



The Phoenix

Spring 2017

The Phoenix

Spring 2017

Editors-in-Chief

Tina Kramer
Amanda Zimmerman

Chief Editor of Layout and Content

Tina Kramer

Editorial Board

Alexis DeMott
Nathan Flory
Audra Franley
Ashley Johnson
Dr. Jared Johnson
Tina Kramer
Kyley Raskob
Alison Schemrich
Alayna Sharp
Stephen Staats
Amanda Zimmerman

Cover Artwork

Alison Schemrich

Faculty Advisor

Dr. Jared Johnson

The Phoenix

Spring 2017

Contents

Notes from Sigma Tau Delta Advisor and Editor-Dr. Johnson and Tina Kramer	4
Evening Stroll, Winter Wonderland-Crystal Durachko	4
Dedication-Dr. Johnson	5
Insanity vs. Creativity-Audra Franley	6
Soul Bearing-Crystal Durachko	6
My fear of trees: from fruit to reality-Camille Radford	7
The view of Walden Pond-Hans G. Myers	7
Pleading-Nathan Flory	8
Hope-Nathan Flory	8
Bright Eyed-Crystal Durachko	8
Flower Petals-Tina Kramer	9
Reflections and Self-Awareness-Crystal Durachko	9
Innocent Slumber-Crystal Durachko	9
Perspective of Western Humanity-Sean Oros	10
Performance Ready-Tina Kramer	11
A School of Criticism-Alison Schmerich	12
Deepest Valley-Tina Kramer	15
Longing-Kyley Raskob	16
Faith-Amanda Zimmerman	17
Imagination-Audra Franley	17
Wisdom-Crystal Durachko	17
Just Passing Through-Tina Kramer	17
Amalgamation-Nathan Flory	18
At Peace-Amanda Zimmerman	20
Dost Thou Not?-Tina Kramer	20

Lonely Path-Crystal Durachko	20
Psychical-Nathan Flory	21
A Funeral-Tina Kramer	21
Intergalactic Frogs-Crystal Durachko	21
My hair journey-Camille Radford	22
Full House-Tina Kramer	22
Epitaph on a Fallen Hero-Hans G. Myers	24
Waiting for Caesar-Sean Oros	25
Autumnal Sunshine-Crystal Durachko	25
The Textbook-Tina Kramer	26
Friendship-Crystal Durachko	26
Untitled-Audra Franley	27
Songbirds-Crystal Durachko	27
The Yellow Clover-Hans G. Myers	28
David P. LaGrange-Cassie LaGrange	29
Age Gracefully-Tina Kramer	30
Ode to Wallaby-Amanda Zimmerman	30
The Climb-Tina Kramer	30
Simple as a Rose-Tina Kramer	30
One Day at a Time-Tina Kramer	31
The One that Got Away-Amanda Zimmerman	31
A view of Edith Wharton's home-Hans G. Myers	31
Pilgrimage of Learning-Sean Oros	32
Therapy of the Written Word-Audra Franley	32
Contemplation-Tina Kramer	32
The Stains of Long Seeped Bruises-Anonymous	33
Reminisce Panic-Tina Kramer	33
In Flight-Tina Kramer	33
In Time-Amanda Zimmerman	34
What do I Title This?-Cassie LaGrange	34
Stranger Sympathy-Tina Kramer	34



Evening Stroll, Winter Wonderland

Crystal Durachko

Notes from Sigma Tau Delta Advisor and Editor

Dr. Jared Johnson

Welcome to *The Phoenix*, Thiel College's creative literary and artistic publication! Now in its seventeenth year, the current edition of *The Phoenix* not only honors its successful past but also celebrates its invigorating present and future. As you read the 2017 edition, keep in mind that *The Phoenix* is a reanimation of the feelings, experiences, and imaginations of the Thiel College community. The firebird of Greek mythology is a widely applied symbol for the power of resilience. Thank you to all of the contributors who had the courage to bring life to your creations and the strength to, once again, vivify *The Phoenix*.

Tina Kramer

To the creative minds of Thiel College:

This edition of the *Thiel Phoenix* features a wide array of creativity, from photographs to poetry. The people responsible for these works have been brave enough to venture their inner thoughts, talents, and energies into media that others are able to view and appreciate. I would like to thank everyone who submitted pieces to be considered, even if they were not included in these pages. Further, I would like to encourage all the students of Thiel to pursue their dreams for excellence. To those who are leaving Thiel, especially Dr. Moinet and senior members of the English Department, you will never leave our minds or our hearts. Enjoy.

Dedication

Dr. Jared Johnson

The Phoenix represents a rich tradition of creative expression by previous contributors from the Thiel College community since the reboot of the journal in 2000. Over its seventeen-year history, *The Phoenix* has featured hundreds of authors, but none has appeared in more issues as Dr. Christopher H. Moinet, to whom we dedicate the current edition.

Much like the author, Moinet's works reflect humor, wonder, and a rare honesty vis-à-vis both his subjects and himself. Ornithological literature at its funniest, his "Crash the Cardinal: A Thiel Bird" (2010) satirizes the Sisyphean task of higher education through a serially self-destructive bird. Moinet's more solemn works run the gamut of emotions—from the deep empathy for the aging subject of "Big Max" (2012) to an unflinching journey into selfishness and despair in "How Dark" (2015).



Thank you, Dr. Moinet, for showing generations of students and colleagues the myriad possibilities that writing can unlock.

Insanity vs. Creativity

Audra Franley

ThE VOIce, aRe wiTh mE,
tAunTinGHaRass-ing-
She paints a masterpiece
Depicting the MaDnæSs within.
Anxiety plagues me-
My heart races fast-
I can't sleep tonight-
He dreams calming images
Trying to escape,
Creates beautiful worlds all his own.
depression pulls me...
down...
a deep sea...
blue...
losing the urge...
to live.
They put their pens to the paper
And write the world poems
That inspire us all to live.
Paintings, dreams, poems-
Beauty the reward
For the awful price they pay.
Appreciate their artwork,
But mock their abnormality.
Are they creative,
Or simply insane?

Beauty the reward
For the awful
price they pay.



Soul Bearing

Crystal Durachko

The view of Walden Pond from the site of Henry
David Thoreau's Cabin, Walden Pond State
Reservation, Concord, Massachusetts
Hans G. Myers



My fear of trees: from fruit to reality

Camille Radford

Fears are a result of past trauma
My fears are carried in the breeze of trees
They scream a mournful song on days with no sun
Shade makes no escape for some fruit
Becoming crow's food begging to finally drop
Begging to break free of these horrible roots

Will I always have this fear of trees; I'm just stuck in the past you see
Walking under a tree I lose my shadow to these trees by the sway of their branches they are
trying to snatch me
To brand me with their history
Others see me flinching at the sight of torched trees not understanding why their branches lean
Leaning when I'm told to stay strong but raising my hands can't save me

Popula trees are branded by these southern fruit
Trees are supposed to be a sign of new life but I see the shapes that their shadows consume
Shadows shedding light on my present fight I mean life
My fears will never be understood by all my sympathy to the fruit that use to hang here
My heart breaks as my fears resonate
Trees have become something great

Trees are supposed to
be a sign of new life but
I see the shapes that
their shadows consume

Greatness
how do these trees grow under such sensitive weight
Shedding their shadows over land founded on hate
When will I find beauty in the things I hate?
I am the product of such strange fruit

Hope

Nathan Flory

Pleading

Nathan Flory

Focus on the higher things,
As I should; I wish I could.
It's the becoming I dream of,
Never the being.
How do I know I'm doing life right?

The thing is, I'll never know.
So I can decide now, for myself,
Whether I do it right or wrong.
Quit this life of guilt and shame,
Rather, be proud of my name.

I so often work against myself:
My desire is insatiable, but
Let my infinite expectation make me complete.
Whatever I do, whatever the outcome,
I live I learn I persevere; I live right.

Oh by the grace of God, let me stand.
Tired of this sin and guilt and shame,
I plead I plead come to me.
Forgive me, yes, but lead me, too.
Oh Lord, show me the way.



Bright Eyed

Crystal Durachko

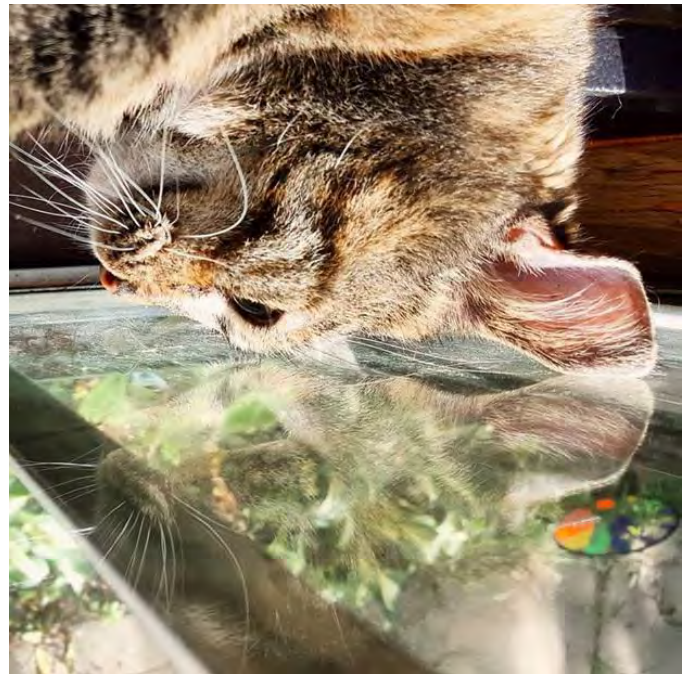


Flower Petals

Tina Kramer

Reflections and Self-Awareness

Crystal Durachko



Innocent Slumber

Crystal Durachko

Perspective of Western Humanity

Sean Oros

The Contemporary Visionary:

The future beckons!
Technology is on the rise
As modern thought leaps light-years ahead,
And human beings transcend the skies!
Our dazzling speed defies belief
As we advance in manic haste
To break all bounds of mortal spheres
And shed all limits we have faced!
How far we've come!
The modern world is surely best!
With civil rights—and internet!
We shape our world unlike the rest!
We have the stars within our grasp:
Our Universe transcends the past!

Modern Thinker:

World War shattered, world upheaved,
A New Age dawns from midst the rubble
As olden structures lay in waste.
Gone the foolish dreams of old!
Now we step into a brave new world,
The past eschewing with new-found wisdom.
For we know best, who wield the power
To blast whole cities and race for moons.
The world is dark, but we are rich
And know we see how we were blind
Who lived with dreams of dominance,
That few would rule and the whole wide world!
Rise up, rise up, and join the march
That questions rule and challenges farce!

Industrial Imperialist:

Power beckons ever on
To the march of gears and steam
The clank of factories and wealth
Mankind is now an unbound stream!
We've burst the dams that held us back,
We've carved the world with enlightened mind,
We've searched the world and pitched our flags:
Empires will rule through right divine!
We've seen Romantics, classicists, and all,
But we know the world—the West supreme!
We hold more power than ever man could
dream!
And wage new wars such as were never seen,
For gentlemen lead honest, gallant fights,
And all will gain from our new powered lights.

Reformation Printer:

Guttenberg has changed us all!
Fetch a papal burial pall!
Luther nailed his grievance post—
Pamphlets now run out to most!
Gone the darkness of the past;
Gone cruel Rome's old strangling grasp!
We now stand a world divided,
But freedom thus is now provided!
Muslims beckon at our doors,
And now we face new holy wars,
But knowledge spreads in lands apart;
Printing presses spring to life
Spreading knowledge to stir the heart
And raising scholars up from holy strife!

Renaissance Man:

The West's reborn, once more in golden dawn,
As Classics rise to give again their light,
And Artists grace with marvel and delight.
Rejoice: Medieval darkness is now gone,
And Gothic style ne'er its goods will pawn.
The world has never seen so grand a sight!
The past is gone like passing of a blight!
These golden days will flow forever on!
So Courtiers will raise a happy glass,
And Princes briefly put aside their lance,
As mourners end their grieving and their fast
And all will join civilization's dance!
These golden, happy days will ever last,
Divine, inspired joy of Man's Romance.

Medieval Theologian:

We have survived the falling of a world,
Our heads held high and banners all unfurled.
With German tribes and romance peoples old,
We lived a time that favored strong and bold;
A darkened world we braved in Jesus' name,
The cup of culture once again to claim,
And raise chivalric ballads to our God,
And plow with iron over root and sod,
To feed our people God's own holy bread,
The *Corpus Christi*, son of God the head;
An age of pilgrims, popes, and royal courts,
As tow'ring castles supplant Roman forts.
We fight Jihad to keep our Europe's soil,
Crusading back in papal, holy toil.

Arabian Knight:

Muslim warriors rise to holy war,
Jihad's call to honor shore to shore,
Spreading faith in Allah's holy name,
Bold Islamic kingdoms rise in fame,
Raising science none could dare despise,
Triumphs varied, spread in glorious rise:
Birthing algebra and astrolabes,
Bagdad's streets to grand Granada's gates;
All must gaze in awe at all we've built,
Hand still on our ready, willing hilt.
Proud Rome fallen, we now take its place,
Spreading Allah's faith with boundless haste.
Our culture will forever leave its mark,
As we onto a holy faith embark.

Classical Philosopher:

We bear the light of knowledge gods have given
To our brilliant civilization's souls.
The Arts, Philosophy, and Mathematics
Enrich our peoples and our minds with goals
To lift mankind above the dark and drear
Of past long ages ruled by tribal law.
Behold the dawn of domes and majesty
Such as no soul before us ever saw!
Our plays and theater tell our ancient tales
As writers tell our odysseys and strife,
And architects our futures raise to heaven,
Who would not want to share our glorious life?
With balance, thought, and splendor we advance
To tame the world and civilize life's dance.

Ancient King:

We have built the cities fed with grain,
We have tamed the waters of the plain,
We have grown the wheat in sun or rain.
We have cut the wood of forest pall,
We have quarried stone from mountains tall,
We have forged the ores we mine from stony
wall,
We have tamed the animals who barked or
brayed,
We have braved the storms though once afraid,
We have sailed the seas for distant trade.
We have given signs to mark our words,
We have written laws to rule our wards,
We have waged cruel wars with mighty swords.
We have raised our temples gods demand;
We now rise to rule both sea and land.

Neolithic Hunter:

Man and Woman, hearth and spear,
Child rearing, hunting deer.
We have carved our destiny:
Tools we've mastered, by strength of mind!
Stone we've conquered, by strength of arm!
Fire we've tamed—the dark's behind!
We fight against a world of harm.
The world our road, the game our food;
We hunt and gather, we live and grow.
Human kind is born with us!
Wild animals flee or die.
Pick the berry, skin the beast,
Tools and fire, tribes and gods,
We will survive, against all odds.



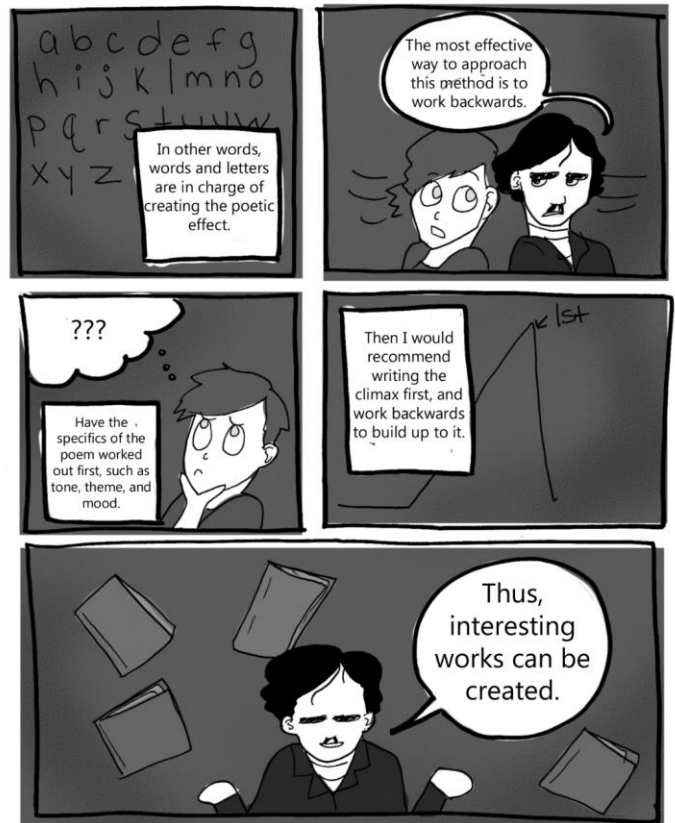
Performance Ready

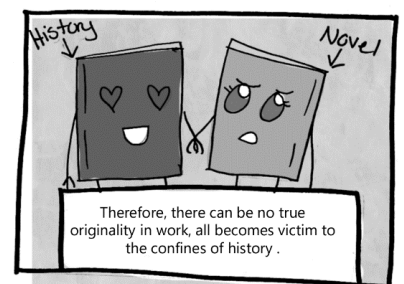
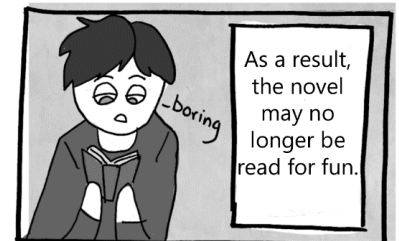
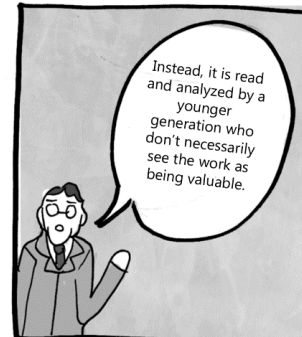
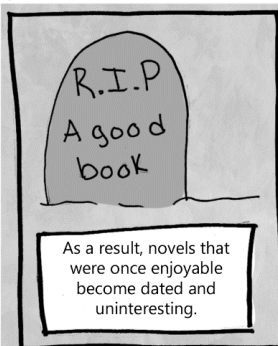
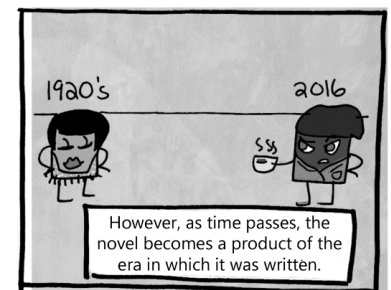
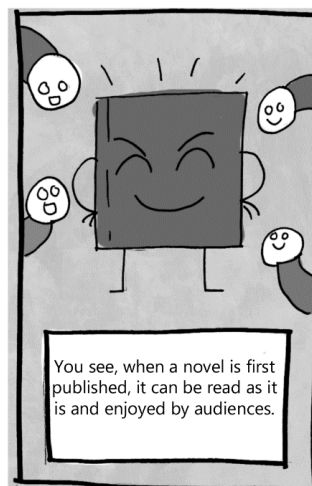
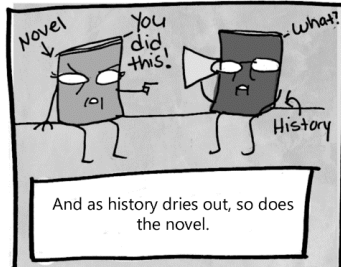
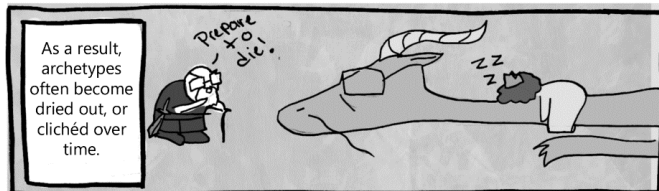
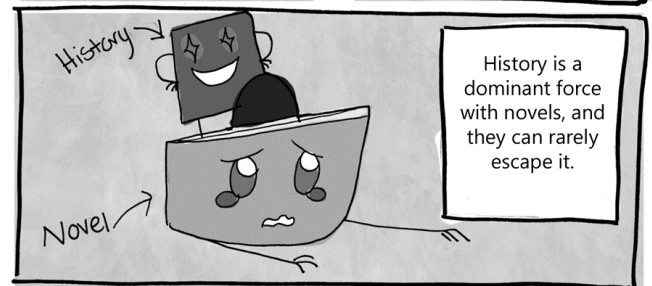
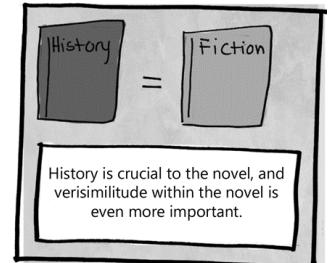
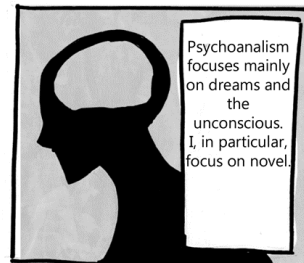
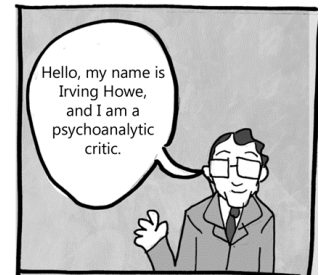
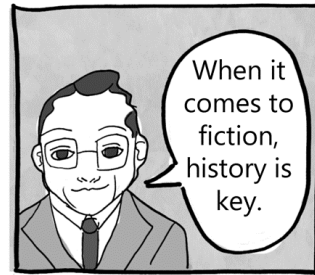
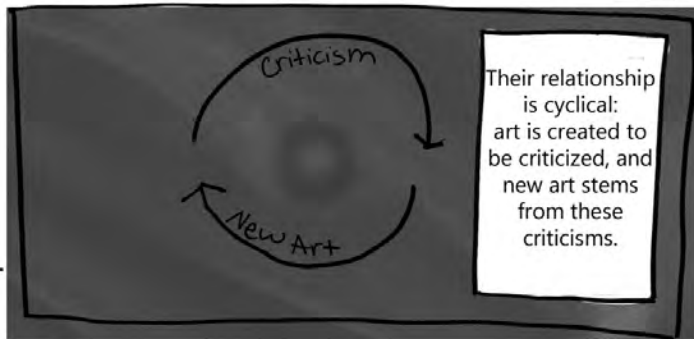
Tina Kramer

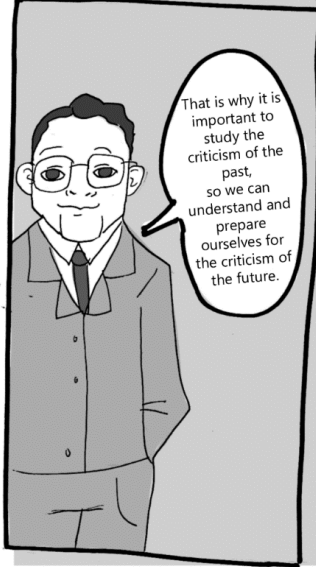
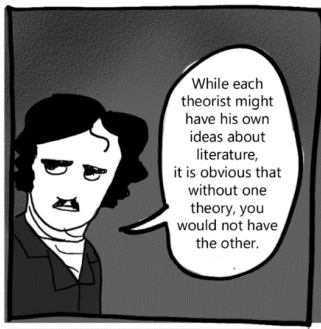
A School of Critics

Alison Schmerich









Deepest Valley

Tina Kramer

Longing

Kyley Raskob

Sunshine

Piercing the veil of pale blue fabric,
guarding her from the world,
All that is needed to break her thoughts.
She leaves reality, if only for a moment,
Just to see the sands;
Warm... Wet... Tickling her toes.
Cool water rushes up over her feet, only to
retreat back to the sea.

She yearns for it.

Aching.

Blood pumps in her veins,
Reverberating in her ears the sound of
crashing waves that crush her.
The sound coming and going; soft then
Loud; Great then small.
A pattern of notes counting the seconds,
Minutes,
Hours.
Keeping the time as she waits.
She yearns for it.
Aching.

Stepping away from the shore,
Moist air permeating her lungs as she
breathes; slowly; deeply.

Drinking in the cool, light air— she plunges
herself

Diving into the abyss,
Tasting the salty sweetness of the water,
Ignoring her craving for air,
Craving for life.
She yearns for it.
Aching.

Opening her eyes
To see the swirling colors that blur beneath
the ocean surface,
Life thrives here.
Creatures darting about the currents,
Curiously watching her.
She sinks below their watchful eyes,
Deeper still.
She yearns for it.
Aching

The rustling of the blinds brings her back to
the room.
The feelings gone, the sea lost.
Seeing the sunshine piercing the veil of blue,
Reminiscent of the waves.
The creatures, the colors, the sand;
Lost
Salt water here made only by tears.
She yearns for it.
Aching.

Faith

Amanda Zimmerman

Sometimes I get this feeling
What if my world falls apart?
And it can be quite difficult to begin healing
When you don't know how to start

What if the world falls apart?
I get really very scared
When you don't know how to start
What if no one ever cared?

I get really very scared
But then I begin to pray
What if no one ever cared?
I know you will always stay

But then I begin to pray
And I remember He's always there
I know you will always stay
All I needed was a quick prayer

When I remember He's always there
Sometimes it's easy to forget
But all I need you need is a quick prayer
And I feel forever in debt

Sometimes it's easy to forget
But then I begin to pray
And I feel forever in debt
Because I know you will forever stay



What if no
one ever
cared?
I know you
will always
stay

Imagination

Audra Franley

Sometimes
Little girl
Mystic world
Discovering things
Not even there.

Years and years
'Til she's aware
Of a deeper meaning,
Hovering.

Just fun and games,
Pretend and play.

Go ahead,
Hide your tears,
Imagine fake fears.

It's carefree now,
The picture's still fuzzy,
You're this, you're that.

Bad times and good times,
Picture it all
Now remember little one,
You make the call.



Just Passing Through

Tina Kramer

Amalgamation

Nathan Flory

Clear the *stage*
And set the lights and sound *ablaze*
We're *players* anyways
Feel fortunate you contribute a verse
First, a question of these recurring:
Should a promise made long ago
be remembered or forgotten?
Passionate when time was short;
though
haunting, not truly begotten.
Who would think that thorn in my
side:
piercing, prodding, ever-present,
is the sole star in my dark sky:
guiding, graceful, glimpse of heaven.

To 'Wait and Hope,' the Count did
say;
That glorious eternal day.
Never worry, I'll always stay:
The perfect verse to end the play.

Hold that thought—
I'll be with you in a moment—there is
time
For decisions and revisions
Which a minute will *re-verse*:

Should a promise made long ago
be remembered once begotten?
Passionate when time was short;
though
haunting, it was forgotten.

Discordant notes, desolate years,
a moving on much overdue.
A crushed dream, unspoken tears,
so let despondency ensue.

To 'Wait and Hope,' the Count did
say;
That glorious eternal day.
Never worry, I'll always stay:
That perfect verse has gone away.

Do I contradict myself?
Very well then I contradict myself
For I am large; I contain
multitudinous
Seas incarnadine.

This world contains too many lands
and seas incarnadine;
And if you don't know what I *mean*,
To you I sound this barbaric yawp:

I saw the best minds of my generation
Distracted by life amid all this strife
While a last *name* and TV *fame*
equates
A political agenda.

While violence and terror seem to be
No longer an error:
With bombs in Brussels, Iraq, Lahore
Pakistan
And don't forget en Paris,
An Egyptian plane gets hijacked,
While a Brit begs the criminal for a
selfie.
That's crazy.

And it's not just *them* over *there*;
It's you, and it's me.
Shootings in Tampa, Baltimore,
Hit and run in L.A.
Road-rage in Minneapolis,
The door *you* slammed in his face last
week;
Last night when *he* hung up on his
own Mom;
The names *I* harassed her with that
day;
The words *you* whispered to your best
friend behind *that guy's* back *today*,
Or more likely you texted those words
to her since she wasn't right next to
you
[We all do it].

Every text, tweet, pic, post
Is just another shout into the void.
It's devoid of real substance;
We've become *paranoid*.

And I hate to complain but
Through all this *pain*
Oh Thou Lord of life, send our roots
rain
That we may cultivate our own
gardens.

I ain't usually this type of guy but
All I'm *try*'in to say is
Give peace a chance.

We need it, need love,
Intentionality, action,
Or we'll just destroy ourselves.

Let peace flow hand in hand over the
whole earth from east to west:
Asian, African, European, American;
Male and female;
Learned and unlearned;
Let lovers embrace in measureless
love without lust;
Let the master salute the slave;
The felon step forth from the prison;
The insane be made sane;
Let those thirsting be given drink;
The suffering of the sick be relieved;
The wrong be made right:

You re-open the door,
He re-calls his mom,
I re-gret my words, apologize, and re-
form,
You and your best friend re-turn to re-
ceive and befriend *that guy*,
The wrong is made right.

It's no slight move
To demand things aright.
Take my hand
As I stand here and re-cite
The words that I write:
Alright? Only if we unite
In this world of crepuscular light.



Lonely Path

Crystal Durachko

At Peace

Amanda Zimmerman

Lightly around me the white flakes fall
And I am enamored by all I see.
Darkness descends, but I have no fear
With my steady companion beside me.

He trots through the unfamiliar substance,
Burying his face deep within.
Wriggling away, cold and confused
The chilled air bites at our skin.

The sun is long gone
But the twinkling homes provide a glow.
Soft chiming in the distance
The world otherwise quiet in these moments.

Within the windows families huddle,
Children play games,
Fires crackle and roar,
Hearts warming lonely souls.

Here I stand
And breathe in the beauty of life –
Peering at my merry escort
We continue on through the night.

Dost Thou Not?

Tina Kramer

Poetry? Poetry? Dost thou not like poetry?
The warm blanket on your shoulders, the wind
in your hair,
May leave you bare
But words will never leave your mind
Angry or kind.

Art? Art? Dost thou despise?
Science may fix the heart, and math the mind,
Still leave you lost
But art will soothe the ever-living soul,
Cool as water, dark as coal.

Music? Music? Dost thou not hear?
Busy street, car horn in ear
Soon in silence.
But music will build you, fill the eternal void,
Long ignored by Freud.

Dost thou not care?
For the gifts so rare
You see.
For humanity is fleeting
But, for now, your heart is beating.

*Darkness descends,
but I have no fear
With my steady
companion beside me.*

Psyclical

Nathan Flory

The universe began with our eyes closed—
Open to light: the first thing we see—infinity.
Bright: but a moment we've begun to adjust.
New: the excitement of possibility.
Constant rotation of the light and the night,
But the true beauty we see is in the between.

The stars form our castles
The stars form us,
And stars burst:
Fate goes ever as fate must.

We were made to make mistakes,
Having fallen into free will for a while:
Was the universe made only to be seen by our eyes?
But in the end we all come 'round—
Space and time take angry things and make them kind
—And our eyes close.

We were made to
make mistakes,
Having fallen into
free will for a while

A Funeral

Tina Kramer

Red roses, black dresses, pale faces,
If only their thoughts could be seen,
For here they are in the worst of places.

As for sorrow, there's more than traces
Asking, "Why is life so mean?"
Red roses, black dresses, pale faces.

The innocent life always chases
Something quite obscene
For here they are in the worst of places.

The flowers in tall vases,
The florists come, so routine
Red roses, black dresses, pale faces.

Family and friends all embrace
To hide the pain unseen
For here they are in the worst of places.

There's no warmth from the fireplaces
For the girl, only thirteen
Red roses, black dresses, pale faces,
For here they are in the worst of places

Intergalactic Frogs

Crystal Durachko





Full House

Tina Kramer

My hair journey

Camille Radford

I was always told that straight hair was best
That flat irons could never be put to rest
As a child my mom did my hair in braids
Using beads and foil on the ends as aids
Other girls got perms and blowouts for their hair
They had to conform to the societal wear

After braids came little puff balls
On my head like clouds in all the halls
I was oblivious to their continuous judgment
Thinking maybe they needed a slight adjustment
I was proud of my natural mane falling every which way
As a predator I became, not to be kept at bay

The loss of childhood, confidence is key
To my confusion of who I could no longer be
Back to the heat In order to gain length
Believing that in this I would find that strength
Water has always worked against me
Now with straight hair I always flea

Look at what Years of confidence abuses can do
Trying to find something to mask my constant blue
It's funny that being lost modeling found me
Trying to beat me into remembering me carefree
Years gone by I still use heat to burn away curls
Straight hair is still the ideal for all the pretty girls

When you find who you are there's an explosion
Confidence in curls that wipe away my poison
Becoming the Afrocentric queen I was always meant to be
Being free to do as they please my curls smile with glee
The road is hard the work is tough
In the end it will all be enough

I can run my fingers through strong bouncy coils
They are soft as pillow because of all the oils
I can change the color pink, white and orange
I can have long locks down my back without warrant
I can do whatever I please with healthy hair
Because finally I will actually continue to care

Do not let society or anyone tell you what you are made of
Only you know the color of your soul you were made with love

Epitaph on a Fallen Hero

Hans G. Myers

For fifty-eight years, he lived on this earth
A giant of a man whose life broke rules
From the first breath on his May day of birth
Through his last on April's long morning
bleak
He defied convention. As a young man,
He studied dance and played with friends
and peers.
And then away to war, where his flight
began
In Vietnam's arid jungles and clime
He earned a country's gratitude, but lost
it to anonymity and time. Just
another sailor. From fire's mortal cost
to enemy's bullets defy served he.
And home from war to a country blind to
the sacrifices they had made. Still, he
served. Suit and tie became his uniform to
view
and help the families of the dead.
From mortician's lab to England's sports,
He made his way to television's screen.
And from there to what he wished to report;
From Lockerbie and its bombs to football,
The world was his oyster and he the pearl.

When illness hit his father he returned,
back to sports at a local news whirl.
He loved and married, returned to death –
Helping those who had loved and lost their
own,
visiting widows, comforting parents.
He and his wife's love was soon to be grown
When a son joined them, forming trinity.
To his son he showed naught but love and
care,
Though to his wife there were some rocky
shoals
But to the son, there was nothing e're there.
Their life had ups and downs, as all do now.

The greatest struggle of his life was last.
Through illness he fought for normalcy and
love. A cancer that he hoped only to pass.
But pass it did not, and on April's long
Morning bleak he breathed his last low sigh.
To Caledonia's pipes we said farewell,
And laid him in the ground, a cold goodbye.
I often think of him, tall and bearded,
Stern-looking but full of joy, life, and love,
Large ears, left-part, and glasses all seem to
be further and further from my mind
shove'd
No voice, no laugh, no speech can I recall.

Autumnal Sunshine

Crystal Durachko



Waiting for Caesar

Sean Oros

America is waiting for its Caesar.
To do away with the republic,
To sweep away the senate,
To make straight the crooked paths
Of government, mired in bureaucracy.
For we have failed.
Not just our leaders,
But we,
The People,
In a government of the people,
Have failed.
We have drunk deep of the draught of
distraction.
We have passed off the mantel of leadership
to others.
We are so busy, we never do anything
And never think.
America is waiting for its Caesar
To Shock the world, to conquer Gaul,

And to cross the Rubicon.
People would rally behind our new Caesar,
A well-spoken reassurer,
A charismatic dynamo,
A bolt of light in a dark sky.
Americans kneel in obedience,
Happy to hand just one other
responsibility—
That of government,
An interruption in daily life—
Off to a man they can follow.
To take one more burden
Off already over-worked necks
And sigh in relief as they follow their
Caesar.
A Julius, to make a name
That will be synonymous with power
For millennia.
An Augustus, First Citizen,
To restructure our empire
And restore social justice and moral virtues
And lay a new standard of laws.
Then, Americans will be happy.

The Textbook

Tina Kramer

New friends! Open wide and talk to me,
There's so much you know, and I fear
I cannot learn it all. We best start now.
Whisper your wisdom as I write to you
Sweetly, and color your pages bright.
There's an exam tomorrow, so we will
Be here all night.

Oh dear friend, I must write a paper!

I need you, the best of all helpers;
Sit for a while, we'll have a nice chat.
I'll drink some coffee; would you like

A sip of that? Page 56, hmm...

What is that term? We best discuss
It more before it's time for midterms.

Do not worry! It will be fine.

The test is tomorrow,
And we still have time.



Friendship

Crystal Durachko

A semester of fighting, the friendship grows strained
Before long my old friend finds himself out in the rain.

Need I remind you
who brought you
here and
Cared for you
this whole year?

Damn old friend! I no longer appreciate
Your cocky word and elevated confidence,
Do not I know something? Fine. Say I am wrong.
Need I remind you who brought you here and
Cared for you this whole year?
Tonight you will sleep alone. Tears? Dare you cry?
Or is that the rain that seeps through your cover
And leaves you no longer dry? I hope the love
We shared smears in the mud. But if that doesn't
The trick, tomorrow I will sit by the fire
Crafted from your corpse; I am sorry it ends,
Especially in such a horrific manner, for you.
Time heals all wounds, but there will be no healing
For you.

Untitled

Audra Franley

One of my least favorite things to do is title a poem.

I've spent these seconds–minutes–hours–days formulating words, creating a thought. I've defined a thought with many thoughts. And suddenly I'm expected to give it a name! I have to title my thoughts. To choose a word – or a few – that represents the many that follow. I've spent all this time writing these lines and now I must define them, reduce them, label them... with a name.

A new born baby enters the world.

This child will spend seconds–minutes–hours–days formulating thoughts, creating an identity. The identity will be defined by many identities. And before all this – before thoughts and identities become – the parents are expected to give it a name. They are expected to title this new human, this new existence. To choose a name – or a few – that will define the identity yet to be developed and created. So much time yet to be spent, but it will be defined, reduced, labeled...with a name.

Songbirds

Crystal Durachko

Songbirds in the woods, singing of a time, when America was great, when America was sublime.
Songbirds in the trees, screaming as they fly, with the American dream, so too did rural America
die.

Songbirds all alone, scavenging for seeds, drinking up the honey, ignoring the stinging bees.
Songbirds starving still, fighting for their nests, ignoring the winter breeze, frost stuck to their
chests.

Songbirds covered in soot, hiding down the mines, songbirds on the breeze, hours away they
must fly.

Songbirds in the trees, as the snow flies, frozen in the winter, underneath an empty sky.
Songbirds over here, fighting for their lives, singing out in despair, the last few notes of life.

Songbirds drinking water, poisoned from a mine, cricks red as blood, leave no hope behind.
Songbirds in the woods, singing of a time, when America was great, when America was sublime.

The Yellow Clover

A Tribute to Robert Frost, Occasioned by a Visit to his Farm in Derry, New Hampshire
Hans G. Myers

It is peaceful here.
The verdant, clear, and cool air
Blows across my face.
There is something about this place.

“Whose woods are these?” His house stands there:
White clapboard and grey shingled roof seem to glare
Under the bright New England morning sun.
I feel a sudden, sprightly, youthful urge to run!

And through the woods along the path
My soul has seemed to grow wings, and hath
Taken flight: borne upon the winds of verse
And nothing in this world seems adverse.

Where two roads diverge in the green wood,
We take the road more traveled by, wondering if we should.
Through the brambles and around the bend lies a stream
“West-Running Brook men call it to this day,” its surface seems to gleam.

We pass a wall – its low-piled stones have aged.
But still its sloping and winding façade assuaged
The age-old maxim “Good Fences Make Good Neighbors.”
Though one must wonder, so long since, how much this fence-maker did labor.

Down, at last, we come into the pasture.
We stand – as if emboldened by our journey – a little taller, with higher stature.
And I, last of all, spot a patch of yellow beneath the heather.
And start to wonder, in this blissful weather, how long had this been here altogether?

Was this yellow here when he left a note to her
Telling her he was off to “clean the pasture spring” of the debris of the local fir?
Did this little yellow clover catch the light when, at night
He would look at his “Window Tree” and write?

I kneel down – the grass against my knees as I brush my fingers through the clover
And wonder – again – how long it has been here, through the grass and heather grown over.
I find a stem between my fingers and gently pluck,
Telling myself that this yellow clover flower, well, “it’s just for luck.”

Perhaps I hope – in my dreams – this keepsake yellow clover will
Allow me a touch – a glimpse, a ghost of his greatness; though I know it will grant less than nil.
For two roads diverged in the green wood under the cloudy New England sky,
And he took the road less traveled by, while I took the road more traveled by.

David P. LaGrange

Cassie LaGrange

Every year we plant sunflowers just for you.
I wish you were here to watch them grow –
You couldn't be here as I grew.
As they get taller and taller, I stand further
below.

I wish you were here to watch them grow,
They stretch their faces towards the Sun, as
do I.
As they get taller and taller, I stand further
below.
The squirrels will eat some before they dry.

They stretch their faces towards the Sun. As
do I,
To feel the light upon on my face.
The squirrels will eat some before they dry.
Why did you have to go and leave this
place?

To feel the light upon on my face,
I sit on the park bench with your name.
Why did you have to go and leave this
place?
I know there's really no one to blame.

I sit on the park bench with your name.
Is this how the warmth of your love would
feel?
I know there's really no one to blame.
It's been twelve and a half years, but I'm
still trying to heal.

Is this how the warmth of your love would
feel?
I know it was so many years ago –
Twelve and a half years – but I'm still trying
to heal.
On my life it's left a shadow.

Even though it was so many years ago,
People still apologize when they find out
you're gone.
On my life it's left a shadow.
It's something I try not to dwell on.

People still apologize when they find out
you're gone.
I have such a great step-dad.
It's something I try not to dwell on,
But having you here too would have been
rad.

I have such a great step-dad.
To the thought of another life path, I try not
to cling,
But having you here too would have been
rad.
In the end, who knows what that life would
bring?

To the thought of another life path, I try not
to cling;
I wouldn't want to be anyone different.
In the end, who knows what that life would
bring?
But who I am now is more significant.

I wouldn't want to be anyone different.
I know you still watch over me and that
you're proud.
But who I am now is more significant.
I just wish I could hear you say it out loud.

I know you still watch over me and that
you're proud,
Even though you couldn't be here as I grew.
I just wish I could hear you say it out loud.
Every year we plant sunflowers just for you.

Age Gracefully

Tina Kramer

“Oh my dear Rose, age gracefully,
Do not wither and grey,
Hold not envy for the new buds,”
As he turned away.

Dear William, I ask
If I am to stay fragrant,
Will you not fall to passion
And need not repent?

For old as I am, a flower once red,
Cannot hope for you to see
Me now, as Earth reclaims my
leaves.

Now my soul is at liberty
Though my splendor has fell.

Does man not yearn for me?
I no longer dance in the breeze,
But my thoughts are just as sweet,
And I pray on my knees.

I will release you, William,
I implore you, dear sir,
To age as gracefully as me,
Of that, I concur.

Though the young bud is pretty,
Older bloom know the art,
Now I leave you with beauty,
But not with my heart.



The Climb

Tina Kramer

**Someone
to hold
when the
anxiety
climbs.**

Ode to Wallaby

Amanda Zimmerman

You have been so many things to me.
A friend in dark times,
You will always agree,
Someone to hold when the anxiety
climbs.

There for me for as long as I
remember
Acting as a wonderful protector.

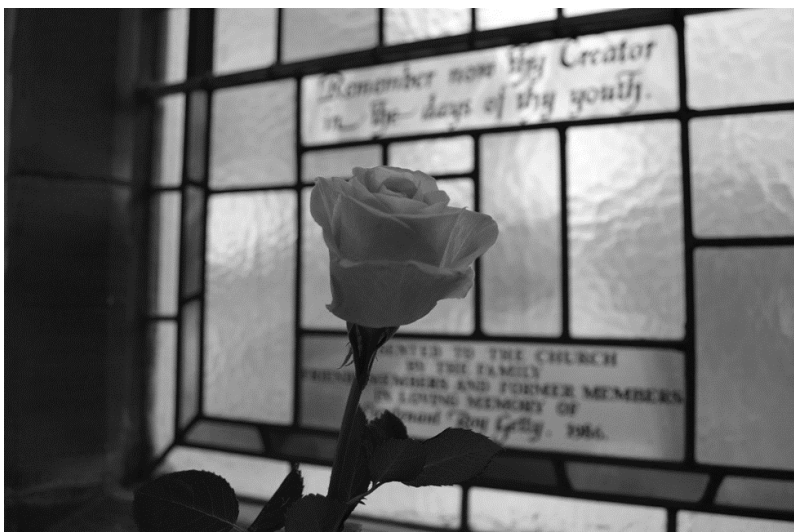
I have shed many tears on you
And carried you in many suitcases.
You have watched me as I grew
And visited many amazing places.
You are someone on who I depend
Any wound you have worked to
mend.

Any time that I lost you
I was so much more than “feeling
blue.”

You have been my rock
Even though I have never heard you
talk.

Communication is unnecessary
When you have been with me from
the start

How lucky I feel
To have been blessed with you.
A best friend to carry through any
ordeal
And help me adjust to the new.



Simple as a Rose

Tina Kramer

One Day at a Time

Tina Kramer

We all kill ourselves one day at a time
A puff of smoke, a drink, a cut to keep
The dark nights deep, void of sleep.
We work to death, or refuse to care
We look around, and say no one is there.
Is one worse than the other? Is smoking so bad?
When you are the one driving too fast,
Kid not buckled in the back.
Or the bully who says the words
Is blamed for the rope, but is it just as lonely?
Killing ourselves one day at a time.
I've never met one who could say they truly lived
Without that end goal in mind.
Let's live one day at a time,
And kill ourselves.
One day at a time.



A view of Edith Wharton's home, The Mount, from its gardens, Pittsfield, Massachusetts
Hans G. Myers

The One that Got Away

Amanda Zimmerman

There are so many too choose from
I don't know where to start
This little yellow ball won't come
It is really quite smart

This game has got me very hooked
On running around outside
The other day I nearly booked
For a Pikachu nearby

I dashed from my room late at night
Once I heard the word
Even willing to catch frostbite
Geez, I'm quite the nerd

I finally got to that place
And saw the little guy
Excitement beamed from my face
So happy I could cry

Eagerly I threw the small ball
And watched as it moved
Waiting for the game to call
If the Pikachu would approve

Suddenly, he popped back out
My heart began to sink
All I wanted was to cry out
But I couldn't even blink
To this day I swear he laughed
At the idea of my dream
To become better at this craft
I wanted to scream

I want to be the very best
Like no one ever was
I will continue on my quest
I will never take pause

Pilgrimage of Learning

Sean Oros

Learning is a pilgrimage
Both in soul and mind;
Many pilgrims wend their way
Seeking growth to find.
Actors varied play their roles
Past the pilgrim trail,
Some, too, bearing greater weight,
Helping those too frail.
Pilgrim bands require all,
Haughty and the low;
Leaders, servants—all are friends
Searching truth to know.
Time may take a toll on souls,
Some may fall aside;
Taking rest well-earned or not,
Often not belied.
Duties dropped then fall to ground,
Others lift them up;
Shouldering the burdens new,
Drinking fuller cups.
Who will lift a burden new?
Who will rise to task?
Pilgrims many roam the road,
Others may pick last.
When a burden falls blocks your feet,
And you stoop to take,
Bear in mind your pilgrim role,
Duty never slake.
Many tasks you may take on,
Many roles to play,
Take the bags that suit you best,
Steps not to delay:
Trust your fellow pilgrim souls,
Marching towards your common goals.

Contemplation
Tina Kramer

*You use these words
To understand
Something about yourself*

Therapy of the Written Word

Audra Franley

Have you ever written
Just to write?
No rhyme or reason,
No end in sight.
You don't feel a deadline
Or a crushing block,
You simply use ink
To let yourself talk.
You use these words
To understand
Something about yourself
That no one else can.
Put your pen to the paper,
Enter a new land.



The Stains of Long Seeped Bruises

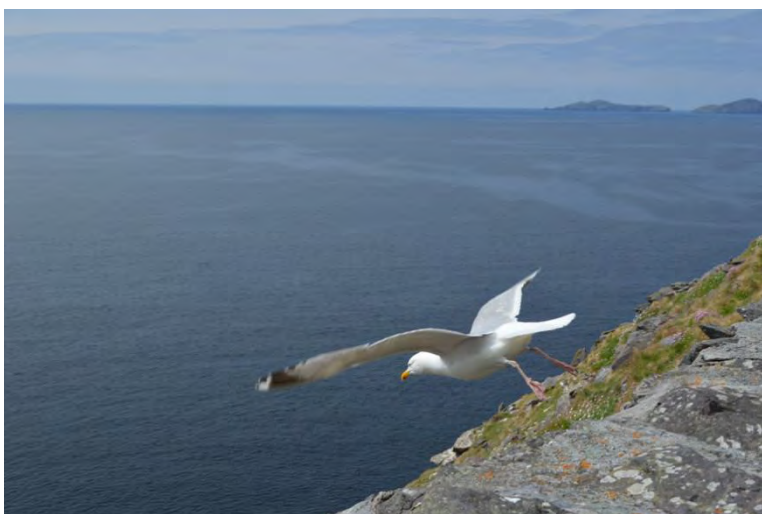
Anonymous

I've bled and been bruised in life, for who has not?
But never so deeply,
As I have been by you.

Never have the marks so
seeped into my hair! my skin!
To set up residence into my
now ever flinching
mind and flesh.

And yet my own thoughts
churn, violent
against me-
While yours drifts-
in blissful ignorance,
to a spot
of blacked out darkness-

But me?
I am left
drowning, gasping-
in the memory-
which refuses to be
Forgotten.



In Flight
Tina Kramer

Reminisce Panic

Tina Kramer

The song, it reminds me
No, it crushes me
I feel the confusion and hatred rush in
I cannot contain the passion
Your embrace—it freed me from this
But was it not the cause?
I'm afraid—the pain still sets
My lungs scream for air—
Does your memory drown me now?
When I would sit and contemplate
In the late hours with you
Did it trap me so? Like iron on my ribs—
The sound, melody—I love the words
Truth from singer's lips, of that time
You lied—or was it truth?
As the melody fades so does the pound
Of my heart beat. I sigh.
The feeling becomes a memory
Like it used to be—but that song—
It's a time capsule I cannot escape,
Yet I love the melody and want to hear
more—
The last beat. Freedom.
For now.

The feeling
becomes a memory
Like it used to be

In Time

Amanda Zimmerman

The trees are falling to pieces,
The sound of the city ceases.
In my own world I choose to be
With the cool crisp air around me.
Falling in love was quite simple
When the leaves began to dwindle.

Sit and think of what life may
mean;
The fresh start making me feel
clean.
I have a new understanding
No longer so damn demanding.

With a small sigh, I think of you
The myriad of events, too.
Then I stir, as a new feeling
A surprise, but without squealing
I turn and look you in the eyes
And it's one of the greatest highs.

What do I Title This?

Cassie LaGrange

Blankity, blankity, blank is my paper.
Racking my brain for the topic and words.
Wishing there was a magic mind shaper,
That would get out of my thoughts, the
keywords.
I didn't expect this to be so hard
I just want to go to bed already.
Everything I write, I want to discard.
Nothing that comes out is classroom ready.
My cat stepped on my keyboard, not helping.
She keeps trying to get my attention
And can I feel a groan developing
If this doesn't save, **there will be tension.**
One more line to go, please help me someone.
I can't believe this, I'm finally done!

Stranger Sympathy

Tina Kramer

"I never let my feelings show,"
"I don't let people in,"
"I've always been the strong one,"
To the therapist with her pen.

"But yesterday I lost it,"
"I couldn't let it go,"
"I just fell to pieces,"
Can't you tell me more?

"Well, I told him that I loved him,"
"I grabbed a razor blade,"
"I walked out while she yelled at me,"
What happened when you did?

"I guess I knew the answer,"
"I was strong enough to stop,"
"I didn't turn around,"
Let's take it from the top.

"I never had a dad at home,"
"Depression was my friend,"
"She always got the best of me,"
Well, I cannot pretend:

I see the pain you're feeling now,
I want you to make it right.
It will not be easy, and you'll
Have to put up quite a fight.
See, I've done this for a while
And what I see in you
Is a "mess" that's put together,
So let me get through to you.

You do not need a man like that,
You do not need a blade,
You do not need to yell at her back,
I'm here to help fear fade.

I do not know you, your every thought
But give a chance, you'll see
What they said about therapy isn't true,
I will help set you free.



An Aging Professor Approaches Retirement
Dr. Moinet

The old professor sits and looks
At shelf on shelf of dusty books,
The work of an academic lifetime
Compactly stored in hand-sized nooks.

As freshmen giggle down the hall,
He's poised to start one final fall
Of lectures, tests, and student banter
Before the finish of it all.

Does anything he taught survive
In student memories? Do any thrive
As a result of all those classes?
He doubts that he's altered many lives.

But now all that is beyond mending,
And content with his life's trending,
The old professor turns toward tomorrow
Prepared for a more conclusive ending