

# The Colonial Times

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## **Litany by Billy Collins**

You are the bread and the knife,  
The crystal goblet and the wine...

-Jacques Crickillon

You are the bread and the knife,  
the crystal goblet and the wine.  
You are the dew on the morning grass  
and the burning wheel of the sun.  
You are the white apron of the baker,  
and the marsh birds suddenly in flight.

However, you are not the wind in the orchard,  
the plums on the counter,  
or the house of cards.  
And you are certainly not the pine-scented air.  
There is just no way that you are the pine-scented air.

It is possible that you are the fish under the bridge,  
maybe even the pigeon on the general's head,  
but you are not even close  
to being the field of cornflowers at dusk.  
And a quick look in the mirror will show  
that you are neither the boots in the corner  
nor the boat asleep in its boathouse.

It might interest you to know,  
speaking of the plentiful imagery of the world,  
that I am the sound of rain on the roof.  
I also happen to be the shooting star,  
the evening paper blowing down an alley  
and the basket of chestnuts on the kitchen table.

I am also the moon in the trees  
and the blind woman's tea cup.  
But don't worry, I'm not the bread and the knife.  
You are still the bread and the knife.  
You will always be the bread and the knife,  
not to mention the crystal goblet and--somehow--the wine.

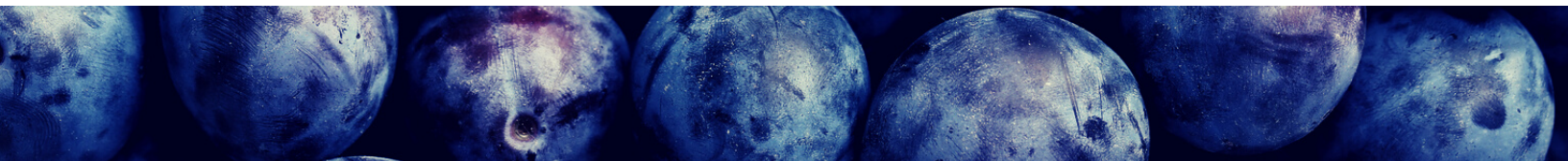


# THE TEXTURE ISSUE

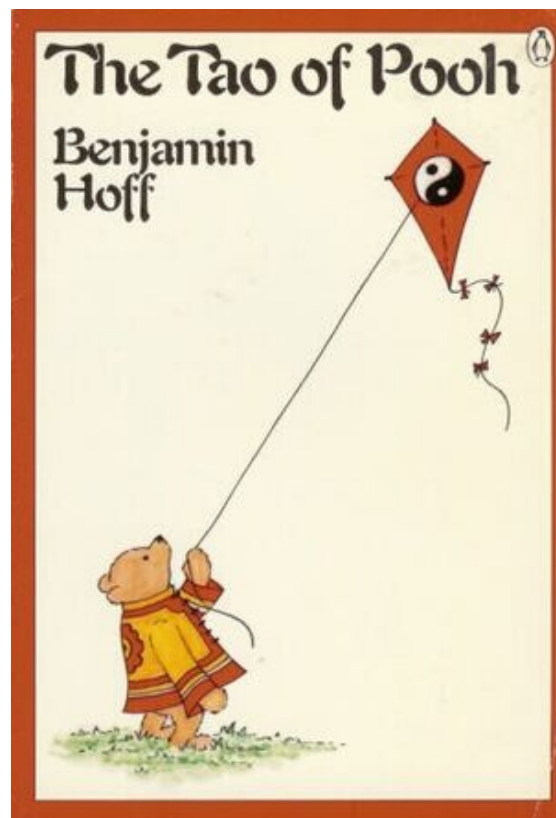
Hello Friends,

When I think of texture in literature, I think of Billy Collins and plums. Collins was the US Poet Laureate while I was in high school, so our teacher did a section on his poetry and spent what I felt was an inordinate amount of time on the word “plum.” He spoke about the way the word echoes the sensation of biting into a plum; the sharp puncture of the skin, the sour first taste, then the lush “mmm” of the juice. It was, perhaps, a little too indulgent for me at the time, but no I find that I cannot eat a plum without thinking about Billy Collins and the smooth hardwood desks of my high school English class. What do you think of when you consider texture in art? I enjoy thinking about texture beyond the physical. Every experience we have adds texture to our lives (this is a very “textured” time, for instance). What is adding texture to your life right now? I love you. Have a great week.

Claren



Contemplating rain clouds and meandering lightly through life, between meals... this idealized quarantine experience is also the way of Pú, or Pooh, Winnie the Pooh. According to Benjamin Hoff, the Pooh we know and love is the perfect example of a Taoist allegory called the uncarved block. The uncarved block moves through life without preconceived notions about the world we inhabit. Pooh possesses an inquiring mind without being “overly” scientific, he is kind without thinking of himself as charitable. A short book full of comforting and familiar quotes from original A. A. Milne texts, this book is a perfect complement to these interminable days. Providing a context for laziness that encourages softness towards yourself, the world and others—the Tao of Pooh was a lovely book to partake of this quaran-season.



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# Tracing Paper Rubbings



Rubbing of an engraved pendant made by Kelly McRae

Dandelion leaves laid out and rubbed over

If you're looking for a way to share a piece of heirloom jewelry but don't want to give it away or melt it down, consider a drawing or rubbing of its texture to make into multiple pieces of art for loved ones. The same could be done with a wedding dress or special piece of fibre art that you wish to re-create in a new way you can share with those people special to you. Have you ever remembered something by texture? Textures make for wonderful pieces of abstract art. Why not try taking a texture of something you would like to remember and making it into a piece of art to hang for generations.

Materials: Graphite stick (pencil), tracing paper and spray varnish

The last few years, plant rubbings have turned into a large part of my painting practice. Each fall, I wait for the right two weeks of September to harvest fallen leaves and frantically create hundreds of rubbings that will hopefully last me the year. I tape them onto a clip board and carefully tape leaves upside down in order to emphasize the spine and veins of the leaf. I cover with tracing paper and rub with a graphite stick. I then spray them with a fixative so I won't smudge them and cut each out individually with an xacto knife and paste onto paintings with a painting medium. In this piece, each leaf and the wood slice are separate rubbings.



'Solitude is my earthly pleasure  
If you enter my world  
BEWARE  
The pulse of me will seduce you'  
Mixed media on birch panel, 2018  
by Stacey McRae

TEXTURE  
WITH  
NATURE



# Texturing paint



'Butter'  
mixed media on canvas,  
2009  
Stacey McRae

Texturing paint is an easy way to add intrigue to your painting surface. There are endless ways to add texture but two of my favourite are adding sand and paper (not to confuse with painting on sandpaper -also a lot of fun though).

This painting hangs proudly in my brothers house. I created it in art school and it has two painting underneath this one which also helped add texture. The first was a horrific nude from a figure drawing class (my fault, not the models). The second a painting of a shattered mug. I reuse canvases as most painters do. If it's not good, paint over it. You get to a point where you don't keep bad work around.

Third time's the charm for this canvas.



Sand was added to both the medium or paint and directly onto the canvas. I also cut out strips of paper with a dye cutter and added them in. It made for a texture reminiscent of our grandmothers kitchen and therefore needed a subject of the right era and setting, hence 'butter'.



# CLAY TEXTURE

## ROLLERS

by Stacey McRae



This roller was textured directly after forming. I took a pussy willow sprig and slowly pressed it into the roller, moving the branch as it moved over the clay.

Another option for texturing is to work reductively, carving away at the clay so the raised areas are what are stamped into the clay. I prefer to feel a texture raised up on a finished pot and normally make my stamps and rollers ones that will push clay up.

**As learned from Sarah Pike in a workshop she taught for the AAC in 2018. These rollers are a tool to use in the clay hand building process.**

1. Roll out a slab of clay - size will depend on the size of your design
2. Smooth out clay with metal rib
3. Smooth edges with lightly damp sponge
4. Trim slab to desired size,
  - a. think about: the size of your design, size of the type of piece you will roll the texture onto, thickness of the texture you would like to add on, are you looking for a concave or convex texture on your finished piece?
5. Trim both ends of the roller to 45 degree angle, each in the same direction that will line up when you bring the two ends together.
6. When clay is slightly set up, still pliable and not yet to hard to bend, slip and score the two angled ends, stand up on end and wrap over a circular surface like a jar or piece of pipe. Slightly over-bend to re-inforce the clay's memory so that it stays in a circular shape.
7. Join the two ends together, smoothing out completely on the outside until you have a continuous surface
8. Begin to texture surface. It might take you a few tries to figure out what stage you prefer the clay to be in to achieve your texture. If you are carving, leather hard clay normally works best. If you are pressing a surface into the clay, fresh clay works best to pick up as much detail as possible.
9. Awareness and time - treat the roller with care throughout the process. As I often mention to students in clay classes, I have never watched an artist make good work quickly. Making good work requires focused hands and mind. Be aware of where your hands and tools are constantly, otherwise, you will likely lose parts of your roller that you like most either by accident or by overworking the roller. Take your time, have a design in mind that you have drawn out a few times.
10. Clean up the roller when you are done adding texture. Soften the edges with a damp sponge or your fingertips, add a maker mark, dry fully and bisque.



These textures were all applied when the clay had set up to just before leather hard. I used a pin tool to indent the clay. This texture turns out to be raised and feathery once rolled onto clay.