

For Kelly with Love

Poems on the Abstracts of Carle Hessay

Kelly touched without breaking, brought a gentle grace to her life and her poetry.

— Linda Rogers

FOR KELLY, WITH LOVE
Poems
on the Abstracts of
Carle Hessay

Edited by Maidie Hilmo

Treeline Press
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2013

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FOREWORD

With the exception of two abstracts (nos. T3 and T4, Bill Bissett's choices), all the paintings reproduced in this book are approximately the size of these pages or smaller.

The pigments used by Carle Hessay are either water or oil-based, not acrylic; some he mixed himself from plants or minerals.

Many of the abstracts are undated and untitled. The numbering system used in this book is not Carle's, but simply reflects when the paintings were photographed or scanned and entered into my computer's picture files.

The majority of these small abstracts were never shown to the public in any of Carle's one-man exhibitions, which featured his larger paintings of West Coast landscapes, urban scenes, aboriginal ceremonies, Spanish Civil War scenes, and images from biblical or classical times.

The poems and abstracts are arranged according to the first mention of the poet in my introductory essay. All poems by each poet are kept together. Each faces the abstract that inspired it. The poets themselves chose their favourite Hessay abstracts.

Maidie Hilmo

POEMS ON THE ABSTRACTS OF CARLE HESSAY

What has poet Kelly Parsons to do with artist Carle Hessay? Kelly passed away in Victoria, BC in 2008, after a long struggle with breast cancer that had metastasized; thirty years previously, in 1978, Carle died of a heart attack while dancing at the Sasquatch Inn, in Spuzzum, BC. They never met, but in May 2008 Kelly was given copies of some of Carle's works for her fiftieth birthday, with the suggestion that she might write poems to accompany them. While she enjoyed them for meditative purposes, with her declining health she never found the strength to write the poems. Poets who knew Kelly, or who knew her work, were invited to finish the proposed project to write short poems prompted by Carle's abstracts; hence this collection by fellow poets is "For Kelly with Love."

Kelly Parsons (1958-2008)

Kelly's brilliant, compassionate, and generous spirit shines through all she created and wrote. She was truly a poet's poet, honing her verse to elegant simplicity. She was interested in all the ingredients that are part of the artistic process, the surface of the paper, the tools such as quills, nibs, brushes, paint or ink—and the enlivening breath informing the poetic act. She felt empathy for all creatures and manifested this in practical ways, as when she knitted coats for injured penguins. The cover of her full-length poetry book, *I Will Ask for Birds*,¹ features an image of birds from a sixth century Greek text on

¹ *I Will Ask for Birds* (Winlaw, BC: Sono Nis Press, 2008). References to Kelly's poems are from this book.

birds and animals written by Dioscorides. Kelly's academic work on the annotations and marginal drawings in a late medieval manuscript is still a classic among scholars today.² The diversity of her major publications is a good indication of Kelly's artistic and intellectual breadth. As Linda Olson put it, "Kelly had a unique insight into life in both its natural and spiritual beauty, combined with an uncanny ability to express it in words that move our hearts and souls."

She greatly valued her friends and, above all, loved her family. The greatest joy in her last years was being with her grandson, Nicholas, who was born in 2006 to her only son John and her daughter-in-law, Alana. She loved reading to Nicholas and playing children's music with him. In September 2008, her granddaughter, Maya, was born. On Christmas Eve, Kelly died at the Victoria Hospice with her son by her side.³



Kelly Parsons as photographed by Patty Loveridge in 2008

² See Kathryn Kerby-Fulton, "Remembering Kelly" (below).

³ For more on Kelly see "PARSONS, Kelly" at http://www.abcbookworld.com/view_author.php?id=9332

Carle Hessay (1911-1978)

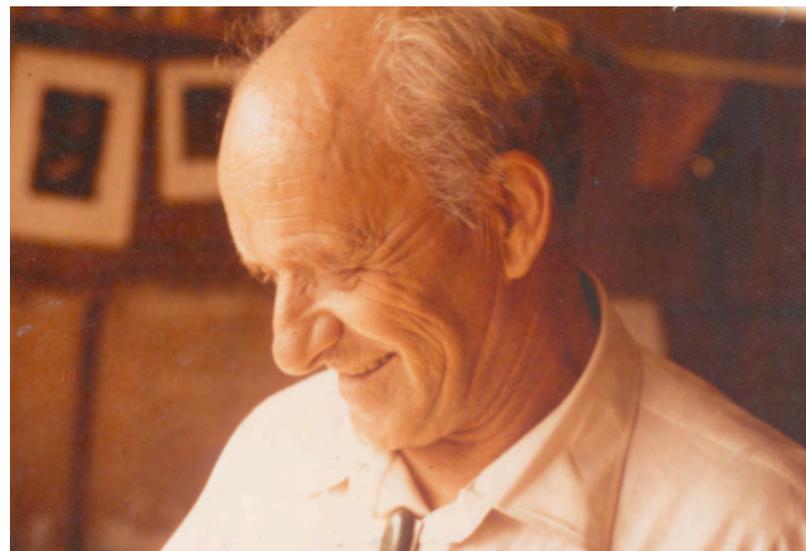
Like Kelly, Carle was multi-talented. He had that refreshing and enviable quality that some creative people have of being always open to trying new artistic endeavours. He travelled light and made of himself what he could. He became an accomplished, largely self-taught gymnast who taught others before the Canadian government supported such activities. He was a pianist who didn't own a piano, but took every opportunity to practice whenever he came upon a one (he loved Chopin especially). He often played for his supper at such venues as the Royal Canadian Legion or the Lion's Club.

After his wartime experiences, he lived his most settled life in Langley, BC, where he opened a sign shop to earn his "bread and butter." When he returned to painting in the early fifties, his work was, at first, more traditional and reflective of his formal art training at the École des Beaux Artes in Paris and at the Dresden Kunstakademie in the late 1920s and early 1930s. It was not long before, as Leonard A. Woods observed, Carle "absorbed the artistic energies that characterized the 1960s" and created not only large, dynamically charged paintings,⁴ but also the small, exciting abstracts reproduced for the first time in this collection. A member of the Canadian Federation of Artists, he participated in group shows, exhibited his paintings in art galleries, and had many one-man shows in BC and as far afield as London, England.

In a small snapshot of Carle, Pat Parungao recently recalled that: "Carle was my first friend and knew me since I was an infant in Langley. He was a customer at my parent's

⁴ For examples see: Leonard A. Woods, *Mediations on the Paintings of Carle Hessay*, Trail, BC: Trabarni (2005). See also: <http://www.pentictonartgallery.com/scms.asp?node=607>

coffee shop, the Lang Lee, and when we moved to Cloverdale, Carle would sometimes ride his bicycle to visit. He would pump my hand up and down a little too long while chuckling, his face turning red with pleasure upon greeting. He tried to teach me cartwheels, handstands and headstands. He entertained me by playing piano, playing and talking to me. Dad would sometimes take me to visit Carle. I remember the unique combination of paint and other smells when visiting his studio. He would show us his gold flecks from prospecting and would allow me to select a polished agate that I was allowed to keep as a gift. One day as a Simon Fraser University student, I went to visit him. When I told him that I was studying Mandarin, he gave me his copy of *Teach Yourself Chinese*.⁵ This was the quintessential, social Carle his friends knew.



Carle Hessay in his studio. Small abstracts hang on the wall behind him.

⁵ Email, December 1, 2012.

Abstract Art In Context

This project coincides with the current resurgence of interest in abstract art. Roald Nasgaard states that “abstract painting in its many guises, at the turn of the millennium, was suddenly rediscovered.”⁶ Editor Katy Siegel takes a new look at the works created during the early period of Abstract Expressionism in New York before the Second World War through to the early 1980s.⁷ This time period framed Carle’s active painting life in Langley, BC, which lasted from the late 1950s to the end of 1977. Carle was familiar not only with the European art world, but also with experiments taking place in New York, where his brother lived, and the West Coast, especially California, which was on his way to Arizona (he liked to try his luck in Las Vegas).

“Abstract art, which was news 60 years ago, lives on,” as art critic Robert Amos observes.⁸ In his discussion of *Red*, John Logan’s play about abstract artist Mark Rothko, Chris Creighton-Kelly questions “whether Abstract Expressionism has anything to teach us in the 21st century.”⁹ Insight into the enduring fascination with abstract art, not to mention its puzzling appeal, is amply provided by the various kinds of interaction with Carle’s abstracts by the poets in this collection.

In some ways, these poems show more directly than intellectual critiques the many levels at which abstract art communicates and why it is still a powerful force. Together with the abstracts themselves, these poems are almost textbook examples of what Abstract Expressionism is all about in

that they recover what the art historians and artists during the heyday of this art movement were writing about its aims and practices.¹⁰ This was not intentional on the part of the poets included here, but their intuitive and personal “readings” and responses to Carle’s abstracts coincidentally validate the continuing importance and appeal of this art form for us in our own time.

Before considering how these happen to be such a good litmus test of ways one can look at and appreciate abstracts, Carle’s especially, but also abstract art generally, it might be useful to reflect on the historical context of Abstract Expressionism (also sometimes referred to as Action Painting, Automatism, or simply Abstract Art).

Released from the need to represent the natural world, which had preoccupied artists until the Impressionists, for example, began to dissolve the outlines between natural forms and until technology offered new ways of representing the material world, the Abstract Expressionists found an almost dizzying sense of freedom in how they approached their art. They preferred to think of a painting as a painting, i.e., as an independent two-dimensional object in its own right without necessary reference to external things, people, or places. Although influenced by modern European art early on, they soon began to distinguish themselves from such movements as Cubism. As if learning anew what it is to paint, they were concerned with the basics of creating art—with colours and the means of applying them, as well as with lines, shapes, and textures—and even with the rhythms and gestures of making art.

⁶ *Abstract Painting in Canada* (Vancouver and Toronto: Douglas and McIntyre and Halifax: Art Gallery of Nova Scotia, 2007), 10.

⁷ *Abstract Expressionism*, (London, UK and New York: Phaidon, 2011).

⁸ “Even experts puzzled by abstract art,” *Times Colonist* (Dec. 1, 2012): C8

⁹ “Am I dreaming?” *Focus* (Dec. 2012): 16.

¹⁰ See the statements by art historians, critics, and the artists themselves in the invaluable “Documents” section at the end of Katy Siegel’s *Abstract Expressionism*, 201-287.

But more profoundly, theirs was an art that delved into the psyche, expressing emotions and psychological states. This was the time when Freudian psychoanalysis, with its emphasis on unconscious cognition, free association, and dream states, was becoming increasingly popular. Further, the focus of the abstractionists on the interior mind was almost a revitalization of medieval interiority in its spiritual desire to reach and express mystical states of being to which art serves as a catalyst and site of transcendence.

Increasing discoveries in the fields of archaeology and anthropology, together with greater contact with other cultures, stirred the abstractionists to value primitive art and the mythologies of different peoples. A reliance on intuition and instinct led many of them to create with a great sense of excitement and spontaneity, although at some point in the process an element of control does appear to come into play.¹¹

Some works by the early Abstract Expressionists, especially the monochromes, appear quite menacing and dark. Before, during, and after the war years, this had a counterpart in the existentialist writings of such philosophers as Camus and Sartre; and after the war, in the plays of Theatre of the Absurd. Sound poetry involved the creation of sounds without reference to rational meaning or the construct of language, the acoustic equivalent of abstract art that creates shapes without reference to external objects.¹² Yet the act of creating is an affirmation of self and a commitment to freedom.¹³

¹¹ See Alfred H. Barr, Jr. and Jackson Pollock in *Abstract Expressionism*, 263 and 282 respectively.

¹² See Meyer Schapiro in *Abstract Expressionism*, 260.

¹³ As Alfred H. Barr put it, "Confronting a blank canvas, they attempt 'to grasp authentic being by action, decision, a leap of faith', to use Karl Jaspers' Existentialist phrase." In *Abstract Expressionism*, 263.

The work of art lives, as it were, "by companionship"¹⁴ with the sensitive observer in stimulating a heightened awareness and a discharge of feelings in the participative act of creation. Different responses to the same work can be accounted for by the different circumstances of the viewer's life,¹⁵ and are no less valid because of that. Although not all artists who painted in this mode were members of the initial New York group, they belong to its history.¹⁶ This applies also to Carle Hessay who, although he never attached a label to his art, thought of himself as a world citizen.

Poetic Engagement with the Carle Hessay Abstracts

Many of the poems in this collection link the process of creating abstracts with that of writing poetry. Dorothy Field, for instance, picks up on the characteristic strength and power of Carle's art in the way his hands applied "black ink like tar" and connects this with Kelly's use of her hands in the various arts and crafts she herself practiced, merging the making of art and writing, both "undamming the heart" (see also Kathryn Kerby-Fulton's recollections of Kelly, following this introduction).

The making of art, a material act that is not confined to putting paint or words on paper, involves a mysterious process. For Linda Rogers, an apparently unconnected series of five paintings "abstracted" the story of the making of a pair of moccasins by Peter Morin. In "The Solstice Tree Mystery" the abstract works she sees take her on a spell-binding journey of

¹⁴ Mark Rothko's phrase, in *Abstract Expressionism*, 229. See also Shapiro, 205.

¹⁵ Ann Eden Gibson, in *Abstract Expressionism*, 286.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

interpenetrating realities—a man in the corner of a coffee shop tells stories and embroiders a magical pair of moccasins before disappearing, and she sees “the light’s coming through” where the needles went in. It takes careful looking at these four paintings to recognize what it is in each that inspired the stages of this transformational experience.

For bill bissett there is an intimate connection between the body, the breath, and the application of colour in a movement that swirls, shapes, swoops, goes deeper, soars and swoons in the act of creating no. 25. He intuits a synesthesia of sound and colour and touch evoked by the “ribbon uv bcuming” in no. 39. Interestingly, Carle often painted while playing records of his favourite composers and singers.

Leonard A. Woods, who formerly taught at the Vancouver School of Art and knew Carle well, senses the commonality between creation and Carle’s “image making” in his poem that starts with Carle’s own title, “In the Beginning.” Knowing that Carle was also a prospector, Leonard connects elemental, formless matter with the evocation of what could be, variously, “wood rock lava” in no. 44. Similarly, bill bissett responds to the call of primordial matter before it was named, as suggested by the monochromatic no. 94. Another monochrome collapses time for Patricia Young who, in “Igneus,” connects cooling magma with the experiences of a woman whose feelings have hardened. Carle’s abstracts often conjure up images of stone, as in “the fractal stone” valleys of no. 92 that draw Gray Sutherland into its “secret core.”

Aware that Carle was knowledgeable in the making of pigments from natural sources, including not only minerals but also berry juice, Karen Ballinger associates the colours used in no. 88 with her experience picking blueberries and suckling her infant son one August, the heat dissolving the berries into blue faeries in her mind.

The meditative potential of some of Carle’s abstracts appears to stimulate a heightened state of being or time or place beyond immediate experience. This is so in Gray Sutherland’s poem in which the life flickering between pine needles sensed in no. 191 pulls him, as it did the early pioneers, to “somewhere beyond the darkness / always beyond.”

Four of the abstracts in this volume were made in connection with a Canada Council Explorations grant project on “The Future World” and were, together with accompanying poems by Terence Young and bill bissett, included in the 2009 juried exhibition, “Universe Inspired Art by Canadian Artists.”¹⁷ In Terence’s mirror poem, “Observations,” the astronomers viewing “the moons of Jupiter” through telescopes are, nevertheless, “slaves of gravity.” Responding to no. T3, bill visualizes bubbles of moon air that “breathe / a sweeping arc / in our heds.” The “orange / yello enerjee” of no. T4 gives rise to a flight of ecstasy.¹⁸ For the futuristic “earth e” (Carle’s title), bill imagines running playfully with swallows and cougars in the windswept terrain.

This evocation of an extraterrestrial place where the lamb and lion can co-exist (cf. Isaiah 11.6) suggests a present state and place where violence and bloodshed are all too often the norm. Carle himself fought against fascism in the Spanish Civil War and then again during the Second World War when he enlisted in the Canadian Armed Forces. He returned to Canada severely shell-shocked. Some of the poems resonate with such experiences, evoking a sense of inner darkness and angst. Corinna Gilliland directly recalls the nightly bombing in

¹⁷ This was sponsored by the NRC Herzberg Institute of Astrophysics in Victoria, BC (see <http://vimeo.com/7321528>).

¹⁸ Similar in its compositional masses, shapes, and the use of radiant gold is the image of the ecstatic nun in the Rothschild Canticles. See the image in Kerby-Fulton’s “Remembering Kelly,” following.

London, but “like blood within the veins,” the “bridge” stood firm (no. 62). For Leonard Woods, the “powers of light persist” despite “emanations from darkness” summoned by the threatening reds and blacks of no. 145. For Gray Sutherland, an almost Jungian sense of menace pervades “Early Morning Tremor” (no. 41). Frustrating the apocalyptic riders’ hissing and snarling in the smoke and flames, elicited by the powerful clash of black and swirling colours of no. 52, is Gray’s metaphoric fence to enclose family and loved ones.

The eerie lighting of “all souls’ day” collapses time and reminds Patrick Friesen of the wallpaper in Oscar Wilde’s room, where the famous poet, now impoverished and possibly deranged from morphine and absinthe after his surgery for an ear problem, is supposed to have said: “My wallpaper and I are fighting a duel to the death. One or the other of us has to go.” It is the terror and beauty of lighting effects in no. 190 that lead Patrick to imagine mythical forces at work and to ask “who stops to comb / the northern lights / from his hair?” In “Red Cedars,” Eve Joseph wants to be told again about the wild boy with a “cannibal heart” who cries “deep in the forest.”

Identification with the potent, mythical forces of the natural world need not be threatening, as Gail Whitter discovers, finding a stillness and silence “in the opening of the sky” (no. 28). As if in a shamanistic trance, Gail divines a powerful female figure who leaves traces of herself in black crows “dressed in silk” who “drop from her fingers” (no. 203) and in “feathers” left behind from her “Earth walk” (no. 90a). Things are also more than they seem for Karen Ballinger who “cracks open the truth” in reaching for “a new laid egg” under speckled feathers (no. 27). The partial impression of the moon in no. 227 has her dancing and chanting to Gaia, the ancient earth goddess. Also responding to an “opening,” Carol Sokoloff sees a “Light at the Centre” of a city in darkness and,

as if intuiting some of Carle’s urbanscapes that feature a means of entry and exit, a bridge that spans the chasm “of unknowing.”

Like many West Coast artists of his time and place, Carle’s landscape paintings were inspired by the BC wilderness in which he was at home. Hints of nature infuse many of his abstracts or semi-abstracts in which there is often some feature that orients the painting and directs reception. Sometimes this imbues the paintings with a spiritual dimension. In “Cathedral Grove,” Barbara Colebrook Peace recalls how she learned to notice even the smallest of nature’s creatures from Kelly and now sees her face in the forest where, “beyond time,” Kelly was born. A sliver of light showing through the trees, as suggested by the addition of branches to the vertical strokes in the monochromatic abstract, reminds Judith Heron of the light bursting through the dark forest of the “Valley of Achor” (Joshua 7.24-26 and Hosea 2.15).

In two shape poems by Linda Olson there is a mystical coupling of the details of nature evoked by the paintings and by Kelly’s own poems, especially those threaded with a general love of birds and feathers. Shaped like a string of pearls, “Wee Pearls for Kelly”—inspired by Kelly’s poems “How the Dog,” “The Beach from the Beach,” and “Angel of First Flight”—culminates in the twinning of the pearls in Kelly’s smile with Linda’s own. While responding to the red highlights and the harp-like shape in the corresponding abstract (Kelly also played the harp), “Pomegranate Wings” combines imagery from Kelly’s “I Shall Wear Pomegranate,” “Magdalene Alone,” “Quill,” and “Red Horse.” Now above the ink of words, sighing winds, and our earth-bound dance, Kelly is “a Magdalene soaring on her pomegranate wings.”

Perhaps it is this sort of visuality of looking at paintings that lends itself to writing poems that are meant to be seen. In mirror poems, the element of sound in sentences that are in

reverse order in the second half of the poem undoubtedly adds to the experience, especially when coupled with the repetition of words like “fallen,” “falling,” “dying” within each stanza in the case of Terence Young’s “Elegy.” In the corresponding abstract, the autumnal season suggested by the dark treelike forms against the subtle gradations of gossamer blues fading into soft reds inspires thoughts of mortality in the poet recollecting oblivious youthful love making. The cyclical nature of the poem, however, allows for the possibility of a renewal of “love,” the last word in the poem.

Many of the abstracts inspire thoughts of personal relationships. Leonard Woods thinks of domestic mayhem, suggested by the animated chaos of no. 32, leading to “a new equilibrium.” The geometric forms of no. 242, titled “The Lamp Shop” by the artist, prompt Patricia Young to ask about Karita’s relationship with a lamp shop boy. Light filtering through the imagined window slats of no. 225 induces the poet’s musings about love in the late afternoon in Venice. The pink and red overtones of no. 60 have a passionate, if whimsical, resonance for Eve Joseph, who insists that, somewhere in the painting, there is a nude slipping out of her pink chiffon and waiting for her lover “lost in red.”

It would appear that laughter, whether existentially absurd or entirely innocent, is never far from love or the other serious subjects that come to mind when viewing Carle’s abstracts. Corinna Gilliland fancifully, if satirically, tackles global warming when she asks if that is the reason the polar bear she imagines beneath the swirling blacks in no. 97 took up smoking! On the other hand, Gray Sutherland sees the eruption of reds and sky blues in no. 91 as the unrestrained laugh of a child.

Self and the Artist in the Poetic Readings of the Abstracts

What is evident in all the poems is that it is the active engagement of the poet with the painting at the moment of encounter that helps to create meaning. It might the way paint is applied that sparks interest in the actual process of creation, the expressionist use of colour that lends an emotional register for response, or a detail that sparks a memory or initiates a narrative, personal or otherwise—all are points of entry into the way the abstract is perceived. Sometimes there is a mysterious alchemy by which a powerful aesthetic and/or spiritual state is induced. Often something in even the most somber abstracts provides an opening for moments of light, intuition, and transformation. Filaments of nature provide a springboard for further introspection. Intertwined with all these elements are magical, mythical, and spiritual resonances that add an element of excitement and mystery to existence. The audience is often taken beyond everyday reality into another state of being: extraterrestrial, celestial or, ultimately, internal.

What is perhaps most amazing is how the different poets, working independently, tuned in to the many aspects that, holistically, were part of Carle Hessay. It may not have been his conscious mind that initiated the abstracts, nor even the conscious response of the poets that led to the writing of the poems, but rather some interior process by which a profound connection was made. And it is the exploration of the meditative potential of the abstracts that Kelly would have recognized. The following collection celebrates the creative artistry of all involved.

Maidie Hilmo
University of Victoria

REMEMBERING KELLY PARSONS MEDIEVALIST, BUDDHIST, AND POET

I first met Kelly Parsons when she turned up in a year-long course called "Introduction to Medieval Manuscript Studies" that I co-taught with three other professors at University of Victoria. I remember being struck one day by the quality of the oral report being given about early medieval "carpet pages" in the Book of Kells. The speaker was a bright, brown-eyed mature woman student; she had worked with my colleague, the art historian, John Osborne, so I did not yet know her. Unlike most of the younger students in the class, she had a kind of inner wisdom and certainty about herself, yes, but also about how the material spoke to her. A "carpet page" is the term used to describe a decorated page in an illuminated Gospel book, a page so decorated that it excludes written text entirely and is simply filled with pattern—in this period, most often, with intertwining, spiraling images of vegetation or stylized animals. As such it resembles a carpet. It is thought that the monastic scribe-artists of these pages sometimes spent months or even years creating a single page. Such an act was a gift, a meditation, a sacrifice to a Power greater than oneself. This the student grasped instinctively and compellingly. This student was Kelly.

The first impression I had of her from that oral report deepened but never altered over the years I knew her. The inner quietude and serenity that is such a marked feature of her poetic style was what she sought in all texts, in all situations, in all people. She and I soon discovered that, in addition to medieval religious manuscripts, we both also admired the Buddhist monk, author and peace activist (although "activist" is rather too Western a word here), Thich Nhat Hanh. Kelly

was a dedicated member of a Buddhist meditation group that studied his writings—this influence, too, appears in her poetry. As Hanh writes, "[W]hen you are drinking tea, drinking tea must be the most important thing in your life... Each act must be carried out in mindfulness. Each act is a rite, a ceremony. Raising your cup of tea to your mouth is a rite."¹⁹ Kelly's lovely poem, "Tea Meditation," teaches in great detail how to do this:

*This cup of tea
I lift to my lips
is the sun low in the sky
over Southern China*

...
*It is the sound of the village
bell entering into
all that is
with its shiny brown
voice. This cup contains
the jasmine bud*

...
*invited to give up
her fragrance
to the tea leaves. And this tea
is sweat from the fingers
of the tea pickers, is their
breathing, is my own blood.*²⁰

The jasmine tea, the bell with the shiny voice (the sound of a bell is the signal that someone has started to meditate) and the sound of the breathing—these things are the essence of Buddhist sensibility, and for Kelly they are a natural language.

¹⁹ Thich Nhat Hanh, *The Miracle of Mindfulness: A Manual on Meditation* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1975, 1987) 24.

²⁰ *I Will Ask for Birds* (Winlaw, BC: Sono Nis Press, 2008) 56. All references to Kelly's poems are from this book.

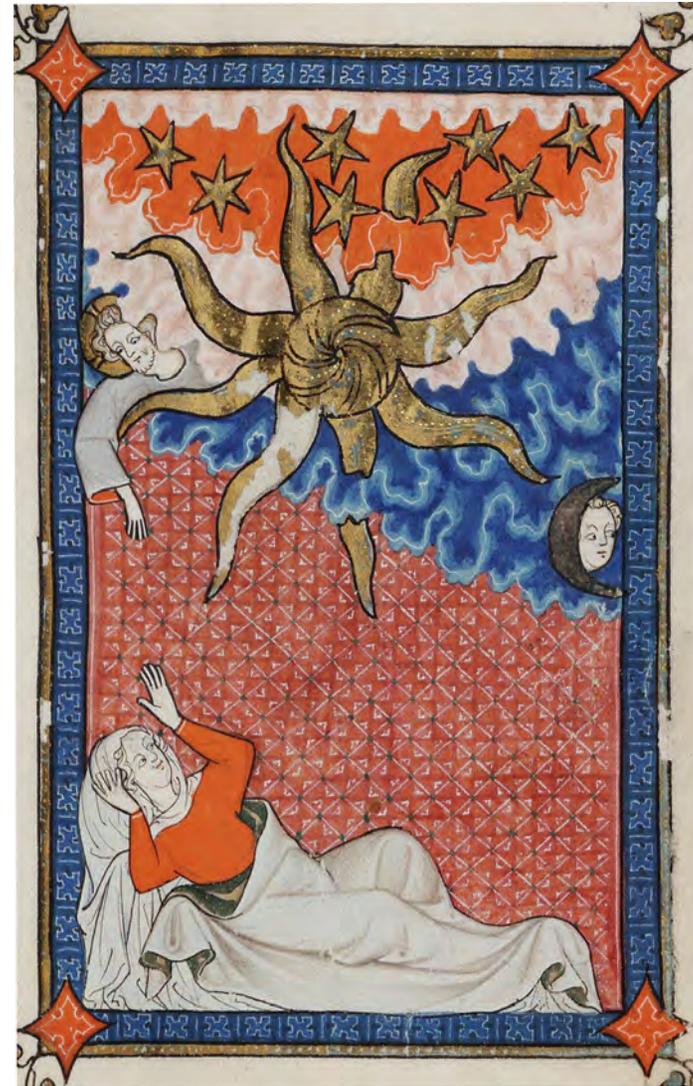
But there was another side to the same coin in her poetry, and that side was drawn from the Christian tradition: her love of the bridal mysticism of the medieval world, a tradition based on the “Song of Songs,” that great erotic love song of the Old Testament. One day she appeared in my office to discuss which manuscript she might choose for her final project for the course: “Can you find me a manuscript like the Rothschild Canticles?” she asked eagerly as she came through the door. Surprised that she even knew about the Rothschild Canticles (in fact, she’d been devouring the latest scholarly study of it, the kind of reading no one expected of undergraduates). I asked her what had appealed to her most: it was the famous image of the nun contemplative laid out seductively on a bed, appealing upwards to her lover, Christ, who leans down from heaven as if to embrace her.

And this Kelly, too, one finds in her poetry, in poems such as “Magdalene Alone”:

*It cannot be blamed; the heart
has long forgotten the bright-gowned
words of the body's song of songs.*

The dual intellectual and spiritual origins of Kelly’s inspiration—the Western medieval tradition and Buddhism—deserve to be understood here if we are to understand her as fully as we can, now, alas, that she herself has departed from our midst.

Kelly later took other courses from me. She became my research assistant, and she indexed an entire book I co-authored with Denise Despres on a single illustrated medieval manuscript. I knew at the time that indexing was not likely to be much fun for Kelly, but I knew that she’d do a splendid job, and benefit from the pay, since more than anything Kelly wanted to make enough money to travel to England to see the



Rothschild Canticles, Beinecke MS 404, fol. 66r, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University.

originals of the manuscripts she'd been working on from grainy black and white microfilms in the basement of the university library. She wanted to hold them and touch them and experience that electric connection with the minds of the past that one can only get with the original, ancient object in one's hands. And she wanted to solve mysteries about these texts.

Instead of a lovely lavish manuscript like the Rothschild Canticles, in the end she fell in love with the fifteenth-century *Book of Margery Kempe*, which was the first autobiography in English, written by a married woman who had had to fight for the right to live the kind of contemplative life a nun, unencumbered by children, could take for granted. Margery Kempe was devoted to bridal mysticism (Christ, not her husband, was her true lover). The unique manuscript survives with the searching marginal annotations of a sixteenth-century monk, and that is what really excited Kelly: here were all the elements she most wanted, rolled into one. Still an undergraduate, she transcribed all the annotations from the microfilm (something no established scholar had ever done). She wanted to go to England and check the original, so she could publish the annotations. (Undergraduates almost never publish). She wanted to see England, the historic sites of her beloved writers. She was a single parent; money was hard to come by; this research job, however, would cover the costs of the trip.

Though it cost her at least one panic attack, she compiled the complete index, a master work of this humble genre, and immediately made plans to purchase her ticket with her payment in hand. But some domestic budget disaster of the kind that single parents are so subject to intervened. Was it that the refrigerator broke or the car or? I can't remember. But the money was gone. And so she couldn't go. She was heartbroken. On my next research trip I took her transcription, checked it

letter by letter against the manuscript in the British Library, and Maidie Hilmo and I published Kelly's work, along with her sensitive, scholarly, and beautiful essay introducing it. To this very day, Kelly's is the text that every scholar at every university in the world cites if they want to discuss the medieval response to Kempe's book. They all assume that Kelly Parsons is a distinguished professor at some university. They have no idea that she was merely an undergraduate when she published that work. I'm often asked where she now teaches. I always say, "In heaven."

One can read Kelly's poetry in many ways and on many different levels, but these themes run like gold thread throughout. Here, in "Quill," is the devoted monastic artist, laying down swirling animal designs or delicate gold leaf on a page that represents perhaps his life's work:

*And the words, perfect weights
pumping like jet beads
through a single feathered vein.*

*This quill is teaching me
patience —*

...
*A black baptism, a blessing
slow surrender of a clean page.*

*See how this simple feather
tilts, just so
against the white dance floor
a single limb waltzing
to the silent syncopation
of tongue, this dance.*

*between words
is a kind of flying
a choreography of the waiting.*

Here, too, is the Buddhist monk or nun, practicing patience and using calligraphy as a meditation. (Here, too, is an allusion to Kelly's time in Linda Raino's contemporary dance troupe, Big Dance—but that's a story for another time).

In "Monastery Quails," she imagines the quails inhabiting the ruins of Holy Isle (an allusion to the home of the Lindisfarne Gospels, another of the great illuminated early medieval manuscripts she studied, not much later than the one with small birds that graces the cover of her book of poetry, *I Will Ask for Birds*). Among the ruins, she gives the birds a gentle Benedictine Rule:

*Let them keep the hours
to their liking. Let the quails be*

*brothers. Hands
non-existent, will be tucked inside*

their feathered robes

*...
but in the evening
slow them down, their sincere*

*little sandalled footsteps reflective and
easy. Let the old quails stroll*

*the Holy Isle in the moonlight. And if
they are old, let their seeds be softened.*

Long may Kelly teach us how to stroll the Holy Isle in the moonlight, make the ruins alive again, and draw each breath and sip each cup of tea with grace and mindfulness.

Kathryn Kerby-Fulton
University of Victoria and University of Notre Dame

For months you've asked for poems

but no poems came.

One night you dream your mother's hands.

The dam breaks and you are a river,
words in spate like homebound sockeye.

I bring you a blank book, Japanese paper

lustrous as the inside of an oyster shell,

but your book's already written and

you lie quiet, buoyed

in your mother's arms.

Dorothy Field

From *With Kelly and After* (Lantzville, BC: Leaf Press, 2011)

POEMS AND ABSTRACTS

The strength of the artist's hands
laying black ink like tar,
coaxing light with
his scraper, comb, the twist of his wrist.

Kelly fed on hands' work,
plying needle into canvas, sharpening
her nib, layering paper on paper,
one scrap marrying another
with the benediction of glue.
Undamming the heart.

Dorothy Field
(For Abstract #31)



Carle Hessay #31

The Solstice Tree Mystery

(a suite of 5 poems)

This winter, dawn is almost dark, but
her friend brings rumpus, brings on the
wild: breaks nuts on the sidewalk, changes
songs in deleafed dressing rooms: now
dog, now passerine voicing his throaty
arpeggios, barks, meows and aubades.

*

Linda Rogers

(For Abstract #2)



Carle Hessay #2

His house has many mansions.

No doubt about it, he owns the tree, every room, every hybrid fruit on its branches; and she has to believe the story he's telling. Eat this, he says: eat the apples, the figs and walnuts. Swallow the light. Wisdom is free.

Meet me downtown for coffee at three.

*

Linda Rogers
(For Abstract #78)



Carle Hessay #78

She brings her own blanket, but coffee's indoors,
and he's saved her a chair. She looks around
and thinks he's invisible, maybe loud steam,
and the man in the corner is sewing moccasins.
He's chewing the leather, and making it soft.

She orders espresso and hears rabbits scream.

*

Linda Rogers
(For Abstract #143)



Carle Hessay #143

The man's telling stories, stitch after stitch,
ancient sutras sung over and over. She waits
for the lesson while his hair turn blacker.
She looks down his throat and sees the sky.

*Look up at my tree house and tell me
what you see between the branches.*

Then he's done. The man has embroidered the
tiny shoes: Raven on one foot, the sun, moon
and stars on the other. These moccasins would
fit a doll, a bird, a cat, but they are powerful, he
says, shapechangers, dance all night slippers,
and she remembers the friend who thought she
had magic sandals, danced with a god, then
married him, told her sons they could run faster,
until the youngest raced an avalanche and lost.

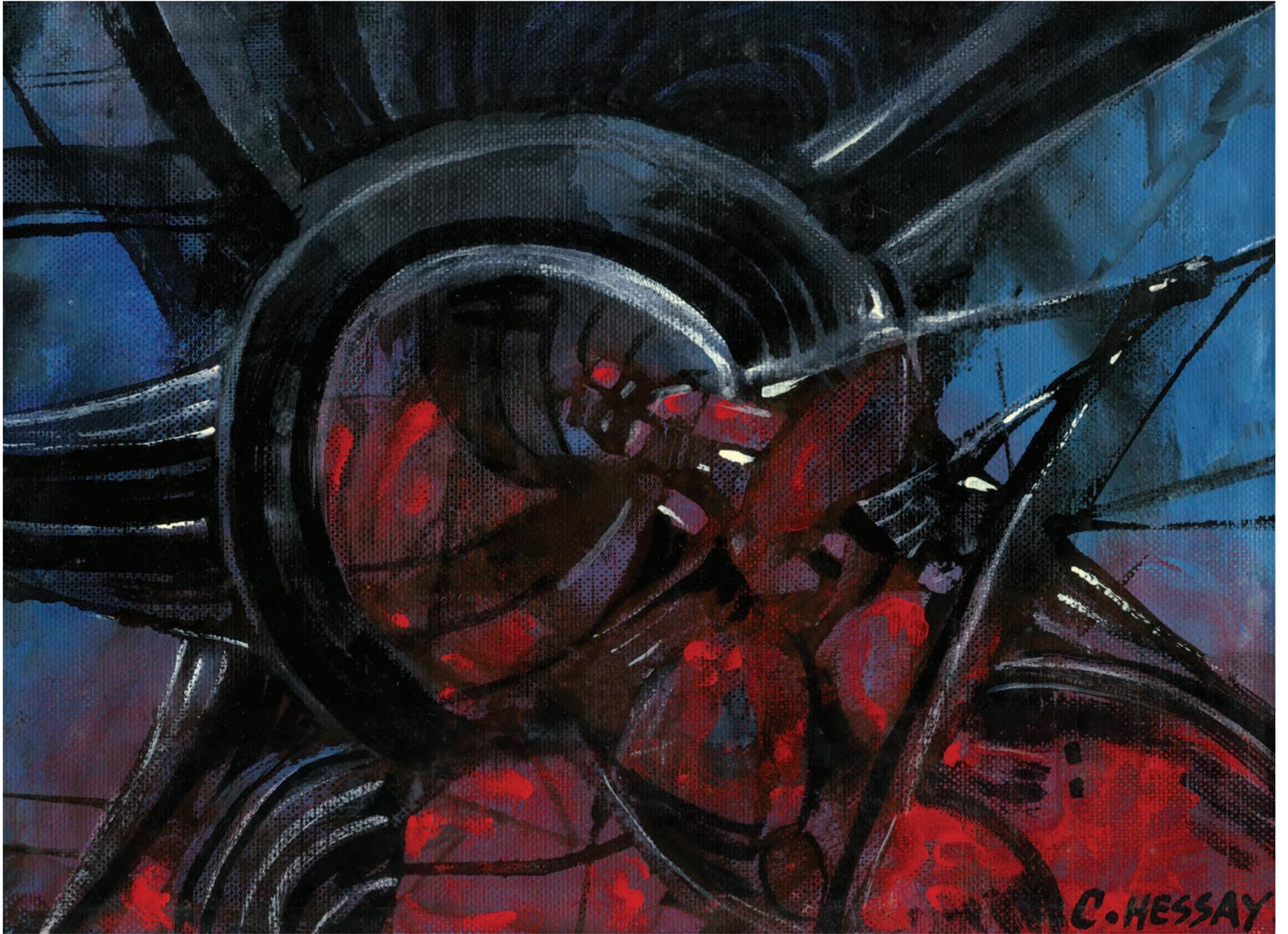
It is potlatch season. Dancers break the ice to
bathe in cold rivers and shivers run through her,

laughter followed by lamentation.

One shoe changes shape and fits, the other note drops.

*

Linda Rogers
(For Abstract #156)



Carle Hessay #156

Once the shoes are on, they are on forever, could be crazy
glue or second skin. She can't stop dancing. A crowd
black as crows gathers around her, makes sure she doesn't
fall in the fire. The man in the coffee shop laughs and
vanishes, goes back to his tree and her moccasins talk
all the way home. Go here/go there; she's blind in the
dark and they join her in bed, under the covers. Will they,
she wonders, talk all night, sleep or make love, make the
sound of rabbits and deers, of needles going in and out?

Her feet go still and her shoes are silent.
She waits for a sail or wings. She waits
for the moon and the stars to appear.
There is no other way to navigate sleep.

Is there a spell that she has forgotten?
At last she tries "All my relations," and
outside, the tree shakes with laughter,
inside, her blanket moves, as new Raven
explores a new galaxy. Where needles
went in, the light's coming through.

Linda Rogers
(For Abstract #162)



Carle Hessay #162

letting th brush
danse

picking up
th brush bodee
breathing pick up
kolour finding th
surface

letting th
brush arm fingrs
swirl kolour
shape keep going
swoop place
go deepr soar
swoon n
thru th brush goez
on n startuls
eyez mouth
breth
find kolours
breth b
letting out
n moov

bill bissett
(For Abstract #25)



Carle Hessay #25

heering th kolour n seeing th
touch thru th ribbon uv
bcuming

bill bissett
(For Abstract #39)



Carle Hessay #39

what coms b4 words

what we see
b4 we call anee
thing or naming song
or describe
th morning site
n nite glade
aneeway call

bill bissett
(For Abstract #94)



Carle Hessay #94

moon skies

say
bubbuls uv
moon air breathe
a sweeping arc
in our heds

bill bissett
(For Abstract #T3)



Carle Hessay #T3

flite uv ekstasee

ung lasting orange
yello enerjee klimbing in th
suddn mist b4 remembring
asting a sting ting in
g g g g tin

bill bissett
(For Abstract #T4)

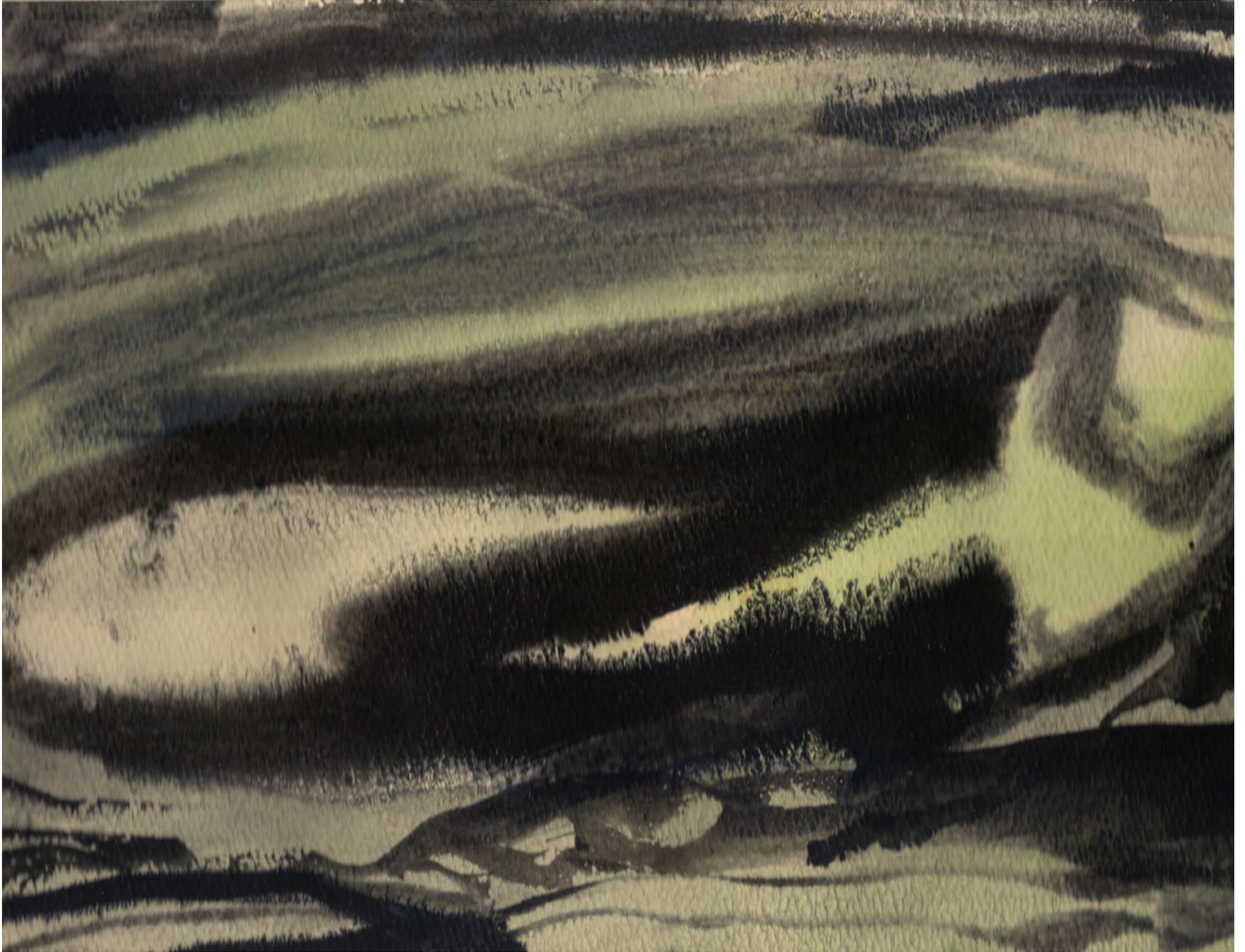


Carle Hessay #T4

earth e

we had such an
amazing time there
didn't we
running with the swallows
our brother the cougar in the
veree moodee winds

bill bissett
(For Abstract #184)



Carle Hessay #184

deep 4est uv th wolf mind

can we know
its anothr mind eyez
staring staring in2 th
nite shining iris
th breth uv th kold n
quizzikul lethal
teeth n tongue

bill bissett
(For Abstract #105)



Carle Hessay #105

dreem ghosts danse
yu wake up n
theyr still dansing

bill bissett
(For Abstract #35)



Carle Hessay #35

inkee blu dansr almost
diaphanous in ice n snow
dew yu see thru th curv
uv th glacier

bill bissett
(For Abstract #147)



Carle Hessay #147

sharks meditatesyun in th sky
n cumming 2ward yu

bill bisett
(For Abstract #151)



Carle Hessay #151

th flite n lafftr uv
no image no name
no representaysun

bill bissett
(For Abstract #139)



Carle Hessay #139

In the beginning
conceptual thought
 molding
 shaping
 image making.

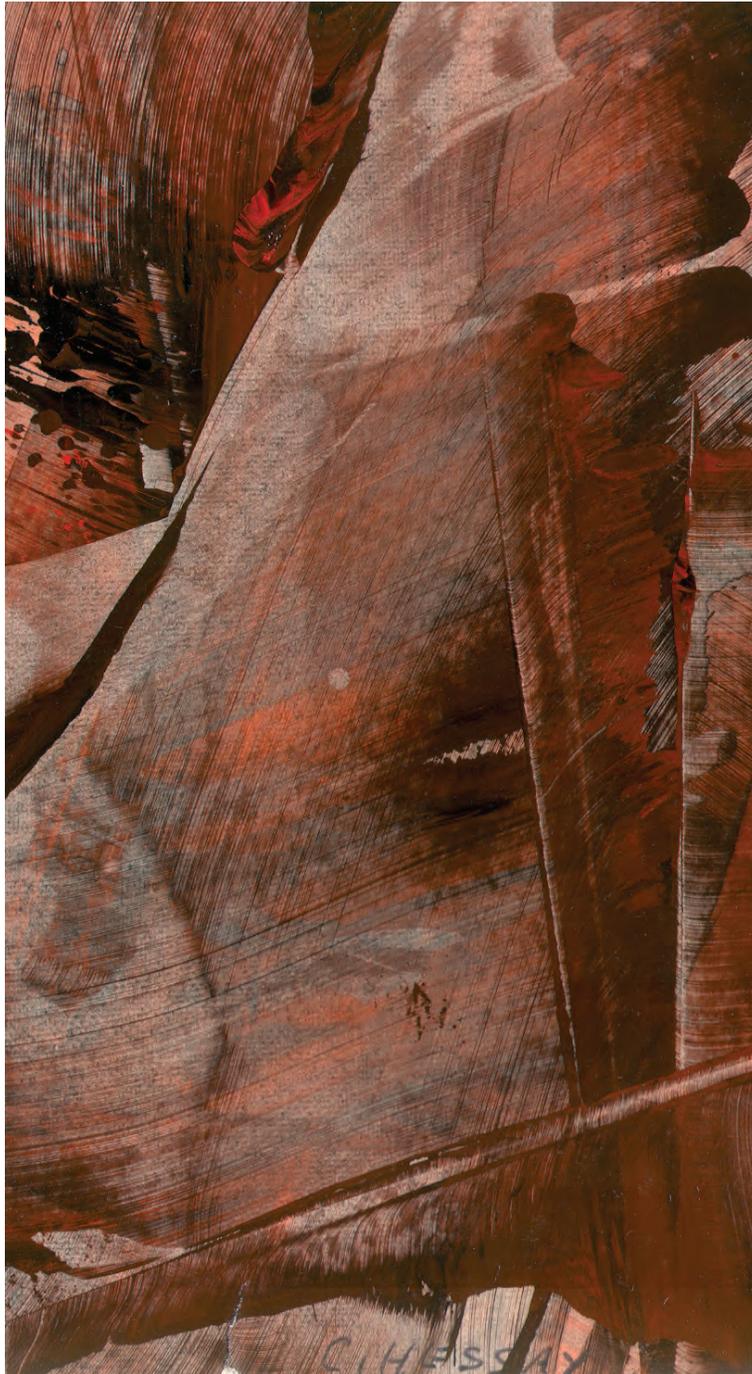
Leonard A. Woods
(For Abstract #239)



Carle Hessay #239

prospector's prima materia
wood rock lava
canyon wall
or cavern
?

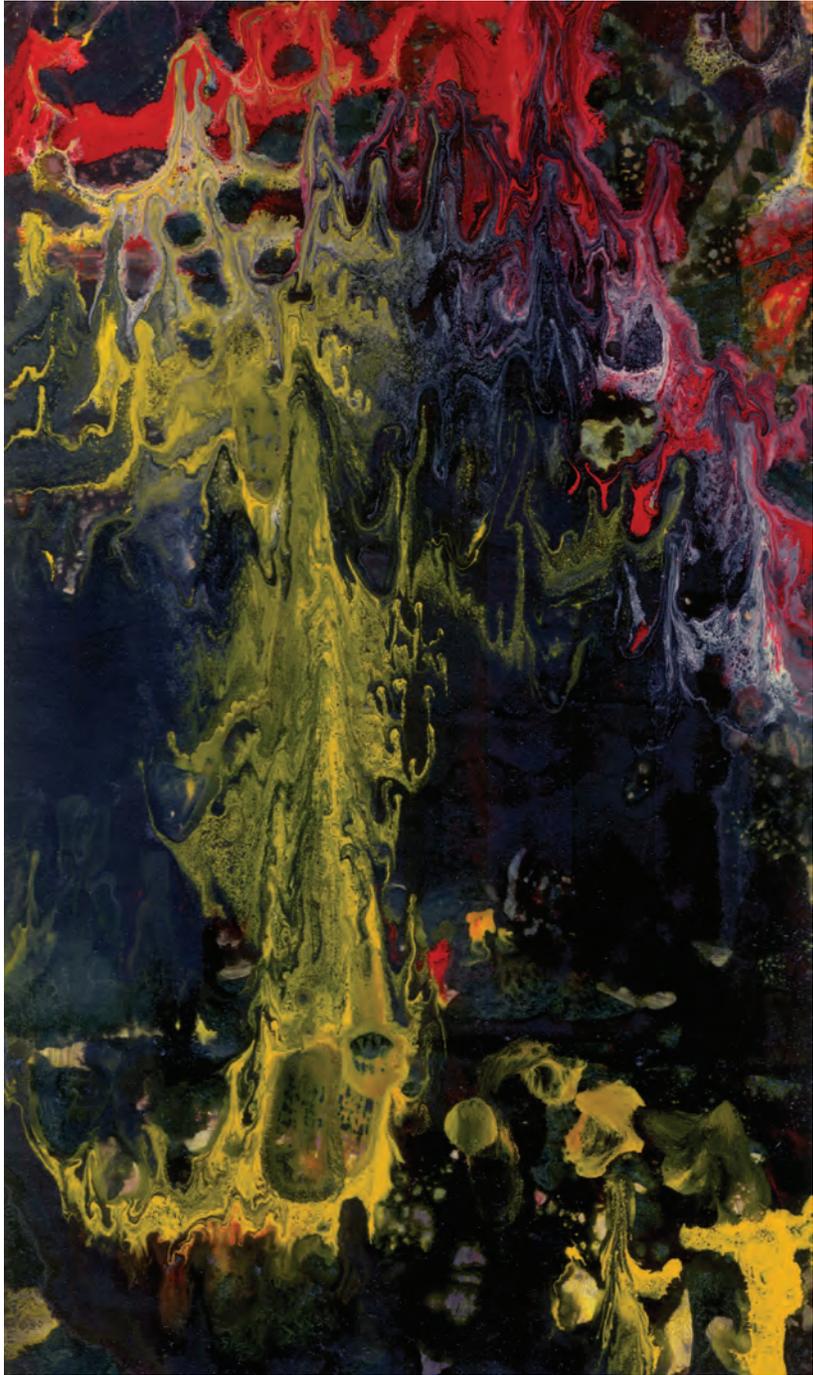
Leonard A. Woods
(for Abstract #44)



Carle Hessay #44

Emanations from darkness
frosted fountain
and blossoms —
blood-red!

Leonard A. Woods
(for Abstract #50)



Carle Hessay #50

Dark brick-red and black
Threatening —
Yet the powers of light
Persist.

Leonard A. Woods
(For Abstract #145)



Carle Hessay #145

Domestic free-for-all
searching
for a new equilibrium

Leonard A. Woods
(For Abstract #32)



Carle Hessay #32

toppling forms
fall where they may —
happenstance

Leonard A Woods
(For Abstract #120)



Carle Hessay #120

Igneus

There's a granite wall
on which she likes
to sit and drink her tea,
and inside that wall,
pockets of cooling
magma. Once she was
molten but now
even she has solidified.

Patricia Young
(For Abstract #229)



Carle Hessay #229



Carle Hessay #242

We weren't young though we were in love
with late afternoon in Venice, confused
other rooms with that one, other
shadows. Light filtered through slats
water rippled below. Waking
from a nap, we'd always fall
into a strange wine-muted silence.

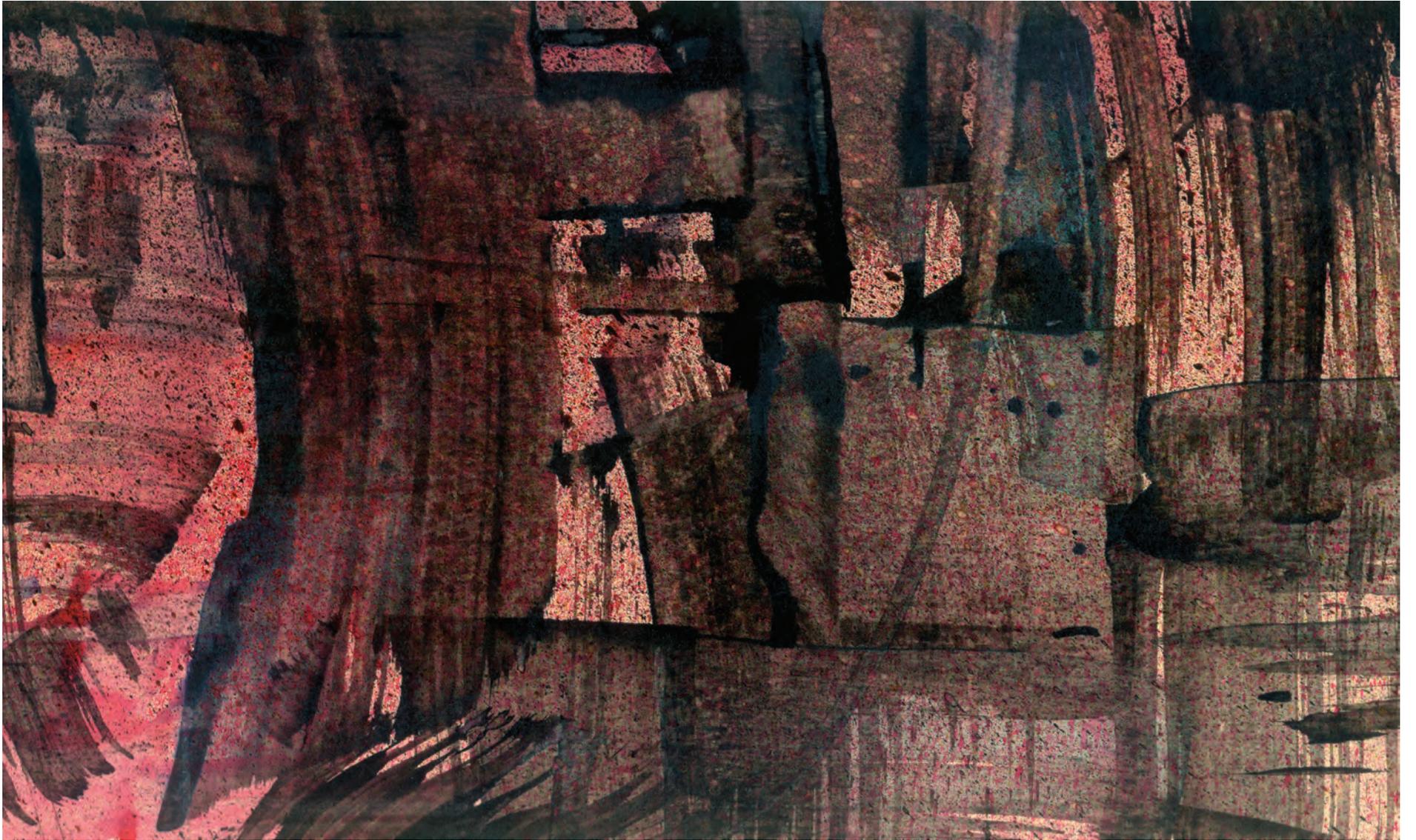
Patricia Young
(For Abstract #225)



Carle Hessay #225

in valleys of fractal
stone shadows beckon
one to another
calling me ever on
into that secret core

Gray Sutherland
(For Abstract #92)



Carle Hessay #92

Pioneers

I've been there, seen
the fractured planes of light
soaring between mountainsides
heard the stone tingle
in nervous delight
as stars rose above the cruel peaks
into the night skies

I've been there, watched
life flicker instant by
ecstatic instant between
shivering pine needles
heard water trickle
somewhere beyond the darkness,
always beyond

Gray Sutherland
(For Abstract #191)



Carle Hessay #191

Early morning tremor

And as we watched a figure twisted
fierce and muscular from the ground
feet cracked and scarred in broken sandals
as if the mountainside itself had swelled

and as it glared at us its eyes
blazing with malevolent rage its breath
snarling through clamped teeth
the sky shuddered rocks cowered

rivers fell silent trees and flowers
cringed all living beings fled behind
their shadows and the whole valley
shook its eyes closed tight in terror

waiting until at last the creature spoke
of what it said we understood
not a word and yet its mocking
sneer left its meaning clear: next time

Gray Sutherland
(For Abstract #41)



Carle Hessay #41

Within my fence is peace
without the myriad riders
howl in frustrated rage

Within my fence I have gathered
wife, children, friends, those whom I wish
to protect from the swirling smoke

Without the flames roar higher
the riders hiss and snarl
within my fence is peace

Gray Sutherland
(For Abstract #52)



Carle Hessay #52

Just like the laugh of
an exultant child
discovering the truth
its parents cannot see

Gray Sutherland
(For Abstract #91)



Carle Hessay #91

if you look closely
eyes almost closed
hold your breath tight
start to hum silently
and sway, sway

just like a hemlock
in February wind
nothing may happen
but at least you'll know
you're on the right track

Gray Sutherland
(For Abstract #207)



Carle Hessay #207

picking blueberries
on the barrens
hot August afternoon
suckle my month old son

blueberries/blue faeries
faerie blue caps
bluebells on the barren

Karen Ballinger
(For Abstract #88)



Carle Hessay #88

sun rises
a new laid egg
still warm
under speckled feathers
I reach under
crack open the Truth

Karen Ballinger
(For Abstract #27)



Carle Hessay #27

Full moon seeks the edge
I dance in the lodge
Gaia, Gaia, Gaia
grounds our Future
In Her Hands

Karen Ballinger
(For Abstract #227)



Carle Hessay #227

inside the lean/to
my stained fingers
winnow
fresh leaves, twigs
from fat blueberries
on small cedar plank

Karen Ballinger
(For Abstract #5)



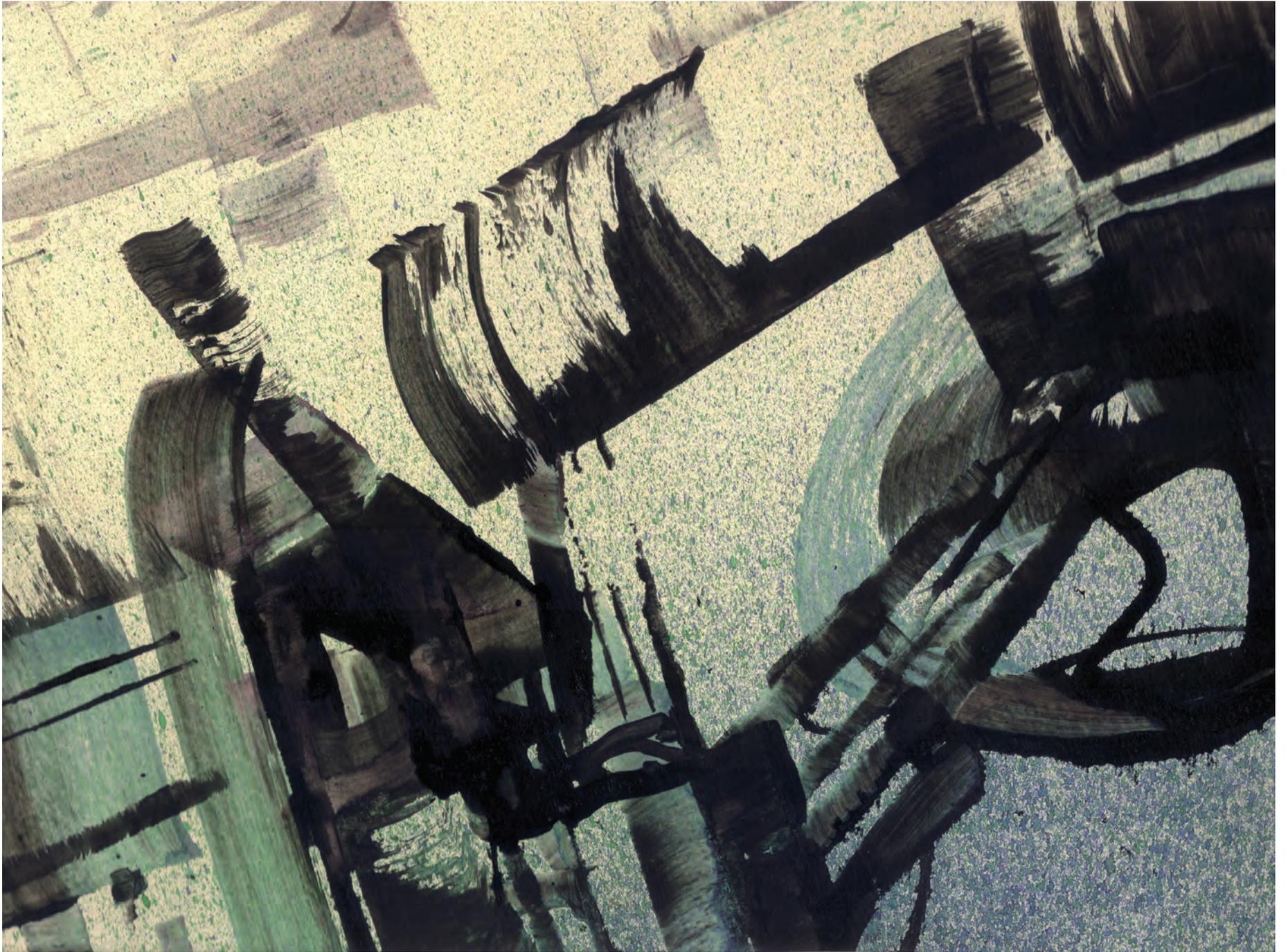
Carle Hessay #5

Observations

They rub their midnight hands
and in the cold
take turns to spy
on the moons of Jupiter
slaves to gravity
like everything else.

Like everything else
slaves to gravity
on the moons of Jupiter
take turns to spy
and in the cold
they rub their midnight hands.

Terence Young
(For Abstract #206)



Carle Hessay #206

Elegy

Making love
in September once
the leaves fallen
falling
the world all around dying
when they were young
and didn't believe
they were dying too.

They were dying too
and didn't believe
when they were young
the world all around dying
falling
the leaves fallen
in September once
making love.

Terence Young
(Abstract for #213)

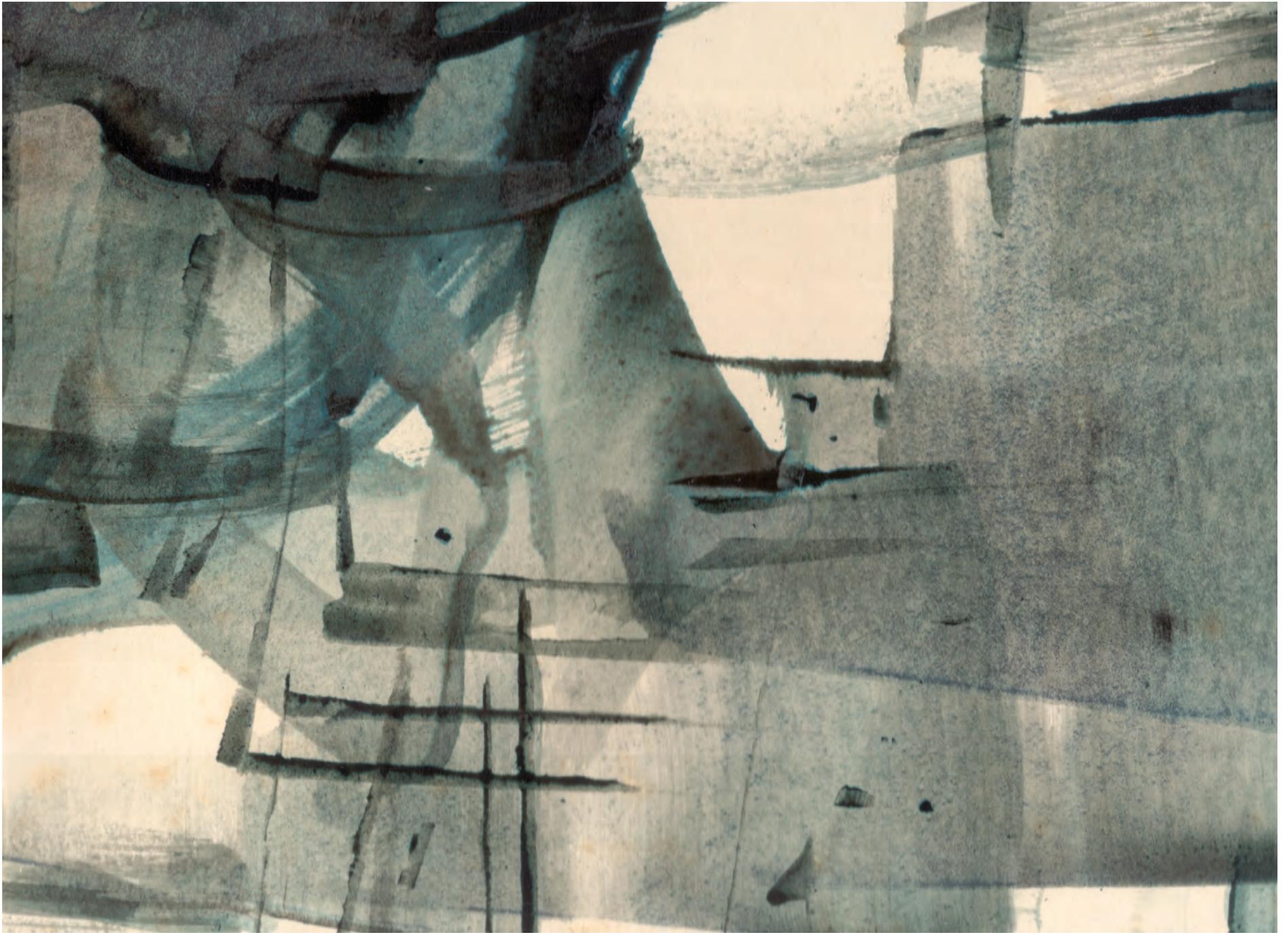
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Carle Hessay #213

Night after night bombs fall on the cold, black place.
But the bridge stands firm
Protecting the river
Holding it together
Like blood within the veins.

Corinna Gilliland
(For Abstract #62)



Carle Hessay #62

The snow is melting
The polar bear faces extinction.
Is that why he took up smoking?

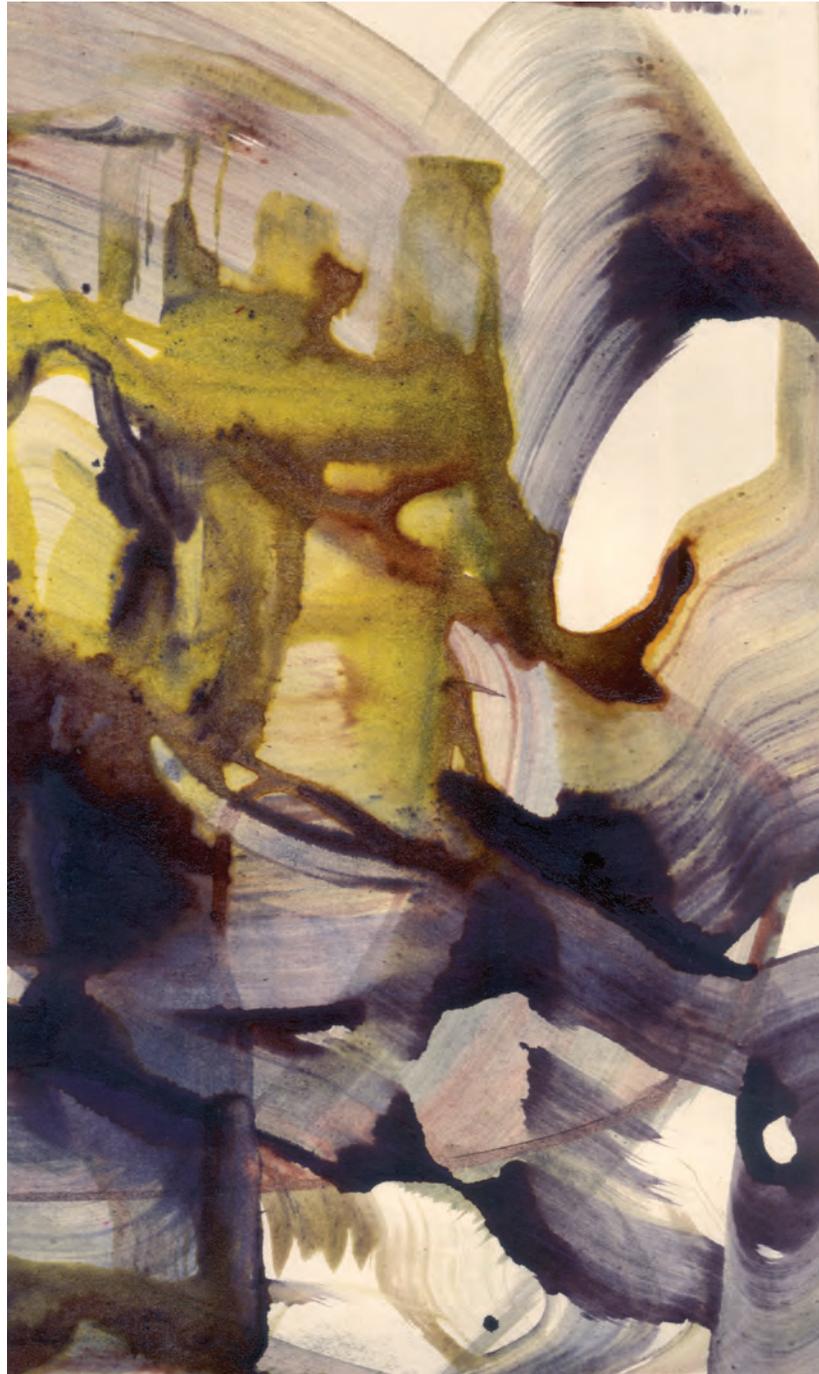
Corinna Gilliland
(For Abstract #97)



Carle Hessay #97

The butterscotch giraffe
Wrestles a chocolate coated branch
As he contemplates
His blackberry and licorice landscape.

Corinna Gilliland
(For Abstract #68)



Carle Hessay #68

The trees are cold without their leaves,
their branches tremble in the midnight air
Black tar stains the rocks and drips
slowly, stickily
into a pool of sunlight soap.

Corinna Gilliland
(For Abstract #58)



Carle Hessay #58

all souls' day

oscar wilde says
the wallpaper has to go
because of the flames
consuming his room
his arms raised
in beggary he
watches the night
from his cell

the landscape lit
for a moment by
lightning

Patrick Friessen
(For Abstract #55)



Carle Hessay #55

who swung a hammer?

who swung a hammer
building a dark fire
on the horizon?

who fed the animals
at the blue window
when the hunger arrived?

who stops to comb
the northern lights
from his hair?

Patrick Friessen
(for Abstract #190)



Carle Hessay #190

Red Cedars

Tell me again —
what was it like
to lie awake
listening
to the cries
 deep in the forest
of the wild boy
with his cannibal heart?

Eve Joseph
(For Abstract #209)



Carle Hessay #209

Life Drawing

There is a nude in there,
I know it.

The long-necked horse
and tattooed man are distractions only.

While she was slipping out
of her pink chiffon dress

you were lost
in red.

Is that the moon in the left-hand corner
of a mirror?

Or a ration of the night sky
beneath which

a nude waits
in naked light.

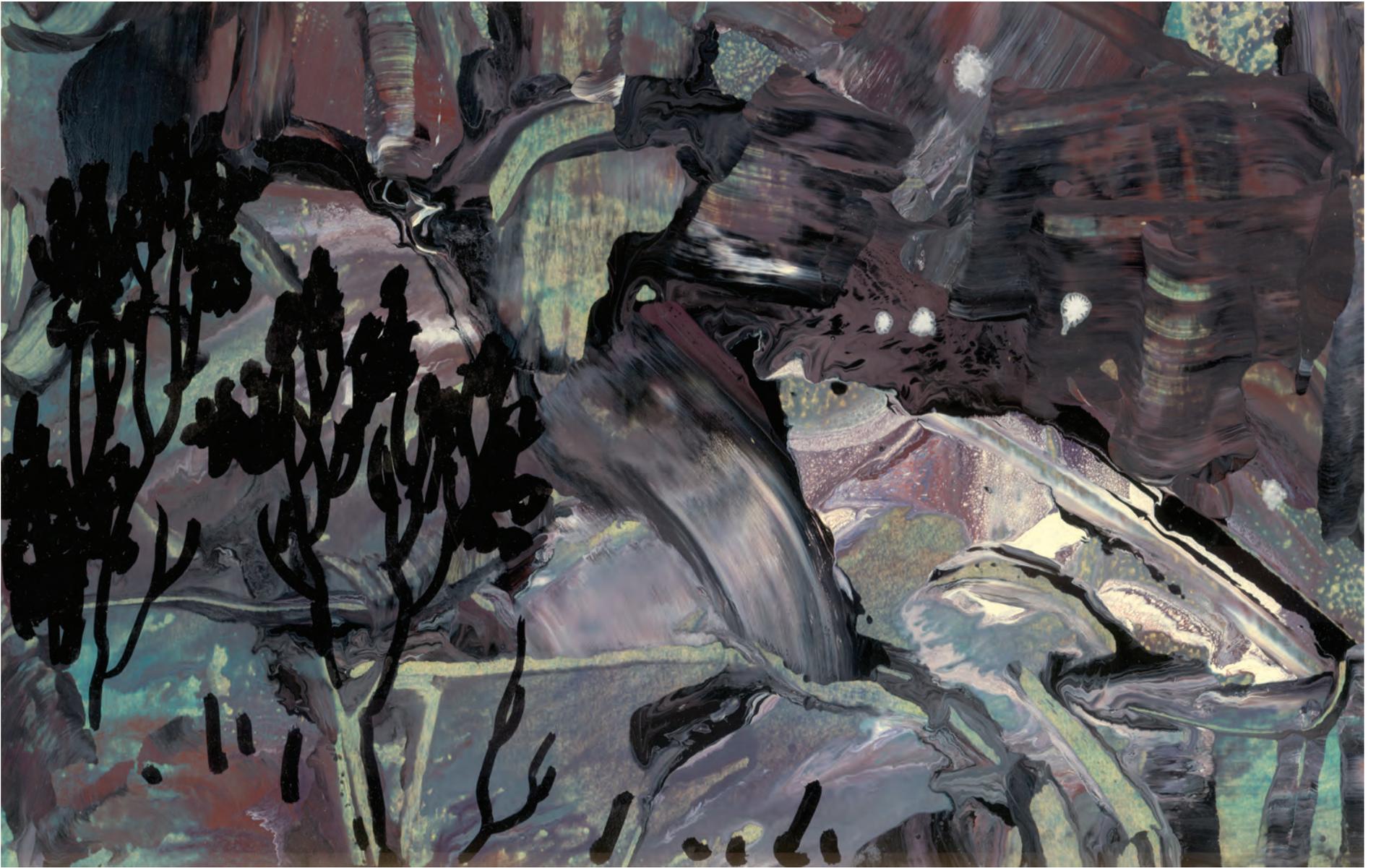
Eve Joseph
(For Abstract #60)



Carle Hessay #60

against this mountain
the language of wings
is a stillness too

Gail D. Whitter
(For Abstract #28)



Carle Hessay #28

all the crows
dressed in black silk
drop from her fingers

Gail D. Whitter
(For Abstract #203)



Carle Hessay #203

more often now
on my Earth walk
feathers

Gail D. Whitter
(For Abstract #90a)



Carle Hessay #90a

do you know
she left segments of herself
in the black crows?

Gail D. Whitter
(For Abstract #45)



Carle Hessay #45

listen for silence
in the opening of sky
says Eagle

Gail D. Whitter
(For Abstract #7)



Carle Hessay #7

mid-winter
from my window
openings ...

Gail D. Whitter
(For Abstract #43)



Carle Hessay #43

Light at the Centre

In the deep moments
the city is dark with grief
but there is light at the centre,
an animated joy —
faces in conversation
a woman sings

flags blaze glory and
a bridge appears
spanning a chasm
of unknowing
bright with the possible

brightness
at the core

flag rays stream
a bridge spans
the chasm of unknowing

bright with the possible

brightness
at the core

Carol Ann Sokoloff
(For Abstract #114)



Carle Hessay #114

Cathedral Grove

Whenever you arrive in my thoughts,
bringing a memory of home, the beach, hospice —
does some trace of you where you are now
reach from beyond this earth and sun and moon?

You loved the connection between one being and another.
Your face, when you stopped to look in a tide pool,
full of tenderness and curiosity and awe.
You told me your favourite word was “and.”

From you I learned to notice small creatures:
the snail on the wet handrail, the beetle’s
tracks in the sand. Now you are gone,
and I try to notice them on my own.

I scatter your ashes. Here, where the earth lies still and rich in loam,
may you find the wind, and a green november.
This forest was your face
in the place beyond time where you were born.

Barbara Colebrook Peace
(For Abstract #231)



Carle Hessay #231

The Valley of Achor

The darkness
so

like the hundred year
forest

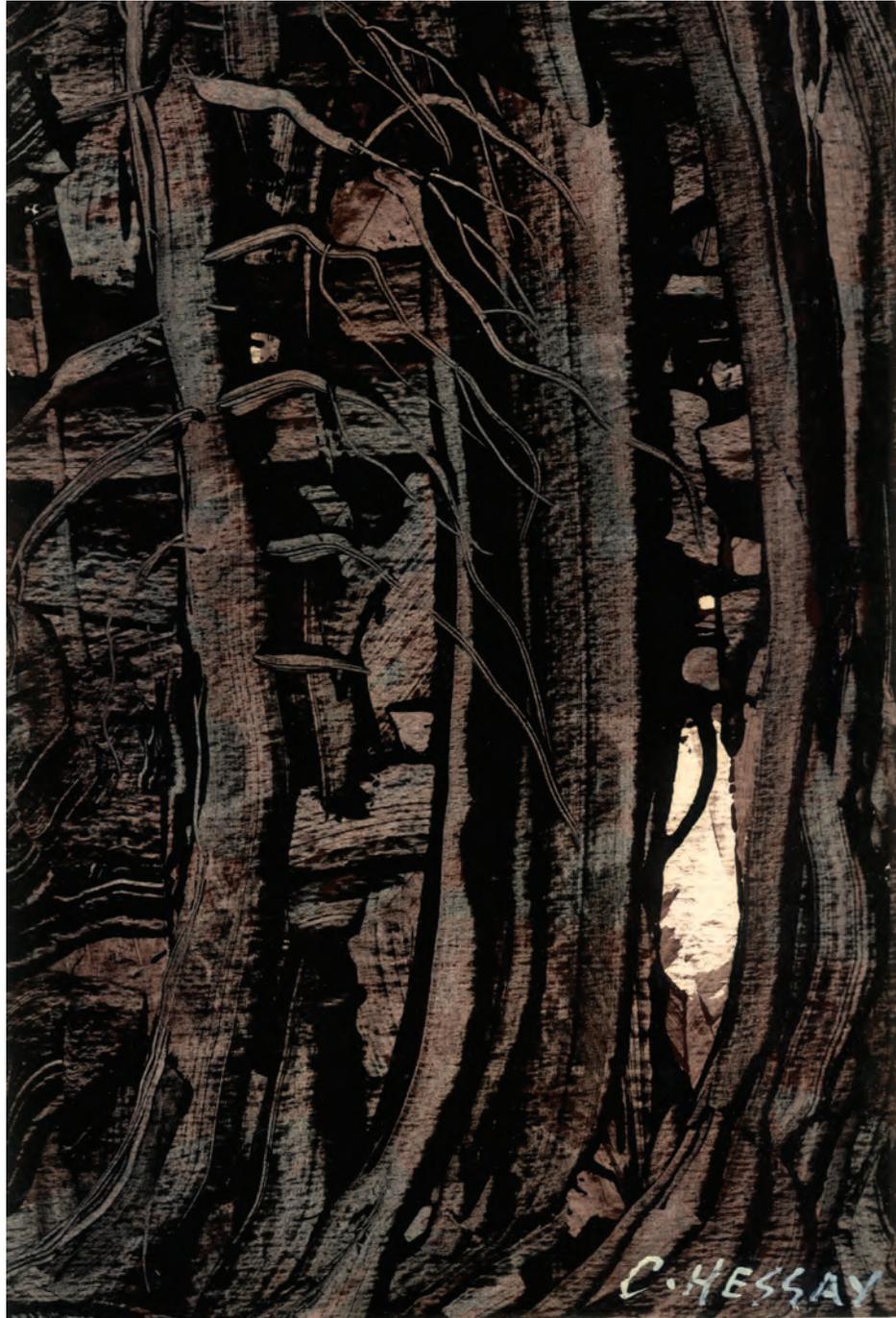
primitive
longings
paw

toward
light, where

space bursts

with remembered
radiance.

Judith Heron
(For abstract #157)



Carle Hessay #157

In the midst of anything

water
clear and eternal
falls
as
it always
has

Judith Heron
(For abstract #124)



Carle Hessay #124

Wee Pearls for Kelly

Dawn
curved pearl
perfect over the
glistening
sea.

Sails
rippled on
the cool edge of
midnight's
storm.

Shells
tossed high
turned to shiver
against the
tide.

Past
the gray
heron splashed
the white
dog.

Both
leapt: dark
wings on mist,
pale feet on
sand.

Twin
pearls in
your slow smile
twinned in
mine.

Linda Olson
(For Abstract #34)

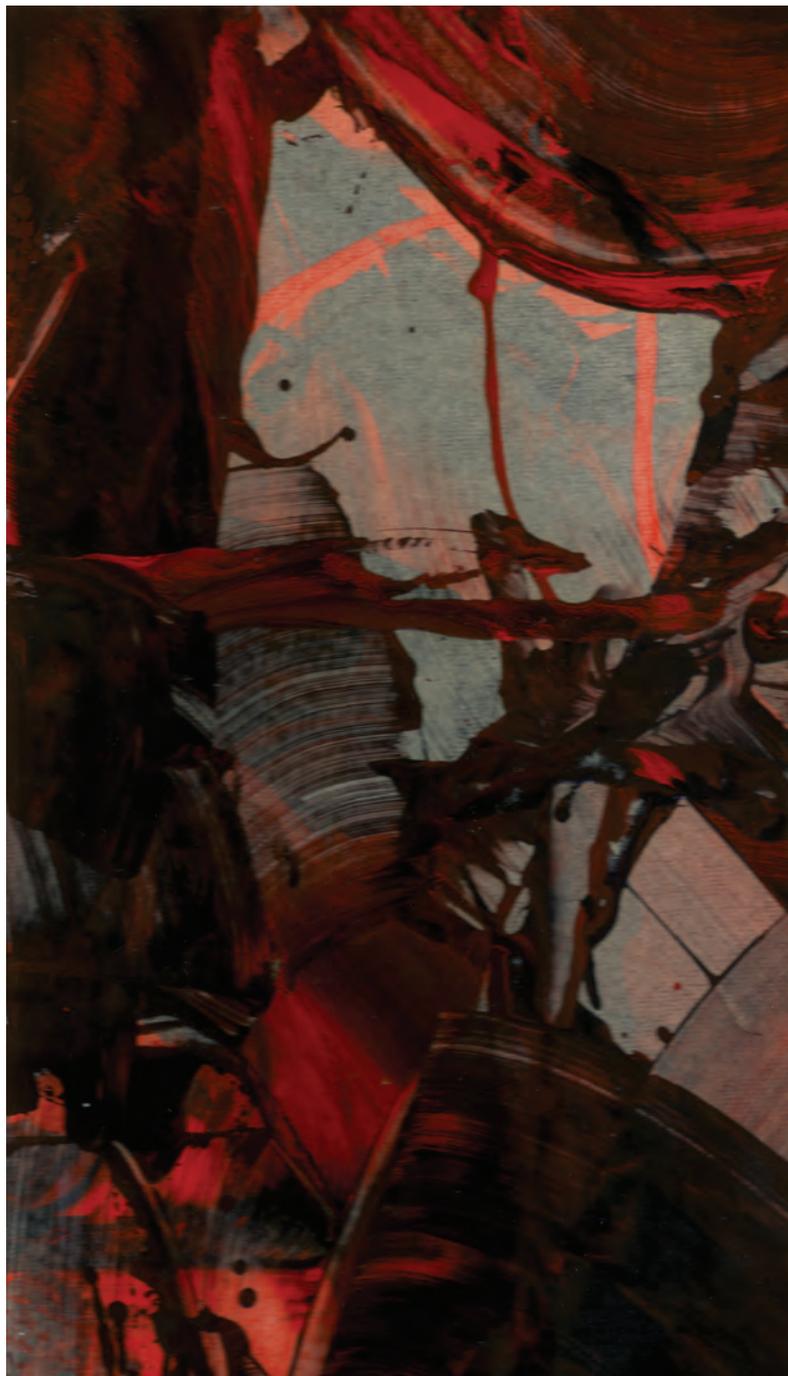


Carle Hessay #34

Pomegranate Wings

I see you painted flesh-pink on my heart's canvas;
your face is bowed a little to the snowy page.
The story is sad—sharp steel and red
horses—but you're smiling: you
know words can waft truth
light as feathers on a
blood-ripe
wind.
A
bone
cage might
soften with fruit at
its core. Even harp ribs can
sigh if the tempest cuts deep. We
keep dancing, like quills, afraid to rise
and read the flow, but you are there, above the
ink, a Magdalene soaring on her pomegranate wings.

Linda Olson
(For Abstract #193)



Carle Hessay #193

LITERARY CONTRIBUTORS

Karen Ballinger, a former Buddhist and a graduate of the University of Victoria Women's Studies and Creative Writing programs, observed a robed monk waiting in the rain at a bus stop. Late that night, these poems were caught when they burst into her sleep and forced their way onto the paper.

bill bissett originalee from lunaria thn
halifax vancouver now toronto
nu book hungree throat talonbooks
cd nothing will hurt with pete dako
art shows th secret handshake art galleree toronto
teeches workman arts

Dorothy Field is a visual artist and the author of three books of poetry. She met Kelly in the early days of her writing career. Together with Barbara Colebrook Peace, the three of them launched poetry books shortly before Kelly died. In the last days of Kelly's life, she was thankful to live close enough to hospice to hobble on her broken foot through slushy snow to sit beside Kelly and sing to her.

Patrick Friesen is a poet and dramatist who was born in Manitoba but is now living on Vancouver Island. He won the Manitoba Book of the Year Award in 1996 and the Relit award for poetry in 2012. His latest books are *a dark boat* (Anvil Press) and *jumping in the asylum* (Quattro Books).

Corinna Gilliland began writing poetry in her late 'teens. Her MA thesis was on the role women played in the creation of treatises written at the behest of two 13th century anchorites. Corinna is an active member of Langham Court

theatre, the Friends of the Greater Victoria Public Library and the Jane Austen Society of North America

Judith Heron first encountered Kelly through her poetry in *I Will Ask for Birds*. Though they met only once in person, it was a meeting that ran deep and still holds. Judith is preparing to publish her first manuscript and has previously been published in several chap books and anthologies. Kelly remains an inspiration in her work.

Eve Joseph is the author of two books of poetry, *The Startled Heart* (Oolichan, 2004) and *The Secret Signature of Things* (Brick, 2010). She recently received the 2010 P.K. Page Founder's Award for poetry and the 2010 Malahat Creative Non-Fiction Prize. She lives in Brentwood Bay, BC. Her next book *In the Slender Margin* is due out with HarperCollins in spring 2014.

Linda Olson met Kelly at the University of Victoria, where they both discovered a passion for the Middle Ages and the beautiful handwritten books that survive from that time. They shared far more than that, however—an abiding love of beaches, birds, and their elderly dogs, as well as a scholarly fascination with interiority and the ways in which words and images can explore and express an invisible realm of emotions and ideas. Strolling along a tide line at the coming of dawn or deciphering an obscure bit of marginalia late into the night, reading a poem or writing one, Linda will always find Kelly drifting like a feather through her thoughts.

Barbara Colebrook Peace is the author of two poetry books, *Duet for Wings and Earth* (Sono Nis, 2008) and *Kyrie* (Sono Nis, 2001), and the co-editor of *P.K. Page: Essays on Her Works* (Guernica, 2001.) She has read her poetry on CBC and at Vancouver Word on the Street, as well as taking part in various benefit concerts. Her poems have appeared in the B.C. Poetry in Transit program, in literary journals, and in several anthologies. Kelly Parsons was one of her closest friends, her sister in poetry, from the time they met when they were both beginning to write poetry.

Linda Rogers is pleased to honour the memory of Kelly Parsons in this elegaic anthology. She was, even in this life, a person of angelic sensibility. Rogers, past Poet Laureate of Victoria and Canadian People's Poet, admires the restrained exuberance of Parson's natural world, a refreshment where ignorant armies clash by night...and day.

Carol Ann Sokoloff is the author of *Eternal Lake O'Hara* (poetry & history), *New Sufi Songs and Dances* (metaphysics), *Colours Everywhere You Go* (for children), and the poetry chapbook *A Light Unbroken*, and has poems in noteworthy anthologies. She is also an editor, instructor, songwriter and jazz vocalist living in Victoria BC.

Gray Sutherland worked as a translator in government service until 2000 and has continued as a freelance since then. He has been writing since 1964 and has published five collections of poetry and a novel. From 2004 to 2006 he worked with the American photographer Carll Goodpasture on what he describes as the “photo-poetic” work *Terje Vigen's Båt*, which was exhibited in Oslo and Victoria. He knew Kelly Parsons very briefly towards the end of her life.

Gail D. Whitter currently resides in the Kootenays. Poet in a former life (she has won several awards for her poetry books), she still writes haiku. She delights in innovative approaches and works extensively in mixed media and new art forms. She also makes Spirit Dolls, jewelry, and art cards.

Leonard A. Woods knew Carle Hessay during his Langley years and was a major influence in critiquing his paintings. Leonard was a pupil of Lemoine Fitzgerald, one of the famous Group of Seven. Multi-talented himself, Leonard Woods taught sculpture at the Vancouver School of Art (now Emily Carr University), designed the bas reliefs at St. Andrews-Wesley Church in Vancouver, wrote musical scores and an opera, and was an original founding member of the Langley Community Music School.

Patricia Young has published eleven collections of poetry. Most recently, *Night-Eater* was shortlisted for the Dorothy Livesay Award. In 2013 she received honorable mentions in two categories of the National Magazine Awards. She was extremely privileged to edit Kelly Parson's collection of poetry, *I Will Ask For Birds*.

Terence Young lives in Victoria, B.C., where he teaches writing and English at St. Michaels University School. His most recent book is a collection of short fiction, *The End of the Ice Age* (Bibiloasis, 2010). He has used Kelly's poems in his writing class for years as fine examples of discovering the miraculous in the ordinary details of everyday life.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

It is no small measure of the esteem in which Kelly Parsons was held that so many highly acclaimed poets have volunteered to write poems to celebrate Kelly, who was a bright star in so many of the arts, including the art of living in the moment—and it is to these poets that a debt of gratitude is owed because their tribute will help to ensure that Kelly is not forgotten.

I thank all those contributors who read my introduction, in whole or in part, for their valuable suggestions. In particular, I thank Gray Sutherland for his expertise and diligence in copyediting this book, as well as for his suggestions on numerous issues, including layout. Any mistakes remaining are my own.

The recollections of Kathryn Kerby-Fulton, Kelly's beloved professor, help to fill out the larger picture of who Kelly was as a person and as an outstanding academic in Medieval Manuscript Studies.

Kelly's son John and his wife Alana have been kind in sharing information about Kelly. Kelly's grandchildren, Nicholas and Maya, who were born during Kelly's life and were the world to her, and Ryan, who subsequently graced the family, extend Kelly's love and personal legacy.

Thanks are also due to Patty Loveridge for permission to use her photograph of Kelly. The Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library at Yale University is also to be acknowledged for its generosity in allowing the image from the Rothschild Canticles to be reproduced without cost. Dorothy Field and Leaf Press have likewise granted permission to reprint "For months you've asked for poems."

Since Carle Hessay passed away in 1978, many people have sent me anecdotes about his life and art. I have included the most recent, by Pat Parungao, in my introduction. Her recollections of Carle during the period he lived in Langley are very like my own. I thank her for encapsulating it all so tellingly.

Most of the abstracts in this collection are part of the Carle Hessay estate. I thank art collector David Douglas Hart of Snow Lake, Manitoba, for the Hessay abstracts numbered 25 and 239 (pages 15 and 37, facing the accompanying poems by Bill Bissett and Leonard A. Woods respectively).

Finally, I thank my husband, Wayne Hilmo, who helped me in so many ways in making this publication possible.

Maidie Hilmo