The works presented in this journal are not the expressed thoughts or opinions of the staff or administration of Coppin State University but the artistic visions of its students.

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Donald A. Tyson, Sr. has been creating art for 50 years. He studied at BCCC, the Baltimore Art Institute, Towson State University, and anticipates a degree in Urban Arts from Coppin State University in December, 2010. The natural environments of the places where he has traveled, including Maryland’s eastern shore, the Southwest, the western mountains, and Hawaii, all have found their way into his dreams and informed his visionary art. Tyson’s journey as an artist has always been and will continue to be a spiritual journey.

ARTIST STATEMENT

I am simply a vessel and these drawings are strokes of faith. I experience tranquility as I envision and create. I hope that my creations will also evoke tranquility in the viewer.

Donaty
Donald A. Tyson, Sr.
To Become a Poet

Andrea Nichols

See all I wanted to be was a poet
But I thought I wasn’t deep enough.
So I went to seek a poetic tutor.
He asked me, Was I rough?
He asked me to think back to a time
When I felt low and wow, behold.
My suppressed memories fluttered me.
Uncle Sam asked me how deep my pockets were.
My pimp told me he would bury me if money wasn’t right.
Then I remembered those words, open wider.
Your legs just too tight. Oh, but you are just a little girl.
How deep do you wanna go?
Let me bring you to my world.
Deep is what he was going for
Told me not to tell ‘cause then he’d give me more.
So how deep did I have to go?
Just show my poetic flow.
Then my tutor said how deep
As I replied, deep enough to make me limp
Deep enough to forget what had ever happened
Deep enough for me to use my voice
Deep enough to relive my horror
How deep? So deep that yes, this is my paper
and it’s an adventure. So I’ll be writing the wrongs.
Accepting Yourself

_Tiffany Gardner_

Knock Knock Thud Thud
As I tap on the box I'm trapped in
Help! Can somebody hear me, is anybody out there?
I believe they are not listening or maybe this box isn't capable of opening
I feel so alone, so I walk hand in hand
With misery searching for hope, searching for the light to accept me into
Its spotlight.
Why am I taking this mistreatment? I ask myself, determined to be a part
Of this way of life
I sit back and examine why
Why am I in this darkness, this gloomy place trying to shine?
A light bulb goes off in my head and I realize that I have always been in the light,
But I had to accept myself as I am, instead of wanting to be accepted
Knock Knock Open up I'm here I'm free
Image

Michelle Wallace

People
Look into glass
See what looks back at you
Indulge in your cooled reflection
See it

Father

Victoria Cook

The stock strong and durable
Out in all types of weather
With many leaves of life’s stories
The flower pink and burnt orange
The color of my Father’s skin.
In the summer sun
The petals have freckles
Much like my Father.
Inside he reaches out
With warm fuzzy arms
To keep his only daughter
Safe from harm.
Leaves camouflage some petals
So they cannot be seen
Like in the woods hunting
Out of a tree.
The petals will always shine through me.
Father

Victoria Cook

The stock strong and durable
Out in all types of weather
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Like in the woods hunting
Out of a tree.

The petals will always shine through me.
When the rock crumbles

DeJuan Clark

The alley dog’s random barking so similar to the call of those big dogs that we had when we all lived on Myrtle. The blue-black shimmer of their coats still twinkles somewhere deep in the childhood memory vault of my past. So nostalgic, my eyes water with tears at the thought of you fixing chicken, rice, and onions in that huge silver pot, with all of the dents and dings around the bottom. The bones shattering the white sticky surface of the rice, the meat lost somewhere deep within, as you poured the slopping mix into the trough-sized bowls in the backyard.

Seems like once a week I almost pick up the phone to call you. Between you and me, after you passed I called you for as long as the phone was cut on. I never believed that rocks crumbled. How could I have conceived a life where the strength of my family would have to be buried. I wish you were here to taste a burger off my new grill. The green peppers, onions, and eggs just like you showed me to season. Your years of restaurant slaving and home slaving twisted into a culinary art. And as you always told me, I made it my own.
Irony of Being Holy

Wallace Lane

Is not defined by what milk you drink
But by your calcium intake of perseverance
Your daily dosage of faith and hope
How you break the fast with love at lunch
By supper time you've burnt your calories
How you take the truth and run with it
Seconds are fine if you hunger for success

Everything earthly doesn't design the heavens

All joy comes when your eyes awake,
Knowledge is the fat
Women’s March to Success

Tiffany Gardner

Minority
Our priority
To be better
To be equal
Rights we did fight
To achieve, believe in ourselves
To get where we are
Far
Farther than those
From no rights
We rallied
Left foot right foot
From houses to desk
Lamp, pen, pen, pen, corner office
We strive to make money
We could not see
But now doctors, lawyers, senators
For we are voting, upholding our name for we are
African-American women
The Night

Porfirio Velasquez

Some of you might call me a stalker, but I am here, waiting for a late bus. It just happened that they walked down from the bridge overhead to the ground level where I am standing. They’re people that I do not know and probably will never see again. Even so, I am concerned and want to know their stories. Outside, a girl paces around the phone booth, out of nervousness or boredom—I will never know. She paces while her friend talks on the telephone. At last she feels either fulfilled or bored with walking and sits down on the curb.

The young woman inside of the phone booth pays no attention to her friend who is now sitting, and turns now and again, being able to see only out of the walls of the booth that confine her. Seemingly aggravated, she slams her open palm into the wall and leans over onto the phone box. Obviously she has been told something that she cannot understand or something she understands too well and has finally come to grips with. Either way, she hangs up the phone and steps outside.

I ask myself why these two young ladies have decided to prowl the streets. Could they be running away? Perhaps it is because the world they know no longer accepts them and they need to go somewhere far away. Maybe it is simply because they are bored, needing something to do for some relaxation. But why walk the dangerous streets of the city—alone?

They’re both sitting on the curb now, talking about things I cannot hear. Twice I ask myself whether I should go over and ask them what is going on in their lives to bring them out into the night. Twice over, I decide not go to them and merely watch from where I stand.

The bus arrives to pick me up. I get on and pay the fare. Taking my seat, I see the two have already stood up and are walking toward the darkness again. Once the bus pulls out, they are gone from my sight. Never again will I see these two girls. Never will I know if they are running from something or running into something. Sisters, perhaps. Or maybe they are friends. Whatever the case, they will never know that I love them. I love them as I love my mother, as I love my siblings and even my wife. These two girls who have no home for the night and must wander the darkness in order to find a place for themselves.

In bed that night with my wife holding me tightly, I stare at the ceiling and think about these girls one last time. I hope the darkness did not swallow them. I hope they have found a place to spend the night. A place filled with love—a place where they will be safe from the night.
We Quit

Wallace Lane

Sweet music of Ray Charles in front of me
Sweet fear
A quitting heart my dad gave me
Faint tears

Sweet nothings
O sweet nothings
Sweet melody of keys A and C
Sweet pain
Left hand chorus chords
No aim

Sweet nothings
O, sweet nothings
A vain heart my dad gave me
Sweet thoughts
Empty Yamaha keys
Sweet defeat
Vanished Out Of Love

Alkema T. Green-Holder

Distant, cold, abandoned and empty, is what my heart feels each time it beats
It beats a song for you that sounds beautiful to me but to your ears, you hear nothing
My song transformed to an echo of something that once was. Something that struggles to exist, something that
is no longer acknowledged. Love…

I reach for your hand but someone else takes it. That hand is unfamiliar
The security, peace, and love I once knew are extinct. Where has the touch that used to caress my very soul
gone?
Where is my lover’s hand?

I stand where I can be seen. Yet, in your state of blindness, you refuse to see me
I dance this dance and play this game but to no avail. I’m still invisible. You only see what you love
Why do you still exist in my world, when I don’t exist in yours?

How do I say goodbye to a lover who has dismissed me? I don’t. I just slowly let the feeling fade
I let each beat created by your presence dissipate. I pause, and play my own song…
I cease feeling, because I no longer exist… I die.
And when I can’t see you, I live again
That was the day she took her last hit and stopped breathing. Lady Day
Substituting permanent pain for a temporary high, slapping her veins, injecting the needle, and taking each
dose wasn’t the way.
For each vocal chord struck a memory, taking her back to that day… she was forced to lay
And take it as it takes her back into her selective memory only to never erase it again forever in a day.
Vocally ejecting in and out her story as she nods in and out of consciousness. The price she pays.
Forever that Baltimore legend, before Bodymore became Murderland, overcoming great obstacles… like she/I
will pray
Not to ever feel this kind of pain and to learn from those who set the path and made the way.
T’ain’t nobody’s business if I do, if I do!

That was the day AIDS took over the body of someone never being inside the closet, sitting outside looking
around, ready to start the journey
Living his life, before the medication was invented, sent his body into a vindictive parallel, only to hit those
perpendicular lines, you see…
Rodney Lee Dunford lived with AIDS, meaning his insides got weak, not taking proper precautions, living the
outcast, learning to never be accepted in society as equal, wanting to flee…
Remembering that some family do and some family don’t, staying to watch me grow as long as he could.
Fighting back tears. Watching him decay was unbearable to see, taking the pieces of him left to view, going to
the casket, crying over the body of a man
That passed on the key … we
Need to stop judging the appearances lying before us because peeking outside is a strong
Story to tell and be
Lifted! Learned! Understood!

This was the day Paul Pardus reacted without thinking in fear
Subconsciously hearing the news that no one wants to hear
The good news was that his mother was going to live, the bad news was that she
Couldn’t walk again said by the doctor crystal-clear
He didn't want to hear it, he just didn't want to hear it! Making the decision that would
Affect everyone near
Pulling out the gun, squeezing the trigger, putting her out of her misery, he thought,
Shooting multiple times until the quilt dropped a tear
Killing the one who gave birth to this misunderstood soul, piercing the one trying to help,
drawing fear
Barricaded in this situation, surrounded by the law, plotting the thoughts of escape, only
one solution, packed with gear…
Turned the gun toward himself, shot into the soul of someone no one knew, ending the
day on the 11:00 news, hated to see it as I understood how we’re
Forced to accept reality even when it’s never good for any of us who have to struggle with
the adaptation of the real world year after year
If I could go back to that moment, I would have been a small whisper in his ear
Tell him: I’ll listen, I’ll understand, I know the personal pain, I’m here to talk because
sooner or later, we’re all to face our fear.
JUDGEMENT DAY

So, as you sit back and re-evaluate the history thrown at you
Accept life and understand that this could have been you, too
For you see, none of it is new and reoccurring out of the blue
The colorless lines of history make an impact for the next generation to do
Exactly what we did growing up, but who knew
That this generation would be bold enough to do more than the few.
Whatever you take from the words coming through
Just know that this is my Baltimore history lesson to you
Refusal to a Happy Ending

Andrea Nichols

I know this story very well.
It sounds something like a fairytale.
And since I heard it all before,
Take bets, I don't want to hear much more.
See it goes: Boy meets girl,
Girl makes boy her world.
And for what? All to live in a rotten pumpkin,
Because she don't have the brains to leave him.
All for Prince Charming to find another.
When she slipped on her glass shoe,
She should have paid attention to his noble brother.
But no, she can't do that, because of shame.
Her village will burn her down, although he's to blame.
This was her search for love.
Look to the sky, Noah release them doves.
Not for you, he was looking for land.
You get three wishes rubbing a genie lamp in the sand.
I wish to break the curse,
I wish for no more hurt,
I wish.....Ummmmmm, for my noble man.
Limo driver, give me your best Hearst.
Froggy in the pond has a lot to say.
Like kiss me. I think not, because I just got out of a bad story anyway.
D.O.N.E.

*Michelle Wallace*

Fin.
Yep, I’m done before I even begin.
There is no reason to let me in.
Who wants to pre-destine the end?

You’re constantly saying you’re “over it”.
What “it” is I don’t know.
But what THIS is, I won’t grow.
I’m just getting tired.
I’m not talkin’ Fannie Lou Hamer.
I’m talkin’ tired of trying to control my temper so I don’t end up in the slammer.
Seeing you change your flaky-ass mind about EVERYTHING.
Never knowing what you want and always compalinin’.
Think you don’t need changing
But you do.