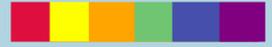
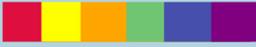


Volume 13

2021-2022



ME



Multicultural Echoes Literary Magazine

Department of Languages and Cultures
California State University, Chico

Ich bin es Moi 나를 я lo mi Me Yo 私 Mim 我 𐤀𐤁𐤓𐤀𐤁𐤓

Ich bin es
Moi
나를
я
lo mi
Me
Yo
私
Mim
我

𐤀𐤁𐤓𐤀𐤁𐤓
Ich bin es
Moi
나를
я
lo mi
Me
Yo
私
Mim
我



𐤀𐤁𐤓𐤀𐤁𐤓 Ich bin es Moi 나를 я lo mi Me Yo 私 Mim 我 𐤀𐤁𐤓𐤀𐤁𐤓



MIE

Multicultural Echoes
Literary Magazine

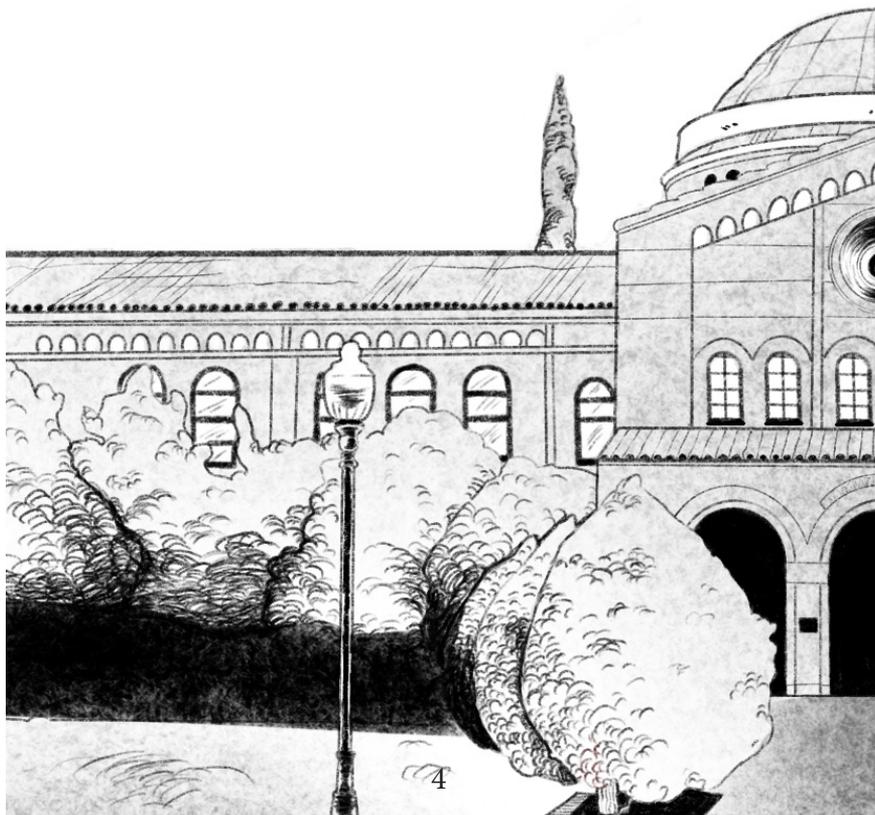
VOLUME 13
2021-2022



Multicultural Echoes
Volume 13
2021-2022

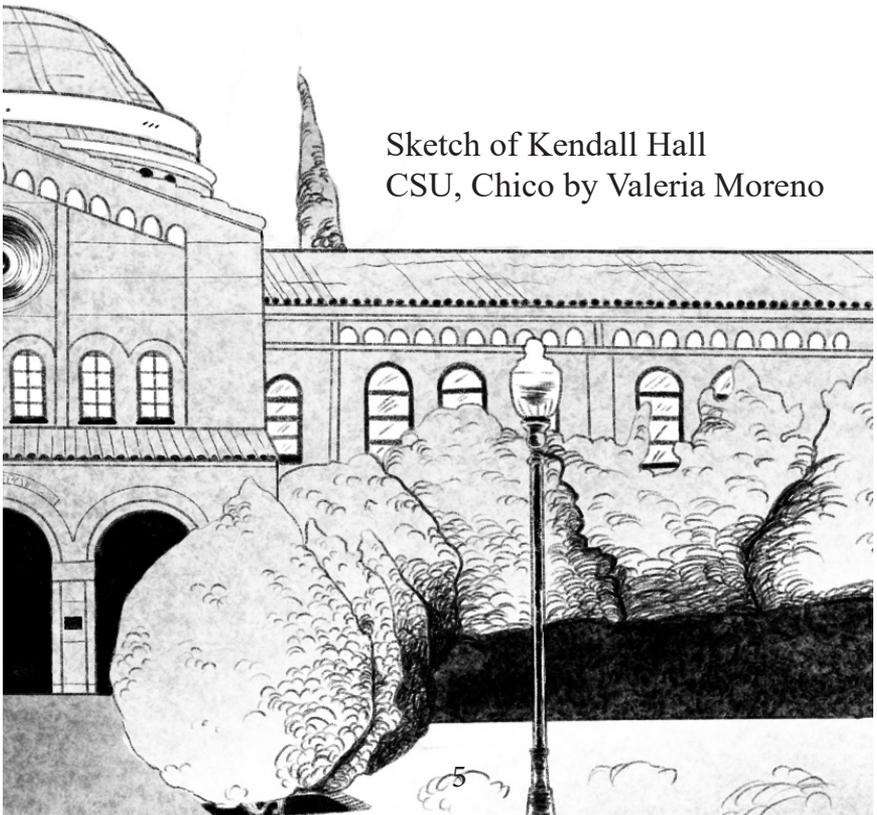
Multicultural

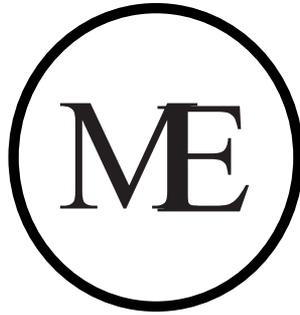
Literary Magazine



Echoes

Sketch of Kendall Hall
CSU, Chico by Valeria Moreno





ME

Multicultural Echoes
Literary Magazine

VOLUME 13
2021-2022

ME: Multicultural Echoes was founded in 2008 by Dr. Char Prieto alongside a group of faculty and students from the Department of Languages and Cultures at California State University, Chico. The journal's purpose is to promote multilingualism, multiculturalism, intellectual growth, creativity, tolerance, and to help authors share and publish their works in a supportive artistic community.

The cover art this year, entitled “Art and Literature in the Time of the Pandemic” has been designed by Anahi Martinez and Char Prieto, representing how Covid-19 affected the world. We have been vulnerable to a pandemic that has led to a dramatic loss of human life, caused widespread economic destruction while disproportionately harming low-income and underserved communities. Despite so much suffering, pain, and death, we are resilient and rebuilding our lives.

ME: MULTICULTURAL ECHOES • 2021-2022 ©

© Department of Languages and Cultures | California State University, Chico, 2021-2022.



Editors

Char Prieto

Anahi Martinez

Editorial Board

Eugenio Frongia

Marie-Christine Henry

Diane Lancaster

Raquel Mattson-Prieto

Carol McClendon

Chunyan Echo Song

Keiko Tokuda

Student Assistants

Anahi Martinez

Publication Design

Anahi Martinez

Cover Design

Char Prieto

Anahi Martinez

Sketch of Kendall Hall

Valeria Moreno

Editor's Introduction to the *ME: Multicultural Echoes* Literary Magazine 2021-2022

Dear Readers:

The worldwide outbreak of COVID-19 was a source of unexpected stress and adversity. For years, the pandemic has disrupted our lives, academic careers, and goals. However, we have shown remarkable resilience and perseverance and despite the pandemic, the myriad of art and creative works submitted by authors and artists to the *ME* magazine this year have been truly inspiring. This is a reminder of what makes our *Multicultural Echoes* family so important: to come together and stay strong during trying times. Despite the pandemic and the other unanticipated challenges, our literary magazine, *ME: Multicultural Echoes*, has persisted as we successfully publish our 13th issue. As we present these artworks and stories of hope, courage, and inspiration, I would like to offer my gratitude to each one of you who made this possible. Artists and writers from around the world shared their personal stories, not about the virus per se, nor about the stress of being confined at home, but about people. It is about the challenges of moving to and from virtual learning. As students, faculty, and community members adjusted to the COVID-19-related economic downturn, we received a variety of works for the *ME: Multicultural Echoes* 2021-2022 magazine. Now is the time to enhance student learning and reinforce our commitment to equity and quality, and it is in moments like these that we need a platform to express ourselves. As founder and editor of the magazine,

I had three prospects in mind for this 13th issue of the *ME*: first, I wanted the work to have a story to tell; second, to show how the contents talk to the reader and relate to our students and their challenges during the pandemic; and finally, the magazine is here to provide a space to think freely, to self-reflect and question about the times in which we live. Most importantly, I wanted these stories to be heard. This 13th issue offers a space to reflect and to create art and literature. Multicultural Echoes, echoes of ourselves and others, to us and the world, these contributions all seek to communicate the creativity and voices of the human experience.



With much appreciation,

Char Prieto

Dr. Char Prieto, Professor,
Founder, Editor and Adviser of
ME: Multicultural Echoes

DEDICATION

During the pandemic the whole world has gone through upheaval and millions of lives have been lost and upended. This issue is dedicated to all who have suffered pain, loss, and hardship during the Coronavirus Pandemic. May the beautiful moments of seeing loved ones in person again be all the more treasured. May the cherished gatherings and moments ahead of us be filled with love and gratitude. May the pandemic help all of us to forget our differences, and to be not bitter, but better people. May Covid-19 help us to be much more considerate to our friends and foes, more willing to help our fellow citizens and to make the world a better place to live.

**To my dear mother, Josefina Rodríguez Malillos
January 15, 1928-June 30, 2021
She will be greatly missed. Requiescat in pace**



Table of Contents

Chinese

Chunyan Echo Song	你错过了傍晚的彩虹	16
-------------------	-----------	----

English

Cloitzél Ahumada	Poderosa	18
Charlie Cave	Get Out of My Hair	19
	Where the Heart Is	23
Clark Colahan	High Hopes	27
Barbara Coddington	Cultivating in the Ecuadorian Andes	28
Danielle Collier	2020	29
Briando Contreras	The Greatest	31
Enrique Cortes	Brotherhood	32
	Muhammad and Jesus	32
	Unity	32
James Craft	Geronimo	33
	I, Blasphemy	33
	Umbrella	33
Roberto Flores	Latinxpresión	34
Kenneth Fries	Cart and Soul 4	35
	One Blue Note	36
	Tidal Ranges	37
Eugenio Frongia	A Testament	38
	Annus Horribilis... No Regrets	41
	On Strategy	42
	The Swallows of Horse Thief Canyon	44
	Where Is the Power?	46
	Welcome, Henry Eugene!	48
Suzie Garrett	End of the Road	50
	Progress	50
	Good Night Moon	51
	Upper Park @ Noon	51
Luis Gonçalves	Tratar das coisas	52

Multicultural Echoes - Table of Contents

Ted W. Hard	Beauty	57
	Love	57
	Nature	57
Arthur Lemner	Life As We Know It	58
	Fish Stories	58
	Red Fish	58
Kristin Moore	Warhol Frogs	59
	Truku Portrait	59
Max Myers	I Should Have	60
	Now	60
	A Moment to Pause	61
	Opium	61
	Caution	61
	Voices	62
	Ghosts	63
	Haiku	64
	Thought of the Tree	65
	Friendship	66
Char Prieto	Peace to the World	66
Kate O'Connell	Divine	67
	Elvira	67
	Janis	67
Vanessa Ortega	The Meadow	68
Char Prieto	Goodbye Ukraine	71
Scott Rushing	Peace Officers or Provocateurs?	74
Roze Sabino-Blodget	Light Rain	77
Ajia Saunders	The Genie	78
	Lights On	81
Cynthia Scontriano	Light For All	84
Schildhauer	Finally Light	84
	Am I On Fire	84
	Social Distancing	84
	Too Much Too Fast	84
Myra Scott	On Caregiving for Papa	85

Multicultural Echoes - Table of Contents

Linda Serrato	The Pregnant Virgin of Remedios	87
Chunyan Echo Song	You Missed This Evening's Rainbow	88
Sophia Vannucci	My Blood is Beautiful	89
Julie Zavan	Not Your Body? Not Your Choice!	90
	Pro-choice	90
French		
Raquel Mattson-Prieto	Je m'appelle Coco	92
	La vie en rose ou Le labyrinthe	93
Italian		
Eugenio Frongia	L'ultima mietitura	95
	Nuova religione per il mio tempo	98
	Oltre la parola	101
Japanese		
Alex Amaya	好きな人	105
Alexis Castro-Castaneda	木	105
Cory Croker	優しい鬼、優しくない鬼	106
Coleen Holihan	早朝の雨	107
Jacqueline Gil-DeVor	いきがい	107
Sasha Rene	冬の虹	108
Sagejane SnyderBehr	ベラ	109
Brenden Wells	風	110
Zilong Zhao	秋	110
	雪	110
Portuguese		
Silvana Delacio	Flor do lascio	112
	Para sempre!	113
	Viva plenamente	115
Roze Sabino-Blodget	Todo dia	116
	Oito de junho	117
Aline Vannucci	Agradecimento	118

Multicultural Echoes - Table of Contents

Aline Vannucci	O recomeço	118
Sophia Vannucci	Meu sangue é lindo	119
	Um convite à descoberta	120
	Carnaval	120

Sardinian

Eugenio Frongia	Amparos	122
	Arpas in abandonu	123

Spanish

Pablo del Barco	Rusia sucia	126
	Sendero otoñal	127
Elena Cerero	El nopal	128
Gabriela Díaz-Dávalos	Yo sabré vivir	129
	Nunca pasa nada	130
	Espinoza matatena	130
Gustavo Gac-Artigas	Olores	131
	Para mí, una docena	132
Maria Gonzalez	El sol de la mañana	133
Marisol Huerta Niembro	Fiesta: Eso es todo	135
	El día después	136
	Poema para Olivia	137
José Luis Plaza Chillón	Selfi para una madre muerta	138
Char Prieto	Elena, siempre te recuerdo	139
	Epístolas parisinas	144

	Contributors' Biographies	145
--	----------------------------------	-----

Chinese



CHUNYAN ECHO SONG
你错过了傍晚的彩虹

那是因为
你选择了在今早的阴雨中
纵身一跃
结束了你的生命

不知道你有没有沐浴，更衣
有没有吃早饭
有没有给爱你的家人打电话
或留下遗言

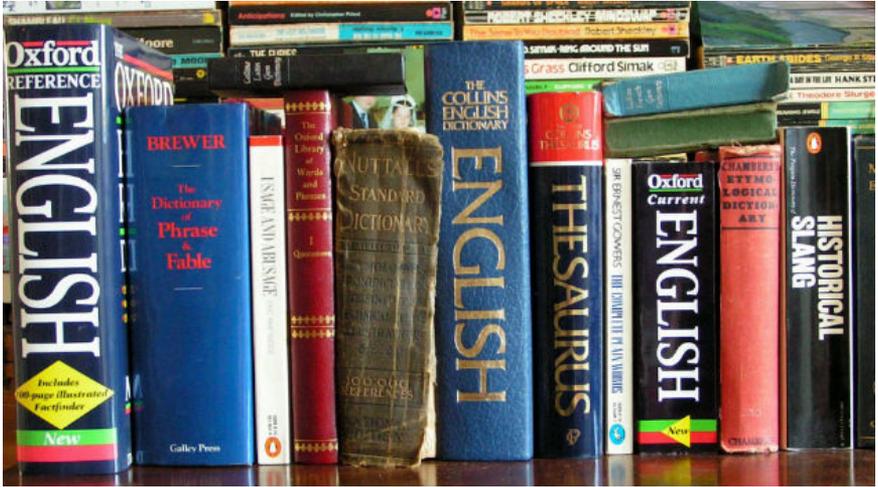
你一路走来
有没有看到树上吐绿的新芽
绚烂的春花
有没有听到歌唱的小鸟
感觉到清风吹拂着你的脸

有没有人跟你问好
冲你微笑
有没有人约你下周的春假
一起去郊游
一起去野餐

在你最后的一刻
有没有对这个世界
还有一丝的留恋

有没有想到这雨后的彩虹
有没有片刻的遗憾

English



CLOITZEL AHUMADA
Poderosa

Beautiful Brown Girl, you are not like everybody else.

Beautiful Brown Girl, your black eyes are the shade of powerful obsidian.

Beautiful Brown Girl, your long, dark hair is a connection to your ancestors.

Beautiful Brown Girl, the sun loved you so much, he kissed you more than the others.

Do not view your features as flaws, they have been passed down through generations,

Given only to those who are worthy of the power they yield.

So, the next time you look in the mirror,

And wished and prayed that you looked like “the average girl”,

Please remember,

Your features were handpicked by those who came before you,

With the knowledge that YOU are their legacy.

CHARLIE CAVE
Get Out of My Hair

I was five years old when my oldest sister cut her hair. By the time she came downstairs, she had already put her hair in a ponytail and taken scissors to her curls, shredding them onto the pearl white tiles of her bathroom floor. I always assumed it was some sort of strange middle school hormone-induced tantrum. I wish I had known better. "I like your hair grown out." The longer the hair, the stronger the curls, the harder it is to control. My mom always begged me to grow it out, but instead I'd head to the barbershop almost monthly to tame my rapidly growing locks. Whenever I got a haircut, I would get a lollipop after. While it's typical for kids to cry during haircuts, this usually stops around kindergarten. I, however, was still tearing up throughout elementary school while someone at the local shop tugged and pulled at my hair. I'm sure my hair was, in a way, alien to them. I almost always left with a sore scalp and a cut on my ear. My dad had tried taking me to a black barbershop once, but they tore through my hair as if it was as densely curled as his. So, the lollipops kept coming.

ELEMENTARY

At Walker Elementary, students were divided into two classes of twenty-five kids each. Considering we were just children; things were relatively easy. We were carefree - recess and the latest playground drama being an exception of course. However, the oh-so-dreaded standardized testing always found its way to our class every now and then. So, a couple times a year I sat down with my class - a predominantly white group save for a few Chinese and Indian kids - to take one. The real test, though, started for me before the first question. In the next box please mark what best applies to you: My race is... I'd quickly scan the list: White, Asian, African American, Native... I was only allowed to pick one. Which? Once, after a moment of hesitation, I checked off the African

American box. I mentioned it to my mother that night, but she met me with a kind of disappointment. “You’re not all black. Don’t forget your other half.”

MIDDLE

I only started disliking my skin tone in sixth grade. While I’ve never been as dark as my dad or sister or many others of the black community, I was still noticeably darker than many of my classmates. Most of all, I just felt ashamed that I could even feel this way. It was a feeling I could never admit to my family. At the dinner table I was frequently hearing from my middle sister about that kid at her high school. One day he would call black people lazy, the next they were gangsters or unsuccessful. I never understood why she didn’t say anything to a teacher or why she let it bother her so much. When bring-your-parent-to-school day rolled around that year, my dad wore a suit to her classes, which shut that kid up for a while. It used to embarrass me when my dad wore suits to parent-teacher conferences, but I guess he felt obligated, almost like there was something to prove.

FIRST YEAR STUDENT IN HIGH SCHOOL

I was fifteen years old when someone said it to my face for the first time. Being new to high school, I had one rule when it came to the gym locker room - in and out. I rarely break rules, but one day I ended up breaking my own. When I heard a classmate from my middle school use the infamous word between laughs, I couldn’t help but turn. “What did you say?” He faced me, smiling. “Charlie, you’re a n.....” His face suddenly fell into a fear that could only match a horror movie victim as he realized what he had said. My cheeks burned while I headed for the gym floor, immediately met by a girl I had only met a couple days ago shoving her fingers through my hair from behind me. “I love your hair!” Please. Stop.

SOPHOMORE

I’m not a fan of math. In my list of backup career choices (in case the first

didn't work out), not a single job required geometry, thank you very much. Being sixteen, I began losing interest in trying. When my parents eventually confronted me with my C, I told them the same thing. They were mad, no surprise, but my dad hit me with something different that day. "I understand, I really do. But, as unfair as it is, you represent a community here. For a lot of people at school, you're the only representation of a black person. We're not afforded the same luxury as others who can just decide not to try."

JUNIOR

In September of my junior year, my school became the center of a scandal. A documentary following a predominantly black high school from nearby revealed that our school football team had been known to fling around racial slurs during games. The next day had come with an email from the superintendent condemning such behavior, signed with something along the lines of "contact me if you have ideas on how to make sure this doesn't happen again." I'm sure he didn't expect answers considering the way he handled my dad's response. My father spent most of that month trying to convince me to set something up - a survey or support group or whatever. But who was I to say something? My experiences weren't as bad as some other people's. If I said something, wouldn't I be a fraud? I often feel like a fraud. Podcaster Leah Donnell calls it "racial imposter syndrome," a mindset among many biracial people who feel "fake or inauthentic in their racial or ethnic heritage." If only I knew about the syndrome earlier, maybe I wouldn't feel alone. During the big scandal, my dad had contacted my middle sister, now graduated, and asked her for help. She was reluctant, he told me. You see, my sister had reported that kid back when she was in high school, but nothing was ever done about it. I was seventeen years old when I learned that things went far beyond what she had ever told me, and that that kid always got away with telling my sister to "kill yourself, n....." Why would the school care about what she had to say now? "They only care that they got caught." It was a couple months later that

I had finally worked up the guts to text my then-crush. Everyone in chemistry class was struggling, no surprise, so I had an excuse. After multiple classes that left my curls falling onto the test pages like ashes, I was ready to try. “If I did a study session this weekend, would you go?” “I work on the weekends my n..... word!” Gut punch. “You do know I’m half-black, right?” “Yeah, that’s why I said it...”

SENIOR

I was 18 years old when I found out why my oldest sister cut her hair. My mom says my sister had grown tired of controlling her curls. No-one else at the middle school had hair like hers. So, the girl I always saw as a fierce lion, decided not to tame, but rather snuff out her mane. She’s since grown her hair back out and let it fly freely. My middle sister, on the other hand, still straightens her hair regularly. It’s been done so much that the damage, quite frankly, is likely irreversible. I haven’t seen her ringlets for a couple of years. It’s beyond me how I never realized my sisters were going through many of the same struggles as me. Maybe if I hadn’t been so scared to speak up, I wouldn’t have felt so alone (a common trait for biracial people.) I still get a haircut every three weeks. I found my barber fawning over my curls during my latest appointment. “They only go where they want to go!” Yeah, you’re telling me. Guess I’ll add her to the list of people who think they want my sisters’ or my hair. My barber likes to tell me my hair is special and my curls “have a mind of their own.” Maybe someday I’ll let them do what they want.

CHARLIE CAVE
Where the Heart Is

This room doesn't smell like the old one. The creamy wallpaper is almost blinding - it just adds another layer of unfamiliarity. Everything seems too neat, too orderly.

"This is where your cousins will sleep when they come over."

I hadn't even thought of that. Would I even want to sleep here? It really wouldn't be the same.

I guess I'm too old for that now anyway...

years ago

The car door snaps open to Mormor's smile in the passenger seat. From the driver's side, Papa's voice chimes.

"Hey!" Considering their age, Mormor and Papa have always had high amounts of energy.

I buckle myself in while giggling at the stuffed bears perched in the backseat pockets. "We'll go pick up Emma and then you two need to decide on dinner."

present day

The stairs are wooden and narrow, but in a way still preferable to the elevator across the hall. The elevator seems too modern, too...new. The kitchen is endless fine white. My eyes scan the counters and cabinets.

My grandparents' actual house was built in the 1950's. My mom grew up under that aging roof, later journeying every day to the nearby high school where I now find myself in my sophomore year. Even though she and her siblings would eventually leave, Mormor and Papa never did.

I spent a good amount of my childhood within their abode, accompanied by various cousins for varying occasions.

One, however, far outweighed the others. Growing up, my grandparents would invite a grandchild (and their plus-one cousin or sibling) for a sleepover every month. This was easier when there were fewer of us. Standing in this foreign house thinking about my aunt (pregnant with the fifteenth grandchild), I realize I haven't slept at Mormor and Papa's in a while.

years ago

Crayons scribble across paper menus, the taste of lemonade staining my lips. The waiter seems to be taking his sweet time. My stomach is wailing, and the smell of Giordano's pizza from the next booth over isn't helping.

"Now I'm assuming you two would like to stop at Blockbuster on the way home?" Mormor loves to ask questions she knows the answers to.

Emma and I don't need to speak to understand we agree with each other. We both know we'll pick a movie and return to Mormor and Papa's to dig into Italian ice (the freezer is always stocked just for us). Being cousins may mean we share blood, but sometimes it feels like we share a mind too. In fact, Emma and I saw a stand with drink fixings as we entered. We have already silently agreed to pocket some sugar packets on the way out and devour them later.

present day

My parents' voices can be heard from upstairs. Papa's still giving them the tour. I've already seen enough.

I miss the old home. This place doesn't have the same welcoming touch. The thought that I couldn't navigate through this house with my eyes closed is unsettling. In fact, I've already hit my head on the dining room chandelier.

Where are the toys littering the living room? The extensive halls with large ornate rugs? The boxes of candy that used to mantle the secret staircase at Mormor and Papa's real house?

years ago

Dust puffs from the cracked door frame. The closet is filled with old wedding dresses and tuxedos and hats and shoes of different shapes, sizes and colors.

"I want that one!" Emma slips a dress from a hanger while Mormor watches from behind. "This dress right here was your mom's" she points to me. Her nostalgia is clear as crystal. Mom's wedding dress hangs among those of my aunts. Why are their dresses here and not in their houses?

I pull Mom's dress from the ranks for a better look at the intricate lace. I wonder what color tux I'll wear to my wedding. Will I keep it here after?

present day

Despite being a relatively big house, I can feel a sense of claustrophobia kicking in. There's no way this kitchen or dining room could fit all 32 (soon to be 33) of us for Thanksgiving or Christmas. We don't have many of those left before college.

years ago

"Tell me something about my mom."

We've already picked her brain for twenty minutes, but Mormor begins a new story anyway.

Only the frail lamp in the corner provides light to the steel blue room. Murder mysteries decorate the bookshelf and hats of various colleges adorn hooks near the closet. One day my college will be up there.

"One more!"

"Oh, no more stories! I think it's bedtime!" Mormor adds a pained dramatic flair to her amused laugh as she rises from the foot of the bed. Emma scrambles to the twin-size in the corner (all the cousins prefer it for some reason) while I pull the sheets of the queen-size to my chin.

Mormor kisses Emma on her forehead before coming to me.

"Good night sweetie."

She leaves me with a kiss as the lamp dims and the cracked white door shuts. My dad and three of my uncles watch from the photo frame above my bed.

present day

Time slips away on my phone. I just want to go home and forget this whole moving thing.

Besides the hum of voices upstairs, this house is silent. At the old one, there was always a clock somewhere in the distance.

years ago

Nothing. Ebony black. The faint ticking of the grandfather clock downstairs pierces the silent night air as I slip the wintry sheets from my body. The dark seeps out into the hallway, accompanied only by my slow steps and complete silence.

In the hush of dawn, the strawberry red step (second one down) gasps

out a short yet poignant creak. Through the blurred ink of night I can make out the sable black piano across the hall. The clock's pulse strengthens while my bare toes hit the floor. Everything lays still, unaware of the upcoming hustle and bustle of daytime. Even the sun remains silent - too fatigued to light my path to the kitchen.

As I stumble in, a single, feeble light hangs, illuminating the maturing wooden table. Across the way Mormor's tender face dawns a smile. She too is an early riser, typically cracking a book on the couch as soon as four a.m.

"Waffles?"

The birds outside begin their daily melody. Mormor loves birds.

present day

"What do you think?"

Papa staggers down the hall. His smile surpasses just the mouth - I can see it in his weary eyes too. You shouldn't move. Their real house is old. If they sell it, there's no doubt it will be torn down.

My gaze turns from him to Mormor. Her inquisitive smile adds even more excitement, which surprises me. She's never been good at change.

Their minds are already made up.

It takes everything in me to allow my voice to break the silence.

"I love it!"

CLARK COLAHAN
High Hopes

You stand behind Jaime Moñala's cement farm house in the majestic foothills of volcanic Mt. Imbabura in northern Ecuador, gazing in awe down the clifflike trail to the green terrace below, and then you find yourself asking the obvious: "Do you go up and down THAT to get to your fields?" Jaime smiles slightly and says, "Sí." In fact, daily. And not just when farming. Four years ago, at age twenty-nine, he finally got the chance to attend high school, but all the classes are offered at night, after the bus stops running, so every evening he walks the seven kilometers home and arrives at midnight. Then uncontrollably gazing at the surrounding cliffs, you ask something else foolish: "All uphill?" This time he breaks into a grin and exclaims: "All uphill!"

He has a poorly understood medical issue with his leg that gets worse when he walks, though he points out that once he gets the muscles warmed up, they hurt a little less. You think to yourself: "What doesn't kill you makes you strong." He meets your thought out loud, declaring that "Time, effort and commitment make everything possible." After hearing about the health issues that he and his young son, Hob, are overcoming, you can see he has good reason to aim high in life. You ask what his long-term goal is: "I like politics. I want to become a congressman." Your visual memory calls up iconic paintings of the early years of America's own farm-raised, rail-splitter whose determined face cast in bronze now sits looking down over the nation's capital.

For several years Jaime suffered from pain in the left testicle, but it wasn't until Tandana Foundation's medical brigade came to his small village, perched high on a misty ridge in the Andes, that he was diagnosed. Tandana operates community-based and locally managed programs in Ecuador and Mali to assist indigenous people with education, health care and essential infrastructure, especially clean drinking water systems. The foundation's medical care coordinator, Virginia Sánchez, arranged for surgery, and now he feels much better, though he still has to be careful about lifting heavy weights. Diagnosis to operation took five months, and he has made a good recovery during the two months since. His son Hob's problem is a birth defect. His left ear is not functional due to the absence of an opening to connect the inner ear with the outside

of the head. Tandana has brought hope and help here, too. Specialists say that very likely in two or three more years the toddler will be big enough to have an operation correcting the defect.

With Virginia's knowledge of available resources, neither the operations nor the doctors' visits are costing Jaime and his wife anything. The free medical brigade comes to this hard-to-reach village of 250 residents twice a year, and typically includes five doctors, several nurses, dentists and some first-aid specialists. They are mainly foreign volunteers, aided by employees of the township's health center. Virginia keeps in close touch with the family by phone, then drives to their house to pick them up and accompany them to doctors' offices. She has a caring, affectionate attitude toward them, beaming with happiness to see that Jaime has gained back some healthy weight since the operation and is looking good.

Jaime's high school graduation is just four months away. He explains confidently that next comes admission to a university, winning a scholarship, and graduating four years later with a degree in Political Science. You are forcefully reminded that a helping hand and an encouraging smile can get you up life's steepest hill, or as the expression says, "¡Sí se puede!"

BARBARA CODDINGTON
Cultivating in the Ecuadorian Andes



DANIELLE COLLIER
2020

They're only mad at the black lives matter movement
Because it's moving
No longer the translucent
Here to stay and not moving
400 years oppression and it crazy that I'm happy Black
My skin, my hair, my lips my nose my smile
I love this shit
Comply and You won't die
It's all so simple
But if ya skin is black and it stays like that
That two & a half strikes against you

This is too much, where's my wallet? wallet? Amadou Diallou
I need to cash a check, girl stoppit.. Ask Yvonne Smallwood
I just wanna go for a drive.. Corey Jones
What if I miss a stop sign ... Sandra Bland
Okay I'll just walk to a store... Mike Brown
For snacks nothing more ...Trayvon Martin
I'll jog so I make it quick... Amaud Arbery
Gatta cellphone if it looks suspicious ... Stephon Clark
I Guess I'll just run home, so I won't be out long. No running Walter Scott
Then I'll get strapped to carry my own. Phillando Castile
I got a question now, this just sounds wrong. No question asking, Randy Evans
I'll go to sleep... Breonna Taylor

Multicultural Echoes - English

It's our children and our mothers and our sisters and our brothers
And you wonder why we are mad (x2)

We're forgotten we're tormented
We're abandoned and heart broken and you wonder why we're sad

Take a day take a day and put yourself in my shoes
Take a day take a day I wonder what would you do
Take a day and take the weight of being black off my back
Use privilege for change like that

Take a day take a day and put yourself in my shoes
Lace them up tight, be careful 'cause they're big boots
Laces of thorn, holes at the bottom
No comfort inside
What happened why u not smiling?

Danielle's song can be found here:
<https://youtu.be/WrlOsJMQW1M>

BRIANDO CONTRERAS
The Greatest

Dedicated to Muhammad Ali (1942-2016)

The morning sun shines high above the sky
Feels like I am fast as a bee but
As light as a floating butterfly
Some think of me as a crazy nut
That's because that's just like me
I am the Greatest of All Time
Don't compare me to that fighter Bruce Lee
I knockout opponents like it's raining dimes
Known as a rebel for my beliefs
Everyone having a problem with those things
Hoping that the public shows relief
Throwing punches that make people fling
Doesn't matter how much work you have in
Don't count the days, make the days count

ENRIQUE CORTES

Brotherhood



Muhammad and Jesus



Unity

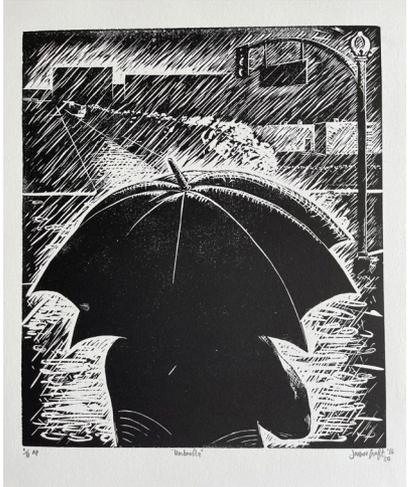


JAMES CRAFT

Geronimo



Umbrella



I, Blasphemy



ROBERTO FLORES
Latinxpresión

In a moment, everything changes
Bright moments and daily struggle,
Take up space in our lives.
Dark thoughts invade and, in a moment,

We fall down from a cloud of dreams with a crash,
Feeling pain and numbness fill us inside.
We wake up to see a gray world,
Our nightmare that is real life.

We create tribulations that shape our reality,
Negativity to keep the mind racing.
We watch people break and crumble
With the pain of impossible possibilities overtaking.

Collapsing under tremendous pressure
The realization of the worst of expectations
The surreal ambiance of grey
Creates the greatest sentiment to overcome

The heart preserves itself with vitality
The resentment brings liveliness that bears fruit
Overcoming the greatest agony
Acceptance beings to take root ---

KENNETH FRIES
Cart and Soul 4

Do Not Go Gentle -- Rage, Rage against the Dying of the Light (Dylan Thomas, 1914–1953)

In soft chair at Barnes and Noble, my old friend Augustus
reads these lines of young Dylan Thomas, written to his dying father
sips morning latte turns art book pages lingering
over Grim Reaper, Holbein's darkest drawing thus

Gus approaches grocery errand with unquiet mind
pauses at the Safeway Door which opens without his effort
unsettling him further

On the List she had prepared for him Gus sees nothing of interest, nothing of taste
tomato soup (Campbell's), lime Jell-o (2 packages)
hot dogs (beef), hot dog buns (any brand ok), American cheese (sliced)
ginger ale and Tums

In the store Young people buy Wild salmon,
brown rice, fresh lemons, avocados, Pinot Grigio
talk fast, talk happy

Gus wanders aisles in life review, his Cart half full, stops
then chooses slowest check-out line to ponder his regrets.
Disquiet deepens when the Girl at Register, in gray Hoodie,
gazes at him smiles in a Spiritual way asks kindly

*Did he find what he was looking for?
Would he like help to his car?*

Gus does not answer; he could say "yes" to what he found, "no" to help
or just as well the other way. On the Register looms the dubious
Forever stamps sold here. When the Conveyor Belt begins to move
Gus feels odd impulse to lie down on it, get it done, gently, Release

Then Humor strikes the Graceful irony checking out his Cart and Soul at Safe-
way's check-out counter! Chuckling now, Gus vows to share this comic scene
with buddies at the clubhouse, have a laugh or two
Gus smiles with the Girl, takes senior discount, pays with credit shuffles into
afternoon

KENNETH FRIES
One Blue Note

Miles Davis, Kind of Blue

Perhaps Miles found an inner ear
descending in the ancient souk of Fez
restless in the raucous crowd
of blue-robed Moors, camels, goats
baskets full of curling cobras
winding down the maze of shops
mounds of spice, past skeins of yarn
(yellow, azure) piled on cedar
tables, until entering the inner door
-- *Babacar's Bijouterie* --
where Miles sat midst topaz, sapphire
tired eyes half-closed; in this sanctum
wakened by the hissing pot of tea
Miles poured full a glass of steaming *menthe*
then heard as one blue note
all mingled shouts of vendors
wails of children cries of women
braying donkeys silent prayer unceasing

KENNETH FRIES
Tidal Ranges

Take your children to the tidal pools
full red moon on red bluff resting
crabs crawling turtles crawling

Taste salt and fog in cooling dark
jagged rocks, boats at tether
fragile waters warm receding

Let them see what's now exposed
like starfish of our deepest yearnings
hidden soon again

Let them see the rising tide
fish the deeps, net the morning
pluck red berries from the ancient sea

EUGENIO FRONGIA
A Testament

A “Testament” is an act of witnessing, namely, speaking the truth as seen in reality. The Latin word “testis” means witness. I am now 80 years of age and my convictions are formed, in a final shape, after a long journey of rationality and will. Witnessing is a way of seeing the human condition face to face.

I detest “Fideism,” the uncritical, slavish attitude and submission to the “belief” that there exists a “reality” beyond reason and science, simply because this “reality” is imposed by, and advocated under the “authority” of either written texts, or human beings who claim they “know” because of a privileged “revelation”. “Fideism” is, therefore, the foundation of authoritarianism, the base of all POWER claims by all Religions and Patriarchies, who have seized on the willing and fearful surrender of rationality, by billions of mental SLAVES throughout history. To this day, “Fideism” is the process of ongoing dis-empowerment of billions of Christians, Muslims, Jews, Buddhists, Hinduists and all other forms of superstition and mythology that control all “believers.”

“Fideism” is the single, most destructive and reactionary force on this Planet, a factor that has blunted the freedom and progress of humankind, opposing rational discourse and evolution, blocking the development of the mind and vilifying the legitimate uses of the human body. As a practical example and a deleterious incarnation of “Fideism,” I can think of no more eloquent witness than the recent book by Tara Westover, “Educated”, whose struggle and triumph over the hateful forces of “Fideism,” are a telling story of the personal sacrifice and suffering that it takes to UNDO the evil fideism and mental captivity. Hers is the rare victory over a combined criminal perversion of the human mind through the control of father, mother, criminally violent brothers who wanted her to stay a slave in their image and likeness.

Billions of human beings across our Planet live lives of oppression, poverty, hatred, rage and homelessness, because they have become the victims of a male-dominated superstructure that leaves no escape or liberation routes. Fideism breeds authoritarianism and stratified social status. The world is divided, into the 21st Century, into two major categories of humans: those who

have power and economic means, and those who are powerless and live on the borderlines of poverty, ignorance, sickness. The alliance of the controlling groups of Christian Churches in Europe with the secular powers of the various European colonial empires, extended to Africa, all of Latin America and most of the Sian continent, has left its permanent marks on all populations affected. Africa's and Latin America's problems are to be traced to the exploitive authoritarianism and capitalism of England, Spain, Portugal, Holland, Belgium and, in the late 19th and Twentieth Centuries, of Italy, through its so-called Empire of colonies in Eritrea, Somaliland, Ethiopia and Libya. Democratic and economic stability and wellbeing are still rare and these continents are frequently subject to the re-emergence of dictatorships, tyrannies, genocide and exploitation, in the template of European colonialism. Catholic Italy has imposed its yoke, with the blessing and connivance of the Vatican State, on the African Empire proclaimed by Mussolini in 1936. Libya, Somalia, Eritrea are now failed states that breed international piracy, refugee trafficking, religious warfare, genocide and international terrorism. The exodus of these desperate populations towards Europe has become one of the self-inflicted plagues, with which Christian Europe has great difficulties coping. The resurgence of extreme racism and nationalism in Italy, Austria, Hungary, Poland and lately in England, is the revenge of history against colonialist and capitalist exploiters. Migration to Europe, the land of the masters, is an act of commutative justice. It's like the uprising of the plantation slaves in the American South. It's a form of Evolution within the framework of human rights and redistributive justice.

"History" has been marked by Fideism and, therefore, very difficult to accept as fact, reality or truth. "History" as accepted by the governing white superstructures, is the witness to the abuse of power and disenfranchisement of ordinary people. Fideism has been particularly deleterious to women across all ages, from mythical Eve to the bulk of historical ethnicities and cultures. Women have constantly suffered the brunt of patriarchy. They have been expected to be the loyal, respectful, submissive frontline of patriarchal dominance and exploitation. For the sake of their children, they have had to choose the yoke of servitude in silence, both at home and outside of the house. When the woman has exercised her right of conscience and truthfulness, she "has made history" in the wrong way, according to patriarchy. Witness Nora's rebellion in Henrik Ibsen's "A Doll's House." Her slamming of the door upon

leaving her “prison”, “was heard across Europe.”

Tara Westover’s “rebellion”, as forcefully expressed in her book “Educated”, earned her the solitude of righteousness, the rejection and disowning of her fideistic family and the criminal threat of violent death on the part of at least one of her brothers. Though I have never in my mind blindly accepted the fraudulent promises of “Faith”, I have, like many others, struggled to escape from the tight grip of cultural Fideism, which, to this day, is embedded in the Sardinian and Italian cultures. I am now a sworn enemy of religious, cultural, ethnic, economic and academic patriarchy. I have always cut my path in Academia and worked inside it to overturn all forms of institutional patriarchy. No one has ever bought me with subjugation to authority and power. I consider too many of my high-level academic colleagues and acquaintances, both men and women, to have been bought by academic barons at Harvard, Stanford, Dartmouth, UCLA and even Berkeley. They occupy places way beyond their merits and intellectual contributions. I have never owed anything to anybody because I have never been owned. I have enjoyed complete freedom of coming and going and I have always created my own work environment and living spaces. I am proud, as an emeritus professor, of having always left an academic position better than I ever found it. The programs I directed, I have mostly created and brought to the status of “benchmarks of excellence”.

My view of History is Zinn’s view of History: a history mostly un-written and unspoken, left by the vast majority of ordinary men and women. I leave a testament of freedom and independence. My allegiance is to the Planet, to Nature, to Science and the free and autonomous unfolding of the forces of biological and noetic evolution. I am comforted by the strength of those, both inside and outside of my immediate family, who have come to understand life as a willful, rational process. Life is here, now, sacred and contained by the boundaries of this Blue Planet. And life always will be. Not in fideistic and imaginary otherworldly realms. Any other conception or offering, is fraudulent, self-delusional and ultimately disempowering.

EUGENIO FRONGIA
Annus Horribilis... No Regrets

Then, good riddance, Twenty twenty one!
Viral, deadly, stealthy and unforgiving,
Cursed by the dead, hated by the living,
Pick up your bags, hasten and begone!

You, pestilential brute, hitman for hire,
You have ravaged the land with drought and flood,
Have feasted on flesh, bone and blood,
And have wasted our Planet with your fire.

You came like a pirate on the waves,
All promises you made became a lie.
Filler of premature, untimely graves,
Vile merchant of death, you too shall die!

The last bell tomorrow we hear and see.
Two, zero, two, one... It tolls for thee!

EUGENIO FRONGIA
On Strategy

When you have a repetitive pattern that produces no results, you have to break the pattern. Forcefully. Decisively. That means, in a way, that you have “to go to war.” A strategy is directed towards the achievement of a goal, or goals. A repetitive pattern without progress is a stall. To overcome and change a fruitless pattern, you must induce a break. A breakthrough. You have to take a calculated risk.

In this dynamic, we must place the often self-serving, obstructive tactics of bureaucrats, of phone and desk apparatchiks, who are trained to keep the advantage and the upper hand, by simply stalling, sweet-talking, passing along the party line of corporations, companies and service providers, who are stewards and slaves of profit-makers at the expense of the public, who pays for these services, but who has no enforcement power, and is often used and abused.

The lower-level employee is the powerless keg in the wheel, who is instructed on how to respond and on what to say – the party line! – when the customer enforces his rights and his legitimate requests for service and delivery. In this category are pharmacological employees and their managers, delivery systems, city, state and federal bureaucrats, water, electricity and gas and insurance employees and their managers. When there is a problem that tests their resilience and creativity, they often try to “pass the buck’ and to extricate themselves from their obligations at the expense of the consumers or the people.

Among the worst offenders are phone-and online services employees, who exploit to their advantage their anonymity and system of “queuing”, using and abusing your time and frequently cutting you off after one-hour of waiting. Instructive, in this sense, a phrase used by a manager of a prescription mail delivery pharmacy, Walgreens, located in Arizona, who, when confront-

ed about his company obvious failure to deliver what was already paid for, as well as the violation of patient rights, yelled at me: “Get off my phone!” My answer: “Get your hands off my time and my life!”

Repetitive patterns of behavioral non-compliance on the part of companies and corporations, who exploit the system of “phone queuing,” are meant (or, by default, result in) to dis-empower the public when it asserts its rights and they are meant to break down your resistance, to discourage you from trying again. They are aimed at “keeping you in your place.”

Hence, the absolute need to resist, to break down the pattern, to have the knowledge and the will to confront, to challenge the system and the pattern, to redirect the ‘one-way’ corporate traffic, in the hope of opening new lanes, or, perhaps, to start a dialogue.

EUGENIO FRONGIA
The Swallows of Horse Thief Canyon

In this Central-Sierra, seven-thousand-foot-altitude retreat, at 12:00 noon, the sun is hot, the 91-degree temperature made tolerable by a pleasant breeze that makes the aspens shimmer. The Carson River flows quietly, murmuring among the ancient rocks of Horse Thief Canyon. High clouds begin to form, announcing a possible, passing thunder storm in this portion of the Central Sierras, dominated like a vigilant shepherd by Mount Round Top. Live, pleasant sounds and voices are heard around the house: the repeated chirping of a family of swallows, housed under the ceiling of one of the porches that surround this peaceful mountain retreat; a family of six, four babies and two parents; the beautiful dialogues and canorous soliloquies of Alexander, two years and four months old, the son of Lisa and Eric, our grandson. An ancient Greek proverb says that “one swallow –μία kelydón – does not Spring make.” But it is clear that “a family of swallows does a Summer make.”

The swallows of Horse Thief Canyon are a spectacle to behold. They are a very functional family unit where the parents share equally in the feeding. All morning long, they fly in and out of an impressively built nest, ferrying food to the four young babies, as efficiently as supply vehicles refurnish the Space Station orbiting the Earth. They are tame, self-confident, generous, caring, efficient providers, language apt to be applied to the human parents of Alexander, our own swallow.

The mother and the father come to rest on the top of the open window panes of the kitchen. They rest, preen, chirp, flap their wings to cool down in the noon heat. Their silhouette forms a shapely chocolate figure against the green of the Sierra pines and the quaking aspens and the awesome granite walls rising sharply skyward in this narrow canyon.

The swallows of Horse Thief Canyon are a lesson in how evolution works. They demonstrate how life in this living Planet has gained a secure, complex and functional foothold; how evolution has specialized and adapted for the propagation of the species and their survival in an environment that, while favorable to life, demands efficiency, fitness and qualities of expert care, that one expects to see in intelligent beings, capable of reflexivity. The swallows are intelligent. They read their surroundings and their ambiance with efficiency; they time their actions with clockwork precision, from the architecturally and structurally masterful construction of their dwelling – impervious to rain, wind, heat and predation –to the perfect time of reproduction, closeness to resources, knowledge of the variance in the cycle of seasons at 7,000 feet of altitude.

The swallows assemble their nest with mud from the banks of the nearby Carson River, use the river as their source of water and a great amount of their food supply. Bugs, mosquitoes, dragon flies, water skiers, butterflies abound in a river, unpolluted and always rejuvenated by snow, snowmelt and confluent springs. The meadow adjacent to the house supplies other sources of sustenance.

These swallows have established a balance that allows them to thrive. Humans are unobtrusive and respect their way of life and the swallows feel confident in sharing a dwelling with humans, whom Nature has endowed with a parallel mission of species perpetuation: pairing, care of offspring, harmony with the environment.

In their own quiet way, the swallows of Horse Thief Canyon provide counsel and enlightenment in a complex world of humans that, alas too often, fail in the very tasks in which the swallows are masterful: loving, repetitive routines, the intelligent application of means to the ultimate end of creating a better world. Better than the one they found at birth.

EUGENIO FRONGIA
Where Is the Power?

“Auxilium nostrum in nomine Domini?”

“Our Strength/help is in the name of the Lord.”

The above is a well-known mantra in Christian rituals. And here is an equally well-known passage from Machiavelli’s *The Prince*: “E così venne alla fine dei suoi giorni Fra Girolamo Savonarola, predicatore e profeta disarmato, cui la parola di Dio non fu di alcun giovamento.” (“And so, Friar Girolamo Savonarola came to the end of his days – in a burning pyre – He was a preacher and an unarmed prophet, to whom the word of God was of no avail.”) This is the real history of the world, endlessly reiterated, day after day, century after century, millennium after millennium. How many, expecting a hand from above, and sharing “the valley of tears” with the wolves, have perished in their own misguided hopes and helplessness, having surrendered their reason and free will, conned by preachers and prophets, sacred books of myths and fraudulent fables?

I cry and cringe in remembering the valleys inhabited by hopeful innocents, slaughtered by armed and evil predators: from the slaves of Mesopotamia, the Fertile Crescent, the Babylonian Empire, the slaves of Rome and Greece, the innumerable hordes of Christian, Muslim, Jewish and Hindu “Faithfuls”, exploited mercilessly by the power-hungry popes, imams and self-appointed “leaders”! Within reach of historical memory, the faithful “unarmed” masses, have been slaughtered by wolves, armed with the sword and the cross, from Latin America to Native America, from the Southern Plantations to the Plains of the Holocaust, the frozen expanses of Syberia to the rice fields of Laos and Cambodia. And today, a capitalistic society has put the sword of power and economic enslavement in the hands of the few, who, from

Silicon Valley to Wall Street, continue to foster the illusion that help is in the hands of the lords.

This ravaging, blind Covid pandemic, rather than opening the eyes of slaves and believers, is proving once again, that hope for a human and just sharing of power is still left in the hands of the few “prophets” and profiteers, who will emerge richer and stronger from this universal calamity.

Because they are “armed” and the people are “disarmed.” The people have their signs, their words, their slogans and their marches, their religion and their “faith In the Lord.” The oligarchs, the corporations, the super-wealthy wield their power without visibility, without marching on the streets and gathering in the plaza. They have the courts, the armies, the police, the guards, the armed Preacher of Hatred and Racism and Nativism in the White House. They are armed with the sword of relentless propaganda of their media, the coded messages that obfuscate and distort. They wield the weapon of the Big Lie in a vast Animal Farm.

Only the people, the masses, can empower the people, strengthen the masses. No power has ever “come from above.” Power germinates and grows from below, from the roots, from the common human ground. The tree of power and justice are a human tree. The branches and fruits of this human tree are from the people, of the people and for the people.

Our help, our strength is nowhere else but in our name, in our hands, in our will.

EUGENIO FRONGIA
Welcome, Henry Eugene!

June 2, 2022, 4:30 pm – San Francisco, California

Today,
You came home.
You left home, briefly,
In a princely carriage,
For a very important event:
To attend to your birth,
To behold the first light,
To utter your first cry,
To draw your first breath,
To have your first meal,
And then, to rest from your labors.

To be born
Is a very hard job,
a very important job.
You did it very well!
Happy homecoming, Henry!
You have come back
To claim your place,
Forever,
In your family.
Tread lightly.
This is sacred space!

You will dwell
In this new home

A Century,
The Twenty-First Century,
And you will cross
The boundaries
Of the Twenty-Second Century.
And Alexander will still be there,
The big brother,
With you
And both will reminisce
The days of old,
The days of gold
When we loved you.

You inherit the light,
The sunrise and the sunset'
The coming and going
Of earthly seasons.

You will find,
On the day of days,
One lucky day,
The most mysterious thing
That Life and Earth can offer:
LOVE, in the eyes of WOMAN!

And love will be the train
That will carry life
Wherever you go.
Behold the flowers,
The trees, the forests,
The cold streams of the Sierras,
The waves of the Oceans
And the ships, sailing
To faraway shores.
You will behold PEACE
In your time
And you will be
In great company,
One among fortunate travelers.

What a splendid, mysterious event
Your arrival!
Forever a marvel.
Today, Mother Earth
Is younger
Because of you.

Happy journey,
Henry Eugene Ochoa-Yanagi!
Your name is written
On the ticket of life.

Eugenio Nicola Frongia
Nonno

SUZIE GARRETT
End of the Road



Progress?



SUZIE GARRETT

Good Night Moon



Upper Park @ Noon



LUIS GONÇALVES
Tratar das coisas

I am really not happy with this arrangement. It always irritates and frustrates me that I have to call the private cellphone of the owner of the retirement place to be able to talk to my mother. I really cannot understand why she doesn't have a phonenumber in her room or her own cellphone, but I am reminded that when my sister brought it to her, my mom had no idea how the cellphone, she had used thousands of times, worked. I am also reminded of the words of a trusted friend "don't let the well decorated rooms, the matching fabrics, and all the fancy amenities of other places fool you: the only important thing is how people working there treat the elderly. My mother is in this retirement home, she is always clean, and the personnel is really good to her." And so, it came to be.

The retirement home employee answers the phone and I let her know that I want to talk to my mother. I hear her walk around and the muffled sounds of her talking to several people and finally I hear her tell my mom she has a call. I absolutely hate that she calls my mother "*Coelhinha*"; my mother has always been "Maria da Conceição", or "São", if you were "part of the family"; but there are so many Marias da Conceição there, they have to distinguish between them, and it might as well be through her family name Coelho that she got from her mother. I tell my mom the news, I will be there the following week to see her, and I will stay for ten days. She says "*Está bem, eu vou tratar das coisas.*" I have heard those words so many times. They used to mean something different, that she would let my father and my sister know I was coming, she would get my old room ready with clean sheets and bath towels, she would make sure to have a few things in the fridge that she knew I liked, and she would make *a cozido à portuguesa* for me. This time it just means that her mind is wandering around a familiar time from ago, from where she still

draws purpose and meaning to her life, and I play along knowing this a place doesn't exist anymore. There will be no ringing the bell at the building door, or seeing her face coming out of the window above, there will be no "*já vai!*" and the sound of the door opening, there will be no dragging of the suitcases to the elevator and pressing the third floor, there will be no one waiting for me at the door or tears or the certainty of that unshakable bond restored in a long quiet hug. There will be no smell of the boiling meats, *chouriço*, *farinheira*, *morcela*, cabbage, potatoes and other vegetables in the air and I will not seat down at the dinner table in the chair with the back to the door to gratefully eat this feast at what, for me, is not even 7:00 in the morning. To be honest, I don't know what will be, except for a total shock, she has no recollection of our conversation and has no idea I am coming. Hopefully, there will be a happy bewilderment in her soul. I arrived last night, and I am getting ready to go and surprise her.

I get in, right behind another gentleman and I see him get a number, so, I do the same. 31. There's no one else in there. A few things are different; service is not one of them, it's as bad as usual. There are two guys behind the counter, one turns the chicken over the embers, and the other seems busy with something. They have two clients looking at them, but they talk to each other like we are not there. Maybe I have been in the US too long, maybe my expectations have changed, but I can't help thinking they wouldn't last a month there with service like this. I get so annoyed after a few minutes that I even consider leaving, but I don't care, I am not here for the service, I am here to eat memories, I am here because I need to go back, something needs to still be the same, I am here because I told my mom I was going to get dinner at "*Rei dos Frangos*", I even joked that it was my church, but she didn't laugh, I don't think she understood. I sit down in a small bench by the wines, when one of them finally says "*a seguir!*" and the older gentleman goes up. Now,

it's my turn, and I get two chickens... "*piri-piri*" he asks... of course with *piri-piri* and a box of fries, a box of *migas*, a salad. I ask if I can pay with a card. He gives me the machine to enter the card and I tell him he made a mistake. He gets an attitude and says "I just entered the total." and I point out to him that he entered 16 euros and the cash register says 26. He confirms and quickly readjusts his demeanor and says out loud, with a very impressed tone, the biggest compliment you will ever hear from a Portuguese business owner "*outro tipo de pessoa e não dizia nada...*" and I smile inside, I guess I am now the good kind of person. But I am worried. I walk home and sit at the kitchen table and eat everything at the same time. I need this chicken to taste the same, I need these fries to be greasy, I need these *migas* to taste like *broa*, I need my lips to burn, and they do, and it all happens, and I can close my eyes and hear everyone laughing and my mother cracking a joke about how we got so silent around that barbeque chicken and remarking that we must have all been really hungry. I remember my sister's oily fingers and my mother giving paper towels to everyone, I remember clearly her finally sitting down with us, I remember her presence and I just want to close my eyes and feel her energy there again. It only works for a few seconds, but I really needed that.

As I wait outside, I see them bringing my mom and sitting her down at a cafeteria table, and I hear the woman say "*Tenho uma surpresa para ti.*" She tells her to cover her eyes and signals for me to come inside. I sit next to her, and the caretaker lets her know she can look now. She looks at me. She looks puzzled. She doesn't recognize me. I tell her who I am, but it doesn't register. We talk, I ask her questions, she answers, but she has no idea who she is talking to. We keep talking and when appropriate, I keep reminding her that I am her son. Eventually, after fifteen minutes, the fog in the labyrinth of her mind opens and she realizes who I am, and she reaches for my hands, and she gets up and hugs me and kisses my shaved head and says "*eu gosto tanto*

de ti". I tell her that I love her so much too, and I tell her that this sentence was one of the first things Lucinda learned to say in Portuguese. I tell her that, in fact, every night I put her to bed, I sing *O balão do João* to her, and I sing *Guitarra* but I stop just before I end the last verse "*guitarra, guitarra linda, eu quero chorar contigo, fica mais suave a vida quando tu choras...*" and Lucinda finishes "...*comigo.*" and we kiss and I say "*eu gosto tanto de ti.*" and she says it back to me, sometimes sounding like one word "*eugostanti*". We laugh. I want to make sure she remembers Lucinda, and I show her photos. We talk. She is restless. She can't seem to sit still. She keeps getting up to go nowhere and we keep asking her to come back to the table. She says she doesn't feel well. She tells me she is shaking; I hold her arm and she is shaking. We talk. Her mind goes but comes back. I have to remind her a couple more times that I am her son, and she seems to be holding on well. I look at her frail body and hardly recognize her once imposing figure. I hear her but, in truth, I can't recognize more than bits and pieces. I look and I do recognize those hands that have done so much for me. She gets up again and her hands search for me, her arms hug my head, and she kisses me again. She remarks she hasn't seen me in a long time, and I joke that she almost sounds like she missed me. She closes her eyes, leans her head to the right, gives me that famous side eye with pursed lips hiding an involuntary smile, but she lets a tear drop down her face and says "*tinha saudades tuas.*" and I hold her hands and I tell her I miss her too, every day. After a while, she gets up and says "*vamos para casa.*" and I have to remind her she lives here now, those people take care of her, and it's almost time for dinner and her medication, but she looks confused, like she doesn't recognize the place. We go through this several times. "*Onde é que tu vais ficar?*" and I tell I am staying in our house, to which she responds "*então vamos para casa, tenho que ir tratar das coisas*" and that hits me so bad. I am doing my best to keep it together in front of her. I don't want to confuse

or bring negative emotions to my mother. I do want to take her home so she can “*tratar das coisas*” but that home doesn’t exist anymore. Last time she went to her house, it was like she was there for the first time, she recognized nothing. When I first arrived to the US, a completely strange place, I was crazy out of my mind with loneliness, homesick, confused, everything was new, I had to relearn basic things all the time, and most of the time, I just wanted to go home, I just needed a familiar face. I realize this is how she feels every second of every day, longing for the random little pieces she still retains of a life that started to fade long ago. How so very cruel. I am happy and grateful that we were able to have these moments today, but I am well aware how fleeting they were. I have ten days and I feel it is all we have. I promise to come back tomorrow and bring a “*pastel de nata*” and she smiles. She gets up again, ready to go home with me. She feels she has to take care of things. I tell her not to worry, I have already taken care of everything. “*E o jantar?*” she asks, worried. I tell her I will go to “*Rei dos Frangos*”, like we always did when we wanted something fast to eat. The caretaker asks if she wants to go sit in the “*poltrona da rainha*” and watch tv. My mom laughs and clings to her arm, she is taken away and disappears behind a French door.

I need to breathe by myself for a second. I need to process the amount of loss I just experienced. I feel like crying, but I am just empty, robbed, looted of feelings. So much has changed. “*Nós já não somos nós, apesar de nos reconhecermos em algumas partes.*” We are not ourselves anymore, although we still recognize bits and pieces of each other. I need so much to feel things going back to what they were, even if just for a second. I get off the car in front of the restaurant. I promised my mom I was going to “*Rei dos Frangos.*” I must not forget to get “*pastéis de nata*” for tomorrow. “*Tenho que tratar das coisas.*”

TED W. HARD

Beauty



Love



Nature



ARTHUR LEMNER

Life As We Know It



Fish Stories



Red Fish



KRISTIN MOORE
Warhol Frogs



Truku Portrait



MAX MYERS
I Should Have

I should have thought while I was young
to marry a poetess
how lovely that would have been
for their thoughts are not masked
nor their meanings hidden – but outright
passion and compassion on their sleeve
my wonder and fretting set aside
as love blossomed let to grow
oh I should have married such a woman
before I had wasted all these years
searching for an open heart

Now

were I not in this tired old frame
restricted by the caution of age
had the winds blown my path less certain
perhaps, just perhaps
this moment would have passed me by
these eyes that see so richly
might have been dimmed
failing to notice the blooming hearts
caught in glances waiting

MAX MYERS
A Moment to Pause

creation fills our world with love
do we see the grace bestowed upon us?
one gazing into the depths knows
it is a gift from the heart for our souls
the heart of creation kneels to touch us
a moment to pause and all is revealed

Opium

like a bowl of opium inhaled
reminiscing the past lulls a blissful sleep
roughed edges rounded
blunt moments softened
a twilight veil descends over memory
as shock has become a pillow

Caution

one desires to swim
be wary of the rip tide
best not jump right in

MAX MYERS
Voices

do I hear voices asking 'Is this me?'
perhaps they're not sure of what I should be
my eyes look at reflections and wonder as much
the Earth's firm beneath me as I sense and touch
oh, were it as simple as one might think
to remain above water not go under and sink
but the voices continue to query and prod
at once they are both stable and odd
I've learned not to listen at least not to respond
adjusted to their foolishness and just carry on
peace is perspective one comes to believe
I am that I am, and the voices can leave

MAX MYERS

Ghosts

dust fills the air all around
hangs there for minutes before settling
this seldom used road rutted
lined with the overgrowth of times passing
once was a destination alive with joy
new and vibrant rich with surprise
what brought me back to this place now
there is nothing left to take away
rusted tin water barrel
stone foundation now askew
where the old roundhouse stood
but nothing remains but thoughts
faces come into mind gentle loving souls
friends woven into the passing of lives
our youth and vision born here
the laughter caught by the trees remains
old songs like the dust stirred
our whispers carried with the wind
echoed to the four directions
thankfulness and companionship
no more than memories of another life
ghosts of love fill this place
they are all about here
the years have claimed me
and I have become a stranger
but for the spirit I left behind

MAX MYERS

Haiku

summers great bounty
following winters quiet
speaks of a wedding

Haiku

perhaps I now see
the balance of spring and fall
held by joyousness

Haiku

at a time like this
thoughts are soaring like Ravens
spectacular now!

MAX MYERS
Thought of the Tree

I have been given a comfort
for around my rooted base
below my mighty boughs
there the softest blanket of moss
gently covering the ground all around
so beautiful and pleasing to sense
the forest creatures come silently
to lay beneath my leaf covered limbs
they rest and sleep on the pillowed ground
my thoughts turn to the sky above
awaiting the steady coming and going
robins to their nests feeding their young
this is my world rich in beauty
roots deep into the Mother hold fast
graced with the gentle green moss
present to every instant that passes
blessed with every breath of breeze
these are my thoughts if I am a tree

MAX MYERS
Friendship

oh the joy of friendship
there is little to compare
every moment precious
loving signs of care
in a world of many challenges
where struggles win some days
we turn to one another
to share in many ways
there is nothing like our friendships
to bring our hearts together
across miles and years and often trials
surmounting any weather
if one has even one friend
to count on for all time
I'd hope that friend would be you
true friends are rare, so rare to find

CHAR PRIETO
Peace to the World



KATE O'CONNELL

Divine



Elvira



Janis



VANESSA ORTEGA
The Meadow

“Where did he go?”

I walk along the dirt path that runs through the meadow. There’s nothing in sight but this six-foot-high grass. I never even knew it could get this tall; you learn something new every day, I guess. My legs are starting to itch, I shouldn’t have worn this black dress. Do you remember last summer? I remember that summer as clear as day.

It was so hot, it made you feel as if syrup was being poured all over your skin. Back then it was simple and not so complex as it is now. I remember walking down to the ice cream parlor in this lovely lilac dress Ma had made for me. Once I entered I was hit with nice, cold air; the place was packed. I ordered a banana split and sat down at the only empty booth available, next to the big bay window. It did make me warm sitting in the sun, but it was a type of warm that makes you sleepy. I was too focused on dissecting my split to notice the boy sitting right across from me.

“You know I never met anyone who could eat a split without making a huge mess.” He gave me a toothy grin. “My name’s Huck. What’s yours?”

He extended his hand across the table waiting for me to shake it. I hesitated at first. Sally remember what Ma told us. “Boys are nothing but trouble. They’ll make you trust them and when you least expect it they’ll rip you to shreds, just like how your father did to me.”

“Oh! come on now, I don’t bite. I promise.” He grinned yet again.

“Sally,” I didn’t reach for his hand.

He gently slid his hand back to his side. We sat there for a second, ex-

aming one another's face. He wasn't too bad looking; freckles sprinkled all over, deep honey eyes, and fire-red hair. Do I look all right? He spoke again, that time being more confident and passionate.

"You're mighty pretty Sally," cheeks lit up with rose color. "Do you think I can call you my girlfriend?"

He was bold to ask me that. I never had a boyfriend let alone talk to a boy before. I didn't know what to say. "Boys are nothing but trouble..." Ma was always right about things, but what if she's wrong? What if this boy isn't trouble? I would like to have a boyfriend, whatever that entails. I sat there for too long because Huck waved his hand in front of my face.

"Heelllooo, anybody in there?"

"Yes."

"Yes what?" Did he already forget what he asked me? Gosh, maybe Ma was right.

"To be your girlfriend Huck." I sat back waiting for a reaction.

He sat there flabbergasted. He didn't speak or even exhale. Did I kill him? Oh god, my first ever boyfriend and I killed him.

"WOW REALLY?!" He couldn't have been louder, "MY FIRST EVER GIRLFRIEND!!!"

At this point, everyone's eyes were on us. I couldn't tell if they were annoyed or happy to see the innocence contained in this booth. My face was cherry red, redder than I thought it could get. I look back at Huck. I think he had ants in his pants or something because that boy could not stay still.

"I GOT TO GO HOME AND TELL MA!!!"

He got up and raced out the door but quickly came back in. Before I could even react this boy gently grabs my face and kisses me. Wow, my first

boyfriend and my first kiss; can this day get even crazier?

We dated for a couple of months without Ma ever finding out. It was great, amazing, something I've always wanted. We would always meet each other at this meadow behind a farmer's barn; exactly at 2 pm. It wasn't technically the farmer's land but he hated it when the grass got too long, so he'd have the local boys cut it for a dollar. But one day, Huck didn't show up. Where's Huck? Is he okay? I waited and waited for hours on end, hoping that he was just running late. The moon rose and the stars began to scatter yet he still wasn't here. I went home. This continued for weeks; he just stopped showing up. I grew depressed. Did he meet someone else? Did I do something wrong? Maybe he moved. I didn't know for a long time what happened. Ma could tell something was wrong but never brought it up. I wish she did.

I'm coming to the end of the meadow now. Legs are more cut up and itchy than before. The weather today is rather lovely, partly cloudy and warm. You know that type of warmth that makes you sleepy. I reached our spot and stood there for a while. His Ma came up to me at the end of May, telling me what happened; where Huck went. At the end of this meadow is where Huck lays.

“I finally found you.”

CHAR PRIETO
Goodbye Ukraine!

I

They were three, always three: Tolik, Evelina, and baby Sonia. Well, they were four: Tolik, Evelina, Sonia and Archy, the dog. Their country was a diamond shaped land, surrounded by velvet prairies in the spring, wheat fields and sunflowers in summer, colorful foliage in autumn, and crisp white peaks in winter. Finally, it was a peaceful country, after a long history of genocide, the Holodomor, starving millions to death and the Euromaidan. And then, on one February winter day, the Russians attacked. This is a day that shall live in infamy! they thought. Buildings crack and as bricks transmute into powder, windows and doors soar away from their frames, shattered glass glittering and hauntingly beautiful for an instant. The earth and granite spout into the air, leaving holes the size of mass graves in the place of pedestrian walks, bakeries, and flower shops. Cars catch on fire, flames, and smoke surround Kyiv. The bombers were close this time. Then a dreadful silence covered the night, just before it is broken again by the whine of the airplanes getting louder, and the screams of sirens, drones and aircraft now growing among the odor of gun powder, with artillery shells and guns firing glass shatter walls. Russia has invaded Ukraine! The four of them huddle in safety and flee to the west. Thirty hours stuck in a miles-long traffic jam--no food, no water, no extra clothes, and little hope. Cars standing still on the highway, people milling about, trying to make sense out of the terror. One kind trucker gives hot water and kasha to Evelina so she can feed the baby. They all join the millions of displaced--a human river heading west, miles and miles of car caravans. Refugees in the village! But again, the dreadful symphony of missiles, glass and sirens and weeping. There is no more refuge in Ukraine--now the three join the millions of refugees from war-torn Ukraine seeking asylum and hoping to arrive safely

across the border escaping the chaos and fleeing the front lines of the war. But Tolik must stay and fight for his country. He tries to memorize the face of little Sonia. Fears, hugs, tears and then, the goodbye. And now they are two. Or one. Goodbye Tolik. Goodbye Ukraine!

II

“This is my land, I stay,” and Tolik stayed to defend his right to live in his country. Heavy carnage. Ukraine is at war now, fighting for its very existence. Hypersonic missiles, shells and mortars, Russian rockets hit Ukrainians and airstrikes bomb military bases. Russia launches rockets and Ukrainians get use to the noise “shooh, shooh, shooh...” Millions struggle for survival, fighting and lacking clean water, heat, electricity, telephones, medical care... The Russian invasion brought catastrophe, death, destruction, disease, hunger, poverty, terror. It also brought the eyes and help of the world and stimulated an unbreakable resolve in the Ukrainians. Putin will never beat them, never break them, never have them. *Slava Ukraini!* People trapped beneath the rubble of kindergartens, shopping malls, maternity hospitals die defiantly. *Slava Ukraini!* Russian missiles and bombs hit civilians, elderly looking for food, children hoping to play, men dreaming of peace, pregnant women, sick and poor--they all die under the bombs. This is a Picasso’s Guernica painting! Millions are separated from their families. The streets are mostly deserted. Pedestrians and cars have largely been replaced by concrete slabs, piles of dirt welded together to create tank traps to hinder Russian attacks. Women and men are taking up arms and are tearing old clothing into strips creating camouflage netting and are volunteering to fight in the war, as they always have. From the Baltic to the Black Sea, millions have been scattered throughout the European Union, to another country, another language, another culture and have become refugees, lonely and grieving, some lost, some wounded, some exploited, some trafficked. They shall not pass! Goodbye Ukraine!

III

мир. PEACE. A dream. One day, after the war is over, with rain falling slantwise, Evelina, baby Sonia and the dog return to Ukraine. Among the rubble and destruction of the war, they see the wavy silhouette of Tolik coming towards them, tired, but joyful. The dog, excited, runs, jumps, and rushes to greet him. Evelina and baby Sonia, with teary eyes embrace dad. Tolik looks into his daughter's eyes--is it really her? The face he remembered every night as he tried to sleep? And he, right away knows, that Sonia is going to be a peace builder. And all together, the four of them reunited, with pain, but with much hope, resilience, and inspiration, look at the flag among the rubble, still standing at its mast, and see the colors that represent the struggle for freedom, blue and yellow. Blue for sky. Yellow for wheat, as Ukraine is the breadbasket of Europe. And from her teary eyes, still embracing her husband, Evelina glances colorful wildflowers growing in the cracks of shattered bricks, and not far away, she sees a nest built by a bird and in the midst of the rainstorm, the mother sits peacefully on her nest. Evelina exclaims: We have come home at last. Hello Ukraine!

CHAR PRIETO

Goodbye Ukraine. Hello Ukraine.



SCOTT RUSHING
Peace Officers or Provocateurs?

Imagine you find yourself in a claustrophobic bathroom with blood dripping down your chest from a bullet hole? There is no place to flee. You are alone. You are in pain. You don't know who shot you. You were helping friends on the patio of a building one evening when the gunman comes through the bushes, dressed in black, gun out. You tried to knock the gun out of his hands in a try at self-defense, but the gunman shot first. You stumble into the bathroom of the building to give yourself first aid. Maybe you can save your life, but you can't breathe. You realize through the throes of fear, panic, and pain that you may be dying and that this may be your last few hours on this earth.

Suddenly, you hear voices outside the bathroom door telling you to come out to get medical help, but you wonder if the voice is coming from the gunman who just shot you. You yell at the person that you have a gun, in a feeble attempt to scare off the man, but you don't have any weapons. It is a bluff. You are covered in your hot blood that has now pooled on the bathroom floor. The voice from the other side of the door responds that he has a gun too! You decide not to leave the bathroom to face the gunman. You decide there is safety inside the bathroom and a menacing shooter outside. You stay put, praying you will get rescued.

A few minutes later you hear the loud barking and whining of a dog. Another man's voice is heard, He is telling you his dog will bite you if you don't come out. The growling and barking noise increases. You are confused and you ache all over and you can't think straight. Without warning, the door bursts open. You crouch behind the door, the only place you can hide from this frenzied dog. Three men and a dog attack you. One man in a uniform pulls you from behind the door. Another man tries to choke you and has his powerful hands around your neck, the dog is off the leash moving between your legs, biting you. You have a piece of the toilet tank as your only weapon and flail in

a weakened attempt at self-defense as these men grab you around your shoulders and wrists. The attack dog's jaws are between your legs, biting you to the bone of your left leg as you slip and struggle to escape the attackers... but you are slipping on the tile floor covered in your blood. Your last words you ever utter is a cry out that you are dying.

A few seconds into the attack the "peace officer" who was choking you pulls out his pistol, puts the barrel against your throat at the trachea, and pulls the trigger. As you begin to turn and fall the officers hold you up as the shooter fires a second shot in the back of your head while pressing the barrel to your flesh. A body now lies on the floor in a pool of blood and water, face down in a prone position, unmoving and after being shot three times, choked, and bitten. "Peace officers" are hovering over the body with guns pointing down. One officer decides to use his taser, to "give a ride," saying they are worried the suspect is playing possum and planning to jump up and attack a room full of armed "peace officers." Moments after the body jerks from 50,000 volts of electricity the "peace officers" handcuff the bleeding wrists, and brutally drag a body from the bathroom to the hallway where an emergency rescue team confirms there is no sign of life.

This is the story of the final moments of the life of my son, Tyler Scott Rushing. He was killed by "peace officers" and an armed security guard. Tyler was a man of peace. He loved art and photography. He was not on drugs, and he had no criminal history. He was not homeless. He had hundreds of friends.

Wild animals are treated better than my son. Bears and mountain lions get tranquilizer darts. My son was viciously attacked by "peace officers" using lethal weapons. The "peace officers" had legitimate non-lethal options to rescue Tyler from that tiny bathroom but they preferred to see "action." Consider the fact that the "peace officers" initiated the rescue by using a hyperactive biting dog ...on a medical rescue of a wounded man! I say my son should be alive today but the culture of law enforcement to use lethal weapons led these

“peace officers” to become provocateurs unconcerned about “protecting and serving” a critically wounded man. This unnecessary killing is an altogether too frequent occurrence in law enforcement interactions with civilians in this country and the madness must stop.

Tyler Rushing



Fallen Victims of Local Officers in Butte County, California

- Tyler Rushing
- Brianne Sharpe
- Andrew Thomas
- Gabriel Sanchez
- Desmond Phillips
- Stephen West
- Myra Micalizio

ROZE SABINO-BLODGET
Light Rain

It was like this:
late afternoon
And clouds promised
warned, threatened
to burst into happy and
long awaited tears of joy
and give them to us,
mere mortals
in waiting.

Almost nothing came however,
almost nothing came.
Only some teasing,
non-assuring, meager drops
graced us.
It's just like him
who gives and carries promise
early in the morning
But slowly and surely
disappears in the void
of the day.

AJIA SAUNDERS
The Genie

I found the lamp at the thrift store. It almost looked like a skinny teapot with a curved nozzle and a big round handle. The entire thing was gold with turquoise lining at the top and bottom. It was cold and shiny and I am not too sure why I bought it. I guess because it was cool. Or maybe I am just turning into one of those crazy old people too early in life.

I was sitting in my dark bedroom around 10:00 at night playing video games as usual. This was my third-hour playing and I was beginning to get bored when the lamp caught my eye. I had placed it on one of my shelves for decoration but for some reason, it was much more interesting at the moment. I got up and pulled it down from the shelf and then flopped onto my bed. The bed was squishy and comfy as I held the lamp over my head.

It was much shinier now.

As I was playing with it in my hands, I start to feel the soft metal on my fingertips. It feels nice as I slide it between my palms.

Then it started to shake.

The lamp was basically vibrating which freaked me out. As the vibration got stronger, it jumped out of my hands and onto the squishy bed. Quickly, out of the fear of it exploding, I leaped away from the lamp and off the bed. I step farther back once I hit solid ground.

Then the lamp started levitating.

From backing up so much, I end up hitting the wall while I freeze in shock. The lamp continues to shake in the air then finally, a big puff of green fog comes out from it.

Within this fog, I hear the clink-clink of the lamp falling to the ground. It rolls on to its side and hits the edge of my nightstand.

My focus on the lamp distracts from the big green ghost floating in my room. "Here I thought my entrance made the difference," I hear a deep voice say.

I look up and there was that green cloud in a better-shaped form now.

He was shaped like a normal human being but green and in the air still. As he dusted his arms off, he lowered himself onto the edge of my bed to sit down. His face looked as if he has done this before and was tired of it as he states with a sigh, “Alright let’s get this over. You have three wishes and no you cannot wish for more wishes.”

I am still frozen. “W-what?” my confused voice shakes as I press harder against the wall like it will let me free my room or something.

“Look I get it. I am a scary dude who just came out of the lamp. But how long is this shock going to take? I wanted to go back to my nap,” the man responds with an eye roll.

I shake my head and blink a few times. Yeah, he is still there. I take a deep breath, trying to accept what just happened. “Ugh okay, we will try to make this normal. What is your name kid?” he asks while checking his fingernails out of disinterest.

“Uh, my name is uh- A-Alex,” I struggle to answer.

“Well, A-Alex my name is Marlow. I am a genie who grants wishes. And from the looks of it, you could use a few so lay them on me.”

I take a deep swallow. A genie? Who grants wishes? Okay well, what do I want? I haven’t really asked this question to myself in a while. “What are my options?” I ask without thinking.

“That’s a stupid question. Your option is basically unlimited. You have to pick a realistic wish that cannot involve time travel or more wishes. It’s easy, just tell me what you want. And you only get three.”

Only three wishes. That’s easy enough, I guess I can just wish for certain problems to go away that I don’t like? This is a lot harder than I thought it would be.

“Oh okay. Well I guess I wish for a healthier environment for the earth,” I state my first wish.

He scuffs. “I said realistic. That one is far too difficult to solve sadly.”

“You cannot solve the environment?” I ask.

He stands up and crosses his arms. “Look, wishes are much more

limited now. If I give you the option to solve something like the environment, it will just end up being destroyed again by other humans which makes your wish useless and unnecessary in the end.”

I nod in response. “Okay. Well, then I wish for world peace.”

He sighs once again. “Sorry kid, not going to happen. Humans are far too much argumentative to solve that wish. You have to pick a permanent one. If I give you world peace, some idiot out there will start an argument about how to say Carmel which progresses to a world war. That makes your wish useless once again.”

“Oh...”

I pause. Who would have thought this would be so difficult? “Okay, I guess I will just wish for simple stuff then.”

I hesitate. It must be something permanent. Well, what is permanent nowadays? If world peace isn’t and the environment isn’t, nothing will be then. Everyone will just end up arguing about something which causes wars and violence. Or everyone will just get lazy and stop putting in the effort that just leads to killing the environment. Seems like there’s no solution to helping anyone else’s problems. But I have none of my own.

I look up to him. “What If I wish to let you go?” I ask.

“Then I will just get trapped again. Sorry kid, I know you want to do something good but certain things just can’t change,” His stern voice was not reassuring.

I nod once again. I used my three wishes for specific items I wanted like a car, clothes, and just for the heck of it, a new phone. Not what I ideally wanted but it was a good bargain I guess.

AJIA SAUNDERS
Lights On

Jane is flickering the lights again.

.....

Still no response. She has been at this for a week now but ever since the power went out in the town, her friends have yet to come back. By this point, she is debating using the red light which signals an emergency. But it would just be a waste; the only emergency in her life right now is that she is lonely.

Jane leans against the wall thinking that if she stays in the living room of the abandoned Mill's house, her friends will eventually respond. She pulls back her long brown hair into a ponytail and grunts while lightly tapping the rotten wood with her head. She has a slight fear that if she stays in that house any longer, it will collapse and crush her skinny body. Although that is a possibility, she is more scared of what her parents are going to do to her when she gets home.

Where are you? I have called the police to find you, come home NOW! This isn't funny, get home immediately! The text messages blew up her phone. It was getting dark now so she decides to lay down on the dusty pillow with brown spots and wrap herself in a hole-filled blanket. She was lucky it is summer because the only thing that a blanket will bring warmth to are the rats she has to sleep with.

Her tired eyes drift into darkness, at least they did for a second until she heard a rattle. It sounded like the wood creaking like usual however, it continued to happen. She grew nervous and sat up to look around. She saw no one but the rattle continued. The rattle phased into more strict, hard steps like a person who was wearing boots. Jane jumped from the place she laid and

grabbed the flashlight. As she showed her light to the ancient ruins of a living room, she thought maybe it was her parents. After a full week of being gone, they might have finally found out where she was hiding.

Jane heard more hard footsteps and she continued to hear them... until she didn't. It grew silent, the only thing heard now was the crickets and the buzzing of bugs. She began to walk around slowly, her footsteps matching the sounds of the other ones. The silence outside began to give her goosebumps and a cold shiver down her back. She stopped assuming it was her parents and instead thought the worse.

Then came the lights.

.... . -.. -..

It spelled.

.... . -.. -..

Again. And again. And again.

The lights would flash quickly then hold their brightness. These dangly Christmas lights Jane put up began as green but as they grew more rapid, they became red. It was one quick flash after another as Jane whipped her head from side to side, tempting the result of a whiplash. The tip of her ponytail stung the sides of her cheek while her sore eyes spun. The lights kept flashing the same word in the Morse code. The more it happened the more she got a deep, burning gut feeling.

Her heart was beating as fast as the lights were flashing, her goosebumps were about to pop out of her arms, the shiver went from her back and spread towards the rest of her weak body. Her head was throbbing and she was paralyzed with fear. No muscle wanted to do anything but shake.

Then it stopped.

All of it. The lights froze. No more hasty flashing, it was like time stopped. The light was still red but it did not move. Jane was confused, she

did not know what to do. She went to the light and tried to signal back to her friends but she couldn't. It was like all the electricity was frozen. Then came that stomping sound again. This time, it sounded like it came from underneath. She slowly wandered herself to the basement stairs and the more she moved, the sound expanded in volume. They say curiosity killed the cat but that simple warning did not scare Jane for curiosity was the only thing overcoming fear.

She walked down the wooden stairs and they creaked even more than the hard steps. She has never been into the basement before, her friends told her not to. However, she assumed that that rule did not apply considering the noises and the lights. She refused to touch the wooden ramp, knowing she would get splinters and maybe even tetanus from the rusty nails sticking up. The more she walked down into the mysterious darkness awaiting her, the more the fear overcame her curiosity. She wanted to go back but she had already battled her way to the bottom of the staircase, she might as well commit. Jane swallowed the massive bump in her throat and flipped the light switch which was originally cream colored but now grey with dust. Sweat drooled down her forehead slowly and her hands were still vibrating but when she turned on the light switch, relief washed over her.

There was nothing in the basement but a cement floor and a string of broken old Christmas lights that had lain on the ground for years. She took a step forward into the dimly lit room and with the feeling of comfort she said, "Guys, don't scare me like that again."

CYNTHIA SCONTRIANO SCHILDHAUER

Light For All



Finally Light



Am I On Fire



Social Distancing



Too Much Too Fast



MYRA SCOTT
On Caregiving for Papa

How're you doing, papa?

3 cold cans of beer clink
on the tabletop. his cigarette
sizzles. smoke blows
through crinkled lips.

maybe 100 years ago,
papa fell off a screaming
train—his bones crumpling
one by one. i imagined
the messy red smear that
followed his crawling body
to the highway.

feeling' finer than frog hair,

he says. his laugh grates
and gargles. beer cans
snap and pop, crumpling
one by one.

Wanted to take a leak,
he said. been hobbing a
long time. drunken steps
led to a stomach drop,
to cold night, to the lip
of a railway viaduct.

finer than frog hair, he says,
and other words, too. like,
close that winder, and
god almighty!

papa also
winces when he walks.
each step snaps and pops
like beer cans
like pill bottles.

finer than frog hair, he says.
but frogs don't have hair and
papa was never
too good at lying.

his hands felt asphalt but
didn't stop crawling. cars
shot past. the corpse-wreck
kept moving. hit me, he
thought. *god, look at me.*

LINDA SERRATO
The Pregnant Virgin of Remedios

Perhaps we are not smart enough to know
that spontaneous combustions
are not really phenomena
of nature, but rather
unsanctioned miracles like
pregnant virgins who
float above pews
clicking castanets while
maintaining proper form
Entre el humo y las sombras
Pivoting in and out
of serpentine smoke
The ascension and descension
of the arms
the hands fluttering in candlelight
The children wide-eyed
behind the pillars
giggling and tapping their feet
The shadows trying to keep pace
with the delicate toes
La alegría de la vida
La dulzura del amor
La pasión del flamenco
¡Ay!
But when the chimes of the Angelus ring
the virgin, with her bulging belly
returns to her pedestal
her breasts rising and falling
rising and falling to the cadence of the bells

CHUNYAN ECHO SONG
You Missed This Evening's Rainbow

Because you left early... this morning
Too young and too soon

After you woke up
Did you take a shower and brush your teeth?
Did you eat breakfast with a cup of milk or orange juice?
Did you call your family?
Did you leave a note somewhere underneath?

On your way to school
Did you notice the new leaves on the trees?
And the spectacular magnolias in full display?
Did you hear the birds sing?
Did you feel the spring morning breeze?
A little bit cold, and a little bit sweet

Did anyone say hi?
Ask how are you?
Did you smile back and said fine thank you?
Did anyone invite you go hiking next week?
It will be spring break.

Did you take the elevator?
Did you hesitate?
Did you imagine the colors of the rainbow?
---RIP Beautiful Soul

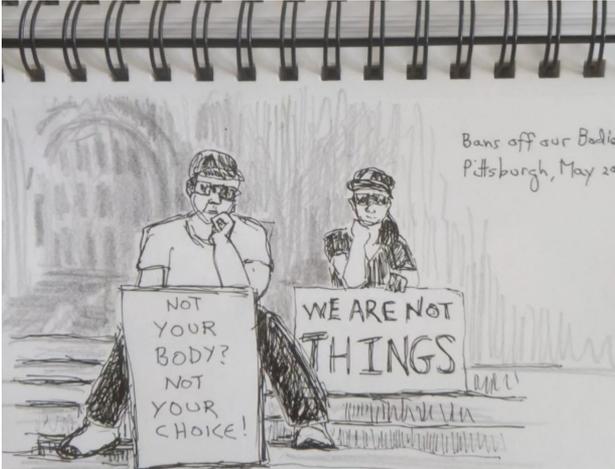
SOPHIA VANNUCCI
My Blood Is Beautiful

My Blood is beautiful
My blood is a timeline of millions of Brazilians
In me is the black man from Africa
And the blue eyed man from Portugal
I know I come from loudness and carnival
Tropical birds soaring through the sky with vibrant colors
From beautiful women dressing in feathers and miniskirts.
From cocoa and sugar canes,
With an accent like strong coffee,
Empowering and true.
Portuguese was my first language
Spanish and English were my second
It was reaching for fantom words, but now I know both.
I hear Portuguese and learned the word “home”
I hear Spanish and learned the word “gratitude”
I hear English and once learned the word “freedom”
But the only word that lingers now is “injustice”

My blood is beautiful,
And I believe someday American blood will be too

JULIE ZAVON
Not Your Body? Not Your Choice!

© Copyright 2022 Julie Zavon



Pro-choice



© Copyright 2022 Julie Zavon

French



RAQUEL MATTSON-PRIETO
Je m'appelle Coco

Je suis née le 19 août 1883 à Saumur en France, une ville au sud-est de Paris. Dans ma vie, j'ai été chapelière, créatrice et couturière. C'est pour ce dernier que beaucoup de personnes me connaissent aujourd'hui. Mon vrai nom complet était Gabrielle Bonheur Chanel, mais tout le monde m'appelait Coco. Pendant la Première Guerre Mondiale, j'ai commencé à travailler dans la mode parce que je pensais que la mode du jour était très chiant. Par exemple, je détestais les corsets parce qu'ils étaient très oppressifs, et alors, j'ai pensé, pourquoi ne pas créer de vêtements qui soient sportifs, mais toujours féminins? De cette manière, les femmes pourraient s'habiller rapidement et aussi faire comme les hommes, et être plus confortables. Dans ma carrière, j'ai créé aussi des bijoux, des sacs à main et des parfums. Sûrement vous connaissez Chanel numéro cinq! J'ai lancé ce parfum en 1921 et aujourd'hui c'est mon produit le plus iconique.

Avant ma carrière de modiste et couturière, j'étais chanteuse dans un cabaret à Aubazine, une ville au centre du pays. C'était là où j'ai acquis le diminutif "Coco". On ne se souvient pas de moi comme ça, peut-être parce que je chantais souvent la chanson qui s'appelait "Qui avait vu Coco" ou peut-être parce que mon père s'est souvenu de moi... Bref, c'est sans importance. Plus tard, quand j'avais vingt-trois ans, j'ai connu Étienne Balsan, un jeune héritier du textile, et puis je suis devenue sa maîtresse. Pendant trois ans j'ai habité avec lui dans son château. C'était génial ! Nous vivions un mode de vie de loisir et de plaisir: les fêtes, les voyages, les [grands] hôtels et les cadeaux chers. Aussi Étienne m'a donné des diamants, des robes luxueuses et des perles. J'étais plus entichée de lui mais on n'a pas duré. Peu après, j'ai rencontré un ami d'Étienne, Arthur Capel, et nous avons commencé une liaison. J'ado-

rais Arthur, même quand il s'est marié avec une autre femme. Il m'a inspirée à créer le look Chanel, la conception de bouteille du parfum numéro cinq et précisément c'est ça qui a marqué mon futur.

Comment puis-je résumer ma vie? J'avais tellement de réussites que je ne peux pas tout raconter dans une seule page. Pour conclure, au début de 1915, la revue *Harper's Bazaar* a publié que toutes femmes devront avoir des vêtements Chanel si elles veulent être à la mode. Et comme ça, Chanel a décollé! J'ai créé un nom qui est devenu une icône du style moderne au XXe siècle.

RAQUEL MATTSON-PRIETO
La vie en rose ou Le labyrinthe



Italian



EUGENIO FRONGIA

L'ultima mietitura

Stanco e pensoso
Sei seduto al limitare
Della porta antica,
Sullo scalino di granito
Che sa tutti i tuoi passi.
Friniscono le cicale
Nell'afa opprimente
Dell'ora panica.
Incombe sulle mute vie
Il peso dei ricordi,
E rivedi i sentieri
Dal biancospino di marzo
Agli sterpi spinosi di novembre.
E la porta chiusa sa
La somma dei tuoi pensieri.

Senti sull'acciotolato
I passi misurati
Della Signora Nera,
Che sosta un momento
E ti fa un invito che non rifiuti.
“Vieni, - dice – Andiamo
Giù per il sentiero che sai;

Andiamo al campo di grano maturo.”

E tu vai con la Signora Nera

Ma vuoi sostare un po’

Alla vecchia fontana,

Perchè l’arsura di luglio

Ti inaridisce la gola.

Ma la fontana è secca.

Faticosamente

Arrivi al campo di grano,

Che sta, immobile e bello;

È il tempo della mietitura.

Con ampio gesto,

La Mietitrice Nera

Mette la falce agli steli riarsi,

E il grano d’oro giace,

Ogni stelo, ogni spiga,

Pronti a entrare nel covone.

Anche tu, come una Spiga di grano,

Entri nel manipolo,

E poi nel covone,

Avvinto dalla forte fibra

Dell’evangelista.

Parte di te è stoppia

Che resta avvinta
Tenacemente alla terra,
Pastura che l'autunno disfà,
Finchè solo resta
Il suolo, coperto di foglie morte.

Parte di te entra nel granaio.
Fortunato
Se franto
E fatto pane
Dalle mani che restano
Nella casa dagli scalini di granito,
Nutrirai il cumulo
Delle memorie dei giovani,
O se seme che ritorna al suolo,
Sarai promessa
Di nuove mietiture.

EUGENIO FRONGIA
Nuova religione per il mio tempo

Abbiamo urgente bisogno di una nuova religione universale, senza chiese e senza patriarchi e falsi profeti, la religione cosmica e planetaria di ogni residente della Terra, il cui scopo principale è, appunto, quello della salvezza comune, il che significa salvare il Pianeta Terra dalle ferite millenarie, inferte ad esso dal peccato originale dello sfruttamento di ogni sua comune risorsa, dalla schiavitù economica delle classi oppresse e abusate, dalle deviazioni razziste dalla traiettoria della comune evoluzione. Navigare controcorrente alle false infallibilità patriarcali e maschiliste dei vecchi testamenti, in cui è stato creato un dio distante e terribile, nel cui nome, la corruzione e l'ingordigia e l'abuso del potere, sono diventati legge e tradizione, a scapito della Terra e di tutti i suoi abitanti.

Definire e praticare un nuovo testamento, basato sulla parabola del servitore fedele del Pianeta, sul rispetto della Natura e di tutti gli ambienti terrestri, sulla responsabilità reciproca del dare e del ricevere, sulla rinuncia alle false promesse di altre vite, di altre dimore e di altri paradisi, accettando di vivere la pienezza e le limitazioni della vita terrestre, ed essendo grati per il dono di *questa* vita.

La Terra oggi sopravvive in uno stato di emergenza ambientale e climatica. A offese e abusi estremi, inferti al corpo della Terra dall'industrializzazione, dal capitalismo egoista e accumulatorio, dalla tecnologia dello sfruttamento, dalla deforestazione e l'inquinamento, il Pianeta sta rispondendo con reazioni estreme, come risponde ogni corpo all'iniezione di veleno, in un tentativo disperato di salvaguardare la propria immunità e di sopravvivere

alle violenze dei predatori e degli aggressori.

La condotta lineare dell'ambiente terrestre sta sconfinando nella tortuosità imprevedibile di cicli di siccità e di inondazioni, di caldo e di freddo, di stagioni fuori stagione, di estinzioni accelerate dall'insostenibilità della vita, in ambienti diventati gradualmente ostili a molte specie e alla vita in genere.

Oggi, attendibili notizie parlano del rapido aumento del livello idrico in quasi tutti i fiumi del sistema dell'Amazzonia in Brasile. Precipitazioni più abbondanti del normale causano inondazioni catastrofiche, che distruggono la vita e le residenze di milioni di persone, mentre in altre zone terrestri, temperature storiche più alte del normale e la mancanza quasi totale di pioggia e precipitazioni, trasforma in un deserto terre un tempo fertili e produttive, causando incendi incontrollabili, che riducono in cenere foreste, strutture e città, portando, di conseguenza, a migrazioni forzate di milioni di esseri umani, per lo più poveri e dipendenti per la loro sopravvivenza, dalla terra, che di colpo è secca, bruciata, e mortalmente ferita.

Secondo un articolo inviato da Manaus, in Brasile, alla Associated Press, e ripubblicato dal "San Francisco Chronicle" del 2 giugno 2021, "The Rio Negro was at its highest level since records began in 1902, with a depth of 98 feet at the port's measuring station. The nearby Salimoes and Amazon rivers were also nearing all-time highs, flooding streets and houses in dozens of municipalities and affecting some 450,000 people in the region. Higher-than-usual precipitation is associated with the La Niña phenomenon, when currents in the central and eastern Pacific Ocean affect global climate patterns." (SFChron, A2)

Sulle cause di queste catastrofi globali si è ormai d'accordo: "Envi-

ronmental experts and organizations including the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration say there is strong evidence that human activity and global warming are altering the frequency and intensity of extreme weather events, including La Niña.” Ibidem.

Sette delle inondazioni più devastanti hanno avuto luogo nell’Amazzonia negli ultimi 13 anni, secondo statistiche del “Geological Survey” del governo brasiliano: Inondazioni più massicce da una parte e siccità più diffuse dall’altra”, secondo Virgilio Viana, direttore della Sustainable Amazon Foundation.

È già tardi per l’adozione di una religione del Globalismo, in cui la salvezza di uno vuol dire l’obbligo della salvezza di tutti.”O salvi tutti insieme, o tutti dannati,” secondo un detto di uno scrittore francese, Marcel Jouhandeau (1888-1979).

Una nuova religione senza “fideismi” basati sulla credenza e la fede cieca e irrazionale “nella sostanza delle cose NON vedute,” secondo la nota definizione di Saulo di Tarso, poi San Paolo per i Cristiani. Al contrario, è obbligo morale di ogni essere umano nato e vivente su questa Terra, essere pienamente informati e credere nella sostanza delle cose visibili e vedute, e praticare un ambientalismo razionale e responsabile, che porti alla protezione del Pianeta e di tutte le sue risorse, per il beneficio di ogni essere umano che vivrà sulla Terra nei secoli e nei millenni futuri.

EUGENIO FRONGIA
Oltre la parola

A Pasquale Frongia (1937-2021)

Ecco, tu, ora
Hai tempo di ascoltarmi,
Perche' hai concluso il viaggio
E sei oltre la soglia del silenzio,
Solo, nella pace inalterabile,
Nel momento che annulla le distanze
E ricuce la veste inconsuete.
Che' è sacro il non parlare,
Quando il parlare brucia
Come fiamma viva,
E le parole sono
Spine senza rose..

Ma tu, poeta,
Che eri schivo dei fiori,
E hai scolpito in ruvido granito
La verità che taglia,
Odi le mie parole,
Prima che cada il vento della sera.

Uomo di molte vite,
Che hai varcato, riluttante, il mare,
In cerca della luna piena,
E hai tracciato,

Tu, figlio di una terra grama,
Solchi indelebili in una terra nuova,
Non dimenticare la soma
Delle tue memorie
Nell'ultimo viaggio verso la tua proda.
Che di memoria è fatto
Quel poco
Che di noi avanza
Dell'ultima mietitura,
Chicchi di grano nella stoppia,
Colti dalla pietà della spigolatrice.

Ricordi quando,
Nella prima terra,
Impendeva la luna piena sulla vigna,
E noi vegliavamo,
Al frinire dei grilli,
O nei pomeriggi statici,
Trapunti dallo stridio delle cicale,
E gli agnelli saltavano sulle rocce
Tra i fiori nuovi della primavera?
O quando il fiume in piena,
Travolse il ponte dei poveri,
E disperavamo, esiliati al monte,
Del ritorno alla casa paterna
Nell'imminente buio della sera?
E l'acqua della fontana,
Fresca e vergine di roccia,

Estingueva le nostre arsurre
Nel silenzio del bosco delle sughere.
Poi, nel mezzo c'è una vita;
Immensa, fiera, prolifica,
Mai vile.
Mai servile.

Or mai più ti vedrò
Sotto gli archi della casa d'estate,
In cui passavano, lente,
Le ore della canicola.
Ma tu regnavi, come Odisseo,
Nell'isola di pietra,
Dopo le avventure d'oltremare,
Tra sirene, naufragi,
E fortunati approdi.

Oggi, altro non ti chiedo,
Se non che almeno ricordi
I nostri volti amici,
Quando, a breve,
Stanchi del viaggio,
Verremo grati alla tua porta.

Japanese



ALEX AMAYA

好きな人

好きなひと
めんどくさいよ
まぶしい 目
ぽかぽかえがお
気がちるなあ

ALEXIS CASTRO-CASTANEDA

木

木が育ち始めた
水が必要だった
水は生命である
木は高い
木は緑
木はすごい
でも木は古い
そして遠い

CORY CROKER
優しい鬼、優しくない鬼

昔々、二人のおには山に住んでいた。かみが赤いおには名をしゅてんどうじと言って、かみが白いおには名をいばらきどうじと言った。しゅてんは山の王さまで強かったよ。でもお酒をたくさん飲むといじわるになったよ。いばらかさんがしゅてんの友達だった…。しゅてんさまはやさしくなかったからしゅてんのたった一人の友達はいばらきさんだった。いばらきさんは、

「たくさん飲むと明日あたまがいたくなるよ。」と言った。

「うるさいな…。おれはおに。たくさんお酒がほしい。だいじょぶ、だいじょぶ。」

「しんぱいしたくない。でも…。うん。だいじょぶね。」二人はひとばん中、飲んで、飲んで、飲んだ。それから、朝です。いばらきさんはねた。しゅてんはねなかった。いばらきさんは

「だいじょぶだよね？」と言った。しゅてんさまはつかれたし、びょうきになった。「だいじょぶ。」だいじょぶじゃなさそう。しゅてんの友達は、

「んんん…。」と言った。

「だめだ。うるさい。氷を持って来い。」いばらきさんはいい友達ですから毎朝、氷を持っていった。ともだちをたすけていばらきさんは嬉しくなった。

COLEEN HOLIHAN

早朝の雨

空は叫びながら、雨の涙を作った。
雨が降り注ぎ、花に当たる。
花が仰ぎ見ると、木だけが見える。
木の中に侵入した猫を鳥が怒鳴りつける。
イライラした猫が飛び降りる。
早朝騒がしい。
太陽が雲を隠れる。
木の下でも鳥が芝生を揺らしながら虫を探している。

JACQUELINE GIL-DEVOR

いきがい

花は物語を語る。
草の中の声のささやき。
雨の中で始まった会話。
それは自然と生命。
春をもたらす。
そして秋の変化。
それは生きる希望。

SASHA RENE

冬の虹

きり は ぶかい

冬がやってくる

みず が こおる



SAGEJANE SNYDERBEHR

ベラ

私わたしの犬はとてもかわいいです。ふざけたりおどけたりしながら、彼女はリスや猫を追いかけるのが好きです。時々、彼女はぜんぜんかしこくありません。

彼女の毛は茶色で白いはんてんがあります。最近、私は彼女のするどい爪に小さなちいさなシリコンキャップを付けました。今は明るいオレンジ色です。しかし、私の犬はがんこです。彼女はネイルキャップが好きではなく、それを食べようとします。

私は彼女に特別のカリカリのえさをあげるのですが、彼女はゴミを食べたがります。彼女は4歳さいなのに、子犬のようにふるまいます。

私の犬はバイリンガルです。私が「どこ？」と言うと、私は彼女がわたしのところに来るくるように教えました。私はいつも彼女に日本語とスペイン語でしつもんします。

彼女の名前なまえはベラです、そして彼女は時々ときどきはおろかなことをしますが、私は彼女を愛しています。

BRENDEN WELLS

風

風が吹く
強いなこの風
なぜ強いのか
強すぎる
この先が見えない
ぼくは一步も進めない
と思った…。
たしかに風が強い
だが止まらない
この風でぼくは止まることができない

ZILONG ZHAO

秋

落葉の日
家族と別れる
風が冷たい
コートが厚くても
手足が冷たい

ZILONG ZHAO

雪

雪は冷たい
雪は綺麗
雪は軽い
でも、雪は生命の温床
そして 新生の希望。

SILVANA DELACIO
Flor do lascio

A flor solta aos meus olhos,
É a derradeira flor do lácio
Eu a vejo, eu a sinto...
Minhas mãos seguem trêmulas
E não consigo detê-la!
Bem me quer mal me quer...
Néctar da irremediável flor,
Escorre pelas minhas mãos, ávida!
Acaricio seu instante fugaz
Neste desejo tardio de desabrochar
Ah! Não posso alcançar.
O movimento da gloriosa flor,
Em sua transitória plenitude,
Encerra o ciclo e transmuta,
Em palavras os meus lábios ancestrais
Desta língua portuguesa com certeza
Do bem me quer ao mal me quer,
É a sua majestade, a flor!

SILVANA DELACIO
Para sempre!

O olho nu, ela flerta com o tempo e descortina
O lugar indescritível, antológico,
Que só os iniciados poderiam sem mácula, olhar.
A janela entreaberta, ainda tímida, ganha força
Ao descortinar o movimento esvoaçante das águas,

O café fumegante, saboreado e transpirado,
Da janela avista o azul índigo,
Era ele, sentado no banco, a contemplar o silêncio!
A eternizar os aromas!
Nas entrelinhas não ditas desta composição do agora.

Mãos se entrelaçam, carícias escorrem em brumas
Exalam um perfume, que incensa de súbito a vida,
Que já não precisa ir para atravessar e nem ficar para esperar.
Há plenitude em si! Na linha tênue, fronteiraça, sobrevoa os escombros
E sobrevive para sempre!

O olho nu, debruçada na janela, ela espia as histórias,
Escorregam sobressaltadas entre os povos,
Que habitavam as regiões montanhosas,
Aos olhos daquela mulher, escorriam cristais,
Que fazia da travessia um encontro com a poesia.

Contemplar o oceano e encontrar as montanhas
De esperanças em terras longínquas.
O infinito e derradeiro espetáculo,
O clamor vibra nos portos de nossos corpos,
Fluxos migratórios de mundos paralelos,

Renascer das montanhas para as águas,
E de novo cumprir o povoamento dos sonhos, sob o olhar
Inexorável e implacável do tempo.
O poeta faz acento em nossas almas,
E agora é para sempre!

SILVANA DELACIO

Viva plenamente

Nas entrelinhas da vida
Chegadas e partidas,
Reveladas no instante
De plena travessia.

No hemisfério do ser,
Luzes explodem na aurora.
Austral e boreal ardem ao vento
Na terra, há plenitude.

Sem rumo e sem remo,
Noites vazias na tempestade
Faróis acendem esperança
Portos, plenamente iluminados.

Vida, que segue em átomos e moléculas
Pulsa o sopro divino,
Coração do útero expande amor
Redenção plena do ser.

No agora, estamos
Estação sempre primeira
Escola primordial de saberes
Outrora, errantes. buscam
De tudo pode, mas nem tudo deve,
Ipês roxos e buganvilas, debruçam na janela
Pés no chão, chapéu de palha, gratidão
Viva a vida, plenamente.

ROZE SABINO-BLODGET

Todo dia

Todo dia me traz desejos
Todo dia me alimento de beijos
A cada dia me chegam impulsos
Que aquiesço ou que insulto
A cada dia me ocorrem suspeitas
Que de nada servem, cruéis maleitas.

Não os alimente, diz o budista,
Ceda a tudo, diz o artista
Nem isto nem aquilo, alerta o psicanalista.
E no meio deste quero e não quero
Me consomem os dias
E minha resolução absoluta continua
De seguir tomando banhos de água fria.

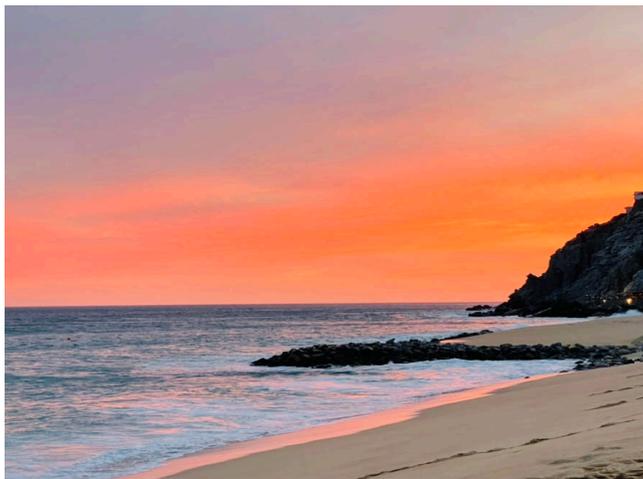
ROZE SABINO-BLODGET

Oito de junho

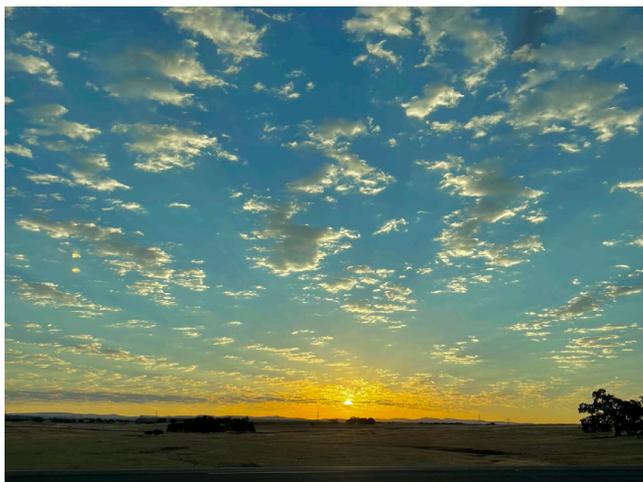
Oito de junho
ouço grilos na noite
e agora, onde estou?
Seguindo o que penso
ou o que pensam os outros?
Sinto saudade daquele homem
mistura de felicidade e desastre.
Sinto saudades de abraços
de amor em pedaços
de leituras no fim da tarde
de ver minha mãe
de andar pelas ruas
da minha pequena cidade
toda suave e sem maldade.
Sinto vontade de viajar
em países de minha escolha
de ver minhas filhas
de correr cem milhas
de tomar banho de cachoeira
de ficar calada, quieta
pra saber se é isto mesmo
ou pura ilusão.
E mesmo se for pura ilusão

Ela é mesmo minha, do meu eu
assim como eu agora sozinha
com esses grilos agora quietos
nesse país e mundo incertos.
Hora de dormir então-
pra acordar bonita e
disposta a abraçar tudo de novo
Examinado as novas atrocidades do dia
E seguindo com ânimo
Ignorando os não.

ALINE VANNUCCI
Agradecimento



O recomeço



SOPHIA VANNUCCI
Meu sangue é lindo

Meu sangue é lindo
Meu sangue é uma linha do tempo de milhões de brasileiros.
Em mim está a beleza da África,
E o pedaço de Portugal.
Eu sei que venho da sonoridade e do carnaval.
De pássaros tropicais voando pelo céu com cores vibrantes.
De belas mulheres vestindo plumas e deslumbrantes.
Desta terra do cacau e da cana-de-açúcar.
Com sotaque como café forte,
Empoderador e verdadeiro.
Português foi a minha primeira língua, o espanhol e o inglês foram a minha
segunda e terceiras.
Estive à procura de vocabulários mas agora eu sei as três.
Eu ouço o português, e aprendi a palavra “casa”,
Eu ouço o espanhol, e aprendo a palavra “gratidão”
Eu ouço o inglês, e uma vez aprendi a palavra “liberdade”
Mas a única palavra que perdura neste momento, é a “injustiça”
Meu sangue é lindo,
E espero que algum dia, o sangue americano também encontre a compreensão
da igualdade que todos almejam.

SOPHIA VANNUCCI
Um convite à descoberta

Para ter confiança, liberdade e felicidade,
você precisa entender seus pensamentos.

Você ficará surpreso ao descobrir novas partes que vivem dentro de você.

Pense em um espelho e veja seu “eu” em diferentes ângulos.

Como se parece? Como se sente? Quem você realmente é?

Pense na enorme parte submersa e invisível de sua parte mais bela,
até então invisível, Escute. Sinta. Ame-se. Liberte-se. Um convite à descoberta.

Esta parte pode levá-lo a águas agitadas se você não encontrar
o que está enterrado sob a superfície

SOPHIA VANNUCCI
Carnaval



Sardinian



EUGENIO FRONGIA

Amparos

Cando si pesat unu fortunale,
Ogniunu tenet unu logu in mente,
Aillargu 'e sos caminos de sa zente
Pro ponner remediù a donzi male.

Su puzone in sas ramas de sa matta,
Su matzone in sa tana sutta terra,
Su sirbone in sas roccas de sa serra
Ei su pastore in pinnetta a frascas fatta.

E deo, c'happ idu frittu e bentu
Pro sas carrelas de su mundu intreu,
Pro chilcare remediù a sa Fortuna,

Faeddo cun sos rajos de sa Luna
Per I sos campos de su logu meu,
E su coro si ponet in cuntentu.

EUGENIO FRONGIA
Arpas in abbandonu

“Dae s’alinu chi pianghet mein s’oru
banzigant sas arpas nostas a su Entu”
“Alle fronde dei salici, per voto,
anche le nostre cetre erano appese,
oscillavano lievi al triste vento” (Quasimodo,
“Alle fronde dei salici”)

Amigu, chi sezis solu e isconsoladu,
In custos tempos de sa Pandemia,
Su chi oe provas tue, happo provadu;
A tottus nos sighit sa fortuna ria.

Sos muros de sa domo hanta connottu
Annadas bonas e annadas malas,
Annos de gherra, morte e abbolottu
Sos majores nostos han portadu a palas.

Sas rodas de su carru sun chiettas,
E dromini sos boes accantu a issu,
E tue, in barantina, crasa isettas;
Pagas oras ti parent un’abissu.

Ma appustis de sa nue, essit serenu,
E de sa morte ‘e su semene naschit su ranu.
Dae s’erba birde collimos su fenu,
Dae s’iscuridade naschet su manzanu.

Custos sun tempos de cuntemplatzione,
Nos si sarbant poesia e iscrittura

E chilcamus, cun ispantu, un'arrejone
Pro custas temporadas de tristura.

E in sa janna mi cumparit Ale,
Riendo che sos rajos de su Sole.
E tando s'acchietat donzi male
...e la lingua non ha piu' parole!

Ajo', fortza paris! Po s'annu benidore,
Su Cuccu Bellu nos cantat fortuna.
Salude, bida noa, tribagliu, amore.
In su chelu piena dominat sa Luna.

Spanish



PABLO DEL BARCO
Rusia sucia

RUSIA

SUCIA

sobre UCRANIA

TORPE INFAMIA

PUTIN PUTON

SIN ~~CORAZÓN~~

HERODES

NIÑOS INOCENTES

JODES

PABLO DEL BARCO
Sendero otoñal



ELENA CERERO
El nopal

Mis abuelos son de México
Mis padres también.
Y cuando me ven me dicen,
“Tienes el nopal en la frente”

Pero, I am a “no sabo” kid.
I never HAD to speak Spanish, so I didn’t.
I don’t eat spicy food
Never watched *Rebelde* or *La Rosa de Guadalupe*.

There was a time where I was determined to be AMERICAN.
Whatever that means.
I hated my heritage
Distanced myself from it.
I realized early enough but still too late,

I AM proud of what runs through my blood.
Soy chicana, and all that entails.
Yes, I look Mexican, porque SOY mexicana.
I continue on my path.
Poco a poco, day by day.

Quería hablar con mis abuelos,
So, I began with learning Spanish.
Quería aprender más de mi cultura,
So, I started with the music.
Little by little I become the person I want to be.

La niña con el nopal en su corazón.

GABRIELA DÍAZ-DÁVALOS

Yo sabré vivir

Apago la luna
sin un mañana,
impera la calma
y el tiempo no pasa.

Presiento el sufrir
oscuro y esquivo,
que busca al estribo
y da pena al vivir.

Me siento despacio
mi mente agobiada,
que calla y otorga
en preciado silencio.

Y en el vacío eterno
de la noche y del corazón,

entierro el silencio
que ya está sin razón.

Amarga esperanza
que alberga el recuerdo,
que niega mi sueño
y subyuga a mi alma.

Jamás buscaré
porque ya encontrado,
el uno es esclavo
y el otro es silencio.

Si no estás cerca regresa,
y si no, sabré vivir sin ti, amor.

GABRIELA DÍAZ-DÁVALOS

Nunca pasa nada

¡Vaya declaración!
El tiempo pasa.
Y han pasado:
tres perros,
un cura,
algunas personas,
un par de tacones homicidas,
un fantasma sin pecado aparente,
ganas, risas,
y también decepciones;
el hombre de los algodones de azúcar,
como esos que sólo existen en el recuerdo,
incluso aquél que sería mi redentor;
y canciones eternas,
y el choque entre mis contrastes,
como danzas entre motas de luz
con matices de un ritmo imperfecto...

Y andar por ahí diciendo que nunca pasa nada...
¡Qué vergüenza!

Espinoza matatena

¡Coraje le pido a la vida!
Y al cielo le pido fuerza,
Para seguir vida mía,
Contra estragos e impaciencias.

GUSTAVO GAC-ARTIGAS

Olores

Mi país huele.

Huele a ramita de perejil recién
cortada,

a tomate recién arrancado de la
mata,

a mierda de vaca

y a leche recién salida de las ubres
del animal.

Huele a gaviota

y a la tierra que abraza las primeras
gotas de rocío.

Huele a trigo,

a maíz,

a girasol,

a aroma,

a copihues,

a dihueñes

y a flores de azahar.

Huele a transpiración,

huele a cebolla,

a ajo cortado en finos cuadritos.

Huele a hojita de menta triturada
con amor

entre las yemas de los dedos.

En las ciudades huele a bencina,

a perfume barato regado generosa-
mente

sobre cuerpos decrepitos.

Huele a polvo de arroz

y a jabón Flores de Pravia.

Huele a mar,

huele a pescado fresco

y a veces a pescado podrido.

Huele a distancia,

huele a nostalgia.

Huele a amor

y huele a odio.

GUSTAVO GAC-ARTIGAS
Para mí, una docena

Déjelos correr libremente
más allá de su prisión
de su imaginación.

Que pisen alados la dorada arena
el fresco afrecho
que ramoneen golosos en el verde
perejil.

Que suban, valientes aventureros
por las lisas paredes
del maloliente ajo
que antes frotó
la malintencionada mantequilla
y sin imaginación
con absoluta y deliciosa mala fe
cuando caigan, ahóguelos.

Delicadamente, fuertemente, pesa-
damente
frotando de izquierda a derecha, de
derecha a izquierda
del centro al borde, del borde al
centro
ahóguelos

y luego déjelos secar el tiempo de
un arrepentimiento
en el horno ardiente.
Cuando estén dorados
chorreando el cuerpo, chorreando la
frente
déjelos salir de su prisión
de su imaginación
y que corran, que corran veloces
como ellos saben hacerlo
en angelical carrera hasta su boca
con el ajo a cuestras
con el perejil a cuestras
con la sal a cuestras
con la mantequilla a cuestras
solos, de a seis, de a docena
por una vez sin su casa a cuestras.

¿El vino?
Hombre, si París vale una misa
los caracoles, un pipeño de Doñi-
hue.

MARIA GONZALEZ
El sol de la mañana

Llega un día en que todo
queda en silencio,
aquellas voces y ruidos infantiles
y adolescentes
ya no se perciben más.

Sus voces, sus rostros
se disipan en el ruido
de la noche,
ni el silencio enmudecido
me devuelve el eco de sus murmullos,
más mi mirada ansiosa
busca de entre las sombras de la memoria
aquellos pequeños cuerpos
que no se me revelan más.

Amanece,
abro mis ojos,
y no aparecen
ni por los rincones del hogar.
Salgo al patio de mi casa
para ver si la memoria del recuerdo llega,
pero no.

Cierro mis ojos
para ver si el sueño profundo,
me devuelve
lo que un día la memoria me robó.



Margarita G. Mejia 1925-2020 RIP

MARISOL HUERTA NIEMBRO

Fiesta: Eso es todo

Te llamo a ti, mi amor,
y no llamo a la muerte, todavía,
pues el tiempo de otoño está acechándome ya
y las hojas marrones de mi jardín ya vuelan,
como si me invitaran a su baile
de boda
para que yo me entregue,
me entregue con mi cuerpo, con mi voz y con mi alma.

Pero lo que deseo, mi amor en el camino,
es que me des la mano
y me invites, alegre,
a la fiesta del árbol tembloroso
y la hortensia azulona que me canta,
a la fiesta del tronco rugoso del castaño,
de ese que no abarcábamos con nuestro cariño,
a la fiesta de nécoras con sabor a labios,
en fin, oculto amor, a la fiesta de la vida.

MARISOL HUERTA NIEMBRO
El día después

5 de mayo de 2021

Madrid ha dado un vuelco
lo dicen casi todos por ahí,
tenemos Libertad
lo dicen casi todos por ahí,

tenemos que traer ahora el mar
y esto será el nuevo paraíso
donde no existirán
las colas del hambre,

los niños hacinados
en los colegios públicos,

las terrazas a rebosar
todos los días buenos,
que son la mayoría,
en mesas numerosas,

los enfermos de COVID
que siguen siendo muchos
más los que ya se fueron,

la pobreza que aumenta
día tras día,
pobreza sólo para los más pobres,

los centros de salud
casi sin sanitarios,

los hospitales públicos
que están privatizándose
y a menudo nos cambian
los médicos que operan
porque cobran muy poco,

el mucho madrugar de las señoras
que vienen a mí pueblo - zona rica-
a limpiarnos las casas y terrazas
en buses hasta arriba
donde no se respetan
las zonas separadas,

pero han votado libres
lo que era lo mejor para cada uno.

Madrid ha dado un vuelco,
libertad libertad
querida libertad,
elegida por todos
o casi todos,
eslogan que convence
y que respeto,

Madrid ha dado un vuelco
y estas pequeñas cosas
en las que yo me fijo
tendrán ya solución.

MARISOL HUERTA NIEMBRO
Poema para Olivia

No es igual, mi pequeña, mirarte por WhatsApp
que tenerte en mis brazos.

No es igual que tus ojos y mis ojos se encuentren,
unos frente a los otros, como reconociéndose,
como si el porvenir y el pasado se juntasen
y nos diéramos tiempo, ingenuidad y amor
que vernos en WhatsApp.

No es igual que tus ojos que se asombran de todo
como una ola que ansía llegar pronto a la arena
para hacerla su orilla, para tocar sus bordes,
estén ahora aquí, a mi lado, y yo los vea
con toda la ternura que quepa entre mis párpados
que vernos desde lejos.

Tus ojos balbucean y extienden sus manitas
como queriendo ser siempre parte de mi parte,
queriendo ser más tiempo de nuestro escaso tiempo,
queriendo disfrutar más de un futuro mirándonos
como ahora nos miramos, mi pequeña conmigo,
tú, mi sonriente Olivia.

(Quizás puedan ser solo tonterías de abuela
pero yo no lo creo porque lo siento así).

Abuela y nieta



JOSÉ LUIS PLAZA CHILLÓN
Selfi para una madre muerta

Suena el infinito al otro lado de la luz: “Ven amor, ¿acaso ya no me conoces?”
Desterrado,

como el número que no encuentra su lugar en la suma,
he de encontrarte. Adiós, madre.

Dije adiós ayer cuando el ruido de la tarde
no dejó de temblar entre las sombras. Dije adiós, y era yo el que se despedía.
Si tu piel ardía sobre la caricia de mi mano,
era yo el culpable de tanta incandescencia.
No supe calmar la quemazón de tu cuerpo
en el instante de la partida. Dije adiós, sí. Pero eras tú la que se iba.

Sobre la ventana de una pared blanca el horizonte te llama,
reclama tu presencia para llenar con aliento
los agujeros de la nada.

No quise ver lo que me mostrabas.

Escondido, como el cobarde que siempre me acompaña,
te dije adiós con solo una palabra: “mama”.

Mis pasos se alejan como pisadas que quiebran el silencio,
temerosos de mí, huyen de una posible llamada.

Vete, y no vuelvas. Quizá regreses mañana.

CHAR PRIETO
Elena, siempre te recuerdo

“Yo había nacido con alas, así que cuando me las cortaron y mi vida no me agradaba, creé la mía propia en un mundo emancipado y volé, volé, volé a París.” C.P.

PARIS 1975

Elena y yo nos conocimos en París en una residencia de monjas donde “domaban” a chicas rebeldes, progres y aventureras como nosotras. Las dos enseñadas nos hicimos amigas inseparables y planeamos irnos de allí cuanto antes. Nos fuimos de *au pair* y nos matriculamos en L’ Alliance Française y en París vivimos un año, fumando *Gauloises bleues* en nuestras *chambres de bonne* en el *Cinquième Arrondissement* y observando la torre Eiffel, tan lejana y diminuta desde las claraboyas de nuestras buhardillas. Caminando por el Boulevard St. Germain, con la *Rive Gauche* del Sena, nos encontramos con algo tan distinto a lo nuestro: belleza, arte, libertad... ¡Ah, París, con sus *patiseries*, jardines y palacios! ¡El París de la luna, del amor y del champán! ¿Cómo olvidarnos, Elena, de aquel encuentro en el metro Trocadéro con Andy, el joven cantante inglés y amigo, con quien quedábamos para pasar su sombrero y pedir francos mientras que el tocaba la guitarra? ¿Y aquel día cuando por primera vez fuimos al Louvre y nos decepcionamos de que la Mona Lisa fuera tan pequeña? ¿Y la peña española donde aprendimos sobre los emigrantes en París? ¿Y aquel 20 de noviembre de 1975 cuando estábamos en correos y de repente oímos un “*Fanco est mort!*” y nos pusimos a saltar y bailar celebrando el final del fascismo en España? ¡Ah, París, París, la ciudad del amor, de la amistad y del ensueño! Ahora cuando pienso en ti, Elena, siento una inmensa sensación de alegría y nostalgia. Nostalgia por lo ya vivido, añoranza por lo recorrido del pasado, de nuestros secretos y recuerdos de aquella juventud que aún fluyen como un torrente, como una tormenta que, con sus turbulentos vientos arrastran poco a poco lo que ya solo queda en mi memoria. En nuestro París de los setenta, por primera vez asistimos a una manifestación política du *parti communiste* en el bosque de

Boulogne. A veces nos parecía imposible ser parte de todo aquello, después de haber dejado años de dictadura, una España que nos asfixiaba, anticuada y represiva y muy especialmente para las mujeres. En el patio de L'Alliance Française y con Elena, nos encontramos a Dale, un rubio americano con pelo largo, vestido de gastados tejanos, camisa de franela de cuadros azules y con zapatillas de deporte. A partir de ese momento nuestra vida ya no sería la misma al lado de este joven que vivía en el Barrio Latino con dos americanos más. Nuestro primer viaje con ellos fue en su furgoneta Volkswagen a Las 24 horas de Le Mans. Luego viajamos por toda Europa. ¿Cómo podríamos olvidar Elena nuestra visita a Ámsterdam viviendo aquella semana en un barco en el canal? En los muros de los recuerdos quedan allí, intactas, nuestras aventuras y memorias de hace más de cuarenta y siete años, algo que me hace pensar que, pese a todo, París es todavía París, la ciudad del amor y de la amistad.

BARCELONA 1976

Cuando dejé Burgos para irme a estudiar a Francia, mi hermano Miguel fue conmigo a la estación de trenes a despedirme y me dijo: “Si vuelves a España, vete a vivir a Barcelona. Es la mejor ciudad.” Esto le comenté a Elena una tarde otoñal paseando por La Seine, cerca de Notre Dame y unos días más tarde tomamos rumbo a la Ciudad Condal. Como habíamos conocido en París a los americanos y yo seguía la relación con Dale, Elena y yo decidimos tomar clases de inglés en el Instituto de Estudios Norteamericanos de Barcelona. Allí conocimos a nuestro querido Ramón, compañero de clases, nativo de Alcarrás, Lérida. Esa amistad con Ramón cambió nuestras vidas para siempre. Aparte de ser simpático, guapo, atrevido, alegre y positivo, tenía coche, así que con él recorrimos Cataluña y mucho más. Barcelona con Elena y Ramón fue una época llena de aventuras y desventuras. Con las torres del Palacio Gaudí al fondo y desde nuestro balcón del apartamento de Las Ramblas forjamos los tres nuestra amistad. El carácter quijotesco de nosotras nos llevaba a sitios inesperados, como por ejemplo cuando después de leer en la revista *Ajoblanco* que los jóvenes iban a trabajar en la recogida de la naranja en Valencia, Elena y yo decidimos ponernos en marcha hacia el sur, en autostop en el mes de mayo. Cuando llegamos a Valencia nos dijeron que la recogida de la naranja era en

octubre. Quijota y Sancha siguieron sus aventuras hacia Andalucía, región que ninguna de las dos conocíamos. Y allí descubrimos las casas blancas llenas de geranios, patios y fuentes, la Alhambra de Granada, la Mezquita de Córdoba, Sevilla y otros tesoros arquitectónicos andaluces. Cuando se nos acabó el poco dinero que teníamos, volvimos a Barcelona y “aconsejadas” por *Ajoblanco*, decidimos ir a la recogida de melocotones en un lugar de Cataluña de cuyo nombre sí quiero acordarme llamado Torres del Segre. Ramón nos aconsejó ir cerca de su pueblo ya que su familia tenía frutales y allí trabajamos una temporada hasta que llegó nuestro “salvador” Ramón, para ver cómo estábamos. Cuando vio con quien vivíamos, se asustó tanto de vernos junto a jóvenes llenos de tatuajes, drogadictos y disfuncionales, que nos convenció que vivir allí con esa gente era muy peligroso. De vuelta a Barcelona con Ramón es cuando decidimos dejar la Ciudad Condal y buscar nuevas aventuras en Londres y así aprender inglés.

LONDRES 1979

En Londres Elena y yo trabajábamos de *au pair* y vivíamos con austeras familias inglesas, con niños malcriados que no aguantábamos así, que nos fuimos a vivir al Sunie and Guruji Hostel London, lugar muy colorido por ser frecuentado por jóvenes internacionales que, como a nosotras, les gustaba conocer mundo y culturas. Unos meses más tarde y como Ramón nos echaba tanto de menos, fue con su coche a visitarnos a Londres. Todo iba bien, hasta que camino a Oxford, Ramón, admirando a unas robustas vacas pastando, se metió en un camino de piedras y un pequeño guijarro saltó al parabrisas y se hizo añicos el cristal. ¡Ay! Con el frío que hacía y además lloviendo, sin teléfono móvil, ya que en esos tiempos no existía. No sé cómo se las arregló Ramón para llegar hasta la ciudad más próxima y encontrar un mecánico que pusiera un parabrisas nuevo. El resto de las aventuras y desventuras quijotescas en Londres con Ramón y Elena, las recuerdo muy bien, pero verdaderamente no sería muy apropiado incluirlas aquí. Años después, Elena me comentó que no sabía cómo aún estábamos vivas, después de todas las locuras que hicimos y, además, sin ningunas huellas ni secuelas psicológicas visibles. En el verano del 79 dejamos Londres y yo me fui a Estados Unidos para reunirme con Dale y hacer de este país mi nuevo hogar. Elena siguió de trotamundos por Europa. Cuando yo iba a España, Elena

y yo nos veíamos en San Sebastián y lo pasamos en grande recordando nuestras aventuras y amistad hasta que en el 1985 discutimos y ya no nos volvimos a ver más. Como bien dijo Gabriel García Márquez: “Nuestra amistad se acabó por un malentendido.” En el 2020 Elena y yo nos “nos volvimos a encontrar”, bueno, solo virtualmente.

LA PANDEMIA DEL CORONAVIRUS 2020

En tiempos de pandemia, aburrida por no poder salir de casa y con miedo por el contagio, me puse a leer las cartas que guardo en una gran caja. Allí aparecieron las muchas postales y correspondencia entre Elena, Ramón, Dale y yo. De repente me entró nostalgia por esa amistad perdida y por esa gran amiga que tanto me había ayudado y cambiado mi vida. La verdad es que siempre me he acordado mucho de Elena y con cariño y nostalgia la echaba de menos, así que busqué en Facebook y ¡voilà! La encontré. Después de 35 años de silencio esto fue lo que le escribí a Elena. Char 27 agosto 2020 Hola Elena: Soy Char. ¡Cuánto tiempo! Adjunto mi número de móvil para que nos pongamos en contacto por WhatsApp. Abrazos

Elena ese mismo día me respondió. Elena: Char, dime por favor si recibes este mensaje que te he enviado. Me alegro de que a estas edades nos dejemos de tonterías y si algún día tenemos un desencuentro seamos capaces de solucionarlo. ¿Verdad que sí? Y estoy segura de que cuando sea, nos veremos y habrá un abrazo de verdad, no virtual.

Encerradas las dos en casa por la pandemia y con el miedo que conlleva el virus, que es la enfermedad y muerte, ya que aún no había vacuna, sabíamos que pertenecíamos a la población más vulnerable, la gente mayor, y nos horrorizaba el contagio. Elena me envió una cita de Isabel Allende: “Me di cuenta en algún momento de que uno viene al mundo a perderlo todo. Mientras más uno vive, más pierde. Vas perdiendo primero a tus padres, a gente a veces muy querida a tu alrededor, tus mascotas, los lugares y tus propias facultades también. No se puede vivir con temor, porque te hace imaginar lo que todavía no ha pasado y sufres el doble. Hay que relajarse un poco, tratar de gozar lo que tenemos y vivir en el presente.” Nuestra relación de amistad entre Elena y yo había vuelto, así que prometimos vernos cuando acabara la pandemia. El 16

de abril de 2020, el día del cumpleaños de Elena, le hice este video con recuerdos de nuestras aventuras. https://media.csuchico.edu/media/Elena%27s+Birthday/1_nynwopfc

En noviembre, la fecha de las elecciones en EE. UU. Elena me escribió:

Elena: 4 noviembre 2020 Ya nos hemos quitado a este demente Trump de encima. Yo, porque los bares están cerrados por la pandemia que si no hubiera salido a celebrarlo con champán...

Elena: 1 enero 2021 Espero que nos podamos abrazar en el 2021. ¡Abrazos!

Char: 6 enero 2021 Ya vienen los reyes...feliz día de los Reyes Magos, que nos traigan todo lo mejor y que nos veamos en el 2021. Muchos abrazos.

¡ADIOS ELENA! SIEMPRE TE RECUERDO. NUNCA TE OLVIDO 2021

¿Y quién diría que el 16 de abril de 2021 sería su último cumpleaños? Elena cumplía 64 años y yo le envié una felicitación con la canción titulada *When I am 64* de los Beatles, para recordar nuestras aventuras en Abbey Road en Londres. El 23 de abril de 2021 ella me escribió:

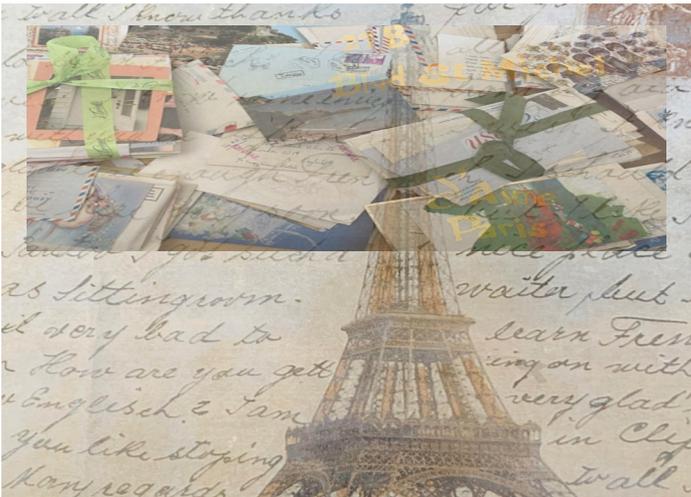
Elena: Bueno...se ha muerto mi gato Michín después de 17 años y estoy desalojando cosillas y, la verdad, no tengo tiempo ni ganas para celebraciones.

El 30 de junio murió mi madre y Elena me agasajó con mensajes y llamadas de pésame que fueron un bálsamo para mi gran tristeza. Después Elena dejó que escribirme y llamarme. Cuando por fin me escribió, me dijo que tenía muchos dolores en la zona lumbar y no se sentía bien. Unas semanas más tarde me informó que tenía cáncer y que era terminal, pero que estaba feliz y contenta de dejar este mundo y haber tenido una vida tan fantástica. El mismo día que murió, el 9 de septiembre de 2021, recibí la última carta de Elena por correo postal, cuatro páginas escritas de su puño y letra que me había escrito cuando estaba en cuidados paliativos diciéndome: Mi querida amiga: ¿Cómo resumir en unas líneas toda la importancia que tuviste en mi vida? Un día apareciste en la mía en

el momento oportuno. ¿Destino? Y entonces apareciste tu y me diste tu alegría, valor y ganas de vivir. Hemos estado desconectadas mucho tiempo, pero en mí, tu recuerdo sigue igual que aquel día cuando nos conocimos en París. Hay personas que llegan a tu vida, pasan y se van sin dejar huella. No es este mi caso, a ti te llevo en mi corazón. Estoy en el momento más feliz de mi vida, llena de energía positiva y amor de amigos y familia. Gracias querida amiga por haber aparecido en mi vida. Te quiero mucho. Ese mismo día Elena falleció. ¡Adiós Elena! Siempre te recuerdo. Nunca te olvidaré. Elena, la amiga que me rescató durante mis años adolescentes, cuando yo estaba tan perdida, se ha ido. Y ahora, aunque ella ya no esté, su presencia resuena tan inefablemente en mí que aún contemplo y recuerdo aquellos años de amistad, nuestros viajes por el mundo, secretos y aventuras. Elena es un espíritu en mi mundo, un duende en mi mágico camino de la vida. ¡A la luna llena de París! ¡A ti Elena! ¡A la amiga que siempre me guía y quien ahora está con Isadora Duncan, Simone de Beauvoir, Edith Piaf...! *Non, je ne regrette rien!* Gracias por tu amistad y cariño.

Elena Landa Colina 16-4-1957-3-9-2021 RIP

Epístolas parisinas



Contributors' Biographies

Cloitzél Ahumada is a proud Chicana, a first-year, first-generation student at CSU, Chico majoring in theatre arts. Her passion lies within the arts and she hopes to increase accurate and proper representation of Hispanics in the arts and mainstream media.

Alex Amaya is a senior at Chico State who is a double major in journalism and Asian studies with a minor in Japanese. He enjoys helping others with their writing inside and outside the school's newspaper, *The Orion*. After graduation he hopes to work as a translator and copy editor of Japanese multimedia, as well as being an interpreter.

Pablo del Barco is a Spanish literature professor and a scholar in Portuguese and Brazilian modernist literature. He is a visual poet and author of several books on literary criticism, history, and visual art and poetry.

Alexis Castro-Castaneda is a junior at Chico State, majoring in Computer Science and focusing on a minor in Japanese. He is interested in traveling and experience new cultures and languages. He hopes to visit Japan one day.

Charlie Cave is a sophomore at Chico State where he's studying for a BFA in Musical Theatre. Hailing from a small town in Illinois, Cave hopes his stories will help others feel seen. His passion for writing is now most often demonstrated in his songwriting.

Elena Cerero is from Chicago, Illinois. She is currently a sophomore at Bradley University, studying to become a Secondary English teacher. Her hope is to make an impact in the lives of students who grew up believing they would not amount to anything.

Barbara Coddington was a volunteer in Ecuador, living with a local family in 2020. She is a retired fine arts museum curator, a position she held at Washington State University and Whitman College.

Clark Colahan was a volunteer in Ecuador, living with a local family in 2020. He is a Professor Emeritus of Spanish at Whitman College in Washington State.

Danielle Collier is a California native who heavily includes social injustice as an inspiration for her music. Inspired by Destiny's Child and 90s R & B, she has written her latest single *Go On*. She is currently studying at Chico State working towards her bachelors in music.

Briando Contreras is a first-generation Chicano student majoring in Liberal Studies. Born in Chico, California he plans on becoming a future educator, military member, and world champion in boxing. Descansa en paz Vanessa Guillén.

Enrique Cortes is a Religious Study major in his last semester at Chico State. He hopes to create a children's literary brand after graduation to bring unity and peace among all religions. Illustrating, graphic design, online content creation, and painting have become his passion.

James Craft is a philosophy major and minor in German at Chico State. Because of his love for languages, he is a member of the International Foreign Language Honor Society. His passion for the arts has branched out from visual, to literary and linguistic, which is represented in this magazine.

Cory Croker is a Computer Information Systems major from Lompoc, California, who has a wide variety of interests ranging from language learning to reading to costume design. Cory enjoys both creating and consuming fantastical media that offer respite from the mundane.

Gabriela Díaz-Dávalos has a Ph.D. from Temple University and specializes in interdisciplinary approaches to textual productions and their application for pedagogical purposes to foster diversity awareness. She is engaged in local community projects that explore and promote the diverse communities.

Roberto Flores is a junior at Bradley University and is an International Studies major with a minor in Spanish. He is from Peoria, Illinois and of Mexican descent. He enjoys reading, writing, music, but above all, his friends and family.

Kenneth Fries likes to set down stories, work with words and images. His poetry is 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 *Coming About and Other Poems*.

Eugenio Frongia is an Emeritus Professor at CSU, Chico where he directed the Italian Program for twenty years and was chair of the Department. He has authored 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, poet, and play writer who lives in the US. He is a regular contributor of opinion articles. His most recent book is a trilingual poetry collection published in December 2020. The three poems included are from a collection he has just finished.

Suzie Garrett has always spent much of her time with nature, appreciating how light and shadow dance. Photography for her is a way to share the beauty with others, offering an opportunity to slow down, appreciate the often overlooked and see themselves reflected in photo.

Multicultural Echoes - Contributors' Biographies

Maria Gonzalez was born in Mexico and moved to the US in 1966. She has a Ph.D. in Spanish from UC Irvine. She is a professor emerita from Chico State where she founded the Spanish Club. She received the Outstanding Advisor Award, has participated in conferences and published poetry and essays.

Jacqueline Gil-DeVor is a senior at Chico State with a Theatre Arts Major and a Japanese Language Minor. She was born and raised in Chico, California and has the goal of becoming a voice-over actor. She enjoys learning more about Japanese culture and language in hopes that someday she can travel to Japan.

Luis Gonçalves teaches Portuguese and Spanish at Princeton University, and his research focuses on Lusophone Cultures and Civilizations and their transatlantic dynamics. He is the president of the American Organization of Teachers of Portuguese, and president of the National Council for Less Commonly Taught Languages.

Ted W. Hard was born in New York, raised in Texas, and passed away in California in 2021. An emergency physician who loved nature, beauty, wildlife, and his family, he was a passionate photographer and enjoyed exploring the world with his camera and his wife Ellie. He will be greatly missed. R.I.P.

Colleen Holihan is a student at CSU Chico who transferred in the spring of 2018 from Yuba College. She is working on finishing both her General History Major and Asian Studies Major.

Marisol Huerta Niembro is a teacher, poet and writer from Spain and the author of numerous books. Her literary creation mirrors social issues, feminism, politics and education, and has been published in several anthologies and won literary prizes. In 2019 she was a visiting scholar and presented her works at CSU, Chico.

Arthur Lemner has been investing creative time researching graphical ways of portraying social and ecological concerns. For those willing to ponder the meaning of human and animal existence, this is the artist to spend time with. He gets great pleasure from directing the viewer into a journey of discovery.

Anahi Martinez is from Escondido, California. She is a Chico State alumni with a B.A. in history and minor in Asian Studies. She is now part of the Single Subject Social Science Credential Program at Chico State. She is also the president of Phi Sigma Iota, the International Foreign Language Honor Society and the designer of the *ME* magazine.

Raquel Mattson-Prieto is a Spanish professor at Princeton University, and a Chico State alumna. Her academic expertise lies in Hispanic Linguistics and Spanish as a Heritage Language. She enjoys learning other languages; most recently, she is studying French after a long hiatus. She also loves to read, travel, and ski.

Kristin Moore is a CSU, Chico Communication Sciences and Disorders and Asian Studies major. After her studies abroad, she is interested in the history and culture of Taiwan and its place on the international stage. Her art is primarily digital, focused on her travels.

Max Myers is a writer and poet. He is retired and living in Oregon House, spends much of his time tending to his honey bees and gives presentations to schools and people interested in the importance of pollinators.

Kate O'Connell was born in the Bay Area and attended the Academy of Art in San Francisco. Kate is greatly motivated and inspired by the fourth wave movement and creating an artistic space of inclusion and visibility.

Vanessa Ortega was born in 2001 in Merced, California. Throughout her life she has been supported by her family, especially her little sister. She has yet to accomplish any grand things in her life, but she has big goals, aspiring to be known.

José Luis Plaza Chillón is from Spain and has a doctorate in Art History. As an expert of Federico García Lorca and his relationship with the plastic arts, he has investigated the involvement of painters in theatrical scenery, in addition to analyzing the correlation between New York, art and AIDS.

Char Prieto has lived in Spain, Paris, London, Prague, Chile and the USA. She has always stood at a unique intersection of different identities from which she draws multicultural perspectives, foreshadowing of what would eventually obsess her writing and psyche: the negotiation of identity. Traveling is the inspiration for her creative works.

Sasha Rene is a Humanities and Communication major from Pacific Grove, CA. She attends CSU, Monterey Bay and enjoys taking online classes offered by CSU, Chico. Her interests range from music to online gaming, creative writing, social action, and writing poetry. She became interested in Japanese at an early age.

Multicultural Echoes - Contributors' Biographies

Scott Rushing is a businessman in Ventura, California. He is an advocate for police policy and practice reforms since his only son, Tyler Scott Rushing, a budding photojournalist, was killed in an officer-involved shooting in Chico on July 23, 2017. Scott has filed a federal lawsuit against the Chico Police Department.

Roze Sabino-Blodget is from Brazil and lives in the US. She has a B.A. in Spanish and English and a M.A. in Education from Chico State. Her educational experience includes Portuguese, bilingual education, reading, and teaching kindergarten. She also has kept journals, written poems and essays since her adolescence.

Ajia Saunders is a nineteen year-old transfer student and this is her first year at CSU, Chico majoring in English Education. Ajia loves to write and she hopes you enjoy a goofy story written a long time ago.

Myra Scott is a professional caregiver for the elderly and disabled. The work she does teaches her some hard lessons. Myra is also a student of English at Chico State.

Cynthia Scontriano Schildhauer is an artist residing in Northern California, who creates dynamic, colorful, textured, and layered paintings described as "mythic landscapes." Her *Coyote In Quarantine* series documents her day-to-day visual impressions of life as the pandemic emerged in 2020 until today. She teaches college art and is an art therapist.

Linda Serrato is a native Californian. She has been writing poetry close to 40 years. Her writing is based on personal experiences, but she also writes about things that simply catch her attention. She has been inspired by nature, her family and the talented scribes of her writing groups.

Sagejane SnyderBehr loves reading, music, and walking her puppy, Bella. She is a junior, majoring in Anthropology, with a minor in Japanese, and a certificate in Forensic Science. She is a Chicoan and first-generation college graduate.

Chunyan Echo Song is a professor of sociology. She was born and raised in China and moved to the US for graduate school. She received a Ph.D. in sociology and has been teaching at Chico State since 2005. In her spare time, she enjoys hiking, photography, and reading.

Aline E. Vannucci was born in Belém, Brazil. She received a Medical Degree at the University of Rio de Janeiro. Aline has lived in Chico since 2001. Her background and upbringing is an inspiration for her artwork. For Aline, being Brazilian means constant contemplation of life.

Sophia Vannucci is 16 years-old who gained a love for arts and languages from her Brazilian mother. She wants to encourage young kids to embrace their culture and be themselves in a world that tells you to be like everyone else. Her work is about celebrating diversity and cultures.

Brenden Wells has had an active interest in the Japanese language and culture after training in Shorin Ryu karate for 11 years and having traveled to Japan multiple times for different reasons. He wishes to continue his studies for any sort of possibilities that may open up in the future.

Julie Zavon has a sketchpad on hand whether she's on a business trip, on camel back, or in a canoe. Over the years she has filled dozens of drawing books with images ranging from wildflowers and wildebeests to Moscow's Kremlin in the snow. She currently lives in Pennsylvania.

Zilong Zhao is an undergraduate student at Chico State majoring in English Education and a minor in Japanese. He is from China and interested in learning languages. He wishes to share the beauty of languages through poetry and other forms of writing to everyone who shares the same interests.

DISCLAIMER

ME: Multicultural Echoes literary magazine is a professor-student run and published California State University, Chico activity. The editorial board assumes no responsibility for loss of or damage to submitted materials. *ME: Multicultural Echoes* literary magazine may contain errors and /or omissions that unintentionally occur in the printed version, but they may be corrected in the online edition. Changes to submitted materials for editorial, layout, and publication purposes are at the discretion of the Editorial Board.



Ich bin es

Moi

나를

私

Me

Mim

我

Yo

私

lo

Ich bin es

Moi

나를

私

Me

Ich bin es

lo 私 Yo

أنا

我

Mim

Me

私

Ich bin es

lo

私 Yo

أنا

我

Mim

Me

私

나를

Moi

Ich bin es

lo

私 Yo

私

Me

أنا

Yo

私

lo

Ich bin es

Ich

bin es

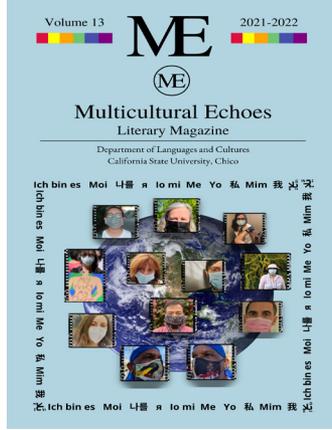
Moi

나를

私

Me

أنا



Sponsored By Phi Sigma Iota
The International Foreign Language
Honor Society

