

**CABABI IS A TOHONO O'ODHAM TERM THAT MEANS
"HIDDEN SPRINGS"**



PimaCommunityCollege

POETRY
PROSE
VISUAL ART

CABABI

ART AND LITERARY MAGAZINE



ISSUE 9

2024/2025

About The Cover



While on a family hike to Lower Tanque Verde Falls, my daughters found a pool of water and climbed down the rocks to get a closer look. In this candid photograph, I tried to capture the fleeting magic of water in the desert and children's sense of wonder and discovery.

Jennifer Wiley

Canyon Pool
Photograph

SPECIAL THANKS

Dr. Kenneth Chavez and Dr. Dolores Duran-Cerda for funding and overseeing this project.

Susan Kuenzler for help with event planning.

April Burge for her expertise and guidance.

And Jacob Leyvas for working quickly and tirelessly to produce a publication that is also a smart and interesting work of art.

CELEBRATING THE MANY TALENTS
OF THE FACULTY AND STAFF OF
PIMA COMMUNITY COLLEGE

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PUBLICATION

Be in the 2025-2026 *Cababi Magazine*.
Look for Fall 2025 submission updates,
Cababi opportunities, and more art and
writing.

Visit <https://www.pima.edu/cababi> or
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Editor's Note

It's been an eventful year for me. In June 2024, I won the Quill Prose Award from Red Hen Press who, in the fall of 2026, will be publishing my memoir, *Nine Grudges: The Spiteful Origins of the Happiest Dyke on Earth*. This will be my first published book. Please, if you see me around, celebrate with me!

It's also been an eventful year for American colleges. Certainly, I don't want to engage in partisanship here, in my brief editor's note. I'll leave all of that to social media. What I will say is that I love the culture of caring we've built here at Pima Community College. I'm proud of the ways that Cababi fosters our college's warm, collective spirit.

I hope that you, the reader, will encounter the images and words of this year's issue as a bond with the natural world and the everyday people who surround you. I hope, in times of stress and instability, Cababi might offer you some brief flashes of beauty and insight.

When I read this year's issue, I feel like I am witnessing important moments of my coworker's lives, moments which would otherwise remain invisible to me. I feel connection. I am honored to share these images and words with you, Cababi readers.

—Molly McCloy



Barbara Carey

The Nook
Watercolor

Breaking Out of the Box I Have Made

(A Found Poem or Maybe a Cento)

by Cathy Thwing

I'm not much of a poet—
I want to actually write,
set a consistent writing habit.
How to distinguish poetry
from journal entries? Take my dreams
and turn them into stories.
The majority of my life
has been keeping myself hidden.
Put my mind onto paper,
more emotion, less words—
what I call popcorn thoughts.
Focus on my emotions
and use it as art.
I am still trying to learn
how to create better balance,
give myself permission
to write about anything I want,
create poems I can fall in love with.
Writing poetry on and off my whole life,
allow myself to step into writing boundaries
I never considered. I can now hear
some different voices when I write,
use words to recreate a place,
write poetry that is beautiful,
make my poetry delightful.
I am hoping poetry is a path
that I can walk. I want
to be taken seriously
as a writer. The important thing
is if I like my writing.
Amaze myself.

GOING OUT WITH A BIG **BANG**

by Sydney Harrison

I want to breathe in the dark, warm ink
that seeps between the stars.
I want to dive so deeply
into the celestial void
that the crushing pressure pushes
everything inside me
into the right places
and I finally make sense.

I would become a perfect constellation,
floating there gracefully,
gazing from a distance.
And without the weight of being in the world
holding me together,
I'd expand like the universe
until I fill the infinite container this is all in.
It would take an eternity,
but I'm not in a rush.

On the way,
I would absorb so much of the
color and heat and wonder
of our cosmos
that I could never be empty again.
I'd be known
by everything with a soul,
which is most things,
without having to say a word.

In this divine state,
I'd be easy to love.
I would finally feel beautiful
without a mind or a body
to tell me I'm not.



Barbara Carey

Blue Agave
Watercolor



Nina Gardner

Friendship Matters
Digital Photography



Nina Gardner

Hope Endures
Digital Photography

Midcentury Modern



by Christine Seliga

She uncovered the ghost baby
nestled in the bottom drawer
of the midcentury modern bureau
she bought from the thrift store.
She had rinsed off the corporate day
was about to tip into sleep
under a weighted blanket
when the mewling started
caroming through the loft
bouncing off brick walls
building to a caterwaul
which pierced her brain.
She sat up and thought: Vermin!
And with the bat she kept
under her bed for protection
she crept toward the noise
yanked open the drawer –
there among pushup bras and thongs
it lay snug, wearing a cloth diaper.
In the moonlight, she saw the faint divot
on its skull under a felt of black hair,
smelled the talc. She reached out –
her hand passed through it like steam.

There had been no sign of this at the store
where she ran her hands over
unblemished cherry veneers,
pulled the drawers in and out, in and out,
looking for the hitch (the price was lower than expected) –
brass pulls, rectangular,
solid like weights.

She had wanted the certainty of geometry,
wanted classic in the most modern sense.
She wanted provenance which is Latin
for baggage, which is old English
for dead weight.

She got a haunting
at times as easy to ignore as a cat
at times as insistent as a dog.
It wailed the most at gibbous moons
all she could do to settle it
was to sing lullabies
until she was hoarse and her head
throbbed. Even when it wasn't crying
she could hear its pudgy legs
pumping up and down in frustration
practicing for steps it would never take.
It babbled and burbled,
and sometimes there was a stink
from its diaper.

Her colleagues didn't understand
why she skipped into work on Mondays,
wrapped herself in email chains,
packed days with meetings, projects.
their drawers were IKEA affairs
with stray Allen wrenches.

The spectral baby cut into her social life.
There were never enough martinis, or old fashioned
To keep from hearing that baby when it started to cry.
She tried to convince whomever
she had brought home
From wherever she had gotten drunk
that the noise was from
the neighbor's apartment,
but whomever she had bought home
never bought it. His eyes
would fly open, and he'd start
hopping back into his jeans even
as he evacuated the premises.

She's seriously considering
getting rid of the bureau.

But she paid so much for it.



Casie Herron

Don't Close Your Eyes.
Relief print.

Mountain Cloud Talk

(to my mom with dementia, on the one-year anniversary of her death)

one of those singular Tucson mornings
a bowl of sun-etched mountains
a litany of turquoise sky, hard and soft
flat-bellied clouds, edges sun-fired
stamp the mountains with purple triangles
that look like hallelujahs
a ring of singing rock
cloud octaves

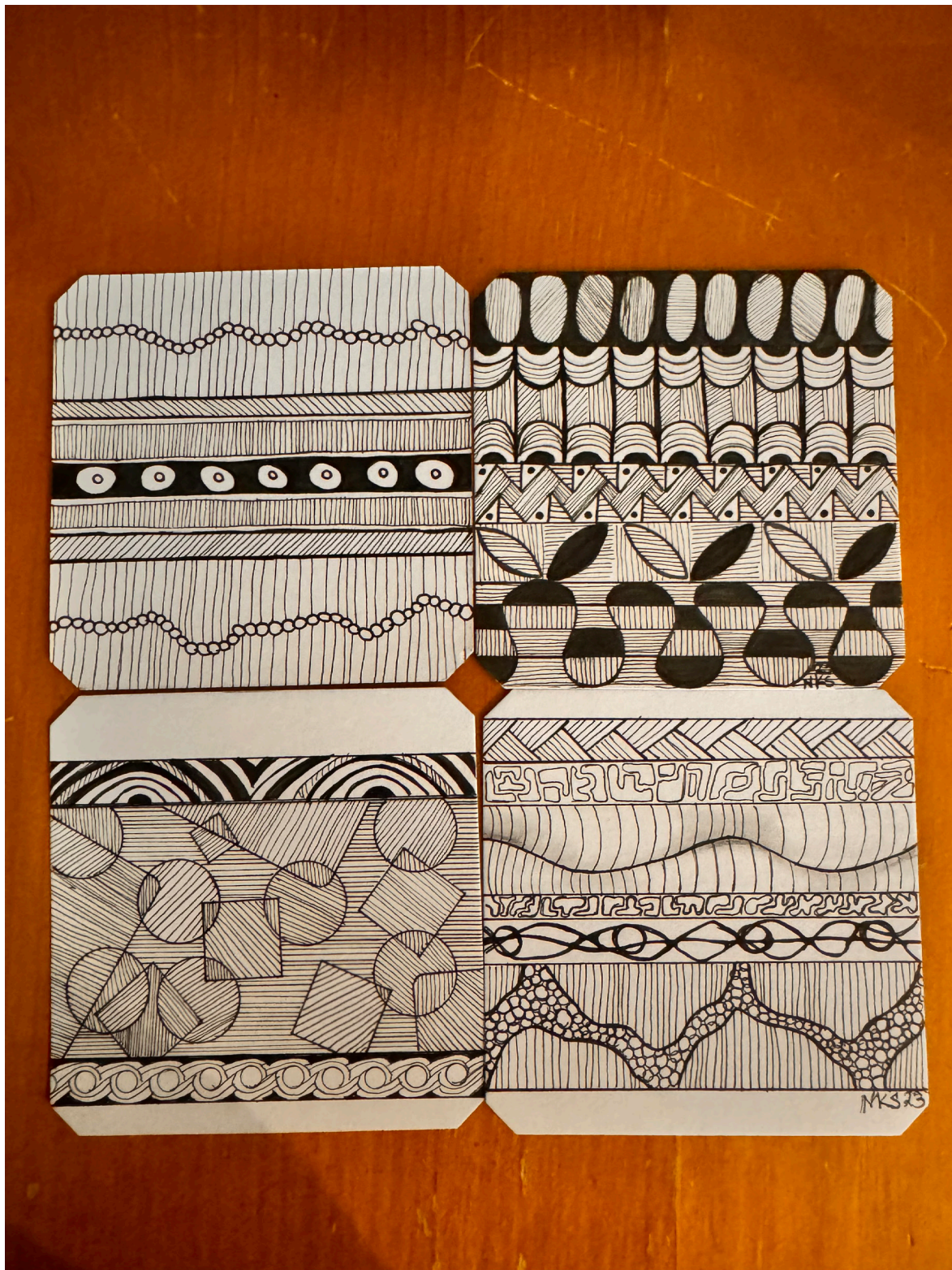
here, Mom, I want to tell you
this mesmerizing sky
these mouthy mountains
this irresistible back and forth
of shadow and fire
this mountain cloud talk

I want you to resurrect the language of paint
pick up the palette knife
trowel on the light
brush the dark
the way you did before
before every third or fifth word made sense
the rest gibberish—(flawn) or (gamish)
before you became afraid of shower water and lizards
and the shaggy heads of palms

when alive, you never painted this adopted desert home
now, I want you to fix these mountains
in sunset, a dictionary of magentas
I can hang on my wall to remind me of your words
when you no longer knew my name:
(You look like home.)

by Sandra Shattuck





Nadine Sotomayor

Order and chaos

Zentangles on paper tiles with Micron markers.



Nadine Sotomayor

B & W

Zentangles on paper tiles with Micron markers.

ACTUAL HAPPINESS ALWAYS LOOKS PRETTY
SQUALID IN COMPARISON WITH THE
OVERCOMPENSATION FOR MISERY.
AND, OF COURSE, STABILITY ISN'T NEARLY SO
SPECTACULAR
AS INSTABILITY. AND BEING
CONTENTED HAS NONE OF THE GLAMOUR OF A GOOD
FIGHT AGAINST MISFORTUNE, NONE
OF THE PICTURESQUENESS OF
A STRUGGLE WITH TEMPTATION
OR A FATAL OVERTHROW OF PASSION OR DOUBT.
HAPPINESS IS NEVER GRAND.
-ALDOUS HUXLEY

Casie Herron

Huxley
Letterpress.

ROOTS

by Sydney Harrison

I come from the sea mist
evaporating off the California sand,
leaving only little cuboid crystals of salt.

This is what I'm made of.

And women who became doctors instead of nurses.

I was incubated in that first major 7 chord,
tended to by the perfume that tumbled
off my mother's tinkling bracelets.
The words sung to me by my father's truck stereo, a lullaby:
Goodbye's too good a word, babe
So I'll just say fare thee well...

The oak saplings I rescued on my grandmother's farm are my sisters.
I don't remember what happened to them
after I stuck them in the egg cartons and black trays.
Maybe I replanted them near the house
or deeper into the forest.

I've been replanted many times.
My roots that were once comfortable in the red soil
now shrivel into me each time it rains.

I know I'm of women who don't shrivel,

except they do,

only far below the surface
of the Earth.

Isn't it weird to think of your parents growing up?



Amanda McPherson

Cascades
Photography

Artist's Note: Rogue River Prospect, OR,
iPhone 13

Artist's Note: This red spotted toad feasts on a swarm of false chinch bugs which briefly emerge in the millions after summer rains.

Photo taken on June 2, 2024 at Sabino Canyon Recreation Area - OM System OM-5, OM 12-45mm f4 PRO lens, 45mm, 1/1250, f/7.1, ISO 4000.



Michael Geiger

Toads Lick Back
Photography



Michael Geiger

Beeware the Jumping Cholla
Photography

Artist's Note: A brave bee dives head first into the world's most dangerous cactus.

Photo taken on May 8, 2024 at Pima West Campus. OM System OM-5, 40-150 f4 PRO lens, 54mm, 1/6400, f4, ISO4000.



Amanda McPherson

A Bug's Life

Photography

Cicindela on a Leaf Cornville, AZ
Iphone 13



Michael Geiger

Red Racer

Photography

Artist's Note: The coachwhip snake is commonly known as the Red Racer, not because of its speed and reddish color but because it will quickly make your hands bleed if you grab it for pictures.

Photo taken on May 29, 2024 at
Pima West Campus - OM System
OM-5, OM 12-45mm f4 PRO lens,
45mm, 1/800, f5, ISO 4000

Nokomis, Florida

by Wyatt Welch

the old house by a wilderness but it was
wild without the ordinary nature how it's mixed up
into where I can't bring myself

to hold the Florida of it now there's
desert beside me

desert I'm not in, can't recall it Myakka River
being here in Tucson,
a river's just as unlikely in my fragmentary
precision, though I wouldn't call
that a storm
off-shore, not rolling in
rainclouds
prayer
kept
away from me
at a safe distance. The mind kept me
elsewhere, seawind from incoming the gulf
to beyond and so many poor
gave in saw us step
into the welfare, would you forgive
the money, "not me," we'd say
holding sand dollars
to my ears
telling me that one's ocean, that one's broken.

I keep addressing the ocean in my poems,
drawn into it as a child by its amulet wildness
though land is made from a substance more human-like
it becomes ordinary, so less absorbing, when does my poem
tell you who I am? once we lived at the "Last Chance Motel,"
but it was actually a monthly duplex with a poison sumac sticking out of
it.

You can't fix my identity I'm negotiating
between poet now reader is imagined
to me being this young this isn't
a life-long dialogue you end up not being a good friend anyway
the *Complete Book of Magic & Witchcraft* I disinvoke
the simple, social abuses
friends become imagined
in a future
no one seems all
that concerned about I'm not talking to you,
a tourist, *a voice, squeezing orange juice*

I know this
is happening to me, You always
say that it's not,
"No shirt, no shoes, Nokomis."
You want this to wax on about the ocean
to describe seawater as if this were a dictionary
but I have to speak with a social worker, they might
remove me
what I mean is there are fewer words when there are
fewer things in nature
left to discuss.

Back there with my cousins,
near the 7-11 on Colonial Trail, we learnt
with each hand each could count to one hundred,
see how my hands hold up ten? see how hers go to 7?



Mike Rom

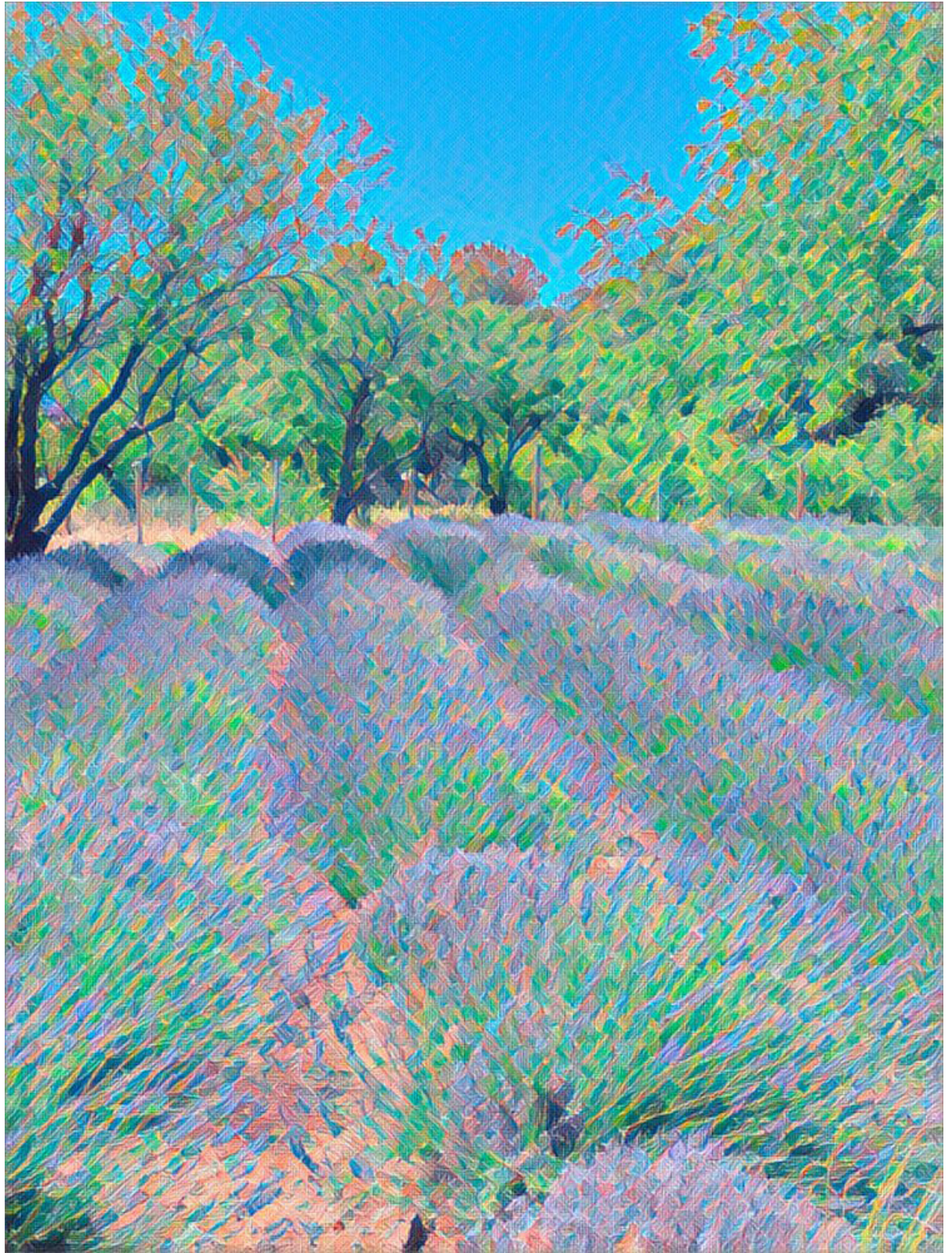
Devastation
Digitally Enhanced Photography



Kris Swank

Antique tractor and lavender field in bloom at Life Under The Oaks Lavender Farm, Oracle, AZ

Digital Photography



Kris Swank

**Lavender in bloom at Life Under The Oaks Lavender
Farm, Oracle, AZ**

Digital Photography
(edited in the Prisma app with the Trendy filter)



Michael Geiger

Sonoran Desert Tortoise
Photography

Artist Note: This gentle gem of the Sonoran Desert was found munching on Prickly Pear fruit.

Photo taken on September 22, 2024
on the Arizona Trail, halfway to
Manning Camp - OM System OM-5,
OM 12-45 f4 PRO lens, 12mm, 1/125,
f4.5, ISO 64

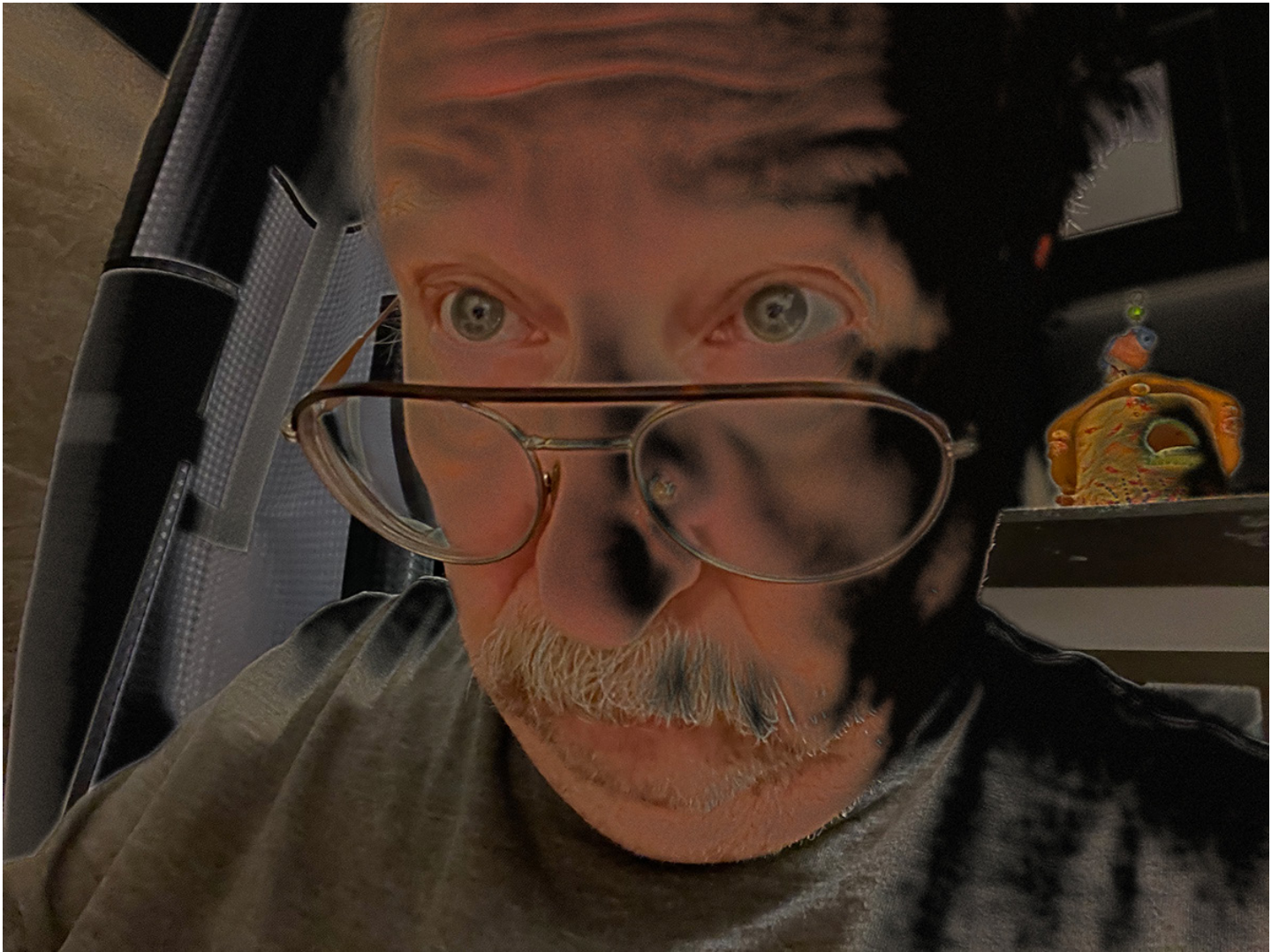


Mano Sotelo

**Prepared or Not, My Brother's Temple
is Soon Upon Us.**

oil on panel, 24 x 36 inches

Artist's Note : This painting was completed for an art therapy exercise called "The Odyssey of Overcoming," which utilizes mythology as a bridge between philosophy, psychology, and art.



Mike Rom

Mad Scientist
Digitally Enhanced Photography



Mike Rom

Sunset Fresco
Digitally Enhanced Photography

Haunted VHS

Chapter 1: Wrong

by Amira Elgazer

When winter rolls around in Cedarbrooke, you can feel it. Most of the time, unless you had one of those houses with the real fancy insulation, you could feel the cold seeping into your bones even when you were inside. Lawrence, manning the counter at Millenium Movies, was all but quaking as he busied himself by staring at the ceiling. He wondered why they even needed him working on airish nights such as that one—they barely got any customers on a good day, let alone on a night so cold it could knock you on your ass.

To interrupt his musing, the bells attached to the top of the door gave a soft tinkle. Lawrence looked up with half-attentiveness, but slouched back down when he saw who had just entered the shop. It was Veronica Lim. He only knew her name because she had announced it upon their first meeting as if it was a name he should've been familiar with. She kept repeating it as if doing so would make him suddenly recognize it, but as he only stared at her in response, she grinned a grin that was hiding incredulity.

"Sorry, it's just- my family is important. I thought you'd recognize my name."

"No, I'm sorry."

And Lawrence thought that was that. After he rang up her rentals for *Candyman* and *Re-Animator*, he thought that he would never see her again—given that she'd use the VHS dropoff chute located at the front of the store. Y'know, something that all five other Millenium customers did out of convenience. Strangely, though, the name-brand covered woman kept coming back, always with a plethora of eccentric and mostly annoying things to say. It wasn't all bad, though. Her chattiness at least masked the sound of the lights humming above his head.

Now, Lawrence was no man to ever judge what a woman was wearing, but he couldn't help but find himself

in awe of her outfit. There was no way a thin little suede jacket and mini skirt was keeping her warm. Her skin was even paler than usual! He averted his eyes the second her own moved towards him.

"It's so cold in Cedarbrooke," she finally said, squatting to get a better look at the bottom shelf of the horror section. Lawrence was certain that she had rented everything from their horror collection twice over.

He strummed his fingers against the counter for a beat, trying to rest his eyes on anything but her. "Why are you wearing that, then?"

"Because it's cute." She shrugged as if that was the most obvious conclusion in the world.

"Don't see why you're complaining then." There was a gruff finality in his voice that he didn't intend, but nonetheless, the woman poked up from her squat and pouted at him. She literally pouted at him with such intensity that he swore he could feel the pressure of her glare.

It was after one full loop Veronica took around the congested store that her petulance wore off enough for her to speak again.

"I guess the winters here just suck then, huh?" After he conceded a nod, she hummed, satisfied. "But the summers here are much better than the ones in Cali. I swear to God, one time I got sunburned just from walking to the bodega down the street."

Thoughts of summer flashed into Lawrence's mind and he had to restrain himself from physically shaking them away. "Y'ain't been here long enough. Give it a couple of years. The humidity'll make you run right back to Sacramento."

"Lawry, how many times do I have to tell you I'm from Palo Alto?"

"It's all the same shit to me."

"You sound like a country bumpkin."

"Maybe 'cause I am."

With an eye roll so fierce that it looked like her eyeballs were going to recede into their sockets, she once again returned to the counter. Veronica gazed up and shot Lawrence that soul-piercing, neutral stare that gave him the heebie jeebies.

"Do you have anything new to rent?"

Now she was asking the right questions, though he knew the answer immediately. "Nah. Nothing horror related, at least. Uhh...we just got a copy of *Open Season* if that suits your fancy, though."

Veronica gave him a befuddled look that told him everything he needed to know before she could even ask.

"Oh man, don't tell me you've never seen that movie before."

"I won't tell you, then."

"C'mon, it's that animated movie with the bear?"

As she continued staring blankly at him, he continued. "And the bear is all domesticated? Oh yeah, and there's a deer voiced by—what's his name—Ashton Ketchum?"

An implacable look crossed over the woman's face, but it was so brief that Lawrence reckoned he had just imagined it. "Deer voiced by...do you mean Ashton Kutcher?"

"Yeah, him!"

She shook her head. "My parents didn't let me watch animated movies growing up. They thought they'd rot my brain."

Lawrence wasn't so sure that the method her parents used worked considering the outfit she chose to wear on the coldest night of the year so far. "Well, ya' gotta fix that now. It ain't a good movie, but it's fun."

She looked like she was visibly uncomfortable by the very idea of watching the movie. "No, thank you."

He clicked his tongue. "Then I'm afraid you've wasted your time coming down here."

Veronica propped her cheek against her palm, looking halfway between bored and intrigued. "Am I not allowed to stop in when I'm on this side of town?"

Not when you don't talk about nothing important and keep me from closing up early, Lawrence thought, but was smart enough to refrain from vocalizing it. He had learned the hard way that if he said something too disagreeable to Veronica, something would come flying towards his head.

Instead, Lawrence simply raised his brows. "Surely

Veronica Lim has something better to do tonight."

"Maybe. And yet, I took time to see you! How lucky you are, Lawry."

Lucky was one way to describe it. He glanced at the clock. Close enough to closing that he could start shutting things down. If she wanted to talk his ear off with the lights going out 'round her, that was her prerogative. With an air of finality, Lawrence grabbed his heavy-ass keys from under the counter.

"Wait!" Veronica's voice had raised by at least 200 decibels and it startled Lawrence so bad that he nearly tumbled over. "Wait, before you close up. I do have another reason that I stopped by."

"Yeah?"

For the first time that Lawrence could recall, the woman didn't immediately respond. It caused him to perk up, if not momentarily, as he saw her clam up. The way the amber light caught behind her made her look ominous as it cast her face in heavy shadow. For a moment, Lawrence thought that this small woman was going to pull out a blunt object and bash him over the skull. Instead, she stood, twiddling her fingers, grasping for words.

"Listen, Lawrence, you know the wildlife around here can get dangerous, right?"

It was an affront to him that she'd even ask that. "Veronica, I grew up 'round here. Of course I know that."

She nodded quickly, as if it was news to her that he was an Appalachian to the core. There was no way she couldn't have known 'til that very moment.

"Right, of course. Well, there's been a lot of activity," Lawrence caught the way her eyes flicked to the side. "Lots of reports of aggressive bears recently."

"Ain't they asleep right now?"

"Normally, they would be hibernating, yeah." That was the word! It was on the tip of his tongue. "But they've been acting weird. Super weird. So I just wanted to check in and see if you needed me to walk with you tonight so you're not all alone out there."

At this, he couldn't help but bark out a laugh. Lawrence gestured at his body—all 300 pounds of it—and then at the woman he dwarfed. "All due respect, but there ain't much you could do for me even if a bear was fixin' to fight." A smirk found its way onto his face. "You asking me to walk you home?"

Veronica's face tightened with a conviction he wasn't accustomed to seeing on her, far departed from the played up indignance she usually performed. "No, no, I'll

be okay by myself. I just wanted to make sure, 'cause there's been a couple of sightings around here lately."

"If it's just bears, I'll be good. I'm too big to be considered prey, no?"

The woman scanned over him with her eyes.

"Well, yeah, you're a big dude, but I don't think you're immune to being attacked by a wild animal. They get desperate when they're hungry, you know." She shrugged and said, with a wink, "I'd feel bad if anything happened to the one person I love bothering the most."

Lawrence crossed his arms, unconvinced. "Are you sure you're not wanting me to walk you home? It'd be no trouble, long as you actually talk about something interesting on the way."

"There's no reason to be worried about me. I have bear mace." Despite him believing her, she went the extra mile to show him. It was in a sequined, pink case, because of course it was. After far too long of her holding it up to him, she finally put it back in her pocket. "Well, I'll let you close up, then. See ya' later, Lawry! You'd better have better movies next time. And look out for bears!"

He didn't even get the chance to say bye back.

After the tinkle of the bell attached to the door signaled he was alone again, Lawrence just stared out the windows and into the inky darkness that Veronica amalgamated into.

"The hell was her problem with *Open Season*?"

* * *

Stepping out of the VHS store after locking it up, Lawrence saw that thick purple clouds blanketed the sky, shrouding the full moon to only be a glimmer of silver through them. He laughed under his breath, sending a thick cloud of mist billowing out his mouth. It was undeniably creepy outside. Perfect weather for a rabid bear attack, if there ever was such a thing.

He began the trek back to his studio apartment wondering if Veronica was really gonna be okay on her own. His mama raised him to never insist on nothing, especially not with women, but this felt different. Letting a woman walk off on her own when she was obviously spooked was just poor manners. He'd have to let her have a free rental as an unspoken apology next time, even though he doubted there was a difference for her between \$2.35 and \$0.00.

His pondering took a backseat when he started to feel the air around him change. He cast his eyes up to see what was different this night from the hundreds of other

nights he walked home. There was the same dingy, yellowing street lights that casted uncanny, oblong shapes onto the wet pavement. The same streets whose only visitors were the slick, black puddles of water. These were familiar, if not melancholy, sights he was well used to. What was different? Lawrence realized it as he took the right onto Main. When walking home, it always felt like he was alone. And all of a sudden, he felt like he wasn't.

Upon turning around, there was nothing behind him. Or at least, nothing *right* behind him. At the very edge of his line of sight, there was a figure outlined against the darkness. While his heart initially caught in his chest at the sight of something else on the street (Sweet Jesus, were those bears *actually* a threat?), he let out a sigh when he realized what it was. It was on all fours, yes, but it was poised gracefully and standing still, staring back at him. It was only a deer. It may have been a little lost, but nothing was out of the ordinary. Animals wound up in weirder places in town daily.

"Get on home," Lawrence called out to the deer. "There's nothing for you here."

The animal only stared in response, unflinching.

Whatever, Lawrence figured. *Some deer don't spook easy*. The second he directed his attention away from his thoughts and back to the deer, it was slightly closer.

"Aht! Don't come any closer. I don't got any food." Frustrated at the animal tailing him, he elected to turn back around and pick up his stride, hoping that it would get the message and hop back into the brush from whence it came. He didn't have it in him to deal with no wildlife tonight.

In spite of his resoluteness, he continued to hear it walking behind him. Oddly, its stride sounded closer to that of a human's than a deer's, at least in his work-fried brain, but at that point, he didn't care if the goddamned thing reared up on its hind legs—he just wanted to get home.

...Maybe he did care if the goddamned thing reared up on its legs, actually. Because when he felt the thing get too close behind him a couple of moments later, he let out an aggravated groan and turned around, ready to shoo the thing away. Instead of one of God's creatures, though, he was met with an unholy beast who was standing upright on its bow legs, making it only a couple of inches shorter than him. Its eyes were not on the sides of its head—instead, they both were situated at the front. Complimenting its predator's gaze was the row of razor sharp teeth it was baring at him, its lips curled upwards to reveal its dark gums. The pattern on its dripping antlers reminded Lawrence of TV

static in liquid form. It even had something of a mane—black, wiry hair spilled down its back. It was all wrong, and the man was wracked with a thousand different signals from his brain. He didn't know whether to sock it, run as fast as he could, or piss himself.

He decided to do the second thing no sooner than it lunged at him. Thing was, it didn't get him too far. Five seconds in and he tumbled ass over head, and in the fashion of the movies both he and Veronica adored, he found himself on the ground and immobile. All he could do was stare at his own terrified reflection in its glassy eyes as it inched its way above him. Lawrence got a front row seat to witness its dripping mouth as it brought it down closer and closer to his neck.

Lawrence made peace with the fact that he was going to go out like the throwaway character at the beginning of a slasher—entirely caught off guard with no good chance of resistance. Funny how things turn out. He always thought he'd go out due to health complications in his 40s.

A sudden force came crashing into the monster on top of him, sending it quite literally flying. It only took a few seconds until the deer screamed a howling, empty scream, and came barrelling back to its new foe in a two-legged gallop. Lawrence managed to sit up in time to see Veronica—still in the same skimpy outfit as before—stanced up like she was about to take it on.

"Get out of the way," he hollered, but his voice didn't seem to reach her despite her only being feet away from him. No, instead, she grabbed this thing by the horns—her hands interacting with the antlers the same way a recently turned off CRT TV would when you placed your palms against it—and flipped it over her head, slamming it into the road. After a moment, it wobbled up onto its thin legs and hissed, flecks of static spit running down its chops and sizzling against the pavement.

"You're not going to win this fight, dude," Veronica said. The tone she used was surprisingly close to the one she'd use whenever she chided Lawrence. He frowned at this.

It just roared in response, standing its ground. The woman it dwarfed did the same. They both held eye contact in a way where Lawrence was unsure which was the prey and which was the predator.

Is she an MMA Fighter or something? He barely got the chance to muse to himself before the deer once again charged towards his unlikely hero. The small woman

connected a right hook with the side of its face. The force behind the punch would have made Lawrence jump up in awe had his leg not been twisted—the haint caught airtime from the hit and skidded to a stop several yards away.

The predatory deer seemed to be smart enough to realize that the fight was already decided. It stayed down for a few moments, catching its bearings, before it stood up on all fours. It hissed at Veronica one last time for good measure before bounding back into the brush. Only then did the woman turn around, albeit slowly. She still looked pristine—not a bit of her was out of place or messy. For a moment, Lawrence didn't doubt that she had gone super sleeper agent mode and was about to beat the living tar out of him too.

The glint of her amber eyes caught his. Making eye contact with him seemed to break her out of her stoic trance as she rushed to crouch down next to him.

"Oh my God, Lawrence, are you okay?" After quickly inspecting him, she flicked his forehead with indignance. "Didn't I tell you to be careful outside?"

He stared up at her, rubbing his forehead. "Y'sure did. But that wasn't no bear."

The End

**Artist's
Note:
Brown
crested
flycatcher
landing on
saguaro.**



Tineke Van Zandt

**Stick the landing
Photograph**



Javier Sergio Pedroza

Wildcat Country
Photography

Artist's Note: A bobcat strolled in front of my house as I sat on the balcony facing east toward the downtown Tucson skyline. Like many other residents around different areas of the city, it is not uncommon to see various wildlife on their property like mule deer, coyotes, javelina, rattlesnakes, scorpions, quail, hawks, desert cottontails, and owls, two of which perched side-by-side on the railing of my balcony one evening. We also saw a coatimundi on another property where we lived. The Sonoran Desert is a kaleidoscope of flora and fauna.

Kris Swank **Lavender field at sunset, Life Under The Oaks Lavender Farm, Oracle, AZ**
Digital Photography



Artist's Note: Edited in the Prisma app with the Aqua filter



Shawn Hellman
Clay

Sipping Cup

Artist's Note: This tea bowl or sipper cup features a forest green breaking glaze to show the carvings on the bottom half. The top half was dipped in purple haze which turns blue when put on top of forest green and the rim was dipped again in purple haze for the purple effect.

Kris Swank

Welcome Wagon at the entrance to Life
Under The Oaks
Lavender Farm, Oracle, AZ
Digital Photography



Glass

by Enrique R. Inocencio

Bright as the sun, or
Soft as the moon—

With tired eyes, we scry—

Influence and outrage
Information and confusion—

Light & sound dance
Nourish a weary heart—

Dissonance | Discordance | Division
Drink Drink Drink

O Lord, give us not our daily bread
Give unto us the glass, our sacred nepenthe

O blessed 'rithm,
Synthesize the music of our souls



Erik Strommer

Wise Cowboy
Pastel

Artist's Note: The "Wise Cowboy" portrait was from a man I met from Mescal Ranch, a western movie set outside of Tucson. The portrait is done in pastels. All work is created in natural sun light. Originals are no larger than eleven by seventeen inches.

Artist Bios

Barbara Carey has been teaching English as a Second or Other Language in Pima's Adult Basic Education for College and Careers program for the past 27 years. In her free time, she enjoys taking art classes and exploring her creative side.

Amira Elgazar works at the Pima Community College Downtown Campus as a Writing Specialist at the Learning Center. Writing has always been a significant part of her life, as her parents—both immigrants—often relied on her to write and translate for them. Her experiences as a first generation Asian-American person shape all her creative writing projects. Through her writing and even in conversations, she tries to enlighten others about the multifaceted sides of Asian culture instead of the stereotypical idea of it. She believes that the ability to use words to express herself is a transformative power that has helped her significantly in the past and continues to help her today. Along with this, Amira enjoys animation, video games, and pop culture, which also greatly influence a lot of her creative works. In her free time, Amira loves going outdoors (weather permitting), attending anime conventions, and occasionally spending lazy days at home.

Michael Geiger is a Program Advisor for the Arts, Performance & Design students at West Campus. He is a self taught illustrator and photographer who wholeheartedly believes that students pursuing artistic degrees are making the best decision ever, regardless of what the world may tell them. Michael is a lifelong lover of the outdoors who takes full advantage of the many walking trails across West Campus year round. He has been particularly fond of reptiles and amphibians since childhood after his dad would rescue snakes from construction sites to observe and release at home. He first picked up a camera during his time in the Peace Corps in Tanzania, East Africa and quickly grew obsessed with searching for cool

bugs and chameleons to photograph. Today, he enjoys photography through the hobbies of hiking and field herping, and will not rest until he finds every rattlesnake species in Arizona.

Sydney Harrison is a Makerspace Technician at Pima's East Campus Makerspace for half of their day and an AmeriCorps member serving at Tucson Village Farm for the rest. She is a life-long lover and writer of poetry looking forward to sharing her work with people who also appreciate a healthy dose of melancholy in their media. When they need a break from their tireless inner dialogue, Sydney enjoys hanging out with her cat Fig, playing electric bass, and going on walks with friends around Tucson.

Shawn Hellman is the department head in Writing for Desert Vista Campus, East Campus, and Santa Cruz County. When not working she can be found sipping tea, making pottery, hiking, or playing with her grandkids.

Casie Herron has been teaching ART 105 at West and Downtown Campuses for 14 years! Her interests include gardening, yoga, printmaking, painting and ceramics. These letterpress works focused on the theme of banned books, Foucault, Orwell, and Aldous Huxley.

Enrique R. Inocencio's friends and family will tell you that he is a bit of a dork, gallant, and super shy, too. As a writer of Mexican and Native American descent from Tucson, Arizona, Enrique enjoys sci-fi/fantasy and some modern literary works, Stephen King is his favorite, Dungeons & Dragons, select moments of schadenfreude, and gaming with his Discord family of nerds. Enrique is a new writing adjunction instructor at Pima Community College—Desert Vista. His script, *The Sweeper*, was a recent finalist for the Southern California Screenplay Competition

and Barnstorm Media's short list. Enrique is an MFA Creative Writing graduate from Northern Arizona University.

Amanda McPherson is the Director of the STEMAZing Project at Pima County Superintendent's Office. She holds a Master's Degree in Early Childhood Education, and she has been an Early Childhood Education Adjunct at Pima Community College for the last 13 years. Amanda has been facilitating a monthly STEMAZing Community of Practice through the United Way for the last 7 years. She has 23 years of teaching experience in the PreK classroom.

Nina Gardner is originally from Russia and moved to the United States twelve years ago. In spring 2019, she graduated from PCC with an AAS in Digital Arts & Graphic Design. Currently Nina is the Administrative Coordinator for PimaOnline Students Success Department at Distance Education, PCC Northwest campus. She is fluent in English, Spanish and Russian languages. Nina has traveled to different countries such as Colombia, Turkey, Brazil, Costa Rica, Spain, the South-African Republic and Hong-Kong. Her multicultural views enriched her personal artistic style that reflects in her creative photography. Her focus is abstract, close ups of nature, landscapes and portrait styles. Nina tries to convey a special meaning through each photograph that is reflected in its title. She tells the story behind each unique image that urges the observer to use their own imagination, possibly discovering something new and exciting for themselves. Nina has been passionate about photography since attending Pima Community College. Her photographs were published in the PCC Sandscript magazine, 2018-2019. Three of her photographs and a poem, also written by her, were published in the PCC Cababi magazine 2019-2020. Five of her photographs were then published again in the PCC Cababi 2020-2021 magazine. Nina displayed some of her photographs at the Golf Links Pima County Library in 2023. In 2024, Nina's photographs were featured at the Quincie-Douglas and Sahuarita Pima County Libraries as well. She continues to develop her skills as a photographer.

Dr. Javier Sergio Pedroza is an adjunct faculty in Pima's Business Department. Courses he teaches and has re-developed or co-developed include BUS125 e-Commerce, MGT110 Human Relations in Business & Industry, MGT200 Small Business Management/Entrepreneurship, MGT270 Computer Applications for Managers, and MKT111 Principles of Marketing.

Mike Rom (Instructional Media Services, Downtown Campus) has a BS in Film and Television production (not that kind of BS). He worked in the movie industry in Tucson for over eight years and did everything from art department to office PA to special effects explosives assistant. When he started working at Pima College in the AV Department, he expanded their offerings to video and computer graphics. He was also able to indulge his creative side through their Digital Art classes. He took sculpture and drawing classes and learned how to paint with acrylics. Mike started photographing flowers for his wife's paintings—she works in oils—and eventually framed his own work and put them into art shows at the Blue Raven Galley and Gifts. He sold his first piece in his first show and has done pretty well since. He shares a website with his wife at RomByDesign.com, to exhibit his art.

Christine Seliga is the Makerspace Librarian at East Campus.

Sandra Shattuck, English faculty at Downtown Campus, is the author of *The Electric Life of Lilah Browne*, a middle-grade novel about a girls' computer science club that she finished while on a sabbatical awarded by Pima Community College.

Mano Sotelo earned a B.F.A. from Otis Art Institute Parsons School of Design, Los Angeles CA M.F.A. Academy of Art University, San Francisco CA M.B.A. University of Phoenix, Tucson AZ U.S. Army Reserve / National Guard, Long Beach, CA & Yonkers, NY Mano's work has been exhibited at the Coutts Museum of Art, Alexandria Museum of Art, Tampa Museum of Art, Coos Art Museum, Haggin Museum, Brownsville Museum of Fine Art, Tucson Museum of

Art, University of Arizona Museum of Art, Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum, Tucson Desert Art Museum, Phoenix Art Museum, local and national juried and invitational shows, and a variety of Tucson galleries. His work has also been highlighted in competitions hosted by The Artist's Magazine, International Artist Magazine, and American Art Awards. Mano has over 23 years of higher education teaching experience and his artwork can be seen at www.sotelostudio.com.

Nadine Sotomayor serves as an Instructional Technology Assistant within the Faculty Services and Resource Centers at Pima Community College. My passion is driven by a love for helping others, and staying at the forefront of ever-evolving technologies. I thrive on connecting with individuals, supporting their growth, and ensuring they have the resources they need to succeed. Outside of my professional life, I am deeply connected to my family and dogs, cherishing the time we spend together. I also have a creative side that fuels my interest in tinkering with all forms of technology and art. Whether it's experimenting with digital art, exploring new tech innovations, or diving into hands-on projects, I find joy in the endless possibilities where technology and creativity meet.

Erik Strommer Adjunct Instructor: Graphic Design, Advertising & Adobe Creative Cloud software Teach at West Campus in Digital Arts, Design Concentration. Erik Strommer is an alumnus of the Art Center College of Design in Pasadena. He earned a B.F.A. in Advertising/Illustration. He also has a Masters in Adult Education from the University of Minnesota. His career spans advertising agencies New York City, Chicago, St. Louis and the Twin Cities. Highlights along this creative journey include; the first TV commercial using Michael Jordan, a Super Bowl commercial for Budweiser, and launching Aspen men's cologne. Erik has twenty-years of ad agency Art Director experience. He also completed a Digital Marketing Certificate from University of St. Thomas and has a master's in Adult Education from the University of Minnesota. Working for national Advertising Agencies, he was responsible for the

generation of creative marketing ideas. This was utilized in promoting brands and products for the following corporate accounts: Kmart, Anderson Windows, Dominos, Pfizer, Century-21 Real Estate International, 3MCorporate, Scotchgard, Fridgidaire, Texaco, Toro, Pfizer, General Mills/Cinnamon Toast Crunch, Hormel, Anhauser Bush, Budweiser/Natural Light, Southwestern Bell Telephone, Chi-Chi's Restaurants, Ozark Airlines, Con Agra Armour Dinner Classics, Dance of St. Louis, and Businesses/Super Bowl 1992. He came to Pima from IPR (Institute of Production & recording) Minneapolis. Past work includes Globe University and the Art Institute of Tucson both as Program Chairs. He's also taught over six years in the Visual Communications Department at Brown College as an Assistant Professor. Currently developing art for Western Art audience.

Kris Swank is a Librarian at PCC's Northwest Campus. By the time this is published (finger's crossed), she will hold a PhD in English Literature from the University of Glasgow. Her father was a professional photographer and she takes pictures now and then in his honor.

Cathy Thwing, part-time writing instructor with PimaOnline, is one of PCC's first online educators, having pioneered online WRT 101 and 102 for Community Campus back in 1997. She's found that, despite developments in technology, the essence of effecting online teaching remains the same: connect, engage, support. Teaching writing and writing poetry go hand-in-hand: each requires attention to detail, presence, and openness to gratitude and awe. You can find some of her recent poems in Blue Heron Review, Meniscus, the Orchards Poetry Review, and Whitefish Review. Gardening, practicing cello, and swinging in hammocks fill her life's other nooks and crannies.

Tineke Van Zandt is full-time faculty in Anthropology and Archaeology at the West Campus. She enjoys spending time outside and is an avid birdwatcher. Birds are challenging subjects for photography, but when the picture turns out and isn't just a blur of wings leaving the frame, the results can be very satisfying!

Wyatt Welch, Adjunct Instructor, Downtown Campus, Originally from Florida, Wyatt Welch has lived in Tucson for the last 17 years. Welch teaches English as a Second Language at Pima's Downtown Campus and has two wonderful dogs. Welch's debut book of poetry "Capitalism Calls Poetry Lazy" was released in 2022 by FlowerSong Press.

Jennifer Wiley teaches literature, writing, and humanities classes at West Campus. She enjoys hiking, gardening, reading, and spending time with her family and many pets.

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ART AND LITERARY MAGAZINE

