

Northern Journeys

Volume No.25.2 Fall/Winter 2022-2023

A Magazine for the Arts, Humanities & Sciences

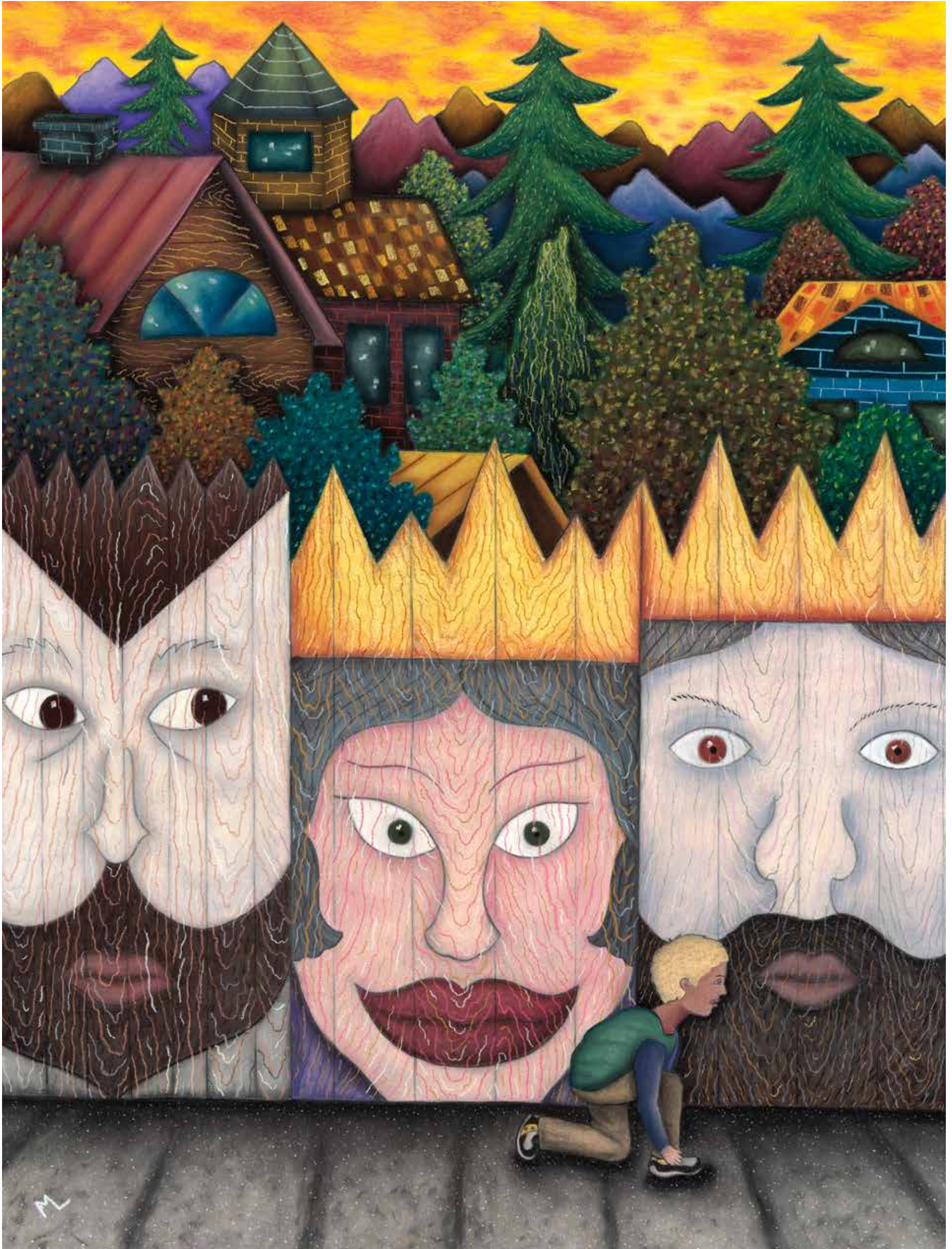


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A Magazine of the Arts, Humanities and Sciences

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NORTHERN JOURNEYS
A Magazine for the Arts, Humanities, and Sciences

We are issuing a call to all authors of prose and poetry and visual artists to send their writing and/or art any time of the year for consideration.

Northern Journeys celebrates 25 years of providing beginning, maturing and established writers and artists a venue to share their work with the region's readers. The magazine is made available primarily to communities throughout northern Idaho, into western Montana, and southern British Columbia. However, when the editor or publisher is traveling, the magazine makes appearances in Washington, California, and Nevada.

Prose, poetry and art may be submitted to:
norjour_tan@yahoo.com as an attachment. Art should be sent in jpeg format with a minimum of 300 dpi. Please contact Jason Thomas, at 208-597-3963. with questions.

Those interested in **advertising** may contact Jason Thomas, Publisher, at 208-597-3963.
We hope to hear from you!

Does God Cry?

By

Warren Carlson

Heart beat blood spurted out of Mother's nose as Father held her against the side of their pick-up beating her. Younger Son rounded the corner of the barn carrying a rifle and two rabbits he had caught in snares set in a rough circle around the compound. Father insisted that Younger Son was also patrolling the perimeter in case federal agents were lurking in the woods. He didn't guess that if were to happen, Younger Son would immediately surrender. He had even practiced slowly putting down his AR-15 and raising his hands.

Younger Son was not surprised by the violent scene in front of him. Not stopping to think of who he was or even who they were in exact terms except as part of something that needed to be ended, Younger Son dropped the rabbits and raised the rifle. He pulled from deep within himself the courage to say one word, "Stop!"

Father cast Mother aside deftly kicking her in the ribs. She crawled under the truck. Father turned to the boy with snarl that held all of his anger for a son that defied him in ways that he had never been able to clearly define or punish.

For years, here in the quiet woods, there had been a dance around death, a moving towards death by and for the cause, Family buffeted by a wind of violent words. In Father's ever narrowing, fanatical mind, revolution and death were overriding probabilities. Sometimes his fanaticism would start to slip away only to be brought back by a gathering of Father's Seven Followers. They arrived on motorcycles. They drank beer. They shot guns. They told racist jokes that required Younger Son's laughter in response.

Most nights Family listened to late night desert-originating-hate-radio talk shows under the hiss and yellow light of a kerosene lantern. Often the four of them on the couch together; Older Son next to Father, Mother on the other side, Younger Son next to her, Father's arms over their shoulders, holding them in place. In his mind, Father was also reaching out to gather the words of a big, yet intimate, overwhelming truth-conspiracy of fanatical

racism. Father had a PHILOSOPHY, a philosophy that connected, point to point to his own history and a philosophy that would resist any counter wind of reason.

Secretly, alone in the woods, Younger Son had a small feeling of hope for a redemptive wind to gather itself to save him. Sometimes as he walked his snare line he felt as if he was kicking aside the words Father had gathered, the hate the Father had gathered, the hate Father had promised would set them free when they attacked the Bureau of Land Management Office.

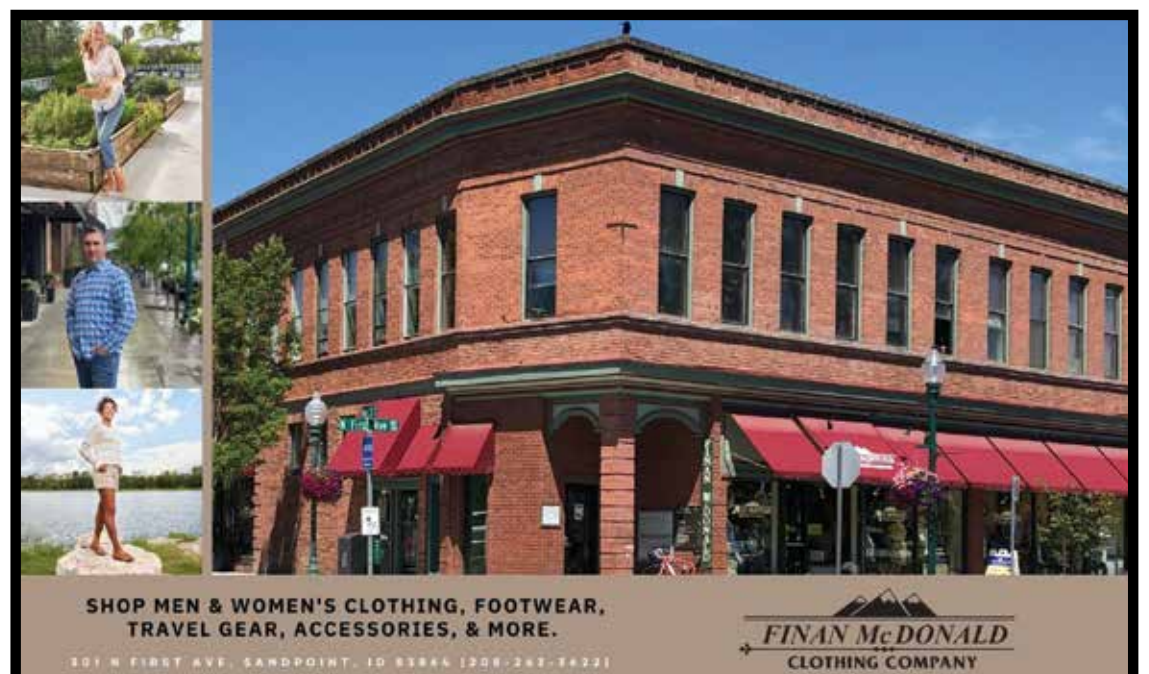
Younger Son sensed that this would not happen; that instead of starting a revolution Father's beliefs would wither away to a kind of desperate nothingness if a few more slowly moving years passed without action. Younger Son guessed Father knew this in some almost forgotten part of his soul. Younger Son often saw Father staring into the fire after his disciples had left for the night, an unfinished beer beside him, morosely searching for the words that would right the world. Alone with the fire, Family walking widely around him without speaking.

And all of this came up hard against Younger Son, one self against another. He remembered with shame the pleasing feeling of power and something on Father's side of joy and hatred as he held the AR-15 in his hands, a present for his sixteenth birthday, and pumped round after round into a rusted out, abandoned car found in a canyon off Forest Service Road 42.

All of that and love too, of Mother, from Mother, and hope in his own vague daydreams of escape; dreams that sometimes grounded him when walking barefoot in the forest waiting until he was out of sight of the house to remove his combat boots. Barefoot, he felt that the earth was holding him almost steady even while his heart was filled with regret that he had been forced out of school by

Father, his Mother protesting and taking a beating. He was now unable to seek any other wisdom. He often ran the trail that connected his rabbit snares so he would have time to cross the far meadow to a small spring and wildlife watering hole no one else knew about. He drank deeply.

Continued on page 11...





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Artworks of Sandpoint

Lucky Sandpoint! For almost 30 years Artworks has provided an upscale venue for local artists to exhibit their work. "Local Artists" does not connote, "amateur". The professionals at Artworks are individuals whose creations could, and in some cases are, displayed in high-end galleries all across the nation. The beautiful copper scenes of Denys Knight would be right at home on the walls of any New York art establishment. The stunning Fused Glass Artwork of Tara Glass would add class to any gallery. Both the stunning metal renditions of wildlife by Bandon Horton and the exquisite metals of wild native landscapes by Tylor Puckett are not excelled in National Geographic publications.

However, wall art is just a bit of the story. Women are thrilled to be wearing the jewelry of Debby Todd or Mark Gardner. The glass candle lights of Dianne Kenny glow through the evening in hundreds of Panhandle homes. Lisa Lund's Gourds are unrivaled by any offering of any South West Gallery. Pat Congleton repurposes unique, unworn fabric she finds in thrift stores and creates stunning one-of-a-kind outfits for woman. The inevitable response of friends, "Wow, where did you find that?!" Visitors and locals who wandering through inevitably remark, "This is a beautiful gallery."

Only a few of the gallery's professional artists are able to be featured in this month's *Northern Journeys*, which is again featuring Artworks and the creative artisans that reside in our hometown.



Gulls on a Log, 24 x 30, Photography

Foster Cline

Shares His Photographic Path

People look at my North Idaho tiles and large wall art, and congratulate me. Without false modesty, I tell 'em to congratulate God. Everywhere I point my lens, there is something worth savoring and saving.

In 1947, for my seventh birthday, mom and dad bought me a little Kodak Brownie Camera. And I have been taking pictures ever since.

I grew up spending many hours in my home dark room and grew to loving the smell of fixer and developer. Even now, when I smell vinegar, it reminds me of a photo tray full of stop bath.



Corry's Curls, 11 x 17, Photography

I travel all over the United States giving Love and Logic presentations and I'm old enough to truly appreciate, as younger people never can, our fabulous digital technology. My laptop computer and my seat on the plane turn into the a color darkroom with options far beyond my childhood fantasies.

All of us lucky enough to live in the Panhandle, live in a constant "Kodak moment". Everywhere we look, North Idaho people and our North Idaho scenery cry out to be photographed. Today, as I sit today at the computer and play with pictures, I feel I am seven years old again, having fun with a frozen moment in time and space. And thinking that perhaps you, too, will be as awe-stuck as I by a petrified moment in time.



View from Tom's dock, 12 x 20, Photography

Continued on page 8 and 9...

MONTANA VIEWPOINT©

By

Jim Elliott

Jim Elliott served sixteen years in the Montana Legislature as a state representative and state senator.

He lives on his ranch in Trout Creek.

GEORGE WASHINGTON—PATRIOT OR TRAITOR?

Many people who are opposed to mandatory Covid vaccinations hold themselves out to be patriots and call those in favor of mandates traitors. Pretty powerful words and it raises an interesting point as far as American history is concerned, namely, would these patriots of today consider George Washington a patriot or a traitor? Here's why. In 1777, Washington issued a mandate that his soldiers had to be vaccinated against smallpox, then known as variola. While British troops had built up an immunity to smallpox, the American troops had not. About one third of those who contracted smallpox died, and Washington feared greater losses to the disease than to battle, as had happened in the American loss in the battle for Montreal in 1775 where the disease had decimated American forces before the battle.

To address this concern, he ordered every one of his troops to be vaccinated against smallpox while they were in winter camp in Philadelphia and Morristown, New Jersey. It was done in secret, to prevent the British from knowing, because even the milder form of smallpox caused by the vaccination took three weeks to run its course, which would give the British enormous advantage if they attacked while the troops were recovering. The vaccination involved exposing a cut in a healthy soldier to pus from an infected person. Three percent of those vaccinations resulted in death. That made even getting vaccinated a patriotic act.

This mandatory vaccination may have been the key to victory over the British and the creation of America as a nation.

Some also argue that mandatory vaccination is unconstitutional because it deprives Americans of exercising their freedoms and liberty.

The Constitutional authority for vaccine mandates was decided in 1905 in *Jacobson v Massachusetts*. Jacobson, a Lutheran minister, was a prominent citizen of Cambridge, Mass. In response to a smallpox outbreak the city of Cambridge mandated smallpox vaccinations for all citizens, which state law gave the city the authority to do. They had imposed a five dollar fine on citizens who were not vaccinated. (The fine, of course, granted immunity only from prosecution not from smallpox.) Jacobson refused to get vaccinated or to pay, arguing that the only people he could infect would be those who made the same choice he had made, that is the unvaccinated. The city disagreed and took Jacobson to court over it. Jacobson argued that the mandate violated his liberty as protected by the 14th Amendment to the Constitution, he lost his case in district court and Commonwealth court

(Massachusetts is called a commonwealth, not a state), and again in the U. S. Supreme Court.

Here's what the Supreme Court had to say, as written by Justice John Marshall Harlan: "...the liberty secured by the Constitution does not import an absolute right in each person to be at all times, and in all circumstances, wholly freed from restraint." Furthermore, he wrote, the Constitution is based on "...the fundamental principle of the social compact...that all shall be governed by certain laws for the protection, safety, prosperity and happiness of the people, not for the profit, honor or private interests of any one man, family or class of men."

Let me return to that "commonwealth" designation. There are four commonwealths in the United States, Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, Virginia, and Kentucky. There is no real difference between a commonwealth and a state, but I like that the word implies a community of shared good fortune, of shared responsibility. The Preamble to the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts puts it nicely and is reflected in Harlan's opinion in the *Jacobson* decision, "...the body politic is formed by a voluntary association of individuals: it is a social compact, by which the whole people covenants with each citizen, and each citizen with the whole people, that all shall be governed by certain laws for the common good."

To put it differently, we are all in this together, all for one and one for all.

For a dispassionate account of this issue see the Wall Street Journal article at: [wsj.com/articles/the-long-history-of-vaccine-mandates-in-america-11631890699](https://www.wsj.com/articles/the-long-history-of-vaccine-mandates-in-america-11631890699).

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The whole valley beneath my window

breathes milky mist across earth's naked body,
holding secret its meadows and cottonwoods
under the silk.

Tense gray clouds, swollen to their edges, press
a prickly down of icy air to the earth. I feel
the weight of it

and listen to the silence of the rabbit tracks
spattered along the thin snow film
before me.

Small finches stir nearby branches, flutter
in a gusty conversation of wings
then settle, again,

into invisibility, their grays blending
with artistic genius into the leaf-
barren branches.

From nowhere, a cottontail appears, shakes ears
and tail with jerky twitches. Waits.
Jumps back

into the protection of its hollow, swallowed
safe, for now. Wispy gauze, having floated above
the land, tears open,

a ballet of shredding, crimson wounds beneath,
the seep of winter's aurora. Yet, even now,
the bleeding transforms

into delicate sprays of rose blossoms,
petals thrown from unseen multitudes,
a beatitude, announcement of morning sun:

the long battle with night, won, again.

Measure

I dreamed I was being measured
with a ruler made of river
water bursting from its mountain, pure
to the touch, flowing
toward some unknown
sea. And I wondered,
Who is doing this measuring?

I stood there, naked, waiting
for an answer, then remembered
how the water of the ruler
made a rushing sound
as it flowed through
the perimeter of its rule,
as a cadence of breath —

my breath,
each breath, in, out, in, out —
a phrase of wind
across a stretch of landscape,
this plane of mind, earth of all
I am — a spread of measures;
work, rest, play — metered

in tempo with the making,
a song of wonder
with which to gauge, wondering
then, while swimming slowly
up from the riverbed of sleep,
if how I measure
is exactly how I measure up.

Of Us

Vast green ribbons formed of light, curl
across the Alaskan night—magnetic rivers,
ebb and flow. They slow
then quicken up their pace to fill crevasses,
deeps of space. Breath
on this window,
silken lace.

I don't know why I wake and weep. Nearby,
my son and husband sleep. I stand between
their separate dreams, in streams
of inhale, exhale—sated. Their rhythmic breathing,
syncopated, floats
like music
softly weighted.

I think of how we're intertwined like loops
in this tatting that I find while fingering the edge
of my handkerchief. Beliefs
are views that some discuss. I see one thread that binds,
one truss—unnameable—
the source
of us.



Rainbow Brigade, 10 x 12, Acrylic

Now I am President of our Artworks Cooperative. And I'd like to say something about that. All of us are good friends, and I think that shows when we welcome you to the gallery. Our Christmas party is a Sandpoint standout of wine, and snacks, while everyone is surrounded by friends, good conversation and great art.

Together and individually, we contribute pieces and portions of sales to Bonner County charities and scholarships. Our gallery is ever changing as new art goes up. No matter how often you visit, it is always a new experience.

Dan Carpenter

I attended the University of New Mexico on a football scholarship. As the NFL didn't want me, I got my degree in Architecture. I also started painting, and found the Genre of "Wildlife and Western Art". My first wife, Judy, and I traveled to Shows from Nashville, Denver, Dallas, Denver, Scottsdale, Kansas City, Cody Wyoming, Jackson ,WY and all over N.M. and Colo, doing at least 10 shows a year, for nearly 20 years. This was a Great learning process as I "stole" from every Artist I met! In 2008 we found Sandpoint, Idaho, and settled here for the great Wildlife, Landscapes, kind people, and the tremendous number of local Artists, Authors, and Musicians that sustain all of us!

I like my paintings to reflect life and beauty pretty much the way God originally produced it, while, at the same time still expresses my unique style and personality.



Urban Animals, 24 X 30, Oil

show "a Lome" in almost any room. His paintings build relationships while inspiring discussion. It is artwork that makes you smile.

In addition to painting, Matt is a fiction author. His children's book, *The Absolute Truth about Woodpeckers*, won The Purple Dragonfly Book Award in 2022.

Matt lives in Sandpoint, Idaho with his wife, Abby, and his dog, Julia.

www.MattLome.com

An exciting piece of local news, Matt will be opening a teaching and learning studio for Art and Music in the Cedar Street Bridge this December. The studios are called, creatively, Cedar Street Studios, located on the 2nd floor, units 202a and 202b. The emphasis is on children's education, but adults are welcome, too!

Matt Lome

Where reality and fantasy are blurred, stories are born.

Matt Lome is an illustrative painter with a flair for storytelling. His playful style is both literal and impressionistic; both realistic and whimsical. It invites all viewers to talk, play, and interact with each other. In children's bedrooms across the land where mothers and fathers kiss their children goodnight, asking, "What story are we going to tell about the animals tonight?"

His works have called out to be hung in the hallways and wards of children's hospitals. His unique and remarkable oils and pastels appeal to discerning adults who proudly



The Guitar Player, 20 X 30, Pastel

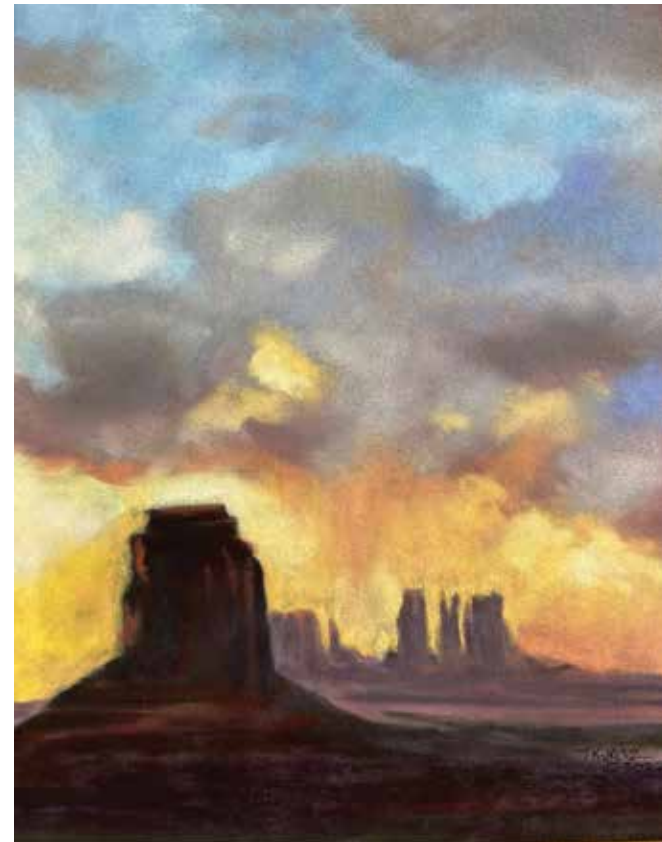
T. Kurtz

Living in North Idaho for 25 years, I discovered a source of material that astounds me. I started working with pastel when I inherited my grandparent's art supplies. "They loved to create, and both enjoyed retirement by painting and drawing." I had always wanted to try pastel but was frustrated by student sets and couldn't justify the cost of professional art supplies. Here they were, just begging to be used. I found suede mat board at several local frame shops. Placing the buttery pastels to the soft surface sings beneath my fingers.

I am now a full-time artist who now teaches art classes out of my studio and The Joyce Dillon Studio — Pend Oreille Arts Council (artinsandpoint.org) Between that and doing several art shows during the year, I have a fulfilling career. Visit my website at tkurtz.com



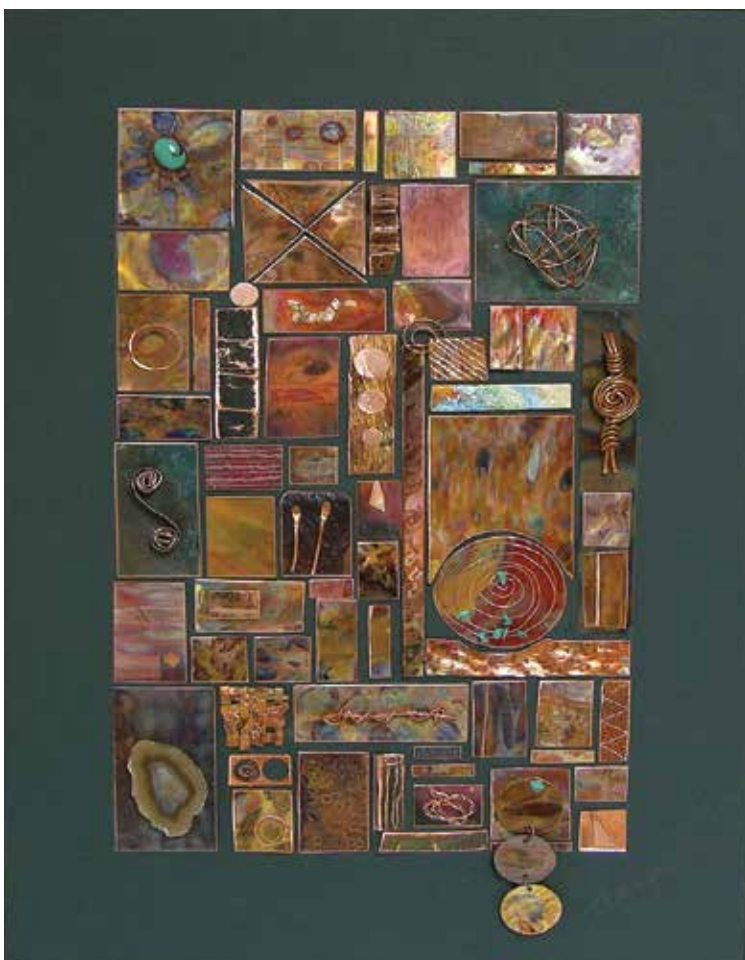
Finding its Way, 30 x 40, Pastel



Monument Valley, 8 x 10, Pastel

Denys Knight

I love copper with small silver highlights. I foldform copper sheets, into new forms and designs using hammers, vises, anvils, dremels, jewelry making tools, and chemicals, then I'm thrilled when I "flame paint". This involves using a torch on metal rather than using a brush on medium. The color combinations, patterns and surface changes are delightfully unending. As every piece evolves and is unique.



Remains of the Day, 14 x 21, Copper



Isle of Eigg, 16 x 18 x 1/2, Copper

For more than forty years, and in many nations, I've taught lettering, color, fine detail painting, and design. In the past decade, I've found a new artistic home in pounding metal, and flame painting. The knowledge gained from previous years in other artistic fields has somehow greatly enhanced my abilities with this new medium.

Working with metal, and allowing it to find its sense of form without a contrived or forced plan is liberating. The metal absolutely speaks for itself, insisting that what I might consider a mistake morphs into a new beginning down an exciting improved path. The nature of the metal insists on its own outcome. I assist in allowing it to speak for itself.

For further information about Denys and photos of additional artwork, see Northern Journeys, Vol. 22.2, Western Edition, Fall/Winter 2019-2020.

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Priest River Hardware, 1200 Hwy 2, 448-1621

Industrial & Home Cleaning

Peachy Clean, 509-671-6694

Plumbing

East River Plumbing, 208-920-0057, 208-920-0058

Real Estate

Suzie Hatfield, Century 21, Priest River, 208-290-7945

John Weyant, Century 21, Priest River, 208-610-5051

Restaurants

Mi Pueblo Mexican Restaurant, 5436 Hwy. 2, 448-011

Roofing

Rival Roofing, 309 E. Valley St., So., Oldtown, ID 208-610-6656

Sandpoint

Antiques & Gifts

Fosters Crossing, 504 Oak St., 263-5911

Art Galleries

Art Works Gallery, 214 N. 1st Ave., 263-2642

Ward Tollbom's Hen's Tooth Studio, 323 N. First, 263-3665

Automobile Services

Emerald Automotive, 900 Bonner Mall Way, 263-3483

Melody Muffler, 602 Pine St., 208-263-2812

Nelson Automotive, 1111 Michigan St., 208-263-4911

Clothing

Eve's Leaves, 326 North First Ave., 263-0712

Coffee Houses

Evans Brothers, 524 Church St., 265-5553

Events

Festival At Sandpoint 888-265-4554, festival@sandpoint.com

Health Care

Internal Medicine, Sandpoint Business & Events Center, 102 Euclid Ave., #202, 263-6876

Heating & Air Conditioning

Pend Oreille Mechanical, 1207 Hwy. 2, 263-6163

Physical Fitness

Natural Fitness Gym, 1103 W. Superior, 263-0674

Realty

Carol Curtis, Century 21 Riverstone, 316 N. 2nd Ave., Ste. A-1, 208-290-5947

Lakeshore Realty North, 116 N. First, 263-3166

Restaurants

Bab's Pizzeria, Corner of Hwy 2 & Division, 265-7922

Café Trinity at City Beach, 58 Bridge St., 255-7558

Di Luna's American Bistro, 207 Cedar St., 263-0846

Eichardt's Pub, Grill & Coffeehouse, 212 Cedar St., 263-4005

Evans Brothers, 524 Church St., 265-5553

Mr. Sub, 602 N. 5th, 263-3491

The Pie Hut, corner of 5th & Church, 265-2208

Second Avenue Pizza, 215 S. 2nd Ave., 263-9321

Spud's Restaurant, 102 N. 1st, 265-4311

Tango Cafe, 414 Church St., 263-9514

Specialty Shops & Services

Blue Lizard, Native American Gallery, 100 Cedar St., Ste. B., 255-7105

Carousel Emporium, on the Cedar Street Bridge, 263-4140

Creations, arts, crafts, children's boutique, Cedar St. Bridge, 304-7384

Monarch Marble & Granite, 336 McNearney Rd., 263-5777

Pend Oreille Mechanical, 1207 Dover Hwy., 263-6163

Sandpoint Garage Doors, 351 McGhee Rd., Ste. 103, 263-4040

Sharon's Hallmark 306 N. 1st Ave. 263-2811

Vapor Planet, 819 Hwy 2, Pioneer Square, 263-9561

Spirit Lake

Restaurant

Mi Pueblo, 6249 W. Maine St., 623-2532

WASHINGTON (509 Area Code)

Newport

Arts

Create Art Center, 900 W. 4th, 447-9277

The Gallery, 331 S. Washington, 447-1036

Automobile & Truck Services

Napa Auto Parts, 300 S. Union, 447-4515

Newport Towing, 137 S. Newport, 447-1200

Perfection Tire and Auto Repair, W. 311 Walnut, 447-3933

Salesky Service Center, 333209 Hwy. 2, 447-4767

Cable

Concept Cable, 412 S. Union, PO Box 810, 437-4544

Real Estate

Northwest Professional Real Estate, 301 N. Union, 447-3144

Restaurants

Mi Pueblo, 311 N. Washington, 447-3622

Industrial & Home Cleaning

Peachy Clean, 509-671-6694

Specialty Shops & Services

Clark Electric, 231 Washington Ave., 447-2319

Griffin's Furniture, Floors, & Mattresses, S. 217 Washington, 447-4511

North Country Enterprises - excavating, hauling 671-2179

Canada

Creston

Lodging

Creston Valley Motel, 1809 Canyon, 250-428-9823

Downtowner, 1218 Canyon Street, Hwy 3, 1-800-665-9904

Valley View Motel, 216 Valley View Dr, 800-758-9334

Kaslo

Lodging

Kaslo Motel, 330 D. Avenue, 250-353-2431, 877-353-2431

Restaurants

Buddy's Front Street Pizza, 417 Front St., 250-353-2282

The Treehouse Restaurant, 419 Front St., 250-353-2955

Nelson

Art Centers

Oxygen Art Centre, 3-320 Vernon, 250-352-6322

Touchstones Nelson-Museum of Art & History, 502 Vernon St., 250-352-9813

Specialty Shops & Services

Craft Connection, gift store and fine art gallery, 378 Baker St., 250-352-3006

Does God Cry? continued from page 5...

Younger Son clicked off the safety and the barrel steadied in his hands. His vision was reduced to a cone shaped tunnel- Father at the narrow end! Father snarled "Put down the gun you young pup," and advanced bent sideways and crunched like a mad dog. The snarl in his throat the sum of all that he had endured in his life; all his failures, his losing the family ranch over grazing rights, his jail sentence, landing in a tumble down cabin surrounded by a stunted, logged over forest and before all that, his first wife leaving him and their home town by joining the army. Then the new marriage to Mother who brought her two boys with her and survived the violent times without producing for Father a Real Son, blood of his blood, heart of his heart, which to Mother had come to mean a blessing from God.

After all the years of looking down, Younger Son looked directly into the fear in Father's eyes. When he saw anger blinding the fear he pulled the trigger.

Younger Son pulled the trigger tight as if he was pulling something almost lost against his heart; something to hold on to. The first bullet knocked Father upright, the second one knocked him down. Younger Son held the trigger against everything Father had tried to take from him. He did not feel that he was in a dream. He felt that he had come fully awake to see without a touch of remorse that Father was an evil beyond what one man should be, an evil beyond what his seven disciples could hold with him, an evil beyond what outsiders could imagine.

Younger Son's vision returned to normal but he still held the trigger down. He heard each bullet and saw the dust from the bullets that were missing the body that was being banged across the dirt of the front yard, a body that was still taking bullets, a twisting, dead thing on the ground. He saw a look of joyless gratitude on Mother's face as she peered out from under the truck.

Younger Son felt a great calmness when the bullets stopped. He eased his finger off the trigger and threw the hot, smelly, now useless artifact of his life into the bushes and looked down at the torn, bloody rags with half a face that had been Father.

The woods, the blessed, peaceful, indifferent woods, returned to quiet and with few words spoken Mother and Younger Son knew what had to be done.

Only fire could end this place.

They dragged the loose, broken body into the house and pushed it under a bed. They loaded the truck with camping gear. Younger Son pried up a floor board in the wood shed and retrieved the cash Father had hidden there. When the pick-up was loaded, Younger Son made a bundle of kindling and soaked it with gasoline from the storage tank by the barn. While he held the torch, thinking half coherently of the Statue of Liberty, Mother lit it for him, for both of them, for a hope of future light and they walked calmly into the house and set the flames against the bookcase that held only books on firearms and revolution. They stood arm in arm watching until the flames took hold. They drove away in silence filled with close feelings

of revenge which neither of them would ever, in their lives in a distant state with new names, think of as evil.

With a snarl that showed all his anger of the past years for a son that defied him in secret ways just below younger son's words and obedience and the Family more and more in a dance near, around death, moving towards a rebel's death in battle against the enemy, in the glory of the casue, threat of death in Father's eyes, in his ever narrowing fanaticism, his eyes alone at times silencing any question of Family or followers.

Now in an unexpected moment, a moment that eclipsed all that had come before, death appeared with the raising of a gun barrel

For the first time in the family it was Younger son who held death as his own and only had to release it into his father's face seen clearly in line with the gun barrel. As the years of Family's isolation passed- for Younger Son in a kind of protecting numbness, for Mother in fear, and for Older Son, now sixteen and helping his father log, and in a mimic that sometimes even Father privately found unsettling, Older Son, now away at a secret paramilitary camp, spoke in passionate death threats against migrants, interlopers, wetbacks, jungle bunnies, and jews.

warrencarlsonwriter.com

This story first appeared in Shark Reef a literary magazine.

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Moon Over Schweitzer, 24 x 66, Photography, Foster Cline

Night Lies Quietly, Waiting

By Susan M. Botich

Black endless night,
shredded by small tears
of light — suns, spheres,
disturbances throughout the void —
lies quietly waiting

for you to choose.

Chaos of debris — these
worlds, systems — seems also the way of love:
the way your lover disturbs you,
makes a good mess of your bed, hair,
assumptions,

the way he does.

This night lies quietly, waiting
with you for that needed other
sphere to be drawn in, held close,
inescapable attraction,
cohesion — romance,

that marriage of bodies.

Out these windows, see the endless
other spheres, other lights:
disruptions, tears, poems
cut, no one but the lover
and beloved can possibly decipher.



Fisherman's Island, 24 x 36, Photography, Foster Cline



Water Ballet, 24 x 36, Pastel, Matt Lome

Silent Night

by Susan M. Botich

A hawk flies wide circles at dusk—
her broad wings forming a sister shadow
that skirts along the field below—and sings
a cry of hunger.

Over the nearby hill, a crowd of big-box stores, crackling
piped-in holiday spirit, herds shoppers into an obedient frenzy.

Driving away from the neon, wildness
stretches the desert to edges of stars. Mists curl
across this valley, snake the long highway
into the gray settle toward darkness.

The prerecorded blaring of five minutes ago, now faded away.
Just the memory lingers, the empty aching of wanting to possess more.

The hawk dives, pierces the sky
for the life sought below—small pulse,
but enough—while evening spills
its countless constellations.

Earth, under the hollow of her great wings,
and blood, flowing, kissing her talons, soak
one into the other,
wholly silent.

When I Think of You, My Friend

by Susan M. Botich

~ in light of Susan Sara

My friend, I always think of you
as a goddess, dancing
the swirling dance, the one

in which you hold a candle
nestled in each palm
and move them impossibly

through the room's air; your breath
so at ease we can't find any strain
or need for push. There's just that feeling

of being buoyed along in your current.
Your eyes, like river,
how she caresses the stones,

giving them excellent purpose.
Your arms, tendrils of wind,
your hands, the flickerings of stars.

Shoulders, breast, belly, thighs, all
earth, the way of beginnings, all
potential, poems while in bloom.

You dance your poems across our gazes
and ride storms of openings, questions,
inclinations toward the vastness.

Lost

by Susan M. Botich

Sometimes you lose a thing—
a sock, a watch, a pen.
Sometimes, you might become lost
inside a thought, a question, the swell
of the moment. Time becomes lost, then,
losing its talon grip.

One day, I became lost
to family, country, the world
I'd inhabited. That's when I started
journeying away. I looked
for what I could hold
true, self-evident.

I visited islands,
cities, seashores, forested lands,
and stayed for a while,
finding what lay in front of me,
when held up to the light,
reflected everything that lay behind.
I found this puzzling.
Was I losing my mind?

Then I came to find everything I needed
was wherever I looked
whenever I looked *intently*.
Love, for example. Or freedom. Peace.
Sometimes in a house, or a window, a glance,
a gesture, a touch, or even just a small string
of words.

*Everything in the universe moves
inside the rhythm you walk,
I remember a friend saying to me,
if you're willing to lose all sense
of distance, separation,
apportioning.*

Begging

by Susan M. Botich

his eyes
a gathering of cloud ships
anchored in a bay of skies

kiss the populous, those spies
who dream him with their tinsel dreams
his eyes

sing promise sweet as sirens' cries
for sailors, all who are not tied
anchored in a bay of skies

sail the ocean till it dies
and all that swims within
his eyes

silk beacons, moons of sighs
impossible light constellations
anchored in a bay of skies

the thronged beg on their knees the prize
how will they find what lies behind
his eyes
anchored in a bay of skies

the day

by Susan M. Botich

~ a dream, meditation, prayer

the day, a glass lake
the moments, skipping stones
blanket love spread out

endless sky watching over
we share our day until
sky becomes the color

of the lake, and the lake
the shade of dream
when night's horizon rises

we stand and turn to greet it
then walk the beach
to shore's shimmer edge

the lake, a glass day
the sands, living stories
each grain, one life

written full
a vessel on the waters
sings as it approaches

breathless, we
step from the edge
and while our feet lift

from beach to boat, the lake
laps pearls
beneath our heels

Gifted

by Susan M. Botich

A filament hums around the moon.
I can't turn away. I never could.

As a girl, I'd gaze at the moon and listen—
its light threading through the universe—

and I would whisper back, knowing no one else
could hear. Moon, constant, enduring, strong

enough to pull the oceans into roaring.
Thinking of this, I smile. Even while knowing

the crush of day threatens. All the pain
of all the things that cut and sting mean nothing,

now. In the deep of night, the moon there
spilling light—whether sliver or river of it.

This embrace is as real to me as the grass
growing in the silence, growing with no argument,

yet slowly breaking up the pavement and asphalt
laid down by all those hands bent on domination.

The Night, Curving

by Susan M. Botich

I walk beneath the canopy of evening —
sky fading, clouds pressing nearer. Earth
already moist: the promise of rain.

Nests of rosebushes — swelling petals
of lavender, coral and yellow — quiver
in the breeze. One slow breath:

the world, the earth, the grass
cutting through, breaking apart
the carefully laid-out sidewalk stretches.

Ahead, there's an assurance, real as that
hint of rain, though just barely felt.
One breath. Deep. One moment. Long

strides bring a home about my shoulders.
A sunset window calls: a gathering
of dusk. Time waits inside my gaze

through the amorphous. Out into the endless,
deepening sky. People shout, dogs
bark, cats cry, the routine of traffic. All of it

fades to nothing. Only
one thing to hear. Now. The night,
curving into place.

Always The Moon

by Susan M. Botich

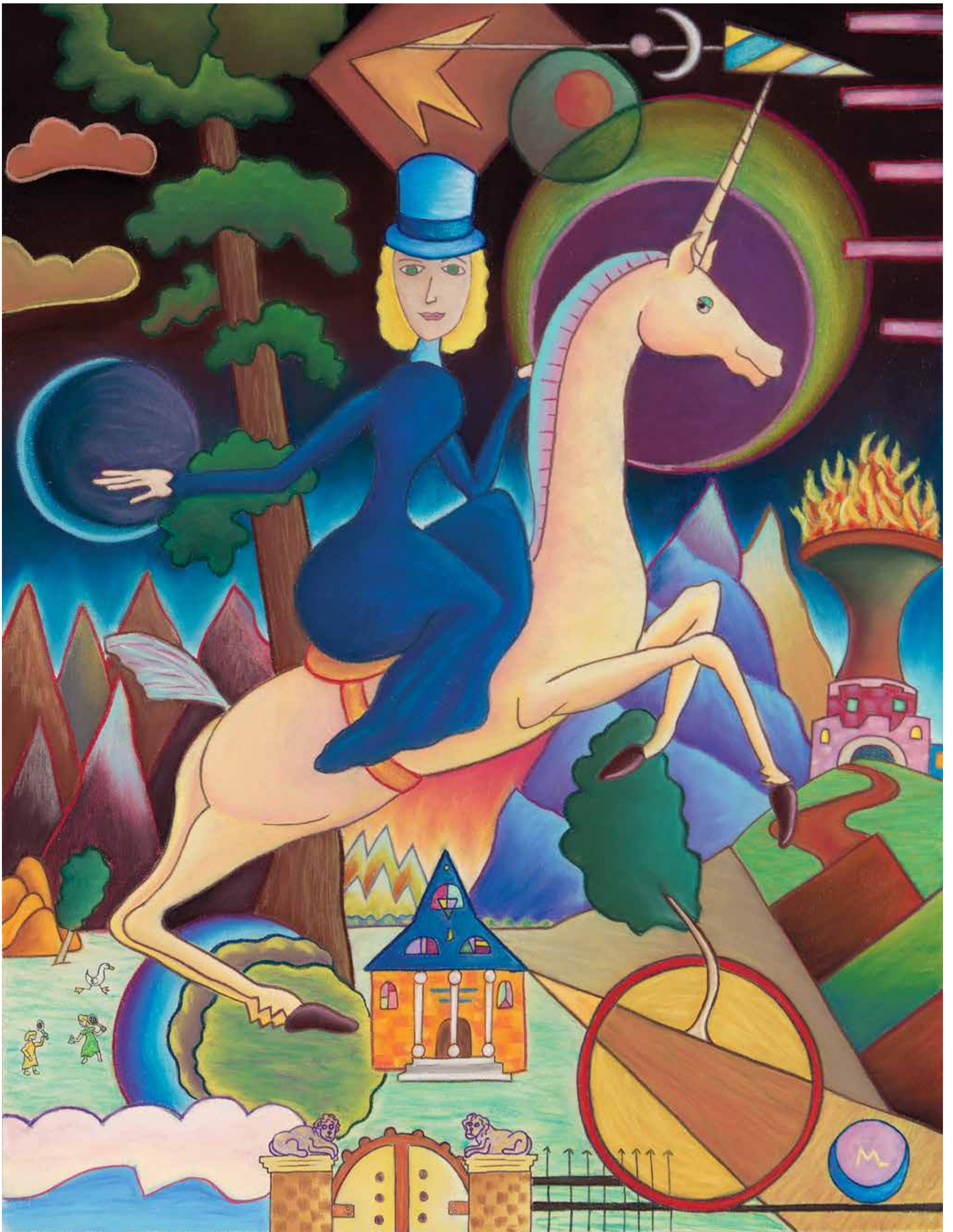
Waking at night, having dreamed,
I sense someone reaching for me.
No touch brushes my skin, though
arousal tremors beneath.

From behind the drapes, soft light
steals into the room, floats
onto the bed I have now abandoned.
Parting the drapes, I bathe in moon.

Husband away on business, tonight
I let moon be my companion.
Both embraced by night, we silently watch
one another, emptying ourselves.

I breathe in sync with the long, slow
breath of night, paced by moon,
its current and phase always moving
as my deepest own:

Reflection binds us. Together,
we share tidal rhythms — that thrum
beneath the light — blood of the body,
ocean under moon's nod.



Woman on Horse, 20 X 30, Pastel, Matt Lome