

A photograph of a cityscape shrouded in thick fog. In the foreground, a black street lamp with a glowing white globe stands on the left. To its right, a tall, leafless tree reaches its branches towards the sky. The background shows a hazy view of a city with buildings and a bridge, with a single light reflecting on the water in the distance. The overall mood is quiet and atmospheric.

TIME AND PLACE
a cultural quarterly

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Ninth Floor Press

We are all of a particular time and place. The space we occupy influences who we are, what we think, how we act, re-act, and what we create. **Time and Place** is about capturing the creativity of a particular moment of the artist's life.

If you wish to contribute a piece to **TIME AND PLACE**:

There are no restrictions as to subject matter or content (the right not to accept a contribution is reserved, mind you.) Each contribution must have an accompanying paragraph detailing the significance of the time and place you were in when the piece was inspired, created, formed, birthed, or otherwise captured, along with a brief biography.

Copyright remains with the artist or writer.

Please send your submissions to ninthfloorpress@gmail.com

Contribution guidelines:

Writing: Words of any type (prose, poetry, fiction, non-fiction,) no more than 500.

Art: Acceptable formats are PC compatible (.tif, hi-res .jpg, .pdf., 300 dpi.)

Photography: Colour, Black and White (.tif, hi-res .jpg, .pdf., 300 dpi.)

Editor: Ed Shaw

Layout/Design: Nancy Benoy

Cover photo: Ed Shaw, 2012

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Macaroni and Cheese for Boys

(from a forthcoming book I hope to title ‘Cooking Unconsciously’)

Shout up the stairs, ‘WHAT DO YOU WANT FOR LUNCH’. Don’t wait for a reply. Turn up the radio, and go to kitchen.

Fill a small pot two thirds with water and start boiling it. Leave the kitchen. Check your e-mails. When your son comes down the stairs and says ‘How come you’re not making my lunch?’, answer ‘I am making your damned lunch. Find your brother, he’s got a surprise for you.’ Compose a reply to your friend explaining why you won’t be going to the cool event this weekend. Try to find a heroic way to describe ‘umpteenth birthday party’.

Get some macaroni. Don’t look for wheat pasta because your wife has gotten rid of all that, after she read that book. Don’t use the rice pasta because we save that for the times when that kid who only eats five ingredients comes for a play date. Put three handfuls of noodles in the boiling pot. Watch the angry water attack the noodles and reflect on the slightly sadistic delight you take watching something boil. Stare until it gets perilously close to boiling over, then turn the stove down.

Grab some hard cheese (it doesn’t matter what kinds, it’s been years since you’ve had provocative adult cheeses in the fridge). Find some yoghurt, mustard, salt, flour (not wheat, please see above), butter, and milk . Set it on the counter. Think back to the time when you had more exotic ingredients to cook with. When cooking was an always unfolding adventure.

Pull the box grater from wherever the hell it has gone now. Hand grate cheese into a tiny mountain on the cutting board. Sprinkle a handful of flour on the cheese. Squeeze a wad of mustard on the flour. Add a larger wad of butter and yogurt on top of that. Don't allow these ingredients to topple from the peak of the cheese mountain. That's critical. Sprinkle some salt and a symbolic yet ineffectual amount of spice on top. The spice is necessary; your kids don't want it, but you have to include it as a tiny declaration of your principles.

Consider the cheese mountain for a second as a consolidated, diversified amalgam of fats. Then start to appreciate it as a metaphor of your lifetime of successes and/or failures, both as a parent and/or human. Think to yourself: 'Yes, goddammit, I still home cook for the family, even if it's the same god dammed thing day after day after day'. Think, "No, I wouldn't exactly consider myself a 'happy' chef'.

Continue staring at the cheese mountain until the noodles reach pliancy. Then stare at the noodles as a metaphor of your future ambitions. Exhale slowly.

Drain the water. With your hand, or a spatula, put the cheese mountain into the noodles. Add a little milk to get things started. Stir until the cheese melts and unites with the macaroni, or until it all goes to hell and the cheese recoils into an inseparable blob around your stirring utensil. Regardless of the outcome, yell to the children that lunch is now.

Cover the pot. Find the ketchup. Seat the boys at the table. They might eat it, they might not. Whatever remains is to be silently and moodily eaten by you over the sink.

Hamilton, Sunday, June 2, 2013:

I had just finished making lunch for my kids, and it got me thinking about the things I cook so automatically I no longer register what it is I am actually doing.

Tor Lukasik-Foss is a performer, visual artist and writer based in Hamilton ON.

www.torlukasikfoss.com

<http://iamacharlatan.blogspot.ca>

Scot Cameron

Abandoned



Manitoulin Island, July, 2012:

I often spend my time driving around back roads trying to find interesting things to photograph. Two of my favourite subjects are interesting cloud formations and skies as they are constantly changing and will only last for a brief moment. Abandoned buildings and objects are equally as interesting as it has taken years or decades to transform them to their current form. Capturing such contrasting moments in time in the same image is the reason why I will continue to travel aimlessly down roads with no particular destination.

Scot Cameron is a writer, photographer, and skater. He lives and plays in Hamilton with his wife and two kids. You can find Scot carving a bowl on his skateboard or hitting the slopes on his snowboard. His current project is to document up-and-coming Hamilton skaters.

Ed Clayton

Lottery Winner

my grandfather was a lottery winner
not the biggest prize
still
it was close
for a moment,
staring down
at the ticket
quiet
the standing ovation
but no encore

bus
to Toronto
early hours
before the bustle,
sunshine at noon
cheque in hand
uptown
passing street vendors
reminiscing

broken sidewalk
falling hard
concrete chasing humility into worn skin
knuckles bleeding attention

5 dollars
a tip to the hotdog man
taking care with his band-aids
and standing up
my grandfather
the lottery winner

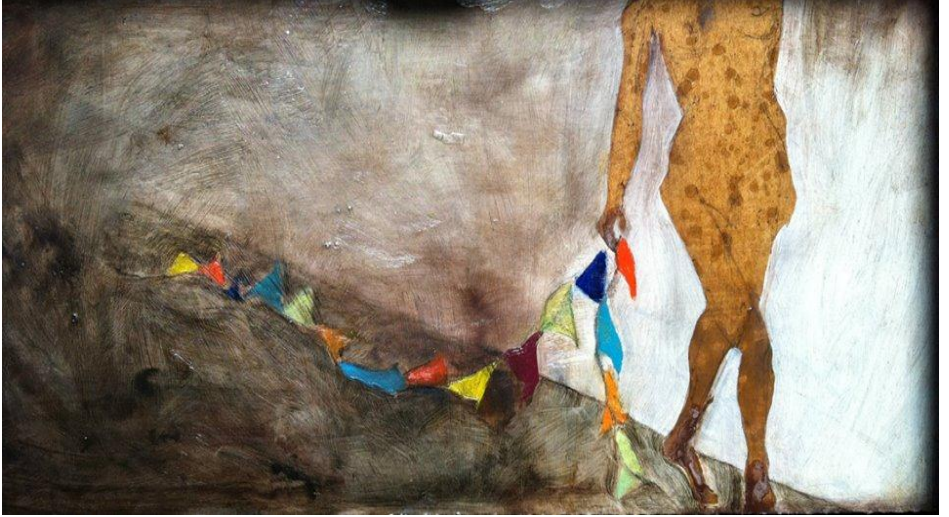
Orillia, 2008:

In line at a local convenience I was struck by a lottery machine playing that winning jingle. My grandfather got as close as anyone I know to winning the big one. I think he had all the numbers but the last. The payout ended up being only a few thousand bucks. He was in his mid 90's and set out on a solo journey by bus to Toronto to collect his dough. Walking away with cheque in hand he took a nasty spill. It was this juxtaposition of fortune and misfortune that has always stayed with me.

Ed Clayton is a long time Hamiltonian and poet who occasionally buys lottery tickets.

Sonya Maheux

Follow Me I



Calgary, Toronto, Hamilton, 2001 – 2013:

I began exploring a more representative expression of the figure in my work with this piece in 2001. I was seeking to further explore; to establish 'who I am' and 'what I do' as an artist. I needed to challenge myself and push beyond doing what was comfortable and known. Inspired by figurative painter Egon Schiele's honest, raw and often unflattering portrayals of the human body, I hesitantly began to experiment with the figure, something I had only done in a very abstract way before. I wanted to express an honest vulnerability: capturing a secret private moment like stepping out of the shower to grab your towel. I toyed with this painting for 12 years. Leaving it and coming back to it until it finally spoke to me. Now my next 12 year journey begins. Perhaps I'll be daring enough to include a face this time.

Sonya Maheux was born in Ontario and has lived across Canada from coast to coast. She studied art at the University of Calgary and holds a BFA in drawing, painting and set design. Sonya lives and works in Hamilton with her husband and son. When not in her studio, Sonya can often be found running the Bruce trail training for her first marathon.

Alison McKinnon

My One Hit Wonder

I see Chloe.

Not the friend.

Not the neighbour's kid.

Not the co-worker.

The fragrance.

The small peach box with white lettering sitting on the department store shelf.

The box brings the scent.

The scent brings her back.

Not the last her.

Not the her of morphine and methadone listening to the looped music of her life.

Not the her of drains, bags and stints tying her to this world.

That was not her.

She was purple silk dresses,

And floral wallpaper.

White wine spritzers,

With pretty toes.

Bone dry chocolate cake,

And succulent meat pie.

A pixie cut,

With earrings and necklace to match.

She was training bras and rat tails.

Road trips and silly songs.

Nail biting spooner.

And queen of the kaftan.

My cheerleader and secret keeper.

My so bad its good decorator.

She was that wacky Christmas ornament.
And the perfect birthday card.

The fragrance.

The box.

The scent.

The woman, the daughter, the sister, the aunt, the partner,
the friend.

She was my one hit wonder.

My other mother.

And still this was not her.

Hamilton, December, 2012:

My step mother died three years ago from pancreatic cancer. She was my champion. I knew I would write about her but I didn't know when or what it would look like. When I think of her the first images to emerge are those of her while sick – a skeleton of her former self. When I saw that box of perfume on the department store shelf beautiful memories flooded back. That is the Pat I remember now and the one I cherish.

Alison McKinnon is a freelance writer living in Hamilton with her husband, two daughters, two dogs, two rats, and a cat.

Nancy Benoy

Untitled (detail) Acrylic and Gel, 2013



Hamilton, June, 2013:

I am always snapping quick photos of my paintings as I create. I love the look and feel of the wet, opaque, string gel drizzled on top other textured layers. In time the gel will dry, becoming clear and hard. I never really know how a painting will end up, but I very much revel in the process.

Nancy is an artist and art educator who lives in Hamilton, and enjoys studio life (as well as the cafes and shops, albeit perhaps a bit too much) in the heart of James Street North, Hamilton.

www.nancybenoy.webs.com

A Gust of Wind

We parked at the 1850s Band Council building and entered the low building across from it. I don't often use the word serendipity, as it sounds saccharine, but here it fit. Defined as a 'gift of discovery', our entrance in the Sunrise Trading Post was certainly serendipitous, although this didn't dawn on me right away. Instantly I knew this was not a 'gift shop' for kitschy crafts; this was the studio of a master stone carver. Power tools, air compressors, hoses, bits, and dust, were everywhere. Despite the attempt at a gallery-style display of sculptures on glass shelves, it was a losing battle against the debris of creation.

When we entered I thought this will be a short visit. One small front room with sculptures the quality I knew were beyond our means. Not much else on display: how long could it take? Three minutes? But then Jamie Henry stepped up from the back and welcomed us. After sussing us out to see if we were Native art collectors (no) and after hearing the story of our long and convoluted journey bringing us to the 'territories', he turned to our kids and proceeded to teach them about time travel, the eternal supremacy of love, our symbiotic interconnection to the earth and other living beings, and the power of personal volition.

Completely unexpected, this unlikely little place is a repository of pedagogical wealth. Henry's art, through creativity and the beauty of art, with narrative teachings infused in his work, is an example that culture is hard to lose. It is deeper than any groove in a stone carving. It is not leather moccasins, or hunting with spears.

It is not lost with the introductions of cars or relocation to reserves. Culture is deeper.

It can be expressed and have meaning in objects and place. But materials are representations of meaning, and become imbued with the meanings of value to a culture by the people who embody that culture.

Jamie Henry is certainly a teacher of Native philosophy, and his stone creations are markers of timeless, universal knowledge, and wisdom. Each piece of art a container of Mohawk and Six Nations meaning and messages. His art is also political and peace building, reminding us, differences aside, there are things we share: good days and bad. Positive feelings and negative ones. We are all dependent on the earth. We all need love. The wind, represented in the sculpture we bought (perfect for us sailors), carries our experiences, like messages in a smoke signal, sounds across the water, or information through cyberspace, to others the world over.

I'm not sure what our children took home from this day; I hope some of the lessons will stick. I'm not even certain I really care if they 'get it' that cultures are deeper than our material possessions on the surface may suggest. I'm happiest if they absorb the messages of peace, that despite our differences and distances, we can connect, relate and empathize across time and space.

Ohsweken, May 21, 2013:

Our intention was to expand on what two of our kids were learning as part of their Grade 3 curriculum. My concern is their lessons focus too much on the past, a representation of aboriginal culture from the time of the early settlers. I don't doubt the impressions they are getting are as politically correct as they are archeologically sound. The aboriginal people in their texts are certainly of the noble rather than cruel savage sort, and the detailed description of their ways of life - hunting, gathering, home life, family structure - all come from the archeological records. What is bothersome is that the cultural teaching appears very stunted.

Sonya de Laat is, among other entities, a photographer and a scholar. Her interests are in capturing people in their lived environments, and using photography for social awareness and justice.

Canal Road

Dad was drunk. It was December, not Christmas yet, but I don't remember exactly which day. It was already dark outside. We were on our way home for supper. The car was stalled, the 63 Chevy Impala, our second car. We were stopped in a line of traffic on Beach Road. It was snowing, the flakes getting fatter. He laid his head back and closed his eyes. "I'm gonna sleep," he told me.

I knew the cars behind us were going to start honking. One did, three steady blares.

"Go to hell," my dad muttered.

"We have to get out of their way," I said. I looked over my shoulder. "Can you try starting it again?" My stomach clenched.

"It won't help for Christ sakes." He opened one eye and closed it again. "I couldn't care less who's behind us."

He'd been drinking all afternoon at his buddy Vic's place on Woodward Ave. They were in the kitchen while I waited in the tiny living room watching soap operas. I could hear the bottle clinking on glasses while they talked about the shitty government. A minute later they were arguing because my dad said, "No offence Vic but if you died tomorrow I probably wouldn't make it to the funeral." One of the stupid things he would say when he was drunk.

“Screw you. You dirty bastard.” Vic pounded the table. I knew because a glass fell on the floor and smashed.

“Jesus Christ it ain’t like I’m your God damn brother.” Dad snickered. Dad was bigger than Vic, bigger than most guys. I would never grow to be his size.

Vic didn’t answer. I didn’t move. Organ music droned as the credits rolled on TV.

Dad came into the living room. “Come on, we’re going home.”

In the car Dad said that he could beat the crap out of Vic anytime, and just because Vic finished high school and had a decent job didn’t mean he knew anything about life. Dad went quiet after that. He lit a cigarette and opened the window a crack. There was a lot of traffic on Canal road. We were moving slowly past the hospital. The lights were on in the rooms. I saw people in beds, some watching tiny TVs. A few rooms had visitors that were standing with their coats on or sitting on the windowsills.

The car engine chugged. Dad put the shifter into park and revved the engine. He put it back in drive and inched forward with one foot on the gas and one riding the brake. His cigarette was tight between his lips, his eyes squinting from the smoke. The engine knocked and stopped. Dad turned the key, the starter whined. He tried three more times and then laid his head back on the seat.

Hamilton, December, 1970:

My father was a heavy drinker. In 1974, when I was 17, he went to an AA meeting. He lived for fourteen more years and stayed sober. I often joke that if he hadn't been an alcoholic I would never have been a writer. This piece, like many of my short stories, is an attempt to sort out those years. My father was a good man. He wondered about everything and had the courage to tackle his problems.

Jeffrey Griffiths' short fiction has been published in Qwerty, The Puritan, Pithead Chapel (2 issues), The Nashwaak Review (4 issues), Front and Centre (2 issues), The Danforth Review, and Hammered Out.

He received Arts Hamilton short fiction award in 2007 and 2008. He instructs Creative Writing 1 & 2 and Dynamics of Prose for Mohawk College's Writing for Publication program.

griffiths52@gmail.com

<http://jeffgwrites.blogspot.ca>

Brian Reid

Trailer Park, Morning, July 19

Swatting oppressive, heavy heat
With another ice-cold can of domestic lager.

These are vulgar men,
Harmless, but coarse and foul.

“Hot as a bastard already this mornin’,
ain’t it?”

Little window AC unit popped the breaker.
These makeshift hydro outfits sweat
and crackle under the weight of haphazard
connections, strain, daisy-chains...and oppressive, heavy
heat.

Gary Snyder
Magpie’s Son
Facts

10. Our primary source of food is the sun.”

And at this moment,
It is the primary source of my discomfort.

Swatting oppressive heavy heat
With another ice cold can of domestic lager.

Bay of Quinte, July, 2013:

We purchased a trailer on leased land on the Bay of Quinte. We stayed up there for two weeks in July, one of which was miserably hot. The gem of this place is noticing the small things: catching the nuances and mannerisms of the other inhabitants.

Brian Reid is a Hamilton resident. Primarily a teacher, he dabbles in a variety of arts. He lives with his partner and two kids.

Ed Shaw

Reels

Who are these people?

I know them now,

Know them? Not then.

Lost souls in the souped up Chevy,

Parked on the beach.

Watching water fall over the edge.

Timeless sights without a sound.

A guitar provides a thought, so distant and so far.

Gathered 'round watching ghosts and souls.

Feelings high, hitting lows.

Memories abound, risen from the ground,

Float and inject the love and the joy into each.

Make us young, commune with thoughts long past.

Hamilton, January 6, 2012:

Four generations of our family sat in my sister's living room in a post-holiday glow. Someone pulled out the old 8mm projector and a box of movies recently re-discovered. Each generation took something new from these old images.

Ed Shaw likes to write. He has published two volumes of poetry. He is slowly working on a compilation of stories about his time behind the counter of an English pub.

<http://fortyteenyearold.wordpress.com/>

Contributors:

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