

HOPE
WORKS
HOWARD COUNTY
2021



Dragonfly

arts magazine





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arts magazine
2021

HopeWorks' mission is to support and advocate for people in Howard County affected by sexual and intimate partner violence and to engage the community in creating the change required for violence prevention.

"Insight, I believe, refers to the depth of understanding that comes by setting experiences, yours and mine, familiar and exotic, new and old, side by side, learning by letting them speak to one another."

- Mary Catherine Bateson

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COVER ART: Faerie Scape by MC Carey

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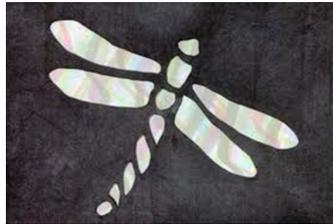
The artistic expressions in this publication are those of the individual authors and artists and do not necessarily reflect the philosophies, position or policies of HopeWorks.

It is not by chance that our arts magazine is entitled Dragonfly.

The dragonfly has been a centuries old symbol for change – a special type of transformation, one wrought from crisis but ending in

self-realization and liberation. This experience is often reflected in the lives of the people we serve

at HopeWorks, and you'll hear it in some of the voices on the pages to follow. This transformation is rarely an easy one and as humans, we sometimes feel so very limited in how to bare the intensity of our thoughts and feelings. This struggle to create something beautiful and inspirational from pain is somehow mystical and pedestrian at the same time – something that is hard to fathom, yet a common daily occurrence.



Congratulations to each of our contributing artists who were brave enough to articulate their own deep emotions and unique perspectives on life.

Self-expression through art gives wind to the wings of the dragonfly and we thank these artists who were generous enough to give us a window into their transformational journeys.

Vanita

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*HopeWorks is Howard County's sexual and intimate partner violence center. We are here for our clients completely.
And we are agents of change. Hope builds momentum and momentum creates change...when we work together.*

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DINNER

BY TOM BALLEs

Hard to believe
your 6th grader
doesn't like kale,
seeing how much it's like her

spicy, bitter, green,
ruffled at the edges.

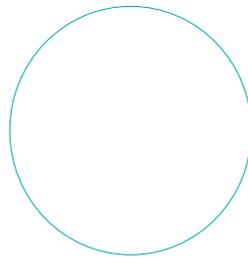
Simmered in tomatoes and herbs,
served over thick, ropy pasta,
how could anyone resist?

The young one wasn't having any of it,
clearly the girl has a mind of her own.

How sad the Mom,
knowing some will try to serve her daughter
much worse than kale for dinner.

How glad the Mom,
knowing her girl
is learning to say no.

© 2021 Tom Balles



CONUNDRUM

BY TOM BALLEs

Hear the encouraging shouts
in the streets of oppression,
“Speak truth to power!”

But dark secrets
lie deeper in the fabric
of the body politic,
making them hard to feel,
even harder to heal.

Power already knows the truth
and doesn't care.

Power
concedes nothing unless threatened.

Power
yields only by force and demand.

Power
plays for all the marbles.

How else to explain
the centuries old, suffocating blankets
of suppression, discrimination, exploitation?

Question power about these coarse, heavy covers
and it will scold as if speaking to a little child:

Be polite. Ask nice. Be patient.
Trust us. Your time will come.

History has always told a different story,
thus the conundrum.

I still say there is only one family,
each of us brothers and sisters to the end

but

this time around
let's stop pretending
we don't have to take sides.

© 2021 Tom Balles

OBSESSION

By MIRIAM LAUFER

I used to be obsessed with
drinking apple juice.
I drank it every day.
Nothing else.

I used to be obsessed
with how long I could hold my breath,
and how quietly I could start again,
on the bus, in the pool, in the closet.

I used to be obsessed
with learning how
to twirl a pencil between my thumb and forefinger.
I practiced twirling with both hands.

I used to be obsessed
with finding rocks that were perfectly smooth,
perfectly round, perfectly grey, and
heavy enough to remain on a headstone long after I was gone.

I used to be obsessed
with what it would feel like
for a boy to press his lips against mine,
and needing to remember
to move my tongue around.

I used to be obsessed
with being warm.
I piled blankets, set heaters,
never left the house without a sweater.
I used to be obsessed
with the perfect brownie recipe, from scratch.
Melted chocolate only, no cocoa.
The secret was Ghirardelli chocolate chips.

I used to be obsessed
With holding on, staying in, thinking, touching, feeling, never letting go.

© 2021 Miriam Laufer

SHAPE OF WINTER

BY BOB SHAPERO

A springlike day in the depth of the darkest season, the city rises from catatonic sleep, a caterpillar pauses on blue green spirit of ornamental cabbage.

A hip hop street preacher jams on divinity, golden church spires octagonally pierce the heavens, walls of paint and script declare Black Lives Matter's triple

epistle: rage, despair, hope. Lincoln's ghost drifts from Fords Theater, hovers over a cast of men, women, and children, masked, strolling the city,

a flutter of sparrows populates bare branches by an outdoor café, their wherewithal of survival, table crumbs on the menu.

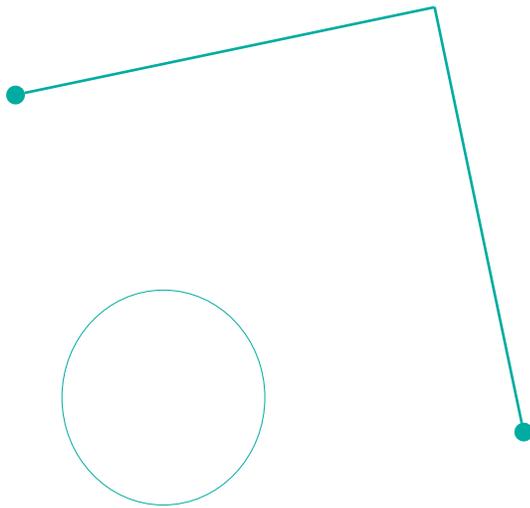
White toothed monuments erupt from reflecting pool soil, calling attention to the great war of our century, murals decorate church facades, office windows

boarded. A year has passed. The clandestine viral marauder still menaces, worthless diatribes split the nation, dams breached, floods of frustration

rampage, purple and yellow pansies reflect slant winter sun in their sidewalk pots, dogs wag their tails, park police chat with passersby.

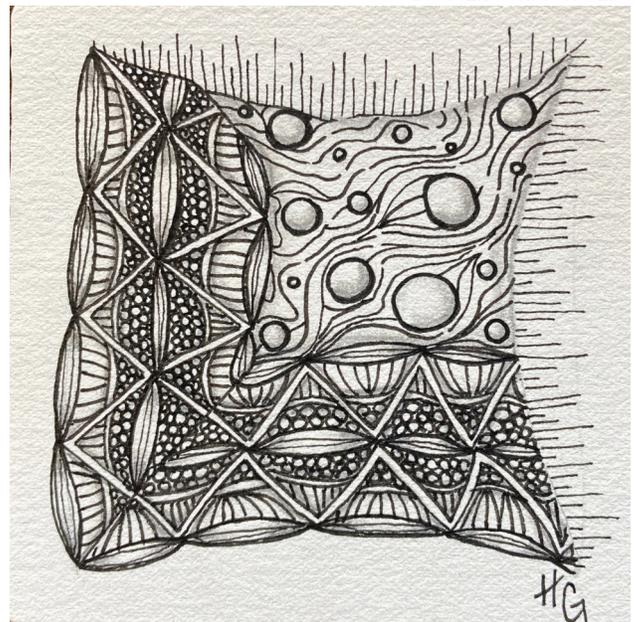
It all feels so benign, so friendly, so alive, the warmth arriving unexpectedly, inviting life to forgive the barren shape of winter, if only for a day.

© 2021 Bob Shapero



FRAYING

DRAWING (PEN/PENCIL)
BY HEIDI GRISWOLD



© 2021 Heidi Griswold

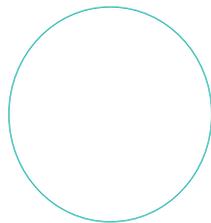
FAERIE SCAPE

PRINT (LINOCUT)

By MC CAREY



© 2021 MC Carey



BODIES LIKE OCEANS No. 1

PRINT (LINO CUT)

BY MC CAREY



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PRISONER'S HEAVENLY SEAL

BY BOB SHAPERO

As blood passes through the lungs,
it is oxygenated, turning from blue to red,
imprinted by the breath with heavenly spirt.
In this exact moment, it is said in Chinese thought,
one's destiny is stamped in the core of one's being,
the mandate from heaven sealing itself in the heart.

He had sought an initiation since childhood,
not knowing what moved him to look beyond
the difficult inner-city life into which he was born.
He now thought of Jesus, Moses, Buddha,
all archetypes of an inevitable destiny, lives
consecrated in the crucible of suffering.

The key is listening, he reminded himself,
hear what cannot be heard, sense what lies
beyond knowing, see that which lies hidden from
sight. Abide in the readiness, as Shakespeare advised,
alert to the prompts and urgings from beyond.
He trained himself the art of waiting.

Like so many men in his circumstance,
had he been practiced in the ability to pause,
when everything in oneself is primed like a
coiled snake to inflict damage, he would now
not be confined in this loathsome place.
He left the prison library. It was time for dinner.

It has been ten years since this fortress became his
home, with ten more fixed in place. No longer the
impulsive young man without compulsion of
restraint in the face of threat, need, or desire.
He has learned how to sit with himself,
allowing tempests to dissipate like spring storms.

He has learned to rest in a deep field
where seasons arrive in their own time,
where change awakens at its own pace.
He sits down to eat, settled like an oak tree,
free inside in this unfree place, each breath
embedding a destiny once abandoned.

© 2021 Bob Shapero

FOR JUDY

BY HELEN CLARK

When you are leveled, flattened,
You see reality, the true shapes of things,
You feel what it is to be in your body,
You can utter hard truths and accept them.
Because nothing can be worse
than losing this person you loved so much.

Judy, I guard your memory close,
not wanting it to be distorted,
appropriated by anyone,
Your shocking death used for others' titillation.
My grief for you will always be unfinished anyway,
So there's no describing it.
But I'll try to write about you
Because I'm so afraid I'll forget what you were like,
How tender and fearless you were.
Your humor drove my fears out of the dark places,
You didn't obsess about making a wrong step.
You were so confident,
"Coulda, woulda, shoulda" you'd always say.
I remember when we were teenagers
and you walked into a field of horses
and they parted to let you come in,
While I watched from the fence,
afraid of their power and size,
Those tremendous hooves.
Later you'd have your own horses,
Massive Percherons,
And you'd teach your daughter to ride.
You were very tall,
Held newborns
in your big strong hands at the maternity hospital.
On your memorial blog, one nurse wrote
about how you held one you couldn't save,
Comforting the baby while it died,
tears rolling down your face.
You could always do these hard things.
I can't believe someone who lived life
so fully could be gone.
Everyone feels this way.
Everyone at your memorial service was so stunned,
And yet, they told funny stories about you,
Like the way you'd try to sweet-talk them
into taking a stray animal off your hands.
I never could keep track of the
revolving door of horses,
dogs, and cats on your farm.

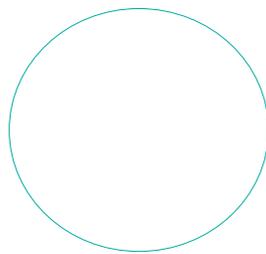
The dogs wandered into your land
or you found them
in the parking lot of the supermarket,
And they always looked so happy
because they got to be natural dogs,
lazily sleeping on the
front driveway or chasing deer on your 70
acres,
surrounded by the delectable smells of
Decaying things.
You were really loved.
Your neighbor Trinlie said your death
"is so much bigger than all of us ...
an opportunity,"
And I know what she means,
Because I've been snapped awake
from the trance of living
on the circumferences.
One last thing..
You were there in the delivery room
When I gave birth to our daughter,
our only child.
You said when you heard I was in labor
that your car steered itself
To be by my side.
So now when I look at photos of that day
When a little human being
slipped out of my body and into this world,
You're there, too, reassuringly close.
And I want to be that reassurance
for your daughter
Who takes after her strong, horse-crazy mama,
Let me be for her a witness
Of how wonderful you were.

© 2021 Helen Clark

SAME AS ME DREAMING
BY CHRISTINE DEBASTIANI



© 2021 Christine DeBastiani



THINKING OUTSIDE OF THE BOX

DRAWING (MARKERS & COLORED PENCILS)

BY DEONTA' HEAD



© 2021 Deonta' Head

UNDER THE HOT LIGHTS OF THE THIRD DEGREE

BY TOM BALLEs

Age: 68
Sex: Male
Race: Caucasian
Occupation: Health care practitioner,
33 years in private practice
Current status: Retired

What percentage of your practice
were people of color?
1-2%.

Did you ever
invite or encourage
any one of color
to come to you for care?
No.

Did you ever
ask your patients of color
to talk about their experiences
relating to race?
No.

What else did you do?
20 years teaching student practitioners
in graduate degree programs,
4 years as dean of faculty.

Did you ever
invite or encourage
any one of color
to apply to the programs?
No.

Did you ever
invite or encourage
anyone of color
to join the faculty?
No.

In all your years
did you ever
invite or encourage
any one of color
to be your friend?
No.

Do you currently have any friends of color?
Yes.

How many?
3.

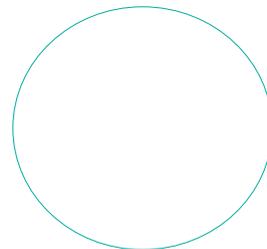
Are you sorry
for what you didn't do
all those years?
Yes.

How then will you make this right?
I don't know.

What don't you know?
I don't know
how to ask forgiveness from
those I never invited,
those I never encouraged.

What do you know?
That when it's time, my grandsons
will hear the name George Floyd.
Hear that he was murdered.
And since then their grandfather
has been striving to be a better man.

© 2021 Tom Balles



COURAGE
PAINTING
BY CHRISTINE DEBASTIANI



© 2021 Christine DeBastiani

A YEAR IN THE LIFE OF OUR DINING ROOM TABLE

BY HELEN CLARK

It's been nearly a year since the pandemic began
And so much of our life together has happened at this table.
Here is where we have "happy coffee time" every morning,
Deliciously lingering over the newspaper (the hair-raising escapades of Donald Trump notwithstanding).
You speed through your crossword puzzles
And I squint into my laptop
Grading papers or wasting time on Facebook.
The window that looks out to the backyard and the woods beyond
Is a gateway to all that is beautiful in every season--
The pink dogwood tree
The mother deer that brought her baby fawn triplets every day,
(And they ate all the plants in my garden, but I didn't care because it was so good to see new life leaping
around when we knew so many were dying)--
And summer came and we migrated to the deck,
And marveling as your beloved solar-operated deck lights began to glow one by one,
We watched the fireflies amid the surround sound of peepers.
Nowhere to go, nothing to do.
After fall had lit up the trees and the frost came, we returned to the dining room.
At Christmas, the table became a wrapping station strewn with ribbon and gift tags,
And Colleen and Jenny visited, and we played boardgames here.
Our ideas crashed into each other like comets as we sat at the table for hours catching up on
Eighteen months' worth of conversation,
And when they left, we returned to our quiet meals and our laughter and our little jokes,
And watched the winter snow cover the woodpile, the pine trees, and the nandinas' red berries.
Maybe we've spent too much time sitting at this table, indulging in too much rich food,
But there are moments when I've felt joy from the top of my head to the tips of my toes
Because I've spent it all with you.

© 2021 Helen Clark

TOWERING OVER LIFE'S CIRCUMSTANCES

PHOTOGRAPHY
BY LIZ HENZEY



© 2021 Liz Henzey

CONSEQUENCES

MIXED FABRICS (FELT, SILK & WOOL)

BY FELICIA REED

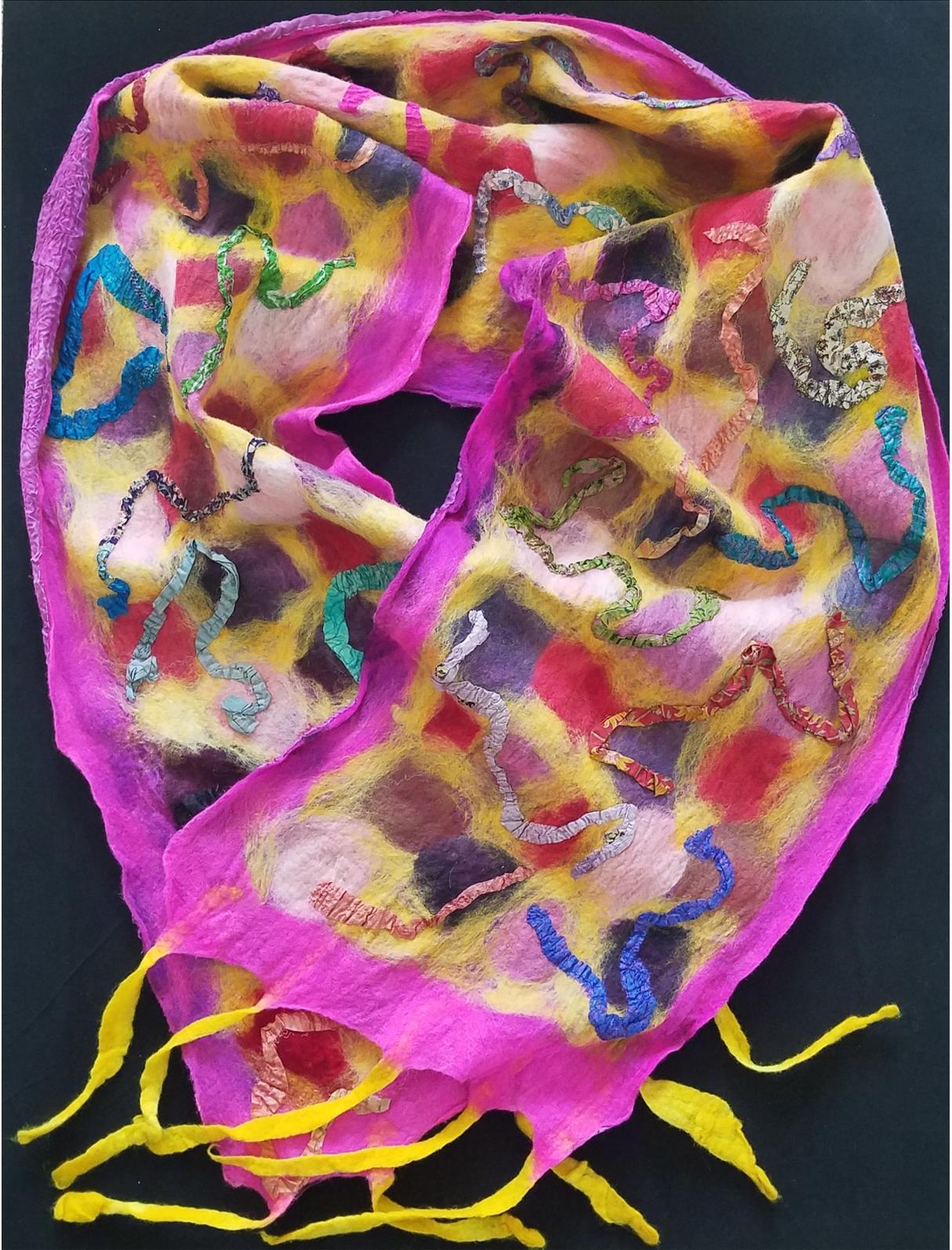


© 2021 Felicia Reed

WHIMSICAL

MIXED FABRICS (FELT, SILK & WOOL)

BY FELICIA REED



© 2021 Felicia Reed

THE OBVIOUS CHILD

BY BETH GULLEY

I know it's Paul Simon
voicing over the top,
but it's the sounds
of the Brazilian drum circle Olodum
drumming in the background
that drive my heart rate,
push me forward,
run me through my workout.

Like watching Central Station
and catching a glimpse
of the red dirt floor
of a Protestant church
in the favelas,
I'm nostalgic
for the southern cone
in the time before
my dad died.

The song reminds me of the year
after Stroessner was deposed
and we were all so happy
the Berlin Wall came down,
and we walked up the brick street
to the flower market
oblivious to the tragedies
waiting in the future.

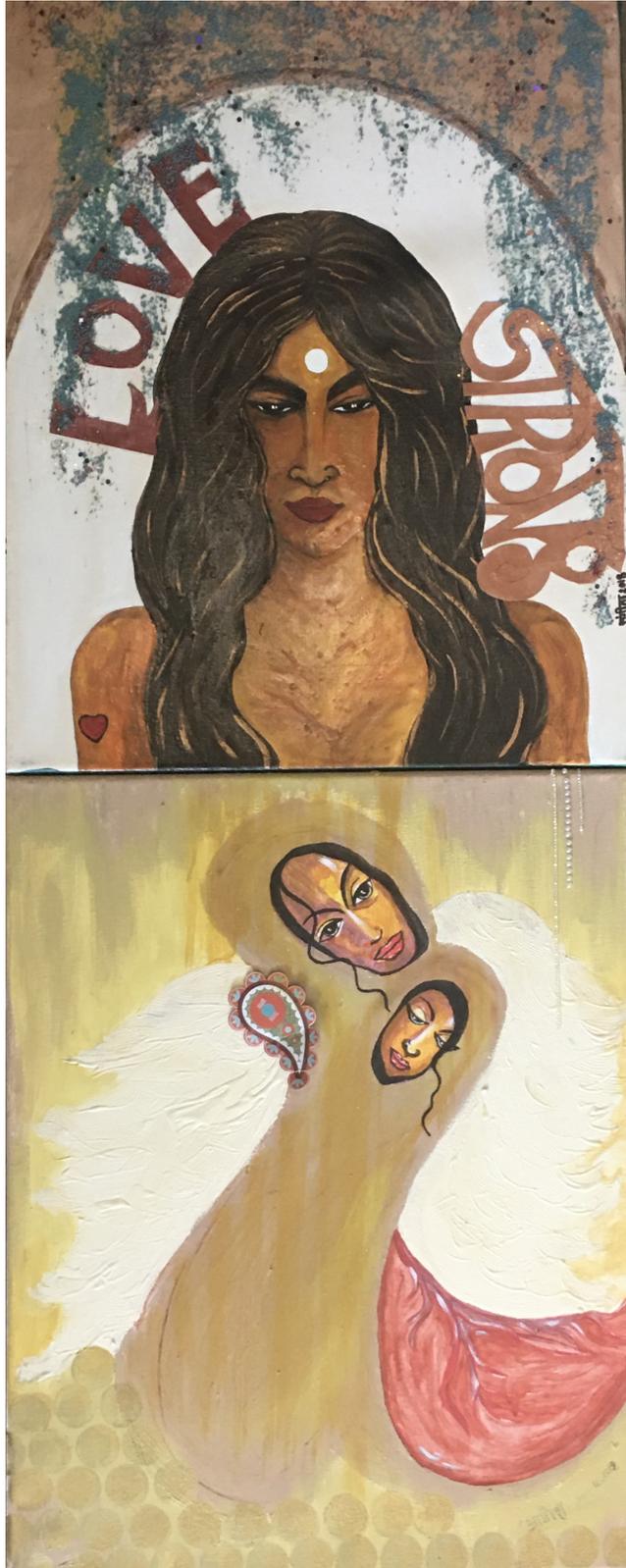
At the end of the song
people at the gym
think my face rolls
with sweat, but I can't stop
from crying. I want to go home.
You can't deny the obvious child.

© 2021 Beth Gulley

LOVE STRONG

PAINTING (ACRYLIC ON CANVAS)

BY SANGEETA KAUL



© 2021 Sangeeta Kaul

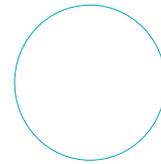
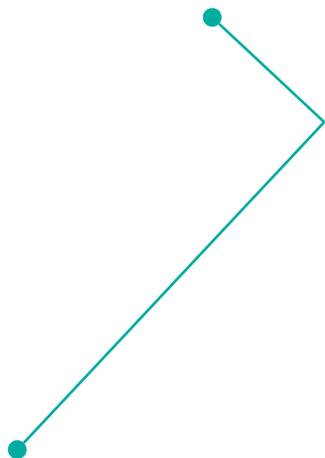
MOUNTAIN SPIRITS

MIXED-MEDIA COLLAGE

BY DIANE DUNN



© 2021 Diane Dunn



NIGHT CREATURES

MIXED-MEDIA COLLAGE

BY DIANE DUNN



© 2021 Diane Dunn



WRAPPED IN THE PAIN

By JEANA LOVELACE

I lie here wrapped in pain and slip into the fog
Visions of journals bulging with words, memories and thoughts

They are packed away in boxes

I try to discover who I have been

Paintings swirl around in my mind

Raw pain and anger spilled out in color

How sad this evidence of my existence

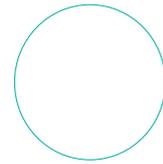
So weary of this life, this pain

These highs and lows

So, for now I will stay and wait

Until I find the fight within that keeps me alive

© 2021 Jeana Lovelace



TIGHT SQUEEZE

By BETH GULLEY

I don't know much about packaging,

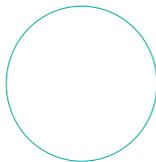
but I'm too big to fit in that box.

I spill out over the label

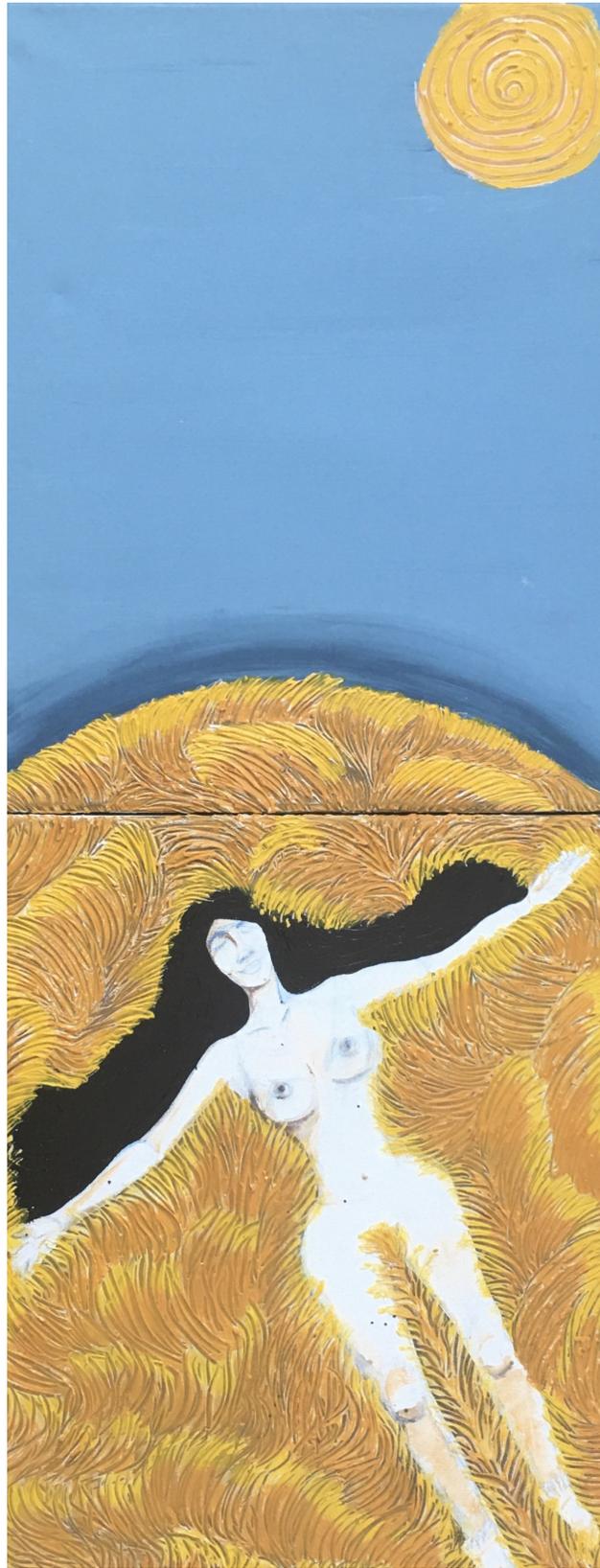
and you must figure out

what to do with me.

© 2021 Beth Gulley



FIELDS OF GOLD
PAINTING (ACRYLIC ON CANVAS)
BY SANGEETA KAUL



© 2020 Sangeeta Kaul

GO LONG
PHOTOGRAPHY
BY SAM JESNER



© 2021 Sam Jesner

READY, SET, HIKE

PHOTOGRAPHY
BY SAM JESNER



© 2021 Sam Jesner

UNTITLED
PENCIL DRAWING
BY HEATHER



© 2021 Heather

UNTITLED
BY MIKE CLARK

seeking love
is a search
well worth taking—
in finding it
or even
when love
escapes us
but leaves us
with tenderness.

© 2021 Mike Clark

UNTITLED

By MIKE CLARK

in my eighties
the imprints
I've left behind
are relationships
who have come
and gone
as messages
in the wind.

© 2021 Mike Clark

UNTITLED

PENCIL DRAWING
BY HEATHER



© 2021 Heather

THE SUN IN OUR FISTS

By KB BALLENTINE

How long will fear pave the road
of joy from your future?
Each anxious thought piled and piled
until you're suffocated: a washed-out,
washed-up version of living.

How long will you let hate make you rage,
blind to the beauties, sometimes small
and over-looked? Each pellet of anger
poured like acid into puddles
that corrode understanding.

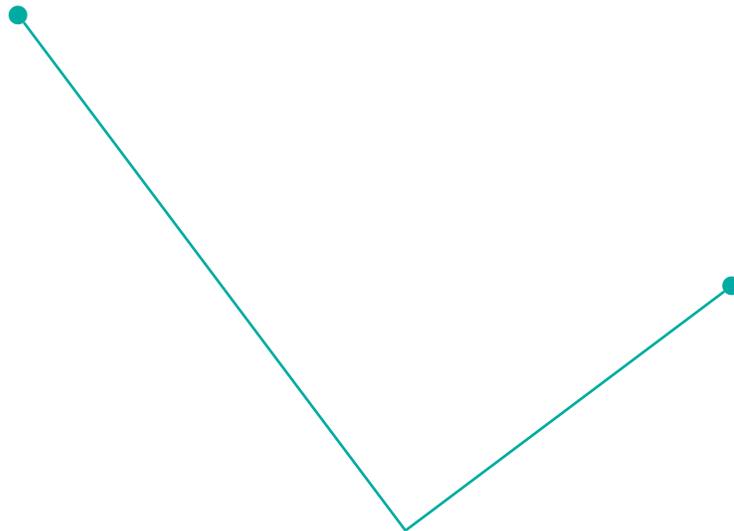
Applause bursts for the rebel-heart,
but when rebellion overflows its banks,
how can we all stand on rooftops?
Who is left to persuade?

There is no place for long-lived dread
or ancient hate, not if you expect
to turn the tide into something better,
something brighter for those behind you.

Step out of their way,

let them see the light.

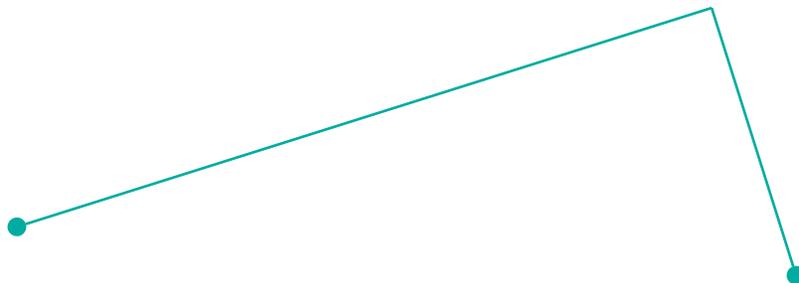
© 2021 KB Ballentine



LIGHT IN THE SHELL
PHOTOGRAPHY
BY DANUTA E. KOSK-KOSICKA



© 2021 Danuta E. Kosk-Kosicka



TETHERED

DRAWING (PEN, MARKER & PENCIL)

By HEIDI GRISWOLD



© 2021 Heidi Griswold

NEW EYESHADOW

PAINTING (ACRYLIC)

BY RENEE KALU



© 2021 Renee Kalu

DRAGONFLY FROST

PHOTOGRAPY
BY KELLY DUMAR



© 2021 Kelly DuMar

TREE HEART

PHOTOGRAPHY
BY KELLY DUMAR



© 2021 Kelly DuMar

STRECTHING PAST MY FEARS

PHOTOGRAPHY
BY LIZ HENZEY



© 2021 Liz Henzey

LONELY ARE THE BRAVE

BY KB BALLENTINE

They don't come as crowds
but wade in singly, tumult and chaos
smashing over them like waves,
like a load of granite dumped
from a ten-ton truck.

A whisky-stained blur stirred
with smoke and ash, the memory hole incinerates
both the masses and the past. Truth tucked
into corners until it shifts, inch by inch,
into forgetfulness. There is no panacea
for facts divided or silenced.

Clouds and dust thicken, people hiding
their eyes. But one or two lift their heads,
reach out – like lightning through rain,
as trees thrash in the flashes,
scattering seeds along the way.

© 2021 KB Ballentine

RESILIENT GINGKO

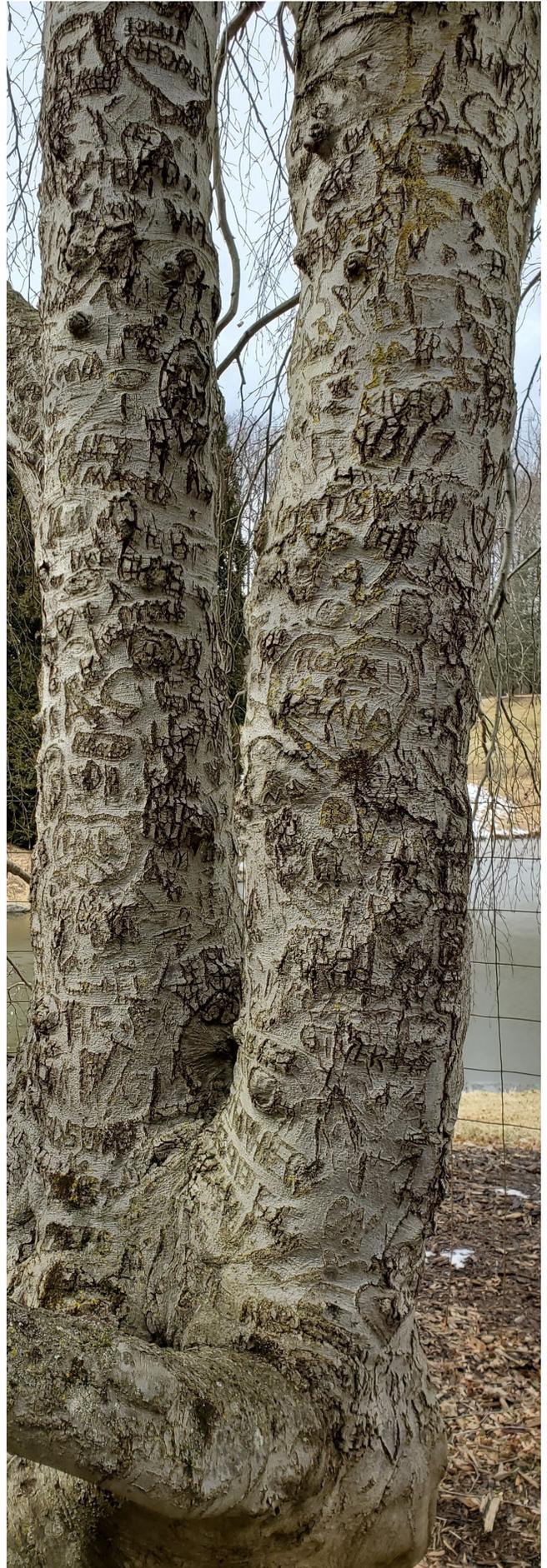
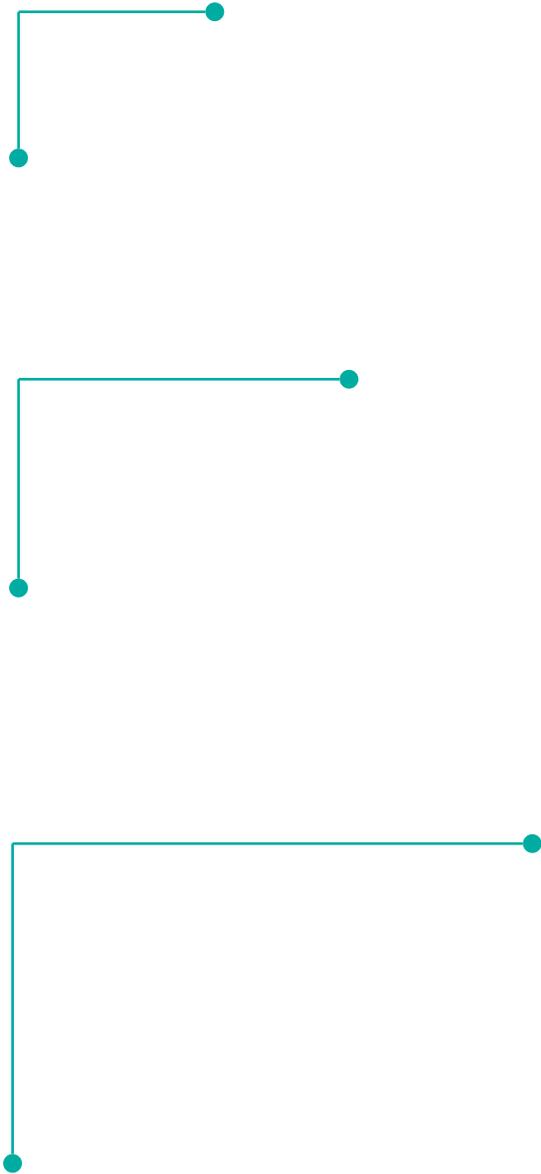
DRAWING (PEN, MARKER & PENCIL)

BY HEIDI GRISWOLD



© 2021 Heidi Griswold

MARKED FOR LIFE
PHOTOGRAPHY
BY PHYLLIS YIGDALL



© 2021 Phyllis Yigdall

NINA & THE KING OF LOVE

PROSE & DRAWING
BY CHRISTINE DEBASTIANI



I am sitting at the local hospital, having been called in to advocate for a sexual assault victim. As I wait outside the ER examining room for the detective to finish interviewing our client, I am struck once more by the healing reality that it is connection, relationship, caring, kindness and empathy — all facets of love — that make the world go around. Even in this instance, just my presence, my smile or a welcoming ear can help to break the remembrance of the pain and suffering associated with what happened — even for just a moment.

Then I remember last week's online staff meeting. We were discussing our thoughts openly and how each of us was dealing with the aftermath of the killing of George Floyd by a Minneapolis police officer. I was witness to the profound sadness and struggle with hopelessness that my coworkers relayed. My heart ached with heaviness, cracking open wide, eyes tearing up with a palpable rawness as my friends relayed their own stories — all varied dependent upon their age, sex and experience.

CONTINUED

NINA & THE KING OF LOVE CONTINUED

For my black coworkers, it's meant living in fear that your fiancé or father may not come home one day. Or that, as a young black male, you would experience the repeat of being personally harassed by law enforcement. It's meant remembering the day Martin Luther King, Jr. was assassinated, when for a crushing moment, the world stopped. And now, it's having the courage to protest for human rights, knowing that you, yourself or your child could be hurt or even killed for standing up for something so intrinsically basic.

Whether a client in need, coworker or friend, it is blatantly clear to me that the compassion and love I feel for them has nothing to do with anything lying on the surface and visible to the naked eye — not the color of their skin, the wrinkles that come with age, the outward appearance of being male or female or the knowledge of who they choose to love.

I know this, because what is essential is invisible to the eye (thank you, Antoine de Saint-Exupéry and his *Little Prince*). This whole black/white, male/female, LBGTQ thing, I believe, really has more to do with the fundamental character of people — how we “be” in the world when no one is watching — what we deem as important and worthwhile and how we behave towards others in the pursuit of it. Why do we continue to fool ourselves? None of this is an issue of skin color, socioeconomic status or who people are drawn to love or how they feel comfortable expressing themselves. This is a battle between those who choose to live in hate and fear, acting accordingly, and those who are determined to live in love and courage. It's a power struggle of the most epic kind — the kind we see in blockbuster movies, the kind we learn about spiritually whether through religious teachings or intimate, honest self-reflection.

Since the beginning of time, humans are humans are humans. There are people who make cruel and inhumane decisions daily — with the blink of an eye consistently choosing themselves over others and choosing to hate those who are different than themselves. These are the people — the haters and fear mongers — who are the real enemy to what's good. Mean people come in all colors, orientations and professions — that's the real truth of it all. Perhaps we are missing the key message as we focus on the most shallow of scapegoats, that which resides solely at the surface of an individual's or group's appearance.

So, maybe what we have here is a bad cop murdering a man; rioters, not peaceful protesters, burning and opportunistically looting for their own gain; the media looking for (or concocting) their next drama to exploit and sensationalize for ratings; politicians more worried about their careers than standing up for the citizens who put their faith in them; people refusing to take responsibility for their own lives while others build walls instead of reaching out. Each one of these actions is designed to separate and the reality is that we are

CONTINUED

systematically doing it to ourselves. Maybe, for one minute, we could stop pointing fingers at each other and explore deep down what part each one of us has played, if any, in fueling the turmoil, hate and civil unrest.

The reality is that there are all kinds of people who live their lives hurting, judging, blaming others and not taking responsibility for themselves. To help a little, let me name some for you — the world is full of ill-meaning doctors, parents, judges, taxi drivers, care takers, fast food workers, farmers, coaches, plumbers, clergy, car mechanics, politicians, world leaders, talk show hosts, athletes, truck drivers, armed service people and dog walkers — I could go on. Just in case you were wondering, in that inexhaustible list, nowhere does it indicate color, race, sex or orientation. Those who continue to perpetuate thoughts and actions of discrimination only serve themselves in order to feel a false sense of control, to bolster their ego or pockets and to justify irrational emotions and fear.

It is imperative, for lasting positive change, that we have open discussions and vigilantly hold ourselves accountable for our own actions and why it is most important that we understand that, as humans, we all have the potential to slip into malevolence and complacency. At any moment any one of us may choose against our fellow neighbor. If we understand where hate comes from, we will be more apt to catch the signs before slipping down that slippery slope.

Benjamin Franklin once said, “Justice will not be served until those who are unaffected are as outraged as those who are.” What that plainly means is that all of it, this huge systemic issue, is collectively our problem. Full stop, there you go — bad behavior is everyone’s issue.

Recently, I was listening to a *Radiolab* podcast while driving. It was about the singer, Nina Simone. Her voice rising with defiance simultaneously over the sounds of protesting in the L.A. streets recorded last week, she sang “Backlash Blues,” a civil rights song written with the poet Langston Hughes. Powerful. After Martin Luther King, Jr.’s assassination, protests followed, riots and burning ensued. Sound familiar? In a live recording at a festival in Westchester, N.Y., only three days after King’s murder, Nina had this to say, “But he had seen the mountaintop and he knew he could not stop. Always living with the threat of death ahead. Folks you’d better stop and think. Everybody knows we’re on the brink. What will happen, now that the King of love is dead?”

I heard a tiny voice the other day. Maybe I was imagining it. It came from a guy named History. He said, “Don’t make me repeat myself.”

ROOTS

BY CRYSTAL OGAR

i don't have the luxury
to walk among them as human
my skin their greatest enemy
my culture their greatest acquisition
I sing
and I hear your voices
strength you grasped onto
a rickety bridge that led to me
your blood, pain, and courage
pulse through my veins
You
Didn't
Let
Up
And neither will
I

© 2021 Crystal Ogar

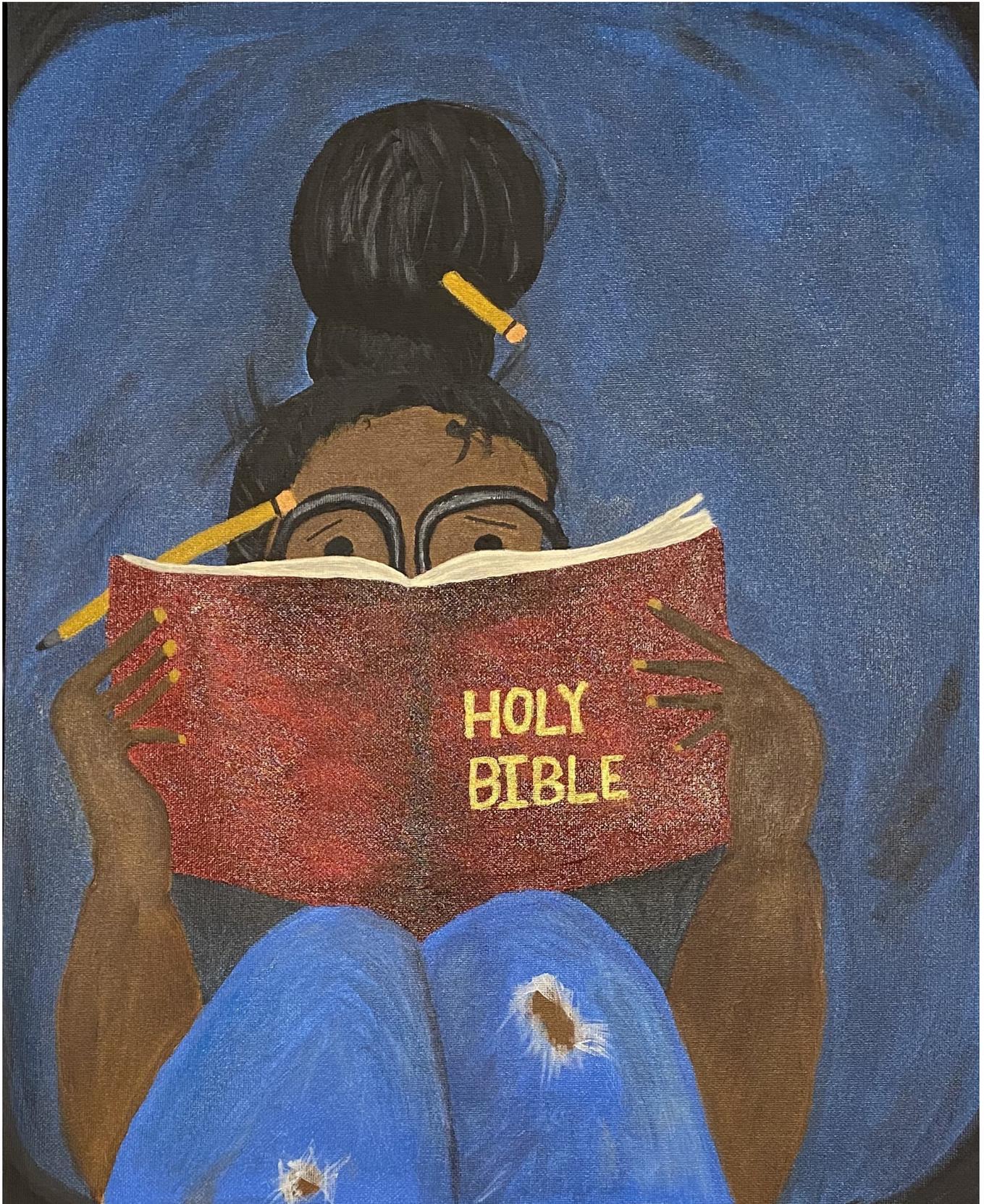


ADORNED
PAINTING/MIXED MEDIA (ACRYLIC)
BY RENEE KALU



© 2021 Renee Kalu

CURIOUS
PAINTING (ACRYLIC)
BY RENEE KALU

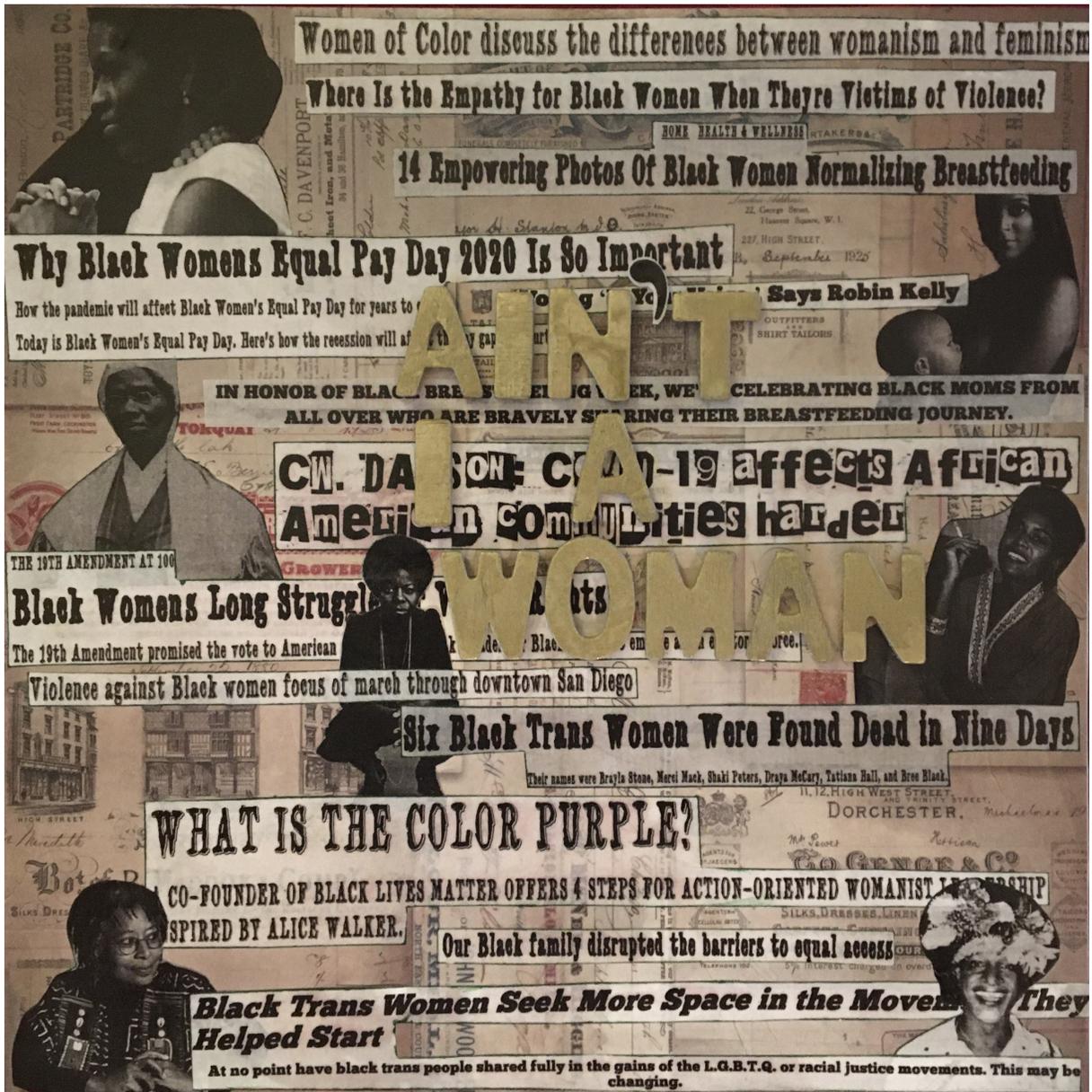


© 2021 Renee Kalu

AIN'T I A WOMAN

MIXED-MEDIA COLLAGE

BY SANDRA PRICE



© 2021 Sandra Price

HERE I AM

By HEATHER

my body is feeling like mine again
(for the first time?)
i can feel my limbs
my forearms resting on my thighs
the kink in my shoulder
i'm at peace
feeling, knowing, being
connected, in control, grounded
i am here, in my body

something profound is shifting inside me
i am seeing my worth
my humanity
that i am strong and imperfect
and struggling and growing
and learning and unlearning
and figuring it out
just like everyone else
i am not broken
i belong

i'm coming (back?) to myself now
learning to peel back the layers
peek inside
and see myself
really see myself
figuring out how to be OK
how to do more than survive
that maybe i have been enough
all along
feeling human
messy and beautiful
shedding all the shells and masks and
costumes and brave faces and and and...

learning to show up
be me
whoever i am
learning that i am ok just the way i am
however i am
and always have been
i am safe now
it's ok to let myself be free

this is a journey without a destination
i continue to learn and grow and change and
shed
i'm so grateful to have made it this far
so grateful to be here
this life hasn't been a given
(no life ever really is)
this journey didn't have to happen

and yet
Here I Am
showing up
again and again
fighting for myself
believing that i am worthy
(for the first time in my life?)
defying the odds
rewriting my story

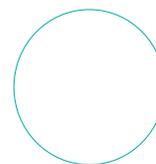
for as independent as i grew up
for as old as i was when i was really so young
i haven't really trusted myself
never believed i had the strength
or the right
to take up space
to stand on my own
as myself

and yet
Here I Am

and i'm not going anywhere

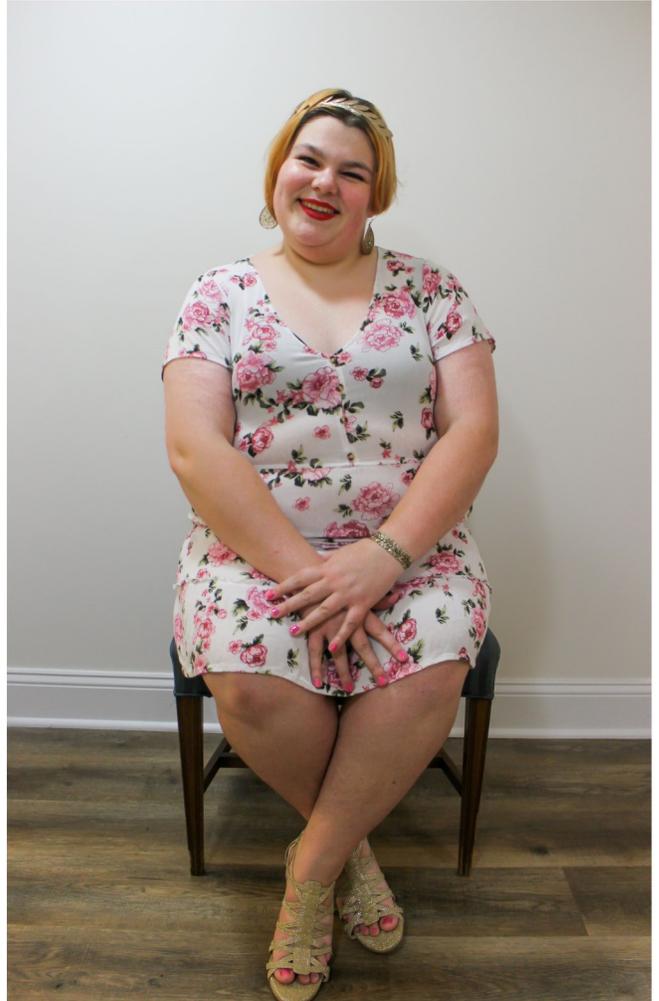
life is messy and beautiful and worth it
i am messy and beautiful and worth it
and so are you

© 2021 Heather

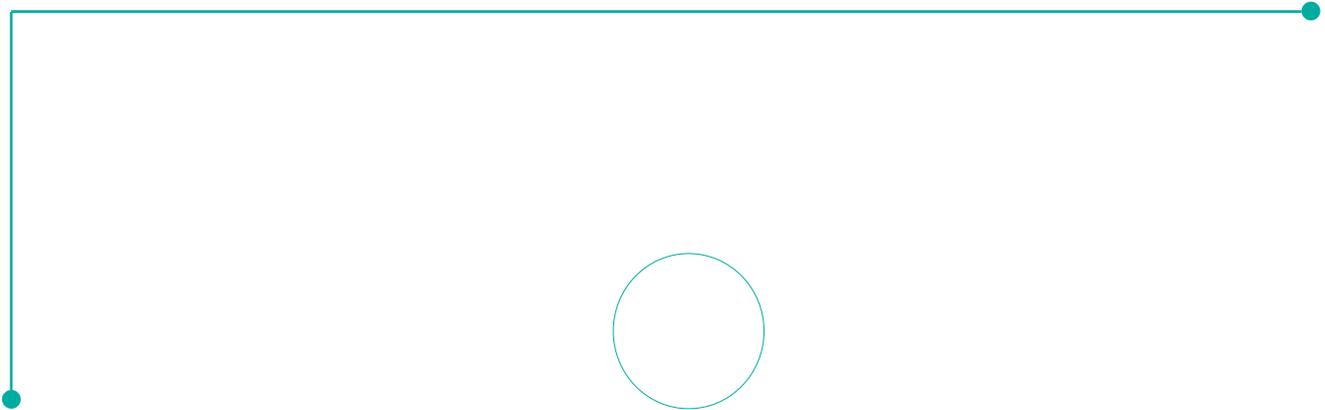


TWO SIDES OF A COIN

PHOTOGRAPHY
BY SAM JESNER



© 2021 Sam Jesner



PATTERNED
PHOTOGRAPHY
BY PHYLLIS YIGDALL



© 2021 Phyllis Yigdall

WEATHER WORN

PHOTOGRAPHY

BY PHYLLIS YIGDALL



© 2021 Phyllis Yigdall

OLD LADY
PAINTING (WATERCOLOR)
BY AMJAD HILLES



© 2021 Amjad Hilles

DRAGONFLY WINDOW SKIMMER

PHOTOGRAPHY
BY KELLY DUMAR



© 2021 Kelly DuMar

TWISTED HEART

DRAWING (PEN, MARKER & PENCIL)

BY HEIDI GRISWOLD



© 2021 Heidi Griswold

I SIT UNDER THE STARS

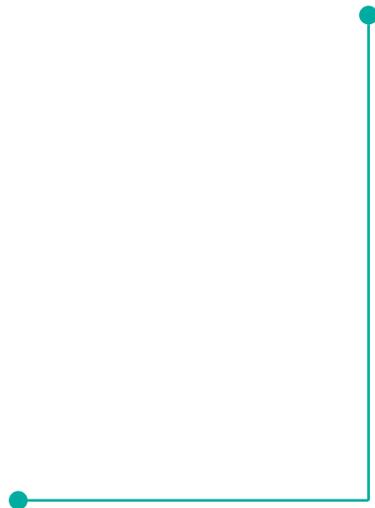
BY ARLITA HOLLAND

I sit under the stars.
Jewels of the poems surround me.
I am engulfed in a quiet stillness.

The sounds of the ocean
Have gone silent.
I am mesmerized
By the rocking motion of waves.

My mind rides them
Endlessly, to new lands.
I disappear into nothingness.
I become the wave.

© 2021 Arlita Holland



THEM / YOU / ME / US

By CRYSTAL OGAR

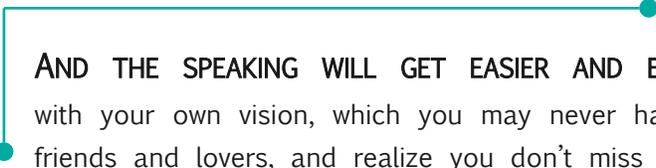
your body determined my birth
feet pounding the hot pavement
marching for a revolutionary
while supremacists profit from pain

monitoring the sounds of tires screeching
adjoined with contraction
while images of you dance
as i'm roused to fruition
untethered from and
made whole by
you
belly swollen
with the actuality of me

on that thundering hill
it took twelve months to recover from you
i feel you singing through me
see you in my likeness
were you wondering who i'd be
as i pushed you to break
and you forced me into the world

© 2021 Crystal Oggar





AND THE SPEAKING WILL GET EASIER AND EASIER. And you will find you have fallen in love with your own vision, which you may never have realized you had. And you will lose some friends and lovers, and realize you don't miss them. And new ones will find you and cherish you. And you will still flirt and paint your nails, dress up and party, because, as I think Emma Goldman said, "If I can't dance, I don't want to be part of your revolution." And at last you'll know with surpassing certainty that only one thing is more frightening than speaking your truth. And that is not speaking.

...Audre Lorde
Sister Outsider: Essays and Speeches, 1984

ARTISTS' BIOS

KB Ballentine (29, 37)

KB Ballentine's sixth collection, *The Light Tears Loose*, was published in 2019 by Blue Light Press. Published in *Crab Orchard Review* and *Haight-Ashbury Literary Journal*, among others, her work also appears in anthologies including *In Plein Air* (2017) and *Carrying the Branch: Poets in Search of Peace* (2017). Learn more at www.kballentine.com.

Tom Balles (3, 4, 13)

Tom is a retired acupuncturist living in Laurel, MD. He was a faculty member at Tai Sophia (now Maryland University of Integrative Health) for 20 years, and is the author of *Becoming a Healing Presence* and *Dancing with the Ten Thousand Things*.

MC Carey (cover, 7, 8)

MC Carey (they/them) is a 24-year-old fat, Black, Queer, agender, Femme-Dyke printmaker, educator, and advocate living and creating on stolen Piscataway-Conoy indigenous land, AKA Baltimore, MD. MC creates linoleum block prints as a way to heal from past trauma, engage in artistry that centers blackness, fatness, and queer and trans identity, and to escape a world where being different is the opposite of celebrated. Printmaking is therapy for MC.

Helen Clark (10, 15)

Helen Clark is an adjunct English and Journalism professor at Howard Community College, and an author and editor. She is also an avid reader, hiker, and nature nerd. These days, Helen's passion is teaching casual creative writing workshops via Zoom that inspire the joy of writing.

Mike Clark (27, 28)

Mike Clark is publisher emeritus and a board member for the *Little Patuxent Review*, a journal of literature and the arts now in its eleventh year of publishing. Clark previously was a reporter for the *Baltimore Sun*. He also served three years as editor of a regional publication of the American Friends Service Committee. In 2018 he received the Howie award as a supporter of arts in Howard County. He was awarded the Audrey Robbins award from the Association of Community Services in Howard County for his work that set up a backpack & school supply project for children who lacked the necessary supplies. At that time, he was coordinator of Christ Church Link. He has three adult children and seven grandchildren. His wife, Lois, is a retired adjunct professor at Howard Community College, having taught special education and reading students for 10 years.

Christine DeBastiani (11, 14, 39)

Christine is a crisis manager for victims of domestic violence in Southern Maryland. She enjoys being creative and uses art and writing to express herself and to connect with her clients on deeper levels. Starting this summer, Christine is excited to begin her master's in clinical counseling at William & Mary.

Kelly DuMar (33, 35, 50)

Kelly DuMar is a poet, playwright, and workshop facilitator from Boston. She's author of three poetry chapbooks, and her poems, prose, and photos are published in many literary journals, including *Bellevue Literary Review*, *Tupelo Quarterly*, *Crab Fat*, *Storm Cellar*, *Corium & Tiferet*. Kelly serves on the Board of the International Women's Writing Guild (IWWG) and produces the Bi-Monthly Open Mic Writer Series attended by women worldwide. She blogs her daily nature photos & creative writing at kellydumar.com/blog.

ARTISTS' BIOS

Diane Dunn (21, 22)

Diane Dunn has, over the years, worked in black and white photography, painting (watercolor, acrylic, oil, and pastel), collage, and mono prints. She has recently become enamored with the medium of collage and loves the tactile experience of cutting, tearing and assembling various hand-painted papers and fabrics, often combined with paint. Diane finds a serendipitous aspect to collage that is exciting and is never sure where a piece will lead when she starts. She also enjoys making mono prints, which allow for layering and masking that reveals hidden patterns and images.

Heidi Griswold (6, 31, 37, 51)

Heidi Griswold is a queer storyteller and resident of Los Angeles, CA. Drawing repetitive patterns inspired by Zentangle has helped them reconnect to their inner artist during difficult periods of transition and change.

Beth Gulley (19, 23)

Beth Gulley lives in Kansas City and teaches writing at Johnson County Community College. She recently published a chapbook, \$!*# Hole Countries: A Find and Replace Meditation. Her poems also appear in the Bards Against Hunger Anthology, From Everywhere a Little: A Migration Anthology, the Thorny Locust, and The Gasconade Review Presents: Storm A'Comin'. She loves thrift store shopping, traveling, and drinking coffee.

Deonta' Head (12)

Highly skilled and diverse artist Deonta' Head is published in over 20 elite magazines publications from east to west coast. His work has been cited throughout the Washington metropolitan DMV area. From murals at children's hospital, Washington Smithsonian, public parks and recreational centers, to local food trucks. Deonta' has also trained as a teacher. He obtained his bachelor's degree to be able to teach youth and adults art classes in mental health. This is a huge way to give back to the community while bringing out the creativity of the people.

Heather (27, 28, 45)

Heather is a human who has leaned on writing and drawing as creative outlets on her healing journey.

Liz Henzey (16, 36)

Liz enjoys capturing moments in nature through photography. Liz is drawn to the raw beauty of naked trees and believes they resonate endurance and fortitude. Liz is an arts administrator for a community arts center, and she enjoys writing and marbling. She has had art featured in Touchstone Gallery, Washington, DC, and Fredericksburg Center for the Creative Arts, Fredericksburg, VA.

Amjad Hilles (49)

Amjad Hilles, 25, knows the oppressive sufferings of keeping beautiful thoughts secret. Living in war torn Gaza, which the United Nations refers to as "an outdoor prison," Amjad knows how political and cultural warfare forces repression of love, hope, trust, faith, love, romance, sexuality, and freedom. Though he paints in relative secrecy, it is art which gives him hope for the day he will paint in freedom.

Arlita Holland (34, 52)

Arlita Holland is a survivor who's been blessed with the gift of poetry. She writes to inspire those who struggle to rise up out of the ashes of pain and suffering. She believes in the power of poetry and prays that her poems find their way into the hearts of those yearning to be free from the effects of sexual assault and domestic violence.

ARTISTS' BIOS

Sam Jesner (25, 26, 46)

Sam Jesner is a visual artist and mental health advocate working primarily with photography, mixed media, and printmaking, although they do not limit themselves to those mediums. Their work focuses on mental illness and gender identity/expression. Sam uses their experience in technical theater to create characters and artificial stage-like situations. They use extreme characterizations in order to express emotion and expand ideas. They hope to start conversations and invoke self-reflection with their work.

Renee Kalu (32, 42, 43)

Renee Kalu is 50 years old and lives in Frederick, MD, with her husband. She is not trained; simply enjoys creating something from nothing. Renee picked up this hobby in 2020, initially as a distraction from COVID then as an outlet for emotional stress due to all the racial injustice that summer. She enjoys sharing her work with her family and friends.

Sangeeta Kaul (20, 24)

As a visual artist and a graphic designer, Sangeeta produces fine art products and events, web design, multi-media graphics, publications, and print design. Her passion is producing projects that cater to various social and human empowerment themes. She is most joyful while curating, directing, and organizing community art projects, creative, and social awareness events. Sangeeta's art is a fusion of Indo-western influences and spiritual explorations/expressions. She invites upcoming collaboration within the community.

Danuta E. Kosk-Kosicka (30)

Danuta E. Kosk-Kosicka is a photographer whose work has been exhibited in shows, art journals, and used for book covers. Her art was featured in *Dragonfly*. She is the author of two award-winning books, *Oblige the Light* (CityLit Press, 2015), and *Face Half-Illuminated* (Apprentice House, 2014). She is also the translator for four books by Lidia Kosk. A biochemist, poet, poetry translator, and co-editor of *Loch Raven Review*, she grew up in Poland and now lives in Maryland. Website: danutakk.wordpress.com.

Miriam Laufer (5)

Miriam Laufer teaches college writing at Howard Community College and works as a learning center administrator and writing tutor.

Jeana Lovelace (23)

Jeana is a survivor of prolonged childhood sexual abuse. For years she has suffered the results of her severe trauma and is almost through the difficult trauma work. She writes poetry to release emotions that have no spoken words.

Crystal Ogar (42, 53)

Crystal Iyaji Ogar (she/they) is a Nigerian-American and Indigenous, queer educator and activist. A graduate in Gender & Women's Studies at UMBC, they were also a part of the SPARK Movement where they were a mentor and blogger. She was featured on two panels in 2012 and 2014 at the Women in the World Summit; The Digital Lives of Girls and Mirror Image: The New Way to Self-Esteem. Crystal's passions include teaching through an anti-capitalist, anarchist, and black liberation lens, giving back to her ancestors, and challenging the scripts of heteronormativity and white supremacist patriarchy.

ARTISTS' BIOS

Sandra Price (44)

Sandra Price is a mother, sister, daughter, friend, volunteer, art lover, gardener, spiritual being, activist, book lover, anti-racist, and survivor. She enjoys communicating her thoughts and experiences via collage and poetry. Born in Washington, DC, in the 60s, growing up as a BIPOC/biracial woman wasn't always easy but was certainly interesting. She loves music, poetry, live theatre, dance, travel, her fur babies, and spending time outdoors – especially the beach.

Felicia Reed (17, 18)

Felicia Reed is a certified Life Purpose, Spiritual and Christian Coach, Advocate, Artist, Speaker, Quality Management Professional for a NASA Contractor, and a JMMB Virtual TV Host of “Females Without Fear to Face Art.” Ms. Reed sits on organization boards and in mastermind teams that are supporting others in their lives. She works with groups and individuals to promote positive and constructive life changes and healing modalities primarily using art and nature. Ms. Reed is a survivor of several life-altering traumatic experiences where she firmly believes that natural modalities and art saved her life. Her award-winning felted Healing Wraps are featured in galleries, engagements, art forums and wellness entities, as tools that spark dialog and change to overcome life transitions and trauma. Felicia Reed inspires others, especially females, to own life events, face them, and ultimately heal them to a manageable degree. Ms. Reed is working on an upcoming book and touring as a fiber artist. She can be reached at 301-728-0027, on IG at @fiberartwithfelicia and by email at Felicia.reed@putitinperspective.net, and is available for engagements.

Bob Shapero (6, 9)

Bob Shapero has practiced acupuncture and Chinese medicine for 35 years. He enjoys hiking, being in nature, playing music, poetry and family (kids, grandkids). He is also interested in fostering how we can learn to engage in constructive, healing conversations in the public and private domains.

Phyllis Yigdall (38, 47, 48)

Phyllis continues to explore the world through her own perfectly imperfect eyes – always learning. 2020 was a remarkable year. Was it perfect vision? Perhaps if looking inward. Lots of time and space for introspection, cleaning out, exploring close to home. Engagement with the world – friends and family, activities, volunteer work, learning – has been different. Perhaps that's the answer: 2020 was different vision.

Submit Your Art!



Poetry

Photography

Sketch

Short Story

Mixed-media

Sculpture

Painting

Prose

Dragonfly

arts magazine

Reflections on Inner Strength, Oppression, Transformation, Healing, Hope and Justice

Dragonflies are a symbol of renewal after a time of great hardship.

Accepting submissions for the 2021 issue:
October 1, 2021 to March 31, 2022

Submit your work to:

Vanita Leatherwood, Executive Director

Dragonfly Editor

dragonfly@wearehopeworks.org

410.997.0304



wearehopeworks.org

Made possible by the Howard County Arts Council through a grant from Howard County Government

Dragonfly

arts magazine

Reflections on Inner Strength, Oppression, Transformation, Healing, Hope and Justice



SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

Dragonfly arts magazine is a publication of HopeWorks of Howard County Maryland. Themes for your submitted work (both visual and literary) should focus on reflections about relationships, activism, oppression, love, advocacy, hope, transformative justice, trauma, racial and gender equity, intersectionality, self-care, or healing. **Writers/Artists do not have to be survivors.**

2022 SUBMISSION SEASON: Opens October 1, 2021. Closes March 31, 2022. Submitting early in the submission season is encouraged. Acceptance notifications will be e-mailed in June 2022.

POETRY AND PROSE

Prose/Fiction: should be double spaced and not exceed 5,000 words

Poetry: submissions are limited to 3 poems

Please specify the genre of the work, your name and pseudonym (if any), the word count (prose only), complete contact information and bio (75-word maximum) written in the third person.

All written submissions should be sent via attachment (as a .doc or pdf) to: dragonfly@wearehopeworks.org

ART AND PHOTOGRAPHY SUBMISSIONS

You may submit a portfolio of one to four images. Please specify the genre of the work, your name and pseudonym (if any), complete contact information, bio (75-word maximum) written in the third person.

Your work must be combined into a single submission consisting of .jpeg or .tif files no larger than 5mb to: dragonfly@wearehopeworks.org

ALL SUBMISSIONS

Type "Dragonfly Magazine Submission" in the subject box. You will be notified if a submission will be published. Contributors will receive two copies of the magazine. Financial compensation is not available. Look for upcoming details about The Fifth Annual Dragonfly The Poetry Reading that will be held in June 2022. The event features the work of *Dragonfly* published poets and visual artists as well as an open mic.

"Only one thing is more frightening than speaking your truth. And that is not speaking."

- Audre Lorde



HopeWorks of Howard County
9770 Patuxent Woods Drive
Suite 300
Columbia MD 21046
wearehopeworks.org
410.997.0304

Made possible by the Howard County Arts Council through a grant from Howard County Government

HopeWorks' mission is to support and advocate for people in Howard County affected by sexual and intimate partner violence and to engage the community in creating the change required for violence prevention.

The Our Voice Project

Wellness & Leadership Programs for Survivors



Program Descriptions

Leadership and Advocacy Opportunities

The **Our Voice Advisory Council** is HopeWorks' organizing mechanism for survivors to build community, share insights and provide feedback on a number of issues such as current events, and agency services or programs. Subcommittees include Legislative Advocacy and Outreach to Faith Communities. Meetings are quarterly, held in the months of July, October, January and April.

Workshops for Learning and Self-care

Survivors are invited to attend **Preservation Circle**. Through engaging and creative activities, we cultivate continued courage, self-compassion, connection, learning and self-directed advocacy. Events, topics and themes vary. Past events have included seminars about emotional abuse, workshops on learning to love again and arts-based stress relief.

Developing Self-care Practices

During one-on-one sessions called **Poetry N2 Wellness**, survivors who are out of crisis can learn and practice wellness and healing techniques. Sessions include development of self-care practices and mindfulness tools, as well as creative activities such as expressive journaling, visual journaling and mixed-media arts. No prior art or writing experience is needed. Call to schedule an appointment for an entrance interview.

Fostering Community & Creativity

In our **Poetry N2 Wellness Workshop** series, we use expressive arts activities to explore issues, share insights, and learn from guest speakers. A series usually meets once a week for eight weeks. Topics include stress relief, self-awareness, understanding boundaries, self-compassion, trauma and the body, and moving forward.

Maintaining Your Healing Journey

After participating in Poetry N2 Wellness one-on-one sessions or a workshop series, you are eligible to receive **Journaling Our Voice**, a monthly eNewsletter providing information to help you maintain self-care practices. Articles focus on expressive arts techniques, such as journaling prompts, inspirational quotes, arts journaling ideas, affirmations and more.

Annual Wellness & Self-care Day Retreat

During the **Unlearning Not to Speak Day Retreat**, members of the Advisory Committee facilitate interactive workshops where we share, play, reflect, and collectively celebrate surviving and thriving. This event is typically held in spring.

Prepare to Share Your Survivor Story

If you would like to be a member of **HopeWorks' Speakers Bureau**, inquire about our next Speakers Bureau Training program. In this eight-week workshop series we provide you with the support and tools to be an effective public speaker. Call to schedule an appointment for an entrance interview.



Questions? Please visit our website for a current schedule of events. For more information and a membership form, contact the Community Engagement Department at (410) 997- 0304 or email outreach@wearehopeworks.org.

finding our voices. speaking our truth. living our lives - well.

We Are HopeWorks.



Founded in 1978, HopeWorks of Howard County is a private nonprofit agency. HopeWorks' mission is to support and advocate for people in Howard County affected by sexual and intimate partner violence and to engage the community in creating the change required for violence prevention.

We are proud of our strong tradition of service provision and survivors will always need the specialized care our dedicated staff provides on a daily basis. Critical also to our mission is engaging the entire community in the work of changing the conditions that allow sexual and intimate partner violence to occur in the first place. This part takes all of us. Sexual and intimate partner violence are not inevitable realities in our world.

We all benefit when individuals are free to live self-determined lives without the threat of sexual and intimate partner violence – not just survivors. Parents, law enforcement, businesses, students, day care providers, doctors, nurses and teachers, men and boys benefit. Families and friends will all be better off without these threats.

Prevention takes an entire community working together – challenging and changing the beliefs, attitudes and culture that allow them to exist. And it takes hope. Hope builds momentum and momentum creates change...when we work together. Our community can be stronger and better and safer when we are all engaged in this work together.

WE ARE HOPEWORKS. EACH AND EVERY ONE OF US.

ADVOCACY SERVICES

- 24-Hour Helpline for callers seeking crisis counseling and referrals regarding sexual and intimate partner violence
- Providing comfort, support, and advocacy to survivors of sexual and intimate partner violence at Howard County General Hospital

SAFE SHELTER AND TRANSITIONAL HOUSING

- Crisis shelter for victims and their children
- Transitional housing
- Individual case management and educational programs and life-skill trainings

COUNSELING FOR SURVIVORS OF INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE, SEXUAL VIOLENCE, AND HUMAN TRAFFICKING

- Crisis appointments
- Individual and group counseling

LEGAL ASSISTANCE

- Brief advice, information and referrals for victims of intimate partner violence, sexual assault, stalking and child abuse
- Representation, consultation in peace & protective order matters, divorce, and family law proceedings
- Information and support through the Volunteer Legal Advocacy Project staffed at the District Court daily
- Criminal accompaniments to victims of domestic violence and sexual assault

ANTI-TRAFFICKING SERVICES

- Safety planning for survivors of human trafficking
- Intensive case management
- Human Trafficking Peer Support Group

ENGAGEMENT, EDUCATION & AWARENESS PROGRAMS

- Workshops and trainings at schools, faith communities, businesses and civic organizations
- HopeWorks' Youth Leadership Project: a service-learning program for teens ages 13 to 18
- The Our Voice Project: Survivor's Wellness & Leadership programs
- Arts-Based Programs for the general public to enhance wellness, build community and create change
- Self-care & Social Justice workshops for the general public to facilitating conversation, transformation and liberation
- Volunteer Opportunities
- Outreach and participation in community events such as school fairs, health fairs and awareness events

HOPEWORKS 24-HOUR HELPLINE 410.997.2272