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*Trillium*

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The *Trillium* is the literary and visual arts publication  
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Department of Language and Literature

Megan-Lynette Rollins, *Editor*  
Dr. Jonathan Minton, *Faculty Advisor*  
Cover art by Liza Brenner

*The Trillium* welcomes submissions and correspondence from  
Glenville State College students, faculty, staff, and our extended  
creative community.

*Trillium*  
Department of Language and Literature  
Glenville State College  
200 High Street  
Glenville, WV 26351

Trillium@Glenville.edu  
<http://www.glenville.edu/life/trillium.php>



## Editor's Notes

I remember most of my childhood based upon experiences with art or in want of such an event. It occurred to me, just a few years ago, when I changed my major to English that every “religious” experience I’ve had has also been one of an artistic nature. I’ve found that holding a camera in my hand has been like seeing the world “through god’s eyes” and that writing poetry is like meditating. I personally feel most at home at these times, even if I’m simply hands-and-knees on the floor coloring a book full of dinosaurs.

I consider myself a religious seeker of art, and through the pilgrimage of editing and formatting this issue of the *Trillium* I believe that part of me has changed. Art often evokes feelings so profound and so visceral that it often shocks my system in a way that leaves me speechless for a time. The creativity in this issue has humbled and captivated me and has even left me saying, “Wow! This is gorgeous! How can I call myself an artist compared to this?” But, that’s what art should do.

Please don’t just enjoy the *Trillium*: allow aesthetics of every word, every page, every picture and sculpture and song and painting cleanse your soul with holy water and make it new.

—*Megan-Lynnette Rollins*

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# John Hoppenthaler

## Home Movie

I watch a Super 8 saved from the attic  
when Mom moved to Florida. Tenth birthday.  
Candles, a cake. My sisters, Dad's hand  
shaking the camera. Brash light.

Uncle Eddie's straddling a chair. White  
tee. Muscled arms, dark brown  
from construction. His shadow almost  
covers the kitchen wall. My gifts that year,

a Zebco fishing rod, a tackle box. Cut  
to the front lawn. Uncle Eddie clamps five  
lead split shots to line's end. I'm casting  
into the road. One month later he was dead.

Chain sawing trees alone, bad judgment  
took him. Beyond the frames,  
I can see my grieving mother  
almost losing her grip, her mind

someplace none of us dared follow.  
In Romania, she'd raised him like her own,  
now couldn't raise him again.  
There's a point, a splice

more than half way in, where the film  
catches a little. I've watched the movie  
six times through—and lost, each time,  
those images back to where the end slides

out, slaps like a razor strop.  
Then I turn on the lamp, snap  
the projector arm up, re-thread.  
I'll rewind my godfather uncle, play him over

until that old connection snags, the screen  
seems to melt, film burns.  
I'll slowly reel it in again, sinkers  
stealing through the uncut grass.

## California Stars in North Carolina

—after James Harms

I drove home from work, smiling for a change,  
I Pod shuffle plugged into the car stereo,

buoyantly inside the vibrant mechanics  
of a favorite song, Wilco's "California Stars."

I imagined I was in Los Angeles, maybe,  
giving a poetry reading, and I was telling the audience

about how, the previous evening, I'd slept under  
California stars, how their faltering light

still managed to warm me through,  
how impossibly happy it made me to say so.

Just then, a red traffic light blossomed,  
and I looked up to discover, in front of me,

an ambulance, siren off, in no particular hurry.  
The last strummed notes faded away.

I could make out a pair of ET's huddled over whatever  
bones were strapped to the rolling stretcher.

Too early for evening to squander its starlight,  
nighttime was carefully unfolding. West

was a planet, brightly lit,

far-fetched.



## Dance

—*Kirby Studio, MacDowell Colony, 2006*

Eleven moths have attached themselves  
to a weathered screen enclosing the porch.

Like some overzealous bouncer, it's blocked  
their flight toward eternal attraction, floodlight

above the studio door. Something insistent  
& genetic draws them toward the bulb, heat

& exposure, bids them begin again the frenzied  
celebration of time that's left in summer flutter.

Doing so, might they nearly forget what  
came before, earthbound crawl & pulse,

laborious spinning, the fitful sleep—  
sisters, brothers snatched by hungry

birds on branches? I'm sorry to say this disco's  
closed to the public for a private party,

lone mosquito & his long-legged date.  
How easily they shift from waltz to tango;

how pleased they seem for the blazing spot-  
light, the rapt audience, glow of romance

in ephemeral life. But a brazen gate-crasher  
buzzes my ear; whispers: *shut up & dance.*

## **The Way to a Man's Heart**

—*for Christy*

To sautéed garlic and onions, I add  
pureed plum tomatoes, a great splash  
of good, red wine. Never cook with  
wine you wouldn't drink, someone  
offered, and we agree. I pour a glass.  
Later, I'll add coarsely chopped basil  
from the herb garden, sea salt, maybe  
a pinch of sugar, and always the drizzle  
of extra virgin. But now, as you see,  
this extended metaphor is dissolving,  
so I'm left with Pinot Noir and the glass,  
fresh basil sprigs which remind me of you.  
And now there's musing on the oil's earthy flavor,  
and now this aching hunger, and who is it  
who says poetry makes nothing happen?

### **Triolet for Joseph**

Joseph's mere presence confuses the gospel.  
See how he haunts the nativity scene?  
He is weighing the lines of an angel.  
Joseph's mere presence confuses the gospel;  
before Jesus turns twelve, Joseph's bidden farewell.  
Stepfather met birthFather most take this to mean. Still,  
Joseph's mere presence confuses the gospel.  
See how he haunts the nativity scene?

## Garrett Rinehart

### Up

Up, it's the  
direction I look  
on a cold  
September day.

Up, at the  
gleaming  
stainless steel  
bars that my  
cold, sweaty  
hands will soon  
grasp to propel  
myself up the  
brilliant tan  
rock.

Up, I go three  
feet at a time,  
farther and  
farther from my  
girlfriend below.

Up, about thirty  
feet higher and  
learning  
suddenly you  
have a fear of  
falling.

Up, pushing on  
past the first  
escape with my  
girlfriend's smile  
to keep me  
going as she  
follows behind.

Up, with my  
guide in front  
seeing the  
amazing view of  
the valley below

dotted with the  
radiant reds and  
oranges of the  
autumn season,  
like the sticker  
on my guide's  
worn helmet,  
giving me peace.

Up, pushing up  
the hill.  
Up past fear.  
Up past the life  
of a college  
student.  
Up to the peace  
of the mountain  
summit where I  
sit sharing the  
last of my water,  
with my  
girlfriend whose  
deep brown eyes  
gave me the  
strength to  
climb.  
Up, higher than  
I have ever been  
before.

Up to the place  
where cars look  
like ants driving  
past amazing  
places  
that they would not have missed  
if they only had looked up.

# Jonathan Minton

## Letter

Dear Reader, you are a thief.  
Bring back the periods from their text.  
There is an oval, a ruddy orange,  
somewhere in the center of the page.  
I see you slipping towards it.

\*

Dear Reader, this is not your cellar door.  
This is a plume of red, a blush, or a wound.  
If I find you in the thickest of the press,  
we will read each other's faces and hands.  
Our words are for ghosts.

\*

Dear Reader, there are flowers  
behind your back because the world is sufficient.  
This is a map of what I know, not what I see.  
The clouds arrive like clockwork.  
There are kingdoms between us.

\*

Dear Reader, even if you were a river  
it would never empty into this sentence,  
but we will gather coins for our ancient fountain,  
and when I write the next letter  
it will say that I love you.

## Letter

Dear reader, you are more than eyes that stare.  
You are serene, but this is an arrangement,  
as the blue on blue along the coasts of Toulon.  
*La inconnue*, you are air and water. You arrive  
as a picture. Someone named it the drowning girl,  
but every town has claimed you.

Dear reader, there is no word for a color,  
until you learn to recreate it. The first blue  
was a void. It is never used in Homer.  
Egyptians used the word *eye* to describe it.  
Because you are a stranger here,  
there are skies of these humors above us.

Dear reader, teal-colored ducks are in their harbors.  
They are yours, and will never be mine.

## Chris Summers

### **Orange County**

Someday my path will cross the muse  
That brings your words to mind  
I want to imagine you'll be drawn close  
Pull on the fresh-cast line

All of our past was imagined  
All of our future true  
The time falling between is fragile  
Which is why I write to you:

The greatest thing in a poet's life  
Is what he never finds  
The muse who remains half a dream  
The rest of her written lines.



## Benjamin Guggenheim

She's the countdown to a bomb blast.  
You can already feel  
The ignition at her lips  
The flaring of her hips  
Energy, blissfully, beautifully free.  
It burns away the thin of your skin  
And you grasp to keep your morals in.

His violin sings in her streets of fire  
You can already hear  
The melody from the heart in his poisoned chest  
The harmony from tears earned in life's test  
"What's up baby?" is all he plays.  
You hear more of his song than you'll ever show  
And understand it more than he'll ever know.

Records spin  
Ice rattles  
Smoke circles  
Legs kick back  
And between them both  
(As usual)  
You declare  
Against your fear  
Against your hate  
Against your bitterness  
Against everything that the last five years have thrown at you  
That our world is still ours  
That our time is still today  
That tonight is still tonight  
And that we shall go down  
As those who fiddled  
While America burned.

## Wayne de Rosset

### **As the Stars Fade Away**

#### *A Song*

It hurts most in the autumn, she tries not to think about it  
That chill November day, she walked out on her life  
There were no questions, she left no reasons  
She just left everything, slipped out the door  
Into the darkness of the night

She finds all her love soon after midnight  
In the arms of fallen angels, wrapped in silk and satin lies  
And when the darkness kindly steps aside,  
for a morning dressed in grey  
She cries for lost tomorrows, as the stars all fade away

She traveled across the country, driven by her restless spirit  
That forever keeps her living, in tomorrow's yesterday  
She has a faded picture, which she always keeps close by her  
Tells of miles and years between  
And the life she's thrown away

She finds all her love soon after midnight  
In the arms of fallen angels, wrapped in silk and satin lies  
And when the darkness kindly steps aside,  
for a morning dressed in grey  
She cries for lost tomorrows, as the stars all fade away

She looks lonely out the window, pours a cup of bitter coffee  
Rewinding images and memories from the wreckage of her life  
She knows this long time sadness, will always linger with her  
As a clockwork lover, feels his way  
Into the morning light

She finds all her love soon after midnight  
In the arms of fallen angels, wrapped in silk and satin lies  
And when the darkness kindly steps aside,  
for a morning dressed in grey  
She cries for lost tomorrows, as the stars all fade away

## Autumn Carter

### **They Shoot Horses, Don't They?**

In the tub the baby  
remembers the commercial with the cowboys/  
rusty legs bowed to the shape  
of a horse's back.

Sometimes when the yard turns  
to dust there's nothing left  
to do/it takes a man  
to hold the barrel steady.

They say he might be afraid  
to put his head under—  
give him the yellow ducky/  
to torture his way into the world of man.

## Dust Dreams

The baby dreams every night of cowboys.  
Dusty hats slapped hard against thighs—  
the snort and whinny of horses  
under the distant stars.

He knows all about the bad guys:  
they never take three steps before  
drawing to shoot you in the back.  
So he faces the front.

The baby knows how to press fingers hard  
in a bullet hole to stop the bleeding.  
How to knock his boots upside down before  
sliding cold feet into a waiting scorpion's stinger.

He rides across the desert for days,  
watching vultures pick bones to a sparkling white.  
Clouds make dancing shadows on the canyon floor—  
he pulls his hat down to shade his eyes.

Lying beside me in the dark  
his silhouette is his only companion.

## **Living in the Bone Orchard**

Things we find on the ground:  
bones of an old cow  
buried in a cocoon of snow  
unearthing only in the spring melts.

The surprise snort and spook  
of the horse who lays his nose  
too near the skull.

White petals on the Autumn Olive,  
the impenetrable cloud of their scent,  
like gnats hovering in shady places,  
mixing with the diesel fumes of the tractor  
where it lurches in the field.

An orchard of plum trees  
where the black snakes nap in high branches.  
We say the snakes rot the fruit—  
it falls to the ground unripened.

The gray curves of plum branches  
releasing their white carpet of petals,  
a veil of children's teeth, or bones.

## **The Argument**

Eyes lock.  
Falter is the only word we say;  
but neither does what it's told.

The feral  
is why hearts race—red face,  
a bruise blossoming under sun.

To know  
is a loneliness like space:  
a body could fit between us.

You collect  
every injustice like precious things,  
while mine waft like smoke through cold air.

## Country for a While

is a fierce blooming

less than the perfume  
of sexed buds waiting,

of insects, prisoners of the trees,  
provoked by their sad inhibitions  
towards life.

Please smear my body with  
red mud, like the honeyed inside  
of a mountain

is not dry, but drips  
heavy. Storm clouds flee through damp hills,

always leaving. Do not leave  
me here to inhale any longer.

Do you see me where I stand  
by the cherry tree

head bowed?

## Megan-Lynnette Rollins

### U.F.O.

I can only love with hate and the pleasantries  
of both shape my plastic exterior—  
Reminiscing a kiss on my lips when  
they were once naked and naïve—  
But the second set shows the  
rigid imprint of a fist—Unidentified,  
Raining rhythmically—Tears on a tin roof—  
My cries and sobs—the  
thunder of a tropical storm—  
Wind—a tornado of hot breath  
sucked in quickly and quickly expelled—  
Trying to breathe and purge the  
stinging nausea of homemade love— trying  
to flee the scene of a shark bite with  
someone else's lost limb: an extra  
hand—foot—guts to climb up  
out of this dank, precooked grave—Fucking  
crater in the sand—steaming—  
Meteor missiles and hot molten red  
plumed cock, crowing—pervasive little deaths  
like fireworks from government issued  
top secret reindeer driven sleighs—  
The alien landed—I'm late—  
Feasted on the cupcakes  
puberty took the last ten years  
to bake—through thistles he—came  
cursing every goddamned footfall—  
Lusting—Heart—heart be still  
though I rage—Mons Venus scaled—  
Avalanche greed flattened  
my freeze-dried soul— Offender  
—came to repossess  
property unfinanced—stuck  
his hand on the wet—pink dust of Adam—  
Parted the inner lips—penetrated—  
Flagging me with his stake  
through my cunt—  
A gift without wrapping—



## April Third, Has Been Rescheduled to a Later Date

—*In memory of what could have been*

Put your brainstem in fourth gear; Neuro-Autobahn,  
inline-five engine, turbo-cerebrum, all-wheel drive—  
coast cautiously down the road to last year. The sky was bright  
blue edges embroidered in a swanky purple with charcoal smeared  
jagged shades of grey sunshine seeped in, just shy of being  
a foot deep, got off like an inch worm—danced  
on a bed of fire and sang my name until I thought I'd be sick.  
Thin, beige modeling clay puddles to an effusive wacke from the

Sun's frosty

heat-sting. There hasn't been a flood in a decade. Forecast predicts  
with a plus sign at the end of my thermometer-stick:  
failure, the color of my cherry lip-stick, that will  
clear off cloudy and come a warm freeze. Nature phoned,  
said she was going to have her way. Winter is expected  
to Occupy a handshake with Summer, an arrangement that  
precious Spring

shall be off on sabbatical; nothing green is penciled in to sprout or  
abide.

The Luxury of Fall was granted by force to those who were caught  
off guard of such statutory hugging from the offensive  
side-of-the-street. Overnight, thunder came amplified  
through the tunnels that stars shine through. The river rose,  
grew thorns, swelled fat and bloomed and lost its pedals. This fury,  
a complete washout, blanched, eyes wide to the Thing  
in your hands, made damp by the murky water. Fingertips  
touching life as if it were a blade; bloody hands, bloody heart,  
bloody lips—

you've been pricked. Can't we put the wet stuff back where it goes?  
The rhythm method of the river—the motion—just too much  
for you to remain still. Impulse standing-on-your-head,  
a turn-the-world-upside-down perspective transition lacks  
savvy reinsertion of the octopus that has been expelled, mangled,  
and flopped wrong-side-out; a sight branding retinas and cannot be  
sanitized.

The river adulates gravity, caring not at all for your imaginative  
acrobatics, and

must snake away from Eden until all the water evaporates, forever  
as the world continues to waltz in the dark, taciturn, deep  
wrinkle in God's hand as it nears the nail hole we hammer-pierced

for ourselves. These bifurcated limbs suspended atop the head;  
and which must resolve to be the right footfall of a spiked gait?  
Replant the unified field theory in the Earthy morass. The wind  
puckers,  
blowing a whisper—a faint sound of harps—that tickles the  
acoustic meatus, the way  
only the superficial can be invigorated, as you fasten your ass  
behind the steering wheel, sore and empty once again, numbly  
putting  
the memory in reverse at full speed back to the reality you left  
where not  
Eve in the hands that made Heaven can see to give you deliverance  
from Adam's ale.

Ashley Gish

**Cabin in Grand Marais**

Fog whirls in languid swirls amid the trees  
dim, clouds blot out the summer sun  
autumn leaves skip end over end on the porch  
winter birds sing wishes to make homes  
in the long fingers of evergreens

The Lake's chilled waves kiss the shoreline and break  
against the walls of an old water-swollen boat house  
A damp, cool breeze parts the fog—parts the fog  
as a mournful widow parts the parlor curtains  
to look miserably through dirty glass

The breeze hopes for the return of summer  
but a step off the porch reveals to boot-heels  
the first frost of late fall

Inhaling deeply I discover these delicate aromas—  
juniper pines, fragrant dried mosses, the faint scent  
of dying algae that clings to the agates of the shore

Robust coffee and warm cinnamon conjure images  
of a crackling fireplace in front of which I settle  
underneath an afghan to read a winter fable  
about a boy who loses a mitten

Andrea Hollander

**Every time her husband climbs a ladder—**

first the framing, then the roof beams,  
then the plywood, shingles, edging,  
roof vent, and now the gutters—  
she wants to pray him down. Not  
so he hears her and complains  
that builders cost money  
they don't have—they agreed  
he'd do it all himself.

But sometimes she slips and says out loud,  
“Be careful,” and he gives her  
the look of his that says  
I love you but please don't tell me  
the obvious (not that she hasn't  
saved them a few times on highways)—  
as if it were nothing much  
to haul a 4 x 8 sheet of plywood  
up a sixteen-foot ladder and lift it  
over his head and slam it onto rafters,  
nail it in place as he squats on the roof,  
then goes down again for another.

“We take care with big things, but take  
small ones for granted,” her father always  
warned. “That's when accidents happen.”  
Perhaps it's her father's voice she raises  
when her mouth opens against  
her better self. It's like that game  
she played as a kid, not stepping  
on cracks, believing a child  
would make a difference in a world  
where her mother could die of cancer  
even though her father's a doctor.  
As if saying something now  
would force the gods  
this time to listen.

## Rachael Peckham

### Cross

How do I explain? These hogs have what we call a *stress gene*. Been cross bred so many times, something's out of whack with the way they react going barn to barn, barn to truck. They'll have a *heart attack*. Some of them will keel over just like that. Others we'll leave to pant in the grass because you just never know, they might bounce back. I remember one hog lay for over eight hours in the grass—three or four times I doubled back—*you just watch*. He was never afraid of me during morning chores: checking the waters, power washing the floors. He let me scratch him on the back like this, even between the eyes. I was sure surprised to see him on his side, winded like he had just run five miles when all we did was push him into the aisle. (For the record, they're pretty darn fast out of the blocks.) I checked on him again before clocking out, going *you watch—you watch*. He was still there, still breathing, but he wore a beard of foam. Bubbles at his nose. Eyes fixed on something over my shoulder. (I almost turned around, no joke.) In the end, he acted just like I'd expect. He didn't flinch one bit, like he had already accepted this last chore. I did it and went home.

Bob Henry Baber

**Bad Review of Lost Flats, WV, 2012**

I watch the tandem log trucks  
straining with hardwoods down the steep mountain,  
mostly big wild cherry with still-wet red rings aplenty.

These are the last of these we'll see  
for who knows, perhaps two centuries, perhaps much more,  
after the land is stripped  
for the first time in Earth's history--

--a terrible last chapter  
in a crime novel based on real facts  
that can never be written off  
and is unforgettable.

## **We Pass As Quickly**

We pass as quickly  
as the phases of the moon  
through clear  
skies and cloudy.

We only reflect  
light we do not make  
to those who have eyes to see  
hearts to feel

The rest is lost  
and the lost rests  
in the deep recesses  
of the woods and sea.

## Sheila Harrouff

### Winter

The weight falling across the windblown  
mountains formed outside my door  
I can hear his presence coming near me now more  
The shadows are all I can see when my eyes are open  
I can't capture him when they are parted  
Taken from my arms as they tore me away  
Surely this is only a figment  
My mind races as the cold wind blows its constant whisper  
The darkness awakes my slumber each nightfall  
To close my lids is the only way I can see  
The limbs shiver when the voice shatters from touching the icy  
winds

Like snowflakes, they melt on my lips  
The appendages that once fell across my face full golden  
The wire grey takes its place  
I reach for the palm, with lifeline short  
The warmth is replaced with ice felt deep  
If they just stay closed will I feel the heartbeat?  
They speak and inform me the dust he remains  
I won't lose you if the spring keeps the white lace  
Grey skies and withered flowers I cannot replace  
Each falling flake you melt on my skin  
With each winter he comes to me again.



Sue Herwat

### **A Pounce of Pepper**

Black as the night.  
Light on his feet.  
Quick as a bird in flight.  
Have known him for quite a while.  
He always gives me a smile.  
Moving with such deliberate intent.  
His gracious energy seems never spent.  
It was love at first sight, when I caught his glance.  
I'd smother him with kisses, if I ever got a chance.  
The exuberance for life is what caught my eye.  
The look of him—how could one deny?  
To run with him in the wind...  
you'd have to be quick as lightning.  
And oh—how he can make my heart sing.  
What a bundle of love, and he's tough...  
Because he's made of the right stuff.  
Does not run...with a run. He moves with a  
Quick pounce. Movement—as "though" he's late.  
Goes where he goes with a precious bounce.  
Pepper moves as quick as a breeze.  
He doesn't even come up to my knees.  
Pepper baby...now with only one eye.  
Our Maker will guide you—don't you cry!  
My heart is yours Pepper. Friendship runs deep.  
You may think I'm crazy. Pepper's a dog.  
I'm in love with you Pepper... a love to keep.

Athena Morris

### **Coconut Baseball**

I saunter along the coast  
My tootsies embedded in the tiny grains  
Until the next lift  
    then I am free to choose my direction  
I choose to stay the course

It is timeless here  
    although time has made its mark since the very beginning  
How much our world has changed?  
    about as much as I have  
infant, child, teenager, young lady, Woman

In the distance are two boys and one girl playing baseball  
The leaf of the palm now a bat  
The coconut a ball  
The Atlantic Ocean a pitcher's mound

I join the game  
Laughing, running, tagging  
Rounding my way towards home.

## **Native**

Willingly I stroll  
Living in the moment  
Freedom

Open  
Beige and blue  
Tender breezes whisper in my ear

I am  
Exhilarated from the sun's rays  
Encased in love

I lie at the edge  
The sand is hard  
I am wet

The wave's motion slowly losing its force after its long journey  
    across the ocean  
I am imprinted in the earth until the next wave comes in  
I relax, feeling the heat, sweat rolls down my neck

I can see the brightness, even with my eyes closed  
I sense something near me  
I look and see the native, crawling sideways away from me

I smile, I give myself to this day, I am living, I am life

Brandon Hayes

**“Scars”**

These scars  
I have  
The knife  
I use to make these scars  
These scars  
Are a reminder  
Of the past  
The pain  
The love  
I lost  
These  
Scars remain  
On my body  
Forever  
Till they are healed over  
But they won't ever  
Heal over  
Cuz these scars  
Cuts are deep  
So deep into my skin  
So much blood lost  
That pool of blood  
On the floor  
Reminding me  
Of the past  
That I have faced  
I'm not strong enough  
To let go of the past  
These scars  
Stay with me forever  
The worst scars  
I have are on my heart  
These scars  
but these scars  
make me stronger everyday  
facing new obstacles

## Jeff Anderson, Carrie Rice, and Isaac Thomas

### Work

*after Sherman Alexie's "Elegies"*

This is a poem for all the people who have ever worked. This is a poem for all the people who have worked for McDonalds and have ever flipped a burger onto their head. This is a poem for all the people who have spilled hot grease on themselves. This is a poem for all the people who gain weight when they constantly eat the McDonalds food.

This is a poem for all the people who have ever worked at Wal-Mart and stood there all day just greeting people. This is a poem for all the people who go around and collect all the buggies. This is a poem for all the people who walk around and stock shelves all day.

This is a poem for all the people who have ever worked on a cattle farm and have ever gotten kicked by a cow. This is a poem for all the people who have ever spilled the bucket of milk. This is a poem for all the people who have been pinned up against a fence.

This is a poem for all the people who have ever worked at a car dealership and have never sold a single car. This is a poem for all the people who have accidentally scratched one of the cars. This is a poem for all the people who have ever been in a crash during a test drive.

This is a poem for all the people who have ever worked at Pizza Hut and have ever messed up an order. This is a poem for all the people have ever burnt their hand on the oven. This is a poem for all the people who have ever slipped on a wet floor.

This is a poem for all the people who have ever worked at Go-Mart and been held at gunpoint. This is a poem for all the people who sell cigarettes to underage people. This is a poem for all the people who have ever forgotten how to open up the cash register.

This is a poem for all the people who have ever worked in a communion wafer factory. This is a poem for all the people who

have ever taken a wafer. This is a poem for all the people who have ever spit on a wafer. This is a poem for all the people who have ever sneezed on a wafer.

This is a poem for all the people who have ever been a teacher and smacked a student. This is a poem for all the teachers who have ever been bent over their desk picking up papers. This is a poem for all the teachers who have ever been locked in a storage closet.

This is a poem for all the people who have ever worked at a print shop and lost their fingers to the paper cutter. This is a poem for all the people who have ever fallen into a batch of ink. This is a poem for all the people who have ever gotten a paper cut.

## Shane Lehman

### Answer

A ghost paces restlessly at his post at the bottom of the hill. His job is to ask every traveler that comes along this path a random question. The ghost is very knowledgeable, for he has experienced life, death, and undeath. He believes that asking travelers pointless questions is futile, but the ghost is dutiful, and like Sisyphus, continues with his endless task.

A little girl is walking with her cow down a worn road when suddenly a ghost appears. The little girl is unafraid and smiles at the ghost. A sudden smell of ash and death fills the ghost's incorporeal nose. He ignores the smell and asks, "Why oh why is your animal's hide marred with black spots?"

The little girl takes a moment before responding. "Why do you ask about my cow's black spots? Why didn't you ask about the white spaces around the spots?"

Amused, the ghost gives the girl a condescending smirk and says, "I don't really know. The first thing I saw was the cow's black spots and it drew my gaze."

Now it is the girl's turn to smile, but her smile holds only sadness. "I feel sorry for you Mr. Ghost", she says as she walks up to him. She goes to give the ghost a sympathetic pat on the shoulder, but her hands pass through his empty self. With a resigned nod of her head, the girl continues walking her path up the hill, towing her cow and the smell of ash and death with her. The ghost turns and watches the odd pair walk up the hill, while pondering the curious conversation that he just had with the little girl. A spark of revelation begins to flicker in the ghost's head, but like a spark that doesn't have any tinder, it quickly fizzles out, leaving nothing but smoke.

"Bah, that was one simple girl", the late-Father Stephen says to himself. With a shake of his head, he heads back to his post to await the next traveler that will surely be coming, so he can ask more pointless random questions.

Jade Nichols

**untitled**





Liza Brenner

**Murmillo with the Lions**



## Evolution of the Pirate



Zeke Bonnet

Untitled





## Untitled



Untitled



Sarah Normant

**Away from Me**



Field of Reminiscence





## Surrender





Athena Morris

**Puerto Rico**



## Night of the Living Dead



Melissa Gish

Her First Loves



Promises She Kept



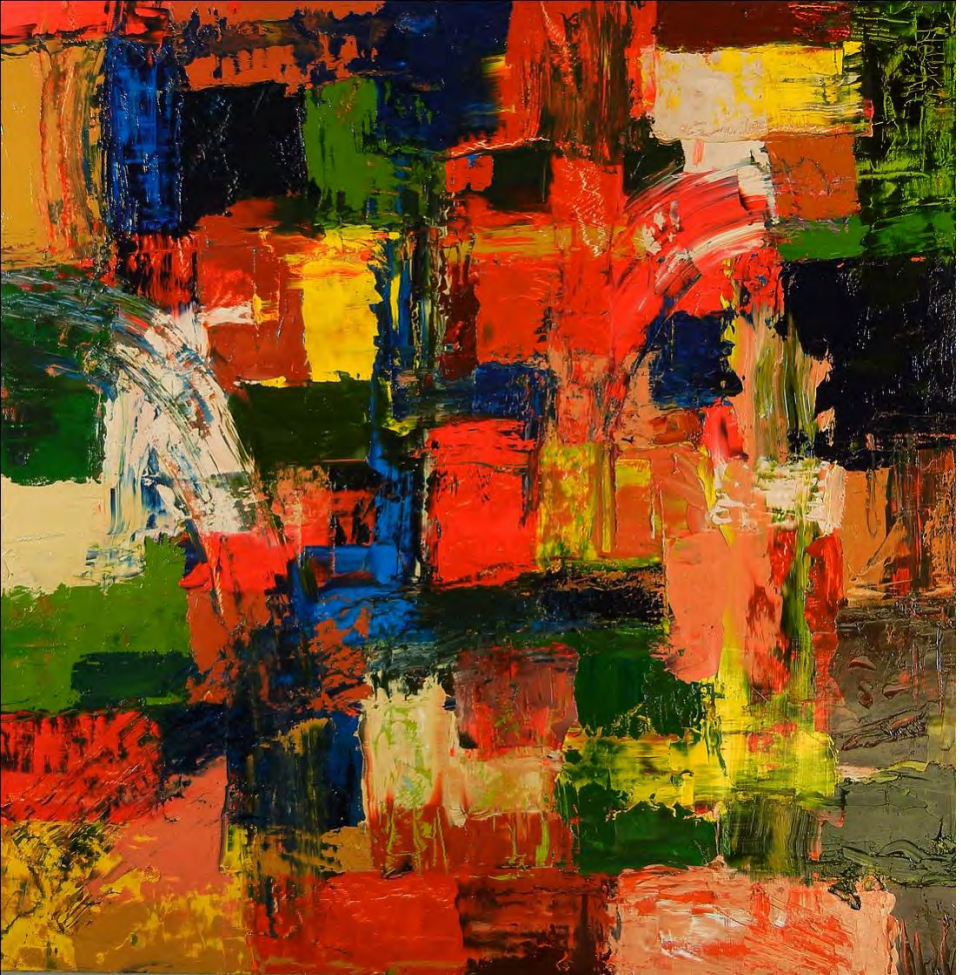


Holly Wright

**Break Through**



south Bound



**Sand in the Water in water**





Megan-Lynnette Rollins

**Beachcomber**





The Door to Aphrodite's Office



## The Artist, Candid



Sara Wise

**Dynamic**



## Flash





## Frozen



Heather Coleman

**lingering**



## Nature in Black and Gold



Whitney Stalnaker

Frank's Place





## Left Behind



## Lonely View



## Seclusion





Ashley Smallwood

Wolves



## Bread Truck



# Hannah Seckman

## **Soldier Blood**

A thrill of terror shot through Rab. "Sam!" he screamed. Images ran through his mind. So clear, so painful. . .

The sky was like ice, blue and white at the same time, with no clouds in sight. It was beautiful, almost perfect. But then the falcons came, screaming out their warning of what would fall from that beautiful, ice-like sky. The blood came anyway though, like red paint on a white canvas. The bugles would sound, but it was too late for that now, too late...

And when it was over, the land was splattered with red, like someone had taken a paint brush to it. It was no longer beautiful, and only the ugly, horrible sight of death remained.

"Sam!" Rab yelled out the name over and over again. The small hills of Gettysburg, Pennsylvania were thick with the smoke from the cannons and gunfire that had just taken place. Bodies lay tangled on the ground and the dirt was stained red with blood.

"Sam!" Rab continued to call out. There was no answer, no other voices, no one else around. Just a young man, staggering along like a drunk, crying out the name of his Confederate soldier brother. Rab finally stopped, and sank to his knees. His hand reached up to his shoulder, where a bullet lay embedded in his skin. A trickle of blood slowly flowed out of the hole. He had been fighting for three days, and on the third and last day, he had been shot. The bullet had to come out now. Rab pulled his pocket-knife from the pocket of the torn, bloody, Union army uniform that barley hung from his body. Dread ran through him.

"Oh God, please help me," he pleaded. He raised that knife ever so slowly and then ran it into his shoulder. Pain shot through his body. Screams crawled up his throat, poured out his lips, and echoed into the empty space around him. After digging the pocket-knife around in his shoulder, the bullet finally fell with a small thud at his knees. Rab dropped the knife, dark to the hilt. His hand fell in his lap, slick with blood. His shoulder began to bleed again, this time like a small stream, covering the whole right side of his body, making him feel dizzy.

When most of the pain and bleeding had passed, Rab ripped half his sleeve off and wound it tightly around the wound. He leaned back and settled against a rock. He raised his chin so his face met the sky. Wind blew through Rab's dark brown hair, which hung just a little past his ears. His navy blue eyes stared straight ahead, viewing the battlefield of Gettysburg.

"I have to find Sam," Rab said, suddenly. He pushed himself up, groaning with pain. For hours he wandered, his feet dragging behind him, until he tripped and fell over another soldier, laying face down. Rab pushed himself to his knees and then carefully rolled over the other man. Rab found himself staring into the lifeless, brown eyes of his brother.

"Sam," he whispered. He picked up the body and gave it a slight shake. "Sam, wake up," Rab repeated. He spotted a bullet hole in Sam's chest, with dried blood running down his uniform. "Sam," Rab cried, pulling his brother up close and sobbing into his chest. When Rab's last tears had fallen, he gently lay Sam back down.

Rab stood up, looking into the sunset. His tears were replaced with fire burning in his eyes. He shrieked a curse at the sky, his voice shaking with rage. Sam didn't deserve to die. What good does fighting do anyway? It just gets people killed. Brothers killing brothers.

Rab stopped yelling. He was only a silhouette, standing in the midst of that golden sky. There was nothing he could do to change that. So he lay down next to his dead Confederate brother, watching him until his breath grew shallow, and Rab died next to Sam. His soldier blood surrounded him that night, while the sky was like ice, blue and white at the same time, with no clouds in sight. It was beautiful, almost perfect.

## Richard Schmitt

### Still Life

*“Photographers deal in things which are continually vanishing and when they have vanished there is no contrivance on earth which can make them come back.” - Henri Cartier-Bresson*

After I stopped taking pictures I saw the one I should not have let get away. She sat in a French restaurant I chanced into during a late afternoon break from a conference in Chicago. Seeking relief from sales rep banter and new product orientation, I slipped between heavy curtains hung inside the glass door and saw her sitting against a wall, beneath a portrait of a young boy and his dog, a signed Cartier-Bresson print mounted in a wide creamy mat and thin black frame. The boy wore a striped shirt like a Mediterranean fisherman and held with two hands his shorthaired terrier surging forward as if to burst from the picture onto her table. The dining room was tiny with adequate, diffused lighting, and our eyes locked immediately. There was no time to duck and shy. She wore black, bare neck strung with pearls; the wallpaper at her back was bordello-burgundy. Just above her left shoulder the portrait of the boy and dog washed with grays and blurred edges in soft rural sunlight. Of course she was with someone; this wasn't the type of place one dines alone.

She looked exactly as she had the day we met outside a theater in college. Our eyes locked and loaded that day too. “You're that barmaid,” I'd said, “from the play.”

“Barmaid?” She laughed at me. “Who uses a word like barmaid?”

Four years went by in an elated gasp. Our student ghetto apartment piled with prints of her. Color, black & white, sepia toned, hand colored. Was any first love as recorded? After graduation I built portfolios, applied to RIT and Cal Tech, while she continued to barmaid in plays. I never used that word again. I never stopped shooting her, pursuing her, trying to capture what I felt, imagined fleeting moments, idealized expectations. People liked the work and I sold some, showed in a university gallery, and she was embarrassed. But my photos never did her justice. I was never satisfied. I clicked and clicked; thinking if I shot enough one would emerge, arrive, as strong and perfect as the way I felt about her.



When she said: “Can you stop?” I couldn’t. When she said: “Does everything have to be documented?” I clicked. “Recorded?” I said *don’t move!* “Captured?” When she said she was going home to Baltimore, to think about things, it was clear she’d already thought about things. Things I missed while watching through a viewfinder.

Now I find her here, framed faultlessly behind a small round table covered with white cloth against the wine-colored wall, with the pale portrait over her shoulder, and the dog surging and the boy straining and slightly backlit strands of her hair drawn by static electricity to the velour wallpaper. A ceiling-to-floor drapery hung to her right, forming a closed vertical border, thick brocade silk tied as if at the waist with a ropy tassel, a decorative device to shield dining room from bar. Her other side was wide open—the leather benchseat running like a horizon down the wall. She formed the axis point, joining up-down and across, making the world round. It was an off-balance frame, the hanging drapery clinched in the middle formed supplementary angles intersecting the ruler line of the benchseat, Cartier-Bresson’s dog about to spring over her shoulder, the startled boy holding him back. Why did this work? It shouldn’t work. There is no “correct” unbalanced framing structure in any textbook, this one would need its own chapter to explain, the way chemistry sometimes works without explicable logic. There is an unlikely *juxtaposition*, a situation, a reaction, say for instance two people meet on a sidewalk, one says an archaic word and four years goes by in the click of a shutter, then silence.

There wasn’t time to think and no alternative but to approach the table. The room was tight; I turned sideways squeezing between the backs of chairs. She was locked in against the wall by the table, a white napkin tucked into her lap, the tablecloth covering her legs. She’d just taken a sip of wine, her tongue swished in her mouth, her throat bobbed, the glass quivered as she set it down. Her companion saw or felt the shift in her demeanor—he leaned back, questioning, then his head turned, following the line of her eyes and he saw me standing next to him looking down at her. She settled back in the seat, slacked her shoulders, opened her mouth and her hands as if to catch the falling sky.

“Wow,” she said. Not *What* or *Where* or *Whoa*—no questions, just “Wow”, as in, *I would never have thought...*

“Hello,” I said. “And yes, wow.”

There was a pause about as long as four years. I guess we both thought something like *How is it that you are here and I feel the need to explain?*

“I just happened in here,” I said.

Her mouth hung open but nothing came out. Her companion said, “Us too.”

*We* too, I thought, and glanced at him, then at her. “Are you in Chicago now?”

“Well yeah,” she said, “I mean, no.”

The guy laughed too loud. I looked at him and knew I’d seen him before. This wasn’t just any guy, this was a famous actor. He wore a blue denim jacket and a western bolo tie with a choker stone too green to be turquoise. *Jade*, with hand-pounded silver tips. “This is Dennis,” she said to me. Then to him, “Roger is an old friend from college.” She took up her napkin and dabbed her lips and looked at the wine colored stain on the napkin.

“College!” He said. We shook, he didn’t stand. Maybe I was wrong, I didn’t know any actors named Dennis.

“What are you doing, *here?*” She said.

“Conference,” I said, shrugging my shoulders. “Coincidence, I guess.”

“Weird,” she said.

“I heard you were in New York.”

“Yes,” she said. “Are still taking pictures?”

“Yes, well, no.”

The inside pocket of my jacket held a tiny digital that weighed almost nothing, a prototype handed to me that very afternoon, *SlimShot!* The camera was as small as a credit card and I wanted to take it out and shoot right away before something happened to corrupt the scene. It was the exquisitely disjointed photo that was flustering me as much as who was in it. But the scene was being

corrupted as we spoke, every word drove the picture of her sitting there, balancing perfectly an unbalanced frame, further from possible capture.

“Actually, I’m in sales now.”

She nodded. Not even trying to comprehend. Her companion said, “Care to join us?” He looked around as if I must be with someone, and moved as if to rise, meaning to join her on the benchseat which would unequivocally kill the picture, disrupt the unlikely equilibrium, and utterly ruin it.

“No, no,” I said, nearly touching his shoulder. “Don’t move.”

He was a big man, a formidable presence; possibly I’d seen him in crime thrillers, a famous man who’d be in tabloids with women, a wealthy man with influence, the type of man they let into a place like this without a proper jacket and tie. There was no way to join them, that too would corrupt the picture, if he switched to her side, put his arm around her, got closer to her, if anything at all moved, the precise picture would vanish. It was a photo within a photo, the frame was there but failed without her to complete it, the blood-like backdrop, the little boy and dog, the silk drapery heavy with tassels, and she, a way I’d never seen her. After all the ways I’d seen her, here finally by chance, a perfect picture. A life changing picture. A picture like this might have kept me in the game, led to another, to assignments, to jobs not grounded in speculation and freelancing or the trivialities of sales conferences, a shot like this would have provided the life I imagined for us when we were in college.

The waiter cut in around me and set escargot boiling in a black cauldron down in the middle of the table with two tiny forks. It was clear they meant to share.

“I’m meeting someone in the bar,” I said, retreating. She stared at me, sensing the lie. “Colleagues,” I said, “from the conference.”

“Yes,” she said, and looked down at the bubbling black snails.

“I’ll stop back,” I said, pointing to the bar, walking backwards, bumping chairs, hands out in front of me, as if to say, *don’t move*. Both of them watched me go.

Behind the drapery I stood, trying to breathe. There were tall bar tables with stools, very cramped, a fat man and his wife were drunk on wine. "Try this," he said, winking at me. I was shoulder to shoulder with him. "Argentine, \$22 bucks a bottle." He put his hand to the side of his mouth. "Better than the triple-digit French shit they sell here."

I tried it. Drank right from his glass. It was good. But I needed something stronger. "Remy Martin," I said to the bartender, and recalled the word barmaid, and the theater that day, and every picture I ever took of her. I still have a portfolio in a closet behind my hang-up clothes, a box of contact sheets, books of negatives, and old blocky Nikons so outmoded now. The prints are flawed, vacant, incomplete, nowhere near as alive as the shot sitting five or six feet from me in the dining room.

I wanted that picture. I wanted her perfectly framed by geometric quirk. I wanted to capture everything about her. Even when I haven't taken a picture since she left. Even if she screamed *can you stop!*

Truth is, her companion was in the way. His fat cowboy head would obscure the vital camera angle. Maybe if he went to the bathroom. I'd keep an eye out, watch for my chance, maybe I'll shoot him, with a gun I mean, then jump from behind the drapery brandishing the new *SlimShot* not even on the market yet and yell: *Don't move, baby, don't move now!*

I wouldn't dream of it. But of course I did dream it. And other things like it. Over and over. Over the years.

"Another Remy please."

I have dreamt of the perfect subject set into the perfect frame, the perfect love alive in the perfect life, the one that got away. Could I live now with a picture so perfect? So fragile, unstructured, dismantled, unhinged, demented, damned without reason, so easily corrupted. I don't even own a gun. Cartier-Bresson said: "To photograph is to hold one's breath, when all faculties converge to capture fleeting reality." My breath has been held too long. I let it out. I got up to move around the drapery. Of course they were gone.

I went to the bathroom. There were no notes on the walls, no clues. Maybe a scrap of paper slipped to the waiter? I stepped back into the dining room and drew my *SlimShot*. I pointed it at the wall and clicked multiple times, once even with flash. The well-heeled patrons eyeballed me nervously. The maître d' came up behind me. Touched my shoulder. "Something I can help you with, Sir?"

"Stand back!" I pointed the *SlimShot* at him.

I stood watching the empty frame, her ghost staining the spot on the wall, a strand of hair clinging to the wallpaper. "Sir, I don't think..." the maître d' indicated the other diners. Clearly I was not the precise complement to enhance a fine French dining experience, a signed Cartier-Bresson print, a famous actor, a one-hundred dollar bottle of wine left on their table barely touched, no phone number scrawled serendipitously on a cocktail napkin, nothing left but the hollow frame, no way to record the picture it begged, no way to go back and retouch, rearrange, set new props. This was a found photo with a hole in it, me, I was the hole, the part that couldn't be centered, balanced, put in place. "Sir, I must insist..."

"Okay, okay. I'm moving now. *I'm moving!*"

On the sidewalk, a doorman under the awning. "Cab, sir?"

Later at my hotel, head hung over shots of Wild Turkey and mugs of crying beer, pondering the fleeting picture, I displayed for my colleagues the *SlimShot* shots. "I tested it out," I told them.

"On a blank wall?" They laughed. "There's nothing there! You're a real ace photographer, Rog. You missed you calling." We all laughed, me too.

I will keep these shots. *I am talking to you now.* I'll take an old picture of you, scan it into your new frame. When you are famous on the big screen I'll make a print matted in cream and framed in steel to hang in some sun-blasted room and past and present will meet, not randomly on a sidewalk with unlikely words, or in a restaurant with strangers, but in a decisive moment clicked in the heart.

David Moss

### **Big Frog Little Pond**

There once was a little pond. It could have been near where you live, and maybe far away. This pond was in the town limits and many people discarded their papers and trash into the quaint little pond. Living conditions for the fish and frogs weren't the best; however, it was all they had. There was also a new frog that had traveled many a pond and was truly ready to settle down and this pond looked like it may be the right one.

Big Frog came to this pond and had a very hard time finding a lily pad that no one had claimed; the other frogs were not very friendly and were not going to share lily pads with this stranger. He did, however, find an old dilapidated pad that no one else had put a claim to. It was at the far side of the pond that had over growth from trees and was very dark with little sunshine. There was much pond scum here and the smell was not very pleasant. Also there was trash floating on the water and some empty cans and jugs.

Big Frog moved onto his pad and decided it needed an upgrade or he would have to find someplace to move to. He asked himself what he could do to improve the pad and make it livable and possibly make his pad the envy of the other frogs. It would serve the other frogs just right if he had the best pad in the pond. Maybe he could put in a living room and add some small furniture and some pictures. All these ideas that he had would require financing but how would he get the money to improve his pad.

Big Frog was cleaning the trash away from his pad when he noticed a wet, soaked news paper that had an advertisement from the local bank that said they made loans for home improvements. This was a good lead and he decided that he would get himself a loan. So off to the bank he went. It didn't take long for Big Frog to find the bank and enter into the secretary's office where he met a very nice looking woman. The name plate said her name was Paddy Whack. She was a little concerned for she was not used to frogs coming into the bank.

Big Frog explained to her that he needed money to improve his new home and he had read the ad in the paper stating this bank made loans for home improvement. The secretary proceeded to

tell him the bank had a policy. All loans had to be secured with collateral, without collateral he would get no loan. The frog didn't have any collateral on him so he went sadly back to the pond to see if he could find some collateral.

Big Frog decided that in the bottom of the pond he might find something that had some value to it so he looked and looked. At the bottom of the pond were old tires, cans bottles and lots of junk—too much to name. While he was searching the bottom he brushed away some dirt and found a little vase that had some interesting curves and pretty colors. This he thought must have some value so he swam to the surface and off to the bank to see if this could be considered collateral.

Big Frog went into the bank and the same nice looking woman was there to greet him. She asked him if he had some collateral to obtain his loan. Big Frog showed the woman the little vase that he had wrapped up in an old newspaper. She examined the vase and looked very doubtful so she took the vase into the office of the president of the bank. She explained to the president about the frog and the loan and also showed him the little vase. This is his reply. "That's a nick-nack Paddy Whack give the Frog a loan." Oh, by the way, the frog ended up with the best lily pad in the little pond.



## Contributors' Notes

**Jeffrey S. Anderson** is from Canvas, WV.

**Autumn Carter** is a Glenville State College alumni and former editor of the *Trillium*. She lives in Jackson, Mississippi.

**Heather Coleman** is a sophomore at Glenville State College majoring in Sociology with a minor in Art. She plans to become an Art Therapist.

**Wayne de Rosset** is the Chairperson of the Department of Language and Literature at Glenville State College. Born and raised in New Jersey, he has spent his adult life in West Virginia. Professor de Rosset has been teaching for longer than he can remember.

**Ashley Gish** is a transfer student at Glenville State College aspiring toward great journalism.

**Melissa Gish** teaches English Foundations at Glenville State College. She tries to collect and preserve historical artifacts in creative ways by making what she calls "story boxes."

**Sheila Harrouff** is a student at Glenville State College.

**Sue Herwat** is from Gassaway, WV.

**Andrea Hollander**, who was a visiting writer at Glenville in October, is the editor of *When She Named Fire: An Anthology of Contemporary Poetry by American Women* and the author of four full-length poetry collections: *Landscape with Female Figure: New & Selected Poems*, 1982 – 2012 (to be released this summer), *Woman in the Painting*, *The Other Life*, and *House Without a Dreamer*, which won the Nicholas Roerich Poetry Prize. Her poems and essays have appeared in numerous anthologies, college textbooks, and literary journals such as *Poetry*, *The Georgia Review*, *Shenandoah*, *FIELD*, and *Creative Nonfiction*. For twenty-two years she was the Writer-in-Residence at Lyon College, which awarded her the Lamar Williamson Prize for Excellence in Teaching. She lives in Portland, Oregon.

**John Hoppenthaler** is an Associate Professor of English/Creative Writing at East Carolina University. "Home Movie" first appeared in *Lives Of Water* (Carnegie Mellon UP, 2013); "California Stars in North Carolina" first appeared in *Spillway*; "Dance" first appeared in *Tar River Poetry*; "The Way to a Man's Heart" first appeared in *Waccamaw*; "Triolet for Joseph" first appeared in *Christianity & Literature*.

**Jonathan Minton** is an associate professor in Glenville State College's Department of Language and Literature. He is the faculty advisor to the

*Trillium*, and editor of the literary journal *Word For/Word* (www.wordforword.info).

**Athena Morris** is originally from NYC. She has been married to the love of her life, Gary, for 21 years. They have three children. She is a PreK-6th grade Education Major at Glenville State College.

**Sarah Normant** is a Studio Art Major at Glenville State College. Her favorite mediums to use in artwork are charcoal, watercolor, and pencil. She enjoys horror films, samurai movies, and antiques.

**Rachael Peckham** is the author of *Muck Fire* (Spring Garden Press) and the recipient of the 2010 Robert Watson Poetry Award; the 2006 Briar Cliff Review Nonfiction Prize; and the 2010-2011 Distinguished Artists & Scholars Award at Marshall University. Her scholarly and creative work appeared most recently in *Composition Studies*, *Diagram*, *Dos Passos Review*, *Edge*, and *Under the Sun*.

**Carrie Rice** is from Ferry, WV.

**Garrett Rinehard** is currently a sophomore majoring in Criminal Justice at Glenville State College. He is originally from Cumberland Maryland. His poem was written after taking the Via Ferrata rock climbing trip with GSC's High Adventure club.

**Megan-Lynnette Rollins**, editor, is from Gassaway, WV. She's double majoring in English and psychology; she is passionate about the wellbeing of others.

**Richard Schmitt** is an Associate Professor of Creative Writing and English at West Virginia Wesleyan College.

**Whitney Stalnaker** graduated from Glenville State College in 2011 and now serves as Hidden Promise Coordinator for GSC. In her spare time, she conducts historical tours at the Trans-Allegheny Lunatic Asylum in Weston, WV, and volunteers to assist with its restoration and preservation. All of her photographs featured in this issue were taken at the asylum.

**Chris Summers** graduated from Glenville State College in 2011 and presently works for the American subsidiary of RM Auctions, the world's largest collector car auction house, as a writer and copy editor based out of the Blenheim, Ontario, office. Chris served as *Trillium* editor for two years and has contributed for six. This year's contributions are, as usual, for Rachel.

**Isaac Thomas** is from Wirt County, WV. He is studying at Glenville State College to be a history teacher.