# SKULLCR 

 USHING HUMMI NGBIRD

Hello and welcome to the first issue of Skullcrushing Hummingbird - The Zine.

For this issue I asked for words and images from a collection of people whose work I admire. I didn't specify a theme, however ghosts and birds make numerous appearances. As do dogs. *makes sign of the cross*

For the next zine (Spring 2023) a possible theme is "Wrong Texts You've Received and The Stories Behind Them."

Here's a kickoff installment:

## Wrong Texts You've Received and The Stories Behind Them Pt. 1

unknown number : I guess you really can't choose your family.
You: Sorry, who is this?
unknown number: Whoops!
Ted Angelis, age 13, texted you from the back seat of a rusty 1987 Toyota Tercel hatchback while his father sat in the driver's seat applying makeup in the style of Norwegian Black Metal corpse paint. They were parked behind a Wingstop. It's too bad you asked who it was before he sent the photo he snapped of his dad's face reflected in the rearview.

Send submissions to larstonovich@gmail.com
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You can view this zine and other works online here: linktr.ee/larstonovich

## Skullcrushing Hummingbird

Issue 1 / Fall 2022



Laurence Wilhelm Lillvik- Editor

fig. 1

## Contributing Artists:

Cover / Theresa Arrison Figure 1 / Kevin Cascell
Figure 2 / Rachel Mulder
Figures 3,14,15 / Kier Cooke Sandvik
Figure 4 / Rino Pasini
Figure 5 / Trevor Rieck
Figures 6,7,8 / Paul Haines
Figure 9 / Emily P. Dunne
Figure 10 / Jill Storthz
Figure 11 / casey g. lowe
Figures 12,13 / Isak Sjursen
Figures 16,17 / Jorge Alvarez
Figure 18 / Laurence Wilhelm Lillvik
Figure 19 / Scott Tienken
Centerfold / Terah Beth Baltzer Varga
Figures 21,22 / Michael Coumatos
Figure 23 / Kat Gebhard
Figure 24 / Emily Pratt
Figure 25 / Eliana Ceniceroz
Figure 26 / Darcee Maloney
Figure 27 / Amy Landvoigt
Figure 28 / Jessica Rose May
Figure 29 / Wyrmfoot
Figure 30 / Michael Henrickson
Figure 31 / HL Milne
Figure 32 / Angela Cameron
Figure 33 / Alanood Burhaima
Figure 34 / Cattreena Stone
Figure 35 / Strummer Jean Lynch


## Beltane Song / Kevin Stack

Gelatin. Ox. Pledge. Richmond. Tonic. Aspirant. Low. Reed.
Common. Song.
Beltane. Belfast. Baal.
Occur. So. Nasty. Tennessee.
Dirt. Bond. Succor. Face. Tonic.
Pledge. Perspire. Low. Reed.
Hum. Succor. Face. Polish. Joy.
Rhythm. Bond. Reed. Rex.
Common. Song.
Foul. Stark. Nasty. Punch. Zero.
Term. Low. Ox. So. Face.
Reed. Richmond. Townhome. Song.
Common. Song.
Perch. Joy. Jewel. Bond. Pledge.
Pour. Low. Reed. Rex.
Run. Run. Run.
Song. Common. Song.

Axle. Time. Tempo. Rex.
Sung. Hung. Face. Ox.
Song. Common. Reed. Rung. Joy. Axle. Tempo. Beltane.
Bond. Light. Lord.
Townhome. Pledge.
Rex. Richmond. Reed. Low. Hung. Common. Song.

Succor. Hum. Hum. Succor. Perch. Pledge. Jewel. Face. Lean. Joy. Rhythm. Mars. Jupiter. Lida. Song. Common. Swan. Blitz. Persephone. Blitz.

Yore. Yarn. Blitz. Pledge.
Rex. Reed. Reserve.
Four. Two. Quaint. Common. Joy. Tennessee. Townhome.
Rung. Song. Swan.
Common. Swan.
Constant. Comment. Common. Song.
Rest. Rise. Rex. Reed
Richmond. Beltane. Blitz.
Axle. Tempo. Polish. Perch.
Rung. Ox. Reed. Face.
Townhome. Blitz. Song. Sung.
Beltane. Beltane. Song.

fig. 3

## True North / Yael Schonfeld

There's one more place for you to find, it's an Alaska of the mind, a trip you take, a different state, beyond your lower 48, a chance to leave yourself behind for an Alaska of the mind, its static hum, so crisp, so numb, enough to strike you blind and dumb, and it feels right, so stark and bright, day stretches endless into night, protruding, steep, to syphon sleep, to tally what you'll shed or keep, the faithful dogs you'll starve or eat, the party that you'll never meet, the long release, the soft decline, of an Alaska of the mind, its coast so near, a midnight clear, you know there's no return from here.


fig. 5

fig. 6

## Above the Clouds / Frank Spignese

A bird just pooped on my head.
That's good luck!
Oh, no, wait...that's a grown man dressed in a bird costume.
This is the worst luck ever.

fig. 7

fig. 8

The Killers / Frank Spignese

Assassins are always remembered by their first/middle/last name.
John Wilkes Booth, Lee Harvey Oswald, James Earl Ray, Mark David Chapman.
I got my eye on you:
Sarah Jessica Parker.


## fig. 9

## Star quality / Ben McCoy

Lars von Trier was in town, casting for his next film's leading lady, which promised to be a role darker, more twisted, and disturbingly beautiful than anything he's ever done. Everything had led me up to this moment; I would either assume my rightful place amongst the stars or sink further into the murky swamp of common folk, barely scraping by.
The casting agent informed us Mr. von Trier was watching via hidden hi-def surveillance cameras and instead of giving us a script or monologue, we were requested to do just one thing.
A grim German-looking lady in a lab coat stood before us, with several puppies in a cardboard box, whimpering and staring out with glazed, innocent eyes. We were instructed that we must choose one and murder them.
The other actresses gasped, horrified, asking if this was 'for real,' 'are you fucking serious?' 'this is horrible,' and 'you people are sick.' Someone mentioned PETA \& TMZ.
I walked forward, my nose high in the air, at an angle both authoritative yet flattering. I was letting Mr. von Trier know that I was most assuredly up to the task.
I took within my hands a fluffy beige golden retriever pup and held him tight.
The air became thick, the remaining girls went silent, the casting agent stoic.
The full moon above was a dirty rust-like orange that reminded me of my upbringing.
I walked to a nearby pond, the moon's reflection an angry blood-shot eye on the water's surface. I plunged the pup deep into the water, bubbles flitting up. He did not struggle. I simply exerted force via my fingertips and placed pressure around its neck, holding it down deep into the water imagining I was Vivian Leigh. We may depend upon the kindness of strangers, but in the end, it is our own will and terrible, terrible charm that gives us anything at all.
I felt its life leave its body as though it was something as crude as mayonnaise. The stars shone in a way that was defiant and I, as before, held my nose up high. My eyes began to water. Not because I started to feel remorse or regret or sadness; but because I felt nothing at all. I was completely empty.

And that's when I knew it... I had exactly what it takes. Star quality. I was going to get that part.

fig. 11

## Wordlekind: The New Science of Who You Are / Nicole Morning

Tired of pseudoscience-based personality tests that don't truly capture the nuance of you? Worn out from all the astrological charting that, time and again, has failed to result in a satisfying relationship? Introducing WORDLEKIND, the $100 \%$ science-based way to accurately describe identity, predict fortune, and if used properly, lead to your soul mate! Simply submit screenshots of at least one week's worth of Wordle guesses (yours or your potential partner's), allow access to your phone's location services, and let our licensed Wordlekindists do the rest.

Our patented algorithm along with personalized analysis means results are guaranteed. Our base rate includes a full personality report, a compatibility matrix showing best and worst possible matches, and a customized headband or bracelet embroidered with your 'kind symbol. For a small additional fee, we offer a detailed blueprint of your future, including the time, location, and manner of your death.

fig. 12


Fig. 13
18 foundational Wordlekinds can be modified by a) the direction you typically face while completing the puzzle and b) whether you use an iPhone or an android, for a total of 144 kinds. The system seems simple on the surface, but please do not try to diagnose yourself. Let our trained, certified Wordlekindists perform the science. For instance, you might be a North Android Librarian (soul mate=West iPhone Cwtch), but if you misread yourself as a Rich Girl and try to couple with a Shaman, the results will be disastrous. Leave it to the experts!

Is your potential partner a narcissist? Who is your ideal mate? Are you a person or a string of letters? Let Wordlekind show you.

fig. 14
Take a look at a few of the 'kinds:
Potato Salad: chunky, cheerful, surprisingly complex. Goes hard and methodically but in a joyful fashion. Dependable, nourishing, a hit at parties. If you're looking for low-key fun and someone who will never leave you, scoop yourself a heaping helping of these delicious carbs. Standard guesses: CHUNK, SQUAT, TRAIL

Adieu: don't trust this fucker. Will ditch you as soon as your vulnerabilities (and vowels) are revealed. These types are great in bed, but multiple orgasms do not a long-term relationship make. Standard guesses: ADIEU.

The Mathematician: every guess is a calculation. Sociopath. Standard guesses: ADIEU, CHOPS, KNIFE

Rich Girl: feels wronged every time she doesn't get it. Doesn't get it. Standard guesses: PARTY, YACHT, SMART

Cwtch: So, you like cuddling with chaos? This is the 'kind for you. He speaks Welsh, he's pansexual, maybe he paints his face like a sad clown and licks your toes while you read Dostoevsky aloud. Adventure awaits! Standard guesses: FUCKS, CHAOS, LUCKY

Black Coffee: Does he even enjoy life? Aggressively arrogant but never achieves more than a three day streak. An accountant or CEO, he's as financially stable as he is boring in the sack. Put a little sugar in it, sad man. Standard guesses: WORDS, STOIC, TIMER

Shaman: into crystals, mushrooms, \& conspiracy. Likes to do uncomfortably long hugs with their unshowered body pressed against your breasts and/or genitals. Unvaxxed. Standard guesses: whatever 'spirit' reveals in the moment. (Usually: SOULS, LOVES, DRUGS)

Poet: so, so dreamy. Probably still in bed, with or without a hangover. Will compromise accuracy for metaphorical possibility. Standard guesses: DREAM, BEAST, FUCKS

Librarian: hot and knows it. Regularly gets it in two. Closest friend is a cat. Sexts like an Olympic athlete. She's never going to meet you in person because humans appall her. Standard guesses: WEARY, ALONE, HELPS

This is just a taste of the power of WORDLEKIND. Sign up today and find out more about these kinds of people and learn how to be them, woo them, and win at life.

fig. 15

fig. 16

## PunitiveTaxidermy / Laurence Wilhelm Lillvik

## Assign

my breastbone
to the
least important reliquary
in the empire.

## FYI / Laurence Wilhelm Lillvik

Often when your sins are committed upon the skins and furs as rugs and blankets the ghosts who wore them in lives previous are well aware of your transgressions.

fig. 17


## Security / Bill Knott

If I had a magic carpet
I'd keep it
Floating always
Right in front of me
Perpendicular, like a door.

## DIY (For Bill Knott) / Laurence Wilhelm Lillvik

She applied bacon
Grease to her pressure
Points, lay naked in
The muddy pond, and
Waited for the crawdads.

## Tribute to Bill Knott <br> (Slight Return) / Frank Spignese

If ever I'm executed by guillotine please take my decapitated head and roll it down a nearby hill as quickly as possible.

Weeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeee!!!!!!!!!!!!

## In The Evening / Justin Varga

Flip the shovel
Trim the Edges

Smack, Smack...Scoop

I don't claim many talents in this world
But God Damn if I can't dig a hole
Smack, Smack...Scoop
The intense summer air
Pushes the dirty beaded sweat
From my brow
Down my chapped tinged nose
It holds true
For a moment

## Release

It falls
like perfection
into the ever growing hole
Beneath my feet
I should have worn boots
Instead, I'm wearing twelve year old tennis shoes Shoes that have never seen or felt a tennis court

Smack, Smack....Scoop
I pause
I think
I cry
I return
The house of four
Has turned to three
I know what it is to bury a loved one
Rest in peace, Flash Bobby
We'll miss you little Bub

fig. 19

fig. 21


## Halls / Yael Schonfeld

I'm in the halls of your old high school. You should be giving me a tour, but

I'm in the halls of your old high school, late at night.
The ghosts of kids who go here now, the ghosts of kids who went there then

I am a ghost within another ghost.
I'm in the halls of your old high school, looking for landmarks l've heard mentioned. I see them where they are and where they're not.

Is this the locker where he dumped you, is this the stair where you always stumbled, is this the table by the window where your best friend sat?

I'm in the halls of your old high school, if they caught me I'd get in trouble, I guess that some things never really change.

There was one teacher that you'd liked, at recess sometimes you'd go meet him, just talking, nothing untoward, but

Your breath grew warm when you talked about him, you tugged your hair like it was much longer, the skin is so receptive when we're young.

You never would have let us come here, you would have shot me down in seconds, nostalgia's never really been your thing, but

I'm in the halls of your old high school, I feel your pulse come spiking through me

I think that I might stay here for a while.

fig. 24

## The Name / HL Milne

When James walked the halls she wondered about her name. There were too many James in her family already and she felt a jumble of James's couldn't end well. Most were Jims. One was a Jimmy, one was a Brother, one was Pup. She was a James.

James often thought about what possessed her mother to name her such a loaded word.
James. It carried so many ghosts in her mother's soul, they were like the swirling little Halloween ghosts on a projector. Sometimes her mother looked at her and she saw others- it was uncomfortable. It felt wrong.

James Francis Cole. Her full name could have been anyone. From any time. Any gender. Any trade. Yet here she was, standing in a hallway, always in a hallway, pondering her own personhood and the people whose name she shared so deeply. Shared so intimately and with such guarded secrets attached.

It was funny, and I don't mean ha-ha, that whenever James commented on anything from the past, or anything she saw that may have a string to the past; her mother took ownership and competition with what she verbalized.

Look, that fog is so beautiful rolling across the pond, well that's nothing new it does that every day.

No buts. No I knows. It was not "worth" it, to volley.
That is the lipstick she loved. No, it wasn't. It was redder. It was glossier. It was lipstick.

Oh, how I remember the pantry where I would mix up the 4:00 cocktails, beautiful old jelly glasses, twisting ice cubes- adding $1 / 2$ to $2 / 3$ vodka and a splash of some fizzy beverage and then some fruit beverage. Sticking fingers into taste and then bringing them to the grown ups. That never happened- you were too young, why were you there?

Digging deep into her own psyche James sometimes couldn't tell why her mother bothered to name her something so symbolic, so pressurized, so painful, as if only to shame her for sins she never committed. Was that her mother punishing herself, was it a penance? Was it so she never forgot and wore her daughter like a plastic coated scapular, a hair shirt, a living martyr dolly.

Walking down this hall was a funhouse, a purgatory, a trail of breadcrumbs to a treasure chest you'll never see inside of. Images placed so sporadically your eyes twitched and struggled to stay within one frame.

Some of the women in James's family had these walls, they ached, they cried for a story to be told. Some women had nothing on their walls. They were bare and sterile and no one could see their pasts, their hidings. James could feel, she could see both sides of why- why you'd keep captive moments in view. Small vignettes into relationships with other James' many many years gone by, dredging up happy tears, smiling eyes and gasping hearts, lustful arms holding waists and firm claws on shoulders and elbows.

This was where James looked for herself in their images. How she tried to find their stories in their black and white and Kodachrome stares. She couldn't stop looking, she couldn't stop trying to know why.

fig. 25

Skullcrushing Hummingbird / The Cocktail
2 oz Mezcal
2 oz Aperol
2 oz Velvet Falernum
2 oz lime juice
Slice of lime.
Sliver of habanero.
Habanero salt.

Shake with ice and habanero.
Strain into a coupe glass with habanero salt rim.
Garnish with lime.

fig. 26

fig. 27
evacuation zone / casey g. lowe
today
my best work was
preventing tsunami
with a cardboard sign
the words "don't drown us"
sprawled across
in borrowed sharpie

fig. 28

## McCormick Templeman / Nebular Hypothesis

You've wandered down here. Now get out. The shapes watching you don't yet know what you're thinking, but they can surmise. They know your heart, that thick beating mass, that corpuscular freak that drones extant and incessant inside those false ribs of yours.

It's too late now. You haven't left. You haven't gotten out, as a wise narrator only a paragraph before once entreated. So now you're in a marble antechamber. The marble is speckled with remnants of sea creatures, and for the first time you realized that you must be somewhere below ground, somewhere perhaps within the mantle of the earth. One fossilized mollusk approximates the shape and size of your hand. You slide your fingers around the space where its velum used to be.

You came here to purchase a volume of verse, eleven inches by eleven inches, bound in vellum (not velum), in possession of deckled edges (the kind Cynthia dislikes), and besmirched by cigarette burns roughly every fifteenth page. Mostly its pages are blank, but at the center you find the supposedly haunting and lyrical verse for which it is famous.

Darkness see it through. Fear like oblique shape. Retreat a red knowing. Knowing red, a retreat. Shape oblique like fear. Through it see darkness.


fig. 30

You don't like this volume of poetry, not at all. You don't find its contents hauntingly lyrical, and you find it distasteful the way the pages lie side by side like sleeping dogs or like lovers too lazy to let go.

When you and Cynthia used to eat locally, you never cared to inspect the kill sites ahead of time, but your broker often coerced you into doing so. One time Cynthia found the hand of a very famous woman inside a glass jar in an abattoir. I won't tell you to whom this hand belonged, but it was to someone very very famous-exceedingly famous. They make throw rugs in the shape of her head. I will tell you, though, that the jar in which Cynthia found this famous woman's hand was filled entirely with marbles of every discernible shade of green.

Bored with the manuscript, you walk through the antechamber and into the chamber to which it was ante. There you find a large sandy area onto which stones have been carefully placed so as to form a series of interlocking squares. Initially that sentence contained the word concentricity, but my squawkish editor interceded, brunette corkscrews tarantella-ing, hornrims sliding down the bridge of her nose, as she sped to alert me to my linguistic slippage [she's waving her hands at that one as well-waving them all around like they're covered in bees].

Which is our cue to stop, I'm afraid. I must leave you now. Back to my glamorous life and my bathtubs filled with rainwater, collected while wearing my disco-girl finest. Back to my crapulous (archaic usage) bedlams. You know the drill. But l'll leave you down here-down with this book you will doubtless grow to love. I'm afraid that's the only option.
The moon goes through phases, of course, but we only ever see the same side.

## Cacophony / Jenn Kercher

Shh. Listen. Can you hear them?
A cacophony of clatter chatter converging Up from down the darkened stairs.
Rubber masked monsters and creepy clowns.

A cacophony of clatter chatter converging In through cracks and floating on dust. Rubber masked monsters and creepy clowns Sing with the grinder's gravelly tune.

In through the cracks and floating on dust, Fragments of fear shake my sanity.
Sing with the grinder's gravelly tune To outrun the carnival of the crazy.

Fragments of fear shake my sanity. Up from down the darkened stairs
To outrun the carnival of the crazy. Shh. Listen. Can you hear them?


## A Conspiracy of Unkindnesses / Laurence Wilhelm Lillvik

## "An Unkindness of Ravens"

by Douglas Donofrio
In treetops above,
Mysterious birds gather,
An unkindness of ravens.
Douglas Donofrio is a student at Red Bank Catholic High School in NJ. He loves playing a new card game called "Magic: The Gathering" and writing haikus.

On June 7, 1993 Donofrio was one of three people who submitted a poem called "An Unkindness of Ravens" to the popular journal "Poetry."

It stands to reason that a large percentage of poets, when hearing that the collective noun for ravens is an "unkindness," will immediately write a poem employing that title. (I mean c'mon. )

1993 was several years before the World Wide Web became ubiquitous.

Another collective noun for ravens is a "conspiracy." (seriously? also really cool)

I thought that ravens were solitary birds, thus nullifying any real need to ever use "an unkindness of ravens," or "a conspiracy of ravens," but, this being 2022, I looked it up, and it appears that though they are often seen alone or in pairs, they do also fly, feed, and nest in groups.

My birthday is June 7, 1973.
Ravens are as big as Red-tailed Hawks, and crows are about the size of pigeons.

Pigeons gather in unpoetic "flocks."
We know all about crows.

fig. 32

## Marcel Duhamp / Apropos Of Readymades

In 1913 I had the happy idea to fasten a bicycle wheel to a kitchen stool and watch it turn.
A few months later I bought a cheap reproduction of a winter evening landscape, which I called "Pharmacy" after adding two small dots, one red and one yellow, in the horizon.
In New York in 1915 I bought at a hardware store a snow shovel on which I wrote "In advance of the broken arm."
It was around that time that the word "Readymade" came to my mind to designate this form of manifestation.
A point that I want very much to establish is that the choice of these "Readymades" was never dictated by aesthetic delectation.
The choice was based on a reaction of visual indifference with at the same time a total absence of good or bad taste ... in fact a complete anaesthesia. One important characteristic was the short sentence which I occasionally inscribed on the "Readymade."
That sentence instead of describing the object like a title was meant to carry the mind of the spectator towards other regions more verbal. Sometimes I would add a graphic detail of presentation which, in order to satisfy my craving for alliterations, would be called "Readymade aided." At another time, wanting to expose the basic antinomy between art and "Readymades," I imagined a "Reciprocal Readymade": use a Rembrandt as an ironing board!
I realized very soon the danger of repeating indiscriminately this form of expression and decided to limit the production of "Readymades" to a small number yearly. I was aware at that time, that for the spectator even more for the artist, art is a habit forming drug and I wanted to protect my "Readymades" against such a contamination.
Another aspect of the "Readymade" is its lack of uniqueness... the replica of the "Readymade" delivering the same message, in fact nearly every one of the "Readymades" existing today is not an original in the conventional sense. A final remark to this egomaniac's discourse:
Since the tubes of paint used by an artist are manufactured and readymade products we must conclude that all the paintings in the world are "Readymades aided" and also works of assemblage.


## Transit for Venus / Lisa Marie Oliver

Dark dot steady to the end, we watch the little body cross. Sun-field, huge with flares and flames. When the planet catches the edge, the crowd is quiet. Only the girl, the gold telescope glinting. She says, au revoir, mon ami the gold telescope glinting. The crowd is quiet. Only the girl. When the planet catches the edge, sun-field, huge with flares and flames, we watch the little body cross, dark dot steady to the end.


Skullcrushing Hummingbird started as the title to an unfinished (not abandoned) novel, then it became the name of the freeform radio show I hosted on The Portland Radio Authority (RIP) in the mid-aughts, and now it is the name l've given to a zine. The phrase comes from a beautiful song by The Flaming Lips and l've always loved the way the words sound together. Give it a listen, the song is "Oh My Pregnant Head (Labia In The Sunlight)" from the album "Transmissions From The Satellite Heart."

## Oh My Pregnant Head (Labia In the Sunlight) Lyrics

When will you shut your mouth
Stop all your vibrating
Birds flying out of a mountain
Somewhere the snow cools my fever
I just have stumps left for fingers
Wondering can you still play guitar

Just like a baby
Just like the smoke rings
Baby in the sunlight
When will you stop all your buzzing

## Skullcrushing hummingbird

Somewhere a star burns the universe
Gold eagle paints at my fingers
Can of spaghetti diseases
Hoping that you can still play guitar

Just like a baby
Just like the smoke rings
Labia in the sunlight
Baby in the sunlight (x6)
To the Indigenous cultures of the Pacific Northwest Coast, the hummingbird is a messenger of joy. It stands for intelligence, beauty, devotion, and love. These little birds are also respected as fierce fighters and defenders of their territory.

Thanks to all who responded to my call for contributions to this humble pamphlet and thanks to all who are reading it now. - LWL 9/22

fig. 35

