

Agora 2004



Editors

Amy E. Heishman
Amanda Marie Frentz

Assistant Editor

Christine Tileston

Moderator

Dr. Ellen Weir

Editorial Board

Dr. Cooke
Dr. Harris
Dr. Abbondanza
Patrick Sutton
Eddie Meeks

Special Thanks

Emily Toy
Peter Lynch
Mary Kate O'Rourke

Cover

Sketch submitted by Patrick Sutton
entitled "Tribute to Leonardo"

Agora

"Birthplace of Democracy, the
Agora dozes at the foot
of the Acropolis. Athenians
thronged here to
discuss, harangue, litigate, phi-
losophize."

Volume
XXXVIII
Spring 2004

Agora is the literary publication of
Belmont Abbey College, funded by the
college.

THE WRITTEN WORD
in Black and
White...

Literary Contents

Two Post-Modern Incidents	7
Dr. Mike Hood	
Moonstruck	9
Monica Yantes	
Wind	10
Carrie Perrine	
In My Solitude.	10
Cindy Campbell	
Navel Gazing	11
Amanda Marie Frentz	
Coward	13
Michael Lillard	
Iago	15
M. Jay Smith	
Petalia	17
Amy E. Heishman	
You Will Find Me There	18
Adam Chandler	
Love is a Crook Thing	19
Abloyou Sam Marzar	
The Ink Pen	20
Elizabeth Sweeny	
Palestine	22
Michael Lillard	
Stigmata at La Verna	23
Maria de la Motte	
Walking The Walk	24
S. Jane Russell	
The Question	25
Powell Latimer	
The Genealogists	26
Donald Beagle	
Untitled	27
Colby Dollar	
The Bringer	28
Sara Jordon	
My So Weary Beginning of Day.	29
Amanda Marie Frentz	

Out Here	30
Dr. Russell Fowler	
Stag	31
Michael Lillard	
In Our Own World	32
Cindy Campbell	
Utility Trumps Aesthetics, Again	33
S. Jane Russell	
Sharing Shakespeare	35
Katinka Evers	
Untitled	36
M. Jay Smith	

Art Contents

Absinthe	8
Jason Clark	
Imagine	9
Patrick Sutton	
Untitled	10
Erin Morrison	
Ready Badger of Carnage	12
David Neipert	
Perspective	13
Jason Clark	
Untitled	14
Michelle Pazzula	
Rose Bloom	17
Erin Morrison	
The Calm	19
Bernadette Fagarang	
Untitled	21
Ashely Bell	
Round and Round She Goes	25
Marie Gamis	
Icicles	27
Erin Morrison	
Passing Place	27
Jason Clark	
Untitled	29
Patrick Sutton	

Untitled	Jenny Rahilly	32
Kitten Love	Nora Fleming	34
Untitled	Erin Morrison	35
Soul Gazing	Jason Clark	36

Lots of ideas
 SWIRLING
 AROUND in YOUR
 HEAD? WRITE!

Two Post-Modern Incidents

French Daredevil Causes Memory Of Ames, Iowa Woman to Lapse

French daredevil climber Alain Robert (pronounced Robear), who defies authorities by scaling some of the tallest buildings around the world without permission, was critically injured Tuesday by sand artist Maria Torp when she knocked him off the walls of a giant sand sculpture that evokes the legendary city of Atlantis. She and 75 other international sand artists have gathered at the sand sculpture festival in Zeebrugge, Belgium, to reconstruct the fabled lost city. Ms. Torp, wielding a spanze (a flat shovel favored by sand artists), hit Robert just as he came over the fifty-foot wall. The International Association of Sand Artists (IASA) said that Robert had been acting on his own without permission from IASA.

When Lavila Thompson of Ames, Iowa saw the made-for-TV movie of the Torp/Robert encounter, Torp being played by the scantily clad Pamela Anderson formerly of *Baywatch*, who now writes a monthly feature for *Jane* magazine on the issues of domestic violence, women's health and parenthood, and Robert by a shirtless Rod Stewart, who has been given his own commemorative tree in London's Hyde Park, she had difficulty recalling details about any of the commercials aired during the movie. When her live-in daughter asked her about a Martha Stewart (no relation to Rod) clothes special at K-Mart, she drew a blank, and said, "I don't rightly recall."

Spiritual Experience Moves Ames, Iowa Youth

Later that week, at the moment a gas explosion ripped through a coal mine in eastern China, killing at

least 63 miners and leaving 23 others missing 1,500 feet underground, the same Lavila Thompson of Ames, Iowa, thought she felt the ground move as she entered an inflatable Gothic cathedral at the Christian Resources Exhibition in Berry, west of Ames. The moveable PVC structure, which measures 47 feet from floor to steeple, 47 feet long and 25 feet wide, was kept taut by a compressor powered by a four-cycle Briggs & Stratton engine that hummed against the background of recorded hymns. Mrs. Thompson had gone to church to pray for her teenage son Jeremy, who, after having his tongue surgically split as part of a new body-enhancement craze, now speaks with a lisp. "When I fir~~th~~t ~~th~~aw my tongue," claims Jeremy, "I thought it w~~ath~~ the mo~~th~~t beautiful thing I've ever ~~theen~~, clo~~th~~e to a ~~th~~piritual ~~eth~~perient~~he~~. It'~~th~~ altho a pl~~uth~~ when it cometh to kith~~thing~~."

-Dr. Mike Hood

CREATE A NEW REALITY...THINK!



- "Absinthe," Jason Clark

MoonStruck

The moon is small from where I sit and stare
It haunts my memory, delights not there.
Though silver pitted high against black sky
No splendor in its beam beholds my eye.

A night like this is cold and full of pain.
The years have drifted by, no sign of rain.
Yet still I wait for you both night and day
To see your face again is all I pray.

Oh moon, cast not your shadow on my face
Despise this child not, but show thy grace.
Let not another night go by disdained,
But curse the day, its mortals ever chained.

Death came before the morning met the sun
And moonlight danced across her grave for fun.
Yet silently I sit and calmly stare,
From here my window, moonstruck, in my chair.

- Monica Yantes



Photograph by
Patrick Sutton



-Erin Morrison

The Wind

She remains unattached,
Passing by
Sometimes gentle
Sometimes fierce
Sometimes holding us back
Sometimes pushing us on
Yet, once her task is complete,
She moves on
She holds on to nothing.
- Carrie Perrine

In My Solitude

In my solitude
I lie awake,
thinking, viewing, experiencing
the beauty around me.
Nature has opened its arms
and embraced m,
admitting me
into its majestic palace
and I am content.
-Cindy Campbell

ART is
WHERE THE

is

Navel Gazing

I guess I really am pretty lucky. I mean I do get to see a lot of the country and I am getting to travel with my best buds. But it's this feeling of never knowing where I am going, rather never getting to choose where I am going, really. All in all, however, things are good. I really should not complain.

I started out in Florida, that's where I'm from. The sun is always so bright there. My tan would be so deep I would look orange. I traveled from Florida though Georgia and all the way up to Virginia. The last time I looked out of the truck my pals and I were in New Jersey. The air sure is different here. And where did the sun go? I don't know how much more I can really handle. I mean, I love being with the guys, and seeing the East Coast is great, but I would just like to be settled at home. And home is Florida, far from Jersey, so how do I get there? I figure the first thing to do would be to get out of this truck. I wonder, would the others want to join me? There are twelve of us and we are a tight group. They might have some good ideas on how to get out of this Jersey place. I wouldn't really know where I was going, well, except south. I'll ask them later. Right now I want to just sit back and enjoy the ride. A car ride can be very therapeutic for a wandering mind.

My mind wandered to a place where I could be an individual and not always with the guys. At this place I could make my own decisions and go where I want. Well, that place looks so incredible! I have to go now; I can't wait for the others. I am going to jump from the truck. 3...2...remember to roll when you hit the ground...1....weeeeeeee.

I indeed hit the ground rolling. And I kept rolling. I rolled down the turnpikes of Jersey, hitting all the southern ones. Going back through Virginia

wasn't very eventful. I did see three yellow Volkswagens. That was pretty cool. The Smoky Mountains were as beautiful as I had been told. And once I got to Georgia, I saw a league of motorcycle bikers on Interstate 85. They almost ran me over. Humph, juiced by bikers- that's not the way that I am going to go. I am so close to home...Florida! I'm home at last. The best place to become Florida Orange Juice.

- Amanda Marie Frenz

Write till your FINGERS ACHE



- "Ready Badger of Carnage," David Neipert

- "Perspective," Jason Clark



Coward

I strung up Billy Budd from the mast high
And shot the albatross out of the sky
I filled the showers with Zyclon-B
Then nailed the prophet to a tree
I slew the children of the last Tsar
Before melting the homes of Hiroshima
With an endless parade of atrocities
I spread destruction like an overwhelming
disease

Never questioned my roll
Never questioned my fate
Circumstantial morality
My tears fell too late
- Michael Lillard



- Michelle Pazzula

ImaginAtion is
the answer!

Iago

I have been warned
By sages and
Soothsayers
And Shakespeareans
Alike;
"Beware the Green-eyed Monster"
I tried listening,
But hearts tell
Stories that the head
Cannot (or will not)
Comprehend.
A lot can happen
In 1000 days.
We often learn
That mistakes are
Repeated.
So are dreams.
They work their
Way through your
Bedsheets that supposedly
Offer you
Security
And give you an intoxicating night
Of bittersweet
Memories that
Forbid the human
Soul from passing
Into freedom and
Newness.
Many things
Became apparent from
Encounters with the
Shakespearean nemesis-
The knowledge that
Jealousy does not

PERFECTLY
STRAIGHT
BUT
CAN YOU DRAW A STRAIGHT LINE?

Always end with the
Exchange of rings
At the beginning---
Or end
Of a relationship.
It can hold a
Person as firmly
As barren oaks
Hold to sidewalks
And foundations of Victorian
Homes long after life
Has abandoned the
Roots. It can work its way into
Lives that never knew
The fact that should have been
Told by the
Bard...
Iago has red hair.

-Jay Smith





-Erin Morrison

Petalia

My vision of eternity happened in a moment of
petal worship
Under summer's breast.
It chanted blues music in a whisper
And
Smelled of my mother's peach perfume.
Then I awoke,
And found I had missed the bloom
Of a certain wild flower.
Life has a way of changing the way it remains.

-Amy E. Heishman

You will find me there

(A poem for all seasons)

With heavy hearts on last lament;
When lovers' whimsy came and went
And patience and hope have both been bent,
You will find me there.

Where winter's touch tickles new morn;
When flakes of falling frost are born
And hearts grow gray and love forlorn,
You will find me there.

When spring has sprung and sprites proclaim:
'Gone is Glacius; his frigid reign,'
And verdant vines arrive again,
You will find me there.

When showers subside on sweet summer days,
Filling fresh flowers with warm sun-rays,
When dandelions dance and sunflowers sway,
You will find me there.

As autumn's auburn burns their bows,
When hunters hark for pheasants and fowl,
And another year your love allows,
You will find me there.

So, my sweet, through seasons' time,
No matter now, nor morrow, always mine
Lest love be lost, forever fine.
I will always be there.

-Adam Chandler

Love is a Crook Thing

Wherefore I throw a coin
to find out if I should love,
"Go and love, go and love young man
If the lady be young and fair"
I am loose in teh hoist of her hair

Oh! token coin, token coin
Love is a crook thing
There is no one wise enough
To find out all that is in it
For he would be thinking
Of love till the sky ran away
And the shadow had eaten out he moon
Oh! token coin, token coin,
Love is a crook thing.

-Abloyou Sam Marzar



- "The Calm," Bernadette Fagarang

LOSE YOURSELF IN A BOOK!

The Ink Pen

Where has it been and where will it go?
What springs forth from its fountain, but words
and thus knowledge?
Along with the rounding letters, the pen cascades
the paper with heavy, magnificent markings of
rich, deep, black ink.
Smoothly and evenly it begins to spurt forth dark
red.
Blood.
Whose blood is it, and why does it bleed?
It is the soul who has lifted this crafty pen and
trustingly applied it to paper.
This boy's words ebb from his heart to his hand
and from his hand to his pen, which willingly
does the dark justice.
Blood abounds in the boy's heart and so it
abounds in the pen.
Be strong for this dark heart of the boy who plans
to redden his own body with his own blood and
rusty tears.
Then, when the boy can write no more, or be
anymore, the pen dies in a faint upon the aban-
doned parchment.
And so they lie, stretched upon the gravel of a
lonely highway.
Life's possessions are packed but notebook open.
Soon, all is a red stain.
Blood of the boy?
Blood of the pen?
Who knows? They are now one.
- Elizabeth Sweeny

DRAW something
SPECTACULAR
and
EXTRAORDINARY
JUST LIKE YOU ARE!



- Ashely Bell

Paint
your
Heart



Palestine

Fingers on our triggers, venom in our speech
Self-constructed boundaries, dare the other side
to breach
Two proud, but wonded beasts willing to fight to
the end
And purge all infidels from teh sacred homeland

The blood of two peoples saturate this ground
Wakes and weddings drowned out by the apoca-
lyptic sound
As the Holy Land ignites, divided by race
And the heretics and savages must be erased

I want to believe in my heart that you are just
like me
A people striving to make a home, deserving of
my mercy
Yet another bomb sends shrapnel through the
crowded marketplace
And I have to restrain my vengeful will to lay
your homes to waste
- Michael Lillard

The Stigmata at La Verna

It is September, centuries ago.
The sky is gray and faithful,
But it yearns to love even more fully,
Like the man under it.
He is a gentle begger, and he prays fervently
Haggard in appearance from his chosen poverty,
But his heart is clean.
He is fixated on the Crucified
A mountain breeze caresses his face.
He seeks so earnestly
To feel the torment of the Passion.
He is parched,
His lips long for the Sacred Blood.
He is so hungry for God,
And he is heard.
As autumn's golden leaves float to the earth
All around him,
He is touched by the presence of the Father.
He has seen Him in himself, and in others, spiritually,
But now, *physically*, the Son is embodied
In his own flesh.
Wounds begin to open
In his rough hands, in his callused feet, and in his side.
As glorious sunlight parts the clouds,
Red rivers of divine love run down
Forming pools of affirmation on the ground,
And Francis falls so deeply in love
All over again.

- Maria de la Motte

Pick Up The Pen
And WRITE!

Walking the Walk

In nightly walks, neither deskbound
nor drawn into gawking
by profligate light,
I languidly entertain
in idling brain
vague hosts of ethereal thoughts.

By starlight and lamplight
ghosts of ideas gleam
hints of brilliance-
theorems almost glimpsed,
bold paths to resolving the war.
Half pints of poetry
pour into the brain;
bright flash in the pan
flees before I can finger it...

None of this will concretize
or survive the return to my
study,
the chance to write anything
down.
The millstone grinds
over fairy dust- all one can ask,
I suppose, from a walk on the
town!

- S. Jane Russell



- "Round and
Round She
Goes...",
Marie Gamis



The Question

When darkness falls above the earth gone sleep,
I feel a tingling feeling crawling up
My spine and so I rise up off my bed
Look out at starry blanket draped on us,
Try to think why God took this black cloth and poke
Holes tiny and countless, white dots for us

To view the heavens deep and wide beyond
Our wildest dreams. Since now you know the stars
Purpose, this I ask you, my friend: since God
All-knowing, gave us eyes to see then why
Did we only get a peep-hole at space?

- Powell Latimer

The Genealogists

To find them you must enter the library
At night, and descend the dark stair
That at first apperas to lead nowhere
But leaves you at last face to face
With a door. Open this door with care.
You will not want to disturb them,
Sitting in dim rows, eyes gleaming
Blue-green from their microfilm dream.
And you, with your preposterous ancestors
And creaking shoes, are the interloper here.
But if you are humble, they will tolerate
Your descent, and allow you to stare
Over their shoulders upon the austere
Screens. You will wonder what and who
They are searching for, hunched over
As if in prayer, in silent posture before
Their purring machines. You may wish
To inquire, perhaps, of the frail woman
In the rear, whose frosted hair glimmers
Like an elegiac star. She will smile at you
And whisper, in a voice age has chided
To cracked ice, her Byzantine lies.
These are the genealogists, and after all,
Cannot really tell us why there are here,
Staring at ship manifests, court minutes,
The simulacra of the dearly departed,
Reduced into microscopic negatives
Whirling like atoms of antimatter.
So I warn you, do not touch this woman
Or you will both disappear with a flash
Into that black hole where the future
Becomes an x-ray of the broken past.

-Donald Beagle

Untitled

The sun sets
a raindrop falls
my conscience at work
everything seems so
peaceful.

-Colby Dollar



-Erin Morrison



-"Passing Place," Jason Clark

The Bringer

He is ripping the veil, and the sacred skies fill with anger.

He becomes the bringer, becomes what the stories said.

He carries with him companions made of war and apathy.

His good intentions melt with the rising tides.

He sings the song, the bloody melody they told of him.

Standing by the sea, time washes his humanity away.

He waits in the world with indifferent eyes

As people build around him walls of fable and lie.

The sands sweep away beneath his feet

The world around him is hollow and sad

He spreads his hands and releases his frustrations.

War coils and breaks among the world

The walls fail and fall as he calls them.

Clean, away from the walls he walks across the sands

He seeks a place away from the melody, away from the land

Alone he finds peace with his companions two less.

He becomes the tides, the winds at ocean sides

Walking the sands, as he calls them.

-Sara Jordon

Find a Creative Outlet

- Patrick Sutton



My So Weary- Beginning of a Day

My so weary view from the top today
Looks briefly like a double red pin stripe.
On the lines is where they limply lie,
A cold place where wee boys warp to wee men.
These wee men see what should never be seen,
For they can no longer hear the bright lights.
Mother Mother where is my dear Mother?
Popping Zinging Striking Burning Bloody.
These wee men then must turn to stony men.
Real men, cloudy eyes no matter the subject.
Home, but still ever there, tentatively there.
Real pebbles are now different stones.
Warm skin, cold eyes, down on his scarred knees.
End of man, Beginning of a day.

-Amanda Marie Frentz

Out Here

All the lights are out. Even the stars lie,
Pale memories burned up a million years ago.
Darkness palpable flows in from Mexico,
Blackens the eternal landscape, and leaves
Us high and dry. You know this music
Better than I, this playful larceny of
The emotions, this mummery of the
Old high ways of love. Outside the wind
Picks up, then dies, confused too
About the way of things, wondering,
As I wonder, if true motion is possible
Or just a trick of perspective, peripheral,
Wishful thinking behind an attractive eye.
You, of course, will never say,
For that is your nature, yet truths
Will have their way, work gradually
To the surface, apply another layer
To these rocky remnants which surround us,
That way of things which will not say
If you and I ever spoke at all,
Or simply exhausted our days.

-Dr. Russel Fowler



WEY YOUR DISTRACTIONS WORK FOR YOU!

Stag

Standing alert in dawn's misty haze
Movement flashes between the gray trees
Twitching nostrils warn of approaching
Wolfpack! The stag instinctively flees
Head for the road, abandon the dark woods
Running alone exposed to the wild
Stag has no herd to warn or protect him
Keeping alive- such a perilous task.

Distant ridges and traverses repeat themselves
Reassembling patterns of rust-colored earth
Puddles of last night's rain in the humus.

From a high ridge he monitors the city's expansion
Conquest of nature in development's name
Between the pothole and cracks in the pavement
The earth breaks free, splendid oasis for the weeds
The living cry out in the stillness of sleep
As the first frost paralyses the country
Songs of preparation from indigenous wildlife
As autumn sneaks through the wood like a thief.

- Michael Lillard

In Our Own World

In our own world
lying in a field of daisies
with the tall grass
tickling our noses
and butterflies gliding
above us.

The smell of rain
in the air
as the sun
sashays behind a cloud
veiling herself
in a cloak of
shadowy gray.

Droplets of water
progress to the earth
before colliding
in little pools
around our feet.

We dance
as the rain baptizes us
purifying
making us ready
to face the world
once more.
- Cindy Campbell



- Jenny Rahilly

Utility Trumps Aesthetics, Again

New loss from last winter's ice storm:
guys with chainsaws
rise in cherry pickers,
hack off healthy limbs
that dare overhang too closely
precious power lines.
Every branch within thirty feet of a line
must go, Duke Power decreed.

Ancient giants maimed,
mutilated,
pull away aghast
with their fingers burned.
How long can they lean
like that, lopsided
till they topple
in total defeat?

It would cost too much
to bury the lines.
This way we only pay
the beauty and grace of
our street,
a pittance indeed
against priority
flow of light and heat.

-S. Jane Russell

- "Kitten Love," Nora Fleming





-Erin Morrison

Sharing Shakespeare

I sit outside alone on a beauteous day
Basking in serene solitary sun.
Proclaim to nature words of Shakespeare's play
Reading out loud, yet reading to no one.
Sweet words go out from classic work of art
Happily join with silence all around.
Yet what can be this loneliness of heart,
Among such beauty, with such classic sound?
Brown butterfly upon my page alights,
Sucking sweet nectar from the masterpiece.
Delicate creature pauses from its flights
Like me, upon great works it wants to feast.
Heaven-sent insect changes loneliness
Into surprise and joy to be so blessed.

-Katinka Evers

Untitled

The morning sweat
of gods
cut through the clouds
like cold lightning
and rained down
upon my glowing face
cooling my world and
causing my head
to fall with
the weight of my
thoughts.

-Jay Smith



LOSE YOURSELF IN A BOOK!



- "Soul Gazing," Jason Clark

Contributors

Michael Lillard attended BAC in 1990-91, then transferred to UNC-Greensboro where he graduated in 1993. He currently lives in Westchester County, NY, where he works at the Business Library at Columbia University and is the drummer for the band Tortuga.

Nora M. Fleming was born and raised in Savannah, Georgia. She is a senior history major and a pre-law minor at Belmont Abbey College. Nora belongs to the Student Ambassadors, Student Government Association, Abbey Chorus, Senior Council, and a Resident Assistant.

David Neipert is an Associate Professor of International Business Studies at Belmont Abbey College who often teaches summer terms in Alberta, Canada, where his photograph was taken.

Donald Beagle is Director of Library Services at Belmont Abbey College. His poems have appeared in *Carolina Quarterly*, *Blue Unicorn*, *Lake Superior Review*, and other journals.

Mike Hood is an Associate Professor of English and Director of the Great Books program at Belmont Abbey College. His stories have recently appeared in the *William and Mary Review* and *Knight Literary Journal*.

Amy E. Heishman is a graduating English major at Belmont Abbey College.

Colby Dollar is from Atlanta, Georgia. She a freshman biology major at Belmont Abbey College. Her hobbies include painting, sculpting, and writing poetry and short stories.

Powell Latimer is the son of Jenny Latimer, Director of the Academic Resource Center.

Sr. Jane Russell is an Assistant Professor of Theology at BAC.
Erin Morrison is a junior at BAC.

Patrick Sutton is a graduating biology major at Belmont Abbey College.

Jason Clark is a 2002 Abbey Alumnae and currently resides in Lincolnton, North Carolina

M. Jay Smith is an Abbey Player at BAC and lives in Gastonia, North Carolina.

Amanda Marie Frentz is a graduating English major from New Orleans, Louisiana.

Marie Gamis graduated from the Abbey in 2002 and is currently residing in Charlotte, North Carolina.

Bernie Fagarang is a sophomore at BAC.

Maria de la Motte is the daughter of Dean and Karen de la Motte. She is the assistant editor of her high school literary magazine.

Cindie Campbell is a junior at BAC. She is currently majoring in psychology and minoring in English. She plans to earn her doctorate in psychology, but literature and writing are her passions.

Russell Fowler is a Professor of English at BAC. He chairs the English department.

Sara Jordan is a junior at BAC, majoring in English and minoring in philosophy.

Abloyou Sam Marzar is a graduating senior.

Carrie Perrine graduated from BAC in Dec 2003.

Michelle C. Pazzula is a junior business major from Lincolnton, North Carolina. She loves traveling and spending time with family.

Agora is published by students every spring at Belmont Abbey College. Next year, submissions of fiction, prose, poetry, short plays, photos, and art paintings or sketches can be submitted during the submission round in September.

Submitted works must be submitted in duplicate. A cover sheet containing a name, address, telephone number, and a brief biographical profile along with the titles of submissions must be included.

Annually, the Jean S. Moore Award will be awarded by the editorial board to the top literary submission. Beginning this issue, an additional art award, the Creative Pulse award, will also be awarded annually. Winning entries will receive a prize of fifty dollars and be recognized in the *Agora*. Notification will be in mid-April.

For more details, write to:

Agora Editor
Campus Box 6
Belmont Abbey College
100 Belmont Mount Holly Road
Belmont, North Carolina 28012-2795



THE AGORA
wants YOUR
SUBMISSIONS



**Agora
2004
Vol. 38
Belmont Abbey College**

**All small pen and inks
created by
Amanda Marie Frentz**