

A PALLET OF MEMORIES

By Dolores M. Ouellette

Like the aged artist who observes
his well-worn pallet
marked by shades of color
chosen with attempts at imagery,
nuances of beauty, brilliance,
spread across the canvas
of a lifetime,

I recall the sparkle of my twenties,
the bold hues of my thirties,
impressionistic forties,
blended tones of the fifties,
realism of my sixties,
family portraits of my seventies
and bad choices that became my teachers.

I hear the ridicule of my critics
who laughed at the dark shadows,
failed attempts at success,
washed humiliation over the gouash
of my soul and hailed others
as more expert than I
could ever be.

I chose to wash the darkness away
with the turpentine of forgiveness
for myself and others, in exchange
for scenes, from my memories,
that spread across the ceiling
of my lifetime, like Michealangelo's
creation at the Sistine Chapel,

where the great finger of God
points at me, the colors of my canvases,
failures I've corrected,
to evaluate my final accomplishments,
sigh with respect,
admire my work and say, in the end,
"Well done!"