

Community Writing Project Journal



This issue thanks:



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In Loving Memory of

Dorothy Saraceno

August 21, 1948-March 5, 2022

A friendship doesn't end when the friend departs too soon. It goes on in fond memories, the retelling of our 'herstories' and remembering her boundless creativity.



Dear Readers,

What began as a suggestion from BDAC Gallery Director, Michele Amaro to have an ‘on-line spontaneous writing and venting format ‘ to the raging ‘pandemic’ affecting all our lives evolved and succeeded in bringing poetry, prose, opinion and art to our vital Yonkers community and beyond. We were all in varying, not by choice hibernation and needed to learn how to share and interact from small boxes ‘zoomed’ out at us. Reading and Writing took on new and renewed meanings. This unasked for virus inadvertently created opportunity, growth and adventures in new ways.

We have come a long way with the Community Writing Project Journal. The Artspeak/From Page to Performance ekphrastic writing workshops flourished and participants increased when the writing workshops went on line. Their offerings and guest contributors made it all happen. Creative writing workshops are now, hybrid, on-line and in person. Our contributors and readers are local, neighboring boroughs and villages and global.

The writings from Issue #'s 1 & 2 are old friends to be savored and reread. Writing workshops partially funded with support from Poets & Writers gave us creative material to publish. The always support from BDAC was there and as poet-in-residence and co-editor, I was the recipient of a prestigious ArtsWestchester Yonkers Artist Initiative Grant. Issue #4 is possible because of the grant.

I thank Kharim Ahmed, Technical Support. I thank Jacqueline Reason, Co-editor, Issues #1 & #2. I thank Russell Evans, Art Director. I thank Nakeisha Cantzlaar, Editorial Assistant I thank Freida Jones for introducing me to Samson Saint Laurent. I thank ALL the writers and artists who patiently hung in with us as we learned how to do a journal and make everyone proud.

Grant deadlines needed to be met for ArtsWestchester – that is why Book #4 is an abridged form is available only on line at bluedoorartcenter.org An

expanded Issue#4 will be available on Amazon and BDAC, Summer 2022 giving voice and visibility to more writers and artists. If you know me, you know that I fervently believe:

We are all artists!

We are all writers!

We are all poets!

My life is sharing and mentoring. Teaching, performing my words with musicians, jazz and poetry are what I am about and with my partner, the Hudson River right outside my windows, I shall continue for several more years. I will celebrate my 85th birthday with friends and Yonkers fireworks this July.

Appreciatively,

golda Solomon

i am golda solomon
a daughter born of secrets
has no hunger for ancestry truths
belly fulls of anna weisman

concoctions my father's lineage
the honest more direct route
would have been perceived

a betrayal by my mother
a child loves unconditionally
not so every mother

daddy, what if you had lived
not left a young girl her breasts
beginning to woman

would you have righted
the falsehoods her tales
or protected with your

silence your loyalty
your forever
bridedoll wife

an alfresco

robert gibbons

we left it all behind, it had been the metaphor for the week
the city in a stagnant drool, wanting something more medieval
maybe a town with a historical name, a one frame church
with a rising steeple, a new Britain, a Naugatuck, a meridian
out of touch with the would; the top-gallant upside down

there is a rest area to spare; to establish a main street;
always chasing those beats; a boy on the corner of Broadway
peddling his mix-tapes; will not rape the trope to be published
you are right when you say my internal rhymes are irritating
keeping time is so obligating; but what you forget to say is they are

my rhymes, three more miles deep into the woods; no search
for substance; whether Binghamton or Purchase; Oh, there it is,
a house by the lake overlooking the expressway; it looks so fake,
then it chases us down the road; places us into a block; opens
the pages to Max Ernst with a naked tourist; big bold bodies

with no shirts; have to be attracted to the outside; forget the Frick
forget the acquisition of a Piero; a stop-hold travels to Arezzo
there is more to me than credential; more than the penitential
of Ezra Pound from a visit of Langston; leave the cantos to them
leave the packaged poet in Battery Park; leave me in the dark,
to the cramp of these voices; leave me to the enjambment of lockjaw.

We are spinning out of control A stone's throw away from here a gun is killing a child. A stone's throw from here a mass shooter is killing.

The crickets will chirp. What can we do but patiently endure.

I am wandering in a world that's lost its way. Where is the glue to hold us together? In an instant the whole past opens up before me with the diffused voice of lost loved one and memories of what we once were. I am terrified of what we may become.

Our present misfortunes are drowning us in suffering. Will we ever be able to rest? I yearn to rest and feel life will know joy, joy and rest.

Easing through the air gliding to his perch a robin ushers in spring yet a stones throw from here a gun is killing a child. Why is the world asleep? There seems to be no refuge from weapons or climate change or tyrants or pandemics, or even from facts being rearranged into fiction.

Mark Twain felt telling the truth is the funniest joke of all. Didn't he worry that we would see extinctions of the truth.

Facts are being confused with layers of fiction. Is this why a stone's throw from here a gun is killing causing this abysmal light near a nervous thrush in the shadow of a pine. He may be upset because a stone's throw away he hears the random shots of bullets.

When will a great light pour into the darkness above the roof of our sky, An awkward cloud looms covering our source of safety. A rose is unfolding her petals. Above a tangle of oak branches, I see a sparrow press against the pale vault of the sky.

The sea spreads its fury against the cliffs. The looping valleys are flooded by the storm but elsewhere there is drought and an increase in uncontrollable wildfires. Illusions burn in the shade of that green thicket while a stone's throw away there is yet another killing going on.

Who can teach us how to be human? We are the worst and the best.

Sometimes I float back to where my parents lived, where there were buckeyes and peonies and tree-lined streets where mountain tops were still in tact.

Guns have a stranglehold on our nation. Though our children are dying every day, someone is paving our streets with automatic weapons. Some of us are in agony watching the indifference on the faces of those that could save them.

We need answers, any we can get. Can someone speak up? Speak up.

We were a country briefly lit. When the sun dimmed out on our horizon tragedy made our lights go out casting a very different tone on vibrations trembling in the heat of the air.

Fate keeps giving me blows but I'm still captivated by beauty and looking into the hidden place of hearts and souls.

What is our human destiny? Does anyone else feel the grace of life is slipping away? Is anyone out there concerned about a certain unquenchable thirst for firearms? I want to know because a stone's throw away there is more, wait there is more and more and more senseless killing going on.

Truth is a bright moon rising in the darkness. There is no need for superfluous words but look at what's disappeared.

What can touch the inclinations of the future still waits to be met.

I looked for a moment at the face of America. Today it is no longer looks beautiful. Actually it is hardly recognizable as it spins out of control.

I listen to the healing sounds of Mozart. It lifts me from despair into the crazed light of the sun shining on an innocent face a stone's throw away where there is still more killing going on. I wonder when we will return to the safe secure country some of us still remember.

In an instant the whole past opens up before
me with the diffused voices of lost loved ones.

Easing through the air gliding to his perch a robin ushers in spring.

Why is the world asleep? There is no refuge from guns, for climate change, from tyrants, from pandemics, from the facts being rearranged by fiction.

In this abysmal light I see on nervous thrush in the shadow of a pine.

A stone throw from here a gun is killing a child.

When will a great light pour into the darkness above the roof
of our nation. A great cloud looms covering our source of light.

A rose is unfolding its petals. Above the tangle of oak
branches press against the pale vault of the sky.

The sea spreads its fury against the cliffs. The looping valleys
are flooded from the rage of a storm.

Illusions burn in the shad of that green thicket

Time burns away showing no signs of a peaceful blue sky.

I listen to the flowing colors of nature's music. It lifts me from despair into the crazed
light of the sun.

Guns have a stranglehold on our nation. They are papering our streets. Our children are dying every day. We are in agony watching the indifference on the faces of those who could save them.

What is our human destiny in this unquenched thirst for firearms?

Karen Erla

June 10, 2022

¼ mile track of friendship

golda Solomon

we adored and trusted our two local babysitters
our boys maybe 8 or 10 months old then
sonya and josephine each talked

about our sons in their charge it was 1980
we two moms finally met a happy accident
a kid's boutique in dobb's matt contentedly

in his front carry pack kathy out alone
recognized us from josephine's description
kathy and i became acquaintances

then friends then confidantes privy
to each other's stories that landed us
in this rivertown of hastings-on-hudson

matt two weeks older than ben
our june babies played together with
pots and pans and wooden spoons

the boys never became school or after
school friends but kathy and me savored
our walks around the reynold's field track

she and i talked and walked walked and
talked we shared childhood war stories
her upended life my interrupted girlhood

her sharp wit twinkle in her eye when she landed
a zinger we shared the joys of quick wit
writing and poetry my mouth popping out

rejoinders as we put motherdom and
mileage on our sneakers she wrote
about the girls who were not like her

girls with white princess phones and
strawberry milkshake lives
i wrote about black and white icecream sodas

sipped while spinning on a counter stool
happy Saturday afternoons at the greenwich village pharmacy
watching my daddy mix magical medicines for the neighborhood

she wanting to connect with her long gone
absentee father dialed her rotary phone
again and again and again

ours called aunts uncles and cousins
arrangements for my father at jeffers
funeral home on empire boulevard

i will honor and remember you kathleen
though your memory is shook hard by
parkinson's i watched your hands gently

shake on our walks you not ready to tell me
give your condition a name you and peter
moved to be nearer your grands

me to yonkers the hudson river my partner
your ben called recently and let me know his dad
was fine you safer in a facility near their

home in minneapolis kathy and i had laughed
predicted that when he married alice
they would wind up living where she grew up

ben wrote in an email that his mom
beamed broadly a glimmer of present
hearing the news that i was the first

poet laureate of yonkers
i would give up all but my son
and my ability to write

if you kathleen could click ruby red heels
be whole again your gogyohka memorized
and shared in workshops

dancing with my son
on his wedding day
waltz time
one-two-three
and he's gone

Eau de jazz suite

golda Solomon

1

I miss the smells of jazz clubs
each one had its own 'eau de jazz'
a visit from Cuba before no smoking a robust
Havana gentlemanly and sweet puffed alongside
pall malls viceroys and chesterfields & smokin' riffs
I could swear iggy and joe termini's cash register gave off a 3 AM pay mo'
greenbacks scent chan's cooking sizzling fried rice wafted and escaped
through those double wooden doors onto saint mark's place blew east or
west of the five spots Mingus's bass mingled with musician's sweat
Dolphy's instrument of choice wailing raw piano keys gave up counterpoint
arpeggios the smell of history genius
joined the mix of perfume and aftershave scrape of chair against linoleum
scratched a 2/4 finger snap
that last night before the move a red velvet rope herded listeners waiting
to get a taste of the last set
I emptied ashtrays between the sets swiped them clean with a damp cloth
and then went back to my stool at the bar the musician's table three deep
the new location return to bowery window fronting the street bitter
winter frost on the outside no heat inside bish's makeshift fingerless
gloves- wet wool odor his huge hands his huge grin keyboard smilin'
surrendering to his commands cold winter night
jazz here tonight jazz copacetic

2

subway odors rushing up at you as you walked to the half note where
Dolphy and me were formally introduced trane's sound against the faint
whistle of a lettered subway train jimmy garrison's bass call and response
pluckin' air particles flyin' the playing hot the listening easy I miss the
humming of car engines waiting for a space on east 26th street spice dry-
rubbed ribs and almost better than home cookin' blue smoke stairway

down to heaven more than the standard of jazz wailed emitted notes from combos, trios, quartets while you drank and ate mac & cheese coleslaw clean smell of new jazz with always a nod to the woodshed of history I miss the smell of beer on tap paired with gimme my scotch straight with no chaser that met you down the vanguard of steps miles of miles and Tony Williams' name on our hip lips he was just 17 when he came to play I miss the manicured clear nail polish scent on some of the uptown pimps at the pub Chinese take-out a steamed window or two down on Saint Nicholas hangin' with Etta, miss jones that is was an all-nighter like Moses parting the red sea, a small round table appeared carried over patron's heads two chairs materialized and there we were next to the musicians tippin' their instruments hello breakfast at the never closed diner on eighth avenue midtown

3

mid-town prominence of Birdland refreshed and new not the historic Birdland where I took my first baby steps where pee wee marquette's special voice welcomed I saw my first rolled joint forlorn and discarded as i walked down those steps to hear my music of choice my lifelong journey that partnered with poetry I wonder if the oversized photo of Etta in an elegant pose still blesses the audience at smoke in upper west side yuppieville she loved sittin' in for a song always closed with an 'I'll be seeing you and you and you' classical notes on my childhood piano led me to the symphony that is jazz and the words that this poet writes

I CHANT

By

Samson SaintLaurent

I'm a boy who likes my toys.
I love girls with big curls.
Eyes of blue or bright green,
the skin of silky cream.
The slants, I do adore.
They make me chant.
Love songs I hear all day long.
I rant to all who will listen.
Stories told about her skin glistening from the sun.
Sweet sweat dripping down her breast,
my eyes I try to hide.
Her memorizing scent captures the wildness in me.
I chant and then whisper in her ears.
Her eyes spoke a language
to me when her lips couldn't.
I understood, and now she's mine.



What Barbie Really Taught me

(NY Times Article)

By

Diane Garofalo

What Barbie Really Taught Me
To Be or Not to Be

To be socially correct or to speak my mind
That is the question
Barbie is an insatiable consumer
Clothes, a dream house, make-up
She teaches girls there is nothing in life
Quite exciting as shopping and
She has clean-cut Ken

Some have decided this is not me
Ken's persona is who I wish to be
We can be who we wish to be
We are free

I read about a Ken who became a Barbie
Competed with other Barbies
Trowned, crushed the competitors
All those Barbies who spent
Hours, days, years so much energy
Only to be vanquished in the end

Ellen, My Sister

By

Marcia Klein

Gramps moved in with us
I was forced to share
My bedroom with you Ellen
I did not mind, although
I said, I did
Ellen my Sister,
Taken from us too soon
Taken from us your humor,
Your generosity, your kindness,
Your ironic comments about our family
About everything from world events to food
Ellen my Sister,
When hippies gathered in Haight-Ashbury
Near your Berkeley home
A student ran for mayor and you
Voted for him, he won
Became an effective Berkeley Mayor
Ellen my Sister,
You resigned a law firm partnership
To work at the California State Auto Association
You decided they needed a law library
You created the CSAA Law Library
Ellen my Sister,
You passed away
Their law library renamed
The Ellen S. George Law Library
When we visit your library
Your daughter Leah, son Jake and me
You are back with us
Shalom, Adieu

Bargaining with an Elf

By

Debbi Dolan

There is a mischievous elf that plagues me. What is he after? How do I appease him so I can restore my equanimity? He hides my car keys. Does he want me to stay home? He hides my glasses. Does he not want me to read and write? Okay Elf, you've got my full attention. Do you want to play outside Elfie? Were you here before this house was built, and you are angry because it is here? Did it displace you and your elfin family? Well, you can all make yourselves right at home here. Habla espanol? Mi casa is su casa. Now will you desist with the hiding and the hoarding? I imagine it is amusing for you to see me rummage through every coat and pant pocket, peer onto every shelf, rifle through drawers, to locate my MetroCard. Ha, ha! Just hilarious Elfie! But I don't have time for this. I am going to miss the express bus. You can come with me to the city. I promise not to crush you with my bare hand! No, I'm not threatening you. Calm down! We're in this together. For better or for worse.

Inspired by the writing prompt by Golda Solomon: write a nonsense narrative.

Cento

(After Lucille Clifton and Anne Sexton)

By

Marcia Klein

Flames bite his thighs

I have ridden in his cart

And spun him, like a top

Haunting the black air

To put a spell on a man

I have known

Me, braver at night

Pictures speak to Me

The Potato Eaters speaks to me

Who are the peasants in the painting?

What were their lives like?

Unique subjects romanticized

The light, food, peasant's faces,

Make a statement

The stark reality of their lives.

My Real Self
By
Sheila Benedis



My Real Self

By
Sheila Benedis

I was named for my father's mother
Sarah Hannah became Sheila Audrey
I inherited her intelligence
I hope her kindness

I had no exposure to the arts as a child
Neither visual art writing nor music
My mother had many limitations
She could function

Only if there were no problems
But she was a successful math teacher
She couldn't accept a very intelligent child
Who had severe social shortcomings

My father was the last of nine children
But the first to go to college
Became a lawyer
I never really knew him

He provided for me to go to college
He had a love of reading and writing
But I don't know about creativity
I'm so happy I've incorporated

Poetry into my art
It makes the artist books sing
I was stirred to create in spite
of the love my parents could not give

After starting life with mathematics
I searched for my real self
Completely grown
I discovered my talent for creativity

Nature's organic shapes
Visual art permeates
Activated by language
Art and poetry flourish

Finally a successful life
I am not a product of my environment
I've accomplished so much
Despite recently diagnosed Aspergers



Why I love spring

Mona Kalman

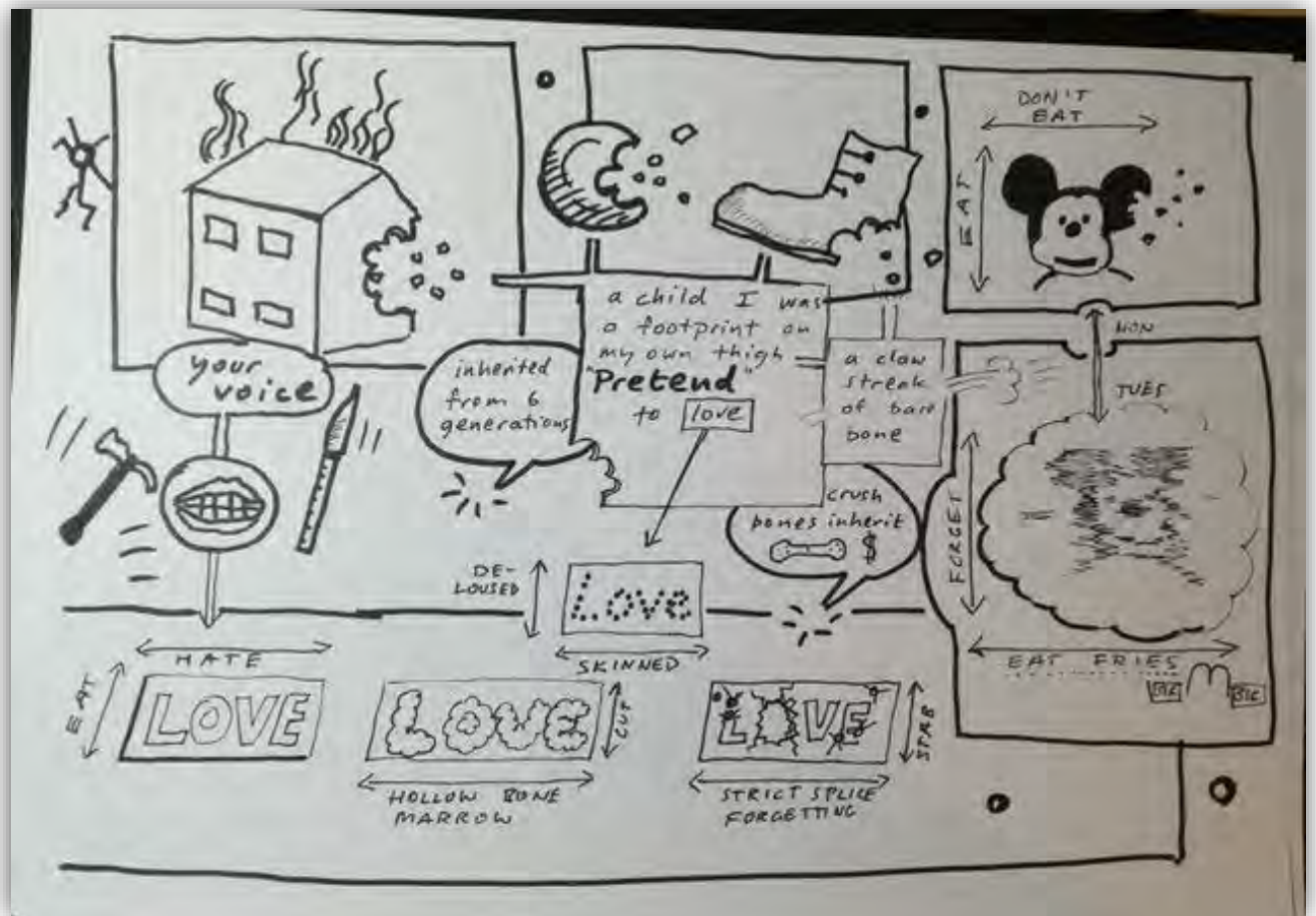
As the water fountain in the courtyard has been broken for many months; it has now been fixed, but instead of water, it has plants now. I'm glad it has been fixed but disappointed it has plants instead. Just the thought, of slightly warm water gushing through the pipes into each bowl; small, medium, and large; makes spring sound so dearly and delightful.

All the majestic flowers and plants bloom. As my shoes slide off willingly, untied by each lace.

Barefoot, frolicking in the grass, sun shining, hair completely lost in the wind; as I spin in an early summer dress... After time ticks, I lay in the slightly wet grass, completely surrounded in nature, my skin breathing, hair in the grass. Looking up at the sky, imagining my world. It's exactly where I want to be. It is peace of mind, it is spring.

As I stand to take in the loose, light air; I think of what the world could be, a vision of the one I see.

Russell Evans



Making Moves

By

Debbi Dolan

Inspired by the writing prompt by Cheryl Boyce Taylor: Write about a move in your life.

My real estate broker younger sister Kathie found what became my cottage in the Hudson Highlands. A fixer-upper, it needed a new roof, electrical and plumbing systems, a new septic system, and during the summer drought, a deeper well needed to be dug. But it was affordable and I loved it. I painted each room the interior and decorated the walls and staircase with fanciful designs. The exterior was painted barn red and had white gingerbread trim. I had a cozy reading chair by the bay window. I planted a redbud tree beside the house, and daffodils around the perimeter. In the back behind the stone wall where the chipmunks scurried, I planted a vegetable garden. I remember how the feathery asparagus ferns flourished. I was thrilled to find baby cottontail rabbits emerge from under the shed, and deer and wild turkeys would occasionally appear. At night, starlight could be seen brightly as there were no streetlights, and I even once beheld Hale-Bop comet from the driveway. I could hear the yipping and howling of coydogs at night, and the hooting of a barred owl.

Finally, a place of my own after renting an apartment in the Bronx where I had been burgled three times. No more staying up listening to sounds of broken glass and drunken bravado. My elder neighbors were wonderful, and I felt safe with them next door and having my sister and family just three miles away. I was able to visit with them often and watch her three children grow. I was ensconced in the Hudson highlands where hiking trails abounded, affording majestic views of the Hudson River and the lakes of the region. A short drive into the town of Peekskill and there was a historic landmark movie theater, library, restaurants, a used bookstore, and coffee shop. Farmer's markets were held on weekends.

My commute to the Bronx where I taught in elementary school required a 5 am alarm, but the commute to be with my loved one spanned a greater distance. Matt lived in Woodside, Queens - a misnomer. No woods at all. He took the train to Peekskill to visit me, and I drove across the Triborough Bridge to be with him. Separations became more difficult as we fell deeper in love. Matt is forever credited with finding the solution to spanning this chasm between us. He asked me to come to join him house hunting and the first home we looked at together in Riverdale was

“The One” where we intertwined our lives. It was close enough to the arts and culture of New York City to nourish his pursuits as an artist, and it was very near to nature in Van Cortlandt Park, the third-largest park in the city. My commute to work was much closer.

Yet it was not easy to leave the country cottage I’d grown so fond of after living there for a dozen years. I’d left a part of me there. I was only moving an hour away from my sister and family, and the neighbors who were so kind, but I felt a sense of loss.

I’d been embedded in nature and would be moving back to the Bronx. But having Van Cortlandt Park so near, and Wave Hill too with its Hudson views comforted me.

Being a collector, it was necessary to hire a woman who could ruthlessly fill a dumpster with my excesses. I made some mistakes and lost some keepsakes by not

being as vigilant as I should have been about what made its way into the bin, but it was painful to watch things being discarded. Some valuable keepsakes that had been tossed in included an autographed photo of Robert Kennedy, my high school yearbook, and a huge bag of letters from my cousins who were my pen pals since I was 10 or 11 years old. But I think of those who lost everything in fires or floods and remember how fortunate I am.

I am supremely happy in Riverdale with my soulmate Matt, but when I drive past the little cottage that was once my home, I feel a pang of longing for the sights and sounds of nature that surrounded me, and I am flooded with memories of a time gone by. My neighbors have since passed away, and my sister’s children are all grown with homes and loved ones of their own. I am grateful for having had that experience. The little country cottage – a place of my own.

BLACK ROSE



Samson SaintLaurent

My chest heaves sorrow from your absence.

I long for the warmth of your embrace.

**My heart, though heavy,
counts the minutes you're away.**

I sulk in my pillow all day.

**Lips so sweet,
they taste like roasted sugar on an open flame.**

I yearn to feel them against mine.

**My emotions frolic, thinking of the wilderness
of happy memories we shared.**

My senses miss the smell of your addictive scent.

**To me, you are warm cinnamon dipped
in milk chocolate. I need you.**

Your skin is swarthy; sprinkled with gold.

I want you.

When your bright eyes look upon me,

I can see the hunger in them.

I am your craving. Devour me.

I am here for you.
The falling rain on my windowpane
reminds me of our warm sensual nights.
Making love in the soft white snow;
Dozens of time
we daringly kissed in the center of the storm.
I long for your return, my love.



Opening Night On Broadway

By

Ken Davis



Opening Night On Broadway

*Its opening night on Broadway under our city's lights and camera.
14 Deep is reciting their scripted-rights through their retaliation.
These color-coders' plea for respect and reputation is puzzling.
Thank God, for contemporary gang critics, near and far.
Only through their critiques can we appreciate ourselves.
So, why are we still held accountable for their quest?*

KD, 2021

Reference: Fourteen alleged members of the "300 Bloodhound Brims" street gang in Westchester have been arrested and charged for their roles in a violent assault of a man that caused potentially life-threatening injuries to a 33-year-old man. 06.17.2021

Thankful for what I have in life.

By

Kelly Encalada

Growing up, I have always been the only girl and very much spoiled, maybe this was because my dad felt guilty that he and my mom put me to the side once my brother was born. Which is very understandable, a newborn baby needs extra attention.

My father always brings up that ever since he watched the movie “boss baby”, a cartoon movie where the older brother gets no attention, feels left out ever since his younger brother was born, he felt a knot of guilt. “ We made you mature on your own at such a young age” he always says, but in fact it does not really bother me, every memory I have as a child has always been with my father.

My father tends to focus on that specific era of “maturing” but did not realize the positive maturing he had developed within me. I can not complain about being in a position of desperately needing. I have always had it my way, I always had the biggest room in the house, even when my parents lived in a small house with my two aunts, they still made it work. My room was always decorated my way, the biggest side wall was always hand drawn and painted by my uncle with the cartoon of my choice. My carpets, furniture, mirrors were always changed by god father willingly, i was really living it up.

Once i hit middle school, the spoiling turned into advantage, i would notice how kids were being picked on for not having good shoes, not having cool bookbags, not having the latest phone, not having good clothing, seeing how mean kids could be, i would always ask my dad to buy me the latest things knowing i will never get “no” as an answer.

I was never a person who needed much, I appreciated the attention but I always felt bad for those around me. I remember I would cry if I was with family and they would give me little things because I knew they would have to work for it.

I remember when the retro bred 13s first dropped. These shoes are the one pair that always makes me sad when I think of them. I had seen kids at my school post them on their social media and I was insisting my dad buy them for me. I did not want to go to school the next day without having them.

I remember it was around nine at night, my dad had just come back from work and I remember he had dark eye bags. He came to me and told me “let's go buy you the shoes”. We entered the store and I recognized some kids from my school. The shoes were selling out so I had to go half a size up. I was determined to get them.

We went up to the counter and the shoes were about \$300 for a kid's size. My dad was shaken but still pulled out his wallet to pay for the shoes with the tips he made. He had them wrapped in his shift receipt.

My mom would always argue with my dad for giving me everything I wanted. As we were walking home he threw out the receipt and told me to hide the shoes from my mom. I remember I cried that night because I felt so ashamed of myself, so ashamed that I let society get to me and the fear of being picked on got to me.

My dad is a very aware and cautious person, he teaches my brother and i ways to survive, teaches us how to run things in the house incase there is an emergency, always makes sure we have an emergency backpacks in case we have to run away but he especially makes sure we are ready for what the real world is.

One fall night, I was in my second year of middle school by this time, my dad called me and told me to go to his job because he wanted my brother and i to meet his coworkers. I was wearing a black turtleneck with a thin navy blue vest, light jeans and white converse.

As I was walking out the West 4 train station, I felt the slight breeze hitting my face. The butterflies in my stomach were throwing up because of how nervous I was. Then there it was, the legendary One if by Land, Two if by Sea, the restaurant which many of my family members have worked in.

I entered the restaurant and wow,what a beautiful restaurant. I hear the jazz group playing, I smell the chocolate souffles, I see multiple beef wellingtons being served, and mmm the way I felt my mouth water up.

I get to the back and WOW! Definitely not so beautiful, I hear the chef screaming, I see the ticket machine running non-stop, I feel the warm tired breath of the runners blowing on me as they are heading out while they try to welcome me and ughhh how I wanted to take my father home with me.

My heart shattered, within those seconds everything about me changed. There is no other heart breaking feeling than seeing how your parents work.

Everyone in the restaurant recognized me instantly, they knew my name, they knew everything about me, but i didn't know them, i was so confused.

They all told me “ all your dad does is speak about you and shows us pictures of you, this third wow is beyond better than my first wow for when i saw the restaurant, wow how complete i felt, it made me realize how right my mom is, materialistic things do not make a person, materialistic things will never make me feel the way i felt.

It made me mature in so many aspects, it changed the way I thought, the way I see things, the way I appreciate things, and made me so thankful for what I have in life, my family, health, protection and love.

Since eighth grade till now, I get to go to work with my dad in the same restaurant where I still get told by the owner how my dad always enjoys telling customers his daughter is the one that made their dessert.

Russell Evans



Green

By Nora Freeman

I am green

yes, the color of the almighty dollar

but also the color of nature

(I'm a little schizophrenic)

the color of the plants that feed everyone

yet ask for nothing in return

they do not complain when everything they depend on is

Contaminated

or when they are summarily

BULL-DOZED

PAVED OVER

CHOPPED DOWN

to make way for the next

money-laundering scheme also known as glass tower

nature's green tries to speak for

JUSTICE

but the green of our corporate overlords

drowns her out

An American Story*

By Nora Freeman

Part I

Grocery shopping with mom
I always hope she gets
Those Aunt Jemima pancakes
They're the best
I know that because I see her on TV
And she tells me so
She always looks so happy
Like all she ever wanted to do
Was to make pancakes for me

Part II

Well, now it's a few years later
I'm a little embarrassed, a little ashamed
About how I used to harp on
Those Aunt Jemima pancakes
I started to wonder
Who is she anyway?
Does she have kids of her own?
Who takes care of them when she is making pancakes?
Do they like her pancakes?
Do they like to see her on TV?
Is she really someone's aunt?
Where does she live?
What does she like to do when she is not making pancakes?
Does she even like making pancakes?
Does she have friends?
Are her parents proud of her?

Part III

I stopped eating those pancakes
Because they started to taste
A little like blood

*Note: My mother never bought any Aunt Jemima products.

John Eastman High Coup 2022

By

Tara Krause

- [illegible]

We pray Esquire Eastman will have a long career
of POETRY .. BEHIND BARS (with the whole cohort
of fabulist insurrectionists.) His screeds to
be published - in best fashion on hoarded toilet paper

imitation on toilet paper to Allen Ginsberg by Amiri Baraka.

a psychedelic road trip

robert gibbons

it is the heels of this hurricane
the streets turn into a cypress swamp
and the trees went knee high in water
people barter in the buses sailing
like the Mississippi River fanning the heat

and the stink of one –thousand mice being
released in lower Manhattan; this is the reason
for all the hobgoblin; all the fall out drunk
is not recommended on a night like this

this is gang initiation and unauthorized
day of the dead; you can not tell who
is ghost or spirit or an apparition
this is Broadway and the night is costume

the stairs are dressed in stocking and there
are garters and chastity belts hanging on the light-
poles with fairies and Cinderellas; everyone
is out for something and they will get it;

it is a race to see who has the most product
on this street; how many ghost will appear
on one street; there are camera everywhere
but you can't keep up with a ghost when they fly

in the darkness of a ghetto window
behind a gray shutter in the Bronx
it is not scary, we always use precaution
in the mean street of East Harlem

the man with the banana yellow suit
and the pumpkins are purple and I thought
I had the urges of all the other hustlers and tricks
hanging out in this Hell's Kitchen near the diner

with egg parmesan sitting in the window all week
she wanted me to clean the plate after the fellatio
beneath the table covered in red plaid tablecloth
and all that was left was in my back pocket.

What's Red?

By Nora Freeman

Red

Red is blood (there, got the hot one out of the way right at the start)

Red is STOP now

Red is mad, angry, furious

Red is sexy

Red is the color of your face when you are embarrassed

Red is what we see when we are royally pissed

Red is the beginning of MURDER backwards

Red is burning hot

Red is your hands when you get caught doing a no-no

Red is plums and cherries, raspberries and strawberries and tomatoes, yum yum

Red is a herring when it's trying to distract you

Red is what you're in when you're broke, but not just any red, THE red

Red is the Bull that keeps you going going going going going until you d

r

o

p

Red WAS what Real Amurkins once would rather have been dead than, but NOW ...

Red is rabid right-wing anti-vaxx believers of the Big Lie and ...

Red is the pill that they swallowed

Red is the tape that the deep state wraps around you so you can't move

Red is the meat thrown at those in a red-state-of-mind

Red is one-third of the Amurkin flag, and don't you ever forget it or you'll be sorry

Dying Peace
By
Samson SaintLaurent

Throw the animals into the barn.

And burn it!

Toss in the red and the blue

and all who's untrue.

Kick in the ones wanting control.

Let them go head to head;

something we all dread.

Visions of liberty,

Death instead.

Equality drowns in the middle of the sea.

Throw the animals into the barn.

Close the doors.

Lock the latch,

strike a match and stand back.

Just watch.

Let it burn.

Down to the ground in ashes and dust,

neither side do I trust.

Just wait.

Peace and hope will thrive again
Only when He says.
After we realize peace and hope don't lie in man's hands,
but in our Creator.
So let the barn and all inside burn.
It will get worse before peace can come.
Just watch.
Let it burn.



Secrets

By

Diane Garofalo

What do we do with secrets?

Keep them, share them?

Are they harmful?

Are they a kindness?

Can we become more with their knowledge?

If, known will it cause sadness? joy?

Have us confront decisions best left unsaid?

Bring us elation beyond words.

How did we acquire this secret?

Why was I told?

To be part of the fun?

To be part of the pain?

It may seem best to hide secrets

where they cannot be found.

I am multicolored

By

Marcia Klein

The rainbow has six colors
I am four: blue, red, green, yellow
Blue my sadness, red my anger
Green and yellow are my happy colors
The Blue of ingrained American racism
Unarmed African Americans shot
Asian Americans beaten
Attacks on Jewish houses of worship
Blue and an angry shade of red
My green will treat all equally
Men, women, children, teenagers,
African Americans, Asian Americans, Jews
Yellow, my sunshine, says maybe one day

ANGEL

By

Diane Garofalo

One phase to another I move along
Toiling my way, grinding alone
Always checking my rearview mirror
My Angel appears
Laughing, chuckling at my moves
I'm twisting and turning through my journey.
No one listens, no changes are made
The journey goes on and on as already planned
It's up to the angel, not me

The Female Writer

By

Ken Davis



QUE/STO – the female writer

She's getting-up again, looking for fame.
Yet, she's never praised. Only viewed as a lawless vandal.
She's getting-up again, looking to be all-city.
Yet, all the city's surfaces refused to grant her queenship.
She's getting-up gain, this time between two creeping-egos.
Well positioned, and only through them is she seen as something original.

K.D., 2021

Reference: Three teenagers accused of being graffiti vandals were arrested after serious damage was done to a business. Jasmine Silva (18 aka QUE), Andrew Mack (19 aka PUSH), and Michael Cabon (18 aka FIVE). 08.28.2008.

I want to be

By

Mary Jane Motl

the grey bushy-tailed
perky eared squirrel
rummaging in my backyard

I want to scamper
up the red brick patio siding
jump on the iron railing

I want to leap grab
on to the hanging petunia basket
and sit in the middle crushing

the purple flowers
I want to stretch up
feast on the berry blast

square of bird food
until it's all gone.
I want to fly down

to the ground
wait and watch
the wire square

be re-filled
begin
again

Karen Erla

In an instant the whole past opens up before
me with the diffused voices of lost loved ones.

Easing through the air gliding to his perch a robin ushers in spring.

Why is the world asleep? There is no refuge from guns, for climate change,
from tyrants, from pandemics, from the facts being rearranged by fiction.

In this abysmal light I see on nervous thrush in the shadow of a pine.

A stone throw from here a gun is killing a child.

When will a great light pour into the darkness above the roof
of our nation. A great cloud looms covering our source of light.

A rose is unfolding its petals. Above the tangle of oak
branches press against the pale vault of the sky.

The sea spreads its fury against the cliffs. The looping valleys
are flooded from the rage of a storm.

Illusions burn in the shad of that green thicket

Time burns away showing no signs of a peaceful blue sky.

I listen to the flowing colors of nature's music. It lifts me from despair into
the crazed light of the sun.

Guns have a stranglehold on our nation. They are papering our streets.
Our

children are dying every day. We are in agony watching the indifference
on

the faces of those who could save them.

What is our human destiny in this unquenched thirst for firearms?

A Woman In A Man's Field

Marcia Klein, Mathematician/Computer Scientist/Writer

“Never Underestimate a Woman with a Mathematics Degree”

*Defined in Glossary

Notes, Footnotes - references and definitions.

Part 1 - Early years

It started when I was in high school, 1957. Math was easy. Answers to math problems popped into my head. Given a “word problem” to solve I knew the answer as soon as I read the problem. Hearing the problem, If A is travelling at 120 mph and is one lap, $\frac{3}{4}$ mile behind B, and B is travelling 110 mph, how many laps will it take A to catch B the answer, 12 laps just popped into my head.⁽¹⁾

My math teacher, Mrs. Taft, keep insisting I should become a college math major. She even spoke to my parents about it. I was okay with that.

My older brother, Ivan, one and a half years older, attended Brooklyn Technical High School, a boys' only school then. Ivan was assigned Math/Engineering problems to solve. Ivan, his male buddies and I drew diagrams in pencil on our Formica* kitchen table: triangles, rectangles, squares, circles, bisected angles, added lines inside and outside shapes to understand problems. We created mathematical proofs based on these diagrams. You know teenage boys, some boys claimed they did not need help

from me, a girl, actually they did. One young male suggested I should leave, I was annoyed and reminded him, he was in my house.

Mom insisted we leave the table in the same condition we found it. The table was white with faint gray streaks making it look like marble. Pencil drawings stood out on the light surface. We cleaned the table with soap, a small amount of Ajax cleanser, water and elbow grease, pencil marks disappeared. We rinsed the table with water. Voila, the diagram disappeared, the table was ready to be set for breakfast, lunch or dinner.

Part 2 - College Years Syracuse University

I attended Syracuse University and was awarded a BS in 1962, 36 credits in mathematics. Most math majors were male.⁽²⁾ I was not encouraged to major in math. Three friends, Jane, Eileen and I started out together. We shared the same male faculty advisor. He successfully talked Eileen out of remaining a Math Major. Our grades were all equal. I believe our advisor, Dr. Gilbert, thought women should not become mathematicians. Jane and I persisted and succeeded in our chosen field.

My fellow math major –male titles only then, Jane and I studied numerical analysis in a class with seven male students. When Sir Isaac Newtons' formula came up, a male student suggested the formula was "classified". That male counterpart was not aware of historical facts, Sir Isaac Newton was born in 1643, his work studied worldwide. Jane and I knew! The instructor was surprised and amused by this comment, his facial expression was indicative of his amazement at this comment. He nodded to me and to Jane; we were smiling. This formula is taught to high school math students throughout the world.

I attended New York University Courant Institute of Mathematical Sciences⁽³⁾ and was awarded an MS in Computer Science. For the degree a grade of B or better on two exams was a requirement.^(Notes A) I passed Fundamental Algorithms and Linear Algebra* exams and was happy I made the grade. I was lucky to get a B+ on the Linear Algebra exam; I had only experienced Abstract Algebra* in college, not Linear Algebra. Abstract Algebra deals with groups of things while Linear Algebra deals with equations and is used extensively on Wall Street.

Faculty members treated male and female students equally. I and my 'fellow' female students at Courant always felt that we were being treated as and spoken to on the same level as male students in the program.

This degree opened many doors for me!

Part 3 - Employment

The Actuarial Department at the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company was my first position after graduating from college. Female employees received \$2.00 a week less than male counterparts for equal work. I resented this policy! This policy was resented by me and 'fellow' female co-workers. We protested to no avail. A Met Life policy was: one mathematician filled a spread sheet based on a formula, another was assigned to verify the data.

I refused to verify spread sheet data calculated by a particular young male mathematician who was related to a company executive because I had discovered his calculation errors. A manager reprimanded me for not verifying the spread sheet. Later, I learned that the manager sent the young man's spread sheet off to be printed *before* it was verified. Was I asked to do the verification because I was female and the manager did not expect me, a woman, to find the errors or complain.

In 1982 I accepted a position in the electronics lab at Rockefeller University (RU). I was treated equally. When I won first prize in a Prolog* programming competition, the lab director wanted to take credit for my accomplishment. The program helped scientists collecting data, select appropriate software and hardware for their research. The director tried doing the same to a male lab employee who published a paper about utilizing mini-computers for scientific research. His need for publishing credit was not limited to exploiting women. His name first, my name second.

I was working at AT&T, 1984 – 1987, when a male counterpart took an installed site tested “trouble shooting module” (I was project leader on the module* and wrote most of the code) and rewrote it while I was on vacation. The module was being utilized in a back office of the NY Stock Exchange on a computerized system. The person who rewrote the code had no comprehension of what the “trouble shooting module” accomplished. He installed his code on the Stock Exchange system, replacing my version the day I returned from vacation. His version, looked neat, but it messed up the system. It did not function properly and muddled database files where data like locations of individual phones were stored. The module allowed AT&T technicians working at the NY Stock Exchange to locate phones not functioning properly in need of immediate repairs. I received a phone call from Bob Davey, the stock exchange Director of Operations telling me the “trouble desk module” was broken. When I looked at the code, I noticed it had no resemblance to what was installed and tested. I was fuming; as was the stock exchange Director of Operations. We were both rather upset!. The AT&T System Administrator and I found the culprit by tracing digitized records of who made changes to the “trouble desk module”. Tracking names of everyone who modified modules, installed or under development, was standard practice at AT&T. The culprit was fired along with the male project

leaded who allowed someone to revise tested onsite operational software without informing the customer. I admit, my code looked convoluted, but it functioned efficiently, conforming to stock exchange requirements. In the 1980's programmers had to code around limited computer memory, primitive operating systems* and limited data storage*.

Patrt 4 - History

'The first real computer programmer, English Mathematician Ada Lovelace, born in 1815, designed an Analytical Engine (never built) that could follow a series of instructions to perform complex calculations.**

**Paraphrased from Internet data

In 1940's England: a woman answered an ad to take an exam to qualify for a position at Bletchley Park* decoding German messages encrypted using enigma machines*. She had to fight to be permitted to take the exam. Her grade was the highest that day. She was hired immediately over the objections of some male British brass. She made important contributions to the decoding project, saving lives during WWII. In the United States during WWII, early programmers on machines such as ENIAC* were mostly women⁽⁴⁾.

By the time I graduated from college in 1962 AT&T was actively recruiting female mathematicians for their long lines division. They offered me a position which I turned down, selecting instead an actuarial trainee position from the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company. By the mid 60's, the US Federal Government was enacting laws to reign in workplace inequality.

Women mathematicians were hired around the middle of the 20th century to do key calculations on US space projects, yet in the timeline between the 1990s to 2011 there was a significantly low representation of women in the field.⁽²⁾

With the introduction of STEM in 2001, educators began emphasizing **Science**, **Technology**, **Engineering**, **Mathematics**. Women were and are being encouraged to study these subjects. Before STEM the number of female students in these fields was moving lower, now it is moving up.

Notes

(A) Graduate School - New York University Courant Institute⁽³⁾ – When I was awarded an MS in Computer Science requirements at NYU were 60 credits in the field, and grade of B or better on two comprehensive exams. Acceptance to this program in the 1980's, meant you were a PHD student who would receive a Masters Degree when you completed part of the program.

MS Degree requirements today, 2021:

An MS student must complete 36 points of approved coursework with a cumulative grade point average (GPA) of 3.0.

- 21 credits must be taken as standard CS classroom-based courses.
- An additional 6 credits in standard graduate CS, Math and Data Science classroom-based courses; independent study; or MS thesis (no external internships). Independent study and master's thesis require DGS approval.
- The remaining 9 credits may be any of the above, or may be: credits transferred from previous graduate study in Computer Science at another university; external internship; or relevant graduate courses in other departments at NYU. At most 6 credits of external internship may be taken. Relevant graduate courses and external internship require DGS approval.

For more details go to: https://cs.nyu.edu/home/master/current_mscsreq.html

References

(1) Solution 10 mph difference start at $\frac{3}{4}$ mile apart, $\frac{3}{4}$ divided by 10 = $\frac{3}{40}$ = 0.075 hours to catch up, or $\frac{3}{40}(60)$ = 4 $\frac{1}{2}$ minutes. 120 mph is 2 miles per minute. $4 \frac{1}{2} \times 2$ = 9 miles, 9 divided by $\frac{3}{4}$ = $9(\frac{4}{3})$ = 12 laps

(2) *Women and Mathematics Balancing the Equation* - editors Susan F. Chipman, Lorelei R. Brush, Donna M. Wilson. Table 14 excerpts “1963-1964 BA in Mathematics 32.0%”, “1976-1977 BA in Mathematics 41.5%”

(3) **Courant Institute of Mathematical Sciences** “The computer science program is ranked #19 among computer science and information systems programs globally. In 2019, the Academic Ranking of World Universities placed the Courant Institute as **#3 worldwide in the subject ranking for mathematics.**” As defined on the internet.

Founded in 1935, named after founder Mathematician Richard Courant.

(4) ENIAC - Primary Programmers Kay McNulty, Betty Jennings, Betty Snyder, Marilyn Meltzer, Fran Bilas, and Ruth Lichterman, “ENIAC Programmers Project” eniacprogrammers.org, Donaldson, James, Susan (December 2007) “*First Computer Programmers Inspire Documentary*”. ABC News retrieved March 29, 2015

Glossary

Abstract Algebra - deals with algebraic structures like the fields, groups, modules, rings, lattices, vector spaces (Wikipedia, and ByJus Definitions Combined)

Bletchley Park - name of location where the British were secretly collecting and decoding enemy communications during WWII

enigma machines - Germany used them to send secret messages to their armed forces

ENIAC an early computer built with vacuum tubes used during WWII

Formica – a surface that can be washed clean after writing on it, ours was a large rectangle

Module – A module is a software component or part of a program that contains one or more routines. One or more independently developed modules make up a program. (Techopedia Definition)

Operating System - controls how a computer processes instructions and uses devices

Linear Algebra – Linear algebra is a branch of algebra that applies to both applied as well as pure mathematics. It deals with the linear mappings between the vector spaces and matrices. It also deals with the study of planes and lines. It is the study of linear sets of equations with transformation properties and their representations in [vector spaces](#) and through [matrices](#). (Wikipedia, and ByJus Definitions Combined)

Prolog - prolog is a programming language now used in Artificial Intelligence applications, it uses pattern matching and is also used for linguistics – *collecting data* – converting analog data measurements and digitizing them

Storage - where data is physically stored, hard disk, tape, printed data,

Site place where a system is physically located]

For Omar

Issue #4, The Community Writing Project Journal features Yonkers photographer Omar Kharem. A thank you and humble gift from me to him for all the years of friendship. He has also shared his amazing family with me through the years.

“ You should call my friend Golda- here is her number.” Linda remembers it scratched on a piece of cardboard. Omar, my friend of 65 years and both of us still going strong gave me the ultimate gift. His partner would become my friend and the sister I never had.

Omar and our friendship began at Brooklyn College, probably 1957 or 1958. I was a student, a dropout who returned and discovered that speech could be a major and I would be able to earn my living as a speech therapist/speech improvement teacher. He worked at the college as an elevator operator , charming and conversational. Me, the student who didn't want to walk up four flights of stairs to class- and so the up and downs of a lifetime of friendship began. His son, Haroon Kharem is an esteemed professor at Brooklyn College.

Omar and I were out of touch for many years until Yonkers brought us together again. It was the 1970's. Me, parked in my car in front of the building where I lived and he with his sauntering almost sprint-like walk taking North Broadway in easy strides. I opened my window and called out to him. Our friendship didn't miss a step or beat- the years vanished and here was my good buddy. Yonkers, our common denominator.

He, now esteemed photographer, me professor and poet. He developed rolls of film in the darkroom in his apartment- photographed and preserved the New York jazz scene and musicians. He captured the grit and beat of NYC. Festivals featuring jazz, soul and everyday folk preserved in black and white. His photographs of the cityscape, iron structures that were pure New York City, kids, people hangin' out, all are glorious. He is now in his 90's and we still hang out. That's what keeps us keepin' on.

The photo of Omar standing in front of a dilapidated Yonkers building on Main St. was taken by my sister Linda J. Mendelson. This photo, a taste of what Main St. Yonkers looked like before a face lift, renovation and revitalization.

Our downtown area now buzzes with culture, renewal and is welcoming to all.

Yonkers past held in his jaunty pose and a click of Linda's camera.

Publisher Samson Saint Laurent, chose from 74 photographs, these for you to enjoy.

Appreciatively,
golda Solomon





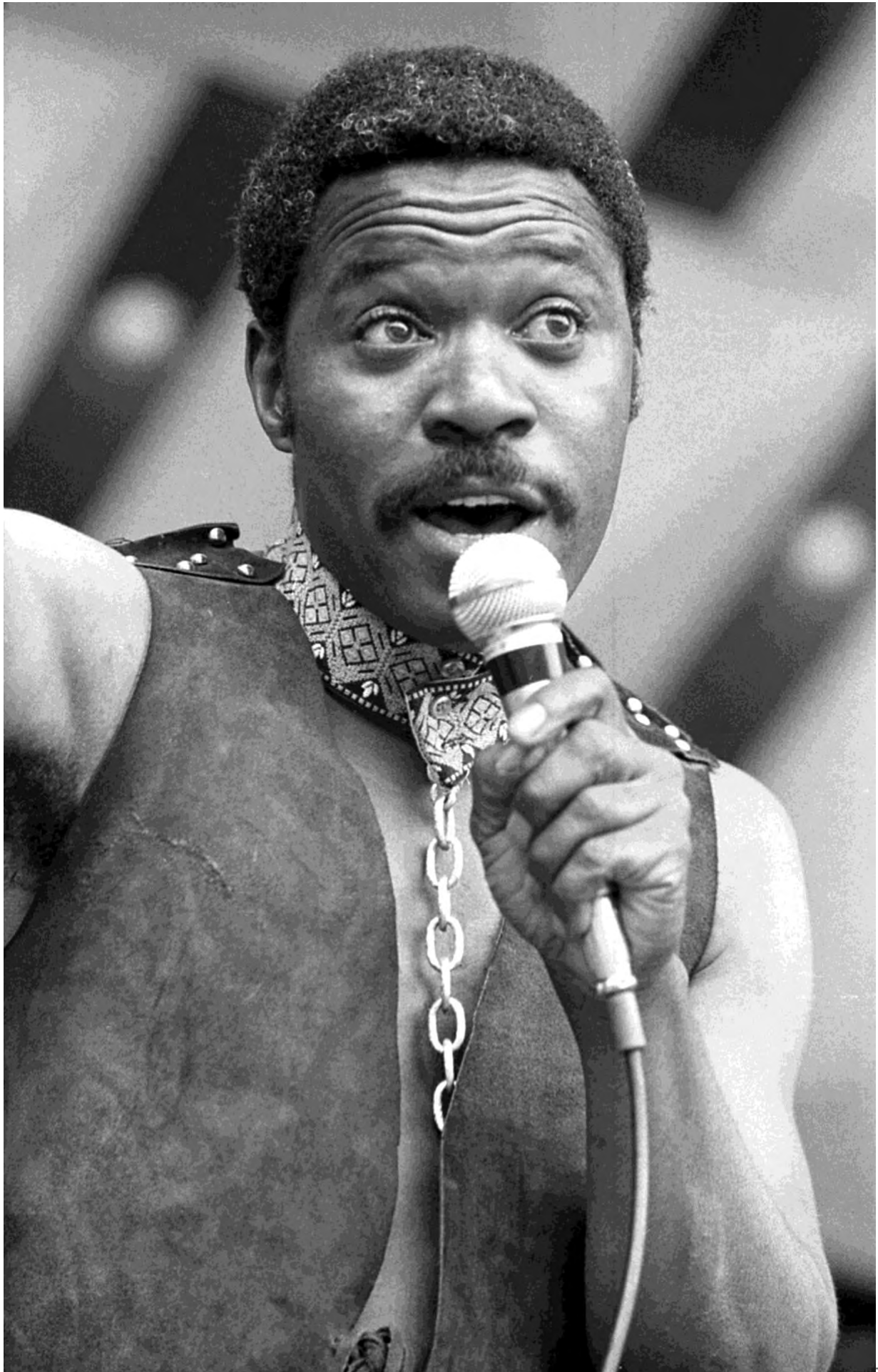


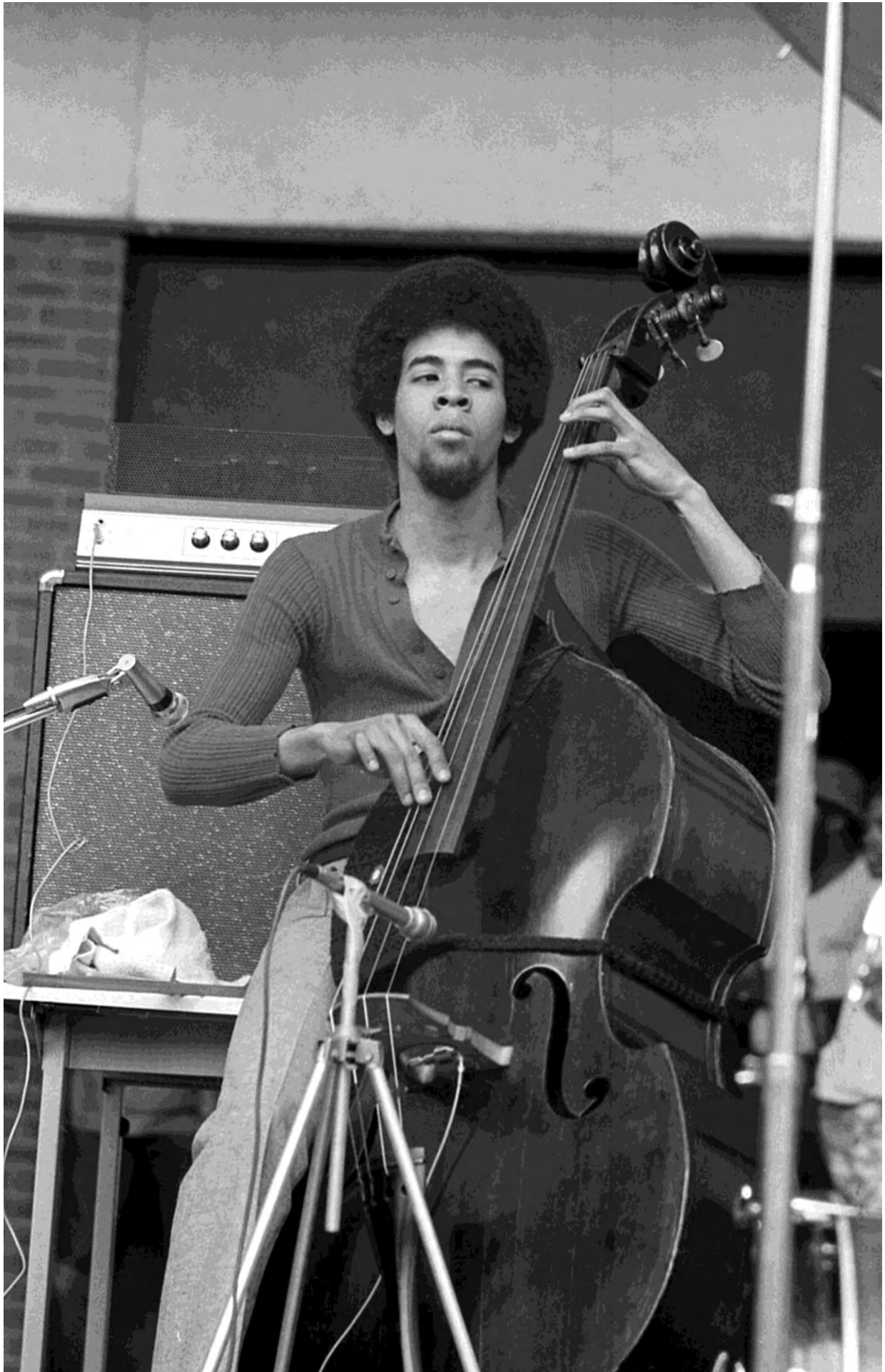




















BIOGRAPHIES

Sheila Benedis

Sheila Benedis is a published artist with an extensive art career in baskets which turned into sculptures, installation work and artist books. Her work is exhibited in galleries and museums throughout the US. She has had solo shows at colleges, universities, and appeared in New York Times reviews. She had a solo show in Saint Peters Church at Citicorp NYC. She has had artist residencies throughout the world and is in many collections. Sheila's work uses poetry in her artist books to explore her life.

Kenneth Davis

Graffiti/Gang Specialist & Private Investigator. Yonkers Police Department
Mercy College. National Gang Crime Research Center's
Presenter and Staff Member (2001 – present) Yonkers Police Department
(Police Officer 1985 – 2009; Detective 2009 – present) NYS DCJS, MPTC –
Law Enforcement Instructor (1994 – present)

To continuously enhance my proficiency, as a graffiti and gang specialist, in the various services of identification and analysis, apprehension, prosecution, prevention, intervention, restorative justice, restoration, and information management.

Debbi Dolan

Debbi Dolan is a retired Literacy Specialist and is an Exercise and Brain Games instructor for retired teachers. She's a Nature Guide, engages in stewardship activities in parks and preserves, and citizen science phenology at NYBG.

During the covid-19 pandemic, she's been an avid participant in The W.A.V.V.E.S. and ArtSpeak writing programs. Her fervent desire is to promote health, and foster appreciation of the natural world in order to preserve it.

Kelly Encalada

Kelly Encalada is a student at Borough of Manhattan Community College. This narrative story was written in her Speech class. Kelly contributed to the success of many students in her class.

Karen Erla

The essence of my work is embedded in the changing light of any given day. I look beyond the horizon and try to draw on what I see and feel. I think about our relationship with each other and with this astonishing world. I think about questions that have no answers. In the hidden silence within I try to excavate something elusive and coax it into life where I live devoted to the discovery of its wonder.

Russell Evans

. “I am a Welsh artist and writer living in England. My themes in poetry and visual poetry are trauma, survival and experience. I wrote two books on filmmaking and teach creative writing at Plymouth University. My drawings and photography have been exhibited in Italy and New York.

Evans was born in Cardiff in 1966 and studied Fine Art at Plymouth University. He lives in Devon with his family and is currently taking a PhD in Creative Writing at University of Plymouth www.russellevansart.com ”

Nora Freeman

I am a latecomer to poetry. Though I have always been a reader I steered clear of reading poems, and even more of writing them until very recently.

My first venture into writing poetry came during the height of the pandemic when I heard about a poetry workshop under the auspices of the Blue Door Art Center. This poem was written to the prompt “write a job description.”

Diane Garofalo

I do not remember when I started writing but once begun, I just kept going, adding on music, art and poetry to my repertoire. My life consisted of travels, mishaps and accomplishments. As I create; my subject became life itself which is emulated in all that we see, feel and touch. In my art, I capture moments and make the canvas dance with colors, my words converging to generate a picture of what life should be.

Robert Gibbons

Robert lives in Brooklyn and continues to be active in the New York poetry scene. Robert's first collection, *Close to the Tree*, was published by Three Rooms Press (2012). His chapbook, *Flight*, was published by Poets Wear Prada (2019) *You Almost Home, boy*, published by Harlequin Creatures (2019) and his collaboration with Brooklyn based visual artist, Amy Williams, “Some Little Words” was published 440 Gallery, Brooklyn (2021) He is the Co-host of ArtSpeak/From Page to Performance and Make W.A.V.E.S (Writing, Activism. Values, Empowerment & Sharing)

Mona Kalman

Mona Kalman is an actress, writer, photographer, fashion designer, and activist. She is just a young teenage girl who loves turtles, horses, flamingos, Zac Efron, and watching teenage romance movies while slurping on a giant bowl of Ramen Noodles. Just a girl with a dream of walking the red carpet. A dream of living in a penthouse in New York City. A dream of having her own horse named Gaby.

A girl can only dream.

Marcia Klein

I grew up in Brooklyn NY, and received my BS from Syracuse University, MS from New York University (Courant Institute of Mathematical Sciences). I was an experienced Computer Programmer/Systems Analyst/Consultant and held various other positions. I am an experienced grant writer now retired and I have been married for 57 years, am a grandmother to three and Great Aunt to seven. I am now learning to write poetry and prose.

Tara Krause

New to ArtSpeak and Po'Jazz, Tara Krause is an artist and spoken word poet with Frontline Arts and Warrior Writers NJ. She performed at Poetic Theater Productions, FDR Presidential Library, and Montclair Museum of Art. She wrote *War Garden Crone*, a jazz spoken word poetry micro-opera in New York Theatre Workshop's playwright program. She graduated from West Point and NYU and is a disabled veteran of the nuclear cold war and the first gulf war.

Mary Jane Motl

She was born and raised in the small village of Monticello NY about 90 mi. NW of New York City in the Catskills. Everyone had a vegetable garden in their backyard and rockers on their front porch. Fresh water came from the tap and clothes dried on a line strung from the apple tree on one side of the driveway to the pear tree on the other side. After retiring from 41 yrs. as a Middle School Science in Scarsdale NY she found a wonderful poetry program sponsored by the Town of Greenburgh in Westchester County called Learning To See. The classes and teachers gave her a new life in poetry.

Samson SaintLaurent

Samson SaintLaurent, nurtured by his mother and aunt to further his writing career, paid off. He's involved in helping those in need. Samson SaintLaurent being the only child advocates for those who are not heard or seen. It brings him joy, thus he continues steadfast in assisting others. He loves to cook. In his spare time, he dabbles in carpentry and fashion.

Outdoor activities such as roller skating and biking he enjoys. He has a strong love for good stories, wine, awesome movies, and terrific music. His style of music ranges from classical to country and everything in between.

He gets pleasure from painting as well as drawing. He is working on several writing projects including a line of cookbooks, poetry books, and novels. He's an animal lover and he resides in New York.

Leslie “Nawaz” Reaves

Leslie “Nawaz” Reaves...Woman, Mother, Daughter, Sister, Wife, Friend, Teacher, Social Worker, Author, Lover, Poet, and Human. She’s been empowering Men, Women, and Children for over 40 years and continues to do so through her Spoken Word. Nawaz is known to be the voice for those, who are neglected, disrespected, unprotected, disconnected, rejected, and misdirected.

Golda Solomon

Golda Solomon, First Poet Laureate, Yonkers N.Y, Poet-in-Residence Blue Door Art Center, Professor,Spoken Word, Author,Artist, Founder & Co-host: ArtSpeak, Make W.A.A.V.E.S (Writing, Art, Activism, Values, Empowerment,Sharing),Po’Jazz On Hudson (Playdates with Poetry and Jazz) Solomon is also a founding member of The Jazz & Poetry Choir Collective. The J&PCC latest offering, the CD, We Were Here. This 2021 Yonkers Artist Initiative ArtsWestchester grant recipient walks through life more slowly, more powerfully. www.goldajazz.com gs@goldajazz.com 914 207 0477

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Solomon created/hosts: Po’Jazz((Playdates with Poetry & Jazz), ArtSpeak/From Page to Performance, and Make W.A.V.E.S (Writing,Activism.Values, Empowerment, and Sharing) ekphrastic workshops.

Published collections:Flatbush Cowgirl, Medicine Woman of Jazz CD’s:Word Riffs, First Set, Po’Jazz ‘Takin” It To The Hollow’ and We Were Here (J&PCC).

Her poems are in The Mom Egg Review, About Place Journal, Solo Café, Heal and other journals.

She performs with musicians and is founder/member, The Jazz & Poetry Choir Collective.