

**PATRICK
MCLAUGHLIN**

The Muse

You call me dawn one day
and dusk the next.

Entombed in warped wood,
you paint me onto your canvas.

Sweat glistens across my back,
forming constellations.

You watch my body
as it translates the cosmos.

The rise and fall of my breathing
you call hypnotic.

You needed to know me,
my indents and slopes—

so you starved your body,
became the oak tree in your childhood yard.

Your hands are stained
apocalyptic red and damselfish blue.

You bleed absinthe.
Track marks race up your arms.

Night falls and I fall upon you,
place images in your mind.

I am inside you,
the voice that whispers fire.

Patrick McLaughlin is currently enrolled in his fourth year at the University of St. Andrews. In the summer of 2014 he attended the Catamaran Writing Conference as a high school graduation present, and was inspired to pursue his passion for creative writing. He has had a number of poems published in small academic literary magazines.

PHYLLIS HERFIELD

Saint Michael, 2004
Oil on wood panel, 10 x 8 in



COURTESY THE ARTIST