

PRISM 2010

A publication of the LTU Artists' Guild
Spring 2010

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A journal of art and literature featuring work by students, staff, faculty and
alumni of Lawrence Technological University

Prism was founded in 1978 by Prof. Paula Stofer

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A note from the Editors

A prism is defined as a medium that changes the appearance of what is viewed through it. The same can be said of this collection of works included in PRISM2010. The creativity and imagination from the students, alumni, faculty and staff of Lawrence Technological University is presented in this publication. PRISM2010 is compiled and distributed by the Artists' Guild.

Prism was founded in 1978 by then-student and later faculty member at LTU, Paula Stofer. Prism was only printed for two years until Dr. Melinda (Weinstein) Phillips with generous backing from the College of Arts and Sciences, resurrected the dormant PRISM in 2000. Since then, every year has led to a more refined collection. The Artists' Guild continuously strives to expand its presence on campus and evoke creativity from students, faculty and alumni.

We would sincerely like to thank the College of Arts and Sciences and the department of Humanities, Social Sciences and Communications for their support. Additionally, we give special thanks to Sara Lamers for her guidance in completing the finished PRISM. Also, thank you to all contributors for their inspiring pieces.

We hope that in our last year as Editors-in-Chief, the school and students will continuously support this publication for years to come. We had a wide range of strong visual submissions this year and we hope you will appreciate the work as much as we did composing it together.

Enjoy.
Elsida Konakciu and Ireli Xhani
and the Prism2010 Editorial Board

Editors' Quote

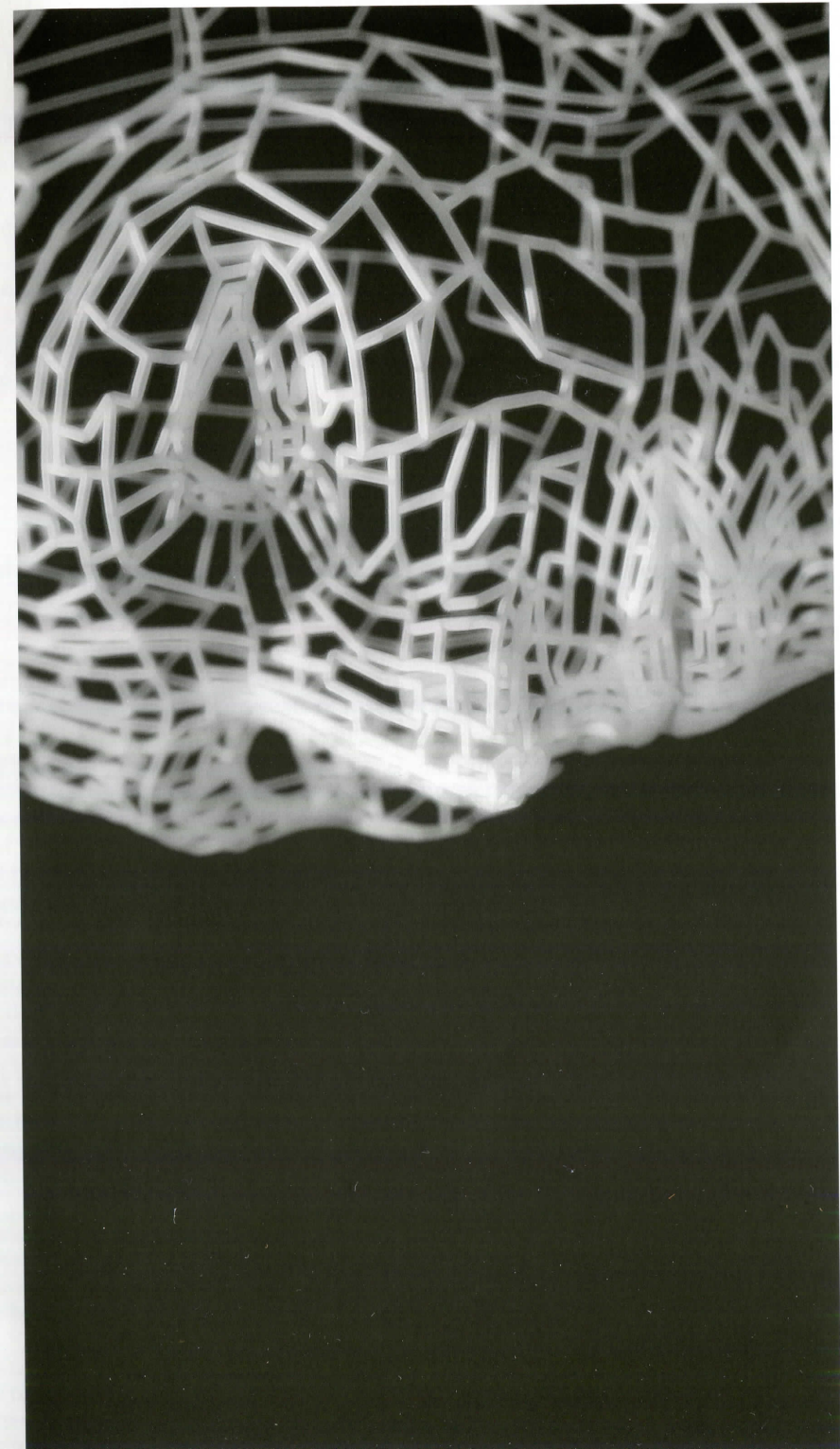
"The job of the artist is always to deepen the mystery." *Francis Bacon*

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Face Structure *Brandon Davis* Digital Model

Going Home

Keith Fox

0600 hours in Afghanistan.
The air is still cold and calm
I stare out of the green canvas tent
missing the smells of grassy meadows, home.

I check my pack
Morphine sticks, pressure bandages.
I inspect and clean my rifle
I strap on my body armor.

0900 hours in Afghanistan.
The air heats up as wind stirs the sand,
it gets hotter than Dallas in July here.
Command sends word

Alpha Company is moving out.
A dusty street in an otherwise bustling village,
children from Bagram sit on mud walls
watching us take up position

There is a look on their faces,
a look of concern, but they never seem scared,
robbed of their childhood and forced to choose,
giving in or holding onto freedom

1100 hours in Afghanistan.
Soldiers pour out of the Chinooks,
green school buses dropping us off
as we fan out into defensive positions

The streets are now empty
Alpha Company advances.
Window sills are stacked with sandbags,
little protection from the unseen enemy

1200 hours in Afghanistan.
I step out from an alley into a field of gravel.
A hard pinch on my back takes my breath away.
Now on the ground, I roll over.

I look back to the alley
clenching dirt with my hands
a child with a rifle emerges from the shadows,
I look up to the sky.

1200 hours in Dallas.
The children are playing,
squirt guns fire streams of ammunition
relief from the heat of the afternoon sun.

I feel the grass in my hands.
My family is out on the deck,
I can smell the BBQ
I close my eyes.

Just Living

Kit DuRocher

His skin burned brown from years on the land,
old eyes grown weary from years of just living,
legs crossed, hat hung upon well-worn boot
begins a jerky dance.

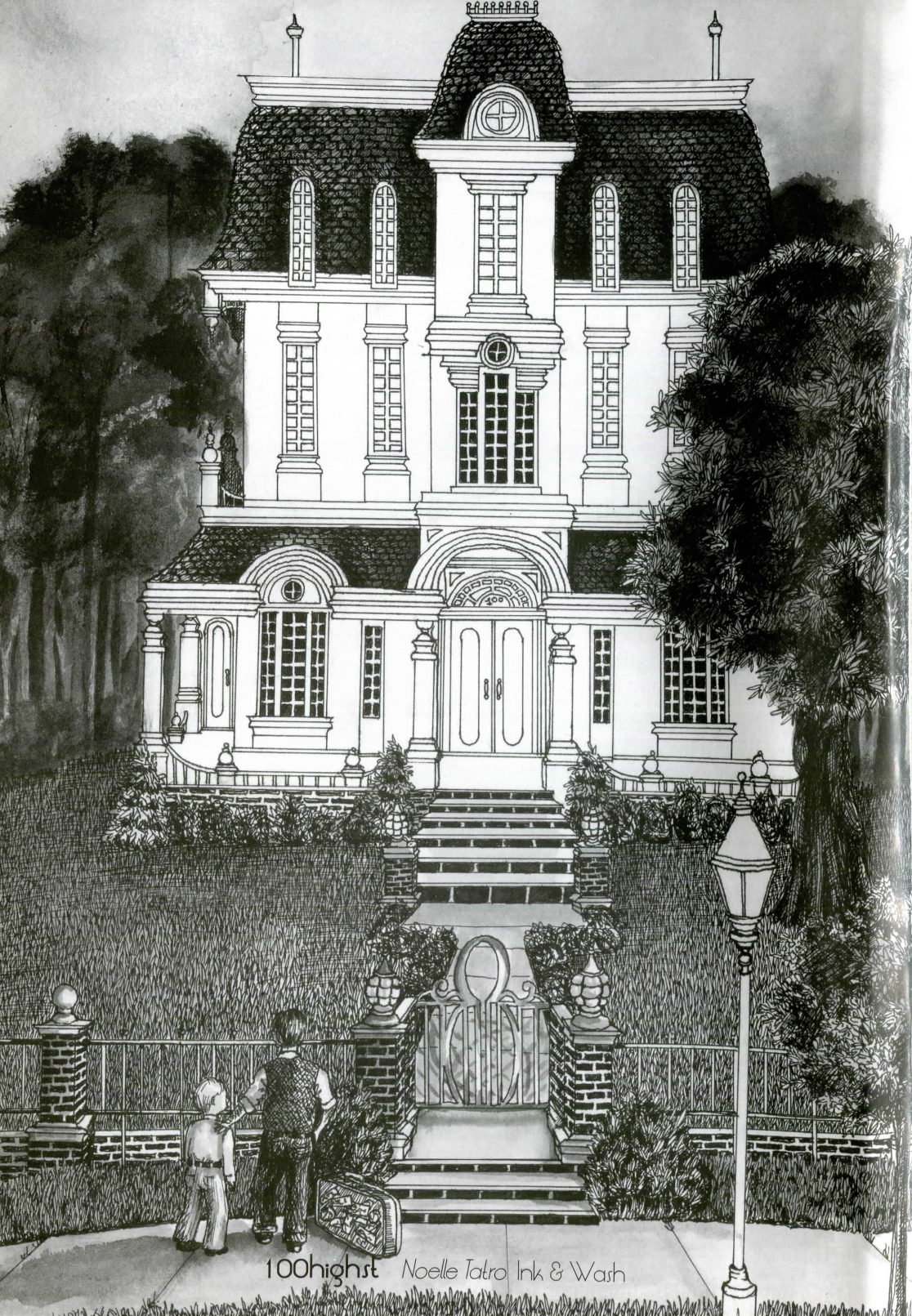
His child, swaddled in cotton so soft,
cuddled within his work worn hands,
babbling softly as she rests her gaze
upon his craggy face.

His focus intent on the doctor before him,
avoiding his little girl's wide-eyed gaze,
he draws in a deep, dry, desperate breath
and asks for answers, unwanted.

The old country doctor, eyes weary and sad,
exuding compassion from deep in his soul,
hating his job at this moment, again,
delivers the fateful blow.

His eyes, that poor tortured father's sad
eyes close tightly; his breath rasps in pain.
Denial erupts; disbelief rears its head,
he battles the truth without words.

As tremors of anguish vibrate his being,
he releases that last strand of hope.
Then, motherless child held close to his heart,
he leaves to get on with just living



100highst Noelle Tatlo Ink & Wash

The Mysterious Sea

Jennifer Ross

The water is ice
stinging our skin as it pours over us.
The waves swallow our boat
violently rocking us like a cradle.

Fresh fish line the pots.
Their wire frames let crab in
but they struggle to get back out.

Heaving them overboard,
a buoy floats atop to fight off the waves.
For several weeks this battle will go on.

Will the buoy surrender to the deep dark water?
Or will it prevail to help us reveal our fate?

We have not slept. The vessel does not stop.

It feels like Christmas.
Those joyous moments with family,
waiting to open presents from Santa.

Our pots, like gifts from Santa.
We don't know what's inside but
hope what we've asked for.

Pots, loaded with hundreds of crab scrambling
to get back in the sea.
They are yanked onto the wooden planks.

Shrieks of excitement burst out from the crew.
Santa was good to us this year.

Heavy eyes and sore muscles have paid off.
A pot full of cash to support the family during the off season.

Will we strike it rich again next year?

Or will we leave empty handed?

That is our job, mysterious like the sea.

Abandoned

Peter J. Vargas

In a city full of sorrow, yet another icon sits vacant
A once magnificent symbol
now a mere shell past its prime
Floor after floor sits quietly
waiting for the return of activity

Money ran dry
power was cut
workers departed
tenants have moved on
The doors were boarded-up and locked

Long ago it was a glorious sight to see
now a marvelous waste to witness
Desks and chairs sit abandoned
Papers and documents lie strewn about the floors
The hallways and stairwells are lined with random garbage

Pigeon droppings cover the fire escape
The façade is coated in soot and grime
Row after row, the windows sit dirty or broken
Dingy statues pose beaten and lifeless
Ornaments plead to the winds to keep from falling

Tonight, darkness blankets the towering mass
The sky is a dense gray that blocks out the moonlight
Every depression hides in the blackness
There is nothing to see but sadness
nothing to be felt but abandonment

All life has gone absent
All is quiet, all is dark



Abandoned *Elrida Konakciu* HDR Photograph

Carpe Diem

Megan Zapoli

With the sun barely visible over the horizon,
I begin my journey
toward the unbounded water
that lingers ahead.

My crew beginning to stir
with anxious anticipation
as the rough waters
slap hard against the craft.

The dipsey divers drift
steadily on the undulating waters
as I feel the first
cold, wet drop from the deck.

The blue skies turn
quickly grey, while
the wind whips wildly
causing water to surge over the bow.

As I turn the steering wheel
sharply starboard
a wave rocks the vessel violently
causing chaos in the crew.

Pellets of rain beat hard
against the fiberglass deck,
sending an endless echo
that dissolves into the vast, vacant waters.

The huge drops fall horizontally
enveloping my vision as
the white capped waves reach
far above the barriers laid before them.

I look toward the sky—
no signs of Mother Nature resting,
I gather strength—once again—
for the following fighting hours.

Darkness takes over our world,
as if being swallowed up
by a big black hole,
despite our rigorous attempts of survival.

As our bodies betray us we become weak.
Do we continue to fight in darkness so meek?

If we didn't return, what would we miss?
The weather still angry as I reminisce.

Fighting for life sometimes ends in a hearse,
but, nothing to fight for, is eternally worse.

Artillery Gun

After Robert Morgan's "Squirt Gun"

Russell Champoux

The greens and browns on metal form
a weapon that appears inert.
But the steel and barrel are hot
and smokes when raised to the ready.
The bolt slides to receive its shells
and fires them faster than sound
across exploding battlefields.
The gun is feared because it brings
quick death. You aim and fire at men,
at tanks, at buildings miles away.
You blast the sky and make dark clouds
that remain for days as black smoke.
You fire flak across the expanse,
and scare the soldiers and destroy
enemy fighters like insects.
And when your work, your bane, is done
you hang your hat upon a hook
and close your eyes to think no more.

Judgment

Heather DeVitis

Weeds so tangled almost lifeless
Supported by such a chilling barrier
Careless and taken by the breeze
Lingering so mysterious and magical,

The sky no longer a crystal blue,
Why can't we hear the bird's beautiful song?
Nor the flutter of the butterflies among the whispering flowers,
Not a single tickle of an ants touch across our feet.

The trees bend, following the wind with its every move,
Respectful submission to the unknown
About to bring down its judgment.

Wondering what is stirring in the horizon,
In awe of the ever deepening silence creeping in
As the darkness slowly replaces the light.

Entrancing Summer

Rachel Yarbrough

Hair smells of berries
much like the days in the field,
drenched with sweat.
Laying outside, sunflowers glow
crisp, yellow, and trickled with dew.

Eyes are drowsy; eyelids grow thick.
The hammock catches with ease,
swaying side to side
reminiscent of childhood times.

The wind is prepared,
ready to dance with strands of hair.
They never stay still.
Waltz, Ballroom, Salsa –
The wind is a master of it all.

Sun goes down, the moon rises.
Stars begin to wink, full of life.
They never look like they are tired
as if they will never see the day
when their sparkle dies down.

The wind sleeps, hair falls.
Tangled with happiness intertwined
Lonely again, until the day
Awakens with the wind



Deer and Webs Christopher Schneider Photograph

Be a Child

Kil DuRocher

After the rain, with the wind a gentle zephyr;
Before yon
Clouds, now x-traneous,
Drift away; the world is newly washed,
Everything is virginal,
Falsely clean, untouched,
Genuinely new. We notice the time,
Hasten to escape our protective shell,
Intent upon - what? - As we stop - rethink -
Jump over the puddles? Freedom quashed.
Kids jump in the puddles,
Laughing and happy, amazingly open.
Must we jump over them? No!
No! Actually, we mustn't!
Opt for the puddles! Be happy, open, laugh.
Play for awhile. Fly a kite.
Quench your thirst for joy.
Reach for the newly immaculate
Sky. The karmic return is huge.
Tilt with wild passion at those giant
Ubiquitous windmills, you fervent,
Valiant adventurer. Jump! Escape,
Willy-nilly. Dance in the puddles! Dive!
X marks the spot of constant
Youth. Live with the boisterous
Zeal of a child. Arise!



Arrow Heather Haislet Digital Photograph

Nostalgia

Megan Zapoli

I stand, forgetting
that as they departed
I was left alone, so broken-hearted.

But the six long months
have passed—
at last.

While “God Bless America,”
fades to the background
those adored memories are once again found.

I long for that
last embrace
although it brought tears to my face:

His arms wrapped
around me ever so tightly
nothing else mattered,
not even slightly.

As my lips met his
for the last time
passion filled my eyes
as a pantomime.

His voice trembled and
“I love you,” squeaked out
as I stood unable to speak,
but wanting to shout.

“Final Boarding Call,” echoed
in my ears,
as I tasted the salt
from so many tears.

He stepped toward departure
then we parted fingers
holding onto that memory
hoping it lingers.

That memory held close
as I wait patiently,
hoping it's him in the distance I see.

The “EISENHOWER” logo
legible from shore
as I anticipate the embrace I've so longed for.



Tonight, To Night

Alexandar Popovich

Again, tonight, I cannot sleep.
A motion & emotion, my mind does keep.
Although my body drained & heavy,
My thoughts are random, but still steady.

It's the thoughts unbiased that seem to torment,
I think the thoughts of others, to see what's meant.

To see singularly, is to see truth;
Yet with singular experience, there is no proof.
Duality is everywhere;
So into my ceiling I stare.

The blankets are ruffled & tossed,
& into a pale cream paint, my thought is lost.

Why can't I see the future—why can't I grasp my choice?
I can't understand, & fear I'll fall without this joist.
Why? Why does life have so much code & inscription?
My mind mumbles possibilities, scenarios, & fiction.
There has to be a clear description.

My mind still rambles as hours go by,
I wonder why I even try.
Plans are noted, yet I can't keep track,
Which plans worked? I can't look back.

I wonder if I'll ever get to
Where I want to be;
So much left to do,
But now I can hardly see.

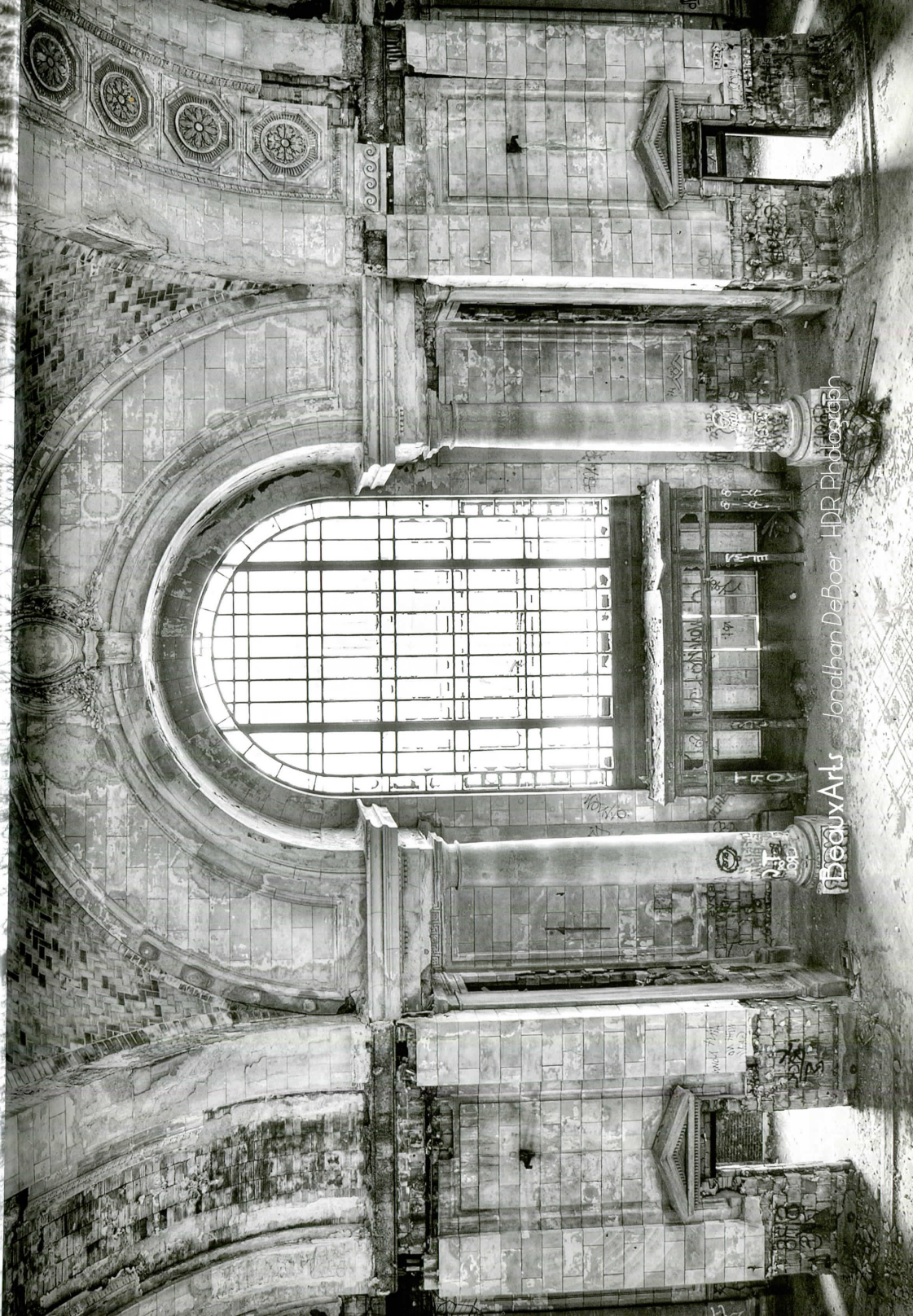
Sleep is my reviver,
Keeping me a survivor.
Sleep is my counselor – my rest.
At sleep I am my very best.

With that my thoughts do lack,
As I fade into black.



Replication Panduh Gaqi Graphite & chalk on tinted paper

Lonely Island Ryan Hamma Photograph



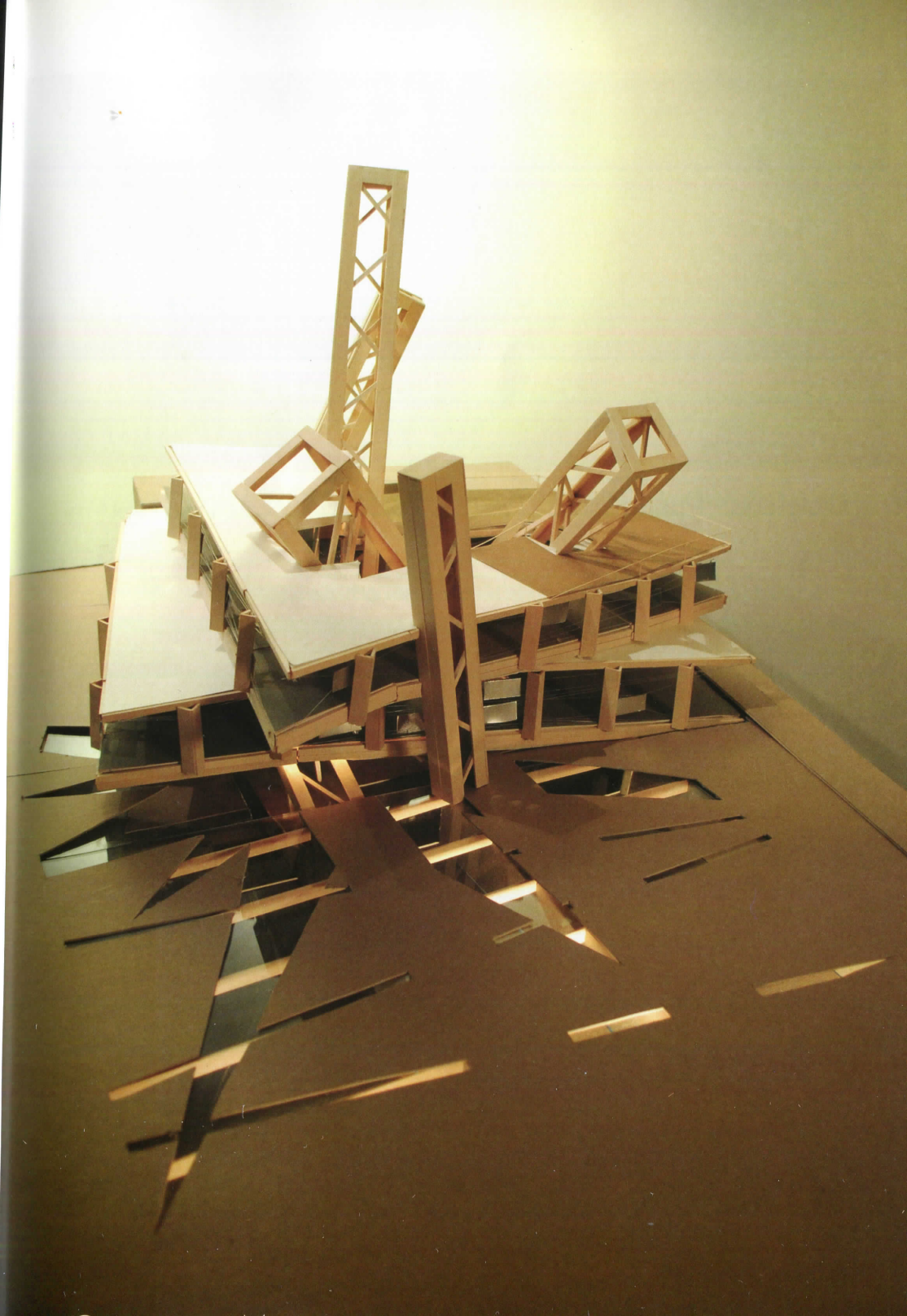
DeDuxArts Jonathan DeBoer HDR Photograph



Life Journey Kyle Post Digital Photograph

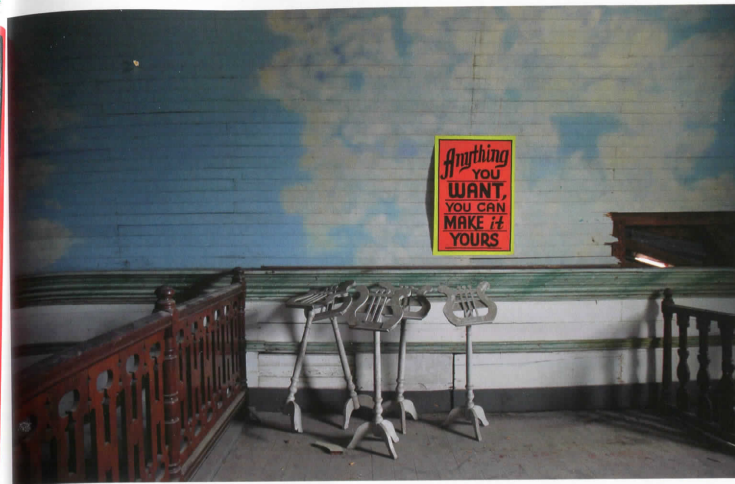


M3-1 Ben Graf Digital Rendering





Cafeteria - Puerto Plata *Peter Beaugard, Corrie Baldauf* Digital Inkjet Print



Masonic Temple Loft - Puerto Plata
Peter Beaugard, Corrie Baldauf Digital Inkjet Print



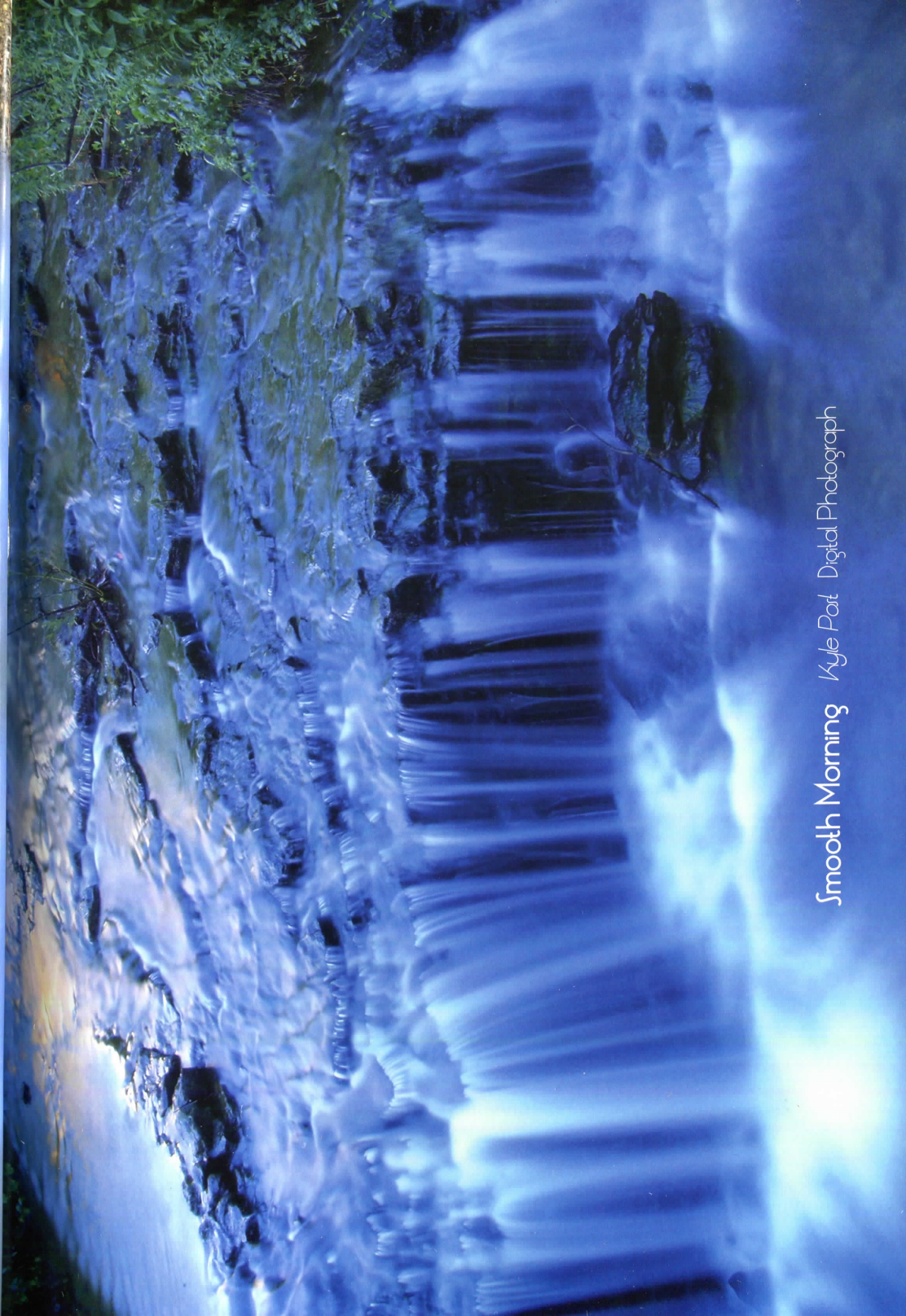
Show Off *Tracy McGhee* Digital Photograph



Deadfall Marsh Wide *Scott Schneider* Digital Photograph



Tranquility Robert Thomas HDR Photograph



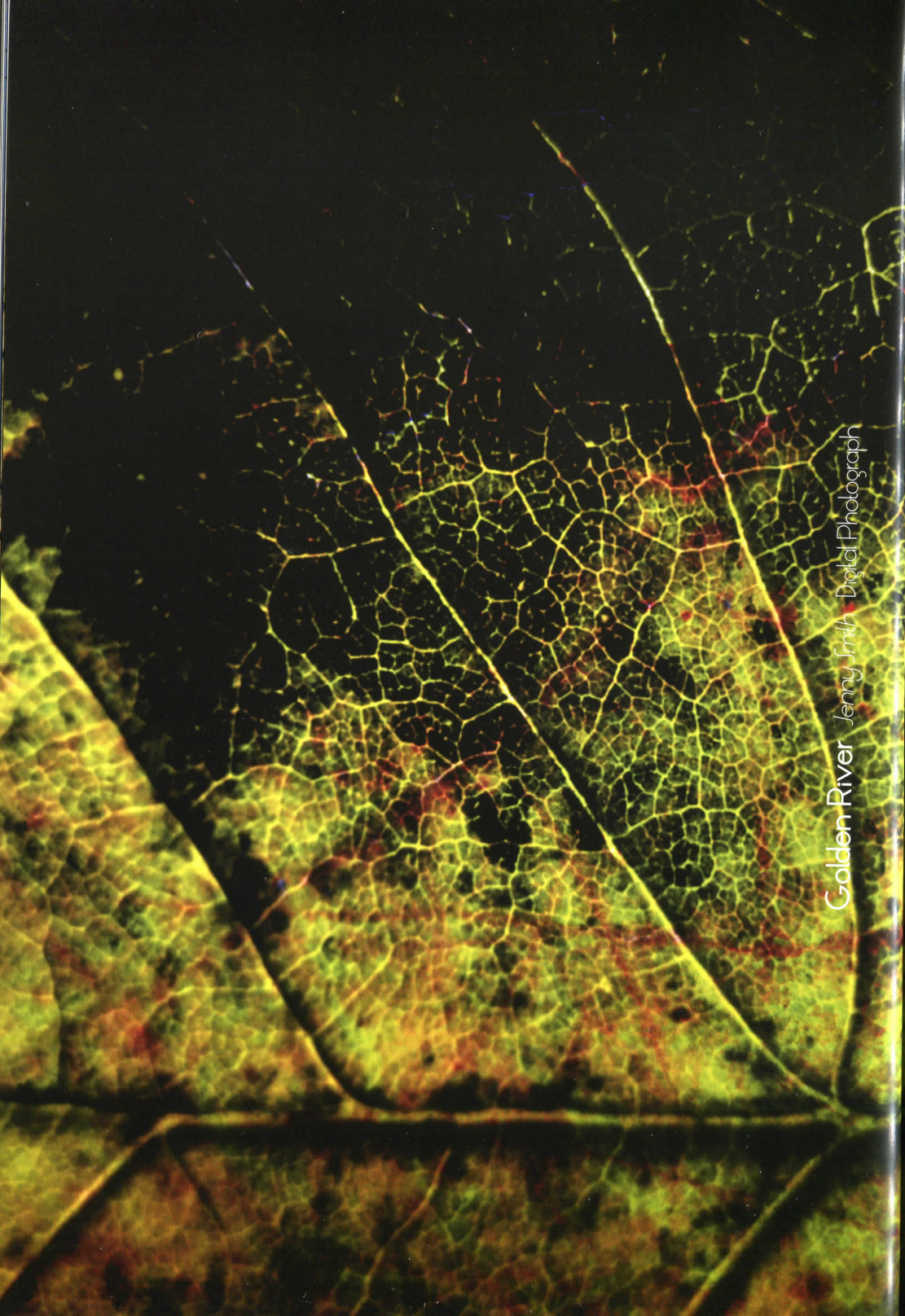
Smooth Morning Kyle Pat Digital Photograph



Good Morning Packard Jonathan DeBoer HDR Photograph



RGB Jonathan DeBoer HDR Photograph



Golden River Jenny Smith Digital Photograph



Leaf on Water Jenny Smith Digital Photograph



Sunset Ridge Ron Livingston Digital Photograph



Dock Cayce Owen-Thruh HDR Photograph



Roman Embrace Matthew Mohr Digital Photograph



GT2 at Night Jason Falenik Digital Painting



Building Butterfly *Elrida Konakciu* Digital Photograph Composition



Eastern Market Graffiti Study *Elrida Konakciu*
Acrylic, Indian ink & thread on canvas

Change

Jackie Moran

It was true. She had let herself go.
Her face showed its age
with every line and mark.

Fat rolls hung over her sweatpants
like a muffin top. Cellulite covered
her legs like potholes

on an old gravel road. Years ago, she stopped
primping in the morning with
the curling iron, straightener, razors,

and make-up.

She drank each day until
she stumbled, mumbled,
and cursed at me

and the children. Maybe it was
the vodka that stopped her
from being able to clean

the house. Years ago, she stopped
doing the laundry
and the dishes. Dishes scattered

throughout the house. Unknown
crusty substances growing on them.
I did the housework when I got home

from a hard day of work.

With the papers in her hand
she wept. She screamed. She begged
me not to leave her. She said

she would change. Change to what?

Lobster Inferno

Rachel Yarbrough

What you may not know, human giant
I am really a dark red-brown.
I do not change colors...oh no.
Not until I have been submerged
deep into the depths;
of your bubbling, hellish caldron of water,
begging for life with my high pitch squeal.

So what if I am delicious?
So what if my fire truck red is a farce?
My claws may pinch you,
but it is you, fleshy mutant
whose large, meaty fingers tear me to shreds.

You overpower me, Balrog of Humans.
It is not I, who is an alien,
with my rich, black pearl eyes
and hard outer shell,
like a suit of armor.
It is you, with your delicate demeanor
and terminator weapons of steel, that trap me.

As if I am not humiliated enough,
you proceed to bind my claws,
with thick, chunky, rubber bands –
as if I am a slave, thrown upon a ship
for the treacherous voyage home.
Your home - your belly.

What if the tables were turned?
You became the main course for me!
At an upscale restaurant, with a glass
of expensive crisp salt water.
Life would be easy.
Life would be a piece of human.
Life would be paradise.

The Pear Tree

Tyler McCarthy

I see him with his wooden ladder. I know what he wants.
Some would think it madness to allow such a thing. I am happy.
I will watch my children go as he takes them.
They are good and from this place. Their outsides have turned a rough yellow.
I will not ever see them again. Any of them.
I nurtured each one for several months. All mothers know,
it's what's on the inside that counts, the seeds of another generation.
I can imagine them now starting out life, in an open field ready to receive them into
its bosom.
Growing tall and strong, so they may have children of their own. As he reaches I let
each one go, a gentle snap of good-bye.

Year upon year they leave me. Sometimes I am not as strong.
He can only take what children I have to give and leaves with unfilled baskets.
Other years are bountiful. Good rain and sun, birds and bees. The baskets overflow.
He works with a dedicated silence. He is here to take my children from me.
After taking all that he can reach from the ground, he climbs the ladder that tickles
my arms.
I have many children this year. They will be good parents themselves.
He is almost done. I can feel the weight lifted from me. It has been a great year.
I gave them life and he will give them a place to live. That is the agreement we have.

On Mother's Day

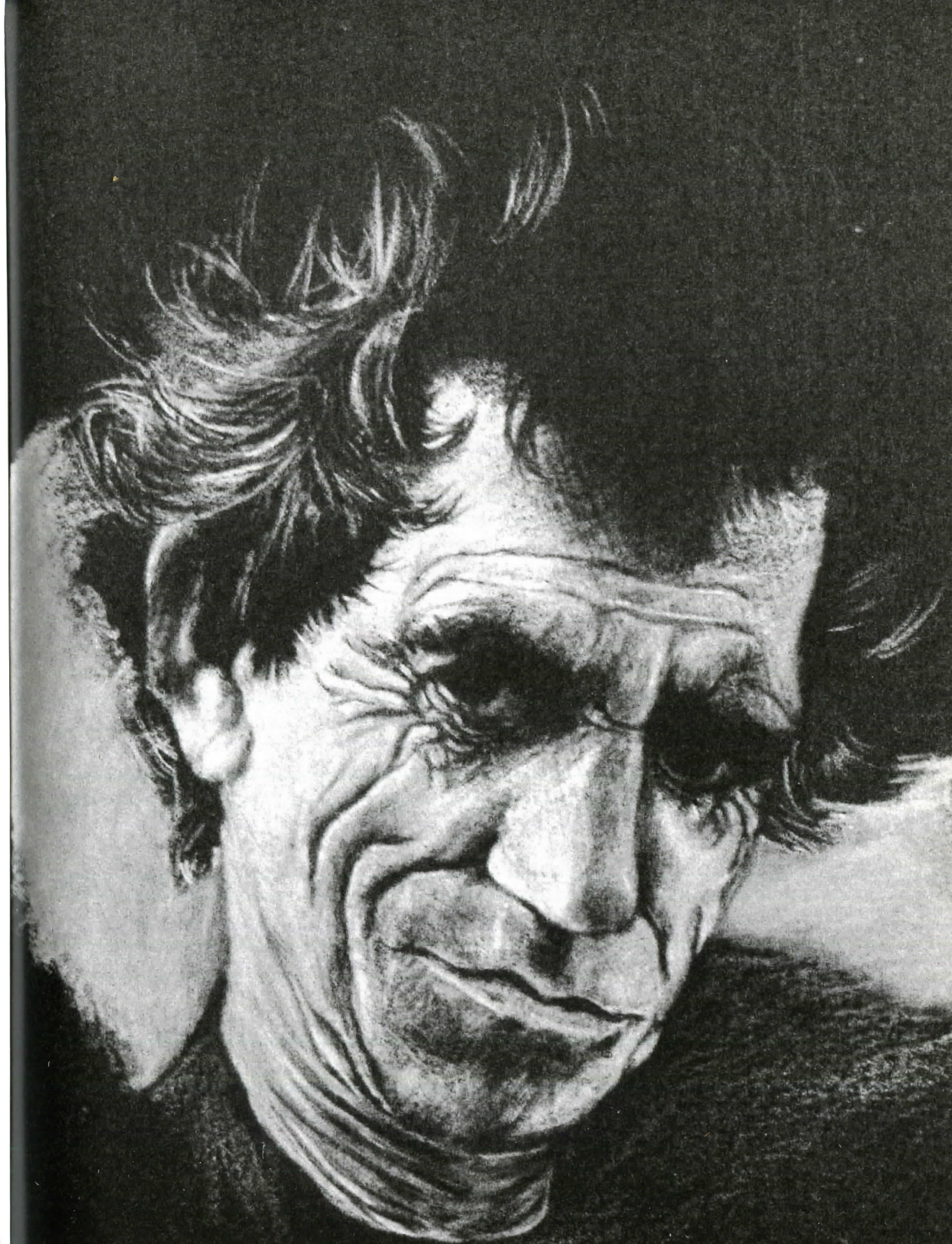
Jennifer Ross

Short break during a routine shift.
Inbox full with unknown numbers.
A call from an old friend.
You've heard it before
but never thought it could happen to you.

Fatal accident on 196.
A bumpy two lane highway
forced to one lane.
Concrete walls lined the lanes.

Wrong way driver
called into police
minutes before she looked up
to find a pair of headlights
staring her in the face.

As she went around the curve.
On her way to work.
Cold brisk morning.
The sun yet to rise.



Keith Richards *Pandush Gaji* Colored pencils on black mat board

Ordinarily on a Monday, this specific Monday in fact, I would be at work. And indeed, there I was in the parking lot of my employer. Actually they weren't my employer. At least, they weren't supposed to be any more.

I had already given them my two weeks' notice and Friday the previous week was supposed to have been my last day — and it had been a good last day. I came in just late enough that I could get an extra fifteen minutes of sleep; those extra 15 minutes where you lay in bed slowly rotating your body and stretching out while you look at the ceiling and yawn. The time had given me opportunity — literally raiding the fridge I got down to business: whisking, slathering, grinding, shredding, cracking. The fruits of my effort producing a veritable feast of three eggs and toast instead of the usual pop-tarts-and-milk bonanza. Arriving at work and slowly passing through the security checkpoints went surprisingly smoothly for once as well. Rather than the usual five to six swipes to get the lowest-bidder-implemented security system to read my ID card, it took only one. The security guards that were paid minimum wage to stand around and look tough didn't upend my bags' contents directly on to the floor when inspecting it either, and the actual line itself to pass through the checkpoint was surprisingly short.

This shortness soon made sense though — the coffee machine had just barely enough assorted chemicals and sweeteners left in it as well to make the morning dose of everyone's favorite drug. And that term really applied to a lot of the people around here — it wasn't uncommon at 8:05 in the morning to see a line of immaculately dressed professionals, suits costing more than some peoples' cars, all waiting for their morning fix. As I rounded the corner after having my bag checked I could see the usual suspects waiting for coffee — all of them had come in five minutes early apparently, knowing that the machine wouldn't be restocked until Monday. And despite all the good luck having been used up up-front, the rest of the day followed suit. I finished up the last of my work early and walked around the office saying goodbye to the people I knew, and then hopped out 15 minutes early while enjoying the summer breeze that blew right as I opened the door to the parking lot.

At 7:00 am today though, I realized that I hadn't had good luck on Friday. It was all a setup, a plot by some malevolent higher being with an incredibly warped sense of humor. Being that I had no further employment, I had spent the weekend doing everything I hadn't when I was a responsible member of society and the company. I went out with friends, I drank, I smoked (even though I don't), and I stayed up until hours of the morning that some people are waking up at. Specifically, my buddy Dave had just returned from a yearlong teaching assignment in Korea that afternoon. And given that he had just woken up at about the same time I had (2:00 in the afternoon), we spent the evening catching up with each other. Specifically, Dave told me of Korean drinking rules, of which there were many. This lesson went on until roughly 4:00 in the morning at which point neither of us could coherently speak, and thus passed out.

The voice on the other end of the phone didn't seem happy. It was 7:00 am. I had gotten three hours of sleep and at this point was mildly certain I was still drunk to some degree, but made sure not to mention that to the voice on the phone. The specifics

of the call elude me — all that comes to mind was the voice saying they had called non-stop since 6:30, left 14 voice mail messages, and that if I didn't show up at the office within 30 minutes they would do everything in their legal power to chop my body into small pieces which would then be fed to overactive Chihuahuas. I was exhausted at this point, confused, partially believed that they did have the legal authority to turn me in to Alpo, and feared for what they could do on reference to whoever I sent my resume to... so I acquiesced and fell — literally — out of bed. Of course, I still didn't know why they wanted me at the office that early, but it was immaterial. The day had been ruined.

Arriving at the office, things quickly grew worse. I contemplated fleeing upon surveying the lobby and the maelstrom that it contained. My future job possibilities however dictated suppression of what would normally pass for 'logic' and 'sanity'. The security systems were broken, and the guards were taking the ID of everyone that came in, literally, and then calling the main office for each individual person to okay their entry. Lines for the metal detectors that were installed in a panic months ago over non-existent "threats" snaked out through the lobby and to the parking lot. Rooted in line, I had the pleasure of a large woman named Delores standing in front of me — she had "the diabetes." I know this because she told me and every other person within twenty yards from the volume she talked into her phone. Her cell phone's headset bulged outwards over her head in an attempt to find any kind of radius that was closer to that of someone not morbidly obese. I almost threw up a little. The snake of a line slowly devoured itself, and by sheer luck I was inside. But of course, then came an overly exhaustive search of my bag that ended in my laptop being dumped unceremoniously onto the floor, as well as a full body pat-down for reasons I can only assumed involved Orwellian dreams on behalf of the security chief. Elevators? Broken too, of course.

As I made my way up the fire stairs to the 12th floor, I wondered what could have possibly transpired over the course of the weekend in order to make everything fall apart here; surely my exit from the company hadn't prompted the collapse of civilization had it? I played out scenarios inside my head, each less plausible than the previous. Maybe a virus had hit the company hard, taking out all the computer systems as well as security, slowly spreading and gaining sentience like a low-budget Skynet. Or perhaps someone else at the company had gotten laid off, and as they exited sabotaged everything in order to get back at the company. Perhaps mice had banded together an armada in order to obtain more cheese, and had chosen this office building as their first conquest. All implausible under normal circumstances, but these seemed to be dire times, and I had been called back to rescue them from some unknown problem. Or to be reprimanded for inadvertently causing it — I still had no idea.

As I came down the hallway, I finally noticed just what the problem was of the Company's sudden collapse. The vendor of manna, the provider of addiction, the pusher of lucidity, the coffee machine, had broken. And years ago, when it had first blessed the office with its presence, I was the one who had installed. And every time it had broken, I was the only one who could figure out how to fix it. In retro-

spect, I should have expected that to be the reason for the phone call from the start. Broken again, the entire office had ground to a halt, productivity had vanished, and nothing was getting done.

Tired, angry, and fed up at only nine in the morning, I suffused myself with energy and began my death march to my old boss' office. Entering, I delivered my ultimatum: I would fix the coffee machine, but I wanted the rest of the day off with full pay. I wanted not just a good recommendation for my next job, but a hand-signed letter of recommendation. And most of all, I wanted him to foot the bill for my lunch. He balked, of course; why should he do anything for me when during my entire tenure there I had done nothing but cause trouble for him? All the office pranks, the teasing about his bald spot, the back-talking. Sure I hadn't been even close to a model employee, but I never once produced anything close to sub-par work, and that pissed him off. I could see the look on his face — a look that couldn't be hidden, not even by the greatest poker professionals. The bags under his eyes; bags that if I could pull them off would be big enough to put my head on and pass out right here on the floor of his office comfortably. His eyelids rested half-over them, his breathing was slow, his head wavered to the sides ever so slightly, and his toupee was on backwards even.

I called his bluff. I turned. I walked out. I made it halfway through the zoo that was the office before his secretary finally sprinted and caught me. He had relented. Something in the management persona had liked my bluff, and the lack of clarity associated with the coffee he so desperately needed had convinced him enough to let me get what I wanted. So, I fixed the machine. It wasn't even a difficult fix — just take some spare parts I had ordered months ago for just such an occasion and pop them in. But the crowd surrounding me while I worked would have made me look like a prophet, someone of divinity. They surrounded me, five, six, seven people deep on every side, watching in awe as I delivered unto them a miracle. I had been working in offices all my life, wearing suits and ties, filling out the forms and paperwork, dealing with the politics and drama of the workplace. Maybe leaving this job meant it was time I took a break and repaired coffee machines for a few months instead of rejoining the rat race.

Lobster Paradise

Rachel Yarbrough

Oh, lobster.
You scrumptious treat.
You morsel of delight.
With beady black eyes
knowing what you have –
two claws, each elegantly called
the plucher claw and the crusher claw.
Too bad I crush and pluck at you in the end.

Shell is hard
bumps protrude over your body
stopping at a mermaid tail.
That is where the treasure is.
Only reserved for me when I'm on a journey
an adventure down south.
Yet, when you arrive at my table
your large claws and antenna
are no match to me.

You lobster, are no beauty at first
but at a second glance
you are boiled to perfection.
I crack you open
Moist and tender tail.
Part of your tail flies off
Like shrapnel fired at the enemy.
Sorry, lobster you have met your match.

The meat is red on top,
I take my claw - my fork - and dip you into butter
Oh, the melted butter.
The butter gets ingrained into your meat
when I take a bite, it is my own personal seafood heaven.

Tender, but slightly gritty
the meat never ceases to impress.
The burst of flavor; sometimes filled with a special spice
a spice that leaves my tongue slightly on fire
calls my mouth home.

I am sorry lobster.
But, if you were not so excellent, so wonderful,
you would have never have been this position.
This delectable, scrumptious situation.



Treehouses Noelle Tatro Ink

Gone

Jackie Moran

She packed up her things.
Her clothes, make-up, sheets,
And pillows in bags. She left

nothing behind that smelled
of her. For months I found
long blonde hair

around the house. In the
couch cushions, corners,
and our bed. She left

the milk crates we used
for tables. The old, brown,
ratted couch. The maroon

and green chipped paint on the walls.
I did not see this coming
when she stayed out

all night under the moon.
I did not see this coming
when she cringed

as we spoke.
I did not see this coming
when she winced upon my touch.

The sun had rose and fallen
many times since she left. My hair
now gray. My heart still broken

until today we met
again. Her flowing long hair
now grayed. She was

the same. I had changed.
The fluttering gone, replaced with
nothing. I stopped loving her

today.

53-Year-Old Student

Kit DuRocher

She entered the room
with a sense of the past.
So many years
since she'd entered last.
She glanced at all the smiles –
She stopped in shock!

She took a step back.
Were these her fellow –
These –
These teenagers?
These –
Much younger than –
She had two daughters
much older than these!
She glanced at all the faces.

So many years
since she'd entered last.
She entered the room
with a sense of the past.

Lights in the Grass

Ronald Mallinger II

1.

“Mind if I smoke?”
“Not at all, just make sure you are careful.”

I stood up from the all too comfortable brown leather chair and went about the usual steps. I walked over to the window, undid the lock, and pulled up the heavy glass, while remembering to replace the semi-transparent beige curtain, so no passersby could watch my criminal acts. I walked slowly to the door, admiring the volumes upon volumes of books the doctor had on his wall. It seemed he had every book on the subject of psychoanalysis ever written, from leather bound ancient scripts to paperback “Crazy People for Dummies.” I push up the Oriental rug against the solid oak door, so the secretary, who I am convinced is already suspicious of me, would have no justifiable grounds to tip off the cops when I was leaving. Finally, I did an awkward tip-toe maneuver and clicked the ceiling fan on, starting up the familiar hum that was just loud enough to make you feel like you weren't being entirely heard. After glancing around the room to make sure I had covered everything, I saw the doctor out of the corner of my eye, glaring at me. I hate that. If you are gonna judge someone, I think you should have the god damn common courtesy to let them know, or at least get better stealth tactics.

I walked back over to the chair and sat down. Reaching into my bag like I had done a hundred times before, I pulled out a Buddha bag of green and an old brass pipe, a tool stolen by me from my uncle during one of his many mid-life crisis getaways. I pulled a quarter sized piece of my deep green herb out of the Ziploc bag. Crumbling the weed into my palm, I heard the doctor's chair creak under his getting up. Microscopic crystals were falling into the pocket I made from my palm, and with some trouble I worked on removing the seeds and stems. The doc offered me a book that I could use to finish packing my bowl; it was one of those self-help books for stress reduction through positive thinking. All ready to go, I took my first hit and inhaled deeply. It was funny, the man sitting across the desk from me no longer seemed to be another shrink. There was almost no judging in his deep brown eyes, and almost a hint of jealousy.

“Wanna hit?” I asked him, offering the still smoking, shiny pipe in my hand.

“No, one of us needs to stay level if I can feel justified in charging you for these sessions,” he said. His voice was soft, and he spoke slowly, with hesitation, barely hiding the disappointment in his voice. The sun had climbed past a cloud now, so I could see the doctor more clearly than I could remember having before. His hair was cut and styled like most of the professional adults I have seen, but it was the lines in his face that really showed his age. He had creases around his mouth that showed his smile, even when he wore his frown of concern for me. I could see in his brown eyes the light they once held for adventure and excitement had now dimmed, and his brow seemed to permanently rest in the concentrated position. He looked very familiar, but I knew I had never met, or never had a chance to meet, him before. I really liked this guy, for a shrink I mean. I have been to 12 doctors now, and I have seen them all. I have been to those really sad ones that work in cramped little rooms with no windows, showing off diplomas from schools I have never heard of in cheap,

Wal-Mart frames. And I have seen the classic Freudians, with busts of famous thinkers, as though there marble images would inspire breakthroughs. This guy was different. Even with shelves and shelves of the greatest thinkers ever, he always seemed unimpressed. He listened to me, but never with the sterile ears of someone who is trained to diagnose. I wouldn't say I was happy about having to come here 3 times a week, but this guy would let me just get high and bullshit, and without all that "how do you feel about that" and "what do you think that means" garbage, I could think of worse places to be.

"Well, where did we leave off last time?" God damn that was annoying. Why does everything have to keep going, like we weren't quite done?

"I think I was debating the merits of NoFX's political opinion," I said. I really was too. That's what I do when I have nothing to say, come up with some stupid argument that really doesn't matter. I was trying to determine if a band with songs about a girl with no legs having trouble wearing high heels should be validated when they promote a complete reversion to a tribal society. See what I mean? "But I don't have any more quarters so we won't continue," I told him. I sat back in the chair and took another hit, choking half way through. I coughed for a bit, and started to get a little dramatic with it, but then stopped quickly and started counting the books on the shelves behind him. I get bored pretty easily.

"Clever," said the doctor, "why don't you tell me about what happened last spring? It says here in your file that's when you started analysis, but none of your other doctors have any record of what happened." God I hated when they called it analysis. Leave it to doctors to make mental instability sound like a math problem that can be figured out if you spend enough time with it. And what does he mean the other doctors? Those guys were all stiff, who I bet probably never had a tough time in their lives. They always got really stuck up when I told them about smoking weed or getting drunk. I started to just leave that part out. It was like I became a walking stereotype for doing something that had been done for thousands of years, and by some brilliant people who doctors themselves looked up to. To tell you the truth, nothing really happened last spring. The only noteworthy event was when that guy went to the top of the Farmers' building and shot 7 people. I mean that was news. My stupid trip to my Aunt's was barely journal material.

"Why don't you tell me about why you became a shrink, doc?" I hate people asking me about things like that. What a stupid question. That's one thing these doctors all had in common, an agenda.

"Uh, well, I guess it's because I always liked helping people, and listening to their problems was easier than all that cutting," he said, "And you don't have to tell me anything about your aunt, we can talk about whatever you want." He started to shuffle the papers on his desk, looking for something, but then shoved the whole mess into a manila envelope and threw it into an out of place looking filing cabinet. I ask him, "Why do you need a piece of paper and a fancy office to listen to people bitch and moan for an hour?"

"I don't know" he said, after a long pause that was part realization, part insulted. I felt like I disappointed him for a second, but quickly realized it was more than likely a trap to get me to open up, and just decided to go along with it. I figured if he wanted to talk about anything I wanted, I wanted to talk about the role of Splinter as a symbol

for Christ, at least in the first two Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles movies. We discussed this topic for the last 38 minutes of my session, till I was free to roam the streets of Philadelphia again.

I was still a little high and had the munchies so I walked over to Mark's Cheese Steak Palace on Broad Street. It was a little shithole that was more known as a place to pick up a cheap date after 11, but it was only a block from my apartment, and I was still sort of new in town. Walking up I saw the familiar orange and black sign, still missing all three S's, and headed on in. I had to stand in line, which I didn't mind, because it gave me a chance to try and match the people inside with the cars in the lot. A white Ford Pinto must belong to the young kid who tried too hard to come across as ironic and thrifty, yet with the Chuck Taylor's on, couldn't escape the destiny of never being taken 100% seriously. The Grand Am with the busted headlight belonged to the two girls, giggling about some high school dream boat who they were "totally gonna try and hook up with." It always bothers me when I see younger and younger girls finding new ways to reveal their bodies while being disgusted if the subject of sex comes up. The Dodge Ram belonged to the steel worker out on disability who was eying the suit and tied man. Wearing his greasy jeans and raggedy Flyers hat, he was thinking how without him, the suits have no one to do the work and would be screwed. The suit thought along similar lines, except he was a little more worried about being jumped on his way out to his slant BMW. Everyone fits into a mold, because that's how we grow. Even though everyone tries to fight it, the things around us shape who we are. The thing that really makes me mad, are the people who refuse to see this.

I got my food, sat in one of those cheap booths that are still sticky even after a few hundred wipe downs, and devoured it in 3 and a half minutes. I was starting to get sick of humanity, or maybe it was the cup and a half of grease that I just consumed. Enjoying my time lounging in the booth, I noticed a new girl had entered my dining room. She was a great looking girl, not the kind you wanna go home to, but the kind you wanna go home with. I caught myself staring at her, taking mental photos of every angle I could find, preserving her perfectly sculpted body in my mind. I watched her lips move in slow motion to enunciate every syllable of her order. Her hips swiveled like girls in music videos I saw on T.V. When she got her order, she scanned the room and picked a spot a few feet from me. Before she sat down, she noticed me watching her out of the corner of my eye. She flashed me a quick smile and lightly breathed out "hi." Panicking, I nodded and quickly checked my pocket for my keys, grabbed my bag, and bolted out the door. I lit up a cigarette, and even though I was about to run, took a few, well thought drags. I started a light jog, before I gave it up and decided to just walk.

When I finally got back to my place, it was dusk. It had been about 4 hours since I left, and the natural light from the setting sun almost made the dump of an apartment building look presentable. If I were a real estate agent, this is the time I would take the picture, I thought. I fumbled with my keys till I found the small silver one, shoved it into the lock, and threw myself against the door. "Fucking door..." I said under my breath, still labored as I climbed the two flights to my floor. I saw a yellow rent notice note plastered on my red door, right under my 9C designation, but I didn't bother taking it off. I was exhausted and just wanted to sleep. I closed the blinds, locked the door, and sat down on my beat up purple couch. I didn't even bother with the TV, but sat there staring at the blank, dark wall across from me and started thinking about last spring. I thought about Riley, and I even started to miss her.



Alligator Christopher Schneider Photograph



Treesources II Noelle Taro Ink & Wash

The Affair

Jackie Moran

She was a golden trophy. Like all trophies,
the novelty wears off. She was beautiful, his wife. Her hair
a stream of melted chocolate. Her eyes dark

and stunning. The tan skin
and toned body of a teenager, though she was
in her 40's. Conversation was

impossible. Embarrassing. Her eyes glazed
staring in the distance as he spoke with excitement
about new ideas. She cared of nothing

but red painted nails, highlighted hair,
excessive makeup, pink cocktails
for lunch. His stomach turned

each time he saw her. He knew she was stupid, boring
when they married. The elaborate wedding,
expensive show-off dress. That was 20 years ago.

The nights had become longer
with each sunset. The darkness
encompassing, black and cold. She was there

every day.

Then he met "her." His eyes glazed over
in her presence. Everything she was
his wife was not. It wasn't just beauty

and grace. His first look at her mouthing the word "Hello."
Giving her hand to the gentlemen, a smile
to the women. She walked in the room

and silence fell immediately. The men
staring. The women mouths open.
His wife the first to criticize
her, finger pointing with her lot of
spoiled rotten rich friends in flowered dresses
and platform heels. The fake nails come out ready

to cut. "Her hair is dyed. Her boobs are fake,"
the women whisper to their husbands.
But it wasn't the natural,

tall, beauty with the right curves and eyes
that reminded him of the waves in the sea that pulled him
in like the moon does the tide at night.

He walked up to her, hand outstretched
waiting for her touch. He stammered "H-hello"
his normal confidence gone. They spoke. Serious

looks and eye-rolling. Laughing, and head shaking.

The words she spoke. The things she knew.
The smile never left her face.
He stood closer with every word. He wanted her

whole body touching him. He was
afraid of her not touching his arm
when telling a story. Not leaning in toward him to whisper.

He would pick up the phone and dial
only 6 numbers then quickly hang up, trembling.
What would she say if she knew? He imagines her

slapping him in the face as he spills
his heart in front of her. Her brow furrowing
at him and turning away. His face red

with shame. He imagines her

lunging forward and holding him. Her embrace
tight and loving. Jumping in his arms
shouting "I love you too."

He
is a married man.

She
is a married woman.

Fall

Keith Fox

Colored leaves rest beneath my frozen feet
old hands comfort each other in the wet cold.

My father cries for the first time in his life
like the leaves on the trees I have nothing to hold.

Grandpa always loved fall, and here we are,
familiar faces gathered with memories to share.

He managed the family from his favorite chair
the Tiger games, the holidays, the stories he told

The good old days when he lived in the city
lessons of hard work and becoming a good man.

Alone with the grey sky, wondering where he has gone
I remember his warmth; it takes me out of this cold.

He lives on when I look at my father
the smile that was lost, somehow found

The leaves will be gone soon, buried by snow,
everyone moves on but nobody forgets.



Dad Pandurh Gajj Chalk & charcoal on tinted paper



Versailles Mike Fontana Digital Photograph

Autumn Rebirth

Kit DuRocher

The glorious colors of fall and the constant flow of the river surround me as I hike along the Au Sable in northern Michigan. Michigan! I could never live anywhere else. I love the change of seasons, the colors, the scents, the temperatures. Well, maybe not summer so much, but the constant change itself is, I don't know, renewing, I guess. Fall is my favorite season and I glory in the release from the summer heat, from which I've been holed up inside with air conditioning for the past three long months. To me the importance of a hike in autumn is like a breath after two long minutes under water. It's a necessity. It's a jump start to my internal engine, stalled from the heat of summer. It's life itself. It's rebirth!

This year, this hike is especially important, because I've been laid off for 3 months. I don't know how it is for those who have been off much longer, but I feel as though I've lost myself. I no longer know who I am. Most of the time this weekend, I've been able to forget as Old Ma Nature recharges my batteries, then BAM! It pops back into my mind and my mood takes a nose dive. Laid off, unemployed, jobless, purposeless... What am I going to do? If they called me back, would I even want to go? I had become so bored with my job that I was going out of my mind. I actually enjoyed my job as long as there was work to do, but the downturn in the economy had begun years before all hell broke loose. Work had been slowing for a long time. I had begun to hope I would get the ax. I had missed the first two rounds of layoffs and had almost decided it wasn't going to happen. Then, it did! I got the call to go to HR. I cried. Why?

I hike on.

As I said, an autumn hike brings me back to life. It's also dangerous so I bring Cody along. Cody, my Siberian husky, is the perfect body guard, and the perfect hiking companion. At 68 pounds, with the personality of a teddy bear but the looks of a wolf, she's quite handy for discouraging unwanted male attention on my solitary visits with Mother Nature; however, she attracts children and women like bees to honey. Cody carries her own food and water, isn't very talkative, and her nine year old reconstructed knees keep her at a perfect pace to match mine (unlike a certain husband who thinks hike means marathon). My husband's name is Greg by the way, not that it matters. I didn't bring him along.

As a smile spreads across my face at that thought, I notice a movement in the trees up ahead. I jerk Cody to a dead stop as a streak of tan, parts from the multicolored leaves in the woods and a graceful doe prances across the road. Remember what I said about Cody's knees? Well, all bets are off if she sees a deer and gets a chance to dig in. I tell her to "Sit," which she hates, because I am, "She who must be obeyed." She sits, but I can feel her instinctive urge to run boiling just below the surface.

My husband's caution about driving up north leaps through my mind. "There's always another one following the first," he has told me again and again. I slowly free my camera from my pocket and stand frozen in place. Moments later, two more of the elegant creatures quickly follow the leader across the road. I snap a few pictures and release the breath I hadn't realized I'd been holding. I may tell Greg he helped me have this serendipitous photo op, or not. I wouldn't want him to get a big head after all.

I hike on.

I don't know, I probably cried from shock when I went up to HR. You know, like when you're in an accident and you don't get hurt but you cry anyway? My friend from HR followed me around, after they gave me the paperwork for my release, as I said good-bye to my friends and packed. I'd been taking stuff home for a couple of months in anticipation of this very moment. I still had two boxes full. Ten years of my life were stored in two boxes. Yeah, I cried, but not for long.

The trail meanders from road to river throughout the day, as my mind meanders from rebirth to jobless torment. About an hour before dusk, as I round a bend, I see a black four door Dodge Ram on the shoulder of the road, the chrome sparkling in the lowering sun. Huge tires, raising the door a good eighteen inches off the ground, bare thick treads, like teeth just waiting to chew into the gravel.

As I near the steel giant, I stop, sniff. Hmm, I smell - well - I smell a musky animal scent, a scent much thicker than the lab, shepherd or even cat scent I might expect to emanate from a pickup truck. I glance around then climb up on the bumper to take a peek inside the capped bed. Gasping, I catch myself before I slip off the bumper. A deer! There's a dead deer inside the bed! Though the sight is sickening, I take a closer look. Dull black orbs stare out at me while his tongue hangs limp to the side. He has this huge rack of antlers with at least twenty points. Okay, I don't know from points, but it is one huge rack! It already looks like a trophy for a wall though it's still connected to the lifeless body filling the bed of the truck.

Repulsed by the sight, I jump down and step up onto the side runner to peek inside the cab of the pickup. Hmmm. There's a child sized bow and quiver of arrows on the rear seat, you know, the kind you pick up at a roadside souvenir shop. I look back toward the truck bed, smiling.

Shaking the silly thought from my head, I move to the front window and Bam! My mind sets off again. There's an unemployment booklet on the front seat. We're everywhere now a days, the unemployed. Could Michigan survive? The world has shrunk. Outsourcing! To me, it's a dirty word, but to corporate bigwigs, it means survival. When the potato crops in Ireland went bad, they moved here. Now that the jobs have dried up in Michigan, should I move to China, or India? I'm 53 years old! Can I start over again? I stayed home with our children for twenty years, then started my new career twelve years ago. My husband is retired. We could emigrate, move away from our children and beautiful little grandsons... No!! Can't do it. Why can't I get past that, come up with a different answer? I just can't do it! I have to stay. Evolve. Start over. Again. Like a child, I feel like stamping my foot, exclaiming, "I don't wanna." As an adult I wonder if the grass is greener across the street. I guess I'll step boldly across and find out.

I take a deep breath of fresh air, and pull out my camera to photograph this interesting addition to my peaceful hike. It will make a good scrapbook page. I jump down.

I hike on.

My Fountain

Peter J. Vargas

I awaken to the sound of splashing water,
as the sun rises on the horizon.
Its bright glow warms my face and blinds my eyes.
The sun is my alarm clock.

The morning chill leaves a dewy covering on my skin.
My clothes are damp and cold.
I wear whatever I can find to keep warm.
I have no blanket or pillow.

I reek of sweat and the beer I spilled on myself yesterday.
I can't remember the last time I took a bath.
I know I shouldn't drink, yet I still do.

Every day.

This park is my home.
Its fountain is my bed.
The pigeons are my pets.

All I know is begging.
I rely on others to survive.
People glimpse with fear when I beg for money or food.
I fear that my dingy appearance repels them.

My beard-covered face shows my age.
A baseball cap tries to cover the gray hairs on my head.
I have two different colored shoes on my soiled feet.
The left one, I found in the trash last week.

Occasionally, I stare at the sky for hours.
The passing clouds become my entertainment.
On game nights, I walk up to the ballpark.
I catch a glimpse of the action through the wrought-iron fence.

I have no job.
I have no money.
My income is what I find on the street.
No one would think to hire me.

My torn shopping bag is full of cans and bottles.
I buy beer with the deposit money.
My lint-filled pockets hang empty.
My belly, only full with beer.

I barely eat most days.
A man bought me a hotdog from the vendor on the corner.
I thanked him, but I am sure he didn't believe me.
I think I have lost my faith in people.
I know hardly anyone,

I have no family or friends.
I have no support or guidance.
No one would want to associate themselves with me.

Most times I don't leave my fountain.
There is no reason to get up.
I sleep all day because I have no will, no energy.

Every day.
I don't know how much longer I can survive.
Sometimes I feel so lost.
Emptiness fills my heart.

My life is daunting.
I live day to day.
I do nothing else.
I am good for nothing.

I end each day lying on my fountain.



Buttermilk Falls Water Detail Scott Schneider Digital Photograph

Bartender's Work

Megan Zapoli

The smell of grease and frozen asphalt
as my tires crush the freshly laid salt.
I pull into the everyday spot
the cars too familiar in the parking lot.

Inside, the faces stare blankly at me
as I clock in, wishing I were free.
Again, I made it in under the wire,
as I anticipate the night and begin to perspire.

Another night of speculation,
as regulars begin their drunken calculation.
The look of lust filling their eyes,
ultimately causing their own demise.

"Another round for my friends!" yells the wino at the end.
"Coming right up!" I reply, pouring more drinks with a deep sigh.

The smell of tequila burns my nose,
as I grab a lemon and the liquor flows.
"That's too much in a single glass!
Didn't you learn anything in bartending class?!"

Management constantly around
their aim to stomp you into the ground.
Ice cubes ting against the shaker
"Let's see you do it—'pro shot maker'!"

Her eyes fill with wild rage
as she retreats to the office—her very own cage.
Back on task, I hand off the drink
as I cleanse my hands in the small sink.

Annoyed with voices of angry drunk talks,
followed by staggering bathroom walks,
I hear a loud "ka-bang" to my right
as I look to see another fight.

Glasses thrown from feet away
the entire bar in disarray.
Screaming takes over the air
Employees simply sit and stare.

I quickly dial for the cops
hoping all the chaos stops.
Blood staining the wooden bar
Everyone watches from afar.

The cops arrive & rapidly break in—
thankfully, before anyone could "win".
As I leave the bar to get away,
I am blamed for the fray.

Patrons allowed to treat me like dirt
while I'm expected to take it and flirt.
To management I'm a dog on a collar
I'm simply here to make a dollar.



Dead Elrida Konakciu Digital Photograph

Dreamland: Binds my Mind

Marc Walters

I peer through the rusty fence, again.
Through the chain of twisted metal
beyond the holey wall
to the green grass freshly slashed.

The sun shines down from the heavens
The trees branch out with leaves
I stay hidden in the cast shadow
from a starving tree with bent leaves.

In the middle there is a small ravine,
a bridge made of stone.
I wonder if it conceals a lonely troll
under rock, in the dark, sitting alone.

From under the bridge a girl
appears, stepping into the light.
Smiling, I become enchanted by her
white, hypnotic eye, winking.

My eyes become realigned by her mind.
I see only the beauty.

The wavy dark hair covering her beautiful body.
Hips swing, eyes glisten, breasts jiggle,
I tingle, staring through this fence.
It appears to have no end but where am I?

I am here, beyond the rusty fence
I step into the light, holding her.
Is it true? Am I good enough?
I am. At last engulfed in my dream,

inside that forgotten fence
that once concealed my dreams,
my hopes, my desires, my love.
Now covering me like a turtle shell
keeping all unwanted life at bay.



Boys in the Band *Teffera Kowaluki* Digital Photograph

The Dormant Dragon

Kit DuRocher

In the snow capped mountains north of Nome,
Beyond the setting sun,
Beneath a glacier, 'catacombed'
Inside an unknown cave,
Lay sleeping soundly, dormant,
Long beyond the break of day,
A dragon, peaceful in its slumber,
Scales glowing silver-gray.

For centuries, the dragon lay
Encased in Nature's frozen tomb,
Sheltered from Sun's golden rays,
Asleep, not dead, inside his grave.
No call to consciousness was heard.
He noticed not the pass of time.
Nor cared -
His form retained its potent prime.

Nearby, beneath the dust of ages,
Tarnished now, and sadly dull,
A tableau culled from life's bleak stages,
Sparks of history engraved.
A sword, a shield, a vest of mail,
Did still adorn the lifeless form.
Its frozen pose created
As protection from a raging storm.

What stories might explorers glean
From these small particles of life,
From cold, dark days, for years unseen?
How came they to this small enclave?
Had fearless knight tracked dragon here,
Or come to seek the Holy Grail?
Were our two heroes' foes or friends?
Just who could tell the ancient tale?

Friends close your eyes to present time,
And fly away through eras past;
With knights of old, the paradigm,
Of how men should behave.
Beyond the mountains, past the coast,
You see a far off land
With rolling hills and lush green woods
Designed by God's own hand.
Now venture forth to castle walls,
A fight in, progress for a time,
Intensifies as evening falls.
Fall back, attack, another wave.

A week now, has the thing gone on,
With little notice to the day.
They fight, then rest, then fight again.
Each honored to join in the fray.

Beyond the walls, with arrow notched,
Stands Jennifer, with saddened heart,
Determined to command the watch,
Her home, what's left, to save.
Her father, baron of this land,
Did forfeit life some three days past.
Her brother, just this morning fell.
This now left Jennifer the last.

Repeatedly, the vultures swarm,
To be fought back with holy zeal.
Again they dodge the arrow storm,
A victory, they crave.
Determined to repel her foe,
Young Jennifer, with careful aim,
Does pick the leader off his steed,
The victory, to claim.

But no; resolved to take this land,
He rallies and regains his mount.
Within a breath, still in command,
Sends forth another wave.
What would it take to end this fight?
She prays and fights and prays.
The Good Lord surely on her side,
She battles, unafraid.

Some miles distant, her true love,
Before an altar, ringed by stones
Intones a special incantation;
Words he'd learned at father's knee.
He circles slowly, chanting softly,
Faithfully, repeating verses,
Building tones to strong crescendo,
Fearing not, the darkened sky.
Thunder sounds and lightning flashes.
Winds tear at his hair and robe.
Upon the alter, bird and lizard
Glow and meld and breathe and grow.
Until, with scales and wings and claws,
A dragon sits upon the stone.
A puff of smoke escapes his mouth.
He stretches yawns and moans.

Poor Kristofer, though faithful long,
Beholds the wonder with surprise.
Despite his fear, he leaps upon
The scaly back, his love to save.
Away they fly, with resolution.
Speeding 'cross the evening sky.
Soon past a ridge the castle looms.
The infidel will die.

Poor Jennifer, her faith diminished,
Stands atop the castle wall.
The fight, she knows, will soon be finished.
Here she quakes in silent rage.
Repeatedly, has she removed
The leader of this evil band;
Then magically, he'd rise again
To wave a deadly hand.

Then 'lo, beyond the enemy,
Along a far off rise she sees
A sight to make her heart fly free.
She shouts her thanks and praise.
'Tis Kristofer, her own betrothed,
Her heart expands with pride.
Her tired eyes put wings upon
The mount he sits astride.

Descending toward the enemy,
He seems to fly on silver wings,
This dragon, led by guiding knees
Of Kristofer, so brave.
The crisp fall air gives credence
To her fanciful mirage.
This smoking dragon and her love,
Will soon, her foe, dislodge.
Though now attacked from front and rear,
The opposition, not dismayed;
Their ultimate resolve is clear;
Collectively, they rave.
They fight as though they are possessed.
They fight with all their might.
And with the moons reflective gleam,
They fight throughout the night.

As morning dawns, a white, dense fog
Arrives to cloak the war torn land.
Yet on they fight; the great prologue.
Defeat, both sides do waive.

The other shows delight.
With catlike tread, he circles in,
Resolved to end this boundless game.
Though tired now, he knows the other
Must feel much the same.

Within a blink, young Kristofer
Regains his calm and pulls his mind
Back to his loathsome challenger,
Hatred, on his face engraved.
As sparks take flight with clash of steel,
Observers may take note,
That almost imperceptibly
Defeat becomes remote.

With careful steps Kris backs the evil
Monster toward the castle wall.
To force a confrontation;
Teach the vermin to behave.
Muscles bulge and bodies glisten;
Tight lungs wheeze with every breath.
The two combatants swing
Their lethal weapons to the very death.

As Kristofer relaxes with the knowledge
Of his mastery,
His foe, in desperation, lunges forward,
Bends and rolls away.
He kicks, with all his might
At our hero, brings him low,
But Kristofer, with lightning thought,
Lands upon him from the blow.

They roll together, fighting,
Clenched fists landing fiercely, swiftly,
Each blow dispensed, inviting
More reprisals in a common vane.
As dust clouds rise into the air
Their energy depletes.
Concentration, lost for seconds
Would foretell instant defeat.

A fleeting smile, on Kris' lips,
From the sudden urge to bite,
Appears to be a focal slip
To weary, evil knight.
He sees his chance to make his move.
He swiftly rolls away.

More soldiers fall beneath the sword
And others from an arrow's head.
Then, as the fog burns slowly off,
They see the fight is limited.

For Kristofer, 'pon dragon, flies
From out the mist with bloody sword.
One man stands 'lone, with demon cries
His yellow eyes ablaze.
Around him lay his fallen cohorts.
Few can breath, but none can rise.
Now on his own, he still fights on
His only goal - 'THE PRIZE.'

As Kris draws near, his love gasps loudly,
Grasping that her dream is real.
'Pon dragon sits her own love proudly,
Here to save the day.
She smiles and leans against the wall
To watch the clash of tempered steel.
With victory in sight, she laughs,
Her faith too strong to be concealed.

The dragon dives with great precision.
Kristopher fights valiantly.
Jennifer, in his minds vision;
Love, he aims to save.
As once, then twice, his sword finds flesh,
He knows this battle will soon end.
He smiles and soars, for one more strike,
Upon his winged friend.
The lone man plants his feet and parries,
Striking sparks off glowing scales,
Thinking, if he's stationary,
Dragon tires and thus will knave.
Then one swift stroke exhibits,
That, for which, his passion longs.
Energized, he takes his stance
And shouts aloud his battle song.

Kristofer, on wounded dragon,
Glides off toward the castle gates.
Scales protect its vital organs.
But wings remain quite frail.
The evil one had learned this fact
With one long swipe of his broadsword.
A smile transforms his evil visage
As he marks their downward soar.

Stepping down, his foe in view,
Our hero checks the dragon's wound.
His anger burns, his strength renewed.

Discarded sword, within his reach...
He turns without delay.

Too late! For Kristofer had seen
The sparks of purpose in his eyes.
Now armed, himself, he stands prepared
To see that his opponent dies.

The clash of steel resumes
The two men fight for all they're worth.
Defeat would spell their doom,
They swing their deadly blades.
When suddenly a careless step
Sends villain to his knees.
Our hero's blade sinks deeply home
As smoothly as you please.

Jennifer and Kris embrace,
Her home is safe at last.
They join the dragon joyously.
They check his wound... But wait!
The dead man rises! Bright eyes glowing,
Striding toward the group, quite sound.
Is he bleeding? Is he breathing?
They watch him come, spell bound.

But dragon does not stand astonished,
Wounded, yes but heart unbound.
Wings spread wide, he screams in anguish
As he lifts into the sky.
He darts in quickly, claws extended,
Grabs the sword from devil's hand.
As the sun hits gold medallion,
Now the dragon understands.

Kristofer had called the dragon
With his father's magic spell.
Evil knight, with his medallion,
Kept his soul from reaching hell.
Nimble, with his massive talons,
Breaking golden links of chain,
The dragon grasps the gold medallion,
Swallows it with some disdain.

Without the source of his enchantment,
The evil knight, now vulnerable,
Turns and flees, his vigor spent.
He does not get away.
Our awesome dragon grasps his shoulders,
Flies off over land and sea
To the mountains, vastly distant.
Sky turns dark as ebony.

Near a cave, they land and shudder,
Freezing blizzard all around.
Step inside, though not much better.
Evil knight sits on the ground.
Though the storm will one-day cease,
Neither being will take note.
Human freezes. Dragon sleeps.
All forget the spell to quote.

As winter yields to summer's heat,
The glacier moans in anguished grief,
And melts in agonized defeat;
The icy winds of March it craves.
Sleeping soundly, dormant
Long before the break of day,
A dragon, peaceful in its slumber,
Still lay glowing silver-gray.



Abstract Bikes Alysa Walters Photograph



Relationship Through Composition Jonathan Jackson Ink



Corvette Jaron Faleniki Digital Painting & Rendering



Artists' Biographies

Alexandar Popovich is currently a senior, and will be graduating in the spring of 2010 with a Bachelors of Science in Mechanical Engineering (with Honors), a Minor in Energy Engineering, a Concentration in Alternative Energy, and a Certificate in Energy and Environmental Management. He believes the boundary between art & science exists only in our minds and hopes his passion for art & science will one day bring about something revolutionary that will benefit the world.

Alyssa Walters is a senior in the Imaging program. She will be graduating in May 2011 with a dual concentration in Digital Arts and Digital Design. She is an active member of Delta Phi Epsilon sorority, and an adult leader in the 4-H community. She enjoys all mediums of art, and her favorite artist is Roy Lichtenstein.

Ben Graf found his niche in transportation design. Being an all around gearhead and automotive enthusiast, this program allows him to express his ideas for vehicle design and conceptualization. Having even a brief engineering background will propel his design career faster and further than otherwise possible.

Brandon Davis has been designing things his entire life and has always had a passion for art. In 8th grade he drew his first floor plan, since then he knew he wanted to be an architect.

Cayce Owens-Thrush is a graduating senior from the Imaging program. When he is not busy with school stuff he enjoys music and creating art. He feels that the world would be a very boring place if it weren't for the color orange.

Christopher Schneider has taught Photography 3023 at Lawrence Tech for the past seven years after earning an MFA from Cranbrook Academy of Art. He grew up in Nebraska and tries to get out into nature whenever he can. He directs two non-profit agencies that focus on art and has exhibited his work as far away as China.

Corrie Baldauf and **Peter Beaugard** are artists and educators practicing in Detroit, MI. Building on initial collaborations while studying at Cranbrook Academy of Art, Beaugard and Baldauf's "Conversations" series utilize text-based intervention from hip-hop lyrics to contextualize seemingly arbitrary urban and suburban sites with the viewer.

Davey McConnell says "A great photograph is a full expression of what one feels about what is being photographed in the deepest sense, and is, thereby, a true expression of what one feels about life in its entirety."
Ansel Adams

Elsida Konakciu graduates in May with degrees in Architecture and Digital Imaging. Her work is inspired by the vectors of architecture, the focus of photography, the details of fashion, the forms of wayfinding and the threads of urban design.

Heather DeVitis is a recent 2009 undergraduate of the School of Architecture and Design. She transferred to Lawrence Tech after finishing her Associates in General Studies at Schoolcraft Community College.

Heather Haislet is senior who is majoring in graphic design. Her photograph comes from a collection taken during a study abroad program in Paris, France. Her inspiration for the study was to look at positive and negative space and to relate to things that are often overlooked.

Jason Falenski is a Junior in LTU's inaugural class of Transportation Design. He's been passionate about cars and motorcycles since he was a child. He's excited to share his love of vehicles and drawing with his 6 month old son, Jackson.

Jackie Moran is a Mechanical Engineering student who is scheduled to graduate this semester. She works full time as a Quality Manager at an automotive supplier and is the mother of three children.

Jennifer Ross work was inspired by the loss of a close friend this past year. These pieces of work have helped with the grieving process in being able to creatively project feelings towards that subject matter.

Jenny Smith says "Hey I'm Jenny, I got inspired in the fall to photograph leaves. Everyone notices their pretty colors, but I wanted to focus on the beauty of their skin and the remarkable shapes and curves they create. The photos I submitted were some of the most interesting and inspiring."

Jonathan DeBoer is a 4th year graphic design major and spends his free time photographing anything that catches his eye. He tends to focus on capturing the urban environment of the metro Detroit area.

Jonathon Jackson, 24, is a senior in Architecture. Jackson hopes to use his designs to influence others that anything is possible. Jackson has quickly found out that life is short and he is working toward not regretting how he lived his life.

Keith Fox will hopefully be graduating in the winter from the College of Architecture and Design. His interests include photography and art history.

Kit DuRocher has returned to college for a Bachelor's degree in Engineering Technology. She looks at the world through rose colored glasses and the big blue eyes of her four grandsons.

Kyle Post says "That's me. I'm studying architecture. I love sneezing, but you might not, but that's ok...as long as you don't sneeze on me. I grew up on a farm...and no...cows don't sleep standing up! ...at least not ours, so if cow tipping was on your "to do before I die" list...erase it.

Marc Walters is currently a senior. He is graduating in May 2010 with a Bachelor's of Science degree in Engineering Technology. His career goal is to work in the advancement and incorporation of future technologies.

Matthew Mohr, 23, is senior in Architecture. While college has taught him to keep his mind open to anything, he still has a hard time grappling with the fact yogurt is alive.

Megan Zapoli will be graduating in the spring of 2010 with a B.S. in Architecture. She thoroughly enjoys the creativity architecture demands and is excited to have recently discovered a passion for language. Her lifelong aspiration is to travel the world and experience all the beauty that lies within it.

Mike Fontana is a fourth year civil engineer and architecture student.

Mike Haley is studying graphic design and motion graphics. He has spent the last 4 years studying architecture, graphic design, and motion graphics. His work is rooted in the process of conceptually building a design. His designs focus around systems of structure and direction.

Nathan Mattson thanks you for reading his bio.

Noelle Tatro is a senior Graphics major. She really enjoys merging hand drawn and digital illustrations. In her free time she likes sleeping, reading and plotting to take over the world muahaha...

Pandush Gaqi was born in a small city, of a small country in Europe, where space was limited. He grew up here, where space is endless, as a designer he aspires to improve it. He is a firm believer in the beautiful. He owes his design creativity to the loved ones around him and to his studio colleagues.

Peter J. Vargas is currently a senior studying Architecture in his last semester. He is 27 years old and has not taken any writing classes in the last 8 years.

Rachel Yarbrough is a junior majoring in English & Communication Arts. She doesn't know what she'll do in graduate school, but as long as it includes a lot of reading she'll survive.

Robert Beebe is a Mathematics major in his senior year. He currently works as an IT administrator and repairman of coffee machines at his workplace.

Robert Thomas is a graphic design student, expecting to graduate in May 2010. His hobbies include everything related to automobiles. He also enjoys photography, especially automotive photography.

Ron Mallinger II is in his 5th year of school, dual majoring in Mechanical Engineering and recently in the LTU's new Bachelor in English and Communicative Arts degree. His pieces of work have been pulled from a larger work that is currently in production, a novel entitled Lights in the Grass.

Ron Livingston is an LTU alumni and a retired Detroit public schools teacher. He writes: "I am now using my photography to do stained glass art by using some of my favorite photographs as patterns for window pieces. Some of my other interests are dancing, computers, digital video, and running".

Russell Champoux is a senior in Computer Programming and Game Design and enjoys playing and designing games. He is a member of LTU Cru, the Math Club, and Blue Devil Development. After graduation... who knows what the future holds?

Ryan Hama is a senior graphic design student and will be graduating this spring. He has been passionate about design and photography ever since he was young. His favorite is natural and wildlife photography.

Scott Schneider - While contemplating the awesomeness of Einstein's General Relativity theories, Dr. Scott snuck away to the Adirondacks for a fall color week. If you are reading this biography some of the results might be found between these pages (well, look earlier, obviously not here!). His aunt has described his photographic work as "disgustingly talented," which is the leading choice for the title his "yet to be published or even planned or even considered" book of photos. In print more than once, but less than 100 times, Dr. Scott announces that he probably wants to be a fireman when he grows up.

Tefferia Kowalske is an energetic photographer turned passionate Architect. She graduates with an architecture degree in 2010.....She loves dogs.

Tracy McGhee graduated from Lawrence Tech in May with a degree in Imaging/Graphic Design. She currently works for the marketing department at Lawrence Tech.

Tyler McCarthy is a senior. He'll be graduating in the spring of 2010 with a Computer Science degree. He has two wonderful kids that give him plenty of inspiration for all his creative endeavors.

