Dedicated to the writers and artists who weren’t afraid to be seen naked in the blaring spotlight of the publishing world.
We appreciate your creativity, your courage, and your beautiful souls.
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TIDAL ECHOES 2013
In all honesty, I don’t even know where to begin! When I took on this project not only was I over-whelmed, I was amazed. I, little old me, would be putting together a true piece of artwork, holding in my hands a small slice of Southeast Alaska in the flesh! Now, two years, countless sleepless nights, endless amounts of coffee, and hundreds of chocolate wrappers later my editorship has come to a bittersweet end (much like dark chocolate). Growing up in Southeast Alaska, I knew that we were quite the artistic community but I had no idea just how much talent was present until I took on this gigantic task of bringing all of that artistic chutzpah into one book! So for that I would like to thank all of you who submitted this year for taking the risk of putting your work out there. I know that it’s not easy to put your soul out there with a neon sign pointing at it saying, “Yes, I can be vulnerable.” But coming from behind the scenes of this journal, I know that it’s not only the beautiful cover or the layout of the book that makes it so great – it is the artistry and talent that is present in every writer, poet, essayist, painter, ceramicist, photographer, sculptor, etc. who graces these pages. Now for those of you reading this who have yet to submit (tisk, tisk) I dare you to put yourself out there like the rest of these artists have! Don’t just dip your toes into the publishing world, take off all those layers covering up your artistic body and jump in. I promise you, it may be frightening and sometimes a little cold but it is completely worth it!

After everything I need to give a gigantic thank you to the amazingly talented, organized, working machine that is Emily Wall. Not only has she been an inspiration to me but I can honestly say that she has changed my life! I also have to give a shout out to Meghan Stangeland, the current junior editor and future senior editor: I was lucky to have someone as hard-working, over achieving, and on top of things as she is and I know for a fact that this journal will be in even better hands next year! Hopefully she won’t get as bad a case of senioritis as I did and if she does, hopefully she’ll have a junior editor who is as awesome as you are. I also have to say thank you to Karissa Sleppy: she did a wonderful job of getting the word about Tidal Echoes out there as well as making our lives as editors much easier; we honestly could not have done this without her!

I cannot stress just how amazing I think this journal is. Getting to work with such talented people while at the same time providing them with a place to broadcast their voice has really become an integral part of my life and I can promise you that this will not be the last that the publishing world will see from me. I can also promise that next year my work will be a part of the hundreds of submissions sent into the editors. I will consider myself quite lucky if I actually get to see my own writing decorating the pages of future editions of Tidal Echoes. So, please, absorb the originality and imagination you are about to see gracing this year’s edition of Tidal Echoes and I hope you enjoy reading it as much as I enjoyed putting it all together!

Alexandra Brown
Senior Editor
Acknowledgments

We would like to thank the individuals who made the publication of *Tidal Echoes* not only possible, but successful.

A huge thank you is in order for our editorial board: Kevin Maier, Sol Neely, Sara Minton, Nina Chordas, Rod Landis, Katie Spielberger, Ashia Lane, Karissa Sleppy, and Kate Laster, and to Pedar Dalthorpe and Annie Wedler for their knowledge and energy as our art editors. Your collaboration made this journal stronger.

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To Katie Spielberger, we are indebted. The time and energy she has volunteered to *Tidal Echoes* has allowed the journal the room to grow over the years. We cannot thank her enough for her patience and expertise.

A gracious thank you to Virginia Berg who is responsible for so much behind the scenes; we thank her for smoothing out what could have been a bumpy road.

Thank you to Richard Dauenhauer and Jeremy Kane for their exceptional contributions to the talent and creativity of Southeast. We are honored to have such renowned individuals as our featured writer and artist.

We would also like to extend a thank you to Paul McCarthy, who, as one of the Education Coordinators at the Lemon Creek Correctional Center, collaborated with Sol Neely to facilitate submissions from individuals currently incarcerated at LCCC. We are delighted to present these voices.

And to those who submitted, we give the greatest thanks; without your creativity and craft there wouldn’t be a journal. We are proud to showcase the multitude of voices that make Southeast Alaska such a brilliant, artistic community.

Meghan Stangeland, Junior Editor
Alexandra Brown, Senior Editor
Karissa Sleppy, Fall Intern
Emily Wall, Faculty Advisor
Kristina Cranston

Sitka

“Just Throw Some Wood on me and Watch me Burn”

No fancy funeral for me thank you very much, I am an unconventional woman in life and will be in death. No glossy mahogany coffin full of smartly dressed dead weight with sallow skin, a face with unnatural pink and my already thin lips looking even thinner. I want my sisters to bathe my body with good smelling soap, while my children dress me and put flowers in my hair and stuff sweetly drawn notes and pictures in my pockets. Just find a nice spot near the ocean, cover my body with wood and sage, and light me up! No fuss. Just don’t leave me until the final ember has gone out, just don’t leave me while I’m still smoldering with smoke and fire.
Kristina Cranston

Sitka

“A Quiet Fire”

I am a child of fire; mother and father burned everyone who touched them, even from a distance.

I recall being small, very small, two years old small, and wriggling away from mother’s hold, from the heavy weight of father’s hand.

I would lie between them in our double bed, silently counting my shallow breaths to the words of a song, waiting for the time to slip away, to be alone.

Their heat, their love, their rage, all of it, was something I was always in the middle of and trying to outrun, out maneuver, their affection made me panic.

I still take shallow breaths, careful not to breathe-in anyone, for fear I may hurt them, consume them the way my parents consumed me.

My fire smolders, most will never get close enough to feel the heat, or get burned, I am careful, I am a quiet fire.
Delivery

She waited until the night she was to fly out. Everything else had been packed, folded into squares and pushed into zip lock bags to remove as much air as possible. Under the light of the kitchen were two containers the size of tissue boxes that contained the remains of her parents. She scooped a few teaspoons of each. They were different shades of white. She sealed the bag and put it into a small bag with her toothpaste and bar soap.

On the plane to Paris she was anxious that the contents of her checked luggage would be singled out, and someone with a dog on a leash would believe her parents to be cocaine or explosives. She drank wine and looked at a book she did not read. However, she got off the plane, connected with her baggage, and took a taxi to a hotel without incident.

The first day she located the café on the Champs-Élysées whose likeness was in a painting in her parent’s kitchen. There was a red awning. There was glass, white tables, marble counters, and wicker chairs. She could not pronounce its name. Her parents never talked about that location, or even about the painting. They didn’t say where they wanted their remains to be spread, or if they were to be spread at all.

She looked at the café from the opposite side of the wide avenue. Her feet were stepped on. The people walked in relaxed fast-forward, walking dogs, holding shopping bags on their wrists, and spoke loudly.

There were distractions like museums, food, boats in the Seine, and parks, but every day she observed the café. A well-manicured bush was planted next to the café, and she considered leaving them on the soil. She had a bottle of water to pour over the roots and the ashes so they would be absorbed. She stood until her legs hurt.

She waited until the night she was to fly out. She was anxious about so many people with so many eyes. After hearing her own breathing and the blood in her heart she stepped to the other side of the avenue, to the plant with shiny leaves. She opened the bag and kneeled at the base of the plant and for a moment smelled green, dirt, smog, coffee and cream. That moment she knew she had been correct.

She emptied the zip lock, snapped it closed, and put it in her pocket. Feeling safe on the other side of the street again, she took a picture of the scene: the café, the people, the plant, and out of focus: her parents.
Fixer Upper
Bonnie Elsensohn, Sitka
Acrylic Painting

Ernest Gruening Cabin
Bonnie Elsensohn, Sitka
Acrylic Painting
Two Ravens
Bonnie Elsensohn, Sitka
Acrylic Painting

The Party
Adam Wood, UAS Student, Juneau
Photography
Mary Lou Spartz
Juneau

When an Old Woman Dies …

White smoke rises from her body
her soul quickly gathers memories
shoves them into a beaded bag
and, without a backward glance,
follows the smoke.
Primal Memories

Should you think of me
If you think of me
when you think of me
    know I am still
    swimming with my sisters
    beneath pack ice,
surfacing to surprise a lone hunter
with our beautiful singing
as overhead color chases
color across the sky

If you think of me
when you think of me
should you think of me
    know I still soar
    catching the thermals
    with my brothers
startling a solitary fisherman
fearing a threatening sky
and a storm before dawn

when you think of me
    know I am still
    beside you in the cave
    with limestone walls
as a sabre tooth tiger
drawn by firelight
stops at the entrance
    pauses
and moves on
Woman-with-Words

For Nora

Keixwnéí
I am telling your story now
because someday
you will have a thousand grandchildren.
Your books, your words
are our at.óow.
And someday our grandchildren
will ask to hear your story,
about the Woman-with-Words
and we will speak
your poems in Lingít,
tell traditional stories in Lingít,
sing in Lingít,
and we will be
your grandchildren dancing—
dancing with your words.

*“Granddaughters Dancing” by Nora Dauenhauer in The Droning Shaman (Black Current Press, 1988)
Sometime this morning, I was unable
to prevent skin-shifting from lips to beak,

while saying aloud an English word,
using Lingit pronunciations.

And I laughed at myself realizing
Raven pesters my vernacular, that old trickster

hopping his mayhem dance—creating
code switching in the midst of my brain.
Tundatáan yák’w, Little Faces of Thought

tleilóo kiji wé,
k’èikaxwéin kayáani woogaaxi
ax sée x’usyée

The moth’s wings,  
flower petals crying  
under my daughter’s feet

*
ayakayadán ka  
du ts’ootaan shíyi wé t’ísítskw wooshee,  
du jaaji sheeyí

It’s snowing heavy and  
the songbird sings her morning song,  
her snowshoe song

*
Yéil wákłéení,  
Haa gaaaxdaasheeyí áyá  
Shtax’héen taak

Raven’s tears,  
this is our cry song  
in the Bitter Water River

*
Shawátshaan Kées’,  
l’éen héeni táax’ yéi yatee wé nées’  
du yáa ayagoonéi

Old Tide Woman,  
the sea urchin lives in the tide pool  
respect her
My brother Sherman isn’t talking to me. He says it’s my fault he got thrown in the closet, but it’s not. He was the one being naughty.

It all started on my birthday when Dad got me a baby buggy. It was exactly like a real buggy except smaller. It had a top that went up and down, and rubber on the tires and everything. Sherman didn’t pay any attention to the buggy until my dad said, “Look, Dorothy, it has brakes.” That’s when Sherman got interested, but right then Mother brought out the cake – a great big three layer, white cake filled with lemon custard and covered with fluffy white frosting and coconut. That cake was so beautiful, everyone forgot about the buggy.

My birthday was on Saturday, and every Saturday night Mother washes my hair and rinses it in vinegar. Then she wraps it really tight around long pieces of blue and white stripped fabric. She ties each piece and then she wraps a big triangle of fabric over my whole head and it hurts all night long, but the funny thing is that I kind of like the way it hurts. I wake up in the middle of the night, and my head is tender where the curls are tied too tight – Mother always ties them too tight - but I don’t care because I know the next day I’ll look pretty. Sunday morning when Mother takes each strip out, my hair bounces like soft, shiny springs. I love the way my hair looks on Sundays. And Sunday morning my best dress is all starched and ironed, and I get to wear my prettiest socks with lace around the top. Edward is her favorite, but Mother spends all Saturday night and Sunday morning making sure I look perfect for church.

Sunday morning I get to the breakfast table right when my mother is bringing Dad his second bowl of eggs. He eats eleven poached eggs for breakfast every day. First Mother makes him a bowl of six eggs, and then, while he eats those, she makes him a bowl of five more. The bowls she serves them in are cream with orange and yellow flowers around the rim and a stripe of gold on the very edge. I think part of the reason my dad eats two bowls of eggs is because the eggs look so pretty in those bowls.

I’m extra excited at breakfast because for twenty-three days of every year – from October 11th to November 4th - Sherman and I are the same age. Sunday is my favorite day of the week, and today I have a brand new baby buggy, and Sherman and I are the same age, so I think today is going to be the best day ever.

“How old are you?” I ask Sherman, while Mother ties a napkin around my neck. I can see by his look that he’s not going to answer, so I answer for him, “You’re eight-years old, and so am I! You’re not older than me anymore.”

Sherman scowls and says, “Eight-year-olds know how to read. Does that mean you can read now?”

Dad says sticks and stones may break my bones, but words can never hurt me. He doesn’t understand about Sherman, though. When Sherman says mean things, he does hurt me. I want to cry because I’ve been trying so hard to learn to read, but right away he says he’s sorry, and he promises he’ll make me a leaf house while I’m at church. We’ll play house and Sherman is going to be the father, and I’ll be the mother and our dog Rex will be the baby if we can make him stay in the buggy.

Before I leave for church, I go out to Dad’s shop behind our house. Edward and Sherman and Mother don’t go out to his shop unless they have to, but I like to go out there. It has a sign over the door that says, H-O-N-I S-O-I-T Q-U-I M-A-L Y P-E-N-S-E. I don’t know what that says, but Sherman told me it’s a sign for people who hate Germans. My Dad is German, which means he’s from Germany, and some people don’t like him because he’s from Germany, and that’s why he put that sign up, but I don’t really understand because our dog Rex is German – he’s a German shepherd – and everybody likes Rex.
Dad’s shop is one long room with machines and motors everywhere and shelves over-flowing with labeled boxes and jars. I think it smells like wood and smoke and oil and metal. Sherman says you can’t smell metal, but you can. I can smell it in Dad’s shop.

The shop has a little coal stove in one corner and when it starts getting cold, Dad works closest to that corner. That’s where he is today. He’s making a box and I don’t think he knows I’m there, but when I put my hand on his shoulder, he says, “How much is it going to cost me?”

“I’m going to church. I need an offering.”

“Well, I guess it’s a good investment if you’re going to pray for the whole family.”

“Yes,” I say, but I can’t look him in his eyes. He has gray eyes and they look straight into you when you’re fibbing, so I look at a drawing of wheels and lines and numbers on the big slanted table by the stove.

Dad reaches in his pocket and gives me a dime. “Well, praying for the whole family will be a pretty big job. Will a dime cover it?” he says.

I try to change the subject. “What are you making?” He shows me this small, flat box. Each half of the lid has been nailed at the top corner with the tiniest nail, so both sides open out, turning on the nails, like butterfly wings.

“Look,” he says, “It’s for keys. See the little latch on each side.” And he takes a pair of pinchers and bends two nails on the outside, so they keep the cover from opening unless you flip them up. He moves the bent nail back and forth with his finger to show me, but I don’t notice the nail so much as I notice his hands. I love his hands because they’re big and comfortable. Some people have thin, spidery hands like claws. I don’t like those. But Dad’s hands are long and strong with big knuckles and round nails. I try to not look at his thumbs, though. His thumbs are square and stubborn.

The little wooden box fits together perfectly. “This side is for our house keys,” he says opening one side, “and this side is for my shop keys,” he says opening the other. “Maybe I’d better label it, so we know what it’s for. What do you think?” I nod, and he takes a little brush and dips it in paint and says, “How do you spell keys?”

“I don’t know,” I say, and I have to be careful again to not look in his eyes. I’m holding the dime so tight that it feels hot and sweaty.

And he says, “Dorothy, you have to learn to read.”

“I know my letters.”

“I know you know your letters. Now you have to learn to put them together. You’re my little Clydesdale, so you have to do everything perfectly. Don’t you?” When I nod yes, he says, “Well then, learn to read,” and with that he gives me a little push toward the door, and I know he wants me to leave, and I’m glad to get back outside before he gets mad at me. I look at my dime, and it’s made two red marks on the inside of my hand because I’ve been holding it so tight.

When I step outside, it’s cold and bright, and I kick the leaves while I walk up the hill to the sidewalk where Sherman is raking. “Are you going to make our house?” I say. I know he is, but I have to ask him. He points the rake to show me where everyone’s bedroom is going to be, and we laugh because the rake is so big, and Sherman is so small that he almost hits himself in the head. I try to show Rex where his bedroom is going to be, but Mother yells from the porch and tells me not to get dirty, so I head to church.

First I walk a block down Gratiot, the road that takes us all the way to Detroit. Across the street on Gratiot is the Colonial Bath House, a long, brick hotel with big white columns in front. I like the Colonial because I can watch the rich ladies and men walk around in fancy clothes. Joey Berger’s father works there, and he says sometimes a rich lady will give him a nickel to tighten her corset really tight. When I get rich and go to the Colonial Bath House for mineral baths, I’m going to pay a dime to get my corset tightened.

At the letter box, I turn down the hill on to Kibbie Street. I like that name — Kibbie. The Irishes live on Kibbie Street. They own the Spruddle Water Company, and in the summer they give us ginger ale. Last summer Sherman was at the Irishes’ getting a ginger ale and Mrs. Irish said her sewing machine was broken, and
Sherman said he would fix it. She thought that was so funny because Mr. Irish had tried to fix it and couldn’t, but she told Sherman to go ahead and try, just don’t make it worse. So Sherman fixed it, and now Mr. and Mrs. Irish think he is wonderful. They always talk about him, and if I get a ginger ale they give me one to take to Sherman too. He doesn’t go over there any more because they fuss over him, and he gets embarrassed.

I play “Step on a crack and break your mother’s back” as I walk down Kibbie. I don’t know if you only have to step on the cracks in the big squares or if the cracks between the squares count, too. They’re not even cracks, really, but I step on all of them to be sure. I don’t want to break Mother’s back, but I’m curious if it works.

At the corner of Kibbie Street, I turn onto Broadway, and I go past the big meat market where mother keeps our meat. She buys a half a cow at a time and it stays there in that market, and when she needs some of our cow, she sends Sherman to get it. He’s seen the butcher go right into another room and cut a big piece of meat off our very own cow that’s just hanging from the ceiling.

Finally, I’m there and I’m right on schedule because I can hear the church bells ringing a block away. I walk up the steps, right when Mike turns the sign around and opens the door for me. “Good morning, Miss Copony.” He talks a little funny. Dad says he’s Italian and we should call him paisano. I don’t know what that means, but Mike is always so nice that I just call him Mike to be sure I don’t hurt his feelings.

Mike’s Grocery is a square, dark room that has aisles stacked high with canned goods. From the outside it has windows, but when you go in, all the windows have things stacked in front of them, so the only light comes from the door and a little bulb that hangs from the ceiling in the back. Dad doesn’t go in there very often because he has to duck to miss the salamis and pepperonis hanging from the ceiling. Dad is a whole head taller than Mike and it’s funny to see them in the same little shop.

Mike’s has one display case by the cash register that has every kind of candy in the world. It’s all behind a big glass, and Mike spends his whole day trying to keep that glass clean. You have to be careful when you pick out your candy that you don’t touch the glass, or Mike will say, “No, no, no touch the glass!”

“You gonna get that new candy bar today?” Mike asks, “That Baby Ruth?” He pronounces it “root.”

“I don’t know. I have to think. First I’ll take a roll of Necco Wafers.”

“Oh, yah. Necco Wafers, they’ll help you think okay.” Mike takes my dime and gives me a nickel and the roll of Necco Wafers and holds out his hand. I tear the paper off the end of the roll and give it to Mike. I help him keep his store tidy. Then I put the first wafer in my mouth – orange, one of my favorites – and I start really focusing. I don’t need the wintergreen or peppermint lozenges because I have my Neccos. But then there are root beer Neccos so I should get some since we’re going to play house. If I buy penny candy, I can get quite a bit, but I love Hershey Bars with almonds, and one of those would take my whole nickel.

Mike takes care of another customer while I keep looking. I get two jawbreakers, two circus peanuts, two root beer barrels and two Hershey kisses with my nickel. Everything is two for a penny except the Hershey kisses are a penny apiece. Mike puts everything in a little brown bag, and I go sit on his steps in the sun to eat my Sunday candy. While I’m there, I say a little prayer for the family, so if Dad asks, I won’t have to lie.

After a while, I take the wrappers into Mike and tell him I’ll see him next Sunday. Then we do our signal – I lock my lips shut and Mike locks his lips shut – and I start walking home. I might be a little early today, but no one will notice. Mother’s too busy cooking Sunday dinner, and Dad’s in his shop.

Since Mike’s is in the block right behind my house, I walk in a big circle every Sunday. I keep going on Broadway to Robertson and then up Robertson back to Gratiot. Two leaves are blowing in front of me. They’re having a race, and I keep walking behind them because I want to see which one wins. When I walk past Ulrich’s house, I can see Sherman in our front yard, the big rake swinging back and forth.

I can’t help it – I run the last little way home to see our new leaf house, and it’s beautiful. The walls are thick lines of leaves and the windows are thin lines. At the edge of each window, where the window ends and
the wall starts, a little trim of leaves angles off. The doorways have the same little trim and the doors all swing open exactly like they do in our real house. The front part of the leaf house is like our house downstairs, and the back part is like our house upstairs except my bedroom is really Mother’s bedroom and Rex’s bedroom is really Dad’s great big bedroom. I think Sherman should have Dad’s bedroom, but Rex is sleeping right in the middle of it, so we decide to leave it the way it is.

“First let’s have dinner, Father,” I say to Sherman, and he’s about to say no when I show him our jaw breakers.

“What will Rex eat?” Sherman always takes special care of Rex because Rex is his pillow. I show Sherman the big orange circus peanut and we decide to give it to Rex for his dinner while we eat our jaw breakers, but Rex just gives the candy one quick chew and throws back his head and swallows the peanut whole and starts begging for another one.

As soon as Rex gulps the candy, Sherman says, “Okay let’s take the baby for a walk,” and shoves his jaw-breaker into his pocket. I run and get my new baby carriage off the front porch. Sherman’s cheeks are pink from raking. Some of the trees are red and some are orange and one is almost purple, its leaves are so bright. The trees are shimmering in the breeze, trying to shake their leaves loose, and some of the leaves are doing cartwheels and flips, first one way and then another like they can’t make up their mind.

The day is perfect except Rex isn’t a very good baby, and when Sherman picks him up to put him in the buggy, Rex wiggles his bottom so hard he gets away. Then Sherman grabs him tight around the middle and Rex kicks his legs like he’s riding a bicycle, but Sherman still manages to plunk him into the buggy. I want Rex to lie down, but Sherman says he can sit up. He says it’s too scary for animals when they can’t see where they are.

While we push the buggy to the corner by the hill, I tell Sherman we need a new name for the baby because Rex isn’t a good baby name. Sherman doesn’t even listen. We get to the corner and he says, “Okay, my turn to push Rex.”

I say, “Not Rex - the baby!” but I don’t think Sherman even hears me, because he starts running downhill pushing the buggy as fast as he can. Then I can’t believe it. He jumps up on the back of the buggy, and puts the brakes on with one foot. Rex twists out, and the buggy skids on its side while Sherman flies over the top and lands on the sidewalk. Rex runs home, and I run down the hill to see if Sherman is okay, but by the time I get to him, he’s turned my buggy upside down and he’s looking at the tires.

I say, “Are you hurt?” but he’s just looking at the bottom of the buggy. I shout, “Sherman, are you hurt?” He has a big strawberry on his chin, but he doesn’t seem to notice. He just says, more to himself than to me, “I thought it might have car brakes, but all it has is this little lever that presses up against one tire. That’s no good.” He gets up and turns the buggy over, and I see the side is all scraped, and one tire is lying on the ground.

We’ve only been playing house for two minutes, and my brand new baby buggy is ruined. Sherman doesn’t even seem to care, he just heads off to find Rex.

Well, I know how to handle this. I grab my buggy in one hand and the tire in the other and drag them back up the hill. As soon as I’m close enough, I start shrieking at the top of my lungs. It’s only a second before Dad runs out of the shop and sees my broken buggy. You can tell he’s really angry, and he grabs Sherman around the waist and carries him up the steps. Sherman points his toes trying to touch the ground, but his legs are just reaching and reaching and not touching anything. Then there is a big THUMP when Dad pitches Sherman into the foyer, and I’m afraid to go inside. I don’t want to see what’s happening, so I play in the leaf house and try not to think about Sherman being in trouble. It’s his fault. He ruined my baby buggy.

When I go in to wash up for dinner, Rex is lying in the foyer with his nose at the bottom of the closet door, and I know Sherman’s in there. I try to open the door and tell Sherman I’ll sneak him some dinner, but it’s locked.
Mother told me once that people with brown eyebrows can see ghosts, and Rex has brown eyebrows. When he sees me try to open the door, his eyebrows kind of go up like he’s seen a ghost, but he doesn’t move his nose away from the crack at the bottom of the door.

Mother has made my favorite dish — wiener schnitzel. It’s Dad’s favorite too. He eats three helpings of meat and noodles and gravy for dinner, but every time I look at Sherman’s empty chair my stomach churns and I can’t eat. I’m trying to think of how to find the key to the closet and sneak Sherman some wiener schnitzel, but it’s like my brother Edward reads my thoughts because he says, “Where’s Sherman? I saw he’s been raking.” I almost jump when he says that.

Dad puts down his fork and tips his head forward so he’s looking over his glasses at Edward. “Sherman’s in the closet. You can finish raking after dinner.” Then he wipes the last bit of gravy off his plate with a piece of bread and asks, “What’s for dessert, Mumpsey?”

Mother sits in the chair closest to the kitchen, so she can get whatever anyone needs. She jumps up to get dessert, and I can tell she’s not happy Edward has to do chores, but she would never say anything to Dad.

When Mother comes out of the kitchen she’s carrying a beautiful apple torte. The crust is pinched into perfect, even waves, and the apples have all been arranged in a swirl that starts at the edge and circles around to the center. They’re glazed with a clear, shiny glaze that makes the torte look like glass. We all have a big piece of torte but everyone is quiet. Mother and Edward are angry about Edward having to rake leaves, and I’m worried about Sherman. I eat the torte, but I don’t enjoy it.

When Mother finishes washing up the dinner dishes, she goes to the living room to get the Wall Street Journal. Dad likes the Wall Street Journal for the news, but Mother likes the Wall Street Journal for the trash. She says it’s the best newspaper because the ink doesn’t rub off when it gets wet.

I know Mother will be gone for a few minutes when she leaves the kitchen. She’ll pick up the living room before she comes back to wrap the trash, so this is the best time to take some food to Sherman. I put a cold piece of wiener schnitzel in a napkin and balance a little sliver of the torte on top. I can’t walk through the living room, so I go up the back stairs. Right there on the landing, I see the little box Dad made that morning. And the funny thing is that when I look at the letters he painted on the front, I can read. I see exactly how the k and the e and the s all fit together to spell keys, but after all the time I’ve been trying to read, and all the scoldings I’ve gotten for not being able to read, now that I can read, I don’t even care because I’m worried about Sherman.

I’m not sure which key is for the closet, so I take all of the house keys out of the box. I’m so afraid Mother will catch me, and I’m trying to balance the wiener schnitzel and the torte, and I’m all butterfingers and drop a key and it makes a huge clatter down the steps and I have to tip-toe back and pick it up. Then I head up the back stairs, just stepping on the very sides of each step because the middle part creaks. When I get to the upstairs hall, I run the length of the house and down the front stairs to the closet. I’m thinking all kinds of things — what if Mother decides to take the trash out the front door, or what if Dad takes a letter out to the letter box. My heart is pounding.

When I get to the front hall, I know Sherman is still there because Rex hasn’t moved. I whisper through the keyhole, but Sherman doesn’t answer, so I start trying different keys. My hands are shaking, and Rex keeps trying to lick my hand and that makes me fumble even worse. Finally a key turns with a click so loud I’m sure someone will hear it, and I can hardly breathe. When I figure it’s safe, I slowly turn the knob and inch the door open.

I can see Sherman on the floor. He’s sleeping. I whisper, “Sherman, wake up. I brought you dinner.” But he doesn’t move. I look over my shoulder to make sure no one is coming. “It’s wiener schnitzel.” I kind of nudge him with my toe, but I’m starting to be afraid because he looks more than asleep. He’s so white that he almost glows, and the strawberry from the buggy accident looks like blood on his chin. I drop his dinner and start to shake him, first just a little and then hard, and his head falls forward like a wilted dandelion. I only scream about once a week because Dad will get mad, but I start screaming for the second time that day. The
sound comes out of my mouth, and at first I don’t even know where it’s coming from. “Sherman’s dead!” and I hear my own screams turning to shrieks because I’ve lost the person I love most in the world, and the sound of my screams terrifies me and that makes me scream even louder. Then I think it’s my fault that my brother is dead, and I shriek myself right out of control.

It seems like I’ve been screaming for forever when Dad pushes me aside. He bends over Sherman, and he looks so huge next to my brother that I stop screaming. I’m shocked at how small Sherman is.

Dad keeps saying, “Wake up, Shermie, wake up, Shrimp,” and patting his cheeks. Mother brings a wet dishcloth, and Dad puts it on Sherman’s forehead. When Sherman wakes up, Dad carries him to his bedroom, and I follow Dad, and Rex follows me. I stay because I want to take care of Sherman, but every time I try to put a wet cloth on his head like Dad did, he knocks my hand away. Then I just sit next to the bed for a while.

I keep asking him if he wants something to eat, but he won’t talk to me. I notice the bump in his pocket and say, “Don’t forget about your jaw breaker.” He turns over on his side so his back is to me and puts the jawbreaker in his mouth. We sit there for a long time. The room is quiet except every once in a while Sherman’s jawbreaker clacks on his teeth. After a while I say, “Guess what Sherman, I know how to read. I read the word keys on Dad’s new box.” He rolls over then, and looks at me and kind of smiles, and I think he’s going to say something, but he just pulls the covers up tighter and closes his eyes.

I keep trying to talk to him and he keeps clacking on his jawbreaker until he puts this white, filbert-sized piece of candy on the bedside table and rolls over so his back is to me and he kind of shudders and then, after he’s been sleeping in the closet all afternoon, he goes back to sleep.

The room is dark when Dad comes and tells me I have to go to bed. I want to stay and take care of Sherman, but Dad says Rex will take care of him. I look at Rex and his eyebrows go up like he’s seen a ghost, but he doesn’t move. He never moves when he’s Sherman’s pillow.

And now it’s been three days, and Sherman still won’t talk to me. Miss McGrath made a big fuss over me because I can read, but what good is reading when you have to walk to school alone? It isn’t fair. Sherman has Rex, but without Sherman, I don’t have anybody.

Maybe I could buy Sherman a Baby Ruth with next Sunday’s offering.
Jacqueline Boucher

Douglas

Questions

Excuse me, Mama. Today I’m this many, and I got a question. What’s embarrassed mean? / Last night I called you a witch in the supermarket and you smacked my butt so hard I saw colors. / So tell me what’s it mean when you and me stop being friends, / and we learn we know how to hurt each other?

Tell me what’s loneliness. / I’m six years old and there’s a softball game, and I can’t come this time. / I’m running up the stairs and there’s a wolf in the house / and I bang and I bang on the window but you can’t hear me, / Mama / as you’re driving away.

What about freedom? / I’m eight this time and a grownup now / and I’m so fly I got wings in my sneakers. / It’s a Mexico trip this time and I came home too early, / two spent cases of Coors falling all over one another in the recycle bin like dominos. / And the house is too quiet to be sober and I turn and I run, breathless and heady like only little fat girls can, / ‘Cause there’s a wolf in the kitchen and I’m too fly to be puppy chow, so I camp out in the slides down the block until sundown. / Until safety. / Until you come home and put the wolf to bed.

Excuse me, Mama, but what’s dignity? / Where are the stutter-step starts and stops of hitting rock bottom, / and pulling ourselves up with shovels like crutches so we can keep on digging. / I’m nine-ten-eleven-twelve-thirteen, / and today at school they told me I don’t get my milk for free anymore. / We’ve stepped up the ranks from the starving to the simply-underfed and we can’t afford eighty-cent cheeseburgers that are cheaper than homemade lunches, / Mama. / They can go fuck themselves ‘cause we didn’t need their charity anyway.

I’ve got a question.

Tell me what’s heartbreak. / I’m seventeen and it’s the day after Valentine’s, / and you tell me over egg drop soup and crab rangoon that you’re leaving me / for a man who’s too tall and laughs too loud. / Who wears Air Jordans and a backpack and calls himself a ski bum. / We’ll be friends, you say, roommates, / with a future in your eyes that that’s too big for me to see, / but I imagine includes some kind of sexual liberation / existential frustration / drinking ‘til midnight and learning to love again. / But I’m too weak to tell you, too neurotic to let it go, / so I negotiate rent checks and child support and eat Taco Bell any night that I feel like it.

And everything’s okay until it isn’t and the wolf is gone but the snake has arrived, and suddenly I’m a full-blown headcase with nowhere to turn to know normal / Mama / where are you, / Mama / I’m frightened, / Mama I’m three thousand miles away trying to outrun the loneliness / but I had a nightmare last night and tore the wings from my shoes. / And I want to stop ripping at my own scars and singing the same sixteen bars again and again, / I wanna tell you I’ve got dreams, I’ve got plans / but I can’t be the voice of a generation, with eyes looking forward and songs trapped in the past. / So I’ll ask you one last time and I’ll pray that it lasts—
Excuse me.

I've got a question.

Tell me what's forgiveness, / because I don't wanna talk about it anymore.

Broken Heart
Adam Wood, UAS Student, Juneau
Photography
This is not a suicide poem.

Wake up, gorgeous. / The sun ain’t shining, but today, you are radiant. / I’d ask if I’d ever told you how beautiful you were, but I know I haven’t, and I know I ought to. / Today, I think I’ll hire a jet-plane, a sky-writer, an electric neon balloon to fly over your house, playing showtunes and say:

Good morning, gorgeous. Today you are perfect.

I hope you won’t find me saccharine, and God damn, I hope you won’t find me insincere, but when I wake up and the birds are singing, and I can hear the sound of your breath and beautiful heartbeat from ten hundred million miles away / I’m moved to poetry. / I’m moved to song. / I’m moved to dancing, even though I’m terrible at dancing, and people like me never ought to dance at all. / When I hear the voice I’ve fabricated for you from a single voicemail greeting and a good imagination, / when it tells me that you’ve survived another night boxing the shadows, / I feel like breathing.

And maybe it’s not over yet, and maybe there will be another Sunday when the birds stop singing and the stars go blue. / And if not that, maybe there will be another someday when you wake up and want to stop fighting in favor of a tumult that’s a little more peaceful. / A little quieter. / A little less invasive. / But know that I’ll look for you in the decrescendo, and turn the speakers up to remind you that there is hope in rock anthems, / in janky stuffed unicorns, / and in hard candy, / and in song.

Good afternoon, gorgeous. Today, you are perfect.

And tomorrow, you will be perfect, when you wake and your body is whole and fresh like inappropriate belly laughter. / Give them to me, / the pieces and parts of you that the shadows stole in the night. / I’ll keep them safe, locked away with the secrets we’ll share one day, when this becomes one of those moments that’s relegated to the dusty, dark corners no one wants to look at. / I’m not asking you to forget the day that the birds stopped singing / only to remember that they started again. / To remember that, when you are tired, you have an army at your back to keep you from forgetting again. / To remember that I love you. / To remember that you’re worth it. / To remember that all the worst monsters can be banished when the lights come on and you remember you are not alone. / To remember that this is not a suicide poem, / but a celebration, a tribute, an anthem to everything you are, everything you’ve been, and everything you still have time to be.

So sleep tight, gorgeous, and watch the skies. Tomorrow, you will be perfect.
A List of Demands

Before we go any further, there’s something I wanna say. / I wanna say... / I wanna say...

I wanna say something that means something / where a decade trapped in a spectral suburban nightmare doesn’t blanch colorless in the face of feet / pounding the pavement to find a moment of peace in cities so flush with life / the walls are buzzing. / To know that it means something to be somebody who escaped something--

I wanna ask the probing questions and be met with pregnant silences / I wanna be somebody who is somebody / somebody who loves somebody / somebody who screams at scenes of incomparable violence with indignation and an utter lack of grace / instead of choking on silences and propriety.

I wanna be the kid who walks home dreaming of dinosaurs-- / who sings a prayer of mourning for steggos and Superman / and Dick Clark and the American Dream / and the kids who got snuffed out before they stopped believing in Santa Claus / and for everybody who wanted to be something but never became that something.

I wanna strip down and run—naked—through a moonless night / my body a spray of stars illuminating the path to the lake / stretched wide and waiting / for me to be the comet that splinters its glassy surface.

I wanna open my palms, fan my fingers, and spread my arms. / Wanna feel a stranger’s hand grasping through thick, mute air to fill the void in a moment that sings with screaming singularity: / You are not alone. / I wanna matter. I wanna go out not with a whisper, but with a bang, / not with a flicker / but with a flame, / to know that—for just one moment—I was all-consuming.

I wanna feel the heartbeat between the pages of books that get stuck together. / Wanna know the intimate secrets passed between the ink, / the kiss of semi-colon and full-stop. / I wanna spit incendiary verse in the face of impotent inarticulacy / and dance until I’m dizzy as the silence goes up in smoke.

I wanna love you like slam poetry-- / where I can call your lungs your lungs / and your lips your lips and speak / in perforating punctuation. / And most of all, / I want the freedom to fall in love with your cheeks / and write about your cheeks / and kiss your cheeks on my every sloppy, stupid whim.

I wanna emblazon you in black and white / immortalize you in the spaces between line and dash / and fail utterly and valiantly at turning you into anything but a shade. / But first I want you to demand something of me. / Put down your pen and gather me to your lungs and lips, / these kisses a joyous exclamation point.
Bad Poetry

Some days, I wake up knowing I’ll never be a good poet.

I lack a requisite cultural confusion that proliferates the most poignant poetry of my generation. / My story, a weak and far-fetched fantasy, / for who would ever believe that I am the daughter of the daughter of a latin lover, who traversed a river for freedom and family / and to lay down sweat and blood to pave the way for a grandbaby so fair, she shone like starlight. / Similarly, my tragedies are mediocre ones, / stories of suburbia in the company of loneliness and alcoholism and moving boxes. / My mother and I speak three times in a week to not talk about that night she broke up with me for a twenty-four year old with a Myspace page and a laugh like Weird Al.

But more than that, I lack the tact to spit rhymes that ring / quick, slick and refined. Sinuous / Never a word wasted. / You see what I mean? / They’re so self-conscious, they trip on the tongue, or whither alone and unsung in favor of verbose and often asininely arbitrary alliterations.

My metaphors aren’t a raft on a river, but a blindfolded bear, rampaging through the underbrush. / They have the harried quality of the wounded / banking left, right, then left again / before howling down tangential paths that neither it nor I ever intended to take. / ...Oh look, refrigerator.

I lack faith in most things, and I’m cranky. / I only know three words for sex / two for heartbreak / and one for love. / My relationship with language is one of stiff give and take, / a conjugal bed, rather than the first electric caresses of a stranger. / And when I give these words to you, I do it with an idiotic disregard for self-preservation. / I never learn to parcel myself out poem by poem, / so instead, I throw myself at you, / stanza by word by syllable / borrowing against an eternity of future selves to balance the debt.

And after the ink and the voice have dried, and ten hundred thousand splinters of a former poet wannabe are laid at your feet, they gather together like dust before the bin, their last offering a murmured—

“Thank You.”
Timemachinist Mark IX
Cal C. Giordano, UAS Student, Juneau
Brass, Bronze, Copper, Steel

Bladeous Maximus
Cal C. Giordano, UAS Student, Juneau
Brass, Iron, Silver, Steel
Aqua Ghost
Adam Wood, UAS Student, Juneau
Photography

Dusk
Adam Wood, UAS Student, Juneau
Photography
“Tell me how you’re feeling today,” she says, and I’m cautious. / Three o’clock on a Tuesday, clouds high, sky bloated with coming rain, / I am cautious. / “Tell me how you feel,” she says again. “And be honest.” / “I’m fine. I’m fine. I’m fine.” Say the words over and over again, forty or a hundred times until they don’t mean anything more than the fricative hiss of teeth and lips / I’m fine I’m fine I’m fine I’m fine I’m fine I’m frightened.

“What are you afraid of?” she asks and I say everything, / and I tell her about the night I awoke in a sweat, / after dreaming that sadists had flayed me to my nerve endings and told me to swim in the ocean. / only to find that, come sunrise, I was suddenly sensitive to the fact that, sometimes, on the internet, people can be mean. / And that sometimes in life, people can be cruel, / and that in the night, my molehills unionized and made mountains of themselves.

“Tell me how you’re feeling today,” she says, and I tell her that I am a fist wrapped around broken glass. / A pulse that’s too fast, / an urban girl with a crick in her neck from a lifetime of looking over her shoulder. / I am a prank can of soda pop shook up and never allowed to spray, / a fat girl in a thong bikini and six inch heels on a catwalk, / real talk? / I think I might be pretty messed up.

“Tell me how you’re feeling today,” she says, “No poetry. Forget the self-effacement,” and I scratch my chest / long, jagged streaks on white skin vivid like late-night wildfire. / “Stop it,” she says, and I do it again. / “Stop it,” she says, “Or I’ll have to ask you to leave.” / And I sit, lips tight and fingers sickled like weapons. Waiting. / “Now, I’ll ask you one more time: tell me how you’re feeling today.”

And I want to tell her that if I just scratch hard enough / I’ll get to the spot between my ribs and my heart where the snake lives / coiling in and out of the muscles and whispering to my darkest places that that grip that I feel when I’m frightened isn’t some psychosomatic garbage, / and that any day is a good day to listen to heartbeats turn into tick-tick-ticking time bombs. / And I can’t take the medicine because it makes me fat / and I can’t take the medicine because it makes me care too little / and I can’t take the medicine because if this body isn’t a nightmare terrarium then maybe it’s nothing at all.

“Tell me how you’re feeling today,” she says, and I tell her I want the session to be over. / Because I may be crazy and tight as a spring, but at my core, I am a people pleaser, / and if I tell you I feel smart and beautiful and loved / then we’re right back to phony phonations, / linguistic exercises in meaningless-ness. / Over and over again. / I am smart, I am beautiful, I am loved I am smart, I am beautiful, I am loved I am smart, I am beautiful, I am loved

Three o’clock Tuesday morning, / clouds high, sky bloated with the coming rain / and there is no she. / Only me. / Bolt upright and sweating, whispering affirmations and praying for sunrise.

I am smart.

I am beautiful.

I am loved.
Reflections

When I look back sometimes I can’t believe I’ve reached thirty, ‘Cause I was out there getting high and always riding dirty. Constantly ignoring the signs of the life that I was mixed up in, Filled with sex and drugs and constant pressures from my sins. I wanted the life from the movies and the television, But all I got was pain and strife that always left me wishin’ That I could fill the void that I thought was from having nothing. But what I failed to realize was I already had something. A family that’s loving, all they’d ever want was me, And if I opened up my eyes I would have seen That I was wrong to think I was living life at all Chasing women, smoking ’dro and drinking alcohol. My mother told me pride would go away before a fall., And that I need to change the things I do and not to stall. So now I see what she was saying was for me to know That being in the streets is not the way for me to go. ‘Cause in the end I’ll feel the guilt and then of course the shame Of dereliction to my family and all that they need. Fulfiling falsely painted pictures fueled by gluttonous greed My mind had become clouded, lost deep in the mist, Created by a schism hidden in the social rifts, It binded me to baubles and the things that don’t mean sh*t. Distracted so I’ll surely end up with my life like this, Trapped behind some walls made of brick and pure rejection, Then treated like I’m nothing but some gangrenous infection. It’s evident I didn’t heed the warnings that were given. Now what I face is pain that’s manifested from my livin’. Trickin’ off my principles is what had got me slippin’ Like a vagabond whose life and soul has just been driven, Deep into a spiral of a never ending battle Feeling like a trophy sitting on the D. A.’s mantle My ways were frivolous but in the end what really matters Is family, loyalty and love, not making pockets fatten. I’m smarter than a man who doesn’t know to change his way. I’ve seen the game for what it is and I don’t want to play. I’m going to get my head right and I will never forget The road that led me here is filled with too many regrets. I don’t want to be the man who ends up all alone,
I want to put all this behind me and take my ass home
To the ones who love me unconditionally to the death.
I’ll love them, and protect them, even give them my last breath.
To see their futures blossom into exorbitant bliss
And not become the products of environments like this.

Field in Film
Jordan Kendall, UAS Student, Juneau
35mm Black and White Photography
Leaving the outside

We live in a transient world where permanent duty equates to 36 months we transfer relocate we exchange Districts Regions States for the West Pacific Rim the South

We unlove those places we leave turn away from this town or that for wherever next is tell unflattering stories to each other rationalize the move as though serving our country is not enough

It is not enough

We hate New Orleans right leaving voodoo Civil War oaks the Quarter hot rain and thunder smell of old urine and parades Christmas bon fires on the levee should be easy

But we find signs that this city’s through with us:
like a rain overtaking the pumps flooding the parish alligators nutria king snakes swimming our parking lot like they are taking back the bayou the swamp underneath the asphalt concrete pools

laissez les bon temp rouler, y’all

Our departure is scheduled for July 1 our car’s A/C breaks June 30 the air sweats with mildew crawfish boil and magnolia we cram a fraction of our lives into the Caravan for the trek strap down the kids pop in the Lion King CD, and get outta here we displaced Angelenos retreating migrating sprinting north to Alaska
Behold:
In a shelter of smoke and coals,
the lives of two humans alone,
woven together like spruce root bowls--
watertight.

Behold:
The lone wolf howl in the isostatic flats,
pure lust in tooth white and fur black--
hungry.

Behold:
The Aurora Borealis behind cumulocirrus:
The Northern Lights
in a nightdress--
sublime.

And here I am.
Street lights reflected off of clouds in rusty ambience.
Then off the snow, orange glow
thrown around so we can find our way without a GPS
or moonlight or stars.
A four hour day is only the lunchtime rest
and a 20 hour night is only one long moment
of coffee and Jim Morrison,
back where I’m from.

Where I’m from, the voices huddle under roofs,
hands cuddle under blankets and jackets,
ears congregate around the guitar and speaker cabinet--
and when they feel about it, they don’t ever hold it back,
where I’m from.
We bear scars in the wet, 
bears scar us back, watching 
long west sun sets on our 
long black guns; 
we see hung deer bags 
like swung lunch sacks. 
Yes, I’ve seen guns shot, 
but, I’ve seen .44 mags splash 
in the channel in memory of the dear 
lives of lost freshman comrades. 
Car crashes and liquor heads, 
leading US suicide trends, 
90 year old sourdoughs still smoking cheap cigarettes--
this 
is the resilient slow death of the 
wild 

wild 

northwest.

Where I’m from we are the etched 
question how do we bear the scars 
of the warrior chiefs and the abusive missionaries? 
How do we treat the wounds of alcoholism and prison visionaries? 
How do I assume this humility 
when the true weight of our history eludes me?

This land has seen too much death.

We occupy the horizon, 
the smile of the sky 
mountainous jagged edge toothy sneer 
reminding us what it takes to make here home, 
clothe ourselves in smoke signals and cell phones 
because nobody makes it alive in the North alone.
Guy Unzicker

UAS Student, Juneau

Written in the Week Following a Funeral I Attended

It should have been linen,
the table cloth. The plastic kind just don’t lie flat.
Plus they smell like,
plastic.

I’m the only one who notices, I think.
Everyone else has eased up from the silence
into figure-eights
and circular conversations,
and side pools;
telling stories,
balancing paper plates
of mayonnaise and cold
pasta.

I should stand with somebody.

It’s a broad lawn, a bed
occupied by a body of relations,
blanketed by a hundred stories,
and every mouth is laughing a little,
hanging slightly at the jaw.

The casket was white as a tooth.

As the evening goes on, the alcohol will start to smell
from mouths and bodies
and stumbling hands will collect ties and hats,
and we’ll all stuff into cars and go to tell louder stories
over peanuts and cashews
or club wraps and cocktails.
Some of us will talk,
some of us will stare.
We will loosen collars
and laugh widely,
and some will go home to sleep,
or watch TV, or make love,
and wake up to coffee and alarm clocks,
and some of us will sleep in.
But for now,
we are constructed;
a little posture, a little normality
encasing the dead conversation,
pressing on my ears,
smelling of plastic.
Guy Unzicker

UAS Student, Juneau

Capital Transit

Silent kisses and rustling plastic Thank You bags,
underneath the static of dust,
which is underneath the coarse grumble of the engine,
which is underneath the squeal of the air-brakes, sometimes,
which is above the buzzy intercom.

Bouquets held carefully by their stems in a bubble of space above
rivulets of brown water exploring angular paths between feet and awkward shoelaces.

Posters and the spaces where they ought to be above smiles of missing teeth
and glances that claim no memory,
pretending to study the crease in the cowboy hat of the man
on the other end of the row.

Blue chairs, and keychain pictures of grandchildren
bathed in blue light which take up conversation between
brown jacket with awkward backpack and
dark green jacket with walking stick stuck into aisle.
The sort of conversations which never disagree,
and earbuds split between two heads,
(but its his music, not hers).

the light brown film of dust,
the sleepy smell of dust,
the dry feel of dust,
and the old lady next to me
has fallen asleep.
How to be Loved

Smile often, loosen shoulders and let arms swing freely.
   Alternatively, if these are not available,
   drink black coffee and try not to talk too much.

Read plenty of Gandhi. Dali Lama, Carl Sagan,
and the New Testament are also suggested.
   Substitutes, if prior materials are missing
   or on back order, include political cartoons,
   conservative website comment threads, and cereal boxes.

You may become aware of others who are learning,
as you are, what it takes and how to be loved. If possible,
compare notes and learn from them. Potential allies include
dentists, tech support specialists, and children.
   You may, instead, if you like, refer to any cats you may own,
as they are skilled recipients of providential love.

Keep a small bird, some feed, a perch
(with plenty of newspapers), an armchair, and a pair of scissors.
Let your bird fly, or not fly, throughout your house. Observe
how natural it is, from your armchair.
   If you ever wish to know what it is like
to not be loved, get the scissors,
and take away its ability to fly.
Do truckers develop patterns, like grooves, for these routes? I mean, like, sleep patterns? Isn’t there some sort of arcane trucker math they can do, like: 15 hours... that’s twice the length of Kansas, a half a tank of gas, 9 cups of coffee, 47 minivans a 7-minute nap, and Toby Keith’s Big Dog Daddy 19 times over. I don’t know what I’m doing. I’ve got an eye on the tank, but I’ll just fill up the next chance I get, I guess. I quit speeding when I saw how quickly you can eat through gas that way. I don’t think there’s any cops around this corn-field gun barrel road this time of night, though. I can imagine: Hmm, highway 49, at 10:30 pm, that’s about 4 cases of roadkill, 7 sets of 4-wheel tracks, 2 leisurely pick-up trucks, and one El Camino driving suspiciously close to the speed limit.

It’s quiet: white-noise, windy quiet, like waking up to an alarm-clock radio that’s been set on an empty a.m. channel. I think I can almost hear it from in here. My radio’s off. The air is flat like old root beer, which I think I happen to have in the back behind the seat. Maybe there’s some cigarettes back there, too. I don’t smoke often, but it’s good to have a pack in case I pick one of my friends up, or I take a girl out and she’s a smoker. I haven’t had a steady in a while, but you never know.

Like Lacey, she could smoke two in a row, lit right off each other. But that was freshman year, three years ago. We used to sneak off through the dug-outs (the only gates in the fence behind the school) and go sit behind the biggest clump of trees. We never went out, mostly because her dad scared me. He wasn’t all that scary, really, he was skinny and red-faced, his skin drooped off his arms, and he always wore a wife-beater, or at least that’s how I picture him, I only saw him once. I used to think he kept a shot-gun by the door, though, because the one time I walked her home from school he met us at the door, leaning with one arm hidden behind the wall. At any rate, I figured out we pretty much only shared the trees behind the ball-park, and it was going to stay that way. I quit the daily escapades right about the time she started bringing other guys along, like Brewster. His black hair stuck out like a lawn on his head, and he would always make this little croaking laugh, with his eyes half open, like he wasn’t sure if he believed you. He just wasn’t my crowd.

School is like that, though. Everything has a place. You have your table at lunch, your seat in class, you have to take a pass just to go to the bathroom, you got your locker, your place in gym class. You can’t pick it up and carry it with you, you gotta go where they tell you. It’s like a prison. After teetering discerningly between the last two lunch tables in the row, I ended up plopping down next to the first group I heard talking about Star Wars. That became my new crowd.

My school is the only high school in town, a big faded brick-red building stuck between the main road and the green-belt that borders the suburb. The ball-field is super flat and bright green, but the parking lot looks like it was laid by a volcano. Other than that, it’s just a dusty, squeaky, ordinary high school. Officially, nobody’s allowed out during school hours, but they don’t usually keep an eye on the field, and if you can make it past the fence you can follow the green-belt all the way to the college, on the edge of town. I never walked further out than that.

Joey says that’s the best place in town if you have to think about something, if you walk around the university to the edge of the corn fields and just stare out at them like they’re the edge of the world. He’s surprisingly poetic sometimes. He’s the only friend I’ve kept since freshman year, even though he dropped out of school as a sophomore. We used to play Halo all the time in the summer, and after school. He’s the sort of scruffy stand-out guy that seems to know everyone. Like, if I ever want to know if Sarah, the new girl from Montreal, is still single, or what Lacey’s up to these days, I just give him a call. I don’t even ask how he knows.

Last time I saw Lacey was last year, around Thanksgiving; it was before I got the car. I was leaving the movie theater alone when I found her smoking behind the building, at the corner by the bus stop. Her hair,
which used to be soft blonde, was something else now. I couldn’t really tell what, because all the parking lot lights are orange. It looked a lot shorter, though. She looked cold, but her jacket was unzipped. So I guess she wasn’t that cold. Well, I wasn’t going to let her stay there all night, anyway. I said we should go for some burgers or something, and afterward I’d ride the bus with her home. I’m an expert with the bus routes, plus she wouldn’t have to take it alone. She just laughed and said “It’s OK, I’ve got friends with cars.”

I try not to judge a girl because she smokes. Sometimes, though, I just think of them like a girl who spits loudly, like she’s trying too hard to be a bro. Nobody wants to date a bro. Nobody wants to date a guy without a car, though, either. It’s just embarrassing. What are you gonna do, ride the bus? Take somebody’s mom’s car, that smells like old coffee and probably looks like a fat tick of an empty mini-van?

That’s not really why I got the car, though. At first I didn’t want to get one because of my dad’s obsession with NASCAR, which is a stupid sport. It fits him well. I got to choose custody when they divorced. At the time, I wasn’t really old enough to make a logical decision. I mostly thought of it as choosing between crowded yellow NASCAR posters and kitschy, smelly Jo-Anne’s Fabric seasonal decorations. I think I was about eight (I should probably know that), and even then I thought my dad’s tastes in Spaghetti-O’s and loud TV were trashy. I went with the silk-flower wreathes and smelly wall-hangings of my mom. Even today, I’d rather get wasted on Kirkland Signature box wine like my mom than a dozen cans of Coors Light like my dad, but I don’t really drink. Sometimes I wish I did, because sometimes I don’t really know what to do with myself. Like when it’s too hot and I can’t sleep and I’m too tired to go do something, but awake enough that I keep thinking about girls and regrets and deep stuff. Sometimes it’s just small stuff, like that Toyota I think I scratched the other week. I heard my rear view mirror make a scraping noise when I was backing out of Target, but I didn’t stop to check – I can’t afford to fix somebody’s paint job. So I pretended like I didn’t notice, and I didn’t look at it. It’s been keeping me wondering what the scratch looked like. Was it deep and grey, like an old scar? Is it still there, spreading rust like an infection? The other thing that really makes me want to drink is re-reading the Communist Manifesto. Marx is the most convincing invitation to drink.

Oh, Marx. So one day, last summer, my mom walked in on me reading Das Kapital. I don’t know why she was coming into my room in the first place, but she sees the name Marx and just goes off about poor people and how they need to just move their asses and not steal the taxpayer’s hard-earned cash so they can blow it all on candy and meth. She just lays into me about dirty socialists conspiring to break the back-bone of this nation through “spreading the money around so nobody gets rich.” Then she starts to get all moral about it, and before I know it, I have to clean my room, and do the dishes, and vacuum the house. It takes a family to do a family’s worth of work you know! I don’t even bother with the whole bit about how we’re not even a real family anymore. I just nod, “You’re right, Mom. From each according to his abilities.”

She just nods furiously and goes off, probably to some stupid PTA meeting for my sister. Man, I really wanted her to change. I wanted my little 12 year old sister to change, to grow up to be something, anything, other than her mother; I wanted to change, I wanted my lethargic pot-head friend Joey to change, I wanted his girlfriend to get a job, I wanted someone to say something impassioned for once, for my English teacher to strike his capitalist propaganda off the lesson plan and start assigning Byron and Keats. I wanted to be in California, where America still exists and democracy can still change things, and you can drive just about anywhere.

So I called up Joey and asked if he wanted to go get wasted. He didn’t even sound surprised. Why didn’t he sound surprised? He should have. We took his car down to the fields behind the Ohio State College football field. When we got there the weather was a little cooler, and I decided I didn’t want to get wasted anyway. So he just rolls up a joint and listens to me drone on about everything. About Das Kapital about NASCAR, about how I can’t get a steady girlfriend for more than a month, and how I can’t get a job that I actually want, just washing dishes and bussing tables. And he just takes a deep puff in, and contemplates it, and doesn’t say a word.
I've been saving up for a long time, as a dishwasher at a local pizza place. I don't make a lot, but it feels good. Mom says I need to save for college, that that's the only future for me. It's a pretty standard piece of spaghetti-night conversation. But that day, the day after my talk with Joey, I bought the car. Mom didn't even say anything when she saw it in the driveway, even though it's the most beautiful shade of orange an El Camino ever came in. I think they call it "Taco Bell Orange." Greasy, bright, and some sort of combination of dingy and shiny, like a traffic cone. I just saw the number in the window and called it, like a collect call to Heaven for a change of pace, then picked up the cash from the bank, and picked up the car an hour later. The guy who sold it to me I've seen at the pizza place sometimes. He's the no-onions focaccia sandwich guy, with the giant sports coat and greasy forehead. Driving it home, I felt like a little bright splotch of orange in the midwest blues and browns of my town. The bummer about the El Camino, though, is that there's no back seat.

Joey's girlfriend is this really hot blonde chick, Yvette. I think she's Norwegian, but she belongs in California. First, because she has the body of a beach goddess, second because she doesn't have a job and all she does is mooch off of Joey and burn his money and pot. I don't think she's dangerous; she just does what she wants, I guess. Joey doesn't know. Joey has everything he ever wanted, and even though he likes to go off about how lame this town is, I don't think he ever wants to leave. He has what he wants: a job, a beard, a big TV, a bunch of games, and tons of snacks. Anyway, last week Yvette called me up, asking for a ride from downtown, because it was late, and apparently Joey wasn't sober enough to pick her up. I'd do anything for Joey, even if it means picking up his weird out-of-place girlfriend from downtown at midnight. My town is small, and what we call Downtown is really just where all the old shops, pubs, and businesses brave enough to keep a storefront huddle together. It's quaint, a little gritty, but not uncomfortable. On a night like this one, when it was beginning to rain, the sidewalk slabs give off a certain grey smell. Other than that, it's just a boring, flat, ordinary downtown. I pulled up to the Culver's where she was waiting. Culver's: home of the Butter Burger. That about sums up food around here. She came out, slid her longs legs down into my tiny car, put her bags on the floor between them, and somehow managed to fit her slender arms in and close the door.

"Weird car, dude," she said, smirking. It was a compliment.

"Thanks, Yvette."

"There's no back seat. It's like a tiny truck!"

"Yeah, I know."

She has a weird way of making conversation, but she really is pretty. I almost forgot how much. "So what's up with Joey, huh? It's a Wednesday," I said. He may not be in school, but he has to be at work on Thursday mornings down at the City Bureau. She slid her hair behind her ear, almost apologetically. "We're breaking up," she said. "Oh," was all I could manage, for a while. He never tells me anything. "Why?" I wasn't sure how else to breach the silence.

"I told him I think we should be seeing other people," she explained. "We've been drifting apart for a while, and it was going to happen some time or another." The way her torso arched into the small seat left ribbing folds of fabric in her shirt, clinging to her. Something about Yvette is that she never overbears. Like, she never uses too much perfume. I hate it when girls do that. I suddenly got this sense about her, like I had been wrong about her all along. Joey's life, his ability to not care about leaving, his apathy about saving up, it all made so much sense to me now. She turned the radio on. A cackling rock DJ sputtered through the fuzz while we drove past closed shops and open bars. In the light rain, Downtown was like a fuzzy portrait done in neon signs, orange street lights, and black windows. We were halfway to her house, which is directly off of 49, one of the long, straight roads leading out of town, when she admitted she didn't really want to go home. So, without saying anything, I turned around and took her to the fields behind the college. I don't know what I was expecting, or why I was so nervous. We talked about Joey and school, about jobs and drugs and gossip,
and leaned up against each other, my shoulder blade to hers. She leaned back and our hair mingled. She wasn’t Joey’s girlfriend anymore, she was a taste of California. If I had a back seat, I think we could have gotten more comfortable, maybe stayed a little longer, I don’t know, it’s hard to say, looking back. I was so nervous, but so still, I didn’t want to ruin the moment. When I eventually dropped her back off at her place, she told me thanks, and, before she got out, gave me a slow kiss on the cheek.

I got a couple of texts over the next few days from her, and one yesterday that really made me interested. “parents going away for the week wanna come over 8pm?” I didn’t even think, my thumbs just pushed out “see you then.”

I argued with myself for a long time today over whether or not to shave the stubble I’ve been working on all week. In the end, I offed it ceremoniously, and threw on a casual-cool combo that’s an old standby in my closet. I finished my homework, mostly, and got in my little car to head over. I passed the school, floodlights on the American flag, and the cemetery. I scooted through Downtown, past probably seven different greasy eateries like the one I work at, and made it out to the sparse houses on the edge of town. I turned on to 49 and started towards her house, only, I didn’t stop. When I neared her driveway, I didn’t even slow down. The closer I got, the more I knew I just wasn’t going to stop there, and I didn’t. I’ve been driving for somewhere around 150 miles now, with a half-tank of gas and maybe a pack of cigarettes, and every mile I pass brings me further into some cold, silent, lightness.
**Lilac 1**
Jessica Hambleton, UAS Student, Juneau
Photography
Changing Stations

I sat on my father’s lap and steered our rusting Ford Courier past Lake Superior sand dunes and whitecaps rolling in from a static horizon of water and sky. FM radio played John Denver and Dad drank a beer. His cheeks and chin scratched out a week of whiskers, and his forearm freckled in the sun on the window ledge, blonde arm hairs waving in the breeze.

Now, I’m as old as he was then. But where’s that red-headed boy to ruffle his hair and call, “Little Guy?” Or to rough house with on a carpeted square of sun? To teach how to multiply by nine, bending down the other number’s finger on one of his open palms as he sits on the toilet lid, both in our skivvies watching me shave to Van Morrison on XM (instead of my father’s AM news) before work? It’s just me—alone in Alaska now; shoveling snow into piles for the rain, I pause to catch my breath, smell the cedar and curls of wood smoke beneath the graying sky. The neighbor’s puppy wags up to me. So I crouch to scratch behind his ear, and like my old man might remind me right now, I say, “This is it, boy. This is it.”
Upper-Crossing Guard Station

Our night’s heat burned down to coals
in the stove at the foot of our sleeping bags.
I rise and feed more wedges of pine,
hold the door close to closed. The opening

fuels the fire with rushes of air. I cinch
the latch shut, choke the chimney down until
the flame darkens, wavers, struggles to stay alive
with just enough to come back. I lay down

beside you Orion’s sword west of the Continental
Divide, the quartered moon to the east.
Only the firelight’s left to shadowbox your ear,
cut our figures into an upended hourglass:

you—a valley of stardust piled in dunes
against the mountains; me—the sky that lets loose.
In bed, Maddie studied Cal’s blue eyes, 
read the quiet resolve of a hired hand 
mixed with the hard-edged jaw 
of a rancher who had a good nose 
for something more than just tits 
dancing on a Saturday night’s tongue-
and-groove. As a girl, father’s whiplash tongue 
left her ashamed of her mirrored black eyes. 
“Strutting around thinking you’re hot tits,” 
he’d punctuate with a stinging backhand. 
But she worried more about mother’s nose, 
shifted to the side and broken like her jaw.

Mother used to knock back a couple and jaw 
with anyone at the bar with a loose tongue. 
A hillock freckled with poppies for a nose, 
she’d wink and bat her made-up eyes 
before she turned to covering up the hand-
jobs, began to flash her head-turning tits.

Just barely over the counter and no tits, 
Maddie would stand and work her jaw 
while mom drank her lunch with the hand-
some bartender. “Cat got your tongue?” 
he’d tease Maddie. Her downcast eyes 
counted peanut shells at the end of her nose.

Her mother continued to bury her nose 
in whiskey as Maddie grew some tits. 
Then the trouble began: the roving eyes, 
the hungry, off-color, sideways, slack-jaw 
remarks. Ma never minded, held her tongue. 
A nice ass just asks for the squeeze of a stray hand.
Laying beside Cal, Maddie reached for his hand.
They touched foreheads, rubbed each other’s nose.
No more words left, she swallowed his tongue,
placed his callused fingers on her warm tits.
Kissing the whiskered edge of his jaw,
she told him all this with her glistening eyes.

Eyes as open as rain on the range, a roaming hand,
sun-bleached bones of a cow jaw, a cold nose,
mountains like tits: the words she tasted on his tongue.
The Mingling of Words:
An Interview with Richard Dauenhauer

I have to confess: I didn’t pick the featured writer. I couldn’t really think of a good option. We decided to feature a poet but I wasn’t any help because most of the poets I have read are dead. When I discovered Richard Dauenhauer was the choice, I had to do some research. I was in for a surprise. This man speaks and translates more languages than Rosetta Stone, writes beautiful poetry that I can understand, and teaches others his love and appreciation for the written word. I visited Richard at his house and had the privilege of meeting two amazing poets: Richard and his lovely wife Nora. They made me feel right at home, like I was catching up on lost time with my grandparents instead of conducting a formal interview. I have a feeling his humble, welcoming spirit has been a big part of his success.

How did you discover your interest in poetry?
I’ve always been interested in it. When I was a kid I wrote a lot of stories because I was more interested in fiction. In high school I started writing; a lot of it was pretty bad. Then in college I started focusing on poetry, especially images. I have been pretty much exclusively on that ever since.

Do you go back to fiction?
I have a story I’ve been working on, my Alaska Hardy Boys, but I’ve got to do a rewrite on it. It was my attempt to get back to my energy in the 7th grade. It’s been fairly well reviewed by friends but it’s a hard market to get into – the whole adolescent fiction genre. It’s been sitting for a while. But that’s the only fiction thing I’ve done. I’ve never tried any serious novels or short stories.

Can you describe the process you take in creating a poem?
Not really. It starts with, I think, an image and then you work from there. A couple of old sayings ring true for me: “10 percent inspiration and 90 percent perspiration.” The other is “10 percent vision and 90 percent revision.” I think that’s true for most because usually it’s an act of discovery and you don’t know where you are going. If I think I know where I am going, the poem is a disaster. You kind of discover as you go and see how the patterns progress. The rhyme and sound also determine the shape for me. That comes out of the poem, whether it’s going to be more of a free verse or a measured verse. How the assonance and alliteration and those devices are going to work.

So you start with an image and let it take its course from there?
I try to. Some of my poetry is very non-conceptual; it just presents the images and lets the reader discover the common denominator. Others are more traditional where there is a philosophical connection that is very Robert Frost-y where you get the image and he gives you the punch line at the end. It just depends; I’ve been all over the spectrum on that too. Some poems are very conceptual and others are not at all.

Do you prefer free form or more form poetry?
It’s hard to tell. There is always some kind of form; even free verse is not totally free. You are playing with word sounds and where words fit better. I’d say, as I look at a lot of my stuff, it’s probably more form. Although, it’s not totally rhymed or stanza form, there is usually some sort of form there. I like to play with the number of syllables in a line but mess around with the rhythm, so it’s not “Mary had a little lamb.” You can manipulate the rhythm and the stresses and such.
Since we are in Alaska, I am wondering how Alaska has influenced your work.

Very much. I think just being where we are, you write about what is around you. One of my books is Phenologies, an observation of nature without any metaphor or commentary. Some of my writing has been very much connected to the land like my Glacier Bay Concerto, which is long out of print.

You were Poet Laureate of Alaska for seven years. Your wife, Nora, was just chosen as the current Poet Laureate. Can you describe your experience as Poet Laureate and what you are now experiencing as Nora holds the title?

(Laughing) I guess this is the first time this has happened. I was number six, after the early poets including John Haines and Sheila Nickerson. It’s kind of amusing because the position has evolved a lot. When I was Poet Laureate, it was sponsored by the Juneau Poetry Society. They went defunct during my tenure so I had the longest reign of any Poet Laureate in history. We were trying to find another sponsoring organization and finally the State Council on the Arts stepped up to the plate and said they would do it. We were surprised with Nora. We knew she was nominated because she had to give her permission to be nominated but we were surprised when she was selected. She is the first Alaska Native writer to be appointed. I don’t know if there are any others who were husband and wife.

When you write a poem, do you have a certain meaning or message that you want your audience to get? Or do you write for yourself, and whatever message your audience gets is up to them?

Well, I guess it is always going to be the latter. The thing is, theoretically, your readers will get out what’s there. What is interesting, as a writer, is that there may be more in a poem than you are aware of. I have had that experience teaching some of my own poetry. That’s always interesting. A friend of mine was teaching a poem of mine and people came up with things that I had absolutely no idea were in there. My feeling is, as long as you are reading out from it and going on the images that are there, if your interpretation is defensible in terms of the structure of the poem, then it’s an acceptable reading. Finding something in a poem is exciting, if it can be supported. You just have to be aware you aren’t just reading in some wishful desire.

You have several published books and another one soon to be released. Other than writing, what is your involvement in the process of publishing a book?

Well, it’s partly a marketing thing. This book is going to be new and selected poems. So we are dealing with 40 plus years of poetry, from 1963 to 2013. Part of it is excerpts from some of my stuff that’s out of print now or very hard to get. It’s just finding the right place. The University of Alaska Press was right for this book. Peggy Shumaker is editing a new series of Alaskan writers, so I’m very happy about that. I have other poems that they weren’t as excited about, so I need to find another home for those poems. Another bunch of my work that I’m having massive problems finding a publisher for are the translations because they don’t seem to sell, or publishers want a whole book of one guy. I have several hundred, but they range from ancient Greek to modern Scandinavian. So I have stuff from Finland and ancient Greece and Germany and Russia, especially. But it’s hard to find publishers for that kind of stuff. It’s always a question of matching your writing with the editorial needs and interests of a publisher at a given time.

Well, it’s almost like a full time job, just trying to get published.

Oh yes it is, and some don’t realize that. Publishing takes a whole different bundle of energy than writing does. And the only way you get published is by licking a lot of stamps and sending a lot of stuff out. You get rejections but you have to have faith and keep with it.
Can you share a little bit of how you’ve grown as a writer?
I guess when my new book comes out you can tell me because it will all be in there. I’ve experimented. At one point I tried writing without any use of metaphors or simile; just looking at things for what they are. I found that kind of limiting. I then wanted to try a long poem in the American tradition. Everyone wants to try a long, epic poem like those written by Pound or Eliot. I tried my hand at those but now I seem to do mostly smaller poems. Much of the time I am most interested in the overlap of the liturgical year and the natural year; how we measure time. I spent one whole book dealing with great spiritual traditions because not all time measurement is the same. Whether it’s measured in terms of 24 hours or in terms of the lives of people’s spiritual ancestors, time is measured differently.

When you’re translating poetry, since languages don’t translate word-for-word, do you have quite a bit of creative license?
That’s the big question and you have to ask yourself how you want to be faithful. You don’t want to change it totally because then it’s no longer that poem. Many people do what is called an imitation where you get an idea and run with it. What I try to do is look for what’s going on in the original; how it’s measured and what is being rhymed. Many times I pick up underlying meanings in the rhymes, especially from the German and Russian poets. It’s always fun to find rhymes that are good and not just used for padding. If you are just starting out as a writer, it’s not a good idea to use rhyme because you will be incredibly limited in what you can say. But, if you can link those words that need to be, as Booth would say “supercharged,” then you have more freedom with rhyme.

Is there one event that you can look back on and see as your defining moment as an author?
When Nora first read her translations to me of Tlingit oratory, when we first met. She had been translating Tlingit potlatch oratory. When she read it to me I was amazed. I had never seen anything like that. This was the first time that anybody from within the culture had translated public speaking from a recording made in performance, which is much different from singing a song or telling a story. You can tell a story anytime. Oratory, however, is only when it is being performed. What struck me about this was the use of metaphor and simile. I had seen, up until then, nothing like this in Tlingit because nothing like this had ever been published. The early collectors were mostly recording stories. Oratory uses simile and metaphor in extremely complicated ways; you have to know the genealogy. I have been able to use much of the training I had with European literature in applying it to Alaska Native literature. Shakespeare also requires knowledge of genealogy and history, for example the opening lines of Richard III. I’d say that was a defining moment for me and our life’s work together.

What is something you would like to share with aspiring poets?
The difference between poets and wannabe poets is that poets write. You have to write. You can’t sit around and wait for the great American novel to come to you. Then you work on your writing. It’s very easy to fall in love with your stuff, so it’s nice to have people you can share with to get feedback. There are certain lines I fall in love with, so I make sure to have people go through and tell me which lines are weak. Just keep at it and be willing to receive comments from people. Also, try and be aware of who your audience is, which can be difficult because you don’t know if they understand who you are writing about. Definitely read. Foreign languages, I have discovered, are great because they open you up to new worlds. If you have a slow day and you know Japanese, you can work on a haiku. Good training for your brain.
Sugar Blues

(A Forefeast of St. Valentine’s Day)

Poetry is the underwear of the soul.
—Ferlinghetti

Beyond the custom lingerie I feast
my eyes—edible underwear; below
erotic
photographs, examine fine
print caution at the edge of boxes: “May
be hazardous to health. This product is
composed of saccharine, which causes cancer
in laboratory animals.” So I
commit instead the deadly sin of pride.
Sweetheart, Honey Pie, my fetishes
embrace no sugar substitutes.

—February 1988
Sparrow Hills

translated from the Russian of
Boris Pasternak (1917, 1922)

Your breasts beneath my kisses, like water from a tap! But not for all eternity; not forever will summer bubble over, will we rise night after night from dust to squeeze-box wheeze, stamp our feet, and dance.

I’ve heard about old age. When not a single whitecap reaches for a star. Dismal prophecies. They tell you—don’t believe it—meadows have no faces, ponds no heart, and no gods live in the piney grove.

Break away your soul! Today’s the high noon of all creation. Use your eyes! Look, above us concepts being whipped into a white-hot seething brew of woodpeckers, clouds and cones, needles and the heat.

This is where the public transit stops. For points beyond, you transfer to the pines. No street cars penetrate. From here on out it’s Sunday, snapping branches, racing through the clearings, rolling through the grass. Pentecost, and sunlight filtered on a walk. The forest leads you to believe the world is permanent: inspired openings and growth designed this way and poured through clouds as patterns on your dress.

(Published in Willow Springs (Cheney, WA) Spring 1982)
Erotic Epigrams

Translations from the Greek Anthology, vol. 5

V. 189
Aklepiados (c. 320 BC)

The winter night is longer than the stars, and stormy. Back and forth, I pass her door, in darkness, rain-soaked, wounded by desire for her who treats me with deceit. Not love did Aphrodite strike me with, but grief. The red-hot arrow sizzles in the rain.

V. 96
Meleagros (c. 140 BC – c. 70 BC)

Timárion, your kiss is glue, your eyes are fire.

Look at me, I smoulder, touch me, and I’m stuck.

V. 156
Meleagros (c. 140 BC – c. 70 BC)

Asklepiás, lover of love, with clear blue eyes like tranquil seas recruits all men to come aboard and launch on voyages of love.
V. 171
Meleagros (c. 140 BC – c. 70 BC)
——translated for Nora, 1971

This goblet has felt that sweet delight
and tells how it has touched the mouth
of Zênophila, woman prone
to love. O blessed cup! But now
if only she would pass her
mouth instead, place her lips
on mine, and, drinking to my health,
drain away my soul.

V. 32
Markos Argentarios (c. 70 BC – c. 40 AD)

You do all the work, Méliissa,
of the flower-loving bee.
I’ve learned by heart now
how you let the honey drip
from your lips, sweet kiss
by kiss, then how you sting me
when it’s time to pay.

V. 67
Kapitonos (dates uncertain)

Beauty without charm just pleases us
but does not hold—
like bait floating
without a hook.

V. 45
Killaktoros (dates uncertain)

A virgin’s piggy bank attracts
investors not through her technique;
deposits come through interest
her body parts by nature peak.
V. 26
Unknown Poet, Probably Rousphinos (dates uncertain, 310 – 390 AD?)
—translated for Nora, Christmas 1975

I see you now, my Lady
with your iridescent hair,
now Raven black, now lighter,
but still the same
brilliance graces it,
and still the same
God of Love will dwell
within it
when your hair is gray

V. 252
Paulos Silentiarios  (Fl. 560 AD)

Let’s throw away our clothes, my lovely, lie
naked, flesh to naked flesh entwined.
Let nothing lie between us. Your sheerest
next to nothing seems a fortress wall.
Let breasts and lips be yoked, the rest be veiled
in silence. Kiss. I hate a wagging tongue.

V. 272
Paulos Silentiarios  (Fl. 560 AD)

I have her breasts in hand, and, mouth to mouth
and all around her silver throat and shoulders
unrestrained, I feed in frenzy; yet
no-way have I wholly seized this Venus.
I’m still exhausted, working on this virgin
refusing me her bed. She gave herself
half to Aphrodite, half Athena.
I waste away to nothing in between.
V. 290
Paulos Silentiarios  (Fl. 560 AD)

Cheating on her mother’s watchful
eyes, that little charmer slipped me two red
apples. Just as quickly and in front of mine
she must have touched those apples
with a magic wand of love to turn me on:
instead of breasts, I hold two
apples in these hands that failed.

V. 253
Eirenaios Referendarios (Dates uncertain)

Why so shy, Chrysilla,
  head bowed, eyes cast down,
holding just the ends undone
  where your lingerie is tied?
Modesty never mates
  with the goddess of love.
If you must keep silent
  give at least a sign
that you consent.
Of all stars
the most beautiful:

* 
Evening star, you return
everything to the fold
that light-bringing dawn
had scattered:

You bring the sheep and the goat home
and to the mother, her child.

* 
Full, the moon appears
as young girls rise, en-
circling the altar.

* 
The girls of Crete, with
well-timed footwork, would
dance like this, too, pres-
ing on the smooth, soft
blossoms of the grass.

* 
The stars around
the beautiful moon
put their own sparkling
form in the shade
when the moon’s full
and shines its brightest
on the whole earth.

* 
The moon has set, and Pleiades;
it’s middle of the night, as time
moves on, and I
lie down to sleep
alone.
Wednesday Night

Next to you
under a blue blanket.
Cold feet chasing your warmth.
Hushed voices give way to
silence.
Staring at the ceiling.

Dirt embedded in
calloused fingerprints
on your hard-working fingertips
that seek
my delicate, familiar
features.

Someone is kicking a can down the street.
“It sounds like fireworks,”
you say.

Breathe in.
Breathe
out.
Eyelids grow lazy.
It’s too late for anything more than
a goodnight kiss.
Stressed muscles reach for
each other,
melting into one person
on the mattress.
Your arm drapes over
my stomach.
My hair creeps onto
your pillow.

Someone is kicking a can down the street.
Sounds like fireworks.
Jeremy Kane
Featured Artist, UAS Faculty, Juneau

Bling Dynasty Detail

Hot Coffee Cups

Tip Jar
Jeremy Kane
Featured Artist, UAS Faculty, Juneau

American History

Country Style

I Love Juneau
Jeremy Kane

Featured Artist, UAS Faculty, Juneau

Kentucky Fried Ceramics

Bar Story Jugs
Jeremy Kane
Featured Artist, UAS Faculty, Juneau

Diner Mugs

TCB Drink Set
Jeremy Kane
Featured Artist, UAS Faculty, Juneau

USA Ice Cream Bowls

Vintage Mustache Mugs
Crow Jar
Doris Alcorn, Auke Bay
Ceramics

Chilkat Dancer and Button Blanket Dancer
Tamsen Cassidy, Haines
Photography

Remembrance
Jill Dumesnil, Juneau
Photography
Sockeye Supper
Kija Ann Elstad, Sitka
Acrylic Painting

Cliffs and Baby Crow
Brittany Buell, UAS Student, Douglas
Photography
Mendenhall Fireweed
Clare Brooks, Juneau
Quilt

Mother’s Warmth
Kija Ann Elstad, Sitka
Sculpture

A Pause Beneath the Devil’s Club
Elise Tomlinson, UAS Faculty, Juneau
Oil on Canvas
Talk Bold to Me

Talk bold to me, baby.
Talk down to me in all caps.

Take my face with both your hands.
Make me listen.

Speak passionately to me in italics.
Emphasize every want, every need.

Crushed between clenched jaw,
chew your words, digest them.

Talk big and out loud
over the roar of silence.

Airy vowels and sharp consonants
from strong diaphragm in body bent.

Let secrets crawl up your throat,
come out small and under your breath.

Talk crazy in your favorite font,
spitting your misspellings.

You don’t have to edit for me.
Talk bold to me, baby.
It’s easy to get lost, so pay attention.

Take IMPATIENCE from FIRST GLANCE to FIRST KISS, you’ll pass MIND TRICKS and LICKED LIPS. It will get crowded at DOUBLE GULP if you’re traveling at sunset, that’s when everyone stops breathing.

When you do get to FIRST KISS, transfer to WANNA SEE MY JUNK COLLECTION. You’ll need to take the SPARKS line headed to CLOUD GAZING, not the PING PONG line headed to SIDEWALK SHOUTING, though they look almost exactly alike.

Careful, don’t get stuck on I LOVE YOU. It’s safe but it’s a loop.

If you’re looking for SMILE ACROSS A ROOM FULL OF PEOPLE or TEMPLE TO TEMPLE COMMUNICATION or STEAMY SHOWER INVITATION, try the MID-NIGHT EMBRACE line. It’s small, but it will get you almost anywhere you want to be.

Passes are free. They expire after three lifetimes or if you have an excessive amount of station transfers.

Some days we are doing maintenance on my heart to make it more efficient, we apologize for the delays.
HOW TO TELL IF A KOREAN WOMAN LOVES YOU

If a Korean woman cleans her mind out in the spring
and you are still in it,

she loves you.

If you walk out of a Korean woman’s kitchen
and there is rice on your sock
she loves you.

If you buy a Korean woman thirteen ordinary flowers
and she lets them die slow painful deaths in a vase on her table,
stems limp, crispy petals weak to the most passive of breaths
and she has yet to see them lose their luster,
she smells them in her sleep,
she loves you.

If you’ve never seen a Korean woman sing in the rain,
only recite poems from the
purple cursive of her veins,
translated verbatim
nerve after crooked nerve,

If you are a bomb
with a kindled tick
and she has not walked away,

If you find a boat in your bedroom
that she carried home in abandoned pieces
from a sun-rummaged shore
and refuses to call broken,

If her heart is the shape of the border
and when you are watching
she can’t step across it,

If there is only one comet
and only one telescope
and only one her
and only one you
and she passes the view,

she loves you,

and she can see the stars from here.
Christy NaMee Eriksen

Juneau

PROFILE

I wish my birth mother
had Facebook.

If she had Facebook,
my newsfeed would repeat her name
and I could know how many carrots she cut for dinner.
How the sun kisses her and skins her and calls it summer.
Whether work is slow,
or alive and steaming,
when it’s not just a dark square on the street and we are in a taxi pointing,
when she is counting the till at night
and mixing sugar into the kimchi.

She could poke me. I could poke her back.

If my birth mother had Facebook
I could know her favorite quotations.
Is she a live life to the fullest, don’t look back kind of lady?
Is she stuck in song lyrics?

Home
Let me come home

Home is wherever I’m with you.
Or is she obsessed with love like it’s a blessing worth repeating?
Maybe she left it blank, like I do, because there are too many words that lift us in this world and it’s hard to nail them down.

I would stalk her mobile uploads:
samgyetang on the first dog day of summer,
hers son, stooped by a street vendor, buying onions and tea.
Cabbage and radishes stretching into her corner garden,
a couple, squished together on the subway,
her new shoes.
An entire album of little moments,
her moments,
the ones she has to save.
And the glow of my screen would catch my smile
as I got to know her.
Would we both
have a photo of the fog
soaking up the sun,
like the bright haze could lift our own shadows.
Is there only one sky,
showing up on both our profiles
over and over across the ocean?

If we were Facebook friends
she wouldn’t have to call me at 4am to tell me that she’s sorry.
We wouldn’t have to blubber in broken Korean about how wholesome we’re eating.
She wouldn’t have to let her tears out, I wouldn’t have to receive them,
she could just post on my wall that she loves me, and I could “like” it.

We could invite each other to events we can’t attend and Facebook could send us birthday
reminders

would my mother curse the screen every august 13th like an annual birth pain?
would Facebook remind her to breathe?

If there was Facebook on the night I was born, my mother could have asked for more courage.
Her friends commenting that they hoped everything was okay,
sending light and love
and my naked mother holding me on her blood stained floor,
skin to skin,
my fist clenched around her finger,
us, weeping together
and still a secret.

Someone, somewhere, would say a prayer for her.

Maybe she would have 811 friends.
Maybe she would have ten.
Maybe she would have closed her account,
closed her doors,
closed her heart, her laughter, her words.

Maybe there isn’t really anything to say
when you’re dressing your baby for the last time.
But I want to know.
I want to be a mobile upload, too precious to forget.
I want to hear her quaint descriptions:
how long is the train ride to the city?
what is the woman next to her reading?
does she get lost in Seoul?

I want to follow her check-ins:
to the payphone,
to the social worker’s apartment.
to the alley outside, where she threw up a piece of her.

I want more than an apology.
I want to know what I was wearing.
I want to know what I was doing, what my mother’s eyes looked like as she said goodbye.
What song was playing on the radio?
How many other mothers were in that black book,
sat on that sinking couch,
handed their children away
in return for their hope?

for how long did she sleep that night?
Has she woken up
yet.

Mother,
time-drenched broken mother,
let’s not wait another 21 years for a birthday party.
for you to teach me what it means to prepare your skin at night,
to scrub our bodies before bed,
to measure a red hanbok around my waist,
and feed me a lifetime of meals in one sitting.

Forgivable mother,
this is a friend request
from a stranger,

dis a friend request
from your daughter.
LIKE ANY AMERICAN MEAL

Ho’s father can make the meanest bowl of noodles,  
beef on boil for two lovesick days  
until every stubborn chunk of it  
lets go of their bones and falls  
to the good graces of the water.

Y la Mama de Francisco makes tamales  
as if corn were lottery tickets.  
She picks the gold off the Pasadena summer,  
steams it until all the neighbors feel rich,

and for a year I watched Shaquanda raise her voice  
so no one could hear her breaking.  
She never hugged her children,  
but she fried chicken  
like she believed in it.

Well my own Irish mother from the heartland,  
she whipped Bisquick and milk with the best of them  
and we ate pancakes Sunday mornings,  
looked just like the picture.

She had a cake pan, shape like a dome  
and every daughter used it at least one birthday,  
plopped the top half of a blank Barbie in the center, and  
my mother worked for hours frosting her into life,  
piping each ruffle like small miracles, every color,  
as if the dress makes the princess.

Halibut, she would switch off, sometimes  
fried in the depths of angry oil, sided with tart yellow sauce,  
sometimes slow baked, blanketed  
in soft mayonnaise, full fat sour cream, a whisper of paprika and  
bread crumbs.  
I could follow it home.
My mother said I was never her Korean daughter
just her Daughter-daughter,
so she steamed minute rice from
an orange box with a Black uncle on it,
reached into the white freezer some evenings
and pulled a Costco bag of vegetables with
STIR FRY scrawled upon it
like a samurai who loved to brush paint
could stage a battle between water chestnuts and snow peas.

My mother gently sprayed a pan with PAM
brightened them over medium heat,
shook only enough soy sauce to barely brown them,
and stirred like any American meal,

except she secretly knew
that this one,

this one was my favorite.
I am convinced I hear clams while walking the beach at low tide. They hiss and squirt through gravel beds, through stone, and call me to the tideline and into the wash in search of their telltale air holes and mad escapes from shovel. Clam digging is the autumn ritual I share with my dad that sometimes chases into winter, even early spring, depending on the yearning and taste for hot chowder. In this ritual is the knowledge of when to dig, preparation for, and ultimate gift in its practice.

Perhaps it is an old wives’ tale, but there are many locals that prescribe and live by the “R-month” clam dig. This simply means that we dig September-April, during the months that contain the letter “R.” I once believed this was due to colder waters and bigger storms, but even this is not a certain indicator of safe waters. Perhaps it simply serves as a reminder to avoid red tides and the potentially deadly effects caused by harmful algal bloom. One cannot predict when red tide will occur, so it’s wise to be aware of red tide postings and harvest clams responsibly. Science and old wives’ tales aside, we nurture high hopes for fair weather digs on crisp, clear, cold nights. These are the nights that even Dad will comment on the beauty and clarity of incandescent moonlight, the brightness of stars, and the oddness of low tide sea creatures. More often than not, the hoped-for optimal weather conditions give way to the reality of fall/winter southeast gale, but even those treks to the tideline are memorable.

Our preparation for the dig is both planned and simple. The most elaborate step in the process is tide book analysis, which usually begins in the New Year with the arrival of tide books. Lowest tides are marked with highlighter pen and returned to in the fall after summer travels and general acceptance of the onset of rugged, generally crummy autumn weather. The focal point of tide book examination is to make note of area minus tides. From there, much discussion ensues. Once a tide is decided upon with an eye on the weather posted by NOAA, the collection of necessary gear is both quick and easy. Xtra Tuffs are placed by heater along with a small mountain pile of layered fleece items, Grundens rain jacket and fine, warm hat. A current fishing license is also essential. The tools of the trade are stacked in the garage; ready to go on a moment’s notice: shovel, bucket, lantern, and headlamps with working batteries.

When the tide is right, our expedition to the tideline begins. Our shovels double as smooth-handled walking sticks, their heads clang against the rock of the beach. We follow the shadow of bumpy, raised trail of sea-tossed gravel and barnacle that is exposed only during low tide and by the glow of headlamps in the dark night. Encased in gathered rain gear and brown rubber boots, we trek to the clamming grounds. Sometimes it is under dark, bright skies and mountain silhouette; more often it is to the howl of wind and rain splatter, the forward dance and retreat of scurrying squalls. This is the weather that is enough to keep even most locals indoors on such nights, but when a minus tide calls, we hear and act upon the song of the clam.

When I was a little girl, Dad used to take me hunting in the woods for antique bottles. Eyes wide open, we’d seek the hazy, brilliant shades of glass. Found bottles washed became treasured sun catchers on windowsills in rainy regions. This practice lent itself well to beach combing and clam digging. While the sought object of the latter, the clam, is not nearly as colorful as worn glass embedded in forest floor, we are delighted when a hole reveals plentiful harvest. Our excavation through heavy rock, smaller rock, and gravel to the eventual mud layered below leads to clams. Plucked from the walls of holes we dig, they appear three-quarter moon faces in the bottom of our bucket. Wading into the dark, black sea to rinse our haul, the tide turns. It is an honor to find the occasional Grandfather Clam, a term we coined to identify the largest of the yield. It is this shelled beast that I always remove from the bucket to return carefully to the sea in a silent offering of gratitude for harvest, for the chowder that is to come; for the time spent with my dad and now even my own daughter Rie, who first joined us in clamming when just five weeks old.

Rie’s experience clamming has not only involved treks to the beach with her mom and grandfather, but has also become fodder for her favorite bedtime story, Clamicorn. This invented character is half clam, half...
unicorn. Think clam with a horn protruding from its shell. It does not have legs or mane or tale, it simply has a horn, a sparkly, glittery horn of every color imaginable. He swims regional waters and has followed Rie to Prince Rupert, to Skagway and back to Sitka on the Alaska Marine Highway. He is carried through the air by his magical raven friends. From the beach he watches Rie play in her tree fort, ride her bike and holler in the wind. The magic that Rie and I create for this invented creature is whimsical and in turn this whimsical creature is predominantly clam, testament to the legend and lore associated with the act of tradition.

Tradition is cyclical in nature. It is longstanding and continual, a dedication to belief, practice and even a bit of legend and lore. It is enjoyable and memorable. The gift is not only in the ritual, but in the time spent among generations to harvest and share a bit of food: spicy chowder and hot bread; and to create and share stories, too.

The full moon removed,
we dig clams in frozen night.
The world is in a shell.

Horizontal white lines -
fluttering folds in shell and
tight, pursed lips lock.

In laughter, we walk
Old Sitka beach, dogs and people, a clamming caravan.
Lineage

Oh Tree,
Mystical Sage,
Sacred Tree,
You are known by many names:

-Hungarian Világfa, Norse Yggdrasil, Hindu Ashvattha.

Timeless, you are ancient text without translation,
the tale told by the bard without written word,
by the storyteller to flame.

You are North, you are wild, you are the beat of raven’s wings.

As a little girl my daughter wrote mysterious runes on the
bark of the red maple in the front yard,
chattering as her sidewalk chalk unfolded one
colorfully
detailed
story
after
another.

To me you are the many Cedar, Spruce and Alder
that line the trail to Battery Point on Lynn Canal
and beg for tree hugging
and weave among totems in Sitka
whispering words to be shared;
these trails set ablaze by filtered sunlight.
and rainless joy.

In the wind your branches shake needles and leaves
to the hollow tune of a mournful buoy at sea.

Give the shaman her drum
Allow her safe passage between worlds
and home again.

-Világfa, Yggdrasil, Ashvattha
Cedar, Spruce and Alder.

Kersten Christianson
Sitka
Hope, Renewal and Herring

The first full day of Ostara
and in Eliason Harbor
even the gulls glitter like the crests of waves in open sea,
catching the sun’s beams under indigo blue skies.
Today the water is glass;
the seiners are packed three deep and
tenders pockmark the harbor’s open spaces.
   Tightly packed buoys on their bows,
      brilliant shades of orange,
      like an unexpected crop of later winter salmonberries,
      a feast for a giant, imaginary raven king.
Crew members walk the narrow expanse of Katlian Street,
sporting faded sweatshirts advertising drink and livelihood,
dressed in woolen caps and fleece Grundens.
They await the news of the day, collected
via spotter plane and test samples.
Ostara proffers the herring
and a returned busyness to the harbor
that has endured long winter stillness.
Karissa Sleppy  
*UAS Student, Juneau*

**Kilns, America, and Clay:**  
**An Interview with Jeremy Kane**

*Art has always fascinated me, although I have a better chance at communicating through writing than drawing or creating a coffee mug. My sister once made me a bowl in her high school art class: that is the closest I have come to creating ceramics. I was excited when Jeremy Kane, a very accomplished ceramicist, was chosen as the featured artist because I was able to pick his brain. From his artistic beginning in Ohio to a long tenure teaching at UAS, to the ample shows and exhibits he has staged, Jeremy has had his share of the ups and downs involved with being an artist. I discussed with Jeremy, known by many as Jr., his passion for ceramics and how he interprets art.*

**How did you become interested in art?**

I first became interested in art through the Springfield Art Center. When I was about ten years old, I started making pottery and painting. I took a lot of classes there, and was admitted into adult classes from time to time.

**Can you talk about your process of creating a piece, from inception to completion?**

A lot of my work is intuitive but in the beginning stages I have to establish what form I’m going to work with. I try to reference Chinese and Japanese ceramics as much as possible. I like their surfaces as well as their forms. Once the form is established I decide what kiln it deserves. Most of my “Americana” work is fired in a gas reduction kiln. After that process I begin to work intuitively with decals and luster. Most of my forms are very iconic and common to the viewer. Larger vessels are mainly “ginger jars” and smaller pots are “diner mugs” and “rice bowls.” These forms act as a canvas to house my specifically American imagery.

**Can you describe how Chinese and Japanese ceramic surfaces and forms differ from others?**

Most of the references that I borrow from Chinese ceramics are from their beautiful porcelain forms with celadon glazes. The rich blue/green glaze looks like water on porcelain – it’s a great traditional surface for non-traditional images. The Japanese reference that I have utilized over the years is the special emphasis on function and celebratory acts that some Japanese cultures engage in every day. Although the tea ceremony is quite different than my coffee drinking, it offers many attributes to my ideas of celebrating and shares a high level of importance, as does coffee for American culture.

**Your work contains pottery pieces (cups, bowls, etc.) that are useful in everyday life. Can you describe your attraction to functional ceramics?**

Functional ceramics places more emphasis on daily activities and celebrations. What is better than that? Making an event such as eating or drinking a celebration allows us to enjoy the true fruits of life. Using handmade objects by all my artist friends gives me a chance to highlight our relationships and feel their presence.

**What inspires your ceramics?**

Growing up in Ohio inspires most of my ceramic surfaces. Old cars, bumper stickers, antiques and American history are my main sources of inspiration.

In 2009, you had a solo art exhibit at the Alaska State Museum. The pictures I’ve seen are amazing, with the truck mural and your artwork displayed as part of the grill. Can you describe what is involved with putting on an art exhibit like that?

First you must have enough high quality photos of your artwork to be chosen for the show. Once the jury selected me, I had to start a body of work that is conducive to that gallery. I usually start with “how the show should feel” when the viewer walks in. In 2009 I decided to black out the gallery and use one single “fat white glaze” for contrast. With all
the color from the images I thought it would really “pop.”

**Do you take photos of your art or do you work with someone to do this? Is there a special art in taking the pictures, figuring out angles and such?**

I take all of my own pictures of my work because there is a certain aesthetic to taking good pictures of three-dimensional artwork. I like to have a strong fade from white to black behind the piece. I also like to get close to the work and shoot at an upward angle to make the piece feel substantial, rather than looking downward at it making it feel more scientific. I use a tungsten light and a piece of light grey plastic that curves up the wall to place the piece on while shooting. The process has gotten much easier since I’m no longer shooting with slide film.

**Have you ever worked with other mediums? What is it about clay that attracts you?**

I have worked with other mediums but I’m a clay guy at heart. I love seeing the process from start to finish, the gamble of each piece, and the anticipation of the firing process. I also love giving my piece to someone and making them smile when they look at it.

**What is involved in the firing process?**

The main firing process I choose for my work is called gas reduction firing. I use high temperature clay such as stoneware and porcelain. The difference between the two is that porcelain has had most of its iron extracted from it, producing a pure white surface. It takes ten hours or less to fire the work and about another ten or more to cool it.

**Eight years at UAS means you have lots of teaching experience. Can you share how being an art professor lent itself to your personal creative process?**

For eight years at UAS I have learned many things from my own mistakes as well as hundreds of student mistakes. When you create something in ceramics, most of the time you learn something new from that process. In my case, being a professor allows me to continuously take risks with the material. My students are always teaching me new things. Each time I fire a kiln I get my hands on everyone’s work. I fire over twenty kilns a year with many varieties of students and pots. There is always something to learn from each piece: often a glaze combination, sometimes good and sometimes bad. I also learn from what my students think is cool. It’s nice to watch what pots they are attracted to and which ones they despise. It may help my own work from time to time.

**Do you have any upcoming shows?**

I am working on invitational shows all year. I just sent work out to a gallery in Kansas City as well as a gallery in North Carolina. In March I will exhibit my work at the national clay conference in Texas. I have no lack of shows, but soon I am looking forward to another solo exhibition, which takes a great deal of time.

**So how do invitational shows work?**

Invitational shows are all very different. Many of mine are often held at Universities where my colleagues teach and their students become interested in my work. Another common way is a direct invite from galleries that have seen or heard about my work. I also apply to a bunch of shows that are related to my area of interest. Finally, I have many friends and colleagues that are involved with clay all over the country. Most of us have been in the business for a couple of decades which allows for a lot of opportunity to share experiences with many different artists and their affiliates.

**What words of wisdom can you share with aspiring artists?**

Take good quality pictures of your work and establish a rigid work ethic.

**Is there one event you can pinpoint that confirmed your success as an artist?**

I’m hoping that comes someday. What is success? I suppose I only get a chance by continuing to make my art better and better.
Lamb Juice Couscous

First Friday in Fes, first taste of tradition. We gather at our too-low table, the same height as our seats. My Moroccan Mama carries the giant tagine-shape meal and I put out plastic patio chairs for extra bodies. As-Salaam-Alaikum to the newcomers, time to eat the communal dish, tradition. Fluffy pops of grain topped with sugared carrots and glazed raisins, the good kind of mushy. Butter-laced and saffron-bright, floating scents of cumin, chickpeas, and something unfamiliar. I watch Grandmother show Abdallah how to scoop the grains into his hands properly; his three-year-old smile never strays. Everyone has taken their first bite and their eyes weigh on my hand as I attempt my first scoop: my cheating thumb holds a few grains in place, the couscous sways with my taste buds. Further, deeper into the grain-pile, my stomach turns a bit. I brush some couscous with my almost-perfected scooper hand – brownish-grey chunks of meat interrupt my perfect grainy meal. Gleamy lamb peers through couscous, my vegetarian stomach turns again. Realization of the meal’s preparation: couscous cooked in lamb juice. I barely find that porcelain hole in the ground to empty my stomach.

Every time my stomach acts up Mama swears by Allah that a spoonful of cumin powder works as medicine to contain my persistent, internal storm. Dry cumin clings to the roof of my mouth, my cheek-walls, under-tongue. Water rushes down my throat taking the powder with it; my body rejects the medicine, purging pasty puke. But I gulp more water, swish it around in my mouth, and again, swallow. Each time the cumin is forced into my mouth is worse than the time before. Five weeks remain full of bread-wheels, imported wine, non-Jiff peanut butter, chips called Cracks. I stay away from couscous. Cumin-spoons become a staple in my diet In-Sha-Allah not for much longer. Every Friday, I avoid Mama and Abdallah and Grandmother and the couscous on every corner. My uneasy traveler’s stomach reminds me I’m a foreigner.
Border Dance

And when we kiss it’s silence in strobe lights,
weirdly familiar, yet heavy lips,
almost refreshing, close to perfect.

We move our bodies—foreign to each other,
tangle our limbs, and spicy sensations,
salsa the night away, stranger-love forms.

And when our hips warm from our dance,
want more, we grasp emotions,
lose ourselves in sound, discover cognates.

We forget words—fall into patterns,
naturally magnetic, our uncontrollable stimulations,
lips speak in tongues, border-crossing brilliance.

And the music makes love on castle steps,
new cravings, your take me.
eyes whisper,
I listen.
My Hands

(for Dick)

These hands
are all that I have left
of them:
my father’s
my uncles’
and all their siblings,
my grandfathers’.
When I’m working
I see them
in my hands.
When I’m writing
I see them.
Everything I do
is by them,
even when I reach
for your face.
Finding Frank Italio

(In memory of Frank Italio, my grandfather)

How wonderful for you
to leave these Raven stories,
for me to find this tapeful
and get to know you,
many years away,
many miles away,
many stories away.
Getting to know you
is incredible.
Heights of sky might hypnotize
but cast in corners of the mind
are specters of Icarus’ demise.

Tissue paper easily torn,
or an ethereal butterfly wing
is the fragility of a dream.

Blueprints etched upon eyelids
from industrious nights are overlaid
on the unclaimed horizon.

December winds push against
an idea that brought the end
to the lives of many men.

This mechanical contraption
of meticulously designed imaginings.
has taken form into featherless wings.

Awakened engine spins clock hands round,
undecided if they’ll carry
this weighted reverie.

So two brothers flip a coin
to see who’ll be rooted,
who’ll lie down and take wing.

To tread on God’s domain,
to realize their dream
at Kitty Hawk.
Casey Newman

UAS Student, Juneau

Casey Newman was working on this essay for my nature writing class when he and his brother were tragically taken from us in a boating accident this fall. A double major in English and biology, Casey was excelling in the 300-level writing workshop. His peers knew they could count on him to offer both theoretically sophisticated and scientifically accurate feedback on their work. In this essay he not only captures the essence of a place that meant a lot to him, but he attends to the ethical implications of living in close proximity to wild animals, too. The UAS community and I will remember him for precisely this type of expansive but careful thinking. He was a positive presence in the classroom, and, simply, a great guy to have around. While I am sad that he wasn’t able to revise this essay further, I still cannot read it without imagining the smile and hearty laugh that emerged from behind his big red beard.

Kevin Maier
Assistant Professor of English

A Smell is Implied

This recollection should begin at a home. We gather our fishing gear, strewn about the cabin as well as a few beers, for traditions sake I suppose, and load the 4-wheeler. We travel on gravel roads through the Village, past homes that outwardly look identical to our own. We then pass the rectangular Lil’ Japan, and roar between Executive Row and a small meadow which is cut once or twice a year to reveal a mini-golf course. One spruce tree stands in this field but all others are repressed yearly by children. After this the road opens up, along with the canopy to reveal the local airfield, which cannot legally be called an airfield, but functions as one all the same.

I bring my left arm into my stomach and we turn up the dimpled road to Neva Lake. The canopy closes again and we are screened from the interior of the forest by alders, blueberry bushes, devils club, skunk cabbage and other edge plants well-adapted to human perturbances. One last crossroads in the trees before we can open up the 4-wheeler safely, or at least considerately. At the first corner we meet up with South Creek which borders the road on the southern edge for the majority of the ride. The merge of South Creek and the road breaks up the dense forest canopy and more light filtrates through while the noise of the creek rises to drown out our transgress. While the noise we make is muted thanks to the roar of the creek, everything but the creek is hidden from our ears.

We slow down when we come to a wooden bridge with a small faded sign that reads “CROSS AT YOUR OWN RISK” or some such thing. Twenty yards beyond this we turn right, then right once more off the road to the lake and came to a stop. Two pillars of stone and mortar stand about nine feet tall fifteen to twenty feet apart, recessed into the forest; from the road they were nearly invisible for the trunks of spruce trees. The first thing I do is to load my handgun and place it at my hip. My co-worker carries his handgun as well, though his is usually tucked in his bag.

Anyway I grab my nets, my co-worker his gaff and we start down the small, winding trail. The trail we walk is seldom used (as of 2003 only three families had registered subsistence catch here) but always muddy, still bearing the imprints of our xtra-tuffs from days before. Occasionally we notice a dog’s paw in the mud or
a print of the flimsy boots the cannery sells to its workers. The cannery’s legal rights extended past the towns well into the woods, so much so that it was hard to know when one wasn’t on cannery property. The rights to the area are still contested though, specifically the Village in which the state has rented a cabin for my co-worker and myself.

Prior to WWII the Village was a summer fishing camp for the large Chum run up Sawmill and North Creek, as well as the incidental Sockeye run up South Creek, to Neva Creek and finally the eponymous lake. During WWII Excursion Inlet was a planned supply port for an invasion that never occurred. This involved the damming and obstruction of North Creek, which was destroyed within the decade. Nevertheless damage has been done and, whether this is causative or not, the Chum run is now vastly diminished. The Tlingit residents diminished as well, only one man from Angoon remains in the Village, he has talked of other times, times of his youth before we, well arrived in memory I guess.

Excuse me, back to the trail. We walk over exposed roots in our boots and nothing makes me feel clumsier. On this trail that leads to the primary, or only, fishing hole of Neva Creek, these roots are our only struggle. There is no satisfaction of pushing through trim, through alder, and red elderberry to reach the old parts of the forest where the canopy is fuller. No matter. By the time we reach Neva Creek the noise of South Creek is lost amongst the spruce and blueberry bushes. The constant din the cannery exudes makes this place seem absurdly quiet.

The pool where we fish is obstructed from our view as we approach a massive spruce. As we round the spruce, the pool comes into view – nestled between a steep embankment that parallels the creek all the way down to the confluence with South Creek, and a silty beach. The pool seemed to be formed from a myriad of fallen spruce trees above and below the pool. One large spruce is straddled between the river banks, suspended a few feet above the water. This spruce rests on the upheaved root system of another massive spruce that fell nearly perpendicular to the first spruce. The pool is clear and relatively deep for the shallow Neva Creek. No bushes or treetops cover the river, save for the isolated individual. The open canopy lets in light which reflects white into my eyes as I gaze down at the pool.

When we arrive Sockeye and Pink salmon are split between hiding under the log that crosses over the pool and circling in the middle of the pool. They swim out into the middle as we come into view and circle in a seemingly endless fashion, starting in bursts occasionally. For these salmon there was nothing left but this, the river and the hereditarily instinctual drive towards a common goal. It’s odd to think of salmon in generations, next year I’ll see the offspring of Pink salmon that past me last year, four years from now I may see the offspring of Sockeye that were too quick or witty for my net. There is no ethic in this itself, these offspring would be just as likely to be swept up in a net or speared or gaffed.

The first time we encountered the juvenile there were no fish in the pool. We looked for a while, probably an hour or more, our necks craned and heads to task. After two hours my co-worker gaffs a fish in the belly, not very clean work, his gaff. Yet for it’s all its ugliness it can be quite an effective and efficient method, often you can strike the heart if you have steady hands. Vexed by the low water, for it had not rained in several days, and apparently missing salmon (salmon only for trout seem never to be absent from this pool which is absent-mindedly filled with skeletal discards and other treats). We head down to a shallow seemingly ancient fish-ladder. The trail down is overgrown and difficult for my clumsy body, but the trip itself was fortuitous for within the hour we had captured and killed three more Sockeye.

We reach the trail out and keep walking the 20 ft. to the pool. It is not until we have taken a few steps past the large spruce that obscures the view of the pool from those on the trail, that I notice the juvenile sitting on the trunk lying across the pool. Much like ourselves when we were in his position, he was intent upon the residents of the pool. The bear regards us from a distance that seems greater than physical proximity. The bear then starts a little as we move, my co-worker searching for his pistol as I draw my own, keeping the barrel parallel to my leg. The bear shambles across the log to a comfortable position on the perpendicular log and then turns, sits, regards us coolly and begins to scratch itself. The pool didn’t fade out or close in but became the background for a tension between the anxiety of the
bear and our own anxiety. This occurred when the juvenile instantly changed posture to one that was no longer dismissive but intent, alert and wholly directed at us.

We stood in silence, arms by our side, watching. I can’t say if the bear glared at us, my attention was on the juvenile’s front paws, limbs and shoulders which had gone rigid and had angled inwards towards each other. Under the juvenile’s shaggy brown coat a vast array of muscles lay tensed in anticipation. We decided that the juvenile’s actions constituted a legitimate excuse to leave the area, as well as the salmon residing therein. We backed away from the fishing hole, slowly at first, several steps at a time. We backed up chattering incessantly (which is relative if you’ve spent a lot of time in cabins) until we reached the fork in the trail. Only then did we turn our gaze from the pool, from all those dwelling within. As we walked back to the 4-wheeler South Creek made its presence felt in the escalating cry of rushing water over uneven stones.

My chatter increased to fill a void that had arisen. The bear itself had done nothing to create this void, except in the register of shock. In our mutual surprise we shared a common urgency with this juvenile, a common unease. It was with this unease that I would continue to return to the pool (I couldn’t say that the juvenile ever again regarded the pool or us in anxious anticipation, for if the bear contained unease in our successive encounters, it never again displayed it). Was this the unease of propriety; had two competitors per-chanced upon the same resource ensuring a connection conditioned by war? If it was then we must be the first to concede; for the fish there was left only the river, for the bear there was the river, the valley, the ocean and mobility, but for us we could wait, the state fed us well.
The story begins when the seat of my pants rips. They do so when I bend to lift my pack as the Alaska ferry from Juneau pulls into the dock at Tenakee Springs, a village of about a hundred people on Chichigof Island which lies in the southeastern Alaskan panhandle that blocks portions of Canada from the Pacific Ocean.

Since the ferry arrives after midnight I plan to overnight in a rental cabin, then arise early to hike to my own cabin three miles east of town. Rising early will allow me to ford Indian River at low tide. At high tides the waters of Tenakee Inlet deepen the river near its mouth and rule out fording.

Fording the river is not the only way to reach the other side. Less than a quarter of a mile upstream is a fine bridge, but this is early September and hordes of incoming pink salmon attract every enterprising brown bear within sniffing distance to the stretch of trail near the bridge.

When it comes to brown bears, I admit to considerable caution. Cowardice, my less tactful friends call it. Fording the river near its mouth improves my odds of not meeting a bear.

Shortly after 5AM, scolding crows on the roof wake me. Sitting on my bunk, I examine my pants. The rip runs eight inches along the seam. So what, I think, I can unpack my other pants after my bath. I pull on the ripped pants, slip into a wool shirt and my boots and walk the hundred feet or so to the town’s namesake natural hot springs.

Hot water in the small, concrete encased pool sparkles as morning light streams through a skylight. I soak until my skin pinkens and my muscles dissolve. After toweling dry, I stuff my underwear and socks into my boots and walk barefooted, boots in hand, back to the cabin. A cool following breeze reminds me of my ripped pants.

Up I walk to the cabin door and try the knob. Nothing. The damn thing is locked. I stare at the knob, vaguely visualizing a key on the table inside. The general store which handles groceries, fuels, floatplane reservations, hardware and rental cabins certainly has a duplicate key, but they won’t open for three hours. Waiting will cause me to miss low tide. Surely a window is unlocked.

The windows of the cabin face the trail, but because the cabin perches on pilings, the lower windowsills are almost eight feet above the ground. I find a long stick in the tidal debris and push the top of the window upward. But it won’t stay up. I find a short stick to wedge between the sill and the upraised window. I allow myself a smug grin.

Another brief search turns up an abandoned shipping pallet, and I lean it against the piling under the window. My make-shift ladder teeters dangerously as I balance on the top plank. I crouch slightly and propel my head and shoulders through the opening. My elbow, however, dislodges the propped stick and the window crashes down on my back. I kick and wiggle, but I am stuck.

As I hang there contemplating escape, the morning breeze curls through the rip, reminding me of both the rip and my lack of underpants. A flush of embarrassment warms my face. Surely I can free myself before I moon the whole town. I brace my feet against the wall and try to push the window up with my back. This extends the rip.

Then, I hear footsteps.

“Good morning,” a voice below me says.

“Who’s there?” I yell.

“Does it matter?” the voice continues.

“Help me out of this window,” I say.

“I can’t reach it,” the voice says calmly, “I’ll have to go inside to open it.”

“You can’t go in for pity’s sake,” I gasp. “What do you think I’m trying to do?”

“I planned to ask,” the voice says.

“Push the window up with that long stick on the ground and give me a boost.” I hate the pleading in my voice, but how wonderful to feel the pressure of the window lift. A strong hand pushes against my bare foot, and I tumble over a table and onto the cabin floor. There’s a loud rap of knuckles on the door. Everything all of a sudden seems hilarious. “Who’s there?” I call out.

“The Village Public Safety Officer,” deadpans the voice.
His tone takes the edge off my hilarity. “Yeah, just a second,” I call out. “Let me slip on another pair of pants.”

“Thanks a hell of a lot,” I chuckle as I open the door. “I was in a hell of a bind, literally.” I think for a moment the man smiles, but decide it’s a hasty conclusion.

“Glad to help,” he says evenly. “Want to tell me what was going on?”

As I tell my tale, I try not to laugh. His stony stare helps. My mind plays with the notion that this man, whom I know to be new at his job as Alaska’s answer to small town law enforcement is simply acting. I conjure up visions of him telling the story at the tavern. But if he’s kidding, he’s good at it.

“I don’t want to give you a hard time,” the officer says, “but I’ve been told to keep a tight line on you Juneau people who come over here to raise hell.”

“Getting locked out of your cabin isn’t exactly raising hell.”

“Showing your ass is something I plan to discourage,” he says without a smile.

For several minutes after he leaves I simply sit chuckling. But time ticks away and low tide won’t wait. I load up and leave the cabin.

The town still sleeps as I walk east along the trail to the boat harbor and onto the beach. The sun burns through a light morning fog and the receding tide exposes an assortment of little beach critters that pop, gurgle and squirt. Gulls complain along the water line and an eagle watches warily from a barnacle-encrusted boulder. Yes sir, life lies pleasantly on my shoulders as I approach Indian River.

In spite of the pleasantry I have not forgotten my plan to avoid bears. But it’s easy to feel safe because the intertidal area is free of anything large enough to conceal even a small dog. The land, contoured as it is by the sea and the river, is not flat, however, and if I don’t know a major river lies ahead of me, I might not guess it. Anyway, here I go, my mind in neutral, approaching a river which has nestled into its bed below my line of sight.

The brown bear fishes in the river as oblivious to me as I am to him. Then, he explodes from the river a scant hundred feet in front of me. Fortunately he races away from me. As he runs, halos of glistening rainbows pulse from his fur with each lope. He runs a hundred yards and stops. I see the vapor of his breath as he eyes me over his shoulder. After a few moments he flops down on his hindside in what appears to be a comfortable position.

To reach my cabin I can abort my plan and hike the trail rather than the beach. That avoids this bear, but his friends and relatives will be fishing upstream. I can at least see this one, and, propped on his furry bottom, he looks more comical than dangerous. I decide to cross the river, then walk a wide, wide circle around the bear.

At its edge I realize the river flows at least a foot higher than anticipated. It appears almost waist deep. I check my watch. Yes, low tide had passed. The water will only deepen.

I pull off my boots and shove my wool socks securely down into the toe. I stuff them as far as they will go in my pack. I tie the legs of my pants together and sling them over my neck. After assuring myself the bear hasn’t moved, I step into the icy water. My feet and legs numb immediately, and my genitals quickly thereafter. I pick my way across, wincing as I step on sharp rocks. I try not to fall while keeping an eye on the bear. Maybe his continuing docile look is my final undoing. Upon reaching the bear side of the river, I drop my pants and pack on the ground and massage my feet. Yes, I take my eyes off the bear.

When I do look, he is lumbering toward me. Without much thought I roll into the river and race through it. This time the water isn’t cold, and the rocks aren’t sharp. I sprint across the beach away from the river. At the outer fringe of my lung capacity I chance a look over my shoulder. The bear has stopped and is pawing my stuff. There’s little to do but watch the returning tide edge slowly toward my gear and the bear. He shows no interest in leaving as the tide continues to return, the river continues to rise, and I continue to shiver. Finally, as water laps over my pack and clothes, the bear moves back only slightly before flopping down again. Rescuing my gear is now out of the question. So, clad only in my wool shirt and cap, I turn toward town to take my chances with the Village Public Safety Officer.
The Last Ivory-Billed Woodpecker

Hopefully, I didn’t kill the last ivory-billed woodpecker in Georgia, but I still worry about a bird I shot.

In the winter of 1956 I am sixteen and living in Wadley, a small town where the Central of Georgia rail line between Atlanta and Savannah crosses US Highway No. 1. At sixteen a car is awfully important to me, but since Dad is a traveling salesman, I seldom have access to ours. This week, however, Dad has taken the train to Savannah for a training conference, and our 1954 Ford sedan is mine for the beter part of two days. For the occasion I have decided on an overnight hunting trip. Having the car at my command and walking around in the woods with a gun will make me feel manly.

Early on this winter morning I park and lock the car near a railroad crossing between Wadley and Midville. From there I know a way into the Ogeechee River swamp where Dad and I have hunted squirrel and an abandoned shack where I can spend the night. I hoist a small pack frame, shoulder my 20 gauge single-shot shotgun and strike out toward the river. In my pack are a can of pork and beans, some dry cereal and powdered milk, three pimento-cheese-on-white-bread sandwiches, and a canteen of water. Two tightly rolled army-surplus wool blankets nestle snugly against the pack frame. I am to be my own man for the next thirty or so hours.

A shallow-rutted sandy road snakes through shrub oak toward the river bottoms. Last year when a high school buddy and my younger brother Lane hunted this area we walked this road, and when we returned a couple of hours later, we spotted large cat tracks in the sandy road. We finally noticed some tracks blotted out Lane’s, thus indicating the cat—a panther in our minds—had been stalking us. Our imaginations soared and the memory alone sends a shiver up my spine. I let my gaze sweep the area and chide myself for childish fear. Still, I slide into the chamber a shell with a slug rather than the squirrel-shot I plan to use to gather supper.

Before long the sandy road changes to a muddy one under a mix of oaks, poplars and black gums. Reaching the shack, I leave behind everything except two sandwiches and my canteen. Soon the woods deepen. Although still morning, it’s dusk-dark under the trees. I walk until I find a squirrely-looking spot and a proper stump for sitting. It never ceases to amaze me how quickly silence falls over the forest when you stop and then how sounds fill the void within a few moments. I listen to the rat-a-tat of a woodpecker and then to the cry of what I suspect is a flicker. Around my home in town, flickers and red-headed woodpeckers abound in addition to blue jays, cardinals, brown thrashers and mockingbirds. The mournful call of a dove reminds me how a schoolmate almost convinced me the sound was ghosts leaving their graves.

While listening for the chattering bark of a gray squirrel, I gaze into the treetops. A leaf high in one oak has resisted breaking away from its twig, and spins and flutters. I try not to react to the movement, but cannot override my squirrel-thinking brain. Again and again, the clinging twirling leaf draws my attention. Then something rustles in dry leaves to my right, and I pivot to get a better view. The sound seems too loud to be only a squirrel, but I’m aware how noises in an otherwise silent forest trick you. The rustle comes closer. I take off the safety and with my right thumb pull back the hammer. But the culprit is only a catbird scratching in the leaves. I thumb the hammer back into its safer position and reengage the safety. I exchange the slug for a shell with squirrel-shot.

A little later, I hear a different sound. It’s no louder than the catbird, but has a rhythm; hop-hop-hop, hop-hop-hop. Then I see the squirrel. He comes toward me, then up a small tree and out on a limb. He chatters loudly and his tail flicks furiously. I raise the gun, fix the bead on the animal and squeeze the trigger. The explosion rings in my ears, but I hear the thump of the squirrel on the ground. I slip another shell into the chamber and approach my quarry. I place the motionless carcass in the outer pocket of my pack and move on.

During the afternoon I shoot one more squirrel while “still hunting” and two others I spook from hiding by shaking thick vines extending into higher branches of trees. Four squirrels are more than I can eat tonight, but I continue to hunt. By now I have entered wetter portions of the swamp, and have to step around large cypress trees and their protruding knees (specialized roots that stand above the water level, allowing the roots to “breathe.”). By now it’s time to head back to the shack. I want to build a fire in the fireplace before it gets too
dark. All I have for light is a small flashlight and a nub of candle. I hear a bam-bam on a hollow tree and a loud, clear call; glint, glint. I walk along, my gun still loaded and my gaze still sweeping the treetops. All of a sudden I see something flying low toward me. It flies like a duck, and I raise the gun and fire. The bird crumples. But when I reach the spot he dropped, I find not a duck, but a woodpecker, a much bigger woodpecker than I have seen before, a woodpecker with a red crest and white markings. My heart sinks.

During my boyhood I have spent hours leafing through The Birds of America by John James Audubon. I have returned many times to plates of birds I could identify and have wistfully looked at plates of birds I hoped to see. I have kept tallies of birds seen.

Now, I inspect this woodpecker lying at my feet. I remember two big woodpeckers in the Audubon book and one of them was the thought-to-be-extinct ivory-billed woodpecker. I look around me as if I expect someone might be watching. Once I killed a bluebird with my bb gun and asked my hunting buddy to slap me. He did with more relish than I asked for, but I felt I deserved it. Bluebirds were not for shooting. Now I may have done something much worse. I drop the carcass under a bush and scrape leaves over it.

I trudge back to the shack in a gathering gloom. I start a fire and while the coals form I clean the squirrels. A skinned squirrel looks a whole lot like a skinned rat, but I have cooked squirrels before and am mentally prepared. Soon after eating two of the squirrels and a can of pork and beans I crawl under my blankets. But sleep doesn’t come easy. My mind spins as I try to remember the markings of Audubon’s ivory-bill and the ivory-bill look-alike. I wish I had inspected the dead bird more carefully. I decide to return to the scene in the morning and inspect more closely.

Sometime during the night I wake with a start. The fire is out though I can see what I hope are a couple of glowing coals—not eyes. What woke me? I hear something on the roof. I grab my flashlight and try to convince myself the sound is my imagination. It’s not. There are clearly soft padded footfalls. I yell out, “who’s there?” The footfalls stop. The cabin is deadly quiet. I load the gun with a slug. Then, there’s a screech of claws sliding down the tin roof. Something thuds on the ground and bounds away. The room is again quiet except for my pounding heart. I need to urinate, but no way am I opening the door. I use the empty pork and beans can instead, but I’m shaking so much I can hardly hit the can.

It’s a long, long night as I alternate worrying about what’s out there in the dark and the dead woodpecker. I can’t even remember the color of the bird’s beak. What I remember most is the red top-notch and considerable white on black.

Morning eventually comes and I mix up some milk for my cereal. I’m tempted to simply go home. The woods now feel more threatening than inviting. I go outside and search for evidence of what slid down the roof last night. I carry the loaded shotgun with me in spite of venturing only a few feet from the shack. I find nothing. In the distance a woodpecker rat-a-tats. A breeze rattles dead branches. I repack everything and fling the two uneaten squirrels into the woods. With buckshot in my gun, I head off in the direction where I shot the bird.

The wind picks up and the sky darkens. Yesterday’s feelings of manhood and freedom have completely evaporated. I remember the story of Peter and the Wolf, and I can almost hear the Overture. The woods have turned ominous. I check my watch; it’s already ten o’clock. If I turn around I can be home in mid-afternoon. I eat the pimento cheese sandwich left over from yesterday.

Before long I reach the area where I think I shot the bird. Nothing looks familiar; everything looks familiar. I find my tracks occasionally in the soft mud so I know I came this way. But I fail to find the bird. It’s after eleven thirty now, the sky is quite dark and in the distance I hear the rumble of thunder. My resolve to find the bird weakens, and I head for the car.

Back home I study the Audubon plates of the ivory-billed and the pileated woodpeckers. I review the field marks that would have allowed me to know for sure what I had shot. I remember lots of white, but don’t remember exactly where it was. I decide to return to the scene and examine the dead bird. But I never can bring myself to do it. In fact, I never hunt the Ogeechee River bottoms again. I try in vain to forget the bird.
Dave Kiffer

Ketchikan

WATCHING THE DEER

My father was born
With the great patience
To slide into the background
Where even the wet leaves
Held their limped, camouflaged
Insolvent wisps of breath.

He could do that for hours
Or so it seemed to my ten
Year old self, as I shivered
In the deadly woods. Only
When the deer had picked
its cautious way into range
Would his index finger spring
Over the trigger like some
Great predator swallowing
The light, and the deer
Would drop as if suddenly
Subject to all the gravity
In the known world.

There would
Be a prayer, of course, silent
as the knife drew the blood
And the entrails were pulled
Out and flung into the snow
That grew deeper near
The trees where we had
Hunched.

I can still taste
The last of a sodden lunch
Where the glass shined air
Hung between my teeth
And possibility sang on
In the last twitch of a tail
Black, in the fading sun.
Dave Kiffer

Ketchikan

PETERSBURG, 1974

And now a portion of him
Will always live there
In that sanctimonious
Square-headed little town
Where he could never
Get enough to drink
And now must spend
Eternity, with an unwatered
Gullet, parched, flat
As a Lutheran sermon
Or the seventh jello plate
At a potluck devoid
Of all hot dishes

He always tried to skip
This disheartened stop
On the spring king road
Where the women were
Shut to everything but cash,
Layered in tole paint
And crinkled dresses,
Wrapped in tight blonde
Hair buns balanced
Between sweet lefse
And bitter lutefisk,
Perfect from a distance
Yet glacial to the touch
Dave Kiffer
Ketchikan

A SIMPLE BEACH OF THE LAST FRONTIER

Everyone gets a close up,
A Warholian fifteen minutes,
Even this patch of wet granite
Licked clean by Southeast swells

In July of 1973, it was featured,
A coverbeach as pretty as real life
With just a few filters cutting haze
And an ever so slight fisheye effect

Four decades on, the beach has aged
The sweep of sand has sagged a bit
The treeline posture is less erect,
A photoshop botox south of perfect

On this day, the sun is not shining
As it did so starkly in that halcyon
Moment when National Geographic
Tabbed this beach all that, and more
I’d like to go by climbing a birch tree,
And climb black branches up a snow-white trunk
Toward heaven, till the tree could bear no more,
But dipped its top and set me down again.
That would be good both going and coming back.
One could do worse than be a swinger of birches.

“Birches” by Robert Frost

I watch the brushstrokes of my sister’s paintbrush as she turns a blank canvas into an acrylic photo of our backyard. It is fall, a short, hardly noticeable season in Southcentral Alaska that is only recognized through the brief colors that birch and other deciduous trees have to offer. My sister begins her painting with the dark browns of the forest floor that lurk beneath our small cedar home fifteen miles outside of town. It must be dusk in her imagination; the yellows and oranges of her painted background denote the glow of a September setting sun. The days are getting shorter and the leaves are beginning to fall. Bright, white light comes to the painting in the form of the bark of dozens of birch trees that stand around our home. These slender hardwoods seem to offer a natural barrier between the small dirt road and our front porch window. She paints them with certainty, never glancing outside to double check her memory. Details of the natural world outside our home are brought to focus with each new movement of the brush. I walk over to look out the window, skeptical of my own ability to remember what lies right outside my front door.

Green.

Summer is passing, although hardly noticeable due to the seemingly endless hours of Alaskan sunlight. Green continues to linger in the leaves of birch trees in Southcentral. The leaves have been preparing for the changes that accompany fall since they first sprouted. Their time is short. Unable to spend half a year on the branches before fall sweeps them to the forest floor, the leaves spend their time suspended above ground creating and storing the food that is necessary to keep the trees alive during the long winter. As they wait, the birches are boundless with bright green canopies. The sun attempts to shine through the spaces between the leaves as I stand beneath two trees and look up.

As children, my sister and I would run into the woods behind our home. We would follow a barely visible trail we had created back to a swing set my dad had built for us. Simple, it was just a two by four nailed between two trees with a single swing made with heavy rope and small board as a seat. From the swing our house was invisible, an escape from the rest of our family, the birches and black spruce that encompassed the woods behind our home became the protectors of our envisioned reality. Following her around as she looked for signs of animals or a good spot to build her newest fort I was mostly silent. Nervous, she would tell me to go away; I would simply watch as she showed me all of the new places I had not dared to explore on my own. Birch trees remind me of making new memories and growing with the trees during summer, forgetting that the green is only temporary and soon things will change. As fall gets near, the sun forces the leaves of the birch trees to pay tribute through color.

Yellow.

The sun serves as a natural timer for the birch trees. The birch’s preparations for winter appear when I reach up to the lowest branch of one right outside my front door and pull a leaf down. It is mostly green, however the serrated edges of the oval-shaped leaf have changed into a golden yellow. As the days fall quickly into night the trees no longer need their leaves to produce food. The trees will rely on what they have stored throughout the summer to keep them alive until spring. The leaves are no longer needed, a peripheral aes-
thetic that changes with the seasons. The loss of their green pigment reveals the impermanence of summer.

Standing on the riverbed I glanced over at the bank. Lining the rocky bed that boasted shades of grey were the vibrant yellow leaves of countless Birch trees. The cloudy sky turned the focus towards the colors of the surrounding deciduous forest. My friends, family, and soon to be brother-in-law eagerly awaited the arrival of my sister. Walking down the grey rocky riverbed she was beautiful. Her white dress glowed against the backdrop of crisp fall colors. My sister insisted the ceremony be outside. Fall was the perfect season for change, for starting new.

_White._

The leaves have fallen from the birch trees only to be covered with a blanket of white snow. Their white bark seems to serve as an extension for the ice and snow on the ground like winter’s hands reaching high up into the sky casting shadows on the colorless landscape. Without bark, the birch trees would not be able to survive the cold Alaskan winters. This white armor shields the trees and keeps them warm against the freezing temperatures. Void of life, their winter skin blends them into the blank canvas.

The birches’ task of protecting our small home has left with the daylight. Their slight white figures remind me of prison bars, keeping the warmth of the earlier months distant. I wander outside leaving the heat of the woodstove to surround my sister. She is curled up on the couch with a fuzzy blanket around her. I turn around and watch through the window as my brother-in-law brings her a hot cup of tea. Her pregnancy seems to only let me see her as delicate. For the first time she is in need of my care. I walk towards the forest and listen to the cold snow crunch and creak with each fresh step. The white bark of the birch trees lures me in, glowing like flashing beacons against the black sea of a winter night sky. I peel a piece of the bark back horizontally and tear the small piece away revealing the orange pink flesh underneath the pale white exterior. The lights of an unfamiliar car pull into the driveway. The midwife has arrived and I become nervous to go inside, preferring to stay put next to the seemingly unproductive forest where new life is planned alongside the seasons. Birch trees in the winter create hopeful reminders of all the new colors that will come with the warmth of spring sun.

_Blue._

With the blue sky comes the sounds of spring that awaken the birch trees from their long winter naps. As night slowly turns into day the new growth of fresh green buds on the birch trees appear. The trees need their leaves once again to help them harness energy from the sun. Preparation for winter is put off until summer. The endless blue sky brighten juxtaposes the birches’ green canopies.

My nephew’s eyes look like those mid spring days when the blue sky seems impenetrable. I chase him around our back yard. His toddler body is just small enough to fit perfectly behind a birch trunk without being noticed. We listen to the green leaves rustle in the light breeze. I pick him up and walk the two of us to the nearest tree. I show him the dark black scars that make their presence known against the white, flaky bark. I tell him these marks are the eyes of the forest, always watching the sun, waiting for spring to come. I ask my sister to help me set up the tent up against the forest behind our home. Tonight my nephew, sister and I camp beneath the birch trees. The sky is blue; there is no need for the rain fly. We lay down looking up through the mesh at the top of the tent. Green, yellow, white, blue. Blurred through the tight spaces of our netted filter, all the colors of the birch trees exist together in the spring. It is a short reunion as they wait for the sun and seasons to interrupt only to bring them back again.
Moving Forward

There’s a war going on outside and we’re trying to fight it, even though our culture’s divided, we live to revive it
Still here today thanks to the work of my ancestors, they passed down the role of protector, now here’s a message to all you defectors
Whatever happened to Native Pride, or being a part of your tribe, instead you’re throwing salt in the wounds of those who died
The villages have no place for religion, people embarking on a holy mission is what started racism and our people’s division
Despite the years that have passed, this holy war still rages on
If there is a god he’s already moved on and gone
To a better place, where people of any race can feel safe with no shame or disgrace
It’s hard to imagine but still I try, I’d flap my wings and fly so I could get there before I die
Devoting your life seems like such a waste, all that’s up there is time and space
The paradise I seek cannot be found in any sky or clouds, I’m native and belong to the few and the proud

The key to freedom, these shackles are open at last
We work towards the future while we live with the past
There are those who choose to walk with the lord
While they stand still I keep moving forward

You speak your mind while I sit and listen
Go ahead and keep your religion, I’ll take my native tradition
Any day of the week, I overcome social obstacles every time that I speak
I was quiet until I learned I do have a voice, now I’m a grown man and I have a choice
Living a lie until I opened my eyes now I can perceive, all it takes is false hope for you to believe
Broken dreams and unanswered prayers, seems that all you care is to see the pearly gates and stairs
While you continue to pray and speak to yourself, I’ll be in search of our native and cultural wealth
It’s all so simple but none of us will ever know, so until my time comes I’ll continue to learn and grow
Sprout from the ground into a tree of knowledge, study their books and get a degree from college
Someday I’ll be up in the booth, speaking out to the youth and be living proof
Advice up for grabs to those willing to take it, they say life’s a bitch but it’s whatever you make it

The key to freedom, these shackles are open at last
We work towards the future while we live with the past
There are those who choose to walk with the lord
While they stand still I keep moving forward

They say Raven is creator, but one day we’ll all meet our maker
Fungi Fingers
Richard Stokes, Juneau
Photography

Out on a Limb
Richard Stokes, Juneau
Photography
Gastineau Channel Sunrise
Richard Stokes, Juneau
Photography

Evergreen
Anna Cramer, Juneau
Photography
Tidal Echoes

Communion

“Wohwewewohwawawewewewoh!” A didgeridoo pounds waves of unearthly noises against our tents. I roll to my side and try to open my eyes long enough to peek at my phone to see what time it is. 4 A.M. Already. Shit.

“Wohwahwewohwahwe wawawa”

“Come on. Get up! Get up! We’ve got a dollar waiting on a dime!” yells Uncle Doug over the didgeridoo. Tents rustle as members of the One People Canoe Society, a canoe family made up of Southeast Alaskan Natives, struggle to get ready for another long day of paddling. We listlessly move in the moonlight. Silhouette zombies breaking down camp, hungry for more sleep. While the elders and leaders sit by the fire waiting for a nasty cup of camp coffee, they joke and laugh as if four hours of sleep was an acceptable number.

I’m still not sure how I ended up in this year’s Tribal Journey. My ancestry has never interested me much, neither my Alaskan Native side nor German side. My dad used to take my family to local Tlingit events and I hated going to them. We would sit on metal chairs, listening to stories and songs I didn’t like, watching dances that did not interest me and eating food I thought was gross. All I would want to do is leave so I could play my Nintendo 64 or go play in the woods behind my house. We stopped going when my dad moved out of the house.

I remember the trip like it was a dream. Emotionally I was sinking into a storm before the journey. I look at my wrist and see a wristband that says, “Paddle to Squaxin 2012” and think, “Thank God for wristbands.” The One People Canoe Society began the Journey in Lummi Nation which is a few miles west of Bellingham, Washington. Lummi Nation to Squaxin Island is roughly 300 miles by water when we take into account all of the islands we have to go around.

Standing knee deep in the ocean, there is no time to be sleep drunk. Our arms ache from carrying a canoe to the water. The air, slightly warmer than the water, is cold but we have become used to the chill. The sand and the ocean look like the same thing in the dark, except one shimmers; each of us look like the same person in the dark, except some bodies are different sizes.

The anticipation of getting into the canoe and begin paddling is unbearable. It is strange to me how afraid I was of the ocean before the Tribal Journey. Salt water smell churns my stomach. We still have two more of our canoes to bring down the beach. When we are finished we will most likely help other canoe families bring their canoes down the beach as well. The lazy sun was rising when we finally got into our canoes.

The skipper surveyed the canoe then smiled with satisfaction.

“Paddles at the ready!”

We clutch our cedar paddles and aim them towards the water.

“Pull!”

The rhythm of paddling, the rhythm of the drum beat, the rhythm of the waves, I was caught in the rhythm of another culture. It was a disciplined, hardworking, way of life that was filled with respect for the natural world. The days I spent in a canoe listening to and watching the ocean were medicine.

When the whole canoe was paddling to the same cadence, I would stare at the ocean and try to find a way to accurately describe it to someone who has never seen large bodies of water. It is, to say the least, a difficult task. There is a beauty in water that cannot be described accurately with words. We describe it with clichés and phrases – symbols to activate the image of water in our brain which give each individual a different emotional response. Our words cannot describe in wholeness what water is: what it looks, feels, smells, tastes and sounds like and what water means to every individual. How can
one describe the sound of the ocean? We often draw upon the ocean to describe sounds. We can say what elements make up water. We can describe, in part, what it means to us, but no one will ever be able to sit down with you and say, “listen, this is what water is,” and proceed to tell everything there is to know about water and what it means to everyone.

So let me describe to you the shadow of water.

The ocean doesn’t have a form; every bit of it is a different shape. Some parts look white where the sunlight reflects off of it and goes into my eyes. Other parts have different shades of green or blue. It is strange how we generalize the ocean, when each wave is so different. For a split second they choose a form but then they get bored and become another. In the sunshine, water sparkles like gemstones. Aqua-marine. Emerald. Light dances on waves. I feel like I am dancing on waves.

“Thump. Thump. Thump.” A proud young Haida in the front of the canoe bangs her drum and belts out “Ya ha hey Ya ha henisaw henisaw hey yaa hey henisaw henisaw ya ya.” Then all of us join in. The waves applaud.

It is even more difficult to describe the ocean from the perspective of a canoe floating on top of it filled with Alaskan Native songs celebrating the past: ancestors and the Old Ways, or from the perspective of a silent canoe listening to the salty, ever changing, formless glass splash against its side.

The sun has begun the second half of its trip. Uncle Doug creates a noise funnel with his hands over his mouth and yells “Come on, come on! We need more help over here!” paddlers from all over rush to the water to help pick up our canoe and move it to the top of the beach. “On three we lift. One! Two! Three!” We lift the canoe above our heads and march up the beach. Our muscles and our minds protest but our spirits cheer us on. We can do this. We can do this. Each step brings us closer to dinner.

Beyond culture and other manmade constructs lies something deeper, something ancient. Inside of us there is something that thirsts for the natural world. On the Tribal Journey my thirst was quenched by the universal aesthetics of the ocean when I floated on it and communed with it for weeks. It explained to me without words that it consumed parts of God’s body and drank his blood, but that God was okay with it. We sat together in the dark dusk sky. The ocean reflected less, but its sparkles were more pronounced. Together we prayed.
Eugene Solovyov  
*Sitka*

**Becoming**

The crocuses and the daffodils burst through the snow, although it was March, and the wind still felt arctic, but inside you something horrible stirred, and you did not notice the spring’s arrival.

While the sun crushed through the snowdrifts, and the returning hummingbirds searched for nectar, in our home, a war was raging, and you tried to rally against the invaders.

By the time the lilacs, the shameless hussies, troubled the air with fragrance and longing, you relied on chemotherapy and radiation and barely recognized your body.

I walked you outside to see the morning, where robins chirped and roses conspired to make you forget your room in the hospital, and the smell of drugs, disease, and sadness.

All the summer life, so busy and vibrant, I thought, it might invigorate and sustain you, strengthen your muscles, refresh your blood flow, give the appearance of health and happiness.

The dandelions’ riotous celebration hurt your senses, and the crows’ narcissistic self-indulgence, while you struggled with each laborious inhalation, hurting with every step, relief not coming.

You left me with the sunset one evening in July, slipping away into the late dusk of the northern forests. By that time, death was a release and a blessing, I said to myself in my newfound loneliness.

Now, perhaps you fly home with the hummingbirds, the lilacs no longer disturb your senses, the robins and the roses don’t bring sorrow, and you’re free of pain and memory.
Now, you’re in the wind, and you’re in the starlight.
In the approaching storm, I can hear you laughing.
In the shrill song of birds and the gentle summer breezes,
you’re also there, you’re becoming…

You’re everywhere the mist glistens,
all the oceans are filled with your shadow.
So, I won’t say goodbye or cry in sadness,
and I will hide the part of me that’s broken.

*I’m Gone*
Anna Cramer, Juneau
Photography
Madeline Handley
JDHS Student, Juneau

Wild Cucumber

delicate, beautiful, soft light green
sprung from the dark under the spruce,
leaves like upturned hands
dark shining berries hang under the leaves
under but not hidden
have a taste, it won’t hurt me
    I hold a secret
    I’ll tell you today
or maybe tomorrow
    listen.
Margo Waring

Juneau

Genesis

Was it like this
That seventh day?
Great flocks pointing north
Red and yellow twigs
Sprouting tiny leaves.
Mirrored hummingbirds
Facing blueberry flowers,
Eagles feeding chicks new salmon;
A scrubbed clean spring?

And what of other days?
Were they always spring
Until the gate closed
And we went stricken and dazed
Into the winter night.
Learning Cursive: Second Grade Penmanship Lesson

Even now, I could be
The only person who remembers
Picking up the cool steel nib
Placing it into the circular slot
Snugging it up to the etched line
Lifting the lid of the ink well
Smelling the licorice ink
Dipping the nib
Checking the film of ink
Filling the hole in the nib
Moving my hand carefully
From ink well to paper
Slanting the pen at the prescribed angle
Pressing the point against the white paper
Seeing the exact moment the ink bead begins
Listening to the sound of moving pen
Holding my breath
Watching the word form
Adjusting the pressure of hand on paper
Making each even stroke
Watching ink dry
Doing it again for the next word.
Tea ceremony of penmanship.
Jonas Lamb

Juneau

In the time before words

In the time before words
he brought his hand, fingers extended but
coming together, touching tips to thumb
then to his lips,
again and again

I twisted the lid from a new jar
pop, it went,
the smell of pureed peas spreading
across small space between us
at the kitchen table

his face, covered in yams,
spread into a bright smile,
one tooth in there,
then the fingertips again.

this time, both hands,
first coming together
in front of his chest,
three times touching
and then parting,
one hand trying to find
his stomach beneath the bib,
so that he might rub
a small circle on it, grateful,
eager to eat summer spooned
from a can

the both of us
smiling,
our light
the brightest thing
that dark fall morning.
Anything I can put ketchup on

To call them berries
really is blasphemy
too bitter without
help of cinnamon, cloves, molasses

these cranberries
hanging in frosted bunches
bagged to be boiled
milled and canned

this collecting,
this pushing through dense brush
down grown over logging roads,
this speaking of the words
hey
and
bear

this balancing act
of supermarket and
backyard
these berries
this ketchup
they became

this hunger
for anything I can put ketchup on
Bread Dough Memory

The feel, like flesh beneath my touch, is cool
to my digging, molding pressure, like skin,
almost like a person, stretched out thin
between the shoulder blades, my fingers, tools,
to push along the spine from neck to cruel,
perfect flare of hips lost and almost sin
to recall the feel, the sight, the smell when
lies lay traps, for such unsuspecting fools
like me that choose blindness and try to feel
not dough but warmth of lost love, smell perfume
not lover’s breath, garlic and pepper heat,
yeast rising up out from the truth of real
baked bread stuffed with desire and gloom
and made by me with lies, no hint of wheat.
Double Sestina: Elmer’s Glue Dragons

You don’t fuck with kids—that is my one true rule created through the experience of learning playground laws for the lawless little gunslingers, whose eyes, thirty pairs, stare and bore as they always do, begging for attention, but also judging your worth equal to a glass of apple juice, yet understanding who it is that holds them as they weep, eye watering from non-existent owies, to those deep, displeasing to voice and held in silence. But there is nothing, together we cannot conquer like a dragon for you to learn to ride even as I stand nearby reins held tight to guard my charges, who shape, as if whetstones, all

that I see and do more clearly than any and all other lessons life has given. A first job that created the barest level of who I am, who I’ve become, and holds on tight still years later. It’s the child care code, the laws burned into me at the day care where I learned that the pulsing glint behind my wretched boss’s eyes was really frustration and anger, melded together in a cacophony of insanity, frightening staff into begging for her removal, and kids into wondering how to please the demented woman or escape, far, far away from her—equal cries heard by our director, but as the frozen waters of a stream in the heart of winter, understanding, action, trickled. “We are singing and having fun, understand?” Don’t you dare let me catch you playing!” she would shriek, all reason long gone. And we prayed for the flood waters drive the trees and the muck and the filth into our home and create a new foundation on which love and sanity stood equal. When she snapped, on a four year old, and grabbed hold of the scruff of his neck, screaming in his face, I prayed. Please God, let it stop. Don’t make me, at fifteen, uphold the laws made to keep these children safe, and not make them beg for fairness and kindness. But no answer came and I learned that none would, unless I bring idealism and action together and it comes from me—So I stood and met the monsters’ eyes.
Exposed, I never thought that I was naïve—that my eyes had not seen all there is to see or that I understood less than I thought, but when I came together with a child, a friend, a charge, against authority, all that I knew was challenged. It was here that I learned about myself, that my convictions were not watery but concrete and while as I wished for and begged for those older and wiser to do their part I created a new path, forging on, alone, fighting for the safety and the lawful treatment of my charges. I came out and while unequal in authority I put my all into fighting, stopping those displeasing actions of my boss—a knight slaying a dragon in its hold without shield or armor, compared to reading a loosely held script without conviction or the weight of appraising eyes. I was fired that day and rehired the next. So pleased to have my deeds recognized, I returned, and understood that in this job I could thrive, that I could find myself equal to the task of educating and nurturing those children, who together educated and nurtured me right back, giving me my one law until after years with them I was ready for the chance to take all that I had on the road to a new job where I would create new experiences to go with the time spent learning to love, and helping my kids learn to fly and begging only for a break for my aching back. Unaware, that the waters I was stepping into were more terrifying than any waters I could imagine sailing. The kind where holding on for dear life, screaming at the baby blue walls and begging to get out is the only sane path. A desk job, where my eyes travelled to places that quickly had me learning how to hate and slowly forgetting what once pleased me. At my new office, a place of growth, I created a broader horizon for myself, gained an understanding of those who are broken, damaged, and hurting all the way down, deep inside, reflecting a dark equality to an amputee, with pieces missing, taken by lawless scum, and with gleaming copper stapled back together.
wretchedly, so as to last an eternity, and keep them together like a drowned man’s lungs, forever bound to pain and water. New job, new kids, new rules, guidelines to these laws of mine, personified in the necessity of making sure to hold a glass of milk out of sight. I can remember, as equal to the pain of any burn, the lack of dairy that begged the question as to why, and the answer that all such items, milk and cream, were banned, so that eyes, that had seen such abuse that I can hardly understand, would not mistake the fluid for semen, which they had learned to associate with suffering and humiliation—a lesson created in a past I’d wish on no one. A past so displeasing that it boggles the mind, and strips the pleasing nature of learning away like a piranha strips flesh. Together with the old laws and a willingness to let in new ones I created an appreciation for glue sticks. With the reminder that the watery products, like good Elmer’s glue are sticky, white fluid, and I learned to avoid any such descriptors. Here, is why I keep my one law, in honor of those with dragons on their backs and do not understand, do not see the everyday, because they have not held the everyday as those of us who are whole in their eyes do, revealing ignorance and highlighting the inevitable inequality that we suffer from, and separated by the fact that all they heard, was silence, as they were made to beg.

I can think of just who I would like to see beg, hopelessly for their life, a sound I think would please me. And I can think of who I would beg to—all those who have willingly stepped aside and together with apathy allowed viciousness to cause pain equal to any flame in hell, and helped the world to create its darkened, shadowed side, where blinded eyes gaze upon suffering with souls so cold as freeze water on its way to become the blood that is held inside small, little people, who were never meant to learn of the pain they would suffer, never meant to understand, to see directly into the deeds that break the most sacred law.
You don’t fuck with kids. It’s not a hard law to remember or subscribe to, but each breaking begs me to ask why, but I know that I could never understand, would never want to, and in this one thing, ignorance pleases me most of all. I remember the last lesson learned by way of a throw away comment a co-worker made, all in the space of one minute, that took what I held as true, and politely smashed it. “When you’re together with a child, especially alone, be specific with praise, never water it down. Be specific like great job with this, or something equal and please try not to generalize.” And why is this? Because eyes that see milk and glue as rape, were told sweet things and create a connection between soft praise and sex. And I’ve created just that quick a new respect for the medieval days where the law condoned stoning, a sport that good common folk partook, eyes held high and proud for their righteous beliefs that needed no begging of forgiveness, for the outlet of screaming their beliefs equal to freedom, revolution and punk rock, and understanding that some people were meant to burn on a pyre. And there is no water to put out these flames, only streams of piss, in pleasing release, to snuff out charred remains. But together as a people, we still weep, for we have learned that the crimes live on in shushing blue eyes, held even as you and I scream melodies of revenge and fuck all to the unholy pieces of shit who have earned all the hate I have to offer and with dark deeds create nothing, but succeeded in strengthening what I hold most true and given conviction to every part of the law I have claimed as mine. But you, the children I have learned to love, should know that my burning, open eyes will never give you a reason to fear me and together no matter the obstacle in our way, be it a stray dog begging for attention or the ugliest fucking dragon, remember please that I will always, always, always try to be as equally kind and soft and forgiving to you as still water and harsh and unyielding to those who wish you harm. Understand however that I have created my identity through this law and as certain as the sight my eyes grant me, no begging will stay my wrath, equal to the harm they face, should it fall. Understand this, if nothing else, those with watered down morals will please leave or together we’ll learn what the unfettered hate in my heart will do when I hold back nothing at all when getting my medieval justice.
Night Comes Early (Eaglecrest)
Elise Tomlinson, UAS Faculty, Juneau
Oil on Canvas

Douglas Harbour
Anna Hoffman, UAS Student, Juneau
Photography
Pussy Willow
Anna Hoffman, UAS Student, Juneau
Photography

Fireweed Tower
Anna Hoffman, UAS Student, Juneau
Photography

Rain Drops on Lupine Leaves
Anna Hoffman, UAS Student, Juneau
Photography
I spent the majority of my childhood playing Barbies with my sister. This surprises a lot of my friends, since I was such a tomboy growing up. I looked like Scout from *To Kill a Mockingbird*. I think it had to do with the fact that my outfit of choice was a pair of overalls with no shirt on underneath. My mom allowed this until I was about ten. But, even though I preferred playing with boys over girls and playing catch with my dad to cooking with my mom, playing Barbies was my favorite way to pass the time. However, I don’t think this would have been the case if my sister and I played Barbies like normal children.

The girls playing with Barbies in the commercials would dress Barbie up and send her on a date with Ken. Maybe she would be older and have children with Ken, but she wouldn’t leave the Dream House. My sister and I had a more realistic approach to playing Barbies, if not a more demented approach.

Barbie never “dated” Ken in our games. She would usually get date raped. Ken had a domestic abuse pose that would strike fear into Barbie’s plastic bosom. My sister would scream for Barbie, while I would provide Ken’s threatening dialogue. If Ken was on his meds, Barbie would usually come down with some serious illness. They never got in the car without suffering a fatal accident. When we performed period pieces, Barbie was often accused of witchcraft and hanged from our shower rod with a shoelace. Then, every once in a while, we would stuff Barbie’s clothes with more clothes so she could play Roseanne Barr and we could reenact scenes from the 90’s sitcom.

These games were only for us. If our mom poked her head into our room, we would become statue children and stare at her until she eased her head back out. I always played the male characters, while my sister would play the female characters. We dealt with bullying and homosexuality before The Trevor Project was even in existence. Our games focused on murder, teen pregnancy, adoption, and anything else that *Saved by the Bell* was afraid to touch.

One afternoon when we were in our pre-teens, the game got dark. It was an ordinary format. Barbie was going to die of cancer and Ken had to go tell their daughter while she was at a sleepover. However, when I was delivering the heart-wrenching monologue to Skipper, my sister and I discovered we were sobbing. We had never been affected by our own stories like this before. I put Ken down. She dropped Skipper. We both got up and found our mom in the kitchen making cookies. We grabbed her around the waist and squeezed her as hard as we were crying.

“We love you so much!” we wailed.

She offered us cookies, which stopped our tears. It took us a few days to go back and clean up the Barbies. We stopped playing after that game. We just got too creative for our own mental health.
Richard Carter

UAS Student, Juneau

His Bunk

Mama got us bunk beds for our birthday. She said they are made of willow. For the first night, we decided I would sleep on the bottom—since I am technically younger. Mama came in to kiss sweet dreams to both of us. She counted 1… 2… 3… and the two of us would blow as hard as we could to get the lights out. Then she would smile, flip the switch, and close the door behind her. In the dark, I could hear him wriggling on the top bunk for the longest time before he sank into slumber. I remember stretching my arm beneath my chilled pillow and cradling my face on top of the freshly-washed blankets. Water trickled down over the bridge of my nose, as it sometimes did when I was the most tired. I could smell the saltiness as I slipped into sleep;

landed into morning. I got outta bed real quick. I popped on yesterday’s socks, ran downstairs, blueberry waffles for breakfast, and he slept in. Mama left for work at the same time Auntie came to watch us, and he still slept in. He slept through the TV blare and sun gleam, through Auntie finding him—and all the sirens. He sleeps through it all.

Mama still kisses me goodnight, but I don’t get to blow out the lights anymore. Where did the dimples in her cheeks go? She asks if we can replace the bunk bed; I tell her no. When the light is off, and the door is closed, I look up and feel the tremble of the bed as it moves under his squirming. I can hear his chest rising and falling, and I can still sense him dreaming on the willow.
She was a heroin addict.
Nothing mattered more than a quick fix.
She was constantly chasing instant gratification.
Her only desire was instant bliss.
Nothing mattered more than a quick fix.
She was a heroin addict.

She was a mother.
Nothing mattered more than her babies.
They were innocent, they were hers to care for, and she loved them with all her heart.
She loved to sing to them.
Nothing mattered more than her babies.
She was a mother

Nothing mattered more than a quick fix.
Nothing mattered more than her babies.
She was confused.
She was lost.
She did not know who she was anymore.
She was scared.
Running from something she hides well.
Something she is afraid will again find her.
Nothing mattered more than a quick fix.
Nothing mattered more than her babies.

She was a prostitute.
A lady of the night.
A corner stalker.
Dope dating.
Getting high for sex.
Having sex to get high.
Nothing mattered if the drugs and money were coming in.
Nothing mattered more than a quick fix.
Nothing mattered more than her babies.

She no longer remembers who she is.
She was confused.
Making love for drugs.
Making love for money.
Good drugs, easy drugs.
Good money, easy money.
Whatever she had to do for a quick fix.
Nothing mattered more than her babies.
“Mommy, is that my daddy?” her son would ask.  
“No baby that’s my daddy, now shut up and play with your sisters and do not knock on this door no matter what you hear.”  
“Ohh they gonna hear something alright.”  
“Shut up, those are my kids.”  
Nothing mattered more than her babies.  
“Bitch, you wanna get high are what?”  
Nothing mattered more than a quick fix.

She left for México.  
She went to get the good dope.  
Her kids were still in diapers.  
She left them on their own.  
Nothing mattered more than her babies.

When the cops broke into the house her kids were crying.  
They were naked.  
There were dirty diapers everywhere.  
The smell of shit and piss burnt their noses.  
Boxes of cereal were dumped onto the ground lying in pools of molded milk.
When the cops broke in she was on a plane home.  
The good dope stuffed up her snatch.  
Nothing mattered more than a quick fix.

She found out her kids were being raped by the babysitter.  
She was furious.  
She went crazy.  
She hit the babysitter in the leg with a hammer.  
Nothing mattered more than her babies.  
She held her babies crying.  
She told them that it would never happen again.  
It happened again.  
Nothing mattered more than a quick fix.

She was a heroin addict.  
Nothing mattered more than a quick fix.  
She was a mother.  
Nothing mattered more than her babies.  
She was a prostitute.  
She started to remember who she used to be.  
The things she was running from could again be seen.  
She died naked on the toilet seat with a needle in her arm.  
She was my mother.  
Nothing will ever matter more to me.
They’re walking children through, as this light comes spillin through my window, in the room this boredom’s daily what I’m chillin’ through.

See what these villains do, robbers, thieves and killers too, the speech I hear the police give these kids as if it’s simply truth.

And it’s not empty to their ears, though no corroborations, evidence to prove the relevance of all his rotten statements.

So all we’ve got is the pavement there to talk to, must be patient, stones don’t speak in volumes, though at times my walls have dropped a statement.

Cold and dark, as if the spark of life has forgotten, taken. Even as the sun is rising, latex blocks my eyes from gazing.

Who’d’ve thought of painting paint upon a window pane, this ain’t the type of changes for change, they try to drive a guy insane.

It’s almost evident that rehab is not relevant, malevolently keepin’ us in chains of mental detriment.

And can the mind of humans overcome this settlement, and somehow relish in the fact that pain and joy are relative?

What they don’t tell the kids is, how when they wish upon a star, with every car of FPD, another will be brought and charged.

Cuz if it’s not a large quantity of charge to guard, then it’s cuts across the board; these prison guards could leave their jobs for Sarge at large.

It’s a cycle, hard and vicious, as the wheel’s progress yielding less fruit, but steady building buildings filled for checks.

So pay your ill respects, as through my window you can guess my attitudes, I flex my moral turpitude circumspect.

I’m just a jerk, I guess, so where’s the hesitation, sighs of resignation as they show this generation segregation.

As if a pledge was taken, I have earned my battle stripes. Inside my tats’ll wipe the pity from their eyes, as though I’m black inside.
But that’s my battered side. The war has been long and hard for me. Harboring feelings deep inside, there but hard to see.

So as they target me, my eyes will start their hardening, pardoning my thoughts again, slicing painful arteries.

Is it startling that after the sentence arguing the life of those condemned continues on to colder, harder things?

This state is bartering lives for pocket impregnation, wondering all the while, beguiled at what they’ve started making.

So all emotions leave, as hollow eyes impact unshaken, These are just the thoughts I thought while children walked through segregation.
How to Kill an Enemy

Gather all the tools that you will need:
thick paper (many colors)
double stick tape
colorful sharpies
crafty do-dads
two pounds of Black Wolf whole coffee beans,
a quart of milk (optional)
your favorite ceramic mug

Every morning grind enough coffee beans for one or two cups. Brew. I use a French press, but any brewing method will do. Add milk to coffee if so desired. This helps still the bitterness on the tongue and in the gut.

Sit down. Take slow sips of coffee. Close your eyes and take deep breaths. Let the whiffs of coffee fill your lungs. If you’re in a hurry, try this process again tomorrow. Killing an enemy takes time.

If you have made it this far, you are doing well. Take a piece of paper and a color sharpie (any color will do). Write a list of all the good traits of your enemy. This might take a couple weeks. Don’t rush. After the list has grown, write each trait into a thankful list. This might seem redundant, but it is a very important step. Take your time. Don’t rush!

Next, make a card. Use the double stick tape to layer different colors of paper. Add a few crafty do-dads. Take your time on the card. Get creative. When you have finished the card, write a short note to your enemy. Include a few of the grateful items from your previous list. This might be difficult. Don’t feel rushed. Many deeps breaths are fine. Even prayers are acceptable. Divine assistance is completely okay.

Check your note. No negativity allowed. If some has crept in, rewrite note.

Mail note to enemy. Continue to write lists of gratefulness. Maybe even think of a gift for your enemy. If this is too much, don’t worry. Killing an enemy cannot be rushed.

If this process takes months, it might be necessary to buy more milk and coffee. Don’t stress out. It is perfectly understandable to feel heightened emotions during this time. Many notes might need to be written in order to fully kill the enemy. These notes must always be carefully written with no animosity.

After time, there is hope for complete enemy death . . . and you will be a friend once again.
Author and Artist Biographies

Doris Alcorn lives by the sea in Auke Bay, and learned ceramics from Jeremy Kane at UAS. As a former fish and wildlife biologist, she frequently incorporates animal elements into her art. She enjoys making both sculpture and functional pots.

Sammy Becker is a senior at UAS. She will be graduating in the spring of 2013 with a B.A. in Geography and Environmental Studies with an emphasis in Outdoor Studies. She loves to be outside and spend copious amounts of time with her awesome friends.

Nathan A. Block is a two-time Iraq war veteran currently incarcerated at the Lemon Creek Correctional Center in Juneau, Alaska. Born in Minnesota, Nathan spent the majority of his time living in foster homes due to his mother’s drug addiction. Despite his definitional childhood Nathan keeps his eye on his dream to become a writer.

Jacqueline Boucher is a spoken word poet and a graduate of UAS’s undergraduate Class of 2012. This is her first time submitting since serving as Tidal Echoes’ fall intern for the 2012 edition. Per tradition, she would like to thank her family, her friends, and the lovely man who has been a source of unwavering support since day one. Moreover, she sincerely thanks you for sharing in the power of the arts in this community, and for the honor of being allowed to share with you.

Clare Brooks – Quilting has been Clare’s hobby of choice since 1994. She loves being outdoors in Southeast Alaska. A sea of fireweed, a warm August day, and a ride with friends inspired her quilted landscape.

Andria Budbill is a senior at UAS in the creative writing program. She is involved in a lot of different activities around Juneau including Alaskapella, Opera to Go, and many other groups. Andria loves everything about Tidal Echoes and the Juneau poetry scene. She plans to become an English teacher in the near future and live a life that allows her to travel to wherever her heart desires.

Brittany Buell has been writing since early 2000. In 2002 she was selected to participate in the first Creative Writing course offered as a prototype class at Dzantik’i Heeni middle school. In 2004 her first poem was published in The Silent Journey. She also began doing Photography as a hobby in 2006. Her photography is nature based and never posed; only what she stumbles upon during her hikes. After attending the University of South Dakota for four years, she transferred home to Juneau to finish her college degree at the University of Alaska Southeast, still majoring in Creative Writing.

Richard Carter is a full-time art student at UAS. He likes to dabble in all forms of art, so keeping at least a paintbrush or pencil in reach is always a good idea. His work sometimes takes a turn for the serious, but what he loves most is a good dark-comedy to make him laugh his socks off. In his spare time, he likes to improv with friends who refer to him as “Spud.”

Tamsen Cassidy (Tamsen’s Chilkat Valley Woolworks) finds inspiration for her needle felted wool sculptures deep within the Alaskan Native cultures and richly endowed environment. Needle felting is a relatively new art (circa 1970) which utilizes a barbed needle (like those used in actual felting machinery) to sculpt and mat together the fibers of sheep, alpaca and virtually any fiber that will respond to matting with the needle. She has made her home in Haines, Alaska where the lush and vivid landscapes drench her thirsty imagination.

Kersten Christianson is a raven-watching, moon-gazing Alaskan who teaches high school English and French, and composes rough draft poetry. An Alaskan, she has taught in various schools throughout the state including the Kenai Peninsula, St. Lawrence Island and the North Slope before returning home to Sitka by the Sea to teach. There she lives with her partner Bruce, daughter Rie, and yellow lab, Odin. Kersten is also the co-editor of the quarterly journal, Alaska Women Speak, a journal with a statewide presence devoted to publishing the words of Alaskan Women.

Anna Cramer lives in Juneau with her husband, T.J., and their three cats, Vinny, Cairo and Machete. She likes to think of herself as a woodswoman who just happens to enjoy indoor plumbing, electricity, central heat, and her Oprah magazine subscription. A few of her favorite things include: exploring Juneau’s trails with her husband, the smell of the ocean, sunshine, seagulls, fall leaves, photography, day dreaming, reading, writing, warm summer nights, the smell of a wood-burning fire, and being inspired.

Kristina Cranston resides in Sitka, Alaska. She is the mother of four and grandmother of two. She loves to explore new things and express herself creatively. She is a quarter Tlingit, and belongs to the Eagle Thunderbird Clan. Her goal in life is to “reach her full potential.”

Nora Marks Dauenhauer was born in Juneau, Alaska. Her first language is Tlingit, and she has worked extensively with Tlingit oral literature, doing fieldwork, transcription, translation and explication. Her own poetry, prose, and drama have been widely published and anthologized. She is a free-lance writer and independent scholar. In October 2012 she was named Alaska State Writer Laureate 2012-14.

Richard Dauenhauer has lived in Alaska since 1969. He is a former poet laureate of Alaska, and his poetry, translations, and essays have been widely published. With Nora Dauenhauer he has co-authored and co-edited Tlingit grammars and bilingual editions of oral literature. He is a freelance writer and independent scholar.
Jill A. Dumesnil is a resident of Juneau, a fulltime UAS employee, and a part-time photographer. She has taught college mathematics for 20 years and currently serves Associate Dean of the School of Arts and Sciences. She took her first photography class in 2010 and continues to take courses and make photos.

Bonnie Elsensohn retired in 2007 from working as a graphic artist and media specialist for UAS Sitka Campus. She was actively painting in the '70s, but put aside her brushes for about 20 years. Bonnie has now returned to painting, using acrylics and frequently taking her own photos for reference material. Her work has been featured at Sitka’s gallery walks and is also on display at Fisherman’s Eye and Sitka Rose Galleries.

Kija Elstad enjoys painting with acrylics and sculpting with both wood and stone. She is a self-taught artist who would like to expand her opportunities in the art trade by attending art classes. The art community and youth art programs are important to her and she looks forward to creating new and original works of art which may enhance and contribute to the Southeastern region of Alaska.

Carrie Enge is a writer from Juneau, Alaska.

Christy NaMee Eriksen is a Korean Adoptee spoken word artist, organizer, and educator. She’s performed at art centers, universities, and theatres, including The Roundhouse in London and Equilibrium’s award-winning spoken word series in Minneapolis. She is the co-founder of a monthly poetry slam, Woosh Kinaadeiyí, and a 2011 JAHC Individual Artist Grant recipient.

Cal C. Giordano is a craftsman who works in the medium of mixed metals and specializes in the creation of functional, kinetic and wearable art. He is a commercially successful product designer in the motorcycle industry and he is a patent holding inventor. Giordano has been recognized by Popular Mechanics Magazine as a “backyard genius” and was nominated by them as one of the top ten “world’s greatest unsung engineers”. Giordano was also recognized by the History Channel as the creator of the Archduke Grand Excelsior, a semi-submersible, semi-amphibious watercraft that was featured on the television program Modern Marvels. Giordano is presently attending the University of Alaska Southeast where he is earning a BA in art with an emphasis on sculpture.

Cory Grant is a published writer who was born and self-raised in Alaska. He is Tlingit, Southern Tutchone and Cherokee. He is also known as “that guy who always wears shorts.” Growing up with an abusive father and learning his native roots are the driving forces behind the content of his writing. He has dozens of written pieces and hopes to record his work one day.

Lauren Haight is a lifetime Juneau resident who recently graduated from UAS. She has been published in Tidal Echoes twice before and is very proud to be a part of such a wonderful publication. She enjoys hot tea, long books, bad TV, and cuddling with the love of her life -- her dog, Max.

Jessica Hambleton is a poet/biologist/amateur photographer. She received her BA in English writing at Boise State in the spring of 2012, but decided to continue on her previous path towards marine biology, and is now a student at UAS. She received her first publication in Barefoot Review this summer, with “Dermatomyositis with a side of Asperger’s Syndrome.”

Madeline Handley is a ninth grader at Juneau Douglas High School. She was born in Juneau and the area’s natural environment is the subject of many of her poems. Madeline is a cross-country runner, a gymnast, and spends as much time as she can outdoors.

Anna Marie Hoffman, born and raised in Alaska, couldn’t imagine living in a place without trees and mountains. The beauty of her home state has captured much of her attention in her poetry as well as photography. Though she still longs for the woods and captures it in her lens, her poetry is beginning to take a step in a new social direction hoping to awake within hearts a concern for the invisible people of our nation.

Robyn Holloway lives in Juneau with her family. She graduated from UAS in 2003 with a BLA in Literature and Creative Writing. She was the inaugural co-editor of Tidal Echoes, and is currently developing two manuscripts of poetry, much of which has been published in this journal. Robyn is a member of the Alaska State Council for the Arts and a co-organizer of the 2013 Poetry Omnibus contest.

Colin Kalk was born in Juneau, Alaska and has lived his entire life there with his mother, three sisters, and three female pets, two cats and a dog. At age fourteen he began studying at the University of Alaska Southeast where he quickly and passionately decided to pursue a Bachelor’s Degree in Literature and the Environment, with Minors in Creative Writing, History, and Philosophy. His favorite pastimes include snowboarding, hiking, and going to the theater.

Jordan Kendall is a UAS student.

Dave Kiffer is a fourth generation Ketchikan resident who is a poet, musician, teacher and historian. He is also the Mayor of the Ketchikan Gateway Borough.
Jonas Lamb is a librarian, poet and super dad who believes that parenting is poetry and that in addition to super-quick reflexes, parenting leads to the appreciation and awareness of everyday magic. His work has appeared in The Kent Collector, Tidal Echoes, Juneau’s Poetry Omnibus and Raw Ether. B poetry, C poetry and read more at jonaslamb.wordpress.com.

Heather LaVerne is a creative writing major at University of Alaska Southeast. She is the president of the improv club, the Maven of Fellowship of the Gay-Straight Alliance, and the Vice President of Fellowship of Alpha Phi Omega. On top of all of her club activity, Heather also enjoys writing short stories about bizarre people, including herself. Her literary heroes include Roald Dahl and everyone who writes for the show Community.

Shaka Levshakoff -- the poem “Reflections” is an excerpt from an original song written by Shaka while he was serving time in the Lemon Creek Correctional Center in Juneau. This portion of the rap song is his favorite so far of all the songs that he has written because it was an opportunity to shed the lyrics of superficial living and express what is in his spirit that no one sees.

Jeremy Kane, originally from Springfield, Ohio, has been an Alaskan resident since he was 18 years old. He is currently an Associate Professor of Art at the University of Alaska Southeast. Jeremy received his BFA degree from Fairbanks, Alaska and continued to earn an MFA in Ceramics from Ohio University. In addition to receiving the Taunt Fellowship at The Archie Bray Foundation he received a mid-career artist grant from The Rasmuson Foundation and continues to exhibit work in many national ceramic exhibitions. When taking a break from making ceramic artwork, Jeremy plays Bluegrass banjo in his band throughout Alaska.

Clara Miller likes to escape outside to slip under the stars and streetlights, or wander along trails and amongst trees to seek solitude or inspiration. If you happen to come upon her by chance and she seems like she’s in another place, she probably is. She often is writing in her head, or disappearing to different dimensions created by other writers.

Vivian Faith Prescott was born and raised in Wrangell, Alaska and lives in Sitka Alaska. Her poetry has appeared in Yellow Medicine Review, IthacaLit, and Drunken Boat. She is the author of the poetry collection The Hide of My Tongue (Plain View Press, 2012) and two poetry chapbooks Sludge (Flutter Press) and Slick (online @White Knuckle Press). Her website is http://www.vivianfaithprescott.com and she blogs at http://planetalaska.blogspot.com.

Seth Siegel is a fortunate resident of the Alexander Archipelago, one of the most mysterious and soulful places he’s seen. Seth writes from his outpost on Douglas Island, when his son Saul is asleep. His wife Alicia is the apple of his eye.

Eugene Solovyov has lived in Alaska since 1990, most of it in Sitka. He owns an art gallery, Sitka Rose Gallery. He writes poems and essays in his spare time.

Mary Spartz lives and writes in Juneau.

Richard Stokes, a 40-year Juneau resident, is a seasonal guide with Gastineau Guiding. His work has appeared in Tidal Echoes in 2007-12, in Poetry Omnibus 2006-12 and Ice Floes in 2006. His prose has appeared in Gray’s Sporting Journal, Alaska Magazine, and Juneau newspapers. He has self-published two chapbooks of poetry; “Notes Searching for a Tune” in 2010 and “Juneau Seasons” in 2011. His wife, Jane, is a Juneau artist.

Guy Unzicker is happy to be a resident of Juneau, surrounded by beautiful mountains and fantastic poets and artists. As a writer and a musician, he most often draws inspiration from Minnesotan and Alaskan landscapes, friends, and experiences. Guy is grateful for his life, family, friends, cat, guitar, and spinach crepes.

Justin Thomerson -- He made the mistake. He lived through the experience. He found his own Truth.

Elise Tomlinson received her BFA in 1994 from the University of Alaska Anchorage with a primary emphasis in printmaking and a secondary emphasis in oil painting. She has been exhibiting regularly for close to 20 years. In addition to being an artist, Elise is also the Regional Library Director for UAS. She paints colorful and stylized figurative paintings in local Southeast Alaskan settings.

Margo Waring has lived in Alaska since 1969 and has been an active member of the Juneau community since 1972.

Todd Wehnies is a student at UAS. His hobbies include knife fighting for the feathers of dead doves, and leading the suicidal on raids into heaven. When not at UAS, he responds to the name “Shark Fighter” in public and does all his talking in the sheets.

Teague Whalen is an Assistant Professor of Humanities for UAS, Ketchikan. He received his M.F.A. in creative writing from Northern Michigan University. Besides a writer of fiction, poetry, and nonfiction, he is also a performing singer/songwriter and guitarist.

Adam Wood is a student at University of Alaska Southeast, double majoring in Medicine and Liberal Arts. Photography is one of many passions Adam lives for. Others include cats, Mexican food, adventures and romantic conquests. Adam plans on working in the field after school and helping communities by addressing medical concerns as well as applying his photojournalism skills to tell their stories.
Tidal Echoes presents an annual showcase of writers and artists who share one thing in common: a life surrounded by the rainforests and waterways of Southeast Alaska.