



Visions 14

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*Visions is dedicated to the students and staff of
Basic Education, SIAST Kelsey Campus*

*Thank you to those students who contributed
stories, poetry and art to this anthology.*

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Heart and Soul

The pulse starts to race;
heart beats harder;
The blood comes to a boil.

Starting as soft as silk,
your lips press up against mine.
Ever so slightly your
fingers run up my chest and stomach

Thoughts do not proceed.
Impulse begins.

As your fingers lead me from
your head to your toes,
I kiss between your chest.
The heat start to rise,
the intensity becomes . . .
Overwhelming.

Looking in each others' eyes
The love is not missed.
Our bodies start to tingle,
going from the tips of our toes,
to the top of our heads.

Pressing our bodies together
wrapping our arms around each other
ever so tight, not letting go for anything,
but to say "I love you."

Albert Fowell

Concrete Palace

If I could turn back time
this bottle I let fall upon the floor
would never go dry.

The chaos can be seen in all
of our eyes.
As it begins to heighten,
it come as no surprise.
Moods, Words, Lies,
are a way of life
To fight is for honour
To be hurt is unheard of.
Meals are only as good as
your hand.

You can only live as long
as well as you can talk.
You are only as smart
as the street you lay your
head upon.

Honestly, I tell you no lies,
if I could turn back time,
this bottle I let fall upon the floor
would never go dry.

Albert Fowell

To My Children

The river swirls in a million little circles and eventually,
Drains into the sea.

 You're my every hope and sincerest wish;
 You're everything that truly represents me!
If I could grab all the stars and give them to you in gold bars,
That simply wouldn't be thanks enough for me!

 You're my everlasting light,
 My bright side of the moon,
 My sturdy anchor in the stormy sea.

I watch the wind disturb every branch of the tree,
 Yet the roots stay firmly in the ground.
 You're my dream, my destination,
 My inspiration when I hear familiar sounds.

My dedication to you will always grow,
 And my love for you will never lose its glow.
 You're my pride and joy, my confidante,
 You're as precious as a gem to me.

No matter what paths our lives take,
No matter what we do,
 We'll always share special feelings
 Only felt between us two.

Much like the bridge across the river
 That stands looking so longingly,
You're my bonds for life that I think of always,
 And forever cherish strongly.

The riverbanks in time will surely crumble,
 But the bridge between us will hold forever,
 If your world should ever seem to tumble.

Allana Hearn (1997)

A Second Chance

My name is Clarence Pine. I'm 40 yrs old, and I'm from the First Nations of Canada. I'm married and have four step-children and five biological children. My wife's name is Debra. My children's names are Sheryl, Carla, Heather, Natasha, Colby, Cory, Keesha, Tyler, and Kona. My wife and I have 4 grandchildren. I've been working as a labourer for bricklayers. I did not see much of a career in this line of work. I realized that I had a lot more to offer to myself and my family, so I decided to go back to school to get myself a new and rewarding career. As you can see, I'm a busy family man with a positive future.

I did not always feel this way; my life was very negative in the past, and I put myself through a lot of grief and pain. I was born in 1960, at Blind River, Ontario. My family and I lived on our reserve until I was three years old. Then, my father went to the city to look for work. A little while later my father sent for us. Next, my mother refused to go to Toronto, and one of my uncles set our shack on fire while we were sleeping. Luckily no one was killed. As you can see, this was the way my father got us to go to the big city of Toronto, Ontario.

When we got to Toronto, my father got us a place to live in a rough area called Cabbage Town. My father didn't work for very long. This must've bothered him because he started to drink quite a bit. This was the start of my very dysfunctional life. After that, my mother started drinking because my father was abusing her. This was a way for her to deal with the abuse. Finally, after living like this for a few years Social Services stepped in and took my brothers and me away to foster homes.

My brothers and I got separated into different foster homes. This became a normal life for us for several reasons. First, none of the homes at the time could accommodate all of us together, so we were always separated. Second, my parents made several attempts to get their lives together but to no avail, and Social Services would always release us back to our parents. This continued for several years until the inevitable happened; my parents got separated. My mother was left with trying to raise five boys on her own.

Around this time I started to be a very disruptive young boy. I started fighting with my brothers. At the same time, I started making life very difficult for my mother, and I would not listen to her. Meanwhile, I began stealing money from my mother. By this time Social Services took me away from my family. In the early part of the seventies, I was placed all over Ontario; no foster home could handle me. Even my father made attempts to take care of me. I would not even listen to him. As a result, I was sent to an assessment centre for juveniles.

During my assessment, it was decided that I needed strict supervision, and I got sent to a reformatory called St. Johns. This was the beginning of a very rough road for me. At the beginning, I was small for my age, and I was picked on by the other boys. At the same time, I was very naive in the way I was to behave in this place, and I was subjected to physical abuse by the staff and Christian brothers that ran the place. Even all the discipline tactics could not change me; I defied all authority. As a result, when I turned sixteen I was given a bus ticket and sent on my way. At the age of sixteen I was living in Toronto, Ontario. I started to drink because I felt that I did not belong with the rest of society, and that everyone was against me. I started to get myself into trouble, and I would always fight with people. This led me into a very different world; adult jail at the age of sixteen.

In 1976, I was incarcerated in the Don Jail in the city of Toronto. This was a very old place which got condemned a few years after I left. The Don Jail was very unfit for men for a number of reasons. First, the cells were so small that only a single bed could fit in, and there wasn't a toilet to use in the cell. If you had to go to the washroom, you had to use a small pail in your cell. Second, it was always over crowded. The living area was always unsanitary, and I would always have sores due to the living conditions. Third, you couldn't show any signs of weakness. If you did, you'd be preyed upon. I did not like the way weak inmates were treated. As a result, I made myself to be tough so that the other inmates wouldn't bother me. Unfortunately, I carried this attitude with me for a long time, even when I got out of jail.

For a long time, I could not function in society. I was very bitter; I did not like myself or anyone near me. I couldn't have girlfriends. If I found a girlfriend, it wouldn't last for very long. I'd be abusive or end up in jail. My life consisted of two things: going to jail, and getting out of jail. This went on for a few years until I turned 18. By this time, I found myself doing three years for stealing a car and for dangerous driving. At the same time, I found myself going into a very grey and bleak world. Kingston Penitentiary was one of the worst places I ever laid eyes on. First, I was given a set of green clothes to identify me as an inmate, which were too big for me. Second, I was sent to a range full of very violent people who would sooner stab you than argue with you. Third, I had to watch myself because of the homosexuals; they liked to prey on the newcomers especially young ones like myself. As a result, I had to be someone other than myself. I played the tough guy with no fears. I also lifted weights vigorously to get bigger.

I got released on day parole, after spending about two-thirds of my time. I didn't last very long out on day parole for a number of reasons. First, I was leaving the institute with a very big chip on my shoulders. Then, I found it very difficult to obey rules that were

set for me. Finally, I didn't care if I was sent back or not; I couldn't look beyond tomorrow. As a result, I spent the remainder of my sentence in prison.

In 1983, I got released from Collins Bay Institution. By this time, I was taking drugs, popping pills, and using the needle. At the same time, I needed money to pay for the drugs. First, I would steal from anybody, even from my own family. Then, if I couldn't steal, I would rob people with physical violence. At the same time, I lived with hookers to get their money to do drugs. As you can see, I didn't last very long on the streets. For the next five years I went in and out of provincial jails.

In 1988, I met a drug dealer at one of the jails. He gave me his phone number, and he told me to contact him once I got out of jail. I phoned him when I got out. Unfortunately it was a bad mistake for me. Now I became a drug dealer. I sold cocaine to strippers in bars. Soon I had to collect money for this dealer. This created a lot of enemies for me. Later, I became addicted. The dealer had no more use for me, so we parted ways. After a short time, I robbed a drug store for their drugs, and I got caught. Again I went back to the penitentiary. Near the end of my sentence, I got a letter from a girl named Debra. She told me that she knew about me through my younger brother, and that she would like to get to know me. We corresponded through letters and the phone.

In 1991, I was released on mandatory supervision. I stayed in Kingston, Ontario for two weeks. Then I decided that I didn't like the town so I decided to go to Toronto to spend time with my mother because I hadn't seen her for a long time. The first night that I stayed at my mothers, I got a phone call from Debra. She wanted me to go and visit her; she was even going to pay for the airfare for me. I thought to myself, "Why not? I have nothing to lose." The next day I jumped on a flight to Edmonton, Alberta.

After getting off the flight I walked around the airport looking for her. As soon as I saw her, I knew it was her from the picture she sent me. At first, I was very shy because it was awhile since I'd had dealings with the opposite sex, but soon we got to know each other pretty well. Most of the time, I was drinking and partying, probably to hide my pains. After a short time, I ended up back in prison because I still had mandatory supervision to finish. Six months later I got released, and I moved to Edmonton.

While living in Edmonton I made half-hearted attempts to get my life together because we were given a beautiful little boy, but to no avail. Soon thereafter, I ended up doing drugs and drinking. This was a time when I became very violent towards Debra; I took all of my frustration out on her. I became so violent that I almost took her life. To this day this incident still tears at my heart. Around this time I made a serious decision to change my life around. First, I signed myself into a drug treatment program in St. Albert.

After going through the treatment, Debra and I made a decision to move to her reserve because her parents were getting ill because of their old age.

When we first moved to the reserve, Debra was pregnant with our second child, and I started to relapse. As a result, I found myself back in jail doing weekends for drinking and driving. Soon after, Debra and I decided to get married. We got married on April 29, 1993. For the next six years Debra and I would have our ups and downs. Also, we had been blessed with two more children, a boy and a girl. Being blessed with four children meant a serious look at my career although the money was not bad from the company I worked for. I felt that I had a lot more to offer to my family and myself. At that instant, I phoned Kelsey Institute, to enroll in their upgrading program. The creator must have been looking down on me because a short time later I was asked to come and participate in their program.

I've been here at Kelsey Campus since March 6, 1999. Besides learning about school work, I've been able to take a real hard look at myself and deal with my personal issues. I haven't completely overcome the past, but I've come a long way. First, my family means everything to me; I will do everything in my power to teach my children not to take the path that I had taken. Second, I hope to pay society back to show my appreciation of giving me a second chance in life. Third, I want to prove to myself that I can do something good for once in my life. I'll be finishing my grade 10 in a few weeks and will be starting Grade 12 on January 29, 2001. I hope to take a computer technical course once I'm finished my grade 12. I hope by writing about my past that it will help people to understand me and others who have had a difficult past.

Clarence Pine

Camp Kamenjak

On April 28, 1992, I had to take a detour from the road of life I was taking. My family and I were on our way to my aunt's place. That same evening my parents and my other sister went back to our house to bring some cookware that was forgotten, for the First-of-May barbecue. They were to be back in the morning, but it didn't happen. Our town was occupied by the rebels that night. My older sister and I stayed at our aunts for six months. Finally, we got a letter from our parents. The letter travelled ten days halfway across Bosnia; usually it would take only one day. The letter said that they were ok, and that there was a way for us to get back home. All we had to do is to go to our other aunt's place in Pula, Croatia. We borrowed some money from our aunt and were on our way with the first bus that was leaving for Zagreb in Croatia. The trip started on Monday, down the highway. After half an hour the driver took a dirt road that was leading down narrow and curvy road into the forest. He told us That we were all going to take the long way off-road to our destination. Our first day of driving was not so bad, except the flat tire. On Tuesday we stopped and picked up some more people who were leaving for Croatia. On Wednesday around 5:00 pm, the bus driver stopped just before a long field and said that the border was only a one-hour drive away. The bus started moving and everybody looked at their family member and said nothing. When the bus got to the border there were three buses before us. By the small house there were three army trucks, one jeep and there was one tank in the bush being somewhat covered with a camouflage net. The first bus was sent on its way, but some people were being taken off the second bus to the army truck. I was able to hear people crying, but their bus had to keep going on. The third bus before us was sent back toward that little house; I was not able to see what was going on with them over there. Now the soldiers were approaching our bus; two of them were asking for ID from all of us, while the other three were looking through our luggage. While they were calling the names, one by one we all had to get up, so they could see us. Now one of the soldiers was called outside. The one that stayed asked my sister and other women to get outside. Because they were over eighteen, they should stay and fight. I stood up and started walking towards them, but some people were trying to hold me back. The bus driver was telling him that I was in a need of an operation, so my sister had to go with me, but he didn't buy it, so the driver told my sister to try and pay him. She offered fifty Marks, which are German money. That would be about the same as fifty dollars Canadian, but he said, "No." He wanted two hundred, so that way he would let my sister and the other women go. The bus driver offered twenty. The woman that was asked to leave as well gave sixty, some old man at the back gave thirty and the old women, the mother of that other women gave thirty, so my sister had to give sixty. After he put the money in his pocket, he left the bus and we were on our way. A day later we were on

the shore of Croatia which is on the Adriatic Sea where we had to take the bus on the ferry. We were on that for several hours. After we continued our trip, my sister and I were dropped off in Rieka; that is a town two hours from Pula. That's the place we said our good-byes to the bus driver and everybody else. They continued towards Zagreb the capital of Croatia, and we were taking the bus to Pula. The trip was four days and three nights long. This trip in the normal time would take only one night by train; the road we would normally have taken to go to our hometown was first line of fire. We ended up staying with our aunt for longer than expected. After four months she sent us to the refugees camp that was in the same town. It was only six or seven blocks away from her house. I spent three years in the camp, Camp Kamenjak. This place was open only for two months before I was sent there. I was only thirteen years old, and I was living there from 1992 through to 1995.

At that time there were only about sixty people. Camp Kamenjak is still open and in use today. Its location is in the Pula, Croatia. It's on the shore of the Adriatic Sea and next door to Italy. In the first days that I lived there, it was very hard to believe that such a beautiful town could have such a sad place. The people in the camp felt so sad for what was happening to their country. At this place I met lots of people, from all parts of world. In the time I spent there, I learned a lot about different people and countries. Also I have learned English and some Spanish. I met people from England, Canada, USA, South Africa, Malaysia, China, Spain, Holland, Sweden, and so on.

Some time ago the camp was military, so it has a big and tall wall around the 3 main buildings. The first and main building is connected to the huge kitchen on the right side. In the summer, you could smell whatever was being cooked that day. My favourite meal was vanilla pudding, mashed potatoes, gravy and some kind of meat; I still don't know what it was. Right by the kitchen there was a playground, with a boat that was turned into a play boat for the kids and it had some monkey bars on top. The kids used this boat for drawing on. It had little flowers and little butterflies and bumblebees. This building had three floors up, plus one that was only one huge and three small rooms, with bunk beds. Actually all of the rooms in the camp had double beds. The big room was turned into a playroom for the kids and some time it was used as a bingo hall. In that room we would have a dance competition at least once a month just to lift the spirits of people. The prizes would be a couple of packs of cigarettes or a T-shirt. It was something that would interest people in to come and enter for the dance competition. The other rooms were for volunteers to sleep in, people who came to try and put hope in the eyes of refugees.

The second building was only two floors, and was turned into an old folk's home for the people whose families didn't make it out of the country. Every once a while outside by the front doors some old man would start telling about the time he was young; about World

War II and the things he had seen through his life and the last few years. That would last until late at night. Most of the time there would be at least ten to fifteen or more, people listening and having a smoke. Some people that were there were so skinny and sick that you could count every bone that they had. Soldiers mistreated those people while they were in the war camp in the occupied zone, back in Bosnia. There was an older man that had a tragic experience. Some time in 1993, he had to flee his hometown with his family, but they didn't make it. They all ended up in the mine area that was not marked. He lost his sister, his mother and his wife. In that same time he lost his left leg. Some people who heard the explosion were able to get him to the next town and get some help. Someone told me that he went back home and is staying at his brother's place. The third building was three floors tall and had a little house right by it, and a little park. That house was turned into a game room for the teenagers which had table tennis, darts, cards and a place just to sit down and listen to some music. One room in that little house was turned into a salon, in which the women from town would come on the weekends to cut hair as a good deed.

The first building was the one I was living in, on the second floor. My room had five different families that lived in it. Including me and my sister, there were seventeen people in it. We would use bed sheets to make separation, so we would have some privacy. The room was big, but having so many people sleeping in it looked very small. Some rooms had even more people than that. One room in the three building had thirty people in it; it was very hard. In that room there was a kid that was 3 and there were elders that were fifty and up.

I knew lots of people and volunteers, so I was something like a helper to translate from English to Bosnian which is my language. I was a very good friend to a boss of volunteers. She was from Denmark.

She allowed me to sleep on the roof during the summer. That was very nice because it was the tallest building in the camp. I liked sleeping on the roof. When you would lie down, all you could see was the stars and sky. Sometimes the wind would bring the smell of sea and beach. It was a beautiful place for a romantic evening because you could see most of the city and some of the old town in which an old arena was built while Romans ruled this area. The beach was five to seven minutes walking distance from the camp. That was a sight to see; the sand was bright yellow with some dark stones in the water. The beach was about 200 square feet. The left side of that place was rocky and about 160 to 165 feet high. That spot was excellent to dive off. That was the last thing I did before I left.

Drago

These Are the Times

These are the times of renewal, the times to face your fears,
the times to finally feel your laughter, to openly shed your tears.

These are the times for learning, the times for spreading love,
the times to look beyond yourself for answers from above.

These are the times for humble silence, the times for sharing pain,
the times for finding lifelong friends who understand what you explain.

These are the times to open up those creaky, dusty doors,
the times for finding for yourself the joys that can be yours.

I give my love and hope to you as you bravely carry on.
For life holds mystery, joy, and pain, but all these help to make you strong.

just be yourself!

Erin Lees

Gravity

Since gravity holds me to this chair,
I feel sustained, but somewhat unaware
Of how it would feel to soar through the air
Or float like unseen vapour into the anywhere.

Since I feel pain and the need to cry,
Must I question the reason we die?
Must I decipher the silent answers that reply
When I ask and wonder why?

Erin Lees

Untitled

You must have felt the sting of love and betrayal
Carried on heart-strings so fragile they could break.
You are a poet in your ways,
and you walk through my life unknowing of your grace.
You are like the sunshine in fields of rain,
the rainbows dappling ripened grain.
Thoughts of you are warm and sweet,
leaving me with feelings of great relief.
My heart surely stops at the sight of your smile.
If only it was meant for me, I would beam for awhile.
Your voice is soft and comforting.
I listen from a distance, and gather hope for future things.
If only you could feel what I can not show.
you may consider a love between us that could grow.
I see you and know without judgment
things about you that no-one would ever say.
I am not like anyone you have ever given the time of day.

Erin Lees

Dreams Don't Die

A new day dawns,
bright future glows.
I see it in your eyes,
as the gentle river flows.
I see your shining face
in the landscape of a dream,
and nothing can replace
the love we're meant to feel.
But I don't know where you are,
or even when we'll meet.
I just feel it in my heart
that our friendship will be sweet.
I long to touch your soft, warm lips,
and run my fingers through your hair,
but most of all, I long to know
you always will be there.
So in these times of trouble,
as you push away a sigh,
just draw another life-filled breath,
and know that dreams don't die.

Erin Lees

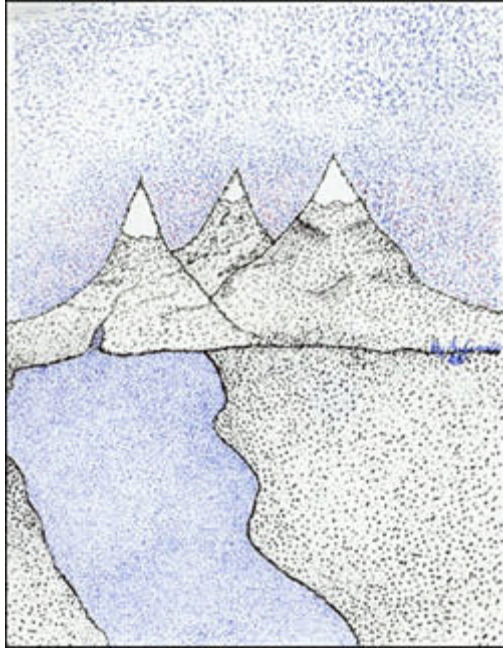
Emotional Misconceptions

A trembling fist goes through the glass-
reality is shattered for an instant.
Can't feel the pain or the warm blood dripping down,
can only see the red.

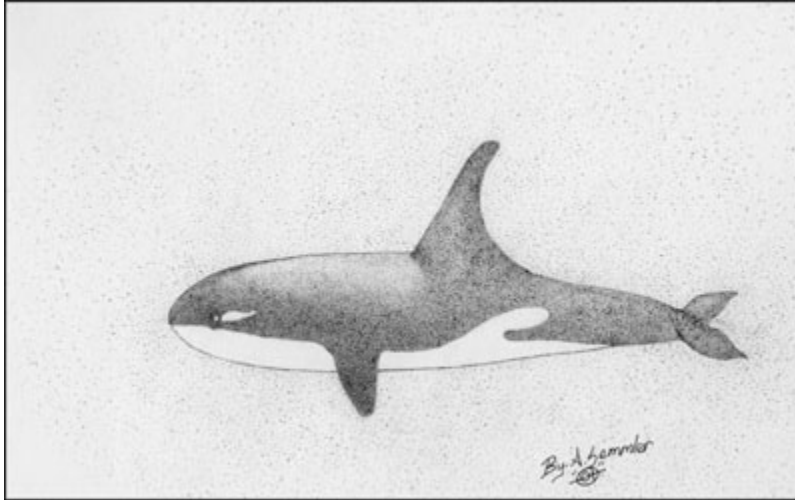
Pacing anxiously back and forth,
his heart is pounding in his chest.
What's done is done, as shock hits hard-
He doesn't want to hear the voices in his head.

In a mixed-up world,
confusion gives way to uncertainty.
He feels as though he's on the edge,
walking on eggshells,
breaking glass instead.

Erin Lees



Amanda Semler



Amanda Semler



Amanda Semler



Eugene Peeququat



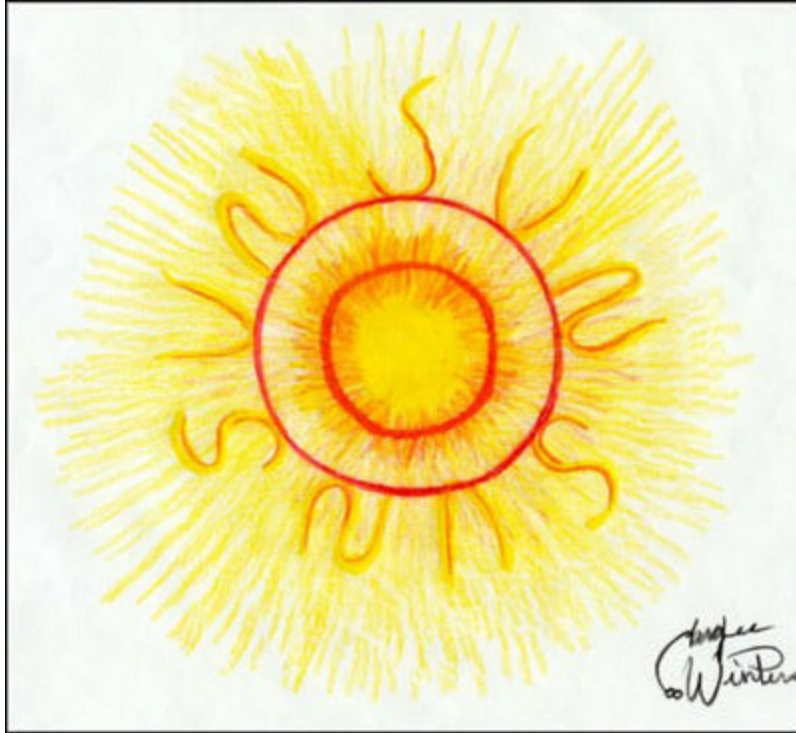
Eugene Peequaquat



Eugene Pequaquat



Taralee Winters



Taralee Winters

The Rock People

I stood among the rock people in all their glory
The land mesmerized me with its wisdom
I saw the mighty warriors
and the fierce animals that roamed the land before
I saw people united as one bright star
There in this land I could hear my soul speak
It told me not to forget that we are one
Even though we may not be the same in appearance
We are the same in spirit
I stood there among the rock people frozen in time
I stood there in their light.

Katherina Aguilera

Effigy of Perception

If I told a stranger that, this year,
I had witnessed the two-thousandth year of modern history;
 offered my love to friends and family;
played the romantic, the confidant, the consoler, and too the
 gentleman;
discovered my heart and offered it without reward;
 discovered my love, and left it unrequited;
 found my senses dissolved by jealousy;
 felt the elation of peace in my heart;
 bestowed my warmth upon others;
 helped those I care for understand my soul;
brought tears of emotion and happiness to mine own eyes, and
others;
 given of my blood to save my fellow human;
cried at my mistakes;
 smiled at my good fortune, usually taken for granted;
 accomplished small victories and great deeds;
 proven others wrong, and resigned in my defeat;
taken the long road instead of the short cut;
 taken the high road when the low had more to offer;
seen the injustice of it all and mourned for the loss of hope;
 seen the futility of it all, and wondered of the purpose;
 seen the beauty of it all, and wonders yet to come;
would that stranger consider me an enigma?

Luke Sather

Unpolarised View

I sit and ponder in quiet reflection,
 The plans I have in my expectation
To wit, I wonder the depths of my labour,
 Accomplishments driven by every endeavour
Alone, in silence, ensconced in this room,
 Bemoaning my problems, like shadows they loom
Transparent, my reasons, with no obfuscation,
 Apparent, my needs are, for some brief elation
I seek out some laughter, a gesture, a smile,
 My own thoughts will do me, at least for a while
For what is my purpose, if not for myself?
 A student expects to place life on the shelf
Unruly and listless, solutions seem few
 Yet truly, my questions reflect in this view.

Luke Sather

The Powerless

Take that which I may
offer you of body and
spirit.

It is mine to give, and mine
to conceal.

My hand, my shoulder,
my heart, my hope.

All is yours if you
need of it.

Desperately I wish for your
happiness and sanity
fleeting as they may be
given residence within
your battered dowry.

My resolve has stiffened
like a petrified eggshell
with thin cracks laughing
as my tears tickle down
like tepid water eroding away
the polish of my sparkle
reflected in your eyes.

Silently I give thanks
for your presence
illuminates
the cavernous depths of my
happy
solitude
flushing forth the creatures
that sleep within
guided towards the warmth
you abundantly provide.

Then, like an impact
against scratchy lace
I recoil upon sight
of your pursuits of fancy
Knowing I am powerless
to hold you with arms
nor words could grip
so tenderly as to stop
your march in search
of a new destiny oft
planned.

Verily I stand from a distance.
Calling out in wit
or speaking as sage,
merely sagacious in my years
to your veterened,
locomotive thought.
Changing nothing, but
for
the moment that I see
myself gazing back at
me in jade reflection.
And care simply to be,
a needed step along your path,
and you
a whirlpool in my ocean.

Luke Sather

Lamented

I never meant to give you up,
Nor lose you along the way.
Did you understand how much
it meant for me to hear
those sweet words you drizzled
on my melting heart?
And here I sit, long time passed
wondering if those words,
those thoughts
still creep into your reborn heart
to find familiar comfort
within
a soft space of warmth left for me.

Is it there? May I return?
Not now perhaps, we are not onlys,
merely firsts in the journey,
soft foot-falls leaving deep tracks
gently covered in by time.
I do not wish to dig out
my return into your hearth.

Merely admiring your light from afar
should be pleasure enough,
enough in my memories
the truth not clouded
save for my anxiety, insecurity.
But proof is there
that all was well and
welcome after a fashion.
No wrongdoings haunt me,
no choices regret
yet still I lament
what has been missing
between us now,
forlorn in my trivial
thoughts of inadequacy
that I could have been more,
or wanted you to be moreso.

Alas it is done, for what have

I lost that I did not release
freely into the world in my
own quest for flight.
This selfishness I cannot abide,
I hate myself for these
sickly human thoughts
of lamented hopes.
I wish to flee from the trap
I dig and cover
for my heart breaks
a little with each fall.

Perhaps a slight absence
can make the heart heal
as well as grow fonder
I can only hope you do
not hate me insomuch
as I hate myself for
doing so in selfish sanity.

Forgive.

Luke Sather

An Emergency Situation I Experienced

One time I got very sick all of a sudden; I found it very scary. The first day I was cleaning up my room when I started having pains out of nowhere, so I told my partner to call me a cab, but it was really painful, so I told him to cancel the cab and call 911. I felt helpless. I could not walk or sit. I was all over the floor throwing up. I did not know what the problem was, and when I got to the hospital, the doctor said it was food poisoning, and he put me on IV, and then he sent me home. The next day the same thing happened. I got an IV again, but the doctor still had no clue what was wrong with me, so he sent me home again. That same night, I got sick again. This time, I found out it was my gall bladder. My gall bladder had shattered into a million pieces and was blocking my breathing, so I was in a hospital for a week. During that time, my kids were in the Crisis Nursery. Therefore, I surely don't want anybody else to go through the many things that I went through; I didn't enjoy that emergency at all.

Rose Herman

La Loche

La Loche is a nice place for a get-away; it is a beautiful and wonderful town. La Loche people are really friendly and welcoming, and they like to meet new people. Also, the whole community knows one another; people like to talk when they meet a person on the street. Therefore, visitors will make lots of friends before leaving La Loche.

There are several parts to La Loche. There is a reserve seven miles out of town, and it is a dry reserve. People can not bring any kind of booze into the reserve, or else the chief will not allow them to come back into the reserve again. Another part of La Loche is Washington and there are other small villages close to town such as Spokane and Seattle. Seattle is where they have graveyards, and they build a lot of houses around there. They also have a hall that is used for all kinds of things like ceremonies and festivals. Most of the weddings and bingos happen there. Spokane is near to the lake, and it has a playground, picnic tables and benches. People go there for swimming and picnics. Now they are building a new hospital beside the lake because southwest of the town of La Loche, they have a hospital that is really small and too crowded for La Loche people. Also because people come in from other towns like Turnor Lake, Bear Creek, Chart and Garson Lake, they're building a new hospital in Spokane. Then the old hospital will be used for home care. Southwest of La Loche they have two different schools: one for adults and one for kindergarten. Places they have there include the post-office, drug store, motel, restaurants, bars, liquor store, grocery store, police station, radio station and a pool room. In conclusion, there are many parts to La Loche and many services, but there needs to be more development because it's so crowded; there's not enough room for visitors.

Who lives in La Loche? The people who live in La Loche include Dene people and a few white people. Dene people have been there for decades. The white people that live there are doctors, teachers, the dentists, nurses, police and store owner. Some of them have been there for a long time.

What things can you do in La Loche and out of La Loche? In town, you can go visit your friends and go play bingo, play ball or go for a walk. Outside town, people go swimming, go partying and go camping. For camping, people go out of town three miles to a place that is called the rapids where they have lots of fish. You can even catch a fish

with your hands because there are so many. It is a lot of fun; it's messy, but it fills your tummy. Sometimes they even have festivals like A.A Round-up and Yanessa which means Olden Days Festival. People take out all their old clothes and their antiques to see who has the nicest and oldest antiques of all. In addition they have pie eating contests, jigging contests, singing contests and gambling. The Yanessa Days goes on for three days. The La Loche community always come up with good ideas about how things are to be managed. Not only that, they have a Winter Festival, hockey tournament and Treaty Days. That's why people from out of town like going to La Loche. They know they're welcome everywhere, and they keep coming back to LaLoche.

As for me, I grew up in La Loche. I come from a big family, and I have lots of friends. I know everyone in town. I enjoyed living there when I was small and when my parents were still alive. Now, when I go back to La Loche, I feel lost even though I have family there. I want to leave there fast. Things are not the same as they used to be, but I go there once every four years. When I go back there, I like to go swimming in the lake. I like to visit old friends, and I like go for a walk on the trail along the lakes. I like to go fishing; I like to gamble from time to time when I have money. I miss a lot of things about La Loche when I'm not there. I miss going to the dances, and I miss hanging around with my friends. Most of all I miss my brother and sisters that are still living there. I miss their company; I miss their cooking. In conclusion, I like a lot of things about La Loche, and I miss it a lot; La Loche is a fascinating place in many ways; it's a good place to go if you want to have a vacation or a get-away.

Rose Herman

Winter

My favourite season of the year is winter.
Beneath my feet snow crunches.
On the corner of my mouth, snowflakes melt.
Near my house, kids make snow angels.
Here is where I toboggan down a hill.
Outside I have a snowball fight with my brother.
Close to Christmas is my birthday.
As you can see, these are the things that make winters fun for me.

Rose Herman

Wild Wind

Let this flower
be a symbol of
our love.

As it started
being a little bud
someone cared
someone loved.

As we learn
together
let our love
grow.

For we may
forever
be together.

Our love shall
smell as sweet
as the rose.

Shall it bloom
like wild wind
on a sunset
lagoon.
We shall bloom.

Taralee Winters - 1997

Untitled

I'm casting a spell on you. One to make you come to me, for all I want is love and happiness. I know life is forever like the blue, blue sky with all the colourful birds swooping and diving in the sky, like humpback whales slapping their backs against the ripply ocean. So I'm casting a spell on you, for all I need is the world to stop destroying what we have. Like some people say, "You don't know what you've got 'till it's gone."

So I'm casting a spell on you.

Taralee Winters-1997

The Window

My heart is like a window
that can be shattered. Nothing can protect it
because it's so fragile. Lots of guys have tried
to break it, and they have. It has been repaired,
but this window is special, and is hard to fix.
That's what happens when you let guys in to see
through the window, or shall I say your window.
When it cracks it hurts, but when its broken it's
excruciating pain that takes time to fix. It hurts so
bad I don't know what to think. I think I'll go off the brink.

Taralee Winters-1994

An Ode To The Family Reunion

(Drumheller, Alberta - August 1998)

We've slept in tents and campers
Whether the ground be dry or wet
It never really mattered much
As long as our family met.
The weather on Sunday, no matter how hot,
Always turned to wind and rain just about 4 o'clock.
We've tried to trick the elements but to no avail.
We always, it seems, end up eating Fasma amid wind, rain or hail
The Loeppkys, each member we exult,
Gather again as a strange religious cult.
We now bow our heads in thanks, for the many blessings that God has given us.
We now remember those we've loved and lost in far and recent past,
As well as those who can't be here from across this country vast.
So thank you God for this Loeppky bunch,
Now no more talking - let's have lunch.

Karen Loeppky & Taralee Winter

My Mother Called Me Flower In the Morning

As my mother carried her new-born daughter for the first time, she looked out on the street of HeFei, China and saw some beautiful flowers smiling under the sunlight in the morning, then she called her daughter “Flower in the morning”. This was a summer day in 1965.

I went to elementary school when I was seven years old. I felt stress because I had so much homework everyday. I worked hard and tried to be the top student in my class. When I was ten years old, my mother died from an accident. I began to learn how to help my family, and I was proud of doing something independently. My brothers and sister were my best friends; they taught me many things. I was very interested in reading literature, and I liked to write some stories. The most exciting thing was that my essays were read loudly by my Chinese teachers in my classroom, at that time my face was red flower. I dreamed I would be another Zhang Jie (a famous female writer in China).

I was a good student in elementary school and high school. My teachers cared about my studies and life like my mother, and I liked to ask some questions everyday, they almost taught me everything. My mother gave me a healthy and optimistic character; my teachers gave me a rich and wide world. In my life I will never forget my elementary and high school teachers; they were hard garden planters. At university, I studied Chinese history for three years. After I graduated, I worked in the Construction Bank of China, HeFei Branch (A National Bank, like TD Bank in Canada). I learned a lot of knowledge as a teller, bookkeeper and accountant during the day and studied from books in the evening.

In 1989 I married and two years later I had a boy; his coming made us excited and exhausted. In 1993 my bank sent me to study Finance in AnHui Finance and Trade Institute for three years. While I worked in the bank, I got a Finance diploma in 1996. I was proud of this. Though I couldn't be a writer, I could become an economist in my bank. After I had studied Finance for ten years, I had self-confidence, I believed that I could be equal to anyone.

In 1997 my brother helped my family immigrate to Canada. We lived in Saskatoon with my brother's family. Once we came to Saskatoon, we found that it was very cold in the winter and it was very difficult to find a good job. My husband lived here for three months, then he left us and went back to HeFei. At the same time, I worked in a Chinese restaurant. I wondered if I should go back to China with my son. My bank still kept my position open for me. After I and my son had lived in Saskatoon for half a year, we went back to HeFei. I resumed work in the bank. My son, Tom began to go to school in Grade One.

In my hometown everything was easy, because I had many relatives and friends. The only thing that I worried about was that Tom didn't like to go to school in China. According to my experience, I knew that if he weren't a top student, he would not have a bright future. One day as I watched TV at home, I saw salmon died after they laid eggs, I was moved by their dedication. I thought I should give my son a chance to live in Canada. Maybe he would have more chance in his future. I liked to read Robert W's poem:

Let us probe the silence places
Let us seek what luck betide us;
Let us journey to a lonely land I know.
There's a whisper in the night-wind,
There's a star a gleam to guide us;
And the wild is calling, calling, "Let us go."

So I resigned my job, packed, took my son, and we returned to Saskatoon in 1998.

I was both unlucky and lucky. I lost my job in the bank where I had struggled for ten years and I separated from my husband because he didn't like Saskatoon. If I lived in HeFei, I would work in the bank for the rest of my life, and I would not worry about language problems and many difficulties in my life. On the other hand, I was very lucky because I had a chance to come to Canada and to begin my new life. For most Chinese this chance to visit and live in Canada was not available. If everyone had one life, I would have two. I learned everything from zero. When I first landed in Vancouver, I couldn't talk to the immigrant officer in English. Now I have studied in Adult Grade twelve for two and one - half years. I can do presentations and write essays in English. I feel I have made a great progress in English.

In my dream I came to a "flower" country, a beautiful garden. I was so happy to be in the middle of the flowers. I loved these flowers, but I didn't know what name they were. I learned calling the flowers' name in English again and again. From far away I could hear my mother calling my name, "Xiaohua . . . Xiaohua . . .

I have been in Saskatoon over three years. I will become a Canadian citizen next month, because I like to live in Canada. Though I find it is difficult in some ways, I will try to do my best to study and work. When I am old, I will not regret what I did, because I have tasted many kinds of lives. I will write some stories about Canada and Canadians because I like my country folk. Maybe I will be a famous writer, another Margaret Lawrence.

Xiaohua Zhou

About the Authors and Artists

Albert G. Fowell I was born on a very stormy day in June. I moved from place to place, and got into some trouble here and there. I found the love of my life and settled down with her. We have one beautiful baby girl named Gabrielle Alora Rae. I have started the BE10 program at SIAST, intending to become a Drug and Alcohol Counsellor.

Allana Hearn: I am a student at SIAST, Adult 12. I was born August 8, 1968 and grew up in Shell Lake, Saskatchewan, as Allana Buck. I have been married since 1991, and I am a mother of two, Brandee, 9, and Rusty-James, 6. I wrote this poem and dedicated it to my children, and in memory of my third child, a little girl in Moose Jaw, and my mother. This poem was entered in a poetry contest and published in the North American Poetry Guild anthology for 1989. I use poetry as a form of soul searching to gain inner awareness.

Amanda Semmler, (Adult 12 SIAST Kelsey Campus): Amanda likes to draw in her spare time. She is pursuing a career in law enforcement after Adult 12. She has 2 children aged 11 and 9. She has lived in Saskatchewan all her life. She is not married but has a wonderful boyfriend.

Clarence Pine: Clarence's composition is his biography.

Drago Nadj: I was born 1978 in Bosnia. I am here in SIAST, Kelsey Campus to do some upgrading. After that, I don't know what my plans are. I have been in Canada since 1995, mostly here in Saskatoon and Prince Albert. I have been dating my girlfriend Stacie for four years. We have twin girls Natasha and Gabrielle. They will be turning two in November.

Erin M. Lees: (Adult 12) I was born in 1978 in Vancouver, B.C., and spent the first 22 years of my life living in southeastern interior B.C. I have always been interested in writing, and poetry is one of my greatest passions. I have one daughter, Serena, who is three years old. She is my pride and joy. In the near future, I hope to study psychology at the U of S, gain lots of colourful experiences, and continue to write on the side. I hope you enjoyed the poems.

Eugene Peequaquat: I'm 32 years of age. I was born and raised on the Yellow Quill Indian Reserve and raised by my maternal Grandmother who is now in the Heavens created by the Creator. (I am eternally grateful) I have been writing for at least a decade and when I have writers' block, I started drawing stick people or anything to do with sticks because I wanted to become the best stick drawer of all time. I'm attending Basic Education 10.

Katherina Aguilera: I come from small family; I have four brothers and no sisters. I have lived in Saskatoon half of my life. I'm attending the BE10 program at SIAST, Kelsey Campus. Before that I was in the literacy program. I hope to further my education and work with children.

Luke Sather (Adult 12): Luke finds the power of words enthralling, and he believes diction is a dish best served as lunch the next day, after being re-warmed and preferably with fresh garnish. Words, like all moments of thought, are subject to revision, lest our ideas remain resolute and stagnant. Much of the poetry Luke wrote during this profound time back at school dealt with themes of anxiety and self-worth. Much of his prose related to identity and perception. Luke is considering a career in Philosophy. Oh, he does comedy too.

Rose Herman: I'm 29 years old. I was born in Ile a la Crosse, Saskatchewan and grew up in La Loche. There are 12 members in my family and I'm the youngest one. Both of my parents died when I was small. My favourite hobbies are listening to country songs, playing bingo, housecleaning, doing bead works and playing board games. I have five beautiful kids of my own. They're the main reason why I go to school, so they can follow my footsteps and stay in school and finish.

Taralee Winters: is a respected, well liked, talented, kind hearted, trusted person in this community. She has adventures every time she goes out, and her friends get more than they bargain for, but that doesn't stop Taralee. She also likes to feed Pop Rocks to her two-year-old nephew, Austin Gregory, and send him home to Mommy and Daddy, "Ohhh, fanks Tata!" She is always singing funny songs to her neice, Jadelyn Mia Dannette. When Taralee travels she usually goes to Calgary, Alberta to see her friends and party with Shannona, "Bouamp, bouamp, bouamp, bouamp, bouamp psycho stalker," (inside joke). To sum it all up, Taralee is just a girl on Sunday morning.

Xiaohua Zhou: SIAST, Kelsey Campus; Xiaohua died in an accident shortly after publication of this issue