Publication of Watershed is supported by the Instructional Activities Fund, College of Humanities and Fine Arts

© Department of English, California State University, Chico

Thanks to Gregg Berryman and the students in English 23 for cover proposals and design
# Watershed: Table of Contents

## Poetry

**Amy Antongiovanni**
- Outside Bismark 5

**Noreen Austin**
- The Octopus House 39

**Heather Brittain Bergstrom**
- Visiting my Sister in Texas 29
- First Holiday Without Mother 32

**Leslie Bouchard**
- Liam 17
- Some Days 18
- When I was Five 25

**Trevor Calvert**
- untitled 51

**Mary Capra**
- Da Nang 8

**Bonnie Cox**
- Camouflage 33
- No More Age 35

**Bob Garner**
- crabgrass 1
- the sanctuary 2
- the hibernating mind 4

**Deborah Grelle**
- Rhapsody 7

**George Keithley**
- Tornado 57
- The Driver 58
- Herons 60

**Kiara Koenig**
- Titleist 27
- Silence 28

**Windy Willows Lovell**
- Running Rain 56

**Caliph Caribe Monges**
- Life of a Nigger Death of a Brother 26
SYDNEY ROGERS
A Saturday Morning 55

SHANNON ROONEY
Clear Cut 49
Late Winter 50

MARK STILWELL
Untitled 46

GEOFF THOMAS
untitled 40
Critic 41
The Evening 42

BRENT WALBURN
Hibernation 43
P.S. One Last Note from Nick Carraway 44

SHORT FICTION
HEATH BJORDAHL
Carnival of the Dead 52

BONNIE COX
Grooming 36
Rowing 38

SAMUEL PROVENZANO
Hookey 47

DRAMA
LESLIE BOUCHARD
Welcome to Schizophrenia 11
The Visit 20

ILLUSTRATIONS
MEREDITH CAHILL
photo 10
photo 24

AKIRA ORIKASA
pencil sketch iii
pencil sketch vi

SARA SIPES
photo 6
photo 34
photo 61
crabgrass

why not

let it be

the

lawn?
the sanctuary

during
like a cartoon
caption,
pink foam
bubbling
from his mouth,
his eyes rolled back
to bloodless
white—
she’s looking
for a spoon
to press his tongue
into his jaw—

you cannot watch
him die
like this
again.

and so you stumble
from the bedroom
down the narrow
hallway,
stumble
through the sterile
kitchen
to the backdoor;
let the backdoor swing
into the broken
sun...

the sky
above your head
is burning,
ground
beneath your feet
is hard;
THE SANCTUARY

you slip between
the rusted
barbs
to wade the waist-
high field
of purple-
tipped alfalfa
to the sanctuary
in the quiet trees:

bend the branches
back to enter,
brush the leaves
away to find
the imitation
leather sofa,
red and brown
boxelder
bugs
pouring
from its cushions
like the night.
the hibernating mind

having slept for two millenia
the fear of morning was an elixir
he splashed it on his face like aftershave

born again to levitate
he moved like a ghost over the four-lane highway
ten inches above the ground

licked his ingrown talons with a bird tongue

looking like a prophet in a trenchcoat
looking for the hibernating mind
AMY ANTONGIOVANNI

Outside Bismarck, 1997

The snow blew overnight
more than twenty feet of bank.
From the bare ground up to a second-story window,
packed
the hundred-year-old farmhouse
into the earth,
the same way I buried
your legs in the sand
at the beach
last summer. Remember, you couldn’t move?
You snarled as I licked my popcicle
under the umbrella, shaping a ridge
between two valleys with my heels.
Dig! you growled. Like the tractor
one man drove into the blizzard.
He couldn’t sleep
the night he heard a woman was lost
in her car on the highway.
He scooped, with the bucket, a path
to her headlights. Rescued
the stranger, while the snow
made monuments on his property
this year. Filled in six-acre corrals, the fencing
like walls of wet sand, built by hands
rough and thick,
the same hands paid good money
for cows and sheep
now lying silent
in the snow. Frozen commodities.
The fourth generation farmer
must watch them thaw on prickles
of silvered weeds,
under a blinding spring sky
late April,
their skin slack on their bones.
DEBORAH GRELLE

Rhapsody

Blue note
you tell me stories
through your sound,
piano and horn...

I can see the smokey club
from where I sit, small tables
clinking drinks.

Your sweat trickles down
like a slow fountain
pouring sweet
your music-soul
name.

You are
a melody
a dream
a sweet dance
a long, hot summer night
with a cool wind blowing—

You are so many memories
in one song-note.
Da Nang

The Perfume was a cocoon.
Its gentle waves lapped tranquility
and wrapped pagodas and huts in peace.

Vietnamese was a necessity,
French was an accessory
fading with time
and Chinese was spreading.

Maidens billowed in white,
matrons crouched in black,
gentlemen ruled and children
were plentiful.

Suddenly, in the name of Peace,
The Perfume gushed red, and its
waves spewed the agony of
a bursting vein.

A shrieking sky rained flames
and death by l'Orange.
Crematoriums suffocated the air
with the odor of burning flesh.

Our precious earth;
exploded in metal, vaporized limbs,
and was trampled by footsteps of terror.

Cement paved the way
for screeching aircraft to crowd
what used to be fields.
Soldiers marched with maidens
white is stained
and the mei tei cry.

Today, in uneasy Peace,
Chinese is a necessity,
Vietnamese a fading accessory
and French is nearly extinct.
Airplane carcasses litter the fields,
crumbling runways are haunted by the roar of silent engines
and ghosts emerge from cracks in the tarmac
to pound out their angry dance.

Maidens adorned in western wear
Matrons dingy in black and
still the mei tei cry.

The Perfume flows with a new reign.
Its meanderings host a change in rule,
Yet many tears of old continue to gush
and will never be swept away.
Welcome to Schizophrenia

Characters: THE VOICE, USELESS, ORDERLY

Scene

The stage is empty except for a man in his mid-thirties, slowly rocking in a wooden rocking chair. The "Voice" begins offstage.

VOICE: Here you are.
USELESS: Who's there?
VOICE: Useless, Useless, did you think you could hide from me?
USELESS: I said, who's there?
VOICE: Come now, listen to my voice. You know who I am.
USELESS: No... No. I came so far...
VOICE: You're still as pathetic as you always were.
USELESS: I walked and walked, moving, moving... always moving so you wouldn't find me.
VOICE: Did you really think it was that simple?

(VOICE enters and paces back and forth behind USELESS, sometimes getting down close to his ear other times shouting from across the room. USELESS can not see him)

USELESS: Oh Gawd! I don't wanna be found. Why can't you leave me alone?
VOICE: Leave you alone? Leave you alone!
USELESS: No... (cringes and slightly covers head) No..
VOICE: You owe me.
USELESS: I don't owe you. (then louder) I don't owe you.
VOICE: (menacingly) You slimy, worthless piece of shit. You slither through the gutters of life, sucking at the sludge and waste, maggots feeding on your brain, nesting in the open sores of your flesh, and who pulled you up? Who pulled you up? (USELESS covers ears, cringes, and starts rocking to the rhythm of the words)
USELESS: No... No... Noooooo
VOICE: Do you remember what it was like before, before I saved you?
USELESS: I remember, I don't want to remember.
VOICE: Hmmmmmm (trying to drown out the VOICE)

VOICE: Hmmmmmm, do you think you can drown me out?
Do you think that's all it takes? You hum and poof, I disappear?

USELESS: I can't hear you, hmmmmmm
VOICE: Useless, Useless, Useless, Useless (USELESS flinches backwards)
USELESS: Okay (pulls himself together with exaggerated movement)
VOICE: I gave you the box! (VOICE exits)
USELESS: I know you gave me the box, but it's mine now. (begins scanning the room, trying to find the VOICE)
USELESS: Take it if you want, but you can't open it, not here. (more nervous glancing. VOICE reenters with a box in his hand)
USELESS: Where are you? (swats around head, as if to keep a bee from landing) Don't touch me! (VOICE places the box on USELESS' head; he becomes very still) Aahhh!
VOICE: What are you afraid of? I'm only going to unclasp it.
USELESS: (frantic) Not the latch, mustn't touch the latch.
VOICE: Is there something in here? Maybe we should take a peek. I'll only open it a little.
USELESS: No, not even a little.
VOICE: What's in the box, Useless?
USELESS: The sound comes first; it always does, moaning, crying, screaming.
VOICE: (slowly begins to open the box, about an inch) What's in the box?
USELESS: I hear it now. It's coming.
VOICE: What's in the box?
USELESS: I feel it pouring out around my eyes. Can you hear it? Can you see it?
VOICE: What's in the box?!
USELESS: Fear! (Shouting, looks down as if he is holding the contents of the box in his lap. He is terrified) Look what you've done.
VOICE: Ssshhh...Ssshhh...
USELESS: Close the box.
VOICE: Ssshhh...
USELESS: Please close the box. You can stay. You can do whatever you like. (jumps up from chair) Here, you
Welcome to Schizophrenia

can have my chair. It rocks you know. Make them go back.

VOICE: Sshhh... Back in the box. (slowly begins to close the box)

USELESS: Close it quick, hurry quick now.

(USELESS sits at the foot of the chair. VOICE sits in the rocker, like a king sitting on a throne)

VOICE: I'm going to like it here. It's so peaceful.

(VOICE gently rocks in the chair, petting Useless' head as if he were a pet. After a while he stops. USELESS leans his head against the Voice's leg. USELESS moves his hands as if he is counting on an invisible Rosary, his eyes are closed.)

USELESS: Hail Mary full of grace, the Lord is with thee. Blessed art thou among women (VOICE stares down at him.)

USELESS: and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus.

VOICE: Jesus?

USELESS: Holy Mary, Mother of God

VOICE: that egocentric wanderer.

USELESS: pray for us sinners now and at the hour of our death

VOICE: Kiss my ass and I'll wash your feet.

USELESS: Amen. Hail Mary full of grace

(As VOICE says his next line, USELESS silently mouths the words the Lord is with thee; blessed art thou among women.)

VOICE: Shut up. I don't want to hear it any more.

USELESS: blessed is the fruit of thy womb Jesus. Holy Mary

(As VOICE says his next line, USELESS silently mouths the words Mother of God, pray for us sinners now.)

VOICE: Did you hear what I said Useless? Shut up!

USELESS: and at the hour of our death. Amen. Glory be to the Father, and to the...

VOICE: You can't do this to me.

USELESS: and to the Holy Spirit

VOICE: I won't stand for it.

USELESS: As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be...
WELCOME TO SCHIZOPHRENIA

VOICE: Enough! *(stands up, leaving the box on the chair.)*

(VOICE briskly paces back and forth behind USELESS. He stops, looks at the box, and then goes over and picks it up. USELESS slowly opens his eyes, then stares straight forward, unmoving, unblinking. VOICE begins to open the box)

VOICE: *(playfully)* Look what we’ve got here. *(VOICE reaches into the box.)*

VOICE: *(acts as if he has pulled something from the box)* It has a funny odor, don’t you think? *(He holds out his hand beneath USELESS’ nose, USELESS cringes and recoils)* I know that smell. Now what is it? *(sniffs it himself)* Burning, something burning.

(VOICE holds it back under USELESS’ nose.)

VOICE: Let’s play a game, shall we? Let’s see, how about “Name That Smell.” I’ve already given you a hint.

(USELESS acts as if he is about to vomit)

VOICE: Need another clue? Hmmmm, it was part of your body once.

USELESS: Hair, hair to flesh, skin, peeling skin, smolder, singe. Burn!

VOICE: It did burn nicely now didn’t it? Hold it up, let me see.

USELESS: *(inhales deeply, twice)* Ohhhh

VOICE: Which hand was it? Left or right, right or left? *(drops the “smell” back into the box)* Well no sense crying over crispy lingers.

(USELESS rocks mechanically on the floor.)

VOICE: Listen *(holds box up to his ear)* They’re calling you. Useless. Useless. *(USELESS stops rocking, listens for sounds)*

USELESS: *(softly)* Use-less *(pause)* Use-less

VOICE: Do you know them?

USELESS: *(as if calling to the voices from the box)* I hear you.

VOICE: Of course you hear them; they’re calling you.

USELESS: They’re in the cellar, down, down in the cellar.

VOICE: It’s your fault they’re there.

USELESS: Don’t cry, please don’t cry.
VOICE: They have no choice but to cry. You torture them.
USELESS: I can’t help you.
VOICE: You’re worthless
USELESS: Help them!
VOICE: No.
USELESS: Pain, they’re dying.
VOICE: You’re dying, I’m dying, we’re all dying.
USELESS: Can’t you hear their screaming?
VOICE: Musical, isn’t it?
USELESS: Help them, in the cellar.
VOICE: There is no cellar.
USELESS: They’re buried.
VOICE: (nods his head) They are buried. Beneath where you sit, Leprous bodies squirming in the cold damp earth. Their claw-like paws digging, digging towards you.
USELESS: Listen (pause) They’re moaning up through the dirt, deep, deep.
VOICE: They’re calling you.
USELESS: Spewing earth worms with their wailing.
VOICE: I hear them, (pause) “join us, join us.”
USELESS: Go away. Leave me alone. (slowly raises arms up in the air) Can’t you see? Don’t you know? My hands, they’re burnt away. I can’t dig. No, can’t get you out. No fingers (sniffs the air). Their scent still floats here. Go away now. No Savior here.
VOICE: They’re singing.
USELESS: I don’t hear them anymore. (pause) They’re dead.
VOICE: They’re not dead. They’re singing you a song.
Can’t you hear them?
USELESS: They don’t sing to me.
VOICE: (recites in a sing-song voice, like it’s a nursery rhyme) Lock you first down in the cellar, ‘til you rot and hell takes over, snip your fingers with my tongue, drain your soul out on the ground, flood the dirt with rancid blood, claw the earth with feeble stubs, whisper nightmares in your brain, bad dreams better than life remains, inhale the scent of burning flesh, your life food for rodent’s nest, still I sing your useless song, until you’re dead I’ll not be done.
USELESS: That's not their song, it's yours.
VOICE: So it is, so it is.

(Jingling keys can be heard offstage. ORDERLY enters with a tray.)
ORDERLY: How ya doing there Mr. Franklin?

(VOICE fades to the back corner of the stage. ORDERLY approaches USELESS.)
ORDERLY: It's time for your medication.

(USELESS is zombie-like. ORDERLY places a paper cup in his hand. He waits for some response.) Here you go Mr. Franklin, open up.

VOICE: (faintly) It's poison.

(A smile slowly creeps onto USELESS' face as he opens his mouth. The ORDERLY puts pills into USELESS' mouth.)
ORDERLY: Wash it down (guides USELESS' hand to his mouth and helps him drink) There ya go.

(USELESS swallows. VOICE slumps to the floor and closes his eyes. ORDERLY pats USELESS on the shoulder.)
ORDERLY: You want me to turn the channel there Mr. Franklin? (walks to the front center of the stage and pretends to turn the channel on a T. V.) There's supposed to be a great fight starting on thirty-two.

(ORDERLY exits. USELESS begins rocking again.)
my blood courses through him
and yet,
he is not of me
the emergence of his life
hurdles mine into another place
that older generation
of Sunday dinners
and remembering when
faint wisps of tawny hair
lay like feathers
on his miniature head
while elfin lips pucker
then howl in indignation
thrust from warm and dark into the day

As I stand and gaze at his figure
through the sterile glass
I am thrown back to a time
when my child lay
swaddled and new
untouched by the world
some days

i feel a perpetual sadness, it engulfs me at odd hours
in the middle of a chore
my limitations slap me in the face.
tears well up in my deadened eyes
i create, no, i created
art took form within my hands
painted, molded, brought into beauty by my hands
i create only words now.
the weariness of time
has turned others' compassion
into pity and ultimately,
embarrassed contempt.
like a clown, i paint an imbecilic smile
it allows me to retreat
not deal with the inner demons that taunt me.
what has become of my dreams?
they stood like a beacon waiting for me to follow
extinguished now
as i crash against the brutal shore
of my own body.
advice, heaped upon me
i want to scream at the world
Leave me alone
you don’t know what it’s like to be me
to have someone else cut your food
pull back your hair
floss your teeth or tuck in your clothes.
there is always one bit more
advice, force fed by well meaning people
that i am growing to despise.
don’t talk to me of Anthony Robbins—
his arms work swinging wide circles in the air
when he sits in a booth
choosing from the plastic menu
he orders what he craves.
i order what doesn’t need to be cut
I am not a weak person
i am strong, but it is a curse
i dwell, sometimes too often
on what was, what might have been
what should have been
but in the end
there is only
what is.
The Visit

CHARACTERS:
ALLYSON: 13-yr.-old granddaughter
GRANDMA PHYLLIS
GRANDPA HENRY
JIM: 35-yr.-old son-in-law
MAX: 9-year-old grandson
CAROL: 35-year-old daughter

SETTING: Kitchen. CAROL and JIM are sitting at the kitchen table

JIM: One more day to go. I don't know if I can make it.
CAROL: This is day three, dear. They're not leaving for another four.
JIM: You're kidding?
CAROL: I wish I was.
JIM: This is hell. I've died and gone to hell.
CAROL: It's only purgatory. It won't last for eternity. It just seems like it.
JIM: How did you do it?
CAROL: What would that be?
JIM: Live eighteen years with those people and not end up in the state wacko ward?
CAROL: Be nice, they mean well.
JIM: So'd Attila the Hun.

enter MAX

CAROL: Good morning Sweetheart, how'd you sleep?
MAX: I didn't.
JIM: Bad night, huh?
MAX: I could hear them snoring clear out on the couch.
CAROL: I thought you were sleeping in with grandpa?
MAX: Mom, the man has a serious gas problem.
CAROL: Be nice.
MAX: He kept sayin' "here comes another train," then let one rip. I had to get out of there. I couldn't find a gas mask.
JIM: (to Carol) I warned you about the enchiladas.
CAROL: It's not his fault. When you get older your system can't handle certain foods as well.

MAX glances at his parents with a worried expression.
JIM: Don’t look at me. I suggested cyanide-laced creamed tuna for dinner.

MAX: For us or them?

CAROL: That’s enough you guys. Mom and dad are going to be up any minute. It’d really hurt their feelings if they heard you talking like that.

PHYLLIS enters

JIM: (whispering towards Max) Speak of the devil.

CAROL: You’re up early, Mom. You should sleep in. You’re on vacation.

PHYLLIS: What? Waste the day when there is so much to do?

CAROL: Sit down. Let me get you a cup of coffee. There’s nothing you have to do. You’re supposed to be relaxing.

CAROL gets up and pours a cup of coffee. PHYLLIS sits down in Carol’s chair

PHYLLIS: (to Jim) I have a few boxes that need to be put up in the attic.

JIM: I’d love to help, but I’m running a little late this morning. I’ll do it for you tonight, after I get home from work.

PHYLLIS: Don’t worry about it. I don’t want to be a bother. I know how hard you work. (to Carol) You are very fortunate to have such a good hard-working husband. He puts in so many hours at the office, he doesn’t even have time to mow the lawn. You know, I read an interesting article in a magazine just last week, while I was at the hair dresser’s. It was titled “How to Tell if You’re a Workaholic” or something like that. Anyway, it said an unkempt yard was a sure sign of a hard-working personality.

CAROL: What boxes do you need stored?

PHYLLIS: I cleaned out your linen closet for you. You had everything BUT a towel in there: Christmas decorations, winter sweaters, picture albums. It’s no wonder you had to store the towels in the bathroom.
THE VISIT

JIM: Silly me. I always figured they kind of went together, bath towel, bathroom.

CAROL: They’re fine where they are mom. The shelf in there was made to hold towels.

PHYLLIS: I know they’re fine now. I have them stacked nice and neat in the linen closet. Don’t worry, it was no problem.

JIM: Well I hate to leave such pleasant company, but this hard-working man has a time-clock to punch in about half an hour.

Exit JIM

Enter ALLYSON, dripping wet, wrapped in a shower curtain

ALLYSON: Thanks a lot Max, real funny.
MAX: What’d I do?
ALLYSON: Oh, like you’re so innocent.
CAROL: What’s the problem.
ALLYSON: First the little weasel sneaks into my room and steals all my make-up, right off my dresser. Now he’s taken every towel in the house.
PHYLLIS: They’re in the linen closet, Dear.
ALLYSON: What closet? We don’t even have a linen closet.
CAROL: Grandma put them in with the Christmas decorations.
PHYLLIS: (laughing) Oh, no, I didn’t put the towels in with Christmas. I have more sense than that. I just told you, I boxed up the lights and nativity in one of your old file boxes.
CAROL: Old file box?
PHYLLIS: Don’t worry about it. Your father found a dusty stack of boxes in the garage. They hadn’t been touched in years. We dumped them all together into one of your hefty bags. Those draw string ones sure are nice. I’m going to have to pick some of those up for your father and I when we get home.
ALLYSON: What about my make-up?
CAROL: Did you notice any labels on the boxes?
PHYLLIS: Good heavens no, just some black marked chicken scratch down one side. I think one said something like bank and taxes ’87, something like
THE VISIT

that. Whoever wrote it really should take a penmanship class.

ALLYSON: Hel-lo! My make-up?

Enter HENRY

HENRY: Make-up? Why would such a pretty girl want make-up for? Look at that face. Your mom here didn’t start wearing make-up until she was at least sixteen.

PHYLLIS: Now that’s not true. Don’t you remember that peachy lip gloss your sister Ruth gave Carol Jean when she went into high school? (to Allyson) She wasn’t allowed to wear it every day of course.

CAROL: Where did you see it last?

ALLYSON: Spread out on my dresser, where it always is.

PHYLLIS: Was that your make-up? I thought it was left over from Halloween. I packed it up with the rest of the decorations.

ALLYSON storms off stage

CAROL: Have a seat, Dad. I’ll get you some coffee.

HENRY: Hey Max, how’s the ol’ room mate? Is that a train I hear coming?
When I was Five

I climbed the stairs of Astoria Column
Ethel
with her cigarette-stained fingers
and wide open smile
stayed behind
her tired legs would not manage
the steep spiraling steps
that mine easily did
still scabby knees lifted
almost to my chest
while grubby fingers clasped
the cool rail and pulled me upward
above the earth.
I reached the top
and circled twice the tight round room
Come down now sweety it’s time to go
I looked out
through the brown tinted portal
out across the ocean
a whale spit up its drink
through the top of its head
the cannery drifted up there
with the salty smells of unshucked oysters
and discarded fish heads
Okay you’ve seen enough it’s time to go home
that’s not my home
I sat on the smooth plank flooring
and felt the vibration of wave after wave
crashing on the rocks
that could not be seen through the tiny window
a squawking seagull passed by
if I opened the glass and stepped outside
would I land on its back
or splash with the whales
Please come down they need to close
I turned off my eyes and stayed there
until the sun swam into the distant water
and Ethel’s voice grew faint and hoarse
I wonder
How many children sleep there now
The Life of a Nigger The Death of a Brother

The trigger got no heart that’s what that nigger said when the bullet tore the brother apart
Die nigger! Die! Is what that nigger said right when he put that brother to bed then he walks off like nothing even happened if someone steps to him they will get a cap in the azz just for acting stupid that’s what he yellz out in the poorly lit ghetto streets this is what happens niggerz killing brothers just for some action I walk down the street and I have to look side to side before I get to the corner because niggerz gonna take your life without a warning all this shit just don’t make sense but brothers don’t know how to act when full of ignorance.
A young boy in baggy shorts
pretends he’s Tiger Woods
on a not so green lawn,
his club a streak of sunlight,
a Nike swoosh,
its head a silver-gold asteroid
in an erratic three-quarter orbit,
trailing a comet-tail of dust
as it passes its low point,
leaving a white moon still nestled
in a tiny emerald sky.
A solitary seagull walking slow, eyes on the white-cap horizon, whole wing testing wet wind, broken wing etching wet sand
Visiting My Sister In Texas

I. First Evening

After you assure me it's the coolest part of the day,
I help you carry the basket of laundry out back to be hung
Blowing against my arms and face
the wet sheets move with me in the wind.
Their warm soapy smell reminds me of childhood.

And I wish, sister, your large Texas sky
could make me forget
another evening under back eaves:
me with my legs spread apart,
you with a wet towel and soap
showing me the right way to clean up
after grandfather was done with us.

Now, covering my hand with yours —
you show me the right way to hang shirts
so the clothespins won't leave marks
and the thick seams under the arms will dry.

II. Migraine

It comes in late morning
just as when we were children.
Pulling down the shades,
I place a cool rag over your eyes.
But without medicine
the pain in your head is so bad
you can't move. Rolling you onto your side,
I pull your T-shirt over your breasts,
lay your new son fussy with want
as close to your body as I can.
Holding him on his side, palm against
his back, I watch as he fills his stomach.
Content at last, he sleeps. Releasing your
nipple from his mouth, you send a stream
of milk to his ear—round and pink
as the petals on your sheets.
III. Afternoon at the Missions

"The only way up," you say, pointing to the narrow steps smoothed by years. My daughter, wanting to look through the priest's high window, begins climbing the steep passage without rails. Walking behind, I keep a hand on both walls—listening for the slip of her foot.

The chamber is smaller than I expected and I am glad to lean out the window—waving down to you in the grass below. New son held to your breasts, you look up at the sky darkening with rain.

Turning the chamber into her church, my daughter makes crosses with sticks from her pocket. Laying two on the window sill, she kneels but can't remember the movements from forehead to shoulders she saw the women in the courtyard making.

Watching her trying to pray, I remember the curve of your back, sister, the way you made your body so small on the carpeted steps of the pulpit. And after mother left the church, you stayed there praying for her soul until the organ music stopped and you crept back to the pew, face red, a home-made cross pressed into your palm.

IV. Flight Home

From up here clouds cast shadows on the desert floor — dark ghosts trailing gowns like priests over the dead face of the desert separating you from me.
cracks in the ground
like veins
tracing back to your arms.
First Holiday Without Mother

Sneaking out the side door of Grandma Lee’s trailer
where father’s family sat eating pumpkin pie
from flowered plates, we took the Ford
grandpa could no longer see to drive
Racing it over the raised railroad tracks
we did to it what we wanted to do to our bodies

and would. But this was before whisky and men
when cigarettes and the back roads
of a farming town were enough.

Snug in our T-shirts and jeans,
we parked the car
to walk the edge of a dried up spillway

where the concrete slabs
sticking up like pillars at its bottom
remained monuments of our parents’ bravery

when cutting jr. high phys-ed they dared
their slim arms and hands to grab the only rope
tied across two bent and rusted poles.

This was the first holiday without mother.
Father’s family sat chewing pie between words about her,
the one who got away, like we wanted to and would.
Camouflage

Dry bark flakes into
the breeze —
in a whisper of wings,
a tree sheds
a moth.

Tall standing grass,
the color of dust —
the lioness lowers her ears
so the zebra won’t see
their blackness.

A heavy white paw
covers the polar bear’s nose.
The black spot
on the snowdrift
disappears.
No More Age

Saturday.
Marshmallow cereal
with tiny puffy shapes
pink, yellow, orange, green, blue
all bleeding their colors into the milk.
Cartoons, but not the modern kind
no mutants, warriors, or people with huge eyes
and tiny mouths.
Loony Toons.
Tweety, Daffy, Foghorn Leghorn, Taz.
Yosemite Sam shakes his red mustache
and shoots at the ground
bang bang bang bang
sending him up in little fits
spraying bullets everywhere,
he tells Bugs Bunny to draw a gun.
Laughter
our wedding bands clink softly
as I put my hand on yours.
This is as old as I want to be.
Grooming

The spring pasture grasses have dried and opened their seed heads to the position that enables the seeds to be carried away. By wind, wool, pelt, or white crew socks, the seeds disperse. The grass is no longer sweet and succulent—it is more like dry, brown cereal. The horses pilfer through it but add no flesh to their hips. We will need to hay them soon.

Once, they glanced up at my arrival at the pasture gate, then went on eating. Today, the thought of a tree-ripened apple brings them walking toward me. They swing their hips and offset the motion with nodding heads.

I have not lied to them; I hold an apple for each.

Their skulls fill with the sounds and vibrations of crunching apples when I put their halters on. The red horse’s mouth froths—he holds the tip of his tongue in his teeth to draw apple juice off. His breath is sweet with apple sugar.

I tie the horses casually outside of their stalls. I stand at the red one’s shoulder, facing his hip, and bend over. Before I can get the hoof pick out of my pocket, he raises his hoof for me to clean.

Their coats lie smooth and shiny, the richest colors of summer. The red horse turns his head away and leans into my curry comb, ensuring that the black rubber teeth go right down to the skin. I lean into his weight, rubbing tight circles, feeling tension leave my muscles as equine dander builds up beneath my fingernails.

I reach the shoulder with my comb, but the horse can’t wait. He curls his neck around to nudge me, lifting a hind leg and pointing with his nose to a spot on his belly that he cannot reach. I comply. I'll groom the barrel later.

His chestnuts have grown out a little. I peel a layer of the flat, teardrop-shaped extra toe off his inner leg. He stamps and shakes his head. I add a little grease to keep the tender new surface soft, then move on to the mare.

My fingers separate tail hairs one by one until each tail can be combed without hesitation. The roan mare stands within an oval of white and red hairs around her feet, her clean muzzle and jaw-line slightly oily from the clipper blades.
GROOMING

I lead the horses back out to the pasture. Releasing them, I watch as they wander away, admiring how their tails fan out hair by hair on their flanks as they swish at flies.

They don’t go very far; I lean on the fence rail and watch them. The lowering sun sprinkles them in gold dust. The mare sneezes.

I turn and walk back to the barn to fetch their hay. The smell of horse lingers in my sinuses. I inhale deeply and smile.
Rowing

Rowing past Pele in the shadow of the mountain, I push the water by. My outrigger floats over the rolling swells, then dips with my paddle into the glassy sea. Three raw canes and half a dozen pineapples fill the other end of the boat, their sweet-tart fragrance riding past me on a gentle tailwind. My three daughters will worry those canes for days, leave them dry as coconut husk on the back porch.

Pele sleeps, her crater a huge bowl of weightless cinder flakes. Beneath the bow of my boat, she continues to build her island. I see flickering, through the clear water, orange knees of lava kneel on the ocean floor. White bubbles rise, then pop at the surface. Their steam evaporates when the seawater-shells burst. My oar churns the bubbles before they surface as I push the water by.

It is a long row to Wailea, but easy. I begin work at daybreak, walking the rows of cane, stooping and slashing. It doesn’t hurt my hands anymore. The cane can’t cut me at all. I grab the pineapples by their spiky hair and kill them at their necks. My knife must always be sharp.

The sun sets to port. The water around it is syrup, resin, amber, then stone. The sun boils it down, like Pele’s knees. She is sister to the sun, and I push the water by.
The Octopus House

In darkness she labors
Answers cries.
Rocks away nightmares
Her purpose clear
Her sleep
Cursory

In all rooms she reaches
She gives, gives and gives
Nurtures them complete
Her designs, intricate
Her color
Paling

In brightness they leave her
Her tears unheard
As she disappears into the walls
Her ends
Achieved.
Embark upon a wintered journey
of spite and excess... parables of bog
and frailty. The tweak and shamble of
blue-notes wafting riverside or
pattering of feet skipping to an unknown fate
But it always comes back to Her, liquid
and shimmering in semi-translucent opaqueness
with marble eyes of bluegreengrey crystalline
oceans. Concessions of contrivity and libations
of lonely scrawlings and sometimes randomly
lucky incantations of poeticism and romanticism,
the shapely nameless Her, who haunts and hunts
in dreams, like an empty silhouette shadowdance
on rock walls of solitary confinement, and
Why's-it-gotta-be-like-dis-I'm-a-askin-myself
to no reply, and can I not fall
into patterns predictable, but rather predatory predicaments
and 'p... this!' as I shift rambling topical metamorphose
morphine—
seated quasi-conscious thought-flickers of dwelled upon
bickering,
dicking around, and dogging the issue altogether, and
she keeps popping up (that sneaky bitch), riding my rolling
waves, surfing my semi-sanity-filled babblings, as it all comes
down
to that from which it grew and was spawned:
How Reality Rides A Shadowed Steed
and our embarked-upon journey comes full-trapezoidal
and to a closing
and I leave you a white wintered page
just like a sheet of night.
GEOFF THOMAS

critic

I speak the voices of shadow and sorrow,
sing a chorus of self-doubt and
wasted moments in time.
I bar you from true happiness.
I've given you a gift
a twisted ornament of imperfection...
To mandate a remembrance of true self,
the you I once owned...
A scar, to contain an ego meant to soar.
Shackled in twisted and deformed reality,
I am negativity, I am your black shadow
the evening

In the coming of the moon's light
when shadows fall long and awkward
and silence crashes like waves upon us,
My shadow-self revels in nomadic freedom
roaming through the dark ink of sky,
melting into all other shadows
as they ripple through heavens
like ravens to other worlds
Fallen into a gulch under the
dank black branches of
swamp trees, is the body of a man's
poetic genius.
Rotting—away from the
green, the voices have died, gone
dormant for a season's
nap.

Children don't laugh in this jaded
muck, where moss doesn't grow,
doesn't hang from willows that
don't weep over this inanimate
bog. Reaching from the sucking
surface that clutches wit, his arms stand
erect, fingers pointing like
pins.

Jelly-eyed muses flit
around their amber glow dripping the
sap of his thirst, tongue eagerly
tugging it to the back of his
throat, past his windpipe, into his
bloodstream. As his eyes roll,
crickets chirp, and stars rip the
sky.
P.S. One Last Note From Nick Carraway

The Buchanans are alive
and living in Sonoma California.
I know it, because I’ve seen them.
I’ve heard their stories, I know where
they’ve been.
While Gatsby’s flesh was still being eaten by
death, they were seeing the sights
in Aruba, Italy, Spain,
you name it.
They never looked back,
and never had to.
I met them in a campground between
Mendocino and Fort Bragg. Me and my Jordan Baker
in a tent,
them in an oversized motor-home.
My cheap
corkscrew wouldn’t fit around the top of
the expensive bottle of wine that I had.
Theirs did.

Tom has mellowed with time.
His once hard
frame has softened into a round one. He
says, “That’s just great,” a lot.
“What, you’re in school? Wanna be a writer huh?
That’s just great. Getting married huh? That’s just great.”
Daisy is still fashionable. Her eyes still flit.
That’s all she needs.
Tom takes care of the rest. He still likes her pretty
and dumb.
As we sat next to a fire on the sand,
Daisy sliced pears
on a marble cutting board, with a gourmet knife,
and meticulously
wrapped them in thin sheathes of mild cheese.
The salmon steaks and
caviar they had
for dinner hadn’t
tided her over.
She giggled a lot and drank more than a lot.
That's how Tom likes her.
She spoke with the greatest excitement
about
her daughter, who was roughly my age,
and going to school in Australia, having
already done a semester in London.
Then the subject turned to
their vacations, which seemingly
never end.
I heard about the wet, slimy
galoshes that she had
to wear while fishing in Mexico.
She was just sure that
hundreds of
other feet
had been in them.
About the tuna fish sandwich that the
Mexican
crew of the fishing boat insultingly
gave her for lunch.

She only stopped long enough to slice some pears
or to drink her expensive
champagne. So expensive
it came in a bottle that
I didn't even recognize.
She asked,
"How do you camp in a tent?
Do you rent them?
Or buy them? What?"
Then, she covered her mouth and roared
with laughter.

All I could see was a red light
blinking on a buoy
out
in the water.
And I thought,
the green light has turned
red.
The selfish blue jay
Hides a seed by the river...
And starts a forest.
Yolanda Coleman was thirteen years old and the most beautiful girl in school. Her black skin had a light of its own and her piercing dark eyes were relentless in their probing intensity. She wore her hair long and braided with colorful beads African-style. When she smiled it was like sunshine breaking against a bank of storm clouds.

All the kids were a little afraid of her, maybe because of her beauty or maybe because she always seemed to know something that no one else knew.

She didn’t speak much but when she spoke, people stopped what they were doing.

Mario Pavone was there the day the police came. He saw her face as they handcuffed her hands behind her back. He watched as they put her in the backseat of the squad car. It was the first time that he realized that someone else’s pain could hurt him.

He ran home from school that day. He ran past his house. He ran and ran until he couldn’t breathe. And then he lay down behind some bushes in Mrs. Mahoney’s front yard, and he cried. He cried until dark.

When he arrived home, his mother asked him if he’d been fighting again. He told her that he hadn’t. He told her he had a stomach ache and that he didn’t want dinner.

Yolanda didn’t go to school the next day, nor the next either. There were a variety of stories circulating about what she had done.

Then the weekend came. Saturday morning he walked to Yolanda’s house. Her brother Jerome was on the front porch. He was two years older than Mario and very tough. He belonged to a gang and people said he was selling drugs. Everyone called him J.C. Mario stood on the sidewalk in front of his house.

“Hi J.C., ” he called.
“Hey little man, what’s happenin’?”
“Yolanda, is she okay?”
“She’s in the house. You want to see her?”
“N..n.. no!” he said in a panic.
J.C. started to laugh then and called, “Landa, there’s a white boy here to see you.”

Mario wanted to run, but as in a dream, he could not move. She came outside and down the sidewalk to him; all the while she was looking directly into his eyes. She took his left hand in hers and covered it with her other hand for a moment. And then she put his hand to the side of her face. She let his hand go then, and he thought he heard her say thank you but he wasn’t sure. She turned her back to him and started slowly towards the house.

“Why...?” He started to ask tentatively. She turned back to him, smiled, shrugged her shoulders and went into the house.

Monday she was back at school. He saw her in the morning at her locker, and at lunchtime she was sitting alone in the cafeteria. He saw her as soon as he walked in. He went directly to her.

“Hi, Yolanda.” He was leaning on the back of the chair opposite hers.

She acknowledged him with a slight nod and the trace of a smile.

“Do you mind if I sit here?” he asked.

“No,” she said watching him intently, He put his bag lunch on the table.

“Somethin’ on your mind?” she asked looking at her plate.

“Why’d the cops come for you?” he asked. The words came out louder and faster than he intended.

“Doesn’t concern you. I know you want to be my friend, but keep it simple.”

“You think I can’t handle it?” His face grew red.

She stood up and smiled then.

“The day before the police came I was playing hooker.”

“You mean hookey,” he laughed.

She leaned on the back of the chair next to his and put her face close to his ear.

“No. I mean hooker.”

He watched in wonder as she walked away.
Clear Cut

Within me
thousand-year-old trees die,
methodically sawed down
by his ear-assaultive chainsaws—
those big guns
of his well-channeled malice.

I know the agonizing
crack
break
strain
of each lush and voluptuous
bough-shaped tree
as she
falls to earth—
thuds to the ground
with a shuddering
and a thundering
that frightens animals.
No longer does the marvelous tangle
of these branches
rub and squeak
on a windy, summer’s day—
no longer do the swarthy trunks
sway like gypsy women’s hips
in tantalizing dance

He clear-cuts me,
makes me the denuded,
spectral sight
of a tree graveyard—

a woman, a swath of land
cut by him.
Late Winter

February.
Camellias outside my window.
Pink blossoms
open, winter’s prayer
for spring.

Leaves of healing green mesmerize
as I glance outside,
try to dissolve
into that emptiness
from which all else
emerges.

Rain falls, making soft
slapping
against slick, shiny leaves,
a gentle percussion,
an entrancing rhythm.
Snow juncos flutter
from springy branches
to the birdfeeder
overhead.

I take heart, knowing
some hungers are fed.
she does not know her own length how rivers have sung and chanted as they exulted in their course through primeval forests how they have roared her name as they crashed into still pools from airy summits she does not hear herself when autumn leaves tumble gently down dancing and whispering her voice and song with their ephemeral tongues she does not recognize her smell when winds slide off the ocean’s blue skin or when the earth breathes her breath as rains drum their prayer softly into lakes and mountains and meadows she does not know her own length and this is her beauty and her strength.
The Carnival of the Dead

When I was a boy living in the Mekong Delta my grandmother’s neighbor swallowed a handful of fertilizer. He had lately been getting into a lot of arguments with his wife and mother-in-law, something about their inability to have children. One night, as he weaved his drunken way along the dirt road towards his home, he saw the bag of fertilizer and ate a handful. He was found half-lying in a rice paddy the next day. A week later he died. A monk burned himself in front of the temple down the road, and a girl hung herself at the bend just past my grandmother’s house. But the monk burned before I was born, and I don’t remember when the girl stopped breathing.

What I do remember is what my grandmother told me. “Don’t leave the yard today. It’s Uncle Four’s funeral.” He wasn’t really my uncle, but that’s what I had to call him whenever he passed my grandmother’s yard. I was there often, playing outside the palm leaf house, since my mother had to go to the market in My Tho to sell her eggs, and my father had to build brick houses for the new wealthy, whose children in America brought them riches whenever they returned to their homeland.

“Maternal grandmother,” I asked, “where will they bury Uncle Four?” He had been a young man, and had yet to build a tomb for himself.

“They will bury him next to his house, and your uncles will build a tomb for him later. Go outside and play, my offspring, but don’t leave the yard.”

I did as she said, sitting under the February sun with my dirt and my sticks. It wasn’t long before the shuffling feet of an old man passing lifted my head. He was carrying a small bronze gong, with a striker that matched the white of his beard. Soon after, another old man passed, this one with brass cymbals tarnished brown. I paid them no mind, being content with my sticks and dirt.

When the coffin passed, I stood. I heard the motor bike approach, the familiar buzzing growl that came and went several times a day. I lifted my head out of habit, but instead of a neighbor returning from market, there was a red and yellow and silver and blue and orange box resting atop a trailer
attached to the motor bike. Uncle Four’s house was a little way
down the road, around the bend. If the tall ditch palms hadn’t
been there, I would have had a clear view of his home. My eyes
followed the motor bike as it turned onto the little bridge that
crossed the ditch in front of the yard. I couldn’t see anything
else clearly, so I sat back down in my dirt until my
grandmother called me inside to eat.

I sat down in front of a bowl of noodles in broth with bean
sprouts and peppers, spearmint leaves, and thin slices of beef.
My grandmother had the same, except for the beef. “Maternal
grandmother,” I asked, “why do they bring music to Uncle
Four’s home?”

“Eat your noodles and broth, my offspring. Never mind
about Uncle Four today.”

After I ate, my grandmother joined me outside, stringing
laundry up to dry. I went back to playing in the dirt, digging a
small hole with my sticks. Another motor bike with a trailer
passed. This one was filled with somber men, and drums, and
long wooden poles. I watched them go to Uncle Four’s house
too.

Not long after they arrived the beating began, the drums and
the gong and the cymbals, and moaning strings too, which
arrived without my knowing. I asked my grandmother if they
were having a lion dance at Uncle Four’s house. She only said
no. I stood and walked to the edge of the yard, almost into the
dirt of the road. I stopped when my grandmother asked me
where I was going. I stared in the direction of Uncle Four’s
house, straining my eyes through the ditch palms.

Men were there, clad in white and taller than I had ever
seen, sifting through the green of the palm leaves. The beating
continued, the strings wept, the men danced a stilting dance on
their poles. The sun was high in the open blue, and there was a
slight breeze that made the shadows shift around my feet. I
watched my grandmother’s wrinkled hands open clothespins
and shut them again over my shirts and pants, and they were
dancing on the clothesline in the wind. They danced for maybe
an hour, tempo-ed by the drums and gongs, mourned by the
strings. I could hear the music clearly but could see only the
tops of the dancers, white shirts with long flowing sleeves,
heads ringed with white cloth crowns. Where their feet stepped
I did not know. And then it was quiet again. No, not quiet,
because the breeze still blew, the way it whispers through trees no matter where you are. The procession traced its steps past my grandmother’s house. The old man with the gong, the trailer full of somber men, the trailer emptied of a coffin.

The next day my grandmother let me leave the yard, and a few days after that it was the fifteenth day of the lunar month. I had to go to temple with my family. They walked along the dirt road lit by the full moon; I walked ahead. When I came to Uncle Four’s house I stood at the foot of the bridge and looked into the yard and saw the mound of fresh soil, tinted blue by the silver moon. It was silent and still, a rare occasion when the two reigned contemporaneously. But the steps of my father and mother made stillness surrender, and grandmother made silence retreat.

“My offspring,” she said, “let’s go.”
A Saturday morning in autumn.
She kneels at the brook,
Running smooth.
Sun at her crown.
Thoughts warm,
Massaged and exercised.
Alive.
Feet bound to the earth.
Melted,
Woven through the soil.
Each grain a part of her,
Swimming through her toes.
Ten of them,
Breaking the solid crust,
Down,
Below,
Deep to the core,
A tangled web of roots.
Solid.
Running Rain

Pouring skies
Dancing trees
Splashing roads
Running shoes

Smiles curve my mouth
rain covers my head
dripping down my nose
...drenching.

Pouring skies
I hear whimpers and complaints
"rain, rain go away"
"no" bubbles from me
splashing droplets are my friends.

Dancing trees
plastered to my face
curving in and over my eyes
my tongue out and up
tasting each drop as it falls.

Splashing roads
each footstep falling down
brings water up to meet my legs
washing away the pain
that pills could not erase.

Running shoes
feeling freer than a loosened leaf
I weave down the sodden path
sorrows cling to rain drops
and slide to the ground
I leave them behind for some
unwary person to splash into.
GEORGE KEITHLEY

Tornado

Wind snapping their silks nine horses strut onto the oval. Thunder wracks their nerves. Two jockeys rise in the irons: "Easy, relax—"
Their mounts stamp, quiver, as the rain rattles a steel starting-gate. Six circle the track in terror. Lightning spooks the mare—

She balks behind her gate, rearing into the rain; the jock’s fist grips her mane. Eluding outriders, she splinters the rail, the post. Splashes off the track. A shattered knee produces this plunging list—
She hobbles home with a rocking gate, plodding through the paddock.

Her groom sees the mare nodding, stumbling down the path. Clucking his tongue, he coaxes her into the barn where the owner waits. She lunges from his grasp. Frowning, the vet taps his temple. The trainer sponges blood from her muzzle, her sopping mane. She shudders, shaking off the pain.

A stable boy brings blinkers she won’t wear. She gnaws his wrist—wrenches his arm—enraged if anyone takes hold of her bridle. Guardedly the groom slips the pistol from his belt, lifting the storm-lamp in the gloom. Now its flame illuminates his face, she trails along at her halting pace.
The Driver

After I'd steered the ambulance off the road
I coaxed it across an open pasture,
rocking to a halt in fresh April mud
while overhead the rack of warning-lights
whirled its circus colors. First I shut down
our shrill siren. Then blacked the lights. Once
their dazzle thrilled me—now it chills my blood.
At four in the morning a full moon flooded
Butte Creek Canyon with its cold white glow
which marbled the water in light and shadow.

Before us Search and Rescue had planted flares.
Unsteady stars, they flamed up, hissed, flickered
over the slick creekside, revealing tape
with which the team sealed the site—bold yellow
like the body bag laid out on the bank.
Nearby we found the subject's pocketwatch.
Twin shell casings. His trail map soaked to pulp.
Two gin bottles. Binoculars. One lens,
already shattered, popped at my thumb's touch.
Detritus of the self—a man I almost knew.

Off duty we played interminable chess,
a pair of bunglers... Fondly he thought he lived
for his family; his work. To a wilderness
firefighter the hours had seemed infinite,
watching the wind chafe the meadow. Returning
to find his wife loading the station wagon,
taking their children to live with her lover.
Clearly suicide. Still the sheriff impounded
his gun. A deputy shot photos. My young
paramedics finished probing; signed papers.

They hoisted the stretcher on board with a care
beyond their years, the yellow bag turning
orange beneath our emergency lamp. Shifting
the corpse to the fixed cot, their work was done.
I latched both doors. Briefly the engine stalled.
THE DRIVER

Then, throbbing, it lifted us free of the field and—headlights only—we eased onto the road. No wailing siren. No revolving lights to speed us through traffic. It was not yet dawn and the dead have all the time in the world.
Herons thrive in Ostia where no ship sails into harbor. Fishnets fray; unknot; return to stray hemp—threads for nests. Once a port fails to satisfy the Roman soul merchants spurn its morning market. The river’s a marsh that sprawls before us. Scholars stalk each wharf to learn how a resplendent shrine, neglected, falls to ruin: while the last mosaics break the lusty gods cavort across these walls—

Noon finds them lying shattered in the wake of a black squall. Already summer trails Hadrian into history. Herons rake the marsh. At dusk they roost among the scales on the docks of Ostia where no ship sails.
CONTRIBUTORS’ NOTES

AMY ANTONGIOVANNI received her MFA in poetry from St. Mary’s College. She is presently teaching Composition at both CSU, Chico and Butte College.

Formerly an interpreter for the deaf, NOREEN AUSTIN has returned to school to study English and Creative Writing to formally pursue her life-long writing hobby.

HEATHER BRITTAINE BERGSTROM is a senior at CSU, Chico. She is also the mother of a seven-year-old daughter and is expecting a baby at the end of December.

Now teaching five-year-olds at a private English language school in Ansan, South Korea, HEATH BJORDAHL began his studies at Arizona State University in Mechanical Engineering but later changed his major to English Literature in which he received his degree in 1996.

LESLIE BOUCHARD, senior English major/Creative Writing minor, mother of three and recent grandmother, began writing poems and short stories to entertain her children when they were young. She is currently writing a novel and hopes eventually to teach creative writing.

MEREDITH CAHILL is a third-year student at CSU, Chico who is interested in both photography and creative writing.

TREVOR CALVERT is an English major who transferred to CSU, Chico from Columbia Junior College, where his work was featured in The Columbia College Spring Review.

Although MARY CAPRA holds a Bachelor’s Degree in Accounting, she is interested in establishing a career as an editor and writer. She presently works for a national community service organization which promotes reading literacy.

A senior Journalism major with a minor in Creative Writing, BONNIE COX would like to “write children’s novellas...the kind of books that educated and entertained me throughout my childhood.”
Recipient of CSU, Chico's Outstanding Academic Writing Award for 1991, BOB GARNER'S work has been published in The Painted Hills Review, Contraposto, and Thrust, and he has work forthcoming in The California Quarterly.

DEBORAH GRELLE has been a serious writer of short stories and poetry since her childhood. She is a member of a writers' group in Chico, and she also enjoys volunteering in her daughter's fourth-grade classroom.

GEORGE KEITHLEY'S most recent collection of poetry is Living Again, published in Spring 1997 by Bear Star Press. He lives in Chico and is at work on another book.

KIARA KOENIG is a graduate student in English at CSU, Chico and a former editor of Watershed.

WINDY WILLOWS LOVELL is a senior at CSU, Chico majoring in Child Development. She loves to work with children and plans to obtain an elementary credential.

CALIPH CARIBE MONGES is a young poet from Philadelphia who writes in the genre of urban rap artists and who has been published in the National Library of Poetry. He believes that poetry can express inner thoughts and feelings and can also be used as a tool for change.

AKIRA ORIKASA is a Graphic Design major from Kawasaki, Japan who hopes to have a career in the movie industry creating special effects.

SAMUEL PROVENZANO is presently enrolled in advanced writing courses at CSU, Chico.

SYDNEY ROGERS is a Public Relations major with a minor in Tourism. She says, "Travel is my passion and my hobby," and she likes to write about her travel experiences.

SHANNON ROONEY lives with her son, Austin, in Chico, where she writes for various publications.
SARA SIPES is the Photo Editor at the Chico News and Review and a 1990 graduate of CSU, Sacramento.

MARK STILWELL, a Speech Communications major whose first love is Forensics, also enjoys philosophy and spending time in nature. He has recently developed an interest in writing poetry.

GEOFF THOMAS is a Santa Cruz native, a poet, an artist, and a surveyor of simple beauties.

BRENT WALBURN is a senior at CSU, Chico who is studying English and Creative Writing. He plans to continue his study of creative writing at the graduate level.
Watershed was scanned in the office of Technology and Learning Programs at CSU, Chico. It is set in Futura and Palatino and designed by the editors and by Lightside Group. Layout is by Lightside Group. It was printed on 70#Sundance Natural at the CSU, Chico Print Shop.