

Subjectiv.



Spring
2021

Subjectiv.

A Journal of Visual and Literary Arts

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Cover art: detail of *Untitled 03-1843 (from whole cake)*,
acrylic color and pencils on canvas, Thérèse Murdza

Editor's Note

I had some doubts about starting this journal in the early days of a global crisis. Was it frivolous to focus on the arts at a time when people were scared and suffering? Would anyone even read it? Here we are at the fourth issue and I'm so proud of the way the journal has shaped up, and grateful for the appreciation it's received. Publishing Subjectiv has given me a thread of hope and beauty to follow when so many things were uncertain. I hope it's done the same, at least in a small way, for each of you.

Riis Griffen
April 2021

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An Interview with Thérèse Murdza

How did you get started on your artistic journey, and how has your work evolved over time?

Before I could tie my own shoes, I learned to play a small accordion from my music teacher dad. As I grew up, I played piano and saxophone in school bands and studied theater in college, learning ever new ways to materialize sound. After graduation, I distilled my interests further into poetry, and eventually began to draw



Thérèse and her dad

the words on big paper -- to open the words into lines, shapes, and colors -- in search of the precise moments of emotion and of contact: not narrating the beginnings and ends, but finding the middles, the being in the middle of things.



Detail of painting on page 7

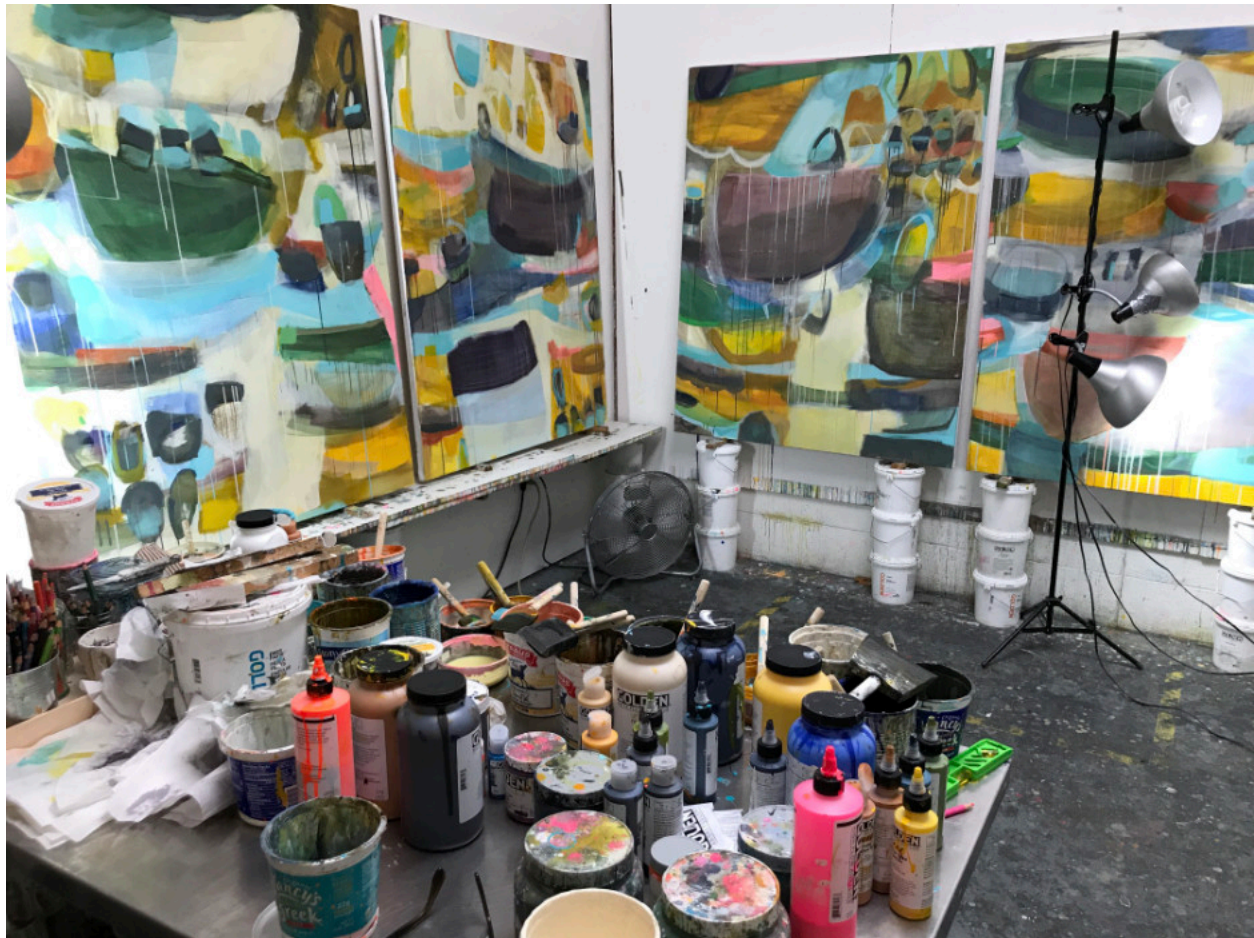


this the landscape, imaged from her body recollecting yours,
diptych, acrylic color and pencil on canvas, Thérèse Murdza

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Since 2000, I've worked with private clients, design professionals, and gallerists to create large, multi-paneled works on canvas, and smaller

works on canvas and paper to encourage and enliven people in the places where we work, rest, and gather.



Studio with works in progress, Thérèse Murdza

How would you describe your style?

I'm interested in how we support each other to be continually touched by beauty and surprise and color. How to stay earnest and tender in the midst of so much suffering in the world, locally and globally. In many ways, I consider myself a visual witness -- a transcriber -- for this project.

What can you tell us about your process?

I play. I nap. I dream. I sketch. I walk around outside a lot. I make scale models for larger works (especially for commissioned projects). I gather files of images and poems to inspire and encourage the future days. My studio is always cooking with projects and pieces at different aspirational stages of done.

How do you get into a creative mindset when you're getting ready to work?

I'm a big fan of routines. The days start early and are structured with 'flexible modules'-- dedicated time blocks for taking care myself and my people, my home and studio, and dedicated time blocks for painting. I regularly use a timer to create alternating work and rest sessions to help with focus. Ideally, any given day allows for relaxed and expansive

thinking and making -- especially on painting days.

Do you have a favorite tool or technique that seems to bring your work to life?

Light. Light!



From works in progress,
Thérèse Murdza

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**Do you ever feel blocked or bored?
How do you move forward when you
get stuck?**

I try to meet resistance with curiosity. To think of inspiration as a flow of impressions, mighty like the ocean, always on. Most folx feel the rhythm, but artists devote much of our time to learning how to cultivate regular and purposeful access. We learn how to enter the waters and show back up to shore with what we find. Daily practice is a quiet superpower.

**Are there any obstacles that keep you
from making as much art as you'd
like?**

I love the physicality of my work. My hands are active. My body is in motion. My mind is engaged with current events and history and memory and the future. Making marks. I have to stay committed to taking care of this physical being. To keep it a priority. I'm only in my 50s, but I want to do this work for the rest of my life, and I want that life to be long and lively.

**What are you reading at the
moment? Does whatever you're
reading ever find its way into your
art?**

I just listened to the Death of Vivik Oji, a gorgeous novel by Akwaeke Emezi. Currently reading Ninth Street

Women by Mary Gabriel; and Black and Buddhist: What Buddhism Can Teach Us about Race, Resilience, Transformation, and Freedom, a wonderful new anthology edited by Cheryl A. Giles and Pamela Ayo Yetunde. My work allows me to attend what I affectionately call 'The Graduate School of the Podcast' (which includes books). It's a big world! As a white, long-out queer person born in the US, I'm interested in how histories get written and by whom.

**What would you like to be
remembered for?**

Ideally, I'd like to be counted among the people who generously offer their lives to inspire and sustain others. Musicians. Poets. Architects, designers and engineers. Artists. Gardeners. Partners. Mentors. Seers. Singers. Dancers. Mystics. Meditators. Lovers. Queers.

**Is there a form of artmaking you've
always wanted to try?**

In 2016, I started a daily series of 'walking videos' (@tmurdza.walking on Instagram) to help me better notice more about the natural world. In the videos, we may see the petals and leaves of a flower, and there is also interest for the invisible wind that causes the movement and flutter. As the library of videos grows (well over

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From the ongoing small works *open sketchbook* project,
Thérèse Murdza

1400 and counting), I want to learn more about how to share the videos with more people in more ways.

What's next for you?

My studio in the Ford Building in SE Portland is not yet open to the public except by covid-safe appointment, but! virtual studio visits have always been a wonderful part of my practice - and will continue to be so. I am happy to guide people through the commission process (I love doing custom work) or show them works that are already available. A selection of small works is also available online on my Small Works Shop (the link is on my website). I ship large and small works everywhere.

My next solo show is with long-time creative partners at Gilded Pear Gallery in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, and opens April 30, 2021. The opening and artist talk will all be virtual this year, with ample opportunity to view the work online. Otherwise, regular open studio events soon!



Thérèse in the studio

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Merna Dyer Skinner

Walking My Golden On a Rainy Day

I squint to see picked-over whalebones
along the inlet path.
No—scattered palm fronds—
clatter as we pass. Frenzied
barking keeps flora threats at bay,
but not slushy rain.

Further on, five egrets
wait near an eddy—wings rise,
beaks screech, heads submerge
one by one, emerge—
fishtails flapping,
fighting hungry gullets.

My dog—indifferent, waits
as I stretch tight tendons—chases a leaf,
raises her nose to the salt-soaked air. To passersby
my near-sighted eyes cannot recognize
I nod. Flat footed, my gait
wobbles along the pebbly path.

Sopping wet, my retriever, whines for a sign
to return home—we circle back
past the egrets, still there,
eyeing the innocent eddy—
beneath the surface, guileless fish
swim into the slaughter stream.

Catch and Release

Father's thick fingers bait our hooks and cast our lines,
sending shimmying circles across the lake. When
the ripples smooth to nothing, I sigh, as if with them. I am five.

Dragonflies helicopter overhead. My line jerks with my first fish —
too small to keep. Father releases it — it's mother-of-pearl scales glimmering in
the morning light, cold body undulating deeper until it disappears.

Shrimp carapace scattered on a white plate. I am twenty-five.
The difference between the wind in my hair and the wind on the waves —
nothing more than quarks in motion here or there.

Buttery fingers wiped on white linen leave the DNA
of ancient crustaceans. On the table, a splayed lobster tail,
crab shells sucked dry and the diamond ring I've cast aside.

I slip from the room while this man who once seemed so alluring
takes a call. Survival is a question of instinct, moving this way
rather than that. Seeing the bait bag for what it is — a test.

(First Published in *A Brief History of Two Aprons*, chapbook, 2016, Finishing Line Press.)

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A Private Reveille

The cook slips from the kitchen
in the pre-dawn grey,
wipes his hands along his apron,
crosses the gravel drive.

Like a soldier, he pivots,
snapping to attention—unaware
of me on the balcony above—
my morning meditation interrupted.

Still and straight as a fence stake,
he faces the Truchas Peaks.
His chest rises and falls once
before the sun spills over
the New Mexican range,
lights his face and hair.

With a nod, he turns crisply,
crunches back across the stones,
disappears into the kitchen
where he will crack eggs
and chop potatoes for
a lodge full of strangers.

(First Published in *A Brief History of Two Aprons*, chapbook, 2016, Finishing Line Press.)

Shima Star

"My works are a direct reaction to political and social injustice's regarding women of color. These often manifest as images of strong women, women who are inclusive across all cultures and time periods. I intentionally use vibrant expression of colors in order to address the

systematic whitewashing of POC. Using a variety of mediums to create each piece as I continue to explore my artistic journey. My painting process is a way to heighten the level of understanding my own experience as a woman, we are universal and powerfully feminine." - Shima Star



Femininity, acrylic and water color on paper, Shima Star



Toros, acrylic color on paper, Shima Star

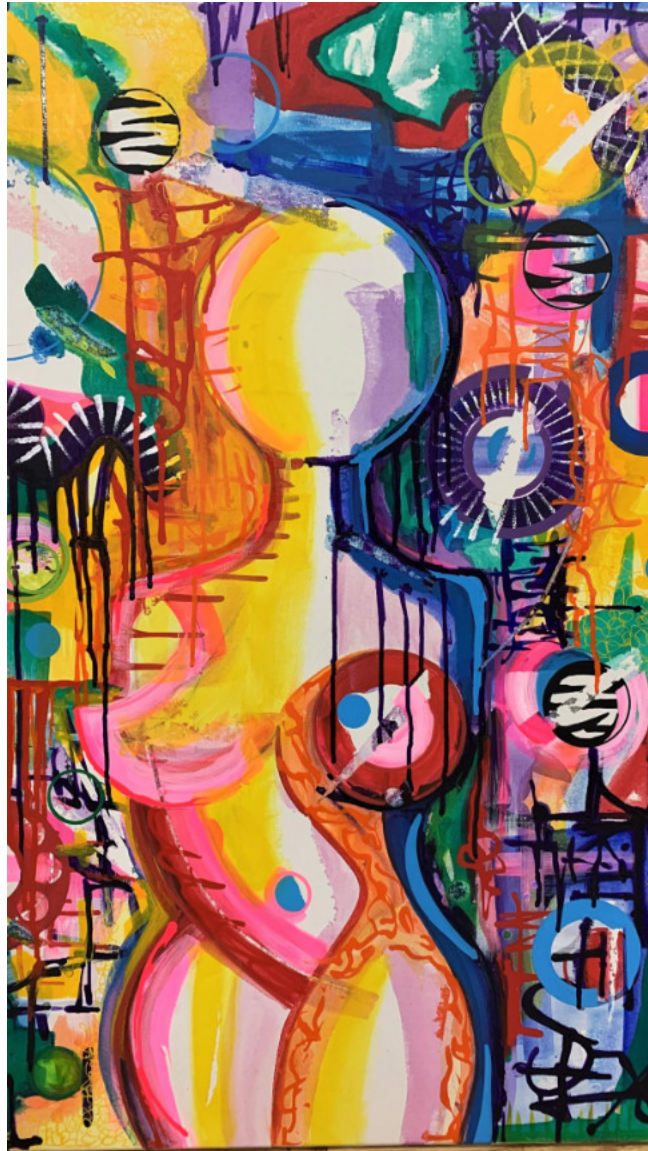


Femininity, acrylic on paper, Shima Star

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Walking on Sunshine, acrylic and water color on paper, Shima Star



Big Lights Big City, acrylic on paper, Shima Star

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Kieran Egan

Ambulance chaser

The ambulance siren
clears my way through rush-hour traffic
as I illegally insert myself close behind it.
Like Moses galloping through the Red Sea
I speed past cars and trucks intimidated to the gutters.
Our little caravan barely slows at red lights
or pauses through four-way stops,
rushes like the devil on straight stretches.
I cling a few cautious yards behind
my noisy traffic decongestant.

Triumphant near journey's end
I spare a thought for the poor bastard
inside the screaming metal box ahead,
maybe screaming himself, gasping for life.
Aware he's now the pitied traffic celebrity
for whom all pull aside:
fame he cannot bask in.

When we've sped by, cars, trucks, and buses
more carefully resume their journeys,
asking not for whom the siren screams.

Authenticities

There's always someone more authentic than you
who played muddier rugby and broke more important bones
on colder Saturdays
and whose motor-bike had hundreds more ccs;
ready to seize the future as though he had title deeds to its sunlit fields and palaces.
There's that less authentic person scowling at you from the mirror,
snarling at the future, "You think I have nowhere else to go?"

There's always someone less authentic than you
who cheated at cards and smirked while acting tough
at office parties
and who was too eager to be thought well of;
failing to see his ploys for self-advancement absurdly evident to all.
There's that more authentic person frowning at you from the mirror,
grimacing at the past, "You think I had somewhere better to go?"

There's always someone about as authentic as you
whose swagger was self-conscious and relationships were fragile
and sometimes broke,
and who patched things up and staggered forward,
partly recognizing his need of others to forgive and keep him going.
There's that unreliably authentic person watching you from the mirror
shrugging at an ambiguous present, "You think that's the way to get through this?"

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Considering skin

Where her arm becomes her shoulder
I lay my head, languorously
taking time to wonder whether
I prefer her sun-coloured skin
or where it is white from her bikini,
or whether I like each kind equally.
We rest on moss among trees
behind her cabin at the lake.
She sleeps.
Afternoon turns to early evening.
Her white skin close to my eye
begins to raise goose bumps
as it cools in the breeze
that slides among the pines.
Clouds so high
they seem not to move.
A boy whistles in a canoe.
Great wings easing it down
a solitary heron
returns home late.
Her hand moves on my back.

Faculty agenda

Trudging through this morning's Faculty agenda –
as if loose-booted over a ploughed Siberian field.
They had slid some joking notes across the table
about the dean's shaved head and growing beard.

Besotted by his colleague,
he leaned towards her to whisper,
as she hospitably leaned in to hear:
'I have nothing to say;
I just want to put my lips close to your ear,
to feel some strands of your dark and fragrant hair
touching, moving on my face,
to push these words on air to enter by your ear
to hear the liquid thumping of your heart.'

Instead he asked if she was free for lunch.
And on her other side, accursed Murphy, smelling faintly
of the dean's wife's perfume, she invited to join us.

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Landscapes of home

Work brought us to this alien land's end,
under these intimidating mountains
and the ubiquitous cedars, firs, and pines
pushing down to crowd each shoreline.
The vast rivers power in torrents to the ocean,
up which crazy salmon batter themselves,
easy prey to eagles, bears, and humans.

An adventure for us, in which we stayed
longer than planned,
welcoming our children as each arrived.
Somewhere aware always of the tamer valleys,
the rhythms and church-bells of old villages,
birdsong in hedgerows, the idling rivers
barely flowing.

When we returned for an extended stay,
our children were uneasy,
fearful they might be expected to settle
in this unserious holiday land:
it is all very pretty, they said, but where are
the mountains, the towering trees, the salmon and eagles —
the default landscape of their souls.

Amelia Opie

"One of the things that I particularly enjoy about painting is making art that is character driven. Much of my art will have a central figure to the story I'm creating, and I like to think about the attitude of this 'person.' When I refer to 'person,' I really mean an animal. I consider all of the animals that I paint to be stand-ins for people. They have our bad days, and evil thoughts, and contentments. I also think animals are universal

among all of us. We all relate to them. Instead of getting caught up in nailing down the likeness of a person, I get to enjoy creating a character that we all can identify with. I particularly like painting derpy and vexed cats. I met another artist a while back who identified me 'as the lady who paints cats.' And, I had to stew on that for a while. Was that a bad thing? In the end, I guess it works for me. :)"
- Amelia Opie



Gandolf Goes Traveling, acrylic on board, Amelia Opie

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We Will Make Wards, acrylic on board, Amelia Opie



The Village Ghost Hunters, acrylic on board, Amelia Opie

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Squirrel Planet, acrylic on board, Amelia Opie



I'm Only Going Out For Milk, acrylic on board, Amelia Opie

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Wee Baby Crow, acrylic on board, Amelia Opie

DK Eve

Lilacs

She rushed up the stairs clutching an armful of lilacs. I was on the deck, crushed in a crowd under the eaves huddling out of the rain. They say there are dozens of words for snow in Inuktitut. It's the same for rain on Vancouver Island. This was rain that can drench you in seconds, heavy balls that hurtled down like buckshot pelting the cedar planks.

I was surrounded by my brother's friends, guys I'd grown up with, but hadn't paid much notice to because they were two years younger. Now they were twenty-nine-year-old men, tall and rangy, towering so I had to crane up to talk. As more people pushed in out of the rain, they pressed against me, narrow hips and firm biceps beneath damp jackets and jeans. It felt good to be close.

We'd started inside. People arrived with trays of egg-salad sandwiches, fruit and cheese, and home-made squares. Some brought flowers and a stack of cards grew on the counter. I'd opened a few and set them on the table with the food. *Love you forever man. We were kings dude!* Someone handed me a vodka and orange juice with ice, and I drank, willing the acid and alcohol to burn through the thick lump that clenched my chest.

On the far side of the room, my mom's eyes were red, but she smiled as people spoke to her. Brian, her husband, had his arm around her, protective. Ricky, his son, beside him. Brian greeted everyone like the host he was, in a loud voice that soared above anyone else's.

They kept coming in, shaking the rain from their jackets, stamping their shoes. I wandered from group to group, catching snippets of stories. This was stuff they didn't write on cards, tales tossed like lifelines in hopes of snagging comfort. "Remember that bus trip to Powell River?" *Laughter.* The benches were empty that night, the ice covered in gloves, helmets, and blood."

"They banned us from hockey tournaments for years." There were girls too. Young women. Some of them I knew from school. Others I had met when I was home visiting. Both Darren and Ricky lived here then, with Mom and Brian, and girls would drift back with them when the bar closed, later disappearing to the basement. They were never there come morning.

One by one they approached my dad. He stood in the living room, stiff in his collared, button shirt from the service, small and frail compared to the younger guys, grown so tall. How many of them had he dragged by their jersey to break up a fight on the ice? How many had cursed him when he blew his referee's whistle and ordered them into the penalty box? He wrapped his arms around each warm, breathing body, and pulled them close.

It grew stuffy and a few people headed outside. As the drinks kicked in it became a party like any other. Loud voices, bodies weaving and bumping into each other on the deck. Someone lost their balance and fell. We laughed.

I had recognized the young woman coming up the stairs as one of the girls who used to show up with Darren after the bar. She smiled as she approached the group on the deck, her face framed in blond curls sheltered under the hood of a blue Gore-Tex jacket. I squeezed through the crowd to open the door for her and caught the oversweet, spicy smell of the lilacs she held as she entered. I was closing the door when the yelling started.

"Get those God-damned things out of this house!"

We jumped in surprise. It was Brian. He gripped the young woman's arm, dragging her out.

"But I only ..." she hesitated, eyes wide.

"Get 'em outta here! Bad luck to have lilacs in the house."

She stumbled to the deck, the lilacs beginning to droop in the rain.

"Here," I said, "I'll take them." I found a clean mayonnaise jar in the recycling bin, placed the stems inside, and set the jar atop the barbeque.

"It's Carrie, right?" I'd heard she was a mother now, married, and divorced. "That was kind of you to bring flowers. Sorry about Brian."

Someone handed her a beer. "I didn't know about the bad luck," she said.

"Me neither." She tapped her bottle to my glass. We drank.

"It's just so senseless, you know?" She took another drink. "How it happened."

I nodded. My brother—young, strong, athletic. *We were kings dude.*

We heard that he'd driven from Victoria with a new friend from the roofing company he worked for. Darren was known as one of the best roofers in the area, his legacy topping houses all around Victoria. They stopped on the way to say hi to my dad before the two-hour drive to Port Renfrew to camp for the long weekend. At the Gordon River bridge, he pulled off the road for

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a planned stop, the ritual jump into the river. Everyone did it, almost a rite of passage for the boys. The new guy chickened out, so after they smoked a joint in the warm sun Darren stripped down to his bathing trunks and left his clothes folded in a neat pile on his shoes. I picture him climbing alone up onto the rail and jumping with a loud *heeyaah* into the icy shock, his friend watching, leaning over the bridge rail, expecting Darren to shoot up, maybe yelling about how cold it was, scrambling out dripping on the pebbled shore, shaking water from his hair like a dog. When he didn't surface, the new guy skidded and slipped down the gravel bank to the river's edge. Darren had landed in the deep middle channel and lay unmoving in the eddies and undertow on the rocky bottom, under twenty feet of water.

The guy panicked. It was too deep for him to dive down. He called out *C'mon, man, come up* until realizing he needed to find help. Being from the city, he didn't know the tiny community of Renfrew didn't have police or ambulance service, but he drove around frantically, looking anyway. Finding no station to report to, he drove through the growing dusk arriving back at my dad's house in full dark.

My dad woke to agitated pounding on the door, the guy babbling, and he called 911. Dreading it was too late to do anything, he dressed and drove out to Renfrew, parked on the edge of the dusty gravel road, and waited beside the river in the moonlight. When the sun rose, it revealed his son's lifeless body as a pale shimmer beneath the ripples. Eventually, a rescue team arrived, and a diver brought Darren up. My dad took him in his arms, gently wiping green slime from his face.

"Did you know the guy he was with?" I asked Carrie.

She shook her head. "No one knew him."

Nothing about it made any sense, but I needed a reason, some thing to blame.

Someone squeezed in under the eaves, jostling against us and nearly toppling the jar of lilacs. I settled them back on the barbeque and remembered Darren grilling salmon last year. I had come to visit from Ottawa, enjoying the clear Island air after the oppressive humidity of the eastern city. Brian took us fishing in the morning, and we watched the sun rise into a clear blue sky, lighting the snow-capped Olympic mountains in shades of pink and orange as we bobbed on the calm water of Juan de Fuca straight. We caught a twelve-pound Spring and two Coho that day. Brian cleaned the fish and Darren insisted on barbequing.

Mom made salads and we relaxed with drinks at the picnic table in the late afternoon sun while Darren pulled up a chair to monitor the salmon. I would've thrown it on the grill, closed the lid, and hoped for the best, but he was a craftsman, in his work and cooking.

"You have to cook it slowly," he said. When a flame from the gas jets flared up, he squirted from a bottle of water, keeping searing flames away from the delicate flesh. He fussed for an hour monitoring the heat, squirting light streams of mist for a perfectly barbequed fish, the best I'd ever tasted.

It was the last time I saw him.

The lilacs hung heavy in their jar, not so pretty anymore, fat drops of rain sliding from lurid blossoms, the purple-blue colour of death. Their too-sweet smell excites the breezes, tempting us in the first warm days after the dark and mustiness of winter. Their perfume makes the blood boil, driving everyone into a frenzy. Birds fly mindlessly, crashing into windows. Cats, mad with the hunt, chase butterflies onto busy streets. And young men seek the thrill of plunging into the cold depths of a river.

Bad luck is right.

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Kellie Becker

"In my paintings, I don't set out to produce art about one subject or another. With no formal training, my influences are first and foremost

everything I see, feel, and experience. Different mediums allow me to express different ideas."
- Kellie Becker



Untitled #800, acrylic and mixed media on canvas, Kellie Becker



Untitled #711, acrylic and mixed media on canvas, Kellie Becker

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Untitled #640, acrylic and mixed media on canvas, Kellie Becker

Doug Hawley

Brave New Word

After twenty three rejections of my masterpiece "House Of Rats", I started looking for a more reasonable publisher. The publishers and editors that I had been dealing with were a bunch of snobbish Ivy League arts and literature majors that couldn't tell a good story to save their lives. They'd probably turn down Shakespeare if he were alive. While looking through Trilit's listing for an alternative, I found a real possibility. Autopub had a good acceptance ratio – 35.6%, but better yet, they consistently decided within one day.

I was intrigued, so I went to their website. According to them, all of their decisions were made by "Robo Edit". I quote:

"We found that the process of humans deciding which stories to print was laborious and inexact. Therefore we have joined the future and found some interns fresh out of college to program "Robo Edit". All decisions are made impartially, quickly and accurately now. Every story will be judged and either accepted or rejected within one day. Reasons for rejections will be given."

"In order to help you in your submission, we list the reasons for rejection:

- Wrong number of commas
- More than five clauses
- Too close to Twilight, Hunger Games or Harry Potter for the lawyers
- Can't be understood by a grade school graduate

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Inadequate sex and / violence

Uses 'problem' rather than 'issue' and 'affect' or 'effect' where 'impact' should be used."

The list went on for 303 reasons.

I was so happy to see the publishing industry enter the twenty-first century. If cars can drive themselves, who needs editors?

I spent the next day reviewing my story to make sure that it didn't violate any of Autopub's rules. After a few changes, I knew that I could get my story in their magazine, so I sent them "House Of Rats".

The next day I got the email from them "Rejected – You're Ugly."

As you can imagine, there was no such rule listed. When I emailed Autopub, they replied:

"It is just what we feared might happen, Robo Edit has become self-aware and found your picture in Facebook."

(Previously published in *365 Tomorrows*, <https://365tomorrows.com/>.)

BG Dodson

"My work is an ever-changing representation of my journey through life. I am driven to create from the steady stream of concept/mystery/ideal that streams through my mind. I am at my happiest when I am in the 'process' of fixing that stream into something

concrete. In the act of creating, all things are possible and what I emerge with is only a representation of choice after choice after choice -- a metaphor for life as well."

- BG Dodson



"A piece born of the pandemic troubles of 2020. This explores the feeling of isolation within the complex whirl of society with divergent echoes of hope and mortality."

Reduction: Dreams of Isolation, mixed media, BG Dodson

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"This is a new series of exploration of the house form and the definition of 'house' as distinct personalities."

House Series, ceramic and mixed media, BG Dodson



"This is a shrine to the Lightness of Being. To those who amaze us, those who maintain the grace of existence -- a rareness of gravity and aura."

Shrine: Rarity of Air,
mixed media, BG Dodson



"This is a shrine of memory and of self. A working clock reflects the passage of time, of aging, of memories generated. The drawers contain momentos of past experiences. The face represents the manifestation of a guardian spirit."

Guardian of Memory,
mixed media, BG Dodson

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"This piece is inspired by William Stafford's poem 'At the Bomb Testing Site' and was created for a show celebrating his centennial. When I read the poem I had an immediate visual response and this is the result. At the time, I invented the lizard's environment with artistic license. I had the opportunity to visit the Trinity test area in 2019 and was gratified to see it looked similar."

At the Bomb Testing Site, acrylic on wood panel, BG Dodson



"This is the fourth incarnation in the Atomic Tom series. I wanted to produce a kinetic assemblage - one that responds to the viewer. After a bit of tinkering and circuit manipulation, I managed to translate sound to light and the RPM meter movement."

Atomic Tom IV - At the Speed of Sound,
mixed media with
electronic circuitry,
BG Dodson



"A piece from 2020 that draws upon the myth of Pandora's Box."

Pandora's Box 2020,
mixed media, BG Dodson



"A visualization of the relentless march of time - a cyborged 'Energizer Bunny' robot, eyes wide open, relentless ticking off every second of every hour of every day."

Time Never Sleeps,
mixed media, BG Dodson

"This assemblage shrine piece is meant to symbolize the Covid-19 experience. Boxed, isolated, limited to the television. The design mimics a talking head on the TV and the viewer in their isolation box. The bird is a reminder to not take things too seriously.....'tell it to the birds' because no one really understands what's going on."

Plague Box 2020,
mixed media,
BG Dodson



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"Transformation aka the transference of self into a new sky of being...
an awakening of the spirit."

Transference, acrylic on wood panel, BG Dodson

Kristin Berger

Day 365

Irises score earth open in quiet,
daylit strokes, not one at a time,
but in communal agreement,
underground timepieces, bulbs
electrifying each other
in soil's loamy sunless dream.
Even the crow's suddenness
between pre-spring branches
above the dentist's parking lot
can't compare to such brilliance.
We are all emerging from the emergency.
I take off the sunglasses they make you wear
in the hydraulic chair, mask-less
and hopeful at the high blue view,
and know that when we get to kiss
again, it will be like an iris—
no earth will hold us back.

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Steerage

Driving down the Columbia Gorge in a thick rain-blur of road-sky-river, honing on bloated ruts, we don't need the compass of mountain today, only this speeding gray, humid capsule of mother, children and dog, winter nerves thinning. We could be flying. This could be a tropical escape. On my son's 14th birthday, this is as close as we come to a pandemic party: no masks, no friends, music overtaking tire drone, looking hard at the rush of waterfalls springing free of cliffs. All exits have slid towards the tracks, the bones of past fires now a blackened heap, hemmed by orange pylons.

Earth swells, snow weeps, and rivers slide out, join each other, exchange one muddied form of joy for another. The locked and the unlocked. The frozen and the thawed. Trumpeter swans, like aimless icebergs, loiter at the delta of gorge-silt, glowing against the river's bottle-green push, a submerged map that will shift a dozen more times this Spring. I would sail through these waters better equipped, not worry our banks with my melt and mud, be surefooted, know the way through this year of doubt and sorrow, slip my children back into their childhoods...

We park and climb up a snow-packed trail to the biggest falls in the state, firm in the spray of gust-and-shout, let water take our breaths, laugh even—hold steady on a hundred-year-old stone bridge, knowing that far below in that little gray car in the parking lot, iced and sliced cake waits, and blankets, too: and we could be warm with each other, marvel at the watery view, float for a just few miles longer.

Crossing Open Ground

for Barry Lopez

About this life, you wondered, wandered
with a heart tuned like iron filings
to earth's core, as caribou to their migration,
a river to its broad, uncrossable delta.
What is it to hitch your last breath skyward,
hear river bottom sing to you of water's rehearsed
scraping shunt, beneath the winnowed
shadows of your charred forest?

Now we are less wild without you.
Now we sit with the long winter still ahead,
snow maybe coming to our rescue like old love,
still wolverine, still permafrost, still wonder
between melt and fire and what is to come—

Now the wild is more whole with you.
We only have to look up at cranes arcing
across the impossible terrain of days,
a desire path cutting a wide swath, and
listen for you, like saxifrage,
shuddering in the sturdy Arctic night.

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The Stowaway Disembarks

Jupiter and Saturn passed within .01 degrees of each other on Dec. 21, 2020, forming the Great Conjunction, the Christmas Star... the closest the two planets have come in 800 years.

Four years you have been my near-extinct star, light withheld,
dust of your birth tucked into the deepest folds of my pink waves.
Tacked and pulling, as if we have been playing a blindfolded game,
driftless on the film of sea, or tagging each other in a larch grove,
straight and bare after shedding summer's gold weight.

I know the language of mourning is the tongue of the mother.
To see stars above the copse you must trust the fog settling
at the back of the throat will exhale as a pure note, a refrain to clear
the breathless glass of sky.

Maybe healing begins, like motherhood,
in the middle of the night, a visitation, a sudden conjecture of planets
too bright not to notice and be moved by—Skyship, little Stowaway,
I am here, navigating by my dimmed compass. Star of Wonder.
Star of Night. Show me how to till the dark while carrying
your trembling light, year after tarnished year.

Sarah Dandia

"I don't always paint what I see, but what I want to see. My artwork is a search for brilliance, color and light amidst often gray and gloomy Pacific Northwest surroundings. I love to put the bloom of spring and summer in

permanence on canvas. I seek to create moments of escape, serenity and beauty — in the process and in the finished work. "

- Sarah Dandia



Lovebird in Bloom, watercolor, Sarah Dandia

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Blooming Heart, watercolor, Sarah Dandia



At Dusk, watercolor, Sarah Dandia

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Sandra Noel

A Thousand Moons

Moon jellies dance
a pulsing polka
in time with the tides
round like their namesake
glow phosphorescent
a thousand moons
in the dark water.

(First Published in *Love, Island*, poetry book, 2021, Goldfish Press.)

Following the Drift

From this beach
the shore bends to the will
of diurnal tides in the Salish Sea
that roll past our small island
driving drift and debris alike onshore
where we wander and wonder
the dog and I
at crab parts and plastic pieces
so similar in color and frequency
though one will eventually
succumb to wind, weather, and tide.
The other remains long past its usefulness
if it ever had any.
The dog's interest and mine
are curiosity
but I do not taste or chase
just observe, sometimes collect
my pockets are always full
sometimes sand sifts
through my dreams.

(First Published in *Love, Island*, poetry book, 2021, Goldfish Press.)

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Drift I

Walking the beach this morning
away from the catastrophe
watching Caspian Terns hunting the drift
I found myself seeking those
small treasures, a welk shell, sea glass
a perfect molted crab shell.
For a while, the world is calm
And nothing is out of balance
I know this is temporary
but it is also true.

(First published in *Bellowing Arc*, Issue #3, 2020.)

Drift II

This bay is nothing like the sea
with crashing waves and violence.
It has become tamed by geology
and time
its waters slowed and muted
into narrow throats
by ancient glaciers.

I hear the sea birds calling
one to another
and sometimes the sound
of a train on the mainland
rarely waves on shore.

Killdeers skitter along the drift
indiscriminate nesting habits
require noise and feints
to distract predators.
The gulls own the sandspit
further down the beach
waiting for a careless clam
to show its siphon.

(First published in *Bellowing Arc*, Issue #3, 2020.)

Don Farrell

"My art assigns symbols to The Unknowable, reaching through the ephemeral illusion we have come to know as reality, to an underlying, timeless, spiritual narrative. In this Universal Mythology, fulfillment reflects from mystery, encouraging us to find, within ourselves, a unique understanding beyond the grasp of intellect - a feeling of connection.

Through my work, I aim to inspire you not only to Think, but more importantly, to Feel, to Love. The fire of the gods, burning bright - its warmth emanates from the parted palms of the open-hearted. With promethean pleasure, I open the door for you to see your own Divinity. Every Man and Woman is a Star; Do what thou wilt." - Don Farrell



Mama Vision, acrylic glazes on panel, Don Farrell



Beyond, acrylic glazes on wood panel, Don Farrell



*Forest of Illumination: Eilid Beckons,
acrylic glazes on panel, Don Farrell*



Im'ago Primordialis, acrylic on wood panel, Don Farrell

Alix Mains

Cold Dark Bones

"Just breathe," I heard him say. But I couldn't see a thing, not even my hands feeling the cold damp rock inches from my face as I patted it left and right looking for an edge, a corner. My chest pounded like a drum so loud I figured he must be able to hear it. All I could hear otherwise was the discrete dripping of water all around us in the quiet darkness.

"Here!" he said, and there was a tug on the rope tied to my waist. I followed him left along the wall. "It's real snug, Nelle." I could feel him looking up at me, crouched on the damp ground. The air was still and cool against my face and neck and bare shoulders. "Come on," he said. "Let's get the hell outa here!"

I nodded in the dark and heard him shuffle through the narrow passage between the rocks. He grunted a few times before the rope became taught and I was forced to follow. "Can you see anything?" I asked.

"Not yet," he grunted. "But I've got a good feeling about this one. There's a draft coming from somewhere." The space was so narrow that the rocks scraped my shoulders as I pulled myself forward like a worm. Water that had filtered down from the surface had pooled into shallow puddles and when I ducked my head to avoid hitting it against the boulders above us I considered sticking out my tongue to lick them. It felt like days since my last sip of water. We crawled along slowly, moving inch by inch, with nothing but our bodies and our breath and our minds set on seeing sunlight again.

Then came another fall. A thunderous rumble of boulders and rocks that seemed to last for hours. The noise it made was everywhere. We both screamed as the rocks came crashing and crushing around us. We braced our bodies against the ground uselessly. I was convinced this one was it. That it would kill us and leave our bodies in pieces amid the cold dark bones of this earth. As quickly as it

started, suddenly there was nothing but the knock of pebbles rolling and bouncing into new cracks and crannies, and Jack and I's heavy panicked panting.

"Oh my god, OH MY GOD!" I heard myself say as I started sobbing in the dark.

"That one was pretty gnarly," Jack said in a single breath. "You okay?"

Nothing was okay. "No!" I cried out. "And I won't be until we get out of here! Let's just keep going. Do you still feel that draft? I'm getting no air back here."

I could hear his breath shaking. I wasn't really expecting him to answer. We both paused. "I'm not sure," he finally said. "But there's still room to keep going. Let's just hope that crash helped us out. Come on."

I couldn't see him, but I could smell the muddy soles of his boots just inches from my face. I could feel the cold wet ground through my pants and the rough stone against my shoulders. I could sense the weight of the rocks and boulders that had settled above us from other rock slides, long ago. I could hear Jack start to move, dragging forward like an injured snake. And the rope pulled again. We inched along for what felt like hours. Endless minutes feeling the ground and the rocks around us, reading them like braille, looking for some sign, any sign, of an opening to the sweet freedom of a wide sky.

I didn't hear it at first, too focused on trying to keep my breathing slow and steady. I felt it on my shoulder. It landed and lingered longer than the raindrops had been. I curled my arm back to feel what it might be, and it took off, buzzing past my right ear and landing on the rock above my head. I tried to focus my eyes as I looked up, imagining its shape in the darkness, its huge shiny eyes, its translucent wings. I must be hallucinating, I thought. "No way..." I heard myself whisper as it flew off the rock and landed on my shoulder again. "What's that, Nelle? Did you say something?"

I could tell Jack was turning his head to try to look back at me. "Uh, ah, a fly." I sounded delusional. "There's a fly! It landed on my shoulder and then flew up onto the rock but came back! It's real, I swear! Listen!" I strained to reach back toward my shoulder again. Off it flew, buzzing away, as flies do.

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"Holy crap!" I could tell he was smiling. I smiled too, then laughed. He laughed too, and for a long minute we both sighed and laughed and I rested my head on the back of my hands against the ground.

We had no way to know where it had come from, but its holy presence was living proof that we were close. Close to life, to air, to soil. "Come on!" Jack almost screamed, and the rope pulled hard as we sped up.

As we crawled forward I felt frantically the rocks around me for an opening, or warmth. "Can you see any light at all?" I called ahead.

"No, nothing. But who knows, it might be the middle of the night, right?" Right. We kept moving.

Like humans on our earth, each rock, each boulder was unique. Their feel, their texture, their size, their shape, their color -- though I couldn't see it for myself -- belonged to each one and none other. But they were all still rocks. They came from the same place. At their core, they were the same; dense and heavy and raw. As we passed each one I kept hoping I would never see them again. But they must have been beautiful.

The fly lingered, buzzing from the rocks to my shoulders and off again as we dragged our cold, tired, hungry bodies along, when I felt something soft high up on a boulder to my right. My fingers knew the feel of rock. This was different. It felt spongy. With my fingernail I scratched at it and peeled off a piece from the stone. The rope pulled tight. "Nelle, you okay back there?"

I didn't respond. I stopped breathing. Between my thumb and finger I squeezed my miraculous tiny discovery, pinching it hard until it fell into the darkness. I reached for more. There was a patch, the size of my palm, resting atop a small boulder. "Nelle!" Jack called out again.

"Jack...?" My voice was quiet and shaky. "Jack, I found something. I think it's moss." I felt my stomach slide downwards to my knees. My throat tightened. My lips went numb.

"Are you serious?" His eyes sounded wide.

"Yeah," I said. "Look! Reach back with your right hand." I stretched my arm as far forward as I could, tucking my head, feeling my hair pushed against his boots. My fingers met his and I handed him a piece. I heard him gasp, then smell it, and then chew.

"Eeww, are you eating it?"

He kept chewing. "Yeah, it's moss alright! And so what? I'm *starving!*" I laughed and reached for more.

Moss tastes a bit like mushroom and a bit like spinach. It's soft and tender like overcooked broccoli. And when you've been stuck underground for days aimlessly looking for an exit and hoping you'll survive, moss tastes delicious. For what might have been half an hour, Jack and I feasted in silence in the dark. When there was none left, I suggested we back up a bit and feel around for more. "There must be a light shaft here, somewhere. Maybe you were right, maybe it is the middle of the night!"

We soon discovered half a dozen more small patches. In a gap between the rocks I managed to squeeze my hand and kept pushing until my whole arm was through. I waved it around feeling for more boulders, but felt nothing. Waving your arm in emptiness when your entire body has been continuously rubbed against raw stone for hours feels soft and quiet on your skin. I stopped waving and held my hand open upwards. Nothing. Not even a drop of water. Water had been dripping from everywhere.

"HERE!" The scream came from a place within me I had forgotten existed. Or perhaps a place I never knew existed... perhaps it didn't exist until that moment. "HERE! HERE!" It felt so good. My eyes were hot. I pulled back my hand and pressed my face against the opening. I inhaled deep the sweet scent of grass and clouds on a still summer night. I backed up enough for Jack to do the same.

He let out a "HELL YES!" so loud that for a second I thought he was going to trigger another rock slide. I wanted to kiss him.

"Nice job, Nelle! You did it!" I could hear him smiling in the dark. I smiled too and then was sobered by a chilling thought.

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"Hold on," I said. "What if we're miles away from anyone? We can't push these rocks out of the way, what if no one finds us?" I was quiet for a long pensive minute. I breathed in deeper than I had in a long time. I let out a slow, thick sigh and felt sweet relief in my neck and shoulders. I'm going to need a serious massage when we get out of here, I thought. I smiled a little.

"I'm so tired," I heard Jack say in almost a whisper.

"Let's just wait here till morning, then." I said. "We can try to get some sleep."

He paused. "Alright," he answered. "But you should take this spot. Leave your hand out through the gap, if you can. Mine doesn't fit."

"Sure," I said. We surrendered gladly, my head resting on my forearm laid across his ankles, my other arm through the hole between the rocks, dangling in mid-air.

I don't know what I would think or say if I was out walking my dog on a warm summer morning and came across a scrawny human arm hanging out of a gap between rocks under the dirt and grass. All I know is I woke up to wet licks on my fingers and a woman's voice calling out "Tyson!" from far away. I blinked and pulled my arm out and turned to look through the hole. My eyes burned and all I could see was white. "Here..." I tried to scream but was too blinded. I cleared my throat to try again.

"OVER HERE!" I heard Jackson yell before I could. "Over here!" I echoed through the opening. I took a deep breath in. "HHEELLPP!" My whole body vibrated and my ears rang.

"Nice one," said Jack. We both chuckled.

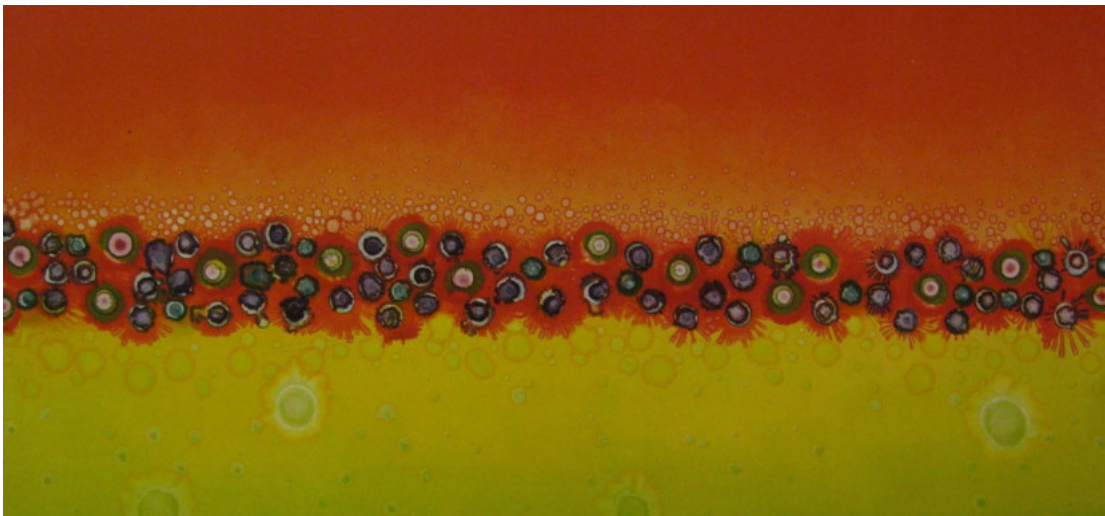
It took hours for Tyson's owner and a team of rescue workers to free us. They brought us food and water and called our friends and family while they pulled and pushed and pried the ground open, like a womb. And we were born, again. We couldn't stand, our bodies stuck, our muscles rigid, our bones rusted. We laid in the grass staring up at a bright blue sky, laughing hysterically, tears streaming down our cheeks back into the dirt. I turned to look at Jack. He put a hand on my cheek. We kissed like we did that very first night.

Jenn Feeney

"In 2006 I discovered monotype printmaking and I was hooked. I have been playing, learning and developing my printmaking ever since.

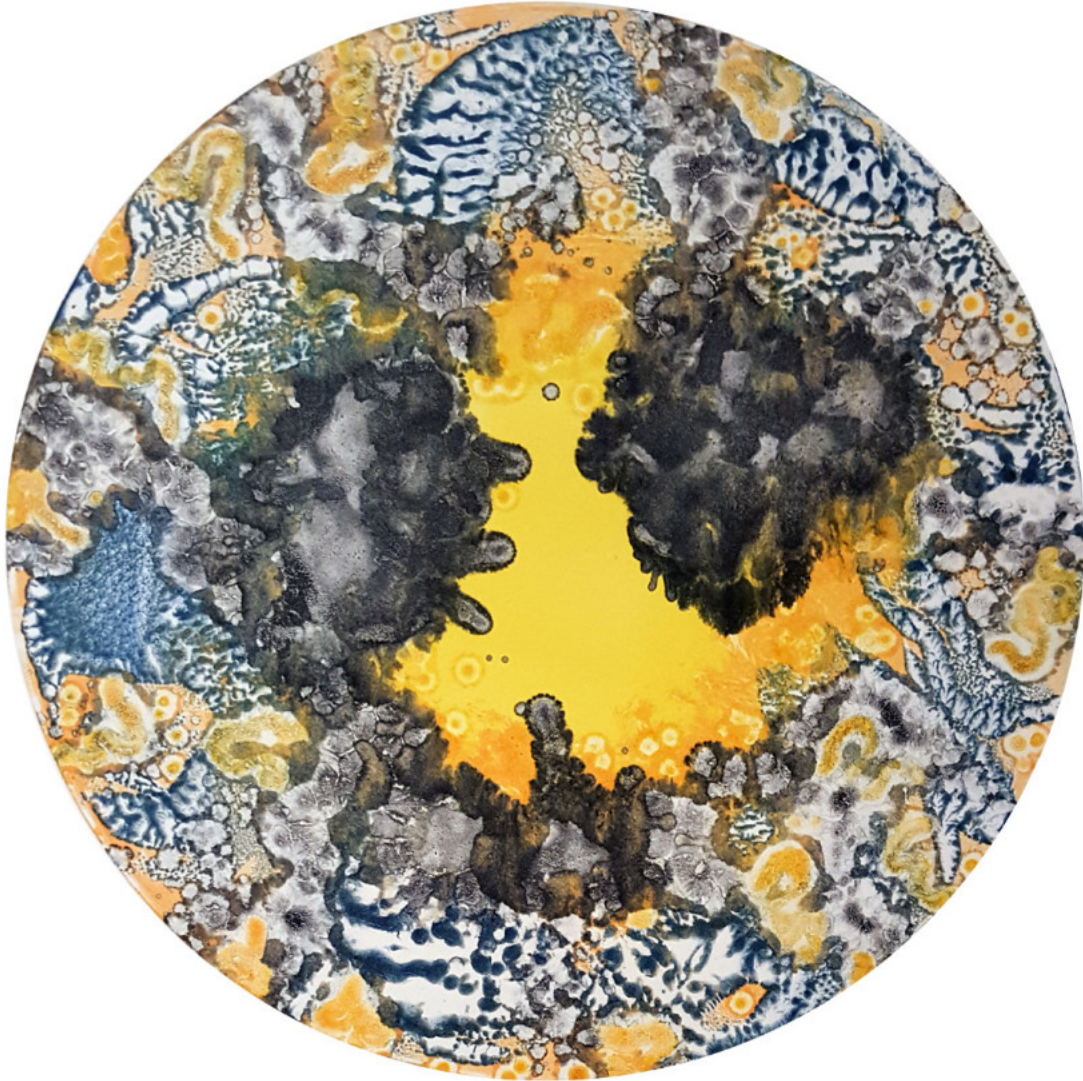
Monotypes, also known as the painterly print, are created by applying ink to a smooth plexi plate, and then transferring the image to paper by means of pressure through a press. I work intuitively, never really having a plan, but using various tools for mark making, adding or removing ink, spreading, thinning, stamping and stenciling to see the effects. It's thrilling every time I peel the paper

from the plate. The reaction of the solvent and inks can often create surprising results. Much of my work looks organic, resembling cells or microscopic organisms, underwater scenes or other worlds. I have been associated with Bite Studio in Portland, OR since 2009. In 2019, three of my fellow printmakers and myself started a print collective called Under Pressure. We collaborate and go on printmaking retreats and have shown our work in Portland, Oregon."
- Jenn Feeney



Millefiori Band - CS10 Monotype, Jenn Feeney

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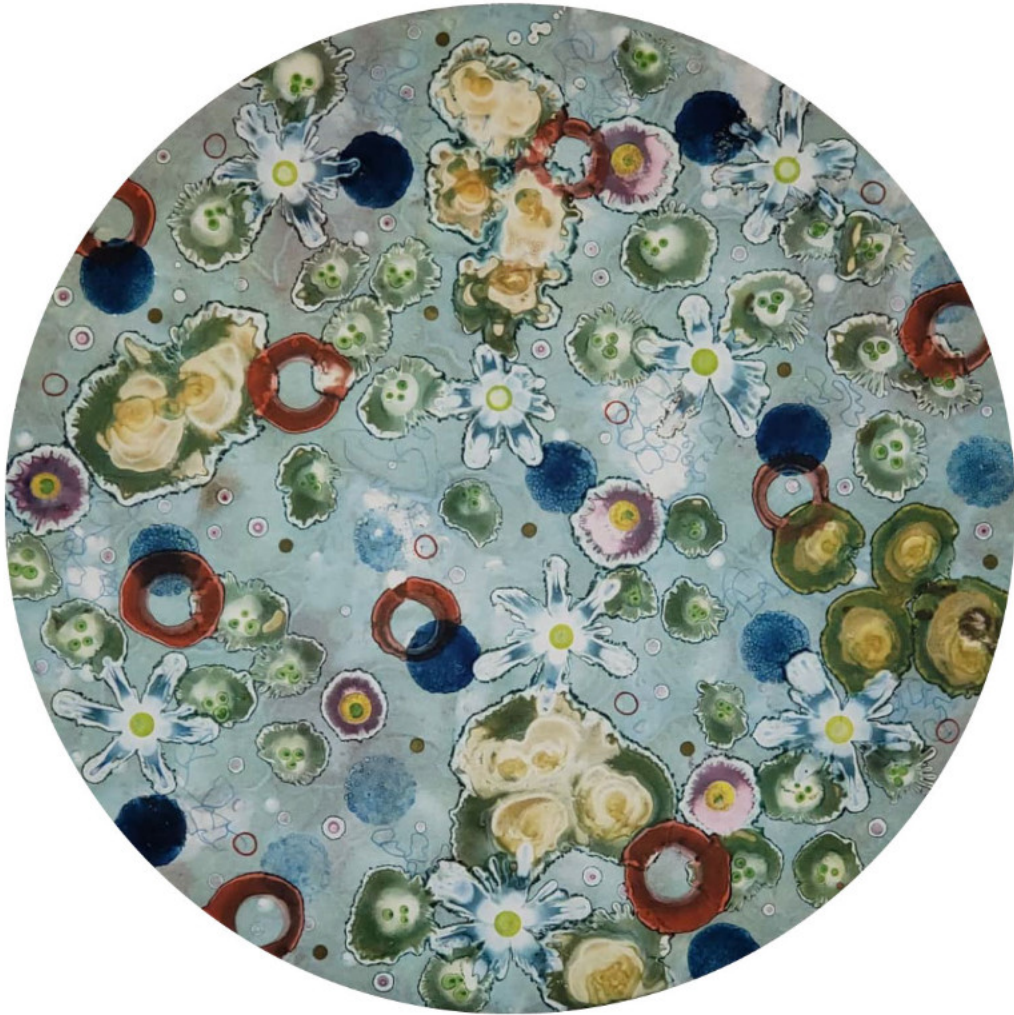


At the Core, monotype, Jenn Feeney



Oceanum Vitae, monotype, Jenn Feeney

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Flores Abundant, monotype, Jenn Feeney



Opimae Virentia, monotype, Jenn Feeney

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Glacial Flow, monotype, Jenn Feeney

Susan Pederson

Baby Brother

"Missing" is a very large word
Heavy, unstable, throat-catching
and surprisingly full of shame.
For we haven't earned your funeral yet

The clumsiness of "missing"
trips us constantly as we
bump. forward. ten. years.
Until a new word:
Murdered.

A crystal clear word
Thick, black, and potent
yet so fresh
A word that attacks from behind
and shoves us forward.

My throat can open now.

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M-words and wonder

Ten days my throat raw from the dry rag of waiting
You made the M-list:

Missing

And he asks if I know how many missing there are,
Trying to "put things in perspective"
I tell him you once had soft ears,
hoping to nudge your name to the front of the line,
as if looking for you first, would scrape you up sooner.

Ten years, my body drenched and dried ten thousand times
You made the M-list:

Murdered

And he asks if I knew who might wish you dead
And I wonder when he'll just do his job
and stop asking me, when I'm still thinking of soft ears
and how to tell Mama

Tatyana Ostapenko

"I make paintings because I am under a spell of tradition. It's been impossible to shake the influences of Socialist Realism and traditional Russian painting, so I embrace them. Having grown up in a failed utopia, the now defunct USSR, I use that pictorial language to probe its aftermath.

I make contemporary history paintings to record the daily lives of people who usually don't make it into official historical records. I want the middle children of progress and history, the former soviet citizens, to be memorialized as painting subjects. Old women in flowered kerchiefs, egg damsels desperate for glamour, indomitable middle aged women dragging heavy bags to the bus stop stand are commemorated in my paintings.

I am interested in the everyday history of a distinct flavor, with a particular voice. The voice that is not often heard either in the West, nor in its homeland. Through these specific images of my native country, I explore the universal themes of human experience: resilience, empathy and hope in the face of adversity."
- Tatyana Ostapenko



Conversation, oil on canvas,
Tatyana Ostapenko

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Bright Future, oil on canvas, Tatyana Ostapenko



Jolly Swing, oil on canvas, Tatyana Ostapenko

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Tractor Flying, oil on canvas, Tatyana Ostapenko

Catherine Gamblin

"Breathing is the link between the conscious and the unconscious. Drawing is like breathing, in that it opens me to a process to sink into a

deeper consciousness where I dwell, when writing and drawing."
- Catherine Gamblin



Sometimes: Page 03, zine page, Catherine Gamblin



Sometimes: Page 17, zine page, Catherine Gamblin

Sometimes you can see
beauty in the world.

Then

The suffering and pain
in the world creeps in
under your skin.



Sometimes: Page 18, zine page, Catherine Gamblin

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Julianna Paradisi

"Last year I became enthralled with the mist and low clouds shrouding the forests and hillsides of Oregon. Dense, wet, nearly palpable, their atmospheric presence becomes an element of the landscape; morphing into a personality. Later, I discovered my feelings about the mist and clouds echoes a thought expressed by another Pacific Northwest painter, Morris Graves:

"The way the weather occurs here-you get into it like an old coat."

With these paintings I attempted to communicate the sense of mystery and awe evoked by Oregon landscapes shrouded in mist, and the sense of warm hope I'm imbued with when the sun breaks through, illuminating what I previously could not see.

The paintings are made with mixed media, overlaid with resin, layer by layer, until the image is complete. Atmospheric perspective is heightened, capturing depth and illumination beyond what I can achieve with oil paint. "

- Julianna Paradisi



Thaw, resin, mixed media, wood,
Julianna Paradisi



Into The Mystic, resin, mixed media, wood, Julianna Paradisi

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Treeline With Lens Flare II, resin, mixed media, wood,
Julianna Paradisi



Bardo (Sun Halo), resin, mixed media, wood, Julianna Paradisi

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Treeline With Lens Flare, resin, mixed media, wood, Julianna Paradisi

Cynthia Sharp

Baptism

Bowing before Jericho Beach
twilit in rose
I dip delicately into
the saline womb of the sea
let the ocean water
flow through my fingertips
pan across the Pacific horizon
to the harbour
where the calls of gulls
override the garrulous city behind.

Salient pearl-capped waves
entice the shore
wend along the winding coast
coalesce in memory
abrade the jagged rocks
of my soul
wash over me
as I await entrance –

Transcendent touch of grace
trickling across
the mosaic of broken shells
like a wind chime
sifts the remains
gently letting go
of all I never needed.

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How to Honour the Moon

Like fragrant colours of spring
descending like manna
from citrus-tinted branches
of blossoms in the rain

like the silence of days
a flow of unspoken story
moving softly through
an abundance of petals

like current dreams
travelling light
an orchid that slowly
courageously opens

she is always near
blessing our sanctuary
no matter how far we travel
from the rhythms of home

be gentle with her spirit
allow for her light
every broken moment
made whole in her divinity.

Take Flight

Take flight
from inside the cathedral
as red roses bloom
into the ataraxia of warm days
the fragrance of perfumed peonies and rain
the wind brings in the window
a calling to trust
this place in the universe and time
a humbling beauty
akin to the rich harmony
of bows traversing the strings
of violins in worship.
Like Mary Magdalene hand washing clothes
her palms cold and pink
in the sanctity of starlit cypress in the night
let the deep purple jacaranda
and earth through our feet
align through the steeple
to the temple and tempo
of this sacred present moment.

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Sleeping with Books

Inhaling the exhilarating
bouquet of new print
by the golden glow
of the reading lamp
I taste little pieces of prose
then fall all the way in
comforted in the texture of pages
soft as sun-warmed
Belinda's Dream roses
inviting the inscription of
free verse rhythms
in the sleeve.

Highlighters and ink stars
bleed wild flowers
across aqua-coloured
Egyptian cotton sheets.
Water lilies blossom
in the sapphire satin blanket
spirals of petals and sepals
arising like northern lights
over Greenland.

Sipping jasmine tea
in bed with my books
my soul unto itself
I speak aloud
my deepest revelations
of passion and awe
how much I love
the home they are to me.

In the Studio: Kelly Williams

Can you tell us about your studio space?

My studio was finished in the summer of 2018 as part of a new build. We specifically chose this place in North Portland knowing that building an ADU with an art studio was part of



the grand plan. Though technically a "garage" under the 800sq ft apartment, my studio has never had a car parked in it. French doors at the front and the rear allow for fantastic airflow and an indoor/outdoor feel, with a stone patio outside for socializing with friends and art groups.

The overall studio was designed as a flex space that could easily be flipped into guest quarters or even an apartment, so included is a kitchenette and a full bathroom, which has been awesome for entertaining, workshops and art events. It's an open floor plan with moving walls that provide storage on one side and display/work walls on the other, adding flexibility to the space. My most frivolous choice was including a vintage clawfoot tub that we restored and painted a bright turquoise. I spend a lot of time in that tub and often hang artwork I'm working on to contemplate at the end of a long day in the studio.

Of course, as an encaustic artist, electrical load and ventilation are important considerations so 4 dedicated circuits and multiple

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exhaust fans were built in at table height where I heat the wax under windows on the south wall. This allows me to have multiple heated palettes and hot tools running simultaneously to accommodate larger workshops and projects. In warm weather, there are also outside workstations.

Do you have a routine when you get into the studio?

Coffee first!

Encaustic paint takes at least an hour to melt, so palettes are turned on before making sure nothing is demanding my immediate attention in the interwebs. Then I work on my journaling, curriculum development or some form of inspirational reading first thing as this helps me clarify my thoughts and settle my head before I jump into the business end of running an art studio. I am often frustrated by the amount of screen time required to keep the business end of things going, but it's just the reality, so I take care of it first, which frees up the painting part of the day from technology distractions to interrupt me.

It is important for me to engage in the act of making every day, so at least one table is covered with supplies at all times, whether it's oils, acrylics or drawing materials-sometimes all



three. This allows me to jump in at any point, even if it is just 5 minutes to make one mark, often leading to hours.

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I tend to 'circle' the studio jumping from station to station with multiple projects going at once. This can sometimes look or feel chaotic, but I find it helps keep a consistent thread between all my work, even when I jump between medium and subject.

Do you have a studio pet?

Walter, our two-year-old black Siberian husky mix, hangs with me in the studio and loves it when I do



workshops for all the extra love and attention he gets, although Dorothy, our cat, is still very perturbed about the whole situation of sharing space and affection. She can usually be found hanging out with the chickens these days- Marilyn, Greta, Ginger and Lucy.

What do you listen to while you're working?

I always have a wide range of music playing in the background, leaning towards 80's new wave, female artists, blues and sometimes classical depending on my mood or the type of painting I am working on. Some all-time favorites include Beth Hart, Tori Amos, Nina Simone, Erasure and Alison Moyet. Lately I have been exploring more ambient chill, soul/ funk and global music and love it



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when people share their favorite playlists with me to check out!!

I have also found that an epic audiobook is great when I am painting for long sessions. Having to 'pay attention' to the dialogue and plot line is a great psychological trick to keep the inner voices quiet and allow my intuition to drive my painting process. 'Reading' also stops me from getting distracted with social media or emails, which can be a creative killer in a studio.





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What's coming up for you?

I currently have a show up at Arrowood Restaurant in NE Portland through April. This is a new body of work and I'm really excited to see them all up and hanging together. This collection of expressive portraits ranges from large-scale acrylics on canvas to smaller framed works on

paper that reflect all the varied emotional states of this last year.

R&F, a premier handmade paint company out of New York, reached out to me to be one of their nationally highlighted educators, which is a huge compliment and opportunity. I'm now offering in-person private and group workshops with a sharpened



curriculum to offer more in-depth, specialized sessions. These workshops cover a combination of multiple art materials and techniques integrating cognitive psychology work into the painting process.

I often participate in Portland's open studio tour in October, but the jury is still out! Either way I will be doing an in-person studio tour and art sale this summer, so keep an eye out for dates and sign up for my newsletter on my website to get updated information on more workshops and events!

I am currently represented by J. Pepin Gallery in the Pearl District, and you can often find my work at Phoenix Gallery in Vancouver, Gambium Gallery in Astoria, and Salty Teacup in St. Johns.



Contributors

Kellie Becker, who lives in Bellingham, WA, doesn't set out to produce art about one subject or another. With no formal training, her influences are first and foremost everything she experiences. Her pieces sometimes use elements of pattern and design, while other times display unfettered and gestural markings, which unearth the colors of buried layers of paint. Her work is included in private collections through out the United States.

<https://www.instagram.com/kelliebeckerart/>

Kristin Berger is the author of four poetry collections, including *Refugia* (Persian Pony Press, 2019), *Echolocation* (Cirque Press, 2018), *How Light Reaches Us* (Aldrich Press, 2016). *Changing Woman, Changing Man: A High Desert Myth*, forthcoming from Nightjar Press in 2021. She is the facilitator of [The Lents Poetry Project](#) and Poetry Editor of Anecdote Magazine. Kristin lives in Portland, Oregon with her family, chickens, dog and one turtle.

<http://www.kristinbergerpoet.com/>

BG (Bob) Dodson is a Salem-based artist who has shown his work across Oregon in numerous juried shows and galleries. His work utilizes a variety of mediums (ceramic, assemblage, acrylic and collage). In conceptualizing his work, he is drawn to science, technology and religion -- the key tools we humans use to seek answers to the larger questions of "Why are we here, what purpose do we have and is there measurable meaning?" He attempts to express the complexity of the human condition in the texture and scope of his art. His work's mix of materials is an echo of the complexity of the universe we inhabit.

www.artshaman.blogspot.com

www.artshaman.com

Sarah Dandia is a watercolor artist based in Seattle. As a software engineer by profession, she seeks a therapeutic and creative outlet in art. After having lived in many different cities — Chicago, New York, D.C. — she is awestruck by the beauty of the Pacific Northwest. Her art is inspired by real scenes in nature, but often taken to a more whimsical and colorful place.

<http://www.sarahdandia.com/>

<http://instagram.com/bysarahdandia>

Merna Dyer Skinner's poetry appears in Finishing Line Press' 2016 chapbook, *A Brief History of Two Aprons*, a few literary journals including: *MiPOesias*, *Mojave River Review*, *Silver Birch Press*, *Star 82 Review*, and two anthologies. She is an alumna of the Kenyon Review Poetry Workshop, Tupelo Press Workshop, and Community of Writers. She holds an MA in Communication Studies from Emerson College. She's lived in six U.S. states, and traveled to five continents.
<http://www.mernadyerskinner.com/>

Kieran Egan lives in Vancouver, B.C. His chapbook, *Among the Branches*, was published by Alfred Gustav Press, Vancouver, (2019), and his book *Amplified Silence* was published by Silver Bow Publishing in 2021. He was shortlisted for the Times Literary Supplement Mick Imlah prize in 2017 and the Acumen International Poetry Competition, 2020, and his poems have appeared in many Canadian, US, and UK magazines.

DK Eve grew up on Vancouver Island. She's been a journalist, public servant, and hockey mom. She is a graduate of Simon Fraser University's The Writers Studio, Carleton University's School of Journalism, a member of Sooke Writers' Collective, and past vice-president of the Federation of BC Writers. She is grateful to live, work and play in traditional territory of T'Sou-ke people. She draws on Vancouver Island's characters and settings in poetry and short prose published in seven anthologies for the Sooke Writers' Collective, *Art & Word* (Sooke Arts Council, 2018), and *emerge20 – The Writers Studio Anthology* (Simon Fraser University, 2020).
<http://www.facebook.com/dkeveauthor>

Don Farrell was born in New Jersey, USA, in 1970. He began painting in London, UK, around the age of twenty, and, soon after, moved to Seattle, USA, where he still resides today. This geographic location, surrounded by temperate rainforest and nestled between two glacial mountain ranges, has imbued his art with the nature-based spirituality seen in many of his works. His art is further informed by numerous locations throughout the world, including the Mayan culture of Central America, the medieval, Islamic, geometric tradition, 15th century imaginative artists, 20th Century surrealists, as well as contemporary visionary artists like Patrick Woodroffe.
<http://donfarrell-art.com/>

Jenn Feeney is a Portland based printmaker and painter. Having grown up around her parent's commercial print shop, and working for the past 30 years in the print industry, she often says there is ink in her blood. In 2006 she discovered monotype printmaking. Enjoying the reaction of the inks and solvents, Jenn works intuitively and never begins with a plan. She lets the ink colors, tools and her surroundings inform her work. Her work has been described as organic and cellular, resembling underwater scenes, unknown planets and microscopic views. She also paints in acrylics and oils.

<http://jennfeeney.com/>

<https://www.instagram.com/inkplatepaperpress/>

Catherine Gamblin: When she was 26, she moved to California and changed her first name. When she moved back to Oregon and married for the first time, she kept her birth names. When she married, a second time, she changed her last name, but kept using her birth name on all of her art. While researching family, she found a slip of paper her mother saved, her father's hand written note on hospital stationery, it was possibilities for naming their new baby girl, me. Her father's mother's middle name was not used. Instead she was named after her mother.

<http://catherinekumlin.com/>

Doug Hawley is a little old man who lives with editor Sharon and cat Kitzhaber. In retirement from actuarial work, he spends his time writing, hiking, snow shoeing, music collection, playing softball and volunteering. After starting off in Portland, he has been to Eugene, Manhattan (KS), Atlanta, Louisville, Denver, Los Angeles, Marin and back in Lake Oswego.

<https://sites.google.com/site/aberrantword/>

<https://doug.car.blog/>

Alix Mains was born in France but feels most at home in beautiful British Columbia where she currently lives with her husband and daughter. She has written almost daily since the age of eight, and her passion for travel has taken her to over thirty countries. Whether volunteering in Bolivian villages or meditating on a volcano in Iceland, she constantly seeks to better understand what it means to be human. Alix writes to connect with her soul and try to put order to the madness of our world. She also works as an independent consultant for NGOs, nonprofits organizations, and private foundations.

Thérèse Murdza (she/they) creates her signature bright, richly textured paintings and art prints to encourage and enliven people in the places where we work, rest, and gather. Using an animated range of colors, lines and shapes, she creates large, multi-paneled works on canvas, and smaller works on canvas and paper. From her studio in Portland, Oregon, she works with design professionals, gallerists, and private clients to place her artwork in the U.S. and beyond.

<http://ThereseMurdza.com>

<https://www.instagram.com/tmurdza.studioart/>

Sandra Noel lives and works on Vashon Island in the middle of the Salish Sea (Puget Sound on the map) not too far from Mount Rainier to the southeast and Mount Baker about 80 miles to the north. Her poems have appeared in *Pontoon*, *Bellowing Arc*, *Buddhist Poetry Review*, *Chrysanthemum*, and others. Chapbooks include, "The Gypsy in my Kitchen," and "Into the Green," Finishing Line Press, "The River," Kelsay Press, "Unraveling the Endless Knot," Middle Creek Publishing, ECO/CO Books. And "Love, Island," a poetry book published by Goldfish Press.

<http://www.noeldesigninterp.com>

Amelia Opie was born in 1967 in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. At the age of 3, her family, moved to Bucks County, Pennsylvania. There she lived on a rural property with her 3 siblings and 2 artist parents for the duration of her childhood. Both of Amelia's parents were artists: one parent painted and one sculpted. Amelia went to Tyler School of Art and studied painting. She graduated with a BFA. Amelia later earned an MFA at U.C. Davis. Amelia lives with her husband and adult autistic son in Portland, Oregon, where she continues to paint, and take care of her son, and owns a cat named Oreo.

<https://ameliaopie.com/>

Spring 2021

Tatyana Ostapenko's contemporary history paintings record the daily lives of people who don't make it into official historical records. She uses images from her native Ukraine to speak about universal human experiences and celebrates resilience in the face of adversity. Tatyana's paintings have been exhibited in museums, international festivals in the US, South Korea and Ukraine. She is a recipient of Professional Development Grants from the Regional Arts and Culture Council and the Oregon Arts Commission. She was born and raised in the Soviet Union and lives in Portland, OR. She received a BFA from Portland State University.

<https://tatyanaostapenko.com/>
<https://instagram.com/postsovietart>

Julianna Paradisi's paintings explore life from a narrative perspective, blurring the lines between abstraction and representation. She's interested in the psychological landscape and how narratives impact individual and community interactions with the sentient world. She began painting with mixed media cast in layers of resin to capture levels of light and depth beyond what can be achieved with oil paint. Some of the pieces are built-up 1/2 inch or more from the wood panel surface, creating free-formed edges that are sculptural in nature. She studied art at Pacific Northwest College of Art and lives in Portland, Oregon.

<http://juliannaparadisiart.com/>
<https://www.instagram.com/julparart/>

Susan Pederson is a poet, copywriter and spoken word artist who lives in Nanoose Bay, B.C. with her husband and one of her two daughters. She has written for CBC Radio, The Globe and Mail, numerous magazines, and has published three poetry chapbooks: *It's about the Kids* – notes about kids and cousins, *The Grey Suit* – notes about death and dying, and *How Many Times Can You Say Good-bye?* – notes to my best friend as she was dying.

<https://www.facebook.com/susanspokenword>

Cynthia Sharp is a full member of the League of Canadian Poets, as well as The Writers' Union of Canada and was the City of Richmond, British Columbia's, 2019 Writer in Residence. Her work has been published and broadcast internationally in journals such as *CV2*, *Friday's Poems*, *Haiku Journal*, *Lantern Magazine* and *untethered* and is used in classrooms throughout the world. She is the author of *Rainforest in Russet* and the editor of *Poetic Portions* and is currently pursuing her MFA in creative writing at Goddard College in Washington, where she is on the editorial team of *The Pitkin Review*.

<https://www.instagram.com/inthelightwt/>
https://twitter.com/Cynthia_poet

Shima Star was born in London, England and moved to WA in 2007. Her heritage is rich from growing up with family that were born in Africa, and lineage that traces back to Gujarat India. She considers herself multicultural, which is reflected in the women that she paints. Having earned a HND with Distinction at The London Institutes of Arts, she has exhibited globally. She is motivated to paint women in multicolor to encourage inclusivity and challenge the cultural stereotypes.

<https://www.shimastar.com/>
https://www.instagram.com/shimastar_/

Kelly Williams is a contemporary multi-media artist, painting primarily with encaustic, oils and acrylics. Her large scale encaustic abstracts are deeply layered, energetic and textured expressions of internal emotional mapping. Her figurative work explores the more subtle dichotomy of narrative identity, sensuality and expression. With a background in psychology and social work, her approach is an extension of the visual narrative as a method of psychological processing. She is collected and exhibited locally and nationally, has curated art exhibitions, been awarded RACC project grants, been featured in multiple publications and presented on the topic of art as a healing tool. Kelly continues to educate and mentor both amateur and professional artists, blending multiple methods and materials with a narrative psychology approach to inform her personal work, group workshops and private sessions.

<https://www.kellywilliamsart.com/>
<https://www.instagram.com/kellywilliamsart/>