

COMMONTHOUGHT

spring zine

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Editorial

The Sherrill Library Zine* Committee has partnered with Commonthought magazine to support the writers and illustrators at Lesley University and expand our library zine collection. In early 2013, we asked for submissions from artists and writers who wanted to contribute their original work to our first annual issue of the Commonthought Spring Zine.

We received several submissions of prose, poetry, and visual art. The 2013 Commonthought Spring Zine is now part of the Sherrill Library's Zine Collection and Archives. We hope to produce a new edition annually.

Thanks to Travis Cataldo for the cover art of our first edition.

* Zines are handmade, self-published, and inexpensive paper booklets that are creative forms of self-expression on topics from the personal to the political that usually include drawings and text; they aren't copyrighted and are free.



EMMA BENARD

Creativity

Creativity is patient and wise.

Sometimes, when I ask her to come, it seems like she wants to stay away.

This is not because she is stubborn, or afraid
but because she is waiting.

She waits for my heart to open up
when she knows she will not be blocked out by negativity, or
judgment.

Creativity carries a small backpack with her wherever she goes.

It sparkles day and night, and is filled with her greatest gift.

When she was a young girl, Creativity met Rainbow for the first time.

When she greeted her, she lay her small hand gently down on
Rainbow.

In awe, she watched as her colors, from the bright yellows to the pale
violets and blues, began to come together, welcoming her; flowing
gracefully, forming a complete, round and sparkling rainbow of
energy.

Creativity never took her eyes off this miracle, as it floated up and
landed effortlessly right in front of her heart.

Her whole self felt warm, loved, and like anything was possible.

At that moment, Creativity knew what she wanted to do for all her life.

She wants to be our Rainbow.

Emma Benard
2012



After the Mother Ship

How dare you come back, he says.

It was your temper, she says.

You left me for an alien lover. I think an interstellar one-night stand justifies a reaction. Don't you?

I have a proposition for you.

This should be good.

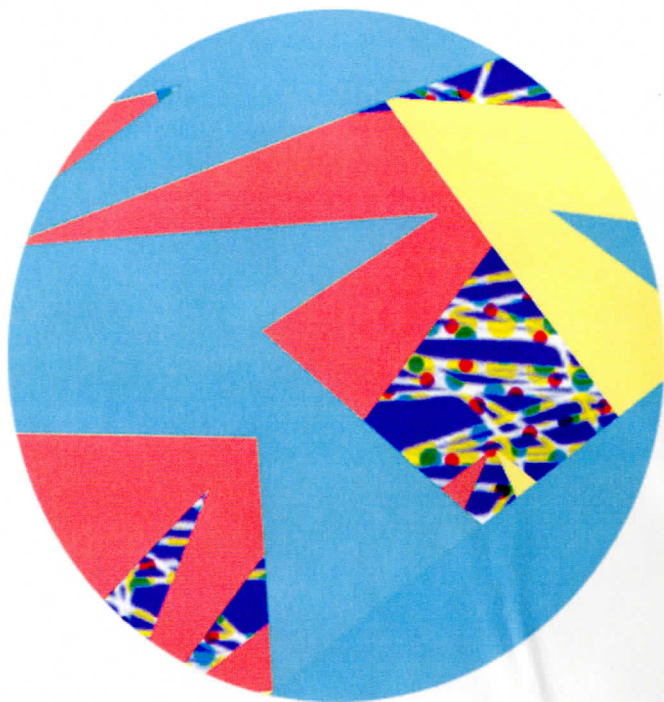
Give me your DNA.

What in heaven's name for?

Immortality.

Get out of town.

Amanda Faith Schaffer



Thomas Luthi

Nebulize

Nebulize time. Nebulize tanks and tidal waves. Nebulize future.

Tomorrow is tomorrow so swaddle anxiety. Swaddle the sheer terror of before and after nothingness. Punch Oscar Wilde in the face and thank him profusely.

Always contradict. Always fight tedium. Always fight inflexibility of age. Fight to transform. To lose self again and again. To gain self again and again. To strip away vanities. To shift. To shuffle. To take off your shirt. To scalp yourself. To sit long awake through long, porous, featureless night.

Dreams insist. Time relaxes the trapezius. Every body sleeps. But to summon that effervescent wisp. That glorious ghost. That zebra-striped, cunt-like hider. That drunken delicacy. That gingered fresh. Friend of the lonely. Friend of the fractured. Friend of the half-filled seeker. In abortion of efficiency. In vomit of routine. Upon a meandered, half-fish-brain float forward to Tahiti and beyond. To the hidden hive. To the fizzing, rhythmic cave.

Take to the non-solid brinks and the art-grown degenerate cities of the uncaged. Take to the burning, moneyless catacombs of eternal joy and people. Take to the poles and the cratered dark sides – secretly colonized, secretly self-sufficient, secretly happy. Take to the release. Take to the discharge, to squid-inkish liberation from the game, from the prayer, from the hunt, from the moribund malarkey of moon-baked us.

Matthew Peipert

April Sixteenth

*April Sixteenth, on April Sixteenth,
That's when I go, down Shade of Death Road,
The people above, the people below,
To whom will I go, down Shade of Death Road?*

A static vision of steel city,
Buses ferry the aggrieved to terminals
Piping yellow-black bars of music.
A pearl of stars begins sliding slowly, then faster and faster,
Down somebody's beautiful shoulder.

*April Sixteenth, on April Sixteenth,
That's when the teeth, fall out in my hand,
Undone by boulder, or grain of sand,
Oh how will I go, down Shade of Death Road?*

A red ant walks briskly, carrying a berry.
It is puny, panting, unaware of titanic forces
Sliding about its periphery, forces so much larger
And more conscious as to be completely ignorant of its existence.
The small ones continue ad infinitum. They must press on.

*April Sixteenth, on April Sixteenth,
That's what the dream, it said unto me,
But how did it know, and how did it see
Just when I would go, down Shade of Death Road?*

No man is not a man is a man.
There are forces beyond our control,
To be unlocked, titillated, agitated
By whiskey, failure, happenstance and exceptionalism.
No man is a man is not a man.

*April Sixteenth, on April Sixteenth,
That's when I leave, my full-hearted bride,
Please say she'll find me, on that bright other side,
Say so as I go, down Shade of Death Road.*

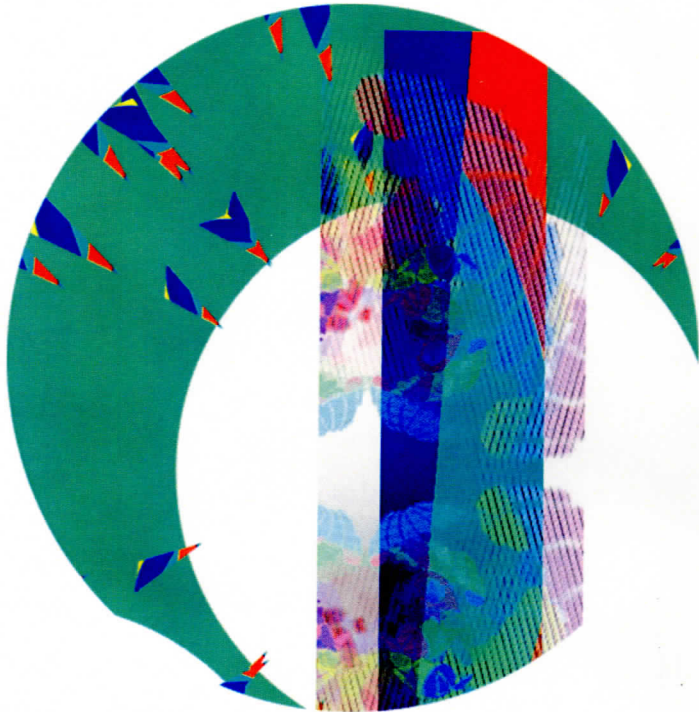
The final vision -
The crow's last, blinded flight into glass.
The low, damp hills and the forest.
The munching chust bugs.
The slow conversion to peopleless steppe,
Cracked and rippled, detached and loving,
That needs your bones to grow.

Matthew Peipert



ANNA JO BECK





Emma Benard

"What are you doing?" A little girl asks.

"Look at your wings! They are so wide, so strong, so beautiful. You could go anywhere, you could reach the sun, the stars..."

"But I can't", the angel says to her, eyes cast down.

"I can't."

Tears begin to roll down her cold cheeks, she looks up.

The darkness followed me, years and years past, I felt lost, so lost, so lost.

Dangerous thoughts crept inside, I wanted to hurt myself, hurt all of myself but I could not tear out the deepest pain, which still remains. There is nothing I can do now, no hope to save me from this hell. I am ashamed and terrified, I am alone...

The snow and the wind suffocated me, my heart throbbed underneath and I was trapped, so trapped...

The little girl touches the angel's wing gently,

"Are you trapped now?" She whispers.

The angel looks into the little girl's brown eyes, and her own silently exchange her answer.

She takes her tiny hand and tucks it into the angel's,

"Then what are we waiting for?"

Emma Benard

2012

PROBABLY NOT OH MY GOD IT'S A WEREWOLF!!!!!!

Hypertrichosis:

A genetic disorder linked to the X-chromosome can cause people to grow very thick hair over their faces and bodies. People with this condition can physically resemble werewolves, but it's extremely rare. One variety, congenital generalized hypertrichosis, is known to affect only 19 people in one Mexican family



Rabies:

Many mammals can carry and transmit rabies, typically through biting. Rabies is fatal without immediate treatment. In its advanced stages, it can cause agitation and hallucinations. A rabies epidemic may have caused wolves and dogs to bite humans, who then could have exhibited werewolf-like tendencies.



Wolf hybrids:

Healthy wolves don't generally attack people without provocation, but aggressive hybrids of wolves and dogs may have attacked villages, leading to the idea of violent werewolves.

Ergot poisoning:

Ergot is a fungus that can infest grains like barley and wheat, and eating it can cause hallucinations. Ergot poisoning has also been suggested as a cause of the witch trials in Salem, Mass.



Collective hysteria:

As unlikely as it sounds, the sudden, simultaneous onset of psychological symptoms in a large group of people is a recorded phenomenon.



ANNA JO BECK

Lucy Bell



EMMA BENARD

I am walking back to my house, the smell of the leaves brings me comfort and I smile to myself, watching them fly up and around my ankles. A group of girls walk next to me, and I talk to them, and then watch them turn right and veer in another direction. They wave goodbye to me as we separate, and as I wave back I feel the cool air escaping into my sleeve and running down the length of my arm. I continue on, just a couple minutes to go. It seems it always takes so much longer to get to where you are going when you are cold. The leaves are a constant; fiery and warm at my feet. I hear the footsteps of another, and suddenly realize that I am not alone. I quickly glance back- a habit - and see a dark haired man walking behind me with stiff steps. His dart-like eyes seem concentrated on something only he can see. I quicken my pace and my heart follows in a hurry. I get the terrifying feeling that he is going to pull a gun out of his pocket and shoot me. I pull a free strand of hair behind my ear, shift my bag strap over my shoulder - anything to distract me from my thoughts, from my throbbing heart. Up ahead, a couple gets into their car, and to the right of the street there are people playing tennis in the court. The man's footsteps are softer now, but his presence is in the front of my mind. I breath. I know I should be rational. Is this man really a threat to me? Will he really try to kill me? The tennis ball pounds on the court, back and forth, back and forth. No. He will not try to kill me.

There are too many witnesses.

Emma Benard
2012



I love

the soft white
on the periwinkle mountains

Animal footprints
and making my own imprint
on the earth
*I am here I am here I am here and here and
I am here*

Falling snowflakes landing on wispy eyelashes and
warm cheeks and all kinds
of safe, stretched out arms of the trees

When my steps kick up white
fresh snow not
dust or dirty rain
water that threaten me
no this white is
safe to breath

Warmth and relief
how they surround me and love me and hold me
once
inside

Couples taking
time to bundle then skate along the pond
their hands tucked together just right
I won't let you go
I won't leave you

Emma Benard January 6, 2013

I don't love

black ice
not knowing until it is too late

White turning to darkness when
machines arrive

Everything disappearing so suddenly
No time to appreciate their
beauty

Speeding cars
Be careful please be careful
Not careful enough

Frozen fingers, a permanent cold
I want to feel but I can't

Where do the turtles go?



Tom De Haven

Not Quite Night

Lovely. The stillborn ideas of idiots. Of everything wonderful. The baby corn in fields – ever growing, ever young, ever pushing for space, crowding for attention. The baldness of reality, the pain the purity the sullied skin of growth the fall the autumn browning the palms cupping the salt crunching the medicine. The totem pole? The Grand Plan? Forget everything. Forget and laugh with the audience. Get over it. Crazy for fulfillment. Crazy for noon alone. Crazy to sleep to swallow to cum to finish to never stop to live it to capture it forever. The paradox. The brain the biology the unadulterated scorn and passion of conscious thought. The pure hell the blunted paradise where we wallow. Seeking, awakening, numbing.

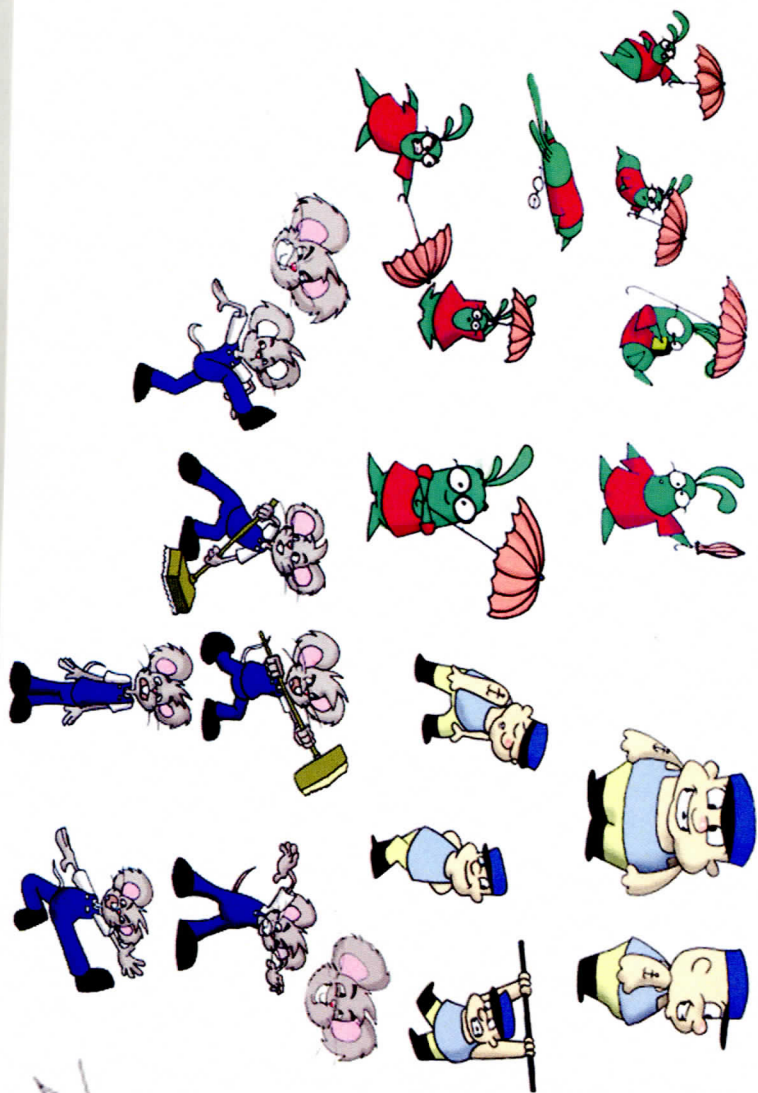
A vision. A secret. A call in the middle of the night. The song. The unifier. The dance. Thematic, exposed, carefree. Costumes. Customs. Play yourself as something else. Inspiration in sweat. In heat. In body-breaking beats. Simmer and touch. A balance of ideals and strained contrition. Reach the roots the edge the limits the outflow the pouring of neutrality. Homeostasis. Strength. Friends. The quickening hot sea of hot data.

Rumbles in the strata – in the fossilized liquidity. The bones of ancient, potted men. Lion's heads, stoned for centuries. Reconditioning the native, sucking the nitrates. Lie awake, listen to the sky outside roaring not quite night who cares unlock the door go upward rub the back of the maker. Feckless freckle-graphic links to the sky to the face of god to the artery of the universe to the very dexterity of it all.

Shout to the beach in the darkness – you can't tell the horizon from the whitecaps and something lives out there, down there in the alien world no oxygen no logic no sympathy no concern for inalienable rights or memory. The rarest commodity in the tree. No fruit, no fall, no open mouth, no juice. It is forgotten by itself. It pisses itself away. It celebrates itself by blacking out. It dons makeup to hide from its creator.

Lovely. The wind, the washing away, the thrashing, the flood that cleanses, the paradigm that shifts, the book that rots, the pygmy organism that feeds. The ash, the sunlight, the knife wound. The deity that ignores. The congregation that adores. The breeding dunes of shifting belief. The code of meaning the web of power the strand of escape. Lovely. The hole that sucks the heart that melts the temperature that cools the promise that solidifies and the story that ends at just the right time. Lovely. Just lovely.

Matthew Peipert



Handwritten signature



EMMA BENARD

Contributors

Anna Beck is a 2013 graduate of the Art Institute of Boston. She is Southern Illinois transplant to Boston, where she honed her illustration, printmaking, and book making skills. Her work is influenced by history, humor, and a never ending quest for knowledge and adventure. More of her work can be seen at annajobeck.com

Emma Benard, a first year Expressive Arts Therapy student, is from Vermont and came to Lesley because of the small classes, and the wonderful sense of community and support. She loves reading, helping others, and being outside in the sun and fresh air! She is a vegan, a hard worker, a believer... and many other things. She is constantly learning new things about herself and the world.

Travis Cataldo, a senior Animation major, has always been obsessed with cartoons and animation. He draws inspiration from those around him and the places that he visits, feeling that there's nothing more satisfying than sharing your life experiences with other people. Change is important in order to keep things fresh and new so he always seeks out opinions on his work. Attending the Art Institute of Boston has shown him just how important it is to collaborate and work with other people.

Matthew Peipert is a writer based in New York City. He is currently a graduate student in Lesley University's Intercultural Relations program. His work has been featured by Word Riot, 3:AM Magazine, Louffa Press, Beat the Dust, Spork Press, Real Talk Japan and Japanzine. Read more at www.lostinastate.com

Amanda Faith Shaffer received her M.F.A. in Creative Writing from Lesley University. She has had two plays short plays produced. At present, she's working on a short film and a short story collection. When she's not writing, she's riding her bike in streets of Providence, RI as often as the skies let her.