

From the Editor

On January 28, 2021 the School of Music at UNCG lost its Director, Dennis Weston AsKew. Dr. AsKew, who died unexpectedly, was a leader, an administrator, and a colleague. Most importantly, he was a dear friend to all who knew him. I dedicate this issue of the journal to the memory and legacy of Dennis Weston AsKew. I wish you all peace and comfort in the days and weeks ahead as we continue to grapple with this sudden and terrible loss, and all of the losses we have sustained since March 2020.

Jennifer S. Walter, Founder and Editor-in-Chief

When Great Trees Fall

Maya Angelou

When great trees fall,
rocks on distant hills shudder,
lions hunker down in tall grasses,
and even elephants
lumber after safety.

When great trees fall
in forests,
small things recoil into silence,
their senses
eroded beyond fear.

When great souls die,
the air around us becomes
light, rare, sterile.
We breathe, briefly.
Our eyes, briefly,
see with
a hurtful clarity.
Our memory, suddenly sharpened,
examines,
gnaws on kind words

unsaid,
promised walks
never taken.

Great souls die and
our reality, bound to
them, takes leave of us.
Our souls,
dependent upon their
nurture,
now shrink, wizened.
Our minds, formed
and informed by their
radiance, fall away.
We are not so much maddened
as reduced to the unutterable ignorance of
dark, cold
caves.

And when great souls die,
after a period peace blooms,
slowly and always
irregularly. Spaces fill
with a kind of
soothing electric vibration.
Our senses, restored, never
to be the same, whisper to us.
They existed. They existed.
We can be. Be and be
better. For they existed.

Angelou, Maya. (2015). *The Complete Poetry*. New York: Random House.