

EAGLE'S NEST

D R T



VOLUME VI

Presented by the Eastern Arts Society

Table of Contents

Foreword by Dr. Charles Terrell.....	i
"Untitled" by Donna Davy [charcoal].....	1
"White Barn at Rose Hill" by Kristen Colebank [watercolor]	2
A word from the artist about "White Barn"	3
"Heart of Marshall" by William E. Strawderman [poem]	4
"WV Dawn" by Peter L Barstow [photograph].....	4
"Social Media" by Jennifer Sunryder [poem].....	5
Watercolor collection by Sarah Purol	6
"Epidermal Anthropology" by Joe McGee [poem]	7
"Forgotten Shed" by Donna Davy [acrylic]	10
Collection In various mediums by Jennifer Sunryder	11
"Pandemic Poetry" by Megan Webb	12
"Pagoda" by Peter L. Barstow [photograph].....	13
"Catching Hope" by Joe McGee [short story]	14
An interview with artist Kelson Thorne by Debi Layton.....	16
Photos from "Repurposed", Kelson's exhibit By Charles "Chip" Bolyard	18

Cover art: acrylics on canvas Converse by Dr. Charles Terrell



Foreword...

I recall growing up always having crayons, pencils and drawing paper in my room and they were essential items for overnight trips and vacations. It was no surprise to find me spending all of my free time in high school in the art lab. I was fortunate to have an art teacher who encouraged us to experiment with block cutting, sculpture, pottery, oils, pastels, acrylics, etc. The art lab was a sanctuary for a skinny, goofy nerd who experienced bullying from male classmates. My junior year I was nominated and selected to attend a Virginia Museum Arts summer program that help me understand there were students from all over the state who shared similar challenges and a passion for creativity.

I gravitated to art students when I attended East Carolina University and had a **serious** freshman crush on a senior art student, Roxanne. And yes, I was still a skinny, goofy nerd in college, but art and an appreciation for music and humanities led to friendships with diverse, creative and talented people.

Art, music, humanities continue to be an important part of my personnel life. I did not marry Roxanne, but instead found true love with an art student from Virginia Commonwealth University. Michele and I celebrated 31 years of marriage in June 2020 and our greatest joint creations are our two sons, Cory and Noah.

Life is like a blank canvas that allows me to discover, create and express something new from my workshop, building a lamp from black pipes and/or painting a pair of Converse All Stars with a favorite character from my youth. The opportunities for self-expression are endless. I admit, I was painfully shy in high school and college, but art helped to build my self-esteem and a quest for adventure. I traveled alone to Europe to see masterpieces by Van Gogh, Monet, Rembrandt, and others. It has been an amazing journey and I never imagined I would become a community college president. Serving as President, I support the arts and humanities at Eastern and in the Potomac Highlands of West Virginia.

2020 introduced all of us to COVID-19 and George Floyd's tragic death. They are life-changing experiences, but remaining constant for me is the desire to try new creative projects during the pandemic. Art, music and humanities helps to connect humanity regardless of race, sex, religion, culture, etc. I am reminded of their positive influence when I connect with creative people from all over the world through Zoom, Instagram, Facebook, etc.

I will depart Eastern this fall with plans to experiment making craft beer, attending a leather crafts camp, learning how to play the ukulele and planning a journey to Italy. Enjoy the newest edition of Eagle's Nest and Live a Great Story!

Dr. T (Newt) That is another story!



"Untitled"
Charcoal
Donna Davy



“White Barn at Rose Hill”
Plein Air Watercolor on Paper
Kristen Colebank

Insight from the artist about “White Barn at Rose Hill”

Plein air” is a French term, loosely translated as “outdoor” and refers to the act of painting on location. The notoriety of plein air painting is most often attached to the development of French Impressionism in the 1870s as painters such as Claude Monet, Camille Pissarro, Edgar Degas, and Alfred Sisley eschewed the Classical conventions and dictates of the Académie des Beaux-Arts and the Salon de Paris and carried their easels outdoors where they attempted to convey their “impressions” of atmosphere and light.

However, as a watercolor artist, I look beyond the Impressionists to an even earlier time when English landscape artists such as J.R. Cozens, Thomas Girtten, John Constable, John Sell Cotman, and J.M.W. Turner seized the opportunities afforded by the 1767 invention of wove paper and the 1780 creation of watercolor “cakes.” With these innovations in hand, watercolorists sallied forth into the English countryside armed with painting kits and sable brushes. Well before Monet’s Haystack paintings, Constable was recording the appearance of the sky at various times of day in his watercolors.

I started painting plein air in 2016. I had painted in watercolors for more than 25 years by that point, but as a mostly self-taught artist, I had relied on photographic references. As a high school student, I vividly remember wandering out into the pasture behind our house with plans to paint the pretty view toward the meadow. I looked out onto that landscape and felt completely overwhelmed by the volume of visual information. I was 17 years old. I made a feeble attempt to paint the scene, but it was terrible, so I kept working with photographs after that experience.

Fast forward to the summer of 2016, and the Museum of the Shenandoah Valley in Winchester, Va., was offering a one-day plein air workshop. I signed up for it because I wanted to see if I finally could conquer the fear I felt for plein air. It was a difficult workshop, but I ended the day feeling a boost of confidence.

On my own, I ventured back into the MSV gardens for another attempt, and even though my painting was dreadful, I had fun. So I started going to MSV during lunch breaks to paint. I was terribly self-conscious and nervous about my paintings, but MSV’s walled garden gave me a sense of safety and security. I bought a plein air easel and took a couple of workshops with experienced plein air painters. And in the four years since that workshop, I have found that the more I paint plein air, the more I enjoy it and benefit from it.

Painting plein air has improved my drawing skills immensely, and that has helped my studio work. The edges of a photograph can become a crutch for translating a scene on paper. Without that crutch, I’ve had to trust my eyes and practice skills where I visually measure and assess elements in relationship to one other. These are the basic skills that formally trained artists learn in ateliers and life-drawing sessions. Through plein air, the landscape has become my atelier.

As an added bonus, the pace of plein air work – because the sun doesn’t wait for you — has benefited my studio paintings. I am not nearly as afraid of “messing up.” I feel bolder and quicker, and my paintings are fresher as a result. Finally, after years of painting, I now trust that the colorful splashes on my paper are the real star of the show, not the scene (or the reference photo).

“White Barn at Rose Hill,” completed in October of 2018, shows afternoon light illuminating the barn at Rose Hill Park, located on the outskirts of Winchester, Va.

Heart of Marshall

Fountain spewing water,
Like a heart gushing its life blood
The trickle of water falls away into the nothingness of
time.

The heart of Marshall, at the center of their world
Turned upside down in one fell score
The broken heart of Marshall Bleeding forevermore.

- William E. Strawderman



“WV Dawn” by PeterL Barstow



Social Media

Here I am

Again

Like I am every day
Wasting my life away
Scrolling for miles
Looking at things, for a while
But it makes me smile

I have laundry to do
And sweeping too
But I'd rather spend time with you
My friend
Because our conversations never end
I just have to hit refresh again.....

My homework's making eyes at me
But don't you fear my darling
I won't let him get between you and I
I'll just see him on the side
It's only out of responsibility I swear
To stop his uncomfortable stare
To get him out of my hair....

My eyes sting, and I'm actually getting bored
But I'm still refreshing, sorting through your treasure hoard
To look for something that will make me grin
That will get me to laugh again
That I can show my friends
I have a hundred of them

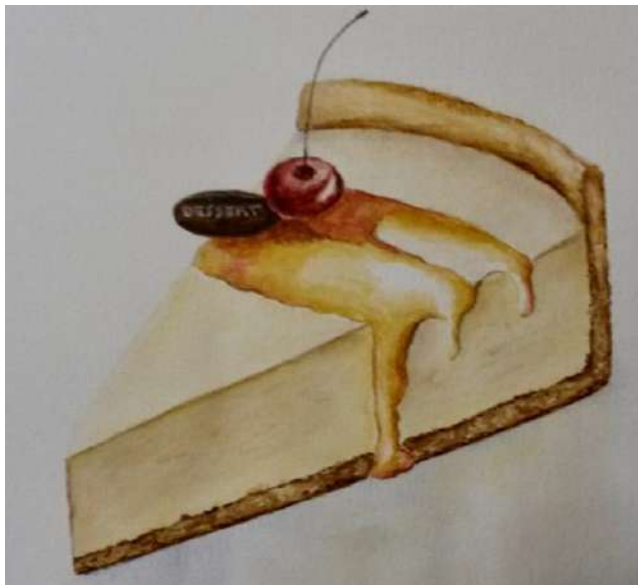
I can feel my butt going flat, I think I'm getting fat
And my room has become a graveyard for paper plates
And though I've won many likes
I've become one of my hates...

But Here I Am

Again

Like I am every day

- Jennifer Sunryder



Water colors
Sarah Purol



Epidermal Anthropology

Scarred flesh, like cave drawings
carved on ancient walls, shout
forty-five years of trauma.
And some day,
when the cave is empty,
when these walls are all that remain,
crumbling inward at the ravages
of time and natural ruin –
when the inhabitant is gone –
The anthropologist will speculate
on what might have been back then;
what life he must have lived,
what tools he may have used,
what his early years were like...

A puckered and pale mark
tucked in the webbed valley
between two fingers,
the result of a smoldering cigarette
dangling between the hand of a distracted uncle.
The child, an Easter Bunny, hops,
hops, hops across the living room,
into the angry, red fire.

Long, pink, tadpole-shaped mark
on the right forearm,
where the splinter lay entombed;
buried deep –
now decayed. Only the cairn remains.
The boy wraps his arm around the beam
and jumps, arms hugged tight, as he slides
down.

The wrinkled patch of skin,
resembling the United States
(and part of Canada),
drawn tight across the top of the right hand
where the skin peeled off when pressed
between two cousins and a sheet of ice
on the downhill tumble from their sled.

(continued...)

Tiny circle, smaller
than a pencil eraser and nearly
invisible in the tangled leg hair
of the left shin.
The nail, propelled from the push lawnmower,
embeds itself in the teenager's shin.
His father pulls it out with pliers
and then chastises him
for leaving the mower running
when he hobbled to the door
for help.

Angry, red line
along the left ribs
where they held the young man down
and sliced through skin and muscle
with a scalpel. Without anesthesia.
Peeled it all back
and thrust the chest tube in
to drain the air from his chest
cavity and give the lung a chance
to heal and re-inflate.
The impact from the steering wheel
broke bones and organs.

Bright red lumps of tissue
stitched across his chest;
painful, nagging remnants
of the shattered windshield
that his seatbelt kept him from
propelling through.

A thin white line
across the pad
of the left ring finger,
where the knife pulled back
and the skin separated,
pushing out the yellow
fatty flesh before the stitches
closed it up.

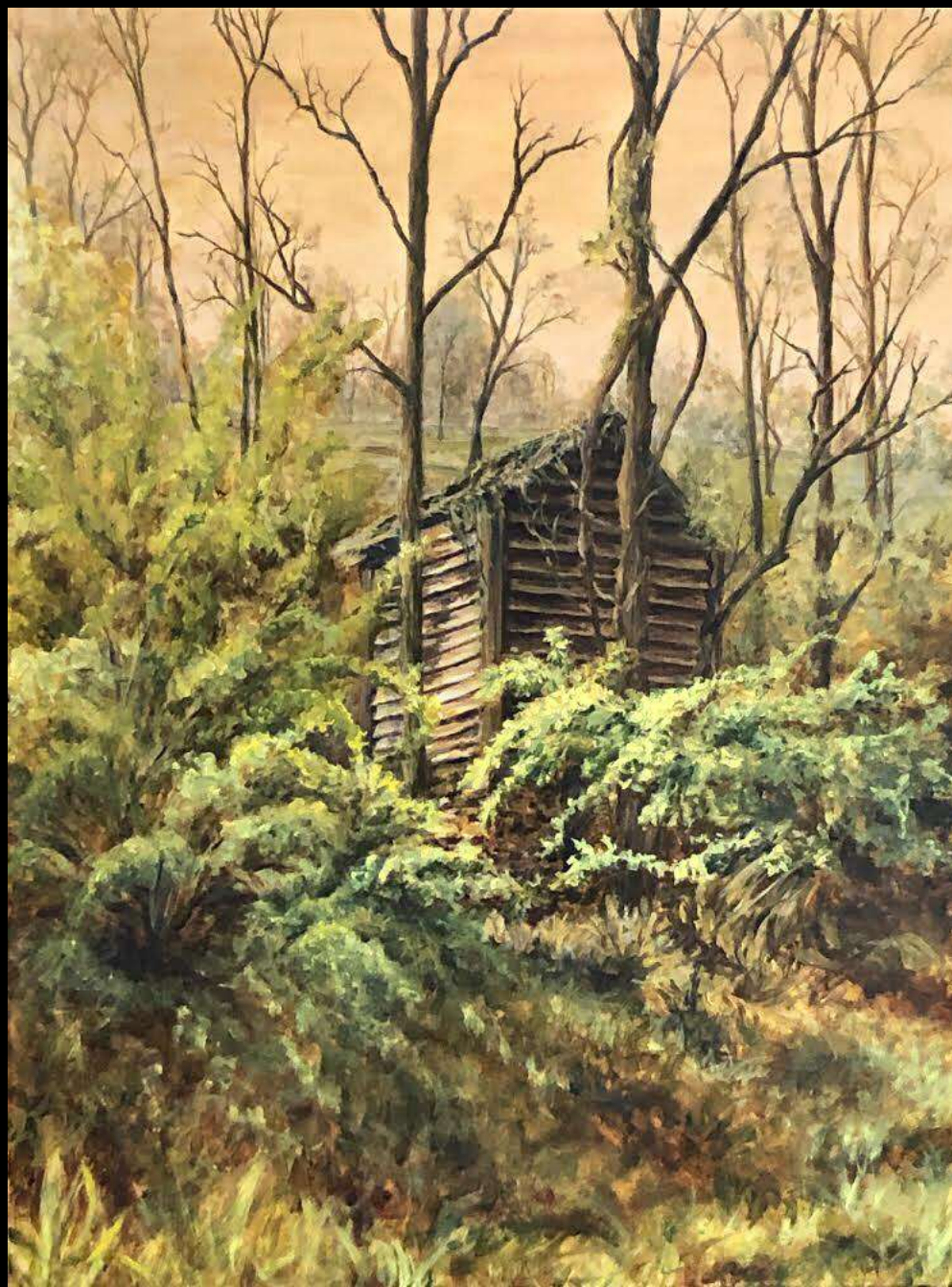
(continued...)

Swollen, red bumps,
like leeches,
where they went into the man's right
shoulder and cut down bone,
repaired tendons,
fixed his rotator cuff.
Ten years of construction work
had torn through it like a hurricane.

There are more,
so many more lines
and pale pockets
of skin whose cause
is long forgotten to even the inhabitant
of this cave. Whose story
cannot be remembered.

The anthropologist
will study these lines,
these bumps,
these wrinkled masses
of pink, pale and angry
red flesh and speculate
on how close they came
to the truth
of how life carved itself
on his skin.

- Joe McGee



"Forgotten Shed"
Acrylic
Donna Davy



1



2



3

1: "Korok Rodeo" (colored pencils)

2: "A Slip" (marker)

3: "Mortis the Undead Fire Mage"
(marker and pastel)

A collection by Jennifer
Sunryder

Pandemic Poetry

COVID 19 has taken our country by storm.
Whoever imagined face masks and social distancing would be the new norm?
School doors would close, no one in sight.
Empty buildings, halls, and classrooms –
2020 just doesn't seem right.

The world would be turned upside down
when you ask the question –
what can we do to find grace, health, hope, and peace
amidst a pandemic and turmoil in the streets?

Let's do our best to rebuild our foundation
with bricks and mortar cemented together with positivity.
Cherish time with our families.
Support our local businesses, farmers, and food-producing entities.
Appreciate and respect diversity in our land of the free.

Be faithful and giving.
Find the good in the bad.
Live each day fully, where there is no I in we,
like a doctor or nurse treating a patient's needs.
Give one for the team; celebrate our neighbors and essential employees.

Let's turn unprecedented into precedent
by being faithful, giving, and with an emphasis on we,
having faith in tomorrow.
Remember, it's us, not them. Celebrate we,
a cure, a vaccine, a new day.
Let's pray for health and unity.

Our country, old glory, hard times she has seen.
Let's be positive amidst the storm
while we follow this new norm.
Let's turn uncertainty into certainty.
With this, America, we will be reborn.

-Megan Webb



"Pagoda"
Peter L. Barstow

Catching Hope

By Joe McGee

Parker whistled too loud and caught an elbow in the ribs for it. He couldn't help it, he was happy. How could he not be happy when he was about to get rich?

"Ow!" he said, rubbing his side and glaring at Sabrina. "What'd you do that for?"

"Because, fungus brain," said his sister, "you're going to chase her away before we even have a chance to set the trap."

Parker grumbled something about sharp elbows and foul moods. He pushed his hand deep into his pocket and fished around. There it was! Small and smooth and jagged at one end. Not three hours removed from its spot next to his front teeth, top row, left side. He'd tied the string and held still while Sabrina slammed the door. Pop! A little tang of blood and a squishy socket was worth it when you knew how to catch the Tooth Fairy. And if you caught the Tooth Fairy-

"Tell me again what happens when you catch the Tooth Fairy?" asked Parker.

"You get rich, doofus," said Sabrina. "And I get half."

Parker didn't argue. Half of rich was better than all of none. Besides, it was her trap. She'd caught goblins in it that told her all their secrets and once she'd trapped a lost daydream and turned it into a poem. Sabrina knew things and Parker knew she knew what she was talking about. Sabrina was smart.

"I'm going to buy a llama," he said.

Sabrina kicked up a pile of dead leaves and watched them spiral to the forest floor. "That's stupid."

Parker shoved both hands in his pockets. "Oh yeah? What are you going to buy?"

She stopped and glared at him, arms crossed. "If I tell you, you promise not to tell mom?"

"Promise."

"Cross your heart?"

"Cross my heart," said Parker.

But he didn't say the next part. *Hope to die*. They never said the next part, not since Noah. *Hope to die*.

(cont'd)

Sabrina nibbled on her lip a moment. “I’m going to buy a whole lot of prayers. Mom’s always praying, but that didn’t help Noah. I seen how it works. You need to give them enough money in those baskets on Sunday. It’s like...like protection money. That’s what I’m going to do. Buy enough prayers for you, and me, and mom-“

“What about dad?” said Parker.

Sabrina scrunched up one eye and thought about it a moment. “Yeah, dad too, wherever he is, I suppose. But I’m going to buy enough prayers so...so we don’t get sick like Noah.”

Parker just nodded. Sabrina knew things.

“That’s a good plan,” he said.

She smiled at him and took his hand. “Come on.”

They found the old breadbox right where Sabrina said it’d be, in a small culvert near the lightning-split oak.

The faded green paint reminded Parker of the weeds he’d often pulled from around Noah’s grave.

“Go on,” she said. “Put the tooth in.”

Parker fished it out of his pocket. He didn’t like the dried blood crusted on the jaggedy parts. It brought up bad memories. Noah memories. He dropped it in the breadbox like it was going to bite him.

It made a plinking sound when it hit the bottom.

“Now what?” he said.

“Now we wait,” she said, holding the lid. “Wait and pray.”

Sabrina set the lid at an angle and used a twig to hold it upright. She’d brought dental floss with her, the same kind they’d used to tie around Parker’s tooth. She tied the loose end to the stick and started spooling out the slack. Who knew that dental floss could have so many uses? Parker remembered seeing Grandpa Henry make a yoyo once with dental floss and an old thread spool and Uncle John claimed he once caught a bass as big as his leg with a piece of dental floss and a stick.

“Parker,” hissed Sabrina. “Stop daydreaming and come on.”

Parker followed her behind the tree where they perched, and waited, and watched.

His tongue found the hole in his mouth. His thoughts found the hole in his heart. A llama was a dumb idea.

He was going to buy prayers.

An Interview with Kelson Thorne

By Debi Layton



Having lived in the same neighborhood for so many years, and growing up with my boys, there are no words to describe the pride and honor I felt in conversing with Kelson Thorne about his success as an aspiring young artist in his own right. The following are my questions, and his responses:

When did you realize you had a passion to paint artwork?

“After two years as a Biology major, I realized I wanted to pursue art. However, I had no direction. I just told my advisor I wanted to major in Art Education. At the time I didn’t even know painting was offered as a fine arts degree at WVU. My schedule required a variety of art courses to expose myself to multiple mediums. My first painting course was in the fall of 2016. This was the first time I ever painted. It ended up consuming my time, because I loved it so much. I thought I was a natural; looking

back I thought I was a lot better than I truly was. There was so much for me to learn, but the confidence fueled my passion and has been there ever since.”

What or who inspired you to start painting?

“Freedom of expression inspired the start of my art. Painting gave me a voice and a chance to communicate about my life and outside influences (pop culture/society) without words.”

How do you choose a theme or style of a painting? Is there an emotional connection? How long does it take to complete a painting? Is there a trend you’re currently following?

“A lot of the time I find when I’m painting, the artwork seems to create itself. Most of my work incorporates the subconscious mind; it allows me to paint more freely. I like to be expressive with the medium. However, pop culture seems to be a trend I have always followed in art. I want to bring an expressive element to Pop Art. With social media and technological advances American pop culture has influenced me greatly, I like to convey these personal connections with expressive painting. If I had to coin a term for my current trend/movement it would be called “Pop Expressionism”.”

What do you want your paintings to convey to others? Does it represent a message about the world, politically or socially; or is it more about the events in your personal life?

"I like to create democratic art that is relatable to a variety of viewers. However, I allow myself to hint deeper meanings; sort of like a dark comedy. At first glance my paintings may seem like there is no message, like it is just something to merely appreciate visually. But when the viewer takes a deeper look there's metaphors throughout. For example, most of my subjects are deceased pop culture icons from the 1990s and early 2000s. I resonated with these subjects and the pursuit of finding ourselves and being lost entering adulthood, it's something I feel like many celebrities struggled with as well as the average citizen. I tend to paint commercial logos and script, but the companies I use serve a purpose. I typically include commercial logos for household items that are also common in drug culture (companies like Arm & Hammer, Johnson and Johnson, Ziploc, etc.). In some pieces, I'll also collage sermons that my late grandfather wrote years before while pastoring his Pentecostal church. This is how my art becomes the most personal. I try to portray the contradicting influences of my upbringing and early adulthood. I like to use indirect analogies because I do not want to tell the viewer how to think or come off as political. I just like to create paintings that can be appreciated by a variety of people while making it personal to my life."

How have you developed your career? It doesn't happen by sheer luck, thus requiring strategic effort based on your vision and goals, and what success means to you. What is your career trajectory?

"So far, most of my success came from social media, Instagram specifically. I was fortunate to paint for celebrities, so whenever they shared my artwork, a portion of their fans became supporters of my artistic vision. Networking is truly key. My social media accounts have allowed me the opportunity to sell paintings internationally, thus creating connections, and accelerating my art career. However, I have no intentions of only selling art through social media. I have my sight set on the gallery setting. I plan to apply for MFA programs after next year. That will allow me to complete a teaching assistantship and open opportunities to become a professor while creating my own art. My dream is to spend a portion of my life in Los Angeles and New York City, being a full time artist. I have plans of fusing my art with the fashion and music industry. I do not limit myself to painting only on canvas, I do murals, create custom clothes, and paint various accessories. My plans and goals can be overwhelming but I find it necessary for my artistic growth."

What efforts do you make to get your paintings showcased or displayed? Do you send your Portfolio to art galleries, and if so how often?

"As of now, people have contacted me to exhibit, rather than me reaching out to them. I will be reluctant to send my portfolio to major galleries until after I complete my MFA. Most galleries prefer their artists have a masters, however there are always outliers. Some gallerist and artdealers only exhibit specific art movements. I am still experimenting and want to allow myself the best chance before blindly pursuing an art dealer. I have a lot to learn about the art market myself. I hope to continue exhibiting locally with my remaining time in West Virginia."



REPURPOSED



Photo Credits: Charles "Chip" Bolyard

Check out Eastern's NEW Little Free Library!

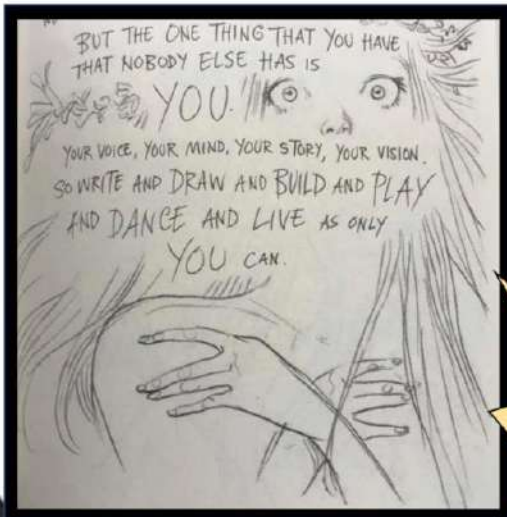


Stop by and have a look. Feel free to take and/or leave a book!

Register for CREATIVE WRITING

Whether you write all of the time, or some of the time, or have never done any creative writing at all, this class is for you!

Creativity and imagination are an important part of us all and in a world turned upside down, creative writing offers a healthy, fun, and rewarding outlet.



FICTION
POETRY
CREATIVE
NONFICTION

"The world always seems brighter when you've just made something that wasn't there before."
-Neil Gaiman

COURSE INFORMATION:
Introduction to Creative Writing
CRN: 270. ENL295
Monday and Wednesday, 3:30 – 4:45
Prof. Joe McGee joemcgeeauthor.com

This!
FALL!

The Eagle's Nest is a publication of **The Eastern Arts Society**
Eastern West Virginia
Community & Technical College

Thank you to Megan Webb, Debi Layton,
Dominic Phillips, Curtis Hakala, and Dr. Charles Terrell.
Special thanks to those who contributed to this volume.



If you would like to join The Eastern Arts Society, or you would like to contribute your own poetry, art, short fiction, or photographs, please contact Joe McGee at joe.mcgee@easternwv.edu

