

ME
Multicultural
Echoes
Volume 9
2017

The cover art is designed by California State University, Chico student Camille Henderson and it is entitled “One World without Barriers.” Due to the sociopolitical climate this year ME 2017 and the cover express that we are all united in one world where we all live in harmony, respecting languages, cultures, ethnicity, races and sexual orientation without discrimination. Also included in the cover is the portrait of the newly elected president, Dr. Gayle Hutchinson, the 12th California State University, Chico president and the first female president in the University’s 130 year history. Her motto is “Together We Will.” Welcome President Hutchinson!

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

ME: MULTICULTURAL ECHOES • SPRING 2017

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DEDICATION

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, CHICO PRESIDENT
GAYLE HUTCHINSON



Welcome Doctor Gayle Hutchinson, the 12th California State University, Chico president and the first female president in the University's 130 year history.

In her inaugural address March 3, 2017, President Hutchinson provided us with a perspective that moved and inspired us on our history and our future. Towards the end of her remarks she gave us this promise: "Together, we will. Together we will work as one University; breaking down silos, removing institutional barriers, and encouraging innovations." And we will rise to meet those challenges. All of us, regardless of our political views, race or gender have thoughts and feelings as we look to our future. We are a close-knit community committed to the health and well-being of everyone. We are equally firm in our commitment to supporting a diverse and inclusive community where people are treated fairly and equitably regardless of individual differences. We stand by the values of reason, respect and civility in fulfilling our mission of serving and educating students.



Très chers lecteurs/Dear Readers:

We are very happy to announce the ninth issue of CSU Chico's literary magazine, *ME: Multicultural Echoes*. Echoes of ourselves and others, to us and the world, these contributions all seek to communicate in the myriad of voices of human experience. Just like Baudelaire, the nineteenth century French poet who revolutionized the poetic subject, voice, and form, whose words I echoed in my greeting, we seek to convey truth, fiction, and the gray area in between. Reading these lines and reading between the lines, we announce to everyone: Here is *ME: Multicultural Echoes 2017*.

We hope that these pages will continue to echo in you, the reader, as well as echo your experience back to us.

Avec mes plus sincères sentiments,

Patricia E. Black

Chair, Department of International Languages, Literatures and Cultures

**A MESSAGE FROM THE FOUNDER OF *ME*:
MULTICULTURAL ECHOES LITERARY MAGAZINE**

The year 2017 has been momentous and turbulent for many people in the world, especially for those living in the United States. The current political climate has given rise to a renewed social awareness and a spirit of resistance. From the Women's Marches here and abroad, to social movements such as Black Lives Matter, this resistance against tyranny, bigotry, and intolerance will play a large part in the lives of individuals and in the destiny of our country.

These sociopolitical movements tell us that public demonstrations against hate, misogyny, bigotry, and xenophobia can effect real change in the way we think, shop, do business, and live our daily lives. In the past year, people of various ethnicities, immigrants, people of color, women, the disabled, and the LGBTQ+ community have made their voices heard, demonstrating that acceptance and diversity are dynamic and embrace the richness of differences among all people of the world.

ME: Multicultural Echoes literary magazine provides a forum for these many different voices to be heard. Our mission is to increase awareness and appreciation of all members of our community by promoting the study of languages, culture, pluralism, and unity. These values are consistent with those of CSU Chico, The Department of International Languages, Literatures, and Cultures, and the community as a whole.

May the diverse and rich experiences of our writers and artists, captured forever in the pages of *Multicultural Echoes* 2017, document the essence of humanity and shared understanding through open and honest communication in these very difficult and challenging times.

Best, *Char Prieto*

Char Prieto, Founder, editor and adviser of *Multicultural Echoes* Literary Magazine

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ENGLISH

ANONYMOUS

A Nasty Man

She was called a nasty woman
by a very nasty man
a misogynist
who only respects
dollar bills, fame and power

She was called a nasty woman
by a man who is nastier
a tycoon often described
as an orange baboon
bathed in Cheetos powder
and crowned with an orange toupee
or was it a moustache traded by a toupee?

She was called a nasty woman
by a pussy grabber (his own words)
a populist demagogue
who embraces torture, xenophobia
Jim Crow, and homophobia
who has perfected the art of shameless demagoguery
with his mob-rallying rhetoric

A very bad "*hambre*" (his own words)

She was called a nasty woman
but for sure he is nastier
than that nasty woman
he angrily described

But now
that nasty woman has left us
roaring in defiance
against this very nasty man

KATIA BERG

Cycles

The faint echoes of her feet against the wooden floor were the only way Liliana could feel a sense of peace. She had to tire herself to tire her mind, a mind too loud unless distracted by repetitive, mundane tasks. She was doing this, yet again, on another school night. One semester and she would graduate. One semester and she could leave the footprints behind and start another trail. A loud buzz broke Liliana out of her daze. It was her phone, shaking violently at 2:53 a.m. A text from her Mama: *¿Por qué no me llamas? Te extraño. Why don't you call me? I miss you.* Silence was the logical response -- she could call her mother tomorrow, maybe next weekend. The thought of shrieking, "Hola, mami!" over the phone made Liliana cringe. She could already picture the heavy, false-delight of her own voice, raised an octave too high in an attempt to replicate joy. And so Liliana continued to pace, back and forth, back and forth, until her eyelids almost fell off her face and onto the shiny floor. Then she could sleep; then she could start the cycle all over again.

Liliana unconsciously created a cycle: pace to fall asleep, icy shower to wake the tired mind, pick at new and old scabs to calm the nerves, place a wool hat over the damage, and walk out the door with eyes glued to the floor. That was the gist of Liliana's routine -- a cycle that never stopped, except sometimes. Those sometimes were mostly toxic: mostly a chemical-reaction induced by dulling, green pills. It was too hot to wear the hat. Liliana frowned as her forehead formed beads of sweat. Her dark, curly hair looked oily and her nose extra crooked. Her eyes were huge and her upper-lip too small. This isn't going to work, she thought.

"Lilly!" Her only roommate, Stephen, shouted through the door, "Are you alive?!"

Stephen was a friend from *way* back. They had met in Catholic school--at Sunday mass when they were six or seven. The pair *still* clung together, much like tangled electrical cords, seemingly cemented but evermore present to yield security.

"Jesus Christ," Liliana replied as she slowly opened the door. "If I were dead you would be able to smell me, you know."

Stephen cackled. “I feel like I haven’t seen you in a week. But I don’t even care anymore.” He paused. “Just tell me *why* you’re still wearing that same goddamn beanie?!”

Liliana was grateful she had put rouge on her cheeks. Her real face was burning red.

“Screw off. This is my identity.”

“Yeah, yeah. Now let me in.”

“Fine.”

Liliana opened her door hesitantly. Nobody was allowed in her personal grotto, a cave that smelled like one. It was too stuffy and there were too many things from the past: A calendar from 2014, a cross that held no meaning to her, clothes she wore when she was sixteen.

“Sometimes I want to slap the sadness out of you,” Stephen sighed. “This is the best I can do.” He smiled gloomily as he opened his pale hand to reveal pills the color of vomit. Like puke, Xanax was bitter and ugly but relieving. Liliana grinned--her first smile of the day.

“I love you, Stevie-bear,” Liliana cooed as she snatched four, two milligram Xanax bars. The rest were for Stephen. Stephen furrowed his brows. He finally said, “No, they’re all for you. I quit.” This was *not* a part of the cycle. Liliana had to sit on her twin-sized mattress in order to process his words. Stephen was the angel that introduced her to benzodiazepines approximately four years ago. They stuck side-by-side at the same college, meeting a few people here and there, but nevertheless ending up alone, together. His tone was synonymous to “I’m leaving you forever.”

“Um. Wait. What?”

“Yeah, I know. I already started to ween off this shit. Can’t afford it anymore,” he explained matter-of-factly. His gaze was fixed on the floor.

Liliana was silent before she muttered, “Oh. Well, thanks. Can you please leave me alone now?” It had been two weeks since Stephen “quit” Xanax. Stephen opted to smoke more cigarettes. He was rarely home. When he *was* at the apartment, he was sleeping or watching TV with some girl from class. The sight made Liliana sick to her stomach--not very sick, though. Her mind was too foggy to come to the realization that Stephen had retreated from Liliana’s comforting, toxic cycle. She *needed* Stephen to bring her pills and candy and love and warmth. He did not do this anymore; maybe he

quit because he loved her too much. The thought was there, but it didn't make sense. A loving Stephen would not abandon Liliana like this! If this was love, she didn't want to feel it.

Liliana *still* hadn't called her mother. She could do that tomorrow. Right now all she needed was a dealer to sell her more pills as her small stash had come to a halt.

"Hey, Stephen," Liliana called shyly from the hallway. He was propped on the couch, arm around the nameless girl.

"What?!"

"Come here?"

Stephen obliged, sighing as he got up.

She could, still, call her mother--perhaps she could catch up with her family. There was only mamá and her older brother, Pedro, but they had their own lives to tend to. In Liliana's clouded mind, she was a nuisance--they only reached out to her because they *had* to.

"Whassup? You look terrible today," Stephen said, interrupting waves and waves of thoughts that carried her tiny family ashore. *Mi pequeña familia*, her mother would announce.

"Thanks. You wanna give me your dealer's number? I'm a big girl now, you know."

Stephen shifted uncomfortably. "I can't do that, Lilly. He wouldn't want me to give out his number, anyway."

Liliana's forehead was on fire. Stephen's words struck her across her face like a harsh, deserving slap. She was reminded of her mother's heated palm when she would misbehave as a child.

"Whatever," was all Liliana could come up with. "I don't need you." She wanted to scream, *I need you, Stephen*.

The cycle was broken. She was too nervous to contact people who could have pills, so she did not retrieve any. At first the difference was minute, then earth-shattering. Liliana would have fits of hysteria, sob into her pillow, and pace back and forth. Back and forth, back and forth, more so than before. The showers did not wake her up anymore because she was already awake. The wounds on her scalp were bloody and plentiful, but not enough. She couldn't focus during class so she stopped attending, here and there. The cycle was broken.

"What can I do?" Liliana asked herself. She was six days clean and the rolling fog banks that often drifted in her mind were absent. She relied on the cloudiness to keep the unwanted thoughts

away. Lilianna felt ashamed: her addiction was harrowingly clear now. It wasn't a *part* of the cycle. The pills *were* the cycle; now her life felt like a vase that had been pushed off a steep, steep table. Bits and pieces lay shattered and sprawled--Liliana did not know where to begin. How could she put everything back together without Xanax, her super-glue?

“What can I do?” She asked herself again.

Liliana had strolled through the park earlier in the day. It did not change anything. She even went to her school's gym for the first time in a year. It didn't help. She still felt on edge--like there was something she *had* to do. Violent buzzes from her phone interrupted the repetitive question of what to do. It was Liliana's mother. And then a stroke of clarity struck her, a little like lightning. She knew what she wanted, what she deserved: candid love. Stephen's love was not love; she only adored his essence because he always lugged beautiful, ladder-shaped pills. It was time to *really* break the cycle.

“Hola, mami,” Liliana answered her phone in a shy quiver. She felt like crying but she didn't. A genuine, rare layer of sweetness coated Liliana's voice as she began to spill broken-Spanish, quietly and then heavily.

“Que milagro que cogiste el teléfono,” said her mother. *It's a miracle that you picked up the phone.*

BENJAMIN COLAHAN

Blessing for God Known in the Stuffed Animal

Blessed are you, worn and dirty Stuffed Animal. When the night is dark and monsters lurk, you are my guardian who does not sleep. When the fever comes and doctors leave, you are the healer who gladly soaks my sweat into your stitches. When my parents fight and I flee to my room, you are the comforter who dries my tears with felted paws. When it is my birthday and I am alone, you are the guest who always comes to my party, eager to hide crumbs in your fur for later. You smell of the shame of wet beds, the triumph of trees climbed, the joy of mud wallowed. You are more precious to me than my final piece of candy, and yet when I meet my very best friend, I will give you to that person. Because you are love.



DALE MATTSON

Hummingbird

ROBIN DIZARD

Chateauguay Country

*I love to go a-wandering, along the greenwood track, My
backpack on my back. . . . Val-dee-ree, val-dee rah Along the
greenwood track. . .*

One day at camp in Vermont, about 1957, someone asked, “Would you like to lead a hike in the Chateauguay country?” I said, “Sure,” because I was tired of the in camp routine---my cabin of little girls was getting along famously, except for one camper who was stealing things and hiding them in her bunk. My co-counselor had a wacky sense of humor, so we egged the campers on to do stunts, like turning our table in the dining room upside down, so we all had to eat squatting on the floor. Morale soared; other girls wanted to be in our cabin, and the stealing ended. I knew being asked to lead a hike was a reward.

Hikes would always be organized about the same way. The camp director and the Head Campcraft counselor chose the leaders; the Head decided which trails to take and how long campers would stay out, and then the hikes were posted on the bulletin board where the campers could see them to sign up for the one they wanted to join. The next step was for the counselors to fill out a list for the commissary. The storeroom had stacks and shelves of supplies; the commissary clerk would advise if she noticed some critical item was forgotten. Figuring out which meals we could make, with a nod in the direction of healthy eating, was for the counselors to decide. Not having heard of the Chateauguay before, I was not sure just where it was. The mere name summoned thoughts of clear streams and dappled woods, so I longed to go. As it happens the Appalachian Trail runs through there, a well-marked trail, and so does the famed Long Trail of Vermont. The night before we left, one of the best hikers in camp, Jack, reviewed the map with me. I am not sure I had

a map to take with us; what I remember is memorizing the way the trail went, taking special note of a stretch Jack said could be tricky: where the Long Trail runs along the same route as the Appalachian, then diverges, at the end of a ridge.

More campers signed on than usual, perhaps because it was late in the summer, which meant this was the last chance for campers who had been hanging back from hiking to have their crack at it. Or maybe the hike was supposed to be easier, crossing no mountains worth mentioning. By the time we were all set we had twelve girls around ten and eleven, and one dog. The dog was a setter. The camper who brought the setter was special, and the dog was what we now call a comfort animal. I was skeptical, but since the dog soothed the girl, I agreed to bring the dog if it were wholly her responsibility. So we were fourteen people and a dog. My co-leader for the trip was one of the new counselors, a foreign exchange student who was at camp for half the summer. We had only met a few days before, but I liked her spirit. She was from Birmingham, England, keen to learn all about America. When we ordered our supplies and worked out the menus, I made sure we had a lemon for Janet's tea. Our jumping off point was a nondescript unpaved road sloping up into the forest. We paid close attention to directions from the camp truck driver about where he would pick us up in three day's time. Right next to the road a few hundred feet from our starting point was a large dilapidated house. It seemed never have been painted. But it was inhabited. A crowd of people came out to watch us walk past. The children apart from the bigger ones had no shoes. The men looked ordinary, but the woman who stood nearby had on a dress so worn it had no longer any particular color or shape. I stole a glance before I looked away, feeling ashamed of my shoes, my bright shirt. My felt hat was all right because I had only recently found it on a tree branch, crumpled and faded, but jaunty.

Janet took a great interest in the hard-scrabble household. “Robin” she said, “Did you notice how the smallest children had no shoes?”

“Yes.”

“Did you see there were *two* men, and only one woman?”

“Yes. . . so what?”

“I think they are renting out Mum for the summer to get a little extra money. The extra man boards with them—and gets *her* too.” I was too shocked to reply. I knew about threesomes from novels, but never imagined that a weary looking woman in a shapeless dress would be a part of one. To my mind, a *ménage-à-trois* was something for glamorous glittery people, not back road Vermonters. So I was silent for some while. The path began to climb, absorbing all my attention. Our trail merged with the Appalachian Trail, and I followed the double set of markers easily. Then rain began, the girls grew tired, and one lost her footing and slipped down a ravine. We got down to her, wiped her off, and tried to put her pack together. She had been carrying our potatoes, and some rolled away. The day was growing darker, the trail was more slippery, and for a while I couldn’t see any blazes. By the time we reached the woodland shack Jack had described as our destination in the Chateaugay all of us were exhausted and filled with self-pity. No one especially wanted to pitch tarpaulin tents, so we all piled into the shack in spite of its stench---someone had thought it was a good joke to piss there. We made a hasty supper and fell asleep.

Next morning, we put all the food on the table next to the shack’s window, and considered how to rearrange our menu, given the potato shortfall. Suddenly, we had company. Three boys, packing guns. One wore bandilleros of bullets across his chest. He practiced shooting the day lilies lining the dirt road in front of the shack. That was Moe. He never spoke. Another guy was Chief, who said just a

little. Their talker was Franky, who sat at our table, pulled out his dagger, and stabbed the lemon. “Chief likes lemons.” As soon as she could, Janet pulled me aside and whispered, “Robin, who are these? What *class* do they belong to?”

“Janet,” I hissed, “they are not in it. They have no class.”

Janet, it seems, was a Sociologist. She was thrilled at the idea of interviewing delinquents, genuine American outlaw types. I thought I had better have one of the girls start sharpening our axe, just to drop a hint. Meanwhile, Janet got to talking with Franky and Chief, who were delighted to learn there were English delinquents too. Janet told them all about Rockers and Teddy Boys. After several hours, Janet suggested it would be a good idea to have the boys take her to the nearest village store in their car. She would buy some potatoes.

I immediately thought the boys would overpower Janet no matter how well she talked. So I volunteered to join the party going to the village. The girls would be all right, I figured, since there was strength in numbers. And they had the dog. So Janet, Chief, Franky and I piled into the rickety old car, while Moe walked ahead to make sure the undercarriage cleared the stony humps in the middle of the track. Once we returned, we found the girls cowering in terror all on the top bunk, having told each other every scary story they knew about bad men. Nothing had happened, though, so we got them calmed down, after a while. We made supper, and those who dared laid their sleeping bags out in the meadow above the shack. About ten o’clock, full dark, an eerie whistling started. The boys had come back. They were blowing on grass blades they held between their thumbs. “We have to go and meet them,” said Janet. “We do?”

“Yes, we will thank them for the raid, say we were expecting them, and wish them good night.” So we did. “Jolly good raid! You were spot on!” said Janet, adding: “We will bring you coffee in the morning.”

“Janet, you are crazy.”

“No, no. We will send the girls to dip water from the stream, and

now that we know where they are staying, because they showed us when we were in the village, we will soak them in their beds.”
“Okay.”

The next morning, we were up early, broke camp, and swung our packs on our backs. The girls had the billy cans dangling from the ends of their packs. We marched, stepping softly, downhill to the village, and then along the row of summer cabins. I stepped inside first, to make sure we had the right one. The girls brought water from the stream. “Surprise! Here’s your coffee!” Chief stumbled out, wet and sleepy. “Wait, wait! Let me get my camera! They’ll never believe me back in Pawtucket!”
“Let it be a happy memory!” Janet called. We pulled on our packs and set off singing “Love to go a-wandering. . .

GREGGORY N. ELIAS

Spanish Breeze

Cool breeze as the hammock sways
Gentle and soft I move like ocean waves
Finally she has come at last
Never will I forget this moment even when it has passed.
You are my Spanish breeze.

The warm sun touches down with its rays
She hugs my body encouraging me to stay
Her voice flows about like a melody
And how I always want her to stay with me.
You are my Spanish breeze.

She gently lies at my side
Giving off quiet sighs
Pressing her soft kisses on my cheek
It sends a shot of happiness from my head to my feet.
You are my Spanish breeze.

I find it impossible to think of life without thee
She who makes me feel right
She is the one in my sight
She is the one to complete my life
She is you
For you are my Spanish breeze

KENNETH FRIES

Comme hier *

Years ago I'd wander the Left Bank
from the walk-up smoke-stained Hotel Sphinx 6 francs a night
bargain for less
breakfast on your own
to the Seine where lovers played at love men fished a jug of wine
take my *sandwich jambon* to the sunny side
Notre Dame, watch *enfants* lost in sandbox games
at *Luxembourg* ... watch *jeune marins* with toy wood boats
... *comme c'est beau!* ...
lost in sailing round the pond
(There began my life-long love of boats and open sea)
Now I set up *Au Marais*, Andre's *Hotel Bretonnerie*, smart clean
beaucoup d'euros
I sit longer in the gardens in the *Place des Vosges*
sip dada mocha from a fur-lined cup
read Jacques Prévert, Aimé Césaire
*abolie bibelot inanité sonore***
When is the lecture by the dromedary at the Sorbonne?
How strange, lucid is Camus!
*Donne-moi ta bouche, ma jolie fraise**
In my remembrance Jacques Brel sings again:
"... the old salon clock hums ... says yes says no ... waits for us
all"
See that human statue on the pedestal, crouched still in silver paint,
startling the passers-by?
I'll try that ruse myself next time; strike a Balzac, Rodin's pose
(I admire his bulging torso craggy hair)
if I can hold it frozen on the bridge, I'll amuse the tourists
let the children come to me

* Like Yesterday.

* Give me your lips, my pretty strawberry (Georges Brassens)

** Nonsense sound bite used by French surrealists

KENNETH FRIES

Mediterranean Temperament

By Northern lakes
harsh winter wind
I learned
charms of early rising:
-- deliver papers before breakfast
-- shovel sidewalk snow
-- plow piano keys
-- strive for grades
-- study law, then more law, eventually
-- run a marathon without stopping,
-- thought these worthy projects all,
-- accepted that most difficult work
would yield gains deferred,

but then

student days *la Belle France*
soft slanted light Loire Valley afternoons
light breezes from blue waters off the Southern coast
infused my sensibilities

pleasures came my way: friendship loves music art

not by effort or adversity, rather more as gifts received,

like the golden message of my French family:
“Take time to live,”
oft served with Mozart, Vouvray in a glass,
goat cheese on a crust of country rye,

echoed under ochre cliffs ‘round the courtyard table
in Provence, savoring new friends, roast guinea hen,
ratatouille, tart of apricot,

sipping chilled *Rose Tavel* long into the chirping summer night.
night.

KENNETH FRIES

The Conversation

Assane hears the call, pulls
his taxi to the curb, unrolls
his prayer mat toward the East,
bows low to Mecca
-- I wait in the car;

as he drives Assane speaks
of Allah's Grace, lays it on me heavy,
sure he is not likely
to have another chance with me,
-- come from far away;

around the river bend
La Grande Mosquée
all arabesque and minaret,
where Sufis chant and whirl,
-- ecstasy of union with The One.
Assane draws more breath,
he knows Hindus, Christians too,
pleased he gets on well
with them -- their celebrations
liven up his days.

Then Assane moves his musings
'cross town to Hospital,
where languished, weeks before,
victim of a highway crash,
-- his eldest son.

Assane stops the car to face me.

His son was near to death,
he tells me with his tears,
until the miracle of human blood,
-- from donors of whatever faith
or none.

EUGENIO FRONGIA AND CARMEN OCHOA

An Essay on the Devil

Who, or what, is this alleged fallen angel, with leathery bat wings, horns and a dragon tail, harpy-like deadly paws, lethal fiery breath, wielding a trident to skewer his prey, his enemies? It is, possibly, the most ingenious and insidious of human inventions, a kind of “straw man”, conveniently set up for the purpose of justifying the need to control, oppress, terrify anyone who challenged established order or hierarchical power structures. Those who set up the straw man would, consequently, appoint themselves as the only authorities to administer, exorcise, and keep in check the devil for the rest of us. Denying the devil, would, therefore, be the equivalent of defying authority and to be marked as deviant and heretical.

The devil has no life of his own, no independent creation other than the one humans afford him in the irrational, naïve, arrogant darker corners of their minds. The devil is as historical as humans are. He has come into existence and has evolved with humans, alongside their language, their art, their literature, their powerful mythology. He has worn their evil masks with every incarnation of evil men and women, conquerors, colonialists, religious patriarchs, genociders, inquisitors, tyrants, mass murderers, warmongers, slave traders and plantationists, exploiters of the poor, women and children, misogynists, racists, barbarians who destroy the artifacts of the human intellect. The author of the narrative of the forty days of Christ in the desert, unwittingly articulates, in the temptations of Christ, the major personifications of the devil: religious powers and structures of mind control, exploitive wealth, unscientific magical power to transform the physical world when unwilling to accept the universe as is known to science, the invention of the miraculous, the delusion of alchemy. To his credit, Jesus of Nazareth rejected the devilish allures. But what would the forty days in the desert be, without the theatricality of the devil?

The devil has a name; the devil has names. In the ups and downs of history, in the cycles of empires, in the convolutions of religious wars, crusades and ethnic/religious cleansings, the devil has had a “local habitation,” this planet, this earth, this geography.

Nothing heavenly, nothing below deck, nothing otherworldly. The devil is those of us who choose to be devilish. It is, in a way, all of us.

What are, then, some of the historical incarnations of the devil? The devil is the Inquisition - - and every Inquisitor who blinded Galileo, who burned Giordano Bruno at the stake in Campo dei Fiori, who condemned Tommaso Campanella, for intuiting, centuries ahead of his time, that the cosmos may indeed contain multiple worlds. The devil is the patriarchal mind set, who concocted the tale of the “Fall”, condemning man and woman to “postlapsarian” sinfulness for having sought knowledge of themselves and the surrounding world. The devil is he who, from the beginning, framed “Eve” as a scapegoat, as a weak, insubordinate, vain, curious woman, while she deserves all honor and applause for being the giver and guarantor of life. The devil is every tyrant, from Egypt to the Deep South, who instituted slavery in the name of God, in the name of race, under pretense of law and order. The devil is all those who appointed themselves, or, where convenient, enshrined as “auctoritates” – written texts – under the aegis of divine “revealed” authority, to keep everyone and every divergent system or way of thinking and feeling, under control. Hence, surprisingly, the devil is Augustine of Tagaste and Thomas Aquinas, who built on the “authority” of Aristotle to create for Christianity a system written in stone, which was conveniently dubbed “natural law”, “The Truth” or “natural order”, an order where the human body is demeaned, sex and reproduction are cast as necessary evils, and where women are inferior and subjected as chattel to the ownership of men.

The devil is the alliance and the collusion between Church and State that unleashed a hurricane of conquest, destruction, murder and pillage on the native ethnicities and cultures of pre-Columbian America. The devil is also the evil practice of Mayan, Incan, Aztec human sacrifice, for the false purpose of assuaging the appetite and favor of false gods, an extension of the insatiable male ego and thirst for power and dominion. The devil was every Roman emperor, who brutally enslaved, exploited and murdered millions of human beings in order to assert, extend and keep personal power and wealth.

The devil is he who, sometime in the first century AD, metamorphosed the simple message of a Jewish carpenter and

local political messiah into a systematic theology and institutional religion, whereby a prophet and preacher of good news to the common folk, morphed into ‘The Christ,’ the Son of God, and built on this distortion promises that have necessarily gone unfulfilled for two thousand years. The devil, in the clothes of the deceiver, is he who promised eternal life and resurrection, when there is no shred of evidence in history for either. Remember that we are still waiting, after two thousand years for anyone to return with evidence of the good news from among the dead.

The devil is every imperial, colonial power that, in more recent times, has invaded, conquered, subjugated nations and entire continents for the sole purpose of exploitation, of “a place in the sun,” hoarding, profit, and left in its wake a heritage of religious divisions and hatred, mass migration, endless war, terrorism, oppression of women and children, famine, plague, epidemic and starvation.

The devil are Mussolini and Achille Ratti, who conspired in the late 1920s, one to create a nefarious totalitarian regime and to crush political freedom and the other, to create an absolutistic “confessional state and Church” to control the thoughts and feelings of billions. The devil are those two Italians who made “a pact with the devil” – namely each other – to create an independent state in the heart of Rome, in order to avoid the legal and historical consequences of religious tyranny, financial hoarding and ethical decadence, invoking immunity from behind ancient imperial walls. The devil is Eugenio Pacelli, who connived with Fascism in Italy and Nazism in Germany to gain Catholic superiority and protection, thereby abandoning to the barbarity of their enemies Protestants, Orthodox, Muslims, Roms and Jews and setting up Jews, Serbs and Russian “Communists” for the Holocaust and mass exterminations. The devil has the names of Pacelli and Ante Pavelic, who murdered 750,000 Serbs in the Balkans to impose Catholic control. The devil is Hitler and his Teutonic acolytes and mass followers, who dreamed a thousand-year Reich in Europe and eventually in the whole world, extolling the Aryan race at the expense of everyone who stood in their way. The devil is a long list of bloodthirsty tyrants who murdered millions of their own people in order to assert their power, from Stalin, Franco, Idi Amin to Pol Pot.

The devil is alive and well today and always will be, as long

as there are cyclical incarnations of evil in the form of fanatical zealots like ISIS, Boko Haram, the Taliban and those who cling to self-serving power to crush others: the Assads, the Musevenis, the Netaniahus, the gun and arms purveyors, worshippers and merchants who empower mass murderers or sick lone wolves to lay waste to countless innocent lives in our midst. The devil is home grown in the schemes and plans of the neo-cons who systematically lie about their imperialistic motivations in order to invade countries and exploits their resources: the Cheneys, the Rumsfelds, the Rices, the Bushes.



CHAR PRIETO

Give Me The White, The Rich...

EUGENIO FRONGIA

Crying in the void

Summer Solstice 2016

Rainer Maria,
I have always admired
The steep and lovely cliffs of Duino,
To which today a pair of crafty corvids fly
From the white towers of Miramare,
Where I have been listening, again,
To the angry waves
Crashing against the Hapsburg granites,
And to the echo of Carlotta's cries,
After the avenging shots at Querétaro.
But, tell me, you...
You who have fought with your God
In the discomfiting Book of the Hours,
Tell me:
Did any from among the legions of angels
Ever answer your anguished cry
In the darkness of the night?
Tell me!
I hear only the sound of silence
In the aftermath of your question.
The implied answer in your Elegy,
Like my own,
And the answer of billions
Who have ever cried,
And the silent pain of those
Who are incapable
Of formulating your question,
All trouble me now.
Nothing,
On this Planet
Is more tragic
Than the fearful refusal
Of the downtrodden

And the unenlightened
To strike back
Before twilight
At the fraudulent merchants of certainty.
As the Sun stands still
Above the splendor of Miramare,
And bathes in the light of high noon
The twin ramparts of Duino,
Reason and love
Are the only certitudes
In the vicissitude of the hours.



KRISTIN “ANJL” DOEBLIN
Concrete Jungle

EUGENIO FRONGIA

Harbor of the Mind

“But into themselves they look not.” (Conf. X, 8.15)

From the contours of a crowd of well-wishers,
Autòlicos made his way,
With unhurried steps,
Back to his painter’s shop,
Where, from a bare stone wall,
Hung unfinished
A Memphian landscape,
Where a crowd of pilgrims stood,
Puzzling over the Sphynx riddles.
“Wayfarers, seekers,” mused Autòlicos
“Eternal pilgrims,” shaking his head.
And, as he looked out
Toward the Corinthian harbor
And to the rainbow of sails
Shimmering in the Grecian Sea,
He thought of all the weathered keels
And all the sea-seasoned sailors
Who drowned the ancient sorrows
Of all unanswered riddles,
And unrequited loves,
In cups of cheap wine
In the Corinthian taverns.

“Prows, masts, sails,
Distant shores,” he thought,
“Outward phantoms of the world at hand
In the calm moorings
Of the abiding harbor of the mind!
Sail, if you must, sailors’
For there is a Sea.
Live, or die,

By the lure of the phantom,
For live and die you must,
And sleep in watery graves, or land.
Yet, you are born
With the world you seek,
Inside!”

EUGENIO FRONGIA

Tahoe Rim Trail

Young pine,
Stately and well proportioned'
With your branches in the sky,
How I would like to return
In a hundred years
To greet you again,
A giant of the forest!
But time, which today we share
In the September sun,
Is not the same
For you and me.
In a hundred years,
You will still be here,
Still young and proud
Among your peers.
The wind,
Climbing the steep hill
From the azure Lake,
Will scarcely sway your pride;
The snow will barely
Bend your branches.
Neither winter nor fall
Will make you fearful.
But I will not be here
To sing your glory.
I will be back in the earth
That gave me life.
Luck will be
To be remembered
For something
I stood tall for
In my own time.
All around me,
The mountain landscape is strewn

With sleeping giants,
Your mighty ancestors
That one day defied the storms.
But you too,
In your time, will turn to dust,
And like this pilgrim,
You will not complain
About your fate.
We will have lived well,
And neither I nor you
Will think of reasons
To curse the ever silent stars.

LISA LEWIS

Flask

The light reflects upon the unending curves.
Its clear liquid contains the power to numb the nerves.
The faded label hints at its potent contents.
To drown the unbidden thoughts and hidden regrets
He wriggles the rubber and angles the draught.
Its aroma sneaks upward; a hint of what he'd bought.
It gurgles forth from the crystal throat and he thought
About quenching his thirst for his habit he besot.
It caresses the cubes and surrounds the round hollow.
The ice clinks without any cares of tomorrow.
The remains of the flask glitter in the drain.
The liquid sears his throat and his eyes moisten with pain.



FRANCESCA TORRES

Sunset Keys

LISA LEWIS

Nature's Way

In the midst of a pine forest frosted with snow,
Two tiny shapes scatter down in a thicket low.
But little did they know they were being followed unaware
By something vicious with sharp teeth bared.
There was a sudden movement through the underbrush
And all of the cold and dark wood stood silent and hush.
There was not a sound save for the alarm cry of a hawk
As it sat on its perch high above and watched the rabbits below
panic and balk.
The snow flew this way and that as the creatures sought safety and
refuge
From the threat that had intently watched their every move.
The rabbits buried deep in the cold whiteness with the fox pawing
about, but to no avail.
At long last, the defeated and hungry fox voiced a wounded wail.
With a weak whimper in its throat which rose to a low growl,
The fox returned to its midnight prowl.

LISA LEWIS

Spring Awakens

When the heavens pass o'er the sky,
Nature relaxes her tight hold and sighs.
When Nature's soft breath rustles the trees,
The blossoms join in to dance with the breeze,
Scattering their scented petals about.
Lifting Nature's spirit without a doubt.
The sun rises through a break in the clouds,
The sparrow and lark greet spring with a joyful sound.
Flowers unfold through a crack in Mother Earth,
Lifting towards the sunshine, celebrating new birth.
With twilight not far yonder,
All of life settles down in reverent wonder.
A night wind cools the air,
Spiced with salt and the crispness of beaches bare.
The conches sound for the tide to flow,
And were reddened by the evening afterglow.
The gulls roost in the last light of day,
Nature settles down, with day but hours away.



CHAR PRIETO

The Making of a Puppet

LISA LEWIS

Trump

He started out as a real estate mogul
Soon all everywhere sighted his logo
Lives in ostentatious homes and decor
Which all of his women just adore

Had it all and a hit show to boot
Where all were fired, so it's moot
Had many enterprises that did not prosper
Does his wealth exclude him being proper?

Flies around in private jets
Blasts his enemies in the press
As he spreads his hate with no regrets
Who knows what he'll do next

He claims he will erect a wall
Does he know the economy will fall?
Spouts out intolerance, suspicion and hate
Is this man really the head of state?



CHAR PRIETO

The Puppet

GEORGE McCLENDON

Hummm...Earthy Chant

In her rocking chair my mother
Lela, "Dark Beauty"
would hummm...while she nursed.
Hummm within her would
Resonate within me.
Mom hummed often,
I think a Cherokee way,
to balance body and mind
during household tasks.
I would listen to her hmmm.
when she made our beds in the morning.
Today I notice I do the same

I make my own bed
hmmm,,,remember her.
A meditative practice
she taught me long ago
helped me during my monastic years
to sing Gregorian Chant in our prayers
same open sound of Latin verse
sacred hymnal hmmm.....
Today I hum this grateful poem

GEORGE McCLENDON

Find My Yes

When unknown caller
somehow knows my name
asks how I am today
I answer
“Not well, don’t want what you sell”
Could have said, “Thank you for asking”
an empathic balance to my no.
Don’t like myself when I leave a shopping mall
pretend not to see someone asking for help.
What if I touched and blessed him or her with my eyes
decide then to give or not?
No place to go from no.
Compassionate affirmation of beauty, truth, goodness
given with love
my yes
even if I say no.

GEORGE McCLENDON

Valley Oak Tree and Me

When I feel old
aches and pains
I stand under a
Valley Oak Tree
hold in my hand
small bark piece
of a two-hundred-fifty
year old tree that grows
on Sycamore Creek
now in drought, no water flows
yet she finds some deep down.
She talks to me, I listen
stand firm, she says
stand tall, she says
be strong, she says
remember who you are, she says
accept support even surgery, she says.
When I feel weak and unstable I go to her
embraced by her limbs I feel strength and hope.
Bless you, she says.

MAX MYERS

Lament

would I lament my past
for opportunity lost
words dismissed to silence
love's intent held back?
would I regret inaction's sloth
with cast down eyes reflecting
cling to the pain of stumbling youth?
oh no, this is not the way
for every moment rise or fall
holds in its passing dearness,
humbleness, forgiveness
these are the fruit produced
of living with one's own self
of bearing the burden of being
of choosing to proceed
in the light and strength
of becoming more

MAX MYERS

The Limited Gift

one cannot fathom this gift of life
that by the Angel's watch is measured
nor is one to understand the depths
of a heart's freedoms and constraints
nor the infinite love encased within
still one is allowed to breathe for a while
to touch another, eye to eye, to smile
for when the Creator of all
decides it is time to come home
it will be in the moment of his choosing
and we will wonder at our loss
and consider all manner of circumstance
yet in the end one has returned to Heaven
the task completed
and we in trust and faith in God
will carry on the memory of that soul
we were graced to have been touched by
even briefly, as this limited gift

MAX MYERS

The Need to Know

still, after all is said
when contemplation has revealed nothing
and only years stand in testament
to the irony of time foolishly spent
does it become apparent,
the need to know needs not be known
for the great mystery is without unraveling
there need be no such folly
no such wearisome engagement
to be, to become that,
which one has always been



CAROL McCLENDON

Bristle Cone Pine

MAX MYERS

To Remember

There is something about traveling the countryside that evokes introspection and deep spiritual contemplation. The incredible Earth upon which we are born of, raised with, and proceed throughout our lives in reasonable relation to, is beyond my limited mind's ability to grasp, in the sense of time's measure. How long did it take to look like it does today, lush with forests, to arid deserts, to oceans, mountains, streams and on and on. Yet my time here is so very limited by comparison to the age of the Earth. I am only here an all too brief instant. This presents the question of my own significance, in relation to my lifespan, is there more to it than simply existing until death? If there is something to my being here that has merit, then it must be addressed in such a manner as to achieve some goal, or end of usefulness. Otherwise I see no meaning to being alive as different as any other organism. In fact there are many other life forms which enjoy a much, much longer lifespan than we do. So in this, it becomes truly clear that there is a point to my presence in this world, this lovely, scary, mysterious and challenging process of becoming more than flesh, of developing my spirit, or soul, that I might continue to exist and rise above the dust from which I came. As the Phoenix, rise above the ashes to eternal life. Such is the impression that grasps me when I travel about this glorious countryside, my present home, the Earth. Were it only possible to remember this always, and not forget to remember the shortness of my time to achieve such a lofty goal.

DAVID REYES

In a Dark Room

He started off like all of us hangin' on the block,
with the boys causin' mischief and running from the cops.
At the time I'm sure he didn't know,
that he would be a gangster he just went with the flow.
At 13 he traded in his toys for two ladies,
Nina for protection and Mary Jane to keep his mind at ease.
Never had fear to pull the trigger,
each and every pull just made him feel bigger.
23 now, has money, women, power, all that he needs.
Achieved through gang banging and slanging cocaine and weed.
Just another product of our environment, can't you see?
If you live in darkness, dark is all you will be.
One day on the boulevard a car pulled up slow,
it was foreign to this neighborhood but he didn't know.
"Northside mothafucker!" famous last words,
not the last he spoke, but the last he heard.
Two shots to the temple,
murder on the go, murder made simple.
But among the witnesses there was a boy age 14,
who just stood there paralyzed by the scene.
Deep down a young soldier is what he wanted to be,
but that day made him say, "I'm glad that's not me."
The goal was to be cool, thought gang banging was the way,
that all changed when shots rang out that day.
Never really banged but still he felt fear,
if he didn't change his ways he could end up like his peers.
The gangster rap he loved had a new meaning the next morning,
no longer a role model, it now served as a warning.
He was always into sports, did all right in school,
he started focusing on academics, wasn't worth it to be cool.
Made it to college and left his old neighborhood,
Those dreams of being a gangster died for good.
You see, flowers can bloom in the dark, it's true.
I was the one on the corner who watched red kill blue.

JULIET ZAVON

To Muslim Shop Keepers

To Muslim Shop Keepers: I'm glad you are in my neighborhood. That's what I told them. I walked to nearby shops and eateries and said: "I wish you peace, health, and prosperity. I wish an end to this hate. Welcome. I'm glad you're in the neighborhood." I could do this: it was personal and direct. It depended on me alone, not a vote in congress. I could do it, and so I did. A middle-aged woman in a headscarf came from behind the counter and hugged me. The old man smiled, his hands never stopping the work of making sandwiches. A man peered around a display of dried fruit, listening. Young men, dark-haired heads bent over lunch plates at four tiny tables, looked up. The waitress, her long dark hair in a ponytail, began to cry. She reached out and squeezed my hand. A man, one hand on the doorknob, the other holding a heavy grocery bag, turned to me and said: "You give us hope."



CAROL McCLENDON
We Welcome Immigrants

FRENCH

EMMY KLASSEN

Coincé

Pour bien vivre
Le renard s'aperçoit
Qu'il faut oser
Pour réaliser sa vie.
Et pour réaliser sa vie
Il faut avoir du courage.
Et pour avoir du courage
Il faut être vaillant.
Pourtant, le renard est sans flamme
Car il est timide
Et il a peur du monde.
Son rêve, c'est de découvrir le monde
Et partir en exploration.
Malgré cela
C'est comme s'il y a une barrière
Devant lui qui l'empêche et qui l'arrête.
Mais c'est seulement dans sa tête.
La barrière occupe son propre esprit
Et barre ses rêves.
Ce blocage s'appelle la trouille.
Une peur terrible
Qui enferme et emprisonne.
Dans sa tête
Il entend une voix
Qui parle des dangers.
Il ne sautera pas l'obstacle
Parce qu'il est effrayé de la chute.

XINRU (KAREN) LIN

La ville des arbres

J'aime Chico.
C'est la ville des arbres.
Chaque matin, je me réveille dans l'air frais.
Chaque nuit, je dors dans la belle odeur des arbres.
Je me réveille avec de l'énergie et de la gratitude.
Je dors avec la paix et le rêve.
J'aime Chico.
J'aime ma vie en vert.

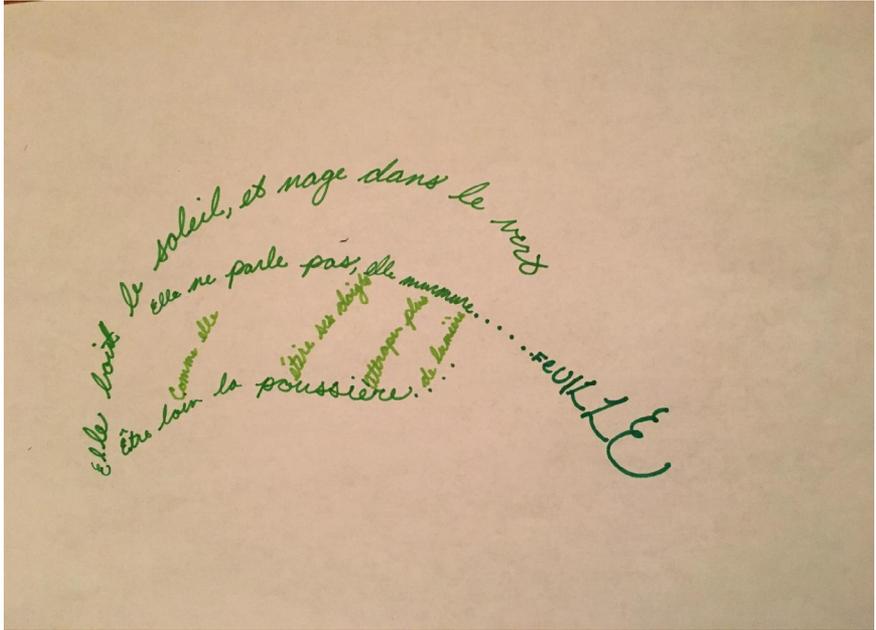


XINRU (KAREN) LIN

La ville des arbres

MARIE WEVERKA

La feuille



ITALIAN

YOMAIRA ANGULO

Le scosse di assestamento

Di solito i terremoti sono più grandi delle scosse di assestamento. Contrariamente a quanto si pensa però le scosse di assestamento hanno un maggiore impatto su di noi. Che si tratti della paura che esse si trasformino in un terremoto ancora più forte oppure dell'angoscia in cui si vive mentre le si aspettano, le scosse di assestamento ci "tengono in pugno". Secondo me l'abuso degli animali produce delle scosse di assestamento che anche in questo caso sono potenti e dannose. Animali, bambini, tutta la nostra società nel suo complesso risente dell'effetto a catena prodotto dai maltrattamenti sugli animali e secondo Dwayne Robinson della Società Umana, "gli effetti sono irreversibili."

A volte le ingiurie sugli animali sono difficili da rilevare ma una volta che un animale ha subito dei maltrattamenti non è più lo stesso. Gli animali soffrono sia per ingiurie fisiche che per ingiurie psicologiche. Secondo il veterinario Frank D. McMillan, il maltrattamento emotivo tende a causare un maggiore dolore sugli animali. Nel suo articolo "Un mondo che fa male- il dolore è speciale?", egli afferma che "(...) ci sono prove che il dolore emotivo può indurre una maggiore sofferenza del dolore fisico. Gli studi hanno dimostrato che i fattori emotivi pesano di più del dolore fisico nelle scelte comportamentali degli animali." Bioeticista e autore di *Tutti i cani vanno in paradiso*, Jessica Pierce è d'accordo con la precedente affermazione di McMillan. Nel suo articolo, "Il dolore emotivo negli animali: un mondo invisibile di male" lei concorda sul fatto che, "(...) quelle che attirano meno attenzione, ammesso che le notiamo, sono le cicatrici e gli sfregi psicologici che gli animali portano su di loro. In effetti, le leggi contro la crudeltà sugli animali riconoscono in generale solo i danni e la sofferenza fisici. Il maltrattamento emotivo è molto più difficile da vedere e da controllare con delle leggi. Eppure questo tipo di ingiuria può alla fine causare ad un animale sofferenze e danni più duraturi." Proprio come gli esseri umani che continuano a soffrire dopo esperienze traumatiche, gli animali che hanno sperimentato dei maltrattamenti non sono mai più gli stessi di prima. Per loro le scosse di assestamento al seguito di un trauma si manifestano nella paura degli esseri umani e provocano in loro degli atteggiamenti aggressivi come il mordere e/o l'attaccare le persone che si avvicinano troppo. Insomma un animale maltrattato non è più in grado di fidarsi degli esseri umani.

Gli aguzzini degli animali tendono a iniziare in giovane età. La violenza di solito inizia come risultato dell'essere esposti a della violenza domestica. La Società di Schenectady County per la Prevenzione della Crudeltà verso gli Animali (SPCA) afferma che, "un bambino che vede maltrattati il suo animale domestico o sua madre, cresce pensando che questa sia la norma. I bambini possono diventare insensibili alla violenza. Essi imparano che si dimostra di essere più forti di un'altra creatura colpendola e dandole dei calci." Come risultato, i bambini possono diventare psicologicamente disturbati. Un articolo del *Giornale australiano di veterinaria* ha stimato che gli abusi sugli animali possono essere presenti fino nel 25% dei bambini che soffrono di disturbi comportamentali. Infatti la crudeltà sugli animali è ora inclusa come indicatore diagnostico per i disturbi comportamentali nel Manuale Diagnostico e Statistico dei Disturbi Mentali. "Diventare desensibilizzati alla violenza e il non avere la capacità di entrare in empatia con la vittima sono scosse di assestamento sui bambini che hanno subito l'esperienza di maltrattamento degli animali."

Le persone tendono a non segnalare o a non parlare degli abusi sugli animali a meno che non venga loro richiesto. L'abuso sulle persone è segnalato più del maltrattamento sugli animali. Tuttavia, a causa di recenti pubblicazioni e casi riportati dai media, il nostro paese ha sentito le scosse di assestamento del maltrattamento sugli animali. Come accennato nell'articolo del New York Times "Abuso di animali come indizio di altre crudeltà", "in Dearborn, Michigan, la contea ha pagato più di \$ 37.000 per ripulire la casa di uno psicopatico, Kenneth Lang Jr., presso cui le autorità avevano trovato più di 150 Chihuahua morti e più di 100 altri tipi di cani, coperti di feci e sporcizia, che vivevano nella sua casa. Molti dei cani morti sono stati trovati in frigoriferi e congelatori." Come risultato di casi orribili come questo, molti stati hanno approvato leggi sui maltrattamenti agli animali. Adesso in California, Tennessee, Arkansas, Illinois, Oregon e Washington, D.C. esistono delle leggi e numerose proposte di leggi sono al vaglio che richiedono o autorizzano gli investigatori sulle violenze domestiche e gli agenti di controllo degli animali a collaborare tra di loro quando trovano qualcosa di sospetto in una casa sotto inchiesta.

Ho scritto questo articolo con lo scopo di informare e, spero, di incoraggiarvi a fare parte di un cambiamento sociale perché, quando si sta male, le persone che si amano risentono del nostro dolore così come noi risentiamo del dolore sofferto dalle persone che amiamo. Qualcosa che sta succedendo a noi può anche influenzare la società. L'effetto a

catena è potente e può portare al cambiamento e, talvolta, un piccolo cambiamento è tutto quello di cui abbiamo bisogno. Come ho detto le scosse di assestamento sono potenti.

SAMUEL CREMO

Essere comunisti nel paese più capitalista del mondo

Essere comunisti può sembrare molto strano nel panorama della politica americana. Nel paese di McCarthy e Reagan, le barriere contro le idee del socialismo, del comunismo e del marxismo sono molte e molto serie. Negli Stati Uniti, nel cuore del capitalismo mondiale, la denigrazione delle ideologie divergenti è sempre esistita, fin dai tempi della prima “paura rossa” a seguito del successo della Rivoluzione Bolscevica. A causa di ciò, da ragazzino, avevo l'impressione che il comunismo fosse la cosa più contraria al nostro sistema sociale che potesse mai esistere.

Questa impressione acquistò grande importanza quando avvenne la crisi economica del 2008. Personalmente sono abituato a una vita normale, senza molti problemi né molta turbolenza. I miei genitori appartengono alla generazione nata durante il boom economico del dopoguerra e sono quindi troppo giovani per ricordarsi della crisi del 1973. Quindi tutti noi in famiglia siamo stati parimente colti di sorpresa. Nel 2008 il sistema capitalistico americano è fallito in maniera catastrofica per molti e io, curioso “topo di biblioteca”, volevo capire perché: come mai i ricchi potessero distruggere le vite di così tanta gente senza soffrire nessuna conseguenza. Sono andato in biblioteca, dove ho preso in prestito due libri, uno di loro una spiegazione molto elementare del comunismo e l'altro un libro propagandistico degli anni '50. Quei due libri non mi sono bastati però e così ho continuato la mia ricerca sull'internet. Leggevo le pagine web di molti gruppetti comunisti, prevalentemente maoisti, ma non avrei saputo dire la differenza tra i due. Leggere qualcosa di radicale mi fu sufficiente per aprire dei nuovi orizzonti nel mio modo di pensare a riguardo del sistema socio-economico del nostro paese.

Così mi sono subito convertito al comunismo, dopo aver letto quella storia degli Stati Uniti che i corsi scolastici non insegnano o che insegnano con molta semplificazione e molte omissioni: una storia di oppressione e sfruttamento. Ciononostante, le mie idee erano confusissime (in gran parte a causa della confusione dei gruppi

stalinisti e maoisti le cui pagine web avevo letto), l'unica opera originale e concreta che avevo letto era *Il Manifesto comunista* di Marx, che non potevo dire di avere veramente capito. Alla fine il mio fervore si è calmato un poco.

Continuavo a considerarmi politicamente di sinistra e per un certo periodo mi sono anche considerato un anarchico, ma mi sentivo soprattutto apatico o indifferente. Un giorno, sul campus, ho visto un tavolo con dei libretti di propaganda marxista e ho visto per la prima volta i miei futuri compagni. Ho preso un opuscolo e, con curiosità, sono andato alla pagina web cui quei libretti rimandavano. Questo sito però era diverso da quelli che avevo consultato altre volte. Invece di essere confusi, gli articoli erano in grado di fare un'analisi eccellente ed offrivano anche molte risorse per studiare le fonti del marxismo per conto proprio.

È così che ho cominciato a leggere le opere di Marx, Engels, Lenin e Trockij, opere in cui ho trovato un sistema coerente e profondo, con le spiegazioni per quei fenomeni che non avevo capito in precedenza, come quello che era successo nell'Unione Sovietica e in Cina e quello che causa ancora oggi le crisi economiche. Questa volta la mia attrazione verso le idee del marxismo non è venuta da una ribellione giovanile, ma da uno studio approfondito e dal pensiero logico. Armato di quella comprensione finalmente trovata mi sono iscritto alla Tendenza Marxista Internazionale e ho cominciato a dedicarmi alla lotta per il miglioramento del mondo, per la distruzione di ogni forma di oppressione, per l'annullamento di disuguaglianze disumane e per la liberazione finale della specie umana.

EUGENIO FRONGIA

Il giorno di San Silvestro

Memoria di un viaggio

Il Giorno di San Silvestro
Sale nel cielo il sol del nuovo giorno,
Mi circonda la pace del mattino.
Giù nella Baia splende il mar turchino,
Ridono le colline tutt'intorno.
Muore, alfin, l'Anno Vecchio, che rapace
Ci ha privato del suon della tua voce;
Ma t'ha alleviato il peso della croce
E ha dischiuso il sentier della tua pace.
Smaga nel tempo il color delle viole;
Sbiadiscono i contorni ed i sembianti.
Si stempra l'armonia dei vecchi canti,
S'affievolisce il suon delle parole.
Ma nell'Anno che nasce, il tuo bel viso
Splenderà ancor qual fior di paradiso.

JOCELYN GONZALEZ

L'importanza del viaggiare

Il mondo é un posto grandissimo e bellissimo. Con quasi duecento paesi e ancora più città da vedere, non riesco a pensare che qualcuno possa essere soddisfatto di rimanere sempre nello stesso posto. Secondo me, ci sono moltissime ragioni valide per viaggiare. Prima di tutto, non é mai una cattiva idea esplorare posti nuovi. Non deve essere necessariamente un paese straniero o nemmeno uno stato degli Stati Uniti dove non siamo mai stati. Basta andare in una città nuova per sentirsi già elettrizzati. In tutte le città ci sono molte cose da fare: si può mangiare in ristoranti mai provati prima, visitare musei e naturalmente godere dei negozi del posto che hanno sempre qualcosa di unico da offrire. Ogni città ha una sua personalità. Chico è molto diversa dalla mia città natale: è più piccola e la gente è più cordiale e amichevole. C'è un senso di comunità di cui non avevo mai fatto l'esperienza prima. Se non mi ci fossi trasferita per frequentare l'università non l'avrei mai saputo e non avrei mai scoperto che io preferisco le piccole città. Adesso so anche che questa scoperta influenzerà la scelta della città dove andrò a vivere dopo che avrò finito i miei studi.

Secondo la mia esperienza, viaggiare aiuta a scoprire nuovi aspetti della propria personalità. Nel mio caso, per esempio, che io preferisco le piccole città. Altri potrebbero realizzare che gli piace vivere vicino al mare, altri ancora che non sopportano un clima umido e piovoso. Si fanno queste scoperte solo attraverso l'esperienza. Se si rimane nello stesso posto, come si possono fare queste scoperte che possono a loro volta influenzare la scelta di dove si vive e quindi di chi si incontra? Le nostre amicizie e la persona che amiamo sono condizionati dal posto in cui viviamo quindi è meglio non prendere alla leggera questa scelta. Viaggiare può aiutare a prendere questa decisione.

Un'altra ragione a favore del viaggiare è, come dicono i giovani americani, *YOLO, you live only once*. Si vive solo una volta ed è la nostra responsabilità essere felici e apprezzare la vita. Nessuno vuole vivere con dei rimpianti. Nessuno vuole vivere con

dei “se”. Accettare una sfida, riconoscere una possibilità potrebbe cambiare la nostra vita per sempre. Se viaggiare non ci fa venire il desiderio di trasferirci ci farà per lo meno apprezzare di più “casa nostra”.

È stato proprio lo studio che mi ha insegnato che il mondo è troppo bello per non cercare di vedere tutto il possibile. Non solo è diverso lo scenario del luogo fisico, ma sono diverse le lingue e le culture. Ogni cultura, ogni lingua è meravigliosa e l’esserne i testimoni e gli ascoltatori ci può riempire di gioia. Se poi rimaniamo abbastanza a lungo in un paese diverso dal nostro potremo impararne la lingua il che rappresenta già un viaggio di scoperta e un arricchimento personale.

Infine viaggiare è un’opportunità per provare dei cibi nuovi. Si può scoprirne uno che diventerà il nostro preferito. Sapori, spezie, aromi: le cucine internazionali sono una parte immensa dei nostri piaceri quotidiani. Ci sono persino degli animali che non si trovano nel nostro paese d’origine. Per esempio, in Messico, la lingua della mucca è un piatto comune ma qui, negli Stati Uniti, non si mangia.

Viaggiare è quindi uno strumento per migliorare la nostra vita, per questo penso che tutti dovrebbero viaggiare il più possibile. Prometto che non nessuno se ne pentirà!

KARLI MILLER

L'eredità di mio padre

Una delle lezioni più profonde che ho ricevuto da mio padre è che io non sono migliore di nessun altro. Per tutti gli anni che ho trascorso con lui, mio padre mi ha insegnato a trattare tutti quelli che incontro sulla mia strada come io vorrei essere trattata da loro. Senza l'influenza di mio padre, non sarei la persona che sono oggi.

Mio padre era un assistente sociale in un campo lavoro per ragazzi problematici a Adrian, una città del Michigan. Per quel lavoro mio padre non aveva bisogno di grande fantasia nè di grandi titoli di studio. Ma lui aveva una qualità indispensabile per poterlo fare, lui aveva un talento naturale per lavorare con i ragazzi difficili. Mio padre ha lavorato molto sodo per dare a mio fratello e a me un'infanzia di cui avremmo potuto essere orgogliosi e quando le nostre vite sono diventate molto difficili lui ci ha ricordato che c'è gente che è meno fortunata di noi. Il suo lavoro lo aveva portato ad entrare in contatto con centinaia di ragazzi in difficoltà e allo stesso tempo ha aiutato a cambiare le vite di tutti noi. Mio padre ha ricevuto numerosi riconoscimenti come operatore sociale di eccezione perchè poteva riuscire a farsi amare da tutti i ragazzi di quella scuola presso cui lavorava. In seguito molti mi hanno detto che non c'era nessun assistente sociale che poteva relazionarsi ai ragazzi come mio padre. Anche dopo che i ragazzi terminavano il loro soggiorno in quella struttura mio padre rimaneva in contatto con loro individualmente almeno una volta alla settimana e continuava a seguirli alla distanza. Sapevo che mio padre aveva un lavoro difficile e lo faceva bene, ma ho saputo solo dopo la sua morte che lui aveva veramente fatto una grande differenza nelle vite di tanti ragazzi svantaggiati.

Quando il ventuno aprile del 2014 mio padre è morto, il mondo mi è crollato addosso. Ho iniziato a pensare a quello che era davvero importante nella mia vita. Volevo cercare il modo di "restare in contatto" con mio padre e condividere con lui qualcosa di speciale anche se lui non mi era più fisicamente vicino. Così ho deciso di iniziare a fare del volontariato per un'associazione caritatevole che si chiama *Il pane della vita* che fa un servizio di mensa per

i poveri. Quel mio primo giorno, vedendo centinaia di persone in coda, che aspettavano la loro razione di cibo mi ha fatto intuire come tutta quella gente fosse passata attraverso l'inferno e ne fosse ritornata. Alcuni erano dei veterani di guerra, altri avevano perso il loro lavoro e un sacco di loro erano senza fissa dimora. Quando li incontravo e ascoltavo le loro storie, mi sembrava di riascoltare le parole di mio padre: "Non importa quanto difficili siano diventate le cose per te, ricorda che c'è sempre qualcuno che sta peggio di te". Allora ho capito che nella vita ci sono cose più importanti dei vestiti che indosso, dello sport che pratico e dei voti che prendo a scuola. Vedendo la speranza negli occhi di tutta quella gente affamata in coda dopo che gli avevo dato la borsa di generi alimentari che li avrebbe sfamati quel giorno mi ha fatto capire perchè mio padre amava il suo lavoro. Nel mio primo giorno da volontaria per *Il pane della vita* ho ritrovato qualcosa che pensavo di aver perso quando era morto mio padre, la fede. La fede che la vita continua anche dopo che abbiamo perso così tanto.

Da quel giorno continuo a fare la volontaria per *Il pane della vita* e in molti altri eventi al servizio della comunità. Perdere mio padre è stata un'esperienza straziante però mi ha fatto diventare una persona più matura e definita grazie soprattutto alla connessione che sono riuscita a mantenere con lui. Passare il mio tempo lavorando per alcune organizzazioni che hanno un impatto positivo nelle nostre comunità è stato ed è un privilegio perchè mi ha reso una persona più riconoscente e generosa. Di questo sono in debito a mio padre e alla sua eredità.

ISHA MUNDAHL

Prima giornata a Roma

Era un giovedì a mezzanotte. Dopo tredici ore di guida eravamo finalmente arrivati a destinazione. Tutta la città era ancora in piedi: chi mangiava qualcosa al bar dell'angolo, chi fumava pigramente una sigaretta affacciato alla finestra, chi sfrecciava rumorosamente su una vespa. Mio fratello ed io aspettavamo in macchina nostra madre che stava facendo il check-in nell'albergo. Non era l'albergo tipico dei nostri viaggi: le camere di questa pensione all'italiana erano infatti tutte disposte sullo stesso piano di un vecchio palazzo. Mentre aspettavo che mia madre tornasse sentivo "il peso" del Vaticano che si trovava proprio lì vicino. Intanto noi ce ne stavamo assonnati nella macchina che mamma aveva parcheggiato illegalmente perché non eravamo riusciti a trovare altro parcheggio. Avevo sognato questo momento per tutta la mia vita, il momento di essere a Roma. Però in quella stanca attesa non mi sembrava così spettacolare come invece era stato guidare attraverso le bellezze del paesaggio italiano per sette ore. Non era così emozionante come essere in grado di capire i segnali sull'autostrada o qualcosa che una voce femminile aveva detto alla radio. Non era eccitante come sentirmi ordinare un cappuccino in italiano alla nostra prima sosta in autostrada...

Poche ore dopo di quello stesso giovedì ci siamo svegliati alle 9:00. Non avevamo dormito abbastanza ma non importava perché la giornata si preannunciava piena di straordinarie opportunità. Da americani ci siamo ritrovati a cercare un posto dove fare una bella colazione abbondante. Sapevo che agli italiani non piacciono le grandi colazioni ma non mi aspettavo di non trovare niente più di un cornetto! Alla fine mia madre ed io abbiamo preso un caffè con del pane e mio fratello ha mangiato una frittata. Finalmente eravamo pronti per il Vaticano. In un corso di Storia dell'Arte avevo imparato tante cose sia della Basilica di San Pietro che della Cappella Sistina. Si avvicinava il momento di potere vedere tutte queste opere con i miei stessi occhi. Non vedevo l'ora...

Era mezzogiorno e finalmente ero in Piazza San Pietro. Non credevo ai miei occhi. Il cielo era proprio azzurro e non c'era nemmeno l'ombra di una nuvola. Mi sono guardata intorno e ho visto più statue che persone –per un istante ho pensato che fossero loro che mi stavano guardando! Sono entrata nella Basilica ed immediatamente sono stata colta da un profondo stupore di fronte a tanta bellezza: i ricchi soffitti stuccati e affrescati, i muri ricoperti di preziose opere d'arte, i pavimenti con lapidi e tombe – tutto era così ricco di tante cose preziose, tanti dettagli magnifici. Avrei voluto esserci da sola, senza le voci e le presenze di altri. Volevo toccare le pieghe delle vesti delle statue. Volevo stendermi sulle piastrelle a guardare gli affreschi della cupola. Magari avessi avuto più tempo! Invece prima ancora di poter vedere tutto soffermandomi a mio piacere davanti a quei gioielli sono stata spinta fuori dalla folla. Per un attimo ho quasi avuto paura di aver perso la mia famiglia nella folla. Nella Cappella Sistina non fu molto diverso. Mi sentivo come la mucca di una mandria e guardare in alto agli affreschi era tutto quello che potevo fare. I miei occhi si sono spalancati di meraviglia nel vedere l'opera di Michelangelo, così vibrante, così colorata. Sono riuscita a fare una foto prima che le guardie urlassero a “noi turisti” di mettere via macchine fotografiche e telecamere.

Rientrammo alla nostra pensione alle quattro e mezza di pomeriggio. Eravamo stanchi morti dopo quella giornata ricca di storia e cultura. Mi resi conto di avere tanto sonno perché avevo dovuto concentrarmi senza sosta durante tutta la giornata. Di solito, nel mio paese, dove tutti parliamo la nostra lingua materna, posso vivere passivamente, posso interagire con tutto quello che mi circonda senza sforzo. Di solito non devo tradurre ogni frase che ascolto o sento per caso, ogni cartello o tabellone pubblicitario e non devo pensare alla risposta perfetta perché una risposta mi viene sempre sulle labbra. Anche se non è perfetta soddisfa le necessità della comunicazione quotidiana. Mi sono addormentata non appena ho chiuso gli occhi. Erano le otto di sera quando mi sono risvegliata da quel “sonnellino” ristoratore. Mio fratello invece non si è svegliato fino alla mattina successiva. Così mia madre ed io abbiamo deciso di uscire per mangiare qualcosa. Non troppo lontano dalla nostra pensione abbiamo trovato un posticino senza troppe pretese dove ci ci siamo godute una caprese con burrata e una pizza squisita con

tonno e cipolla. Ero orgogliosa di me stessa perché avevo ordinato e chiesto il conto al cameriere tutto in italiano! Quello che avevo studiato, a volte anche con fatica, adesso dava una prova tangibile della sua utilità. Satura di immagini, suoni, colori e di un'ottima cena me ne sono andata a dormire molto soddisfatta. Non era male per la mia prima giornata nel Bel Paese!

JAPANESE

DESIREA ADAME

「一瞬」

永遠。未来。今。過去
時間は不思議。
この一瞬が、思い出で一杯。
悲しくて寂しくて…。
塩辛い海の中に涙が落ちる。
どこかで小さい子猫は泣いている。
ママがいない。
兄弟もいない。
その子猫は肉球を舐める。
雨が降り始めた。
雨と涙が混じり合う。
思いが溢れる。
くまなく静かに。
もうだれもいない。
この世界はむなしい。
私の胸から全てが失せ去る。
寒くなった、
この一瞬。

MARIE CUENCA

マリーエ クエンカ

猫がいる

私の台所に猫がいる。
彼は泥棒のように動き回まわっている。
彼は食べ物を探している。

猫は私の台所の床に足跡を残す。
彼の足跡は私の水槽の前で止まる。
サメのように、彼は周りを回り回る。
すばらしスピードで、彼は跳る。

私の水槽の上に猫がいる。
彼は自分の歯を私の肌に沈める。
私の水槽の上に、私の台所に猫がいて、私は彼の夕食だ。

BRENNA VON KLEIST

好きな食べ物

普通はおばあちゃんが好きなものですが、私の好きな食べ物はどら焼きです。これが一番好きだと言うと皆んな私を「ドラエもん」と呼びます。すこし恥ずかしいですが面白くて本当のことだから「好きな食べ物は何か」と聞かれるとやっぱり「どら焼き」と答えてしまいます。

なんでそんなにどら焼き好きなのかと思っている人もいらっしゃるでしょう。ちゃんと理由がありますよ。承知のようにアメリカ人は甘いものが好きでわたしも例外ではありません。初めて食べてみた時に、その味にびっくりしました。「これは美味しい!」と思いました。なんだかすごくやわらかくてふわふわな感じでした。私にとってどら焼きは、特別なパンケーキみたいで最高です。味が良すぎて「毎日食べることできたらいいなー。」と思いました。でも、皆んなが「ダメだよ、そうすると!太っちゃうよ!」と言いました。「まあ確かに、その通り。」と思いました。毎日どら焼きは食べない方がいいとついに決めました。

MARITZA LAUREANO

タコス

一番好きな食べ物はタコスです。いろいろなしゅるいがあります。でも私はとくに牛肉のタコスが好きです。

ほとんどのタコスはサルサとトッピングでカラフルです。タコスをとってさわってみると、あたたかくてぷよぷよによした感じで、食べるとむしゃむしゃと音がします。匂いはふくぎつです。肉とトッピングとサルサがまざりあっているからです。

タコスはからいのが大好きです。いろいろえらべるし、私の一番好きな食べ物です。

MIN-JEE KIM

私

私の名前はミンジーキムで韓国人です。韓国の首都、ソウルから30分くらい離れたヨンインという所の出身です。

私には尊敬できる両親と祖父と弟がいます。私は高校で音楽を勉強していましたが、今「カリフォルニア州立大学、チコ校」というの大学でグラフィックデザインを勉強しています。

留学に来てちょうど4年ぐらいになります。最初のころは、英語が少ししか話せなくて本当に大変だったけれど今は英語を話すのがかなりらしくなりました。そして、日本語に関心を持つようになって日本語を勉強するのがとても面白いです。

母から影響を受けたのかもしれませんが。母は日本語の先生で高校生に日本語を教えていました。それは私が日本語に関心を持つようになった理由の一つです。一所懸命日本語を勉強して、将来機会があればアメリカにある日本の会社ででも日本にある日本の会社ででも働きたいです。

GABRIELA ROMERO

宇宙人はいる

私は宇宙人はいると考えています。なぜなら、他の生き物が存在しないとしたら、宇宙はあまりにも大きすぎるから…。私たちがいる銀河はかなり若いです。でも人間でない他の生き物が生きることができないことを意味するわけではありません。私は宇宙人の存在を除くことはあまり考えられません。そして彼らの存在を脅かさない限り、私たちと彼らは平和であると思います。

JONATHAN GIERTYCH

冬

四季の中で冬がいちばんすきだ。
なぜなら、寒い天气のほうが好きだからだ。
特に曇り。
世界は白くなって、曇った空はすごく美しい。
それに、雪がふるのを今までに二回しか見たことない。
私が住んでいる場所で、雪はとても珍しい。
だから、日本で雪がふる時の美しさも見てみたいな～と思う。

NICHOLAS PULIDO

永遠

永遠は
長い時間です。
永遠は
海が深いよりも
長いです。
永遠は
肉球がぶにぶにすることよりも…。
だけど、
永遠は
一瞬のようにも
感じることができます。

JOSHUA STATION

勇敢な猫

永遠に猫は水が怖いどうぶつなので、
ふだん海にはけっして迫らない。

ところがある日、その勇敢な猫は生まれた。
4歳のとき、猫の肉球は海岸にふれた。
でも怖がらないで、海に突っ掛かった!

そして猫は遊んだ!
永遠に猫は水が怖いはずだった。
しかし、その一瞬、猫は怖くなかった。
その一瞬…。

CHERIE THAO

ただひとり

永遠のようだ、この人生は。
一人で私は海辺のがけつぷちに座っている。
「ああ…」とため息をつく。
太陽の光が、海面に輝く。
背中の中から、かるい風が吹く。
「涼しいな…」私はささやく。
遠くからカモメが飛んでいるのを、
私は見て聞くことはできるが…、
一瞬すべてが静かになった。
私はそっとあたりを見わたした。
心臓があわてている。
そうだ…。私、一人だ。

PORTUGUESE

ROSE SABINO-BLODGET

Em casa

Chego em casa
tudo bem
chego em casa
tudo amém
chego em casa
mamãe dá o tom
chego em casa
e tudo de bom.

A vida passa menina,
mas não perca a graça
canta um homem na rua
dentro da casa semi-escura
concordo:
verdade mais pura.



ALINE VANUCCI
Chama da Amazônia

ROZE SABINO-BLOGET

Perdas, desvios e novos rumos

Há um lugar no Brasil, misto de escola e abrigo, chamado Casa do Zezinho. Para ali vão crianças, adolescentes e adultos, gente de uma das áreas mais pobres e violentas de São Paulo. Lá, eles recebem apoio, educação de qualidade e têm a oportunidade de se reestruturar para poderem viver melhor com o mundo hostil lá fora. Creio que todos nós também precisamos de um espaço especial em tempos de crises e perdas; de irmos parar numa simbólica casa do Zezinho, pois às vezes a vida se torna muito frágil, triste, e volátil. É assim quando perdemos um membro da família, um amigo, alguém próximo adoece gravemente ou há um estado de calamidade pública. Pior ainda, é quando tudo isto acontece de uma vez: catástrofe atrás da outra, rolando incontrolláveis, como as enchentes deste ano, num somatório de tempestades, naturais e político-sociais. Os fatos esbofeteiam nosso espírito, gerando um sentimento de vazio e incompreensão, um soluçar interior que sentimos ao respirar fundo. Foi assim comigo, quando ao mesmo tempo meu sogro faleceu, meu pai adoeceu seriamente, uma colega de trabalho anunciou que estava com câncer e mais recentemente a comunidade na região onde trabalho teve que ser subitamente evacuada devido a um possível desastre em Oro Dam. Onde estaria minha Casa do Zezinho?

Devido às perdas e às crises, nossas vidas perdem momentaneamente o equilíbrio duramente conquistado; a rotina se altera, e daí podemos ir em frente só através de alguns desvios, para poder ganhar energias de novo, pois a vida, esta implacável, as exige sempre. Os desvios são tentativas para chegar à Casa do Zezinho. Só que saímos sem GPS, SIRI ou mapas. Podemos cair em desvios de estradas boas e sólidas, cheias de benefícios para fortalecer o corpo e a alma. Os desvios bons e enaltecidos são reflexões profundas, caminhadas ou meditações para uma interiorização necessária, para que a gente possa se recompor por dentro. E daí passar a entender e aceitar mortes, doenças graves e catástrofes iminentes. A compreender que o corpo é mesmo falível; que a morte ou doença séria pode descompor e acabar com rotinas,

sonhos e planos e nos fazer ficar numa luta desigual com a vida, para salvar nossos corpos (que julgávamos tão fortes) e vidas (que julgávamos sem data de expiração.) A arregaçar as mangas como podemos também e ajudar outros envolvidos em situações fora do seu controle. As reflexões ainda que doam, fazem bem, são uma ducha fria para saber que a vida, queira-se ou não, é frágil e finita. Esses desvios se situam em um espaço interior, em preto e branco, onde entramos nus e de cara lavada; e com sorte, saímos dele com alguma graça e transcendência.

Porém, também podemos ir por desvios desastrosos, por caminhos esburacados e prestes a desmoronar, aqueles que nos levam a cometer pequenos crimes contra nós mesmos. São desvios idiotas como tomar um porre e depois pegar o telefone como uma arma quente e sair disparando mensagens sem nexos para um amigo (só para depois morrer de vergonha de ter feito esta grande bobagem com o coitado.) Ou de envolver-se numa briga com o marido ou o namorado, que nem se sabe como e por quê começou. Ou de ficar meio de molho na vida, sem tomar decisões, economizando o combustível interno, as energias, as emoções. Ou de cair na depressão: nada de ouvir música, nada de sair pra ver amigos ou de dar gargalhadas altas; só um viver seco e constricto. Eu fui pelo caminho do bem e do mal, como o anunciado no slogan cristão. Por ambos desvios. Cometi o crime de disparar pelo telefone as mensagens tresloucadas ao amigo, as quais não quis, nem quero saber quais foram; não assumo nenhuma responsabilidade! Mas refleti um bom tanto, também, e fui visitar meu pai enfermo; apoiei a família na morte do meu sogro, e ajudei um pouco as pessoas que tiveram que evacuar a área de Oroville. Fiz do melhor e do pior, com resultado insatisfatório até agora em ambos. As reflexões resultaram em algumas boas ações e o amigo, vítima de minhas mensagens loucas, como é bonzinho, já me perdoou; mas, creio que vai ter precaução quando se aproximar de mim da próxima vez.

Mas, ao fim das contas o bom de tudo isto é que uma hora a gente finalmente encontra o rumo da casa do Zezinho. As perdas e desvios não são constantes; e destas perdas e dos conseqüentes desvios, os nobres e os pobres, a gente finalmente vê despontar pelo caminho umas belas florzinhas de esperança e enxerga um sinal anunciando a chegada na casa do Zé. Neste momento, a gente

se volta para o que nos dá felicidade e arrebatamento neste nosso viver humano e mundano: música, amor e sexo, filmes, fazer um jantar gostoso para a família, fazer uma viagem ou retiro espiritual, ir de novo à academia, dançar, visitar amigos; ou seja, a gente se permite outra vez uma reentrada alegre na vida, e talvez até com um pouquinho mais de sabedoria. A gente volta com força renovada para o trabalho e as lutas diárias, ainda que o mundo continue em estado grave. Mas, mesmo assim, a gente vislumbra horizontes, segue em frente. Taí, levou tempo e muito combustível, mas chegamos, por ora, ao nosso intentado destino.



ALINE VANUCCI
Beleza pura

ROSE SABINO-BLODGET

Trindade

(Para Silvana e Weber)

Por que motivo
aqueles três lírios,
ainda verdes,
ainda botões
desenhados no quadro a giz?

Por que razão
eu queria permanecer
ora nas ruas da cidade,
ora na praia?
Nós três sempre: ele, ela, eu;
nossa trindade: ela, ele, eu;
aquele meu eu antigo e triplo.

Que queria eu?
Passar nos exames
de família e escola,
fazer a dissertação,
acertar com precisão
e avançar junto com eles
no teste de viver?

Nossa trindade desaguou um dia
em três afluentes separados.

Os lírios sigo desenhando
e, todavia, estão inacabados.

ALINE VANUCCI

Saudades de ti

Na imensidão desta terra,
que vive em minha memória,
canta-lo-ei este amor eterno
pela minha Belém do Pará.

Lembranças eternas da minha meninice nas ruelas
donde pororocas explodiam como magia,
Levando as os afluentes do Rio Amazonas a se encontrar com
o mar.
Lá, onde vive a minha Yemanjá.

Na cacimba de areias brancas, onde só existe em meu Pará,
águas cristalinas se encontram ao infinito
e o verde se almeja ao azul do céu límpido.

Assim vivem em minha alma
lembanças das canções mais saudosas
das cirandas das crianças,
e também do carimbó.

Saudades de ti,
minha terra tão amada e idolatrada.
Saudades de ti, que vive para sempre em mim:
Minha Belém do Pará.

RUSSIAN

SERGEY BYSHOV

Звезды падали

Звезды падали. Мысли таяли.
Ты простыла; курила усталая,
Поглощенная суетой.

Неприятности выли стаями -
Ночь манила сокрытыми тайнами,
Разметав полуночный покой.

Никогда не должны были встретиться,
Но превратностями судьбы,
Так сложилось, чуть больше месяца,
И мы вместе пылим мосты.

Не могу дать себе отчета,
Как случилось за пару дней
То, на что, по хорошему счету,
Часто годы идут у людей.

Как смогла ты заставить, скажи,
Груз тяжелый взвалить на плечи -
Мне в далекой поволжской глуши
С нетерпением ждать будущей встречи.

Звезды падали. Мысли таяли.
Расстояния стали хрустальными -
Перестали играть свою роль.

SERGEY BYSHOV

Очень

Осень вносит свои коррективы
В настроения порывов души -
Беспросветно и нет перспективы
Для дальнейших развитий,
Увы!
Лишь играешь ты серыми бликами
На палитре невысохших луж.
Я же окружен людьми безликими.
Надоело!
Оркестр, туш!
Мозгу хочется действия -
истосковался.
Легким –
дыма смурного
давно невтерпеж.
Ты скажи!
Ты скажи мне,
Женщина,
Где ты есть? И когда ты придешь?
В ожидании. Мечусь по комнате.
Побороть бы желание
завыть, что есть мочи.
Очень больно.
И очень холодно.
Приезжай.
Я соскучился.
Очень!

ALEXANDER GRONSKY

Зачем ты, бездарь, пишешь?

Зачем ты, бездарь, пишешь?

Цена трудам - гроши.

И только Муза шепчет:

Сашенька, пиши!

Ты многим неугоден,

За смех и дерзкий тон.

Пиши, пока свободен,

Пока еще влюблен.

На коже и ладони,

На маленьком клочке,

Пиши о каждом стоне

И пламени в зрачке.

Душа парит незримо

Над оболочкой слов,

Пиши неумоимо

Про смерть и про любовь.

Пиши, упершись рогом,

Без фальши и прикрас,

Как будто пишешь Богу

Письмо в последний раз.

ALEXANDER GRONSKY

Вселенная не спит

Вселенная не спит,
Она спокойно дышит.
И с Богом говорит,
И каждый шорох слышит.

В ней звезды, как песок,
Рассыпались без края.
И где-то, как цветок,
Земля моя родная.

Там запорошен сад,
На улице морозко.
И греет снегопад
Раздетую березку.

SVETLANA LISOVSKAYA

Я буду помнить тебя вечно

Я буду помнить тебя вечно:
Когда в душе цветет весна,
Когда на небе бесконечном
Сияет первая звезда,
Когда туманом воздух скован,
Дождя мерцает пелена,
Когда рассвет сияньем полон
И светит в сумраке луна,
Когда летят по ветру листья,
Когда все засыпает снег,
Когда так холодно от мысли,
Что мы прощаемся навек...

SVETLANA LISOVSKAYA

Экспресс

Вокзал, вагон, часы в пути
Вновь отмеряет стук колес...
Сквозь дым, туманы и дожди,
Сквозь сумерки весенних рос
Летит экспресс через ветра,
Летит, врываясь в темноту...
И только отблески тепла
Закат роняет на черту,
Отрезавшую, как мечом,
Землю подальше от небес...
Сквозь ночь мелькают за окном
Стальные реки, черный лес;
Холмы и горы по кривой
Вновь рассекают облака...
Путь поезда уходит в ночь,
Не оставляя ни следа...

ZETH MARTINEZ

Душа

Не стихи, а души
Английского и русского поэтов-
Шекспира, Пушкина-
Я изучаю души.

Я, думающий по-английски,
В познании страны
И языка России
Я изучаю душу.

И вечным странником
За Пушкиным я следую-
Большим поэтом
И душой России.

Язык России,
Дай познать поэта.
Язык и Музыка -
Вот что такое ПУШКИН.

IGOR MAXIMOV

Зимние выходные

Было ясное зимнее утро – тихо падал снег и ложился на замерзшую землю, оставляя на ней хрустящий сверкающий пласт. Я чувствовал запах маминой стряпни на кухне: пахло блинами – традиционное русское блюдо. Осмотревшись, я заметил, что брата, с которым мы делили комнату, уже нет. Мы жили в 4-комнатной квартире, которая находилась в центре города Алматы – столице Казахстана. Это великолепный город, окруженный большими горами и утопающий в зелени - так много деревьев, что, проезжая по улицам, трудно увидеть небо.

В этот холодный зимний день мы с мамой и братом собрались съездить в горы – покататься на санках. Мы часто придумывали что-нибудь на выходные, так как среди недели совсем не оставалось времени на развлечения.

После завтрака мы начали упаковывать вещи в рюкзак. Обычно мы брали с собой термос с горячим чаем и бутерброды. Мои мама и, особенно бабушка, который много путешествовал, очень любили походы.

Горы были совсем близко, но попасть туда было непросто. Подняться на горы можно только на специальной машине, способной преодолеть крутые ледяные подъемы. Мы должны были ехать на автобусе, который останавливался рядом с домом. Автобус всегда был набит людьми, желающими тоже покинуть город на выходные.

Приблизившись к подножию горы, из-за выпавшего в прошлую ночь снега мы долго не могли найти тропинку, с каждым шагом мои ноги проваливались по колено. Мы с братом часто играли в снежки и подшучивали друг над другом. Помню, как однажды брат пнул дерево, стоящее у меня на пути, и мне на голову упал целый сугроб.

Мы продолжали тащить в гору санки и тяжелые рюкзаки. Уже на подходе к вершине мы решили немного отдохнуть и перекусить. Горячий чай разогрел мое тело, и мне сразу же захотелось уснуть на этом белом пушистом снегу.

Но вот настало время спускаться вниз. На санках мы покатались к автобусной остановке. Заходящее солнце било в спину, оставляя на снегу яркие оранжевые лучи.

Никогда в жизни я не забуду этот день!

SPANISH

BENJAMIN COLAHAN

Cinco galones de gasolina

La nieve mojada cae
sal helada del cielo
quemando la herida
la herida abierta
del cuerpo Jesucristo
la gente de Howard Beach
todavía en la cruz
la cruz del huracán Sandy.

Ya no hay electricidad
Ya no hay calefacción.
Mis hijos todavía recuerdan
recuerdan su escuela
Clases llenas de calor
sopa de la cafetería.

Solamente un poco
de gasolina tengo--
un generador chico
Pábulo casi vacío.

Déjame, voy a entrar,
preparar a mi hijo
su último momento
de calor esta noche.

No es suficiente
Echo todo lo que tengo
Esto puedo ofrecer

lo doy de mi pobreza
Wet snow falls like dancers
on a Brooklyn Coffee Shop
All cozy with pumpkin chai
A window between the cold

For all the white beauty I weep
I weep for this white ballet.
I weep for Christ's body,
Howard Beach, Far Rockaway
Though Christ's hand may be warm
Catching flakes on a finger
The foot still freezes numb
Cold from a week without heat
From a week without power
A week with faucets run dry
A week hanging on the cross,
The cross of hurricane Sandy
My tears are not enough,
I shed all that I have
This sacrifice I offer
I give from my poverty
Una iglesia llena
llena de arena
llena del agua del mar
lágrimas del rebaño.

Cada día llega más
gente para ayudar
traen ropa, comida,
y cepillos de dientes.

Se llevan puñados fuertes
puñados de arena
Se llevan cubos de piedras
baldes del océano

Pero no pueden llevar
no pueden quitarse
El frío de los huesos
el frío de tristeza

Te ruego: préstame electricidad
un traguito nada más
para mandar mensaje
un mensaje al mundo
a los hermanos de Dios:
tráiganos gasolina
para el generador
tráiganos gasolina
el regalo del calor
cinco galones prende
prende la calefacción
el calor por la noche
sueño sin pesadilla

Dios dinos por favor
di, "no tengan miedo,"
di, "la gasolina"
"no se escaseará ,
"no se disminuirá"

The wifi pulses once
A beep between clanging cups
A message from Howard Beach
Words spoken from the cross:
"five gallons of gasolines
that our generators drink
five gallons of gasoline
to heat us through the night
Can of gas, the gift of warmth
Gasoline, the gift of warmth"
But I have no gasoline
I cannot give the gift of warmth
All I have is this machine
And friends to which to send this
prayer
A prayer is not enough,
I send all that I have
This sacrifice I offer
I give from my poverty
Un taller de madera

llo de carpinteros
Fabrican escaleras
para unir mar y cielo.

El mensaje le llega
llega al carpintero,
Pidiendo gasolina
el regalo del calor

"No tengo gasolina
para darte el calor"
"ni tengo la manera
"para llevarte el calor"

"Pero tengo un bote,
"bote de gasolina"
bote vacío
que ahora estar lleno.

No es suficiente
Echo todo lo que tengo
Esto puedo ofrecer
lo doy de mi pobreza

On the slushy soft sidewall
Lands a cellular prayer
Massive hope on tiny screen
One forty-four characters
Smashed together to spell:
"Gasoline, the gift of warmth"
There is a station full of gas
And full of men in line
I can stand and wait the chance
The chance to pump a can of gas
A can of gas, the gift of warmth

But I have no car to take
To take a can of gasoline
To take to them the gift of
warmth

To the cold at Howard Beach

Gasoline is not enough,
I give all that I have
This sacrifice I offer
I give from my poverty

Dando pan a los pobres
apoyando a la viuda
Una mujer recibe
recibe el mensaje
pidiendo gasolina
el regalo del calor
"tengo un coche lleno
"lleno de gasolina
el regalo del calor"
"Pero la gasolina
no ayuda adentro
adentro de mi coche
y no un generador.
pero si alguien tiene
tiene un recipiente
donde se pueda poner
gasolina en un coche
puede llevarlo donde
no haya electricidad

No es suficiente
Echo todo lo que tengo
Esto puedo ofrecer
lo doy de mi pobreza

A banging on a Brownstone door
A buzzing up the townhouse stairs
A voice below reciting prayers
Prayers for gas, the gift of warmth.
Alas we have no gasoline
We cannot give the gift of warmth

But time we have, my wife and
I

Time to drive gift of warmth
Our time is not enough,
We give all that we have
This sacrifice we offer
We give from our poverty

No es suficiente
Un recipiente sin líquido
No es suficiente
Líquido sin recipiente
No es suficiente
Un conductor sin coche
No es suficiente
Un coche sin conductor

Nuestra pobreza damos
Todo nuestro sustento
Se la ofrecemos a El
A El que se ofreció
A sí mismo, su vida
Y fue suficiente
Suficiente para muchos.

No it is not enough
A message sent in hope
No it is not enough
An electronic prayer
No it is not enough
Gas without transportation
No it is not enough
Transportation without gas
We give from our poverty
Everything that sustains us
We offer it to the one
The one who offered himself
Offered himself for many

And it was enough
Llegando por la tarde
Persiguiendo la noche
Un recipiente lleno de luz
Lleno de gasolina
El regalo del calor
Traído por extraños
Dado para el cuerpo
El mismo cuerpo de Cristo.

Hoy no se escaseó
Hoy no se disminuyó
In the darkness full of white
Liquid light in a bottle
Against the groan of freezing waves
A cheer of chilly voices
Five gallons of gasoline
Gasoline, the gift of warm
Tonight it has arrived
Tonight it has not been emptied
Tonight it has not failed
Tonight it is enough

PABLO DEL BARCO

Trump etero

TRUMPETERO

**TTTTTTTTTTTT
RRRRRRRRRR
UUUUUUUUUU
MMMMMMMM
PPPPPPPPPP
EEEEEEEEEEEE
TTTTTTTTTTTT
EEEEEEEEEEEE
RRRRRRRRRR
OOOOOOOOOO**

APOCALÍPTICO

GREGGORY N. ELIAS

El mar oscuro

Camino por la orilla durante la noche
El agua y arena besando mis pies
No necesito luz ni mapa para navegar a mi hogar
Porque la luna es mi guía
Yo miro a la luna
a su fija y blanca mirada
Su resplandor me captura
Y el sonido de las ondas
el agua fría, el viento y el mar bañan mi cara
Y antes de darme cuenta
estoy en mi hogar
bajo el mar oscuro mirando a la luna



PABLO DEL BARCO
Un trono para Trump

GREGGORY N. ELIAS

Nueva oportunidad

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



BRIAN PETERSON
Invierno en Yale

GUSTAVO GAC-ARTIGAS

El español

huele a sudor
y sabe a esperanza.
Con Trump,
hoy,
en los Estados Unidos,
mi idioma sabe
a la sal de las lágrimas
y huele a miedo.

JENNIFER GONZALEZ

La isla de las muñecas

La primera vez que visité a mi abuela paterna en México me llevó a los famosos canales de Xochimilco. Mi abuela alquiló una de las hermosas trajineras adornadas con papel y flores de muchos colores. La abordé emocionada de conocer a la familia de mi padre y descubrir la belleza de los canales de aguas verdes. ¡Qué espectáculo era aquello con las trajineras flotando a mi alrededor y escuchando grupos de mariachis tocando música tradicional! Estaba admirando la belleza de Xochimilco y disfrutando del tiempo con mi abuela cuando de pronto vi algo extraño: muchas muñecas colgadas de los árboles en una casa abandonada. Las muñecas eran viejas, estaban sucias y a algunas les faltaban partes del cuerpo. Cuando miré a los ojos de las muñecas, sentí un gran escalofrío en mi espalda. Sin apartar la mirada, le pregunté a mi abuela por qué había tantas muñecas colgadas en esta parte de los canales. Ella me explicó era la isla de las muñecas de Xochimilco y me contó la leyenda.

Un hombre llamado Julián Santana Barrera, nativo del Barrio de la Asunción, en 1950 dejó a su esposa y a su hijo para vivir en soledad en la isla. Un día, Julián descubrió a una niña muerta en los canales. Cuenta la gente que ella misteriosamente se ahogó en las aguas profundas y oscuras y cuando él encontró una muñeca en el agua, pensó que era de la niña y la colgó en un árbol como una señal de respeto. Pronto Santana Barrera comenzó a escuchar susurros, pasos y gemidos de angustia por la noche. Su casa estaba en medio de los boscosos canales de Xochimilco y alejada de todas las demás. En un período de cincuenta años, Julián coleccionó muñecas y cuando las encontraba las colgaba de los árboles que se hallaban en la rivera de los canales de la isla. Él creía que colgando las muñecas en los árboles y alrededor de su casa podría apaciguar el espíritu de la niña que se había muerto, ya que las muñecas estaban poseídas por el espíritu de ella. Después de que Julián murió en el año 2001, encontraron sus restos mortales en el mismo lugar donde el cuerpo de la niña había sido hallado años atrás. La gente, incluyendo su familia, creía que la historia de la niña ahogada solo había sido producto de su imaginación. La leyenda nos dice que a consecuencia

de la muerte trágica de la niña, las muñecas han cobrado vida y se dice que éstas mueven la cabeza, los brazos y hasta abren sus ojos. Esto significa que el espíritu de la niña vive a través de las muñecas. Algunas personas que han visto las muñecas, dicen que las han oído susurrando, causando gran terror entre quienes las han oído. Cuentan que lo que les ha atraído a la isla de las muñecas es la historia misma que cuenta la gente.

Esta leyenda me causó gran miedo y terror, así que cuando mi abuela terminó de contármela me alegré. Lo mejor de todo, era que había llegado la hora de volver a casa. Empezamos el retorno al hogar y aun pensaba en la leyenda que había oído de mi abuela, mis ojos no podían dejar de observar las muñecas colgadas. La isla de las muñecas lentamente comenzó a desaparecer en la distancia del canal pero todo ese día tuve la imagen de la isla de las muñecas y no podía borrar aquellas escenas de horror que me habían descrito. Pensaba en los canales de Xochimilco, un área dedicada al turismo que es como Venecia para los mexicanos y donde se pueden ver las chinampas o islotes construidos por los indígenas pre hispanos en el Valle de México hace siglos. Aun recordaba ver a los turistas recorriendo pantanos y canales, llevados por gondoleros que se ganan la vida repitiendo la leyenda de las muñecas, pues dicen que esto les ha traído buena suerte. De alguna manera, la isla de las muñecas tiene una gran atracción turística y a los residentes les parece que ofrece un ambiente lúgubre, pero con una gran belleza natural, pero a la vez oscura y misteriosa sin igual. Para mí es algo raro, una extraña leyenda contada por mi abuela que siempre recordaré pues aún se sigue contando en mi entorno familiar, una fábula sobre las muñecas de la isla de Xochimilco que nunca olvidaré.

CHAR PRIETO

Entre bastidores y costuras

Mis años de adolescencia franquista pasaron entre bastidores y costuras. Después de clase, todos los días me estaban esperando las servilletas de punto de cruz que tenía que terminar para el “tú y yo.” Entre hilos rosas y azules pálidos pasaban mis días, haciendo punto de cruz, vainica, bordando y creando flecos en manteles y servilletas. Así también pasaban los fines de semana y mis vacaciones de verano, entre clases de corte y confección, bastidores y constantes pedaleos de mi máquina de coser. Después de la dictadura, cuando ya casi tenía yo veinte años y cuando por fin llegó un poco de libertad para la mujer en España, me negué rotundamente a coger el dedal, la aguja y los hilos. Aquellas costuras ñoñas del fascismo, la Sección Femenina, la canastilla y las largas bufandas de lana, habían pasado a la historia para mí.

El otro día, después de décadas desde que me divorcie de los bastidores, costuras, del arte y confección, de mis puntadas neo vanguardistas y de mis hazañas forzadas de modista, mi hijo me pidió que le cosiera unos pantalones cortos, rotos y deshilachados. Yo, modista fidedigna que fui, es y será, un tanto perpleja me enfrenté con el costurero y armada de aguja y dedal abordé al enemigo de mi adolescencia, el costurero. Con las tijeras, le corté los hilachos al pantalón y entre hilvanes y largas puntadas, reviví aquel pasado franquista que ya, hasta cierto modo, había olvidado y de cuyas hazañas nunca he querido acordarme.

El resultado fue casi una gran obra maestra. A mi hijo le dejé los pantalones como nuevos y con gran sorpresa afirmó: “Mamá, que bien me los has dejado. Parece como si hubieras trabajado en un taller de corte y confección.” “Si, y en un país de corte fascista” le respondí yo por un momento recordando y, aun hasta un tanto añorando ahora mis años de juventud, aquellos muchos ratos de adolescencia que perdí, desterrada a coser y a bordar, las subidas y bajadas de los árboles con mis hermanos que nunca pude hacer y los muchos paseos y salidas con amigos que perdí debido a mi condición femenina en un país de corte fascista.

DAVID REYES

La del vestido verde

Todavía recuerdo la primera vez que la vi. Tenía trece años y estaba en mi primer año de secundaria. Salí al campo durante el recreo y ahí fue donde la vi. Tenía un vestido verde y parecía que toda la escuela la conocía. Todos la saludaban y le hablaban, hasta mis amigos la conocían. Mi amigo le apuntó con un dedo y me dijo, “Ahí está la María.” Por tres años su nombre fue lo único que sabía de ella. No le vi nada especial hasta que me la presentaron un día antes de clase en la prepa.

La del vestido verde siempre fue vista como una persona muy vil por los que no la conocían. Mi padre la conoció mucho antes que yo, pero me advirtió que me alejara de ella. Nunca entendí la razón por la advertencia, cuando el mismo me confesó que había hablado con ella. Después de charlar con María por primera vez vi que no era la gran amenaza a la sociedad que todos decían. Su voz me relajó y me sentía calmado y contento estando con ella. Aun así, solo mis amigos más cercanos sabían que yo hablaba con ella.

Poco a poco forjamos una relación de amigos en secreto. Decidí que nuestra amistad iba a ser confidencial porque no quería que mis padres supieran que yo me juntaba con ella. María era delincuente por razones que todavía no comprendo, pero yo sé que ella no le hace daño a nadie. Es una persona muy pasiva, aunque odiada por muchos.

Me di cuenta de que mucha más gente la conocía más de lo que yo creía. Fue durante mis estudios en la universidad donde llegué a estar con ella con más frecuencia. Mi vida era muy estresante y María me ayudó a relajarme y a escapar de mis problemas, aunque fuera por solo algunas horas. Tuve dificultades financieras por un tiempo y ella me dio una solución. Le agradecí su ayuda, pero nunca fue mi intención trabajar en su negocio para siempre así que me salí de ahí lo más pronto posible. Cuando estaba solo, ella era lo más cercano a un amigo que yo tenía. Estuve alejado de mis padres y mis amigos y María me ofreció consuelo. Llegué a pasar casi todo mi tiempo libre con ella y vi como las horas volaban mientras que yo seguía solo, aunque con ella.

Después de tanto tiempo y tantas aventuras, aún no sabía

si lo que sentía por ella era amor o adicción. Ahora veo que la respuesta no es ninguna de las dos y me niego a dejar que una mujer se apodere de mí, como me controló María. Ella es solo una amistad que tengo y nada más. Querida, me he dejado controlar por ti, pero ahora que el humo se ha aclarado, me doy cuenta de que no necesito huir de mis problemas contigo. María, por ahora me despido de ti, quizás algún día podremos volver a hablar, pero por ahora me tengo que ir y dejarte a ti, la del vestido verde.



CAMILLE HENDERSON
Encendiendo

VIVIANA RODRIGUEZ

Chicano

Cargando la mancha desde la conquista,
lleva generaciones de sangre perdida
Pero protege su origen,
cómo lo cuida nuestra dulce virgen.

Abrumado por la pasión que arde dentro de su corazón,
su presencia es indispensable aquí en esta ocasión.

Les contaré la historia de mi amigo,
que jamás se dio por vencido.
Encarcelado dentro de su propio territorio,
no le queda más que aguantar generaciones de maldito odio.

Nacido en la tierra de oportunidad y aún sin poder ganar.
Pero llega el momento y se reencuentra con su origen,
defendiendo la raza con todo honor, recordando,
es purépecha, es mexicano, pero más que nada, es chicano...



CAROL McCLENDON
The Migrants: Canada Geese

MIRTA YAÑEZ

Rubén

Alumnos,
les ofrezco este busto:
corresponde a quien quiso para sí la belleza como pocos.
Acérquense a su aliento amargo,
supurando las trasnochadas, el desgarrón a mansalva,
la sabiduría
de la última hora,
pero cómo llegó a entender de buena tinta
que el cetro no armonizaba con tanta miseria.
Acepten, pues, alumnos, sus artimañas,
las trastadas,
los ditirambos enchapados en oro,
porque también sus mirajes fueron tasajeados
por la transparencia de los males profundos.
Observen este busto pulido por el siglo:
aunque le pese, expone sus ojeras,
exhibe para la espantada posteridad
los visajes famélicos de la nostalgia.
Pero a estas alturas ya ¿qué importa?
Se salió con la suya, tiene la belleza
desfachatadamente sobre sus rodillas,
mientras la multitud del mañana lo pasea en vilo
y los fermentos de su tierra
han empezado a colorear el mármol.
Tal pareciera, alumnos, que cobrara vida.

VERONICA ZARAGOZA-VENTURA

Caminando por las calles

Todos viven en su propio mundo
Caminando por las calles sin saber su destino
Comen sin importarles el costo
Leen simplemente para pasar exámenes
Caminando por las calles sin saber el destino
Todo parece muy tranquilo
Pero todos tienen problemas por dentro
Se ríen para esconder el sufrimiento
Nada es fácil en este mundo
Navegan por las calles sin importancia
La vida está llena de sorpresas no siempre buenas
No es como la presentan
La felicidad no está garantizada
Pero sí se puede alcanzar
Caminando por las calles
Y siguiendo adelante

VERONICA ZARAGOZA-VENTURA

El temor a la muerte

La vida no es prestada
Hay que disfrutar de todo
Todo alrededor es hermoso
La vida un día llega a su fin
¿Qué pasa después de la muerte?
Tenemos miedo a morir
Pero no hay que tener miedo
El fin es un fin feliz
Hay que disfrutar de la vida
Viajar, salir, aprender, sonreír
La vida no es no hacer nada
El dinero no tiene que limitar todo
La vida no es prestada
Tenemos que gozar siempre
Nada es dado
Todo es prestado



CAROL McCLENDON
Bidwell Oak

CONTRIBUTORS' BIOGRAPHIES

Desirea Adame is a senior at CSU Chico, majoring in Asian Studies and a minor in Japanese. Desirea is working toward building a career in translation and publication of Japanese *manga* (graphic novels). She fills her spare time with animals and Japanese pop culture, and is currently saving up to travel to Japan.

Yomaira Angulo was born in Mexico and moved to the US with her family when she was four. Presently she is a sophomore majoring in International Relations at Chico State. She enjoys learning about new cultures and new languages, reading, and going out with friends.

Katia Berg is majoring in News Journalism and minoring in Creative Writing. The latter is her true passion. She can always be found with a book in her hand and enjoys writing fiction stories that are loosely based on her own experiences. She hopes to obtain an MA in Creative Writing after she graduates in 2017.

Benjamin Colahan is a teller of tales and a hiker of trails who lives in Chico California, where he is blessed to serve as pastor of Faith Lutheran Church. Born in Walla Walla, Washington, Ben spent his childhood traveling to Spain through his father's work and to Mexico to visit his mother's family.

Samuel Cremo is a senior at California State University, Chico, with a major in Spanish and a minor in Italian. He is also the president of the Marxist Student Association at CSU, Chico.

Marie Cuenca likes J-pop/J-Rock, cats, reading, writing, and video games. Her goals are to become fluent in Japanese and to make enough money to travel the world.

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

Sergey Byshov is twenty-one years old. He studied at the Literary Institute in Moscow. He started writing poetry at the age of thirteen. He enjoys team-building and studying history.

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

Kristin “Anjl” Doeblin is a Brooklyn-based artist. She holds a Bachelor of Arts in Spanish and Master of Science in Environmental Policy & Sustainability Management. She paints a variety of styles: from graffiti and portraits, to street art murals that express courage and spiritual elements, hoping to inspire positive energy and community.

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

Kenneth Fries lived and worked in Washington, D.C., before returning to Chico in 2004, where he currently lives. He travels occasionally to Africa to lead seminars on public contracting practice and reform. Ken has studied creative writing at the Bethesda, MD Writer’s Center and poetry at CSU Chico. He has written for the Chico ER, *Watershed*, and the *Alehouse Review*.

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

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Jonathan Giertych is a senior at CSU Chico. He found an interest in Japanese early in high school. He enjoys learning about and experiencing the various aspects of Japan: its language, culture, shows, games, music, and history. He hopes to continue these experiences onwards into the future.

Jennifer González is from Escondido, California. She is the second person in her family to attend college. Jennifer is a junior at CSU, Chico with a major in Education. Her goal is to teach elementary school.

Jocelyn Gonzalez is currently in her second year at Chico State. She is pursuing a degree in Humanities, and hopes to be a flight attendant one day. In her free time, Jocelyn likes to read, spend time with her family and friends, and watch the Harry Potter movies.

Alexander Gronsky was born in Russia, graduated from the Philological Department of the University of Gorky, and has worked as a journalist, host, and producer. He is the author of many published literary works for children and adults.

Camille Henderson is the designer of the magazine. She has studied Spanish and French while majoring in Communication Design-Graphic Design at CSU, Chico.

Min-Jee Kim is an exchange student from Korea. She was interested in music until she came to the U.S, but now she is studying graphic design. She is also interested in the Japanese language and culture, probably because her mother teaches Japanese in high school.

Emmy Klassen can usually be found reading any book she can find. She is a lover of words and is interested in finding new, innovative ways into the world of writing and literature. Emmy wants to continue pursuing the creative writing world while exploring the French world too.

Maritza Laureano is learning her third language!

Svetlana Lisovskaya lives in Russia and has a degree in Linguistics. In her free time, she enjoys studying foreign languages and creative writing.

Xinru (Karen) Lin is pursuing a double major in Psychology and Applied Mathematics. She is a senior at Chico State. She hopes to go to law school at the University of Minnesota where she will pursue her JD in International Business Law. By using these degrees, she hopes to work for people who have legal issues.

Zeth Martinez is currently a student at Chico State. He is majoring in English and has a Minor in History. He started learning Russian this semester, and this is his first attempt to write a poem and publish poetry in Russian. In his free time, Zeth enjoys writing stories and reading.

Dale Mattson is from Chicago but now lives in Chico. He loves photography, especially capturing scenes in nature and the environment.

Igor Maximov is a third-year California State University, Chico student. He was born in Kazakhstan and immigrated to California at the age of 10. He is currently pursuing a degree in Nutrition and Food Science. Some of his hobbies include participating in outdoor activities, such as cycling, spending time with friends, and cooking.

Carol McClendon is a Chico State Elder College student, a retired middle school teacher of English, and a former Peace Corps Volunteer who served in the Philippines. She enjoys drawing and photography. As a teenager, she worked in orchards alongside migrant workers, for whom she has the greatest respect, as they produced ten times more than she could accomplish.

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

Karli Miller is a first-year student at Chico State. She is currently an undeclared major leaning towards International Studies. One of her dreams is to study abroad in Italy and to travel all around the world. In her free time, she enjoys playing games and spending time with friends and family.

Max Myers was born in West Virginia and has lived in Kentucky, Hawaii, Oregon, and currently, lives in California. He began writing in high school, and though not formally educated in writing, has published two books and currently is in the midst of his third work.

Isha Mundahl has studied Italian for two years. She has studied other languages before – French for four years, German for a semester – but has never been so passionate and driven to learn a language as with Italian. She is proud to be able to communicate in such a beautiful language!

Brian Peterson has a BA in History from the University of California, Berkeley, and a BA in Music and MA in History from CSU, Chico. Currently he is a student at Harvard University. In 2016 Brian was chosen Citizen of the Year in Orland, CA.

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

Nicholas Pulido is a junior at CSU Chico majoring in finance. He enjoys long walks on the beach and hanging out with friends. His life is dope and he does dope stuff.

David E. Reyes was born in Guadalajara, Mexico. In 1998 his family relocated to Reno, Nevada. His majors at California State University, Chico are Spanish and Physical Therapy. Since he was a little kid David liked to write stories related to politics and religion, among other themes.

Viviana Rodriguez graduated in 2016, and had the opportunity to connect with others within her own community, which awakened her knowledge of the different dimensions of her own culture. Her passions are social justice and embracing the diversity within her own cultural background, which inspired her poem.

Gabriela Romero is currently in her third year at Chico State pursuing a major in Asian Studies. She's found in interest in languages and has studied French and Spanish. She is currently an officer of the Filipino American Student Organization on campus, Hmong Student Association, and J*Fusion.

Roze Sabino-Blodget is from Minas Gerais, Brazil and has lived in the US since '86. She has a B.A. in Spanish and English literature from Utah State University, and is a CSU graduate with a M.A. in Education. She's an elementary school teacher who loves writing and music. Roze lives in Chico with her husband and daughter.

Joshua Station is a junior at California State University Chico. He is majoring in English and Education, and one day hopes to live in Japan.

Cherie Thao has a big Hmong family of eight brothers and one sister. Learning new languages is almost second nature, and to her surprise, Japanese happened to be ready for the taking. This experience helped her not only learn the language, but also learn about the Japanese people and their songs.

Francesca Torres is from Durham, California. She is majoring in Political Science with an emphasis in legal studies and a minor in Spanish. She enjoys traveling with her family and hopes to go to Spain one day to practice her Spanish.

Brenna von Kleist graduated from Chico State with a Bachelor's in English. Upon graduating, she moved to Japan to teach English to children and stayed for 3 years. Aside from her love of languages and Japanese culture, Brenna is an accomplished electronic musician and singer. It began with the love of animé that led from an interest in the culture, to a realization of “Oh?”

Aline Vannucci was born in Brazil where she received her medical degree. Her background has been an inspiration for her works, since being Brazilian means always to contemplate life. Aline would like to share her journey growing up at the Amazon Region and wish that each one of us embrace the spirit and joy for life. She lives in Chico with her husband and daughter.

Marie Weverka is a fourth-year student at Chico State, majoring in Anthropology and with a minor in European Studies and Global Development. She will be graduating this spring, and she hopes to study food and cultures.

Julie Zavan 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 wild flowers and wildebeests, to Moscow's Kremlin in the snow. She currently lives in Ohio.

