

1999

## Reflections 1999

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# *Reflections*

## *'99*

*A Literary Journal of Gardner-Webb University*

# *Reflections*

Volume 31  
1999

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Susan Carlisle Bell, Director of Art Contest  
Ted Vaughan, Director of Photography Contest  
Steve Varley and Kathy Martin,  
Graphic Design Artists.

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## Poetry Contest

Each year, the English Department of Gardner-Webb University sponsors a poetry contest for students in conjunction with the publication of Reflections. This year, awards were given to three students whose work was judged excellent. All works were judged anonymously. This year's poetry judges were Matt Theado, Susan Bunn, and Darlene Gravett.

### Poetry Awards:

First Place:	<i>Christina Whitehouse,</i>	"Untitled"
Second Place:	<i>Lori Moore,</i>	"Blank"
Third Place:	<i>Kime Lawson,</i>	"Untitled"
Honorable		
Mention (Tie):	<i>Starr Gist,</i>	"Memories"
	<i>Miriam M. Oviedo,</i>	"El Shaddai"

## Art Contest

Each year, the Art Department of Gardner-Webb University sponsors an art contest for undergraduate students who have submitted work to be included in Reflections. The art judges were Susan Carlisle Bell, Beth Senger-Knotts, and Noel Manning II.

### Art Awards:

First Place:	<i>Mary Jones and Miranda Potts (Tie)</i>
Second Place:	<i>Angie Hendricks</i>
Third Place:	<i>Anna Marie Martin</i>
Honorable	
Mention:	<i>Efrem Tekie</i>

## Photography Contest

This year, the Communication Studies Department sponsored a contest for undergraduate students' submissions of photography. The winning photos are published in this issue.

### Photography Awards:

First Place:	<i>John Durham</i>
Second Place:	<i>Ashlie Pence</i>
Third Place:	<i>Brianne Taylor</i>
Honorable	
Mention:	<i>Brianne Taylor</i>

Dear readers,

As a lover, and a writer, of poetry, I appreciate open interpretation and free thought. The expression of poetry is, for the most part, an outpouring of the soul, divergent from the norms of a conforming society and an escape from convention and monotony. Poetry is meant to give the mind wings, allowing “flights of fancy” and the experience of grandeur that can only be captured in the imagination. For this reason, I believe that you will find this publication of Reflections to be both enlightening and elusive, spellbinding and tranquil, captivating and freeing. It is certainly our most diverse publication to date, ranging from the simple and straightforward to the thought-provoking and disturbing. Our themes encompass such issues as Christianity, homesickness, native heritage, classroom anecdotes, and prejudice. With the herculean efforts of the staff and the superb submissions by faculty, students, and community members, the 1999 publication is a work of art to be proud of. I would like to thank Jennifer Carlile for giving me the opportunity to be the editor, and for helping me strive for greater poetry within myself; I would also like to thank all the people who helped us put this together. I hope you enjoy this year’s issue of Reflections, and remember - be true to the art within your own soul!

Your editor,

Jayne Helmick



## El Shaddai

I am a rose upon the ground,  
a wave across the sea  
I am the eye that sees all things  
the heat upon your skin  
I am the stars that light the heavens  
the reflection of the moon you see  
I am the cry of an owl  
the whispers of the wind  
I am the comet that comes down  
the eagle that does not fall  
I am the bird that flies through wonders  
the fish that secrets keep  
I am the spirit that has set you free  
the soul that lives eternally  
I am the hands that rock you asleep  
the fingers that wipe your tears  
I am the song that has no words  
the voice inside your all  
I am the beauty only you possess  
the source that gives you strength  
I am the ocean that unites the rivers  
the aurora that gathers hope  
I am who I am, said the Lord,  
God Almighty,  
El Shaddai.

*Miriam M. Oviedo*

## Curious

The way I wish to read your thoughts brings my pen  
To life. All along, you have  
no thought,  
no idea,  
no epiphany out of the blue  
of just how much your words  
Undulate in my mind -  
moving and breaking,  
tearing down and making me  
Me.

*Carla Catoe*



*Brianne Taylor*

## I Forgive You

I see you across campus and wonder how you are.  
Not really of your daily well-being but  
of the situation you have labeled a struggle.  
I pity the fact that you have put  
on a facade just for acceptance.  
You've succumbed to an easier life.  
What is life if not a challenge?  
You can try to run away from yourself  
but where ever you run, there you will be.  
The words of hatred you shot to me  
have ricocheted off me and it hurts you to see  
that my shoes are just your size.  
Go on submitting to society  
and see how much regard they really have for you.  
All in all for the actions you've shown to me of beating  
yourself up  
through me, I forgive you.

*Neil Velez*

## In the light of Sergei Grinkov

Young Sergei, why were you swept out the door?  
Leaving a few triple salchows short in life.  
The height of your excellence did not end that final day,  
Your partner climbing the icy steps alone.

Young Sergei, why should your death bother me?  
A young American girl,  
Knowing you only through fame,  
Yet so troubled by your exit.

Perhaps I fear that I will have your fate,  
To work so hard trying to succeed  
Only to find  
Fortune ending much too soon.

Young Sergei, I have strived to be myself for years,  
No advertisements, just the outline of who I really am,  
But when my last day comes, young Sergei,  
Will my fate be true to me?

*Mary E. Gettys*

“I think that we are all eggs,”  
    he said  
And cracked in my palm.  
    I smiled gently  
And placed him  
        (or what was left . . . )  
into a bowl on my shelf,  
Determined to use him . . .  
        later.  
Only to return a day later  
    And find him . . .  
Rotten  
And stinking up my kitchen.

*Christina Whitehouse*

## **The Day After the Night I Dreamed I Married Elton John**

An average morning  
after a strange night of dreaming  
that Grandpa married Daddy, Grandma married Daddy,  
and I married Elton John.

Running to meet a friend,  
we enjoyed a casual picnic  
by the lake sharing  
funny stories like how I married Elton.

The next thing I knew  
a kiss, flirty glances, and fake caviar,  
wait!  
Is he Elton?

Only a dream about Elton the night before,  
yet it is the same as  
my picnic love –  
pure fiction.

*Mary E. Gettys*

## i'm not your dream anymore

the words you spoke  
were so sweet  
dew  
on yellow roses

now those same words  
sting  
the dew has turned  
to venom

i'm glad you don't call  
i'm not your dream  
anymore  
and i'm thankful

you didn't have any right  
to talk so sweet

i wonder if you say  
those same words  
to her

oh the sweet blade  
of the knife  
it cuts me open  
every time i remember

it's over  
and i'm  
thankful

*Lori Moore*





*Angie Hendricks*



*Miranda Potts*

## Farewell to the Future

She indulges in the moment  
Where everyone is in the past  
And she reaches through the time zones  
To bring back something that will last.

The present is a piece of glass  
A blurry one without reflection -  
Her future - endless reruns  
Of a past without perfection.

To look at her, she's beautiful  
But to look into her eye  
You'll see the statues of stone-frozen figures  
Who will never, ever die.

She's almost seventy years old now  
And she still combs her dolly's hair.  
She likes to hold the ghost hand  
Of the father that was never there.

She plants flowers in her garden  
And waits for seeds to grow  
And when the petals open,  
They put on quite a lovely show.  
Counterclockwise is her watch;  
Yesterday she can't recall -  
She lives her life in a picture frame  
Without living life at all.

*Jonathon Allen*

Interpretations of  
cascading dreams  
Blinding performances  
of unspent youth  
A rhythm older  
than time  
A liturgy of strange  
disturbances  
Such a spectacle  
of gyration  
Freud would have  
a field day  
Thrusting accompaniment  
Love that music  
I don't believe it -  
Paul Newman  
in his prime!

*Jayme Helmick*

## An Autumn Outlook

A solitary romance hangs in the autumn twilight  
    lingering...  
in the night sky mingled with auburn and brown  
    against the aging distant horizon.  
    Emptiness waits in a graying pruned tree,  
    dying bark, wrinkling in absence.  
The breeze serenades the arrival of love's loss  
    as Death Winter comes a caller.

*Jeremy Absher*

## blank

i smell the air  
salt  
sand squeezes between my toes  
i didn't invite it  
but it is more than welcome

this place  
i hold it  
captured  
somewhere between  
last years grocery list  
and today's idea for a painting

how i remember the many days  
my hands felt like they were shriveling  
from swimming for hours

i can smell coconut  
and hear music

my castle fell  
the blue tide washed it away

the salty smell  
lingers and drifts

*Lori Moore*

# blu

bottles  
butterflies  
birds  
ink  
blazers  
basketballs  
blankets

*Lori Moore*

burrowing into a spirit of fear, hands drip mud clots  
as dirt mingles with blood and the soup of the day  
is rotting vegan godflesh again

i pursue a portable nietzsche  
in a barrel of regret and the horses (!),  
oh the horses! cast my cares upon their necks  
and surrender to insanity's cold french kisses

then the breach! my cool dirt cave collapses  
and my pale eyes fail at the bright light of daybreak.  
but now i know that the world is truly blue like an orange.

*Kime Lawson*



*Ashlie Pence*



## Rosewood

What I saw tonight my eyes will never share.  
Innocent victims,  
Scattered bodies,  
Screaming children.

I wish I could have helped  
I so felt their pain.  
History is so damned non-negotiable  
once writ.

What if I were there?  
Their destiny,  
would it be the same?

Unshed tears,  
my vision blurred.  
What could I have done?

The powerful and strong  
why were they spared?  
Children dead, frozen in youth,  
forever gone.

My heart hurts,  
pounding in my chest.  
It questions yesterday for being so  
unfair.

*Starr Gist*

## A Toast to Grace

A chalice lifted high in the presence of many  
A toast proposed, "To grace." The crowd  
confirmed, "Here, here." Behind the  
ringing of glass could be heard a  
faint trickle as each did sip  
of the pleasing potion  
of poison.  
It was  
a subtle  
seduction  
by the sweet  
elixir the warm tingling delight of drunkenness  
the hypnotic swaying delusion of escape that ended  
harshly in sin's slow rigor mortis of despair and death.

*Jeremy Absher*

## Morgan's Quilts

(for Dr. Robert Morgan)

There's something special about Morgan's quilts.  
The fabrics blend like a romantic rendezvous,  
colors race like a comet in some or  
stand like still water in others.  
Like a gypsy, patterns dance or  
sing of lullaby in a windy whisper.  
It's hard to pick a favorite,  
I like them all because they fit my moods.  
Each quilt has a story, a life,  
and feverishly pulls its own history  
methodically before your eyes.  
Thread by thread united in oneness by love  
and a gift of warmth and reminiscent charm,  
bits of cloth join as if born into a family,  
never judging but giving.  
Disregarding color and nationality  
to be shaped by Morgan's hands into art  
that God wills because much is required  
of those that much is given and Morgan is a giver.  
Yes, there's something special about Morgan's quilts  
and only he can tell their stories.

*Karen Jones*



*John Durham*

## Love's Photo Shoot

What?

No more pictures?

Only thirty-thousand from four frustrating years  
shining in the shadow of lost love.

Each photo waited to be developed  
into the intimate light of romance.

A black-and-white argument, the night of terror,  
Followed by color prints of hugs and special moments  
together.

One day the film will be dead forever.

Why break the camera this way?

Two more rolls and our time is complete.

No more pictures?

Can we really say "cheese"?

*Mary E. Gettys*

## Without a Net

There I go  
Trying to predict  
The Unpredictable  
After flat tires  
Food stamps  
and bent burgundy metal  
I'm putting words in Your mouth  
As though I had a say  
Trying to listen to myself  
At the end of the day  
But my words are dusty  
And dry  
And all the wisdom I call my own  
Is just the lie  
That I can predict  
The Unpredictable  
That I know more than You  
And that what I want  
Is a justifiable thing to do  
But when I look at the words  
And I look at the sky  
When I look in the mirror  
Look in my eye  
I know that I cannot predict  
The Unpredictable  
So I will live without a net  
And trust You to catch me  
And You will be  
Who You will be

*C. Allen*

## A Stranger

My eyes are dark brown,  
like the color of a warrior's stare.  
My nose is the mixture of a Maya, an Aztec,  
or maybe even a white man.  
My mouth a cherry color,  
my skin a golden glare,  
My pride unmeasurable,  
my pain unfair.  
I could have been a queen,  
but instead I was made a slave.  
I could have passed on my traditions,  
but they were stolen from my hands.  
One day I was found a treasure,  
the next I was buried again.  
Now I am just a stranger  
in some unknown place.

*Miriam M. Oviedo*



*Brianne Taylor*



## Wish

I sometimes wish, though only to myself, that I could  
swim back to the island in my heart.

The island, where some may never leave, though they  
grow old, on the outside.

The island, where truth is always something good.

The 2-dimensional world where I held my father's  
hand, while we crossed the busy street.

I could cry, and be allowed to fear, giggle at silly  
jokes, and my mother, always ready for a hug, smiles  
freely.

Why must we leave our safe solitude, where living and  
happiness go together, to venture into the rough  
waves and find what we really shouldn't have to  
know?

I wish to not be set, though we all are, in this hopeless,  
desperate situation.

If we never leave, we'll die of thirst, if we go too soon  
we'll be pulled under the roaring waves.

So we must leave the colorful island and make it to the  
land of solemn faces and broken hearts and proper  
names and bitter tongues and try to make it better,  
try to not accept but truly understand what we  
swam our ocean of fear and truth to know.

Maybe to only add a bit of sunshine a little  
rainbow, to life.

*Sasha Habel*

# The Old Place

Mysteries  
of the past are buried here.  
Truths of torment  
manifested here.

Looking at the walls,  
wondering whose blood left this stain?  
Whose heart spilled such pain?

The carpet, tattered and faded  
a reservoir of many tears.

The ceiling,  
cracked and aging,  
beckons the future,  
retains tomorrow.

Cabinets,  
mouths open wide,  
yield forth their dusty contents.

Spider webs,  
forming labyrinths.  
Dust balls clustered into gardens.

Mildew decorates the furniture.  
Its odor is fog in the air.

Insects,  
rodents  
everything  
has come here to  
die,  
Their decomposing carcasses  
scattered in corners.

*Starr Gist*

# The Names Have Been Changed

Before she partakes of harvest

Jane asks,

with head

w

o e

b d

For God's blessing on her

tuna salad sandwich

and

ridged potato chips.

On her tongue, their salt

mixes with chlorine

ice

water.

And reminds her of those lonely

liquids

which compose 75% of her,

the rest of us.

Bless my mother,

my father,

my brother,

Bless.

Bless

me,

God.

*Christina Whitehouse*

## Almost in English

In the evening breeze blowing up  
From the stillness of the lake  
In the creaking and the cracking  
Of every heart that breaks  
Beneath the echoes that return  
From within these canyon walls  
Beneath the ache-filled sighs  
Of every three a.m. call  
In the shape-shifting clouds that rise  
From the valleys running through these hills  
In the whispering and the clattering  
Of rain on my window sill  
In the salt-stained trail  
Of every errant tear  
Almost in English  
Your voice I hear

*C. Allen*

*Esfrem Tekie*

yesterday  
i watched truth whisked away  
gone with the wind  
sherman's burning  
my ivory tower  
burning an effigy  
on white sands  
of time ticktocking  
gone away  
i'll never see daybreak here.

*Kime Lawson*

Everywhere he walked there was a cloud overhead.  
His prime was years past.  
Every step on a walkway, a cliff  
Every simple task seemed impossible.  
As the cars pass by with a whirl  
The noises are either too loud or too soft.  
All he wants to do is to do something  
He wants to get the job done, and not watch others do it  
And in his loneliness he heard the voice of his mother  
“If you can’t run with the Big Dawgs get to where you  
can.”

*Clay Gardner*

## Key

There is a key  
That few find  
Along the path  
Of the wise

Many view it  
But don't see  
It or don't know  
Where the door lies

While they look  
But don't profit  
From the truth  
Of where they stand

Some turn mad  
Others leave  
Few fall down  
But never land

*Sasha Habel*





*Anna Marie Martin*

## The Desert in North Carolina

Walking home one night,  
it seemed as though I'd walked much further than a half  
mile.

The crisp breeze on my face and  
the clear night with glittering stars  
took me to a far away place.

The smell of the sagebrush and cow dung  
and the scraggly grass crunching under my feet  
made it seem almost as if I were in the Nevada desert.  
The dirt was red instead of an alkali-filled khaki,  
But lack of rain had given it a dusty desert-like  
appearance.

A swift gust of wind lifted the dust into a mini-tornado, a  
dust devil,  
and it pelted me with tiny grains of dust and stung on my  
skin.

The sounds of coyotes echoed an eerie cry in my ears.  
Shivering, I closed my eyes in Nevada, and I opened them  
in  
North Carolina.

*Rich Cox*

## Rendezvous

The wind and I were restless  
last night,  
Passing the darkened hours  
together.  
Lulls were softly quiet  
and still...  
Once I heard a rooster  
crowing.  
Stars watched.

*Eunice Sharpe Simmons*

## Moonlight

Moonlight  
Shines coldly white  
Into my room.

The three-quarter moon  
Is a great luminous pearl  
Against black velvet skies.

*Eunice Sharpe Simmons*

## In The Dark

A laugh  
A grunt  
A growl  
A sneer  
A young man yells,  
“You nasty queer!”  
A flying fist is all I see  
a spurt of blood comes out of me.  
Too dark to see. No breath to yell  
on cold concrete. What in gay hell?  
My heart throbs in my blood drenched ears  
my teeth clench down on tongue and tears.  
I pray to be numbed by the freezing rain.  
While channel surfing thoughts dance in my brain.  
Christians, Republicans, Nazis, oh my!  
Will they leave me here to die?  
My So Called Life, Spin City, and Ellen  
Fast forward through all my head is swelling.  
Robert Stack announces my death  
I click it off and restore my breath.  
Action Nine can’t hear about this  
They’re running off but one thing I didn’t miss.  
The wrist of one of them I happened to see  
had a bracelet with 4 letters, WWJD.

*Neil Velez*

## Fatigue

Eagerly reaching for angelic unconsciousness

I embrace the subterfuge of sleep

I climb up on clouds of forgetfulness

And sink into velvety depths of fluff

I float along the breeze of dreams

And smile at their absurdity

Silence envelopes me like a blanket

While the outside world knocks at my door

I ignore their entreaty

And snuggle deeper into myself

How blissful! How innocent!

Such a vulnerable state am I in

That I let down my defenses

And become again like a child

Palm open beside my cheek

Trusting that I will remain safe

In solitude

But the knocking is louder, insistent

Finally jarring me out of my peacefulness

Pulling me away from desired absence

I blink at my unfocused surroundings

And hear the drone of an old professor

I've failed again

Lost the battle

and my head falls back to my desk.

*Jayme Helmick*

## Memories

My teachers are Ms. Potter and Ms. Daniels.

Ms. Potter wears funny, little red shoes,  
with polka dots.

Ms. Daniels is always serious,  
she calls my daddy when I  
am too loud and t-a-l-k-a-t-i-v-e.

My classroom is like the big tent at the circus.

Everything is everywhere.

My favorite place is the  
block  
station.

*There are colors for everything in the world.*

*Daddy sometimes calls mommy blue black*

*I am pecan brown.*

My blocks are purple, yellow, red  
green, and  
black.

There is a train on the  
wall, my letter is the s,

soup  
slurpy  
sweet  
and snow.

I  
Smell like crayons and play dough,  
Ms. Daniels say.  
Tim  
smell like dirt.  
My mommy say kids don't supposed to smell  
like nothing  
but baby fresh. I sometimes  
smell like mama's strawberry lip gloss!

I'm giggling,  
Ann is trying to color her Barbie brown  
Barbies ain't brown.

*Starr Gist*



*Marydean Jones*



oh! i ran into faith, hope, and love -  
shopping: mallrats seeking the half-off  
soul sale of the century -  
arrayed in most glamorous garments.  
“versace?” i asked.  
“no, plato,” they replied.  
and i stood puzzled thinking,  
“surely a wise man wouldn’t have  
fashioned such finery.”

*Kime Lawson*

Walking through the woods,  
with footprints in the sand,  
a squirrel bit my leg.  
Then suddenly,  
I was fishing by the pond.  
Children with masks were running  
into fish.  
I looked into the sky,  
and a cloud whirled over me.  
A voice like my mother's said,  
"Don't count your chickens before Tuesday."

*Brian Childers*