



GLIMPSE

Fire Leaf
Michael Moon, Adult
Autism

GLIMPSE

Welcome to **GLIMPSE**, a new publication of ICDL that showcases the writings and artwork of individuals with a history of autism spectrum disorders and other developmental disabilities. We hope to provide a **GLIMPSE** into the unique perspectives and rich inner lives of people who might otherwise not find a voice. We welcome your submissions and feedback (see last page), and hope you enjoy our first edition.

*Lori Jeanne Peloquin
Austin Retzlaff,
Editors
Natasha Labbe
Layout Design*

A New Day

*Tomorrow is far away and lonely,
but I think I'll get over it
as long as it's still dawn.
Feeling that we bump into each other.
But tonight, we miss each other again.
Tightrope walking with result so bad that trails of
effort fades off with the results.
Every day, the more you do, the more you lose.
Its easier to hold yourself at an angle.
Hiding the passionate self as well as hiding the
hurt self I live on in this short era.
Tomorrow is far away and lonely,
but I think I'll get
over it as long as it's still dawn.
The feeling will run wild if left alone.
Dreams are again missing each other.
For the only thing we can do is look forward to
tomorrow's dawn to begin the next day.
I count my seconds as I wait for my day to end
and begin
a New dawn.*

Robert Cerqueira. 20 years old
New York, NY.
Asperger's Syndrome and ADD.



More Colors

*Roy Bedward, Age 29
Autism
Madison, WI*

BEST FRIENDS

by CarolAnn Edscorn, Age 53, Asperger Syndrome

“Where you goin’ sugah baby?” Mama’s voice followed me like wind through the pines.

“Shopping, Mama.”

“Little girl, why you goin’ shoppin’? Ain’t got no money.”

I sighed. I knew Mama didn’t understand me. I was the last of nine, and a late surprise to her and Pap. He died before I could know him. He worked for the railroad, so we were pretty well taken care of, but Mama grew up in the Depression, and never outgrew the fears of the poor. I turned and smiled at her, loving her every crinkly wrinkle.

“No Mama, I don’t have any money. Just got a bit o’ cabin fever.”

The exertion of standing was showing on Mama, and she was looking down at the porch. “You just be home for dinner, hear?”

I smiled even though cream cheese and jelly sandwiches weren’t my idea of dinner. “I’ll be back afore dusk, Mama.”

A faint echo of Mama drifted out to me as she hobbled back into the living room: “You was always the best one, sugah baby. Be good.”

Freed from gray fried chicken walls that never did get a fresh coat of paint on a promised Saturday, I swung my arms and strode into our village. I loved the gingerbread trim, the pines and, in the Spring, the heady aroma of the magnolias. Mr. Rowe was trimming his hedge. It was small when I was small, and now it towered over me so’s he and his grown son have to use the ladder to cut it all level. He calls it his privacy fence, but everyone knows his wife left him and died in a shelter up North. No privacy in a small town. Course, I know there are ways to be private. I just read this book, written by some smart man who got imprisoned in one of them awful camps in the war. I didn’t understand a lot of it, but he

wrote that every thing can be taken away but a person’s mind. If’n your mind is creative and your thinking positive, then you’re free inside.

So today I am feelin’ free. Being the last baby has its good moments, but mostly I felt like I was in prison, so many big folk tellin’ me to go there and do this here. Never could get in on the conversation at dinner. Now they’re all grown up, mostly married and I’m even an aunt. It sure is quieter. I don’t know if I like that.

Well, I can’t worry ‘bout that. I got me some freedom thoughts and some happy thinking and a date, no one special, just my best friend. Sometimes we meet in front of the Side Car Café, sometimes in front of Hopkin’s General Store. We giggle a bit, talk ‘bout the folks sippin’ their coffee and gossipin’. Or if we meet at the department store, we dream about trying on the prettiest dress. Today, being a Saturday and the whole town seemin’ out and about, I think we’ll meet at then church then mosey to the store and do some window shoppin’. I meet her in front of the notice board by the high arched front doors. We are silent today. We read the community bulletins, when the volunteer firemen are having their spaghetti supper, the Boy Scouts their pancake breakfast, and the Ladies Guild their informational tea. We grin at one another in the glass. Good friends don’t need talkin’, when silence is just as nice.

We amble along the cracked sidewalk. Sometimes I think we breathe together, we’re so close. Many’s the time we even dress in the same colors, no plannin’ it.

Hopkin’s just got in the summer clothing. Can’t imagine why the “New Summer Sportswear” has to show up in February. Makes The winter doldrums a mite harder.

We make eye contact and wordlessly we agree to wander along.

We walk together, she pointing out different plants starting to bud—she loves nature—and I chatting about who is holding whose hand. We dream of holding hands with some handsome young man, but there ain't too many in our town. We chuckle because we also dream about being old spinsters livin' in one of those fine houses on Pleasant Street, right across from the park, so we can hear the summer concerts on the band stand from our porch.

We pause at the café and spy inside. It's mostly farmers this morning. They're comparing seed catalogues and arguing about hybrids and heirlooms and organics. I suggest we go in and get a stack of pancakes to share, but she wags her head and we meander over to the drugstore.

We consider buyin' some gum or some chocolates, but the memory of Belgium chocolate melting in our mouths last Christmas ruin any thoughts of a Snickers bar.

Our ramblings end at the used bookseller. The windows are so dusty it's like lookin' in an old mirror. We huddle close. I read the titles out loud. Today we use the titles to make little rhymes, like matching The Wedding Planner for Brides to a biography, Sailing with the Tides. My best friend is funny. She noticed that the name Shakespeare, the guy who wrote that sad story about Romeo and Juliet, well his name rhymes with Lear, like King Lear. We had a good laugh on that one.

I want to stay beside my friend forever, softly chatting, bein' brave against the town gossip. When I get home, Mama will be asleep in her recliner next to the urn with Pap's ashes. I'll throw another log on the fire, curl up with the tattered blankie my grandma made for me afore I was born. Can't read because we owe on the electric and the lights are always off. Can't watch television, same reason. I'll just sit there with all the memories, listening to Mama snoring. I look in my best friend's eyes in the reflecting shop window.

"So, you goin' home now?"

Yep. Have to make stew for dinner. What you having?"

"Roast chicken." I lie. "How's your Pa?"

"Good, good. The mine gave all the miners a raise 'cause the union had a meeting."

"The railroad was good to my Pap when he was alive." I sigh. "You goin' to church tomorrow?"

"Course! Ma and Pa don't go no more but I get wupped if I skip out."

"Pap used to wup me. Mama sleeps in now."

We touch fingertips in the reflection, smile at one another, and I notice someone has joined our mirror image. It's my oldest brother. Harvey is a cop on the town police force. My best friend thinks he's cute, but really, he's nearly twice our age!

Harvey has that sad hound dog look he gets. He smiles at me real slow, puts his arm about me.

"Hey, scout, Mama sent me to find you. Time to go home. I'll give you a ride, okay? It's already snowin' up at Mountain Home."

I wink at my friend, put on my cutest little girl smile, even though I'm actually too old to play this game, and hug my brother's strong arm.

"Can my best friend come too? Please?"

He breathes, looks next to me. I don't know, maybe she offends them, but my family just ignores her, acts like they don't see her. This hurts me, but certainly today, when we had such a lovely walk and happy talk, surely Harvey will see how good she is for me. Harvey hugs me and leads me to his police cruiser.

"Sure baby girl. Today I'll give her a ride home." He opens the door and lets me in, and I scoot all the way over to let her settle next to me. I look back, but she's run off home already. She's shy around Harvey.

But Harvey is acting weird. He bows to the air and says "After you milady!" He pauses, holding open the door and letting the cold wind in. What a ham, my brother. First he pretends to not see her, and then he pretends she's still here. He smiles, uncertain, then closes the door with a gentle thump.

He pulls away from the curb. I look back, but my best friend is gone.

There are a few town folk loitering about the corner, watching us pull away, prattling idle rumors, I can tell. That's okay. I'll meet my dearest companion tomorrow after church. If we speak only to ourselves, share one another's secrets and cares, then all those others will disappear. Our love for one another is what counts. That's real.

I just wish she wouldn't disappear like that.

END

PALS



PARTY BOY



WILLIAM C. KERNER, AGE 12
AUTISM
RENTON, WA
WWW.WILSPAPERCUTOUTS.COM

A Call for UNITY

A child walks the city streets of risen Babylon,
Calling for a mother he never knew,
And souls die young.

Unity...

A lone voice cries out,
Denouncing the oppression of the people,
But his words fall on deaf ears.

Unity...

A child dies,
Darkness Falls,
The Beast rises,
No one is safe,
No one can hide,
As Armageddon draws nigh.

Unity...

A call for peace,
An end to war,
All are equal,
Yet separate.

Unity...

The light must win,
But the darkness rules.
Pray to God for our salvation



Liberty

*Trey Huebner, Age 17
Columbia, MO
Asperger Syndrome*

*Kevin Cheney, Age 13
S. California
Autism/seizures*

Autistic/Artistic *by Michael Moon*

Having been diagnosed with autism at age 3, and at 7 and 34, diagnosed with high functioning autism, puts me in a unique position to share sensory experiences, which often are misunderstood. I am blessed with living on the edge of two worlds. One foot in the sensory internal overload of autism and one foot in the 'normal' world where I work and interact with the world as a musician and artist. Though I have been incredibly blessed to not have severe symptoms that keep me separate from the world, I have also spent my whole life learning full time on how to function and communicate with the world. In my experience though my brain, thinking patterns and idiosyncrasies don't change, my growing ability to communicate, be present and experience emotions has been extraordinary. I now find myself leading talks and workshops, performing concerts, all of which seem impossible to the 'autistic' side of me but I have been able to overcome so much through much help over the years. During my talks and workshops on my experiences living with autism I get asked many questions about how I experience the world. Here I will give a brief window specifically into my sensory experiences.

I feel soothed by constant even intense sense stimulation as long as it is under my control and or constant. I think because of this, I have made it my life work to create music that generates this feeling of consistency for me. I have recorded 4 CD's of music, which are designed to create a soothing atmosphere by masking unpleasant or uncontrolled sounds from the environment. Nature sounds and images such as wind in the trees, ripples on a lake, or bird song, which are constant, yet changing, especially sooth me and I use that feeling to inform my music and photography. People

who hear the music for the first time often comment on the multi-layered complexity in the Music which is very relaxing and yet also grabs the attention of the listener in an almost trance like way. My intention is to create a sensory experience which the listener can get lost inside and forget the disturbing sensations and thoughts from the outer world.

I have naturally created a living environment in my home identical to a 'Snoezelen' room. I had no idea that it was so directly helping me. I just put together what made me feel happy comforted and relaxed and later found it was identical to Snoezelen therapy. The paradox is I often don't notice the beauty I've created, because when I'm thinking or doing something my sense input seems to disappear. It still seems to have a general effect of relaxing and soothing me though. In stressful moments I can focus on a light or pattern and all else disappears for a time.

This mono-sense thing is classic to autism and I find it helps me immeasurably when I'm focused on one thing like composing music for hours or days at a time. But often what happens is that there is so much stimulation and input coming in from different directions constantly that my brain flips from one focus to the next never being able to rest on one thing for long. It is so frustrating because I feel like I'm missing out on so much of life. When young I was diagnosed with ADHD and hyperactivity, I think due to this.

If I go for a walk in the forest with a friend and their talking, I may as well be at home for I've missed the trees and the sounds; all I experience is their voice. If I notice the beauty around me I miss everything they said as I was focusing on the forest sights. So often I go on walks alone, but even then I find while walking I'm

missing a lot of the forest. So I stop and enjoy a beautiful tree, but then find I'm missing the sounds and begin to immerse myself in the sounds of the birds and the leaves and even though my eyes are open I literally can not see the tree, my vision is blank. Then I flash back to the tree without planning to and it snaps me out of the trance I was in listening to the sounds. And so it goes. Often if I want to hear something I close my eyes or my vision goes totally blank, or psychedelic. This can work for me, for when I go into that trance like state where everything else disappears the beauty I experience is profound. I hear sounds most people don't hear and see patterns shapes and colors most people don't.

There is such sensitivity to sensual stimulation and the detail within it. For instance I was walking with my friend and I stopped to look at a fountain. After about a minute she asked to get moving. I asked to stay and she got impatient. I said can't you see the patterns in the water isn't it beautiful? She said it's a fountain it's nice. It turned out all she could see was the fountain; she'd taken it in and was ready to move on to the next sight. I hadn't finished looking at the fountain yet because, to my vision, the fountain was a collection of dancing interlocking patterns that each needed attention. Though it took me much longer to take in that fountain I realized the richness I experienced was so much deeper than most people ever see. I began showing her the textures in the water, the way you could see the individual water drops held in mid air sparkling in the light, the unusual colors blended in the pool... Endless vignettes that to me were huge and visceral and to her were just a fountain. Even though I pointed them out to her and she understood a bit more about my unique perception I could tell she could not experience what I was experiencing and I could not experience what she was seeing. The frustration is that everything seems to take me longer and often miss the big picture. On the other hand what I experience in something as simple as a fountain can be ecstatic and moving if I surrender to my way of seeing and take the time I need.

This beauty I experience is often what inspires me to create art and music. In fact much of my music and art is an attempt to translate the beauty I find in nature so as others can get what I hear and see.

Not only is it a passion to pass on the insight but a desire to be met and understood because it can feel quite lonely inside. Anything sudden or unexpected can throw me for a loop, from a sudden sound to changes in plans. I seem to need time to process things including words before speaking. A change in plans, even to something I ultimately prefer can upset me and I can get frustrated, snappy and panicky for no reason. After having sometime to think about the new plan for a bit I then get focused on that and if it gets changed back again I can get very upset.

Intense physical pressure can sooth me. So can causing myself controlled pain by digging my nails into my skin or pulling out body hair one by one. I especially do this when I'm in an emotionally based conversation. Emotional stimulation, even pleasant emotions but especially challenging emotions such as anger, and even such things as concern, cause great distress. Often I find myself causing controlled physical pain to myself in order to deal with the emotions. I find my body goes into adrenal stress and turns ice cold during most emotional interactions including emotional scenes in movies. When I'm in emotional overload I love to be tucked in and hold people and things tight, even though I don't generally like to be touched when it's out of my control.

When I'm doing something, I'm doing it. I can focus for hours, even days at a time on something I'm involved with. Yet if I'm pulled out of it I can feel lost and completely unfocused. I have to force myself to be aware of my body's needs and like with the emotions I have to just go through the motions in a perfunctory way in order to survive. If I'm working I'm just not hungry or tired and, will never feel that I am, until my body simply can't function anymore. There is such a deep disconnect inside that even when I stop to eat I don't feel the hunger I just do it because I know I have to.

All these perceptions and experiences of life, although difficult in day to day 'normal' activities seem to give me a profound creative and artistic connection. I can focus for hours on my music and art with incredible patience and stubborn obsession. I feel so much inside yet on a continual basis cannot seem to communicate that experience to others directly so I resort to music, song and art. I see and hear so differently than the average person it seems, and I crave to share the experience, so I create with the intention of evoking the experience I feel of life, in others. I have such a need to sooth myself from the discomfort I feel in the world that I need to create the perfect sensual environments with sound and color that can sooth me in the way I need to be soothed. I therefore create the music and visuals I need to relax me. I experience things in such intricate patterns, which then help me dissect the sounds and colors of the world into little windows called art, which help people experience the world around them in a new way. This is how I find being autistic is very in line with being artistic and can be a blessing in disguise.



Ice sculpture,

*Michael Moon , Adult
Autism*



Noa Davis, Age 9
Queens, NY
PDD-NOS

BUDDIES



William C. Kerner, Age 12

Autism

Renton, WA

www.wilspapercutouts.com

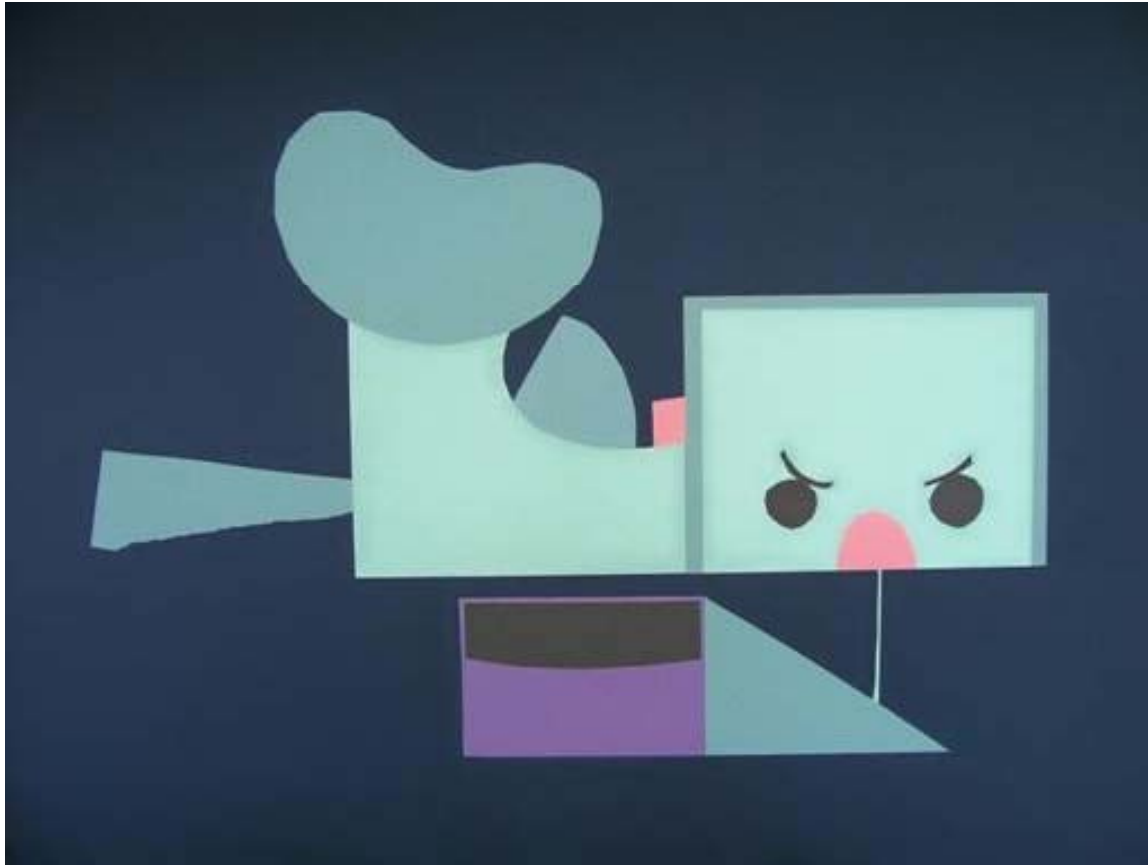
I LOVE BUTTERFLIES

I LOVE BUTTERFLIES MOST OF ALL.
LADYBUGS CRAWL
MOTHS FLY
WORMS SLITHER
SPIDERS TIPTOE
AND GRASSHOPPERS JUMP
BUT
BUTTERFLIES DANCE AND ARE FREE
LIKE ME.

Jonathan Ryan Cooper

Age 4

Autism/Hyperlexia



Whale

William C. Kerner, Age 12

Autism

Renton, WA

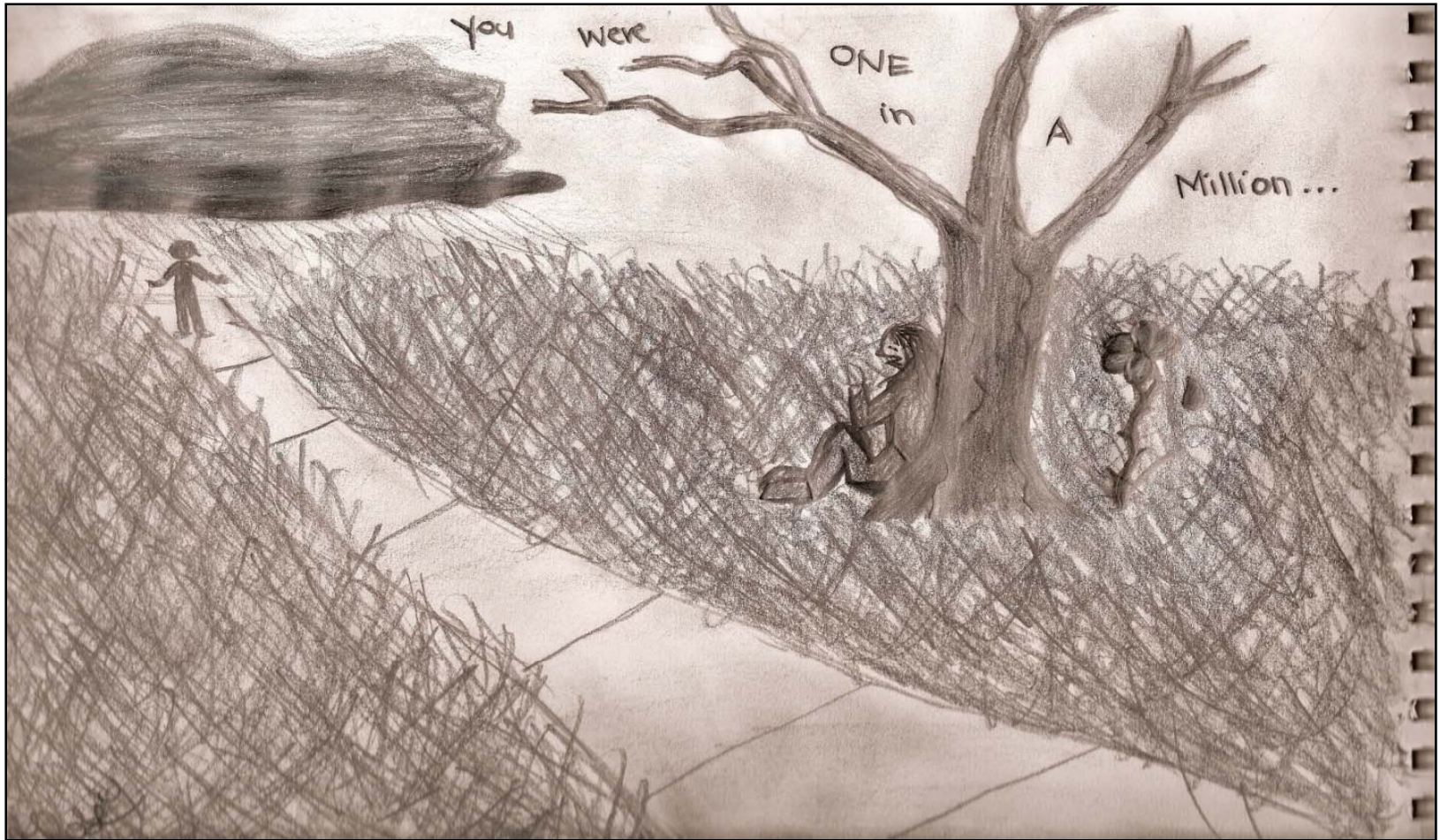
www.wilspapercutouts.com



I like the volume in my face
because you can see it go
to dark one side is light and
the other is dark! I did my
hair very strong! I really like
it! the lines are very cool
they are the lightest out of
my hair! they are my
blonde streaks!

LilliRose

*LilliRose Farnell, Age 14
Schaumburg, IL
Dyslexic*



One in a Million

LilliRose Farnell, Age 14

Schaumburg, IL

Dyslexic

PLEASE LISTEN TO MY HEART

PLEASE LISTEN TO MY HEART
PLEASE FORGIVE THESE CLUMSY WORDS
JUST HEAR ME FROM MY OPEN HEART TO YOURS
THE LANGUAGE OF MY HEART SPEAKS ELOQUENTLY
WHILE MY FINGERS GRAPPLE FOR THE LETTERS ONE AT A TIME.
MY MOUTH HAS NOTHING TO SAY.

HEART LANGUAGE REMEMBERS THE BEGINNING
AND FORSEES THE END
IT HOLDS MY WHOLE LIFE IN ONE SINGLE GLANCE
AND TRIES TO CONVEY EVERYTHING AT ONCE.

WORDS ON THE OTHER HAND
BREAK IT ALL UP INTO
A THOUSAND TINY PIECES
WHICH NEVER GO BACK TOGETHER AGAIN

*Roy Bedward, Age 29
Autism
Madison, WI*



Comet

*Roy Bedward, Age 29
Madison, WI
Autism*

BE GLAD

Be glad that you've had such a full, happy life
Be glad for your joy as well as your strife
Be glad that you've walked in sunshine and rain
Be glad that you've felt both pleasure and pain
Be glad that you've tasted the bitter and sweet
Be glad your life has been full and complete
Be glad that you've walked with courage each day
Be glad you've had strength for each step of the way
Be glad for the comfort you've found in prayer

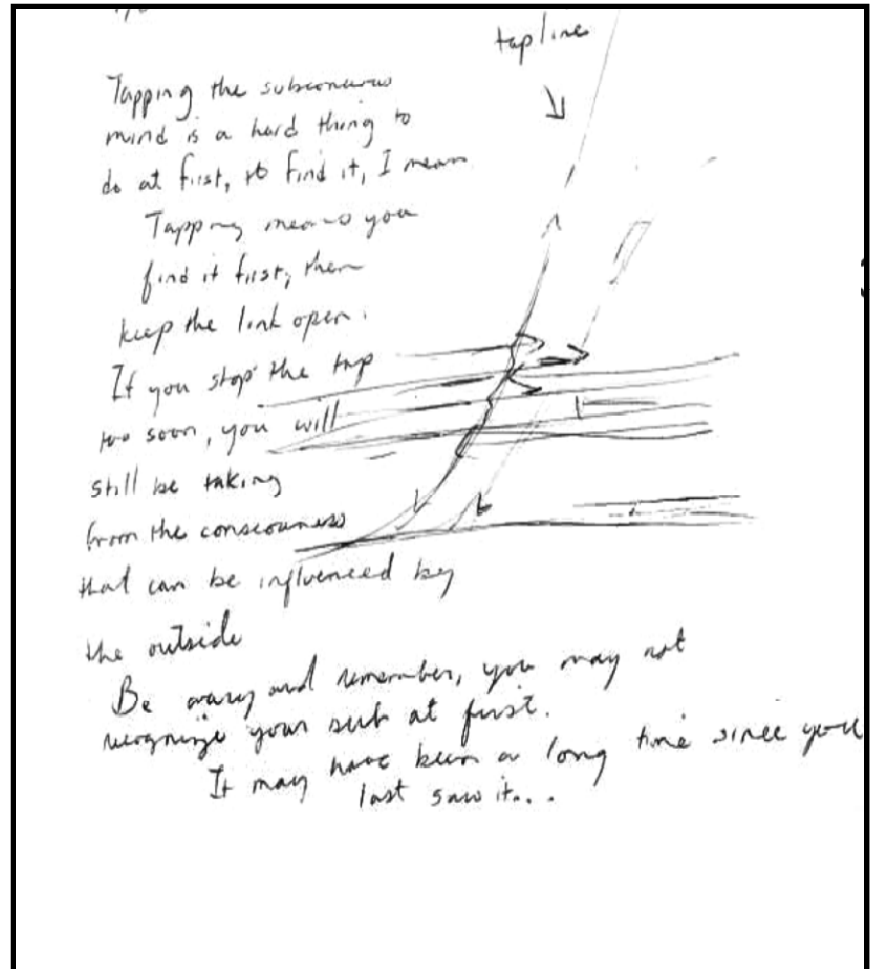
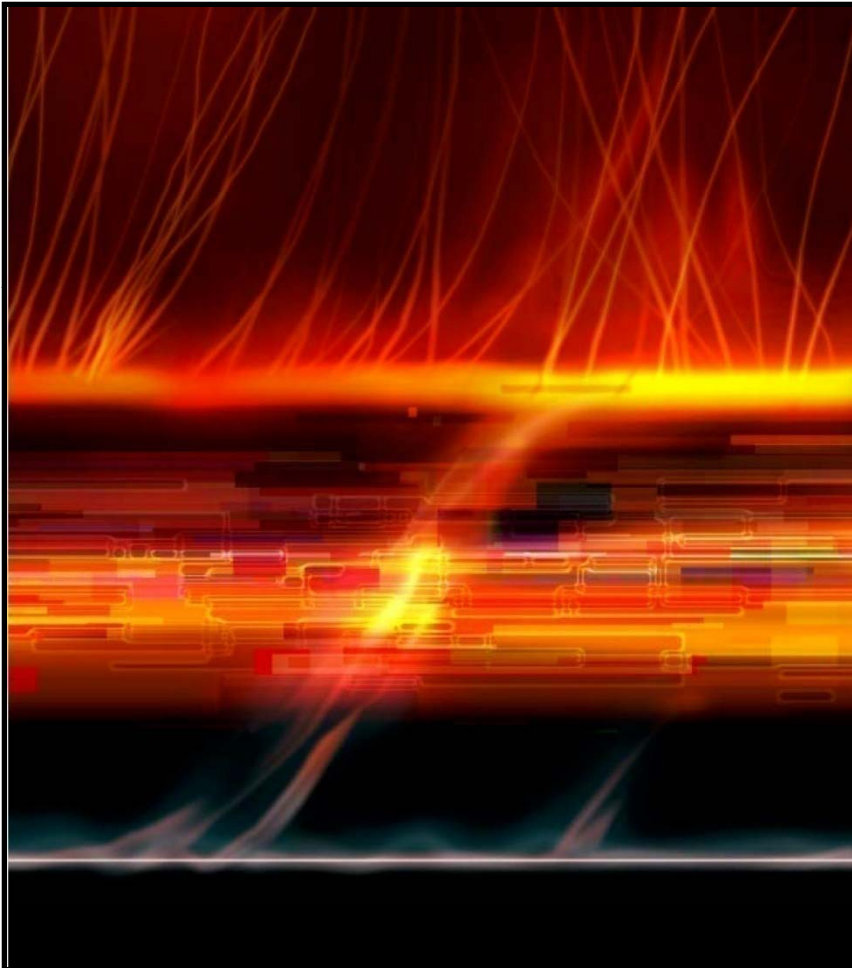
*Monique Nadine Earnest AKA "MoMo"
16 years of age
Developmentally delayed*

Stream of Conscious

Anie Knipping, Age 22

New Jersey

Asperger/Synesthesia



Submission Guidelines

- We are seeking poetry, essays, reflections, short stories, photography and two dimensional artwork on any subject.
- Written entries (in Word document), digital files (jpeg) of artwork/photographs, or questions/comments should be sent to GLIMPSE@icdl.com
- Please include your name (you can request to remain anonymous), age, state or country of residence, email, and type of current or past disability.
- Written work in general should be no longer than 3 pages, although slightly larger pieces may be allowed on occasion. Parents may submit a child's work, with permission from the child.
- Submissions may be accepted, rejected, or accepted with editorial changes. Pieces may be held for possible inclusion in later editions. Pieces may not have been published elsewhere. Final decision about inclusion in the magazine will fall to the co-editors.