

A hand-drawn diagram on graph paper. A green, triangular shape representing a seedhead is drawn in the upper left. Several blue circles representing seeds are scattered on the grid. Two thin lines connect the bottom corners of the seedhead to two of the blue seeds. The text 'Seedhead-Swept Semicircle' is written in blue across the middle, and 'H. L. Hix' is written in green in the lower right.

Seedhead-Swept Semicircle

H. L. Hix

Seedhead-Swept Semicircle

Seedhead-Swept Semicircle

Glasswing's Wind Roses

H. L. Hix

Glasswing

I purport to listen to Glasswing, and allege that Glasswing speaks through me. The reminiscences (not flash fictions but gust memoirs) that accompany each wind rose here could be my own, but they have for me that feel of hearing an experience recounted by someone else who was also there and saw things differently.

Roses

Wind roses are informed by particulars of a time and place (such as average wind speed and direction for a specific year at a specific location), but they can be detached from that time and place. A “freestanding” wind rose places me in a familiar role, sensing the presence of meaning without having access to that meaning. Although: this estrangement is itself a type of meaning.

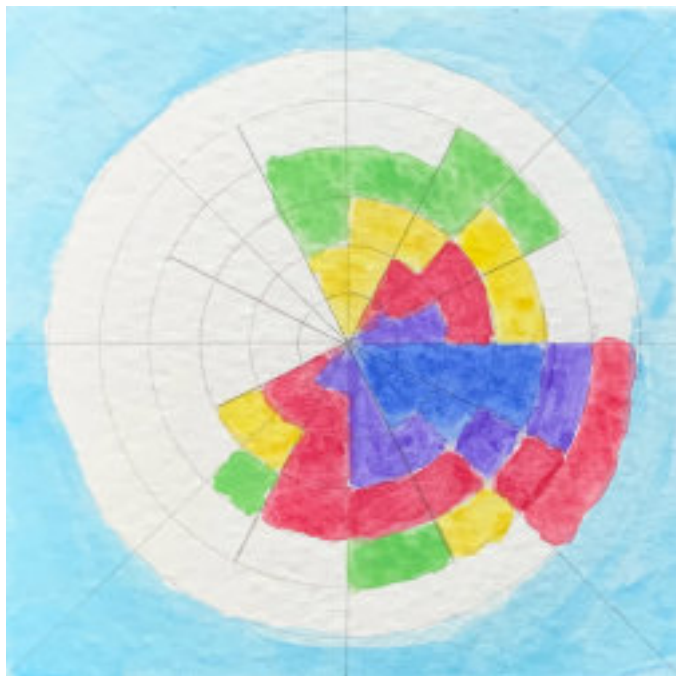
“I like thinking of them as flowers.”

— Kate Greenstreet

Twelve Memories of Wind

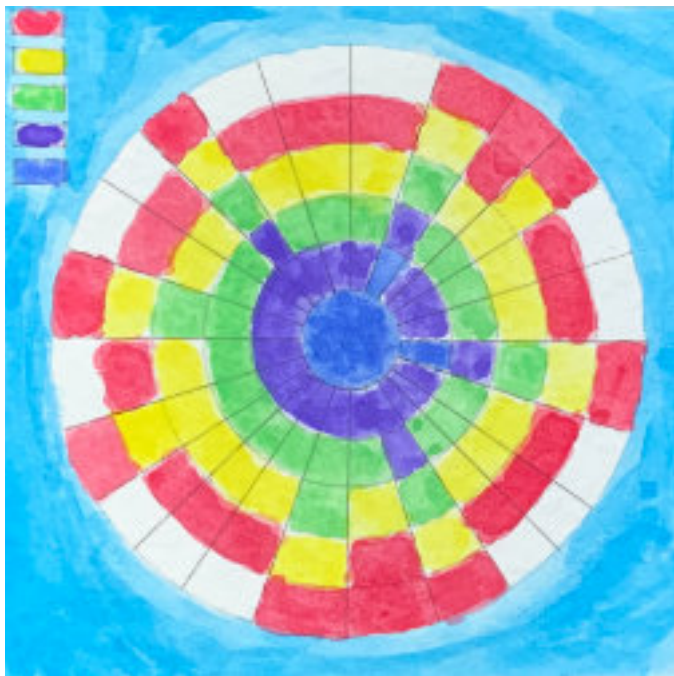
Trunk

Wind downed the sixty-foot pine across the street, but right into the house's narrow strip of yard, so it damaged nothing but one gutter. You should have *heard* the crack, though, when that trunk snapped.



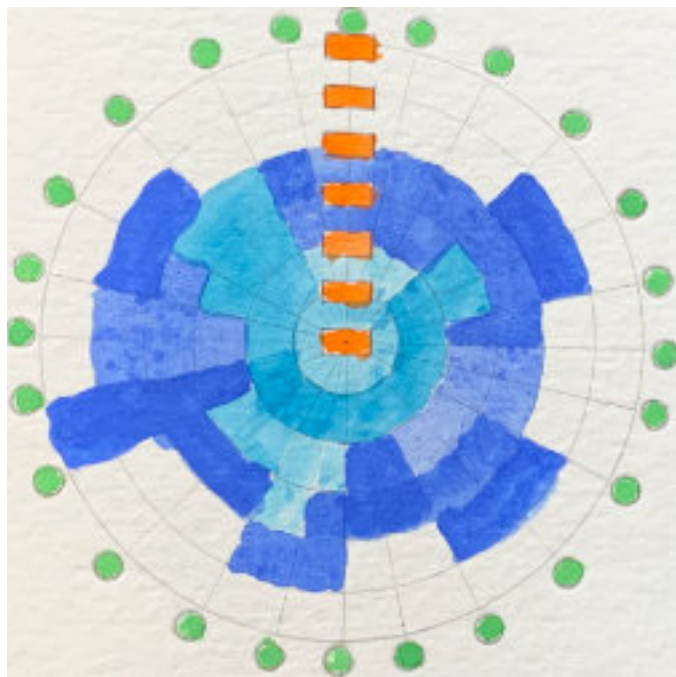
Car

So strong was the headwind, I couldn't maintain highway speed, and my rusted-out subcompact bucked. It'll give away how long ago this happened and how old that car was even then, that what I turned off because wind noise drowned it out was a cassette.



House

The house stood out at the edge of town, exposed to wind that set it shuddering and shouting. My ex didn't leave me while we had that ramshackle, but it's where she decided she would.



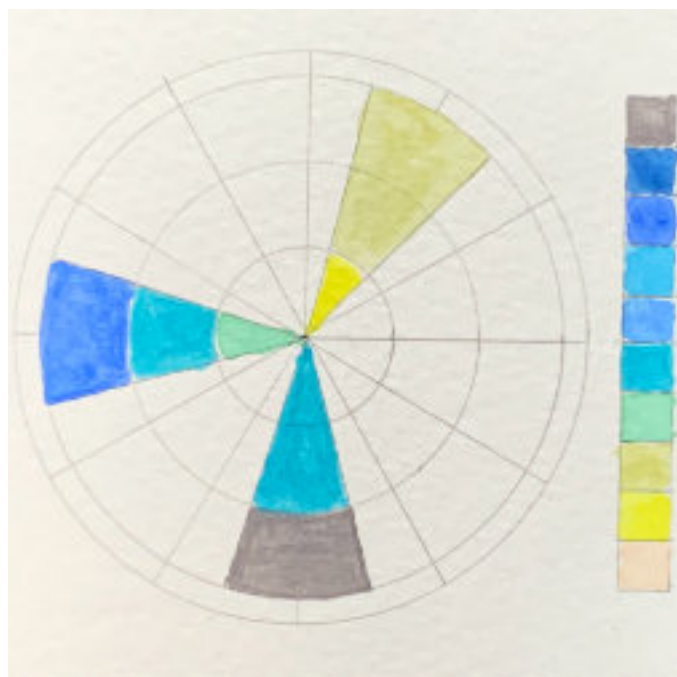
Bird

I got it, how Hopkins' windhover gave onto God, because as a kid I'd often seen, from the back seat of a Catalina station wagon crossing Missouri, that same bird shivering over furrows.



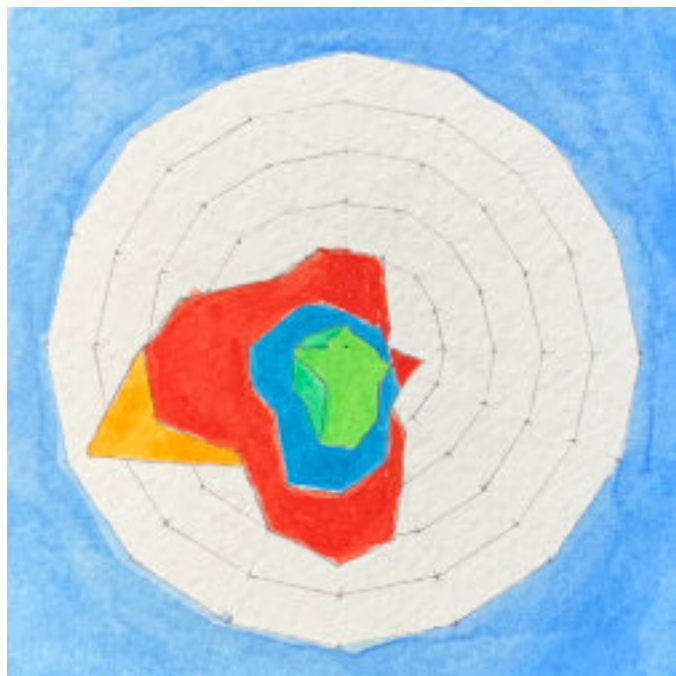
Grass

My partner planted a stand of ornamental grass outside the kitchen window. When one stem is broken, wind will sweep a semicircle with its seedhead into snow. I care less for the crescent itself than for my partner's voice when she points it out.



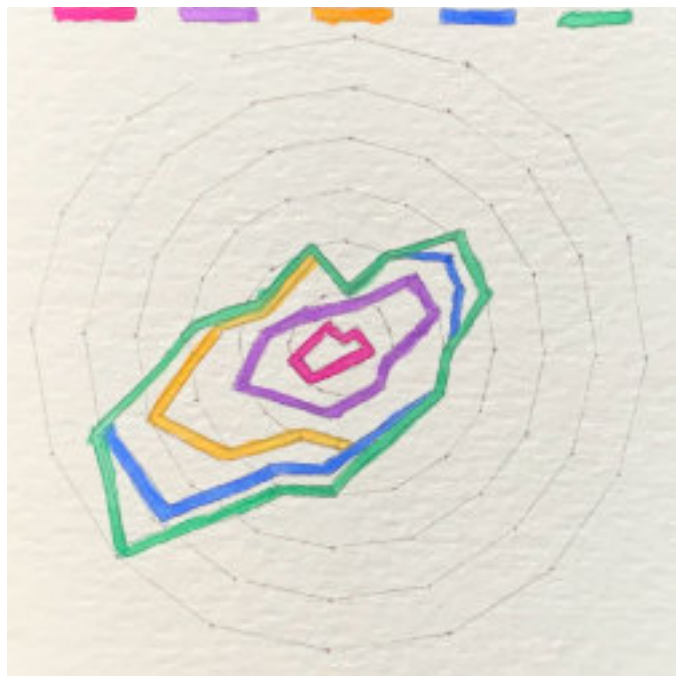
Hands

It's not for their supposed eco-benefits that I always use electric dryers, never paper towels, at the sink in airports and truck stops, but because the brief divots they drive into my skin mimic the ones I make blowing soup cool in a spoon.



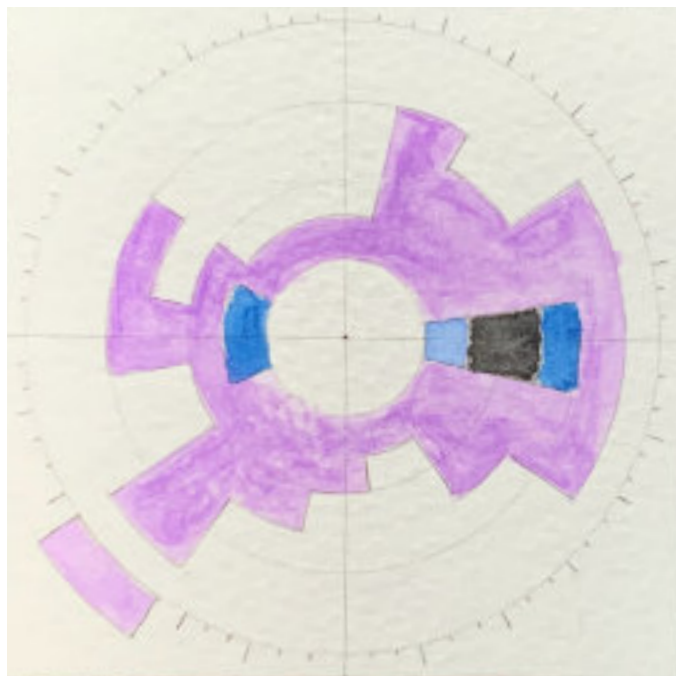
Gate

Even bag-burdened, bringing in groceries, I can keep the gate from getting blown against the fence, and the storm door from being blown against the house, but pulling my bike from the shed to pedal to work, I just have to let the door bang.



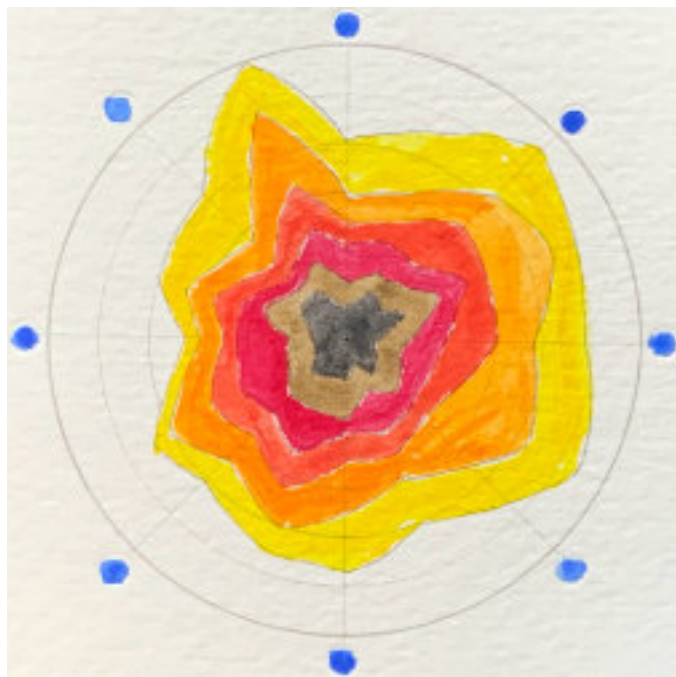
Pass

Mountains magnify wind through the pass, so any snow makes crossing it dangerous. I associate fear with noise, calm with quiet, but the one time I got caught there in a whiteout, the silence was as perfect as my panic.



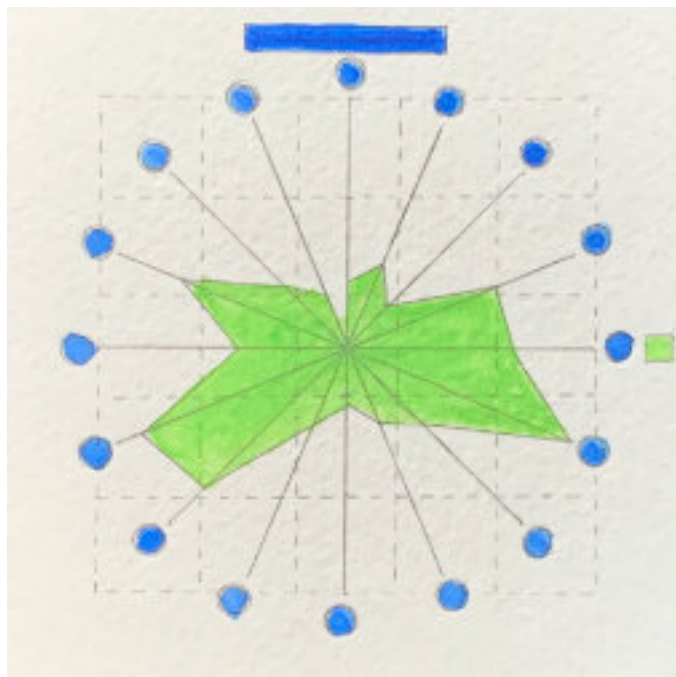
Boat

My friend turned back the borrowed boat early, not because the wind was bad but from mercy. My nephew was a little kid, he'd been excited to go sailing, so he *tried* to look like he was having fun, but when he turned down the picnic lunch her mother'd made, my friend knew.



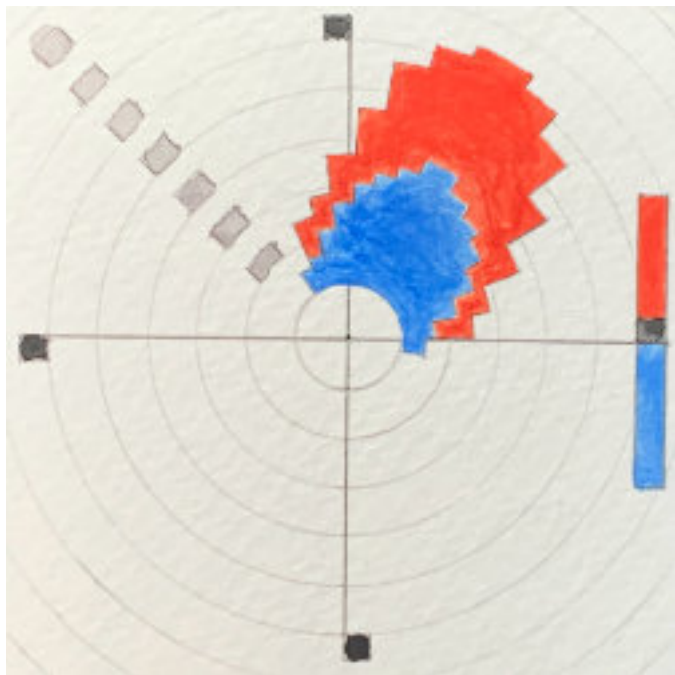
Airplane

I've flown often, but never felt a plane pitch so violently: up, down, side-to-side, passengers gasping and shrieking the whole descent. Even afterward, while we were taxiing, wind rocked the cabin back and forth, but somehow the pilot had put that plane down easy as you please.



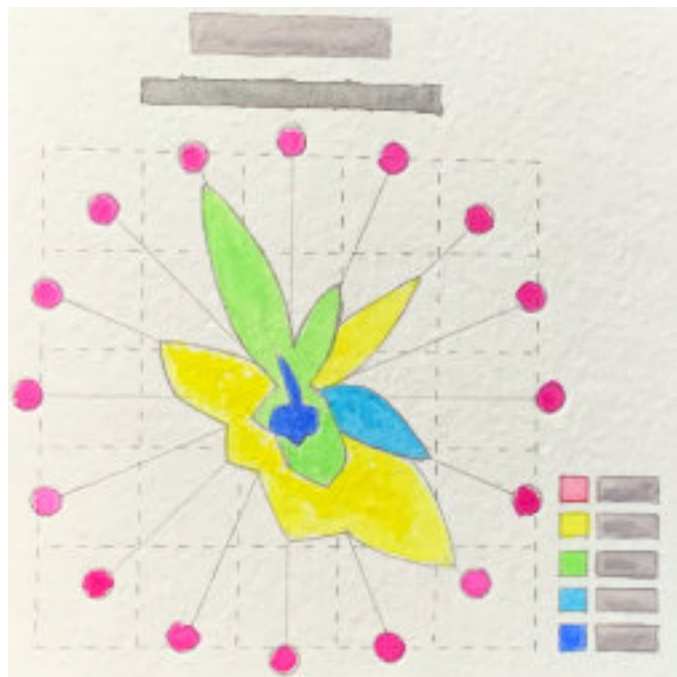
Lid

It's rare, but sometimes I don't roll the bin out to the street on recycling day. It only had to happen once for me to learn the wind here can blow even that heavy lid open. I picked up what I could, but that was a lot of loose paper blown who knows where.



Kites

It drew attention to the immobility of the burial mounds, that there were so many kites the day we visited Gyeongju. Adults, children, families — everyone out in the park with a kite. The contrast also emphasized that those mounds and kites alike meant more than I understood.



Paeon

Greta Oto gives it up for organizations that sustain our sharing stories and songs with one another, organizations that do so from motives other than making money. *Seedhead-Swept Semicircle* pays homage especially to SPD and CLMP.

Plates

The images are of Wind Rose 1 through Wind Rose 12, and appear in sequence. Each wind rose is 3.5" x 3.5", graphite and watercolor on Strathmore 400 paper.

Gratitude

Glasswing thanks Kate Greenstreet for her gift of precision, the pinhole that lets in light and focuses it, creating this shoebox camera.

Intent

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