



WH

With a
Grateful
Heart

FALL 2024



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PERSPECTIVE

— Hannah Hiler —

Every moment in life contains an opportunity for gratitude. While we share a common language around the feeling of thankfulness, the process of being grateful is deeply personal; it can look like many things, each in the eye of its beholder. As we invited artists in our community to express gratitude, what emerged was a collection of inspiration and admiration, each with its own coloration and focus.

Three themes surfaced from the submissions this year: Becoming, God's Presence and Wonder, themes we have used as sections in this publication. We encourage you to connect with the personal thankfulness expressed in each piece, even as it stretches your expectations around what gratitude looks, sounds, and feels like. May it make way for a deepening of gratitude in your own life.

*Hannah Hiler is the Graphic Designer at Woodland

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I. BECOMING

Consider for a moment your past year. What has filled you up? What has moved you? What has broken you down to pieces only time and Christ could mend? Our joys and griefs alike—and the grace woven through it all—provide the soil from which gratitude can spring.

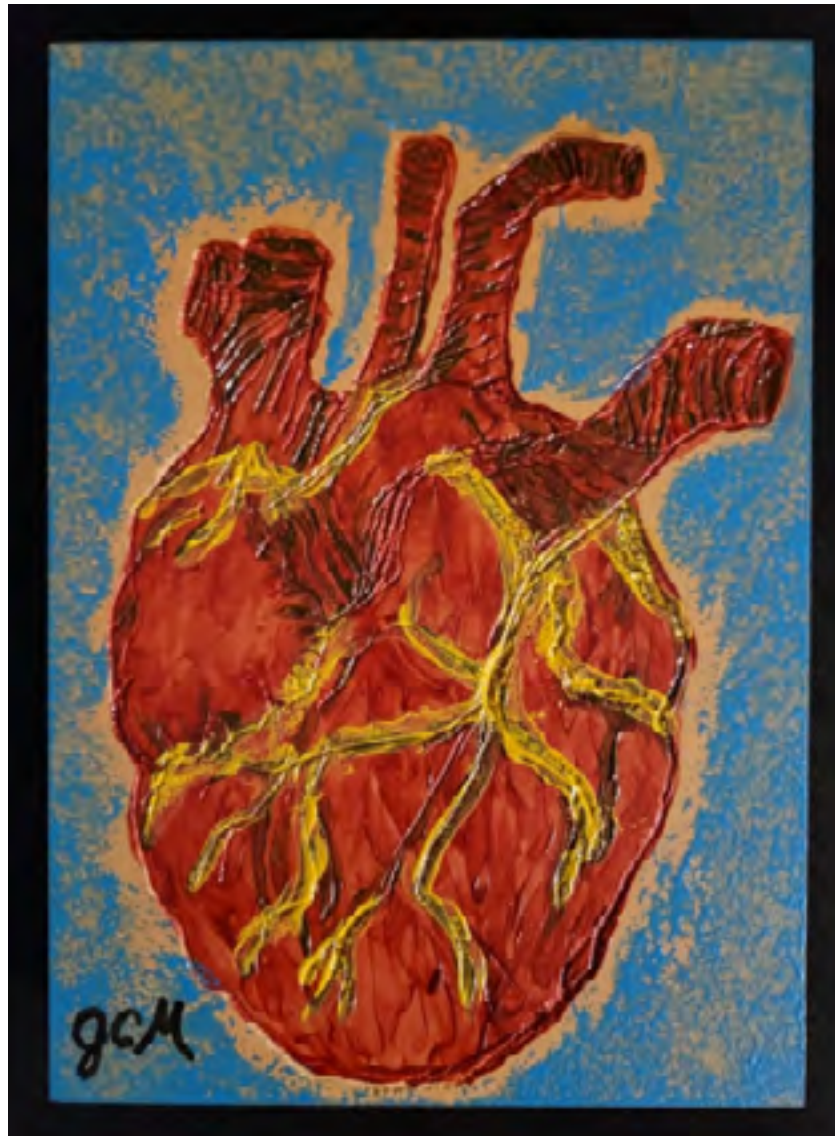
Kintsugi, the Japanese art of mending broken pottery with gold lacquer, both puts the history of a thing on display and transforms it into something marvelous—a kind of marvelous made possible only by that very history. Far from glorifying the act of breaking, it re-values breakage by allowing the opportunity to be something new: something both the same as and quite different from what it was originally. Something more whole, more beautiful, for having once been broken and mended. And isn't this what Christ does with us?

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KINTSUGI HEART

– Julie Martignacco –



Artist Reflection

Kintsugi is the art of repairing something that's broken with gold. Jesus repairs our broken hearts with the golden light of his love.

“The wound is the place where the light enters you” by the poet Rumi.

THE SYMBOLIC SUCCULENT: A TALE OF REASSURANCE

— Megan Hardy —

For one of my past birthdays, one of my gifts was a succulent. Unfortunately, its new life with me had a rough start. I accidentally knocked it over twice. The first time wasn't so bad and the succulent was unharmed, but the second time, I was afraid I had killed it. But it turned out I had just knocked off some of its leaves. Despite my concern, it recovered from its injuries nicely.

Months later, after it had been working hard growing, I found the succulent's top third or so missing. Despite that, my succulent kept growing: a new branch grew out the side of the original stem! But I eventually learned the succulent wasn't getting enough sun. After repotting it, I tried putting it in a sunnier spot, but it still wasn't enough. I moved it to a spot that would get even more sun and later learned the succulent was much happier there. I was also pleasantly surprised to find a second branch beginning to sprout on the other side of the original stem!

By then, the first branch was a couple or so inches long. It drooped from its own weight and I feared it would eventually fall off and die. But just when I thought my resilient, little plant was out of surprises, I discovered that branch was growing roots in at least two places! My succulent continues to surprise me to this day.

God used that small, but tough plant to send me a needed message: "You know, (insert your name here), you and the succulent aren't so different. You may not always know it or believe it, but you can be resilient, too, and endure far more than you sometimes think you can. You might not be unscathed, but you're still living, breathing, and growing. You can make it through this."

Artist Reflection

I am so thankful God has more faith in us than I had in my succulent! In other words, I am so thankful God doesn't see us through our own eyes. I may not know much about what my succulent is capable of, but God has always known what we are capable of. He believes in us even when we don't believe in ourselves.

RASPBERRY PICKING

— Tyler Rogness —

Things are busy these days.
Schedules, yes, but more—
inside is a garden I'd not
have recognized five years ago. But
perhaps I shouldn't be surprised: How many days
make a stranger of the self?

I was picking raspberries when
wild, soft-purple cones erupted all
slantways within:
Motherwort—
mint, but a bitterness, too. I reached as taught
and wrapped a violent hand about—
and stopped. I didn't know

that even this
can still the heart. Even this
has a place in the berry plot.

Things are busy these days—
months of tea spring at my feet,
a stalwart, lonely strawberry
makes a short and valiant show, and this:
a heart of purple bittersweet
sprung up within the raspberry.

Artist Reflection

I am learning to hold new space and gratitude in myself for the pressures which have brought me to where I am, and have made me who I am today. Only by allowing myself this grace have I found it possible to start growing again. I continue to be surprised as I reconsider what I'd previously written off or thought I understood.

OUT OF THE MUD

— Lila Joy Diller —



Artist Reflection

This has been a tough year for me. As I've been contemplating how God can bring good out of loss, uncertainty, physical limitations, and relational problems, I've slowly added layer upon layer to these canvases. Through the slippery mud of trials, the dark shadows of loss and fear, and the foggy of confusion and aimlessness, God grows me into beautiful blooms. If the flowers can bloom, so can I.

WOODEN VASE

— Patrick Suer —



Artist Reflection

I have been working with wood for most of my life. I fell in love with wood turning way back in 8th grade wood working class. The good Lord has given me a gift of creativity to make beautiful things out of logs that really aren't very pretty. It's like bringing beauty from ashes. When I'm turning wood on my lathe, it's just me and the Lord. It's very rewarding for me as the layers of wood come off to reveal the beauty underneath. The best part is when all the sanding is done and that first coat of finish goes on and the wood grain pops. For this I am for ever thanks. God bless.

STUDY OF LIGHT

– Alyssa Whiting –



Artist Reflection

While doodling during one of Greg's sermons, I noticed the effect of the overhead lights in relation to the arc of my hand, which curled on the paper relative to the pencil point. Truth guides us through illusion. We have the promise that if we seek God, we will experience the radical Truth of God's love.

LACRIMOSA

— Nathalie Gaillot —

Do not scream, oh violin
As death renders its sickly sigh
And our mothers bury their cry
Lament when the voice of torment
Brushes the ruby-edged stone
—A costly cast for a cold heart

Solo cello and forlorn horn
Can bring this organ back to life.

Despair, you string, before the choir
Invoke the King Christ our Savior
With awe-filled hope, spark his spirit
To shine amid your lacquered arms
And revive what once was living

Thus, may the souls that leave the cage
With the music forever rise.

Weep, my soul, this ground is holy
Break the hourglass of time, with your tenor
and your alto
Let the voice of this concerto fill in the
majestic temple
Mount and ascend, shake and tremble
Console these eviscerated ribs from which
this lacrimosa spills

And when the golden doors of Heaven and
its pearly gates arch open
Oh, most melodic cello,
Before the Lord incline thy Pernambuco bow.

Artist Reflection

This poem is a reflection on a musical piece of Mozart's, The Requiem in D minor. Lacrimosa is about death, and death is what faced Mozart as he gave grace and thankfulness to God and to his fellow men in his last days. This poem imagines the state of the artist and seeks to understand how, while death or tragedy may seem to take over, the love, beauty, and promises of God surpass any earthly loss and sorrow. Lacrimosa is gratitude, which is worship, that is, knowing deep in your soul in spite of any temporary doubt that Jesus will turn all things into beauty and love eternal.

AWAKE

— Tom Watkins —



Artist Reflection

This piece is an attempt to acknowledge a few of the many people I am grateful for. Each of these people has been awakened to discord and injustice and each has helped to awaken and mobilize others in the direction of peace, healing, freedom and justice. Each models sacrificial love in their own unique way. While the people are shown in the windows in this urban scene, there are everyday “soldiers” outside in the courtyard joyfully celebrating what has been accomplished, and committing to nonviolence (weapons removed and being molded into tools in the fire). Can you name some or all of the people pictured here?

UNTITLED

— Jerry Grace —



The meta-historical fall, a pre-cosmic fall, is an understanding of the biblical fall of man as a reality outside of empirical history when Lucifer, the morning star, wanting to make himself like the most high REEL, [spirit ONLY] leaving the material fall behind],

from Heaven taking a 3rd of everything to include angels, plants and animals so there is the PLANCK ERA before quantum-antiparticle slaughter fall collisions resulting in 10 billion photons to 1 quark left over the hologram confinement, an earlier time about GOD and the FINE TUNING elements in place, the only thing left after the fall - THE ONLY WAY back with light

Stars and fractal patterns and the many hearts of Wisdom

Spirits and the narrow path of wisdom and a unique light for each of EVERYTHING taken to follow

Theo-synergistic Neuro-Transformation™ Cooperating With God For A Change®

The Holy Spirit working with your Spirit and your holographic avatar Flesh

and the only thing left NEVER dying your Awareness

Neurogenesis - every day you wake up Lam 3:22-23 there are new brain cells generated in

your head, malleable, changeable, and fresh ready to be shaped, NOT by food or nutrients, but by your thoughts

on the only way back journey nose in the dirt (ALL IN | SOLD OUT) on the narrow path of Wisdom dialed in on the Fruit of the Spirit

is (preserving the hologram) climate change and the plight of whales and leopards or reuniting fallen spirits with the actual material in Heaven the most urgent critical thinking path!

In Him we live and breath and have our being so make a JOYFULL NOTE or NOT

Seeing the cup half empty and only getting worse or half full and moving, dancing back and forth, forward! the lens: critical or analytical

Artist Reflection

God provided the ONLY way back! This work is inspired by Al Larson, co-author of the book Escaping the Matrix, and includes an AI pencil sketch of Larson.

II. GOD'S PRESENCE

The nearness of God. The idea can be a bit amorphous at times; a bit abstract and untouchable. But our God was enfleshed, and meets us still in the physicality of our world in many ways, orchestrating his creation in innumerable movements to point us to him. As the poet Gerard Manley Hopkins says,

"...Christ plays in ten thousand places,
Lovely in limbs, and lovely in eyes not his
To the Father through the features of men's faces.

How does God speak to you? How do you experience his nearness? What new perspective on God's presence might the following pieces encourage in you?

25	IN DUE TIME	Rebecca Wynia
26	I AM HERE	Travis Letendre
27	I THIRST	Darrell Rohling
28	FRIEND	Kay Lee Penton
29	NO WEIGHT TOO HEAVY	Melissa Hardy
30	FROM WAR TO SAFETY...	Anonymous
31	COMMUNICATION	Akossiwa Medowokpo
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33	THE PEACE WE NEED	Pam Taylor

IN DUE TIME

— Rebecca Wynia —



Artist Reflection

Yet, God's mercy continued to prevail.' God's mercy is always there, over time, waiting for us. And his mercy always triumphs.

This landscape is set by a dark sky. Breaking in are airy, soft, yet colorful clouds. These clouds represent God's goodness, his never-changing character, and his eternal presence, offering us safety under his care. Sometimes in the dark we fail to see him, but he is always there. Often just waiting, giving us time, but always ready to extend to us his mercy and comfort that we do not deserve.

I am eternally grateful for God's love and mercy. Without it I would not be here today. I am grateful for his presence, especially in my trials, and I find peace in knowing that He will always be there.

I AM HERE

— Travis Letendre —

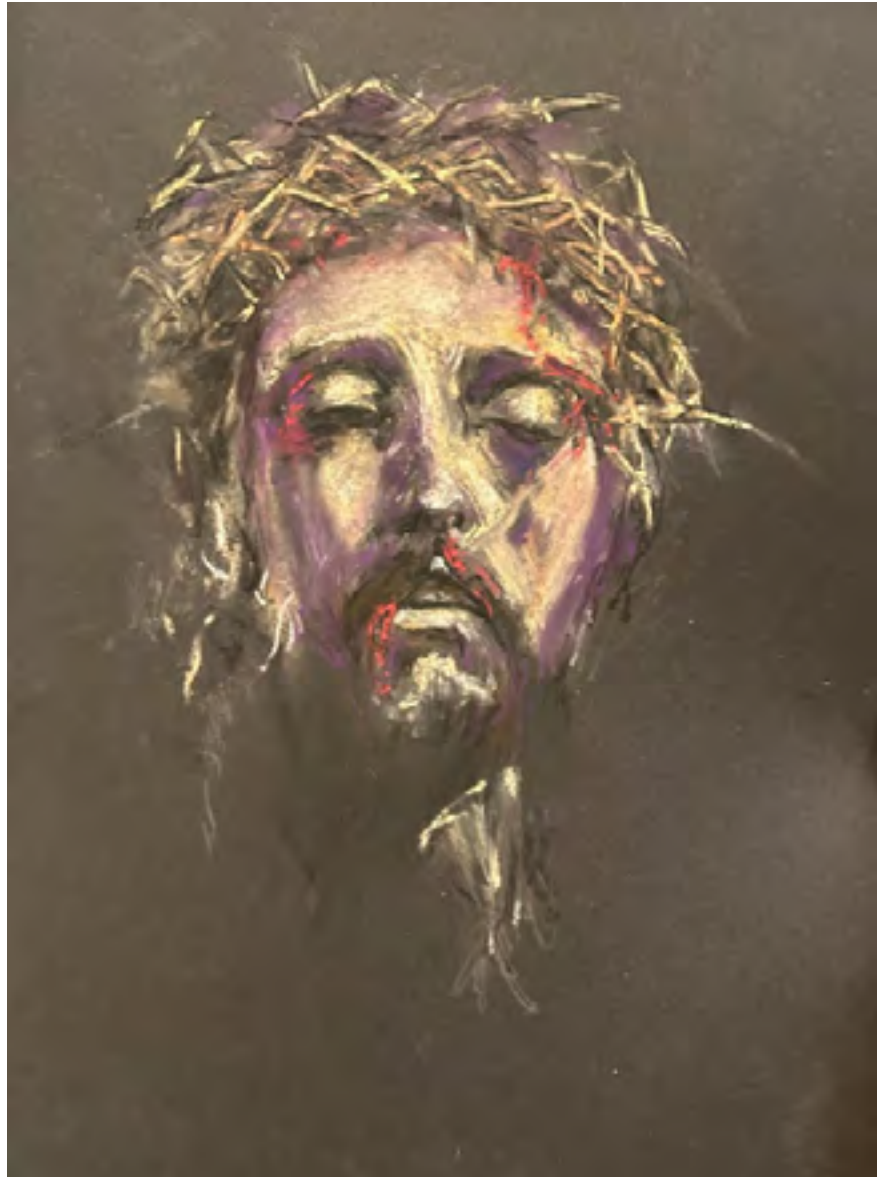


Artist Reflection

I am so grateful that at any point in time, when I turn towards Jesus, He is there waiting for me with open arms like the father of the prodigal son. I am His Son.

I THIRST

– Darrell Rohling –



Artist Reflection

I felt compelled to create a representation of Greg's ER vision that gave him solace during his own dire thirsting.

FRIEND

— Kay Lee Penton —

I know
I am not alone
walking this road.
But here I am-

Fast feet
on the gravel shoulder
crunching a quick beat,
a near-noon sun
smacking my face,
my shadow
chasing behind me.
I'm briskly heading
East, there,
up ahead, just
a little further,
faster.
My brain frets;
my heart flips and flutters
at the tornado
of anxious thoughts.

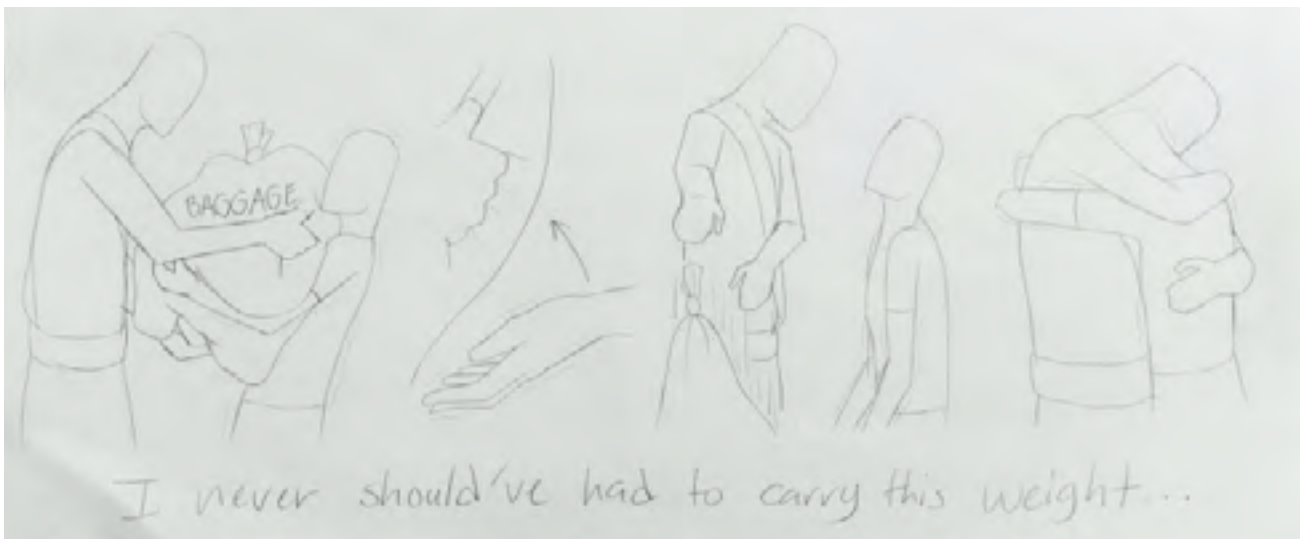
I'm not doing this alone.
I slow the pace,
breathe deeply.

Closing my eyes
I see two yoked oxen
pulling a plow,
breaking up clods of dirt.
Their soft bovine faces
become human faces:
mine and my friend's.
Together we are dragging
my wagon load of weary.

I'm learning:
the road
goes easier
this way.

NO WEIGHT TOO HEAVY

– Melissa Hardy –



Artist Reflection

Sometimes things are put on us that were never supposed to be. Whatever we're carrying can become this huge thing that is always there, and is always so heavy. God knows this, and if we let him he can gently lift this weight off our weary bodies and souls, letting us feel the weight being taken away. At the same time, he mourns with us that we carried that weight for so long when we didn't have to, and that is such a comfort.

A revelation from God I thought I should share and something to definitely be grateful for.

FROM WAR TO SAFETY UKRAINE TO MINNESOTA

— Anonymous —



Artist Reflection

Grateful for the gift of being able to bring Ukrainian refugees out of the war and adopt them into our family.

COMMUNICATION

– Akosiwa Medowokpo –



Artist Reflection

My gratitude to God. I thank God for creating man in his image, for caring for us, for giving us his love, his blessing and his protection. This is what gave me the inspiration to paint the mother and her child which expresses communication because a mother must communicate often with her child every moment, to trust him and if something happens to him outside (for example at school), the child will not hide this from her and will talk to her about everything, just as we come to God to talk to him about our problems and needs because we trust him.

ALMOST THERE

— Peggy Kulhanek —



Artist Reflection

Even if you feel all alone, you are not. The Lord is always with you.

THE PEACE WE NEED

— Pam Taylor —



Artist Reflection

Our world is in such need of God's peace right now, and this dove reminds me of the peace the Holy Spirit will provide the whole world one day. I am so thankful for that!

III. WONDER

Despite what Sunday School might have inadvertently led some of us to believe, a prodigality is not a cherished returning after long absence; something which is prodigal is not something which has come back to us. A prodigality is an excess, an overabundance, an overwhelm of something. We call him the Prodigal Son because of his wasteful extravagance, not his final return to his father.

But the word is not all bad. The wasteful beauty of God is everywhere: in jaw-dropping vistas, forgiveness, and the belly-laughter of children. How could the hands which formed planets craft as well the paper-thin wing of a butterfly? We serve a prodigal God.

How do you see God's wasteful beauty in and through these next works? Where do you see it in your life? Here is the well-spring of both wonder and gratitude.

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GOD CREATION

– Olga Noemi (Noni) Nagy –



Artist Reflection

God created us from his image: His heart, his love, and his soul are in us to help us love people, the animals, nature—all his beautiful creation. His love comes from our hands through our souls.

I'M NO CITY PLANNER

— J. Brookes —

but the rows of sugar maples
planted along Lowry Avenue
are distractingly red
And I wonder
who chose them
knowing each October
they'd be
a scarlet choir
captivating
the drivers
who hurry past

Artist Reflection

While taking care of the errands and chores that make up an adult life, I am often in my car running here and there. These sugar maples in all their autumn glory were so captivating that I had a hard time paying attention to the road. I'm so grateful the mundane is often punctuated with such ridiculously lavish displays of beauty.

PEACE LIKE A RIVER

— Kathy Suer —



Artist Reflection

Amidst the chaos in life, there is still so much beauty in nature. I grew up in a family that loved tent camping, hiking, and Sunday picnics. My mom taught us how to appreciate the awe and wonder of God's creation.

Now I still find incredible peace in a walk in the woods or sitting watching a boat floating down the river.

We all need to find peace in our lives, and I thank the Lord every day for the gift of incredible beauty in this world if we take a deep breath and look for it.

NO TRESPASSING

– Alison McClocklin –



Artist Reflection

This piece expresses plain and simple gratitude in the experience of ordinary life. One spring day while walking on a hill in the woods, I came across a simple dead tree standing in a clearing and was struck with wonder and awe.

How can we know wonder and joy and awe without gratitude? I don't think we can. Gratitude is the awareness we need to hold and to know anything truly good. And wonder, joy and awe are good things to hold.

FROSTED TIPS

— Grant Bullert —



Artist Reflection

Here in Minnesota we have the lovely privilege of experiencing natural beauty in each of the four seasons. While the winter can be enchanting (especially early on), it can also become relentless. For this reason, I have come to cherish the Como Park Conservatory. It's a delightful refuge of growth and warmth during the cold season, providing a great escape from the dreary, dull, and redundant winter days.

I took this photograph early in February of 2024, when the air outside was brutally cold. Knowing that this calm, stunning environment is just a short drive away from me always warms my heart. What a gift it is that God has made it possible for us to grow almost anything in any part of the world as long as the proper conditions are recreated.

BEYOND THE VEIL

– Stephanie Herington –

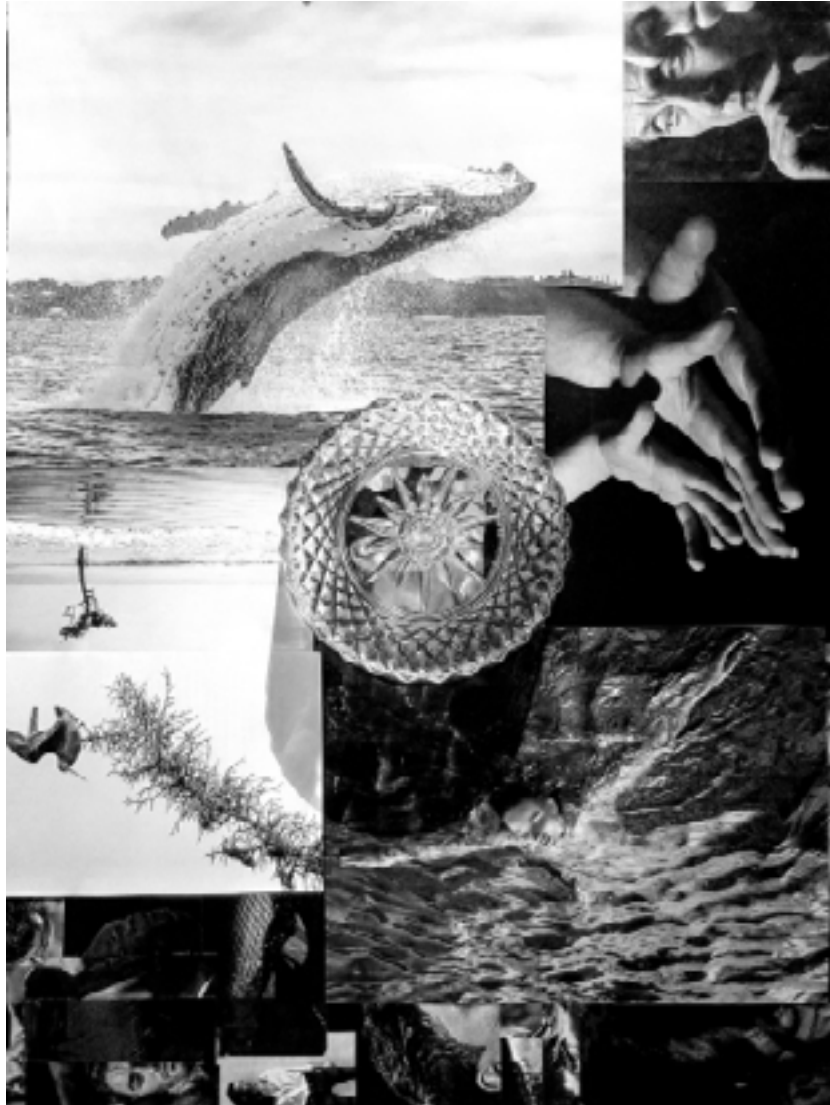


Artist Reflection

I'm finding gratitude in the realization that there is something past the thin veil that separates us from the Heavens. In "Beyond the Veil" I imagine what it might look like if we could see the veil and were peeking through it: Light playing off colors, magic, and mystery; wonder at almost seeing what there is; but it's not quite time to see fully so the clarity is elusive. But even so, the joy is still there.

COLLAGE POEM

— Zach Cusick —



Artist Reflection

Playing pool and determined to love
mean enemies and a cruel adversary
love by any means necessary
in a coal mine with an eight-ball canary

(Poem is revealed when light is shone from behind the collage.)

SILVER IN UTAH

– Anne T Craigmyle –



Artist Reflection

I'm grateful for God's potential creative work in our lives, and not just in His creation of nature and our world.



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