

The Muses' Gallery - Poetry for Fall 2011

Inhale

By

Marjorie Rissman

The scents of a season
Of cinnamon, nutmeg and cloves
Of pumpkin seeds roasting
Of leaves falling and burning
Of hot apple cider
Boiling on the stove
Ah, the fragrance of harvest time
Crowds my mind
As summer days fly
And the last cicada
Chirps goodbye



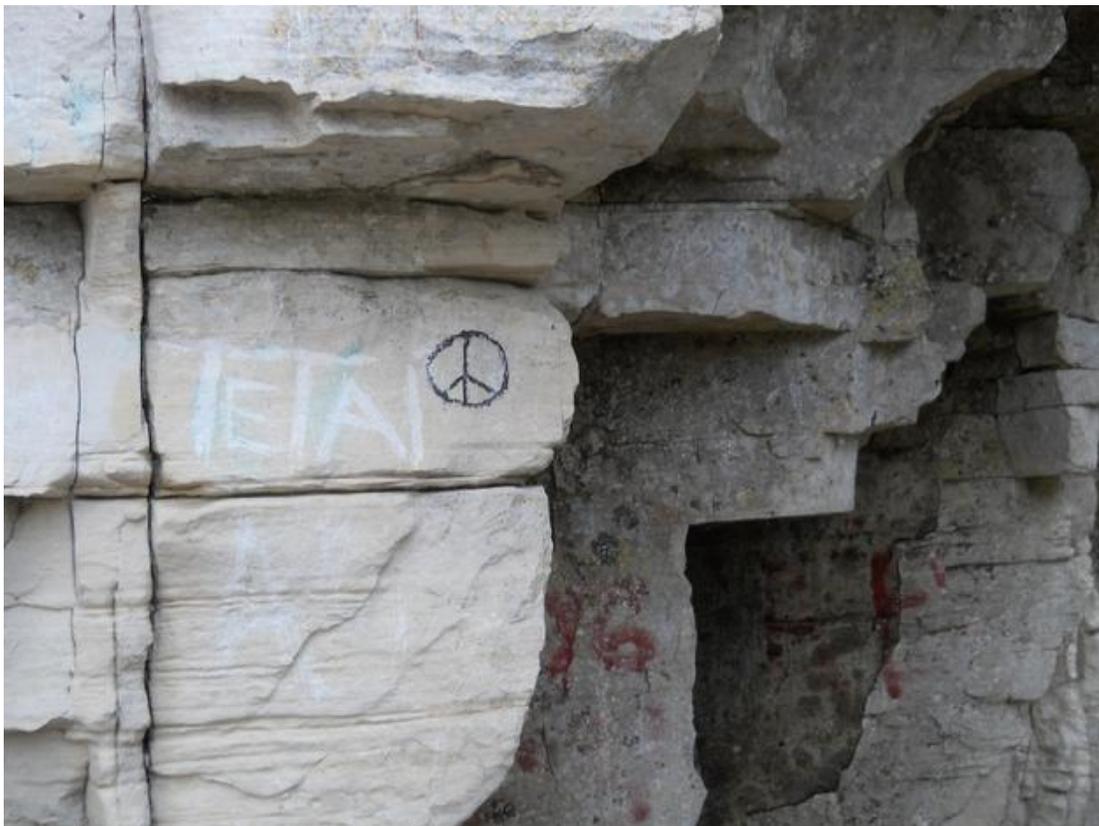
James Paradiso, Photographer

The Apple

By

William Vollrath
Downers Grove

Ripens wondrously
at the perfect rate
to realize its
multiple potentials
sweet or tart
red or green
reaching maturity
embraced by sun and air
only to be plucked
from its lofty cradle
scarlet skin peeled away
cool juices drained
golden meat consumed
till only the core remains
the apple's essence
born from a season
of growth
then decay
sweet quintessence
from multiple possibilities
the apple's true self
crafted over time
now generously gifts seeds
for a budding tomorrow



Kohl Trimbell, Photographer

summer's last

By

Marcia Pradzinski

Skokie

*Published by Amanda Blue
in Ohio, 1984*

day draws
breath
slowly
lingering on
fingers sweetened
by sunlit batter
of crickets skateboards
broadcasts windblown
in trees

as nightbirds pierce
the melting sun



Pam Larson, Photographer

Ansel Adams

By

Pam Larson

Arlington Heights

Young man boldly goes out
amongst the trees and mountains.
Finds an old man on his knees,
ear to the ground
awaiting his next order.

Looks into his eyes
a reflection of landscapes that
have escaped film.
Private moments in time
falling into puddles of yesterdays.
Proof that poetry needs no words.

Falls to his knees.
His story has humbled him,
he has felt the terror of grace.

Printed
to share with you.



Kohl Trimbell, Photographer

Poet's Game

By

Jennifer Dotson

I'm addicted to a computer game
of trains and tickets and far off
destinations. A game
I cannot get enough of.

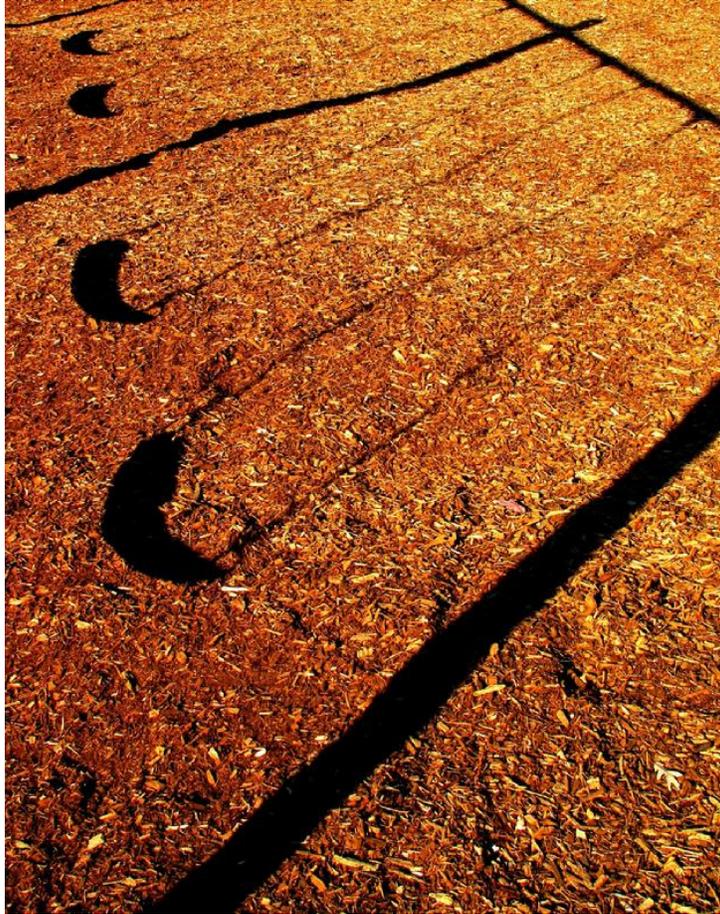
Win or lose, once it ends
a click of my mouse
sends me on a new
cheap thrill adventure.

I play it on-line in the morning
and again after work while
I pretend I'm doing something
else, something worthwhile.

I fear that I will become like
the retiree looking at his statements
who learns that if only he'd saved
\$1 every day and invested carefully

over time he'd have massed millions.
I'm chewed by the same regret
that if only I'd spent those
minutes writing instead of playing

I'd have written volumes of poetry.



James Paradiso, Photographer

Sharing Memories During A Nursing Home Visit

By

Jenene Ravesloot
Chicago

Milk men, tinker men, rag men, too
sound of clinking milk bottles at 5 a.m.,
glint of knives at eight, cries of *rags*,
rags, rags, grind of wagon wheels in
the alley, scent of horse dung hanging
in the air at noon.

Mr. Griffenberg grinds ice, pours
milk into a pail on the porch, begins
to make ice-cream for the neighborhood
kids while water runs down the street
from an open hydrant.

Children laugh. A dog dies under a tree.
Black flies hum like angry bees.

And here you are, father, so young
in the Brownie photograph, dressed in
your Navy whites, holding me.



Pam Larson, Photographer

Passing Through We
Questioning

by

Robert Klein Engler
Des Plaines

Sure, you've seen it, that old frame
house by the roadside, rotted white.
Someone decided to live there.
Like wind scattered seeds at night,

they had to bloom with roots in ash.
For a second you wonder whose name
was called to life in that moldy bedroom
with floral wallpaper stained by shame,

or why he loaded his shotgun and went
to Grand Rapids, there to shoot dead
seven people, one of them a little
boy who just lately learned to read.

I guess you could tell her it's OK to be
tired. Life is a long unraveling, the thread
from one love to another only leads from
maze to maze. Just sit here by the bed

in your rocking chair, rest, let sunlight
filtered by the curtain's gauze glint
your spotted hands. Let others drive
into the cannon blast or a sweet scent

of pines up the hill. They'll play croquet
at the Bradfords until the kids want to go,
then have dinner on the Perry Hotel porch.
He'll wear his lemon yellow chinos,

she her sailor blouse. This is the way
it is. White fish, chardonnay, and pain;
then watch the ice water pitcher sweat.
It looks like raindrops on a windowpane.

Even after their long conversation,
when she asks hesitantly how to forgive,
there are still the chains of the body
to loosen, not so much to die but to live.



Kohl Trimbell, Photographer

Post Labor Day Blues

by

Marjorie Rissman

The last of summer days
The last of summer art shows come and go
How to fill the empty weekends left
Before the first deep paralyzing snow
Sure there are leaves to rake
Bulbs to plant
Solitary walks to take.
But damn!
I miss the crowded
Calendar of ice cream cone nights
And picnic lunches on the sand.
You can try to cheer me up
With your autumn wardrobe
Orange, red and gold.
But all I see is darkness coming
All I feel is old and cold.



Pam Larson, Photographer

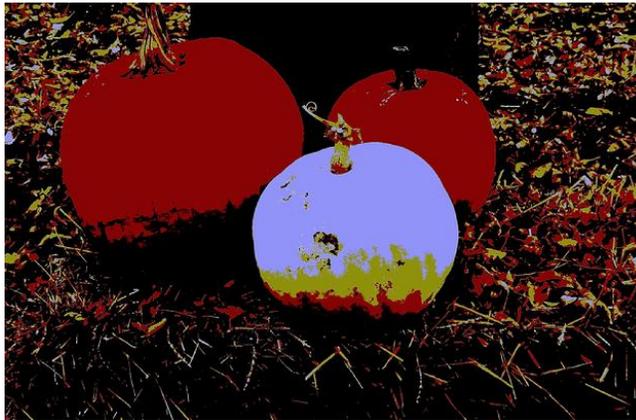
A Poet

by

Michael P. Wright
Highwood

Wild yearning for writing, the seed planted as an 8-year old;
Creative anxiety pent up like a wandering butterfly;
Words, the catalyst value of his existence;
Downtrodden and melancholy, melody of words fits like a glove;
"The" moniker, a title for which I don't deserve;
Plentiful walks of life lay claim to the charm;
My literature knowledge, so pitiful and blithely undermining;
The idea, conjure up and recite;

Critical acclaim perfects my tortured soul;
Pluck a word out of thin air;
Sigh, respond then fiddle with an exact sentence;
Stunning patrons at a loss for comments;
Exclusivity reigns supreme, for I am globally alone;
Satisfaction heightens to a peak humanly possible;
Spread the word, the utopian message of a poem printed in a
publication;
from incubator (The idea) to a genteel manner in a scholarly journal.



James Paradiso, Photographer

The Hairy Angler

by

Kohl Trimbell
Chicago

It's like thread
spun something marvelous on its own.
Some horror picture,
some grotesque beauty heavily wrapped up
in itself.
In what tones its mouth gapes
like some sort of violence
leaks out of it
into nothingness around it.
And if nothingness then what is the point
of all that imagery? The specimen
hardly beautiful yet undeniably calling all attention
and at what depths.
From who?

It's like thread spun
some Disaster, some Ugly,
placed it at the bottom to avoid being seen
but since we have
and cannot look away it creates wonder about what else there is.
Not that beauty has anything to do with anything anymore...
it's just the mystery of the thing.



Kohl Trimbell, Photographer

"We Meet Again Merrial
Mumett"

By

Kenny Sommer

For years all the searching and questions
Where did you go my friend at Rosewood Beach?
Was I looking too hard?
Lost in myself, giving up, not trying
Did you move on to another dimension or planet?
Today I felt you in the birds, water, wind and sand.
Seeing the unseen
You must be open, a state of peace
Nature flows into you
Hearing your anger, faith and hope
The water calm but getting colder
Summer turning to fall
Hope we meet again, Mrs. Mumett?
You bring sunshine, strength and warmth.

Collateral Damage

By

He is an escape artist or the devil
A ballerina, walking tippy toes through the tulips
Avoiding excremental deposits
Tiny piles of goose droppings littering the sidewalk
Tarnishing the well worn trail of our journeys

Bruce E. McNutt
Glenview

The Golden one with four gigantic paws
Putting one paw in front of the other
As if guided by radar to avoid enemy fire
The road side devices left by feathered terrorists

While I, his trusted companion, supposedly leading him
Collateral damage
Unable to avoid the decimation of stepping on
Natural detonation devices

The traces of natural products impaled in the grooves of my tennies
Hundreds of dollars spent on the best shoes China can manufacture
In seconds scarred for all times
Unusable by me, refused by the Army of salvation
Even unsuitable for destruction by fire

Barkley looking back over his shoulder
His eyebrows moving up and down
Do I see a hint of a smile



Jan Burke, Photographer

Why I am Boycotting
Monsanto and Dow
Chemical

-- *for the Vietnamese people and the American Viet Nam
Veterans*
www.projectagentorange.com

By

Michael H.
Brownstein
Missouri

When I gather my strength and walk down a row
into my field where nothing can grow
(except concrete and gravel and a few hardy weeds),
I bend in surprise to find a half dozen seeds.

I pick them up gently and find each a pot,
nurture them carefully to fill empty spots,
but my field has too many due to chemical scorch
and my field has too many because of war's torch.

Earth tries to heal, but it cannot succeed,
the topsoil it makes is topsoil that bleeds,
and dead space creates dead space, everything dust,
my field, my people, dying slowly, land into rust.



David Dotson, Photographer