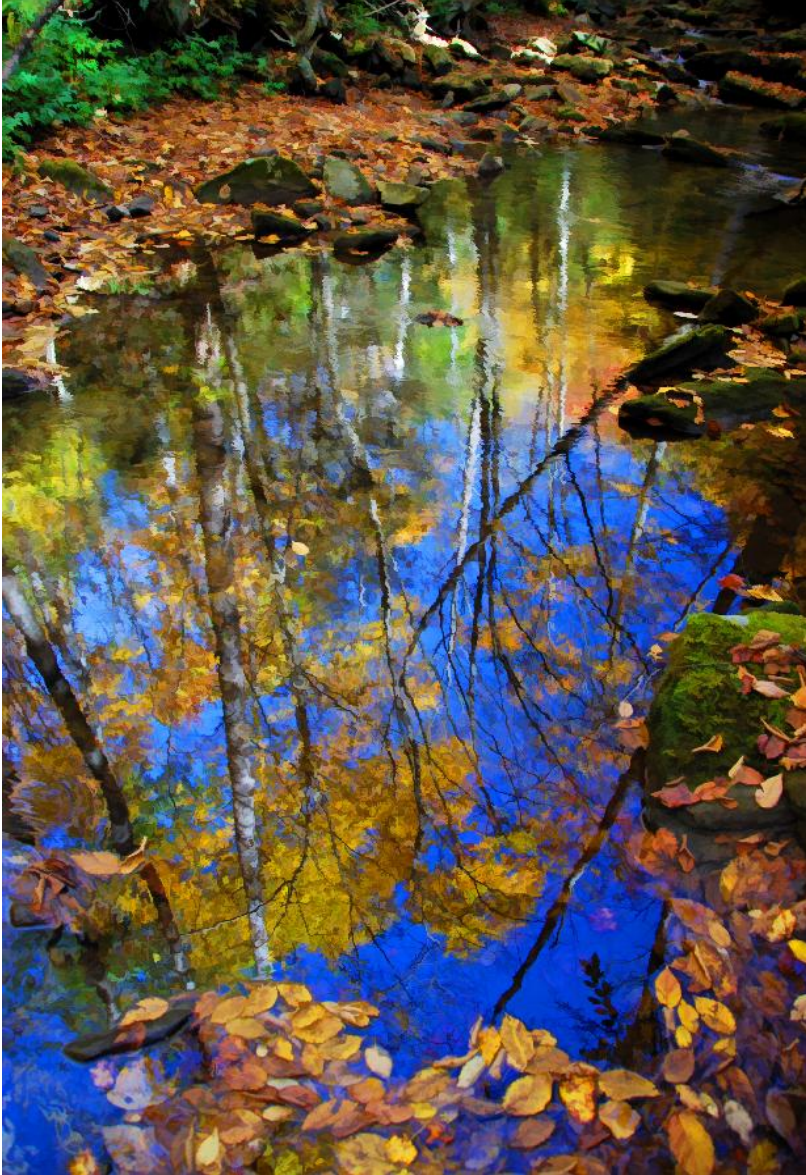


Chapter 15: My Autumn



My autumn...
with shorter days and longer nights.
The cold tip-toes in.
Breezes give it a sweet bite.
Parts of me need maintenance,
are befuddled, lack tone.
I walk where I once ran,
rest where I once walked.

My autumn...
It's the loveliest of times
but brings with it
uncertainty of time remaining.
Faint apprehension,
more awareness of precious seconds.
Appreciation of pleasure.

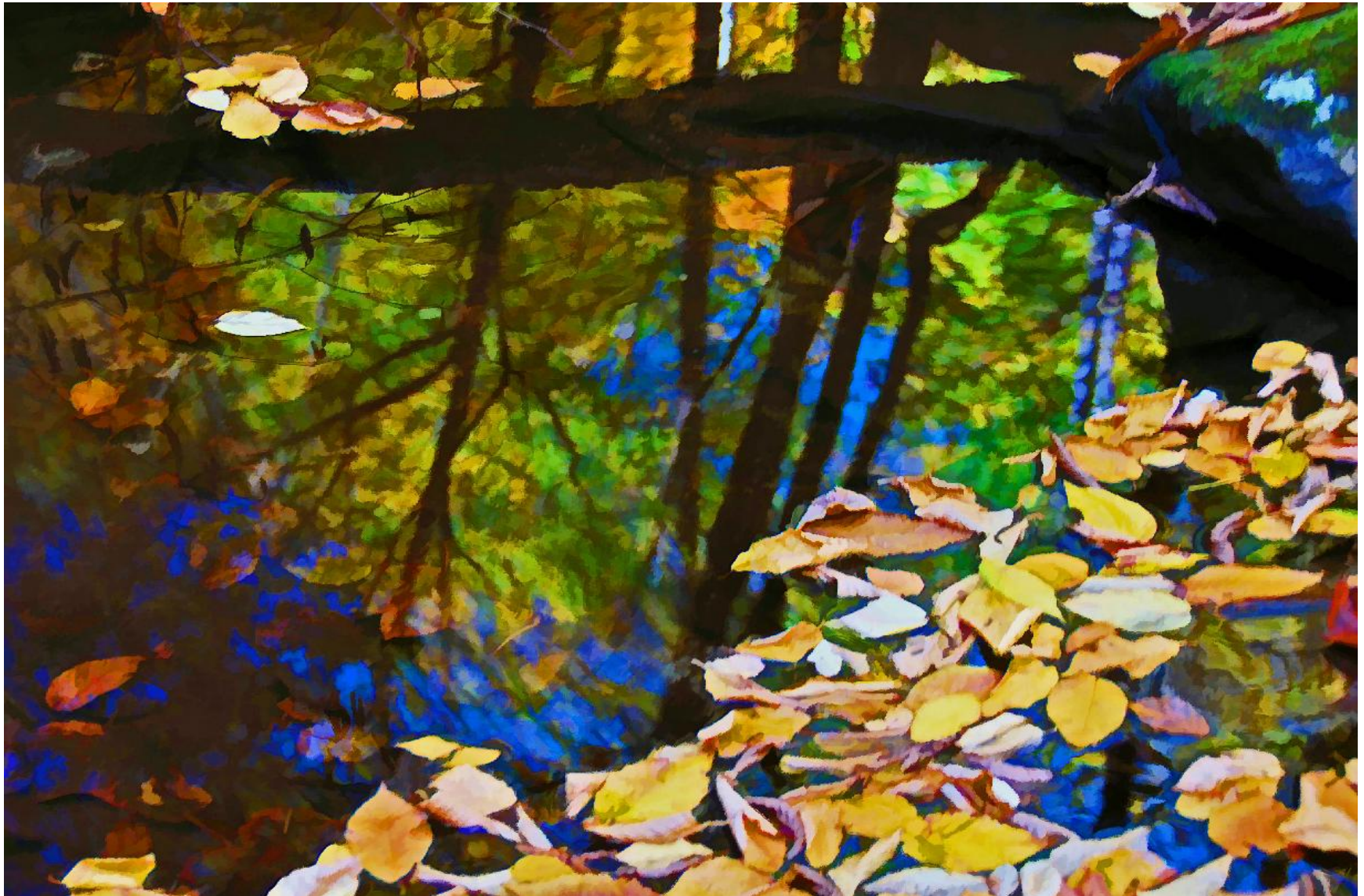
My Autumn...
with plans more grounded,
dreams more colorful,
wit more corny.
What a beautiful, temporary state.



Where I am when I'm not.



The deepest oceans are refreshed here.



How many grand thoughts are stored in pools like this?

I spent much of my youth being told
I was fashioned in an instant
in the likeness of my creator.
But I now know with far more certainty
that my being, my form,
my consciousness...
was forged over a length of time
I am unable to fathom.
The trees and soil and rock
no doubt see me as a long lost relative.
Perhaps they wonder,
why did I ever leave them?



WELCOME 55

I have never been a senior. This is new for me. And yet so familiar. I have witnessed this stage of life in people and animals I've loved. I've had a long time to ponder over and prepare for it, to embrace it or reject it. I knew that either way, it was going to happen.

So now that it's here, I am going to welcome it as a new found friend, one who encourages me to make adjustments to how I eat, walk, sleep and think. I am going to get to know this friend slowly so that my journey through seniorhood is as much a joy as growing through boyhood and becoming a man.

Embrace! Embrace!



Time moves with the stream and change is inevitable.

Change

Of course we change
but I never thought about
how much others would change with me .

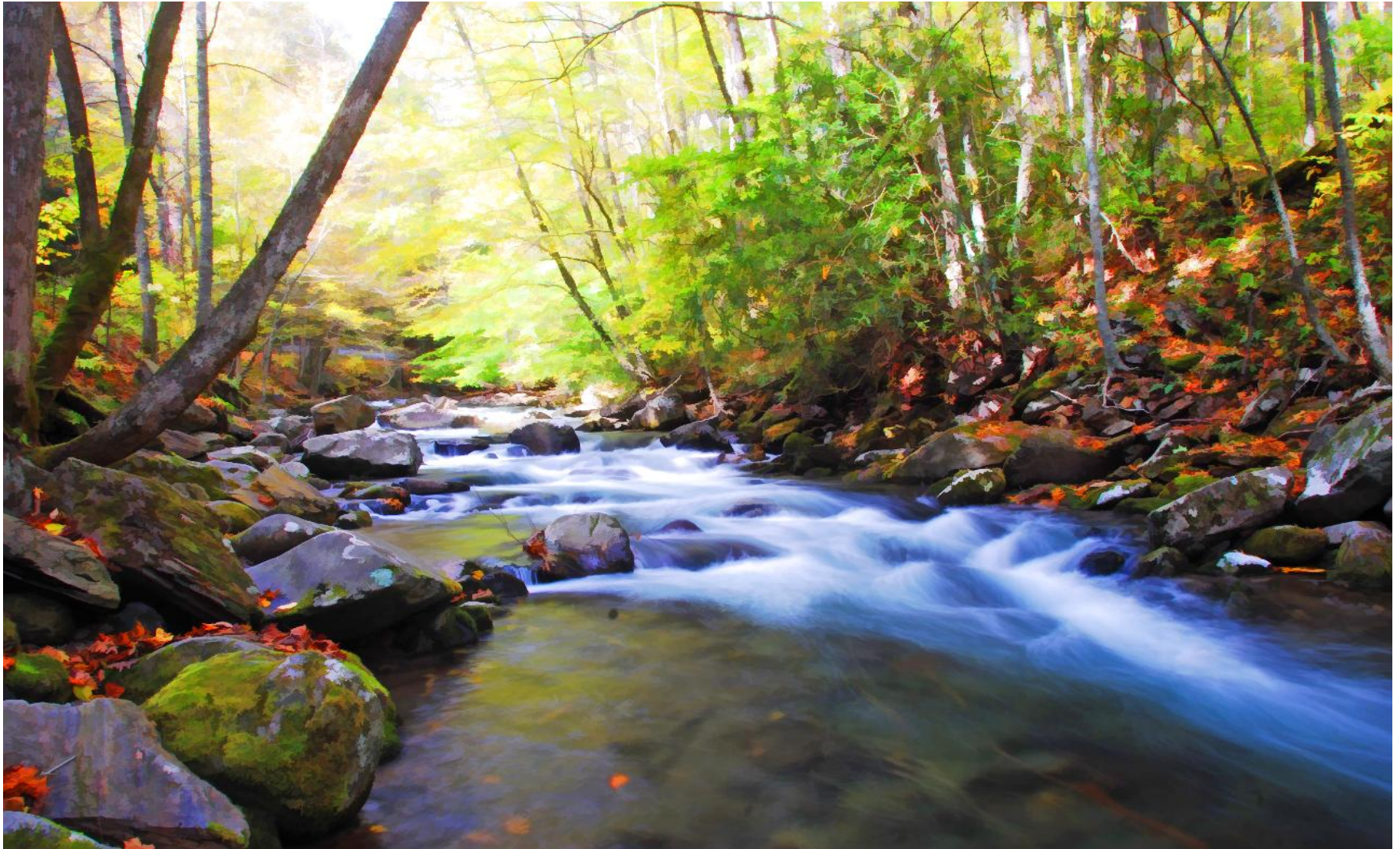
At 55, perceptions
about me are redefined.
I've seen that look before
when I was much younger
and in the presence of a gray hair.

Younger generations
size me up
and categorize me as a senior,
someone
who is over the hill
and should get out of the way
so they can have their turn.

But...

I'm not ready
to live up to their perceptions
just yet.

Impatiently, they wait.
Patiently, I continue on.



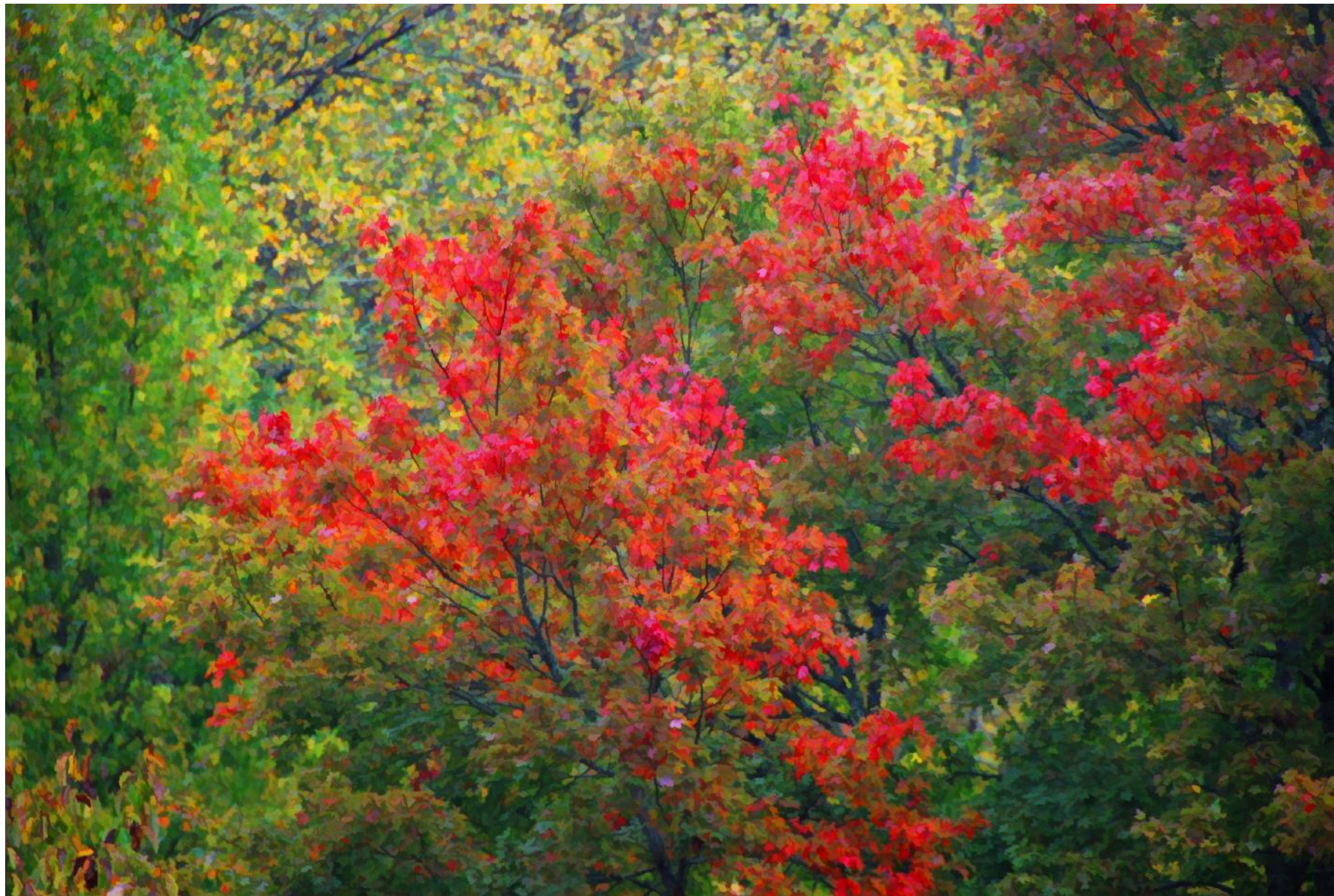
It stirs me how such solid boulders seem immovable,
Yet tiny droplets of water can push them a thousand miles
to the sea...slowly, gradually, grain by grain.



I could die happy in such woods, knowing the soil and worms might live on by my passing.



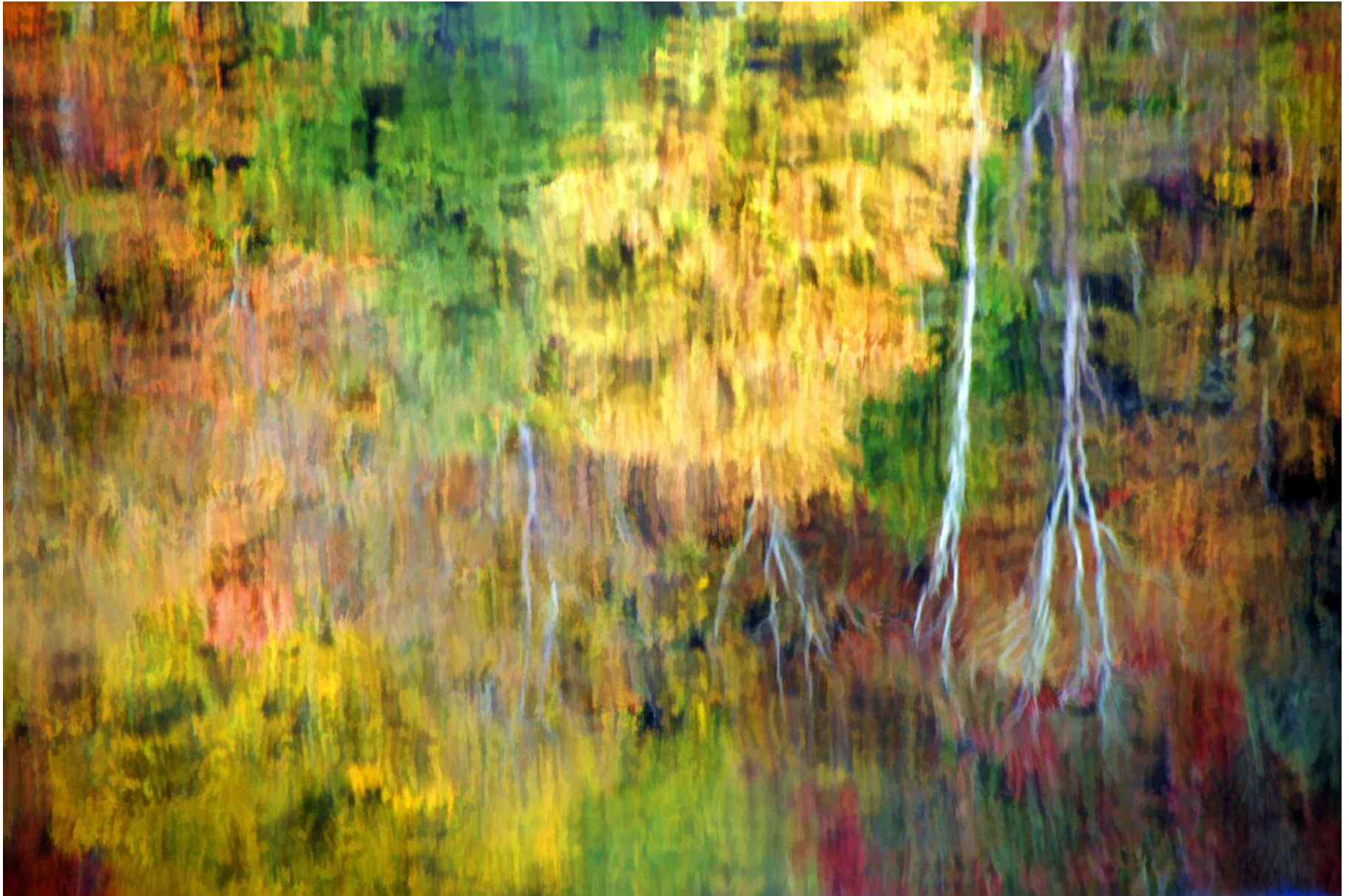
The only true value of gold is when it's pressed against a blue sky.



I am grateful for the circuitry that connects such beauty to my brain.



Even with my eyes closed, I can hear and taste and smell the sweet sight at my feet.

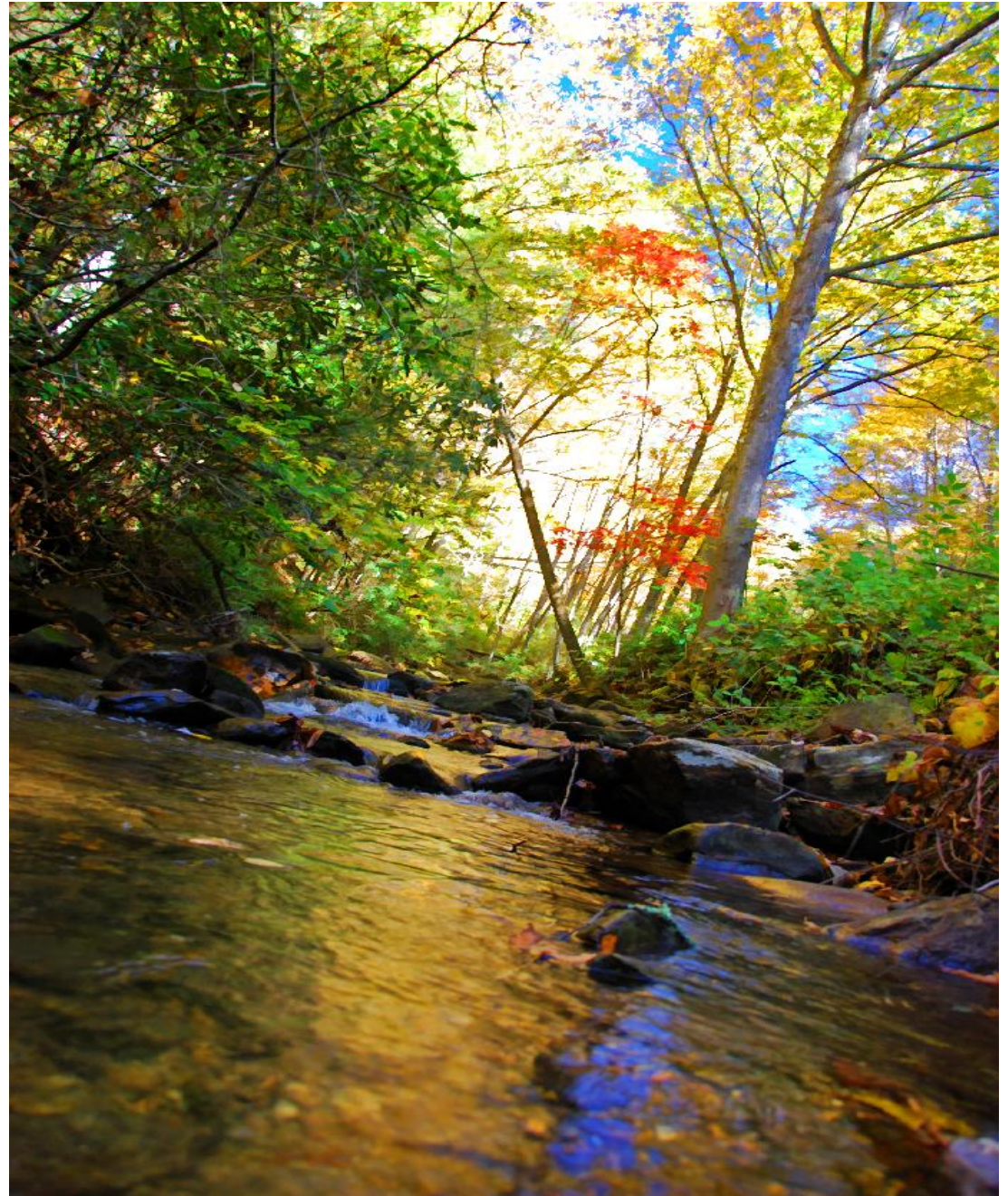


It's not enough that nature has provided me with so much soothing color when I look up into a forest.
At my feet is a second world, more subtle and gentle, but every bit as stirring.



Nature keeps no secrets.
Nothing is hidden with a willingness to see.

Put together enough snapshots
and you have a movie.
Put together enough movies
and you have a clearer picture
of evolution.





If you hold a moment without trying to own it,
it is yours forever.



I envy Darwin's senses in the wild.



Are the young any more tuned in than I am?
Does their youth see as much or more?