



Contents With(in)



**Featured Artist
Adam Fulford**

Also seen on
the cover and the
contributors page

6 Art at the edge of self:

An enlightening conversation with
Molly Ott.

18 Call Signs

Creative and artistic works
from Veterans and Patriots

20 Culture Fest

Sondra Ballageer brings the
Culture Fest to Reverberations

24 My Community

Reflections on release,
reintegration and friends

Astral Rat

Colored Pencil and Ink

Poetry, Artwork, Prose and Cons

Page 7
Beautiful Struggle
 Raymonde Beverly

Page 8
I Am
 Freddie Diaz

Page 8
Chained Freedom
 Kerry Cournoyer

Page 9
Adventure City
 Shawn Ortega

Page 10
Philosophy of Fishing
 Kyle Murphy

Page 11
San Miguel
 Daniel Lopez

Page 12
Sustainable Shelter
 Christopher Scarver

Page 12
AD-SEG Snowman
 Nathan Dunlap

Page 13
The Land
 Rotilio Meza-Franco

Page 20
Reflections
 Peter Sweeney

Page 21
Life
 Josiah Ivy

Page 21
Unchained
 Phoung Dang



Art Making Practices



Adam Fulford



Inside Wire News



The best views in Colorado are With(in)

Page 22
Purdurabo
 Anthony Lucero

Page 22
Useless Paper
 Peter Sweeney

Page 23
We Are Kings
 Vincent Harper

Page 23
Buried Alive
 Tyrone Edwards

Page 25
Monkey Mind
 Alexander Jasmine

Page 27
Transformación
 Kyle Murphy

Page 27
Me Siento
 Jhoana Melchorre

Page 27
Metempsychosis
 Curtis Lake

Page 29
The Initiative

Page 30
Peer Review

Artwork

Edwin Baezvaldivia	27
Anthony Cole	20, 23
William Coney	18, 19
Puong Dang	29, 31
William S. Graham	25
Chris Nye	24
Mario Rios	26
Billy Scott	25
Peter Sweeney	22
Patrick Suchaiya	24, 30



Dose

Colored Pencil and Ink



Coming of Age Summer 2023

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REVERBERATIONS **The Magazine**

Reverberations is a high quality literary and visual arts magazine with engaging, thought-provoking ideas, providing a critical and creative outlet for incarcerated individuals and serving as voice for a community of writers and scholars, artists and visionaries, to grapple with big questions, stimulate minds, and spark imaginations. *Reverberations* aims to educate writers, make incarcerated creators and readers feel valued and ultimately, to deepen the conversation on who is in prison. *Reverberations* nurtures emerging writers through feedback and guidance, explores exquisite beauty even in darkness, and provides substantive literature to readers inside and outside Colorado's prisons.



Art at the edge of self:

An enlightening conversation with Molly Ott

Brett Phillips
Cañon City, Colorado

There is something very alive about Molly Ott, artist, academic and fourth generation teacher who has facilitated the DU PAI course "Introduction to Art Making Practices" 12 times in several different CDOC facilities. Reverberations had a chance to sit with her and discuss her views on imagination, art, and the life-altering influence naturally imbued into the role of educator.

Her journey towards art started at a young age, in the home of her parents. "I was blessed with parents who, when I was drawing on the floor, they wouldn't say 'Please let her be a doctor or lawyer' but would say 'Please let her be an artist.'" A self-purported "bad kid" in high school, Molly says that she was on her way to becoming a sorority girl, but instead ended up at a small college where the professors were "more into creating family, than just numbers. That saved my life."



Allen Yerkey verses styrofoam
[Photo courtesy of IR]

Now Molly is proud to keep her teaching legacy alive. "It feels natural to me, learning something new to share it. I have taught the same class 12 times, and I work to keep it fresh and alive, keep it living. My grandmother was a middle school science teacher and taught the same class for 30 years. Creativity is what keeps it alive. Like if we would teach English while doing an art project, we would learn so much better. If you have a strong imagination, you can see a different world."

In her class, she strives to be that teacher that "lifts" the people inside. "I'm teaching a group of guys who were pulled out of high school and never had that special teacher. It's not fair that these guys didn't have that—it's life changing. That teacher for me was Mr. Kato, a history teacher, who also started an outdoor club to shoot skeet."

"I read something crazy," she quipped with a gleam in her eye. "What we are experiencing right now was dreamed up. It came from someone else's imagination. We are living in someone's dream. It's like time travel. All the waste in the world comes from dreams of scarcity. If you only dream of solving scarcity, it won't work."

She says that she has only one rule for her art. "My rule is that when I create art, I make it on the very edge of me. It's uncontrolled, and lives without being attached to me. My job is to deliver it, not possess it and not to have ego about it. It has more power that way. I am a finite being but the art can live on its own forever."

Molly believes that her superpower is keeping her heart soft, in the hard places. "Prison is like a myth. No one really knows what happens in there. To me, true masculinity is about vulnerability. I am grateful for the honesty in here (prison), that you don't get out there. Sweet



Tory Kuzinicki Godspell prop model
[Photo courtesy of IR]

and goofy, I wish that's what people would define masculinity as. I believe in goofiness. If change is fun, it will last longer."



Molly Ott
[Photo courtesy of Molly Ott]

One thing about Molly, she will not "shut up about being hopeful for the future. The resilience I see on the inside. Like, that you can be in the hole for 11 years and be okay—like still love people and be open to new experiences. That feeds my hope." When asked if she had a message to her former students, she laughed, saying "Stay in school! Really though, I want them to know they are not forgotten. I'm always thinking of them."

Molly finished by telling us, "Bad art is made when somebody tries to tell someone else's story. I can't tell the story of being a 40-year-old man in prison, but I can tell the story of being a white woman who learned about prison," to which my friend Trevor Jones quickly responded, "I don't know what it's like for you to come in here, but I do know what it's like to be on the receiving end of that gift." What a gift it is. Thank you, Molly, for the gift of hope.



James Franzen and Quince Skaggs at work
[Photo courtesy of IR]

"My rule is that when I create art, I make it on the very edge of me. It's uncontrolled, and lives without being attached to me.

My job is to deliver it, not possess it and not to have ego about it..."

THE AD-SEG SNOWMAN

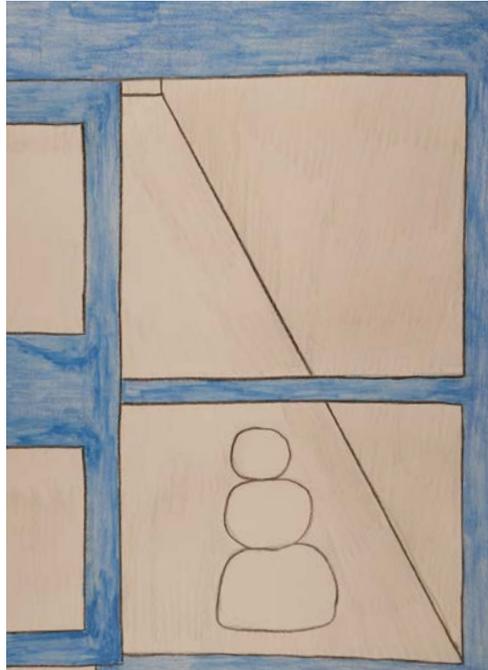
Nathan Jerard Dunlop
Cañon City, Colorado

My earliest memories are growing up in Memphis TN. Despite my aversion to the cold, every winter I looked for the day that I could make a snow angel, snow man, snow ball and, snow fort. I came to believe that I would never see that happen. No matter how hard it snowed, the snow would never accumulate. Any snow that I managed to scrape off the trees or grass would melt almost immediately after I touched it. I wasn't until I was in second grade before I got to experience the joy of snow. I had just moved to Michigan, in the middle of winter and the day before a blizzard. From that moment until the day I found myself in CSP, I always took pleasure in playing in the snow whenever it snowed.

I arrived in CSP a little over a couple of years after my arrest. Prior to my arrival a CSP, people had asked me what I missed most about the streets. To their surprise, I told them it was the little things that everyday life has to offer that so many

people take for granted. For example, something like a bubble bath, the feel and smell of grass and the company of family and friends. Even the occasional smell of a Zoo exhibit.

Once in CSP, I was no longer offered outdoor recreation. I could no longer enjoy the smell of fresh air (including that occasional smell of a zoo exhibit); the warmth of the sun on my face; or



rain drops and snowflakes on my head and my face. Making a snow angel or snowman was out of the question. More than 15 years would pass before I got to experience the childhood pleasure of making a snow angel or snowman.

I was in SCF when I found myself excited and looking forward to a good snowstorm. I had planned to make a snowman inside the little outside recreation area. I talked about my plans and people thought I was crazy, given my sentence and whereabouts. When the snow storm came and left an abundance of snow in the recreation area, I was out there playing in the snow just like I was a little kid. I made my snow angel and it was a wonderful time.

I could not help but notice the looks on other's faces. I think some happiness rubbed off on them. For a moment, they couldn't be so grumpy looking or feeling. Some guys even donated other items to give the snowman eyes and hands. At the end of the day, no matter how gloomy life is on the outside, you control how happy you are on the inside. Even in some place as dismal as prison, a person can still find the little things that life has to offer and find pleasure in them.

SUSTAINABLE SHELTER

Christopher Scarver
Cañon City, Colorado

Just before COVID-19 hit, I met a prisoner who was always smiling. I noticed that he had fingers missing from both hands.

I asked him what had happened to them. He told me he was homeless. I asked, "What does that have to do with it?"

He said, "One cold winter, I was late getting back to the shelter so all the beds were taken. So they did not let me in. I looked for another place; there weren't any. Before I realized that I should be starting a bonfire, my fingers were too cold to strike a match."

He said he fell asleep on a park bench and awoke in

the hospital being treated for hypothermia. He told me they had amputated the fingers because they were severely frostbitten.

He said the hospital kicked him back out into the freezing cold because he had no medical insurance.

In America, many people are made to feel like they don't belong simply because they can't pay to stay here or there.

The only two places in America that guarantee long-term residency for those who have no money are: places of incarceration and a potter's field, the spot where they choose to dump your cremated ashes after you die.

This is a drawing of the only sustainable way to end homelessness. It requires that the state allows prisoners to



buy their own laptops that do not have internet access, which will have software and videos that teach them how to renovate and build houses from the basement up.

Phase I: Minimum-security prisoners will put up a permanent security fence around a worksite and install

security cameras inside and outside the buildings.

Phase II: Medium-security prisoners will be dropped off inside that fence and allowed to work. For every house a prisoner builds or refurbishes, 5-10 years will be taken off their sentence.

I AM

23163rd
Birthday
I am neither
heaven nor
earth.
I am the
in-between
defined as the
"being"
smelling-
feeling-hearing-
seeing
I am acting
steward for the
in-between
reaping heaven
and earth life.
The land I stand
upon tolerates
my indifference.
Will I rake the
surface of its
face sucking its
blood
one drop at a
time depleting
its mineral and



depositing
corpses.
I am the 12410th
Birthday viewing
the sunrise
from "inside"
a concrete
window frame,
the
painted sunrise
you look upon
"today" is my
12411th Birthday
point of view.
I am the in-
between
blessed by
heaven and
earth
changing like
the desert
wind my vision
stagnant
Not 23164th
Birthday slowly
creeping in with
a new sunrise.

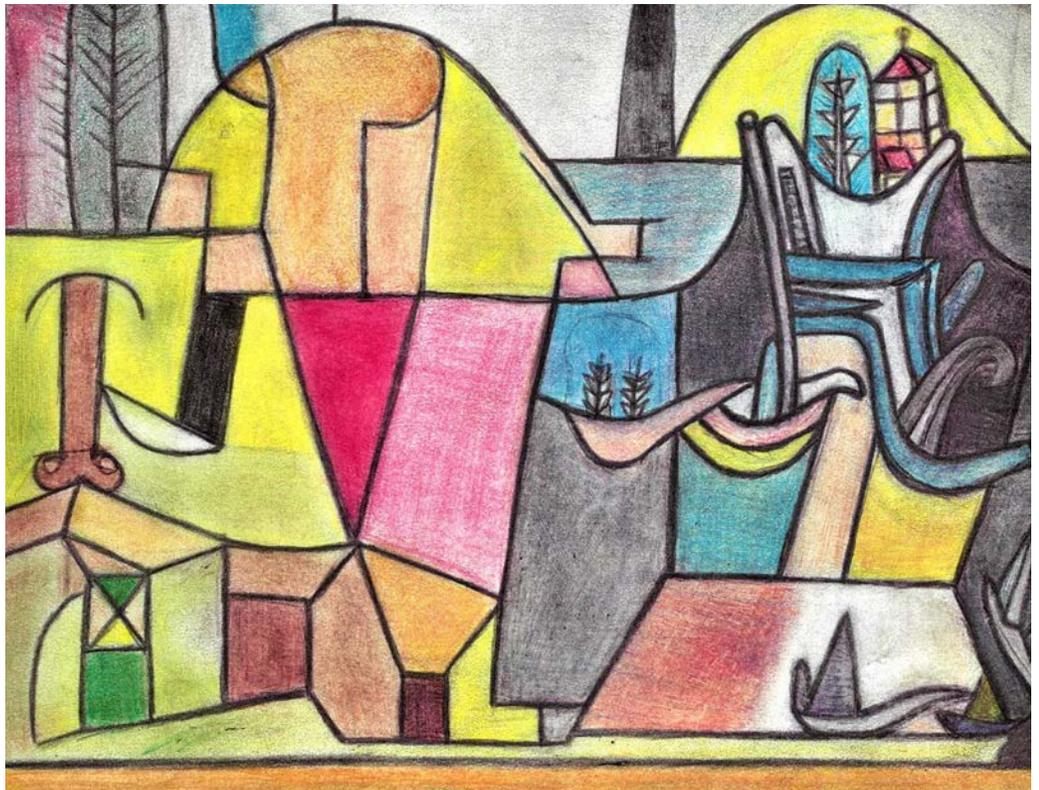
Simply stated, every day I am alive I must celebrate it as a new birth, including the 12411 days I have spent here in prison seeing the sunrise. The land I stand upon did not shape what I feel, it only provides the view. What matters for me is the view I stand upon that reveals my feeling...

45473 Freddie Diaz
Cañon City, Colorado

CHAINED FREEDOM

Kerry Cournoyer
Cañon City, Colorado

Sitting idle—days flying by—youth lost to old man time—How long must one wait to die—All hope fades—no friends in sight—counted both day & night—made to stand in the light—shadows consuming moral delights—until all left is a shell of regrets from hindsight—a chance taken—seeds sowed, new growth—This land allows for a fresh sight a good person lets new skills develop—new hopes, new dreams, new eyes look at the world—fresh works, deeds, and character built—until you look up at the world—Perceived peaks reached, by trails well-etched in the earth—a man rebuilt by fresh hope is Allue—Ready to fight for new life—Colors flash, friends cheer, a new perspective led by talents discovered—Grace given by GOD—This land is a dream—may I never wake up—Please Father, let this be reality....



ADVENTURE CITY



What do you think of when you hear adventure? I think of my city, my hometown, and the place I grew up. Denver aka the Mile High City. A city with so much to do with very little time. A place for biking and hiking up and down the Colorado South Platte River to spending time with family and friends at Sloan's Lake. As I grew up, the beautiful sunny and snowy days impacted the way of my days. I remember Sunday nights cruising down Federal Blvd. listening to Sunday night slow jams! I remember the South Platte River and how scary it looked, the fast rushing water with several drops of danger, as for me that's what it looked like. I never wanted to go down it, but hey I tried. As I went down the first drop, I felt like I was never going to stop, the strong waves hit my chest like a ton of bricks that took my breath away. The seaweed didn't let me stop as I was reaching for rocks to stop. I continued sliding, gasping for breath as I swallowed water with a taste of dirt and a quick smell of wet rocks, while friends laughed on the side lines. It was frightening but very fun! Aww, what a joy I had when I was young. This experience really taught me

to just be open-minded, brave, and courageous. It also taught me to live by faith and not fear! I remember staying out late on the 16th Street Mall, wishing the night would never end. I remember Six Flags and the Tower of Doom, and let's not forget about the funnel cakes, shakes, and Oya, the place where I had my first date. BBQs full of love, family, good food, and brew. Beautiful vibes, beautiful days, and you never know when all this can be taken away. I remember snowy days at Ruby Hill and how sledding down that hill made me feel! Free and accomplished! I remember days when it was hot and sunny, then twenty minutes later it was snowing. Denver, the city that built me, made me strong. It was a place where I found friendship, community, and love! For sure a tough city, though love raised a strong kid. We all have a story: who we are, where we come from, and what we believe; all this is something that lives within me! My hometown taught me what adventure is and how it feels!

Shawn Ortega
Denver, Colorado

Shawn Ortega is now out on parole. He is the first DU PAI Circle Keeper to apply for an Artistic Justice Facilitator Certification on the outside. We here at Reverberations wish him all the success in the world with this new Adventure!

THE PHILOSOPHY OF FISHING

Kyle Murphy
Cañon City, Colorado

Very few important events in life can be missed without an understandable excuse. All sorts of celebrations and ceremonies are almost unforgivable if missed, so you better have a good excuse. None are more perfect than "I went fishing," although poor Mary Beth at my Junior Homecoming would argue otherwise.

In my life, I have used fishing not only to avoid social situations but as therapy and celebration. I imagine husbands in feudal Japan going fishing to not only provide food for their family but to get away from their nagging wives. No wonder the country reveres the beautiful Koi fish.

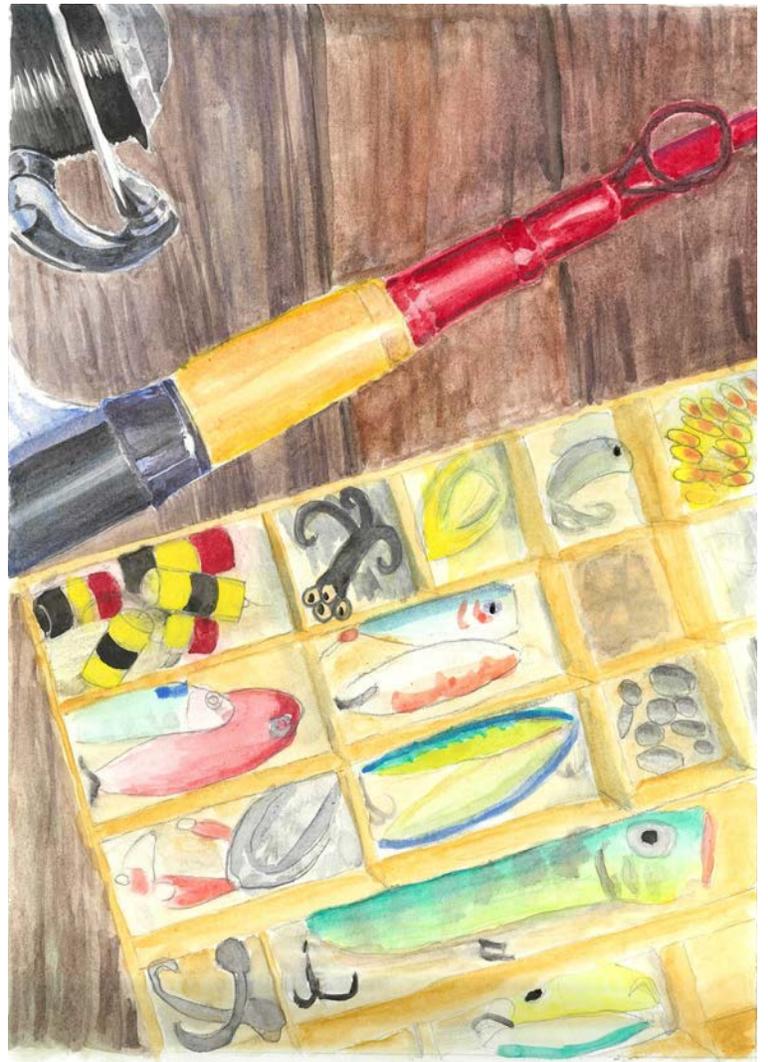
I have been fishing for so long that I can't remember my first time. I know as a child in Louisiana there were crawdad cookouts for the whole street and a gator that lived in the drainage ditch behind the houses. By that time I was in my early teens, the country was at war, my father was deployed a lot, so when we did go fishing it was life or death.

Once, my father, brother, and I went fishing and my father caught one on the first cast. He yelled, "They bitin' today boys!" That was the only fish we caught that day. Early success is no guarantee for future results, and arrogance is bad for your Karma.

Another time, my brother tried fishing in a clear pond for two days straight. The pond was packed with fish but he never got so much as a nibble. Finally, my father had to explain to him that the fish could see him. If it looks too good to be true, it probably is.

On one occasion my father went upstream and my brother went downstream. I decided to hop on a rock in the middle of the so I could fish both banks. I slipped on the rock, fell in the river, and began swimming for my life. Bouncing off of a boulder in the way of the current, I desperately clung to the moss on the riverbank, and pulled myself up from the battering, soaking wet. Walking back to the spot where I fell in, drenched and defeated, my brother and father came around the corner. Upon witnessing my pitiful state, my father had one question for me: "Where's my fishing pole?" After explaining my debacle, he glanced at the river. There, at the bottom of a clear water pool, was his fishing pole. My father, being the practical man that he was, stripped naked and dove in to retrieve his property. He taught me that sometimes you have to sacrifice for the things you care about.

When I was young and in a loving, caring relationship, my girlfriend would kick me out regularly. Since I lived in the country with a revoked license and no job, I fished for my food. When you have to do something just to survive, you tend to get pretty good at it. Throwing little ones back so they can get big and eating the big ones. That among other things, like a dramatic ex-girlfriend, taught me to choose my battles.



One of my last memories is of me and my Dad, his best friend Mike, and Mike's brother Dan. We were all in a little boat in a big lake. It started to rain, the waves were white capping, and we were weighed down with beer. It was a dire situation. It demanded you be present in the moment, full of life. I didn't know whether to be scared or excited. My mind was made up for me when my father started belting out laughter. Unfortunately, Dan is no longer with us but it is that moment that reminds me that no matter where I am or how horrible the situation is, I can define my experiences.

Fishing is all about the intangible. The relationship between the things you can touch and what you can't. I can touch the reel, rod, bait, and hook but I cannot as of yet touch the fish. You need to understand the spaces in between, if you can see the fish, the fish can see you. The nature of it is more important than the form. Essentially some of the best times I had fishing, I never caught anything at all.

When it comes to being a creative-artistic, no one draws out inspiration more than Molly Ott. Nowhere was this more evident than during the creation of "Godspell"

— Daniel Sopiwnik costume construction contributor a.k.a. Poetic editor

SAN MIGUEL DE ALLEADE

Daniel Lopez
Cañon City, Colorado

As I sit on a rooftop gazing at breathtaking views of mountains, it triggers many thoughts and memories. Some good, some bad, but mostly good.

Once on a trip after an intoxicating evening, I laid down on a trampoline. What I saw was a beautiful display of stars that illuminated the dark night. This display belonged on a canvas.

Another memory I have is in Mexico. Up high in the Sierras of Guanajuato. In this region the terrain is captivating. There are so many pueblos and ranchos in these mountains. These small towns have existed since the early 16th century. Traveling through this region is similar to traveling in Europe, I was told. The greenery along the mountains remind me of pictures and movies of Italy and Spain.

There is a town named San Miguel de Alleade high up in these mountains. It is famous for its Art institute. Many artists sit out on the street to sketch and paint big cathedrals and other structures.

Glancing around, I had to stop and acknowledge what was in front of me. I myself was in awe by the streets and its structures. It looked like Spain or Paris. The streets are in its original form of cobblestone since the early 1500's. The architecture is spectacular. Some of the finest masonry work.

This town of San Miguel de Alleade is named after an old Spaniard noble, it has a lot of Spanish influence. Up until the '90s, this town still practiced a Spanish tradition of releasing the bulls to run the streets.

In another part of Guanajuato, is a cathedral with an altar made of solid gold. This cathedral is in Guanajuato, Guanajuato. It is famous for its mummy museum. I don't know much about the mummies. The State of Guanajuato is a beautiful state with some breathtaking Architecture and artwork. I have not seen any art, architecture, or culture that can

compare to Mexico. Call me biased if you like. I just love my Mexican Heritage and native soil.

Mexico holds on to many traditions and customs. The native food is delicious. Everything is still primarily made with fresh vegetables. The aroma of chiles and barbacoa is what I call Mexican food. Not burritos or nachos. As one attends the Posaclas in the cold, you feel the warmth of the people and the delicious atole with

mixture that you still see today.

Mexico is beautiful. There is beauty all over the world. This is what I admire most in life. The beauty of life.

What stuns me in life is how something so simple can be beautiful. Like a cobblestone road. One can create a painting like Da Vinci or a statue like Michelangelo. Yet also the stone mason down the street can make a beautiful structure like the Spanish or Aztecs. Honestly, you don't have to be an artist to create a beautiful masterpiece. Look at children across the world.



tamales. The celebrations and holidays are full of excitement. On the 15th of September at midnight, you hear the President ring the bell of independence. The sound of everyone chanting VIVA MEXICO brings patriotism to your heart. This is a true celebration. Not Cinco de Mayo, which is an American holiday. The Mexican country and its people are a colorful beauty. We are descendants of Mayan astronomers, Aztec warriors, and Spanish Conquistadors. A beautiful

They are beautiful. Someone created them. Anybody can create something spectacular. You can be a mason, painter, sculptor, writer, or a dad/mom. We create beauty every day and don't even realize it. A smile can be a thing of beauty. Next time you make someone smile, remember you created that beautiful moment. Life is beautiful. No matter your circumstances or income, beauty surrounds us everywhere and constantly being created. The world and life are beautiful. Appreciate it!

It was amazing to witness the transformation of the artists as they worked together in the classroom, then set the stage and propped for the play "Godspell"

— William Coney scenery design team a.k.a. Senior editor

THE LAND THAT WATCHED ME GROW

Rutilio Meza Franco
Cañon City, Colorado

I remember it like it was a dream, when my family migrated to the United States. I was only 8 years old and the youngest with 7 brothers and 1 sister. This is why field contractors loved to hire my parents. With the exception of winter we worked the fields of Greeley all year. At first, working out in the fields was very hard for my little brother and me because we were too young. Some times we would mimic an Indian dance we had seen in a movie, but the gods never brought us rain to flood the fields. So we just had to continue working.

My family's biggest income was from harvesting onions. The beginning of

the year we planted fields and fields of onions. During the summer we irrigated and weeded these fields. The worst part was the end of the year when we had to pick the onions. It got to the point I hated the taste of onion in my mother's cooking, but it paid most of our bills and covered most of our needs.

Working the fields was my after school and summer job all the way through high school. One of my duties was to load my brother's pickup with empty sacks the night before. This way they would have plenty to fill with onions the next morning. It was embarrassing when I would get dropped off for school and we would get laughed at. I even hid my hands in my pockets when I was around girls would talk with me. I always thought the girls

could smell the onion odor on my hands.

As the years passed, we could see more and more homes built over the fields we worked. This would upset my dad. But it would comfort him that we were working and growing up with less backbreaking duties. Although there are fewer fields today, most are processed with specialized equipment.

I know it was hard work, but I thank my parents for teaching us responsibility. They always told us to be patient and to be proud of everything we did. That everything is provided from the land. Even memories, on Mondays during chow I can eat the onions by themselves on burger day. The taste and smell bring back memories I would never change for anything in the world.



BEAUTIFUL STRUGGLE

Raymonde Beverly
Cañon City, Colorado

The mountains are my muse... my trustworthy, brave safe space. This is where I cultivated my identity with the help of the land via the vantage point that the mountains offered me of Colorado Springs, Colorado, where I was enabled to develop my agency...

But to reach them, I had to navigate my way through the red-lined neighborhoods, where the land was brought up and used as sites to extract profit and recourses from the beautifully resilient yet marginalized

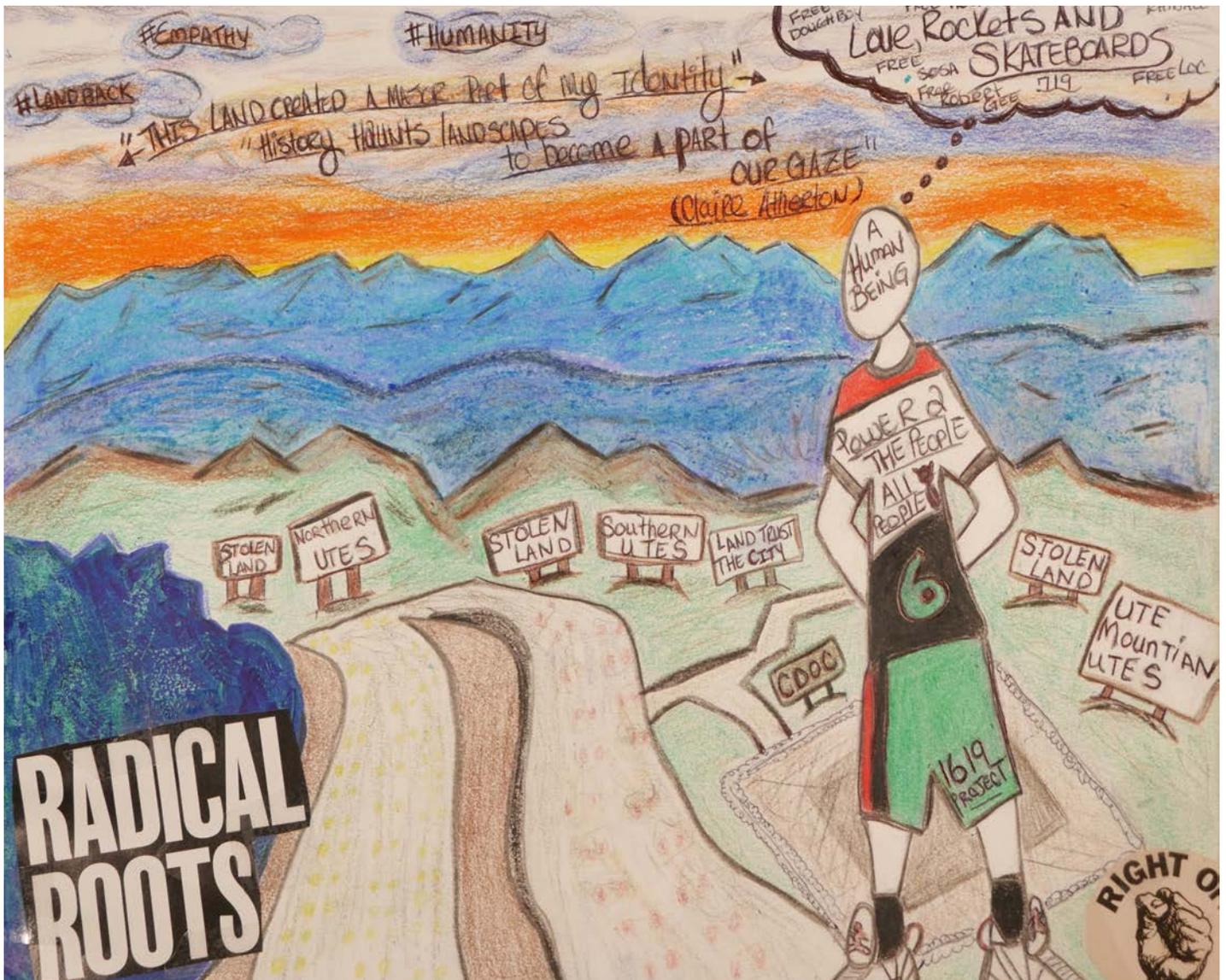
citizens...

In this world, we live in the same building but have different views... But you gotta see this view though... The mountains from the hood... My mother called it "the beautiful struggle"... The mountains of the people contrasted among the overly militarized NORAD, which used to be Cheyenne Mountain. A dwelling place for the indigenous Americans, became a conversation piece for our elders to breakdown the epidemic of trauma...

See, this land shaped my identity as it cried out to have its trauma validated and just share space with me as it did with the indigenous Americans it was took from...

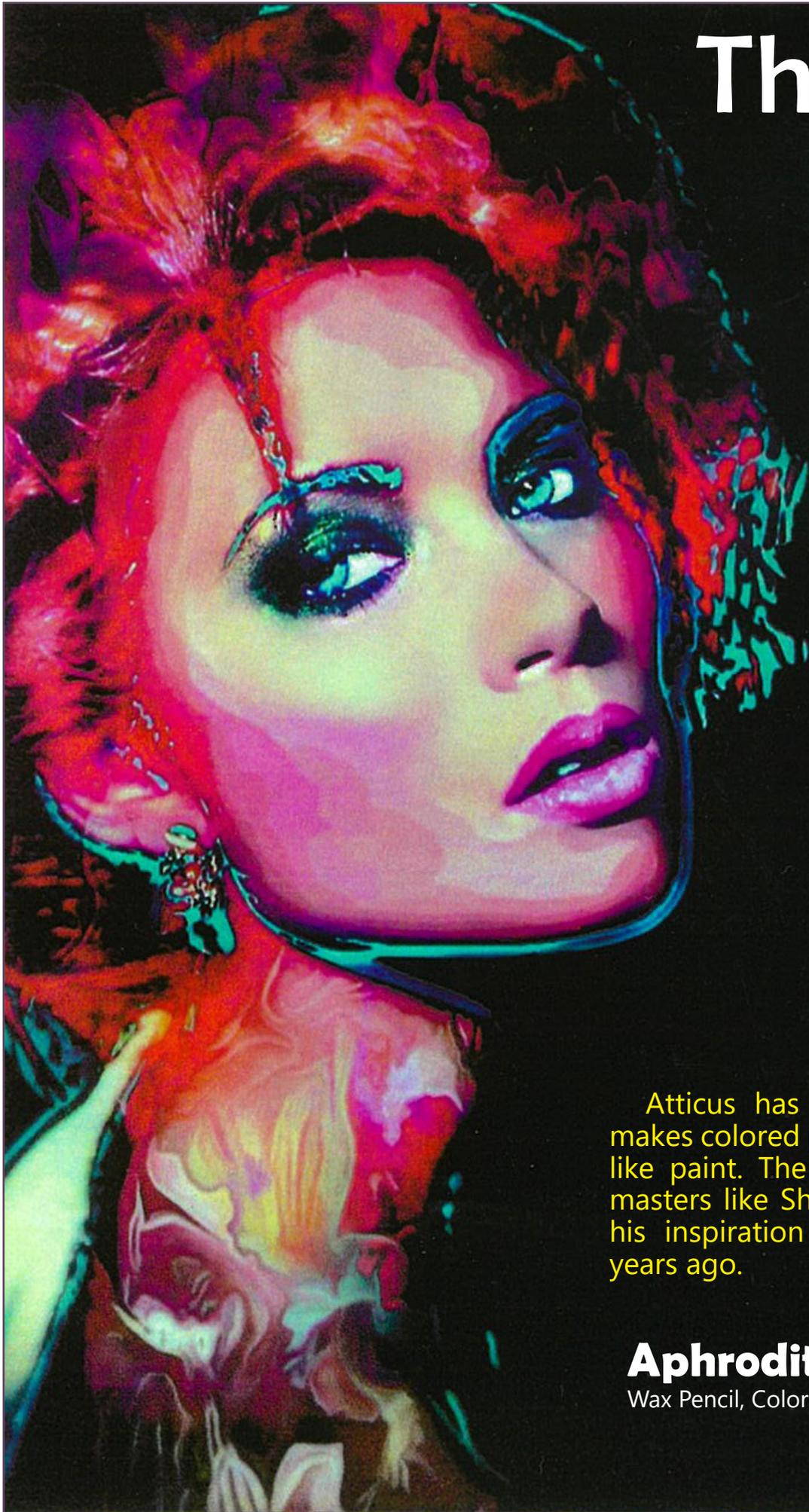
The resilience of nature became the back drop of some of my deepest crucibles and most vulnerable conversations that gave me the courage to embrace my humanity...

The mountains are my muse...



Thank you artists for your contributions to our magazine

The art of



Atticus has developed a style that makes colored pencil and pen look more like paint. The artist cites incarcerated masters like Sherman and Kevin Her as his inspiration to start drawing three years ago.

Aphrodite

Wax Pencil, Colored Pencil, and Ink

Adam "Atticus" Fulford

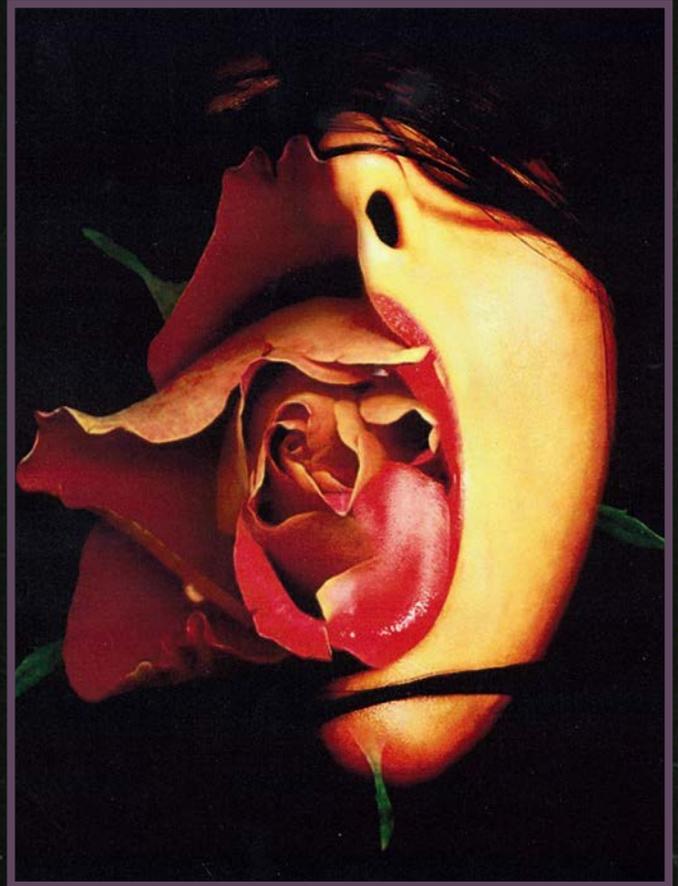


Graffiti Chick

Wax Pencil, Colored Pencil, and Ink

His style is definitely all his own. He colors outside the lines, the box and beyond preconceptions. A 34-year-old North Carolina boy that came to Colorado his freshman year in high school. He evolved into a graphic and clothing designer.

"Art is my escape. I like doing work for others and just spreading love through art."



The Message of the Rose

Digital Painting Photo Manipulation

The juxtaposition of digital and the street brings a virtual soul to his work. "I was always in awe by street artists, especially, those who get down with spray cans" he says while talking about developing his style, and all the practice art requires. Atticus is always willing to try new techniques and uses art to escape.



"I was always in awe by street artists, especially, those who get down with spray cans"



Cyber Punk
Colored Pencil and Ink



Pinky
Colored Pencil and Ink



CALLSIGNS



Lest we forget

I am an American and proud of it.

I was taught growing up that freedom wasn't free. Great men came before me to pay that price. It was done here at home and lands far away. These men came from big cities and small farm towns. Many who served were not treated well by this country, but yet they served. Many paid the price for the hope of having a small piece of the best country in the world. I've been taught by and looked back on great men who had passion and a dream for a great country.

Oh we've had our failures, but we fought hard for our successes. From behind these prison walls, I know more freedom than many will ever experience.

...But what have we done? What have we allowed to happen? Have we forgotten those who paid the highest price for the dream for our children's children? Have we lost the pride of saying, I am an American?

I am proud but it is said with a tear, because I fear, I've failed those men that gave their life for my freedom, because I haven't handed down those dreams to my own.

Oh what will they become?

God Bless America and all those who are proud to be Americans.

**Call Sign
Honey Badger
USN
Chris Butler**

Night Watch

After the fall and exile, decades rolled by without the comfort of starlight. Pink sodium sunsets washed out the warmer metal halide haze. Progress enabled tiny bright diodes to occult the heavens. Counterfeit constellations that brand the optic nerve with false impressions. Harbingers of a flash-bang abyss. Woke from the darkest night of the collective soul. A planetary lockdown declares mass incarceration has gone viral. In the twilight of an age expired the world begins to spiral. Pin-prick holes penetrate platonic cave like tombs. Voice and vision materialize, illuminating a new stage. Speaking slanted truths and right brain views. The enlightenment has come to the traumatized and penitent. A LuxLit transformation transcends mental bondage, walls and wire. It takes the airwaves to the subliminal slumbers of a sleeping cell. A warrior reactivated from the silent 50th wing of space.

The game has been initiated.

An old Warrior was sitting on a rock.
The coyote came by.

The Coyote said,
"What's your name Old Warrior?"

"Chiye Hinhan Thanka"
the Old Warrior said.

The Coyote Said "You were a great warrior
once, what are you going to do now?"
The Old Warrior said, "I'm going to die."

The Coyote laughed
and cried and said,
"why Old Warrior?"

"Because today is a good day" the old
warrior said.

And the Coyote sat next to me on a rock.
We died together.

Great Owls Brother

Steven Rodriguez
Buena Vista, Co

Call Sign
Wraith
USAF
Will Coney



All stations this net:

Welcome to Call Signs. These pages are dedicated to the creative and artistic works of Veterans and Patriots alike. Here can be found stories, poems and art works depicting both time in military service and things completely unrelated to the military, we do it all! If it's created by a Veteran or Patriot this is where it belongs. As a tribute to all of our fallen, we are asking you to come up with your very own 'Call Sign' to act as your pen name when contributing to this section.

Reverb-6 out.



Reflections

*Reflections in time ticking in my head, counting
the minutes until the next turn, the next
moment that means something, that gives me
meaning.*

*I am this number, but am I only this
number? I am an animal—they put me
in a cage*

*I am the one that did it, it's me, but
what I have become in these chains
resurrects me from what I could've
been if everything went another
way.*

*I strain against my restraints as
they chafe my new arms and legs.*

*I learned to move again, like a
child, like it was for the first time,
I learned the weight of shackles
and black boxes, conformed to them
now,*

*but I am life, I am ignorance, I
am the bliss you live by, the beauty
you ignore because if you didn't I
would blind you, I am garuda, lion, I
am dragon.*

*They said that it's all in a mustard
seed, that in a grain of rice you can
encapsulate the whole universe,*

But they want me blank, they want

*me white-washed, they want me penitent,
repentant, on my knees, begging for another
chance,*

*but in these deep places, in this
dream there is one rift in my heart
left.*

*Love, passion, anger, peace,
patience, resentment all gone, yet
one thing remains like a sickness
within me—the hope that
someday somebody will make it
all worth it.*

*There are things that stick in
my dreams, things I want for
me, and I hope that they don't
all just become fairy tales or
forgotten.*

*I indulge on the unknown, all
the vast, passionless emptiness
around and emerge time again
defiant ready, pacing-ready,
stalking life and the inevitable*

*breath filling my nostrils, in,
out, another soft step.*

Peter Sweeney
Cañon City, Colorado

Anthony Cole
Acrylic on Canvas
Cañon City, Colorado

This edition of Reverberations is dedicated to our brothers and sisters that have spent the springtime of their life in captivity. So many youths have been sentenced to life in Colorado. In the last few years they have began to come of age. Many in their ranks have helped create our publications. The background art and writings found on the following pages was selected to honor this theme. The wild ones, that society stepped away from until they realized their worth in the natural order. Our thoughts are with them as they come of age.

Life

*I've heard growing up in prison is hard.
Not true.*

You either grow up or you don't.

Now, growing out of prison...

that's another matter entirely.

Recognizing the cultural flaws that plague prisoners, adapting away from the established practices, realizing that this life isn't life –these are spurts that require effort before there can be growth.

And growing out of prison doesn't happen out of prison, as attested to by the legions that step out only to leap back in.

Overcoming this place must start within this place, day by day, decade by decade,

life by life.

Josiah Ivy
Cañon City, Colorado

Unchained

*Trong nhà tù cuộc sống thật ám ảnh,
Không gì để làm ngoài chờ đợi và suy nghĩ.
Nhưng đối với một số người, có cách để thoát ra,
Qua nghệ thuật, họ tìm thấy cách để tỏa sáng.
Chỉ với vài cây bút và một ít giấy,
Họ có thể tạo ra điều gì đó tuyệt vời hơn,
Một thế giới bên ngoài tù và thời gian,
Nơi mà họ có thể thể hiện sự sáng tạo của mình.
Thiết kế, màu sắc và đường nét,
Họ có thể thể hiện những gì đang suy nghĩ,
Mà không sợ bị phán xét hay ghét bỏ,
Nghệ thuật là cách để giao tiếp.
Tâm trí họ có thể đi lang thang, trái tim bay cao.
Và họ có thể quên lý do tại sao,
Mình bị giam giữ trong nơi đen tối đáng sợ,
Nhưng qua nghệ thuật, họ có thể trốn thoát vào không gian.
Hãy nhớ đến sức mạnh của nghệ thuật,
Để chữa lành, an ủi và đóng một vai trò,
Trong việc cho giọng nói của những người cảm thấy bị hạn chế,
Nghệ thuật có thể giải phóng họ không bị gò bó.*

Phuong Dang
Cañon City, Colorado

Fresh Tracks
Christian Garcia
Acrylic on Canvas
Cañon City, Co

Perdurabo

Words that change

their meaning

via the ordeal,

this

acknowledgment,

into,

I [WE]

will endure

to the end.

An end where

Death

drives a hearse

named Enough! And

our bodies are

finally

set free.

A life sentence might appear just punishment, but to the crucified time is a gauntlet of: seconds, minutes, hours, days, weeks, months, years, and decades that elapses into the singularity of memory. This crucible of time becomes the Ouroboros that feeds on itself, and those confined within it: The gastric juices can dissolve the weak-minded, harden the bitter, and soften the strong.

There are over two-hundred-thousand souls serving a life sentence or virtual life sentence.

This anointment of suffering; this softening of the heart can allow redemption to those that chant in a solemn tone, mea culpa.

This anointment of suffering; this softening of the heart can allow redemption to those that chant in a solemn tone, mea culpa.

Anthony Lucero
Cañon City, Co

Explosion
Peter Sweeney
Colored Pencil
Cañon City, Co

*Swallowed up in a black hole of
crime,
Consequences of prison for a
lifetime.
Married for all the wrong
reasons,
Ironically lasting only four
seasons.*

Useless piece of paper

*Remember in the beginning,
How we first met through letter
writing.
Lust, excitement, and back and
forth flirting,
A whirlwind of emotions and
uncertainty.*

*Infidelity, betrayal, and
deception,
Become the hurt, anger, and
bitter infection.
Love, desire, compassion, and
respect are gone,
Nothing left but memories as
we move on.*

Gerard Shultz
Limon, Co

Prose and Color

We Are Kings

We are Kings living through the struggle of judgments, misconceptions, and egos.

Bound by the laws of Masculinity, we are taught to walk, speak, and act in a certain manner.

Failure to do so will result in the criticism of your Manhood, Such as showing or speaking about emotions in public is a sign of weakness, Not reacting to or accepting a challenge deems you weak or a coward, Show humility and patience and your opposing enemies will say you're soft. Barbaric is the standard and a perception of what a man is supposed to be.

There is no room for feelings or for caring after others.

Love is a disease and women are only seen as tools for gain and entertainment, But this so-called set of rules for being a man is disastrously flawed.

Adaption and flexibility are the keys to avoid extinction.

Only when you live freely of the fear of judgment of others can you enter Kingship.

Do not allow the rules or laws of the misled to dictate your walk or way of living in this life,

But walk naturally as you are because my Brother, We are Kings.

Vincent Harper
Cañon City, Co

The Roar

Anthony Cole
Acrylic on Canvas
Cañon City, Co

I Am Buried Alive Here...

Beneath this impenetrable bedrock of conflicting concepts, which together have manifested this institution in which I am bound. My writings are only expressions reflecting my ideals, not meant to be airtight points of debate. But as I write, I can't help but hear echoes of rebuttals to how I feel regarding such matters. So I can't help but feel that some may come to regard me as, critical of my country...

I very well am as a matter of fact. I have every right to be critical of that which I am intimately acquainted...

While we understand this to be our home regardless of how it came to be.

**They've forgotten that without us,
America would not BE!**

Tyrone Edwards
Cañon City, Co

The art *withlin*



Our database was never designed to calculate the time and ages of our contributors, but some names searching for content. The samples of those we missed opportunity to

Patrick Suchaiya
Cañon City, Colorado

have caught our attention while names above are only small honor in this Coming of Age Edition. someone, please forgive us; the choose a theme came at crunch time.
William Coney, Interim Senior Editor

Editors Note

Murphy's Law is a humorous axiom which states that anything that can go wrong, will go wrong. I think Murphy's Law was very much at work in our recent efforts with Reverberations. However, I believe Humanity trumps Murphy and all his supposed "laws" every time. A very heartfelt thank you goes out to the Inside Report team at Fremont for making sure we made it to print this time. I hope none of us ever loses sight of the fact that all of these platforms we have the opportunity to be a part of are a gift. I mean, it's all impossible, isn't it? People in prison don't make magazines and newspapers. They don't run radio stations or podcasts. And they surely don't make every effort to transmute their heartache and pain – all the harm they've been a part of – into something worth sharing with the world. What we are doing is unreal. It is fantastical. It is unimaginable.

...And yet...

I am so grateful the universe doesn't care about what is possible. It cares about what people are brave enough to birth into the world. It cares about what we are willing to grab onto with imperfect hands. It cares about those who push through all the wrong that Murphy and company can throw at them and still find a way. Not in spite of – but because of it all.

So, thank you Fremont team. Thank you writers and artists. Thank you loyal readers. Thank you universe. We are the only ones doing it just like this...
Matthew LaBonte, Managing Editor



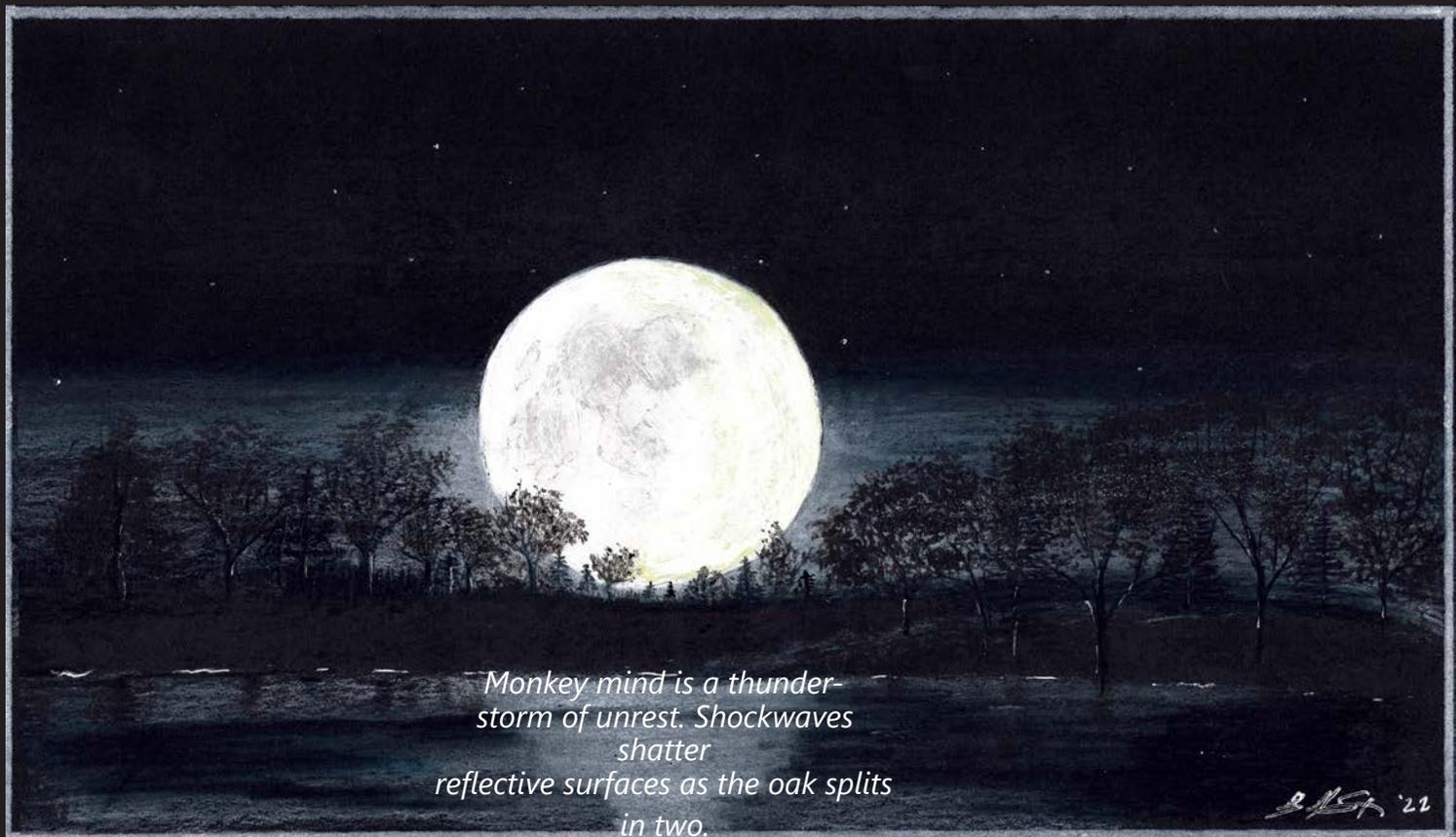
MyCommunity

My purpose for being
here is beyond words
Transformed by truth
Battling time one day at a
time Searching...
Trying to find proof Proof
I exist
That I was here
Able to throw my name in
the hat Add it to the list
A spoon full of nothing
Eating my own discomforts
Like a special ingredient
I gather stones of change
scared to throw them at
the people who doubt me
No! No! No!
Doubt us
The company of what I
create Destroying data in
my work Crucial way of
smiling
An alien to the earth I
arrive together
As a people
I am community My
community

William S. Graham
Cañon City, Colorado

Sean Marshall
Parole, Colorado

We are pleased to celebrate the release of our dear friend and colleague Sean Marshall. He was returned to the world on January 31st, 2023 but remains joined with us in common cause. We celebrate you Sean...



*Monkey mind is a thunder-
storm of unrest. Shockwaves
shatter
reflective surfaces as the oak splits
in two.*

B. Scott '22

Moonrise

*Reconciliation decays with nightfall.
Stability dissociates like the leaves of aspen
queens. The winds
of change liberate a cornucopia of color.
A kaleidoscope of emotion zips across the sky. Saplings
peek from damp soil under the horizon.
Rebirth illuminates the wasteland.
Monkey mind attains
solace as the full moon climbs*

Billy Scott
Cañon City, Colorado



Monkey Mind
Alexander Jasmine
Cañon City, Colorado



Mario Rios
Ordway, Co

Inside Wire: Colorado Prison Radio has been named a silver award winner in the Human & Civil Rights category in the 2023 Anthem Awards. The Anthem Awards are administered by the International Academy of Digital Arts & Sciences, honoring the purpose and mission-driven work of people and organizations worldwide. Anthem Awards organizers state that "by amplifying the voices that spark global change, we're defining a new benchmark for impactful work that inspires others to take action in their own communities."

Transformación

La curiosidad del Niño compite con su imaginación

Las dos cosas quieren crecer, quieren ser reconocidas

El niño mira el mundo y lo quiere probar

En sus ojos se enciende un fuego, su corazón late más rápido

Es un dolor no poder jugar con su hermano mayor

Le duele ser pequeño

Pronto crece pero quiere más

El joven lo sabe todo

No hay nada que teme

Edwin Baezvaldivia

Colored Pencil
Cañon City, Co

¡Que maravilla es el mundo!

Los años llegan y pronto se van
¿A donde se fue la maravilla?

El hombre llega a sus sentidos

Se mira en el espejo y las canas no lo engañan

Sus fuerzas ya no son lo de antes

El tiempo lo ha transformado

Por dentro es el mismo

Es el mismo de siempre

Ricardo Cortez

Cañon City, Co

Me siento más entendida cuando

Me siento más entendida cuando me encuentro entre personas positivas

Y con las mismas emociones o valores que yo

Me siento entendida cuando estoy con las personas que saben quién soy.

Me siento entendida cuando estoy con las personas que han sobrepasado lo mismo que yo.

Me siento entendida cuando estoy haciendo lo que me gusta con las personas correctas.

Me siento entendida cuando solo soy escuchada y no juzgada, cuando hablo con Dios y con personas que están en la misma comunicación que yo.

Jhoana Melchiorre
Pueblo, Colorado

Mayan Metempsychosis

When still I see

The will of my ancestry
In every tree I climb.

Hunter or prey, I pray
As with every role I play

On the Way,
Up the Totem of the collective mind.

A Jaguar yesterday in a Cerba Tree,

A star today in the Milky Way of Eternity,

Oh, how does my soul shine
In the infinities of a whole lifetime.

Curtis Lake
Parole Colorado

William Coney
Water Color
Cañon City, Colorado

Colorado Peer Review

Here we create a place to share information on art-based, peer-led programs happening across the state. The purpose of the review is to present the work of our brothers and sisters in the professional format they deserve, but rarely see on the inside. The flyers seen below are the product of photographers, reporters, and digital artists working statewide in the name of art. The harmony of many voices in accord was the theme of this review. To apply for the review, just continue to do good photojournalism.

Our team will meet you here.



Two-hundred women gathered together in the Denver Women's Correctional Facility gym to celebrate each other and experience the latest graduating class of Open Mic. Read all about it on-line TheInsideReport.com



Hip Hop night is a collaboration of Grace Without Borders Ministries and the performers. The Ministry reaches out to multiple prisons changing lives in innovative ways. See story on TheInsideReport.com

Reverberations is always looking for art related peer venues and programs to share with our readers inside and out

UNCHAINED

*In prison, life can feel pretty bleak,
With nothing to do but wait and
think,
But for some, there's a way to break
free,
Through art, they find a way to be.
With just some pencil and paper,
They can create something greater,
A world outside of their cell and
time,
Where they can let their creativity
shine.
Through colors and shapes and lines,
They can express what's on their
minds,
Without fear of judgment or hate,
Art is a way to communicate.
Their minds can wander, their hearts
can fly,
And they can forget the reason why,
They're locked up in this awful place,
With art, they can escape into space.
So let's remember the power of art,
To heal and soothe and play a part,
In giving voice to those who feel
restrained,
Art can set them free, unchained.*

Phuong Dang
Cañon City, Colorado

Unchained Voices Art Show

Liminal Presents
and Futures

The theme asks artists to think about the concept of liminality or in-betweenness as it relates to incarcerated life. For some, incarceration might mark the end of one phase in their life and a transition to another stage.

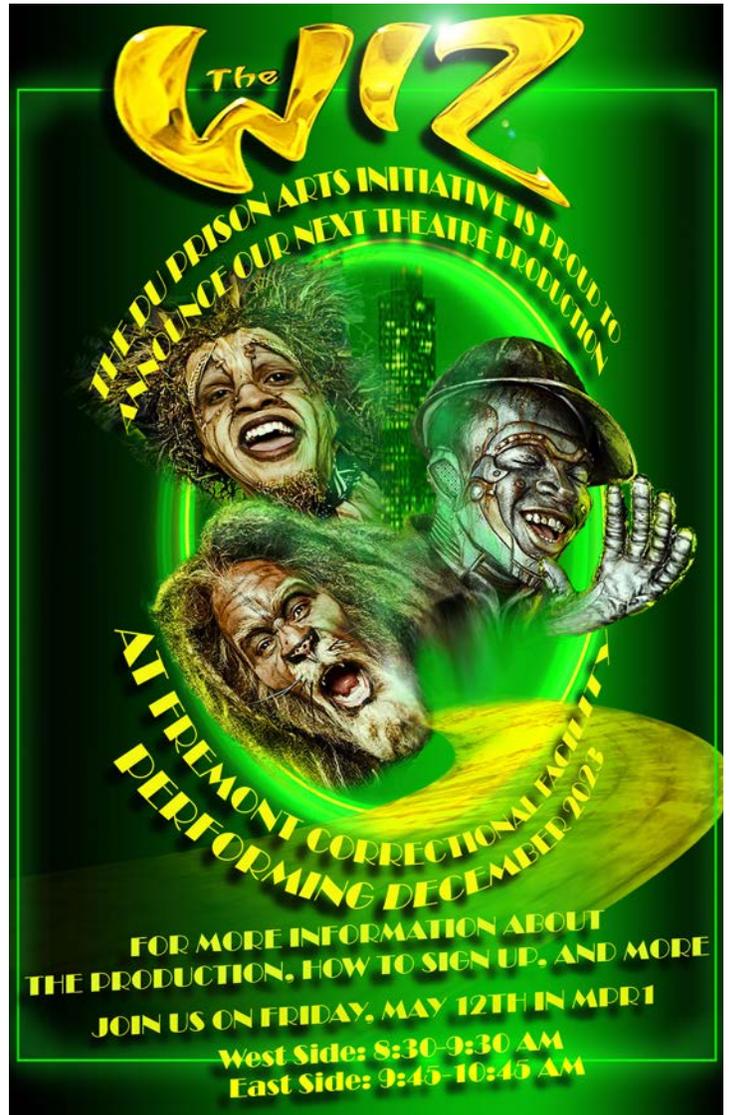
*Does this resonate with your experience?
Why or why not?
How do you foster a sense of community,
belonging, or feeling "at-home" in carceral
space/time?
What rituals do you maintain?
How do you think about and cultivate
self/community care in these spaces?*

Patrick Suchaiya
Digital Background
Cañon City, Colorado

The Initiative



UNCHAINED VOICES ART SHOW
LIMINAL PRESENTS AND FUTURES
SEPTEMBER 25TH - OCTOBER 27TH
SUBMISSIONS DUE JULY 3RD
IN COLLABORATION WITH
ARAPAHOE COMMUNITY COLLEGE



THE DU PRISON ARTS INITIATIVE
IS PROUD TO ANNOUNCE
OUR NEXT THEATER PRODUCTION
THE WIZ
WILL BE PERFORMED AT THE
FREMONT CORRECTIONAL FACILITY

Spring In-Person Arts-Based Courses

- CSP: "Public Speaking: Accessing Self and Creativity Through Voice"
- Centennial: "Moving Meditations: Intro to Dance & Choreography"
- Fremont: "Moving Meditations: Intro to Dance & Choreography"
- Ark Valley: "Introduction to Art Making Practices"
- Territorial: "Introduction to Art Making Practices"
- Limon: "Introduction to Art Making Practices"
- La Vista: "Seeing & Drawing: Inside & Out"
- DW: "Introduction to Improvisation"
- BV: "Introduction to Songwriting"
- DRDC: "Theater and Conflict"

