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## ~~A TEXAN RANGER.~~

A gentleman, just from Richmond, gave the following account of these redoubtable warriors:

Ben M'Cullough's Texan Rangers are described as a desperate set of fellows. They number one thousand half savages, each of whom is mounted upon a mustang horse. Each is armed with a pair of Colt's navy revolvers, a rifle, a tomahawk, a Texan bowie-knife, and a lasso. They are described as being very dexterous in the use of the latter.

HARPER'S WEEKLY – July 6, 1861

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# Picking a DEXTEROUS NEW up VOICE in Country The Tempo from the ~ Music a country HALF ~ SAVAGE western Southwest

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*PICKING UP THE TEMPO, a country western journal*

February 01, 2008, number 11

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708 Chandler Drive

Garland, Texas 75040-7775

Phone: 972/485-0990 or e-mail: judygordon708@verizon.net

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*Introduction:* The title of this journal comes from Willie Nelson's song, "Pick up the Tempo." Since I am relocated in Garland, Texas, will attempt to publish this journal on a regular basis first day of each month to seek out new writers and bring back some existing ones.

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*Contents:*

Roxy Writes – Making Sense ... by Roxy Gordon [edited by Judy Gordon],

Ranger Rita Writes – A Review of My Sister's Keeper, by Jodi Picolt ... ,

Carol Gerhauser Writes – Summer Travel, CH. II ... ,

Observations Of Wild Life, with Jennifer Kidney – Global Warming ... ,

Art Coelho Writes – A Fishtailing Soul With Nothing To Lose ... ,

**Karen X Writes – The All ... ,**  
**Rick Sikes Writes – The Troubadour's Woman ... ,**  
**Peter O'Brien Writes – Ice Cold Coke ... ,**  
**Roy Hamric Writes – Six Short Breaths ... ,**  
**Wes McGhee Writes – (Watching The Moon Over) Ciudad Acuña ... ,**  
**Judy Gordon Paints – Red Armed Panther ... ,**  
***Entertainment Checkout Roger's ITINERARY and SUNDAY, 3-6 P.M. LISTEN***  
***TO JAZZ RADIO By ROGER BOYKIN, RADIO STATION KKDA 730 AM ... ,***  
***SPECIAL NEWS ON STEADYBOY RECORDS—NEW CD ... ,***  
***\*\*HEARTS ON FIRE\*\*—LANEY YARBER—FIREHOUSE GALLERY... ,***  
***\*\*A MEMORIAL MOMENT for JOHN STEWART with THE KINGSTON TRIO\*\****  
***CD Reviews by Judy Gordon\* and Carol Gerhauser+ ... ,***  
***Classifieds/Links***

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***Edited and Produced by Judy Gordon***

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## **ROXY WRITES**

"Making Sense"

The Magic / The Art / The Artist

by Roxy Gordon – © 2008, "Making Sense" [Edited by Judy Gordon]

Thanks to Terry Allen's—*China Night, 1985*

and Peter O'Brien's—*Omaha Rainbow 37, Winter 1985*

**"MAKING SENSE"**

**The Magic / The Art / The Artist**

1. The Magic

The ancient and still most valid function of any art is magic. Western European / American white people and those others not-so-white who have bought the concept have a lot of trouble with magic. They largely do not believe in magic and if some might, most still do not care to be affected by such. Magic is to be avoided because magic alters order. Magic changes. These people like the things the way they are. These people try to quit smoking and they try to drink less; they jog; they wear their seatbelts; they keep away from red meat. They don't want to wake up some tomorrow with cancer or even fat thighs. The best surprise, so said the motel chain, is no surprise at all.

Don't ever say never, my mama says, it might just change to will. The generation that grew up in this country just following World War II and the Korean War was a generation bred for no surprise. By the time it was reaching some sign of maturity, the early sixties, the future lay long out like a sparkling, uncongested urban freeway. Nuclear war was a forgotten fear of the fifties; hunger was a banished demon of the thirties. Polio was conquered; cancer couldn't be far behind. Technology would take over the dirty jobs. We'd all have a boat to go water skiing. Who would want to change any of that?

Lyndon Johnson, perhaps. The bad and the good of the sixties can rightfully be

attributed to many sources, but in none is so much centered as in Lyndon Johnson. Perhaps the man himself was a magician; he was the agent for some serious change. In his own search for order, he blew hell out of the order of that post-wars generation. Instead of a ski-boat, they found a rice paddy. They got their legs and their arms and their very goddamned heads blown off. AND IT WASN'T SUPPOSED TO BE THAT WAY!

They found their rightside-up world turned right upside down. Many of them still haven't recovered. They want, they say, for America to welcome them home. Which America is that? There is another America, not nearly so well-lit, not nearly so clean, not anywhere near so ordered, where SnowWhite's world has always been upside down—where the future was never a sparkling urban freeway, but instead some dirty old dirt road that winds off into the desert among generations of empty beer cans. That America hardly noticed they were gone. The difference in a KACHINA NIGHT and a CHINA NIGHT is just two unlit neon letters in an adobe bar window.

Out in New Mexico, the deep wise old blood always knew surprise was always just around the corner and the deep wise old blood always knew disaster was likely to do the surprise. No matter how pretty and young and white you start out, you end up smudged and blackened and wrinkled like the Badlands—likely blown to bits several times and patched each because there's nothing else to do except die—and you'll do that soon enough. Living another day in the Badlands is a kind of victory. Who knows about old age? Was that Asian war different from any other war? All wars take young men and blow them to bits. All wars leave glassy-eyed parents and confused wives. Why did that war seem to leave such long-lasting scars? Because America lost, do you suppose? Ah, Americans are used to loosing wars. Go hang out in the (KA)CHINA NIGHT and ask that brown-skinned guy over there, the one with sideburns and a moustache and straw hat, ask him which side his great-great grandfather was on. Ask that other guy over there, the one with braids. Ask the kid shooting pool, the one with wheat straw hair and washed-out blue eyes. Ask him which color uniform his great-great grandfather wore in that war back east long ago.

Loosing isn't new to Americans.

So if the long black wall is a monument to this lost war, then is the (KA)CHINA NIGHT a monument to all lost wars? Let's get a little stranger. Are, indeed, any wars won or lost at all? William Faulkner said, "They are not even fought. The field only reveals to man his own folly and despair, and victory is an illusion of philosophers and fools." Let's get even stranger. Are there any wars at all? Doesn't the existence of war prove the existence of peace? Where the hell is the peace? The past and present of all mankind seems to be conflict. Certainly the story of this continent's acquaintance with the Western European whiteman has been one of continuing war. He warred himself all the way across it and, though its something of a cliché to say that VietNam was just another Indian war, as in most clichés, there is contained here a great deal of truth. Certainly the United States went to VietNam to take it's own political, social, economic and anthropological vision to those political savages who of course had none. Lyndon Johnson and his buddies sought to IMPOSE ORDER.

The war? Which war? The artist in the coffee shop in Fresno said his view of the war was not political, but personal. He saw what it did to people. That's true of All-The-War of course; politics is the highly imprecise science of guessing the future and second-guessing the past. The kid with the roadrunners tattooed on the backs of his legs is just as dead

whether his death was planned-for or unplanned-for-and-rationalized.

The artist was asked what the art meant. The artist, as expected, tried to say something. Nice ladies smiled at him while he spoke. Art, of course, don't mean a thing. Art is. Good art affects change. Life itself affects change. Lame Deer said, "We are a part of the nature around us, and the older we get the more we come to look like it. In the end we become part of the landscape with a face like the Badlands."

Approach that bar in the Badlands with caution. They've got live rattlesnakes in there. A Kachina really isn't a doll. A Kachina is really a spiritual being that comes to somehow inhabit a mortal man who dresses to resemble the being. The Kachina Night is long and dark with neon flashing on broken bottles and empty beer cans, god knows, and deserted dice and broken combs and used condoms; it is a night filled with unformed neon reflections on deep wise blood glimpses of the Other Side—of WHAT IS.

Approach that bar with caution. They've got live rattlesnakes in there. Some concrete Mother Mary stands on a snake out front.

I said to the artist, "I'd rather just stand at the front and look at the bar than go around to the other side and see SnowWhite's upside down world." I said, "I been trying to avoid that side all my life."

But the bar is full of live rattlesnakes!

Well, of course the bar is full of live rattlesnakes. Who the hell ever suggested otherwise? Maybe if you're lucky, some Mother Mary might step on one for you—but don't count on it. Living is dangerous to your health.

## 2. The Art

The room is darkest grey/black with neon signs: DON'T MEAN A THING and NEVER HAPPEN. One of these signs is at the front of the room, one is at the back. The bar is a New Mexico-blue, sort of—plastered, adobe-like. It faces forward in the dark room. Across the front of the bar are painted Kachinas. The entrance to the bar is a smudged screen door; that's to your right as you stand in front. To your left, on the front of the bar, is a window hung with an old American flag for a curtain. This is a flag when the stars were still stacked instead of staggered. Mexican/New Mexican windowsill icons sit on the window. A neon sign in the middle of the window used to say KACHINA NIGHT, but with the KA no longer burning, now it says CHINA NIGHT. On the end of the building to your left as you stand in front, is painted the large face of an Indian like on a tourist truck stop. At the other end is a rattlesnake with rattles rattling and a sign that says you can see them live.

Go around behind and find the back of the construction open. A room is upside down there, a pretty much normal American room with an easy chair and a lamp. And standing on the floor—which is of course actually the ceiling upside down if the other stuff is on the floor, are SnowWhite and all Seven Dwarfs. The Dwarfs, with yellow flesh and grey clothing, do what the Seven Dwarfs are generally supposed to do. SnowWhite, who is all white, is something else. With concrete horror on her face, her mouth hanging open, she is forever trapped in something concrete and horrible. These stand in brown dirt where a partially buried neon sign says, THERE IT IS.

All this is surrounded by a tall wire fence, the fence at the bar front and sides topped with coiled barbed wire like a war zone. The top of SnowWhite's fence is lined with smooth, unbarred wire. The fence encloses, around the entire construction, a truckload of sand. The sand is narrow and clear on SnowWhite's side. It is a littered yard on the bar side. A

discarded tire rests in front of the window. A sort-of-New-Mexico-blue concrete Madonna stands in: a sea shell on the right toward the front of the fence. She stands on a concrete snake. The yard is littered with twelve Coors cans. (The artist and his children had no food in the house so the artist and I went to the supermarket and bought some, and along with the groceries, bought a twelve-pack of Coors, a brand neither of us generally drinks, but did then for the sake of art, and then threw the cans into the front yard.) One Budweiser bottle rests there, too, and several Michelob because they served Michelob at the opening—the first night opening, I mean—the one for the patrons and others who could afford the barbequed steak and open bar. We smoked cigarettes and threw the butts into the sand. The artist picked up a ruined black pocket comb and paper cups from the street outside his studio and threw them in. The artist and I each threw in one of a set of two dice. We got eleven. The artist and others threw in crumpled empty cigarette-packs and other miscellaneous human things. The artist and I discussed the probability and desirability of used condoms.

A tape plays. Ron Gleason and the artist and I read the artist's writings about Youth in Asia and Youth in New Mexico—poems of disorientation and the story of the roadrunner. Between and around those readings are portions of recorded music. Music from VietNam and from Mexico. Jimi Hendrix and George Jones. Creedence Clearwater. Little Feat. Townes Van Zandt doing "Pancho and Lefty."

The first night opening, the one with the expensive sit-down meal and open bar, I am sitting beside the artist eating damn good steak when a lady leans over. She says to me that someone in the other room wants me to come stand in the doorway so that other somebody might see me without me seeing that other somebody. I am a little colorful for the Fresno Arts Center, I admit, with my hat and hawk feathers and braids and pierced ears, but quickly I perceive that the unknown somebody has mistaken my colorful self for the artist himself. The artist has already told me no one in Fresno knows him much. The artist is dangerously close to being an international art-star, but he is a prophet unknown in his own home. So I point to the artist and say, "It's him you want. He's the one who did it. Not me."

Next night, the opening that don't cost a thing, I come in carrying a half bottle of beer and smoking a mostly smoked cigarette. A kid comes up quickly. "Sir," he says, "the director says no smoking." So I pitch the cigarette into the littered front yard of the (KA)CHINA NIGHT. I go back outside for something and come back and the same kid gets me. "Sir, the director says no drinking." All I can say is its too damn bad the (KA)CHINA NIGHT is full of SnowWhite's upside down world. If it was full of beer and a jukebox, then I'd just disappear inside and get quickly drunk in Eastern New Mexico. Like I told the artist, I've been trying to keep away from that damn SnowWhite all my life; she's always messing up good bars.

So instead I just go outside. The Fresno Arts Center sits in a field of green grass with picnic tables. The artist has already told me that VietNameese come to these tables to gamble sometimes. Tonight I can see shadowy figures at the tables in darkness. I sit down at the nearest and smoke. A girl emerges. She asks me, "Can I have a cigarette?" I give her one. She has a heavy Mexican accent, and she is listening to my voice, too. She says, "How old are you? You look young, but you sound old." I laugh at her. She asks me, "Do I look pregnant?" She could be, or else she's done some serious eating and drinking lately. "I haven't had a period in five months," she says. I say, "Sounds like you might be pregnant."

She rubs her hand across her breasts. "I used to have big tits and a little belly," she says. "Now I got little tits and a big belly." I laugh at her. She says, "My name's Ruby." She wants to know, "Where did you come from?" I point out the Fresno Arts Center and more-or-less explain where I came from. She says, "Oh, I always wanted to go in there."

Remember I said, she has this heavy Mexican accent.

Oh God! Miracles appear in the strangest of places. God is alive; magic is afoot.

"Where you from?" I ask her, hoping to God in Heaven it's New Mexico. "Fresno," she says. It ain't New Mexico, but by God, it would do.

The girl is headed across the street for some beer. She brings it back and sits beside me at the picnic table. She gives me one. "Well, you gonna take me in there?" she wants to know. "If you wanna go," I tell her. "Will you buy me some whiskey?" she wants to know. I laugh at her. She says, "I don't like white people. They build these houses for us to live in, but I don't like them." She asks me, "Do you like white people?"

She asks me, "Can my friends come, too?" She shows me her friends. They are drunker than she is by a long shot, and male and not nearly so pretty. I expect they would fall over things. I'm colorful, but I'm not crazy.

Ah, (KA)CHINA NIGHT, where are you?

### 3. The Artist

The first night I was in Fresno, the artist and I got good and drunk sitting at his kitchen counter. We drank a lot of beer and his bottle of whiskey and we talked about dying. We didn't talk about our dying, we talked about all the dead we had. The artist, after all, is dealing with Youth in Asia. And he has recently done words and music for a dance piece, words and music he based vaguely on a steel guitar player I used to know in New Mexico—a steel guitar player who OD'd in the late seventies. The artist told me about his dead, Pete Duel and Lowell George and others. I told him about mine. I can't count them on my fingers and toes. Next morning with a hangover, he took off for San Francisco to take a look at how the dance piece was going and I stayed in Fresno with my hangover.

In the middle of the afternoon, my wife Judy called me from Dallas and told me Georgia Stafford was dead. She killed herself with barbituates over the weekend. I wasn't surprised, really. She'd tried before. Georgia was a painter and a good one usually, with ideas and concepts not unlike those of the artist now in San Francisco. I'd once been very close to her—close, hell, why not tell the truth? There ain't no SnowWhites in this (KA)CHINA NIGHT. Georgia used to stay with Judy and me and once when she thought she was pregnant, she said to me, "Oh we'll have such a beautiful child." And now, by Fresno sundown, I could see her dead of barbituates with puke running out of her mouth.

The artist lives in a very nice, quiet green neighborhood. I went out and sat in his yard. An old lady walked by. I was drunk again, and I thought how good it would have been if Georgia could have found enough peace to get that old and walk someday peacefully down peaceful streets.

But then, I thought, look at you yourself, you have a lot of room to talk. Here you are, forty years old, sitting drunk in the grass in Fresno sundown some thousand miles from home and wife and kids, mourning that disordered woman who never knew what to do anyway.

So what did she do? She painted and wrote poetry and songs of social disorder. Sounds kind of familiar. What does the artist now driving home from San Francisco do? What do any of us who portend to be artists of this disordered generation do?

Why has this damn war left such long and searing scars? Because it was a heavy straw of

several that broke the back of order. THINGS WEREN'T SUPPOSED TO BE THAT WAY! But they were.

If artists are magicians as they should be and if magic alters order, then the order we have to alter now is, itself, disorder. And most of us have become true conservatives. A nation-full has declared itself conservative now. It is not. These who elected Ronald Reagan are not conservative. These are just those who haven't yet seen the FREEWAY ENDS sign. They'll see it soon enough. They'll get out of their BMWs a little dazed and squint into the desert sun to try and see what's where the freeway should have run. There'll be that funny little blue bar, almost beyond sight . . .

Conservatives aren't interested in BMWs and endless freeways; conservatives cling to basics. We are a generation of artists searching for something godawful basic. I have gone back to my rural West Texas past and my older native past. The artist has gone into his own West Texas/Eastern New Mexico past—and done an admirable job of it. Lubbock on everything.

The artist now almost back from San Francisco is a true conservative. He is searching for a handle on the old wise-blood magic. He is an actor, as such, in this himself. By searching for the magic, he makes the magic. No that's not right. The magic is there. The artist is one who has sense to recognize it. The artist knows that surprise is all there is. The artist smokes cigarettes like he owns stock in a tobacco company.

The artist and I rode around Fresno in his pickup. We picked up junk to throw into the (KA)CHINA NIGHT yard. We drank beer. We told stories. We hung out till closing time in the (KA)CHINA NIGHT. The fat Mexican barmaid asked us where we came from. We said The Fresno Arts Center and we laughed, but we tried not to be too loud. The barmaid didn't get the joke, exactly. She'd never been to Fresno; Fresno's a long ways from Eastern New Mexico. The Mexican guy said he'd been out there working; he said they had some pretty strange bars out there. The Indian said no bar was too strange for him. The artist shot pool with the kid who had wheat straw hair and they were about evenly matched. I looked at the other stuff in the Fresno Arts Center and some was fair-to-middling good. But none of it was anything like this bar. I looked back over at the artist shooting pool. I noticed the Mexican girl from the park outside had come in. She had big tits and a small belly (hell, if you're going to work magic, you might as well get as much out of it as you can.) She smiled at me, but I was thinking about the artist. I was thinking, this ain't art. I'm not sure he makes art at all.

I think he makes sense, I thought. Then I smiled back at the girl.

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**end**

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(Coming next issue Roxy Gordon's "*Physical Education.*")  
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## **RANGER RITA WRITES**

**A review of *My Sister's Keeper*, by Jodi Picoult**

(\*\*)

by Rita Webb

*My Sister's Keeper* is the story of a 13-year-old girl, asked by her parents to donate a kidney to her sister who is dying of leukemia. The 13-year-old rebels and hires a lawyer to file a medical emancipation lawsuit against her parents. She only has \$136, so the

lawyer takes her case *pro bono*. The girls' father is a fireman, and their brother is an arsonist. Gore and body parts abound in this book, understandable, given the nature of the plot.

First, *My Sister's Keeper* doesn't have conventional chapters, a big plus in my opinion. Second, *My Sister's Keeper* has multiple points of view, which always makes for a better read.

Third, each character has his own special typeface, a nice touch. I suppose one could evaluate the fonts as they're assigned to each person: the darkest, most lugubrious belongs to the mother; Optima, to the 13-year-old girl; Arial, to the father, etc. That said, we next consider the quality of the prose. It's well-written and flows nicely. However, most of the characters talk and think like the same person, a smart-ass 35-year-old housewife. The only believable dialogue comes from the wise-cracking lawyer, the troubled older brother, and the mother (a 35-year-old housewife). There are many too-clever lines that should have been excised in the name of credibility. The main character is a 13-year-old girl whose vocabulary and viewpoint are those of a 35-year-old. It's hard to imagine a 13-year-old making such witty comebacks. Ms. Picoult should have taken more time in developing a believable child, instead of attributing such precocity to one so young. (Oh, but that would have presented a nasty obstacle to getting published as quickly as possible.) Certainly a 13-year-old could harbor rebellious thoughts such as this character does; however, a more typical 13-year-old's reaction to the situation would be to either run away or to contemplate suicide. The reader is asked to suspend disbelief, to accept that a 13-year-old would file a lawsuit. It's an exceptional situation, barely believable, as it is. But asking us to accept that a child could use such mature vocabulary and general level of wit is far beyond plausibility. For dialogue, this book earns three out of five stars.

One other thing: Picoult's fact checking wasn't all that great. For instance, a small BMW is t-boned and someone is killed. This is precisely the type of accident that the BMW is built to withstand. BMW wants to keep its occupants alive so that they'll buy more BMWs. Ms. Picoult should have done deeper research before she wrote that scene. Certainly it could have happened in another car make, but it's unlikely in a BMW. Furthermore, the driver was epileptic, which is to say unlicensable, and therefore illegally operating a motor vehicle. Add that to the cheap *deus ex machina* ending, and you have the final verdict: two stars.

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**end**

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Rita Webb © 2007.

Rita Webb's book, *Cruisin Central* © 2006,  
Tonopah Press, Richardson, Texas.

E-mail [Rita](mailto:Rita)

or buy *Cruisin Central* at  
Paperbacks Plus Bookstore  
6115 La Vista  
Dallas, Texas

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**CAROL GERHAUSER WRITES**

"Summer Travel CH. II"

by Carol Gerhauser, © February 01, 2008, Dallas, Texas

**"SUMMER TRAVEL CH. II"**

Pleasure aside, and pushing the doubts about the outside world—friends, family, ex-lovers and lovers to be—aside, I am fraught minute by minute with references to child-bearing, and rearing, as the end-all in life. Perhaps since the advent of man, this result of copulation has figured as the reason for being, but in the modern world such infinite posturing has been overlooked for the immediate gratification philosophy of pleasure in the finite products of a gradually deteriorating, like all things, world. Control, pride, and power are still the driving forces of man, but its rewards are either physical or in the minds of physical others—fame, recognition, popularity. The intangibles, for some, outweigh the monetary rewards as long as creativity, which is tangible, can be seen, heard and even touched. Meanwhile, the basic instincts of altruism—love, concern, gentility, forthrightness—are privy to a few, like myself, who know that their manifestations are never evident or secure, and only the selfish knowledge of the fact can be leaned upon as a by-product of a worthwhile existence or life.

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(Coming next issue Carol Gerhauser's "*Summer Travel CH. III.*")  
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Carol Gerhauser provided a collection of her poems entitled "Her Clean Up Days," in *Picking Up The Tempo*, journal – number 3, September 06, 2001. She can be contacted at e-mail Clgerhauser@aol.com.

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**OBSERVATIONS OF WILD LIFE, WITH JENNIFER KIDNEY**  
**"Global Warming" Collection Entitled CHANNELLING EMILY DICKINSON**  
© 2007 by Jennifer Kidney, Norman, Oklahoma  
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**GLOBAL WARMING**

It's an odd season  
of flies drowning  
in my glass of wine  
and fallen leaves  
littering the lawn.  
The calendar shows  
that summer has gone,  
swimming beyond  
the horizon, but autumn  
seems delayed,  
only throwing long  
shadows and awkward  
angles of light  
that blind me  
at dusk and at dawn.  
Winter birds begin  
to trade places

with summer visitors,  
exchanging dun  
for bright plumage,  
while the garden  
goes to seed.  
Yet it's as warm  
as June, tempting me  
to plant something  
that would be doomed  
to shrivel and blacken  
with the first freeze.  
I'm hoping for sweaters  
rather than sweat  
and looking forward  
to a cool October breeze.

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**end**

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Jennifer Kidney was nominated for Oklahoma Poet Laureate, along with twelve other poets, including N. Scott Momaday and Yevgeny Yevtushenko. Dr. Kidney's recent book, *Women Who Sleep With The Dogs*, published by Village Books, 2004, is \$10.00, plus in the United States add \$4.00; for each item shipped to an address outside the United States, add \$10.00, shipping and handling. Also available limited quantity of her *Animal Magnetism*, published by Wowapi Press, 1985, \$3.50, inquiry.

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**ART COELHO WRITES**

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Art Coelho,  
P.O. Box 249,  
Big Timber, Montana 59011  
**“A Fishtailing Soul With Nothing To Lose”**  
Resting on my laurels without any time to rest,  
and sleeping with the enemy without having to go to war,  
and giving away my poems when I should be  
assaying them out in a gold rush of spirit  
(or at least charge as much as the price of a good whore),

and looking for angels to cross over my threshold  
when I don't have in sight not one solitary door,  
and listening to the politicians when  
all the spiel is brittle as a mundane roar,  
and my skin so thinned by trying that a barbwire's twang  
slips through a matador movement playing with a bull's gore,  
and art that noble profession that has more dark  
in Van Gogh's one ear than all the ungracious oilfields  
that spit the turnkeys of oblivion like hate  
was a rocket with a light-year for high gear,  
and when I reach the end of the poem's journey  
and home is only the sense of keep on the roam  
(vagabond with stars sucking through a black hole),  
and a fishtailing soul with nothing to lose,  
and what I gain from solitude can't be saddled  
by any of man's truth, or the world's pleasure—  
maybe a child still flying a kite could measure  
some kind of treasure without getting the blues,  
but everything else has been killed by rules—  
freedom some kind of art-in-the-park freak show,  
a skid row of sorrow with only an orphan's beat-up shoes.

– Art Coelho

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*(Next issue will have Art Coelho's "I Did My Boogie With The Town.")*  
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*For Sale:* Art's paintings

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**KAREN X WRITES**

**PUTT no. 11, 2008 ©**  
**'The All'**

It is great to be loved,  
but to love?

To be chirping like a bird that loves  
the sun coming up  
A flower that loves it when it rains,  
and not too much

The colors that love  
any kind of light  
The wood that loves  
the ancestry  
of the tree

The tree that casts  
a dance of leaves  
To have kin so near,  
though a park bench  
it may now be?

The bed that loves  
your sleep  
The water that loves  
your drink

The people that let you  
watch them,  
The people  
that watch you?

What you imagine you share  
in a stare..  
The spoon that loves  
to stir

The book that loves its pages  
and holds them tight  
in its arms  
The spirits of the Dead,  
Did love die  
when they did?  
The truth that loves  
to surface

The journeys that love  
us to pieces  
The pieces apart  
and attracted  
to a whole

Or picked up piecemeal, loved  
individually,  
The splinters of the self, divided,  
multiplied,  
Physically altered,  
but never wavering  
in the soul's composition.

The composition that loves  
your soul  
The soul that loves  
you

The you that love  
them  
The Them that is You

The All that is The It,  
The Them, with You  
The All is nothing more  
than nothingness  
plus All

Deathlessness,  
birthlessness  
Living, Dead,  
and In-Between.  
The shining of nothing  
in a hole

The hair that grows  
down a river  
The river that perches  
on a tree  
The tree made into a TV  
The TV that is  
nature  
The nature that is the  
furniture

The silence  
that speaks  
The ceiling that rains  
thought  
The floor that cradles  
the heart  
The walls that cheat  
the feet  
Start to finish,  
Finish to be started.  
The In-Between  
bleeding  
into opposite attractions  
All Of It!

The eye of the daisy  
while staring at the face  
of the chair's air  
The choir of voicelessness  
The danceless rhythm  
The unseeable obvious  
The oblivion of the known

The power involved in  
remaining weak  
The cowardice  
of the powerful  
It is great to be loved,  
but to Love  
Be on Fire like a cube  
of Ice  
Dance like a door Jam

Throw Light like the Curtain  
Vacuum like the Rain  
Publish the Sun  
Fax the Clouds.

Fly like a Grave  
Spray like a Solid  
Light up a Glass of Milk!  
Pressure a Void

Refuse and accept  
Everything  
Simultaneously!

It's not All or Nothing.  
It's Everything.  
That's Nothing:  
Be the Problem  
and its Solution  
Be as Empty  
as you are Full.  
Be a Dimensional Plane.  
Be Dimensionless.

Be Aimlessly  
Passionate.  
Be Passionately  
Aimless.  
Loose the Answer.  
Find the Question.  
Dawn is never wrong.

====  
end

=====

**KAREN X**

Registered Yoga Teacher  
and Writer at Large

[KXatlarge@aol.com](mailto:KXatlarge@aol.com)

<http://hometown.aol.com/kxatlarge/>

WOWAPI PRESS, 1993, published

***TENDER BLUE FLICKERS,***

by Karen X.

See other connections: [[www.priyayoga.net](http://www.priyayoga.net) and  
**Karen X presents: [www.wordspace.texas.org](http://www.wordspace.texas.org).],**

=====

**RICK SIKES WRITES**

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**THE TROUBADOUR'S WOMAN**

By: Rick Sikes © February 01, 2008

When I was weary and the road was long

You gave me a song

When I felt I'd traveled my last weary mile

You gave me a smile

When there seemed no tunes left on my old guitar

I needed a melody, there you were

I sang of sorrow and hard times

But, found you easy on my mind  
I had done all I could think to do  
You gave me ideas fresh and new  
I grew restless and unsure  
Your understanding made me secure  
They say a man's song is his soul  
You are the story I have told  
"Let us have a good day today, for we are making memories for the future, with each  
passing day."

=====

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Phone: 325/625-5014

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*Rhythm Rebel*, © by Rick Sikes' chapbook,  
published by **Wowapi Press**, 1996, 2001, inquiry.

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## **PETER O'BRIEN WRITES**

**"Ice Cold Coke"**

by Peter O'Brien © February 01, 2008, Surrey, England

**"ICE COLD COKE"**

Back around '55,  
ten years after the war,  
we went to Saturday dances  
at the Wolvercote Village Hall.  
Me and friends from school,  
some girls we used to know,  
others we'd like to know better  
but with them it was touch and go.  
We'd stand around looking cool,  
in fact we were nervous as hell  
on our side of that hall  
and the girls on theirs could tell.  
Eventually things got going,  
gave the girls you fancied a glance.  
A record was played you liked,  
it was time to take your chance.

When it came to the last waltz  
they finally dimmed the lights.  
You'd pray you had someone  
to dance with and hold real tight.  
I'd leave with my best friend,  
we had quite a way to go,  
lying about what happened  
when the lights were low.  
Cycled up Headington Hill  
on our Raleigh bikes  
with three speed Sturmey Archers,  
heading home late at night.  
We stopped at the red machine,  
like a spaceship standing tall.  
Put our coins in the slot,  
waited for the bottles to fall.  
And I'm here to tell you,  
I promise you this is no joke,  
nothing on earth tasted better  
than that ice cold Coke.  
Back around '55,  
ten years after the war,  
nothing tasted better  
than ice cold Coke.

===

**end**

=====  
Peter O'Brien is an author and publisher, *Omaha Rainbow*, and under his  
*Sun Storm Records*, launched Roxy L. Gordon's music.  
(Coming next issue Peter O'Brien's "*Skiffle Kings*.")  
=====

## **ROY HAMRIC WRITES**

### **Six Short Breaths**

Mountain trail—breath  
Going up, going down  
Deep lake below.

Tear down the fences  
leave the gates.

Draw a slow breath  
Taste delicious nothing  
From your asshole,  
To your brain.

Coming to the end  
Of the sex race,  
Animal breaths—  
My nose is on fire.

I cut the grass—  
Green smells &  
Nightfall  
Stars  
A child  
Again.

Rock on the ground  
Moon in the cosmos—  
Breathe this.

===

**end**

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Roy Hamric was the editor of the former weekly newspaper, *The Desert-Mountain Times*, in Alpine, Texas. He edited a collection of newspaper columns, *Archer Fullingim: A Country Editor's View of Life*, which won the Texas Institute of Letters best work of journalism award in 1976, and he took the photographs for *The Big Thicket*. For many years, he took photographs which regularly appeared in Wowapi publications.

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**WES MCGHEE WRITES**

***Blue Blue Night***

**"(Watching The Moon Over) Ciudad Acuña"**

by Wes McGhee – © February 01, 2008, England, Great Britain

**"(Watching The Moon Over) Ciudad Acuña"**

Watching the moon over Ciudad Acua  
Got the radio on – and they're playing a tune  
But it's fading – fading away.  
I'm in the mood for some Sunny Ozuna –  
"I'm a Fool to Care", "Talk to Me", "Think it Over"  
Or maybe – "Judgement Day".  
So twice around the Alamo  
That's the lucky touch I like.  
Then south towards Del Rio  
Where Conjuntos play all night.

*Chorus*

*Oh – whad'ya know!*

*I'm back in Del Rio again,*

*Watching the moon over Ciudad Acuña again.*

I'm gonna get me some Carne Guisado,  
A couple of beers and then head for the border

Where cantinas never close.  
The song on the radio couldn't be sweeter,  
Later tonight if I'm lucky I'll meet her,  
My sweet Mexicali rose.  
And all the señoritas know  
How to drive a poor boy wild.  
The mezcal and tequila flow  
Like it's goin' outa style.

*Chorus*

And all the señoritas know  
Just what to do and say  
And ev'ry Mexical rose  
Gets sweeter ev'ry day.

*Chorus*

Gonna howl at the moon  
Over Ciudad Acuña again.

===

end

=====

**WES MCGHEE** produced *Blue Blue Night*, recorded and mixed at Glebe Studio,  
Great Hillingbury, Bishops Stortford, Herts—CM227TY, England, Great Britain,  
[contact: wes.mcghee@hotmail.co.uk]

=====

## **JUDY GORDON PAINTS**

**#2100**

*Red Armed Panther* media: acrylic on canvas, date: 1969, dimensions: 16" x 20,"  
current whereabouts of original: Private Collection, Garland, Texas.

*Judy's comments:*

Have this original painting in my studio in Garland. Used as my subject photograph  
provided by Photographer of the Plains, L.A. Huffman, in the book, *The Frontier  
Years*, given to me, and Roxy Gordon, from John and Minerva Allen, as a gift, when we  
lived at Lodge Pole, Montana, on Fort Belknap Indian Reservation, Montana, 1969.

This Cheyenne Scout, at Ft. Keogh, 1879, was sometimes called Red Sleeve.

He was very much a fancy dresser, but very quietly wore a small downy feather in his  
hair. When one shines a red light on this painting, painting becomes very realistic.

Learned this trick about using red lighting on my painting, when I lived at Lodge Pole,  
Montana, Fort Belknap Indian Reservation, 1968, through 1969. Had painting setting  
on my couch in the living room, and Roxy turned on our Christmas circular tree lights,  
discovered red makes painting become realistic, and painting would pulsate.

On a visit from England, Peter O'Brien photographed original; provided a slide for me.  
All prints 8½" x 11," archival matte paper available.

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end

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(Next issue will have Judy Gordon's "*Two Moon, Cheyenne.*")

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**ENTERTAINMENT**

**#100**

**LISTEN TO JAZZ RADIO SHOW** By **ROGER BOYKIN**, Every **SUNDAY EVENING, 3-6 PM**—**KKDA Radio Station 730 AM, Dallas, Texas.**

**ROGER BOYKIN:** Here's my itinerary: **Dec. 31st** at the African American Museum, **Feb. 22, 24, 26, 28,** and **March 1st** at Music Hall (in the Dallas Opera production of Porgy & Bess), **March 5th** at **The Sammons Center**, 3630 Harry Hines Blvd.(at Oak Lawn).

**#200**

Last **Fridays** of every Month at **7 pm:** The Priya Yoga Studio Contemplative **Open Mic and Reader Series**, coordinated and hosted by **Karen X**, sponsored by **WordSpace**. (www.wordspacetexas.org), 6337 Prospect, Dallas, Tx. 75214. 254-495-9976 for more info. **FEBRUARY 29, 2008**, features **KAREN X**. Open Mic: 3 poems or 5 min.— whichever comes first.

**#300**

*By Way of Vicki Meek*—**THE SOUTH DALLAS CULTURAL CENTER--13th INTERNATIONAL THEATER FESTIVAL, FEBRUARY 1ST-9TH, 2008,** contact her for ALL EVENTS: [msart55@yahoo.com](mailto:msart55@yahoo.com).

**#400**

**\*\*SPECIAL NEWS\*\* FREDDIE STEADY NEWS\*\* TUE—FEB. 19, 2008,** is the official release date for the new CD on SteadyBoy Records—**ROKY ERICKSON & THE EXPLOSIVES "HALLOWEN" Best of LIVE: 1979-1981.** [Contact: [fkrc@austin.rr.com](mailto:fkrc@austin.rr.com)] or [[www.myspace.com/freddiesteady](http://www.myspace.com/freddiesteady)]

**#500**

**\*\*HEARTS on FIRE\*\*—LANEY YARBER--On SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 10, 2008, 4-8 PM, FIREHOUSE GALLERY, 4147 Meadowbrook Drive, Fort Worth, Texas 76103— [www.firehouseart.net](http://www.firehouseart.net) 817-534-3620.**

**\*\* A community celebration for sweethearts and families alike with SWEETS FOR THE SWEETS BAKE SALE, a LOVE SONG KARAOKE CONTEST for the young at heart, and a love themed FUNDRAISING RAFFLE to make this heartfelt that will be not be unforgettable.\*\***

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**A MEMORIAL MOMENT for JOHN STEWART with THE KINGSTON TRIO,** check your Vinyls, take a moment to **HONOR HIM, PASSING ONWARD ON SATURDAY, JANUARY 19, 2008, SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA.** His long time, friend, **PETER O'BRIEN,** sends out **TOM DeLISLE, ALLAN SHAW, FOLK ERA/WIND RIVER RECORDS** notice to all of us **CARING FOR JOHN STEWART'S MUSIC.** John was born **SEPTEMBER 5th, 1939—68 years ago.** It is estimated he wrote more than **600** unique and highly personal songs. He wrote: "**Cooler Water, Higher Ground,**" one of his many highly personalized songs.

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**end**

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**FOLLOWING CD REVIEWS:**  
**WILL T. MASSEY: Acoustic Session**  
*by Judy Gordon\**

1. "Later to Live," *Will hits you with how its done, with his straight-ahead guitar strumming*, 2. "Two Lives," *And this is a hard way its done*, 3. "Alone with You," *Don't think it'd be easy without her*, 4. "Blue Shadow," *This glow brings you something that might help*, 5. "Biggest Horse," *Horse history in a small town*, 6. "Phenomenal Blue," *Unique way to approach sadness*, 7. "Leaving is What You Know," *This is something we've all experienced*, 8. "Curving Southwestward," *An unusual journey Will takes us, makes us want to go, too*, 9. "Drifter's Way," *We get the story right*, 10. "Letters in the Wind," *Folks—strangers drawn together, getting to know each other better, Austin has a WAY*.

Vocals and guitar: ALL **Will T. Massey**, *paying a visit like being at home*.

Contact: Alan Buller, (512) 442-6351—[abuller@earthlink.net](mailto:abuller@earthlink.net) or [will@willtmassey.com](mailto:will@willtmassey.com)

**RICHARD DOBSON: *Hum of the Wheels***

*by Carol Gerhauser+*

I have seen this fellow perform, and he does it with complete abandon, shows he can sing and is a deep-writing dude, too. So, there are a couple of ditties I can say have commercial potential: "Tryin' to Keep My Feet on the Ground" and "It's the Women Who Choose", way-good though melodically homogeneous. The love song "I Give Myself Away" needs more subconscious info on the lady for us to join in. Yet all, as is the mix, are good though not in good order. The last two songs are (1) a WWII? story called "Sant' Anna" who I could've sworn was a Mexican generalissimo in 1830 or so and then "Next Year Better", a sort of homage to amigos everywhere. From these last to first, in the title track, "Hum of the Wheels", his voice struggles to its erudite feet, and, being a Gordon Lightfoot fan, I and my love of tragedy wanted no country beat (this place is serious)—which love was immediately violated by "Magic and Danger", the third person artistic distance is not as clear as Jerry Jeff's "Mr. Bo". Speaking of spiritual arrogance, the other in this two in a row is "The Fairest Outlaw whose speaking the truth is a likable place for me but WITHOUT mentioning Mr. D outside a context of sin.

My personal favorites, which are oddly-enough slow (must be my moon child heart), are "Coyote Waltz", a trickster/Hermes/Gemini canine close to LA baying to reclaim his lost desert (my sacred fave) and "Ain't It like a Circle" about life runnin' us around, spend-thriftiness, and predestined one a days (my schemata). The two I do not like much, ahem, are "Whoa Back", a techno broadside that gets better as it goes until a tragically Greek Momma Nature screams, and a spoken word (another artistic deferential distance violation) "Who Killed Jack Rabbit" that breaks my heart with its animal cruelty (as in PBS on Australia)—like that damn turtle story. John Hiatt or Mark Knopfler he is not, thank God.

Contact: **Error! Bookmark not defined.** or [brambus@access.com](mailto:brambus@access.com) or [saltysongs@bluewin.ch](mailto:saltysongs@bluewin.ch)

[\*Editor's Note: This story about shooting jackrabbits was a moral dilemma discussed between Roxy Gordon and Richard Dobson—we all dealt with this growing up in Texas. There were not many of them left to use as target practice, as well to make a meal.]

=====  
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6. ***BREEDS,*** by ROXY GORDON © words & artwork, 2001, the Estate of Roxy Gordon \$10.00 book, #3700, 66 pgs.
7. ***SOME THINGS I DID,*** by ROXY GORDON © 1971, Encino Press, 127 pgs. See Amazon to order.
8. ***WOWAPI: ANYTHING WRITTEN IN ANY FORM,*** by Judy Gordon, poems, drawings, and photographs, now available Wowapi Press Chapbook, 2007, #4A \$10.00.
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10. ***LIVING LIFE AS A LIVING TARGET,*** by Judy Gordon, poems and drawings, a chapbook published by Marquetta Herring, Editor-Publisher, **PAPERBACKS PLUS PRESS, 1987;** limited quantity available.
11. ***PICKING UP THE TEMPO, a country western journal,*** current or back-issues. Go to Roxy Gordon's Website to find **ARCHIVES – www.roxygordon.com.**
12. **SPECIAL AVAILABLE – Wowapi Press brings CHARLEY MOON'S –**

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