

*Even before Crossroad Poets got under construction, Crazy Child Scribbler kids were romping in foundation trenches, making paper airplanes out of old blueprints and throwing them into the circus streets, jazzed that something's going on behind the clowning.*

### Rest in Peace, Kayla Sussell

Kayla Sussell passed away on September 16 at the age of 87. She is survived by her son Jesse and daughter-in-law Molly, her grandkids Nico and Desmond, her brother Michael, cousins and nieces, and a vast abundance of friends.

Kayla was born in Brooklyn in 1932. As a teenager, she worked at Sam Goody Records and stole enough from their cash registers to finance a motorcycle trip across Europe with her first boyfriend, Walter Levy. Seventy years later, she considered that to be one of her finest accomplishments. She also lived on a kibbutz in Israel, joined some kind of a cult in England, and did graduate work at Cornell University. She married once, briefly, to help obtain legal residence for the Italian man whom a gay friend fell in love with.

In 1969 she moved to San Francisco. New acquaintances would inquire, "Oh, the summer of love?" to which Kayla would reply, "No, I came later, during the winter of heroin."

Her son was born in 1975. Two years later they moved into an Oakland communal house on Monte Cresta street, where she made lifelong friends. She briefly lived in Mendocino County, but returned to Oakland after narrowly avoiding arrest during a police raid at an illicit marijuana production facility.

She loved language and worked as a proofreader and editor, retiring from Oakland's New Harbinger Publications in 2011. She served as editor of the *Scribbler* for several years and hosted Clive's Poetry Saloon. She also became fond of spoken word performance, completing poetry coursework at Berkeley City College and participating in East Bay poetry readings.

Kayla was genuinely interested in listening to other people's stories. Her disinterest in adhering to social niceties that she found pointless was probably part of what drew people to her. She was not afraid to speak her mind.

Friends who wish to attend her October memorial may contact Jesse at [jsussell@gmail.com](mailto:jsussell@gmail.com). Kayla will also be honored at the 100th-issue celebration of the *Scribbler* at Art House Gallery and Cultural Center on November 10.



### The Finish Line

Somewhere near the end  
I count my blessings because I don't want to concentrate  
On the abject failures or half-assed successes.

Somewhere near the end  
I add up my small triumphs because I don't want to look at  
Much less examine how I was many days and dollars short.

Somewhere near the end  
My old body manufactures, secretes and then emits  
A new scent...immediately identifiable as old-body emanation.

Somewhere near the end  
I groan, smile ruefully, tap my chest meaningfully,  
and wish fervently to be carried off by a massive heart attack.

As I edge ever closer to the ledge  
I hope I am truly somewhere near the end.

—Kayla Sussell  
Sent to Liza Malm on April 12, 2019.

# Workshop Schedule

## CRAZY CHILD WRITING WORKSHOPS

*Let your creative self free to write with abandon —*  
based on the tutorial *Let the Crazy Child Write!* (New World Library, 1998)  
(fee: \$80 or any donation; included in 10-week workshops)  
Sunday, November 17, 10am to 5pm, Point Richmond  
Saturday, December 21, 10am to 5pm, Grand Lake District, Oakland

## THE BEAT AESTHETIC And Why We Need It Today

(*\$5 or any donation*)  
Omni Commons, 4799 Shattuck Avenue  
(at 48th Street) in Temescal District, Oakland  
Every second Saturday of the month:  
November 9, December 14 — 1 to 4pm

## 10-WEEK WORKSHOPS

(fee: \$400 per session)  
*poetry*  *prose*  *plays*  *nonfiction*  
**Wednesdays** 6:30 to 9:30pm Temescal District, Oakland  
*Current sessions end September 25 — New sessions start October 2*  
**Fridays** 10am to 1pm Lafayette  
*Current sessions end November 1 — New sessions start November 8*

## 2-BUSY 2-WRITE

(*drop-in writing time*)  
(fee: \$10 or any donation, like healthy cookies)  
Every Tuesday, 7 to 9pm Temescal District, Oakland

## MARIN WORKSHOP

(fee: \$25 or any donation)  
7 to 9pm in San Rafael on the third Thursday of the month  
Register at [clive@matsonpoet.com](mailto:clive@matsonpoet.com) for address

## THE NOVEL'S ARC

(fee: \$500 for five sessions)  
*Four novelists read each other's novels and examine how each works as a whole. Two-hour sessions, once a month, are devoted to each novel. Currently meeting 7 to 9pm on the first Thursday of the month. New sessions will be arranged as each of four authors declare their readiness.*

**FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT**  
**[matsonpoet.com](http://matsonpoet.com) or phone (510) 508-5149**

## POETRY SALOON

(*drunk on poetry!*)

Second Fridays at 472 44th Street, Oakland  
Potluck at 6pm, readings start at 7:30pm

*Bring poems or prose by you or others  
to share, or come just to enjoy.*

October 11, November 8, December 13

## THE SCRIBBLER PREVIOUS-ISSUE FINANCIAL REPORT

|   |                                    |
|---|------------------------------------|
| Issue 99, 475 printed:  | \$209.00                           |
| 434 mailed at a cost of:  | \$219.26                           |
|   | (includes 10 foreign @ \$1.15 ea.) |
| Collate, address, seal, and stamp; and mailings<br>to submitting writers: | Donated                            |
| Total expenses:   | \$428.26                           |
| Total income:   | \$100.03                           |
| (includes \$20.03 surplus from #99)                                       |                                    |
| Net loss:   | \$328.23                           |

## DONORS

Lucy Lang Day, Sharon Doubiago, Bruce Schneider

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Workshop participants receive the Scribbler for two years and as long as the recipient shows interest. To get on the mailing list, send an email with your name and mailing address to: [clive@matsonpoet.com](mailto:clive@matsonpoet.com)

PLEASE DONATE to keep the publication going. You can write a check to Clive Matson and mail it to:  
THE SCRIBBLER, 472 44th St., Oakland, CA 94609

## SUBMISSIONS

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If you wish to stop receiving the print version, please notify us at [clive@matsonpoet.com](mailto:clive@matsonpoet.com).

## In this issue

- Page 1** **Kayla Sussell.** Thanks to Jesse Sussell for the information about his mom. Thanks to Richard Loranger for Kayla's picture.
- Pages 3, 4** **Lee Worthington**
- Page 5** **Ananda Esteve, Mark Horosky**
- Page 6** **Ellaraine Lockie, Liv Max**
- Page 7** **Lorraine Lupo, K. Sussell, Javier Zamora**
- Page 8** **Caption by Robert Peck.**

Clive Matson presents  
"Traveling through Time  
with the Beat Aesthetic"

at the European Beat Studies Network  
Conference in Nicosia, Cyprus

Thursday, October 10, 1:30 pm  
<https://ebsn.eu/2019-conference-nicosia-cyprus/>

## **The Body Remembers:** An article and interview by Leah Worthington

Javier Zamora, a Salvadoran-American poet who lived for most of his life *sin papeles*, doesn't care too much for labels (or borders, for that matter).

His literary success has earned him new titles – immigrant activist, American Dreamer, and according to his new EB-1 visa, a person with “an extraordinary ability.” Despite being blessed with both talent and luck, Zamora, who knows what it means to be undocumented and unwelcome, has had to reckon with his own buried past.

In 1999, at the age of 9, he said goodbye to his home in La Herradura, El Salvador. His parents had fled to California several years before, so he made the trip unaccompanied – save for a small group of immigrants and a “coyote.” The journey through Guatemala, into Mexico, and across the Sonoran Desert to Arizona, should have taken two weeks. Two months and many hardships later, on June 10, 1999, Zamora crossed the Mexico-U.S. border and reunited with his parents.

He struggled with his new life in the Bay Area, and with anger he didn't understand. The “brown kid [among] the white kids,” as he described himself, Zamora rebelled in school, and was nearly expelled. During his senior year of high school, a guest lecturer introduced him to the poetry of Pablo Neruda. It was the first time he'd seen Spanish and English on the page together, and as he told *The New Yorker*, “A light bulb went off.”

Writing poetry became a place to confront his demons and, as he tells it, begin his “healing work.” Copper Canyon Press published his first full collection of poems, *Unaccompanied*, last September. The book confronts, in his characteristic frankness, the trauma of his 4,000-mile trek to the United States.

Zamora, whose work has received international recognition, will be a Radcliffe fellow at Harvard this fall. Before leaving, he sat with the *Scribbler* to talk about his poetry, a most recent trip to El Salvador, and skepticism about the American Dream.

### **Your poetry is mostly in English with some Spanish words. Is that the way you think?**

**Javier Zamora:** The words that I choose to leave in Spanish are just how I talk and think. They're almost untranslatable words because they don't sound as cool or as good in English as they do in Spanish. There's also a lot of sincerity and honesty in leaving those words on the page surrounded by English. And to me it also feels like how it feels to be a Spanish speaker in the United States. It feels isolated and it feels different, and there's also a bit of resistance.

The whole language thing is also interesting because I came here when I was 9. I started writing when I was 17. And I was very conscious of when I was going to turn 18 because that was the age when I was going to be physically more “American than Salvadoran” because I had spent more time here.

### **Do you think national identity is something we overemphasize?**

**JZ:** Absolutely. U.S. nationalism is a huge problem. I think being an immigrant you really feel that. Even in El Salvador, we're overly patriotic and nationalistic. I didn't see this so much, but there's a certain looking down upon that Salvadorans do when children are born in the United States. It's like they don't consider them fully Salvadoran. Americans do that here, too. I don't think it's an American or Salvadoran thing, it's just a byproduct of nationalism, that by defining a nation, you have to exclude other people. That is the problem of our century, and of immigration, because immigrants are counter to the idea of the nation-state.

### **You just got back from your first trip to El Salvador in almost 20 years. How did expectations compare with reality?**

**JZ:** It was not the El Salvador that I had left. Everything had changed. I already knew this, but it's something completely different to experience. I read a lot of memoirs of people who go back, people who were exiled, and they

(continued on page 4)

always have this moment of feeling smaller. That certainly happened to me because I left when I was small. Going back now when I'm 28 – everything looked so much smaller.

I've never felt unsafe in the United States. I felt unsafe in El Salvador. I was woken up by gunshots. They killed four people while I was there. I got to experience and better understand why people are leaving. I know they're going to continue to leave because that is not a safe country.

**I'd like to ask you about this incredible EB-1 visa. How did you find out about it? And what did you have to do to meet the qualifications?**

**JZ:** This firm in L.A., they specialize in these visas, emailed me asking if they could help out. They charged me a much smaller rate. The visa – they have like ten criteria, and you have to meet three of those requirements. Some of those requirements are whether you have won an award of national or international acclaim.

I ended up meeting seven of the ten requirements. Immigration actually turned me down the first time. But then we rebutted, and we were approved.

**What does having this visa mean for you?**

**JZ:** It means the possibility to travel outside of the U.S. and to eventually have the right to vote. I've never voted in my life. With the green card, in five years I could apply to be a U.S. citizen. And I can finally vote. So that next goal is to finally have a political voice.

**You've been criticized for not representing the American Dream as a sort of glorified journey. How do you respond to that?**

**JZ:** I've been told that I could be the cookie-cutter image of the American Dream at work. And I think my résumé, or even getting this visa, would back that claim. I am wary of that label because it does not take into consideration the literal luck of why I got here or have gotten the things that I've gotten. And also the exceptionalism that occurs in my case – that if I make it, there's a lot of other people that haven't.

I think that's my problem with the "American Dream," with the idea of exceptionalism. I think that's been a thing forever, of pulling yourself up by your own bootstraps – this idea that one person can do it, so why can't everybody do it? It's bullshit. It doesn't take into account the different societal, economic, political factors that keep other people from achieving the same thing.

**In a recent interview, you said that you're still traumatized from your past and that you always will be. Do you think it's possible to ever heal?**

**JZ:** I think that is part of healing – understanding that I'm never going to be able [to] erase what happened. This realization was a huge step for me; a step that needed to happen in order to continue to walk this road of healing that I'm now seeing is not finite. It's like being an addict – you always have to know your background, keep it in the back of your mind because you can regress very easily.

**When did you realize that?**

**JZ:** I thought that writing about my trauma was going to be the end of it. That once I wrote this thing out, literally, physically out of my body, that I could put it away on a bookshelf, and that was gonna be the end of it.

My book came out and I went back to Tucson [for five days]. Tucson is where the Sonoran Desert is. In those five days, I must have slept like five hours because my body felt re-traumatized. It was the climate, it was the helicopters, it was everything. I knew that there were people immigrating at that exact moment. And walking around downtown Tucson, in this very nice area, seeing people act as if nothing was happening, was repulsive. I couldn't sleep. My body didn't let me sleep. My physical reaction was a wake-up call. It was like, "Wow, the body remembers."



## Narcolandia

You wake up in blackness. The Tarahumara doll pokes into your behind as the floor you're sitting on hums and vibrates. You must be traveling in some vehicle. There's a cloth in your dry mouth. You can't swallow. You can only make whimpering noises, not the kind of noises *you* wanna make, but it's all you can muster when you realize your hands are tied up behind you. *Shit!* You feel a pressure around your head. You must be blindfolded. You try separating your hands, but the restraints tighten. You try to separate your ankles and they move with ease. After a bit of wrangling, you wrench them free! Bit by bit you curl your legs cross-legged then push up toward a standing position until you bang your head against a low ceiling. You hear snickering. You're not alone.

"Look, the roquera woke up!" says a youngish-sounding man. He's no one you know. "You think you got street cred. You wanted to knife us, huh? The only knifing is gonna be from us, you understand?"

"Ah," says a raspy voice, "At last. My companion may be a bit impulsive. Don't worry. Nothing much will happen to you if you *behave*. You can start by answering our questions. Where are you from?" You find yourself answering honestly.

"El D.F."

"A runaway," mumbles the younger one.

"Perhaps not," says Raspy Voice Man. "Who are your parents and why do they let you wander about these wild lands unsupervised?" he continues. You tell them their names. *Damn it!*

Wanderings of Chela Coatlicue

"The wrong one. Didn't I tell you, Jefe?" the younger one exclaims.

"Shut up! I don't want any of your lip! You're just a foot soldier or better said, a punk-ass kid. You're replaceable, remember?"

Foot Soldier continues as if nothing negative were said. "What are we going to do?"

"We're going to have to wait for el Capo."

"Maybe we should let her play that piece-of-junk instrument to pass the time."

"No. Don't give her anything!"

It's getting hotter and hotter in the back of the truck or RV or whatever you're in. No A.C. for you, or for Foot Soldier or this raspy-voiced man. Neither of them can be *that* important. Whoever they are, at least they don't touch you...not yet. This is kind of surprising. Why haven't they touched you? They could have gotten away with it. You've been kidnapped. Rape is the logical next step before they dismember and murder you. Your stomach tightens. Nobody in your life knows where you are and these guys don't see you as human. It's almost like you don't exist already. It's like you got swallowed up by a giant beast leaving no trail, no remains, no whisper of your life.

— Ananda Esteva

From the book, *Touring Califaztlan*, 2018, from the collection, *The Wanderings of Chela Coatlicue*. Used with the author's permission.

## On Seeing An Engagement Photo of a Girl I Used to Date

Her eyebrows have thinned and certainly oxygen thins at great heights while blood thins in different climates as the present thins into now. Umm, hmm easier to learn in private like a radiator learns how to warm air into nosebleeds. Refrain from using naked unless it is for emphasis and clarity. Her eyes are not supernova, not a landing strip of jet lights, but newspaper. February. Sunday. Here is the year of her birth: 1976. Ask her where she likes to be touched and she'll say there and there and there. Calling the day morning into the afternoon. And how the daylight leaves rooms earlier. A summer wedding is planned. Once driving through Memphis during an ice storm she created a doll called Pants Down Jesus. She she. And how the newspaper leaves fingers darker than they were before. Now: an ice cube crackles. How I never met a crackle that didn't think it was a telling moment. Broad daylight is never alone wondering how to cover distance. And how My Aim is True leaves listening darker than it was before. You don't need to memphis to know that lips to silence can sprawl like a suburb.

— Mark Horosky

## Then and Now

I don't tell my daughters  
At 18 I knew my way  
around a parked car  
And the boy who parked it  
That I was dressed up  
Ready to go whenever he was  
Soon dressed down in his front seat  
The word *fuck* never spoken  
in high school cliques  
Or anywhere else by nice girls  
A word never heard  
Yet often happened

I don't tell my daughters  
There was no safe sex phrase  
That the only worries were whispers  
from small town gossips  
And shotgun weddings  
that held girls hostage on wheat farms  
Montana labor prisons  
where their pardon was left to luck  
of early withdrawal  
Condemning evidence spilt  
over their bellies  
Allowing an escape route  
out of state into a different life

I don't tell my daughters  
from sheer copy-cat fear  
Endorsement by demeanor  
of a promiscuous generation  
Where *fuck* is an extended handshake  
in a sea of social gatherings  
Accepted articulation  
and an exercise in the ordinary  
With reckless denial  
of diseases and death sentences  
Hell on earth that makes Montana  
wheat farms into promised lands

– Ellaraine Lockie



## Untitled

you've got impressive skin  
and the disposition of a bomb.  
i think i found you on the internet.  
you can say all the nice things you want  
about "North Korea" and

## Taking Issue with Marcelino

who suggests a boy flex his forearm  
instead of shoulder when he fingers a girl  
A forearm, like he's pulling a calf  
Let there be light in the darkened corner of the barn

Where a girl waits for the haystack-lush  
breeze-through-chokecherry bush touch  
from her first boyfriend  
A boy who perhaps works at the post office  
where he spits on a finger  
and pets a stamp onto an under-paid envelope

Or maybe his mother introduced him  
as a child to the art of fingerpainting  
When he learned to ease fire engine red  
into the pink of an earthworm's crawl  
Into flush of cheek and slush of melting snow  
with the cursive of one slow O after another

Or let's say he plays Chopin late at night  
after his garage band practice  
Taps the keys with feather tips  
How he holds the hammer inside  
Turns the slams against his heart into a prayer

Like a priest saves himself for Christ  
Knowing the sacrifice will be rewarded in the end  
The way lightning explodes over the night prairie  
Blesses both the boy and girl through the one window  
and blinds even the star with its brilliance

– Ellaraine Lockie

## Untitled

do straight people even know who sappho is  
i admit i have a gun which sometimes  
i call a toy & other times call food &  
when u eat rice-r-roni you say grace  
but when u eat pussy u dont &  
when the revolution comes ull still  
be an orthodontist  
believie in free jazz in elevators  
but also wage labor  
& ill probably have 2 kill u

– Liv Max

trade heroes  
for ghosts  
a coup for a cool breeze  
but i want to eat the moon tonight  
grow teeth where  
i've only had soft things.

– Liv Max

## The Ballad of the Sad Young Men

All the sad young men  
know war  
What I know isn't  
in history books  
I don't want to fight  
anymore

I knew a baby  
and some sad young men  
who walked miles  
to get to me  
I walked with them  
Behind sometimes  
That's what I know

I know blood and gore  
Want to ask me?  
No, I didn't think so  
It's not in history  
books but it's what  
I know

No, I don't know Marx  
I don't know how to shoot a gun  
What is glory?  
My fights are in my head  
I hate certainty  
I'm jealous  
of your certainty

Maybe I should start  
charging money for this love  
It feels like work  
Did Marx have a wife?  
What kind of husband was Marx?

I was alienated from my  
labor when my daughter was  
born. No one told me  
it was their hands inside  
my body, pulling her out  
Panicked, my voice rose  
My husband snapped  
pictures of the wound  
They took her away  
That's what I know

When the fog rose through  
the trees and she was  
at my breast I worried I was  
doing something wrong. That was  
the happiest moment of my life

– Lorraine Lupo

## Donald and the Zombies

(with apologies to Philip Larkin)

He'll fuck us over  
The Donald will  
He may not mean to  
but he will.  
For he's a skill  
for obscene pricks  
who'll eat us  
for their lunch.  
They'll wash us down  
with good red wine  
munch munch munch.

They'll gargle our blood  
to cleanse their palate  
'n' chomp on our sinews  
like playing with mallets  
they'll suck our hearts' valves  
and dig deep in our brains  
which will be fried up  
and chewed over again  
crunch crunch crunch.

– Kayla Sussell

Reprinted from the January 2017 #90 *Scribbler*.

## To Abuelita Neli

This is my 14th time pressing roses in fake passports  
for each year I haven't climbed marañón trees. I'm sorry  
I've lied about where I was born. Today, this country  
chose its first black president. Maybe he changes things.  
I've told Mom I don't want to have to choose to get married.  
You understand. Abuelita, I can't go back and return.  
There's no path to papers. I've got nothing left but dreams  
where I'm: the parakeet nest on the flor de fuego,  
the paper boats we made when streets flooded,  
or toys I buried by the foxtail ferns. ¿Do you know  
the ferns I mean? The ones we planted the first birthday  
without my parents. I'll never be a citizen. I'll never  
scrub clothes with pumice stones over the big cement tub  
under the almond trees. Last time you called, you said  
my old friends think that now I'm from some town  
between this bay and our estero. And that I'm a coconut:  
brown on the outside, white inside. Abuelita, please  
forgive me, but tell them they don't know shit.

– Javier Zamora

From the book, *Unaccompanied*, ©2017 Javier Zamora, reprinted  
by permission of Copper Canyon Press.

"Hello, Paradise.  
Paradise, Goodbye"  
reading by Clive Matson

Saturday, October 5 and November 16  
7 - 9:30 pm

**Frank Bette Center for the Arts**  
1601 Paru Street, Alameda, CA 94501  
510-523-6957

**Excerpt performed in Paris,  
September 2017**

Crooked Teeth chapbook number one, \$5,  
will be available at the readings.

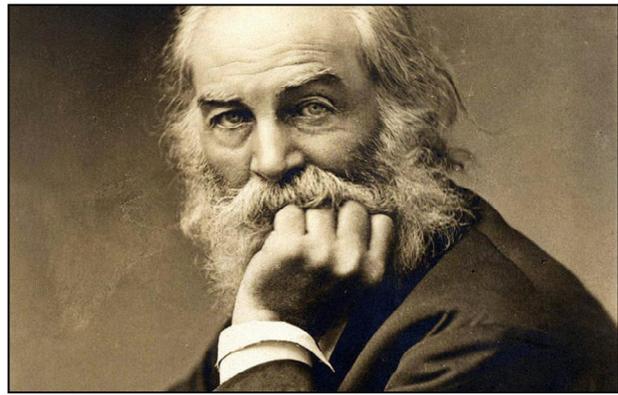
Final reading of the poem in November  
will feature select poets who influenced  
the poem's creation. Open Mic.

THE SCRIBBLER

Total expenses: **\$428.26**

Donations: \$100.03 – Thank you.

**PLEASE DONATE**  
to keep the  
publication going.



"I'd Rather be at the Scribbler Celebration than Look for my Brother at Appomattox."

**"Something Old, Something New"**

CELEBRATING ISSUE NUMBER 100

*Crossroad Poets Crazy Child Scribbler*,  
one of the longest-enduring small journals in the Bay Area

**4 to 8 pm, Sunday November 10**

Art House Gallery and Cultural Center - 2905 Shattuck Avenue (at Ashby), Berkeley  
\$10 or any donation

For those who have been involved with the *Scribbler* in any way! Bring a  
couple of poems to read, or one published in the *Scribbler* plus a new poem.

Also bring food and beverages for the potluck.  
clive@matsonpoet.com 510-508-5149

***Honoring our editor Kayla Sussell, 1932 - 2019***

**THE SCRIBBLER**  
**Clive Matson**  
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