

The Messenger

Volume 1999

Issue 1 *The Messenger*, 1999

Article 1

1999

The Messenger, 1999

Follow this and additional works at: <http://scholarship.richmond.edu/messenger>

 Part of the [Fiction Commons](#), [Fine Arts Commons](#), [Photography Commons](#), and the [Poetry Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

(1999) "The Messenger, 1999," *The Messenger*: Vol. 1999 : Iss. 1 , Article 1.

Available at: <http://scholarship.richmond.edu/messenger/vol1999/iss1/1>

This Complete Issue is brought to you for free and open access by UR Scholarship Repository. It has been accepted for inclusion in The Messenger by an authorized editor of UR Scholarship Repository. For more information, please contact scholarshiprepository@richmond.edu.



TABLE OF CONTRIBUTORS // MESSENGER 999

1	KEITH CUNNINGHAM	SHARON BRICKER	BETH THOMAS
2	TOM WILLIAMS	CHRISTOPHER ROBLEY	PERRY MADDOX
3	GREG GUIFFRIDA	BETH THOMAS	GREG GUIFFRIDA
4	DANIEL BIEGELSON	ANONYMOUS	LAURA NAZIMEK
5	TIM HOSPODAR	DAVID STANIUS	CRAIG BROMLEY
6	JASON GACCIONE	SHARON BRICKER	DARBY ERBAUGH
7	JASON GACCIONE	PINK	JOE MAGLIARO
8	SHARON BRICKER	KRISTI SIBLEY	DAVID STANIUS
9	GLENNON KARR	ANONYMOUS	CARRIE KENADY
10	JAMES MACCOURTAIN	CHRISTOPHER ROBLEY	CHRISTOPHER HOBDA
11	JOE MAGLIARO	SHARON BRICKER	PINK
12		BETH THOMAS	KRISTI SIBLEY
13		GREG GUIFFRIDA	BRETT A. MORGAN
14		LAURA NAZIMEK	JOE MAGLIARO
15		CRAIG BROMLEY	DAVID SHRIMP
16		DARBY ERBAUGH	BLYTHE KING
17		JOE MAGLIARO	SHARON BRICKER
18		DAVID STANIUS	BETH THOMAS
19		CARRIE KENADY	CARRIE KENADY
20		CHRISTOPHER HOBDA	
21		PINK	
22		KRISTI SIBLEY	



LAURA NAZIMEK (ACQUIESCE)

*Those old, old fingers
posed anciently over the piano
as if you had been a musical pharaoh
and we buried your whole scene beneath the earth.*

*But life still ticks and tocks,
seeping through your leathery collapsed veins
and I find myself strangely fixated
with your persistence to press upon
those stuck and yellowed keys.*

*Suddenly your hands remind me
of the scaly toes of a stubborn bird-
madly clawing at a branch which is
far too smooth and broad to ever grasp.
Scratching and wailing downward into classic redundancy*

*Your fingernails are stale
and poke insistently out from your bones
tapping slowly against the keys
as if the song you compose
is really an exercise in breathing.*

*I stare,
but am horrified by the plucking.*

KEITH CUNNINGHAM (CLASSIC)

(Nominated, staff art award, for above and shield on back cover)





SHARON BRICKER}{JOSEPH

*Joseph got away. He never was
The type to stay, too enigmatic and too scared
To leave a number or note,
Lest he change his heart and turn around.*

*Joseph lived alone. He used to pause
Before the phone to let it ring an extra time,
To weigh the risk of being real
With the need to find what love he could.*

*Joseph disappeared. I guess I knew
When his head had cleared that he would have to move again,
To steer his thoughts from all the things
That would break him down and make him live.*

BETH THOMAS}{UNTITLED



TOM WILLIAMS}{SUMMER IN A SOUTHERN CITY

*It's nice stepping outside
To the sound of sirens,
Sometimes, when the summer
Air has shifted a few seasons
To spring planetary dust
To gather before a normal mirage
Of marigold's making sun-split sutras
To the wind--In back alleys
Between boards
And cars parked eternally.*

CHRISTOPHER ROBLEY}{EPIPHANY

*The entire Christian Narrative
out in front of me on the board,
illustrating to the class
a critic's course for interpreting King Lear.*

*Creation- Lucifer's fall- Man's fall- Christ-
Salvation- Judgement- Eternity...*

*My eyes move right, along the line.
I thought of:*

*Sunday school at age six- Vacation Bible School at nine-
believer's baptism at twelve- bible study Monday nights...*

*A cough came from the back of the room.
The church bells rang noon from the chapel.
A chalk eraser moved across the chronology,
first clouding it,
then gone.*



PERRY MADDOX {ALBANIAN DREAMS
(Winner, Margaret Haley Carpenter Prize for Poetry)

*Long after independent assortment had
set the deck of fate, a worker among millions
slices the skin of a finger on the rotor of an
un-oiled assembly device, jammed from neglect.*

*Long after random fertilization had
determined the cold reality of things,
a drop of black blood falls on the dry steel,
causing it to slide back into place and run again.*

*Long after the crossing over of money from
dead uncle to newly rich nephew, a young man
awakes in a penthouse to a throbbing thumb
but sees no use in it and returns to sleep.*



TIM HOSPODAR {THE EXCHANGE
(Nominated, staff art award)



GREG GUIFFRIDA {NY
AFTERNOON

His torn Nike canvas sneakers slipped on a patch of oil in the street. One knee bumped the asphalt, but no one saw. He continued his stride and pretended he did it on purpose, like an impromptu dance step. He walked past a shiny hot dog cart and nodded to the large bearded man slumped over it. The sun burned through the umbrella above and glistened on the man's forehead.

"Hot enough for ya?" the vendor asked, hoping to sell one more warm soda before retreating indoors.

He smiled sympathetically and continued walking. Four more blocks to go. Beads trickled down his forehead, creeping out of his thick curly hair. He was ten minutes late, and she was impatient.

Maybe she'll wait, he thought. Maybe not.

He couldn't even think of running. He was too weak to step onto the curb, much less run. Besides, his shoes would probably fall apart. The blue swoosh hung by its tail, slapping the sidewalk. The laces trailed behind. He would have bought a new pair, but he needed the gas money to get to the city.

He had called her a week ago, hopes soaring. She sounded tired when she picked up the phone, and more tired when she heard who it was. Her voice was quiet, the words hesitant, as if she was about to yawn at every break. After one minute he regretted calling her, even though he had spent months convincing himself he needed to. They chatted. She didn't care, he tried to sound like he didn't. He told her he was coming to town next week and he'd love to see her. How's Wednesday?

Another yawn almost crept out. She knew she needed an excuse, but something kept her from finding one. She heard the words come out, but they were far away, echoing. Wednesday's fine. Where?

Capri Blu. One o'clock.

He always did this. She sipped from the bottle of San Pelligrino on the white tablecloth. Her finger traced the wet circle that the bottle left. It was a cool morning so she had asked for a table outside. She regretted it as the afternoon sun climbed. Her long hair draped over her back. Her shoulders were shaded, but her body cooked underneath the blanket. The smell of her conditioner sat in the air.

Oh, Jesus. He still has those shoes. She was disgusted for a minute, then she remembered Florida. He stuffed his wallet and keys before they went swimming. With her eyes wrenched shut from the glare, she could see it. His plaid bathing suit, the empty wine coolers. The water was warm and dirty. She kept falling out of her bikini.



He saw her smirk. She was sitting back in the wicker chair watching through the tables on the patio. He bumped into a waiter and ignored his dirty look. He tried to read her eyes behind the blue sunglasses, but couldn't. She sat there, revealing nothing. Her cheeks were red from the sun.

He got to the table and paused, half-expecting her to stand up and hug him. She didn't. With a tired shrug he collapsed into the chair, grabbing a cloth napkin to wipe the sweat off his face. He realized that he looked like shit, especially to a beautiful blonde in a small sundress, who had better things to do.

She sat there, waiting for him to say something. A few pregnant moments passed as his mind raced. He had never put much thought into what he would actually say to her. She watched flakes scatter to the ground when he scratched the side of his head. She sat there, waiting. Uncomfortable silences made her comfortable.

He sat up and opened his mouth, but only let out a quiet sigh. He felt powerless as she tossed the last splash of water in her mouth and picked up her purse. The chair creaked sadly as she stood up, looking down at him.

The sunlight blazed from her white dress, which draped over her breasts and flowed onto the table. She looked down at the dirty, unshaven face squinting up at her. He felt his stomach twist with the urge to grab her shoulders, push her back into the seat, and scream out every dream he had about her for the past three years. Florida, Maymont, the Flagship motel. His fingers clenched the armrest.

But she left. She walked right past him, sticking a soft hand out to brush a curl off of his forehead. The hem of her skirt swept his arm. He listened to her heels click away from him, boiling in the draft of her perfume.

He couldn't turn around to watch her walk away. The chair held him prisoner, the sun beat him. He stared at all that was left. A lipstick-smearred empty bottle of water, a wrinkled napkin.





ANONYMOUS}{TRAIN#99 (WAS-RIC)

*Metal tube we travel on,
petals we unravel on,
shiny like a pistol
click
click
(numb)
the train tracks slap,
the windows hum.*

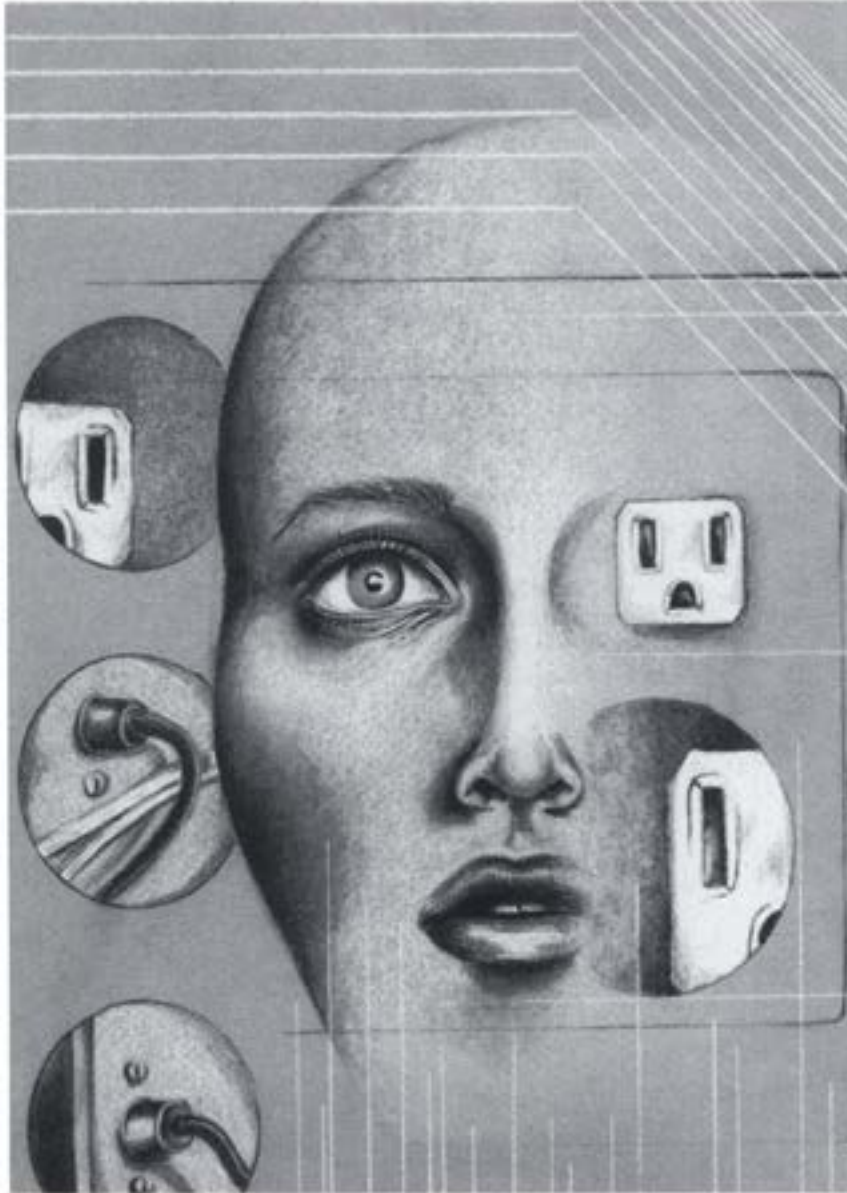
*Metal tube we travel on,
petals we unravel on,
hollow like a bullet
ping
ping
(bloom)
my ticket's punched,
my flesh exhumed. . .*

*Metal tube we travel on,
petals we unravel on,
antsy like a vacuum
woo
woo
(shot)
I lift the seat
to fill the pot. . .*

*Pissing,
missing,
I hit the spot.*

BETH THOMAS}{UNTITLED





LAURA NAZIMEK{AT THAT SHE IS CALLED
(Nominated, Margaret Haley Carpenter Prize for Poetry)

*Grape jelly is smeared across her wide face
as she greedily grabs at my beloved papers.
My thoughts and privacy are at once crushed up
against her soft flesh.
And they stick there like feathers all around her indulgent mouth.
One by one, she tears off the dates and the names and the pictures
of my most precious dreams
and stamps them harshly with a smoldering iron.
With mad laughter and cruel indifference
she stuffs them all into a used envelope
and tosses it into the deep pocket of her coat.
Her balding head and her blackened teeth hobble off into the sunset
where she finally sits beneath a sappy tree and thumbs through
my stained journals.
Unimaginable colors and sounds swirl from her breath
as she pastes stars and seeds and flower petals all over my words.
With a grubby pencil in her hands she sighs and coughs
until the dwindling moonlight is a mere stub of wax and no longer burns.*

*And so I wake from the unrest to meet her again.
She is coated in the syrup of the woods and grass of the fields.
My papers smell like the exotic indulgence of a sweet tooth
and I am nearly sickened.
I pay her, and she gives me change from her musty purse.
She stares at me as if I am the changing weather,
and sways mysteriously to some distant music.
There is a familiarity in her milky skin and wide feet.
I am intrigued by her crystal eyes, and yet frightened by
her extravagance.
I remember myself.
I clutch my papers and run from the madness
of late night crumbs and ashes.
There couldn't be one as horrible as she.
And yet she has read my words,
Written them as if imagination.*

CRAIG BROMLEY{UNTITLED







DARBY ERBAUGH } MY MIND'S BEAUTY

*A wise prophet once said
Your clothes conceal much of your beauty;
Yet they hide not the unbeautiful.
And though you may seek in garments the freedom of privacy
You may find in them a harness and chain.
Upon hearing these words falling into me
I place these pearls of wisdom around my neck
For all the world to see.*

*For now,
In the summer of my life I want to never forget
That the earth delights to feel my bare feet and
The wind longs to play with my hair
And my skin longs to feel the salty water from the sea
And the sun wants to let me strip down and
Be the natural me.*

*For when I am truly alive
I am not hiding myself in the shadows
Of capes and cloaks
Or getting lost in a hall of mirrors
That show life's greatest illusion
But shining through transparent glass
So the world can view my mind's beauty.*

*Why choke ourselves with rubies and pearls
When the true crown that we wear comes from within?
I cannot hide my ugliness though I wear a silver ring
But I refuse to silence the beauty
That truly wants to sing.*

*And if the future calls for true beauty
And my ugliness wants to mend,
I must remember that the breath of life is in the sunlight
And the hand of life is in the wind.*

JOE MAGLIARO } HOME



DAVID STANIUS | SMITH

"Wake up, wake up, wake up, wake up."

The young man rolled onto his left side the better to address his youngest brother, age two. Bleary-eyed and shaggy-headed, a bum in a suburban bed, he squinted in the toddlers general direction, opened his mouth, raised his arms, cradled his head and began:

"Smith, we have to talk about this morning deal. You understand, of course, that by no means am I to be woken up before noon on Saturday. Every other day this is acceptable, so I understand you confusion, but, Smith, seriously, after all this time, don't you think a reasonably intelligent individual like yourself would have figured the situation out? In many countries, Malaysia for instance, it is a capital offense to wake the head of the house before noon on Saturday. Capital! That means I would have the right to hack your little two-year-old head off! Now isn't that silly?"

Smith jumped on top of his elder's knees, giggling, and threw his favorite bottle at the sleeper's nose.

*"Owl Smith!
Come back here!"*

But Smith was gone, rolling down the hallway to his room, half running, half crawling. The toddler's shrill demon giggle bounced off the walls like a thousand bad checks. His elder stumbled out of the chocolate-soaked bedroom, over the piles of porn magazines, dirty clothes, newspapers (USA Today) and old boxes of chicken nuggets, bringing to earth with a crash a grotesque ceramic Buddha. The prince landed on his big right toe, but the hunter ignored the sound and the sharp shooting pain suddenly radiating up from his foot, seeking only Smith.

"Ya liquid eatin' slimy faced blob, ya'd better bring that pampers-wearin' dirty behind back here!"

Smith slammed his bedroom door, and, emitting a series of devilish giggles, ran to his closet, opened the door, and hid under a pile of comforters and board games. His brother followed perhaps too close to the young one, for he ran headlong into the just-closed door, his Neanderthal forehead meeting the wood with a sound knock.

"Owl Smith! You're gonna get it now!"

Big brother opened the door and stepped on a broken lego robot. Again the sharp pain, again the yelling and swearing. Smith laughed riotously beneath his hibernatory mound, like a frog under the creek bed out of the snake's sight. The elder sat down on Smith's bed (a small mattress placed indelicately and asymmetrically in the middle of the floor) and addressed the closet door:

"Well, Smith. It appears you have no respect for authority. You have violated my ordinances innumerable times. No punishment has changed you patterns of behavior, which, I might add, become more immoral by the month. Why, only last week such tomfoolery as this would have never crossed your mind. Yet now it is a common Saturday morning pursuit. I don't understand you, Smith. Tell me what's wrong. What have I done?"



Inside, Smith snickered.

"Is it because mom isn't around? Is it preschool, Smith? Do you not like the other children? Is it the dog around the corner who uproots daffodils and sniffs crotches? Does not being able to eat lots of solid food do this to you? Have you started doing drugs? Are you in that two-year-old gang, Smith?"

Baby Smith laughed a juicy laugh, shook his cubbyhole, and kicked the door three times.

"Hm. I see. Another outburst of violence. I'm disappointed in you, Smith. So much potential wasted. You were born a fine young man, you know. Somehow it seems the demands of society are too great for you. Too heavy a burden. It's hard being without parents, isn't it Smith? You have me to look up to, of course."

"Ronald McDonald!!" exclaimed Smith from his cocoon, kicking the door open. Sadly, big brother had leaned his temple against the doorknob during his last diatribe, and the impact of the swinging door was enough to kill him without pain. Here

Here the writer may be permitted to note with total objectivity that this was no small feat for a two-year-old boy.

Child Smith stepped gingerly onto the floor of his small room in the back of the trailer. He looked down at the twitching body of his only brother, saw the single rivulet of blood rolling slowly down the side of his head. Gravity carried it into big brother's left eye, which was open and vacant like a stuffed bird's. Smith's tiny pinkish hand reached out to his brother. He touched his brother's shoulder and shook him, tiny sobs shaking his own body. One-o'clock sun streamed in through the dusty blinds. A board game left behind in the closet cocoon shifted and fell with a muted crash. Smith knelt down and stared hard into his brother's face and moaned his morning cry:

"Wake up, wake up, wake up, wake up!"



SHARON BRICKER}{GROWING JP

*She remembers the daughter who planted light bulbs
In hopes of raising a glowing silver maple
Before the storms of late summer.
The storms came and went, then
The autumn wind stripped the leaves from their places
And she grew up, longing
To hide herself in the midnight held in the arms of the trees,
To wrap herself in the black of the calf's side.
The snow fell quieter that winter
Than the year before. Every year, quieter.
When visitors came, their steps crunched harshly,
Startling, like a frightened partridge bursting through the still air.
When the front screen door stopped banging in its frame,
She listened to the calm, appraised her four walls,
And continued knitting the delicate lace curtains
She hung over her windows, layer upon layer.*



TIM HOSPODAR}{OCTOPUS TREE



CARRIE KENADY | ANTICIPATION

*white picket fences lined
across the bluegrass
if i were to touch my bare
toes to the salty earth,
would i feel your presence
and the way you would
laugh
into my collarbone?
new dawn and an early
matriarch
may connect us, so that
my toes do touch—
but until then, i pray for both
the sky
and your birthmark of
life, and most of all,
for your white
creamy stubborn
neck.*



CHRISTOPHER HOBDAY | UNTITLED



} the messenger {

PINK | WHERE HAVE ALL THE WIZARDS GONE

He leaned, forearms resting on the oak porch railing, a cigarette between his lips, his eyes trained on a horizon he couldn't see through the tendrils of smoke that crept into the starless night sky. The girl was asleep inside, she had drifted away when he had gotten up to take a shower, and despite his unending propensity for romanticism, he had not bothered to wake her and invite her to watch the moonlit ebb and flow of the sea beside him. The ocean whispered in his ears, a voice of peace rolling over shores of calamity.

"Dammit."

The sound of his own voice seemed almost painful as it floated away on the breeze and into nothingness, a nothingness that surrounded him like the fog that would settle on the beach in a matter of hours, just before the dawn. Yes, the sun would rise, but not for him. He would climb out of bed tomorrow, be fed breakfast by some girl that hoped he wouldn't walk away, and then he would do just that, walk away

into a darkness that the sun never seemed to penetrate from which he could not extract himself. It was all like some preposterous kids' show, the same miserable fucking plot every episode. Boy meets girl. Boy fucks girl. Boy leaves girl the next morning without leaving a number, only to fuck another pretty face forty-eight hours later. Such was the life of Boy, especially when She was five-hundred miles and ten cents a minute away, forgetting about a guy that would have given the world for Her.

"Why don't you come back to bed baby?"

He didn't bother turning around, he didn't feel like staring his reality in the face again, not when it was peaking from behind a sliding glass door, an invasion on this hour of self-reviling.

"Why don't you come in?"

"Because I'm a goddamn cliché."

"What?"

As if he could sit there and explain anything to this faceless ghost that shivered in the doorway behind him, as if he wanted to share this pain with anyone else.

"What did you say? You're muttering."

Damn sirens, maybe if they were really looking for Mr. Right they should stop taking their clothes off for every Mr. Wrong that smiled at them in a bar. What is a smile anyway? An invitation? A coy expression of interest? No, every smile that crossed his lips was a miserable plea for help, an anxious desire to be loved, an appeal to the wicked whims of fate.

"Why don't you just come back to bed?"

"Why don't you shut the fuck up."

The interstate receded beneath the tires of his '82 Mustang as he flicked the last fiery remnant of marijuana out the window and watched in the rear view mirror as the orange point of light fell to the asphalt behind him in an explosion of sparks. Nothing like a drive home at three in the morning to make you feel completely alone. The yellow dashes in the middle of the road began to blur together and soon he was the tin man soaring down the yellow brick road. Too bad no wizard could do shit for him right now. In a world like this, really good wizards were in short supply. The guy on the radio was reeling off the kind of unimportant garbage that guys on the radio spew forth at three



in the morning when the happy people of the world are asleep, and he popped in a tape that would make him cry. Crossing over the turnpike, he wondered what She would think of black and white police photos of a broken guard rail and shattered glass. He wondered if she would ever even hear.

Five in the morning and he was back in the dark, musty apartment, standing in front of an eight by eleven sketch pad once again, surrounded by crumpled and torn pages of paper. His pen coursed over the empty surface, etching portraits of diminutive, hollow figures whose limbs were frozen in positions of agonized movement. A single line for the torso, two lines for the legs and the erratic arms given life with two crooked strokes of the pen. The head was a thin circle, bereft of features, no curved mouth, no dotted eyes, just a pale, empty visage, faceless. No organs, no muscle, no stream of life running through the veinless lines, and all of them, all the figures stood frozen in perpetual movement, though none could tell which way they were going. Infinitely meaningless souls, empty linear corpses without hearts and faces of anonymity, namelessness, all contrasted with the wicked white

expanse on which their two-dimensional forms reclined.

He raised his pen from the whitescape and brushed his hair back from his dull, lightless eyes. Even the simplest of movements made his mind and body ache, made him wince at the mundanity of his existence, brought to his attention his own pathetic emptiness. Maybe things would be easier for him if he had an empty, colorless plane on which to dwell, where emotions never complicated things, maybe he could be just another stick figure and not feel so out of place. But instead, he was trapped in a great wide world of vibrant color and kinetic energy, a three-dimensional horror, seething with vivacity, motion, and soul, where an empty man could find himself lost and afraid. His pen traced another circle and carefully, precisely, etched the fine line that was the torso. This time the legs would be crooked, the shadow was kneeling on his knees, cast upon the white dirt, beside a white sea looking out to where a white horizon met the indiscernible waters, all tricks of the eyes, because there was nothing there. But the featureless twig didn't know this. He had no eyes with which to search for golden sands

or placid blue skies. He had no ears to hear the lapping of the salty waters on the beach or the calls of the gulls as they circled over a giant world. He had no nose to smell the brackish salty air or the faint scent of lovemaking wafting from far off on the sands, nor lips to taste that salt. He was emptiness in emptiness.

And he slowly drew the arms, held upward reaching to the sky and crying out for help, crying out for identity, for completion, but there were no fingers to stretch to the clouds.

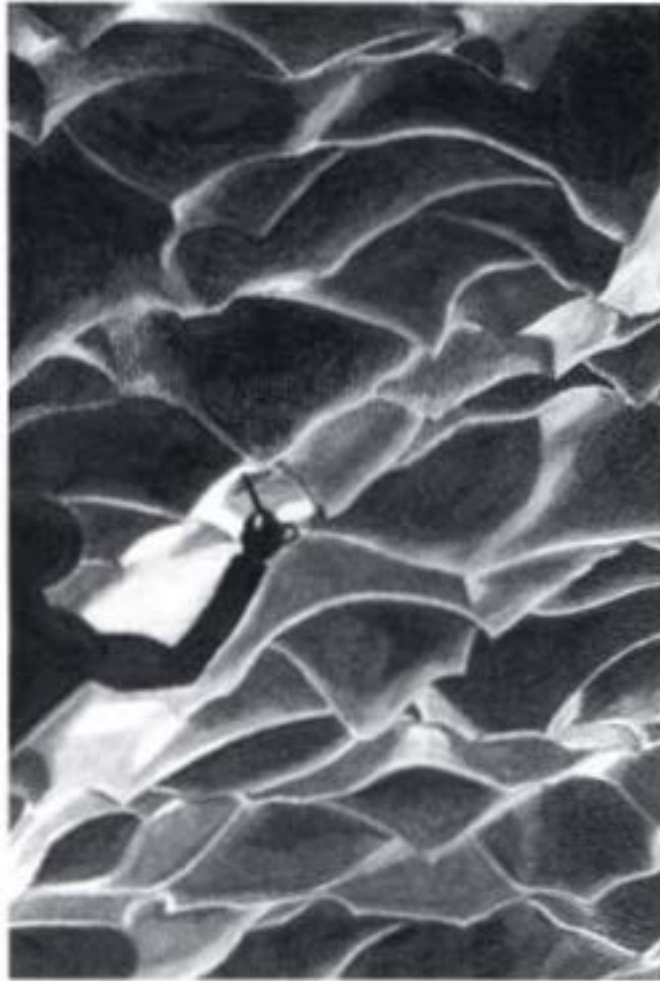
When she got the news that he had sucked gunpowder through seven inches of polished steel at six in the morning the next day, she called her boyfriend of three weeks and told him she couldn't see him anymore and locked herself in her room. The police delivered his parting message to her at four in the afternoon, scratched on an eight by ten page of drawing paper, surrounded by sketches of misery. She stared at the page without blinking until her mother asked her if she was ok.

"I loved him too, mom, I loved him and he never told me."



ANDREW PITTS} (AMNESIA

*Resplendent echoes
muted with the breaking day;
pastel hue, tarnished.*



JASON GACCIONE} (UNTITLED



} the] messenger [999 {

*Efforts to restore are in place
to bring back the chapel to splendiddness
to inject it
with breaths of life
to invigorate
the saints to sing
the gold to shine
the brush strokes to come alive.
One by one
the curators
sing their heavenly chants
as images of prophets
revive themselves
into the electrical symphony
of the ceiling.
Here the synthesis is flowing
blood given to art
loins removed from censored bodies
all waiting to be judged
in the humanly and heavenly sphere
as
each awakes
until
all resound in a full choral chant
every member set back to work
some scared
others hopeful
in sending the hideous to Hell and the righteous to Heaven
as efforts are renewed
and the mission reveals itself more glorious.*



ANONYMOUS}{THE RUG

*In the center
A fantastic fable
Of a rare red flower
Raging with reckless roar*

*Timid serpents
And daring dragons
Leisurely crawling
Licking its luscious leaves*

*Further out
Small creatures sipping
The seemingly Silent streams
Soaking in the surrounding colors*

*Floating from forgotten mountains
Facing the sunlight
Fading the colors*

*Around the edges
Repeating images
Of restless vines
Rising to reach
The forgotten mountains*

*Your fingers
Carelessly fold the feeble petals
Of the familiar flower
Teasing the serpent
Grieving the dragon*

*Your knees
Lie along the lonely stream
Blocking the light
That lures the colors*

*As your gaze gathers
Inside the gray pages
Of a book
Of geometry*



BRETT A. MORGAN | TONIGHT

The straps of your bra

*Cling tightly like hangman's ladders
that ride to a ship's side*

my only wish-

to climb aboard



JOE MAGLIARO | MOUNT VERNON, OHIO



} the messenger { 999 {

CHRISTOPHER ROBLEY | HUNTING IN ARCADIA WITH MY GRANDSON

*My hip hurts.
These old cold bones in autumn
and the pinching straps of thick rubber waders.*

Flannel shirts part the silent reeds.

*A mallard squawk above,
an oscillating V retreating
into the animated spread of evening.*

*One of my pained knees slides into the bottom muck.
Aiming position—hard fingers.
The bullet labors from the rusty barrel,
a sinking vessel
in a quick channel.*

*The splash of a mud bass in Sammy's hand.
No feathered splash in the reeds.
"Look Gramps! I got the fish!"
"Good eyes! Good boy! Though I missed."*

*Fat cheeks filling,
he blushes,
touches my hand, and tightens
himself to the rifle
to fire four times effortlessly.*

*Three birds drop against the enflamed sky
like flocked bombers
descending slowly to the burnt black
of stopped youth.*



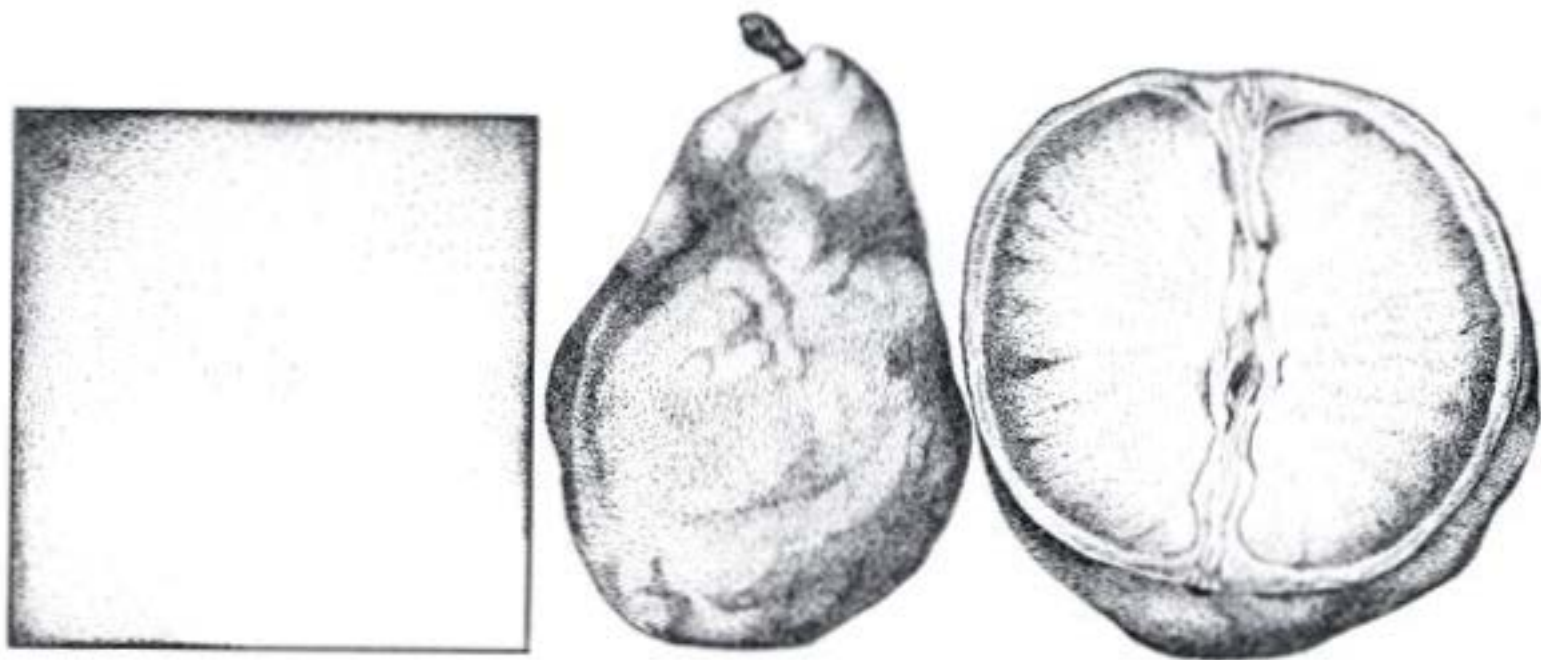
DAVID SHRIMP (IN THE TRADITION OF HAIKU)

AUTUMN

*The squirrels gather nuts
While I buy Planters in the
Supermarket aisles*

WINTER

*Once I slipped and fell
Into an icy river
I forgot that week*



BLYTHE KING (HOW ABOUT A BOX, PEAR, AND A GRAPEFRUIT)





BARRETT EMERICK}{UNTITLED

*To look upon the thing was to know it,
and in doing so I was terrified, for it was undeniable,
unchangeable,
it was.*

*For it was reality and
that made it everywhere
and in everything.*

*It was inescapable and to run from it was simply to forestall being overcome
It was immeasurable and to judge it was to fool your senses into fearful belief
It was full and brimming and thick with lung-filling
heart-stopping
mind-numbing
confidence in its certain and ever sure path toward finality.*

*Unquestionable and full of bitter caffeinated wind,
it shocks you into consciousness and forces you to look.
It is passion embodied
It is truth personified
It is as bright and sweet and acidic as a fully ripened orange.*

*Like the smoke from an ancient pipe
or the words of an eternal storyteller
It winds forward like a road
cutting through countryside; sometimes fragrant, sometimes barren.*

*And on that road travels possibility
and probability
and potential.*

*And on that road there are bumps
and there are brambles
and there are beasts that will tear and bite and impede.*

*And yet the road travels onward ever onward
and there is no choice whether to follow or not.*

JASON GACCIONE}{UNTITLED





SHARON BRICKER (LEAVING FRANKLINVILLE
(Nominated, Margaret Haley Carpenter Prize for Poetry)

"Can I help you?" she asked from behind the counter.
"Probably not," I said with my best dapper smile
And sighed as I put the tin of coffee and the
package of bolts in front of her.
She fixed on her polite smile. She was probably
thinking of the weather.
For the one-hundredth and twenty-first time
(or at least that many)
I almost begged for something different to happen:
A gun pointed at me! A tornado at my apartment!
The aliens have landed!
(Another sigh.)
There I was, with the pretty lawn ornament cashier,
wearing an old shirt.
And buying two things I really didn't
give a shit about.
"Honey, you know, I've changed my mind," I said,
and left the store carrying nothing.

BETH THOMAS (UNTITLED



GLENNON KARR {UNTITLED

if until then, when i don't know, i try to hold to my course, but the direction is blurred, like constant flash to anticipate the fall, such a shore, and such a shade of gray that casts the only light on Simon on board the shape, and so i stop feeling everything that was made to take the place, of the free time i find myself in still thirsty and so i'll drink, and so late that i'll take and sleep instead seems nice, but you've fulfilled your greatest fear, in repeat the same chain path that fear led you down the first time alone, the first time you see the world draw away from yourself, and the picture of you, the polaroid, standing alone among the seats of the last theater on the block, of old cars and parking lots, and trade your last chance back for two pennies and the cab fare home, where the TV turns off every night after a half hour has timed your wakeup call, in the box with the alarm that runs forever seemingly on batteries, in anticipation of the repetition, and expectations of everything you don't yet know.



SHARON BRICKER {LUNCHTIME IN BERLIN



CARRIE KENADY | VOWEL SONG
*(An imitation of Rimbaud's **Voyelles**)*

a

*is an overblown bicycle wheel
fat and laughing as it
rolls onto its back
like a spinning purple plum*

e

*is a pretty girl's shrill as she
steps out of the shower, naked,
realizing her audience is much
larger than she anticipated*

i

*is a proud hot air balloon
rising straight into the blue sky
he waves hello to the tiny
midgets on the tapestry below*

o

*is a blazing ring of fire,
its full-blown cries both
lost and found in the
same sweet orange breath*

u

*is an underground hideaway
its doors are open to the mystery
of life beyond, "if you
find it and it begins to flirt*



JAMES MACCARTAIN | SCHIZOPHRENIA-- WELCOME TO HILLBILLY HEAVEN

*Come and join me in Hillbilly Heaven
I haven't been there for so long.
There's broken glass and hairy grass
And silent fears but never tears.*

*Come and join me in Hillbilly Heaven
Where the rain never shines.
There's midnight stars and foreign cars
And dragon treats but never sweets.*

*Come and join me in Hillbilly Heaven
Cause I can't take the pain.
There's gutless knives and cheating wives
And crooked cops but never mops.*



JOE MAGLIARO | HULGATE, NJ
(Winner of the staff art award)



CREDITS | MESSENGER 999

EDITOR

Tom Williams

ASSISTANT EDITORS

Blythe King

Joe Magliaro

STAFF

Dave Culley

Laura Nazimek

Andrew Chiacchierini

Beth Thomas

Saadia Iqbal

Daniel Biegelsen

Katherine Foret

Tiffany Pender

Irene Arce

Carrie Kenady

ADVISOR

Dr. Joe Essid

UNIVERSITY FACULTY

Dr. Stephen Adliss

Dr. Dona Hickey

Dr. Angela Ball

THANKS

All students who submitted pieces for consideration

GRACIOUS CONTRIBUTIONS

*The University of Richmond Student Government Associations of:
Richmond College, Westhampton College & E. Clairborne Robins School of Business
Margaret Haley Carpenter Endowment*

CONTROLLER

Jennifer Sauer

ART DIRECTION, DESIGN & LAYOUT

Zinc Design (Washington, DC)

PRINT PRODUCTION

Goodway Graphics (Springfield, VA)



email

messenger@richmond.edu

website

www.student.richmond.edu/~messenger

} the messenger [999] {