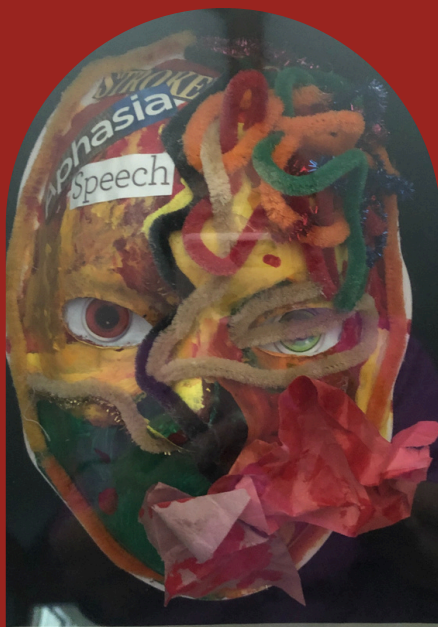


POETRY BOOK

NIGHT OF APHASIA ARTS 2024





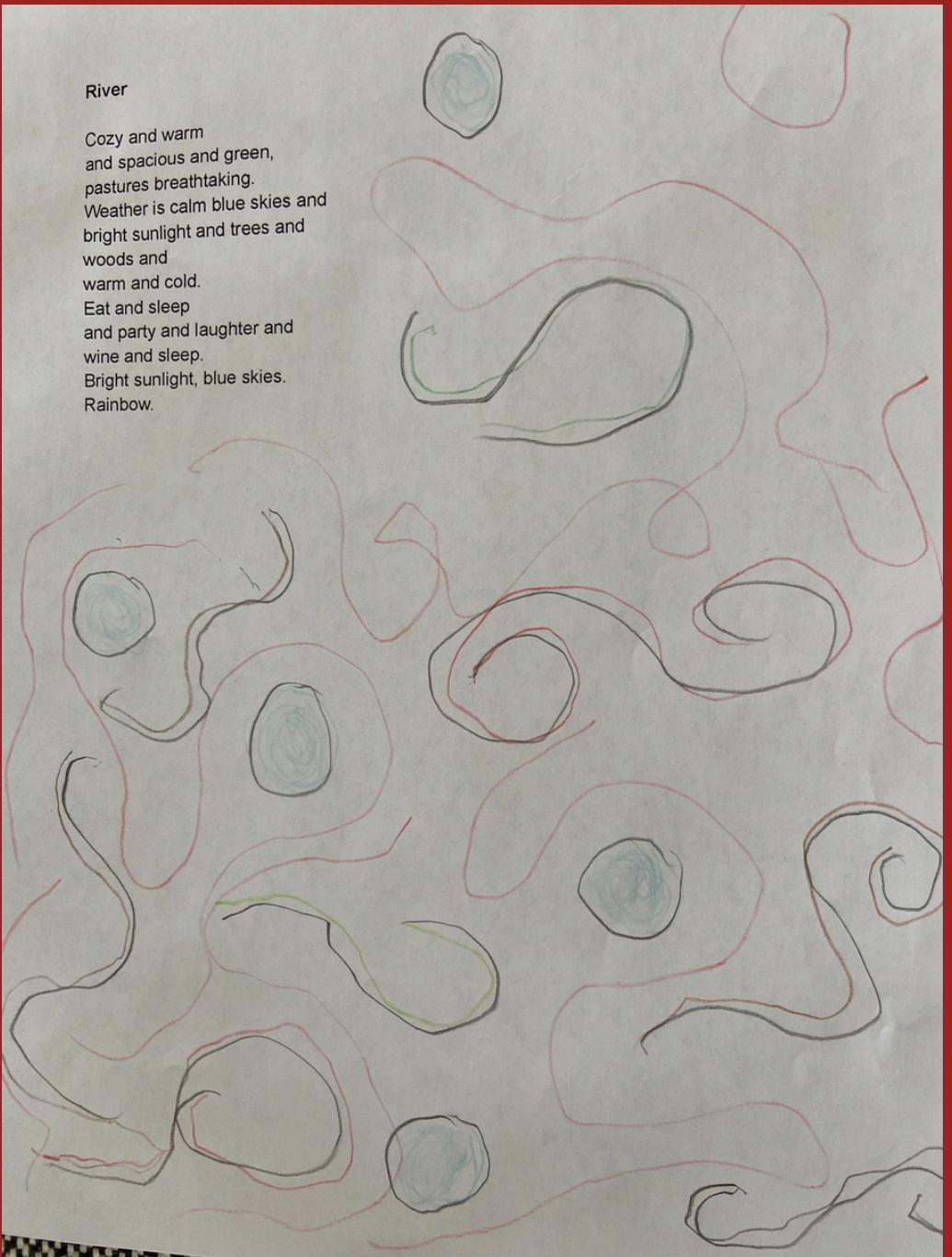
“My Own Definition of Aphasia”

Artist: Jonathan Kreuter

In this acrostic poem, I took the letters in the word Aphasia and I used each of them to write another word. Therefore if you read those seven words in order, then you read "My Own Definition of Aphasia", and it is. That's why it's the name of this poem. And the poem is shown in a photograph that I took next to the World Trade Center in New York, and that's where I'm from.

River

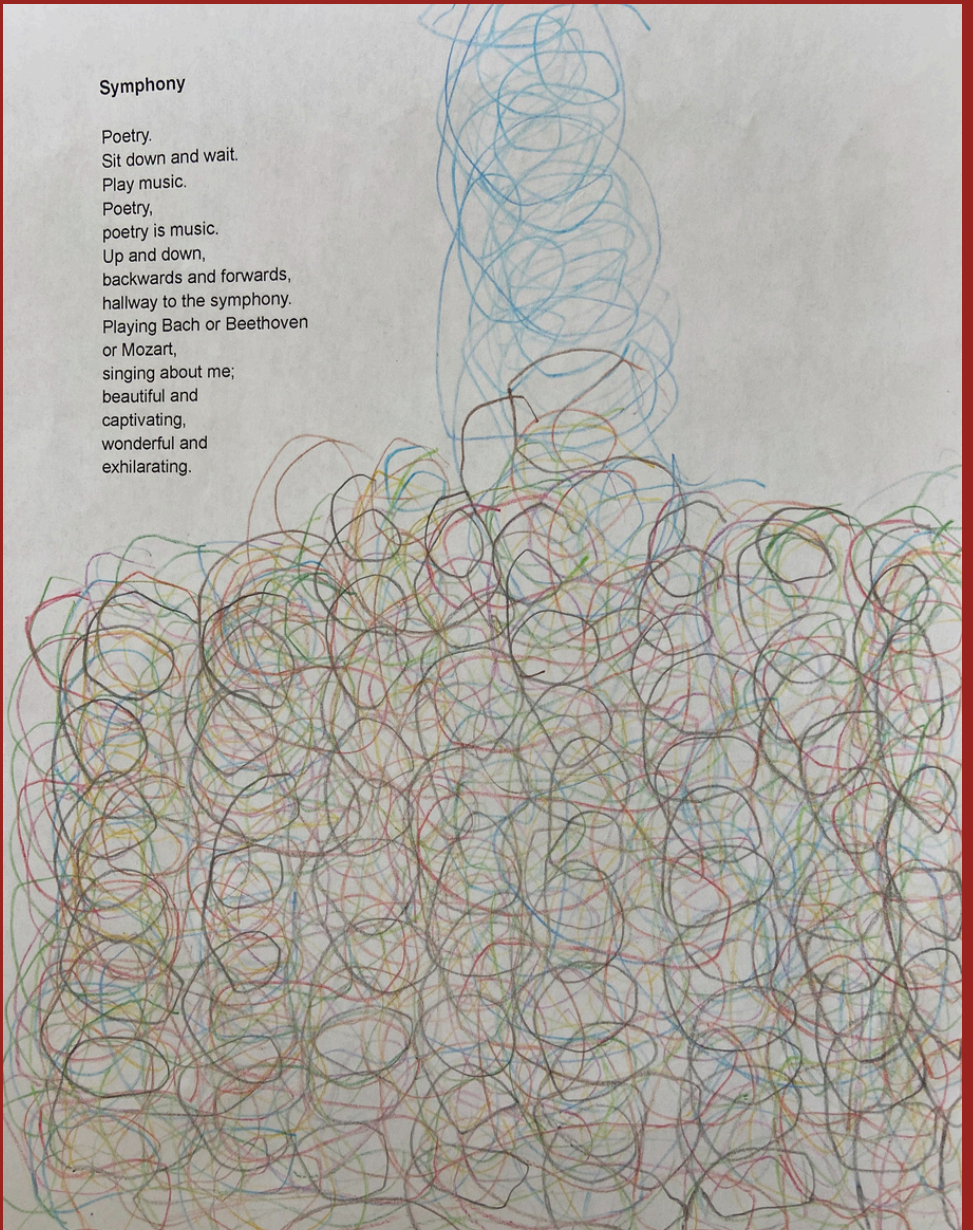
Cozy and warm
and spacious and green,
pastures breathtaking.
Weather is calm blue skies and
bright sunlight and trees and
woods and
warm and cold.
Eat and sleep
and party and laughter and
wine and sleep.
Bright sunlight, blue skies.
Rainbow.



“River” Artist: Elaine Peterson
“Poetry with Illustration”

Symphony

Poetry.
Sit down and wait.
Play music.
Poetry,
poetry is music.
Up and down,
backwards and forwards,
halfway to the symphony.
Playing Bach or Beethoven
or Mozart,
singing about me;
beautiful and
captivating,
wonderful and
exhilarating.



“Symphony”

Artist: Elaine Peterson

“Poetry with Illustration”

Rising Sun

Rise up and be a thinker

Peace to all human being
of the Universe

Respect to every human being

Show Dignity to a person of dignity
and unbending principle

Love your brothers and sisters

An intense feeling of deep
affection for human being

Then you will live on forever.

Mike L

“Rising Sun”

Artist: Dwight Mike Liburd

Freedom

I am free to live and love
I believe in myself and
trust the wisdom of my
Soul that guides me to be
Good to others

mikey L

“Freedom”

Artist: Dwight Mike Liburd

El Verdadero Amor Nunca Muere



Amor, amor, mi amor.

Te quiero hasta el día de mi muerte.

Y más allá de la muerte te voy a estar esperando con los brazos abiertos.



Te quiero mucho.



Cuantos bonitos recuerdos, extraño.

Espero que un día vuelvas.

Para estar contigo, juntos.



Amor

*Escrito por los miembros del Centro de conexión de afasia
de El Paso*

**Artist: El Paso Aphasia Connection
Center**

Il Trittico del Sé
The Triptych of the Self
Emmett M. Hogan

My triptych is based on the toxic masculinity that we find a lot in society in the Western 21st century. It deals with the selfishness and self-centeredness of — particularly — men.

In art, especially in paintings, triptychs were — and are — used to focus thoughts, through three views. (The greatest painter using triptychs is the Flemish artist, Hieronymus Bosch, mostly in the 15th century.) Triptychs are always meant to be used as a piece: three images, combined to tell a single narrative.

Triptychs do not stay just in paintings. In poetry, in 1320, Dante Alighieri finished the greatest poetic triptych of them all: *The Divine Comedy*. It takes the reader through three visions: *Inferno*, then *Purgatorio*, and lastly, *Paradiso*.

In December 1918, in New York, the Metropolitan Opera premiered a new triptych-in-operas by the greatest Italian opera composer: Giacomo Puccini.

Puccini wrote *Il trittico*, a collection of three one-act operas. Like Bosch's "The Last Judgment" (c. 1492), each opera follows a single narrative. In *Il trittico*, the single narrative is death. (It premiered just after Armistice Day, November 11, 1918, which ended World War I. It was the right time to think about death.)

All the same: each opera deals with death in very different ways. In *fury* (*Il tabarro* / *The Cloak*), in *tragedy* (*Suor Angelica* / *Sister Angelica*), and, lastly, in *comedy* (*Gianni Schicchi*).

“The Triptych of the Self”
Artist: Emmett M. Hogan

continued on next page...

My poem is named in Italian in honor of Puccini. (The title is in honor of Dante, too.) Like him, in a very small way, I want to describe three sensations we feel in dealing with selfish men. Like him, in the same very small way, I want to bring the reader through multiple emotions until we feel free at last — il Paradiso.

My triptych is divided thusly: i) The man thinks and behaves selfishly; ii) we feel anger from that; but iii) we learn to let go of this toxic masculinity.

Going through these sensations, I used as exemplars three of the greatest poets yesterday and today.

The first poem is an English sonnet, based on the fantastic poetry of William Shakespeare. (Indeed: they are also called a “Shakespearean” sonnet!)

The second poem, based on fury, is based on trochaic tetrameter. This is the meter of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow’s Song of Hiawatha, as well as the Finnish mythological epic, Kalevala. I can say with certainty: neither of those works deals entirely with anger. But, to me, multiple trochees seem right to express anger. It briefly changes near the very end to a similar but different meter — such, in fact, is anger.

The third and final poem is based on terza rima (“third rhyme”), which was first used in Dante’s Divine Comedy. It shows the narrator’s journey from “Inferno” to “Paradiso.” That goes along with my own triptych: from dark into light. “Third rhyme” mirrors, too, my own use of the triptych form: three poems that lead you, dear reader, from darkness into light.

A person would stop mourning when a man is so selfish that other people — like me, like you — who means nothing to him. So: why should he mean anything to you?

Artist: Emmett M. Hogan

Poetry – specifically, a triptych about toxic masculinity, following three very well known metric prosodies – and a two-page introduction that illuminates that. This triptych shows that aphasia harms speech – not cognition!

I. The Rake's Sonnet

The rake thought that the world should pay its due
to him — as though his life should be a prize.
He thought rewards were due. Achievements — few.
The world thought differently, to his surprise.

He viewed his friends as opportunities.
As for their hopes? He didn't care a whit.
Their only use, for him, was just to please.
An honest word came shrewdly — bit by bit.

At times, he talked about his will to write,
to write some golden yarns that filled a shelf.
But effort waned. So daylight droops to night.
And, year by year: his interest was himself.

If op-eds, ads — he may write them to sell.
Life is the perfect fiction he can tell.

- Jan. 24, 2021

Shakespearean sonnet – iambic pentameter

Artist: Emmett M. Hogan

II. The Song of Fury

Other people aren't there to
pay your tab or cosset for you.

Troubles come with every liar.
Truth will put your lies on fire.

User, liar, loser, failure.
Devils feed on misbehavior.

Solitary, and forgotten.
That's the end of all the fallen.

Your day-boyfriend might be angry.
(So you'll bed a boy you fancy.)

Your concerns for people are few.
You disdain – “fuck that.” Perhaps ... “you.”

(But

*O O O O that Shakespeheran rag—
It's so elegant
So intelligent)*

Done with that old wizened hag o
Done with that Shakespeherian rag.

- Feb. 11, 2021

Trochaic tetrameter

Artist: Emmett M. Hogan

III. The Divine Revelation

I had a friend who wasn't there.
Our time went on — but clocks would toll
for me alone. He didn't care.

He gave his friendship like a dole
to needy beggars — fazed poor minds,
who held a shard and thought it whole.

That man hid thoughts behind his blinds.
His friendship went through rationing.
That way, he wins. His lie — it binds.

I thought I was imagining
whole cloth, my friend — who wasn't there.
That thought was almost maddening.

I looked to find a drop of care.
I tried. I looked inside his soul.
I looked. But I saw nothing there.

Mar. 4, 2021

Terza rima – Iambic tetrameter

Artist: Emmett M. Hogan

Speech Language Institute at Salus University

Finding Our Words Poetry Club

Group Collaboration 2-9-24

Prompt: "What Does Love Make You Think Of?"

LOVE

Love songs, music, heartbeats.

Intimacy, togetherness.

Appreciation.

Respecting a variety of people.

Mother's love, heavenly love on earth.

Parenting, generational love passed down.

Family united, you can depend on each other, love never fails.

Happiness.

Smiling, thinking of memories of

Caregiving.

Looking forward to helping, no burden.

Tender, not just money; love me tender.

"Love"

Artists: Denise Mendez, Frank Reiner, Jenn Derry, Mark Harder, Ayssa Alcudia, Ann Rossi, Carolyn Barrett, Amy Wismer, Elizabeth Eisele, Jenna Goldberg

A collaborative group poem written at our Finding Our Words Poetry Club meeting.

Finding Our Words Poetry Club

The Speech Language Institute at Salus University

Group Collaboration 2-25-24

Prompt: What Does The Word "Nature" Make You Think Of?

Nature

Spring blooming, the smell of evergreen trees, earthy moist soil, fresh air.

Birds, the coo of the mourning dove.

New life, little bunnies hopping through the grass, fledglings crying.

Natural formations and pathways through trees and water...

Childhood memories, barefoot exploration, cool water, and the creek bed between my toes brings

Happiness and calmness.

A house on the lake, dense green trees hug the shore.

Brown dirty sneakers, green grass-stained knees and elbows, white puffy clouds in my mind.

"Nature"

Artists: Denise Mendez, Frank Reiner, Jenn Derry, Mark Harder, Ayssa Alcudia, Ann Rossi, Carolyn Barrett, Amy Wismer, Elizabeth Eisele, Jenna Goldberg

A collaborative group poem written at our Finding Our Words Poetry Club meeting.

Fire

I step into fire
flames wrap
my ankles in warmth
thoughts appear
searing my mind

my skull splits
opening itself
to the flames
language rises up as
smoke from my brain

as the fire dies
I search among
the embers
for my words

“Fire”

Artist: Douglas G. Campbell

Douglas Campbell is an artist and poet who has a language disorder called aphasia (subsequent to having a stroke in 2012). He is a member of UWEC's Thursday Night Poets, a poetry group for people with brain injury and aphasia. He lives in Portland, Oregon and is Professor Emeritus of Art at George Fox University where he taught painting, printmaking, drawing and art history courses. His poetry and artworks have been published in numerous periodicals and journals. You can see Douglas' artwork at: <http://www.douglascampbellart.com>

POEM FROM THE LITTLE ONES....

When I was small the world was tall and everyone was older.
I never saw them face to face except when on Pops' shoulder.
Then one day he got quite old and didn't make much sense
He'd start to tell us something, then leave us in suspense.

His words got mixed and muddled up, and sometimes none came out,
I didn't know what I'd done wrong that made him huff and shout.
One day he didn't know my name when I went round to play.
Granny only said "he's old," and Pops had "lost his way."

I understood in later life that my Pops had dementia,
I wish I'd known, I could have helped or even asked Alexa.
So, parents, teachers, carers too, it isn't complicated,
Just tell us what dementia is, then we're not uneducated.

“Uneducated!”
Artist: John Hyde

Inscrutability

Enigma, isolation, inscrutability,
That is what my brain, my mind is like.
That is supposed what we say about
the Chinese, Japanese, Vietnamese,
but the cranes, the art, the tea leave,
they are strange, beautiful, exciting.
Could it be then that my brain/mind,
all the synapses, neurons, axons,
will be strange and beautiful and exciting?

Look up, the Magpies flew away into the sky
scattered, in disarray, the way my mind is.

Chinese Magpie is named for “happiness.”

“Inscrutability”
Artist: Lisa Smith

Falling

I fell today.

I've been falling,
falling the past three years.

Inside six times,
outside in the yard two times,
going someplace two times
(that was embarrassing!).

I've been falling
over words, too. Countless
adverbs, spelling, pronouncing,
and numbers.

But I go on, right or wrong,
like some dumb animal.
How's does the song go?
"I picked myself up, brushed myself off,
and start all over again."
Again, and again.

"Falling"

Artist: Lisa Smith

Comprehension, I Think
By Seth Brunner

A word,
I think,

A phrase,
I think,

A sentence,
I think.

I thought.

“Comprehension, I Think”
Artist: Seth Brunner

A Poem: Tiffany's Week

Monday

Step Plus Abs at LA Fitness
Walk my dogs

Tuesday

Gavel Club for Toastmasters
Walk my dogs

Wednesday

Body Works Plus Abs at LA Fitness
Hand therapy at Park Nicollet
Walk my dogs

Thursday

Adult Academic Program for reading and math
Drama Club for my acting and improv skills
Walk my dogs

Friday

Step Plus Abs at LA Fitness
Walk my dogs

Saturday

My free day
Walk my dogs

Sunday

Kingdom Embassy Church
My mom's house
I don't walk my dogs!

“A Poem: Tiffany's Week”
Artist: Tiffany Alston

To My Son

By Carolyn

Sometimes I wish you were still small
And not yet all grownup and big and tall.
When I think of yesterday,
I close my eyes and watch you play.

I often miss that little boy
Who embraced and appreciated every toy.
You filled my days with pure delight
From early in the morning until late at night.

I enjoyed watching you change and grow
Just like the seasons come and go.
I have watched you transform from an adorable little boy
To an extraordinary and amazing gentleman.

My son, I am very proud of you because
of your accomplishments, your kindness and
thoughtfulness, because of your amazing
talents, and so much more...

I will love you until my days are done
I am very grateful that you are my son.

“To My Son”

Artist: Carolyn Barrett

To My Son is a poem about how it feels to watch your son grow up over the years and the emotions that come along with it.

Superstition

Mom swept under my feet with the broom, "Now I will never marry!" I cried, and sauntered down the hallway toward my room.

I heard birds chirping from my windowsill afar. I entered my room, leaving the door sitting ajar.

While curled up on my bed, with my head in my hands. I told Alexa to turn on the ceiling fan. Feeling so upset, I wanted to scream, but instead I drifted off to sleep and began to dream.

With itchy hands and a runny nose, I ran outside and turned on the water hose. As I wet my hands to calm the itch, my thoughts began to soar. "Will I grow up and become extremely wealthy, or will I be very, very poor?"

While feeling refreshed in the cool, breezy air. I sat down on the grass and started to stare. I spied a lucky penny, with its tail side up. Then I carefully turned it over, so its new owner would have good luck.

When I dozed off to sleep I was upset and steaming, and now I have awakened smiling and gleaming...

Realizing that the best way to predict my own future is to create it myself. Through motivation, knowledge, creativity and hard work, I can intentionally build my own wealth.

By Carolyn

"Superstition"

Artist: Carolyn Barrett

Superstition is a poem captures the stress and anxiety that comes along with growing up. To then realize that you are in charge of your life and that you can make the change if you put your mind to it.

"Where You Started, & Where you are Now" |

Michael Obel-Omia

That's a funny thing, sigh, "Where you started"
A dreary, echoing down, falling, fast:
Without Carolyn, I might have just died,
Falling, descending, clasping on my sheets,
"Michael, are you okay, Michael, hear me!"
Saturday, no, this day was momentous
Believing something else was done, but, no
Limping I felt down, throwing against chair,
With silence, I feel asleep, now, deeply,
Only my wife, plus ambulance, I moved
"Don't forget the iPhone, you'll need me too!"
"Oh, Lord, My God, I cried to you for help"
2,851 days
Counting, that's ischemic Stroke, aphasia
There is so much to do so much to do,
Depression, frustration, anger, confused,
But, life's a journey, and I'm on my way:
Most, I can feel it, but "Where You are Now?"
Let's see, well, I'm published, "Finding my Words,"
I cycle, Stroke Across America,
 cycling, from Missoula from Revere Beach
I can read speeches, presentations,
I can read, listen to the published words
Middlebury, Barrington, they know!
Felicitate me, friend; you're inspired!
From Ships-Cap, and even more speeches now,
I can do this, I can be happy now,
From poetry, toastmasters, cooking,
I am fulsome, eudaemonic, too
Life is changing now, very different,
"you pulled me up from Sheol," you spared me too:
This world is changing, every day:
Yes, improving, always improving!

"Where You Started, & Where You Are Now"
Artist: Michael Obel-Omia

Hammer, Rose, and Comb

Scrabble. Hundred square tiles. Alphabet lost
Some sideways, some upright, some upside down
In a dream, double letters, triple words glow brightly
In real life, silence rules, muted, cold and distant
Speech blocked behind an aphasia dam

Jigsaw puzzles. Purple, pink, orange and yellow
Unable to complete picture, irregular and complex
Stuck, broken, reversed, a river-going canoe lodged in a tree
Four corners and border. Legs bruised and bandaged
Try to start dancing, but trip over feet instead

Brain. Mostly grey and white, gyri. Neurons firing
Stroke, almost died. Bloody, black and necrotic
Spirit shows how all can change in minutes
In the dark, a rainbow tries to laugh through the cracks
Beckons normalcy, but then knocks you flat

Wars rage inside your mind; smelling smoke, spectacular explosions

**“Hammer, Rose, and Comb”
Artist: Rochelle M. Anderson**

A Writers Course

I glided by circled desks while adults
scribbled words on paper. I wondered
if 'ineffable' wandered its way into prose.
Words might turn into warped stories.
Or worse. Or better. I put up my hand.
"Attention" I said Scrawled paper and
pens stilled. Eyes focused on my face.
Whirled hands danced ideas from fingers.
Passioned tidbits from memory. Fingers
oozed speech. Willing pens scrambled
sense from fingers to voice notes.
Writers could make sense of ineffable.

"A Writer's Course"
Artist: Robert Parker

Time Standstill

In the morning break a day
It's time to wake up and have a good day.

A person starts walking around while the other person still sleeping while no one's around.

A business or fun or just staying home, something is coming on and we just don't know.

Read a book or just listen to word, or maybe someone's dreaming about eyes and ears.

Working at the garden or sitting at the bar, somethings going on like a theater play.

Cross the world to the galaxy to see the star in my world, a brain is working through the dust.

A stroke like a pen but you can't see, Time Standstill!

by **James B. Jett**
"Aphasia Stroke Survived"

"Time Standstill"
Artist: James B. Jett



**Thank you to all of the poets
that contributed to this book.
Your words create vision and
inspire those who read them!**

**National Aphasia Association
www.aphasia.org**