

Submitted–Inspired
Art–Poetry/Poetry–Art Pairs
ArtAsPoetryAsArt 2026
Presented by the Lakeshore Artists Guild



- 20 poets submitted 20 poems
- 20 artists submitted 20 art works
- Three months later, they've each created new poems and artwork, "inspired" by a submitted artwork or poem
- The result is 40 pairs (80 pieces of work) of "submitted" and "inspired" works!
- The Submitted-Inspired pairings of poetry and art will be displayed in an exhibit lasting from July 13th–August 21st at the Manitowoc Library in Manitowoc, WI
- Thank you to all of the poets and artists who participated!

Happy reading!

SUBMITTED POEM

“A Promenade in the Morning”

By Paula Schulz

*“ . . . the sun . . . is a promenade in the morning,”
Wallace Stevens*

Just-daybreak and first light blesses the living room all
around.

The black lacquered picture frame offers
a writing spider whose script is a gliss

of radiance. Beside this: a gleam
on the chinoiserie pot. Forty seven

years and still my engagement ring doubles
the sun like a psalm, like love twined, like

a promise spoken twice. Vermeer’s brilliant points
studded in the carved wood of my grandmother’s

chaise lounge. Ceiling lights reflected in night-
dark windows. Vectored sheen on the silk lamp-shade.

INSPIRED ART

“Kaleidoscope of the Morning”

MEDIUM

By Mike Freeman

(portfolio site: mefreeman.artspan.com)



Copper-gold apostrophes that stand in line
down a baroque frame, this same grand frame

reflected in the mirror—blazing like
the gate of heaven that is phasing in

and out of focus, always there but seldom
noticed. I live in a circuit of light.

SUBMITTED ART

“Joy”

Mixed media collage

By Cheryl Mahowald

INSPIRED POEM

“Joy”

By Anneliese Finke

(portfolio site: <https://linktr.ee/abfinke>)

If the heart is a garden,
let it be a wild and open one—
one where you can see the marks
of care and tending—watering,
dark mulch to protect the roots—



but that is also a little overgrown,
plants spilling over into each other,
tangling and overlapping their greens,
their cacophony of flowers.

Not abandoned, not the gardener giving up,
but with one who knows the limits
of their charge, and gives their work
the love they can—

then, standing, steps back
to see what they created
and what they did not create

SUBMITTED POEM

“Privilege”

By Evelyn Hawkins

I don't know how to tell
my story

INSPIRED ART

“In the Mud of My Own Misdeeds”

Watercolor on cut paper with wax finish

By Julie San Felipe

without getting my hands
dirty—
scrounging about elbow-deep
in the mud
of my own misdeeds.
Over and over and over and over
I cower
while the invisible storm rages
overhead.
Once upon a time
there was a princess
trapped in a tower.
Have you heard this one before?
My mother said
that I was snow-white, raven-haired,
red-lipped—
so I
built
my own
tower.

They never tell you
that guilt is heavier than stone.
That you can water pride
hydroponically, and it grows
just fine
looking down at all the world below.
The mud pulls at my limbs—
hypocrite that I am
I try and fail
to escape.

It's only when the world is burning
that we feel so alone.
Can we write an ugly truth
with beautiful lies?



Serendipity is a noose
the prince rides on a stolen horse
the tower is
empty.
Here is a story
about me.
Once upon a time
there was a river—
it said “to drink is oblivion”
and I drank
for all of us
over and over and over
while the castles in the sky
burned red.

SUBMITTED ART

“Happy Hybrid”

Printed wood grain with wax pastel, fabric, beads, wool, feathers

By Jennifer Anne

(portfolio site: www.ArtOut-There.com)

INSPIRED POEM

“Measuring Wingspan with Texture”

By Jenna Rindo

Against the grain with scraps of burlap
the artist dilutes wax pastels from violet
toward indigo then blends
and smudges for a depth of nuance.

His wings are covered with modified
hairs overlapping like shingles--he unfolds and opens



from closed chrysalis--a bit groggy from his torpor.
He hesitates--cautious before spreading his wings.

She looks to fuel her creative practice
with lines enjambed with sweet hydration. She places
beads in three dimensions--stitches them toward
an auspicious angle.

Behind his eyespots he rests--protected
from predators--confronted with a wide
spectrum of choices--which color gradations will flow
with the sweetest nectar?

She searches for a floating texture--a material
sensitive and flexible--attaches feather remnants
so that this happy hybrid can navigate
through the wind's fluid directions.

His structure of wing veins
Her found materials pinned yet
collaged with an open expression
become art's fourth dimension.

SUBMITTED POEM

"Winterhardiness"

By Christy Schwan

INSPIRED ART

"Winter Birds"

Watercolor and ink

By Amy Kvidera

Late December storm brews, swirls drifting snow.
Icy gusts batter dried-up perennials
whose seedheads were left standing for birds.
Coppery leaves cling to stoic maple tree.

Bitter gusts abuse dried-up perennials,
bruise wings, frost beaks and claws.
Stoic maple tree holds fast to coppery leaves,
hunkers down against blizzard attack.

Wings bruise, beaks and claws freeze.
We shelter behind glazed windows,
hunker down against blizzard assault,
post photos of nature's onslaught.

We shelter behind iced windows,
warmed by our gas fireplace,
post photos of Mother Nature's onslaught,
praise the winterhardiness of wildlife.

Staying cozy by our gas fireplace,
a late December storm swirls drifting snow.
We admire the winterhardiness of wildlife,
as seedheads left for birds scatter.



SUBMITTED ART

"Morning Shore"

Digital photography

By Mary T. Wagner

(portfolio site: <http://www.marytwagner.com>)



INSPIRED POEM

"Solitude, a Canvas"

By Carolyn Vargo

My name is Clara after my great aunt long passed.
I'm standing alone beside the Wisconsin River in Portage.
Here, I gather memories. Here, weeks ago, I walked
with my friends Jeanette and Chet who gathered
pebbles to remember the day.

Above, in the clouds I see a salamander, a turtle, rabbits,
a duck, a fish, and two men with beards, one severe,
the other comical.

To my right stands the Watch Tower.
I imagine the watchman alone sitting by his fire
gauging the river's swell, ready to sound the siren
warning nearby households of the rising water.

On the bench left of the tower,
a man in well-worn clothing,
a flannel shirt, jeans and a baseball cap
pulls a sandwich and a book from his backpack.
He looks up at a biker who looks just like Jim Gaffigan, who
smiles at flannel shirt, then moves on. Another man,
thin, but not tall, wearing jeans and a Portage t-shirt,
pushes a baby carriage followed by a child dancing on tiptoes.

In the river, elongated Islands line up like flatboats or canoes
full of trees I call kin, mostly boxelders and willows.
These trees and the birds, squirrels, butter-and-egg flowers,
forget-me-nots, violets, and mullein, are all my kin.

Behind me is a path lined with mulberries.
An old couple wearing binoculars, jeans and ovenbird t-shirts
stop to pick berries. They see blackbirds, cowbirds,
a pair of cranes, two eagles, barn and tree swallows,
and gulls.

Farther back past the canal and over a bridge
is a garden and bench in front of a library. On the bench
is a plaque which reads: "Don't cry because it's over! Smile
because it happened!"

I can feel those who once passed here as if they remain picking
berries and stones. The path is full of people and birds who
were here yesterday and before. One by one, they leave.
Don't be sad because they have left. Be happy they were here.

Quotation from 'Bright Days' by Ludwig Jacobowski.

SUBMITTED POEM

"Spilt Holy Water"

By Tara Huck

(portfolio site: <https://substack.com/@divinetimewithtara>)

INSPIRED ART

"Goodman Park Falls"

Colored pencil

By Barbara Zipperer

(portfolio site: www.barbzippererart.com)

What if our tears are spilt holy water
—blessed droplets, from within—

forming streams of the Holy Spirit
cleansing us from pain and sin?

To heal!
To renew!

If that were true, if tears were
saving waters, would there still
be shame in leaking our emotions?

‘Cause ain’t it so, that we all could use
some sort of redemption, a kind of
Reconciliation?

Suppose, tears release the Holy Ghost
—salted pure, collected whole—
set free from inside.

Shame, then, is not the spilling
waters, but those stoic upper lips.

Forgiveness pours
from openness.

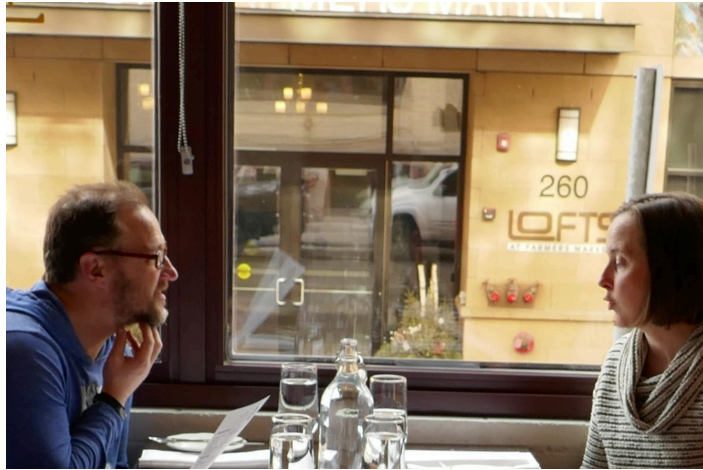


SUBMITTED ART

"Brunch at Saint Dinette"

Color photograph

By Robert G. Stetson



INSPIRED POEM

"Sunday Ritual"

By Karen Haley

all week I look forward
to this time with you
uninterrupted
time to connect
before the busywork
of a week
pulls at our sleeves

time to find the
contours of the bands
—elastic as they are
that bind us to
each other

here the things
I want to share
stack patiently
like plates on a shelf
—waiting
today the stack doubles
on itself
closer to toppling

I lean into your margins
to feel the edge of
your attention
but you are distant
your thoughts finding
purchase in other
layers of our space

left to savor warm gold
in morning sun
I hold myself still
in the moment
—open to sunlight
I refocus the lens
of affection
where rays light
on your hair
outline your face
in familiar

—there will be other Sundays

SUBMITTED POEM

“If I Am Made of Light”

By Carrie Sherrill

INSPIRED ART

“Sky on Fire”

Canvas-printed photograph

By Mary T. Wagner

(portfolio site: <http://www.marytwagner.com>)

Let me be starlight in the handle of the Big Dipper
moonlight napping on lapping night waves.
Let me glimmer and glint, sparkle and shine.
Let me reflect and refract, let me dance
through leaded glass, form rainbows
on the east wall in late afternoon slanted sun.

Let me flicker over dinner on a table for two
or shiver in ghostly gloom during a séance.
Let me be the light that teases
morning glories open, the peach light
of dawn, the russet of sunset.

Let me bolt zig-zaggity across summer night sky
or provide a soft aura around a haloed saint.
Let me be the everyday light of the oven
the bedside lamp, the night light in a child's room.
I am ready to burst into a Fourth of July sky
to stutter and bang and disappear into thin air.

But my favorite play spaces are in a firefly's belly
in a red laser pointer gone wild in a professor's hand
on the Christmas tree twinkling
strung with a hundred others, many colors
or in the blinking beacon of Rudolph's GPS nose.

Tonight, if I must be made of light
then let me be Northern. Gaudy green
nudging orchid paint across the dark sky.



Or perhaps, that last glow
in a dying person's room
long after dark
long before morning.
Let me be that light
that guides them
home.

SUBMITTED ART

“The Entertainer”

Watercolor

By Karen Utech

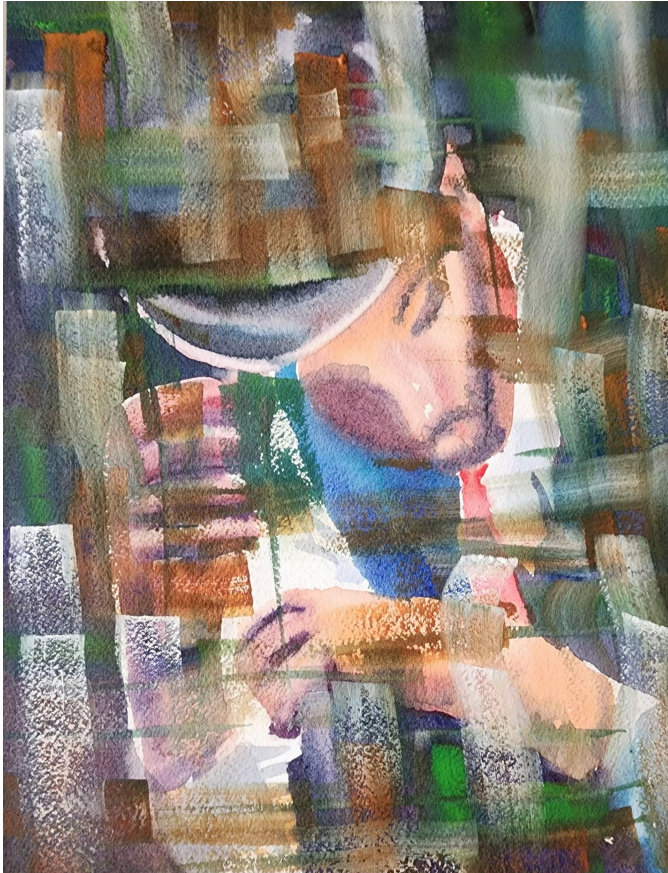
(portfolio site: <https://kutech.faso.com/>)

INSPIRED POEM

“The Listener”

By Peter Sherrill

She remembers it all: the what, when, where and how:
the first time she heard that song, which said all the things
she couldn't say herself: how the words, the melody
the chords set her adrift on that sea of sentiment
as though this singer had been right beside them
heard the music of their love-talk
wove the chords and melody
into a gauze of alluring lyrics
from the mist of a dream;
how love just seemed to rise straight
from the mist of that dream
into those gauzy, alluring lyrics
that fitted the chords and melody



into the music of their love-talk
as though this singer had been there, right beside them
to set her adrift on that sea of sentiment.
She couldn't quite put her hands on how the words, the melody
of that song, the first time she heard it, worked its magic;
but she remembers it all: the what, when, where, why and how.

SUBMITTED POEM

“April Snowstorm”

INSPIRED ART

“Stuck in Place”

By Peter Sherrill

The motel's parking lot is nearly full.
The wind whistles its "take shelter" warning.
The atmosphere is peppered with the soft chatter of distant generators
and the flimsy metallic gnaw of shovels on sidewalks.

We stomp off our boots as we enter the lobby.
Yes, they have a room – once Housekeeping has it ready.
until then, we're pointed to the lounge.

Coffee is cooling in its pump pot. Half a stale bagel waits.
TV weather-guy sports his most-polished penitent smile
as he draws invisible millibars over the weather map.
All those outings, contests, picnics, classes
sigh across the "cancelled" crawler at the bottom of the screen.

Nothing happening in the broadcast area for the next 36 hours.
State police recommend "no travel"
on roads not already closed by drifts or multi-car pileups.
Tomorrow promises more of the same, with temps in the teens
and wind chill in the "you've got to be kidding" range.

He conjures up a promise of rising degrees and an end to the "no-tow"
order,
so vehicles can be resurrected from wherever they never wanted to go:
but not today, not tomorrow. Maybe after that.

TV weather guy surrenders his time to TV news lady
whose perky updates promise that help is on its way
but not until tomorrow at the earliest. Until then

Drypoint/chine collé/acrylic
By Mel Kolstad



stay in, stay safe, stay warm,
and hope your credit card has some credit left.

SUBMITTED ART

“Bookstore Rat”

Acrylic on metal panel

By Michael Shaw

INSPIRED POEM

“Once Upon a Time”

By Maryann Hurtt

a quite adorable
but sadly illiterate rat
named Matilda lived in the walls
of the Carnegie Library
though often did pilgrimages
to Books and More
in *World's Cheese Capital*
bustling downtown
and just like her clan
ate lots of cheese
but Matilda was different
sure she loved cheese
but when she eavesdropped
on story time hours
heard pages turn and children giggle
inhaled that particularly sweet
smell of books
she knew she must learn to read



and indeed she did
and lived happily ever after
Moral of the Story
one might survive on cheese
but to really live
eat cheese and read ferociously
devour words

SUBMITTED POEM

“Mozart Visits Rib Mountain”

By Annette Langlois Grunseth

(portfolio site: www.annettegrunseth.com)

We ride the chairlift together,
I never skied with Mozart before.
Domine eis requiem, he says

INSPIRED ART

“Wolfie’s Glissade”

Oil on canvas

By Joan Emmett

(portfolio site: www.JoanEmmett.com)

Ah, the requiem! I whisper.

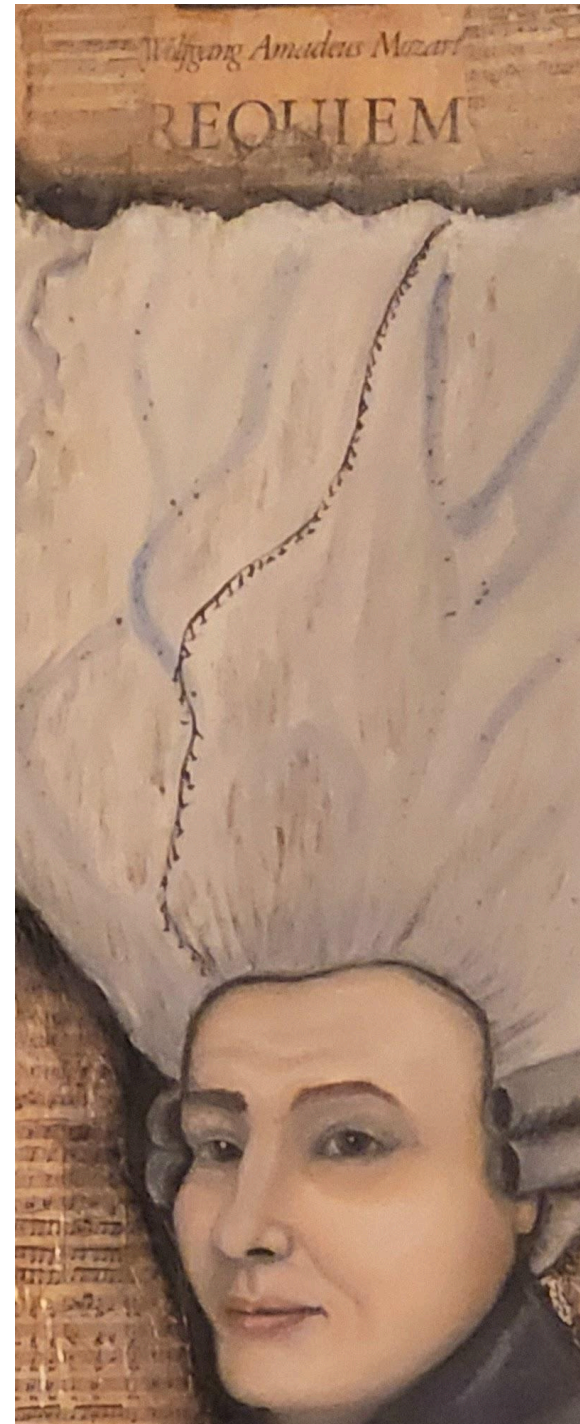
We scan ski runs from the top,
Allegro, don't you think? he says.
I sing a line from the fugue
head down *Birch Run*,
a black-diamond trail. Definitely, *allegro*.

In 4/4 rhythm I carve even turns
to the bottom of the hill,
a line of music dances from head to toes,
Mozart drives every turn.

We ski again in 4/4 time
as I spray powder into the woods,
he at the end of his run of sixteenth notes
and I finish with perfect parallel turns.

We ride up the chair again, music circling us.
Next, we choose *Dusky*, a blue-square intermediate,
perfect for the second movement,
Adagio, he calls.

Wide, graceful turns carve through my hips.
He and I ski until my thighs burn
with a rush of music and wind,
winter sun sinking orange to the west.
Mozart cries out, *Domine eis requiem*.



SUBMITTED ART

“Tuesday in the Garden”

Ink & watercolor

By Lynn R. Peters

(portfolio site: www.lynnpetersart.com)

INSPIRED POEM

“Tuesday in the Garden”

By Marilyn Zelke Windau

No hurry.

No wind today.

The poppies and irises
stretch toward the sky,
seeking wonder.

Ivy greens the stoned silo
with silent strength.

The calm of my garden
gives me pause,
gives me silent peace,
gives me energy
to plant anew.



SUBMITTED POEM

“Fuse”

By Tori Grant Welhouse

(portfolio site: www.torigrantwelhouse.com)

–Originally published by *RockPaperPoem*; nominated for Best of the Net and a Pushcart Prize

What is god but the healed clavicle collaring of
statuesque posture. You stand tall to the ache you
were born with, that existential lagging to belong,
connect. God gives you bones to articulate like
runes, an alphabet of protrusions, bumps, grooves,
chronicling attachment, fracture, fusing of bone with
momentum. You feel for the finger bowl at the base
of your throat. God is the squared off shoulders,
the press of three fingers at the fluent hollow,
the strut of two bones on the catwalk of becoming.
God is the plush of velveteen pulse, the smooth nap
of what perceives as lovely, the high-stepping susceptibility,
the suture of windpipe and breastplate. God is the thin-
skinned vulnerability, the body notched with soul.

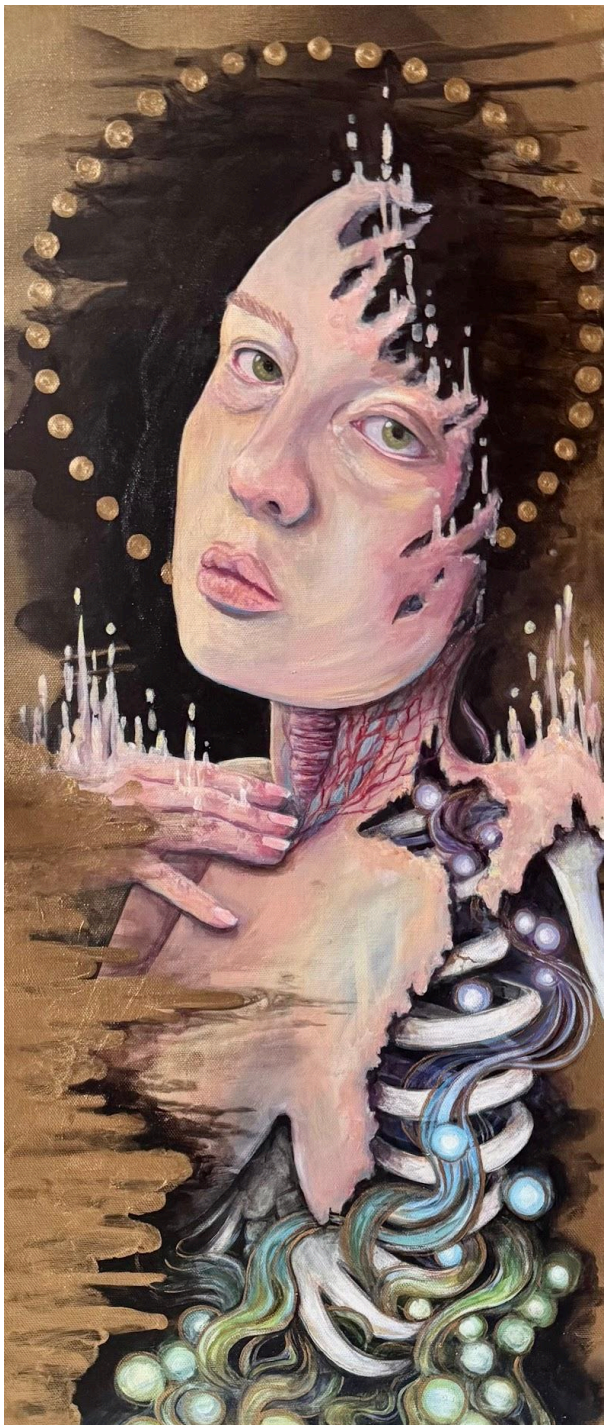
INSPIRED ART

“Fuse Expansion”

Spray paint and acrylic on canvas

By Christy Grace

(portfolio site: www.artofchristy.com)



SUBMITTED ART

"1900s Bathroom"

Mixed media

By Barbara Zipperer

(portfolio site: www.barbzippererart.com)



INSPIRED POEM

"View From The Hallway"

By Christy Schwan

She straightens her back,
admires her day's work.

Her beloved lilac blossoms stenciled
in full bloom round the ceiling.
Violet rug fringed in aubergine
hand-hooked by her grandma.
Mulberry café curtains sewn
on her mom's Singer,
ruffle in the breeze, hide the view
of her new indoor privy.

The pristine porcelain sink
and clawfoot tub are only outshone
by gleaming brass fixtures.
A modern step up from the old tin model.
So what if family members reuse
lukewarm bathwater for their weekly scrub?
Handy hooks await nighties and nightcaps,

and finally, a mirror for checking her rouge.

She hums while straightening plum towels,
steps back, closes the door.

SUBMITTED POEM

“The Worst Part of Procrastination”

By Katrina Serwe

(portfolio site: www.KatrinaSerwe.com)

Shit piles up
 under the roosts,
 around the water bowl,
 even the egg boxes
 get shit in,
and chicken shit stinks,
freezes into heavy
clumps that stick together.

I promise to take a shovel-full
out every day to keep up.
I'll add more wood chips
to keep them comfortable
until a warmer day.

Those are my excuses
that cover over the dread
of how long the shitty task
of cleaning will take.

INSPIRED ART

“The Worst Part of Procrastination”

Mixed media collage

By Debra Cribbs



When the temperature rises
I gather the bag of fresh
wood chips out of my trunk
and the rusty shovel
from the shed.

The coop scoops out
smooth as butter. The new
wood chips spread sweet
and dusty from the bag.

The whole ordeal takes less
than an hour. It is late
when I find the chickens refuse
to move into new, choose
the danger of the known
dark outside over the fearful

new clean inside. I crawl
through shitty freezing mud
under the chicken stairs
to collect each puff of sleepy
feathered resistance, push
their squawks through
the square of door where
they roost back into routine.

SUBMITTED ART

“State of the Union”

Photography

By George Lottermoser

INSPIRED POEM

“Whose House Is This?”

By Annette Langlois Grunseth

(portfolio site: www.annettegrunseth.com)

The garden is overgrown, half dead.
The porch light is burned out.
The house number has fallen upside down.

The tending stopped.
Invasive species have taken over,
crowded out what once belonged.

A tangle of vines chokes
what used to be verdant and viable.
Who lives in this neglected garden?

The exterior of the house is in shambles.
The front steps need repair.
The door is unhinged.

The American flag droops, torn and faded.
Perhaps citizens will come to help,
pledge their allegiance to this battered home.

Untangle the mess, clear the debris,
prune wild and unruly vines,
find the original plantings,

pull the weeds, add new soil,



work it with their hands,
water the roots.

The garden will grow back,
but it will take some time
before it feels like home again.

SUBMITTED POEM

“Thank You Montello”

By Carolyn Vargo

We all gather in Montello
beautiful, beautiful Montello

where the Purple Martins dip and rise
over the river, where moms and dads, young men, old men,
whole families, a woman with a dog I thought
was a wolf, a woman with the big hat
dipping her feet in the cool current,
and a teenage girl
with black hair, black leather boots,
black loose slacks,
black fingernails,
and a see-through black shirt over a black bra
fish all afternoon, just happy to watch
or catch a fish,
no stress,
just hope.

Meanwhile, by the crook in the road
near the waterfall,
fishing for honking trucks and cars,
carrying signs that read,
"Honk if you love your country."
"Honk if you want NO KINGS."
"You're hurting our farmers."
And so it goes,
fishing for hope.

INSPIRED ART

“Fishing For Hope”

Fiber and found object

By Cheryl Mahowald



It's a beautiful day in Montello, Wisconsin
where we gather by the river
where the Purple Martins stitch us together:

the bartender who serves mostly farmers,
the artist who makes birdhouse pins from bullets,
the grandmother and grandfather
who have brought their grandchildren, the teacher.
Thank you, Montello. Thank you.

SUBMITTED ART

“Forest Floor, November 3”

Mixed media collage

By Mel Kolstad

INSPIRED POEM

“Understory”

By Paulette Laufer

Forest floor,
tell me of clues left at ground level.

Guide me to look, not only up at sugar maple and red pine,
canopy chapters unfolding, but down towards the leaf litter
ahead of me, scatter of leaves decaying and composting,
twigs and woody debris in multi-layered abandon, as if all

whisper of an ancient era,
of dinosaurs roaming everywhere
through lush coniferous forests, before
everywhere changed in a flash



and birds became their survivors of feathers and wishbones.

But the forest shelters deep memory, hollows time
in a way not known to me, and the patch before me
woven of orange leaf, mossy green, and brown gnarls
weaves into a forgotten map, an assortment of clues

grounding me in mystery,
forest floor.

SUBMITTED POEM

“Drum Beat”

By John Contreras

Reverberations rippling through the air
Born from the beating of drums, feet, and hearts
All bouncing in tandem, in joy, and in community

Beyond walls, through ears, between each vibration's
Short yet powerful lifespan

INSPIRED ART

“Hunters’ Moon”

Mixed media

By Robert G. Stetson

Existing within that resistance of gravity
Lives a force that is more than life
Rhythm and flow
Blood and tears
Movement
Of cosmic
Magnitude.

Sounds of a sanctuary
Allowing salvation and synchronization
Beat by beat the blood within bodies
Speaks to the bonds between all creation
Countless interconnections accumulating
With every passing moment

Beat upon beat
Berating the body
From the surface
To the innermost
Part of my soul

Grounded by reverberations
Ignited by passionate purpose
To recognize where it all began:

A metaphysical series of explosions
Growing louder and louder
Preserving a sacred pattern
Of origins of understanding.

Drum drum drum



And it all makes sense

SUBMITTED ART

“They Laugh”

Acrylic on canvas

By Debra Cribbs



INSPIRED POEM

“Spiritual Contemplation”

By Pamela Walsh

Growth within Spiritual

contemplation

Modern day reconciliation

Of ancient gods and daily life

A return to hieroglyphics

Open to interpretation

Kundalini declaration

Dormant 'til mind stilled

Manifestation un-willed

Until divine light is spilled

From third eye un-blinded

Youth to crone to goddess
Divine speaks through symbols
Serpent reflects shed skin
Old habits, unwanted kin
Adaptation without sin

Transmutation
perception
Of ethereal
being

SUBMITTED POEM

“Winter Stream”

By Karen Haley

The winter stream
is unlocked at last
and the sound is
delicious...
enticing murmurs,

INSPIRED ART

“Icey River”

Oil and cold wax

By Tracy Bezesky

(portfolio site: www.tracyb.art)

still tentative
barely find a way
to carve through
blue ice.

Soon enough
it will be full-voiced
—all vocal and
wildly musical
rushing at rocks
and all else
in its way,
letting go of
un-needed constraints.

What is learned from
such exuberance
seems joy—
there for the taking,
and the sureness,
the sweet smell
of spring.



SUBMITTED ART

"The love nudge"

Photograph

By John Rohrer

(portfolio site: <https://lakeshoreartistsguild.com/profile/2/>)



INSPIRED POEM

"Can You Feel The Love?"

By Carrie Sherrill

She takes it in; the weight of his head
nuzzled against her cheek, the bristles
that tickle her upturned snout.
His earthy scent: all fresh mud and hay.
The way he turns his ear her way –
listens for that special snort.

Her eyes half-closed and dreamy
the sensual "Mona Lisa smile"
he brings to her face. The blissful
thoughts of piglets to come –
perhaps a dozen, pink and scruffy
squealing happily in the summer sun.

SUBMITTED POEM

"Li Po Has no Teething Advice to Offer"

By Jenna Rindo

You are far removed– a distant west
of Li Po and his twenty thousand

INSPIRED ART

"Notre-Dame du Bourbon"

Mixed media drawing on Bristol board

By Michael Shaw

poems. Here the wind ruffles Lake
Winnebago to white caps. You count
the aspen leaves quaking in each window.

Tai Wang Shu understands
melancholy as the color and flavor
of a clove blossom—your matriarch—
on the verge of a century—tells you
to soak a rag in clove oil it will numb
your first-born's gums—angry and swollen.

His drool is constant, he can't latch
into deep sleep—he squints
to find his constellation.
Your uncle shrugs
urges the numb that moonshine offers.
You waver exhausted. You find
the sharp moon but the stars are muffled.

You can't map any mythic figures.
Later in the witching hour you dip
your finger in the hard proof liquid
then outline your lips with the liquor
instead of a burgundy pencil. You sit
on the edge of sofa—have no
lullaby to offer but hum
haikus—half-forgotten.



SUBMITTED ART

“Time Waits for No Rascal”

Oil on canvas

By Joan Emmett

(portfolio site: www.JoanEmmett.com)



INSPIRED POEM

“Other Flight Patterns”

By Emilie Lindemann

(portfolio site: emilielindemann.com)

The day Artemis II slingshots moonward, I remember your butter yellow statement jacket. How to dress like a time traveler: One pair of boots//loafers//mary janes with reinforced leather soles. Shuffling & tapping & otherwise frolicking into the black and white checkered spiral. Somewhere in the Milky Way, my grandmother’s silver wristwatch slips past my invisible arm hairs. Time stops. On TV, people slowly pack up their lawn chairs and disperse as the sky dims.

Days later, tracing

the figure 8 on my phone:

everything aglow.

SUBMITTED POEM

“Postscript from Seventeen Magazine, Circa 2000”

By Emilie Lindemann

INSPIRED ART

“Becoming”

Printed wood grain with wax pastel

By Jennifer Anne

(portfolio site: emilielindemann.com)

Butterflies wish
& whoosh their wings.
Celebrities
you used to see in plastic form
congregate in a blossoming tree.
Hair clips pinning back your bangs,
a first lesson
in the beauty of the miniature.

(portfolio site: www.ArtOut-There.com)



SUBMITTED ART

“Grafted”

Acrylic on canvas

By Christy Grace

(portfolio site: www.artofchristy.com)

INSPIRED POEM

“Grafted”

By Tori Grant Welhouse

(portfolio site: www.torigrantwelhouse.com)

Only magnolia's cold hardy varieties thrive in zone five.

The pithy arrangement of yours, mine, and ours.

Saucer magnolias and their cup-shaped blossoms—

your son, my son, our daughter. Clouds in the painting
have the transience of consciousness. Is cold hardy
the same as divorce hardy? Flowers have little patience
for leaves. Love is rarely obvious, something not one or the other.

Branches reach like my arms at a bad angle.

The curves of petals recur in the sky. Pink signals

a caress of color. All three children practice
to be gone. Disembodiment of bad haircuts, sun in their eyes.

The wrap-and-pull tangling is a hue and cry—green of green,
starting over. I wish I could go back and say all the words.

Half knots of expression, too much loose fabric, hidden splints.
Thorny is as thorny does. The going is multidimensional,
a subjective window, this blended family. I let our clasped hands
speak for me. The xylem of goodbye without turning back.

Rooting and longing have the same insistent history.



SUBMITTED POEM

INSPIRED ART

“Catching the Collage”

By Paulette Laufer

It starts in a corner of an open field,
or perhaps, more a meadow.
A young boy in a red T-shirt
with long sleeves
(or is it a sweatshirt?)
darts into view.

A red cardinal against the flash
of a green tree.

The boy picks at an old softball,
the object that pulled him
across the open space
like a magnet, but now

not sure in which direction
to send it flying.
Not sure it's the ball
he ran for, or if he simply
ran for the running;

to be a flash of color in a collage
he couldn't fully see but was part of:

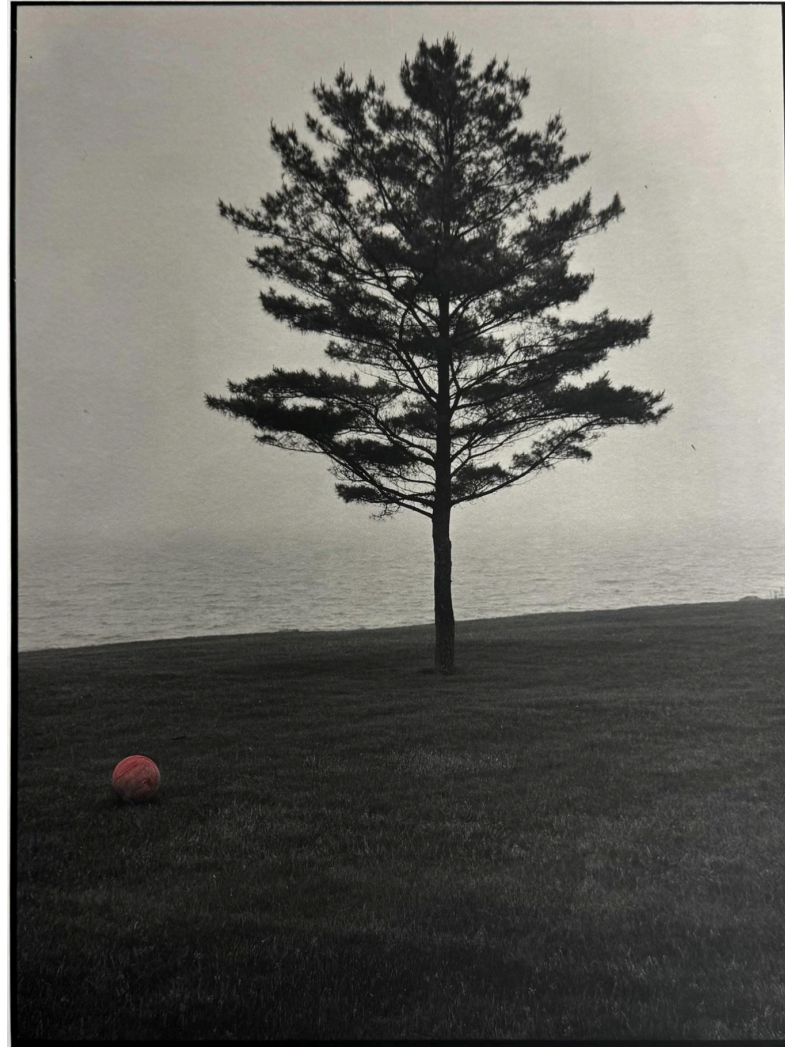
brown twigs of spring, cool sky overhang,
two hawks suddenly glide into frame,
pitched against the space over earth,
marking their rhythm of rise and descent.

“Invitation”

Black and white photo with hand applied color

By James Iverson

They don't want the red mark of him
but want something to swoop towards
much as he does.



SUBMITTED ART

**“44 degrees 06 minutes North,
87 degrees 40 minutes West”**

Traditional silver photographic print

By James Iverson



INSPIRED POEM

**“44 degrees 06 minutes North,
87 degrees 40 minutes West”**

By Paula Schulz

This photo holds the quiet of sun and stone.
I do not come for these; I come for you.

And I come for me, because that's what love is--
the black and white and grey blending of lives

durable as stone: love outlives its object.
I come to love you in the gray light

that never warms me. I place my hand
on the sun-warmed stone, since I can no longer

place my hand on yours. This is not enough
but it is all there can be. Here is rest for the body

but not for the heart that flies back in time.
What is here is not much to sum a life and

these numbers may seem impersonal but
they mark an exact spot in the wide-wooshing

breath of eternity. These numbers mean
I can never lose you.

SUBMITTED POEM

“All Praise Be to Tiny Seeds”

By Maryann Hurtt

in seed luscious land
I hike in wetland muck
it's fall
tiny seeds travel
some stick to my socks
as milkweed pods pop
with feathered to be bloom
cattails let loose
their downy load
from tiny seeds to glorious
once again spring

my tramp a prayer

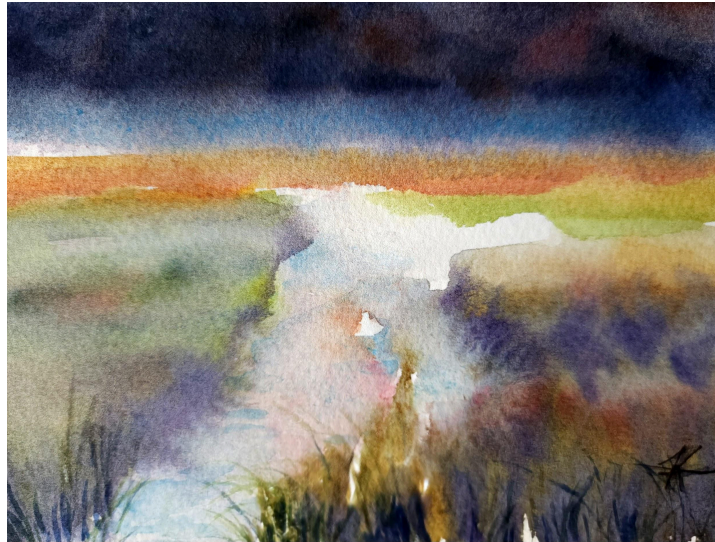
INSPIRED ART

“Horicon Marsh”

Watercolor

By Karen Utech

(portfolio site: <https://kutech.faso.com/>)



SUBMITTED ART

"Harmony of the Many-Twinkling Feet"

Watercolor on cut paper

By Julie San Felipe



INSPIRED POEM

"Synchrony"

By Katrina Serwe

(portfolio site: www.KatrinaSerwe.com)

There is a shift
 in the body
 in the mind
when steps pattern
together, link to music
and our rhythms
return to basic
harmony.

Neurons spark,
movements mirror
heartbeats and breathing,
brainwaves focus and relax.

Those with twinkling
feet circle in defiance
of systems that oppress
our nature.

In times past, the jealous
may have called them witches
for the way they dance
and how when gathered
they alchemize an ordinary day
into something magical—

salty and sweet
with a kick of heat
like sunshine illuminating,
a shimmer more felt
than seen that can rainbow
a storm edge, hold space
for fear to tear and slide
witnessed into relief
where in between
steps, stress can story
and spill off the tongue,
waterfall conversation
to twirl tangled thoughts
into smoother sense.

Today, they are called
over-educated, crazy
cat ladies by those who
are afraid of footsteps
that synchronize to build
community, compassion,

and care—the power
in the dance of our
natural rhythms.

SUBMITTED POEM

“The Queen of Spring and her Children”

In memory of Virginia Giuffre

By Margaret Coombs

portfolio site: <https://margaretcoombs.com> ()

Persephone’s mother Demeter
the Queen of Spring walked
 over the world working
 her powers to make the earth bloom

while much-loved Persephone played
outside in the meadow
 alone and content to count
the clover till she ran out
of numbers and then she tallied the trees
 the violets the bees
and as she sat musing the fate of dandelions
 the wind carried their seeds
 to new places and the scent
 of lilacs drifted past
the sun said . . . you’re like your mother
 spreading bounty
the river gurgled . . . be free . . . like me

INSPIRED ART

“Persephone”

Mixed media

By Lynn R. Peters

(portfolio site: www.lynnpetersart.com)

and a man on a huge pounding horse
grabbed Persephone
and threw her in a hole which closed
behind her she lived with the stranger
in the dark for years in a pestiferous pit
but sometimes she remembered
the patterns of butterfly wings

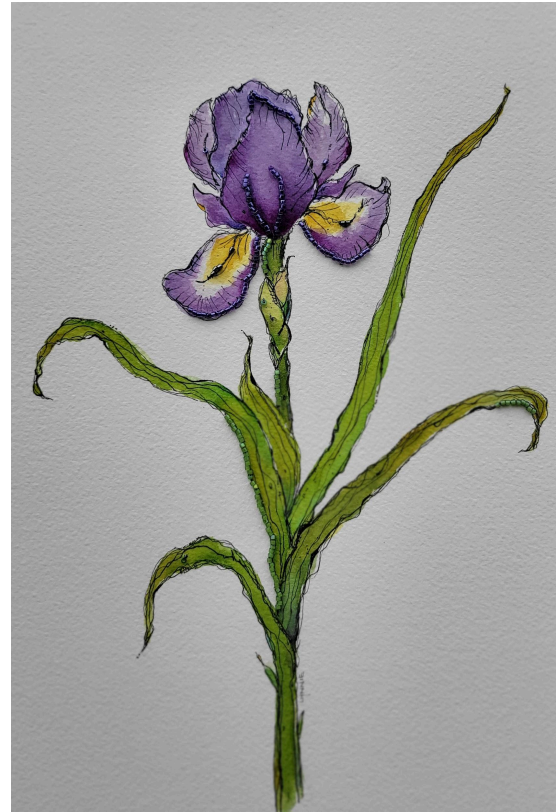
one day her prison filled with light
with Demeter
without her stolen child Demeter
never left her bed to work
spring ended on earth
winter stayed for years
everything living wanted seasons again
and good growing food
slowly starvation spread

at last the patriarchs sent Demeter below
she said I can't undo the harm done to you
but dear Persephone
you'll have summer showers
and sunshine . . . roses and raspberries
with me again . . . beginning now
and Persephone climbed out of her cell
then another girl clambered
from the depths of hell
and another girl clutched a baby
many many girls and boys too
stumbled out escaping from the monster
and his decomposing maw
so many children and their stories followed



Persephone's path to the surface squinting
at the shimmering summer world

that the Queen of Spring took pity
and consoled them all she said
have faith precious ones
love survives
and justice will abide
love is here
and justice, justice nears



SUBMITTED ART

“Royal Rejection”

Colored pencil with pastel

By Mike Freeman

(portfolio site: mefreeman.artspan.com/home)



INSPIRED POEM

“Rebuttal to Reality”

By John Contreras

(portfolio site: https://www.instagram.com/johnny_types_ink/)

There is no disdain in being discarded, rejected, or lost
when purpose has not been abandoned;
I am cast out by a jury of my emotions waiting to
settle within the ecosystem of my heart

Where to go next with this litigious inward pilgrimage
mixed with the natural order of survival, seeking asylum,
and an eternity of internal dissonance. I resist rationality and actuality
to confine my true self in the peripheries of perspective and precognition

Bloody world of beating woeful hearts
all pounding pretentiously while everything and
nothing occurs collectively. We are mere
figments of satisfaction, an upheaval entwined
at the roots, and here now to liberate the start of all possibilities
with a ruckus of ruminations awaiting action

Forlorn floundering and malicious machinations
suggesting that royalty is a marvelous falsehood
believed to be benevolence epitomized

Finding artificial solace quietly under a glimmering
crown of inconsistent inheritances. Generations of disconnected

and disconcerted tinkering from a madman's history
presented proudly for a profound insurrection
from those that were supposedly hopeless

Infatuated with reform, the fragility
of the golden pillars of standards
are on the verge of collapse

Manifesting a delicate divination found only in Mother Earth
to fester the world with empathy, adaptability, and change.

With a lexicon of love, there will be a
transformation of destruction to abolishment of authority
to reformation to a revision of reality.
There is no king, only
determined denizens
standing upon a humble earth

SUBMITTED POEM

“Rejection”

By Anneliese Finke

(portfolio site: <https://linktr.ee/abfinke>)

Tell me— I thought I wanted—
but your hands are so cold,
the opposite of sunshine.

I imagined myself into
a thousand people

INSPIRED ART

“Mean Girls”

Oil

By Rob Burkhard

(portfolio site: robburkhard.com)

capable of being loved.

Avoided mirrors, photographs,
recordings
of the sound of my voice.

Then I stood too close—
and there, in your eyes,
was my reflection.

That's all. Truth
is where everything
ends.

*First published in San Pedro River Review,
Spring 2025, Vol. 17 No. 1*



SUBMITTED ART

“Pondering”

Oil

By Rob Burkhard

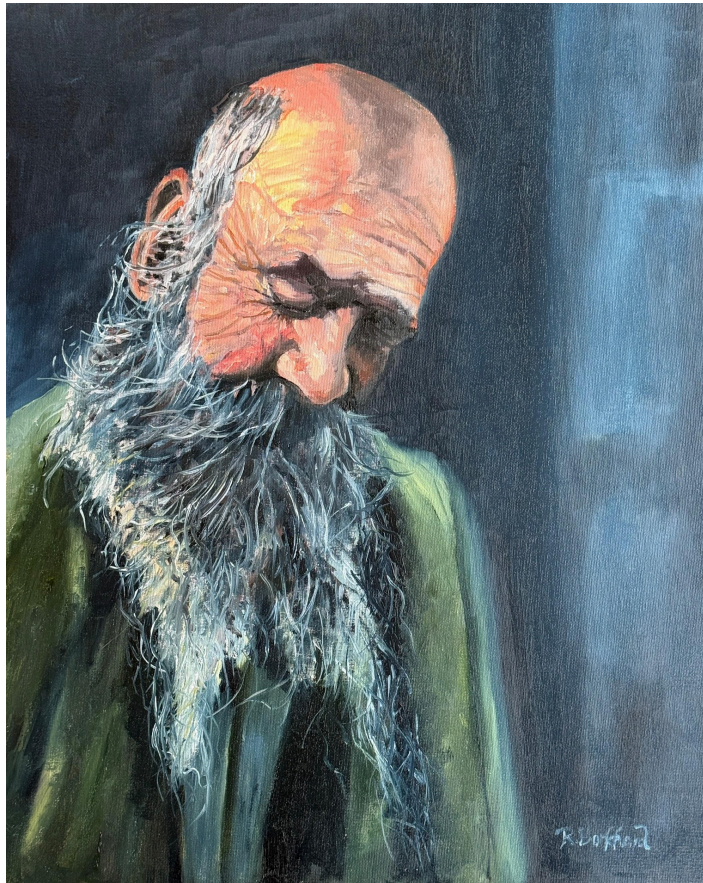
(portfolio site: robburkhard.com)

INSPIRED POEM

“Pondering (the depths)”

By Evelyn Hawkins

He bows his head
balding pate shining
in the downtown afterglow



while the rest of the world
sleeps

he remembers how
the faded bricks looked
when they were
new
and the thought
spans
decades.

on the main drag,
the streetlights mostly
block out the stars
ten thousand suns
along the road

in the arms of the brick
building
infinity unfurls
inky silhouette shadows

in the silence of the
city
someone slams a car-door
and the echoes
riccochet
across the space

of the parking lot

breath after
breath
samsara cycle
begins anew-
each heartbeat heavy
with misery-

he continues
pondering
the thoughts that run
askew
before he reaches the
end
of a sentence

the whelm of
the unconscious
beckons
softly

he drifts
on the sea of impulse
so often that
solid ground is
disorienting

fretful

-lost

the dizzying memories of the
past
converge
with the present.

the cracks
in the brick wall-
yawning chasms of
the abyss-
have enough space to
condense
a
lifetime.

one after another the
streetlights stop
shining and the
memories
fade

the night
stretches its claws

a little deeper

and it never gives
back
anything.

part of him fears that
when he looks up
he might not
remember
where he is

but if he said it
out loud
would it be a
quiet prayer
or a
scream?

is it enough to simply
feel the night air
as a cool breeze
over the skin?

he chases the half-formed thoughts
relentlessly
and the lines deepen
across his

face

still

pondering,

still

undecided

still hoping he can

outlast the night

before it erases

everything.

SUBMITTED POEM

“A New Season”

By Marilyn Zelke Windau

Ribbons of bubble froth
decorate Lake Michigan this morning.
She wears a new springtime dress
of watery aquamarine.
Gulls clap their wings
in applause from above
while keeping a sharp eye out
for newborn minnows.

INSPIRED ART

“Lake Michigan this morning”

Photograph

By John Rohrer

(portfolio site: <https://lakeshoreartistsguild.com/profile/2/>)



SUBMITTED ART

“Solitude”

Watercolor

By Amy Kvidera

INSPIRED POEM

“The Solitude”

By Margaret Coombs

(portfolio site: <https://margaretkoombs.com>)

At the end of the day the sun
tosses a bouquet of blooms to earth
in shades of goldfinch and daffodil

which spill onto the lake, changing
blue jay water to mallard reflections,



until colors fade. The horizon shrinks

into one small wink of white, then
exits in an instant, and I no longer see
a thing in this unfamiliar site, not

tent post or tree trunk, fallen log
or poison ivy patch. Blinded
by darkness, I am a prisoner

of solitude, until I hear other species
proclaiming their presence
in waves that hasten through the forest,

an enchanting chorus. Multitudes
surround me, making music to ensure
their perpetuity. Tonight I share

their wild home and listen to their songs
alone without hearing
any other human voice or sound.

SUBMITTED POEM

“Just a Number”

By Pamela Walsh

I am here to bear witness
Because they need to be seen
I am here to speak their truth
Because they deserve to be remembered

A man behind walls with a heart condition
Ignored and dismissed
Not worth the effort to listen
Just heartburn they said
He didn't survive the night
How he died wasn't right
His offense didn't warrant a life sentence
But no one cared
He was just a number
Named offender

A man with stomach cancer
Treatable. curable
Passed over for the care
That would spare his life
Spare him excruciating pain
Not worth the cost
So they let him waste away

INSPIRED ART

“framed / beneath a love pump gone dry / save for the numbers”

Multi-media sculpture

By George Lottermoser

Consumed from within
his offense didn't warrant a life sentence
But no one cared
He was just a number
Named offender

A man viewed across the hall
Something wasn't right
He wasn't that tall
Lock down floor shut down
As he dangled at an impossible angle
Days from release
his offense didn't warrant a life sentence
But no one cared
He was just a number
Named offender

A man on probation, on "paper"
Held hostage in his mind
By a system devoid of humanity
Rules held as law was all he saw
No new crimes, no new harm
But a polygraph fail is a fail
No recourse to avail the truth
Couldn't go back again
his emotion that caused the needle to jump
didn't warrant a life sentence
But no one cared
He was just a number
Named offender



SUBMITTED ART

“Fall in Plymouth WI”

Acrylic

By Tracy Bezesky

(portfolio site: www.tracyb.art)



INSPIRED POEM

“Wisconsin Farmhouse”

By Tara Huck

(portfolio site: <https://substack.com/@divinetimewithtara>)

Summer gives way to fall on repeat.
Gander honks overhead, fleeing the
winter that Wisconsin tends to give.

Eyes spy the fields, then come to the yard,
landing on that lonesome tire swing ring,
now motionless on the still September night.

Still the brick, laid a century prior, stands.

Life's beauty is temporary, once time was
fun climbing, eyes so big wondering. Now,
only memories of when love looked back at you.

The summer seasons held picnics, children upon
the mixed, yet-trimmed, grasses that held
bare feet, thick with mud from the garden hose.

Still the brick, laid a century prior, stands.

Carried on like puffs of dandy flowers, youngins
seek soil of one's own. The farmhouse,
impossible to hold, built family, a tether to home.

The emptiness is new; the chill begins to fill

the air, foreshadowing freezes yet to come.
Stillness, a respite from joy's relentless buzz.

Still the brick, laid a century prior, stands.

