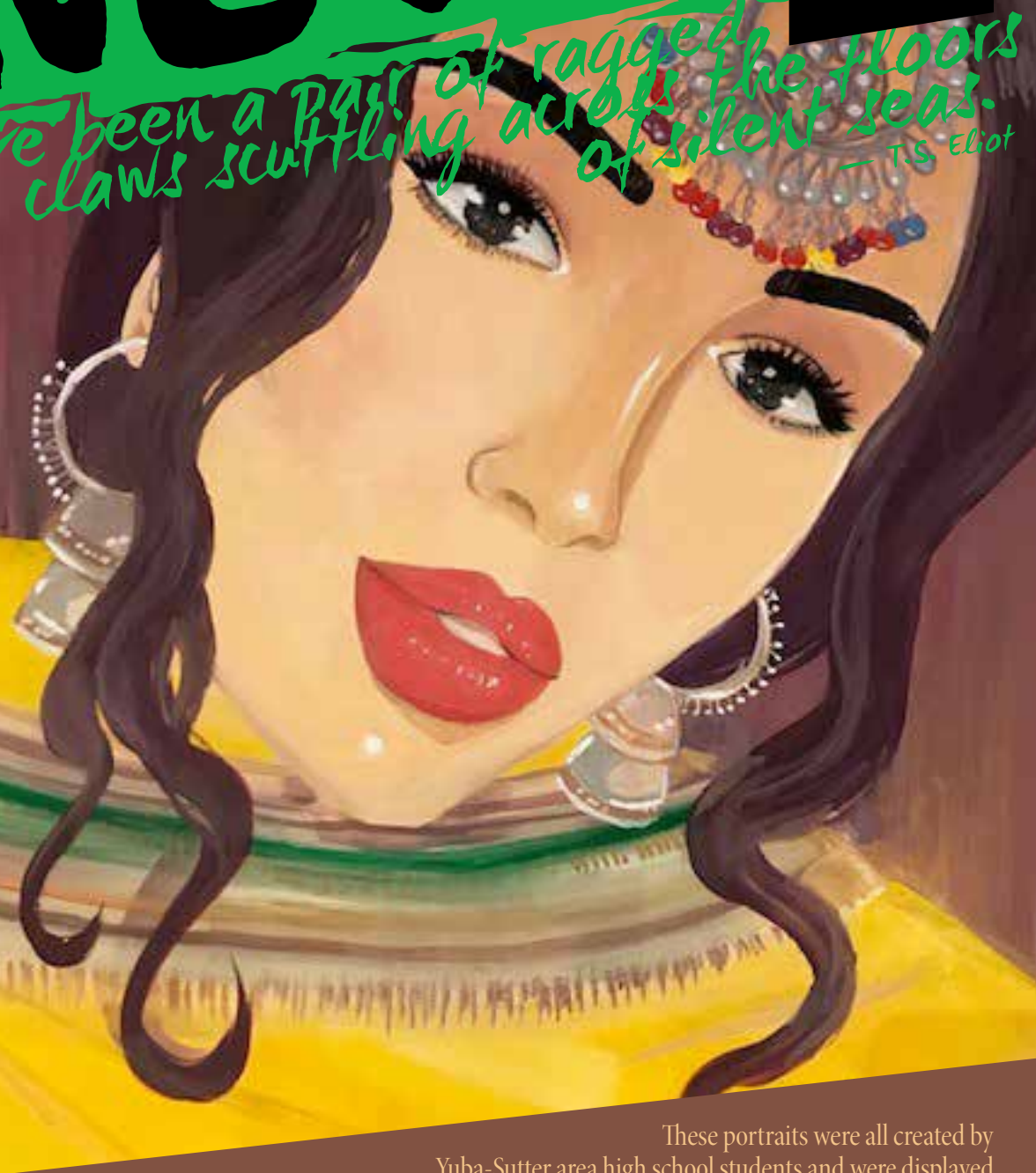


RAGGED CLAWS

YUBA SUTTER arts

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I should have been a pair of ragged claws scuttling across the floors of silent seas.
— T.S. Eliot



These portraits were all created by Yuba-Sutter area high school students and were displayed at various exhibitions including the River Valley High School and Yuba City High School shows at the Gallery at Yuba Sutter Arts and in Davis at Congressman Garamendi's office as part of the Congressional Art Competition.

From top left to right, clockwise – “Laughing Boy” by Ashlie Brand, “Portrait” by Kaitlyn Schlemmer, “Red” by Gwen Buckley and “Gemelas” (Twins) by Maria Guerrero. “Gemelas,” was the second-place winner in the Congressional Art Competition for District 3.

EDITOR'S NOTES

by Jonathan Kinsman,
Poet Laureate of Yuba
& Sutter Counties

“IT MUST BE BEAUTIFUL”

So goes the title of a collection of essays on the Mathematician's bouquet of a dozen equations that the essayists claim approach P-O-E-T-R-Y. And why is that? Why do supposedly sane persons in fields of endeavor as varied as Theoretical Mathematics (where String Theory plays its dissonant fugues), Architecture, Cuisine, Music, Painting, Movies, Sculpture, and, organized Sports, all concur that the highest compliment, the greatest metaphor, to describe their singular epiphanies in their respective vocations is

“Great equations also share with the finest poetry an extraordinary power – poetry is the most concise and highly charged form of language...”

or, from Frank Lloyd Wright, Chief of the Panderers of concrete, glass, wood and steel:

“Every great architect is – necessarily – a great poet.”

So poets have a burden to bear. Centuries of being the benchmark, the gold standard for excellence in human endeavor, thought and invention. This is so because poets deal with words and their arrangements. Like the Creator with atomic and subatomic particles and waves, the poet (the word itself comes from the Greek for “creator”) “makes it new” (as per Ezra Pound) and shows us a different angle of an idea's point or an experience's meaning.

Poems are like the alphabet talking at once and the reader has to focus on one conversation at a time to put together the narrative, the multi-layered meanings, that the poet is presenting in the text. And the visual arrangement on the page is as important as the aural play upon the sounds of the words.

Here, **Ethan Raleigh**
of Plumas Lake,
contributes

KITE

This
work of art
floats above the girl
hovering in the slightest breeze.
she wishes she were this colorful kite,
to soar and circle, to glide and dip, to suddenly
twist from the calm then gusting winds of the day.
The kite's swallow-tail scissors the air, cutting a path to ride upon.
With colors that are soft and faded looking in the sunlight,
the kite seems more like the wind and the sky,
not the girl below who stands on firmer footing,
looking up, basking in the risk, uncertain
of the path the kite at any moment
may take or forced to take
dipping
soaring
gliding
jerking
back
and
forth
wait-
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n
to
s
n
a
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a
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t
h
e
girl
a little
field mouse.

James Theodore Brown
contributes:

SILENCE

The heart is the usual voice.
Sometimes a source
for suffering, sometimes for
an ineluctable syllogy of choice.
The heart – the patriot, the patient
or the art – the organ plays with stillness.

Let's call it love, then.
Or silence. Each with its own rings
of vultures circling.
Fear, or vanity, and then delay –
slowly they descend. Stillness,
until it starts again.
The heart, you see, is the usual voice.

Until it ends. Then
all prelude turns to usher
stillness in.
The sheets for grasping illness in.
Then waking in the room
designed by death
to dress you in.
The heart, you see, is the usual voice.

The heart, you see, is the usual voice.
I cannot wait too long,
my convalescent blood is thin.
I write this, then.
I call you out to enter in.
Until you do
the heart conserves,
it waits for you,
I'll write again.

Lucille Palmer, who moved to Yuba County back in 2006, takes an old English proverb and creates a new way of looking at it.

New pain drives out old pain
new grief drives out old grief.
One nail drives out another nail
but love to love gives no relief.

Gaultier Bonami feels a kinship with that bear of an American poet, the patron saint of male nurses: Walt Whitman. Here is Bonami's love letter to his favorite American poet:

PHILOSOPHICAL TRAMP

I am all and everything.
I am entire unto myself and wholly of others.
All that pants, grows green or is borne upon the air,
breathes, and lives in me.
All manner of movement, all that swells,
that sings, burns and freezes
is part and portion, shard and chunk of me.

The sinew of the oak is my sinew, my strength.
The matted fur of a mountain lynx,
the throaty bellow of a bull,
is my hair and my voice among my brothers and sisters.

The flowing of the mighty Missouri, the deep Ohio
and the Father of Waters, courses through my veins.
Every drop of sweat that falls when I labor
rains upon the furrows of this land,
drenches the prairies of this Republic.

Every morsel of atom in ant and antelope vibrates in me.
I am a creature of creation exhaling the breath God exhaled
stilling the roiling waters upon the world's first day.

I am the voice in the wilderness, the tramp at your door,
like a ransomed king or prince raised in wood and pewter,
I am apart from my kind but a part
o'erbrimming with riches, bejeweled in cloth homespun.
Your kindness to me is kindness to all
and all I inherit I give freely to you.

Titles can be as important as the poems attached thereunto. “Charm” is an Old French word from the Latin ‘carmen’ meaning song or spell to ward off evil. In Geoffrey Chaucer’s time (1350s AD), the songs of birds was called ‘birdcharm’. A nice way to ward off evil for the day listening to the morning larks and robins in the yard!

Now we have ‘charm bracelets,’ to remind us what is important, what sings to our hearts and minds and keeps the wolves at bay. So, it was with all this (and more) in mind when I put together a small book entitled, “Shoshana, her Charms.” Each poem has its counterpart in a charm that my muse wears upon her small but fierce wrist. So, as a preview to an upcoming book which will be published by summer’s end, here are two charms from her bracelet:

“IN THE KITCHEN,” AND “ABOUT THE YARD.”

SHE writes me notes,
those little things
that bless and lift the day
above the base and mundane sort
to fragrant vistas faraway.

SHE sends me news
of great import,
my heart resounds and sings –
missives mixed among the berries,
lines wrapped around the wings,
and, all Love brings

are little notes,
the moment’s news –
noted manifest of the day:
frenetic coaxing curlicues
calling to me – let’s run! let’s play!

And the second ‘charm’ or song:

SHE carves the air
in curves of sleight
indefatigable delight.

SHE marks the thyme
treads not with care
the grass relents everywhere.

SHE ties the vines
and thins the fruit that’s trellis-hung, to stir the root.

SHE ambles about the yard in
steps a goddess would take, intent
along the arbor’s rose-filled scent.

And when she goes to where she goes
buds bloom, leaves unfold, stalks harden –
and the yard grows.

Christal V. expresses
the angst of young love in

WHAT I WANTED WAS

I guess what I wanted was
for the flame of reality
to never wake me from my dreaming sleep,
as your hands full of words caress my mind.

My mouth spells the words,
the letters of love in the sand of nobility.

I guess what I wanted was
for you to never leave me
even as I wore out your lasting contract
of ineligibility.

For I cannot stand the silence
of my own mind
in such a small, confining
space of immortality.

GET RAGGED CLAUSE PUBLISHED

A quarterly literary and art journal for students and others interested in the literary and visual arts.

Submit your entries for the **FALL EDITION** of Ragged Clause via email to: david@yubasutterarts.org.

For literary works, Word documents are preferred.
For visual art, please send .jpegs.

Yuba Sutter Arts
624 E Street
Marysville, CA 95901

530.742.2787
yubasutterarts.org



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rj@originalrandy.com
530.218.8099

WHO WE ARE

Yuba Sutter Arts is a non-profit organization whose mission is to provide arts programming, education, advocacy, assistance and service to artists, organizations and all residents of Yuba and Sutter Counties.

**The official local agency of the California Arts Council,
its programs include:**

- Arts in Education
- Arts in Corrections
- Murals of Live Oak
- Veterans Initiative in the Arts
- Art Everywhere with 9 satellite galleries
- Applause Concerts
- World Music and Culture Series
- Cover It! Utility Box Murals
- Scholastic Writing Awards
- Poetry Out Loud
- "Ragged Clause" Journal
- Shakespeare Readers Theater
- Press Play Art & Culture Lectures
- Women's Creative Circle
- 3rd Sunday Jazz Jams
- Singer/Songwriter Series
- "Stand As 1" Open Mic Series
- Yuba Sutter Youth Choir
- Veridian String Quartet
- Shakespeare Film Series
- Families Learning in Play

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