40 Years of Gallery


Walters State Community College proudly presents the 40th edition of Gallery, our literary and art magazine. Gallery has published the creative work of students since 1973. The magazine is organized and designed entirely by Walters State students. This year’s staff is honored to present the anniversary edition that celebrates 40 years of talented up-and-coming artists and authors.

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“The aim of art is to represent not the outward appearance of things, but their inward significance.”  
— Aristotle
Ashley Crooke Digital Photography
40 years of Art and Literature

Digital Photography

Ashley Crooke
Gallery

Ryan Wolfe Digital Photography

Art
Art

Ron Smith

Digital Photography
40 years of Art and Literature

Tabytha Vance

Digital Photography  Nathan Hoskins
Christine Jeter

Art

Celeste Rudd Digital Photography
40 years of Art and Literature

Digital Photography

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Go, Go Fatty Rangers!
By: Marandia Harville

One day in the city...

I WANT BROWNIES!
I want soda and a ton of ribs!

Hurry let's go, Rangers!

I hope you save me a crumb this time...

Help! That guy just stole my purse! Someone help me please!

To the Buffet!

Chicken! Steak!

I like totally want a Cosmo-Martini-Shirley T with extra sugar, extra cream, a scoop of ice cream, whip frosting, and two cherries on top. Oh, I hope it don't have trans fats. I don't want it to transfer to me!

But... what about me?...
40 years of Art and Literature

Courtney Howard

Drawing - Ink pen & Sharpie on Bristol Board

Acrylic on canvas panel

Painting - Acrylic on Stretched Canvas
Marena Rayle
Acrylic paint on stretched canvas
Taylor Perry
Drawing - Graphite Pencil on Paper

Celeste Rudd
Drawing - Charcoal on Paper
Breanna Moore

Oil paint on paper

Gouache on Bristol Board
Marisa Mitchell

Acrylic paint on stretched canvas

Celeste Rudd

Mixed Media on Bristol Board
Sweet Nanny Cass Ballad
by
Mary Ellen Allen

The boards still creak when wind blows through
The ancient wavy glass
When I walk in I hear the busy work
Of Sweet Old Nanny Cass;

The trees still stand with vaulted grace
Their limbs, a natural shelter
Her footsteps on the lime green grass
Says comfort comes soon after;

The water flows with endless peace
On down the creek in pasture
She trudges down, her head held high
With rushing roaring laughter;

It's been so long, since she's been here
Her spirit roams 'round
When trees leaves blow I need not fear
Sweet Nanny Cass is near.

Mississippi Child
by
Mary Ellen Allen

I am from the sweet-as-dessert tea, served morning, noon, night, and anytime in between.
I am from the porch swings always swaying lazily under the ceiling fans and gliding over the painted porch floorboards.
I am from the “Let’s go callin’” people.
I am from the buzzing south: the buzzing ball of sun and the buzzing rhythm of night.
I am from the milk-bathed bodies, feeling baptized under the silver moon.
I am from the nap-taking children, listening as our fathers and grandfathers talk deeply in the next room, lulling us to sleep.
I am from the bottle-tree yards and the glorious magnolia scented air.
I am from the patent-leather shoes, stockings, lacy dress, curled hair, Bible-in-hand, go to church every Sunday people.
I am from the place where every body of water is warm, no matter what the month.
I am from the always say, “Yes, ma'am, no, sir, please and thank you” people.
I am from the “Hey ya'll, how's your mama?” people.
I am from the place where little old ladies have gardens that are the most colorful, beautiful works of art.
I am from the hot, sweaty children always outside, calling over the fence, “Come on ova', let's play house,” people.
I am from the picking out your own switch and you better stand still people.
I am a Mississippi child.
The Sweet, Sweet South
by
Mary Ellen Allen

Where does the moss grow thick on trees
And ladies drip with sweet gentility
The men let romance grip and seize
Feeling the richness of fertility
Where do the porch swings creak like songs
And the lightning bugs give ambiance
To lovers whispering, promising all night long
With their playful, sensual dalliance
Where are the ladies treated sweetly
Like antique, precious play-things
The fierceness in their breasts, beastly
When courage and hope is all that clings?
That Sensual, Starry-eyed region, where Summer air is as thick as the accents,
The hot, humid South, where every tree, flower, house are kinfolk to the ancients.

Fevered Dreams
by
Mary Ellen Allen

Only in the fevered sweat of dreams can
I see the life you are showing me,
That I never knew I needed.
You stare into my panicked eyes.
"I hate my life," I whisper,
As I lay on your body, scared, clinging, breathing hard.
"That? Him?" You say smiling, "That was nothing."
"I've been making our new life since the first time I saw
Your beautiful face."
I Ascended Up To Heaven
by
Monica Todd

I ascended up to heaven,
The Holy Spirit and me
Welcomed by angels seven,
And beauty old eyes can't see.
Old friends came to hold me close,
And show me my new home
We all were dressed in white cloaks,
And no one lived alone.
The Son came to welcome me,
I noticed then, my friends had crowns
They dropped them at His feet,
Their jewels made eloquent sounds.
Then I saw that I had none,
And I could only kneel
He lifted my face, the Son,
He knew what I would feel.
My parents came behind Him,
Adorned with jewels and treasure
He explained it to me then,
Their love once equal in measure.
Every emerald and every ruby,
Every jewel that they carried
Showed every accepted duty,
Each task from God they married.
My soul sank as I realized,
Why I lacked a jewel
I had hated I’d told lies,
I had lived a fool.
I looked up deep into His eyes,
And knew I was forgiven
Through my faults there was a right,
I’d taken love He’d given.
But I took it just for me
I had not shared it once
It wasn’t till then I could see,
Just what I had not done.
I bent down my head in pausing,
And I tried to make it up
My shameful lack of offering,
So I said words I thought of.
“I don’t have any crowns to give you,
I lack jewels, silver, and gold
All I can do is bow before you,
In awe of who I behold.

Shame
by
Monica Todd

Tear stained face
Falling away from grace
You were once so beautiful.
Tears on cheeks
Where color had once peaked
Your life was once so fruitful.
Bloodshot eyes
No longer a disguise
Your eyes were once so bright.
Silent voice
Joy was once the noise
Your laughter was so light.
Blackened thoughts
Where wisdom had been sought
Your mind was once so pure.
Angered speech
Where confidence would speak
You were once so sure.
Shame is what you have become
Shame is what can’t be undone.
Sunrise Sampler
by
Ashley Williams

The atmosphere is cold and dark.
A handful of guests shuffle across the room,
Hungry, peeping through their menus.
And I have limited legroom.
My own menu is stained with jelly,
That foul substance like early morning smog.
The window to my left shows a dark world of headlights—
I should write about this in my blog.
I pore over my menu, finding nothing and everything.
The world is dark, but I am hungry.
The triangle peg game bores me to tears.
Whatever that song is, it's not helping.
Alas, the waiter comes!
Takes my order . . . pours me a cup of . . .
Blackness. Night fades around me again,
While I watch the rocking chairs bob and the headlights sink.
I stared into the Bermuda Triangle,
Or else it was that eg-no-ra-moose peg game
With its thousands of holes that it could sink into.
The waiter must've died, or worse—
Has caved and eaten my breakfast.
Forever I'd be haunted by this dark world
If I knew the light of day wasn't coming.
I shall give my waiter a one penny tip—
One penny for the one star on her apron.
I shall crawl upon the floor, come crashing through their door—
Baby, I can't fight this feeling anymore.
Footsteps approaching. Birds singing out.
The waiter's hand dips, and I know what's ahead.
A warming glow floods through the window, two suns upon my table . . .
Two? Hang on . . . it's actually my sunny-side-up eggs
Water World
by
Thom Mather

We'll set sail on dry land with whiskey for waves
Destination is nowhere but we'll drink for days
The man is a pirate; he picks where he stays
And also the plots that he'll dig for graves
Crash landing on principles that play close to heart
We made it to the end without meaning to start
Transversing denial without the great part
Act now to cry later my genocide's art
I'm wrecking your port while my ship is secure
Did you lose some or win some; I'll leave you unsure
All my friends are so hungry their thoughts are impure
They'll run off with your women so coldly demure
We're blowing up buildings that stood up to time's test
I'll leave you no shelter and no place to rest
I'm keeping my lovely tucked tight to my chest
She's killed me before but only when pressed
The air in the sails is the breath from my lungs
My mouth is the ocean with thousands of tongues
Only the sad ones were songs that I sung
I couldn't get back to where I'd begun
I'm dying for Death, but he's taking his time
I'm strung up on hooks without any lines

My Childhood Home
by
LeAnna Chandler

You took my hand and led me to the outskirts of my childhood home.
The memories, both pleasant and painful, kept me from the doorstep.
I gazed upon the overwhelming beauty of the landscape and the pathways.
Although everything was worn from time, it all looked the same.
You listened as I rambled; embracing the feelings I had tried to bottle inside.
I attempted to tell you every story I could remember.
You smiled when I spoke of the fondest memories; the ones I cherished deep in my heart.
You held me when I spoke of the most painful ones; the ones that left their scars.
Then, to my confusion, you thanked me . . .
You thanked me for letting you into my world, and you told me I was the strongest person you knew.
And when we turned to leave, I realized that with you by my side,
There would be even more beautiful things in life to come,
Things even more beautiful than my childhood home.
Polonius
by
Alysha Coggins

O Polonius, Dear Polonius,
Why do you hold yourself in such high regard?
Don't you know that Shakespeare merely put you there as a sounding board?
You who court the king’s queen and the queen’s king
You try to garner favor wherever you are going
Hamlet saw you as nothing more than a tool
You truly are a pretentious fool
You stuck your nose where it did not belong,
And in the end you sang death's song.
I hope you are in hell
Boring the devil
With your spils of endless drivel
Hamlet did right in slaying you
Even if it was by accident
I doubt it is an action of which he will repent
Maybe next time you will listen to your own advice that
“Brevity is the soul of wit”
And when you cross the river Acheron
Give all my love to Charon.

While On The Road
by
Marandia Harville

While on the road, never forget, the lives you touched, cherished moments spent,
No matter the vehicle you took, the journey was long and time went.
Through times of joy,
Through times of pain,
You would always come home, through snow, heat, or rain.
As tiny infants, you watched us grow and bloom,
But through those years, we watched and learned from you.
As days grew old and time did flew,
Our bonds never wavered, our hearts remained true,
To a caring father, who is kind and brave,
No matter what the danger, the day you would come and save!
The roads they twist, they twirl, an endless stream of stone that is hot or cold.
Though you travel on in this dark cruel world,
If despair should take you and turn you sad and blue,
Know that your daughters love and care about you!
While on the road, never forget, the lives you touched, cherished moments spent.
Unsung Ambition  
by  
Brandon Molzon  

The self-proclaimed intellectual colossus swears  
To figure out the meaning of three-sided squares  
As those who have stood before him marvel  
Beholding stupidity manifest  
Interpreting nonsense  
Into the future of lies believed  
Twisting perplexities into abomination  
Communicating ignorance  
Like sugar-coated razor blades  
Severing the vocal cords of truth and sanity  
Lavatories of nonsense overflowing  
While we all believe what we do not believe in  
This unsung abomination takes place daily  
And this we accept  
With open arms and open legs  
Only to despise what we have created.

Dollar Menu Days  
by  
Michael Anthony Lewis

It surely started sometime ago,  
My stomach hurts and I know  
To wait much longer could surely seal my fate,  
Oh long has it been since last I have ate.  
My search begins with no success  
No fruit, no vegetables, no meat, nor bread  
I search the cupboards, I check the shelves,  
nothing at all, but a rotten smell  
I’m hungry enough to eat a horse,  
I never thought that could be true of course.  
I’ll do this dance till my hunt is through  
Eventually I’m sure I shall find some food.  
My strength weakens, my stomach draws close  
My ribs protrude and my voice grows hoarse.  
Giving up is my only option,  
There is nothing to eat! Not one single sausage!  
A cell phone rings from far far away,  
It is familiar, but yet so strange.  
A last surge of energy to answer this call  
I see it is my friend. Oh please don’t be calling  
about ball.  
“Hello,” I say, half staving, half excited  
The line is only filled with an awkward silence.  
“You wanna go eat,” he says in a hurry.  
“I’ll buy the Mcdoubles if you get the Mcflurries.  
Off we travel to end this famine  
I had nearly starved but now it’s finished.  
I might eat three or possibly five,  
All I know, it’s dollar menu time.

Cyber Speed  
by  
Brandon Molzon

My microwave can suce-ify  
The finest flavorful incentives  
To destroy the shining parts of me  
Decaying virtues of inventions  
This culture spins its web  
And literally it’s spinning  
Each image dies at birth  
To influence new beginnings  
This is the age of complacence  
Precipice of annihilation  
Entitled; blissfully unaware  
Status update degradation  
So much confined by gravity  
To dwell amongst the herd of liars  
Contained within the walls that bind me  
Surrounded by a ring of fire  
The figures passing will not see  
Nor would they even choose to learn  
More than shining new technology  
Out of touch with human life  
Into worlds of make believe  
Yet void of all imagination  
This learning curve is cyber speed.
B-R-ownies
by
Michael Anthony Lewis

Brownies, brownies, a fat guy's good friend.
You have been there with me whether you were cut thick or thin.
Hi, I'm Anthony and I'm addicted to brownies.
You should all try them too, they will keep you from frowning.
They never hurt your mood, merciful God blessed us the day they were created.
Beautiful squares so delicious, they could never be tainted.
Stir it in a tray then just let it sit.
30 minutes seems so long but it's well worth the wait.
Beeper goes off, brownies come out, and now let them cool if that's ok.
All to do now is cram them in my mouth.
Since I have nothing left to say.
Now some have nuts, some have sprinkles.
Some are made with caramel or frosting.
If you make them, make them good.
Never-mind what it's costing.
Beautiful squares cut to perfection; baked at 300 degrees.
Blissful squares so scrumptious and tasty; my how I love thee!
I can eat them slow; I can eat them fast; I can't eat them with milk.
The only way to enjoy a brownie is with 2 percent white Silk.
O sure sure, calories galore, they will go straight to my behind.
Even diabetes won't stop my fetish; take my feet and my sight.
Share? Not at all, how dare you even ask.
They're all for me, me alone, and my own fat-ass.

Our God
by
Brandon Dillman

I have seen you in rays of sun
I have felt you in drops of rain
I have claimed you to make rivers run
I have blamed you as a source of pain

But that is not to say
That I have ever found
Even one fault in your teachings
Or a reason to take my opinion of you
down

You are our god
No matter what name is called
You are my god
It is we who are flawed
From a Unique Perspective
by
Autumn Johnson

It’s early morning and the sun is rising. Not many people are out yet, but it won’t be long. Between the city residents, the commuters, and the tourists, my little area of the world will become quite crowded. Sorry, I guess I should mention who I am. This may come as a shock, but my name is THE Golden Gate Bridge. I know that it sounds strange, but just because I appear inanimate does not mean that I don’t experience the world around me. I have my own story to tell, but I prefer to tell the stories of the ordinary people who cross over me every day.

There are two types of people who come to see me. The first group is the tourists and the second is the locals. It is fairly easy to differentiate between the two. The locals are the ones who are always rushing to work. They prefer driving to walking, and their sense of awe of the scenery generally does not exist. However, a few residents of San Francisco will jog across me in the morning, bundled up against the cold and wind that is always present in the early hours, even in the summer. The tourists are a completely different group all together. They always choose the sidewalks and are never prepared for how breezy it is around me. I can always expect a good laugh when a tourist’s hat goes flying off his or her head and he or she runs around attempting to catch it. One time, there was this man who was jumping around trying to snatch his baseball cap out of the air as it floated on the wind. That was a definite highlight of that day!

Oh the stories I can tell about each and every day in my life! Do you want to hear one? You do? Great! I have just the one.

That particular day had the potential to start out with a depressing event. It was very early, and the sky was still pitch black. A young person, I won’t mention any names, decided that his life was not worth living. Now, I’m fairly high off the ground. Well, if you want to get technical, I’m high off the bay. I am so tall that a fall from me into the water below would kill a person, and unfortunately, the locals know that. This particular individual wanted to use me for such evil deeds. He wanted to die from suicide by bridge, can you believe it! I couldn’t stand the thought of that poor young soul going to the waste. I told him to hold on, that everything would be okay. Of course, I can’t speak English, or any language, so he probably didn’t understand my actual words. But I am pretty awesome, so I like to think that my words reached him in some way, and that he made use of one of the phones stationed periodically along me, and was saved that day because of me.

Mid-afternoon was much more cheerful. That was when a small tourist family came to take in the sights. They were so fun to watch. The little group didn’t provide much in the way of laugh-out-loud humor, but they did my soul some good. It is always a joy to watch the tourists’ looks of wonder when they stare up at my columns or out into the bay and see Alcatraz and the city. Most realize that they are having a once-in-a-lifetime experience and enjoy every second of it. This family did that. The kids were so excited, running around and looking over the railing edge or almost getting vertigo from just looking skyward when standing next to one of the pillars. Their parents kept them in line, though, and prevented them from taking a swim or getting run over by a cyclist. It’s possible to rent bikes to travel across me on. It’s a good thing, except when the bikers pedal just a little too fast and don’t watch where they’re going. Oh, sorry, I’m rambling, aren’t I? Well, getting back on track, the group was an absolute joy to have visiting. They are the kind of people who make my world a brighter place.
At nightfall, the temperature dropped again. By the time the sun set, all of the pedestrians were gone. I don't blame them. I don't even really enjoy the cold and wind that comes with no sun. Because of that, I think it's time that I ask for a new coat. Maybe I'll get a golden one this time, in order to match my name. Oh, but red suits me so well. Ah, but this is a matter to discuss at another time. Back to the story. Night had fallen, and everyone was heading home from work or another spectacular Giants game at AT&T Park. This time of the evening is when I love to listen in on the drivers and hear how the latest game went or the gossip of something that happened at a workplace. Hey, all the pedestrians have left by then, so I need something fun to do! Once the evening traffic rush is over, I take a nap for those short hours between one period of excitement and the next. I have to be well rested in order to enjoy every aspect of life. Even though I cannot die like a human can, my end may someday come. After all, the next great earthquake could happen at any time. No matter what you are, always cherish the time you are given. On that sentimental conclusion, it is time for me, the large, beautiful, wonderful, RED, Golden Gate Bridge, to say:

THE END

Untitled
by Patricia Jordan

We're a raggedly old pair
Him and I
Our bones worn down
Thin and bare

Eyesight fades
Hearing almost gone
Color recognition is
Nothing more than shades

Hair so sparse
Our skin is dry
Youth is just a memory
Of days gone by

These are troubled times
That's for sure
Old age is upon us
And there is no cure
The Couch
by
Kelly Meadows

It sat in the garage now, beaten and bloody, literally, from scraped knees and the tabby cat that had been hit by a truck, its legs twisted. The floral pattern was faded and yellowed. The fabric had an oily feel to it from the humidity in the garage and the Kool-Aid stains. The springs were crushed by the weight of years so the cushions sunk. It was all very concave.

“We’re going to burn it one day,” she told him laughingly. “In a ceremony, a ritual of sorts. It’ll be cathartic.”

He laughed. This wasn’t the first time they’d joked about burning the couch, tossing it in a wood chipper, calling the Salvation Army to pick it up, probably only to have it rejected because of disrepair.

“You’re not fond of it anymore?” he asked.

“All my best memories are on that couch,” she answered.

It was true. He had touched her knee for the first time when they were fifteen on the couch. When they had bought their first house, a double-wide in hicktown, her parents had donated the couch, a generous housewarming gift. They’d made their second son on the couch, one of those things they told him to traumatize him and his friends.

The couch bore more than their happiness, though. It also held a great deal of pain. One night, after they’d fought about something neither one of them remembered, he had been so angry, he’d stomped out into the garage, grabbed a cushion, and violently ripped it. After everything was forgiven, she had sewn it up, not good as new, but tougher from the war.

Now, their first-born was heading to university for his junior year, was moving into an apartment of his own, was requesting the couch to sit in his living room that was also a dining room.

“You sure about that?” the dad asked.

“Well, yeah. It has character,” the son replied. “It’s one less thing I have to put money out for. It’s just sitting in the garage.”

The trick for the parents was this: did they continue the cycle of the couch, or did they end it finally? It reminded them of the power of youth, the urges and falls. It was their coat-of-arms, blemishes and all.

So, in the middle of the night, like teenagers sneaking out, they stalked into their own garage, giggling at themselves, at the seriousness of the situation. They’d made blueprints of their plan. They’d packed extra batteries for the flashlights. The garage door wailed as it opened, a sure way to wake the kids and the neighbors. Luckily, everyone slept except the dogs and the crickets.

One on each end, they hefted the couch out of the garage, her end lagging, him carrying most of the weight. He pulled down the tailgate of his truck and lifted the couch onto the lip of it. He climbed in the bed, whisper-yelling at her to help him out; that his back wasn’t what it used to be. Finally, and with much struggling, they tied the couch down, securing it to the bed.

“This is the oddest thing we’ve ever done,” she said, smiling.

“Some things just seem right,” he said.

She sat on the couch in the bed, and he drove slow so she wouldn’t fly out. The rear window was open, and she kept her arm draped across his shoulders. They drove into the boonies, deeper into the field lands and cow pastures. “Someone’s going to see,” she whispered, but the wind snatched the words and she let it drag her caution away too.

“My shoes are on fire!!”
After a half-hour, he stopped and pulled the emergency brake. She stood up, feeling unsteady. In a move he was proud he could still perform, he lifted her off the truck bed and onto the ground.

Much easier this time around, the two pulled the couch of the bed and dragged it fifteen feet away. He poured lighter fluid religiously over the couch, sanctifying it. “Damn, the matches are in the dash.” She grabbed the packet, old-fashioned but more poignant than modern lighters.

“You take one, I take one,” she told him.

They stood on either end again, like the first time he saw her in that lavender dress, like when she knew she loved him. They lit the matches, a yellow light compared to the whiteness of the moon. Wordlessly, they dropped the sticks. The couch erupted in flames and he cursed, surprised.

She didn’t bother helping him as he beat at the small flames with his jacket. She laughed and laughed, the fire burning passionately. He settled down and laughed with her. They sat in the truck bed and watched the couch break down, some atoms headed to the west, others settling in the dirt.

“What’s that word you used?” he asked.

“Cathartic,” she answered.

“Are you going to miss it?”

“We have a gravesite right here,” she said.

“What have we killed tonight?”

“Nothing. We didn’t kill anything. We immortalized it.”

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**Mama**
by
Kelly Meadows

These are the groanings I cannot utter:
Everything I hate in you
I see in me.
I don’t understand, how
hatred and disgust can
do coexist so peacefully alongside
love and affection
and an admiration so fierce.

I wanted to be like you
Because you fell down stairs
or pushed others down stairs

...When you let the dishes pile up
I was aware
that not all kids live like this.
When he was gone during the weeks
and the months,
I learned to not miss him
because you didn’t miss him.

...After you told me about the soldier
who died in that helicopter,
I saw a glimmer of reflection of the person
you once were

Sometimes you still type his name in
a search engine,
hoping to find his obituary
or a picture—
as if proving to me,
proves it to yourself.

You never have found him.

...I followed in your footsteps, you know.

Beating up the bad guys,
though I never threw a punch.

Reading Harlequins by the batch
despite comprehending little of the innuendo.

Well, how could you have survived,
without giving a few hard kicks
or learning the truth of love
in the bindings of a book...?

...Sometimes,
I think we could tear down buildings
together, set a village on fire
and let it burn.

I don’t have the bitterness
to accomplish all that,
but maybe, since I once hungered
for your breast,
you can feed it to me.

I won’t douse the flames if you won’t.

Kelly Meadows
Twisting Journey of My Soul
by
April Foust

When my heart was cast before me and I saw its gruesome lot
Intensely was I horrified
Gravely I besought
A balm of soothing comfort
An experience injury free
A way to equal the punishment
Life had given to me.
I strove side to side
As I sought solace in what is real
I wandered ever so dangerously
Far too close to the surreal.
And teetering into blackness
Grasping for some friendliness
I found there my greatest soul tie
An image, a sweet decadence.
You alone can view with whole
The twisting journey of my soul
When finding way it died a death
And came to life and died again
It proved to me this one thing true
No death doth end my life unless
Permitted by my LORD’s adieu.

Charon
by
Alysha Coggins

8 days dead, waiting to depart
With its last beat, stops the heart
The gold coin is laid upon the eyes
Only those deserving get the prize

Hermes guides souls without direction
Offering his protection
Waiting on more souls to ferry
On winged feet light and airy

At last on the shore of the river Styx, the fallen awaits
In a place where one shiny coin will determine his fate
Pity the one who must for one hundred years wander
Tearing the mortal world asunder

Charon appears from the swampy river he for all eternity has patrolled
A terrifying apparition to behold
His visage will make anyone shiver
He is death riding on the river