

# ARGENTUM

The Art &  
Literary  
Magazine of  
Great Basin  
College  
2025

IGNITE



Aurora Borealis Over the Mountains



## Swish of Flame

*Medium: Photography*

Elizabeth Nash

## 2024-2025 Staff

Toni Milano and Dori Andrepont, *Co-Editors*

Dr. Josh Webster, *Adviser*

The theme of “Ignite” inspired many contributors, and we felt that featuring a ceramics piece that is fired at 2,350°F to become art could not be more appropriate! *Argentum* is much more than two editors, and we thank Dr. Josh Webster, Gail Rappa, and Angie de Braga for their assistance. We also thank the Great Basin College campuses who help to get out the word and take extra steps to make known that the submissions are open to all community members. We do appreciate it!

We hope you enjoy this year’s publication, and consider submitting to the 2026 issue.

Our website is [www.gbcnv.edu/argentum](http://www.gbcnv.edu/argentum) and our email is [argentum@gbcnv.edu](mailto:argentum@gbcnv.edu).

## FRONT COVER Aurora Borealis Over the Mountains

*Medium: Ceramics*

Sabrina Chang

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# Argentum Selection Committee

*We thank our 2025 Selection Committee as they took time from their busy schedules to review and choose this year's submissions to be included in this publication.*

*Their willingness and effort is deeply appreciated.*



## Nancy Harris McLelland

### *Writing Judge*

Nancy Harris McLelland, an Elko County native, has a BA in English from the University of Nevada Reno, and an MA in Language Arts and Literature from the University of New Mexico, Albuquerque. She taught creative writing, composition, and literature for over twenty years at Mendocino College, a small rural community college in Northern California. McLelland has conducted writing workshops for the Western Folklife Center, Great Basin College, and the Great Basin Writing Project, as well as at her place in Tuscarora.

McLelland has presented her "Poems from Tuscarora" at both daytime and evening events at the National Cowboy Poetry Gathering in Elko. Her essay, "Cowboy Poetry and the Literary Canon" is in the anthology *Cowboy Poetry Matters*.



## Janet Winterer

### *Art Judge*

Janet is an artist, sculptor, potter, wood worker, leather worker, jewelry artist, and glass lamp worker. She has done metal casting, various types of weaving, spinning, sewing, fiber arts, lapidary and mosaics. She has produced thousands of works of art both large and small, been represented by an esteemed art gallery and won numerous art competitions. She served as assistant sculpture teacher at Antelope Valley College in California and is currently an active artisan member of the Society for Creative Anachronism. She plans to never have a day in her life without art.



**Amber Donnelly**

*President, Great Basin College*

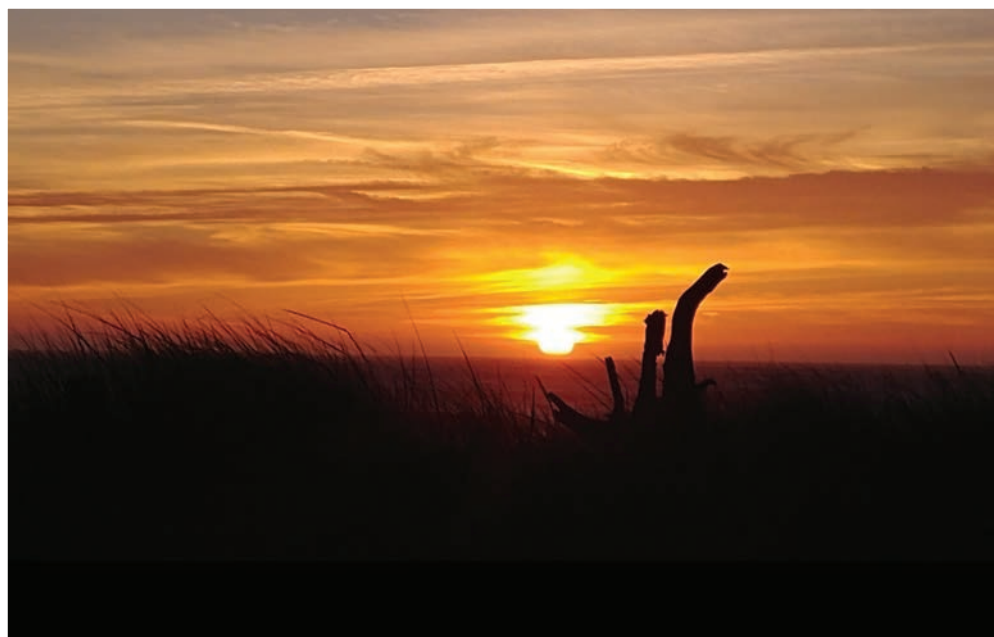
As we unveil the 2025 edition of *Argentum*, our esteemed art and literary magazine, we are proud to present this year's theme: "Ignite". This theme embodies the spirit of inspiration, creativity, and transformation that defines our institution. "Ignite" calls upon each of us to kindle the sparks within those ideas, passions, and dreams that drive us toward excellence. It is a celebration of the creative force that propels us to explore new horizons, challenge conventions, and illuminate the path forward.

In this edition, you will encounter a diverse array of artistic expressions and literary works that reflect the vibrant talents within our community. Each piece is a testament to the unique perspectives and voices that make Great Basin College a beacon of innovation and cultural enrichment. We extend our gratitude to all contributors for sharing their artistry and narratives. Your work not only enriches our publication but also inspires others to embark on their own creative journeys.

May the contents of this year's *Argentum* ignite your imagination and encourage you to pursue your passions with fervor. Together, let us continue to build a community where creativity thrives, and the flames of knowledge and expression burn brightly.

Sincerely,

*President Donnelly*



## Fiery Sunset

*Medium: Photography*

Saundra Watts



# LEAVES

by Rebecca Hawkey

AS CHILDREN we form societies and complex social systems that mirror – if not necessarily mimic – the societies and complex social systems of the grown-ups. And I don't think this is nurtured as much as it is nature. We were largely unaware of war and alliances and commodities as children. It didn't occur to us to react to the offenses of others the way Allies reacted to the Axis. And yet it didn't stop the youth in my apartment complex from engaging in a series of skirmishes with a fervor that rivalled that of every war before it.

When I was eight I had a seven-year-old friend named Chanara who lived in the apartment above mine and was often baby-sat by my mother, thereby making her an honorary sister. We were playing in the grassy area in front of our apartment building with her toy horses and a pile of small, pale green leaves that grew close together like bunches of bananas. We had not seen leaves like these before so naturally our imaginations turned them into a great treasure.

I don't remember what we did that provoked the attack. He may have been a bully. We may have appeared too young and vulnerable to be left to play unmolested. It may be because we had created a treasure. All I can remember is that while at our innocent horsey play, a boy, who was probably 12 years old, though to us he seemed as imposing and as impossible to fight as a teenager, ran at us, grabbed our leaves, and ran off again laughing at the joy of being more powerful than two little girls. The leaves to us were precious, and never more so than when they were taken from us.

My sister is three years older than me and while she held no qualms about beating the crap out of me herself, there was no hiding place under heaven

sufficient to protect those who hurt her little sister. She came upon my friend and me crying over our lost treasure and innocence. The idea that someone would do something so unkind to us was still a new and shocking notion. The troops were rallied. I do not remember all the allies. Like remembering a dream, I can sense numbers of fellow preteen girls, but I can see no distinct faces. The same holds true for our enemy. What had been one wicked boy grew to a small army of people whose characters could see justice in stealing the playthings of children. You can only imagine the evil that must have dwelled in those youngsters' hearts. Of that army, there was one who stood out. The Girl. She stood toe-to-toe with my sister in her fierceness, but she was vile. She was that character in kids' movies who was just mean with no other dimensions to her character. She was the kind of 12-year-old girl who wants to watch the world burn. She would have sooner destroyed our leaves than return them.

There were a number of maneuvers in which the leaves were captured and then recaptured again. Our righteous anger grew; their maliciousness grew to meet it. I only remember the final two battles, but funnily enough, I do not remember who ended up with the prize in the end. All I retain from our efforts are these remaining memories.

My sister had discovered where the leaves were hidden, but they could not be gathered during the day because an apartment complex is always crawling with spies and witnesses who could not all be silenced. So, we woke very early on a Saturday morning and while Chanara and I kept watch, my sister crept with valor and bravery into enemy territory where the leaves were stowed beneath a large rock in front of The Girl's apartment. My sister returned without incident. We had

triumphed! The war was won! We could now play with peace – and a new caution.

However, the leaves were missing, and The Girl wanted them back. She confronted my sister, shoving her, demanding information, demanding the return of what The Girl had rightfully stolen. My sister, ever the stubborn and stalwart soldier, refused. She turned her back on The Girl and walked away. That is, until The Girl jumped on my sister's back. Did I mention that my sister possesses a fury within her that is terrifying to behold? The Girl had chosen the wrong back to jump on. My sister reached behind her and in one swift motion pulled The Girl from her back and onto the ground. Now, The Girl was of average build and like all apartment kids, she was skinny and wiry. However, my sister would have been skinny in whatever situation she was raised in. Even now I refuse to believe that she weighs over a hundred pounds and she never grew over 5 feet 3 inches. As a child my mother took her to doctors because she worried about her small size. Despite her diminutiveness she has been the star of every physical fitness test she has ever taken, holding onto bars with her arms at 90-degree angles long after every classmate has dropped, performing pull up after pull up without struggle, and doing series of push-ups for our uncles' entertainment at family reunions because she could seemingly go on forever. Add to this physical perplexity the fact that I have never witnessed such a burning intensity so tightly contained in all my life as what I have witness in my sister. This was what The Girl had thrown herself at. And I'm glad. I'm 26 years old now, and I am glad for what she got.

As I said, my sister threw The Girl to the ground and without strategy or forethought she punched and clawed at The Girl who could do nothing but attempt to

cover her face. There was blood and tears, and at long last, justice.

Of course, after this the adults got involved and The Girl's mother proved to be even nastier than her daughter. She came pounding on our door and screamed at our mild-mannered mother who did nothing to fight back. I just wish I had been old enough to do so. I would have done to this woman what my sister did to her daughter. Naturally it never occurred to that wretched woman that her daughter may have done something to deserve the beating she took. So, my sister was grounded, the armies disbanded, the whereabouts of the leaves dwindled into the stuff of legend and mystery, life returned to normal.

Time is a funny thing at this young age so I don't know how long it was after the war that I experienced this profound moment of reflection. It was probably only a matter of weeks, but in the world of a child it felt like years after my horrific battles, and I should have been strolling slowly with a cane because the shrapnel in my leg left me forever changed, as I walked with a peaceful wisdom. On this stroll I looked up at a tree that stood not far from our now quiet battlefield. And I saw a familiar pale green among the more mature dark green leaves. I reached up and was just barely able to graze a bunch of leaves identical to those we had fought so bitterly for. They had been here the whole time, growing just above our heads. Even at the age of eight I found myself wondering in quiet horror at the hatred and bloodshed caused because we thought this treasure so precious and rare. What fools we had been. For it had been here all along, growing on a tree while we were digging them out from under a rock. ■

# ARGENTUM



## Monkey Plate

*Medium: Ceramics*

Cindy Cordray



## Paper Phoenix

*Medium: Paper Strips*

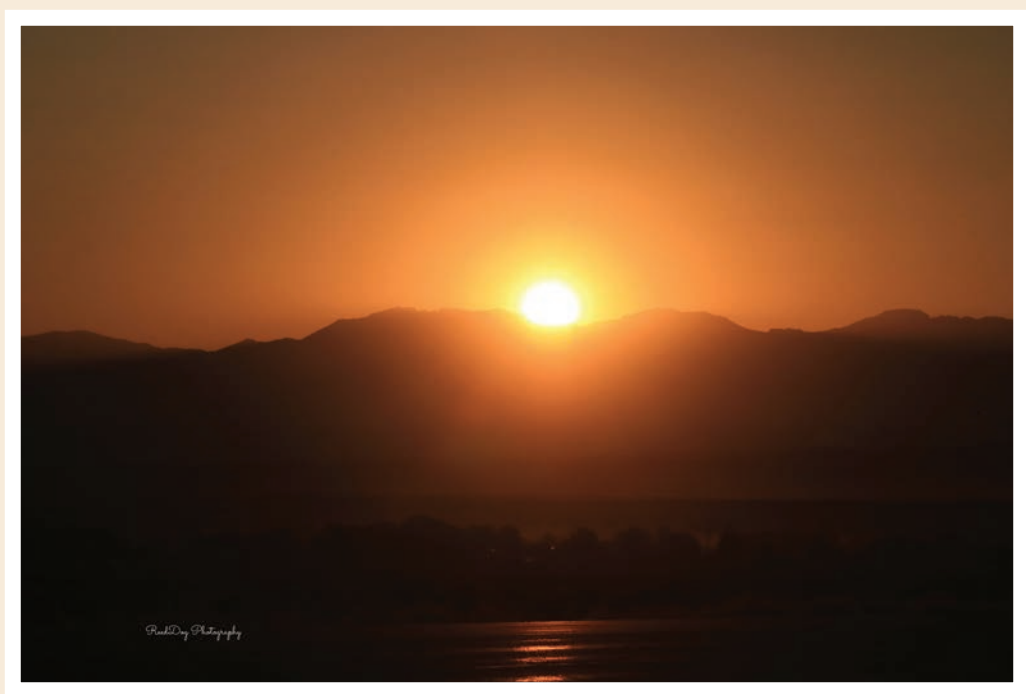
Hailey Syme



## Light the Sky

*Medium: Photography*

Maria Castaneda



## Peaceful Easy Feeling

*Medium: Photography*

Gregory Reeder

# A Tapestry of Fleeting Moments

by Karissa Sena-Fadenrecht

I wander through my days in a dance unplanned,  
With steps that follow no mapped-out strand.  
It's in fleeting whispers, the truth I find,  
The essence of self, a moment unconfined.

Sometimes, my being is a patchwork of forgotten parts,  
Held together by remnants of childhood arts.  
In rubber bands faded, I see strength in the fray,  
A tapestry of moments, imperfect yet they stay.

Other times, my mind feels like clay gently shaped,  
By the hands of those whose love I've embraced.  
Bright laughter echoes in a kitchen's warm glow,  
On cold nights when stories and jokes overflow.

In the chatter of birthdays, with joy in the air,  
I find pieces of me reflected in their care.  
These moments remind me I am never alone,  
Connected to something greater, a love I've always known.

And more often than not, my heart is not held together,  
It feels fragmented, like petals in stormy weather.  
Yet in this disarray, I find a hidden charm.  
In the shattered echoes, a resounding alarm.

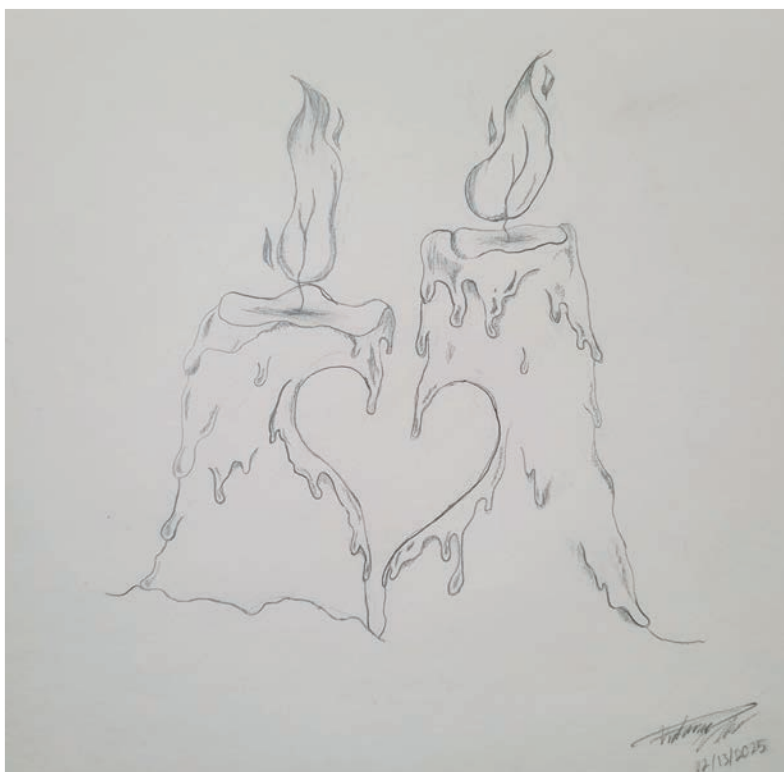
I learn to embrace the cracks and the seams,  
For they hold the stories, the hopes, and the dreams.  
In these moments, I realize, in my human guise,  
That it's okay to be vulnerable, to let tears arise.

For it is in these fractures, these soft places of the soul,  
That I find the strength to feel, and paradoxically, become whole.  
In the quiet corners where the small things reside,  
Lies the essence of life that we often let slide.

A smile exchanged with a stranger on the street,  
Or the sun's gentle warmth on a park bench seat.  
Maybe I'm crazy, with paint smears and songs,  
Finding joy in the mundane, where my heart truly belongs.

For it's the overlooked moments, the whispers of grace,  
That reveals who we are in life's hurried race.  
Life, I guess, is something I don't fully grasp.  
Yet in those fleeting moments, I loosen my clasp.

When clarity strikes like a sudden embrace,  
My heart beats stronger, my soul quickens its pace.  
It's in these instances of undeniable truth,  
That I find my purpose, a rekindling of youth.  
I am reminded, in this dance of ebb and flow,  
That I am alive, connected, and ready to grow. ■



## Candlestick Heart

*Medium: Drawing*

Victoria Villa



**Moon Plate**  
*Medium: Ceramics*  
Kaitlyn Wilder



## Ignite the Day

*Medium: Photography*

Angie de Braga



## Stanage Edge: Kindled Dreams

*Medium: Photography*

Jennifer Stieger

# Within

by Rebecca Murphree

In the hush before the dawn,  
Where dreams and reality blend,  
A spark is born, gentle and warm,  
A whisper on the wind

From ashes of forgotten dreams  
A glow emerges, fierce and bright,  
It dances on the edge of your soul,  
Guiding you through the night

With every heartbeat, every breath,  
The ember grows, fueled by desire,  
It spreads its wings, unfurling wide,  
Becoming a roaring fire

In the core of every soul,  
There lies a spark longing to ignite  
To turn ideas into more,  
To set the world alight

So let your passion blaze unbound,  
Let it consume the fear and doubt,  
For within you lies the power  
To let your story out ■



## Cowboy Campfire

*Medium: Painting*

Gudrun Johnson



## Soda Fired Mug

*Medium: Ceramics*

Allie Ingels



## Dragon Fire

*Medium: Photography*

Joe de Braga



## Blessed Sunset

*Medium: Photography*

Kathi Griffis



## Never Again Plate

*Medium: Ceramics*

Cindy Cordray



## Morning Glow at 7th Canyon Ranch

*Medium: Photography*

Angie de Braga



**Indian Flutist**

*Medium: Painting*

Cindy Wilkerson



**Mountain Plate**

*Medium: Ceramics*

Allie Ingels

# Ruin

by Elizabeth Armstrong

If you are the whisper of malice  
I am the clean blue shout of reason.

If you are the black ink sky  
I am the blank slate of a white board.

If you are the absence of feeling  
I am the painful red of passion.

If you are a lesson to be forgotten  
I am the lyric they will sing to.

If you are something to be learned  
I am the regret they never saw coming.

If you are the simmering orange tea  
I am the painful snow.

If you are the solid yellow of mid morning  
I am the red strewn sky of smokey sunsets.

If you are the ease of walking away  
I am the bloody knuckles pounding on a door.

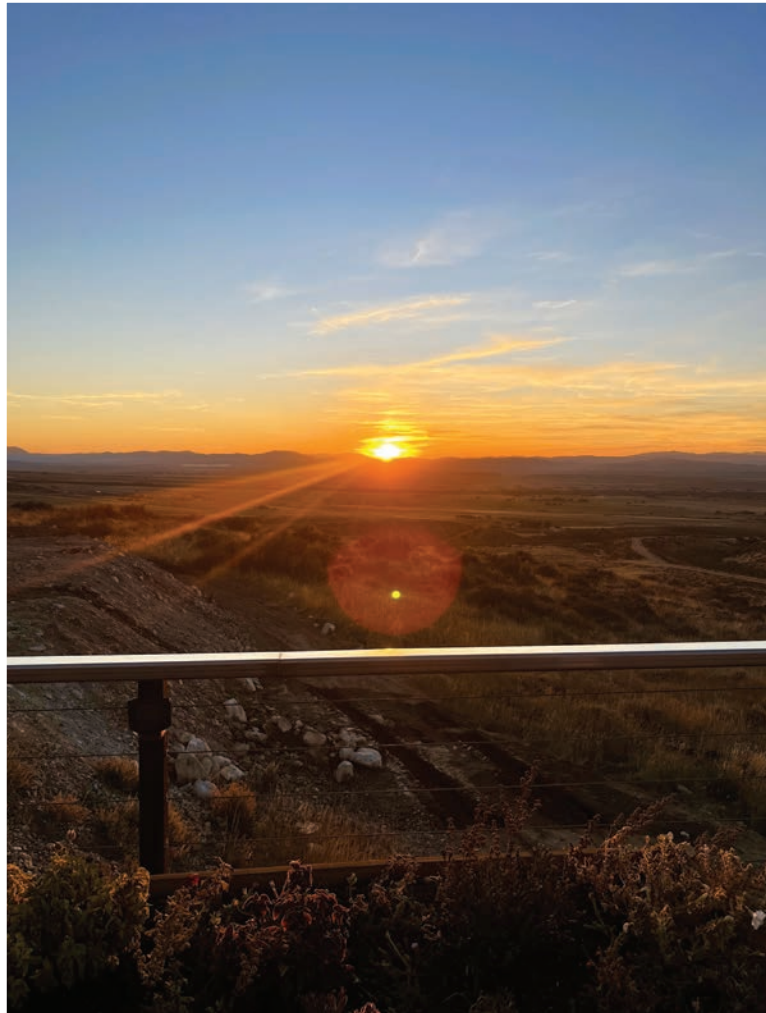
If you are the cat nap in the afternoon  
I am the staring at the ceiling with a blinking clock.

If you are the thrown away photo strip of us  
I am the laughing as the camera flashes in your eyes.

If you are the coward that hides behind reason  
I am the fearlessness of a heart on my sleeve.

If you are the “you’ll find somebody else”  
I am the mourning of a loss.

If you are the green eyes looking away  
I am the nails imprinting half moons on palms. ■



## High Desert Aflame

*Medium: Photography*

Jennifer Stieger



## Plane Drop

*Medium: Photography*

Joe de Braga



### Golden Blooms in a Scarlet Vase

*Medium: Painting*

Alondra Lopez



## Carnival Sunset

*Medium: Photography*

Saundra Watts



## Amsterdam Centraal Illuminated

*Medium: Photography*

Jennifer Stieger



## Mercatoria

*Medium: Mixed*

Rafik Vartanpour

*In 1776, this battleship sailed the coast of the United States to Boston to fight in the war. I'm fortunate to be in this country, and learn about this important historical event through a course offered by Great Basin College. The firing cannons on this ship relate to the Argentum theme "Ignite".*

*I observed the shape, angles, and proportions to create a replica of the real ship. Being in prison, I have limited access to tools and materials. The model boat I created is made of newspaper layers shaped to a Styrofoam mold. Each individual piece was painted and glued to the boat. The cabin, anchor, wheel, and stairs were made from Styrofoam. The sails were created from old, dyed t-shirts, and the masts were made from rolled newspaper. The rope connecting the mast and sails to the boat was made from elastic from socks, dyed black, and sewn with a needle, one by one. The total project required around 175 hours.*



## Hexagon Mug

*Medium: Ceramics*

Sabrina Chang



## Symphony of Blooming Crimson

*Medium: Painting*

Karissa Sena-Fadenrecht



## Ignite the Morning

*Medium: Photography*      Maria Castaneda

To learn more, visit *Argentum* on the Great Basin College website at [www.gbcnv.edu](http://www.gbcnv.edu), follow us on Instagram at [gbcargentum](https://www.instagram.com/gbcargentum), or email [argentum@gbcnv.edu](mailto:argentum@gbcnv.edu)