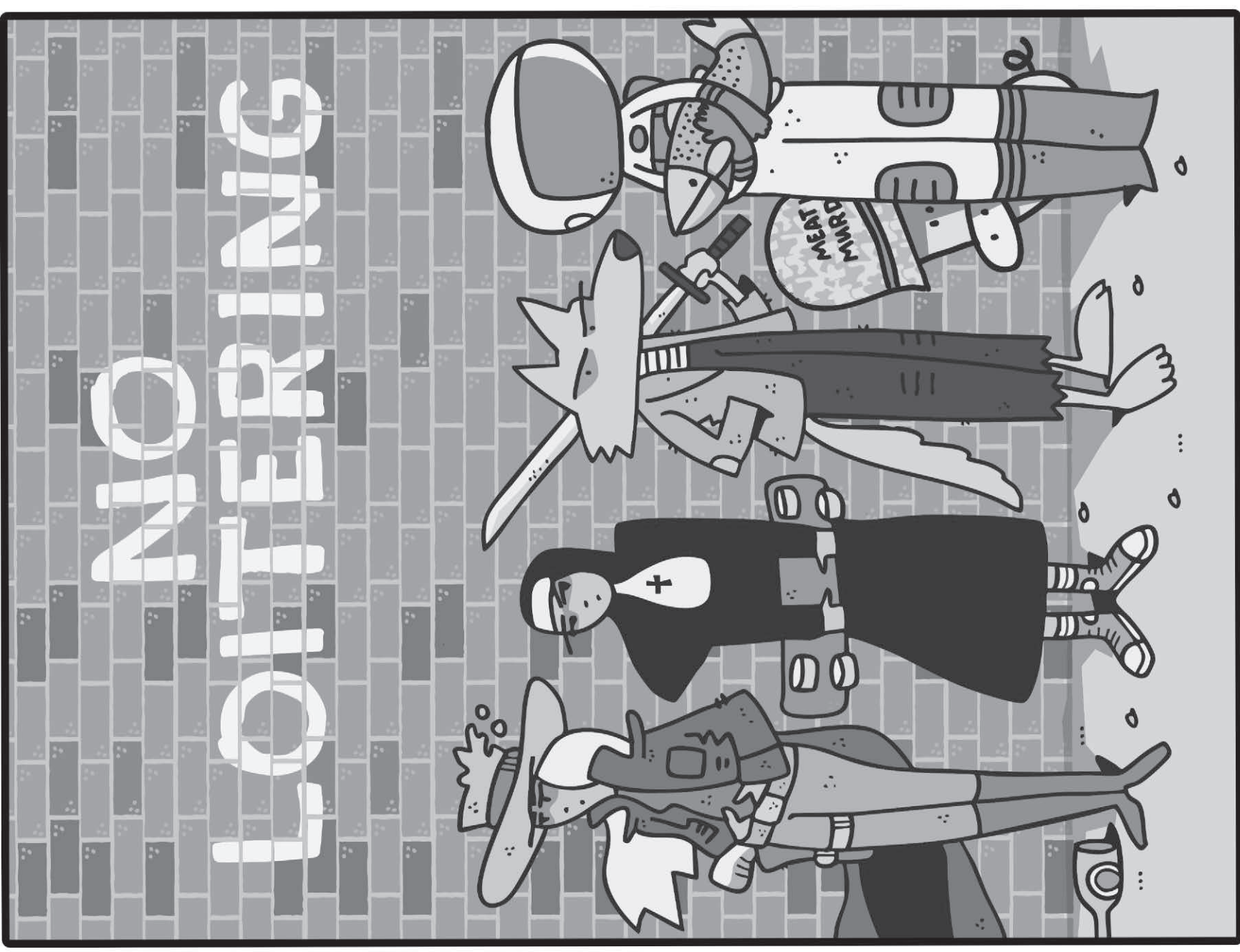


# Graffiti

CREATIVE WRITING & ART ZINE

DECEMBER 2025  
ISSUE #26



*to Love and to Create*



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# Graffiti

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## ON THE COVER:

the chuck finley experience (aka dave morello) is a nomadic artist currently residing somewhere on the west coast. he suffers from micron blisters and light box blindness. he misuses punctuation; he is a staunch anti-capital-ist. his graphic novels (aka zines) can be found in record and coffee shops around the northern hemisphere. he shares his art with the algorithm (aka instagram) @bound.for.mediocrity. check it out.

## SUBMISSIONS - PLEASE READ

Protocols for submissions are as follows:

-SUBMIT TO: [info@graffiti-magazine.com](mailto:info@graffiti-magazine.com)

-MULTIPLE SUBMISSIONS: If you have MULTIPLE SUBMISSIONS, submit each submission in a **SEPARATE EMAIL**.

-Work MUST be submitted in PDF (writing) or JPEG (art) formatting

-**WORD LIMIT: UNDER 1000 WORDS. If something is submitted over word count, DO NOT expect it to be published. We MAY publish it on the website.**

-ACCEPTED WORK: Stories, Prose, Poetry, and Art. Academic work considered, but must be formatted as you want it to be published and should NOT be longer than the word limit.

-**WE DO NOT ACCEPT: RANTS, HATE SPEECH, or ANYTHING THAT MAY BE COPYRIGHTED**

### **I SUBMITTED BUT DID NOT GET A RESPONSE, WHAT SHOULD I DO?**

If you submitted but did not get confirmation as to whether or not you should expect to see your work in the next issue or any past issues, please do not hesitate to email [info@graffiti-magazine.com](mailto:info@graffiti-magazine.com) and follow up.

## ADS AND DONATIONS

Please inquire about all ads and donations at:  
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We will have an account for direct donations sometime in the near future.

## OUR MISSION

**Graffiti** aligns with the principle of free speech. Disagreement and **resistance** should be a right, not a privilege. This zine is local, community-based, and engages with artists and writers throughout Oregon and the Greater Los Angeles Area. As censorship and surveillance rises, **Graffiti** will be a vital defender of free expression. All art and writing will be published as is, without compromise.

**We don't support hate speech or harmful rhetoric and disclaim that individual pieces don't necessarily reflect the views of contributors.**



## FRONT LINES

RIMAN

Hello Oregonians and Angelenos!

I hope you all have (so far) had happy, safe, and pleasant holidays and will continue to do so in the coming months. Seeing my partner and I just moved to LA and do not have family or many friends here, we did not have anywhere to celebrate Thanksgiving. We did what any implants would do and went to one of the few steakhouses that was open in the SFV, the beautiful chain Black Angus Steakhouse. It was between that or Olive Garden, but neither of us were too keen on overloading on breadsticks and immobilizing ourselves for the rest of the break.

It is with bittersweet sadness yet overwhelming gratitude and pride that I bid you all formally goodbye as **Graffiti's** editor. Morgan Smith, founder of **Prise Design Group** and owner of many houseplants, will be taking over for the next three issues. After that, I am not certain who will be taking on the role as editor, however I know that whoever does will love this project as much as everyone on the board does.

Additionally, this last issue marks my formal separation from **Graffiti** as I plan to utilize my time nurturing my upcoming career in screenwriting. (AKA, I will not be considering myself as a candidate for a permanent editor position, should one ever become available. I will also be removing myself from the non-profit board documents officially.) However, I still hope to submit my work to this beautiful zine!

General housekeeping:

-ADS, DONATIONS: Contact Morgan Smith through the [ads@graffiti-magazine.com](mailto:ads@graffiti-magazine.com) to get details on how to place an advertisement or donate as well as touch base with Morgan about billing.

-SUBMISSIONS: For all those who answered the call for submissions this month, THANK YOU! I tried my best to get back to everyone letting you know if you were in this issue, however in the past I know I did not respond to confirm the publishing of submissions. The new editor Morgan Smith may or may not be better about responding than me, but know we read and appreciate all of your submissions.

-LA DISTRO: I am uncertain if I will continue distributing **Graffiti** in LA as I leave the editor position. I will request Morgan Smith to address Angelenos in his **Front Lines** should we continue to distribute in LA.

-TO ANGELENOS: For the few of you who have picked up this zine at multiple NoHo locations and left the drop off locations empty, I hope **Graffiti** has brought you joy and an opportunity to reflect on what creating means to you. Although **Graffiti** is not an LA-based magazine, I have found it embodies everything that LA stands for: freedom of expression and appreciation of the arts. Please do not hesitate to submit at any time. We post back issues online so if you cannot find a copy of **Graffiti**, you can find it on our website.

-TO OREGONIANS: I love your beautiful state and everything it has given to me. While I certainly did not spend my two years in Oregon without struggle and adversity, I found some profoundly extraordinary and resilient people in Eugene, one of those people being my partner who braved the move to LA with me. This magazine is a beautiful being and no matter how long it continues or where it goes, it will always have a pulse. Let the rain fall!

**Graffiti** was my first real exposure to a public community wherein it was permissible to say, write, or create anything. Before this, creating and thinking freely was largely inaccessible in the rural, conservative town which I am from in West Texas. Regardless of the size or the reach of **Graffiti**, this zine will always have a sizeable place in my heart.

Be safe, love hard, and listen to one another.

Goodbye friends!

# Imaginary Friends Saved Our Marriage

Peter Fenton

**W**e're mature adults of sound mind and body and have warm relations with a host of imaginary friends. Well, not always warm, because they're six brilliant rascallions with a penchant for getting into difficult scrapes. Many is the time they've had us up past midnight, worried about whether they'd return home safe from their risky adventures around the world.

Our energetic crew first came to mind when the pandemic was gaining steam and we began to isolate ourselves at home, venturing out only for necessities.

We've been a couple since our early thirties and pride ourselves on being emotionally self-sufficient. For us, it was love at first sight when we locked eyes over cubicle walls in the communications department of a Transamerica subsidiary. We became instant soulmates and eventual business partners, working out of the house after leaving our L.A. corporate jobs for the Smoky Mountain foothills. To some, it might seem a suffocating existence. For us, it was just right.

Our home life was all good until Covid-19 arrived. By then, we had moved to a fresh set of hills above Eugene, just down the coast from the major outbreaks among senior citizens in Washington State.

We'd thought we'd lucked into the perfect home for a self-contained couple with an intense aversion to dying from a newly-coined disease. Perched on a steep hill among tall pines on a private road, it offered a distant view of the valley below. There, if one was inclined towards magical thinking, the virus would stop, unwilling to tackle an arduous climb when so many potential victims were within easy reach on level land.

So, we settled in for the duration, figuring that it would be measured in weeks. Books were our panacea, the antidote to sameness. They allowed us to accompany 1930s gumshoes as they solved heinous crimes, find lost civilizations in South America, or crash land on Mars.

We read on the couch, at the kitchen table, but mostly in bed, snuggled under a down comforter, surrounded by three purring cats, pleased by our inactivity. Only on occasion would the literary orgy be interrupted, when Crazee or Hannah or Sara, in search of a more obtrusive position, would curl up against a book, bringing even the most pulse-pounding page turner to a halt.

Then our bedtime story took an unexpected turn. Smoke and ash from Oregon's raging fires invaded our once-impermeable home. Eyes ran. Dust jackets became indistinct beneath thin films of carbonized Old Growth. Meanwhile, Covid-19 lurched from unnerving chapter to chapter. Even simple excursions to buy food or to gas-up become fraught.

Eventually, shopping anxiety became social anxiety, which turned into generalized anxiety, the mother of them all. Misplacing a bookmark became an event of major concern.

Melancholia followed. Our closeness, forever a solace, began to grate. We were like hostages bound together face-to-face, inhaling the humid stench of each other's opprobrium. Personality characteristics that had once delighted became gratuitous acts of tyranny.

We agreed on only one thing: books were no longer enough. They were diverting, for sure, but we needed escapism of a more personal sort.

It was moments after this epiphany that there was, figuratively speaking, a knock on the back door. We peered out the kitchen window. And there, in immaculate blue sweaters and pressed khaki shorts, were six boyish figures of precisely the same physical stature. Their faces varied, though, each a pleasing twist on classic boyish traits.

"May we borrow a cup of sugar?" one of them piped up. He proffered a Pyrex measuring cup. His smile was

ingratiating. Yet there was a touch of mischief, as if this was just a set up for a monumental prank.

"We're The Flakes," he added, as if sensing our unease. "We live right behind you." He flashed the ingratiating smile again. In fact, all six of them did.

Disarmed, we allowed them in. And thus, an imaginary friendship began that has sustained us through Covid-19 and our current politically difficult times.

The Flakes, as we learned, resided in a compound among the Doug Firs and blackberry snarls in our back yard. Consisting of a thirty-room bunk house, one room school, full gym, professional galley, outdoor amphitheater and twenty-car garage, it was far too sprawling for the actual space, but we ignored that.

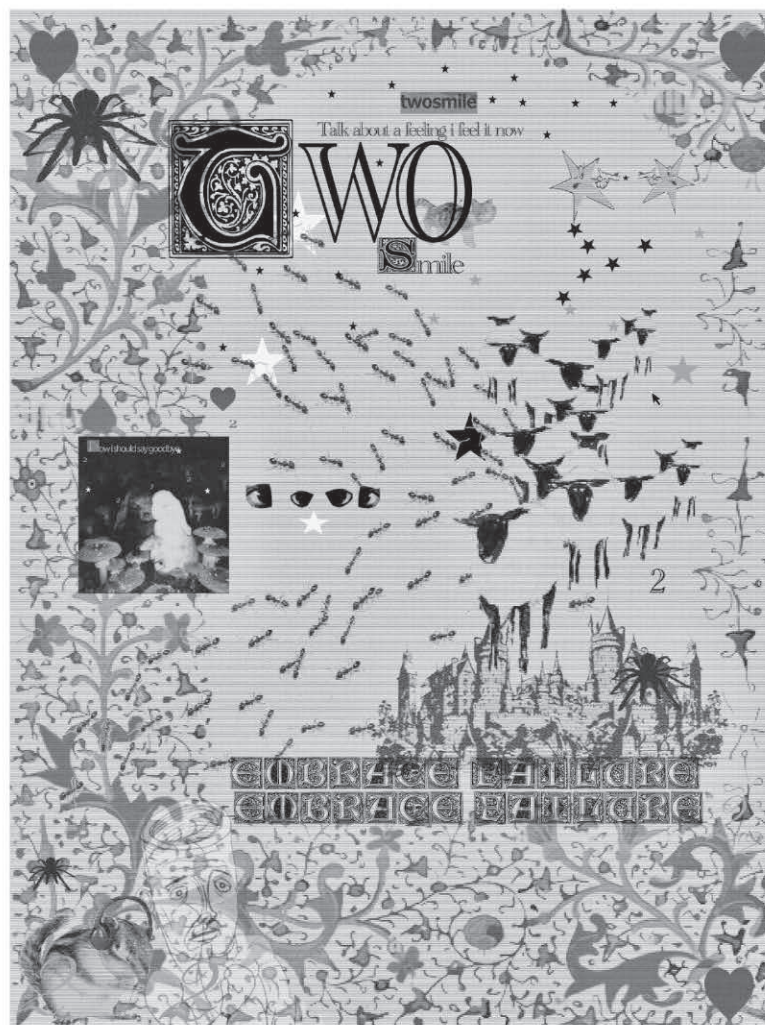
The Flakes were the only students at the retro grade school, furnished with solid oak desks, inkwells and a squeaky chalk blackboard. Their instructors were a pair of Irishmen who smoked clay pipes, stashed whiskey behind the lectern and challenged the boys with a curriculum an Oxford don would envy.

The Flakes were also billionaire entrepreneurs, running a successful business empire when their homework was done. Called Splat Inc., after a malleable substance they'd come up with during chemistry class, the company was multi-pronged. Splat was as tasty as ice cream and as strong as tank armor, just two of its countless uses.

Which is not to say The Flakes ignored athletics. Put through their paces by a taskmaster known only as Coach, the boys typically left gym class dead on their feet. A sample workout was three hundred Marine-style push-ups on the bottom of the swimming pool, followed by a bruising rugby match in thigh-high mud.

During school break, The Flakes embarked on adventures so dangerous they included coffins in their luggage. Ever considerate of our needs, they didn't want us left with a mess should something go wrong.

All of which has distracted us from fears, both real and, yes, imagined. For one of the ironic things about the present era are the dreadful fantasies it engenders of traumas even more dire than we are currently suffering.



Jair Alfaro

## Rock-Oil Blues: Loveless Twins Meet in Anchorage

maRco

Where rapacious parents sodomise, then  
With greed, Saturn-style devour children  
At the Molten Core is the Iron Age  
Far in the north city of Anchorage  
Satan's hunger-driven grim gremlin twins

Pale-sun warming powdered vulture wings  
Mechanical o so puppet-like maniacal

Stiff, pompous, puppet-like patriarchal  
Lock-step robotic on carpet flame red

Hanging from necks below their head  
Shorty wears the brown rag of Xcrement

Swollen one's tie droops blood-red as a flag  
Your eyes in pain, cry-gag throw up in a bag

Must be them hate-canisters of gas  
Itch and break out tears as they pass

Together sheltered in the darkness of the "Beast"  
Carni barker and cold-blooded killer from the East  
In hushed complicity with malicious ambition ride  
A burning thirst for domination they'll try to hide

Their lies and duplicity over hills and vale is famous  
The smoked window frames sickly twisted grimace  
Through clenched teeth of mafia gold, slow

A deep hum of sorrow rises from down below  
"You can't always git what you want...  
if it's the peacemaker ya try to vaunt  
That Nobel Peace Prize it'll makes you drool  
A pathetic yearning is the grasping of a fool"

In Hell's flames the Royal burning of the seed  
Grab'em by the pussy when you feel the need

Shit-soiled putrid stinking ocean of slime  
Born lacking love embracing a life of crime  
Starvation expulsion migration

Plus as a bonus mass extinction  
Psychopathological o so ironical  
Diabolical, neurological, comical

The very air we breathe on fire  
King Petro of RockOil you a liar  
Narcissistic, psychotic, sadistic  
Vain pedantic cruising da Titanic

Rising up from deep down in crude oil  
A piercing scream "do I care if you boil?"

Chorus in the background:  
Anthropocene Obscene Anthropocene  
Yo,Smart-Ass Apes make an ugly scene

So obscene Anthropocene so obscene  
Is it Kakistocracy or is it K K Kleptocracy?  
Does it stink to high Heaven of hypocrisy?

Bandits and imposters in a fever took the stage  
After the horror, the corpses and prancing idiocy  
When dust settles we'll have to burn a lot of sage

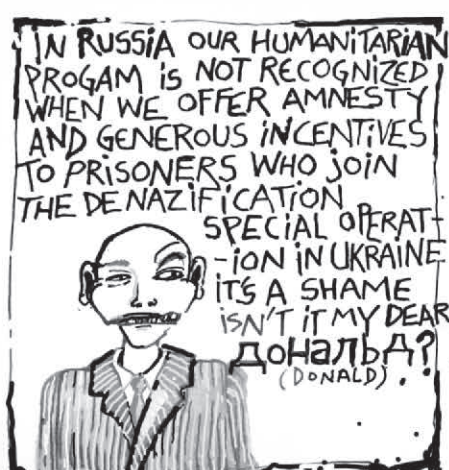
Let's toil and strive for lost ways of Oil meritocracy  
Waiting for Godot or for the wisdom of a new age  
Down with tyranny highway robbery bit coin piracy



maRco



"Lunatic" in Oil Paint -Jerry Ross



maRco



maRco

## What is Society? An Academic Analysis

John Zerzan

It is hard to imagine a world without accelerating technology as its reality. It would be a fantasy to see society as other than the orbit of dizzying technology. This dimension is one of isolation, in which the goal is "an experience different from and potentially better than face-to-face interaction" (Holland and Stornetta, 1992). Industrialism brought mass society, which devoured community. The tech juggernaut deepened this separation immeasurably.

And what is the nature of society at its base, its ground zero? Jean Baudrillard (1929-2007) proclaimed it to be simulation. Simulacra and representations are paramount. Reality is a copy for which there is no longer an original. Baudrillard was light on specifics, did not examine technology. Had he lived past 2007, he would have witnessed more of the full force of the meaning of the technosphere. But it's doubtful that would have gotten down to brass tacks. That was not his (very postmodern) style.

Guy Debord beat Baudrillard to the punch by about a decade. The first thesis of his *Society of the Spectacle* (1967) declares, "All that once was directly lived has become mere representation."

Immanuel Kant, godfather of the Enlightenment 200 years before Baudrillard, might be seen as his opposite. Kant espoused the rational autonomous subject, operating in a stable reality, whereas Baudrillard overturned all that. But Kant also told us that the world is thinkable, though not directly knowable. Our mental categories provide the (mediated) knowledge. As pioneering German sociologist Georg Simmel put it, "What a thing this man did to the world by declaring it to be a representation!" Not a perfect fit, but an early version of Baudrillard's simulacra epistemology.

Returning to the technosphere, Peter Hancock (2009) concludes that "we have built a global society whose dependence on technology grows daily." In his estimation, "our ecology is technology." Geoff Mulgan, reviewing histories of technologies, found that "it usually takes at least 50 to 60 years for them to diffuse throughout a society and economy." As he was writing this in *Connexity* (1998), the arrival of personal computers, smartphones and AI cut his time frame in half. This techno-momentum has put its imprint on society with dazzling speed, while technology has largely been seen as both neutral and autonomous in its development. In other words, inevitable.

That assessment is far from true. Daily life is increasingly automated and programmed. To the point, according to Nicholas Carr (2014), that "we've designed a system that discards us." Technology as Experience is John McCarthy and Peter Wright's 2004 offering. Even the title is a lie. Technological "experience" is supposedly open, unfinished, promising. But the results are sterile, synthetic, standardized. So very unpromising, as society grows colder and sadder. Isolation spreads; society is less and less social.

A basic target for us must be technology, the physical actuality of dying civilization. We must fight for life, for community. There are flickers of light: the Lamp Club and other luddite gatherings. Let's grow them.

## Maud Kerns Exhibit

maRco

Starting January 9th 2026 through Feb 6 an exhibit for Pac. Northwest under-wood explorers, friends of hobbits, nature aficionados opens at Maud Kerns.

Joann Carrabbio with *Forest Icons*. For several years her focus is on the exuberant but tightly controlled phantasmagoria of kaleidoscopic leaf patterns. Works that can be described as magical realism veering on abstraction, drawing "from emotions and dream-like memories loosely improvised with vibrant color, texture and design." "A laborious process of destroying, erasing and scraping away previous layers leads to the emergence of a final result that resonates inside of me. Time "she say, "is of no consequence in this venture, a patient quest for the Forest Icon."

For maRco Elliott, her palette partner in rhyme" the ancient forests and flowing rivers, the ever changing presence of the vast Pacific reaching out through ocean fog, gentle mist, winds, clouds, frequent downpours and babbling brooks are a source of reverence and unwavering inspiration." *Natural Woman*, the title of his series of gouaches comes from by Aretha Franklin's song in which she sings with passion about "feeling like a Natural Woman." Two words, with erotic suggestion lead on, for the painter, to "a wider celebration of Eros, the universal life form swelling like spring's sap, what Arthur Rimbaud refers to as "the sap of the world" in a poem where he longs for an ancient pantheism, a time of renewed animism,

..."A Time where the sap of the world the river's water, the pink blood of green trees put in Pan's veins a universe."

For maRco, the "Natural Woman is a bridge over the gap inflicted on the human psyche by monotheistic cultures for well over two thousand years severing mind from the body and the body from nature. The Artemis-like archetype connects us again with the enchantment of a pre-agricultural humanity, recalling the Garden, a symbiosis of body and fungi, a merging of skin, lichens, mosses and ferns in a pre-promethean universe transcending the devices, accessories and accoutrements of a civilization fascinated by artifice, even in the realm of intelligence.

Celebrate with us "the sap of the world" as it slumbers in the depth of winter.

Ol'Coyote, "amateur" and seeker extraordinaire. Graffiti art critic at large.

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## charlie #2

RIMAN

i looked for you in my dreams for years  
i flew to space to find you  
i hitched a ride on a time machine  
i journeyed through a jungle  
i sifted through the scraps of a junkyard

i cried

once i stopped looking  
you appeared  
you asked for things  
made demands

because of this

i don't remember you anymore  
i think it's because i never knew you

## A Toast To Death

Jordan Mackay

A plant is a model for life and death in the natural world. It spends much of its time in vegetative state, then briefly goes into flower to be pollinated and reproduce. That same model can be applied to life in mammals as well, by broadening our acceptable understanding of the process of death and decomposition, which redistributes our nutritional resources back into trillions of other organisms. Biologically speaking, our true "value" to the web of creation is actually "cached in" by our death. We, like fruit, are meant to ripen with nutrients until we are eaten by the organisms that we play host to. Then our genetic material is distributed and recycled. Our lives are almost certainly our "flowering" phase – where we are meant to spread and attract, be beautiful and colorful, maybe reproduce.

As humans, we wish to reverse the idea of the flower and plant in our mind, because it seems strangely barbaric and sacrilege to accept the biological truth. We use religious ideology to try to see our lives as the long steady green growing "plant phase," and imagine our death as the bloom of the flower – this colorful, beautiful extension of our life's journey that lifts us even further into the sky, allowing our purest spirit to be accepted and admired. In our most pleasant fantasies we are judged by some divine pontificate, and found worthy of paradise. In this fantasy, we are a flower that lifts away from our useless plant and floats up into the sky, blooming as a disconnected set of flower petals forever in an endless field of other worthy floating petals. We do not wish to think about what happens to our crude body that is left behind. It is a rare few of us that enjoy dwelling on the inevitable certainty of our own corpses rotting.

What would fundamentally change in our perception of the value of our lives on earth if we began to reverse our thinking about death? If we had the appreciation and courage to see a rotting corpse as the artistic and scientific miracle of recycling that it actually is? To look at the blushes of color that radiate out from purification, and see in them a mirror to a rainbow playing out across a rigor mortis sky? To feel truly honored that the worms and mycelia are able to carry the value of our life into hundreds of plants, thousands of insects, and uncounted millions and billions and trillions of smaller decomposers that distribute our individual selves into an entire landscape?

When we die, we become a symphony of creation that is played underground, and is carried far and wide through the rich loam of that underworld from which every iota of life is rooted, and to which every carbon molecule of death must return. We are dispelled as gas and heat and the purest component opportunities for creation. It is the most genetically generous moments of our lives, and the most selfless act we can ever perform with our time on earth. And yet it is feared, reviled, or at least warily tolerated. But, like the long green growth of a plant that blooms but for a single night, it is also by far the longest and largest effect we have on the environment. Our genetic material: ever more reinvented, recycled, reused and repurposed, will go on in widening ripples of form for countless years. And if we have children, they will spread out and play the same roll in their environment - effectively spreading the value of that long green time even further.

We diminish our reuse to our ecosystem by filling ourselves with toxins. Our greatest 'fuck you' to the planet is that we have become so inherently toxic that even our fecal 'waste' is not actively helpful to the environment around us – it must be carefully worked on by local organisms for a long time until its ready to properly decompose and be useful as fertilizer. Our immediate value to the system, while we are alive, is to eat, decompose, poop, and shed lots of organic matter in the forms of hair and dead skin cells. Through this process we are supposed to nurture the environment. But because our environment is so polluted and our fast food is made of strange emulsifiers, we pickle ourselves with poison and damage our place in the web of life. Even more disrespectfully, we make sure that even in death we are fighting to not be useful to the rest of the world - by burning our bodies, or embalming them with preservatives, or locking them up in plastic coffins so that it takes as long as possible before any single part of us is available for reuse. When our bodies are burned, those ashes become so sodiumrich that plant roots will not go anywhere near them. We are literally salting the earth as our final wishes. It is a primitive and hostile act that expresses the deepest selfishness and mortality fear in our nature.

So, what if our lives are indeed the flower, and our death is the long green plant?

Now, instead of plodding through our days with a grudging hope that our disembodied flower will shine as the truth of our life in some heaven, what if we realized that our living Now time is the briefest blooming of that flower? What if we spread the creative color of our petals here, and took pleasure in truly prioritizing and giving first precedence to the things that make us so beautiful and fragrant and unique? What if we spent our days not in the joyless drudgery of worrying about our own inevitable decay and death, but instead filled them with the purest longing of the flower - to stretch and bloom, to spread the pleasure of our pollen, and to turn our face towards the light and follow the path of the sun?

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## The Aerialist

Stephen Swiftfox

Been volunteering at a non-profit thrift shop for over a decade in Cottage Grove. Not much happens, except for the occasional sleeping visitor on the stoop in the morning.

Crisp morning, opening the shop. Moving back and forth I happen to glance up and see a young woman, dark hair, cream colored knit shawl, long dark dress, and running shoes standing in the parking lot looking at me. 'Strange' I think.

She enters the shop, lithe and quick. It was hard not to smile too much and making myself look like a foolish old man. "Good morning" I say. Softly, a "Hello" answers then a "Good morning to you." An Eastern European accent.

That got my attention. Fascination. This is different.

"May I help you?"

"Yes, where are your women's clothing?"

"Right over her." She seems to glide over to where I'm standing with an outstretched arm. I'm becoming more intrigued. A young East European woman early in the morning in Cottage Grove of all places.

"I love Americana!" Her fingers glide over various rather ordinary seeming blouses and scarves. She pulls out what

could be a shawl or wrap, whips it slowly around her shoulders and smiles. I couldn't help but smile. She streams over to the front counter and snaps open a little cloth coin purse. I am in total in thrall. She pays, wishes me a good day but I interrupt her and ask how she came upon this town.

"The circus. We are in your park. I am an aerialist." I know that I'm brightly red and my pulse seems to echo in the shop. I have so many questions. I end up saying something stupidly lame like "Have a nice day" and she glides out the door and disappears around a corner.

Later that day another young woman comes and looks around. There are a few questions about the town. I ask if she is a visitor. Yes, she says. She is with the circus. "Oh! I exclaim, 'there was a wonderful young woman in here earlier. I'm guessing that she's from Eastern Europe. She said that she is an aerialist'". The young woman's expression hardens. I wonder why.

"She's my younger sister. She's 15 and we're from Iowa!" And she leaves the store.

## Cray Fish

Dan Libtherson

In a rainbarrel in the alley  
lived three crayfish, content  
in their utter strangeness,  
but a child couldn't bear it  
and had to interfere.

With their stalk eyes  
and gray too-many legs,  
did they see the baseball bat  
descending calm and curious  
until it chose one and pressed  
lightly as it could  
but too hard not to express  
dark murk. Camouflage  
or ruptured innards?



The child never knew which.  
He jumped back, ran away,  
and ever after  
shied from strangeness.

Illustration credit: Cassandra Mettling-Davis

## Three Cowgirls Opt for a Swim on a Hot Summer's Day W.W.

Three cowgirls  
Janet, Sharon and Erika  
Walk to a pond  
Because it's too hot to ride  
Janet points to the water  
"Let's go for a swim"  
And all three  
Joyfully dive in  
And swim all the way across  
Sharon's long black hair  
Draped across her brown leather vest  
That gleams in the water and sunshine  
"I win" Sharon yells  
"Show off" Janet says as she splashes Sharon  
Erika dives down  
And slips a red smooth stone  
Into her jeans pocket  
They spend the whole day  
Soaking in the water  
"This feels so good" Sharon says  
And they float slowly back to the other side  
And enjoy a long, cool walk home



Dan Koss

twosmile



is still feel the same

twosmile



honostraw twosmile embrace failure  
Jair Alfaro

## Turn it up!

by Jayce Barnhart



As a kid, I grew up on my dad's collection of rock n' roll and learned to develop a taste for thrashing guitar and thumping drums. When my dad passed in 2013, the collection of albums were all handed over to my younger nephew, and I feared I'd never see or hear them again. However, I was able to trade that collection of albums for a Super Nintendo 64, four controllers, and a dozen games. Here, I'll pick out three of the albums from that collection to review. Enjoy!



### Weekend Warriors



**Ted Nugent**

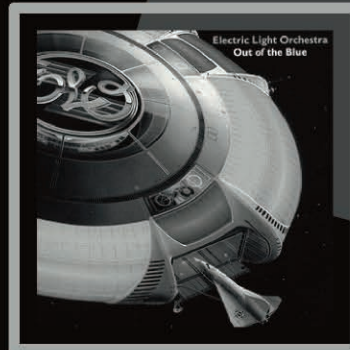
Released: 1978

Tracks: 10

The Motor City Madman from Michigan was a favorite of my dad's, as they were both from the Wolverine State.

So many of the tracks from this album feature Nugent wailing away like the guitar is a screaming machine gun (see album cover). The opening track, "Need You Bad," is an especially good one to crank up as you're racing through the deserts of eastern Oregon and beyond. "Tight Spots" is also very catchy. And though Ted will sing about the virtues of Good Friends and a Bottle of Wine, I'm certain that a fat doobie would qualify as well. Nugent may be best known for the guitar licks behind "Cat Scratch Fever," and you'll recognize those riffs throughout the album.

### Out of the Blue



**Electric Light Orchestra**

Released: 1977

Tracks: 17

This was a fat two-album vinyl set, which was a pretty big deal upon its release in October of 1977.

My personal favorite that always seems to beat back those persistent clouds in Eugene is "Mr. Blue Sky," which was such a fun tune, they put it on the *Guardians of the Galaxy* soundtrack. It's no wonder after listening to this album that lead singer Jeff Lynne is one of the famous voices behind legendary supergroup The Traveling Wilburys, along with Roy Orbison, Tom Petty, George Harrison, and Bob Dylan. "ELO" lives up to its name: the music is a sexy mix of orchestra instruments with energetic, synthesized vocals, which was novel when this album was released.

### V



**Chicago**

Released: 1972

Tracks: 12

They had a song called "Stay the Night" that would come on MTV along with some high energy, exciting video that featured fast cars and beautiful women.

I was certain that this band was for me. I begged my parents for a Chicago poster. However, as years went by, and Chicago became more of a fixture on classic rock radio stations than it ever was on television, I began to realize I didn't like Chicago as much as I thought. Perhaps it was the lack of electric guitars or thrashing drums or solos of either. When I listened to Chicago's V, I was struck by how jazzy and brassy it sounded. The songs were between almost melancholy and slightly peppy. The album's title "V" is misleading, as this album was their fourth, but their first to reach No. 1. You'll totally recognize "Saturday in the Park" when you hear it. You'll think it was the Fourth of July.

## Réquiem

Jesús Sepúlveda

A Paul Dresman

Esperábamos la noticia  
 Años de lluvia y palabras  
 tras las cortinas de humo  
 Las velas alumbran  
 y la barca comienza su recorrido  
 Yo bailo solo  
 El viejo marinero parte  
 Fotografía de un garaje  
 que no termina de ser revelada  
 En el río de los sueños  
 el duende de Lorca  
 recita su último verso  
 Luciérnagas que encienden la noche  
 Certeza que no pudo ser  
 Hubo una geografía  
 y unos cuantos libros  
 ¿Para qué sirve la poesía  
 sino para recordar a nuestros muertos?  
 El ornitólogo le quita las plumas  
 al ave de la ilusión  
 La leyenda cuenta  
 que los magos siguieron una estrella  
 Luz fulgurante de los poetas  
 o llama a la deriva  
 ¿Adónde te llevarán  
 esas criaturas  
 dibujadas en la corteza de una ceiba?  
 Esa noche grité  
 ideologizado por mis herencias  
 Éramos entonces  
 actores de una obra inconclusa  
 No sabrás el nombre de su autor  
 ni la fecha de su estreno  
 Hubo un helicóptero de papel  
 y un hotel sombrío  
 que fuiste alumbrando en otro idioma  
 ¡Oh, maldita lengua inglesa  
 en el laberinto americano!  
 Historia de un imperio que supiste documentar  
 Objeto de conciencia  
 traduttore  
 y amigo  
 El libro de los rastafaris se abrirá esta noche  
 Que no quede ninguna página sin destino  
 Tu imagen ilumina el comedor  
 Iré por ti a San Petersburgo  
 y miraré el cielo extenderse  
 El espectro de la poesía recorre el mundo  
 Poción mágica con Mozart de trasfondo  
 Y en el patio de los recuerdos  
 el Wurlitzer gira  
 Toca la misma música  
 una y otra vez

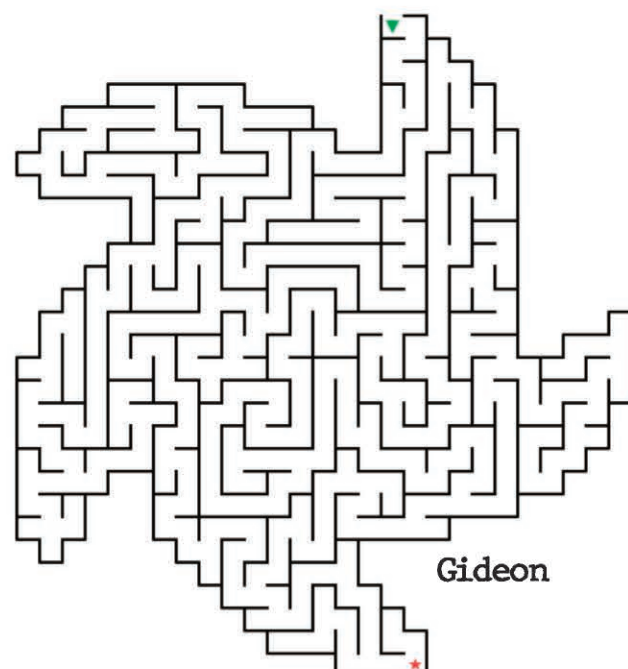


Jair Alfaro

## Cassiopeia

Jesús Sepúlveda

Where are the missing words?  
 Intimate sounds  
 traveling through your skin  
 Were they exiled, recycled  
 composed or just put away?  
 Where are the words you never said?  
 Where did they go?  
 Did they stay hidden  
 under your tongue?  
 Were they invisible vibratory beings?  
 Wild bunnies reincarnated  
 in your dreams  
 Where are the missing words?  
 Their incantation?  
 Fragile silhouettes like a voodoo doll  
 Were you aware of Wittgenstein?  
 The double-u transported in colonial ships  
 where the crew smoked opium and fell asleep  
 Where does impeccability end?  
 Words are ghosts in the bush  
 where the tsetse flies  
 Were you forgetful or didn't want to say it?  
 Witnessing it but not saying it is a brutal way  
 to protect yourself



## Chased by Starlings

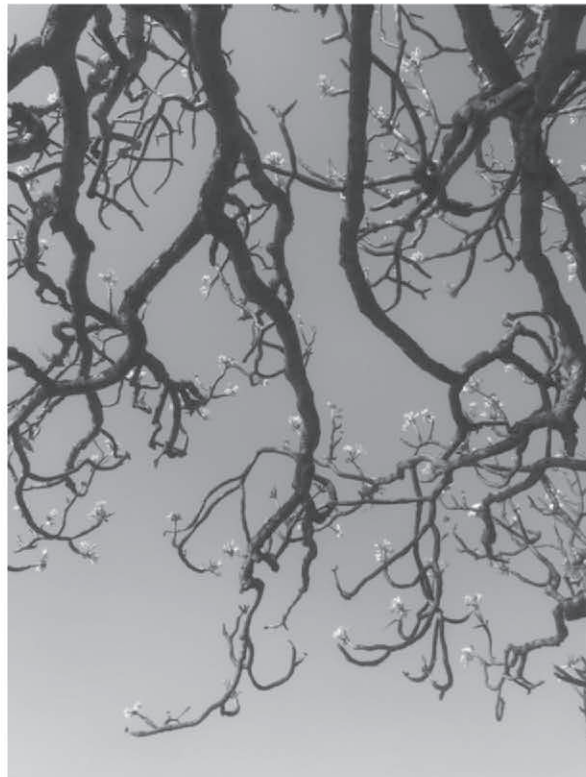
Bill Gunn

A bell in a prairie  
sounding its simple bleat.  
A torn fence wire,  
loose juniper posts.  
A trail with no end,  
no beginning.

A cottony cloud at sunrise,  
a distant canyon.  
Tamaracks now yellow.  
A harried crow  
chased by starlings,  
a barn owl hiding its head.  
A distant chortling  
of sand hill cranes  
passing the suns first rays.

The trail, a skiff of snow.  
Cold tracks of a fox,  
stopping, looking,  
sniffing the air.

The bell, at last,  
chimes again  
like it is one o'clock.  
Life is awake  
and waits for the sun  
to pass and set.



Fergul

## October

Iris Bartholomew

I still have the power to exhale  
And then breathe in  
Even when, heart heavy, I  
Close my eyes and synthesize  
What it would be like to feel alive  
Instead I am enamored in this  
Grief, a wave- an echo chamber  
A journey for awhile later  
Asking what am I,  
How far is  
A real space, a place  
With love from here?

## dreamsical

Justin Rodermond

if you think about  
the place you go  
before the show and afterglow  
have piled so high they seem so low  
with drippe drop and drinkle pop=  
a burning crop, a melty shop  
a timely friend, a final show  
a tugging sleeve, a time to leave

## KISS AGAIN KISS

David Koteen

May you be naked with eyes open wide--  
And dance lightly in sunlight with beast  
parts engaged.  
Give each other pleasure while snowflakes  
freely fall...  
Kiss you again, again and again and again--  
Kiss again, again and again.

Now is truly of marvel, tomorrow all a lie--  
Promises sweetness, delivers thorns and ashes.  
So come quietly, quickly, loud as summer  
thunder...  
Kiss you again, again and again and again--  
Kiss again, again and again.

Movement what is real?--hard as night ocean.  
Dreams are but wave crash when you're wide  
awake.  
Vanity! Vanity! Sister of insanity!  
Kiss you again, again and again and again--  
Kiss again, again and again.

Movement what is real?--hard as night ocean.  
Dance lightly in sunlight with beast parts  
engaged.  
Vanity! Vanity! Sister of insanity!  
Kiss you again, again and again and again--  
Kiss again, again and again.

Barbara Dzuro, piano...Darcy Duruz, Allison  
Rickenbaugh, vocals



Fergul

## LOVERS

Fergul

There were plenty  
They were plenty  
They were lovely  
Sometimes lonely

Used to fly together  
A bit of laughter  
A bit of jealousy

Magical and delusional  
Remarkably deep and solid

Emotions in motion  
Lovers melt into each other

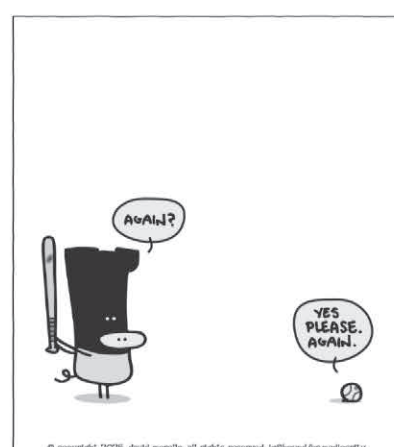
/

Take time  
As long as you need  
Wild, yet tamed  
I relate and resonate  
With almost everything  
Everyone

Thought come and go  
The feathers, the birds

Subtle feelings of gratitude  
I am an apology  
A 'thank you' card  
The hesitation wound

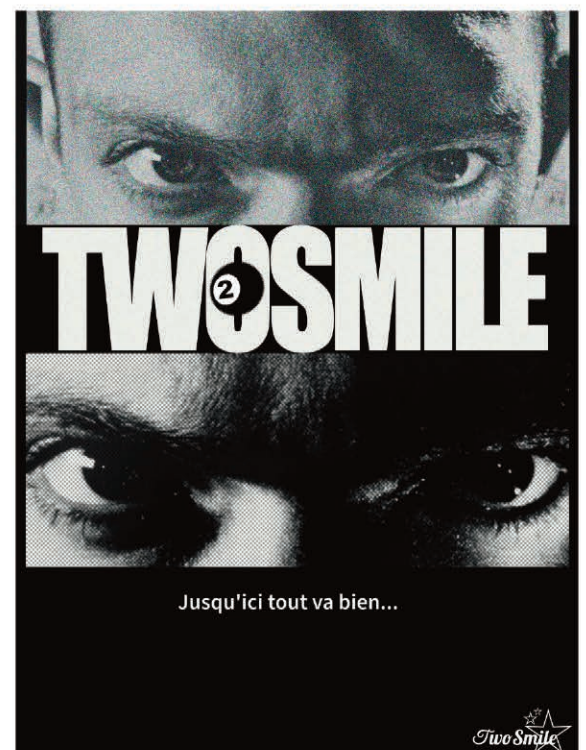
Words have power  
Power has words...



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Soapy



Jair Alfaro

## Liberty Bells

Erika

The liberty bells are ringing, and in my heart I'm singing, "Freedom, Freedom."

Obtaining freedom is a choice, when I choose to give it a voice.

But when my body houses bitterness, anger and pain, I commit myself to being bound in chains, And in prison I shall remain.

I must examine what's deep inside, find the places where anger and hate hide, Then slowly begin to swallow my pride. Only then can freedom reside.

My anger is justified, It feels right to hold on tight, But the truth is, that's a lie, It will only cause devastation inside.

For what's in my heart must eventually come out, In my relationships and friendships without a doubt, And leave destruction lying about.

So I must try in vain, to heal and release my pain.

I must put anger in it's place, to experience freedom, finish the race. Only then will my heart and mind be in a better place.

The liberty bells are ringing, and in my heart I'm singing, "Freedom, Freedom."

## Dusty Blue

Parker Moses

A glistening gimlet eye, not shy.  
Looking fly, untucked flannel, wood panels.  
A ranch hand here to apprise.  
The capsized, of a pool ball, far corner pocket.  
Insouciant, buzzed focus,  
His cousin Ernie can't relinquish neurosis.  
A dim silhouetted figure leaned against an opened door.  
In the rear, no need to peer.  
Bone colored diffused daylight.  
By birthright, he might, with no fright.  
A hot gravel lot three blocks away.  
That's not to say.  
The emerald green cloth awaits.  
Cobalt blue chalk dust flakes.  
White ball to striped, Burgundy 15 quakes.  
A smooth tap in, his compadre took it on the chin.  
The temporary czar of the bar, gold star.  
Downs a shot of auburn whiskey.  
\$20 transferred onto the worn, walnut bar.  
No car.  
Ranch walks past a leaning broom out into the daylight.  
Residual blue chalked fingertips are.  
Swaying to and fro.  
Swaying to and fro.  
He's content to be straying.  
A look left step over a blotch of pink cotton candy.  
He's feeling randy.  
May visit Sandy.

Turns the corner.  
To the former.

## Domes and Bells

Tim Gardner

Those domes, they rise above all else  
but for the mountains and the birds.  
Clang ringing of their bells, their beautiful bells.  
They seem to lift their domes even higher.

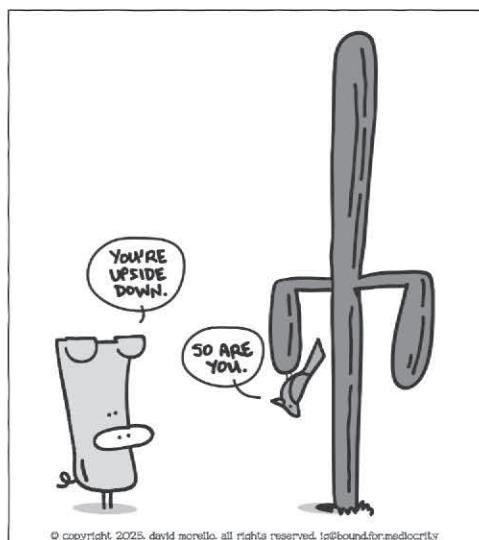
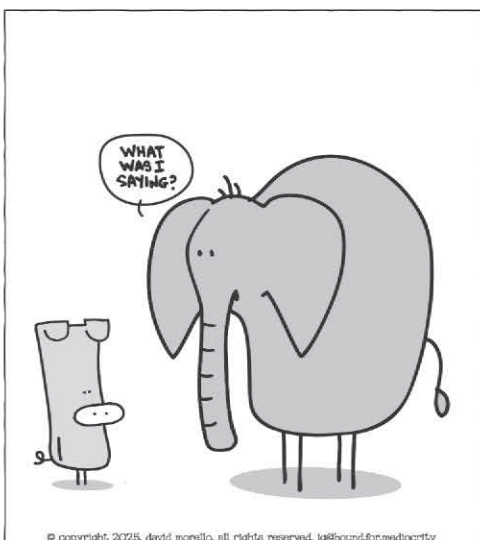
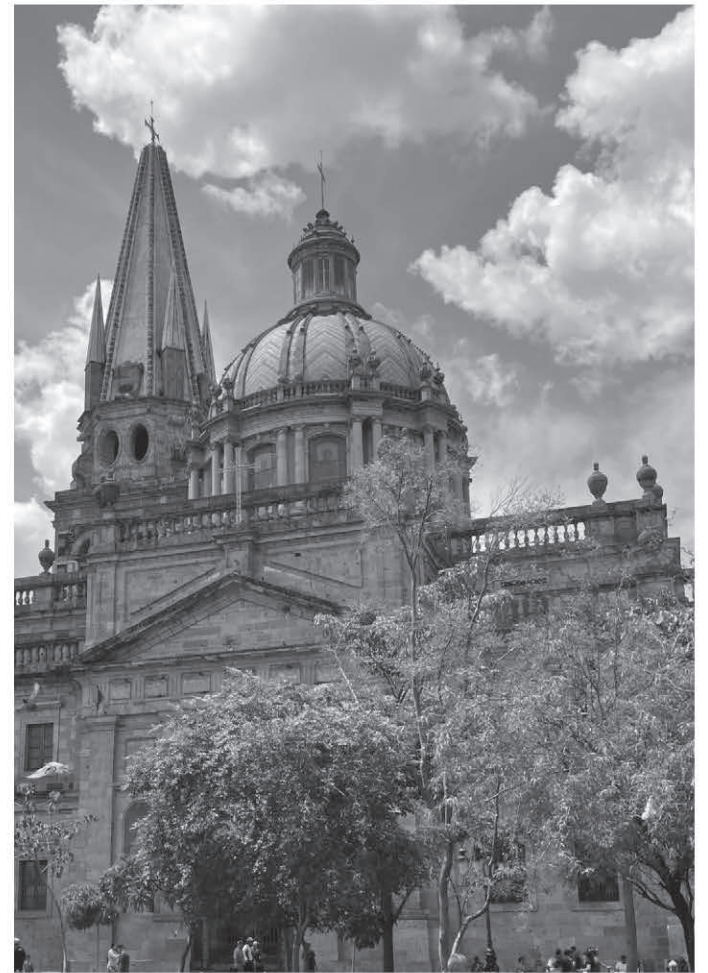
Brilliant white Ibis wing across verdant green mountains,  
thru the streaming, misty clouds,  
heading to lake or wetlands,  
friends to the domes and their bells.

The hard, harsh, heavy sounds of even the motocicleta stay down.  
Dogs bark, nuevo rock seeps about, mothers correct their hijos.  
The roof top chihuahuas yup, yap, screech like a broken child.  
It all stays down.

Yet I am drawn to all that is soaring above, flying beyond.  
I am so tired of searching.  
The body aches.  
But I have always ached,

If those crucifix, capped, domes could offer me a miracle  
I would have them waft me away,  
uplifted by the bells,  
to fly with the Ibis.

And disappear.

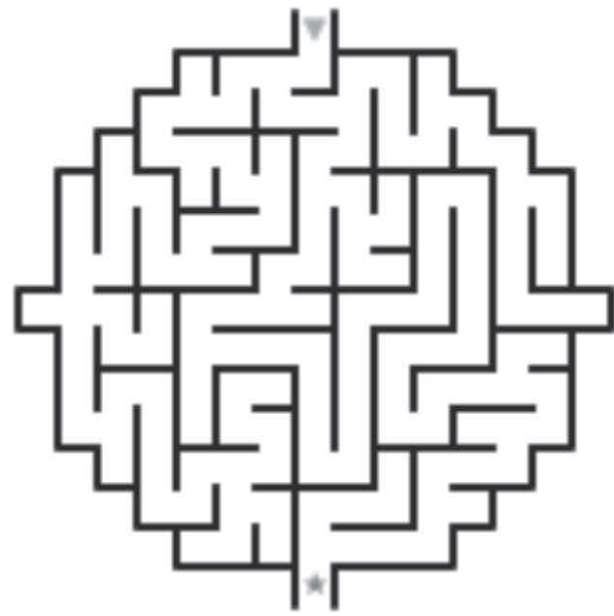


Photography by Tim Gardner

## hiipie shit

David Koteen

"hippie shit" is oft composed of beans & rice  
 maybe tofu, carrots diced, onion'd be nice.  
 "live simply that others may simply live."  
 give amply that others may prosper & give...  
 unconditional love is both means & ways  
 radiate kindness...mindfulness... heart's rays  
 to them in need offer what you have available  
 "spare change"...warm smile...place at yr table.  
 "Flower Power"...compassion...Make Love Not War...  
 "hippie shit"...free spirit...glad to be it...forever more...



## Miracle

Paris

There was no miracle it was just me  
 Staring back at me  
 The reflection of a hero  
 Who embraces his irrelevance  
 His new beginning as zero

Inside the heart of a lion  
 Lies a tin man  
 A scarecrow of Courage who says yes we can

We're not in Kansas anymore  
 Taylor swift and Travis kelce galore  
 Can't tap your shoes and home sweet home  
 your way out of this  
 No doctor or meds or therapist will ever  
 make you better  
 It's an inside job  
 You're the cops and the mob

No home sweet home Alabama  
 You burned and razed it to the ground with  
 a tractor  
 You're afraid  
 Tired scared and shivering  
 You nuked your old self burst it to  
 smithereens

No god or human can save you  
 Only you can save you

You're the miracle  
 You're the knight in shining armor  
 Stained with tears and blood and snot  
 This is your shot  
 Give it everything you've got

Be divine  
 Be your own lifeline  
 You're not running late, you're on time  
 Sleep easy sweet child of mine

## fully offline

Justin Rödermond

A tepid tub of toner  
 told the printer he's a loner  
 and to call off all the cron jobs  
 they'd have to disconnect and sink

his bubble-flavored elvis  
 thinks of things he'd like to tell us  
 all the pictures he had fashioned  
 while he dried up all his ink.



Gideon

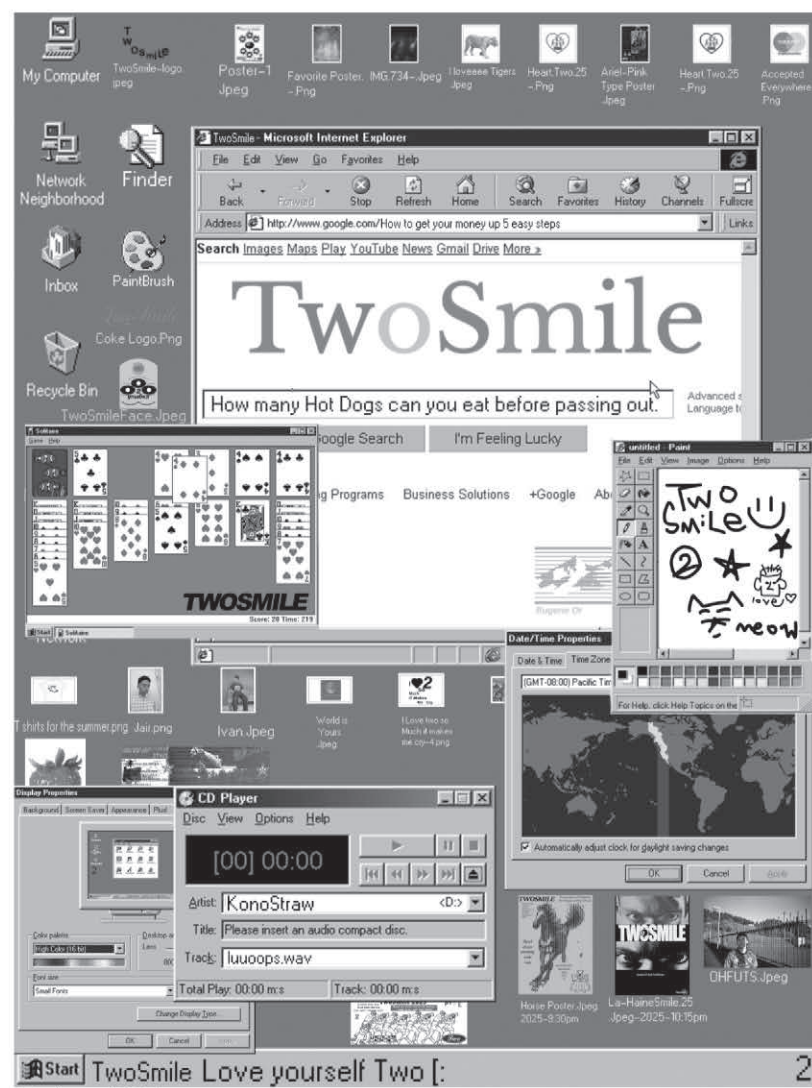
## A Reflection So Far

Iris Bartholomew

The answer to this function, not rational or  
 Trigonometric  
 You can't convey something to a basketball, just inflate it  
 Or get a straight head on that stripped screw,  
 Just wedge and twist it  
 A baby mouse in the grass, once  
 Flies dancing across flesh, I pull her hand far from the  
 carcass  
 Tell her you do not want to see it  
 But of course she does-

Curiosities nonlinear, human in propulsion  
 Translate and polish, a trickle from an ocean  
 I can't swim but I have held my breath  
 Underwater  
 Bubbles prowling from my mouth and nose and pressure  
 Rising to chest, waves coming to crest,  
 Wetting the oaks, the eternal tree  
 Both a mother and daughter, roots  
 Gripped to ground, acorns spreading out  
 Creating new life from a breeze

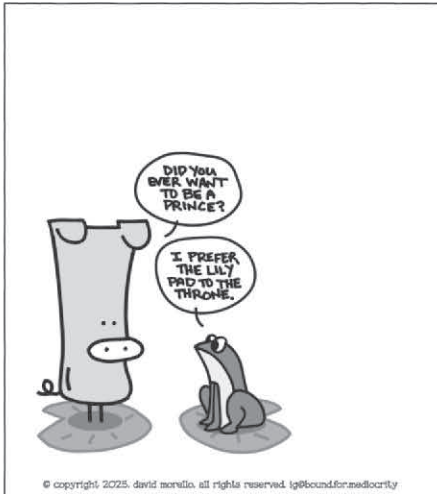
The cars drive south to the highway,  
 And each move I buy a new broom  
 To keep the old dirt where it cast  
 And I'm all skin, no leaves  
 An addition and subtraction,  
 A fraction- rehearsing and reciting the action  
 Exponential, a logarithmic spiral  
 Nature enchanting and leaving indication  
 An image spoken, a piece of jasper  
 Pressed tightly in a palm, somewhere  
 Moth larva wriggles and squirms-  
 And solutions are not promised



Jair Alfaro



Marcel Tulloh



## Giulianova

Jerry Ross


Your wide boulevards  
along the enchanting sea

The quiet sands and tide pools  
glistening in the  
kiss of  
morning light


My thoughts roam and  
float free of the  
whispers of silent  
palms

We walk seemingly  
an infinity of steps  
into your beautiful  
emptiness

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## All Apologies

Tony Brown

I am sorry that...

- Your aura could not be cleansed
- Your phone fell into the toilet.
- You were part of the data breach at chewy.com.
- Your auto driving car took you to the Olive Garden unexpectedly.
- You could not solve the three body problem.
- When you were on the antiques road show your vase was determined to be a fake.
- The farmer's market only had onions.
- Your identification of the mushroom you found was incorrect.
- You could not pull the sword out of the stone.
- You experienced every side effect mentioned in that TV commercial for that new drug you started taking.
- Your once in a lifetime photo opportunity was blurry and had your finger in the frame.
- The aliens probed you.
- The house fell on your aunt.
- Your screenplay was rejected.
- You got pulled over for a broken headlight then got busted for the weed in your car.
- Your corvette fell into a sinkhole.
- You were baptized in the river without your consent
- The NPC turned down your romantic advances.
- Your Netflix account got stuck on Ad-Mode and would only show commercials.
- Your neighbor changed their WIFI password and now you do not have internet access.
- You were born with 6 fingers.
- You didn't get a golden ticket in your chocolate bar.
- You got kicked out of the logging convention.
- You had to get those shots after a rat bit your ear.
- Your superpowers suddenly went away.
- You were homeless during the polar vortex.
- Vikings pillaged your village.
- They built a wall through the middle of your 20 acre farm.
- You contracted that foot fungus from the YMCA
- Pitchfork gave your album a one star review.
- There was sand in your coffee.
- Your handmaid could not produce offspring.
- IKEA overcharged you.
- You had that archery mishap.
- Your account was deleted from the servers.
- Your coven disbanded.
- The new book you just purchased was missing the last 11 pages.
- Cicadas ate your crops.
- Your dog bit that famous art dealer.
- Those people got food poisoning from your cake.
- Your vacation abroad ended in espionage charges.
- An asteroid was predicted to hit your city.
- You were not able to use the force.
- Your cult leader made you drink the KOOL-AID.
- Your electricity went out during the big game.
- You slipped on a banana peel.
- Your golf ball was never found.
- You lost a toe during the running of the bulls.
- You moved all of your savings to that failed cryptocurrency.
- Your Uber Eats food was delivered to the wrong house.
- You can no longer purchase soup from that place with the really good soup.
- You got a poison oak rash in that hard to reach place.
- Your sister was abducted by the black helicopters.
- Zombies got into your prison hideaway.

