

# **FOOLS FABLES CITIZENSHIP**



**2018**



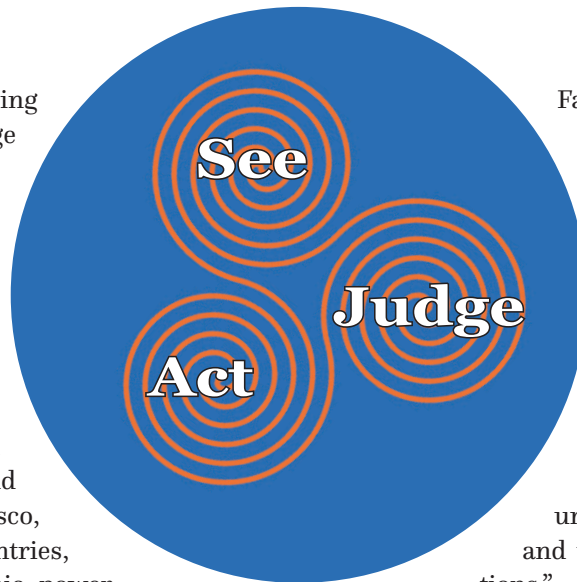
# Fools, Seeing Beyond the Surface

By Carmen Barsody

I have always had enough, including people to support me and encourage me in my choices and transitions. I have always had a healthy mind and body that facilitate my ability to function within complex systems and social relationships, and a skin color that affords me privileges many don't have. For more than half my life I have lived amongst people in the U.S. and Latin America who are impoverished and disenfranchised. I see in San Francisco, as I have in various cities and countries, people with political and economic power making decisions and policies that negatively affect far too many people, and the earth as well. Consequences are often devastating for people who already have limited options due to poverty and/or physical and mental health challenges. It never ceases to amaze and anger me at how the focus of blame is placed upon those negatively affected instead of challenging decisions made with blatant disregard for the good of all.

As I contemplate our work as Faithful Fools through the lens of "Citizen," I am reminded of the practice of SEE – JUDGE – ACT. I was a young adult when I read an encyclical written by Pope John XXIII about "Reading the Signs of the Times." It is a process used by individuals and groups to see beyond headlines and news reports. It requires us to look more closely at situations and experiences through doing social analysis and in-depth reflection. Taking the time to study and reflect helps us to determine actions we can take to change or transform a situation.

I am personally grateful for the resurgence of this practice as it is ultimately at the basis of our street retreats and everything we do as



Faithful Fools. In order for personal and social change to take place we must look beyond the surface of a situation and include ourselves in the picture. As our friend and colleague Erin Brigham writes in her book, SEE JUDGE ACT, "Though the phrase see-judge-act emerged in a Catholic context, it describes a process that people use implicitly and explicitly in many different contexts to observe situations, to evaluate them in light of understandings of what is good and right, and to act in ways to improve those situations."

Faithful Fools is grounded in a particular community. We challenge ourselves daily to live and work together as a community for the well-being of the whole. No one can be considered worthless or insignificant!

As we enter our 21st year, my commitment, together with a resilient community of Faithful Fools and neighbors, is firm and unwavering. I look again at our mission statement and I imagine what a world could look like if we really believed in the "worth and dignity of every person."



Carmen Barsody at the Fools' front door.

## SEE:

Listen. Investigate.  
Examine the actual situation.  
Set aside what you think you know in order to learn.

## JUDGE:

Evaluate the situation.  
Who benefits? Who is left out? Who is harmed?  
What compels our actions?  
What does it cost us to act?

## ACT:

Decide what can and should be done in the situation.  
Speak up, stand with, take risks, move with compassion.



Sam looking out on the street

# Thinking Out Loud

By Sam Dennison

On the streets in front of our building, there are people who have no home. They are stressed from poor sleep, poor nutrition, lack of health care, and the anxiety of not knowing what will come next for them. They are waiting to get inside. It strikes me that the lives of people hoping for housing and the lives of people hoping for asylum at our borders are strikingly similar. Poverty, anguish, and hoping to get inside—be it by getting a room or getting across a border—are common among those who wander with all of their possessions in backpacks and carts. They are all refugees. The slender difference between those waiting for housing and those waiting at our border is that some have formal citizenship here in the US and some do not.

**The single most powerful thing you can do is to speak with compassion as you say, “This is not right. We must do better”**

A person with no passport and no citizenship is a stateless person who must wait at a foreign border, in a refugee camp or makeshift tent under sweltering skies, for a new home. While they wait, stateless people are people without human rights, for they have no nation and no fellow citizens to call upon for protection. Too often, people without a nation are reduced to something less than human; they become dispensable; they are discarded.

Here on the streets of the Tenderloin, we see refugees not only from foreign lands but from failed US communities. You undoubtedly see such people in your community as well, for despite record highs in the stock market, people are filling the streets, living in tents, suffering the traumatic consequences of losing everything. Low wages and high rents, addiction, and lack of affordable medical care—these are the causes of our internal refugee problem, signs of our failure to meet our responsibilities to one another.

If we are to do our duty to one another, we must first stand up and say, “This is not right.” True, we must speak with compassion, but we must speak and call one another to our better selves. We must answer the call to think out loud and in public.

*As a young Episcopalian, I learned several services in the 1928 Book of Common Prayer by heart. The only part that has stayed with me is this piece from the daily confession. These words still help me think clearly about complex issues and urge me to ask hard questions.*

**The Book of Common Prayer**

## ***We have done those things which we ought not to have done.***

For decades now, San Francisco like the rest of the US has tried to use punishment to stop people who have no home from acting like they are homeless. When people have no place to go, they spend their time in public places *because* they have nowhere else to go.

- Twenty years ago, the City installed barricades and stationed armed police at UN Plaza to stop poor people from gathering there. In September 2018, the City did exactly the same thing for exactly the same reason.
- In 2010, voters passed a law prohibiting sitting and lying down on the sidewalk. In 2016, voters banned sleeping in tents on the sidewalk.
- Every year, millions of dollars are spent cleaning human waste from the sidewalks, and the problem persists: people without homes and therefore without bathrooms have nowhere but the streets to relieve themselves.

## ***We have left undone those things which we ought to have done.***

Despite repeated efforts to force people who have no home to stop living on the streets, we continue to have the same problems—loitering, sleeping on the streets, human waste on the sidewalk. If we truly want to address these problems, we must ask some very difficult questions:

- Why is housing a source of wealth for some while others have no place to live at all?
- Why does the CEO of a corporation deserve to make 400 or 500 times what the average person working at that same company makes?
- Why is the work of a computer programmer worth 3 to 5 times what a pre-school teacher makes?

When we address these questions, we will realize that the free market is not free at all. It is paralyzed by the belief that some people are inherently worth more than others, and the result is an unending increase in the number of people living in tents and under bridges. As long as the free market is our only guide for addressing poverty, the problem can only get worse.



# Spirit of Empires

By Elise Youssoufian

How do I know I am  
a citizen,  
of an empire?

My ancestors were,  
until they weren't.  
The empire entrusted  
with their lives  
saw my people as less than,  
making  
betrayal  
murder  
exile  
easier, to commit and  
to cover up.

Sometimes, as I walk the streets and see  
people enduring deep cuts of inhumanity,  
I wonder, is this what the streets looked like  
in my ancestral home before the genocide?

When you tell people they must leave,  
where are they supposed to go?  
To where does an exile belong?

Great Spirit of Empires past and present,  
see us, hear us, dance and sing and heal  
into the future with us.  
We are the great-grandchildren of  
the ones You could not kill.  
We are here. We are everywhere.

You cannot rule our hearts, or stop  
us from rising and uniting.  
No wall, no border, can make us forget  
who we are, or where we come from.

We are alive. We are rooted in love. We are growing.  
And all beings are invited to join in the beautiful struggle.

Yes, even You.



# A Citizen Belongs?

By Jackie Hider

Citizenship is a serious word. It encompasses a sense of inclusion, privileges, and responsibilities, But does it include a sense of “belonging?” And what is belonging anyway? How do you know you belong? I know I belong when I can be in the fullness of who I am, when all of me is accepted and welcomed. In a more expanded sense, I know I belong when I can trust that there are systems and policies in place in my community that support me.

I set out to find some examples where citizenship and belonging are connected, or not.

Last week I caught the #9 Bus on Market and Hyde. It was really crowded. I only got to sit down when a young person offered me, as an elder, her seat. When we got to 11th and Market, the bus driver called out, “Wheelchair coming on.” Everyone around me took action.

Some moved to the back of the bus. The bus driver put up the seats so the wheelchair had a spot. We all tucked ourselves in so as to not be in the way. The ramp went down

***Isn't the precious  
experience  
of belonging big  
enough to include  
all of us?***

and the man in the wheelchair rolled in. Someone helped him lock his chair. He was greeted by a few people. It seems that on that bus, he was a citizen with the right to be where he was and with systems in place to accommodate him. I imagine, because he was treated with respect and care, that he also felt he belonged.

On a different day, I was walking home to my



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## On Hyde Street 2018

Two years ago the Lafayette Coffee Shop lost its lease. The business which had been on Hyde St. for 40 years moved. The neon sign is an historic landmark so had to remain in place. Ironically, the storefront has remained empty ever since. It's an ideal place for people who have lost their homes to sleep. They are less likely to be ticketed or forced to move. The displacement of a business has made room for people who have been displaced.



# Our Work is Thinking Together

By Dorian Dorey



The Truth Mural, painted in 2002 by Rigo 23, stands across UN Plaza from San Francisco City Hall.

## *A Citizen Belongs (Cont. from previous page)*

room on Hyde and Turk, I passed our local Pit Stop, a portable toilet that's available Monday through Saturday. Surely having a bathroom close by is not just a privilege of citizenship, but a basic human right. These Porta-Potties are the only public toilets around and almost the only toilets that unsheltered people have access to. But here's the deal: they close in the evening and don't open again until 8 or later the next morning. So, the unsheltered people in my community (and there are many) often have no choice if they need a restroom except to use the streets. This upsets everyone. The message here is that the dignity of these community members does not matter, and therefore they do not belong.

It seems obvious that we make public transportation available to all citizens and that bathrooms should be available 24/7.

But there is another group of citizens who present a greater challenge. These are the people who use drugs on the streets. Every morning I encounter many people who are clearly high. As I walk, I see used needles on the sidewalks, drug deals happening in plain sight, and people injecting drugs out in the open. People overdose and sometimes they die. They get dangerous skin infections. These are frightening sights. It's no wonder that drug users are so often treated with contempt.

How do we think about belonging when we see someone who is shooting up or passed out on the sidewalk? It's a tough question. People say they feel uncomfortable walking through my neighborhood. Why? Is it because we are being asked to look at our own attitudes and confront our own fears? Is it because we feel helpless? Maybe. But, if we leave any of our neighbors out of our community of citizens, do we not lose a part of our own humanity? Isn't citizenship a big enough idea to include the precious experience of belonging for everyone? I hope so. And we obviously have work to do.

The Tenderloin has as much talent for collaborative planning and activism as it does for creativity and artistry. We, Faithful Fools and our neighbors, take our roles as "artists" quite seriously, and we're continually exploring possibilities through community organizing and grassroots creativity. We take a slower, more thoughtful approach to neighborhood issues as we not only seek answers but new ways to think about the questions. A TL

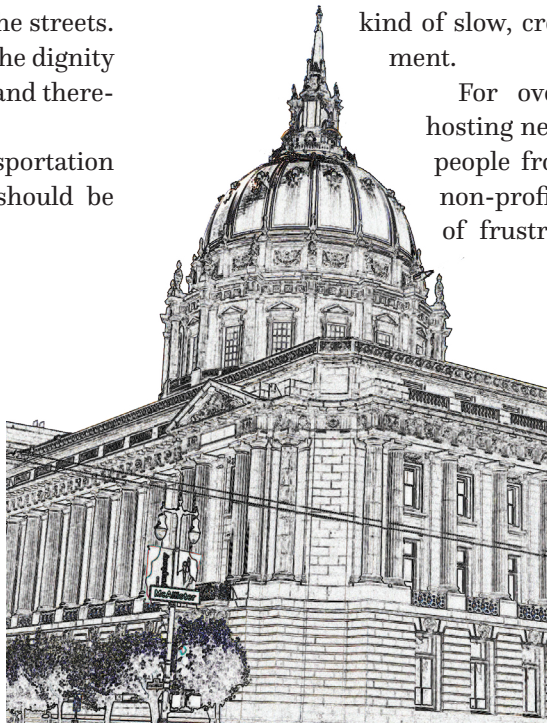
Think Tank is the most recent incarnation of this kind of slow, creative, and thoughtful engagement.

For over a year now, we've been hosting neighborhood leaders along with people from City Hall and neighboring non-profits. These gatherings were born of frustration with how seldom resi-

dents are actually consulted in the development of neighborhood plans and policies. Our Think Tank was formed to tackle issues proactively rather than waiting to be surprised by decisions that have already been made and plans being implemented.

Many of our sister community organizations are responding vocally to the most pressing issues, so our Think Tank is free to be proactive in our approach and

can take our time with the issues, striving to find what works – such as social design – rather than protest what's wrong. We know we can't keep using the same approaches if we hope for better outcomes, and so we are committed to seeing where careful collaborative creative thinking can take us. If the Tenderloin is ever going to be what so many of its residents know it can be and what all of us deserve, the questions have to change.



San Francisco City Hall



# Remembering



From the very first years of Faithful Fools, we have experienced the joy of coming to know neighbors and friends from near and far. We have also understood that with love comes loss. This last year we have experienced the loss of a number of Fools, some who have been with us for many years and some who more recently entering our community.

**Kay Jorgensen**, Founding Fool and inspiration (center) passed away in January. She helped us understand what losing our neighbors could mean when Mama, who lived in her van near our front door, died in 2002 (read Kay's reflections about Mama on the back page).

This year we also lost **Kat Callaway**, a founder of TL Votes (to Kay's left). **Donna Gilfert**, whose life on the street was so very difficult, was a part of our lives nonetheless (her street memorial is shown top left).

And **Edward Tyler**. We lost Edward Tyler too. He was as much a Founding Fool as anyone could be, having been part of our lives for more than 17 years. He was loving and kind. Placed in 32 different foster homes before the age of 12, in and out of rehab, no piece of his life was easy but he was a fine Fool who gave generously of his time, his cigarettes, and most of all his love.

These Fools are woven into the tapestry of our lives and our community. We hold them close, and we miss them.





# Our Way Forward

*April 7th 2018*

We convened a great gathering at the Unitarian Universalist Church of San Francisco. We raised our voices and our spirits to mark the 20th Anniversary of Faithful Fools and the 50th Anniversary of Martin Luther King, Jr's assassination.

We called it "Remembering Our Way Forward." In our remembering, we gained strength from one another and the wisdom of our ancestors so that we may face the future resiliently and creatively.



Long-time Fool **rAmu Aki** and Board Member **Silena Layne** read words of wisdom (top left). **Mary Ganz** and **Tammy Lundy** greet you (top right). Clowns **Entonces** and **Queen Slow Duck** greet each other (center slanted). **Mark Sumner**, UUSF choral director, leads 130 member choir while long time volunteer and Fool **Linda Chrisman** looks on (directly above). Alfonso in his famous motley green (aka **Thomas Atwood**) sings a simple song in honor of Kay Jorgensen. **Kasey Asberry**, **Dion Smith**, **Earl Gadson**, and **Lee Staples** from Skywatchers perform "I got a truth to tell." And above them, **Ade Kroll** and **John Brett** savor the moment.





# NOT ONE OF US (is dispensable)

By Rita Whittaker

I love my beautiful legs  
Used to jog around the lake or run down the street to catch a bus  
Singing out to the world  
Never noticing the leg-less among us  
Until the day they told me they would have to amputate my leg.

What is it about our legs?  
Our brilliant, dangerous autonomy  
Bold power of mobility  
Profound connection to earth

I saw a woman walking in the neighborhood  
A month later she was in a wheelchair

They said they'd have to amputate my leg!

Why so many poor people in wheelchairs?  
Rolling down the street  
Legless reminders of medical convenience

They don't want us in their offices,  
their clinics and hospitals  
And oh—Medi-Cal won't cover the expenses of fixing your leg,  
but it does cover cutting it off.

He said he'd fix my leg if I would go through his experiment  
They're doing research on poor people

They wanted to amputate my leg!

Legs of the poor  
Dispensable parts from bodies  
Of those already thrown away

They said they'd have to amputate my leg  
NOT!

I am here!

Survivor among survivors  
Of the poverty industrial complex  
And I will roll my beautiful legs down this street  
And I will sing my songs of survival and love  
Because not one of us is dispensable



A SKYWATCHERS' SONG:

## GETTIN' READY TO FLY

I'm gettin' ready to fly  
A-way up high, up in the sky  
Had to fight through the dark to get to the light  
Fighting da fighting night

Holy fire rises up  
Through the spine  
Uniting with the cosmos  
Making love to the divine



Skywatcher poet Rita Whittaker (above) is dancing her part of the revolution. Skywatchers is an ensemble of Tenderloin and professional artists who create performances based on their stories of life in the Tenderloin. From the streets to the hotels, they sing, dance, and celebrate the truth of their lives creating unforgettable, undeniable declarations of love and social justice.

If I can't dance,  
I don't want to  
be part of your  
revolution.

**Emma Goldman**

## We Need More Civic Love

By Hy Carrel

In early 2014, my friend Peter Shanley and I convened a monthly gathering to imagine a more sustainable Bay Area. Our intention was to create an early-morning coffee hour that was accessible to nonprofit case managers, shelter staff, tech workers like Peter and me, unhoused residents, and activists. In a word, “neighbors.” We called ourselves Civic Love. Each meeting began with sharing experiences of civic love from the past month and from there grew our discussions. We took no action as a group, viewing ourselves as “activists without action items,” and we inspired each other. We gathered nonprofits and tech companies near the Tenderloin, each location a new canvas for our stories.

One December, Civic Love met at Faithful Fools. The roof was leaking after the season's first heavy rain, so we huddled in the Hat Factory downstairs. Kay was still brand new to me, but she joined us that day. After carefully listening to my moment of civic love, Kay said, “As you walk around meeting people, there is a neon sign above your head.”

Four years later, grief hang heavily over me. Kay was the first of many companions lost this year. I grieve also the death of truth when phrases like “fake news” and “alternative facts” threaten to obscure every basis for civil conversation. I feel fear as I read Elie Wiesel's “Night;” I see what humans are so capable of doing to each other. As I walk the streets of San Francisco, I feel anger noticing that gun-carrying police appear to be the primary response to the poverty of our homeless neighbors, and metal barriers obstruct the sidewalks that used to sustain communities in tents. I see my neighbors looking increasingly haggard and dying.

I walk the streets in order to see with my own eyes and hear others' experiences with my own ears. Listening to others' experiences grounds our community in a shared truth.

Civic Love was open to anyone. It was open to anyone who cared about their community. Together we fostered respectful dialogue; We valued each others' experiences. As we face fear and grief in our lives, we need all kinds of love. That's what civic love is, and we need more of it.



Fools Hy Carrel and  
Nicole Fusco

# San Francisco Chronicle

# INSIGHT

SECTION  
B  
Sunday  
November 28, 2004

• IDEAS

• OPINIONS

• COMMENTARY

## GEORGE, COME TO JESUS RIGHT HERE

Dear Mr. President,

Because you are a man of faith, I would like to invite you to my Bible study group, which meets Thursday mornings in the Tenderloin district of San Francisco. Recently, we read the part in Luke where Jesus cures the epileptic boy.

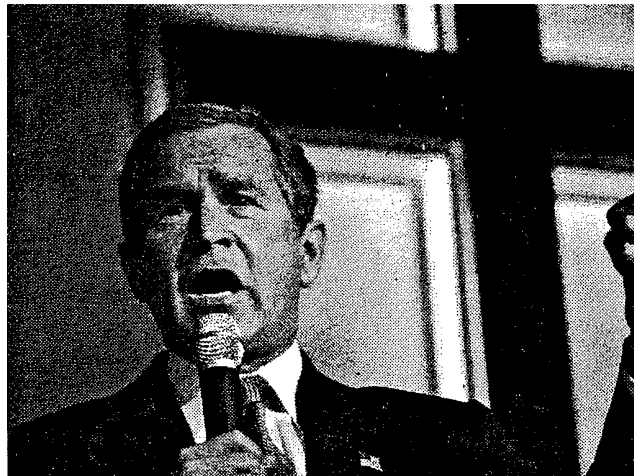
You probably know the passage: Jesus heals a boy who is possessed by a demon. But he seems angry when the boy's father tells him the disciples are unable to help his son.

Based on this text (Luke 9:37-43), the conversation gets off to a fast start. John, who lives on the street and comes faithfully, says Jesus is sick of people flattering him. "Jesus knows that all that he has to give this boy is love, and love is what will heal him," John says. "And Jesus knows that everybody else in that group could heal this boy, too, if they only knew how to give love. That's why Jesus gets mad."

Jerelle jumps in next. A younger man with wire-rim glasses, Jerelle lives and works part-time as an assistant manager at a nearby residential hotel. He says that when he is confronted with the alcoholic rage of some hotel guests, he has a hard time receiving them with the love that Jesus teaches. Sometimes he has to go into his room and close the door.

Then Charles asks, "What is love, anyway?" Charles, a nearly blind jazz poet, comes to the Tenderloin on the bus from Berkeley, where he is staying with friends since losing his home. "Can we read that chapter about love?" he asks in his light Louisiana drawl, and we are on to 1 Corinthians 13: "Love is patient and kind."

This is a group that knows a lot about love. You see, some of them have been coming to this group for 18 years.



J. Scott Applewhite/Associated Press 2004

**President George W. Bush**, here demonstrating his faith in Maryland, is invited to a Bible study group in San Francisco's Tenderloin.

Through that time most of them have been homeless, or housed in substandard rooms they felt lucky, for a time, to have.

Larry raises his hand. "I went to Union Square, into Macy's," he says. "Usually when I go there I pull myself way in so nobody will notice me, because they'll ask me to leave. You know, in this society where you can go is all about whether you have money or not. It's not about love. But this time, a couple of upper middle class women gave me a meal. So I found love at Union Square, too. I was so amazed."

In this group, Mr. President, we make connections that might surprise you. One time, for example, we were talking about Jesus driving the money-changers from the temple, and one of the group noticed that in San Francisco, if you're homeless, there is no place to sit and have a conversation anymore, because the city has taken away all the benches and roped off the fountains where homeless people used to enjoy each other's company. Now, all there is, he said, is money-changers. No temples.

On this recent Thursday morning, as we talk about love, the conversation turns to moral values.

"What about the morality of going to war?" asks Jerelle. "Isn't that a moral value? Maybe if they're invading your country, there might be times you have to. But you do everything you possibly can, not to."

"The Bible says, 'Do not kill,'" John says. "So we can work against the death penalty. They'll throw every screwball thing in our way, like Care Not Cash, and we'll have to fight that, too. But we can keep working against what the Bible says is wrong."

A little translation here, Mr. President: Care Not Cash is the program in San Francisco to cut homeless people's general assistance checks down to nothing—\$30 a month is all some people are getting—and use what's taken from their checks to pay for shelters. Problem is, many of the homeless people I know won't stay in shelters. They feel safer on the streets. So they're not getting care, and they're not getting cash now either.

But that's another story. Your name came up, Mr. President, when somebody in our group noticed that coming to Bible study is one of the ways we keep hold of that value of love that Jesus talked about. In this group, there are folks who are schizophrenic, who may or may not be able to get medication; folks who slept on the street last night and every night; folks who are struggling or have struggled with addiction. And here in this space on Thursday mornings, we read the Bible, and everyone listens respectfully to everyone else, even when some of us don't understand what others of us are saying.

"Didn't George Bush used to be an alcoholic too?" Charles asks. "And I think I remember him saying it was Bible study that helped him conquer that."

So, Mr. President, we want to invite you to visit our Bible study, where folks are still struggling; where most folks don't have family to fall back on, or even a social safety net. Just come check it out. Even if we don't speak the same language, I promise we'll make space for you.

Sincerely,

Mary Ganz

***A version of this article appeared in the San Francisco Chronicle. It was written by fulltime Fool Mary Ganz in 2004 when she was a ministerial intern. She continues to find community and amazement at the Thursday morning Bible Study. So far, President Bush has not appeared.***



# BREATHING

The small in the whole, breathing,  
resonating ALL being ONE.  
All Cosmic beings coming from One.  
Cosmic Earthly Citizens crying  
for the good of the whole—for oceans,  
mountains, now cluttered space, chickadees,  
trees, rats, babies of all species—

Now invoke spirit-consciousness:  
oneness in diversity,  
through interdependence,  
communion in relationships with all,  
BREATHE  
as citizens of one planet, one with all,  
BREATHE  
as citizens of one planet, one cosmos.

Ade Kroll, OSF

## On the Front Cover Artwork by Lisa Kaplan Middletown, CA



Here in California, we see signs of climate change: A five-year drought, cataclysmic wildfires in each of the last four years followed by mudslides. Three years ago a fire in Lake County, which is more than a hundred miles from San Francisco, created smoke and ash that choked the atmosphere, even in the Tenderloin. It devastated 76,000 acres of mountainous forests, and wildlife, and 1300 homes, in a low-income rural region with few cultural resources. Five lives were lost in that fire. Since 2015, almost half of Lake County has burned.

Lisa Kaplan, one of those whose homes were lost in 2015, co-founded and directs the Middletown Art Center, where she and other artists commemorate the experience of the fire, the resolve to remain rooted there, and the creativity to keep on going. Lisa sculpts and paints with earthen clay and straw, harvesting rich colored earth from the valleys and mountains of Lake County. She forms the primordial medium into expressive images and human scale figures, colored by earthen paint mixed with charcoal dust from burned branches.

We are honored to have Lisa's artwork (called *Growing*) on our 2018 Fools Fables' cover. Created out of earth and pastels, this haunting face looks directly at us, calling us to our better selves. Engaged and enigmatic, this portrait speaks to us of what it means to be a citizen in today's climate. Lisa's work reminds us how deeply connected we are to the earth and to one another. We are grateful for the light, courage, intelligence, strength, and creativity of the people we encounter in all the places where there are myths about those who suffer. We know from personal experience that in community we can and do rise to once again celebrate life.

# Faithful Fools Mission Statement

*We are called to a ministry of presence that acknowledges each human's incredible worth.*

*Aware of our judgments, we seek to meet people where they are through the arts, education, advocacy, and accompaniment.*

*We participate in shattering myths about those living in poverty, seeing the light, courage, intelligence, strength, and creativity of the people we encounter.*

*We discover on the streets our common humanity through which celebration, community, and healing occur.*

## MAMA

Lula Bell Seymour (1932-2002)

*Kay Jorgensen wrote this memorial for Mama in 2002.  
A letter awarding Mama housing arrived two weeks after her death.  
Mama's ashes remain at the Fools as do her strength and spirit.*

The news of Mama's death instantly changed life on our corner. People and things get broken: our hearts, Mama's van. We are mortal. Without notice, our personal lives and the belief systems that hold us together get smashed and shattered. We relied on Mama to keep us related to each other. While the powers of privilege worked to separate us, Mama with her truth-telling personal authority kept weaving us into community, like it or not! At the time of our open house, two and a half years ago, she was doing what she did every day, sweeping and cleaning up trash on the street. I was grateful and told her so. She waved her broom back at me and retorted, "You can just find yourself a broom and help out."

Recently, in agitation, she called me over and said, "*Come here a minute, Sugar, and look at this letter I got in my mailbox from the wife of the President of the United States. Can you believe this? She wants me to contribute some money in order to protect this country from terrorists! She ought to be ashamed to ask us poor folks, white and black alike, to give money when we don't have enough to live on. They can just let those terrorists come, don't bother me none. I'm used to terror every day. She ought to be ashamed!*"

She was homeless, black, 71 years old and suffered from acute asthma. She worked for years at Children's Hospital while raising two sons. Four years ago the rented house in which she lived was sold, sending her to the streets because she lacked the resources, in the present economy, rent again. She moved into her van. After the memorial service we held for her at the Fool's Court, we found in her things an application for Sec. 8 housing. She had received a notice from the Housing Authority telling her to attend an informational meeting where she was to come 5 minutes early, prepare to stay two hours. The notice went on to say, "We ask that your friends, children and/or additional family members remain at home." Remain *where*?

She's gone. There is one less homeless person to ridicule or throw away. The corner feels lonely, and broken now. As Mama lived justly, we Fools seek to act justly in the world. We close the chasms that separate us, at the peril of our own comfort and the recognition of suffering. As we walk with each other past her parking spot and the curb where she sold her wares, we will be reminded of the lessons we learned from our wise teacher, Mama.

