

*Push through the fog of winter! Charles Bane, Jr., Gloria g. Murray,
Sonnet Mondal, Phil Juliano, and The Dream Journal*

The Blotter

February 2016

MAGAZINE



THE SOUTH'S UNIQUE, FREE, INTERNATIONAL LITERATURE AND ARTS MAGAZINE
visit www.blotterrag.com

Follow me on
twitter

Like Us On
Facebook

G. M. SomersEditor-in-Chief
 Martin K. Smith.....Publisher-at-Large,
 Treasurer
 Marilyn Fontenot.....Director of
 Development
 Laine Cunningham.....Publishing
 Consultant
 Brace Boone III.....Marketing Advisor
 Richard Hess.....Programs Director
 T.J. Garrett.....Staff Photographer

Subscriptions Contact:

Martin K. Smith
 M_K_Smith@yahoo.com
 919.286.7760

Advertisers Contact:

Martin K. Smith
 M_K_Smith@yahoo.com
 919.286.7760

Submissions and Editorial Business to:

Jenny Haniver
 mermaid@blotterrag.com

Garrison Somers, Editor-in-Chief
 chief@blotterrag.com

919.933.4720 (business hours only! you
 may call for information about snail-mail
 submissions)

Marketing & Public Relations Contact:

Marilyn Fontenot
 marilyngfontenot@gmail.com
 919.904.7442

COVER: "Nothing Happened" from our
 archives.

Unless otherwise noted, all content copyright
 2016 by the artist, not the magazine.

The Blotter is a production of

The Blotter Magazine, Inc.,
 Durham, NC.

A 501 (c)3 non-profit

ISSN 1549-0351

www.blotterrag.com

[clmp]

Council of Literary Magazines & Presses
 w w w . c l m p . o r g

"Notes on the neighborhood"

Here at the new home (we've been here over a year, but I'm always reticent when it comes to new situations) I have taken over what would be the dining room in a normal family. My computer is sitting on one corner - I'm left handed so all of the things I am working on are stacked to the right. The new Little Book. The next issue of The Corner Bar Magazine. My sketching journal - the last class was Drapes (I did poorly) and the next class is Still Life With Drapes and I expect to do much, much worse - sits on the far corner, needing to be opened and attended to more regularly. Practice, if it doesn't make perfect, makes better. In my case, only the tiniest bit better.

It is a big table, and cluttered with stuff that hasn't the least thing to do with my work. A matte from a frame store which didn't get thrown out when the frame was used (it houses a photo of the girls that they hate but I love. So it goes...) A stick of Uhu glue, from when the girls were little and used it with abandon to stick things temporarily together, as we all did. I was an Elmer's child myself and an eater of library paste, even after it was explained to me (however true or legendary) that glue was made from cow hooves. I sneered at that in the same way I did when I was told (by other purveyors of fiction in my growing-up neighborhood) that chewing gum was made from the inner bark of trees. And sour-grass was sour because people poured lemon-juice out their kitchen windows.

Speaking of windows, there is a large window that looks out from my workspace onto the front porch and down to the suburban street. Across the way is Lawnmower Man's house. Above his house the clouds are carefully sliding in, like an old man trying to score from second on a single. They make up for the anticipated turn in the weather by being playful with the afternoon light, picking up shades of yellow and gray and putting them back down again as it suits them. I foolishly didn't take advantage of today's sunshine. I should know better. I suffer (that's not the right word - it's more like I endure) some variant of seasonal disorder as the daylight shrinks. It begins in November as a frown and advances into December as general lassitude with a generous side of grumpy. In the old house I countered this with "daylight" fluorescent light bulbs in the kitchen. No such feature exists here - we have a somewhat green house with very efficient lighting that leaves me squinting at words on paper or wandering closer to lamps to get clarification. It is often gloomy inside.

I might have taken a walk around the neighborhood. Instead I was here, at the keyboard, or reading, or listening to the television play music. I like this feature of modernity - audio channels on TV. Right now, for example, a selection (I don't care which) of Sir Edward Elgar. Violins, peaceful. A walk, however is good both for me and for the neighborhood. I like meandering along the side-streets, looking at the porches, what the fami-

lies have collected there that make the opening to their house look like...their house. Rocking chairs, mostly. I wonder how many folks take the time to come out and rock in them. I suspect not many. For the most part, we are a busy, cluttered culture, and we see sitting in rocking chairs as wasting time. Too bad, though. Rocking in a chair is good therapy, it joggles your brain loose from its urgent need to check on those aspects of our life that demand regular attention. Our phones, social media, the news. Things from which only the occasional good does come.

At the top of the street is a park with swings. This is a good place to sit for a few moments - not as rest but for the goodness that results from just sitting under trees, under the sun, under the blue sky. There are neighborhood noises all about. The dogs - ensconced within their fenced yards or leaning out bedroom windows - bark to one another in code, developing their canine friendships and checking up on the status of squirrels, cats and cardinals. Although I rarely see cats wandering about, not at all like back at the old house, where they must make their way through the raccoons and occasional coyote. If there were more cats here, there would be fewer squirrels, I suppose. Still, it's a dog's world, here in suburbia. Dogs make good company, if you like company. I'm not much of an entertainer, so I would be troubled by and trouble for a dog. Need to go out? Are you sure? Dogs don't do well with such lines of questioning. Cats, on the other hand, make good family - their demands are consistent, rather than insistent.

Farther along, the powers of commerce have pulled up, plowed down and carted away four or five acres of piney woods. The next plot of development is going in here. You can - well, someone can - put in a lot of houses in four or five acres of land. They've taken the trees out for lumber, the stumps for wood-chip scrap. The top inches of dirt will be fill. They'll replace some of the dirt as topsoil after the new homes are in place - it won't be anything like enough to have a good garden or luxurious lawn, but that's how things roll. Each home will have one replanted tree selected from a catalog of permissible varieties. No swamp maples or weeping willows - their roots damage water pipes. No mimosas - too trashy with their pretty flowers and seed-pods. In the suburbs, your neighbors' opinion is as important as yours. I get it, I suppose, but I'll sure miss the sound of the wind blowing in the morning through the little patch of piney woods.

Garry - chief@blotterrag.com

We often use Bobco fonts, copyrighted shareware from the Church of the Subgenius.

Prabob. We also use Mary Jane Antique and other freeware fonts from Apostrophic Labs and other fonts from other sources.



in the Great State of Georgia!



The Blotter Magazine, Inc. (again, a 501(c)3 non-profit) is an education concern. Our primary interest is the furthering of creative writing and fine arts, with the magazine being a means to that end. We publish in the first half of each month and enjoy a free circulation throughout the Southeast and some other places, too. Submissions are always welcome, as are ad inquiries.

Subscriptions are offered as a premium for a donation of \$25 or more. Send check or money order, name and address to The Blotter Subscriptions, 1010 Hale Street, Durham, NC 27705. Back issues are also available, 5 for \$5. Inquire re. same by e-mail: chief@blotterrag.com.



CAUTION

*I think Mother Nature and God
are married.*

Excerpt from "The Ascent Of Feminist Poetry"

by Charles Bane, Jr.

"And she laughed secretly, saying: After I am grown old, and my lord is an old man, shall I give myself to pleasure?"
Genesis 18: 12

Not long ago, noted literary scholar Harold Bloom read the passage above and realized it could not have been written by a man. Bloom, sensitive as a tuning fork, recognized the writer's wry mockery of the eternal male belief in his prowess. In November, 1991, Bloom published *The Book Of J*, called his finest book by the New York Times, and in which he identifies one of the key authors of the Hebrew Bible, "J" (for her reference to her Creator as "Jehovah" or "Yahweh") as a woman. We cannot know J or her times but we can marvel at the special place of women to the Hebrew sages who wrote in the Talmud that "God counts the tears of women." It is the argument of this short work that feminist poets have not merely exploded the traditional male, all

white Western Canon but are creating a golden age of new verse that is being ignored, sometimes willfully, but more fully because Americans no longer read contemporary poetry. We are literally lost without it, because the ancient Greeks recognized that poets serve as our historians, and secular prophets.

There are many reasons for poetry's collapse: children are required in the classroom to read poets who do not speak in their voice, or to their times. This is tragic because there are serious, working poets in virtually every community or nearby who would gladly visit and beckon them to poetry's recesses.

The corporate power supporting wealth inequality decimates legions. Only Farrar, Straus And Giroux among major publishing houses remains interested in poets. And the large-scale publishing firms that produce popular fiction and nonfiction are themselves part of media con-

glomerates that advertise their authors, and against which small presses can't compete. The fastest way to have a query ignored by a literary agent is to write in the subject line "My book of poetry."

Finally, academic poets are a separate class who continue a tradition of believing the general reader will not understand their work ("Yeats", T.S. Eliot remarked in an interview with the *Paris Review*, "that *Gaelic* writer). After E.E. Cummings' death, his wife, Marion wrote a friend, "Academics hated my husband because he only wrote short poems, but above all, because he was popular."

But poets, working as cashiers or waitresses, or juggling multiple jobs as they pursue a Master's degree, still write, even knowing that the indifference of the public overspreads them like winter cover, and, unlike J, whose radical gift was harnessed to a narrative, gaze up and long to be pleased by the cosmos:

"Stargazing" by Ariana Nadia Nash
The stars are all the skin
I'll never touch. They are
the bright points of years

20% off
Your first haircut
at the new salon
with selected stylists



ALTERED
image
Hair Designers

Appointments: 919-286-3732
600 Foster Street, Durham, NC 27701
www.AlteredImageDurham.com

NEW LOCATION!!

FROM CREATION TO CONTRACT



Ghostwritten/rewritten
over 200 projects

Editor and publishing consultant with twenty years of experience helps you capture attention from top publishers and agents. Queries, proposals, developmental help and more for fiction and nonfiction.

Laine Cunningham
WRITER'S RESOURCE

Toll-free 866-212-9805
writersresource.us

CLIFF'S MEAT MARKET

QUALITY MEATS
Beef · Poultry · Pork · Lamb
Sausage · Seafood

If we don't have it, we'll order it for you!



We carry beer & wine

Mon-Sat 9 am—6 pm
919 942 2196
100 W. Main Street, Carrboro

Serving Carrboro and surrounding communities for over 35 years

I have not lived, the names
I do not know. They speak
to worlds inside myself
I will not learn. They shock —
this spread of stars, these motes
of fireballs, this milky
conflagration. In their depth
and beauty, they are
the most intricate map
of the unknown, the most
wild moan of silence.

When a recent CNN poll noted that
only 7% of Americans had read a
poem in the last year, a new intro-
duction, using all the language of
polish on my shelf, is where I look
for remedy. I do not want feminist
poets whose gifts are dominating
contemporary letters,
to be spirits, flickering near us
unseen:

Vastness of dusk-after a day.
what is a person? Too late
to ask this now. The court has ruled
a corporation is a person.
Persons used to be called souls.
On the avenue, a lucky person
stands in a convenience store
scratching powder from his ticket —
-

silver flecks fall from his thumbs
to galaxies below.

Brenda Hillman

Poetry begins, and I'm writing from
personal experience, in the uncon-
scious and those who are chosen ran-
domly to write it begin their craft in
childhood. " 'Dragoon' ", Dylan
Thomas said to his sister as small
boy, "isn't that a wonderful word?"
Sylvia Plath was published at eight.
Susan Sontag self published her
poems at nine ("I got through my
childhood in a delirium of literary
exaltations."). At fourteen, Edna St
Vincent Millay wrote: "in the hush
of the dying day, / The mossy walls
and ivy towers of the land of
Romance lay. / The breath of dying
lilies haunted the twilight air / And
the sob of a
dreaming violin filled the silence
everywhere."

I believe the unconscious - which we
know from dreams does not record
time - stores a culture's collective
memory of its art. This explains the
impetus and inexplicable confidence
every poet feels as they write. There's
more: when a poem is finished, its

writer - and this is a common experi-
ence - often feels they are not its cre-
ator. The poet reads a superior art-
work but feels no part of it, though
he/she may have wept through its
setting down, so deep were the feel-
ings stirred.

Without doubt, women felt this
impulse and longed to "wrestle with
the polis" (a critic's compliment of
Brenda Hillman's work) throughout
the worst of times. "Whenever you
read anonymous at the end of a
poem", said Virginia Woolf, "it is a
woman."

Feminist poets have not only over-
come the suppression of traditional
Western literature, they are adding
new discoveries to its foundation
stones. In the 1970's, "Songs Of The
Troubadours" appeared in print,

**Friendship, loyalty, nostalgia; and the joy
and healing power of music...**

A Southern college town and its thriving local music scene,
where the music's neither "sacred" nor "profane" so long as it's
good...

A lost tape of a beloved band's legendary show...

A record label, poised to break big, which certain people want
to be part of - by any means necessary...

Two visitors, whose own music has been muted by regrets over
long-ago bad decisions: Chuck McDonough, former grad student,
who skipped town after learning things about himself he couldn't
face; and Penny Froward, whose attempt to help a friend in
danger almost destroyed another woman's life...

A mysterious will by an unknown hand; and murder...

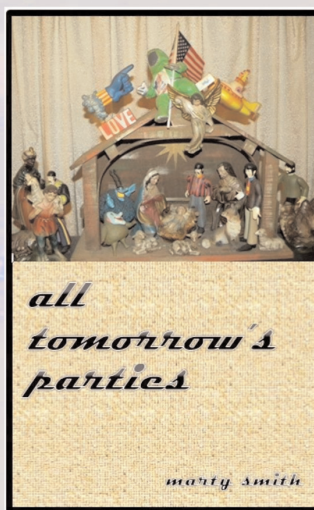
Blotter Books presents:

All Tomorrow's Parties

by Marty Smith

(publisher & book reviewer, "The Blotter Magazine;" contributor to the "Urban
Hiker;" former host of "New Frontiers" and "Laugh Tracks" on WXDU - FM,
Duke University Radio)

Available in print or e-reader at www.wileequixote.com



The Blotter

translated from Provencal by Anthony Bonner. The work of the jongleurs had first come to the notice of Ezra Pound, the champion of all that is worthwhile in literature. Pound was astonished by the modernity of the poems which would not be equaled until the appearance of Yeats.

And there scholarship might have ended were it not for Matilda Bruckner's seminal "Songs Of The Women Troubadours", published in 2000 (Garland Library Of Medieval Literature), followed in 2013 by Meg Bogin's "The Women Troubadours" (Norton Paperback).

But for the male lot: critics, academic advisors and peers who wish to smother feminism as it's expressed in poetry, the way is closed:

We Never Remember The Last Argument | Sarah Bartlet

The smell of your mom's dress is closed.
A magnolia's heavy unlatched tongue is closed.
The bitter scratch at the back of your throat is closed.
Your childhood's rebuttal is closed.
The road holding up an arc of trees and their strange covenant is closed.
Disappearing on schedule is closed.
A field of rabbits spreading their fur around is closed.
I am easing myself daily closer to the ground is closed.
I am easy on paycheck night is closed.
Lying next to you in a box of bourbon-soaked cherries is closed.
I am almost the same taste and timbre as the empty field is closed.
Our eyes staying closed in proximity is closed.

www.blotterrag.com

Telling me this child isn't my child is closed.
Telling him he belongs where belonging means absence is closed.
When you try to identify the poison it is closed.
The ravine raising its mouth up to the sky and swallowing the last horse is closed.
A review of the maximum leverage available here is closed.
My hands asking to release this fistful of air is closed.
Try and make another decision without me and you'll see what I mean is closed.
Reporting back on a dream's dialogue with awakening is closed.
I want to get on an airplane for the last time is closed.
I want to never come back here except to you is closed.
Crows dropping chestnuts and letting us crack them is closed.
Fists of flowers punching through the dirt no matter what the air says is closed.
You plus I plus you plus I plus you plus you plus constant fucking is closed.
Like a tail in the door being able to take it all back is closed.
The olden days where ships hefted the seas apart like god is closed.
Access to regret too pristine to share leaving its knife out is closed.
An element of surprise is closed.
Ask yourself where your blood is and say it's right here is closed.
Your grandmother's curtains refusing to move for a casual breeze is closed.
My great-grandmother swallowing her death down is closed.
Taking the land for ourselves is closed.
Erasing an entire year of a bed nailed to the floor is closed.
Making you the bed is closed.
Making you an object of forgiveness

or sparkling teeth is closed.
Making this unremarkable is closed.
Narrative that reflects absolute truth is closed.
Believing in truth as fact under trees at night after a fire takes the stars away is closed.
The scissors we use to make snowflakes stay sharp is closed.
Another year of windows softening our gaze is closed.
Holding my breath under water to panic the heart is closed.
Tell me one last time please is closed.
Our mouths together dredging words thick as oil is closed.
The hatch over the mouse in your chest is closed.
Being small in the arms of myself is closed.
Holding on to a rock with a child holding on to me in a running tide is closed.
Looking for mistakes like feet look for glass is closed.
Body as fist as ship as celestial navigation is closed.
Brick by brick this hole in the side of our house is closed.
Won't you wait somewhere just out of sight while I do this is closed.
Which of us was left holding the bag is closed.
Believing it's possible to run the clock out is closed.
Please oh please oh please oh please oh god is closed. ❖

CREATIVE METALSMITHS

Kim Maitland

117 E. Franklin St., Chapel Hill

919-967-2037

www.creativemetalsmiths.com

Weekdays 11 - 6 * Saturdays 10 - 5 * Sundays 12 - 5

"Our questions for the editor of The Annotated Alice on the 150th anniversary of the publication of Alice's Adventures in Wonderland."

All hail the scholar who takes ownership of annotating a classic. Why? Because what they do is hard work. It's not thankless, but we often lack the skill to know what a task they've given themselves. Is it everything ever known about the subject? No, that's a "Compleat...". Is it everything we need to know? Yep, or at least, we hope so. We'll never know unless we dive in, and it has to be an attractive volume (it is!) and we need time and patience and good coffee and sandwiches from *Dean and Deluca* and the kids have to go outside to play until, say, February.

And then we do dive in. Why? Because if we can't be scholars, we can be fans. We peruse, one of those absurd words in English that means what it does and exactly the opposite of what it does (how that must have pleased Lewis Carroll) and we talk about it with our friends and promise to lend the book to them when

we are done, but we are never done. They'll have to get their own copy, or wait for an important birthday, like their own or Carroll's or maybe the Queen's.

Mark Burstein is the president emeritus of the Lewis Carroll Society of North America and was gracious enough to answer some questions for us, which demonstrated rather succinctly that we are not serious reviewers but still like good things when we see them, especially in print, and we also like big roundish numbers like 150. Mr. Burstein was fun to type to, and to receive typing from.

Note: I am nowhere near clever enough to have put these questions together on my own. My younger sister, who has loved *Alice* since she was little (probably around the age of the young Miss Liddell) posed some of them for me, and I bounced

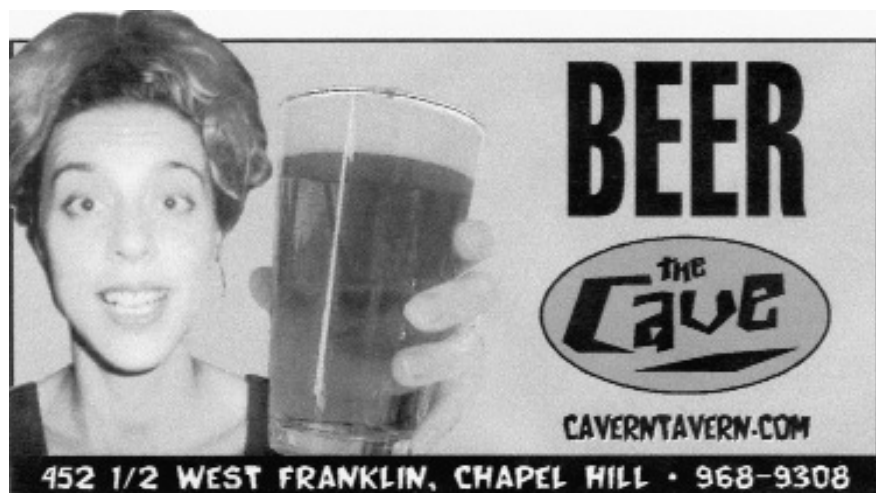
a couple of ideas off my good friend, aka Sir *John In Florida*.

Editor: We'd like to pick your brain - as the "SME" (subject matter expert) of all things *Alice*. We have a perception - it seems a modern one - that there are "levels" of reading intended for us as we grow from youngsters to teens to adults. *Alice* is (or is it not?) a child's fairy tale, but also arguably fantasy/science fiction, intended for older readers. How do you characterize it and why?

Mark Burstein: I like to point out that the average age of the people in the boat that famous day the tale was first told was close to eighteen, all of whom needed to be amused. *Alice* herself was ten at that time, but Carroll set her avatar in the book as exactly seven (her birthday, in fact). It was never intended for young children; Carroll wrote an abridged version called *The Nursery Alice* in 1890 for them.

I would avoid the term "science fiction," but "fantasy" is fine. The books and their author were ghettoized for a century as belonging exclusively to children, and it was Martin Gardner's *Annotated Alice* that turned the tide in 1960. From not even being listed in the first two editions of *Victorian Fiction: A Guide to Research*, it has become an academic industry, eclipsing many of the most revered Victorian authors, and constantly generating a cornucopia of interpretations, elucidations, and theories.

Yes, it can be read (and reread) on so many levels. It's the most quoted novel in existence, on a par with only Shakespeare and the Bible. Philosophers, political commenta-



The Blotter

tors, students, professors, and just about anyone can find something profoundly true (and often simultaneously very funny) in its pages.

Ed: What was it about the *Alice* stories that first grabbed your attention? How old were you? Which of the Carroll characters is your favorite and why?

M.B.: Their depth, humor, and how fine of a description of the actual world we live in they are. We're taught in school that if you are intelligent, work hard, are dedicated to selfless public service, you might grow up to be president. Take a good look at the present crop of candidates; I ask you: does this conform to what we were told in school, or

have we fallen down a rabbit-hole?

I probably got my first "hit" of what they mean when *The Annotated* came out in 1960. I was ten, and my father, an Alice fanatic as well, brought home one of the first copies. It's always been a bit of a bible to Carrollians. Another huge influence was the Cyril Ritchard complete recordings. It's wonderful to have them read aloud, and when I was at U. C. Santa Cruz in the late Sixties studying, shall we say, amateur psychopharmacology, they made perfect companions on one's travels. 'Nuf said? From there I wrote several papers on it (particularly in relation to Zen Buddhism), and integrated it into my senior thesis. Collecting came just a bit later.

I have always identified with the White Rabbit. He's the Hermes figure, the one who initiates her and introduces her to Wonderland. He also serves as the "Herald" at the Trial. He gets a bit of a bad rap; everyone thinks he's late, but in fact he was just *worried* about being on time, and the only character we know was late was the Duchess.

Ed.: We also think - we hope we are not alone in this - that certain iconic literature must be introduced to

readers of a particular age (ahem.. the age of the reader, not the age the reader dwells within, as in *Bronze or Space*) and in a particular order, and that one should - must - read the book before seeing any of the films/cartoons made from that work. Our feeling is that if one waits too long to read *Moby Dick*, or *The Catcher in the Rye*, one loses the directed point of the author and the story's effect is spoiled somewhat. Certainly one must read *The Hobbit* and *Lord of the Rings* before high school (and certainly before seeing the movies!) What thinkest thou? Agree? Disagree? And what about attending to classics before modern pieces? For example, shouldn't young people know about *Alice* and *Gulliver's Travels* before Harry Potter and (Neil) Gaiman's *Coraline*? Or is this just wishful thinking on the part of an old editor?

M.B.: I just went through this with deciding when to read *Wonderland* to my daughter, Sonja. It's certainly ideal to have it read to you around eight or nine, but on the other hand, my friend Adriana Peliano, who founded the Lewis Carroll Society of Brazil and has done several books about Alice, first found her through that Hanna-Barbera abomination

Unorthod+c

Finally...Primary Care Built for YOU

Cory Annis, MD
Phone (919) 914-9611 Fax (866) 784-0473
www.unorthodoc.com

SENSIBLE
SUSTAINABLE

FLEXIBLE
AFFORDABLE



JOHN HERRING

Full Service Copyediting / Proofreading
Developmental Editing

johnherring.net/editorial
jhherring@yahoo.com
954.971.5785

Novels / Nonfiction / Dissertations
Theses / Essays / Articles / Web Sites

I wouldn't say one needs to read the canon in chronological order. Master Potter does just fine with *Pooh* or *The Hitchhiker's Guide* in whatever order they happen to be read (mostly to do with the age of the reader or read-to-ee). And we have a rule in our family: the book must be read before the movie is seen. Where possible.

Ed.: What is your opinion about the *Alice* movies which have been produced over the years? Which is your favorite/least favorite and why? How about one sentence on your thoughts on Johnny Depp's "Mad Hatter?"

M.B.: *The Annotated* lists 14 feature films beginning in 1903 and 42 other adaptations (animations, made for TV movies, mini-series, direct to DVD, etc.). Many have a redeeming quality or two, but the only ones I find watchable are Jonathan Miller's 1966 BBC teleplay with Sir John Gielgud, Peter Sellers, Peter Cook, etc., and Dennis Potter's *Dreamchild*, which is not actually an adaptation. I could give you some choice words for that godawful hairball coughed

up by Tim Burton, with its execrable screenplay and scenery-chewing performances. And the chutzpah of calling it *Alice in Wonderland* rather than *Alice Returns to Underland* baffles me.

Ed.: Illustrations: Your thoughts on the Disney-izing of the characters in our cultural mind's eye. Do you prefer the Tenniel or Rackham illustrations, or a different artist altogether? How about Walt Kelly's Pogo "satire" of the *Alice* story in "Who Stole The Tarts" from Stepmother Goose?

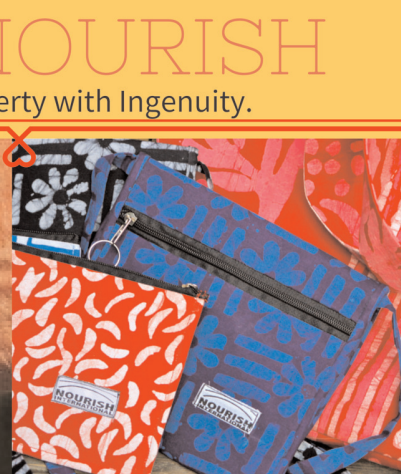
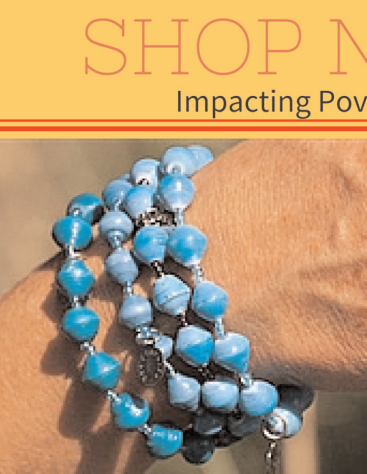
M. B.: “Tenniel or Rackham?” We know of *over a thousand* book illustrators, from Ralph Steadman (a favorite) to Salvador Dali (the first trade edition of which I produced). Others high on my list would be Barry Moser, Anne Bachelier, Oleg Lipchenko, Harry Furniss, Pat Andrea, Willy Pogany, and Harry

Rountree. It is one of literature's most delicious ironies that a book whose original illustrations are among the most iconic in Western Civilization has gone on to be the most widely illustrated novel in existence.

Pogo is another favorite of mine, but I'd call "Who Stole the Tarts" an illustrated sequence, not really a satire, even though he used comic-strip characters. Would that Kelly had undertaken to do the whole of *Alice*! There are many other examples of Kelly's Carrollian work, including renditions of "Jabberwocky" and Humpty Dumpty's poem that serve as teases for what could have been.

Ed.: Is *Alice* more than an absurd look at Dodgson's historical period? Is it the Saturday Night Live of Victoriana? Is such stuff inevitable in the life of a culture - we develop





SHOP NOURISH

Impacting Poverty with Ingenuity.

Shop Nourish is an online store featuring handicraft items from grassroots nonprofits and artisans in developing countries in need. Run by Nourish International, purchases enable us to impact poverty through sustainable development projects.

www.shopnourish.org

The Blotter

to the point of having a leisure class, then look inward for answers, then almost immediately dismiss those answers as silly/madness?

M. B.: I don't believe that the *Alice* books would have survived through time, been translated into more than 170 languages, and be adopted by people of all ages all over the globe, if it were solely a study of Victorian England. The books that have come along in the after-time attempting to prove that all of the characters were Oxford personalities or it was a gloss on some of the academic or religious controversies of the time have been utter failures. Face it, she's universal.

Ed.: Carroll's poetry was probably his first "skill" - something he began to hone early and often as a young man. Which of Carroll's poems is your favorite and why? What do you think about the potential for Carroll (and "substance abuse"?) to achieve the heady level of absurdity, or is his brilliant doggerel a standardly clever product of witty times?

M. B.: Nothing comes near "The Hunting of the Snark" (counting "Jabberwocky" as part of *Looking-glass* and therefore ineligible). It shows all of Carroll's sublime wit. Most of his juvenilia is just that, his

serious poems are way too maudlin, and a few others just have bits and pieces of brilliance. "Hiawatha's Photographing" and "The Three Voices" should also be mentioned as laugh-out-loud funny.

Carroll got a bad rap in the Sixties; he never touched anything stronger than sherry. I don't see Victorian times as distinctively witty; there are always great nonsense verse writers - Edward Lear, Ogden Nash, Dr. Seuss, John Lennon, and one of my favorites, the aforementioned Walt Kelly....

Ed.: *Alice*, Dickens, Gilbert and Sullivan: which is the more scathing indictment of the British culture? Just kidding - how does *Alice* fit in with the other classics of 19th Century English art? Does Carroll owe anyone props? Byron? Mary Shelley?

M. B.: "You might just as well try to influence a Bandersnatch." Carroll was a game-changer, genre-definer, tipping point, whatever you want to call it. Closest we'd come is George MacDonald, whose *Phantastes* and "The Light Princess" were around and who was the very man, in fact, who encouraged Carroll to expand his manuscript, get a better illustra-

tor, and publish it. But no, he was *sui generis*.

Ed.: Finally - in your opinion, if one does not play chess does that fact diminish the appreciation of *Through the Looking-glass*?

M. B.: I don't think so. It might even be better, as a chess-player would notice things like the moves being out of order and that when the White and Red Knights were fighting over her, neither was actually in a position to do anything about it such as capture or defend her. I suppose a basic knowledge would be good, that pawns can advance to being a Queen and the like.

Final note - we had fun with this. We hope we didn't break any HIPAA rules finding out about Mr. Burstein's connection to Grace Slick's writing of "White Rabbit" with Jefferson Airplane, and how cool is it that he has a piece of (ahem, unprepped) sixties blotter acid paper with the *Alice* art?

Mark Burstein is the editor of W.W. Norton and Company's volume *The Annotated Alice, the Deluxe 150th Anniversary Edition*. ♦

Best In Show



by Phil Juliano

"CatchMatch.com"

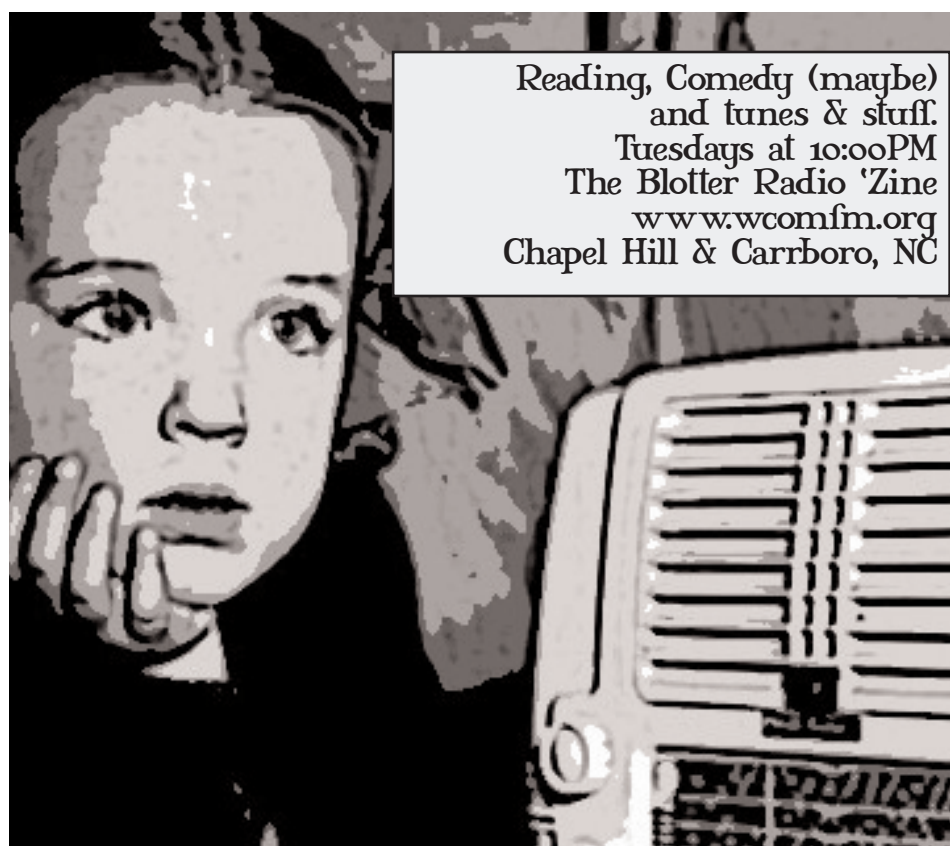
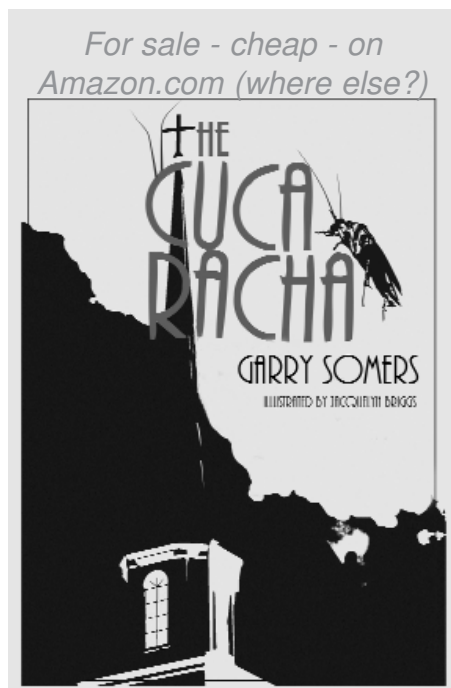
by Gloria g. Murray

Maybe I should have worn the blue top instead of the black. It shows off my purple rose tattoo. Hmm, too late now. Hope I put enough deodorant on. Oh well, the Shalimar should diffuse any odor. Six minutes to seven. Why did I get here so early? This mirror is so damn small I can hardly see my eyeliner. And my eyes are so itchy, but I can't rub. Did I bring liner with me? Yeah, here it is. Yes, that's better. And my hair— oh god, it's frizzed already. Was my mother's hair this frizzy? Can't remember. Died so long ago. Yes, I think it was. Must have come from a long line of Hasidic. Anyway, it looks better like this— pinned up with this butterfly clip I

picked up in Macys. Imagine— sixteen dollars for a hair clip? Good thing I had a coupon.

Oh, I just can't believe I'm actually doing this—again! Though it's been over a year. A year on that loser site: *CATCH MATCH*. I think I've been on them all. Anyway, he *did* sound nice on the phone. Although he didn't ask any questions. Talked mostly about himself. What was his name again? *Motor59*. What the hell does that mean? Oh shit, I've got a chipped nail. Just did them this afternoon and didn't bring the polish with me. Look at this—my hands are shaking. Calm down, girl. It's only a freakin' blind date. Probably a big bore.

That's how it usually goes. "*Oh, how long were you married? Any children? Two—boy and a girl, how nice.*" And then a pause. "*Oh, by the way, I'm divorced too—with twin girls in college.*" And I wait. Aren't you going to ask something—*anything?* *Don't you want to know about my divorce, how my beloved almost killed me, trying to strangle me with his tie? How I had a breakdown and walked around on Valium and Prozac for almost six months? Oh, you don't really need that much information? Want to know if it's going to rain tomorrow or if I saw the new cell phone ad from Verizon?* Oh, stop it now! You don't really know how it's going to go...always the pessimist. *Calamity Jane!* Yeah, that's what my grandma always called me. Should I let him pay for dinner? No, not on the first date. Pay for it myself—like a woman who takes out the garbage, fixes the stopped up toilet, even kills the bugs.



Reading, Comedy (maybe)
and tunes & stuff.
Tuesdays at 10:00PM
The Blotter Radio 'Zine
www.wcomfm.org
Chapel Hill & Carrboro, NC

The Blotter

Oh shit, I think I've got an eyelash in my eye. I can't see anything in this damn mirror. It's five after seven. If I go to the ladies room, I'll probably miss him coming in. Just keep blinking. There, I think it's gone. Can't rub because I'll smudge my liner. Well, 7:15. Looks like he's not the punctual type. Well, that's good, probably means he's an Aries or Sagittarius. They're sort of free-spirited. Not like that Taurus I was married to. Used to check the garbage just to see if I threw away something that might, god forbid, still be good—like an old sock with only one hole, a milk container with one gulp. Oh, here comes the waiter. Hmmm, not bad looking. A bit on the young side, though.

"Yes, I will have another drink, thank you. The same and no ice, please." Why do they always put ice in when you say no ice? Well, it's almost 7:25. Maybe he forgot, but we just spoke this morning, said he couldn't wait to meet me. Guess I'll wait until 7:40 before I admit I've been stood up on a blind date. I suppose that's not the worst—not like he knew me and then didn't

come.

Oh wait, someone's coming in. Well, if that's him he's certainly not six foot. More like five foot six. A little on the paunchy side too, but he *does* have dirty blonde hair. And that sweater. I don't believe it—emerald green. What the f— it's not St. Patty's day is it? Look at the jeans—charcoal gray and white sneakers. Oh god, he's coming over.

"Hi, are you Jeanette—you know from Catch Match?"

"Oh, no, you must be mistaken. My name's Carol and I've never been on Catch Match."

"Really, you sort of look like her but pictures can be deceiving."

"Yes, definitely so. Well, I was just leaving. Hope you find who you're looking for."

Looking puzzled, he waves.

Whew, am I glad to get the hell outta there. Maybe I can catch a movie I haven't seen yet on one of the 300+ cable channels. Maybe I can bring this stupid clip back if I can find the receipt. Shit, I never paid the check. *Oh well, Mr. Motor59, thanks for the drinks.* ❖

The Dream Journal

real dreams, real weird

Please send excerpts from your own dream journals. If nothing else, we'd love to read them. We won't publish your whole name.

mermaid@blotterrag.com

The fright makes me gag, then cough, unable to take a breath. It is a splash, a grab, a flash a No! All of these are old nightmare acquaintances I am familiar with: the splash is gore, the grab is something coming up from behind, the flash is an image that changes to something horror and a No is someone dead. If there are other moments that can make my sleep break apart into little pieces, I am not aware of them anymore. The frequency with which I visit this quartet of dreams depends on the weather, the food, my habits, my lack of habits. If this does not make sense to you, I suggest you read the first twenty or so pages of Dickens' "A Christmas Carol." Scrooge puts it rather succinctly. And so I awake, the picture projected on my eyelids fades but leaves that de-rezzing, pixillated image that only rolling over or actually getting up to splash some water from the faucet up into my mouth with a cupped hand will release completely. I hear the sound of rain falling outside, its incessant tapping on the window jamb will either permit me to fall swiftly back to sleep or I will lie for some number of breaths and then get up and go downstairs. GL - cyberspace



Support the Cause!

www.losercomix.com/#!/comix/c22j5

"April and my Plastic Sunflowers"

by Sonnet Mondal

The four plastic sunflowers in my bedroom-
The way they swayed in the ceiling fan's air
Were the *functional-year-long-April* for me.

Fallen twigs of meditating winter
And the deadwood sanity of their roughness;
The begging deserts of the patient summer
And the coarseness of their ravaged mirages;
The thin tune of the nostalgic autumn
And the restlessness of their alcoholic breezes-
Were never like fresh seasonal fruits to me
For I had the *functional-year-long-April* in my bedroom:
Those four plastic sunflowers.

Not long, my wedding and divorce-
Both in their infancy
Ended the perpetual April in my room
By demanding those yellow sunflowers
In the package of reparation.

It was four seasons ago and the spring of April
Now seems to be a creepy plastic serpent
Irresistibly insidious in its illusory cruelty
as my new girl friend from the same city
Talked of bringing new plastic flowers in my room.



"MY SISTER CHANGED HER NAME"

(for Beeve)

by Gloria g. Murray

because we dwelled in the land
of plastic covered couches
pink porcelain ladies with tasseled lamp shades
black speckled tiles my mother on her knees
waxed every Friday, then covered with newspaper
to keep the shine and the news a little longer
because no one ever came to that place
that smelled of Pine-sol and chicken soup
because this was an alien planet in the cosmos of Canarsie

where I, the high school drop-out
put on this earth to drive my mother 'mad'
or, at the very least, kill her with what in Judaism
was called 'the weapon of aggravation'
got knocked up and married a gentile
and my sister, the 'good girl', at sixteen ran rampant
in Bloomingdales, shoving in her bag things
she could never, ever, afford, changed her name
and hair color, made up her face like a china doll
seducing men with names like "Bob the Bookie",
"Eddie the eel" and became next in line
to kill my mother with aggravation

CONTRIBUTORS:

Charles Bane, Jr. is the author of three collections of poetry including the recent "The Ends Of The Earth: Collected Poems (Transcendent Zero Press, 2015) as well as "I Meet Geronimo And Other Stories" (Avignon Press, 2015) and " Three Seasons: Writing Donald Hall (Collection of the Houghton Library, Harvard University). He created and contributes to The Meaning Of Poetry series for The Gutenberg Project. <http://charlesbanejr.com/> This excerpt is reproduced by permission of its publisher, Transcendent Zero Press.

Gloria g. Murray of Brooklyn, NY writes, "I have been published in various literary journals including, Bardic Echoes, Poet Lore, The Paterson Review, Ted Kooser's American Life in Poetry, Third Wednesday and others. I am the recipient of the 2014 Anna Davidson 1st prize poetry award from Poetica Magazine. My recent book What I Couldn't Swallow has just been published by All Books, Long Island, NY."

Sonnet Mondal of Kolkata, India, is the editor of *The Enchanting Verses Literary Review*. He has authored eight collections of poetry and his recent works have appeared in *The Sheepshead Review*, *Nth Position*, *Fox Chase Review*, *The Penguin Review*, *Two Thirds North & California State Poetry Quarterly*. He is currently one of the featured writers at *International Writing Program* at The University of IOWA-Silk Routes Project funded by Bureau of South and Central Asian Affairs at the U.S. Department of State.

Sonnet was featured as one of the Famous Five of Bengali Youths in *India Today magazine* in 2010 and was long listed in The *Forbes Magazine's* top 100 Celebrities 2014 edition among India's most celebrated authors. Later in March 2015 *The CultureTrip* website, London listed him among the Top Five Literary Entrepreneurs of Indian English Poetry.

He has represented India at the Struga Poetry Evenings, Macedonia (2014) and at The Uskudar International Poetry Festival, Istanbul, Turkey (2015). Most recently, he has been invited to represent India at the International Poetry Festival of Granda in 2016.(website: www.sonnetmondal.com)

Phil Juliano of Minneapolis, MN is a good Blotterfriend. Follow his adventures on philjulianoillustration.com

CORNER BAR

magazine

CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS!
Send your work to:
editor@cornerbarmagazine.com



Be part of something...GROUNDSHAKING!
Corner Bar Magazine:
not quite your father s speculative fiction zine

look what we found: a way to help The Blotter, not spend any money, and surf the Net all day. check this out.



GoodSearch
YOU SEARCH WE GIVE™

1 Choose Your Cause
Enter your charity or school below and click Verify.

2 Search
Search the web just as you normally would.

3 We Donate
We'll donate to your cause for every search. *Yes, it's that easy!*

powered by **YAHOO! SEARCH**

Web Images Video Yellow Pages Shopping

who put the bomp in the bomp sh bomp sh bomp **Search**

Please use this site honestly. Fraudulent searches will result in your charity being delisted.

WHO DO YOU GOODSEARCH FOR? ?

enter your charity here ... **The Blotter Magazine**

Verify

Enter the charity or school you support here then click "verify."
Next, search from above and earn money for your cause!



whenever you want to search the Web for something, go to "www.goodsearch.com", and type in "The Blotter Magazine" under "who do you Goodsearch for?" for every search, they'll donate a penny to us. and pennies do add up, eventually. give it a try.

xxooxooxoox - The Blotter Gang