An Exclusive First Look
Inside the Artist's Studio

John Lithgow:
Painter

James Ellroy
Interview and Excerpts from his new novel

PLUS:
Journalism by Marco Mannone,
Fiction by James K. Redding,
Sculpture by Myron Dyal,
Science Fiction, Poetry,
Photography,
& More!
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Dillon Mullenix
Dillon was born in Echo Park, CA in 1985 to Joseph and Mary Mullenix, and in 2003 he went off to college at SDSU, graduated close to the top of his class with a B.A. in Criminal Justice Administration, but quickly gave all that up for a career as a struggling writer, and since then he has always been living somewhere between the lines.

Lynne Bronstein
Lynne Bronstein is a journalist for the local paper The Santa Monica Mirror and the author of four books of poetry and some short fiction.

Andi Ewington
Andi was born in Barking, raised in Romford, England and is now living out the remainder of his days as far away from Essex as possible. “45” is his debut publication, though he has plenty of other ideas that need sharing with the world, like Limpit Muskin & Company and Post Mort’em. World domination is always just one book away!

Emma Ferreira
Emma Ferreira is a painter of contemporary mixed media paintings and a celebrated photographer. Ferreira continues to examine the abstract notions of our foundations, our teachings, and our destiny through the philosophy of color, texture and their relationships to the human experience.

Mitchell Friedman
Mitchell Friedman is a painter/printmaker who grew up in Chicago, Illinois, and was influenced by reading folklore and mythology, as well as roaming the friendly confines of The Art Institute and Wrigley Field.

Sean Kelly
Sean grew up in the San Francisco Bay Area before coming to Los Angeles. He’s had in interest in photography ever since high school and only recently returned to it after finding his old Canon A-1 in an unmarked box.

Myron Dyal
Myron Dyal is a modern mystic, a classically trained musician, and a self-taught artist. His spiritual visions are connected to his Temporal Lobe Epilepsy, which help him come to grips with his lifelong struggle with epilepsy and its stigma. Epilepsy is the main catalyst for the vast oeuvre of Dyal’s work, which spans nearly three decades and includes more than 6,000 drawings, paintings, and sculptures.

Crewest Gallery
Crewest is a gallery that supports some of the most talented underground artists from the West Coast and beyond. The gallery’s focus is on urban & graffiti art created through painting, sculpture, digital, and print medias.
I know, I know. For any publication, especially in Los Angeles, the practice of putting a celebrity on the cover seems predictable. But the notion of celebrity is not what interests me here; rather it’s what the talent represents. Those who have found great success at a creative craft yet need more, who can’t stop the winds of imagination as they pour through other mediums, challenging themselves, keeping themselves young, firing up old dreams and new hallucinations. Indeed, living, breathing examples of artistic success.

To me, presenting the artwork of John Lithgow is a proclamation. Look! Here is a man who lives a creative life, a professional who does what he loves and who isn’t afraid to do it all, to create whatever he feels he must, to act from the heart and imagination. Presenting the artwork of John Lithgow is an affirmation: It is possible to live a life of passion and creativity! Kill the attachment to that “starving artist” routine. Here’s an artist, and he ain’t starving. As if you’d rather work the nine-to-five desk job, while painting or acting or writing “on the side.” It’s time instead to focus on the side and make it the center. By featuring successful, creative people, in a personal and intimate way, aspiring artists will in turn be reminded, as I was, that a creative life can also mean a successful life, professionally as well as personally. I humbly thank John for allowing FORTH Magazine to be the first publication to present his work. The inspiration is beyond words.

Further inspiration in this issue comes from bestselling author James Ellroy. With a new novel coming out—his 17th to date—we’re honored to profile this prolific writer and feature short excerpts from Blood’s a Rover. Ellroy is of course a very different sort of author from Charles Bukowski, whose shoes were stepped in for a day by FORTH writer Marco Mannone. Here again, these writers show us that success is possible by sticking to what one loves and not postponing the urge to create. At least professionally anyway. I’m not sure if we can quite call Bukowski’s personal life an example of success.

This issue is truly about inspired achievement and features more fantastic artists, like Emma Ferreira and Myron Dyal, as well as an exclusive excerpt from the upcoming graphic novel 45. And of course more fiction and art from our wonderful Collective of FORTH writers and artists. In six short months, FORTH Magazine has grown more than I could have hoped. Every issue has gotten bigger, and we are constantly expanding, in all directions, truly living into our name. FORTH owes our success to the talent in the pages, to the amazing team behind the scenes, and to you, our readers—the buzzing, the vibrant, the truly-inspired community for whom we create.

For those of us living what we love and loving what we do, we will find success. And those around us who are inspired will help us get to where we need to go. I know this to be true. Don’t think, just do what you love. No matter what. Press onward. Go FORTH… And Enjoy!
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My works, either mixed or photographic, are the interpretations of my life’s journey. My photographic training taught and nurtured my instincts to represent the human form as more than just a model seen through the lens of the camera; I aim to portray the meditative complexities and consciousness that lies beneath.”  – E. Ferreira

Emma Ferreira's opening reception, entitled “Exposure,” takes place September 13th from 6:30 - 9:30 p.m. at Franks Picture Gallery, Bergamot Station A-5, 2525 Michigan Avenue, Santa Monica, California 90404

(clockwise from top left) “Siren,” 40”x40”. “Fever,” 40”x40”. “Woman,” 48”x32”

by Emma Ferreira | Los Angeles
Echo Park was where I grew up

And where Tom Waits sat drooling bourbon drunk
And cocaine heavy in the 70s
And where in the 90s chinks stood atop grocery markets with AK-47s
And blacks ran down streets in a glorious show of the power of mayhem
And it was like watching hundreds of fingers coming together as a fist
Pulling men from trucks

Echo Park is where my dad ended up after drifting

And getting stone cold drunk on Sunset and Alvarado
And Echo Park is where I saw my first dead body
On Riverside
And witnessed my own friend’s atonic stare burn holes in bodies
with steel and lead

And in that hole there are the only far flung green hills
that stand above Los Angeles’ developed basins

Echo Park is where during fits with poverty my mom
and I ran food packages to Skid Row

And ventured out to Gorky’s downtown
And Echo Park was where dad bought Fosters beer before camping trips
on which he always found girls
And lost us on granite hilltops for pussy
And tits I myself lusted after

And in Echo Park tired old men begged for whiskey
And coins for “yen”
And doggie bags

Echo Park is what I left
Before I found college

Echo Park is what I remember
On lonely nights when things don’t seem solid, anymore

Echo Park is my childhood
Where ball games and manic fiends were the norm
poetry by

lynne

bronstein

BORN

I was born
to live a single day
lived it as long as I could
My childhood was my first hour
and I cried it into a second
hour when I wrecked all that I touched
In the third hour
I loved a dozen times
and broke the beds I slept in
In the fourth hour I made a mil
The fifth I spent it, drank it all away
and by the sixth I had split and reunited
atoms and molecules
conquered cities and read a few good books
But after that I was arrested
tried convicted jailed
and strung up for the rest
of my brief existence
The last hours
were a tedious and dreary old age
until the last half hour
and then
I got dressed up and went out to dance
Born to live a second youth
in 30 minutes
I turned to gold
and spun myself around a nightclub floor
Screaming laughing drenched in wine
my arms flung out my legs sprawled out
I kissed everyone in my last minute and
died with a smile.

(above) “Sweetchild.”
Photography.
(below) “Alonso Brito.”
Photography.
by Sean Kelly | Santa Monica
In the summer of 1972, President Richard M. Nixon denied any knowledge of the five burglars who entered the office of the Democratic National Committee, the last US combat troops finally departed from a naval stronghold in Southern Vietnam, and I went to Savannah to die. I had never been to Georgia before. I knew of Savannah only from what I’d learned in the tones and faces of oil-painted jazz legends and in the subtle memories spilled quietly by my father years before. But in the sticky climate of that hot, political summer, I was determined to find a peace I had never known.

The kiosk that sold liquor and cookies at the train station carried travel guides, which pointed me to the library on the north end of Savannah. The library where my father had worked in his youth, where he had spent peaceful times and long nights with Goethe and Blake and Lewis. I wasn’t about to pay for a room, hadn’t planned on being around come nightfall. Today would be the day. The pain had become unbearable—the tightening in my chest, the anxiety, the curling of stomach and mind, all twisted together, all brewing in the final moments of my life. Yes, today. Three or four hours. I was sure of it.

On the trolley, I watched the townsfolk speak to each other. There was a certain elegance about their manner—the southern dialect, cool and easy—it was the kind of smooth tone spoken by a people without concern, who would return to their narrow white homes across from a small park and take pleasure in the sunflowers that graced the foyers of their living rooms. There seemed to be some simplicity in their voices, a gentle confidence in their eyes. I longed for a moment in that southern mood. Perhaps it’s what I came here to find, a bit of the peace I craved.

It was still morning when I arrived across town at the MacArthur Library. I stepped out into the cool air and onto the grass of the park across the street, staring up at the massive, colonial structure. It stood on a row of white pillars, though the paint ran yellow in certain corners and cracked in tiny veins that ran to the very top of the building, as though the library were an old, living creature, wrinkled and worn now by time.

Approaching, I came across a podium that stood waist-high and boasted a bronze plaque, nobly declaring the origins of the library. According to the fixture, this had been the estate home of a Mr. Wilbur Holmes in 1788. After giving up most of the rooms in the house to soldiers during the war between the states—General Lee himself had stayed here for an entire week during the capture of Fort Pulaski in 1862—it had been donated to the city by Mr. Holmes as a memorial for Savannah’s valiant war efforts and support. A structure of pure memorial, a salute to the gallantries of war…as I too shall be.

I steepled up the narrow stairs to the third story, the faint smell of cedar mixed with modern cleaning solution settling under my nose. The cedar told a story of the estate’s blistering age, the kind of structure they used to build out of local trees rather than imported lumber. The cleaning scents, though, seemed set on washing away the smell of that deep-rooted cedar. And somehow, I could almost hear the march of the soldiers up these stairs, echoing my own steps, as though the States were still at war and a number of armed men, teenagers and seniors alike, would be resting downstairs with their feet up on the old mahogany tables, dressed in dirty grey uniforms and waiting for news of the northern invaders.

I found a book by Lewis—something about the devil—and another on the pains of post-war trauma. A whole section on the US Civil War and Georgia’s gallant participation in the effort. They thought of it down here not as a de-unification endeavor to
FAX
From the Desk of W.C. Jennings
To the Desk of: J. Pollack

JP-

I hope you receive this fax in time. I’m still sitting in the lobby of the Citizen Hotel, just outside the Capitol building where the Governor is arguing with the Senate about how to remedy this massive fuck-stain of a deficit. I’m frozen in catatonic horror at the rumors spewing across the Capitol lawns. And I’m afraid I won’t be able to produce any coherent sort of material on deadline for this issue as commissioned. If you were to witness first-hand what I have, however, you would understand. You think this state is in the shit bath now? Wait ‘til the good Governor and his henchmen get through sucking the blood veins from California. You ain’t seen nothin’ yet. We’re all turning into zombies, and the next generation will be a slum of bumbling fools and thieves. We’re doomed.

News out of the war room is that first to go will be education. $3.3 billion. Slashed right at the throat, left to bleed like a stuck pig. Massive cuts across the board, from salaries and programs to basic educational “niceties” like libraries that keep the lights on past 6pm, combined with higher student entrance fees in state and community colleges as well as fewer student admittances. In my humble estimation, cuts in higher education should be the last thing to go. But the Governor’s list is upside down. Top is bottom. Straight is sideways. And the bottom now shows a pig-shit gang of phony bureaucrats and former hand-puppets in cushy positions getting paid big money by “staff seats” on bullshit committees, like the seven-figure Waste Management board I told you about earlier…or the overcrowded cluster-fuck discussing budget reform in the room right now. Why are there so many people trying to make a decision here? Why do we need so many goddamn legislators in high-paid positions with lofty per diems and petty cash lockers? Let’s take a look at cutting some of those expenses, huh? Instead, we’re going down headfirst into the concrete ghettos of undereducated, underpaid, underhappy, underbusy Californians—just where these politicians want the next generation, it seems. And this frightens me half to death. Certainly into the liquor cabinet, as I can see no other comfort when thinking about the dreary future of non-educated American citizens taking the reins when future workforce generations emerge.

Can’t any of these short-sighted cronies see the big picture? Am I the only one? I know you can, my friend. You’ll agree with me when I glare into the future and predict more crime, more drug addiction, more illegitimate children, and a host of other problems that will undoubtedly cost the state just as much in maintenance, enforcement, and rehabilitation as these suits think they’re saving now by forfeiting people’s right to better education. Can’t they even grasp that fewer students in community colleges translates into fewer transfer students, meaning less tuition taken in by state universities, AND translating perhaps to fewer high-paid executives and fewer entrepreneurs qualified by banks and investors, which means ultimately less taxable income to the state? Where are the long-term trickle effects? As it appears now, the youth’s education will be little more than video games, iPods, and Twitter blogs.

What happened to California’s “Master Plan,” written in 1960, espousing the notion that all people have a right to Higher Education? Anyone who wants to go to college should be afforded this ability—indeed, the very reason for the Community College system. But now with less funding and higher fees, there will be perhaps millions of wanting students without that ability. Oh well. As long as these bloated Capitol freaks have jobs, and as long as the long-passed-retirement, drearily-teaching professors of tenure can’t be kicked out, and as long as everything looks good in the short-term, let’s make some cuts. Cut Cut Cut! Like the doctor’s bloody scissors after an American Birth, snipping loose the wailing child of Generation Next. Drop the kid into the dumpster. Kill the mother. Wash the shears and get them ready for another go around. Let’s see, what can we cut next? How about our basic right to health care?! I get a feeling these scheming butchers aren’t done yet.

Anyhow, as you can tell by my demeanor, I’m in no general mood to write anything of lucid merit or suitable length. That being said, I hope you can find something to fill in the pages you will inevitably miss by the absence of my 4000 word piece on the deficit debate that you requested. I’m off to De Vere’s down on L Street now for Ambien and strong drink. And then to sleep. Hopefully to wake in three years when a new administration is in the state office and the now graduating high-school alumni have turned into hardened criminals. Perhaps then, I’ll finally have the motivation and grit to move to the mountains like I’ve been talking about all these years. ‘Til then.

Your friend,
Wayland

Post-Script: If you publish this letter, as I know you’re fond of doing just to screw with me, be sure I will hang you, you bastard. I’m not joking. - W.C.
Daniel Rogers was born on March 22, 2012 at 6:23 a.m. at St. Andrews hospital in Rochester, Minnesota. All the papers had reported it accurately. A picture of the Baby Rogers was on the cover of every local, national, and foreign newspaper, under large headings that read “Wonder Baby” or “Lone Rogers” or, according to translations of the foreign papers, something like “Miracle Baby.”

From looking at Miss Bobbi Rogers, one would not be able to tell from the outside, apart from the large hump in her belly, if she were indeed a female or a male. However, the compelling part of Miss Rogers’ story lay in the fact that one would be equally confused when viewing underneath the woman’s clothing. For in fact, Miss Rogers was not simply a hermaphrodite; she was, according to modern medical science, the only known living mammal in recorded history to have been born with both functioning female and male sex organs. S-he had ovaries that produced viable eggs as well as testicles, which produced fertile sperm.

Remarkably, with the right kind of positioning and a strange, slightly uncomfortable—though highly pleasurable—action, Miss Rogers could actually have sexual intercourse with herself and self-procreate. Hence, the miracle Baby Rogers. The first human to be born from the efforts of a single human since the Baby Jesus.

No one was quite sure what the Baby Rogers would be once out in the world. On the ultrasounds and cardiograms and other dozen medical exams performed throughout the birth, the doctors, who were baffled, saw nothing physically wrong with the baby from the inside. And they were quite right, as the baby was born perfectly healthy, which according to them was indeed a miracle of sorts. Though, no one could foresee in what state the baby’s brain would be. In other words, would he be challenged mentally in some way? Would he be deaf or blind or perhaps somehow intellectually deformed? A question that would prove impossible to answer until the child had reached an age at which normal infants begin to respond to regular stimuli. For now, though, the Baby Rogers seemed perfectly and wondrously perfect.

In the small town of Hayden, just a few miles to the north of Rochester, Minnesota, lived a man named Chester Goldsmith. Or rather, Chester was merely staying in the town, as his home was mobile—a burnt-yellow camper van to be precise, with the words “Come Talk to a Real, Live Author $5” painted in dirty red across each side. Out of the back and sometimes side of the van, Chester sold his famous book *The Virgin Mary Was a Whore*, which he had written and self-published almost a decade prior. His self-proclaimed historical truth was a treatise on Chester’s theory that the Virgin Mother had in fact committed acts of sexual malfeasance with a local carpenter behind the back of her scheduled courting mate Joseph. Apparently, due to the harsh societal judgments and punishments upon sexual deviancy during that time and place in the world, Joseph had agreed, upon Mary’s unexpected pregnancy, to provide for her an alibi in the miraculous story of Mary’s innocence and sudden, spontaneous child conception. Based precisely on the right time and circumstances, least of which was a dire need for social change and radical leadership due to the impending approach of the Persian Empire in the Middle-East, the people of her small town were eager to buy into the idea of a miracle child and perhaps even a messiah, further supporting her lies as actual truth. In fact, the treatise was based only loosely on empirical historical data, but rather more so on a pseudo-notion of argumentative anthropological concepts. Not to mention, a heavy dislike and rejection of the Christian sentiment on the part of the author.

The book never sold to a major publisher, and Chester had in fact only given out about a thousand copies over the decade it was in print. Nevertheless, he was madly surprised when, upon his approach, Miss Bobbi Rogers had never heard of the author or of his self-proclaimed brilliance. Known or not, Chester Goldsmith was the first “writer” to actually offer Miss Rogers a significant amount of money to write a non-fictional account of her son’s birth and early life to be sold to the general public. Chester, despite his awkward, dreg appearance and his living in a van, was actually a wealthy, what-you-might-call trust fund baby, having inherited a cast estate from his parents’ death almost 30 years earlier. Upon acceptance of the proposal, Chester had quickly obtained legal documents from a team of high powered lawyers in New York, awarding him the full legal and exclusive rights to own the story until Daniel Rogers was seven-years-old. And at the amount offered, Miss Rogers would be able to live comfortably without worry at least until that time, and
“Some people never go crazy. What truly horrible lives they must lead.”
—Charles Bukowski

Every writer rips other writers off. It’s the name of the game. Hunter Thompson took Hemingway’s words and blew his brains out with them. Charles Bukowski kissed the same dirty pavement John Fante puked on and licked his lips accordingly. But even to this godless day, literary heroes are false-idols, and if worshipped incorrectly, they will lead to an inescapable quick-sand known as plagiarism. Such icons are meant to be chewed but not digested. Too many writers are bloated on their influences, and in this respect, I am morbidly obese. The trick is to spit them out before their flavor seduces you to swallow.

And if you found anything remotely sexual about that last statement, your mind is in the right place: The gutter. The gutters of Los Angeles are where Charles Bukowski lived his entire life. Born in Germany exactly thirteen years before Hitler rose to power, Bukowski’s family moved to Los Angeles in 1930. He grew up during the First Great Depression and slummed it around downtown and East Hollywood most of his life before moving to San Pedro in 1978, where he lived until his death in 1994 at the surprising age of 73. I say “surprising” because, for anyone who knows their literary ass from their cultural elbow, Bukowski lived on alcohol, nicotine and crazy women—not exactly nutritional blocks from the Food Pyramid. He managed to outlive both Hemingway and Thompson, dying just one year shy of his god, Fante. During his 73 years on Earth, Bukowski wrote six novels, hundreds of short stories and thousands of poems.

CUT TO: July 2009, an Italian-American writer from Buffalo, NY prepares to board a bus embarking on a tour of Bukowski’s world—some half-assed attempt to chase the bruised muse of a fifteen year-old ghost. In a day and age where the Internet and Twitter have turned a world of A.D.D. illiterates onto writing, no one is a writer. The magic is long gone. Hell yes, the floodgates of technology have opened and we are all awash in the rubbish of widespread mediocrity.

Surely if there is any one phantom who would be outraged about our current literary state of affairs, it would be Two Buck Chuck. Here was a man who treated words with more respect than people, and the assimilation of those words into art was nothing less than a religion for him. Can he peer out from his permanent corner in the universe and have sympathy for my plight?

Before you get all pissy with the World’s Smallest Violin, make no mistake: There is no occupation more futile in the 21st century than that of a writer. It is a lonely path rife with tumble-weed dreams and littered with road-kill hopes, especially in an industry as commercialized and cowardly as Hollywood—which is Ground Zero for modern indifference and ruled by a fraternity of eunuchs. It is safe to say there is nothing cool about writing anymore, nothing macho or rebellious, and most certainly nothing sexy. It takes a certain masochistic pride to call yourself a writer these days, and maybe that’s the niche I’ve been searching for: Self-Inflicted Musings From an Obsolete Soul and Other Creative Miscarriages.

That’s it! Now we’re getting in the damn spirit of the day. It’s the dead of summer in the belly of downtown Los Angeles. The air is malleable and the whiskey in my pocket is hot to the touch. The Esotouric bus is waiting outside of Philippe’s, one of the oldest restaurants in the city and birthplace of the French Dipped Sandwich. Bukowski frequented the joint back in the day, and it’s our launching-pad into his demented dimension. I’m the last to board the luxurious bus filled with about...
forty people—all upstanding citizens of The System. I squeeze into one of the front seats next to Richard Schave, who runs the tour (esotouric.com) with his wife, Kim. The couple debuted their tour in May 2007 and offer journeys into all things strange (mad scientists of Pasadena), violent (the Black Dahlia murder), and literary (Raymond Chandler, John Fante, et al). Today, we’ll retrace the ragged steps of a Dirty Old Man.

First stop on the list is the Terminal Annex Post Office, where Bukowski worked for over a decade before gaining serious acclaim as a writer. It was here that he gained inspiration for his landmark novel Post Office, which was the result of Black Sparrow Press publisher John Martin. Martin, having caught wind of Bukowski’s early poetry, offered to pay Bukowski $100 a month for the rest of his life if he would quit his position as a letter filing clerk and dedicate himself entirely to his writing. The year was 1969 and Bukowski was forty-nine years-old, effectively smashing modern ageism in the face with a hammer. Since then, the building has become the largest Internet hub on the west coast and is guarded by trigger-happy sentinels waiting for a terrorist attack.

The L.A. Grand Central Library is where Bukowski wets his voracious literary appetite, and where he discovered his personal messiah, John Fante (Ask the Dust). In the late 70’s, when Bukowski was in his prime, he had Black Sparrow Press reissue the long-forgotten novel, which reignited interest in Fante’s legacy from a new generation. In his preface to the reissued novel, Bukowski wrote about his discovery: It was like finding “gold in the city dump.” He went on to say that, “Fante was my god and I knew that the gods should be left alone, one didn’t bang on their door.” However, anyone who has read the two authors knows full-well that Bukowski didn’t just bang on Fante’s door, he kicked it open and made himself at home.

Clifton’s Cafeteria is where Bukowski (and thousands of others) ate many a free meal during the First Great Depression. Clifton Clinton was a saint during this tough time, and he opened his restaurant to anyone who was hungry. Clifton’s remains one of the oldest and most charitable restaurants in L.A. history, and you owe it to yourself to check it out. The first floor is a weird recreation of the rustic Redwood forest, complete with murals, waterfalls and Gold Rush Era décor; the second floor is like walking through a time warp, just as it was decades ago. Old men resembling Two Buck Chuck himself sit hunched over their food trays, eating in quiet solitude.

Next on the tour is 5124 De Longpre Ave., where Bukowski lived from 1963 to 1972. In this humble abode, he refined his writing and found his voice. It is here he wrote his acclaimed novel Women, among many other poems and short-stories. In a poem dedicated to his publisher John Martin, Bukowski wrote of his home:

And thank you / for locating me there at / 5124 De Longpre Avenue / somewhere between / alcoholism and / madness. / Together we / laid down the gauntlet / and there are / takers / even at this late date / still to be / found / as the fire sings / through the / trees.

The story behind the conservation of the property is worthy of its own article, but the Cliff’s Notes version will have to suffice: Richard and Kim Schave initiated a grass-roots campaign to have the residence preserved once and for all as an official Historic-Cultural Monument. During the legal proceedings, the landlord—who would have stood a greater profit had he been able to sell off the property—declared Bukowski a Nazi, according to Internet rumors, and therefore should not be deemed historically significant. Fortunately for our culture, these unfounded ravings were ignored. As of 2008, 5124 De Longpre ain’t going anywhere. Thanks, Richard and Kim.

As I stand outside in the baking July heat, I peer into the kitchen window of the bungalow-style house, where Bukowski did a majority of his writing. I can almost hear the Mozart or Beethoven playing and I try to imagine him sitting there, grooving on a solid buzz and letting the words flow through him while the Vietnam War rages far away. The Mexican family who now lives there regards the tour with an amused indifference. They hang around the front porch, the men shirtless, and study us as much as we study their home. It is a relatively safe bet they have no idea what this place means, or what literary brilliance was created within their walls. To some strange folk operating on the periphery of this society, it would be like living in a holy museum. To most others, it’s just another pile of bills and problems.
to eat itself alive decade after decade. Now, only a few Bukowski-era structures stand—
lonely survivors of an endless (and somehow forgotten) war.

For all intents and purposes, the story should end here. But it can’t end here. Not
yet. The tour didn’t have time to visit Musso and Frank’s on Hollywood Blvd, one of
Bukowski’s favorite restaurants / watering holes when he could afford it. His favorite
bartender, Ruben, still serves up cocktails behind the counter. I am told he doesn’t
mind sharing a story or two about one of his more famous customers.

It becomes clear to me, as I drive through the madness of Hollywood Blvd. on a
Saturday night, that when Disney takes over Iraq, it will look just like this: Hot, dirty,
crowded, police and fire engines flashing, music blaring, neon buzzing – Third World
Glamour.

In the middle of this chaos, sits Musso & Frank’s. Open since 1919, you can feel every
second of the establishment’s ninety years in business. I just know that when the last light
has been turned off and the door is locked
tight, that the ghosts of hundreds of pimps,
prostitutes, gangsters, movie stars, and
wannabes haunt the booths, winding stairs
and narrow halls of the building. It must be
like a spirit orgy after-hours, and Bukowski
just might be in the middle of it all, humping
away in the ethereal glow of swirling souls.

Ruben is a robust Mexican with graying
hair and the trademark red jacket with a
black tie. The vast dining room is filled with
mostly older clientele, and I saddle up at the
spacious bar, wondering if Bukowski ever sat
on this stool. I introduce myself to Ruben,
explaining my assignment, and he jovially
asks me what I’ll have to drink.

“What would Bukowski have?”

“Scotch on the rocks, or vodka martinis,”

Ruben says with his strong accent. “Then he
would switch to sweet wines.”

Feeling classy in old Hollywood, I order
a vodka martini with extra olives. One can
never have too many olives. As Ruben makes it, I ask about his story.

“I jumped the border into New Mexico
when I was sixteen (Ruben has long-since become a naturalized citizen). I wandered for
fours days alone without anything. Random
people took pity and fed me bread and water.
I ate watermelons from fields. Eventually I
ended up in Los Angeles. There were jobs
back in those days. Not like today. You could
go down the street and work here, work there.
I have been working here since 1967.”

Ruben slides my martini over, and it’s
impeccable. I sip it, relishing each playful
zing, and ask him what his first impressions
of Bukowski were.

“I asked him what he did and he asked me
what I thought he did. I didn’t know.
But I told him, ‘You’re always drunk, with
beautiful women, you eat steaks and pay
with cash. So you must be a pimp.’ He didn’t
like that. He got very pissed off about that.”

Over the years Ruben and “Hank”
became friends, and it was not uncommon
for Ruben to drive him home when he got
too drunk to drive. “He would pass out as
soon as we got in my car, but I never had to
carry him. He would walk on his own. He
was a very strong man.”

Next to the women in his life, Bukowski’s
bartender is the person who would have
known him best. After all, he didn’t go to
churches, only bars, so Ruben might as well
have been Bukowski’s priest. I ask Ruben
about the man as he remembers him.

“Did you ever hear his laugh? He didn’t
laugh from here (his mouth) he laughed from
here (his belly). A loud, deep laugh. Very
rare.” Ruben paused from wiping a glass with
a rag. “I saw him when he was broke, and I
saw him when he was rich. Always the same.
Money never changed him. I respected him
for that.”

Then Ruben looks elsewhere, momentarily
escaping back to a better time: “There will
never be another like him.”

This story ends where Bukowski’s did: The
Green Hills Memorial Park cemetery in San
Pedro, California. The Sunday traffic moves
with me down the 05 to the 110. Strange
to think Bukowski’s bones are just forty
minutes south of where I do my drinking
and writing. A flower shop greets me as I
pull into the grounds. Feeling sentimental,
I decide I will place flowers on one of my
hero’s graves.

If you ever come to this place for a non-
tragic reason, you will be lucky to find Carol
behind the counter—a youthful-looking
Asian woman with a heart of gold. She helps
me choose a simple arrangement and when I
don’t have the cash to pay for it (no cards
accepted) she’s kind enough to give them to
me for free. Such generosity is unheard of in
2009, so I retrieve the latest copy of FORTH
Magazine from my car and humbly offer it
to her. She accepts it graciously and thanks
me for giving her something to read during
her long and lonely hours tending life in a
place of death.

Henry Charles Bukowski Jr. (Hank) is
forever nestled in the rolling green hills of
the Ocean View section of the cemetery. With
a highlighted map from Carol, I traverse the
grounds, walking past names and lives I will
never know. His grave is flat and simple,
unlike the man buried therein. A simple
illustration of a generic boxer with his fists
raised in battle evokes the spirit of the late,
great writer. “Don’t try” are Bukowski’s final
words to the world, and the meaning is open
to interpretation.

“So we finally meet,” I tell him.

I place the flowers in the holder and
regard a postcard from Kentucky with a single
cigarette being held down by a horseshoe—
a gift from admirers. Who knows what
strangers will one day stand over our graves?
I kneel down and gently pat the headstone
behind the counter—a youthful-looking
stranger. I read Bukowski’s last
illuminating a generic boxer with his fists
raised in battle evokes the spirit of the late,
great writer. “Don’t try” are Bukowski’s final
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I met John Lithgow (pronounced “Lith-go” to my surprise) at Santa Monica Fine Art Studios one night during an open house. Among the many fine artists that hold space at the studio, John was showing his work publicly for the first time that evening in mid June. FORTH sponsored the event, and Sofiya—our Events Director—introduced me to the artist early in the night. Lithgow towered above me at 6’5” but tendered an easy, welcoming presence. After browsing the magazine, he cordially accepted the offer for FORTH to feature his artwork. He was obviously very shy and modest, despite his talented hand. This would be the first publication of his art anywhere, and I promised that we would present his paintings with taste and class. Usually, PR people handle this sort of thing, but John unassuminly gave me his personal email to schedule an interview.

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Surprised once again, I heard back from John right away, and we scheduled to meet within a week. On June 21st, I returned midday to his studio at SMFAS with Bootsy, our photographer, for what would be a quick photo shoot and interview. Before starting, the artist wanted to finish a base layer in the painting he was working on—a portrait of his father, reproduced now in acrylic from a photo taken some time before his father’s passing. John allowed us to photograph him at work, still fully engaged in his world of re-creation, as if we weren’t there at all. It was perfect.

One must understand, this is not usual for celebrities. So I say with comparative integrity that John Lithgow is a gracious and genuine man, a soulful fellow, and a gentle though passionate spirit. I point this out because these qualities emanate at above-average levels from the painter. Intuitively, I felt he was genuine in character. He seemed humbled and sincere, grateful to be featured in our magazine. I, of course, expressed my gratitude at competing levels. He wanted to make sure we were featuring his work not because of his face or name, but rather due to the merit of his artistry. I assured him, as I do our readers, that my interests and intentions are transparent.

During my time with John, I remembered the original vision of FORTH: This magazine is not only about art for art sake. It is also about the artists, about inspiring others by example, those who might relate and feel they’re not alone in the strange landscape of creation. And here was Lithgow—an actor, painter, writer, and singer—an artist who inspires, who believes, who has lived a life of passion and creativity, who has stayed imaginatively young in dreams and charm. At 63-years-old, the wonder in his eyes reminded me once again that one can be an artist…and find success at it, success in doing what one loves. This, I knew, was what this feature—indeed, what this magazine—is about. But of course, there is also the artwork itself.

Upon finishing the base layer on his father’s portrait, John rose and smiled into Bootsy’s lens. A thin, grey slice of hair sprouted into the air above his scalp. But we didn’t mind, and neither did he. “I’ve given up vanity a long time ago,” he smiled. And this became our cover.

After a few shots, John and I proceeded outside, sitting then beneath a small, old shed next to the studio to chat for a bit. He in his paint-trodden work-scrubs, used often for his studio time; the few strands of hair still rocketing into the sky in humble comfort. When the artist speaks, it is subtle though direct. And his energy is one I expect—or rather, hope for—in a recognizable talent: A mad scientist fused with a free-spirit and an intelligent, experienced craftsman.

J: All right. It’s June 21st. I’m with John Lithgow, artist, and I just wanted to say thanks for having us out to Santa Monica Art Studios here.

JL: Welcome, welcome to our studios.

J: Thank you. So when did you begin to
paint? You said you started when you were a child?

JL: Well, I started out intending to be a painter, and then pretty much abandoned it when I became an actor which was around age 19, 20. And I was very serious about it back then. I grew up in a theater family, and being an actor was the last thing I wanted to do. But I got off to college and fell into the theater gang, and I realized I’d better go with the flow here.

J: Did you paint through college?

JL: It became more and more spotty. I did print making and drawing, you know, things that were easier to do, that didn't require a studio.

J: And so have you been painting throughout the years?

JL: Off and on, but finally about two years ago when I got this studio I started painting fairly regularly. And before that it was more or less a hobby. When I was on movie locations for many, many months at a time, I would set up a studio in my hotel room with oils.

J: So you’ve become more serious about your art again in the last, what, five –

JL: Yeah in the last five years or so.

J: And did you receive any formal training in art?

JL: I did when I was young. I went to the Art Students League as a high school kid, Sunday mornings or Saturday mornings for drawing classes.

J: And that was it?

JL: Well, I always had high school art classes. I went to public schools in Ohio and back in the late 50s and 60s, they had fabulous art education. Pretty much a thing of the past I think. But in those days it was a very serious thing. As an elective, if you were interested in art, you could really study art in the public schools.

J: It's not like that anymore.

JL: No, it's not like that anymore.

J: It's too bad. Hm… So you seem to paint a lot of people’s profiles, a lot of faces. What is it about faces that inspire you?

JL: Well, it’s easy to get faces, you know. It’s easy to get people to sit or work from photographs. And they are endlessly expressive. I mean, I’m an actor and I deal in characters, and I love the character in people’s faces.

J: Do you look for certain emotions in faces?
JL: Not really. Mainly I look for great faces and great life. I would love to move on to figurative painting, and I would love to paint more freely. I love – you know, Richard Diebenkorn is a favorite painter of mine who paints figuratively and representationally, but then he moved off into more and more abstract and exuberant color.

J: That’s where you think you’re going?

JL: Well, I wish I could go there. I don’t have the courage.

J: Are those faces the greatest inspirations for your paintings?

JL: Probably, faces and figures. I think my favorite painters tend to paint figuratively.

J: Who are your favorite painters?

JL: Oh, Lucian Freud, a contemporary painter. And I love, you know, American painters from eighty and a hundred years ago, John Singer Sargent and George Bellows and Akins, Winslow Homer.

J: Do you feel like they’ve influenced the way you paint?

JL: Yeah. I mean, I wish I could paint like them. I can’t.

J: I don’t know. You’re very humble.

JL: No, I still feel like it’s a hobby, but it’s a hobby that I take more seriously all the time. And I think hobbies are only useful if you take them seriously.

J: So do you use live models, or do you draw from pictures?

JL: I use live models sometimes, and I want to do more of that.

J: Mostly from pictures right now?

JL: Yeah, mostly from pictures, but I bring friends in to just sit for a while. And the trouble with painting your friends is that you’re too eager to please them.

J: You’re worried about their disappointment.

JL: You want to make them look good, and you’ve got to free yourself from that.

J: So take us into your studio when you’re painting. Take us in to the mood. Do you have certain music playing, certain lighting?

JL: Well, you know, we’re here at the Santa Monica Fine Arts Studio where you can hear everything that goes on in the other studios. So it’s a kind of a matter of courtesy that it’s quiet. And that’s fine with me. I work very quietly and in a kind of fueled state.

J: Any certain times of day?

JL: Midday. Weekends here nobody’s around and it’s wonderfully peaceful. And I’ll work for about three or four
hours. I can't work much longer than that. It's very exhausting.

J: And there was classical music coming from another one of the studios. You like classical music?

JL: It's nice to have classical music playing.

J: Now, has painting ever sort of crossed over into your preparation for acting?

JL: Not really. I do concerts for children, and I play a fabulous game with the kids to keep them absolutely captivated, to keep their attention. I have an enormous easel. And if I sing songs about an animal, I'll play this game, Guess the Animals, with them. Or I'll start drawing on these huge panels like an elephant or a manatee or something or a rooster. And they will scream out what it is I'm drawing. And I'll say: "It's what? It's what?" You know, I think that's the one actual practical use I put art to. But it's fabulous. It works like a dream. It's just like a kid's game.

J: So do you sing or do other music or any other art forms other than acting and painting?


J: Oh really? You're a children's writer? So there's a lot of different creative outlets.

JL: That's another sideline.

J: When you're preparing — when you're writing or when you're painting or when you're acting — do you feel that the head space you're in to prepare for those things is very different for each? Or is it similar?

JL: Well, acting is very social and very informal and relaxed, and you know, a rehearsal room is a wonderfully creative and active place — and collaborative. It's extremely collaborative. All the acting, all the forms of acting are working with lots and lots of other people. I'm currently doing a one man show, but even there I perform for an audience. So there's a lot of us here. Painting is completely solitary and you're lost in your thoughts. And it's a wonderful gear shift. You're just in a different world when you go in there and paint.

J: Do you have an opinion on the shift in importance? I mean, do you think art is as important as it has always been? Or do you think fine art has gone down in comparison to the mainstream arts like film and music?

JL: I have no idea. It seems to me it's always active. There's always furious interest when a great painter emerges or a great exhibition comes out, where everybody suddenly has to crush into the Met museum to see an exhibition.

J: Do you think art is still important in our society?
JL: Art's always important. People can't do without art. They literally can't do without it. I mean, they may dismiss the fine arts, but God knows they have to listen to Country music or they have to watch sitcoms on TV. They're all forms of expression. They're all participation. You know, there's always that kind of interaction between expressive people, you know, storytellers.

J: Through your arts or your painting, are you trying to tell any stories or messages? Or is it more personal for you?

JL: No, it's very personal. I don't know why I do it even. I love to do it and I'm very excited when it turns out well, and I'm very upset when it doesn't. And secretly I am very eager for other people to look at it and like it.

J: So do you have a plan? Do you want to be selling art?

JL: No. I have no particular interest in selling it, no. I'm not a professional artist, and I revere fine artists too much to even call myself one. I still consider myself a hobbyist. I'm very flattered when people even mention the possibility of even buying anything I paint. Again, I give them away. I give them to friends and relatives.

J: It’s hard to part with them, though, I'm sure.

JL: Yeah, I don't like parting with them. That's the other difference between me and professional artists. They want to move their stuff.


JL: I used to have a little cottage Christmas card industry when I was a college student, yeah. That was a long time ago.

J: So do you have any sort of words of wisdom for struggling artists – or any kinds of artists – that are trying to find success.

JL: Well, to actors I say, develop something that's all your own. Young actors ask me for advice, and I say, find something in your life that's more important to you than acting, and something that doesn't depend on anybody else hiring you. And art is a perfect thing. I mean, there's an actress in here who's a very serious artist, and it's a huge relief for her to have a place to go where she can feel like a creative person, where she's not waiting around for somebody to call her. Because otherwise you're just enslaved by the acting business.

J: So develop your creative process and really hone it, whatever it may be.

JL: Yeah. And if it isn't acting, then tap dancing lessons or write something. Write fiction, write plays, write a monologue for yourself. If there's a play you want to be in, then produce it.

J: If you're passionate about something, just do it.

JL: Yeah, and the chances are you'll never get to complete the project, somebody will hire you to act. But in the meantime, you've explored your own avenues of creativity and expression. And it keeps you from getting depressed. I mean, the acting business is just ruthless. You live with rejection all the time.

J: And the art business has got to be –

JL: The art business is just as terrible. It's a toss up [as to] which is the harder life. I suspect being an artist is harder than being an actor. But I don't – I don't recommend either of them. (laughs)

J: All right, well thank you so much for having me out, John.

JL: Oh, that's great. Thank you, Jeremy. It's a pleasure. That was easy.

See more photos from and listen to audio of this interview online at www.forthmagazine.com.
James Ellroy: Author Profile and Excerpts from Blood's a Rover

“Tricky Dick won. Close, but no squeaker. Carlos threw a bash. His mock-Roman suite, mobsters and Mormons, election returns on TV. Call girls told I-blew-JFK stories. Farlan Brown said [President Nixon] was no headman. He was more like an S&M slave. He’d get stinko and bomb some Third World shit-hole. He’d fry some kids and get all misty then. He’d bring in a sick chick with a whip to retool him.”

- James Ellroy, Blood’s a Rover

If you sit down with James Ellroy, you will not be disappointed.

In this case, the bestselling author of LA Confidential and the upcoming historical epic Blood’s a Rover is hunkered down at a sidewalk café, dispensing truisms while giving his coffee a lean eye.

“There’s always a Mexican transvestite named Peaches,” he explains affably. He’s talking about his numerous stints in the LA county jail, visits he earned from a string of drugged-up breaking & entering charges back in his twenties. But he’s a different person now.

“I despise reflexive anti-authoritarianism. I would actually rather live in a society that errs on the side of authoritarianism than one that errs on the side of permissiveness, a stance that shocks a lot of people in the arts.”

Ellroy, whose 1997 memoir My Dark Places details his search for his mother’s murderer, is a self-described brooder who prefers to lie in the dark and think. Ellroy, who tops out at 6’3”, 170 pounds, is elegantly visceral and piercing. He’s still perhaps a little too rangy and powerful to be grouped into the “Literature” section at Barnes and Noble; although Peaches, the Mexican transvestite, did end up kicking his ass in county, the majority of Ellroy’s prose is like machine-gun fire in comparison to the limpid potshots from the majority of his peers. The moral complexity of his characters rivals that of Dostoevsky, while his understanding of realpolitik is perhaps his defining characteristic. His technical gifts as a novelist lie not only in his elaborately structured plots, but also in his incredibly fluid and nuanced characters, who emerge fully formed in a few brief sentences.

As Ellroy refines his craft, his novels keep getting fleshier, even poetic. Blood’s a Rover, which is set in the United States during the period of 1968-72 and features, among others, Richard Nixon and J Edgar Hoover, is a giant departure both aesthetically and emotionally. The novel is a study in heartache, a romantic’s lament for a country that could have been. In one of Ellroy’s trademark eye-blink characterizations, we are pulled effortlessly into the corona of insanity of Howard Hughes, neé Dracula:

“You look through him. It subsumes the shock and diverts the titillation. It deflects the insanity. It was [Wayne’s] sixth face-to-face meet with Dracula. Wayne just discovered the trick.”

Sections of Ellroy’s narrative shift from third person subjective into the first person, allowing him greater leeway in interpersonal expression. He writes from the perspective of left-leaning political activist Karen Sifakis. Her journal entries are cogent and moving, romantic without being sentimental. Here, Karen journals about her love affair with Dwight, a right-wing operator for Howard Hughes:

“It’s that we both want something…and that I have a language for it, while he does not.”

Perhaps one of the most intriguingly conflicted and politically complex characters in Blood’s a Rover is Marshall Bowen, a gay, black FBI infiltrator of two militant Black Power Movements. Marshall also benefits from the first person perspective shift; aside from creating an affecting portrait of repressed sexuality and institutionalized prejudice, Marshall’s journaled discourse animates the political conscience of the novel:

“‘Both groups peddle bootleg editions of Mao’s Little Red Book and Franz Fanon’s The Wretched of the Earth. I’ve read both books. They both contain wisdom. Given my life in Los Angeles, my parents’ horrible tales of life in the South, my own LAPD experience and my two auspicious beatings by the LAPD, I empathize as much as my compartmentalized psyche and soul will let me. But revolution?’

Ellroy’s work, even in its most grisly depictions of disarticulation, has always been primarily moral. There’s redemption at the end of his work; the bad guys, invariably, get whatever is coming to them. But that doesn’t make his work simplistic. Ellroy is sure to ask us: Who are the bad guys?

Blood’s a Rover features the character of Wayne Tadrow Jr., a Mormon hit-man whose FBI-sponsored coordination of the murder of Martin Luther King eventually leads him into a love affair with an African-American woman, Mary Beth. The best part: Ellroy mines Tadrow’s hellacious flaws for insight into the inherent incongruity of being human. You don’t have to like Tadrow to understand him, just as you don’t have to condone his actions to see how they could occur. Ellroy’s willingness to explore the unsavory extremes of human behavior is a gift in a climate of homogenized, politically-correct thinking. In these pages, we are reminded that the insane, the criminal, and the psychotically duplicitous all spring from the same gene pool as we do. As years of human history have demonstrated,

Continued on p. 25
Massachusetts. no one spoke to her. Maybe she was frightened by men from
could mold whatever face I wanted out of hers.
stare at it. Maybe touch it. It appeared soft, almost pliable, like I
plainness. It was somehow appealing. Like most things in this place.
woman, though not unsightly either. Just bland—a peaceful, simple

A petite woman—a librarian presumably. She wore narrow glasses

"Well, if you’d like, I could check that book out for you."

"Boston," I said.

"Never been there." I knew that. "Heard it’s busy." There
was a sudden shakiness in her voice, an unexpected haste. Maybe
no one spoke to her. Maybe she was frightened by men from
Massachusetts.

"Sir?" She whispered.

I turned my head slowly, still half asleep. There was the voice.
A petite woman—a librarian presumably. She wore narrow glasses
near the tip of her nose. Behind the frames, I could see her eyes.
They were peaceful, innocent, somehow inquisitive. She’d never left
the state. I knew that right away.

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"Sorry, I… I must have fallen asleep."

"Didn’t mean to disturb, just thought you looked uncomfortable.
You can take that book home, if you’d like."

"Right, home."

She smiled. "Not from around here, are you?"

Her voice was very light, sweet. She was not a terribly beautiful
woman, though not unsightly either. Just bland—a peaceful, simple
plainness. It was somehow appealing. Like most things in this place.
I wanted to study her skin, her bone structure more carefully. Just
stare at it. Maybe touch it. It appeared soft, almost pliable, like I
could mold whatever face I wanted out of hers.

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Massachusetts.

"Well, if you’d like, I could check that book out for you."

She was making me nervous now too—we were committing some

sort of sin by speaking in this sacred depository. We spoke quietly.
It was vaguely exciting, until anxiety filled my chest again, forced
it tight. Thoughts of death, fears brandished my words. I couldn’t
speak much longer. I smiled. Nodded. "Uh, actually, I don’t
really need to check out the book."

"You sure?" she insisted.

I just smiled and turned toward the door. It would happen soon.
The darkness, the silence. "Yes, I’m sure."

More than five hours had passed and still nothing. So, I sat and
waited at a small café on Clinton Street. An easy place with white
tables and soft lanterns that hung from the brick wall. I settled
outside and had a brandy. The afternoon was auburn and cool. And
I wondered why the past seemed to linger in this place, why it oozed
from the pores of the buildings, the sidewalk cracks, from the folds
of crow’s feet and eye veins and easy, sunburned wrinkles of smiling
mouths and foreheads.

I thought about the librarian. Her simple smile, her painless eyes.
I thought about the way she smelled, that faint scent of old perfume,
the kind my aunt used to wear. Everyone smelled like lilac here. I
sipped my brandy and thought about her voice, the nervousness, the
thrill of speaking. Maybe there was something worth living for, after
all. Maybe if it didn’t come today, it would never come. But then the
pain set in again, and I stopped thinking, and took a sip of brandy,
and felt sorry for myself.

If I could just fade into the easy night, maybe I could fool myself.
Maybe I could become one of them, one of these simple creatures
with painless eyes. And no one would know. No one could see. Not
even me. Maybe I could coat it with brandy. I took another sip. And
took a deep breath, in with the dusk, in with the scent of grass and
willow trees and distant harbor oils and fried foods, in with the past,
the sidewalk cracks and auburn skies and confederate ghosts, and in
with the scent of lilac.

A violet sunset burned gently against my cheek. I was back in the
park across from the old Holmes Estate, and I was numb now. Must
have been the brandy, not the drugs. Stopped taking those weeks
ago. I blinked slowly. My eyes felt like tanks. They told me to fall,
cut my wings. Dig down. Digging now.

I didn’t know her name, so I referred to her glasses, the pointy
ones, when I asked for her at the desk. "Karen," the clerk said. "She
left about an hour ago." My heart sank even lower. Another artillery
round, the sound of helicopter blades. My insides tightened. The
pain was there, like always—the kind that never ceases but that you
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round, the sound of helicopter blades. My insides tightened. The
pain was there, like always—the kind that never ceases but that you
probably have the brandy, not the drugs. Stopped taking those weeks
ago. I blinked slowly. My eyes felt like tanks. They told me to fall,
cut my wings. Dig down. Digging now.

I didn’t know her name, so I referred to her glasses, the pointy
ones, when I asked for her at the desk. "Karen," the clerk said. "She
left about an hour ago." My heart sank even lower. Another artillery
round, the sound of helicopter blades. My insides tightened. The
pain was there, like always—the kind that never ceases but that you
probably have the brandy, not the drugs. Stopped taking those weeks
ago. I blinked slowly. My eyes felt like tanks. They told me to fall,
cut my wings. Dig down. Digging now.
“Are you a Christian?” asked the priest. His voice was soft, though not southern. Clean, harder round the edges, like mine, but still easy.

“Used to be,” I said.

“Not anymore?”

I just glared past him, onto the audience of small candles, burning timelessly on the altar before a dying god. “Did something happen?” he asked. He must have assumed certain things about people who had lost a place in their own faiths. Runaways, abandoning their families, losing access to God. Maybe he was right.

“I’d like to find him again,” I said.

“Find who?”

“God,” I heard myself say. A sense of honesty washed through me. I wanted peace before I left this world. But I doubted with every inch of my soul that I would find it, even in this place with large stained-glass faces.

The priest smiled, slightly. “Then you have already found him,” he insisted quietly. “You’re just not looking with the right kind of eyes… Tell me, son, why is it that you believe he is not with you now? Have you done something you regret? Seen something? God forgives all who take him into their hearts.”

I looked at him now, for the first time really. He had a gentle face, very round, and red cheeks. Thin white strands of hair across a barren scalp, a friar from the woods in a seventeenth century fable. Large, accepting eyes, bright blue and curious.

“I’m not sure forgiveness is what I need,” I sighed, taking a seat along one of the benches. He sat as well.

“Then what is it?”

“I don’t know… 1…” I shook my head, looked to the floor. I was searching for the reason, the reason I came here, to this city, to this church. And now, why was I feeling suddenly open to this man? He was, perhaps, my stairway. And this place, maybe it was the vast, auburn pillars and intricately carved walls that suggested I was no longer in the world I knew, that I was in a different place where freedom and courage and truth would not be harshly spun or twisted.

I looked at him, into his large eyes, then to the altar candles in their small glass hubs. “I just… I guess I just don’t really know anything anymore. I haven’t much thought about God for a long time.”

“Oh?” He wanted more.

“Maybe I was scared,” I said bluntly. “Maybe I still am.”

“And why would you ever be scared to think about God?” he asked.

I wasn’t sure at first, but soon I recollected images. All the nights. All the flashes. The screams, the blood, the dark, musty scent of greenery in a foreign land. I drifted off for a moment and felt my voice continue aloud, ghost-like, without confines again. “Maybe I’m afraid of knowing what I’ve done… what I’ve seen… Maybe I’m afraid of what He’ll do to me, when I…” I realized what I was about to say and turned to the priest.

“When you what, son?” he asked quietly. I didn’t answer. “When you depart this world? Is that what you mean?”

“Yes,” I said. And I felt my jaw begin to shake, a swell rose up into my throat, as I shuddered, “I’m going to die, Father. I’m going…to kill myself.” I don’t know why I said it, why now, why in this place, why with this man, in front of these candles and those large glass eyes, colored and lit by the fading sun. I felt suddenly like something had taken over, pierced my heart in a moment of pain and glory and recollection, something about childhood and dreams, something about fairytales and presents at Christmas and goodnights and tucking me in and feeling safe and crying at night alone, in the dark, in the jungle, in the sharp, blast-crazy lights of a modern dawn at wartime. I began to cry.

It was a long, deep, hard cry, heaving in waves rooted from the grooves in my belly, bottomless grooves I had never known. But it came anyway, throwing me into convulsions, bending me over, and funneling me into a flash-mad wind of thoughts and fires and horrors. I don’t know how long it had gone on for, but I came to when I noticed his hand on my shoulder. And I looked up, through wet eyes, and saw his fairytale face, eyes of myth, and all the compassion and confusion in the world.

“What is it, my son?” he asked, voice cracking. “What could it possibly be?”

I just stared at him, into him…

“He’s there,” I blurted. One word. And I told him. Finally, someone. I told someone. I told him of the quiet nights in the jungle, cold nights. Dark, slick vines. Black ants bigger than your thumb. Rice fields, green men humping the land, panting, large boots, small villages, no rules. And then death. Death everywhere. Next to me, in front of me, coming out from the barrel I must, from the smoke that fills my face. Death in the brown and red faces of the small people, in their cries, in their fury. And death in the eyes of my friends. In the moments when they saw what I could not, when they felt the touch of God and Love and Anger and Madness, and wishing I could feel it too. I told all of it, from the brainwash at Basic to the numbing on a C-130 Transport setting aground after 10,000 miles. And then the depression. And the nightmares. And the not being able to live with it. And the loss of any light, any reason at all for life, for the pain, for the trouble.

When I finished, he had tears in his eyes, and mine were dry. Speaking of it all had brought it back, and the numbing with it. I was back to where I started. Today was the day.

“Dad?” the voice made him jump. But not me. We both turned, and I couldn’t believe it. There she was. Karen. Karen. Sweet, southern, soft-spoken Karen. I could tell by her eyes, tilted in and up like the edges of crescent moons, that she was utterly confused and of course concerned. “Dad, are you okay? What… I know you.”

She stopped, staring at me. “I mean, I don’t… I mean, I met you. I told someone. I told him of the quiet nights in the jungle, cold nights. Dark, slick vines. Black ants bigger than your thumb. Rice fields, green men humping the land, panting, large boots, small villages, no rules. And then death. Death everywhere. Next to me, in front of me, coming out from the barrel I must, from the smoke that fills my face. Death in the brown and red faces of the small people, in their cries, in their fury. And death in the eyes of my friends. In the moments when they saw what I could not, when they felt the touch of God and Love and Anger and Madness, and wishing I could feel it too. I told all of it, from the brainwash at Basic to the numbing on a C-130 Transport setting aground after 10,000 miles. And then the depression. And the nightmares. And the not being able to live with it. And the loss of any light, any reason at all for life, for the pain, for the trouble.

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She stopped, staring at me. “I mean, I don’t… I mean, I met you.

We met, right?”

I stood. “Uh…that’s right. Yes, we—we met today, this morning, in the library.”

“You fell asleep,” she said.

I smiled, still shaken, and sensed the dry tears on my cheek. I had a feeling she could sense them too, and…she’d called him Dad.

The priest stood, wiping his eyes. “You two met?”


“Oh, I…” he stumbled. His eyes met mine. Neither of us knew how to continue. “Uh, Karen, this is… I’m sorry, I don’t think I know your name.”

“It’s David,” I said. “David Hardy.”

Continued on p. 24
“Ah, well, David, this is...my daughter, Karen. I’m Charles Lewis... Okay, enough,” he snorted, smiling and pulling her hands down from his face. She was trying to wipe away his tears. And suddenly, she seemed to remember she was shy, and stepped back, trying not to look into my eyes, which also could have used a wiping.

“Your daughter?” I asked, surprised.

“Yes,” he replied.

I looked at both of them. Faces lit only dimly now by prayer candles at the altar and around the inner carvings of the church. The late sun had retreated, and here we were, three of us, in the house of God. “You are the only two people I’ve actually spoken to in this town. The only two I’ve spoken to...in months.”

He gazed me with those mild, echo-blue eyes, sadness welling again. But her eyes were full of neither pity nor sadness. No, Karen was...flattered. And a calm settled between the three of us.

A few moments later, I walked back down the aisle towards the large doors where I’d entered. His eyes, her eyes, I knew, were watching me, and now I felt the eyes of the glass saints above, and perhaps even the eyes of a God, hanging on a cross behind me or from somewhere on high.

I stopped at the doors, before the world outside, placed my hand against the heavy wood of the threshold. It was strong and cool. Something of an old earth, a past, a den for the things we love and regret and condemn and forget. I closed my eyes for a moment, then turned slightly to Father Lewis. I didn’t look at her, but I could feel her staring. “Can I come back?” I asked quietly. “Tomorrow?”

He smiled. “I’ll be here,” was all he said.

But it was enough. And I slipped outside, off to find a room for the night.

THOMAS. Continued from p. 11

perhaps longer, on the royalty advance given by Mr. Goldsmith.

During the early years of the child’s life, Chester witnessed an almost unique sentiment in the boy for animals. He noted this, though it would go largely unnoticed for quite some time, since many children were especially fond of animals. The most significant point in the work, however, occurred at age four, when Daniel Rogers had come across a dying Yellow-throated Vireo in the play yard of his preschool. According to one of the school caretakers, a reported eye-witness, Daniel had bravely taken up the bird into his hands and stared at it, a tear coming to his eye. The caretaker informed the child that it had broken its wing and that the bird would probably die. According to Chester’s account, based on eye-witness claims, Daniel closed his eyes and enclosed the bird in his grip even tighter, encompassing the small animal with his tiny fingers. After just a moment, as though he were a magician in an act, Daniel thrust his arms up into the air, opened his hands, and the small bird flew toward the sky, totally uninjured, completely healed.

The incident was reported at once to Daniel’s mother. The preschool teacher who had witnessed the supposed “miracle” was still in a state of total awe and perhaps fear, according to Miss Rogers. The other kids in the school, those that understood what had happened, had reacted in a variety of ways, some compelled by Daniel, some utterly afraid. Miss Rogers asked sincerely that the teacher not speak of the incident to anyone, especially to reporters of any sort. She agreed, though Bobbi Rogers was certain the woman would tell the tale to family and friends for many years to come. And of course, legally bound to a contract, Chester Goldsmith would be entitled to the story for his forthcoming book.

When they arrived home from school that day, Miss Rogers had asked Daniel never to do such a thing again, at least not in front of strangers. Else, he might be ridiculed and chastised his entire life, and he would be condemned to the sorry, lonely life that she herself had lived. From that day forward, through the time of the book’s publishing, when Daniel was eight-years-old, the boy had never again participated in a miracle of such things. Nonetheless, the book, entitled Wonderchild: The Story of Daniel Rogers, made several other miraculous claims of the boy’s doings. Creative liberties, Chester would tell his editor in private.

Chester Goldsmith’s book ignited yet another great wave of intrigue and news over the boy at its surprisingly well-received release by Horton House Publishing in New York. Less than a year later, after dealing with her son’s renewed fame as a miracle boy, and with the fear and shame that came along with the pointing and staring, Daniel was taken by his mother to Europe, where she used a great deal of the publishing money to engage in an operation that would leave her solely a woman—a gender she felt more and more driven towards since giving birth. The following year, they returned to America, quite unrecognizable, and had taken up the last name Copper in the small town of Lonestar, Colorado. Finally, the Coppers were to enjoy anonymity.

Over the next several years, Chester Copperfield had gained great fame as the author he had always professed to be. He had since written three other non-fiction books, with great acclaim, though with still less success than his finest book about the Wonderchild. He had not spoken nor heard from the Rogers since the book’s release.

Daniel had meanwhile grown to be a vastly normal, rambunctious teenage boy. Now seventeen years of age, Daniel was soon to graduate from Middleton High School in Lonestar. His best friend, Tony Growen, had interested him in motocross when they turned fifteen and were legally allowed to ride in the state. As a sixteenth birthday present, Miss Copper bought for her boy a Yamaha YZ125. Daniel hardly went anywhere in town without it. One month before graduation, in the year 2030, was when the accident occurred.

Daniel and Tony were riding at dusk back to Daniel’s house for supper. They were at the local jumps, practicing wheelies, imagining they were Jasper Whim or Frank Delagrassi at ProAmp Supercross, racing in front of 25,000 screaming fans. On the way home, Tony’s boot lace had come undone. He had reached down to fix it, rather than stopping, as he might have done a dozen times before. Daniel was just ahead and saw the large pot-hole, swerving around it at the passing. He yelled back for Tony to see it as well, but by the time his friend had looked up, the hole was already upon him, and in a panic, Tony jerked the steering bar to the right, too fast, too hard, and flipped over the front wheel, launching him into the air and head first onto the cement beyond the pothole. Neither of the boys wore helmets.

Daniel sat at his best friend’s side for more than a week. Tony
was in a coma, having severely damaged his brain upon impact. Results from the cat-scan and MRI and encephelograph showed very evidently what was happening. In all parts where blood was flowing, the x-ray was lit in red, veiny light. In all parts where it was not flowing, the silhouette was black. On Tony's X-Ray, his cortex was as dark as pitch. There was hardly any blood flowing at all to his brain. Even if they could keep him alive, Tony would be in a permanent vegetative state.

It was Saturday, May the 4th, just minutes before the doctors were to pull the breathing tube from Daniel’s best friend. The Growen family was in the hall outside the ICU, grandparents, uncles, aunts, everyone, about to come in but giving Tony’s best bud a few last moments alone. Daniel was crying. Very hard. He took Tony’s lifeless hand in his own and a thousand questions and confusions raced through the boy’s head. Most of all, though, he wanted his friend to wake up. More than anything in the world, he wanted his best friend back! This thought over and over repeated itself in Daniel’s head. Live, he thought. Live, Live, Live. And it was then, Daniel traveled into a deep, dark place inside. A place he had not been in a very long time, not since he was a small boy with a different name. It was indeed a dark place, filled at the moment with sadness and loss and pain, but there was comfort in that place nonetheless, some strange comfort in the dark silence, and Daniel saw finally a light. A sharp, bright light, small in the deep, dark silence of his mind. And there was a small boy, a four-year-old boy covered in mud and standing in front of this bright light. And Daniel Copper the teenager asked of this boy who he was. And the small boy, covered in dark mud, sadness coming from him through the light, responded with only a word… “Live!”

And Tony’s hand then moved. And Daniel’s eyes opened quickly. He was back, inside the ICU, back in the world, and stood up quickly. He touched Tony’s hand again, but it did not move. He then squeezed Tony’s leg, just above the knee. And Tony’s leg moved! He pinched Tony’s forearm, and the forearm swung across the body as a defense reaction! At this, Daniel leaped from the room, and yelled, “He’s alive!”

At first, the doctors thought it was just reflexes, common to some coma patients. But upon further testing, they realized Tony was in fact making purposeful movements. Tony struggled to remove the breathing tubes. The doctors were still pessimistic, suggesting that Tony, regardless of his breathing and reacting, would be virtually brain dead, unable to lead a normal life of any kind. Far too long had passed without any blood flow to the brain to sustain any sort of reasonable intelligence. A few days later, Tony opened his eyes, and the day after that, he had spoken. Within the week, he was talking and eating on his own, and continued to completely recover.

There was no reasonable, medical explanation for what had happened to Tony. There had been no precedent, no prior incident in which a man or woman had lost complete blood flow to the brain for several days and was then able to make a full recovery. It was, medically, theoretically impossible, and would give new hope to future victims of similar incidents. Though, those close to the family at the time of his awakening knew that it may have had nothing to do with medical precedent at all and might not in fact give any hope to future patients. As they were certain, most of them, that one factor, unique in this case played the crucial role: Daniel.

Five weeks after entering the hospital, Tony left the ICU and walked out of the front doors to a warm reception of onlookers and local reporters, all of whom had nearly reported the boy’s death in their local obituaries just a month earlier. Daniel was at this friend’s side. Though only one among the crowd suddenly paid more attention to Daniel than to his miracle friend… Chester Goldsmith, among the crowd of reporters, left New York for the Rocky Mountains, always hunching for a story of any sort on miracles. And now, the famed author faintly recognized the teenage boy next to Tony. A boy he’d not seen in several years, and the whole scene began to make sense.

And this is really where Daniel’s story begins… ■

TO BE CONTINUED

* All excerpts from Blood’s a Rover, published by Alfred A. Knopf, September 2009.
ability for recalling these things...
I'm watching the world go by from my table in a quieter part of Soho, London. It's not often I find myself nervous before an interview; years of journalism prepares you for most things. But this time, I'm the one who's being interviewed.

I turn back to look at the young woman sitting at my table. Her name is Angela Dace; she smiles politely, tapping her pen on her writing pad. She takes a sip from her americano before writing my name on the top of the page followed by a number: James Stanley. 45.

JS: I'm not that old!
AD: Okay, let's start at the beginning: can you tell me about yourself and the nature of this "45" project?
JS: I'm James Stanley, a freelance journalist, who isn't 45 yet. I've been a fan of superheroes for as long as I can remember. It's my interest in their world that has brought me to where I am today. "45" will be a series of forty-five interviews with those individuals that have been gifted with the Super-S gene or those that have developed a super-power later in life — what's called a 2nd Degree. I assume you've done your research and know already that my wife is expecting our first child?

AD: Yes, congratulations to you both. Was it her pregnancy that inspired the idea of the forty-five interviews?
JS: In part, yes. But it was really after we declined the "Super-S" test that my wife is expecting our first child?

AD: What are you hoping the reader to garner from these interviews?
JS: I'm James Stanley, a freelance journalist, who isn't 45 yet. I've been a fan of superheroes for as long as I can remember. It's my interest in their world that has brought me to where I am today. "45" will be a series of forty-five interviews with those individuals that have been gifted with the Super-S gene or those that have developed a super-power later in life — what's called a 2nd Degree. I assume you've done your research and know already that my wife is expecting our first child?

AD: Yes, congratulations to you both. Was it her pregnancy that inspired the idea of the forty-five interviews?
JS: In part, yes. But it was really after we declined the "Super-S" test that my wife is expecting our first child?

AD: The Hale-Criterion, you mean?
JS: Yes. The test designed to determine whether an unborn baby possesses the Super-S gene that activates at birth, enabling the child to evolve physically and/or mentally far beyond the range of a normal human's abilities. It's extremely rare, of course, but it had me wondering — what if my child was born with such faculties?

AD: What are you hoping the reader to garner from these interviews?
JS: I'm trying to interview Super-S from all walks of life and age-groups. I'm hoping my book affords the reader an insight into what it's like to not only live life as a Super-S, but also what it's like to live WITH one.

Before I conducted any interviews I'd have said a Super-S should aspire to be a legend in their own lifetime, adored and revered, successful and famous, feared by the wicked, loved by the good. I've discovered over the last few months that it's not as simple as that. My interviews are not just with those with the Super-S gene that have 'made it', but they're also with those who haven't. So it's not really a series of interviews with "Superheroes", per se. They're not necessarily all heroes - that's for the reader to decide.

AD: I see. So what sort of people have you met?
JS: Everyone, from proud parents at the birth of their newborn baby, through to teenagers with super-abilities struggling to define their own identities. I'm hoping to encompass the entire spectrum of age-groups, to truly understand the life-cycle of an individual with extraordinary powers. This isn't as straightforward as you may think.

AD: What do you mean?
JS: Well, for starters, say you've decided to become a Superhero — what's your Superhero name going to be?
AD: SuperGirl?
JS: Not possible! Taken already. Now, try thinking of one that isn't already taken by a comic publisher; one that a true Superhero can own without infringing copyright.

Angela is stumped.

JS: Not easy, is it? Now throw in puberty, pushy parents, family breakdown or, for example, dating - how do you explain your double-life or ability? What about Superheroes that want children of their own? How do they cope? It's not just about wearing a cape or mask and adopting a persona; it's about what's under the costume that's just as important.

AD: So why "45"? What's the significance with the number?
I can't resist a wry grin.

AD: Did I say something funny?
JS: Just a private joke I have with my editor. There is a reason why it's called "45" but to explain now would be unfair. You need to read the interviews yourself to work it out.

AD: You're approaching the way you document your interviews in transcript form, right?
JS: I wanted to approach the project from a unique angle; the people I'm talking to need to be heard. I wanted to give them the appropriate conduit; I think the readers will appreciate that. By leaving the interviews in transcript form, there's nowhere for the truth to hide. There's something you may not be aware of; I'm aiming to pair each interview with an illustration, drawn by one of the many talented comic book artists from around the globe. I think it'll be a memorable way of capturing the moment.

AD: It sounds very ambitious. What does your wife make of the project?
JS: She's being very supportive. She agrees that this is something that shouldn't be ignored. The timing was never going to be great but it is both critical and relevant to the book. When I'm out of the country, we communicate daily. If there were any cause for concern, I'd be on the first flight or train back to be with her.

AD: How many interviews do you have left?
JS: I have a trip to New Zealand and Japan scheduled, then it's back to the States. I didn't realize there would be so much travelling involved. Oh, to be able to fly!

AD: Who is publishing the book? Have you approached one of the nationals?
JS: I doubt a national would be able to publish the amount I have to tell in one go. I have a publishing deal with an independent company called Com.x. They understand what I'm trying to achieve with "45" and are very excited by it.

AD: When is it scheduled for release and where will people be able to buy it?
JS: Pending delivery of the final few pages of art, we are scheduled for a December 2009 release. It will be available anywhere comic books are sold; comic stores, online stores, bookstores, etc.

The alarm on my phone rings.

JS: Sorry, you'll have to excuse me, I have another interview with a Super-S scheduled here in London which I have to attend.
AD: Well, James, thank you so much for your time. I hope our readers will be intrigued to see the finished book.
AD: One more final question before you go. Are you hoping for a Super-S or a normal baby?
JS: Right now, we'd just be happy with healthy... anything else we'll leave to fate.

As I stand to leave, I glance at her interview notes. She hasn't written anything beyond my name and the title "45" at the top of the page. She catches me staring.

AD: Don't worry, I have an exceptional ability for recalling these things...

She flashes a knowing grin.

"45" will be released at the end of 2009. For more information on this graphic novel, go to the Current Issue section of ForthMagazine.com.
“All my work comes from my inner life in conjunction with my seizure disorder that I have had since childhood. I see visions and make a record of them either in paintings, drawings, or sculpture. The sculptures help me see the visions in three dimensions, and that in turn helps me process my inner life material.” – M. Dyal

Myron Dyal’s opening reception takes place September 12th from 7-10 pm at Billy Shire Fine Arts, 5790 Washington Blvd., Culver City, CA 90232

(clockwise from top) “Autumn Durga.” 54”x55”x36”. “Standing Durga.” 54”x54”x36”. “Crawling Durga.” 120” x 36” x 36”. by MYRON DYAL | Los Angeles
“Artists represented in FROM THE STREETS OF IRAN are inspired by the rich heritage of calligraphy, visual arts, revolution and the state in which they live in as well as their exposure to graffiti and urban art in the west. These artists have exhibited their work in Europe and Australia, and this is their debut exhibition in the United States.”

From the Streets of Iran opening reception takes place
September 10th from 6-9 p.m at Crewest Gallery,
110 Winston Street, Los Angeles, CA 90013

Dear Reader,

You may recall our whirlwind affair began only in January. Since then, our tender, romantic interludes have blossomed into full-blown LOVE. On the Santa Monica Pier, we swept you off your feet (and into the air) at our White Carnival with the NY Trapeze School. We’ve beguiled you by showing you the heart and soul of the creative process at the Santa Monica Fine Art Studios. We’ve driven you Mad with Ellei Johndro in the shadows of the Hollywood night.

How—you ask, voice trembling with excitement, pants a little wet from anticipation—can we continue to romance you when we’ve set the bar so impossibly high? Well, be prepared to have your toes curled and your ears nibbled at the following events:

✓ “First Fridays”: Forth sponsors various events during the monthly festival on Abbot Kinney in Venice - Sept 4th

✓ **Issue Launch Party**: A raucous art- and literature-themed costume party – Sept 5th

✓ “Second Thursdays”: Forth sponsors various events at the monthly Art Walk in Downtown, L.A., including contributing artists Opening Reception at the Crewest Gallery – Sept 10th

✓ **Art Opening**: Talented contributing artist Emma Ferreira’s opening reception - Sept 13th

✓ **Abbot Kinney Festival**: Visit the FORTH booth at this annual street fair in Venice - Sept 27th

✓ **Artist Open House**: Forth Sponsors an incredible exhibition at Santa Monica Art Studios – Oct 17th-18th

And, dear reader, that’s just a few! Intrigued? Check out the events calendar at [www.forthmagazine.com/upcoming-events](http://www.forthmagazine.com/upcoming-events) to find out more info and to make sure you don’t miss out on any FORTH-approved art and lit debauchery. Because this relationship goes both ways.

XOXO,
Sofiya Goldshteyn, Events Editor
FORTH Magazine
## Writing & Art Workshops, Groups, & Readings

### Writing - Workshops

**BEYOND BAROQUE**  
681 Venice Blvd.  
Venice, CA 90291  
www.beyondbaroque.org

**HEART & SOUL**  
HEALING ART CENTER  
Tuesday Creative Souls  
Writing Workshop, 7pm  
1167 North Lake Ave.  
Pasadena, CA 91104  
www.cr8ivesouls.com

**LA WRITERS LAB**  
www.lawriterslab.com

**THE CORONET WRITERS LAB**  
for Scripts and Plays  
1625 Las Palmas  
Hollywood, CA 90028  
www.coronetwriterslab.com

### Writing – Open Readings

**TUESDAY POETRY, 9pm**  
**Da’ Poetry Lounge**  
Greenway Court Theatre  
544 N. Fairfax Blvd  
Los Angeles, CA 90036  
www.dapoetrylounge.com

1st & 3rd TUESDAYS POETRY,  
7:15pm  
**Tuesday Night Café Project**  
120 Judge John Aiso St  
Los Angeles, CA 90012  
www.tnkar.org

**WEDNESDAY OPEN MIC, 8pm**  
**Velvet Guerilla Cabaret**  
UnUrban Coffeehouse  
3301 Pico Blvd.  
Santa Monica, CA 90405  
www.velvetguerilla.com

**WEDNESDAY WORLD STAGE LITERARY SERIES OPEN MIC, 9:05pm**  
**Anasi Writer’s Workshop**  
World Stage  
4344 Degnan Blvd., Los Angeles, CA  
www.theworldstage.org

1st SUNDAY FREE OPEN READINGS  
(except Aug., Sept., Jan.), 5pm  
**Beyond Baroque**  
681 Venice Blvd.  
Venice, CA 90291  
www.beyondbaroque.org

### Art - Workshops

**PAINTLAB**  
2912 Main St.  
Santa Monica, CA 90405  
www.paintlab.net

**LOS ANGELES ART ASSOCIATION**  
Wednesday Drawing Workshop at  
the Lynn Studio, 7:30pm  
Santa Fe Art Colony  
2349 S. Santa Fe Avenue, Studio C  
Los Angeles, CA  
www.laaa.org

**TEALE STREET SCULPTURE STUDIO**  
11847 Teale Street  
Culver City, CA 90230  
www.tealestreetsculpturestudio.com

**DESIGN AND COLLAGE WORKSHOPS**  
West Los Angeles  
www.mitzitrachtenberg.com

**LOS ANGELES CENTER FOR DIGITAL ART**  
107 West Fifth Street  
Los Angeles, CA 90013  
www.lacda.com

**THE JULIA DEAN PHOTO WORKSHOPS**  
801 Ocean Front Walk,  
Studio 8  
Venice, CA 90291  
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