



# The Louden Singletree

Writing and Visual Art from the University of the Fraser Valley  
*Issue 2 / September 2010*



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*Writing and Visual Art from the  
University of the Fraser Valley*

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*Issue 2*

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## About this issue

Welcome to the second issue of the *Louden Singletree*.

The greatest desire of the 2010 Editorial Board was to build on the success of the first issue – and we believe we have succeeded. By continuing to publish the fiction and poetry of students, faculty, alumni and staff as well as adding a selection of outstanding visual art, we have honoured the goals set by the first Editorial Board and continued to grow and develop as a showcase for the creative work produced at UFV.

The production of a student literary and arts magazine is an endeavour of love, dedication, inspiration, teamwork and not a small amount of frustration. Every step of the process, from forming a cohesive group to advertising, sorting, reading, discussing, selecting, printing, announcing, encouraging, presenting and then starting all over again, is done on a voluntary basis by a dedicated group of students with advice and guidance from faculty and staff. It is an amazing process and one that I truly enjoyed being a part of.

We are very proud of this issue. Proud of the work we have done, but even more so, proud of the high quality of literature and visual art that we are able to showcase in this edition of the *Louden*. This issue is proof, once again, of the strong literary and arts commitment and the wealth of talent that resides here at UFV.

**Hilary Kim Morden**

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*Hypnotized Magician*  
Scott Varga

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# Emerald

*Miriam Huxley*

He was laying in the wooden box surrounded by plush material: a shimmering satin bed in a luminous emerald. Emerald; it was the first crayon he pulled out of the crayon box at one. And at two, it was the emerald crayon that his pudgy hands shoved into his mouth, tiny teeth mashing the crayon into an emerald oblivion. It was the first unnatural colour that tinged his vomit after his mother forced him to cleanse his system of crayon. After he attempted to eat the crayon, it became his favourite colour. The vomit-incident had created a love for the colour that would never fade. After that day, everything had to be emerald. His room, his sheets, the tux he wore to his prom, the colour scheme at his wedding; no other colour would do. Only, and always, emerald. As I looked at his breathless body, it was the colour that replaced all others; it was the only colour I could see.

My eyes took in the emerald satin in the coffin, and the new emerald tie around his neck. The tie—only four days, four hours and two minutes old—was a present from his mother for his birthday: the seventeenth of March. My mind turned emerald as I thought of that day: a cake with emerald icing in a room with emerald walls decorated with streamers and dancing balloons. I could see the room filled with guests, all dressed in their best emeralds.

It happened when he was eating the cake. His mother had told me not to do it, saying that crayons were dangerous, even to a grown man: dangerous even to a grown man who had tried to eat a crayon as a child. The situation was not one that could be repeated. Man could not triumph over crayon twice. But I had ignored her, imagining the look of delight on his face when he dug into the cake and found the brand new emerald crayon, hidden between the layers. But it went all wrong; he ate the cake without looking inside. Half of his piece was speared onto his fork, making its way into his mouth with the emerald crayon still hidden inside. Then a cough, a splutter, a gasp for air. No delight, instead, horror as the crayon lodged itself in his throat.

We tried to save him; a flurry of emerald as we rushed to dislodge the crayon I had meant to be a joke. But when his face turned a colour I knew no crayon would ever represent, I realized there was no hope. His mother had been right; man could not win against crayons twice.

As I stood next to his coffin on the day of his funeral, my eyes unable to see anything but the emerald that surrounded him, I willed the colour to disappear. I hoped that if it went away, so too, would my overwhelming guilt. I closed my eyes, blinked rapidly, but it would not fade. The luminous folds of satin still surrounded him, the tie from his mother still lay unmoving on his lifeless chest. Only four days, four hours and two minutes before, I had loved the colour and everything that went along with it. But as I stood next to the coffin, desperately trying to ignore the obnoxious colour, I thought I would loathe it for eternity. I thought I would be forever haunted by emerald crayons; the first that created the love, and the last that ended it.

But as the wooden box was lowered into the fresh earth, I noticed the myriad of stunning shades and tones surrounding me: hats accented with violet flowers and ties of sapphire silk; the ruby roses on his coffin; the rich burgundy of his mother's dress; the brilliant lemon of the daffodils. Every colour of the rainbow but one: emerald. The colour had been buried along with him.

## Almost

*Hilary Kim Morden*

“Pull over here.”

I pull the car over to the curb and park. It feels weird to park on the left side of the street instead of the right. I am on the one-way road bordering the Auto Mall. I look toward the building in front of me. It appears foreign and, yet, familiar; like all the auto malls everywhere in the world, but also unique only to this one. I focus on the sound of the Dixie Chicks singing as my mind tries to still itself. I’m having trouble catching my breath and my heart is pounding so hard I feel the blood pushing against my neck. He leans forward and pushes the button turning the cd player off. I think of men and the way they move through the world – so sure of the things they create and use. I don’t find those parts of the world so easy to deal with.

“Put out your right hand.”

His voice is firm and sure, as though he has no doubts, no misgivings. I wonder at that as well. How can he be so sure when I am so conflicted? I hold out my right hand palm up and shut my eyes. Breathing might be easier if I can’t see.

I feel his touch before his hand reaches mine. Instinctively I close my hand and begin to pull away, then deliberately reopen it and hold still. I need to do this; I need to have him touch me. Afraid and expectant at the same time, I feel as though I am on the edge.

Slowly, I exhale as I feel his hand touch down on mine. I wait for the electric shock that occurred earlier during lunch when his hand accidentally brushed against my knuckles. But, it doesn’t come. Now his touch feels different. There is no sudden shock, just this feeling of warmth and arousal as his palm settles into mine. Shivers run up my arm and down my back. A sense of expectation settles into my abdomen.

“Get a room,” screams loudly in my head as he gently folds his hand around mine. The voice is so loud I am sure he has heard it too. Fearfully, I briefly glance at his face for confirmation, and am relieved to see that his concentrated expression has not changed.

Shutting my eyes again, I suspend. All that I feel is sourced in my hand and simultaneously throughout my body. I start with surprise and a sudden intake of breath as he grips tighter. I didn’t expect him to do that. I didn’t expect him to physically impose where only energy had been before.

Holding my breath, eyes closed, I wait for something more. Random thoughts glide through the suspended instant in my mind. His hand is warm, and smaller than I thought it would be.

I wait some more. I can not breathe. I am on the edge of something momentous. I feel an energy build to its utmost, needing to be dispelled.

I wait to be dispelled.

A thought emerges: if he slides his fingers between mine...I will be lost...I will fall off the edge. And, so, I wait for him to slide his fingers between mine, to feel his fingertips probe the most vulnerable and delicate parts of my hand. And, waiting, I feel his hand leave before he even moves.

A cool rush of air displaces the warmth left by his hand and dispels our tangled energy.

Disappointment rushes through me – there will be no resolution. My need to fall remains, unfulfilled. I let go of my held breath and then shallowly breathe in as I open my eyes.

“Now you,” he says, extending his right hand out to me, palm up, “use your left hand.”

I close my eyes and ponder his request. I can not look in his face for the answer. I know that my world will shatter if I do. It felt that way earlier when we first met for lunch. I looked everywhere except at him. He laughed and then told me he didn't think he could be friends with someone who wouldn't look at him. Yet, I wonder, are we friends?

Briefly, I peek at his hand, waiting patiently, suspended in front of me.

Twisting slightly in the seat so that my left arm can reach across I hold my hand over his and let it fall. But, before I make contact, his left hand shoots out and grips the wrist of my falling hand.

“Not so fast.”

A rush of heat licks across my cheeks. I feel shamed, as though I was too eager, unrefined. This feeling fuses with a long distant memory of the same emotion. I pull back a little and then hesitantly hover above his hand. The feeling of shame dissipates, pushed away by curiosity and a compelling need to touch him.

As my hand continues to hover, I ask, “Can you feel this?”

“Of course,” he replies.

I keep my eyes downcast and stare hard at his hand – the lines and scars that criss-cross his palms. I don't need to look at his face to see if he's watching me. I can feel his eyes on me. He must be smiling; I hear it in his voice. He seems entertained by my confusion, my indecision and my overwhelming feelings of arousal.

I place my hand in his, gently laying it there. There is no sense of holding it up or being held up. The two hands are simply suspended, one resting lightly upon the other.

I turn my face slightly away from him and stare sightlessly out the window. Emotions flicker through me; the conflict that began months prior plays out in my mind – and my body.

Time passes.

Pulling his hand away from mine he says, “You look like you're having a therapy session in your head.”

I look down at my hand as my fingers curl inward in a vain attempt to capture and hold the feelings he has aroused within me.

Opening the car door, he turns to me, “I'll leave you with that thought.” And, then laughing quietly he gets out of the car, “if I had known you were that close to an orgasm...”

He shuts the door and then hunching down into his jacket, away from the cold, he walks in front of the car and away from me, down the sidewalk without another glance in my direction.

Stunned, I put the car in gear and pull out, driving past him. I refuse to turn as I pass him to see if he's watching me, because I know he isn't. He doesn't have to watch. I have already given him all the information he could possibly need or want.

I briefly consider crying, but, somehow crying feels inappropriate for the emotion I am experiencing. But, I don't know what the appropriate reaction is because I can't define the emotion. I feel a mild sense of amazement that I can experience an emotion I have never felt before.

Amazement, arousal, and frustration all mix with a sudden feeling of loss and all that gets mixed up with a sense of “lost-ness” as I realize I don't know where I am, or how to get home.

In the diminishing light my car follows the curved road out of the Auto Mall onto the street and in a direction that I hope will take me back to my world, thinking –

If only he had slid his fingers between mine...

## Ghosts of her Life

*Hilary Kim Morden*

The vision of the teenage girl in the studio window temporarily disconcerts her. The woman knows no one is home. She moves her head side to side, eyes holding steady on the girl's image, to see if it is a trick of light and reflection – a not unusual occurrence in her home as the house and the paned glass it contains are both very old. The girl's face becomes part shadow as the woman's perspective changes, but, she remains, behind the pane of glass, eyes solemnly watching, dark and compelling in her small oval face. The girl is so close that the woman can feel her sadness, deep within her own body. Yet, she knows she is not real.

She has long known that her life is shared by ghosts. She has no fear of them, nor they her; both cohabit quite comfortably. The woman doesn't actually like to call them ghosts, but she has no other name for them. She sees them as remaining energy; perhaps of past relationships, or, previous lives – either way, energy with a purpose. She believes that she pulls others to herself; others she is meant to interact with, and, for her, this includes the ghosts.

The teen girl watching her through the studio window is newer to her. She appeared when the addition to the house was being built several years ago. At first all she could feel was the girl's rage. However, now that the addition is complete she has calmed down; making her presence known in the studio when the woman has no students and is not playing the piano. The girl wanders the room aimlessly trailing her hand across the cool, slick-black surfaces of the pianos. Yet, she scarcely makes an impression. She has little substance; leaving the woman with a sense of uncertainty and vague anxiety; much the same way her life currently does.

The elderly man who paces the living room with even, measured steps has been with her for most of her adult life. She became aware of him during the long, spring days she awaited the birth of her first child. Frantically torn between her desire for a drink and an obsessively neurotic need to care for the gestating baby in her womb, the coming of this older man, with his steady way and heavy presence, gave her a feeling of constancy and surety. His existence has allowed her to avoid returning to the addiction that dictated most of her early years, and, she often wonders if he would leave her should she one day succumb, to the urge to drink – an urge that haunts her daily.

She rarely tells others of her ghosts; they require more explanation than she can possibly offer. Some, like her granny, needed no explanation. Her granny knew she came with others the day she was brought home, as a sickly newborn, from the hospital. Both she and her mother were desperately clinging to the fragile lives they had been given and her mother was not up to the task of caring for an infant, especially one that was constantly alert and agitated as though interacting with some invisible entity. Her granny had been more than willing to step in and care for her and when she was six told her that she knew. Her mother's response was to call her a liar and tell her to never speak of "it" again. Her granny is long dead, but always present to her; her mother alive, but less real to her than her ghosts.

Some days the stillness of the woman's ghosts haunts her. Alone, within the hushed, quiet of her home, children gone and husband often away, she feels them settle around her and she has difficulty knowing where she leaves off and they begin.

A few years ago she held a party to celebrate the completion of her home. Her friend, an Anglican Minister, offered to bless the house. She worried that the blessing would affect her ghosts. But it didn't. They remain. She wonders if it should have been her that was blessed and then maybe they would leave. Yet, as she gazes upon the shadowed face of the girl in her studio window, she dismisses the thought. She is not overly concerned. She made peace with her ghosts a long time ago.



*Little Fawn*  
Jessie Somers

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## Memento Mori

*Hilary Kim Morden*

So named because I've heard  
 that if you call a child  
 for relatives long dead,  
 you beholden them  
 to secrets whispered,  
 promises made,  
 and edicts obeyed,  
 with no free acceptance  
 of consequence.

So named because I've heard  
 the insistent call  
 of my sister, long dead,  
 her childish voice  
 breathing hotly in my ear  
*Promise me,*  
 gripping my arm,  
*Anne with an e—*  
*promise me.*

So named because I've heard  
 that promises made  
 must not be broken,  
 that even fingers crossed  
 and Rosaries spoken  
 can't keep you safe  
 from secrets whispered  
 or insistent sisters.

## four: twenty three

*Hilary Kim Morden*

sometimes I wake in the early morning  
sporadic bird-calls breaking  
the pristine presence of night

not wake to my heart pounding  
sweat pouring  
body shaking

but, wake  
still and quiet, as though I heard my name  
whispered

I lie, motionless  
eyes adjusting to the dim light  
4:23 a steady red glow

it is here that I look for you my lost child  
caught in the thin membrane  
between dream and day

I find you huddled  
in the corner  
your whimper the sound that brought me awake

I open my arms  
and you settle  
a tiny bird of fine bones against my breast

your eyes search  
look inward  
and you try  
but like me  
cannot let go

your breathing lengthens  
as you nest into me  
then, we breathe  
as one

## Threads

*Hilary Kim Morden*

Threads linger and float  
tangle into snarls

wisps of my past  
startling in their appearance.

I pick you off the surface of my life.

How was I to know  
that you would remain

the unfinished seam  
raveling  
surprising me  
with errant threads  
that disturb my continuity  
my structure  
my existence.

## Ocean Triolet

*Hilary Kim Morden*

Beach glass shines dully, shades of the ocean,  
eternal it waits and peeks through the sand.  
Eyes to the sunrise – peace, my devotion.

Wind pulls, gulls cry, waves make me understand,  
choices made without me, came from your soul.  
Answering inner voice, one lone command.

Life is so hard, so dark and temporal  
a silent, small sigh linking worlds unknown.  
Journeys begin when we feel their soft pull.

Some cross by freely, like wind they are blown,  
traveling above ground, ascendant they climb.  
You passed by; your nature, never my own.

Alone on the beach, I ask one last time,  
will you wait, like the beach glass eternal?  
Wait for me, stay with me, share your sublime?

## All the Memories a Body Can Bear

*Hilary Kim Morden*

it surprised me to wake  
with you on my mind  
in this nondescript hotel room  
in a small prairie town  
so far from home

the cold October wind  
blew through the open window  
and set the chimes dancing  
as it tangled in my hair

I shivered in anticipation  
as the air followed  
the path left by your tongue

*come, you whispered*  
*stay with me now*

and I stayed,  
    I followed

How could I ever refuse you

eyes closed  
I drift  
on the languorous tug of my own desire  
it pulls  
submerging  
me back  
back into my dream

I dream  
    of my lips on your skin  
    my hands on your arms  
    our bodies twined  
    and sheets tangled

and wake  
to find myself alone  
in a nondescript hotel room  
in a small prairie town  
    far, far from home



*Untitled*  
Erin Dugdale

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## beyond the showbox

*Shannon McConnell*

I exit the doors of the club  
feeling my shirt stick to me  
like a freshly licked stamp  
the chilled night enfolds

small crowds on the gum-speckled sidewalk  
unleash secondhand smoke and banter  
about the lack of skill of the opening band  
and that favourite song that never gets played

I weave through shoulders and unfamiliar streets  
finally resting my thoughts at second and pike  
standing on the cement curve  
as the space needle becomes my north star

the humid breath of the city grazes my cheeks  
and I inhale a subtle scent of calm and coffee  
I walk without words as the sky dims  
the hum of decibels stay burrowed in my ears

## departure

*Shannon McConnell*

at first light  
slow pull of the door  
a twist of a wrist  
wipe the key across denim  
removing four years of fingerprints

the sedan packed high  
to the arc of the window  
two clammy hands  
on a tepid steering wheel

drive the curves  
until everything gets straight

a single pillow waits  
in a house locked  
in the rubik's cube flatlands  
where knees were scraped  
a diploma grasped

drive the lines  
until everything gets strange

before crossing the transparent divide  
confessions are divulged to the dashboard  
apologies to those never immersed in water  
woe to ones whose embrace dissolved too soon

far from cedars and skylines  
at arrival  
a glance and removal  
of time pressed against a wrist  
reveals a pale tribute  
to faithful origins

drive the stretch  
until everything gets strained

**exposure***Shannon McConnell*

in the thick of dusk  
his heavily covered frame  
deflects wind and snow  
a frigid december night

he rests his backpack  
on a wooden lookout  
a clearing among trees

eyes expand  
as the distant fairmont hotel  
illuminates the mountain side  
and the snow covered stairs  
where he sits

he angles  
a bulky camera skyward

inhale  
the shutter opens  
muscles hold steady  
fighting the harsh temperature

the collage of clouds  
roam against a charcoal backdrop  
strokes of green cedar branches  
funnel down  
through the convex glass  
burning into emulsion

exhale  
the shutter releases  
capturing the coldest night  
between his hands

## A Smile in the Sky

*Jocelyn Rintoul*

A combination of  
reflection in your  
colored eyes  
and deception in  
your subtlety  
violet on the inside  
red on the outside  
separated by  
lightening beams  
my little star dancing in the constellation  
of duplicity  
and for once the clouds have overslept

The music was bleeding poetry  
violet on the inside  
red on the outside  
a mosaic of scars and bruises  
tinted paint on the color spectrum  
separated by  
the chords of some  
seraphim symphony  
telling the entire twisted story  
of how my fingers  
failed to grasp the stars

Asking questions of  
how and why  
and wanting to know the  
size of the sky  
because it's  
black through gray and white again  
the colors of simplicity  
then  
white through gray and black again  
a never ending tendency  
separated by  
the impossible scent of  
creosote and the sound  
of cicadas in July  
violet on the inside  
red on the outside

## Into the Ocean

*Jocelyn Rintoul*

Its like  
being carried out on a riptide  
and smashed by a tsunami,  
then dragged over a coral reef  
and drowned in a puddle,  
in a tear.  
But the trick is to keep breathing  
though its become too much a cliché,  
like cigarettes and beer,  
and you.  
Because somewhere in the stratosphere  
the stars are breaking,  
and somewhere in heaven  
the angels are loosing sleep.  
And bruises are back in style,  
but I thought we were cloud connected  
like stolen first kisses,  
like the rain,  
like absinthe.  
You were never poetry.  
Though I found you dressed in imagery,  
it never seem to fit.  
Now here you are broken  
and here you lie.  
Just a nervous habit  
like a one night stand,  
like falling in love,  
like wine.



*Snow Gnome*  
Grant Morden

## Conrad and the Goat

*Ron Dart*

White goat gained thin ledge,  
pressed thick thighs upwards  
to precarious  
perch.

It was our day to take to the  
peaks,  
Conrad and I, he the goat,  
I  
the eager kid on this  
granite slab.

The white haired monarch  
inched,  
eased ever  
upwards,  
position  
gained, stable for a  
second.

We were far from  
safe boulder  
field and alpine flowers  
below.  
A thin pitch straight up,  
anchor now in  
place.

Thinnest of ledges  
tried, attained, lone  
guardian chanced  
yet loser  
rocks.

Conrad belayed me  
to an exposed,  
unwelcoming  
overhang.  
Heart beat too fast,  
fears had to be  
faced—a deeper  
place to yet  
go.

Goat had taken a  
bad  
route, instincts betrayed  
the elder, a hard choice  
to make.

We stopped, I unsure about  
going yet  
higher  
on austere unforgiving  
citadel of ages past.

It was a long jump,  
goat hesitated, legs  
quivered, tightened,  
sprang, sad was the  
missed ledge, sadder still  
the blood stained, body  
mangled mass.

I  
thought these  
mountain mentors  
could not  
err.

Conrad turned to me,  
said  
we should belay down.  
And so we did.

## Fish and Chips

*Janet Vickers*

Yesterday you fried halibut in Japanese bread-crumbs.  
We ate on the balcony wearing sweaters and slippers  
listened to the steady rain against a million leaves  
inhaled pinot gris in the air.  
You tell me I'm not fat just middle-aged.  
Food, you say, is an honourable pleasure.  
I wish this simple achievement for everyone  
to taste the tender flesh under crisp cover  
to feel this is enough, to want no more  
and want no less for others, but this morning  
I read of bombings in Lahore, Baghdad, Islamabad  
—pleasure not just interrupted but sacked  
for revenge. How silly my wish.  
Once the tongue has tasted the enemy's blood  
will fish be enough? Will it be a sin to wear  
the sweater, the slippers, and to love the rain?

## Ornaments

*Janet Vickers*

Sleep this night in another bed  
my love, while my limbs like wild animals  
sniff the sheets for delicious sleep  
the toe's nose pushing corners to the darkest  
point where two opposing tensions meet  
and dissolve into that reservoir  
inhabited by mute souls.

This is where we turn away from each other  
the day's incisors, hours chewed into portions  
for washing the floor we grimed with dirt  
from outside our door.

A Russian doll on the bookshelf fifteen years  
holds seven other dolls inside.  
All wear the same expression in this light.  
What is there to say about smug ornaments  
we've spooned from inconsequential details  
that recast our lives? They have their own  
opinions.

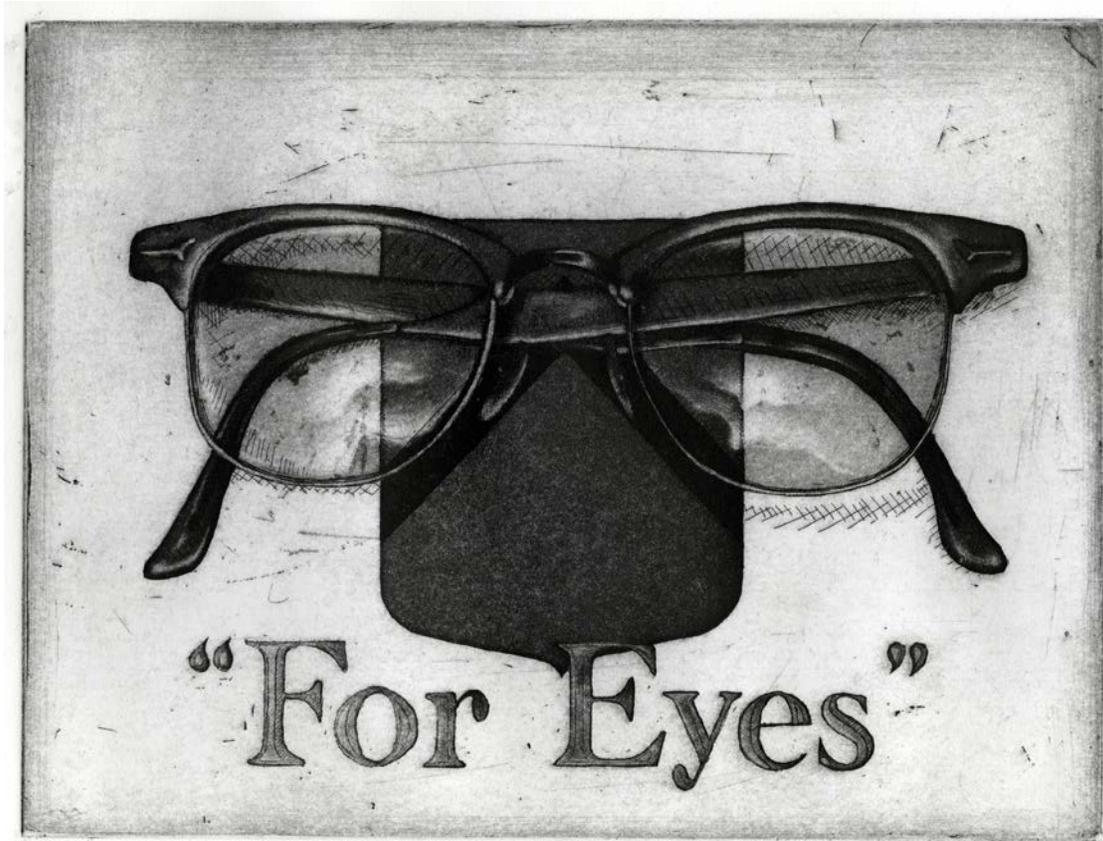
You and I have shared the unshaped too.  
Worries hidden from kitchen and bedroom.  
There is still so much we could learn  
from our recurring nightmares if we dared  
to sully the day with their warnings.

Together we could salvage the world because  
we live the mundane and know the politics  
of wrinkled bed sheets.

## The Wedding

*Janet Vickers*

My white daisy appliqué dress, purchased cheap—a graduation dress  
with yellowed lining I only noticed a few days before The Day.  
Mum had a fit looking for a dressmaker in Arnprior  
and the cost to fix it more than the dress itself  
here at the mouth of the Madawaska River where the Algonquin  
fished before Laird Archibald McNab brought his hundred  
to settle on eighty thousand acres, before Emmanuel Anglican was built,  
before the white pine logged,  
you from Huddersfield and I from Ruislip, came and promised  
our bones to each other not knowing  
where it all started  
but in the black and white album we are pretty, ignorant of the past,  
the future, and for me the present too—clumsy, confused,  
absorbed in anxiety about the way things appear  
1969 was the year of *The Edible Woman*.



*For Eyes*  
Daniel Mack

## The Ticking of a Clock

*Joshua Frede*

When the world was first founded  
of water air and rock,  
on that dawn of days sounded  
the ticking of a clock.

Man was born and woman too;  
they crawled out of the dust.  
Somehow even then they knew  
that rule the earth they must.

Mighty empires, young and old,  
they fight for wealth and land.  
Power they shall never hold,  
to stop the minute hand.

Rich men store up treasure vaults  
of unimagined cost.  
Money can't bribe time to halt  
and soon it all is lost.

Famous men throughout the past,  
they carve their names in time  
hoping that their marks will last.  
History too shall die.

Man may try to ward off death  
but sheep can only bleat.  
There's a gift in every breath  
and every heart beat.

When the earth ends with a word  
and shepherd calls the flock,  
that constant sound can't be heard:  
the ticking of a clock.

## The Keeper

*Jennifer Colbourne*

Gentle fortress-  
steadfast in elegance  
bastion of a lost age  
of  
naiads, dryads, nymphs  
beautiful chapels and God

You are beautiful  
clung over in ivy, lichens, and moss  
recalling  
Arcadia  
that which is lost but shall never be found  
for it was a fable  
then and now-  
those green pastures.

Bewildered  
city skyscrapers overshadow you  
you weep, black streaks on the walls  
grieving for the unknowable  
fucking, texting, saturday night live.  
trying to trudge backward  
you're naively unaware  
you're a pretty ghost but obsolete

And the muses,  
     but oh, oh! where have the muses gone?  
     the supersensible, nature, the 3-in-1  
 (but haven't you heard? God is dead  
     we had a lovely funeral,  
     you would have loved the roses)  
 There never was a muse.

But must it be so-  
     a bang, a wimper, the world's end  
     (come ye soon, oh whore of babylon?)  
 Mankind blessed, damned, or-  
     indifferently lost in the abyss

Regardless, it is you who must cling  
 Cling, cling, cling!  
 Cling, crumbling tower-  
     cling to the holy book of fairy tales  
  
     the elusive happy ever after.

## If Only Romance Were Dead

*Jennifer Colbourne*

Yes.

The leaves are beautiful  
(bursting with color, blowing in breezes)  
And I- my heart is twisted with grief

But I will tell you this:  
the fat men are still eating the children.

## Sonnet IV

*Ray de Kroon*

My love is like a pilsner in the sun  
a sparkling sprite, a jug with auburn tan  
beading on the beach with top undone  
whetting the pit where my desire began.

Clad only with a label green and red  
and yellow taut conceals her deeper fire  
my finger lingers near her label's edge  
caressing beading sweat to fuel desire.

Her voice rings clear as glass where nectar spills  
a bubbly kiss so close she kneads the nose  
immersed in intercourse, conversed in rills  
inebriated as her cadence flows.

I'm heady! Drunk with love! Intoxication!  
Our mouths indulge in wanton carbonation!



*Rajasthan*  
Rachel Chapman

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## Station

*Melanie Schindrig*

The rain falls on rusty tracks  
Steam thick and sweet as honey  
clings to my skin, drips into my lungs  
I search for your face

Multicolored umbrellas, mushrooms sprouting  
A train's whistle echoing through the twilight

I rush into the crowd  
people waiting, watching, waving  
Shoulders bump luggage knocks  
Running to the platform I catch a glimpse,  
of your train leaving,  
Lost in the impending darkness.

I stand alone on the empty tracks  
Rain falling on my face  
I weep  
The sky cries with me.

## Crossing Over

*Catherine Prentice*

I found a hair  
woven through the sleeve of my sweater  
my sweet daughters

long  
shiny  
black

it found its beginning inside of me

with a heavy belly  
on the eve of a winters full moon  
you blessed my world

many seasons have sprung  
faded since  
though, not enough it seems

you blush now with the rosy red  
of womanhood

the moon pulled it out of you  
your pendulum sways  
coincides with the tides

the summer solstice moon is full  
dreamy  
hazy  
light shines from your eyes

the spell is cast

## Incubus

*Catherine Prentice*

Like a pest strip  
you dangle coiled in the corner

sending out pheromones  
innate ingredients  
disguised as  
passive elements

attracting bodies  
any shape, size

the sight of those in flight  
arouses you

the catch,  
to capture

your guise,  
a shoulder  
ear  
lip  
thigh

*soul mate*

when a beautiful winged creature  
lands on your  
sticky range of mental concerns  
your wits fill with elation

you draw  
they land

once captured  
transference takes place  
you gain another ally

this ritual sends  
an exhilarating burst of energy  
up your coil

when compliance is intact  
the only thing you miss

the particular way  
certain wings played into your field

though comfort is fed  
as long as you hang twisted  
the possibilities are limitless.

## Convallaria Majalis

*Catherine Prentice*

I step carefully through tiny white ruffle edged bells  
like pearls hanging from  
chartreuse ribbons  
delicately dotting the edge of the churchyard

wafts of musky sweet odor impress  
memories of a field trip to St. Patrick's Parish  
and the voice of a Nun  
when I ask why these flowers  
grow around graves  
she explains:  
*Mary's tears dropped to the ground as she cried at the cross  
turned into lily of the valley*

my eight year old Presbyterianism, weak as it is  
casts doubt  
still, I hesitate when I  
hear the snapping of rhizomes,  
damaging sacred roots

the Nun seemed superior, gentle, wise  
but she has not labored on this land  
sweat blood  
earned the right to wives tales

besides Mrs. James, who sings on key, says:  
*these lilies are poisonous*  
*but the smell increases memory,*  
*a poultice cures gout,*  
*a liquor, smeared on the neck and forehead induces common sense.*

with this bit of rationale  
 up the sleeve of my Sunday dress  
 I carry the courage to climb  
 over a chaotic mass,  
 rectangular stones that  
 separate the bumpy churchyard  
 from the larger mass of white bells  
 I plan to explore

free from church goers eyes  
 where I can think out loud  
 maybe even sing  
 under the shade of giant sugar maples  
 increase my memory, common sense

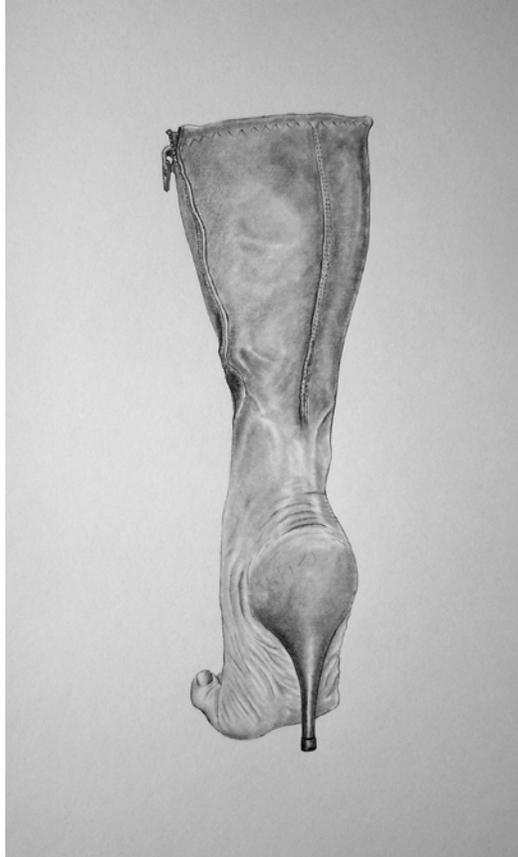
but awkward footing in shiny black shoes  
 slips on eroding inscribed granite slabs  
 piled here when the road was widened

settling my 90 pounds  
on the white landscape  
a foot sinks below the roots  
dangles into nothingness  
just below the surface of the ground

balancing precariously on one foot  
a horror stricken panic tingles  
through every inch of my body  
as I realize my foot has  
broken through a grave

I pull my dangling foot to safety  
scramble over the discarded tombstones

cringe as I wait for Mary's tears  
to drop to the ground,  
turn me into  
lily of the valley.



*Stiletto Foot*  
Maurice Motut

## Vertebrae

*Suzanne Kittell*

in sleeplessness, i follow your skin  
like a map

i wander over vertebrae  
that veer off to the side

like a road that bends around a tree  
too beautiful to be cut down

## i am not prince hamlet

*Suzanne Kittell*

a disconnect between the eyes and lips  
the captive words within the pupils squirm  
but latent oaths to paralyzed tongues grip  
and shove this pregnant pause to far past term  
a wanderlust that's overwhelmed by space  
with everything and nothing left to find  
the way my fingers inch toward your face  
is pantomime presented to the blind  
i ask but for a start before an end  
beseech your honest eyes to never blink  
i cry that my beloved can pretend  
that all was not spelled out as clear as ink  
i fear my penstrokes all to be in vain  
and yet my patience far outweighs my pain

## restless tradition

*Suzanne Kittell*

if skin could speak then mine would utter verse  
vocabulary learned from sleepless nights  
on crooked spines my silent words disperse  
expressing all the thoughts I cannot write  
and I spell august using wrinkled shirts  
quotation marks around a stuffy room  
and punctuated by how much it hurts  
when autumn ends all life in summer's womb  
the sonnets on my bedpost form a cage  
to quarantine my overzealous lips  
at dusk I try to burn each taunting page  
but cannot even brown the tattered tips  
I'm losing sensibility again  
but gaining ammunition for my pen

## My Forest

*Lisete Isaak*

I wander through my forest  
bleak bones branching to the sky  
gray twilight mist silencing my cry  
last year's birth  
turned brown and brittle  
blankets the earth.

it crunches under me  
my forest creaks and groans  
it snaps overhead, it moans  
branches left to dangle  
amongst the rows  
of angled spines

I wait for it  
the feather-strokes of an artist's brush  
bones transform to velvety white  
pristine lines against the black canvas  
of the silent midnight sky

then one by one  
rays of stars beam down and join  
my branches bathed in white  
my hands reach out and dance  
the winter's waltz of promise  
of forest renewed

## At the Dinner Table

*Nathan Owen*

my dad was known to say  
that wolf cubs would get their necks cracked  
if their behaviour questioned the pack's integrity

my brother would state  
that wolves often starved alone  
when they grew too old for their teeth

they didn't talk much about other dogs, though  
domestication, they would say.  
neutering, they thought.

# Fall

*Matthew Loewen*

I could read her the sweetest poem  
 About  
     New leaves  
         Fallen  
             On  
                 Dead  
                     Grass.  
 But she has just woken up  
 with  
 The           Lingering           Silence           Of           Sleep  
             Still  
                 Clinging  
                     To  
                         Creaky  
                             Branches.

“We are in different seasons,”  
 I say,  
 Closing the book.

“What?”

## Grief

*Esther Campbell*

Empty well protrudes  
From jagged rocks and prickles.  
Morning again,  
Mourning again.  
Unseen eyes intrude  
On faceless bones and rubble.  
Poring again,  
Pouring again,  
Subduing pounding winds.



*Bending Time*  
Jessie Somers

## Untitled

*Alexandra Watkins*

Speak to me like you do when we lie alone in the dark  
When I drowsily marvel at how the dimness and shared skin can undress a tongue  
At how, with less encouragement, we will surrender more

Speak to me with a voice softened by the night  
I'll concede and lie down in this opiated rowboat  
And your fingers will question  
And answer  
And push me out to sea

# Eggshell

*Alexandra Watkins*

You are the all-seeing egg candler,  
Holding me to the flame  
And reading my embryonic thoughts,  
The secrets that are curled inside a shell.

You read my poems, too.  
“A shell,” you spit,  
“What insight!  
Such a masterful metaphor for the  
Fragility of your pretense.”

My words will be crushed beneath your feet.  
White lies become white dust  
Ground into the earth,  
To nourish the garden where you  
Bloom with superiority.

Where your jaded carnations will dismiss me entirely  
And turn to consider the sun.



*Space Invader*  
Grant Morden

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## American Haiku

*Hilary Turner*

There's nothing left of you.  
The hours I spent waiting  
Are unrecorded.

I gave you my best things;  
You broke them all and said  
Look, they are no good.

Oh my sad soul that  
Wants, wants, wants  
To leave a mark, somewhere—

Life is not a borrowed book.  
Reading should leave an imprint, but  
You bring nothing to the text.

The seed you scatter will die.  
Light passes through you.  
You have learned to leave no trace.

## Speak Why

*Jennifer Maxwell*

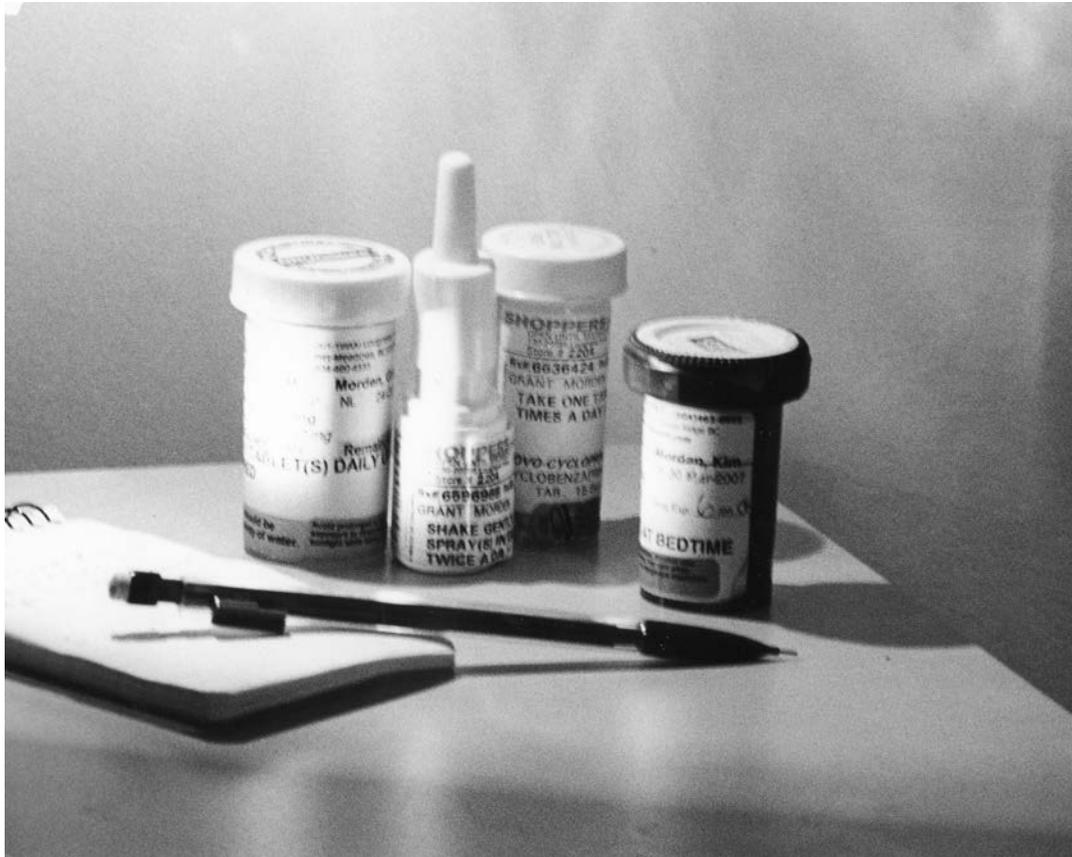
It is so nice to hear you speak  
Of the travels of Odysseus  
To imagine the bare feet of Socrates  
To hear Gandhi's words  
To smell curry  
Shawarma, Samosa, Souvlaki  
You came with your legends on your back  
Your fairy tales attached to your feet  
And when we Speak White  
We tell your stories in your schools  
We are an uneducated and illiterate people  
But we are not mute.  
Speak white? We speak it fluently.

Speak why  
And guess why we keep our secrets as close as we keep our children  
Talk about Progress  
Of Nature and Language  
Speak Why  
Talk about the responsibility of humanity  
About the Kindness of Canadians  
Sympathize with us  
Tell us about welfare  
And government initiatives  
We are a people ravaged by tuberculosis and smallpox

Talk about civil rights  
Tell us again about Freedom and Democracy  
But we don't believe that Freedom is a mot noir  
We just define it differently

Speak Why  
And let's discuss tradition  
Hunting, Fishing  
Religion, Politics, Education, Culture?  
We are citizens of the 21st century  
Listen why!  
Tell us what we want  
But you never ask us  
How are you doing?  
We are not alright  
We are not doing fine  
We scream it out loud  
We scratch it on the walls of our reserves

We are the observers, spread out to the corners of the world  
We are one thousand peoples  
One thousand  
Peoples!  
Fixed on the earth  
And we are each of us  
Alone.



*Time Released*  
Grant Morden

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## A Note on Contributors

**Esther Campbell** is in her last year of a degree in Physics and Psychology. Writing is something she does as a hobby and creative outlet. She wrote the poem *Grief* about a year after losing a very close friend.

**Rachel Chapman** is a geography major at UFV. She caught the travel bug a few years ago and has enjoyed many adventures since then, almost always with her camera at her side. *Rajasthan* was taken in the Thar Desert in India, not far from the border with Pakistan. This community has no electricity and gets their drinking water from an oasis that they share with the camels and livestock. Their homes are made mostly from camel dung, straw and sand.

**Jennifer Colbourne** is currently completing her BA as an Honors English major at UFV and plans to continue on to get her Masters degree.

**Ron Dart** has taught in the department of Political Science/Philosophy/Religious Studies at University of the Fraser Valley since 1990. He has published more than 20 books (including 4 books of poetry).

**Ray de Kroon** is a recent graduate (BA) and current student of UFV.

**Josh Frede** was born and raised in Chilliwack, where he has been privileged enough to live all his 22 years. He is a second year English major and has been interested in writing since elementary school. His favourite genres to read and write are fantasy and gothic.

**Miriam Huxley** is in her fourth and last year of a BA in English and History. She loves to write really weird stories, and spends most of her free time lazing (aka, doing nothing). *Emerald* is a postcard story about man's quest for superiority over crayons.

**Suzanne Kittell** is graduating this summer with a Bachelor of Arts Degree in English Literature. During her time at UFV, she has been the Vice President for the UFV Pride Network and the Association for Students of Philosophy; she has written and edited for the *Cascade* Student Newspaper; and has been a programmer and board member on CIVL Radio.

**Matthew Loewen** is a third-year UFV student and English Major who started out as a high-school student and then got sidetracked. He enjoys writing because it "keeps him busy". Among his literary influences are "The Iliad, Twilight, and everything in between". He lives in Vancouver.

**Daniel G. Mack** was born in Lahr, Germany on the 16th of February, 1981. He graduated from the University of the Fraser Valley in 2007 on the Dean's list with a double major in geography and history and he took his first university visual arts class in his final year of study. Since then he's been back to take more whenever he's had time.

**Jennifer Maxwell** is a fourth year student of History and French at the University of the Fraser Valley.

**Shannon McConnell** is an English Major at UFV. She previously studied creative writing, photography and music (classical guitar performance) at Kwantlen Polytechnic University. In her free time she enjoys writing, recording and performing music, photography and creative writing.

**Grant Morden** is in the final year of his undergrad at UFV and aims to graduate with a major in English and a minor in Fine Arts. His plans are to continue his exploration of art by pursuing a graduate degree in photography and hopefully to eventually find meaningful artistic work (not doing wedding photos).

**Hilary Kim Morden** is a crim/psych graduate student at SFU but fondly remembers her days as an undergrad at UFV (when she still had time to write creatively!) She has written one novel, two collections of poetry and a stack of short stories. She has won several writing competitions and has been published in *Event Magazine* and academic journals.

**Maurice Motut** is currently a student enrolled in UFV Visual Arts Diploma Program.

**Catherine Prentice** is a recent BA graduate from UFV (Visual Art, English, Psychology). Catherine will attend SFU this fall to complete a BEd in counseling, which will enable her to utilize her passion for creativity to inspire high school students and future clients to explore and grow through the creative process. Her work has been exhibited throughout the lower mainland.

**Jocelyn “Jojo” Rintoul** is a student at UFV. Most of her free time is spent writing poetry, though sadly, since starting university, that time is dwindling steadily.

Born and raised in beautiful Mission, B.C lives practicing watercolorist **Jessie Somers**. Having drawn since she was very young, Jessie began painting watercolor in 2004 and has continued to do so with keen interest in nature, portraiture, fantasy and the surreal. Jessie has been attending the University of the Fraser valley and plans to graduate with a Bachelor of Fine Arts in the spring of 2010. From there, she hopes to continue her art practice, possibly looking into illustration, teaching and travel.

**Hilary Turner** teaches English and Rhetoric courses at the University of the Fraser Valley. Over the years, she has read and taught a lot of poetry, but has only recently begun to write it. Hilary lives in Mission with her teenaged son, two cats, and a dog.

**Scott Varga** was born and raised in Abbotsford, BC and has travelled extensively for school and leisure. Through his experiences he has learned to dissect settings into components for ambiguous yet intimate narratives. Scott is in his final year of his B.A. and will be pursuing a M.Arch upon graduation.

**Janet Vickers'** poetry has appeared in several journals and anthologies, including "Down in the Valley" edited by Trevor Carrollan. She graduated with a BA in Adult Education from UFV in 2007, and currently lives on Gabriola Island. Janet is also the publisher of Lipstick Press ([www.lipstickpress.com](http://www.lipstickpress.com)).

**Alexandra Watkins** is an English major at UFV. She describes herself as a voracious consumer of literature that is occasionally compelled to attempt some of her own.

## Acknowledgements

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The Rotary Club of Langley



UFV Criminology Department  
UFV English Department

*Louden Singletree* | September 2010



# The Louden Singletree

The *Louden Singletree* is UFV's literary and visual arts journal. Since 2009 the Louden has been a forum in which students, alumni, faculty and staff of the university can share their unique perspectives on the world.  
In this issue:

Esther Campbell  
Rachel Chapman  
Jennifer Colbourne  
Ron Dart  
Ray de Kroon  
Erin Dugdale  
Joshua Frede  
Miriam Huxley  
Lisete Isaak  
Suzanne Kittell  
Matthew Loewen  
Daniel Mack  
Jennifer Maxwell  
Shannon McConnell  
Grant Morden  
Hilary Kim Morden  
Maurice Motut  
Nathan Owen  
Catherine Prentice  
Jocelyn Rintoul  
Melanie Schindrig  
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