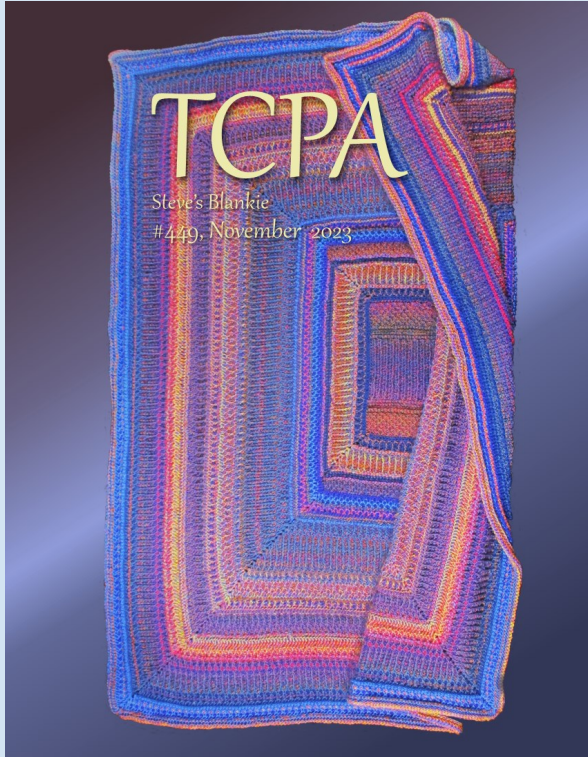


Orion Works Sonova Quark

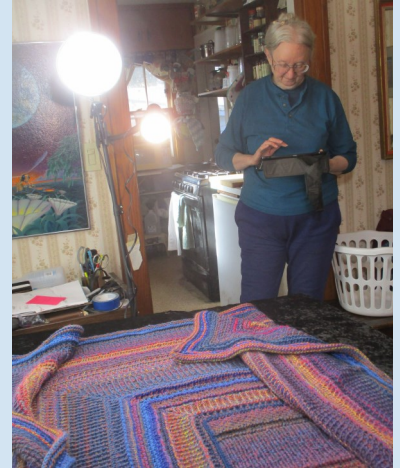
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November #449 Cover



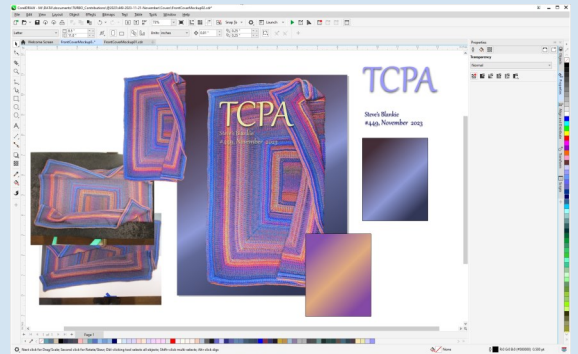
November's cover, brought to you by **Darlene P. Coltrain**. The workup turned out to be more challenging than I had

anticipated, particularly in the post-processing department. But hey! I got my own blanket! See Darlene's contribution *Tagalong* for additional details.



Shoot and analyze!

Work in progress



Our house has been painted!

We got it done before winter! As I said last month, dwellings possess a living spirit of their own. She is slowly healing from the trauma of having been scraped and carved on. Swollen doors and windows have receded, making it possible switch out our front and back door screen panels with winter glass panes. I even got around to Windexing some windows. After several decades of cohabitation, I've lost count on how many times I've washed her windows. It's less than the fingers on my left hand - thumb not included. OTOH, I had her roof repaired and re-shingled more than once. I faithfully raked





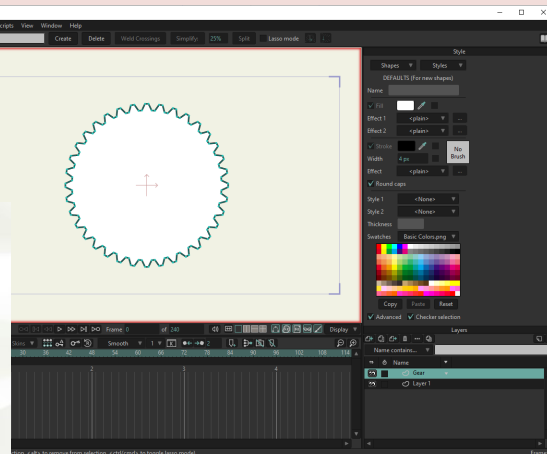
Back Porch

and mowed her lawns. When she erupted with a collapsing cistern discovered to be residing under our driveway threatening to engulf our car, we had the pockmark filled in and blacktopped. There are so many more fixes we would like to apply. But after spending +\$27k evicting and removing carpenter ant abodes from the back porch followed by a thorough repaint, we'll need financial recovery time. Fortunately, she continues to be a patient hostess.

Or

MOHO Animation, anyone?

I'm currently teaching myself how to use *MOHO Animation* software. My objective is to enhance some of the geometry pertaining to my Orbital Mechanic configurations with organic-like props. With MOHO's assistance, I can also assemble the appearance of animated mechanical-like devices. Demonstrating the eccentricities of planetary orbits are easily performed via computer simulation—a matter I execute all the time with my own software. But to accurately demonstrate a planet's quirky elliptical path by mechanical analog illustration? I



MOHO Animation (computer generated gear)

wager there exist few analog devices capable of doing that. Perhaps one of the best known analog mechanisms ever discovered is the famous 2000 year-old *Antikythera Mechanism*. Google claims the *Museum of ancient Greek technology* sells an exact working replica to the same dimensions, but I can't find a link. While scientific analysis and X-rays of the prized artifact reveal some flaws, it comes astonishingly close to understanding the mechanisms of variable motion pertaining to planetary paths, particularly concerning the Moon's orbit. At some point in the near future, I hope I might be able to interest some mechanical engineering students on the challenge of building a fully functional model based on my geometry—perhaps as extra credit. Have at it!



Antikythera Mechanism (original gear)

Or

The Write Hemisphere

Clouds

Listed below are some contemporary definitions of what verifies that a thing is a living thing:

All living things breathe, eat, grow, move, reproduce and have senses. Non-living things do not eat, grow, breathe, move, reproduce, and they do not have senses. In order for something to be classified as living, it must grow and develop, use energy, reproduce, be made of cells, respond to its environment, and adapt.

Biology's incredibly sophisticated chemistry resulted in a highly diversified blueprint allowing the reproduction of many things. This has led many Earthlings to speculate that unique forms of "biology" have likely manifested on countless other planets assuming (1) what's available from the larder, and (2) there is a sufficient amount of shake-and-bake time for the chemistry to kickstart something interesting. While contemplating such speculation does expanding one's horizons of what biology might play around with, it doesn't necessarily help one acquire a more expansive perception of just how diverse and pervasive the existence of *life* really is. If you were to ask us, what IS a living thing, the short answer is *everything*.

We realize a more detailed response would be appreciated. What about the smallest living things? Most would say bacteria fit the bill. But what about viruses? They tend to be smaller than bacteria. While viruses do replicate, some argue they are not alive because, technically speaking, they don't grow. Nor can they manufacture their own energy. To replicate viruses need to hijack the biological chemistry of a host. It basically means zombifying victimized cells in order to get them to perform the necessary reproduction procedures. This has led many to argue that viruses are essentially nano-machines. Some have even speculated that per-

haps these tiny machines accidentally escaped an interstellar laboratory, a long time ago in a galaxy far, far away... And now, their ilk infest the entire universe. Does that mean these machine-like things are not alive?

We will point out there exists an infinite number of things that replicate, and have been replicating with no need to follow biological procedures or rituals. These things have thrived on your planet long, long ago, before "biology" got a foothold on your planet. They will continue to thrive long after your species has finished it's business on Earth.

What might be one of these living non-biological things? Take a leisurely walk outside and bear witness to clouds as they graze up in the skies. If you are patient you can watch them being born through the acts of condensation. Observe them drift about, occasionally intermingling. They often merge with other clouds, challenging your beliefs about separateness and individuation. When clouds feel full they may urinate down upon your head. When their environment changes to less favorable conditions you can witness them quietly evaporate away, thus ending another lifecycle.

There is a tendency to classify tribal societies, such as those who believe they can communicate with clouds, in anthropological terms. Documenting the rain dance comes to mind. While we aren't suggesting giving up the technological benefits society has to offer and go back to living off the land as your ancestors once did, it could be worthwhile to consider the riches your ancestors were capable of not only sensing but interacting with. Ask yourself, which of these perceptions were chosen to be traded away in order to better acclimate with the riches and rituals a technological society offers? Follow up with, was it really necessary to leave so many of those forgotten senses and rituals behind? A famous phrase sung by a beloved songwriter from your time period comes to mind: *It's life's illusions I recall, I really don't know clouds at all.*



Tag Along

Darlene P. Coltrain

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Making the Blankie was fun, with lots of color changes and stitch choices to keep me engaged. Steve was a little concerned that it wasn't turning out as blue as he wanted but



photo shoot

was pleased in the end. It took over six months and many/ lots yarn, but it was an enjoyable project all the way through.

Then I thought it might be a fun Turbo cover. Steve expressed his doubts ... "It will be simple" I said. "I have lots of in-progress pictures already," I said, "And if we need a better picture of the finished blanket, it's right here and we can take a few minutes to take new pictures".

By the time 'Turbo Week' rolled around Steve had ascertained that we did need a better picture of the finished Blanket.

For the better part or two days later we had pictures with questionable resolution that would not color correct to the actual colors of the blanket. We have proved once again that we perceive color very differently, so do our cameras, and the computer sees it differently than any of the rest of us.

The range of colors that I have in the progress shots, all shot with the iPad with questionable resolution and various lighting conditions, are on the back page. Mixed all together the colors are pretty accurate (assuming your brain can do that, it gave me a little headache...). The front cover is pretty but not at all as earthy and subtle as the actual blanket.



Sweet Dreams

We survived some rather heated discussions concerning color adjustment choices, several disagreements on the best lighting arrangements for the photo shoot, and now we've got it covered. Ahem.

I'm on to the next (smaller) projects and Steve likes his Blankie so we are ready for winter. All is well in our world.

OR