



Types and Shadows

Early in the pandemic, at first, I thought, “Seclusion can’t be that bad for an artist. I’ll have an excuse to stay holed up in my studio with creativity, uninterrupted.”

But then...

I became haunted by a photograph of a stand of trees I had shot the winter before. I was compelled to submit to exploring its unexplained appeal.

Working in watercolor, somehow, “I felt unable to breath life into the work--like the Von Trapp Family Choir when Maria went back to the convent.” After my first attempt to paint during this pandemic, (see painting #1, page 4) I thought “How dare I paint when the world is so upside down around me.” (cont. page 4)



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Featured Cover Art and Essay:

"Willowstream, Ithanpathway," 9" x 12," Oil pastel; essay, "Art during the Pandemic, both © Beverly S. Benson (also see pages 4-6.)



Edith Maxwell

Becoming a Quaker Mystery Author

by Agatha Christie award winner

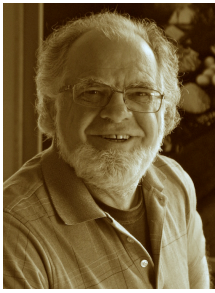
Edith Maxwell

I am a Quaker who writes books in which people get killed. That is, I write murder mysteries, and lots of them. How did I get here, and how do I square that kind of work with my Friendly values?

As it happens, I am a lifelong writer. I started with fiction, moved on to journalism and academic writing, and then had a career writing software manuals. I didn't return to fiction until my mid-fifties. But I have always had a hyperactive imagination, so it's no surprise I now make things up for a living. As I love reading amateur-sleuth mysteries, it made sense to try my hand at writing one.

My first novel came out a month before I turned sixty. I now have 24 mysteries in print, all traditionally published, and I'm polishing my thirtieth. Only two of those thirty don't yet have a publication contract – but I'm working on it. I have no intention of stopping, and I'll be sixty-nine in a few months. I write three books a year (or more) in three series at any given time.

The books that might interest readers here the most are my historical Quaker Midwife Mysteries. They feature unconventional Quaker midwife Rose Carroll in late 1880s Amesbury, Massachusetts. The Quaker poet and abolitionist John Greenleaf Whittier (**cont. page 10**)



Blair Seitz

©Judy Ballinger

From the editor...

How many of us knew that in the Quaker artist community, we had a mystery writer of 22 going on 30 novels—accepted, printed and distributed by national publishers? That's **Edith Maxwell** who I met at the FQA/FGC writers session this year. Here in **T&S**, Edith tells us how being a Quaker and mystery writer are compatible.

All of us enjoy collaboration with many friends who do not attend Quaker meetings. In this issue, FQA member **Keith Calmes** interviews a favorite colleague, Czech **Štěpán Rak**. **Jennifer Elam** is back to **T&S** with an encore; and I'm very happy to introduce our featured artist, **Beverly S. Benson**, who shares her heartbreak and breakthrough art during COVID. I hope you enjoy this issue—Blair

F2A gets an imaginative boost...

Imaginations with realistic planning flourished on June 21, 2021, when a group of FQA members met by ZOOM with intent to enliven FQA.

Since Clerk Maria Cattell and Treasurer Doris Pulone retired from the FQA board after many years of service, FQA has floundered without a new board though Doris has continued as interim treasurer and Bonnie Zimmer as membership recorder.

This FQA wilderness came to a halt with a meeting of seasoned FQA members including several of the old vanguard.

Oldsters Chuck Fager, Doris Pulone and Blair Seitz were joined by Liz DiGeorgio, Jesse White, Jennifer Elam, Keith Calmes and Jonathan Talbot to form a reorganization/revitalization initiative. The members represent five states and will continue to meet by ZOOM technology.

Members may look forward to interactive website features, better representation of members' artwork, a new board and an organization that will encourage member participation across the US. The group will meet again on August 7, 2021.

A great opportunity...

"Mediating Trauma and Grief through Creative Expression" led by Jennifer Elam and Gloria Stearns-Bruner

Trauma and grief can be stories that have forgotten how to dance and move. Evidence from both our personal and professional lives have confirmed what research is showing: creative expression is effective in getting our stuck challenges to move. Class members will be asked to write a brief story about a challenge that is stuck in their lives. Others will move/dance as they read the story. Then a visioning process will result in re-writing the story and others will move to that vision. Sharing will help us to develop a way to take steps to make changes in our lives so that our stories can learn to dance again with Love. The first zoom (but you can sign up after this date) class will be: July 17, 2021 from 10:00 to 11:30am. To sign up, please contact Jennifer at jenelam@aol.com. Jennifer and Gloria are available to do this class for groups; and classes will also be offered for individuals.

Gloria Stearns-Bruner is a Friend for 34 years and a member of Bloomington Friends Meeting, (IN). She is a clinical music therapist and violinist, currently following a leading in music ministry and activism, writing music as led by Spirit for personal and cultural healing.

Dr. Jennifer Elam began her study of psychology in 1969 and served in many settings until her retirement in 2014. She has been immersed in Quakerism for 30 years. She is presently following leadings to use her life-time of work in psychology, spirituality and social justice to develop classes for healing, using creative media as led by Spirit for healing.

Tri-Quarter F2A Arts Exhibit...

This year, once again in person rather than on ZOOM, three of New Jersey's Quarterly Meetings will meet at Camp Ockanickon on September 24-26. FQA member, Doris Pulone, is curator for the art show which includes music, poetry, 2-D and 3-D art as well as painting sessions for adults and children. For questions about presenting art please contact Doris at dpulone@comcast.net.

Art during the Pandemic: Beverly S. Benson

(cont. from page 1, cover)

Next, I was led to sew facemasks as a way to support my loved ones and community. Sewing is meditative and channels many of the same creative pathways as does painting.

However, sewing requires sitting for long stretches that my back wouldn't allow. I wasn't able to sit long enough to join the effort in providing face masks in mass for institutions in need.

It was in May, I learned that one of my dear lifelong friends had been hospitalized and her condition was sounding more grim as the days passed. I looked at that photograph again. Once again, I brought it to my easel to explore the mystery of it.

This time, I began in pastel. But it was a hard start. I had an overwhelming sense of doom thinking of my friend on a ventilator. After some coaching, a friend helped me realize, I may be channeling my friend through this work. When I went back to the easel, the work had a spiritual flow and a feeling of connectedness. Communicating daily--myself, six close friends and her brother--we held onto all the information we could understand while keeping vigil, holding my friend in the light. The power I felt among us was like the trees in the forest, when another tree is troubled with infestation. (see **pastel #2 below**)

*Above right: #1, "Stand of Trees," watercolor, 5" x 7";
Right: #2, "Trees, Standing Together/Apart,"
chalk pastel, 16" x 24"
©Beverly S. Benson*



Photo used as reference



Powerful underground connections mysteriously send the information and chemical prescription for others to survive themselves or even protect the failing tree. Somehow, this second try exploring this subject matter was what I call a trance, that is when you go into automatic and the work has a



#3, "Tree. Standing Together/Apart," Oil & Wax, 30" x 40" © Beverly S. Benson

way of completing itself. You are simply a facilitator. (see painting # 3 above) I spent a great part of the pandemic using my creativity and experience, helping children cope with learning online. Finally, when the children went back to school, I had time to go out into the landscape and observe new life and the promise of Spring. Because of my Spring allergies, I have to make photographic sprints into the landscape, then come inside to work. Along with family friends and myself being vaccinated, returning to the landscape and photographing rebirth felt so optimistic and right, a feeling of rebirth. And the oil 9 x 12" pastels (below and on the next page) were the results in my spring painting, which coincided with my vaccination.



"Bridge over Ithan Creek, Willow Streams," Study #1, Alla Prima, oil pastel, 9" x 12," © Beverly S. Benson



Beverly S. Benson

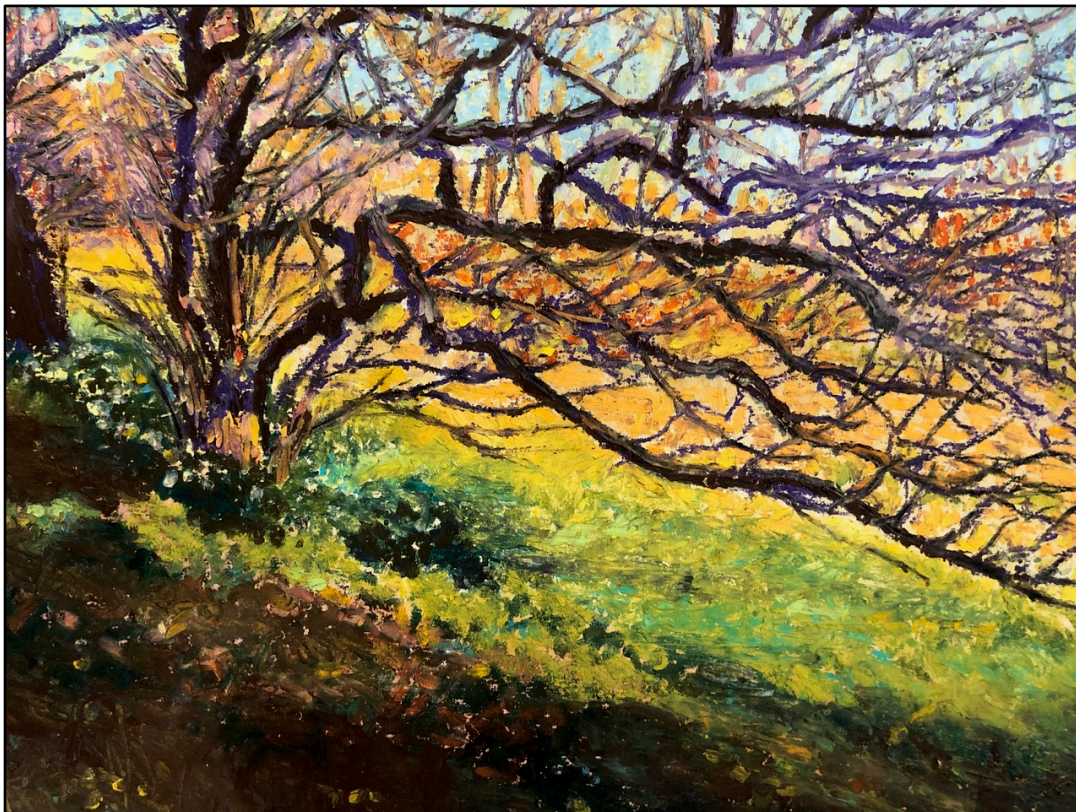
Beverly's childhood was spent in the bucolic woods of Bucks County. Most of her childhood memories include making things shaped out of mud, crafted from found objects, on or with paper.

She received her BFA from Philadelphia College of Art and her teaching certification from West Chester University. Beverly is a member of Haverford Friends Meeting.

Beverly notes, "I am a colorist painter. My work reflects a love of nature as I capture the array and arrangement of hues it has to offer. My language is strokes, blends, harmony and dynamics of structure. Light carves out space as the strength of the light predicts the intensity of the hue."



Above: "Flowered Embankment along Darby Rd," WC & Oil Pastel, 9" x 12";
Left: "Light Show, Veiled by Tree," Oil Pastel, 9" x 12", both © Beverly S. Benson



FQA member and classical guitarist Keith Calmes talks with colleague Štěpán Rak



Štěpán Rak

Štěpán Rak's music has been an enormous inspiration to me for almost four decades. We met at California Institute of Technology when I was a member of the Sun Guitar Quartet and gave the world premiere of his piece "To the Memory of the Renaissance." We have kept in touch over the years and he wrote a lovely solo piece for me entitled "Nocturno and Dance." The piece was recently published; a recording of the piece is widely available online.

Although Rak is not a Quaker, I asked him about topics that might be of interest to members of FQA.

On the creative process:

The seeds of the creative process have no special rules. It all depends on the situation. Usually, it works in such a way that it comes just suddenly in stillness and peace. At other times, I have to play my guitar first: I start practicing scales, broken chords, imitation, etc. and the inspiration comes afterwards. But there are also moments, especially after I receive a commission, when I write down a special piece in concrete and durable form. It is a little bit strange, but in these moments it usually works quite well and I get the inspiration rather quickly. I would say that some kind of limitations are good for me.

On seeing and hearing a sense of love in art:

There is nothing more than Love in our world, isn't there? If something works as a seed in my case, then it is pure Love. I must love all the notes, all the

harmonies, and all the rhythms during the composing process. Without it, nothing works in my case. Music is my sweetheart!

On growing up in Czechoslovakia in the shadow of World War II, and the influence that war has had in his art:

World War 2 definitely had a profound influence on me. My mother, Vasilina, was a soldier in the army of General Ludvik Svoboda's regiment during the Second World War. She was on the front lines marching from Buzuluk to Prague, thousands of kilometers, to give life to me. During the most terrible deadly combat near Dukla Pass during the autumn of 1944, she became pregnant.

Furthermore, she was very seriously injured by a fragment from a mine to her head and, even then, brought me to Prague!!! It was just unbelievably heroic. She was given the bravery award. Ever since that time I cannot stand any shooting nor explosions. All of my works are practically anti-war kind of music. I composed the symphony Hiroshima as gratitude for my life. Hiroshima happened August 6th, 1945; Nagasaki, August 9th, 1945; and I was born August 8th, 1945, just in between those tragedies. I was very moved by the fact that I was born at the same time many thousands died suddenly. That was my main reason for composing this piece. It won Second Prize in the Czechoslovak Composición Competition years ago. I played a version of the piece for guitar at many of my concerts worldwide. I have performed guitar concerts in over 70 countries on four continents.

On The Velvet Revolution, a non-violent and artist-led revolution, in the Czech Republic:

I knew President Vaclav Havel personally, as well as his first wife Olga. I have also been great friends with his widow (and First Lady) Dagmar for many years. I was honoured to play many times for President Havel both in the Czech Republic and abroad. I used to play for him at his meetings with politicians in Canada and in the United States. He was a very humble and kind person and brought many great, human ideas to the world at that time. On the day of his funeral, December 23rd, 2011, I participated at the tribute concert at the Lucerna Hall in Prague. (cont. next page)

(from previous page)

On his recent recovery from the Coronavirus:

I am happy to have it over with. I managed to compose several works that time. You can watch some of my pieces on my YouTube channel.

On being musically open-minded:

First of all, I started playing violin as a child. The guitar came later. Around the age of 18, I played steel-string guitar, electric guitar and double bass in different Jazz or Beat groups. I later played wild folk and traditional music. I also started playing my own compositions during that time. I played with a popular protest singer named Jaroslav Hutka a lot during the late seventies until we were banned. Also, I used to play in different nightclubs and coffee shops. A piece that I wrote about that era is called The Last Disco. This piece was performed and recorded by Czech virtuoso Vladimír Mikulka, as well as by myself at my Wigmore Hall (England) concert. All of these sources were very important to me later on as musical influences and inspiration. I have also composed other genres, such as: Tangos, Rumbas, Latin American music, etc.

On writing Sacred music:

I have written quite a lot of pieces with sacred topics. For instance, Prayer for the Holy Virgin, and others like this.



Photograph ©
Štěpán Rak

On being involved in other artistic mediums:

In high school, I studied art. After graduation, I also became a photographer. I love photography and have had numerous photography exhibitions both in my country and abroad. If you visit my website: www.Stepanrak.cz, you can see many of my photographs as well as my musical performances. You can also follow my YouTube channel.

On the power of art and music:

Art, in my opinion, is one of the most remarkable pillars of humanity and human society. Even during the most horrible times—during wars, in political prisons, in concentration camps, during the Second World War, etc.—culture and music has been a primary sort of aid and has provided salvation.

On artists reflecting their times:

Artists have always reflected their times throughout history. Just read Shakespeare’s Sonnet 66 etc. My best friend and major Czech actor Alfred Strejček and I have traveled to over 40 countries with our project Vivat Comenius, which is dedicated to the exciting personality Johannes Amos Comenius (1592-1670). Comenius remains important to both Czech and world history. He was the last priest of the Czech Brotherhood and was also a philosopher, peacemaker and humanist. He wrote over 200 books on diverse subjects. His contribution to the world is just remarkable. They hated him during his lifetime and he was an involuntary refugee. Simply put: we artists are inseparably part of human society and we are reflecting our time through our art.

On his own artistic legacy:

This will be the task of future generations.

Circle of Life

paintings and poem by Jennifer Elam

***In the Circle of Life, opposites meet and mean the same...
in that place where opposites meet, tension is, tension brings Destruction, Creation or both, destructing old places and in the Light or Darkness bringing the new.***



"The Circle of Life-1," paste paint, 11" x 14" © Jennifer Elam

(Circle of Life, cont.)

As Opposites meet, Light flows, Spirit comes
which Spirit do we embrace here?

the Far Left meets the Far Right...
Black meets White...
Red meets Blue...
too Good meets Evil;
too Correct meets Wrong.

Us "hillbillies" meet the rest of the world.

In knowing theirs is the ONLY Correct way,
the story forgets how to dance;
Souls shatter, Countries destruct or become new.

How does the story get unstuck?
How does the story remember how to dance,
Destruction or Creation to go forward?

Destruction calls for Only Correctness
to meet the "Othered" Only Correctness and both are harmed,
Players selling their souls.

The Angels of Our Braver Selves enter and
Creation calls for core values of each side to Meet and Dance,
Meet and Dance in Love, knowing both are Correct,
both have a place in God's Choir.

As Opposites dance, Light, Sweat, Messy
and Spirit may enter and the colors change.
They see each other more clearly,
changing the Invisibility of each, to Transparency,
seeing the Soul, as God intended each soul to be seen,
appreciated and valued in the Wholeness,
Life meets Death and Resurrection comes,
includes a place for Left and Right, Black and White,
Red and Blue, Right and "Othered" Right...

Wholeness plus Love dances to Harmony then
Harmony can bring true Unity.

All God's Children, Chillun, and Brats Got a Place in the Choir.



"The Circle of Life 2," paste paint, 11" x 14"
© Jennifer Elam

Types and Shadows history of Quaker Artists feature

With permission of author Gary Sandman, T&S shares vignettes of artists from his book, *Quaker Artists*. These essays are sometimes surprising as the artists date back to the era when artwork was condemned by Quakers. Sandman's book can be ordered from garysandman@cox.net.

NELSON AND EDITH DAWSON

Nelson Dawson (1859-1941) was a multi-talented artist: architect, painter, etcher, jeweler, metalworker, potter and writer. He began as a painter and etcher, especially of marine scenes. Later he became a key figure in the Arts and Crafts Movement, creating beautiful, handmade objects. Working closely with his wife Edith, he designed a wide variety of items: ornaments, dishes, boxes, plaques, lamps and jewelry. Toward the end of his life he returned to painting and etching. He was an Associate of the Royal Society of Painters in Watercolours and a Fellow of the Royal Society of Painters, Etchers and Engravers.

Edith Dawson (1862-1928) was also a multi-talented artist: painter, jeweler, metalworker and writer. As a painter, her main subject was flowers. A key figure in the Arts and Crafts Movement, too, she made the items that her husband designed. Her specialty was enameling. Among their pieces were the bronze organ grille in Holy Trinity Church; a trowel and mallet used by Queen Victoria; and an ornamental box presented to President Wilson. Their studio became very successful over time and employed other craftspeople to carry out their ideas.

With Nelson, she published *Goldsmiths' and Silversmiths' Work* and by herself *Enamels*. Their work is represented in private collections, the Victoria and Albert Museum, the British Museum and the National Maritime Museum. Rhoda and Mary, their daughters, were also artists.

Edith Dawson was born a Friend. Despite Quaker opposition to art in those days, she pursued painting and as a young woman earned considerable sums. She was also noted to wear a Quaker bonnet but trimmed with real flowers. Her daughter described her mother's workroom as having "...the portrait of George Fox on the mantelpiece". Nelson and she were married at Whitby Meeting in 1893.

Nelson, however, supported World War One, working in a munitions factory and then seeking a position as a war artist at the Admiralty. Only after Edith's death did he become a member of the Religious Society of Friends. His memorial service was held at Hammersmith Meetinghouse.



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FQA Statement of Purpose

To nurture and showcase the literary, visual, musical and performing arts within the Religious Society of Friends, for purposes of Quaker expression, ministry, witness and outreach. To these ends we will offer spiritual, practical and financial support as way opens.

In this Issue...

Beverly S. Benson, (PA), essay and paintings; Edith Maxwell, (MN), Agatha award novelist; Keith Calmes, (ND), interview with musician Stépan Rak; Jennifer Elam, (KY), paintings and poetry.



"Circle of Life 3," paste paint, 11" x 14" © Jennifer Elam