

Submitted-Inspired Art-Poetry/Poetry-Art Pairs

ArtAsPoetryAsArt 2024-25

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 May 4th–June 15th at the Rahr West Art Museum in Manitowoc, WI
- Thank you to all of the poets and artists who participated!

Happy reading!

SUBMITTED POEM

“Kintsugi”*

First published in the 2025 "Wisconsin Poets' Calendar"

By Anneliese Finke

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

When Notre Dame burned,
I wanted to say—
let it, let it burn.

Let the heartbreaking thing
happen. Let the heart
break.

This was the home
of the god
who chose suffering,

who promised us
he'd understand what it meant
to be human, and despair.

When it comes,
you can close your eyes—

INSPIRED ART

“Ode to Dave’s Birch Vessel”

Yobitsugi

By George Lottermoser

(portfolio site: <https://lakeshoreartistsguild.com/profile/13/>)

but the tears still fall.

That's alright.

Not everything
can be made new.

But some things

can be made glittering and beautiful
if you will let them break.

"Kintsugi (金継ぎ, "golden joinery"), also known as kintsukuroi (金繕い, "golden repair"), is the Japanese art of repairing broken pottery by mending the areas of breakage with urushi lacquer dusted or mixed with powdered gold, silver, or platinum; the method is similar to the maki-e technique. As a philosophy, it treats breakage and repair as part of the history of an object, rather than something to disguise.

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kintsugi>



Yobitsugi (呼び継ぎ), in Japanese, means "calling together."

Unlike Kintsugi, which focuses on mending broken pieces with precious metals like gold,

Yobitsugi comes into play when the original fragments of a broken vessel are missing.

This integration of diverse materials creates a unique and visually intriguing outcome,

transforming the piece into a new artistic expression.

Yobitsugi embodies the Japanese philosophy of wabi-sabi, which finds beauty in imperfection and impermanence; and reflects a deep respect for objects and a commitment to reuse and sustainability; and celebrates the object's history, embracing its imperfections and highlighting its journey through breakage and restoration.

Gratitude to my collaborators:

Birch Trees for their intrinsic beauty,

Dave Pozorski for generously sharing a vessel which cracked after turning,

Bees for their generous wax production,

And Anneliese Finke for writing her heartfelt Kintsugi poem

SUBMITTED ART

“Morning Bun”

Pastel

By Mary T. Wagner

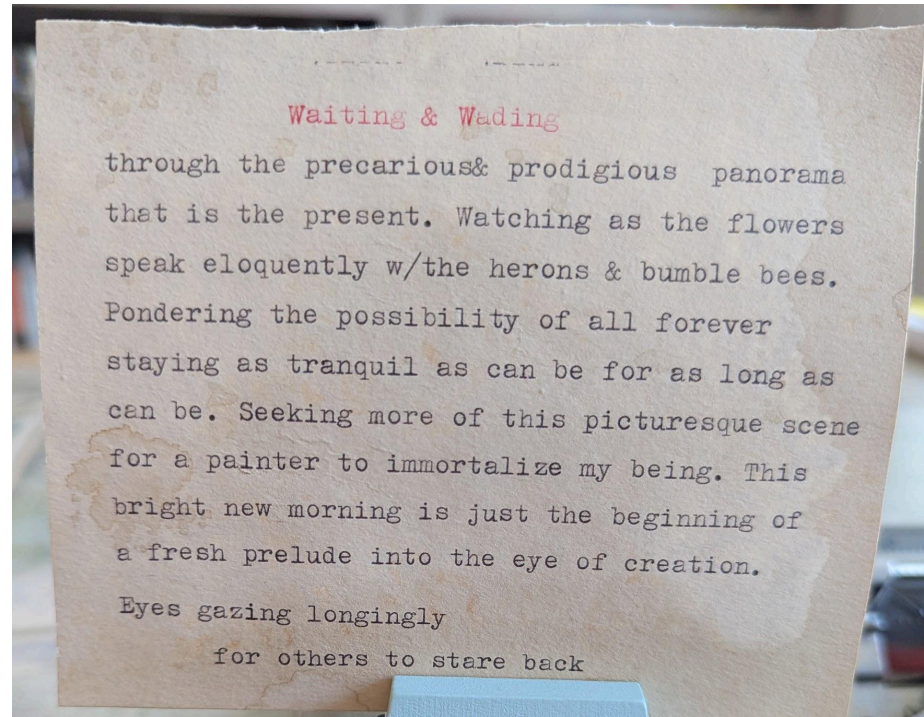
(portfolio site: marytwagner.com)

INSPIRED POEM

“Waiting & Wading”

By John Contreras

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



SUBMITTED POEM

"Designer Wings"

By Carrie Sherrill

INSPIRED ART

"Winged"

Mixed media

By Lynn Peters

(portfolio site: www.instagram.com/lynnrpeters)

I have commissioned Gustav Klimt
to design my own personal
and functional pair of wings.

I will sit in profile, unblinking
for as long as it takes. I have made it clear
that I am not interested in showing breasts
sculpted eyebrows, bejeweled forearms.

He must begin with silk. Add gold-leaf brocade
that glints in moonlight
bright as the stars themselves. Multi-layered
and flouncy, rampant with ranunculus,
pink-petaled roses, and coral tissue paper poppies.

Then, add geometrics: Nile green triangles perhaps.
Arrange them in pyramid style, paint at least one
with an eye that never blinks. Now, backstroke
golden curlicues along the border, watch
them widen into the tree of life

when the wind wafts and ruffles through.
Last of all, a crow, please. Perched on my
left shoulder, tucked in and protective
for our otherworldly travels.

Let this be the vision that visits
on night wind, that rests with the moon
in the high branches
for generations to come.



SUBMITTED ART

“Autumn Walk”

Photography

By Robert G. Stetson



INSPIRED POEM

“Wait Up”

By Kathleen Serley

Wait up

Let me walk with you

We'll match our pace to the pulsing tide

Breathe deep the ocean's salty air

What bows your head this morning

an errant child's wayward whims

or all that lies within the ocean's murky depths

mindful of algae's silent toil

Let me walk with you

We'll lean into the wind

Not a right this air we breathe

What can we do what will we do

square our shoulders say, "look here"

or settle in to ride the wave

the ancient ocean's fragile gift

Let me walk with you

We'll pitch our voices low

Endangered by warming water's acidic turn

Spout tales of widespread disregard

until they add up to chances lost

reveal a child bent on wayward ways

coral reefs shrink and fade

Let me walk with you

We'll scan the horizon look out to sea

Arctic ice floes melt

Wander near the edge the water lapping at our feet
make our way to a distant point where
the lighthouse beams a warning

as rising tides reclaim the beach

SUBMITTED POEM

“Walking There and Back”

Ice Age Trail: Milwaukee River Segment

Forthcoming in First Steps (Brain Mill Press, May 27, 2025)

By Katrina Serwe

(portfolio site: www.katrinaserwe.com)

I skitter through leaf litter like a squirrel, follow
the intuition of a red fox across the road to the shelter

of the forest, pause to pluck poetry from the green
leaves of my mind, hear bird chatter through

the treetops, see church spires and question
why we imagine that a source of creation

INSPIRED ART

“Morning Trail Walk”

Watercolor

By Rob Burkhard

(portfolio site: robburkhard.com)

would dwell indoors. My pack lightens
as my thirst deepens. I turn back, taking

a faster pace against the setting sun, follow
a cooler breeze into the mirrored view

where the tree shadows fall longer on the pond
and find the church obscured by moraine-top-maples.

To know a place, I must see it both ways—
the different views of there and back.

I hear four bells by New Fane, another church
hidden from view and laugh at redundancy

echoing back across my steps, necessary
for the return home, I keep walking.



SUBMITTED ART

“Dear John”

Watercolor

By Karen Utech

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

INSPIRED POEM

“Dust to Dust”

By Maryann Hurtt

tucked high in an attic
a trunk holds '60s and '70s



love letters
Vietnam, Canada, jail, the “cities”
they lay close to dust
like their senders and me
our lives giving way to the next
but now
I will tell you a story how
once upon a time

SUBMITTED POEM

INSPIRED ART

“What would it be?”

By Paula Schulz

While I drink my morning tea,

sun ignites each ice-wrapped branch in a glare
of glory too sharp, too bright for human eyes.

What would it be to live like
clear but for my lively spine

jumping into blue? Everywhere
I look—community! Countless

shining lives around me
clattering Pinocchio limbs

in gestures of glee. A gloss,
a glister of water

wrapping us, while we dream
our bodies prisms of light.

SUBMITTED ART

“The Glister of Winter”

Acrylic on canvas

By Eric Cluth

(portfolio site: <https://www.instagram.com/eric.cluth/>)



INSPIRED POEM

“Monarch’s Garden”

Ink & watercolor

By Lynn Peters

(portfolio site: www.instagram.com/lynnrpeters)



“Transformation”

By Katrina Serwe

(portfolio site: www.katrinaserwe.com)

Half one thing, half
another, you slowly digest
what you were—to become
what you will be.

Even the caterpillar
closets in a damp dark,
like early spring,
before opening day.

It takes time,
patience waters
the color of what is
yet to bloom. Climb

your preparatory squares,
ink your dreams,
splash in undetermined
values and hues, then look

through the caterpillar’s
eyes. See how
your unfinished is
beautiful—exactly as it is.

SUBMITTED POEM

“Dear Doug”

*In response to “Nature’s Best Hope” by Douglas Tallamy**

By Kathleen Serley

I’ve planted the milkweed, coneflowers and borage
Lacking yard space to grow your mighty oak,
I must trust that flowers will tempt insects to forage

Turning my grass into gardens took courage
Angst over my neighbors’ reactions no joke
Yet I planted my milkweed, coneflowers and borage

And was surprised when my neighbors encouraged
removing grass in their own yards even as we spoke
They, too, trusted flowers would tempt insects to forage

As habitats decline, our yards must make up for the shortage
thus your Homegrown National Park initiative gives folk
reason to plant milkweed, coneflowers and borage

Our front gardens attest to a new age
when neighbors take action– so to speak go for broke
to tempt insects to forage

As you want, we register our yards in a marriage

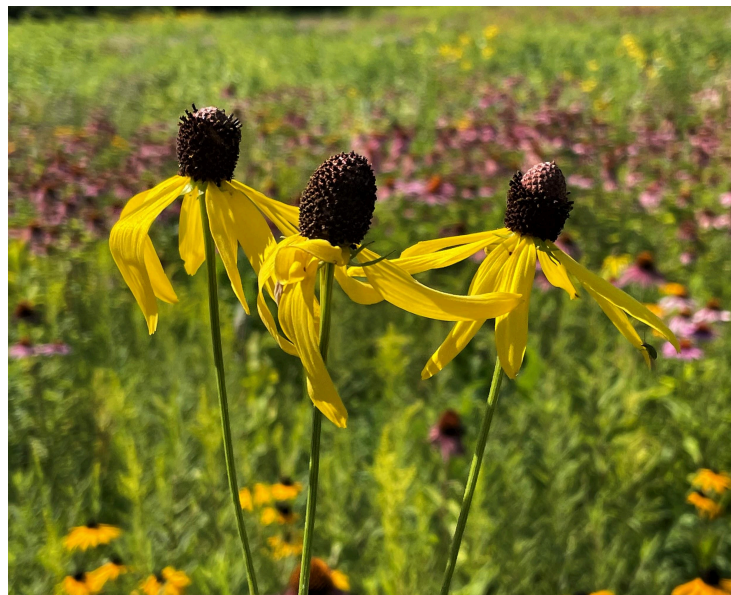
INSPIRED ART

“The Three Graces”

Photo-printed canvas

By Mary T. Wagner

(portfolio site: marytwagner.com)



of minds on your website forming a corridor of kinfolk
planting milkweed, coneflowers and borage
trusting that flowers will tempt insects to forage

**homegrownnationalpark.org* advocates planting gardens in front yards, thus turning neighborhoods into homegrown national parks.

SUBMITTED ART

“Among the Daisies at Dusk”

Color pencil

By Mike Freeman

(portfolio site: www.mefreemanart.com)

INSPIRED POEM

“Preserve This Work”

By Carrie Sherrill

Preserve this work. Preserve your pencils of orange and black sulphur yellow, baby blue, cream and fuchsia. Hang the original in a prominent place where you can study it closely and often close your eyes, carry the fading image in your mind’s pocket.

This may be all we know of butterflies

after insecticides, urban sprawl and global warming
have had their final say. After the last Monarch migration
fails: air too hot, sheltering trees too few.

When host plants disappear, or bloom out of sync
with nectar needs – butterflies will be gone.



We will feel their absence, in the empty air
that hovers around the measly flowers

and grandchildren will beg

Tell me the story of the butterflies, Grandpa.
They will watch your expression, try to decide
whether it is really true, that you held one gently

in the palm of your hand, weightless almost
its flutter a mere tickle in time, or is it just your
old artist's imaginings, the persistent colors
of memory breaking through.

SUBMITTED POEM

“Junk Drawer”

By Peter Sherrill

I reckon every kitchen has a junk drawer, except for Aunt Lou's.
In her kitchen, every drawer is a junk drawer.
Truth be told, every drawer in every room is a junk drawer.
No telling what's where.
Scissors may be in with allspice and half-used boxes of Rit dye
and a copy of *The Catcher In The Rye*, still in its bag from the library's used-book sale.

That was the first layer I dug through as I looked for her phone charger.
Half-book of matches from Rhonda's Roost; three cats-eye marbles
in a thick ceramic ashtray probably from a junior-high arts class;
a dog brush full of tan hair — Molly died two years ago —
an Altoids tin with something not-Altoids inside;

“Aunt Lou, you sure it's in here?”

“It's in there. Under something red.”

“Something red—” I pawed a little deeper.

“Only thing red is this ball of yarn, and—”

I stopped looking. “Not *under* it. *In* it.”

“Oh, yeah! Pull it out, will you?”

“Sure.” Why hadn't I thought of it?

She'd wound a ball of yarn for Miss Aikin's mittens
onto her phone charger, with only the cord showing.

INSPIRED ART

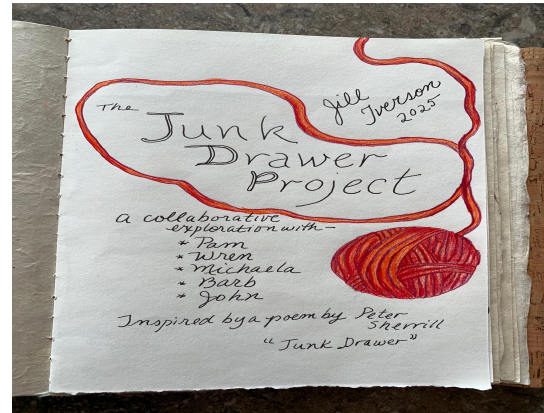
“The Junk Drawer Project”

Drawing, artist's book, audio

By Jill Iverson

I guess it was "under" something red," if you want to get technical.
"And put things back where you found them
so I can find them later."





SUBMITTED ART

“Flower Child”

Acrylic

By Lisa Gegare

(portfolio site: www.instagram.com/lisagegare)

INSPIRED POEM

“Flower Child Haibun”

By Peter Sherrill

Save the world, stop the war, feed the poor, share the love. Yeah, the beads, the fringe, the patches on the faded denim. You know the story. Didn't turn out quite the way it... rough road.

That Peace Corps stint, was just a bureaucrat's answer to another bureaucrat's question. I did do some good, when I wasn't reporting on the progress of completing my reports.

April sunrise
cotton-candy promises...



Distant train whistle

Returning to the States, that liberal-arts degree landed me a job teaching middle school social studies. A stopgap gig, until I could get back to saving the world.

Even radish seed
Seems to sleep while root slips down
Then green leaf appears

Ten years later, I found myself with a wife, a mortgage, and a tilled-up back yard with a Sears garden shed.

Ah, summer! Kneel in the dirt, mull over the last school year, ponder next year's kids. Reflect on pruning as an act of kindness, whether tomatoes, tardiness or tantrums. Always the pleasant surprise of a former student dropping by to say hello. Perfect chance to hear about their family, share joys and sorrows, send them home with beefsteak tomatoes and a handful of marigolds.

One August morning, I realized I actually did get back to the earth. I hadn't stopped any war, fed the poor or clothed the needy (outside my county), but I had created a patch of green peace in my small corner of this big, mean world.

Late afternoon sun
September harvest basket
promise kept

SUBMITTED POEM

"Ode to Anemone"

By Kathrine Yets

(portfolio site:
sites.google.com/view/authorkathrineyets/home)

Viewed so meek and mild
as you sway in the sea bottom current
as though cello plays, so you dance,
yet you are the aquatic predator
of vibrant colors— purple, pinks, yellows—
questioned to be a flower,
but no, you are a wicked beast
that waits to devour,
trap prey in your tentacles,
tendrils round and round
until life suffocated out.
You creep along the corals
so slowly, stealthy, calculative.
No one suspects that such softness
can be so deadly
with venom at your tips.
Oh, great anemone,
don't deny you're docile,
yet ferocious.
Bold and shy at the same time.
A confident modesty
as you flare your mouth open
wider to scream without sound

INSPIRED ART

"You are the Clownfish to my Anemone"

Acrylic on paper

By Lisa Gegare

(portfolio site: www.instagram.com/lisagegare)



how proud you are,
despite assumed to just be pretty
and delicate as a woman.
Look, oh anemone, just as she,
there is more than meets the eye
because if not treated right,
there's a sting within your graceful grasp
not a soul can recover from.
Respect and remove expectations
and theories that simply are unfitting
of such a creature's greatness.

SUBMITTED ART

"Being Human"

Mixed media

By Lila Brochá

INSPIRED POEM

"To Be Human is To Dream"

By Paula Schulz

To be human is to dream,

to seek the beautiful in our world's lush exuberance
of waterfall lilacs, lapis lazuli, the maple
in autumn, sunlight on water—
that sparking glitter—peacock feathers,
red geranium fireworks.



And to seek the beautiful in memory.
So many memories like so many bright beads
and those beads a rosary of remembering
people we have loved, birthday balloons,
times we laughed and sang ribbons
of simple happiness into the blue sky.

Let this be our work
to make more of the beautiful
to dream on.

SUBMITTED POEM

“Rugosa Rose”

By Annette Langlois Grunseth

(portfolio site: www.annettegrunseth.com)

Rugosa rose
grew tall and full
cornered outside my brother's bedroom window.
That rose bush grew as unruly as us kids
who ran free on summer days.
Coiled behind this gangly shrub,
we tugged the green garden hose out to the yard.
One of us squeezed behind those dense prickles
cranked the faucet wide open.
Thorns caught a shirt, snagged the skin,
a gash of blood trickled down an arm,
soon red-crusts by the sun.
Water on full blast, the hose gushed into our mouths,
a faint taste of rubber with the aroma of rose

INSPIRED ART

“Water Spray and Rose”

Photograph

By John Rohrer

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



SUBMITTED ART

“A Jellyfish”

Watercolor on cut paper with wax finish

By Julie San Felipe



INSPIRED POEM

“Below the Surface”

By Jenna Rindo

Our bond fluctuates—you approach
to catch me and I close with certainty.
Our connection is pre-Jurassic.

We pulse along on ocean currents
our balance changes from cold and deep
to brackish and shallow.

We absorb nutrients then expel
poison from one porous opening.
Our tentacles are too complicated

to count—each nerve at the base
more than replaces the heart and brain
no diagram can fully label.

Blink and we change from clear
peach to tawny with hints of bio-
luminescence. Interpret and translate

our symbiotic relationship—we can’t measure
the consequence of venom—we search

for surface bubbles

stretch into challenging
poses—we hope the well of understanding
is bottomless and open.

SUBMITTED POEM

“Under the Dogstar”

Originally published in Crab Orchard Review

By Tori Grant Welhouse

(portfolio site: www.torigrantwelhouse.com)

The belljar of sweltering summer

containing body and hope and

darkwinged apprehension on the

wires between the rim of your head and the sky.

You flinch at fleeting. You walk and walk.

You feel tree sweat, humusbreath,

wildgreen overgrowth, edging

woodland, wonderlust, deepforest.

INSPIRED ART

“Released”

Watercolor

By Karen Utech

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

You imagine boughs under glass. You
see points of light sparking between
oak and beech and spruce. You
wish follow the flight of a butterfly,
your dead sister, her wingstripes thrilling
as eyeliner. She streaks exactly three
colors — orange and white and black.
She smudges your heartbruise.
Where is she going? Her soul is the opposite
of restless. She thrives in the humidheat,
feeding on milkweed, mudpuddling tiny pools
in the rustearth. You soften in her season
of crazy lushness, under the dogstar,
your path brimming weedlavish. For a day,
you meet at an age, and for another cycle
you carry her demands — bloomheavy, vinehungry.



SUBMITTED ART

“The Cheshire Cat”

Acrylic on stretched industrial paper

By Eric Cluth

(portfolio site: <https://www.instagram.com/eric.cluth/>)

INSPIRED POEM

“The Cheshire Cat is here, and so am I”

By Sue Blaustein

(portfolio site: www.sue.blaustein.com)

The famous cat is frizzled
and fat-tailed
with a narrow head and fangs! Fangs,
and a grimace,
(where literature calls for a broad, trademark grin).

A sign warning *Get Back* is upside-down,
and uselessly far from the entrance now.
Too late!
Time is flushed out and flies – wow!
A citrus orb (a grapefruit, a planet?) leads
or maybe recedes...
what now?

Most everyone is glad here – so they say –
or most everyone
is mad!
Angry mad? Or unhinged?
Or both – it could be both.

You can be two, or even more kinds of mad all at once.

In this place – this moment – in this busy, juicy
corridor
the glad and all kinds of mad are hurtling as one.



Glad or mad, mad or glad, everyone here argues.
A lot – it's a sport. It's spiky (maybe too much)
but I *didn't* get back. I didn't flee,
so I live here.

SUBMITTED POEM

“it's enough some days”

By Maryann Hurtt

it's enough some days

for a peek of sun
then a pewter morning
as you taste spider's web
crossing your path
soon chipmunk chatter
and lone gull cries
fill your ears
way out in the Lake
a freighter slides its way south
your own journey
just as full of mystery and wonder

swallow it all

INSPIRED ART

“Drifting Thoughts”

Acrylic on gallery-wrapped canvas

By Lila Brochá



SUBMITTED ART

INSPIRED POEM

“Mirror Lake, Early Fall”

Pastel

By Renee Couture

(portfolio site: <https://fineartamerica.com/profiles/renee-couture>)



“Morning at Anchor, Bustard Islands, Ontario”

By James Iverson

Floating on the water just off shore
the boat slowly rotates on its anchor rode.
So still it feels motionless and the world revolves around
us.

A magical part of the earth
where the water meets the land.
Where ripples caress the banks and overhanging trees dip
their fingers to gently touch the surface.

A turtle sunbathing on a log!

No, two!

No, three!

A heron stands patient, still as a painted bird.
I look down on the water at a perfect reflection of of what
is above,
sea and sky locked in a loving embrace each revealing
what is beautiful about the other.
and then...

the soft rustle of leaves heralds the return of the breeze
and the mirror image of shore and sky explode into a
million shards of color.

SUBMITTED POEM

“White Pine Ballet”

By Marilyn Zelke Windau

From a nap, I awake
on the deck outside
at the cabin
in the north woods
of Wisconsin.

A strong wind from the west
gives dance to the white pine
towering above me.

There, as I open my eyes
are star-flowers
of green needle petals
showing off, showing their beauty.

Mesmerized, I watch their ballet
of tour jetes, of arabesques.

The winds calm.
The pine needles cease movement.

Quiet emerges.
I close my eyes,
dream the encore.

INSPIRED ART

“White Pine Ballet”

Acrylic on canvas

By Steve Thimmig



SUBMITTED ART

“Fire Study #11”

Photography

By John Rohrer

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

INSPIRED POEM

“Bonfire”

By Tori Grant Welhouse

(portfolio site: www.torigrantwelhouse.com)

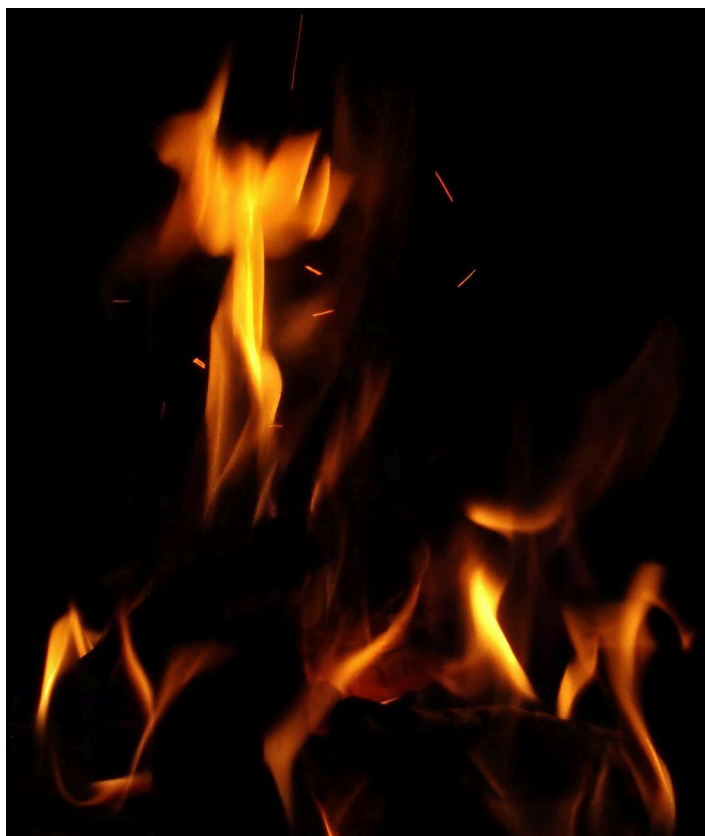
The sound of chopping wood whacks the air,
the blunt-end pound of splitting logs,
the hacking of peg-sized splinters.

The echo illuminates the kitchen window
where I stand distracted from the chore
of feeding the dishwasher

or setting the cooking pans to soak.
I work in the almost dark as the sun sinks
behind our rabble of trees along the river.

I watch him ready the fire in the fire pit,
stacking cuts of wood,
dragging fallen tree branches.

The night is windless.
Mourning doves call and coo.
The fire ignites in a combustible gladness.



He pulls my birthday Adirondack chairs
close enough,
my cue, my invitation,

to join him,
as I sashay the short stretch of grass
with a glass of wine held like a divining bowl.

Licks of flame spark and writhe.
What discoveries will we make tonight?
What mysteries will we reveal?

SUBMITTED POEM

“Home is a Quilt with Frayed Edges”

By Christy Schwan

home is a quilt with frayed edges
that softens with each passing year
it warms the heart and the body
holds memories of hope and fear
colors may fade or stay brilliant
stitches may loosen or keep strong
nothing can match its sweet comfort
if times in your life have gone wrong
when life shines golden with promise
it knows your dreams and your wishes
wraps an arm around your shoulders
sends you on with tender kisses
oh, home's a quilt with frayed edges

INSPIRED ART

“Storytime”

Color-photo collage

By Robert G. Stetson



SUBMITTED ART

“Fall Creek 2”

Acrylic on canvas

By Tracy Bezesky

(portfolio site: tracybezesky.com)



INSPIRED POEM

“Riverview Love Notes”

By Christy Schwan

Ah, warm summer waves
lap over, surround
me, soft and sensual.
Splash me with your gleeful
ripples, tumble over
each other on your way
to downstream rapids.
Where you leave me,
disappear
around the river bend.

Oh, water-worn
boulders, silent, half-hidden,
yet solid, bold,
we embrace
your strength. Our fingers
encircle you, trace
your smooth contours. You glisten
with pleasure
at our last caress,
as we wave goodbye.

SUBMITTED POEM

“Suspended”

*First published in "A Catalog of Small Machines",
Winter 2023 edition*

By Sue Blaustein

(portfolio site: www.sue_blaustein.com)

It's one of those cold April mornings.
Fine frost on my car in the backyard below.
Moon waxing gibbous, blurred edges but bright.
My immediate world
the way I left it last night.

A cold April morning – a Sunday – early.
The moon in the backyard, blurry but bright.
For a few moments more (as far as I know)
the world is the way
I left it last night.

INSPIRED ART

“Barbie's Car”

Color pencil

By Barb Zipperer



SUBMITTED ART

“Oh Susie Q!”

Oil on oil ground linen

By Rob Burkhard

(portfolio site: robburkhard.com)

INSPIRED POEM

“Susie Q II”

By Isaiah Janisch

(portfolio site: <https://janischwritingandediting.com/about/>)

White letters—painted over
ver red—shine in the sun.
“Susie Q II,” the
bow of the boat says, filling
my head with questions.

Did she crash aground while
the gulls and the geese sung?
Or, perhaps, the owner
got bored and decided
she was no longer fun?

On a dark, stormy night
did the boat captain yawn
at the helm? Was the
firstmate a thief who stole
her and went on the run?

Is she still on the water,
baking in the sun



or freezing in ice?
Is she now in the wa-
ter, sleeping with the fish?

I wish I had the an-
swer, and that it was known.
Right here is Susie
Q II. But where is the
boat called Susie Q One?

SUBMITTED POEM

“Embarrassment”

By John Contreras

(portfolio site:

http://www.instagram.com/johnny_types_ink/)

Face flushed red
Body warming up
Conjuring a sickly sweaty sensation
Pressure in my chest
A swelling around my eyes
I seek the urge to cry
Not that there's anything wrong with that
Tears have been shed
For a myriad of moments
And this particular emotion alludes me
A burning inside and around
My heart and a shrinking
Of my stomach
I loathe this feeling
Yet it returns at every graceless juncture
Humbling and mortifying

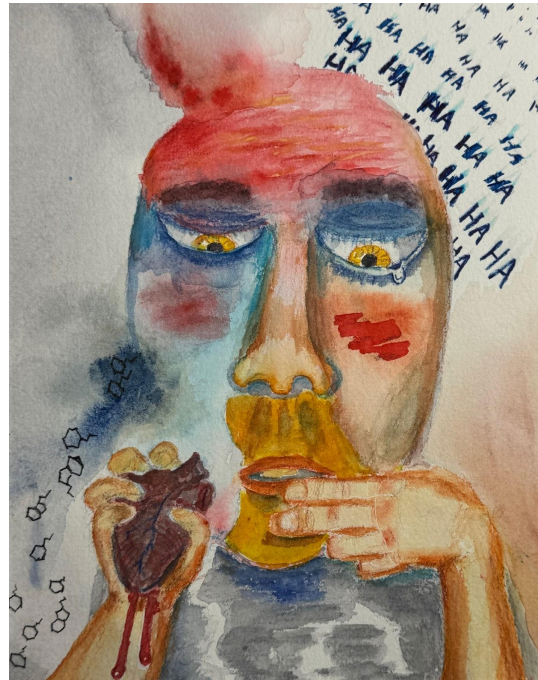
SUBMITTED ART

INSPIRED ART

“Embarrassed”

Watercolor

By Amy Kvidera



“Beiraffe”

Digital photo collage

By Joan Emmett

(portfolio site: joanemmett.com)



“The Indomitable Song of Benny the Beiraffe”

By Margaret Coombs

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

A clipper ship carries the tourists
here to play chess by the sea.
I hope they’re not bigots or purists
or they’ll scream when they catch sight of me.

I’m a two-horned giraffe like my father,
my mother’s a human being.
I struggled with bullies and bother.
Predators forced me to flee.

I’m making a new life, just you wait and see.
I’m making a new life, don’t bet against me.

I worked off my fare to Australia,
rented a room in Adelaide,
arrived for the feast Saturnalia,
for the first time I danced unafraid.

Soon I found work on the beaches
as a living chess piece, displayed
while standing in wool swimming breeches,
wearing wings and a vest, tailormade.

I’m making a new life; I’ve found the right key.

I'm making a new life, don't bet against me.

The chessboard floats on the ocean,
black-and-white squares tip and sway.
I balance in the commotion
of tides, winds, and currents at play.

Today sea and sky are in mourning,
slate-blue with an edge of night.
A cold and a murky forewarning
of turbulence, thunder, and might, but

I'm good at this new life here next to the sea.
I'm great at my new life, I'm sure you'll agree.

So I'm going to wait till tomorrow
before letting my hopes disappear.
The horizon's sunshine grows stronger,
its pale yellow light's coming near,
it hurries to all my friends here,
see how the sky's coming clear.

SUBMITTED POEM

"A Wood Turned Bowl"

INSPIRED ART

"Mikey's Bowl"

Oil on canvas

By James Iverson

Whoa!
Check out that big brown bowl!
I heard some dude carved it from a tree!
You heard me,
A god damned tree!
It's big
but not as big as the tree the dude carved it from.
It sure is big though!
and brown
very brown
and big!
The dude must be some kind of wood working genius.
He's big too!
but not brown
I bet he spends all winter holed up in a basement just
carving away
and growing ghostly white
making sure that bowl tells the story of that tree
and his story too.

SUBMITTED ART

By Joan Emmett

(portfolio site: joanemmett.com)



INSPIRED POEM

“Forest Walk”

Mixed media

By Jill Iverson



“A Degree of Difference”

By Annette Langlois Grunseth

(portfolio site: www.annettegrunseth.com)

The fever's rising, we are being warned.
The trees are talking, their network urges.
The bog complains behind our backs,
nature's kidneys can't keep up.

The trees are talking, their network urges.
A teaspoon of plastic has been found in our brains.
Nature's kidneys can't keep up,
the dementia of denial continues.

A teaspoon of plastic has been found in our brains.
Warmed oceans heave their might. Hurricanes muscle inland.
The dementia of denial continues,
the west is on fire, cities incinerated.

Warmed oceans heave their might. Hurricanes muscle inland
while the bog complains behind our backs.
The west is on fire, cities incinerated.
The fever's rising, we have been warned.

SUBMITTED POEM

“The Red Brick Terrace”

By Paulette Laufer

It must have taken a summer stretch
of early mornings and long evenings
to build – but I was young, had no idea,

other than it could be a place to hold
a tea party with cats, hang a dishtowel
to dry on an overhead line, follow
two steps down to the backyard,
escape into the hideout of a crabapple tree –

As every brick you placed found
its purpose, a small clay raft to stand
on before venturing further, a solid reason
to make the eye pause, the red rectangles
sandset, level – mornings, evenings,

every brick, like every word laid into paper,
mortar of spaces between, hoping to hold.

INSPIRED ART

“Red Brick Terrace”

Acrylic

By Mary Hamachek



SUBMITTED ART

“Mary Shrine”

Colored pencil on colored paper

By Barb Zipperer



INSPIRED POEM

“Mary Shrine”

By Anneliese Finke

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

*A hunter, lost in the woods of Marinette County, promised to build
a shrine to the Virgin Mary if she would intercede and guide him out safely*

Lost in the woods, how long
before you begin to pray,
to make promises, to bargain
for a safe way home? Is it when
the shadows that were dancing playfully
grow ominous, become the dark, reaching fingers
of witches? When you shudder, wondering
what they are weaving, and why?
These dark woods are beautiful and wild,
filled with the feeling you are not
alone. Overwhelming, but then—
comforting? They say we all die alone.
You don't believe it. All at once, you're sure
it isn't true. The hands of the witches
will hold you, the shadows will reach down
and wipe your brow. And in your hour of darkness,
Mother Mary comes to you. Whatever happens,
you are going home. No—you are already home.

This is how prayers are truly answered—
the truth winding around our hearts,
thorns and blood and beautiful rose and all.

SUBMITTED POEM

“Deciduous Dreams”

By Marshall Begel

Do palm trees ever feel resentful
Season’s change is uneventful,
And wonder what it’s like to take
A winter-long relaxing break?

But would they even have the guts
To drop their fronds and coconuts,
And watch them tumble down to land
Despondently on tropic sand?

Then take that cross-climatic trip
To join the dormant fellowship—
Beneath the watchful eyes of crows
They’d rest their roots beneath the snows.

INSPIRED ART

“Deciduous Dreams”

Color pencil & acrylic

By Mike Freeman

(portfolio site: www.mefreemanart.com)

It seems unlikely that they would
Seek out a colder neighborhood.
Despite the joys of snow and ice,
They'd settle for their paradise.



SUBMITTED ART

“Longing”

Charcoal, pastel, ink

By George Lottermoser

(portfolio site: <https://lakeshoreartistsguild.com/profile/13/>)

INSPIRED POEM

“Long For”

By Kathrine Yets

(portfolio site: sites.google.com/view/authorkathrineyets/home)

to admire from afar
across an ocean
of emotional tides—
the waves of affection.

rejection takes form:
disclosed waters
a tide pool full of urchins
spiny and unwelcomed
as the cough-cough-cough and clear of throat
to cover the words undesired
but understood.

a bed of coral as red as heart just as

art to
poetry
to art

apart from the symbols' swerves
and closed
and opened
as a hand reaches in yearn
for black yarned characters.

a sirened shriek.
creep and creak
of ship to shore—
away-away-away from all/every

sky/sea who
we be.



broken as starfish fragments on a beach.

to each their each.

SUBMITTED POEM

“On the Prairie”

By Isaiah Janisch

(portfolio site:

<https://janischwritingandediting.com/about/>)

A dark cloud ascends from the west.
Lightning glows, and thunder murmurs.
The bison run, and the songbirds
flee to the only tree amid the grass.
But the poor little spider,
has nowhere to go.

Life is dangerous on the prairie.

The storms erupts—
wind rips through the bluestem,
rain fills the huge leaves of the
cup plants, and a flooded creek
swallows up the land.
But the poor little spider
finds shelter on a thistle.

INSPIRED ART

“Prairie Thunderheads”

Oil and cold wax on canvas

By Tracy Bezesky

(portfolio site: tracybezsky.com)

Life is dangerous on the prairie.

The storm rolls on without a care.
Not one bison remains.
The lone tree has toppled over.
But the fine little spider
watches the water drain
from the safety of the spiked thistle leaf.

Life is dangerous on the prairie.



SUBMITTED ART

“Abstract #3”

Watercolor

By Amy Kvidera

INSPIRED POEM

“Resiliency”

By Paulette Laufer

Hard to grasp — in this dry desert terrain you
stand where water once stood millions of years



ago, a vast shallow sea covering the land. You long to clutch something that is not rock, is not grey sand and gravel, is not a horizon of crust hard as cement. Hard to fathom — in the same way that not everyone can cry, can make tears. That would be its own dry sorrow, not to be able to feel the tiny wet drop of dichotomy that embodies sadness and joy. Here in a desert botanical garden a hunched stalk with chimerical camel face, hump of pomegranate, looks as if it is rescuing a newborn plant creature with sea tail, black bear face and golden eyes, claws resembling paws. Imagine it floated upwards from a magical plant realm, from leaves and cones in hues of blue and gold, trailing traces of ancestral footprints. Here resilience thrives in the teddy-bear cholla but do not touch its fuzzy spine. Long gone are waterways and fossils of ocean-dwelling creatures. Yet pause, hear a hum in your ear like wind, like a desert seashell. Let past and present cradle your hand.

SUBMITTED POEM

“No Way to Timber Your Silence”

First published in the 2024 "Midwestern Review"

By Jenna Rindo

You felt safe, sheltered in place under weeping willows on the edge of a stagnant lake perfect for leeches and mosquito egg hatches. You followed deer paths between burr oaks and buckeye trees— its nuts, bark and leaves toxic to children and livestock, like your father’s mix of moods— his muscles bulging with hard labor his temper diluted with sad jags of weeping.

The smell of leaf rot and black walnut shells still make you hungry. Under your fingernails the texture of clay and humus remain. You dug for hours with a plastic shovel and sharp sticks looking to discover museum treasures—arrowheads, shed antlers, raccoon skulls waiting to be carbon dated. Your father was staking the corners of his dream house with no money to dig a foundation.

One autumn afternoon you dropped out of sight in a hollow box elder. He roamed the land for hours repeating your name in a range that changed from boredom’s baritone to the soprano of terror. You tucked down deeper

INSPIRED ART

“Treasured Moments”

Pastel

By Renee Couture

(portfolio site: <https://fineartamerica.com/profiles/renee-couture>)



hoping the tree trunk could dampen his anger, you wanted to reach for him but couldn't call out, couldn't even whisper.

SUBMITTED ART

"Put on a Happy Face"

Acrylic on canvas

By Steve Thimmig



INSPIRED POEM

"Gray Skies Grief"

By Marshall Begel

"The five stages – denial, anger, bargaining, depression, and acceptance... are tools to help us frame and identify what we may be feeling."

—Dr. Elisabeth Kübler-Ross

It's raining you say? Nah, it's merely a spray—
some bike must've splashed through the gutter,
and I'd be prepared if the weatherman shared
predictions of more than a sputter.

Well now I'm upset—my new bowler is wet—
the one that I got from Magritte.
The newscast should sack that incompetent hack
who forecasts in lies and deceit!

Oh, what I would give for an offer to live
someplace that's reliably sunny!
I'd make my amends, say goodbye to my friends,
and use up the last of my money.

Though skies may seem lighter, I pull my coat tighter

and shrink to my innermost core.
This pitiful state must be owing to fate
or pledge I neglected before.

My confidence beat, I accept this defeat
and lesson on life it implies,
Which brings me to wield this new weather-wise shield
against all that comes from the skies.

SUBMITTED POEM

“In a Kayak on Collins Marsh in Mid-July”

By Margaret Coombs

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

A light wind stirs the marsh.
From its edges glide
a bullfrog’s twang, a blackbird’s trill and cluck,
the hymn of dragonfly wings sparkling
in aerial benedictions I happen into.

When marsh reeds cling
to my paddle, I accept the invitation
to linger, drifting on a hidden current
that leads to a lazy eddy. Clouds

high in the cerulean sky separate and skim

INSPIRED ART

“An Invitation to Linger”

Mixed media

By Julie San Felipe

north as if summoned by some greater need.
Bright and dazzling, they fly, while I

savor the cradle of this sturdy boat
and approach the state called rapture.



SUBMITTED ART

“Step Into Dreamland”

Acrylic

By Mary Hamachek

INSPIRED POEM

“Seasons”

By Marilyn Zelke Windau

Grey clouds hover
over a grey lake.



Surprising color bursts forth
from maple trees on shore.
Reds and yellows,
greens and browns
reflect warmth in a narrow river
which s-curves its way
towards the sandy beach.

The river meanders slowly
through golden grasses,
seeking to change
the mood of this day—
a conflict of the seasons.

Warmth of late summer
competes with autumn.
Which will prevail?

LAKESHORE

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