



# echo

**ISSUE 8**



# Echo

A Journal of Creative Nonfiction

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# Echo

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Austin Shay

## About Echo

A heart echo test, or an echocardiograph, is a painless test that examines the structure and function of the heart, according to the National Institution of Health. This test may involve the injection of saline or a specific dye into the patient's veins to showcase the heart.

We chose the name Echo because we expect the work we publish to come from the heart. In our issues, we want to publish the greatest creative nonfiction we can find.

We accept creative nonfiction submissions for Echo year round, and we would love to read your work!



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# Wagah Border Shenanigans

Sarah Julien

Adventuring 58 kilometers North of Amritsar to the Wagah border, we arrived late to the changing of the guards. Tahir had brought Nash and I to see the spectacle but by the time we arrived at the ornate gate the Indian and Pakistani guards had already thrown their feet high into the air and stomped them hard onto the ground; showcasing a duality deeply rooted in their competing national identities.

The imposing gates on either side clearly outlined the delimitations of the August 15, 1947 partition. The ceremony is a battle of bravado, an artistic performance laced with patriotism and birthed by adversity. They stood there, the guards, erect and silent, each in elaborate costumes, each attempting to be more grandiose than the other. The men were standing with their backs to each other, motionless, defiant. My disappointment quickly dissipated when I realized that though the main attraction was over, like most places in India, the masses stole were the main attraction. We arrived just in time to see the crowds descend from the stands perched on each side of the gate, staggered to watch the spectacle from both sides of the border.

It split the crowds that would have been identical were it not for the colors they adorned: Pakistan's deep greens and whites seeping out through to the Northwest and India's vibrant green and oranges dipping into the Southeast. From above the pathways would have looked like river streams trying to infiltrate the ocean, patriots were moving into every crevice at a slow but constant pace, humming to India's rhythm.

As we exited with the eclectic crowd, there were trucks lined up for kilometers. Every truck was bursting with more vibrant colors than the next and not one truck was unpainted. They were all parked in neat lines, all turned off with no driver in sight. The random process in which each truck would be found by its driver and then each driver would wait patiently until the driver in front located his truck to then drive off, baffled me. I found the patience ingrained in the Indian order of things to be reassuring.

Tahir was an attractive man despite his never fully smiling. He still is. But I didn't see it when we first met, not until my mother pointed it out. He grins but never shows his teeth; even when he is happy. The only time I've ever seen a full tooth grin on his face was years later on the silver screen, while he was pretending to be someone else. That is not to say he isn't funny, in fact his sense of humor is well-honed, twisted, and sourced from an abundance of world knowledge.

I've always been attracted to Tahir but in an asexual way, like you would a sibling, tied to you by kinship. In fact, the only time Tahir would be affectionate towards me was in public and this was to get a rise out of the average small town Indian. Landing a white chick gave him more street cred with the rural folk than he could resist, even if we were faking it. "Life-changer!" a young man yelled as we walked around the Taj Mahal with Tahir's arm around my shoulders.

Conversely, having white friends in India was a mixed bag for Tahir. It brought him the wrath of beggars and the praise of onlookers. He was either denounced as a traitor and a hypocrite for having rich, white, anglo-looking friends, while others treated him like the son of an

emperor, assuming his fairer friends were royals, or at the very least, famous. TJ (the “white” name I bestowed on him after butchering the pronunciation of his real name more times than is proper) and I teased each other relentlessly. Nash had to play mom and intervene more often than not. Like siblings we would argue about trivialities with gusto and little heart. Despite our obvious differences, our life experiences growing up in the middle class on different continents were strangely similar.

I had been following Nash and Tahir for weeks now. Nash had never let me out of his sight. When we traveled without Tahir, he was on high alert. Having a large Greek man as a companion heightened my experience of the place. Much in the same way a princess would be at ease with a body guard. Custom has it that a woman is rarely heckled and even more scarcely addressed when in the presence of a man. Usually this would piss me off. But in this case I bent my moral objection to the blatant inequality between men and women, and I savored the advantage of discovering India armored with a protective bubble/best-friend. My shield was imposing, and though his smile was so wide it sectioned his face in two like an emoji, most ill-meaning Indian’s wouldn’t mess with him.

The sun was setting on the Wagah border but it was still warm, even the sun’s glow packed heat. We were in the golden hour before dusk and everything took on a warmer shade and shadows grew long. Between the multi-colored trucks were makeshift kitchens and restaurants made of plastic chairs with ingenious sun covers fabricated from recycled saris propped-up with sticks: Confirming that micro-commerce is alive and well in India. Vendors were selling street food with pungent odors of masala and deep fried samosas and jalebis. The smell of charred breads and smoke from the cooking fires was enough to make my mouth water. I put on ten pounds in five weeks.

Before I met TJ I had never had an Indian friend. Then again, I had mostly made white friends up until this point. It wasn’t intentional, but a reflection of my surroundings. I’m embarrassed to admit that I was attracted to the novelty of having an Indian friend. And if I am being really honest, it hasn’t worn off. I would give a day’s happiness to know what Tahir said that made us laugh wholeheartedly that first day of class when we met. It was our second year in the Global Media Communications master’s program at the University of Melbourne. We were walking down the squared, spiral staircase at the center of the John Medley building, when his sly sense of humor shone right through.

But like most meaningful interactions, in the moment it felt mundane and so since the details have slipped through the cracks of my memory. Despite my failure to remember the salty joke, I can still recall how it made me feel. It made me jolt with laughter and instantly cringe for fear of being distasteful, and then smile for having indulged in a joke of the sort. I remember feeling a sense of ownership in that moment, having the feeling that we would be bonded by friendship, inevitably.

He had this way expressive people sometimes have of making you feel things with his humor. His deepness, his intellectual predilections, his wit, it all came through when he would poke fun. Most times you wouldn’t even detect that he was teasing you because his tone wouldn’t change: only realizing after having laughed that you were in fact laughing at yourself.



But he isn't cruel by any stretch and his humor though bending the limits of convention, is not vile or misplaced. It is simply dark.

Tahir's choice to become an actor was bold, especially in a country where Cartesian disciplines rule mightily over the arts. It was particularly daring because of his elite education and his vast intelligence, neither of which is commonly associated with acting and dancing. I was surprised at this revelation. I thought he might become a political advisor, even a film critic, but never an actor.

It wasn't until I met his mother that I saw it, the showmanship they both wielded. They share a flair for the dramatic, that is volatile and deeply connected to their emotions. But Tahir keeps his talents quiet, waiting for the right moment to put them on display, willing you to become his audience...

Tahir blended into the crowd first. I was dutifully trailing behind Nash when I felt someone gently squeeze my arm. I turned to see a young man, surrounded by his school friends, holding up a camera, gesturing a request for a photo. I'm quite the attraction in India, so this doesn't surprise me. Despite barely being dirty blond, my fair hair and complexion was enough to be sought after, acting as a mantle for babies and aunties alike in vacation photographs.

However, it occurred to me that my bodyguard and guide must have been out of sight if this young man had the nerve to accost me. I know not to panic, but I don't let my guard down. I can't because I've lost Nash, my protection, my safety. Still I look around to see if I can spot TJ. There are people everywhere. The crowd moves slowly but steadily. People intertwine as if they were wearing melon hats in the Thomas Crown Affair, making it impossible to scan for anyone. I turn back to the young man with his camera still held high and with no sign of Nash or Tahir, I acquiesce.

I haven't been surrounded by this many horny teenagers since I was in high school and I'm still unsure how to handle it. Luckily, these kids seem more shy than perverted so I take my place in the middle and the lineup of school boys on each side of me, four or five wide, giddy with excitement. I smile for the camera. Another camera then pops up and we repeat this until everyone has a photo. As the group of schoolboys slowly disbands the knot in my stomach tightens.

It dawns on me that for the first time in five weeks in India, I am lost. Mother India rules with intensity, is prone to chaos, and is never quite what she seems so I know I'm in for an adventure. Nash and I had to learn not to resist her whims. As the protector, Nash was the most reticent, but after the incident on the Delhi highway, driving against traffic, he had no choice but to let go.

I tried to stay calm and focused. As my mind jumped incessantly from thought to thought, I looked at the effervescent crowd hoping to recognize someone. That's when I saw him, not too far off, pushing his way through people with a stern look on his face. My relief was short lived when I realized Tahir was mad. I'd never seen him this mad before.

He grabbed me by the arm as if I was a naughty little girl and dragged me out of the reach of the schoolboy's yelling in Hindi "Doosron ke saath apna waqt barbaad matt karo, tumhe khareedne ke liye doh hazaar rupiye diye the maine." The boys scattered in awe, some

gasping, not knowing where to look. I heard the tall, lanky one echo “2000 rupees” in disbelief.

We slid away in between two stationary trucks and there Nash was, bent over laughing, hysterically. It took me a minute to process, so I turned to Tahir who was stealth but with a toothless smile tugging deep into the right side of his mouth. He was grinning with his whole face. He had been waiting patiently for a month to deliver that one line.

“Get your hands off these men immediately! I paid 2000 rupees for you. That means you are my prostitute. You pay attention only to me!”

# Earth Day

Kristin LaFollette

## I

As Cohen and I lay on the mattress on the floor of her bedroom at her mother's house, I could smell bits of the house she grew up in: the wood-burning stove, the trees in the yard, the grease and gasoline coming in from the garage where Cohen and her father would work on her '63 Ford Fairlane. She had newer, thicker, black-framed glasses on, her vision impacted by whatever it was that the doctors couldn't quite diagnose. I was scared for her, but I tried to hide it in my voice as we talked. We were both laying on our backs, looking up at the ceiling in the dark. I couldn't see her face, but her voice was quieter than normal as she talked about her upcoming surgery.

She kept saying, *Maybe it's a tumor. Maybe it's a tumor.*

And every so often I would say, *But if it is, they can remove it. Then you can get back to your life.*

## II

Cohen and I had met in the seventh grade and weren't instant friends. Her real name was Deanne, but she deemed that name too feminine for her tomboy persona. I was the new kid in school and didn't know that, at the time, she preferred to be called "Dee" (Cohen became her nickname in high school, after the character on the television show *The OC*). One day at lunch in the school cafeteria, I called her Deanne and she angrily flipped a spoonful of mandarin oranges at me, creating sticky splotches all over the new shirt I was wearing. Despite this initial incident, we became part of each other's families over the years. I was there on the day her youngest brother was born. We went to the same college in South Bend, IN, and lived together on campus all four years. After college, we got our first apartment together. She was the maid of honor in my wedding. I don't think there was much we didn't know about each other after years of friendship and six years of living in the same small space together.

Right before I got married, Cohen moved to Fort Wayne, which was two hours away. She was doing an internship with a radio station and moved in with her mother, stepfather, and two brothers, and it was the farthest we had ever lived from each other. The summer after she moved, I was working as a camp counselor when she called to tell me that her routine optometry appointment had led to her being referred to an ophthalmologist.

*Swollen optic nerves*, she told me.

After doing a quick Google search, I feared the worst and spent days worrying about it.

## III

I was sitting in a waiting room in the outpatient surgery area of Lutheran Hospital in Fort Wayne when they called Cohen's name. The ophthalmologist had confirmed that her optic nerves were swollen and had referred her to a local neurologist. The neurologist had requested a spinal tap, and I had driven from South Bend to go with Cohen to the procedure. Her mother

and stepfather came, too, and we all sat quietly and waited for the procedure to be over. After some time had passed, someone came out to tell us that they were having trouble retrieving a sample and that the procedure was taking longer than planned. A nurse finally brought Cohen out in a wheelchair and she was discharged with strict instructions to go home and lay flat for the rest of the day. Back at her house, Cohen developed a terrible headache and became sick, so we took her to the emergency room. On a gurney surrounded by nurses, Cohen held her hands over her face to shield her eyes from the bright light. She was in terrible pain, and I was pleading with the hospital staff to do something to help her.

*Please, I said. Please. Look at her.*

*There's nothing we can do, a nurse told me. If you don't follow protocol after a spinal tap, these symptoms are common.*

*She needs to go home, another nurse said. Sleep it off.*

#### IV

After the spinal tap, the neurologist in Fort Wayne told Cohen she had pseudotumor cerebri, or a condition that mimics the symptoms of a brain tumor but isn't actually a brain tumor. She was unsure of that diagnosis, so her family doctor ordered a scan of her head.

*There were cloudy spots on the scan, Cohen told me over the phone. The doctor thinks I have encephalitis.*

*But how? I asked.*

*Swimming in the lake?*

Cohen was in the hospital for days receiving antibiotics for encephalitis. Even after being discharged, she had to go back to the hospital daily for more IV antibiotics. My bridal shower was that September in South Bend, and Cohen helped my aunt plan the event. As we were setting up for the shower, Cohen was slower than usual, her skin pale and her eyes wide. She had a headache and was clearly feeling sick, but she was trying to minimize it. At the wedding a month later, Cohen looked beautiful in a burnt orange dress, her curly black hair pulled back in an updo. She said she was feeling fine, but I think she had become accustomed to the constant head aches by that point in time.

Later, when I asked her what all the pressure in her head felt like: *It sounds like a dog whimpering. Like an animal crying for help.*

#### V

When the headaches didn't go away, Cohen was referred to a neurosurgeon in Indianapolis. The doctor told her that they needed to relieve the pressure on her brain, so they scheduled her for surgery to have a shunt placed. After the pressure was under control, she would go back in for a brain biopsy surgery to finally determine the cause of her symptoms. The day before the shunt surgery, I drove to Fort Wayne to stay with Cohen and go with her to the hospital the next day for the procedure.

We were laying on the mattress on the floor of her dark room, neither of us able to fall asleep.

Over and over again: *Maybe it's a tumor.*

After more than a year of being misdiagnosed, I secretly hoped it was a brain tumor. That was once my greatest fear, but at that point, I thought a brain tumor meant that the bad thing could be removed and that Cohen could finally be herself again.

We were both quiet for a few moments in the dark.

*I want to tell you about a dream I had,* she finally said.

In the dream, it was Earth Day. Cohen said all of her loved ones were with her at her father's house, planting trees on his property. Her father lived in an old farm house on some acreage with a big red barn off to one side. Cohen and I often explored that old barn, searching for bats and treasures that were being stored or that had been left behind. In the dream, Cohen looked over and saw a ladder leading up to an opening toward the top of the barn. She walked over to the ladder, climbed it, and crawled into the opening at the top. When she got inside, there was a screen set up with memories from her life playing on it. She said she saw a bright light and heard a voice that she somehow knew was God.

As she watched the memories play in front of her, the voice asked her if she wanted to leave and be with God, or stay awhile longer. Cohen said she wanted to wait awhile longer.

*Why did you say that?* I asked, listening intently but not able to see her face in the dark room.

*I couldn't do that to you, to my family,* Cohen said. *I wouldn't want you all to be in pain because of me.*

In the dream, after Cohen had made her choice, the voice told her that he would see her in just a little while. Cohen crawled back out of the opening and down the ladder to continue helping everyone plant trees. Then she woke up.

I didn't say anything at first, not sure how to process the mixed emotions I was feeling after hearing about the dream. I felt a profound sadness; if God had truly spoken to Cohen in this dream, then that meant Cohen only had a short time left on Earth, and I couldn't imagine being without her. What was even worse was that we didn't even know what was wrong with her yet, but I felt in that moment that whatever it was would eventually take her life. I think she knew it, too.

## VI

Cohen had the shunt placed in April 2013. A few days later, the neurosurgeon performed a brain biopsy which ultimately revealed that Cohen had a terminal brain tumor. Later that year, she had a stroke that left her immobile and almost completely blind. Over the next few years, Cohen's body slowly betrayed her as the tumor grew. During those long years of watching her deteriorate, I would think of the dream she told me about:

She chose to stay and endure this.

January 16, 2017 was Cohen's 28th birthday. Her mother planned a small birthday get-together to celebrate Cohen's life. For the party, her family had hung blue and yellow streamers and had Batman balloons dispersed throughout the house (Batman was her favorite). Six months before, Cohen had slipped into a coma. She was in hospice care, but they allowed her to stay in her home. She was in a hospital bed in the living room, surrounded by white blankets and some

some of her favorite things. The lights were dimmed to make her more comfortable. I held Cohen's hand, told her I loved her, pulled her still-curly hair back from her face. Our longtime friend, Elisabeth, came to the party. She told me she had something for me and I went out to her car with her, walking through the snow in the yard. Elisabeth handed me a package.

*So you will always remember,* she said.

I pulled out a wall hanging with a Walt Whitman quote printed on it: *We were together. I forget the rest.*

## VII

Three days after the party celebrating Cohen's life, she passed away. When she was first diagnosed, the doctors told us she could live for ten years with the slow-growing tumor, but she only lived for less than four years. As the dream indicated, Cohen had to leave after just a little while.

I knew it was coming. During those long years of watching Cohen suffer from a horrible and debilitating illness, I knew it wouldn't be long. In the back of my mind, I knew she would never recover from her illness, and I always wondered when the time would come that I would receive the phone call about her passing. But through it all, Cohen was still Cohen – faithful, strong, resilient.

After her memorial service, we went to a park to release blue and yellow balloons into the sky. I had the string of a yellow balloon in my hand (my favorite color, although Cohen's was blue). As I watched it float upward toward the trees nearby, I thought of Cohen's dream and how it was Earth Day and how everyone was planting trees. I thought of the tattoo of a tree Cohen got on her foot while we were visiting friends in North Carolina and how, to her, the tattoo was a symbol of life and rebirth.

# Depression

Barabara Joy Laffey

You turn on the radio, but there's nothing you really want to hear. The news channels carry war, crime, death, and destruction. The music channels, worse, paint a shallow gloss over the planet's pain with pop hits.

You turn off the radio, play the Schumann lieder that Jerry brought, rich, mournful, soulful. But even that gets under your skin, irritates nerve endings. You turn off the music too.

You don't know what to do with yourself. You look at your desk, but you know you can't draw, can't sort the slides, can't call the architect, can't even sit down in the chair. You roam through the kitchen, the living room. All there is to do is too much to bear.

You have no focus to read. Magazines feel like pale imitations of reality, like the pop hits on the radio. The self-help books tell too many truths you don't dare add to the burden you already carry. You have not yet discovered poetry.

You might call Bruce or Donna to cheer you up, but you've called so many times. You wander through rooms, hating the worn gold carpet, and the circumstances that brought you to live in this wretched place, barely functional, no aesthetic.

You make a cup of tea, because that's what you're supposed to do. You sit at the table and stare out the window. The tea goes cold.

There are no thoughts, no words, no time, just dullness. You cannot feel your sorrow or grief, cannot find your passion or joy. Your skin encloses only dullness, void.

You make a sandwich for lunch because it's time. The same ham sandwich you made yesterday and the day before, with the same dill pickle on the edge of the same blue plate. You stare out the window as you eat.

The misery lives in your chest, behind your eyes, in your belly, down your legs.

You cry.

In the bathroom you count the hoarded pills. Tiny yellow anti-depressants conned from Carla's carefully doled out monthly prescriptions. Round blue sleeping pills begged from Jerry. You wonder how many is enough. You won't take them today, but it's comforting to know that you could. Like when you quit smoking and kept an unopened pack of duMauriers on the dresser, just in case.

You sit on the couch, hating the stiff orange velvet John covered over the beautiful deep green, and pull at the ragged seams where he left the thing unfinished.

You go back to the chair by the window. Your gaze rests somewhere outside, not too close to the self. To gaze at the self would be to view the ravages of men: surgeon's scars, husband's denials, lovers' disappointments. To gaze within would be to see the void.

The phone rings and you put on a face for the world. You lift your voice.

"Hi Mom."

"I just called to see how you're doing."

"Oh, I'm fine," you say, holding your breath. A tear escapes your eye, runs down your chin.

"So, what have you been up to?"



“Oh, not much really. Just a bunch of stuff around here.”

“Are you coming down with a cold? Sounds like you’re getting a cold.”

“No, I’m fine, really. I’m just making some dinner.”

“Well, then I won’t keep you. I just wanted to see how you’re doing.”

“I’m fine Mom, really. Don’t worry.”

You hang up the phone, put your face in your hands, and weep.



# Back Room Abortion, 1970

Paul Rousseau

Her daddy says, “You can’t start life on a mistake. You need to go to college, make something of yourself.” He hands her \$400. “There’s only one solution to the problem.”

##

She’s frightened. Rumors swirl: coat hangers, bleeding, pain, infection, death.

##

The room sits in the rear of a warehouse. It’s sober and unmarked. A lone window peers into a patch of dark. There’s thick dust on the windowsill. The walls are a peeling, pasty green, the floor a dingy yellow of cracked linoleum. The air is rancid, filled with a putrid stench. She steps up on the examining table. The paper crumples and crackles as she sits. A woman covers her with a blanket.

“Lay back honey, and just relax.” She looks up. A single fluorescent light flickers.

“How old are you?”

“I’m seventeen and a half ma’am.”

A boy holds her hand. “Are you her boyfriend...or husband?”

“I’m her boyfriend.”

“You’ll have to wait outside once we start.”

The woman unzips a purse.

“Do you have the money?”

##

His white coat is a backcloth of stains. He looks nervous, distant, occupied, his hands fidgety. Their eyes meet and slide apart.

He hesitates. “I’m Dr. Smith.” She wonders if that’s an alias, a pseudonym. She wonders if he’s even a doctor.

She moves to place her feet in the stirrups and the paper tears; she can feel the cold of the plastic table. The woman touches her shoulder.

“We’re gonna start.” She locks the door and turns on a radio, loud.

##

She hears the harsh whistle of suction. The bottle on the wall fills with a soupy mélange. Then she’s scraped like a pumpkin, the rind slowly grated until there’s none, like every seed must be removed. Dr. Smith stands, snaps his gloves into a trashcan, unlocks the door, and leaves.

Afterword, 2019

Backroom abortions declined after the Supreme Court affirmed a woman's legal right to abortion under the Fourteenth Amendment in the 1973 landmark case *Roe v. Wade*. However, forty-six years later, the legacy of *Roe v. Wade* is increasingly besieged. States such as Alabama, Georgia, Ohio, Louisiana, and Missouri are limiting the use of abortion through draconian, male-dominated legislation; other states will certainly follow. Moreover, the 2019 iteration of the Supreme Court seems ideologically positioned to contravene the judicial precedent of *Roe v. Wade*. This swell of partisan determination to proscribe a woman's right to reproductive health-care is frightening. I fear backroom abortions will once again become the only option for terminating a pregnancy. And if they are, many will end with tragic consequences, including physical and mental trauma, and death.

Certain details have been changed to protect individual privacy.

# For Mild Peppercorn and Backseat Windows

Jonathan Koven

It is that veiled time  
when elms amber,  
take down, and  
pale.

Sweet teeth fill our mouths,  
car-seat quiet, carving  
*I* and *love*  
and *you*.

So far ago, and again,  
wearing November  
like clothes. I could  
count the days I feel  
the brume lower in  
me. Broadly still, I

roam night life, jacket dripping  
the moon's syrup.

Your hands are cold now.  
Remember I was a boy whose  
beltways listened, whose eyes  
willowed enough to catch rain.  
I was, I am a wish, to keep  
cold away  
from you.

(...a wrist against the window,  
a palm under my head;  
I sink below my eyes' brine  
and dream white flags waving  
the phantom sails...)

All the while today is beautiful, and  
thereafter delicate; peppercorn  
filters swiftly  
askew  
our pensive hearts.

# Burgundy Responsibility

Jonathan Koven

Halted wristwatch atop  
the night table, too soon  
to resuscitate, whittles  
braver futures  
between

both seconds sealing where  
a stagger in time starts,  
and

(she is a tourist to dreams; she is  
now sprinting  
inside the greenhouse;

she is kneeling in fauna; she is  
exhuming  
blares of an alarm;

she is unconquered time. I pine for  
a stalling  
of the smaller hand

where it drops.)

# Meet the Authors

**Sarah Julien** is a graduate of the Masters of Global Media Communications at the University of Melbourne and holds a bachelor in Public Relations. She is a professional communicator as well as a writer of creative nonfiction. She has been previously published in the Huffington Post. She lives in Montreal.

**Kristin LaFollette** is a writer, artist, and photographer and is the author of the chapbook, *Body Parts* (GFT Press, 2018). She is an Assistant Professor of English at the University of Southern Indiana and serves as the Art Editor at *Mud Season Review*. You can visit her on Twitter at @k\_lafollette03 or on her website at [kristinlafollette.com](http://kristinlafollette.com).

**Barbara Joy Laffey** holds a Ph.D. in depth psychology with emphasis in Jungian and archetypal studies. She also trained in counseling and group process facilitation at the Toronto Institute for Self Healing. In her writing Barbara Joy utilizes a depth psychological approach to explore what it means to honor the feminine in both the inner and outer worlds. She is an award-winning film and television producer, and considers herself a shamelessly addicted student of popular culture. She currently lives on an island in the Pacific Northwest.

**Paul Rousseau** is a semi-retired physician and writer, who is published in medical journals and a smattering of literary journals, including *The Healing Muse*, *Blood and Thunder*, *Intima*, *A Journal of Narrative Medicine*, *Months To Years*, *Cleaning up Glitter*, *Burningword Literary Journal*, *Prometheus Dreaming*, *Hospital Drive*, *JAMA*, *Annals of Internal Medicine*, *Canadian Medical Association Journal*, *Tendon*, and others. Currently working on a collection of essays. Lives in Charleston, SC, longs to return to the west. Lover of dogs.

**Jonathan Koven** is a writer, currently employed at Teleflora as their sole technical writer. He edits fiction for Philadelphia's *Toho Journal* and organizes their weekly creative writing workshops. Jonathan lives in Philadelphia with his girlfriend and best friend Delana--along with their cat Peanut Butter. His work has been featured in *American Literary* magazine, and is working on publishing his first fiction novel

