



## **NEWSLETTER #35**

**Fall 2001**

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- ◇ **Creative Arts Retreat—Coming Oct 13-14!**
- ◇ **Brugh Joy—Coming January 18-20, 2002!**
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**The Creative Edge: The Way Of The Arts** is a nonprofit public benefit corporation formed in January, 1989. It operates under IRS Code 501(c)(3) for the educational purpose of sponsoring programs that introduce and develop for individuals the inner creative process used by experienced artists of all fine arts disciplines. In particular, these programs have as a foundation the belief that expression consciously based on intuitive material from the psyche and expressed in one or more channels of artistic endeavor supports healthy development of both the individual and the society. Furthermore, the underlying creative principles are the basis for a healthy way of life.

Issued: 8/3/01

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# THE NEWS

Fall 2001

No. 35

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## Programs Scheduled: (See pages 4-6)

• <b>Shanja Kirstann</b> Donald Mathews	<b>Harvesting Dreams</b> <b>Creative Arts Retreat Weekend</b>	<b>Oct 13-14, 9 a.m.</b>
• <b>Donald Mathews</b>	<b>New Dream Work Seminar</b> <b>Creative Arts Fellowship</b> <b>Creative Development &amp; Dreams</b>	<b>Aug 18, 9 a.m.</b> <b>Monthly, 1st Sat-9 a.m.</b> <b>E-mail or as scheduled</b>
• <b>Brugh Joy</b>	<b>Weekend Study Group</b>	<b>Jan 18-20, 7 p.m.</b>
• <b>Jay O'Callahan</b>	<b>Finding &amp; Telling Stories</b>	<b>May 10-12, 7 p.m.</b>

**T**he Creative Arts Retreat Weekends continue with an exciting program in October with Shanja Kirstann and Donald Mathews emphasizing creative work with dreams. Shanja brings a wealth of experience from her teaching in San Francisco Bay Area universities and has established a private practice in the local area.

**B**rugh Joy returns again! After taking time off to reflect on his new direction, Heart Art is his new theme. It is possible this three day study group could be extended a day if all participants endorse the concept. Brugh Joy is an exceptional teacher and there will be an opportunity for all to bring wisdom to this rich intimate experience.

**A**'musings returns with more thoughts on creativity from your directors!

**T**he policy has changed for address changes because of increased mailing costs (82¢ each return plus 34¢ to re-mail)! When a Newsletter is returned because the addressee has moved, that person is now dropped from the mailing list unless they are a current member. Free mailings to other countries have been discontinued since the Internet provides accessibility for almost everyone interested. We receive about 2600 visits each year to the home page.

The moral of this story is: If you want free Newsletters mailed to you, advise us when your address changes!

**I**f you haven't checked out Letter Box On Line at our web site, there is a rich collection of totally different E-mail submissions available monthly from readers. Send your work now for either Letter Box!

DWM

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## New & renewed Members of the Creative Edge:

**Associate Members:** Carolyn Mary Kleefeld, Franz Spickhoff, CA.  
**Friends:** Cynthia Diquie, Ted Hill, Lisa Smith, Faye Zimmerman, CA.

We invite newcomers to our free mailing list— membership with your fully tax deductible donation is totally voluntary.  
Newsletter Distribution: 1333 — Current Membership: 4 Patrons, 10 Associates, 11 Friends.



Marlie Avant

SURRENDER TO CHAOS:  
In Search of grace filled passages.

There are seasons in one's life and often the entry from one into the other feels a bit chaotic and overwhelming. It is during such times that I always call upon my creativity and artistic nature for guidance. I realize that in my creative state I am able to step back from my "little self" and become witness to the "dance of consciousness" that emerges from deeper

waters. I am reminded not to take things personally, for it is a cosmic dance, a very organized, loving, spiral dance if we surrender to it.

Recently my husband and I have sold our home of 21 years and done a tremendous amount of letting go. We moved into a much larger home on 3 1/2 acres some 25 minutes from our former lives. We are in the country now. Our neighbors are goats, sheep, chickens, peacocks, emus, horses and cows.

What wonderful neighbors they are. I feel as though I am apprenticing under them and the land. There is so much I have forgotten that I am beginning to remember again. They speak to me on the wind and as I breathe in the scents of nature I am taken back to my roots... my heritage.

My parents (who are in their mid eighties) and my granddaughter (who just turned five) are living with us now. And this summer, my niece

Donald Mathews

In a recent dream, I find myself welcoming a couple of soldiers dressed in traditional WWII German uniforms. I am aware they are arriving to occupy our territory and others living with me are fearful of the situation. But I feel differently. As I approach them with outstretched hand in friendship, I discover one is really big—perhaps nine feet tall! I express how I understand and appreciate his difficulty dealing with the job at hand and then his

expression softens. He reaches out his hand to me with a smile on his face as I wake up.

I puzzled over this dream for several days. My thoughts about the creative life went to fear and how fears can imprison us and restrict access to our creative abilities like occupying troops. Thinking about my life, I realized how fears of one kind or another often restricted my actions. Usually from an unconscious place, they limited my

creative potential and helped maintain a certain level of defensiveness. As my outlook and relationships with them changed I began letting go of old ways and habits and reaching out with full imagination for the possibilities in new situations.

It came to me the soldiers coming to occupy my life in my dream represented my fears—they brought me face to

Kyla McCollam

Since February I have been suffering from shoulder pain and loss of range of movement of my left arm. As a sore and out-of-sorts seeker, I first concentrated on finding someone to fix me, and fast. This impulse landed me in even more pain. Then I had a dream that a woman was working on me. Four women practitioners helped me past the worst pain. Slowly, I became involved in solving this

predicament by gathering information and trusting the process. And I became the woman of my dream working on myself.

When summer vacation brought the realization that I couldn't travel back home to visit my mother, this marked the understanding that I truly yearned to stay in my own home. A simple existence centered around a routine of appointments

supporting my healing process. Taking daily walks, I could see my shadow as I walked and it showed me the stiffness in my posture. On these walks, I saw how much this shadow looked like the silhouette of my aging mother, and my aging self. As I accepted these basic revelations, I started to accept the healing journey.

Barbara Rose Shuler

There's a saying, "If you want to keep your confidence in laws and sausages, don't watch how they are made." This could also be said of certain kinds of creating.

expect a speedy turnaround of intelligent, interesting reviews for their readers.

Just attending the rich array of offerings can wear a person out. Having to write about them on top of that each day brings on a peculiar mind-body overload unmatched by any other experience I have known. It's seven very long days of listening, listening some more, analyzing, and writing.

Each morning, the writing blitz starts. Searching for the lead sentence, we discuss the music and events of the day before, how we feel and think about the music, the performances, soloists, conductor and so forth. With one eye on the word count and another on the clock, I usually do the actual writing. Marilyn sits nearby, nodding in with her insights and expertise, and takes over for the final edit. We never have enough time; the deadline is always hurtling

For years now, my colleague, Marilyn, and I have collaborated in covering the venerable Carmel Bach Festival for various media. This means a big push the first week of the festival, critiquing recitals and concerts—and some years, master classes, lectures, and parties—for editors who

Patty Waldin

CREATIVE INTENT: Ego-Driven or Spirit-Led?

Wouldn't it be nice if we could consistently launch ourselves into our creative projects with the joyous innocence of children? — Would it be even nicer if we could always be free of our ego's demand that our products be polished to a level of which IT can be proud?

I don't know about you, but my ego/ shadow-self can spring out of its nowhere-land and cast dark clouds of scorn and doubt upon most any of my fragile moments of creative indecision.

But, whenever I've been able to shake mySelf awake during that moment of indecision... and re-establish my heart's intent to be Spirit-led, rather than ego-

driven, the lessons that have unfolded through my subsequent grope and blunder have provided sublimely transitional shifts in consciousness.

Easier said than done, but when I do choose to seize one of those fragile moments, I have to linger in a kind of balancing act upon the Creative Edge. For starters: reliance on



**Marlie Avant**

(who is twenty-one) is also staying with us. Because my husband is fifteen years older than me, we literally have five generations living together under one roof. It is blessed and it is challenging to say the least! There is nothing like family to push every button that needs to be pushed. And yet, I am learning that there is absolute divine order in button pushing IF we look inward, honoring the button pusher for holding up the mirror that allows us the opportunity to dive into our own mysterious waters, as if

on a quest for revelation. I am finding that if I can simply hold my outer re-action, inwardly cradled in the heartland's, the dark, sometimes turbulent waters gently quiet themselves and I am gifted a reflecting pool that reveals a deeper truth.

And so I stand at the center of my family circle, literally in the middle. I am watching my own life at all of its stages... through all the drama and chaos and humanity. I am watching how love and compassion elevate

the circle into a spiral. The spiral dips just before it rises... a dip soulward... sometimes into chaos... but love and the clarity of intention lift it. The insights I gather in the reflecting pool always elevate my awareness and deepen my faith and compassion.

And so I stand at the center of the circle for now, full of gratitude and humbled by the tides of change that lovingly carry me... when I surrender to them.

**Donald Mathews**

face with a new situation and all its dangers. Fears over the years have become huge, much larger than life. And now, I am at that time where physical changes also present new challenges. (I recently have been gifted with new sight after successful cataract surgery on both eyes. Thank goodness for modern medicine!)

There is a choice! Instead of being restricted and slave to fears and challenges, I can face

and befriend them. There are parts of me that are still fearful or apprehensive, but I now have the conscious resources to meet them and change how they occupy my life. In the last five or ten years my ability to shift attitude from fear to curiosity—to befriend all the things that come my way has opened my life and changed my attitude!

Clearly there is work to be done to achieve this. It is often the difficult work of letting go

of old ways and situations and welcoming what is actually coming in—to be present. Creative Edge attempts to provide a safe environment where all can begin to express their unique gifts. My dream tells me this way has become my natural way and it works!

Shifting attitude and befriending what we fear is an important part of the way of the arts!

**Kyla McCollam**

Then it started to register that besides managing the pain and learning to relax, I needed to become stronger. I followed a lead to a physical therapist who started me on some exercises. Progressing from wobbling weakness and even difficulty counting out the sets and holds showed me the frustrations inherent in any new practice. My creativity came into play when I figured out a way to spell out

each number's first three letters to get a hold for three counts. I found my own way to grip the stretch band to keep my wrist stable. This active involvement brought a newfound stability along with a balance of relaxed receptivity.

Seeing progress, however slight, was encouraging. Now as I walk, my shoulder has some swing, the pain is on the wane,

and range of motion is returning. Following the creative threads of my pain, it dawned on me how important meditation can be. At first, the hot and cold packs twice a day, before and after my school day, seemed a big bite of my time. I made peace with this and started to enjoy the time—just me and those packs on my shoulders, ■■■■■

(Continued on page 6)

**Barbara Rose Shuler**

down on us like an inexorable calamity.

This summer, we got to stay in a gracious, spacious household, with other people around watching us work. Being observed helped me realize that we may fit into the sausages and laws category. Do we quietly and studiously fashion our commentaries, methodically delivering a publishable essay to the editors day after day? Nope, we don't. Our high-tension creative process is liberally punctuated by irreverent comments, off-the-

wall ideas and peals of laughter. Marilyn plays solitaire on her laptop, lobbing in comments and asides. I often jump up and do things mid-sentence—toss the dog a ball, wash my hands, make a cup of coffee, fan the ends of a scarf draped around my shoulders.

Sometimes we go through amazing verbal gyrations looking for the perfect phrase to describe a simple mood or musical gesture, like a viola da gambia passage or an aria in one of Bach's Cantatas. Occasionally, we do

get very serious, unsmiling thoughts about a troubling performance. But mostly, there is laughter and fun and a sense of satisfaction, in spite of the ever-present pressures.

We have evolved this peculiar collaborative style over the years, and it suits us. Though we've been assured that it looks like a form of benign madness from the outside, the process works—and it's fun, besides.

**Patty Waldin**

art-school-conventions and quick-fix "know-hows" must be disengaged; and ego's attempts to conceive and compel predetermined outcomes must be temporarily disconnected.

Then there are the subtleties—and herein lies the real adventure of turning customary tendencies upside down. Those accidentals and distortions which

ego would hasten to "correct," become respected, viewed as potential breakthroughs, and can be verified—or rejected—as authentic insights. Much like dreamtime, they can become a veritable lens for viewing sacred mystery elements, any one of which may provide a focal length through which I can glimpse a larger portion of the Truth.

Probing for whatever lives beneath our multi-sensory reflections is to invite the revelation of an essence that lies well beyond our ego's limitations.

It is this essence, spreading from the rim of the creative edge, that is the Soul's native land.



“If you look for the truth outside yourself, it gets farther and farther away.”  
—Tung-Shan

### Background:

Our thoughts and imaginings are fed continuously by our emotionally guided six senses. Mystically, we receive dreams and intuitions to evoke our imagination. Therefore, along life’s way, we perceive and store a whole range of personal and collective experiences and visions triggered by these processes.

Like creative artists of all kinds, we all have within our psyche this rich flowing wealth of personal and collective history and unexamined mysteries of creation. As a resource, it is a full treasure chest waiting to serve our glorious response to life. When we chose to manifest our unique expressions and bring them into the world in support of life, we fulfill our soul’s gift to community, Spirit or to Divine Creation.

Our urge to express from the heart through our natural ability to sing, dance, draw, tell stories, write poetry,

and make other highly creative expressions of all kinds from this personal wealth, provides a way to find, and meaningfully travel, the inner and outer roads of a rich life experience.

Instead of critical judgment, when we have appreciation and curiosity about our own and each other’s personal process, a door opens to imagination, inspiration and our soul’s deeper longing. An open supportive group with deep respect for each person’s journey gives sacred witness, provides safety and trust for intimate sharing.

Further, it facilitates spiritual and mystical aspects of life where meaningful collective themes spontaneously emerge. Thus we gain strength to share the universal joy and pain of being human and courage to creatively participate in service to life.

### Community Projects:

The Creative Edge supports various programs and collaborative efforts in the community where the creative process of individuals and groups is enhanced. Donald Mathews, the Executive Director, is available to advise or facilitate various interdisciplinary groups for special projects. He provides information, inspiration and emotional support from his wide variety of experiences.

### Creative Arts Fellowship:

The monthly Creative Arts Fellowship is a public gathering seeking self awareness and presence through a practice of contemplation, mutual support and intimate sharing. Our shared stories, dreams and artistic expressions of all kinds then become a deep source of wisdom.

This free living room group is for those interested in sharing their creative work and process from a personal point of view. Facilitated by Donald Mathews, it is for all skill levels. Bring an image, poem, song, story, dance or other creative expression that intrigues you. Meetings: the first Saturday each month except July & August. 9 a.m. till noon. No fee.

### Creative Arts Retreat Weekends:

Explore with the core fellowship of Creative Edge Artist-Directors. Away from busy lives for either one or two days in a small intimate group, we leisurely seek the authenticity of our soul’s call. Although primarily a weekend of self discovery, we open to the power of collective energies and guest facilitators to bring and share their special talents with us.

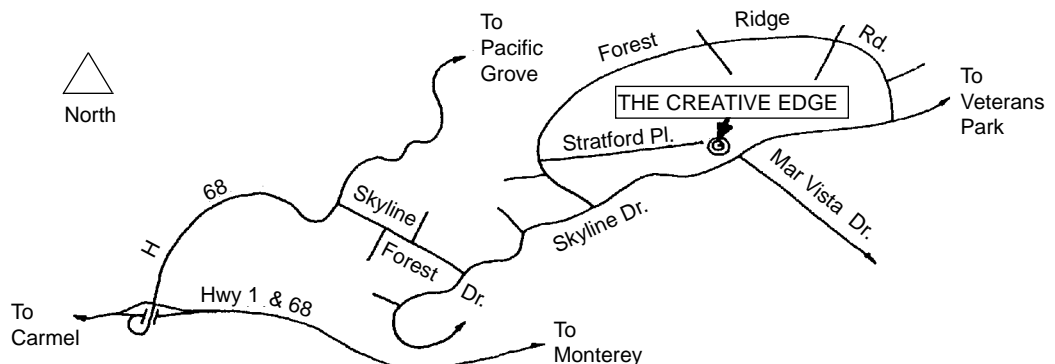
Forming a safe circle of support for dreams, sharing and contemplation, we use lots of free time to follow our personal muse with reading, writing and other creative work. Mask-making, paints and clay are available in the studio. Lunch is provided. Offered as scheduled, 9 a.m.—5 p.m.

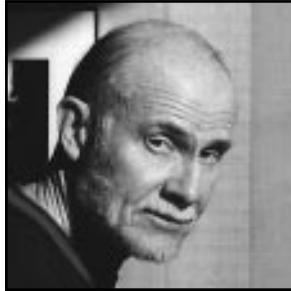
### Special Workshops & Seminars:

Special workshops and seminars are scheduled throughout the year with different facilitators. Call for information or addition to the mailing list.

### Reservations:

Send your check payable to The Creative Edge. There is a \$20 handling fee for refunds.





**Donald William Mathews** is an artist, educator and Founding Director of The Creative Edge where he teaches and edits the newsletter. He has diverse degrees and professional experience with teaching credentials in education, management, fine arts, engineering and mathematics. He has studied and gained wide experience in various psychologies and other disciplines searching for a deep understanding of the human experience, creativity and spirituality.

“Come with me into the great hall of my heart. I will light the candle of my thoughts and I invite you to light yours.”

—Donald Mathews

In particular, he has been involved over the years with the Association of Transpersonal Psychology and Process Oriented Psychology. He facilitates trust and intimacy in order to find wisdom from individuals and groups based on his continuing journey learning from life.

Married over forty-five years to his musician wife Lou, they have 3 daughters and 7 Grandchildren.

### Monthly Dream Work Seminars:

By experiencing the vital images and wisdom of each other’s dreams shared as our own, we gain an in-depth understanding of our selves and our common human experience. Limited to about eight venturesome people seeking spiritual depth.

January—May & August—November:  
9 a.m.- noon on the 3rd Saturday of each month,  
Fee: \$15 each or \$12 each in a series of 3 or more.

### Creative Development & Dreams:

Donald Mathews responds to personal questions involving development of one’s creative process through artistic expression and the use of dreams as an intuitive resource (E-Mail, Telephone or other exchanges). This usually involves an intimate exchange seeking hidden talents, thus activating the individual’s deeper resources. Sliding scale fee: \$25-35 each hour’s work.



**Shanja Kirstann, M.S.W.**, founder of The Open Way, brings over 25 years experience to her work in transpersonal counseling, lifecoaching, bodywork and teaching at San Francisco Bay area universities including SF Arts Institute, JFK, UCSF Med. School and presently at the University of Creation Spirituality with Matthew Fox.

“Let the beauty we love be what we do. There are hundreds of ways of kneeling and kissing the ground”

—Rumi

She is a gifted evocateur—assisting others with heart and humor in gentle, yet profound journeys of transformation and spiritual awakening. Her holistic approach is a unique synthesis of eastern and western spiritual practices, medicine wheel wisdom, depth psychology, dreamwork and the expressive arts.

Shanja currently has a private practice in Carmel in which she assists individuals through practical lifecoaching skills to honor their own soul callings and to bring forth their gifts into life.

### Harvesting Dreams—A Creative Arts Retreat Weekend: October 13-14, 9 a.m.-5 p.m.

In this one or two day creative arts retreat, co-lead with Donald Mathews, we will explore bringing dreams to life. On Saturday morning, Shanja will orchestrate a contemplative space for deep listening and high play to evoke, bring alive and embody the deeper transformative energies of our dreams.

Forming a safe circle of support with the core fellowship of Creative Edge Artist-Directors for sharing and encouragement, creative meditations may include: silence and enquiry, authentic movement and voice expressions, spontaneous art and flow writing.

Lunch and simple art materials furnished.  
Fee: \$95, Sat. only: \$50 (\$85/\$45 prior to 9/15.)

### Computer Users:

Adobe Systems Inc. provides an ideal cross-computer program for distribution with their PDF file format. PDF files are read by Adobe’s free Acrobat Reader (AR) software available for download at <<http://www.adobe.com>>. (There are links to Adobe from the CE Web site.) This system works on all types of computers and gives an easily read presentation adjustable in

format with a menu click for different size screens. Buttons allow viewers to conveniently jump around to different pages. Images are in color! Desired hard copies may be printed on your own printer. PDF files with all past newsletters and other materials are already available at the CE Web site! Downloading is quick and easy because of compression technology.

Mail to:  
The Creative Edge  
8 Stratford Place  
Monterey, CA  
93940

or call:  
Donald Mathews  
(831) 373-7809

#### Registration Form:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone: ( ) \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
Amount enclosed: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Please register me for the \_\_\_\_\_ Seminar/program. Date(s): \_\_\_\_\_  
Please send:  Map  Motel information  Back copies of Thoughts on Creativity (\$5)  
 Information flyer for the \_\_\_\_\_ Seminar/program(s)  
 Please accept my donation. Friend (\$5 plus), Associate Member (\$25 plus) or Patron (\$100 plus)  
 Please change my mailing address.  Please remove my name from your mailing list.



“Each human being is a galaxy... Yet we live most of life superficially, unaware of our vast inner world.”

—Jay O'Callahan

**Jay O'Callahan** has been creating and performing stories now for over 25 years. Time magazine called him “a genius among storytellers...” “A virtuoso,” echoed the Boston Globe.

Jay O'Callahan crafts the details of ordinary life into extraordinary stories containing deep spiritual wisdom. There are no gimmicks or clever tricks opting for the quick response so often found in today's entertainment. Rather, with artist's imagination and attention to authentic detail, he brings to life his personal perception of experience in telling the unfolding story. Then, combining his intimacy with the audience's deeper experience, participants discover their own stories.

**Finding & Telling Stories  
A Weekend Workshop  
May 10-12, 2002.**

In the warmth and trust of a special Monterey home, Jay will give a small supportive group the opportunity to experience this highly unique creative process. We will playfully examine rich stories hidden in our memories. “We are beings in a universe that is alive with creativity, with wonder.” says Jay... Wanna dance?”

Fri.: 7-9 p.m., Sat.: 9 a.m.- 4 p.m. (with lunch) & 7-9 p.m. (after a dinner break),  
Sunday: 9 a.m. — noon.

Fee: \$290 (\$270 before April 1) .



“Dreams are our greatest and truest teachers, as they reflect our basic aspects in constantly creative variations.”

—Brugh Joy

**W. Brugh Joy, M.D.** is an extraordinary guide! In the dream realm, he follows personal images and stories to their mythical roots like a fine artist follows the mysterious trail of the muse.

Brugh Joy was a distinguished and respected member of the Los Angeles medical community in 1974 when he experienced a life-threatening disease that led to a spiritual transformation and writing his best selling book *Joy's Way*. Since then, he continued his explorations into healing, meditation, dreams and their interpretation, and the influence of the unconscious. His last book *Avalanche: Heretical Reflections on the Dark and Light* tells how his once-revered values finally crumbled under an "avalanche" of new insight into the dark and disowned portions of the human psyche.

**Heart Art:  
A Weekend Study Group  
January 18-20, 2002.\***

Through the augmenting forces of group work we gather to heighten into the Sacred Realms to experience both the personal and collective mysteries of Healing, Revelation, Intuition, Communion, Story Telling, the Oracles, and Dream Interpretation. Emphasis will be placed on the differentiation between the ego's perspective and that of the Transpersonal. The Vow and the Witness will culminate our weekend together.

Friday Evening: 7-10 P.M., Saturday: 9 A.M. to 9 P.M. with lunch, Sunday: 9 A.M. to noon.

Fee: \$410 (\$380 prior to December 1.)

\*The possibility exists to extend the study group an additional day for an extra \$75 fee.

Continued from page 3

breathing, receiving air and letting it go. The walks became a moving meditation. And the exercises have become a strengthening and focusing meditation.

When a wise woman pointed out that the left side is the receptive one, I felt an emotional shift which made it right to be more receptive. Out of necessity, I accepted that my pointing hand showed my needs and connected in a full circle to my receiving

hand. My compensating behaviors are dissolving, restoring a healing balance to my life.

Certain sights and imagery have been helpful during this recuperation time. A small piece of driftwood shaped like a dove showed me my wooden nature along with my sense of flight. An earlier painting and poem which were inspired by a dream of a woman coming out of a wave in a ward-off position (left shoulder emerging first) and taking flight

as a hawk showed a precognition of coming out of this experience with a new sense of the polarities between my stiff and supple sides.

I am thankful for my progress, and I am developing a deepening empathy for others in pain. I hope that this experience in weathering one of the storms of my life will help me when I become overburdened, exhausted, frustrated, or exasperated.



Carmel, CA

**DOTSON'S CAT**

all through the nights the cat  
tromps around on the roof most  
especially in the mornings about  
the same time as the tiny birds  
wake up and well before the  
larger  
birds and crows who sleep  
latest I think

this morning the cat

there are actually two cats  
and this morning one is outside  
when the cat inside

signals by audibly illicit  
sofa scratches a desire to  
be removed so I arise from  
my deep dream of peace

and release him

and to check the time which  
the tiny birds speak to

ambiguously  
I flip on the kitchen switch  
like one nanosecond and my neural  
eyes are emblazoned and  
engraved with a vivid flash

and wandering hesitantly back  
to bed with this hit that splash  
of counter edge clock and  
microwave could be inter-edited  
in any given dream sequence  
could be a waking day frame  
could be written into a screenplay  
interphrased could be filmed  
in fact easily interphased

so what would be best  
as a framing of place  
which should I choose

dream file  
sleepwalking file  
awaking file  
amaking file

life is suddenly  
filled with assorted cats  
enframed

which is not to mention  
yet ghost cats  
apparitioning

**WHICH WAY DOTH THE CAT  
CLAW?**

**WHICH WAY DOTH THE CAT  
CLAW?**

which side is this in  
which side is out  
which is most alive most  
valuable or interesting  
to pursue perhaps  
a cat scan would do

the cat that is both  
of them seem to float  
somewhat freely through  
my holding here  
these clues

*John Dotson*

Marina, CA

Journal entries for and about my son, age 2.

This was a truly hectic day... A special part of the day though, came at the end when I was putting you to sleep.

Forgive my indulging in a cute story about you but at bed time you didn't want to settle down. So, while I rocked you, you decided to try and distract me by saying 'night night' to the chair, the bed, the lobster and crab we saw today, and anything else you could think of. The last two really made me melt though—you said night night to the Christmas tree and to Santa Claus, then promptly nodded off. It was the perfect closure for Christmas, a child bidding goodnight to lights and magic.

I wish I could capture your innocence, put it in a sealed bottle and cradle it with stars. Then one day when I became old and gray and the irony and cynicism of aging began to get to me, I could open the starry bottle and experience again the elusive essence of all that makes our species truly unique. This reminder of our capacity for wonder is a gift to caretakers of the youngest among us, a priceless treasure that disappears like quicksilver into the folds of time. What wouldn't any of us give to feel the world that way again?

\*\*\*\*

Sometimes upheaval is necessary, it is part of life. But humans grow and adjust and do what our species does best, adapt to the surrounding circumstances. We have done that with your arrival in our lives. My life, on the eve of my 40th birthday, is definitely different than at any other time. You have altered me to the core, there is nothing else like being a mother. I am not the same person I was just two years ago. I have learned more than I thought was possible about patience, curiosity, fun and love and I think I am definitely better for it. I had never, before you, examined us as a species because there is little to nothing that a non-parent can know about how a human creates itself out of a few molecules of DNA and goes on to have a personality, an independent will, a mind capable of orchestrating the miracles of language, movement, self-awareness.

I don't think scientists and sociologists have a real grasp on it either—there is nothing that can replace daily contact with a being in its natural environment, whether that is a middle class home or a hut in the desert. This is why I pay attention, why I am an observer as well as a participant, because I know that this opportunity for growth and knowledge is irreplaceable. I am so glad you are in my life—I hope I don't forget to tell you that as often as you need to hear it. Fascinating, intricate dance. I am having the time of my life.

*Olga Chandler*





*Big Sur, CA*

### THE NAKED DEATH

This fleeting life.  
This transient, ever-changing world.  
Time and no time, again, look  
what falls from my shoulders,  
my hands cannot grasp understanding.  
When fear comes again to me,  
come to me, my king of silence,  
my lord of the moon.  
Pierce my shut heart where  
every dark root grows.  
There beside the bitter boulders  
of my being release me from  
this prison. Plant instead  
a few seeds of mercy, and move  
the stones of solitude  
that bruise me so deceptively.  
Why should I shudder for you?  
Dear is the spring twilight.  
Dear the fragrance of my tears.  
I who would linger forever  
now linger on.  
Show me, my prince of spring,  
what it is like when the white  
morning opens and rises  
from your breath.  
Never leave me.  
Show me what every April  
promises and every August fulfills.  
Laugh at me, naked in your garden.  
Sustain me, bright one, or else lose  
your way with me, lead me  
to my destination.  
Let every leaf fall and the naked  
death of a lover still proclaim you.

### A FAR AWAY CANYON

The mountains held no memories. The mountains stood beneath  
the storm oblivious to time, oblivious to sentiment, apart from  
the thoughts held in the minds of those who slept in a little  
house at their base. The mountains stood beneath the hidden  
full moon of January accepting with massive inhuman strength,  
the storm on their shoulders.

I stood a long time at the window watching the gray, hourless  
peaks, trying to mimic their indifference. But the wind, fierce  
as jealousy or green envy blew from the west, the rain  
fell sideways...

I thought of a far away canyon where we had walked only a few  
days before. (Do you think it will rain soon, the trembling  
trees seemed to be asking. We had no idea.)  
I remembered the fragrance of shade in that forest glen.  
I dreamt of redwoods whispering in the mountain quietness.  
I imagined an animal walking on the same trail we had walked,  
droplets of moisture on his hungry muzzle and his fur, damp  
and smooth with the fecund smell of a wet, saturated beast.  
And then for a moment, 'trapped' as we were, by a storm in that  
little house I wished with a pang of longing that I were some-  
where else. I drew back the curtain just noticing again those  
timeless gray peaks staring down and wondered: where, where...  
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*David Wayne Dunn*

*Monterey, CA*

### A PROMISE TO MYSELF

Full Expression:  
Two words I roll around my tongue  
To taste the flavors of their meaning  
Two words which hold entire worlds  
Waiting to be found  
Not hidden as I fear.

The ticket in  
Exact a price  
That few will pay  
But I am here  
To turn my pockets inside out  
And gaze at what they hold  
And wonder at the meaning  
Of every scrap of gold.

### GETTING CLOSE

Being looked at, heard, and seen  
Getting close, is what I mean  
To myself and to another  
Closer than the average lover.

Sharing pain that's often hard  
Pain that keeps us on our guard  
Strangers to ourselves as well  
Hiding all there is to tell.

Hiding all there is to feel  
Like nervous gerbils on a wheel  
Round and round we race all day  
Determined not to face the way

God made us in His image, yet  
We turn our backs and never let  
Our true selves shine, our true selves thrive  
We walk through life but half alive.

I know it's not too late for me  
To face myself courageously!

*Duffie Bart*



*Carmel, CA*

**THE CASABLANCA LILY**

Ah, the fragrant white lily  
with the orange stamen  
and luxurious scent

How bravely you face  
the ripening of summer,  
the fade of petal,  
mouth of the fly

The earth revolves;  
what can you say or do,  
subject to whatever  
seasons pulse you

You stand elegant now  
for this moment  
without a choice  
but to bloom until the end  
of your next beginning

**IN RESOUNDANCE**

Enshrouded in the bible black night,  
the unknown inhales me  
into its darkest womb  
There, we are one pulse again

The extraneous is put to rest  
in the ancient caves of origin

Swimming in a silvery pond of moon beams,  
my song re-chords integration

Darkness develops the day's film

I am developed and digested,  
dissolving and re-forming

In the ebb and flow of tidal rhythm,  
in resoundance with the seas below

*Carolyn Mary Kleefeld*

*Colorado Springs, CO*

**THOUGHTFUL PURSUIT**

The search is endless,  
The cup never full,  
Thirst never quenched,  
Love never found,  
Are these the questions?

Or—  
are they the answers.

**THE BEGINNING—OF WISDOM**

I want to know what makes the moon  
so bright.

What candle does she carry in her fullness  
that—even the brightest star fails in  
comparison to her glory.

What secret did she find in her waning?

I want to know what makes a single  
bird reach out with its song an hour  
before sunrise.

I want to know why the top branch of a  
tree never bends,

Nor—does it move,

When birds gather in silent attention,  
waiting—with anticipation, for the first  
rays of the sun.

What are they thinking?

How long has this ritual been enacted, how  
did I miss seeing the worship they carry,

How long have I been asleep?

Today, I surrender the search for the  
meaning of life, and take up the dance

To learn—the secrets of nature.

**THE HEART'S REPLY**

Poetry is prayer manifested.  
It is—the asking,  
And—the answer.  
How then, do we critique a prayer.

I am filled with awe and appreciation for all of you.  
Not just the writer's who contribute to The Creative  
Edge, but all the silent reader's of this incredible  
newsletter. Poetry and story telling require an audience  
to truly fulfill its destiny. Thank you, silent readers.

Through the A' musings, and through the poetry I  
witness my own great desire to know my spiritual soul.  
Thank you all for weaving your own golden thread into  
the tapestry of life. And especially thank you for daring  
to be different. For in our differences—we are alike.

A personal note to, Doree Bart. Thank you, dear friend,  
for loving the printed page as much as I do. It makes  
me feel less like a dinosaur.

*Patricia Ann Doneson*



Carmel Valley, CA

### RAPT AND BLISSFUL SEEING

Early morning now,  
a crescent moon lingers,  
a white torch in an ashen dawn.  
I listen to the overture,  
birdsong whistling from the hillside thickets,  
the foofall of the gray fox  
half-remembered from night's passage,  
discover a consolation  
with which to begin one more day.

### REDEMPTION

At the raw edge of the hillside,  
where wind scours  
flakes of shale to whiteness,  
nothing grows.

Onto the slope  
below the bare rim,  
I toss  
each remnant of foliage,  
bud and leaf, seed  
stem, blossom  
when they fade.

From this compost  
what has perished  
may resurrect  
or not.

### NOW AND THEN

*"At birth you were handed a ticket... beneath every journey  
the ticket to this journey in one direction."*  
Frank Bidart—*Little Fugue*

All Sunday afternoon the sea rolls ashore. I weigh the  
ultimate shortness of life, the journey in one direction, this  
human anthology of organic matter, lasting anywhere from  
shortly after conception to more than century...

Sirens interrupt my meditations, a different drama playing  
out in the cove. Two small boats circle. Rescue vehicles with  
flashing lights stand in wait on Scenic Drive. The Met Life  
blimp hovers in the sky over the celebrity golf tournament.

One boat speeds off, perhaps having saved a careless rock  
climber or weary scuba diver, perhaps not. The surf is  
treacherous anytime.

Heedless of tragedy lurking in ocean's mesmerizing swells,  
small children wade into foaming breakers. No one thinks it  
will happen to them. I am all too aware

veteran of loss after loss, the last one as recent as Friday, a  
primitive cluster of multiplying cells. So little to grieve over,  
so inconsequential each of us.

What about all that life between now and then, then  
and now.

### BETWEEN SEASONS

*"Nature and books belong to the eyes that see them"*  
Emerson

Swirling mosaics of foam cast  
white spray over a rugged arm of shoreline,  
cascade between wet stone fingers.

From a hilltop bench  
I stroke the blue cloth canopy overhead.  
A pool of sunlight shimmers  
beyond twin peaks to the south.

All along the trail pastel  
ambivalence of early wildflower petals  
emerges from bare sticks  
of dormant brush.

Even as the last ivory tufts  
of spent blossoms drift  
in the wind, new buds open.  
Nature has no problem,  
co-exists in two seasons.

I live somewhere in between,  
read a dialect of transition in landscapes,  
more complicated than fallow and prolific,  
mimic the seacoast in December.

Laura Bayless

Monterey, CA

### ROSES

Winter roses fade  
Leaving lingering scents.  
Once proud perfection  
Reduced to essence,

Destined to return to earth  
From which  
In springtime,  
Vibrant new roses.

### WHO AM ?

Who am today?  
Tried and true  
Or towering courage?  
Somewhere in between,  
I'll venture  
On a great  
Unknown adventure,  
Stepping lightly  
Steps of joy  
Steps of boldness  
Giant strides  
Over chasms  
Over stones  
Over water bridges wide.  
Who am I today?  
Only I can now decide.

Shirley Tofte



*Rancho Santa Fe, CA*

I so love receiving your newsletter!

*Lisa Smith*

*Carmel Valley, CA*

### **PHOTOGRAPHS OF THE PAST**

Overlooking New York City  
illuminated darkness  
sways with visual movement.  
Night refuses to sleep.

My sister and I sort out  
Mother's belongings.  
More than nine years  
separate us, yet closeness reigns.

We sit at the walnut dining table,  
piled high with photograph albums.  
We make stacks for ourselves,  
our absent middle sister, and  
cousins. We divide our past,  
poignant glimpses back.

Each photo carefully weighed,  
asked which place it wants to travel next.  
Our hands blacken with residue  
from dark pages that crumble, tear, or  
even resist our deliberate touch.

My first wedding day shows no clue  
to future sharp tear of divorce.  
Further on, our boy and our girl  
tumble for a playful decade  
between heavy embossed covers.

This slice of love no longer here,  
surprisingly still cuts deep into my flesh  
fresh burning under silken scar thought  
forever healed with another marriage  
and sheer gladness of living.

Later this clear night,  
in slumber's hold  
I return to betrayal's place  
live again abandonment,  
become acquainted with that  
woman within, almost half my age  
and ache for her, remember her well..

In morning light, the view serene.  
A tender covering of clean snow  
gently cradles the entire city.  
Photos torn out of my past, disposed.  
The negatives still present.

### **FARM CHILD**

David, dark-eyed, black haired, porcelain skin,  
blushed by nature's frequent kiss.

He played in garden soil, tasted fresh harvest,  
and drank milk warm from udder's hold.

As seasons turned, he gently grew, sat tall by  
father's side and steered heavy tractors.

One day, he fell twice his height and the doctor  
placed a metal plate inside his head.

Childhood gone with surgeon's care and  
inserted intruder pressed against his brain.

Sweetness left this country soul and shadows  
walked both day and night beside this boy.

He wrote in black ink of the world's need to  
prove that he should live, demanded sign.

On his eighteenth birthday, he called his  
mother not to enter the family house alone.

He took the cold gun, deliberately placed it  
against his weary head, and shot himself.

No portrait I know of this first born son, who,  
that day, tore a hole in the pastoral setting.

Our grandfather, David, took sulfuric acid  
when he found the world could not hold him.

I always loved the lyrical sound of David, but  
chose not to call either son by that name.

*Illia Thompson*

Thank you for your letters and offerings. Keep them coming. Look for emerging themes that resonate with your own intuitions and creative works. I also invite you to comment on how these sharings facilitate your own life journey. (I will add your address if you approve.)

The Editor.