

Lite

FREE!

to residents of
Baltimore City,
Annapolis, Bel Air,
Columbia, Glen Burnie,
Laurel, Towson, and
the entire Baltimore
metropolitan area.

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2001

Baltimore's Literary Newspaper



THIS ISSUE

SPOTLITE: Literary
News 1

■ In Light of Recent Events

Bill Jones

Editorial 3

■ Proud to Be an American

Dave Kriebel

Meter & Metaphor 5

■ The Local Literary Scene

Kate Yemelyanov

Fiction 7, 11, 14

■ Mary Janes *Carol Harper* (3rd
Place Winner, 2000 Fiction Contest)

■ 911 *Hilbert H. Turner, Jr.*

■ Stoned Angel *Stevan Allred*

Poetry 14, 15

Kathleen Hellen ■ Arthur Glass

Lite Reading 4

■ Book Review: *At the Edge of
Beauty*, by Gary Blankenburg.

Dan Cuddy

Lite Sightings 13, 15

■ Theatre Reviews

Meaghan Greyson

■ Art & Photography

Patti Kinlock

LYTE BYTES 6 ■ NAMES IN LITE 10
SOCIETY'S PAGE 12 ■ CONTESTS 3, 16

■ GUIDELINES FOR WRITERS 13

■ ADVERTISING RATES 8

■ MEYERHOFF PRESENTS 9

■ ENOCH PRATT PRESENTS 9

■ 1999/2000 CONTEST WINNERS 7

Plus Literary Happenings in
November & December! 2

TOP STORY

In Light of Recent Events

*A High School Teacher's
Look at Teaching
Creative Writing*

When Dan Cuddy called me in August and asked me to write an article about teaching creative writing in high schools, I readily accepted. I've taught English in the Baltimore County Public Schools for twenty-seven years, including creative writing in three schools over the last fifteen. In many ways, my experiences in creative writing have constituted the best part of my career. Throughout that time, I've been amazed at the talent, intelligence,

and sensitivity of the teenage writers I've worked with, and I've had the pleasure of seeing them achieve tremendous success.

Over these years, of course, individual students have etched themselves into my memory. Some have gone on to considerable success as writers, editors, and teachers themselves. I think of Lea Aschkenas, who contacts me every few years to direct me to a piece of travel writing she's done that has appeared in a new book. Check out her story in Tom Miller's *Travelers' Tales—Cuba*, published this past summer. I think of Linda Brady, a songwriter, who sent me a self-titled CD which was released in San Francisco in 1993 and included several songs written in our Advanced Writing class. There's Sharon Kim, who graduated from Yale with a Ph. D. in English and is now serving as the advisor for a beautiful student literary magazine at Wheaton College in Illinois. Or Kate Ettinger who is a magazine editor in California. Or Kathy

Cottle and Alicia Rabins who have won Baltimore Artscape prizes in short fiction and poetry, respectively. Kathy won two Associated Writers' Prizes for poetry while working with Elizabeth Spires at Goucher College. Alicia was a Presidential Scholar in Writing. Yes, I'm very proud of these writers whose early careers so wonderfully crossed with mine. And I'm proud of many others, some of whom are still in college, who are making writing a significant part of their lives.

But these writers and their accomplishments are only a small part of why I've loved teaching creative writing to high school students. What has most intrigued me over fifteen years has been the myriad of voices I've heard emerging in class after class of students, the beautiful sensitivities and absolute courage these young adults have demonstrated as they've realized that writing can help them to make sense of the

Continued on page 8

THANK YOU!

This issue was made possible with grants provided by the Abell Foundation, Parks Sausage Company, American Trading and Production Corporation, Development Credit Fund, Inc., the Maryland State Arts Council, the Mayor's Advisory Committee on Art and Culture, the Harry and Jeannette Weinberg Foundation, and charitable contributions from Lite Circle members, including:

PATRONS

Marta Knobloch
Mary B. Kriebel
Nathan & Alice Winslow

SUPPORTING MEMBERS

Barbara E. Kirchner
Meaghan Greyson
Ray V. Gorski
Mitch & Rose Kerr
Atticus Marcus
Maryanne Vukcevic

Donations are tax-deductible.

Lite: Baltimore's Literary Newspaper ADVERTISING RATES

FULL PAGE \$300
(10 1/4" x 13 1/2")

JR. FULL \$235
(7 5/8" x 10 1/16")

1/2 PAGE \$195
(10 1/4" x 6 5/8" or 5" x 13 1/2")

1/4 PAGE \$120
(2 5/8" x 13 1/2" or 5" x 6 5/8")

1/8 PAGE \$60
(5" x 3 3/16" or 2 3/8" x 6 5/8")

1/16 PAGE \$30
(5" x 1 1/2" or 2 3/8" x 3 3/16")

1/32 PAGE \$20
(2 3/8" x 1 1/2")

Business Card \$20
1 issue (no discounts)

Volume Discounts

3 months 5% discount
6 months 10% discount
12 months 15% discount

For payment/ordering info, see p. 8.

Lite

Baltimore's Literary Newspaper
P.O. Box 26162
Baltimore, Maryland 21210
www.litecircle.com

Editor and Publisher: David W. Kriebel; *Managing Editor:* Patti Kinlock; *Director of Public Relations:* Dina Feinberg; *Advertising Manager:* Kate Yemelyanov; *Assistant Editors:* Dan Cuddy, Dina Feinberg, Hilbert H. Turner, Jr.; *News Editor/Calendar Editor:* Dan Cuddy; *Book Review Editor:* W.H. Stevens; *Art Director:* Ronnie Winslow Crist; *Membership Director:* Faith-Anne Bell; *Laurel Reading Host:* Hilbert H. Turner, Jr.; *Literary and Distribution Staff:* Dan Cuddy, Dina Feinberg, Colette Fozard, Patti Kinlock, Stephanie LaMastra, Alexander B. Peker, Hilbert H. Turner, Jr.; *Webmistress:* Patti Kinlock; *Art & Photography Staff:* Ronnie Crist, Moira Lachen; *Theatre Reviews:* Meaghan Greyson; *Customer Relations:* Alexander B. Peker.

Opinions expressed do not necessarily reflect the views of The Lite Circle, Inc., its staff, or contributors.
©2001 The Lite Circle, Inc.

Literary November/December

A Potpourri of Literary Events

(Available online at www.litecircle.com/calendar.html)

Consecutive Reading Series

Saturday, November 3, 10, 17, 24

8:00 p.m. Saturday Night Poetry Series, Mariposa Center for Creative Expression, 5000 Berwyn Rd., College Park, MD. Typically 3 featured readers followed by open mike. Complimentary refreshments included in \$5 cover charge. For more info, call (301) 513-9422 or email MariposaPoet@aol.com.

Sunday, November 4, 11, 18, 25

7:00-10:30 p.m. The MYTH poetry slam, TEAISM, 400 8th St. NW (corner of 8th and D Sts), Washington, DC. Cover \$5. For program/info, call (202) 638-6010 or email GalAengus@aol.com.

Monday, November 5, 12, 19, 26

7:30 p.m. SLAMicide! downstairs at XandO, 3003 N. Charles St., Charles Village. Donation \$5. Open mic—local and national features—slam. Cash prize for 1st and 2nd place SLAM winners! Hosts: Baltimore Slammaster Nicki Miller and Granma Dave Schein. For directions, call (410) 889-7076. For more info, contact Nicki at: GalAengus@aol.com, or Dave at: granmadave@yahoo.com. Featured readers: 11/5: *Georgia Popoff/Syracuse*; 11/12: Regie Cabico/NYC; 11/19: Scott Kirkpatrick/Fairfax; 11/26: Dwayne Morgan/Toronto; 12/3: Elizabeth Thomas/Connecticut; 12/10: Komplex/DC; 12/17: the dri fish/Baltimore.

Tuesday, November 6, 13, 20, 27

8:30 p.m. Tell the World, open mic poetry and spoken word reading at the One World Cafe, 904 S. Charles St., Federal Hill. Hosted by Tom Swiss. For more info, call (410) 455-5325 or email tms@infamous.net

9:00 p.m. Open reading at Funk's Democratic Coffee Spot, 1818 Eastern Ave., Fells Point. For more info, call (410) 276-FUNK.

Literary November

Thursday, November 1

6:00 p.m. Maryland Institute College of Art. Felicia Morgenstern and Linda Zisquit read their poetry at the Mt. Royal Station Auditorium. A "Spectrum of Poetic Fire" event.

Saturday, November 3

12:00 noon. Enoch Pratt Free Library, Central Branch. The Enoch Pratt Poetry Discussion Group discusses the work of Kamau Brathwaite, a contemporary Caribbean poet.

2:00 p.m. Enoch Pratt Free Library, Wheeler Auditorium of the Central Library. Commemorating the 25th anniversary of the publication of Toni Morrison's *Song of Solomon*, Dr. Gerri Bates, Professor of English, Morgan State University, will talk

about the novel and lead a group discussion.

Sunday, November 4

5:00 p.m. Barnes & Noble Ellicott City, 4300 Montgomery Rd., (410) 203-9001. Irish Book Group. *1000 Years of Irish Poetry*.

Monday, November 5

6:30 p.m. Enoch Pratt Free Library, Central Branch, Poe Room. In *Meeting of the Waters* author Kim McLarin provides a realistic look at interracial love. In Los Angeles two reporters—one white, one black—meet on the day when the jury acquitted four police officers of assaulting Rodney King.

7:30 p.m. Barnes & Noble Ellicott City. Student Writers Alliance led by award-winning Howard County teacher Sindy Parrot.

Wednesday, November 7

6:30 p.m. Enoch Pratt Free Library, Central Branch, Poe Room. In *Master of the Crossroads* novelist Madison Smartt Bell returns to Haiti with the story of a gifted military and political leader, Toussaint Louverture. This is the second part of a trilogy, of which *All Souls' Rising* was the first.

7:00 p.m. Barnes & Noble-Ellicott City. Middle School Book Club discusses *Turnabout* by Margaret Haddix.

7:00-8:30 p.m. 1st Wednesday of the month, Lite Circle hosts "Function at the Junction" at the Coffee Junction, 803 Frederick Road, Catonsville. Featured Readers: Dan Cuddy, Rosemary Klein, Barbara Simon. Info: lite@toadmail.com.

Saturday, November 10

1:00-4:30 p.m. Lite Circle 1999 and 2000 Literary Contest Winners Reading, Poe Room, Central Branch, Enoch Pratt Free Library (400 Cathedral St.). *Fiction 1999*: 1st Prize, *A Lovely*

Day for Tennis, Elisavietta Ritchie (Note: no 2nd and 3rd place winners); *Poetry 1999*: 1st Prize, *Last of Summer*, Kathleen Hellen; 2nd Prize, *Thanksgiving with Great Aunt Eugenia*, Elisavietta Ritchie; 3rd Prize, *Lester Come Home*, Tod Wild Barclay. *Fiction 2000*: 1st Prize, *Twig Doll*, Katrina Prado; 2nd Prize, *Véronique*, Andy O'Bannon; 3rd Prize, *Mary Janes*, Carol Harper. *Poetry 2000*: 1st Prize, *I Wait for You*, Tillie Friedenberg; 2nd Prize, *View from the Bottom of the Well*, Daniel H. Lightsey; 3rd Prize, *Two Tenets*, Atticus Marcus. Info: lite@toadmail.com.

Sunday, November 11

2:00 p.m. Barnes & Noble-Ellicott City. Wine Glass Poets.

4:00-6:00 p.m. WordHouse at Minas, 733 S. Ann Street. The Poets of Quatrain: Liliane Roy Anders, Norma Chapman, Kathleen Corcoran, Lidia Kosk, Danuta Kosk-Kosicka, and Denny Stein read.

Tuesday, November 13

1:00 p.m. Harford Poetry Society Event. Program: Jack Kelly and Susan Lesser read Jack's one act play *John and/or Mary*. Rockfield Manor, 501 Churchville Rd. (Rte. 22), Belair MD. For more info, call (410) 877-1625.

6:30-8:00 p.m. Enoch Pratt Free Library, Central Branch. The Fiction Group discusses *The Journey* by Jiro Osarabi about the American occupation of Japan.

Wednesday, November 14

7:30 p.m. *Potomac Review* "2001 contest winners" reading, Strathmore Hall Arts Center, 10701 Rockville Pike, Rockville, MD. Judith McCombs will lead with her contest winning poem, "November, Ravine Behind Houses." (Poet Elizabeth Spires of Baltimore was the guest judge.) Hilary Thum will stand in for 1st runner-up Jeannette Barnes of Madison, AL. The next runners-up, Kathy Michael and Thom Stuart, both of Arlington, also will read in this

The Big Literary "Spot" Lites

■ **Borders-Columbia**, 6151 Columbia Crossing Circle. Phone: (410) 290-0062.

■ **Borders-Towson**, 415 York Rd. Phone: (410) 296-0791.

■ **Enoch Pratt Free Library, Central Branch**, 400 Cathedral St., Baltimore. Phone: (410) 396-5494/396-5847.

■ **Mystery Loves Company Booksellers**, 1730 Fleet St., Fells Point. Phone: (410) 276-6708 or (800) 538-0042.

■ **WordHouse Salon at Minas**, 733-35 S. Ann St., Fells Point. Phone: (410) 732-4258.

■ **XandO**, 3003 North Charles St., Charles Village. Phone: (410) 889-7076.

Cafe Muse event. Open readings will follow.

Thursday, November 15

11:30 a.m. Friends of the Library, Montgomery County, Maryland, Inc., host the "Fourteenth Annual Literary Luncheon Series" at Strathmore Hall Arts Center, 10701 Rockville Pike, Rockville, MD. Lecture: 11:30 a.m. Luncheon: 12:30 p.m. "Robert Smalls, First Black Civil War Hero," presented by Kitt Alexander, documentary writer and photographer. Series cost: \$65 (\$55 members). Individual lecture luncheons: \$17 (\$15 members). Subtract \$5 per date if you do not want lunch. For more info, call (240) 777-0020.

7:00 p.m. Greater Homewood Book Group will meet to discuss Sandor Marai's *Embers* at 3501 North Charles Street. An international bestseller, this novel by one of the great masters of Central European literature has been recently published in the U.S. Several copies of the book are available at Waverly/Pratt for Book Group participants. For more info, call (410) 261-3524.

Barnes & Noble-Ellicott City. American History Book Group discusses *The Prairie Traveler* written in 1859.

Friday, November 16

6:00 p.m. Maryland Institute College of Art. Madison Smartt Bell reads from his *Master of the Crossroads*. A "Spectrum of Poetic Fire" event.

Saturday, November 17

8:00 a.m.-5:30 p.m. "Ways With Words: Writing, Getting Published and More." 8th Annual Baltimore Writers Alliance Conference and the MidAtlantic Publishers Association's Independent Publishing Conference, Towson University. Keynote speaker: Donna E. Boetig. Closing Speaker: Allegra Bennett. Writing and publishing fiction, poetry, nonfiction; sessions with agents and publishers; more. Register online: www.baltimorewriters.org. To obtain a brochure: email hdiehl@bcpl.net or call (410) 377-5265.

2:00 p.m. Enoch Pratt Free Library, Central Branch. Debra Dickson reads from her memoir about emerging from a squalid St. Louis neighborhood to become an acclaimed journalist, a distinguished U.S. Air Force intelligence officer, and a graduate of

Harvard Law School. In *An American Story* Dickerson documents the events that shaped her conscience. Also Dalton Conley, who grew up in the projects of Manhattan's Lower East Side, one of a few white boys in a mostly black and Puerto Rican neighborhood, reads his memoir *Honky*.

Tuesday, November 20

1:00 p.m. Harford Poetry Society Event. Program TBA. Rockfield Manor, 501 Churchville Rd (Rte. 22), Belair, MD. For more info, call (410) 877-1625.

Friday, November 23

7:00 p.m. Barnes & Noble-Ellicott City. Open Mic Poetry.

Monday, November 26

7:30 p.m. Barnes & Noble-Ellicott City. Literary Readings Book Group discusses *The Garden Party and Other Stories* by Katherine Mansfield.

Tuesday, November 27

1:00 p.m. Harford Poetry Society event Program TBA. Rockfield Manor, 501 Churchville Rd (Rte. 22), Belair, MD. For more info, call (410) 877-1625.

7:00 p.m. Barnes & Noble-Ellicott City. Writer's Circle invites aspiring writers to share their work and to help critique others.

Thursday, November 29

5:30 p.m. Loyola College, 4501 N. Charles St., McManus Theater. Modern Masters Reading series. Poet Stephen Dunn reads from his work.

Literary December

Saturday, December 1

12:00 noon. Enoch Pratt Free Library, Central Branch. The Poetry Discussion Group discusses the work of Anne Carson.

Sunday, December 2

2:00 p.m. Enoch Pratt Free Library, Central Branch, Poe Room. Maxine Claire reads from her novel *October Suite*, about October

Continued on page 5

ONE OR MORE WORDS FROM OUR EDITOR

EDITORIAL

Proud to Be an American

Hello, my friends, my fellow writers and lovers of literature. That terrible day of the terrorist attack on our country will forever be remembered, not only by all Americans, but by everyone who has heard of it all over the globe. In a very real sense, we are all survivors. I hope and pray that the evildoers will be punished in order to prevent further bloodshed. Don't get me wrong—I love peace and I want there to be peace, but the fact remains that peace has been taken from us and we must reclaim it. And the peace must be the peace of justice, not of capitulation.

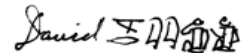
Some have claimed that somehow America brought this on itself, that the terrorists acted in response to the policies of our government, particular our policy toward Israel. The truth, however, is that Osama bin Laden and his cult of terror would have done this to us had Israel never existed. Because what they can't tolerate is not the sins of this nation, but its virtues. They can't tolerate our values of democracy and pluralism. They can't tolerate a nation which proposes that all people are created equal, and that everyone may worship—or not worship—as he or she sees fit. They can't tolerate a nation where people are free to dress as they wish or say what's on their minds without fear of being dragged before the authorities.

And let's also put the events of 9.11.01 in perspective. The terrorist attacks that day killed over 5,000 people, mostly Americans, but also citizens of countries from Argentina to Zimbabwe. In all of recorded history, this was the largest mass murder of civilians on a single day during peacetime. And if we look at the attack on Pearl Harbor, which pushed

us into entering World War II, we find that fewer than half that number were killed, and overwhelmingly servicemen. The Japanese could have attacked Honolulu or some other undefended city, but instead they chose a military target—thereby demonstrating their moral superiority to the terrorists who struck New York and Washington. Timothy McVeigh killed even fewer, less than 5% of that number. And the Unabomber killed only 3. Clearly we are in a new world, when the heinous acts of these recent mass murderers can be made to seem small.

And yet, some good has come from this evil. The country has come together—I even notice differences like skin color, hairstyle, and mode of dress less these days. People are generally being kinder to each other, helping each other out. The coffers of charities are overflowing. At a recent benefit reading sponsored by Lite and the Maryland Institute College of Art the Red Cross collected hundreds of dollars for the victims, a drop in the bucket, perhaps, but evidence of the care and concern of Baltimore's literary community. I also see American flags everywhere. The flag is more than a symbol of our country—it's a symbol of the democratic and pluralistic ideals which are the basis for this country. As one NPR editorial put it, we don't have a "homeland" or one "people" here—we have a flag.

Long may it wave.



David W. Kriebel,
Editor

I Hear America Singing

Each issue we will select one patriotic poem and print it in this special section. Poets whose work is selected will receive a \$25 savings bond. By "patriotic poem" we mean any poem which:

- celebrates the United States or its democratic and pluralistic ideals;
- eulogizes the victims of the terrorist attack on September 11, 2001; or
- honors our men and women in uniform—military personnel, police, firefighters, postal workers, and medical personnel.

Poems should be no more than 40 lines long.

Please submit only one poem per entry to:

Attn: Patriotic Poem

Lite: Baltimore's Literary Newspaper
PO Box 26162, Baltimore, MD 21210

Email: lite@toadmail.com

Through A Glass Darkly



New Mystery/Gothic Horror/Dark Fantasy anthology is **open for submissions until December 31, 2001** (or when full). *Needed* theme appropriate: stories (under 2,500 words), poems (under 50 lines), and essays (under 2,000 words). Check with editors for other non-fiction. Editors: Vonnie Winslow Crist, David Kriebel, P.E. Kinlock. Assistant Editor: W.H. Stevens. Anthology will be issued in a 6" x 9" trade edition of about 190 perfect-bound pages and will debut in Spring 2002. First time rights preferred. Pay: in copies at this

time. To submit, please send your work along with a reading fee of \$3 per poem and \$5 per prose piece to: *Through A Glass Darkly*, c/o Lite Circle Books, P.O. Box 26162, Baltimore, MD 21210. All reading fees will be waived with an advance order of 2 books at our low advance price of \$9.95 each (total: \$19.90)—final price after publication will be higher. **Please, original work only** (no copy-righted characters, e.g. *Star Trek*, *Dark Shadows*, etc.)

Join The Lite Circle

The Lite Circle, Inc. is a non-profit literary organization based in Baltimore. We rely on individual contributions to continue our literary activities, including Lite Circle Books (a small-press publishing house), our various poetry reading series, and the publication you are reading right now. If you care about the literary arts in Central Maryland, join us. All you have to do is fill out the form below and send it to The Lite Circle, Inc., P.O. Box 26162, Baltimore, MD 21210.

Check your level of support:

- Regular (\$13) - subscription to *Lite: Baltimore's Literary Newspaper*, free or reduced admission to Lite readings, and a 10% discount on all Lite Circle Books and back issues.
- Student (\$10) - same as Regular. Must be at least a half-time student.
- Supporting Member (\$25) - same as Regular, but with a 25% discount on all Lite Circle products and a listing in each issue of *Lite*.
- Patron (\$100) - same as Supporting Member, plus 3 free books of your choice and a 10% discount off any advertisement placed in *Lite*.

Date _____
Name _____
Address _____ Apt./P.O. Box _____
City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____
Phone (optional) _____ Email (optional) _____

Your donation is fully tax-deductible.

Lite Circle Books

proudly presents

Lower Than the Angels

An exciting new anthology of science
fact, science fiction, & fantasy

edited by *Vonnie Winslow Crist*
& *David Kriebel*

Includes work by Jack Chalker, A.C. Crispin, Lawrence Watt-Evans, Neil Gaiman, Bud Sparhawk, Robert Wayne McCoy, John Flynn, Darrell Schweitzer, Don Sakers, Bruce Boston, Steve Sneyd, W. H. Stevens, Marta Knobloch, Rosemary Klein, Dan Cuddy, Patti Kinlock, Elisabeth Stevens, Stacy Tuthill, Donna Eason, Sam Beard, Judy Chernak, and many others.

ORDER YOUR COPY NOW!

\$14.95 (check or money order payable to the Lite Circle—plus \$2.00 shipping)

LTTA c/o Lite Circle Books, P.O. Box 26162, Baltimore, MD 21210.

Info: www.litecircle.com/books.html
Online ordering coming soon.

The Lite Circle hosts Function at the Junction

1st Wednesday of the month,
7:00-8:30 pm.

The Coffee Junction
803 Frederick Road, Catonsville
Donation: \$2.00

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 7
Dan Cuddy, Rosemary Klein,
Barbara Simon
Open reading follows
Info: lite@toadmail.com

Question, comment, review, or
event for Lite? Write us or email:
lite@toadmail.com.

For the Holidays

...and throughout the year.
Beautiful wreaths, Christmas
ornaments, decorative pillows, toys,
and other wonderful creations—each
individually handmade with care by

Coventry Crafts

a family-run business since 1989

2103 Coles Blvd.
Norristown, PA 19401
(610)275-7442 or (410)719-7792

We Ship Anywhere!

Lite Reading:

BOOK REVIEW

At the Edge of Beauty, poems and fiction
by Gary Blankenburg. Dolphin-Moon
Press, 2001, unnumbered pages, \$12.

This book is the third collaboration between writer Gary Blankenburg and photographer Stephen John Phillips. It is a winning combination. Phillips' photographs are surreal, bizarre, kinky, memorable. No one can look through the book and be indifferent to them. The viewer is either delighted or repelled by the freakish images of some of them, e.g. the cover photo of a head in clown paint with a serpentine, almost obscene tongue, and two horns. Surely not everybody's ideal of beauty but remember the title of the book, and in its own way that memorable image has a beauty intrinsic to it, if your sensibility is open to more than the conventional. Some of the other photographs are easier to admire. The shock is less though the expressiveness is as striking. Phillips' photographs complement the content of the writing.

Gary Blankenburg's writing has never been better. The book, though comic and absurd at times, has its quiet, sad moments. This poet is the Bukowski of Baltimore but with a spoonful of transcendent longing thrown into the broth of his narratives, more sympathy for humanity, less, though definitely some, spit. Someone once said that Gary Blankenburg could stand before an audience and read a phonebook and be interesting. However, *At the Edge of Beauty* contains interesting material, and the only performance is the verbal opera transferred to the bare stage in the reader's mind.

The book opens with poems that deal with God and the great abstractions. For the most part they are successful, though at times the artifice shows through like a bone under the skin. The book progresses to love, sex, adolescence and adult scenarios. The movement in these pieces is compelling. The words are just right:

*It is the obscene pinkness of it all,
its taste hot on the tongue—
not the natural blush of spring
flowers in bloom,*

*not the common flush of cheeks
grown warm,
or the welcome streak of color
cast in the evening sky—*

*that is so public & shameful,
so terribly crass,
like women applying lipstick
in a restaurant,*

*or lovers embracing & kissing
on a street corner,
or declaring one's love w/fuchsia
spray paint on a wall.*

From "Flamingo Love"

There are poems like "Dancing," which tell of the poet's relationship with his three

wives. There is the poem "Sadie Hawkin's Day" which is a really great narrative about adolescence. Fact or fantasy? It is both. Only a callous person can not feel the pathos. Poems like "High Noon," "Black Front Tavern," and the story "I Go Down To The Ocean" are Bukowski-like in their tawdry sensuality, but they have more heart. There is an uneasy balance of bravado and vulnerability in these pieces which make them so poignant. And they are not literary in the bad sense. They contain a wealth of details but the details are subordinate to the whole. There is plain language with a lyricism in the images but not the phrasing. The reader does not get thrown from the narration by bucking diction, but rides the tale to its end.

The next group of poems present many facets of the poet's relationship with his mother. Some are quite sad, "Mother As Art Critic." These poems are followed by narratives of old age and of people met at A.A. meetings. A comic potpourri, "The Beard Poem" and "Cigar Butts" change the mood. The final poems have a joy in them, even when melancholy. The reader is not trapped at the bottom of a barrel but floating in his(her) tears of laughter and sadness. And the next to last poem in the book "Chrysanthemums In November Twilight" is such a lyrical gem:

*These chrysanthemums in November
twilight are like no earthly flowers.
Heavy headed muted suns drooping
toward the ruined grass gone dank,
these chrysanthemums speak just how
clean a right moment can be.*

The last poem, "Crows," is a romp of free-floating associations, some extremely dark. However, this book, even in its brutal stretches of imagination, does not leave the reader in despair. Insights and emotions change like a kaleidoscope. Blankenburg can make you laugh and can make you cry. In lesser hands the poems would be ruined with self-pity. Humor and lyricism imbue the vestiges of self-pity with a decorative sheen that pleases. There is sadness, genuine sadness, but, though remaining as an omnipresent possibility, it enhances the bright colors of life like shadows accentuate photographs or paintings. This book is Blankenburg at the top of his game.

DAN CUDDY

The Baltimore Science Fiction Society Presents BALTICON 36

Maryland's Regional Science Fiction
and Fantasy Convention
Memorial Weekend—May 24-27, 2002
Wyndham Inner Harbor Hotel

Artist/Author Guests of Honor:
Phil & Kaja Foglio, Mark E. Rogers
Filk Guest of Honor:
The Boogie Knights
Fan Guest of Honor:
Dr. Yoji Kondo
Costume Guest of Honor:
Carol Salemi
2001 Compton Crock Winner:
Synne Mitchell
Info: www.balticon.org

Calendar, cont. from page 3

Brown, a 23 yr old first-year teacher in Kansas, unmarried and pregnant.

Monday, December 3

6:30 p.m. Enoch Pratt Free Library, Central Branch, Poe Room. Julia Chance, *Sisterfriends: Portraits of Sisterly Love*. A collage of impressions of African-American women, the essays in *Sisterfriends* tell beautiful stories of sisters, whether related by blood or bonded by fate. Mary J. Blige, Iyanla Vanzant, bell hooks, Gail King and others less well known have contributed their stories to this collection, written by Ms. Chance with photographs by Michelle V. Agins.

Tuesday, December 4

1:00 p.m. Harford Poetry Society Event program TBA. Rockfield Manor, 501 Churchville Rd (Rte. 22), Belair, MD. For more info, call (410) 877-1625.

5:30 p.m. Loyola College, 4501 N. Charles St., McManus Theater. E. Ethelbert Miller reads his poetry.

Thursday, December 6

4:00 p.m.-6:45 p.m. Maryland Institute College of Art. Readings from *Fire: MICA Student Poetry Journal*. A "Spectrum of Poetic Fire" event.

Sunday, December 9

4:00-6:00 p.m. WordHouse at Minas, 733 S. Ann Street. Tillie Friedenberg and a poet TBA read.

Tuesday, December 11

1:00 p.m. Harford Poetry Society event. Program TBA. Rockfield Manor, 501 Churchville Rd (Rte. 22), Belair, MD. For more info, call (410) 877-1625.

6:30-8:00 8 p.m. Enoch Pratt Free Library, Central Branch. The Fiction Discussion Group discusses Edwidge Danticat's *Breath, Eyes, Memory*.

Tuesday, December 18

1:00 p.m. Harford Poetry Society event. Program TBA. Rockfield Manor, 501 Churchville Rd (Rte. 22), Belair, MD. For more info, call (410) 877-1625.

To Have Your Event Listed

please send information to: Dan Cuddy, Calendar Editor
41 Odeon Ct.
Baltimore, MD 21234
Tel. (410) 882-4138
lite@toadmail.com

Information received after the 15th of the preceding month may not be printed. We reserve the right to edit all material to fit space requirements. Lite: Baltimore's Literary Newspaper is published bi-monthly. A literary calendar is posted monthly on the Lite web site (www.litecircle.com/calendar.html).

The Local Literary Scene

After Auschwitz, is lyric poetry possible? I don't remember where or when Theodor Adorno posed this immortal question, but it did stick in my head from the "Post-Modernism and Political Theory" class I took in college from a Swedish professor who looked like the Brawny Towel Man. And I have to say it came to mind when I made my home from Washington on September 11.

There was a lot of stuff I meant to cover in this column before September 11. I'll get to some of it in a minute. But I want to start with an account of the Red Cross fundraiser Lite Circle and the Maryland College Institute of Art (MICA) hosted October 19. The event was emceed by **Lite Editor-in-Chief Dave Kriebel** and kicked off by **Lindsey Stroh from the Central MD division of the Red Cross**, who gave us an overview of what the Red Cross has



Michael Fallon. Staff photo.

been doing since September 11 and what the Red Cross does in our everyday lives. I didn't realize they got involved with ordinary things like house fires and psycho killers holding neighborhoods hostage. She also read two poems related to the tragedy of the 11th. The event featured **Linda Joy Burke, Barbara DeCesare, Michael Fallon, Rosemary Klein, Kendra Kopelke, Barbara Simon, and Chezia Thompson-Cager** followed by open mike readers. An audience of about 40 people raised about \$370 to support the nationwide efforts of the American Red Cross—not bad, considering the mix of students and starving artists in the house.

Burke led off with a recitation of a Lynda Barry comic about Marlys' family and its reflections on the Vietnam War. She read a cycle of poems she wrote during the Gulf War. I appreciated the juxtaposition of the Gulf War and the War on Drugs in "They keep bringing it in." The poem of hers I liked best was the hypnotic "M a k e me over," w h i c h d i d n ' t seem to have anything to do with war. It



Linda Joy Burke. Staff photo.

was a good lead-in for Barbara DeCesare's reading, which also didn't have anything to do with war and which was hysterically funny. (If you haven't seen her reading of "Joanne and Dick," her poem about the next-door neighbor's love life, you should be able to catch it when Blair Ewing's next installment of "Poetry Jam" appears on cable). But Michael Fallon's disturbing poems about high-rise fire and apartment fire sales brought the group back down and made them ready to go there—address the tragedy of September 11 directly. Rose-

mary Klein's reading of the poems she had composed in the wake of September 11 as well as some snippets of New York-themed poems by other writers—what a lovely, homely voice she has!—brought many members of the audience to tears. Kendra Kopelke's reading of postcards from Japanese youth orchestra kids to their Baltimore counterparts strikes a lovely note. "Poetry broke through, as if by accident." Barbara Simon read from her own work as well as the work of a Bosnian poet whose name escapes me. The boldest thing I saw that night was Chezia Thompson-Cager's "Ode on Tuesday," a choreopoem interweaving "Hava Nagilah," "Jesus Loves Me" and the Call to Prayer with verses asking whether blood can redeem blood. I wasn't sure why she'd chosen to kick off with a Hebrew song of celebration, but she said she liked the ferocity of the "Uru achim" part. She also added that the poem was a work in progress and that she might try to find something from the Torah to use instead. I am looking forward to seeing how it shakes out.

Lite is seeking submissions for an ongoing web anthology of work related to the events of September 11, entitled "Songs of Remembrance and Renewal." Fiction, poetry, art, photos all welcome. Submissions accepted by email to: crescent@toadmail.com; mail to: Lite, PO Box 26162, Baltimore MD 21210.

A final note related to September 11, and then I'll try to let it go: **the 9/11 project** is collecting the artistic outpouring of Maryland residents in reaction to the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, to be published in various media, including the multi-volume set: *September Eleven: Maryland Voices*. Estimated publication date: August 11, 2002. Title of the publication is not final. All entries must be received on or before Friday, March 15, 2002. All proceeds generated by the 9/11 project will be donated to various relief funds in support of the victims of this tragedy. Submit entries by mail to: the 9/11 project, P.O. Box 6881, Towson, MD, 21285; or by email to: submissions@the911project.org. Submission guidelines and entry forms are also available by mail (#10 SASE) at the address above. Please write for more information, call (410.337.9411), or email to: info@the911project.org. Web site: <http://www.the911project.org/>. Entries will not be returned. the 9/11 project is co-directed by members of the Baltimore Writers'

METTER & METAPHOR

Continued on page 10

**MY THOUGHTS
ATTICUS MARCUS**

**A CONSERVATIVE
CHRISTIAN
REVOLUTIONIST
POET**

Call 1-888-280-7715
Or your local book store
To order your copy
(ISBN: 1-58500-822-2)
Amazon.com 1stbooks.com

DEVELOPING
Existed before the
beginning of time
Slave and king
have I been
Conqueror and
conquered
Saint and demon
Dwelt in hell
and heaven
And deserved
them both
Lived a thousand
times have I
Died almost as many
Created
in God's image
So I am all man
As I am no man
But I'm not a god
Neither are you

**Want to be part of the organization behind
Baltimore's Literary Newspaper?**

If you like the idea of doing something worthwhile for hard work and no pay, maybe you can be one of us.

Many hands make Lite work. We need people to help out in:

- Administration
- Advertising (*earn commissions!*)
- Distribution
- Marketing
- Fundraising
- Public Relations

Please send a letter and your resume to:

The Lite Circle
Volunteers
P.O. Box 26162
Baltimore, MD 21210
oremail them to: lite@toadmail.com

The Lite Circle, Inc. is a non-profit organization.

LITE BYTES

ANNOUNCEMENTS

• By the time this paper reaches its distribution points the Creative Alliance's **Unity Jam Open Mic Night** has come & gone. It was held on Thursday, November 1. Paul Harris of Fusion Group hosted a wide open evening celebrating the "diversity and abundance of the community." The mic was open to poets, musicians, and those who wanted to share their thoughts on race, class, history, art and how this whole little American community can move forward with intelligence, compassion, understanding & a just plain old neighborliness.

• **The Creative Alliance**, based at 413 S. Conkling Street in Highlandtown, sponsors and promotes a vast array of activities each month. There are performances, Camm screenings, exhibitions, artist programs, community & kids' events. Call 410-276-1651 for information on their activities & how you can become a member.

Another example of their events is **Gary Vikan Talks Elvis** on Thursday, November 29 at 7:30 p.m. (\$8, \$6 members). Dr Gary Vikan, who has directed the Walters Art Museum through its largest reinstallation, is an internationally known scholar of medieval art, and a hip guy. "Hip enough to see and research the many parallels between America's trips to Graceland and penitential rituals through the ages." Vikan presents a slide lecture of The King and talks about his epic, and busy year.

• *Good Scissors: Poems* by Ingrid Ankersen was the winner of the 2001 **University of Baltimore's Publishing Arts Award**

• Paintings by Salvador Bru and Photography by Connie Imboden are on display until November 24 at the **Gomez Gallery**, 3600 Clipper Mill Road Suite 100.

(Note—There is a \$10,000 painting *Battle of the Amazons* by Bru which is, in *Lite's* opinion, a whole show in itself. It would be nice if one of the local public or institutional art galleries would purchase that gem and keep it in Baltimore.)

• **School 33 Art Center** announces the exhibitions *FreeVerse* by Alexandra Carmel and *Complications of Cages* by Lisa Dillin on view in Gallery I, *Contre-Jour* featuring photographs by David A. Penney in Gallery II, and *Flesh* by Kelissa Kesler in the Installation space from November 3 through December 7, 2001. For more information, call 410-396-4641.

In *FreeVerse* Alexandra Carmel takes material out of its ordinary context, void of any preset idea, and then makes a story, using a combination of drawing, painting and sculpture. Carmel uses soy sauce as a drawing medium, nail polish and fabric paints as a painting medium, and rubber bands, upholstery cord and liquid latex in her sculpture. Carmel's work is represented in the collections of the Metropolitan Museum of art, The Brooklyn Museum, Gutenberg Museum and the Stedelijkker Museum.

Complications of Cages by Lisa Dillin uses various media to explore the romantic relationship by using birds as a metaphorical tool to amplify questions/concerns about

the nature of our personal freedom while participating in a long-term relationship. The exhibition compares and contrasts the entrapping bird cage with the nurturing bird's nest, and exhibits a flock of pink cloth birds mimicking flight, thus, representing women who have found the strength to fly and become individuals again following a break with their partners.

Contre-Jour, David Penney's photographs, succeed in taking the astonishing range of 3-dimensional "visual scraps" that we're exposed to every day and making them into self-sufficient 2-dimensional images by seeing those scraps more strongly. In his photographs Penney works "against the light" with distortions, and in shallow focus which has the effect of making the photographs still more independent of the subject, although it makes aspects of the subject more striking. Penney's photographs are toned gelatin silver prints, while some are split-toned with sepia and selenium.

Kelissa Kesler's installation *Flesh* exists within the space that lies between the visible surface and what covers it up. By introducing people to the artist's personal conflicts about flesh through her use of 3-D animation, visual imagery, sound and tactile elements, she intends to trigger the viewers' personal feelings toward different manifestations of flesh and address issues of compartmentalization and isolation, as well as the commodification of body parts.

• Poetry Fellowships of \$20,000 from the **National Endowment for the Arts** are available to published writers of exceptional talent. Applications will be accepted between January 1, 2002 and March 11, 2002. For more information or to download an application visit www.arts.endow.gov/guide/Lit02/Litindex.thm. Applications are available in Microsoft Word and .pdf formats.

• *Lite* met **Stephen Parlato** at the Sugar Loaf Arts & Crafts Festival the 1st weekend of October. Parlato was active as a poet in the 70s and 80s. His main creative energy these days is directed to the visual arts. He is producing original limited editions of Giclee prints on canvas. He is, though, working on a children's book. To get in touch with him and see his work call 410-945-0800. Parlato Productions is located at 1527 West Lombard Street

• The power of the sea led J. M. W. Turner (1775-1851), considered the greatest British Romantic landscape painter of the 19th century, to create his most dramatic works. The **Baltimore Museum of Art** brings the first major exhibition of his work in more than a decade to its only American venue in *Reflections of Sea and Light: Paintings and Watercolors by J. M. W. Turner from Tate* from February 17 to May 26, 2002.

Filled with expressionistic studies of light and color, the exhibition includes more than 100 watercolors, oil paintings, drawings, and prints—many never before exhibited—that span virtually the entire career of this British artist. Turner's watercolor studies of the sea show him to be incredibly forward-thinking, and his later works proved to be a quarter-century ahead of the French Impressionists' studies of the effects of light and atmosphere.

"This exhibition reveals how this visionary landscape artist turned to the sea again and again for inspiration," said Doreen Bolger, BMA Director. "Only in Baltimore will visitors have the opportunity to see works that are usually half a world away."

In addition to dramatic paintings of the sea and luminous landscapes for which Turner is known, the highlight of the exhibit is a group of works with an abstract quality that were created during the latter part of his career. Turner captures light, space, and the elemental forces of nature in breathtaking watercolor studies of crashing waves, haze, and storms that resonate with the modern eye. These works reveal Turner's intense analysis of the components of nature to deepen his technical understanding of painting, as demonstrated by the well-known tale of the artist strapping himself to the mast of a ship to witness a raging storm.

Reflections of Sea and Light is organized by Tate and curated by Ian Warrell, in collaboration with the Baltimore Museum of Art. Tate is a family of galleries in Britain that houses the national collection of British art from the 16th century to the present day, and international modern and contemporary art.

• The exhibition schedule for the **Photoworks Gallery**, 3531 Chestnut Ave 9410) 889-4600 is:

Nov 2-15—Photographs and Photograms by Helen French.

Nov 16-29—Photographs by Janet Little (abstract natural images with vibrant color).

Nov 30-Dec 28—Photographs by Jill Berry (black & white).

• From October 27 to November 27, 2001 the **Fleckenstein Gallery & Archival Framing** presents *Redemption*, Giclee Digital Prints by Thomas Wynn. The gallery is located at 29 Allegheny Ave in Towson, (410) 296-8588.

• **The Enoch Pratt Free Society** will present its annual Lifetime Literary Achievement award to Toni Morrison on Thursday, November 8, at a reception and dinner to be held at the Central Library.

Toni Morrison's seven major novels, *The Bluest Eye*, *Sula*, *Song of Solomon*, *Tar Baby*, *Beloved*, *Jazz*, and *Paradise*, have received extensive critical acclaim. She received the National Book Critics Award in 1978 for *Song of Solomon* and the 1988 Pulitzer Prize for *Beloved*. In 1999 Ms Morrison co-authored the children's book *The Big Box*. Her books of essays include *Playing in the Dark: Whiteness and the Literary Imagination*; the edited collection *Race-ing Justice, Engendering Power: Essays on Anita Hill, Clarence Thomas and the Construction of Social Reality*; and he co-edited collection, *Birth of a Nationhood: Gaze, Script, and Spectacle in the O. J. Simpson Case*.

The Enoch Pratt Society is a group of major donors to the Pratt Library, formed in 1997 to encourage private support for Baltimore's free public library system. The reception and dinner honoring Toni Morrison are open to invited guests and members of the Enoch Pratt Society. Previous winners of the Enoch Pratt Award include Saul Bellow, Joyce Carol Oates, John Barth, and John Updike. For information on membership in The Enoch Pratt Society, call the Library's Development Office, (410) 396-5283.

• On Sunday, Nov. 11, 4:00-6:00 p.m. at WordHouse at Minas, 733 S. Ann Street, Fells Point, the Poets of **Quatrain** will read: Liliane Roy Anders, Norma Chapman, Kathleen

Corcoran, Lidia Kosk, Danuta Kosk-Kosicka, and Denny Stein.

• Don't miss Maryland Institute College of Art (in its 175th year) **Spectrum of Poetic Fire 2001-2002 Season: The Voice of the Collective/The Voice of the Individual:**

8. the night mother earth told father sky she was tired of the missionary position. Felicia Morgenstern—Compass Rose Press/Unopened Letters—Linda Zisquit—The Sheep Meadow Press. Thursday, November 1, 2001, 6:00 p.m., Mount Royal Station Building. This dynamic duo hails from opposite ends of the Jewish Diaspora but each uses the same discerning artistry to spiritually intuit the signs of the times: A remarkable and unlikely combination in a reading meant to be unforgettable.

9. Master of the Crossroads—Madison Smart Bell—Random House. Friday, November 16, 2001, 7:00 p.m., Mount Royal Station Building (6:00 p.m., Narrative and Drama Workshop Readings by MICA Students). While Elequa is the master of the crossroads in Africa—the Old World, Gede is the master of crossroads of time and space in the New World and the man who would be his master must wear more than one face. Madison Smart Bell takes us to Haiti and to the exoticism of fear and suspense in our hearts, in this tour stop on his new book.

10. FIRE: MICA Student Poetry Journal. New chapbooks by students—reading & reception. Thursday, December 6, 2001, 4:00 p.m.-6:45 p.m., Bunting Center Room 110. A presentation of the final book projects of MICA poets (as the student poetry journal begins to collect work for its next volume), always contains an amazing range of styles and content, destined to entertain and astonish. Books also for sale.

Directed by Chezia Thompson Cager. For more info, call (410) 225-2350 or email: spectrum@mica.edu.

• On Saturday, Nov. 10, from 1-4 p.m., join Dave Kriebel and winners of the **Lite Circle 1999 and 2000 Literary Contests** in the Poe Room, Central Branch, Enoch Pratt Free Library (400 Cathedral St.). **Fiction 1999:** 1st Prize, *A Lovely Day for Tennis*, Elisavietta Ritchie (Note: no 2nd and 3rd place winners); **Poetry 1999:** 1st Prize, *Last of Summer*, Kathleen Hellen; 2nd Prize, *Thanksgiving with Great Aunt Eugenia*, Elisavietta Ritchie; 3rd Prize, *Lester Come Home*, Tod Wild Barclay. **Fiction 2000:** 1st Prize, *Twig Doll*, Katrina Prado; 2nd Prize, *Véronique*, Andy O'Bannon; 3rd Prize, *Mary James*, Carol Harper. **Poetry 2000:** 1st Prize, *I Wait for You*, Tillie Friedenberg; 2nd Prize, *View from the Bottom of the Well*, Daniel H. Lightsey; 3rd Prize, *Two Tenets*, Atticus Marcus. Info: lite@toadmail.com.

• Some of Maryland's finest poets will read their poetry in a special program to benefit Afghanistan refugees Sunday, November 18, 3-5 pm at Stony Run Friends Meeting, 5116 N. Charles Street, one block south of Northern Parkway. The **4th Annual Margaret Diorio Poets for Peace** program is free, but donations will be accepted for the American Friends Service Committee program to aid Afghanistan refugees in Pakistan and Iran.

Ten Maryland poets, including Michael Fallon, Marta Knobloch, Thomas Dorsett, Barbara Simon, and Rosemary Klein will read and engage in a dialogue with attendees. The *Poets for Peace* reading has been called especially relevant in these trouble times. For more information phone (410) 435-3773 or (410) 821-7807.

I don't cower as I once did. In fact I barely listen to the voices in the next room, one shrieking like an outraged animal with its leg caught in the teeth of a metal trap, the other staid, level, authoritative, patient. I put the voices in another place and think about Alice. Alice's mother said she would give us a nickel after school tomorrow. We will go down to Mr. Peter's store and buy a lemon and a sour pickle and split them both two ways. The thought of it makes my lips pucker with pleasure. I'm glad I still live near Alice. I quietly pull my clothes, my cigar box full of treasures, and a new pair of shoes from the ratty, musty-smelling suitcase I have used for so long, and place them on the shelves of the tiny alcove which is now my bedroom in this new apartment just off Peachtree Road.

Mother, Daddy, and I have lived in eight different apartments now, all within a two-mile radius of Piedmont Park. Sometimes I walk by the various two- and three-room flats in Virginia Highlands and Midtown—some standing, some different from the way I remembered them, some no longer there—and wonder why there are so many. But even with all the trouble we've had, I know Daddy loves me: he always makes sure I have new shoes.

As the noise in the kitchen escalates, I edge toward the door Indian style—I've learned to move silently on the creakiest of wooden floors. Daddy is doing what he has done so many times before: calm the demon that is inside Mother. Daddy has lived in Atlanta for almost fifteen years now, though Mother says he still has a lot of Yankee in him. His nose is long, thin, and hooked nose like a bird's beak, and his small, gray eyes behind round, wire-rimmed glasses squint when he talks. His whole face seems sour somehow, like he is never at peace. He doesn't talk much but I know he is busy taking care of Mother.

"Ann, look at me," I hear Daddy say. "I'm eating this soup—the soup I prepared for your supper. Ann, now listen to me. Would I put poison in this soup and then eat it? Ann, look at me now," he says, as if coaxing a stubborn child. By this time there is no amount of reasoning or evidence Daddy can produce to convince Mother that he is not planning her death. I hear Mother slam out of the apartment and I race into the kitchen as Daddy grabs the keys to the car. I smell the acidic tang of tomato soup.

Mother is in her pink nightgown and it is still daylight out. We will follow her until she gets tired of walking; then she will reluctantly get in the car and tears of rage will start. I don't know why she is so angry. Then we will drive home and Daddy will calm Mother with one of her pills into an unwilling sleep. I will clean up the mess in the kitchen where Mother threw the soup. Daddy and I will not talk about what has happened.

But this time Mother will not get into the car. I keep looking at Daddy to see if a sign of doubt appears on his face as the

FICTION: THIRD PRIZE

2000 Literary Contest

Mary Janes

by

Carol Harper

Illustration by Moira Lachen

walk becomes nearly twice as long as ever before. I know that as long as Daddy looks the same, everything will be all right. He doesn't speak, but just keeps clicking his tongue, "Click, click, click." I am beginning to think we will just keep driving forever, when Mother suddenly turns to the car. Daddy stops and leans forward and down, looking past me, waiting for Mother's next move. In Mother's face I see all the anger and bitterness I have ever seen in the world. Her eyes are the piercing black holes of an animal cornered and about to make its move. She looks right past me as if I am not even in the car, and the words slash like knives aimed at Daddy's heart.

"I've taken care of her for twelve years—now it's your turn!" And with that she takes off running across Piedmont Park. Daddy puts the car back in drive, and with only the vibrating noise of the engine to fill the silence, we each find separate places to store those words.

Alice and I get our treat the next day after school. Mother does not return home for several days and Daddy neither mentions her absence nor gives any hint that he is pursuing her. After a week of quiet, I am even growing to appreciate the peace which has settled in the little apartment. I wonder where Mother is, but know she might be with one of her other sisters, and if there were anything to worry about Daddy would look worried, and he doesn't.

The next day I walk to the city pool

with Alice and two other girls. We giggle as we head toward the park with our towels and beach bags. The pool has just opened for the season and we are excited about the beginning of summer and the end of the school year. The dogwoods have about petered out. I take a deep breath of spring and smell grass cuttings mixed with azaleas. With a nudge from Alice I look up suddenly and see Mother walking toward us.

"Hello, Mother," I say.

"Hello, girls," Mother replies, and continues walking.

That night Aunt Caroline calls to tell Daddy that Mother is at her apartment. "I think it's time, don't you?" Daddy says quietly, and hangs up the phone. Daddy says he's going over to Aunt Caroline's to get Mother and take her to the hospital. I am scared, but know that she might get well there. She's been to the hospital several times before and come back well, but then she got sick again.

"When will Mother come back?" I ask, as he gathers some papers from the drawer. I wonder what they are for and why he is taking them to the hospital.

"She's not coming back," he says firmly, and moves quickly out the kitchen door. I know that Mother cannot stay in the hospital forever. She always comes back after one of her spells.

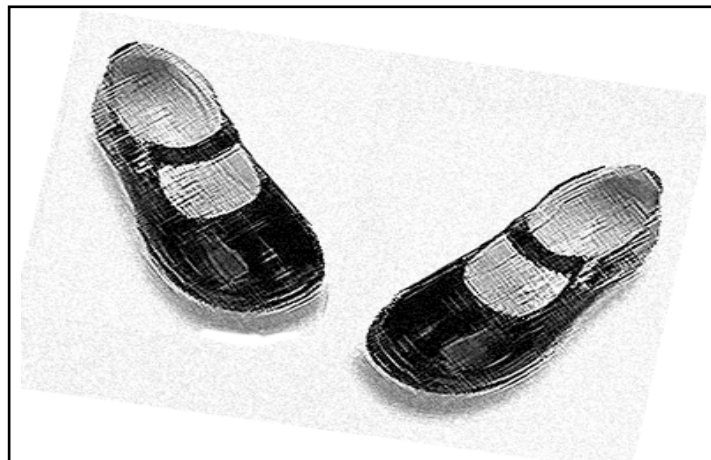
Over the next few weeks Daddy and I settle into a routine that is not warm and homey by any means, but merely comforting in its familiarity. I rise at dawn

with Daddy and peruse my *Weekly Reader* as Daddy pours through the *Atlanta Journal*. We have biscuits with honey and Daddy says you can never make the biscuits and honey come out even, so you just have to keep eating more. Usually the conversation is short, with the same questions and answers, but I know I'm lucky: at least I have Daddy and I know he will take good care of me.

A few weeks into our routine Daddy calls me into the kitchen. It is a bright June morning, a Saturday, and I think perhaps Daddy has something fun in mind. Many times on a Saturday Alice's father takes us to the zoo or to a movie. I feel excited as I come down the stairs.

"Sit down, Betty," Daddy says. "You know you'll be a young lady soon and a girl needs a mother. You know your mother is not coming back. I have a woman friend who has been a client of mine, and she wants you to come and stay with her family for a while. She has a girl just a bit older than you, and you'll do fine there. Now go up and get your things. Go on, now."

I go to the alcove whose shelves hold every possession I own in the world. I slide the suitcase out from under the tiny day bed where I have slept for the past two months. I know it will take only minutes to empty the shelves and that the suitcase will still have plenty of room after all my things are packed inside. I stall for time as I try to decide where this turn of events can fit into my mind. Just as I think I will give in to the tears burning behind my eyes, I reach for my Sunday shoes, a new pair of white patent leather Mary Janes that Daddy bought me for Easter. The tears subside as I look at the shoes and place them in my suitcase. I finish packing and return to the kitchen where Daddy stands, car keys in hand.



Lite Circle Literary Contest Winners, 1999-2000

Fiction 1999

1st Prize: Elisavietta Ritchie, *A Lovely Day for Tennis*

Poetry 1999

1st Prize: Kathleen Hellen, *Last of Summer*
2nd Prize: Elisavietta Ritchie, *Thanksgiving with Great Aunt Eugenia*
3rd Prize: Tod Wild Barclay, *Lester Come Home*

Fiction 2000

1st Prize: Katrina Prado, *Twig Doll*
2nd Prize: Andy O'Bannon, *Véronique*
3rd Prize: Carol Harper, *Mary Janes*

Poetry 2000

1st Prize: Tillie Friedenber, *I Wait for You*
2nd Prize: Daniel H. Lightsey, *View from the Bottom of the Well*
3rd Prize: Atticus Marcus, *Two Tenets*

Don't Miss the Lite Circle 1999-2000 Literary Contest Winners Reading

Saturday, November 10, 2001
1:00-4:00 p.m., Poe Room
Enoch Pratt Free Library
400 Cathedral Street, Baltimore

Lite: Baltimore's Literary Newspaper
**ADVERTISING INSERTION
 ORDER**

Name _____
 Company Name _____
 Address _____
 City, State, Zip _____
 Home phone: _____
 Business phone: _____ Fax: _____

- Camera-ready copy enclosed/attached
- See ad copy/instructions/comments below
- Please layout for me
- Note: Fee for complex layout \$50/hour
- Please call me to discuss this ad

- 1 issue 2 issues 3 issues
- 4 issues 5 issues 6 issues
- Other _____

ADVERTISING RATES

- FULL PAGE **\$300** 1/8 PAGE **\$60**
 (10 1/4" x 13 1/2") (5" x 3 3/16" or 2 3/8" x 6 5/8")
- JR. FULL **\$235** 1/16 PAGE **\$30**
 (7 5/8" x 10 1/16") (5" x 1 1/2" or 2 3/8" x 3 3/16")
- 1/2 PAGE **\$195** 1/32 PAGE **\$20**
 (10 1/4" x 6 5/8" or 5" x 13 1/2") (2 3/8" x 1 1/2")
- 1/4 PAGE **\$120** Business Card **\$20**
 (2 5/8" x 13 1/2" or 5" x 6 5/8") 1 issue (no discounts)

Volume Discounts

- 3 months 5% discount
- 6 months 10% discount
- 12 months 15% discount

New! Spot color now available!

Amount enclosed \$ _____

Please attach ad copy/special instructions.

ADVERTISING AND PAYMENT POLICY

- *To Our Patrons:* The Lite Circle presently accepts checks for purchase of Lite Circle merchandise and services. *Advertisers:* Payment is due prior to insertion of ad. Please enclose check or money order with ad copy and insertion order.
- If your check bounces, you will be charged for the amount of purchase plus returned check or any other fees incurred by Lite, including applicable late fees. Your cooperation is appreciated and will allow us to continue to serve you with the convenience of purchasing by check. For more information, contact us.
- **To order online:** Lite now accepts online orders and electronic payments at: www.litecircle.com/ads2.html.



Baltimore's Literary Newspaper
 Lite Circle Books
 P.O. Box 26162
 Baltimore, Maryland 21210
 Web: www.litecircle.com Email: lite@toadmail.com

**LITERARY
 NEWS**

Cont. from page 6

world around them. They have learned, as I have, that writing can provide insight and clarity and peace. It can give direction, it can reveal, it can console. At no time has this been more apparent to me than in the troubling days we've shared following the attacks on our nation this past September.

At 9:37 on the morning of September 11, I was leaving my first writing class of the day at Towson High when two of my colleagues met me at the door with the news of what was happening in New York. By the time I got downstairs, my third period writing class was waiting, transfixed by the images unfolding on CNN on the television in our room. We watched, as many Americans did, stunned by what we were witnessing. And then we talked, trying to come to terms with what we were feeling.

Over the next few days, writing began to emerge from the writers in my two classes, writing that was not assigned as an exploration of history or politics or philosophy. My students wrote what they saw, what they felt, what they imagined. They did what I think the best writers do; they wrote what really mattered. Take, for example, the following poem by junior Sarah Bregel. In it she captures the scene in our school on the morning of the attacks:

The Price of Freedom

The door slams behind me on September 11, 2001, as I rush into a silent classroom, moments before the bell.

I take my seat as no one even turns a head away from what is without a doubt the most horrific image any of us have ever seen.

Covering his mouth, our teacher stands still, not shifting his eyes from the screen.

"America Under Attack" read the bold letters.

A million thoughts pass through my head at once, but I cannot articulate what it is I'm thinking.

The image on the television is New York's World Trade Center, black smoke billowing away from it, a terrorist attack.

Over the next fifteen hours the loss of lives barely leaves my mind, and I realize that I will never forget the events I have seen today.

"Freedom is not free" were the wise words of my Field Biology teacher, and I wish he wasn't right.

Sarah Bregel

Sarah, a student in Writing I, exemplified what we had talked about during the opening two weeks of the course, writing with an eye for detail, capturing the graphics from the television and the quick portrait of her teacher, including his words. She used line length and line division to control her reader's attention.

One of Sarah's classmates, Jess Blumberg, did what I encourage many of my writing

students to do; she experimented with point of view. What emerged was a poem born of the TV and newspaper eye-witness accounts of that day, a poem that gives me chills each time I read it.

From St. Vincent's Hospital (New York, 9/11/01)

Just technologically reassured
 That he's okay
 That the huge gaping hole in the side of his building
 Didn't affect him
 Writing back a letter of relief and appreciation
 Of their good fortune
 Her peripheral vision catches tragedy out the window
 One by one, the stories give up under each other
 She lifts her fingers off the keyboard
 As she watches her husband crumble

Jess Blumberg

Not every writer in our classes maintained the distance and ironic perspective that Jess's poem embodies. Emotions broke through the surface in many of us, demanding forceful expression. Senior Lacey Burke captured the pride, anger, and patriotism which have pervaded the United States in recent weeks. In our discussions of the early drafts of her poem, students raised the issue of tone in her writing, and she chose to be hopeful and resolute. She selected a rhetorical style, emphasizing control and will:

Notice to Bin Laden

You tried to hit America
 with your planned attacks,
 but you failed
 to reach your target.

You may have killed
 thousands,
 you may have hit
 a building
 or three,
 but America you missed.

For America is not

Continued on page 10



Need an event covered?
 Call News Editor Dan Cuddy at (410) 882-4138
 or email lite@toadmail.com.

PRATT PRESENTS

Exhibit: "New Beginnings: Japan in the Immediate Postwar Years, 1945-1949," an exhibit of photographs, magazines, newspapers and children's books from the University of Maryland's Gordon W. Prange Collection. On display at the Central Library, 400 Cathedral Street, through December 29.

Annual Book Sale: Fri., Nov. 30 - Sun., Dec. 2, at the Central Library. Call 410-396-5403 for information.

Writers LIVE! Readings and Book Signings at the Central Library

Wed., Nov. 14, 6:30 p.m.

W. Dennis Hand and Eric W. Allen discuss and sign *The Great Football War: 1984-1995*.

Sat., Nov. 17, 2 p.m.

Debra Dickerson (*An American Story*) and **Dalton Conley** (*Honky*) discuss and sign their books.

Sun., Dec. 2, 2 p.m.
Maxine Clair reads and signs her novel, *October Suite*.

Mon., Dec. 3, 6:30 p.m.
Julia Chance talks about her book, *Sisterfriends: Portraits of Sisterly Love*.

Children's Book Week (November 12-18) Events:

Sun., Nov. 11, 2 p.m.
Eden Unger-Bowditch discusses and signs her new book, *Growing Up in Baltimore*.

Tues., Nov. 13, 6:30 p.m.
Meet children's author and poet **Nikki Grimes**. Talk and book signing.

Both programs will be held in the Meyerhoff Children's Garden of the Central Library.

Call 410-396-5494 to register.

Enoch Pratt Free Library 400 Cathedral St. www.epfl.net



1888 1889 1890 1891 1892 1893 1894 1895 1896 1897 1898
1899 1900 1901 1902 1903 1904 1905 1906 1907 1908 1909
1910 1911 1912 1913 1914 1915 1916 1917 1918 1919 1920
1921 **Part of your day for over 110 years...** 1922 1923 1924
1925 1926 1927 1928 1929 1930 1931 1932 1933 1934 1935
1936 1937 1938 1939 1940 1941 1942 1943 1944 1945 1946
1947 1948 1949 1950 1951 1952 1953 1954 1955 1956 1957
1958 1959 1960 1961 1962 1963 1964 1965 1966 1967 1968
1969 1970 1971 1972 1973 1974 1975 1976 1977 1978 1979
1980 1981 1982 1983 1984 1985 1986 1987 1988 1989 1990
1991 1992 1993 1994 1995 1996 1997 1998 1999 2000 2001
...and still counting.

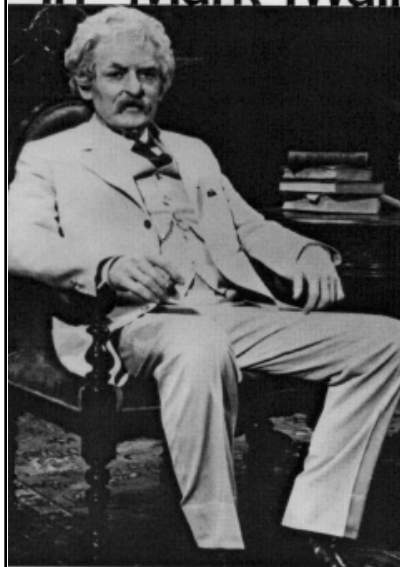
When Edwin Warfield started *The Daily Record* more than 110 years ago, Maryland's business community had a very different set of needs. Today, successful executives require more comprehensive information about law, technology, health care, investments, workplace development, and the economy as well as a host of other issues. That's why today's *Daily Record* combines the latest in local and statewide business and legal news. The result is Maryland's most timely, accurate, and comprehensive business news.

To subscribe, call Chris Fimmano at 410-752-3849.

THE DAILY RECORD Today's Business News. Today.
www.mddailyrecord.com

MEYERHOFF PRESENTS

HAL HOLBROOK in "Mark Twain Tonight!"



Tuesday
November 20
7:30 pm

Now in its 47th year, Hal Holbrook brings his legendary one-man stage show to the Meyerhoff for one performance only! Don't miss your chance to see this great theatrical masterpiece, featuring excerpts from Twain's work combined with some of the author's personal reflections and social commentaries.

"Astonishing...a work of art..."
- THE NEW YORKER

"Go and see it...hilariously funny."
- CLIVE BARNES, THE NEW YORK TIMES

"A breathing American treasure."
- MILWAUKEE JOURNAL

TICKETS: \$34, \$46, Boxes \$58

410-783-8000

Groups of 15 or more call 410-783-8170.

Order on-line at www.baltimoresymphony.com

RUSH TICKETS: Students \$10/Public \$20 subject to availability. Call for information.

JOSEPH MEYERHOFF
SYMPHONY HALL,
CATHEDRAL AND
PRESTON STREETS,
BALTIMORE

a building
or the land
we build upon.
America is
the people who live—
the firemen and
the police,
the volunteers
and blood donors.

America is in the hearts
of our every single soul.
We don't live
in America;
America lives
in us.

Lacey Burke

Other students took other directions. Elecia Roberts, a senior, spoke of the new consciousness she perceived in America, portraying the tension in our country's psyche. Her original draft contained what proved to be two poems, one much like Lacey's in its style, the second the haunting vision which became "Aftermath."

Aftermath

From the twin towers
to the frightened workers
retrieving dead bodies,
our country remains humble,
silent,
dreading the next day,
for war is chanting
death in the air.

Children,
holding their breaths,
clasp the little bit
of their mothers' skirts,
view terror for the first time,
not understanding the evil
conceived on that Tuesday.

Elecia Roberts

Clearly, Elecia had understood that evil and the horror surrounding it.

Finally, twelfth grader Ben Vaeth-Levin provided a personal and powerful glimpse into his experiences following the terrorist attacks. His writing illustrates the courage and sensitivity I described earlier. He is a young man willing to express his confusion and uncertainty, a young man who speaks to our humanity.

In Light Of

In light of recent events,
I have done many different things.
I have lit candles
in the name of those who suffer.
I have prayed
for the first time in years.
I am not religious,
but I've asked God
to give mercy to those affected.
I have gone to church,
where I've recited prayers and psalms
and sang songs
that I have never sung before.
I've watched as the priest lit candles,
seven candles for seven reasons.
In light of recent events,
I've talked to strangers,
who've held glowing beacons
of sorrow for a night
of silent mourning.
Deep thoughts have entered
and left me, thoughts
of anger, revenge and pity.
I have thought of trying to help,
of donating blood, of sending money or aid.
I feel useless.
In light of recent events.

Ben Vaeth-Levin

Looking at these students' work, I recall my own writing as a senior in high school, writing that won an award or two, but that would now strike me as well intentioned but un-original. Its voice was generic, its phrasing indistinguishable from the phrasing of many others. To me, it lacked the maturity of what I see in my students' best work. It was safe. It could hide what I really thought and felt.

Now, as a teacher of high school creative writing, I'm committed to inspiring my students to go beyond that. I want them to educate themselves about writing. I want them to experiment with style. I want them to help us all experience life more fully through their words. I must encourage them to write clearly and forcefully and honestly. That is my role as their teacher. I see that as a the most significant contribution I can make, now more than ever, "in light of recent events."

BILL JONES

Names in Lite

•**Stevan Allred** (Fiction: *Stoned Angel*) is a writer and teacher of writing who lives in a rural community southeast of Portland Oregon. He writes: "'Stoned Angel' was born a number of years ago when I encountered a young woman in a writing class I taught. Her writing was raw, intelligent, and dealt with an underworld of pimps, street dealers, and the police. Over the course of a few months I got to know her pretty well. She was worlds away from the typical writing student, a single mom with a ferocious drug habit who was also addicted to CNN and possessed of an encyclopedic knowledge of reggae and the blues. She saw writing as a way out of the mess of her life, but sadly, she quit showing up and I've never seen her again. "Stoned Angel" is based on this woman."

•**Arthur Glass** (Poem: *The Gull Song*) lives in Hillside, New Jersey. This poem was written for a friend. An alternate title for the poem is "For A Runner." Mr. Glass frequents the

Continued on page 11

Meter, cont. from page 5

Alliance (www.baltimorewriters.org), in association with the following organizations: Maryland Writers' Association, Maryland State Poetry & Literary Society, and Maryland Writing Project.

Okay, now on to happier subjects. I want to talk about the **Diva Squad Poetry Collective**. Oh, how I love the Diva Squad Poetry Collective. The Diva Squad consists of **Chezia Thompson-Cager, Lenett Nefertiti Allen, jaki-terry, and Linda Joy Burke**. Their performance at MICA'S Mt. Royal Station September 7 left me positively giddy. I mean, here were four poets serving up verse that ranges from the erotic (Allen's "Why a Lazy Woman Loathes Leaving Her Bed") and amusing (Cager's "Alien Pussy" and jaki-terry's "Leo Sun Scorpio Moor Cancer Rising, Part II") to Cager's choreopoems and a pair of political pieces that ought to be canonic (Burke's "This is Why I Remember King" and Allen's "Call to Action on a New Day Dawning for Naomi"), in a well crafted production (and with costumes and group vocalizations and percussion, this was a *production*) that lasted LESS THAN AN HOUR. I tell you, if all high school students were herded into auditoria around the U.S. for mandatory encounters with the Diva Squad Poetry Collective, we'd have a nation of budding poets on our hands. (I don't bring the best attention span into this Great Critic thing, so I really appreciate brevity when I find it.)

A reason for celebration in this otherwise dark time: I got **my first free book** from an author seeking publicity. Can a place with Oprah's entourage be far behind? Without further ado, then, let me introduce you to *Twelve Stories of Russia: A Novel, I Guess* by **A.J. Scott**. A.J. Scott has no connection that I know of to Baltimore. Why do I review his book? Well, dear readers, Dave and Patti have a surprise for you. They're plotting a Russian issue in the winter of 2003. So they've been in touch with **Natasha Perova**, who's the editor of *Glas*, the premiere journal of contemporary Russian literature in translation. As it happens, Perova recently published *Twelve Stories*, the first time she's handled an original work in English. She prevailed upon A.J. Scott to send it to me, and voila—or perhaps I should say *â€*ô. (I earned this 10-syllable last name the hard way, people.) So here's what I have to say about *Twelve Stories*: I liked it. The author (or the author of his web site, at any rate—check out <http://twelvestories.narod.ru/>) claims to have been influenced by Ilf and Petrov, but I was reminded more of *Russian Beauty* by **Viktor Erofejev**. The two books share a loose structure and a finely tuned absurdity. (Note to self: Genis refers to Venedikt Erofejev in his review. Must find out more about Venedikt Erofejev and all of the ways in which is like or not like Viktor Erofejev.) He does a good job of capturing the sheer randomness of the post-Soviet expat experience and its intersection with the real lives of Russians during a period of chaos. He also handles a potential clunker—the protagonist's relationship with his mother and aunt back home—defly, conveying powerful emotion without overwhelming the light and

flaky goodness of the narrative line. In fact, the only thing I don't like about this "Novel, I Guess" is that Perry ends it with his protagonist deciding to *write a book about Russia*. Was that necessary? No. But fortunately, it doesn't really detract from the overall appeal of the book. I don't think any bookstores in the Baltimore area are carrying this book, but it's available online at his web site or through Amazon.com.

Look, speaking of Russia, and returning once again to the events of September 11, I want to share a poem with you. This is not my poem, though it is my first literary translation. It's a poem that a poet in Chelyabinsk, Russia, sent to the U.S. Embassy in Moscow shortly after the attacks. Her name is **Irina Argutina**, and she's given me permission to print her poem here.

11 September 2001—New York

On the screen the tower melts like Popsicle.
Red flame flies to ground like an autumn leaf.
And the longing grows to flee the theater
And say: "What a pitiless scenarist!"

But the screen is documentary: sit, watch.
And, unable to tear myself away, I sit, I watch.
But from windows melting people wave inside
The black geyser, and alas, it's no special effect.

No sister of mine lives in that other country,
Thank God, I'm two steps from my father and mother,
Thank God, it wasn't them at all this morning
Who peacefully set off for work—to die.

But from the morning of an alien land creeps fear
And my night is covered in New York ashes.
And it all comes to me in a dream,
how my sister waves,
Forty-thousand sisters—and I cannot help.

More of Argutina's work can be sampled online at http://www.urc.ac.ru/globus/literature/new_books.

Yes, as Kendra Kopelke says, poetry breaks through. I don't know if that answers Adorno's question or not.

KATE YEMELYANOV

"Songs of Remembrance & Renewal" on the Web

Lite is seeking submissions for an ongoing web anthology of work related to the events of September 11, entitled "Songs of Remembrance and Renewal." Fiction, poetry, art, photos all welcome. Submissions accepted by email to: crescent@toadmail.com; mail to: Lite, PO Box 26162, Baltimore MD 21210.

A time to help others & heal ourselves.

Coming Soon! From Lite Circle Books

River of Stars

RESERVE YOUR COPY NOW!

Send your check or money order for \$9.95 plus \$2.00 postage and handling to:

Lite Circle Books/River of Stars
P.O. Box 26162, Baltimore MD 21210
Info: www.litecircle.com/books.html
Order online!

911

by

Hilbert H. Turner, Jr.

9/11-13/01
September 11, 2001

The News

It is a series of hallway rumors until my co-workers let me get a glimpse of what they have been following all morning on a tiny television set. The image that greets my eyes is the centerpiece of the New York City skyline disappearing like two gray banana peels opening up to reveal nothing but dust.

Going Home

No one can function as if it is still a normal day anymore. Everyone leaves but me. I volunteer to lock up. Disbelief keeps me seated for one hour. Once my legs allow me to walk again, I do not go directly home. I stop at the library to return a book that is due today. As I enter, the really cute checkout lady is approaching me and carrying in one hand a ring of at least twenty keys. In her other hand is a sheet of paper stating that the library, along with the county schools, is closing. She locks the door behind me. I return my book and do not look for another to borrow. The cute lady is standing by the front door, unlocking and relocking it to let people out. As I leave, an elderly woman behind me asks why the library is closing in the middle of the day. The checkout lady says, "National emergency." The elderly woman asks if the President has been shot. Another man being let out explains the situation to her. He is the last patron out. I resume my commute and get home at the time the late morning flight from Cincinnati usually passes overhead on its final approach. The sky was empty except for sunshine and clouds, and quiet except for the low-pitched cooing of a pair of mourning doves. I climb three of my four steps and stop. I set my newspaper and lunch bag down and sit on the fourth step. All I have the energy to do now is stare at the houses in front of and next to mine and wonder what is going on behind the doors.

My Neighbors

My townhouse shares a wall with that of the Ali family: Ahmed, Fatima, and little Molly. Molly is not her real name. Her given name begins with an M, but English speakers never seemed to be able to pronounce it correctly, so her parents took the first initial with the last name to produce the nickname Molly.

I admire their cleverness. The Alis are devout Muslims. Ahmed is from Philadelphia as are his mother and grandmother. His father is from Tampa. Fatima and her parents are from Detroit. Molly was born in

nearby Baltimore. The parents know what they will have to go through for the next few days, maybe weeks. They remember the Persian Gulf conflict and the Ayatollah and how they were not granted amnesty from middle-class American wrath due to their Saudi roots. I remember Oklahoma City and how, when guilty parties were caught, no one called for retribution to be visited upon the heads of those with Irish surnames.

Fatima pulls up in the minivan. She slides the side door open and two first grade girls pop out and race to the Alis' house. One is a miniature version of Fatima without the mole on the left cheek. The other has freckles, red hair, and green eyes. Fatima and I acknowledge one another without the customary wave. She knows her husband is not home yet. I can see the worry in her eyes. The ebullient laughter of the girls gives me the energy to rise and unlock my door. The redheaded girl wins the race.

Molly and Megan

Molly is six and doesn't understand the significance and depth of what is happening today. Her best friend and classmate Megan Zimmerman lives two doors down. The Alis usually watch her until her mother gets home from work in DC. Megan's father travels a lot. Today, he is in Denver. Megan and Molly are drawing rainbows on the sidewalk with chalk. Megan's mother finally gets home and screeches the SUV to a halt in front of the houses and jumps out screaming, "Megan, get away from her right now! Let's go home!" Naturally, Megan protests, but her mother snatches her up so quickly, she doesn't have time to drop the chalk or wave bye-bye. Molly is stunned. She sheds silent tears that scream louder than her voice ever could. After ten seconds, she runs inside.


Ahmed's Car

I hear glass breaking outside. I go to the window to see two high school boys, one black and one white, vandalizing Ahmed's car. It has a green bumper sticker with a crescent moon and a slogan, motto, or advertisement written in Arabic. It is parked next to my car. One of the boys is denting the hood by jumping on it and chanting "USA! USA!" The other is in search of more loose asphalt instead of retrieving the chunk that landed on the passenger seat on his last hurl. I exit my door and head for the parking lot. I yank the jumping boy off the car but catlike, he lands on his feet. Somewhere nearby, I hear rapidly fading footsteps. He gets up in my face and yells,

"Hey, man, don't you realize what happened to our country today? This is war! What kind of an American are you?" Instant anger makes me say, "A tax-paying, God-fearing, and until now, a law-abiding one." I clarify my statement by punching him in the gut. I finally notice that he is the white one. I hear sirens getting closer. Someone else obviously called the law. Maybe the other kid; maybe Ahmed; definitely not Mrs. Zimmerman. The kid I slugged is still doubled over and sucking in air when the lone blonde officer pulls up and turns the flashing lights off. I give my account first since I can speak more clearly. I say that I feared the destruction would spread if unchecked. I neglect to mention that I believe the target would have been the Alis' bedroom and kitchen windows, not my car. The kid does not deny his vandalism and calls me un-American for not joining in. The officer removes the cuffs from his belt. The kid snickers and points at me derisively. The officer slaps the cuffs on him telling him he's both under arrest and a jerk. The kid screams bloody murder as he is guided into the back seat. The officer closes the car door and walks over to Ahmed, who is standing on his front step with steely eyes aimed at the car's occupant. I walk to back my house as Fatima appears in her daughter's bedroom window. She gestures "thank you." I give her the thumbs up sign. The officer sees none of this.

Our Next Step

The children of the neighborhood are playing in the common area and in the parking lot just as they would on an ordinary Tuesday. The adults would be coming home one by one between 4:00 and 7:00 p.m. It is 5:21 and six of us are outside under the magnificent blue sky chatting mostly about recent speeding tickets, barbecue grills, and bats in our attics. The tone of our collective voice is normal so as not to alarm the children and for personal peace of mind. The clique drifts back and forth depending on which parent's child is in need of closest supervision at the moment. The crowd settles in front of the Zimmermans'. All the windows are open. My other next-door neighbor, Mrs. Petersen, brings up the subject of the battered car in the parking lot. Another woman, whose family moved in only last month, tells of how she called the police on the vandals. She says she saw me come out and pull the one kid off the car's hood. She says to me, "You did the right thing." I do not believe she witnessed what transpired between that point and the policeman's arrival. I keep this thought to myself and justify my actions. I say, "Only three things were on my mind then: 1) Islam is not the enemy. 2) Ahmed and Fatima are Americans. 3) And most importantly, to me anyway, is that what those kids were doing is also terrorism." The other five heads nod. Eight seconds elapse, then the Zimmermans' front door opens a quarter of the way. Megan dashes out just as quickly as she did to win this afternoon's race. The door shuts before she can take three strides. The smiling girl weaves through the maze of grown-up legs stationed in front of her house and heads two doors up the row. She

knocks and rings the doorbell four times. Ahmed answers cautiously with his head protruding from behind the door. He sees Megan and calls his daughter. Molly bounds down the stairs and the two girls join the rest of the children. They are careful not to step on their drawings on the sidewalk. The other kids ask Molly and Megan why they have been inside for so long. This is the first phase of Mrs. Zimmerman's apology. 

Names, cont. from page 10

NYTimes Book forums as "Goliard."

•**Meaghan Greyson** (*Lite Sightings: Theatre Reviews*) was born in New York and raised since almost a baby in Switzerland, London, and central Europe until 1959 when she permanently returned to America. She received a doctoral degree at the University of Georgia. For years she worked as a consultant but on the side wrote and still writes for newspapers in New York, Los Angeles, London and Sydney and also for the well-known internet magazine, *Theatre World*. She now lives in Columbia, MD and continues to write theatrical reviews.

•**Carol Harper** (Fiction: *Mary Janes*) is a writer, editor, and graphic designer living in Baltimore. As leader of WHU's NOTES newsletter from 1996-2000, she utilized all these skills as editor-in-chief and production artist. She received a Master's degree in publications design from University of Baltimore. She has read many of her commentary essays on Baltimore Voices, a local radio show that mirrored, from our uniquely Baltimorean perspective, NPR's essay series. Although clients include University of Baltimore, Johns Hopkins Children's Center, and Johns Hopkins Comprehensive Transplant Center, she prefers writing fiction. Her story *Mary Janes* won 3rd place for fiction in *Lite's* 2000 Literary Contest.

•**Kathleen Hellen** (Poem: *We, Like Winter*) is a poet and journalist who publishes widely in journals, literary magazines and newspapers. Her poems have appeared in *The Baltimore Review*, *Blue Unicorn*, *Calliope*, *Cicada*, *English Journal*, *Nebo*, *Nerve Cowboy*, *Now & Then*, *Piedmont Literary Review*, *Rattapallax*, *Southern Poetry Review*, *The Sow's Ear Poetry Review*, *Verve and Visions*—as well as other literary magazines. She has poems forthcoming in *Confluence* and *Earth's Daughters*. In 1999 she took first place for poetry in the Lite Circle Literary Contest. She was second-place winner in the 2000 poetry competition sponsored by *City Paper* in Baltimore. Her poem "Three Views of the Monongahela" will appear in the anthology *Frontier: Custom & Archetype* published by Pig Iron Press. Twice the recipient of the James Still Poetry Award, she teaches writing in Baltimore.

•**Bill Jones** (Spotlight: *Literary News—In Light of Recent Events*) has taught English and creative writing at Catonsville, Dulaney, and Towson High Schools in Baltimore County. His students have consistently won local, state, and national writing competitions. A poet and essayist, he has had writing published in small press periodicals locally and nationally. He won the Baltimore Artscape Prize for Poetry in 1992.

•**Natalie Murakoshi** (*Cover Art*) is a junior at Towson High School in Baltimore. She plays field hockey and lacrosse as well as participating in Advanced Placement Studio Art. After graduation, she plans to continue with the sports while majoring in Fine Arts at Towson University.

•**Hilbert Turner, Jr.** (Fiction: *911*) lives in Columbia, Maryland and hosts local poetry readings, including LITE's Poetry in the Shade series. His first poetry chapbook, *Extended Family*, was published in October.



Society's Page



Once More To The Book Fair!

The 2001 Baltimore Book Fair was a great success for Maryland Poetry & Literary Society. We again hosted the Coffee Bar, and for the first time we actually scheduled the events that took place. Friday night the Coffee Bar's focus was on College Night, featuring readers, especially from University of Maryland, Baltimore County, Towson University, and Morgan University. Saturday the focus was on poetry and fiction readings, and Sunday a variety of workshops were offered. The Coffee Bar was always crowded with people appreciative of local literary talent.

Our booth at the Baltimore Book Fair was also a success! So many interesting people stopped by, including Joan Biegeleisen, a life-long Baltimorean, reared in the Slavic community, who loves observing and interacting with people and who wrote our featured poem "Mommy, Mother, Mom." In "Thoughts," Joan expresses her positive outlook on life, saying "Don't hesitate; reach out today beyond yourself sharing love, knowledge and skill; help others grab on, creating a masterpiece together."

We were so thankful too for Meredith Burke, Pat Barnes, David Diorio, Rosemarie "MiMi" Zannino Bracken, and George Bracken who worked diligently and tirelessly at our booth. Without the generosity of dedicated volunteers like them, the Society would fold.

For our annual Book Fair raffle, the Chesapeake Center For The Creative Arts donated a family membership, won by Baltimorean Melissa Malanowski; the SoBo Café donated a forty-dollar gift certificate won by Baltimorean Bill Johnson; the American Dime Museum, co-owned by literary light James Taylor, donated a year's membership, two copies of *Shocked and Amazed: On & Off The Midway*, and a genuine "dimeand" pin, won by Catonsville resident Pat Barnes, and Friction donated an original signed mobile, won by Sandra Crute. For more information on those who donated the wonderful prizes to us, please read the following article.

—Rosemary Klein

Support These Merchants and Organizations!

Especially with the upcoming holidays, we encourage you to support the local merchants and organizations who support the Society and the literary community at large. If you haven't yet, stop by the SoBo Café, across from south Baltimore's Cross Street Market, at 6-8 West Cross Street. The spacious but cozy Café is filled with paintings and serves excellent and intriguing food. Visit this charming restaurant at www.sobocafe.com or call 410-752-1518.

And while you're in south Baltimore, make sure to visit Friction, 1039 Light Street, 443-722-2332, where you'll find appealing gifts, vintage clothes, and original, visionary art, including mobiles and clocks, by Friction's ebullient proprietor Gerald Gillis. Visiting Friction should make your Christmas shopping a snap!

Chesapeake Center for the Creative Arts (CCCA) is located in Brooklyn Park at 194 Hammonds Lane.

The Center offers music classes for all ages as well as classes in the visual and the literary arts, dance, clay and pottery, and drama and acting. Linda Joy Burke, president of the Baltimore Writers' Alliance, and Barbara Simon, president of Maryland Poetry & Literary Society have both taught CCCA workshops. The Center's literary classes have also included creative writing for teens, introduction to playwriting, and dramatic screenplay writing for television. December 7 at CCCA is opening night for the perennial holiday favorite A Christmas Carol. For more information on CCCA's special events, its classes or memberships, visit the Center's web site at www.chesapeakearts.org or call 410-636-6597.

The American Dime Museum (ADM), the world's only museum devoted to variety, novelty, and exotic performance and exhibition, is a must see!! At 1808 Maryland Avenue, you'll feast on eye-popping display that includes Fiji mermaids; unicorns; shrunken heads; original artifacts, such as a giantess mummy; an extensive display of sideshow banners and genuine sideshow props. You'll learn about thrill acts, tattooing and piercing, human blockheads, bearded ladies, swordswallowers, and human cannonballs. Extensive exhibition notes explain the attractions and let visitors in on the "secrets" of the business. ADM is open Wednesday to Friday from noon to 3 PM and on Saturday and Sunday from noon to 5 PM. Admission is five dollars for adults, three dollars for children aged seven to twelve, and free for "well-behaved" children six and younger. Check out www.dimeuseum.com the ADM's web site or call 410-230-0263 for more information.

No local merchant has been more consistently giving to the literary community than Minas Konsolas. His gift shop Minas in Fells Point at 733 S. Ann Street (just down the block from John Stevens) is chock full of exceptional jewelry, vintage clothes—including a wide selection of jeans, sweaters, shoes, scarves, hats, and dressy outfits as well as books by local writers and a fine collection by local artists, including paintings, photographs, and glass. Minas' special inventory and generosity—with each purchase, he throws in a free book—have not gone unacknowledged around these parts. Tacked to walls between wrapping paper, ribbon, cards are the 1994 and 1997 awards the shop received for Baltimore Best Postcards from the City Paper, and a thank you letter signed by the set director and the set decorating assistant of **Runaway Bride**. For hours or information about poetry readings and art exhibits hosted at Minas, call 410-732-4258.

—Rosemary Klein

A City of Readings

While Baltimore may no longer be known as "the city that reads," a case can be made that we should be known as "the city of readings." And the Enoch Pratt Central Branch can take great credit for the title.

"Society's Page" is brought to you by the Maryland State Poetry and Literary Society under the auspices of The Lite Circle, Inc. with special thanks to Alan C. Reese

Under Judy Cooper, Chief of Public Relations and Programming, the library honors a commitment to writers and their audiences by bringing them together for readings as various and interesting as our city itself.

On Sunday, October 21, Washington Writers' Publishing House poets Bernard Jankowski and Margaret Weaver were featured in a reading in the Central Branch's Poe Room. Weaver, a retired teacher and tree farmer from Wayne, ME, read from *Escaping Words* (WWPH, 2001), her collection of poems evolving from close observation and insightful reflection. Lyrical and sensual, Weaver, with lines such as "Gold-eared, lean, sunlit/the old man's sonsteps/from branch to branch/in cleated shoes ("Treemaster") displayed her quiet skill of making the ordinary into the extraordinary. Reading from his collection *The Bullfrog Does Not Imagine NewTunes* (WWPH, 2001), Bernard Jankowski, who hails from Shamokin, PA and who owns a business in Frederick, MD, shared poems firmly grounded in place and filled with interesting characters such as "Eddie (who's) gettin' pathetic" ("Fast Eddie") or "The Carnival Owner (who) knows/the silence" ("The Silence Beyond the Carnival Grounds"). Janowski's poems portray a world not quite secure, a world that just may tilt.

Within a week of those two readings, on October 27, the Pratt featured a writer of international prominence, Thomas Glave, who has been praised by David Lynn of the *Kenyon Review* as "one of the finest and most important new voices on the American literary scene," read from *Whose Song? and Other Stories*, his first collection of short stories. Glave's talent and appeal were obvious (he read to an audience of 20 men on a fall afternoon). A master of voice, in "And Love Them" Glave developed a first-person portrait of a white woman pathetically unaware of her prejudices. In "Whose Song," that voice turned lyrical as the author wrote of the despair of a young lesbian raped by boys who knew her. Glave also read a piece "Interview with a Not-Poem" written in response to the September 11 tragedy.

So, wherever you are, be aware—because of the Enoch Pratt Central Branch programming—we are "the city of readings."

—Barbara Simon

Mommy, Mother, Mom

The silence is broken by streams of tears coming from my eyes:

Aching for my mother's touch
Yearning for the warmth of her arms
Wishing I was curled in her protective lap
Wanting the smell of her sweet breath,

Then calm reaches out and soothes my brow
Peace surging through every part of me.

I see my mother's spirit. I feel her soul.
She breathes strength into my heart...whispering

"I am you and you are me."

Joan Biegeleisen

Lite Sightings: THEATRE REVIEWS

The Architect and the Emperor of Assyria. *Reviewed by Meaghan Greyson at the Warehouse Theater, Washington, DC., on Sunday, October 28th, 2001.*

This sadomasochistic farce has been referred to as "...gargantuan blasphemy," a surreal fable which is the brilliant creation of Fernando Arrabal, a well reputed Spanish playwright, who included the play into his self-described "theatre of panic" (theatre panique) which was named after the god Pan, the one that could make people laugh and dance one minute, and plunge them into terror, the next.

The play was presented by the GALA Theatre Company in collaboration with the Washington Performing Arts Society, and the National Endowment for the Arts with the support of the Embassy of Spain.

This controversial farce, written around 1965 in Arrabal's Paris exile and which has been played over the world, was excellently directed by Jose Carrasquillo, who faithfully brought about all the corrosive rumination on the nature of Man, ruthlessly exposing all the ugliness of the mankind; as well as his smart guiding of the characters—Arrabal's kind of men—the ones who need to rule and reign, and the ones who build, control, and create.

The play, performed in a Spanish Castilian language, was translated by Everard d'Hamoncourt and Adele Shank, with a simultaneous interpretation coordinated by Ed Johnson.

The farce has been attributed to the non-realistic genre of absurdism. The Theatre of the Absurd, a term coined by the critic Martin Esslin, never followed the roots of logic and among the representatives of this school of drama we find the works of Genet, Albee, Beckett ("Waiting for Godot"), Jarry ("Ubu Roi") Pinter and Ionesco ("Rhinoceros"), just to mention a few of the proselytes of the Existentialist philosophers Jean Paul Sartre and Martin Heidegger.

Arrabal's present work was inspired by Bosch's painting "The Garden of Earthly Delights," projecting a psychological approach to men whose search for truth is abandoned and who moved in an incomprehensible void-like realm; and also describing a fragmented existence where the sense of place is minimized and the truth is obfuscated in a bantering game of words.

Arrabal explores the fascinating primal interactions of a castaway and an aborigine, trying to shock the audiences with the naked horrors of the human condition where moral laws seemed to be ignored and venial sins like hypocrisy are uncovered. For this reason his work has been called "Theatre of Cruelty."

We can see elements of "Robinson Crusoe" (Defoe) and reminiscences of "Waiting for Godot" when he depicts, first, life in itself coming to a halt; and secondly, his two characters engaging in fruitless and repetitive actions that remark the meaninglessness of an existence surrounded by a scenery which reminds of Goya's fierce etch-

ings, his Caprichos sketchings and some of Picasso's paintings. Also, there are influences of Ionesco ("The Lesson") in the chattering technique used where the characters sometimes cannot communicate.

The entire action takes place on a desert, elusive, phantasmagoric island where a plane apparently crashed and the only survivor is this man who calls himself the Emperor of Assyria and seems to descend from the sky. There is a lone inhabitant, a savage, whom he dubs the Architect. Those two, confined and prisoners of an illusive freedom, are usually in conflict as well as in love. There are intricate series of interactions, graphic and intense, which provide an enthralling analysis of the formation of societal roles.

This complex charade is a confrontation and in fact a study in role playing: the Emperor parades around the stage impersonating different people: his wife, his brother and a friend. The Architect pretends to be sometimes the Emperor's grieving mother and a prosecutor as well. The Architect devours the Emperor on stage as the climax of this odd surrealist fable; an implicit allegory of special aspects of life, perhaps the human condition in its creative level.

When the Emperor urges the Architect to kill and devour him, it seems to symbolize the pagan ritual of slaughtering a sacred king, which represents the nature god who died and revived with the season, a phoenix coming out radiantly from the ashes, as seen in the last scene when it repeats the sequence with the Architect coming back as the Emperor.

This is a story of two people living together: their games, their plays, the gestures they make, the roles they assume—two aspects of one personality continually switching roles as an implicit suggestion that both characters are ever-changing reflections of one man.

Luis Caram is the Architect, noble and naive, who acts brilliantly when sending inadvertently brutal blows to his companion using a speech pregnant with hideous humor. He is very real and convincing when submitting to the will of the self-styled Emperor in order to learn the ways of "civilized" men from this sole survivor of an airplane crash.

Hugo Medrano was magnificent as the Emperor: an effective versatile performer in the impersonation of several winners during an hilarious mock trial; and forceful in the disgust he spewed out in raucously derisive laughter. Both men arguing, accusing, condemning, fighting, loving, and losing seemed to be depicting a dual representation of one human soul in an eternal conflict.

This play is saying something about isolation, confinement and the needs of a 20th century man with the grace of the unreal and the coarseness of the real, its mood, its sentiment, its special eloquence and its basic thrust which makes it unmistakably powerful.

For some, this farce has been considered a blasphemous caricature of the Roman Catholic Mass. For others, the interpretation of the characters resides on the two faces of a coin, the two sides of the

Continued on page 14

Lite

The Lite Circle, Inc.

Guidelines for Writers

1. Founded in 1992, The Lite Circle is a non-profit literary organization devoted to the encouragement of emerging voices in the arts. *Lite: Baltimore's Literary Newspaper* is a bi-monthly publication featuring art, literature, and book reviews. Formerly a quarterly magazine, it is now a free tabloid publication carrying one story and several poems per issue. A literary supplement is published on the off-months. We seek to give emerging writers and artists the opportunity to reach a broad, literate audience, and to keep our readers informed of literary events in Central Maryland. *Lite: Baltimore's Literary Newspaper* is distributed in the Baltimore area and Central Maryland, with a press run of 10,000 copies. The Lite Circle also publishes book-length manuscripts in cooperation with authors under the imprints "Lite Circle Books" and "Sunrise Press." The "Guidelines for Writers" apply to all Lite Circle publications, and the term "Lite" as used here refers to all Lite Circle publications.

2. Lite holds one-time publication rights to all material accepted for publication. All other rights remain the property of the author. Terms of payment: For *Lite: Baltimore's Literary Newspaper*, 5 copies of an issue in which submission appears. For Lite Circle Books/Sunrise Press: 1 contributor's copy (unless other arrangements are made).

3. Electronic submissions to Lite are encouraged. Email submissions to: lite@toadmail.com (attachments OK; Microsoft Word or WordPerfect format preferred). Submissions may also be sent as ASCII text in the body of an email; special formatting such as italics or bold should be noted. We will also accept documents on disk (WordPerfect or Microsoft Word format preferred). Please include contact info/short bio. Hard copy submissions to Lite should be on plain 8-1/2" X 11" paper, double spaced, typewritten or computer printed, suitable for scanning with no handwritten editing or other marks anywhere on the document. Please include the file on disk, if possible. Notes concerning the copy may be made in legible handwriting on accompanying separate sheets. Illegible, poor-quality, or handwritten text will not be considered. Copy must include the author's name, address and telephone number on the first or last page; for multiple simultaneous submissions, each work must be a separate document, each with the author's name, address and telephone. Please include short bio.

4. Word limits—Poetry: generally no more than 30 lines, but up to 50 lines may be accepted for poems in stanza, section, or any divided format; Fiction: 1,000 to 4,000 words (longer pieces may be used in serialized form); Humor: 300-1,000 words. Reviews: 300 words. Due to the enormous amount of material we receive, response time averages 6-12 months.

5. Lite reserves the right to do all editing appropriate to maintain grammar, stylistic consistency, and standard punctuation without advance notification to the author. We suggest that deliberate deviations from standard grammar and spelling be noted on a separate sheet to avoid editing problems. Lite will do everything possible to advise writers in advance of publication of any proposed changes which may affect the author's meaning or stylistic integrity; writers may withdraw their manuscripts from consideration should they conclude that proposed changes are unacceptable, provided notification is made within three days of notice of proposed changes.

6. Lite will not accept manuscripts which contain the following: sexually explicit language or graphically depicted sexual scenes; gratuitous expletives; pointless or graphic violence; material denigrating any race, nationality, gender, or religion. Authors accept all responsibility for factual errors contained in any submitted manuscript. By submitting to Lite, author agrees to the editorial policies and conditions as stated in these guidelines.

7. If hardcopy material is rejected, submissions will not be returned unless a SASE of suitable size with sufficient postage is provided.

The Lite Circle, Inc.
Lite: Baltimore's Literary Newspaper
Lite Circle Books

Hot off the Press from
Lite Circle Books!

Cherry Pie

by Elisabeth Stevens



Twelve stories about growing and growing up are included in Elisabeth Stevens' fourth fiction collection. Although the female protagonists and family situations vary, the common thread is learning from often bitter experiences. "Cherry Pie" and "Crumbs" chronicle a young woman who ineptly says "no" to one man, and then unwisely says "yes" to another. In "The Neighbor," a child discovers deception, ambition, and, eventually, death. In "In the Dust," a girl who has lost her father contrives an odd game to compensate. In "Campfire," a five-year-old is separated from her parents for the first time. The stories "Wally and the Waltz" and "His Ambition" examine the effects of war seen from a distance. In "Van" an art teacher becomes the icon for a girl's discovery of her own talent. In "A Matter of Money" and "A Rough Ride," heroines of less than twenty painfully encounter the ways and wiles of Boston society and "important" literary people in Manhattan. "The Towers" is a story of marriage and adultery, and "The Nurse" deals with the conflict between two women over a new baby.

Order Now!

Send check or money order for \$14.95 plus \$2.00 shipping/handling to:
Lite Circle Books/Cherry Pie
P.O. Box 26162, Baltimore MD 21210
For more info, email lite@toadmail.com
Order Online!

Lite Circle Books presents

Penny's Hill

*A chapbook of poetry
by Hugh Burgess*

ORDER YOUR COPY NOW!

Send your check or money order for \$6.00 (includes postage and handling) to:
Lite Circle Books/Penny's Hill
P.O. Box 26162
Baltimore MD 21210
Info: www.litecircle.com/books.html
Order online!

ERRATUM

On the cover of the September/October 2001 (Special Italian Issue) of *Lite*, Regina Soria was incorrectly listed as the author of "The Translator's Dilemma." The author is Madeleine Keller. *Lite* regrets the error.

human nature. Ultimately, for few, the ritual anthropofagia as the man's attempt at self-integration.

MEAGHAN GREYSON

A Moon for the Misbegotten. Reviewed by Meaghan Greyson at the Outback Theatre, HCC-Washington-Baltimore area, on Sunday, October 28th, 2001.

This drama, written by Eugene O'Neill in 1943, is the sequel to "Long Days' Journey into Night," where continues the story of the dissolute James Tyrone.

The three central characters of the play, Josie, Tyrone and Phil Hogan, are New England Irish who are set in a Connecticut farm in 1923. At the beginning, the story evolves around the high spirit sot, Phil Hogan, who lives now with his plain daughter Josie and whose son Mike has left the farm looking for better venues. Pretending that the landlord, James Tyrone, whose family has long owned the Hogan farm, is planning to sell the farm to the grumpy neighbor T. Stedman Harder—a "Standard Oil man"—Hogan concocts a scheme persuading Josie to seduce Tyrone and then blackmail him by coercing either to marry her or to pay Hogan the price of the farm in order to avoid scandal; therefore, Tyrone will not sell the farm and naturally they will not be displaced from their lodgings. Much later, the old man reveals to Josie that he knew that Tyrone had no intentions of selling the farm, and that he only wanted to bring the two together so they would recognize their hidden love for each other. Josie agrees to save the old homestead from the clutches of that supposed villain. She is a very quick thinking, overweight, not too young woman who is not nearly as bawdy as she appears to be and who pretends to be a slut with calculating efficiency. She invites Tyrone to come that night and when he comes, Tyrone explains his guilt to Josie and to himself in terms of his long hatred to his father and the love and the remorse suffered for longing for his mother. Tyrone claims that during his father's life time, he was a drunkard and a never-do-well but after his father's death he insists that he stopped drinking for his mother's sake; but as she became ill and was dying, he turned again to alcohol in retaliation upon his mother for abandoning him. His final refuge is in lechery finding only satisfaction with slovenly women and the prostitutes rejected by another men. All that "baggage" feeds his self-hatred and the need for a mother's substitute; so finally this cynical and hopeless alcoholic finds for one night a loved mother in Josie. He was attracted to her by his desire of expiation and in her maternal and redemptive love he finds, at last, forgiveness and release.

The absolution comes to him when he confesses to Josie and also when discovers that he is still loved, in spite of his hateful self that presumably desecrated the mother-son relationship. Having placated the maternal spirit, he now can sleep under the moon lying on Josie's breasts.

The emotional culmination resides in his morning departure as well as in Josie's understanding of this man's love and the

uncertainties that enable him to return. She resumes her usual role and goes on living, quarreling with her father, to meet the problems of every day life through the haze of sadness and the futile frustrations that heavily weights over her.

In this four act play, the director, Michael Stebbins, has assembled a cast of characters, combining and revealing their psychological idiosyncracies in a slow pace of facetious comedy existing in the first and second act; while keeping the energy high in unraveling the intricacies of the play in the third one that prepares for Tyrone's deliverance in the fourth, establishing the catalysis conducive to the climax of the drama.

Bill Hamlin is Phil Hogan who renders magnificently the role with a shrewd coarse sense of humor and a soft heart displayed with emotional euphoria.

Valerie Constantini is excellent in her interpretation of Josie showing no illusions about herself; revealing, as the affected promiscuous slut, all her inner self-hatred as well as her neurotic pride which enables to eradicate the rooted self-loathing that overwhelms her personality.

J. M. McDonough is James Tyrone Jr., who faithfully portrays the least dramatic of O' Neill's protagonists. He is very successful as an alcoholic and in describing his haunted memories and his whoring binges; though not very convincing and somewhat unsettling in his role of self-analysis, his spiritual agonies, and his self-tormenting which are all related to an unresolved Oedipus conflict. He is superficial in his braggart poise and also as the lonely child at heart who cries for his "mommy," which reminisces Dion 's conception of Cybel in "The Great God Brown." However, he's good in his contrasting moods, expansive one moment and submissive the other, and in showing oblivion and denial of his real identity.

This rich modern drama, with fierce qualities of introspection, is filled with emotional truth, a wealth of psychological complexities that progressively uncover the masks that some people wear to either conceal or disguise their feelings in order to protect themselves and avoid becoming vulnerable to one another.

MEAGHAN GREYSON

Das Barbecu. Reviewed by Meaghan Greyson at The Vagabond Theatre, the oldest little theatre in Baltimore, MD, on Sunday, September 16th, 2001.

This inane musical comedy, in two acts, with book and lyrics by Jim Luigi and music by Scott Warrender, was presented by the Vagabond Players and directed by Terry J. Long. The musical was originally commissioned by the Seattle Opera and later produced Off-Broadway at the Minetta Lane Theater.

This is a brazen, small-scale musical with five actors playing about 35 characters and costume changing at a terrific speed. It tries to present a witty Texas fable as an hilarious and grotesque parody of Wagner's famous opera "Der Ring Des Niebelungen"(The Nibelung Ring). This crazy musical includes a shotgun double wedding, three generations of feuding fami-

lies, guitar-slinging cowboys and girls crooning out their unhappy woes in a Western rather than a country twang; and a magic gold ring that gives its owner worldly powers. The musical runs from Broadway to Texas swing, to jazz and country and western foot stomping's rhythms. This puerile romp is characterized by dialogues interspersed by a series of ditties that explain the complex situations among the characters in their diverse roles.

The plot, which first focuses on Siegfried drugged and betrothed to Guttrune while his beloved Brunnhilde is also mis-betrothed to another, opens with the song "A Ring of Gold in Texas" that makes clear the quest for the marvelous ring which drives the action. The score includes gleeful melodies like "Hot-Tie Your Man"; the ode of "Makin Guacamole"; "Rodeo Romeo";, as well as romantic ballads like "County Fair" and "Slide a Little Closer," which envisions Siegfried and Brunhilde gliding along a dance floor in a Texas two-step waltz.

The performance of the five actors was excellent, specifically Heather Marie Beck as Guttrune, Laura K. Cosner as Brunnhilde, and Stuart Goldstone as Siegfried.

Also, well to mention is the musical director Robert Gee and his keyboard, and Tony Colavito who produced a fantastic geography map of Texas dropped in as a splendid backdrop.

It was a terrific time spent watching this director Long's fast-paced production!

MEAGHAN GREYSON

Da. Reviewed by Meaghan Greyson at the Smith Theatre, HC-Baltimore area, on Sunday, September 23rd, 2001.

This 1978 award-winning comedy, a Tony for best actor (Barnard Hughes), was written by Hugh Leonard (pseudonym of John Keyes Byrne) and is based on memories of his adopted father and remembrances of his past life.

The play, presented by RepStage players, was admirably directed by Kasi Campbell, who has received a Helen Hayes nomination for her remarkable direction of "The Lonesome West."

Charlie Tynan is a prosperous writer who lives in London and has returned to his

suburbial Dublin home for his father's funeral and, when sorting out papers while sifting through his father's belongings, begins to be surrounded and haunted by family ghosts when his "da" magically appears, coming back to life for a father-son chat that shapes the entire action. He's furious to see the man whom he thought would disturb him no more although once "da" was the most important man in his life. He tries to come to an understanding of his working class background and the non-idealistic relationships with his infuriating "da"; feeling exasperated in realizing that he has overshadowed his father's knowledge and accomplishments.

The play is set in Ireland and uses many Gaelic words and expressions with humor and touching familiar dynamics.

Dwight Tolar, well known for his role as Robbie Ross in "The Judas Kiss," is the grown-up Charlie projecting a complexity of feelings from hate, shame, and regrets to wonder and tenderness. The role was enchantingly played and in particular the dialogues with the young Charlie when he tries to direct himself as to make amends that possibly would have change the outcome of certain past events.

Leo Erickson as "da" (Irish slang for daddy), portrays the title role in an extraordinary performance: charming and beguiling as a loving but irritating father who wants to teach his disquisitive son what little he knows.

Bill Largess as Drum, young Charlie's stodgy employer, describes a despotic man with a vague vein of humanity seeping to the surface and who shows disillusion of life at the very end.

Rena Cherry Brown presents the long-suffering figure of a wife who anticipated every mistake that her husband could make; being sweet when referring to "da" but still reminiscing the man she could have married instead.

The young Charlie's vision was very well acted by Jonas Grey in all the aspects and contradictions of his age.

This play, heavily autobiographical in nature, conveys an inherent emotional power, very touching and hilarious at the same time.

MEAGHAN GREYSON

We, Like Winter

We, like winter; sky
tipple dumps white on burrowed tract,
branch and hive. Nature
retreats into the artifact

of sex, bedecked, sprayed
with hoar-frost, hung with balls and lights
that copy flickered
heat of firefly in twilight's

frenzy. Nothing we
admit of this nature, ever-
green, ever pushing
up from white to spring's first fever.

Kathleen Hellen

Lite Sightings:

ART & PHOTOGRAPHY

entity: the urban jungle of devine debris by Alex Heilbrunn. Photographic exhibit, July 2001, Café XandO, Charles Village.

In July *Lite* had the opportunity to review a photographic exhibit at Café XandO in Baltimore's Charles Village. Entitled "the urban jungle of devine debris," the series presented a variety of black and white images by local artist Alex Heilbrunn. While not individually titled, each piece invited the eye to explore a variety of mysterious, often stark land and urban-scapes, which seemed to balance beauty and emptiness. Drawing the viewer into a twilight realm of light and shadow, the artist seemed to be asking us to consider the



road we have traveled thus far as individuals and a society, and where that road is leading. If one was looking for concrete answers, they were not here—only more questions. Such questions seem more important than ever in light of recent events. It has been said that the future is ours to make, and these almost ethereal images ask us what it will be.

On a technical level, the photographs were presented nicely, with sharp detail and contrast. While part of a theme, each image could stand alone on its own artistic merit. Since little information about the exhibit itself was available at Café XandO, we asked the artist to tell us more about his vision. He writes:

"Photography, like all forms of artistic expression, is a science. A science that provides the artist with the opportunity to analyze, interpret, and then record the subjects and/or events around him or her in the surrounding environment, while being influenced by the emotions experienced from those subjects and/or events. The artist is one who experiences and observes every event that happens to him or her on a more deep and intense level than if the same events were to happen to others, whether they be positive or negative, beautiful or ugly. This 'hyper-examination' of the events that occurs in the artist's life is what



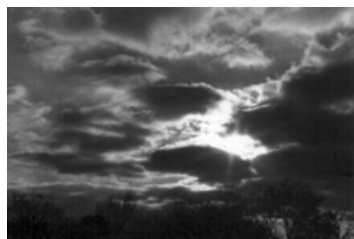
provides the artist with the opportunity to create, and is an indomitable tool that he or she must possess in order to advance beyond the first step of the Science of Art.

"The artist is a lonesome traveler in a lifelong quest for subjects to report on. The artist feels as if he or she is obligated to present the details of the human dream, reality and condition of his or her generation. The artist

wishes to experience everything life has to offer to find new material to incorporate into his or her work, and to learn about the self, for experience is the only way one can gain introspection and self-knowledge. The artist wants to live life for what it is meant to be; a continual journey for experience and truth. In the words of Henry David Thoreau, 'I went to the woods because I wished to live deliberately, to front only the essential facts of life, and see if I could not learn what it had to teach, and not, when I came to die, discover that I had not lived.'

"The exhibit that I held at Xando Coffee & Bar last month is entitled, entity: 'the urban jungle of devine debris.' The title is exactly what it says. There are no hidden metaphors. Like I said in the previous paragraph, life is a quest, a journey, an urban jungle of devine debris, and it is for the artist, the entity, to indulge his or herself in. Each photograph in the exhibit is just a small piece that I've retrieved from experiencing the urban jungle, and thus there is no need for each individual photograph to have its own title. The photographs speak for themselves.

"I am part of a small, burgeoning artistic movement, which originated in the Baltimore area, and became known as the Integral Generation. The Integral Generation are a group of young intellectuals who hold all of the same artistic ideas stated in the previous paragraphs but have exchanged the selflessness and naivete of the majority, for self-respect and an unquenchable thirst for knowledge, experience, and sophistication. An Integral is complete with oneself or is in search for completion."



Lite hopes to see more of Mr. Heilbrunn's work around town.

Alex Heilbrunn was born and raised in Baltimore. He is 17 years old, enjoys writing and painting and is "in no way limited in artistic depths in all three mediums." Major artistic and personal inspirations include Jack Kerouac, Allen Ginsberg, William S. Burroughs, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Henry David Thoreau, and Fiona Apple, and provided inspiration for the exhibit.

All photos by Alex Heilbrunn.

PATTIKINLOCK

The Gull Song

They are the clowns of light,
angels of lower air,
slapstick Punicellos. Look where
they coast up the cliffs of heat,
crying, canting there,
hang by the merest wingbeat.

May my song do the same:
climb up the frets of breath,
tongue the eternal name,
sing down the maw of death.

Arthur Glass

Stoned Angel

by
Stevan Allred

Bitter.

Baby makes a face when my milk lets down. Three or four hours into the rock my milk tastes bitter, but he's gotten used to it. That first taste makes his face scrunch up so cute. I love when he nurses, the way his mouth latches on. He's so strong. I can tell how much he needs me by how hard he sucks. Not like his father. Guzzetta doesn't need me, not anymore.

Guzzetta pays my rent sometimes but he never comes around to see his baby. Like he don't want to see.

He waits for me on payday, outside the hotel, up against the lightpole in his ratty leather jacket with his eyelids half closed. Walks me down to the bank and stands in line with me while I cash my check. He whispers in my ear, tells me he's got The Good.

Bread into flesh. Wine into blood. If a priest does it they call it a miracle. Priestly magic.

Oil into rock. Rock into smoke. If I do it, it's a crime and a sin.

Baby don't mind.

Magic. Before the rock's all the way cooked, while it's still small and gathering itself from the water and the heat and the baking soda. Glob of oil dead center in the rolling boil. Magic, how the oil finds the center and stays there. Magic, how the oil becomes rock.

Baby starts to fuss a little. All wrapped up in a blanket on the couch. He's squirmy but he won't fall cause he's wedged in tight with pillows. He cries a little, and I sing to him to let him know I'm here, *Them that's good shall get, Them that's not shall lose, So the Bible says, And it still is news* . . .

Baby loves when I sing. Quiets him right down.

Candlelight is best. Dark, like inside a chapel when I start to cook the rock. Blue flame from the gas so pretty, and with all the lights off the kitchen is like Midnight Mass on Christmas Eve. Something so special about to happen.

Alchemy. Making gold from base metals. Guzzetta taught me how. Baking soda and water and cocaine hydrochloride. Atoms and molecules. Baking soda strips the hydrochloride off and makes it disappear, steam rising in the air and gone.

What's left is pure. That little rock is an Act of Faith. Spend your whole paycheck on an eightball and dump it in the water and watch it dissolve. The only way to get it back is to cook it. Blue flame. The Refiner's Fire. You have to Believe. You got to get the flame just right so the water won't boil too hard, and keep it that way until the rock

comes. The Philosopher's Stone.

A miracle, right here in my kitchen.

That moment when I dip the baby spoon in the water and lift the rock out I feel like I should be on my knees. O-Father-For-give-Me-For-I-Have-Sinned. Ten Hail Mary's while I dry the lump out with the hair drier.

Baby sleeps a lot, which is a blessing. God looks out for us, each and every one, no matter what kind of sins we commit. God put the Vietnamese woman down the hall so she could watch my baby while I work. God put the Safeway store on the corner, and it's God who turns the eyes of the clerks away when I shoplift. And God made my baby a good baby so I can do the things I need to do.

Thank God for TV, it's always so dark in this apartment. I've always liked the way a TV lights up a dark room. Mostly I watch old reruns. I saw *The Flying Nun* last night.

Newsbreaks in between shows. This winter it's all Bosnia. Winter in Sarajevo, and how terrible the war is. A woman holds a crucifix above her head like a shield. Calling in the angels. People standing in line for water and a mortar round comes in from somewhere they can't even see. Blown to bits for a bucket of water.

They burned all the wood in Sarajevo last winter, and now there's none left.


Snow on the ground. Must be cold there.

Baby warm up against me, TV light flickering in the room, glass pipe on the floor where I can reach it. Only thing is my feet get so cold when I smoke the rock. Makes me shiver.

I'm going to quit. If I hadn't run into Guzzetta I wouldn't of spent my paycheck so fast. Wasn't much of a paycheck anyway. Doesn't matter, the money just comes and goes.

I only bought a gram. Is that such a crime?

Guzzetta is Bosnia. Sarajevo. Guzzetta is a mortar round, coming in from somewhere I can't see. I have no crucifix. My baby is my shield, my angel.

The way the light in the room changes from blue glow to dull daylight, I hate the dawn. All the mystery drains away. Baby and me rock back and forth in the morning light. My feet cold and I sing to him, the way my Mama used to sing to me, *Mama may have, Papa may have, But God bless the child that's got his own*. His eyes close and we lay down on the couch, keeping each other warm, and I sing us to sleep. 

CALLING ALL WRITERS! STOP!

You are **NOT ALLOWED** to put down this magazine without reading about Lite's 2001

Poetry & Short Fiction Contest

Winners in each category will receive the following prizes:

FIRST PRIZE: \$75

SECOND PRIZE: \$45

THIRD PRIZE: \$15

All winners will be featured at a special Lite Circle reading and will have their work published in *Lite: Baltimore's Literary Newspaper*

All entries must be postmarked no later than **December 31, 2001**. Reading fee: \$5.00 per story, \$3.00 per poem, \$10.00 for up to 6 poems. **No limit on submissions.** Manuscripts should be typed, double-spaced, with cover sheet containing title(s) of work, along with author's name, address, and telephone number. The manuscript should include the title, but not the author's name. Please include short bio. Winners will be notified by March 31, 2002. Maximum story length 6,000 words. Maximum poem length 50 lines. Please mail entries to:

The Lite Circle Literary Contest
P.O. Box 26162
Baltimore, MD 21210

For more info, write us or email lite@toadmail.com.
Or visit our web site at: www.litecircle.com.

COMPLETE LANDSCAPE

SHRUBBERY, HEDGE TRIMMING

OVERGROWN AREAS CLEARED

GARDEN DESIGN - PLANTING

JOE MARCUS 410-485-9568

Writing is a
Solitary Profession.
Life Doesn't Have to Be.

If you are interested in participating in a
new literary singles group, email
lite@toadmail.com.



DAVID OSTROWSKI
REALTOR®

Office: 410-931-6300
Cellular: 410-245-8026
Fax: 410-931-2853

For all of your real estate
needs in the Baltimore area.

WHITE MARSH TOWN CENTER
7984 Honeygo Boulevard / Baltimore, Maryland 21236

