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Literary Magazine  
Spring 2013



# NANDI

Witkaze's Literary Magazine

SPRING 2013



EDITION XVI

# NANDI

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MASTHEAD

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# Nan-di

[**nahn**-dee]

*Nandi is the Queen Mother of the Zulu Nation. Queen Nandi became a legend in the history of the Zulu people as the mother of Shaka, a great warrior of southern Africa. Her concern and inspiration contributed to his stability and daring. The Zulu people today speak her name “Nandi,” meaning*

## A WOMAN OF HIGH ESTEEM.

Nandi Publication

May, 7th 1997

Vol. 5, No. 2

# A Note From *Dean Lee*

We behold art all around us. It is in the music that reverberates through our souls. It is in the hues and shades of the earth. It is in the lines, curves, and shapes that magically form the body. It is in the words, phrases, and sentences that leap off pages. Art is an expression of self, an extension of feelings, emotions, desires, and dreams. What may have once been inchoate is transformed, illuminated, and articulated in creative fashion. As the artist manipulates her medium, an inner agitation is shaped into a form that - at a minimum - provokes, evokes, bemuses, ignites, inspires, challenges. This edition of Nandi is no exception. Aptly named, Nandi denotes “strong-willed” in African culture. And it is with that will and determination that women of color have discovered and uncovered the “fierceness” that is within them. Nandi is a portrait of the landscape of women of color who, through their art, describe their passions, their politics, their prayers, their problems, filling gaps and voids. They have created their lives on their own terms in a world that often tries to squelch their voices. . . in a world in which, in the poignant words of Audre Lorde, *we were never meant to survive*. These artists are not just surviving, they are thriving. . . with passion and compassion, wisdom and insight, grace and style, love and soul. Collectively, their art becomes one rite of passage, a journey on a path of greater revelation and empowerment. As a beholder of this art, I was touched, blessed, and honored to join the journey. Thank you for sharing your hearts and spirits.

Much Love,  
Dean Lee

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# POETRY

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POE

TRY



# Distance

**Crista Carter**

Distance is relative.

Separated by stretches of highways and high hills we call mountains.

Twice has the moon manipulated the sun's light

To display the most perfect of circles since I've seen you.

Been close enough to breathe you in and out of me.

My mind wanders creating fantasies with the help of my imagination.

Scrapbooking memories and images of we.

Connecting dots that don't exist but this process produces stories

Where we are together again.

Close again.

Fingers interlocking.

Bodies, we break and we bend celestial.

I mean heavenly.

If I ever questioned whether or not there was a Creator

It all stopped upon your arrival.

I was made not for you but from you

Divine hands were placed over the cage that protects your heart

And of all your ribs I was chosen.

Your greatest weakness but there's strength in vulnerability I promise.

Did you ever believe this to be possible?

You may see me as unstoppable as gravity, a force to be dealt with but I'm scared.

Come closer clasping these hands to stop this shaking, steady.

Here with you I have the audacity to think I'm ready.

Love

A word that will frequent these lips and I need to believe me

Across the distance

I need you to believe me.

# Daddy

Sofía Barrera

The purple light gives way to rain-  
silvery beads and halos of street lights  
and houses.

I sit in the car surrounded by  
beige and glass safely watching  
as the sky falls in watery droves  
of crystal.

I keep thinking,  
keep trying to forget-

I keep trying to get lost in the light-  
the absence of color.

there's a rhythm to sadness and repression:

there's a flow-  
stag-gered

stac-cato-

when the mind extracts years of poison-

and I hear,

"I was never a good father,"

and I scream- "I know!"

I've carried pieces and trinkets

to keep you close:

pañuelo- black bandana that smells

like vanilla ice cream

and catering and grease

and yelling as you say

'what the hell took you so long?'-

la Virgen encased in holographic pink

nombre del padre

hijo

espiritu

santo-

Marble-heavy, a bag full of God  
tumbles from the darkness and it falls  
like fist against drywall  
like unfisted rage against face  
like hail-  
heavy rain water,  
red with headlights-  
and I'm holding pictures  
of my life, but there's nothing of me-  
just negative space  
with traces of  
your eyes  
your skin  
your anger  
in  
my  
face.

Daddy, I feel your fingers as you  
bless me before I go to sleep:  
nombre del padre, hijo, espiritu santo-  
you do not do, you  
do not you  
do not have me heavy in hand-  
and  
I walk to the porch light  
hair slick and black  
and I remember  
I used to pray to be without you-  
but your roots  
are buried deep in my bones-  
I am your ghost.

# What Are You?

**Chelsey Jenkins**

Gullah.

Geechee.

Are you what you inherit?

Does your ethnicity define you?

Gullah is my ethnicity.

But Gullah is not my culture.

I did not grow up in their communities.

My mouth does not form their words.

My ear does not grasp their tongue

I learn about them in books and in class

But I was never blessed to learn straight from the source.

When I look at their features I see myself.

I see my mother, I see her father.

I long to know the faces I see in my history books.

When I read on their culture I notice similarities in my own.

But does that make me a part of them?

I wish to pass down the things that make them great to my future little ones.

But how can I?

Though we share facial features and a few practices

I feel like a stranger to them.

Society defines by what you look like or what racial group you belong to.

As if your race is all you will ever be.

But heritage...culture is more than skin deep.

It is not biological, though many people think it is.

It is your way of life, your way of thinking

People are not monolithic.

Even within one ethnic group you have your own personal culture.

We should stop attaching ourselves to a racial group

And simply identify ourselves as us.



# Brave

Chelsey Jenkins

His lips are soft and sticky  
Like a wet marshmallow.  
It's the first time I've ever kissed someone.  
My senses are instantly heightened.  
It makes me feel strange inside.  
I can hear the echoes of my heart  
beat as he caresses my face.  
My blood boils and rises like steam  
My breath accelerates as  
He whispers, "I love you".  
My throat closes  
I reply with a smile, a tear  
He returns the gesture.  
All I can think is how much I want to keep him.  
He says, "Wait for me."  
I smile and nod. It hurts to speak.  
He gives me a tight hug.  
"See you soon" he says as he lightly taps my chin.  
I watch him walk away in his greens and join his platoon.  
For 73 days I waited for him to write.  
His letter never comes.  
Only a phone call from his mother-  
She bears bad news,  
"Be brave."

# Fade to Black

**Kebreht Walker**

So there's this girl  
with skin like spoiled coffee  
and an ugly tattoo that  
sings cornbread hallelujahs  
with a Marlboro in her mouth  
that she can't light because  
momma tells her no  
her tattoo it throbs over her heart  
like a second heartbeat  
or like two hearts in  
one soul that is crying out  
for Jesus Christ but  
slips those two palms  
pressed in praise  
into the back pocket  
of a blonde girl from Tuscan  
with a rainbow tattoo on her left ass cheek.  
She speaks in tongues  
that lap up lace like honey drops  
of the revolution

She is teased by girls with Afros and locks  
For having hair down her back that she bought  
40 dollars a pack the equivalent of selling your soul  
Although it doesn't matter to her whether her hair falls straight  
like a 2B Waterfall  
Or kinks up in the fight for visibility  
She is a homegrown woman  
Offspring of a Black Panther  
Uncle Tom was her first word  
Love, peace and soul, the final three.  
So her hand slips into yours like perfect harmony  
As we sing together for eternity of new words and new hate.  
Let us remember who we are and remember never to pounce  
but create.

# Grown Up and Blown Away

Catlin Wade

*If music be the food of love, play on,  
Give me excess of it; that surfeiting,  
The appetite may sicken, and so die.  
-Shakespeare; Twelfth Night*

What upheavals lie in your heart  
What dreams lie in your chest  
What cries to God erupt from your throat  
And where the hell did you learn to do that?

I rocket  
    I explode  
        I break down  
            I am reborn into something new  
    Something wonderful  
    Something so  
        Sore           in the morning

And I don't live anymore  
    Except in those Shakespearean moments in which I die with you

*Why, then, can one desire too much of a good thing?*

There is never too much of you  
                    Constant exposure would be deprivation  
Living under your sheets would be condemning me to loneliness  
For even if I lived there  
    Saw you sleep every night  
Kissed you every morning  
It would not be enough  
    And that is that.  
Which scares me.

*Have I been on your mind? What's a voice without a song?  
Something in your head you've been fighting all the long...*

I was afraid you'd love me  
With such ferocity  
With such pride  
I'd explode.

And I did  
Because I drive to your apartment when the stars are out  
And the sun is out when I leave  
*I don't feel so far away from you lately, love me on the sly*

And I did  
Because I can't be away from you for more than a few songs  
before one of them reminds me of you  
*You are everything, you are nothing at all, you are every night  
you fade to light the room, daylight lights a new one on you.*

And I did  
Because you even have taken over Shakespeare  
The safe place to which I retreat when I need to be confused  
By something other than my own emotions

*Age cannot wither her, nor custom stale  
Her infinite variety. Other women cloy  
The appetites they feed, but she makes hungry  
Where most she satisfies...*

And yet, you look at me every night with the same surprise  
Like I've tricked you into falling for me  
But you did.

And I did  
Because what can I say but that I am blown away?

# Ying-Yang

**Britessia M. Smith**

Hatred is not determined by wavelengths and amplitudes.  
My electrical particle alignment should not determine your attitude.  
As I am projected onto your retina,  
Deciphered by your mind,  
Should the perception of what's in front of you  
Send chills down my spine?

If the basis of your hatred is scientifically derived,  
My hypothesis would be that your data  
was not obtained doubly blind.  
Slipping down the path of unresolved,  
My hatred of you stems concretely from the past  
With no fiction involved.

Hamatically formed postulates  
Encouraged your perception,  
Accepted your rejection,  
And laughed at my dismay.  
The ignorance of your ancestors  
Fuels your mind today.

As we stumble throughout time  
Racing toward success,  
You tell me how your actions  
Don't resemble all the rest.  
You tell me that you're different,  
A nobelian anomaly.

“like, the reflectance of his wavelength,  
to yours there is resemblance.  
And he is the best friend of my sisters friend.  
My house, he sometimes visits.”  
One token no longer grants you pass,  
Admission has increased.

Inspired by false power and stolen wealth,  
Colonized an “unrefined” and “uncultured”  
Savage of a sculpture  
Refinement in your eyes  
I define it more as torture  
Still I stand,  
A beautiful tapestry,  
And you, the wall I rest upon.  
I regrettably admit, that we share a common bond  
We are trapped in an inescapable dance of interconnectivity.  
For my beauty would not be known  
If I were to stand alone.

I could not be me  
If you were never you.  
There is no negative without positive.  
Inescapably intertwined.  
Twisted run of fate.  
You and I are a work of art.  
The yin to a yang.

# The Pair That Might Have Been One

## Suzanne Gordon

Such specific instructions that he's been given,  
and he follows them to the letter.

Yet when I plead for his sandals to be put away,  
It seems my plea should've been clearer.

Diligently, he builds this boat  
for the salvation of pairs of all that exist.

And I wonder, with a pair of elephants, rhinos,  
and hippos, will it even stay afloat?

And if it does, the frogs will jump,  
the snakes will slither, the insects crawl,

the monkeys will swing, the lions roar,  
and the rats will scurry about.

As he hammers and he saws  
I hope that he is building cages too.

Or else one pair will be minus one.  
Which one? "My love, it's you."



# For The Art of Love

**Suzanne Gordon**

Again

I glide into the stark space, where  
another dose of sweet torture awaits.  
Where the glare of those panoramic eyes  
mock my imperfections and magnify my errs.

With swollen knees,  
an aching back and  
muscles too sore to touch,

I fine tune my instrument depending on this barre.  
This barre that will leave me stranded,  
This stationary crutch.

Adagio,  
Remember now  
the progression of the strokes  
that air-brush art in fluid motion  
and the emotions it must coax.

With searing muscles  
weighted arms and  
taped-up, bruised, marred feet

I pirouette, I assemble,  
Glissade and grand jete  
encountering a flight sensation  
somewhere along the way.

As I draw breath and flick the saline  
waterfall now streaming down my chest,  
I smile and think that sweet torture was, after all  
a welcome guest.

# You Cannot Ignore That Feeling

## Ashely Summerall

you get right before you buckle your seat on a rollercoaster  
that feeling before you speak in front of a crowd of a hundred people  
it's that same feeling when your crush smiles at you for the first time  
of a million butterflies dancing with feathers in your stomach  
that feeling that reminds you this is moment is happening  
that there is no going back  
that feeling you get as you prepare for the next journey of your life

you cannot ignore that feeling  
you get after you experience the adrenaline rush of a rollercoaster  
after receiving a standing ovation for your speech  
after you realize your crush is crazy about you  
of a million butterflies dancing with feathers in your stomach  
that same feeling that reminds you that this moment is finally happening  
that you cannot do anything but move forward  
that same feeling you get as you conquer the next journey of your life

# Frei

**Dana Shum**

I vowed to never be like my mother.

The dawn's dimming of the morning sun,

As I lay stark between my Jeffery, Sarah and Esther

Would change my life, my talk, my walk—etched into me like a burn.

She left us branded as orphans on a Thursday in 1978.

So when that call came more than thirty years later,

I was in my apartment in Düsseldorf, divorced, an inebriate.

“Hello, is this Marie?” Zu spät. There were no words to muster.

A slither of light crept in between the curtains

As the dawn left pieces of the sun exposed

Otindzen? How are you? Her voice was new and old and like my daughter's

Filling silence with words from my mother-tongue; reposed

And there I asked myself to forgive

Succumbing as inflections of my child's voice fall through hers like flour in a sieve.

# Cafuné

**Dana Shum**

I remember you, with us,  
never bored of that thing lover's do.  
Seeing each other with your mechanics.  
Your joints collapsing into hands and necks,  
and his back,  
receiving, imparting.  
Fooling  
with his beard  
and packed rows of hair above eyes  
that have seen past your corporeal --  
    administer to me pleasure in the physical.  
Hide the pain, though, cover my eyes.  
    Set some sweet thing in my mouth.  
    Grind. Roll me a blunt.  
Wait, tap against the window sill.  
Still, on a rainy day, search warmth  
beneath his trousers  
Till you find it.  
    Push the propeller on the lighter  
    too soft, faster --  
there you go.  
Now plunge into cups of tea, and soup  
and banana bread batter  
Tell me, is that sweet enough?  
    You make me smile.  
Cover my smiling teeth for me, please,  
Because I do not like the way they stare.

You jut out laterally  
hanging off cliffed knuckles,  
I forget your presence which is reduced by the way you  
linger beside my body  
hanging, tempted to  
    fall to the ground  
    as I walk past honeycombs  
of cafes on chestnut avenue.

    The idiot driver missed the turn  
I place you in the space between him  
and I. Then I remember you again,  
shearing crops of hair away from my face  
sprinkling crumbs into my mouth  
sliding between my lips  
pressing against them.  
shhhhh, don't let them hear you  
I remember.  
Don't you?

# The Suburban Minstrel

## Courtney Taylor

From my penthouse window,  
I cannot see the black boy's piss  
dragging down the leg of his sweatpants  
as he cripples under the wind  
of a police baton,  
nor the tar baby's flesh  
snatched up by the rugged pavement;  
the pink meaty corpse of a drive-by.  
Instead, I watch their backs without having them  
as they cower behind commercial breaks.

But here in suburban schools, when all that thrives  
are the rushing T.V. static lines of peachy blonde blurs,  
I become the local 24 hr. liquor store and  
the discarded Black & Mild tip;  
a paper weight atop an unpaid phone bill  
in the ghetto apartment of my skin.

In the school bathroom,  
classmates cheer on  
as I laugh at a better reflection,  
smearing more charcoal against my cheeks.

# Courage

**Safron Smith**

Thousands of miles away

My heart beats in a body other than my own.

It beats with love.

It beats with sincerity.

It beats with caution.

Caution because I'm afraid to fully give in

Because I'm afraid of what the future may bring.

Caution because I'm afraid of rejection.

I can't live my life being afraid to say the words I yearn to speak

Words that might stop my heart if he said them first

Words that might change my life if we said them at all.

Now, my heart, it beats with courage.

Courage because if i don't try then I'll never know.

These words, I can speak them now.

They're as simple as...

I love you.





VISU

# QUAL ART





# Concrete Jungle

*Asha Boston*



# By Any Other Name

Courtney Taylor



# A Sea of Possibilities

*Morgan Lewis*



**Exposed**  
**Britessia M. Smith**





# Eye of the Storm

Asha Boston



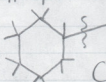
**Praised**  
*Courtney Taylor*

Today: - Remarks about HW  
 - Overview of Nomenclature  
 - Conformation

09/06/2012  
 SON TEST TOMORROW

Chapter 3.5-3.7:  
 Alkane Properties & Reactions, Alkane Conformations

Cyclo example:



$C_6H_{12}$

Practice:

②  $CH_3CH-CH_2-CH-CH_2$

$\begin{matrix} H_3C & & CH_3 & CH_3 \\ | & & | & | \end{matrix}$

④ 2,4-dimethylhexane

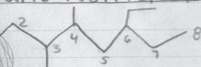
③ Name!

$\boxed{CH_3}-\boxed{CH}-\boxed{CH}-\boxed{CH_2}-\boxed{CH_3}$

$\begin{matrix} CH_2 & CH_3 \\ | & | \\ CH_3 & \end{matrix}$

④ 3,4-dimethylhexane

Alkane Nomenclature



5-ethyl 3,4-dimethyl octane

NOT: 3-ethyl 5,6-dimethyl octane  
 too big

\* #s order + then alphabetical!

like alkene?

UNBALANCED

3QUESTION

Chinenyenwa Okoye



# A Note From The Editor

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Art is at its basic core indefinable. Its true beauty lies within its vagueness and inability to capture experience into a box of singular meaning. Hidden within every image, brush stroke and metaphor is an opportunity for every woman to freely express herself. As the editor, I am pleased to see that Nandi remains an artistic medium that is as diverse and brilliant as the beautifully unique women who create it. I admire Nandi's artistic complexity and its ability to raise questions and showcase what it means to be a woman of color in today's society. I couldn't be more enthused and inspired by this year's contributors and staff members and would like to extend a sincere thanks to all involved in Nandi's production. From Dean Lee's exceptionally rich introduction and the profound cover art by our artistic director, to each individual submission and the unyielding support of Witkaze Executive Board, I see Nandi beginning to flourish and inspire a legacy of strong Agnes Scott women.

Courtney F. Taylor

