

# Tidal Echoes

LITERARY *and* ARTS JOURNAL







# Tidal Echoes

UAS LITERARY & ARTS JOURNAL 2015

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Featuring the work of students,  
faculty, and staff of the  
University of Alaska Southeast  
and members of the community.



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**S O U T H E A S T**

*learn • engage • change*

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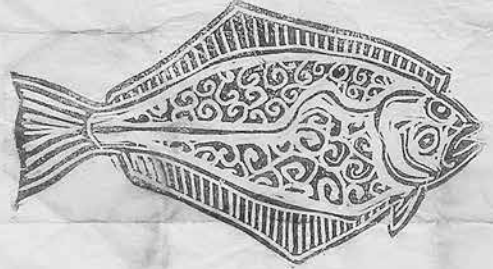
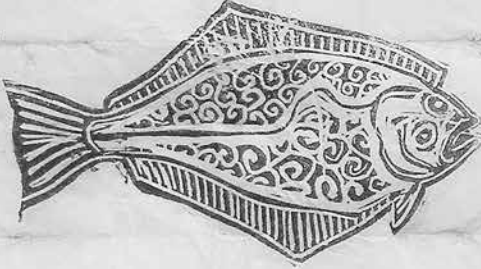
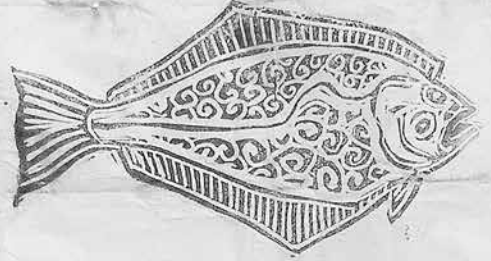
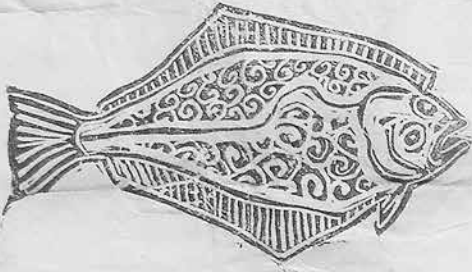
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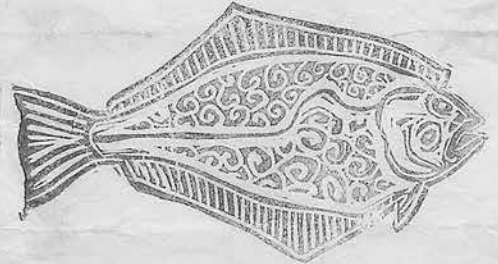
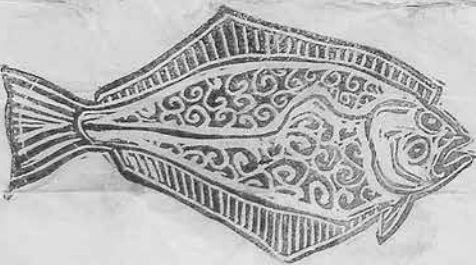
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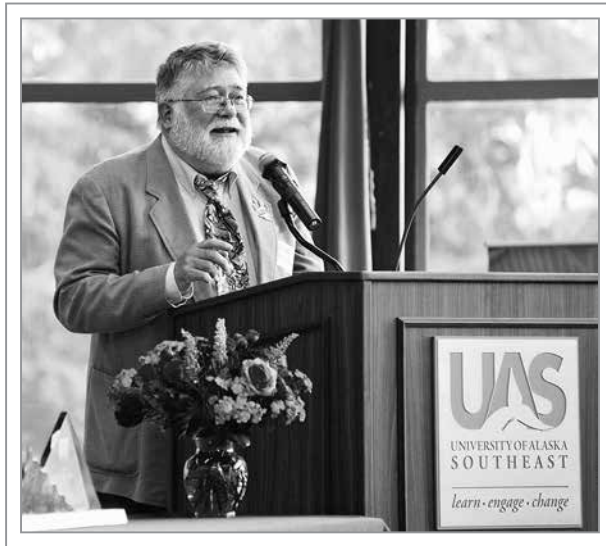
Fumi Matsumoto, Two Ravens



Dedicated to Richard Dauenhauer (1942-2014)  
for inspiring countless people to write and  
explore the Tlingit language.



"Ohyou"



University of Alaska Southeast President's Professor of Alaska Native Languages, Richard Dauenhauer served as the Poet Laureate of Alaska from 1981-1988. He worked as a program director for the Sealaska Heritage Foundation, and with his wife, Nora Dauenhauer, edited the *Classics of Tlingit Oral Literature* series. He and his wife helped standardize a written form of the Tlingit language, made recordings of spoken works in Tlingit, and published histories of the Tlingit people and translations of their work.

*Richard Dauenhauer receiving the University of Alaska Foundation's Edith R. Bullock Prize for Excellence at the Egan Library in June, 2013. Photo: Henry Masters*

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left: Fumi Matsumoto, Halibuts (Ohyu) detail

# Contents

- x Editor's Note  
*Elise Tomlinson, UAS Faculty, Mid-Air*
- xii Acknowledgements  
*Fumi Matsumoto, Salmon (Gohan Desu Yo/It's Dinner Time)*
- I Xwaayeenák Richard Dauenhauer  
*X'unei Lance Twitchell, UAS Faculty, Juneau*  
*Fumi Matsumoto, Loon*  
*Jordan Kendall, Burney Falls*
- 4 Richard Dauenhauer  
*Ishmael Hope, Featured Writer, Juneau*  
*Fumi Matsumoto, Egg Carton Fox*
- 6 August Afternoon at Helle's Pool, Vancouver, Washington  
*Richard Dauenhauer, Juneau*  
*Jordan Kendall, Oak Run*
- 9 Buddy Tabor teaches me to filet a halibut  
*Jonas Lamb, UAS Faculty, Juneau*  
*Caroline Hassler, UAS Faculty, Icelander*
- 12 Home  
*Chelsea Tremblay, Petersburg*  
*Jill Dumesnil, UAS Faculty, Season's End*
- 16 Young Me, Old Me  
*Christina Apathy, UAS Student, Juneau*  
*Adelle Labrecque, UAS Student, The Window Seat*
- 17 Wind  
*Laura Tripp, UAS Student, Juneau*  
*Ariel Svetlik-McCarthy, UAS Student Back Study*
- 19 Paintbrush Conversations  
*Heather Burge, UAS Student, Juneau*  
*Christofer Taylor, Grey River Soulshine*



- 20    *Across the Universe*  
Heather Burge, UAS Student, Juneau  
*Donald Hale, UAS Student, Aurora–Skaters’ Cabin 1*
- 23    *Whiskey and Autumn*  
Joe Lewis, UAS Student, Juneau  
*Fumi Matsumoto, Leaf Wolf*
- 24    *Spring Cleaning the Perennials*  
Sarah Isto, Juneau  
*Bonnie Elsensohn, Ode to a Rose*
- 26    *Final Point*  
Sarah Isto, Juneau
- 27    *After Spring Recital*  
Robert Fagen, Juneau  
*Richard Stokes, Olympic Ceiling*
- 29    *Rodda—Hard going (too little snow)*  
Vivian Faith Prescott, Sitka  
*Gordon Harrison, Birch Bark Calligraphy No. 2*
- 30    *Fishtailing*  
Alexis Miller, Juneau  
*Marianne Manning, UAS Student, Working the Corks*
- 37    *Modern Alaskan Storyteller:*  
*An Interview with Ishmael Hope*  
Clara Miller, UAS Student, Juneau
- 38    *Bailer at the Back of the Boat (Excerpt)*  
Ishmael Hope, Featured Writer, Juneau  
*Paris Donohoe, UAS Student, Close Up*
- 42    *Bothering the Dauenhauers*  
Ishmael Hope, Featured Writer, Juneau

- 44 In Memory of Andrew Hope III  
Ishmael Hope, Featured Writer, Juneau  
*Mark Sixbey, UAS Student, Wolf Brimhat*
- 47 I Am From  
Brady Harang, Sitka  
*Richard Stokes, Crossing*
- 48 Revelations and Realizations  
Heather Miethe, UAS Student, Wrangell
- 53 The Shrinking Girl  
Mary Koppes, Petersburg  
*Kaylie Simpson, UAS Student, Untitled (Andi in Niki's Room)*
- 54 Afternoon Reading, Rainy Room  
Kent Pillsbury, UAS Student, Juneau
- 55 My Grandmother's House in Metlakatla  
Lindarae Shearer, Metlakatla  
*Deacon Charles Rohrbacher, Icon of St. Nicholas*  
*Magil Pratt, UAS Student, Honoring Tibet*
- 65 Fumi Matsumoto: Finding Art in Culture  
Clara Miller, UAS Student, Juneau  
*Fumi Matsumoto, Pathway of Thorns*  
*Fumi Matsumoto, Minidoka Interlude*  
*Fumi Matsumoto, Mountain Dew Parrots*
- 70 Watch Out for Falling Objects  
Mary Lou Spartz, Juneau  
*Adam Wood, UAS Student, Loose Change*
- 72 An Unkind Demise  
Katie Bausler, UAS Staff, Juneau
- 75 A Place That Holds Names  
Kristina Cranston, Sitka  
*Sheila Dyer, UAS Student, Immortality (skull side)*
- 76 Opening Again the Box of Wisdom  
Deacon Charles Rohrbacher, Juneau
- 78 Iff'n I Go  
Christian Woodard, Haines  
*Adam Wood, UAS Student, Colorless Blues*

- 80 The Heartsdance  
Rocky Stiers, LCCC, Juneau  
*Nathan Buendia, UAS Student, King of Dreams*
- 81 Hungering  
Diane DeSloover, Juneau  
*X'unei Lance Twitchell, UAS Faculty, Colonialism*
- 83 Inside Out  
Carol Prentice, Juneau  
*Christofer Charles Taylor, Rachel Day*
- 88 Lying Here  
Margo Waring, Juneau
- 89 Note to Wife  
Kent Pillsbury, UAS Student, Juneau  
*Inari Kylänen, UAS Faculty, Death*
- 92 Round the Clock  
Jennifer Prince, LCCC, Juneau  
*Kaylie Simpson, UAS Student, Untitled (trap)*
- 96 Seeds of Racism  
Richard Stokes, Juneau  
*Richard Stokes, Auschwitz Remembrance*  
*Jackie Manning, Moab 1*
- 101 Pearl of the Orient  
Rosalinda Ainza, UAS Student, Juneau  
*Jackie Manning, Moab 3*
- 102 Scars  
Eugene Solovyov, Sitka  
*Adam Wood, UAS Student, Transporting*
- 104 In Eliason Harbor  
Kersten Christianson, Sitka
- 105 Poet Passes: Leaves Words Behind  
Kersten Christianson, Sitka
- 107 Tough Guy  
Richard Dauenhauer, Juneau  
*Mark Sixbey, UAS Student, Wolf Helmet*
- 108 Biographies



# Editor's Note

In 2009 I was required to attend a *Tidal Echoes* launch by my professor. I expected to encounter a room full of stuffy people reading a dry manuscript, but I was wrong. Instead, I found a room of vibrancy, people that held the same ache and urge to produce quality art and writing for others that I had. Since my initial encounter I have attended every launch and my respect for the journal has only grown.

I was fortunate to become an editor of *Tidal Echoes* because I was in my senior year at UAS while serving as the junior editor. I had to wait one year to officially complete my degree so that I could be the senior editor, and I wouldn't change it. Watching the journal grow from piles of submissions to a selection of diverse voices is amazing. The junior editor and I have poured over 240 hours of love into this edition, going over the large and small details, so that the author's and artist's work can be represented in the best possible light.

The journal isn't about us, the editors; it is about the people whose voices and artwork compile this edition. It's about you, the reader, taking the time to read through the pages to find the piece that makes you sit back and smile, wander through the day thinking of one word, or to let go of a to-do list so that you have time to read.

Having been born and raised in Juneau it doesn't surprise me that there is so much diversity and community within *Tidal Echoes*. My pursuit in the field of writing has taught me that submitting and being accepted into literary journals is hard. Finding a journal that represents a writer's piece properly can be even trickier. That is where my respect for *Tidal Echoes*' uniqueness has grown greatly. The journal takes a community of voices from our extraordinary homeland and shares it with others. This isn't a collection of separate pieces, but a communal voice of Southeast Alaska. This journal serves as a platform for others to learn new stories from people in their homeland, or to read writings from Southeast for the first time.

As you turn the pages I hope your encounter with this journal is like mine every year, new and full of wanderlust. I want these pages to help you have a desire to keep exploring the worlds of other's voices. Please, look for new ways to transform artwork on the pages and don't ever be afraid to submit to your impulses of sitting down with a new book and warm tea.

Warmest wishes,

Rebecca Salsman, Senior Editor



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Elise Tomlinson, Mid-Air, UAS Faculty

# Acknowledgements

This is the page of the journal where we lavish extensive praise and gratitude upon the people who made it possible and delightful to publish this issue of *Tidal Echoes*.

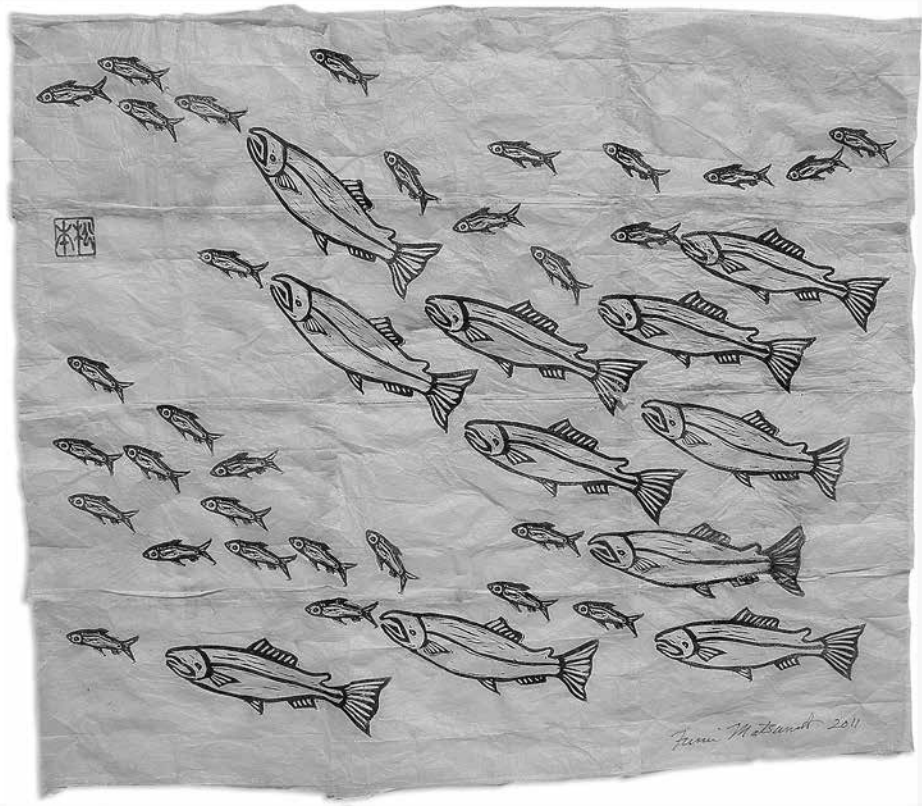
First off, an enormous *gracias* to our editorial board! This board was composed of Professors Math Trafton, Rod Landis, Andrea Dewees, Sol Neely, William Elliot, Emily Wall, as well as John Wade from the Writing Studio. Thanks also to Professors Anne Wedler, Liz Zacher, and Ben Huff for their artistic knowledge and effort as our art editors. Their hard work and dedication helped to make this collaboration as strong as it is. To Kaya Day, administrative assistant in the Humanities department, thank you for all your behind-the-scenes assistance, including that time you let me into Emily Wall's office to find the hat I had left behind in 10-degree weather.

Special thanks goes out to Provost Richard Caulfield and especially Chancellor John Pugh, who will be leaving us this year. Not only did Chancellor Pugh fund the first grant that launched *Tidal Echoes* and made it a reality, but he has continued to support it for the past 13 years – a feat which has not gone unnoticed or unappreciated. And it is a feat; Alaska is a big state, and alongside the provost, he has successfully managed to promote and showcase *Tidal Echoes* within the widespread University of Alaska network. *Tidal Echoes* would not be here today if Chancellor Pugh had not taken a vested interest in its creation and continued survival, and for that we are eternally grateful.

Immense thanks to Alison Krein for being our graphic designer and making this issue of *Tidal Echoes* look fantastic. She has dedicated massive amounts of time and energy to *Tidal Echoes*, and her graphic design, expertise, and patience have helped us transform a raw manuscript into a really majestic book. Without her, this issue of *Tidal Echoes* would not exist.

A huge thank you to Ishmael Hope and Fumi Matsutomo for their exceptional contributions, both to *Tidal Echoes* and the community of Southeast Alaska as a whole. We are honored to have such fantastic individuals as our featured writer and artist.

In honor of Mac Behrends, the Behrends family contributes a generous scholarship donation to a UAS student, and for this we cannot thank them enough. The 2015 Mac Behrends scholarship recipient is Rosalinda Ainza—congratulations, and thank you for submitting your piece to the journal!



We are incredibly grateful to Nora Dauenhauer, Kathy Ruddy, and the University of Alaska Press for allowing us to use Richard Dauenhauer's work in this issue of *Tidal Echoes*. In addition, they have allowed us to dedicate the journal to him. We would also like to thank X'unei Lance Twitchell and Ishmael Hope for their kind, thoughtful, and well-worded tributes to Richard Dauenhauer and his memory.

Last, but certainly not least, thank you to everyone who submitted! Your pieces have given us the opportunity to showcase the creative and artistic talent of Southeast Alaska.

Eternally grateful,

Alexa Cherry, Junior Editor

Rebecca Salsman, Senior Editor

Emily Wall, Faculty Advisor

---

Fumi Matsumoto, Salmon (Gohan Desu Yo/It's Dinner Time)



Tléil daatnáx sá kwshí yéi yándeí kaguxdayáa.  
Wooch isxán, ch'a tléix' tí, ach asgíwé  
wooch xoo yakaguxdadáa haa ku steeyí.

— Wóochx Kaduhaa

There is nothing that can force this to happen.  
Love for each other, being one, perhaps that is what  
will blend our lives together.

— Jimmie George, Dakl'aweidí





A TRIBUTE TO  
Richard  
Dauenhauer

**XWAAYEENÁK RICHARD DAUENHAUER**

by X'unei Lance Twitchell, UAS Faculty, Juneau

At the 2014 UAS Convocation I have the chance to tell something to all the faculty and staff who have gathered to prepare for the upcoming academic year: «*du x'us.eetix' yéi xát yatee, wé yak'éiyi xóots, Xwaayeenák. Xwaayeenák. du yéi jinéiyi áyá litseen ka du shát tsú, Keixwnéi. Xwaayeenák yís kkwa.áakw.*» (“I am standing in the footprints of a wonderful brown bear, Xwaayeenák. Xwaayeenák. His work is strong, and so is his wife Keixwnéi’s. For Xwaayeenák I am going to try.”) My dear friend and fellow language teacher Xéetl’i Éesh Lyle James calls me a little later to let me know that Dick had taken that walk back to the inland, into the forest. It was probably near the time I said those words. I walk down to Áak’w (Auke Lake) and sit on the dock. The sun keeps shining.

---

left: Fumi Matsumoto, Loon

Language revitalization is tremendous work. There are a lot of people who talk about how wonderful that work is, but there are not many people who are actually doing the work in the trenches where we fight against genocide and assimilation. No excuses, only hard work. Dick Dauenhauer was one of those people, and he did a damn fine job fighting with us and understanding how to be productive in this field. Sometimes, I look at the vast collection that is the work of Nora & Richard and think to myself: how do we fill these footprints? It amazes me how we have only scratched the surface of Tlingit knowledge, and how the overwhelming majority of people in Southeast Alaska, and of the Tlingit people themselves, have no real knowledge of the language.

Because of this, I send students into the texts *Xwaayeenák* and *Keixwnéi* developed to help us deconstruct systems that kill languages: Alaskan education, American politics, concepts of superiority born out of a deep seeded and lurking idea that white European languages, thoughts, and histories are far superior than those of indigenous people. The thing I miss the most is being able to sharpen my arguments by engaging my friend, teacher, and uncle in conversations about creating change. His compassion and knowledge could help shape my consciousness and see things I had not thought about. I remember when we told Nora about the governor signing a bill that made Alaska Native languages the co-official languages of Alaska. She clasped her hands to her chin and said through tears, “Dick would have loved to see this!”

It is time to call out for a joyful reunion with Tlingit identity, and that identity takes place in individuals, groups, communities, and in the land itself. All of the knowledge that has been documented was not done so we can have the “preservation” of language. Instead, we want a world where a room full of people do not need a translation, and where children can communicate in multiple languages. When they do that, their concept of identity is so much less fragmented than the BIA mentality that has us measuring blood quantum and making arbitrary decisions about who is human and who is not, and just how much Tlingit a person needs to be.

I cherish Richard Dauenhauer and the conversations we had. I live them every moment I teach someone about the language, and when the light bulb shines I think about the ways he explained things to me and how excited he became when he noticed that I was getting it. I would stay up all night at times reading the texts he had produced about the language, anxious to try my hand and explaining it as well as he and Nora had done. Their poetry, hundreds of recordings of wonderful Tlingit, translations, teaching materials, and just good company is enough to flood my world with hope and energy.

---

George, Jimmie. “*Kéix’ 1971 / Kake 1971*” *Haa Tuwunáagu Yís—For Our Healing Spirit: Tlingit Oratory*. trans. Nora Dauenhauer & Richard Dauenhauer. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1990. 168–169.

We need to speak without hesitation. We need to speak for those who have taught us and are now counting on us to stand up for it. We need to speak for those little grandchildren who will stand in our imprint. We need to listen. We need to speak. The long night is coming to an end and the day will dawn on us again. All of those who have fought this battle will watch us as we raise our children as birth speakers and carry on conversations about everything possible. And right now, everything is possible. *Gunalchéesh áwé ax sáni. I tundatáani tóonáx ch'u oowayáa ldakát át wulicheesh.* Thank you, my uncle. Through your mind, it appears that everything is possible. I'll see you on the fine sand someday, and in the meantime we will keep fighting until there is enough laughter and love to allow us the cultural safety and linguistic security that was your dream.



---

Jordan Kendall, Burney Falls

## RICHARD DAUENHAUER

by Ishmael Hope, Featured Writer, Juneau

# “*Anyhow...*”

Richard Dauenhauer would repeat this over and over again, as he was answering a student’s question with a vast, delightfully-mixed bundle of references, context and analysis. You would leap from Albert Lord’s theories on oral literature culled from Avdo Mededovic’s timeless epic Slavic poetry, to the erotic poetry of Ancient Greece, to the wry humor and “code-switching” of his father-in-law Willie Marks’s brilliant storytelling. Then you would hear about Greg Sarris’s “Keeping Slug Woman Alive”, how Pomo traditions struggle to find its way in modern classroom settings. Then you would hear about the intricate constructions of the Tlingit verb. Then you would hear about his nature poems that were rooted in what Kenneth Rexroth dubbed the “bear shits in the woods” school of poetry. Then you would hear how he and his future wife Nora met, how he asked Nora to tell Raven stories—Nora smiled and said, “He still hasn’t heard me tell those stories!”—and how the professor dated a freshman at Alaska Pacific University, where he taught. The professor was Richard, the freshman was Nora, and they went on to form a partnership in love, marriage and everlasting indigenous scholarship.

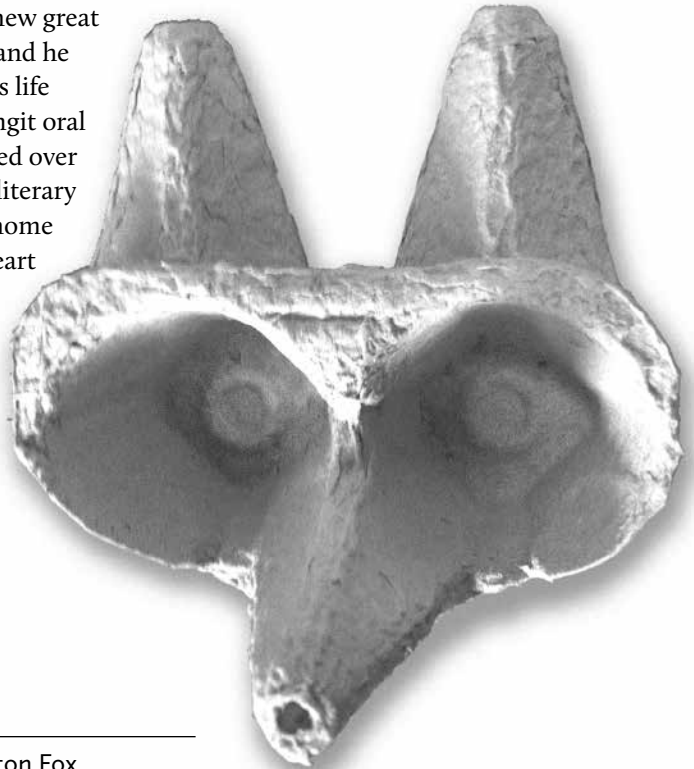
*Anyhow.*

He left behind a monumental legacy, but I’m not too sure that the intellectual atmosphere he fostered can really be recaptured in its breadth, depth and milieu of cultural richness and eclectic humanism. He attended and organized hundreds of poetry readings, conferences, seminars, classes and workshops. He read everything, and with Nora he listened to hundreds of Tlingit Elders. All those points of reference, all of it observed, experienced and deeply-felt in its hundredfold layers of meaning, were brought into every moment that he taught and shared.

Richard frequently talked about how Tlingit Elders would tell stories and afterward they would answer any of his questions about the story with another story. I came across a recording where he was visiting with the great storyteller Robert Zuboff, Shaadaax’. Robert told him the story of the “Raven and the Box of Daylight.” Richard then asked him about the stories he tells for school children and community groups, and how he picked what story to tell each group. Robert said that “Some of them are the Brown Bear People, some the Killer Whale People, some the Beaver People, and they ask me to tell them a story.” Robert then told another story, a very fine story. After finishing his sandwich, the master storyteller promptly left.

Did he answer the question? The story is of a man who paid the price of his life for a mistake he made, going against what was expected of him. Maybe it was a good lesson for the young man Richard was at the time. Maybe it was just a good story to hear before they finished up for the day. In any case, Richard got the message. He learned to put the storytellers and their stories front and center. Richard was one of the finest scholars who ever worked with indigenous cultures, but unlike most of the others in his field, his theories and scholarship are not privileged over the voices of the Elders. This made his scholarship finer and richer, and while the bulk of his and Nora's magnificent *Classics of Tlingit Oral Literature* series rightly features the direct words of Tlingit Elders, the introductions and essays he wrote with Nora are as insightful as anything ever written about Native cultures.

Richard Dauenhauer knew great literature when he saw it, and he chose to spend much of his life working with Nora on Tlingit oral literature. His mind traveled over much of the world's great literary traditions, and it found a home in Lingít Aaní, while his heart found a home with Nora. We're blessed that they found each other, and now their work nourishes many generations with their brilliant scholarship that elevates and cherishes the durable wisdom of the Elders.



---

Fumi Matsumoto, Egg Carton Fox

# August Afternoon at Helle's Pool, Vancouver, Washington

---

Richard Dauenhauer, Juneau

*—for Bob and Pat*

We float the pool, the buzz  
of locusts or cicadas, hiss  
of phony plastic inner tubes  
leaking underneath us. We lament  
the rarity, the near extinction  
of childhood inner tubes,  
by definition: too used  
and patched to put back on  
cars or trucks or tractors.  
We change positions, heads  
and armpits through the tubes now,  
like some mythic heroes being  
born through clamshells from the warm  
womb of the void. Our wives,  
more cynical, from poolside  
describe the myth as giant  
geoduck and garlic.



---

Jordan Kendall, Oak Run



---

Caroline Hassler, Iceland, UAS Faculty



# Buddy Tabor teaches me to filet a halibut

---

Jonas Lamb, UAS Faculty, Juneau

in an interview  
i ask him what he thinks about  
when he paints houses?

nothing, he says  
i just go blank

you never write songs  
or poems to occupy your mind  
while working those hands?

nope, he tells me  
when you get as old as me  
it's a relief, the silent mind

i'm deep into  
pearl-rope backbone  
of a sockeye,

light fading  
no-see-ems swarming  
the hands, the knife  
magnificent red  
salmon flesh

hands- automatic  
despite the slime  
but my mind's not blank

i'm remembering Buddy  
how we ran into each other  
down at the harbor  
after a morning  
full of stories  
recording an interview  
for the radio

both of us lured down  
to the water by the  
hand-painted sign  
by the road  
'FRESH HALIBUT'  
a boy and his father  
working side by side  
deep lines in the sea  
bringing fish to boat  
from boat to table  
no middle men

Buddy bummed to find  
they are only selling  
whole fish  
the smallest 25 pounds

so we split a fish  
and drive over to my place  
on Douglas

i'd grown comfortable  
enough in a short time  
speaking with this  
peculiar poet i admired  
to admit I didn't  
know how to filet a halibut

Passing my knife  
he makes short work  
talking his way through it  
a song for the fish, for me

carving it up, negotiating  
some sort of a split in which  
he comes out ahead

payment for this  
life lesson, his tutelage  
Buddy takes home the heavy filets,  
the cheeks

Buddy's been dead for years  
this salmon in my hands  
only days

I remember telling Buddy where i lived,  
Which crooked house on the hill?  
Him laughing, telling me  
“a guy asked me to paint  
that house years ago,  
When I gave him the estimate  
He told me to go to hell!  
I told him that roof is a widow maker,  
It's gonna cost you something.”  
His old house-painting-partner  
Is painting my neighbor's house  
In this late summer dusk

# Home

---

Chelsea Tremblay, Petersburg

A customer told me this was his last trip.

He'd been diagnosed with terminal cancer, and, luminous,  
proclaimed his time traveling the Inside Passage had been a rebirth.  
He was leaving the next day, home to Vermont to most importantly *live*,  
and then eventually die.

We smiled at each other when he left the bookstore,  
and I told him, with all my heart, to take care.  
I fought tears for the rest of the afternoon,  
then ordered a cheeseburger to go and watched the sun go slowly down.

I doubt he is the only person I've met who came to Alaska with that knowledge.

They travel to our home to have the experience of a lifetime,  
and some of us have countdowns for the next time we can leave.

~

We are children of the Tongass,  
with muskeg in our hearts and scales for skin.

We itch to push off,  
to wring ourselves dry and bask in the sun.

But before long we're dried up and in the breeze,  
waiting for the rain to help us settle back down.

~

I was explaining daily life in Southeast to an elderly visitor and her daughter.  
The family that includes people who shovel off your porch without asking,  
and the walk that should take five minutes  
but takes twenty because of the people you see on the way.

She replied, "Oh, I see. You take care of each other up here."

When I hear whales greet each other before I speak to another person,  
it's already been a good day.

~

When I need to feel powerful, I put on my boat clothes.

We live in a ring of fire with glacial ice in our veins, but ultimately it is the green  
the moss, algae and mold  
that prevails.

~

When I need to feel grounded, I hike alone in the woods.

Our world moves with the tide and winds.

Only the most powerful can try to ignore those  
and eventually they fail.

~

It is a radical act to have an intense connection to the land you call home.  
Our connections to other people and places grow more intangible every day.

Anymore it takes intention to feel the dirt beneath your boots.

Those of us that choose this place are here for love.  
Of person or place  
it barely matters.

It just matters that it is a fierce love.

A love that removes us from others  
and defies attempts at logic.

And sometimes reason.

The adhesive on my skin mimicked tar as it traveled  
from my hand to my forearm,  
elbow to fingernails.

In the shower I was distracted by the sun I was racing to catch  
and I scrubbed until the pumice made my arm bleed.

I may help take care of others, but I think I may sometimes need a little help too.

Even in my boat clothes.

~

Like love, this relationship can be painful.  
There can be pain.  
And loss.

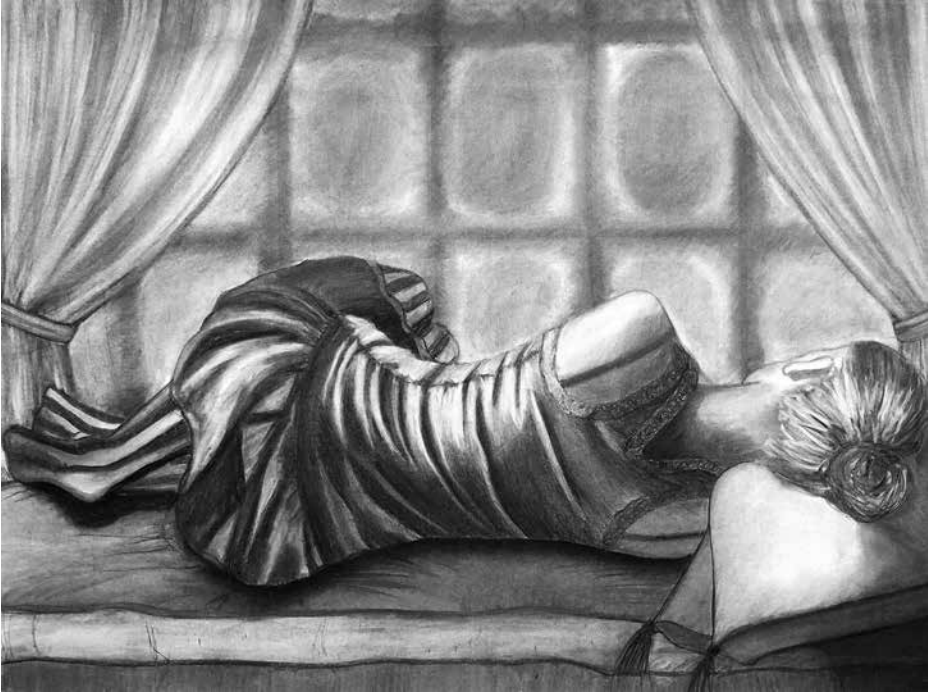
But there is also joy.  
Connection.

I don't think it's possible to ever actually be alone in the woods.



---

Jill Dumesnil, Season's End, UAS Faculty



## Young Me, Old Me

---

Christina Apathy, UAS Student, Juneau

I saw myself walking ahead of myself  
to a place I'd already been;  
I watched myself look back at me  
and then enter in.

The me that stood there on the street  
ached to follow her then,  
but I waited outside patiently  
for her to return again.

---

above: Adelle Labrecque, *The Window Seat*, UAS Student  
right: Ariel Svetlik-McCarthy, *Back Study*, UAS Student



# Wind

---

Laura Tripp, UAS Student, Juneau

Those creatures that have eyes,  
they cannot comprehend visibility, deeds, and omniscience.

Those creatures that have hands,  
they cannot understand touch, caress, and strike.

Those creatures that have ears,  
they think they know a scream, a howl, and a whisper.

They are not me.





---

Christofer Taylor, Grey River Soulshine

# Paintbrush Conversations

---

Heather Burge, UAS Student, Juneau

She could hang the moon  
with her Utrecht 209 finest.  
Fling dripping wet stars on paper,  
with a stroke cause them to burn.

But she couldn't paint her way  
to a phone.  
Couldn't sweep her brush through numbers,  
to call her grandma a thousand embers away.

Didn't know as her brush spawned lines  
to shape her world in gold  
That her grandma was slipping—

Like wet paint dripping

But boy, could she hang the moon.

# Across the Universe

---

Heather Burge, UAS Student, Juneau

He says stars shine through our skin,  
dusty specks of forever.

I ask how you can breathe in  
that kind of responsibility.

He says he breathes just fine  
because fish cannot drown.

Because everything was beautiful  
and nothing hurt.

Because the space between his  
fingertips and my skin was instant.

Was infinite.

Just a breath away.

It is everything we've ever been,  
everything we are,  
and everything we must become.

It hangs suspended in the spaces between us.

All we have to do is breathe in, and speak.



---

Donald Hale, Aurora-Skaters' Cabin 1, UAS Student



---

Fumi Matsumoto, Leaf Wolf

# Whiskey and Autumn

---

Joe Lewis, UAS Student, Juneau

Snow dusts the peaks of Mt. McGinnis  
clinging to branches like bald eagles.

Born on the first snowfall in November,  
so her mama called her Autumn.

Her heated fingertips rake down  
my chilled back. They bite.

Cedar smoke and ash swirl in my nose  
the way scotch massages my tongue.

Whiskey and Autumn keep my body warm  
beside the light of a faint beach fire.

Her hair and my face lit up by the cinders  
casting shadows on tent walls and spruce tips.

Our bodies exposed to smoke and  
moonlight, making love while the sun sleeps.

# Spring Cleaning the Perennials

---

Sarah Isto, Juneau

I lift off curls of seaweed crisped black by months of cold.  
Last fall we raked its slimy tangles from the tide  
and hauled it up to blanket the flowers.  
What began rough with shells and infant barnacles,  
stinking of iodine, salt, and decay  
now smells of nothing, weighs almost nothing.

Beneath its dark mesh poke the perennials,  
bright imports striving for life  
in the rough shadow of a cold forest—  
pale green shoots of daylilies,  
scarlet stalks of reborn peonies,  
the squat yellow crocus, petals unfurled.

I talk tough-gardener to them all,  
even the irrepressible rhubarb,  
whose crinkled leaves weeks ago  
broke through a soil still stiff with frost:  
“Plants that can’t survive the winter  
don’t belong in my garden.”

---

right: Bonnie Elsensohn, Ode to a Rose





But there, next to a tiny bleached shell is a miniature iris,  
her three purple ewers open not to pour out but to draw in  
some insect smaller than a bumblebee, which will crawl  
the yellow stripe to her heart of nectar and pollen.  
She is the last of a handful of bulbs planted three years ago  
in the corner where snow slides off the roof.  
April's sun warms my hands and informs me  
that I will buy these tender bulbs again,  
seaweed over them again,  
and search for them with hope another spring.  
Perhaps this time I will plant them  
closer to the shelter of our stone wall,  
where the snow is not so deep  
and the soil a little warmer.

# Final Point

---

Sarah Isto, Juneau

I knew that the self, that slender line  
fused from memory and expectation,  
would shift its center as life grew short.

But I was slow to grasp that memory  
would haze and drop beneath the fog,  
the past shortening as fast as the future.

Now as I contract toward my single point,  
I sit and watch the ravens dive and glide  
within the tossing air.

At dusk they rise as high as dots  
and curve above the hills to vanish  
in the shelter of hidden, waiting roosts.



## After Spring Recital

---

Robert Fagen, Juneau

Far downriver to port,  
the calm sky clear of rain,  
families clumped like spring shoots  
offer flowers and seek their own again  
in the crowd of dancers flooding home.

Back to the lap of beginnings  
they travel in diverse ways,  
filling the gaps in space  
that their absence made,  
all but the last one.

---

Richard Stokes, Olympic Ceiling



---

Gordon Harrison, Birch Bark Calligraphy No. 2

# *Rodda—Hard going (too little snow)*

---

Vivian Faith Prescott, Sitka

Because you believe in rain  
you stand outside and shake

a brass rattle and the clouds darken.  
Elders tell me that reindeer are happy when clouds

pull down to tundra—rain  
drives away mosquitoes.

Tell me, how will you change the weather  
without a shaman?

Teach me to become rain.

*\* Saami have numerous words for snow.*

# Fishtailing

---

Alexis Miller, Juneau

*in homage to Pablo Neruda*

We have tarnished even this twilight  
we have bled even this moonrise  
and filleted this night's dark exchange,  
caught in our interlocked hands.

Your hands gutted the gullets  
of every salmon species  
in these Southeastern Alaska seas,  
sometimes pieces of finned skin  
or patches of scales gilded your palms  
into a refracted tattoo with slime-speckled freckles.

I repeat rote the scientific name of each fish genus  
but I do not repeat rote the scene in *that moment*  
your right hand—slightly larger than your left—hooked your chest  
like a shield and your body dropped, an anchor  
to the deck, slipping on salmon entrails  
knocking me over and my knees together  
then splaying them apart,  
a slice of boneless sockeye stuck to my thighs.

The sonar strikes that flashes silver at midnight  
and at the moon-dark bewitching hour and again  
my red beret falls in slow motion, folds itself  
into a hermit crab, a small heart-shaped crustacean  
in crimson—*always, always* this fishtailing image,  
this fistful memory advances with the low tide,  
one lone blood starfish stranded  
on a jellyfish-spangled shore.

---

right: Marianne Manning, Working the Corks, UAS Student



# MODERN ALASKAN STORY. TELLER



An Interview with Ishmael Hope

*by Clara Miller, UAS Student, Juneau*





PHOTO: MICHAEL PENN

**W**hen I got to interview Ishmael Hope, I was excited, having prepared numerous questions for him to answer about his creative endeavors and artistic craft. Besides being an Alaska Native storyteller, Ishmael has also written a graphic novel, plays, worked in theater and film, and has a book of poetry forthcoming. I knew I wanted to talk to him after watching a presentation he did in one of Juneau’s local elementary schools on the im-

portance of language and listening. We conducted our interview over e-mail so we could carefully ponder and respond to one another.

**How did you start writing?**

Both of my parents, Andrew Hope III, Xhaastánoch, and Elizabeth “Sister” Hope, Taliiraq, were poets. They encouraged me, especially by telling me stories. They shared their Tlingit and Iñupiaq cultural heritages with me and constantly read to me as a child. From

this foundation, I have long been deeply interested in my heritage, and after high school I decided not to go right to college but to read as much as I possibly could. I also began to spend time with the Elders, listening to stories, and participating in and sometimes organizing cultural events.

**What was it like to transcribe Tlingit stories with Richard and Nora Marks Dauenhauer?**

It is a great education. I am really learning the Tlingit language by transcribing stories. It also takes me into the ancestral thought world. Transcribing stories and spending time with Elders has been a great education for me. Nora Dauenhauer and the late Richard Dauenhauer have been great mentors for me.

**What normally inspires you to start drafting a poem? An image? A line? An idea?**

Whenever I find myself thinking intensely, there's a poem there somewhere. Most of the time, I don't actually write it. But when I do, it's just when that intense, full thought is there, and that thought is connected to every part of my body. For the last round of poems I did, I was discovering my heart. The heart feeds, like everything else. It feeds and eats. When it is doing so regularly and with good nutrition, so much else falls into place. A consequence of my

simple discovery about this is some of the best poetry I've been able to write so far.

**You co-wrote the play *Raven Odyssey* with PJ Paparelli. How did the project get started?**

He had the idea to travel the state of Alaska to learn Raven stories and to create a play about those stories. I basically organized the trip and wrote drafts that were then rewritten. I dearly appreciated the opportunity afforded by my friend PJ and the theater, as well as my time with the Elders and the amazing Alaska Native cast. However, almost all of my work with Perseverance Theatre, no matter who it was with, had an unspoken barrier, a glass ceiling for

Native voices, and it still does to this day. Currently, they are listening to the community and considering Native plays and I hope it really leads to substantial change. There has never been a main stage play created with a genuine Native voice, by a Native writer or directly using the words of an Elder telling stories in her language. I hope that soon they will finally do what should have been done more than three decades ago, and consistently since then: work with the stories of a master indigenous storyteller, exactly as they told it, or produce a work of a Native playwright on the main stage.

*The heart feeds,  
like everything else.  
It feeds and eats.  
When it is doing so  
regularly and with  
good nutrition,  
so much else falls  
into place.*

**Any advice on how to successfully co-write a creative piece?**

It is ideal to get into partnerships where the power is equal among the partners, and if that's not the case, serious groundwork needs to be made to ensure that the process is equal. Then you can develop a flow, whether that's sitting in a room together hammering out the work, or passing drafts back and forth to each other.

**You wrote the play *The Reincarnation of Stories*. How do you go from the initial idea to the completed version of a play?**

I have complete confidence in the voices of the Elders. I wanted to share a story entirely in the Tlingit language by one of the masters. In this case it was Kéet Yaanaayí, Willie Marks. Flordelino Lagundino, who produced and directed the play, supported the idea. From there, I created a script to make Kéet Yaanaayí's voice shine as brightly as possible. I had fun writing a dramatic, playable script that has the feel and energy of Tlingit thinking. Sometimes I fumble, but I consider it among my best creative achievements to write from an indigenous perspective.

**Do you see a genuine Native voice coming to the main stage in Tlingit any time in the near future?**

Vera Starbard has a play under consideration, *Our Voices Will Be Heard*. She

is a Tlingit writer, and after seeing the script, I think it would be a wonderful play.

**Do you have favorite stories you enjoy telling?**

In Tlingit, you are who you are through your mother. I am of the Kiks. ádi clan, but because I am Tlingit

through my father, I am in my father's father's clan. I am really their grandchild, which is a special relationship in Tlingit culture. I tell some of the Kiks. ádi history when appropriate, and I also love sharing Raven stories. I have a couple Iñupiaq stories that I know and share as well.

**You wrote a comic book called *Strongman* which blends traditional and**

**contemporary storytelling. How did the concept for the project arise?**

I wanted to write a comic book because Dimi Macheras, an Athabaskan comic book artist, is outstanding. Then I thought a Tlingit story would be nice, and I did everything I could to respectfully obtain permission with the owners of the story, especially Elizabeth Katasse, the Elder of the clan who owns the story. Steve Nelson at the Alaska Initiative for Community Engagement did an amazing job getting it produced, published and distributed. The comic book has impacted Alaska Native youth, and I'm very proud of that.

*I think good poems have something of the rawness of being alive —it should feel alive— and the form, the conscious thought, follows.*

**How was it different being on camera for Universal Studio's *Big Miracle* than being on stage performing a play?**

It was a great adventure to be in *Big Miracle*. Obviously, it was a big Hollywood production. While the Native side of the story was fairly obscured, we represented ourselves well and with integrity. It is very enjoyable to perform for film. It's completely different than theater. For both sides, as an actor, you have little control, but you make the best with what you have. You act much more with facial expressions in movies, almost more than anything, and in theater it's more about blocking and line delivery. I've yet to find a part in theater that I can say I was really able to plumb the depths of my being to portray the part. Some of that is attributable to my acting ability, but I also think we need to take more "risks" with roles for people of color. You can get pigeon-holed and without a real opportunity for growth that is afforded to many of the privileged. I also think there should be more genuine Native content, and so far there has been nothing of that sort, really, on Alaskan main stages.

**You wrote a book of poems, *Courtesans of Flounder Hill*, which will be forthcoming. You've also mentioned when writing poetry, it comes from intensely thinking about something. What were you pondering when you drafted the poems for your book?**

I was just learning about poetry. I've almost always written poetry, but you can say I found my voice in *Courtesans*. I discovered my heart. I believe good writing taps into energies beyond ourselves. My teacher Robert Bringhurst frequently discusses this, such as his suggestion that great artists from the

Renaissance and the great Haida storytellers alike have in their works, beyond participation in a long-standing narrative tradition, "the shock of the real." I think good poems have something of the rawness of being alive—it should feel alive—and the form, the conscious thought, follows.

**How do you know when a piece is finished and ready to be read by others and performed?**

It feels ready. It's always a process. It is finished every time it is heard by an audience. It has to be recreated every time it gets shared, though maybe the words are somewhat stable for the time being. I think modern theater people can often make themselves too busy with scripts and everything gets workshopped and critiqued over and over. I like the theater of William Shakespeare and Thomas Middleton and Kaufman and Hart. It was produced, sometimes at a frenetic pace. I'm not suggesting theater should be sloppy, but I think the creative vitality of plays can benefit from simply getting plays up on their feet and seen by audiences.

**Is there any important lesson you learned about writing that you wished you had known earlier?**

I wish I had known that formal education means very little for what I wanted to do in my life, and it still does, though I'm finally on my way to getting my bachelor's degree, and I look forward to receiving a post-graduate education. What I mean is that so little is actually learned in formal school, and so much is learned by pursuing the slow-burning passions that interest you. I wish I started intensely reading earlier.

# STORYTELLER

---

Ishmael Hope, Featured Writer, Juneau

So many songs came to me  
as I was falling asleep,  
and so many times I let them go,  
the urge to rest  
stronger than the urge to speak.  
But when you wake in the morning,  
before the dreams fade,  
save a place for me.

So many heartbreaks passed me by.  
Many times I didn't live them,  
their ghosts are everywhere.  
I opened my hands for the rain that came by,  
that's sure to come again.  
But when you travel to faraway places,  
hiking to the mountaintops,  
your legs barely holding you up,  
and dark blue birds lift you in their beaks,  
save a place for me.

So many false rests passed me by.  
I arrived at the ocean  
and I couldn't smell the saltwater.  
But when you invite guests into your home,  
and the garlic and the herbs melt the room,  
and your eyes are lost gazing into the music,  
save a place for me.

So many good people came by.  
I kept a part of them in my palms.  
Old men and women are standing up,  
holding the islands between the worlds.  
They are standing up  
spreading medicine leaves to the wind.  
And when you take off your skin  
and lay your belly in the sand,  
save a place for me.

*\*From Courtesans of Flounder Hill, published by Ishmael Reed  
Publication, 2014*

# Bailer at the Back of the Boat (Excerpt)

---

Ishmael Hope, Featured Writer, Juneau

Storyteller 1:  
We tell stories  
to map the world's mind.

Storyteller 2:  
We do this with paddles and with feet,

Storyteller 3:  
and the songs of elders,

Storyteller 4:  
who've gotten to know a little bit  
about the land and the water,

Storyteller 5:  
and so have gotten to know plenty

Storyteller 6:  
about us.

Storyteller 7:  
The world is alive.  
We know this and still we shake it  
and it crumbles in our hands.

Storyteller 8:  
The world sustains itself,  
and so do the stories.

Storyteller 1:  
We can't contain the stories,

Storyteller 2:  
though we often misread them  
or misunderstand.

Storyteller 3:  
The story will go on anyway.

Storyteller 4:  
It's because a part of them  
doesn't come from you or me.

Storyteller 5:  
That's why we keep telling the stories.

Storyteller 6:  
The world eats and is eaten,  
and on every cycle gives thanks.

Storyteller 7:  
Everything was mud and ocean once,  
and sunlight, too, and darkness.  
We started climbing out of the mud,  
and never stopped telling stories  
to never forget where we came from.

Storyteller 8:  
A man came back from the dead.  
He paddled back down the river.  
He returned cold and hungry.  
He told the people always to remember  
those who walked through the forest.

Storyteller 1:  
A kind thought, a good word,  
a little food to the fire—it doesn't take  
much more than sincerity  
to resonate with the whole of your history.

Storyteller 2:  
Say one unkind word,  
have one insensitive thought,  
and the spirits disappear—

Storyteller 3:  
try to clutch them and it is like the Raven  
who mistreated his wife, and she became fog.  
He had nothing to grab  
as she drifted away.

Storyteller 4:  
That's why the old ones  
talk of respect, and of courtesy.

Storyteller 5:  
The truth is, when we feed the ancestors,  
we are fed, too.  
It is a feast of knowledge,  
a flood of joy, a river of healing.

Storyteller 6:  
Our Elders are precious to us.

Storyteller 7:  
The voice of the tradition bearer,  
the power of the orator,  
the wisdom of the storyteller.

Storyteller 8:  
We cherish our grandparents.

Storyteller 1:  
Nora Dauenhauer, Kheixwnéi said,

Storyteller 2:  
“The thing to do is to listen to the old people.  
They've been through it.  
All of it.”

All:  
We're listening.  
We're listening closely.

*\*Performed in 2012 by the Summer Theatre Arts Rendezvous youth  
theater program, Perseverance Theatre. Directed by George Holly*





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Paris Donohoe, Close Up, UAS Student

# BOTHERING THE DAUENHAUERS

---

Ishmael Hope, Featured Writer, Juneau

Maybe I was the only one who bought  
*Keeping Slug Woman Alive* by Greg Sarris  
on Dick Dauenhauer's recommendation—  
there were some nice thoughts on Pomo basketry—  
or, out of my friends, unwrapped  
his *Glacier Bay Concerto*, Alaska's  
great, unheralded protest poem,  
by a local Robert Bly or Gary Snyder,  
singing his unpopular but true recriminations  
to the provincial poets' café of our dreams,  
filled with listeners who hear words like jazz.  
Familiar, happy to be Nora's husband,  
the second half of the team  
who created the Classics of Tlingit Oral Literature,  
but who among us took the time  
to carefully read what he read,  
and listen to who he listened to,  
the ancient rocks that he gathered  
and placed in the middle of the stream,  
so the fish would have an eddy,  
a multi-currented resting space  
for the mind?

A sucker for obscure books,  
he was bemused, lightly chuckling,  
at seeing my father's copy of Louis  
Zukofsky's *A*, surely the only other  
person in Alaska who owned a copy,  
besides him. This was our small talk  
for years, inching toward Homer,  
then the Tlingit Elders who inspired  
him and Nora to do the work they did:  
Kichnáalxh, Shaadaax', Naa Tláa, Kaasgéiy;  
these and others are almost here with us,  
their spirits alive, from the drumming  
Dick and Nora still hear from far away.

I thought these conversations and classes  
would go on forever. They are still  
a phone call away, but the community  
I thought was so large, filled with  
so many ideas, turned out to be so small,  
so much Dick and Nora, and the company  
of their books and memories of Elders.  
I want to have someone that will  
help me compare Avdo Mededovic  
with Robert Zuboff, and it turns out  
that people have moved on  
before they even really arrived,  
so I keep bothering the Dauenhauers.

Richard, your ideas have been taken in.  
I'm glad that you're here, and Nora, too.  
Andy Hope III, Angayuqaq Oscar Kawagley,  
Ron Scollon, where did they go?  
George Davis, Robert Zuboff, Willie Marks,  
Suzie James, where did they go?  
Who's going to give anyone a sense  
of the world you and Nora tried to share  
with us? I hope we're not imposing too much,  
but I want a few young people to know  
the excitement of taking in a conference  
at Centennial Hall, the Elders taking charge,  
telling stories in Tlingit,  
and a few scholars like my dad, Sergei and you,  
at the crossroads of a great oral culture  
and a few who wanted to understand.

# IN MEMORY OF ANDREW HOPE III

---

Ishmael Hope, Featured Writer, Juneau

Before airport security  
was like it is today,  
my brother Andy and I  
used to run up the tunnel  
as my father's plane landed,  
jumping up and down,  
as we begged for whatever  
gift he brought us.  
Usually it was a bag of peanuts,  
and we smiled as he picked us up.

I never knew what he did for work,  
until he started calling me at my office,  
talking through ideas and new projects.  
I was happy to give him money  
when he was looking for a job.  
When I just started learning  
how to live on my own,  
my friend Chris was helping me  
move my stuff to a new apartment.  
He gave Chris my mother's book of poems,  
and he said,  
"If anyone screws with you,  
fuck 'em."  
And he lifted his middle finger.  
"Fuck 'em."  
And I learned something  
about standing on my own.

---

right: Mark Sixbey, Wolf brimhat, UAS Student



My father hardly ever looked up,  
and even his friends rarely  
looked him in the eyes.  
But sometimes  
he would play Van Morrison  
or Lucinda Williams  
in his living room  
and I would see his soul wake up.  
I would see his heart making confessions.  
I would see the rocks on his shoulders  
melt and float with the music.

I share some of my father's burdens.  
The duty to his people,  
as old as dust,  
as heavy as grindstone,  
the straight line that he walked  
through the killer whale's mouth.  
And some of those burdens  
don't have names yet.  
They drift in the room like smoke,  
drifting to the edge  
where my father stood.



---

Richard Stokes, Crossing

# I Am From

---

Brady Harang, Sitka

I am from Trevor and Tracie, Gordie and Eileen, and John and Kathy,

from the cold snowy mountaintops and the wrath of the rich, Alaskan sea.

I am from pouring rain and sunshine simultaneously, from salmon, deer, and whales,

From fresh halibut cheek sashimi and alpine blacktail steaks,

from making fishing the only good reason to get up early and work being just a filler in between the weekends.

I am from doing everything you can to drag that deer back to camp, or get through that stretch of angry frothy water and back to a worried mother, and where fishermen outnumber business men.

I am from “be home by dark,” but it gets dark at 2pm,

from playing on Saturday and church on Sunday, unless you’re out on the boat,

from buying your first boat before you buy your first car, and of course, *Top Gun*.

I am from *Sitka Tango*, and catching rotten humpies in the river that reeks of death and grizzly bears,

from the most brilliant starry nights and the hardest downpours you have ever seen, and the drug of adrenaline that drives you into situations that can be life or death,

from the coastal forest and brilliant green alpine scattered with the orange dots of August deer, and understanding, respecting, but sometimes disliking the Fish and Game regulations.

I am from thick mossy forests, deer heart, and dandelions growing out of asphalt,

from Will Hobbs, Shania Twain, and the Beach Boys

I am from weekend memories drifting around Southeast Alaska that are recalled as I see the waterways that they took place on, and being able to stare at a chart and tell you stories about every single bay, strait, and sound: Klag Bay, Appleton Bay, Peril Strait, Tava Pass, Sitka Sound, and Salisbury

I am from Sitka.

# Revelations and Realizations

---

Heather Miethe, UAS Student, Wrangell

I am a woman full of strength and hope, though I once was a child made up of imagination, laughter, and fear. I lived in a household that lacked for nothing. The glossy pictures in the catalog which I had circled so carefully would magically materialize under the tree, wrapped in ribbons and bows each year without question. My room had a canopy bed, of course, with ruffles and frills, beautiful soft folds of pink and blue, with pillows so light, a pea would be detected right off. Shelves held horse models lined up straight and trophies of accomplishments, partly for things that kept me busy and out of the house. The large deep window sill housed a collection of dolls and stuffed animals from all over the world: a doll with a parasol from Paris; a Paddington Bear bought from Harrods; a large penguin with a bright orange beak and white chest, with a sash that spelled out Antarctica. The furniture had swirls and scrolls of gold, and nestled inside were clothes free of stains, pressed and folded, in matching pairs. The room was the largest in the house and the sunlight poured in, in the afternoons, but it was also the farthest away. The last room as the house stretched far out down a long hallway, away from noise and confusion. I lived in a room quiet, neat and filled, next to the room of my dying father.

I lived in a world of birthday parties, school, weekend roller skating, movies, and bags packed unexpectedly for overnight stays that turned into weeks. A revolving door of settings, my cousins, my brother's dorm, my grandparents' house, a well packaged gypsy of sorts; smiling and helpful, scared and unsure.



I waited for talks that didn't happen, discussing the facts of my life. What was happening and why, I now see the answers were not given because they were not known. Fumbling my way through days, clinging to normalcy, watching my father twitch and shake with seizures in stores, and me, part of the entourage, that remembered my mother's purse, or ran ahead to open the car door.

When I ponder, now, who my father is and was, I see a box in my mind filled with pictures of who he had been before, a box of who he was after, and a box empty with scraps of papers listing things missed in my life, where he had not been to take his seat, but was remembered by a look up above.

I can formulate in my mind a man full of medals, who saw the world and brought it home to me in trinkets and baubles. A man who made guest appearances during holidays and caused the house to be polished and spit shined upon his arrival. He came through the door in a uniform so crisp and bright, like a costume to me. This man with a large smile of bright white teeth and kind eyes, the same ones I see in my brother now, who would come bearing gifts, and sweep me up in his arms and hold me close like we knew each other.



But the man I knew most is the one I don't need to make up in my mind, unfortunately. He was pale and grey; his head held downy bits of baby bird fuzz, with angry crimson zipper like scars, where the doctors had tried to launch a fight. He walked on willow saplings, bending and twisting uncontrollably as he placed each foot, not knowing with every step if they would hold. His eyes were set in hollows in his face. They registered fear and alarm most of the time. The bright white grin was replaced by a slanted mouth, which was only half alive, was moving slightly up and down in twitching movements to reveal a smile. His mouth the gate to utterances and moans, that resembled half words, left as puzzles in the air for us to un-code. This man who peed in a bottle and smelled strangely of pine, medicine and urine, is brought to life in my mind from recollections, thoughts pulled from the memory of the child still inside, which was limited from the insights of experienced living.

The grotesqueness of dying, though scary for a child, can become familiar and accepted. I would know of its existence in my home, yet I seemed to play and thrive in the peripheral zones that lived just outside the core of the illness, that dictated the inner workings of my life. Often when friends would call, an outdoor play date would be suggested, to shelter those who were ignorant to the sight of sickness. I now realize the elaborate forts and tea parties outside were settings created to keep the great and powerful illness behind the curtain.

I became immune on the outside to the seizures and deterioration that I saw before my eyes. Like the way your mother teaches you not to stare at people with deformities you see at the mall. I kept my eyes focused away from those things I knew to be there, but did not want to look at long enough to formulate an image for my brain; for then it would make it real and I would have to name it and try to understand it, and my brain was only newly budding, not prepared for these inner discussions with myself.

Looking back has the wonderful privilege of slow motion. Each moment can be extracted and polished for viewing, airbrushed with time from the harshness with which it was first presented. I see moments in my mind of complete raw uncensored horror that I viewed, fully knowing their reality, only to feel normalcy and routine; passing them off as things that just happened. I do not feel these are the memories that I need to reexamine, but mere potholes that I was able to traverse and ride over safely, to the freedom of overcoming.



The things that were not put away so easily are the ones I still question, the ones I still don't have answers for, the things that we do not comprehend in a lifetime. Those are the things of death. I was introduced to death in a way that seemed harsh and unexpected. No pamphlets were read, no preparations for what I might see or feel were discussed, no guidelines or scenarios run through beforehand. No rehearsals for the play, which would shape and fracture the core of my world for so long.

"Ignorance is bliss." How I have heard this phrase repeated, but to live it, to

really know it, is a scary thing. To walk through a door and expose yourself to something foreign and unnerving, only to turn and find the exit door has disappeared and you stand on the precipice of no return is alarming. It is difficult for any adult, but for a child it is very hollowing. It takes the core of what you know and how you feel; it rips the essence of any assurance of safety and leaves you hollow with your thoughts echoing through your whole body with no one to answer. You are suddenly alone in this world and fully aware that you, and you alone, will drive and survive this journey called life.

To see and feel a body free of any life, a body that had once sat next to you at the dinner table, or had watched you from the window perform perfect cartwheels on a thick summer lawn, is unexplainably strange at 8 years old. To watch as this body lies in a box and see it lay so still, no hint of the stress and toil so ever present from before, and have people gather weeping to observe it, is so unreal and futile. Yet I was dressed up in a dark navy sailor dress (my mom thought black too mature for a young child—oh the hypocrisy). I was nudged along with a line of strangers past my father's body, watching those ahead of me put mementos in his uniform pocket or touch his face, or most unsettling of all, kiss his lips goodbye. I can still feel the pull of the line and feel my calves flex, as I recall the digging in of my heels on the plain green carpet, willing the people to slow down and to please let me prepare for this, but there was no time, there was no plan, there was no advice, just the pushing and movement until my turn in the spotlight had come. There before me just barely at my eye level was a body, laying still and quiet dressed in his crisp black and white uniform, looking whole and transformed. This body no longer in a robe and loose pajamas, shuffling down my hall, but was instead lying as if sleeping on a pillow of satin. Everything seemed so peaceful and safe and okay. So with a thought in my mind, that was telling me to say goodbye, I reached up slowly with my hand uncurling my clenched fingers, the hand that had just held a crayon only hours before, and I touched the hand of my dead father. Sensory descriptions blazed to my brain. A cold hard lump of clay, with no purpose. A frigid, stiff metal claw, contorted to give the appearance of rest and ease. A hand that had given and received the warmth of love, now a piece of meat, sucked dry of any life. Oh, if I had only known or was prepared for the feel of his hand, I would have some reference as to where to go after I had experienced this fear engulfing mistake. A true to life, real meaning to match the word death, slowly trying to filter into my childish intellect, bobbing around like a ball on waves, unable to settle into the grasps of my knowledge, no resting place to land and be registered. My eyes scanned the crowd for someone to tell me how to accept this raw realization, but alas, everyone I knew was engulfed in their own sorrow and reverence, too filled up and preoccupied in their minds to administer any guidance or refuge for the inhale of horror and fear that streamed directly into me from that single touch. I began to shake uncontrollably and as we filed out into the sunshine, flowing with the crowd again, taken by the undertow, I realized these events were not ending. There was no time to pause and gather my thoughts; to try and self-pacify my raging fear. No. Next I was ushered into a long

black limo and driven along, not really knowing if I was feeling inner tremors still or the pulsing of the engine motor.

We arrived at the cemetery, which is scary for a child in itself. I was led again, not by the hand, but by the movement of the crowd around other graves and sinking divots in the ground too scary to consider for long. Once again, my assigned seat lay at the front of all the action. Had it been a concert I would have been envied, but this concert was one no one wanted a ticket to. I watched as the creepy hearse pulled up and familiar relatives picked up the box and laid it in front of me on a rack. I focused on the coffin and as it was placed, right before it touched down on the rack, I caught a fleeting sliver of a glimpse of the deepness of the hole below. I had the urge to yell stop; so I could drop a handful of pebbles into it, just to listen to them descend, bouncing off the walls and echoing out of sight. This was a hole, a hole in the ground, that they were going to put my father in and throw shovel-fuls of gravelly dirt over, and then what. What would happen then, to his body, to his memories, to us, his family? It was like burying him in the back yard like a bone that could never be dug up, or could it. I had to stop thinking, gruesome visions played out of zombies and the half dead, streaming through my head like a ribbon behind a plane. I closed my mind and became numb, not thinking, not listening, just being and breathing. I had to keep breathing, I told myself. I don't remember much after that; the memories of that day divert away from my father's body and the ceremonies, and come to rest on the remembrance of my aching calves as I wrapped my feet around the legs of my folding chair, in an attempt to anchor them from their uncontrollable shaking. When the preacher paused in his speaking, I could hear the rattling of my chair accompanying his every word; I searched the faces around me, for looks of disapproval and only saw a sea of robots all with the same red-eyed blank expression. I let my eyes scan the front row, and at long last someone had noticed me meeting my eyes with a look of care and concern: my brother. He placed his arm around my mom and rested it on my chair, applying pressure to steady it. It was a small gesture but it was enough; the heat from his hand, as I leaned back into it, was a warm mug on a cold day. A cord of reality that tethered me and held me into existence, that kept me attached to the living.

Remembering is a powerful ability that I would not trade. It brings me images of my wedding day, and of how young and unsure we looked, but oh so excited and hopeful. It brings me the images of my sweet newborn babies nestled in my arms, so sure I knew what I was doing, more so than I. It holds a million snapshots that were never captured by a camera, and wraps them with an abyss of emotions, feelings and dreams. So I will keep my memories, all of them, and I will treat each one as a gift. I will keep the memories that scare me and the ones I have not dealt with, for they will have some pleasant company, surrounded by all that I have achieved and accomplished so far. For I see that my memories evolve and grow, as I do, and it is the memories that do not hold my dad, like on my wedding day and at the births of his grandchildren, that now seem sadder and more poignant, even more so than the ones I have of when he was here.



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Kaylie Simpson, Untitled (Andi in Niki's Room), UAS Student

# The Shrinking Girl

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Mary Koppes, Petersburg

She sleeps in an attic room  
under a sloped roof she grows smaller  
and smaller

The edges of the bed creep toward the wall  
like tree roots taking hold in the forest

and she starts to disappear

An open window invites a blustery breeze in  
as it passes over, her muscles contract  
and she draws inward yet further

The light dims and as the room grows dark  
she struggles to see herself  
or the room beyond her

Her pulse grows faint as her heart diminishes  
inside her chest

She is a pea on a monstrous platter  
a clattering object  
in a spinning world

# Afternoon Reading, Rainy Room

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Kent Pillsbury, UAS Student, Juneau

Grim sonnets fraught with fraud and trauma stuff  
her notebooks—steamy, bitter memories  
of finished romance, rarely with enough  
sweet lip syrup—ripe with frivolities,  
essential drama, broad license. She needs  
an audience like green things need daylight.  
I am the sun to her bright lily. She reads  
with fierce emotion—I squeeze my arms tight  
against ribs, choke a chuckle—she pretends  
I'm enraptured at her singular style.  
So much to ask, this ritual she tends  
like a garden? I feign attention while  
  
she rails at love and fate, lips pursed or drawn—  
sarcastic, crushed, dismayed her youth is gone

# My Grandmother's House in Metlakatla

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Lindarae Shearer, Metlakatla

My grandmother's house was right on the beach. Her back porch overlooked the Pacific Ocean and sometimes the tide would come right up and touch the skirting of the house. Crow Island, with its tall dark evergreen trees, appeared closer than it was. Seabirds were always present and their cries blended with the sound of the waves that washed on shore. Grama would feed the crows. She said they were her cousins. The thought intrigued me, but I never got around to asking her how they got to be her cousins – there must have been a story there! She dried halibut on a folding wood clothes rack under protection of the porch roof. She was very skilled in cutting the fish into paper thin sheets. I spent many hours there listening to the waves, feeling the strong ocean breeze and watching the sun's rays sparkle upon the azure blue water that could turn angry gray in a matter of moments with a sudden summer storm. The smell of the ocean was a heady perfume to a small child and when it was mixed with the odors of kelp and iodine at low tide it was like heaven.

As a little girl I often stayed with Grama. Grampa was rarely home and she was lonely. She and my mother must have worked out a deal to have me come and stay when her loneliness became unbearable. Grama had 25 other grandchildren, but I believe I was the only one of them who actually lived with her off and on during the years when I was a small child up until about the age of 13. I was happy to stay with her—I loved staying with her. She was soft-spoken and affectionate with me. My grampa made long solitary trips to California and Mexico, coming home with small elegant artifacts for her: china teacups, small Japanese statues, Mexican hand wrought pitchers, and fine porcelains, all of which she placed in her semi-circular china cabinet.

Grampa owned a logging company on Annette Island with floating quarters called a "wannegan." He had several employees and a Mexican cook, who created a specialty sauce he called "Mexican Jam" that was hot, sweet, and spicy all at the same time. My brothers loved it. Grampa also was a fisherman, participating in the salmon and halibut fisheries: trolling, long-lining, and seining. He was also a councilman and an elder of the church. Like all of the adults in my life he was extremely busy all of the time. I loved my grampa too. He was very loving and I adored the sound of his deep, soft voice. He spoke English very well—beautifully, I would say, especially when he would pray. He would use the words "Father God" at the beginning of each prayer. I cared for them both very deeply but he seemed more like a visitor to my grama's house than her husband. I suppose it was because they were almost never together. When he did come home, though, I could tell they were pleased to be together. He teased her mercilessly, and she would plead with him to stop, but I could tell she liked his attention.

My grama's house was a special place. It was very quiet so you could easily hear almost every outdoor sound, including seabirds, barking dogs, and the crashing

waves. She wasn't one of those people who must have music playing all of the time to drown out the sounds of life. Her wooden front door with glass panes was bordered with small rectangular window panes on either side—a design feature that spoke to my grampa's love for the new and unusual. When you came into the house through the front door, you were immediately in the “dining room,” although it was never used for dining. To the left was a light colored buffet, filled with Grama's fine dining things. If she never had people to dinner, it appeared as though she intended to someday. To the right was the tall semi-circular china cabinet in a dark wood with curved legs. The massive table was right in the center of the room. The lineoleum was dark blue with a large flower pattern. A gigantic green porcelain frog stood guard at the front door and did double duty as a door stop. Grampa continually brought home new decorating ideas from his many travels and had a good income from his various endeavors to place them into effect. As a consequence, their home was one of the nicest. It helped that Grama loved to have things clean and there was no smoking or any other activity that might make their house smell unpleasant.

My grama's bedroom was right off the dining room. That bedroom was once occupied by both her and Grampa, until her illness forced his migration into another room. Grama's bedroom was a heavenly place for a little girl to visit, filled with things that were a bit more elegant than I was accustomed to and therefore quite fascinating. She had a matching set of walnut furniture, two twin beds with headboards, a dresser with a massive circular mirror, night tables, and a chest of drawers. The floor was a nice wood floor. In this room there was no carpet. It was wonderful to explore everything and I did so with delighted abandon. Grama never admonished me not to touch anything, but to be careful when I did touch something. She and Grampa were so permissive compared to my parents. Her closet was filled with fur coats and coats made of fine wool, suits, hats and dress shoes. Her chest of drawers contained filmy gloves with cuffs of pleated voile. Some of the gloves were embroidered with fine stitching. They were only a little too big for me, as my grama had very small hands. My mother once told me Grama's feet were a size 3 when she got married! So she must have been very small. There were beautiful folded handkerchiefs in her dresser drawers, too, with lace on the corners, and they were snowy white. Each day Grama would perform her “toilette” at her dresser. She sat on a bench of wood that matched the rest of the furniture in the room. Here she would braid her long gray hair and, in the earlier years, put on her makeup, which consisted of eyebrow pencil and maybe a little lipstick. That was all. I used to watch her “tame” the loose hairs that fell in her face with a tallow cake. When I asked her what it was she told me it was deer fat that she had rendered by boiling it on the stove and then skimming off the fat and putting it into a small round container to set and harden. It had no smell to it, and she used it regularly. She would also pluck her eyebrows, admonishing me to “never start” doing that, because I would have to pluck for the rest of my life. She blamed Grampa for “forcing” her to pluck her eyebrows, making sounds that expressed her deep regret.



Later on, after Grampa's death, Grama's room became a room dedicated to sickness. She had Type II Diabetes, which had developed before he died, but had been somewhat under control while he lived. In those days one had to take insulin with a needle that looked to me more like a nail than a needle. She gave herself shots in either thigh and always had plenty of oranges around so she could stabilize her blood sugar if necessary. Someone, probably my Mom and Dad, had purchased a hospital bed for her and she slept in that while I slept in one of the twin beds in the same room. In the days of her illness it was especially important for me to stay with her, then I could report to my mother what had transpired the day and night before. She would share information first with my dad, then her brothers, and then the older cousins. They would take action if needed, based on what I told them and how she looked. I loved staying with her but was frightened at the nightmares she had, and the illness that was always present. My oldest brother tells me that he and a cousin used to help my uncles (Grama's sons) take her out of the house on a stretcher when she was very ill and had to be transported to the hospital in Ketchikan.

Proceeding through the dining room straight ahead, you would come into the living room. Instead of a door there was a large arch that gave both rooms a feeling of elegance and spaciousness. In the living room were a large blue couch, an easy chair and a rocking chair. The carpet was a light rose sculpted carpet which looked like it had small mounds of carpet material that resembled tiny sand dunes, pictures of which I had seen in my grampa's National Geographic magazines. Directly to the left as you entered was an oil stove. It gave off a pleasant steady warmth that was nice in the cold months of fall and winter. Grama used to have me go to the pantry and get big slabs of dried black seaweed from their 5-gallon storage tins lined with brown paper, and put them on top of the oil stove. The heat was just right for drying the seaweed to the perfect degree of crispness. When it was ready, she would get us each a small bowl of ooligan grease, and we would dip our seaweed in it, enjoying its crunchiness and taste. We felt a little euphoric while eating this delicious snack. To eat the food harvested from your own land is a gourmet experience unlike anything else! The seaweed was picked by someone in my family, probably my mother, sun-dried by my grama, and roasted by the two of us to perfection.

The only art work my grandparents had in their living room or any other part of the house had to do with Christianity. Pictures of Jesus or The Lord's Prayer were hung in the living room to show their religious preference. They were both devout Christians and so, according to the custom of the time in Metlakatla (mid-forties and early fifties), did not subscribe to any Tsimshian cultural art work. I don't believe I ever saw any piece of art in their house that spoke to our indigenous culture. In the years of living with them in the spring and summers, and exploring everywhere in the house, even upstairs in the giant attic, I never saw anything that resembled native art. They never spoke of it. The subject simply never came up. They were Grama and Grampa and I never knew otherwise.



Deacon Charles Rohrbacher, Icon of St. Nicholas

There was a door in one of the walls in the living room. It led to my grampa's bedroom. This is what Grama told me. I didn't think it odd then that they slept in separate rooms, but I figured things out later. Grama had started to be sick much of the time because of her refusal to take her medications. The bedroom had a large bed and a small closet that had my grampa's dress suits in it, and a dresser. I didn't go in there much because there was nothing really to see. I did go in there occasionally, though, just to see what there was to see and to find out if there was anything different since my last visit. It never seemed to change. My grampa was rarely in it and it seemed more like a guest room than a person's bedroom. When he was gone fishing or on one of his excursions, the room remained unoccupied and when he was home I didn't stay there, so I didn't have firsthand knowledge of the arrangements.

Through the dining room you could turn left and go into the kitchen. It was fairly large with the newer white stainless steel cabinets of the early fifties and a chrome finished red table and matching chairs. Grama and me would sit at her table with the hot sun shining on us, and eat breakfast. She would make a green pepper omelet, swimming in butter, with toast from homemade bread. Each of us would have our own little aluminum teapot and she would tell me stories from our people's mythology. They were fascinating and I loved hearing her talk. She spoke with a heavy accent. When Grampa was home he showed me how to make bread. I loved the attention he paid to me. He explained very softly and carefully how to fill a quart jar with warm water from the tap – “not hot,” he would tell me, then pour it along with canned milk into a very large aluminum pan. We called it a bread pan but it was more likely a round dish pan. Grampa loved to eat, and so much of his activity was showing my grama how to cook the dishes he loved, with recipes he brought back from his travels. He also liked to show me how to make certain things – mostly desserts, and although too young to read, I remembered key ingredients of his favorite cakes, such as spice cake, a popular cake in the fifties.

At times, different members of the family would come to visit Grama. One of them was her youngest son, my uncle. When he came to visit he would pour himself a cup of coffee and would speak to Grama always standing up. He never had the time to sit and visit with anyone. He and Grama would speak our language: *Shimalgiack*, the language of the Tsimshian. I loved to hear them converse. Although we weren't taught to speak our language, still the words were familiar and a sweet sound to my ears. He spoke it easily and casually, fluidly and softly, leaving off a hard sound here and there. Everyone spoke *Shimalgiack* when they didn't want us to know what they were talking about. The uncle was fond of me and often messed up my hair as a gesture of affection. He asked me questions about my life and spoke to me in the tone of voice that allowed me to be aware that he loved me. He was my mother's youngest brother.

Later, after breakfast, Grama would read her Bible in the living room. She always read aloud. Her pronunciation was not quite up to par, as she couldn't speak English very well, but she always struggled through whatever passage she was reading. She often asked me if she was pronouncing certain words correctly. She told me

she learned how to speak English by reading the Bible, which was astonishing to me. It showed me how much perseverance and determination she had, and she never gave up and thought things were impossible when all she had to do was to keep practicing. Sometimes she would invite her little old lady friends to a prayer meeting in her living room. She had an electric organ there—a Hammond—so I had to play for the ladies while they sang hymns in an unendurably slow style. They slurred their notes. I never minded that too much, though. To me it was charming. After the singing they would take turns praying in our language. They all cried when they prayed. It was so moving to them and to me that sometimes I cried right along with them. I liked listening to them speak in our own tongue; it is such a beautiful language.

Grama was fastidiously clean and much of her day was spent doing laundry, sweeping floors, making beds and ironing everything in her “mangle.” It was all from habit, because there was really no one to do these things for anyone except herself, since my grampa wasn’t around very much. She would let me do the flat things, like towels, wash cloths, handkerchiefs and such. She taught me how to make a bed, tucking sheets and blankets into perfect 45 degree corners, saying “No, you have to pull it apart, honey. It’s not right. You have to do it right.” She was so kind about correcting me that I never felt belittled or embarrassed. Little did I know then that I would become a perfectionist partly because of her teaching. On a typical day, she walked back and forth from the laundry through the kitchen and into her bedroom, busy with the tasks of the day. Her steps were slow and heavy because she was heavy and unable to walk very fast. The floor creaked when she walked. She blamed my grampa for the squeaking floor, saying he hadn’t nailed the boards underneath well enough. I never did tell her that I thought it was funny that she was mad at him for such a small thing. Maybe it was just one of her ways of missing him. Her house was impeccably clean and pleasing because of its cleanliness.

On certain days, when the sun was shining brightly, Grama would recruit me to help her get to the grocery store, which was two buildings down from her house. When she walked she swayed from side to side, and I had to match my stride to hers. It was sometimes a challenge because she was so heavy, but she was so pleased with me that she complimented me every time we went to the store, saying: “You know how to walk with me just right! You really help me!” and kept piling on the effusive compliments until I was a little embarrassed. But I was pleased that she liked the way I helped her.

Off of the kitchen were two rooms – one was the long bathroom with all blue fixtures and a small window too high for me to see out of. I had to close the lid of the toilet and stand on the lid in order to see out. The bathroom was very cold and smelled like Lifebuoy soap. I did not like it in there because it seemed so hard and uninviting. There was a large storage closet with towels and an eyecup that my grandfather used to rinse his eyes at times. Most of the household linens were also in this closet. It was painted white and had silver metallic handles with buttons

that you had to push in if you wanted to open the doors. When I was older I had to help my grandma wash herself, as she was somewhat disabled due to her diabetes. I found this task distasteful, but she said I had to do it because she had no one else to help her.

The other room was the pantry. In it were shelves and shelves of jars, pots, various cookers, cans of Darigold butter, and other preserved foods. The room was long and narrow. It was just big enough for a full sized adult person to go in, get what was needed, turn around and come back out. I'm sure Grama put up lots of food, because I remember her working on canned fish one year. Grampa liked hot and spicy foods, so there was a string of red peppers hanging from one of the shelves. Grama told me "don't eat anything in there," but of course I had to try a handful of the peppers, thinking they were burnt sugar candies! No one said anything, because my mouth filled with hot peppers was punishment enough!

In the back of the house was an unfinished room that had mostly work things in it—a utility room. The large chest freezer was there; there was a small white wood stove, which was rarely lighted but when it was, gave off a pleasing crackling and popping sound when the wood burned. They didn't use it much so it always looked new. Grampa's work and fishing clothes were hanging in that room also. I remember his extra large rain hat hanging from one of the hooks. Grama had her "mangle" iron in that room; it was used for virtually anything made of cloth that was capable of going through it. The other door in that room led to the covered porch. There was a gate with a hook and eye closure, and wooden steps leading to the boardwalk that ran the length of the house.

Outdoors, Grama had a smokehouse, like everyone else in Metlakatla. I remember her bending over the wood trying to get the fire going. At the time I didn't think anything of her doing everything herself, but when I got older I sadly realized that Grama was always alone. With Grampa being gone all the time, he was almost never around to help her and then he died at such a young age (61) that she was then truly alone. I feel sadness for her, but that's just the way it was then. Perhaps Grampa didn't want to be home that much, but when he was home he was happy.

In the front of the house was my grandfather's shoe repair shop. I loved to visit him while he repaired the shoes of the townspeople—the sound of the machines whirring was loud but very comforting and I loved the smell of the shoe wax and polish. His shop was in the rear of a huge room, which he had refinished, thinking he was going to make an apartment and rent it out for extra income. He had put down a dark burgundy linoleum throughout the entire place and had made the windows opaque with thick coats of "Bon Ami." He didn't want people looking in, he said. He always fixed my shoes for me and gave me cash to go to the movies. My grama didn't approve of movies but he would hand over a fifty cent piece with a wink and a smile. Grampa couldn't do enough for me. When he would come to visit my Mom he would always compliment me on my piano playing. Grampa died in 1959 at the age of 61. It was the first time I felt awareness and grief at someone's



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Magil Pratt, Honoring Tibet, UAS Student

passing away and I felt it deeply and keenly. My mother, worried about my emotional state, sent me to stay in Seattle with one of her uncles. By the time I came home I had mostly recovered from this terrible loss.

My grandmother's house was a place of peace, beauty and serenity for me as a child. I have many happy memories from being there, with her and with my grampa. I was cherished by these two loving people. Whatever else was going on in their lives, they gave me their love and affection. I was protected from the meanness, conflict and politics that can occur in a small community such as Metlakatla. It was an idyllic life and I was deeply contented and happy. I have always felt blessed to have such loving and attentive grandparents, who, with my parents, taught me a great deal about life.

My grama's house stood in its assigned place on the beach where it had been built by my grampa. It was a dependable fixture in my life; it was always there. All of a sudden it burned to the ground a few years ago one night during a storm. When I saw the blackened pile of burned wood where that beloved house had been, I felt overwhelmingly sad. Now it is just an empty lot where grass grows, and the wind blows carelessly over it, encountering no resistance in its journey. I often gaze at it thinking how much life went on in that house, how much love, how much teaching, praying, hopes and dreams, and now it's all gone, literally in a puff of smoke. I soon realized, however, that of course it lives on in my memory, just as vibrantly as if I were there today. I now know what it means to have those cherished memories and am thankful. Whenever I want to be there again I can reconstruct each part of it in my mind at will, and hear the sounds of my grandparents' voices again, and watch them as though I'm watching a video. A little has been lost, but at least not all. I can remember and be happy.

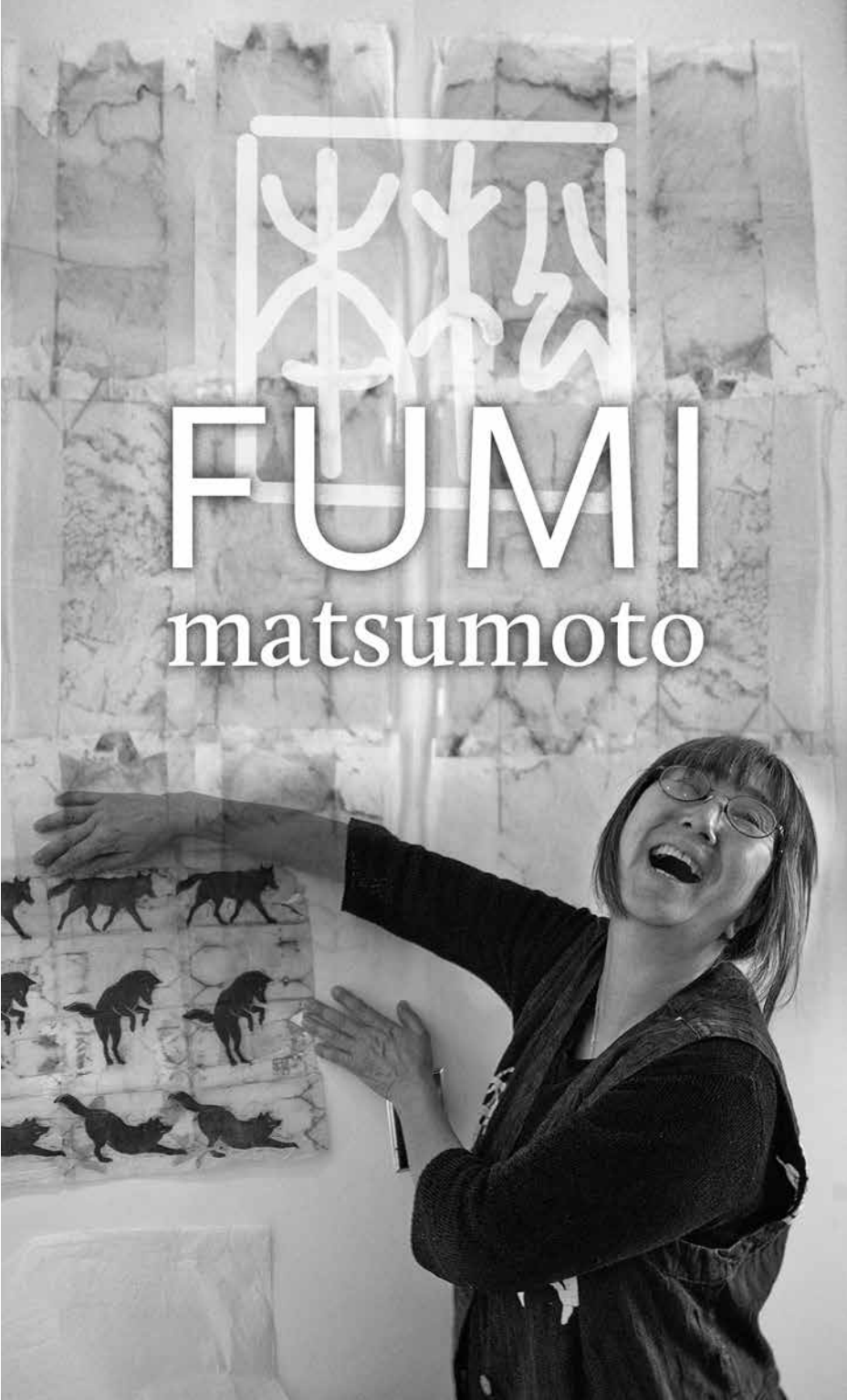


PHOTO: MICHAEL PENN



I got the pleasure to interview local Juneau artist Fumi Matsumoto, who creates art from the ordinary, seeing potential in objects she comes

across and turning them into something beautiful and intriguing.

**What medium of art did you first start to experiment with?**

I started drawing with pencils on the walls and shoji screens at my grandmother's house in Japan when I was two years old. Instead of scolding me, she bought me crayons and paper and encouraged my artistic endeavors at that early age. I have been drawing ever since and continued to take art classes all through high school and college. Drawing, printmaking, and ceramics were media that I started experimenting with as a young student. I attended the University of California in Berkeley and graduated with a degree in art and education with an emphasis on sculpture and printmaking.

**You've described your art style as "found art," where you use regular, undistinguished objects and transform them into art. What drew you to this?**

## FINDING ART IN CULTURE

I have always been a collector, picking up interesting objects and saving recyclable items. I see potential in most everything I find lying around

the house or lying on the ground in the woods and on the beach. What some people would call discarded junk can be re-purposed and given new life and transformed into a piece of artwork. I have never had a large budget for buying art materials so it was natural for me to use found objects in my work. Instead of buying expensive rice paper I glued used teabags together. This made a beautiful, unusual surface for printmaking. I also wanted to experiment with a metallic surface for small sculptures of parrots. Instead of purchasing expensive copper sheets, I decided to try using aluminum soda cans which were in abundance around the house and free. That is how I came about making my "Mountain Dew Parrots."

**What tools do you usually use in your creative process?**

Tools are minimal and the process of creating a print is a basic lino-print technique. I begin with the image which

is drawn onto a block of rubber-like material, similar to an eraser. I use a large and small linoleum cutting tool. The image emerges as the material is cut away. The part of the image that will be dark with ink is left uncut while all of the area that will be white negative space is removed with the cutting tools. I then I apply water soluble ink to the surface of the block with a rubber roller. The tea bag paper is placed on top of the block and a Japanese baren, a tool made of cardboard and dried bamboo leaf, is used to rub the surface of the paper to transfer the image. When the paper is pulled off of the block, the finished image is reversed.

The teabag paper is made by gluing together several teabags after they have thoroughly dried and the loose tea removed and discarded. I like to use different kinds of teabags to make the paper. There are quite a few different shapes and sizes of teabags and I like to use the square and round tea bags as well as the standard “flow-through” type. The varieties of teas give the papers subtle shades of brown and a single sheet of paper has its own “tea stains” that make each print unique.

### **Do you give yourself a scheduled time to create?**

I am pretty busy these days and I don't really have a set time to do my

artwork on a daily basis. Finding time to do my artwork is a challenge because I like to work within large blocks of time. If I start on a project I concentrate solely on the process and try to continue until I finish if that is possible. I don't want to interrupt the creative process when I am engaged in a project. That usually means working through the night.

### **What is the hardest part of making art?**

I would have to say that finding time to make art is illusive. Normal daily routines and chores and personal commitments and responsibilities take up much of the day. I find that my best time

to create art is late at night.

Depending on the medium, some art forms need large continuous blocks of time to complete. The process dictates the way you need to approach the project. I worked with clay to make ceramic functional ware and art pieces. Because of the many stages that it takes to finish a work in clay, it can't be done in one sitting. Not only is there a wet and dry stage to the clay, the piece needs to be fired, then glazed and fired again. It is not something that can be done in a day.

On the other hand, printmaking has a more manageable pace because I can chose to stop the process and still be able to take up where I left off. This is





*I see potential in most everything I find  
lying around the house or lying on the  
ground in the woods and on the beach.*

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above: Fumi Matsumoto, Pathway of Thorns  
left: Fumi Matsumoto, Minidoka Interlude



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Fumi Matsumoto, Mountain Dew Parrots

also true of my mixed media sculptures. I think I gravitated to these art forms from ceramics because it gave me more flexibility and ability to control the process.

**How large of an impact does Japanese culture and history, and the Asian American experience, have on your work?**

I am a person of Japanese ancestry born in Japan and raised in America. I have experienced growing up Asian American in the United States. My work reflects those experiences and themes. I studied Japanese art and culture while living in Japan. I am drawn to various traditional Japanese arts and crafts and incorporate techniques such as origami (paper folding), kirigami (paper cutting), sumi-e (ink brush painting), raku ceramics, hanga (block printing) in my artwork.

**You were involved in the Empty Chair Project, a memorial for the Japanese Americans who were incarcerated during World War Two. What emotions and thoughts were driving the pieces you created for it?**

My father, Roy Matsumoto, and relatives and friends were forcibly removed from their homes and had to live in various camps located in some of the harshest environments in the United States. One of the camps where the Juneau families were sent was Minidoka, Idaho. My mixed-media sculpture "Minidoka Interlude" was created as a tribute to the men, women, and children who were sent there. Loyal Japanese American citizens were stripped of their civil rights and suffered a terrible injustice just because they "looked like the enemy." In creating the pieces that were in the Empty Chair Exhibit,

I hoped that the artwork would have an emotional impact that would affect the viewer and make them aware of the hardships that the Japanese Americans had to endure. Many internees created beautiful works of art during their years in camp. They used whatever materials they could find since art materials were scarce and difficult to acquire. In the mixed media sculpture "Ibara no Michi" (Pathway of Thorns) I wanted to create a piece using only limited materials that I could find in my environment. I used wild Nootka Rose twigs to form a lattice and tied them off with pieces of grass. The teabag paper origami cranes represented each of the internment camps and had the name of each camp written on the back of the cranes in Japanese. Working with the thorny rose branches was often painful and difficult to weave. It made me sadly reflect on the experiences of the individuals who were in the camps, especially my father, who joined the army from camp to fight with Merrill's Marauders in Burma during the war. He became a highly decorated Nisei Veteran for his heroic deeds during WWII.

**Are there specific subjects or themes that you find frequently reoccur in your work?**

I am influenced by my Japanese heritage and the Japanese American experience. The series of mixed media sculptures and my shadow boxes reflect Asian American themes, often that of the WWII forced internment of Japanese Americans as well as other topics seen from an Asian American perspective.

I also am intrigued by birds, fish and animals. The subjects of my teabag linoprints are usually Alaskan wildlife.

# Watch Out for Falling Objects

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Mary Lou Spartz, Juneau

A very small asteroid fell  
    into the boat harbor  
frightening live-aboard cats  
sending coffee pots dancing  
    on cold stoves,  
silverware racing to high ground.

One cat—a calico—hissed  
    arched her back  
    walked sideways  
as a big wave lifted the little boat  
past startled jelly fish  
    and tossed it out to sea.



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Adam Wood, Loose Change, UAS Student

# An Unkind Demise

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Katie Bausler, UAS Staff, Juneau

More than twenty years ago, our family made the journey from Southern California to Southeast Alaska in a truck carrying two young children, a black lab and camping gear on an Alaska Marine Highway ferry from Bellingham, WA to Juneau, AK. What distinguished us from the other passengers was our irreplaceable vehicle. And when it suffered an unexpected demise a few years ago, a chapter in the book of our family history closed for good.

That truck was impressive. We didn't know just how impressive until November 1992, when we rolled off the ferry and into downtown Juneau and Douglas. Locals seemed more interested in meeting our truck than us. "Where'd you get that rig?" was a familiar greeting, usually from a non-smiling male with his arms crossed over his chest. Fresh off the boat from the Lower 48, I'd never heard our Ford Ranger referred to as a "rig."

You see, this wasn't any navy blue Extra Cab. It was the result of a vision my husband Karl had in 1990, when we lived in Southern California. He wanted to make our truck the ultimate road trip machine. The way to do it was to cut the Ranger in half and stretch the cab three feet.

My initial reaction was that the truck was fine as is. I was still sentimentally attached to the old Ranger—the truck in which Karl picked me up from college when it was shiny and new. We drove our first baby home from the hospital in it.

The blue truck was a veteran of the road, to places like the Baja Peninsula and New Mexico. We'd already added a steel canopy over the bed; the same shell used by the California Highway Patrol. It even had windows that flipped up on the sides and back with little screens that slid open.

Karl found an Anaheim limousine maker who said he could do the job. For about a month of nights and weekends, my husband babysat the surgery and customization. When the transformation was complete, Karl must have felt like Dr. Frankenstein driving his monstrosity down the L.A. freeway while the lesser vehicles parted for his creation. There was nothing like it, svelte and shimmering in the California sun. The cab was more like a mini living room, with fake fur-covered seats, between them a table with drink holders and a ridiculous amount of leg room for two young children.

Soon we were taking our son and daughter on their first ski trips, over a pass on a windy road to a little ski area with a rope tow. Five-year-old Kaitlyn grabbed onto that rope tow and never looked back. At the time, three-year-old Kanaan wasn't convinced that skiing would be fun. He became a formidable skier eventually, but his first association with skiing was carsickness on the Angeles Crest Highway.

On a weekend trip my sister came along. She tried to chat up her carsick nephew. He stuck his fingers in his ears and had two words for her: "No talk."



Two years later we were residents of Juneau, and still better known for our rig than anything else. The rig was a familiar sight around town, and at tailgate parties in the Eaglecrest ski area parking lot on Douglas Island, where beer-sipping skiers would hit the tennis ball for our black lab. In 1999 one of Karl's ski patrol colleagues nicknamed it the Y2K Assault Vehicle. The moniker stuck.

If that rig was well known around Douglas and Juneau, it was a rock star in the Yukon. We'd take it up to our Canadian neighbor on soccer team road trips. And it patiently waited for us when we went hiking or backpacking. When we'd stop for a pee or a view-break, Yukoners would actually pull over and jump out of their vehicles. "Where'd you get that rig?" Then they'd make offers on it. It wasn't for sale.

The last of the family road trips, the Y2K Assault Vehicle did not go far. But it came full circle. We parked it at the Auke Bay ferry terminal where we'd first arrived in Juneau from California years earlier. We rolled our bikes onto the ferry north to Haines and a long weekend at the Southeast Alaska State Fair, where we'd find a sliver of grass for our tent.

By now, the kids were in high school and college. Our daughter was sharing a separate tent with her boyfriend, our son doing the same with his girlfriend.

So there's Karl and I, the spacious family tent all to ourselves. Karl genuinely asked me, "Where are the kids?" I had to break it to him. "Honey," I said, gently. "They grew up."

By the summer of 2011, the truck was relegated to the far edge of our Douglas driveway. It leaked too much oil, guzzled too much gas, and needed one repair after another. We didn't take it out much anymore.

Clear skies and a full moon graced the evening of June 16, 2011. We had recently installed a new accordion shade over the sliding glass door in our bedroom, which led to a deck overlooking the driveway. I am a light sleeper. Karl was sound asleep when I woke up around 1 a.m. to a crackly whooshing sound.

Our new shade was bright orange. Afraid to slide it back, I ran into the living room and looked out the windows. Flames were leaping out of the hood of the truck, high enough to singe electrical wires crossing the road. Pointed the opposite direction, it surely would have ignited our bedroom and the house. I ran back into our room. Karl was still asleep. "Wake up!! The truck is on fire!!!"

It was the summer after our son had graduated from college and returned home. I burst into his room.

"We have to get out of the house!" A procession of siren-blaring trucks finally appeared. The fire was soon replaced with billowing grey plumes of flame-extinguishing chemical smoke and an acrid smell. In a minute, arson had reduced the holder of a quarter century of family memories to sagging wreckage.

Standing barefoot in the front yard, our son looked over at the charred shell and uttered the same two words he had as a carsick three-year-old 20 years before.

"No talk."



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Sheila Dyer, Immortality (skull side), UAS Student

# A Place That Holds Names

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Kristina Cranston, Sitka

I want to know my name. My Tlingit name and what it means. I was given a Shangukeidi' name my great grandmother held. She was a midwife, mother, and a strong woman in a small body.

I called an Elder in Klukwan; he seemed unsure of my purpose, guarded. We spoke, I listened, he asked me questions, and he warmed. "This Elder is knowledgeable and my good friend," my father told me.

The Elder told me to pray, he said human beings are very intelligent. He said in his gentle cadence that I was told my name a long time ago. My name is in my heart, and it would be revealed to my mind.

And even though it escapes me now, the spirits will reveal my name in time. He said there would be a day my lips would know how to speak it. Now, I just have to be patient.

# Opening Again the Box of Wisdom

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Deacon Charles Rohrbacher, Juneau

My own first encounter with Tlingit as a living language was almost thirty years ago when I was invited to write (paint) an icon of St. Nicholas for St. Nicholas Orthodox Church in Juneau. Most of the church members were (and continue to be) Alaska Natives, mostly Tlingit people. The church services, as is the case in Sitka, Hoonah and Angoon, are sung in Church Slavonic, English, and Tlingit. So I was asked to write the inscriptions on the icon of St. Nicholas in two of the liturgical languages used at St. Nicholas—Tlingit and English. Two parishioners, Nora and Richard Dauenhauer, both of whom are scholars and poets and Tlingit speakers, translated the inscriptions into Tlingit.

I'm grateful for that experience and for their friendship since then, because as a newcomer to Southeast Alaska (that is, as one of those who has arrived or whose families have arrived here in the past 150 years), I might have thought, mistakenly, that the traditional way of life, cultures, and languages of our Tlingit, Haida, and Tsimshian neighbors was a thing of the past. Yet since the 1960's a remarkable cultural renaissance has occurred among Alaska Native peoples in our region (and throughout the state), made even more remarkable because of the many preceding decades of cultural and linguistic suppression after the purchase of Alaska in 1867.

One of the amazing cultural and spiritual initiatives in recent years has been the movement to revitalize spoken Tlingit and form a new generation of Tlingit speakers here in Southeast. The Tlingit language, which has been spoken in present day Alaska, the Yukon, and British Columbia for at least 10,000 years, because of forced assimilation in the 19th and 20th centuries is today only spoken by an estimated 200 speakers.

Dr. Xh'unei (Lance) Twitchell, assistant professor of Alaska Native languages at the University of Alaska Southeast in Juneau, is one of the leaders among those working to revitalize the use of Tlingit in everyday life and to pass the language on to the next generation. In one of his Juneau Empire columns on language revitalization, Xh'unei quoted elder Kichnáalxh (George) Davis, who said, speaking of revitalizing Tlingit,

*"Tsu héide shugaxhtutaan, yáa yaakhoosgé daakéit, haa jéex' anákh has kawduk'éet'."* "We will open it again, this box of wisdom, which was left in our hands."

I'm grateful for the commitment of all those working to "open again the box of wisdom" of the Tlingit language, as well as other efforts to revitalize Alaska Native and other indigenous languages. Every language is a treasury of wisdom passed down to us by our ancestors in stories, proverbs, poetry, songs and history. Every language and the peoples who speak and think in their own languages participate in the divine Logos, the divine Word through which the cosmos and everything

that is, came into being and remains in being. Our loving Father who created men and women in the divine image has given all people and continues to bestow upon every person the gifts of language, consciousness, moral conscience, artistic expression and a spiritual sense.

The work of language revitalization here in Southeast is, I believe, a necessary, worthy, and deeply spiritual endeavor that reminds me of the words that St. Paul wrote in his closing exhortation to the Philippians: *Finally, brothers and sisters, fill your minds with everything that is true, everything that is noble, everything that is good and pure, everything we love and honor, and everything that can be thought virtuous or worthy of praise.* (Phil 4:8-9)

With only 200 speakers in the entire world, the work of Tlingit language revitalization faces enormous challenges and long odds. Yet I know from my own experience as an icon painter how the “language” of traditional icon painting, which was violently suppressed for almost seventy years in the former Soviet Union and eastern Europe and almost entirely supplanted by Western painting for two hundred years prior to that, was nurtured and kept alive by a handful of icon painters.

In retrospect it all looks so inevitable, but it really needed a miracle to survive. I remember being told quite adamantly by a professor of Russian art history at Stanford in the early 1980’s that icon painting was (regrettably but irrevocably) dead and that I was simply wasting my time. Thirty years later there are thousands of men and women who were so drawn to the truth, beauty and goodness of the icon that they somehow found teachers and became icon painters themselves. (Thank you St. Nicholas the Miracleworker!)

May God bless all those fluent Tlingit speakers who are opening the “box of wisdom” for their children, their grandchildren and future generations. May God bless all those who are receiving it in our time and into the future. May the revival of this language, of such significance for the First People of this place we all call home, contribute to healing the wounds inflicted across the generations on so many of our Native friends, neighbors, and fellow Alaskans.



## Iff'n I Go

---

Christian Woodard, Haines

Iff'n I go before you do:  
Give my nose to the feathered  
snow my ears to the distant geese.  
My tongue has always been  
yours, iff'n you want it.

Iff'n I go and can't be found:  
tell the dog I'm gone to heaven  
to put it all on lucky sevens and bury  
a rock in a secret place

Iff'n I go and my body stays:  
tell 'em all I'm lost  
at sea. Come out to walk  
with me. Give my thanks, my love,  
give my skin to the current  
at last my blood in a woodland river,  
offer up to the birds my liver.

Give my clothes to a tallish man,  
give my gloves to a calloused hand.  
Let my boots still walk the land.  
Give my hair to the freezing wind;  
my eyes belong to the dying fire.  
From the day we breathed each other's air,  
My lungs are yours, iff'n you want 'em.

Let my mind subside at last  
pile my works before the mast.  
my burial weapon naked hands  
so quick in life to grasp a tool

Commend my soul to the big below  
supplant that space with kelp and sod  
let my vision slipshod run  
grimy traces to the hand of god.

Lead me not to heaven above,  
this holy earth has all my love  
I'll haul the ladder myself behind,  
where whiteys sound the ocean floor

Yet, If you go, I want your teeth. Let your hair  
grow from my palms, so all I touch clothes your pate.  
Breathe your last into hollow hills,  
let your humors brim the rill.  
Fill your finger bones with frost,  
split new cracks in the mountain rock.  
Let's be this place together, again.



## The Heartsdance

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Rocky Stiers, LCCC, Juneau

A quiver of my heart's life  
begins my song's breath  
    nerves light my soft lips  
    songs begin with every step

My heart begins its dance  
so softly across a cloud  
sunrises begin each future  
    as I dance out loud

My spirit calls to you  
Love now shines from my eyes  
come now walk beside me  
together our hearts will fly...

---

Nathan Buendia, King of Dreams, UAS Student



# Hungering

---

Diane DeSloover, Juneau

She was wearing that flimsy red top again,  
the one that made her boobs look like melons.  
I could tell it was going to be one of those nights.

The car ride to Pizza Hut was depressing.  
She kept flipping music stations saying,  
“I can’t decide what mood I’m in.”  
Well, why don’t you decide to leave my Dad alone?  
I thought. Why don’t you decide to disappear?

Waiting for our pizza I kinda wanted them  
to ask me what I did at school that day  
just so I could say “Oh nothing.”  
And they would say, “Well we just want to know  
what’s happening with you.”

Like they even cared.

Gross. They were at it again.  
Dad had his hands in places he shouldn’t have  
in a public place, for God’s sake!  
They weren’t going to stop—the drinking,  
loud voices, her disgusting laugh  
ringing in my ears.

The pizza arrived steamy and tantalizing.  
The first piece I hardly chewed,  
let it slide, thick and sluggish all the way down,  
its weight a warm hug  
circling my middle, holding me tight.  
I was desperate to feel it again.



The next piece I chewed deliberately,  
caressed it with my tongue; chewy, salty,  
satisfying mouthfuls, swallowed ever so slowly.  
As long as I was eating  
I felt something good,  
just me and the pizza.

I would have eaten forever but the pan was empty.  
I heard her sickening voice say,  
“I can’t eat another bite. I’m so full!”  
I couldn’t remember the last time I felt full.

# Inside Out

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Carol Prentice, Juneau

## Seattle, June 6, 1981

I'm at the Grand Illusion Cinema watching, no doubt, something dark and serious, probably in black and white, at the request of my boyfriend. At least it's a change from my job as a grassroots organizer and my usual weekend activity of marching the streets of Seattle for rent control or against utility rate increases.

Midway through the film the theater starts to undulate. The walls are moving, closing in on me. My heart starts to race. The popcorn sticks in my throat. I am choking. I leave my seat and go to the lobby. I leave the lobby and stand outside, holding my face up to the rain. I open my eyes and see myself looking down at me. The world pulses around me. I've never experienced anything like this. I'm confused and scared.

"Where'd you go?" My boyfriend asks when we meet up in the lobby.

"I'm not sure."

Later that night, it happens again. This time, I shake uncontrollably. My teeth actually chatter, like in a cartoon, and I hold my jaw shut to stop the trembling. The pounding of my heart creates a swishing sound in my ears. Like the Tin Man's ticking heart, the pulsing sound follows me everywhere. I develop the habit of holding my thumb over my wrist, counting my pulse, waiting for the inevitable heart attack. One hundred and twenty per minute, one hundred and forty, I calculate with my eye on the second hand of my watch and my thumb pressed to my wrist.

## June 25, 1981

In the waiting room of Seattle's Virginia Mason clinic, the receptionist hands me a form. I check off the symptoms: chest pain, accelerated heart rate, shortness of breath, difficulty swallowing.

"So, what seems to be the problem?" Dr. Gavin asks in his chipper tone. I like Dr. Gavin. Last year, after my annual checkup, I walked by his office and overheard him dictating notes about me: "A young woman in excellent health with an exceptionally pleasant demeanor." I hold on to those words.

"Sometimes my heart feels like it's pounding out of my chest," I confess. "I'm afraid of having a heart attack." I feel silly perched on the exam table covered with a paper dress, a healthy 24-year-old woman with chest pain. I sound ridiculous even to myself.

Dr. Gavin listens and pokes and shakes his head. "I thought we had something exciting going for a minute, maybe an overactive thyroid, but you seem just fine. Tell you what. Next time your heart rate is accelerated, get to an emergency room.

They'll do some tests and we can find out if there's anything worth paying attention to."

He doesn't seem worried. "Maybe it's just in my head," I think.

### July 8, 1981

Riding the #16 home from work, it happens again. It happens a lot but this time is worse. I picture the bus window above my head shatters, and glass is flying everywhere. My heart is pounding so hard I wonder that others can't hear it, like Poe's "Telltale Heart." I pull the cord and get off. I walk the ten blocks home where my roommate takes control. Joanne is strong and so smart she makes me feel smart. If I were a lesbian, I would be in love with Joanne. Even so, I am sort of in love with her. Counting 180 beats per minute, she rushes me into her grey Volkswagen Beetle with rotting floorboards and drives to the emergency room of the University of Washington Hospital.

"She needs to see someone right away," her Long Island accent commands.

EKG equipment is taped to my bared chest. The monitor beeps while nurses scurry around me.

"Good news," the fresh-faced white-coated doctor announces. "Your tests are normal." He goes on to describe a "syndrome" that causes my heart to escape from its regular rhythm and jump to something else. I don't really get it.

"So, there's nothing to worry about," he assures me. "It won't hurt you. When this happens, you can do one of three things: you can immerse your head in cold water and the shock will jolt your heart back to its normal rhythm or you can bear down like you're having a bowel movement or you can put your finger down your throat to illicit a gag response."

I feel oddly reassured, though this advice is so non-clinical. It's just some harmless heart rhythm thing, I tell myself.

### October 11, 1984

I marry the movie-theater boyfriend and am well into my public affairs graduate program at the University of Washington, interning with the World Affairs Council.

Riding the elevator of the upscale Madison Hotel, which donates guest rooms for our offices, I break out in a sweat, my heart racing. I push the button and escape the elevator, taking the stairs to my 11th floor office. It's back.

The feeling of having food caught in my throat is so frequent and frightening, I start eating my lunch on a bench outside the emergency room at Virginia Mason Hospital, just a few blocks from the office. My husband comes home from his day of teaching to find cans of soup in the trash because the seal didn't sound right when opened. Suspicious jars of spaghetti sauce and tins of tuna have a similar fate. I nibble saltines to assure myself I can still swallow and orient myself by the distance from the nearest hospital.

Like a virus, playing out cycles of latency and activity, my affliction is back. I am



worn out by the internal dialogue required to calm myself. I am tired of being both in myself living my day-to-day life and outside of myself waiting for disaster to strike.

**April 5, 1985**

Sitting in Murphy's Pub, one of our favorite hangouts just a few blocks from our Wallingford apartment, the waiter sets down my pint of Ballard Bitter. I run my finger around the rim.

"Could I get a new glass, please? This one has a chip," I ask politely. I always get the glass with a chip.

"Where? I don't see a chip," the waiter says.

"Could you just bring her a new glass?" my husband interjects.

As the waiter sets down a fresh pint, my husband extracts a notebook from his jacket pocket.

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Christofer Charles Taylor, Rachel Day

“I called Frank today, hon.”

“Frank, the psychiatrist?” I’m caught off guard.

“I told him about your symptoms, and he said it sounds like something called ‘panic disorder.’ He thinks you’re having panic attacks. He read off a list of symptoms and, sweetheart, you have almost all of them.”

“It’s listed in a book?” I am stunned. There’s a name for what I have.

I feel both relieved and frightened. Relieved at the possibility that what I have actually is something. I’m not making this up. This strange array of manifestations is identifiable and has a place in a medical book. But, equally, I’m frightened by the reality that I might *have* something.

### **April 16, 1985**

“Panic disorder,” the psychiatrist at the student health center concludes after our first session.

How can she name this so confidently after spending one hour with me? I question her eagerness to attach a label while at the same time finding comfort in it.

“Are you interested in treating the symptoms or do you want to explore the cause?” she asks. “Regardless, it’s essential that you start medication right away to get your symptoms under control.”

She warns me of increased risk of alcohol and drug abuse for people with panic disorder as they try to escape the frightening symptoms. There’s a higher rate of suicide. She says something about fight or flight instincts and tells me panic disorder has only recently been recognized as a mental health condition.

I have never heard any of this before, and my mind struggles to take in the information. I am someone with an “exceptionally pleasant demeanor” and “extremely healthy.”

I have been trying to get someone to pay attention and take me seriously. Now that someone is, I am not prepared to listen to her. I tell her I will think about all of this as she writes my name down in her appointment book for the following week. I never return.

I tell my husband, and myself, that I don’t go back because I don’t want to take medication.

### **August 4, 1985**

The yard sale goes well. We make a few hundred dollars for our drive down Highway 101, the coastal route we will drive to San Francisco. Friends stop by to say goodbye, admiring our sense of adventure for moving to California, with no jobs, no credit cards, and little cash. Moving is good distraction. The details are so consuming, there’s not much time for pondering what’s behind or what’s ahead. Once the wheels are in motion, reverse is difficult.

It’s late in the day when my husband and I finally pull away from Seattle. We stop to fill our blue Volkswagen Squareback with gas and our Stanley thermos with

coffee. We know the routine. We travel well together, allowing silence, not forcing each other to travel roads we aren't ready to take.

### **San Francisco, 1986**

Fear of flying and riding the Bay Area Rapid Transit join my growing menagerie of phobias. I buy a used car to commute to my job in Berkeley.

### **Sacramento, 1991**

I'm eating dried apricots, purchased at the local farmer's market, while watching an outdoor puppet show at the library with my daughter and husband. Suddenly, I can't catch my breath and, in my effort to take in oxygen, I hyperventilate. Convinced of an allergic reaction to sulfites, a color preservative, I give up dried fruit, coconut milk, balsamic vinegar, wine, salad bars, frozen French fries and anything else that might contain sulfites.

### **Claremont, 1994**

I take my children to a pumpkin patch, packing a lunch of tuna sandwiches. That night, I break out in debilitating hives that last for weeks and finally respond to steroids. Pumpkin and tuna are added to my growing list of allergies.

Taking the light rail home from my Planned Parenthood job in Los Angeles, I lose the vision in my left eye. I cover my right eye and can see only a sheet of grey with white floating specs. My vision returns within an hour, so I ignore it. When it happens a second and then a third time, I tell my husband. He takes me to the doctor where I'm diagnosed with stress-induced ocular migraines.

### **Juneau, 1998**

I learn a lot about my mom in the three years between her diagnosis and her death. Like that she had a mental breakdown in college. Like how she was hospitalized several times for "fatigue" when my siblings and I were too young to even remember her absence. My dad used to help her breathe into a paper bag when my mom would panic and then hyperventilate. That, after my younger brother was born, she lived with her new infant for weeks in her mother-in-law's basement, unable to emerge.

She learns some things about me, too.

"Oh, sweetheart," she says, "Why didn't you tell me?"

"Why didn't you tell me?" I want to say. But I don't because she's dying, and I love her, and she means no harm.

I haven't forgotten the advice the student health center psychiatrist offered to me many years ago. It has taken a long time, but I am finally prepared to listen. The young woman with the "exceptionally pleasant demeanor" is ready to listen.

# Lying Here

---

Margo Waring, Juneau

Lying here, I could be any age  
easing my hip into its bowl.  
I could be seven,  
first noticing the soft spot  
where I liked to curl.

Lying here, I could be any age  
sliding my feet across washed linen.  
I could be seventeen,  
soft skin against  
slick ironed sheets.

Lying here, I could be any age  
breathing a sigh of relief.  
I could be twenty-seven  
wrapped in a comforter  
weary of the day.

But I am forty-seven  
and not sliding into sleep.  
I watch the dark,  
waiting for my son  
riding on rainy roads.



# Note to Wife

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Kent Pillsbury, UAS Student, Juneau

Three hours blue, white, red lights flashed in next door's rain, across the weed-laden plantain patch we call lawn and bled through the trees till just before dawn. You told me a man had died there—a tenant, our neighbor—and more than half a dozen municipal vehicles swarmed the small gravel parking lot like beetles blanketing a corpse. I slept through all of it—first good sleep I'd had in days.

"Lights, sirens, cars lined up down the street, people jumping out and running into the house, jumping in and driving away—you didn't hear the dog barking?"  
Nope—dog barks all the time.

He could have been an astronaut, a spy, a hit man, or a clown with rabies for all we knew. How long had he lived there? What did he do? Why did he die? Who were his people? Weeks later, neither of us could answer most of those questions. In this age of instant everything I found it alarming and encouraging a person could live right next door and be that unidentified. People aren't as connected as they believe.

When I was a kid the O'Hagans lived next door—Eunice, a first-grade teacher who endured my brother and sister as students, and Red; corpulent, retired custodian from the same school. Eunice's mother—whom my siblings and I only ever referred to as Mrs. McDonald—lived with them on the side of the duplex nearest our house. She was a kindly, ancient lady of the wrinkled persuasion, white-haired, rarely seen, even less often heard.

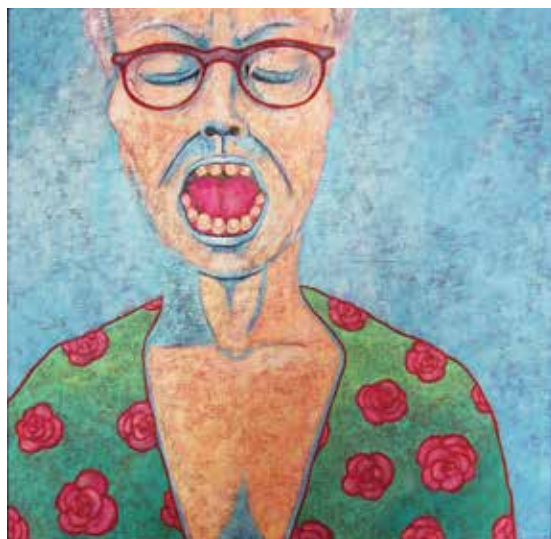
First time my brother and I tripped together we were shoveling the driveway in the dark—the pharmaceuticals had distracted us from the task during daylight and my father had raged us outside to finish—when Eunice pulled onto her own parallel strip of asphalt next door, climbed slowly out of her car and took two steps toward us.

"I've come from the hospital", she said. Deep valleys of fatigue creased her face, thick shadows stuffed the hollows beneath her eyes, the weight of recent strain drawing her face into an expression more jowly than usual. "My mother just died."

"Mrs. McDonald?" I asked, even though I knew the answer.

"Yes," she nodded, and that was all. Stars stared down at us, waiting for something to happen. Eunice turned away, started toward her house, then stopped and looked back at us. "Perhaps you could tell your parents for me?"

After midnight, as we waited for the inevitable effects of whatever agent the acid was cut with to wear off—usually some sort of stimulant, so it could take hours—we lay in darkness on opposite sides of our shared room in identical twin beds, as it had been, well, forever. Quiet reigned. The LED glow of individual alarm clocks spread different-colored lights across the faux-paneling walls, dissipating into black corners. A plain black rocking chair lounged against the wall, black-on-black in the shadows yet still discernible. Whenever it moved it creaked, and suddenly it did both.



Rigid, agape, adrenaline-stoked and still moderately high, my brother and I proved slow on the uptake. Not until the creaking had become rhythmic and there was no doubt the chair was moving, rocking, on its own, did we begin to consider such a thing possible. Gradually, gauzily, unmistakably, a form began to coalesce, growing in size, depth, density, growing recognizable, growing into the shape of a little old lady, yellowish-white and glowing brilliant, rocking, rocking, gazing out the window at something only she could see, but something pleasant; she was smiling. Her non-descript housedress, close-cropped, tightly-curved hair, knit shawl, naugahyde slippers, even the antique brooch clasped at her neck—all flushed with otherworldly radiance, as if spun from thread made of light.

“Are you seeing what I’m seeing?” my brother whispered.

“I...I think so?” I murmured. We gawked at the chair, then at each other, then back again, no longer sure what was happening and what wasn’t. The apparition continued to rock, smile, and stare contentedly out the window for another ten minutes, then faded until there was nothing left to see, and the rocking and creaking ceased. Silence covered everything like thick, black dust.

“Okay, that was out of the ordinary,” I said, as my brother nodded in amazement. We left it there. What else was there to do? The next morning we told our parents. Their reactions were banal and predictable, along the “What were you smoking?” line, which struck them as witty at their sad, terminal level of development, and we were dismissed, per usual. Fine—be that way.

A few weeks later my mother awoke from deep sleep to find a woman dressed in flowing white standing at the foot of her bed. My father balked at being awakened

long enough for the misty, translucent form to disappear. Recounting her encounter, Mom remarked that Mrs. McDonald had been born in the bedroom my brother and I now shared. Dad cleverly brayed that we had all been smoking the same thing. Hilarity ensued. By summer the vision had appeared to him too, and finally settled into a prominent slot in family lore.

Over twenty years would pass before I learned from my younger sister that Red repeatedly molested her and her best friend as tweens. I don't remember being overly surprised about it, either. I guess he just fit the profile—at least in my mind—though back then I'm not sure the term existed that way.

When my anonymous next-door neighbor died abruptly a correlation sprang at me—had I known him better might I have seen it coming? Were there unmistakable signals, flags so red even the color-blind could have picked them out? And what would that have changed? Would anyone have done anything differently? Weeks later many of the connections still eluded me, but I knew they were there. How many times have I been that drunk, even fallen similarly asleep in the same size hot tub? Am I just lucky, or was he? I pondered the wisdom of living as unknown as he did, as I do. Solitude isn't for everyone, exacting different tolls from different souls, still, it's the ballpark we all live in. No matter how many friends one accrues, no matter how venerated, no matter how many people claim to know us, no matter how many gather at the end, we all die alone.

One can never truly know another person. We all hide in secret places to pore over our secret tomes, make our secret pacts, plan our secret plans, visit the slithering places in our psyches no one else ever sees, walking damp catacombs of fantasy where no one looks over our shoulder, sexting grim dream images to our personal demons—a writhing bacchanal of ineffable thought which I'm told guys engage in roughly every ten seconds—and no one ever knows what we're thinking. Yeah, everyone's got their dark side.

When death sneaks up so close as right next door, how immediate life becomes—brighter colors, sharper sounds, sweeter birdsong, softer touch of skin on skin. The rain falls harder, wetter, more soaking, the sun warms clear to the bone, meals taste better, beer is cheaper; moods, memories, visions, vexations, grins, grunts, grandiose gestures, frivolous *fol de rol*—all the trappings of the human experience on this floating pebble spaceship intensify in the wake of mortality, according to how close it passes. Even then, one can only know as much about another person as they're willing to divulge—and vice versa.

We scoured newspaper reports, local radio, the police log, high school yearbooks, the campus rumor mill, even listening extra close at the supermarket, in search of some kind of back-story for our no-longer neighbor, but there was never much to know. We moved on—you went back to work, I took the dog for a walk. She stopped to sniff diligently, thoroughly, all around the newly-sprouted make-shift shrine in front of the house next door. I indulged her, allowed her to sniffle, snurf, and snuffle until she was satisfied she had stripped it of all useful information. Now she knows as much as we do.

# Round the Clock

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Jennifer Prince, LCCC, Juneau

They never get comfortable, but sadly enough you do get used to sleeping on these metal prison bunks. I have a free pass to bitch about how uncomfortable they are because I have two forms of arthritis, degenerative joint disease and nerve damage. I need spinal surgery, I'm overweight, I miss my dentist and once again, the burden of raising my children falls on my mother. In prison we all find ways to cope with the agony of being away from our loved ones. Some write, some read, some draw, some find a jailhouse romance.

Me, I'm still in denial.

## 5 am

I'm trying to scream but I can't. My voice is empty, stolen. No matter how hard I try to yell, I can only scream silence. My fingers are soaked in oil because I'm trying to reclaim this house in the name of Jesus Christ. But my fingers are frozen stiff. I can't lift my arms. There are black demonic spirits hovering above me and I know I am running out of time. Clang, clang, clang. With all my might I'm able to turn my head in the direction of the loud noise. I hear the oddly familiar jingle of keys on metal. Male officer! I'm jolted awake and back to the safety of reality by the sound of the C.O. announcing his presence in the female dorm. I left one hell for another. I have recently decided that the reason I turned out to be such a fuck up is because I played with Ouija boards as a kid and left the spiritual door wide open for Satan's soldiers to trample on my soul.

## 6 am

Taking into consideration this morning's disturbing events, I perch on my bunk and read my Bible like the good Christian I am only while in prison. I read the gospel and the words disappear in the abyss of my mind as soon as they enter the black hole of my brain. Although I have no idea what I just read, I'm satisfied that I have fulfilled my religious duty for the day. Time for coffee.

## 7 am

I've been awake for 2 hours and finally my make-shift, felonious family is starting to stir. Rise and shine my not so sweet sisters! One by one, I watch the yellow-clad zombies stagger to the toilet, then the sink, then back to their bunks, waiting for the call to breakfast. The guard opens our door and we stumble into the hallway where the overwhelming stench of morning breath overpowers my nostrils. When the C.O. unlocks the gate, we begin our exodus to the chow hall.

## 8 am

Deb is chasing Brenda around the dorm with a rodent-size glob of hair she wiped off the broom. This is probably the most comical part of my day. Because I

have the Web M.D. app on my cell phone at home, it pretty much qualifies me as a doctor so I graciously diagnose Brenda with chaetophobia....a fear of hair.

**10 am**

We luck out today. It looks like Kris and Paul are back from tearing it up at the hotel, motel, Holiday Inn, which means we can go and party it up on Post 5. Putting 15 women who barely like each other in closed captivity for extended periods of time is not a good idea. Ever. But when you take away their newspaper and Zuma's revenge, watch out, cuz shit's about to get real. Brenda beats feet and ditches me for the computer lab while I waddle to the Learning Center. I hope the day hasn't already ruined Paul and he's in a good mood. If I'm really lucky I'll be the only one there and maybe he'll kick down an Almond Joy.

That's a negative, ghost rider. Better luck next time.

**11 am**

I'm working on a project. I find enjoyment passing the time battling the in-house administration. Need a grievance filed? I'm your girl. One of the many health hazards of being an inmate in this facility is that we are not provided with, or given the opportunity to purchase microwave-safe, BPA-free containers to boil water in for our hot beverages. Until very recently, almost all plastic contained Bisphenol-A, or BPA, a carbon-based synthetic compound used in containers that store food and beverages, such as water bottles, inside metal products, food cans, bottle tops, and even water supply lines. BPA was shown in studies to increase growth of fibroid tumors in the uterus, is linked to the development of diabetes and heart attack, and it increases the risk of breast cancer. Because BPA is a synthetic estrogen, it has the potential to lead to hormonal imbalances resulting in fatigue, weight gain, anxiety and poor sleep. As if we need any help with any of that around here. Sound scary? I agree. As an inmate of this facility, if I want to boil water to make a cup of coffee to enjoy while I sit and work on homework assignments, I have no choice but to use what was once a 64-oz. plastic Coffee Mate creamer bottle that has shrunk down to about 25 fluid ounces from being heated in the microwave. When this type of plastic is constantly reheated, the BPA leeches into the water at dangerously high levels and we unknowingly drink it with our Folgers. I submitted a copout to the superintendent explaining the health risks of BPA and asked permission for the Native Culture Club to use inmate funds to purchase microwave safe, BPA-free containers to use in our housing area. The superintendent granted my request upon the approval of P.O. Lucy, whose verbal response was "That's never gonna fuckin' happen." 'Nuff said, let the battle begin.

**2 pm**

It's 6 pm in St. Thomas so I call my daughter Sekoia. Unlike me, she's had a very eventful day. Her pit bull, Domino, is in her cage giving birth to her first litter of puppies. I can imagine my little Sekoia sitting outside Domino's cage with her big black curls bouncing in the sweet, tropical night breeze, impatiently waiting to become a grandma.



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Kaylie Simpson, Untitled (trap), UAS Student

**3 pm**

I'm off to the sewing room with Brenda and Betty Jo, who is teaching me how to crochet. I find my favorite spot on the floor with my ball of yarn and needle and get to work on my scarf. I'm imagining we're in the 1930's, high up in the mountains of Pennsylvania, sitting around the hearth of a fire sipping hot tea. The clothes we have are tattered and worn thin, so we busy ourselves stitching as many sweaters and scarves as possible before the cold sting of winter hits. Brenda swears she will happily burn in the fiery pits of hell before she ever wears a dress, so she dresses in Pa's suspenders. Mama told Pa it's just a phase, she'll find a nice boy to settle down with, but Pa knows better.

**5 pm**

BANG, BANG, BANG! "Ladies, time to go." C.O. Bambam, who reminds me of one of the angry flying monkeys on *The Wizard of Oz*, uses the entire weight of his tiny 5-foot frame to bang on the sewing room door, rudely yanking me out of my daydream.

**6 pm**

It's my phone time. The rest of the heathen banshees are at the gym so I stay to enjoy the sweet solace of one hour of silence. I spend this wisely and use it to call my 20-year-old pride and joy, or pain in the ass, depending on what day of the week it is. Hi Mom, yes class was ok. Yes, she's feeling better. Yes, she ate today. No, she did not mail me the picture of her college homecoming dance she promised to send a month ago. I tell her I love her munches, and I'll talk to her later. Next on my call list is Spencer, my boyfriend of three years. He tells me my dog, Jax, ate an entire bag of cough drops. The only evidence he left behind was a lone wrapper on the dining room floor. At least when he farts or shits it will smell like menthol and eucalyptus.

**9 pm**

My felonious female family is huddled around the TV watching a show and I climb into bed. I sit in my corner bunk and look around the room at the women who were once complete strangers to me. I am sure I'll forget this moment, like I forget most moments. And I'm sure I'll remember these women for a while, but I'll eventually forget them, too. But for now, they are the women who hand me Kleenexes when I'm crying on the phone; they are the women who hug me when my heart is aching for my children. And they are the women who long for their kids just as much as I long for mine.

And best of all, they are the women who give me their desserts at dinner.

# Seeds of Racism

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Richard Stokes, Juneau

Reflecting on my upbringing in Georgia, I suspect most things good in my psyche came from growing up in my grandmother's boarding house in Decatur, Georgia. But such reflections always bring me to the unpleasant subjects of prejudice and racism. How was my prejudice planted? How did wonderful people teach me terrible lessons?

When I was born in 1939 the country was emerging from the Depression of the '30's and was on the cusp of World War II. During the Depression years my grandmother started taking in boarders to make ends meet, and after their marriage my parents moved in. If not for the Depression my parents would probably have had their own house, and I would have missed what I consider a nurturing six years.

From my birth in 1939 to my brother's arrival in 1944 I lived in a house populated with adults, mainly women, who doted on me. In addition to my parents and grandmother, Maggie, my grandmother's unmarried sister and four female teachers lived in the house. Every adult was college-educated. When my mother was young she transformed Maggie to Diddy, and I further shortened it to Dee. She played a major role in my life during these early years. She was always available.

The house operated with comfortable routines. Dinner was served each night at six o'clock sharp after a brief blessing by my father. Each person sat in the same seat night after night. Each table setting included a silver fork, spoon and knife, a linen napkin and a glass of iced tea festooned with a sliced lemon. I was taught to use silverware correctly and to say please, thank you and if you please. I never left the table without asking to be excused. Promptness, order and good manners were paramount. Voices were not raised in anger.

There was another person in the picture, a black maid named Rosa. She served the food, appeared at times to replenish a dish, served dessert, and when we all left the table, she collected the dishes and cleaned up the dining room and the kitchen. My grandmother used a little silver bell to summon Rosa from the kitchen into the dining room at times. When Rosa came to the table with a basket of hot biscuits I was trained to take only one. Rosa ate her meal at a little table in the kitchen. If I was ever curious about why she ate separately I have forgotten it. I suspect it was like many other "lessons," simple observations of the way things were—the normal state of affairs.

After dinner, and dependent on season and weather, the family typically repaired to either the living room or to a screened porch. As I got older I was allowed to stay with the adults, but more often I was taken by Dee to her small bedroom upstairs where she would read to me until bedtime.

In addition to Rosa, I remember a black man that sometimes sat in the basement. He fed coal into the furnace and removed clinkers. Rosa and this man were





the only exceptions to my well-ordered white world. My playmates were white, my kindergarten classmates were white and most, if not all, shopkeepers I observed were white.

I do recall being in a car with Dee in front of the Piggly Wiggly grocery store when she commented on clothes worn by two black women on the street. The women wore bright colored blouses and Dee said “darkies like to wear bright colors.”

Rosa apparently didn’t show up one day, and I was in a car when my mother and grandmother went looking for her. Piecing together my vague recall of this day, we arrived at a dingy house. The people there said simply that Rosa didn’t stay there anymore. I recall my grandmother saying Negroes—probably pronounced *nigras*—never lived anywhere, that they simply stayed places. A simple remark, not designed to “teach” me, but it did. On the positive side of the ledger I remember that my mother and grandmother felt for Rosa. They were no doubt disappointed to lose a faithful servant, but they were also worried about Rosa’s well-being. As far as I know, they never had further contact with or information about Rosa.

Although I felt loved by everyone in the house, Dee was the most attentive. She read me stories morning and night. She recited the “Wreck of the Hesperus,”

and probably could tell I liked the rhythm. She read of elves, Uncle Wiggly, fairies, queens, kings and animals leaving home to find their fortunes. Some stories scared me and may remain in my deepest psyche even today. One had wolves trying to get through a window into a house where a family hid. I had discomfort about windows well into adulthood. Another was about a little boy being held captive in a basement that resembled the one at grandma's house. Even after we moved out of grandma's house, we still visited two or three times a year. I never passed the basement door without an image of a boy being held captive. Dee was fearful herself and would certainly not have frightened me purposely. But these lessons stuck. So, no doubt, did ones from *Little Black Sambo* and Joel Chandler Harris's account of Brer Rabbit and the tar baby. Very pleasant lessons by a loving and gentle adult.

I remember one night on our screened porch. A cooling rain broke the heat of a muggy day, and tires of passing cars whispered on wet pavement. I stood on the swing next to Dee. Dad sat in his regular chair in the corner of the porch and smoked a cigar. The end of the cigar glowed red. My grandmother sat in one of two cane chairs that faced the street. Alberta, one of the teachers, sat in the other. Did all of these things occur the same night? I can't be sure, and my memory of the key conversation is fuzzy. What is important is that a memory was imprinted.

The conversation turned to a live-in maid in a house down the street. I recall my grandmother speaking directly to Alberta in the near-darkness of the porch. What was it that alerted me to something being out of place, something being wrong? A tone of voice, I presume. There was consternation about the daughter of the live-in maid. I had seen this little girl from time to time and knew her to be about my age. I recall we had visited the house, and I wonder if that visit triggered the night's conversation. My grandmother thought it was time for this maid to move out of the neighborhood.

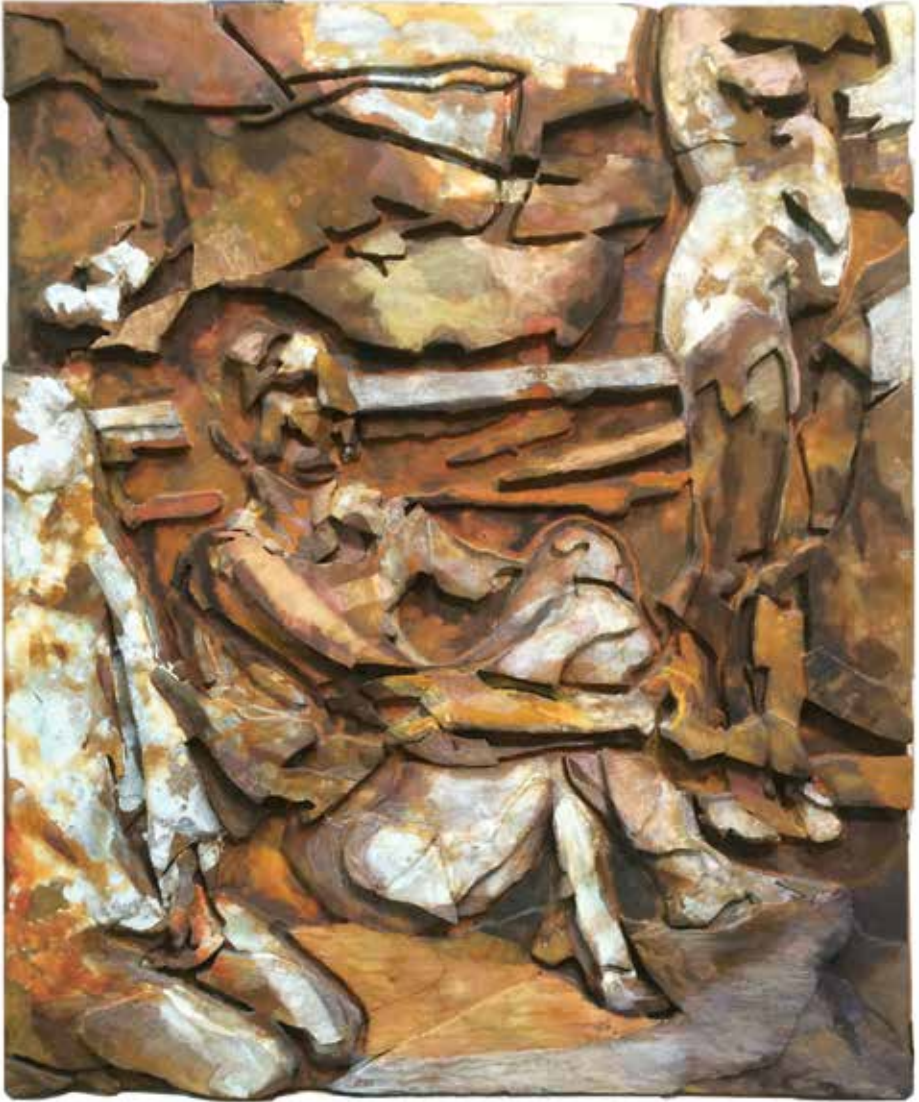
At this point I find it impossible to separate what I knew that night and what I would understand later. The problem was the little girl had become old enough to want to play outside in a very white neighborhood—perhaps in fact to play with me. There had been no problem when the maid and her daughter were enclosed within the house. It was only when the little girl wanted to be a little girl.

None of these "lessons" were designed for me. But they all stuck in my psyche. They have been difficult to purge—to outgrow. Scores of gentle lessons, mostly inadvertent, and the teachers loved, trusted, kind and well-meaning adults. Effective lessons. Damaging. Long lasting.

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right: Jackie Manning, Moab 1





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Jackie Manning, Moab 3

# Pearl of the Orient

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Rosalinda Ainza, UAS Student, Juneau

Bangkok,  
anything but a pearl.  
A forest of shanty houses.  
Squat grey tenements  
decay in the shadow  
of adamantine towers.

Open sewer  
and incense mix  
with garlic in a hot wok.  
Aromas that wake  
the beast in the belly.

Tangled power line clouds,  
the loom of a cement sky,  
loiter above narrow streets.  
Monsoon rains wash the filth  
from gutters and minds.  
Rivers of sin.  
The streets at dawn  
bare the lady boys of Khao San  
as they pass saffron monks,  
each seeking  
alms.

Fat golden Buddha looks over,  
overlooks,  
those raven haired sirens,  
who call out in nasal chorus  
for the delight of old men.  
They come to churn the sea of milk.

Such a city as this  
exists in dreamscapes,  
cast in the minds of  
madmen and wanderers.  
A place where Eastern promises  
make light of chaos.

# Scars

---

Eugene Solovyov, Sitka

I noticed it on our first date, but did not ask you. It must have been a deep cut, above your cheekbone and under your left eye, but long ago stitched up and dark brown now. It looked distinctive somehow, giving you character, individuality, one of the marks that made you who you were. You did not try to hide it, purposefully refusing to put makeup over that spot. When we became lovers, and I kissed your face, my lips circled around it, but did not touch it.

It stabbed at me sometimes on cold November nights and hot July mornings. The pain attacked at random times, unpredictable in its severity and duration. He was a good father, and I always had toys and bicycles and baseball gloves and my first car and money for college, but he never read me a book or told me he loved me or allowed me to say to him what I always could say so easily to my mom and sister, about my friends and my first girlfriend, and how I wanted him to notice that I was finally growing a mustache and that I liked Guinness as much as he did. The one hug I remember, after I graduated from high school, was awkward, dissolving almost the moment it began, empty, filled with the smell of stale cigar smoke. The conversations we had were short, to the point, practical. When I told him I wanted to become a writer, his reply was: "Why? There's no money in it."

Three months after we became lovers, I finally kissed it, and you put your fingers on my lips before I could ask you and said: "He was my boyfriend right after high school. And he was so loving at first. It began gradually. First an insult, then a slap, but he was still nice at other times and a good lover. When he slashed me with the knife, and I tasted blood running down into my mouth and started drifting into a haze, I could not understand why, and I still loved him."

When my first novel was ready for publication, so much of it was about the love that never was between the father and his son, and I was drinking a Guinness on the balcony of my apartment in Juneau, across the frozen state from him in Fairbanks, and the sky was brilliant with cold February stars, and I wanted him to read it first because I wrote it for him, and then we would finally have that talk, the one we never had, "the father and son" talk that would break away all the barriers, melt our thirty years of winter. The phone rang, and it was Mom, crying. "Yes, heart attack, but he was in a bar with his business buddies, shooting pool, doing what he loved the most." And the "what he loved the most" stabbed into me, the conversation we never had, my book he did not read.

And after you stopped talking and sobbed in my arms, I kissed your scar over and over again, making up for lost time, staying away from it for so long, afraid to touch it, to find out why and how, to comfort you and fall in love with you, and then I told you about the father I never had and the phone call and my first novel.



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Adam Wood, Transporting, UAS Student

# In Eliason Harbor

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Kersten Christianson, Sitka

Potted nasturia flame  
on the stern deck of the old tug, *Adak*.  
Apricot orange and saffron linger,  
haul fading summer into fall.

Quick to pick the florets  
my wide-eyed daughter gifts them;  
love tokens from an eight-year-old  
of flash and wilt,  
sliding from her hair,  
scrunched in her pocket.

We can all learn  
from this lambent bloom:  
face the sea, blaze margin with color.  
Adorn in vermillion and garlands of marigold,  
extend wispy runners  
into the unknown.

This might well be the secret  
to joy: one season carried  
into another, waving banners  
of cadmium red and yellow,  
dried in a pocket.



# Poet Passes: Leaves Words Behind

---

Kersten Christianson, Sitka

I'm spending time tonight with Richard Dauenhauer's book,  
*Benchmarks, New and Selected Poems, 1963-2013.*

Three weeks  
of drumming,  
inches of rain  
in short hours.  
Mud Sprints  
into sea; salmon  
carcasses line  
the bank  
in their return  
home to spawn.

A love song,  
this downpour:  
Ravens, snow  
on the gunwales  
of halibut boats  
in harbor,  
moon skip  
across Flattop.

We don't count  
our days –  
this rift  
from rain,  
this plummeting sun,  
this candle  
flickering,  
this poet's  
words.



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Mark Sixbey, Wolf Helmet, UAS Student

# Tough Guy

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Richard Dauenhauer, Juneau

You should have been dead  
two years ago. You stayed  
in such good shape that cancer  
seemed, in retrospect,  
a mild annoyance  
until it finally  
caught you, like Raven  
inside the Whale, eating  
everything beyond the point  
of no return—the perils  
of good health. They tell us  
“The healthy have no faith.”  
But perhaps they’re blessed  
by not being tested yet.

# Contributors

## WRITERS

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### Rosalinda Ainza

UAS School of Education student, Rosie Ainza, has resided in Juneau for over twenty years. While extensive travel is her passion, particularly around East Africa, she also feels deeply connected to Southeast Alaska. After graduation, she hopes to make a difference through education within Alaska, as well as within less developed nations.

### Christina Apathy

Christina Apathy is an 8-year Alaskan of German-Hungarian descent en route from the Gulf Coast of Florida via NYC's Greenwich Village. Her professional curiosities cluster around acting, voice, writing, and exploring inner and outer terrains. She is particularly proud of her second-place Woosh Kinaadeiyí SLAM win which serendipitously rocketed her to open for Kealoha, the first poet-laureate of Hawaii, this past November. MFA from Tisch and national TCG award winner. [www.capathy.com](http://www.capathy.com)

### Katie Bausler

Katie Bausler is a lifelong English major. According to the T-shirt, that means she “lives in a crazy fantasy world filled with unrealistic expectations.” Katie’s observed she is not alone in this outlook, living in a place where northern lights (or sunshine for that matter) can show up when you least expect them.

### Heather Burge

Heather submitted a haiku as her biography for last year’s *Tidal Echoes* roundup, and was very disappointed that did not make the biography cut. This year she submitted a non-biography in protest. She is also a cat whisperer.

### Kersten Christianson

Kersten Christianson is a raven-watching, moon-gazing, high school English-teaching Alaskan. Currently she is pursuing her MFA in Creative Writing/Poetry through the University of Alaska Anchorage. Kersten co-edits the quarterly journal, *Alaska Women Speak* and is a member of Blue Canoe Writers in Sitka, Alaska. Her poetry has appeared in *Cirque*, *Tidal Echoes*, *Alaska Women Speak*, and *We ‘Moon*.

### Kristina Cranston

Kristina Cranston resides in Sitka, Alaska and helps her life partner operate Raindance Gallery and Studio, where people gather to create art and share writing. She writes poetry, prose, memoirs and short stories. She is a recent Rasmuson Recipient for her work with Northwest Coast carving.

### **Diane DeSloover**

Diane DeSloover came to Juneau in 1977 with the intention of staying a year. Thirty-seven years, a marriage, three children, a teaching career and three grandchildren later she is still here, still stunned by the beauty, still trying to capture her life in poetry.

### **Robert Fagen**

Robert Fagen is a retired Juneau resident who currently spends his time writing, hiking, reading, and translating.

### **Brady Harang**

Brady Harang was born in 1997 and raised in Sitka, Alaska all his life. Ever since he was young he enjoyed fishing, hunting, and everything else outside. Klag Bay is approximately 2 hours from Sitka and he goes there as often as the weather will let him.

### **Ishmael Hope**

Born in Sitka, Alaska, and living in Juneau, Ishmael Hope is a storyteller, writer, and actor who shares his stories, culture and writing at community events and classrooms in Alaska and around the nation. His Tlingit name is Khaagwáask' and his Inupiaq name is Angaluuk. He was a lead writer for *Kisima Ingitchuna: Never Alone*, a video game produced by E-Line Media and Cook Inlet Tribal Council. In the winter of 2014 released his first book of poetry, *Courtesans of Flounder Hill*, published by the Ishmael Reed Publishing Company

### **Sarah Isto**

Sarah Isto writes non-fiction and poetry in Juneau where she practiced medicine for 20 years. She and her husband spend time each spring and fall at a remote cabin in Interior Alaska.

### **Mary Koppes**

Mary Koppes is a creative writer and newspaper staff writer living in Petersburg, Alaska. She enjoys leading creative writing workshops at the local public library and walking through the muskeg with her dog, Oona. This is the first time her poetry has been published.

### **Jonas Lamb**

Jonas Lamb is a librarian, dreamer and parent-poet. He lives in Juneau with his wife, two sons, one live dog and one ghost dog. In Summer 2015 he'll begin the low residency MFA program at University of Alaska Anchorage.

### **Joe Lewis**

Joe is a native of Southeast Alaska. He is a full time student, studying both English and art. While both physical art and written word are his passions, he tries to capture both the beauty and creativity that come with living in Southeast Alaska.

### **Heather Mieth**

Heather Mieth is a returning student to U.A.S after a 20+ year hiatus. During those 20 years, she has raised three daughters in Alaska with her husband, a commercial fisherman. As a family they have fished, trapped, hunted and lived a bush and pioneer lifestyle together. She has written many marketing and editorial pieces for Alaskan artists. Most recently she has returned to UAS to pursue her goal in receiving her Bachelor of Arts, with an emphasis in Creative Writing.





### **Alexis Ross Miller**

Alexis Ross Miller is a born and bred Alaskan. She has lived and worked from one end of the state to the other, from Ketchikan to Barrow, and in five other communities within the Greater State of Alaska (Anchorage, Fairbanks, Juneau, Petersburg, and Sitka). Two of her poems were included in the 2010 *Tidal Echoes* issue. Other poems were accepted for publication in past issues of *Explorations*, the former literary journal for the University of Alaska Southeast.

### **Kent Pillsbury**

Kent is a random invader of various UAS classes and such, or at least it probably looks that way to professors, classmates, administrators, custodians, campus security, et al. He has been chasing the arts all across the country for decades and is delighted to have found this secret creative paradise called Juneau, full of like-minded miscreants and unlikely niches in which to congregate. Everyone in Alaska is hiding from something, right?

### **Carol Prentice**

Carol Prentice returned to writing a decade ago, inspired by creative writing classes taken at UAS. A monthly column of her personal essays, “Caught in the Middle,” was published in the *Juneau Empire* in 2007-2008, as well as a travel series in 2004 and 2009. Her fiction work appeared in the 2008 volume of *Tidal Echoes*. Most recently her essay, “When the Thanksgiving Table Turns” was included in the 360 North Writers’ Showcase: Holidays 2014. She lives in Juneau.

### **Vivian Faith Prescott**

Vivian Faith Prescott was born and raised in Wrangell, Alaska and lives in Sitka Alaska and part-time in Wrangell at her family’s fishcamp. She is the author of the poetry collection *The Hide of My Tongue* (Plain View Press, 2012) and two poetry chapbooks *Sludge* (Flutter Press) and *Slick* (online @ White Knuckle Press). Vivian facilitates the Blue Canoe Writers in Sitka Alaska, and co-facilitates a teen writers group at Mt. Edgumbe High School.

### **Jennifer Prince**

Jennifer Prince lives in Juneau, Alaska, and her most favorite thing in the world is Almond Joy.

### **Deacon Charles Rohrbacher**

Deacon Charles Rohrbacher is an icon painter and writer who has lived in Juneau for the past thirty three years. He has painted icons for Orthodox, Byzantine Catholic and Roman Catholic churches in Alaska and throughout the country.

### **Lindarae Shearer**

Lindarae Shearer is a full-time resident of Metlakatla, Alaska. She was born there and has lived there most of her life. Shearer started writing while in Junior High School in Seattle, Washington and has continued throughout her adult life. Her hope is to someday publish a longer work that will tell about life in Metlakatla.

### **Eugene Solovyov**

Eugene Solovyov has lived in Sitka, Alaska for 22 years. He owns and operates an art gallery, Sitka Rose Gallery. Eugene is a writer and a painter. He mostly writes poems about the natural world and the way it weaves its magic and connects with human thoughts and emotions. His first book of poetry, “How to Frame a Landscape,” was published in June 2014.

### **Mary Lou Spartz**

Mary Lou Spartz has been published in *Alaska Women Speak*, *Tidal Echoes*, *Omnibus*, and the *Juneau Empire*. She likes it here.

### **Rocky Stiers**

Rocky Dean Stiers was born August 30th, 1981 in Kenai, AK. He writes from his heart. Art and poetry allow him to reflect, escape, and overcome the powerful grasp of addiction. Expressing his thoughts and feelings a lot enables him to recover from one of life's hardest falls...falling in love.

### **Richard Stokes**

Richard Stokes, a 43 year Juneau resident, was born and raised in Georgia. In 1994 he retired from the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation. He now works seasonally with Gastineau Guiding as a naturalist guide.

### **Chelsea Tremblay**

Chelsea Tremblay grew up in Petersburg. She received a B.A. in Political Science and Critical Culture, Gender and Race Studies from Washington State University, and an M.A. in Cultural Studies from Dartmouth College. Between writing and reading, she serves on the library advisory board, works at the local bookstore, and as a substitute teacher in the schools. She returned home with more questions than there are answers, which is just the way she likes it.

### **Laura Tripp**

Laura Tripp was born and raised in Alaska, and has found her home to be a huge source of inspiration. When not writing poetry and fiction, she reads and hardly ever leaves the house without a book. Laura is a senior at UAS and hopes to publish a book one day.

### **Margo Waring**

Margo Waring has lived in Alaska since 1969. She has been previously published in *Tidal Echoes* and other publications.

### **Christian Woodard**

Christian Woodard loves the water. He has been an orchardist, a paddling guide, and a fisherman, though he currently writes for the *Chilkat Valley News* in Haines. He likes warm bread more than ice cream.

## **ARTISTS**

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### **Nathan Buendia**

Nathan Buendia was born and raised in the artistic community of Ketchikan, Alaska. Aside from being a vocalist and avid ballet dancer, he found a keen interest in photography and photo manipulation. His current creative interests lie in surrealism. Much of his inspiration is drawn from his perception of contrasting Alaskan wilderness and townscape. Nathan is a sophomore at the University of Alaska Southeast.

### **Paris Donohoe**

Paris Donohoe was born and raised in southern California, and moved to Juneau with her family in August 2008. She attends the University of Alaska Southeast, and is getting her degree in the Geography and Environmental Studies program. She loves ice cream, sunny days, and her cat, Lil Mama.

### **Jill Dumesnil**

Jill Dumesnil is an amateur photographer living and working in Juneau. She currently serves as Associate Dean of Arts and Sciences and Professor of Mathematics at UAS. In addition to photography, she enjoys reading, growing African violets, hiking, and spending time with her husband and two sons.

### **Sheila Dyer**

Sheila Dyer is a collector of old, beautiful things and artifacts of nature. She enjoys working with clay to recreate objects and bring them back to life. In addition to sculpting, she is addicted to throwing ceramic pieces on the wheel and adding small sculpted pieces. Although she has only recently begun taking college courses in art, she has been a maker of handmade things her entire life. Sheila has had pieces selected from drawing, life drawing, and ceramics classes for display in the UAS Juried Art Show, and thanks UAS Art Department faculty for their wonderful instruction that made this achievement possible.

### **Bonnie Elsensohn**

Bonnie Elsensohn retired in 2007 from working as a graphic artist and media specialist for UAS Sitka Campus. She was actively painting in the '70s but put aside her brushes for about 20 years. Bonnie has now returned to painting, using acrylics and frequently taking her own photos for reference material. Her work is on display at Fishermen's Eye and Sitka Rose Galleries. One of her raven paintings was selected for inclusion in the Taku Graphics 2015 Raven Calendar.

### **Donald Hale**

Don was born and grew up in the Gainesville, Florida area. He graduated from the University of Florida, where he met his wife Barbara Fischer Hale, in 1979. Don, Barbara, and his daughter (Natalie) lived in Ocala, Florida, where he worked in the financial services industry for 17 years. Don, Barbara, and Natalie moved to Juneau in 1997. Currently, Don works as an Insurance Specialist with the Alaska Division of Insurance. Don has been an avid photographer since grade school.

### **Gordon Harrison**

Gordon Harrison is a 33-year resident of Juneau. In his retirement he has been a wood turner, ceramic artist, and calligrapher. These pieces were made at his remote cabin in interior Alaska.

### **Caroline Hassler**

Caroline Hassler has lived in Auke Bay since 2007 when she moved there from Maryland. She is the Technical Services Librarian at the UAS Egan Library.

### **Jordan Kendall**

Jordan Kendall is a UAS Arts graduate from Juneau Alaska that works with photography and painting. His artwork develops from visual discoveries and interpretations, a steady trickle of pop culture and a love of boardsport graphic design.

### **Inari Kylänen**

Inari Kylänen is an artist living in Juneau. Originally from Finland, her art transforms visual fragments into narrative paintings.

### **Adelle LaBrecque**

From Maine originally, Adelle moved to Alaska three years ago to pursue her degree in Art. She is a full-time student at The University of Alaska Southeast in Juneau. Adelle enjoys singing, writing, dancing, art, and music. She also has a passion for American Sign Language. This is her first submission to *Tidal Echoes*.



## Jackie Manning

Jackie Manning studied art at the University of Alaska Southeast where she received her BA, and at the Academy of Art in San Francisco where she received her MFA. She works as an artist, art teacher, and Curator of Exhibits at the Alaska State Museum. She continues to explore different media with each new body of work.

## Marianne Manning

Marianne Manning is a working artist living in Juneau, Alaska. She has had many gallery openings in Juneau, including recently a show at the Juneau City Museum. She began as a portrait artist, but has recently expanded to painting landscapes. Marianne retired from teaching art at the Juneau-Douglas High School five years ago and has been working as a full time artist ever since. She continues to grow in her art journey by taking classes at UAS, The Canvas, and taking workshops by renowned artists all over the world.



## Fumi Matsumoto

Fumi Matsumoto was born in Japan and came to America at the age of four. She graduated from the University of California with a degree in art and education, during which time she spent a year as an exchange student in Tokyo, where she studied Japanese art, language, and culture. She visited Denali Park in 1979 and was so inspired by the grandeur of the wilderness that she moved to Alaska the next year. She has been living here ever since. She has taught art in both Fairbanks and Juneau. She considers herself to be an Alaskan artist as well as a Japanese American. Much of her artwork reflects the Japanese aesthetic and often the Japanese American experience. She continues to be inspired by the struggles of past generations of Japanese Americans and their ability to endure hardships as well as appreciate their successes. She hopes that through her artwork, she can somehow share some of their stories with others.

## Magil Pratt

Magil Pratt, a Juneau resident, has been painting and taking painting classes at UAS for a number of years, first with Jane Terzis, then Anne Wiedler. Magil has been painting in oil and watercolor for a number of years. She has had several one-person shows in Juneau, including the Canvas, the Baranoff, the JACC, and Silverbow. This is her first submission to *Tidal Echoes*.

## Deacon Charles Rohrbacher

Deacon Charles Rohrbacher is an icon painter and writer who has lived in Juneau for the past thirty three years. He has painted icons for Orthodox, Byzantine Catholic and Roman Catholic churches in Alaska and throughout the country.

## Kaylie Simpson

Kaylie is a printmaker/multi-media artist. Born and raised in Juneau by wolves. She is interested in the blues, playing banjo, bellydancing, mythology, dark matter, silent and foreign films, records, etc...

## **Mark Sixbey**

Mark Sixbey (Wolf Clan) is a Tsimshian woodcarver from Metlakatla, Alaska. Born in 1980, he trained with Master Carver Jack Hudson from 1992-1998 at Annette Island School District. He enlisted in the U.S. Marine Corps in 2002, deploying in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom as a Combat Correspondent in 2004 and 2006. Since then, he has made traditional art pieces for galleries and museums across the Northwest, as well as teaching workshops in Sitka, Alaska.

## **Richard Stokes**

Richard Stokes, a 43 year Juneau resident, was born and raised in Georgia. In 1994 he retired from the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation. He now works seasonally with Gastineau Guiding as a naturalist guide.

## **Ariel Svetlik-McCarthy**

Ariel Svetlik-McCarthy is entering her senior year as a student at University of Alaska Southeast where she is majoring in the Outdoor Studies program with a minor in art. Originally from Wisconsin, Ariel has spent the last four years in Juneau with her husband, Patrick, and dog, Bear, enjoying the opportunities unique to Alaska. She enjoys climbing, biking and skiing with her family during her free time.

## **Christofer Taylor**

Christofer Charles Taylor studied art at the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth, where he received his BFA, and at the Academy of Art in San Francisco where he received his MFA in Painting and Drawing. He works as an artist, art teacher, and Artistic Coordinator at the Canvas community art studios in Juneau Alaska.

## **Elise Tomlinson**

Elise Tomlinson received her BFA in 1994 from the University of Alaska Anchorage with a primary emphasis in printmaking and a secondary emphasis in oil painting. She has been exhibiting paintings and photographs regularly for close to 20 years and recently opened the Suite 5 Studio and Gallery downtown in the Valentine Building. In addition to being an artist, Elise is also the Regional Library Director for UAS. She was recently awarded a Rasmuson Individual Artist Award, and is currently working to complete this body of work.

## **X'unei Lance Twitchell**

Lance A. Twitchell carries the Tlingit names X'unei & Du Aaní Kawdinook, and the Haida name K'eijáakw. He is from the Tlingit, Haida, and Yup'ik native nations, and speaks & studies the Tlingit and Haida languages. He is a multimedia artist in poetry, fiction, drama, non-fiction, Northwest Coast Native design, photography, and traditional & contemporary music. He is an Assistant Professor of Alaska Native Languages at the University of Alaska Southeast, and lives in Juneau with his wife and daughters.

## **Adam Wood**

His work is to find truth through conversation and cultural interaction while behind the lens as well as away from the lens. Culture is his subject and what it reveals is his passion. His name is Adam Wood and he is a storyteller, using photography as his medium. He is a full time student at the University of Alaska Southeast studying visual communication and medicine. Welcome to the beginning.







The 2015 edition of *Tidal Echoes* presents an annual showcase of writers and artists who share one thing in common: a life surrounded by the rainforests and waterways of Southeast Alaska.

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