

louden singletree

WRITING *from the*
UNIVERSITY OF THE FRASER VALLEY



ISSUE NO 3 / SPRING 2011

louden singletree

THE UFV ENGLISH DEPARTMENT'S JOURNAL
OF CONTEMPORARY WRITERS AND ARTISTS

louden singletree

ISSUE 3

EDITORIAL BOARD

Jennifer Colbourne
Miriam Huxley
Sophie Isbister

VOLUNTEER EDITOR

Sonja Szlovicsak

FACULTY ADVISOR

Andrea MacPherson

DESIGN & PRODUCTION

Elaine Littmann

PRINTING Ricoh Canada Inc.

Contents © 2011 Louden Singletree
for the authors.

READERS

Sidrah Ahmad
Breanna Black
Brandon Booth
Cheryl Buerge
Nicole Christian
Paul Esau
Nicole Ford
Laura Friesen
Kim Goertzen
Renee Hartwig
Ali Kathler
Samantha Lenz
Matt Loewen
Lian McIntyre
Chrissy Moshonas
Sherylynn Niezen
Chris Scarrow
Merissa Theroux
Nick Ubels
Amy Van Veen
Courtney Whitfield

Contents

POETRY

- | | | |
|----|--------------------|------------------------|
| 1 | Misha Arthur | Late Night Revelation |
| 2 | Jennifer Colbourne | Don't Mourn, Eliot |
| 3 | | The Prayer |
| 4 | Paul Falardeau | Write Me Poetry |
| 5 | Miriam Huxley | Edith |
| 7 | | Memento Mori |
| 9 | Sophie Isbister | Stay with Me |
| 11 | Robert Martens | I Take My Coffee Black |
| 15 | | Most Poets Can't |
| 18 | Shannon McConnell | Someday Trip |
| 19 | | Tangled Coasts |
| 21 | Hilary Kim Morden | For Annis Pratt |
| 24 | Sherylynn Niezen | Misplaced Concern |
| 25 | Hilary Turner | After the Party |

FICTION

- | | | |
|----|------------------|--|
| 28 | Lacey Hall | Mother, Where's Our House? |
| 29 | Sophie Isbister | Storefront Silence |
| 33 | Chris Scarrow | Sandbox |
| 34 | Sonja Szlovicsak | A Day in the Life of the Fabulous Mrs. Poulivard |

VISUAL ART

- | | | |
|----|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 10 | Randona Bushell | Untitled |
| 20 | Brian Carlisle | Tofino Sunset and Surf 2010 |
| 14 | Renee Hartwig | Center of Attention |
| 23 | | Get Inside |
| 32 | Jose Joaquin "Jake" Sobrepeña | Killing Time |
| 17 | Jessie Somers | Into the Tide |
| 27 | | Nevermore |
| | Cover Art: Flamingo by Jessie Somers | |

- 39 Notes on Contributors

The Loudon Singletree was edited by University of the Fraser Valley students and sponsored by the English Department.

We gratefully acknowledge the financial support of the Student Union Society, the Cascade Journalism Society, the English Department and the English Students' Association.

The magazine would not be possible without their generosity.



Editor's Note

The 2011 Loudon Singletree Editorial Board would like to sincerely thank everyone involved in the making of our third issue, most notably the Student Union Society, the English Department, and our faculty advisor Andrea MacPherson.

In issue three we strive to bring to the University of the Fraser Valley community the best literary and visual arts works grown close to home. Working together as a tight-knit group, the Editorial Board feels that we have displayed well-crafted literature that stands apart from the herd; we have brought forth works that display a unique point of view and a strong voice accompanied by bold visual art.

Works were chosen blindly, passing first through a group of student volunteer readers, and then finally through our editorial board; the final selection was based on originality, strength, insight and craft. We have tried our best to represent the many different threads that weave together our very diverse community, and we thank everyone who submitted work this year. We also sincerely thank you, the reader, for your support – because without readers there would be no need for such rewarding publications as the Loudon Singletree Literary and Visual Arts Magazine.

- 2011 Loudon Singletree Editorial Board

MISHA ARTHUR

Late Night Revelation

For Billy.

You know that feeling, when you feel
like everything's a metaphor –
you don't?
Oh, me neither, nevermind, it's fine,
I only think about it all the time.
And the attention I am paying when it's late at night and I decide
to watch TV is perfectly normal. I've got nothing to hide.
But really, don't you think it makes sense?
I mean, aren't we all looking for a sham-wow? I'm on the fence
I guess, but wouldn't it be nice
to just clean up all our spills in life?
And is it better 'cuz the Germans made it?
'Cuz if for 20 minutes a day these size two jeans will fit,
then anything is possible.
And televangelists are right about The Fall of man,
it wasn't me it was Eve,
I wasn't even born yet. And Oxi-Clean
would get the stain of Sin out anyways.
But forget about it, what I mean to say,
is that if only, back in the day
Adam had a TV.

JENNIFER COLBOURNE

Don't Mourn, Eliot

The wasteland is beautiful

The charred and scorched earth
is still rich soil

The water of the fount, well, and moat still lies
waiting in the deep

Ready to surge, to spring up into new (but not everlasting) life
the temples gone but the plumbing intact

palimpsest.

JENNIFER COLBOURNE

The Prayer

Oh Apple! Oh Pharmaceuticals!
 you scientists in white coats!
Save us from the Titans
 bring us back our Olympian gods
 beautiful, unchanging
 conquerors of death
 the Airbrushed-

Bring to us miracles! Unveil, shamans,
 the mysteries
 of the deep.

Redeem us from mortality
 smooth the wrinkles from our brows
We praise you, glory, hallelujah
 blessed prophets
 no need to die on a cross or drink the hemlock-
 work, and we shall exalt you.

We've prepared the altar burning
 we offer the fat of the land
 fossil fuels for salvation.
This is not about comfort
 this is about eternal life
 which has always been worth everything.

PAUL FALARDEAU

Write Me Poetry

Write Me Poetry!
You said
Show Me the Beauty of Life!
You said
Make it Sing!
You said
Show Me what it is made of!

So I took the words;
I created
twenty-five beautiful poems;
killed one hundred beautiful trees.

How could I show you
the beauty of nature,
written in the mud,
by a true poet?

MIRIAM HUXLEY

Edith

I found you,
hiding beneath a layer of grime,
mildew, your frame molting
as if an aging crow.
I looked in your eyes,
and knew your life as if it was my own.

Edith, you stand in the studio,
(alone)
dressed in your Sunday best,
hair in a perfect chignon,
eyes polluted with memories.
You are forty years old,
a widow,
with three children:
Jem the first born,
then Cecilia and Margaret,
(and a fourth you have almost forgotten).
You stand, book in hand,
ready to remember yourself as you are,
in this moment.

But I remember your life.

I remember:

Grandfather and his coffins (sister Sophie's suffocation).
your fourth: a boy born before breathing first breath.
Raymond, your senior by ten years and his death in 1905.
Jem and his trip to Europe (eternal).
Scotland.
your home a top an emerald hill.

the sisters you left behind (and buried).
when you gasped over hemlines and bobbed hair.
when you listened to Chamberlain's speech and thought
 you would die of another broken heart.
the day you died.

An old woman,
eyes polluted with memories,
hair in a messy braid,
dressed in an old nightgown.
They were all there:
Jem, Cecilia, Margaret, Sophie, Raymond, and even the fourth.

But not me.

Oh Edith!
I feel your pain as though your memories,
and not your portrait, belong to me.

As I stare at the picture,
past the grime and mildew,
your molting frame,
your nose and polluted eyes,
the life that might have been,
I recite this anonymous requiem,
this inventive requiem,
and realize I know nothing of your life:
not even your name.

MIRIAM HUXLEY

Memento Mori

portrait of Harry Courtright from the Thanatos Gallery

“What a comfort it is to possess the image of those who are removed from our sight. We may raise an image of them in our minds but that has not the tangibility of one we can see with our bodily eyes.”

- Flora A. Wendeyer

Little boy lays,
a chaise of green,
his body artfully positioned
to appear as if deep in slumber.
But hands do not move,
and little feet (in polished shoes and whitest stockings)
do not twitch or kick or stretch.
And his eyes, they do not blink
nor twinkle with mischief as a little boy’s should.

Little Harry Courtright,
not a day over eight,
brought to us by his parents;
little Harry Courtright, dressed
in his velvet suit—
reserved for holidays, church, and, today.

The art of photography becomes
the medium for mourning.
And we lay Harry to impermanent peace
and capture his essence,
so that his parents (so poor in earlier years)
may have an enduring memory
of an ephemeral boy.

Little Harry Courtright,
not a day over eight,
lays on the chaise where so many little boys have lain.
But this boy will not get up,
nor quake or make faces.
And I will adjust his smile,
wait for the artist,
and pray that this remembrance,
this portrait,
will help them remember.

SOPHIE ISBISTER

Stay With Me

a girl says “obsession,”
hard,
 sharply curving the otherwise
smooth syllables, cruel and
fast over her tongue.
“It’s an obsession,” because
any obsession is an addiction
and any word has a
thousand uses, a
thousand ways to say
 this passion makes me crazy.
and I want more, want want
more and there are a
thousand, maybe more
ways to
be obsessed with a
glance, through a possessive
 (possessed)
mess, you say
“I’m obsessed.”
which is just another way to say
 stay
 with me.



RANDONA BUSHELL Untitled

ROBERT MARTENS

i take my coffee black

you from texas she
asks, no i say but i
take it black, & she
leans over bigbreasted &
bluesy, over the
whiff of twisted bacon
& spluttered eggs, &
the chunkchinned
clamour of customer
complaint: so no
cream love she asks, no
i say no cream,
give it to me
oilfisted and zeroeyed,
like the morning star
when it isn't there, like
my lost youth in the
superexpansion of space,
i want to
drive black rain
streets, & traffic sweating
the grit of badmen, &
crowds of hustlers in
moonsatin suits: a bit
harsh on the tongue
my dear she says, no
i'm not mexican i
say but i take it
black, & and she slings me
a cup that
churns like bones in a

tarpit, & the scorched
scam smoke of cigarettes,
& the customer chorus of
closet conspiracy: but
a little sugar darling
she says, no i say no
sugar, give it to me
double hiss and hot, like
a morning alarm dis-
assembling the brain,
like a cellphone set
to negative, &
no one buys when the
sugar crunch caves, when
the storm sewer sucks
down the last sweet
deal, & the
alleys squealing like
green beer, & traffic
lights stuck on
sour cherry: no i'm not
african, or caucasian, or
anything at all, just
black i say, alright then
there's no charge she says
black is free: &
she's fluttering
like the darkside
of an angel, like
a goddess denying her
own existence, thanks
i say i'm truly grateful,
& i take that historic
first sip, that
morning midnight lick,

that glory of hallelujahs
in reverse, i can
taste it all, her wild
blackberry grief, my
rooting blackthorn
joy, & our souls
finding each other behind
a lunar eclipse: it's
your own cup now
she whispers sip it
slow & shady,
& she sheds a tear
that flares like a comet
long burned out, we've
travelled so far, &
gambled, &
lost, & she
puts an arm around my
shoulder: there's
nothing left my love
she says
but praise.



RENEE HARTWIG Center of Attention

ROBERT MARTENS

most poets can't

bukowski said, most poets
can't write a simple line like:
the dog walks down the street.
i'm writing this with a pen.
the pen belongs to a fool.
a fool's a poet who uses
too many adjectives.
the cedar across the lot
has no adjectives, it is
needle and bark and root.
the lot paves its empire
while we google.
the lot will crack under the force
of cedar root.
my car is parked in the assigned spot.
my neighbours are indoors
googling.
in the distance the city continues
its conversation
with the adjectives of the poor.
from my front window
i can't see the city.
most poets see too much.
most poets say too much.
today's forecast is sunshine,
but tomorrow's rain
will wash away excess.
i'm writing like a poet.
i submit for your consideration
the fact that i live here.
coffee is brewing.

the phone has a message waiting.
the net googles adjectives.
the dog is peeing on the cedar.
the dog walks down the street.
it bites bukowski's ankle.
bukowski curses. no
need for 911,
bukowski and the dog
are long dead.



JESSIE SOMERS Into the Tide

SHANNON MCCONNELL

someday trip

in the corner of the room
a bookshelf packed with trinkets
souvenirs of airports and vacations
liberation experienced by others

stacks of glossy postcards
 rusty bridges and jutting skylines
 ancient cathedrals and pale statues
 glowing sunsets and endless oceans

in the other corner of the room
a desk covered with well worn textbooks
mental adventures in highlighted pages
an infinite monotonous existence

crumpled piles of loose leaf paper
 hopeless exams and continual procrastination
 twelve page term papers and red eye all nighters
 dreadful group projects and incalculable debt

in the silence of first light
when all the books take a breather
adrenaline swirls in these veins
forever anxious and longing
for the smell of fresh thick ink
on virgin passport pages

SHANNON MCCONNELL

tangled coasts

buried in the largest borough
you are a transplant
every word thick
with a northwest accent

at dawn you open your eyes
longing for a jagged alpine horizon
not stacks and storeys
concrete and rebar

you skate at rockefeller center
surrounded by numbing snow
feeling overly exposed
without an umbrella in hand

in the middle on the square
you stand on your toes
to witness the lights ablaze
like fireworks in english bay

in summer you lie like a footprint
shoulders sunk into grass
blades sweeping against your feet
like nightfall in stanley park

even though your suitcase
occupies the floor in queens
your roots are fixed in the walls
of an empty room in surrey



BRIAN CARLISLE Tofino Sunset and Surf 2010

HILARY KIM MORDEN

For Annis Pratt

Now I know why
I loved science fiction
as a twelve-year-old
reading stories
devoid
of social stereotypes
with girls such as I
trying to break free.

and

Now I know why
when I explored my sexuality
as a young woman
dancing in bars
taking partners
when and how I pleased
there was always a small knot
hard and hot
in my abdomen.

and

Now I know why
I am so afraid
of aging
to lose the power
in my body, my face
to don the countenance and bearing
invisible to all
despite knowledge and wisdom

reposed within me.

and

Now I know why
because
in two short excerpts
my childhood
my womanhood
my life
was explained
to me.



RENEE HARTWIG Get Inside

SHERYLYNN NIEZEN

Misplaced Concern

school bus ride
infected chair infects pants

ride bike to class
bugs and germs greet on pants

sneeze
rub hands on pants

bathroom break
dry hands on pants

spill pop
absorb into pants

cough
wipe hands on pants

presentation
palm sweat on pants

meet friend
shake high-five pound it

lunch time
apple
use hands
rub on pants to disinfect

HILARY TURNER

After the Party

We go because we said we would.
Our separate addresses, now,
are none of their business, and we're scared
and dazed by what you've conjured up.

These people are not people, they're the shadows of shades –
do they scent our disease? They gibber while I pace
like a caged cat, and you get laughs in the kitchen.

There's a flowery bower in the warm June night,
and a surfeit of sugary things. My jaw is locked;
the music, a moan from a make-believe world,
hurts my face. You can't stop talking so

you call me later with a special message:
if this had been a blind date,
you wouldn't ask me out again.

Well, I'm not blind, not any more.
I put down the phone and look wildly around.
The party is over, so now
the serious drinking must begin.

Bottles and jugs are three deep on the window sills;
vats and tubs, wall to wall, and basins and bowls –
all filled to the brim. They concede

a path on the floor where a woman could weave.
It's all I can drink any more – my anger:
it's as salty as tears and stronger than Jesus.
And the more I gulp, the more there is.

What will I do when I run out of canisters?
Soon I'll be murdering plants for their pots
and dumping the dead out of their urns:

I'm that thirsty.



JESSIE SOMERS Nevermore

LACEY HALL

Mother, Where's Our House?

They were yelling, telling us girls to get going, the alarm wouldn't stop beeping, and the thick, black smoke poured out of the kitchen, burning my eyes, making us sputter and cough, blinding me so that Teddy dropped from my hand, I tripped and fell, sliding on the rug as I was dragged along by my mother, whose faded pink robe and matching slippers were the only possessions she would be left with, and me thinking 'Teddy, I told you not to let go'.

The heat could be felt on our cheeks, even though my sisters and I stood far on the other side of the street, and the yellow suits clashed against the orange, and as they sprayed, water crashed from the hose, and my mother wept over by Mrs. Gonzalla's cherry tree while my father spoke to another yellow suit and ash floated through the air (my belongings: Teddy, blanket and Joe Turtle, all with it) and I clasped my sister's hand so tight her veins turned a dark shade of purple and she said 'Ow', pulling away ... As she let go I quietly whispered 'Goodbye Teddy.'

SOPHIE ISBISTER

Storefront Silence

It's New Years Day. I'm tired because they let me stay up all the way until midnight last night. The coffee table in the middle of the storefront is littered with last night's leftover festivities; pots and pans, a wooden spoon, streamers, and two empty bowls that used to house popcorn and candy. My mom loves New Year's Eve. She encouraged me and Johnny to make all the noise we could when the clock struck twelve, and we all watched the Royal Canadian Air Farce. My absolute favourite part is the Chicken Cannon where they fire rubber chickens at pictures of things although I'm not exactly sure why.

I'm in my section of the storefront, getting dressed for church. I call it the storefront because that is what it is, an old store that all four of us live in. My section is divided by half of a wall from a play my mom worked on, called the Yellow Wallpaper. The wall is covered in bright yellow flower print, which is faded and peeling. Behind the wall is the bunk bed that me and my brother sleep on. On the other side of the wall is my parents' loft, with olive green steps that they built leading up to it.

I like to dress up for church, which is funny because I don't like to dress up for any other reason. It's hard to get me into a clean shirt most days. This Sunday for church I'm putting on white wool tights and my favourite shiny patent leather shoes. I wear a nice corduroy skirt and a crisp white shirt. My hair is kept short because my mom doesn't like to brush out the tangles, so I don't have to do much of anything to it. I am presentable.

I don't know where Dad is. He stormed out of our storefront early in the morning. I guess he's probably at church early, because I think church is his favourite part of the week. He plays the piano and he has lots of friends at church.

"Karen! John! Let's go!" My mom is hurried and looks upset, so I don't make a fuss, even though I deeply resent being yelled at when I am always the first one ready.

We walk the few short blocks to church. We take our seats and I fidget in the uncomfortable pew, trying to get into the best position possible to wait out the usual unbearable sermon. Today is going to be special though; every week the priest, Margaret, dedicates the sermon to a family in the congregation. This week is our week.

I'm excited to hear our names called out. I like the community of church, not so much all of the God stuff. I guess that stuff is pretty interesting, but mostly I like after church, because me and Isaac and Emma steal sugar cubes and hide them in the hallway downstairs, behind a structure that we have made out of cinderblocks. Sometimes after

church Isaac comes over and we work on the miniature town that we are constructing out of coloured index cards.

What feels like forever passes as I stare at the long silk banners that adorn the church, trying to look devout. My hands are folded nicely in my lap. I steal looks at my dad as he's playing hymns, and he looks happy and peaceful.

"On this day," Margaret says, "we would like to honour as a congregation the Lockhart family. Tracie, Edward, Karen and Johnny. We dedicate today's sermon to them, and we wish them many happy and healthy years together as a family."

Everyone turns to look at us and my heart feels set to burst, and I am so proud. My brother doesn't seem to notice that anything has happened, but I look at my mom and she is just crying and crying, tears I don't recognize. I don't know why. I think she is happy, how could she not be? I'm confused because the church is full of the sun's light and it's a beautiful day, January 1st, and everyone at church is praying that we are happy.

We don't linger after the sermon.

"Moom! I want to stay!" I whine. Emma and Isaac are just to the left of the entry way, they want to hang out. There's cookies and hot chocolate just calling my name from the church basement.

My mom grabs my arm. She looks shaken by something that I must not be able to understand. "No, Karen, not today. Your father is waiting outside, we need to go." With Johnny in tow she drags me through the heavy wooden doors.

I hold hands with Johnny while we walk home. He's kicking fallen pine cones on the ground, his little four year old hand trying feverishly to escape mine so he can move on to pine cones that are further away. Mom and Dad are walking ahead.

I'm reminded of the time that I lost Johnny, at Granville Island. It was last summer, the summer that I was eight. We were playing hide-and-go-seek at a playground after a fancy lunch and I guess I didn't know any better because I was younger and dumber. It was his turn to hide and my turn to seek so I covered my eyes with my hands and I let him run away and hide. I counted to ten and when I opened my eyes he was lost in a sea of people. My mom, who usually turns red when she is mad, turned white that day. The colour was all gone from her face and she looked like a ghost while she frantically searched for Johnny, and I sat and waited on the swings, filled with shame and knowing I'd done something really wrong. He turned up eventually, he'd been hanging out with some Canada geese on the other side of the restaurant. I don't think I have felt more relieved in my whole life, before or after that day.

Remembering, I hold Johnny's hand a little tighter. I pull him along, urging his little

legs to hurry up and catch up to Mom and Dad. We're almost home.

We step into the storefront and I finally see Mom's face, and it is bone white, like the day that I almost lost Johnny. Like she's lost something but I don't know what.

"This is your mess," she says to my dad. I look around and I don't see any mess in the house except maybe our New Year's Eve mess but that is really more my mom's mess than my dad's. "You clean it up," she says, and her voice is rising now.

"Tracie..." My dad trails off after he says her name. He's not much for words.

"No. Just.. no," she says. "I have to get the fuck out of here. I'll be back later." And then she is gone, leaving me and my brother behind with our dad who has no words.

My dad turns to me. I'm a big girl, I'm nine years old, but I'm struggling to figure this one out. They argue lots, sure, like everyone does. Why is today so different?

"You already know what's happening, Karen. You must."

I don't know, and I shake my head, no.

My dad paces, and then he raises his voice. "You have to know, are you fucking stupid?"

My brother starts to cry but I don't, I sit there and my tummy feels like it is filling up with ice and I can't move, but I guess I have to speak. "I don't know..." I manage. "Is Mom coming back?" It is now that I realize that I am like my dad, not much for words.

My dad sighs. "Mom's coming back. But then I'm leaving. I'll be living somewhere else for a while." He walks away from us, to the other side of the storefront, the kitchen side, and he pours a drink into a glass and I know that words are over. I look at Johnny and he looks at me, and then he sits on his bed which is right under mine. He's still crying and sniffing and snot is running all the way to his chin. I curl up on his bed and I stare at the bright yellow wallpaper on the wall that blocks Dad from our view. I know Johnny's confused. I know it's time for me to shape up and find some words.



JOSE JOAQUIN "JAKE" SOBREPEÑA Killing Time

CHRIS SCARROW

Sandbox

Blood, that's the first thing I noticed, there's a lot of fucking blood in a body, really we're just bags of blood and bone, and the way it seeped into the sand and formed that thick mottled mud almost made me freeze, like they said it would, but then I guess it did make me freeze, for a second at least, until Dave's screaming finally crept into my deafened, punctured ears, fuck, fuck you my legs, let me see my legs, fuck, then a gargling scream like a monster, you could say blood curdling but, hopefully, you wouldn't, given the reality of the situation, and what sand does to blood, and the fact that Dave couldn't see his legs, problem was that they weren't there, they were all around, they had become as much a part of the sand as his blood, fucking greedy sand, but he also couldn't see them because I wouldn't let him, that was part of my job, they said it was an important job, that I would maybe save somebody someday, I don't know, I've only been here for a week, but they said what we learned would save somebody, they said it would, but I knew it wouldn't today, as I knelt over Dave's head, holding down his shoulders, I watched his stumps flailing against Cam's orders, fuck's sake, Mike, hold it down, hold it down, there, gimme the fucking tourniquet, not yours asshole, take his, front left, no, the left pocket, fucking hurry up and get back, hold it there, okay good, but it wasn't good, the bone, the femur, was pristine, spotless, not even broken, just pried off at the knee joint, sticking out from his body, meat stripped off clean from the blast, now that's something hard to look at, is meat, you know that's what you're made of, and you really should know that somebody somewhere wants to butcher you like that, and feed your body to the sand, but that's not what I was thinking as I watched them fish for that artery, all I was thinking was, Jesus Christ, that's a lot of blood. That's a lot of blood.

SONJA SZLOVICSAK

A Day in the Life of the Fabulous Mrs. Poulivard

This morning, just like every morning for the past several months, Mrs. Poulivard could feel she was being watched. However, as she had installed black out curtains over her bedroom's only window in an effort to protect her privacy, she didn't feel as if she needed to hurry through her morning grooming. The first few weeks she was being watched had been a nightmare; the thought of being spied on by a stranger before she had her face on was too much. For those first few weeks, her bedtime ritual had included the re-application of her makeup just in case she stepped in front of her bedroom window and was seen in all her plain, unadorned glory.

She loved her curtains. At 87 years old, she had been forced into a kennel. Yes, a kennel. It had happened so suddenly. After her husband died, her oldest son had badgered her into selling the family home. She went along with the plan because she'd hoped, now that her son was grown and her husband was dead, that she could return to Paris and die in a country that did not consider yoga wear and screaming music to be a part of high fashion. That plan didn't go anywhere. Instead, she helped her son pay off his mortgage and moved into his house. A year later, his family went on a cruise but left her in Sunset Hill's Retirement Living Community for Active Seniors and just never bothered to pick her up. (They did, however, pick up the Labradoodle from his kennel.) The curtains were her only contribution to her little apartment. The bed, the chairs and the couches were all supplied by the building's management. Since she was neither an active senior nor retired she was certain that she would be allowed to leave soon.

So in short Mrs. Poulivard was not happy. As she slid out of bed, she noted her room was too cold once again. She shuffled into her bathroom and drew a bath. The fact that her room was not adequately heated confirmed, in her mind, that Sunset Hill's management was more interested in killing its residents than ensuring their comfort in their twilight years. After all, most elderly people in the community suffered from arthritis and hip problems; cold rooms only made these conditions worse.

After her bath, it was time to begin the process of getting ready for the day. While most of the 80-something year old women Mrs. Poulivard knew all let themselves go at some point, she was determined to stay fabulous right up until her death (which, she

had quite clearly stipulated in her will, must be followed by an immediate cremation. She did not want some stranger dressing her for her burial). Every morning, after her bath, she pulled out her potions and began to rub them into her skin. She had a cream for under her eyes, to banish dark circles and puffiness. A separate cream went onto her eyelids, because they were always so dry but a regular moisturizer would make her eyes sting. She applied her facial moisturizer with a cotton ball so she could be sure it went into her face and not into her fingertips. Last, she spread a special butter mixture into her arms and legs. All of this was very measured and precise. These rituals hadn't changed much since she was a teenager; after nearly 70 years of this, she was an expert on her own skin.

While her creams set, she went to work on her hair. It wasn't as thick as it once was, and it had lost its colour, but it still deserved her attention. She had always brushed her hair with 100 strokes, and didn't see any reason to stop now. It was hers, and she was proud that she didn't perm it. She'd rather have thin but straight hair instead of curly white sheep hair.

As a young woman, Mrs. Poulivard had begun her beauty regime to fight aging. She took care of her hair so it would stay healthy into her old age. She put creams into her skin so she wouldn't wrinkle into a crone. She did 100 situps a day so she wouldn't get fat. She ate well. She exercised. She avoided the sun. It was strange that now, at 87 years old, as a widow, in a home for the elderly, she still kept up this battle. Clearly, old age had set in, but she was still clinging to the last bits of her youth.

What was strangest of all, though, was that she insisted on painting up her face. Once her hair was finished and her creams were set, she would powder her nose and paint her eyelids and rouge her cheeks and apply mascara to her lashes. This in no way kept her from aging. Instead, it was more out of a sense of pride that she kept applying makeup.

Only after all of this, would she get dressed. Every night, before she went to bed, she would pick out her clothes for following morning. The next day, once her skin was ready, she would turn her back to her mirror, slip out of her bathrobe, and pull on her undergarments, followed by her panty hose and then her skirt and then her blouse and then her jacket. Once her nakedness was safely tucked away, she would walk back to the mirror and apply her lipstick. Last, she slipped on her shoes and picked up her handbag. She was ready, but for what?

The whole process took a little over an hour. As she didn't really have any appointments to keep and no one to see she enjoyed this part of her day. It was the only thing

that had remained unchanged throughout most of her life. War had raged around her and she still made herself look presentable; she ran away to Canada, and she still looked presentable; she gave birth, and the next morning she looked presentable; now that she was alone, she still might as well look presentable for her mirror. And whatever it was that was watching her.

She knew where her watcher was as long as there was daylight. It was during the night, when she couldn't see outside, that she was frightened. She couldn't see if her watcher was creeping into the building. She had nightmares that she would wake up and see this thing that was always watching her standing over her bed, looking at her. It would be unbearable. At least she could close her curtains and shut him out, if only for a little while.

Now that she was ready for the day, it was time to open the curtains. It was always so hard to do. She'd developed a trick to make it easier: she would hold her breath, shut her eyes, then throw open the curtains. It was like jumping into a cold pool or ripping off a bandaid; get it over with and it will be less painful. Everytime she opened the curtains, she hoped to catch her spy running around the yard, but he never was.

Today, just like every day, he stood unmoving, rooted in place. His arms seemed to branch out towards her, but they were so crooked and deformed so she couldn't be sure if he was actually reaching towards her. He was dark. It could be a nice day, but he always stood out because light didn't seem to penetrate through to his face. She considered getting binoculars so she could see him better, but then changed her mind. She didn't want to see his eyes – she didn't need to see his eyes. He was looking at her. Of that, she was sure.

I hate you, she thought. She wanted nothing more than to be able to leave her room, leave this whole “community,” to just go outside and leave. But she couldn't. He was there – he was watching her. And if she didn't watch back he would come after her. Or worse. She kept imagining herself leaving during the day, and returning to find him in her bed. Or looking through her drawers, perhaps playing with her creams. Maybe he would try on her coat, or slip his feet into her shoes. The feeling of violation from just the thought of this was too much. So she had spent everyday for months standing at her window and watching him. He never moved, he never left, and he never tried to communicate with her in anyway. He just stood there and stared at her.

As a young woman, when she was in Paris, she owned a hat and purse shop. During the war, after Paris became part of the “Occupied Zone,” she had spied on the Germans. She would go to her shop everyday, and watch the Germans come and go from the

building across the street. She wrote down what time they came and what time they left. At the end of each week, she would give this information to a woman that came to her shop to try on hats. That was Mrs. Poulivard's contribution to the French resistance: watching Nazis. At the time, that work had seemed frightening but at the same time somehow thrilling. Now, here she was 70 years later watching again. But this time she couldn't say why she watched her tormentor. She just knew that there was no escaping him, so she might as well fight back however she could.

The worst was on weekends. Grandchildren would come visit the residents in the building, and they would run outside and play. They would play outside in the yard, unaware of the danger that stood right in their midst. They would laugh and run and touch the creature. One time, a little boy actually jumped right onto the back of her watcher, and still he didn't flinch. It was as if children, with all their youth, did not realize that they could be hurt by the figure that stood in the yard. Or perhaps their youth shielded them from his gaze. Maybe he had been following her all her life, and it was only when she was forced to live as an old woman, in a retirement community, that she could see him. Thankfully, there weren't any children outside today. She could stand at her window and watch the creature without worrying that he might harm someone other than her.

There was a knock at the door. Mrs. Poulivard shuffled to the door. It was just one of the nurses. They usually came by her room a few times a week in an effort to get Mrs. Poulivard to take her meals with the other residents. She opened the door a crack and peeked through at the nurse.

"Can I come in?" the nurse asked. In response, Mrs. Poulivard opened the door and went back to her window.

"Will you come downstairs for breakfast today?" the nurse asked. She frowned when she realized Mrs. Poulivard was ignoring her. "What are you looking at outside? We can go for a walk outside after breakfast, if you want. There's no sense wearing that nice coat if you're just going to stay inside all day."

The creature outside shifted, or maybe it was just the wind. But it didn't like that there was someone else in her room. It was now watching the nurse. Why did she let the nurse in? Would he follow her as well? Maybe he would sneak into Mrs. Poulivard's room and smother her in her sleep, now that it had a new specimen to watch. She was certain that the creature's gaze had shifted. She didn't like the feeling.

"No, I can't go outside," Mrs. Poulivard replied. "There's a monster out there, and he's watching us." She pointed so the nurse could see the danger.

The nurse walked to the window. She looked visibly alarmed. How could she not be? Mrs. Poulivard had been alarmed the first time she knew that she was being watched. The nurse looked right at the creature, and frowned.

“Mrs. Poulivard, I don’t mean to be rude, but that’s not a monster. Are you all right?”

Notes on Contributors

MISHA ARTHUR is a student at UFV.

RANDONA BUSHELL is a UFV student. She lives in a bunny house with her husband Peter.

BRIAN CARLISLE is a Visual Arts and Criminology major, born in Montreal, Quebec. He spent his youth in Randolph, Vermont, in the heart of picturesque New England. Growing up in Normal Rockwell country gave him an early enthusiasm for art; he had his work displayed at the prestigious Ethan Allen Gallery at the age of eight. Studying in the areas of Visual Arts and Criminology has given Brian the ability to develop his artistic skill and vocabulary dialogue with his viewers.

JENNIFER COLBOURNE is an Honours English student at UFV. Among her many inspirations include Gertrude Stein, Lev Tolstoy, Fyodor Dostoevsky, George Orwell, Lady Gaga, the Cumaean Sybil and Miriam Nichols.

PAUL FALARDEAU is an English major at UFV. His essay entitled “The Great Story of British Columbia: Robert Bringhurst and Haida Oral Literature” has been published in the *UFV Research Review* and in *Making Waves: Reading BC and Pacific Northwest Literature*. He is the Arts and Life editor for the *Cascade* newspaper, a DJ and programmer for CIVL radio, and a book reviewer for the *Pacific Rim Review of Books*.

LACEY HALL is an English Major at UFV. She has been passionate about English since elementary school, and is furthering her love of the written word at UFV. She enjoys using creative writing as a method of self expression.

RENEE HARTWIG is a current UFV Student, studying towards a Bachelor of Arts with an English Writing & Rhetoric Major and a Visual Arts Extended Minor. Center of Attention and Get Inside are part of a photo essay about how dogs’ personalities are affected by their owners.

MIRIAM HUXLEY is a student at UFV. She completed her BA in 2010 (English and History), and is now hoping to complete English Honours. Miriam loves to write, and

while she primarily writes short stories, she has branched out thanks to Creative Writing classes at UFV. She was published in the 2010 edition of the *Louden Singletree*.

SOPHIE ISBISTER is a 2nd year English student at UFV. When she's not scrambling to complete assignments, she is the Opinions Editor at The Cascade Journalism Society, and can also serve you a beer at Casey's on Campus. Her passion is creative writing; her work has been published in the Vancouver School Board publication *New Shoots* in 2003, and she looks forward to a long future in the creative writing community.

ROBERT MARTENS was raised in a Mennonite village, learning the joys and griefs of a closely bound ethnic community. He entered the bewilderingly individualistic wider world at SFU during the times of student rebellion. Since then he's lived in Abbotsford, and has co-written and coedited several regional histories, as well as a literary anthology, *Half in the Sun*. Robert writes poetry in a quixotic attempt to save mind and soul from global domination.

SHANNON MCCONNELL is an English Major/Geography Minor at UFV. She previously studied creative writing, photography and music (classical guitar performance) at Kwantlen Polytechnic University. In her free time she enjoys writing, recording and performing music, photography and creative writing.

HILARY KIM MORDEN is a first year masters student at SFU, but fondly remembers her days as an undergrad at UFV (when she still had time to write creatively!) She has written one novel, two collections of poetry and a stack of short stories. She has won several writing competitions and has been published in *Event Magazine* and academic journals.

SHERYLYNN NIEZEN is a student at UFV, and is graduating this semester with a History Major and an English Extended Minor in the Bachelor of Arts degree program.

CHRIS SCARROW is a History student at UFV.

SONJA SZLOVICSIAK is terrible at writing biographies, so a friend wrote the following: "Sonja is a student at UFV and former editor extraordinaire of the *Cascade*, UFV's autonomous and ever so slightly vapid student publication. When not kicking ass and taking names, Sonja enjoys walking dogs, destroying lesser mortals at board games, and enriching all of our lives immeasurably through her studied use of sarcasm and wit."

JOSE JOAQUIN “JAKE” SOBREPEN˜A is an English student. Jose would like to acknowledge Noah Jarvis for helping him with “the intricate sexy graffiti flames” found in Killing Time.

JESSIE SOMERS is a young practicing artist who recently graduated with a Bachelor of Fine Arts from UFV in 2010. She has always loved to draw and partake in anything creative and imaginative. Jessie draws much of her inspiration from fantasy and surreal worlds, the abstract and her imagination.

HILARY TURNER teaches English and Rhetoric courses at the University of the Fraser Valley. She routinely writes for *Canadian Literature*, *the Pacific Rim Review of Books*, and *Event Magazine*.



The Loudon Singletree is UFV's literary and visual arts journal. Since its inception in 2009, the Loudon Singletree has been a forum in which students, alumni, faculty and staff of the university can share their creative work.

POETRY

Misha Arthur

Jennifer Colbourne

Paul Falardeau

Miriam Huxley

Sophie Isbister

Robert Martens

Shannon McConnell

Hilary Kim Morden

Sherylynn Niezen

Hilary Turner

FICTION

Lacey Hall

Sophie Isbister

Chris Scarrow

Sonja Szlovicsak

VISUAL ART

Randona Bushell

Brian Carlisle

Renee Hartwig

Jose Joaquin "Jake" Sobrepeña

Jessie Somers