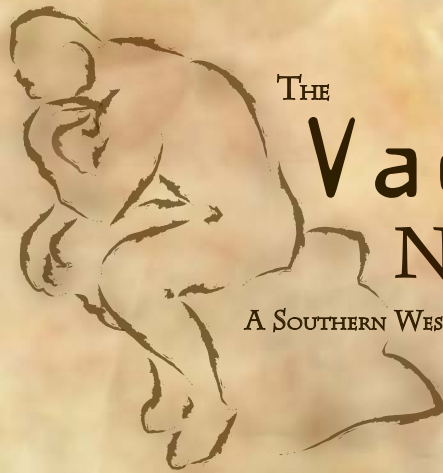




*The Vaguest Notion*  
"unlock Your Creativity"

2008



THE

# Vaguest NOTION

A SOUTHERN WESLEYAN UNIVERSITY PUBLICATION

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On Front Cover: "Untitled" by Elizabeth Propst



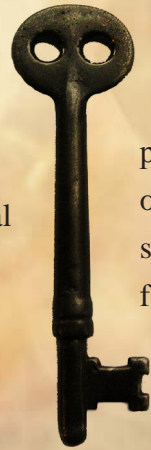
## Editor's Note

Creativity - *noun*

1. The state or quality of being creative.
2. The ability to transcend traditional ideas, rules, patterns, relationships, or the like, and to create meaningful new ideas, forms, methods, interpretations, etc.; originality, progressiveness, or imagination.

Throughout history, people have taken the time to express their hopes, dreams, desires, and fears in the form of literature and art. By studying these creations, we can learn more about individuals, society of that time, and the culture. Creativity is not something that only a select few can obtain. It is something that is born within everyone. However, some people never take advantage of the opportunity to tap into this underlying resource.

When discussing the direction of *The Vaguest Notion* this year with Dr. Mealy,



we decided to take it on a slightly new path to help everyone find their creative outlet. We hope that this will not only serve as an outlet for some, but the key for others to help them unlock their own creativity.

Personally, I would like to thank God for granting me this opportunity and for the gifts He has blessed me with that were able to be used. To Dr. Mealy, the faculty of Modern Languages, and the students that I would constantly bounce ideas off of, this would not have been possible without your criticism and encouragement.



~ Charlotte Dyal ~

## Table of Contents

Abram Rampey.....	51	Justin Trammell.....	32
Amanda Link.....	28	Kelly Maney.....	6, 40, 42
Amy Davis.....	41, 45, 53	Kristin McJunkin.....	18, 48
Brian Daniels.....	37, 43	Nick Crowder.....	34
Britta Fowler.....	55	Ryan Seibert.....	4, 21, 29
Brittany Molloseau.....	36	Shanda Teague.....	12, 27
Charlotte Dyal.....	3, 24, 52	Stephen Hoffman.....	11
Cleveland Gilliard.....	50	Tammy White.....	26
David Bedsole.....	30	Whitney Fritts.....	9, 33, 44
David Elliott.....	2, 25	Wiffie Bruce.....	1, 39
Elizabeth Propst.....	35		
Emily Medders.....	17	Anonymous Submissions.....	8, 46
Jennie Darden.....	19		
Jennifer Hicks.....	10		
Jennifer Terry.....	13, 38		
Jessica Mussro.....	5, 7, 22, 47, 49		
Justin Donnahoo.....	31, 54		





*The true work of art is but a shadow  
of the divine perfection.*

*~ Michelangelo*



*A Trio Of Zübelpoofens*

*Digital Photograph*

*~ Wiffie Bruce*





## *Albino Leaves*

*Digital Photograph*

*~ David Elliott*

## *A Passion Burns Deep Within*

And the flames dance in your eyes.  
Hidden behind the ever changing color,  
flames jump and dart begging for release  
before they die out to a mere flicker.  
In the flames a sadness flashes, longing to end.  
on the colorful edge of brightness  
lies a hope and desire to survive.  
Words drip from a mouth like melting wax.  
forming puddles of emotion.

*~ Charlotte Dyal*



## *Anonymous*

God,  
Let me be  
Anonymous for thee  
Let no man look upon this  
Twisted, sinful heart of mine  
And think I'm better because I may  
Act like something great—something  
That I am not:  
More than I am  
What I try to be  
I'm just a man  
Lost in myself  
But found in thee  
So help me, God  
Help me just to be  
Humbly and poorly  
Anonymous for thee.

*~ Ryan Seibert*



## *Barbed Wire*

*Digital Photograph*

*~ J. Mussro*





## Birds

Digital Photograph

~ Kelly Maney

## Bondage

Gently, the fishing boat was swaying  
While the breezes swiftly taking  
The dying sounds of crowds away  
Blew across the hills into the dusk  
Only twelve men stay.

Shouts and shoves, the boat is off  
Into the water. An eagle soars aloft,  
Above the glistening waves of Galilee:  
Impatience festering beneath its calm  
Groaning to be free,

Free from bonds of sinners' choosing  
Which since the garden have giv'n no sign of loosing  
Nature is held fast and sure;  
Still constantly she cries in pain,  
Yearning to be pure

On board the boat the Maker sleeps  
His presence sensed by waters deep  
Waves leap up, a sigh they heave  
Perhaps restoring He comes to bring  
Their sorrow to relieve?

Release our chains, O Elohim! They cry  
As clouds burn and darken all the sky  
In their threatening flame.  
Unleashed is all the ocean's longing  
Its passions too-long tamed

Peace! Be still! Louder than the thunder  
The Creator resonates as when in wonder  
Spirits heard Him speak the seas.  
Higher than mortal ears, the Word shouts out  
Amidst their pleas:

Peace, await, there will come a day  
Thy chains I'll break; I'll say  
Be new! Thy grace I will restore  
Thou'lt praise again with perfect praise  
Ev'n higher than before

But not yet, not now, be still  
Sin must die, death be killed,  
Thy lords must first be reckoned free  
Then will their second birth  
Be granted thee

Obedient, a sigh is breathed  
As clouds and water are allayed  
It rushes to the heights,  
Like the Breath that over waters dark  
Began His work of Light

Shouts and cries, the boat at last  
Is gone, Creator once again has passed  
Above the glistening waves of restless sea:  
Longing flowing beneath its calm  
The promise to be free

~ J. L. Mussro



## Butterflies

Butterflies in my stomach fresh out of a cocoon  
I asked the Lord, how could it happen so soon?

Can't eat, can't sleep, without you in mind  
I never imagined me it would find

As time fly's by my heart only grows fonder  
After all this time I have nothing left to wonder

No longer can I wait  
My heart is his to take

Will he reach out and meet my hand?  
Will his heart reflect the feeling so grand?

When I look at him the butterflies rise  
Longing to see the look in his eyes

I cannot battle this feeling much longer  
For the yearning continues to grow stronger

Here it comes no longer can I wait  
So here I am leaving it up to fate....

I love you

Please open your heart so that you can see  
That once in a lifetime you are for me

~ *Anonymous*



*Butterfly*  
Digital Photograph  
~ Whitney Fritts



## Darkness

We just received a call. The kind of call you dread. With the ringing of a telephone, the messenger brings tidings of loss and hurt. My family and I drive the long, winding roads that lead to my grandmother's lonely mountain house. They don't even have street lamps where she lives. The entire drive is normal; it feels like we are just going for a customary visit. Maw Maw is dying? There is no possible way. We'll arrive there, and she'll get better, and we'll all continue our separate lives as we have always done.

Now all the family is here, and we all silently feel the guilt weighing on our hearts because this is the first time in a long time that we have all been in each other's presence. We know that it is not right to wait until an unexpected loss brings us all together. We all smile through the tears and make empty promises of visiting each other before death brings us together again.

I hate and love the sounds I hear through the sad house as my father and his brothers sing to their dying mother. I hear the muffled sound of weeping coming from every corner of the house. The pets are still and quiet; they know what is taking place. Her favorite songs are sung, and my heart is being torn. A terrifying, black shadow is settling over me. I remember all the times I spent with her as well as the times when I denied her my visits for my own selfish reasons. I painfully realize over and over again that I will never again hear her slow, sweet drawl. Never again will she send encouraging notes and letters in the mail which she knows I dearly love receiving. In a shower of tears and a gnawing sadness, I realize that she will not be present at my upcoming graduation, and she won't be there to see me walk down the aisle.

The night is black now, and my grandmother is barely living still. The walls close in around me, and I suddenly cannot breathe. Everyone is still surrounding my grandmother, waiting and dreading for her to make that final journey. I have to get away, so I escape to the porch. It is so dark and everywhere I look there is nothing but the house and dark, sinister forest. I'm terrified by what unseen phantoms and beasts could be lurking just beyond the tree line. But there is something even more frightening inside. As long as I remain outside, my grandmother's imminent death is not real. I don't have to face that horrible truth as long as I remain in the safe darkness of the forest. I grow accustomed to the black trees, and I no longer fear what I cannot see and what is unknown. I now dread what is real. The realization hits and opens the wound again with searing pain and loss, but this time I find some solace in the quiet, black, wooded mountainside. I have come to terms with the forest; it befriends me with a small gift of hope and courage. I can now return to face my fear of what lies within my grandmother's house.

~ Jennifer Hicks

## Dear Writer

I've been chasing the wild parrot. Catching it with my bare hands is extremely difficult. I climb up the trunk and scoot along the branch holding one hand out hoping the bird will accept my offering. I've been so close sometimes. It has the most vibrant lime green coat with little red splotches at the tips of both wings. Have you seen it? If I ever catch it, I will be able to write everything I know inside my head. Obviously that has not happened yet. But I wish you were here to see what I see. At my feet is an early morning fog bank shrouding the forest floor. Above are jagged jewels of violet sky set in a deep green almost black canopy. All around me are massive trunks of support between earth and sky inside the mattress of God. Exotic alien creeping things chattering and chirping and long far off cries from animals to animals keep me watching, hoping to catch a glimpse. I'm lodged in the cleft between branch and trunk. It's pretty comfortable. If I want to read I can lie back and prop my feet up on the trunk. Or, if I want to write, I switch using the branch as a desk and the trunk as back support. Right now I'm straddling the branch facing the trunk watching two single file lines of fire ants. One line is heading into the canopy and one is coming out. All the ants in the line coming out are carrying a tiny piece of waxy emerald green leaf from somewhere up above. These are the words I write. Ancient mariners sailing into the foggy abyss bringing treasure for their queen.

~ Stephen Hoffmann





## *Diagonal Sight*

*Digital Photograph*

*~ Shanda Teague*

## *Eleven O'clock Lasted Forever*

It was Friday night on May 20, 2005. The air outside was warm and summer was upon us. I had just returned from an evening out and I was settling into bed. As I turned on the television and gathered my pink blanket underneath my head, I felt relaxed, almost too relaxed. Ready for a good night's sleep before a full day of work, I found a station on the television that I liked as prepared myself for the night. That is, until I got the text. Eleven o'clock was going to last all night.

*"Eric Brooks just died!"*

At eleven o'clock I read the text message and immediately felt my heart sink into my aching belly. All I could think was that Eric was on the other end, sending the message as a cruel joke. After all, people that I knew did not die; it just didn't happen. Or so I thought.

*"Yeah right! Stop joking around!"*

As I typed the words in my responding message, I was praying to God that I was right. Eric was a joking person and I figured he was just trying to fool me. Even though I would have been angry if it was a joke, I was hoping that I would be angry instead of devastated. I was wrong.

*"Jennifer! It is true, Eric died in a car accident!"*

I had known Eric since I was a little girl. We grew up together, we played together, and we went to school together. For years, his parents and our friends told us that we would end up getting married. When they told us this we were only in the eighth grade so I wasn't sure how to take in that new information. As we grew up and we began to mature as young adults I could finally see what exactly everyone meant about me and Eric's relationship. I was not sure of how our relationship would unfold, but after seeing him the previous weekend, I knew that I wanted to try to make our relationship work.

I moved away when I was seven years old and I have been devastated about the move since then. Leaving my friends and everyone else that I cared about was extremely difficult. Eric and I kept in touch for the ten years we were apart. We often saw each other every time I visited my hometown. As the only person I kept in touch with, Eric held a very special place in my heart. The long distance was hard to cope with as our relationship moved from "just friends" to something with more meaning than that. Now, I knew that we would never have a future together.

All I could hear was crying in the background when I called my good friend Clarka. It was really happening; my worst fears were coming true right before my eyes. I could feel myself starting to lose my breath as I tried to make sense of everything that was happening.

I kept thinking I would wake up and it would all be a dream but it wasn't a dream at all. Eric had really died and he was never going to come back again. Instantly, I sprang *cont.*



*“Eleven O’clock Lasted Forever” continued*

from my bed like a deer running from a predator. There was nothing but darkness around me as I made my way down my stairs.

Feeling the carpet rub my legs as I fell down a few steps was painful, but nothing compared to the pain I was feeling in my chest. My breathing had ceased to regulate and my heart was pounding as if it were being pushed to its limit. Finally, after falling down quite a number of stairs, I reached my parents’ bedroom. There they lay sleeping peacefully, as if nothing were wrong. Oblivious to the news I was about to reveal to their resting bodies, they laid there motionless as I watched their chests rise and fall with each deep breath.

*“Mom, dad, wake up! Eric Brooks just died!”*

My mom, a not-so-pleasant person when awakened from deep sleep, didn’t understand what I was saying. She kept saying, “What?” over and over again as if I were speaking a foreign language. I repeated that Eric had died and suddenly she sat straight up in her bed. My dad didn’t know what to do but ask me what happened. At that point, I didn’t know the details and I was very emotional. Emotional and unaware of the facts, it was all I could do to cry hysterically whenever he repeated his question. Why did he keep asking me the same thing when it was clear I couldn’t answer him? Time was standing still as I cried into my mom’s warm, comforting shoulder.

I couldn’t sleep that night, especially not alone. The next day was going to bring on a full day of work that I was not prepared for in any way. My dad offered to sleep in my bedroom, so I slept with my mom. The sun started to rise as I lay in the bed beside my mom, frozen with devastation. Sleep did not seem to be in my brain’s list of actions that night. My eyes watered like a leaky faucet and my chest felt heavy. Morning came eventually, after a dreadful night that seemed like it had stayed eleven o’clock all night long.

God must have been on my side the next day because it was a miracle that the water park, where I worked, was shut down for the day. In the midst of my hysteria, it rained throughout the night. Unaware of this, I showed up at work with my boyfriend in my blue bathing suit and shorts. Shaken from the night before, I wasn’t able to drive myself to work. Sleep deprivation and hysteria did not prove to be a good combination. It wasn’t raining when we arrived at the water park, nor did it look like it was going to rain at all that day. But somewhere up above, God was looking down on me and realized that I couldn’t handle working that day. Even though I had just lost someone close to me, my bosses wouldn’t have sent me home due to that type of incident. But, the Lord knew that it wasn’t the right time for me to work, and work was canceled for the entire day.

My boyfriend, of one year, drove me home as I sat silently in the passenger seat. The seatbelt rubbed my bare shoulder as I pulled my legs close to me in the seat. I felt safe from the world when I was in my ball, but I didn’t feel safe that day. Safe to me meant to be away from harm, and I was not away from the pain that harm had inflicted on me. Every time *cont.*

*“Eleven O’clock Lasted Forever” continued*

I heard something that reminded me of Eric, I felt like salt was being poured into my already torn open heart. All I wanted to do was hide in a quiet place with my blanket. There was nothing more I wanted to do at that point than to be away from everyone and anything that could remind me of Eric. Unfortunately, I couldn’t escape things that reminded me of Eric.

When I got home, I sat down on the plush green couch alongside my mom. Her warmth seemed to comfort me, if not only for a few minutes. As we all sat in the living room, my dad proposed to me that he would take me to the funeral. Even though school was not out yet, he was going to let me miss school on Monday. I figured it was a better excuse than “not feeling well.” My dad worked at the high school I attended. In order to ensure that he had someone to cover his classes, he called the principal whom we had known for a very long time and told her what happened. She offered to let me use my “gold card” day (a free day we received if we made all A’s on our report card) as my excuse. Thankful that I was being taken to see Eric’s family, I dreaded going at the same time.

My dad and I arrived in Walhalla on Sunday afternoon. The hotel room felt cold and lonely, like my heart. I lay down on the bed and tried to rest my eyes for a few minutes before getting ready for the visitation. My hands were sweaty and my heart was pounding; I wanted nothing more than to get the visitation over with.

*“I will not look at Eric in the casket.”*

As I said this I meant it with all of my heart. The weekend before Eric died my mom took me to Walhalla for a visit. Call it a coincidence, call it fate, call it whatever you want to but there was something much higher in power that took me to see Eric the weekend before. If I would have known it would be the last time I saw him I would have told him everything that I felt for him. I would have told him that I loved him, that he was my everything, that I had loved him since I was six years old, and that I hoped for a future with him one day. In some ways, I am grateful that I didn’t know it would be the last time I would see him. The feeling I left with that day was a feeling I will never have again, a feeling of completeness and love that no one could ever duplicate.

The visitation was the hardest. I started to cry as we turned into the parking lot and I could tell it would be harder than I ever imagined. My dad and I stopped to talk to some old friends outside of the funeral home, and I was hoping to stay outside as long as I could. The warm May air circled around me as I stood there hugging my dad tightly, not wanting to let go. There was a feeling of sadness that exuded from the inside of the building into the parking lot; I was not ready to face the realization that he was gone. My dad grabbed my hand and led me into the building.

*“Keep it together.”*

I repeated this over and over again for the fear that I might lose my composure right there in the middle of the funeral home. That is, in fact, what happened when I saw *cont.*



*"Eleven O'clock Lasted Forever" continued*

his casket through the open doorway. There he was, lying there motionless like a rock, and I knew he was not getting up. I waited in the line to talk to his parents and sister. Those few moments that I stood in line were the hardest moments I have ever been through. When I got close to his casket, I didn't feel like it was really Eric. Maybe it wasn't him, I thought to myself. No, it was him; I would recognize him anywhere. So there he was, in the casket with his baseball jersey on and his red hair contrasting greatly with the white pillow that he lay on. I remembered Eric's freckles the most out of all of his features, and yet the makeup that they used to try to cover his scratches and bruises completely camouflaged his trade mark freckles. I was angry that the one thing that made Eric was gone. Then again, Eric was gone.

Leaving the funeral home was hard. I didn't want to leave because I knew that was the last time I would see him. It would be the last time that I would be able to talk to him while seeing his face. The funeral was not as difficult as the visitation. I sat in the front pew of the church, on the left side of the middle pews where his family sat. Before the funeral, a slideshow of all the pictures they had of Eric were displayed on a screen. To my surprise, a picture of Eric and I suddenly appeared on the screen. A feeling of joy and happiness filled my heart. His family recognized our relationship for what it was and they knew we had something special. The picture of us on the slideshow made the funeral easier to cope with.

I didn't get to stay for the burial because my dad told me we had to get home. Heartbroken that I missed the burial, I knew that it wasn't really Eric in the casket anyway. He was gone to Heaven and I didn't need to see him being placed into a wall. On the drive home, I heard a song that I had sent to Eric the weekend before. Another song by Garth Brooks came on the radio and I began to cry again.

*"If tomorrow never comes, will you know how I much love you?"*

In an email the weekend before Eric passed away, those words were written in an email from him to me. Amazingly, it had been "our song" for as long as I could remember. The funny thing about that being a song that reminded us of each other is that he really didn't get to see tomorrow. And now, I do know how much he loved me and I know that he will always love me. Often times, when I pray, I ask God to tell Eric that he just has to wait a little bit longer for me. One day, I'll see Eric again and it will be a wonderful day! Until then, eleven o'clock will continue to last forever as I remember the hour my world changed forever.

*~ Jennifer Terry*

## Eloi

*Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?*

*Father*

A dark, hostile van oozes  
into a gravel lot lit with  
a bare bulb dangling atop  
a steel post coated in  
phone numbers and ads for  
lost puppies and free sex.  
Oily curls drape around  
A gaunt face with sunken  
Eyes inked black by  
Hard times, barely comparable  
To the enticing brown ones  
That gazed at me through  
The naivety of a  
Seventh grade crush.

*Forgive them,*

Filthy fingernails anxiously  
Tap the steering wheel  
anticipating the slightest  
crunch of tiny stones  
beneath worn combat boots  
and the distinctive smell of  
old leather. Hands that  
earlier drew blue melodies  
out of a sea of black and white  
now draw folded Jacksons out  
from hidden pockets.  
Fingers twitch  
out of impatience, or  
maybe because he can't  
Stop.

*For they know not what they do.*

*~ Emily Medders*





## Enigma

Graphite 9" x 11"

~ Kristin McJunkin

## Fear of Water

Before going to the beach on that faithful day, I used to have a passion for the water. I would always enjoy whenever my parents would take me down to the ocean so I could play. After turning eight years old, though, my opinion of the ocean changed dramatically. My father and I went to the beach over the weekend just like any other time, but later that day this trip changed my life. While playing in the ocean with my father, an enormous ocean wave came out of nowhere and knocked me off his shoulders. When I tasted the ocean water flow into my mouth, I began to go into a panic fit. All of a sudden I began to feel helpless and that the ocean now controlled my fate.

My father began to call out my name, but I was unable to hear him because the wave had me fully submerged underneath its great strength. I thrashed around in an attempt to get my father's attention, but to no avail because of how the water kept covering me.

*"Where is my father? Why has he not found me yet? What if he never finds me?"*

I began to feel the rip tide pull me further out into the ocean, while I was fighting to stay close so my father could find me. Every rational thought I could have at the age of eight had vanished completely. While submerged underneath the ocean, my eyes began to burn from the sea salts. In a courageous attempt, I tried to find my father and swim close to him. With my eyes completely open all I could see in the water were several crabs, starfish, sand dollars, and other animals that live in the deep water. While still held underneath the water, I began to feel helpless and scared, thinking that my father would never rescue me.

All of a sudden I feel a strong grip grab my wrists, pulling me up toward the surface. My father had enlisted help from the lifeguards whose towers were close to my location in an attempt to find me. Though my father was *cont.*



*“Fear of Water” continued*

first to find me, the lifeguards tried to pull me away from him to make sure I was alright.

The lifeguard approached my father while he was holding me to check on my condition. *“Sir, we need to take your daughter and examine her at our tower.”*

From what my father told me, I established a death grip around his shoulders after he pulled me from the water. When the lifeguards attempted to pry me away from him to check my condition, I refused to release my grip. My father had told me that I was underneath the water for about a minute, but to an eight-year-old child a minute seems like a lifetime.

From that day I had learned several valuable lessons. One lesson was that whenever I begin to feel troubled or scared, I must to never panic. My father taught from that event that if I remained calm, I would have floated to the top of the ocean making the rescue simpler. To this day, though, I have not stepped foot in the ocean or a pool because I still feel traumatized by that event.

*~ Jennie Darden*

## *Firefight*

I feel the heat  
Reach my freezing heart  
It pulls me closer  
Draws me in  
Blood pumping  
Head throbbing  
Heart beating  
Lungs pounding  
The fire comes  
The test is here  
The flickering menace  
To challenge me to fight  
A battle worth fighting  
A fight worth winning  
Blood worth shedding  
A death worth dying  
Yet a life worth living  
The fire rises  
Let it come  
I will not run  
I will only fight  
I will die  
And I will find  
The immortality of Christ

So run ahead  
Into the fight  
Be consumed  
Prepare to strike  
The fire waits  
Let it come a burning  
The fire smiles  
Let it come a purging  
Now I laugh  
Though my skin it sears  
For this heart of mine  
Already burns alive  
The blood's been shed  
The Son's been bled  
The fight's been won  
And I have found  
The immortality of Christ

*~ Ryan Seibert*



## For A. S.

Walking, dragging my feet along this path  
This lonesome jagged road  
Long has been my journey, everlasting  
Driven on, roaming homeless  
Goaded by the Shadows  
Chased and hunted with the Dark  
While Pain and Sadness take my hand  
And Anger chides me to move faster  
Hate takes the way beside me  
And in my wake come Tears and Rain  
Is Love anywhere about me?  
Once upon a time you came to me  
Gliding, flying, dancing  
Was it yesterday or a thousand years ago  
Do you linger still?  
Joy and happiness take your hand  
Peace allows you to move faster  
Purity takes the way beside you  
In your wake comes Morning Sun.  
My companions moaned and cringed  
Against your Light  
It stung me back and drew me in  
My eyes were burned so I could see  
Shadows also walked with you  
Pain rode at your side and  
Sadness streaked your cheeks  
Even Darkness became as Light about you.  
I searched, looking for the difference  
Between your Night and mine,  
*cont.*

*"For A. S." continued*

The Shadows and the Darkness  
Yours radiate, mine are a vacuum  
Edged in velvet, shrouded in despair  
Pulsing and redeemed, dormant, ever-dying  
Love was everywhere about you.  
My companions will not walk with yours  
And I must go where they will follow  
They are my followers.  
As I left, my heart turned back  
To wonder, ponder, hesitate  
But if all I have to offer is my agony to your joy  
My guilt to stain your daylight  
Then could we ever blend?  
If I overcome these false disciples  
Maybe I could change, could mend  
My ways.  
Sighing, dragging my feet along this path  
This lonesome, jagged road  
Long has been my journey, everlasting  
Driven on, roaming homeless  
On a time out of mind you came  
Gliding, flying, whirling, dancing  
Your eyes a breath and a blade  
Was it yesterday or a thousand years ago  
Is Love anywhere about me?  
Do you linger still?

*~ J. L. Musso*





## Getting Started

*Trompe l'oeil in Charcoal 19 1/2" x 25 1/2"*

*~ Charlotte Dyal*



## Griz

*Digital Photograph*

*~ David Elliott*



## *Her Song*

If you told her ten years ago that suffering is good  
She would have laughed in your face.  
But god told her today that her suffering alone  
Was by his glory and grace.  
She was not alone in those dark hours when she  
Shuttered and hid in her room.  
Jesus lifted her up when he took glorified  
Steps out of the tomb.  
When glass shattered downstairs and yells floated up  
To terrified kids hiding under a bed,  
A Spirit came in time and time again, praise to the One  
On the cross no longer dead.  
Her song is not a boring religious one,  
But a God-breathed lesson: do not run.  
A dark past will no longer hold her back  
She strives for the light and stomps out the the black.  
Hid no more little children. Hide no more!

*~ Tammy White*

## *I Have Never Seen*

I have never seen anything more beautiful,  
then the glow of a morning sunrise seeping through the clouds  
  
I have never seen anything more beautiful,  
then the valley lumps being covered with brown stalks of marvelous color  
  
I have never seen anything more beautiful,  
then the colored oceans in the faces of creation  
  
I have never seen anything more beautiful,  
but i have not yet met my maker to say otherwise no have I?

*~ Shanda Teague*



## *I Used To... But Now I...*

I used to dread Sunday afternoon naps,  
But now I am miserable if I'm too busy to take one.

I used to abhor Chinese and Mexican food,  
But now I crave China Wok and El Alazán.

I used to be a messy kid,  
But now everything has a place.

I used to immerse myself in books for hours,  
But now I treasure every spare minute for pleasure reading.

I used to love long road trips with Barbies and books,  
But now I take Dramamine and beg for the front seat.

I used to think I knew who I wanted to be when I grew up,  
But now I realize finding myself is a process, not an event.

I used to be insecure and doubt myself (like any teenage girl),  
But now I have confidence and focus on encouraging others.

I used to be quiet and withdrawn,  
But now I...oh wait, I've never been quiet or withdrawn.

I used to be lukewarm,  
But now I know the process of sanctification is happening in my heart.

I used to be Daddy's princess,  
But now I'm waiting for my Prince Charming.

I used to rarely think about breast cancer,  
But now my future crosses my mind every day at 3:15.

*~ Amanda Link*

## *I Wait For A Cloudy Day*

Most people look at the clouds and say  
"It's time again for a rainy day".  
They quickly see the deepening haze  
But the silver lining escapes their gaze.

They forget the sun, the moon, the stars  
And remember only the sky's gray scars.  
And for a moment, they forget the One  
Who built the stars, the moon, the sun.

But all the while He sees them frown  
As surely as the sun goes down.  
His eyes grow weary of all the doubt  
In the hearts of those who cast him out.

But me, I wait for a cloudy day  
And welcome them, so dull and gray,  
For in God's promise I will sing:  
"Coming on the clouds now is the King".

*~ Ryan Seibert*



## *Introit*

My dog's dearest wish: squat legs and fishhook claws  
to mimic the zero-gravity antics of squirrels.

My wall's dearest wish: better bone structure,  
to halt this swayback travel downward.

My rug's dearest wish: a trip to Arabia,  
to sample pedigree and aviation.

My roof's dearest wish: a hurricane, to suck it up  
into the storm for once, instead of crouching in dread.

My car's dearest wish: shocks tense as prayer,  
to bound over potholes and railroad tracks.

My heart's dearest wish: a poem that strikes  
at forever so squarely, and money to buy it with.

~ David Bedsole  
Modern Languages Faculty



*Iwo Jima*  
Digital Photograph  
~ Justin Donnahoo



## *Listen To It Rain*

Have you ever listened to it rain  
And the song that it creates  
In the orchestra of fate

Don't fear your memories of pain  
Or the cold that it can bring  
Just look for sunshine

Some people wonder why it rains  
They feel their sorrow and their shame  
Some people bask in others' pain  
Some wear their sunshine

Don't fear the coming of the rain  
Or hear your sorrow echoing  
Just search your heart through all the pain  
And find your sunshine

Have you ever listened to it rain  
And the song that it creates  
In the orchestra of fate  
Everyday  
Don't fear your memories of pain  
Or the cold that it can bring  
Just wear your sunshine, yeah

Put on a smile! Don't be afraid  
Laugh if you want to  
Just hear the rain, and wait a while  
Here comes the sunshine

Have you ever listened to it rain  
And the song that it creates  
In the orchestra of fate  
Everyday  
Don't fear your memories of pain  
Or the cold that it can bring  
Just wear your sunshine, yeah

Put on a smile! Don't be afraid  
Here comes the sunshine

*~ Justin Trammell*



## *Make A Wish*

*Digital Photograph*

*~ Whitney Fritts*



## Me And You

### Verse 1

Another day goes by and now I'm alone. I can't wait to hear your voice on my phone. I pray tomorrow sunrise comes with haste so I can wrap my empty arms around your waste. I tried to let you see me so your love can free me from whatever's making me afraid. So put your hand in mine girl. I wanna show you my world. Share my dreams until they all come true. Yea!

### Chorus

So fly away with me baby, cause now its me and you. Don't look down or back now baby. 'Cause from now on its me and you.....me and you, oh, oh, rite.

### Verse 2

I feel my heart beat as I hold you close. My pulse quickens when you speak, my love grows. When your eyes light up and that smile appears. It erases all my doubt and all my fears. Staying up all night to, try to see inside you, into the very chambers of your heart. Say it one more time girl, I wanna know your mine girl. So I can dream of you till the sunrise brings you back again.

### Chorus

So fly away with me baby, cause now its me and you. Don't look down or back now baby. 'Cause from now on its me and you.....me and you, oh, oh, rite.

### Bridge

The stars are dancing, the moon is bright. I could hold you close all night. But these wings need rest so tomorrow we can fly away again.

### Chorus

So fly away with me baby, cause now its me and you. Don't look down or back now baby. 'Cause from now on its me and you.....me and you, oh, oh, rite.

~ Nick Crowder



Mugshot

Digital Photograph

~ Elizabeth Propst



## *My Demon And My Angel*

It haunts my nightmares  
Forever stalking me  
Demon, vampire, werewolf hybrid  
Silver teeth and eyes  
Black as the moonless night  
I see its reflection in a painting glass  
As it advances, quick as death  
It holds a vice-like grip on my shoulders  
Preparing to bite  
I wake up sweating  
Tingles of fear over my shoulder  
Where it would have bitten  
Still tense I say a prayer  
I grab my little brother's teddy bear  
The only thing I have left of my guardian angel  
I roll over and think what he would be like now  
How he would have grown  
Knowing he watches over me  
I slowly fall back asleep...

*~ Brittany Molloseau*

## *Of Hopeless Possibility*

Could you sing a melody,  
Hauntingly, just for me,  
Or find forever in my eyes?  
Could we touch the darkness,  
And find our passion there within  
The safety of our moonlit trance?

Love, come softly and I will go  
Gently into that good night you've bestowed.  
Love, come quickly and you will see  
You've always been too good for me.

Could the starlight light our way?  
Could our embrace never end,  
Or are my whispers much too loud?  
Will you touch the darkness  
And find compassion there within,  
Or will this searching never end?

Night, come softly and I will go  
Gently into that good love you've bestowed.  
Night, come quickly and you will see  
You have my heart eternally.

*~ Brian Daniels*



## One Breath

She whispered, lie to me  
I love you was all he said  
How could he do this to her? She had done nothing wrong  
But she didn't see the truth, he was wrong all along  
Never had she loved someone with all her heart before  
Yet he didn't love her back, he'd sworn on it before  
He'd promised her forever, and she took that promise true  
She knew that if he loved her, he'd always be there too  
But the light started to darken, she started to go blind  
If this is what love does to you, then I want out this time  
She said these words over and over, and every time they seemed  
To start to ring true, yet her love was all that gleamed  
You could see it in her eyes, that she loved this man so much  
But he didn't love her back, it was nothing but a rush  
He got so much out of hurting her this way  
He knew this was the ultimate, he'd like for her to stay  
He wanted her to himself; no one else could have her heart  
That's all she ever was in his eyes to this day  
She sits in her room and stares far far away  
Everyday she wonders how she let herself get lost  
How'd she let him do this to her, how much it cost  
It cost her her life; it made her lose her soul  
It made her lose touch with reality' it took its major toll  
Now she sits alone and she wonders why it left  
Why did her love she gave him, only last for a single breath

~ Jennifer Terry

## One Light

I  
See  
A light  
Flicker  
In  
The  
Darkness,  
Dancing,  
Rebellious.  
It calls to  
The void  
For a fight.  
"Scared of a  
Challenge?"  
It jeers,  
"Why don't  
We have this  
Out here  
And now?"

The darkness, enraged by the little flame, presses  
Forward; almost extinguished, the light laughs.  
The sun had risen.

~ Wiffie Bruce



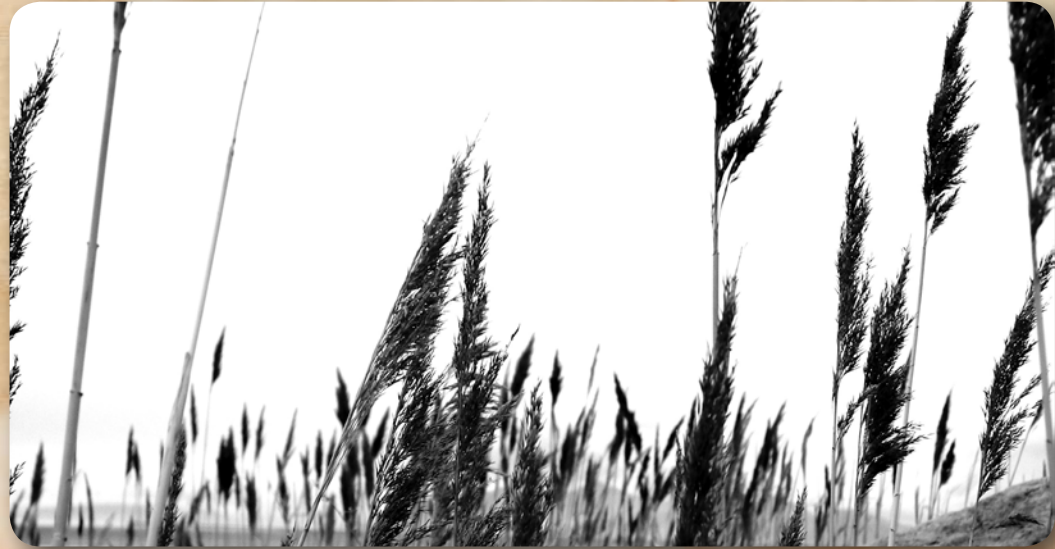


*Orchids*  
Digital Photography  
~ Kelly Maney



*Parrot*  
Charcoal 19" x 24"  
~ Amy Davis





## *Reeds*

*Digital Photograph*

*~ Kelly Maney*

## *Reflections On Camus That Slightly Resemble Poetry*

Take this world away.  
My shoulders can't bear the weight.  
My heart collapses.  
My soul might shatter  
From the grip of this nightmare  
You call life.

Take this world away.  
I drown in the absurdity  
Of endless nighttime  
And all the straight lines  
That lead to absolutely nowhere.  
Is this life?

Take this world away.  
I'm weary of linear existence  
That spirals down to death,  
Hell before I reach the gates.  
Tell me that it's not too late  
To find life.

Take this world away.  
It is too much with me,  
And yet so far away,  
Beyond my reach.  
I can't find it  
Any meaning whatsoever  
In this life.

*~ Brian Daniels*

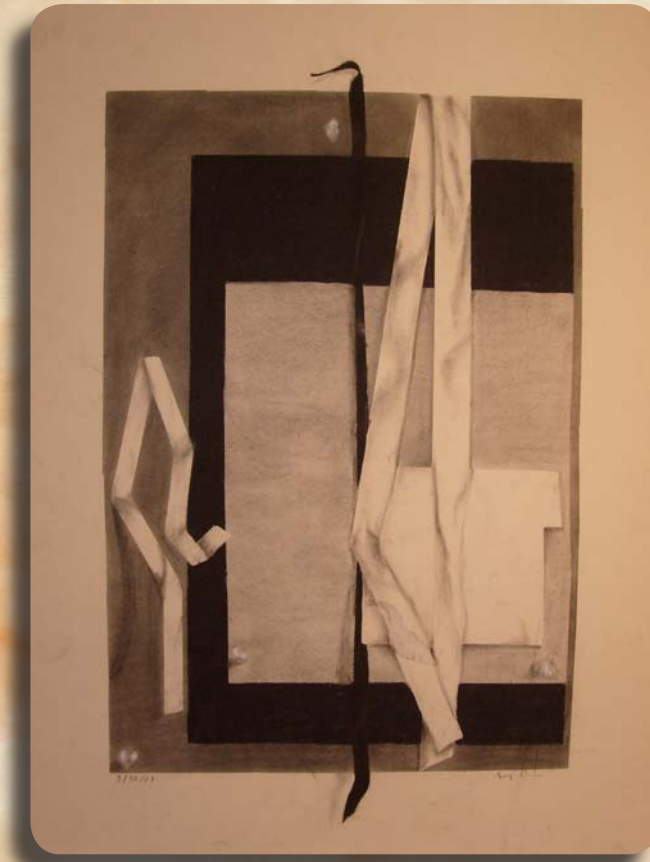




*Reza And Rachinni's Wedding*

*Digital Photograph*

*~ Whitney Fritts*



*Ribbons*

*Trompe l'oeil in charcoal 18" x 24 1/4"*

*~ Amy Davis*



## River

Time crashes past with lightning speed  
I reach out my hand to stop it  
Time laughs and swirls on

Time hurtles 'round me  
Like a hurricane's wind  
Cruel and forbidding

Time shoves me  
But I must stop  
Dreams cannot die

Time, let me rest!  
Let me sing,  
Alone

~ *Anonymous*



## Steps of Stone

*Digital Photograph*

~ *J. Mussro*



## Tears Unbidden

I close my eyes, resisting  
the pressure behind them.  
Undaunted, stinging, burning, glistening,  
the hated drops fall.

Why the moisture comes unbidden  
never will I know,  
but it comes.  
It comes accompanying  
a churning in my stomach,  
an ache in my temples.

I hate the way these  
tears roll down my face  
without permission,  
forcing their way through  
my clenched eyes.  
Am I so weak that  
I cannot control my own emotions  
cannot stop the tears from falling?

I close my eyes, resisting  
the pressure behind them.  
Undaunted, stinging, burning, glistening,  
the hated drops fall.

~ Kristin McJunkin



## Ten Thousand Miles

Digital Art

~ J. Mussro



## The Blood of The Innocent

*All who have suffered from abortion.*

Never had a chance to do no wrong  
Never had a chance to sing a song  
Or dance a dance, never had a chance.  
In the secret place you call a womb  
The place of birth became a tomb  
Where evil men a plan devised  
They said I couldn't even cry  
They said I couldn't feel the pain  
When they stuck that needle  
Into my brain  
It's what they call a partial birth  
And now that babies have no worth  
They want the parts but not the whole  
The U.S.A. is losing its soul  
God no longer has a place  
Godless men have taken His place  
So hundreds of babies die every day  
They'll never get to run and play  
The greed of men shall be their fall  
Surely God will be the judge of all  
Those who spill the blood of the innocent

~ *Cleveland Gilliard, Jr.*  
*AGS Site Assistant, North Augusta Campus*

The Best Poems and Poets of 2005, Cleveland Gilliard Jr., The International Library of Poetry as a compilation,  
One Poetry Plaza, Owings Mills MD 21117

## The Moment of Realization

The car was unusually warm in the morning light. I felt tired at having to wake up so early, but incredibly excited. The light grey stones of our church seemed unfamiliar as we parked the car, like they had been replaced over-night by larger and more ominous ones. My limbs felt like lead as I walked into the building holding Mom's hand. The hallways seemed dark and menacing as we slowly walked down them. But when we turned the corner, light spilled out of one of the doors. I could hear other kids my age playing and laughing inside as a bunch of parents talked with a woman in front of the classroom.

Mom introduced me to my new teacher, Mrs. Powell whose long black hair reminded me of something out of a monster movie. I was instantly frightened of her and I tried to hide behind my mom. I couldn't believe this was what I had been waiting for all whole year; I had begged my mom to let me start school. I had even been carrying around my new dinosaur back-pack ever since I had gotten it. Now I just wanted to go home again. I remember sitting down and nervously looking around at all the other kids who seemed to be having the time of their lives.

It hit me as the door suddenly closed and Mrs. Powell was the only adult left. I looked around in panic but my Mom wasn't there. I couldn't believe that she had left me without saying anything. Even as the teacher started to talk, I couldn't stop thinking about how my mom was leaving right then. I jumped up and asked if I could go to the bathroom. She seemed suspicious at this for some reason, and asked if I could hold it. I quickly lied and said that it was an emergency. I began sprinting as soon as I left the room, flying around the corner and darting through the dark hallway. I burst out of the doors and searched in vain for our van but I couldn't see it. I called and called but she was already gone.

Just as I began thinking about running down the road, the teacher opened the door and quickly told me to follow her. I realized that I was in trouble, but she seemed to understand my fear. She only told me not to lie anymore, which made me feel horrible. When I sat back in the classroom, I hung my head in shame but I don't think any of the other kids had a clue about what had just happened.

The rest of the day passed in a blur. I was surprised to find that Mrs. Powell wasn't evil; she was, in fact, one of the best teachers I ever had. I remember playing on a chalk-board at the end of the day with one of my new friends and looking up to find my mother standing in the door. I didn't want to leave because home seemed like such a boring place compared with this huge classroom filled with cool toys and puzzles.

When I think about that day, I realize that whatever problem I am facing, one day I will look back and be reminded of a small kid running away from his scary teacher.

~ *Abram Rampey*





*Tranquility*

*35mm Photograph*

*~ Charlotte Dyal*

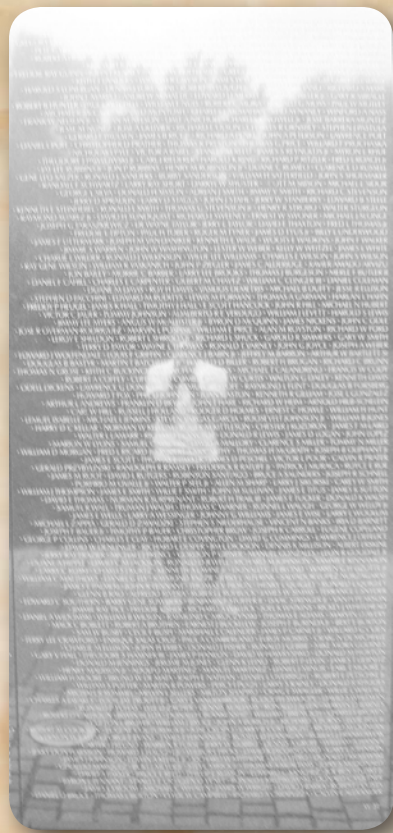


*Untitled*

*Acrylic on Canvas 22" x 28"*

*~ Amy Davis*





*Vietnam*  
*Digital Photograph*  
*~ Justin Donnahoo*

## *Yellow Jackets*

I saw her fading away. She pulled at my clothes . . . Don't tell them! Her weight in my arms, those one-hundred and fifty pounds of sweat and longing, threw my body to the ground. I didn't call for help. The noise was enough to cause someone to stick their head out the door. Should we call for help? I looked back at them (Of course you should! What else would you do?). Yes. I held her, and talked to her fading green eyes as they wandered, groping for something more.

Only a minute before we had been sitting together as we normally did. Except I knew that today she was worse. I could tell it as she walked through the door. She could barely sit in her chair without help. Are you alright!? She looked at me, her eyes large and watery. She was sweating from head to toe; her every limb shook in her chair. She tried to explain, to form words, but her mouth was limp. It wouldn't cooperate. Señora Rosa asked her if she wanted to see the nurse. She shook her head; she couldn't go to the nurse. She knew what that meant.

. . . Rehab. It changed people. They would go into rehabilitation sane and leave whispering secrets to themselves, or making crafts out of shoelaces in public. Every stoner in the school knew that was where you went to lose yourself, your friends, and any sanity you may have. She didn't want to go there. She had seen the products before . . . people coming out mechanical and mindless. At least she knew she was messed up now. What if she didn't know anything when she came out? She didn't want to risk it.

I saw it all flash through her brain. It was painful, watching her think. What did you take? How many? You need to get out of here. Yellow jackets\* consumed her, eating away at her muscles and sanity. She no longer had control . . . they had taken over. She turned to me, "I need to go to the nurse." Are you sure? Alright. Before I could even ask, I was given permission to take her to the nurse.

I walked beside her, watching each hesitant step. As she slid across the *cont.*



*"Yellow Jackets" continued*

tile floor, I wrapped my arm around her to keep her stable. She mumbled to herself as we walked; and then, with a cry she was down, and I with her. As she reached towards me, I told her she couldn't do this. We would make it to the nurse. Get up! She was gone. Her mind had left me alone in an open hallway, looking at the breathing carcass of a zombie.

Fear began to set in. She couldn't just leave me here like this. I tried to hold her close, but she was bigger than I was. There was nothing I could do or say to make this better. She felt cold. I wouldn't let her fail on me.

Finally I heard them coming from around the corner. I decided I didn't know anything; authority couldn't make me talk. It echoed from around the corner and down both halls. I couldn't decide whether it was hope or doom that I heard.

They came at took her away. I prayed...or at least hoped more things than I could process. My mind was stuck on those eyes, gray, lifeless as they stared back at me. They echoed in my mind like the men who rolled her away. I couldn't live like that, living life in fear. I wasn't going to become her. I promised myself that...and I didn't.

\*yellow jackets, a slang term for the drug Nembutal, are used as a sedative, hypnotic, and anti-spasmodic.

*~ Britta Fowler*

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*... From The Division Of Modern Languages*

