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Submissions are welcome anytime, but cannot be read and acted upon except during January and February. Submissions must not have been previously published and must be submitted in an electronic format. Authors and artists should have some present or past affiliation with Georgia Southwestern State University. No work will be returned.

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CATCHING THE WINDS OF CREATIVITY

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EDITOR’S NOTES

We are living in a time in which art and literature are often trivialized or ignored all together. It is our opinion at Sirocco that art and literature are infinitely important. A major goal of this magazine is to help give voice to Georgia Southwestern students and faculty pursuing their interests in art making and writing. The accessible format of the magazine is a wonderful tool for both literary and visual artists to spread their ideas quickly. It is my pleasure to help provide this tool to our campus. I hope that this magazine reaches many hands and communicates to many minds.

A special thank you to Dr. Stauf for her continued support of this project and to the students and faculty who submitted works this year.

Andrea Carter

BRIEF HISTORY

The Sirocco was founded in 1965 by Mrs. Iris Argo. The Georgia Southwestern literary magazine continued under this name until 1984 when the name was changed to Clay and Pine. In 2004 the editors chose to return to the original name as it was more in keeping with the themes of Georgia Southwestern’s other publications and the mascot - the Hurricane. The magazine continues to promote art making and writing on the campus of Georgia Southwestern as it has for the past 42 years. This year’s theme “Witness the Wind” is an invitation for everyone to view the literary and artistic achievements of the students and faculty of GSW.
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Charles Combs

*In the Beginning; 4’x3’, oil on canvas, 2006*
FENCE
By RAY MANNILA

Walking in my mom’s yard
a hair raises, an ear pricks back,
the eyes miss something.
The fence isn’t here.
Last time I saw it
rain, wind and time had aged it more.
It never looked strong;
cracked two by fours reached between
notched poles, rooted in the dirt.
A rust-coated mesh of wire squares spanned its yardage.
For years it remained a harbor
for a cedar that ruffled above it;
a playground for my brothers, my friends and me.
Grainy memories are now my only proof
the fence once stood in my mom’s yard.

Pam Sparrow Untitled; 3.25’x2’, oil on canvas, 2006
Stand in awe of the noble democrat!
The progressive minded champion of the downtrodden.
He accepts all viewpoints he considers acceptable.
Be you a minority of any kind?
Go! Rally to this man, or woman, and press your case.
He'll be your friend and advocate.

Stand in awe of the noble Republican!
The just and righteous man of God.
He shuns all evil but the evil he doesn't shun.
Be you a majority of any kind?
Go! Rally to this man, or man, and press your case.
He'll be your friend and advocate.

Stand in awe of politicians!
They know what's best for you.

Kristin Rufo  *Wally*; 4.5’x5’, oil on wood panel, 2006
JONNY RYE CANNOT FLY

By MALCOM KING

Your kids have dreams, no matter how silly.
So nurture the dreams of little Billy.
Help Davey and Sue to give them a try,
Or they may end up like Jonny Rye…
Did you hear about Jonny Rye?
He wanted to see if he could fly.
That silly boy, did he try?
Yes he tried, but Jonny did die.
He told everyone he wanted to fly.
Way up there, up in the sky.
And everyone looked him straight in the eye,
And said, “No silly Jonny, now have some pie”.
So he got some wings, the best he could buy;
Attached to his back and the top of his thigh.
He went to the roof; it was way up high.
He got a running start; he was very spry.
He slipped off the roof ‘cause it wasn’t dry.
He saw he was falling and going to die.
So little Jonny Rye began to cry.
He hit the ground ‘fore his tears could dry.
Now everyone is sad, saying “why, Jonny, why?”
He died to young, couldn’t say goodbye.
So when your kids tell their dreams and hopes,
Explain to what won’t work and help them cope.
‘Cause if you don’t, I cannot lie,
They may end up like Jonny Rye.
Tara Joyner
*Page 24; 8”x10”, collage and acrylic on cardboard, 2007*
I tell you folks I’m hard to please
I like the long skirts not the grinning knees
the gals nowa days they powder and they paint
trying to make you think they something they ain’t
but a’way back yonder, this would’a been a disgrace.

Now as for my ole lady
she knows what to wear
a hoop-tailed skirt and a big fall of hair
and I’ve never see’d no powder on her face
cause, a’way back yonder, this would’a been a disgrace.

Now the gals you know everyone of them you meet
dressed in bobtails right there on the street
The less they wear the more you see
of the flapper mamma with the dimpled knee
a’way back yonder, this would’a been a disgrace.

When the boys come along the gals all go
to some old honky tonk or a picture show
when they come for the gals they don’t have to wait
for there’s no braying hoss to tie at the gate
folks, I tell you now—a’way back yonder, this would’a been a disgrace.
As a child, my Mother and my Grandmother would always tell me that I could only eat dessert if I had just finished a meal. I had to have what they called a “happy plate;” absolutely nothing could be left over in my plate. This was their way of forcing me to eat vegetables and other distasteful foods that provided proper nutrients needed for my body to function properly. It worked every time because the thought of dessert motivated me to eat everything on my plate. For my dessert, I always chose ice cream. It didn’t matter if my Mother had just baked homemade chocolate chip cookies, or if my Grandmother had just made one of her famous pecan pies, or if my Aunt Paula had just decorated a strawberry cake with my favorite cartoon character. I still wanted ice cream.

“You picked up your Grandfather’s love for ice cream,” my Grandmother would always tell me.

“I sure did, Grandma.”

I liked ice cream very much. Additionally, it was by far my favorite dessert. I liked a variety of ice cream such as vanilla, butter pecan, chocolate, rocky road, strawberry shortcake, and orange sherbet. I believed that I liked all flavors of ice cream because I had yet to come across one that I disliked. My Grandfather hadn’t either; he is the person that introduced me to the different flavors of ice cream.

I remember on my ninth birthday when my mother asked me, “Do you want strawberry cake and vanilla ice cream?”

“No, Mother, I just want different flavors of ice cream.”

“Why is that, Shirhanda?”

“Because ice cream is my favorite dessert, it’s my Grandfather’s favorite dessert, and that’s how we want to celebrate.”

I can still see that puzzled look on my Mother’s face as she stood in the empty kitchen with her mouth wide open. She couldn’t understand why I was so stuck on ice cream or why I didn’t want to try another dessert for a change. Without further questions, she agreed to do whatever I asked to make
our day special. I went into the living room to tell my Grandfather that we were going to celebrate our birthday with different flavors of ice cream. He was just as excited as I was. He gave me what he called a “bear hug”.

“I like ice cream more than you, Grandpa.”

“Well, if you like ice cream more than me, then I love you more than you love me.”

What really got me to love ice cream the way that I do now? I do not know if it was all the good memories that it brought back when I was younger, or the way that my Grandfather would sneak and let me eat it before bed or right after school, or one of my Grandfather’s wild stories about how it can make you stronger and wiser. Maybe it was just the flavor and texture.

After my Grandmother passed away, my Grandfather decided to move back to North Carolina. I went to visit my Grandfather about three months ago. He greeted me with a huge “bear hug”.

“I like ice cream more than you, Grandpa.”

“Well, if you like ice cream more than me, then I love you more than you me.”
Robert Orchard
The Object of Fascination for the People There; 3’x3’6”, oil on canvas
David Griffin
*Happy Thanksgiving; 8.5”x11”, intaglio, 2006*
A voice outside the door, gargling and broken,
Weakly crying out for someone who isn’t there,
Makes me remember.

My grandmother told me, or maybe not me,
“I want to go to hell.”
Is that better than where she is now?

Switching between placid curiosity and frustrated confusion,
That’s not the face I remember.
The one that always knew exactly what it wanted to say.

Then my father stutters
Trying to remember her meds.,
And I’m no longer sad.
I’m scared.
Heather Ashberry  *Untitled; 3’x’4, mix media on canvas, 2006*
The Vegetables had a dispute
each one in despair
they fussed and they argued
wished the other wasn’t there.

The Squash and Cucumber
both a terrible wreck
the vines grew so entangled
that they crooked the Squash’s neck.

The Pepper and the Cabbage
denied what each had said
the Pepper got the hottest
and cracked the Cabbage’s head.

The Grass grew the greenest
tried to take each row
but I settled this dispute
with a plow and a garden hoe.
Shakespeare’s Hamlet, Prince of Denmark centers on a young man with a tortured soul, torn between hundreds of choices and their subsequent consequences. Although love is not the main theme of the play, it is the second most important theme, lending a hand to shape many, if not all, of Hamlet’s actions and thoughts. Hamlet’s love towards two of the supporting characters, his mother Queen Gertrude and his young lover, Ophelia, devolves throughout the play and raises the most common question: did he even love them in the first place?

The first character of the two addressed in the play, Queen Gertrude, is the key to understanding the changes that occur within Hamlet. In scene two of the first act, Hamlet proclaims, “[f]railty, thy name is woman…” during his first soliloquy (1.2.146). He is clearly troubled that his mother married his uncle shortly after her husband, his father, died. That she leapt so quickly and unabashedly into another man’s bed leads Hamlet to believe she needed the presence of a man and his attentions because she is too weak or incapable of taking care of herself. However, he does not single out his mother; instead he applies his rationalizing to all women.

Hamlet’s filial love and previous adoration for his mother are further enforced in scene four of the third act, which takes place in the queen’s closet. It has been clear since the beginning of the play that the queen idolizes her son. Also, the ghost of Hamlet’s father instructs Hamlet not to harm his mother during the course of avenging his wrongful death. Hamlet enters his mother’s closet and shortly after kills Polonius. This drives Hamlet into a mad frenzy and he proceeds to harshly chastise his mother for wedding her husband’s brother and murderer. Even though he is empowered and disoriented from killing a man in such haste without any premeditation, he never physically harms his mother or even threatens to. He is aware that she committed adultery and that she is the underlying reason why his father was murdered but
loves her and still worries about her well being. Hamlet bids her not to “let the bloat king tempt you again to bed; pinch wanton on your cheek; call you his mouse…” (3.4.182-183). He is worried about her moral standing with God and her reputation since their marriage was considered incestuous. In “the Renaissance Hamlet,” Roland Fry maintains that “the incest taboo is one of the strongest to which people are subject and in 1600 it would have condemned an union such as that of Claudius’ and Gertrude’s” (77).

Even the fact that this meeting takes place in Queen Gertrude’s closet is to be taken into consideration. During Hamlet’s era, the bedroom was commonly a place to welcome guests and was fitted with a sitting room and a large bed. A woman’s closet was her refuge where she could read a book or sew, enjoying the time by herself or with an intimate. Although it has been portrayed as perversely sexual in several modern renditions of Hamlet, this simply means that mother and son were very close. Even though he leaves her closet dragging Polonius’ corpse, he does not fail to wish his “good mother” a good night (3.4.28).

After Hamlet meets with his father’s ghost, he tells his friend Horatio that he will feign madness in order to hide his intentions of murdering Claudius and possibly as an excuse once he has executed his plan. His acts of madness are alluded to in the beginning of the play, but we are first introduced to it in what is most commonly referred to as the “nunnery scene,” in Act three, Scene one. Hamlet comes across Ophelia, innocently reading a book in one of the castle’s many rooms following his infamous “to be, or not to be” speech (3.1.55). Magda Romanska points out that while most portrayals of the “to be or not to be” speech are acted with only the prince on stage, Shakespeare meant for this speech to be directed towards Ophelia as there are no directions for her to leave with her father and Claudius or enter at the end of the speech (490). Hamlet turns to Ophelia to tell her what is troubling him and reveals his suicidal thoughts to someone who is close to him. Upon closing he exclaims, “[T]he fair Ophelia! Nymph, in thy orisons be all my prayers remember’d” (3.1.87-89). He is delighted to see her and relieved
to have gotten some troubles off his chest.

Hamlet soon suspects something is amiss, however, when Ophelia proceeds to return the love letters he had written for her. His cheery disposition quickly fades and the baleful Hamlet is reintroduced. Ophelia’s actions hurt Hamlet’s feelings and he retaliates with hurtful expressions and suggestions. It appears that Hamlet let his tongue go unchecked before thinking a statement through because he admits that he “did love [her] once” (3.1.113). Hamlet then remembers the role he is supposed to be playing, and follows the statement claiming that he “loved [her] not” (3.1.117).

After cursing her dowry and future marriage, he returns to massing all women into a single category. He remarks that “God has given you [women] one face, and you make yourselves another; you jig, you amble, and you lisp…you make wantonness your ignorance” (3.1.141-142). He adds that “we will have no marriages,” proclaiming that he no longer believes in the sacredness of those spoken vows. His adulterous mother and his scheming ex-lover have been lured away from their “true loves” by other men. Hamlet, at this point, seems to have lost all faith in woman-kind. Imtiaz Habib affirms that the use of his word nunnery, with its double entendre, “masks perfectly the sense of his feelings for her, now or in the past” (“Never Doubt I love: Misreading Hamlet”).

In the following scene, Hamlet continues his acting and requests to lay his head down on Ophelia’s lap during the play. He is kinder to her now, and Ophelia is pleased that he seems merry. Hamlet makes a few crude remarks about women during his conversation with Ophelia. She remarks on the short monologue following the dumb show, “tis brief, my lord,” to which he replies, “as woman’s love” (3.2.153-154). Hamlet is further emphasizing his distaste to his mother’s quick marriage to his uncle. Once again, he lashes out on all women, including the poor Ophelia.

The play that Hamlet “fixed” is important as well; in no other part of Shakespeare’s Hamlet does the word “love” occur more often. This lends valuable insight into how Hamlet perceives love and how much he questions his mother’s love for his father. The Player Queen em-
phatically reassures her husband, the Player King, that she could never love another, let alone marry another man should anything happen to him. She says, “[A] second time I kill my husband dead, when second husband kisses me in bed” (3.2.185-186). Hamlet, having rewritten the majority of the play, is further chastising his mother, wanting to further impress upon her to decline Claudius’ advances. Even though the real play does not progress beyond the Player King’s murder, we know from the dumb play that the Player Queen did, in fact, become betrothed to her husband’s murderer through his gifts and sweet words—the same way, according to King Hamlet’s ghost, that Claudius wooed Queen Gertrude (1.5.43). Even in this play, where Hamlet could have altered anything, he made sure that the ever-seeming virtuous wife broke her vow to her late husband and remarried after being “once a widow” (3.2.223).

Because Ophelia goes genuinely insane after learning of her father’s murder by the hands of her crazed lover, many critics have called her weak, childish, and silly. Shakespeare only wanted one hero in this play, and therefore makes Ophelia delicate. For painters and writers, Ophelia embodied “the cult of invalidism,” a fascination with the femme fragile that reflected the aesthetic tastes of that era (Dijkstra 25-63). Hamlet would not have fallen in love with a maiden who was vain or not clever in her own right. Commonly mistaken as weakness, Ophelia dutifully follows her father’s wishes and listens intently to her brother’s advice, while genuinely wanting to help Hamlet any way she can. Hamlet’s acts are too much for her to bear, and in Act four, Scene five, she incoherently sings of love forlorn and the death of her father.

In versus fifty through fifty-five, she sings about being a maid at a man’s window, when after a sexual encounter, the man dresses and leaves, leaving her a maiden no more. Surely she is referring to Hamlet, which means they must have had intercourse during their relationship. Taken into account the customs and beliefs of this era—that a woman who was not a virgin was instantly considered “ruined” and unfit for a wife, and add to this the loss of a father, it is easy to see why Ophelia went mad. Her relationship with Hamlet must have been serious enough that she believed they
were going to marry one day and could justify sleeping with him. Doing so, she made herself unavailable to any other man. This also explains her probable suicide in Act four, Scene seven.

In Act five, Hamlet reacts again without premeditation. Realizing that he is witnessing Ophelia’s funeral, he leaps into her grave and grapples with her brother. He laments that “forty thousand brothers could not, with all their quantity of love, make up my sum” (5.1.169-171). He further challenges Laertes to “weep... fight...fast...tear thyself...drink up eisil...eat a crocodile...” to show his love for Ophelia, claiming that he would do all of them (5.1.174-176). He even requests to be buried alive in her grave so he could stay by her side. If this was simply an act by Hamlet to emphasize his madness to the court, Shakespeare would have added another soliloquy explaining Hamlet’s actions. Instead he acted impulsively and genuinely. Even Horatio does not comment on the scene. Being such a close confidant, Horatio must have known Hamlet’s true feelings for Ophelia from the beginning.

It has been argued that Hamlet never truly loved either woman merely because he never refers to love or Ophelia in any of his soliloquies. Shakespeare did not write this play as a love story; Hamlet revolves around murderous revenge and the shaping of an unlikely hero from a formerly pusillanimous character. It is clear, though, that Hamlet did love both women. It pained him intensely to have to separate himself from them both, and their deaths further enraged him, motivating him to finally avenge his father’s murder. Although Hamlet did become a hero who was immortalized as the brave Prince of Denmark, he also devolved into a desensitized human being with no trust in women, with much less faith in love.

Works Cited
Laurel Robinson
*Cosmic Dialogue #1*; 22”x30”x4”, graphite, oils, cast glass with inclusions, on paper on wood, 2006
Laurel Robinson  
*Cosmic Dialogue #2*; 22”x30”x4”, graphite, oils, cast glass with inclusions, on paper on wood, 2006
I do not know exactly how the idea came about, but my friends and I thought that it would be a nice gesture to give out Christmas cards at our local nursing home. Honestly, the whole idea of even setting foot in this place disgusts me. What if these people are crazy? What if something goes wrong while we are here? Most importantly, in my mind, what if it is my fault? I have never been around any of my grandparents for more than a few hours at a time. I have never been around someone seriously ill before, either. I have no idea what to do or say once I get there. All I know is that this would be considered the “right” thing to do, and that, although selfish and stupid, was my motivation for embarking on this ride to the facility.

All of those thoughts raced through my head, not when I was buying the cards or the candy canes to tape to them, not when I was sealing and signing envelopes, but on the actual car ride to our destination. The thoughts of how scared I was did not occur to me until it was too late to turn back. In the short moments it took to shake myself up until I was so nervous that I could not speak, the small green Acura that we had rode in came to a screeching stop right in front of the nursing home. It was too late to turn around and go back home. I took a deep breath as we got out of the car and hoped for the best. Everything would go fine, and, hopefully, it would not take long for us to get the job done and go back home. After all, it was Christmas Eve. I had better things that I could be doing.

As the three of us approached the front of the building, we were met by a middle aged woman and her young son, about seven or eight years old, sitting on the rocking chairs outside. She stopped what she was doing and kindly gave us the password to get into the facility. We thanked her, and gave her and her son cards and candy canes, since we were sure that we would have extras leftover.

Now that we were inside, we immediately got ahead of ourselves. Without thinking or knowing that some residents were not allowed to have
candy for reasons to do with their health, we gave two elderly citizens in the front lobby candy canes and cards. It was not until seconds later, when we approached the front desk, that we were given the names and room numbers of patients who could and could not have sweets that we realized the mistake that we had already made. This was exactly what I had feared would happen, but the nurse assured us that we, and the patients, would be fine.

More careful about what we were doing this time, we visited each person on the list. We stopped and talked with them. We gave them the cards and the candy, which we thought would be a big deal when we came up with the idea, but now seemed quite small. We began to realize that these people could care less about the cards. It was the fact that we thought of them that mattered. Many of the people in the facility had no family near by, if they had any family left at all.

One woman in particular, Mrs. Mary Etta Parker, cried when we came. Her room was dark as we stepped in, and there she sat at the edge of her bed with her lamp. We could hear her sniffles from across the hall, and as the light from the lamp streaked across the light creases in her face, we could tell she had been crying. “Merry Christmas!” we said, “We have this card and a candy for you!” She took one look at us and burst into tears. “I have no one!” she screamed, “No one!” She had no pictures of family on her walls. She had no other cards. “Yes, you do,” I said, “You have us, and I am sure you must have had a full life with many years to come.” As we chattered on, this woman put up a fight, until she, and I, were both convinced that she had people that cared about her in this world. In fact, she must have told us her whole life story in the hours that we sat in her room. Her face began to brighten up, and I noticed that this elderly woman had the whitest teeth that I had ever seen. For a moment, time stopped. I forgot about knowing exactly what to say. I forgot about doing the right thing. I was enjoying myself, and so was she.

Later that night, when I arrived home, I felt accomplished. I could not believe how foolish the thoughts I had on the ride to the nursing home actually were until afterwards. Going into the situation, I was grossed out. I was thinking with the mind of a
SIROCCO

child. It was not until after I arrived and went through with the experience that I realized this was something that I needed to do. I had no idea how much impact these people would have on me or how much I would have on them. It was more than just the right thing to do. It was a learning experience.

Stacie Porter

*Mosque of Cordoba;* pen & ink, 2006
He walks through the woods in the cold evening air, the rhythm of his pace making his arms shake with the weight of the rifle. Once again instinct has lead him here—on the last evening such as this one he had gone against his intuition: He had found a place by the creek that he'd felt was the spot for the attack. He walked on instead, and later, regretted it. When he returned by the path that he came, he saw the fresh tracks.

But that was another time. This is the place where the winter-time wind is harshest on the bare hand and face. This is the place where he stalks for deer.

When he finds the tall grass thicket on the hill by the creek, he settles down and begins to listen; the fresh fragrance of the pine relaxes him as he inhales it sharply and he wets his cold, chapped lips with the moisture from his mouth. He fills his lungs deeply before he sighs, the warm breath escaping his mouth and nostril in a blast of condensed droplets. All that moves is detected by his wise, experienced eyes... the wind gusts along the foliage and leaf-carpet. Shuh, shuh, shuh-shh...

Caught by sudden surprise, the hunter withholds his air
at the start of a faint, distant sound
and he kneels, feeling carefully for the ground.
He hears something that he fears to be a bear—
the sound drags in the leaves,
and something rustles around the trees.
-It is alive, though its breath remains silent;
a scent arrives slowly on the breeze.

It is marking its territory—

He draws his finger to the trigger,
speaking an internal dialogue that calms his nerves
as he prepares to ready his aim with care.

The hunter thinks at one moment to move closer.
Though it had been difficult to discern its figure,
he can now see what it is:
A beast of a living creature,
it is a grand-looking buck
the size of a bull elk;
undoubtedly it is one seasoned by years of survival and mating suc-
cess.
By the looks of his hide, encounters have been fierce.
Many a time must he have fought and his fair antler pierced
his foes that they, dripping their wounds, have left with woes from
wanting win…

What a beautiful animal…
It takes no notice of him hidden amongst the tall grasses;
it passes him and steps briskly between the tall poles of bark,
investigating the smell of a falsely sprayed doe’s urine.

“My G—”, whispers the man,
bringing the rifle’s sight to rest broadly on the animal.
The clearer view of the deer fades with the creeping twilight,
but the point-of-twelve antler,
which spans the width of a tree branch on either side, can still be seen as it rends the lower boughs. That is the main concern—to look handsome, as it would seem, mounted above the mantle.

In the serendipitous excitement it is all the hunter can do to keep the moment stable as he hides. The buck continues to stir, considerably seeking a new mate.

Easy now, easy.

Shifting his weight, the hunter holds his breath and pauses; His eyes are wide in their concentration, observing every movement and watching every muscular stride as the animal becomes obscured through the thicket and onset of eve.

Ea...sy...

He senses the moment is close, as any master can tell—anyone as skillful as he knows the feeling before the moment. He is ready. At last when it arrives, when the moment comes which he is meant to take and in which he is to take aim and make it accurately true, it slips away.

And so does he.

A surge of adrenaline shoots through his blood as the hunter’s erroneous footing causes him to slip the slope, sending him disturbing his cover and revealing the intent plot.

The buck, seeing and hearing this, flicks its ears in the very direction with alarm and quickly turns in frightened flight,
kicking up its splayed hooves in a pattern of rushed turns and bounds.
The sounds of its steps fall heavily into the ground and echo as it pounds a path away from which it came.

T-dmp T-dmp T-dmp T-dmp
p-d-dmp!
p-d-dmp, p-pmp...p-d-dmp... p-pmp p-pmp p-pmp p-pmp...

Cursing the luck, the man gradually regains his footing as he continues to slide down the muddy embankment by the brook, all the while taking his last desperate shots to land the huge, massive buck. Ultimately he regains composure and balance, but it is not in time to execute the blast that would count. The shots ring out in melodic suspension and prove to be a lulling reminder of the chances he took.

Dry, molted leaves crack and crumble in response to his disgraceful tumble and the hunter, entangled in bramble, cries out at the flight of the animal. The woods rattle and tremble and the man releases his tension. There is silence no more, and the wind howls as it had before.
Scene: a poorly lit stage, a club chair sits in the middle of a stylish room. A baseball bat leans against the chair which is highlighted on stage.

Character: Sally – a dejected wife that has taken years of abuse to now find out that her husband has cheated on her.

Sally walks on stage, alone and unaware of her surroundings. She is speaking to herself, but is actually addressing her husband. There are pauses between each set of lines, she is remembering/thinking through the situation.

Sally: (smiling while looking at the empty chair, almost wagging her finger at it) Sophisticated simplicity always was your style. Everything about this place is you: sleek lines with sharp edges. What it really means is cold and unfeeling.

(She looks away, and then down, remembering)

Sally: I should have known there would be more when I found you. I saw it in your eyes, the way you tried to hide the glare from the lamp. You weren’t going to make it easy for me.

(The anger starts to rise, but it is still muffled by the hurt she is feeling. She is louder, more aggressive, but not fully.)

Sally: (facing the chair again, imploringly) Why did you try to find yourself in someone other than me? (grasping for air now) Wasn’t there enough between us, between our souls, or
SIROCCO  
(angrier) did you just not have one to give?

Sally: You left our life without a thought about me. (stepping toward the chair and picking up the bat) Well, now I am here to change it all back to us! (turning away slightly and more to herself) Even if that means there is never another moment of humanity in me. (back to the chair) I will always be here, always desirous of you, even with the complications.

(turning toward the audience, less anger in her voice but the rage is omnipresent, just under the surface)

Sally: The showy words and heartfelt melodrama always were the weight of our relationship (cracking a quick smile, then away when the affair comes into memory). I guess the heft of your own desire became too much for you to fight (looking down and then back at the chair, sarcastically feelingly) I never paid enough attention to you, I know. Or, I never left you alone. (yelling) Which one was it?

Sally: Your contradictory requirements kept me guessing from one day to another. I never knew if you were actually here, or already gone. (scathing) How cold were you to turn my desire to please you into my torment?

(waits a few seconds and then turns quickly to the chair. enraged but barely controlling herself)

Sally: You looked past me and into another, now I refuse to suffer for your sins. You may have taken all of my dignity, but you forgot that only leaves anger. I hope you are ready for the disaster you created when you found yourself in her. I loved you!

(a key is heard in the door, she turns almost out of breath
with rage. the door opens and from stage right we hear, “I’m home and don’t even think about bitching, it is only 11” from a cold male voice)

Sally: (smiling, she lifts the bat and kisses it, suddenly calmed) I will stand on my own finally, and you…well, (as she swings the bat looking toward stage right) you’ll never walk again.

(lights fade out to black and the curtain falls.)

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Alan Miknis
You Can Go Home Tomorrow; 3’x2.5’, oil on canvas, 2006
SIROCCO

DREAMS

By ADELAIDE SMITH

He prays in his sleep
Hands clasped together
Turned to God
Searching for peace

Each breath is haggard
With every inhale
A test is won
In his dreams
He overcomes

Sleep is a moment
To slow his pace
Filing away life
Too hard to face

Forced to revel in the past
He heaves as if
Each breath the last
The struggles of time long gone

No remembrance tomorrow
At night he believes
Reality hard to conquer
Dreams become his release

Won’t face the past
His pain runs deep
His demons are battled
In his sleep

From choices gone wrong
Paths too hard to tread
The mind struggles to heal
The wounds of his head

His mind the enemy
Or his best friend
Each dawn brings comfort
Today it will end
Winter, let the snow melt
against my cheek, and
the wind burn my nose pink.
Speed my blood and freeze my head
like a tooth when bitten
by a dentist’s needle.
Bristle my moustache!
Frost my eyes!
Steal the warmth and
crystal the air.
Winter, this leafy thatch
lies here night after night.
Please spackle it over
with a glistening white.

Timothy Clayton  
*Binary; 3’x4’, oil on canvas, 2006*
In the three years of our marriage, I found myself repeatedly trying to convert her negativity into a more optimistic view. I feel part to blame for her demise. We had a good life in Cuba. I was a writer for the local, government-published paper and she was able to be a kept woman. We were the envy of our neighborhood, not because of our wealth, but because of our ability to live comfortably. Like the physique of most beautiful girls I knew growing up, comfort evolved into more of a burden than an advantage. It was an ache that surfaced like arthritis in abused, old hands, on the coldest of winter days. When I began bumping into police every fifty yards along the northern coastlines, I ached. Whenever I had to submit my political articles to Castro’s media approval committee, I ached. Whenever I witnessed great individuals like Arturo Sandoval being forced to smother enthusiasm for the arts, it nearly broke my heart. Eventually, my tolerance for the pain subsided entirely and I realized that it was time for change. It was time for a change that could not take place in this place called Cuba.

My wife is my soul mate. We are connected in a way that transcends the institutions that mankind has used to define love. We share not only God with each other, but each other with each other. There is a bond between us that allows us to feel each others’ emotions. So, it was no surprise that she sensed my unhappiness. “Santino, what’s on your heart?” She asked one evening, during dinner. “Oh, nothing more than an exhausting day,” I replied.

“Are you sure about that?”

“You know that I’m not. Look at our surroundings.”

“We live in one of the finest subdivisions in our entire country. We have a two bedroom, one bathroom home with some fine furniture.”

I looked around at our belongings. “Andrea, listen to yourself and walk around this house, in-
side and out, and tell me that you can honestly tell me that you don’t want more.”

She didn’t say anything else and just walked off. This was the beginning of our search for a way out.

That night in bed, while we floated between consciousness and sleep, she asked, “Where would we go and how would we get out of Cuba?” I had been asking myself the same questions. I knew where to go, “America,” but how to get there evaded me. “Hell if I know how to get there.” There was a brief moment of silence. “Hey, maybe the paper would get us there. If only you could find a long term assignment that would justify your requesting I accompany you.” With that thought on our minds we drifted off. The next day and the months that followed were, for the most part, routine. I went to work, she kept house, and we had family time at night and on weekends. The only deviations from the norm were my looking for assignments in the United States, and her deteriorating satisfaction with our dwellings. Before we knew it a year had passed and I had applied for numerous assignments, only to be denied each of the opportunities. I eventually gave up on thoughts of escaping our lives, but she was unable to forget about the idea of a possibly better life. Her obsession with the inadequacies of our furniture, home, vehicles, clothing, and other things became scary. On one Saturday morning, as we were watching a soccer match, she ran her fingers across a thread in the sofa. Andrea pulled at the thread, as if she expected it to break off at about an inch as so many in the past had. However, the thread appeared to be endless. She continued to pull. As the pull continued beyond a minute, my attention was drawn from the soccer match to her tug-o-war with the sofa. Andrea pulled at the thread, as if she expected it to break off at about an inch as so many in the past had. However, the thread appeared to be endless. She continued to pull. As the pull continued beyond a minute, my attention was drawn from the soccer match to her tug-o-war with the sofa. Andrea pulled at the thread, as if she expected it to break off at about an inch as so many in the past had. However, the thread appeared to be endless. She continued to pull. As the pull continued beyond a minute, my attention was drawn from the soccer match to her tug-o-war with the sofa. Andrea pulled at the thread, as if she expected it to break off at about an inch as so many in the past had. However, the thread appeared to be endless. She continued to pull. As the pull continued beyond a minute, my attention was drawn from the soccer match to her tug-o-war with the sofa. Andrea pulled at the thread, as if she expected it to break off at about an inch as so many in the past had. However, the thread appeared to be endless. She continued to pull. As the pull continued beyond a minute, my attention was drawn from the soccer match to her tug-o-war with the sofa. Andrea pulled at the thread, as if she expected it to break off at about an inch as so many in the past had. However, the thread appeared to be endless. She continued to pull. As the pull continued beyond a minute, my attention was drawn from the soccer match to her tug-o-war with the sofa. Andrea pulled at the thread, as if she expected it to break off at about an inch as so many in the past had.
exponentially. After 20 minutes of pulling, the thread was still there and I too was now weeping and pulling at a thread on the couch. This continued for two hours, and I'm sure some minutes and seconds. We cried and pulled until there was nothing left of the back of the sofa but a huge, tear soaked piled of faded string. Then we embraced. “Andrea, baby, I’m sorry that I even mentioned change and put you through this.” She responded with a sweet lie, “It’s okay. It’s not your fault. I think it’s just that time.” I gave her a half smile, “I’m going to the car to get some mota, my pipe and a lighter.” She responded, “Why don’t you go to the corner and get some beer too.” The idea of drowning and then exhaling our sorrow sounded pleasant. “I will do.” “Santino, toss me the scissors on your way out, I have an idea.” I looked in the drawer, tossed her the scissors and headed out of the door. It took all of ten minutes to run my little errands.

My lungs were good and ready to commune with the herb. I ran back upstairs and flung the door open. “Mamisita, I’m home.” There was an eerie silence. “Andrea?” There was still silence. “Andrea,” I called a little louder. I looked out of the window and her bicycle was still in the yard. I looked toward the spot I left her, but she was no longer there. “Andrea,” I called even louder, but to no avail. No only was she gone, but the pile of thread also. I walked down the short hall. There I notice the bath room light on. “Andrea?” As I reached the door, I saw the familiar legs. “Andrea!!!” I screamed. I don’t know if I ran or teleported into the bathroom. There my beautiful wife was, lifeless, lying in the tub. She had stuffed every inch of the thread into her mouth. Without a second thought, I grabbed her limp body and laid her on the floor. I began pulling and weeping. It appeared as if she had swallowed some of the string. After removing the thread, I began to move toward performing CPR on her. “What is this moisture?” I looked down to find my arm covered with blood and blood all over Andrea’s hands. “The scissors,” she had slit her wrist with the damned scissors. There was no reviving her.

I quietly walked to the
bedroom, grabbed a pad and pen and began to write my last article: Letter of Resignation To Whom It May Concern:

Our lives have afforded us many luxuries. We have little to complain about, in comparison to the plights of some of our countrymen; however, that little has become an unbearable load. The glass ceiling has created an illusion that, until recently, we were oblivious to. Being who we are has rendered us unwilling to continue without the innocence that births and sustains dreams. In a moment, I will quietly walk to my bedroom and open the safe. I plan to remove the pistol that I had been given in appreciation of ten years with the paper. It is full of ammunition, the same state that it was awarded to me in. Initially, the fully-loaded state confused me, but now I think its purpose is clear. I will return to the bathroom, hold Andrea’s head next to my own and shoot myself. Our brains will mix on the floor become the physical one that they had spiritually been. We won’t make it to America, but we are on our way out of Cuba. Darkness…
Tara Joyner

*Getting Old*, 8”x10”, acrylic and collage on cardboard, 2007
The teacher says
   She is not normal
   or nor will she not ever
   be
   because you see
   her brain plugs
up backwards and outside
   in
   freaky things that
   hang and
   freaky things that
   rang around
around
around
around
   (and now our teacher
   babbles)
But the struggle is a pity one
   that with
   beauty is jealousy
   and with genius
   is loneliness
Don’t snub your nose o teachers pet
   says the teacher
   to the teachers
   pet
   pity the lonely genius.
(About the girl w/glasses)
Butterflies and inspiration,
Incense and perspiration;
Intrigue and mystery,
Anxiety and ecstasy.

Wonderland is the place to be;
The place to be and be seen.
A mecca of lost souls,
Soul-Slingers and DubTribes;
Glowsticks, pacifiers, Vicks, and beans.
To raga and trance and emcees they dance;
They break and trip and roll and flip
Through fate or chance or circumstance
They thrive with pills and baggy pants.
They’re pretty but plastic.
Disposable and tragic;
Like party-pups on short leashes
Who choke chasing trails.
Teenyboppers drool like Gilbert Grape,
Aging fast and dying young
On the battlefield of breakers.

Sweet lyrics whispered softly.
“Gentle night into the morning,
With the sun come fairies and fun;
Let’s go faster, faster now”.
Faster and farther,
Today won’t end
If we never close our minds again.
Charles Combs

Self-Portrait, 8.5”x12”, wood cut, 2007
SIROCCO

THE VICTIM

By LOLA FARLEY

The heart perpetuates fear of a
Distinguished, nonchalant addict.
The beat of a heart’s fast pace
Has the mind convinced
Of its own denials.

In the blink of an eye,
The deepest and darkest of desires
Can be interpreted into miles.

She cuddles the silhouette
As she stares in his eyes
Reminiscent of a man
Proposing to the love of his life
For the first time.

His silhouette embodies society’s
Security, courage,
Strength, warmth
Masculinity
And most importantly,
What a woman needs to survive.

The sun shines promptly
Through Venetian blinds
Letting her know she’s still alive.

She awakes with a frown,
Her silhouette is nothing more
Than a head rest and a soft comforter,

Revealing the realness of the time
Becoming another illusion of the mind
Which has yet to play another trick
On one love-sick chick.
I have splinters in my feet.
My mind has wondered many miles
in such a short time.

I have blisters on my hands
from holding tightly to dying dreams
for all of my short life.

Weary are my eyes to light
from worshipping the moon for its peace.
Quiet, much like sleep,
Exhausted from my journey
of coming to grips with who I am

and who I once was.

Silent is my ragged voice.
My actions speak as if to my feelings
confused, if not conflicting.
Yet grateful is my head heart
for another chance to be seen, heard
even if I hide,
Awake is all my senses.
I can touch your love, your fear.
It feels like blue fire.

Cool, warm, perfection.
Smiles that feel like a winter night
under protection of fleece throws.
Smoke rising, providing comfort
from everything real
in the world today.
This year’s edition of Sirocco is dedicated to Professor Laurel Robinson, who has taught at Georgia Southwestern’s Fine Art Department for twenty-nine years. Laurel has taught not only how to be skillful in line, shape and design, but she has brought about a consciousness that art is a vehicle for changing the world. She has taught developing artists to respect their craft and themselves; moreover, she has urged a worldview that brings students beyond comfortable circles of home and unquestioned values and provokes them toward a habit of questioning and measuring. Her own works reflect attention to detail and depth of engagement; her persistence with students reflects her commitment to shaping a new generation of artists and “Mensch.” Thanks, Laurel for your work. Thanks for the standard you hold us to.

A P.S. from the man of no words, Ralph Harvey -
An abbreviated haiku for Laurel:
Laurel Good
JACKIE ABBOT is the Dolores F. Capitan First Prize Winner.

ANDREA CARTER is a fourth year art major at Georgia Southwestern. She enjoys taking photographs, listening to music and getting into arguments about what art really is. In her spare time she plays saxophone in the concert band, edits the *Sirocco* and takes Sociology classes for fun.

SASHA HELLER is an English tutor for Student Support Services

ALEENA HERRICK has been writing poetry ever since she learned to write. She has poetry from all the way back to 3rd grad. She loves to make art and write poetry. Alle performed in slam poetry competitions during her first years of high school; she was the youngest performer there. She enrolled in the Psychology Department as a hobby because she enjoys it. Psychology gives her ideas to pull from when creating art or writing.

LOLA FARLEY is currently the GSW Assistant Women’s Basketball coach. She enjoys writing poetry and short stories randomly. She has a variety of interests but in relation to her creatives side, she tries to create real-life scenarios, pieces that make the reader think and she loves surprise endings.

MARCUS JOHNSON is a self-published author. His previously published work is a collection of poetry entitled Flowers for Her, published by Red Lead Press. He is originally from Palmyra, Virginia but currently resides in Stone Mountain, Georgia. Marcus holds an A.A. in English from Georgia Perimeter College in Clarkston, Georgia.
SIROCCO

MALCOM KING is an English major. He is 20 years old and enjoys writing and especially creating. He greatly admires the work of Shel Silverstein, and enjoys writing lighthearted poems for children and adults, which are entertaining and often have a lesson. He also likes to create unique characters and situations in an attempt to create story ideas never before seen or read.

MICHAEL MYERS is a senior at GSW who is currently hoping to graduate sometime before the second coming. His interests include acting, drawing, writing and film.

PATRICIA McCoy is from West Middlesex, a small town in Western Pennsylvania. She moved to Georgia with her husband, Alex, in 2001. She has decided to combine her two passions of edu-

Andrea Carter
Fisherman; 8”x10”, black & white photograph, 2004