Poetry for a Change,
West End Poetry Festival 2020

It is early September and the Poets Council is nervous. How can we have a poetry festival during a pandemic? How could we make sure that Carrboro was poetic even during these challenging times? Sometimes you don’t know what is possible until what you have always done is impossible. Thus Poetry For A Change came to be. With the invaluable help of Ralph Earle and Paul Jones, and led by Abigail Browning, the festival came together. And the good news is, if you missed it—you can still “attend”, as it is posted on our website, http://www.westendpoetryfestival.org.

Highlights:

CJ Suits, Poet Laureate of Chapel Hill and nationally known spoken word poet, opened the festival with an interactive and inspiring workshop on How to Read a Poem.

A virtual open mike, hosted by Paul Jones, had 20+ participants—presenting many different types of poems.

Our featured poets included some of the best poets writing today: Destiny Hemphill, John Murillo, Michael Glaser, CJ Suits, Rachel Hadas, and our own Poet Laureate, Fred Joiner.

Another new feature this year was the community Poem. Community members were invited to submit a line of poetry for our community poem, Homesong.

Pokeweed

Autumn season...

an oversized
Pokeweed root is
removed from our
southern garden.
This botanical irritant
is a reminder
not everything
can be resolved until Springtime.

Non gardeners, faced
with endless detours,
are encouraged to seek
newness as it will
come your way.
An inner strength will prevail.
You in turn will plant
another seed of "positive
possibility".

tfc
(During the time of Covid19)
**Notorious RBG**

I doubt that I shall ever see  
A brain as pretty as RBG.  
Her analytics towered over men,  
Used the law to turn never to when.

Her spirit was matched by workout regime  
That kept her alive to work out new schemes  
That aptly pushed the court to intervene  
When legislators stank up the latrine.

Or justice required an intelligent hand  
To put out the fires, help women take stands.  
The diminutive powerhouse lost her last fight:  
Watch as the court again ratchets right.

Her dying request was to wait, let voters decide,  
Hypocrite turtle-face means justice denied.

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**Flu Shot 2020**

The young woman from CVS pharmacy  
Administer flu vaccine and  
Said, “It is the strong one.”  
She offered a store coupon,  
Which I declined because  
I’m not shopping except food.  
I accepted a cookie and water  
And received a happy face sticker.  
“Ah, a cooker for the children!”  
Thanks!  
I ate mine for dessert at dinner.
When you live in a pandemic that gets worse when you so need it to get better, to go away, in fact, ordinary problems get magnified, distorted, all out of proportions. A sick dog will keep you awake or even some especially good news like finding a publisher asking for the writings of a woman who is “courageous, innovative, definition-defying.” You wonder: how did he know what you were like? You queried him immediately in the pre-dawn quiet house, but no response came yet to this magic call for poems, and you lay awake wondering how long it would take him. Of course, your expectation was unreasonable. But you’re eighty-three and already your options in this life—your only life—are fewer each year.

You walk to improve your ability to walk. You proof old manuscripts which you want to enter the world of published books. You search for publishers and publish some books yourself. You’ve always been yourself and no other. It was easy to ignore you since you weren’t seeking fame, but only readers. You reached them not as mobs but as thoughtful individuals. Fame can wait. I don’t need to be alive when it comes, but the books have to be out there somewhere readers can pick them up and enter my created world of peace, love, and sanity.
Jean Jones

A WALK WITH DANTE

I feel you are like Virgil
walking my soul
through my hell
pointing out the different levels
I have fallen into—
You show me the sign—
"Abandon hope, all ye who enter here—"
You show me where I currently live—In the second circle,
with Paolo and Francesca blown back and forth
by the winds of passion—
I scream to you to "Help me!"
You respond—
"You placed yourself there— P
You can get yourself out—"
So I force myself down from the winds,
with K, S, and D, circling around
and I find myself following you
as you take me to the Ninth Circle—

where great Lucifer's
frozen wings and tears
freeze this ninth level of Hell—
You point to the place
where, if I go past Lucifer,
I follow this comedy
to Heaven
where my wife waits, if I wish to meet her
and when I ask what happens if I don't climb up, past frozen Lucifer?

You show me another place—
a place with Second-Century furniture;
"If you go there, you cannot come out,"
You warn,
That is the place of "No Exit,
"there you make your bed with S, K, and D
and there, your hell will be "other people,"
"Good luck with that."
Candy Cane Christmas

Candy cane skies lick
the mountains wrapped with blue bows;
a full Super Moon glowing.

Late evening shadows,
the wind whistles through
Bradford pear trees covered

with chocolate drops;
fall’s last foliage;
winter is marching

to the drumbeats of toy soldiers;
presents are piled under
the Christmas tree

that was cut on Shewbird Mountain:
evergreen fills the cabin
with fresh forest scents,

a star shimmers,
white reflects against windows;
a silent snow blankets the earth.
Affair Aborning

I don’t have the time to luxuriate
In the chaos of my thoughts
Or rest on the certainty
They will coalesce into order
As they always do, so I seek to force
The agenda when I, not them, are the instrument
To be played as a lyre stroked
By tapered fingers never knowing hardship.

She stands at the center.
The heart of my wishes
Flickering with round hips
Hypnotizing the rational thought
That counts the ticks of the clock
I am not working at the dead end job
Of such noble underpayment.

There are no rewards given out
For this private suffering
As all life is suffering between bursts
Of pleasure and those dumb thoughts
Never to be whispered into existence.
Hovering

Mini hovering helicopters have left our grounds for parts unknown. I dream to travel with them to Central America for the months ahead of a dreaded northern chill. How they manage I cannot grasp. Imagine without GPS, thinking while navigating, a place to take shelter, avoiding high rise structures, man-made environmental disasters, other intimidating flocks also enroute. While here, these past summer months, pure bliss found its way to our protected body of water, surrounded by most welcoming plant life.

Will they come home again? Shall we dream?

(a fine memory from a most dreadful sizzling summer day)
edges

sitting still
takes so much control
to be confronted with one’s own breath
the reality of each heartbeat
knowing the numbers of both are finite
each one means one less
before the implacable number arrives
as I watch gentle rain soaking into this sacred earth
that I am blessed for a time to call my own
knowing how many rivers
my fellow travelers have diverted
with all good intentions
until those who live farther from the source
whose lives have been described by the flowing
of the same waters
wake up to their ancient friend
who no longer visits
their home
no longer carves
the banks exposing new earth
or in season flooding
wildly effortlessly inundating
leaving all the remnants of its exuberance
to return to the sea
exhausted
as man asserts his vision without wisdom
the compounding interest of unintended consequences
relentlessly reminds us that as a species
we truly live in one single room....
all of us are sharing
the same soil air water light
and toilet
no pile of money can insulate anyone from this reality
our Mother gently seeks our attention
until like the heedless children we are
we walk off the edge of the possible
and gravity asserts her dominion that mountains cannot ignore
the perfect helical wandering of our biospherical space ship
invites us to listen to the crackle of meteorites
as they disintegrate upon entering our skin of atmosphere
and to know each fragment
so incinerated
is more fuel for the insatiable fire
that created us......
Come Together

I’ve been listening to her die, the sound of a swimmer
Gasping at water, lungs full, only able to take in more water.
The gulp of drowning on dry bed sheets, phones convey
The becoming-more-futile struggle spurred on by her daughter,
My wife. She’s 85 and having extreme difficulty keeping the
Good fight going. Melodic Hangul notes float softly back
Between horrific, interrupted air sucked through lungs past
Pneumonia-full, but not on a respirator; yet. Encouragement turns
To rage for a while before the family Shaman calms into a
Regular conversation. Even this 60-day battle, so near, so fierce,
So strong, shares time with the Louisville Grand Jury that cowardly
Bent to customs so wildly antiquated, so slavery-encrusted
That murderers, attained a no-knock warrant via an affidavit
that was a pure lie, no conscience. The shots that strayed into a
White apartment, well those cops are going to trial. But Breonna’s
Murderers walk free? Are the ones who missed going to court
BECAUSE they missed?!? Is that it then? Litter the floor of a
Neighboring flat with benign bullets, arrested for missing the target:
Kill a black woman in cold blood, bullets mutilated her, and you
The perpetrators, tip of the fascist spear, Walk Free, Walk Free!?!?
Deck the Lodge

Brasstown Resort decked
with evergreen boughs,
red ribbons wrap the stairs,
mistletoe and wreaths hung.

Lights glow on the tree
trimmed with old-fashioned ornaments,
the logs brightly burning
in the rock fireplace.

The resort filled with cheer,
merry Christmas music,
drinking apple cider,
the snowcapped pine branches,

and thousands of crystals glitter
on the Brasstown Bald;
cardinals chatter at the feeders,
paper chains hug the tree.
Virtue, Versus Forgiveness

As all are, I was born into slavery. The world held me captive By being good and virtuous I tried to find peace and freedom, To escape from guilt and shame. Still my errant thoughts ran wild within the fence of justice. Efforts to break free caused scars, not release. Shame and guilt embittered my soul, As bitter as quinine on the tongue. Unhappiness and regret burdened My defenseless spirit, regularly. Each morning I awoke to defeat. If I did better than my peers, Pride defeated me even then. Even human love was tainted For my beloved was as I am, A slave within the confines Of the stockyard of life. His love could free neither of us, though we were as privileged as others With food, water, and shelter. Physically we did not suffer lack. The fences protected us from predators, but The distant green pastures were denied us, Until forgiveness, requested, was given and For a season, satisfied my desire, until Rebellion and anxiety returned to my heart. My spirit chafed under failure, regret, confusion. Unlovely, disgusting to myself, unable to best Boundaries of my miserable enslavement, my Freedom came unexpectedly one day. My Redeemer came, said, “I love you.” though I did not love myself, I accepted His gift of faith enabled my acceptance Of His word and promise to me. Restrictions to my spirit vanished And I am free. Forevermore!
NORTH CAROLINA POETRY SOCIETY
2020 PINE SONG AWARDS

DEADLINE: January 9, 2021

The NC Poetry Society invites submissions to its 2020 adult poetry contests. Entrants do not have to be residents of North Carolina.

Prizes (per category): 1st Place: $60; 2nd Place: $30; up to Three Honorable Mentions.

POET LAUREATE AWARD: a serious poem, any subject, any style, max of 110 lines.*
Sponsored by Kevin Watson/Press 53 Open to poets currently residing in NC. The winning poem will be selected by the North Carolina Poet Laureate.
Single prize of $150.

ALICE OSBORN AWARD: written by adults for children ages 2 - 12, any form, any style, max of 36 lines.*
Sponsored by Alice Osborn

CAROL BESSENT HAYMAN POETRY OF LOVE AWARD: any form, any style, on the theme of love, max of 36 lines.*
Sponsored by Dave Manning

JOANNA CATHERINE SCOTT AWARD: Sonnet or other traditional form, max of 36 lines.*
Sponsored by anonymous Friends of Joanna C. Scott

KATHERINE KENNEDY McINTYRE LIGHT VERSE AWARD: any form, any style including limericks, max of 36 lines.*
Sponsored by Diana Pinckney

MARY RUFFIN POOLE AMERICAN HERITAGE AWARD: any form, any style on the theme of American heritage, siblinghood or nature, max of 36 lines.*
Endowed by Pepper Worthington

POETRY OF COURAGE AWARD: any form, any style on the theme of courage or crisis, max of 36 lines.*
Endowed by Ann Campanella

BRUCE LADER POETRY OF WITNESS AWARD: any form, any style, addressing contemporary events or issues, max of 36 lines.*
Sponsored by Doug Stuber

Poems with different line requirements

BLOOD-HAIKU AWARD: contemporary English language haiku (untitled)
Sponsored by Bill Griffin

RUTH MORRIS MOOSE SESTINA AWARD: any poem in the sestina form.
Sponsored by Ruth Moose

THOMAS H. McDILL AWARD: any form, any style, max of 70 lines.*
Sponsored by the Board of the NC Poetry Society

* * * * *

*Please note: Line limits include lines of text and title, blank lines, and any epigraph.

ENTRY GUIDELINES & OTHER INFO: www.ncpoetrysociety.org/adultcontests
NORTH CAROLINA POETRY SOCIETY
2020 STUDENT POETRY CONTESTS

Postmarked by: February 1, 2021

The NC Poetry Society is currently accepting submissions for its 2020 student poetry contests, open to student poets from 3rd grade to university undergraduates attending schools in North Carolina.

PRIZES:

Each winning student poem will be published in the NC Poetry Society’s annual Pinesong anthology, which features all of the contest winners and their poems.

1st Place winners will receive a trophy, a $60 check, an NCPS award certificate, & a free copy of Pinesong.

2nd Place winners receive $40, an NCPS award certificate, & a free copy of Pinesong.

3rd Place winners receive $25, an NCPS award certificate, & a free copy of Pinesong.

Honorable Mention winners (up to three per contest) are also chosen. These winners receive an NCPS award certificate & a free copy of Pinesong.

THE TRAVIS TUCK JORDAN AWARD for students in Grades 3 - 5
Endowed by Dorothy and Oscar Pederson

THE JOAN SCOTT MEMORIAL AWARD for poems about the environment
for students in Grades 3 - 8
Endowed by contributions in memory of Joan Scott and by the Board of the NC Poetry Society

THE MARY CHILTON AWARD for students in Grades 6 - 8
Sponsored by Tori Reynolds

THE SHERRY PRUITT AWARD for students in Grades 9 - Undergraduate
Endowed by Gail Peck

SUBMISSION GUIDELINES & OTHER INFO: www.ncpoetrysociety.org/studentcontests/
Poetry News and Readings

**News**

Poems from the Heron Clan IV is taking submissions year-round. Send three poems (Previously published OK) to katherinejamesbooks@gmail.com. Include a 50-word bio, and 2-3 sentence cover letter.

Send us your very best work. Previously published: Ilya Kaminsky, Lola Haskins, Xue Di, Jaki Shelton Green, Shelby Stephenson, Anne McMaster and Norm Davis. All we do is dedicated to the memory of Delaney Watson.

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**Heron Clan Readings**

**Sundays at 2:00pm**

**Zoom**

The Heron Clan does Zoom readings Contact Doug Stuber at katherinejamesbooks@gmail.com and anyone who has ever submitted is free to sign up and read. International group.
Please note that the following events are subject to change due to the current public health situation. Please check ahead of time to see if the event is still being held.

Recurring Events:

Carrboro Recreation, Parks & Cultural Resources Department Presents:
Poe’ts Open Mic Night (ZOOM) First Tuesday of Each Month listed, 7:00-8:30pm

Join Carrboro Recreation, Parks & Cultural Resources Department the first Tuesday of each month listed for this great event! This is a night where poets can engage with others and share the power and diversity of poetry. The event is staged to provide a venue for people to celebrate, to share, and to encourage the writing, reading and listening to poetry.

See page 20 for listings.

Free the Mic Second & Fourth Monday of Each Month, 7:00-10:00pm
Lucky Tree
3801 Hillsborough St., Raleigh

For people who are not afraid to believe in themselves, for people who are thinking of believing in themselves, and also for people who like supporting people who believe in themselves. Just bring good energy & support for local artists. Artists and spectators welcome!!!

For more info: http://www.luckytreeraleigh.com/

City Soul Café VIRTUAL Open Mic Second & Fourth Wednesday of each month, 8:30pm
2nd Wednesday:
Jonathan’s Lounge & Grill
3400 New Birch Drive Suite 120, Raleigh

4th Wednesday:
VIRTUAL on ZOOM

Open to #poets, #singers, #lyricists, #comedians and #performers. City Soul Café is the spot for a night of poetry, music, and so much more. DJ Supreme will be providing the music. Krystal Da Muse and Church Da Poet will be hosting. The CSC team will be present. Featured performers from all over the country. Sign up between 8:00 - 9:00pm. Hosted by "The City Soul Café Group". The show will be hosted on Zoom and streamed on FB Live from our City Soul Open Mic page. Zoom LINK WILL BE POSTED IN THE EVENT PAGE AND ON THE MAIN FB PAGE.

For more info: https://citysoulcafe.splashthat.com/
**More Recurring Events:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event Name</th>
<th>Details</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Passionate Poets</strong></td>
<td><strong>Second Wednesday of Each Month, 7:00-8:30pm</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Unity Center of Peace</td>
<td>$10 suggested donation</td>
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<tr>
<td>8800 Seawell School Rd., Chapel Hill</td>
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<tr>
<td>Passionate Poets invites all to this evening of creative expressions where performers are encouraged to share their gifts of music, poetry, dance or comedy. Performance times will be 3-5 minutes each depending on the number of participants. A piano is available if required. Arrive early at 6:30pm to sign up. MC: Vanessa Vendola.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Friday Noon Poets</strong></td>
<td><strong>Fridays, 12:30-1:30pm</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Amity United Methodist Church</td>
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<tr>
<td>Corner of Estes Dr. &amp; Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd. <em>(Historic Airport Road)</em></td>
<td>Chapel Hill</td>
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<tr>
<td>Informal meetings every Friday. Read original poem or prose or a selection written by someone else. Writings should be no longer than 1½ pages. Free parking, side entrance. All are welcome!</td>
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<td>For details, call Dave Manning at 919-462-3695.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Jambalaya Soul Slam Outdoors</strong></td>
<td><strong>Third Saturday of Each Month, 8:00pm</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>The Hayti Heritage Center</td>
<td><em>(Participating Poets sign up @ 7:30pm)</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>804 Old Fayetteville St., Durham</td>
<td>$10 Admission</td>
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<tr>
<td>Spoken-word poetry competition hosted by Dasan Ahanu. The area's best performance poets compete for a cash prize &amp; a possible spot on the Bull City Slam Team. <strong>Mature content.</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>For more info: <a href="http://www.bullcitypoetryslam.com/">http://www.bullcitypoetryslam.com/</a></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Tongue &amp; Groove Open Mic Redux</strong></td>
<td><strong>Second Sunday of Each Month, 7:00pm</strong></td>
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<td>ZOOM*</td>
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<td>309 W Martin St, Raleigh</td>
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<tr>
<td>We welcome poets, musicians, storytellers, jugglers, interpretive dance...anything but comedy (which is not say you can't be funny) and sermons (which is not to say you can't do poems/songs/stories/juggles/dances about faith). List and Zoom open at 7:00. Show at 7:30. 7-minute slots.</td>
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<tr>
<td>For event updates and to get/stay in touch: <a href="http://www.facebook.com/tongueandgroove/">www.facebook.com/tongueandgroove/</a></td>
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</tbody>
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*The link changes each month; find it in the Events section on FB.*
Winter 2021 Creative Writing Courses taught by Judy Hogan by Skype

January 11 - March 15, 2021 Mondays 7:00-9:00pm
Snowday: March 22
Cost: $180
For More Info: Call 919-545-9932 or judyhogan@mindspring.com.
Location: Skype

Poetry Writing and Reading. We’ll read Galway Kinnell’s translation of the Poems of Fancois Villon. In a dual language edition. He lived in the Middle Ages He is said to have been a student who turned vagabond and thief, living amid desperate poverty and violence. We’ll work by Skype and written work will be turned in to the instructor for strengthening the student poetry.
Poetry Websites

http://www.ncPoetrySociety.org
Home of The North Carolina Poetry Society, an all-volunteer organization especially for poets and friends of poetry. There are approx. 370 members.

http://www.poets.org
Award-winning website of the Academy of American Poets. Find thousands of poems as well as hundreds of poet biographies, essays, interviews, and poetry recordings. Also available are resources such as the National Poetry Map, a national events calendar, and poetry lesson plans for teachers.

http://www.ncwriters.org/
Home of the North Carolina Writers’ Network. The Network strives to lead, promote, educate, and—most importantly—connect writers, at all levels of skill and experience, from across the state and beyond.

http://www.poemhunter.com
Poetry Search Engine with thousands of poems and poets.

http://poems.com
“Poetry Daily” is an anthology of contemporary poetry. Each day, we bring you a new poem from new books, magazines, and journals.

http://livingpoetry.net
Fascinated by the power of poetry, members of Living Poetry are dedicated to keeping the pulse of poetry alive in the North Carolina Triangle area.

http://poetry.meetup.com/cities/us/nc/
Join a Poetry Meet-Up in your area.

http://griffinpoetry.com/
Bill Griffin created this website to showcase vivid poetic imagery, from established as well as emerging poets. He hopes you’ll read a line that reaches out and grabs you by the throat - the image that is so vivid, novel, sensual, emotionally imperative - so satisfying you find yourself saying, Damn, I wish I’d written that!

http://theoriginalvangoghsearanthology.com
Seeking submissions of poetry, short stories, and art. Submission guidelines are on the site.

http://www.facebook.com/UNCwordsmiths
A student organization at the UNC at Chapel Hill founded for the purpose of hosting poetry events, functions, and initiatives on campus. We serve as the collegiate branch of Sacrificial Poets.

https://writenaked.net/
Here you will find vignettes from the freelance writing life, behind-the- pen scoop on articles, tips for working with editors, overviews of conferences, interviews with publishers, guest bloggers in the publishing industry, and a few miscellaneous blogs with a writerly twist.
By Request:  
Poetry Revealed Presents  
**OPEN MIC NIGHTS!**  
*Events tentative due to COVID.*

Poet’s Open Mic Night - ZOOM  
Join Carrboro Recreation, Parks & Cultural Resources Department via ZOOM on the first Tuesday of each month listed. This is a night where poets can engage with others and share the power and diversity of poetry. This program will provide the opportunity for people to celebrate, to share, and to encourage the writing, reading, and listening of poetry. For information on this program, please call (919) 918-7372.  
**Pre-registration is required.**

Dates Held:  
December 1  
*No Open Mic in January*  
February 2  
March 2  
April 6  

Time: 7:00-8:30pm  

Carrboro Recreation, Parks & Cultural Resources Dept.  
100 N Greensboro St, Carrboro, NC 27510  
919-918-7364  
carrbororec.org

For the newsletter, we welcome:  
- Poetry News  
- Upcoming Poetry Events  
- Articles  
- Contest Information  
- Festival and Event Recaps  
- …and of course, Poetry

Please email your information to  
Karen Kessler at  
KKessler@townofcarrboro.org

Information about the  
2020 West End Poetry Festival  
Can be found at:  
www.westendpoetryfestival.org

The Town of Carrboro does not endorse the views and opinions expressed in this newsletter. The Town of Carrboro does not assume responsibility for the accuracy, completeness, or usefulness of any information enclosed.

Pg. 3, Art & photo by Doug Stuber.

Pg. 4, Photo by Janet Wyatt.

Pg. 9, Photo by wm mason.

Pg. 10, Art & photo by Doug Stuber.

Pg. 16, *Daniel Kitson's chair*, Mc-Q.  http://www.flickr.com/photos/mc-q/2510906537/  https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/2.0/

Pg. 18, white figure with pen.  http://300palabrasdemarketing.com/comportamiento-humano/la-disciplina-el-factor-que-marca-la-diferencia/  http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/3.0/

Pg. 19, poetry wordle *(color modified)*, Angela Quiram.  https://readingafterbedtime.wordpress.com/tag/poems/  http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/3.0/

Pg. 21, photographer drawing.  http://tejasforyou.blogspot.com/2012/05/photo-collection-from-all-over-world.html  http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/3.0/deed.en_US