



Denali

FALL 2006

Denali

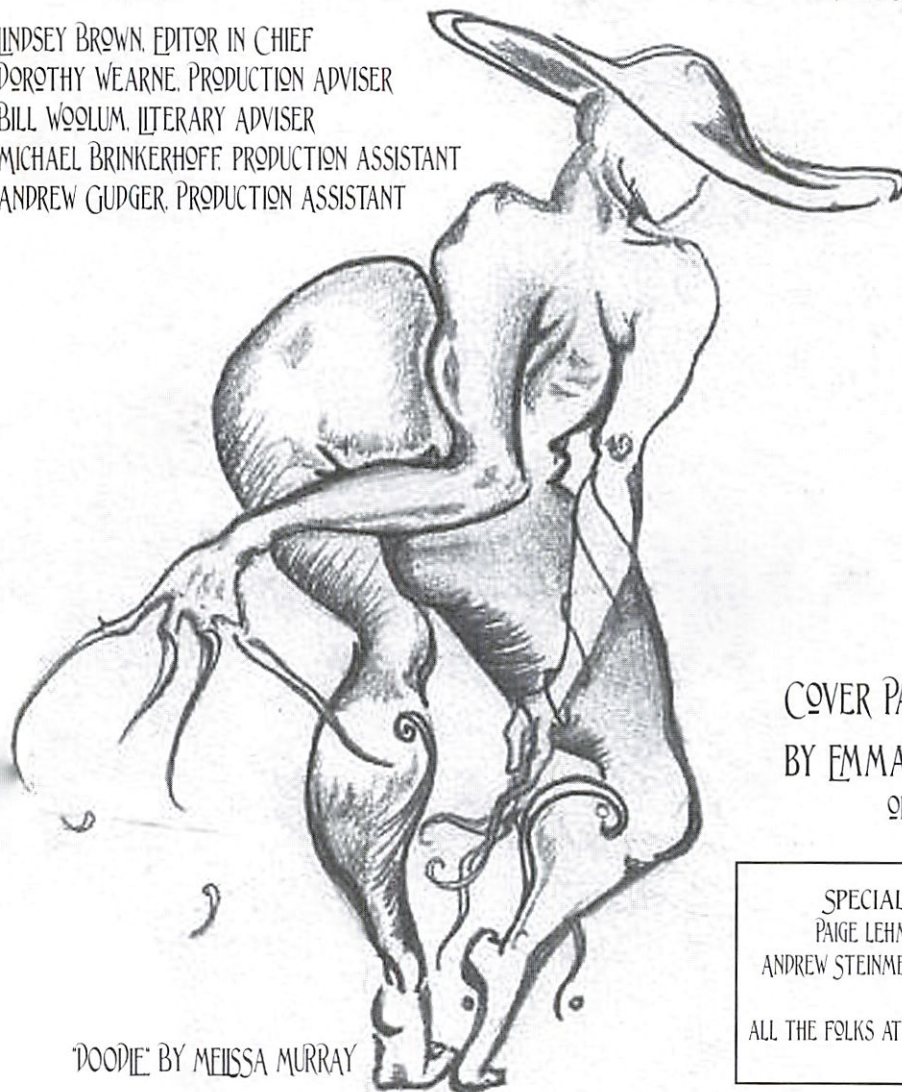
LITERARY ARTS JOURNAL

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PAIGE LEHMANN, SUKI HOLLY,
ANDREW STEINMEYER, PATRICK WILLIAMS,
AND
ALL THE FOLKS AT PRINTING AND GRAPHICS

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SAND MESSAGES

Paige Lehmann

Love Letters, with the Sea

One on one
one lost one
touch from yesterday
a black and white
silent film running
on the beach
and the tides
I wrote you a message
in the sand
and asked you never
to forget me
and begged the frothy water
to deliver my letter
when it rose and carried it away
and I imagined you
at fifty
swimming, in sudden
ecstasy
at the long lost arrival
of my heart.

Paige

Onda Trasportatrice

stavo lì sulla spiaggia..
seduto sulla sabbia
guardavo l'orizzonte.
il punto dove il cielo
bacia il mare e..
le onde schiumose uno dietro l'altra
si rincorrevano....
il mio pensiero era lì
in quell'onda trasportatrice
una speranza..forse un desiderio..
Dio ha donato all'universo
un'infinità di colori..
lì possiamo vedere quando
nasce una stella nel cielo di notte,
in un arcobaleno dopo un temporale,
la vita ha..
a volte passi incerti
e vorrei nuotare in quell'oceano
dirigermi verso quella sabbia..
tu sei lì..
avvolta dal rumore dell'onda..
voglio sognarti mentre che scrivi..
cuore mio..batti ancora una volta..
Il rumore dell'onda mi avvolge
onda trasportatrice raccogli quella lettera...

Santo



UNTITLED

Emily Corack



Michael Brinkerhoff

REFLECTION



THE WHOLE PICTURE

Jasmine Olson

I wear the lips and hips
of an African woman
my Cherokee cheekbones held high
I shout to my soul
but I hear only echoes
as I retrace a previous life

My body is a temple, no mere vessel
that harbors a knowing within
and though my mind is truly Human
I cannot accept
the concept of sin

I believe we all have a purpose
A reason life allows us existence
The Forces of Nature outweigh us
So that we could be blinked out in an instant

But yet we are here now, still breathing!
Here now, to love and embrace
Those mysteries in Life that remain to us
Our souls, God's mysterious face

And each one a key to the Heart of the World
A tapestry of a thousand shades
Each one of us reflected in the eyes of another
We make up the whole of God's hands

Aisha Macdonough
WATERCOLOR

YARD



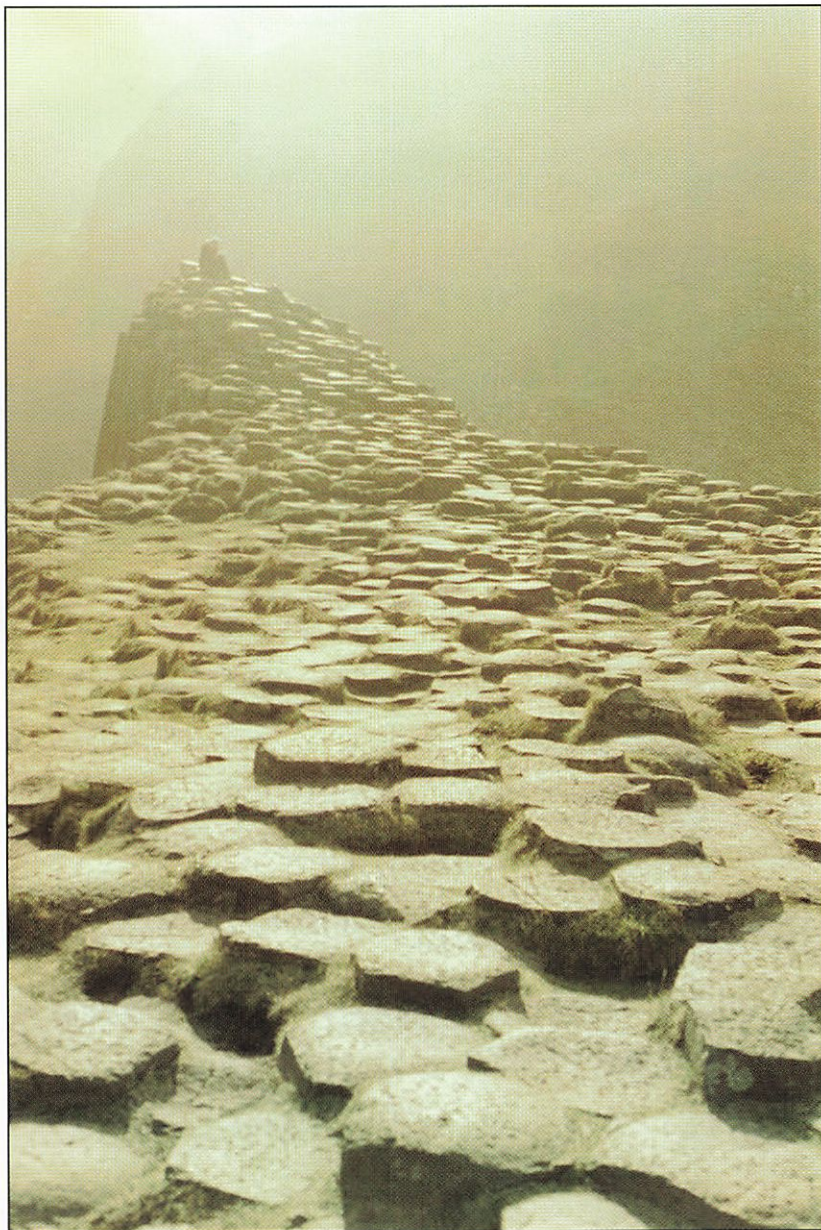
PATRICE FAMILY

by Susie Morrill



Handi Vickroy

GIANT'S CAUSEWAY



WILLOW

Aisha Macdonough
WATERCOLOR



John Bartlett

MEMOIRS OF A MODERN-DAY HOUSE NIGGER

I do not walk like them
I do not talk like them
I do not hustle, battle or flow like them
The swagger in my step is mine and mine alone

I am what I am because I choose to be
This man who stands in front of you
Is your same brother whose family was in chains and robbed of their dignity
Is the same brother whose family was robbed of their land and privilege

Am I to be a rootless tree? To deny or refuse my history?
I refuse, I REFUSE to let someone decide that for me

Although I might night rock the khakis with a cuff in the crease
I stand tall and proud and leave you in Peace

SHALOM TIME

Kathy Torvik

i stop as i catch sight of him;
my walk momentarily delayed
as i see him standing beneath
overhanging tree limbs
near the pond's shore. stationary,
but ready. waiting. cautiously stepping out,
he remains low to the water,
not rising to full height,
but reaching out with each step
as if sitting backwards on his knees. with
quick, darting moves, he scoops up
unsuspecting morsels. penetrating,
intense eyes scanning about,
paying no mind to the mallards that cross his path;
intent only on what lies
beneath the surface. i stand for a while
in the hush of the surrounding, late-autumn hillside,
quietly watching his sleek, blue-gray form,
elegant in his bearing,
and wishing him a silent
bon appetit.

Emma Brochier

HUMAN TREE

OIL AND ACRYLIC



THREE CROSSES

Jesse Coffee



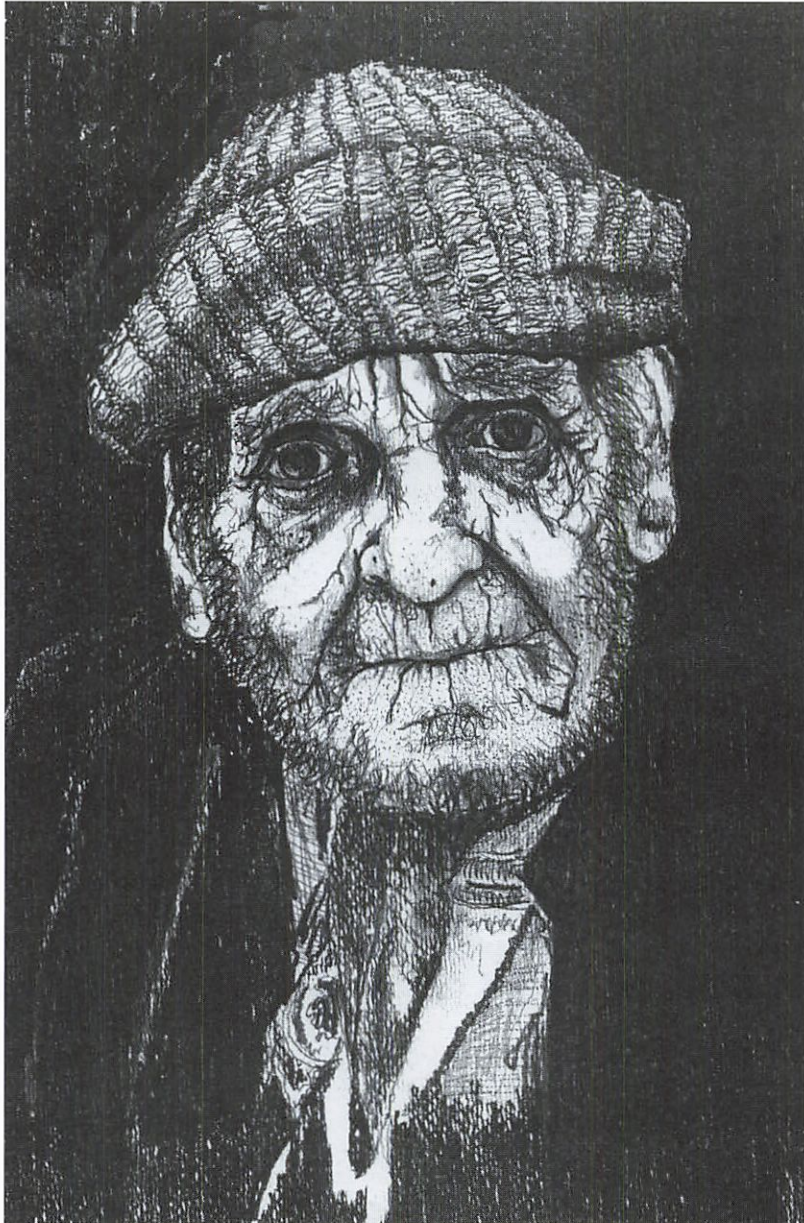
Michael Brinkerhoff

ELLI



HOMELESS

Kathy Gunson
PENCIL



Once I was sitting in a public park watching the leaves whisk around the loose pants of the passers-by when a small bird came and told me a secret.

That's the first thing I remember.

That was Monday. I know it because as a sudden wind gusted down the sidewalk two business men passed, holding their hats against the breeze, and they greeted each other with feigned enthusiasm and made plans for tomorrow, *Tuesday, tomorrow. Is tomorrow Tuesday? Yes. See you then!*

They parted. I picked up my hat and followed the steady street traffic north. I do not remember having a hat, but I don't remember not having one and it seemed natural; I was already well on my way before I even realized I had put it on. Passing a window shop I had a good look at myself, and noticed the fine, sharp starched lines of my collar and my overcoat. I was overdressed. But never mind.

That was Monday. I know it because the streets dragged with a sullen sadness and a sense of loss. I know it because the Monday special at the corner diner is Corned Beef and all the sickened faces in the windows faced a plate of Corned Beef. That was Monday. I remember its leftovers in the sad grey yellow of the sunset in my brownstone window.

Tuesday came and went like a bad fever, and I slipped in and out of sweaty sleep in an apartment I don't remember on a couch that seemed familiar but of a color I abhorred, and when the morning crawled through the thick green curtains I barely remembered my dream: a thick green garden and a bird that warned me of the Exit Doors and... that was Tuesday. I remember because it's the only day that could have come before Wednesday, and how could I forget Wednesday?

Wednesday I realized that Tuesday night I must have finally made it to the bedroom, although I hadn't quite made it to the bed. The carpet smelled like cigarette smoke even though I don't remember having been a smoker. Then again, I don't remember not having been a smoker, and sometimes the cloying smell of second hand smoke combined with the right sort of perfume makes me swoon but... that's not what I was saying. Wednesday I snapped my cufflinks and decided not to shave and fixed my hair and descended on the streets feeling like a hunter of an animal I had never seen.

That night I took her home with me and remembered what a simple and profound joy it was to hear a girl moan my name into the anonymous night, but when I awoke later she was sobbing silently, delicately, into her pillow. By morning she was gone, and a blackbird rested on my windowsill and sang me back into my apartment, and I wondered if she had been there at all or if the green eyed bird had some sinister hand in my dream's design.

That was Thursday. Thursday I laid in bed tracing my finger along the contours of the shape her head had left on the pillow and buried my face deep into the softly perfumed sheets. Stumbling around, I found an unopened half-gallon of bourbon on top of an empty refrigerator and felt guilty opening it even though I knew it was mine even though I didn't quite remember buying it. That was Thursday. I know it because I fell asleep with the radio on and when I woke up in the late afternoon the announcer was saying it was Thursday. Chance of rain and overcast. Avoid the northbound interstate. That was Thursday. I turned off the radio and stumbled into the bathroom and realized it had a balcony that overlooked the main road not three blocks from the entrance ramp of the northbound interstate.

Two trucks, one red. That was Thursday.

Friday I had lunch at the corner diner and smiled at the waitress as though she knew me and she smiled back and I tipped her too much.

That was Friday. I knew it was Friday because the Special is Clam Chowder and everybody sitting in the booths had Clam Chowder except for me, because it was too thick, like leftover gravy. I don't remember ever having had the Clam Chowder, but I do remember it being too thick like frigid porridge. Friday night I wandered along the brightly lit Broadway feeling sated and not satisfied and watched young couples dash in and out of alley ways and rejoin in giggling, raucous groups and I felt like a wounded animal who could not identify his attacker.

That night she took me home with her and I felt the solemn, quiet joy of moaning a woman's name into the anonymous night before falling asleep in a cascade of soft warm flesh.

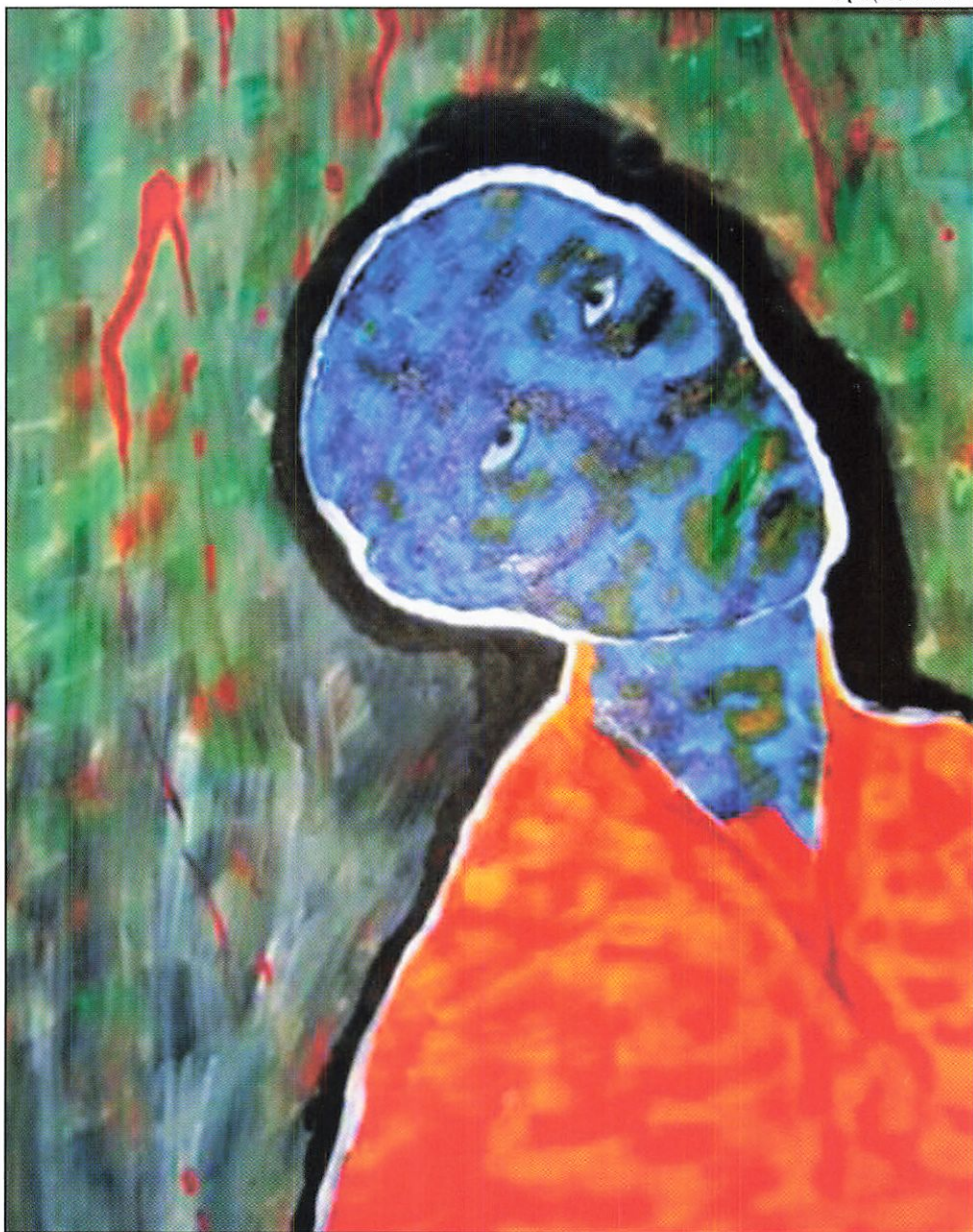
That was Friday. Saturday morning I woke up and she was gone, and I found myself in an empty apartment on a bare mattress with all my clothes on a heap on the floor and only a pack of cigarettes with a slim slip of paper and a scrawled number. I stumbled out the door and spent the rest of the day making change and taking busses until I recognized my Corner and found my way into the apartment and crashed on the badly colored sofa. That was Saturday. I know because that was the only day that could have come before Sunday, and Sunday I can't forget. Saturday night I smoked every cigarette

in the pack and burned the number and finished the bourbon and felt guilty about drinking a stranger's booze. That was Saturday.

On Sunday I woke up every five minutes before the sun rose and then I watched it turn the room to Emerald as its beams stretched across the ceiling and I finally heard the streetcars come alive below me and I knew it was Sunday. I knew it was Sunday because all the liquor stores were closed, and how could I forget Sunday? The Special is Eggs Benedict and everybody ordered the Special and everybody was disappointed but me. I had never had the Special but I knew it was no good and I ate plain dry toast at the bar with black coffee and eyed the unopened tavern across the street and the waitress smiled at me and refilled my cup and I tipped her too much as always because... well, never mind. The waitress smiled and I left and that was Sunday. All the faces in the windows mimicked their Benedicts and I wandered along feeling like an animal searching desperately for its enclosure. I looked for green eyes and stayed close to the park, scanning the trees for the birds and waiting on the park bench watching the passers by try and contain their wild winter garments in the fresh fall wind and a small bird came and told me a secret and That was Sunday. And Sunday I remember because it was the only day that could have come before Monday, and Monday I remember because I can't forget.✱

BLUE

Emily Norris
ACRYLIC ON CANVAS



Emma Gunson-Anderson
WATERCOLOR

EXOCYTOSIS



HAMMERS

Jackson Snellings



Among the goons that were trying to hunt me down, it was popular opinion that I was going to die today. One of them had even offered to bet on it, challenging anyone who thought he was wrong. In fact, he was willing to give hundred to one odds to any of his thugs who thought I could somehow escape alive. No one in the bunch was brave enough to take the bet. They were all pretty sure that they were going to find me. At that particular moment, during this discussion, they were making their way through the alley they had just chased me into, arguing loudly. Through the rusted, eroded metal of the city dumpster that I had flung myself into, I could hear them in the distance describing my demise. Even I thought it would be crazy to take those odds. With only the fish skeletons and empty tomato paste tins as company, I was quickly trying to accept my own mortality.

They were still a good twenty feet off when I suddenly got the notion to jump out of the trash can and make a mad dash for safety. I have no idea what rhythm my heart was pounding to, but it was loud and intense, and I was sure that everyone could hear it reverberating down the alley. Beads of sweat poured down from the top of my scalp, traveling over my face and into my eyes. I lunged forward out of the trash without a second thought and hit the ground running. Without looking back, I gave everything I had and more. I was actually quite shocked by the course of action I had taken, because my will to live had never been so strong. I didn't have long to meditate on my sudden urge for self preservation, because my one avenue of escape was cut off by a busy street straight ahead. Some might think an obstacle like that might slow a man down, but not me. I flew right through the traffic, was nearly hit by a slowing taxi, and leaped deftly over the crouched form of a small man who had bent over to tie his shoe. When I reached the other side of the street, curiosity got the best of me and I stopped to turn around. Though the goons had been stopped by the traffic, one of them had pulled a gun and was now aiming at me. I decided not to stick around too long, surprised by how well I could turn my legs in the opposite direction. One of their bullets caught up to me, but luckily it missed. What that poor sucker actually hit, I'll never know. I was headed through another alley. My legs were on automatic, my whole body rumbling with deep breath. The world was rushing past me, a silent kaleidoscope of images.

My vision registered another street in front of me, but I was on autopilot, and my mind started making decisions without the rest of me.

Another shot whizzed by, and my head jerked around.

Bad move. When you're ahead, don't look back.

As my head turned, full attention on the pursuant thugs, my body was still traveling forward. I tripped, my face set on a direct course for the ground. When I landed, the force of my weight didn't stop me, like I had expected it to. I kept going, rolling down a descending series of platforms. Some how or another, I had found my way onto a staircase, and was taking a much faster way to the bottom than I had intended. I finally collapsed at the bottom, and pain shot throughout my body. I lay, chest heaving, trying to breath without injuring myself further. My brain was disturbingly blank, and tears began gathering in my eyes, plummeting to oblivion on the soiled concrete below. Just then, I realized I was still being chased. I heard them above, yelling, rumbling, stampeding their way towards me. The noise got louder and louder, the force of their presence hung over me like a fifty-ton anvil. Then something funny happened: I heard the goons come, I heard the goons directly above me and then I heard the goons pass.

Blissful silence.

With enough time, I became aware that my injuries were not fatal. I had found my way onto a small flight of stairs that led down to the boarded basement door of an apartment building. I still wasn't sure what to make of the disappearance of the goons. Supporting my wounded and frail body on the rail, I slowly made it to the top. Funny, the world looked the same as it did just before I traveled down. I was expecting it to be different. I sat myself down at the top of the stairs, carefully trying not to irritate any of my wounds. I had lost the concept of time in that heap, and couldn't for the life of me figure out how long I had been down there. At that point, it didn't even matter. Melancholy began to set in, and I was almost ready to simply surrender, and get the whole thing over with. I was tired of running, I was tired of being afraid, I was tired of not knowing what to do next. Just when I thought I could never find another reason to have hope, one found me.

My head hung over, eyes closed, I was sitting, haggard, at the top of the stair, still clinging to the cold metal rail. My skin began to tingle with the sensation of human contact. A warm hand was on my cheek, a soft and delicate hand. It curved down beneath my chin, and titled my head up.

At first, I didn't quite believe. At first, I thought all the pain was making me hallucinate, making me see visions to ease the pain of death. Visions that brought warmth into the pit of my stomach, and made my heart beat with excitement.

I saw my love, my partner, my friend and comrade standing before me, a wise and kind smile on her face. I thought I had seen the last of her. When I awoke in our hotel room this morning, she was gone, leaving no traces behind. At the time, I thought it best that way. No matter what happened to me, at least she would get out alive. As she tenderly helped me up, I stared into her eyes, transfixed. She wasn't gone. She was here with me, now.

I stared in disbelief, opening my mouth to verbalize my concerns and doubts. She placed her hand over my lips and nodded slightly. She was a plain beauty, but she was mine.

A thousand thoughts flooded my brain. I worried about her safety, and my own. Where had the thugs gone? I looked around me, in every direction, but my vision had become a blur. I could only make out her face. She took my arm, and placed it over her shoulder, and we began to limp, or as it seemed, to float down the street. I kept looking at her, and she kept looking straight ahead. Determination was etched into her face, but hope and love flowed through her eyes and paced the way ahead. Strength emitted from her shoulders, and traveled into my body. A force field grew around us, a walking barrier between us and the world. For the second time that day, as we traveled down that busy street, I lost myself in a surreal dream.

A dream unexpectedly cut short.

As we passed a cafe, to the right of us, I spotted two gentlemen, both wearing frowns as if they had suddenly become the popular fashion. With their arched eyebrows and wrinkled foreheads, their faces seemed eerily familiar. And they were looking straight at me. Just then, a man passed wearing a trench coat and a black hat, despite the unseasonably warm weather. He carried himself lightly, twiddling his thumbs with his hands behind his back. Odd. My eyes followed him, and as he glanced back at me, I realized he too had a familiar face.

I was being surrounded. I looked back. A man with glasses and a black beret was walking swiftly towards me with a newspaper tucked tightly under his arm. Yet another familiar face. I turned forward and closed my eyes. My stomach began to toss and turn, and fear sunk to the bottom like a rock, sending violent tremors

throughout my body. I shook, and my breath came fast and shallow. I stumbled, but the woman in my arms steadied me.

She once again placed her hand on my cheek.

I opened my eyes, and looked directly into hers. She smiled. I saw love. I looked once more at the men surrounding me. Another oddly dressed woman, just behind me now. In the street, two cars filled with familiar faces passed, gawking open mouthed from behind closed windows. They were everywhere.

They were everywhere.

The thought did not linger long, because I purposely let it go. There was nothing I could do about it now. As we walked by the two men sitting in the cafe, I leaned over and kissed the woman that I loved so dearly. It was a brief but deep kiss. I sent with it my very being. I released myself into her lips. She did the same. I could feel myself wrapping around her, and through her, and inside her. My lips hung on for dear life.

It was the very last thing I ever did.

It would have been nice to have escaped. It would have been one hell of a victory, love triumphing over evil. In a way though, it was.

That moment is where I spend the rest of eternity, in that kiss with her. What happens next doesn't really matter. At least not for me. It's what I did with the last moment I had that matters. I didn't fall to my knees, and beg and grovel for my life. I didn't fling out and attack the men that were just licking their lips, waiting to get a taste of me.

Instead, I puckered up and planted one on my baby. What a way to go. ❀

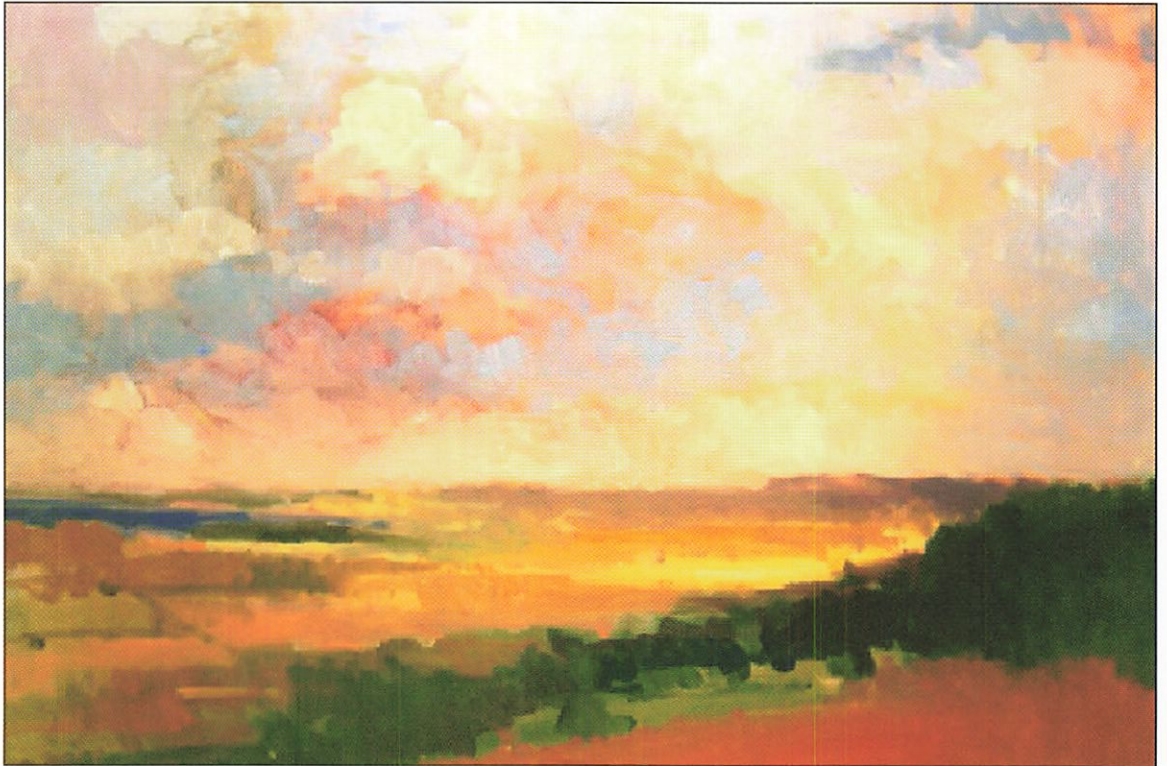
Dominick Barbero

CASTLE STAIRS



OREGON COAST

Jerry Ross
OIL ON CANVAS



Fall courses its way through wind-blown limb: fragrant hymns of
Oranges, reds and yellows bleed from the great leafy bellows of
Nature's cornucopia:
Fresh and vibrant dreams painted from an earthen palette,
With brushes of cool night air and blushing themes, transforming greens
With spontaneous, psychedelic pseudonyms emblazoned with uncharted hues

Awaken, oh Bacchus, drunk with the fruits of this year's yield
Blushing maidens flash within vats of grapes as ripened cheeks flush
Fullness of cycle and timeliness, sublime in their own fruits and part
Their art: the dance of seasoned ripeness, the jaunty jig yearly unique
Yet, connected to year's last, the past upholds the present, the gift of

Life perpetual, circles within a circle, structuring this Earthly universe:
Maidenhood, Motherhood and Crone; the bones, the superstructure of
This year's tango, mingled with the lingo of changing seasons, reason enough for
Celebration, filled hearts, filled cups and exuberance overflowing in plentitude
This brilliant season, impregnated with ripened bounty fattens all calloused hands
Soon enough Winter's chill will drill at our hearts and whiten wedding gowns
In preparation for emergent Spring when billowing, birthing, budding life will spark

CONNECTIONS

Kathy Torvik

She stares straight ahead,
her old, stone face masking her thoughts.
To my hello, there's but a bare
whisper of response, her soul seemingly
lost somewhere far from reach.

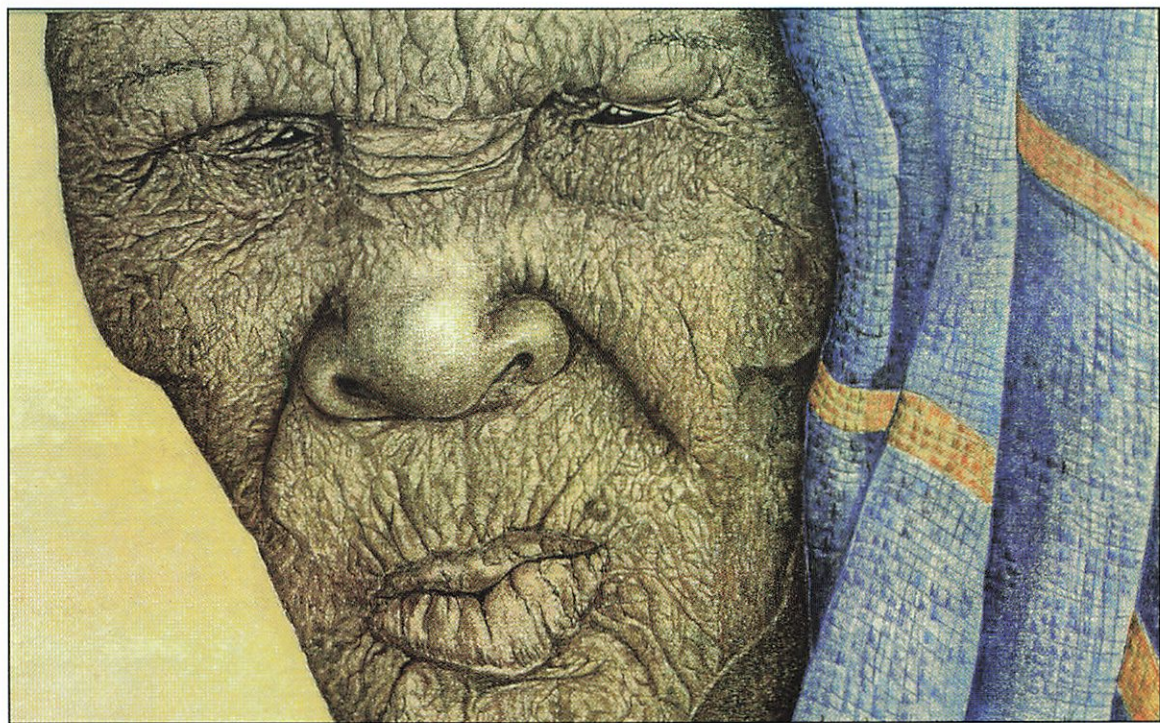
I place a dripping wet flower stem in her hand,
a Black-Eyed Susan from the courtyard garden.
Slowly, silently, still staring ahead vacantly,
she begins twirling it in her hand.
Back and forth, feeling its green edges.
Dipping the flower forward, she touches
the soft golden petals to her chin.

Reaching back through time, I ask about whether she had a garden?
Slowly, she looks at me for the first time and whispers a stream of unintelligible words. I
suggest various vegetables and flowers she might have grown.
Did she grow flowers like these? "Yes," she whispers back.
Soon, both hands examine the length of the stem, before gently placing
it on the table.

Back in its vase, she reaches for the smooth glass sides, sliding her hands up and down the
cool, sculpted grooves.
We stay silent
before the flower which momentarily
reached into her distant world.

Kathy Gunson
COLORED PENCIL

REFUGEE



CRESCENT CITY GUY

Susie Morrill



Jennifer Blue

PORCUPINE



BRICK WALL

Jesse Coffee



Dominick Barbero

ENCOMPASSING LIGHT



PROCESSION

I.

A daisy, a lily walks.
One door (for a sign)
Two doors (for a symbol)
A crimsoned weapon,
Dripping the bloody sea.
This thing is the pyre of glory
This thing is dust.
A slow measured tread.
Three behind and none ahead
Trouble here elegance.
The open door: is it a tomb
Or just another road
To dusty shelves?
Why does she walk?
What moves her?
What moves the stars?
No Question.

What fine food!
Wine that rivals Homer's sea,
And bread that shreds, rolls beneath his teeth.
These two figures,
They are like two friends, long parted,
And have, as vine branches, grown apart.,
I have heard that a man has joy in words,
And that princes have joy in searching a matter
And again I have heard that wounds are faithful
when from a friend
And a concern carefully concealed is
Worse than none at all.
Yet who can judge when there is not matter?

The kiss is waiting, and is given.
No question.

II.

The dreamer awoke.
in a garden.
The garden stretched out
Like the wing of a great bird,
His mind, rising up
(Or was it cast down)
From Dream.
'Till all could be seen was
A Figure, reduced, in the garden
In which he awoke.

There was a rose arising nearby.
A fine rose, but as odd as a dog
Without any bite.
A drop of dew hangs on a thread,
Hung on sparkling radii,
Hung on strands and threads,
Hung with dew.

A drop of dew, masquerading as a
Gem, cut into lines and vertices,
Crossing and contradicting.
Confused tangle, endlessly repeating,
Winding down, revealing a single
Spider
Reflected in a drop of
Sound

Paul Snider

Bouncing off of cold stone walls.
Made up of single
Words

Winding down, revolving in constant
Symmetry, around th' emerging, repeated word.
A question.
There's a figure fit for dance.
Fit for the seamless dance.
A hump there is,
A shriveled hand,
The winter of the north,
A bruised lily.

Beautiful and deformed
Split by hail,
Seared with frost,
Rent and torn by passers-by,
Pointing a finger like a sword.
"The land is broken,
"like the fields where our fathers lie,
"And the grandfather lives.
"He lives, and still wonders
if there are any,
"Any who haven't kissed the enemy?
"We must remain with him,
"Though I belong beyond the setting sun,
"And the wind whispers to me,
"The west wind cries lily.

"Do you revel,
"Do you dance
"In your deeds?
"Shall I join you?
"Dancing my lament to a dirge?"

Lily, let him go.
Look up, let go,
He doesn't know your entrances,
He doesn't know your exits,
Open up your fists,
He doesn't know,
He can't know,
Lily, let him go.

Spring up,
Let loose your wasted buds.
This fallen man is worth your mercy,
Just let go.

WINTER'S LAST HURRAH

Autumn Loverin



We are not youth any longer.
No, we do not have wrinkles that show our old age.
Not like the number of rings on a stump show a tree's age.
Look closer.
See our eyes?
Do you see our souls fleeing?
Fleeing.
We flee from ourselves.
From our lives.
Look at our youthful complexions.
No, ignore the bloodstains on our cheeks.
Ignore our bloodstains on our cheeks,
Like we ignore the ringing in our ears.
Explosions, shells flying, bullets penetrating.
You can't ignore the blood on our cheeks.
Just like we can't ignore the ringing in our ears,
The explosions, the flying shells...
Fleeing.
We had goals once. We loved the world.
We believe in such things no longer,
We believe in the war.
That is all we have now. That is all we know.
Perhaps we are like those empty shells on the ground.
Empty, lifeless.
Once filled with life, used, and then discarded and left to
Lie on the ground for someone to notice and throw away.
Look into my eyes.
I was young once.
I was.

*Inspired by the novel All Quiet on the Western Front.

FLOATING

Susie Morrill



Denali

FALL 2006

Denali publishes in the Fall, Winter and Spring.

We accept original submissions
from all residents of Lane County at any time.
Submission forms for art and literature may be found
on the Denali Website or outside the Denali office.

Submissions, questions and concerns
can also be sent via e-mail to:
denali@lanecc.edu.

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CORRECTIONS

In the Spring 2006 issue of Denali, the text for Laura Lebew's poem "Beauty" on page 2 was swapped with the text for "Sapling" by Margaret James on page 7.

The photograph "Untitled" on page 34 was taken by Brook Hajcich, not Brook Hajc.
We apologize sincerely for all mistakes and any confusion or distress these may have caused.

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WOMAN
WITH PITCHER

Melissa Murray

