n°8

letter from the poetry editors

THE POETRY WITHIN THESE PAGES

is diverse, containing a range of voices varying in age, tone, experience, and background. What culminates from their coming together is a truly unique collection of poetry, imagined and created by those living in the South Sound area.

We realize our publication only scratches the surface of South Sound’s varied and seasoned poetic voices, techniques, and styles, but we hope it scratches the surface in a way that intrigues, inspires, and encourages the continuation of new writing. As Rainer Maria Rilke says in Letters to a Young Poet,

“write about your sorrows, your wishes, your passing thoughts, your belief in anything beautiful.”

The publication you have in your hands took an excessive amount of coffee and many all-nighters to create, but we couldn’t be more proud.

We owe great thanks to every individual that helped in the creation of this issue, mostly to our brave and talented submitters. Your words are our inspiration—we can only hope we have done them justice.

Thank you South Sound,
Your poetry editors at WRIST

Ava Williams and Crys Ignatowski

SELECTION PROCESS We received over 250 poems, and in order to avoid bias, the judging process was completely blind. We dearly regret having to limit the number of poems we could publish, but fortunately, WRIST publishes year-round on a monthly basis. (Please submit!) JUDGES Tammy Robacker, Maria Gudaitis, Crys Ignatowski, Ava Williams

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Cold
Beverly Fosharaki

I’m left out when the mind is memory,
In the cold.

his warmth has moved on and I'm left out
in the cold.

When the Mind is Memory
Lauren Plitkins

When the mind is memory, the tongue thinks
sea coral, scuffed ship, hot macadam—the taste
of truth and utility
as limestone rocks slice folds of brain.

When mind is memory, hair thins along the crown
ghost scalp stretches taut
hair thins along the crown
When mind is memory, breath owns an ear
each time dry lips scratch my lobes.

When mind is memory, your hulking body is a flat expanse
of rotting desert, drained and gutted
your hulking body is a flat expanse
When mind is memory, the tongue thinks
sea coral, scuttled ship,
the tongue thinks
When the mind is memory,

laughed for the lined face.

When the mind is memory,

folds of brain.

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skin laughs for the lined face.

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THE KEEPER
Alex Newman

I collect people
like I collect books—
sorted, stacked
by genre alphabetized
by author cordoned in care-printed cards
pearl-skinned, pretty ones
worn and wise ones
yellowed, aged ones
beautiful and broken ones.

But souls are more slippery—
they inhale
and leap from the shelf edge—
a suicidal plunge
or mayhap decay
pages melting away
against vice or will
to dusty death

Why won't you let me keep you?

Kevin Miller

Missing Jim Crabtree

Kevin Miller

Grab, that shy smile curbed its way across your face
and the stars you had for eyes glistered like the Waterford goblets
Mother left us, she
and you too, Jimmy, left us stranded and dumb, muddling
in the kitchen with hand cut glassware stemmed, and when
the willow leaves have fallen
and a rare winter sun sneaks its flat line into the kitchen
to bounce off this crystal,
I hold what remains—
the way you said, Hey, Mills, the mistakes I made, the deep
cut of your death lined in newsprint
in a vanished Seattle paper.

Diner

Allen Braden

London. 1940. Overhead, bombers in formation
herd clouds before them like a cattle guard.

But this is Tacoma. Present day. The air
is only a fleet of geese flummoxed
by pulp mill exhaust navigating above us.

Beginning With a Line From Dafydd ap Gwilym

Aiden Braden

for Kevin Miller

Until honey comes from stones
instead of steam from wet cobblestones between downpours in Old Town,
our lives will unravel on their own.

Yes, even the innocent revel in trouble. Seamus, for one, with his fire engine
bashing the squad car until naptime.

Dreams of sirens, flames, unlikely rescue.

Though Cammie breaks apart entwined
bulbs then tucks in one after another
from one book after another
where you just rototilled and mulched.

Though bumblebees on lavender-bloom
fumble at piddles of pollen to dream up nectar. Sure, try to imagine that golden
shimmer in hied dark somewhere nearby: the light
will blossom into cascades of lazy honey.

Maybe, as we’ve been told, the power to create
does outshine the succulent power to destroy.

Which, would you say, rules body, rules spirit?

Author-ized Alterations

Carl Palmer

not actually how it may have happened
but maybe how I wish it had occurred or could come about if ever
that circumstance should emerge again

as an author I am able to alter any event
change outcomes and answers
make it different and do it all over again
when or wherever by use of written words
perhaps hoping you'll read what I wrote
believe that it really did happen that way
possibly change more than just the story
maybe change how I get along with you

I cut myself from your organs
When memory is memory,

his warmth has moved on and I'm left out
in the cold.

Bathroom floor.

When mind is memory,

as a flat expanse

cold.

I'm left out in the cold.

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The Dane at 72
Richard Lovering

The question’s still the same and so’s the rub But years have worn away the novelty; When north of sixty, natural cause takes all Despite the actual fact: a hollowpoint Expanding through the throat, an overdraught Of valium in your drink, a jump, a rope Your friends – all who remain – may mourn But no one is aflame with indignation That you missed your chance, none desperate to unfold Your once subjunctive fate And truthfully, outrageous fortune’s left You’re not shocked now, your heart no longer aches Love’s a well worn too small coat And even melancholy with its sinusoidal curve No longer is the roller coaster car To pierce the fools who dared get in your way You once rode with your bodkin pointing out No longer is the roller coaster car And even melancholy with its sinusoidal curve No longer is the roller coaster car To pierce the fools who dared get in your way You once rode with your bodkin pointing out

ROWBOAT
Phil Kennedy

I wonder how we would ever get back home if the continents hadn’t separated
– Henrik & Malta, Scorpios

Without glacier disappeared in mid-scour at the last possible moment, the yellow boat could not have floated there at all so suddenly on such ultramarine.

Excepting the comet, the invisible thrust could never vanish, spiraling out of sound in the deep forest above the barnacle beach discovering distant cries of geese.

Unless worlds collide, no silver moon against dark matter glides her way, drawing up her tidal veil, adorned with jewel herring spark, across the black and brimming bay.

Save for this restless drifting froth of water, rocky earth and air, no orca hammered plosive breath of water, rocky earth and air, no orca hammering plosive breath, adored with jewel herring spark, across the black and brimming bay.

One-line Haiku Back to My Son’s Visit
Carmen Sterba

scent of snow
fr needles stick to my jeans
son’s visit

On the Eighth Day
Dave Warner

the spiritually bulimic
scurry around God’s zoo

the faith in their
fragile umbrellas hopeless
against angels plummeting
from a torn sky

haïku
on hemorrhaged streets
clowning with feathers

faces frozen
in nascent belief
imploring

Who whispered Apocalypse
to the horses?

Dear Doctor and Mrs. Wiggenbottom:

Thank you so much for the party! I hope all your guests had their fun – I know that young Julie DuBois did. When she bedded your underaged son. I’m sorry that I broke your glasses, and that vase that your Aunt sent from France, (With his bevy of busty young beauties Or it was until Randy arrived – With his bevy of busty young beauties) And that vase that your Aunt sent from France, And I’m sure Jim and I were such asses: And that vase that your Aunt sent from France.

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Dave Warner

As he shaves, in the steely light that cuts the dusk, he wonders How deep should I go? Trafficutters, siners bully, neighbors throw sweaty moans against the wall.

I’m sorry that I broke your glasses, and that vase that your Aunt sent from France, And I’m sure Jim and I were such asses: And that vase that your Aunt sent from France. (With his bevy of busty young beauties Or it was until Randy arrived – With his bevy of busty young beauties) And that vase that your Aunt sent from France, And I’m sure Jim and I were such asses: And that vase that your Aunt sent from France.

How deep should I go? Trafficutters, siners bully, neighbors throw sweaty moans against the wall.

Oily rainbows circle beneath streetlamps, storm drains gag down the drags of another day.

He thrusts an umbrella into the black and blue others ignore by dreaming.

MORNING
Tyler Yoder

I woke hungover, half past one, The sky is a lovely grey - I grinned into my cigarette, And rose to greet the day. For I was young, and newly poor, I suffered for my art: Like every poet ever born, I had a broken heart, And all my friends were gathered there With coffee, and despair, Perhaps a touch of lunacy, The greying of our hair, And I set out with paper, pen, To nail the world down, To transmute my troubled life To pleasant, written, sound.

The Man who Couldn’t See Through Rain
Dave Warner

The spiritually bulimic
scurry around God’s zoo

the faith in their
fragile umbrellas hopeless
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The Thrall
Elizabeth Back

The victory lies in
Not letting your palms sweat
Sometimes that’s all the triumph
That is needed
And sometimes even that is insurmountable
Better to see white crescents in
The skin
Where fingers have tattooed their nervous desperation
Than to admit such a biological defeat
To appear weak
While in that final moment of measure
When we are judged in a manner so devastating
It can only be called love
When all it would take is
ONE. shaky. step.
backward
To lose everything.

Severs’ Sonnet
William Turndorff

Am I like the path trampled underfoot
Able to hear the truth but not receive
Or the dirt in which the seeds take to root
Where no devil is able to deceive.

Am I like rock who hears but will not mold
Where what I hear will vanish in testing
Or with a patient heart do I grab hold
Bearing fruit and joy in honest resting
But could I be the worldly thorn that grows
Choking the word on cares and causing strife
Or does my heart take what the sower sows
Humbly sharing the joys of fruitful life.

Time passes and the morning dawn draws near
Come sun come rain for I have ears to hear

PEDESTRIAN UNIVERSE
Gerry Sperry

Little paint-drops drip accidental stars on my dark shoes.
Let them dry.

These are my star walkin’’ shoes!
My planet-hopping wingtips,
Casualtized constellations,
My Boots boot!

Stellar spectral splashes falling,
Up from creations loaded brush,
Bound with loopy cometary orbits,
In floppy double-fed ellipses.

Can you move the Milky Way?
I can, I do when I get down on rhythms,
in my star-dancing shoes.

I can take the whole of time and space,
In my stride,
At my pace.

If I wiggle my toes.
Heaven knows.

How big is the universe?
About two feet.

POETRY
Jeff Richardson

Poetry is like a secret spot high in the mountains
The kind of place you come across once and keep going
back to in your mind
It’s hard to reach
It’s never quite what you expected
It’s cold and rainy and your face is always wet
Bloodthirsty creatures swarming your exposed skin
Half the time you can’t see what you’re looking for and every
time you go
there you wonder why you bothered
Your stomach growls but you’re too tired to cook
You think about reading but you’ve read all your books
You’d like to have a friend
But it’s better here alone
And when you’re done
You don’t want to go home

Because all the same troubles are waiting for you there
The dog needs feeding
Your girlfriend needs attention
Your parents are saying you don’t visit enough
And all you can think is how you reached it
How you touched the moonlight sun
How you swam in streams of freedom
And all through the trees the birds are singing
Their high and lonesome call.

HER PINK COAT
Susan Ratzliff

There’s a pink coat
hanging in my closet
next to the rest of the coats
that I hardly wear.
It hangs there, lonely.
A gift from her
my friend, that’s gone now.
I used to carry a half written poem
in the pocket
now that’s gone too.
It’s strange sometimes
to open the door
and see it there, her.
I can still hear her calling my name.
I think it’s made out of rabbit hair
I don’t much care about that though
even though it itches my neck.
I love it —
because it was hers
and now it’s mine
and it reminds me of a time
when things were much different.
I was young and looking for love
and she was always searching
for something she could never find.
Now I am married with children
and she is gone.
She was found
hanging
from a pipe in the basement.
Her life, gone —
by her own hands.
And I am here without her
wearing her coat.

THE EARTH MOVED
Douglas Dodge

The earth moved... last night
The world shaking and crumbling around us
And I gazed down at you amid that passionate turmoil
Interpreting the rivers of thoughts that
pool into the blue-green of your eyes
Which fail to douse your fiery passion, or quench my thirst for you
My fingers tracing your body like brand
Telling me how to touch you
Painting a Picasso on your skin
And you listen to the lexis of love that
my tongue outlines up your neck to your lips
Praying over and over that the earth never stops moving...
I am holding hands I cannot hold, lips I will never again kiss. A hip bone, a rib?

The dull weight of it all. You. You voyaged through hot white fire, back into my hands. Your body never as white as these bits of bone, teeth, ash. This is not you. You were never a burden.

My fingers peel back the lid, a grotty white ghost in a plain tan box. The absurdity of an archeologist becoming artifact. I carry you from room to room, where will I put you? If I trip, would I vacuum? Or even worse, mop, sending sacred bits of you swirling down the drain?

Later, I drop handfuls of you into the sea, mouths of mollusks and silver minnows will never appreciate the pleasures you gave. I save a small portion of you.

A tiny wooden box nestles deep in my lingerie drawer. There in the dark, I imagine bits of white knitting themselves back into your smile, your teeth beaming like stars. In the dark, I imagine bits of wine and yourself, bits of bone, teeth, ash. I save a small portion of you.

I save a small portion of you. will never appreciate the pleasures you gave.

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The Warm Spot
Sally McClintock

The phone call. “Mother died.”
I rush up the hill to my mother’s bedside, stand beside her cooling body.
I close her jaw. It falls open.
I close it again and discover a warm spot on her neck, a spot of lingering heat, a mother-spot that winter has not reached.

I ponder how she made me out of this body which has just died – yet her neck still warm
and I have found it, and felt it, and my spirit lightens.

OUTLINE

Marjorie Rommel

the old woman’s daughter lost many years ago — now the war over
perhaps only in caesura, the daughter still lost, a broken son home again, at least for now —
the mongol child taken at birth, abandoned, the mother betrayed, the child betrayed …
The problem here is fragmentation isolation, brokenness gathered in again
the crazy son — his grieving mother holds him together chanting the names of things isolation betrayal broken glass in an alleyway fragments arranged in delicate arcs at one end of a magnet
the puzzle stone cracked — its shards reshaped pressed together again again… chanting the names of things all the names …

Typo
Tina Burley

Seemed like nothing at the time
A miscue, an error, a typo
An accidental f replacing the p
Two shifts passing in the night

The smallest error, the largest repercussions
One miscue, one error, one typo
A little f when better judgment said p
Wrong companionship causing relationship

Feet of clay do not type accurately
Even pedicured toes trow wrongly
Sometimes a f mistakenly replaces the p
But to hide it? That’s just censorship.

Voices of the City
Antonio Edwards Jr.

There are many voices in the city
However, these are the not so preferred voices that we hear
You know the ones that we fear
That buzz around our ear like an annoying fly Whose cries often go unheard…Ignored
Their songs carry no melody through the air; only stench
One such voice full of grunt, mumbles and moans of disappointment yells into society’s deaf ear
Mr. Heany, a man who carried the weight of world on his six foot three inch frame causing him to walk hunched over and downcast
His hair probably once blond like Norway now dark and matted.
A dwelling place for lice, leaves and discarded things Tobacco stained lips bordered by a mucus filled mustache

The Pilings
Jennifer Chushoff

It’s Friday night
and Katie Down’s heroic humming
rumbles over thick-planked floors tumbling to the sea below
mixing with the ancient echoes.
The sea remembers when
docks draped around the Bay like a busy necklace, but now scattered pilings lean
and kneel to fate, sprouting weeds and Coromarths.
The wood has been retired,
born from time and berthing ships.

Briny hulls once chanted their hides, engraving scars and raking splinters as they delivered goods.

Still, the pilings stand, as stubborn as Greek columns, their prehistoric tar winking in the heat, costing sticky, inaccurate blood reminders of an early age and industry when people coursed their docks, beating busy rhythms with their leather, hobnailed boots.

Here, Washington’s wheat was scattered to the world in grain sacks slung on shoulders. Asia’s tea arrived in dark, carved chests. Just to keep the pace, sawmills buzzed throughout the night pelting fresh-cut lumber.

Today, the rivers’ mouth now opens on a gallery of trade where men hoist rickcarts with machines from ship to road and rail. In intermodal yards container cranes lug 20 foot-long boxes filled with Chinese goods. Somewhere just below whales in rubber-ribs still pursue the seals while seals pursue their salmon: Coho, Sockeye and Chinook.

Restaurants dotting Ruston Way watch out their windows, guarding tired timbers where new ships cut the Bay sending sheets of water underneath their hungry hordes.

I’m thankful for their old and steady bones as I take another bite.
The Young Summer

David Mucklow

This summer we smoked and drank a lot, sharing stories of nights past, making sayings that we carried with us the rest of that year.

Cigarettes shared on back porches meant more than the stories that went along with them, and the drink concoctions we made were steps toward alcoholic tendencies. We found our way home, carousing the night 'til the sun came up, sharing six am beers before we slept until three.

The young summer was more important than the future.

Now, back at school, we act like there's more to life, like there's a future that we are living for, a dream that is fabricating and unfolding that we are living for, act like there's more to life, when we know we could show up in our studies and extra-curricular activities.

The Young Summer

Kellie Richardson

We tight knit like fish scales
Segmented with intention
Brused by devotion,
Happy to be hurt
joined by soft taupe hooks
And fleshy pearls.
We are earth on foot
Pretty clay angels
Wings tucked away
in our pocketbooks.
with Doublenem and perfume.
You damn skippy
we still powder before we lotion
Wear slips on Sunday
eat fish with spaghetti
and keep the oil in a jar next to the stove.
We let it ride to the pit of low,
and hustle back before
the hot water runs out,
and trepidation leave us high and dry.

Sidewalks

Kellie Richardson

These sidewalks don't lie
 cuz they don't have to
No embellishments necessary
The truth is richer than the Ruston well-to-do
My sidewalks make concrete a red carpet.
This is where we roll deep,
love hard like gangbusters,
like fruit fresh off the vine,
like we were never hurt.
These sidewalks are weathered and worn
from the footsteps of city soldiers and prisoners
of this long fought war;
they have cracked under the weight of regret
rippled open like defeated samurais
and some have up and left,
To become part of the structures they once despised,
tailin in line with short sighted high rises
and crocked, shiny expansions of a stranger's fantasy
To survive. What else would you have them do?
We are soaked in the sweet and sordid.
Relief comes and goes
with rehabs and festivals,
campaign trails and media fed movements
but the real grace is in the sediment,
the rubble and dust of the people
that walk these streets.
The grit ain't no eyesore.
it is the life blood of me.

I love the pulse of my nature,
yielding me to this doomed paradise
'til I turn to russet dust.
The Cat at Keys and Virginia Woolf
Tad Monroe

Just a few feet from the entrance and to the left
the large gray cat lies curled in a round
of purring warmth.

While outside another species of gray
stretches out over the city’s collective mood
with a ratting chill.

The cat’s eyes squint lazily open
with a subtle flash of familiar recognition.
As he says to me,
Hello my pony pastor poet,
What inspiration do you seek today?

The smell is musty,
like northwest concrete and old glue.
The soil and air of America
has attached itself to the pages of every book
in the store.

I wear my usual path,
towards the usual suspects;
through Percy, O’Connor, and Green
Make a quick stop at Fitzgerald and Maugham
and vere rearward for a look
at the poets and philosophers.
Cautiously optimistic of finding
an early edition or hardback glory.

With nothing to declare
I pass the old cat on the way to the exit.
With his eyes closed he says,
who’s afraid of Virginia Woolf?,
and points his tail towards
the Lighthouse.

Picking up the book I think,
why should anyone be afraid of her?

As I thumb through the book I think to myself,
how well I’ve developed from
too many cigarettes.

The whitest moon shines through a tiny
Depression glass window
and speckled the tops of your barely freckled cheeks
with pale light.

The wisps of hair falling out of your bun looked like the tails
that sprout from a bulb of garlic.

Standing on silk scarves, our knees knocked, and I pulled you
a little closer, and you stood
a little taller.

I looked at the sheet of black lashes shielding
your pretentious eyes
as your
beet smeared lips
barely
 touched my mouth
as all restraint gave way to frantic frantic frantic kisses—
I skipped, falling backward, pulling you down with me onto
musty coats and dresses piled
in the depths of your closet.

Fresh-picked Herbs
Taylor Goulaud

A squirrel breathing dismally is visible from our kitchen
nook.
The lace that blurs the window conceals hairless places on
his body.
I fumble with the cast iron pan of seething rosemary pota-
toes.
Their scent hangs in the air.

The aroma of my frolicking fingers is discreet.
I look out again.

Past the table of dirty cloth napkins, watercolors, cold
orange tomatoes, and empty coffee cups—
the squirrel is pulling his crippled body to a better dying
place.

PASSOVER
Sandy King

Carry me—
Carry me over the threshold.
Rise me up;
Let me out.
Get me through.

Alone, me—
By myself, I keep on falling;
Helplessly,
On my own--
Without hope...
And the blood on the doorframe is real,
From impatient attempts to run outside.

Solemnized, can I be peaceful and remember
That the one who holds my future doesn’t lie.

Clumsy me--
Hurt myself again—so weary of...
Aching head,
Broken heart;
I need you—

Carry me—
Carry me through to tomorrow.
Wake me up.
Bring me out.
Help me move.

And the blood on the doorframe is real
From some reckless attempt at solo flight.
I know cursing at these wounds won’t speed their healing,
As I wonder if I will ever be alright.

Yet the blood on the doorstep is real;
Meant only to stay there for the night.
So trustworthily I find this revelation:
Deliverance requires more than my might.
Carry me.

Flowers
James Rodgers

In so many poems
our lives are compared
to that of flowers,
of poppies, violets and roses,
or the seasons of a garden,
and as I get older,
this thought worries me
as I can’t remember
when I might have bloomed.

Adulterers
Alaya Darnov

HE
I wrote you a letter here it is
Edited by cousins and aunts
Trusted into the care of bees
Were these years or months
Of dreams of dread but listen
At night still hear you whisper kiss it
Your body scolded soul of mine
The room the bed the nosy angels
In other life you were a bride
A kin of friend of total strangers
Still if you ever weary listen
Stop by we’ll have some gin or whiskey

I lie I steal I run red lights
And dim the sun and food the valley
Frequent the baths get into fights
Don’t think of you I’m drunk and jolly
But should the fucker hurt you listen
Just call alright I’ll kick his face in

SHE
He bantered the suburban night
Comparing stars to pop-corn
Littering theater floor,

Moon to jaw-breaker; I smiled
Suggesting we get wine
At the all night suburban corner store.

Drinking he went on you see
There really isn’t much to dying,
Like going through car wash

It is to no small degree
Clockwork of off beat wet dream
Confusing frightening and plush

I smiled, he lit a cigarette
From out gently parked
Cruiser not really interested cops

Studied us, one tried other fat
I thought I heard the sun
Breathing it in he noted darkness rusts
So how are you going to pull this off?” Joshua asks right when his interview comes to a close, right when I thought I was in the clear. He knew. I was busted. Joshua knew I was going to feature him in the upcoming issue. The April issue. The one that was going to be distributed throughout all of South Sound. The one for National Poetry Month. The one that would contain poetry, and only poetry. That one. Joshua just published a 245-page novel. Why feature him in the poetry issue then? Because Joshua just published a damn good 245-page novel. I think that’s all the reason I need.

If you must have another reason though, Joshua’s writing has some quality poetic style. He doesn’t quite call it that, but that’s okay. Instead, he calls his writing Tacoma-centric. “This is where I’m from,” he says. “I knew my book had to be placed here.” The word here for Joshua encompasses basically everywhere, I find out; he’s been in the area his whole life. He was born in Bremerton, grew up in the Key Peninsula, spent his high school years in various parts of the East side of Tacoma, spent a few years farther North in Seattle, has family in Gig Harbor, and still finds enjoyment in further exploration and travel.

It makes perfect sense, why The Tacoma P.I. Junkies is set here. So what is the book about? “Real life,” he says. “I mean, it’s a novel, so there’s suspension to this belief, but that’s more just for the story. The book is really just about the working class of Tacoma and their day to day life which for these characters is getting high and going to work and talking about whatever is going on.” I’m intrigued, so I flip through the book. My eyes skim over familiar names of local bars and close-by destinations. It’s obvious Joshua appreciates Tacoma and draws inspiration from the city. “Tacoma has a lot of history and it is more real than a lot of cities.” Joshua gives me a quick history lesson and educates me on Tacoma’s changes and improvements, such as the addition of more public works and more developments, the availability of more money in schools, and the resurgence in the arts community. Changes like these have made Tacoma an incredibly livable city. When I bring up Tacoma’s ‘bad reputation’ he tells me that this is just a common misconception, and that actually, he’s glad for this because it keeps Tacoma, well, Tacoma. “The grittiness of the city will continue to scare people away.”

From our 45-minute interview, I can tell Joshua keeps Tacoma, Tacoma, a skill I’m sure he learned to do in one of his many careers. He’s worked as a loan officer, a gift-wrapper, a rental truck driver, a telemarketer, a cab driver, a courier, and even worked as Santa Claus. For the last ten years though, Joshua has worked as a sailor. He travels to Alaska every other month and works his job from there. Though he says this is hard because he has to leave his wife and son, it makes him happy to return to the city every other month. I imagine Tacoma is just as happy with his return, and I’m sure it welcomes him home with its familiar gray, gritty smile.
I you have ever looked at a map and have seen the water as a blue world framed by patches of khaki and taupe—then you might understand where I’m coming from. A map, like poetry, can hold a number of meanings in its “margins.” Reading in between the lines, the “negative space” of a map–river, sea, ocean, blank, blue canvas—can look entirely different with a changed perspective.

Looking at a map of South Sound in this way, the blue stands out clearly, while the wheat and khaki-colored masses marking “land” fade into the background. The longer I look, the more the blue water seems to be central to the map, until it is all I see. And in a way this makes sense, since we are by name defined by the water surrounding us, South Sound.

And that fluid term that defines and unites us. South Sound.

is all I see. And in a way this makes sense, since “land” fade into the blue stands out clearly, while the wheat and khaki-colored masses marking “land” fade into the background.

Looking at a map of South Sound in this way, the blue canvas–river, sea, ocean, blank, blue canvas—can look entirely different with a changed perspective.

What I see is this: two figures, facing each other. One is telling a story, the other is leaning in. They look like ents, or wizards, and regardless of my appreciation for Mr. Tolkien’s work, there is something definitely mystical about the two.

Perched on a branch to the right, a strange vulture-type bird listens in.

Even upside down I see things. An alligator, a vulture-type bird listens in. Even upside down I see things. An alligator, a vulture-type bird listens in.

But what strikes me is that my first reaction when I saw the image was “storytelling”. How fitting! Perhaps it isn’t a stretch at all, then, to claim that we South Sounders really are natural storytellers?

Yes, this is silly. And yes, it is quite likely that not all of you will agree with me. But that is what makes this map, the Sound, and the people that belong to it, so wonderful. This beautiful range in perspective. It can be seen on the streets and throughout the pages of this issue. The varying backgrounds, the topics, the word choice: it is something almost, dare I say, topographical?

So the next time you see a map, a body of water, a person walking down the street, or the Lord of the Rings, think of the storytelling ents. Or, for that matter, think of your own storytelling. You will only make the Sound richer by sharing your perspective.

DIANNE AVEY | ANDERSON ISLAND was born and raised in the South Sound area, currently residing on an Anderson Island, where her Swedish immigrant ancestors settled in the late 1800’s. She works as a nurse practitioner and writes poetry as often as she can between raising her son, washing the dog, long walks, and trying to learn the fiddle (not necessarily in that order). She is working on a manuscript of poetry of grief and recovery after the death of her husband in 2006.

ELIZABETH BECK | GIG HARBOR, WA is a former nocturnal creature most often found in the Pacific Northwest Region of North America, namely Gig Harbor. Naturally at home in her habitat of dark-furred forests and rainy streets lined with coffee shops, she can be seen hosting local WAKES (Writer At 90’s End) meet-ups. Her work has been captured by the Harbor History Museum, Washington State History Museum, and Underneath the Juniper Tree. She might also be glimpsed sneaking abroad ghastly tall ships to write macabre poems and evil unicorn stories. Approach with caution.

ALLEN BRADEN | LAKESWOOD, WA is the author of A Whiff of Dew and Drips of Blood (University of Georgia) and Eagle in the Passive Voice (University of Alaska/Fairbanks). He has read his poetry on KPFK, Pacifica Radio in Los Angeles and KUOW, National Public Radio in Seattle. His grandfather grew up in Tacoma and his great-grandfather helped establish what’s now called the Old Tacoma Cemetery. He is an instructor at Tacoma Community College.

TITUS BURLEY | TACOMA, WA is a seasoned novelist, poet, playwright, and now blogger.

JENNIFER CHUSHCOFF | TACOMA, WA writes fiction, and nonfiction, and poetry. Her poems have appeared in television, in an art gallery, in anthologies, in a limited edition letterpress print and in the award-winning pop-up book, Stowforaces.

LEAH COAKLEY | TACOMA, WA is proud to live, work, and learn in Tacoma. Washington with her sweetheart and her dog. Her primary interests are her MEd in Counseling program, social justice and feminism, books, vegan cooking but mainly eating, muggle studies, naps, and travel. Her poems have been featured in Antithesis Review, In Tacoma’s Shadow, Phrasings, and Phoebe. He has received the Jeanna Lohrmann Poetry Prize and the Anonymous Bosch Poetry Award and has been a finalist for several other awards. Brain has worked inside countless dark theaters as an actor, director, and playwright. And, once upon a time, he was a large, silent bird. Now he prefers the simplicity of walking towards light-filled horizons.

DOUGLAS DODGE | TACOMA, WA is forty-two years old and has been in the US Army for twenty-two years. He is the father of three children, and currently works on JBLM.

ANTONIO EDWARDS JR | TACOMA, WA is known as the people’s poet. He was named Tacoma’s Poet Laureate in 2009. He writes about his life in ways which resonate with audiences of all ages, races and cultures. As Poet Laureate, historically an appointment given to literary poets, Antonio made history in The City of Destiny as the few spoken word artist to receive the prestigious title. Antonio has been writing and performing for over fifteen years providing listeners with personal, powerful and entertaining poetry, adding his unique style and insight to local issues, our human legacy, and matters of faith. Focusing on performance poetry, his spoken word pieces are charged with rhyme, rhythm, images, and language. His verbal assaults that refuse to sit on paper.

VALENCIA ESKELIN | PUYLUP, WA was raised, and still currently lives, in Puyallup, but hopes to migrate to Tacoma to be closer to her job. She works for an adult-league sports company and has her own dodgeball team. She started writing poetry and creative fiction when she took a writing class for fun. Some of her poetry is a reflection of the last few years of her life, and serves as a way to work out what’s happening in her life and to find beauty, truth or just release from everything.
BEVERLY FESHRARI | TACOMA, WA
has taught writing to elementary students and has served as an Instructional Facilitator, Mentor, Presenter and Literacy Coach for teachers. Bev is a reader, writer, golfer, grandma and friend. She is a member of the Puget Sound Workshop at Katherine Place in Tacoma and the Merrill Ranch Community in Florence, Arizona. She works out in both communities, not often enough and watches Indy films, primarily for the popcorn.

TAYLOR GOULLAUD | TACOMA, WA
Taylor茅d out lives in the North end of Tacoma. She attends the University of Puget Sound and is majoring in Psychology and minoring in English. Originally from San Diego, CA, her first attempts at writing poetry were not up to her standards, but since the creative writing classes in college have given her the tools she needed to make writing a habit. From this, she has produced work that she feels genuinely expresses her character and is the style that fits her personality. Taylor plans to continue developing this style.

PHIL KENNEDY | TACOMA, WA
is a carpenter. He studied Latin in high school, poetry under Nelson Barnett at the UW, and has also been influenced by Emily Dickinson, Robert Frost, William Blake, Robert Burns, and William Wordsworth. He has written a book of poetry since he could compose a sentence on paper. He especially loves reading poetry, as it is capable of transporting us to both foreign and familiar places within a few short lines. Nancy is also a painter of abstract landscapes. She works as a locomotive engineer on the tides flats and looks forward to retiring soon to pursue an MFA degree through the low-residency program at Pacific Lutheran University.

KELLIE RICHARDSON | TACOMA, WA
is a senior graduating from the University of Puget Sound this spring, where she writes under the wing of poetry professor Hans Ostrom. Kellie has been published in many literary magazines and has read poems throughout the state. She has been nominated for the Pushcart Prize in poetry, grew up in Puget Sound and is majoring in Psychology. She currently lives in University Place, as well as others. Her work has been featured as part of local art and cultural activities, in City Arts magazine, and in the anthology in Tahoma’s Shadow. He has been a journalist and has written for The Puget Sound Bulletin, the Haiku Society of America from 2005-06 and the 1st vice President in 2009, she received a bachelor’s in english and creative non-fiction. He co-founded the City of Tacoma’s Poet Laureate Program, the City of Destiny Film and Film Series, and The Druyan Telescope: Live Storytelling. He writes poetry, memoir, and creative non-fiction. He has been published in several manuscripts, including Tahoma Anthology for poetry, In Tahoma Shad- ow: The Old Town Poems, in 2009.

KEVIN MILLER | TACOMA, WA

TAD MONROE | TACOMA, WA
has lived and worked in Tacoma since 2000, when he began attending Pacific Lutheran University, receiving a BA in History and Communications, and an MFA in Poetry. He is a writer of the 253 and is writing as the Ecu- menical and Multifaith Campus Minister at Seattle University. He worked in Tacoma’s hilltop and downtown neighborhoods for fourteen years as a pastor of two local parishes, as a com- munity organizer and volunteer, and a non-profit leader. Tad also holds a Masters of Divinity degree from Fuller Theological semi- nary. He co-founded the City of Tacoma Poet Laureate Program, the City of Destiny Film and Film Series, and The Druyan Telescope: Live Storytelling. Tad writes poetry, memoir, and creative non-fiction. He has been published in several manuscripts, including Tahoma Anthology for poetry, In Tahoma Shad- ow: The Old Town Poems, in 2009.

SALLY CARRIGHAR | TACOMA, WA
is a member of the Puget Sound Workshop at Katherine Place in Tacoma and the Merrill Ranch Community in Florence, Arizona. She works out in both communities, not often enough and watches Indy films, primarily for the popcorn.

JEFF RICHARDSON | TACOMA, WA
also known as El Jefe, Tacoma is a letter- writer and typesetter. He is a wannabe basketball coach, a wannabe haiku poet, a wannabe hiking guide, a math tutor, a singer/songwriter, and the lead organizer for The Free Word Associa- tion, a network of artists dedicated to mak- ing Tacoma a world-class city for the arts. He is a 2007 graduate of the Rainier Writing Workshop at Pacific Lutheran University and is the co-founder of The Northwest Renaissance, Poet- ry, Proctor and Pushcart prize winner. He is an Epsa Literary Foundation Resident in Poetry in 2000, and was awarded the Stallenges White Bridge Traveling Fellowship to residence in the South Sound.

LAUREN PUTKINS | TACOMA, WA
received a bachelor’s in English and Creative Writing in 2010 through the University of St. Thomas in Houston, TX. Lauren is currently pursuing an MFA degree through the low-resi- dency program at Pacific Lutheran University.

IDA POBEREZOVSKY | TACOMA, WA
is a senior graduating from the University of Puget Sound this spring, where she writes under the wing of poetry professor Hans Ostrom.

NANCY MCLAUGHLIN | TACOMA, WA
has written poetry since her school days in the 1970s and is majoring in Psychology and has served as an Instructional Facilita- tor, Mentor, Presenter and Literacy Coach for teachers. Bev is a reader, writer, golfer, grandma and friend. She is a member of the Puget Sound Workshop at Katherine Place in Tacoma and the Merrill Ranch Community in Florence, Arizona. She works out in both communities, not often enough and watches Indy films, primarily for the popcorn.

PHIL KENNEDY | TACOMA, WA
is a carpenter. He studied Latin in high school, poetry under Nelson Barnett at the UW, and has also been influenced by Emily Dickinson, Robert Frost, William Blake, Robert Burns, and William Wordsworth. He has written a book of poetry since he could compose a sentence on paper. He especially loves reading poetry, as it is capable of transporting us to both foreign and familiar places within a few short lines. Nancy is also a painter of abstract landscapes. She works as a locomotive engineer on the tides flats and looks forward to retiring soon to pursue an MFA degree through the low-residency program at Pacific Lutheran University.

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is a senior graduating from the University of Puget Sound this spring, where she writes under the wing of poetry professor Hans Ostrom.

SUSAN RATCLIFFE | SOUTH SOUND, WA
is a life-long Tacoma resident and gradu- ate of University of Washington Tacoma’s communication program. She currently works as the Senior University Director at Rainier Writer’s Workshop at Pacific Lutheran University. She is currently pursuing an MFA degree through the low-residency program at Pacific Lutheran University.

LAUREN PUTKINS | TACOMA, WA
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DAVE WARNER | MILTON, WA

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Christopher Arthur, founder.

CHRISTOPHER ARTHUR | FOUNDER, GRAPHIC DESIGNER, AND PUBLISHER

is a graphic designer, photographer and publisher hailing from Seattle. Now residing in Tacoma after living abroad in Montreal, NYC, and Provence while operating a variety of free publications, art collectives and design troupes. Christopher is quoted as saying he is, “not a work-a-holic, rather in desperate avoidance of creative bordom.” Christopher is also co-sponsored by Adbusters. His favorite publications are co-ops between Juxtapose and Adbusters. He distributes his creative habits to industries ranging from fashion, retail and service industry type businesses and hopes to one day cook a perfect risotto.

CRYS IGNATOWSKI | ASSOCIATE PUBLISHER AND CO-EDITOR

is an aspiring poet and cartoonist. She is interested in documenting people and hopes to someday complete a New York Times Sunday crossword puzzle. She minored in documenting people and hopes to someday complete a New York Times Sunday crossword puzzle. She is interested in documenting people and hopes to someday complete a New York Times Sunday crossword puzzle.

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TATIANA MASON | LITERARY AGENT AND EVENT CO-ORGANIZER

is an undercover super nerd. When she is not leveling her Pokemon, watching anime, or saving Hyrule, she likes to volunteer at different non-profit organizations around Tacoma. She loves flowers, Arizona iced tea, the color red and making the world a better place. She enjoys being an independent black woman who don’t need no man (though she’s open to suggestions). Her power level is over 9000.

MARIA CHONG-GUDAITIS | GUEST JUDGE

is a Korean-Lithuanian essayist, poet and designer who lives south of Tacoma. In 2012, Maria published a limited-edition, local National Poetry Month anthology and served as a News Tribune reader columnist. She also co-organized the Hope For Hard Times local reading at the Washington State History Museum, and was a featured reader at Tacoma’s First Night. A professional copywriter and graphic designer for two decades, Maria edited two books and wrote the foreword to Drip Dot Swirl. Her essays and poetry appear regularly at her blog, mariaugaitis.com.

TAMMY ROBACKER | GUEST JUDGE


POET B IOS (continued)

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THE TEAM

WRIST

JACKIE GABELLA | EDITOR

is known as a mother, writer, editor and also a self-professed Tacoma enthusiast. What does this mean exactly? She’s a creative culture enthusiast who encourages others to explore the enchanting journeys this Girl City hides under its perceived rough exterior. Her professional career includes contributions to Patch.com, City Arts Magazine, Wrist Magazine and The Weekly Volcano not to mention acting as Executive Director of the North Tacoma Branch of Peace Out and Co-Producer of Art Bus tours. She’s rarely seen without a pen or camera in hand and she’s slightly obsessed with bourbon cocktails as well as her newfound love of baking.

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APRIL SUPPORT

As a self-funded publication, WRIST is extremely grateful to the readers and writers who took time to contribute their works and thoughts of support in the many emails we recieved this month. Such support is what makes WRIST a worthwhile venture.

WRIST would also like to express thanks to Tammy Robacker and Maria Gudaitis for helping get the word out about the April issue along with contributing to the judgement process.

GUEST JUDGES

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