

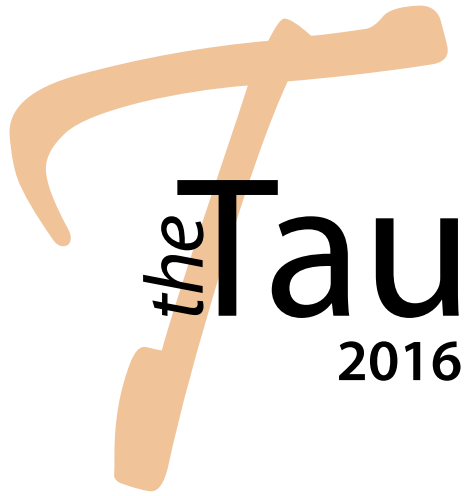


the **Tau**
*the literary and
visual art journal
of Lourdes University*

2016



Cover Art:
Windmill in Summer ~ *by Laura Ott*



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*Lourdes is a Franciscan University that values community as
a mainstay of its Mission and Ministry.*

Pulchritude, passion, patience, perfection and perspective perpetuates the pages that lie before you. Every edition of *The Tau* contains different textual elements annually, with an underlying commonality. That commonality has no single descriptive term as those listed above, but a story that follows every piece of art and example of literature. A story unique to the artist that only the artist can decipher; its true creation, genesis and symbolization. Stories have inspired writers to construct their fiction, nonfiction, and poetic narratives. Stories have motivated painters to use simple ink to represent their experiences.

Time is that story of commonality. The literature published in *The Tau*, along with the magnificent paintings and photos provide time for that moment where the creators and readers can share an appreciation for that point in time. Of all the distractions in life, every affiliate of *The Tau* has taken time out, harmoniously working as one unit to piece together dozens of fascinating ideologies of life before us. Following the rules of literature, writers tell their stories and painters share their gifts of kinesthetic aesthetics. As you read the literature, attempt to visualize the writer's point of view primarily. Allow the art to enter your emotions, for time was taken out to create these styles of expression. The creator is trying to tell you something about their time.

As time and the essence of life influences our emotions, let us not only examine the presentation of this experience but also the purpose and meaning behind our existence.

Denzell Anderson
President, Literati

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Casts

by Ally Fulton

We sit on carpeted stairs
with the dirt remnants left
by shoes, and I can't
seem to meet your eyes because
if I did your irises would
bloom into memories caked with soil.
So I stare at the rug, and I
moor myself in the
landscape of your knees
as I halfheartedly will the coarse
carpet to please take these
memories and deposit them
evenly with the dirt,
an offer for shoe impressions
as they craft weightless casts from
visions of your brown eyes settled in mine,
forcing the air to catch itself
and take a seat beside us.

Life Has Woven Me

by Dalal Sarnou

My life has woven me eccentrically,
With its dreariness and its sympathy.
I am the evil, and I am the good strangely
But my evil harms no one, and the good in me
Is unconditionally priceless and cannot but be
The smile on the face of the other I like to see.
I hate to forgiveness, and I love to tears, and Thee
Comprehend not what's for is this honesty,
I am the only Me, and no other creature but me
That I resemble what life has long knitted passionately.
Is the bliss that renders every flash back, every memory
Every pain, chagrin and every ecstasy an endless story
Of an outspoken lady who reminds you of Kafka's crazy
Metamorphosis, of Woolf's helpless moth ridiculously,
Of Soueif's Aisha in her identity, and this is but me.
I am the Arab that I am not, though in me it is the harmony,
And I am the one who stands on the threshold to observe closely
Life weaving me with its defeat and its glory.

I Can't Touch My Mother's Pickles

by Sr. Karen Zielinski

The pickles are tucked on the back lower left shelf of my refrigerator. I can do nothing with them. I cannot open the jar, nor can I eat them. And Loretta made good pickles.

My Mother made the jar of homemade dill pickles the week before she died. I took the pickles then, eleven years ago.

When my parents died, friends told me that as part of the grieving process, I should take an article of clothing, a book, or anything that they had used or touched. I took an army photo of my Dad, John, and his hand written list of people on his prayer list. When my Mom died, I took a hand written recipe for “klops,” or Polish meatballs, a cardigan sweater, and her jar of pickles.

I told my friend Faith about my Mom's pickles sitting for years in my fridge. Faith asked, “Why do you want to throw them out? What a wonderful memory of your Mom. Sometimes, I think we find our mothers where they lived... like in the kitchen. And with the pickles she left you.” Those pickles are staying right where they are; they are more than pickles. They are a special memory of my Mom.

I am in good company feeling this way. The Mayo Clinic says, “Reminders of a loss aren't just tied to the calendar. They can be anywhere — in sights, sounds and smells, in the news or on television programs. And they can ambush you, suddenly flooding you with emotions when you drive by the restaurant your wife loved or when you hear a song your son liked so much. Even years after a loss, you may continue to feel sadness and pain when you're confronted with such reminders. Although some people may

tell you that grieving should last a year or less, grieve at your own pace — not on someone else's expected timeline.”

The pain of my parents' deaths has lessened over time and the crying has too. But I still miss them. And seeing my Mother's pickles sometimes brings up how much I loved seeing her cook a wonderful meal for our family and friends. Every time I see a Detroit Lions or a Red Wings' game, I recall my Dad commenting on the players or coaches. These reminders of my parents bring back good memories of them. This is a normal part of coping with a loss.

Grief is not over in a set time. I think of it as a spiral. It ebbs and flows. Sometimes it comes back again with an anniversary of a loved one's death, or a holiday or special event that they might have loved. I know I am still grieving my parents' deaths. Although I feel I went through the stages of grief and loss of my parents, I am reminded that there is no time line on grieving.

The return of these feelings of grief isn't necessarily a setback in the grieving process. It's a reflection that the lives of others were important and that you grieve their loss and still miss them. Learning more about what to expect and how to cope with reminders of your loss can help make the grieving process a healthy, healing one.

I have cherished memories of my Mom and Dad. My Mom's pickles are in the refrigerator, a happy reminder to me of her life. I will move the pickles sometime. But not now.

I asked my brother Jim if he still had my Mom's homemade pierogis (stuffed dumplings) in his freezer.

“I do. I don't think they are edible anymore, but they are still in the freezer...”

Loretta, we remember you.



World Pieces ~ *by Laura Ott*

Terracotta

by Phil Robinson-Self

This is the place where the corpses were flung, dug by the condemned, shot and hurled in. A body takes time to toss like that, did you know? Two or three swings, the arms feeling the hanging weight, the pull. To and fro, then dumped, a centrifuge into the earth of me.

I try to make my embrace kind. I try to hold them like a mother would. But this is not a grave a mother would dig: my shape too desperate, too swift. I wish that places didn't have memories; I try to forget those inside me in the years to come. Yet I cannot bring myself to smother. I am used to passion, to ancient powerful hands fashioning my stuff into the life of clay. I am used to being created, not creating.

I try to hold them as I was held. I am not used to birthing the past. Earth and mud, I cannot give testimony, but spill contents spoken in raw bones, sinew.

When I Speak

by Nastassia Fifer

I speak in parables, since the truth for some is unbearable

I speak with metaphors so you'll understand me more

I speak through poetry, words spoken so beautifully

I speak in song, hoping you will sing along

My words, unspoken, speak to those who are broken

Soft spoken, but every word becomes a slogan

Ink & Soil

by Alex Anderson

Bright blood
pumps underneath
dark ink
embedded in my arm—
a permanent tribute to
the moors and the lowlands and the fog.
It is a love letter home,
with characters woven
together
like threads
in our family tartan.
The strokes remind me of the strong straight
wind
and our spines stretched long.
We stand together; we
STAND SURE.

I blow a kiss
to my beloved Stirlingshire,
with the chill in the air and the long sunrises.
There,
emboldened by the soil,
a prickly thistle
breaks through the earth,
blue and purple and red.
Here,
she dares to bloom
in errant,
unapologetic
radiance.

Alley Gollums

by Russell Brickey

Idaho superheats its highways and small
town slums beside the gardens of Babylon.

And when I step out of the gate, I am
confronted by a pale boy about my own age.

He is many things, none of them good:
shirtless, chest smudged with dirt,

bone-scrawny; he is a nasty riddle, smaller
than I am by quite a bit, but unafraid

because he has been worshiping at the feet
of his barefoot rocker king, also shirtless, perched

on the hood of his GTO in the dark
of his garage, beer in hand. I know

their kind from the cloud-boarders
of the neighborhood at home.

They watch me, surprised and interrupted.
Whatever I am doing, whatever I look like,

they vibrate like guitar strings. We meet in
a hardpan backstreet doused with oil; garages

open like caves; the paint peels, doors crack,
milky windows reflect the shells of cars. The undead

rotates his head, smiles a chilly quarter-
moon, eyes red-rimmed with hay-fever.

The head-banger on his hood settles slightly:
A cat contented to be fascinated when a bird

hops onto the drive. Not knowing what else to do,
I assume (what I hope) is an expression of

concerned, unimpressed concentration and take my steady gaze north and south toward the starry poles.

I could ask them if they'd seen a little dog lately.
It would be easy: a small mutt with curly

black hair, gone that morning. But I don't.
I know my playground violence is weak juju.

I picture a thundercloud, how its sunbaked crown
gleams with porcelain and its smoky underbelly

hangs with slag, how most give you warning,
like gods, distant and cruel, grumbling,

but there are those others, the armadas,
which come for you when you are alone

walking home from school
next to the fields. It would

take me years to learn the weather, so
I simply step back into my aunt's high fenced

tide-pool of genteel life and Edwardian certainty
and close the gate on the two oil can gollums.

We haven't yet found the little lost creatures
and probably never will. My aunt's garden

gleams under its crystal skin, and the Merry
Pranksters are dying out in the desert.

Their dead-ends are out there in gasoline alley,
waiting for the gate to reopen and something

they've seen before to stumble through,
as if that's the way it's supposed to be.



Lazy Daze ~ Laura Ott

Pieces of You and I

by Ruben Lopez

Look upon our bond
Only to ponder the broken picture,
Like the last digits in my bank account.
I only gave you my two sense;
Now here lies in between us
A white picket fence
And a dense fog of feelings.
Healing these wounds requires pieces that you and I don't have.
Rather sad how we fell apart.
Like a broken mirror that reflects all that is,
Time has shattered us into these pieces of you and
I.

A Love Letter to My Past

by Isabella Valentin

When my fake façade falls
Comfort me endlessly.
When it shatters every muscle
Don't cringe at the sight.
When the bones twist and crack
Carry me through the pain.
When the skin pales and wrinkles, ancient paper,
Smile for I may steal your youth.
When my voice falters, no longer singing
Speak to me lovingly.
When the labors of the day strike me down
Fight my battles.
When I return to dust
Never weep.

The time will come, too soon for all,
When my cries will be forgotten,
And the commotion of living sweeps my feet
Unable to breathe anything, but defeat.
A moment in time is all I desperately want
With you, one more sweet Memory
Before Reality sinks in and prevails.
My fake façade then reigns
Until we meet again.



A Mother's Guide to Exploration ~ *Stephen Carl*

Bath Time

by Eloydia Garcia

Mommy, look at my piggers,
And stubby little fingers.
I think I grew bigger,
As I splashed in the water;
Bet my butt by tomorrow,
You won't have to look down so low.
Every time bath time comes and goes,
Like a sponge mom, look at me grow!

The One Example I Was Given

by John Grey

My grandmother is wrapped in shawls
but still whacking away at
the keys of her ancient, non-electric Remington typewriter.
Her only company is cups of tea, cigarettes
and a framed PhD in English lit.

Spend time in her presence,
and she will shower you in quotes from Shakespeare,
and sometimes Thackeray, a personal favorite,
though never Dickens
and, unfairly to my mind,
not a soul from the 20th century.

She's been working on her manuscript
on the daughters of King Lear,
which she hopes to finish
before her mind gives out or her heart,
or some other body part,
all of which, as she puts it,
are becoming increasingly anti-intellectual by the day.

She has cataracts, which don't help
and arthritis in her left hand.
She tells me,
"This will be you someday.
Writing's not like an ordinary job.
You just can't retire from it. It retires you."

No one else in the family
has ever written anything but credit card applications.
So, literature has become this open secret
between a young man and his wrinkled forebear.
But it's hard to pursue the shining grail
when the only example set for you
is a fading light.

That was years ago of course.
Shakespeare, Thackeray, my grandmother,
even the modern writers she despised...all dead.
I'm still struggling to fit in this mold called a writer
while others around me
are being themselves with such ease.

Not to Worry!

by Daniel Barbare

As I mow, and think of a
hundred things I have to do,
I stop to look up through the
leaves of a tree—and for
a moment not worry about
a thing, but which is prettier—
a swallowtail butterfly or
a yellow pear tinged with red,
and instead of coming to a
conclusion, as both are just
as pretty, not make up my
my mind at all. Just enjoy.



A Leper's Perspective of Assisi ~ *Stephen Carl*

Introspection

by Denzell Anderson

Card activated the familiar door.
Familiar key reopened the house of limitless comfort.
Belongings of additional weight to my skeleton embraced the unvacuumed
floor.

There I sat, introspectively,
On 90 degrees of cushion where that and my skeleton articulated.
Such cushion indeed soft... sunken... flat.
BUT HEY;
Enough for me to relax.

(Synapse, Synapse.)

Full of thoughts, brain fat.
Full of thoughts that lamented for me to place them gently on the empty
pad.

Handel's Air Water Suite attempted to calm these thoughts.

Entonces, those thoughts uttered with jealousy and aggression.
Of neglect accustomed to lately.
All they wish was to play on the paper that I had no room to waste.
Introspectively, a place for them on the pad was already pre-determined.
They didn't understand.

Sensationally, an emerging thought was felt to be..repetitive..positive..
articulate..positive and repetitive.
Circulating reminders of immediate priorities that I detested placing on the
paper of that pad precisely because my surmising wasn't completed.

"But when are you ever?" it said chivalrously.

To avoid answering that unanswerable question,

Orbicularis oculi allowed the closing on my eyes.
I wanted acoustic and cognitive distractions to subside.
Turmoil on how to compromise my mind, relied.
O, what a wild ride
of
Introspection.

April and My Plastic Sunflowers

by *Mondal Sonnet*

The four plastic sunflowers in my bedroom-
The way they swayed in the ceiling fan's air
Were the *functional-year-long-April* for me.

Fallen twigs of meditating winter
And the deadwood sanity of their roughness;
The begging deserts of the patient summer
And the coarseness of their ravaged mirages;
The thin tune of the nostalgic autumn
And the restlessness of their alcoholic breezes-
Were never like fresh seasonal fruits to me
For I had the *functional-year-long-April* in my bedroom:
Those four plastic sunflowers.

Not long, my wedding and divorce-
Both in their infancy
Ended the perpetual April in my room
By demanding those yellow sunflowers
In the package of reparation.

It was four seasons ago, and the spring of April
Now seems to be a creepy plastic serpent,
Irresistibly insidious in its illusory cruelty,
as my new girl friend from the same city
Talked of bringing new plastic flowers in my room.

Belonging

by Eugen Bacon

IT SIFTED HIGH, fine as baby dust. Kayla noticed it unexpectedly. At first it was the way the girl, Pepper, held herself: her soft waist and new face too. Then it was the angle of her neck when he stepped into the room.

* * *

It seemed an eternal yesterday since Moonga's fever, the one that took her, since an impossible journey in a battered coupé across carrotty dust, rugged terrain. Two travellers and a casket juddered through a blood-red desert dappled with sapphire oases – mirages. Heat seeped and sizzled in airy waves. A melancholy cry from sun-baked galahs announced proximity.

Taz sat mute in the silence of men. He was Kayla's... rock orchid: large, leathery, unassuming. He weaved into her sentiments to make her happier, stronger. He helped her reseed herself when she was trapped in a scream. Now he lifted one hand from the steering wheel. The solid weight of her husband's comfort touched Kayla's shoulder before his palm snatched away to manoeuvre a pothole.

The moon was big and bright when they drove up high country, when they slid into a sultry village named Adnanuara, the land of running water. Tribes with painted faces emerged from a dirt cloud and hollered consultation with ancestral spirits. Out came cabbage palms, half-nude dancers chanting around a coffin of foreign teakwood, not bunya pine.

'Spirit a land!' cried the great chief, Wundurra.

'Ururu!' cried the tribe.

'Spirit a sunset!'

'Ururu!'

They sang of the Wirinun, sorcerer of the mount.

'Ururu!'

They sang of Moonga, the lost one, a wayward aborigine who fled the Goonagulla, the sky of her gods; the Kurrin, the sand of the ancestors; the Kimba, the bushfire of her people. She sought destiny in the land of the white man, and found her Wirake, her soul friend, a pale face named Kayla.

'Ururu!'

They sang of the loveliness of Moonga, same beauty that besotted the Wirinun.

'Ururu!'

The sorcerer seeped morning from Moonga's eyes so she might become immortal and be with him.

'Ururu!'

At the end of the smoking ceremony, Great Chief chewed a maple leaf. With an apostrophe of spit, he made a paste and rubbed it on the casket to wipe waywardness out of the lost one. He implored Wollowra, the great eagle, to guide Moonga's spirit into the land of the Dreaming.

'Ururu!'

To mend a broken soul-hood, Great Chief permitted a new bond. She was an orphaned girl, Aboriginal, aged ten or twelve. Kayla regarded the muddied braids fat as giant kelp, forced her gaze on the girl's face to avoid half-formed breasts that pouted bare. Apricot eyes, cracked lips chalk white... the child's simplicity was pure.

Kayla smiled. She wanted to own that innocence, to protect it. She stretched her arm. 'Hi. I'm Kayla.'

'Pepper Kourri,' said the child with wilderness eyes. 'That my name.'

A child driven by instinct, one who took slumber on fragile cliffs, on Jurassic fungus beneath naked Coolabah trees, wilderness that conversed with timeless stars because the loose sun was no longer available: it had long dipped beneath the ardent horizon...

How would Pepper fit into a pharaoh divan with an ivory bed head, into snow-white linen in an air-conditioned beach apartment in Port Melbourne? How would Pepper Kourri belong?

* * *

Belong she did, too well. Climbed to a place of passion Kayla understood, too well.

Pepper's gaze for Taz held a dreamy kind of sadness, the tender kind of one who yearned. Suddenly, hair she had always locked in braids opened up.

As it had always been locked up, Kayla was astonished to find the true colour of Pepper's hair when it came loose. It was reddish-brown, the colour of stained ruby.

Kayla fingered Pepper Kourri's hair as they stood on the terrace, watching Taz play ball with their pet terrier, Woofie.

'Loof! Loof!'

Kayla nuzzled her chin against Pepper's rust-red head and spoke against it. 'You love him,' she said.

Blue-Collar Twister

by Mondal Sonnet

Sweat tries to swim upwards through the hairs
of a labourer building the statue of the herald
but fails and falls in the soil sucked up by heat and
Vanishes as a struggling animal in quicksand;
Dreams drain and entity turns into fossils as slippers
walk over it.

His weapons are a chisel and spade;
He lifts them to protest but vacuum wailing in the curves
of his muscles make it fall again on the mummified ground,
just to dig, dig the ground for
the Herald's statue must stand firm
or his existence will be buried under its
falling weight...

Toils will evaporate with the smile of the moon
The dawn will hear sounds again-
sounds of iron striking against rocks.
The air waits to weave those sounds
and strike a twister with them-
Tall enough for the world to see
bold enough to step over mountains
Clear enough to show the waving hands
begging a day out of slavery.



Möwen ~ *Laura Hatry*

Maps

by Ally Fulton

We become cartographers and
find the older we are,
the more we see
the world only from a
bird's eye view—

Where trees lose their trunks
to leafy tops and faces disappear
into heads of hair. Where buildings
have no doors or windows and lights
relish their role as divine constellations.
Where friends may be strangers and rivers may be veins
because there's no way
to tell the difference from this high—

We scrupulously begin
to chart our maps, never
bothering to mark which way is north,
and hushing the ink when it tries to tell
the street lamps that holiness
is restricted to the skies.

Blue Zone

by Russeel Brickey

Cool as the poles, she ignites the sun.
Her breath comes out blue as the
Ocean in her eyes. She breaths blue fire.

Heat falls like a curtain around her.
Houses gleam.
Air blue: day, a zone of burning sky.

By this time, the maps have been drawn.
We could stand on the peaks and gaze out
Over the known Earth forever and come

Back to this perfect blue peace in green space.
Her children pray. The doors are open for her.
We pray and she prays, and what she prays

Is blue and pure as the first ocean.
Feel the path of birds blown across the sky.
Follow the cross of jet trails

Trailblazing the dome of space.
All for the brilliance of sweet green Earth,
That garden which she breaths out

Ever and ever becomes creation!
Turning away, her children give life in
That zone of the livelong sun.

That long living earthbound sun.
Heart in her breast as she takes it in—
The heat and wonder of its forever living curve.

Curiosity

by Michael T. Smith

I heard a noise somewhere in my head
And I went looking for it -
Into the et cetera of my thoughts.
Through blinking windows
Shut with a shrug hard
I went down a rabbit hole of a perfumed heart.
Now, I remember you like the sound
Of a deep sea within a conch;
Now, I remember you as Layla
Remembers Majnun.

With a wooden chin,
You decided you weren't going to grow old,
And this made perfect sense to me.
In the moments of small death,
You confronted time in a black alley
And spoke on phone lines
Crossing the chasm of sorrow.

And headless body in hand
I stumbled down to Kashmir
With my burnt emotions
In solid tow.
What could you know, but
The rest all just faded away; it all
Just faded
Away



Birth of Endurance ~ *Laura Ott*

Jazz

by Alex Anderson

To stand and notice is
To dance and listen and
To coax life out of cold dead
things.

The brazen brass
Beats
Bashful blush,
And the ivory black animal
Bites the hush.

It's the bile
Of hot metal
And the prick
Of hot keys,
The tapping of fingers like
The lapping of tongues—
Signs of life from cold dead
things.

There's art in the speakeasy,
Like molten marrow
In the music.
The words come easy
And the rhythm
Cuts deep.

The First Plunge

by *Brittany N. Krantz*

New neon suit stretched tightly across my torso,
sticky hands gripping the ladder's warm metal railing.
Sliding foot onto the ladder's first step,
heart feeling like it's about to beat out of my chest.

My seven-year-old body trembling, I climb the ladder
to the unsteady rhythm of my intensifying pulse.

First stepping onto the sandpaper-textured board,
slowly beginning the descent outwards,
like a ship's prisoner about to walk the plank
and plunge into the abysmal unknown.

Walk forward slowly, keeping eyes focused outward,
not once daring to look down.
Never. Look. Down.
Ever.

Finally meeting my final destination of the board's edge,
toes dangle over like ten tiny monkeys hanging on for dear life.

Breathing deeply, I inhale the the aroma of chlorine, inflatable rubber, and
coconut oil,
the unofficial scent combination indicative of summer's long-awaited arrival.

So easy to turn back, to climb down the ladder,
and pretend I don't care about jumping.
No. Not this year, which is MY year to make the transition
from kiddie pool to cool kid,
from sissified to sophisticated,
from cowardly to courageous.

Fists tight, knees bent, resist urge to count—inhale—
My knees straighten and my feet leave the rough textured board.

Reverberations of the board bouncing against the metal springs
confirm the reality of my decision—to jump!
Speeding downward like a bird with no wings,
my body zooms straight for the water's surface.

PLISSSH!

Shattering the water's smooth surface,
continuing the descent down,
wondering if my feet will meet the bottom
of the pool's deepest depths.

Tap. There it is!
Pushing off the submerged concrete the instant it meets my feet,
body shoots upward towards the water's surface,
like a recoiled spring—or a torpedo! flying into action.

Arms and legs flailing clumsily in uncoordinated unison,
a combination of movement chaos,
the water's surface—the finish line.

AHHH!

Bursting through the water's surface,
I exhale strongly,
filling my lungs with the victorious mixture of oxygen—
and years of long-awaited triumph.

My Café Booth

by Eloydia Garcia

I don't hate his tattoos
I just hate that I can't see them all
He is a piece of art
I even dig that half seen skull
That hides under his shirt
It peeks at me from my booth
It winks and smiles
Showing a missing tooth
People stare at him oddly
But I see the art inside
Yet he ducks his head at their glares
And tries to hide

Another is pulling up her sleeves
To hide self-inflicted scars
She sips on her coco
As kids stare and laugh from the bar
But I'm looking at a book
A piece of paper sticking out
Half an interact drawing I see
And I can hear her shout
"Look, here I am
Look here, this is me
I'm not just my scar
I'm an artist, I am free"
While she hides her head
And another tear is shed.

Another sits alone
His clothes hand-me downs
Others point and stare
Whispers go around
But I watch him leave
Stopping by a beggar
And gives his only dime
I'll hear it chime forever
He may be poor
But he understands
Money is empty
Fills not the heart but the hand

I stop and tip my waitress extra
Her baby bump is showing
Pay for the tabs of the artist
And say "I must be going"
Many things I see on Sundays
From my little café booth
When I look close enough
I can see the truth
Many come to give me lessons
They have learned in life
They never have to speak
That's the art of strife
It paints all of us
And if you let it be
Covers up who we really are
Till none of us can see.



Whitney II - *Laura Hatry*

Stoop

by Erin Grogan

Concrete and bare
and cold beneath my growing feet.
The smell of stale smoke
mixed with heat and sweat
where my grandmother would sit
and laugh
and tease
and smoke.

A rough sanctuary
where knees were mended
tears were soothed
and summers spent.

Your coarse and sandy steps
that began and ended each childhood adventure,
the watchtower
that saw me through each adolescent trial,
as much as any parent.

You knew my friends
as well as I.
Hardened, callous, compressed.
My stoop.



Puerto ~ *Laura Hatry*

Irony

by Eloydia Garcia

Two men sat out one night,
Beneath the dim moonlight,
One was hot,
One was cold,
One was young,
One was old,
One had youth,
One had fire,
One had warmth,
The other desire,
All night they sat,
In anger they spat,
While one died old,
And the other died cold.



Whitney I - *Laura Hatry*

Box

by Michael T. Smith

I want to take every cliché
And stick it in a box, post it
Post-haste, in haste, and let
The error scrub clean the taint of
Pedestrian inroads like cow
Trails in Boston. I can't stand it -
The love of millions turned into
Waste, a sewage system of
Linguistic fountains:
Words rhyme because all we
Hear is one word repeated
Time over time. I want the "I"
In my I to be the why in
Why I owe you...
Cubed, so I can see all
Things at once
To allow newly
Trod grass to be young
Because the proverb itself
Is always a greener thing.



Bats in the Line of Fire ~ *Stephen Carl*

Shanking the Skyline

by Stephen Cruikshank

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e l b v i n g a
s d o c r a
t h e b l u e
s k y .

Woman Slowly Dying

by De Misty D. Bellinger-Delfeld

Her head is too big for her shoulders,
and her hair is too big for her head.

She walks as if her toes all depend
on the second toe, and her toenails are too
long.

Too big for this century, with her
curls creeping over her back,

Over her face, her shoulders, reaching
down into her bosom, tresses like fingers.

Her hair shines like only sable could:
iridescent and too bright in the sun.

This is how a crow is beautiful—
kaleidoscopic colors, all concentrated in black.

This is how she is beautiful—
decaying bit by bit like a magic show.

At the Edge of Her Grave Site

by Isabella Valentin

The night's gloom
 Lingered into the dawning day.
The first drop of spring
 Planted itself on my eyelash.
As I blinked, it slid
 Down my cold cheek.
“Look! He cries,”
 The mourners shocked.
Not even the saddest,
 Most desperate memory
Could make me tear
 And stain that white cross.
“She's gone, she's gone,”
 As if I didn't know.
But this deep dent in the ground,
 Wooden box, cement stone
Couldn't stop her from
 Crawling, climbing into thoughts.
“Off to heaven,”
 Some kept saying, hope in their words.
Are you so sure?
 She never liked white anyway.
“There he goes.”
 Off to the next death.



Up There ~ *Orsolya Karacsony*

God is in the Garden

by Alyson Parker

Where the purple hanging bud
Blooms like the color of fresh blood pounding
Persistent, steady, strong
A symphony of perfect timing
First the Lenten roses, a stand out tulip, yellow primrose
Along the perimeter
Each one cresting out from the long dark night
And I pick up leaves in solidarity
And breathe deep into the belly
Where new life grows
Eyes to gather the visual treasures of
Wet water crystals on bright green leaves
Gossamer grids of holy attention to gathering
Resources for the purpose of creating beauty
Yes, God is in the garden.

Father's Ink *by Eloydia Garcia*

In the years of your accompaniment
This ink sowed creation, like God,
Flowering the beauty of birth,
The godliness of mountains,
The humbleness of shepherds,
The mightiness of a song act,
And combined the metaphorical
Hands of two lovers hearts,
With the promise of eternal love.
And the ink held an aroma,
Sweet as the ever glades,
And strong like fresh lavender, that
Awoke the cinema of the imagination
-A girl by the bank plucking wild berries
Smiling with seeds between her teeth
Stained as black as the ink that created her-
And it sunk deep between the fibers
Fossilizing the last great battle of an empire
-A man alone commanding the army
To the almighty God he raises his sword
Then gives the charging command-.

If only you knew the life you gave it,
It breathed well and spoke often,
When you were here to tend the fire,
And listen to it ramble on and on.
But now it resembles that stain

On your favorite white t-shirt,
An eyesore that you wish to wash away
It's potent of vinegar and sauerkraut
Bringing about nightmares
Of snakes on trees and rotten apples
The true stench of war without the glory
It screeches like a hawk before the pray.
It seeps and blurts out words
Leaking straight through the parchment
That has turned a muddy murky brown
And so I leave it to rot by the ashes
As it turns the room eerie and sows in cobwebs
Instead of great glimmering seas.
And sometimes I peep through to spot it
See if it may ever ripen again
But there it glares back at me in silence
Like the god of death himself
Standing beside the fire place
The tombstone of your passing.

Anniversary Gifts

by Michael T. Smith

1

Rushed, with a kiss with other small trinkets
And a hundred “I love you’s” on post-its.

2

You got me chardonnay from Eighty Two -
My favorite – and we hummed folk songs and blues.

3

Bellogio’s - where we first went to dine
And bicycle bits - new hobby of mine.

4

A movie night: When Harry Met Sally
I like...but it’s your pick on the tally.

5

A discounted wine bought the night before
But worse is how your card’s words are so poor

6

All of our gifts are in quotation marks:
Like our separate trips to water parks.

7

Nothing but organizers for the shelf
My present for you...I kept for myself

8

An early August the 8th, cold and blue
The golden ring I form’ly gave to you...



Dining Alfresco ~ *Laura Ott*

The House That Has Eight Grandkids

by De Misty D. Bellinger-Delfeld

Has, too, a reticent man
Who keeps his lawn
Immaculate
With flowering trees for
Song birds;

Has too, two little dogs
Barking in syncopation
With my footfalls and the traffic
From Summer Street;

And has
a grandmotherly woman
Who gives us cookies in December,
questioning our religion.

At the National Monument

by Phil Robinson-Self

My daughter's hand is small in mine, her stern eyes fixed on history.
This is concrete, I think, and steel.

She'd like to know, incessantly, what the inscriptions on the columns mean. I can't make them out, though I do my best to decipher. Unsatisfied, she sits and tells me that this was a path chosen some time ago. Purposeful, she tells me that this is a place to gather: to commemorate, to commiserate, celebrate, exonerate. I try to tell her that these things are all different, but she insists they're the same. This is pewter, lead and brass. Cross-legged and deliberating, she tells me of times when some of us came here wielding implements for the application of graffiti, when some of us made speeches to crowds real and imagined. Sometimes they wept, or were glad.

Patiently, she describes how the moss is cleaned from the cracks by relatives, charities, prisoners. We sit and look. There is plaster, stone, and worn paint. Education, my daughter explains understandingly, is difficult when it can't be fun. There are parades run past, marches and riots. Rewritings, bullet holes, bulldozers. Slowly, my daughter traces the inscriptions. Here are unfamiliar lists of names, here is a map, the drawing of the borders, erasure of the old lines. Here she marks out obfuscation, a statue at top, flowers at bottom.

Pointing, she shows me how at the end of her small finger we can see the centre of roads, a pause in memory. I nod. This is grey concrete, looks marble in the rain.



Thinker ~ ???

Regrets

by Gary Beck

Many mumble
what they should have
could have
if only
 luck,
 fate,
 family,
 friends,
helped
 at decisive moments
 changing
 failure
to coveted success.

The Digger

by Eloydia Garcia

I handed him a shovel and told him to dig.
He started and went six feet under.
“This much?” He asked me.
“Not enough, Dig longer.”
So he did as he was told,
And dug till the break of day.
“This much?” he asked once more.
“No, keep going,” I say.
So he kept going,
Till he reached the core,
But still I shook my head,
And said, “Dig some more.”
So he dug straight to China,
Through the world and back.
Still I walked away,
“Not yet, go back.”
Finally he bowed his head,
“I don’t get it!” he cried.
“What’s the measure of love?
You said you knew but you lied!”
I shook my head in awe,
“You keep on digging boy,
But never come to realize,
Love doesn’t have units,
It has no true size.
You could keep on digging,
But love goes deeper than the skin.
If you asked if that’s enough,
I’d just send you back again.”

To Study History

by Ally Fulton

If the sky is silk then
why won't it cling
to my finger tips? What
I'd give to touch
the jumbled air, fabric
tides that catch
my tongue,
taste like chaos, full bodied,
a palette of grey
swollen over years.
My voice paints
the sidewalks in
charcoal flint and
pebble doves,
hoping to grasp
the symmetry of faces and faith
in bent knees, but
it's hard to find
the grey of that man's coat
on a street corner
in November sixty years ago.

No People Were Killed, Only Numbers

by John Grey

Czar shot dead,
His family massacred,
Rasputin, "The Mad Monk"
dumped in the river,
banner unfurled, the red of peasants' blood –

I look back at all history
from such a distance
that it can't get out from
being dates or facts
or cause and effect
or just plain philosophy.

No one is really dragged
out from the beds
by pistol-packing reds.
No young girl is executed
for no reason but her ancestry.
There's no people involved.
Just names.

For all I know,
1916 could have pulled the trigger.
Or maybe it was the battleship Potemkin.
And did Lenin ever have to take a piss?
What about Tolstoy?
Before the icepick,
did he ever use a toothpick?

Rasputin at least
has a reputation
that almost dragged him
into the twentieth century.
But sadly, not even
a womanizing faith-healer
has enough cachet
to be any more than
a Russian Revolution footnote these days.

As for the 9 million who died,
that's one more than 8,999,999
and much much less.

Authors' Biographies

Denzell Anderson is a 2016 graduate of Lourdes University. Denzell has been interested in poetry since 2012. He has submitted and been accepted into *The Tau* since 2014 *Miro Eso* and *Enigmatic* for 2014, *You*, and *The Beauty of Life as We Know It* in 2015 and *Introspection* for 2016-2017.

Eugen Bacon MSc studied at Maritime Campus, Greenwich University, less than two minutes' walk from The Royal Observatory of the Greenwich Meridian. Her arty muse fostered within the baroque setting of the Old Royal Naval College, Eugen found herself a computer postgraduate mentally re-engineered into creative writing. She has finished a masters and PhD in writing at Swinburne University of Technology. Eugen has published over 50 short stories and creative articles, and has recently completed a creative non-fiction book and a literary speculative novel. Her short story 'A puzzle piece' was shortlisted in the Lightship Publishing (UK) international short story prize 2013 and is published in *Lightship Anthology 3*. Eugen's creative work 'Being Marcus' and other works are published in *New Writing*, *The International Journal for the Practice and Theory of Creative Writing*.

Danny P. Barbare attended Greenville Technical College where his poetry won The Jim Gitting's Award. And his poetry has been nominated for Best of the Net. His poems have recently appeared in many Christian print and online journals such as: *First Day*, *Rhubarb*, *Friends Journal*, *Doxa*, *Sisters Today*, *Christianity and the Arts*, and *Prince of Peace*. He resides in the Upstate of the Carolinas with his wife and family and small dog, Miley. And he says he loves to travel to the Blue Ridge Mountains and the lowlands of South Carolina. He says he spends much of his time writing while doing work as a janitor at the YMCA.

Gary Beck has spent most of his adult life as a theater director, and as an art dealer when he couldn't make a living in theater. He has 11 published chapbooks. His poetry collections include: *Days of Destruction* (Skive Press), *Expectations* (Rogue Scholars Press). *Dawn in Cities*, *Assault on Nature*, *Songs of a Clerk*, *Civilized Ways* (Winter Goose Publishing). *Perceptions*, *Displays*, *Fault Lines and Tremors* will be published by Winter Goose Publishing. *Conditioned Response* (Nazar Look). His novels include: *Extreme Change* (Cogwheel Press) *Acts of Defiance* (Artema Press). *Flawed Connections* (Black Rose Writing). His short story collection, *A Glimpse of Youth* (Sweatshoppe Publications). His original plays and translations of Moliere, Aristophanes and Sophocles have been produced Off Broadway. His poetry, fiction and essays have appeared in hundreds of literary magazines. He currently lives in New York City.

De Misty D. Bellinger-Delfeld teaches creative writing at Fitchburg State University in Massachusetts. She has an MFA in creative writing from Southampton College and a Ph.D. in English from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. You can find her recent work in *Assay: A Journal of Nonfiction Studies*, *Necessary Fiction*, and *Forklift, Ohio*. In June of 2015, she was a full fellow at Vermont Studio Center. DeMisty's website is demistybelling.com.

Russell Brickey has collections out from *Wild Leaf Press*, *Spuyten Duyvil Press*, and *Aldritch Books*. He studied creative writing at the University of Oregon and Purdue University.

Stephen Carl is a junior at Lourdes University. He is currently working towards a degree in English and was also in *The Tau* last year. His involvements on campus include Campus Ministry and The Drama Society.

Stephen Cruikshank is a PhD Candidate in the department of Modern Languages and Cultural Studies at the University of Alberta, Canada. He is the recipient of a SSHRC Doctoral Fellowship and conducts research primarily on Latin America and Brazil. An avid writer and publisher of poetry, Stephen is inspired from his travels to the South and his life in Canada.

Nastassia Fifer is an alumna with a Master of Arts in Liberal Studies degree. She is now pursuing an MBA with aspirations in entrepreneurship. She is currently the author of "Stories from the Heart," published in 2011. She enjoys writing, singing, traveling, and Italian cuisine.

Ally Fulton is a student at Oberlin College who will graduate in May 2016 with a B.A. in English and Biology. She has always sought to take advantage of as many books she can get her hands on, looking for new ideas to dream up, not-yet-created works of art to fashion, and words to write and rewrite. Her interests include book arts, letterpress printing, papermaking, poetry, and creative nonfiction, all mediums that allow her to explore and unravel the tangled connections between history and memory. She is especially captivated by where and how we engage with our surroundings works to fill the gaps and anchor us in a more active participation with the environment and ourselves.

Eloydia Garza is a lacrosse player at Lourdes University and loves to do everything under the sun. She is always trying new things to help broaden her experiences so she can better write them. In her junior year of high school, she won first place in the Ohio Poetry Contest for her poem, Tanka, and honorable mention for her comedy piece. If it wasn't for Shel Silverstone and Dr. Seuss, she would've never seen what poetry can do. And if it wasn't for Laura Ruby's *Wall and Wing*, she would've never fell in love with reading nor understood that imagination has no limitations. Her favorite poems for now and always are Langston Hughes' *Weary Blues* and Alfred Noyes' *The Highway Man*.

John Grey is an Australian poet, US resident. Recently published in *New Plains Review*, *South Carolina Review*, *Gargoyle* and *Silkworm* work upcoming in *Big Muddy Review*, *Main Street Rag* and *Spoon River Poetry Review*.

Erin Grogan is a PhD student studying Interdisciplinary Fine Arts (Theatre) at Texas Tech University. Erin hold her MFA in Writing for the Stage and Screen from Lesley University and is a practicing playwright. Her full length play *Rathbone* will be produced at Texas Tech University in February 2016. Besides creative writing, Erin has also presented scholarly work at a number of conferences including the "Performing the Archive" conference in Galway, Ireland in July 2015.

Laura Hatry is a PhD candidate at the Universidad Autónoma of Madrid, with a thesis entitled "Power, Violence and Politics in Latin American Film and Literature." Her research focuses mainly on cinematographic adaptations of Latin American literary works, and her work has been published in many specialized journals and books. She has also translated books and essays from and to Spanish, English and German and has participated as a speaker in international conferences in Spain, England, the United States, and Argentina. Her work as a visual artist has been shown at exhibitions in the United States, Spain, France, Germany, Canada, Austria, and the United Arab Emirates.

Orsolya Karácsony is a PhD student at the University of Debrecen, Hungary. One day, she hopes to be an expert in film and spatial studies. As an artist, she considers herself an enthusiastic beginner. She likes experimenting with different techniques and themes and venturing into new fields - sometimes with quite interesting results. In the future, she would like to find a balance between her scholarly and artistic work.

Ruben Lopez is a junior and a psychology major at Lourdes. He plays men's lacrosse for the University and plans to attend graduate school for clinical psychology. In his spare time, he enjoys composing music and writing poetry.

Sonnet Mondal is the founder of *The Enchanting Verses Literary Review*. He has authored eight books of poetry and has read at *Struga Poetry Evenings, Macedonia, 2014*, *Uskudar International Poetry Festival, Istanbul, 2015* and the *International Poetry Festival of Granada, Nicaragua, 2016*. He has been a featured writer at the *International Writing Program, University of IOWA-Silk Routes Project* and his latest works have appeared in *The Mcneese Review*, *Sheepshead Review*, *Clackamas Literary Review*, *The Fieldstone Review*, *Two Thirds North* and *Sanskrit magazine*. Most recently his poems in Slovenian translation have been aired at the Literary Nocturno program of the Public Radio & Television of Slovenia. His poetry has been translated into Hindi, Italian, Slovenian, Slovakian, Chinese, Turkish, Macedonian, Bengali and Arabic. (Website www.sonnetmondal.com)

Alyson Parker started her writing career as a young child when she religiously contributed original works to her diary every night. Her way of thinking has evolved from boy crazy to crazy crazy to managed outrage at what she considers a false approximation of God's glory manifest on our one beautiful Earth. It is her hope that with a little grace and grit we can all manage to get a little closer to the Garden.

Phil Robinson-Self teaches at the University of York, UK. His interests span English literature and culture of the late medieval and early modern periods, pedagogical theory and academic leadership. He writes flash fiction for pleasure, and has been published in *Apocrypha* and *Abstractions*, *Paragraph Planet*, *Flash Fiction Magazine*, *Burningword Literary Journal*, and elsewhere. On balance, he finds the world to be better than people tend to think.

Dalal Sarnou is a university lecturer (at the English department, Mostaganem university), a poetess and a young academic researcher interested in postcolonial studies, cultural studies, transnational literatures, border studies, Orientalism, Feminism, Islamic feminism, CDA and DA, and Arab women writings in particular. She has already published two academic papers on contemporary Arab women writers, a paper on Youth vs. Arab revolutions, and has published a series of poems on electronic websites. Now, she is working on hyphenation and the perception of the diasporic consciousness in the works of Arab American women writers and the specificity of the literary works of Anglophone Arab writers. She is also a poet. Many of her poems were published online, and in anthologies.

Michael T. Smith teaches at Purdue University where he recently finished his graduate work. He is teaching in a transdisciplinary program. Most recently, his poetry has been featured in the journals *Taj Mahal* and *Symbolism*.

Isabella Valentin is a junior at Lourdes University, working on her Theology major and English minor. She loves writing poetry and hopes to one day be a published writer. Wattpad is her love. Although God is her passion, she wishes to graduate with a bachelors in English in the future. This is her third time being accepted into *The Tau*.



**Call for Submissions
for
2016-2017 Tau**

Deadline: December 31, 2016

Please email submissions to Tau@lourdes.edu

You may submit up to five, double-spaced entries. Each one should be in a separate, Word-compatible file. Accepted formats are Word (.docx), Word 1997-2003 (.doc), and Rich Text Format (.rtf).

Please do not include your name in the document or the filename of the document. Use the title of your work as the name of the file.



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