



# Progeny

2005

Poetry

Prose

Plays



Photos

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## 2005

Poetry ♦ Prose ♦ Plays ♦ Photos

Defiance College

Defiance, Ohio

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## Editors' Acknowledgements

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This fall we were humbled by the vast quality of the contributors. Without you, our labor would have been fruitless. Thank you for your passion and talent.

Your co-editors,

Abigail Reichard  
Kaycie Atchison

## Untitled IV

The decor at that little Greek place–  
The onions on my salad–  
This song, any song, on the radio–

Or maybe it's the way  
My breath catches in my throat  
Before I open the door.

And I remember a time when  
Things that were sacred  
Would be sacred for always...

...But now sometimes they're not.  
This is no reason to feel like a terrible person.  
I'm unsure: is this a one-way street?

“Something” keeps me coming back  
Something more than we know  
And less than we mean–

But it makes all the difference.  
Maybe this is sacred, too.  
(But I think I want to keep lying to myself.)

Parallel universe? I see the truth  
In my dreams, six years and a world too late.  
Is it only wrong if it's serious?

Sorry, zanmi. Maybe we'll have better luck  
In our next lives.  
Until then, sweet dreams.

Rachel Baker

## As a Young Child

As a young child, I was afraid of storms.  
Rain falling and lightning flashing,  
The Heavens joining in a cosmic battle  
Of mysterious beauty and dangerous power.

The powers fighting in the sky,  
Scorching all who come too near,  
Frightening for dominance,  
A mastery of all.

Then as I got older, I saw the alliance,  
And my mind embraces the wonder  
Of the deadly dance  
In the sky.

The destruction and its cause  
Bring new beginnings to all.

## Myree Mills

## Dreams

Dreams are the aspects of our everyday life  
They help us through our toils and strife  
Although we want our dreams to prevail  
Sometimes it's hard on that onward trail  
For the loved ones we have lost in the rebels of life  
They held onto their dreams with their very last might  
They took one step forward and two steps back  
As they stumbled to stay on the right track

Dreams shattered, leaving a young soul in despair  
But who's to say that life is fair  
Who are you to judge me, when my dreams are gone  
And my heart is scorned  
Like the gods that you serve, my dreams I believed  
Until one day I didn't succeed  
As I began to think about the things I'd overcome  
I realized my dreams were not all dumb  
It coulda' been worse  
But who's to curse  
I don't need no remorse  
Don't I have a choice  
To project my voice  
Some people said I had high hopes, maybe I float  
Maybe I just gloat, maybe I'll build a moat around my castle  
I don't mean to be a hassel  
I dreamed to be a good friend, until the end  
To be a good sister and never dis her  
To be a good daughter and not play the martyr  
To respect my body, for it's a temple, it's just that simple  
So with my confidence rebuilt and like a flower not even a wilt

I stand bold and beautiful, dressed in silk  
With the ability to stand and an outstretched hand  
I press on with God and continue to trod  
On that brand new road on which I've been told  
Many have traveled, but few have claimed  
So I dream  
I dream and I wait  
To one day clear my slate and see my fate  
So as I swim upstream  
One by one is my means  
To one day conquer my Dreams

Alicia M. Johnson



## The Sleeping Child

I walk through the forest, dazed by the sights.  
As I long to rest my legs, a tree braces my tired being.  
My arms feel the space around me:  
Earth, plant, being, heaven . . . being . . .  
My body turns to see a boy sleeping,  
The light bathing itself around him.

Standing, knees shaking, walking toward the light,  
Then falling to my knees facing the boy,  
Slightly curled up, me covered by the light.  
His clothes tangled, his bare skin exposed,  
Hair stringing and scattered,  
and face relaxed but unsettled.

As my hand moves to touch him, his eyes open,  
His expression simple as mine is shaken.  
Before I can speak, sadness overcomes him.  
I ask “Why are you sad?” and give a calm smile.  
The sadness turns to tears,  
his face a wet mess of tears and hair.

He stands: “Don’t . . . don’t you feel it?” he says.  
“What?” “The pain.” “Of whom?”

“The world. . . . I feel it all, everyone’s pain, hate,  
sadness, loneliness, broken hearts . . .  
I even feel yours . . .  
you running away to escape your pain.”  
He falls, rolls into a ball, screaming, shaking, yelling:  
his body in pain.

I turn to touch his face. He turns away.  
I pick him up, rocking him in my arms.  
“Please don’t cry, I wish my . . . our . . . pain would be gone.  
And I will try to make our pain go away, I promise.”  
The promise echoes as the wind carries it away,  
guided by white wings.

Siobhon Smith

## When Poet and Pen Unite

I try to smile,  
but in the depth of this mind of mine,  
confusion and irrationality  
father my fear,  
mother mistrust,  
birth abuse  
of self.

But when Pen and Poet unite,  
there is a true simplicity,  
a partnership, creation, it  
seems to flow with an ease  
that wouldn’t have been ease  
had it been just this easy  
To Smile.

Agibail Reichard

## The Amazing Singing Muscle, Part II

Yes, my heart did sing.  
It sang for you a song  
of everliving, everloving hope.  
You taught me a new trick.

The song has faded from  
my lips, from my heart. Instead  
of a song, my heart clinks together  
as though it were glass that had been broken.

I doubted you at first,  
and now I know to never  
go against my first choice.

My heart did bleed for you,  
mourned for you once you were  
gone. And now, you know what?  
I just don't care anymore.

You did love me once, and  
it was a great and passionate  
love. I knew it would end,  
but did you really need to lie?

I thought love, True Love,  
was built on trust. Why did I trust  
you? Why was it false when you  
told me you would never lie?

Then again, did you not  
trust yourself? Did you lie  
to yourself about me? About us?

And now, though still shattered,  
my mourning is over. I did let the  
tears stain my pillow at night,  
I did feel the cold instead of you.

So, to answer your question,  
yes, I suppose that  
my heart, the organ, the muscle,  
my soul will forget you.

Kaycie Atchison

## Doppelganger

Fear not,  
Dear boy,  
your life will not go – unlived.  
No dreams  
now dreamt  
will haunt this world – alone.  
Dredge deep,  
unmasked,  
Blessed Hyperion.  
I breathe  
one last,  
then you and I – are one.

Gary Mattingly

## Giving Her the Eye

A beauty stood on a balcony high,  
Sneezed and lost her blue glass eye.  
A young man walking down The Strand,  
Caught the flashing eye-ball in one hand.  
Invited up to receive her thanks,  
He drooled on her features, figure, flanks.  
While dining on champagne and chicken,  
These strangers felt their heartbeats quicken,  
Gazed into each other's eyes,  
Imperfections indiscernible,  
Including the eye-ball that proved returnable.  
Over croissants and coffee in the morning,  
The young man felt suspicion dawning,  
Said, "Would you do this for just any passer-by?"  
"Oh no!" she said, "He'd have to catch my eye."

Shawn Hughes

## Untitled

Deep down it dwells,  
Not in the eyes, but the soul.  
Bit by bit it swells,  
Strengthening its role.  
But soon the hurt and pain is too much.  
And by the light of disappearing moon,  
It erupts at the slightest touch.  
First it's just the one,  
Leading the way,  
Looking back at what's been done,  
Not knowing what to say.  
The others soon follow,  
Not realizing what's right and wrong.  
One by one they disappear,  
Taking the hurt and pain.  
No longer will they be a tear,  
But a drop in the cold, cold rain.

Mary Ann Whitney



## Ode to a Nice Guy

This is for those guys who sit in the back of the cluttered room behind the books that bind their thoughts away from their instincts. This is for the nice guy who surreptitiously finishes his book. Those who are forever last or first, but never with the crowd. This is for those award-winning messengers of the uneventful days and nights with those who will make the events of tomorrow. This is for the nice guy who wins first place, stands alone on the pedestal, and waits. Waits not for his applause but with the proverbial proffered hand to the one who needs the light that falls upon his shoulders, proffered to the one who waits to be plucked up. Needy minds notice the nice guy only for the light he holds. He plucks them from their imposter's world, and he is drowned in the snake oil of the ones who would hold him back while pulling themselves to him and beyond. Knowing that the ones he lifts will not look back upon him. Knowing that those who make it to the lands beyond the seas will never wonder by what Graces they managed the voyage. This is for you, the nice guy.

The nice guys are the ones you turn to when your boyfriend turns around one day and vomits on your favorite purse at that party that you were only going to just so he could show you off to his friends. So that he could hold you tight with the rest of the world watching, take your last dignity from you and come back and DEMAND seconds. This is for the nice guy, waiting and watching in the crowd for her to run off crying so he can follow her and assure her that men—all men—are pricks and losers. It is you, nice guy, who assures women as you bandage their aching hearts that they are not alone. That each man is worth less than the last, when you know that you are truly worthy. You are the one who will hand her back her heart instead of coveting it when it is weakest. You will hand it back to her and set her loose, knowing that she will choose to dwell with the wolves that tear her apart and send her limping back to you. And each time she turns, you will look into her eyes, seeing her for the beauty that she is, but let her go.

You are the one who will lay her drunken body upon that mattress upstairs and take your seat to watch over her until you know there are no more wolves lurking in the corners. You are the one who will tuck her in and whisper to her to go to sleep instead of letting your lust take her over.

You are the one who doesn't wonder "Will I get caught?" You are the one, nice guy, who deserves the sonnets behind your eyes, the sonnets you mentally transcribe upon your heart and never speak.

But remember, nice guys, that for all the pains you have seen and endured, for all the outrageous plans you have heard, and for all the lies you have helped your insane friends get over, there will be an end. Why? Because you, in female form, exist. You will find each and every woman is more illogical than the last, until there will be one woman who shows that great illogical ideal that you have been living.

There will be one woman, so insane, so doomed to be alone because she expresses those same characteristics that have banished you to the realm of "singles," that she will love you for who you are. She will see in you, what you see in her: A nice . . . person.

Gary Mattingly



## The Untold Hurt

It's been twenty five years,  
ironic after all this time  
the twenty-year-old daughter has to play  
mediator  
between the two,  
acting  
understanding and cheerful.

Neither of them knows the truth.

The truth is  
I have  
never been happier  
than the days  
when I used to go to church  
with my two hands clutched  
in separate directions . . .  
one in hers  
one in his.

The truth is  
I miss  
getting kissed at bedtime,  
both cheeks wet  
from the prints of their lips . . .  
hers on the right  
his on the left.

The truth is  
I saw  
the tears that she hid,  
I felt the tension  
when the other woman came around,  
and I heard  
the quarrels from my bedroom . . .

The truth is  
when she stayed  
and held on  
because I needed them  
both,  
I was happy . . .  
we played our roles well,  
we were the perfect family to them.

The truth is I am grown,  
still needing them  
both  
more than ever  
together,  
but they need me to be understanding  
and that I must be.

Neither of them will  
know the truth.

But I don't forget,  
and now I hope  
someday you will see  
the tears  
I hide.

Camile Tucker





## Living History

*As some may know, I spent the last semester studying in England. This gave me the opportunity to do some traveling and see some things that I never thought I would ever see. I stood at the top of the Eiffel Tower in Paris and gazed at the Eastern European cityscape from the Charles Bridge in Prague, Czech Republic. But I think the most moving and significant events of my entire four month European odyssey came when a friend and I were visiting Krakow, Poland. Poland seems to be an odd choice to vacation, but at the time of our visit there was a cultural event of the highest magnitude that was unfolding right before our eyes.*

*Pope John Paul II was not only Polish but, also, a native of Krakow, and his passing set off a chain of events that just made me feel as if we were seeing history right before our eyes. To be caught up in a group of Polish pilgrims numbering 1.5 million, marching to mourn their fallen hero, is something that words cannot describe.*

*However, as powerful that that imagery may be, it may not be the most life-changing experience to occur in Krakow. Krakow is the home of the Auschwitz and Birkenau extermination camps. Perhaps the best way I can convey the kind of raw emotion that bombarded me when confronted with the camps is through an email that I sent to my parents the night after returning from Birkenau. Below is a copy of that email, representing an average, basic day in the life of my Krakow existence:*

Saturday, April 2, 2005

Hi There!

Time for an update from Poland. Yesterday, (Friday) Ernie and I went to Auschwitz. It was at the same time one of the most sickening and rewarding experiences of my life. The stuff that we saw should not be seen by anyone who is not truly strong enough to handle it, and a lot of the people there were not. Our experience there was made even more unique because when we got there, our tour group was too big so, Ernie and I broke off into another group. The group we were in consisted of a group of Jewish students studying in Jerusalem and their two rabbis. We talked to one of the rabbis, and he informed us that all of the students had an immediate relative die at Birkenau. This was a pilgrimage for their families, and as they are very poor, they had been saving for a very long time to make the journey.

I have said this about the two camps: Auschwitz will make you cry, but Birkenau will make you puke. Auschwitz is pretty much a museum of everything that the Red Army found when in was liberated. We saw a room full of 7000 kilograms of human hair packed in paper and ready to be shipped to a textile plant. We saw a room literally as big as a gym filled to the top with nothing but shoes. Another one filled with suitcases. Another one filled with clothes, one with combs and brushes, one with pots and pans, one with prosthetic limbs, and— maybe the worst one of all—one filled with children's toys.

Then you walk into the gas chamber and you smell the worst smell you can think of: A mixture of excrement, vomit, and a stale musty smell that comes with age. On the ground you can still see stains of blood and excrement. On the walls you see the imprints of fingernail marks. Then you walk into the crematorium . . . and that's a whole other smell altogether. Then you go to Birkenau and you pull up to the gates and see the train platform where they were separated and unloaded. Then you see the barracks, as far as the eye can see, in perfect rows, in perfect straight lines. It almost looks fake, like you're in a movie. It's a tough place to go, but I'm glad I went.

Now then, as we were getting off the bus from Birkenau, we walked right into a prayer vigil for the Pope, being led by the Bishop of Krakow. There were literally two or three thousand people standing in dead silence, cars driving past and stopping so as not to break the silence. Then we were going to go out last night to one of the newest, trendiest dance clubs in Krakow, but it was closed on a Friday night out of respect for the Pope. Walking through the square last night, past all the television trucks from CNN, BBC, and about ten others, we walked into the cathedral where he was ordained, and there was a candlelight service. The church officials asked that everyone who came into the church make a small donation and light a candle and set it somewhere in the church. It was around midnight local time, and they estimated that some 500,000 people had passed through and lit a candle. So it was kind of a surreal day yesterday in Krakow. Until next time . . .

Kyle



## Weapon of Mass Destruction

Fear  
Sets Neighbor against Neighbor  
Nation against Nation  
Paralyzes Positive Action  
Ends any hope of Human Harmony

Fear  
Organizes Power  
Organizes Prejudice  
Obliterates Justice as  
a category even to think about

Fear  
Active like love  
Opposite to love  
Vicious circle  
When will it end?

Fear  
When it permeates the world  
Foreshadows a Bang  
Rather than a Whimper

Has Love lost all power?  
Love needs Reason to partner  
And Determination  
And Courage  
And Resources

Fear Fades only when  
Love, Power and Justice  
Fill the air  
And the sea  
And the land  
And the hearts of all people on earth  
With good thoughts  
And better Relational Realities

Portal to Mass Construction

Kenneth Christiansen

## Lost Breath

I live in a place where  
the air's too cold to breathe  
yet I've caught on  
by now it seems  
that the harder  
I try to inhale  
the more my lungs  
seem at a debilitating loss  
they flap and flutter  
still nothing will happen  
nothing will come or go  
so I'm lost gasping  
the cold, like pinpricks  
to my unsuspecting mind  
then the wind comes  
with its inexorable force  
I fall  
the frigid air too much  
frozen ground no better  
but there I curl up  
trying but failing to remember  
the warmth of mother's womb  
gradually I've come to realize  
that I can feel no more  
no aching lungs  
nor biting wind  
not even the unyielding ground

now with calm I think  
the pain has at last stopped  
and someone now approaches  
I don't know who  
truthfully it does not matter  
'cuz with an outstretched hand  
they reach for me  
and with a smile I accept  
never looking back  
far away from the cold  
finally I've found me warmth  
I can breathe here

Lauren Brown



## Wear Your Helmet

Our youth had few boundaries, and we loved to explore.  
As we roamed with our freedom until darkness was growing.

No directions or guidance, we were off on our own.  
Now I ask “who’ll you be with” and “where’ll you be going?”

“Hell on wheels” at age ten, I did not think of safety.  
Yet I say “wear your helmet,” there’s too much to lose.

I’d love you to explore in my youthful freedom.  
But I won’t take that chance, I simply refuse.

My concern is instinctive, it comes from my heart.  
You must realize I’ve never been a parent before.

And I wish that you could roam, free to learn on the run.  
But the world keeps on changing, so I watch you next door.

Tim Rickabaugh



## The Definition of a Poem

What is poetry?

To me,

An art form, a form of expression,  
Wanting to be heard, a form of obsession,  
Deeper meanings rooted from simple thoughts,  
Simple stories with complex plots,  
Thoughts conceived, extended through  
Fingertips to pens and pencils to  
Create freedom on paper, no boundaries,  
Freedom to write and freedom to please,  
Cause controversy or freedom to tease,  
A pencil and paper puts me at ease  
When I’m lonely, upset, even confused,  
When I’m happy, sad, even been used,  
It’s conflicting, compelling, often confusing,  
Appealing, applauded, and always amusing,  
The letters form words, the absence of control,  
It’s my life, it’s my love, on paper my soul,  
To write is to be, my words my existence,  
The need to be heard is my persistence,  
Poetry is not word, iambic pentameter, soliloquy,  
Poetry is alive, it’s an entity,  
It has a soul, that’s why poetry  
Is me.

Audric Warren

## Regret

I look through eyes  
that are midnight black  
maybe hazy through the storm

I see things  
that are not there  
and wonder where reality has gone

These horror films flash  
like colorless bulbs  
in the back of my head

It won't go away  
It plays in my mind  
The past becomes my present

The crimson, it flowed  
all over my hands  
I felt so useless then

I wished to do more  
but I'd been too late  
I saw him run out the door

One long stemmed rose  
as I prayed you away  
was all I could pay in repentance

I look through eyes  
dark as window panes  
in the middle of the night

Lauren Brown

## Unmasked

I am misguided and undecided  
about the rhythm and course of this life,  
listening to the worries in my head.  
But give me the chance to say  
often when I smile,  
there is a glimpse,  
a relapse of self,  
that can evolve into the relaxation  
and true representation of my mind.  
Just relax and maybe unwind.  
Combine your sensibility and  
compatibility with all races,  
all creeds and all that is mine.  
In the dark or light,  
I have begun to see,  
to unmask what could have been  
so perfect,  
so passionate,  
so full of me.

Was the face upon which you gazed  
beautiful in every way?  
But still it took the mask  
for me to get into your life.  
The mask will remain  
Until the glorious day  
You choose to see me  
For who I truly am.  
But I do not have a poem.

That's right, I do not have a poem.  
There is no poem to describe the complexities of Me.  
When I look in the mirror, I see a face I do not recognize.  
When I look into myself, I see a teenager.  
When I look into myself, I hope to see . . .  
me.

Instead, my mind plays tricks, I can imagine  
anything.  
Usually I am smart or handsome  
even though the little voice says I am  
neither.  
Usually I am funny and entertaining,  
but really my mind is quiet.  
The truth is I don't know, and that scares me to death.  
So why does everyone keep asking?

I think the truth is, when the questions stop, that is who I am.  
I breathe in and out and in again and feel the rush of my blood  
through my veins and think, this is my life.  
This is me.

And I am fine,  
even when everything in the world insists that  
I should not be.  
Insist that I fold back into the norm,  
assimilate,  
decimate,  
desiccate,  
The ocean, frozen with lost ideals,  
new desert . . . the arctic . . .  
leaving only the quagmire of insanity  
to spawn tomorrow's hope  
is where I began.

But I drag myself  
out of that inky darkness  
that will open up wide  
and swallow me whole,  
that enveloping silence of seclusion and loneliness,  
I've come from there.  
I refuse to go back to what is unknown,  
where I become obsolete,  
so slowly I crawl from that bog.  
determined to fight.

Never will I hide.  
It's too stifling  
where there are no dreams,  
so please, please  
get to the dream  
therapist now . . .  
immediately . . .  
before I fall asleep again,  
before my brain slips into REM again,  
a state of despair for those of us  
who think monochromatically.

Oh, for the color of dreams,  
the color of hope, the color of human purpose,  
giving . . .  
giving off a ray of light  
that shines on our fears and doubts,  
and turns them into pure joy.  
The light shines through and guides,  
gives us the strength that is needed  
now . . .  
we can take off the masks that hide us.

Now . . .  
we can reveal ourselves to the world.  
Let the light shine on me and guide me,  
Let you be known as you make your way.

We all want to hide at times, but  
when we take off the masks that bind us,  
we can truly know and be  
known.

Enlightenment comes  
and greets us with our first  
showing. But do I want to know  
you? Know myself?

Wrapped in my cocoon,  
I am warm, safe, ignorant,  
lost in the fog of my own  
identity that I cannot understand.

In hiding, in staying away,  
I feel no love, true, but I  
feel no pain, no loss.  
I like it better inside,  
alone,  
away from all the stereotypes  
and away from all the judgments.  
I am in my own world,  
in my own thinking, my own ideas.

The outside forces of this life  
do have influence,  
but they make it more confusing,  
more difficult to understand.  
I am told to conform, to be normal,  
not have my own thoughts and ideas.  
But if I don't  
see things the way you do,  
why should I have to agree?  
Why should my life be covered and hidden?  
Can it not be unmasked and real?

So many questions, so few of answers.  
What should I think . . .  
believe . . .  
say . . .  
or do?  
I am lost and confused.  
I am alone.  
I am misguided and undecided  
about the rhythm and course of this life.

Progeny Editors, Associates, and Assistants

## Untitled

What soft snow falls on such a warm day as this?  
Observe how the trees,  
in their wild and natural state,  
yield their boughs to the winds,  
freely and carelessly.

What art Thou to shine such light on us?  
We, the lesser immortals, do we deserve such?  
Blessings they are called,  
miracles they should be deemed,  
we receive them as such.

A star's light cannot reach far, but to a lesser immortal  
it is all the light in the world it needs . . . to wish.

Sharonda Fudge



## Getting There

So many paths to choose and I can take only one,  
I don't know where I'm going, I'm hitchhiking without a thumb,  
I can't decide which path to take or which road to travel,  
Whether or not to take the paved, dirt, or gravel,  
Gotta get focused, my mistakes are minor detours,  
I've parked for too long without change to feed the meter,  
Gotta start moving before I get towed,  
Get old,  
Get rolled,  
Get sold,  
Out of time can't decide  
Whether to just ride  
Like Bonnie and Clyde,  
Two paths, pick one side,  
I don't even know,  
Stay stagnant or grow,  
I'm at a fork in the road, two choices: left or right,  
Don't know what to choos, no help in sight,  
Since I can't choose one, I guess I'll make my own path,  
It may not be the right one but it's the best that I have,  
And I'm a keep' movin' rain, hail, sleet, or snowin',  
My path is my own as long as I get to where I'm goin'.

Audric Warren