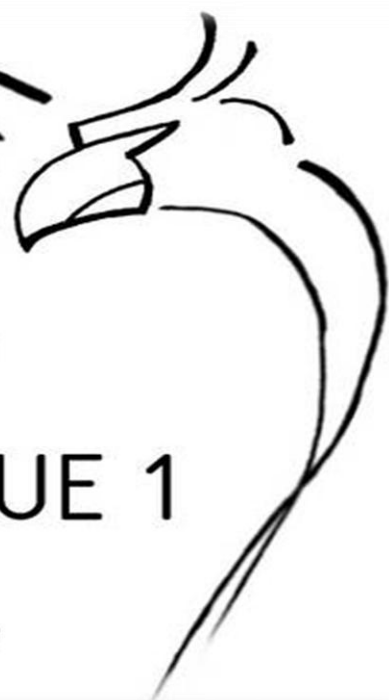


PHOENIX *NOW*

ISSUE 1

a publication of
The Phoenix Literary & Arts Society



Phoenix Now is...

...an “art noir” style of magazine. In today’s “high definition” society, we provide a stark contrast to that world. The ‘noir’ quality is evident in everything from the black and white print, to the old typewriter style font. Each issue may deal with anything from the darker aspects of humanity, to topics and ideas that explore the human condition and humanity’s struggle. Our goal is to shed light on subjects and ideas that sometimes go “unnoticed” by mainstream society.

The publication will be free to the public, will be distributed on MATC campuses, and will also be available online for free.

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Contributors:

- **Phoenix Now Logo by: Brandon Haut**
- **Special Thanks: To Patrick Moran: An extraordinary poet and friend of The Phoenix and MATC.**
- **Front and Back Cover Photography: Angela Ferrow**
- **Editor and Faculty Adviser: Jason M. Kolodzyk**

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I love you
In sorrow and change
Mirth days gone
Child sight strained

Grown now
Fire temper pain
Takes away brilliance
Leaves colors drained

Oh, my hands hold nothing
But turning, I still stay
In sorrow I now love you
And in loss live duller days.

copyright 2011, photo and poem, Elise C. Boucher

Meet the Contributor: Elise C. Boucher likes to engage in creative activities. She does not like to write autobiographical summaries. She's done too many interesting things to pick just a few to share in three sentences. In Sorrow is a combined submission, a poem and a photo that make a whole work.



Rachel Richardson—Walk in the Rain

Meet the Contributor: I am a student at MATC, obviously, who works for a natural landscaping company and does art on the side. I'm taking an art course through correspondence which has really helped boost my artistic abilities. I love to draw the things I see all around me every day. I'm an artist and a student. I love to draw and make beautiful things and I'd like to share what I do with all of you.

Carpe Diem

Carpe diem, carpe diem.
Seize life,
grab hold of the day.
But when I see his face,
I can't look away.

I try to move on,
let the past be the past,
but when I see him,
my heart beats so fast.

How can one live life,
day by day,
when the one who made life worthwhile,
goes away?

Carpe diem, carpe diem.
I want to live life,
I want to be free,
but life isn't life without him and me.

Carpe diem, I have one goal:
to set him free,
to live just for me.
Just one goal,
but how does one live without their soul?

Angela Elwing —Carpe Diem

Meet the Contributor: My name is Angela and currently, I am enrolled in my first semester of the Registered Nursing program at MATC. I have always loved reading/analyzing poetry (in English and Spanish) but I only started to write my own about five years ago. Usually I am only inspired to write poetry when I am upset, so sometimes my work may seem a bit depressing. However, I think it also will speak to anyone who has ever suffered through a broken heart.

A grasp of truth...

By Brandon Haut

I'm beginning to lose my grasp of truth. It seems the seams are loosely knit, a tangled fray of fiction. Who is everyone? Are you? Do I understand the same as you? You appear to me as always been, always will. But a second glance is worth some thought. A deeper root, a twisted vine ensnares your vital moral self. One can't be sure of what is not, behind that two-way mirror. Don't tell me now: it's not for me; it's not what, therefore, is meant to be. Yet my lonesomeness has piqued, and my skeptic septic tank is full of rotting half-baked thoughts. Maybe all that was just a wish—a summer wish of auld lang syne, floating nicely through the pines and resting calmly in the field. That's where I'd rather be. Instead of this concrete bed: a meadow. Instead of these iron bars: some woods. Rather than a ticking clock: the sun. Rather than reproachful night: the moon. Rather than the stark true you: the dream, the sunny reverie of what I always hoped was you. And time will stand still then, as I always hoped it would.

Interview with Brandon Haut on “A Grasp of Truth” by Natasha Hollerup, Secretary for the Phoenix Literary and Arts Society Student Organization

Natasha Hollerup: *Is this piece based on you or anyone in particular?*

Brandon Haut: This piece, titled “A grasp of truth...” is based on how I see other people. “You” is anyone I know or have known.

NH: *What propelled you to write this piece? What is the ultimate goal of this piece?*

BH: It's a bit complicated. The ultimate point of this "prose poem" is that it is a glimpse of how my mind works. It was fueled by an evening of nostalgia and loneliness, thinking about how much my friends have changed, moved on to do great things; and I realize how little I actually know about them now. It's also a commentary on how most of what I think about and wish for is dream-like: where everything is ideal, timeless, beautiful, and out of this corrupted real world.

NH: *Where did you get the idea? How?*

BH: I never plan before I write. I just let it flow from my fingers. And yet, I find it astonishing how well this summarizes all my thoughts and feelings.

NH: *Why did you want this piece to be featured?*

BH: There's no real reason I wanted this specific piece to be featured. But if anyone wants to know about Brandon Haut "in a nutshell," then this is the thing to read.

NH: *Where do you find the inspiration to write?*

BH: I find inspiration anywhere. I mostly draw from within myself, as in emotional outpourings, dreams or desires. I also love to write about nature or surrealism, especially involving the both in extended metaphors. Whatever comes, comes.

NH: *Is there anything else you'd like to add about this piece?*

BH: My style is usually choppy and semi-poetic. I love unusual combinations of words and unique phrasing. You'll notice some of that here.

“Where is My Daddy and Why Doesn’t He Love Me?”

An excerpt from a short story by Chandra West, an Administrative Assistant for Liberal Arts and Sciences

It has taken me many years, tears, talks, and prayers to be able to speak freely about growing up without my father and some of the damage it did. When I was 13 years old my life changed forever. It was then that I found out the man I knew to be my daddy was not. I did not meet my biological father until I was 19 years old—six years later.

Unwed mothers or baby mamas as they are now called tend to hate my truth but the truth is you have got to stop being selfish. Once you found out you were pregnant and decided to keep that child, your life was no longer your own and that child’s needs must come first. I know it sucks but remember, children don’t ask to be born. And for the biological fathers, or sperm donors, it is so hard for me to hate you because although I am an adult now, I once was that child needing and wanting my father’s love. I can’t hate someone I was not allowed to know or never got the chance to know. I do think that although most of the burden falls on the baby mama, that as a man you are responsible as well. When you had unprotected sex regardless of whether you were already married and cheating on your wife, or how trifling the baby mama may be, you chose to have sex knowing what the consequences might be. So, yes, you are wrong! Children, whether male or female, need their fathers, too. You can teach the child things the baby mama cannot. As fathers you formulate future relationships that your daughter has with men. Remember you are the first men we love. Okay enough of that.

To the men who stepped in and took the role the sperm donor was too weak to take, thank you. I think raising a child that is not yours must be one of the most selfless acts, and God will bless you. It may seem like I’m not giving you the credit you deserve. I am sorry for that! But try to understand, that if you are a stepfather you are not the child’s father. And no matter how much you love the mother and her child, the child has a father and at least deserves to know that he exists even if he unfortunately has chosen not to be a part of their life.

To all the children and adults who went through a situation similar to mine. I want you to know that it was not or is not your fault. You did nothing wrong. I believe in my heart once we come to terms with us being born innocent in all this, we can begin to learn to love ourselves, accept who we are and at the same time know that the ugliness doesn’t have to hold us back from being more and achieving more.

“Each of you must put off falsehood and speak truthfully” (Ephesians 4:25).

Interview with Chandra West on "Where is My Daddy and Why Doesn't He Love Me?" by Jeffrey Henry, President of the Phoenix Literary and Arts Society Student Organization

Jeffrey Henry: What was the one thing that allowed you to be able to speak freely about growing up without your father?

Chandra West: To be honest...it has taken lots of time. Even once I "found out" that my Stepdad wasn't my biological father...any discussion of the biological was absolutely forbidden within my family. Once I was older and met him I found myself slowly telling different people outside the family that I had a father out there but Jeff, I still wouldn't say I was speaking freely. It hurt so much and I cried every single time the topic came about, but, when you are filled with so many unanswered questions, you can't help but bring it up no matter how painful. Because for me keeping it all bottled up just made it all the worse. It can affect other aspects of a person's life. Sorry to ramble but the answer is time. I can now speak freely about not having my father in my life as a child, and even still as an adult we are not where I want us to be, but I have accepted the situation for what it is.

JH: What was your initial reaction and feelings once you learned the truth about your father?

CW: OMG! I was a 13 year old kid. I had lots of feelings. First, it was hurt and disappointment. You see, I was a good, naive kid and I believed "everything" my parents ever told me, so to find out that they lied to me day after day, year after year was...for lack of a better word...devastating. Then I felt curiosity and relief. Although I loved my stepfather who I had believed was my biological father all along, I sensed something. I felt their love for me was different from the love they showed my younger sister and brother (who were both my stepfather's biological children). Unfortunately it was always there; after all, it is how the secret was revealed. So anyway, I was curious to meet my "real" father; I fantasized about him loving me, picking me up on weekends and just having another family of siblings, aunts, uncles and possibly grandparents.

JH: Did you ever feel that it was your fault?

CW: I never thought it was truly my fault. I think my parents (all 3 of them) made mistakes and I had to pay for them. Um...I could say more, but I'll just leave it at that.

JH: If you could say anything to the man that stepped in as your dad, what would it be?

CW: Thank you for being there for me when you really didn't have to do it. I know that things weren't good between us all the time, but I do know you loved me then and you love me now and I can count on you—for that I will forever be grateful.



Tai M Hardie — Abstract Charcoal Tree

Meet the Contributor: My name is Tai, I'm 27 and I'm the proud tamer of two monsters. Hayden is 4 and Emery is 2. I've adored the fine arts for as long as I can remember. Georgia O'Keeffe and Salvador Dali are my heroes. Acrylic paint, charcoal and colored pastels are my strongest skills. Sewing makes me happy, as well as crafting in general.

It ain’t right that I’m stuck here as a swamp tree. I’m just as good as any of those others. Like the redwoods, or mahoganies for example. Sure, my trunk and branches are all knotted and gnarled. Sure, my leaves, if they grow at all, are sickly and thin. But it ain’t right that they’ve got all the green and I get to throw down my roots in this fetid water. Ain’t hardly nothing worthwhile in it! I’m a victim of my surroundings? Bull shit. I’m a victim of those snobby, leafy green trees that get all the chances. Some day I’m gonna bust myself up outta here and leave these stinking parasites that just bitch and moan all day, “Man, you taste like shit.” Really? Never would have guessed... I mean, look at what I’m living in!

It used to be that the trees took care of each other; particularly with passing on the wisdom of our ancestors. Nowadays, it’s all about the green though, ain’t it? The redwoods and mahoganies have all those fancy greens that the would-be-keepers-of-our-ways all left to bow at their trunks and shine their roots. I don’t blame ‘em; I’d have done the same. But where does that leave me and mine? Here in the swamp with the few wise trees that still want to keep things going and the remaining young upstarts that don’t give a damn about discipline. We don’t even learn how to move anymore. Them old codgers are afraid we’ll leave them behind and lose the history, and they’re right. If I could move around like my grandpappy did, I’d be up out of this shithole faster than the two sprouts down the water can suffocate each other. On the other limb though, with the disrespect these saplings have for everything, it might be a good thing we don’t move no more. Otherwise, we’d have to worry even more about sapling killin’ sapling for whatever damn no-good reason.

That’s the other thing that’s messed up about the swamp. Ain’t no food, ain’t no green, and everyone and their goddamn step-child is having too many saplings. Bernice was just saying she dropped 8 more down just the other day. No wonder they’re always choking each other out before they even reach adulthood. Just ain’t no way all these sprouts are going to survive. That’s why I’m holdin’ out. I’m just working on getting my roots up out of this slop so I can move and have my saplings up near where the redwoods grow.

Hey, it can happen, right?

Interview with Joshua Klug on "It's All About the Green, Ain't It?" by Richard J. Plevak III,
Member of the Phoenix Literary and Arts Society Student Organization

Richard J. Plevak III: *Upon reading your story I felt that you actually have had some experience, or have seen a swamp in your days. Is this true or are you hitting upon some other meaning with the word "Swamp"?*

Joshua Klug: The swamp setting spoken of in the story is primarily based upon popular conception of what a swamp is: dark, dangerous, and dead. In reality, swamps are havens for a wide assortment of both flora and fauna and tend to be very much alive. That said, I have not been to any real swamps that I can remember, and the entire piece is written as metaphor for the inner city of a major urban center where poverty is the rule and not the exception.

RJP III: *Within your work you choose to make redwoods and mahoganies the upper class in the tree world. What was the reasoning behind this?*

JK: Redwoods are a rather exclusive tree (as far as I know), and mahogany is sought after as a commodity. Oaks were actually a runner-up for inclusion in the group, but I ended up deciding that they would work better as a working middle class sort of tree.

RJP III: *Upon reading your work I found that I could make it fit into the theme of society. With the swamp being the underprivileged and the others the upper classes of society, was this something that you were trying for, and if so why do you feel this way?*

JK: That is precisely what I was aiming for. The trend of the "white-flight" in Milwaukee in particular sparked the idea for the piece. The working class left certain neighborhoods as the residents grew poorer and poorer, and the culture that took over in these neighborhoods is often viewed in a similar fashion to the culture of the swamp in the story. The swamp birch, the story's protagonist, sees himself as part of the escaping working class, but also finds himself stuck where he is. He is unable to change his situation regardless of his desire, but he refuses to conform to the new culture around him.

RJP III: *Where did the inspiration for this story originate for you?*

JK: Between personal observations, stereotypes, conversations with individuals all three cultures represented (the wealthy, the working class and the lower class), and the desire to write something about the world around me, I could not really pinpoint a true origination, but would rather claim it was a collection of ideas and inspirations came together over the years and finally wanted to be put on the page.

RJP III: *You mention within your story that the trees used to look out for one another. Is this personal experience that you have witnessed within your life for the inspiration to write this into the work?*

JK: I admit this is probably one of the weaker areas of the story, but the goal was to hearken back to a sense of community neighborhoods shared with their occupants. Everyone knew each other, would keep an eye out for the neighbor's children, and a general sense of trust was extended to everyone else in the neighborhood. As far as having witnessed this directly, I cannot say, "yes." The sense of this was already pretty eroded when I was growing up in the 80's and 90's, so I drew on the experiences of others and the tales of my elders.



Meet the Contributor: I've faced countless struggles in my past and the one thing that has always gotten me through them is photography. When I'm holding a camera, I feel like I'm doing much more than taking pictures. I'm trying to capture the few emotions that can be best described behind a lens than through any combination of words. Because of the many emotions I have captured, I have found myself growing quite a bit as an individual.

Advice for Aspiring Writers: Excerpt from an Interview with Patrick Moran

By: Jason M. Kolodzyk

good place for a handout



Patrick Moran, author of the book of poems titled tell a pitiful story, spoke with me about his past, present, and future in a telephone interview on Friday October 7th, 2011.

What follows is an excerpt from our conversation.

Jason M. Kolodzyk: What advice can you give to an aspiring poet or writer?

Patrick Moran: Short story writer, novelist, playwright, the kind of advice other people gave me: Read, read, read! Whether it is Chekov, or Lorine Niedecker, or articles on psychology, anything. The more you read, the more you acquaint yourself with poetry and drama, or anything else, you become more and more enriched with language.

The other thing is to not be discouraged. There was a very long period in my career as a writer, where I might publish, if I was lucky, maybe one or two poems a year. I encourage writers to not be discouraged, as it takes persistence and dedication. Because writers create in isolation so often, there is always the possibility that they will become discouraged because they are by themselves and this can heighten the feeling of isolation. Stay with what you like and develop it from there.

good road to follow



aren't they all
haven't they promised

can't you see
won't you look

couldn't you stop
wouldn't it matter

isn't there time
shouldn't you go

How To Join the Phoenix Literary and Arts Society (PLAS) Student Organization:

If you are interested in becoming more involved in The Phoenix magazine, or in conversing about literature, art, or photography, perhaps you would be interested in possibly joining the now-forming Phoenix Literary and Arts Society?

To complete your intent to join, please complete the following **two things** at your earliest convenience:

1. Go to this webpage <<http://matcphoenix.com/phoenix-student-organization/>> and fill out the student organization form please.
2. Enroll in our Phoenix Blackboard website. Then, log in, look around, and begin participating!

Directions for how to complete #2 above:

- > 1. Login to Blackboard
- > 2. Select the “Community” tab at the top of the screen
- > 3. In the search box on the left side, enter “The Phoenix”
- > 4. Locate the organization within the listing.
- > 5. Select the down arrows next to the name and select “enroll.”

Submission Directions for Phoenix Publications:

- Phoenix Now submissions must be “black and white” in color but, while the content is geared toward the struggles and imperfections of humankind, we will consider all submitted work for publication.
- The Phoenix submissions are not regulated by color or theme.

We are now accepting submissions in the following categories:

1. **Art:** Digital, Electronic, Pen and Ink, Pencil, Watercolor, Acrylics, Pastels, and more.
2. **Writing:** Fiction, Nonfiction, Poetry, Essays and Plays and other forms considered.
3. **Photos:** Digital Prints, Electronic, Transparencies, Black and White Prints, and Color Prints.
4. **New Categories:** Short Comic Strip AND Short Graphic Novel (**NOTE:** there must be **narration** and/or **dialogue** used in both of these new categories!)

1. Go to: <<http://matcphoenix.com/>>.
2. Click on the words “Submit” (in the upper right hand corner of the screen).
3. Follow the directions to complete the submission form and to attach your work.

Note: We are only able to accept MS Word and RTF files for literature and .jpg or .gif files for art and photography. Written work should be no longer than 4,000 to 6,000 words*, and we prefer that such work be closer to the lower number. Thanks.

*Written Work Approximate Length Clarification: 14-21 pages in Times New Roman font, 12 point size, double-spaced.

