

*Aunt Chloe 2011*

## **Aunt Chloe Editorial Staff**

### *Fall Staff 2010*

Danielle Augustine  
Jordan Harris  
Shapel Laborde  
Alana McKinney  
Khadijah Robinson

### *ENG 390*

Samantha Akwei  
Stephanie Deltor  
Victoria Plummer  
Janiqwa Worsley

## **Faculty Advisor**

Opal Moore

## **Advisory Board**

Tina McElroy Ansa  
Rachel Eliza Griffiths  
Michelle Hite  
Major Jackson  
Tayari Jones  
Anthony Kellman  
Jessica Care Moore  
Mendi Lewis Obadike  
Yvonne T. Prabhu  
Margaret Price  
giovanni singleton  
Rochelle Spencer  
Sharan Strange  
Shay Youngblood

## **Acknowledgements**

Special thanks to our guest artists Rachel Eliza Griffiths for our cover art, *Woman, 2008*; and to Niki Herd for "Ars Poetics" from her debut collection, *The Language of Shedding Skin*. Thanks also to Lain Shakespeare at the Wren's Nest; to Dan Bascelli and Anne Warner of the Comprehensive Writing Programs; to Marc Fitten for his advice and assistance with this issue; to Dr. Michelle Hite for her discovery of Chloe Henderson. Special appreciation to Bill and Molly Barney, our friends at Automated Print.

Aunt Chloe is a journal for people who have reclaimed the spaces denied them by cultural and historical tyranny. She belongs to any of us who have been pushed out of the spotlight, yet through art, literature, and dialogue have re-chosen where we belong.

*Aunt Chloe*  
A JOURNAL OF ARTFUL CANDOR  
2011



CHLOE

For many years the milker at West End. Often mentioned in the stories and letters

*"I don't know any black woman who is too proud to get out here and work."*

*Collected from May Anna Madison  
in John Langston Gwaltney's Drylongso: A Self-Portrait of Black America*

*Our special section is dedicated to Chloe Henderson, and to all of the black women who  
labored in the homes of others in order to secure their own.*

## Who is Aunt Chloe?

because women are expected to keep silent about  
their close escapes I will not keep silent.

"On Stripping Bark from Myself," Alice Walker

In her novel, *Meridian*, Alice Walker tells a fable, about a black woman storyteller, Louvinie, who told stories, marvelous and frightening to entertain the children of the people who purportedly owned her. One child had a weak heart from birth, a fact that no one knew, until he was literally frightened to death by one of Louvinie's tales. Her enslavers were so angry that they cut out her tongue and tossed it into the yard. Louvinie retrieved her severed tongue and buried it beneath a tree, which grew larger and fuller than any other tree in the vicinity. It so happened that a school for black girls was built on that land, and the tree, which they named Sojourner, stood in the center of the campus. The co-eds on the campus used the tree for unsanctioned trysts with lovers or just to escape the monitoring eyes of the matrons—they were never discovered in the dense foliage of the low-hanging branches of Sojourner. But one day the co-eds rioted on their campus when their sense of justice had been offended—the day the school forbade them to properly mourn a "wild" girl whose death had reminded them of the properties of mercy. And on this day they went to Sojourner and, in a rage, chopped their ancient ally down to the ground.

I love this bit of modern folklore. Alice Walker once walked the campus of Spelman College, cut her resistance teeth in the civil rights movement in Atlanta, and pushed back against the well-meaning efforts of college officials to domesticate her. She offers to her *Meridian* sisters this tale of a black woman's silencing and the fearsomeness of the unleashed tongue of a furious black woman which, even today, can strike dread in the hearts of those who cultivate innocence as an armor to truth.

Aunt Chloe is the namesake of Anthony Chloe Wofford—the Nobelist, Toni Morrison. Her name also recalls Frances Ellen Watkins Harper's witty persona talking truth in the poem "Aunt Chloe's Politics:"

Of course, I don't know very much  
About these politics,  
But I think that some who run 'em,  
Do mighty ugly tricks.

I've seen 'em honey-fugle round,  
And talk so awful sweet,  
That you'd think them full of kindness  
As an egg is full of meat.

In this issue we also call the name of Chloe Henderson, a black domestic worker for Joel Chandler Harris, the white raconteur of black folk tales whose historic home is situated in the West End, Atlanta.

But Aunt Chloe truly rests her feet upon the 41 years of Focus Magazine, which began as a poetry supplement to the college newspaper. Who is Aunt Chloe? She is a woman in control of her own tongue, her own mind.

*opalmoore*

# Contents

<i>Ars Poetica</i>		
	Niki Herd	10
<i>Grace, Amazing</i>		
	Carrie Shippers	11
<i>Spun</i>		
	Christina M. Rau	12
<i>Portrait of Old Ma</i>		
	Suzanne Sunshower	13
<i>Bound to Our Past</i>		
	Taryn Crenshaw	14
<i>Pink Blues</i>		
	Teresa Leggard	15
<i>Same-Sex Engaged Life</i>		
	Tom Rastrelli	16
<i>Club Girl</i>		
	Jesse Minkert	18
<i>Going to the Witch's House</i>		
	Rachel Trousdale	19
<i>The Raccoon</i>		
	Suzanne Sunshower	20
<i>Naming the Wife of Sisyphus</i>		
	Christina M. Rau	21
<i>Jacob's Warning</i>		
<i>Pox</i>		
	Evelyn Alfred	22
<i>quiet sorrow: a cento</i>		
	Evelyn Alfred	23



<i>Back When I Used to be White</i>	
Wayne Lee	24
<i>Sunday Hallucination</i>	26
Marthy Silverthorne	
<i>Recovery</i>	
Wendy Maragh Taylor	27
<i>ABCs: A Book Review</i>	30
opalmoore	
<i>Special Section: DISPLACEMENT</i>	32
<i>Checks Cashed</i> , Taryn Crenshaw	33
<i>Black(en) the Mystique</i> , Iresha Picot	34
<i>Sale of Contents</i> , John Grey	35
<i>Urban Ruins</i> , Taryn Crenshaw	36
<i>Birth Certificate</i> , Marthy Silverthorne	37
<i>The Opening</i> , Bettina Judd	38
<i>Lilith to Eve</i> , Bettina Judd	39
<i>Bettina Judd's Poetic Justice</i> , Alan King	40
<i>House Tours</i> , Michelle Hite	43
Contributors	48
Call for Work	51
Submissions Guidelines	52

for all women finding themselves a country.  
a country taken possession by a fist. the fist holds

history. the history of somebody's mama.  
the history of their mama's mama.

for the numbers. for 50 bullets and black blood shed.  
for the years at war and the next soldier dead.

for longing. for not the bullet. but broken skin.

for a hovering gospel. hand clap and holy ghost.

for the open mouth. not speak when spoken to.

for the robber. for the robbed.

for this naked black ass. kneeling before you. holy.

for a word this girl never claimed to be.

## Grace, Amazing

CARRIE SHIPERS

*Musicogenic epilepsy is an extremely rare form of the disorder  
in which seizures are triggered by music.*

Mama's prayer group met every day for a week  
after Daddy left. I laid under an open window,  
listened while they ate cake and giggled  
over Pastor Luke's new suit, his frumpy wife.  
When the singing started, I closed my eyes,  
saw Amazing Grace bloom shapes and colors  
so beautiful I closed my eyes and wet my dress.  
Mama blamed the weather, our broken home.  
Sunday, I fell between the pews, heard Pastor Luke  
call me a miracle. Too tired and full of light  
to sit in school all day, I stayed in bed  
while Mama made me toast and scrambled eggs.  
Daddy came to church to see what I could do.  
He brought a nurse with straight blonde hair,  
strong fingers that held my wrist when I came to.  
At the hospital, Mama sang Amazing Grace  
till the doctors made her stop. They said  
it wasn't God that made me shake and quiver,  
see shapes behind my eyes. Daddy says I have  
to go to school and take my pills, made Mama swear  
she wouldn't sing. She says a miracle can't fail  
even if someone won't believe. My seizures  
could hurt my brain, stop my heart, make me fall  
somewhere that isn't safe. Like the song  
says grace can do, they could lead my daddy home.

*When I drink, I am the only man in New York City." – James Tate*

When I drink  
I am the only woman  
in my mind  
in the room,  
but not in New York.  
Many of us drink  
in New York, perhaps  
too many; perhaps, that's  
the problem, but  
that's not the point.  
In my mind  
in the room  
I am the only woman,  
drinking or not.  
This is the point:  
I am the only woman  
anywhere, everywhere.  
When I drink  
I suppose I'm running  
at first,  
but then it's suddenly  
there again—  
Drunken women, and men,  
careening around the room,  
but never touching  
each other or me.  
Drunken cells  
careening around the skull.  
They're touching me, pounding me.  
Me careening against,  
into, off of walls.  
Streaks of muted peach,  
a scarf of red  
lit over a lamp  
in an exposed brick loft  
that is not real,  
I've never been there  
until now; I am  
the only woman,  
the only person. I am  
only one.

# Portrait of Old Ma

SUZANNE SUNSHOWER

Rarest portrait of all:  
    tintype of a Black woman  
forebearer (original  
                    mountain)  
– deepest shadow  
    of country's darkest hour.

Thumbing the smoky image  
in awe  
a visiting neighbor-lady says softly  
    Wasn't it a sin  
        what those slave masters did  
to the women?

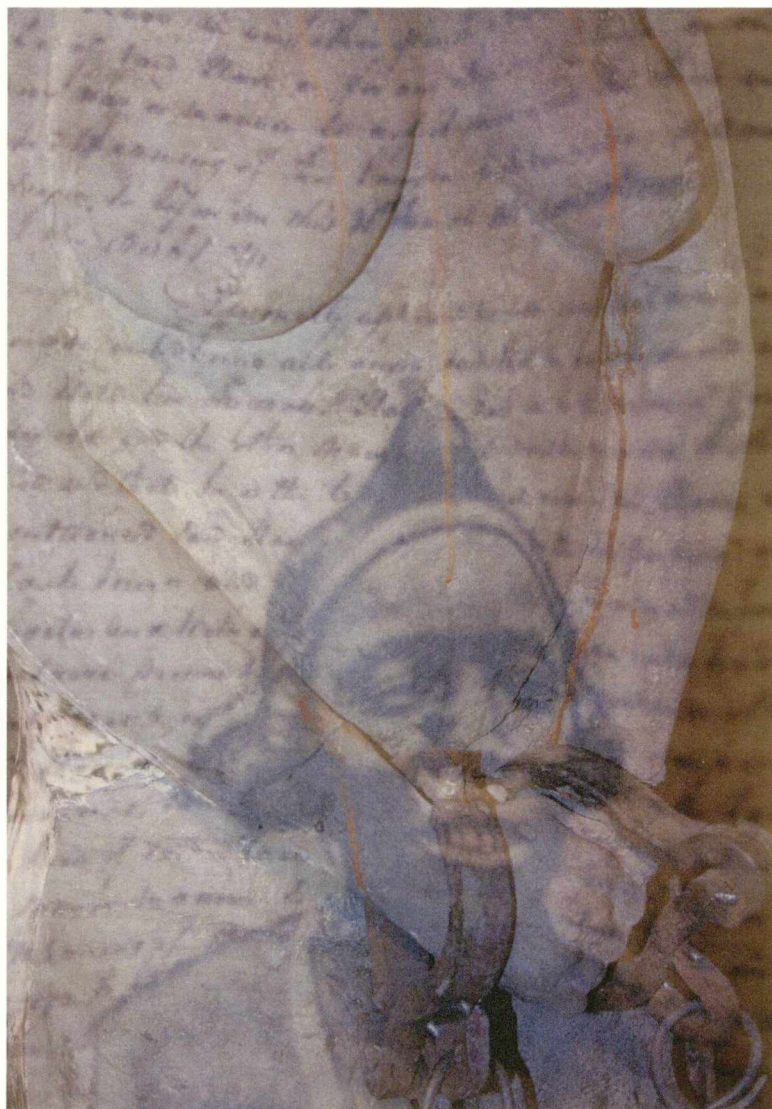
My child's mind processes  
the reverent whisper  
        and knows   just knows  
what is meant.

Old Ma's portrait tells all  
  
before film   almost  
        before photograph –  
rugged great-great face   worn  
eyes deep-creased / battered  
crack of mouth  
        forming bitter line:  
Ain't I A Woman?  
in thick mississippi drawl / voice  
    like muddy river pounding rock...

They used to say  
being "sold down the river"  
to mississippi  
was the cruelest fate –  
  
the sun blazing   always blazing.

# Bound to Our Past

TARYN CRENSHAW



## Pink Blues

TERESA LEGGARD

*(for Sherley Anne Williams "Any Woman's Blues")*

The day my mama birthed me, I was hushed.  
Oh, the day my mama birthed me I was hushed.  
I had learned real quick  
    a good girl don't make no fuss.

All my brothers, they ain't never lift a hand.  
Lord, all my brothers they never lift a hand.  
At home they're kings  
    outside they're less than men.

I had me a boyfriend, and we liked to play house.  
Had me a boyfriend—we got good at playing house.  
And he won the bread  
    so I ain't run my mouth.

Then I had me a husband who liked to be king.  
Done got me husband, and he liked being king.  
Said our home was his castle,  
    and I was his little play thing.

So I got me a girlfriend who treated me real nice.  
Got me a girlfriend, and she treats me real nice.  
When I ask for lovin'  
    I never have to ask her twice.

When I die, Lord, I'm gone make some noise.  
Yes, when I die I'm gone make some noise.  
I lived like a lady,  
    but I'll die like one of the boys.

# My Same-Sex Engaged Life

TOM RASTRELLA

I don't want tolerance. I want compassion. I don't want pity. I want action. I don't want religion. I want the Constitution.

I don't want tax breaks. I want joint federal filing status. I don't want my job search restricted to states where I have marriage equality. I want the Defense of Marriage Act repealed. I don't want to be "gay married" or "same-sex married." I want to be married.

I don't want childhood friends de-friending me on Facebook. I want friends forever. I don't want college friends calling me evil on my blog. I want collegiality. I don't want my big sister phoning me on Christmas to condemn me, once again, in the name of "Holy Mother Church." I want my mother's hugs, my dad's ravioli, and my grandma's grasshopper pie.

I want only my portion, the 1138 federal marriage rights I'm denied.  
I want a wedding.

I don't want a rushed ceremony at city hall between court rulings. I don't want to wear the dress. I don't want my daddy to walk me down the aisle. I want my little sister to be my best man. I want my nieces to throw flower petals. I don't want a rainless day with perfect weather. I want a marine layer and worldwide carbon emissions reform.

I don't want to wait for the majority to feel generous, for the polls to catch up, or for the "Greatest Generation" to pass away. I want to drive the length of Wilshire Boulevard without seeing a bumper sticker that implies I'm a second class citizen.

I don't want to hear "the other side" to the "same-sex marriage" "debate." I don't want Sarah Palin, Rupert Murdoch, and Rush Limbaugh. I don't want a self-proclaimed "fierce advocate" in Washington. I want prophets who will force-feed the ground-up remains of outdated idols to their unenlightened fold.

I don't want to spend millions on political advertisements. I don't want to march in the streets protesting ballot initiatives and court decisions. I don't want "special" rights. I want people to realize that civil rights are not contentious.

I don't want fists. I want hugs. I don't want drama. I want dramaturgy. I don't want gay men playing straight roles in Hollywood. I want straight folks to live a day in my same-sex (permanently) engaged life.

I don't want to wear pink shirts every day. I want to wear them every other day. I don't want to hot-rail crystal meth while having unprotected animalistic butt sex with multiple partners at bathhouses while snorting poppers. I just want to make love to my husband. I want people to stop using my love as a weapon in their culture war.

I want to walk outside holding my fiancé's hand without listening for an increasing tempo in the footsteps behind us. I don't want to read about another gay child being bullied and committing suicide. I don't want to hear my parents crying after a stranger shouts "faggot" at me from a passing vehicle. I don't want



to end up hanged on a barbwire fence outside of town. I don't want to be an intercession at a church service. I don't want to return to the priesthood or the closet. I want my old seminary and priest friends to stop drinking themselves to death.

I don't want to die alone in a red state's emergency room. I want to die with my hand in my husband's. I don't want an eternity in heaven. I don't want hell. I want people to stop projecting theirs onto me. I want to make the most of the frail life I have here on earth.

I want to sit on a boulder by the Mississippi River in my Iowa hometown and rest my chin on my husband's shoulder, his warmth against my chest, as fireworks shower the nation in pastel freedom.

Club Girl  
JESSE MINKERT

Her thrustulating hips and arms  
thump and bump to the hip-hop queen  
the way her mother did as Janis  
offered up another bit of her heart,  
and grandma gave Elvis  
whatever he called out for,  
and the way great grannie swung  
to the boogie-woogie accents;  
slipped and sliding eight to the bar,  
and great great gramma  
with her long, long legs,  
back in the twenties;  
her knees and elbows flew  
to the tunes that flared out  
from the bells of trumpets  
like a crown of lilies pinned to the head  
of a New Orleans dance hall queen.

# Going to the Witch's House

RACHEL TROUSDALE

The first time, I carry  
a pocket full of stones  
and drop them on the path  
where they glow like pearls  
between the strawberry leaves,  
under the aspens, even  
in the dusk of the canopy cover.

The second time, I carry  
the stones, and I scatter  
them evenly, misleading  
the birds, who take them  
for seed, and eat them,  
peck, tip the head back,  
swallow, peck.

The third time, I carry  
the stones and drop them,  
but our way lies along  
the bed of the river they came from.

The fourth time, I carry  
the stones, and I drop them,  
but it is a miracle:  
they turn to bread.

The Raccoon  
SUZANNE SUNSHOWER

It would be called a long hot summer  
if we were in the literary South,

but I'm at a window in Detroit  
with an aunt gripping my hair, twisting

it 'round a beige hand (brown,  
roped against egg-white), and it seems

my mid-length tresses are not long enough  
to "pass".

Oh look – the aunt says, suddenly distracted  
by a raccoon's stealth approach,

amused by its silent watching  
curiously from outside.

And, at twelve, I feel a connection  
to him – this lurking outsider,

because I am like that  
within the Irishness of my mother's family –

always noticed, never left alone  
to my quiet blackness.

# Naming The Wife Of Sisyphus

CHRISTINA M. RAU

Cathy—it's a sweet name,  
one who loves her husband  
but since she's got a bit  
of resistance in her, maybe  
it's Kathy, with a K,  
or Kat since she's got some  
sass, too, or Katerina,  
a strong, sexy name,  
but that would make her too skinny.  
No one has ever seen a fat Katerina;  
Fat Katerinas simply do not exist.  
She needs to have some weight  
so she can throw it around  
when she stands her ground.  
Georgina—slender with a slight belly,  
a woman who can bellow at the Gods,  
but that's not old enough;  
it needs to be antiquated,  
like Antigone, but not as depressed,  
like Aphrodite, but not as beautiful,  
like Angelika, but less cinematic.  
Frannie, Francine, that must  
be her name—no, Francesca,  
a woman with looks, older but not  
too old a soul, one strong enough  
to love a man whose heart attacks him  
and then kills him  
though he refuses to die.  
Perhaps that's too pretty still;  
even a slightly average woman  
would move on.  
Laura, Maria, Betsy, Daphne,  
Portia, Sally, Vesta, Wanda,  
Yolanda, Zelda, Helen—  
nothing quite fits.  
They are all slightly off.  
Nothing safely and soundly  
encompasses all that is the woman  
who stands by her man  
in the face of his false immortality  
and the consequences of his  
undeadly denial.

jacob's warning  
*from a mercy*

he should have seen the  
struggle with surf, sand, and sun  
as subtle warnings...  
the sticky seduction of slavery

smelling sugar, his soles sank  
in mud and Sorrow.

pox  
*from a mercy*

thirty-one words were afraid of a three-letter word. a dangerous three-letter word, like a curse. two turns into twenty-five. death arrives for him, comes for her, but Sorrow manages to escape.

quiet sorrow: a cento  
*from a mercy*

can you read?  
Sorrow cannot  
like not reading the garden snake  
crawling up to the door saddle to die  
don't be afraid

can I find you in the dark?  
Sorrow does not say  
nor is Sorrow happy to see me

I am happy the world  
is breaking open.

# Back When I Used to be White

(after Mark Turcotte)

WAYNE LEE

1.

I am digging a hip-high pit  
in the shovel-clump soil  
of the Little Woods  
felling thigh-thick birch  
snipping cedar boughs  
to thatch our pit house roof  
we three neighbor boys  
the only members  
in the Indian Club  
whittling spears  
sharpening arrows  
bending bows with kite string  
setting traps for cottontails  
dams for brook trout  
tin-can strands across trails  
to warn us of enemies  
or parents  
trekking into the Doug fir forest  
bare-chested in the August heat  
hand-towel loincloths  
hung over cutoffs  
ripped up strips of pillowcase  
tied around our heads  
sneaking through gullies and mud  
speaking in our secret tongue  
creeping through the sword fern  
devil's club heavy-nettle underbrush  
back wet and weary  
from our hunt at dusk  
as bats begin to slice the air  
empty-handed slump-shouldered  
back in the flicker-dark  
of our tribal fort  
back into pjs socks  
J.C. Penney moccasins  
sleeping bags and pillows spread  
on the hard-packed dirt  
laughing at danger  
happy for Kool-Aid  
Wonder Bread  
and Sunny Jim peanut butter.



2.

I am standing in the back field  
aiming my birthday bee bee gun  
at a chipping sparrow in the apple tree  
aiming squeezing firing  
watching as it doesn't even try  
to fly  
just falls like rotten fruit  
in the hay at my feet  
and it is only when my brother  
yells at me  
tells me it's wrong to shoot a bird  
that I think about my power to kill.

3.

I am circling the mat  
looking for an opening  
against a younger wrestler  
from the rez across the bay  
a Lummi boy with fear  
like fireworks in his eyes  
circling feigning seeking  
that awkward cross-step  
ducking under his futile guard  
executing a textbook takedown  
spilling him flat  
on his coffee-colored back  
pinning him flat in record time  
one and two and three  
the referee slaps the mat  
the yell team kicks their legs  
jumps up and down  
in their Red & White  
and chants in unison  
Here we go Red Raiders  
Here we go!

# Sunday Hallucination

MARTHY SILVERTHORNE

I must be losing my damn  
mind, the TV preacher's got  
on a bright yellow jacket,  
says the end is near  
peaking over his bifocals.  
Two weeks ago I saw  
a black statue of Liberty  
break dancing on a cardboard  
box outside of Liberty Tax Service.  
Two weeks later, I saw a 12 foot  
Uncle Sam walking  
the parade route, juggling  
two AK-47's and a declaration of war  
and I swore this morning  
as I got my coffee and peeled back  
the pages of the newspaper it said  
we have our 1st black president  
and there's a picture of him,  
his sexy wife, hotter than Marilyn Monroe  
in JFK's bed and two perfectly cute  
little brown daughters with ribbons  
in their hair. It is way too clear what  
the TV preacher prophesized, I know  
why he thinks we are nearing the end  
but could it be a beautiful beginning.

## Recovery

WENDY MARAGH TAYLOR

"Sometimes I feel like I could lose my mind," she said with a sigh, the crimson red lipstick on her teeth peeping out from the flash of a crooked smile. It took some time for Mira to tell me her story, beginning with small-talk as soon as she closed the office door and sat down in the upright chair. It was a different chair from the one she chose during the family sessions when her husband and teenage son dominated and she disappeared into the furniture. She occupied her fingers with the purple throw, tugging and pulling at the threads. In an effort to save the blanket from the unraveling that might come, I offered to take it out of her way. Finally, then, she looked up, sighed and began.

"My father used to beat me, you know? Mira continued.

I hadn't known. . She had barely spoken during the family meetings – something I needed to address before progressing further.

"I didn't have to do nothing wrong. When he was drunk, he could do anything," she said, shaking her head. There was no one to help ... no place to go."

Again, I could see the red on white through her smile. I found it distracting and eerie, even – all of it. Mira's olive skin was masked by the wrong shade of face powder. She looked like a doll, clearly made up. Only it was all wrong, as if someone had made a mistake in choosing the colors for her eyes, cheeks and lips. Her jet-black ringlets didn't fit either. I could see her hair was meant to be straighter; the curls were too overpowering and held patches of grey in unlikely places. However, she seemed completely unaware of her appearance.

"He forced me into a chicken coop once."

Describing how her family had raised chickens to help pay their bills when they lived in the country, Mira's sing-song manner of threading words peaked every so often, adding to her story-telling. It was pleasant to my ears.

"He got so drunk that he locked me in a chicken coop," she said. I had to bend down and crawl on my hands and feet to get in."

Feigning the movement, Mira showed me how she made it into the tiny space. Perhaps she felt caged or small again, because she didn't straighten up for some time. Seeing her like that brought a dull pain to my heart, akin to the feeling when one sees a bird whose wings are broken or a puppy with a maimed leg.

"My poor mother, she didn't know what to do. He would have beaten her too, so she pretended not to know," Mira shrugged her shoulders, still crouched low in the chair. "Then, this man came and did the same thing to me."

I recognized from the family sessions how she referred to her husband and knew she was now talking about him. Mira shared how her father had given her to "the man" when she was just a girl. She remembered hearing that her father had been forgiven his gambling debt in exchange for her.

"I was happy to leave his house. I thought I had a chance to live now, but this man ..."

Her voice cracked. Though she paused, Mira seemed determined to go on and the crooked smile faintly appeared and then vanished.

"He beat me too. I can't hear good," she tugged at her left ear, "because he knocked me so hard one time. And, the nastiness ..."

Her voice was low, her disgust clear. After moving to the sofa, which was closer to me, she continued:

"He used to bring women into our home," she said, shaking her head again.

"He made me sleep on the couch while the two of them be in my bed."

I heard no outrage in Mira's voice, yet, I could see in her eyes a well on the verge of overflowing.

"I couldn't go. Where would I go?" she asked.

She seemed to be looking to me for approval, which I was ready to give her. But she didn't wait for it.

This time, there was no smile to introduce her pause. Mira just sat with her eyes closed and now leaning back in the sofa, she looked more settled. For a moment, I could see her face without interruption. It was softer, less offensive or comical, and more palatable. It was like an abstract portrait – the violet eye shadow, rose dusting on her cheeks and crimson lipstick appeared deliberately painted on to the white canvas of powder that covered her face. She was hidden behind the colors.

"Now, he says he's better. What they call it, recovery?" She didn't look convinced. "They say I'm making it hard for him, for the family, to get better." The crooked smile returned.

She was right. We called it "resistance."

"All those years should just be the past because he says so?" She didn't sound like she was looking for a response.

"How we recover?"

She didn't want an answer.

"What about the girl? She can recover?"

The girl? I was confused, which Mira must have read.

"You didn't know we had a daughter first?"

I hadn't known.

Mira moved closer, on the edge of the couch – where she didn't seem to fit either, adjusting herself every few minutes. I offered her the purple throw, making a cushion of support to place behind her. She shared about her first born, whom she had not seen in many years. It was as if she didn't exist any longer, Mira said. She reminisced about how smart her daughter was, how well she had done in school, how pretty she was.

"The girl said when the man was drunk he let his friends do all kinds of nastiness to her."

Mira whispered this to me as if someone else could overhear.

"He said it didn't happen and then thrashed her for lying. Things got bad for the girl after that. I couldn't do anything for her. Then ... she left me."

Mira bent forward and I instinctively moved toward her too. We were close

enough that I could feel her breath and see that the well was just on the brink of running over. She lowered her voice as if it would be too much to speak out loud.

"Sometimes people say they see her in the neighborhood, on a corner. They say she is taking drugs and doing things to get money for it."

Just then, Mira's voice cracked. Though she paused, her eyes remained wide open. She grabbed her head and bellowed. "She can recover?"

Mira wasn't asking. She declared this with no uncertainty.

At first, it was just a streak on both sides of her face, traveling from her eyes and down an almost straight path to her chin. Soon after, there was a rushing stream. Mira reached for the tissues I offered, and wiped all the colors away. Then, I could see her beautiful olive skin.

*The Language of Shedding Skin.* By Niki Herd. 59 pp.  
Main Street Rag Publishing Co. \$14.

In the opening poem of her debut collection, Niki Herd posits a secret alphabet, one that spells an American grammar that has tongue-tied many a black child

Teach that the alphabet begins with n.

and flummoxed the efforts of many a competent orator attempting to prove the actuality of freedom. This alphabet constructs fluidity rather than meaning. Or rather, meaning is a matter of one's point of view. In "50 bullets, One Dead, and Many Questions" /a bullet is a hymn/ and a man raped with a night stick might well read about his assault in the next day's news to find his violation reconstituted:

Name it poetry. Don't call it blood.  
Consider it pomegranate stain, hibiscus leaf  
your mama's lipstick, a cherry  
lollipop...

Herd's collection often reads like the liner notes to a hymnal of struggle songs. Sometimes it seems to do the work of witness that James Baldwin talked about—how we are obliged as human beings to witness for the mistreated. When we refuse to turn away from atrocity, we render that suffering visible.

Randall Horton praises *The Language of Shedding Skin* as "a history lesson." If this is history, it is not a traditional invocation of an American iconography. Her poems, with their juxtapositions and interweavings ("Jena, Louisiana" recalls Emmet Till; a child's pulled teeth are replaced with bullets beneath her pillow) make a new-age palimpsest—not the dim shadows of images on an erased scroll, but one we might imagine as images flicker and fade on the black of the iPad screen. Or, more quaintly, it is what we might see if we could peer down through a stack of daguerreotype plates laid one atop the other. Etched onto glass, the stories accumulate and do not fade.

But Herd does not seem interested in a telling. She seems determined to make her own use of this secret alphabet that has spelled so much pain and called forth so much grandeur in the life of a nation—pain that is both personal and political. In her poem "My Mama" Herd captures the personal pain and toughness natural to the work of raising women, and of raising oneself:

I wrote to her once, said  
I'd slept with more dick than  
Stars on the flag. How patriotic  
Was her response....

"In the Company of Women"—a tribute to rambunctious, feminist women—may be seen as a further comment on the portrait of Mama, but it also suggests the wisdom of embracing diverse models into one's life. By re-writing the film title "In the Company of Men," it also examines the political, affirming the portrait of American corporate culture.

Herd's poetry tells its stories in headlines, in songs, and in revision. In the title poem that closes the book, we learn of a parallel alphabet:

Teach that the alphabet begins with l.

The language of n spells n-i-g-g-e-r. The language of l spells l-o-v-e. This is the balancing act of resistance, the counterforce that holds the relativistic language of n at bay. This is the language of your pen—the language of Fredrick Douglas who wrote his story into history by, figuratively, laying his "pen with which he wrote in the gashes." /Call it the word, important as blood./ write Niki.

Niki Herd knows that the pen is a sword we wield in our battle for words. And with the right alphabet even the Cookie Monster can dream. When we can shed our skins, Cookie Monster can propose to Michelle Obama, 'who is pretty/ as miss piggy / is fat' and offer to run away with her and "make / cookies / cookies/ cookies" together!

Special Section:  
**DISPLACEMENT**



# Checks Cashed

TARYN CRENSHAW



# Black(en) the Mystique

IRESHA PICOT

Betty Freidan was wrong.  
Didn't she know that we were happy?  
The brown ones anyway.  
    In our homes.  
But she forgot to seek out our mystique.

If she did, we could have told her:  
Our homes were safe spaces,  
Warmth-enclosed by Granny's soft wrinkle hands,  
Good food  
Matriarchs  
    Reaching back.  
Thigh Slapping, Head back: Laughter.  
Homemade creations  
Embracement  
Solitary Communion  
    Generations: Meet.  
Refuge  
Sanctuary  
Loud mouths: tongues running free  
Smiles  
Othermothers: Loving  
Oral Traditions  
    At kitchen tables  
Sisters. Homegirls.  
Dexterity  
Affirmations  
Testimonies  
    Whole.

...If she would have asked, we would have told her, our homes were not  
desolated in patriarchal prisons. Our homes belonged to us.

## Sale of Contents

JOHN GREY

The auctioneer's voice  
stabs my brow  
but won't burst out the other side.  
How much am I bid  
for these thoughts, these sorrows, these memories.  
Let strangers hold up our best china to the light.  
I'm feeling a price to my cerebellum,  
my ventricles, my pons.  
How much for my language, my calculation,  
my sensory input, my control of movement.  
He's at the microphone,  
speaking in tongues,  
a Mick Jagger for the Sotheby's set,  
a preacher with mammon in mind.  
What about this dining room furniture,  
this water color, this kitchen table?  
Still, no one can take away the fact  
that hands touched, eyes saw,  
bodies slept and sat.  
Take the tintypes, steal the trumpet,  
stow the images in your trunks.  
But the years are not on offer,  
the love is not for sale.  
Going once, going twice, going, going,  
he shouts about all the things that stay.

Urban Ruins  
TARYN CRENSHAW



## Birth Certificate

MARTHY SILVERTHORNE

Money emptied the box, rearranging dust.  
She remembered what her grandmama said  
about spring cleaning; we's just rearranging  
dust, little Money. She pulled old newspapers  
off the next layer; there it lay, her birth certificate.

Child: Lena Monique Divine.

Mother: Lena Divine.

Father: Unknown

Money knew that was not true.

Her grandmama told her how her mama ran  
the streets early. Back then running the streets  
with white folks was dangerous but not as dangerous  
as coming home with a white baby in your belly.

These words touched Money as she looked  
at the fading birth certificate. Her grandmama  
taught her everything, her mama, nothing.  
She could barely utter her own mama's name  
and her father, surely his name was not Unknown;  
surely he was never a father.

# The Opening

BETTINA JUDD

betsey leans in with sure hands  
slosh of seeping liquid  
lucy prepares for metal on wet tissue  
menstrual blood to urine to feces

we are an unfortunate journey, a plunder  
darkness's heart and treasured coast  
there is something to be found here  
something not to be seen

introduce spoon and i am sacrament  
unforgivable sin and reprieve practiced  
in the dark ghetto of my body

there is something to master here  
something to enslave

dear lucy, dear betsey  
that we three weren't so perfectly broken  
the scent of us so eagerly hunted  
if our mouths, when opened up  
could light our darkness

“An assistant on each side lays a hand in the folds between the glutei muscles and the thigh, the ends of the fingers extending quite to the labia majora [...] and then, by lifting the perineum, stretching the sphincter, and raising up the recto-vaginal septum, it is easy to view the whole vaginal canal as it is to examine the fauces by turning a mouth widely open, up to a strong light.”

—J. Marion Sims “On The Treatment Of Vesico-Vaginal Fistula”

# Lilith to Eve

BETTINA JUDD

in these millions of years  
they have not realized that this  
is the original sin  
God, spoiled her first son  
and he split sister-wives in two  
i am mad woman  
you are ruin.

imagine  
if She assigned you to me  
they would have found in Ethiopia  
two skulls resting chin to chin  
two sets of pelvic bone in  
fossilized embrace

# Bettina Judd's Poetic Justice

ALAN KING

She didn't go looking for poetry. In fact, it was the other way around, Bettina Judd told a packed house Friday at the 14th and V streets Busboys and Poets. She was the Sept. 9 feature at the Nine on the Ninth monthly poetry event, the longest running series hosted exclusively by Hughes poet-in-residence Derrick Weston Brown.

A bi-coastal Cave Canem Fellow, the Spelman College alumna infuses her interest in women's studies, social justice and spirituality into her poetry and visual art, reminding me of the point Kim Addonizio and Dorianne Laux make in their book *The Poet's Companion*: "There is a world inside each of us that we know better than anything else, and a world outside of us that calls our attention." However, Bettina navigates two other worlds: improvisation and performance venues like Busboys and Poets, and the scholarly work of research and theory in the Women's Studies program at the University of Maryland, College Park, focusing on intertextual narratives.

The poems she read that night came from her dissertation, a poetic and visual exploration of body, memory and the history of gynecological experimentation on Black women in the US, and an academic and creative venture on affect and Black feminist politics in Black women's art.

Among those poems is the "Etymology of Anarcha I," which alludes to a slave woman named Anarcha who suffered severe vaginal tears from childbirth. The damage resulted in Anarcha's inability to control her bowels and bladder, according to various sources. Though the speaker in "Etymology of Anarcha I" is not Anarcha, the persona suffers from a similar condition although she wasn't giving birth.

The audience at Busboys and Poets tensed and squirmed in their seats from the poem's physical detail:

when the tearing came there was  
no baby in the canal but a new route:  
fistula, with a hard f like fetal  
freak, fatal, furor.

The audience bristled at the poem's psychological details:

i needed the f when the break screamed  
no sound from me but fire, fuchsia  
becoming an un-fuckable woman is a freedom  
the black hole of my sex, a fare  
to the good doctor i will be flesh  
which you will think brutal.



Slave women like Anarcha, Betsy (sometimes spelled "Betsey") and Lucy were used as guinea pigs by Dr. Marion Sims, who experimented on them to hone his skills in what would later become gynecology, a medical practice that focuses on the female reproductive system. The three slave women's spirits haunted Busboys and Poets' Langston Hughes room, summoned through Bettina's poems.

In "The Opening," Betsy and Lucy come alive: "betsey leans in with sure hands/ slosh of seeping liquid/ lucy prepares for metal on wet tissue/ menstrual blood to urine to feces." There's companionship between Betsey, Lucy and the speaker, who's also been experimented on, as we surmise when the speaker says: "we are an unfortunate journey, a plunder/ darkness's heart and treasured coast."

These psychological details intensify the horrors of experiments done on Black women's bodies: "[...] introduce spoon and i am sacrament/ unforgivable sin and reprieve practice/ in the dark ghetto of my body," and illustrate the companionship between Bettina's speaker and the other two women:

dear lucy, dear betsey  
that we three weren't so perfectly broken  
the scent of us so eagerly hunted  
if our mouths, when opened up  
could light our darkness

Bettina's speaker/persona illustrates Addonizio's and Laux's observation: there's no equation between good poetry and unhappy circumstances.

Last night's reading was heavy—the weight of history so present in that room. But Bettina didn't leave us there. She brought it home with her poem "Full Bodied Woman" that had women calling out uh huh! and I know that's right! The women and men in the crowd exchanged knowing glances with one another when Bettina read:

a Full Bodied Woman gives life in edible chunks.  
those who know partake. those who don't  
run to lesser women, and die of starvation.

Then the crowd's affirmations got louder:

from this we know She will return  
for who could reign over a woman who  
sings I'm a Woman without apology? As in:  
I am that I am.

Bettina made us laugh during the Q & A with Busboys and Poet's poet-in-residence Derrick Weston Brown, who started the monthly reading series six years ago. Asked how poetry found her, the poet covered her smile. "It's a really embarrassing story," Bettina said. "Big up to John Singleton!" This puzzled the audience until the poet elaborated. It was Janet Jackson's character, Justice, in Singleton's 1993 film *Poetic Justice* that started Bettina on her journey as a writer. Like her speaker found with the three slave women, Bettina found companionship with Poetry. So much so that it still wakes her up with the 3 a.m. urge to write.

"It's like a ghost. It knocks against your head," Bettina said. Of her friend, Poetry, she added: "It kept finding me even when I thought I was through with it."

## House Tours

MICHELE HITE

The National Park Service tour of the home of Martin Luther King Jr. begins outside with the larger community. You learn that "Sweet Auburn" was the wealthiest black community in the world and that it was highly integrated. Integration in this sense means the intermingling of black folk of various economic positions and levels of educational attainment. Thus, the simple "shot-gun" style homes of domestic workers were situated among the Queen Anne-style homes of teachers, doctors, and ministers. Once inside, the tour extends to most of the rooms that the family used when a young Martin King would have enjoyed the company of his siblings, parents, maternal grandparents and boarders.

When I was teaching a course on the South and its literature, I framed the course around the concepts of history and memory. I have taught the course twice and each time I have struggled to integrate historic sites and monuments into the class study. In addition to trying to avoid having students pay additional money for the class by requiring these experiences, I don't always feel as though I have a sufficient command over the physical texts. This was certainly the case when I came across a reference to Joel Chandler Harris in David Blight's *Race and Reunion: The Civil War in American Memory*, a key historical work used in my class. I decided that I wanted to visit The Wren's Nest—the name given to Harris's home because of the wrens that had made a nest in the mailbox there—so that I could think about this site and consider how I might use it for class.

Compared to the King home, the Harris home felt massive. While neither house tour explicitly addressed the nature of the domestic work performed in the homes, the King home showed signs of it as the kitchen was a part of the tour and a clothes wringer was visible. Domestic labor at the Wren's Nest was concealed. I knew that after the Civil War 98% of black women in Atlanta worked as domestic laborers and even poor white women sought the help of laundresses, so it didn't take much to conclude that the Harris's employed black women. As Historian Tera W. Hunter notes, a "middle-class home employed a general domestic...or perhaps a cook, full or part time. An upper-middle-class family most likely added a child-nurse." Given the size of the Harris family and their wealth, I wanted to learn more about the people who worked there.

The docent told me that "Chloe" worked for the family and he showed me a picture of a black woman in uniform. He told me that he thought that she and her husband either lived downstairs, in what we would think of as the basement. The kitchen was out back in the quarters and had not been preserved. The tour of the Harris home did not include the kitchen as it had not been renovated. He also noted that the institutional memory was not as good as it could be so there was very little else that he could tell me about Chloe.

When I got home, I sent him an email that my friend and mentor Fon Gordon, a history professor at the University of Central Florida, helped me to craft:

Dear Lain Shakespeare:

I had the pleasure of having you as my tour guide on Saturday, February 19, 2011 when I visited the Wren's Nest. I found the tour both thoughtful and engaging. As a Professor of English/African American Studies, I was particularly struck by the beautiful photograph of Chloe present in the dining room of the Harris home and the insight you were able to offer into her tenure at the Wren's Nest. Having taught a course on black women and domestic work, I am interested in learning more about Chloe; perhaps you might help me? Do you know her last name? Can you mark the fifteen year time period during which she worked for the Harris family? Do you know who her husband was (i.e. Name? Occupation?) Can you tell me what her duties would have been (i.e. was she solely the cook or was she also a nanny and a housekeeper)? Finally, can you tell me the name of the photographer who took the beautiful picture of Chloe? Is it possible to obtain a copy of that photograph? If this is possible, what is the reproduction fee?

Though my colleague was not able to join me on the tour, I am most eager to tell her about Chloe as the literary journal that our department publishes is entitled Aunt Chloe, she will find this an interesting connection.

Thank you so much for your time and consideration.

His response was very thorough:

Michelle,

I only know a few things about Chloe Henderson. . . .

"Chloe Henderson came from her home in the country twice a day to milk the cows, walking two miles down what is now Cascade Road to West End. Chloe was a "character," and undoubtedly furnished father with material for many of his stories. She was very religious and could not be persuaded to live out of sight of her church, the "Philadelphia Baptist." She was eventually the mother of twelve children, and one or two of them were usually in service around the place, as yard boy or

house boy. I mention their servants thus specifically because they played their part in the family life with a certain vividness, and became attached to the fortunes of the family in a way which is rare nowadays; also because they figure in many of the character sketches and are frequently mentioned by name in father's letters. . . .

Julia Collier Harris also describes Chloe:

Undoubtedly Chloe, the faithful general factotum of the Harris family for so many years, furnished hints for the character of Aunt Minervy Ann. The old soul's unctuous humor, vivid speech, and downright ways are all reflected in her literary kinswoman.

. . . In *Dearest Chums and Partners*, there are a few details sprinkled here and there:

- It's implied she might originally hail from Fayetteville (that's where her niece's corpse was taken back to)
- Harris, in the same kind of tone he reserves for poking fun at his wife, said this of her in June 1900: "Lizzie, the cook, went to Fayette yesterday [...]. Chloe has taken her place and makes as much fuss among the pots and pans as a blindfolded cow. Two or three times today I have gone out to see if the range had caved in or the hot water tank had exploded. Ask Chloe about it, and her reply is, 'Dey wan't no fuss out here. Maybe I mought er set the kittle down.'"
- Similarly, in 1901: "I haven't seen the Chloe tribe in some time. Mrs. Richardson, who is now a widow, wants to collect some back rent from them. She might as well try to make them use soap. As soon as anything is said about money, Johnson takes down his crutches, and beings to limp, Chloe goes to bed with typhoid fever, and Rufus's legs lean in further than ever. If they hear that they have to pay back rent, three or four of them will permit themselves to be buried alive." Lizzie, and Rufus, and Banks and Calvin are to come in to the tune of Sousa's marches, played on the piano by Essie, tear up the carpets, knock down the plastering, break the clocks, and drop a stove in the back porch." These people, with the exception of Banks and Calvin, all seem to be part of Chloe's family, though their relationships are unclear. Rufus may be her husband, but might also be an older son.

The photograph (attached, along with another one) is available at the Emory Archives. I don't know the reproduction fee. That's all I have for you. I hope it helps! It was a pleasure meeting you Saturday, and please let me know if I can be of any further assistance.

The additional information that Lain provided greatly informed how I thought about "Chloe." In addition to not having known her last name, I had thought she lived with the Harris family, which would have been an uncommon choice for a black woman who worked as a domestic in Atlanta. Julie Collier Harris's letter places Henderson in the company of those women who added to their physical labor in order to preserve the freedom of their own domestic spaces rather than live in the homes of their employers. Having her children employed by the Harris family also meant that she could keep them close. We also get a portrait of a woman who makes a further "reading of the world" as she negotiates perceptions of black hygiene and health with the employer's demand for rent money. While Collier Harris suggests that the Henderson family benefitted from the "fortunes of the [Harris] family, we know from their difficulty paying rent that they were not well-compensated for their labor. What we do know is that employing them, at exceedingly low rates, meant that the Harris family was afforded time for creativity.

Thinking about what The Wren's Nest Tour would have been like without my having asked about "the help," reminds me of a passage in Alexander McCall Smith's novel *The Right Attitude to Rain* where he writes:

But there was another side to the heritage of well-to-do Mobile, of course: the dark side of the South—and this was not talked about, or used not to be. It was there, though, and could be seen in the musty family photograph albums, where the servants stood in the background, under a tree, beside the cars, carrying things. That's what can lie behind money, thought Isabel; not always, but often: expropriated lives; the lives of people in the background, nameless, forgotten, who never really owned very much.

"Well-to-do" Atlanta resembles Mobile in this way if we do not wonder about "the lives of people in the background." The narrative that *The Wren's Nest* tells about itself erases the Henderson's daily contributions. The Harris's attempted to expropriate Chloe Henderson's life and yet her efforts to carve out a space for herself emerge through a close consideration of her choices as well as the narratives she actually offered the family about why she could not live with them or why she could not pay "back rent."

It should really make you wonder about not only the horrors that might have awaited a black woman who lived inside the home of a white family in the Jim Crow south, but the better worlds that they made for themselves in their own homes. In other words, what was so good to have kept someone walking two miles each way twice a day? What made the family's indebtedness to a landlord worthwhile? Wouldn't it be interesting to see *The Wren's Nest* from the perspective of a two mile walk? Unfortunately, unlike the King birth home tour, the Harris house tour doesn't begin outside in the community, but it might be a little more interesting if it did.



Chloe Henderson



## CONTRIBUTORS

**Evelyn N. Alfred** is an educator, poet, and bibliophile based in Glen Burnie, Maryland. Her poetry, stories, and reviews have been featured in several publications including: *Quinc Review*, *Lambda Book Report*, *WITL*, and forthcoming in the *ISFN Anthology #1*. She currently teaches English at an independent school in Crownsville, Maryland.

**Taryn Lee** Crenshaw is a documentarian, artist, and educator. Using art to expose marginalized realities of the oppressed, Taryn's work exhibits oral history narratives through the mediums of photography and film.

**John Grey** is an Australian born poet who has been a US resident since late seventies. He works as financial systems analyst. He was recently published in *Slant*, *Briar Cliff Review* and *Albatross* with work upcoming in *Poetry East*, *Cape Rock* and *REAL*.

**Rachel Eliza Griffiths** is a poet, painter, and photographer. She received her MFA in Creative writing from Sarah Lawrence College. She is the author of *Miracle Arrhythmia* and *Mule & Pear*, and lives in New York.

**Niki Herd** grew up in Cleveland and received degrees in Creative Writing from the University of Arizona and Antioch in Los Angeles. Her work has appeared in several journals and anthologies and has been supported by organizations including the Astraea Foundation, Cave Canem, and the Virginia Center for the Creative Arts. *The Language of Shedding Skin* is her debut collection of poems. She currently lives in Washington, DC.

**Michelle S. Hite** grew-up in a black working class community in Cleveland, Ohio. The desire to enliven flattened, popular representations of the lives of black working people fuels her current academic work. She teaches literature at Spelman College.

**Bettina Judd** is a bicoastal Cave Canem Fellow who infuses her interest in women's studies, social justice, and spirituality in her poetry and visual art. Bettina is an alumna of Spelman College and is currently pursuing her doctorate in Women's Studies at the University of Maryland, College Park. Her work can be found in the literary journal *Torch* (Fall/Winter 2007 and Spring/Summer 2010 issues) and Cave Canem's anthology XI.

**Alan King** is a poet and journalist, living in the DC metropolitan area. He writes about art and domestic issues on his blog. In addition to teaching creative writing



throughout the DC/Baltimore region, he is a part-time poetry instructor at Duke Ellington School of the Arts and the senior program director at the DC Creative Writing Workshop. Find him at <http://alanwking.wordpress.com>.

**Jesse Minkert** was a visual artist, but a threat to his vision turned him to writing. In Seattle, he founded the nonprofit corporation Arts and Visually Impaired Audiences. His works have appeared in magazines, anthologies, and spoken word recordings. Each summer Minkert teaches radio theater to visually impaired teenagers.

**Wayne Lee** teaches at the Institute of American Indian Arts in Santa Fe, NM. His poems have appeared in *New Millennium*, *The Ledge*, *Tupelo Press*, *California Quarterly*, *The Floating Bridge Anthology* and other publications. His collections *Doggerel & Caterwauls: Poems Inspired by Cats and Dogs*, and *Twenty Poems from the Blue House* were published by Whistle Lake Press.

**Teresa Leggard** is a poet and writer from New Jersey. She's published with Spelman before, as an undergraduate. Her most recent publication appears in the current issue of *Reverie: Midwest African American Literature*. Teresa lives in Kansas City with her husband, where she is a greetings editor for Hallmark Cards.

**Iresha Picot**, M.Ed is an activist, currently residing in Philadelphia. She works diligently around prison issues and is an active member with the Malcolm X Grassroots Movement in Philly. She is co-founder of the Ntozake Shange School of Literary Thought, Summer for the Sistas project, and "Womanish: A Sista Manifesta."

**Tom Rastrelli** earned his Master of Professional Writing from the University of Southern California in May 2011. His blog, [www.gospelaccordingtohate.com](http://www.gospelaccordingtohate.com), confronts religious hypocrisy with a mixture of memoir, commentary, and personal essay. Tom has a B.A. in Theatre Arts (Northern Iowa) and a Master of Divinity (St. Mary's, Baltimore).

**Christina M. Rau** is a professor of English at Nassau Community College and the founder of "Poets In Nassau," a reading circuit on Long Island, NY. Her poetry most recently appeared in *Potomac Review* and *River Poets Journal*, and she is guest-editor of the 2011 forthcoming *Long Island Sounds Anthology*. She loves moonbeams, puppies, and of course, sarcasm.

**Carrie Shipers's** poems have appeared or are forthcoming in *Connecticut Review*, *Crab Orchard Review*, *Hayden's Ferry Review*, *Laurel Review*, *New England Review*, *North American Review*, and other journals. She is the author of two chapbooks, *Ghost-Writing* (Pudding House, 2007) and *Rescue Conditions* (Slipstream, 2008), and a full-length collection, *Ordinary Mourning* (ABZ, 2010).

**Marty Silverthorne** resides in Greenville, North Carolina. He holds degrees from St. Andrews Presbyterian College and East Carolina University. He is employed as a Licensed Clinical Addiction Specialist. He has received several North Carolina Regional Arts Grants.

**Suzanne Sunshower** is contributing editor at *Quiet Mountain Essays*. Her new collection of poetry, *Stop Film*, deals with issues of identity, place, and belonging. It is composed of three intertwining catalogs of poems: Home Movies, Training Films, and Travelogs. These poems are from the Home Movies catalog in *Stop Film*.

**Wendy Maragh Taylor** is a licensed clinical social worker who seeks to help others find their voice, so they can better their lives. She uses her writing to engage, provoke and heal. Wendy earned her BA from Brown University and MSW from New York University.

**Rachel Trousdale** teaches at Agnes Scott College in Decatur, GA. Her poems have appeared in the *Atlanta Review*, *Confrontation*, and *Pocket Field Guide*. Her book on displaced writers, *Nabokov, Rushdie, and the Transnational Imagination*, was published by Palgrave in 2010; her current research is on humor in twentieth-century poetry.

## Aunt Chloe's Call for Work

Aunt Chloe seeks to publish the finest poetry, prose, fiction, nonfiction and visual art by established and emerging writers and artists. We take pride in publishing work that tackles issues of the political, personal, mundane and earth-shattering in artful and candid ways. Aunt Chloe publishes an annual issue in April.

Our 2012 issue will include a "Special Section," on War. Contributors are encouraged to interpret the theme broadly. Of course we are aware of the several armed conflicts within or between nations on the globe. But we perceive the state of war to include more personal territories of the soul, the mind, the spirit. We envision the 2012 issue as a way to find out what writers have to say about any or all of these armed or unarmed conflicts.

## 2012 *Aunt Chloe* Submission Guidelines

Please read the following submission guidelines carefully to ensure that your work is considered. Aunt Chloe will begin accepting submissions **September 30, 2011** through **January 1, 2012**. Please expect decisions by March 31, 2012.

A. Aunt Chloe **ONLY** accepts **electronic submissions**. The following requirements must be met:

- a cover letter in the body of an email with your name, mailing address, email address, phone number and the titles of each piece, and how you heard about Aunt Chloe
- **DO NOT** include your name on the work
- a brief biographical statement in the third person, 50 words or fewer
- text files must be in Microsoft Word .doc format only. Do not place text in the body of an email.
- Visual art must be in .jpeg format

B. Previously published work is acceptable when solicited by the editors, and when the contributor has retained rights.

C. Aunt Chloe accepts simultaneous submissions. If your work is submitted elsewhere please inform us and if it is accepted by another publication please notify us as soon as possible.

D. Payment for publication is in the form of two copies per contributor. Authors retain all rights to their work.

E. Aunt Chloe submission requirements:

- Poetry: 3-5 poems
- Fiction: 1,200 word limit
- Essays, Articles, Reviews: 1,200 word limit
- Art: All images should be in .jpeg format

Please send all submissions to: **[auntchloe@gmail.com](mailto:auntchloe@gmail.com)**