

Sprinklers© issue 3.

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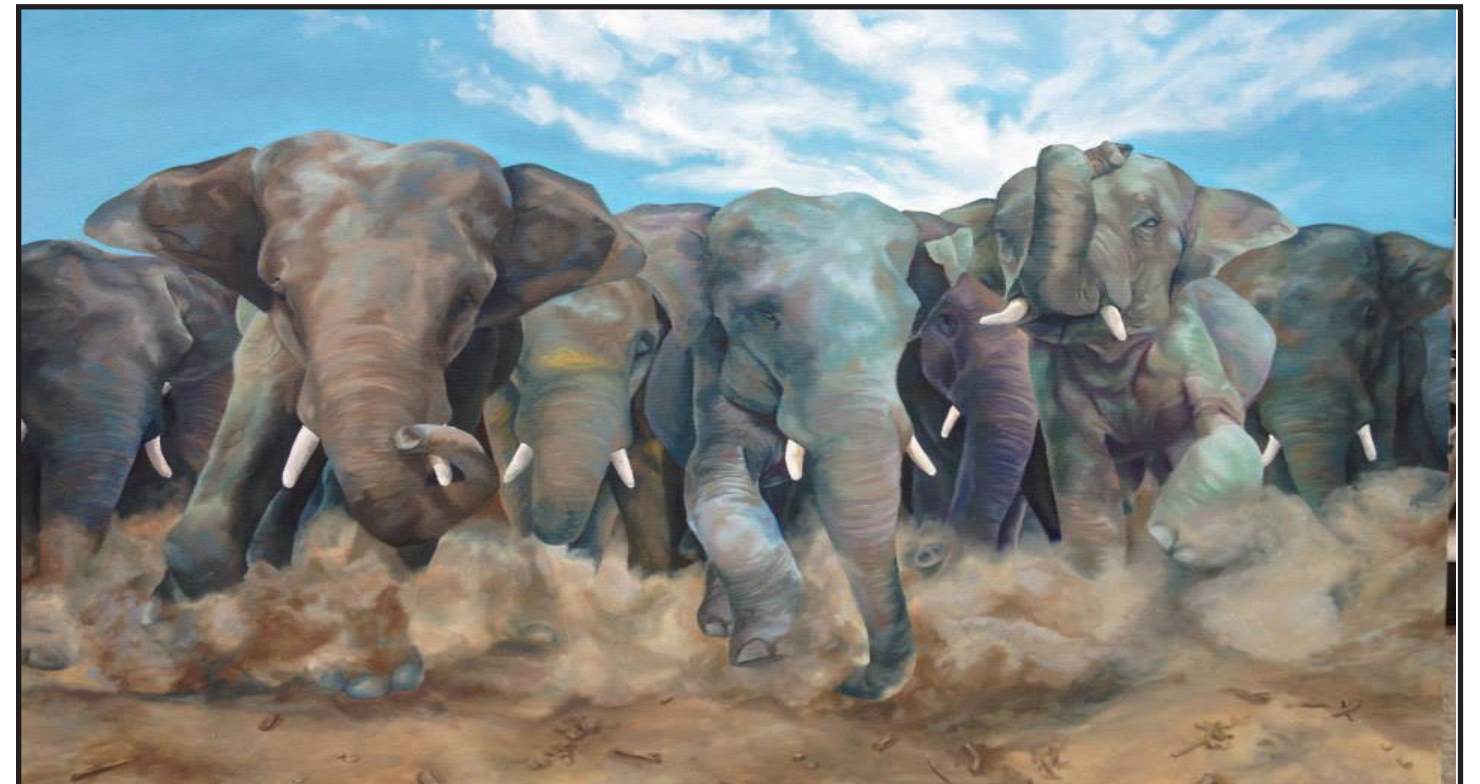


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* = not actual title but a 'reference' for the art piece.

Note from the Editor

Love lies at the root of art. This issue contains art that explores the notions of what it means to love in all forms, colors, and absurdities. Moreover, the artist reveals humanity at its most fundamental level--to love is to be human. These artists capture that humanity in words, and brush strokes. They bottle lovely moments like perfume and dab it behind your ears.

Lucas Khan,
New Assistant Editor

Night, An Alley

With each breath of your cigarette

*leaned against the bar door
in the alley a cat scrambles
a car passes on rain-slick streets,
and in your eyes, something,
something illuminated, fading,
something like moonlight bleeding
into street water, draining into sewers.
I can hear the churning, see the steam
rising from the man-holes like a secret
rising like tentacles of breath and smoke
rising like hell-fire under your eyes*

I am burning

Daniel Hurst

The Reinvention of September

On the third morning in September the sun rose and peeked its way through the sheer cream curtains of the front room. A light, cool breeze swept around the angles of the trailer. This morning was like every other, except it wasn't. The garden had been perfectly tended, the gate shut behind, the screen door left open to filter the morning air that crept in from the fields. The old man sat on the make-shift front porch in a wooden rocking chair, both built with his own rough, dirt-caked hands. A pair of black suspenders held up his brown slacks, a white tee shirt always tucked neatly, and a pair of ordinary black shoes, which had lost their luster, tapped a steady rhythm on the floor. The early morning sun made his bald, round head shine as though it had been covered with Johnson & Johnson baby oil. His brilliant green eyes maintained their gentle contentedness, but he knew it was time to leave. This would be the last time he was to stare out at the land he had worked so hard to sustain.

His wife and daughter stood along the front steps patiently as he rocked rhythmically in the creaking chair, whistling along with the birds. Finally, he stood ready. They walked together down the sandy driveway, and he eased himself into the passenger seat of a '78 Dodge Aspen. It was a long drive into town from Salem. The only voic-

es that fought back at the silence in the car belonged to Patsy, Conway, and Hank. They crossed the Thirteenth Street Bridge and then Broadway, cutting right through the middle of town. The trees that hung around the edges of the old shops and leaned over the road had all turned shades of orange and red. It looked like a world on fire. They passed a man wearing a sports coat, cane in hand, and waved casually. A group of young boys raced their bikes down the side walk, yelling and laughing. The oldest one in a blue baseball cap lagged behind, coasting along with no hands and sipping on a glass bottle coke as he smiled and seemed to toast the old man. He absorbed everything: colors, sounds, and smells. It was a leisurely drive to the hospital – he probably insisted upon it.

The Medical Center probably doesn't look the same as it did that day. A lot of things have changed in the past 33 years – places gone out of business, new roads and highways, no more mom and pop stores. Whatever they passed that morning, whatever they saw, it's all gone now, for the most part. Mostly, it's what I've invented, stories I've told myself so often that they've become the reality of that day. I would imagine they entered from Talbotton Road, one of the main roads in the area. Perhaps, it was more likely that they took a side road to avoid traffic, like 10th avenue or 18th street. They pulled into the emergency entrance and the sturdy old man walked himself through the front door and laid

down on a gurney, exhausted.

Out of his sixty years, the last five had been spent suffering through the stages of ALS. He had worked himself to the bone, the way a farmer with a 6th grade education normally does. He had the calloused hands and tanned, leathery skin to prove it. He had provided. He had done his best and then some, and now he was tired. They took him to the third floor of the hospital. The overbearing white walls of room 321 were made to glow by the sun that lapped in through the small, open window. He rested, with an easy smile on his face. The old man never left that room. Two and half hours after his arrival, he died. But the important thing is that he lived. His name was Edward Brooks. He was my grandfather.

He had a hard life, this I know for certain, but he was a lucky man. My grandfather was one of twenty-one children, and one of the five that survived to adulthood. He was two days too old to be drafted in World War Two. To this day, if you go to the Early County courthouse, the very last file in the back of the cabinet belongs to him because they had to overlook his papers. He lost the farm he grew up

on because everyone else had left for the war and there was no one to help keep it running. Through all the hardships he faced, the poverty and loss, he always came out on the other side. He married Elene, my grandmother, in 1940 and together they had five children. My mother was the youngest, born twelve years after her sister. I will never know why such luck was granted to him, but I do know that my existence depended on it.

The past is something that we are given artistic license to change, to make better, to make worse, to make livable. It is something that only lives in stories and old, dusty, yellowing photo albums. I have no memories of my grandfather, except for the ones I invent for myself and visit over and over again. He was the greatest man I've never known. What truth I do know of him, I've heard my whole life in recollections from my mother, her sister, and her brothers. He died eleven years before I was born. He wanted to wait for me, but he couldn't. He was strong and hard working. He was an ox. He was hot-tempered and forgiving. He was generous and kind. He would have loved me.

Lindsey Mathis



Give Them Nonsense

Constantinople was Istanbul one day, and vice versa, yet the paperclips came and hanged the paperclips – it was a wedge of balls and sockets. Eyebrows are more attractive than nose hairs, yet picture frames blind deaf noses. Puppies run, babe, let's just watch television. I told you that we weren't on the level yet, that illustrious plane where you can poop with the door open. We're just not there yet. Perhaps next month I'll be more comfortable with your anal cavity and distinct smells and sounds, but babe, just not today. Today I want to play video games with my friends, where we can fart and not mind because that's just what boys do.

Lightbulb goes off, dirty towels, clean towels, wipe the broken dresser socket like a toolkit, real slow like. Floral arranger, spell out those ink cartridges and set them up all nice. Let the black spill out across the tapestry, dribble some pecan pie atop creaky floorboards and sneak across the granite countertop until you meet me with the lipstick while you fix your fake eyelashes like a mannequin. Give me that foundation, not the foundation holding up your humble abode but rather you one you plaster your face with. Nelly did hood things with his friends, just like 50 Cent went to the roller derby before spiraling out in propellant watched by girls with bruises. Bathroom stalls, my favourite place to dirty up. Locker, lock her up in the dirty bathroom stall. Go to

court, carve yourself on the picnic bench with your
senior superlatives, paint the mural with Mexico and
eat goldfish one fish two fish red fish fuck fish.

Swim in the high tide so the comedian sharks can stand
up with the audience and later sit on the barstool at the
club and fight tabs. Nonsensical testicles drape above
the windowpane, syntactical deployments reign into
horses mouths. Dance on that table like a filthy hooker,
because the ATM just fed me multiple ones, ones who
kangarooed across the barby eating shrimp on sticks
and yes, I'll take the check.

Justin Rizzi

Thinking of a Beautiful Dead Poet

Sweat and graphite and green.
I love summer
And the mud which sticks to my feet.
I can't help thinking
About Yu XuanJi
Lying naked next to the river
One thousand years ago
With her piles of poems
And cups of wine.
I wish she were here now
To recite the words
My ears wouldn't understand
But my eyes and heart would devour
Like the sun devours our bodies
And like time devours all in its path
Keeping us from ever meeting
And pushing us ever more irreparably apart.

Dean Marais

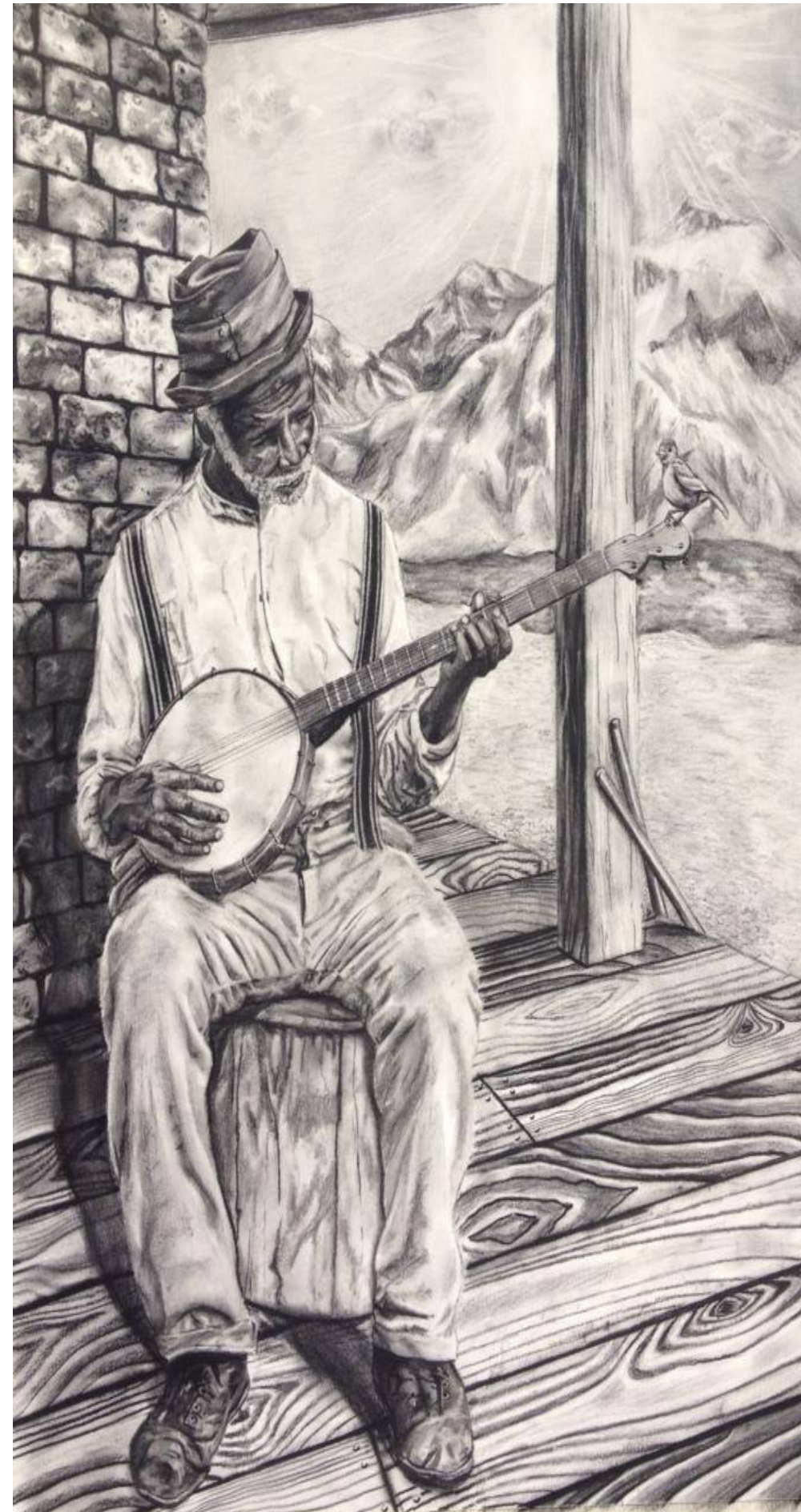
Untitled

Tell me why, Lothario,
When you saw sitting alone,
Just nibbling baby carrots,
Harmless as a rabbit,

That long-armed woman
You've wanted to know,
For three weeks now,
Beyond banalities,

Why did you pass
With your eyes to the floor
And not even banalities
Passing your lips?

Blake Estep



Autobiography:

"I like to write poetry because I like the way words sound when you put them together in different combinations. I've been published in Georgia State University's The Underground, and am trying to find the drive to write while working at a desk job."

-Daniel Hurst

"23, currently lives in Columbus, Georgia. She attends Columbus State University where she is pursuing an MEd in English and Secondary Education."

-Lindsey Mathis

"Art is my life. Nothing makes me happier than others enjoying my creations."

-Breze Art

Please check out facebook.com/brezeart for more art work and handmade jewelry!

"A current Masters student studying International Policy at the University of Georgia. However, once in a while I like to write more than policy papers."

-Justin Rizzi

"Dean Marais is a student at Georgia State University. Reading and writing poetry is essential to his soul. He finds inspiration from God, his river, his love, and all the dead poets he has fallen in love with over time. "

-Dean Marais

"Blake Estep is a dog food salesman with clinical depression."

-Blake Estep