

INK
WAVES
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Ink Waves

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Abigail

Andy Hapka

In December of 76 an egg was formed in you

The egg was but one of two million
While your boo was but two

An egg that had to wait
For an eagerly awaited moment

It would take thirty years
Through the years it was waiting

A part of Abby
A dream to be

A daughter you always wanted
But disasters you had not wanted

As you grew
It was in you

Waiting, for the moment was not yet right
Hoping, for few are at the right time

In July of 04 it was time
Ours was joy at the time

The beautiful time had come
A real baby had been made

A baby to love with all our heart
A baby who did not have all a heart

A baby named Abigail
Also called Shmabigail

In October of 04 Abby too had two million eggs
For too many reasons two million would be none

For but a fortnight her heart beated
For but a fortnight our hearts hoped

Entrusted to us in March of 05
Entombed in April of 05

An earthly life in two weeks
An eternal life into eternity

Blue Dragon

Valery Meyer

Blue dragon soars high in the sky
Heart of passion burns hot as breath
The rider up astride his back
Her thighs cling tight to scale and sinew
Her heart too burns with fevered passion
Justice seeks she, to so many long denied
Her hair streams back, long, red, burning, flaming
Her hand and arm by love made strong
Truth, her sword, is held in scabbard
Faith holds leather breastplate strong
Together they fly, fierce and fiery
Wronged and pained they seek to save
Burning breath and burning passion
They take flight their world to save
Rider, dragon, fearsome pair
Yet deep love for life they share
To battle they dive, in full hope,
Tyrant, oppressor to destroy
They seek not thanks, nor reward
Theirs but hope for justice, peace and life restored
Blue dragon winging ever higher
Beast and rider's strength by passion fueled
Neither rest nor slumber seeking
Life restoring love share they

Divinity

Winston Douglass

All hail the King of Dreams!
Resting on his throne of leaves
In the house of the darkest fantasies
In the court of thieves
As they sing their revelries

All hail the King of Dreams!
All hail the Prince of Pain!
As he reads his poems
His promised lyrics given voice
And laid to rest in a shallow grave

As they sing their revelries
All hail the Prince of Pain!

All hail the Queen of Death!
Laying in her bed of satin
No more mirth for the damned
No more toils for the saved
As they sing their revelries
All hail the Queen of Death!

All hail the Court of Man!
All hail their pitiful power!
All hail the divine amongst them!
All hail their greatest achievements
As they burn, burn, burn
As tribute to the Divine.

Fall For You

Jhavontae “Von” Jones

"The best thing about tonight's that we're not fighting..."
On the other hand we're not talking, and I'm crying.
Darkness ensues, you left me, and stole my lighting.
And I've completely lost all will to go on trying.

"...Could it be that we have been this way before..."
She left, you left, they left, I'm left alone.
A corridor of bad memories, and one girl for every door.
And here I stand in this haunted house I call heart's home.

"...I know you don't think that I am trying..."
I know you don't hear the words I'm calling.
With you, just for a while, I felt I was flying.
And now you're gone, and I'm back to falling.

"...I know you're wearing thin down to the core..."
Love like acid, destroying everything I do.
I used to love to love you, and now tolerating you is a chore.
I wish I couldn't love, wish you never made me fall for you.

Firebreed

Winston Douglass

Bred in fire
Born in rage
Taught in anger
Baptized by fire

The truest heart she ever knew
Not one she found, but one she'd lose
A man, woman, it mattered not.
Her heart was the truest of the true

Bred in fire
Born in rage
Taught in anger
Baptized by water

They met on a Sunday morning
Outside the sanctum that held their hope
Unsure of the consequences of their actions
Unsure of what they had thought was true

Bred in fire
Born in rage
Taught in captivity
Baptized by water

They suffered thru, these tender souls
Peering thru the veils of what was
Contemplating what will be
And feeling that that was once forbidden

Bred in fire
Born in ecstasy
Taught in captivity
Baptized by water

They were so alone,
Alone in a sea filled with themselves
So shunned by others that they looked to
So welcomed by those that they dare not talk to

Bred in shadows
Born in ecstasy
Taught in captivity
Baptized by water

For once in a moon, a goddess is born
For once in a full moon, they are welcomed

What sorry souls, they say to themselves
That they hold fire to our will
Hold hatred to our love
Hold gold to our knowledge
And above all else, hold an invisible sword to our throats

Bred in fire
Born in rage
Purged by anger
Erased by man

Goddess

Valery Meyer

She dances for her tribe
This woman most in black
The coins upon her bosom
Catch light and draw me in
Her movements are as water flowing
Each one a lovely ripple
Her shape recalls our mother earth
A body voluptuous and full
She brings to life new meaning true
A heart that calls me near
Yet deep within her is a place
So dark and hidden still
Where fear and hurt are holding court
Distrust and cautions manifest
Within that life's short span
Much living she has done.
Much pain, much loss
Deep hurt and trauma
I would that I could make it flee
But life gives not such power
My only hope is love to give
And thus give to her safe harbor.
My Goddess is a woman strong,
Yet vulnerable and frail
Heart and soul I give to her
My body hers to wrack
This life to her in servitude
Would be a lovely task

Goodbye

Jhavontae "Von" Jones

omg OMG!!! just stop, please stop!!!
Everyone gets to spin the "Von" top.
Round. Round. Up. Down. Spin, spin, spin...POP!
Someday, some way, he's just gonna drop.

Tears fall, tears fall, everyone cries.
Bodies drop, hearts stop, everyone dies.
Scars, pain, hurt, blood eventually dries.
Casualties happen, and smoke eventually subsides.

No you don't love me. No you don't care.
I'm just another notch on your belt of despair.
My life crumbles to pieces, angels above are soaring.
If God created me for a reason, I'll be alive in the morning...

Hallowed Day

Winston Douglass

I hear the screams, on Hallowed Day
The young ghouls who live doth pray
To gods of science, and theories of the divine
To toast of promises left far behind
I hear them revel, I hear them scream
I hear them all, on Hallowed Day

I hear the cries, on Hallowed Night
What joyous pleasure and monstrous delights
The ghouls alive, their spirits in cans
It's as if all could be right again
I hear them curse what temperance brings
I hear them all, on Hallowed Night

I hear no one, in Hallowed Death
The screech of Medicine, the wails of technology
The cries of lost futures, the pleadings to god
The dead say nothing, and nothing to get
As Temperance bashes its eternal drum
All is silent, all is one

Home Straight

Edwards-Sawyer Effiong

Persuaded, I ploughed on a mile
Thro' teeming fields of pain;
My transfigured eyes
Honed in elements profoundly gay,
Searched exhumed mine lines,
Gathered up a sojourner's way amid the once elegiac sign that read:
Ten miles freedom ahead.

Letter To Who?

Jhavontae "Von" Jones

A pen, a pad, a head full of thoughts.
Of memories, dreams, and secrets I brought.
A handful of tears makes an ocean of cries,
And a heart without fears makes a soul of strong ties.

A man bruised and broken, by a long list of lies,
with a heart that's soft-spoken, soft screams, and hushed sighs.
What words would I say, if I could be alone with you today?
Would my flesh take my body?
Would my love make you stay?

Love me, love...I'm sorry! I am.
A broken man, is me, not worthy of your hand.
But I courted, and coaxed. I wooed and I loved.
I held your precious hand, now I'm left with the glove.

And now that my eyes are stained and bloodshot
I finally realize why they're soaked and they're hot.
The voice comes so clearly, all that's left is my nod.
My listless life, is still missing my God.

My fathers, they love me.
My mothers, they care.
My fathers bring bacon.
Moms cook and prepare.
My father protects us,
My mother nurtures us.

My daddy holds my mind
while mommy holds my hand.

Mommy keeps my balance,
Daddy gives me strength to stand.

Daddy teaches discipline.
Mommy teaches love.
Daddy brings me coat
and mommy shops for gloves.

Protected from the winter cold,
Sheltered from the pain.
Kept from all the hail and snow,
Defended from the rain.

But, alas, it's summer time,
Heat cuts through me like a knife.
Body broken with peace of mind
cuz pain is just a part of life.

Eyes on the cross,
Hands in the air.
Voice raised higher
than anything that passes there.

Love me father, love me son,
Love me spirit, please.
Peace of mind, place on my heart
As I fall on my knees.

Love Don't Live Here **Jhavontae "Von" Jones**

"You try and try, fail and fall, then fall and fail some more.
But inevitably, destructively, your heart ends broke 'n' tore"
"A cell, I build, no windows here, just walls and roof and floor.
And yet somehow, impossibly, someone creates a door."

"Get out! Get OUT!" I scream and shout, "I dwell in here alone"
"Is love here?" They ask, "Does gorgeous love, dwell in this home?"
"She left, she left, she ran away, it hurt down to the bone.
She took every poem, song, each book, and ev'ry tome."

"I hope she dies, I hope she fries, Hope she believes a million lies,
I hope her heart is broken to a million fragments, shards and knives.
to darts, to tatters, pieces and bits, and I hope she barely survives.
OH LOVE, damned love, you heartless wench, I pray birds gouge your eyes."

"She left me with a single gift, a gift thrown in my eye.
Some good came from the pain she left, and I'll save as time goes by.
She left a sacred, lovely gift, the inability to cry.
And so, a tear, I cannot shed, even after I shriek and die."

"Love used to dwell in here with me, but now she does no more.
She just got up, she packed her bags, she even took my door.
And so I slaved here, day and night, elbows and knees to floor.
And now, somehow, by furrowed brow, my walls became secure."

"So find this love, and tell her this. Say, I'm a better man.
'Cuz even aft she ripped me in half, I still find strength to stand.
She hurt, she lied, she tore me apart, piece by piece, by hand.
So, once again I say to you, Love dwells not in this land."

Midwinter

Valery Meyer

Midwinter night
God born of Goddess
Full Moon rises from the lake
A broad white road it makes
Shoreline rocks piled high
Beach of sand and stones
Bleak and barren strip of land
Frozen reeds, water, stems, grass
Desolation, isolation
Still within the cityscape
Yule has come
The cycle renews
Life's circle continues
God Sun, Goddess Moon
Peace and life
Hope and love
The die is cast
Magic is the lot
The book of Shadows
Becomes now My story

My Man

Melody Scrivano

Dark am I, someone see me
Shattered am I, someone fix me
Empty am I, someone fill me
Bitter am I, someone help me

Waiting, searching, longing for my Prince to come and wake me
To sweep me off my feet and to never let me go
To say that I am his and his alone

He takes me, He holds me, He molds me
Wrapped in his warm embrace
He lifts my head and sings to me face to face

My Man is a Warrior, defeater of every fight
My Man is captured by me, jealous for me, infatuated by me
How can I walk away?
Hold my hand, guide me, so that I will never be led astray

He dances with me and leads my feet
He smiles at me and listens to my heartbeat
He delights in my future and rejoices in my past
He actually thinks I'm perfect, though He can see right through my mask

He loves the sound of my voice
And catches all of my tears
Consumed with thoughts of only me
Blazing with the love that set me free

Dark am I, yet lovely
Shattered am I, yet Holy
Empty am I, yet filled in
Bitter am I, yet loved by Him

My Mind Unfiltered

Jhavontae "Von" Jones

What else can go wrong?
I challenge the universe, just to see how much my tear ducts refuse.
Broken and abused, need shelter and refuge,
but the world keeps breaking, crumbling.
Falling, mistaking, tumbling.

Life is taking turns on an icy road, and faking
courage....fearlessness in a world of fear,
ear-less-ness and I'm expected to hear.

Eye-less-ness means blinded-ness
and tears just make more pain.

I'm sprinting on frictionless ice,
to slow down means to die.
sobbing with these tearless eyes,
and I only wish to cry.

Tears means death to my resolve,
and that will kill my heart,
Impossible puzzle, no way to solve,
I'm still stuck at the start.

Blindly walking in the dark,
sadly falling down,
just take your love and pierce this heart,
the king of fools needs his crown.

A golden heart, and silver soul,
with skin not hot nor cold.
This life destructively takes its toll,
and truth I'm yet to hold.

I wish, I wish, for the golden eclipse,
That takes away my sight,
Almost as I wish, for the golden lips
That seeps away my might.

And she's not mine, and neither is she,
I'm faithful now, to only me,
I'm here to prove that I can be,
faithful to she, who's not faithful to me.

My tears will just waste away soon
they seep into the sand,
of the frozen desert at 8 o'clock noon,
and I try to remain a man.

I listen to music, I hurt and I bruise,
I watch television, I'm human like you,
Or at least I'm trying my best to be
just human, but you all won't allow me
to lead a life like normal folks do,
I want to be us, but you want to be you.

And I'm trying my best to just let you be,
but inevitably, when I'm almost free,
You tug on my heartstrings, and pull me again,
Am I enemy? lover? friend or boyfriend?

I'm done living by the rules of your world,
You lying, disloyal, incompetent girl!
You force me to love, and then you dismiss,
push me away, then retrieve with a kiss.

You've never loved me, I'm ashamed that I did,
believe you, and wish that we might have a kid,
Afraid of this life, but not fearing death
No life ever lived has been lived in regret.

My mind is unfiltered, unblocked, and unloved,
unlearned, unadulterated, and all that I love
has been torn from my grasp and ripped from my life,
so, go for the kill, my death should suffice....

No More Tears

Jhavontae "Von" Jones

As we sit down, on the ground to cry together
I realize that I haven't cried in forever.
Heaves and sobs shake me.
Sorrow and life take me.
But no matter what I do, no tears escape me.

And it seems that fact won't change now,
as I hold you in my arms on this open range ground.
I listen to the lyrics of this sad, sad song
and remember all the rights turned wrong.
I try to release emotions that I need all gone,
but my seasoned heart strings still stay strong.
and my stubborn heart strings, they still hold on.

So, no more tears rain from these eyes of mine.
Tear ducts welded shut, by eclipsed sunshine.
"Wait for it child, it's just not loves time."
Now's the time for pain. Lose love. Lose mind.

Like the cool nights rain on the hot, sand-formed place,
the cool, wet water would be a nice change of pace.

And I wish, across my cheeks they would race,
but I pray for rain, cuz no tears touch this face.

I remembered when I used to cry for everything I loved.
For Earth, for her, for God, every creature I could think of.
But I can't remember the last time I could cry,
I don't remember when the last tear fell from this eye.
I won't remember when the last duct went dry,
And so no more tears rain for this sad, little guy.
And I prays that my loved ones, make up for lost tears when I die.

Ode to the Moon

Tyler Walczak

Your gentle smile illuminates
The ground beneath the foliage.
Silky, silver, soft and smooth
Your beam pours down upon the grass
And trickles down into the creek.
It caresses the delicate petals
Of fragile flowers, cool with dew
Enticing the nocturnal world awake.
You bathe the woodland sceneries
In your placid, pallid light.

Your altruistic heart casts rays
Of compassion and perception,
Consoling in fashion.
You hearken to the troublesome mind,
Provide sound, silent suggestion.
Your attentive tranquility
And soft, glowing light penetrate,
Liberating disquietude,
Dissipating burdensome weight.
Your comforting glow envelops,
Regenerates, rejuvenates
You bathe the unsettled spirit
In your convalescent light.

Your sagacious eye emanates
Your wisdom and experience.
What have you witnessed all your life?
Did Olympians and Titans clash?
Did Eve pluck that fateful fruit?
All the mysteries of our past

Are not a mystery to you.
And what, dear Moon, has witnessed you?
All the bugs and butterflies.
Any man who walked the Earth,
Insignificant or great,
Has walked in the presence of you.
Focusing on your knowing eye
Arouses honor, nostalgia,
To know that you guided
Caesar and Shakespeare
And Galileo Galilei,
Just as you hang there, guiding me.
From any past life, you remain
As a connection to a world
Unknown, unknowable, unseen,
From your dark, heavenly perch
You bathe the world in the world's light.

Oceans

Winston Douglass

I stumbled upon an infinite sea
And as I walked amongst its shores,
I heard upon a man who asked me,
“What is on the other side?
Why should we explore where there is no end?”
I took him to heart, and went on my raft
To find infinity's end

Rain Drops Falling Ever More

Peter Michael Johnson

She's crying, can't you hear her wail
As it flows like the wind, through the trees.
Jagged cracks mark the break,
Torn spirit resting in its wake.

Indoors provides peace from malicious weather,
But inside is a hailstorm trapped forever.
Was the trust, so easily gained,
Worth the deceit that caused so much pain?

See the Darkness, watch it spreading,
The Blackness, become overwhelming.
Trapped in a vortex of Nothing,
And yet forever connected to Something.

Thunder cracks and lightning flashes.
And rain falls forever more, washing away *that* which gives life no more.
Leaving no witness left to share,
That which is, true despair.

And when the clouds do go away,
And when you think the sun will stay,
Expect the inevitable, and its truth.
Another day, another time, another place,
Rain drops fall ever more to guide Death to another's door.

Steel Skies **Winston Douglass**

I look out my midnight window,
Across this city of steel
With towers of mankind's greatest feats
Formed of steel and concrete
Illuminated, with the light of endeavors and dreams

I do not, however, see a city of miracles
A city of dreams
I see a city, cold and lonely,
With no lights bright enough to guide me
Or to invite me in
I see a cold city, under a gunmetal grey sky

I look out my midnight window,
Across the hills,
Across the rivers
To a village of wood and clay
Where the warm light of a fire,
And the loud jubilations of my friends
Ring loud, all the way to my city
All the way to my midnight window

And in one house, lies a special flame
One that inspires me
Motivates me

And breathes into me the very essence of life
This flame, this solitary light in my window
I wish to hold it, love it, and cherish it
I wish for it to guide me thru the rain of the city
Thru the clashes of these steel monuments which litter my view
Back to my village, back to its warmth

And for all of the rain that falls from these steel skies
And all the twisted wonder of this concrete world
This flame of mine, this loving flame
Shall push me thru this steel city
Till I can walk no more

Stressful Blessings

Jhavontae “Von” Jones

The stress crashes down on me, I'm about to explode,
There isn't enough time in one day to reload.
The tests keep coming, the stakes continue to rise,
Is it still worth it to go for the prize?

Eyes darkened brown, by the stress that I hold.
Mouth forced to frown, by the tales that I've told.
Courage starts dwindling, from the stories I hear,
And patience eludes me, replaced with dark fear.

Stuck in this prison, locked into this cell,
Reaching for heaven, in midst of this hell.
Sunshine hides its head, shadow is all that I see,
A crow this world has made, a dove I should be.

Oh, what I wouldn't give to be that beautiful dove,
To soar high above the clouds searching for love.
To be free to be me, to be honest and pure,
After years of dark doubt, to finally find myself sure

Sure of what's before me. Sure of what's ahead,
Sure that I am free from pain, and I'm protected instead.
Out on my own I feel my wings come free,
None to suppress, or to tell me how to be me

These long chains put on, meaning to crush,
Have now been let go, I feel my heart rush.
Time to let go of the small problems in life,
To free myself from the pain, the hurt, and the strife.

Sweeter

Jhavontae “Von” Jones

The grass couldn't be greener,
And the sugar can't be sweeter,
And the air couldn't be cleaner,
When you're near.

But the birds all seem to simmer,
And the sun's a wee bit dimmer,
And the fish don't like to swim near,
When you're not here.

This wall is just too thick to break,
And fence too high to climb.
Ocean just too wide to take
A chance and make you mine.

Cuz if I break my hand,
or fall back to the ground.
If I can't swim far back to land,
I'll hurt, I'll fall, I'll drown.

And so the people here are meaner,
And beauty is never seen here.
So I guess I'll save your seat here.

Until someday, someday, you come back to me, and make my life Sweeter

To Defy Reality

Ethan Sippel

&

Jhavontae Jones

Our lives are ours.
There may be pressures
From outside,
From within
But we remain stable
while tethered to the illusion
The Matrix, if you will.
Your tether may be stifling;
Yet your freedom
Can be overwhelming.
But the latter opens the mind

So
Choose the red pill.

Ahh...
but the blue pill is so much sweeter,
candy coated and delicious, I just wanna be a dreamer.
The real world is scary, but the real world is true.
Nothing could prepare me, so I'd rather take the blue.
Stability I need, and calmness I desire,
I'd rather drink the ocean, than devour a pill of fire.
I'd rather my throat not burn, It might consume my hope,
so for now, only a blue pill enters my throat.

What You Need

Jhavontae "Von" Jones

Let's go back to the day we met,
I saw you. My heart jumped outta my chest.
Back to that day when we danced in the rain,
Turn around. Fall down. Take this pain.

Leave me be, just leave me alone.
Just leave me be, peacefully. Please go home.
Love you gave me, pain came too.
And it's all my fault for falling for you.

I hoped that you would be my antidote, and
you'd fix my heart, but you left it broken.
I prayed that you would clear my head & stop the noise, and
Make it all better, but you turned into a poison.

I went back to the happiness, and back to the fun.
I went back to the cravings, and all you did was run.
I chased you forever, like I'd die if I didn't catch you,
but catching you brought death, but I won't let me regret you.

I won't let me forget you, I won't let me return
to the love I had, or the peace, I cannot freeze, nor burn.
The silence here is deafening. It's the loudest quiet now.
This nothingness eludes me, and destroys me with no sound.

I fell into pieces, because I loved again.
A dream you were. A broken, twisted friend.
I count the stars twice, then twice more,
pain & pleasure caused by you, were each this number times four.

I wish that you had the capacity to feel,
I wish that you could bleed.
Cuz maybe knowing how love could hurt,
could be just what you need.

With a Jaundiced Eye for Imperfection (A Ballade in Iambic Trimeter)

Joshua Handrich

Ephemeral infant frail;
Soft skin and oh so pale,
born to a blemished world.
Cold hearth without a fire.
With hung'r that can't be quell'd.
Small frame without a bolst'r,
falls into blemished world.
All with a jaundiced eye.

Less sheltered now than ev'r.
They thought they ran the world.
Less wrong they could not be.
Out of control they tumbl'd.
They're marred by others' scars.
They've set the world a-fire,
But fail to grasp the ocean's gyre.
All with a jaundiced eye.

The tough and weathered skin.
They're stoic now and still,
façade that melts away.
Been all but gnawed away,
and all that's left's within.
Thought old and wise, they were.
More lost than ev'r before.
All with a jaundiced eye.

without a flaw you look ... on – witness death
their greatest flaw, or grand escape
you see them leave; yet you remain, unfazed, perfect
with your jaundiced eyes, green-eyed, yearning for imperfection.

The Globalization of Terrorism and the Negative Impacts of Violence

Bradley D. Aldag

Prevalent throughout many cultures and in the most pernicious facets of terrorism is a monstrous force—violence. Such a force, when used perfunctorily and when widespread through globalization, has proven to negatively impact the dynamics of twenty-first century life. This is seen in the many terrorist organizations that have impacted the world so seriously that the globalization of terrorism is now a major problem, putting a burden on the “social equality” of all people, the cost of global traveling, and the United States’ economy.

“Social equality” may be defined as the integral element of making the world a peaceful place—one in which all people can get along with each other. One such terrorist organization that has negatively impacted this element is al-Qaeda, whose current goals are to establish a pan-Islamic Caliphate throughout the world by working with allied Islamic extremist groups to overthrow regimes it deems “non-Islamic” and to expel Westerners and non-Muslims from Muslim countries (“Al-Qaida/Al-Qaeda”). Driven by these goals, al-Qaeda issued a statement that noted it was the duty of all Muslims to kill United States citizens and their allies everywhere. However, all United States citizens have freedom of religion. Therefore, these goals (to overthrow regimes it deems “non-Islamic” and to expel Westerners from non-Muslim countries) are unreasonable in that neither one promotes “social equality” or the freedom of living in the United States. A good life may be defined as one with pure happiness and social equality, which sounds somewhat nebulous, but ultimately comes down to living in a peaceful world, free of violence.

Issued in 1998, the above statement not only diminished “social equality,” but also impacted world travel and security as well. For example, all airports in the United States increased their security, thus making traveling extremely cumbersome. Because the September 11th, 2001 attacks on America involved plane hijacking, many laws were put in place which prevent itinerant passengers from carrying any items which are suspected bombs or weapons. Because improvised explosive devices (IEDs) have become the signature weapon of terrorism, and due to large numbers of passengers traveling through airports, expensive devices which detect threats extremely fast were installed in virtually all United States airports. Given the creativity and the ingenuity of tech-savvy terrorists, the efficiency of these devices has improved remarkably over the years. For instance, an HEDD1 detection device, which uses a magneto-electrostatic method, is capable of immediately detecting all types of commercial and military explosives up to 100m away through any type of barrier (“Explosive Detection and Blast Protection Devices”). Since many suicide bombers have surgically inserted explosive materials into their bodies, this method is very effective in quick detection of these terrorists’ deleterious intentions. But, in the end, because of heightened security measures, the cost of traveling has increased exorbitantly.

Finally, the exposure of such violence of al-Qaeda has had significant negative impact on the overall economy of this country as well. For example, following the 9/11 attacks, the United States’ only option was to launch a war in order to protect its citizens from the threat of future terrorist attacks. The cost of executing such a task is huge, and clearly caused the United States’ economy to decline rapidly. The sooner these terrorist groups realize how wasted their efforts are, the more peaceful this world will be. For instance, any attack on America will cause its

troops to deploy and fight the assailants. Not only are these individuals hurting America, but themselves and their terrorist groups as well. Therefore, one of the most negative impacts of terrorist violence is the fact that it only creates trouble and does nothing positive for any group, any individual, or any country. However, that brings up a relevant question: what motivates a terrorist group to do what they do? In an al-Qaeda house in Afghanistan, a brief statement of the goals and objectives of jihad was found which implied that such motivation for an extremist is related to religion. In order to establish the word of God, and to end Muslim government viewed as corrupt or impious, the groups are placing an increased emphasis on developing surrogates to execute attacks in an effort to avoid getting caught. For instance, the Egyptian Islamic Jihad (EIJ) is rooted in al-Qaeda and has many operatives scattered throughout the world—in places such as Yemen, Europe, Lebanon, Pakistan, and Afghanistan. In addition, alliances exist among Sunni extremists worldwide, including North Africans, radical Palestinians, Central Asians, and Pakistanis. Many of these terrorists are sponsored by national governments which view the United States with great abhorrence (“Al-Qaida/Al-Qaeda”).

With this monstrous force prevalent in twenty-first century life, many people suffer, as there is absolutely no benefit for anyone when one resorts to violence, including those who execute their pernicious plots in hopes of overtaking the United States of America. In other words, terrorism and violence are self-defeating. America is a free country and a nation under God, and with its brave soldiers and its wise government, this country will endure, no matter how hard any terrorist group tries.

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Mellotron, Moog, and Autotune: How Machine Captured Soul

Matt Macaluso

Music is one of the most human and spiritual things on Earth. Because of this, people find a strong emotional connection to those people making the songs, and sometimes to the instruments themselves. However, people today are making a connection to music that seems to be lacking any human quality whatsoever. Pieces of music technology, like synthesizers and auto-tune machines, have all but replaced artists in many realms of music. Artists focus less on the music and more on the stage show. Popular music has become an exuberant display of flashy lights and sounds that, if the music industry was more creative, would be called “photosynthetic”. While this seems strange, it was not something that snuck up on the music scene. Like Nirvana, people treat synthesizer music like something that just showed up one day in the industry; however, there is indeed a rich past in the concept. In examining musicians before synthesizers, early

experimentation with them, and their widespread use nowadays, one will see that there was a gradual evolution in the role that technology plays in the instrumentation of popular music.

Clearly, in the early 1900s, there were no synthesizers. Electrically powered instruments hadn't even been invented yet, and people were only starting to buy radios more and more. Hillbilly musicians like Fiddlin' John Carson and Charlie Poole were coming up from the Piedmont South and being spun on phonographs and filling radio waves. John Carson was one of the most popular musicians of the time, but it was not because of great talent. According to *Linthead Stomp* by Patrick Huber, most of his more music-oriented contemporaries considered him mediocre, at best, calling him, "a poor fiddle player...good showman"(45). In order to be popular, he had to somehow convince America that he *was* a good fiddle player. At these times, musicians could not get by without musical talent (or at least faking it, as it seems). Most knew this, as in the case of Charlie Poole and Thelonious Monk. Poole sought to be respected as a musician and worked at crafting his banjo ability; even revolutionizing banjo playing for all that came after him. Monk could not stand playing with mediocre musicians, going as far as to drive musicians who were jamming with him off of the stage that he felt did not make his standards of expertise. These people saw themselves as professionals and wanted nothing less than the same drive and effort that they put into their music from those who played with them. This can be seen by the fact that Monk's performance at the Paris Jazz Festival, where he showed up without *his* particular band, went disastrously. This idea carried on through the first half of the 20th century and into the early 1960s.

At that point, musicians began experimenting with synthesizing sound. Popular artists began experimenting with the mellotron, as heard in the Beatles "Strawberry Fields Forever," which was an organ-like instrument where each key held the sound of an individual tape track of pre-recorded music. A combination of these keys could create an entire song; however, you still needed some musical knowledge to properly operate the machine. The same can be said about what was being done with Theremins and electro-Theremins, the latter of which can be wailing on the Beach Boys' "Good Vibrations." Guitarists also experimented with sound widely, using numerous effects like the wah-pedal and talk-box to create sounds no one had ever heard before but became household items following artists like Jimi Hendrix and Peter Frampton.

Into the late 60s, a few "computer nerd" musicians began making the first synthesizers in their homes; however, it wasn't until two particular musicians began to experiment with keyboard synthesizers, though, that the concept really took off to change the music industry forever. Keith Emerson, organist of Emerson, Lake, and Palmer, began to use a Moog modular synthesizer alongside the Hammond organ, being one of the first musicians to do so live. Its popularity skyrocketed following the release of 1970s "Lucky Man," which featured extensive synthesizer sections, including a solo to close the piece, even being called "a big breakthrough" for the instrument, according to *Analog Days: The Invention and Impact of the Moog Synthesizer* (Pinch and Trocco 248). The second surge in popularity came from Edgar Winter. One of, if not the first person to put a neck strap on a keyboard and walk around stage among the guitarists, Winter created an instrumental rock and roll classic from the early 70s known as "Frankenstein." It was one of the first songs to hit the top of the charts featuring a synthesizer as the lead instrument. It was musicians like these two men who inspired the spread of their use across numerous genres throughout the 70s and 80s.

While the use of keyboard synthesizers changed the instrumentation of popular music of the 80s, they, along with voice modulators and instrument emulators, have completely altered the entire music industry in the 21st century. The most prominent voice modulator currently is the auto-tune system. According to its patent, “the device determines the pitch of a musical note produced by the voice or instrument and shifts the pitch of that note to produce a very high quality, high fidelity output (*Espacenet.com*). This means that the singer doesn’t have to hit notes anymore; they just have to be in the vicinity of the correct pitch, and the machine will just make everything in tune with one another. One may associate this technology with pop artists like Lady Gaga and the Black-Eyed Peas; however, country musicians, too, have succumbed to the temptation of the device. According to an article by Michael McCall, “You’ll never see Tim McGraw pick up an acoustic guitar and sing in front of an audience without using a microphone that’s run through an auto-tuning device”(McCall) One of country’s biggest stars relies on auto-tune because of apparent pitch problems. How would artists like Fiddlin’ John Carson or Charlie Poole feel about this? Assuredly, they’d be irate, especially Carson who fought to overcome his lackluster singing ability.

The 20th Century has also brought in a variety of instrument emulators, such as the drum machine. This allows performers and musicians to create music with artificial musicians. If all one is looking for is a musician who doesn’t make mistakes, rather than one who improves or plays with his soul, than these are perfect. Surely, though, musicians of old, especially jazz musicians like the great Thelonious Monk, would be outraged with this kind of technology. Combined with the auto-tune devices, this combination creates a sort of John Henry type story where it’s actually tangible musicians fighting to keep up with computer programs and electronic devices. Hopefully, though, the steam shovel won’t win this round.

One may ask, “Why was this technology surge being allowed to happen?” The answer is easy and can be found to correlate with how the punk scene formed in the late 70s and early 80s. America is in an economic recession. Generally speaking, everyone is feeling the strain of a failing economy, people continue to pinch pennies, and the general public wishes to escape their misfortunes through upbeat dance music. When it comes to the pop music industry, the instrumental aspect of the music is nothing more than simple beats backing a simple melody, such as with a techno dance hit. These synthesized instruments and voice modulators allow artists to maintain a “Do-it-yourself” system where there’s no need to pay for backing musicians, thus saving money and increasing profits. There is another downside in that many popular musicians in the past, such as Jimmy Page of Led Zeppelin, started out as session musicians. Great musicians like this may never be found because they have been replaced by a Yamaha keyboard with the capability of matching the sound of 300 instruments. However, there is a positive outcome through all of this. These programs are available to the general public, whether by sales or through illegal pirating. Local musicians can then use this technology to practice and/or create music of their own. This results in quality that was unreachable in the past decades without being signed to a major record label. This access also allows for hundreds of small labels to operate throughout the United States, as well. So, all in all, is this technological advancement good or bad for the industry?

One thing is unquestionable: synthesizer and emulator technology is continuing to grow and advance in the United States. While the human quality continues to be removed from the music, the popularity never really dwindles. People don’t seem to mind that synthesizers and auto-tune

machines have replaced living, breathing musicians. This can be perhaps attributed to the fact that they have been acclimating to the concept since the 1960s. Through investigating musicians before synthesizers, those who created the synthesizer scene, up to their widespread use in the 20th Century, it becomes obvious that there was a gradual evolution in the role that technology played in the instrumentation of popular music. Whether or not this change in music will be permanent or even be around much longer is impossible to tell. It may seem like all there is right now, but look at the past. In the early 1990s, grunge controlled the music industry. Only time will tell what the future holds for the industry.

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Modern Medicine

Colin Swetman

Even the strongest willed man can succumb to the effects of chemical imbalances in the brain from the drug cocktail prescribed, trial-and-error process for treatment of mental disorders; known today as "modern medicine."

The problem with the trial-and-error process that is today's modern medicine is that, assuming that the patient's mental disorder isn't properly treated on the first attempt (which is common and why it's called trial and error), the patient at some point will be improperly medicated.

For a person that has gone through hardships and dealt with their feelings appropriately most of their life without the use of medication, being on a cocktail of prescriptions can put their minds in places and orientations never before experienced. Thought patterns that normally provide a path to deal with life decisions and push us to use logical reasoning to come up with a solution don't happen in the same way when someone is being improperly medicated.

When someone is in that state of mind where life seems so bleak, rational decisions are not reached with the same process. Decisions become driven by pure emotions; emotions that are snagged out of the whirlwind of emotions flying through one's head just to have a definite feeling about something instead of continual uncertainty.

The emotions that come with the trial and error process that is used can be terrifying. Even for someone who has been through the roller-coaster of ups and downs before, the experience is very hard to deal with because it's never clear things will continue to go as badly as they seem to be at the moment, or if the mind will go into an even darker place where things like the normally out of the question, notion of suicide start becoming considerable.

Even if a person's views about suicide are that it's an inconsiderate idea to take the easy way out to escape the depression, leaving family and friends behind to mourn, the idea may be considered if their head is in a dark enough place and they hit rock bottom. They say in business "Perception is reality," and I believe it's true in life. In the case where someone is unstable and using emotions instead of logic, suicide can seem like the only escape because the reality they perceive seems so far from how they would normally view life. It's easy to forget about everything ahead of you and everyone that stands behind you in life when a single defeat or loss of a cared one seems like the end of the world.

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