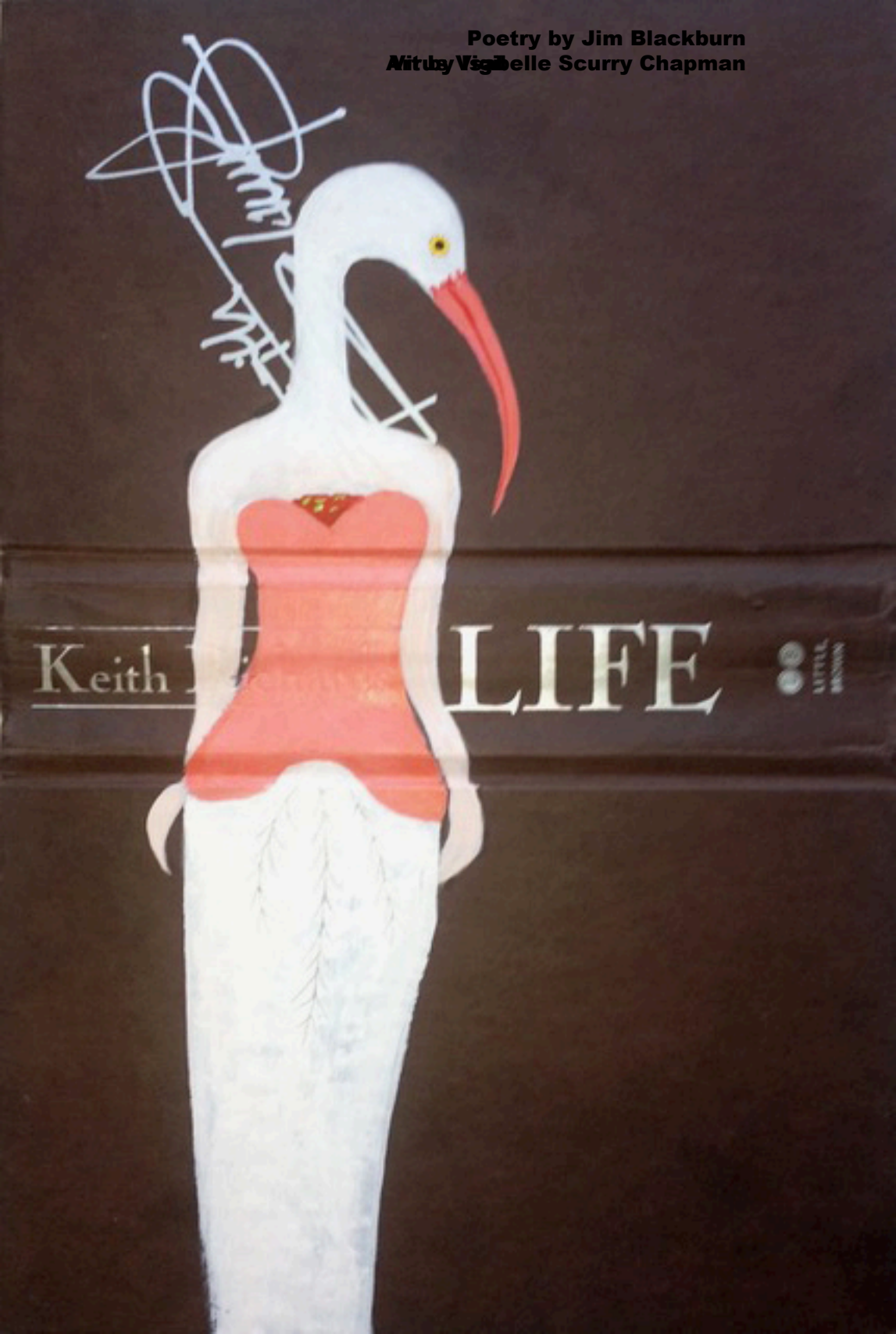
HOYO de MONTERREY DE JOSE GENER

Poetry by Jim Blackburn

Art by Virginia Belle Scurry Chapman



The Ruddy Turnstone

On the East End Flats
Adjacent to the Ship Channel
On Galveston Island

The reddish-brown bird with the black bib
Works the shells and debris
Along the shoreline,
Pushing this and that with its short beak,
Flipping things over, seeing what's there
Meeting its daily needs.

I smile as I watch it work,
Noticing similarities between this small bird
And my practice of environmental law
With partner Mary Carter here in Texas,
A state where much is hidden beneath the rocks,
Out of view of the public,
Done in the back rooms of power,
Mary Carter - a private woman with a love
For the birds and bunnies -
A woman upon whom I could depend
To read my attempts to unseat power
And judiciously redline the over-the-top,
Unnecessary rhetoric that would offend,
Focusing the offensive, sharpening it,
Honing it so that the fruits of turning stones

Could be realized.

The Ruddy Turnstone scampers to the seaweed
Piled alongside the channel,
Stabbing in its beak, pushing the weeds aside,
A bird near and dear to Mary Carter
Who is near and dear to those us
Who try to turn the stones
Along the debris-line
That is the State of Texas.