

2008

Ink Waves
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INK WAVES

A Collection of MSOE Student Creative Writing

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2008

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Milwaukee School of Engineering

www.msOE.edu/academics/academic_departments/general_studies/



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Beleaden Soul

Kieran Easter

How should I feel when they leave,
When they pass onwards
Towards roads brighter and higher,
To where the air is cleaner and their vision clearer?

Should I feel angry at them for leaving me behind?
Should I feel sad that they'll never look back?
Should I feel happy that they've succeeded like so many before them have not?
Should I be feeling lost and confused as I do now?

I look at the tracks they left behind,
The traces that they were here,
The proof that they were beside me,
And I wonder what I could have done, so that the tears I feel could run free.

The words I wished I'd said,
The time I wished I could have spent,
The smiles I could have shared,
The feelings I wished I had.

I feel as a shell, cold and uncaring,
Empty as time crawls forward and unmoved by the passing of heavenly spheres,
As I look upon the glossy and mirrorlike surface,
That reflects the beclouded eyes and unfeeling expression on my face,
Seeing the tears being held back and not knowing why they do not run free,
As I read the names frozen on the surface and remember who they might have, could
have been to me.

I turn away to continue to trod the cold, dark trail, leading ever downward,
As the night continues to gather and my fears mount,
I wonder where they all could have gone,
Whether their path was any brighter or theirs were as bleak as mine.





Blood
Emily Knowlen

I recoil at the sight.
Blood spurts. I can feel its hot stickiness.
Sweat. Dirt. The stench of war and hate.
Mindless pain. Insanity. How do you fight the terror?
Vile control. Power. Twisted.

My mind returns to the scene.
Grit. Debris. Rubble.
Intermittent gun fire.
It's like the sirens you ignore in the city. Commonplace.

Stumbling. Tired. Scared.
Proud. Angry. Honorable.
And it's all just a movie.

I turn from the screen to look at something comforting.
His eyes are still on the show.
He rubs my hand in response to my quiet search for reality.
My reality.
Comfort, warmth. Or cool if I want it. Quiet. Noise. Whatever I please.

Equations and terms pound at my mind again. Finals week.
A good week though...I voted yesterday.

Voting. Elections. Politics.
Fluff. Inane babble.
Words tossed to the masses.
Bread to buy them over.
Scandal raised now, for their entertainment.

Bread and circus. Hmm. I've heard of this before.

Comfort. Finals. Voting. Politics.
Privilege with pomp.
People always talk about it, but do they ever really think?
Blah, blah, blah... *my* rights, *mine*, *mine*, *mine*.
Who said so? Who *made* it so?

Because it's *true*. We *do* have rights and privileges.



Saying. Making. Hmm.
Politicians. Talkers.
Citizens. Doers.

No, no. Not all politicians are simply talkers. And not all citizens are doers.
Remember the masses scarfing their bread?

Bread. Food. Body.
Blood.

“Stop the blood flow!”
Yes, put pressure on that wound. If you just sit by and watch it, they’ll die!
Pressure. Pressure. More pressure!
Sew it up. Now bandage it.
Take care of it now, too.
It’s going to hurt awhile, but if you treat it right, it *can* be whole again.

Treat. Do.
Citizens.

Citizens who serve. Troops.
Troops do.

Troops treat the wounds. They *get* wounds as they treat the wounds.

Wounds. Blood.
Comfort, where are you?
Hold my hand again. Put your arms around me.
The arms you put around your sister before she left.
Before she became one of the troops.
Before she became a doer.
A doer who treats wounds, gets wounds, gives wounds.
Sometimes you have to make a wound to heal one.

Healing. Happiness. Home. Heart.
All such lovely words...not fluff and babble...truth we live by.
What we defend.
We fight insanity. This insanity loathes what we love, what we live by.

Crazed cowardice.
Covering with their innocent.
Creating more zealots.
Children confused.



A selfish cult.
What is valued?

They loathe what we love, what we live by.
Our constant cries for “individual expression!” and “exercising my rights! – my freedoms!”

They do not value the individual,
The intrinsic importance of freedom - life, liberty...

What are these things?
They are what holds us together.
Us. America. Citizens. Doers.

Freedom...
Life...
Liberty...

They are what holds US , the United States, together.
United. Unison. As one...

Life. Liberty.
Love.

Family. Friends.
Freedom.

Health. Happiness.
Home.

Bread. Body.
Blood.

I do not recoil at the sight.
It spurts, but I cannot feel its hot stickiness...
Because someone saw it, someone felt it...*for me.*

I honor those who give their lives in service daily for my life. Whether they are on the front lines or here at home, recovering from injury, or prepared to go out again.

I honor all those before them who have been doers.

I honor our troops.

I honor our men and women and children who have fought for a cause to make America what it is and defended what it stood for.

I honor those who backed Martin Luther King, Jr.



*I honor the suffragettes who fought for my ability to vote.
I honor the many immigrants who left everything to start anew and fully embrace this young country America.
I honor the families who sadly fought each other to end slavery and to maintain a truly United States, with certain state rights.
I honor the slaves who grew our country, and who, when freed, fought the daily battle to be truly treated equally.
I honor the hardy settlers who acted on their adventurous spirit, in hopes of a new start.
I honor the Native Americans who defended their homes, or who peacefully welcomed strange men in.
I honor those who endured terrible times.
I honor those who were revolutionaries, who accomplished a dream that was freedom, life, and liberty, in so many forms.
I honor the Pilgrims who had the gumption to take on a dangerous journey and who were willing to learn from the native people.*

*I honor all those who resisted the “poor me” attitude and decided to fight when necessary, in various forms, for what they, as people, deserved.
I honor all those who fought to uphold the American dream, those who attained it, and those who continue to maintain it.*

Thank you.



*Breathe Deep
Emily Knowlen*

*I'd forgotten what it meant to breathe
To feel your skin, to enjoy your warmth
Your lips so sweet, seeking mine. Slow and sensual, sweeping the shapes of my
slender
form*

*I'd forgotten what it meant to feel
To inhale your scent, to take in your body
Your hands so tender, touching me. Tough but talented, tempting the tastes of my
growing desire*

*I'd forgotten what it meant to see
To love your mind, to revel in your changes*

W

Your heart so careful, curing mine. Kind and caring, cutting the curses from my
broken
self

I'd forgotten what it meant to love
To watch your life, to admire your growth
Your feet so steady, saving me. Strong and striving, searching the stars for your
wholeness as man.



A Cruel World's Pity

Ryan Haas

may the world take pity
on a young man's soul,
as he waits for his lover
to come back home,
may the world take pity
on a young man's soul,
as he lives his life
wondering where she is,
and may the world take pity
on a young man's soul,
as he wonders if she's happy,
for he won't take pity on himself,
he'll wrack his mind
and tear through his body,
looking for answers he'll never find,
answers to questions he doesn't know,
questions he's asked himself a thousand times,
questions that will take him to his grave,
so may the world take pity on a young man's soul
for the rest of him is doomed forever.





Cupid's Arrow
Ryan Haas

Standing chained to the wall
I sit and wait,
As you take aim,
My chest laid bare,
A target painted
across my heart,
I dare not look up
For fear of you,
For fear of you realizing
That which you are doing
As thy fingers hold taunt the bow
As your eyes, warm as ever,
Sight down the barbed shaft,
You take aim and let fly
And as you let go and our future lets loose
Just maybe I'll look up
And stare into your eyes
So you can see before it's through
Just what you have done
Maybe you'll shed a tear
As your aim strikes true
Maybe you'll cry out,
Or maybe nothing,
Or maybe I'll not look
Waiting till the barbs set inside me
So when you see what it is you've done
And try to retake your shaft from my heart
The wound will be torn asunder
Never to heal,
Never to close,
Always and ever
A reminder to all,
To keep one's shirt on
And never turn one's back
Maybe you'll move on,
Maybe you'll cry and try to take it back,
Maybe I'll haunt you,
Till the day you confess and long after still,
Always a reminder of what you have done

W

Of what you did,
All said instances,
And all said thoughts,
I stand yet still,
Chained to the wall,
My chest laid bare,
Thy target still brazened across my chest,
Your bow still taunt,
Your aim still true,
Do I look up,
Or do I not,
Not I think,
Let's see what shall happen,
If you do what you set out to do,
Let's see where it takes you,
And in what shape it leaves me and my heart,
Let's see how you cope once the barbs are set,
Let us see what shall happen,
Let us see...



Escape
Ryan Haas

staying sane through my music
through my dreams,
through my feelings,
keeping me awake
letting me feel my soul
as it fades to black,
far too many memories
for too many feelings
feelings too strong to deny,
too strong to ignore,
overwhelming my senses
turning the happiest moment
bleak and black as night,
i escape to my dreams,
i escape to my music,
i sit in my true corner
that i know all too well



and i remember how she came,
 an angel from afar
 reached out her hand
and made me feel once more,
 pushed back the darkness
and made me whole once more,
 back now to my music,
 back now to my corner,
 huddling under my light
 escaping as best i can,
 to survive,
 to endure,
to suffer the darkness evermore.



Feathers In the Wind
Hollie Deitelhoff

 The jokes we have, the tales we tell,
 show that we're unique.
Because we carry our own tune, and march to our own beat.
 Because we know what to say to subsidize the pain.
 Because we're common with no weakness.
 Because we play the game.
 Because we laugh, because we cry,
 because we're not afraid.
 Because we know each other,
 and the memories that we've made.
Because we have connections that build up what we are.
 Because we trust each other we are set above the bar.
Because we care we're always there to help each other out.
 Because true friends are hard to find
 and harder to be without.
 But because we have each other,
 there is one thing to be said;
"Life can be a struggle, but it's great to have a friend."





Green Bean
Ben Wheeldon

My girl and I it was love at first sight
It was late at the library
She was turning out the lights
I saw she'd been reading
Food magazine
On the cover full glossy
Was a can of Green Beans

I get weak in the knees
At the sight of Green Beans
Take all your pinto, kidneys,
Limas, and greens
But for all you lovers,
You know what I mean
When the knees go weak
You're in the presence of green Beans

My mind in a whirl
I had to talk to that girl
"Jolly Green Giant..."
I stammered and stopped..
She said with a smile
...french cut green beans.
I said "tell me no more,
Will you be my Queen?"
She said "Only if you like it
'Ala Green Bean."





I Find Answers to the Real Life Questions

Colin Swetman

Why do people go here?

What makes people stay?

Why would anyone stay in a place that makes them miserable?

Does anyone think of what they are missing?

The crucial step between high school and real life when people grow, meet new people, go new places, live out the 'college life' and make lifetime decisions has been replaced.

It is told to be a place of achievers and leaders.

Before entering the gates it seems to be a place of growth, and struggle with great rewards.

Once inside, the walls seem lonely. People inside are aware of the rigid system and it conforms them.

This place keeps you inside; if the course is to be deviated from there are consequences to be met.

People here find their escape.

The escape is anything that takes you away from the madness of the system.

Some people choose the social events, team sports, video games, or just hanging out with friends.

Some people choose to escape with the 'college life'.

There is no problem with the 'college life'.

It is only when a person chooses to over indulge in the 'college life' that complications occur.

People drive themselves insane to keep with the program, but there is only so much a person can take.

The system picks out the underachievers and turns up the heat.

People leave out of anger, and defeat.

But I realize that this is a place where people must make life decisions.

Some people go to college to go live out the 'college life.'

And some people go to college for a college degree.

Some go to college as a step from high school to 'real life'.

And then there are those who choose to sacrifice the 'college experience' to make a future in the 'real life'.

It is a lot of work to make a future but those who plan ahead are rewarded.





I Think I'm the Villain

Jared Blayney

Every story has its hero.
While fending off the darkness, they inspire us to be better than we are.
Yet there is someone waiting for them to falter.
We always keep that cynicism in our hearts that nobody is perfect.
We yearn for evidence that these heroes are exactly like us.
Real people make mistakes, and heroes are no different.
We choose to bathe them in a glory of something beyond purity.
These people deserve our praise. I'm asking for acknowledgement of the misguided.
The one left out because of his attributes of morality.
Our distinction lies in the ambition of the individual and the objectives in his heart.
Equality and honesty go with the good guys to benefit the whole.
The bad guys hold self preservation and ultimate aspirations as top priorities.
There is no bad quality, yet we associate some with evil people.
Displaying courage while being in a position of weakness is heroism.
Yet confidence without weakness is often a characteristic of villainy.
Comic villains have some of the strongest attributes that make people superior.
The pursuits of their goals are plagued with qualities deemed to be evil.
By their treacherous actions, we see the intentions of the rogue as villainous traits.
All qualities are great but you cannot embrace them all.
The good guy is fair and righteous, but he doesn't have the strength to do whatever it
takes.
With this strength the villain looks ruthless and sick, even though his outcome
benefits the world.
Idle stances cause casualties. Stagnant verdicts bleed resources.
We criticize those who make quick decisions while not considering our eternity of
judgment.
People don't look criminal when the ends justify the means.
It is not ours to decide whether the journey or finale were virtuous.
Intention is nothing without resolution.
What is right does not make it the best choice.
Wrongs in morality can make rights towards humanity.
If you have any sort of conscience, you'll know what is good and evil.
Cleaning the earth of a few diseases;
It doesn't make you right, but it doesn't make you wrong either.
The real test of a hero is knowing when the greater good will be served by evil deeds.
I just hope you have the foresight and fortitude to do the wrong thing, when the right
is just around the corner.





Innocently Mature
A poem based on Chapter of Candide by François-Marie Arouet de Voltaire
Crystal R. Vertz

In Thunder-Ten-Tronckh, what splendors lie
Beauty and beauties, a sweet taste for eyes
The grandeur would spoil one's mind
A life of splendor, a life too kind

A fair, young girl went walking one day
In bushes, discovered two adults at play
A man and a woman well known to her
Doing as adults do; the bushes did stir
Her professor and maid in a lesson
Caused her mind to whirr where she stood, stunned
She did not quite know of what had occurred
She did not know repetition would be so absurd

After dinner, the next night she decided to share
What she learned at those bushes; what caused her to stare
With a young lad, as innocent as she
Little did they know what was shortly to be

A drop of a kerchief, an eager retrieval
The holding of hands, surely not evil
An emotional kiss of one of them, leading to lips
Enlightened their eyes, and busied their fingertips
When her father then came upon the young two
Banished the boy with a kick, after love's debut

For fondling the Baron's daughter after a tender kiss
Is something of decency he shouldn't have missed
The boy pondered, quite puzzled of his recent action
Then longed for that place of such peaceful satisfaction.





Life's Soap Opera
David Beasley

The life as we know it
The way I look at it

The way I see it, well,
Let me tell you....

It's just like daytime television
Why?
Let me explain,
Pay close attention and listen

As The World Turns
Many things have been changing
Throughout the Days of our Lives

Civil rights,
Supposed to build us up
Untie the Knots Landing

Taking us to Another World,
However, do we really see it?

It's still the "izms" and itises" that still exist
It has been, way before what Don Imus did!

No matter where you go,

It's not so sunny in Dallas or Santa Barbara,
Nor Melrose Place, where the Young remain Restless

Despite the things that happened then,
Many are still fighting to get out of the figurative cubicle

Though aren't we, the people, created equal
Bold, and Beautiful?

I'm so glad there have been so many that have
Enabled so much and paved the way

When things weren't so bright



They made a way to be our Guiding Lights

Getting many out of the General Hospital
Expanding their One Life To Live

To continue to do so for all, I must say that

We must continue like Dr. King and
So many historic voices did then,

Stay motivated, walking in his footsteps and marching on
Maintaining our inner Passions



Oops

Holly Deitelhoff

Oops it escaped!! The voice in my head; it ran out the door and over the edge.
I screamed for help, but with not avail, the voice from my head was pouring the hail.
It cursed the world for the pain it inflicts, for violence and madness and constant
conflicts.

I try to catch up, but my tongue runs away, telling the world the things I won't say.
It talks of the tortures and mishaps in life, offering the world something other than
strife.

I know I remember it mentioned that, there needs to be medical, for after the fact.
It ranted; it raved and cried about, no gain for the suffering, no reasonable doubt.
My voice is so angered from not being heard, it has no boundaries, no exceptional
word.

The voice knows the upsets that drive me insane, and curses the world for causing my
pain.

I can't make it stop, the voice in my head, it has to get out it has to be read.





Our Heroes

Jeremy Kundert

The strong, the brave, the loyal stand.
Standards for freedom and right.
Protect the weak with heart and hand;
They fight and win for those afar;
They bear the day, the ghastly night.
We won't forget, for heroes they are.



Plague and Prosper

Jared Blayne

I wake fumbling from sleep, yearning for the sun,
Bright awake, atop a knoll of cascading blossoms.
A wonder of dazzling white flames dancing before me.
Vast sheets of rippling radiance, their light blinds.
I am their audience and their protector, their faithful keeper.
Different am I from them in all ways and swallowed in their midst.
A breeze comes inward toward their center and I being their core.
As the draft melts to hollow voids I knelt to touch their splendor.
Their conviction that I being their guard provoked their inward bow.
And before my touch, a dire stifling of hearts cried out in ill despair.
From my caress a fetid disease breaks my sight and the light had shown its last.
I stand to wonder if the creeping death will ever cease.
The jeweled petals that once sheen withered and collapsed in rumbling waves.
The majestic race that ruled so proudly were caved and wrought with ash.
The earth heaved up and exhaled a cloud of dismal smoke.
Far from sight the blackness lashed and scraped and grasped for more.
Once done with light, the night rocked and galloped for more blood.
The tidal swell arced up and crashed back toward my post.
I mean to shield myself from the raging torrent but feel I warrant worse.
In my quaking heart I witness the horrid wonder of what I wrought.
And now the storm dropped crashing and engulfing my summit perch.
Destructive silence. I welcome another blast to this bleak tranquility.
Cradled in the escaping dust a milder stillness soothed.
Seeing emptiness, I wish I had not eyes, and I weep them out.
Glistening sparkles splash ashes and echo on eternal.
Planting gentle ripples grows something glorious and fresh.
Their number is no more, but their value far more grand.



Both brighter and unending, they were greater than the last.
True art lies in the journey, proven by their past.
Illustrious as they are, they have no goals in sight.
In that thought I welcome their curiosity and bow as if to serve.
I remain their trusted protector and they my enduring audience.
To my disgrace their race had run, and through my privilege they start anew.



Silence
Hollie Deitelhoff

Walking away from pain and fear you find only loneliness and sorrow.
To know this you must once have been there, and in order to be there, you know that
pain hurts like no other feeling.
It hurts like a knife twisting in your gut, or like the falling of the leaves making the
trees bare in the fall.
To know the hurt you must also know that sometimes the pain is so strong you can
barely move, leaving you buried in your despair.
Often without even knowing it, you walk into something thinking that it will help.
Then once you are there the world completely turns and traps you making you feel
like you should stay, like you are important.
Putting chains and cords on you, stopping you from where you want to be, or where
you feel you should be going.
At the same time clouding your vision, hiding the truth.
You walk alone looking for someone who knows what you are talking about but you
are afraid to talk yourself, so you stay hidden.
Only behind the ink and points do you find comfort, but you know the world around
you relates, even though we don't talk.





What Really Goes On
David Beasley

It's been a while since the last time I wrote
The last time I expressed myself

And what goes on, better yet what is going on
Been existing and what still exists

I'm struggling, and at times, well I must admit
I just want to just throw it all away and quit

So many things on my mind
It is so hard to keep up with

They come and go away
I can't get a firm grip and catch it!

I'm walking on thin ice
You can say that I'm slipping
When it seems like I'm out,
I somehow find my way back in

Can I win?

Enough with this rhyming
Though perhaps it shows my fine alignment
In tune with good timing

That I need to stay ahead
Focus on what I need to do

Even when some of my dreams
Have not come true

I proved them wrong
Making them into reality

Trouble constantly follows me
And his close friend insanity

If they happen to get to me?
It's all misery, sorrow and depression



Hand on the Bible
Nothing but the truth, my confession

I'm passing this test of life
Learning all my lessons

I am all alone
I am my legend

As long as I'm still breathing
I guess, it is far from ending

So come along, walk with me
Pay close attention!



Who Do You See?

Ryan Haas

look me in the eye
and tell me what you see,
which part of me,
what side have I shown you,
am I the quiet nerd,
am I the tall freak,
am I the jock,
the dumb linemen,
or the odd volleyball player
am I a mystery,
am I no one,
the friend of all groups
the one who might not approve
but will never be a rat,
am I the quiet poet
who writes and wishes for death,
or am I the troubled soul
who writes because he can't see past the next day,
am I a wanabe



or am I the real deal,
am I friend,
am I foe,
have I bared my soul for you
or do you only see my shell,
am I a tough guy
set to live life dealing and receiving pain,
can you see where my loyalties lie,
can you see me at all,
if you can please tell me
for too many sides and too many faces,
that is me
I'm an artist
I'm a jock
I'm a scientist
and a grease monkey,
I'm a chef
I'm a college student
and a philosopher,
I work with my hands,
I work with my mind,
I lived with my heart
and I'll die my own way,
I had friends in every group
no matter where I turned there was someone
but now when I'm asked to stand alone
and I look in the mirror,
I see myself but I don't know who I really am
so if you could
look me in the eye
and tell me what you see,
then perhaps,
just maybe,
I'll figure it out myself.





Breaking the Habit
Carlton Davis

It was a bright-dark day; it was bright because it was day and dark because of the evil that was about to transpire. The day you ask? It was Thanksgiving; a day in history that is celebrated many a year, but no longer by me.

The weather outside was changing from a chilly autumn rain to an early winter freeze with the unforgettable smell of chaos in the air. Every time this kind of occasion comes about, all of my family members and I gather at my grandmother's private residence. My grandmother accurately resembles Ray's mom off of "Everybody Loves Raymond." She has both the looks and personality of that bothersome lady. The time is irrelevant in a situation like this, but dinner is about finally through. The turkey was dry like many other things at the table, including the humor. With there being no edible food on the table without chipping a tooth, my thirst took control of me and my judgment. There was no controlling the only two options offered; cranberry juice or wine. Being the ripe age of six, there was only one obvious choice. After about five cups, my intolerance for the food was cured. I was thrilled by the quality of the juice.

Dusk was approaching quickly as was a sudden urge to urinate. I believe I could have been diagnosed as having the ailment of "safe-toilet syndrome" as coined by Dr. Phil. For those lucky few who do not know what this syndrome is, the squeamish may be appalled. I don't feel comfortable using restrooms other than my own. Dr. Phil wouldn't suggest this practice because of the possible side effects. But what does he know? Back to my journey of destiny, I was ready to escape from the abyss of my grandmother's residence and make it home as dry as possible.

After quickly paying my final farewell, my grandmother realized the urgency of the situation. She told everyone that something was about to go down. So now I had spectators to witness my speed and agility. My rush out of the front door was uncanny and somewhat supernatural. Superman couldn't have done it better. I felt the briskness of the altered winter wind on my nose. My chubby cheeks were full with a grin of long awaited personal relief. The only obstacles in my way were the four step staircase down to the car, followed by the bumpy ride home. All odds weren't exactly in my favor. But in my mindset, the chance of failure was zero, nada, nyet, nunca, and nil. Flying past the front door finally, ahead of the pack, I ran the best I could given the certain circumstances. I galloped across the porch to the stairs similar to an antelope being chased down for a tasty feast, but I endured. As the stairs became clearer to my vision, my instinct told me that this mission of going in my own bathroom would not be interrupted.



Running down the staircase, I cleared the first step with the grace of a leaping gazelle; the second step had no symptoms of being altered or tampered with in any way conceivable by man or nature. The third step had a feeling of riskiness that gave me an adrenaline rush. The sharp bite of imminent danger gnawed deeper and deeper on my racing heart that something was going to take place. The moment I left the third step, my show was ready for the finale.

Finally, the moment I had been waiting for; the fourth and final step to give relief to my bladder. I stepped on the brittle stair, and an unforeseen force officially known as ice covered the very surface area where I had just contacted. My forward momentum stopped and reversed as I slipped hopelessly. My body was completely airborne at this point. I recall seeing the star filled sky and the sudden cross between my emotions and my unrelenting urge to urinate triggered an unfamiliar sensation. For the first time in my life, time slowed down long enough for me to realize that the adolescent thinking that had controlled me for the past six years had finally caught up with me.

The landing is something I would rather forget, but I will go into grave detail of my emotional and physical whereabouts. The warm sensation uncontrollably came forth with no hope of slowing it. How are you supposed to feel after creating yellow snow beneath yourself? Some people would call it embarrassing, but I really felt stupefied. The people I supposedly called my family fashioned a laugh that echoed louder and louder as my state euphoria came to an abrupt halt. The pointing and cackling of my grandmother is still vividly etched in my mind. The displeasure and embarrassment of the incident is ongoing to this very hour. This tragedy forever changed my perception of this world. I still keep that no longer soiled underwear as a reminder and somewhat as a trophy of my survival.

With this story of agony and defeat came two lessons that I still follow closely. Lesson number one is the hope of triumph with completion always comes with a consequence, either it be good or bad. In this case it was bad. The second and most significant lesson that I think everyone should follow is always listen to that crazy wizard that I call the Great Dr. Phil.





"Hana's Suitcase"

Hubert Bartosz

A few weeks ago, my son and I went to see the play "Hana's Suitcase." This very emotional play opens the viewers' eyes, as well as mine and my young son's, to senseless death, cruelty, and meaningless wars, but at the same time forces the viewer to think that it is not all hopeless as long as we strive to make a difference to correct this world's ills, past and present.

The play was adapted by Emil Sher from a true to life story based on Hana and George Brady's lives which was written by Karen Levine. The book made such an impact on Emil Sher that he decided to bring it to life on stage. It turned out to be a very powerful story about a 13-year old Jewish girl, Hana, from Czechoslovakia, who during the Holocaust went literally through hell on earth. Hana's family is torn apart, herself and her brother George are resettled to a ghetto in Terezin. There she tries to see her brother whenever she can, but that also ends, and she is sent on a railroad car to Auschwitz. On her way there, she is happy because she thinks she will get to see George, but when the transport arrives, she is sent to a gas chamber. Four months later the Soviets liberate the camp. We learn her story through a suitcase that had been sent to Fumiko Ishioka at the Tokyo Holocaust Education Center. The Holocaust Museum in Auschwitz sent several artifacts to Fumiko in order to promote an exhibit called "The Holocaust Seen Through Children's Eyes."

Watching this play, I came away with a desire to do something in order to keep Hana's spirit alive and never forget the senseless killing of one and a half million children during the Holocaust. The present day world keeps repeating the same mistakes of the past as we look at the suffering in Darfur, Iraq, Afghanistan, etc. The list goes on, and we (people--human beings) keep on perpetrating the same ills and indignities on others because of religion or cultural differences. "Hana's Suitcase" transcends time, race, religion and culture as we see it in the play which is set in present day Japan. Children and adults of a different culture and religion are so affected by Hana's plight and suffering that they are moved to act--to somehow reach out to others and change things.

I can identify with Fumiko Ishioka as the teacher at the Tokyo Holocaust Education Center says, "It's important to teach our children to create peace with their own hands." Having two sons, it is important for me to teach them to respect and honor other people's religions and cultural differences. There's no better way than to read, see, and discuss the play "Hana's Suitcase." It was good to see my son's reaction to the play, and his interest to meet and talk to George Brady (Hana's brother) after the play and his desire to learn more about that period in history. Seeing the play was just a beginning of his study of the Holocaust. I can teach my son about the ugly persecution of Jewish people only for the reasons of religious and cultural differences.



Just like Fumiko, I can teach him to learn from the past and never close his mind to differences. Fumiko says in the play, "A closed mind is like a wall." I will strive to teach him to keep his mind open when he encounters other cultures and religions, sometimes differences are very interesting and educational, and he just might grow from them.

It is important to study Hana's experience and compare that to similar situations in today's world. There are atrocities and genocide being perpetrated on people in Darfur, the former Yugoslavia, and Iraq. Countless numbers of people are being killed only because of their cultural or religious differences. We have to take Baruch Spinoza's words to heart when he says: "If you want the present to be different from the past, study the past." I also agree with George Santayana when he says: "Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it." That is also why I admire George Brady for overcoming the personal pain of losing his family and his beloved sister and having enough strength and will to go on the road at eighty-some years old and answer countless probing questions from children and adults about his past. He is doing that in hopes of making the viewers remember how ugly prejudice is and to make people think. He said himself that he really doesn't practice any religion and feels himself to be Czech. One of his sons is Catholic, another son is Buddhist, and his daughter is learning some of the Jewish traditions--this revelation from a man who was persecuted for being a Jew. By keeping his sister's memory alive, George Brady gives voice to Hana and the other 1.5 million children killed in the Holocaust for nothing more than being born Jewish. As Fumiko says in the play: "They were Jewish; that's all that mattered." Knowing about our past and learning from history will make us all better people.

Maybe it does take an emotional bullet like "Hana's Suitcase" or visiting the Holocaust Museum in Auschwitz and seeing a giant room filled with baby rattles, toys and tiny shoes to wake us up so we look at what is going on around the world and take some action to change something, anything for the better. Look at our past, apply the conclusions to our present lives, and strive to change the future for the better; after all, that is what Hana and George Brady would like us to do.





One's Hell is Another's Paradise...

Sean Howard

It's hard for you to see. The noise is almost overwhelming. You feel yourself being beaten from every direction. You smell an aroma in the air so foul you begin to gag. You feel like you might pass out at any minute from fatigue, injury or insanity. You shield your eyes and wish that it would end. Suddenly the noise dies, the pummeling ceases, and you feel better. You begin to open your eyes when the madness starts again. Doesn't sound like something you would want to experience, does it? Welcome to my world, the world of Heavy Metal shows.

To some, this might be an arena of hell, where the noise and physical abuse is too much. But for me, it's a place to release frustration and aggression, to enjoy seeing some of my favorite bands and to enjoy the music they play. Everything that happens during a show makes me feel like I'm in a special, personal haven. Music has an amazing power. It lets you draw on this power for as long as you need and never expects or asks for anything in return. It can take me from pure sadness or pure anger to an indescribable level of happiness. This occurred about a week ago, when I took one of my friends with me to a special concert. I knew what it would be like for me, but this person had never experienced anything quite like this before.

Very rarely do they occur, but new traditions arise in my world. There is a new one that has come about. This tradition occurs once a year now and is composed of hours upon hours of some of the best musicians and groups to get together and play music. It would be like Woodstock in the present day and age of metal. This event is called Gigantour. Some of the most well known bands play together all over the country, every night bringing entertainment and excitement everywhere that they stop.

My friend Brandon and I were going to this event – he was not briefed with the details of what the concert would be like. It was to be held at the Eagles Ballroom on the northern side of Milwaukee. The journey began at my house. He arrived already nervous at what he was about to face. I just thought to myself about how amazing this night was going to be. He was looking at me very unusually. He said he had never seen me smile like I was. I was already in sort of a trance-like state of mind, imagining the night ahead of me. I was wearing a Megadeth t-shirt. Megadeth was headlining for the show and is my favorite band. In addition to this were the torn up jeans, the Megadeth sweatband I wear around my wrist, another Megadeth bracelet I wore around my other wrist and beat up tennis shoes that looked like they had been worn for years. We got ready to go and our journey was underway.

The car seemed to tremble on the way there as we blasted the intricate guitar work through the speakers of the car. Another tradition in my world is playing the music you are about to see live, very loudly, before you even get to the show. I prepared



myself for what was to come; the ultimate collection of Thrash and Death metal bands to create the greatest Heavy Metal show ever. Brandon and I drove for about 10 minutes before we arrived at the metalhead infested arena--my hair was already tangled and all over the place looking like I had already been to a show from the head-banging that had occurred in the car. We parked and walked a few blocks, the sun still shining strong on a typical summer day in Wisconsin. We walked up the steps to what looked like a palace, a huge building already rumbling with music running through its walls. I marveled at this sight and Brandon just looked at it in awe. We anxiously waited in line for a ticket and stepped through the doors to what would become a truly amazing evening.

From the main hall room, we waited in line to get into the concert hall itself. The line to get in was full of people excitedly waiting to get in. We began to move and everyone roared in excitement. As we walked through the doors to the concert hall, a big transition of energy and light was made. Everything that a person knew of light was gone; you stepped into a world of darkness. This changes the person who exists in my state of mind. I become a different person; you have to in order to survive.

Brandon was looking around the place, scoping it out. His mouth was open looking at the huge stage at the front of an elongated oval room. The size was something to marvel at. He looked at the crowd and turned his head to me as if to say, "Are we going in there?" I responded simply with a nod and lead him into the sea of people that were talking and waiting for the music to start.

The most famous bands play towards the end of the show, while the newer bands play in the beginning. The first band that I really cared about came on after the first band: The Lamb of God, known for their brutal moshpit named the "Circle of Death." The Eagles Ballroom is shaped as a giant oval, with sidebars along the outside perimeter. The entire room is pitch black, with the exception of light for the bathroom and the stage lights. This moshpit makes the entire building shake. The band is playing their heavy, deathly riffs and pounding drums while the crowd makes a circle along the perimeter of this oval room. The inside of this oval is not for the faint hearted. Inside the circle of death, you had better be ready to defend yourself. The ultimate moshing experience begins! The circle begins to move, all in union, making the floor quake. On the inside, the scent of destruction fills the room. One quick guitar breakdown is all it takes. The inside of the circle is no longer in the shape it began in. Once you are in, you cannot get out. What begins so simply turns into a war. Bodies begin to be hurled into other bodies, fists and feet are going everywhere and anywhere, not caring where they are landing, and suddenly the music stops. The pit regains its composure and the band finishes its set with appreciation and exits off the stage. Brandon and I go to the side and get a couple of drinks, waiting for the next band to set up.



I start asking Brandon what his experience (his first experience) in the moshpit was like. He didn't even bother to respond verbally, but rather he threw me a disgusted look. Strangely enough, he had a smile on his face while he had this look of repulsiveness. He then said, "That was the craziest thing I have ever done in my life." I laughed and we walk over to the bathroom. The bathrooms were dirty, there were no paper towels, and it smelled of many mixed aromas making one pungent odor. Through the open doors to the bathroom we hear the crowd go loud and hear a loud voice on the intercom--O-Tep would have their turn on the stage.

O-Tep was another band that was known for their deep, screaming vocals. Only the interesting thing about it was that it was coming from a small, extremely cute woman in the center of the stage. The moshpit that occurs during this set is nowhere near what it was previously, but after a while your body just wants to quit. The lights are still flashing all over the place, the ground still trembling and bodies still doing what they can to show their appreciation for their favorite bands. An explosive and electrifying guitar solo begins and with the deep hit of three drums, their set ends.

Again, Brandon and I exit the floor and make our way to get a few more drinks. He is breathing heavily and looked like he was going to crash. He informs me that he would not be on the floor for the final set. I chug the rest of my drink, tell him to enjoy the show and start to trudge my way through the crowd once more. This time, I have to get as close as I can, for it is my favorite band, Megadeth, and I am not about to sit back for this one.

Every light in the entire ballroom goes off. Nobody can see anything – but still I go forward using bodies as a guide for making my way through. The smell of body odor and beer mixed with drugs fills the air. Every person you touch is glistening with sweat and you can feel it latch onto your skin. A hand grabs my body but I have no idea who it is – part of the thrilling experience. I break loose from the grip and still push forth; I would not be denied this privilege. The anticipation rises, the blood begins to flow, and the energy level once again rises. It feels like you had just arrived at the show again, like a renewal of energy. Just when it seemed no one could take anymore, the lights from the stage quickly come on and the crowd goes wild, watching the band make its way onto the stage. The crowd begins to move, swaying back and forth, the floor is packed solid. Finally I make my way through the last group of people and find myself in front of the rail, watching my favorite band, as close as I ever had.

A long sustaining, powerful chord from the guitar blares through the speakers. The guitar holds the note and lets it fade until it's almost inaudible. Then another chord fills the room. A quick and discreet drum session fills the room and the entire band starts to play. My favorite band playing in one of my favorite places--is paradise to me, worth every bruise and cut one gets. I hear a familiar sound – the first riff of one



of my favorite songs. I look around me and everyone is doing the same thing I am; playing the riff on the air guitar and headbanging. The strobe lights are going off, the colored lights flash around the room, the crowd goes insane and it begins again. The crowd moves again, fists flying, bodies crowd surfing above and the scents becoming stronger.

You feel like your lungs are about to burst being pushed against the front rail, being squashed from every person wanting to get as close as they possibly can. You already feel the bruises that have come from it. Suffocation enters your mind and you feel like you are going to die. Then another song begins, and it energizes you to an entire new level. This has been going on for over 4 hours; how can you deal with it any longer?

A world of despair and pain and utter ugliness for some is the experience which make me happier than anything else. Being in the presence of great musical entities and the amount of energy that is produced at one show is marvelous. There is no place I would rather be than at one of my favorite band's shows, where everyone has come for the same reason. I feel at home and nothing matters except the music and the "dancing" that occur. It's such a release of some of the negative aspects you feel in life; it's phenomenal. After the show ended and my body was on the verge of failing, my friend found me and asked, "How do you do this all the time?" With my hair in my face and sweat dripping down my forehead, I answered simply, "It's all about the music." And so it would seem: one's hell is another's paradise.





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Ink Waves is published by MSOE's General Studies Department. Designed to showcase students' literary talent and to encourage writing potential, Ink Waves attests to this department's belief that science and the arts can and do coexist. Students may submit writing of all kinds: fiction and nonfiction, poetry and prose, leisure-time writings and classroom assignments. Ink Waves is published every spring quarter. We accept submissions and inquiries at any time.

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- 2. In an email accompanying the submission, include your name, major, and year as they should appear with the submission if accepted.**
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