

THE CREATIVE REVIEW

MAY 2008

HIGHLIGHTS

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5 PEOPLE WHO HAVE MADE A DIFFERENCE IN MY LIFE

- Erich Fromm
- M. Scott Peck
- Dalai Lama
- My Wife - Denise
- My Mother - Lorraine

First off, I would like to say thank you to those individuals who took the time to email me after reading *God Deceased* in the last issue of The Creative Review. Based on the responses I received it was obvious that my article touched quite a few people. Many stated how well they identified with my disconnection from god and many expressed a deep appreciation for the vulnerability I offered through my writing. I must say that I was a bit apprehensive when I first published the article as one never knows what reception it will garner - but I am now glad that I went ahead with it.

I am very pleased to be able to present my first newsletter of 2008. Although I had planned on getting it to 'press' right at the beginning of the year it once again took a back seat while business boomed beyond belief. Currently, business has slowed significantly, perhaps in part due to the financial upheavals the USA is presently experiencing. Whatever the case, I have decided to seize this opportunity and get my current thoughts down on paper before the 'To Do' list once again begins to build.

In the 'upcoming issue' section of the last issue of The Creative

Review I stated that one of the articles would be called Remembering Erich Fromm. Although I may still pen this article at some point I have decided to write a different article that seems more timely for the current review. Look for *The 48th*, an article where I share some of the burdens that I have carried along with me for the last twenty-three years and how they have shaped the person I have become.

Just to touch on a couple of the highlights since the last newsletter I should mention two things that have been ongoing topics since I first began writing my newsletters.

My wife's health continues to be one of the main areas in life that never ceases to be looked at on a daily basis in one way or another. After some additional convalescence after her heart surgery in August 2007 Denise made an attempt to return to work at the end of November. She felt remarkable and was able to convince her doctor that she was up for the task. After two weeks Denise began to have recurring chest pain and felt the wind had been knocked completely out of her sails. On a return trip to her doctor she was told in no uncertain terms that she could choose work or

she could choose life. Making the only choice possible Denise is now on long term disability and we are in the process of adapting to this new modus operandi. Although it means a significant drop in family income we will adjust accordingly and continue to treasure the gift of life.

Weight loss / weight gain continues to be a daily topic for me. After working hard for a full year at weight loss I managed to lose a total of ninety-six pounds. It did feel good and I was happy that I made the effort. The last few pounds took the longest and my dedication waned greatly and my momentum petered out. Although I have been able to keep some of the habits I had developed I have gained a few pounds back and fear that I don't have the strength to rekindle my drive. Perhaps I won't have to suffer so long this time before I realize I am only as happy or driven as I make up my mind to be. DBC



-Denise - Lovely as Always -

Photo by Don Cheke

## A PLETHORA OF PAPER - PETER CALLESEN

On The Other Side  
By Peter Callesen

Donald B. Cheke

I love paper. I love the look of paper, I love the feel of paper and I love the smell of paper; of fresh newspaper, of magazines and books - of printed matter hot from the printer. A versatile material quite like no other - and practical too - this commodity, this substance, is the catalyst that helped transcend the boundaries of class structure, for paper is available to all, at least in some forms. It is the substance that does not require one to be rich in order to employ it.

If you think about it, paper (along with a writing utensil - and a dirty fingernail will do in a pinch) is the substance that allows its possessor the ability to hold one's most

treasured thoughts in safe keeping. It is the substance that holds dear our greatest fears, our greatest loves and our greatest triumphs - in the form of journals, autobiographies, treatise and narratives. It is the medium that has formed, and has molded the world to the shape it is today.

Where would life be today had libraries never existed, where constitutions had not been penned, where stories, myths, legends and testimonials not been passed on from generation to generation on this most treasured substance? We take paper totally for granted, but what would life be like without several reams of the white stuff close at hand?

I have had a very close and personal relationship with paper for as long as I can remember; drawing on it as a youngster straight on into my adult years, folding countless configurations while fascinated with the art of Origami and writing, with paper being my preferred output medium.

Although it doesn't seem like it from the writing above, paper alone can be expressive. It does not always require its usual partners - the pen and the pencil. Sometimes paper can be molded, or folded, or cut or creased and speak volumes without ever seeing the pencil or pen and this is where the work of Peter Callesen can illustrate this point in a splendid manner.

To see more of Peter's paper magic visit: [www.petercallesen.com](http://www.petercallesen.com)

Impenetrable Castle (detail)  
by Peter Callesen

**"Where would life be today had libraries never existed, where constitutions had not been penned, where stories, myths, legends and testimonials not been passed on...?"**

Holding on to Myself  
by Peter Callesen

**A PLETHORA OF PAPER - PETER CALLESEN** Continued from page 2

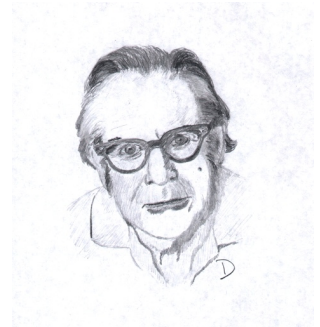
Peter Callesen, paper sculptor extraordinaire, was born in 1967 in Denmark. He was schooled in Denmark and in London in the fields of art and architecture. Although Peter's name may not be immediately recognizable on this side of the globe, his work certainly is. I know that I have seen his work many times over the years and have always been quite taken by the stories it tells, by the sheer elegance of his designs. Although some of his pieces are highly complex while others appear rather simple in design, they are each truly remarkable works

of art. One can't help but be awed by Peter's talent and insight into the nature of form and expression. I am continually moved each time I spend time with one of Peter's creations. Each provokes thoughts and memories and forces me to contemplate their meaning. Take for instance, Eismeer below. Probably inspired by Caspar David Friedrich's work *Das Eismeer*, it conjures up visions of Franklin's ill-fated expedition to locate the North West Passage. I can't help but feel the certain initial excitement and the inevitable terror that came to the crew

of the doomed journey. I am left feeling a sadness that comes from visiting the graves of those lost. Peter's artistry has allowed him to capture the poignant final moments of their journey and share them fully with us - a true and fitting epitaph for those brave few.

Although we have only had a glimpse at Peter's paper work, he is also a known for his drawing and performance arts abilities. Please visit his web site and have a good look around.

Keep up the great work Peter!



Rollo May

A drawing by  
by Donald B. Cheke



White Hand  
by Peter Callesen



Eismeer  
by Peter Callesen



Distant Wish  
by Peter Callesen

**NEVER SHALL I FORGET - DENISE CHEKE**

Denise Cheke

Introduction: One evening, while helping my daughter with her homework, I read an excerpt from Elie Wiesel's book entitled "Night". After reading it I felt compelled to continue it on. The following short story evolved and Don asked me if he could make it available for the newsletter.

The memories and the details of my time in the concentration camp are burned into my mind for all eternity.

For ten years now I have been living in silence. After our liberation from the camp, I joined the millions of people whose lives had been displaced by the war. I eventually traveled to France, studied as a student at the Sorbonne, worked for a French newspaper, married and had children. And yet I have always lived with the memories of the night. My dear friend François has been pressuring me to record for all of humanity the horrors I have experi-

enced. My fear has been that words alone could not describe the atrocities and that to share the story would betray the dead; but now it is done. I have told my story and I have told the stories of all those many souls who died. So where does that leave me? What does tomorrow bring?

Early this morning I woke up to the sound of birds chirping outside my window. "How strange." I thought. "I haven't actually paid attention to

**"The memories and the details of my time in the concentration camp are burned into my mind for all eternity."**

**Excerpt from  
Never Shall I  
Forget by Denise  
Cheke**



Seven Chinese Musicians  
Wire Sculpture by Donald B. Cheke

## NEVER SHALL I FORGET - DENISE CHEKE Continued from page 3



the birds' song in so very many years." My heart felt somehow lighter and my senses were alive again. It was as though I had awakened after a long, dark night.

In the kitchen my wife was making us a hearty breakfast of sausage and eggs, potatoes, garden tomatoes and a large pitcher of freshly squeezed orange juice. She somehow seemed to sense that something was different about me. "Good morning, my dear. How are you this morning? I have prepared you some breakfast." Her morning greeting was especially cheery and bright.

For so long I have awakened each morning with a heavy heart. I have gone through my days, simply putting one foot in front of the other. I have lived but I have not been alive. Today, however, I feel as though I have been given a second chance, a reason to live.

After sharing a very pleasant breakfast and a relaxing cup of coffee with my wife I

headed into the newspaper to get a little bit of work done before my meeting with the publisher who has agreed to edit and publish my work. I carried the manuscript in my briefcase, guarding it as though it were more precious than gold. I can hardly believe that the words have been written, that the story has been told. I have finally been able to be the voice of all those who suffered and died. Now I can only hope that the world will listen.

I left work early and took the subway across town to the publisher's office. The building was three stories tall. It was a simple brick building that easily blended with all of the surrounding buildings. Who would ever suspect that through those doors my life would change once again? I entered the simply decorated room and was welcomed by Ann, an older woman with her grey hair done in a tight bun. She was wearing a plain dark suit and looked like the type of woman who would be strict and who meant business.

But when she spoke her voice was soft and soothing. "Good afternoon, Mr. Wiesel. I am so glad to meet you. Please have a seat and Mr. Dubray will be with you soon."

I sat down on one of the chairs that she pointed to and clutched my manuscript in sweaty hands. Suddenly, I felt, once again, the weight of the world on my shoulders. "What will he think of it?" Will he understand?" My thoughts raced around in a panic.

The door opened and out stepped a short, plump man with a twinkle in his blue eyes. I was reminded of the Christian Santa Claus. "Come in, come in." his voice boomed and with those words we began a friendship and a partnership that would last through the years to come.

George Dubray, a well respected editor, insisted that I wait while he gave my manuscript its first reading. And so I sat, for hour after hour, anxiously watching his face for clues about what he was thinking. When he reached the part about Mrs. Schacter and her young son, his eyes filled with tears. At that moment I knew that my job was well done. I had told the story that needed to be told and the world would listen. I shall never forget.



Monochrome Dee

Photo by Donald B. Cheke

**Most  
unhappiness  
comes from  
clinging  
tightly to  
illusion.**

**DBC**



Reels

A photo  
by Donald B. Cheke

## THE 48TH

Donald B. Cheke

On February 25th of this year I turned 48 years old. Quite a common occurrence that most of us will see at some point in our lives. However, this year had a particular significance for me, as it was the date I had been counting down to since February 25, 1985 - the day we buried my father. Please continue reading for the full story.

I was born into an alcoholic home in February 1960 during a time, I was informed, that was the beginning of the worst times that my mother and father had in their relationship. It was a time when Dad was creating much havoc within their marriage relationship through his excessive drinking, his extra-marital affairs and stunted maturity. Although Dad was the obvious problem, each person does play their part in family dynamics and so Mom too, added to the dysfunction with her reactions and responses.

It is said that we learn by what we see and so one can't really fault Mom and Dad for their inadequacies. At the time they knew no other way and looking for answers was not yet considered, probably not even contemplated. Both my mother and my father grew up in tremendously dysfunctional families and so it is quite understandable that their lives traveled a few unsavory twists.

Dad was born last of three

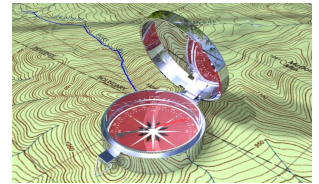
boys to an alcoholic mother and a father who seemed unable to cope with life. Dad's family history is quite disturbing and it is often embarrassing to talk about it. One can clearly see that alcoholism became a family disease in a big way for them. The three boys learned the ways of alcoholism so well that they all died prematurely as a result of it, each leaving behind them a wake of broken families, of shattered hopes and dreams and aspirations.

The middle son died first. Much of his life has remained a mystery to me. It was said that he had been married for a short while and did have a son who died in an automobile accident at the age of twenty. I really don't remember anything of this uncle and if I had not seen his picture a couple times in our old family albums I would not have known he existed. I do, however, recall talk of him when he died. Mom said that his body had been found in a bathtub in one of our city's less than attractive hotels. He was forty-six years old at the time. Quite a few years ago a girl in her mid-thirties located my mother and explained that she was the illegitimate daughter of this particular brother. She was trying to fill in some of the many missing pieces of her life and was looking for connections and information. As far as I know she was never really able to establish any

concrete facts and has had to continue on with many missing pieces.

The oldest of the three boys lived the longest although he followed some years later in the family manner of premature death due to alcoholism. He died at the age of sixty-three on skid row in one of Canada's larger cities. He too left behind a broken family whom I have had no contact with over the years. Hopefully they have had an opportunity to find peace and meaning in their lives.

This is where the importance of my forty-eighth birthday comes to light. My own father killed himself during his forty-seventh year of life. I was twenty-five at the time of his death and was, thankfully, already into the early years of my own recovery, a recovery which he believed would be impossible to achieve. He said to me, just shortly before he shot himself, that I would end up just like him and would never amount to anything. Ouch! I'm pleased to say that he was wrong, although I lived all these years carrying this around and fearing that his words would ring true. I have had many overwhelming periods in my life where I have wanted to take that permanent escape and each time remembered his words; words that kept me from seriously contemplating this final act. There was no way on earth I was going to prove



Compass  
A CAD render by Donald B. Cheke

**I was twenty-five at the time of his death and was, thankfully, already into the early years of my recovery, a recovery which he believed would be impossible to achieve.**

**DBC**



Saguaro

A photo  
by Donald B. Cheke

him right, so maybe he did me a favor, although I would like think that I might have fared better had I not had the burden in the first place. As the calendar finally clicked past the last day of my forty-seventh year, and I was finally older than he was at the time of his death, I was relieved. It didn't feel, however, like the celebration that I thought it would. Sure, I was glad to be alive and I had definitely proved him wrong in so many ways, but it also gave me pause to think about his life.

I can't help but think about how relatively young he was and how much life he deprived himself of, of so many wonderful things that laid in his future - had he only been able to choose life. Most of all, he missed meeting the possibility of a recovered life, a life truly worth living. He missed meeting the family that continued to flourish with wives and partners for his sons and four wonderful grandchildren and all the wonders that they have brought.

On a sad but ironic note, it is their alcoholic mother that lived the longest. She died only a few years ago after living as mental vegetable for twenty-plus years in a nursing home. Remembering nothing and recognizing no one, perhaps, it was just as well. Sadly, her life and death was only a passing footnote in my life. We had moved on.

My mother was also raised in a dysfunctional, poverty stricken, family. Her mother had been 'matched up' with and married to someone from the old country. He turned out to be a feared, violent fiend who had escaped from Poland for reasons that have never become known to me. I am told that Grandma went from a fairly stable home, from a family who managed quite well on their farm, to the depths of poverty and abuse in a small community away from where she was raised. Grandma eventually ended up spending time in a mental institute where she received electroconvulsive therapy to overcome the deep depression she had sunk deeply into. When grandma returned to her family she was, apparently, never the same - and not necessarily for the better. This is where my mother and her three brothers were raised so it is no wonder she brought a bit of in a dysfunction into her own married life. Of the four children in my mother's family Mom has certainly come the furthest in terms of growth. She was able to stop the cycle of alcoholism and dysfunction by taking steps to change patterns, most notably by attending Al-Anon. By learning about the affects of alcoholism and making the changes necessary to facilitate growth she moved positively forward. Her change, her growth visibly illustrated to my brothers

and I that life could be a joyous event - one that can be enjoyed and savored no matter what struggles do come our way.

Mom is sixty-nine this year and is retiring at the end of July after thirty years of service at the same job, the job she took to support our family after dad moved out all those years ago. I have been asked to say a few words about her at the function her office is putting on for her. It will be a very easy and pleasant task to perform. I won't have any difficulty talking about how proud her sons are of her and of the wonderful model she has been for us. In her role, she has touched many lives and I know that she is highly regarded by her peers and our community as a whole.

Through all of this I think my biggest issue has been the need to be loved and approved of. To know that I am not my father and realize that I have indeed taken steps to become a whole and healthy person. I thank God that Mom made the break from dysfunction all those years ago and provided my brothers and I a healthy home and safe haven to share our joys and our accomplishments - and the burdens that living life brings to all humans. At least we have learned that the issues can be looked at and can be learned from - and best of all, we don't have to do it alone.

Continued from page 5



Fish Cup

CAD render by  
Donald B. Cheke

Through all of  
this I think my  
biggest issue  
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loved and  
approved of. To  
know that I am  
not my father....

DBC



Creation

A Wire sculpture  
by Donald B. Cheke

On the web: [www.textualcreations.ca](http://www.textualcreations.ca)

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The Creative Review is a publication produced and published by Donald (Don) B. Cheke.

It presents articles based on the thoughts and ideas of the author in a variety of fields including Art, CAD, Photography, Psychology, Spirituality and more.

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The Creative Review is geared toward the uplifting and enlightening things in life.



M O R E T H A N J U S T W O R D S O N P A P E R

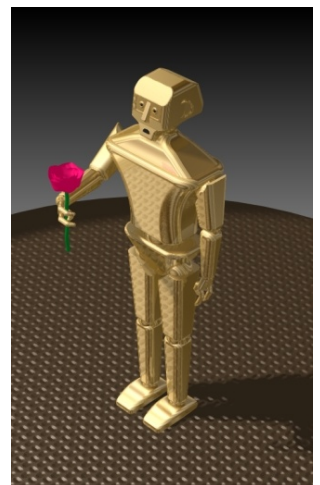
## CONTRIBUTORS

### Donald B. Cheke

Aside from his TurboCAD CAD service interests, Donald (Don) B. Cheke operates a small data management business in Saskatoon, SK Canada where he lives with his wife and daughter. In his personal search to better understand the human condition he has spent a great deal of time researching and writing about his discoveries. His search has been augmented by exploration into the creative realm through various mediums – TurboCAD being one of the most recent.

### Denise M. Cheke

Denise is an school principal (currently on long term medical leave). Denise has spent twenty-seven years with the same school division where she has shared her many gifts with students and co-workers alike. Her first twenty-three years were spent in special education and the remainder as principal. Denise would love nothing more than to be back at work where she feels most able to contribute. She is doing her best to adapt to her new circumstances.



Robot

A CAD render  
by Donald B. Cheke