

# Gazing at the Stars

1998



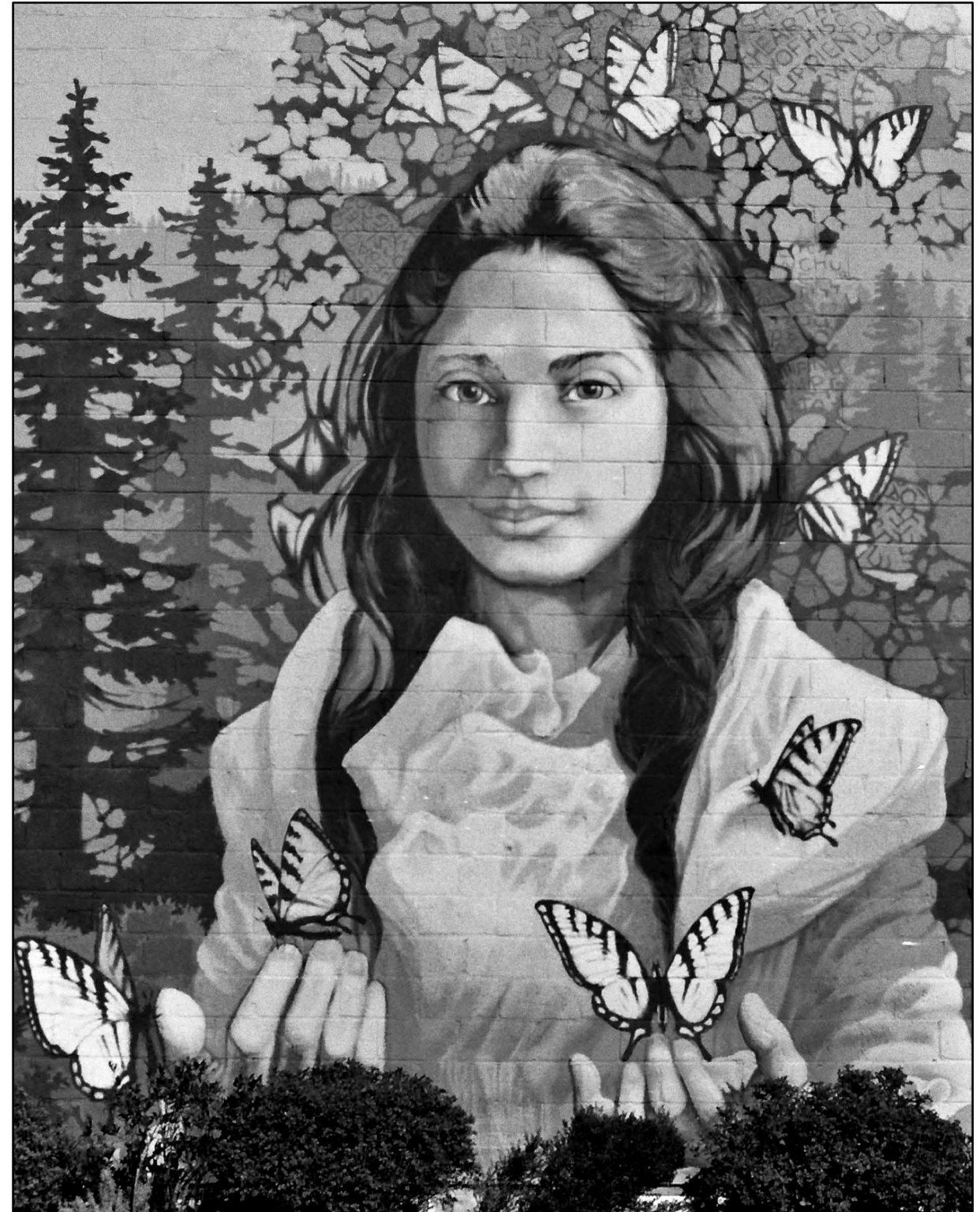
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# Graffiti

EUGENE'S CREATIVE WRITING & ART ZINE

# #19

NOVEMBER 2024



# Graffiti

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back issues online!  
 at graffiti-magazine.com

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**Special thank\$ to ALL our Supporter\$ over the past two years!** : Barbara Ambler-Thomas, Susan Bloom, Steve Boergadine, Phil Bridler, Claudia Caramelli, Trina Cleland, that guy Dan, Tom DeLigio, Carla De Martino, Paul Dresman, Shachar Efrati, Lise Eskridge, Mark Foster, Paul George, Rich Gilman, Bill Gunn, Wes Hansen, George Havens, G. L. Helm, Hillbilly, Rachel Johnson, Martin Ley, Mackenzie Alliance, Robert MacConnell, Charles Mattoon, Jean Murphy, Penny Neu, Kevin O'Brien, Anne & David O'Brien, Lauren Oliver, LaDonna Qualtieri, Rose Ramsey, Leo Rivers, Ken Robinson, Kenneth Roe, Andrew Schwarz, Jim Smith, Erica Snowlake, Karen Stingle, Charles Stromme, Stephen Swiftfox, Silvia Theiner, Joel Unger, Terah Van Dusen, Michelle Whitlock, Rod Williams, John Zerzan, probably others we've regretfully forgotten ♥♥♥

graffitizineugene\_

**ON THE COVER:** Mural of Opal Whiteley by Connie Huston. Photo by Stephen Swiftfox. See Randy Gudeika's "Our History," p.4

## Our Mission...

...should we choose to accept it, is to encourage the production of creative writing and art by members of the community, to foster skills in those endeavors, to explore strange new worlds, to seek out new life and new civilizations, and to boldly go where no woman has gone before.

## Read Me! and FAQ

- Graffiti publishes artwork, poetry, and short prose, submitted by anyone. Work must be original to you and preferably based on personal experience. We DON'T publish rants, hate speech, excerpts from other people's work, or anything that makes us worry about libel or copyright infringement.

- Submissions aren't juried. Subject to the "DON'T"s listed above, we try to publish — either in the paper or on the website, at our discretion — everything we receive, first-come, first-served. Rarely, a submission may fall through the cracks, get eaten by the dog, or be rejected for some random reason. If it didn't get published, don't query us about its fate. Note: **WE DON'T EDIT. EVERYTHING GOES AS-IS.** So make it clean.

- Please scan your art (jpeg preferred) and email us your art and text. No scanner or computer? Public libraries have them. And librarians love helping Luddites.

- We give highest priority to new work, because Graffiti's mission is to encourage writers to write and artists to art.

### HOW DO I GIVE YOU ALL MY MONEY?

It costs \$600 to print each issue. You can help us out by giving us all your money. Or okay, just some of it. Thanks!

**Donations via:**

**Venmo:** @GraffitiEugene

**PayPal:** graffitiugene@gmail.com

**Cash or check:** Graffiti, 1292 High St. #129, Eugene OR 97401

### HOW DO I SUBMIT WORK?

Email it to: graffitiugene@gmail.com

### DO I GET PAID?

No. And neither do we.

### DOES I GOTTA RIGHT GOOD?

No, but please try. Don't just write for your ego — that's what journals are for. Write for an audience. Sweat over your work. No first drafts. And please, at least run spell-check and grammar-check if you've got 'em.

### WHAT LENGTH WORKS ARE ACCEPTABLE?

For printing in the zine, anything under 800 words makes us happy. Submissions longer than 1,000 words will probably be posted on the website instead: [graffiti-magazine.com](http://graffiti-magazine.com).

### NOW FOR THE QUIZ:

WHAT'S THE NAME OF GRAFFITI'S FAVORITE BUBBLY?

# FRONT LINES

Don Root

**O**n Thanksgiving, first and foremost I'm grateful I'm not a turkey. It's said Benjamin Franklin wanted the turkey to be America's national bird. He lost out, and we got the bald eagle instead. I wonder, would we feel any differently on Thanksgiving Day, sitting down to a fine feast of roast bald eagle? Would we still fill the eagle's innards with "stuffing"? Would mashed potatoes and cranberry sauce go well with eagle? Would the oenophiles among us suggest a good complementary wine? Château l'Aigle, perhaps?

In my neighborhood, we have lots of free-range turkeys wandering at will through the streets and yards. They seem peaceful enough—usually minding their own business and letting me mind mine. I wish humans could do that. But obviously we can't.

Now let's talk about Graffiti's gratitude. It cost \$600 to bring you this zine—the one you're reading right now—the one you're holding in your hands, feeling its texture under your fingertips and listening to the slight rustle of the pages as you turn them. It's nice, isn't it? You never have to plug it in, and the batteries never run out. Of course, thousands of spotted owls were rendered homeless so you could have this wonderful tactile experience, but we won't get into that. What we will get into is where the money comes from to print this zine.

A full 25% of the print bill each month comes from one advertiser: **PRISE DESIGN**. Since Graffiti never makes more than \$20 over the print bill, that means without **PRISE DESIGN**, we would have folded long ago. If you need any website design or any other advertising or graphic-design work, you know who to call, okay? Thank you, **PRISE DESIGN!** Graffiti is ever so grateful! Several other advertisers have been with us since the beginning or have otherwise had sufficient faith in our project to support us with multiple ads: **ART HOUSE, EMERALD BROADBAND, JOHN DAVIS REALTOR, MISHA KAGUTABA, MIND'S EYE DIGITAL DESIGN, AFILIPINAHIPPIE.BLOG, LISA DILUNA LMT, THREADBARE PRINT HOUSE, WORDCRAFTERS OF EUGENE... thank you all so much!** We remain ever so grateful! We've published a lot of one-off and two-off ads, too, over the past two years, and thank all you businesses for those! You know who you are! Graffiti is grateful!

Now, ads are all well and good, but Graffiti couldn't have made it this far on ads alone. About half the print bill each month comes from readers like you who appreciate us sufficiently to actually give us money to do what we do! We've gotten a lot of lip service from businesses and individuals in Eugene—enthusiastic praise not followed up with even a smidgen of financial backing. But **YOU GUYS CAME THROUGH FOR US!** Everyone in the **Special thank\$** column in the masthead is an angel in Graffiti's book. We couldn't have done it without you!

Speaking of which... when Graffiti had just started, a reader asked to meet me for coffee one day. We had a nice chat, and when we were getting ready to leave, he pulled out his checkbook and wrote Graffiti a check for the entire print bill of issue #2. **KEVIN O'BRIEN**, you are a rock star, and we are ever so grateful!

And even before Kevin, even before Graffiti #1, there was the first person who saw my flyers soliciting creative work from you locals and immediately got in touch. Thanks a gazillion **JORDAN HOWELL ROSE!** I wish Graffiti could've made money for you—for both of us—but your help and ever-positive support has kept Graffiti turning over from Day One! Graffiti is ever so grateful!

**ROD WILLIAMS, MORGAN SMITH, LISE ESKRIDGE:** You've kept us chugging along, too, with your constant effort and enthusiastic support. All on a volunteer basis! Unsung heroes all of you. THANK YOU! Graffiti is ever so grateful!

And finally, of course, to **ALL OUR CONTRIBUTORS OF ART, PROSE, AND POETRY:** Thanks for sharing your work with Graffiti! Keep that creativity flowing! It's up to you to save the world (and possibly Graffiti; see p.12)! We're ever so grateful! Dogspeed to you all!

Now back to our regularly scheduled programming...



art by marcel tulloh



a customer at Dark Pine Coffee reads Graffiti #18 over a cuppa joe. photo by don

## The Naming Game

John Zerzan

In Genesis, the first book of the Bible: "So out of the ground the Lord God formed every animal of the field and every bird of the air, and brought them to man to see what he would call them; and whatever the man called every living creature, that was its name." In this way God let humankind "have dominion" over all non-human life.

Another dominion was introduced when "Adam called his wife's name Eve."

Naming makes the named into objects. On this primary level Man establishes superiority over the world.

Taxonomists name nature. Their works fill collections and libraries with names and multiple classifications of names. Life reduced to endless naming, whose crowning achievement is discovering and naming a new species.

Adam was the first taxonomist. More prosaically, archaeologist Jacquetta Hawkes reminds us that "we can have no single syllable from the names given by paleolithic hunters."

If they had, prior to some epoch, names at all. In face-to-face immediate-return hunter-gatherer society, what use for names? In such band communities of, say, 50 or fewer people, would individuals need to be named? Ellen Bramwell repeats a commonly held notion, that names are "part of the global human condition" and are "a human universal." But this may be too sweeping a judgment.

All naming is a metaphor of continuity and connection, tending toward an institutionalized practice. In this sense there is a very different political dimension between indigenous and colonial naming, to put it mildly.

In the 5th century BCE Confucius emphasized the central political importance of correct naming. "The very first task of a true statesman is to rectify the names."

In the 17th century Thomas Hobbes was the first theorist of representative government, that mainstay of modern civil society. Names are fundamental to this form of government. Hobbes saw naming as a cornerstone, beginning with his view that there is "nothing in the world universal but names."

Naming exercises authority over the named. Within indigeneity, it is treated carefully.

In James George Frazer's encyclopedic, first-of-its kind anthropological survey, *The Golden Bough* (1890), considerable attention is devoted to the potency of personal names. "Primitive" peoples throughout the world treated names as very powerful in themselves, and surprisingly often, not to be uttered. Indeed, in some cultures the use of personal names can be perceived as disrespectful.

Variations abound. For example, while it was forbidden to Jews to write or speak the name of Yahweh, the monks of a Tibetan monastery (in a story by Arthur C. Clarke) set themselves the task of listing all the possible names of God. In a 2014 issue of the *British Medical Journal*, Caroline Dover argues that diseases can be created by the act of giving them a name.

The meaning of naming goes back to the beginning of language. Naming is a language activity and hence a cultural activity, having to do with the elusive and confining nature of representation. With the nature and limits of symbolic culture itself. As Jacques Lacan put it, "No language can speak the truth about truth."

A baby acquires a name, the first symbol in the language through which he/she will encounter the world. There seems to be a quest for unique names for variety in a world that is ever less varied.

What is important gets a name. New heat waves will join hurricanes among the named. The family of an anarchist friend in Turkey had to add a surname when Ataturk, first president of Turkey, ushered in modernity in the 1920s. Before that, many Turks had only one name.

Claude Lévi-Strauss said "place is named space," and it may be hard to imagine how we know something without its name. Joan Maloof, however, asserts that "there is another way of knowing that does not involve names," in response to Laura Kostanski's question, "Are we able to create a space with no name?"

In Ursula LeGuin's story, "She Unnames Them," Eve in the Garden decides that closeness between herself and the animals was lost when Adam put names on them. So she undoes the naming and the bond returns. Our road to domestication, in reality, stayed open. The unnamings did not take place.

Something was lost. We mourn the loss of that which cannot be named. ☺☺☺

## 7 Dances & Yer Out

David Koteen

### Dance I Gretchen Blows Me Off

Gretchen Stimmt is my female bff... sister Aquarian, and as nearly any astrologer will tell you: Aquarians don't date other Aquarians. Like mirror reflecting mirror phenom. You can try but it's hopeless. They don't need any more airy intellectualization in their love adventures. But great buds. Ms Stimmt has mastered degrees in both clinical cynicism & sacred sarcasm. She has tattoo running down front of her left upper thigh of Cleopatra w/ smiling erotic asp latched on to Cleo's majestic bosom... w/ inscription BITCHES -- B in black... & ITCHES in scarlet. My type of folk.

She got wed (now Stimmt-Deskin) so our time together is considerably curtailed. Always buy her drinks: Manhattans. She'll text when she's 5 minutes out, so there's one Manhattan awaiting her arrival. i'm good that way. Last Thursdays we closed down The Electric Station. While staff reset tables, washed counters and put last loads of cocktail glasses thru dishwasher, Gretchen got up and performed tap duet w/ oak chair... singing "Singing In The Rain."

Tonite tho she blewwww! me off...no explanation, Text: "Can't make it. Sor-ree!"

Because i'm old-ish i don't go out much. Often before i do (& double always w/ Gretchen Stimmt-Deskin) load up with white my trusty tortoise shell sniffer-snorter...just to keep aside of things. Here i am wired & ready and no where to go. i've drunk Gretchen's Manhattan and my Kettle One martini. Now what?

i add some ganja (street legal in Oregon--how bout that!?) to assure maximum clarity and pull into The Golden Calf parking lot. Eugene's Premiere Gentlemen's Club. Tho i note substantial increase in female attendees...especially on 25 cent beer night...

i'm buzzin, disappointed, and wonderin if some naked stranger can shake my tree? Generic sexual encouragement--for this gentle man... sounds better than unadulterated loneliness. \$3 cover charge...and Gretchen be long gone.

Before entering Golden Calf there is innocuous entryway where stands Bruno "el bouncer." There are several rotating bouncers but i call them all Bruno. Why? 'cause they're all massive dudes in neighborhood of 5'10"-6'2", wght around 220-40 lbs (100 kilos). They bounce. And when i say, "How's yr night goin, Bruno?"...he never says, "I'm not Bruno." ...always says, "Good! Good!" Counts out 17 ones from my \$3 door fee. Bruno's got lotsa ones.

It's 7:45...thus slow goin. 4 or 5 other customers...et moi. Early shift at Golden Calf (mothers must return to their other duties.) ends at 7. Hence these 8 new young la-dees have not yet been paid. Why they're here. i'm here to pay them... among et ceteras.

As always i'm slightly intimidated, amazed that this place exists (young semi/naked women wanting to

snoogle in my lap, nip around my neck and ears, encouraging my mostly dormant dingus to show some respect!), curious as butterfly, and cautiously watching. i move on to Hornitos w/ coupla rocks. Much to glean here about human bottom lines.

Couple of sisters have noticed. They sidle over where i'm leaning against off-white post into private dance area. Rounder, less sensual la-dee is named Orchid. She has large bosoms which is her come-on. Flashes me, says "You like?" Seems like they want 3-some; but he doesn't! i've tried several this life but really prefer duets. Deep intimate connection between 2 people is unlikely enough.

Whereas #2 la-dee just keeps comin on--pubic bone & breasts & blowin warm breath on my neck and ear. She is all-Americansan girl w/ blond pigtailed & periwinkle eyelids & bouquet of smiley teeth. "Tee-hee. I'm kind of bad. What's yr name, honey?"

### Dance II Average Annie

Me: Max. i say. And you.

Annie: Annie. I'm just your Average Annie. Tee-hee.

Orchid: I love the name Max. Is it short for something?

Max: Nope. It's my Golden Calf name. i wanna play too.

Annie: (in continuous touch w/ me) You want to party w/

us. I think I know what you like.

Max: Do tell, Average Annie.

Annie: Honey, you like to have your nipples bitten. That's

my bet.

Max: Oops!

Annie goes on spotlight strobe, brass-poled center stage for her 2 dance set. 2 of us 5 customers sit around it and flow \$1 bills at her, on her, nearly in her. She inverts herself atop brass pole, squeezes it between her thighs and slides upside down, smiling heat at me. Good job!

Orchid: Hey Max, you want to get friendly with my girls.

She pulls her nipples and breast spring into action.

Max: Aint gonna happen Orchid.

Average Annie tickles my rapidly aging fancy. Or i hope she will.

Orchid: Oh, yes. She is very sexy. And modestly skulks off on her red awkward stripper heels towards la-dees dressing room.

(now i've invested \$4 in my relationship w/ Average Annie)

...& Annie assembles her facade (think black fishnet bikini) & takes my arm, guides me back into purplish, seductive private dance section. Pass thru small corridor with 3 video poker machines...Royal Flush. Up 2 steps and into vacuous, mirrored modestly lit Private Dance area.

Annie: Any where you like, Max.

i go to furthest corner bench (one prays they use some penetrating disinfectant). Are there cameras? She sits quickly...crosses her legs & translucent heels, and invites me. i feign and stay upright-- playin hard-to-

get--push my palms together into prayer hands...ease her knees apart...

(cont'd on p.7)

## Our History by the walking historian Randy Gudeika



A vibrant statue dances in the little garden east of the Knight Library. Opal Whiteley (1897-1992), Oregon's environmentalist child-prophet, attended the U of O without a high school diploma, surprising professors with her intimate knowledge of nature.

As a child she kept a life-affirming diary of her adventures living near today's Mosby Creek Covered Bridge, along the Row River bike trail east of Cottage Grove.

Opal was very connected with her small, complex world, naming trees and animals, always speaking to them as friends. The earth was, in a profound way, her loving home: "I lay my ear close to the earth... I did listen... There were voices from out the earth... the things of gladness of growing. And there was music. And in the music, there was sky-twinkles and earth-tinkles that come of the joy of living" (p. 240, from her diary as presented in Benjamin Hoff's *The Singing Creek Where the Willows Grow*).

At the end of her life she descended into mental illness, dying in an English asylum. Some folks say she wrote the best-selling diary as an adult. To me, that matters little. Her message is what matters: "This is a very wonderful world to live in" (p.107, Hoff).

- RANDY

More: local historian and Opal expert Stephen Williamson's website, [www.storiesbysteve.com/opal-whiteley](http://www.storiesbysteve.com/opal-whiteley)

photo: Rick Obst; <https://www.flickr.com/photos/discoveroregon/>

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[graffitiegene@gmail.com](mailto:graffitiegene@gmail.com)

## Turn it up!

by Rachael Hillenius



Hey there Graffitians... it's been a long time. I've missed you all. What have you been up to? A bit of this that and the other thing? Well, do I have some tunes for you... Let's turn it up already and get this turnip wagon a movin'...



P.S. But don't fall off!

### Struttin'



#### Thumpasaurus

Album: Thumpaverse  
Released: September 24, 2021  
Track: #4  
Song Length: 3:48

Leather chaps and a good sense of humor are mandatory for this tune. Please watch the video. Keep on struttin'... I like your butt!

### Smokin Out The Window



#### Bruno Mars, Anderson Paak, and special guest Bootsie Collins

Album: Silk Sonic  
Released: November 5, 2021  
Track: #5  
Song Length: 3:17

This track is a great throwback tune... it features Bootsie Collins need I say more? It will have you smokin' out the window. Endo?

### It's a Beautiful Day (Reprise)

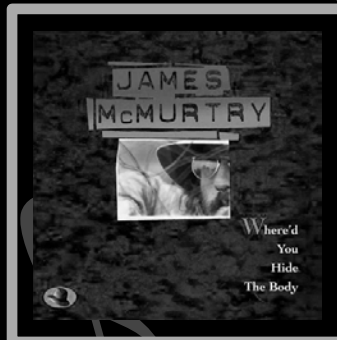


#### The Kiffness, Rushawn, Jermaine Edwards

Album: n/a — independent release  
Released: December 16, 2022  
Song Length: 2:42

This is a beautiful tune that will move your heart + soul. It is a beautiful collaboration with a perfect mix... a feel good tune.

### Rachel's Song



#### James McMurtry

Album: Where'd You Hide the Body  
Released: June 1, 1995  
Song Length: 4:39

This is a beautiful song. The lyrics are written beautifully. The writing is about as good as it gets. Also bonus points for including my name in the title.



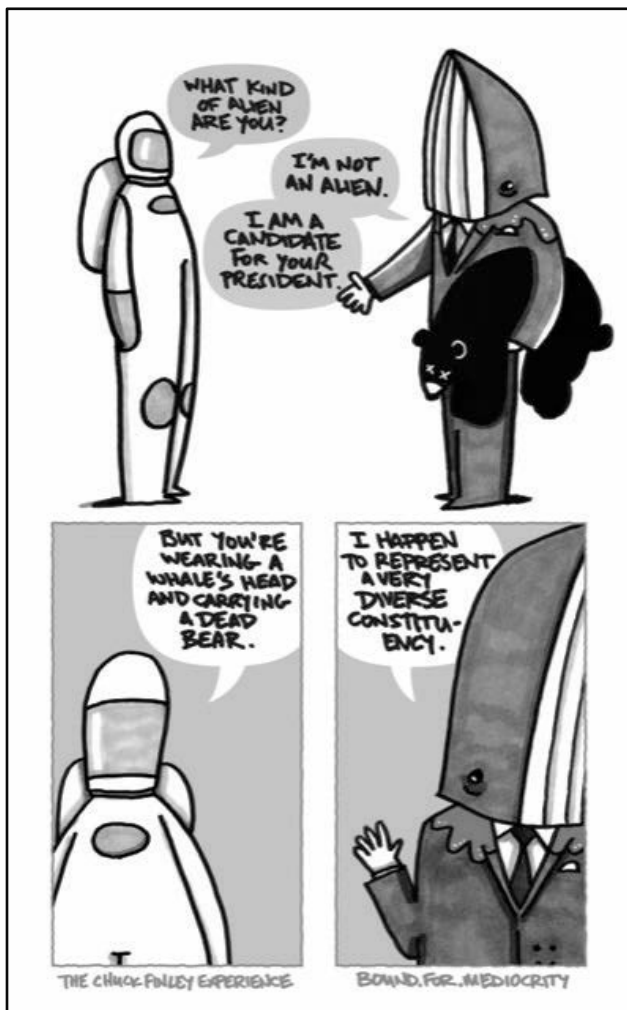
art by tate cocotos



art by morgan smith



art by chuck finley



art by chuck finley

### Reflection

My face appraises me  
 from a horse's hoofprint  
 brimming with rainwater.  
 The walls erode and crumble:  
 bit by bit, cohesion fails  
 until a whole side comes down  
 and another and then  
 only a faint imprint remains  
 beneath a thin wet sheen.

When I was five years old

I found myself fishing  
 from the end of a pier  
 on a small Adirondack lake  
 beside a girl shy as myself.  
 We shrank from our parents'  
 knowing glances and nudges,  
 my big sister's smoochy noises,  
 lowering our eyes

to a secret embrace—  
 our figures rippling together  
 in dark water.

The girl's name is gone

and her white salty skin  
 and the curve of her limbs.  
 Her sweet face, like mine,  
 is a muddy blur  
 in a ruined hoof-pool.

Our parents dissolve

in endlessly receptive earth  
 and my sister is an old woman,  
 yet from beneath the sediment  
 layered over that moment  
 love and shame surface again,  
 a double-edged blade, now as then.

Dan Libberthson

### The Highwayman

i say to my lack of willpower:  
 i think that we can make it out of here.  
 he pulls me aside, whispering:  
 let's die a human wasteland,  
 a falling sky on empty oceans,  
 an old notebook by the freeway,  
 an oily puddle of stained pennies.  
 let's be a crash-test wicker leviathan,  
 a tale of bitter remorse for lost love,  
 a blind zealot for each subtle agony,  
 an eager hurricane over porcelain.  
 and i held him, like a long lost friend:  
 we always die here, you and i,  
 a farce, a spectacle of waste.  
 this head is a broken television  
 swiveling in the dark, hunting mirrors.  
 auditing life, calculating languidly,  
 a speck, a quiet corner of the cosmos.  
 these eyes are hollow glass shovels,  
 in the distant, frozen earth.

Mike Heide

### Faded Restless Friends

taken by choices  
 mysterious things  
 my haunted rooms  
 wallpaper faces  
 invisible roots  
 digging down  
 aroundright through me  
 we learn invaluable degrees from falling

don't tell us  
 we cannot exist  
 we've earned our rights of passages  
 leave us alone

under pressure  
 under guns  
 pressed against Dystopia's razor wire  
 sleeping rough by trains  
 in doorways/fields/under bridges  
 night quakes riddled with pressure  
 tension/loss/violinist aching melodies  
 storming air

like snowflakes in August  
 everything under scrutiny  
 severe strings playing all night

waiting to hit crescendo  
 while empires keep shooting fears  
 under our desks

I tap keys  
 like LA freeways  
 full of chrome  
 sirens  
 chasing war stories

beneath forgotten wires  
 buzzing distressing sparks  
 praying war will not kill us all

remembering what you mean to me  
 what you taught me  
 honesty burning down stoic stares  
 with early rainfall/cold marching through

parking lots  
 listening to crushed grapes  
 bleed secret tales  
 lost wolves hunting howling

on john's peak hoping their humbling  
 voices answer in songs to help me  
 scratch an iceberg  
 hiding far far below

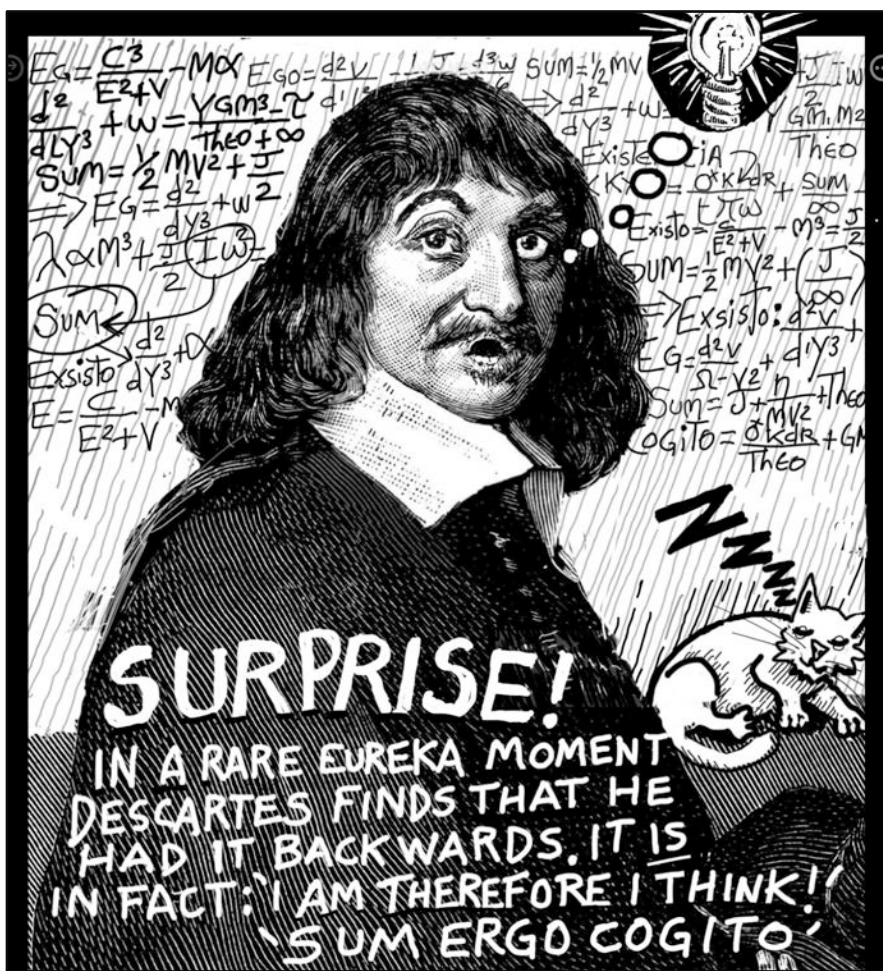
a shape I feel  
 but cannot sing

yet.

For Sten Kerwin  
 Megan Bobb  
 Drew  
 Dad  
 Mom  
 Brother  
 Nephew  
 Daughter

Nation & troubled world.

Scott Lee



art by marco elliott

## Morning Philosophy

marco Elliott

This morning, waking up, I told her how much I enjoy taking a short snooze when well rested after a full night's sleep. A cherry on the cake kind of a snooze.

— I don't see the logic, she says, since you've already slept a good 8 hours.

— That's the point. Who needs logic amidst the spinning chaos of a world with the willies?

— But I thought Descartes was your Joe, she responds.

— Youthful error! Old fart Descartes is the problem you see. His bizarre obsession with Cogito Ergo Sum and the idea to use logical argument to prove the existence of god, give me a break, it gives me existential heeby-jeebies on top of the willies.

— So you'd rather take a snooze when building Rome requires all hands on deck?

— Yes, now that I am fresh, bright eyed and rested I'd much rather go quietly fishing for a pearl in a dream. Just a sweet while longer. Rome can wait. I'll gladly let others commit freely to the vanity of lifting stone upon stone, building monuments to the glory of Empire. Besides look at wise Descartes. For all his fancy metaphysics, he finally succumbed to the catastrophe of success and met his maker when invited by young imperious Queen Christina of Denmark, she insisted he rise at 5 a.m. for her private lessons in freezing winter apartments in Stockholm. He caught a death of a cold and Ciao Professore!

No doubt, welcoming a cat nap is the wise way to go in all this mad hustle and bustle. Far from the rumble, all the dust and excitement, this here droopy-eyed feline would rather wave his well weathered cat hat satisfied to let rats race around to their full hyper-caffeinated contentment.

— You're hopeless, she says, I love you anyway, who knows why. Even your Descartes dude with his logic and cogitation wouldn't have a clue.

Pascal, a contemporary of Descartes who dabbled with introspection, faith and happiness framed it this way: 'Le cœur a ses raisons que la raison ne connaît pas...'

Yawn...Zzzzz.

☺☺☺

### It should be of no surprise...

It should be of no surprise  
that I hold the secret of life between my thighs.

Oceans have parted and mountains have crumbled for  
far less than the the miracles my body has performed.

It should be of no surprise  
that when I walk with high stride people stop in their tracks  
to behold just a part of the energy I possess.

My beauty runs far deeper than what is seen by the common eye  
for my soul holds every star in the night sky.

It should be of no surprise  
that I possess the ability to make your world shine,  
because I have walked through the flames of hell  
and came out the other side;

And that is why I hold a glimmer in my eye when I see the flames rise.

Amber Pacheco

### My Last Week at the Old House

a little house  
with a tree-lined view  
i'm so close to it.  
portland has been  
calling me by  
my full, legal name:  
"time for a rendezvous!".

almost there now.  
eugene has held me—  
cradled my pieces  
and let my wounds  
breathe fresh air  
for almost 3 years.  
my bedroom is  
near the highway.  
i can hear the cars  
and sometimes,  
i pretend their  
steady stream is  
the sound  
of a waterfall...  
delusion is a  
dream-state.  
oregon is my  
dream state.  
thank you, eugene  
you were good to me  
i was first held here—  
at my will,  
i was held here.

Lauren Oliver

The irresistible light  
Dresses your soul

Your daily bread  
A cup of coffee  
Any grace received only in the now  
The present, the gift

Moment to moment  
Until eternity

Fergul Cirpan

### Incas Will Always Be There

to tell our grand kids about...  
Inkers always will here be  
so we know what's droppin hot...  
Inklings come like ducklings  
first time paddin on pond...  
How webbed foots push against  
water...and so life proceeds  
Incarceration is for our foes...  
until we give'm par-don  
Ev'ry crime reaps same square cell  
May your myriad stars make sensual  
constellations...  
You enter in to...feel at home  
Full moons won't be 'round, rather  
more complex configurations  
Several sides in shades of dark  
shifting.

David Koteen

I'm

### We Dozed Off in Our Rowboat

We dozed off in our rowboat  
And so we've started to drift  
Soon we'll be among cattails  
Unless the breeze comes to shift.

It's not that I'm feeling anxious  
Though heads are showing fluff  
With no storms in the forecast  
Fortitude and patience are enough.

We should sand and repaint  
Stuff new caulk in the seams  
For wood tends to dry and shrink  
Must we procrastinate till spring?

We know the dark chill of winter  
Comes earlier than we expect  
Why then do we wait for a crisis  
To stir us from indolent neglect?

Here the frogs dive for cover  
Fingerlings shelter in the stalks  
A dragonfly lands on an oar blade  
On heron's feather our worries drift off.

Your hair holds a fluff of downy seeds  
The setting sun illuminates your halo  
And that cattail you swing in revenge  
Becalms rising waters we haven't bailed.

With tasks distracted by fair weather  
Rot comes along with fungus, and mildew  
Buckets full of regrets we share in silence  
Here in shallow muck, I will not abandon you.

Jeff Southwick

### Parting Shot

A lot has been said about it being a good thing for humans to define themselves even before before their brain has fully developed. Well, that's okay, I guess. I mean, what do I know? I'm sixty-one. I'm on the way out anyway, and besides, my brain as far as I can tell never fully developed anyway. But it can get a bit confusing for us less than relevant oldsters. But dang nab it! That's not the point!

The point is: the next time I get pulled over for speeding by the po-po, you know, the five-o (see, ahm still hip!) I want to redefine myself as "Ryan Blaney."

Nemo

I'm a capitalist for small businesses  
a socialist for fire departments  
a communist for air and water  
an egalitarian for my country  
a shepherd for the Earth  
and a snob for art

I'm a hand for neighbors  
an ear for friends  
an empath for children  
a heart for my loved one  
an autocrat for my body  
and a servant for my cat  
the anarchist

Jack Cooper

Not even an echo  
in this lousy room!  
Lonely.

G. Lloyd Helm

### The Way of the Feminine

I'm sorry  
Because I dance

Head in the clouds

White noise  
The smell of coffee  
Stuff

Divine presence  
In the room

Blessed all shadows  
Compassionate and raw

Drifting...

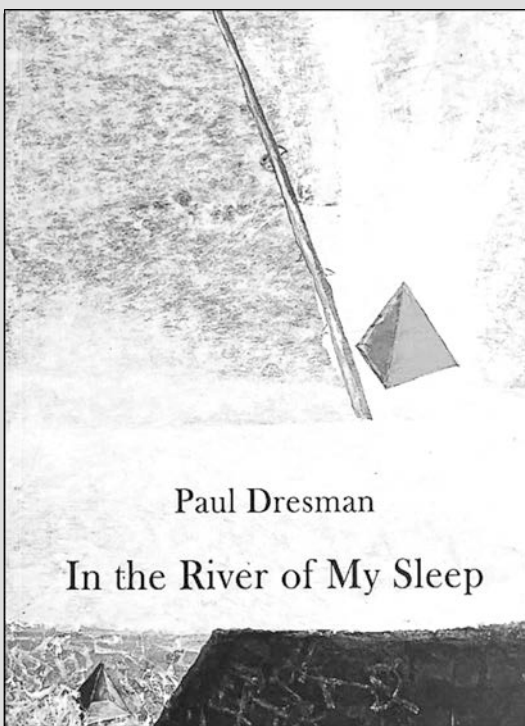
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**“The weather deepens roots, and I write from an American imagination, a spirit in cahoots with wellsprings and camaraderie... History is a nightmare I am trying to elucidate; poetry the singing, invisible flag I raise.”**

—from the Prologue



Award-winning poet Paul Dresman taught literature and writing at the University of California at San Diego, at Beijing Teachers' University, and at the University of Oregon, in his hometown of Eugene.

amazon



*“Big, spectacular, and daring in topics confronted.”*

— Donald Wesling,  
Professor Emeritus of  
English Literature,  
UC San Diego



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[www.amazon.com/dp/1736178490](http://www.amazon.com/dp/1736178490)

## 7 Dances, cont'd from p.3

### Dance III Girls Night Out

i check Golden Calf on-line schedule to learn when Annie next dances. Seriously her pole work is fantastic--art by any other name. Monday i park, do my coke ritual, sprinkle my self w/ drops of Lavender Essence, head towards door. i note 4 women in Highlander passing around pen-vape pipe.

Monday's is 5 draft beer. According to Annie this is only day that women 'some times' outnumber men. They come in small groups, sit around center stage, and rarely tip more than "one single dollar". Whoopee! They giggle and hi-5 each other cause they're being naughty. Whoopee...

According to Annie there are 4 female types:

- 1) see above
- 2) wives/partners who are fighting w/ their significant other -- also present. They watch their partners and do more: flirt more, touch me more, cooler attitude, and gratefully, tip more...one-up-woman-ship.
- 3) lesbian date night...they're looking for dancer who turns them both on for private dance for two. Often one wants to watch while I work their partner. I really enjoy this.
- 4) drunk, lonely ladies who want to be a bit wild--make noise & stick dollars in my straps or thighs. They're all about fondling me as much as possible, not respectful and cheap! Like I'm merely a lowly stripper. My least favorites.

Old Tricky song comes on:

I think ahead of you, I think instead of you Will you spend your life with me and stifle me? I know why the caged bird sings, I know why.

Instead of pigtail ties tonight Annie has her hair in twin turquoise barrettes. i remove one & fasten \$20 bill to her left nipple. She reacts...then tee-hees. Annie lightly but definitely slaps me...pushes me back, and slides her hands under, lifting my sweater...

We finish everyday Well, anyway Sixty-nine degrees My head's between your knees You ask what is this? Mind your business

(aside: Exiting intoxicatedly slowly...i drive towards pain-visaged woman singing under streetlight outside of The Golden Calf...singing some hard blues, dressed in flowered kimono with face elaborately painted:

I tried to treat you right  
But you stayed out late each night  
Bring yr love, bring yr sweet love  
Bring it on home ...to...me."

So happens i always keep A harp in my cup holder of my '04 Subaru Outback. And so i idle half way out of Calf parking lot while she let it out, lit it up. W/ Max on harp no less! Blues is where you find'em!

Why can't we love each other. Why hate crimes?.

Who da fuck is Trump shittin? Him is soulless.

Finally Black Bruno comes over:  
"Stella, You need to go  
now. You know our rules. You can't be on The Golden Calf property...

We've been through this before. Just go now.

Why can't I sing here? I just wanna be freeeee.

### Dance IV Grapes Of Laughs

So...my environmentalist lawyer niece Victoria ("Don't call me Vickie.") comes to Eugene for conference at U of O. Victoria is quite a bit holier-than thou, might i say, arrogant. Faultlessly successful. When Evil corporations wanna haul Evil coal through your property...who you gonna call? Niece Victoria. Besides i owe it to my brother.

Hence i took her to dine at King Estate Winery--triple politically, organically cor-rect! 15 country miles sw of Eugene. Century farms, undulating fir mountains, horse people, sheep and cattle, and influx of vineyards.

King Estate is French winery elegante. Sunset seating outside. Victoria is pleased. Hostess at King Estate is elegantly attired but also very "average". Average Annie herself...! She & i gulp & smile together. i believe attorney Victoria notices slight, not-so-subtle shift in her uncle's behaviour...some clue to mystery yet unensnared. As Annie told me later: "Sure, less wages. But respectable to all...like my twin girls...and their friends."

V is among-other-less-desirable traits ...wine snobby. She orders Silver Medal Pinot Noir for \$56. But hey, her MasterCard Gold. Easy drinkin... No, for me Max (my Golden Calf name) this is profound synchronicity. i can only pretend to need men's room so many times. Ultimately give in to awkwardness. "i'll be home before you know it." "No problem, Uncle dear. Don't hurry on my account." i ask Annie to wrap up some luxurious wine...to assuage my guilt, p'r'aps... &/or to encourage my bro's 2nd offspring to enjoy her alone time. Anyway, it got done. Vickie went quickly...

i drink Cabernet, explore King Estate until Annie is officially signed out. Warm rays clinging to ripening grapes...Rows and rows rolling down into Lorane Valley. Finally last busload of Oregon Wine Tour persons stumble into their bus.

Annie: Come Max. I'll show you my secret smoking spot.

Walk back out among these Pinots. Grapes are like stars...for a few minutes we can share them.

Really, Annie is way more than average...way more.. In her present costume, she doesn't tee-hee; but does smile generously. In truth i'm embarrassed.

Synchronicity is all i believe in as truth. But from time to time one doubts one's own truths.

Within myriad rows of Pinot Gris there's small pumphouse with back overhang. And 2" x 12" weathered board between 2 concrete blocks. Perfect.

Max: Annie, may i touch you?  
AA: Of course, Max. But remember i work here...i need to work here.

(cont'd on p.11)

## Foreign, Independent, Classic and Cult Cinema

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## The New Amended Five Food Groups as recomend by the Sturgeon Genral

1. Mc Donald's
2. Burger King
3. Taco Bell
4. Pfizer
5. Johnson & Johnson

When asked about the last two categories, the Sturgeon Genral responded, "Well, I thought of putting Eli Lilly at 4 or 5, but honestly, their commercials are kind of flat."

### Nemo



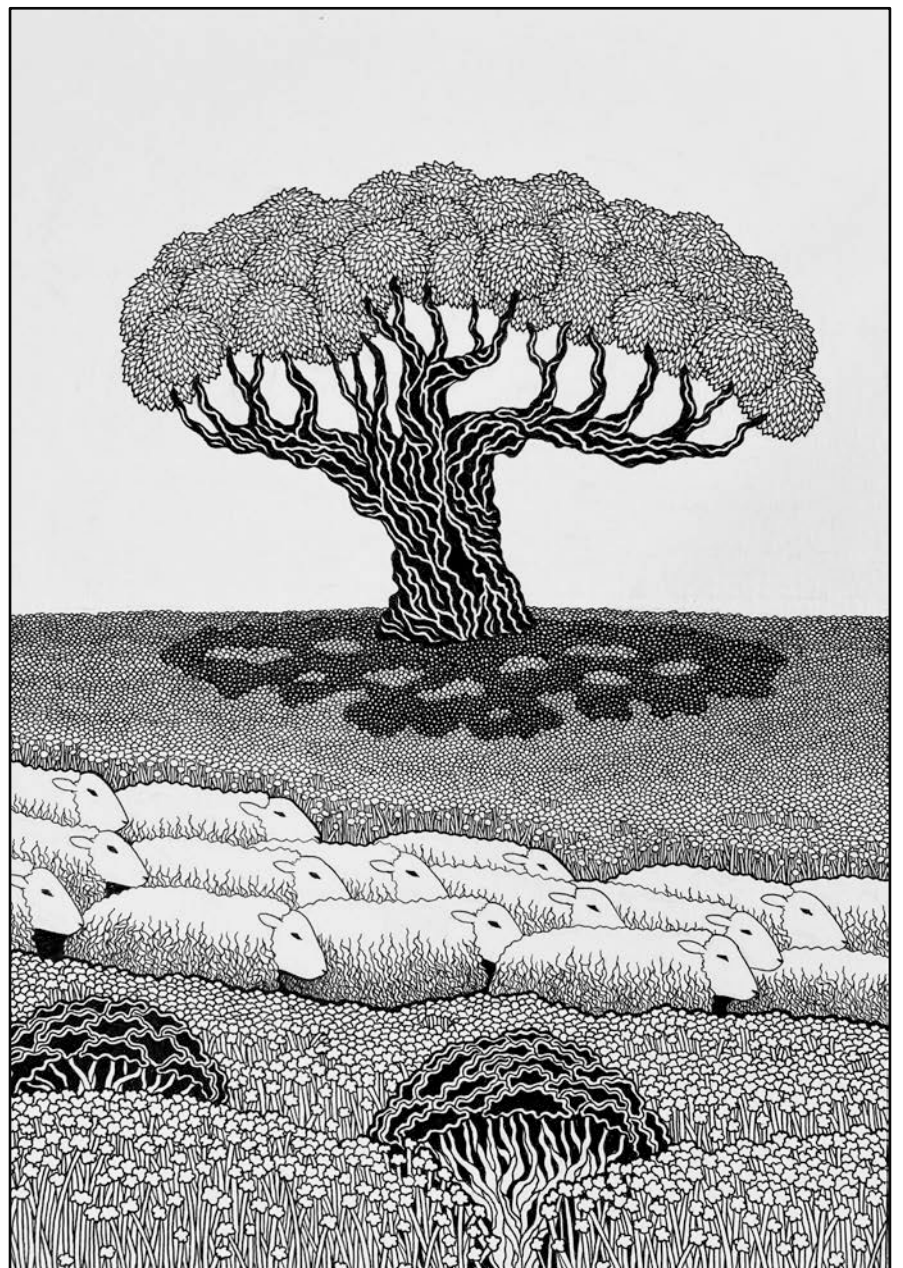
other-handed art by david kotteen



art by stephen swiftfox



art by stephen swiftfox



art by eamon morris

# ◀ NO WAY OUT ▶

JimSmithJimSmithJimSmithJimSmithJimSmithJimSmithJimSmithJimSmi

*The two major candidates have merged into one foreign policy. That's why Dems are supporting Trump and Republicans are supporting Harris. The tricks of the Oligarchs are becoming obvious.*

**T**hey try to make us think the presidential election is like a football or baseball game. Cheer for your favorite team and we'll beat the other side. That's all it takes to get back to our endless dream of happy days.

This time around it's not so easy to distinguish good from evil. A plot was cooked up to discredit everyone's friend, old Joe Biden. Suddenly, he was an incompetent old guy who had no business being our leader. If you are naive, you'll believe there was no Democratic leadership conspiracy. It was just another work day for Vice President Kamala Harris when she was called to be the standard bearer for the free world. Being a selfless individual, she assumed the burden and the hundreds of millions of campaign contributions that went with it.

But wait. The Pretender to the Throne, Donald Trump, was not giving up. He survived a bullet to the ear, and came out stronger. He is a true hero just like Kamala. So now the race is on, as millions of passive voters sit in front of their TVs waiting for the next exciting development. Trump, the former Democrat, and Harris, the daughter of immigrants from India and Jamaica, vie for the prize. No matter who wins, it will be another victory for the greatest country the world has ever seen.

What will the next four years be like?

If Kamala Harris wins, it will be a continuation of the Biden years. There is no record of Harris contributing anything meaningful to Biden's administration in the past four years.

Four more years without change will mean more wars, including with Russia and China; more violence in the homeland, including mass shootings (we can't disturb the gun manufacturers); and more arms to aid the genocide by Israel.

If Donald Trump wins, it will be a return to his previous term in office. This time, he will have a cause, which is wholehearted support for the continuing genocide. He will show liberal U.S. Jews that Republicans are even more

dedicated to being Israel's lap dog, than are the Democrats. The underlying message, no matter how many Palestinians are murdered, is that liberal Jews should desert the Democratic Party for their friends, and Israel's friends, in the Republican Party.

Trump would likely regard China as a major enemy, since its industrial might is depriving his Oligarchic billionaire benefactors of profits. Of course, the Democrats are also a party of the Oligarchs and have similar sentiments.

Some voters may think that by joining Trump's campaign the former Democrats, Robert F. Kennedy, Jr. and Tulsi Gabbard, might moderate the next Trump administration. However, judging from Trump's past behavior, he is quick to ostracize anyone who disagrees with him. A break between Trump and Kennedy/Gabbard might come as early as the choosing of a cabinet, with the liberals wanting a change-oriented cabinet, while Trump is focused on rewarding his cronies. If that happens, RFK Jr. and Tulsi may find themselves out on the street.

Both contenders will pursue a domestic policy designed to shift even more of the nation's wealth to the rich and super-rich. Any suggestions for improvements in the lives of working class people, the largest class in the country, have been noticeably absent from the presidential rhetoric.

Who Duped the American People?

If you haven't guessed already, it was the Oligarchs. Ever since their first appearance in ancient Greece, they have been demanding a strong government with no funny business by pro-democracy types. When leaders got into power, who were genuinely for the people, the Oligarchs screamed that they were tyrants who cared only about themselves. Revolutions and counter-revolutions ensued for hundreds of years.

Today, we have a strong cadre of political Oligarchs because of recent policies that encouraged the growth of billionaires. What do billionaires want? They want to keep their billions, and get even more of them. Either Harris or Trump will serve them well. More wars and more weapons will enrich those Oligarchs who profit from the arms industry. The National Security State, which has become a thing since 2001,

ensures its survival and growth by having constant "enemies" abounding. Harris and Trump are not alone in catering to these Oligarchs. Nearly all of the members of Congress, and most Generals, are also held in thrall by their patronage and power.

What Can Be Done?

At this writing, there is about one month remaining in the melodrama called, "Who's going to win?" Even though it is not a holiday, the Great Presidential Election Day is once again hot on the heels of Halloween, as it should be.

There is nothing in this election cycle that should surprise anyone, considering what we have been through. But a real shocker would be if either major candidate came out for an arms embargo to stop Israel's bloodthirsty rampage against its neighbors.

That is exactly the subject of a recent poll by the Arab American Institute (AAI). The online poll of 2,505 American voters was held during July 31 and Aug. 1. It showed that Harris' rating could go up by 5 percent if she endorsed an arms embargo, according to the news source, Common Dreams. She would go from 44 percent to 49 percent, likely enough to defeat Trump. The war goes on and the polling results probably haven't changed much.

So what are you going to do, Kamala? Are you going to stop a genocide and win the presidency? Or are you going to continue to supply weapons of mass carnage and lose the presidency to Donald Trump?

That should be an easy decision for most people, but not for Kamala. Does she even care about the people of Gaza? Does she even care about becoming president? Time will tell.

If Donald Trump, or Kamala Harris, stumble into the Oval Office while still upholding genocide, our response should be swift and long lasting. We have to organize. We have to educate our neighbors and friends to understand that the Oligarchs and their loyal servants are marching us closer and closer to World War 3, the last war of our species.

We have to organize an unbreakable alliance of all the working class and the poor, if we are ever to walk into that Age of Abundance that awaits us just a few years down the line. 🚲🚲🚲

## Flying Free

According to my critics,  
I must write poems about  
human warmth and compassion.

I, on the other hand,  
feel a need to write  
about sex and disillusionment,  
free falling from an airplane  
with no back-up parachute.

Flying free  
like a mosquito across a lake.

Flying free, letting go  
of a life line on a rubber raft.

Flying free, letting  
a once closed mind devour curiosity.

According to my critics,  
I must poeticize  
about small stuff,  
insignificant to others.

I think that I must reel and roll  
from a high perch above the delta.

I must come up for air,  
and with the experience of the depths,  
face the wind,  
sand cutting my cheeks,  
just to know what  
deprivation is all about

**Bill Gunn**

## Heals On Its Own

Tremors of old age and anger  
now course through my veins  
hounds running on the steppes.

Surgeons, like totalitarian dictators  
scream at you in a new language,  
and we're off like a favored horse  
lunging forward to  
a coveted triple crown.

Here in reality,  
the colorectal surgeon  
pronounces his well rehearsed  
bad news.

"We have to do it again,"  
which translates to  
cutting me open in the same scar,  
leaving a wide open wound  
to heal on its own.

To cut a muscle so deeply  
has to have consequences.  
With bright blood running free,  
I am reminded of life and death  
and the drudgeries in between.

I don't respond  
to mediocre terror.  
A person not only has to  
experience a near death moment,  
but they also have to feel like shit,  
otherwise, it is  
a scratch on their forearm.

It is living a nightmare,  
and at four A.M.  
I wake up, ready for a fight.

**Bill Gunn**

## Scratches

The scratches on my forearms  
look as though I have been  
in a knife fight  
and I barely made it.

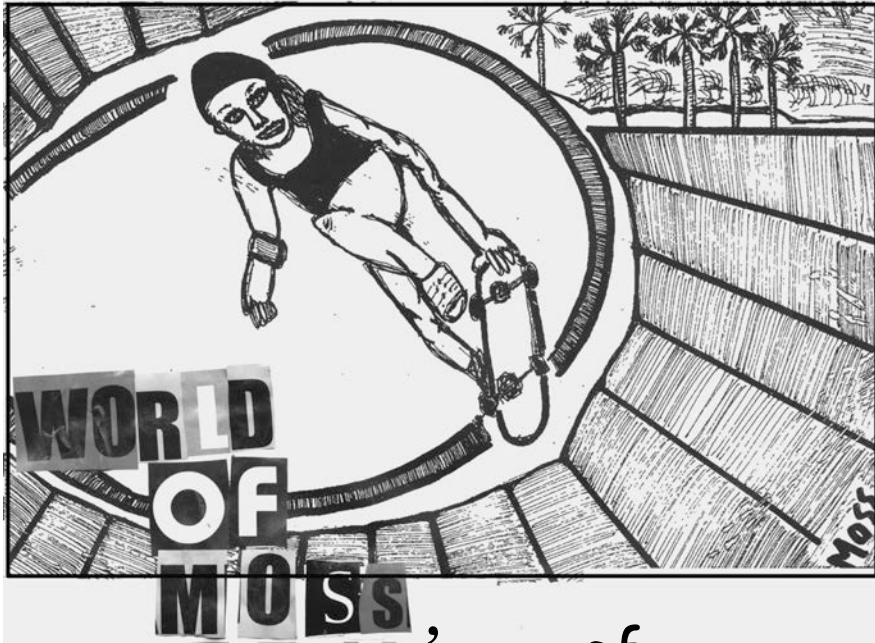
These scratches,  
red and swollen  
represent some type of work  
I took on that fought back.

These scratches  
similar to errant tattoos  
that were bad from the start.

**Bill Gunn**



"Our Lady of the Nazi Bunker," Soulac-sur-Mer, France. Artist unknown. Photo by don.



cf.,

## Ornithology: A Rift

The visionaries dreamed sending rockets through the shoulder of Orion, a whirlwind of titanium to hit the Kremlin. Huddled under school desks in the nuclear pretext—we were kids at the vortex of binding energy—scrapple from the apple. Endless scroll print-outs from the computers of exit velocities and re-entry equations—the prose of the trans-Siberian express. Death ships, cartoon strips, spontaneous bop prosody inside a glass case in a museum of artifacts, a poem on a pedestal—  
“Run Over by an Inter Continental.”  
Suddenly, it was spacecraft and telemetry, a moment when the soul arose out of the mere body, fleeing earth and all its bonds, liberated from gravity and every one of its straps—  
Transcendentalism once more!  
All of it captured by cameras with mad camera disease. Cameras on cameras (in case cameras deviate), spy planes, satellite imagery—the barely disguised desire to play God. There’s disease in a healthy body, radiated rain on a sunny day. It’s falling in a colossal payback on our flattops, boys in love with football, shotguns and Marines, talking in tongues about God and Communism swearing allegiance, pledging my love for thee. Some whispered further confessions before going back to reconsider fast fish, loose fish, and fissures of men broken-down, deranged with heat and friction by re-entry equations in the night kitchen. Factors of integrity grip the imagination. Congress of birds—so many places to run, so few to hide from what flies overhead somewhere in the blue, out of the blue. “You’ll pay for it, won’t you?”

Paul Dresman

## Waves Are Ghosts of Storms Across the Ocean

From the hills of Montezuma to the shores of San Clemente I was in the surf at Church, listening to long range artillery—  
Marines on maneuvers in the hills of Camp Pendleton preparing for the next one—  
distant thunder—a roar in a shell—  
jarheads headed for hell—  
poor kids, just my age when I rode waves.

Paul Dresman

Photo: “Napalm girl” (detail), Trang Bang, Vietnam, June 8, 1972  
Pulitzer Prize-winning photograph by Nick Ut, Associated Press  
Napalm girl was a real, living human. She had a name: Phan Thi Kim Phuc  
More than 50 years later, we’re still killing, maiming, and abandoning children somewhere in the world. Why is that?

## 7 Dances, cont'd from p.7

Max: What would you advise?

Annie: (meditatively): I'll put several of these ripening

grapes in various places...and you, Mr. Max, remove them to yr own satisfaction. Tee-hee.

### Dance V Interview Sorta

i decide to write this story. Much meaty material, vaguely taboo, and certainly curious to them who don't enter such establishments as The Golden Calf. You really ought to. 30 minutes w/ Average Annie and you'll know why.

(These first two questions were random. Later i got serious...and clearer.)

Me: Ok, Annie, what's most dollars come yr way in one night...of strippin', sippin' & private escapades?

AA: Last September one night in Vegas I pulled in

\$3260...strictly dancing...mostly (this guy pulled out

10 Franklins, saying: "What can I get for this?")

People need to spend beaucoup bucks on their Vegas

experience. But on a normal weekend at the Palomino

like 4 thou for two 7-hour shifts. In Eugene naked is

normal; not so in Vegas. In many ways Eugene is ahead of the sex curve.

Me: What's yr fav in terms of sex positions...please?

AA: (tee-hee-ing ) Funny story that... we call it here--

The Ethi-Straddle. You see, Max, 2, maybe 2 ½ years

ago The Golden Calf hired Ethiopian rasta lady dancer

stage name Myrrha. She knew stuff...one sexy, savvy la-

dee. After slow Sunday, 6 of us, smoking weed on back deck

swapping sex stories. It's funny how innocent some

dancers are. And segued into best and worst positions

for doing IT. Myrrha explained that her mother had

showed Myrrha and 2 sisters "sex asanas" after puberty.

One was called "The Camel Saddle". But we renamed it:

The Ethi-Straddle. Really Max, I like all positions as

long as my partner aint being mean...hurting me! As my

main man Willie Dixon sings: "I'm built for comfort..I

aint built for speed."

Here's what i understood The Ethi-Straddle to be: man is lying on back...

erect. female ('spose?) climbs atop facing footward; lifts man's leg over

her head as she bends it forward towards his chin. She employs leg like bendy rudder.

Unfortunately, i've yet to try. i'd hafta to be maximumly long and hard...and

w/ muy simpatica amiga. Arriba! Arriba!

Arriba!

### Dance VI Stripper Curiosities

i thought 10 things to consider was ample for Average Annie to answer. She has been over-the-top generous with me. To be fair to Max, he has placed many-a-twenty in Annie's lap.

Here's what i printed out for Annie to respond to:

what is curious to me about strippers?

1) bleeding & dancing  
2) shaving & waxing, etc.  
3) how far is too far--\$20 is \$20. what about \$100?.

4) does anyone care what you do... microphones or videos

5) costumes...who are you?..

6) do you ask other girls for feed back?

7) pole work takes upper body strength...what's yr diet

like? work out regime?

8) what do you do when they get too 'handy'?

9) do guys some times ejaculate?... on you ever?

10) being on center stage in front of 15 people--what's

that like? is it different w/ private dance?

### Dance VII & Yer Out

i'm home alone in cozy, forest dwelling. "No sleep for weary & wicked" my deceased mother often said (speaking of herself i believe). This penchant i inherited: wake up, wander & worry. Why do i do this so frequently when my life is so care free?!

1:00 am...not my usual Golden Calf visiting hours. But i just checked...and Average Annie is dancing til 2. i don my black rayon pants i like for dancing...and being danced. i remember our gambol between rows of grapes. She actually does like me... so i pour myself several drams of Glenmorangie for 6 mile drive to Eugene...+ 4 small lines and head Golden Calfwards.

Bruno gives me 17 \$1 bills; i say, "How's yr night goin, Bruno?" "Good, Good."

i get small glass of Stoli's w/ 2 ice cubes...look for Annie who is about to begin her 2nd dance on center stage.

There's very large tv screen in background of Annie's performance. She wraps her legs around drunk, gawking woman's neck, drawing her onto stage, crab-crawling backwards. Behind her i'm watching Babe Ruth scarfing down hotdog, talking w/ Lou Gehrig...then pointing & clobbering baseball...going...going...gone!

Annie gathers her numerous ones from around stage & we go upstairs, past video poker games, into private dance area. i give her \$60. (i keep my clothes on entire time.)...but show me what The Ethi-Straddle is like, please."

And w/ minimal restraint and many sympathetic adjustments, Annie led me step by step.

...then what happened..?

...Annie digs her fingernails into my thigh...riding, riding, riding (i'm happily in my black rayon pants). i'm telling you shyly...yes, old man ejaculation transpires. After great deal of huffing & puffing & satisfyingly too loud groans Annie found her oasis... All is well...except...

... Bruno comes clomp, clomp, clomping in...Annie dismounts and --while i--blushing in ultra-violet light-- search for my shoes, cell phone & watery Stoli.



(cont'd on p.12)

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art by james otter

## HOW I LOST THE ABILITY TO SPEAK

PETER FENTON

I swear what I'm about to tell you really happened, even though I was alone at the time, one hundred and fifty feet above the forest floor. Holding on for dear life to a massive Douglas fir.

I was a tree-sitter. You know, the kind of crazy person who climbs a big tree and stays put in order to protect the old-growth forest. Crazy, at least in the eyes of a general public that thinks clinging to the branches of an immense fir in order to save it is insane.

I'd never considered tree-sitting until I lost my publishing job in San Francisco. Living costs there are, of course, sky-high. A deal-breaker when you're unemployed. So when I read about a protest at a proposed logging site (which I'm not going to identify, for reasons you'll soon understand), I figured, "What the hell." It was a good excuse to escape a hectic town I could no longer afford anyway.

I left all my possessions with a friend. Half a day later, I was in a world of giant trees and happy people. The dramatic change was a kind of high—a hit of Mother Nature's Ecstasy, you might say. Before I knew it, I was being roped up to a platform one hundred fifty feet high in the branches of a grand, distinguished fir.

The protestor I was replacing greeted me with glazed eyes and a beatific grin. But a shiver went through me when she tried to speak and only spittle emerged.

Little did I know I'd soon be struck dumb, too.

My first hours alone in the canopy were a wonder of soft breezes and swaying limbs. I had never before felt so serene. But as twilight fell and the stars came out, I got paranoid. Crippled with stress, I'd roll off my tiny wooden platform when I fell asleep. Only after roping myself against the massive trunk in a perpetual hug was I able to relax and close my eyes.

Two hours later, I awoke with a start. The tree's limbs groaned. The wind had picked up, I thought. Thank god I'd tied myself down.

Then I screamed. The disturbance was actually a phosphorescent stream swiftly traveling up the tree, over my body and into the night sky. I was petrified. I wanted down. But I was teetering one hundred and fifty feet above the forest floor, with no help from below until first light arrived. I had to gut this out on my own.

I took a deep breath only to be startled again. The phosphorescent stream was composed of recognizable beings—rabbits, bears, owls, even insects! Thousands upon thousands of them were shooting past me to the treetop and the twinkling infinity above.

Slowly, imperceptibly, terror turned to wonder. I started to blubber and cry. Yes! I had been granted a privilege few before me had ever experienced. A lucky few, like the tree-sitter I'd replaced—the young woman who'd been rendered speechless by the magnificence she'd beheld.

I was being overwhelmed by the spirits of deceased forest creatures, heading skywards to their Next Destination. I had entered the bloodstream of the life cycle itself.

I now stock shelves in a grocery store in a small Oregon town. Don't talk (can't really). Smile a lot. My coworkers call me The Mute. But I don't mind. My only ambition is to get myself together enough so I can return to the Enchanted Forest.

Because its towering pines offer deceased wild animals' safe passage to the world beyond ours, where they cavort to their hearts' content, free from the encroachment of man.

Cut down the old growth and we slam the door on their highway to the Other Side. ☺☺☺

## 7 Dances, cont'd from p.11

Big Bad Bruno is stirred up, stammering & being frustratedly self-contained. Me and Annie hustle. Bruno: You sir, are being escorted out of The Golden Calf

by me, Bruno...forever. Don't never come back!  
As i am being herded out exit door. I hear:

You go too far Average Annie.  
Charlie wants to see  
you NOW in her office. She is pissed!

### Post Script

i never return to The Golden Calf--  
better for it, no doubt.  
Never speak to Annie again. Never  
return to King Estate.  
i'll hafta take my niece elsewhere--tho  
i hope she don't come. See Gretchen  
Stimmt-Deskin rarely.

In response to my 10 points of inquiry  
Annie wrote and i received following  
week in my rusty, rustic mailbox...  
these words of stripper wisdom:

Dear Max,  
It's all about MAINTAINENCE.  
Spending dollars on yourself will bring  
more dollars home. Be as pretty, as  
seductive, as beautiful as you can  
possibly be...from toes to ears. My  
personal rule of thumb:

Cleanliness Is Next To  
Goddessliness

Shave it, wax it, pluck it, body sprays,  
ultra clean ass. We're selling fantasy  
here. We aint farmers.

Be well,  
Average Annie

☺☺☺

## Brockengespenst Stephen Slater

I was walking along a street in a residential area of town one evening in October. The sun had already set and twilight was palpably turning to dark. An upper-storey window in a house about a block away caught my attention. It appeared to be illuminated from within by an electric light, yet something about the quality of the light seemed odd: it was not the sort of light one sees in a house. As I continued walking, I noticed a gray shape moving in the window, like a silhouette of a person moving either toward me or away from me. But when I moved to the left or right, the figure in the window simultaneously did the same, and if I moved too far in either direction the figure disappeared altogether. Realizing that I was seeing my own shadow, I was thus able to center the shadow in the window and continue walking toward it. But what is this alignment of oneself with one's shadow? ☺☺☺