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INSCAPE

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Cover art by Alisha Anderson

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On a recent jaunt through our archives, I learned that without our noticing *Inscape* recently passed its 25th anniversary. Some very talented writers have been published in the past two-and-a-half decades, including a few writers who have returned to BYU to teach. *Inscape* is proud of remaining a quality venue for student-produced writing and hopes that this tradition will carry on. We’d like to thank this semester’s staff for all of their fine work as well as our faculty advisor Patrick Madden for his keen eye and pertinent Rush allusions. Also, thanks go to the visiting writers of the English Department Reading Series who provided the quotes you see before every image. Finally, *Inscape* would not be possible without our writers, whom we thank for allowing us to publish their work.

*Inscape* Editor
## INSCAPE STAFF

### Editors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Names</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chief</td>
<td>Andy Ross</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant</td>
<td>Brent Rowland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant</td>
<td>Katherine Sanders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fiction</td>
<td>Tim Wirkus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nonfiction</td>
<td>L.M. Ferreira C.-V.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poetry</td>
<td>Amanda Aagard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Art</td>
<td>Scott Russell Morris</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Webmistress</td>
<td>Kristy Gilbert</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acquisitions</td>
<td>Andy Ross</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty Advisor</td>
<td>Patrick Madden</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Staff

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Names</th>
<th>Names</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Andralynn Brown</td>
<td>Jessica Laitenen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jesse Michael Brown</td>
<td>David C. Moberly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dallin Bruun</td>
<td>C. Bearcat Paylen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ashton Carrington</td>
<td>Jordan Earl Peterson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Michelle Crowley</td>
<td>Betsy Ryan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michelle R. Hoppe</td>
<td>Moana Fololini Uluave</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Erik Hill Josephson</td>
<td>Theodore Robert York</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whitney Rae Klein</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
TABLE OF CONTENTS

Fiction
Kate Finlinson, *The Instinct to Climb a Fence* 32

Poetry
Claire Åkebrand, *Glass of Water* 12
  *Driving Through Montana* 16
  *Thief in the Night* 18
Ellis Clarke, *Spork* 131
Jeff Harris, *Away* 56
Sydney Kiker, *Last Days* 125
Meghan McGrath, *Why I am Haunting Your Dental Floss* 87
Julia Moore, *To My Mother, After the Stroke* 137
Cassie Stoneman, *February 29* 81
Non-Fiction

Bryce Isaacson, *How To Sneeze* 48
Alma Jean, *Lost But Not Forgotten: A Mormon Confessional* 62
Katherine Elaine Sanders, *A Text Message* 93
Christina Tibbetts, *On Wrinkles* 115

Art

Clayton Bailey, *Robocopper* 153
  *Robojuke* 169
  *Wormbot1* 159
Eliesa Lake, *Technical Climb* 17
Tammy Messick, *Fresh Paint* 23
  *Graffiti* 27
Jordan Reasnor, *Kursk* 47
  *You Play Ball Like a Girl* 31
  *The Parlor* 55
Skoticus, *Come Back Afghans* 124
  *Cities.Charles* 61
  *Confessions* 80
Edited by Jack

Enduring Concepts

Globes

National The Post

Passing

Amanda Stoddard, Chairs

Reviews

Lina María Ferreira Cabeza-Vanegas,

Brian Doyle's *Thirsty for the Joy*

Brent Rowland,

Kimberly Johnson's *A Metaphorical God: Poems*

Tim Wirkus,

Paul Rawlins's *No Lie Like Love: Stories*

Contributor Biographies
unique poetic forms. —GERARD MANLEY HOPKINS

introspection of a poet, who in turn embodies them in

Inscape is the inward quality of objects and events,

as they are perceived by the joined observation and
Place shapes us as much as gender, or race, or class. Who I am has much to do with where I have stood. Perhaps because I have passed through so many places as a military dependent and never stayed long in any one place, I pay attention to the details, knowing the particulars of a place are what define it, what make it precious. In terms of craft, I like the way the details of a scene create the tenor of a piece and how a writer can use the details of a scene as a way to replicate or undergird their deeper subject.

— Jennifer Sinor
GLASS OF WATER

Claire Åkebrand

“A poem begins as a lump in the throat.” —Robert Frost

My father’s apartment hovered
above the town’s only gas station where
a king-size bed imposed itself upon every corner
of the one bedroom,
barely enough room for kneeling.

And there we gathered for evening prayer,
my soft-limbed sisters and I,
under a father’s sighed pleas and thanks,
with which he knitted the static silence of the darkening room.

Sometimes I would unsquint during the prayer
and try to stare my silhouette out of obscurity in the dresser mirror.
We would all share the bed that night, while our father in the other room read his way through another hole of mute hours, on a short sofa, silky, matching a Paul Klee painting above.

And later in the black space, my praying secretly also for a mother before falling asleep, who had us during the week, sliced certain sandwiches in half.

On such weekends, long afternooned, lilac air freshener burnt my throat when we all knew he smoked a kitchen wall out of its white innocence.

We didn’t know how to weep together then.

But one night, I awoke in that wooly black, to the blue sound of TV and when I moled toward that hum of the restless to ask my shadow-faced father for a pen and a piece of paper like a tall glass of water,

he wanted to know whether all of this was

enough paper.
Inspiration is not something that happens, it is something you work your way toward, so that you have to continue putting those words down on paper in order to get to the point where those words means something. And when that happens, as my old teacher Richard Hugo used to say, then my Buick finds a more forward gear and then I can make a poem happen pretty quick. There are some that I’ve worked months and months on, and then there are some...that I just can’t figure out how to get out of, I can’t figure out that last step. But there are a lot of others that, ten minutes, fifteen minutes, there’s a poem. And those are miracles.

—Robert Wrigley
DRIVING THROUGH MONTANA

Claire Åkebrand

The night sky is
    a ghost town.

Stars—
    bullets buried
in the dirt.

My love, after turning off the radio, I thought I heard
    the wind blow through the gates of some saloon.
Please wake and watch with me while clouds like smoke swell from that
dark corner above, veiling

    the moon—
    that slowing pulse of cigar light.
In my creative writing workshop, when we’re workshopping a piece, the writer is not allowed to speak. Because, if the writer has to explain or defend, it means that there is something missing. If it’s written right, there should be no explanation necessary, or no defense necessary. It’s just, this is the way it is. And as a reader I can read it and make sense of it.

— Chris Crowe
Look! at the sky—

a plundered flower shop,
it's empty shelves and counters.

Only the moon remains
like a shred of buttercup petal,

and a handful of stars
like pollen scattered
across the black floor.

Whose greed, my love, what longing?
A gun to my head. This puts me in the mode of writing. I used to believe in inspiration. I sort of don’t anymore. I believe in time and space, which we have so little these days . . . You know you don’t have to wait for it, for lightning to strike. Virginia Woolf is right. A room of one’s own and the time to be in it and one can write.

—Idris Anderson
Sometimes Jacob Arthur still gets afraid of the dark. He climbs into his parents' bed. He sprawls like a Labrador might, taking up just enough space to be annoying. Sometimes he burrows into the blankets, between his sleeping parents, lifting his mother's arm, his toes cold as they pass over his father's bare calf on his way to a vacant pillow. He hibernates against them. Their own little cub.

One evening in May, Jacob's mother kept him away from the newspaper and the television. She bribed him with a Lego set, one of the trinkets she kept in the linen closet behind fitted sheets. Jacob knew she kept toys like this on hand. In case of an emergency. Maybe an unexpected
birthday party, a broken arm, a failed math exam. At first, Jacob did not know why she gave him a new set, but he tore open the cardboard packaging and dumped the interlocking bricks out of the box. He did not take out the folded instruction manual, which would have shown him how to make a spaceship.

Earlier that day, Jacob heard the phone ring as he reached into the cupboards for a bag of pretzels. He heard his mother gasp. She held the phone to her ear with one hand, put the other over her mouth. She looked around the kitchen. Jacob knew that she checked if he was nearby. He knew something was wrong. He watched his mother, and noticed that she did not cry. Something was wrong, but she was not going to cry about it in front of him.

She asked the neighbor if she thought the boys read the warnings, if they knew how dangerous bears could be. Jacob heard that much. She said maybe they did not read very well. Jacob read well. Jacob had made a smooth transition into chapter books. He liked biographies: athletes, politicians, sometimes scientists. Jacob listened to her while sorting the Legos into little piles based on shape and color before starting on the fort he planned to build. Jacob heard his mother ask why anyone deliberately did
dangerous things.

When she hung up the phone, Jacob’s mother left the kitchen. She closed the door to her bedroom to speak in a low voice to Jacob’s father. Jacob could not hear what she said, and he did not try to listen.

Jacob’s father said the kids were stupid. He pulled off his tie. He sat on the bed. She stood in front of him, looking out the window, then moved to pull down the blinds. She asked him how to tell Jacob. Should she show him articles or let him watch the news? He said he didn’t know the answers to all of her questions. He said the kids were stupid. He said those boys tried to act tougher than they were, older than they were. He expected her to cry. Other kids might tell him about the blood, about the shots. When she sat down on the bed next to her husband her hand became a vise on his wrist; she leaned her head on his shoulder. Mothers know all about possibilities. They know all about whose child it could have been.

“Will he have nightmares?” she said.

He said, “I don’t know. Maybe. Probably.”
She said, “Do you think Jacob would do that?”
“I hope not,” he said.
She pointed out that he would not have done it even if they dared him because the fence was so high. She caught herself wanting Jacob to be afraid.

When his mother walked into his room, Jacob set aside the fort: four terraced walls of colored bricks stacked on a base plate. When she told him, tousling his hair, he covered his face with the collar of his shirt. She read somewhere to describe death concretely. There was an accident at the zoo last night. Bjorn died.

Jacob knew his friends had wanted to get into the zoo. Mikey and Duddy and Bjorn. Mikey’s older brother Valon was thirteen and he said he had snuck into the zoo after it closed once. Valon said he was going to get back in there one day to pet one of the lions. Jacob laughed and told him that people are not really supposed to pet lions. Duddy said he saw a man pet a lion on TV. It was then that Valon told them they probably did not have the guts to even climb the fence. Mikey brought it up a few days later. He said they should find a way in there, to show Valon. Duddy
said there was no way he was petting a lion. But he liked the idea of free cotton candy. Jacob did not even want to go, but he knew they were going. Listening to his mother tell the story, Jacob thought maybe he should have told someone. Jacob worried.

When his mother left the room, Jacob broke apart the fort. He put all of the pieces into the bucket where he kept all of his other Legos, then shook it. It made a lot of noise—so many tiny pieces crashing around.

The eleven-acre zoo closed hours before the three boys entered. Mikey reminded them his brother had visited after hours before. Duddy wondered if Valon even told the truth. He pushed his glasses up the bridge of his nose as he often did, and tried to hide his worry and his doubt. Bjorn laughed.

They climbed the fence. It was ten feet high. It took the boys a few minutes to clamber over the railing, shimmying up the posts then sliding down the other side.

They walked past the kangaroos and the ostriches, pressing pennies into coin machines, pounding on the latched screens where in the daytime mothers ordered cotton candy and soft-serve
ice cream. Maybe they felt safe locked in, as if no one could come to disturb an expansive game of hide and seek. Not one car might speed pass if they threw a ball too far. They could not be prevented from having fun. They could not hear their mothers calling about bedtime and school tomorrow and washing their hands.

They planned on simply walking around to see the seals, but then one of them remembered the moat surrounding the polar bears. Mikey kept thinking about his brave brother Valon—he had to tell him he was not afraid of breaking any rules.

The moat was ten feet wide. The boys knew how to climb fences. They knew how to jump high. They threw their clothes off the same way they threw them on the concrete at the community pool next to sour licorice and beverages with flimsy plastic lids. Two pairs of shorts, size 10 and 10x. A blue tee shirt that read Jingle Bells, All Girls Smell, a discarded gray hoodie with sticky Swedish fish in the pocket.

When Bjorn climbed over the fence, Mikey squeezed through the bars, angling his shoulders, craning his neck around. If he could get in he could get out.

Bjorn walked quietly over to the moat and slipped in. He
said the water was warm. He said it was not deep at all. It was two feet or so. Just like taking a bath. He said the bears were asleep up in their little cave, but his voice echoed through its walls.

Duddy watched Mikey and he watched Bjorn. Duddy said his stomach hurt. He said maybe it wasn't a good idea, even though he had already thrown his clothes across to the other side. He stood outside the fence like a normal spectator at the zoo, as if he could have had a map in hand or a little bag of popcorn. Yet he stood there in his underwear, boxers with schools of fish on them, his scrawny white legs exposed, baby fat still padding his torso.

Duddy watched. He also screamed the loudest. Later he told his mom he just wanted to go home.

Mikey and Bjorn played. They submerged their heads in water. Their bodies dripped. They splashed each other's faces. Forearms cut through the water to create ripples, waves. It was not wide enough to really race across, not deep enough to dive.

Bjorn was the tallest of the three, the biggest.

He threw Mikey's shorts to the far side of the moat. People said this is what woke up the bears, but others suspected the boys' laughter, the taunting that likely sounded like a game of capture
the flag or Marco Polo.

One of the bears ambled down the rocky cliff of its enclosure and stared at Bjorn. Bjorn was quiet, still. Mikey froze. Duddy put his hand over his mouth.

Both bears suddenly stood feet away from the moat. Mikey stood closer to the west bank, nearer the fence, nearer Duddy. A bear lunged at Bjorn, and he screamed. Mikey scrambled out of the moat, trying to get back through the bars as Duddy yelled, shaking, sobbing, standing in his boxer shorts. In one swipe, Bjorn was unconscious. The bear dragged his body over the rocks and up into the den.

When police officers and rescue workers arrived, they did not see Bjorn: just a tug of war consisting of his remains. Blood on white coats. His tiny rib cage ripped open. They found nothing left of his legs at all.

They shot both bears. A twelve-gauge shotgun and a .38 caliber rifle.

The police, the mayor, and Bjorn’s mother: they all walked through that den the way they may have surveyed a crime scene. Even investigators are not really used to that sort of thing.
After Jacob’s mother left his room, he thought about Bjorn. They traded baseball cards and took swimming lessons together. Bjorn was bigger than him, and seemed older than the other boys. This was because Bjorn could always do brave things. The zoo did not seem dangerous.

Jacob found out later that Duddy and Mikey saw it all happen. He never asked them about it.

The boys found three approaches to handling the dare. First, Mikey acted tough. He came up with the dare, which is something his mother knew much later. He came up with it, so he did not have to do it. He could just watch. When he came home and confessed, his mother sat down and wept. She clutched the son she wanted to slap. He sent his friend into the bears’ den. His face burned red. His cheeks felt hot. His body quivered. Mikey carried the scene with him for the rest of his life. Especially the nine-foot bear, tussling with limp arms, mauling an unconscious body.

Mikey would not so much as walk past Prospect Park
after that, even after renovations rendered it nearly unrecognizable. Eighteen million dollars worth. Planned before the attack. Convenient after it happened. They tore down the enclosure, the cave. Pavement covers the moat.

Mikey asked the same questions again and again. Did Bjorn’s Mom see his body? Why did I say that dare? He wanted to sit on his mother’s lap. He wanted her to rock him in the rocking chair. She began singing him to sleep again at night.

Duddy took a second approach, backing out of the dare, offering reasonable excuses like My mom wouldn’t like it, or Come on guys, let’s check out the flamingoes. His parents still lectured him for standing there and watching it all happen.

No one told him he did the right thing by not going in.

They did tell him he should be glad he was not hurt. But they reminded him that two bears took a twelve-gauge shotgun and a .38 caliber rifle because he did not have the courage to stop his friends. And Bjorn died. They told him he might have prevented it. Duddy felt guilt, though so many others never found him to blame. They told him to be grateful for his life. He heard
screaming in his sleep continually. He wept and wept and washed his hands. He licked his lips raw with anxiety. He pulled nearly all of his eyelashes out.

Bjorn obviously took the third approach. He jumped right in.

Jacob cried. Because Bjorn did not even have legs anymore. Because he needed to go to the funeral. He wasn’t sure what he was supposed to say when he passed Bjorn’s body in that large box with its lid shut. He felt kind of sure Bjorn would not really like all of those roses on the top of it. He saw Duddy and Mikey there, but did not say anything to them. They both kept their heads down.

Jacob wanted to take Bjorn’s baseball cards back to his apartment but he didn’t tell his mother he still had them. He did not want to see Bjorn’s little sister or his dog.

Many people had nightmares. Those two boys. And all the boys in their classroom. And all the girls in their classroom. And the kindergarteners, and the sixth graders. The brothers and sisters and
grandparents and babysitters. Bjorn left them behind. And he left a lonely puppy, an unfinished reading log, lost action figures.

Mothers talked about whom to blame. Foolish boys who climb fences. Security guards. Whoever built the enclosure.

They talked about other mothers who were not watching.

Jacob was not afraid of heights. He climbed lampposts, he stood on roofs. He climbed over fences to retrieve balls; he stood on the railings of balconies. Jacob was not afraid of falling.

However, when summer came, Jacob did not swim. He simply refused. While other children practiced blowing bubbles in the shallow end or circling around the pool with kickboards and foam noodles, Jacob stood at the gate to the pool and refused to go in. He said swimming made him sick. He said swimming was not any fun.

He never called Mikey or Duddy after that day. Jacob said they were not good friends. Jacob said good friends do not let really bad things happen. When Jacob’s mother asked him what he meant sometimes he yelled. His face became red.

Months passed and Jacob made new friends, but for a while, he
played alone in his room. He had quite the Lego collection. He built a series of forts, each one with higher walls than the last. The first few forts had windows and doors, but Jacob soon eliminated entryways from his designs. For a while he put his creations on his bed, which gave him an excuse not to sleep in it.

But Jacob Arthur said he did not have nightmares.
I like poems because they’re bite-sized; you can carry a poem around in your head far better than an entire story. I like stories, too, I think they’re maybe more fun, but poems are tight little glimpses at the world—very satisfying, very compact. Every creative piece is a million creative choices—every word, every comma is a choice. If you and I were to both write poems about, say, penguins, they could be radically different.

—Mary Hedengren
A dust particle smacks your nose hair, sending neurons on a 100 millimeter dash to that cranial pot of gray jelly upstairs. Reacting faster than a teen to gossip, it phones your face, throat, and chest—which go for that molecule like a dugout of players at a pitcher who just beaned the batter—exploding air out of every facial orifice.

With that force comes a decision: how to sneeze. There are all sorts of ways of going through with it. Some people sneeze like wet whoopee cushions, their lips flapping unabashedly. Dainty sneezers scrunch their noses into accordion shapes to slow the expulsion—some even clench their teeth to stop saliva—then they act ashamed and excuse themselves profusely like they just stepped on your infant. My dad’s sneezes are fanfares announcing
his presence. Playing in my room as a child, I heard his symphonic gale thunder through the house, causing the window panes to shake and light fixtures to tremble in awe. (My old man also sneezes when he walks outside and the sun slaps his face, but when his cells made a leaf rub of chromosomes for me, they skipped over that frond.)

Of course, you can stifle a sneeze, but it’s generally thought of as a bad idea. Joey Nichols knew this in fifth grade. We were standing by the tetherball poles, fantasizing as usual about worlds filled with atomic weapons, when my nose twitched and my face puckered like an angry grandma’s. To avoid blasting my friend, I stopped the sneeze in the bridge of my nose. It felt like smashing a loaf of bread into a wall. Neglecting my thoughtfulness, Joey said, “Stopping a sneeze kills brain cells.”

I resented it, but Joey was right. What kind of self-respecting sneeze wouldn’t bust into my fat tub of grey matter and flip a table after an insult like that? Here it was, trying to get schmutz out of my filthy nostrils and I had the audacity to pull the brakes.
“How’s God going to bless you now, punk!?" it screamed, chucking a chair into my hippocampus.

Whether you go through with a sneeze or choose to rearrange your brain cells, you cannot decide to keep your eyes open. The very idea conjures mental images of eyes popping out like veiny tennis balls. From what I’ve gathered, it’s possible, but it requires eyelid clamps and results in severe pain.

Even though science has put men on the moon and made glow-in-the-dark monkeys, we still don’t know for certain why we close our eyes during a sneeze. The general hypothesis is that it developed as a way of keeping all the flying microbes from getting in our eyes. Another idea comes from the Middle Ages, when they thought sneezing was your soul escaping. If that’s true, it then makes sense to me why we close our eyes—nobody would want to look at that.

It’s commonly held that the “God bless you” adage originated in those times as a way of stuffing the sneezer’s soul back into their body. Saying “Bless you” is still the cultural obligation of any decent person within hearing range of a sneeze. When you yawn or burp you’re supposed to say “Excuse me,” but when you sneeze,
strangers in an elevator are supposed to call upon the Almighty on your behalf. When you cough or hiccup, nobody is obligated to say anything. You could be hacking away with whooping cough, yawning from narcolepsy, burping from giardia, and hiccupping from kidney failure, but the guy next to you with dust up his nose will get the blessing.

It's a good idea to cover your mouth when you sneeze, but you only really need to if there are other people around. Using your hands stops germs and saliva from speeding out at 100 miles an hour, but if you go around touching things that really ruins the whole point. The best solution, if you're not averse to accessories popular during the California Gold Rush, is to use a handkerchief. However, the local health department did teach my elementary school the "proper way" to cover a sneeze in a bus or other public area: turn your head and sneeze into your shoulder. I made fun of this to one of my friends and got sent to the principal's office. Sneezing into my shoulder is no laughing matter, though I'm pretty sure it would be for the people looking at me on the bus.

But, if no one's around, you can sneeze the way nature
intended. When you feel a buzz in your nose and a lift of your soft pallet, raise your head to the sky. Inhale deeply and roll gently onto your heels. Pushing the pressure out with your chest, lean forward until your head gives a curt nod and releases the sneeze. Savor the feeling of sending a cloud of microbial salivary vapor freely glistening into the sun. Your drops of spit may get evaporated and fall onto a droopy purple pansy as the first sign of Spring—or provide sanitation and drinking water to an ant village. The circle of life will be blessed because you have learned how to sneeze.
I write by way of a sort of binary process: I like this, I don’t like that. So I go to what I like, and in the place that I like, and see what I like more. I see that I may like one part of it more than I like another part. It’s maybe like the way a salmon finds the scent of the river that he came from. When the salmon is in the ocean it can key in on a river, the river that it was spawned in, and return to that river to spawn. How does it find one particle per trillion of this river in the ocean, I don’t know. But it is something that you, as you are getting closer to it, do by means of honesty with yourself.

— Ian Frazier
away

Jeff Harris

a photo
is all i have of you

this photo
with your handwriting
telling me that you
are at a museum
in a state
far
away

it sits above my desk
where i can see it as i write
a glossy moment
a reassuring rectangle
if i concentrate long enough on this 3 x 5
i can see myself there

by your side:
we are at
the modern art exhibit
admiring andy
warhol's brillo
box

you are captivated
  three reverent feet back
  from the glass which holds
  this postmodern profundity
arms folded still
eyes squinting thoughtfully
your head slightly tilted
to the right

two feet behind you
feet sore from standing
i feign keen interest of the display
and secretly steal glances
of you
My advice is to take advantage of contests and these campus magazines and other opportunities to feel like a writer. Because even getting rejected—once I started writing, or trying to write—getting rejected was, in some ways, reinforcement because it meant that I was doing what authors do.

—Chris Crowe
LOST BUT NOT FORGOTTEN: A MORMON CONFESSIONAL

Alma Jean

I am made up of (sometimes) lost things: 20+ pairs of shoes, 16 New Era hats, 11 Banana Republic chino slacks, 3 Nikon SLR cameras, 3 iPods, an iPhone¹, and the list goes on. These things are not only lost on occasion but they follow a pattern like the seasons. Yesterday was “Lost iPhone Season,” I almost cried. I am made up of great tasting foods, but mostly I

¹ I use my iPhone notes application to start up essays:

Elevators

Why do people take the elevator to go up just one floor? I recently was on an elevator when a lady got on at the first floor and then pushed two. I yelled at her to myself in an angry inner voice “why don’t you just take the STAIRS!” I looked closely, with a stink eye, and realized that she was pregnant.
am made up of lost relationships². The lost relationships are

2 Baxter, my favorite miniature pincher. My friend Blake sold Baxter, his miniature pincher without consulting me. I loved holding him just to have an allergic reaction.
lost for now but they are not forgotten. I’ve recently started a photo project\(^3\) to capture my cherished relationships. It’s my way of not losing them, of holding onto them forever. The end result is a picture within a picture as they hold onto their own selves, truer selves perhaps. Gary, for example, never smiles in pictures.

---

\(^3\) This one is a photomontage of five of my friends and myself. It is 18 pictures that have been cut and pasted together, like small pieces of my friends. Often pieces are discarded, but none have been discarded in this picture. Now, I have lost all of my friends to marriage.
In his engagement picture he looks angry. In reality, he's always smiling, sort of. I caught him smiling with my camera.

**Almost Forgetting Innocence**

Sunday morning on the lower end of San Pedro, California, I went with my mission companion, Elder Haurunen, to the Brown residence. (I served a religious mission for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.) We arrived to pick up the family for church. The house was messy and cluttered with dirty clothes. The mom, invisible to us, yelled out, “Go, and let everyone see what trash kids you are!” The kids snuggled close together in the backseat of our car, seatbelts safely fastened. We arrived at church apprehensively. Sitting next to the children in the front pew of the church, tears slowly slid down my face. Hesitantly, almost unworthily, I glanced at the two brothers and the sister. The two brothers wore our white dress shirts that drowned their upper bodies and arms. Their sister wore her dirty dress. Smiles on their faces. Innocent. They were the joy of our Father in Heaven. I think the oldest brother's name was Bobby. I can't remember the younger brother's and sister's names. I hate myself for forgetting. I hate myself for forgetting names.
Almost Almost

There was this girl I met once. I always wanted to start a story with that sentence. For me the sentence implies: the one that got away. It implies further that I had lingering feelings that are not yet resolved, like the journey is not finished. I cannot start this story with that sentence. I probably should start it with: there was this girl I wish I had met, maybe. I only have a vague memory of her voice, soft.

I returned home exhausted from a football game. It was the first game our team lost in years, and it was against Waiana‘e at Aloha Stadium⁴. During the game I picked up the ball and ran

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⁴ I googled my name and Aloha Stadium and got this picture.
for a touchdown that didn’t count. (It was negated by a penalty.)

During halftime, Coach Beatty slammed his fist against the chalkboard and it almost folded like a window shutter.

After the game, I arrived home. Discouraged? Maybe not.
Happy? Probably not. I answered the phone, and for some reason I knew it was her. She didn’t miss a beat. She knew how we lost our game, how I picked up the ball and ran for sheer exercise. I flew like the wind. (I liked to believe so.) We talked about the game and other miscellaneous topics. During the conversation, my mind wonders, “Who is she, really?” We talked for a couple of months (sad, silly, scary I know), and every time I wondered, “Who is she?” She sent me a picture of her once. She had medium long brunette hair to her shoulders and green eyes. She claimed that she was from the Southside of O’ahu, but was originally from Evergreen, Washington. She was a year older than me and was about to attend Stanford. She gave me her Washington number. I called it once and some older man answered. I hung up the phone. I never found out if she was really from Washington or not.

She said I met her at a dance at Kamehameha High School. I don’t remember and somehow I highly doubt it, but who knows. She got my number from a girl named Kalei. I know a Kalei. This
Kalei asked another girl from my hometown and then, voila, got my number. She called me and I answered. I continued to answer because I'm curious. I wanted to find out who she was. She knew all the right things to say to keep me hooked. A mastermind. Well not a great mastermind, but she did her homework—some based on facts and some based on (faulty) assumptions.

Naomi: My name is Mariko.
Me: ... (Umm, no. I don't really like Asians. Why would she think that I would? Well not really.)

Naomi: But I go by my other name, Naomi. I'm half white and part Japanese.
Me: ... (Ok)

Naomi: I got accepted to Stanford.
Me: ... (Smart, intelligent, hmmm.)

Naomi: I have green eyes.
Me: ... (I don't care for eye color but green is nice.)

Naomi: I'm not a member of the LDS church.
Me: ... (How did she know that I was LDS but only dated non-LDS girls?)
Part of me is smart enough to know that she is a figment of my imagination; no, she is a figment of her own imagination. Once my sister answered my phone and said, “Hey Naomi is on the phone for you. She sounds cute!” There was a part of me that wanted to believe her. I recently heard the song “Soulmate” by Natasha Bedingfield. I liked talking to Naomi. It’s funny and almost scary that I have told her things I never told anyone. (What if she was a stalker?) I was totally honest, for the most part. Well honest yes, but I still had a bit of reservation, not much though. Maybe it’s a good thing I didn’t know who she really was, that way she remains a mystery in my mind. Lingering: the perfect soulmate. A mystery, yes, also a friend, a safe friend indeed. And

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5 Now I keep a set of numbers programmed Do Not Answer.

Do Not Answer

Hansen: Hey I just called you. (Why don’t you just die!)
Me: Oh did you, it must be on silent.
Hansen: (He calls my phone.)
Me: Ringtone plays (Crap!)…Oh I must have been under a building.
Hansen: Oh…but why does it say “do not answer”
Me: Oh…[Someone else] must be calling me. (Crap!) I have to go!
then all of a sudden she broke up with me. I didn’t know what to say. I didn’t realize we were dating.

**Alm ost Forgiving, Never Forgetting**

This is my first attempt to write about my father in three years. Three years ago I would have been too angry but now I think it’s time. I hear that time is the healer of all things.

My father was a great man, mostly. He comes from a once well-to-do family. His own father, my grandfather, was also a great man. My grandfather, to show his love and loyalty for his sick mother, chopped off the end of his middle finger on his left hand. I don’t fully understand the ritual but it was instilled in me that it was a great sign of sacrifice and love; his love, his mother, his left middle finger. I thought it was silly (I picture my grandfather giving my great-grandmother the middle finger, the bird, then cutting it off) but never dared to voice my thought. My father joined The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints when he was a young man and was disowned by his family. To me he was a man of principle, strong moral convictions. He served as a
bishop at the age of 28. On paper he was the perfect father: intelligent, morally strong, and fearlessly courageous.

I stopped writing to take a break and I sketched a portrait of Robbie’s late father. His father has the gentlest eyes I have ever seen. I realize Robbie has his father’s eyes. His father had an unexpected, unplanned heart attack. I guess it’s almost always unexpected. I wish I could have planned one for my father.

About three years ago, in 2005, my father was excommunicated from the LDS church. First his family disowned him, then the church he served and loved disowned him. Quite frankly, he ruined our family, ruined himself, ruined my mother, ruined everything. It felt like everyone knew what happened,

6 Driving with Jeannie, My Mom

Me: (Half joking) I feel so sorry for you.
Jeannie: Why? (Smiling)
Me: (Semi-Sarcastically) Moved out of the house, no money, no husband, stupid children, no grandchildren and you are old...er.
Jeannie: (Laughing with tears) Yeah! I feel sorry for myself too.
except me. I didn’t want to know. I remember meeting a random lady in California during the summer of 2007, who knew my family, knew my father. She offered condolences, and because she knew something about the situation felt it necessary to tell me that my father was foolish. I was offended; I smirked at her. Her words claimed to know my father, but all she knew was what had happened. I didn’t care to remember her name.

I haven’t talked to my father in over three years. Last time I talked to him was at his BYU-Hawaii office. This was before I knew he was to be excommunicated. He had moved out of the house by then, and he wanted to talk to me. I didn’t hesitate to answer his call. I remember my mom was there when I answered the phone. She wore her broken heart on her face. She probably thought he would tell me. We talked for a long time. We talked about how he once kicked me out of the house before my high school graduation. (I almost skipped my high school graduation, but my mom came over to Ali’i’s house where I was hiding and begged me to attend. I thought I had prepared a great Yellow Brick Road speech for graduation. Along the road I met my closest friends and emulated them. I guess I was Dorothy. So I clicked
my heels three times and showed up.) We talked and laughed about other miscellaneous things and then he asked for forgiveness for constantly kicking me out of the house. The question caught me off-guard. I offered him my love first, then my unconditional forgiveness. We hugged, but the hug was half-hearted. We parted. I came home and my mother called me into her room. Her room overlooked Hukilau Beach. The sun was setting and the ocean glistened with sparks of red, orange, and yellow. The constant crashing of the waves soothed me, almost prepared me. Then my mother told me that my father was going to be excommunicated. I asked my mom not to explain any further. I didn’t need to know, I didn’t want to know. She told me anyway. I listened but nothing stuck. I couldn’t listen and I don’t remember much. Surprisingly,

7 I love hugs and kisses, but mostly hugs. But I also love tender kisses on the hands, shoulders, and foreheads. However, I prefer real hugs that take your breath away, but don’t squeeze too hard, just enough.
there were no tears, just complete shock. The waves of Hukilau came crashing down on my stomach and my heart\(^8\) wept\(^9\).

\begin{quote}
Me: Mom I'm scared.
Jeannie: Why?
Me: I'm just like him.
Jeannie: You mean you have problems?
Me: No, but I'm like him.
Jeannie: Tell me if you have problems! Tell me if you have problems.
Me: No, I'm part of him. (I have recently learned the meaning of the word transposition. I imagined myself in his shoes.)
Jeannie: It's ok; you are part of me too. (She understood.)
\end{quote}

My father would call me from time to time. I didn't erase his number from my phone. I changed the name to \textit{Do Not Answer}.

8 The human heart is responsible for pumping blood in rhythmic contractions approximately 72 BPM, little over 933 million beats in 25 years. My heart stopped to take a break and wept for a moment.

9 I love the song \textit{While My Guitar Gently Weeps} by The Beatles. The song does not attempt to console me prematurely. I don't need to be consoled. Instead the rhythm of the guitar recognizes me, weeps with me.
At times I wonder why he didn’t tell me that day in his office, but I know why. For the last three years I never answered his calls. Not because I hate or loathe him, but because if I talk to him I will have to forgive him again, prematurely, without conviction and feeling. And because I’m like him: perfect on paper. Graduated Valedictorian. Check. Started on the State Championship Football Team. Check. Was offered a scholarship to play in Oregon. Check. Chose rather to attend the Lord’s university, BYU. Check. Served an LDS mission and was Assistant to the President. Check. Applied to Law School. Check. Scribble, scribble, nonsense, check, check, check. Well maybe not perfect on paper: perfect is too strong of a word. I was mostly scared, I was a mess, just like him.

My dad stopped calling last year. I started a religious fast early October 2007. I have fasted almost every day, sometimes taking Saturdays off. I love great food and great people. Fasting, depriving myself of food and water, my great love of life, was supposed to heal my relationship with my father, another love of my life. I would break my almost daily fast with dinner. I fasted for other things, too, but mostly so I can truly forgive my father. I didn’t want to hold a grudge; I didn’t want to be held back any
longer, not by him. I stopped fasting; I’d lost approximately twenty pounds. I wrote in my journal February 24, 2008:

I think I’m ready to stop fasting on a regular basis. Since early October, almost every day. Yet it doesn’t seem long enough; I feel like I should keep on. Yet there is a calming spirit that whispers, “It’s enough for now. Let go.” Sometimes

10 Relationship Renewed

Dustin: How did you guys meet?
Me: I had a crush on Alexis since the Pre-earth life.
Alexis: (Light Chuckle) He is lying.

Pre-earth life
Alexis: What does your earthly itinerary say?
Me: It says that I am going to live in Idaho and be Miss Malad. What?
Alexis: You have mine, silly.
Me: Nice, Miss Malad Idaho. I think I have a crush on you. Can I get your autograph? (Switched itinerary). Let’s see, it says I’m going to live on an island, under a tree. Come find me. I hate water, sharks, and coconuts.
Alexis: Ugh, maybe.
Me: I’ll come find you. Wait, it says that we are going to forget everything. Please don’t forget me. I wonder if I can sneak in somehow.
Alexis: I’ll come and visit you when it snows in Baghdad.
Me: Really? Baghdad, as in Iraq? Isn’t that the desert? Don’t forget me.
letting go is just as comforting as holding on. I hear the comforting words of E. E. Cummings, “I carry your heart. I carry it in my heart.” It’s my mother’s voice. I think I’m ready, ready to reciprocate the words to my mother and hand the words to my father with a real hug, heart to heart. I wait for his call.
Sometimes there is an idea that just gets under your skin and you like to think about it. The idea and its implications are just fun to think about and you think about the plot that might result from the idea as well. The same is true for a humor idea, sometimes you’ll have a title of a piece that’s just funny, and you can’t help thinking about it. You’ll say it to people and the jokes that might be spun out of it.

So in that regard both fiction and nonfiction are a pursuit. You think of something you like to roll around in your mind and then you make a piece out of it.

— Ian Frazier
I took the 6 to see you
and missed my stop. Now I’m walking
ten more blocks, in the rain,
the smell of February mingling
with the smell of cigarettes,
the smell of exhaust, and
the heady perfume of
sugared almonds. I’m not hungry.
I stop anyway. Two bucks
and a wax-paper bag
from a grubby hand.

Three more blocks and I’m
walking with a purpose.
I’m thinking of your long fingers
on accordion keys, and how I'd rather be late for my own wedding than late for your show. I pass dumpling joint after thrift store after coffee shop; they start to run together, all brick and neon signs. I measure distance by graffiti.

1st Street and Avenue A was the address you gave. Sidewalk Café. I press my whole body against the door and start to make my entrance with deafening rainboot stomps, until I feel your voice from the back give me goosebumps. I almost forget to breathe.
I am drawn to the genre of poetry because of its ability to distill an emotion and pack a large amount of impact into a few lines, making the emotion often more potent. It also has a power to say something to a reader at the core level. I make sure that I am feeling something powerful when I am writing. I can’t write dispassionately, that doesn’t work for me.

—Robin Johnson
Edited by Jack
WHY I AM HAUNTING YOUR DENTAL FLOSS
Meghan McGrath

I’ve been lost without this life
and its corporeal morsels...
now even your gnawed-on egg-roll
brings awe. Let me deal
with your left-overs, let me
spelunk your mandibular jaw.
I’d almost forgotten
the way this is. I want
Gingivitis to name you with,
a chipped bicusp, halitosis…
Give me the cinnamon-soaked
thread strung tight, and I’ll
tango with your overbite.
After ages of prowling in
skeletal hedgerows and roiling
the floorboards at midnight, I’m
giving up the ghost routine.
So let’s graze the enamel clean,
let’s see how real you are—
I’m waiting for the wedge
of masticated pear, a lick
of parsley, oatmeal, waiting
for the bread pulp that proves
you exist. The vibrance of
life, in unswallowed carrots:
it takes a ghost
to appreciate this. I coast
along on flossing fingers,
recognize what you have missed.
I think all my work, I can honestly say, is written for my children and grandchildren. They’re my audience, so I’m preoccupied with their faith and what they want. I don’t think I’ve written anything to discourage them. In fact, I hope it encourages them.

— Douglas Thayer
INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Enduring Concepts and

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INTERNATIONAL
A TEXT MESSAGE

Katherine Elaine Sanders

Last night at 9:24 pm I received an anonymous text message:

You're going to hate me but I'm leaving Utah in the morning.

The text was sent by an area code 503 number which means that the cell phone came from Oregon. I recognize this immediately because that's where I grew up and got my first cell phone. The number came with me to college, but I changed my number to a Utah number when my former summer fling kept calling me five times a day. Despite having this Utah number for three years now, I still occasionally receive calls from strangers inquiring for Julie. Apparently Julie was the previous owner of my
Utah cell phone number. Even after three years, whenever the Julie-seekers call my phone, I still feel obligated to apologize for not being Julie—even though I don’t know who she is and will most likely never know her. I always feel annoyance and pity for these people that she, perhaps like me, deliberately chose not to give her new cell phone number to.

Other times after I say “Hello?” I am greeted by a recording telling me that I need to register my car or return my videos to Blockbuster—I have neither a car, nor a Blockbuster account. One time a woman called my cell and yelled at me in Spanish. I didn’t understand a word. I tried to tell her my side of the story in English, but this only seemed to make her more upset. I had to hang up on her and guiltily ignore her subsequent calls.

We have no control over whom we inherit our cell phone numbers from. A friend of mine inherited calls from the FBI, IRS, and multiple collection agencies for about a year, all trying to contact some character named Michael. The most interesting phone calls came from gruff voices—different voices every time. These callers told my friend, despite her protests, to tell Michael that they had “got the stuff,” and that he should come pick it up
immediately. These calls continued until she threatened to contact the police.

:-)  

Was this text message I received directed to a previous owner of my number? I had no way to know. But the familiar tone and apparent urgency of the text made me feel uneasy:

You’re going to hate me but I’m leaving Utah in the morning.

The person who wrote this text clearly appreciated traditional spelling and grammar. Instead of using abbreviated txt that makes me 1DR what the 411 is, this person spelled out every word correctly. Not only that, they used capital letters: the Y in “You’re”, the I in “I’m”, and even the U in “Utah”. They even bothered to use apostrophes and end with a period. Place a comma in front of

1 This is an emoticon. If you tilt your head to the left, it resembles a face—in this case, a smiley face. For more information on emoticons please see http://neuage.org/se/phd/storm/abbreviations.htm
the coordinating conjunction “but” and the text would have been grammatically flawless.

You're going to hate me—it seems like there was some previous obligation—why else would the person suspect that I am going to hate them? This anonymous text wouldn't normally have bothered me so much except that a couple weeks ago my cell phone stopped working and its contents, my contacts, were unsavable. I sent desperate emails to family members and close friends in order to collect the vital information, but now whenever I receive a text message from anyone who is not one of those six people, I see only a number, not a name.

;)

Last Saturday I called my parents. I heard the phone ring on the other end and after a couple of rings my mom's cheery voice came on the line, “Hello?”

“Hi Mom,” I began. “How are you?”

“Hello?”

“Can you hear me?” I tried again.

2 This person is winking. I like this emoticon because I can't wink in real life. This emoticon allows me to wink at people in a digital virtual reality.
“Hello-oh, anybody there?"

“You seriously can’t hear me?” Apparently not; she hung up.

A few minutes later, my parents tried calling me. My phone rang and I answered. “Hello?” I said carefully, loud, and clear. Silence. “Hello?” I repeated, more carefully, more loudly, and more frustrated, “Hello?!"

I heard my dad’s voice, “Are you there? I can’t hear you at all.”

“DAD, I’M RIGHT HERE. CAN’T YOU HEAR ME?!”

Silence again. And then he hung up. I quickly called a friend’s cell phone to be sure that it wasn’t my phone that had the problem. It was my phone. The same result: I heard my confused friend’s voice, but he couldn’t hear me. The situation hit me like a bad metaphor: I was voiceless and it was like I didn’t exist. I could hear the silences where my voice should have been. I spoke, I

3 Silences like this bother me. I don’t like silences on the phone. I don’t like silences in face-to-face conversations either. I continually catch myself humming on the phone or in person just to fill in the silence gaps. Friends who know me well know my tune—the stupid little melody I hum unconsciously when conversation runs dry.
shouted, but I was unheard. My short time of voicelessness forced me to hear the undeniable truth: the cell phones we create for the purpose of simplifying our lives inherently complicate them.

Cell phones do more than just place calls. They express individuality and style. Almost every feature of the inanimate cell phone object can be personalized and “person-alized.” When we shop for a cell phone, we evaluate color, shape, and size. We buy clothes-like covers for our phones or sometimes even ports or beds to tuck them into. Not only can we choose between built-in ring tones, but we can download songs and other sound clips from the Internet. These can be saved as a ring-back which allows your caller to hear your favorite song while they wait for you to answer your phone. Are you the type of person who would have Mozart or Metallica for your ring-back? Or maybe both, just at different times. All these are downloadable from the Internet—the ubiquitous cytoplasm of the 21st century that unites micro-organismic individuals to a larger cellular world.

Not only can cell phones do more, they are more. They are cameras, computers, phonebooks, video games, calculators, planners, alarm clocks, music players, and GPS systems—rechargeable
pocket-sized brains that have speed-dial and voice activation. My cell phone is everything that I am not: small, fast, organized, musical, reliable, good with numbers, always entertaining, never forgetful, always on-time, able to unlock the car when your keys are locked inside, and almost always located in a network while I almost always feel dislocated from my human networks.

We are obsessed with these gadgets. A decade ago there were about 34 million cell phone users in the United States; today there are more than 203 million users. Based on surveys taken in 2004, MIT declared the cell phone to be “the number one most hated invention, yet one we cannot live without”—it beat out the shaving razor, the microwave, the coffee pot, the computer, the vacuum cleaner, the television, and even the alarm clock. Americans are obsessed with their cells—borderline biological gadgets that we are scared to leave home without. When I place my cell phone in my pocket and receive a call, I can feel it vibrate like a strange muscle spasm inside my clothes, making me feel like a cyborg. The barriers between humans and machines break down. Now

4 For instructions on this clever trick of unlocking car doors with a cell phone, see http://www.ehow.com/how_2182577_unlock-car-cell-phone.html?ref=fuel&utm_source=yahoo&utm_medium=ssp&utm_campaign=yssp_art.
we collect outdated models of our cell phones to recycle\textsuperscript{5} and raise money for people in need—even soldiers.\textsuperscript{6}

Cell phones have ensured their place in our world by making the landline obsolete. According to the 2008 CIA World Factbook, there are now a mere 163.2 million landlines in the US compared to 255 million mobile cellular lines—and growing. I saw this result firsthand when, to my roommate’s dismay, the managers of our apartment complex revoked the landline. But my roommate was ready to fight for her right to be cell phone-less. She tried to enlist support, petitions, protests, anything, but she found that she was one of only three cell phone-less people who lived in our apartment complex of about six hundred. My roommate was proud of her resistance to the great “evils” of the cell phone. She saw them as distracting, rude, worldly, and worst of all, germy. A landline phone wired to the wall, for the most part, stays in its place and is controllable; but a cell phone goes everywhere—in

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{5} Yes! It’s true! You too can recycle your old cell phone at http://www.americancellphonedrive.org
\item \textsuperscript{6} This charity, started by a couple of teenagers, uses the money collected from donated cell phones to buy phone cards for soldiers. Check it out at http://www.cellphonesforsoldiers.com/about.html.
\end{itemize}
every conceivable pocket, purse, or bag, in every hand-held situation. On occasion, my germaphobe roommate would need to borrow my cell phone and while wiping the phone furiously with a cloth would declare, “Cell phones are gross! You never know where that thing’s been!” After the landline ended, she finally bought herself a cell phone, and got a job to support the habit. Her boyfriend was delighted with her new purchase—he could finally hear her voice more often and track her daily movements. She bought a pink cell phone—her favorite color. But despite the aesthetic pleasure, she felt like one of her personal freedoms had been restricted.

But despite the possible inhibitions or dangerous germs, I still feel safer when carrying a cell phone because in case of an emer-

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7  She has a good point. I know at least two people who have admitted to accidentally dropping their cell phones in the toilet.

8  She still finds ways to assert freedom. Sometimes while painting, she turns her music up so loud that she can’t hear her phone ring when her boyfriend calls. Other times she forgets to turn the sound on after class, so she continues her errands while her boyfriend shows up at our apartment confused about why she isn’t returning his calls and why she isn’t at home. These instances have happened multiple times and it is still uncertain whether they are accidental or deliberate.
gency I can contact help in seconds. If I were to encounter, like my friend Christina, a naked man on my path to school, I could, like her, within seconds pull out my cell phone and call the police. The naked man might, as he did with her, just stand there in awkward shock as I hold my weapon-phone, and walk away. Disaster easily averted. Cell phones also keep detailed records of my calls. These records are useful if I ever want to contact someone or sue them for contacting me.

Cell phones also have the marvelous ability of bringing people together wherever they are—even if the cell phone users happen to be with other people at the time. This phenomenon takes place every single day, especially in between and during my classes. In one class particularly, I noticed that my friend Steve would always have his cell phone out during class and be texting while our professor lectured. When I asked him about it, he sheepishly admitted that he met a girl last week and they have been texting each other almost nonstop since they met. They soon started dating seriously—in person.

But even this valuable dating tool can be misused. My friend Mary was engaged to a wonderful man who seemingly turned bad
overnight. He broke off their engagement via text message. The breakup was hard enough, but the final insult was the fact that their close relationship was broken off by a terse “I can’t marry you” transmitted to a two-inch monitor. After the breakup, Mary said, “Even my fourteen-year-old little brother has better manners than that!”

So apparently there are manners and rules associated with cell phone use. Well, what are they? Is it appropriate to have loud phone conversations in crowded public spaces? Is it appropriate to answer a call during a meal? Perhaps it is best to leave this subject with “Text unto others as you would have them text unto you.” The code of cell phone conduct doesn’t come with the instruction manual. Perhaps it should.9

Maybe this is why we simultaneously love and despise our cell phones—they become more human while we become more robotic.

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9 For the Ten Commandments of cell phone use, thou shalt please see http://www.infoworld.com/articles/op/xml/00/05/26/000526opwireless.html.

10 This is a person who can still smile despite losing an eyeball. It reminds
Last Saturday at the cell phone store in the mall, I asked the phone doctor what the diagnosis was. He asked me two questions: “Did you get water on it?”

“No.”

“Did you drop it?”

“No.”

He scratched his chin, mumbled something about the “back room” and took my phone there where he ran x-rays and other medical tests on the patient. He finally emerged with my cell phone and said with grave seriousness, “I don’t know what’s wrong.”

“Have you ever seen this problem before?” I asked, as I stared at the vertical blue lines on the monitor.

“Never. Not with the monitor like that— with those lines…” he shook his head in dissatisfaction.

me of Ralph Waldo Emerson who wrote that he considered himself to be a “transparent eyeball.” If this particular emoticon disturbs you, just imagine that Emerson is the other eyeball.

11 Why is it that when we talk about our cell phones they never “break”, “stop working”, or “malfucntion” they simply “die”? This is a rhetorical question— I’ll answer it for you. I think the answer is that we treat our cell phones like living bodily limbs. Whether this is beneficial or maleficicial is still under discussion.
“What are my options?” I asked.

“Well, this isn’t covered under warranty and you’re not due for an upgrade for another six months. So you can either buy a new phone at retail price or pay $50 for a replacement.” I forked over the fifty.

“Can you at least switch over my contacts from the old phone to the new phone?” He tried. It didn’t work. Another salesman tried it on another computer. It didn’t work. Every phone number that I had bothered to save in the past three years was eaten by the blue vertical lines.

As I walked out of the store and into the common area of the mall—typical Saturday shoppers strolling by—I realized with embarrassment that the only useful phone number I actually knew by memory was my own. I knew the former landline number of my apartment—now useless. I knew the landline number of my childhood home, but my family didn’t live there anymore. I knew my high school best friend’s landline phone number, but I hadn’t talked to her in over a year. While looking at the new white phone with its perky sounds and straight-from-the-store excitement, I felt ashamed. I could recite my social security number, my student
ID number; I could name every president of the United States in order of presidency; I could even recite the first fifteen lines of the Prologue of Chaucer’s Canterbury Tales in Middle English, but I didn’t know the phone numbers of my family members and my closest friends. Those numbers weren’t written anywhere in my possession. I thought they were safe on my phone. Yet the unexpected happened unexpectedly and my contact list went from over sixty people to zero in just under an hour.

|=|:-)= 12

You’re going to hate me but I’m leaving Utah in the morning.

Knowing that I didn’t know how to contact my friends, or recognize their numbers when they contacted me, this anonymous text message I received became vitally important. Was it for me? What if it wasn’t for me?

I imagine a once-loving couple, now struggling to keep their love alive. Perhaps her name is Julie, and perhaps his name is Michael. One night, while the two are at the opera, tight-tuxedoed

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12 Abe Lincoln.
and slinky-black-dressed, Michael’s phone vibrates in his pocket. He takes out his phone and recognizes the caller. His eyes grow large; he turns to look at Julie who looks surprised and confused. “I have to go,” he says, “I’ll pick you up after the show.” He stands up and walks out, rudely stepping over people in his row while the lead soprano performs an impressive aria. In desperation, Julie follows him outside.

“Michael, where are you going?” she cries, as she jogs up behind him and catches his arm.

“Julie, I’m sorry, but this is urgent. I...need to run an errand and I can’t tell you what it is,” he says as he alternates his gaze between Julie’s green eyes and his cell phone’s blue monitor.

“Michael, I’m sick of this. You’re always disappearing when I want to spend time with you, and you never tell me why you leave or where you’re going.” Tears well up in her pretty green eyes.

“Julie, don’t cry,” he says as he puts his strong arms around her—cell phone still in hand. “I’ll be back to pick you up after the show, I promise. I just need to pick up some stuff on the other side of town.” He releases her and retains the cell phone as he starts walking toward the parking lot. “And when I get back, we’ll go to
IHOP—how does that sound?” he calls out with a smile as he jogs toward the car leaving Julie on the steps of the opera house.

His directions are clear; he must pick up the stuff, then transport it to the next drop-off. Once on the correct street, he gets out of his car and walks toward the drop-off point. Suddenly, a man jumps out of the shadows and tackles Michael on the pavement. By the smell of pizza Michael knows it is Bill, the delivery boy who delivers pizza when he’s not peddling the stuff in used pizza boxes to his extra-late-night customers. “Bill, it’s me,” mumbles Michael, through Bill’s large, greasy hands.

“Shhhh,” hisses Bill. “They’re here.” He whispers, while pointing to a cop car concealed in a tree-lined driveway.

“So what do we do now?” whispers Michael.

“This was the last drop-off we had,” Bill responds. “We’ve gotta leave the state—tonight.”

As they drive away from the neighborhood, cop cars wailing and screeching behind, it is 9:24 pm. Bill drives—creatively—to the airport, and Michael pulls out his cell phone and dials, out of habit, Julie’s old cell phone number to send her a text message:

You’re going to hate me but I’m leaving Utah in the morning.
Okay, okay, highly improbable. But still, who sent me this text message and why? Was it from God? (I always knew God would choose to live in Oregon)\footnote{I saw this in a play recently—a character received a text message from God. I liked the idea, and I decided that I wouldn’t mind at all if God sent me a text message every now and again. But maybe not this particular message, since I know a lot of people who would be very disappointed if God decided to leave Utah in the morning.} Was it one of the fifty-or-so lost numbers that I was desperate to regain? Was it one of my friends from Oregon, who was living in Utah and going to school like me? Was it a person I knew from BYU who just happened to have an Oregon number? Either way, my anonymous friend was making a dramatic out-of-state move very quickly—why? Did they need my help? Why would I hate them? Maybe this text was not intended for Julie or me and it was just a wrong number altogether and I was never supposed to see it in the first place. Possibly. But...

After much deliberating, I finally texted back:

*Who is this? all the numbers on my phone got erased*

I didn’t receive a response\footnote{until about a week later.}
Reading and writing feels like the systole and diastole of your heart—they feel reciprocal to me. They are interactive, going both directions. I think we tend to write the way we read ...I think the best writers I know are really well-read people and I know that I owe much of the best in my writing to other people—to things that I’ve borrowed.

—Steven Walker
ON WRINKLES

Christina Tibbetts

The problem with bedsheets, mainly, is their rebellion against lying flat. Sheets, for some reason, prefer to crawl across mattresses until they lie in wrinkled bunches of unstarched cotton, dangling off the sides as if they would rather inhabit the dark recesses beneath the bed than the space on top. When I awake in the morning, nine times out of ten, my sheets have migrated to some dark crevice down the side of my bed, or scrunched into crumpled piles at the foot. The same problem arises when putting them on in the first place. The art of making one’s bed was the one chore I was incapable of accomplishing to my mother’s satisfaction as a child. The sheets slipped and scurried, folding over themselves.
I could not achieve the immaculate smoothness of a well-made bed, and after several unsuccessful attempts as a seven-year-old, I determined that it was, after all, an unnecessary routine and scratched it off my list of obligatory housekeeping practices. Years later, I still attempt it occasionally (knowing very well that many five-year-olds do it with their eyes still half closed in sleep), but it remains hopeless. Each time I try to make my bed, I only end up reaffirming to myself its impossibility due to the stubborn immortality of wrinkles.

Much modern effort has gone into eradicating the wrinkle problem. In 1882, Henry W. Seely patented the electric iron, a great metal machine that breathed heat and steam, and was capable of trampling wrinkles in clothing effortlessly into smoothness in mere seconds. Today, over a hundred years later, brilliant minds focus on wrinkles of another kind. Lining convenience store shelves are face creams of every color, in every sized bottle, tube, or tub, smelling of everything from vanilla to begonias, which promise to wipe away all signs of wrinkles in “three to six weeks of daily use.” No matter if the user is ninety-seven years old and had wrinkles two inches deep before Mary Kay was even born.
“Wrinkles,” said my mother to me in a mantra that I still hear every time I open my closet, “are a sign of sloppiness and neglect. Wrinkles are evidence that you don’t care.” Of course my mother was speaking of wrinkles in clothing, but I thought about this today as I was walking across the street and noticed an elderly woman, with a halo of white hair, cross my path. Her face was covered in chasms of folded skin, lined with tunnels of age. Her wrinkles had wrinkles. It was a beautiful face, and as I looked at it, the declaration that “wrinkles are evidence that you don’t care” echoed in my head. Almost immediately, it was followed by a counter-thought: Or that you have cared much. The woman’s wrinkles seemed to me a map of a lifetime of experiences. The troubles of the world, and of people in the world, had probably been tugging on her for more than six decades. As I looked at her, I decided that, as far as those wrinkles went, they meant she had indeed cared. A lot. For many years. Cared so much that her skin had formed drain paths for her tears and moved out of the way for her smiles.

Wrinkles are a part of nature—a chronicle—a record of years. The earth itself is wrinkled—earth pushing into earth, creating
clefts and vast ranges of gullied and mounded landscape, mountains that drop into valleys that rise into mountains again. Many people, when they personify “Mother Earth” or “Mother Nature,” picture a beautiful young maiden with a wreath of flowers in her hair. Not me. Mother Earth has been at her job a long time, and you can bet she has the marks of her age. Only her eyes, the heavens, are ever young.

Wrinkles are the signature of time. Time moves swiftly through the world, scrawling its name with wrinkles on faces and rocks and works of men, saying, “This is me; this is my work. I did this.” And it does. Time is an artist that works in lines. Lines crisscross the peeling, cracking, moving earth. They move through the bark of young saplings grown old, and map the pathways of life on faces of men. Lines put texture on otherwise plain surfaces, carving their canvases with individuality and moving beauty. The history of our world is told in lines—in wrinkles.

It seems a shame, then, when we can have our whole life experience engraved on our faces to be looked at and remembered when Alzheimer’s starts to steal our memories, that we choose to slather ourselves with lavender cream and pray for the wrinkles to
disappear like a rabbit in a magic show. But all too often the show is amateur and the rabbit is never really gone, and we wash off the cream and the wrinkles remain. Slightly soggier and smelling faintly of flowers, granted, but as distinct as ever. And too wrapped up are we in trying to make them vanish, that we don’t appreciate wrinkles for their own particular beauty.

It was several months ago that I first connected wrinkles with beauty. I was on my first rock-climbing expedition, up in the canyons of central Utah. As we hiked up into the craggy mountains, looking for a suitable cliff, the uneven, folded ground grabbed at my feet, tripping me up, and making the trek difficult. Eventually we selected a cliff to climb, set up our gear, and I began my first ascent. My hands, long familiar with the outdoors, seemed to see the rock better than my eyes did, moving easily over it, in and out of holes and knobs—like a dance. And then, about halfway up, I stopped. My position against the rock face resembled, I am sure, a squashed spider—limbs twisted at odd angles, neck stretched uncomfortably. I squinted up, wondering why I couldn’t move further, and saw myself gazing at a wall of smooth granite. Rain had started to fall, dotting the rock with slick water that streamed
down in little rivulets. My hands scuttled across the wall, searching for a crack, a crag, the smallest imperfection in the rock—searching desperately for a wrinkle.

The same uneven ground that had caused so much stumbling on the hike up had now, hanging off the side of a wet, weather-eaten rock, become an absolute necessity. I needed wrinkles—wrinkles that I could shove my hand into to pull myself upward. And as I eventually found them and continued to the top, I was able to stand above the world, or so it seemed to me, and look out across the wrinkles of mountain after mountain, and the beauty that was inherent in their cracked, lined imperfections. How dull it should be if mountains were smooth like glass and the carpet of nature was as even as an asphalt road. What a loss I would feel if the crumpled skin of tree bark shone with the slickness of well-polished oak.

I do not look forward to the sight of my body aging in the twilight of my life, the smoothness of youth lost to the rough record of years. But perhaps if I can look in the mirror sixty years from now and see a beauty like that of the elderly woman crossing the street, like that of the mountains and valleys, perhaps then I
might pass by the anti-wrinkle cream in all its various forms and false hopes, with the confidence of one who is finally at peace with her bedsheets.
The cultural skepticism that is a hallmark of our media age manifests itself particularly in a distrust of language. I certainly think of language as a patently flawed system, one that we sort of agree to adopt for convenience's sake, but which fails at every turn to communicate accurately. Certainly human life is populated by experiences that exceed language. The challenge is, how to record these moments of . . . for lack of a better word, sublimity without doing them violence.  
— Kimberly Johnson
LAST DAYS
Sydney Kiker

The walls are piss yellow,
pretty as puke you vomited
on the floor at 6 am,

turning the room sour
with stomach acid. While I bleached
and scrubbed, you sat staring
at leaves whirling
gold in the breeze. Your

onion skin is peeling
papery and I recall
once smooth brown
hands that dug deep
into the earth,
cradling summer squash.

You say: *when the sun streams through the window like that,*
*the room is*
*almost yellow*
*like honeycomb, daffodils,*
*autumn leaves...*

—like lemonade
we made years ago
in glass mason jars,
slicing lemon after lemon,
then stirring.
I write about loss because it is a constant, in my life and in everyone’s. Loss is democratic. We have all experienced it. And when I look back at my childhood, it is defined by loss. What I have found, though, is that writing about loss is actually writing about wholeness, that what you think is empty or abandoned is actually the very stuff that makes you whole. In my losses I am connected to all the losses in the world around me. So I cannot actually be empty or alone.

—Jennifer Sinor
NATIONAL
THE POST
They tell me
I’m a bastard child.
What’s it to them
If one night,
The washing done, my mother,
Nested with her sisters, defied
The constraints of compartmentalization
And slid to lie beside my father with a scandalous clink?
Let them scoff at my stubby lines
And incomplete curvature.
I’m proud to be a mutt.
Let those stuffy segregationists
Toss me in with the tea strainer,
The asparagus tongs,
The cracker scoop: other freaks
Who won’t stack. They’ll change their tune
When the chicken noodle
Soup is served.
This past summer I sublet an artist’s studio in San Francisco for about six weeks. Some of the best parts of that summer were the train rides [to San Francisco] and back because my mind was loose. And some of the new poems I have in draft... I call them train poems. They are not about trains, but it was something about the motion of the train and maybe because my father was a railroad man, but I’m cut away from the rest of the world and that loosens up things.

—Idris Anderson
TO MY MOTHER, AFTER THE STROKE

Julia Moore

Your granddaughter drew a picture of the clot that traveled from thigh to brain.
She made your blood the Mighty Mississippi, the freezing pipeline that softened into trudging muddy waters in a place unthinkably far away.

And, pushing up river, the clot was a barge that grew wider and wider and heavier and warmer until it got stuck in the sludge of the river silt.
Even if beautiful, your walk is stooped.  
A dropped necklace, your left side sags.  
The clatter of candy against teeth, your right side a smile.

Do you sense the quiver of your hanging arm,  
shoulders lopsided like a falling wave?

We are alone, I ask if you recall  
the morning drives to town  
when, squinting into the sun,  
you held my squirming hand.

Being alone doesn't help,  
you still don't answer.  
Your lips only stretch and flatten  
like a baby gurgling bath water.

Out on car rides, we watch things pass.  
Flaking barns, a clumsy church, trout ponds,  
the drooping sun, heavy as a garnet,  
a dog lolling in a dried up creek bed.
I tuck my hand into your curled fingers and stretch my eyes wide to see at dusk. You are slumped against the door.
I used to write line by line. I’d write a brilliant line and then I’d think for three hours and then write another brilliant line. Now, I try to slap it down on the page as fast as possible and then I put that away and re-write it again. When I do that, it’s very interesting to me that very often I will start with the last paragraph. So I work my way to that conclusion, and then . . . go from there. That last paragraph, the conclusion was the essence of what I had to say.

—Steven Walker
In *Thirsty for the Joy: Australian & American Voices*, Brian Doyle captures “salty and graceful stories” told to him mostly “in streets and lanes and alleys,” as he wanders through Australia and then America. The book is an elegant arrangement of these commonplace narrations into beautiful “fact-poems” that, despite line breaks and lyrical elements, remain—through unelaborated and familiar language—wonderfully accessible.

Most of the pieces start with lines like “I get to talking about . . .”; “A man tells me that . . .”; or “I meet a man who used to be a . . .” that situate the reader immediately, without pretension or overly-eloquent distractions. The book moves smoothly through the narratives in long sentences, paced by the rhythm of ordinary speech and by poetic line breaks. Despite the simplicity of the essays’ construction, they stand alone
elegantly both in form and content, mimicking ordinary speech while simultaneously offering up poignant and revelatory insight into the contrastingly complicated human psyche.

Brian Doyle is the editor of Portland Magazine and author of eight other books. He has published extensively in journals and magazines such as Atlantic Monthly, Harper’s, American Scholar, Orion and in the Best American Essays anthologies of 1998, 1999, 2003 and 2005. Through this illustrious career he has demonstrated a talent for finding beauty and poetry in the ordinary. Thirsty for the Joy is the a result of this talent, and a product of a gifted hand that seems to make the condensation of full human experiences into lyrical essays, fact poems, or short nonfiction pieces seem effortless.
I used to only write poems when I saw something that really impressed me, but now I’ve learned that it’s much more productive to sit down and start writing, even if I have nothing on my mind—I just start writing about anything and I always come across something of value if I do that for long enough. Then I just cut it down, whatever it is I’ve written, and hopefully get a poem out of it.

—Claire Åkebrand
Anyone can enjoy the stars. Stargazing requires no special training or formal degree. You don’t have to know anything about them to admire how they burn, or to spend hours beneath their light, tracing your own patterns. But certain people do study the history of stars. They know specific names, temperatures, myths, and connections that form the numerous constellations in constant motion above us. For these people, the night sky looks very different.

The great beauty of Kimberly Johnson’s latest volume of poetry, *A Metaphorical God*, is that you don’t need an advanced degree in Renaissance studies to enjoy the striking sound of her poetry; but, after you’ve read through a couple of times on your own, grab the equivalent of a star map (your dictionary), and work your way through the breathtaking constellations of language that illuminate
the poems in this book. Simply put, the stellar language will reveal an adroit poet at work behind every word.

Johnson crafts every poem in *A Metaphorical God* with her self-proclaimed “lavish particularity.” You’ll “brank” troubadours, hear crickets “geiger-up,” see “orange blossoms wave in pneumatic arcades,” and before you end up all “skewampous,” you’ll come across adiaphora, phalanges, sackbuts, astrolabes, shotgun angels, petrichor, and plenty of “spunky verbs.”

*A Metaphorical God* is comprised of thirty-nine poems that open with Ash Wednesday, traverse the period of Lent, and conclude with Easter. Johnson may “verb impenitent” near the end of the book as her verse thunders across the page, but she admits early on that her spiritual forays do not begin in fatness or excess: “I whose blowtorch urge approaches the ascetic, whose resolve to bury luxuriance grows raw-handed from shoveling.” Johnson writes spiritual verse, but you’ll rarely find the soul of her poetry separated from the flesh and blood that surrounds it. She sings the promptings of a highly visceral, metaphysical muse.

There are quiet, hushed moments, soaring pleas, acute observations, and instances of wide-eyed fascination with both the spiritual
and the profane. Rather than attempt to resolve the disparity between heaven and earth, spirit and flesh, many of these poems prefer to explore the fact of the disparity itself.

Johnson’s poetry tirelessly explores the gulf that separates us from the Divine—at times fasting patiently, at others demanding suffering. At times she observes nature’s beauty and at others she exhausts herself in attempts to stave off its inexorable force. She bemoans the frivolity of her appendix yet concludes that nothing is extraneous. In *A Metaphorical God*, Johnson points us to the myriad metaphors of life and death, love and sadness, fall and redemption that occur around us every day. She writes in energetic, unfettered tones and *nothing* is extraneous. John Donne (Johnson’s professed boyfriend) wrote that the Lord’s metaphors made “all profane authors seem of the seed of the serpent, that creeps” and the Lord “the Dove, that flies.” Happily, *A Metaphorical God* spends as much time romping in the dirt as it does forcing itself upward through the air—reminding us where our feet are planted and where our eyes may roam.
Sometimes you’ll have a title of a piece that’s just funny, and you can’t help thinking about it. You’ll say it to people, and then you think about it and think: what are the implications of plot, what are the jokes that might be spun of this? So in that regard, in both fiction and nonfiction, it’s a pursuit. You think of something you like to roll around in your mind, and then you make a piece out of it.

—Ian Frazier
NO LIE LIKE LOVE

by Paul Rawlins

Review by Tim Wirkus

One of the most impressive feats of Paul Rawlins’s story collection *No Lie Like Love* is the way it makes drab working-class towns feel so alluring. The observations of the down-on-their-luck narrators in so many of the stories give these towns and their inhabitants an almost exotic sheen. In one story, the attendees of a neighborhood barbecue are described as men who “fold their hands around longnecked bottles of beer like so many wise Jews at Iowa’s own wailing wall made up of the peeling white fence that keeps the yard from breaking outside itself.” It’s details such as these that valorize the neglected communities that the stories focus on.

Rawlins, a BYU alum, won the Flannery O’Connor Award for this collection—and it’s easy to see why. His unassuming prose style highlights the human element of the stories, creating characters that feel like they could live just down the street. Daily,
mundane struggles take on an appropriate sense of significance. In “Still Life with Father,” for example, the story’s middle-aged narrator describes the stagnant state of his daily existence in the house he shares with his elderly father. He ruminates on missed romantic opportunities, on the finer points of laying concrete, on foods his father will not eat. The story ends, not with a stunning epiphany or change in fortune, but with a simple description of the narrator coming home from work at night to find his father on the front porch: “If he’s awake, he’ll look up and lift a hand to wave, watch me as I head up the walk toward him, his only son come home.” In this story, like so many others in the collection, what ends up holding together the crumbling lives of the underdog narrators is their ability to find some comfort in their often frustrating relationships with those who are close to them. From these relationships comes a tough, realistic optimism about the future. As the narrator of another story puts it, “when I find two nickels to rub together, stand back from the heat of molten metal and the flash of a rising star.”
I’m not actually all that interested in nature *per se*; rather, nature becomes in my work a figure for expressing certain kinds of conflict that interest me. If my poems include what seem to be the less lovely parts of nature, the less “poetic,” it’s not because I am drawn to the ugly, but rather because the tension between beauty and ugliness is a productive conflict, one that mirrors other kinds of conflict.

— Kimberly Johnson
Claire Åkebrand was born in Stockholm, Sweden, grew up in Frankfurt, Germany, and has lived in Utah since age fifteen. A senior majoring in English, she will graduate in April 2009. She is the recipient of the La Verna S. Clark, and the Blessing Creative Writing Scholarships. In Winter 2008, she won first place in the Hart-Larson Poetry Contest and second place in the Elsie C. Carroll Essay Contest. She has published poetry in the British literary journal X-Magazine: Daring New Poetry and Prose. In Fall 2008, she was nominated for the AWP Intro Journals Contest. After BYU, she plans on getting an MFA and a PhD in writing poetry. Claire’s greatest goals are to live in a stone cottage by a lake in Ireland, raise children with Irish accents, and always be surrounded by poetry.
Alisha Anderson is a Junior at BYU but a freshman in the Studio Arts Department, with emphasis in drawing and painting. She grew up in California but now considers herself to be from South Jordan, Utah. She plays on the BYU women’s lacrosse team.

A special thanks to Clayton Bailey, who has spent many years as a Professor of art and ceramics in California. He was a professor of Art at Wisconsin State University and now an Emeritus professor of ceramics at California State University, Hayward. He is also a recipient of the prestigious National Endowment for the Arts Craftsmen’s Fellowship Award and an Honorary Fellowship Award from the National Council on Education for the Ceramic Arts. In 1976 he founded “The Wonders of the World Museum” in Port Costa, California.

Ellis Clark is a sophomore from Moscow, Idaho. She is majoring in English with an emphasis in creative writing. When not studying in the Periodicals section of the Harold B. Lee
Library, she enjoys reading voraciously, writing poetry, hiking, cooking with friends, and singing in her ward choir.

Kate Finlinson is from Salt Lake City, Utah. She will graduate this April with an MA in American Literature. This year she took first place in the Utah Arts’ Council Original Writing Contest. She has also received various awards for her writing at BYU. Kate is applying for admission to MFA programs for Fall 2009, where she will continue to work on her fiction.

Jeff Harris is a senior majoring in English. He thinks your tractor’s sexy.

Bryce Isaacson is an Advertising major at BYU, minoring in English. He spent his teenage years in Buenos Aires, Argentina and is currently missing the beef very dearly. He has published several articles and features in BYU Magazine and won first place in the Radio Ad category at the 2007 BYU Half Show. He is currently preparing his honors thesis, “Content Analysis of Family Conflict in Children’s Television in the 2006-2007 Season.” He enjoys performing
in community theater, and harbors an intense love for music, cooking and eating. As a postscript to his essay, he would like to add that his grandmother's sneezes sound like "Hug-a-choo-choo!" His current home is Farmington, Utah.

**Alma Jean** is from Laie, Hawaii. He is the winner of no awards. However, he recently won the Alexis Plowman Scholarship that includes a lifetime supply of milk and cookies, piñatas, indie movies, mornings, awkward phone calls, and occasional roses.

**Sydney Kiker** is a sophomore from Henrico, Virginia studying English. This is her first time submitting to *Inscapes*. Sydney hopes to continue on to graduate school with the tentative goal of teaching English at an East-coast college preparatory school. However, in the meantime, she is passionate about her education, fighting for social equality, and learning about other religions and cultures.

**Eliesa Lake** is a freshman from the small town of Wilsonville, Oregon. She is currently undecided as to what to do with the rest of her life, but enjoys photography, sewing, and craft projects of any kind.
After graduating from college, she hopes to travel the world, but to eventually end up living in her favorite place in the world: Oregon.

**Tammy Messick** recently graduated from BYU with a degree in Anthropology. She currently resides in the outskirts of Washington, D.C. where she is pursuing a career in museums. She is passionate about finding beauty in seemingly everyday things.

**Julia Moore**, having recently forsaken a career in law to pursue poetry, is a novice writer. Hailing from Memphis, Tennessee, Julia aspires to develop the skill of those exceptional Southern writers who have come before her. In the meantime, she is working for The Man as a technical writer.

**Jordan Reasor** found herself drawn to creative endeavors at a very early age when she produced her first tribute piece: a marker-crayon mix on white wall boldly depicting a steep Victorian staircase upon which the artist suffered many a fall. The controversial piece drew many criticisms and was finally removed from exhibition by a parental figure of sorts.
The artist currently prefers paper but plans to return to wall tributes in the near future. “You Play Ball Like a Girl” was originally in full color.

Katherine Elaine Sanders is a senior from Keizer, Oregon, majoring in English. She plans to continue studying creative nonfiction (along with the myriad of other things that interest her) in graduate school. Her latest adventure includes street haunting in New York City.

Skoticus is a guy who likes to write and take pictures. He will soon be graduating from BYU with a degree in Recreation Management, and has no idea how that is going to help his future. Skoticus’s creative work has previously appeared in Inscape and The Prick of the Spindle. FYI: “Globes” was taken at Old Star Mill.

Amanda Stoddard is a senior in English Language/editing. She is from Fruit Heights, Utah. She graduates in April 2009.
Cassie Stoneman is a sophomore from West Point, New York. She tries to write about small things: her inspiration comes from diners, bike rides, and rainy days in Manhattan. This is her first contribution to *Inscape*.

Christina Tibbetts is a twenty-one-year-old BYU senior, majoring in Theatre Arts and minoring in English. She has freckles, schizophrenically curly-straight hair, and a crooked yawn. Some of her favorite things in the world are blue jeans, sunsets, and words that start with the letter “Q”. On that note, she is also a word nerd and devours books the way most people devour junk food—with great enthusiasm and little self-control. She takes pictures of leaves, old houses, and interesting people. She is also a health nut who loves chocolate, and a sun-worshiper who adores thunderstorms. She will graduate in April and move home to bask in the sunshine.
I always ask myself what is at stake for me in telling any story. I believe that you must risk yourself on the page, reveal your humanity, your vulnerability, especially when the story you are telling puts other people at risk. That the more you write, the more you see the world through the eyes of a writer.

—Jennifer Sinor
Inscape is a student-run journal that publishes students' creative writing. We welcome submissions in the first half of fall and winter semesters.

Submissions to Inscape must be e-mailed as Word attachments to inscapebyu@gmail.com. Please include the following information in the body of the e-mail: Author's name, phone number, address, and e-mail address, as well as the title of the work and its genre (short fiction, poetry, nonfiction, drama).

Art submissions must be submitted on a CD or through e-mail, scanned at 300 dpi or higher, and saved as a TIFF image. Art submissions may include photography, paintings, drawings, digital art, etc.

Authors/Artists will be notified of the staff's decision concerning their submission by the end of the semester. All published authors and artists will receive two free copies of the journal they are in.

E-mail all questions about guidelines to inscapebyu@gmail.com.
In this issue:

Sneezes, cigar-moons, book spines, our favorite miniature pincher Baxter, plenty of robots, haunted dental floss, a meditative spork, Paul Klee, an illustrated guide to emoticons, the 6 train, Ian Frazier, and of course: the inward quality of objects.