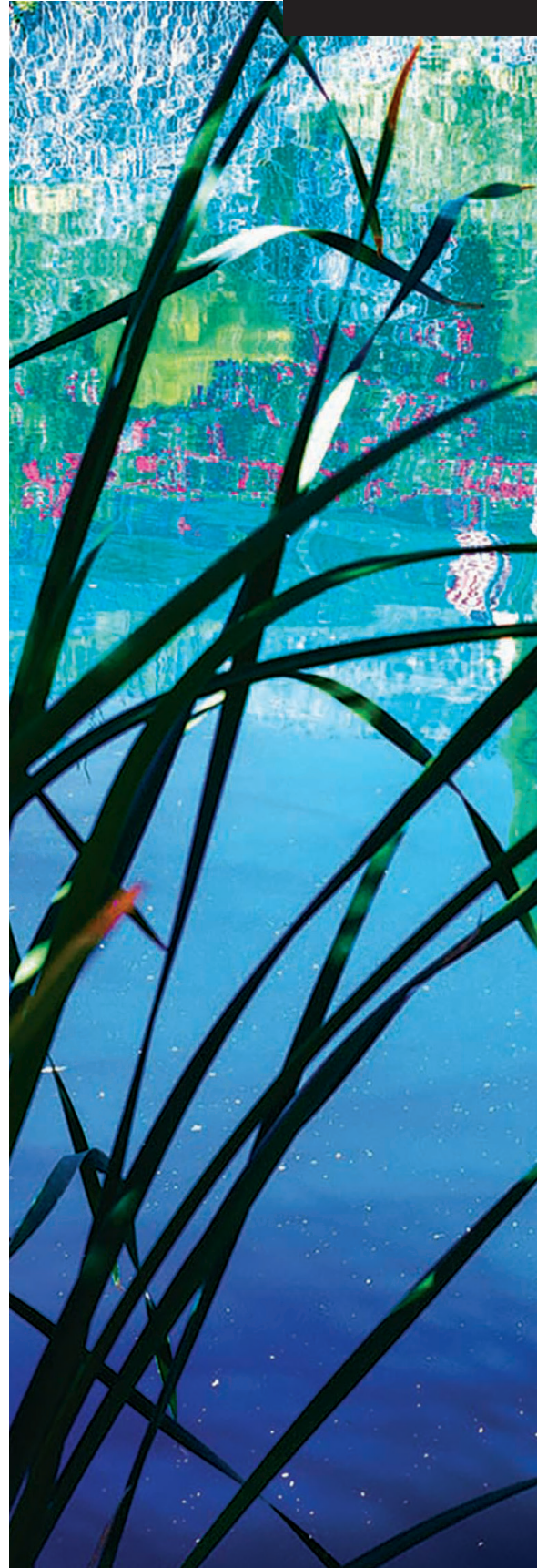


CABABI IS A TOHONO O'ODHAM TERM
THAT MEANS "HIDDEN SPRINGS."



PimaCommunityCollege



CABABI

ART AND LITERARY MAGAZINE

2019/2020

POETRY
PROSE
VISUAL ART

ISSUE 6





Blue Paradise
Digital Photograph

Nina Nardolillo

ABOUT THE COVER

Blue Paradise is a moment in time where nature's beauty, and the creations of man are brought together to portray an image of life and tranquility. Distorted reflections in the water of the blue sky, distant buildings, and landscape are enchanting, as they allow you to be transported into another world which is both surrealistic and magical: a single moment in time where our minds can wonder and dream of a different dimension.

SPECIAL THANKS

Dr. Kenneth Chavez and Dolores Duran-Cerda for funding and overseeing this project.

April Burge for her expertise and guidance.

And to Cynthia Drumond for working quickly and tirelessly to produce a publication that is also a stunningly beautiful work of art.

IN MEMORIAM & DEDICATION

This year the Pima community lost Dorothy J. Donovan, IT Advanced Analyst; Walter Henderson, Counselor; and Tessy L. Laporte, Fiscal Analyst.

We honor their memory here.

**CELEBRATING THE MANY TALENTS
OF THE FACULTY AND STAFF OF
PIMA COMMUNITY COLLEGE**

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Look for Fall 2020 submission updates,
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Visit <https://www.pima.edu/cababi>

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LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

A striving for human connection inhabits the artwork, poems, stories, and essays in this issue of *Cababi*.

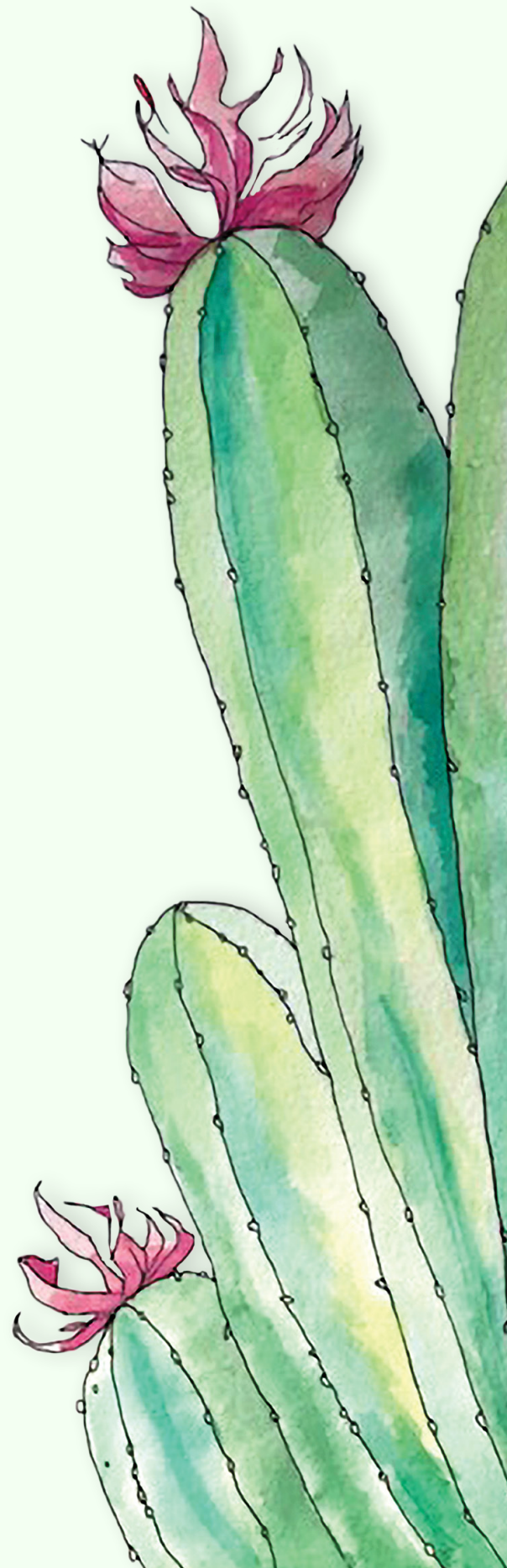
“We are not separate in this life/We are in it together,” writes Sarah Jansen in her poem “If Suffering is an Illusion.”

How prescient this statement seems now. Since the global pandemic erupted this March, we have entered the strange paradox of “social distancing.” Classes are conducted online and the college’s buildings are shuttered.

Yet while we keep our bodies distant, we offer each other companionship and compassion. Fees were waived, extensions granted, and sick leave increased. We all helped each other to move our courses online.

I hope that you will pore over this year’s creative expressions and find in them kinship and solace during this difficult time. I hope that this intimate gift of artistic exchange will help us know each other better. And I hope that when we meet again in person, we will share joy and gratitude for an opportunity we once took for granted.

—Molly McCloy



Desert Cactus in Pink
Watercolor & Ink
Emily Jacobson

by Sarah Jansen

PICTURING A SAGUARO



A pair of crows
swoop over you
wings weighty
beating the wind
leaving you behind
for a little while.

You are so tall
my four-armed friend
with long thorns for fingers
catching purple flowers and spiders' webs.

I caress the creases of your flesh
the parts of you that are still alive
above the brown bark at your base
beneath the high holes in your upper body
that house Gila Woodpeckers
who hang around you always
vocalizing your silent nature
for all the world to hear.

I remember when, last spring,
you sprouted a fat white flower
waxy and otherworldly
I held a picture of it in my mind
believing it to be your gift to me
and only me
as I marched up the stairs to my classroom
where my students waited indoors
staring at screens, not noticing me
as I entered
and told them all about you
not expecting the quiet student
who sits by the door
to smile radiantly and hold up her phone
for everyone to see
a perfect photograph of your flower.

She'd been watching you all along.

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Dreaming of Horses
Digital Photography

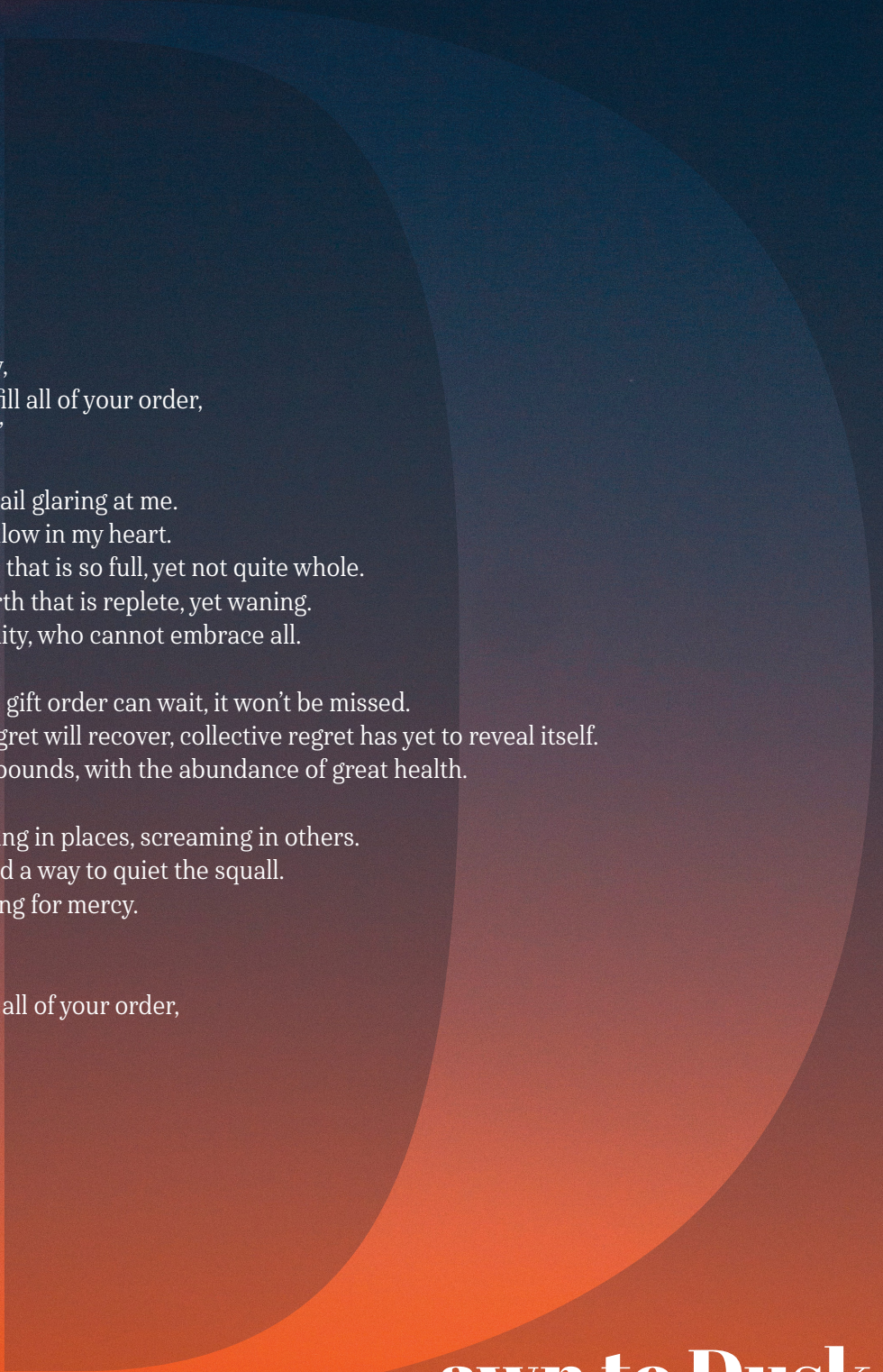
Jennifer Wiley

A Storm is Coming
Travis Ardle



Moonrise
Silvia Kolchens





“We’re sorry,
we can’t fulfill all of your order,
at this time.”

Says the email glaring at me.
Says the hollow in my heart.
Says the life that is so full, yet not quite whole.
Says the earth that is replete, yet waning.
Says humanity, who cannot embrace all.

The unfilled gift order can wait, it won’t be missed.
Personal regret will recover, collective regret has yet to reveal itself.
Gratitude abounds, with the abundance of great health.

Earth is crying in places, screaming in others.
We must find a way to quiet the squall.
Still searching for mercy.

I am sorry,
I can’t fulfill all of your order,
at this time.

awn to Dusk

by Diane Miller



Waiting to Live

by Diane Miller

—Nonfiction



“Can I pet your dog?” On the occasions when a child asks this question on the morning walk, the dog obliges. He’s always a bit miffed when the smells of the day are on hold; this I can tell by his sigh, but then he leans into the gentle strokes and coo of a young voice. This Sunday morning, three young voices come over to feel the softness. As with most encounters, a few strokes, a few smiles, a quick thank you and the feet run back to the neighborhood playground. The girl left immediately to resume play; the oldest child, if even eight, was the one clearly responsible for the oversight of the trio’s excursion. He went back to perch on his bike, ensuring proximity to the youngest boy.

The youngest, still in his pajamas with disheveled hair, continues to pet the dog. His grimy face, still wearing breakfast in a combination of dark swirls, matches the brown of his large eyes. He needs to eat more, with a large head posted on his alien-thin body. Based on his continuing questions, I suspect his stature has more to do with his inquisitive nature and his search of the extraordinary. Probably a creature with never-ending queries; I hope he will not be silenced or disregarded. His second question seemed benign, “Where do you live?”

Pointing in the direction of the nearest neighborhood straddling the grassy corridor, I indicate, “Over there.”

Big brother sat attentively as our conversation unfolded. A few more strokes and the third question, “What color is your house?” Before I could answer,

big brother inserted, “He asks everyone that.” My disappointment rose to hear the question was posed to many. At first, because I hoped this child’s conversation with me was just ours. But, then dismay hit me as I had to respond, “Tan ... and brown.”

You see, every home in this multi-neighborhood, planned community we share is some shade of tan and brown. The most prominent bursts being the red-orange tinge of a clay tile roof or bright green, leaf-shaped flags on the dark brown mailboxes. The latter, a feature that harkens to decades past when mail was not such a security concern.

With this last question from the milk-encrusted mouth, inquiring about where I live, he searches for something unique in his small world. Is it possible he just wanted to emblaze the color of my home in his mind, so he could hope to come by and pet the dog again, as children say they will? I’m not confident that’s what he was looking for and I doubt he will be satisfied with the tan and brown things in his life.

There is contentment in a monochrome physical space. Everything of similar shades to make us feel like we belong to the familiar. The creatures of our environment are the notable change from one day to the next. Domesticates, and the wide-eyed expectant child, create the texture. Are there irrevocable costs to being in this place? It’s not a bad place. Yet, we search for more. I hope my youngest encounter finds what he is looking for.



Mermaid Magic
Acrylic on Canvas

Veronica Willis

Reflection, Dirty Mirror

by Alexis Kopkowski

Peter Pan was able to lose his shadow so she tried to shed her skin
 An assorted topography of hate, self-loathing, scars, blemishes, beauty, and acceptance
 Straps of sinew clinging to achilles and clavicles
 Painted sienna dotting areas both taught and otherwise
 Supplier of strength and summer anxiety
 and everyday anxiety
 Forever in dress rehearsal in the teal shirt and braids singing Simon & Garfunkel but idolizing
 Nirvana
 Vessel for two, what else should I be?
 Absorber of her and her and him and him and them and all the rest
 Too many stupid tattoos on display, collected from [mis]adventures
 Too old to fly to Neverland, too stuck to leave town on her own, just old enough for contempt
 and the calm that comes with the acknowledgment of the inevitable.

the train of life

by Nina Nardolillo

Sometimes I start to dream,
and I imagine that my life is like a train.
It runs to infinity...
I am in the train, sitting next to a window
and I am observing the fast changes of landscapes.

Sometimes I recognize
human forms
but the train moves so quickly
and I don't have enough time to see faces clearly
except when the train is slowing down.
At each stop, different people get in.
I watch them closely
and sometimes conversations begin.
Later the passengers exit the train
and arrive at their destination.

I see many new people boarding the train
and the train continues going on in its infinite way.
Sometimes there are special people who enter
and share beautiful and unforgettable moments with me.
Unfortunately, at any moment they can get off the train
and continue on their own journey.
But they will forever remain in my heart.

Sometimes I think I am already halfway through
but I do not comprehend what my purpose in life is.
The train continues to run to infinity-
crossing valleys, fields, mountains, rivers,
cities, villages, deserts, and forests.

When I get tired of looking through the window
I close my eyes and imagine
that I am like a light feather soaring in the air
with a light breeze that carries me
away in an unknown direction...





Herding Sheep
Oil Paste

Desert Ehrhart



Ranch Sunset
Digital Photography
Jennifer Willey

APOCALYPTIC BREATHING

by Sandra Shattuck

one world
clogs my airway
each time I inhale

the dissected yellow stomach
of an albatross chick
reveals
plastic bottle caps
part of a syringe, a toy soldier

the tattooed skin
of someone's five-year-old son
discloses
the artistry of barbed wire
marking borders

the blasted leg
of a soldier
exposes
the ambition of missiles
martyred limb, patriotic prosthesis

dead oceans
rigorous mathematics of migration
gluttony of war
and still we grow
quadrupled in 60 years
almost 8 billion of us now
on a planet meant to sustain
half that many

in one world
one throat

I breathe death
a pebbled piece of sin
too far from any gods
or new language
imagining us beyond war
and waste

words rattle
my airway thins
soon this tongue
detonates into inferno

my voice burns to ash
an orphaned pile near my left tonsil
one willowed breath scatters
cinder to its rightful vacuum

if I could end
with hope
I would

wrap myself
in a hope cape

hook my feet to the stars
and dream wrong side up

claim
my ounce of batty vision

one brook-clear
heart-strung
conversation with a neighbor
unplanned unasked for
a gift
dispels cataclysm
arrests apocalyptic breathing
jumpstarts one inhale

then the next



Hand Study
Drawing with Charcoal

Christine Conners



a proposal

by Maureen Burns

Your steps are light, calculated, avoiding
creaks in the old wood floor. You hold
your breath and gently close the door.
I feel your eyes travel down my form
from the matted hair to the fuzzy
gray robe and Christmas socks.

Anxiety is written on your brow.
I feel your dark eyes fixed
on my face, waiting
for acknowledgment, but
fear makes me feign sleep,
while my eyes struggle to open.
An unpredictable Deja vu
wraps around me close to you.
The voice inside says, it is time
to stop pretending.

Your hair is still damp, I imagine
the just washed smell, your
warm color, like the sunset
coming through my window.
I expect you to ask after my health,
feel my brow, pull a blanket over my feet.
But your eyes lock onto mine.
I see your tears as you perch
on the edge of the old oak bed.



Untitled
18"x24" in
Acrylic on Paper

Victor Navarro

Too afraid to speak, my limp hands
comb through tangled hair,
while my lips attempt to smile,
I didn't know you as well then.
I didn't know, when you tightly
shut your eyes to speak, it is
to let the words appear
from somewhere deep inside.
As if the truth of you
must be conjured.

I watch you take a slow, deep
breath, while your hand delves
first in one pocket and then another.
I pray that you will make this quick and painless.
For I suppose this day is as good
as another to have my heart broken—again.
I close my eyes to summon
a special icon to keep me strong—
just long enough—until you go.
I feel you take my hand in both of yours.
I feel your sigh more than hear it.
I feel the ring slide over my finger.

I know it's a perfect fit.

FINDING ME

by Maureen Burns

You wouldn't look for me here.
You need the tension of the crowd
the commingling of dialects
and street musicians
and cell phones.
All I want to hear
is a raven's cry
or the chitchat of the tanager.

You are grounded by the energy
conducted
by cars
and buses
and trains.
Emotion and conflict
excite you.

The road I am on
goes to nowhere
as far as you are concerned.
I travel through the desert
stopping only to see
the Cooper's hawk circle
or a kestrel dive for prey.

You are complete in the crowd
within the rhythm
and bass
of the city streets,
while I refuse to speak aloud
to disturb the surrender
of my senses
to the earth
beneath me.

The city in you
held me prisoner
until I lost
my sense of direction
my ability to hear
the desire to smell.

Nightfall approaches
and I long
to leap like the antelope
yelp like the coati
and cry like a child.
I will lie under the stars
watch the moon travel
and open my soul
to the place
where you
will never find me.



Mother and Daughter
Digital Photography

Jennifer Wiley

A Mindset of Polarity
36" x 36" in
Oil on Panel

Mano Sotelo



Contemplating Fear: Is it Hope or Faith That You Lack?
8" x 10" in
Oil on Panel

Mano Sotelo



The Soul of Africa
Digital Photography

Nina Nardolillo



ALL THAT WE CAN BE

by Anja Leigh

*"... and whatever they keep trying to achieve is
but wind!" (Epic of Gilgamesh)*

Broken Boy
lay his cherub cheek wounded
against dry Umma Lagash ...
blood bathes parched soil;
life leaks for all of us.

Five thousand years of battle
throb beneath his ear.
The people of Uruk, America, lament.

Eyes roll back to
[side] walks, home
meandering pathways torn with
half-built houses and
unborn babies waiting mothers
mourning, wives craving
[arms] enfolding coffins,
Broken Boy
one more time

[Time] is running ...
bullet-memories
caress [oh] the
sand, time—released—

Back home in [mid] America
the mantle clock chimes,
hip hop be bop blares,
children sway on backyard swings,
water sprinklers cool the lawns.

Gilgamesh eats the garden
of Eden one toe at a time.



The Fox
Drawing Using Pencil

Himelda Davidson

BLUE WATERS AND REGRET

by Alexis Kopkowski

I found peace somewhere on a deck between the red sand and lone rock
where the early morning slight chill would melt away with cocoa and the fluffiest layer of
marshmallows
where the promise of the lake was almost always too much for the kids and the cousins
who COULD NOT WAIT
and neither would time unfortunately
the deck was replaced
children were added but the patriarch was gone and so was the frequency of the escape to
36.9147° N, 111.4558° W
the peace turned to worry and a broken heart
there would just not be enough trips taken in this lifetime



Kekaha

by Theresa Stanley

Sand so soft it kisses your foot.
You dig in.
Its coolness envelopes your feet.

Surf mist fills the air.
Fresh . . . moist.
Breathing comes easy. Calming.

Surf is pounding, thundering!
Kekaha.
Summer on the south shore.

Boats in the distance.
Cruises, tours headed for Na Pali.
Fishermen looking for today's catch.

High tide waves break higher.
Peeking over the sand.
A little here and more down there.

Thunderous surf crashing on shore.
Pounding, pounding until the shore is gone.
Disappearing, disappearing . . . gone.

Beach is quiet, no one comes.
Driftwood scattered where children once played.
Quiet but for the thunderous surf.

Surfers are fewer, only one this morning.
Already gone, now alone on the beach.
Just me, and the thunderous surf.

Surf calms me, yet gives me energy.
Kekaha.
South shore in the summer.



Things Come In Threes

by Sherrie Lynn Stewart

—Nonfiction

Mama Bess always said that things came in threes. I always thought my grandmother was a little silly because she had a funny saying for everything like “Eat black-eyed peas on Sunday, and you’ll have money the rest of the week,” or “Throw a pinch of salt over your left shoulder to get rid of bad luck.” But all the grandkids giggled secretly to each other whenever we heard one of her sayings.

Our grandmother insisted that all of us kids call her Mama Bess because she refused to be called Grandma. Mama Bess had glacier white hair and bright blue eyes accented with peppermint red fingernails and lipstick. She was so short that wooden blocks were screwed to the brake and gas pedal to fit a size 4 shoe, and she sat on a thick, pink pillow in order to see over the dash of her red Ford Falcon. She collected sets of fancy salt and pepper shakers, made the stuffing for the Thanksgiving turkey from her own homemade cornbread, and kept the accounting in the plumbing department at Montgomery Wards. According



to my outspoken grandmother, bad luck, good luck, bills, money, all came in threes. Nobody ever paid much attention to her sayings, especially me, until last week.

On Monday, the handset for the house phone came up missing. An insistent ring led me frantically around the house searching for a way to stop the jangling. It typically sat in a cradle on the kitchen counter. The handset wasn't there. Most times, I tracked down that pesky portable phone by following the ring, but that technique wasn't working this time. I had the girls dig into the black hole under their bed and search the cluttered closets, but no phone appeared. The jangling went on periodically all day with no way to stop it. My checking account balance read \$12.43, so buying a new phone was out of the question. The jangling stopped just about supper time, and I figured that phone had been lost forever.

Tuesday morning the washing machine balked. With three kiddos in my house, laundry was my life. No water spilling into the washer tub threw me into a panic. Placing both hands on the control panel, I attempted psychokenises, considered CPR, then finally came back to my senses. After checking all the normal settings on the three knobs—load size, water temperature, then extra rinse—my fingers rotated the main wash cycle selector knob to numerous positions. The tub jerked into a spin cycle several times as the knob went round, pressed down, then pulled out to engage. My mind whirled with thoughts of hand washing blue jeans and boxers. I had to sit down.

Calculating the age of the washing machine at my kitchen table, my mind churned out a list of possible problems and potential solutions. Sipping coffee in the kitchen, my resolve returned. Lefty loosey. Righty tighty. The spigots leading to the washing

(continued, next page)

Southern Arizona Fall
Ramsey Canyon
Digital Photography

Diane Deskin



The Red Tree
Painting

Nahal Rodieck

machine hoses turned with difficulty, then more easily. Pulling the knob out again created a cascade of water into the heap of towels waiting to be washed. A sharp exhale, along with a brief prayer of thanks to the god of mechanical things, marked the problem resolved—for the moment.

On Wednesday, which happened to be a holiday, the evaporative cooler squealed in protest to the searing summer heat and died. At about 3 a.m., one of my girls tapped my arm. “Come tuck me in. I had a nightmare. Someone was screaming,” she whispered.

Didn’t I already do that ... Who’s screaming? What the hell time was it anyway? Instant anger overwhelmed me from being awakened at a particular point in the sleep cycle. “Okay, I’m coming.” Stumbling down the hall, I gave her a hug, wished her a half-hearted ‘Sweet dreams,’ then headed for the bathroom. Through my sleepy stupor, I realized the cooler was making a weird noise—flappty squeal, flappty squeal, flappty squeal. Aah, that was where that screaming in her nightmare had come from. So, I flipped the pointer

on the cooler controls to ‘Pump Only.’ After the heat drove everyone out of bed the next morning, we went up on the roof to investigate that flappty squeal in the cooler. Turned out that the blower belt, the circular strip of rubber connecting the moter to the pully on the blower fan, was a goner. A frantic call to the local hardware store along with the quick drive over when the clerk told me that the belt only cost \$8.49 and they would be closing early for the holiday, brought a quick fix before the entire household suffered heat stroke. Another quick prayer of thanks to that god of all mechanical things for the hardware store being open on a holiday, the new belt costing less than \$12.43, and the absence of that flappty squeal when I turned the cooler control to ‘Low Cool.’ Disaster three diverted! That’s all folks, right Mama Bess?

About noon on Thursday, one of the kiddos asked for their allowance for the previous week. Each of the three children had chosen from the list of daily chores in order to earn a little spending money. As a child, my chore of taking out the trash and partnering with another sibling each night to wash



Fall. 2018.
Lithograph

Casie Herron

the supper dishes earned me a quarter a week. This technique taught responsibility and a good work ethic. At least that was the lie we told ourselves as parents. In truth, it tormented the parents trying to push lazy summer souls into movement to provide a reason for dolling out two or three dollars. But this time it paid off. My husband found sixty dollars of forgotten money hidden in one of the multiple pockets of his new billfold—the gorgeous purple one he bought for his own birthday gift last month that his color-blind eyes told him was black. We took a ride down to the local convenience store and splurged on vanilla ice cream cones.

On Friday, the mailman brought a check for \$57.32. It paid another installment on the damage a neighbor's son did to the living room window trying to break into our house last summer. Turns out, that neighbor's son had been breaking into houses all over the neighborhood. He roamed the yards in the early morning hours in a drunken stupor. One neighbor caught him stumbling around in his kitchen and beat the crap out of him, then sat on him until the police got there. The judge sent the

drunken intruder to jail, requiring restitution for damages committed against his neighbors' homes. Now, a check came every so often. This installment paid for a new house phone. I affectionately named the new handset Mr. Bo Jangles.

In the Saturday mail, a notice came from our mortgage company that our application for a mortgage modification had been approved. Our house needed some roof work, drywall repair in the splotchy brown stained hallway and bedroom ceilings from that leaky roof, even a replacement for our 1989 model evaporative cooler held together with black rubber bungee straps. It had taken a frustrating year of applying, providing financial information, then more documents and financial records. But the approval finally came through on Saturday.

"Things come in threes." My grandmother's words struck me as very relevant in my life this past week. Suddenly, she became a very intelligent and intuitive person to me, and I printed 'Black-eyed peas' at the top of my grocery list in bold, black letters.

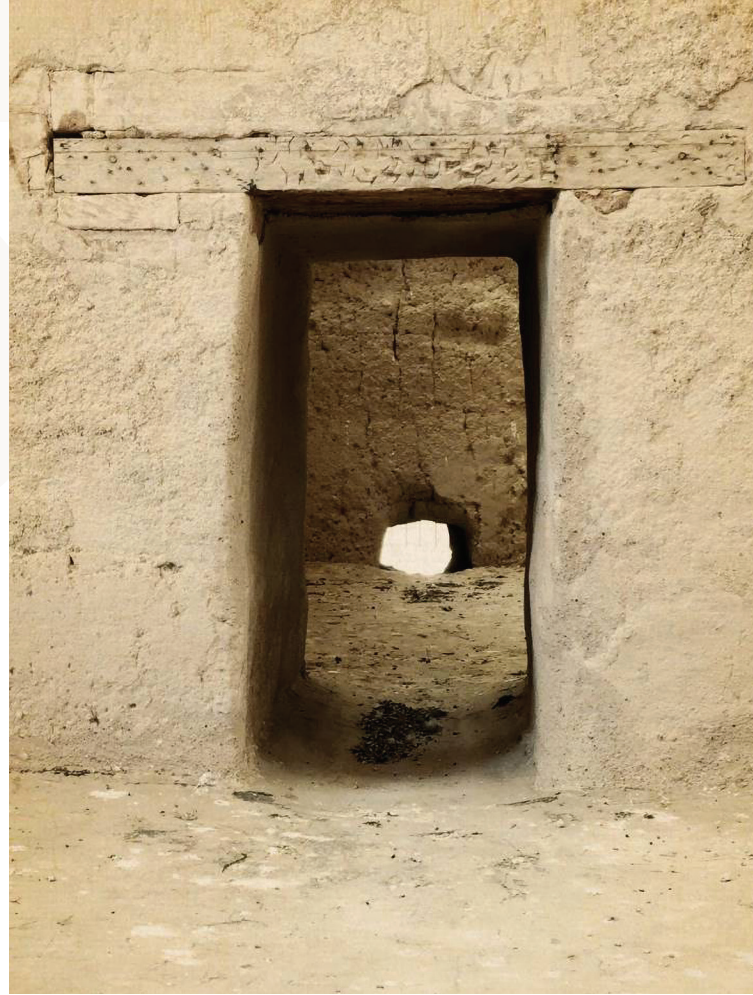
ORPHANS

by Rosanne Couston

Welcome to the Orphan Club.
It's an exclusive membership.
We are the parentless.
The Mom-less.
The Dad-less.
Untethered.
Unfettered.
Unconstrained.
We didn't grow up as orphans in a Charles Dickens novel.
We weren't abandoned on someone's doorstep
or left in a basket with kindly nuns at the church.
We weren't raised in an orphanage
or some place that was home-like but still made you home-less.
We were raised in homes.
In a family.
We are adult orphans.
Grownups.
Big people.
Brave people.
Orphaned by elderly parents who have taken their turn at eternity.
Frail elders.
Wise elders
Who spent a lot of time on this earth, enough time to see us reach the age of reason.
They taught us.
Tempered us.
Taunted us.
Treated us.
They parented and grand-parented.
Some even great-grand-parented.
Prepared us to start school.
Prepared us to cross the street alone.
Prodged us to finish our homework.
Persuaded us to try.
Drove us to cheer-leading practice, band practice, soccer practice.

WINS

Practiced perfecting.
Warned us not to stay out too late.
Listened to the heartbreak.
Gave us away to life partners.
Held babies and walked toddlers with life-hardened hands.
Felt endless kisses on wrinkled cheeks.
Absorbed the passing years on their shoulders like a comfortable blanket.
Until they became delicate.
Breakable.
Feisty but fragile.
Sometimes housebound.
Chair bound.
Bedbound.
We nursed them.
Nurtured them.
Nourished them.
Still needed them.
And then
We let them go.
We gave them to the heavens.
To the earth.
To the universe.
So who are we now?
Whose children are we?
Where do we belong?
How do people know us if we can't say "I'm her daughter" or "He was my father."
We aren't tied to them in the land of the living any more.
We're adrift.
Unanchored.
Unmoored.
And so, we remember them.
Regard them.



Casa Grande Ruins
Coolidge, AZ - 2017
Photography

Kris Swank

Revere them.
We keep their memories close.
We see them in each other's eyes
And in the faces of our children.
We feel grateful for the time they were here
And curse that they weren't here longer.
We create new families.
Eventually we all become the elders.
And we hope those families care for us
And nurse us.
And nurture us.
And nourish us.
Still need us.
And then
Let us go.
Sooner or later, everyone belongs to this club.



Roller Derby Rave Up

by Robert Matte Jr.
—Fiction

Division 1 Power Five NCAA football or Roller Derby? The ladies on skates win out this night. I could have gone to the big-time football game (I have season tickets) but decided, that as a leisure activity, I would be seduced by the siren song of my first roller derby.

This is family friendly. The venue is a nondescript warehouse building among many in an out of the way business park. The wafting aroma of old sweat socks permeates the interior. The entry way features a large team picture where all the women are tricked out as zombies. Inside, the “flat track” is outlined with yellow tape on a faded green concrete floor. Battered folding chairs provide “close to the rink” seating for those willing to plop down a few bucks to watch the home team, ladies of the Vice Squad, take on The Surly Gurlies, from up the road a hundred miles. The skaters are decked out in a helmet, wrist guards, elbow pads, knee pads, and mouth guards. Each skater sports a team jersey, and most also wear long padded knee length pants. Serious business, folks.

The rules are simple. Two thirty minutes halves. Each team places five on the track. A jammer on each team tries to break through the defense set up by blockers on the other team. “Points are scored when the first jammer on a scoring pass (every pass a jammer makes through the pack after the initial pass) laps members of the opposing team.” Simple, but not easy. The defenders on each team can get pretty knarly. Players range from double plus size to willowy and lean. You don’t need an athlete’s body to get in on this deal. Refs on skates try to maintain some semblance of order.

Lots of bumping and grunting with quite a few spills, but not the helmet beating smack downs you see in movie versions of the sport. The names of the ladies are as good as the action: Pariah Carey, BITCH-Please, Dewey Decimatrix,

Cherry PopHer, Van D. Lyzher, Strawberry Hurt Cakes. You get the idea. In the back corner of the room is a well used bar where you can load up on Mickey’s, Bud, nachos and pork rinds. Fits right in with the Star Wars’ Cantina. I get a hot dog and coke, no excitement there. The football game I am missing is on the TV. Can’t touch roller derby, buddy. I’m down with flop sweat and skates.

As the teams race or bump around the oval, the medical staff sitting next to me is preparing for any injuries. The EMTs are rolling bandages and chatting up the ladies in red T shirts which say, “Fresh Meat.” At breaks in the action these women touch up/repair the yellow tape that defines the track boundaries and frequently gets torn. A skater, PyRo Blaze, comes over to “Medical,” a pained look on her face. A broken bone? bad floor burn? No, her skates need tightening. The EMT reaches into his black bag,

pulls out a wrench and tightens a loose nut on the bottom of the skate. Another thankful patient. Meanwhile, my son, a true millennial, has one eye on the skaters and the other on his smart phone, some worldwide video game championship. Vivid reality vs. virtual vacuity.

At half time the score is Vice Squad 63, Surly Gurlies 127. The home team is getting walloped, but the fans are inoculated against depression. Being here is all that counts. During the break, the musical entertainment is provided by The Desert Crawlers, three raggedy guys who look like they

just escaped from someone's garage. They blast out bad 80s metal music, and are cheered on by twelve-year-old girls who think they've hit the big time. Someone passes by me wearing a hat that says, "Make America Skate Again." I knew Trump had it wrong.

In the second half the announcing team, which looks like they just stepped out of Duck Dynasty, encourages the fans to give it up for the home team. The cheering apparently works, because the home team storms back with Mona Handful punching up that tote meter with killer skating and excellent jamming. But just when Vice Squad seems to be closing in, the Surly Gurlies release their secret Jammer. Luz Chaos is

about five-foot-tall and ninety-five pounds. A ghost on skates. She passes though blockers as if invisible. Now you see her, now you don't. The final score is Vice Squad 130 Surly Gurlies 183. The ladies shake hands and will soon return to their day jobs in some office, school or retail outlet.

As we leave, I grab a roller derby bumper sticker and a flier promoting the next showdown: Furious Truckstop Waitresses vs. The Bandoleras. A full moon hangs over the warehouse. Life can be crazy good.





Hogwarts Reading Room
Photography with iPhone

Alexis Egurrola

if suffering is an illusion

by Sarah Jansen

If suffering is an illusion
then the loss of loved ones
is a chance
to love them more.

If suffering is an illusion
then pain is there to teach you
to persevere.

If suffering is an illusion
then the trauma that lights up your body and enflames your mind
is fire for your soul.

If suffering is an illusion
then the harm we do to others
is not harm
but bitter medicine
meant to heal, not hurt.

If suffering is an illusion
then shame and guilt and depression
are a prison of our own making
and we can leave
whenever we want.

If suffering is an illusion
then we are not
separate
in this life.
We are in it
together.



DDoS Chicano 2020—44" x 81" in
Oil Painting on Arches Cover

Ernesto Trujillo

CAREFULLY CRAFTED CITIZENS

by Anja Leigh

We are in a nightmare of our own making.
Hollowed out by uncertain possibilities,
Sinking beneath the burden of apathy.
Resigning ourselves to atrocities.
We feel weary with uncertainty.
Again, again, again.

The morning news drones.
We should fear—
Nuclear annihilation.
Undocumented aliens.
Rising gas prices.
Declining house values.
Muslims, Christians, Buddhists.

Mostly—we fear change, protect what's ours,
While cities sink, children starve,
Bombs proliferate, species disappear.

We are in a nightmare of our own making.
Again, again, again.



Only in America
Photography with iPhone

Alexis Egurrola

HARMONICA

by Chuck Williamson
—Fiction



Lightfall
Lower Sabino Canyon
Photography

Silvia Kolchens

Rancho Alegre Assisted Living—Tucson, Arizona

Cindy Wright, the Memories Bus social hostess, stood on the pavement at the open bus door greeting each guest by name. Cindy's experience as a resort social hostess extended back decades, including numerous seasons at three- and four-star resorts in places like the Bahamas, Miami, Aspen, and Scottsdale. As Cindy's age and lifestyle took a toll on her appearance, her personal panache and experience wasn't enough to continue opening the same lucrative doors. Discouragingly, her funds became depleted, her arthritis flared, and her bronze tan morphed to age spots, some becoming suspiciously dark moles.

Rancho Alegre was Cindy's fourth assisted living home position in as many years.

Lori, the Community Service Volunteer stood alongside Cindy, who was looking at the reservation checklist on a clipboard. Lori was happier than usual because this was to be her last Memories Bus trip ever. At the end of the trip today she'll have completed 101 of her court mandated 100 hours of community service. Her probation requirement would be over.

Approaching the bus was a dapper old man assisted by a woman on each arm. One of the women that flanked his side was his daughter, Julie, the other, Rosie, his granddaughter. He was fully dressed in tweed—tweed pants, tweed vest, and, of course, a smart looking tweed golf hat. He also sported a huge childish grin.

"Mr. Evanoff!" Cindy pealed in a singsong voice that people reserve for infants, the senile, and pets. Lori looked up momentarily from her phone, giving an indifferent eye-avoiding nod towards the trio. Lori rarely spoke with the guests. Cindy, with a variation on her usual departure spiel, announced, "We have a great trip today! To a Spanish Mission!" Grinning, Mr. Evanoff continued his unwavering focus on the bus door. Cindy shifted her attention towards the two women, less loud, and more conversational, "And a great barbeque lunch at the Flying Sombrero Ranch Resort! Lunch will be grilled by Cookie, the famous

old bronco-buster rodeo hero but now a master at chuckwagon cuisine, a true grub-guru if you will. Imagine! Juicy buffalo burgers, ranch beans, and homemade apple pie!"

Then as an afterthought, Cindy said directly to Julie in an undertone, "I hope you've removed that harmonica from his coat pocket this time. Harmonicas are not appropriate on these trips." Julie nodded assurance—but, honestly, the morning had been so hectic she'd forgotten to check her father's pockets. To end on a positive note, Cindy said loudly, "Mr. Evanoff loves those buffalo burgers."

Reaching the bus door Mr. Evanoff stopped for a moment, looking at his daughter Julie, and then back at the Social Hostess, "Can't my wife come along this time?"

Julie, moving for emphasis deliberately into his field of view, "Dad, Mom's been dead for years. I'm your daughter Julie and this is your granddaughter, Rosie."

Mr. Evanoff's smile disappeared with this news. He shifted his gaze from Julie and looked blankly at Rosie.

Julie took her dad's hand in hers, trying for the hundredth time to reach him, repeating, "Dad, this is Rosie, your granddaughter."

Mr. Evanoff continued looking blankly at Rosie and then, averting his gaze from her and then turning his attention to getting into the bus, looked up the steps, and asked, directing the question to no one in particular, "Is Mom in the bus already?"

With his daughter's assistance with the big first step, he awkwardly ascended the rest of the steps. Rosie turned to her mom, shaking her head, "He's so far gone, Ma. He really has no idea who I am."

The Social Hostess looked at the mother and daughter with a huge grin, again using the loud voice, "He always has such a good time on these trips! Doesn't he?"

On the way back to their car, Rosie looked at her mom, "I hate that woman. Granddaddy never remembers anything about these trips. Ma, his brain is completely gone, mostly air pockets, he's no long-term memory. He'd be better off at home."

Julie didn't know what to say. She really needed the time away from her dad that his trips on the Memories Bus provided. She didn't know what she would do otherwise. And it was hard for her to admit to herself what was so clearly obvious to her daughter. Her father, once a tower of strength and wisdom in the family, was now feeble and confused.

(continued, next page)

As Mr. Evanoff situated himself in a window seat in the center of the bus, Cindy stuck to her post at the base of the door, busily referring to her clipboard. Setting aside the cartoon voice and using a normal conversational tone, she mentioned to Lori, "Ron had better get here in the next five minutes or I'll fire his ass. All the guests are here except that damned Harry Holland, you know, the escape artist? Harry the Houdini Holland?" She laughed at her own joke. "He's the old coot who opened the emergency door and slipped out the back of the bus when we were at the zoo?"

Lori almost let out a laugh but instead just said, behind a suppressed smirk, "Oh, that was really bad." She didn't blame him though for escaping.

Lori remembered the trouble they had finding Harry. The big problem was that, according to the company, the bus ended up arriving back at the drop off location more than an hour late, worrying and angering the families who were waiting to pick up the bus guests. A number of the guests had missed their medication or were soiled.

Once out the back of the bus through the emergency door, Harry had proved to be elusive in the park. They'd spotted him in the distance on the other side of the park but then he'd mysteriously vanished before their eyes as if he'd flown a tree like a bird or scurried down a rabbit hole.

Eventually Harry was found at the park shuffleboard court just south of the zoo. He was patiently sitting, watching the players scoot the pucks back and forth, watching them and wishing he was once again as full of youth and vigor as the shuffle boarders.

Afterwards Lori was even a bit disappointed that Cindy and her fraudulent smile didn't get canned, particularly since the whole Houdini incident was all Cindy's fault anyway, a fact that the company

knew nothing about. Cindy had kept all the guests in the bus and away from the zoo as punishment just because a few were acting up. Was that fair? While Cindy was outside at the front of the bus smoking and Ronald was in the driver's seat sleeping, Harry did a Houdini out the back.

Lori considered Ronald, the bus driver, innocent by virtue of his idiocy. Yes, he could be criminally stupid if he took orders from Cindy, but Ronald was at heart a child of god, the salt of the earth, as simple as dirt. However, the bus company did not consider his simplicity a virtue. One more slip, and he'd be let go immediately.

Yes, that little incident was really bad for the regular bus staff. Cindy and Ronald almost lost their jobs. Funny how now they too were on probation!



But hey! What did she care? Lori was in a celebratory mood. Today was the last day she had to stomach the charades of these ridiculous people and The Bus of the Walking Dead—not to mention those gawd-awful, unimaginably horrible box lunches.

At that moment a red pickup with two bicycles strapped upright in the bed drove up quickly and abruptly stopped right in front of the bus, as if it needed to block the bus's imminent departure.

The passenger door flung open and a short, fortyish athletic woman in a spandex cycling outfit swung out first, shouted, "Cindy! Sorry we're late! Thanks for waiting!" Then she turned to help her father scoot out of the back seat of the crew cab.

"Damn, there's that pain in the Harry ass now," Cindy

said as an angry aside to Lori. "I wish some of these old fart guests would just hurry up and die and get out of my hair!"

Lori glanced at Cindy's wig, then quipped with a wry smile, "Maybe he'll choke on some buffalo burger."

"That's not funny."

Cindy, smiling like a game show assistant, stepped toward the arriving Mr. Holland, "Mr. Holland! Great to see you! How's my favorite adventurer?" She made a theatrical gesture of looking at an imaginary watch on her wrist and then back up to Mr. Holland, "We're holding the bus just for you!" she said pointing to the imaginary watch on her wrist. Over her shoulder she could see Ronald rushing towards the bus and, from behind her, slipping into the driver's seat. The bus started. The air conditioning turned on.

"This way my Mr. Harry ..." In order to prevent a repeat performance of Harry the Houdini Holland slipping out the emergency door, Cindy had since reserved Mr. Holland a seat in the very front of the bus.

Guiding him with her hand on his back, she said "I have saved the best seat for you Mr. Holland! Up in the very front, at the head of the class! You are the Guest of the Day. You get the best views, and! You get the most important job of all—Bus Monitor!"

Harry looked up at her, making a sour face, and said very angrily, "Me? The Bus Monitor? To hell with that!"

(continued, next page)



Aesthetic of Decay #11 – 2017/2018
34½" x 151" x 49" in
Mixed Media

Olivier Dubois-Cherrier

Cindy took that as just another crotchety response from just another crotchety old man.

Ronald, the bus driver, wasn't feeling so good. Not only was he up all night at the Raider's Reef Gentlemen's Club, but he made the additional mistake of getting a huge chorizo breakfast burrito at Filiberto's Mexican Takeout just an hour before departure. The problem was not so much the chorizo, but the full-sized jalapeños he consumed. His

buddies the night before told him that jalapeños would be good eye-openers after a hard night, as good as toothpicks, better than menudo. One would be good enough. Two would be twice as good! Now Ronald was wondering if those jerks were pulling his leg, like when they told him that putting black sharpie on mosquito bites make the itch go away.



Expecting Nothing is Going to Change @ The Island in Tucson
H8' x L9'8" x D5'6" in
Mixed Media

Olivier Dubois-Cherrier

His stomach made as much noise and producing about as much exhaust as the old Memories Bus as it trundled, rumbled, and rattled southward down the Old Nogales Highway towards Green Valley, leaving along the road, a trail of blue smoke curling in its wake.

The old Spanish mission at Tumacacori was less than an hour away, but in fifteen minutes the bus would pull into Green Valley and make a quick stop at the gas station and convenience store at the intersection of Continental Blvd and the Interstate 19 Frontage Road.

Cindy regularly contracted with the gas station night shift to provide box lunches for the bus guests. She bypassed the gas station management and owners, cutting out the middlemen, and went, with cash, directly to the night shift, who had access to all sorts of leftover food that otherwise it was their job to throw away. Cindy wasn't particular as to what went into the box lunches—because in dealing directly with the gas station night shift, whose overhead was very, very low, the price was always right.

And besides, Cindy always brought her own sack lunch.

On her first Memories Bus trip, Lori quickly learned to be self-sufficient too, usually bringing a Snickers

Bar and a bag of Cheetos, but she could never forget the difficult experience at lunchtime on her first bus adventure. Ronald, Lori noticed, had not caught on yet, but on the other hand, Lori suspected that for Ronald, the serendipitous contents of the box lunches might have reminded him of what his mom fixed for him as a kid, when she did fix him something, so these box lunches, being for him, were nostalgic—comfort food.

Ronald drove along, lost in thought, at least lost in the thoughts that his lower tubes were communicating to him.

Harry Holland, from his privileged vantage point as Bus Monitor, was the first one to speak out about the odd cloud ahead.

“Look at that thunderhead up the road! That’s some gully washer!”

Indeed, the towering Godzilla cloud that was moving into the valley from over the Santa Rita Mountains was stomping the ground directly below with a brutal shaft of torrential rain. Bursting out from this shaft was an irate wind that churned up all the dust and dry debris in its path into a roiling dusty wall that was speeding in the direction of the bus and Green Valley like a huge, dirty, dusty tsunami.

Ronald broke away from his lower

thoughts long enough to register that the storm cloud ahead was nothing like any he’d ever seen before. “What the hell? A tornado? Dust storm? What the ...”

Lori looked up from her cell phone game, poking her head into the aisle to see what was up. Excited, unconsciously putting her phone down on her seat, she jumped up and, hanging over the seat in front of her, she announced, quite loudly, “Haboob! It’s a HABOOB!” Lori learned that word from the Channel 13 weather guy during the last few months, who explained that global warming was now triggering humongous dust storms that could swallow whole metropolitan areas like Phoenix in a gulp. He said the old phrase, “dust storm,” was obsolete. It was necessary to import a Middle Eastern word to describe these choking, blinding, monster dust storms: haboob. Translated directly from Arabic, haboob means, of course, “dust storm.”

“HABOOB!” Lori shouted, pointing to the advancing wall of dust ahead. She smiled. She liked that word.

The sleepy seats from the front to the rear of the bus became animated. Nearly every man that still could jumped up and looked forward, jockeying for a better view of whatever it was, craning their necks to look out the front window

(continued, next page)

Tucson Monsoon
Mercado San Augustin
Photography

Anja Leigh



of the bus, hoping to ogle these HABOOB! things.

The women, in contrast, even those too deaf to hear, remained in their seats, looked at each other apprehensively to see if they should be offended, many pulling their sweaters or jackets into more protectively modest arrangements.

With this commotion triggered by the storm ahead, and as the Memories Bus neared the turn off to Green Valley, Cindy moved to the front of the bus, standing up in the front and hanging on the vertical stainless-steel pipe just behind the driver.

The situation presented her with a challenge: how to get the box lunches out of the pickup truck and into the bus before the dust storm hit? If they failed, left in the back of the pickup, the lunches would be ruined by the dust and rain that followed. She'd have to find some other source of lunch, possibly having to pay real prices for real food. Quickly assessing the situation, it looked to her as if they'd have just a couple of minutes at the pickup to move the lunches before the onslaught of the dust and rain.

They could do it!

She started to marshal her forces for the operation. As soon as the bus stopped, Lori and Ronald would jump out and get the boxes by the armload into the bus. It would take at least two trips. During that time Cindy would dash over to the pickup and pay the Night Shift Dude in cash, and, maybe even have time

(continued, on page 46)

Sunset at Wupatki National Monument
Flagstaff, Arizona - 2014
Photography

Kris Swank



Sheeps Crossing Arizona
Oil Painting

Greg Reddoch



Snow Bowl
Oil Painting

Greg Reddoch

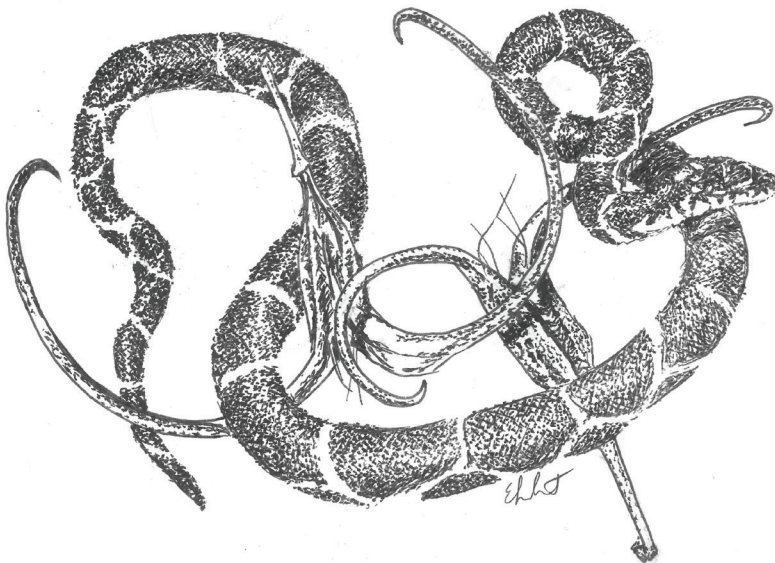
Cactus Wren in Cholla
Pen and Ink

Desert Ehrhart



King Snake with Devil's Claw
Pen and Ink

Desert Ehrhart



for a few puffs of the cigarette she's been craving for the last hour. She called Lori up to the front of the bus and laid out the plan.

As the bus turned up Continental Blvd. and headed the last quarter mile to the gas station it looked like the timing would be perfect!

However, as the bus positioned in the left turn lane with the box lunch pickup truck in sight behind the gas station, an extremely large woman in an oversized motorized wheelchair came zipping around the corner coming down the bike lane the wrong way. Concurrently from the other direction an electric golf cart came around the other corner going the right way in the bike lane.

Coming at each other right in the mouth of the gas station driveway busses use, both the wheelchair and the golf cart stopped. Neither the wheelchair nor the golf cart wanting to yield the bike lane to the other—a Green Valley standoff!

“Those idiots! We don’t have time for this. Honk your horn, Ron!” Cindy shouted as she shook Ronald’s shoulder.

Lightning stuck close, too close. Thunder clapped instantaneously. Ronald flinched. He blared and blared the horn... The combatants stood their ground, neither wanting to hazard a move into

the traffic lane or delay their own escaping the storm.

"Go! Drive up and over the curb!" Cindy shouted.

Ronald automatically followed her orders, pragmatically bypassing the stalemate. Hitting the curb at an angle. The bus bumped over the curb, rocking from side to side as it did so. The bus pulled up and parked about 40 feet from the pickup, as close as it could get given the dumpster that was there.

Lori was out the door first, then Cindy. As both rushed to the pickup, Ronald followed, but first securing the parking brake, and then scrambled out the bus door, leaving the bus idling in neutral.

Lori and Ronald grabbed the first armfuls of boxed lunches and gallons of expired Tropicana Fruit Punch and struggled to lug the load into the bus. Cindy, at the pickup, banged on the driver's window with her fist. The Night Shift Dude was asleep in the front seat. "Idiot! Open the door!"

Ronald and Lori returned to the truck for the rest of the box lunches and Tropicana. The wind whistled through the wildly swaying power lines overhead. A trash can blew over and noisily rolled, strewing out empty scans and Styrofoam cups as it blew across the road.

Ronald and Lori dropped off the second load and turned to return for the last boxes of Tropicana. Dust stung their exposed faces as they reached the pickup. Everything was an eerie dusty red.

Another flash of lightning with an instantaneous crash of thunder, and the sudden onset of pelting hail—a painful assault of big stinging, bruising dime-sized hail.

All three, Cindy, Ronald, and Lori piled into the protective pickup cab, Cindy scrunching against the Night Shift Dude still sitting at the wheel.

The pickup cab was crazy loud, hail hitting the roof and windshield like a thousand ball bearings a second. Nothing could be seen out the window. Hail collected like snow on the windshield wipers.

Five deafening minutes and finally, like the waning pops of popcorn done cooking, the sharp reports from the hail faltered.

Cindy looked into the back of the pickup and saw only a few box lunches that had been overlooked.

"Good work!" she said, giving Ronald a high five. "Good work!"

Cindy was going to praise Lori too but Lori was looking at Cindy with complete disdain. Ronald gleamed. He very much needed praise now

and then. He continued smiling and let out a satisfied I-done-good laugh, and as he did so, twisted in his seat to look back at the bus, his bus...

His smile disappeared. His jaw dropped. He stared expressionless. He let out a weak murmur, "The bus..."

Lori and Cindy both turned and looked.

Then all three, in chorus, shouted, "IT'S GONE!"

"Oh SHIT!" Lori had a sudden, terrifying realization, "I left my phone on that fucking bus!"

Harry Holland adjusted the rearview mirror as he took the Memories Bus into a smooth right turn off Continental Blvd, heading up Madera Canyon Road. He'd driven this route before. That is, this was his route for his 35 years driving a school bus for the Continental School District. Most of those years he drove buses that were the same make, but older models, as the Memories Bus.

On all these roads up here in the canyons and foothills of the Santa Rita Mountains above Green Valley he had picked up and dropped off kids, and then the kids of those kids, he could see them now in

(continued, next page)

his mind's eye, standing waiting for the bus, the school dances, his young and beautiful wife, the winters, the mountain lions crossing the road, his friend's roadside cross, the floods, sycamore trees in the spring, Christmas. Everything and everyone was still up here in these grasslands, canyons, ranches, and woodlands.

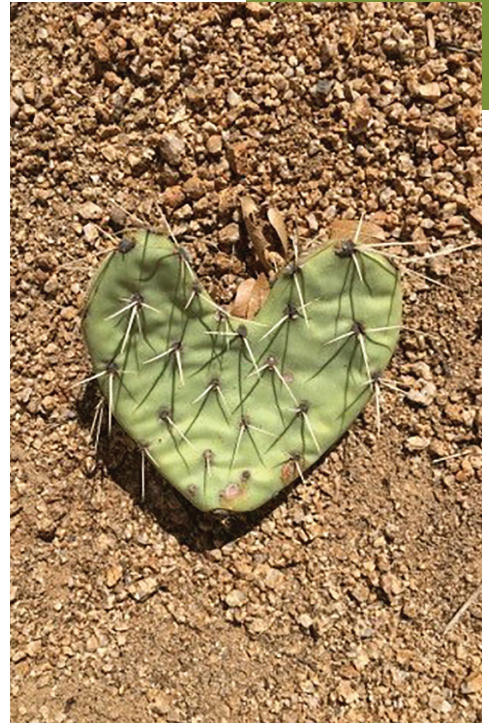
His route serviced the ranches around Madera Canyon, then heading up into the homesteads of Greaterville via the Box Canyon Road, and even up to the Gunsight Pass Road, picking up the kids in the northwest portions of Rosemont Ranch.

He could drive all these roads in his sleep.

He looked back to see his kids in the rearview. One, in a tweed golf hat, was up on the top of his seat playing a harmonica. The other kids were clapping and laughing along.

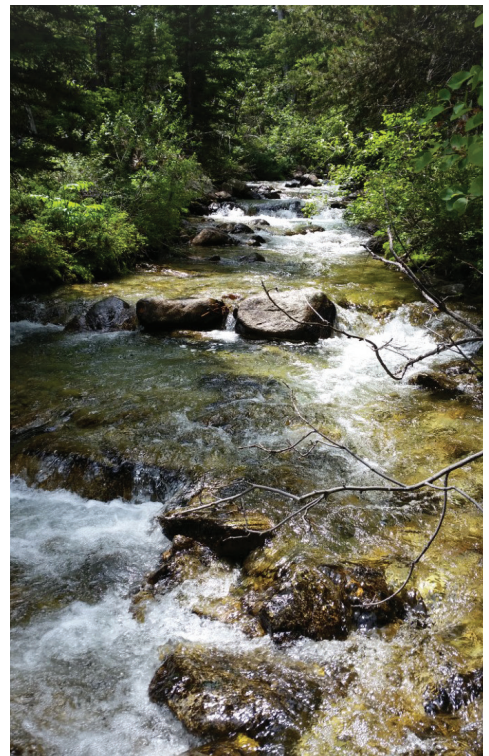
All good kids, just as he remembered.

He called out to them, "Who wants to come up front and be Bus Monitor today?"



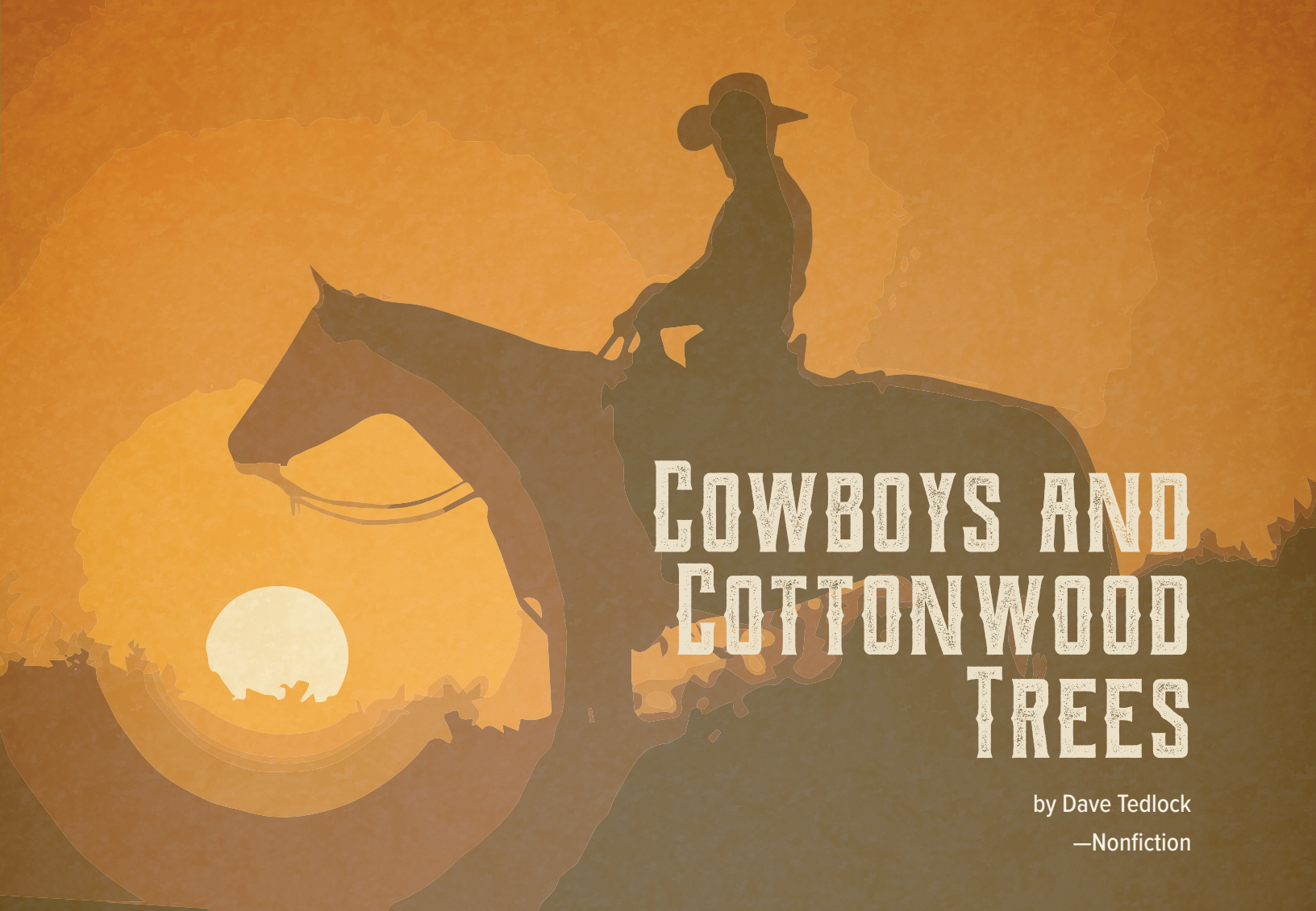
Cactus Heart
Digital Photography

Monique Rodriguez



Summer Stream Near Red Lodge, MT
Photography with Samsung 5 cellphone

Michele Rorabaugh



COWBOYS AND COTTONWOOD TREES

by Dave Tedlock
—Nonfiction

More than seventy years ago, some cowboys created a rough, dirt road, perhaps then no better than a Jeep trail, from New Mexico State Highway 14, then NM 10, a mile and a half long to a cabin and corral they built near a spring in the hills that rose up sharply at the north end of our valley. The remote location of the cabin, even today without electrical service, might have been inspired by a natural spring flowing, then, down a narrow canyon above them. Even now, pieces of rusted out pipe provide proof of plumbing that once ran from spring to cowboy cabin. But cows need more than the steady trickle the spring provided, so the cowboys erected a windmill there, its wind-driven flow filling two large cattle tanks and, overflowing, grew a pond they dug out, probably by hand, though no one living now knows.

Some four-tenths of a mile in from the highway, the cowboys—surely these same cowboys—built an earthen dam across a large arroyo. A monsoon-

season pond was born then, though no one living now knows exactly how long ago it first presented itself or when cottonwood seeds discovered the water and grew trees. The cottonwood trees, a dozen or more, grew up tall, their branches reaching stories high for the sky, their bright green leaves crackling in the spring, summer and fall winds.

The dam and the pond are about half way between the highway and our home here. If you live here long enough, over decades, changes present themselves to you, waiting for you to take note. In the summer, as I grew up and still now, monsoon rains deposit water behind the dam and a pond grows. When the monsoons end, the pond slowly, almost imperceptibly, shrinks and slips away until only a dry crust of broken red clay remains as evidence, the pond's singing toads disappearing underground again, waiting for the monsoons to

(continued, next page)



Day of the Dead in the Wild West
Digital Art

Mike Rom

return so that they can reappear one by one and join the chorus, proclaiming a new season of fertility. A decade ago, probably more now, I began to have an argument with my neighbor, the owner of the pond, about the dam and its configuration. Over decades the pond silted up so much that rushing monsoon water escaped over the dam's western end, gashed our road and left the pond with enough water to make the toads sing, but only for a short time. Then the drought came. Years of it. And with it, death.

The dam, perhaps because of its reduced capacity and certainly because of the drought, failed to hold enough water to give life to the towering cottonwood trees. The trees reached up to the sky, asking it for rain. Little came and the trees died. A slow death. First, their barren corpses stuck up into the sky, arching gravestones marking the end of an

era. Then one by ones the trees toppled over and lay in gray pieces on the ground.

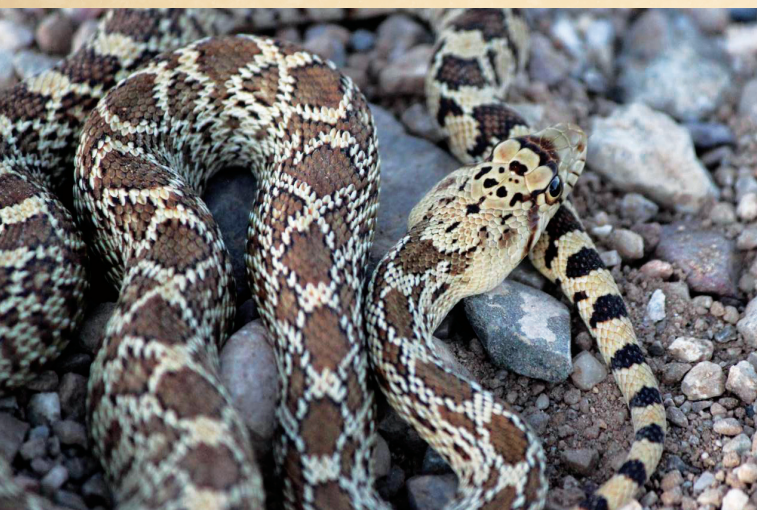
Finally, the cottonwood trees and their cheerful clattering but a memory, my neighbor had the dam scooped out and built up to prevent run off. Then, we waited. A season or two later, the monsoon rains offered up their so-hoped-for, stunning generosity and the water level rose within perhaps a foot of the top of the dam. At seven feet deep, the pond was deep enough for my two golden retrievers to swim gloriously in huge circles, gleeful at such an unexpected bounty.

We even had some rain in the fall, and then, even with no significant rain for months, the pond stubbornly persisted into April, shallow but reflecting a shockingly blue, spring sky. Then, just a few days later, a surprise. As I drove in, I saw ducks

on the pond. Mallards. They were so startled at the appearance of my Forester on the top of the dam that they burst into flight and disappeared in minutes. The next day, they had reappeared, but even when I crouched behind juniper trees and walked as quietly as I could across the top of the dam, the moment I showed enough of myself to take a picture, the flock burst into flight again, wheeling away first right and then left and then right again. The image of their departure stayed with me, my eyes the photographer, the picture sad, the flock forming an imperfect formation, two or three places missing on one branch of their V. They had not yet adjusted to the loss of members of the flock, taken out of flight by hunters, perhaps. My family, then, talked excitedly about the ducks. We had all seen them and agreed, just five. Not city ducks from a city park, but wild ducks, ducks who had once flown off with more than just four others.

Then, skip ahead to the next summer, and an old cowboy, a head wrangler, my neighbor and friend for 60 of this 82 years now, and I experienced what we agreed was the longest, most amazing thunderstorm we had ever seen, water filling my yard, rushing down the road, making a pond of the back meadow for a few strange minutes and, yes, causing the beloved pond out on the road to overflow, but blessedly, overflow out the back end so no damage was done to the dam itself. Another change. This one of grace and abundance.

I wish I could talk with those first cowboys now, from 80 or 90 years ago, and ask them when ducks first appeared on the pond. What about geese? Deer? Cougars slurping water at the pond's edge?



That's Close Enough
Sonoran Gopher Snake
Photography

Missy Blair



Three of Life Sugar Skulls
Mixed Media

Christine Connors

How deep did the water get? Could they hear the singing toads serenade from the covered porch of their cabin a mile away?

This spring, I have a plan for the future. A quiet proclamation. I see myself walking down to the edge of the water, or where the edge will be. I am carrying a shovel and a cottonwood tree in a container. One or two more wait patiently for me, on top of the dam, while I plant them one by one, these new trees, now only six feet tall, will pay homage to their predecessors and grow gloriously green. Surely with some extra care, some water carried by the bucket to tide them over, I can watch new cottonwoods grow, leaves clattering out a call, an invitation.

"We have water to share. Come. Stay and rest for a while."

The cowboys are long gone, but the ducks will be back.

Forget It

by Anja Leigh

I forget why I walked into this room
where I put my glasses, or
when my passport expires;
but I remember my childhood phone number,
the poem my fifth-grade boyfriend wrote me,
my son's first birthing cry.

I don't remember why we went to war,
where I put the scissors,
or where I parked the car,
but remember my first kiss.

I forget what it feels like to feel my feet,
the words to "*Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star*,"
or what day to take out the garbage;
but I remember emerging lilies-of-the-valley, and
my mother's heartbeat as I lay against her breast.

I remember getting my first period,
my first bike, my baby sister's hiccups.
I remember the first time my boy pals rejected me because I was a girl,
smoking my first cigarette, my first job, getting my driver's license, and
the days JFK, MLK and RFK were assassinated.

I forget the names of movies,
what all these remotes control,
or where I saved that file.

I remember thinking I wouldn't find love;
I forget how long ago that was.
I forget to brush my teeth or add vodka to the Moscow Mule,
but remember how to find all the houses I've lived in.
I forget where my grandparents are buried.

I remember my sixth-grade graduation dress, but
forget the sequence of presidents, and certainly vice-presidents.
I remember the grocery money, but
forget the shopping list.

I remember when phones had to be dialed
and watches worn on wrists.
I forget the names of all my cousins, and
the date my best friend died.



Expecting Nothing is Going to Change @ The Land with No Name
H10' x L16' x D10' in
Mixed Media

Olivier Dubois-Cherrier

I forget names, but remember faces;
forget lyrics, but remember melodies;
I forget the time, but remember Paris,
and every country I've visited.

I'm glad I don't remember
what I was told to forget.
What lingers has yet to be handled.
There will come a time
when no one remembers these events,
and no one remembers me.

I hear a train whistle in the distance.

ARTISTS' BIOS

Alexis Egurrola is an amateur photographer taking pictures of life with an iPhone.

Alexis Kopkowski is a librarian at the east campus and a PhD Candidate at the University of Arizona studying American Indian Studies and Public Health.

Anja Leigh has been writing, publishing, and performing poetry since she was a teenager. Now in her 70s she continues exploring the world around her through words. She currently teaches part-time at Pima Community College in Tucson, AZ.

Casie Herron is an instructor of Art and Yoga at Downtown and West campuses. She has taught at Raytheon, UA, and every Pima campus. She enjoys multiple media including but not limited to printmaking, painting, sculptural mosaic, cyanotypes and letterpress. She's interested in the connections and interstitial spaces between art and yoga, art as yoga, and yoga as art.

Christine Connors was born in Paris, grew up in Hawaii, and currently lives in Tucson, AZ. She has a B.A in psychology from the University of Hawaii, an MA in Marriage, Family and Child Counseling from Chapman University, and an MA in Fine Arts from the Academy of Arts University. She currently teaches psychology part-time at Pima. Christine

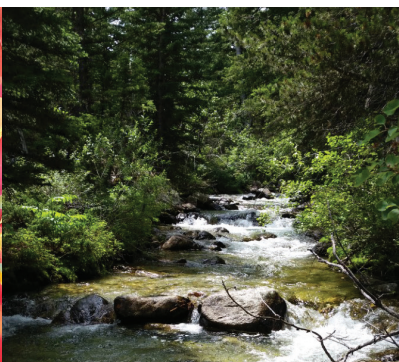
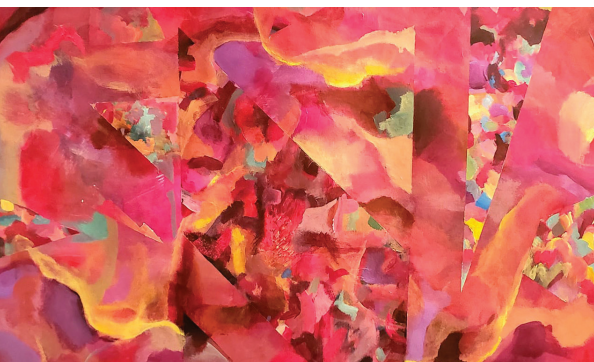
specializes in oils and charcoal. When painting, Christine uses the classical techniques of glazing to create realism. She is certified to teach both psychology and art for Pima.

Chuck Williamson has enjoyed the mountains, nature, and culture of Tucson and southern Arizona since 1980. Currently his writing focuses on fiction and non-fiction centered around the Santa Rita Mountains.

Dave Tedlock is a writing instructor at the West Campus. He has published scholarly articles, several short stories and hundreds of articles for magazines and newspapers in the Midwest and west.

Desert Ehrhart works as a figure model for the art department at PCC. They spend much of their free time out in nature, gardening and working with plants. Primarily working with pen and ink and oil pastel, Desert's art work is heavily influenced by wildlife and their practice with herbal medicine. They are currently inspired and challenged by a couple children's books they are illustrating.

Diane Deskin currently works in Student Conduct and Title IX at PCC. Diane is an amateur photographer who simply enjoys taking her camera with her wherever she goes.



Diane Miller seeks inspiration to write and create as she observes life, people, and the odd and wonderful circumstances we navigate. She enjoys integrating the dynamic nature of work and play while striving to make substantive contributions to her community. Aspiring to seek simplicity and understanding, while admiring the complex, she acknowledges that life, circumstances, and our perceptions are sometimes nonsensical, sometimes profound, and sometimes must be graciously challenged. She also loves big dogs. Diane has worked at PCC for over 14 years and, in addition to her full-time job as an Advanced Program Manager for Faculty Affairs, she also teaches part time for PCC working at most locations with a home base at West Campus.

Emily Jacobson graduated from Utah State University with a bachelor's degree in Fine Art, with an emphasis in drawing. She later received her Master of Arts in Library Science and currently works at Pima Community College East Campus Library as a Library Services Specialist. While studying art in school she came to love the process involved in printmaking, particularly woodcuts and in photography. She enjoys drawing, printmaking, and photography, but has recently gravitated towards watercolors and acrylics as well. She particularly loves painting cacti and flowers. Although, Photography is where she truly finds her solace. She personally perceives photography as a way to memorialize the beauty of everyday objects and nature. She loves portrait photography as well,

and particularly loves the quiet and still within nature when taking photos. She enjoys finding something ordinary in nature and making it look extraordinary to those who behold it. Art is a way she can express how she feels and in how she sees the world.

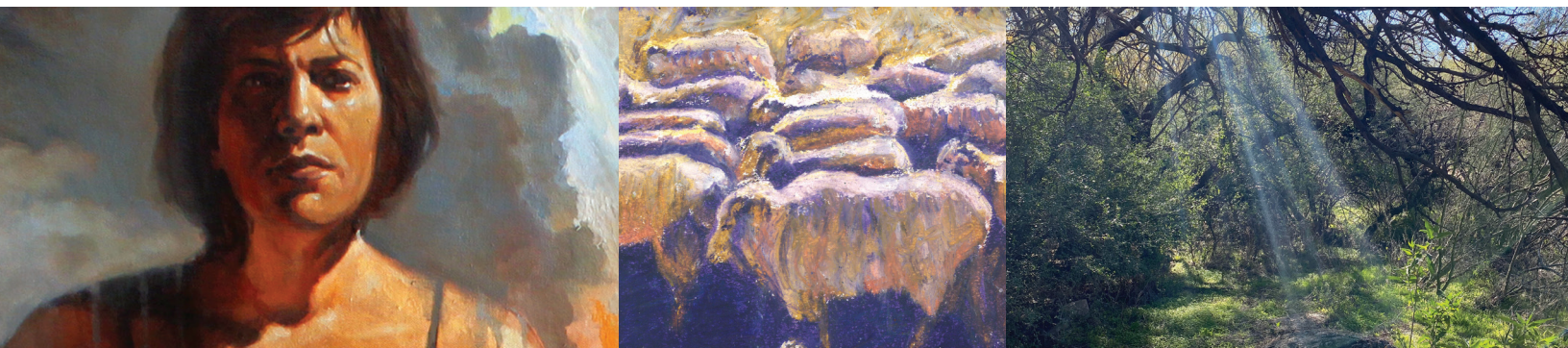
Ernesto Trujillo is Lead Instructor - CTD BT Cluster at Desert Vista Campus. Ernesto Trujillo has been working with Mexican American experience in painting through memories, family experiences and traditions. Ernesto's paintings include the rapid changing world of science and technology and how our private worlds are permanently revealed through our digital footprint.

Greg Reddoch is a district electrician.

Himelda Davidson is a Graphic Designer. She works in the Media Production Department at Pima Community College District Office. Besides being a designer, she also loves to draw. Her favorite medium is pencil. Himelda is a huge animal lover. She especially loves to draw cats.

Jennifer Wiley, PhD, teaches writing, literature, and humanities at the West Campus. In her spare time, she enjoys traveling with her family, gardening, photography, and caring for her cats, chickens, and horses.

Kris Swank is the Library Department Head at Northwest Campus, and an Instructor in the Honors



Program. She comes from a family of photographers and has been taking photographs since her parents bought her a Kodak Instamatic in 1972.

Mano Sotelo BFA Otis Art Institute Parsons School of Design, MFA in Painting from Academy of Art University. Mano is a member of the Visual Arts Faculty at the West Campus. His work has been exhibited at the Coutts Museum of Art, Alexandria Museum of Art, Tampa Museum of Art, Coos Art Museum, Tucson Museum of Art, University of Arizona Museum of Art, Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum, Tucson Desert Art Museum, Phoenix Art Museum, local and national juried and invitational shows, and a variety of Tucson galleries. Mano's work has also been highlighted in competitions hosted by The Artist's Magazine and International Artist Magazine. His work can be seen at www.sotelostudio.com or Instagram: @manosoteloartist

Dr. Mark Nelson, currently performing arts department head and director of bands at West Campus, is a music instructor. His career spans 38 years of teaching at all levels of instruction from elementary school to graduate school. He was tenured at the University of Vermont and Millikin University reaching the rank of full professor and spent several years teaching public school. He has taught at Pima Community College for the last twenty years. His specialty is tuba performance and has had over thirty works written or premiered by him, many recorded on his two CD recordings of solo tuba. He has performed with several

professional orchestras including the Tucson Symphony Orchestra and Tucson Pops Orchestra.

**** Performance Art Medium**

This is a public performance of Three Florida Orchids by T. O. Sterrett, music written for solo euphonium, solo tuba, and piano accompaniment recorded live at Pima Community College.

The link to the performance is:

<https://youtu.be/N4ZMznudEjI>

Maureen Burns was born in Kentucky. She lived, worked, and attended schools in Germany and Switzerland, and eventually moved to Colorado, where she completed a bachelor's and a master's degree in English Literature/Creative Writing at the University of Colorado, Boulder. Since completing her degrees, she has taught creative writing and English composition and literature courses at several Colorado Community colleges. After moving to Arizona in 2015, she began teaching writing at Pima Community College, Desert View campus. Maureen now lives in Red Rock, Arizona. She volunteers at Tohono Chul Park, and guides visitors through the Exhibit Hall and explains the history of the park and the current art exhibits. Maureen spends much of her free time experiencing nature and studying the ways it demonstrates the interconnection of all life. Her life has been a journey of self-discovery, leading to a better understanding of the world she lives in and the human perspectives and ideals that drive it. As



Linda Hogan states in her essay titled, "Hearing Voices," published in *The Writer on Her Work, Vol II, New Essays in New Territory*, "Writing begins for me with survival, with life and with freeing life, saving life, speaking life. It is work that speaks what can't be easily said."

Michele Rorabaugh grew up in Bradford, Pennsylvania and lived in Florida and New Mexico prior to relocating to Tucson, Arizona. My partner, Arnie, has a place in Red Lodge, Montana where we spend much of the summer, which is where one of my photographs was taken. The others were taken right here in Tucson at the Northwest Campus.

Mike Rom has a BS in Film and Television Production. He worked in the movie industry in Tucson for over 8 years and did everything from art department to office PA to special effects explosives assistant. When he started working at Pima College in the AV Department, he expanded their offerings to video and computer graphics. He was also able to indulge his creative side through their Digital Art classes. Mike started photographing flowers for his wife's paintings—she works in oils—and eventually framed his own work and put them into art shows. He shares a website with his wife at www.RomByDesign.com.

Missy Blair is a program manager with the Center for Transportation Training, located at the Maintenance and Security campus. When she isn't working or doing Master's degree homework, she

is outside with her family and rarely forgets her camera. She strives to take photos that require little or no editing to retain a natural feel.

Monique Rodriguez is an Educational Support Faculty Librarian at the Northwest Campus; conducting information literacy instruction, library curriculum design, reference/referral services, research, and development in library instruction through interactive technology. She holds an MLIS and an MS in Educational Technology.

Nahal Rodieck is a Persian mother of 2, teacher and writer. She resides in Southern AZ and continues her journey of loving life and teaching writing, literature and, in the near future, law at PCC, NWC.

Nina Nardolillo is a Program Coordinator of International Development at West Campus, PCC. She emigrated from Russia to the USA in 2012. Nina studied Digital Arts at PCC during 2016-2019, and graduated with an Associates degree in Graphic Design. She speaks English, Spanish and Russian languages fluently. She has been passionate about photography for many years, and she took additional classes of photography at PCC. Nina's photographs were published in *SandScript* 2018 and 2019. A few of her photographs recently were displayed in three local photography exhibits.

Olivier Dubois-Cherrier is an experienced French painter, photographer and sculptor based in the US, who has exhibited his work internationally. His



Caribbean family background deeply influenced his path to art as well as the content he portrays in it, and he has lived a nomadic life for many years now. Typically painting with thick impastos and using additional materials such as sand, soil, grass and found objects, he composes works that contemplate natural environments and pose philosophical questions. His themes include time, ego and death.

Robert Matte Jr. has been a word smith for many years. He has lived in various parts of the U.S. as well as in France, Turkey and England. Among other pursuits he has been a hippie poet, an Army officer and a college teacher. He and his wife Kathy have raised two sons in Tucson, Arizona. His last three books of poetry are *Fort Apache*, *Digging For Bones*, and *Coyote Moon Trailer Haven*. Mr. Matte has an abiding love for the land and the peoples of the American Southwest and is often struck with awe and wonder.

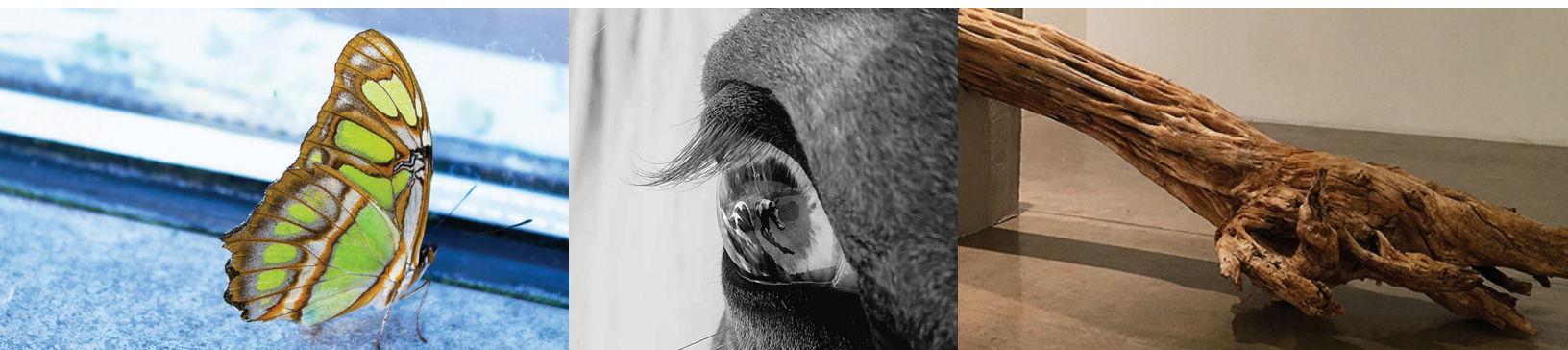
Rosanne Couston is a native Tucsonan who has been a Librarian at Pima Community College for ten years. Most of that time was spent at the West Campus Library, where she created the Study “Paws” program, bringing therapy animals to visit during final exams. Her undergraduate degree is in theatre, and she has been active in local community theatre companies such as Something Theatre, Winding Road Theatre, Borderlands Theater, and Rogue Theatre. She’s had the opportunity to perform in bilingual productions that alternated English and Spanish performances, as well as premier

productions of original works by local and Chicano playwrights. She currently devotes most of her time to providing library and research support to Distance Education students. She embraces the idea that she’s pretty stereotypical for a Librarian - she wears glasses, loves sweaters, and has 4 cats.

Sandra Shattuck is full-time writing faculty at the Desert Vista campus.

Sarah Jansen is a native Tucsonan and former PCC student who now teaches philosophy part-time at West Campus and Downtown Campus. She loves the Sonoran Desert and travels by bicycle, pretty much everywhere.

Sherrie Lynn Stewart is Adjunct Faculty & Discipline Coordinator—American Indian Studies at West Campus. Originally from the pine woods of East Texas, Sherrie Lynn Stewart lived in shiny Las Vegas, Nevada, farmed for a decade in snowy northern Michigan, floated around on a sailboat for about a year in the aqua waters of the Florida Keys, survived ten years of the break-neck pace in Los Angeles, California, and then moved to Tucson in 1991. After starting a business, Sherrie and her husband adopted three grandchildren. That same year, she lost a large chunk of her eyesight. In 2001, she began taking classes at Pima Community College to learn how to run an Internet business. That began her academic journey. Almost twenty years later, they have adopted three more children, and she holds two Masters and a doctoral degree



from the University of Arizona. But she still hasn't a clue how to get an Internet business off the ground.

Silvia Kolchens is Department Head and Instructional Faculty for Chemistry at the West campus. Originally from Germany she came to Tucson in 1989. She loves to explore the desert through hiking, motorcycling, and photography.

Theresa C. Stanley is the Library Department Head at the Downtown Campus. Being a Librarian was her dream job but four kids and several other careers came first. She finds that being a Librarian, and working with students and faculty help her to continue to expand her knowledge, which in turn assists her when helping students. When Theresa is not working, she loves to spend time with her four beautiful granddaughters. She also finds time to quilt, travel, go camping, paint, and cook/BBQ/bake.

Travis Ardle has lived in Tucson his entire life. He currently has six college degrees. He has written over 150 poems and has written 3 screenplays. He has been to numerous concerts and some of the acts he has seen include Pearl Jam, Bruce Springsteen, Metallica, The White Stripes, Foo Fighters, Alice in Chains, Guns N' Roses and Linkin Park. He currently is a tutor at the Downtown Campus.

Veronica Willis is a support specialist for library Technical Services at District Office. She paint for fun and for stress relief.

Venturing into the artistic lifestyle at the young age of 15, **Victor Navarro** began his art career as an exhibiting artist in Tucson, Arizona; soon after expanding his career to an international level. Graduated from The University of Arizona with his Bachelor of Fine Arts (B.F.A.), and having received his Master degree (M.Ed) from Northern Arizona University, Navarro seized art teaching opportunities at various institutions, such as Pima Community College, Parks & Rec and Splendido. Victor's diverse art forms have been exhibited in various renowned locations throughout his career. Some of which includes, the Carrousel Du Louvre Paris, International Academy of Lutece France, Taiwan at Sun Yat-sen National Memorial Hall in Taipei Taiwan and many more. His paintings are Inspired by diversity, identity, culture and emotions. Navarro's art has been featured at World Art Dubai. Becoming part of notable art collections such as the Ambassador's residence in Abu Dhabi.

