

# The Trail of Time

Reed Venrick

Amy Brakeman Livezey  
Trail Work, 12" x 12"  
mixed media on panel

## The Trail of Time

Welcome to the Grand Canyon:  
this short hike takes two billion  
years—each step measures  
one million years, so a person

walks two thousand steps, about

a mile, taking some 20 minutes  
to walk along this south rim.

Two thousand—all the exercise  
needed to walk back into the history  
of earth—see the trail along this canyon  
rim, stretching along before you,

and as you hike and observe  
the rocks that exist from 200 million years  
ago to 1500 million years, you might  
think that if humans had god-minds  
and could expand consciousness to

understand the meaning of living on this  
soiled and stony ship, circling the eye of  
a star, then anyone would be strong enough  
to hike back down this trail a second time—  
coming back into our century.

Twenty minutes down, twenty back—  
that's all it takes. Each step, a million  
years along this sandstone path,  
where a hiker will visualize all

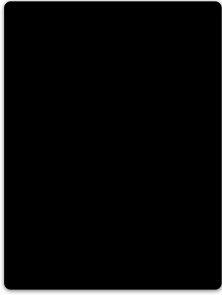
earth colors of the imagination—  
and imagine those animals and  
dinosaurs that lived and died among  
these rocks for more generations  
than people could count in a life.

After all, 90 percent of humans, who  
have lived on earth, have since passed  
down this trail of time before they  
they joined those yonder clouds

above the canyon horizon, and all  
the human lives that have stepped  
on and pondered along those  
boulders under moon and starlight,

wondering why it all began,  
realizing that the history and  
the story of humans, is but a  
scratch on a slab of stone.

Yes, translate as we will, only  
only the gods of this great,  
grand canyon can transcribe  
the symbology that explains  
why today—we walk down  
this trail of time.



Reed Venrick lives in Key West, Fl., and usually writes poems centered on nature. He has taught English and linguistics in universities in Brazil and Japan, and published many poems and stories in online and print journals, most recently in *Sky Island Journal*, *Edify Fiction*, and *DASH*, at Cal State, Fullerton.



