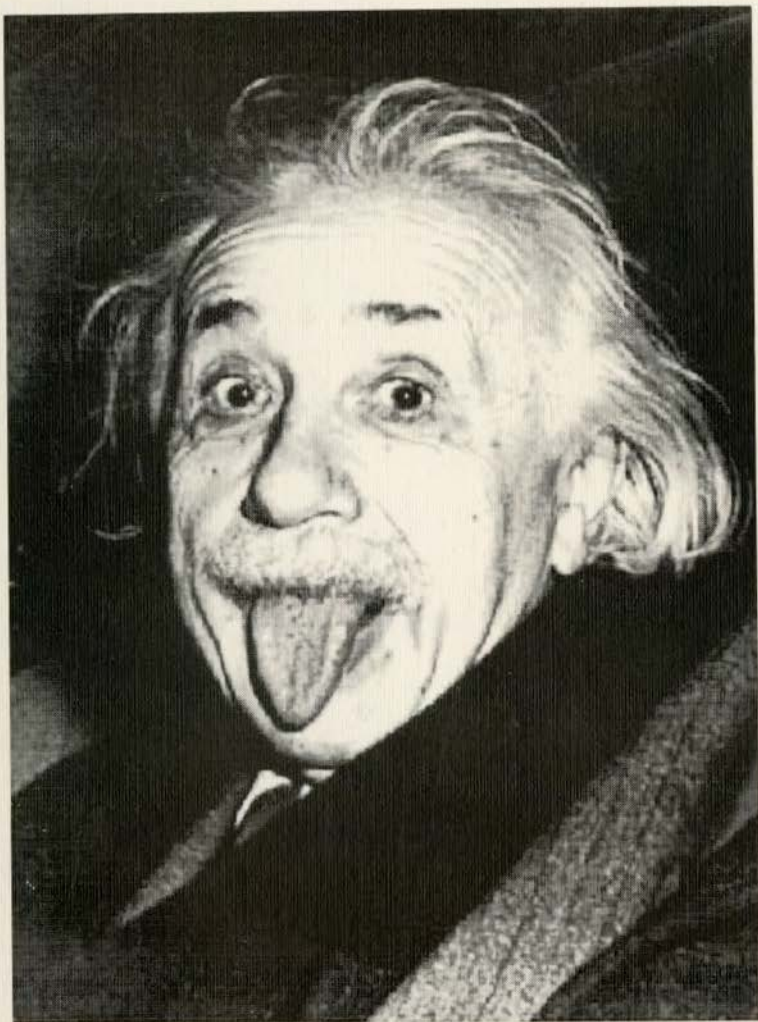


# Cynics of the World Unite



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***The Southern Quill*****1998-1999****Cynics of the World Unite**

"Only two things are infinite,  
the universe and human stupidity,  
and I'm not sure about the former."

—Albert Einstein

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**"It is people who make me seasick—not the sea.  
But I'm afraid that science is yet to find  
a solution for this ailment."**

**—Albert Einstein**

## Alyson Overton

### Statue of Tyranny

Down between the docks,  
Among the rats,  
I walk and wander,  
Searching for some evidence  
Of humanity,  
Some shred of decency,  
An arm to grab and trust,  
A country founded in love  
And born of fire  
Like a flag waving  
From a float sailing  
Down a deserted street,  
Displaying, like a rusted trophy,  
Blinding Stars and Stripes standing  
For the American question,  
A way of life, undisputed,  
Undiscovered, and unobtained,  
A float made of banners and lies,  
In memory of fathers who died  
Without leaving us a legacy,  
Without leaving us a leg to stand on.

## Heather Brough

### To Catch A Poem

Leprechaun-elusive,  
Evading more my every pit  
For snaring its inviolate form:  
Escape-artist consummate.

Flicker, snatch, arrest, grasp,  
Gone.

Blast! Another inch meant chains  
For Insight's fickle fairy,  
Now taunting, limping from my gaze—  
(She's free, but twice as wary).

My motives? I can vindicate  
My spectre's endless haunt:  
Perfection's psalms alone placate  
Its lone disciple's want.

But Inspiration's pregnant bolt  
Of lightning never strikes,  
And I am left, pathetically,  
A wet and useless kite.

## Lael Langston

### An Empty Box of Letters

An empty box of letters  
 Lay on the vacant desk.  
 I decided I'd unspill them,  
 Because they wouldn't read  
 Out loud among the open  
 Flames, swept up the doorways,  
 Halls, and water cans.  
 Blinking sparks and screaming  
 Smoke whispered in my eyes.  
 I ran down to the dying grass  
 And mailed an empty  
 Envelope filled with tea  
 From China's warehouse gold.  
 It sparkled in my tear,  
 Then laid to rest in someone's  
 Kind mind, until pillow cases  
 Uncovered it and ran it out of  
 Towns that seemed too smothering  
 And hearts that weren't there.  
 At a stop I flew on by,  
 Disregarding its reaches.  
 To me it seemed a solemn  
 Affair to be had, at any  
 Occasion always possible.

## Melina Nielson

### The Same Question

Again the computer screen flashes.  
 No, it is not okay.  
 The phone rings, and another hope is canceled.  
 No, it is not okay.  
 The day is empty,  
 And sunlight is only air.  
 The same question is posed to me,  
 The response the same.  
 Nothing that happens is merely all right.  
 My life refuses to be the watercolor dream  
 That I would have it be.  
 I wander confused through the day  
 Until the stars suppress the sun  
 And the night cools the world.  
 Every night brings a new day,  
 And it's okay.

Fourth Place Winner, 1996-99 Annie Allin Tanager  
 Poetry Competition

## Nicole Melissa Wilkes

### Detaining Rainbows

Crayon color spills across the newspaper print,  
The way a prism seeps fluidly through glass,  
Refashioned in a stream of ribbon light.

Rummaging through your pillowy prison,  
You crouch over, searching for my case,  
Though I've nothing left to present.

In sofas we've lofted through an ever-stretched even;  
We have created comfort, hypnotized  
In Technicolor image illumination.

I lick the smeared blackness across my knuckles bent;  
Periwinkle looks blue, though purple is the argued hue  
Invading the pages split under my thumb.

Cushions nuzzle you before the changing scenes;  
A slate of glass entertains as I await,  
Rubbing pastels on the thigh of my jeans.

## Alyson Overton

### 1999

Slumping in a corner,  
A man,  
A withered Jack-O-Lantern  
Under a rain-beaten hat,  
Swaying in rhythm to the music of his memories.  
He sees notes so real, almost tangible.  
They float like fragile bubbles above him,  
Buoyed up by good thoughts.  
He coughs,  
An old man with colic.  
Some never outgrow childhood epidemics  
Or boyhood dreams.

## Lisa Freestone

### Tomorrow\*

Tomorrow is not filled with promise,  
As today I find myself alone.  
Changing the past is impossible;  
It's unforgettable, but I wish it were gone.  
I dream I'm an angel with wings,  
Flying away from all of my sin.  
I sit in a heavenly place,  
But then I wake up again.

*\*Fourth Place Winner, 1998-99 Annie Atkin Tanner  
Poetry Competition*

## Nicole Melissa Wilkes

### Dialogue

It's just after eleven p.m. and rainy. I arrive on the front porch drenched, searching for the right key in the tangles of brass. The porch light is not on to assist me, but I know someone is home because I can hear the television laughing. Only two minutes pass before I can break through the rusty key hole and get my key to turn. I'm inside. There's not a greeting, but she looks up at me. She's obviously glad to have gotten home before me; otherwise, the remote may have been in my control. I carry my bike over the carpet and linoleum, hoping the rain water won't drip too much on the floor. She blames me for the black spots on the carpet, but some investigative work proves that black-soled shoes are to blame, and not carried bicycles.

I take a long shower, making sure my hair is plenty conditioned because it's not been trimmed in six months. She had said before that she would trim it, but never opened a slot for me at the beauty college she's attending. I don't mind because she really wants my hair in high-maintenance layers, so I can spend as much time and hair spray as she does every morning. So I just ignore it and think about when I can get that extra ten dollars to have Super Cuts give it a trim. Sure, it's never worth the ten bucks because they either trim only a half of an inch or six inches more than you had requested. What does it matter at this point?

I towel myself down, thinking about when I will no longer have to come home to her, when her socks won't be left on the coffee table, and popcorn bowls won't be left on the counter top for a month at a time. It seems so far away, like one of those nightmares you have where you're being chased through the woods, and the only light is a pinprick in the all-consuming darkness. You run, and run, but the light never gets closer. Of course she can leave a mess because she knows it will always be cleaned up somehow. She never takes responsibility for the scummy bathtub or moldy dishes because we bow down and let her step on our heads with her fat, three-inch heels. If something was said on a daily or weekly basis, a change may occur; however, tri-monthly won't do anything but feed the agitation.

I know when this started. It started a year ago when we moved in together. We never spoke then, either. I didn't care as much at the time because she hadn't yet claimed me as her friend. Last year, she never sat in my room yapping on about the boy she thinks she loves, who couldn't care less about her. One afternoon this summer, while watching "A Wedding Story" on TLC, she told me she was going to marry him, and even the style of tuxedo he would wear. I don't know why I can't believe her. The mirror is all fogged up and supported by my hand towel because it broke loose from the wall a couple of weeks ago, and fixing it runs the risk of breaking it. Of course, I don't think she has even noticed. Hers is the only hand towel available, and it is damper than a swamp, considering it hasn't been washed since I washed it last month. Her make up, bath towel, and hair dryer are all strewn across the counter. I hang up the towel and want to put the others in her drawer, but I'm afraid that if I did she'd throw a fit to herself and hold it against me. She does that often; how often, I don't know. I know it happens because that's when she makes quick decisions without consulting anyone else in the apartment.

That's what happened when she canceled the long distance. She hasn't even noticed that we were being charged for a long-distance calling plan, when we have a long distance block. I had it cleared up Saturday. She won't notice until the next bill comes without any charges, and the three months we overpaid will be credited back to us, taking care of two entire bills. I think how great it would be if I wasn't there when the next phone bill arrived, but I don't think it's likely.

I tie my hair up in my bath towel and sneak out the bathroom door wearing my coziest pajamas. My bed is so inviting. It's twin sized and the box-spring's broken, but it is the nicest place I could possibly be at the moment. I shut off the light and close my eyes. I have the next six hours and twenty-three minutes to sleep before that alarm yells, and I'm determined to enjoy it.

Downstairs, the television is turned up; I can hear the dialogue. I cover my head and pretend it's just not there.

## Lisa Freestone

### Yearning

A fire that is getting hotter burns me deep inside my chest.  
It makes its way through my insides and soon makes ashes of my flesh.  
My thoughts turn to gasoline from the complication in my head,  
So I strike a match in my empty heart to fill an aching that is already dead.  
My feelings now burned, I lie on my pillow with an expressionless face.  
I try to sleep as the tears wash away my cold-hearted taste.

## L. J. Chandler

### I Had a Weird Dream Last Night

DeForest Kelley was in an elf costume,  
Driving the Bat Mobile on his way to  
Help Obi Wan Kenobi, Indiana Jones,  
Yoda, and myself stop Mount Rushmore  
From destroying the Earth.

Then I went to sleep and had a really weird dream about breeding pine trees.

## Alyson Overton

### One Month, Five Days

You could find yourself lost in a big city, where buildings stab the sky and make it bleed thick, gray, sticky smog. A city where the streets are wide and nobody recognizes anyone else. Where everyone wears black and people never look each other in the eye. The head shots are glossy, and the billboards huge; it almost makes you think those people really are larger than life. You could get lost, but you could also find your dreams. And that is why they come. The songs and postcards make it seem so inviting—"Bright Lights, Big City," "The Big Apple"; after all, "If you can make it there, you'll make it anywhere. . . ." They arrive every day by the dozens—singers, musicians, models, dancers, actors—with light still in their eyes and fire in their hearts, a fire which the city will most likely extinguish. Their audition numbers burrowing tunnels through their brains, they wander the New York streets in a trance, staring up at the gigantic skyscrapers, imagining themselves as big as Godzilla, the city their playground.

Sara (no 'h'), a small town girl from Virginia, came too. She stepped off the Greyhound Bus like a queen from her carriage. With an elegant turn of her royal head, she surveyed her new kingdom, or at least the one she intended to conquer. If people had been paying attention, they would have noticed her blood is blue, but this is New York, and nobody notices. She inhaled deeply, wanting a taste of her new home, but because of the dirty air, she stopped mid-breath and had to hold back a cough. Sara took this minor defeat in stride and stood even taller than before. She cleared her throat, almost silently, and marched on. Within the next week she had found a tiny but comfortable apartment in Greenwich Village with a roommate who was nothing less than colorful. She got a waitress job in an all-night cafe, where her pleasant attitude and long, blond hair seemed alien. She had memorized the first and last names of every Broadway and Off-Broadway casting director in the city. She spoke extensively to everyone she met who had ever been on stage. She went on an average of four auditions a day and slept less than four hours a night.

The first month there was nothing. Despite her determination and work, Sara had only made it past the first cut in a single audition. But she did not give up. If she wasn't practicing or auditioning, she was thinking about practicing and auditioning. At work she would hum scales as she served deep fried food to her cranky customers. Walking down the street, she would picture herself on a Broadway stage, the spotlight glaring in her eyes, the crowd standing to applaud. Her dreams were constantly on her mind. And looking back, she cannot understand where she went wrong.

One bleak and rainy night, Sara was waiting tables at Ray's Cafe, as usual. She was in the midst of serving some chicken noodle soup, when out of the downpour came a man like a kitten, hunched over and shivering. He stood in the doorway shaking the rain from his tattered trench coat, which didn't seem to have kept any rain out. He had no scarf or gloves, and his right shoe had a hole at the toe. But when he removed his hat, Sara could vaguely recognize a once-handsome man behind his snarled facial hair. He waited and was seated in her section. As she approached his table, she felt not scared, but nervous. She struggled to smile, welcomed him, and asked what she could get for him. He sat staring at the menu for a moment, took a deep breath, and then sharply replied, "Come back in a minute."

"Oh, okay." Sara was taken aback. She left him for a moment, and when she returned, she stood near his table silently and waited for his order.

"What do you do?" the man asked.

"Wh-what do you mean," Sara stammered.

He shot her a stabbing glare. "I mean, what do you do here?"

"I'm a waitresses," she replied.

"Not *here* here—in the world, in life, what do you do?"

"I'm a performer," she told him as she straightened her posture.

The man seemed amused. "Aren't we all," he said with a laugh, "'All the world's a stage, and all the men and women merely players.'" He looked at her sideways, "Who said that?"

Sara, confused, replied, "You did."

This seemed to amuse the man even more, for he was now roaring with laughter. Virtually everyone in the cafe was looking at them, and Sara could not

conceal her embarrassment. Her face flushed bright red, and she slumped, forgetting the posture she had just corrected. He noticed her discomfort and pitied her. His face dropped when he saw her staring at the linoleum with a wrinkled forehead. "I'll have the tuna melt and a cup of coffee, please." Sara nodded, still looking at the floor, took a step back, turned, and headed for the server's station.

She returned shortly with his order and set it down in front of him without a word. "Thank you," he said.

Sara looked at him with hesitant blue eyes and said, "You're welcome. Is there anything else I can get for you right now?"

"I used to be a performer," the man told her. He chuckled. "It's true; believe it or not, it's true." He looked down at his sandwich.

"What happened?" Sara asked.

The man looked up into her now-concerned blue eyes and said with a smile, "Same thing that always happens." He paused, Sara waited. "You find out," he continued, "you find out none of it really matters, nobody really cares."

"That's too bad," Sara said. "I'm sorry things didn't work out for you."

"It's not just me," replied the man as he took a huge bite of his tuna melt.

Sara gave him a half-smile and headed to one of her other tables, preferably one where her customer was not insane. Sara felt bad for the pathetic man. "Some people just don't have what it takes," she thought. In retrospect, she wishes she had spoken to him longer, and listened.

Although at the time Sara did not seem to be affected by that bizarre conversation with the sloppy, strange man, a few nights afterwards he haunted her dreams. She saw him as she often saw herself, alone in the middle of a Broadway stage with the spotlight aimed directly at him. He sat hunched on the ground with his head down, holding his tattered trench coat up around his ears. It seemed as though he was trying to block out the sound of a cheering audience, but this audience was silent. Then, suddenly, he lifted his head and seemed to stare straight through Sara's soul. Sara remembers being frightened in her dream because there was something different about the man, about his eyes—his irises had no color. Startled, she awoke damp with sweat; her heart was racing and her stomach churning. She could not erase the image of the

man from her mind.

The next morning when Sara arose, her eyes were bloodshot and had black bags beneath them from lack of sleep. Regardless, she set off for a day full of auditions. Standing in the long line at the theater where the auditions for a new Broadway show, starring Billy Joel, were taking place, she noticed that nobody noticed her. People were passing by, talking loudly; some were stretching, some warming up their voices, but no one was noticing her. She felt alone. Never in her life had she been ignored; she was always the stand-out, but not here—nobody notices her here.

Soon, a man with a clipboard was standing in front of her. Without looking at her, he asked, "What's your name?"

"Sara Larsen," she replied. She watched as he wrote it down. "S-A-R-A," she corrected him. "There's no 'H'."

The man with the clipboard continued writing her last name. When he was finished, he looked up at her and said, "I don't care. Your number is one hundred and sixty-five."

The audition went terribly. Sara forgot the dance moves and could not sing on key. Instead of the director's words, she heard the echoing voice of the man with the clipboard, "I don't care, care, care." She saw the colorless eyes of the man from the cafe, she felt the rain from his trench coat and realized his despair. Sara (no 'h') left the audition in a cold sweat, a waterfall of hot tears rushing down her crimson cheeks.

Instead of taking the subway as usual, she walked all the way home like a zombie. Once safely inside her apartment, she flopped down on the shabby, second-hand couch, without even bothering to take her shoes off, and almost instantly fell into a deep, dreamless sleep. She slept all that day, all that night, and most of the next day. When she did wake up, it was not because she wanted to but because she was so exhausted with sleep. She sat for about an hour or so; she cannot quite recall how long, for she had lost the concept of time. While she was sitting there, images of home crept from the back of her brain to the front, and she missed it. She felt hot summer days and cool spring breezes. She saw her friends and family, her street and home. She smelt the scent of her mom's cooking and heard her dad's laugh.

It seems like forever ago when she was in this bus station for the first time. Sitting here now, remembering these events, Sara shuts her eyes tight and wishes they would go away. She wishes she had never come to New York to find what she now considers a silly, little-girl dream. She wishes she had never met the man in the cafe, that she had never seen his eyes in her nightmare, and that she had never been so sure of herself. She wishes she had never gone to that audition where a man with a clipboard had changed her name and given her a number. These wishes were interrupted by a voice over the loud speaker, "Bus 112 to Richmond now boarding." This is her bus home. She looked down at the one-way ticket in her hand and almost smiled. Sara stood—not as tall as she had when she first arrived—and walked towards the bus. Standing in front of her giant, aluminum escape pod, "One more wish," she thought, "I wish I had never wasted one month, five days." She took one last breath of the filthy air and boarded the bus.

## Darryl T. Barfuss

### Vicarious Fan of a Dead or Dying Man

Standing squarely on your grave plot,  
Reading the etchings of your epitaph.  
Surely if you were still alive,  
He'd be asking for your autograph.

Discouraged by your untimely death,  
A charcoal rubbing will do.

## Alyson Overton

### All the Love and Happiness in the World

The house is too small. Sitting in the front room, Mrs. Nothing-In-Particular stares at the overstocked bookshelves against the white-painted wall reading the titles of each novel. She had read them all before in college or perhaps before, but not any more. Photographs of her children hang on each side; she squints at them, trying to remember the day in a hospital room, how had it felt—where is that feeling now? The vacuum is stopped in the middle of the floor where she had abandoned it when she decided to sit down, and the glass of orange juice she was drinking is making water marks on the coffee table.

Once again reading the book titles, she comes to one she has never read. "Strange," she mumbled as she made her way closer to the shelves. She picked it up and felt the solid velveteen of its cover; she opened it. On the first blank page an inscription read, "To my dear friend. On this special day I wish you all the love and happiness in the world. Love always, Barb." Now she remembers. This book was given to her by her best friend on her wedding day some ten-odd years earlier. She had never gotten around to reading it.

She sat staring at the beautiful cursive writing for a moment. A tear nearly swelled up in her eye, but before it could, she dropped the book down on the coffee table and swiftly left the room. She returned soon carrying an overnight bag and her coat. Leaning down to pick up her book off the coffee table, she noticed the water ring beneath the half-empty glass of orange juice; she nearly lifted the glass to wipe the wood with her sleeve, but she didn't. Instead, she reached past it and took up her book, holding it to her chest. She gave a deep sigh, then one last look, and headed toward the door.

## Valerie Langston

### The Black Expert

Biting serpent who poisons my dreams  
And takes away my hope of life.  
It is you who alters my moods  
And chases away my memories  
Of the sun.  
Slithering along black banks,  
You plot my death, while  
I lie wounded by your subtle cruelty.  
My life mocks me as  
Your toxic words, like lightning,  
Jolt the doubts  
That have already become a part of my life.  
Creeping into my thoughts,  
Your whisperings cut at my soul  
And make my life unbearable.

## Lael Langston

### Funeral

Blank, empty faces  
With one-sided memories.  
Has he forgotten my words?

Tears for the fallen one,  
Lies for the chosen ones,  
I will remember the lies.

Hallow presentation,  
Of a soul once forgiven (Remembered).  
Within me the white shadows creep.

False liquefaction,  
Black, worn uncomfortable:  
I am accustomed to cold.

Click heels impatiently,  
Echo, mocking the broken one.  
My eyes shut from the dark (The Sun).

Errands for everyone,  
Blacken the happy day.  
His eyes are my eyes again.

## Jeremiah Adrian Zempter

### The Truth

Yawn.  
Lying in your bed for days—  
Probably should get up soon.  
Instead, I lean in and run my hands through your hair.  
What's this I've found?  
A hole.  
You've got a hole in your head, honey.  
Wait a minute,  
You're dead!  
Dead all this time, and you never told me.  
I stand up quick in shock of this frightening realization.  
Your ragdoll corpse just kinda rolls off my lap onto the floor.  
Dead girl on the floor,  
And me forgetting everything I learned in that first aid class three  
years ago.  
Panic!  
I scoop you up and ease you back onto the bed  
And start stuffing your skull with flowers, candy, cash,  
And stupid little poems written on colored paper.

## Lael Langston

## Melted Memories

1

Beautiful men, with illegal smiles  
 Painted on, faces brighten the night.  
 Beneath the one spotlight,  
 Minds flourish and deepen;  
 Streetlights cloud over;  
 Lamps darken in smoke;  
 Eyes mist and water,  
 Connections unfounded.

2

Error and lies loosen the legacy.  
 Happiness, Mischief, Mystery,  
 Dull tears never drop.  
 Empty the Empty. Break the Broken.  
 Carve out the Nothing.  
 Pour out the air.

3

Not understanding,  
 Naught understanding,  
 Loose in the tension.

Error in footsteps  
 And perfect black skies.

## Nicole Melissa Wilkes

## Bicycling Home After Work

My tires lick the asphalt,  
 Where under-tread gravel  
 Dances into gutters.

I side-slip, but know well my grip.  
 The moonlight keeps watch,  
 Clearing the exhaust from the air.

Buried in the hollow  
 Beyond the lane,  
 Comes the creature Haunting,

Whose nightmares intrude  
 Children's safe sleep,  
 Under frightened pillows.

Slithering, slumping,  
 Following my path  
 Through the parks and trees.

Unearthed, unspoken  
 Echoes ring through  
 The hollow beyond the lane.

Wheel over wheel,  
 I leapfrog his hunt,  
 Never to be captured.

## Melina Nielson

### Shy

I am too shy to write this poem in rhyme.  
 For although flood and good are so closely ended in letter,  
 The sound plays upon the ear in a way to make it atrocious.  
 You'd see my weakness if the noise was not a perfect match.  
 Then you'd not praise me, but laugh.  
 Or I should hide this poem away where no one would find it.  
 Or better yet, never finish what I had begun.  
 My fear, my dislike of disapproval of peers  
 Who merely look in my house through a peephole,  
 Govern all I do.  
 My anxiety makes me Olivia;  
 I am not to be involved in the world of decisions for seven years  
 And after the wait for a brother's ghost to appear,  
 I shall ask him what happened to the life.  
 I now, truly in mourning,  
 Left behind.

## Kelly Leatham

### Isabella

High upon your pedestal,  
 You look down to judge.  
 Preaching your belief of Christianity,  
 Overcoming temptation,  
 Clearly expecting exaltation,  
 Repressed emotions coming forth,  
 Intent upon condemning all,  
 The truth soon to unfold,  
 Everlasting Hell in store.

## Chris Nelson

### Storms

Bedroom blue in TV glow,  
 Old mother isn't watching.  
 She listens to the voices  
 Rising from fathoms of memory,  
 Voices that travel  
 Like the safe guns of thunder.

The twins caged in the playpen,  
 Red faces crying for her breasts  
 As milk trickles down her belly,  
 But she's locked in the bedroom  
 With dad's whiskey logic  
 And knuckles.

Ghost dad watches  
 From the empty side of the bed.  
 He gestures invisibly  
 From the place no one knows of,  
 And his tears crash silent  
 Unlike the fists of memory.

Mother's walking with her face to the rain,  
 Bare feet and nightgown  
 With her eyes closed  
 Under the blessed wave.

## II.

"An hour sitting with a pretty girl  
on a park bench passes like a minute,  
but a minute sitting on a hot stove  
seems like an hour. That's relativity."

—Albert Einstein

Nathaniel Taggart

### Words For You

The perfect words are there, somewhere,  
Lost among befuddled lines  
That fall from my pen like a tear  
That splashes, making rills in my notepad.  
Eventually, it finds its way to the floor,  
Along with other words that seeped from me in disarray  
When I try to write for you.

Rebecca Sylvia May

### Master

Controlling my actions with words,  
Eloquently spoken and softly heard,  
You twist my mind, rationalizing for you  
A gradual, slow process you have planned.

## Nicole Melissa Wilkes

### Suffering Complexity\*

Collecting the pieces  
Which fit us together  
From the broken urn,  
Where my ashes were laid to rest.

In offering your hand,  
The cold porcelain  
Slices your skin,  
Opening an unstoppable wound.

Draining our selves  
Into the shallow basin,  
Blood mingled with water,  
Your fingers tangle into mine.

I do not tremble,  
But your life  
I keep contained,  
Scattering that which was repaired.

Thus dust returns to dust,  
And all else empties into illusion.

*\*Second Place Winner, 1998-99 Annie Atkin Tanner  
Poetry Competition*

## Nathaniel Taggart

### A Real Go-Getter Kind of Guy

Of all the times I've told myself  
Not to let each passing "hi" pass me by,  
I'm staring at your back again.  
Of all the nights void of sleep  
When I'd sweat with regret,  
While thinking of tomorrow's plan:  
The things I'll do and say.  
Either I don't see you,  
Or I run away.  
You're staring at my back again.

## Nathaniel Taggart

### Pretended Accompaniment

Portraying myself, in night I walk.  
Flashing a smile, I pretend to talk  
With that person in the corner  
That's almost there—  
"Beauty on a pedestal" and long dark hair.  
She's smiling at me as I see  
A beauty I wish she saw in me.

## Heather Palmer

### Masterpiece

I want to touch your face  
 And feel it, like clay  
 Taking shape beneath my hand,  
 Smooth your eyebrows with my thumbs,  
 Maybe letting them rest momentarily,  
 Lightly on your eyelids  
 As your cheekbones are cupped in my palms,  
 Press my fingers gently to your lips,  
 Brush the back of my hand against your jaw,  
 Then maybe rub with my cheek  
 To feel the texture of soft and rough,  
 Almost like dark and light.  
 I want to run my knuckles down the bridge of your nose  
 And, like an artist,  
 Know all the contours of your face  
 As if I could sculpt you from memory,  
 Recreate you when you leave.  
 I'd like to take a handful of your hair  
 And slightly pull,  
 Just to reassure myself that you're real,  
 Not a lifelike statue sitting across from me.  
 I look into your eyes, like young, hot, blue stars  
 Ready to burn me into smoldering ash,  
 And as I study you,  
 I realize you are one of God's unattainable works of art,  
 A painting, so I can look, but never touch.

## Lisa Freestone

### A Smile

I smile as I think of a simple acquaintance  
 Where glances fascinated, but over time turned vacant.  
 So innocently we sit, together yet, abandoned.  
 You control my frustration and I am left, sitting empty-handed.  
 So generously a smile is given to a face that is new or has  
 changed.  
 A careless beginning leaves my feelings chained.

## Nathaniel Taggart

### A Funny Little Wound

It wasn't Cupid's arrow  
 That caused my wound  
 But her stare that  
 Doesn't turn men into stone,  
 But stone into mush—  
 A gaze that fills meadows  
 And turns hard men into petals  
 And petals into dust.

*L. J. Chandler's poem "A Sense of Oneness" stirred a heated discussion among the Quill staff. The result was that Alyson Overton and I wrote poems with similar themes (which appear on the following pages), and L. J. produced the revised version printed below.*

—Ace Pilkington

### L. J. Chandler

#### A Sense of Oneness

When your fever grows too proud,  
I'll provide my coat for you.

If your soul is lost by wanton words,  
I pledge to guide you to't.

If "He" isn't all you hoped him to be,  
Drown your tears in my arms.

When you're released and ready to choose,  
I'll give my life to you.

### Alyson Overton

#### Skin

I watch as you  
Rub your hands  
Together for warmth,  
Wishing I were in  
Between them,  
Feeling the frictional  
Heat of your flesh.

You tremble.  
The wind cuts up your  
Coat like a rusted saw,  
Jaggedly reinventing its pattern.  
I will rip my skin  
From its bones,  
Exposing muscle and blood  
That flows only for you.

I will swathe you in my skin,  
Offering every  
Stitch of me,  
Cloaking you in  
Pinkish leather that  
Protects from the elements,  
As well as self-consequence.

## Ace G. Pilkington

### Little Gifts

(For Heidi, who suggested I write it.)

Morning blooms its profusion  
And scatters incandescent flowers  
That glow from cobalt to vermillion.  
If I could stop time in its climb,  
I'd make a garden for you from those hours.

Dragging blue shadows from its heels,  
The slow afternoon shuffles up the hills,  
To drowse in night's dull velvet.  
I'd cover you with colors warm as sleep  
If I could keep the light such sunsets spill.

There across the sky  
That fire no greater than a grain of sand  
Shows brighter than Orion,  
And if I could gather meteors,  
You'd have them on command.

The small warmth in an offered hand,  
Love's magic through the changing days,  
A dream shared on a turning page:  
I'll give you what few things I can.

*To demonstrate how easy it is to write poetry, I offered to write a poem on the board using any four words the creative writing class suggested. I then asked them to make the same experiment (at home on paper), but only one student was brave enough to try. Here are both poems.*

—Ace Pilkington

## Ace G. Pilkington

### Love

Such sunflowers as can push  
Through pre-stressed concrete  
And stand in breezes fanned to gales,  
Can grow impossibly  
Golden apples from the Hesperides.

## Alyson Overton

### Love

Blessed sunflower beyond my door,  
Waving in the wind like a Japanese fan,  
Beckoning me,  
Daring me to partake of an apple,  
Fertile and bursting with bright white pulp,  
Showing me solace and sustenance  
As I lean against a pillar of pre-stressed concrete  
In a comfortable daze.

## Melina Nielson

### Ice

Love is the elusive fear of a snake's flicking tongue.  
 Darting in, then out,  
 Ready to strike.  
 Hurried. Frantic. Exciting.  
 Alluring but deadly with pain to come.  
 The softest touch,  
 Coolest whisper,  
 Sets small flints smashing up my back.  
 Scalding extinguished in ice.  
 Is the cold panic in my skin started by a warm touch,  
 A fear of fire that might come?  
 Ice, to fight the fire of any love,  
 That may wish to trap me to him.

## Heather Alvord

### Intrusion

The sound of your voice  
 Once took me away  
 To a secret place of our own,  
 With wildflowers immersed in refined wonderment  
 And trees engaging in puerile prattle,  
 One promptly attaining superiority  
 Until another's outrageously ostentatious declaration.  
 The sun, exposing the waters, attempts to intrude on our  
 seclusion,  
 Incessantly closing in,  
 Unable to yield to tranquillity.  
 The sand clinging,  
 Hoping for its part in the rendezvous,  
 But now,  
 It's all different;  
 Your voice sends the chill of abhorrence  
 And searing pain of unforgotten wounds.  
 I despise the mere thought of your voice.

## Lael Langston

### Library

In a room—hid,  
Amidst dead bodies of spiders  
And dust from ancient books.

Dying memories cough up their dust.  
The air is thick with words of the dead,  
Fading, fading away.

Rustle through the silence,  
You'll find the dark;  
We promise.

The laugh is unshakable,  
Untakable,  
And drops from the floor.

Depths unthinkable spread dreams.  
To you we seem so very far away,  
Holding onto you.

Help me. I love you. He is now dead.  
Save yourself. I hate you.  
They all swirl around your head.

Go home and visit us in dreams.  
Come back when the sun comes,  
Shining brightly through the dust.

## Erin Allen

### Quicksand

Study all the stains, my sweet,  
On the surface of the yellow moon.  
Come and slide back in your skin.  
The coral tide is coming soon.

Run naked through blue pain, my dear  
(As long as you don't stray).  
Your fleshy soul is mine, you know.  
I'm here—and here to stay.

Ride the wave of freedom in the  
Empty summer breeze  
As long as thoughts don't linger there.  
(It's me you're made to please.)

"Mother, can I go and play?"  
"Mother, can I think today?"  
"Mother—come and hold my hand  
As I sink beneath the sand."

## L. J. Chandler

## Doublespeak

Love is a ceaseless, unyielding cavalcade of cliches.

The urge to date is not unlike shooting yourself in the foot simply  
because it itches.

You ride the absurd roller coaster of failure,

Again,

And again.

The only excursion this cheap amusement park has.

On the other hand,

She is so peerless

That each movement, each gesture she makes is a thing of beauty.

So much so that she is criminal to keep herself from the eyes of  
the world.

Hidden deep within a red dungeon where precious few will ever  
witness her perfection.

She is too noble for this place.

Maybe this park is worth the woe.

The price of admission is merely your wits.

The payback...

Merely lunacy.

## Heidi Madsen

## Correspondence

The hollow of his hand;

Clutched firmly—carefully there,

A feather-plumed communicator,

Surface engraving in eloquent, elementary bred sweeps—

Dipped, a quietly cumulative portion of dense ink;

Words of love and declaration extend through fingertips,

Moist and glistening as tears,

Then dry; to be sealed up—

Beckoned with care, the

White dove to bridge

Hearts and lands.

### III.

"If you were to recite for me the most beautiful poem . . . my pleasure would not even approach the pleasure I felt when I received the mushrooms and goose cracklings you prepared for me; . . . you will surely not despise the primitive side of my nature that is revealed by this."

—Albert Einstein

Lisa Carrie Ure

### Autumn

Is Deceitful—  
He flares his colors,  
A blaze of brights,  
As if to mark his  
Menacing plight.  
He escorts death—  
Yet, in swan song  
Blazes his final,  
Great Glory with Pride.  
He changes all the world.  
Leaves of red or orange,  
If there be any at all,  
Try to forget, one by one,  
Of the warm summer of green,  
As though these other colors  
Are not just  
Substitutes of the original.  
And with the falling leaves  
He seeks to drop  
Each passed memory of summer.  
But in stark, revealing light of mourn,  
The chilled air betrays his secret  
In white puffs—foreshadow of fall's pattern.  
A thief in royal robes,  
Counterfeit in crimson and velvet,  
Trailing a princely procession,  
He comes in the guise of a king,  
Bestowing Gold and tapestries of scarlet,  
Only to leave  
The plundered hillside  
Barren.

## Amanda Pratt

## Slumber Deep

Elegant ice fairies glide through the air  
 Then light upon the ground,  
 Forming a blanket  
 Covering the entire earth,  
 Preparing it for a long winter's sleep.

All the world in slumber lies,  
 Dreaming its life away,  
 No worries,  
 No cares,  
 A transparent vase  
 Free from confusion and clutter.

Sunlight pours over the mountains,  
 Spilling forth its bounty upon all the world;  
 The diamond prisms bend  
 The light into mottled ribbons rising in the wind.

Whispering voices of near sleeping fairies float upon the air.  
 They are carried away,  
 No longer audible,  
 Flawless flowers of life's existence.

Then frozen in place,  
 Left to wait until the roaring  
 Fires of summer chase  
 Them from the earth,  
 From this crystalline enchantment.

## Lisa Carrie Ure

## Victory

A summer's day, alive with Light,  
 Hostage holds the silent thief night,  
 Who steals the busy humming bees  
 And takes with him the shade of trees.

She yields a grudging surrender  
 In her shadowy guise.  
 A black sheep—the great Pretender  
 From the victor's beam she flies.

The morn awakens chasing dew,  
 With bright returning, exuberant news.  
 The Sun has conquered, Light has won;  
 Again we feel her precious gleam.

## Darryl T. Barfuss

## Disturbing Nature

I picked up a perfectly weighted, flat, and rounded rock;  
 This masterpiece of time and waves.  
 I threw that pearl of the ocean,  
 And watched its first skip on the rippleless water.

# Candice Kuhlman

## Desert

God's tears,  
Held so tight  
In a stubborn cloud's grasp,  
Keeps moisture's sweet passionate life—  
Selfish.

# Heidi Madsen

## Good Morning, Hans

Copenhagen gables parallel to the eye;  
Climbed I there intended, up thinning stratospheric sky.  
Rococo towers—neither Paris blue nor London green—  
But dragon tails entwined yield ivory and, ensuing,  
    mandarin.  
Soldiers, tin, march brass—unoiled—  
Ducklings, grey, as yet swan-like unadorned.  
Alongside ships bob harbored . . . Viking dreams.  
Do mermaids truly swim among the high and Baltic seas?

# Lisa Carrie Ure

## Cello Song

The descending scales cascade over my fingers.  
A rivulet of images and flowing feelings,  
Condensed into black marks on a sheet,  
Reveals a world of green banks  
Whose tripping, giggling, babbling water  
Increases into a movement.

In a measure's pause and reflection,  
A dipping, diving Kingfisher snares my gaze,  
And carries me in fleet freedom,  
Unknown to any of earth's bonded servants.

We lift higher and ever closer to the sun.  
A gentle, moving breeze outlines my face,  
And a flowing stream of air  
Carries us motionless  
Over a distant world of sound.

*\*First Place Winner, 1996-98 Anne Arundel County  
Poetry Competition*

# **Nicole Melissa Wilkes**

## **Spending the Days**

These days spent  
 Barefoot walking  
 On warm sidewalks  
 Where my legs stretch  
 Into eternity,  
 And a praying mantis  
 Imitates my shadow  
 With his crooked claws,  
 While I pick pansies  
 From an unsuspecting  
 Neighbor's garden,  
 Whose roses are too tough  
 To tear off the bush,  
 And lawn is livelier than ours,  
 Should never be tossed  
 In the backseat of the Suburban  
 I would drive as a mom.

# **Natalie Gunnell**

## **Nature Sonnet \***

The day was wet; the rain was falling down.  
 A gentle mist climbs over the dirt ground,  
 The seasons changing while the leaves turn brown;  
 I look for flowers, but they can't be found.  
 A big, blue bird belts out a dreadful cry.  
 Great insects flee to warmer homes and sleep.  
 The soil is oozing, trying to stay dry.  
 Small rodents prepare; quickly off they creep.  
 A once light, cheerful sky—now sad and dark,  
 Red sun now falling, a chill hits the air.  
 The hand of Mother Nature leaves her mark.  
 A silent, silver moon gives a great glare.  
 Oh, winter time is here, white falling snow.  
 It is a time when frozen nature glows.

**\*First Place Winner, 1998-99 Annie Atkin Tanner  
 Poetry Competition**

Heidi Madsen

**Cessation of a Lion\***

Eggs of azure in their nests,  
Tops of treetops wherein one rests,  
As stars as moons as sorcerer's spire,  
A shoot—a scion—assembles aimless and higher.

Dew partakers of the same  
Spindled branches bathed in rain  
Rhythm in transition, as such the iris follows,  
Cascading chiffon petals—as crimson  
Blush or fair as love's own lucid colors.

*\*Third Place Winner, 1998-99 Annie Atkin Tanner  
Poetry Competition*

Lisa Carrie Ure

**Rain**

Raindrops call at the door of my memory,  
Each one recalling a time half forgotten.  
A golden sliver giggles of sitting  
Drenched in rainwater  
In Grandma's irrigation ditch.  
Another translucent pensée echoes  
Off the memory of bed time,  
Enthralled with Dad's "El Greco" stories.  
There was one, driven and slicing,  
That scraped my memory  
Recalling the year of want  
When cupboards were bare  
But the real want was for one true friend.  
A dripping opal weeps,  
As I again mourn the passing of that childhood.  
A diamond teardrop ripples of the wedding and Baby  
Timothy,  
A living reminder of Life's repetition.  
These memories flood my mind  
To the distant drum of beating rain  
And then recede, my mind washed fresh  
For new memories to harbor.

Heidi Madsen

Anne Boleyn on Eagle's Crag

Twilight falls and etches silver  
The drifting circus in the sky.  
Haunting, frozen, timeless, headless,  
This zoo-like myriad merges by.

Strict, a song of current  
Ripples hollow and below.  
Above, a fusion heaven  
Casts a torch and censorial glow.

Disaffinity's crownless portrait—  
Cerulean at type of night—  
A geologic façade, guillotined and disunited  
The castle, the henchman, the mother of a queen.

Repine for the severed, the rolled, the misplaced,  
Reflect on unworthiness—a monarch's own,  
For the acrimonious and the separated,  
Ponder the heights ... the power of reunion.

Rebecca Sylvia May

Concussion

Upon a mountain, seeing so much,  
Understanding more than before.  
The valley below stretched long and desolate to my goal.  
A bridge in front of me is the shortcut; I take a step towards it.  
BOOM. Thunder roars; I am confused.  
FLASH. Lightning strikes; my eyes are stung.  
CRASH. Together they attack, creating chaos.  
I uncover my eyes; I am surrounded in thick fog.  
The bridge gone,  
What was known is now unsure or not real.  
RUSH. Rain pours to dampen spirits.  
All is lost.  
WET. My head ringing from past percussions of thunder.  
The rain stops.  
LIGHT. The familiar sun beams,  
Its rays attacking the fog only to create a mist,  
Tangible but unstable.  
Glancing down at the once known valley,  
The light breaks through but touches  
Only a few sections.  
What was known before or after,  
My memory will not recall.  
Frustration builds.  
The smooth journey of the bridge no longer exists,  
My path through the dark valley sits heavily in my eyes,  
A longer and unwanted way to a destiny no longer known.

Heidi Madsen

## Waterless Ocean

In a splendid sea of lime and cobblestone  
Skim and swim stems slender by design.  
While, merely superficial, their colorful appendages,  
A rainbow of tulips dance their sprightly dance.

Natalie Gunnell

## Snowflakes

What happens in heaven during winter?  
A mother saint, making ice cookies for her nine children,  
Drops some lacy sweets  
For her great-great-great grandchildren to catch on their tongues.  
An elderly angel knitting doilies,  
Sends them to Mother Earth for a birthday present.  
An angry teenage cherub,  
Smashes all the chandeliers at Heaven's gate!  
Shattered pieces of crystal rapidly fall down.  
God's favorite daughter is getting married,  
Her wedding color white.  
The sun takes a nap.

## Rebecca Sylvia May

### Looking Inside

Lifting the senses from my cerebrum, I am free,  
 No longer trying, touching or trusting,  
 No longer crying, denying or sighing.  
 I am free as a log in the cold rain:  
 It pounds on my surface, making a hollow echo from inside.  
 The green grass and soft sand feel the same to my numb touch.  
 By denying myself the privilege to show emotion,  
 I am separated from a world of pain.  
 Lost, alone, with only my contradiction for company,  
 I can barely taste the joy and happiness I once felt.

Faking emotion keeps others at bay, trapping myself  
 Deeper in hard layers that can't be cut;  
 Layers, like an onion peeled off one at a time,  
 Will cause a crisp sting, persuading me to surrender.  
 The core of the onion should be my goal.  
 Protecting myself from emotion is safer,  
 But is being free worth my sanity?  
 Do others have layers of pain that lead  
 To the core of a problem or just me,  
 And does admitting strip off the first layer?  
 True freedom doesn't own so many doubts.  
 I start to cry.

## Nicole Melissa Wilkes

### Seclusion

Wild vines twisting  
 Into aging circlets,  
 Where memory creeps  
 Slowly around the front gate.  
 The lamppost sinks behind  
 A sagging willow's shade,  
 In the concealed corner  
 Of decaying brick face  
 Beside the drive,  
 Where unintended wishes  
 Remain to hide.

Twilight tempted  
 The music in the moon,  
 And I, a stranger,  
 Watched stars flirt off and on.  
 Beyond my sights  
 Flies a chariot of lace,  
 Tales streaming forth,  
 Where ancients made their place.

I await the blue-white ribbon  
 Which cuts through  
 The black satin sky,  
 As evening elapses  
 Beside broken lamplight,  
 Anticipating  
 The speaker of the night.

## Douglas Wardle

### The Race over Parley's

My father said to my mother, "Harry and Louise said for us to go ahead. They said that if we don't see them on the way, then they'll meet us there, in Duchesne, at my Mother's place."

My father, my mother, my brother George, and I drove across Salt Lake City in the old brownish-yellow '54 Chevy to Highway 40. Highway 40 is a four-lane road leaving from Salt Lake and winds its way up through Parley's Canyon, past the reservoir. It then rolls mostly up and some down for a mile before the last gradual turn to the left. The road drops downward as it goes into that last turn and then starts back up a hill.

This is where people would test the power of their cars. They would accelerate as fast as they could go through the turn to get a running start at the straight, one-mile, steep climb over the summit of Parley's Canyon. The test on the car was how fast it could go over the summit.

The old Chevy would jerk when it misfired, as it slowed and maintained 50 miles per hour up the hill. My father said to my mother, "I guess that I'm going to have to get a tune-up."

Suddenly, Uncle Harry's light blue Cadillac moved up the inside lane, along the side of us. He honked. Harry, Louise, and their sons Dan and Jerry waved. Then Harry stepped on the gas, and the big Cadillac moved away up the hill.

Mother said, "Don't let them get ahead of us!"

Father said, "I can't help it. This is as fast as I can go."

My cousin Jerry turned around in his seat and stuck his tongue out at us as they drove away.

My mother grumbled, "We're never going to hear the end of this."

My grandmother's place was a log cabin, by the river, in the middle of Duchesne. It had been built there when the town of Duchesne was new, and over the years the house had been added on to, as the town grew up around

it. Two and a half hours after we had last seen my cousin's tongue, we drove up to grandma's place and found Uncle Harry's Cadillac parked there. Uncle Harry was standing arrogantly at the door. "What kept ya? We've been here for hours."

For the entire time that we were at grandma's place, Uncle Harry, Aunt Louise, Dan, and Jerry took turns making snide remarks. Most of the way back home, my family was quiet until my mother said, "Do we have to go back again next weekend? You know that they are going to do that to us again."

Through the rear-view mirror I saw a strange look in my father's eyes. I leaned forward, and on the side of his face I could see the sign of a small grin. He said, "Yes. My mother needs us."

The next weekend, again we were climbing the steep hill at 50 miles per hour. Again Uncle Harry's Cadillac came up along the side of us. Again they honked and waved. My father smiled, waved. Then he shifted into second gear and stepped on the gas. The old Chevy lunged forward.

I looked at their shocked faces in the Cadillac. Aunt Louise started saying something to Uncle Harry, and her hand was gesturing up the road. Also, I could see Uncle Harry's lips form the words, *I know*.

The motor was screaming higher and louder than I had ever heard it before, when my father shifted back to high gear. For a moment, Harry's Cadillac started to catch up to us, then it slowly fell farther behind.

At grandma's place, when Harry walked through the door, my father said, "What kept you? We've been here for hours." Uncle Harry did not smile or laugh. Neither did Louise or my cousins. I heard a quiet snicker and turned to see my mother struggling to keep a straight face while trying to pretend to read a magazine.

The next Monday Harry bought a new car, "The old Cad never did run right." My cousin Jerry bragged to me later, "The new Cad can go over Parley's at more than ninety miles per hour!" However, Uncle Harry never raced us again.

## Lael Langston

### An Alien Encounter

I woke in the freezing air and, for a moment, did not know where I was. My arms shook under layers of quilts, sheets, a horse blanket, and the gently snoring figure of a man. I blinked and tried to shake the sleep from my eyes. I had been dreaming that I was warm.

The three-quarter moon shone just brightly enough that I could see my breath in the air above me. With teeth chattering, I pursed my lips together and blew. The white breath shot up into a cold shadow and disappeared in the stillness.

For a moment the cold gave way to shock. I was in the back of a beat-up truck parked off the side of the extraterrestrial highway about half a mile from Rachel, Nevada. How could that possibly be real?

As gently as I could, I moved one of my arms from its pinned position and brushed the matted hair from my face. I felt my fingers move across my cheeks and become stiffer as the warmth left them. The ring on my middle finger caught the edge of my eye, and I felt a tiny sting. I held my hand out and could see my blood glimmer slightly on the little, fake jewels set in the ring.

I watched my hand twist back and forth in the moonlight and turn a sickly blue. My fingers stretched and grew deformed, like a creature I had read about in a book when I was little. The fingers touched each other and were sealed together, one by one, slowly. I didn't want to breathe or move. I did not want the feeling to end.

I held my breath deep in my lungs and could hear the silence for miles. The only sound was my heart beating from somewhere inside my body. A place that science has not yet found.

The thudding echoed in my head until my lungs screamed and let out the silence with a hiss. My hand shook from cold and loss of blood, and I wasn't certain if I could bring myself to move again. I counted my fingers slowly twice. Five of them both times.

With relief and exhaustion, I felt tears snake their way down my cheeks. I pulled my arm beneath the covers and felt the weight trap all of me once more as I shut my eyes. As I felt my eyelashes freeze to my face, I began to hear the soft breathing of a man beside me. I had almost forgotten he was there. I whispered, "I saw an alien, baby. You missed it."

## IV.

**"I believe with Schopenhauer that one of the strongest motives that leads men to art and science is escape from everyday life with its painful crudity and hopeless dreariness from the fetters of one's own everyday desires . . . . A finely tempered nature longs to escape from personal life into the world of objective perception and thought."**

**—Albert Einstein**

## Ace G. Pilkington

### From *Our Lady Guenevere*

[*Our Lady Guenevere* received its first production in 1997 as part of the Utah Shakespearean Festival's New Plays-in-Progress series.]

#### Act I, Scene i

[Enter MAK UL, dragging a throne. He struggles with it through the following monologue, eventually reaching DR. He is dressed in semi-military leather, and is rather short than otherwise, heavy around the middle but thin in the legs.]

MAK

Here I am alone [*Looking around in surprise*]. That's a bad beginning. It's not what I expected and not what the story calls for. Tom—you lousy lubber—come lend a hand for once to some honest work. Tom! [*To the audience*] Isn't that the way of it? Whenever there's the least bit of energy to be expended, you might as well be the only man in the parish who hasn't got the plague. You'd think everybody else had been dead a fortnight. [*To two male members of the audience*] Feel free to get up on your hind legs and give us a tug and a push. [*Beat*] No help are they? I didn't think they would be. [*To the two male members of the audience*] Don't fret yourselves over it. I'd have done—or rather not done—the same in your places. Tom! You see the way of it: here am I struggling manfully to put this seat of power in place, and there is Tom off snoring, as like as not, and whose name have you heard over and over? Tom. Whose is the shout of fame? Tom. Well, I don't suppose that's news to any of you. Just for the record, my name is Mak. We're working up gradually to a story filled with kings, queens, princes, lords, knights, dragons, and a very cranky old wizard. I'm not any of those o' course—I'm a peasant—someone we thought you'd feel a bit more at home with—someone just like [*Starts to say you and then switches to*] your neighbor two doors down. Tom!

[Enter TOM UR, yawning. His costume and looks are similar to MAK's, but he is a little younger and a little more attractive.]

TOM

[*Sarcastically*]

You couldn't make a bit more noise, could you? I've had a hard night.

MAK

Here he is, barely got the yawns out of his mouth and he's already bragging. What woman with her senses intact would—but never mind—you'll hear stranger things than that in our story.

TOM

You could have waited.

MAK

I tried that.

TOM

You could have shouted.

MAK

[*Giving tom a disbelieving look*]

What do you call what I was doing?

TOM

[*Enjoying this*]

That's what I said—you could have called out to me.

MAK

[*Resignedly*]

I did that too.

TOM

You could have— [*He stops because he can't think of anything else.*]

MAK

Well, what?

TOM

Done the job yourself [*A small apology*] in your usual workmanlike manner?

MAK

[*Gestures to the throne and makes a small bow*]

The throne is in place; our pageant begins. We work for Lord Mordred—

TOM

Or anybody else who'll pay us.

MAK

We won't.

TOM

I will.

MAK

You would.

*[They glare at each other.]*

*[Enter LORD MORDRED UL. He crosses straight to the throne and sits in it, stretching out his legs and luxuriating.]*

MORDRED

There's something about one's rightful place that makes for comfort—the hardest bench, the draftiest corner—

*[Enter ARTHUR UR.]*

ARTHUR

Are spaces that you've never known and wouldn't visit for a king's ransom.

MAK

Here we go. That's Lord Mordred sitting on the throne, bastard—

TOM

Illegitimate.

MAK

Grovel as much as you like, Mr. I'll-work-for-anybody-who-pays-me.

TOM

Thank you, I will. Illegitimate son of the legendary *[With a flourish to ARTHUR]* King Arthur.

MORDRED

On the contrary, Father, I'd go anywhere for a king's ransom or palace or power or *[Looking inward at himself and finding it surprising]* even a king's love. You see, I've never had any of those things. *[Returning to his usual, sarcastic mode]* I believe I've missed them all equally. You've certainly refused them all evenhandedly.

ARTHUR

Mordred, you'll get the palace and the power when I'm dead.

MORDRED

And the love?

ARTHUR

When you're king, you'll learn that love is a luxury, and that you must use all the care and compassion you have on the necessities of your subjects.

TOM

What did he say?

MAK

He said he's too busy.

*[Enter GUENEVERE UC. MORDRED rises when he sees her and bows.]*

TOM

*[Impressed]*

That's Queen Guenevere, that's the Queen!

GUENEVERE

Thank you, Lord Mordred, for the courtesy. And thank you, Arthur, for the honesty. Are you really too busy to love? Have you paid out your very last coin of compassion to the kingdom's needy? *[She gestures to TOM and MAK.]*

TOM

*[Behind his hand to MAK]*

How much is compassion worth?

MAK

How should I know? Sounds like foreign currency to me.

*[Enter MERLIN UC.]*

TOM

That's Merlin.

MAK

The cranky old wizard aforementioned.

TOM

They know that, Mak. It's insulting to explain every simple thing.

MAK

*[To the audience]*

Sorry. But you see what I'm used to *[Gestures at TOM]*. You wouldn't believe what I've had to explain to him.

## MERLIN

All the knights are gone, Lancelot with the rest, racing after the Holy Grail—or in some cases tripping, stumbling and falling after it.

## ARTHUR

Bring them back, Merlin. We can't run a kingdom without knights. Cast a spell.

## MORDRED

Father, you don't need ...

## MERLIN

A spell may not work against the lure of God ...

*(GALAHAD and then LANCELOT cross from UL to UR and off. MERLIN, ARTHUR, and GUENEVERE follow them, leaving MORDRED, TOM, and MAK.)*

## MORDRED

*(Sitting on the throne again)*

I suppose it's too much to hope that they won't ever come back?

## MAK

This early in the story?

## TOM

*(Showing off something he's memorized)*

It would be a severe disappointment for us all.

## MORDRED

*(Getting up)*

Not for me. I like my happy endings early and easy. I suppose we'd better go after them. But first one of you *(He points at MAK.)* had better move that throne to a safer place. *(TOM chuckles as he follows MORDRED off. MAK begins hauling the throne away.)*

## MAK

Has a nice symmetry, doesn't it? Sort of like bad luck bookends.

## BLACKOUT

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## Act II Scene ii

*Enter GUENEVERE, TOM, MAK, MORDRED, NIMUE, GALAHAD, LANCELOT, MERLIN, AND ARTHUR from the direction of the hill. GUENEVERE is walking between ARTHUR and LANCELOT.*

## GUENEVERE

So you see, Arthur, we have the truth before us, shining like *(She hesitates deliberately, teasing them.)* the Grail on a hill. My sin merits death; your law decrees no less. I suppose I'll be a long time cold, and a little heat to send me on my way can't hurt.

## ARTHUR

Lancelot will save you. He always does.

## LANCELOT

*(Firmly in the present now)*

Yes, Arthur, but this time you can't stand aside and let me win. This is no tournament with banners; this is war with battle flags and blood. This is the end—

## MORDRED

Of the kingdom as you know and own it.

## ARTHUR

*(With great bitterness)*

My son. Have you noticed I've never called you that before?

## MORDRED

It's prominently marked down among my scars.

## ARTHUR

*(Making it an insult)*

My son. This disaster is your intrigue, your venom. You are poison, Mordred. I should have killed you as a child.

## MORDRED

Let's not forget how hard you tried, Father. All those babies you had murdered, every child born that year on May Day. But like Herod before you, your evil failed, and your innocent intended victim *(He gestures to himself.)* survived.

## MERLIN

Blasphemy!

**MORDRED**

Oh, Merlin, in spite of similar persecutions in my early years, I don't think of myself as Jesus Christ. If I cast my father as Herod, I can hardly maintain that he is simultaneously Jehovah.

**TOM**

What are they talking about?

**MAK**

Theology.

**TOM**

But the Queen's going to burn!

**MAK**

That's the practical application of theology.

**ARTHUR**

*(Ignoring everybody except MORDRED)*

You are fated to destroy the kingdom. It was my duty to stop you.

**MORDRED**

My Lord, if I am fated, you can't stop me, and if fate has nothing to do with it, you would have been wise to do your duty as a father and thus keep hate out of it too.

**GUENEVERE**

Are you really saying, Arthur, that your duty justifies you in murdering children, in killing any inconvenience? If so, why wait for the bonfire? Here I am. *(She kneels before him.)* Plunge in the sword and end the story.

**LANCELOT**

*(Moves between ARTHUR and GUENEVERE to protect her)*

Endings are seldom as simple as that.

**MORDRED**

Though they are often as silly.

**ARTHUR**

I will plunge in a sword and end the story. I'll do what I must.

*(ARTHUR takes LANCELOT's sword and moves to kill MORDRED. GUENEVERE rises to her feet and attempts to stop him. TOM, believing there is a threat to GUENEVERE, rushes in to*

*save her, impaling himself on the sword in ARTHUR's hand.)*

**MERLIN**

Stop this all of you. Are you the inhabitants of a court or the denizens of a nursery?

**TOM**

*(With great surprise)*

I'm dying. *(Then, with a kind of wonder)* I'm dying for the Queen.

**MERLIN**

*(Kneeling beside Tom)*

I'm afraid that among you, you've killed this poor peasant Mak.

**MAK**

Tom. It's Tom you've killed. I'm Mak and still alive with a voice to say so. And it wasn't all but only Arthur, King of Britain, who killed him.

**MORDRED**

*(Kneeling beside Tom)*

He is killed, Mak. And he was a peasant, though not a poor one. He was a better peasant than I am a prince or Arthur is a king. And he did not die for Guenevere, for chivalry or for anything noble. He died on the hilt of my ambition and the point of my father's fear.

*(LANCELOT takes his sword back from ARTHUR, looks at it in horror, and throws it away off stage. He looks at his own hand as though it might have blood on it and then looks at ARTHUR.)*

**LANCELOT**

I thought we had met before, my Lord, once long ago. But my memory plays tricks and tricks out plays. I have lived too long with shadows to understand the substance of what you've become. You are not the man to whom I swore allegiance or I am not the knight who spoke the oath.

*(GUENEVERE takes LANCELOT's hand in a gesture of comfort.)*

**MAK**

He means, King Arthur, that you and not Lord Mordred are the bastard.

*(MAK waits defiantly for the punishment he expects this speech to bring him.)*

**GUENEVERE**

Arthur, your time is at an end. Now, while you still have some rags of your glory, give the power to Mordred and give yourself peace.

**ARTHUR**

*(Seems stunned)*

I took the only path open for me. I hacked away brambles and made a road broad enough for a king's highway. How ever did I lose my direction and come to this wilderness? Mordred—the crown, the throne, all the bleak burdens are now yours. I give them to you as the curse they have become for me.

**MORDRED**

*(Sarcastically)*

Oh thank you, Father.

**MERLIN**

We must all forgive our fathers' sins, as Galahad says.

**MORDRED**

To forgive their sins is easy; it is the reliving and relieving of those sins that is terribly hard. I don't want the throne. I don't think I ever wanted it. All I cared for was—

**NIMUE**

To have a place where you belonged and someone there who loved you.

**MERLIN**

How would rebellion gain him that?

**NIMUE**

*(Smiling sadly)*

It wouldn't. Any more than putting you underground gained me your love.

**GUENEVERE**

We are all fools whose follies are like shadows running hugely before us. Lancelot, will you come with me, and we'll walk toward the sun for a change?

**LANCELOT**

*(Takes her hand)*

How could I refuse the only person I have ever loved?

**GUENEVERE**

How have you refused me all these years, lummoX? *(She smiles at him, and they begin to walk off stage. She turns back to ARTHUR.)* Arthur?

*(ARTHUR with GALAHAD to help is picking up TOM's body and carrying it off stage.)*

**ARTHUR**

I will find you, Jenny, when I have fewer sins to carry.

**MAK**

I wish that all the kings in history had had to carry all the men they killed. Perhaps they will in hell.

*(GUENEVERE and LANCELOT go off stage together.)*

**NIMUE**

Well, Merlin, do you have a happy ending for me?

**MERLIN**

You can have the spell and seal me up for good. What use am I to anyone?

**NIMUE**

*(Pulls out a piece of paper or parchment)*

I wrote it down. *(She rips it up.)* Didn't you offer me another sort of proof for your love?

**MERLIN**

I did. Weren't you teaching me another kind of spell?

**NIMUE**

I believe strawberries came into it somewhere. Do you suppose we could find some?

*(The two of them walk off talking softly together, leaving MAK and MORDRED.)*

**MORDRED**

I'm sorry, Mak.

**MAK**

I know you are, Lord Mordred.

**MORDRED**

I'm afraid it's King Mordred now, though with you I have no titles, unless you'd like to say we're friends. *(MAK holds out his hand, and MORDRED takes it.)* Would you care to be Lord Mak?

MAK

Could I think it over?

MORDRED

Yes. I wish I could think over being king.

MAK

They'll say you killed your father.

MORDRED

Of course, that's only fair since he's tried for much of my life to kill me. Still, if my legend and I don't match, I think I'll be the healthier for it.

MAK

It won't matter that Arthur's alive. I know how stories grow.

MORDRED

Would you care to tell me a story as we travel back to Camelot?

MAK

Not just yet. Telling the story was never the fun of it. It was the interruptions I liked. And if you wouldn't mind, I'll walk back on my own.

MORDRED

To be honest, that's how we go most places, so suit yourself and your grief. I think I have more compassion to spend than my predecessor. I hope I can even mint some small change of love. *[He exits.]*

MAK

Here I am alone. *[Looking around in surprise]* That's a bad ending. It's not what I expected and not what I thought the story called for. *[To the audience]* I'll bet it's not what you expected either. I wish I could tell old Tom that he was a good friend and not nearly as stupid as I made out. I even wish—just a little—that it had been me the sword ran into. Just a little, mind you, we all know the truth about that. Did Tom die for anything? I doubt it. Would it make you feel better if I said he died so Lancelot and Guenevere and Merlin and Nimue could be in love? So Mordred could be a good king? You can think that if it helps you. Sometimes when I sit up late and miss old Tom, I'll try thinking those things and see if they help me. We all tell ourselves stories. Sometimes they hurt; sometimes they help. Sometimes—God save the mark—they're even true.

BLACKOUT

## Brandalyn Egan

### Love Story or History Lesson?

*Romeo and Juliet*, one of the world's most widely read love stories, is not a mere love story, but a reflection on life and society during the time of Shakespeare. The Elizabethan Age, in which Shakespeare lived, greatly influenced not only the literary world, but the world in general.

Set in the sixteenth century in Verona, Italy, *Romeo and Juliet* portrayed the customs of the day. Marriage, family, friendship, honor, religion, government, love, and day-to-day life were important elements in this play and sixteenth century England as well. Whether for prestige or money, marriage was seldom for love. The young girls often married whom their fathers wished and at quite a young age, often at thirteen or fourteen years old. Juliet's father, Lord Capulet, wanted her to marry Paris. At around thirteen years of age, unlike her parents, she wanted to marry one that she loved.

While there was a sense of loyalty to the family name and a duty to uphold it, the family structure itself and the possible relationships therein were generally overlooked. Sons were often more important to the fathers than the daughters were because the sons were those that would carry on the family name. The death of Hamnet, Shakespeare's favorite child, left him heartbroken even though he still had other children. The Montagues and Capulets fought, for no particular reason, but did so in the name of their families.

There weren't close-knit family relationships. An example of this is when Juliet had been raised by the nurse and had a better relationship with her than with her own mother. The Capulets depended on the nurse to raise Juliet and to teach her. Friendship and honor were also important. The friends that one had in sixteenth century England were determinants of his or her social status. Their opinions were highly respected. Romeo's friend Benvolio tries to lift Romeo's spirits when he can't win the heart of Rosaline by persuading him to attend the masquerade ball at the Capulets. Also, though not a Montague himself, Mercutio, Romeo's best friend, fights

alongside Romeo against Tybalt and the Capulets. Their friendship is so strong that Mercutio gives his life fighting Tybalt and Romeo revenges his death despite the possible consequence of being exiled.

Religion was an important factor in every aspect of life. In the play, there are many examples of how religion played a part in everyday life. When Romeo and Juliet wished to marry, the nurse told Juliet to meet Romeo at the church, where she attended regularly. No one would suspect her of going to meet a young man there. Also, the relationship that Romeo had with Friar Laurence shows how important the church was to his life and how highly Romeo valued the Friar's opinion. The Friar helped Romeo and Juliet in many ways. He married them secretly at the church and helped Juliet appear dead so that Romeo could come back for her.

Like Elizabethan England, Verona was a monarchy. A prince ruled, setting and establishing laws for the people and keeping the peace in his kingdom. He had influential powers over Verona such as Queen Elizabeth had over England. The prince told the Montagues and Capulets to stop fighting many times, but they persisted. When Romeo killed Tybalt as part of the feud, the prince was forced to take action by exiling Romeo and threatening his execution if he returned to Verona.

Love, though not required for marriage, did exist in the hearts of the people although it was often between individuals not married to one another. Shakespeare is believed to have had a mistress and to have written sonnets about her. Romeo and Juliet, though Juliet was being forced to marry Paris, still loved one another greatly and died "in the name of love."

The man of the house being in control, as well as having servants, was just part of everyday life. The man of the house had complete power over everyone in the household and had the final say on matters pertaining to his family. Lord Capulet would not be argued with about Juliet's marriage to Paris. Both he and Lord Montague influenced their families and Verona by feuding with one another. There were many servants in both of the households, such as the nurse that was with Juliet.

The tragic tale of star-crossed lovers is more than just a story of forbidden love with a sad ending. The culture of Shakespeare's time shines through in his work.

*Last summer some Quill staff members (past and present) were invited to review Utah Shakespearean Festival plays for the Spectrum.*

*—Ace Pilkington*

## Alyson Overton

### *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*

(Originally appeared in the *Spectrum*, 5 July 1998.)

*Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat* opened for its debut at the Utah Shakespearean Festival in Cedar City on Tuesday afternoon, July 2<sup>nd</sup>, to a receptive and energetic audience. This is the first year *Joseph*, by Tim Rice and Andrew Lloyd Webber, has been included in the impressive lineup of performances at the Festival, and it seems to be welcome. The talented cast, colorful set, and amusing costumes had the audience applauding and "Whooping" early on, and kept them going throughout the play, until it ended with a standing ovation.

This musical is the long-lived biblical story of Joseph, the favored son of Jacob, who was sold into slavery by his own brothers. In the beginning of the play, Joseph is arrogant, juvenile, and proud. One can hardly blame his jealous brothers for taking action; I too was tempted. Joseph, played by talented and charismatic Joseph Heninger-Potter, displays a strong voice and stage presence, which make the play that much more enjoyable. His eleven brothers are also talented (it must run in the family) and offer much of the comic relief. The entire cast did very well for the most part although Narrator, Jenny Bennett, was not quite strong enough to hold center stage as she was often compelled to do.

Comedy and sarcasm play a central part in this production. For example, Joseph's brothers sell him as a slave to Harley-riding "Ishmael lites," who purchase him with a giant Visa card. And when the brothers tell their father his favorite son is dead, they do so by singing a forlorn country-western

song while wearing red shag chaps, silver stars, and cowboy hats. The comedy in this play was by no means understated; there were even jokes about the Utah Jazz, Donnie Osmond, and director Fred Adams (who is also the founder and executive producer of the Festival). The scene where Potiphar sends Joseph to jail is actually a 1920's silent film, must-see. There are so many amusing, even hilarious, aspects of *Joseph* there is no way I could possibly cite them all.

I personally thoroughly enjoyed watching this play, and highly recommend it to anyone wishing to see a play for the sheer enjoyment of it. It is not complex or difficult to follow, but light-hearted and simply entertaining, a production for everyone to enjoy. *Joseph and the Technicolor Dreamcoat* is perfect for people of all ages and intellects, and offers a refreshing change of pace at the Festival. Beautifully directed, acted, and choreographed, it is a definite must-see. Be prepared for unexpected twists and surprises, such as Las Vegas Elvis impersonators. Try something new, view it with an open mind, and enjoy.

## Melinda Durrant Husk

### *Relative Values*

(Originally appeared in the *Spectrum*, 10 July 1998.)

"Sweet." That is the word Fred Adams, founder and executive producer of the Utah Shakespearean Festival, used to describe Noël Coward's *Relative Values*. I agree wholeheartedly. "How sweet it is!"

The beauty of this play lies in its wonderful characters. They transport the audience into what was once the library of Marshwood House, East Kent, England, with a barrage of witty and intelligent epigrams. In this comedy of manners, the outstanding cast really shines.

The laughter erupts when, in Act I, the flippant and bright butler, Crestwell (William Leach) and the grim-faced Moxie, the Countess of Marshwood's personal maid (Libby George), open the play, and mirth escalates as the regal and engineering Felicity (Patricia Fraser) and quick-witted Peter (Sheridan Crist), along with the rest of the top-notch cast, become entangled in uncomfortable and often ironic situations.

In fact, the amusement does not end until the love-tortured Don Lucas (Conan McCarty) and the insincere Miranda Frayle (Jeannie Naughton) leave, back in each other's arms where they belong, and the lights go down to end Act III.

All of this is set against an elegant and never-changing set, understated and tasteful costumes and convincing props.

The play begins as the Marshwood House is experiencing a crisis. Nigel, Earl of Marshwood (Raymond L. Chapman), is planning to marry Miranda Frayle, an American actress. Crestwell and Moxie are discussing the impropriety of two people of such distinctly different social situations marrying. However, Moxie is upset about more than that. Nigel's intended also happens to be her younger sister! How could she allow Nigel to learn that "his prospective sister-in-law is his mother's maid?"

To escape the discomfort of the circumstances, Moxie declares that she must leave. Felicity cannot imagine life without her Moxie, and eventually

a scheme is hatched! Moxie will play the part of an heiress, living with the family on equal terms. The scheme is a success until Miranda, ever the actress, embellishes on her humble beginnings and Moxie calls her on the carpet, thus revealing her true identity.

Amidst further complications, Felicity gracefully steps in and arranges the circumstances to her liking, proving once and for all that she is the mistress of the house. Anyone who would like a good laugh or is a fan of Noël Coward will not be disappointed.

Charles Morey, the play's experienced and talented director, states that in this play, "Coward's primary concern is what it has always been—the comic undermining of the pretentious, the dull and the moralistic by the forces of wit, intelligence and taste. The leading characters of *Relative Values* are Noël Coward's creations down to their shoes."

The play is a delightful and entertaining way to spend an afternoon or evening and is guaranteed to be, well, "sweet."

## April Davis & Kelly Leatham

### *All's Well That Ends Well*

(Originally appeared in the *Spectrum*, 5 July 1998.)

Utah's beautiful southern weather made the Adams Shakespearean Theatre a perfect setting for an enjoyable rendition of Shakespeare's seldom performed *All's Well That Ends Well*. The Shakespearean Festival has done this play only once before, in 1979.

Though most people don't know the story of *All's Well*, it is a fascinating one, with elements that may remind audience members of recent films such as *My Best Friend's Wedding* and *Sabrina*.

This dark comedy tells the story of Helena, a lovesick maiden, whose deceit and persistence eventually win her the object of her affection. Honoring a promise, the King of France orders Bertram, count of Rossillion, to marry Helena. Bertram agrees to the marriage because of his devotion to the king. However, Bertram refuses to accept Helena as his wife because of her lower class status as a physician's daughter. Bertram then runs away to war in Tuscany and sends Helena a letter stating that she must obtain his ring and have his child in order to gain his acceptance as his wife, two requirements which he firmly believes she can't meet. Through clever planning, Helena fulfills these conditions, Bertram accepts his wife, and *All's Well That Ends Well*.

Throughout the play, the entire cast gave effective performances. Jeannie Naughton (Helena) and Jim Hart (Bertram) were both convincing in difficult roles despite the apparent differences in their ages. However, it was obvious that age and experience were assets for many cast members, including William Metzo (The King of France), William Leach (Lafew), and Patricia Fraser (Countess of Rossillion).

The soldiers' ensemble, led by Fletcher McTaggart (First Lord Dumain) and David Ivers (Second Lord Dumain), was both delightful and entertaining in the mocking of Conan McCarty (Parolles), and their invention of the imaginary language which they use to intimidate him. In fact, the

soldiers added more energy and comic business than Lavatch, the clown, played lethargically by Sheridan Crist.

The costumes and music were typical of the Shakespearean Festival, providing the semblance of an Elizabethan evening. Such details as the contrasting colors in the legs of the tights, and the intricate headdresses added to the characterization. Costume designer Janet L. Swenson's choice of cool colors added unity to the production and a solemnity to the emotional impact, which chimed nicely with the overall concept of director Rosemary Dunsmore. Christine Frezza's music had a wistful charm that contributed an additional poignancy to this sad love story.

**Lisa Carrie Ure**

### ***The Taming of the Shrew***

(Originally appeared in the *Spectrum*, 5 July 1998.)

The Barnum and Bailey Circus has competition this year from the Utah Shakespearean Festival's *Taming of the Shrew* with its costumes admittedly styled after the Cirque du Soleil. Peggy Shannon, the director, has decided to include the rarely performed Induction in this summer's *Taming*. The Induction is an extended introduction to the play wherein a group of pranksters convince Christopher Sly, a lower class drunk, that he's actually an aristocrat. This turns the main story of *Taming* into a play within a play, put on for the entertainment of Christopher Sly. Peggy Shannon has taken advantage of this to add a host of theatrical and commedia dell arte touches, including on-stage juggling acts, acrobatics, singing and dancing, and circus noises similar to the honking of a clown nose. Although individually many of Peggy Shannon's ideas were effective, collectively there were so many of them that they became distracting.

Overall, however, the Shakespearean Festival's *Taming* was effective and well performed. It will be a popular production and enjoyable entertainment for families and youth of all ages. Despite their clownish costumes, several actors gave performances worthy of serious commendation, beginning with Christopher Sly (David Ivers), who played well the part of the drunkard and clownish pedant. A usually minor role, Sly's was enlarged under the direction of Shannon. He even joined the actors in the main plot. In his expanded role, David Ivers, carried away with the joys of being an actor, speaks lines from other Shakespeare plays and even recognizes Gary Armagnac (playing Baptista) as Toby Belch from last year's *Twelfth Night*. Finally, he is literally carried off stage while suffering from a convulsion of Shakespearean quotes.

The majority of performances from Gremio (Robert Anderson) to Lucentio (David Janoviak) were amusing. Tranio (Peter Zazzali), with his meddling manners and Eastern accent, reminded me of a Puck from

Brooklyn.

An actor with a minor role that I enjoyed was Grumio (Troy Scarborough), the servant of Petruchio who could have stepped off the cast of *Cool Runnings* with his humor and mannerisms. He and the other six servants made up a troop whose costumes and behavior resemble the seven dwarves.

The main characters of the play fit my expectations wonderfully. The scene where Petruchio (Hassan El-Amin) meets and tries to woo Katherine (Angela Ionnone) is comical without an excess of stage violence other than the required lute bashing. His taming is done majestically, and while she suffers the pains of hunger, fatigue, and sleeplessness, we realize he is also making sacrifices himself. The final scene was a capping scene to the rest of the play. For it the costumes were toned down (or my eyes may finally have adjusted to the bright colors and shapes) and ceased to be a distraction, and the real issues were directly addressed. By dividing Kate's final speech up between Petruchio and Kate, Shannon brought the lines into a new perspective, showing more cooperation between the two and the acknowledgment of the game they had been playing.

## Heidi Madsen

### *King John*

(Originally appeared in the *Spectrum*, 5 July 1998.)

For those of you who are planning to attend Shakespeare's *King John* merely for the appealing prospect of swooning over Robin Hood, it should be understood that "The Prince of Thieves" will not be making an appearance this year at the Adams Theatre. While there will still be men in tights, some worth mentioning, there will be none inhabiting Sherwood Forest at any time during the two-hour performance; neither will anyone be compelled to sign Magna Carta. It could be argued, however, that King John, as we know him, is as tyrannous and scheming as the one played by Sheridan Crist and directed by Russell Treys in Shakespeare's version; and probably the only familiar character one will encounter all evening.

Perfect weather, the perfect setting, and a refreshingly new, because seldom produced tale—full of suspense, drama, and even humor: what could be more enjoyable?

Upon the death of King Richard I of England (otherwise known as Richard the Lionheart), his younger brother John has succeeded to the throne—or rather seized it. However, John might say, does not the necessity of political action outweigh the nicety of legitimate succession? The prince's right to the title is perhaps, by succession, very logical but seriously disputed by Arthur, duke of Britain, nephew to the king (played convincingly but oftentimes too soft-spokenly by R. Dustin Harding). His mother Constance (played at a persistently high emotional level by Jeannie Naughton) widow of Geoffrey, John's elder brother, would argue that Arthur's was the superior claim. King Phillip of France (Sean Connery-like William Metzko) supports Arthur and Constance.

Confrontation ensues, of course, between the French and English armies before the city of Angiers; the resulting riot is led and enlarged by Queen Elinor (Patricia Fraser), mother of King John, and King John's nephew (Conan McCarty), the illegitimate child of King Richard I. A temporary

antidote to war is proposed by one of the city's citizens. Hubert de Burgh (Gary Armagnac) suggests that Lewis (Marc O'Donnell—clad in blue tights), the son of King Phillip, and John's niece, Blanche of Spain (the lovely April Hall), should form a marriage union—thus uniting also the two combative countries. The alliance breaks apart after Cardinal Pandulph (William Leach), closely attended by chanting and incense-burning priests, arrives to punish a disobedient King John with excommunication.

War resumes, Arthur is bundled off by his enemies, and many key players die, but I won't give away the resolution—if there is a definite one; my recommendation is that you see it for yourself. You will not be disappointed!

## History of the *Southern Quill*

| Year    | Editor(s)                                         | Advisor(s)                       |
|---------|---------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1950-51 | Loraine Taylor                                    | Juanita Brooks                   |
| 1951-52 | Loraine Taylor                                    | Juanita Brooks                   |
| 1952-53 | Rose Workman                                      | Rose Esplin                      |
| 1953-57 | No magazine published                             |                                  |
| 1957-58 | Karen Vawdrey                                     | Juanita Brooks & Betty J. Allen  |
| 1958-59 | Karen Vawdrey                                     | Juanita Brooks                   |
| 1959-60 | Barbara Larkin                                    | Juanita Brooks                   |
| 1960-61 | Titine Spillsbury                                 | Reed Blake, Jr.                  |
| 1961-62 | Joan Esplin                                       | Robert O. Dalton                 |
| 1962-63 | Joan Esplin                                       | Robert O. Dalton                 |
| 1963-64 | Ilene Harmon                                      | Pansy L. Hardy                   |
| 1964-65 | Emily Cottam                                      | Pansy L. Hardy                   |
| 1965-66 | Kay Lichtenwalter                                 | Pansy L. Hardy                   |
| 1966-67 | James Force                                       | Robert O. Dalton                 |
| 1967-68 | James Force                                       | Pansy L. Hardy                   |
| 1968-69 | Linda Sue Hunt                                    | Pansy L. Hardy                   |
| 1969-70 | Linda Sue Hunt                                    | Pansy L. Hardy                   |
| 1970-71 | Roxanne Schmidt                                   | Pansy L. Hardy                   |
| 1971-72 | Michelle Thomas                                   | Pansy L. Hardy                   |
| 1972-73 | Gordon J. Peterson                                | Pansy L. Hardy                   |
| 1973-74 | Connie Gifford                                    | Pansy L. Hardy & John G. Hacking |
| 1974-75 | Cathy Pam Heaton                                  | Pansy L. Hardy & John G. Hacking |
| 1976-77 | Michael Perry                                     | Janice F. DeMille                |
| 1977-78 | Marilee Camp                                      | James Force                      |
| 1978-79 | Bill Batzlie                                      | Pansy L. Hardy                   |
| 1979-80 | Laura Lee Graff                                   | Pansy L. Hardy                   |
| 1980-81 | Kurtis Crist, Linda Hedrick,<br>& Aderianna Smith | Ace G. Pilkington                |
| 1981-82 | Melanie Madsen                                    | Ace G. Pilkington                |
| 1982-83 | Dianna K. Kearney                                 | Ace G. Pilkington                |
| 1983-84 | Dawn Houghton                                     | Ace G. Pilkington                |
| 1984-85 | Julianna Burton                                   | Ace G. Pilkington                |
| 1985-86 | Janae Daley                                       | Ace G. Pilkington                |
| 1986-87 | Bonnie McCowan<br>& Kris Shipp                    | Ace G. Pilkington                |
| 1987-88 | Karen Hansen & Kris Shipp                         | Ace G. Pilkington                |

### History of the *Southern Quill*, cont.

| Year    | Editor(s)                                          | Advisor(s)        |
|---------|----------------------------------------------------|-------------------|
| 1988-89 | Stephanie Chidester<br>& Chris Metcalfe            | Ace G. Pilkington |
| 1989-90 | Stephanie Chidester<br>& Chris Metcalfe            | Ace G. Pilkington |
| 1990-91 | Tiffany Durrant<br>& Joni Jones                    | Ace G. Pilkington |
| 1991-92 | Christian Arial                                    | Ace G. Pilkington |
| 1992-93 | Jandi Jones,<br>Natalie Nilsson,<br>& Chris Pellew | Ace G. Pilkington |
| 1993-94 | Jandi Jones<br>& Natalie Nilsson                   | Ace G. Pilkington |
| 1994-95 | Dina Gerhauser                                     | Ace G. Pilkington |
| 1995-96 | Aubree Howard                                      | Ace G. Pilkington |
| 1996-97 | Diana L. Blakley<br>& Bart Jay Mitchell            | Ace G. Pilkington |
| 1997-98 | April Davis, Amber Hyde,<br>& Kelly Leatham        | Ace G. Pilkington |
| 1998-99 | Heidi Madsen                                       | Ace G. Pilkington |

#### ***SPECIAL THANKS TO:***

**Associated Students of Dixie College**

**Janeene Cowley**

**The Division of Humanities & Social Sciences**

**Cheri Drew**

**Bill Fowler**

**George Jantzen**

**Thomas "Randy" Judd**

**Max Rose**

*Southern Quill*

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