

TIME AND PLACE

a cultural quarterly

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Ninth Floor Press

We are all of a particular time and place. The space we occupy influences who we are, what we think, how we act, re-act, and what we create. **Time and Place** is about capturing the creativity of a particular moment of the artist's life.

If you wish to contribute a piece to **TIME AND PLACE**:

There are no restrictions as to subject matter or content (the right not to accept a contribution is reserved, mind you.) Each contribution must have an accompanying paragraph detailing the significance of the time and place you were in when the piece was inspired, created, formed, birthed, or otherwise captured, along with a brief biography.

Copyright remains with the artist or writer.

Please send your submissions to ninthfloorpress@gmail.com

Contribution guidelines:

Writing: Words of any type (prose, poetry, fiction, non-fiction,) no more than 500.

Art: Acceptable formats are PC compatible (.tif, hi-res .jpg, .pdf, 300 dpi.)

Photography: Colour, Black and White (.tif, hi-res .jpg, .pdf, 300 dpi.)

Editor: Ed Shaw

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Cover photo: Ed Shaw, 2013

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Spoiler

I'm a commuter. Have been for the better part of a decade. No doubt some form of karmic payback for having spent the better part of the 90s rolling out of bed and walking to work at my leisure. Back when putting 8000 km a year on the odometer seemed like a big deal.

But I enjoy being in the driver's seat. Bombing between Hamilton and Waterloo—145 km return trip, 55 minutes each way on a good day. The relentless forward motion between compass points: east on the 403, north on the 6, west on the 401, then north again on the 8, and finally northeast on the 85 bypass. Reverse and repeat Monday through Thursday. Fridays are flexible.

It's a love-hate relationship. The hour-long drive can be productive: listening to CDs, organizing mental to-do lists, catching up on news or just daydreaming. Commuting is a psychological off-ramp between work and home. But when the days get shorter and colder I can feel the winter funk seeping in from the edges.

So I focus on details. There's an OPP speed trap at the Puslinch-Flamborough town line. Traffic slows—I furtively flip the cops the bird before speeding away. Merging. Westbound lane. Slogans on the sides of trucks: Load King, Another Cool Move, If it's on time it's a Fluke! A tractor-trailer has flipped over near Hespeler Road. How I hate Hespeler Road. Nudge my way over to the left lane. Accelerate back up to 120 km. I apply wiper fluid liberally but the highway miasma coats my vehicle.

Wiping the side-view mirror I manage to smear the grime into a greasy smudge that further obscures my visibility. I need coffee. In town, I feel the car begin to gently fishtail along King Street. The anti-lock brakes kick in. Phump. Phump. Phump. I ease over to the right. I'm not ready for this. I need wiper fluid.

So I drive to Canadian Tire. Park and let the engine idle. CBC plays in the background. I'm about to turn it off but the consoling voice of host Jian Ghomeshi calms my anxious energy. I kill the engine but leave the key in the ignition and settle in for the next segment. The gallons of noxious yellow wiper fluid can wait.

Snow falls as I sit there listening absentmindedly. The windshield has become my window on the world. People come and go. An enormous green tractor races across the lot. Lurching forwards, then backwards repeatedly at high speed—a bravado display of snow removal. A nearby sedan comes to an uneasy halt as the tractor rockets by. Oblivious. I tune back in to the interview. *Everyone's currency is their own voice.* I like that. I turn off the radio, grab the keys, lock the door and walk across the slushy parking lot towards the climate-controlled warmth inside.

Hamilton to Waterloo, Wednesday, December 11, 2013
10:54 am.

Ivan Jurakic is the Director/Curator of the University of Waterloo Art Gallery and a principle of the TH&B artist collective based in Hamilton.

Scot Cameron

Untitled, 2003



I often wanted to stop and capture some of the images on my way to work but I never had the time. One particularly foggy morning during my leave after my son was born in the fall of 2003 I decided we should go for a drive, partly to calm my son but, more honestly, as a selfish photo mission. I stopped at all the places I wished I had time to stop on my commute. It wasn't until we turned around to head home that I noticed this tree. I'm sure many people drive past this tree on Hwy 8 near Middletown road as I did hundreds of times, without taking note. On that foggy morning, it stood out in such a way I could not miss.

Scot Cameron is a writer, photographer, and skater. He lives and plays in Hamilton with his wife and two kids. You can find Scot carving a bowl on his skateboard or hitting the slopes on his snowboard. His current project is to document up-and-coming Hamilton skaters.

Collingwood

From the minute I got on the boat and the lake rose up all around me I felt at home. My grandfather had no chiding words to say, no jokes at the expense of my age. I was able to cast rod and sit still, thinking only of the grain silo by the bay and what that might have been like in his youth.

Three years older and hunkered down on the edge of the board; they couldn't teach me to dive. I knew that you pushed with the balls of your feet and kept pointed hands to break the surface, but I wouldn't let myself fall. Always and forever the anchor. My coaches were generous people, the senior swimmers forgiving. Drop, they said. Drop in and move fast.

Never strayed away from rain. Never turned down a chance to soak heavy things away. Water at five degrees in Algonquin in the lake basin, and I swam; one hundred, two hundred, those meters coursing across me like burrowing through ice. But then I was surrounded by pines as the sunset and everything else was nothing at all. I let the sight stop me. I let the chill of the water freeze my bones.

I'm afraid of drowning in the rest of my life, but here and there and in a hundred other places I can swim. I relate better to bodies that are one hundred percent water.

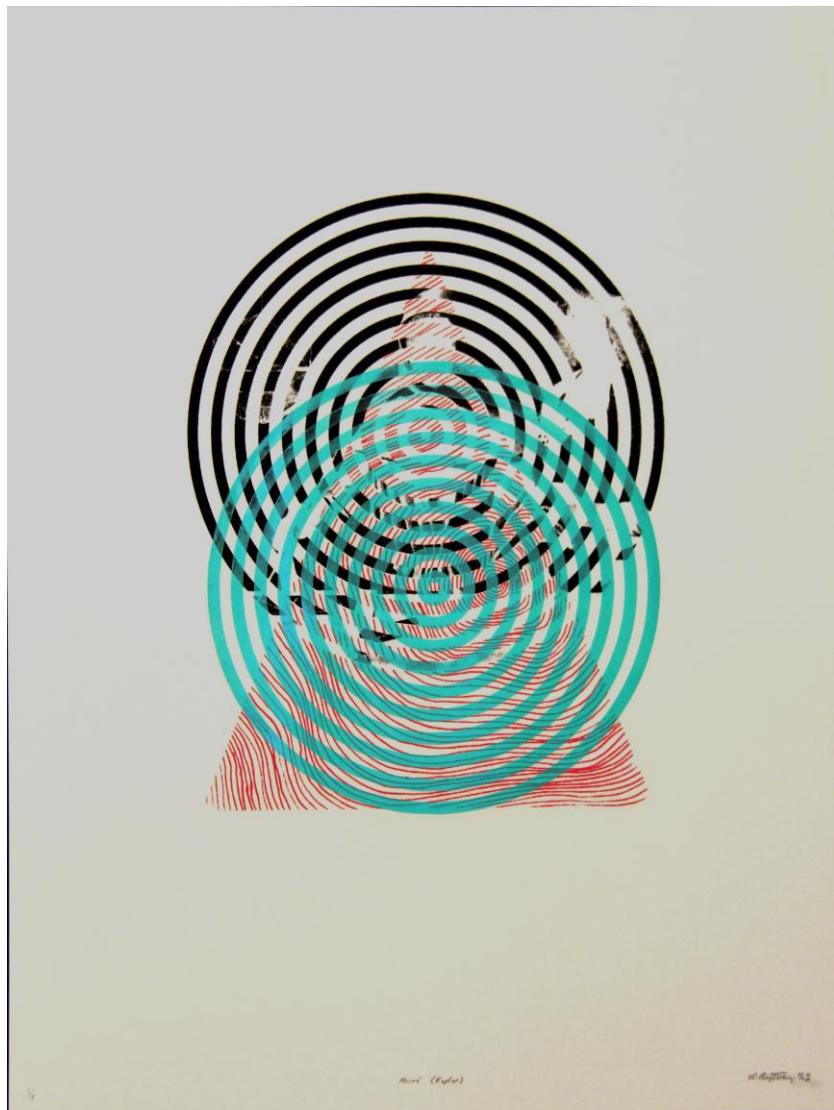
This story was brought about after having to walk home from the bus stop in seemingly all of fall's rainstorms, wishing that I had the time to go and see my grandfather at home before the year ended.

Alexandra Missett is 25 and was born and currently lives in Hamilton. She works quietly behind a cash register and noisily at her desk.

Her piece, "Fire", was the winner of GritLit 2013 for Fiction.

Kearon Roy Taylor

MOIRÉ (KEPLER)



My work more often than not exists in a space that is temporally dislocated; spatial distortions and interfering geometries form a strange archaeology that flits between futures and imagined pasts.

Kearon Roy Taylor is a printmaker, new media artist, livecoder, and independent curator at HAVN on Barton Street East, Hamilton, ON.

krtkrt.ca /////////////// havnode.com

Mimi Shaw

Disappear

I wade through water, I walk on glass
I drive through cities, dream up a past
I smell the ocean, I'm on the pier
As I disappear

Salt water candy on your fingertips
I wanna taste them here on my lips
I wanna feel you on my skin
Miles away from here
As I disappear

Don't try to save me now
I've spit and slapped the face of love before
It's not the way love is
It's just the way I feel
When I disappear

It's not the memories up in your bed
It's not the ghost up in your head
Slip out of nights and into days
As I disappear

Don't try to save me now
I've spit and slapped the face of love before
It's not the way love is
It's just the way I feel

When I disappear

Cape May, New Jersey.

Driving home from a ghost tour of this historic American sea side town we came upon a condemned building. Not any ordinary building but the corpse of a majestic, grand, old hotel. Emboldened by the earlier ghostly adventures, we stopped and hopped the fence. It was raining, dark, eerie and ominous. We walked around the building, we could see inside to the once magnificent lobby and huge stained glass dome. The whole scene spoke of an elegance and luxury of a bygone era: formal dining room with a view of the ocean, dance floor, swimming pool and a bowling alley. We wandered along the veranda facing the beach and saw broken china, painted wardrobes in a pile and chairs, some turned toward the ocean, others folded and leaning against the wall in stacks. It was the spirits of these people now gone that spoke to me. Their stories, hopes, and dreams appearing like a living black and white photograph. Their histories staring back at me. Soon the building would be demolished and the memories of what was there would disappear.

Mimi Shaw is a musician from Hamilton, Ontario. She is currently recording her debut solo album and plays the local haunts as a member of the Highnote Ramblers.

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Steph Seagram

Untitled, 2014
(Mixed media on mylar)



Saturday, January 11, 2014, in the afternoon.

I did this piece at my table of mess inside my studio in the heart of James N. in Hamilton.

It's a bursting swirl of graphite, charcoal, acrylic polymer, coloured pencils, tape, and a collage element of some data from a Toronto street map. As soon as I finished this piece I realized it had created a moment of significance because it answered some questions that I had been circling around on the 'how to' incorporate data and colour into this new body of work.

Stephanie Seagram is a visual artist and arts educator living in Hamilton, Ontario.

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Anger Slaw

(from what hopes to be an upcoming book “Cooking with Anger”)

Wait for the right moment. Like you’re downtown and bump into that classmate you used to have the thing for, and realize that they somehow magically have retained all of their vitality. Worse, their vitality has both deepened and mellowed; their psychic waft is now that of a just opened bottle of twenty-year old scotch. It’s not that you don’t retain vitality of your own. It’s just that, in the public sphere, your vitality spews hotly out of some invisible hole, causing you to flail around like an un-gripped fire hose, causing other parts of you to willow and deflate and sag. The waft of your vitality is more akin to the hot air coming out from the local indoor pool as you go through the doors.

Nothing has to be said between you and your old acquaintance. Your eyes will lock once and that will be enough. Wait for that moment.

Then go home and make lunch. Get yourself to the kitchen, but before opening any cupboard or refrigerator door, take stock of exactly what it is you have to achieve. Most likely you want to punish yourself somehow; you also desperately want to set your circumstances right. You want to create one meal that will eat like a penance, but also be part of a permanent lifestyle change, a religious conversion. I shouldn’t be too hard to throw that together.

Start with carrots. Carrots are humble, stoic things that lend well to urges of self correction and/or self flagellation. If the carrots are organic, then scrub them in the sink but don't peel them. Scrub them as Lady Macbeth would scrub carrots. If they are regular carrots, then peel them first. While you do this, ponder exactly what it is that you are removing from the peel. Pesticides? If so, try to imagine how one goes about spraying pesticides on root crops. Maybe you are peeling off an unsavory layer of dirt. If so, then ask yourself if organic dirt tastes better, and that's why you don't peel organic carrots. Then chastise yourself for veering off topic. The topic is you and the mess your life is right now and/or how better it will be once you've had a punishing, cleansing lunch.

Get the box grater from wherever the hell it has gone now. Ponder why it is you don't just declare a place in the kitchen for the box grater, why you let it roam around like a vagabond, a gypsy, why you only know where it is when you don't need it. Then congratulate the box grater for being a free spirit. Grate the carrots. Grate a lot of them. Much more carrots than you need. Tell yourself 'I don't even need my lunch; I just need to grate a lot of things. I could grate for hours'.

Find other things to grate. Grate half as many apples as you have grated carrots. Grate the rest of that horrible rot-resistant wedge of cabbage in the back of the fridge. No, wait, throw the cabbage out, you have no loyalties to the cabbage, you've done well by eating 2/3rds of it, that's enough. Tell yourself you will not let the cabbage haunt you. Find some fresh ginger and grate that. Lots of it. Stop when you've razed your knuckles for a third time. Admire the droplets of blood that have made its way into salad.

Go to the computer and confirm if there is such a thing as 'toxic level of ginger'.

It's not that your life is miserable. It's that just for once you want to be the well put together person who makes an old acquaintance feel like crap.

At this point, you should have a large number of grated things in a bowl. Add some cider vinegar and/or lemon juice to push it past the point of no return, to make it not so much a food as cleaning agent. And then enjoy a wave of remorse-- 'there's no way in hell I can eat that; I've just destroyed innocent carrots'. This is the low point of the recipe, the point where you must summon unknown reserves of strength, do some pretend yoga breathing, and pull yourself together. The salad is not doomed, but only you can rescue it.

Add a little olive oil and/or toasted sesame oil to calm the acid down. Then a plug of maple syrup. Then some dried cranberries. Then some sunflower seeds, and pumpkin seeds because of the article from the thing that said something important about pumpkin seeds. Mix it all together. Grind some pepper on it to assure yourself that you haven't turned your salad into a dessert.

Put some in a bowl and store the remainder in the fridge. If you've made it right, not only is it delicious and sanitizing, but you will feel the carrot and vinegar actually pushing out evil ghosts from where they have been hiding behind your eyeballs. It will in fact be so effective, the salad will scour away your resolve to change and improve your life; it will even remove the desire to eat anymore of the salad.

Hamilton, Thursday June 6, 2013.

I was downtown and bumped into the classmate I used to have a thing for, which lead first to cooking, then eating, then writing.

Tor Lukasik-Foss is a performer, visual artist and writer based in Hamilton ON.

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Sonya DeLaat

Pines of Bisesero



Bisesero Memorial Site, Rwanda, February 2013

The deceptive beauty of this landscape conceals the trauma buried beneath it.

Sonya de Laat is, among other entities, a photographer and a scholar. Her interests are in capturing people in their lived environments, and using photography for social awareness and justice.

Jeff Griffiths

Driving Home from Stromness

Driving home from Stromness takes me through Cayuga

The Grand River glistens
it's Victoria Day Weekend

In Cayuga it's May two-four and nothing more

Harleys rip by, straight exhaust pipes tear at my eardrums
grey-haired men drive flawless vintage cars

I recall radio ads for Dragway Park
the announcer echoing the words

"Dragway Park Park Park...Funny car championship
showdown
with special guest Penthouse Pet of the Year, Miss October
1994"

I'm out of town as fast as I drove in
the Grand River still shining

My friend Jim canoed here once and a boat full of good old
boys swamped him with their motor boat

My sister lives a few kilometers south of Dunnville, just outside of Stromness., almost at Lake Erie. Her husband was born in Cayuga and once said to me, "A lot of good people live out here...and a lot of crazy people too." Nothing could sum it up better.

Jeffrey Griffiths' short fiction has been published in Qwerty, The Puritan, Pithead Chapel, The Nashwaak Review, Front and Centre, The Danforth Review, and Hammered Out.

He received Arts Hamilton short fiction award in 2007 and 2008. He instructs Creative Writing 1 & 2 and Dynamics of Prose for Mohawk College's Writing for Publication program.

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Len Jessome

Spare Change

Standing on the corner of
King and James
crack pipe empty
Standing in the rain
Stains on my cheek from
when I cried
Cried this morning
Don't remember why
Please won't you help me
Spare change

Standing on the corner
King an Hughson
Sidewalks are crowded
Friday night
Spectacle of rainbows around the
street lights
Please won't you help me
Spare change

Standing on the corner of
King and John
Stomach grumbling
Buses rumble by
Protest is futile
Mumble to myself
Can you help me out
Can yah Spare a slice
Please won't you help me
Spare change.

Wednesday November 27, 2013 1:05 pm.

Watching the lost soul circus from my car near the meth clinic at John and King.: people hustling for change.

I remember this corner, John and King in the 80's. There was Record World, McDonald's, Sunrise Records, the Chicken Roost restaurant. People paid to sleep across the street at the Connaught Hotel. When you could pee in Gore Park in the downstairs washrooms. The War Vet with the bobby pin as an earring, He left his right arm in Vietnam. His voice a growl with the inflection of a pirate, "err spare change".

Further down King-The legless pencil seller sitting on a piece of cardboard outside the Woolworths, selling his wares.

All things have changed but many things stay the same
People still asking for change.

Len Jessome is an artist living and working in Hamilton, Ontario.

Teresa Karlinski

Tangled

It has begun...my worst nightmare. Myrna-Jo Bourke blinks and stares into the gas-lit fireplace. Nail-bitten fingers smooth her creased forehead. She frowns at a rap at the door.

A lanky girl, cinnamon hair streaming, soars through the finished basement to the Easy Boy and her grandmother's arms. "Why are you sitting in the near dark?" The girl squints and pulls back for a better look. Her small hand brushes the rough cheek. "Grammy, are you okay?"

"Of course, I'm all right." Myrna-Jo offers a fake smile and plunges closed fists into her lap.

Thin lips clamped, Lilli slips out of the light embrace. "Your cheeks are wet. Why?" Stepping away and examining the room, she flicks on the light switch.

Grammy's glance drops and rises. The half-lie slips out between wobbly lips. "I'm happy to see you."

The young girl leans in again and lays a warm satin cheek against her grandmother's. Arms steal over rounded shoulders and circle her neck. "No-one hugs better than you." Lilli breathes in the baby-powder scent of her grandmother's neck, sighs, and tightens her embrace.

"Can I help you?"

Giggles tinkle like tiny crystal wind chimes. "I almost forgot." Her nose scrunches. "Mum wants you to come to supper Saturday. For your birthday."

Myrna-Jo's eyelids flutter. "Birthday?"

"You didn't forget did you, Grammy? Wait till you open my special surprise." Lilli rocks on stocking feet, hands twirling at her sides.

"Such excitement over a little birthday..."

"But it's *your seventieth*." Pink-faced, bunched hands rise and slip underneath her chin.

"Seventieth?" The voice cracks. A spotted hand pats the bun.

"*Seventieth*. And you are how old?"

"Stop teasing, Grammy. I'm eleven. Remember the hot pink dress you gave me last August?"

Myrna-Jo's eyes wander. *Time rushes headlong with a mind of its own. If only I could slow its....*

Lilli grins. "You're coming, right?"

"Where?"

"For supper Saturday, didn't I just say?" She searches the drawn, clouded gaze of the woman in the recliner. "Grammy?"

Eyes dart left and right as the woman claws her throat.
“Who’s my most favourite grandchild in the whole wide world?”

“Silly, I’m your only one.” Fidgety, Lilli caresses the cloud-white hair. “What will you wear?”

“Wear?”

“I know—your green pantsuit—your eyes look like emeralds.”

“Oh... Come and help me dress, will you...?”

“Okay, an hour before supper. Gotta go. Mom is setting the table.” She plants a kiss on the cold cheek and scurries away. At the door, she hesitates. “Grammy?”

“Hmm?”

“Love you. See-ya-bye.” *Slam. Thump. Thump. Thump.* She avoids a collision with her mother.

“There you are. Thought I’d have to come down. Wash up.”

“Mum, is Grammy all right?”

* * *

Myna-Jo listens to chairs scrape overhead and buries her face. *How long before I end up like my Aunt Sylvie. Can I lay this burden at my family’s door?*

Another glance ceiling-wise, then she gazes into the rhythmic flames as if answers are written there.

A short time ago, while working on another short story, I rummaged around in my head for a particular phrase. My brain refused to cooperate for a moment. Because of my age, this made me wonder about memory / word loss and its beginnings. What happens when you are aware of what's happening to you? What makes you so sure you're right? This story is the result of those meandering thoughts.

Teresa Karlinski lives with her cat, Lady G. in Stoney Creek, Ontario. She is a grandmother and a student of life. Although retired, she hasn't enough time to read her overwhelming collection of new and used books. Her days consist of writing short stories, blogging and looking after her grandchildren. Her stories appear in online Perspectives and Twisted magazines, with a recent submission in an anthology, Finding the Path, (Redmond Publications 2013).

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Scenes from the Wrong Side of the Bar, #17

140 hours. One-hundred-and-forty-hours serving on the bar the past two weeks. There are only 336 hours in a two-week period. I have worked 42% of those on the bar. How have I found myself in this predicament?

John. The (in-his-own) head barman. Outwardly friendly and accepting of us, the new landlords; inwardly seething and jealous his name was not above the mantel to the Royal Oak. He had been helpful and hurtful (although we were not to know this for a while) in equal measures. He did, in his defense, know the pub well. He simply did not know how to run a pub well. He worked the lion's share of the day shifts those first weeks, giving us time to settle in. Time to make our changes. He gave free scotch to the regulars when we were not around. He boasted about it behind our backs. John called in sick around the third week: not a problem, get well.

Working a day shift on the third day after, Steve, a regular and recipient of free scotch, says he saw John down the road at the Lamb. Says he misses him. Well, misses the free scotch. Not a good sign of your character when your cohort grasses you up. Take a wander down the road, spy John at the bar. Looks well enough, looks as if he is enjoying himself. On the fourth day John calls in saying he might be in the next day: don't bother. Enjoy your time down the Lamb. But ... but ... Bye John.

Starting to think I may have cut off my nose to spite my face. I am working day and night. Taking in the dray, managing the cellar, the books, between and around my serving pints. The punters are getting a kick out of watching me, seeing if I can manage. See if the young colonial can cut it. John comes in for a drink. Serve him one then bar him from returning. But ... but ... Bye John.

At the end of my tether, running on fumes, I see a familiar face sitting at the end of the bar. I recall his name: Joel. He is having a quiet Sunday evening pint with a friend. I recall seeing his résumé in a drawer in the office. I walk over. I ask him if he still wants a job. Yes. I grab him and pull him behind the bar. I tell him he is in charge until closing time. Tell him I am going upstairs to the flat to have a rest. Tell him to call me if there is trouble. Tell him thank you.

My wife and I went to England to help friends manage their pub, which lead to our managing our own pub. I took notes. The names have been changed to protect the innocent and guilty alike.

Ed Shaw likes to write. He has published two volumes of poetry. He is slowly working on a compilation of stories about his time behind the counter of an English pub.

fortyteenyearold.wordpress.com

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