

**Rita**

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**From:** "Judy Gordon" <judygordon708@verizon.net>  
**To:** "Taffy Myobe" <taffy@aohell.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, April 01, 2009 7:08 AM  
**Subject:** Picking Up The Tempo, number 22, April 01, 2009

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## **april 1, 2009 – no. 22**

### **~~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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<p><b>Picking up The Tempo a country western journal</b></p>	<p><b>a DEXTEROUS NEW VOICE in Country from the ~ Music HALF ~ SAVAGE Southwest</b></p>
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**~~ PUTT Ready for 2009 ~~**

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*PICKING UP THE TEMPO, a country western journal*  
 April 01, 2009, number 22

© 2009, Judy Gordon,  
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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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*Entertainment Checkout Roger's SUNDAY, 3-6 P.M. LISTEN TO JAZZ RADIO By ROGER BOYKIN, RADIO STATION KKDA 730 AM ... , BY WAY OF KAREN X & WORDSPACE bring JOHN DOLPHIN ALLEN ... , Writers' Garret brings RICHARD PRICE ... , CD Reviews by Judy Gordon\* and Carol Gerhauser+ ..., EDITOR BRINGS BACK PUTT MONTHLY FIRST DAY ... , Classifieds/Links*

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*Edited and Produced by Judy Gordon*

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**ROXY WRITES APRIL 01, 2009**

"Steve Young is a Southerner" Part One  
 by Roxy Gordon – © 2009, "Steve Young is a Southerner" Part One  
 [Edited by Judy Gordon]

**"STEVE YOUNG IS A SOUTHERNER"**  
**Part One**

Steve Young got me to thinking about the South and the Civil War again—an occupation which once took up an awful lot of my time. My great-grandmother (who was in her nineties when she died in the 60s) was born in Georgia not long after the end of the war. As some old people do—old people who generally, I think, have had successful and relatively untroubled lives—she tended to ramble on—to talk quietly and unceasingly in the late morning and early afternoon. In the early evening out on the porch. Her father and her husband's father were both in the war and she spoke of them often, thinking, perhaps that the excitement of it would appeal to me as a child. She was right, of course. I have a photo of myself at 12 or 13 which I induced my mother to take; I have on a makeshift Confederate uniform; I stand with eyes, chin, and mouth set—as I'd seen in the old photographs.

The first piece of fiction I ever wrote was about the Civil War; it was for a junior high school class assignment; it was a showcase for my knowledge of Civil War equipment. The teacher had to look all those items up to see if they were spelled correctly.

But for some years now, I've lived in the West and made western myths my myths; western rhythms my rhythms—forgetting almost that the West itself is in a very real sense a product of the Civil War and an outgrowth of the Confederate army and dream which lost. Jesse James thought till the day he died that he was fighting Yankees when he robbed a train or bank. Two generations (or more if you want to take it into the 20s and 30s even with Bonnie and Clyde and the like) of westering men took up guns and horses in the way of their Confederate fathers and grandfathers—and fought the same northern and eastern money interests that the Confederate army fought. Who can say that Black Jack Ketchum being decapitated at his Clayton, New Mexico, hanging of 1901—being hanged as an example for the railroad interests to keep down further robberies—was any less a victim of the northern industrial army than was Stonewall Jackson, crossing the river to rest in the shade of the trees—dying from his wounds at Chancellorsville.

I said to Steve that I suspected the South didn't lose the war at all; that just because battles end, wars don't always end; that the outcome is still uncertain; that the South may well be winning after all. Steve said he understood, but nevertheless, he longed for a more real victory. He didn't want to see the South part of the United States. Steve said that on his first trip to California from Alabama with Richard and Jim, the folk duo he played guitar with, they stopped off at Joan Baez's house for Richard Farina's wedding and Joan Baez could hardly stand their presence; so much did she dislike the South—or southern whites to be exact.

Joan Baez apparently doesn't care much for an evil and corrupt United States government; Steve Young thinks one of the most important things about the Civil War is that it has been, so far, the only mass and armed uprising against an evil and corrupt United States government.

Steve Young wrote and recorded "Lonesome, On'ry and Mean" which Waylon Jennings did a little later. He also wrote "Seven Bridges Road" which has been recorded by several people. He's made two albums so far, the first on A&M, the second Reprise. He played in rock and roll bands in L.A., with the likes of Van Dyke Parks and Stephen Stills. He is convinced he was killed by an artillery shell overhead while leading a Confederate charge at Kelly's Ford, Virginia, on

March 17, 1863. I am convinced Steve is an honest man.

When you've been an actual participant in an event, then you most likely have more interest in it than the general public might. A medium in California told Steve he had been in the Civil War and told him enough about himself as a soldier that he was able to recognize his previous self as John Pelham, a young artillery officer who was killed in 1863.

Once in Nashville, Jim Terr of Blue Canyon Records, asked Steve why southerners all seem to look so unhealthy. Bad diet, Steve said, plus the fact that the cream of southern manhood was taken out of the ancestor game by Yankee bullets.

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 (Published by *Picking Up The Tempo*, Number 2, 06 December, 1974, Albuquerque, NM.)  
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(Continue Roxy Gordon's "*Steve Young is a Southerner*" *Part Two* to *PUTT no. 23*.)  
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**CAROL GERHAUSER WRITES**

**THE TRICKSTER IN ANDRÉ GIDE'S *PROMÉTHÉE MALCHAINÉ***  
*Part One*

by Carol Gerhauser, © 2009, Dallas, Texas

“Sometimes the road between heaven and earth is not open...whereupon the trickster ...steals from the Gods the good things humans need if they are to survive in the world.” “Tricksters [are] by definition,” according to Michael Dirda of the *Washington Post*, “... gods of mischief who are also the gods of artistic and cultural renewal.” In *Hermes the Thief*, Norman Brown says, “Like Hermes, Prometheus is preeminently intelligent, friend of mankind, a source of material blessings, ...and both try to change the way the cosmos is apportioned...but Prometheus fails.” Like with ritual sacrifice, human beings end up with a power they did not have before, and the Gods end up fed but a bit less sovereign. Not forgetting the dispute over the slaughtered ox with Zeus, “...whose mind is full of immortal wisdom knew and did not fail to know the trick...” humans have fire and meat, but because of the mischief they also get stuck with endless hunger, age quickly, and die in pain.

Prometheus's brother Epimetheus and he are representative, dissociated aspects—wise and benevolent; foolish and mischievous respectively (Pandora is conducted by Hermes to Epimetheus who

accepts her against Prometheus's advice)—but together the two brothers are responsible for the good and evil that follow the theft of fire. Lewis Hyde calls Prometheus a quasi-trickster as he suffers too much and is too serious. This novel transpires "...in a period not far distant from the release of Prometheus... left

bound in adamantine chains." The image of Zeus as angry at man or thinking mischief against mortals seems a bit strong, but as the story unwinds each character's fate and actions associated with it, less distinction between the message and the messenger can

be drawn. Prometheus in his eagerness to please finds himself with man, if only just.

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 (Continue Carol Gerhauser's "*THE TRICKSTER ...*" to May, *PUTT*, Part Two, number 23)

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**end**  
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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**

**"Athena – Coca Cola"**

© 2009 by Jennifer Kidney

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**"ATHENA – COCA COLA"**

A participant  
 in the poetry workshop  
 opined that Coca Cola  
 for us is like Athena  
 to the ancient Greeks.  
 Her statement  
 does not compute.  
 I can understand  
 the goddess of wisdom  
 with her companion owl  
 and sea-gray eyes,  
 her fondness for the wily  
 Odysseus and those of us  
 who can spin yarns  
 until the dawn,  
 but I do not relate  
 to a red metal disk  
 or the modern depiction  
 of Santa Claus  
 nor to the missing drug

the corporate name suggests.  
 The polar bears  
 in their ads appear  
 cuddly and content,  
 but I know  
 they are disappearing  
 from the continent.  
 Better to believe  
 in a motherless goddess  
 who represents  
 something as invisible  
 as human intelligence.

====  
**end**

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**Jennifer Kidney** was nominated *twice* 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.  
 Available **NEW** book of poetry order from author—***Life List***—**\$15.00 each**, or from her publisher villagebookspress@yahoo.com, To order each book, contact:  
 Dr. Jennifer Kidney  
 1232 Windsor Way  
 Norman, Oklahoma 73069  
 Phone: 405/329-3395 or E-mail: jen1kidney@hotmail.com

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**ART COELHO WRITES**

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 Art Coelho  
 Box 249  
 Big Timber, Montana 59011

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**"Flying-Pipe-Wrench-from-Easel-Gash-Over-the-Right-Eye Blues"**

Every day since I started  
 the nude canvas  
**Self-Portrait with Hay Rake Model and Sunflowers**  
 I've tried to get enough hours in  
 each day to make a showing.

But you have to understand  
 what I'm up against with my easel.

I should have sent it south years ago;  
or either like I am fond of saying back then when  
something was going totally wrong with my printing press  
I'd threaten to throw it in the Yellowstone River.

The problem is when you lift the canvas up and down  
the mechanism that holds it won't stay in one spot.  
This painting season is the worst year ever  
for my having to stop and fix the damn thing  
every time I have to move it towards the floor or ceiling.

Now it does something new, too.  
All of a sudden it slips—  
and I have a 3 x 4 canvas on it;  
and the wood I built it out of  
to stretch it on is made from two x two's  
instead of one x two's.

It came crashing down the other day  
from about two feet high;  
and like I told Linda with the weight  
on the easel it came down about  
100 miles an hour.  
Scraped my shinbone an inch and a half.  
Drew a streak of blood.  
Bled like hell. Had to put my leg  
up in the sink to pour that  
stinging brew on it called Hydrogen Peroxide.

And that ain't the worst of it.  
Now I'm paranoid. At the drop of a hat  
I expect it to come sailing down rapid fire  
guillotine style.  
I keep my legs away from where it might suddenly  
drop like an elephant afraid of  
a sack of peanuts weighing sixteen tons.

What happens is I have to keep putting  
this cotton inside the screw hole  
because the easel where the screw bolt  
is suppose to grab, doesn't catch anymore.  
So the cotton acts like a holding mechanism,  
but once you move it down several times  
and screw and unscrew it, the cotton has  
a hole bored in it and then you have to  
fill the hole with cotton all over again.  
Eventually the hole gets to a point  
there is so much cotton in it  
you can't screw the knob on anymore.

So, you get a piece of stiff wire

and dig it all out  
and repeat the process.

The nightmare part now is  
that the screw when you tighten it  
onto the wood of the easel...  
it gets so tight that you can't  
move it by your hand-strength alone.  
Hence, the new Pipe Wrench technique.

You put the pipe wrench on the round  
knob and tighten it till you think you got it;  
then you check it to see if the canvas  
is still sliding down the easel;  
when it doesn't slide  
you finally can paint again,  
but just for a little while.

This afternoon the pipe wrench slipped  
shoved my eyeglasses upward hard against my brow  
and nailed me right above the left eye...  
immediately drawing blood.  
I had to put pressure on it.  
Eventually triple antibiotic.  
The whole thing turned into a lot of time  
lost at my canvas. I told Linda.  
She looked at it.  
Thought it might need stitches.  
She knows how I hate to go to a doctor.  
She thought she might be able to put a butterfly on it.  
Not the kind that flies.  
The kind that is sort of a Band-Aid.  
I had to go to the Drug Store  
right in the important part of executing my canvas.  
I was putting the pigment on the nude's skin.

When I got back from the snowstorm downtown  
I got in Linda's beauty parlor chair.  
But the butterfly was too long  
and it wouldn't stick  
because I put a big wad of Vaseline  
on it just like the cut-man does  
when his contender gets hit  
hoping for heavyweight division shot.  
The way that pipe wrench iron felt on my brow  
was just like a right-hook from Rocky Marciano.

And it's not that I didn't expect it.  
There are a lot of lame things that I  
try with my easel. Like it won't go  
low enough to do the bottom of the canvas

so I have three 2 x 6 boards two and a half feet long  
 that I stack on top of each other,  
 but here's no room to put my feet.  
 I came up with another idea.  
 I put my work shoes on each side of the easel,  
 run a one x two from one to the other,  
 and rest the canvas on that.  
 That's a pretty good brainstorm.  
 When Linda sees it though  
 she's gonna laugh her ass off.

She hasn't asked me yet  
 why I have a rusted-out antique tractor seat  
 right beside my easel.  
 I need to match this old hay rake model color  
 that's part of my subject in my nude painting.

– Art Coelho

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**end**

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*(Continue Art Coelho's "MR. MELANOMA.")*

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**RICK SIKES WRITES**

**"TIME HAS ITS WAY"**

© 2009 BY RICK SIKES – 325-625-5014

**LADIES HAVE THEIR MOMENTS  
 DOGS HAVE THEIR DAY  
 THE MUSIC KEEPS ON PLAYING**

WHILE TIME HAS ITS WAY  
SOON SMALLEST MOMENTS  
OVERCOME THE LONGEST DAY  
THE MUSIC LOSES TEMPO  
AND TIME HAS ITS WAY

SOMEWHERE THE SUN IS SHINING  
BEYOND THESE SKIES OF GRAY  
ROLLING STONES GATHER NO MOSS  
STILL THEY NEVER STAY  
OTHERS FEEL LIKE SMILING  
BUT I FEEL THIS WAY  
I'LL KEEP ON LIVING  
'TIL TIME HAS ITS WAY

I AM A FORGOTTEN PART  
IN AN UNWRITTEN PLAY  
AN OCEAN IN THE DESERT  
A ROAD THAT'S LOST ITS WAY  
PEOPLE HEED THIS WARNING  
HEAR WHAT I SAY  
MY DAY IS COMING  
'CAUSE TIME HAS ITS WAY

===  
end

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**RHYTHM REBEL**

**Rick Sikes**

900 N. Neches

Coleman, Texas 76834

Phone: 325/625-5014

**Rick Sikes' CD's For Sale**

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*Rhythm Rebel*, © by Rick Sikes' chapbook,

published by **Wowapi Press, 1996, 2001**, inquiry.

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**ROY HAMRIC WRITES**

**Your Anniversary Medicine Pouch**

Wind/ A Black Rock/ Brothers/ Windows/

Chinese Red Hair/ Willow/ Ashes/

White Clouds/ Fish/ Secrets/ Knives

Repulsive Odors/ Sex/ Light/ Seeds/

Unborn Ideas/ Violence/ Roots/ Spiders  
 Embarrassed Smiles/ Darkness/ Maps/  
 Shoes/ Mountains/ China/ Spoons/  
 Baby Whales/ Snow/ Military Ranks/  
 Deserts/ The Big Dipper/ Menus/ TVs/  
 Hair Triggers/ Eyebrows/ Pajamas/  
 Locks/ Opium/ Burnt Photographs/  
 Cheesecake/ Politics/ Assholes/ Moons/  
 Eels/ Death/ Breakfasts/ G.I. Jokes/  
 Palm Trees/ Newspapers/ Bat Cat/  
 Horned Animals/ The Mafia/ First Loves/  
 Dairies/ Soap/ Sublime States/ Nothing

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**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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**KELL ROBERTSON WRITES SELECTED POEMS**

"John Wesley Hardin...#3" comes from *THE GOOFY GODDESS ON THE WALL*,  
 © 2008 by Kell Roberston, Southwest, New Mexico

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**"JOHN WESLEY HARDIN...#3"**

**For Todd Moore**

There were fifteen in the posse  
 and had me cornered but i  
 charged them with guns blazing  
 fists of fire because  
 there was nowhere else to go  
 and I was afraid. Hell they thought  
 I was crazy and I was crazy  
 crazy with fear they couldn't understand.  
 I shot one in the belly and one  
 in the eye, killed a horse  
 and then rode on with hell  
 at my heels. I guess they  
 didn't know that fear  
 turns us all into lonesome strangers  
 blasting away at each other in the darkness.

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**end**

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 Contact: *Kell Robertson, 39 Saltbush Road, Santa Fe, New Mexico 87508*

**MARY MIER WRITES****"February 11, 2007"**

by Mary Mier © April 01, 2009, Santa Fe, New Mexico

**"February 11, 2007"**

Woke up this morning to the sound of rain on the skylight.

“How did you like the Willie Nelson film *Some Enchanted Evening*?” he asked.

“Willie’s the real crooner. Fuck Frank Sinatra, I hate his voice! Fucking mafioso anyway.”

“Ah come on,” he said “Sinatra was great.”

“Fuck Sinatra! Too bad Townes didn’t get up on stage. Willie should of had Townes do 'Poncho and Lefty.' 'Roger Miller was pretty cool.”

“Yeah. I guess Willie was afraid of what Townes might do.”

“Well Townes looked great. Guess it had to be that way. If Townes knew he was gonna be asked to come up on stage it would have made him so nervous he would have gotten drunk.”

I started thinking about Townes getting nervous. Flashes of his sad face, sitting across from me and Laney at Roxy and Judy’s house. Quiet, shy.

“Nobody sings like Townes, probably the closest to Hank Williams really. Kell David is right about the lyrics of songs, how they have to be simple. Like the lines

'The Federalies said they could have had em any day,  
'They let em slip away,  
'Out of kindness - I suppose.”

“What a line - Out of kindness - I suppose.”

Ron sang me the line. I started crying. We sat in the dark bedroom, drinking coffee, me crying, for quite awhile.

“You know 'Tecumseh Valley,' wow, I can’t hear that song without crying.

Townes and Roxy both died at fifty four.

“Babe, how old am I?”

“Fifty four.”

“I thought so. Townes and Roxy died when they were fifty four, about six months apart.”

We kept drinking coffee. Sad morning.

=====  
 Mary Vaught Evans Mier lives on Refuge Ridge in Santa Fe, New Mexico. She is an actor, producer, director and writer. Her favorite game as a child was make-believe. She is an autodidactic having dropped out of high school at sixteen to travel the world. She considers her life experiences her most important asset as an artist. Many of her stories, including “*The Last Dance*,” began as vivid powerful dreams. Presently, she is working on a Sci-fi novella and a screenplay, as well as, directing for the Santa Fe Playhouse. Her short story, “*Ruby’s Dream*,” will be included in a collection of works by Santa Fe writers entitled, *25 Saltbush Road*, edited by Kell Robertson. Her first chapbook, *The Death of Mr. Love*, based on her experiences living in the Barrio Centro in Fort Worth, will be coming out soon thanks to publisher, Judy Gordon, Wowap Press.

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**KENDALL McCOOK WRITES – SPECIAL**

"The Dream Revealed"

by Kendall McCook, © 2009, Fort Worth, Texas

On a dark, frozen Tuesday morning, January 20th, 2009, my son, Clayton, and I awoke to the promise of Barack Obama’s inauguration day ceremony. Son, Jake had spent the night with friends in D.C. We were to “meet-up” at Farragut Park at eight., then “join-up” for our walk with thousands down 19th Avenue to the Lincoln and Washington monuments, where millions would gather in celebration.

There had been news warnings the night before about a congested city with the Metro commuter trains stretched beyond capacity, but Clayton had planned well. His friend, Jackie, a middle school government teacher, drove us to the first station along the Metro line. The train was mostly empty, but the next station saw the car packed. There was no pushing or shoving. Closer to the heart of the city, the mood seemed almost somber. Not sad, but serious. Anticipatory.

At Farragut Station, we flowed out with the train crowd in a gentle wave. Up the escalator we rode, and then we entered a world of Obama Inauguration Washington Post newspapers and tee shirts and pins. The dream was real, and the promise of a united states of America would soon be revealed.

We wandered with the tide down to Farragut Park, where we crossed the street and saw a friendly sign for the Firehook Coffee Shop and Bakery. Beneath Admiral Farragut's statue, his words called out in bronze, "Full speed ahead and damn the torpedoes." We walked along the cobblestone pathway through the park, and then we spotted a small crowd huddled around two young black men who were selling inauguration buttons for five dollars apiece or three for ten. I spent ten. Clayton bought extra for friends. I pinned on the blue and red dayglo face of Barack with the simple word "Victory" lettered across the top. Victory. It had been eight years since I'd known any kind of victory in America. My America, in vain ruin, my city circled and choked by gas wells and boomtown air pollution. Victory. No longer the hopeful cry, "We shall overcome," but the growing sense that, yes, indeed, we have overcome; the troops will come home from Iraq, and their families will somehow be restored. Soon, I thought, the future will be in the hands of someone who cares, someone who will help the poor, the disabled, the millions now under and unemployed, the homeless and the ill-housed. Someone who will care about the gas well poisons filling our air and sickening our people.

At the coffee shop we found a restroom and a place to wait in warmth for Jake and his friends to show. We savored egg and cheese breakfast croissants and cups of hot black coffee. Outside the bakery window, the crowd filled 19th Avenue. Soon Monica and Jake arrived with his friends Alex and Natalie. We threw our arms around each other in loving embrace, for love was filling the air and shining in the eyes of all the people walking there. A merry band, we joined the human parade to the Washington Mall. Waves of people rolled past a frozen pond where scores of ducks floated among the floes and swam easily in the open waters away from the shore.

And then we were funneled between the Lincoln Memorial and the Washington Monument, which rose in piercing white stone on the hilltop, where we're suddenly surrounded by hundreds of thousands of people huddled together for a mile toward the capitol, where, in two hours, there would be the oath of office for the people's President, Barack Hussein Obama ..Jake and Clayton snapped photos of the masses that jostled for a glimpse of the swearing-in – too far for the eye to see, close enough for the mind to imagine. Down below I saw faces and heard singing on the teleprompter that spread what seemed a hundred feet in the air. And I heard the voices of Pete Seeger and Bruce Springsteen calling out all the verses of Woody's anthem to the poor. Here were the words of the Great Depression, words for Barack Obama, community organizer and Kenyan friend to the desperate. These were the words from "This Land is Your Land":

"Down in the city, in the shadow of the steeple  
By the relief office, I saw my people  
As they stood there hungry, I stood there  
Whistling, 'This land was made for you and me.'

As I went walking, I saw a sign there  
 On that sign it said, 'Private Property'  
 But on the other side, it didn't say nothin'.  
 That side was made for you and me.

Nobody living can ever stop me  
 As I go walking my freedom highway  
 Nobody living can make me turn back," cuz, 'this land is made for you and me.'

The sun came shining, and I was strolling  
 And the wheat fields waving and the dust clouds  
 Rolling  
 As the fog was lifting, a voice was chanting, 'This land was made for you and me.'

As the song ended, I felt a sudden breath of claustrophobia, and I moved down the incline to escape the hilltop people. There on the side of the slope, a few folks lounged about on the grasses. A few read books or shuffled their morning papers in the gently- blowing wind. A middle-aged white woman pulled a silver flask from her wool coat and took a swig to warm her spirits against the cold. For a time, until just after eleven, I, too, rested on the grass, but the hour of promise was approaching. I stood to my feet and located a good spot to watch the inauguration on the giant video screen. The Marine band played while all the dignitaries strolled solemnly from the Capitol. Scores of policemen and snipers on all the nearby buildings protected the government from the threats of an angry public. Our government officials had grown accustomed to the hatred of the people. But, this inauguration marked a change. There was no hatred here. The hour neared twelve, and as I watched all the dignitaries drift down to the grandstands to witness the inauguration, I saw red face bloated Dick Cheney being helped in a wheel chair, too broke down and decrepit to walk. It had been eight long years for him. For all of us. Gone soon, I thought.

At exactly 12:01 p.m. a new day would be dawning. I stomped my cold feet, marching in place to the sound of wild-hat churchlady Aretha singing "sweet land of liberty." Southern Baptist preacher evangelist poser Rick Warren tried not to disgrace himself, but his hell-fire Yahweh vision seemed more disturbed than comforting.

Finally, there was an awkward but smiling swearing-in, and then the chant, "Obama," echoed through the people there gathered. Cheers from every voice, tears from every lover of human hope, human possibility. The long dark Bush night was finally over.

President Barack Obama stepped to the microphone and addressed a million hopeful faces. He called us to service and to freedom, speaking the word as if he understood its hard-won and difficult to maintain promise. Freedom from want. Freedom to attend college and freedom to learn a well-paid

skill. Freedom to buy a business or start a school. Freedom to pursue “the God given promise that all are equal, all are free and all deserve a chance to pursue their full measure of happiness.” The crowd clapped and cheered with warm, gloved hands. Obama exhorted and inspired us to turn from childish things. Then, the realization was upon us, and the people cheered and laughed and cried. President Obama had taken the reins. A new leader was driving the team.

Elizabeth Alexander, a Yale University poet, asked the question for the day, “What if love is the mightiest word?” Then came the soulful benediction from the Reverend Joseph Lowery, Dr. King’s best friend and fellow organizer who co-founded the Southern Christian Leadership Conference and marched down those long ago Alabama and Mississippi freedom roads. “God of our weary years,” he intoned. “God of our silent tears,” the weight of Martin’s murder remain ever imprinted on his long memory. Then, the civil rights leader of sixty years, always seeking justice and peace, recalled my old Socialist friend and fellow farmer’s favorite verse in the Bible asking us to “work for that day, when nations shall not lift up sword against nation, when tanks will be beaten into tractors, when every man and every woman shall sit under his or her own vine and fig tree, and none shall be afraid.” Finally, the reverend asked “in the joy of a new beginning, that day when black will not be asked to get in back, when brown can stick around...when yellow will be mellow...when the red man can get ahead man, and when white will embrace what is right.” Finally he asked that “all those who do justice and love mercy” say, “Amen.” Twice more he repeated the benediction. Twice more the people echoed the refrain. “Amen.” And “amen.”

Only then did the crowd slowly disperse. We walked back down the hill when a green helicopter flew over. Some waved the finger, others only glad goodbyes as Bush disappeared into his own Texas clouds of doom, gone to Midland, where paid supporters and sycophants welcomed the horseless Crawford cowboy home. Twenty-thousand loyal followers took advantage of the free food and music in downtown Midland. About the same crowd fills the high school football stadium on any important weekend. Two million had come to welcome Barack to D.C.

Down 19<sup>th</sup> over to the edge of Georgetown we walked – bought a hot dog from a vender and let the souvenirs go. None of us had extra money to spend. I walked behind middle-aged black women with tore-up shoes and worn sheepskin coats – walking lightly with a stomp in their march forward – on to the parade on back to the stoops and the sidewalks where celebration filled the bakeries and the coffee shops and the bars. Something real and magic filled the avenues.

We found ourselves at Jake’s friend, Natalie’s, and there were good people drinking tea. D.C young professionals watching CNN and laughing. I wanted a beer. Clayton agreed. Jake said he’d stay and savor the party. Then, crossing the bridge we found Georgetown mostly stores closed, the wealthy in the Four Seasons Hotel drinking and flashing their clothes and money. Years ago, when my wife Ginny’s father’s ashes were interred at Arlington Cemetery, I drank beer with Bob Hope, whose wife was my mother-in-law’s cousin. This time, I was an old cowboy in jeans and boots and certainly didn’t belong. I took a whiz in the gentlemen’s bathroom for old times’ sake, and my son and I wandered out

the door to find the people somewhere in a bar in D.C.

Just down the alley from Natalie's apartment we saw a sign outside a sandstone building with a chalkboard greeting welcoming Barack and Michele inside. "That's good enough for me," I laughed, and we entered a cavern of cheerful beer drinkers. Instantly, as if by fate, two stools were empty at the crowded bar. A flat screen T.V. greeted us at eye level. We ordered two beers and burgers with fries and settled in to the warm sensations of victory and hopefulness. A woman from Atlanta struck up a conversation with Clayton as I gestured to the screen where the Presidential Parade rolled down Pennsylvania Avenue. Barack and Michelle exited the bullet-proof Cadillac and strolled arm in arm to the cheers of good will heard there and in bars all over America, all over the world. The dream revealed in a walk of love. We drank a couple more beers and learned that the woman who hailed from Atlanta had just returned from an extended stay with her daughter and grandbaby girl. I said I was a writer, and she said her daughter teaches creative writing at the University of New Mexico. New Mexico is a small world, indeed.

We walked up 19<sup>th</sup> to the Farragut Station where we boarded the Metro. A young man on the seat across from us gathered two cameras in his hands. He said, "This is a whole lot better than Baghdad," he said, just as a woman in her seventies swayed through the Metro door. She swung a black plastic walker against the subway seat and threw her arms in the air. "I'm high," she cried to the celebrants. "It's a glorious day. I come all the way from Anchorage, Alaska," her words heavy with Southern accent. "And boys, let me tell you, it ain't no 'marywanna' gettin' me high. I'm high on Obama." We laughed, with her, but not at her, and when the young ex-soldier asked her about Anchorage, the woman smiled and said she loved it there. When asked if she ate moose, like her governor, Sarah Palin, she said, "I don't eat no moose meat, and I don't eat no bear. I got 17 frozen turkeys on my back porch froze since October. It was 48 degrees below zero when we left Alaska. Cold weather don't bother me none. She said she grew up in Florida in the segregated South and never wanted to go back. She said there was oil all over Alaska killing the oceans and the wild creatures. She knew Barack would save the wilderness from Sarah Palin's oil field ruin. "Sarah Palin ain't done nothin' to help poor people. But, she said was too happy right then to dwell on problems past. "Today begins a new tomorrow," she laughed. The young ex-soldier said change was already coming to him with a new G.I. bill and the promise of free education waiting back home.

The long drive from Maryland to Philadelphia found us in a long line of trucks and cars, thousands of us returning from the inauguration. At several toll gates, traffic was slowed for miles. We listened again to President Obama on a Washington D.C. public radio station. Nine Presidential Balls were being danced all over the city. A sense of peaceful satisfaction with our moment in history, our stolen moment in time, heightened our senses, gave us faith in the possibility of human kindness.

The long drive back to Philadelphia that night found us in a line of thousands returning from the inauguration. At the toll road gates, cars and trucks slowed for miles. We listened to President Obama's speech again on public radio still filled with the day's sense of peace. The dream had been revealed after all these years, all the way back to the late 1950s, when a young intellectual white woman from

Kansas fell in love with an African prince – a woman who would one day raise their son in worlds far from the Midwest – where he would return to first help the poor as a community organizer, then as a brilliant and diligent politician. I rested my eyes and thought of the connections – the jazz Beat voices of Kerouac and Kaufman – the respect for the arts and education which she and Barack the Kenyan passed down to the child of their universe. The respect for Dr. King and Malcolm X and Paul Robeson and Maya Angelo. I think of the Vietnam War and Mahatma Gandhi – the sense that justice can only be achieved peacefully. I reminded Clayton of the song we sang during the war, “All we are saying is give peace a chance.”

The Enterprise car van rode us over to the taxi that would deliver us from the airport to our room at the nearby Red Roof Inn. We boarded the van with smiles and Obama Inauguration badges pinned to our coats. The driver, a black man in his sixties working nights and worn from a troubled road, perked up at the white man with a cowboy hat and his son in Western boots. “You been to the inauguration?” he asked. “How’d it go?” We answered that it was a celebration of love and hope and especially peace. Our voices cracked with the recent memory. “I know it,” the van driver said. “I felt the same way when my daughter came home from school with the grands. I’d been watchin’ it on the T.V. When I seen them kids, I busted out crying’ thinkin’ ‘bout Barack and Michelle and their two little girls. Thinkin’ already about better times.

We approached the cab stand happy to have met another friend, a fellow traveler seeking the road toward freedom, seeking good will. We stepped down to the pavement, and waved goodbye. “God bless us,” the van driver called. “Yes,” I called back. “That’s it. You got it right. God bless us.”

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**KENDALL McCOOK, writer, can be contacted by his Email: [kcmccook@yahoo.com](mailto:kcmccook@yahoo.com)**  
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### **JUDY GORDON PAINTS**

**#3000**

*Indian Scout*, Media: Acrylic on Canvas, Date: Year unknown,  
Dimensions: Not given, Current whereabouts of original: Private Collection, Valera, Texas.

*Judy’s comments:*

Have original painting at my son, Quanah's place in Coleman County in west Texas. Color of painting is primarily black, with parts being grayish tones. Brush strokes are very obvious on available prints. Peter O'Brien photographed original during one of his visits from England, then provided a slide.

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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.**

**#200**

*By Way of Vicki Meek—THE SOUTH DALLAS CULTURAL CENTER, APRIL, 2009, contact her for ALL EVENTS: msart55@yahoo.com.*

**#300**

*By way of Karen X, WordSpace & The Museum of Nature & Science present JOHN DOLPHIN ALLEN on Friday, April 17, 2009, 8:00 p.m. at Museum of Nature & Science Auditorium, 1318 S. 2nd Ave (Fair Park), Dallas, Texas, General Admission – \$15.00, Members & Students – \$10.00.*

**#400**

*By Way WRITERS' GARRET brings RICHARD PRICE, novelist and screenwriter, Talk, Interview & Reading on Tues., APRIL 7th, 7:30 PM, hosted by Randy Gordon and Catherine Cuellar, location: THEATRE THREE, 2800 Routh St, #168, Dallas, Texas. – the WRITERS STUDIO SERIES.*

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**FOLLOWING CD REVIEWS:**

**KRIS KRISTOFFERSON, BILLY JOE SHAVER, WILLIE NELSON & WAYLON JENNINGS: *HONKY TONK HEROES***  
*by Judy Gordon\**

1. "Honky Tonk Heroes (Like Me)," *Full vocal by these heroes,*
2. "Willie the Wandering Gypsy and Me," *Willie's picking right on top,*
3. "I'm Just an Old Chunk of Coal," *Piano underneath, then all our singers tell the story,*
4. "Ain't No God in Mexico," *Waylon takes you immediately,*
5. "You Asked Me To," *Billy Joe's THE ONE, HERE COMES Waylon, then story comes,*
6. "Oklahoma Wind," *Good Indian song—Kris sneaks & what about Willie,*
7. "I Couldn't Be Me Without You," *There go the strings, here comes Eddy,*
8. "Tramp On Your Street," *Billy Joe remembers Hank Williams,*
9. "Easy Come Easy Go (aka Ride Me Down Easy)," *Willie ALL GENTLE, harmonica slips in,*
10. "We Are the Cowboys," *Then we get THE TITLE EXPLAINS—KRIS, WILLIE, BILLY JOE and WAYLON.*

Produced by Eric Paul and Eddy Shaver, ©©1999 Pedenales Records,  
Executive Producers: Willie Nelson and Freddy Fletcher.

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**DAVID NEWMAN: *FRONT MONEY***  
*by Carol Gerhauser+*

For the record, anyone who has heard *Front Money* knows it was a MILESTONE in local creativity; perhaps one of the few living documents of the great jazzmen in Dallas, few of whom remain. Fathead had a long, illustrious career having left Big D for the B Apple long ago. In his post-Ray Charles era (1977), he hung a bit with the homeboys, Claude, Jr., WA, Shagg, et al., and together they recorded this funky album whose “front money” disappeared (thus the title) and was picked up by WB. My having been “friendly” with at least one of these players has no bearing on this GLOWING review. Few locals even know the HUGE talent of aforementioned cats, so catch these COMPOSERS while you can.

A five-minute “Amazing Grace”—yes, the hymn—begins side A (no heresy here), and then are Fathead’s “Sneakin’ In” and “Still Hard” (a reference, duh, to his smash hit “Hard Times”). All the playing is terrific (by the way, Newman is a perfect flute-player—or that other word—according to this expert). Side B kicks it (way up, Tim). Claude Johnson, the best keyboardist around (call it unrequited intellectual love), wrote the title cut “Front Money” (shouts them all!), and the melodic groove of the A side continues with another winner of his, “Pharoah’s Gold”, as mysterious as drummer William Richardson’s life experiences. Roger Boykin who is on guitar (his first AXE) and bass and who helped arrange the disk with Claude and Newman (something they’ve done a lot before) wrote the last two fabulous songs, “So Fine” and “Suki Duki”, two of hundreds he has penned, by God.

Even if the recording never gained recognition or success at the time, Newman evidently thought enough of it to REDO and RERELEASE “Suki Duki” and “Pharoah’s Gold” on his second to last album, *City Scapes*, perhaps an undying testament to the talented friends he loved.

Contact: [soultex@aol.com](mailto:soultex@aol.com)

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***EDITOR BRINGS BACK PUTT MONTHLY FIRST DAY – APRIL, 2009.***  
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9. *THE ART OF JUDY GORDON*, by Judy Gordon, all prints are on 8½" x 11" archival matte paper, \$30.00, plus postage and handling.

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11. **PICKING UP THE TEMPO**, a country western journal, current or back-issues, on **Roxy Gordon's Website** – [www.roxygordon.com](http://www.roxygordon.com), under *Picking Up The Tempo*, you will find **Archive**.

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