

Collage

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Front Matter

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Collage
A Magazine for Language
& the Arts

Collage

A Magazine for Language & the Arts

Collage is an interdisciplinary magazine designed to explore the poetry of language and the visual arts. Submissions may include original poetry, short prose, and bilingual translations. All submissions must be accompanied by an English summary or translation and include the name of both contributor and translator. Images may be in black and white or color and must be submitted digitally. In the online version of the publication, we can also insert links for audio and video pieces.

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A Magazine for Language & the Arts

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Editorial

by Judy Cochran

This sixth issue of *Collage* explores the pictorial aspect of words in texts juxtaposing light and shadow, like the painter's chiaroscuro. Language affords the writer the possibility of entering and exploring the deeper regions of the Self, what the poet Rainer Maria Rilke has called the "dark hours" of our being, which lead to the light of understanding.¹ Our selection of texts includes translations and interpretations of works by prominent literary figures, both past and present, as well as original prose and poetry. Through these words, we look again at the universal themes of time and memory, good and evil, love and death.

Acclaimed Middle Eastern author Andrée Chedid revives the Renaissance notion of humankind as microcosm, attributing to us the creative energy of the Sun, which inspires our "fragment of eternity." In the poem "Rappelle-moi," she evokes an anterior world, reminiscent of Plato's world of

¹ *Rilke's Book of Hours: Love Poems to God*. Trans. Anita Barrows and Joanna Macy. Riverhead Books, 2005.

Forms, a more radiant, harmonious and generous world that we can only intuit. Chedid, like Victor Hugo in “Demain dès l’aube,” believes in the redemptive power of memory and the ultimate triumph of love over death. Three contributors in Spanish, responding to Garcia Lorca, have revisited the age-old story of love and death with similar optimism and purity: “I will kiss you on the forehead / And the burden of the world will rise from our shoulders.” A contributor in French treats the theme of memory through a study of the photographic image in the love story *L’Amant* by Marguerite Duras, where the creative voice – set free in writing – crystallizes and exonerates the past.

By contrast, the aesthetic nightmares of contemporary Spanish poet Leopoldo María Panero push the outer reaches of the Self, verging on madness. Panero refashions the fairytales of youth and lost innocence. His “Hymn to Satan,” dedicated to the author of *Les Fleurs du mal*, captures the duality of Charles Baudelaire’s struggle to reconcile good and the evil with the truth demanded by art. Panero’s depiction of Satan brings to mind the Persian myth of Lucifer, the fallen angel, recounted by Joseph Campbell. According to this Muslim legend, when God created the angels, Satan was His greatest lover. Therefore, when God commanded the angels to bow before man, he could not because his love for God permitted no other. The story ends with the poignant image of Lucifer eternally falling, sustained only by the echo of God’s voice, banishing him to hell.²

In the poems “Refuge” and “Vagabonder,” two contributors consider the pathways of life and Self, while another explores a “Nuevo camino.” One recreates the solitude of her ascension of Mount Kilimanjaro. Yet another describes the irresistible call of language. All stretch themselves as they move toward a compassionate sense of commonality. Whether in the image of the sun setting over the seaport of Alexandria, or in the sun reflected in our hearts, the light of the world is ever-present for as long as we can feel and see.

² Joseph Campbell, “Tales of Love and Marriage” from *The Power of Myth*. Doubleday, 1988.