

The
Abstractaphy
Initiative



Happy Belated New Year!

from *The Abstractaphy Initiative*

Founder's Notes - Abstractaphy #1

Well, the journal is starting to attract a significant number of fellow humans so it's time to start staying in touch. That doesn't mean bombarding your inbox, no. It just means, "Hi, hello, we're still working here for the planet and for humanity."

To start 2025, I'd like to look back and share some of the work we've received to date. I'm going to call this Issue 1 of Abstractaphy—a semi-occurring collection of works from the pages of The Abstractaphy Initiative.

There is no set number of works per issue. The focus will be on cohesiveness. We're starting small but there is a buzz in the air when people find us. Community is a beautiful creation. It's also a powerful one.

I want to thank the editors at The Haiku Society of America's journal (Frogpond) for first publishing Alan Peat's "Black Hole". I would also like to thank the editors at The Weekly Avocet for first publishing a variation of Theresa A. Cancro's "landfill overflow."

Together with Jenny Ward Angyal's "Renaissance," these three pieces evoke a deep sense of poignancy, introspection, and reverence in both subtle and blunt ways. There's a delicate dance on these pages. The subject matter speaks for itself.

Welcome to Abstractaphy Issue 1
Enjoy!

Richard Grahn
Founder, The Abstractaphy Initiative

Renaissance

By Jenny Ward Angyal
Gibsonville, North Carolina, USA

No cougars are supposed to roam the Appalachian mountains. They're supposed to be extinct here, killed off or driven out by logging half a century ago. And yet . . . here and there a single footprint lingers in damp earth, a wisp of hair clings to rusted wire, a blurred snapshot betrays the image of a ghost-cat slipping through shadows.

And once, echoing down the mountainside where I stumbled mile after mile over rain-slicked rocks in gathering dusk—once, a long, unearthly scream to pierce the heart.

I utter a prayer
into the darkness
that enfolds me—
may all the vanished ones return
when at long last we're gone

Black Hole

By Alan Peat

Biddulph, Staffordshire, United Kingdom

This morning I awoke with an ocean inside me. The faint cries of gulls gave the game away; that, and a gentle lapping at the back of my throat.

With every breath, salt air filled the room; shoals of fish swam in my belly; sharks slept; the calls of whales boomed deep within me; kelp waved behind my eyes.

All was well until lunch when the cramps began. By evening, I had no choice but to take a taxi to the hospital.

The doctors ummed and ahed; the nurses frowned. I guess they'd never seen a man with an ocean inside him before. The senior doctor buzzed for a surgeon who had once saved a mermaid. Immediately upon seeing me, he plunged his arm deep into my mouth and down until I felt his bony fingers clasping inside me.

He pulled out a child's ball, rubbed by the sand until it was as white as an eye. He pulled out plastic bricks, a spoon, a hosepipe, credit cards, a beat-up bath duck. Then, quite suddenly, he raised his scalpel and sliced me open. A wave of water bottles spilled upon the floor. Puffins circled.

"Now," he shouted, and with all the medical staff assisting, a net was hauled from the deepest part of me; a net so large that it stretched from my ocean to an ebbing time: before ice retreated back up mountains; before junk fell from the vacuum above; before we all ran headlong into waves.

day moon . . .
footprints still
in its dust

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Landfill Overflow

By Theresa A. Cancro

Wilmington, Delaware, USA

landfill overflow . . .
a praying mantis
bows its head

A version of this haiku was originally published
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