

2013 Longlist



Montreal International Poetry Prize

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Preface

We are very happy to present our second Longlist Anthology. Once again the poems in this collection were chosen by the 2013 Montreal International Poetry Prize Editorial Board—an international jury of ten poets. The entries were divided up among the editors so that no two editors had the same poems. The editors then made their selections independently without knowing who the authors were. With no haggling, no grading, no compromise, this collection is a book of favourites.

The reader will find a variety of styles and poetic approaches collected from thirteen countries. The themes powering these poems are drawn from the whole gamut of human experience, including travel, history, science, technology, nature, love and sex. Some poems contemplate the mundane, such as quitting smoking or yawning, while others consider such fanciful topics as humans growing antennae. There are also politically focused works, and poems about God, mythology, spirituality and prayer.

Happy reading!

Acknowledgements

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The members of the 2013 Editorial Board who believed in this project and who made the selections for this anthology deserve a warm thanks as well.

A big thank you is also in order for all the participants in the 2013 Montreal International Poetry Prize, without whose interest and support none of this would be possible.

The Longlist



About Time

Oh so it's an intervention.
Fine.
Bring it on
Fuckers.
What took you so long?

Come on then.
Let's purge my fucking soul.

But after we do me,
We'll do you.
Okay?

Come on let's do it.
Let's sit down and pass the pillow.
You can purge my fucking soul.
I know you've been watching.
(Salivating)
I know you don't approve.
Come on.
Judge me
You fuckers.

But after we do me
Let's do you.
Okay?

I haven't been watching.
Or judging.
But I'm ready to do my bit
And help you purge too.
Because that's the kind of guy I am.

Bring it on,
Fuckers.

MARK RIBOLDI

Ai Wei Wei / Breathing Through Silk

Trust the dissident artist;
he knows heads crack as
easily as sunflower seeds
and schools built on sand,

where fragrant Sichuan spices almost
cover the stench of corruption and death.

He spreads out one hundred million
porcelain seeds, each one perfectly
painted. Will that be enough to feed
the souls released in the Great Leap
Forward and Chengdu Earthquake?

There are one hundred million
reasons to walk in his shoes,
footsteps of ghosts who went
before him, as carefully as ants
avoiding diatomaceous earth

and resolute heroes swimming in circles.

The mornings Ai Wei Wei,
arrested for truth, sipped thin
soup in prison, we broke bread
on the rocks where circling gulls
opened their beaks to drop and
smash their invertebrate food—

where every story's a sacrament,
one thing becoming another.

Never Sorry, Ai Wei Wei,
breathing through silk, does
not apologize for the toxic
dust that rises from his hand
made breakfast of martyrs,

seeds fired in crematoria.

He knows the breath exhaled from
graveyards and mouths full of
broken teeth is the wind of change.

LINDA ROGERS

Air Pocket

Choppy sky. Chop-socky jabs and swats.
Thank God you got your belt on and the hot
Resilient hull here hems you in. Rammed, socked,
Jostled, rendered sky's poor pawn—you thought
A flight would make you free. Instead, these knots:
Kinked belly, braided ribs, intestines locked
In self-garrotte. The plane tips at the pocket's brink and cock-
Eyed in its wingline drops.

That's it, you think. Extinction's brim. Which thinking gives
Your guts another twist. Your pretzeled pith.
Then all at once the falling halts. The jet revives,
Judders back up to its expected path.
Breathe out. The belt is fast, the hull intact,
And in the end the ground will have you back.

PETER NORMAN

Amber

Two long teardrops of it
graze my shoulders, coolly,
as my mother's tucking-in touch was cool,
nights she and my father went out
in the glamour of their long-ago youth.
How I held my breath then
not wanting her to go. She went
anyway; gone for good, eleven years now.
These earrings I've inherited glow
mellow against skin,
reflecting, refracting. Light of late
August caught in their elegant oblongs,
dark honey of the inmost hive.
And now they swing
awkward, out-of-place against
my wrinkling neck,
this wind that's always at my back.
Amber was her song,
her go-to color, wine at sunset,
peaches poached in fire.
How we live to rue.
How love refracted,
deflected, bounces back
catches me off-guard—how we missed
each other, she and I
even when she was alive,
so that now, all these years
later, I feel her as a coolness
brushing my collarbone
a tug at the lobe, though I wouldn't
know what to begin to say.

ALISON LUTERMAN

The Antenna

For Mike Endicott

The antenna is a growth not always
functional in all people.

Some can hoist their antenna with
remarkable ease—like greased lightning.

In some it is broken, stuck there in its old winged
fin socket way down under the shiny surface

never to issue forth.

Others make do with a little mobility,

a little reception, a sudden spurt of music
and joy, an aberrant hope.

And some—the crazies,
the fools of God—drive around

or sit or even sleep
with this great thin-as-a-thread

home-cobbled monkey-wrenched filament
teetering above their heads

and picking up the great I AM like
some hacker getting Patmos on his toaster.

And some, with WD40 or jig-a-loo
or repeated attempts to pry the thing up

or chisel at the socket
do not give up on this antenna

because they have heard of how it works
sometimes, how when the nights are clear

and the stars just so and the new moon has all but set,
the distant music of the spheres is transformative

and they believe in the transformation.
It is the antenna they have difficulty believing in.

MIA ANDERSON

Ark 1962

Warned by Kennedy about nuclear nights, skinless winter mornings, lawns white-brown swatches of ash, air an invisible airlessness, he ordered the free Defense Department plans, and built it. I remember him, then, regarding our eight pairs of eyes around the twelve foot conference table he'd installed for us to eat at, I remember, as well, the effort he made to explain, to attach to the unimaginable, words.

He had been paranoid at times, at other's booze garbled his words as he, somehow, stayed upright at that table into early morning hours, cursing his life. But this was a focused plan, its elements well chosen, executed to save his family. Imitating tens of thousands, he bought concrete block, wavy steel, procured a pistol. A thirty foot-long string of ladders plunging into darkness is what I remember

most of the bunker crouched below the garage, his, "Remember the dog stays behind," intoned ignoring our stricken, wordless faces, his pleased fear discussing 'improvements' on the football field length shelter beneath the White House. I foresaw mornings in line for the chemical toilet after folding my cot, and a hunger he denied in view of crackers, jerky and Campbell soup's deep well.

But we never used it. The elfin-capped air compressor, well water purifier, radiation meter, scrabble board remembered distinctly by each one of us became part of the family lore he engendered with his crazy life. It existed like a foul word, real, frightening, like hearing your parents fight in the morning, pounding through the wall, innocence receding on padded foot.

At that time I could not speak. "Thought" came out "fut," robin "wobyn," church "showsh." Mysterious sounds welled in my throat like paste. When he laughed, one morning, at my mouth's strained shape, and they laughed too, I remember thinking, 'I'll never forget this moment,' and have not, loving words to life, sounds to be mannered with beautiful lips, perfect letters – t.h.e.,

definite articles, weightless, handy, safe-haven in light of the shelter he built. In an anguished trance I saw marks for things: hand, foot, window, eye; marks for motion; marks for thought. Thought itself. Words. The world, capacious, intact. The mind, wholesome, perfect, well. Their sound was my sound, their birth my birth. Remembered as one does a luminous dream, the one I wake to each morning.

He and I play cards underground. There, our silent thoughts are well known to each other. Our hands, twelve inches apart, remember a sameness. Without words, without mourning, I touch his thin fingers.

VICTORIA KORTH

Ascension

Think I'll ascend tonight.
Long overdue and done with
The redundant foolishness of this orb;
Fed up, over-full and vomiting
All the lies I've been fed.

And they say ascension starts first in the brain
As a sort of drifting up...

drifting far...

drifting out...

Of the mind.

A strange traversing of
And slippage through

The In Between Spaces,

in between moments,
in between breaths,
in between thoughts—

In between

The atomic spaces
Of the viscera—
Or some such mysticism.

The main important thing though
Is the insistence on the *In-Betweenness* of it all—
That curious ecstasy of floatation, of lift—
Clumsy frightening exhilaration
In the disannulling of gravity.

And they say, a soul bound heavy, weighed down with cosmic tons of mortal grief,
Is morbidly obese.

But I have sometimes known it to be the exact opposite, and merely waste away
Till the load of its flesh is so thinly, so scarcely felt
That the shadow residue of its grounding
Just gives way, to flight.

Think I'll ascend tonight.

F. B. EVANS

Aubade

Light brushes the white weatherboards
some unclaimed border of purple and pink,
strokes the windmills churning early air on the hills.
There are fifty-five turbines. In a bag, an apple
picked in an orchard seven kilometres from here,
placed on a shelf at a market garden. The woman who took the apple
from that shelf, who inspected it for bruises, found one, then bought it anyway,
would see the same light, standing in the same kitchen. Instead, she stares
at her hands, less like hers than her mother's, the first time
she has thought of her mother today, though not the last, it's early yet.
Early light, the earliest it can be and still be called light.
All the risks of the day stand between you and the next time you see this colour.
The light that slips through the glass of her window reveals a web
of lines in her hands, palm up before her as in supplication.
To whom? The kettle boils. 1.65 megawatts per windmill,
enough to power 700 homes. She was trying to tell you
something. Your wife. Though no turbine may exceed
forty decibels. It is that time of year, the whole of the working day
visible, leave with first light, return with the last, this time
will hardly last at all. Bigger close up, each seventy meters. It helps
she has things to do with her hands, that this moment
of self-reflection is circumscribed by the rattling she hears upstairs, children.
You see the day as a kind of wind. It will recede, leave you standing. One
of the weatherboards is rotten. Each has three blades. Nearly twelve
hours since you last spoke, half of that in difficult sleep,
the rest in the language only a stunned silence makes,
scrape of drawer, hard complaint of dishes, the refrigerator's hum
forty-three decibels. Speech, if not absent, would be forty-five.
There are things information cannot tend.
There are things said that will take a long time to fade
as the colour fades now against the house, whitening, the clamped teeth
of the day. The sun rising. Someone will pick hundreds

of apples today. Rain will engorge the valley. Some neighbours complain about the noise. Your wife was trying to say something to you. Forty decibels. The windmills whip and whip. You haven't heard a thing.

BRYAN WALPERT

A Bad Rap for Thetis

What can I say that you don't already know? My marriage to the mortal Peleus was not a whim, or a moment of passion, but something in the bones that told me

this union was important, foreordained by the gods. I knew nothing of genetics, or that the half-mortal issue of my loins would create a deep, open wound, render

me vulnerable. Some claim I released Zeus from his chains, took refuge with Diomedes in a bed of seaweed, and refused to save a boy from drowning

in a shipwreck. These are mostly lies. I'll admit to some shape-shifting to avoid capture, the goddess of water testing other elements, taking on fiery shapes,

winging it, using ground-breaking measures to achieve my ends. These were the perks of immortality that I wanted for my son Achilles when I dipped him into the briny

waters of the Styx. Who would have thought the thumb and forefinger that held him by the heel underwater would have created a weakness that led to his death and mine

and changed the course of history. Divine intervention is no mere literary device, my friends. If you should see me depicted riding the sea nymph Hippokampos, Achilles'

shield in my right hand, or choose to believe
the lament of the kingfisher that I cut off
the fish supply as a result of petty displeasure,
don't be too judgmental. Remember,

a mother is bound to mourn, the oysters
I bring to banquets are tastier than truffles
and the poet Apollo played at my wedding,
his honeyed lyrics blessing all creation.

GARY GEDDES

A Bathroom for Wallace Stevens

On the double-deep folds
of the emerald towel

on the white-lacquered seat
of the four-legged stool

at an easy reach
from the cool enamel

“Phenomenology of Spirit”
by Hegel

The room seems vacant
the mirror has been cleaned

Halos (halogens)
gleam from the ceiling

A bass-toned fan
hums wisps of steam

above the shower’s
translucent screening

What on earth
is this world’s meaning?

Hieratic mutters
swerve in their word-paths

off track by miles

Caught short by gravity
the cistern splutters

A leaf of two-ply
flutters to the tiles

PHIL DAVEY

Bicycle Arpeggios

For almost a year now I have been trying to write this poem about the bicycles at dusk, a clattering gamelan's rhythm of give and take at the lake's edge, those stripped bikes converted into instruments—the bell and tock of pedals, the clicking gears as one rider yielded to the next, leg bones converting energy into mechanical song. And some would ride their bicycle as fast as they could go, and others drag out the broken chords. You would have understood this music as I could only listen. How beautiful and complicated humans are.

I mean to say that you are. I don't know you at all so how is it that I feel as if I've always known? Each time I mean to study you, to learn everything about you as I would learn a bicycle or a poem, but when I am with you I am overcome, and can only absorb you like water. I might recall a fragment—the olive skin of your hands, your scuffed shoes. But then I can't even remember what clothes you wore, your wrists, the colour of your eyes. So I need to see you again, and again, although I know you are not meant for me, to study every beautiful and complicated part.

And as you were not there to see it (how could I not have known that you existed on this earth?) I would like to include in this poem for you, how, when it became very dark, tiny hot air balloons were released here and there around the lake. They floated up over the bicycle gamelan and the black lake water and the stilt walkers and the gypsy band, higher and higher until they could no longer be seen anymore, until they were extinguished by the beautiful night.

KIM TRAINOR

A Bird and the River

A tiny bird floats on its back
as if at home upon the stream
that bears it swiftly past the pontoon's
piers and struts towards the sea.

The fledgeling's rosebud feet
are furred, its eyes closed; keel
bone uppermost; serrated wings
a casket cradling the downy breast;
heart and silent throat at rest,
the body weightless, eluent
upon the tidal pulse and ebb,
offered to flight's element.

How intricately made this frame,
how fine the tender arc of breast—
unblemished plumage dry,
the pinions curved symmetric as a lyre;
a natural canoe, the neat, beaked
crown a prow to brave the flux—
the river vast and treacherous;
the rite of passage effortless.

A human body cast into the spate
would not possess this grace:
only such a small, winged craft
can navigate the current's haste—
composed amid turbidity, serene in death:
concrete on the brink of its abstractedness.

JENA WOODHOUSE

Blaze

i.m. Giordano Bruno the Nolan, 1548 – 1600

A finite chamber, the domed sky of the chapel
shows God as Father, Son and the same Holy Spirit
that descended on the apostles as tongues of fire.
Filled with the ardour of faith,
they preached in language understood
by those who would believe.

Giordano, your knees ache from the immutable truths
that sit on your shoulders. Then you stand up.
From beneath your cowl, you watch the skies,
light-pricked, expanding as a dark ocean:
God's domain, Heaven.

In the evening drizzle, the tails of stars burn the sky.
Their flames fall near Vesuvius and
as you watch, their light passes through you.

The thoughts of stars linger in walks and prayers
and speak of more complex notions.
You are encircled by earth, water, air and fire.
You are earth, water, air and fire.

This is spirit.

No skullcap will fetter ideas that break through
as branches born of Egyptian, Greek and Arabic plantings.
You teach, travel, but the hounds of dogma
inhabit the world, and Venice delivers you to Rome.

You say *innumerable suns exist;*
innumerable earths revolve around these suns—
in the city's prison, the world is dark.
Here your thoughts are free to roam
with the chattering rodents.

Your cheek against the damp wall, empty chains and
names carved into stonework are all that is left of the others.
You look up, filthy and bloodied.

There are no stars in the spears of light from the window.
God must be completely infinite because he can be associated
with no boundary and his every attribute is one and infinite.

God is silent.

Winter, and there are no flowers on the Campo de' Fiori.
Mouth vised, you are tied to the stake on a mound of branches.
Smoke rises to the cold sky.

And you
 the fiery, living torch.

ROSANNA EVA LICARI

the book of last year's resolutions

is fickle; each dead leaf
needing to be swept
and binned; then
the faded fire of the bougainvillea

like a rain from heaven,
like my friend
whose final breaths through morphine
were entrained to such a river,

whose voice was silver until it was silenced,
who found that finding a way
to leave this earth
even in a stripped, forsaken body

to be such labor, like birth,
like a god moving achingly through matter
before sloughing it off,
contractions of the shattered heart widening

in awe beyond the cloud of self;
so the book of life in which we long to be inscribed
has the thinnest pages,
they disappear as soon as they are turned

ALISON LUTERMAN

Breakup

“they are... creatures of ignorant suffering”
–Sharon Olds

You feel most sorry for the tits,
and the hidden spongecake of the cock,
the parts that do not understand

this dissolution, the sudden lack
of touch each night, the lips, the hand
now gone, deleted, out-of-stock

like milk or waffles. Flesh gets stained
by fellowship; it cannot fake
the loss as well as heart or brain.
It reaches out despite our talk,

a stubborn child, too-well-trained;
it craves the meat-key’s tongue that fits
the private tumblers of its lock.

The wrist recalls. The eye awaits.

KENT LEATHAM

Carried Along On Great Wheels

Dear ghosts long-vanished into ash and gray city wind

I think of you

When someone bicycles by with a little seat on the back, and in that seat, listing perilously earthward, a two-year-old girl half-asleep

Sagging down towards the pavement, wearing a tiny helmet and carried along on great wheels

Sack of potatoes is what my father used to call me, joking, when he hoisted me up on his shoulders

And I loved it, loved seeing the world from that great height

Now bare black trees stretch over the lake glistening like a giant eye at the center of our city

And from leafless branches an explosion of gulls, winging in unison

Their furious texts scribbled on sky and immediately erased

The lives we dreamed we'd live, and the lives we actually have

Dogs on twin leashes, pulling us eagerly toward everything that flies

ALISON LUTERMAN

Cashmere

says its own softness
in the sound of its name, the cajzh
sliding over the tongue
like a pansy's petal, only warmer,
the mere like the whisper of your first love's name
something half-forgotten,
tucked away in the drawer lined with tissue paper,
redolent with grandmother,
she who stuffed nylons with dried rose-petals
and hung them from light bulbs to release their scent.
And why does this memory
drift back to me now? Because I want
that hundred dollar sweater, marked down
from a hundred and forty
but still way too much,
still out of reach as the touch
of my grandmother's cheek,
gone for decades now, her powder and woe.

Because I have never seen the cashmere goat,
bred in the hard-fought Kashmir valley,

goat who is neither Muslim nor Hindu,
she of the cherished silky, double-layered coat
deliberately picking her way
down the rocky path of the Himalayas.
Because I have not met the herdsman
or seen the place where the wool is carded,
washed and spun, nor sat with the women, weaving,
or heard their stories and songs. Because I have not sipped
their smoky tea in the dimness of the hut,
or lifted my eyes to the ring of mountains ranging me
wondering why the work of my hands may fly
where I cannot, I crave the expensive sweater.
Or perhaps
it's the ancient cleft between worlds I want,
the agility of the goat's quick step,
the way she lives at the edge of a cliff
without falling off. Or then again it could be
the strength and softness of those unknown women.

ALISON LUTERMAN

Dante in Ravenna

She who has been my love of all the world,
dying long ago, left me alone to learn
out of my loss of her something of God.

I had no other teacher of the heart
but books; Augustine, Virgil, Bernard drew
maps for my journey from a nowhere place

of darkness to the patient light of truth.
And now, an old man in these foggy streets
of a flat city steep as purgatory,

I stumble towards the gold of San Vitale,
towards the candlelight, the prophets, marble
waves of the sea transfixed, mosaic walls

of green, white, scarlet, men alone with God,
Melchisedech and Abel, in their hands
offerings of the earth, and in the priest's

bread become God, the wine we never shared
become his blood for us, the life we share.
A matter of belief the gift of her

has been always, who took my soul through death
in love for which you have only my word,
my many thousand words. As so do I.

Out in the Adriatic the waves move
grey with the slowness of the winter sea,
their chill to fetch me soon to her, to God.

No more to do but kneel on the cold floor,
watching the emperor who stayed away,
the God who came, holding us in his grace.

LUCY BECKETT

The Deep Water: On Rape

A simple and
calamitous truth is that the spirit does
animate the flesh after all.
Held down, you fight
to the end of your mortal strength
and fail. Everything you have
is not enough.
A light goes out; the spirit
leaves the body.

How long can you really
keep dragging this carcass
around? How long
can a bird struggle in a sack? Even if
you could take wing
in that fibrous dark,
how would you find your way
to the shore and
out across the deep water?
What is across there, anyway? That air
you can watch leave the body,
when an animal dies – can that
be breathed back in? Or perhaps
there is only the water,
and you have to keep flying
until you can't anymore. The gift
is that then you can stop.

BELINDA RULE

Departing the Rough Bounds

Late August, and the end of something;
our time out of time all spent. Big tides
funnel through the sea-gate between Glenuig
and white-sanded Arisaig, lifting the foam line
close to our door-sill; high rollers, with more
than the usual West Coast flotsam, whole trees
even, foretelling urgent oceanic power
and the reach, the terrible reach of it.

We are conversant with the signs; the wild
land, by degrees, begins to winter-up: Sun
declines early, bleeds on the flank of An Stac,
nights are long, stars bright; Loch Eil's piper
played out. West wind bays in the birch wood.
Deer come down early, stay longer, bruising
the wild sage with their slotting. We smell them
at graze when we fetch wood for the stove.

Moon time, tide time, star time, rain time; time
simple, weeks of sweet air, clear water, and silence
have lent us a sense of calm; and shriven thus, at one
with the universe and all its parts, we must consider
how to leave, to fasten the door-latch, hide the key,
and pack-haul across the burn and up the brae;
tracing our quartz-line to the metalled road,
and South to the city, with its world of clocks.

MIKE BANNISTER

Dog

My feeder light me to run, the tail me waggors
he here! he here!
The wait me all out and the lone me
lift like the loose wind—he here,
he here, he here.

Over the ground grass the pup me
nose up the sweet piss of the not me.
Throw high the yard stick for the teeth me,
and test me feeder—test me the follow you—
we here, we here, we here.

Lend me this world of the make you,
the empty me fill, and the body me
into the waters leap
at the finger point you—
this here, this here, this here

Lead, feeder lead—across your feet lay me,
the fool me, greed me, the want me—
wake the dream me, feeder beyond
the see me and nose me—beyond the you me
all here, all here, all here.

And old me, the hurt me and used me,
still in me the need me—this breath
all here for the you me, wherever you go
take me, take me and run me, feeder
this last now.

ROBERT CARTER

The Door

Two minutes after waking
she's smashed her son's door open
breaking the doorframe, the plywood
and the handle's useless.

Why?

He had a small sliding bolt
carefully put on
so he could lock his bedroom
from the inside
and she just hates the idea of locks.
It makes her want to break something.
She breaks something.
It's her son.

All day's gone. All day's gone.
Her son's staying somewhere else.
Her man still hates that cruel temper
and won't talk. She won't talk.
There's no-one to talk.

She's gone to her room.
That's her room. Her room.
Her house.
She'd like to lock the door.

RICHARD TIPPING

Dorset

Birds perch on telegraph wires
like music notes on staves. They shift
in stop-go cinematography
as cattle with black and white maps
on their backs lumber across fields
under curving shadowy hillsides,
sunlight-slashed. Two horses, one white
with white lashes, the other sorrel
with a blonde mane, stand flank to shoulder,
static from poll to croup but facing
opposite ways, like a couple
not talking. Hook-headed, a hawk
hovers. In woods, all elbows, knees
and contorted spindly limbs vaguely
gesturing, that tap of Morse means
woodpecker. Nerves in soil inch
a foot, and clumsy butterflies,
flimsy as the earliest planes,
brush a chrysalis on a shrub
that hangs like a parachutist
caught in a tree. Kite-like, the soul
tugs. A heartbeat of hooves, the flicker
of birds against coastlines of cloud
and all the sweeps and dips and folds
of countryside invite one to
follow dreamy rivers out to
where the sea broadcasts to the world.

MARK KIRKBRIDE

Drum

The ones I miss the most I rolled by hand,
packed with moss and damp earth. The paper
crackled quietly between my fingers
as I packed down all those fields, the leaves
of Kentucky and Virginia. The moment
it turned to chocolate gravel in the floor
of my throat, everything became

easy: lying in bed with our twin coils
of smoke rising in the streetlight,
or standing in the shower with one
dry hand, or driving on a winter morning,
one hand on the wheel, the other tipping
the cigarette out the window. I remember

being fifteen, and holding one out a window
as the car charged down the freeway,
and marveling at the rain of sparks
as if this were some sort of bona fide magic,
a true slice of the mysterious held between my fingers
and drawn into my body, where it might grow.

The last one was on a bench in early spring,
forgettable except for being the last, its smell
on my hands rich as the scent of a woman's hair.
In bed that night, I mourned it, fingers to my face
as it faded away. Goodbye my slightly deadly,
goodbye my nearly precious—

PRESTON MARK STONE

Earth Girls Are Easy

That old song has it wrong, I don't find them
easy. When I bring them back to my place
they won't relax and let go. I offer
them a holiday, a chance to shrug
their spirits free from all that bile and bone,
that ribcage, lock and key. But they
are as heavy as a riverbed, a seam
of oil too deep to reach. I see their spark,
their potential—at the ski fields or when they're dancing
they show me they want to be airborne. So I
try to help, to loosen the root so they can wiggle
their spirits like milk teeth, ignore the gore,
the dull tear and dive through that moment
of pulling free. But they never do, they get stuck
at the wiggling, endlessly. They prefer to sit
in the saddle of pain. I see their thoughts.
What if there's no coming back? I can't leave
my children, my friends, my cat. I could switch
to earth boys, some swear by them. But they
are just as clenched, and more into the spaceship
than me. Also ungrateful: when I drop
them home they complain about a stopped watch.

LISA BROCKWELL

Five Songs for Petra

I

They say my great-grandmother was mad,
but I like to think she flew into herself,
got trapped in the wool of her feline heart
and decided to stay there.

II

He was already married when he met her.
Her name juts from the borders of his own,
half-Carib woman with a forest in her bones,
mother of his mad children, she who would dare,
with her sharp white teeth, to try and eat him alive.

III

They say my great-grandmother lived alone in the leaning house.
I slept there once, long after her death,
my body rocked between the walls by
a slow August earthquake.
I smelled her in the damp floorboards.
The syllables of her name
rolled through the broken windows like
swollen fruit and grating metal.

That was how I found her.

IV

He was already married when he met her,
but there was something about her
that caught him, pierced his skin.

Her love was an unsheathed claw.

He waited, tunnelled around in the flute
of her hip to find the sound
of himself.

But soon, the beasts around the bed
would not let him in. The house bulged
with books and bared teeth.

When she began to sing to the trees,
he decided it would be best
to remain whole.

v

There is a door that leads
down a broken hill. Trees grow there,
but are dark, burdened with moss
and too much hunger.
If she walked here, with her dogs
barefoot and half-blind, then
I might still find her.

If I go mad, like she did,
I wonder if he will stay.

DANIELLE BOODOO-FORTUNÉ

Grade Seven Social Studies Unit

The merry-go-round in the back yard
was once a bedstead my father took apart
then welded back together into a whirring
contraption I rode through a season.
On long afternoons it spun like a pinwheel

among blossoming trees, apple and pear.
He built it as he built everything else
in those years, out of scrap metal and bits
of plywood—swing set, picnic table, tree fort.
When I think of that merry-go-round I think of

Mesopotamia's golden sands and lunar calendar.
I think: plow, sailboat, waterclock, stylus.
When I was twelve I lay on my back looking up
at the turning world and imagined I was rocking
in the cradle of civilization. It must have grown

dark, I must have gone in for dinner, but when
I think of that spring I think of my father
who died too young. I think of an iron bedstead
spinning between two rivers, Tigris and Euphrates,
the fertile delta running between.

PATRICIA YOUNG

The Guard

King Tut, five-foot-six, lies supine on mould-flecked cotton,
ceiling-transfixed. Body broken
like he'd been struck by lightning.
Dead at nineteen, before the purpose,
before the remark. My avatar. In my last teen year,

my man tried to kill me with a Volkswagen. Rammed
my spine with grille, reversed to gain momentum.
I leapt from light, body split from spirit—
ba left ha. Fractures don't kill, but heal with an echo
wedged in the chasm. The Valley of the Kings,

I imagine, is located in the foreground of a photograph
wall mural from *Sears*, beneath the mountain
at its lowest ridge. You can tear the world off
by its corner and ball it up in your arms;
that's all it is. I lied for a decade. The universe

got hitched, had quints, got divorced, pitched over, while
I ruminated in my bed about hot knives. I described
my crypt to a doctor who put a
gun-trigger hand sign at his temple: "You feel 'pow pow'
sometime?" No...the opposite. For self to reenter,

reanimate my shell, like the blockbuster CGI
storm cloud can reset the hero's bone back in line.
Instead, my ex-love became security guard, a bored
protector of goods against longing. Who wouldn't
rather camouflage than change? But grief has an unknown half-life,

and I've been resin'd in a vault
of magical thinking—that I can
spell-cast superstition into art.

STEVIE HOWELL

HazMat

Choose one of the six plots
four ironies, eleven conflicts
and a point of view. The guy
in the theater sits under the
ceiling painted with day glow
constellations. Isadora
Duncan is wrapping her
scarf around Orion's belt.

He's waiting for mayhem or the feature
film, whichever comes first,
meanwhile scrolling through email,
listening with one ear to previews
of coming attractions.
His good ear, the other
a rag of eardrum, incus in bits,
stapes shot to shit. Operation

Eternal Vigilance.
He's lucky, his cousin said—who
otherwise is not in this piece—
to have made it back without a prosthesis.
It's a romantic comedy.
They wouldn't let his service dog in,
he forgot the special vest, but no big.
Hephaestus can sleep in the truck.

As long as there's
no loud noise.
At this point laughing's ok.
Ten years of chick flicks
and in real life he still
can't trust himself
with a girl.

DAWN MCGUIRE

His Arms Are Full of Broken Things

From a line by Ray Liversidge and Charlotte Mew

The sun is out in Spring as all things are
but he fiddles listlessly with something unmendable
in the yellow September glare

her heart
or a marriage
or something more complex

the relationship with a daughter perhaps
the endless failures at employment
a social mask for wearing to the garden

party. There are no tears
that you can see and not much drama
it's not tv

although he's into singing
he can't seem to strike the right
note

with others on e-harmony.
He wonders why the little dents
and scratches

appear on his car
like parking tickets
in the Spring

and his dreams are full
of money flying out of his pockets
like birds in a seasonal migration

forgetting to return.
He's always preparing to move
But when he looks up from packing

His arms are full of broken things.

LYNDON WALKER

House

for HRS

He always lived there—
on plum-red escalations of morning
when magpies warbled from fence-posts
and heat ran like streamers through the living room;
during mild winters when rain clagged windows
and someone drew stick figures
of copulating buffalo on sweating glass.
He picked a bougainvillea spike from loping couch grass
and tickled his sister's feet with its point
as she rolled and squealed.
He circumnavigated his parents' bedroom
where arguments like smoke snuck under the heavy door.
They emerged shadowed by makeup,
buying Neapolitan ice cream at the local deli
where Mr Georgiades said 'Soon nobody will have to die'.
He couldn't believe that
because birds sometimes fell from the air
and his parents inhabited death like a promise of final satisfaction,
their loose bones and flesh seductive
with the knowledge of growing old.
The house was ransacked in his indolent games
by Roman soldiers who made its stones
as slippery as egg-whites, and was finally cut in half
on a day when smoke hovered over the suburb,
a hundred ghosts exiting walls
and sliding from floorboards that twisted and groaned.
It was lifted like a Leviathan in two exposed sections
with furniture taped to its ribs,
and trundled on a truck through dust
like clouds of unknowing.
He was pressed tight to those walls
or running for cover as his father walked with a belt
wrapped tightly around knuckles.

His sister leered from her corner bedroom
where the louvres were open and a boy was looking in,
saying 'You're in for it now'.
There was a smell of rising yeast
and his mother's high voice broke as if she'd been crying.
Crows cawed, settling
on exposed, unsteady ground.

PAUL HETHERINGTON

I Confess We Ate Chocolate

after Adorno

First, the bus driver kept getting lost and those on it began to wonder from what edge, into what ditch we would drop. Rain; let me speak of rain in the Baltic. Rain filled the narrow pitted roads, combed the trees where branches slaughtered peace and left cracks in all our frail judgements. When we arrived at the pristine compound in the middle of the wood and rain we stood, umbrella to umbrella. We loved our guide, her Austrian accent and suit, her brown hair and meager raincoat. We were not in Austria but in the complicated village of Paneriai outside Vilnius where the Russians dug pits to hide munitions, and the Germans used them for other things. (Have I mentioned the hot coffee and rich rye bread, the currants I'd eaten that morning? How each seedy berry bled a story, grown from fields once graves?). She talked and we followed (Jews and Catholics, some with their German heritage on their faces, some from New York or other places on the earth). She led us to the edge of a pit, a sloped saucer, green with grass. She led us there to speak of numbers, of the half-starved men brought to sort through things, of the villagers who came as if to market to find new shoes and clothes. In the small museum and the rain we read everything. Like crows we pecked down to the marrow of some bitter carrion. Like wolves. We combed for (hope) the story, the Japanese official who issued visas, the music and poetry of the captives. We were wet and huddled as a group. Then each of us, alone, walked onto the bus. Silence rode us back to the city. In our wet socks and our silence we shared shards of dark chocolate.

YVONNE BLOMER

In the Beginning was the Hinny

Progeny of a nag's prick
and donkey's complaisance,
no nose for punctilio
(behold her rope of spittle),
the newborn hinny skips,
staggers, slips, lists, leaps,
as if on points or little stilts:
"Look at me!" She glories
upside-down in vetch: hooves
pedal towards a lime-green,
apricot and pumpkin sky:
all this inedible splendour!

Her mammy squinnies at
the water-trough, a casual
witness of an offspring's wit:
the clownish ballerina
who must be nagged,
tutored by an ass,
and chafed by shafts, bridled
by those who try to break in
a thoroughly unbred beast
who will try to break out.

Memories of barley startle
her trance till, assaying
a whinny, she cackles or,
on three stammering legs,
performs Tai Chi to scratch
a flea or ear, scowled at by
that drenched enormous turnip,

the sun-hungry Holy Mountain.

JAMES GREENE

Jesus on a Train from Mumbai

I was dragged from the train by English tourists as the tall man from Tamil Nadu called “coffee coffee” in his soft, sad voice.

They had been to too many temples, mistaken the pigeon-feeding ritual for a message from god. All they wanted was for me to sing songs

altered by death but when I opened my mouth I vomited water hyacinth—they beat me with metal rods from London buses, whilst the school boy bird

whistled outside. Women wrapped in blankets came to view me, carrying boulders on their heads to mend the roads. When they judged me

bloody enough, we went for chai at a shack by the roadside, a statue of St. George in a glass case spoke. There was mist and no view.

In damp fields, men sold bags of candyfloss to over-dressed newly-weds, heaps of carrots sickening as goldfish. Children followed us like skinny dogs

their ribs rotten as railway tracks. In the back yard of his brother’s house a man invited us into his concrete hut, model trains mounted on the walls

like something shot. His brain was smaller than a mouse’s. He showed us a dead kingfisher the size of a rat, its enormous

beak open, about to speak, asked me to bless it. I could not. I had shared a bed with my mother, under the same

mosquito net, had watched my father miraculously pleasure thirteen women with his thirteen hands.

SUZANNE BATTY

Kennethland

This is all his now. The front row's four desks, habitually rearranged like a swastika throughout history. They have been annexed for the founding of Kennethland. He has a pilgrim's first thrill on sighting landfall. His anxiety rises from his head like a tall black hat. Inside its boundaries he raises a flag of outlandish design legitimising his mind's false invasion. He blames others for his border intrusions. His actions are a grand conspiracy, dressing up conformity's corpse in irrationality's dun-coloured uniform & dumping it over his checkpoint. He is fluent in visual propaganda. He shoots a history of his new world order in grainy super eight. The assault was sudden. He keeps a guarded airspace over his meticulous kingdom. He has measured every perimeter's inch. He keeps equal distances apart. There is no other landscape like this, so worth protecting. He writes his inaugural constitution in red crayon pictures. His weapons are literal, his thoughts fire rapidly like a gun-mounted camera. They hurt. Any breach to his sovereignty is dealt with fiercely. His left fist hangs in the air like a bulbous-headed drone. His neck is rigid undercarriage when he makes a decision. He draws computer game screenshots to prophesise what exactly will happen. Like a robot, he doesn't mix his words, but acts by instruction. Missile-pens launch from his fingers' slim silos buried in the cornfields of his jean pockets & stab at their flesh's no fly zone. He is steeped in Armageddon's instantaneous results. This land is lost. He has already begun to print his own currency. The denominations don't make sense, but they are as nostalgic as soil & well worth collecting. He doesn't want them to open his nation's tidy box. There are some inner workings they don't get to see.

He craves the sensation of a cattle crush pinning him,
but without the iron touch. He patrols. Outside his wire
enclosure everyone has been reclassified as an enemy
combatant. He keeps just one true prisoner of war.
He has no plans to exchange him for the present.

BRETT DIONYSIUS

Kid Stuff

Some can't forget their torturer, forgive
the egger on and fellow traveller
who stand and watch. Years later, named and shamed,
you can't recall and still don't recognise
the warning signs. Part civil, fallen state,
children shut grown-ups out, revert, no qualm;
doe eyes, cold butter-wouldn't, goldfish pout,
feral, angelic charm. Beyond spike words
and sticks and stones, from slings and arrowheads
to Chinese burns, your 101's the need
to suit. Let off, pride sacrificed, your turn
to watch, though adults will be mortified,
the spell charged up, wall-eyed, can't stop; pure will,
dark, proto-sexual, electric thrill.

PETER BRANSON

King of Diamonds

Occasionally I find a playing card
the wind has carried & left stuck in the gutter;
swept from a mansion lawn or prison yard
it is most often mixed with muck & clutter.

I marvel I'm the one who's singled out
to pick it up—a moment seeming fraught
with real fatality that leaves no doubt
a sign's been given just as I have sought.

For I've been looking up at scudding cloud
& listening between the awful thunderclaps
that roll on down these valleys good & loud
when all the inner workings there collapse.

As over some years I've picked up a few
foretelling cards among the stray black cats
wandering this world of mirrors, know: I knew
their meanings always, usually just caveats.

Today I found a King of Diamonds
that's somewhat worse for wear, torn & muddy;
it's obvious to whom it corresponds:
a man out there whose fate may well be bloody.

I place it by the pristine Queen of Spades
I found just last week beside this, the Two
of Clubs that tells by what she so evades
that nothing she can ever say is true—

it all mounts up: beware a fair-haired man
whose work involves electric instruments
& uses ladders for he's one who can
unwittingly cause fatal accidents.

While she, the most ambiguous of Queens,
come out of scuttering leaves, the fatalist
& O so famously portentous, means
the hidden force in play you can't resist.

Beware; be wary, that's the message, yet
I can't help looking through or right around
the cards to see what chancy hand has set
them thus together here, once lost then found

as innocent as every destiny—
such signs & portents challenge me somewhere
among my intuitions, moving me
to go against their telling. If I dare.

JOHN CAMFIELD

Last of the Elm Leaves

The discipline of that sound dry leaves make under foot
like ruined mercy, as if by sound alone it were settled:
what lives past its life replying to its life,
neither hearing nor sensing, speaking as it breaks

the release of this sound below the dying elms in August,
muffled in time by the rolling in of violent weather,
the great voice hidden in black air, the fissuring light and then
the avalanche of rain putting an end to the precise grammar

so that now, deeper in, soaking begins the rotting,
the brittle flesh yielding to soft heat and silence,
a thick blackening on the trails, an acrid mash
sticking to the soles, and beneath, a warmth, then earth itself

this humiliation, like the penetration of grief,
of voices lost: not one of us will not know it.

J. DAVID CUMMINGS

Legacy

We have the Pompei dog,
DaVinci's paintings,
Shakespeare's gloves,
the 32 plays, the 154 sonnets.

We have world-wide ruins where people
baked bread, told tales,
fought and loved
their children and friends.

Feudal swords hang on walls in Japan,
the hands that wielded them
rested into dust.

Eyes in ancient mid-eastern mosaics still
look out on scenes where people
once passed; thousands of vanished people.

And we have grandma's cut glass sugar bowl,
her leather bound Rubaiyat,
her lace scarf legacy,
her lessons of love.

KAREN WARINSKY

Lesbian Sex

I love it when you're rolled on your side
and your curves mirror the blue mountains
Sometimes I take you like that, without seeing your face
covering you with licks and bites, feathers

Sometimes I mount you and fuck you from behind
and you call out fuck me and I fuck you harder
my palms spread wide on your ass
or gripping your breasts like reins

But sometimes all I want is your face, to taste
your lips and run my tongue along the edge of your lashes
to leave my fingerprints on your cheeks, your nose, your chin
my scent along the swell of your neck

Other times we're so workaday, intent just on coming
reading porn, using vibrators, the one doing the supplementary
fucking is
thinking about the office or the children or bills
is thinking *Hurry up and come for crissakes*

Sometimes we play cards to get ourselves interested
Tell her your wildest fantasy, it'll command
and I'll say it's the moments afterwards when we're snuggling
spooned and almost asleep, when our orgasms still buzz in our toes

Sometimes all I long for is to look at you across a patio
white shirt, jeans and sunglasses
capsized with laughter at someone's joke
caught as a reflection in someone else's eyes

JANE EATON HAMILTON

Medusa is Crying

Sobbing bitterly like a ravished maiden,
Medusa wonders why vipers were matted to her hair,
hissing, and spitting, and arguing with each other
like deformed children. Perhaps it was her fault,
she thinks. If only she had not kindled the ire of the living
gods who were so very fond of punishing their creation.
If only she understood then as she does now, how much
deceit there is in love, and how willingly it can be tricked
in and out of its harness. Her greatest fear is not death,
but the shame that she would live so favoured as a sliver
of her former self, forever... She will never be appeased,
she thinks. Never again live undisguised, she tells herself
as a ganglion of eyes suddenly fix their gaze
and prepare to strike.

Something underserved happened.

Something big and cream fed was wrested from her body.
But she has no time to thread through the tangle of her thoughts
because another cutter suddenly appears out of a clot of light
and steps towards her.

At first, the young girl Medusa sees staring back at her
is hazy and unclear, but too familiar to be ignored.
Then as the memory of her former self thaws and bleeds
like a dark red seed, it dawns on her that she is no longer a fragment
but a mere reflection, and hesitates for just a moment.

Just until the gorgon in her stirs
and hunches over the water blossom on her lips.
And then, in the certain knowledge that all is lost,
that she can not possibly endure
the very bottom of things,
she growls defiantly
as one already slain
and turns to stone.

ILYA TOURTIDIS

Moon Jellyfish

Unhitched, you rise—a Chinese lantern trailing ribbons,
clenching and unclenching,
swallowing space as you sail
with fathomed grace through the dark;
now motionless, adrift; now climbing an invisible cord,
more trick of light than living thing,
a palpitation, a visual echo
of your old name, *sea lung*.

Your bell's a nerve net, frilled with cobweb
strands; four pink gonads glow
like sun-shot cherry blossoms; tentacles waft
plankton into the harbour of your mouth—
like the mind feeling its way into a half-remembered idea, the tongue
into a familiar sex, the way we sense, by degrees,
the murmur of wind, the brush
of weed against ankles, the shiver of wing-beat
as a fulmar skims the foam.

On bright nights you gather in your thousands,
phosphorous, moon spawn,
utterly dependent on your mother's pull, a bloom
of photons returning to their source,
a fleet retreating to the carrier, the flux
of neurons during each inhalation
as the breath journeys through sleep,
washes up with a sigh.

SHARON BLACK

Morely

As in: he'll morely be sitting there,
the butt of a roll-up between index
and thumb, the makings of another
in his lap, for why wouldn't the next
world be much like the one here?

As in: the crane this morning
alighting on the shed roof, morely
knew to expect the Sunday chicken-
scraps, the leg, the wings. Did he scry
into the kitchen window last evening?

More *than-likely*? It must be, I suppose.
I've never heard another soul
utter this mind-made shortcut. His
and his alone. Now he's gone, is that all?
Morely. This shatterable ves-

sel; the mini urn on the windowsill.

ANDREW FITZSIMONS

My Head Is Full of Pakistan

Riotous confusion—colour, light, noise—a bowl of jewels
poured into my hand by my friend, who keeps leaving
Canada to return to its gardens, its temples,
its feasts and ululations.

Its sudden kills.

A bomb in the street crashes without warning
on the vendor who yesterday sold sweet almonds.
And on his child.

Walls lock Westerners into deeper and smaller spaces
as the barrage grows.

North, where I sit at the table on my porch in pale spring sun,
a bowl of stones—clear quartz, blue calcite,
fool's gold, haematite, lake-polished glass—
gathers the light.

The river, in May, is almost ice-free. A swimming beaver
crosses the flooded road in front of the truck.
My husband will tell me this
when he returns bearing rainbows—
more trout than we can eat.

For now, the radio is my link to Sunday acts.
In Sweden, a pill frees a woman in pain
from too much life.

Twins in Belgium who are losing both sight and sound
decide they've had enough.

My mother asks, Why am I still here?
Her brain has turned to snow.
My father's is a blizzard.

The garden beyond the railing is pink and ferny green.
The sparrows never stop, robins insist, blackbirds whirr.

February hovers behind their songs: not bombs
but snow, thigh deep, shoulder deep,
a path unmarked.

“I’m just going outside and may be some time.”

Unearned riches. Undeserved cold.

Too many jewels. Too many stones.
I can’t use them all.
I don’t know how to save them.

[Note: the quotation is the reputed last words of Captain Oates, who walked into a blizzard on Scott’s doomed Antarctic expedition to save food for the remaining explorers. They died anyway.]

SUSAN MCMASTER

Nights in the Gardens of Priapus

It was the third year of the recovery:
Persephone showed up. Pale, and dusty,

she looked tired; feverish; and the pockets of her coat
were frayed. I'd seen her look better.

'Funny,' she said, some glasses later, 'Funny how that cunt
Oedipus hides his limp so well.'

She chewed a scagged nail.
I felt easier—about the frayed pockets.

Some shook their heads at the state of her
as if they hadn't seen themselves lately.

~

'She's a miserable bitch, that one,' said Oedipus.
For two heartbeats, I felt sorry for him.

I should've known better:
the way he looked at me.

Later he'd slip his hand
between my legs

without touching me.

TRACEY O'ROURKE

Note to Ex-Husband

That old jacket (the one with just the right slouch)
has been found
in clothes for the Sally Ann
by mistake. You called several times.

I picked the pockets long ago,
found nothing but the gritty lint of bad times;
not one pinched penny,
no rumpled hankie softened by my tears
or hardened by the snot of your anger,
no ticket stubs for puny promises,
no endless lists for domestic harmony,
and that pen you lost
which produced a sulk lasting long as winter,
heavy as wet snow,
it isn't there.

The jacket that wore you
smells like a stale Christmas tree,
shed of its light;
makes a handy gift
from the heartless to the homeless.

ELIZABET STEVENS

oh darling, it is no secret

This is how to find true north:

 first find all other norths false,
littered with rubble from fallen idols,
all that glitters is pyrite; pyrrhic; permeable.

Forget magnetism, abandon all meridians—
cartography alone cannot account for this;
the seven seas already an ocean entire.

It is hard to hang a shingle with a hangnail,
clumsy fingers, wayward tongues,
torn sails and all hands on deck.

The first mate is first to mutiny.
The cabin boy a girl in disguise.
The parrot speaks in riddles, always,
dead men tell no tales, but you should hear their jokes.

A compass can only guide, not lead.
It is your feet that must move,
your hands that must row, and row, and row
towards an x that never wholly marks the spot.

When in doubt, look up.
Watch for clues lining cumulus clouds,
constellations, celestial signposts—
 know you are not the first to see the stars fall.

We have nearly come to our white whale, our apogee.

Take my hand, I will teach you port from starboard.
I've walked left and right and recently,
shivered my timbers, walked
any number of planks.

SHARYN BRADY

Pelicans

Something in the slow gait of their wings says
fuck you. They don't mind dominating the scene.
A grey silk estuary of fine boned terns,

spoonbills, black swans from a chocolate box
and the pelicans crash into my line of vision
like a gunship, tilting the landscape off its axis.

One dwarfs the top of a lamp post. Odd, but
nothing like a circus elephant forced to
balance on a piano stool, the applause

worse than jeers and no chance of escape, not
even the feel of earth beneath her feet.
When I was a girl I was too large;

by ten I was built on a different scale
entirely to the approved models,
the little slips of things, slivers of

pink with lips and tidy hair, no scabs.
I blundered around the playground
with all the grace of Godzilla but none

of his confidence. There's a flinty mob
in me that wants to join in the laughter
but I don't see the Lamb of God in the pelican,

that old Catholic symbol has it wrong.
She'd never let herself be nailed to a cross
or scratch open her heart to feed her chicks.

Who would feed them tomorrow, then? No, the
bloom on her chest just a mess of spewed fish;
something in the slow gait of their wings says.

LISA BROCKWELL

Photographs of Jews

Yad Vashem, Jerusalem

1) An orphan child
crawls in the ghetto
like a dog.

2) A woman, wild-eyed as a deer,
stares at the muzzle of a camera.

3) A father points up to the sky
to ensure his son sees this
and not the brink of a muddy pit
where corpses lie in a casual heap.
The guards have raised their guns.
Birds wheel above, unimpeded.

I have dreamt of rough serge coats,
of escaping camps
and being sent to them,
of hiding in groves of trees.

I am a Dachau Jew with a yellow star
staring down the barrel of that camera.
I am digging potatoes from the snow.
I am hiding with my baby birds,
who will not keep quiet.

I shall not tell my daughter yet,
put off the moment, can't speak of it
in the trail of her bright innocence.

Some say God no more abandoned them
than the wind abandons a swallow's wing;
that the answer is as close to the question
as breath.

Can you not feel the ethereal dead
tearing at the veil till it's almost rent?

And what if I told you all those bones and teeth
hold for me a terrible beauty?

LISA JACOBSON

Pig at the Mexican Orphanage

Either it's all okay or none of it is,
like the lonely black-and-white sow with the bristly face,

her sty filled with rotting corn cobs
and the deep irremediable odor of pigshit

halfway up the hill behind the orphanage.
Past the yard where kids congregate

by swings and slides. Past pens
of bleating goats and the busy hen-house,

I stopped to talk.
Pig you stink and I have no children,

I said. She snorted in acknowledgment
and came close, her wet snout

with its damp, snuffly nostrils like two black tunnels.
Perhaps if I had a grass wand

I could turn her back into a princess
and avert her fate of becoming *carnitas* or *jambon*.

Perhaps if I dared to scratch behind her ears.
There are those whose pens

are definite and wooden, and others
whose only cage is the leaden sky

of their own mind.
Look here, in the exact center of my

divided heart where the blood
is always busy, rushing and returning,

where old questions lie
like quartered rotten potatoes

flung on the compost heap
to spring back new again and whole.

Tell me: when they weigh my heart
against the feather of truth

will it crash the scales like a hammer
to the back of a pig's skull

or float straight up to Heaven
like the shrieks of these children

which reach me, faintly, no matter
how high I climb? Bright sparks

from the welder's arc, they know the language
of foot and soccer ball, frijoles y tortillas, just as I know

abandoned may mean *alone, desolate, bereft*—
or finally free to feel everything.

ALISON LUTERMAN

Please Don't Go

Seven Years! Has it really been seven years?
Your spirit is fading, slowly, fading, fading.
Please don't go. I miss you so.

Memories once sharp and clear now appear
Blurred, sepia tinted, like an old photo.
Please don't go. I need you so.

Many wonderful years. Children laughing, playing.
I remember two sweet little girls. But you never
got to see them grow, and we miss you so.

Trying to recall just simple warm happy times.
Eating at Chinese restaurants, sharing the
Sunday crossword. A five letter word for 'show'?
Please, please don't go.

I pay for such thoughts with awful images of you
in the hospital. I said to Nina over the phone
'She stopped breathing. She's gone.'
I did not believe it for years, but now I know.

And so the time has come to close this door.
I want to keep it ajar, for just a bit more,
so that your light may cast even the faintest glow.
Please don't go.

WAYNE HODGINS

Poetry Magnets

I don't know what I was thinking
when I left the poetry magnets on the living room table
Two hundred words that one arranges in stanzas
on the refrigerator door

Having grossly overestimated the power of poetry
over teenaged hormones
the first thing I noticed on our return was the bathroom door
leaning, wounded against the kitchen wall
A team of basketball players towered over the dining room table
A young girl was asleep on the couch
Her green hair peeking out from under a pile of winter coats
The smell of beer and less legal odours filled the air

Ten kids stranded past metro hours
Mattresses and sleeping bags were assigned

And poetry was strewn about the kitchen floor
like asteroids scattered across the solar system

Afterward, poetry would show up at odd times
in unexpected places
“ennui” clinging to the cat’s dish
“suicide” was found face down in the bathtub
And “trust” was nearly sucked up in the vacuum cleaner

RANDALL FINNERTY

Prayer Is Scrubbing

Prayer is scrubbing a carrot with plastic bouclé bath-gloves on.

Prayer is another carrot, and another.

Prayer is opening the door to the mudroom and then the door
from there to the garden steps

and throwing the muddy water out into the leaky bucket.

Prayer works like the leaky bucket:

there's an 'is' and an 'ought' but the 'is' takes precedence.

Prayer is standing at the other garden door after midnight

and breathing in the dark and

seeing someone's white cat the White Cadger mid-stalk stand stock-
still in the middled night

and watch the watcher—and watch the watcher watch her,

another cadger cadging prayer bytes—

then stalk off into more dark, more garden, more bytes.

Prayer is dreaming that you asked if he had any time today,

the last day, for a chat,

and he confesses with alacrity but chagrin that he hasn't,

and you have asked because

you are pretty sure this is the last time you will be on the same
continent, before the great divide.

And you are dreaming of Last Things. Prayer works like that.

Prayer is that sudden intimation that just perhaps you might

forgive the one you know best,

(who is that? you? him? the other?)

might find how to be able to let or might be empowered

(as they tediously say) to let at last the last

nearly midnight shadow of whatever it is that stands between
you and the shining carrot

shuffle off its muddy coil and let the soil cleanse it.

Prayer is soil.

MIA ANDERSON

The Problem with Love

My brother died and I got his tarantula, “Nigger.”
Ma asked if I was fucking man enough
and I said “Yeah” so she handed me a book,
*Tarantulas, their Captive Husbandry and
Reproduction*, and went back to her TV shows.
Nigger the girl spider lived in a fish tank
with plastic ferns and a tiny house just big
enough for her to hide in. She let me
pick her up and she never bit. She spun
a silk forest to decorate her house. I fed her
bugs and told her tales I made up about Pa.
I came in the room and she rattled her little
pedipalp hands, which they do when mating,
hoping I’d pick her up. One day she fell
off my arm onto the floor and just lay a sec
before creeping toward her fish tank,
and then one of her legs fell off. I lowered
her in. She crawled, wonky, into her house.
I had a bad dream that night. I woke
in the dark, found Ma’s hair scissors,
reached into Nigger’s house and cut off
another leg. She hissed at me and hid.
Next morning she wobbled out to greet me,
and I cut off another leg. Each day I cut
another leg. She stopped spinning a silk
forest. Her legs grew back and I just cut
them off again. Soon she wouldn’t come
out of her house, or eat her crickets.
She tossed sharp hairs at me, tiny spears.
Then her legs did not grow back. She sat
in her house, grey, hissing like a punctured
basketball. One morning I scooped her
into my palm, chatting like the old days and
she just sat there, not biting. In the backyard
I placed her on an anthill. As the red ants

climbed her, I hosed down the fish tank.
It took fifteen minutes to scrub it spotless,
so the sun really shone through the glass.

JOHN WALL BARGER

Rain 48

The shape of the landscape spoke of her lips.

The way the ranges lay low in the rugged distance

all chapped and scaled from the constant squalls; the whittling ice.

She opened the crag of her mouth, and the tongue was a salt marshland

stocked with waders and stoats. They fished through the reeds and the bitter vetch.

They ventured into the dome of her corbelled palette to orate their foraging thoughts.

The dusk moves on, the dawn moves in and they move off, as light slices down through the gap in her capped front teeth. She holds a wedge from the gap in those limestone teeth.

Keeps it as a tool with which to test the way the winds blow.

Her eyelashes come from the wandering hedgehog; strong rushes woven into hoods, thatched visors to shield her hare quick eyes and to house the long stag-heart gaze. The hedgehog made off to become a mole, was part mole already with the long brown nose, and glad to be rid of his quiver of quills, as he dug down deeper away from the Queen. She took her nose from the beak of an eagle recycled her mind from the dog fox, and a bearded jackdaw made up her chin.

She has the frantic fingers of a spider but the palms of her hands are badger big.

A garland of blackthorn and oak twists around her hair, beech clogs clad her feet and between each toe grows the rowan and the scarlet holly.

The berries she gives to the fortunate rook.

Now the canine frosts are cast in cold iron,
and winter storms suck the sap out of prong tongued trees.
This is when the hare in her eyes will saddle the wind, will race the long shadows,
and chase mountain goats, chase mountain rams to be sacrificed for her own good.
She employs a gizzard to chew on their entrails, grates fog into sleet from the bark
of their gnarled horns, and then sounds out a summon to the wolf hounds waiting in the woods
as her eyes shine like demons and she moves across the peaks, swift as a swallow.
She roars her orders through the rain; a report comes baying back from the distance.
A sad and desolate call from the hill, from the throat of a scorched vessel
thousands of years old, and covered in stones.

She is bound to our time through the weight of the ages
and she watches from the wave of the mountain, in the coil of it
as the rusting wind plucks at the wire in the lyre of her larynx.
It suckles on her nostrils, fights the foxes in her ears,
and drives home an air, through that shining gap
between her teeth.

CRONA GALLAGHER

The River of Forgetting

Standing on the riverbank, the man cradled a small package
as he negotiated with a nearby boatman.
Then he waded into the River Ganges and placed
the package—a loaf-sized bundle wrapped in gold cloth,
tied to a flat stone—onto the v-shaped keel
before climbing on-board.

The boatman dug the oars in
and moved them out towards the middle.

On the riverbank, a youngster was playing a kite,
his gleaming eyes, black as headstone marble, looking skyward,
to where a shovel of white pigeons flew out from a tower.

Barking dogs broke into a fight and I looked over to see them scatter
between the black cows, garlanded in marigolds,
standing entranced on the riverside steps that fed down into the water
below the sandalwood-orange cremation-fires of a burning Ghat
as people promenaded past enjoying the morning sun.

Near the middle of the river, the boatman raised the oars.
The man stood up, lifted the loaf-sized nugget
and dropped it into the river without ceremony.

The boatman lowered the oars
and rowed in.

The boy's purple kite,
a diamond strip cut from a plastic bag
and fixed to a bamboo crucifix,
dived and twirled through the air
like a dolphin swimming invisible currents,
its nose sifting through the unseen
as it surges down into the blind sea.
When I looked down again the man was gone.

The boatman, perched at the back of the boat,
was smoking a cigarette.

Gilded into the alluvial veins of my memory
is myself turning to look out towards the middle of the Ganges:
the surface was still—sealed over,
like the mind of the father,
through whose unfathomable waters,
embossed deep down, tied to a flat stone slab,
his shrouded child plummets.

PAUL McMAHON

scarabs

beetles dismount bikes halfway to hereford
and stay for chai beetles go for broke goad
storks half-seriously stave hunger with crumpets
gateau and prosciutto scones beetles bake baklava
in dutch ovens and break for gin and billiards

beetles set downstream in milk jugs make
for medugorje and mostar and split haul
corrugated tubes through date fields filch
figs from dry branches beetles build ladders
beetles grow bored of dalmatia walk daschunds
pull pine trees backwards through backwoods in winter

beetles leave virtue in vitro roll dung downtown
shanghai the boardroom grow twenty-one fingers
for twenty-two pie charts beetles talk energy
talk economies of scale beetles forget themselves on
corporate outings genuflect for drag queen judge
judays say *i'm in transition these are transition towns*

beetles catch basil bare-ass balls-out
pen tijuana bibles curate thigh quality
donkey shows on a velvet elvis beetles
admire his perfect skin whet their lust for
holy ground beetles run with the pigs
run for president beetles learn glagolitic
beetles watch meryl streep forget her lines
(meryl streep forgets her lines)

beetles tire of gardens give genocide
the conch find grapes in their wings
(must thank something) line the quiet
hinge beneath a bomber beetles flint the
hatchet pay with nickels and knives beetles

think God's ready for remission and a nitrate
glow beetles spend saturday contemplating holes
sunday too

JOSH NADEAU

The Screen

1

She writes: I work at a think tank now. I'm an intern.
No pay, but a possible reference and resumé credit.
I have my own badge, I hold it to the scanner,
the gates open of their own accord.

The windows are tinted and the light filtered.
All day down the astro-turf corridors we wheel
carts overflowing with print-outs: drought,
Kiribati overwhelmed, Bangladesh flooded.

There is a screen you may touch, cold as a lover's hip,
and it will tell you the future.

The fatigue of this labor is beyond belief.

We download the model of the Himalayas melting,
the Ganges and Yalu River, that irrigate a billion farmers,
petering out to a scratch in dust.

There are further predictions, but we can't access them.

Sometimes even here you can sense the hum of traffic.

Once I swear I heard a sparrow. Perhaps
it was a digital cue in the background music.

2

When I was a child, I had a recurring dream.
I dressed for school methodically.
I had just learned to button in the grownup mirror
where each of my gestures countered me.

My father had shown me how to wait at the sign
and trust the bus emblazoned on the shield
would actually arrive, loud and full of strangers.
I came to the brass-shod doors just at the bell.
I helped the teacher beat the erasers, the dust
choked me, except it did not, I realized
I was still deep in the dream, I had forgotten to wake,
and I had to go back and find out how, no clue
except suffering, or else my father's gentle hand
that smelled of shallots and Burma Shave.

But now if I go back it is to the simulations
and the wind that moves across the screen
at three miles per minute.

D. NURKSE

Sealed

The manmade biosphere was sold at cost
today, the planned savanna's crinkly plants
punched and tagged. I'm lost
in this dark wood

four-poster, wondering: could
a brand-new biome possibly supplant
its monolithic elders? Love, we can't

go quiet, as our systems do in sleep.
We can't partition off our ruined realms
from the panoramic sweep
of consciousness.

The earthy, blithe redress
of those eight neo-greenhorns overwhelms
me now; they medicated slippery elms

and infused rhizobia in clover roots
beneath bright skies of high-performance glass.
Their insulated suits,
advanced degrees,
their stellar indices
for good cholesterol and body mass:
the cleanliness is gorgeous, gone. We pass

a dull shame back and forth, find it rejected
as a corroded organ: chargeless, capped,
a fern someone neglected
to repot.

Geodes with peridot
hearts, we burn and scar and overlap
our layers in a topographic map,

encroaching on ourselves like caves that cut
their ice incisors early on. Basalt
blood in hard pools. What

could have possessed
you, head on my rain stick chest,
to love me? Every vein a hairline fault,
I shudder with their secrets and their salt.

NATALIE SHAPERO

Shadow Veteran

Two tickets, please, for the *Footage of Shadows*.

Screen three. I'll take your shoes.
I've seen worse. It's from all this rain.
Has the sun come out? I forget when I'm serving.

You'll have fun. Don't worry. Just remember
where you came in. It's standing room only,
so watch your step, and if you forget how many feet
you had, know that it can't actually hurt you.

In a nutshell: breathe slowly, flex the digits
and focus on one, touch a tip to the ground. Stop
as soon as the shadow gets too much. Don't push it.
We were all fairweather walkers the first time.

I'm bound to silence as to the details of the reel
itself, but I can say that you will never see
a better new release a hundred times over.
Believe me. That's why I work here. We go free.

There's something about a shadow when it is cut
by nothing but your sole on the cold glass.
Sometimes we turn off the projector to hear
an audience pace in pitch black to shadow light.

They still see it when there is nothing to cast it
but a pair of disabled eyes. I'm still mourning
the loss of an extra toe I thought I saw in the early evening
showing. Good luck. There's no money back.

RUBY TUROK-SQUIRE

She hasn't changed places

She looks no older than she did,
A year ago, when I saw her last. Kept to herself, on view, she is
Not so old as the Madonna, hewn from lime-wood—her joined hands restful.
On a warm, late summer's day, the Gallery's shade
Stalls: blandly air-conditioned; temperate.
Swathed outward by reliquary, the Madonna
Is alcoved, hands unmoved.

Eyes sever her bower. Charcoal walls, behind lime-wood's prayer, are grey.
Arbored, in her bower, she must stay.

Footfalls away, in another room, Miss Susanna Gale
Looks no older than she was, in 1763. She's still, at fourteen, waiting—
Made here, a lady, within a portrait's chamber.

I'm tired, I tell myself—and know in my bones, that fixed
Seasons have past me on moving, metal-shelved stairs;
On glass ramps, opaquely frozen.

She hasn't changed places, at full-length. But then,
The background's allotted—leafed as a stately garden, actual or dreamt.
Whoever may carry her favour next the heart, she looks, herself,
As if her likeness were set, to prevail.

She's in good company: un-fretful; genteel.
Arrayed side by side, after a fashion, each singular pose
Would—in any event—serve to
Complement modes of reverberant elegance.

Brought to the threshold of Joshua Reynolds' studio,
Did Susanna take him, at a glance or at a word's breadth,
To plantations in Jamaica? An heiress, he's the artist—politely introduced.
Nothing's tracked on a cheek, where the artist goes
Ever so sparingly, with white-damped rouge.
In her right hand, a rose is as pink as the folds of her dress. Petals won't fall,

while
She's still, as she was.

Being young, had she seen herself run
Into high gales of laughter, high seas of recoil,
Before she stepped, watchful, into a dark-varnished mirror,
And—since an appointment was over—out, again?

A year after last seeing her here, I can't know.
In this late summer, she looks to a closer season. Her arched brows pre-empt
Any discomposed surprise, at what may pass.

I'm tired, I tell myself. I glance back, moving away.
The Madonna, alcoved against charcoal,
Needs must stay.

CATHERINE STEWART

Sing

When she expressed not only shock that her father was dying but resentment that such a thing could be happening to her, her naïveté provoked me, outweighing the compassion I like to think I feel, so I stated primly that my first memory was of my grandmother's funeral and, it having being followed by too many others to count, my most reliable expectation was loss.

“What is it about you,” she shot back, “that attracts so much death?”

Dumbfounded, I had no answer. So I closed my eyes and—summoning my super-power of imaginative retribution—pictured her in a skimpy flowered bikini, bobbing along on an air mattress, feeling invulnerable because she remembered to put on sunscreen, oblivious that the same current leads us all, irresistibly, into the rapids.

I only joke because I'm sad. A heritage of days responding politely to telephone solicitations, marking papers, scrubbing mildew from between bathroom tiles with an old toothbrush, toting up the bills, hoping the balance will be lower this month than last, scanning the newspaper, stomach churning at atrocities committed here or in places the names of which I can't find on the map ...

And after people die, what are we left with?
Things left unsaid. The wish to have lived with intensity every blessed day, to have told loved ones how much we cared before they were stretched flat under starched sheets mouths opening for a last sweet spoonful, rheumy eyes blinking at the squeak of linoleum under the nurses' rubber soles as they come in to plump up the pillows, asking brightly “And how are we doing today?”

Not too well, actually. We're none of us doing all that well but words fail us, yet again. So maybe words are not the answer. Maybe when people are dying what we ought to do is just sing to them: not vent idle chatter, pretending nothing's wrong,

or grasp for closure with portentous conversation,
but lift our voices in praise of what they were

each bar of music a step articulating their comings and goings
the way a staircase goes both up and down
at exactly the same time.

SUSAN GLICKMAN

The Single Woman Traveller, Latin America

England's frostbitten fields laid out like circuit boards.
Ice-filled bomb craters, north of Leeds,
write a long sentence to the coast, spelling out
the O, O, O distress call of men at their own throats:
abandoned payloads of a long-past war
which had your mother, at six, dreaming bananas.

Silver seams of lights across the southern States,
earth rumpled below, make your flight
the zig-zag mend of a woman's knuckles,
a woman who hums to her porch as mosquitoes
fizz her children's blood onto the glass of the bulb,
sticking there, like dropped stitches.

Your Spanish turns out to be useless.
At Arrivals, you side-step the locals,
their wreck mock-taxis. The high-priced bar,
you discover, translates into brothel.
Waiters don't ask what you want to drink,
but "¿Para tomar?": *for to take?*

Take care. The night is done up like a corset,
and kittens with prominent spines
teeter, oblivious, over the gullies.
Take this language that falls apart under the tongue
like fruit dropped from a market stall
undressing itself beneath the moon's glare.

Take the eyes of the Robert Mitchum lookalike,
which sleep through his nightlies on the desk,
waking only to push up the hem of a passing dress.
A shift away, pregnant turtles reject the Atlantic
to oar up the black volcanic grit of the beach
and bury their futures: wet, delicate, out of reach.

ROS BARBER

Sonnet for the Tiny Neutron*

At first it seemed to have no mass—just dazzle,
flavored with zip and bang. They called this cosmic,
quirky weirdo the Ghost Particle:
space partitioned to mere verb, mere spirit,
mere form. Though it's not, of course: it tropes,
changing states at random as it whizzes
through space, its flavor a matter not, as hoped,
of order, but probability. Thus:

change. Thus: time. Thus: mass.
And the Standard Model's calculus?
Empty. Beauty doesn't prove the math
(Einstein's famous malcontents). But what is
content if not form? Everyone knows
God does not play dice. He merely throws.

*Italian physicist Enrico Fermi gave the neutrino its name, which translates to "little neutral one."

ARNOLD SEONG

Spring

Forgiveness is everything. A step here, a step there, a whirlwind dance
then all is gone in a wink. I am waiting for the vee formations
to come home, for spring to arrive. In my heart, frozen, in a moment of madness,
comes the tunnel, the darkness. When will the light reappear?
My cat's yellow eyes are filled with curiosity. I wish I was an animal, devoid of debt.
Innocence and trust lost on the highway of life and the road of lies.
I will be eaten up, guilt, remorse, anger. I'll tuck them away,
they will tumble deep in the craters. The trees are budding,
the sun is hot, the sky painfully blue. I must buy milk and bread,
prepare some meals for the week. I get surprised every day, every way.
A seven year relationship gone with the look of another from the past.
Secret trysts in black motel rooms, the light of the television
shimmering like northern lights on knowing walls and sweaty bodies.
A myth from long ago, from enchanted forests, that doesn't exist here.
I hear the fire truck alarm, I pray for their safe return, I see empty eyes.
My hand is cold yet it writes of wounds and happy moods,
a daily charade of survival. My oatmeal is perfect, creamy not sticky.
We've been touched by disasters, living in huge shadows that could
swallow and destroy us. I feel fear and I put it on the back burner.
I recycle religiously but where does it go? On a plastic island in the ocean.
The shame is thrown in with the garbage and worms, decomposing
in the earth, my pain with it, seeping in the ground.
I dream of three turtles, a mother with her babies, my diamond children.
Rough, thoughtless lovers thinking with their dicks.
My imaginary prince, a liar of words, who I will bring to my deathbed.
I hear the birds outside, they sound busy, they have a purpose.
I'm all over the place, I can't concentrate, all I do is reminisce.
Making love with the painter, on a table, on a full moon, his work on my walls.
A distant sister, a close friend, many people in between. How do you live
with an injured body and only your head to move? I smell the sweet
air of spring, makes me crazy every time. My love of music on my ankle,
songs forever playing in my mind with notes swimming in my brain.
A drunken mess I am, spitting out nonsense, tears cascading

all over my body. I see tulips peeking out, it's full of dog shit everywhere.
It's melting, it's dripping, all disappearing in the cracks.
Men fucking like porn stars, where's the romance, wooing is extinct.
The fairy tale is over, my cat wants in, time for another coffee.

CÉLINE PITRE

Supreme

“A petition was filed to the Israeli Supreme Court to let Palestinians harvest their grapes, and the High Court told the Army that they must let them harvest...People have rights to this land and there’s no law that takes these rights away.”

–Avital Sharon, Israeli lawyer, Rabbis for Human Rights

Atta wants to go harvest his grapes
and he can’t go because what used
to be his vineyard, the settlement took
as their *shabam*, their security zone,
and he can’t go because he doesn’t
have a permit and he doesn’t have
a permit because they won’t give him
one and this is the problem, so I
called the Army and they said he can’t
get a permit because he has to prove
this is his land and he has to get an
expert to show that this is his land
and I said that he did that, he came
to your office and showed you the map,
and he said I don’t have it, and I said,
could you look again because he even
remembers the date he was there and
Palestinians don’t usually remember
the date and he called me back and
said, yes, I have his date, but I don’t
have his map. But a map costs a lot
of money, I said, could I send it to you
on the computer and he said, no, I don’t
like that and here’s what we could do,
I could come to his land and you and I
and him, we could walk and he could
show me. So we agree on a date and
Atta and I are there and this guy doesn’t

show for the meeting, and here we are,
this has been going on for three years.
Last year, they let him come in to harvest
his grapes, just for a day or two, and you
should've heard his voice on the phone,
calling from his vineyards, picking his grapes,
the joy. And now he wants to go in again, and
they're saying ever letting him in was a mistake

FRANCES P. ADLER

Teachers

Four rooms gave onto a pine-floored hall, draughty, echoing at the centre of the school, always full, it seemed, with some unlucky class at gym: dull rumble of plimsolls, solemn bump—bump of nine-year-olds dropping from the creaking antique vaulting box. Frosted glass made up the doors and walls between. Drowsy from reading or sums we watched shadows tumble past. Our turns, Mr Adams, scathing, saturnine, oversaw our clumsy circuits and falls. He'd drag clear of the wall a tall curtain of ropes thick as bell-pulls, greasy with use. They creaked and swayed like rigging and Adams in his boredom drove us up them like a bo'sun. At the top I always clung to the cold steel collar, stared at the pointless, perished mat beneath. From the safety of the floor, palms raw, I watched the struggles of mortified girls in skirts, nudged whoever was next in line and smirked at the ropes' swinging ends—leather-bound, stiff, stitches fraying—Frankenstein's cocks, we called them in whispers, a weather eye cocked for fear of Adams.

But Adams, Adams, a teacher myself now, I regret never stopping when we passed in the street, maybe to joke man to man about those comic leather ends; those four walls of bathroom glass that cased the school's heart; and that deep thunder, winter afternoons, like the circling of a great animal unhappiness, muffled, perpetual. Two suicides divided by thirty years—almost a classroom puzzle. One from the skinny boys milling at the ropes—Richard ('a king's name') the headmaster's son, seven years on. For what? I used to wonder. And Adams, who took his shotgun into the fields near Abercynon. Well, I wish I could greet and thank him somehow, teacher to teacher, and offer a climber's hand to his, relaxed now forever; half-hearted man we could never know who sent us inching, inching up difficult ropes, those worn out rubber mats below.

WAYNE PRICE

Tennis Court Road

“The rows of bags grew. A priest stood in the McEnroes’ yard, in the midst of the white bags, making the sign of the cross. He appeared to be praying.”

—Michael Winerip, *New York Times*: Jan. 27 1990

I like to remember my grandfather
as sitting in his sunroom
full of vhs tapes
fake turf flooring with a bocote wood desk for coins and taxes
all the orchids my mother gave him as birthday presents
displayed around the jacuzzi nearby
my grandmother across the house
getting ginger ale from the frigidaire in the garage
the amoeba pool out the window closed for winter
the garter snake that bit my cousin
dead in the snow

or my mother herself
a couple miles away
first hearing the sound of something big and dark
sailing over the frozen creek
with paint dripping off her brush
pauses
with a couple minutes gone
to call my pa

aluminum and wood shear
an albatross
or the sound of one sailing
everything silent along south st & audrey
everything crisp and rolling as january—

gravel on metal
the foggy hills of tennis court rd.
the bird descends
but only to lay eggs

my grandfather drawn away
from green books of tax code for a moment
to see what landed in his pool
and explosions of police lights
projecting on the bare trees

up the hill
on hills like I sledded down
kids with bloody foreheads
scream Mamá!

kids from bogotá
where I have never been
are roaming my grandparents' yard
where I spend the fourth of july
and watch my father
grill steaks

and now I sit in the sun room
wondering which video tapes fell off the shelves.

VINCENT MARKSOHN

Things We Know When It Rains

the birds are drunk on the fermenting plums of the big tree out back

they fly erratic into the windows
thud
and die

we cringe with each thump
then gather their limp feathered necks in our useless hands
and bury each one with a glass button grave good
under that same tree

a sea-worn stone
marks each failed flight

inside
a different story

inside
a little girl draws kitty-cats in green ink

there's a hole in her brain
the size of a plum
you can see it on the MRI

a dark space
an echo of where the terror was

sometimes
the dark space
mocks our desperate joy in her sing-song mind
and her carefree wanderings about the house

but in the deep heart of truth
the dark space
the size of a plum

that the MRI can find
has nothing on her

because while we can
while we have the upper hand
while we have the chance

we're filling the space
with life-long commitments
with forever promises
with for-always-I-love-yous
with an upsy-daisy umbrella
and a rainy day with the daddy who has changed the world
for her

there are some things the MRI can't detect
it's these things that make the difference

ANITA ROBERTS

To Feel

The past tense of the verb
and I am back in childhood's
art class—"Today, we are going
to make a present for your parents
out of macaroni and felt
out of paper clips and felt
out of the tears of divorce
and long November rain and
the corpse of a grasshopper
and the back-of-a-baby's-
mouth-silk smooth-
pool pocket and the terrifying
clunk of generation and
felt. There are no lines
to cut along or keep
the colours in. You're
on your own. At 3:15
outside this clutch of years
no longer than your dog's
life span, Time will arrive
in the Halloween mask
your grandparents fashioned
out of polio, foreclosures
and papier-mâché
to take you to the sea
where you will go like gleaners
between the velvet water
and the felt indifferences
over this spinning clay sphere
held in no hands, made
without love, lovelier
than the intense attraction
between your eye-songs
and these desperate invocations of your little wanting heart.

TIM BOWLING

Transit

The horizon is doing my favorite trick, flattening itself into a blazing line. I've been watching the sky from this plane as the plane burns through it, the dark streaming behind. It's an illusion of space and light I've stared at so long now that I've become confused. And not a simple confusion, in which I equal the zenith of my own perspective and you equal the burning horizon. You are in the horizon and so am I. I'm also on the plane

and you are nowhere, though several times now, I believed I heard your voice, turned from the window to look down the aisle, as if you could possibly be there. Like a dream I often had in the years after we split—how I followed your echo through an apartment (that one built like a thin-walled cinderblock) where the rooms were infinite, filled with people I didn't know and your voice steadily disappearing into the next room. I always arrived late, just in time to see

a glimpse of your heel or elbow slipping around a corner into nothing, just past a doorway. I never caught you before I awoke. Between the dream and the years after, I began to wonder if any of it was real: you, me, the way I could feel my pulse like a moth in my throat each time you moved past me. When I blink toward the aisles, I notice a circle of light obscuring my view (penance for staring too long at the sun), a transit in negative. Not the astral spot of Venus

across the broad sun, but a bright tiny form on a body so vast it could be the dark sky itself. It could be the infinite, God's Love, as Augustine imagined it in a time before space could be measured, before we understood that everything is finite, that everything is only as we perceive it. So, I know that I loved you from that knowledge alone, though I can no longer feel that heat. The dark has caught up to the plane and the horizon has burned itself out. Not even the faint light of a city below, as if we are

flying over nothing into nothing. When I rest my temple against the glass, I swear I hear the Atlantic shifting below and think of a water current in the southern hemisphere unbroken by land that circles the earth. You told me once how a solitary note at certain depths will echo the same path endlessly, how if I whispered into that water, my wish would follow its own song of longing through every ocean, hypnotized by the rhythm of waves, until someone reached far enough down to lift it into the singular air.

DANIELLE CADENA DEULEN

Two Days in Spring

1. Sunday 12 February 2012

The nun Tenzin Choedon, at a crossroads near the Mamae Convent, in Aba Prefecture, Sichuan Province, sets herself on fire—this girl of eighteen—and dies.

I scroll down the blue film of words this afternoon, then pull on boots, a raincoat, and head outside to dig through black clumped earth and the fleshed roots of day lilies.

Now she is salt, water, bone. A line of charred letters. Rain falling on the trees' blackened skin.

It falls so quietly, fingers the guttering eaves, stains the concrete path and the metal blade as it cuts through chestnut leaves which seep a dark fluid. Falls, soft, into the opened earth.

Now I bury the roots of this small apple tree—a stick and a bare root—scrape back the dirt and tamp it down, tie the espaliered arms to the wall.

It seems impossible that it will grow. And as the rain comes harder, I stand stripped and rooted, can only wait—how long—for the bud to swell and tear the bark, stiff blades of crocus to cut through earth, the quince to blood-redden.

The sudden flowering.

(In Aba Prefecture, Sichuan Province, the soldiers who took her away
will not release the body for last rites.)

I put away the tools and pull the shed door closed. The light to the west is indigo, dried ink, rust.

Shadows deepen. New earth a black stain in this early spring.

ii. Monday 12 March 2012

Bloody dock has survived the winter, rosemary, green sorrel.

The earth labours in the dark.

In Syria, Homs has been under siege a year now.

News comes of a massacre of women and children and some men—beaten, mutilated, throats slit.

News comes like water, a rumour, trickles through cracks and underground channels, then a torrent.

Here is a child. Here is another. Another. Look away, look away.

Their suffering does not end.

In Book One of the *Georgics*, Virgil tells us how to occupy the long winter months with small tasks, waiting for the spring. How to read the signs:

A crimson shadow darkens the sun.

Wells seep blood.

Pale ghosts come walking through the fields at dusk.

(Think of the farmer who will plough his land a hundred years from now, harvest weapon and bone, how seed will take root, grow through socket and blue-black soil, towards the cold light.)

Sometimes the small tasks of custom and routine are not enough.

War creeps over the surface of the earth.

KIM TRAINOR

The Uninvited

For Charles Simic

If I do not often think of the dead
it is because I know they are with me.
They come from their strange distance
carrying gifts in their misshapen hands:
books, string, cabbages, poetry and bread,
or less desirable things—a yellow word,
blue corroded thoughts, shriveled black
plums of something said or left undone.
Watery and vague, they still know how
to penetrate the deepest, sleeping self
lost in the daily relief of labor and light;
no matter how I deny it, they use my grief
to unlock the twilight gate of my defenses.
But I don't mind their unannounced arrival,
their fingers of willow, their unfocused eyes. . .
Like friends, they linger aimlessly, counting
flies or kicking stones, or pacing in the grass.
Then they simply pass away, and the day
is my own, to slough, or tear and mend, as I
see fit. Alone again, I see how easy it is to be
like them: to let the numbing autumn sky
chill my eyes until nothing human remains,
iris and cornea dissolved into a gray flat
mass without an echo in the sea. And gifts?
Well, I admit, I've got some rubbish to lug;
it's summertime and the livin' ain't easy,
and things I offer seem to slip and fall
between their rainy, treeless lifelines
and foggy, missing palms. But at midnight,
though I'm not sure I should invite them in,
I think some evening I could set the table

and leave out a glass of milk, so they will
know I welcome them, as I hope they will
me, when my time comes, to the other side.

LEE H. McCORMACK

Walking Without Feet

You do not return complete.

You return with broken teeth and bleeding gums,
sores on your heels down to the bone.

You return blind, you have stood too long on the prow
watching the place where sunlight meets the sea.

You return unable to eat, with flesh turned inwards,
you return with a duodenum heavy with parasites,
you return with visible bones.

You return silent, you return deaf.

You return without names for the garden birds, for
the robin's territorial disputes, the magpie's indifference.

You return with vomit staining your clothes,
you return open, you return having lost your defences,
you return choking on flies and cockroaches.

You return from a long journey, you have come further
than Odysseus, than Dante, than Frodo.

You do not return complete. You have walked without shoes,
you have had cholera, you have walked past exhaustion,
past drought. You have walked past language,
past sky burials and cities too ancient to have been given names.

You return and stand on the other side of the wall from me,
as I hang my washing, white and yellow and fresh
against the sky. Bile in your throat. I smile, raise my hand:
you look the same to me.

ROSAMUND TAYLOR

Wasted Not Wasted

Fuck tired she say tole me Im nine her age
her slot in hell Im die-able she lay
face nesting glistening on the pillow not
often a nurse hear littles cursing watch me

stop breathing slept next day mooks took my mama
her lock the closet slid me under the key
say honey slide it back ifn you hear it me
my shit in there caint beat ma ass for drama

attending say three day dehydrate heat
e r say neighbor call chile screaming mama
six hour straight my cell run out a battering

she say fuck you you soft white shoe too sweet be
my ma aint shit got shit and like to be dead from karma
Ima cry if I wanna cause it my breath that mattering

PAUL GRAMS

Wedding Service

She is plain
but he likes that
not, as others whisper
because Another is so fair
nor as rebellion for the act
not for subservience
she is not to be ignored

Her veil, white lace
as pale, almost, as her skin
eyes bright
stance demure
and she has been taken
before

What better scandal
an unexpected wife
like the whispers
a preference
without choice

He vows, this day
one to see happy
the other to serve

SALLY MOORE

The Woman Who Swallowed History

It took almost seven decades for the woman
who swallowed history to break

her silence, for the Sturm und Drang
of what had happened to her

to erupt, the way a piece of shrapnel
might finally work itself free,

and for her secret, enshrined in layers
and layers of guilt, lies and shame,

to take on the translucent lustre of a pearl,
something of value she thinks

she will bequeath to a dutiful niece,
an inheritance of bald truth

on no occasion did she consider sharing
with her husband when he was alive.

But now she is once more a prisoner,
too frail and ill to leave the Berlin apartment

in which she was born and where
she will soon die, a fact which liberates her

to reveal her wartime role as a young
and beautiful food taster for Hitler

and an incorrigible flirt with his guards
at Wolfschanze near the Polish border

where she never saw Der Fuhrer in person
but played with his dogs, Blondi and Bella,

and for the rest of her life, so well fed
on rich dishes spiked with the fear of poison

while others starved, she was unable to enjoy
spring asparagus in cream sauce

or the woodsy flavor of forest morels
or forget that her life had been saved

by a whispered warning from an SS friend
to go back to devastated Berlin

just days before the rest of the kitchen staff
were shot to death, and where

in the first months after the war,
the Red Army so loved her well-padded

and plump figure, they treated her
to savage beatings and weeks of rape,

which is why she never bore children
or later carried an extra ounce of weight.

JUDITH KRAUSE

Yawn

Funny how a yawn travels through a room
a pied piper gathering all the rats

In that instant we all draw from the same source
a great swallowed gasp shoved into our lungs

like socks stuffed in a bag
and the long outward sigh

That we try to hide it up our sleeves
makes us culprits in common

like playing truant
with a friend

It's mostly like this
our bodies that bind us together

despite talk of mind's united
mutual goals—a Weltanschauung

No, more likely it is that we all pee
bare-footed in the night

with toenails that particular pale shade of shell
and a shadow pressed onto each heel

That at a certain point in the evening
we reel our shoulders in on tiny strings

to catch the small warmth of our elbows
and shrink our silhouette

We all lean the same way as the bus turns a corner
grow a wide-legged stance on a train moving

We all rise
on tip-toe

at the edge
of cold water

And sneezing scares us somewhat
those first few seconds when the breath comes in and in with no end

We know the mundane imperative of bowel
and the incredulity of a broken heart

Our bodies loosen in warmth or water
and we all leave hair on the pillow

We share in the first great O
our mouths make for milk at the start

And the milky grey our eyes
all turn at the end.

SARAH RICE

You'll Never Know

The window confesses a square of summer,
A blue to stripe those bone-white cups,
The farmhouse jug you still remember
Sometimes. The netted curtains tremble
On the shadows of a breeze that, somewhere,
Absent leaves have smothered from the air.

Opaque, your gentle body spent by days,
You rest your brown and knotted fingers
On sheets turned down and tucked in ways
Your unchanged self would quietly adjust.
That was always your method, your routine;
The smoothing, placid ghost, the half- unseen.

Now in open space a child yells in sharp delight,
A throttled bike roars, spiking into the distance.
And in that moment your mind has taken flight
Skimming the dark waters of time—
To the bicycle leant against a whitewashed wall
The muffled ring of laughter from the village hall

Frost-brindled churns, blistered fields of clotted mud
Days imagined before dawn, the flare of his cigarette,
Stocking lines, that one-meek-kiss, flush of blood,
'You'll Never Know' on the vicarage gramophone,
A rhapsody, those days.

When all began to fade,
Still you wept when you heard that love song played.

For you now, no letters lie in no special place.
Too brief the touch of love. Only an imagined
Ending; beneath the Perspex his dying face

Looks up, captures a blue square of summer
Skimming the dark waters, fading from sight
Falling towards home, forever losing height.

SIMON MILLER



Notes on Contributors

Alison Luterman has written two books of poetry *The Largest Possible Life* (Cleveland State University Press) and *See How We Almost Fly* (Pearl Editions). In addition to poetry, she writes plays and personal essays. She has taught at The Writing Salon in Berkeley, at Esalen Institute and Rowe Camp and Conference center; at Omega institute, Santa Barbara Writer's Conference and elsewhere. Check out her website www.alisonluterman.com for more information.

Andrew Fitzsimons was born in Ireland and has lived in Japan since 1998. He is a Professor in the Department of English Language and Cultures at Gakushuin University, Tokyo. His publications include *The Sea of Disappointment: Thomas Kinsella's Pursuit of the Real* (Dublin: UCD Press, 2008) and *Thomas Kinsella: Prose Occasions 1951-2006*, ed. (Manchester: Carcanet, 2009). His poetry has appeared in Ireland, Britain, and the U.S.A., and he has also published translations of Italian poetry, including Eugenio Montale, Giuseppe Ungaretti and Andrea Zanzotto.

Anita Roberts is settled on Lkwammen Territory, Canada. She is a teacher, activist, musician, writer, and collector of old things.

Arnold Seong's poems have appeared in *Best New Poets* and *Poetry Northwest*. He lives in Southern California and teaches ESL and Academic English at UC Irvine.

Belinda Rule lives in Melbourne where she studies Creative Writing at one university, and makes websites for another. Some of the places her works have appeared are, *Meanjin*, *Eureka Street*, *Westerly*, *Sleepers Almanac*, *Famous Reporter*, *Cordite Poetry Review* and *Best Australian Poems 2012*. Find her at belindarule.com.

B.R. Dionysius was founding Director of the Queensland Poetry Festival. His poetry has been widely published in literary journals, anthologies, newspapers and online. His eighth poetry collection *Weranga* will be released in 2013. He lives in Ipswich, Queensland where he runs, watches birds, teaches English and writes sonnets.

Bryan Walpert is the author of the poetry collections *Etymology* and *A History of Glass*, the short fiction collection *Ephraim's Eyes* and the

scholarly monograph *Resistance to Science in Contemporary American Poetry*. A dual American and New Zealand citizen, he teaches Creative Writing at Massey University in Palmerston North, New Zealand. “Aubade” is from his third collection of poetry *Native Bird* for which he is seeking a publisher.

Born Sydney, 1960, **Catherine Stewart** grew up in Lismore, Australia, studied English Literature at Sydney University and at University of London (U.K.), completing an M.A. in 1987. She returned to Lismore from Canberra in 1993. Stewart has presented creative writing through local Performance Poetry events as well as at the Australian Poetry Slam 2009. She has also experimented with self-published poetry, combining the written text with her own hand-drawn graphic artwork. Writing “shapes” her viewpoint; impressions.

Born in Montreal in 1957, **Céline Pitre** has been writing since the age of ten, and her first story was about an Indian girl named Lianna. She kept diaries from the age of thirteen till eighteen that she burnt in her twenties. Pitre also wrote French poems in the 80s about love and nature. After having children, she ceased most writing and reading until joining a poetry retreat a few years ago.

Cróna Gallagher’s poetry has been featured in *Revival*, *The Chattahoochee Review*, *Magma*, *Popshot*, *The Moth* and *PB3*. Her fiction has appeared in *Prairie Schooner*, *Crann g* and *Drunken Boat*. Her work was commended at iYeats 2013, and her piece “Ballypuca” was nominated for a Pushcart prize. She has received a Literary Bursary, and a Travel and Training award from the Arts Council of Ireland. Her collection of poetry is *The Doves of the Forest Night* (Lapwing P).

D. Nurkse’s latest book of poetry is *A Night in Brooklyn* (Knopf, 2012). He is the recipient of a Literature Award from the American Academy of Arts and Letters and recently served a term as an elected board member of Amnesty International-USA. He teaches poetry at Sarah Lawrence College.

Danielle Boodoo-Fortuné is a poet and artist from Trinidad. Her work has been featured in several local and international journals. She was awarded The Charlotte and Isidor Paeiwonsky Prize by The Caribbean Writer’s editorial board in 2009, nominated for a Pushcart Prize in 2010, and awarded the Small Axe Poetry Prize in 2012.

Danielle Cadena Deulen is an assistant professor at the University of Cincinnati and has authored two books. Her poetry collection *Lovely Asunder* (U. of Arkansas Press) won the Miller Williams Arkansas Poetry Prize and the Utah Book Award. Her memoir *The Riots* (U. of Georgia Press) won the AWP Prize in Creative Nonfiction and the GLCA New Writers Award. Formerly, she was a Jay C. and Ruth Halls Poetry Fellow at the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

Dawn McGuire is a neurologist and author of three collections, including *The Aphasia Café*, winner of the 2013 Indie Book Award for Poetry.

Elizabeth Stevens has an M.A. (Creative Writing) from the University of New Brunswick, Fredericton. Her poetry, fiction and non-fiction, have appeared in *New Brunswick Telegraph Journal's* literary section. Her poetry has been published in literary journals and has received recognition in competitions in Nova Scotia, Ontario and in the Maine State Writers Conference. A former journalist, she has worked for Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, and contributed to several newspapers including the *Globe and Mail*.

F.B. Evans currently resides in the Pacific Northwest, and has survived two hair-raising close calls with enraged bears and one close call with a hungry cougar. Evans considers poetic labor to be both generative and re-generative, and finds in it one of the purest and most essential freedoms of human existence.

Portland poet **Frances Payne Adler** is author of five books *Making of a Matriot*, *Raising the Tents* and three collaborative poetry-photography books and exhibitions shown in capitol buildings across the U.S. Current work-in-progress is *Dare I Call You Cousin*, poetry & visuals about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, collaborating with Israeli artists, photographer Michal Fattal and videographer Yossi Yacov. Adler is Professor Emerita and Founder of California State University Monterey Bay's Creative Writing and Social Action Program.

Gary Geddes has written and edited more than 45 books and won a dozen literary awards, including the Commonwealth Poetry Prize (Americas Region), the Lt.-Governor's Award for Literary Excellence and the Gabriela Mistral Prize from the government of Chile. His most recent poetry books are *Skaldance*, *Falsework* and *Swimming Ginger*. He's also the author of *Drink the Bitter Root: A search for justice and healing in Africa*. He lives on Thetis Island, British Columbia.

Ilya Tourtidis was born in Greece. He moved to Australia when he was four years old and to Canada when he was fifteen. He worked as teacher and counsellor in the Comox Valley where he now resides. He was co-winner of the Gerald Lampert Award in 1994. His poetry publications include *Mad Magellan's Tale*, *The Spell of Memory*, *Path of Descent and Devotion*, and *Bright Bardo*. He has also published several e-books.

J. David Cummings's poems have appeared in journals including *Bellowing Ark*, *Convergence*, *Poetry Flash*, and the *Sand Hill Review*. His work has reached finalist level in contests including the National Poetry Series Open Competition, the Red Hen Press Benjamin Saltman Poetry Award, the Slapering Hol Press Chapbook Competition, the Tupelo Press Snowbound Series Chapbook Contest and the Winning Writers War Poetry Contest. He lives in Menlo Park, California with his wife Christine.

James Greene was educated at Oxford University and University College, London University. He has had two books of poems published and three books of translations, in particular of Osip Mandelstam and Fernando Pessoa. Among other prizes in 2005 he won first prize in the Strokestown (Ireland) International Poetry Competition Prize. He is the author of a not-yet-staged tragic farce about Stalin, *Killing time in the Kremlin*.

Jane Eaton Hamilton is the author of seven books shortlisted for a variety of awards including the Ferro Grumley, the VanCity, the BC Book Prizes and the Pat Lowther award. Her short work has appeared in the *New York Times*, *Seventeen*, *Salon*, *Numero Cinq*, *Maclean's* and the *Globe and Mail*, among other places. Her fiction was a first prize winner in the CBC Literary Awards. Jane is also a photographer and visual artist.

Australian-born poet **Jena Woodhouse** has published two poetry collections (with a third in preparation), an award-winning children's novella, a novel and a short-story collection. She holds a Master's degree in Creative Writing and spent a decade in Greece, where she wrote on books and writing for a subsidiary of the *International Herald Tribune*. In 2010 she was winner, Pacific region, in the Commonwealth Short Story Competition, and in 2011 received a Hawthornden Fellowship to Hawthornden Castle, Scotland.

Born in England in 1940 during the bombing of Southampton, much of **John Camfield's** childhood was spent in a Sisters of Nazareth convent. After his 1957 emigration to Canada he visited San Francisco in search

of the Beat Poets and met Lawrence Ferlinghetti at his City Lights Book Shop. Later he was overwhelmed by the poetry of Ezra Pound and T. S. Eliot. Poetry became a necessary part of his life. His working career was in Architecture.

John Wall Barger was born in New York City, but grew up in Canada. He currently lives in a village house in Hong Kong, and teaches Creative Writing at the Chinese University of Hong Kong. He has published two books of poetry with Palimpsest Press: *Pain-proof Men* (2009) and *Hummingbird* (2012). *Hummingbird* was a finalist for the 2013 Raymond Souster Award.

Josh Nadeau hails from Northern Ontario but currently resides in Russia. He briefly served as fiction editor for *filling Station Magazine* and released a chapbook with *In/Words Magazine & Press*.

Judith Krause is a Saskatchewan poet whose work has appeared in print or online in Canada, the US and Ireland. Author of four poetry collections—the most recent *Mongrel Love* (Hagios Books, 2008) and a collaborative chapbook *blue transport/ the insistence of green* (Jack Pine Press, 2007)—and with a fifth soon on the way, she is one of the original members of the province's longest running writers group.

Karen Warinsky was a semi-finalist in the 2011 Montreal International Poetry Prize. Her work can be seen on several online sites, and she recently published two poems in *Joy, Interrupted*, an anthology on motherhood and loss, available through Amazon.com. She has lived in Illinois, North Dakota, Washington state, Japan and Connecticut. Mrs. Warinsky holds an M.A. from Fitchburg State University and currently teaches English at a high school in Massachusetts.

Kent Leatham is a poet, translator, editor, and critic. His work has appeared or is forthcoming in such journals as *Fence*, *Zoland*, *Poetry Quarterly*, *Poets & Artists*, *InTranslation*, *Ezra*, *Softblow*, and *The Battered Suitcase*. Kent serves as a poetry editor for Black Lawrence Press and lives in central California.

Kim Trainor's poems have appeared most recently in *Grain*, *Qwerty*, and *The Dalhousie Review*. She won *The Fiddlehead's* 2013 Ralph Gustafson Prize and was co-winner of the 2013 Malahat Review Long Poem Prize. She has recently completed a first collection of poetry, entitled *Karyotype*.

With the exception of five rather cold years in Montreal, she has always lived in Vancouver.

Lee H. McCormack has been a year-round resident of Martha's Vineyard for 43 years. Poet, master carpenter, sculptor and guitar-maker and co-founder of The Savage Poets of Martha's Vineyard, he has written poetry for over 50 years. He is the first Martha's Vineyard Poet Laureate in the history of Martha's Vineyard Island, selected in 2012 by ten judges representing the Martha's Vineyard Poetry Society. Intensive studies with Howard Nemerov, Galway Kinnell, Sharon Olds, Charles Simic, Robert Pinsky and Thomas Lux.

Linda Rogers, poet, songwriter, novelist and journalist, past Victoria Poet Laureate and Canada's People's Poet, is an advocate for human rights, particularly those of children. Rogers' most recent award is The Gwendolyn MacEwen Prize from Exile Editions, 2013. Her most recent poetry title is *Homing* from Ekstasis Editions. A mother and grandmother, she is married to blues mandolinist Rick van Krugel.

After spending a large chunk of her adult life in England, **Lisa Brockwell** now lives near Mullumbimby on the north coast of New South Wales, Australia, with her husband and son. Her poems have been shortlisted for the Bridport and Magma prizes, and this year she won second place in the Byron Bay Writers' Festival poetry prize. She is working towards a first collection.

Lisa Jacobson is an award-winning poet and fiction writer. Her verse novel, *The Sunlit Zone*, was shortlisted for the 2013 Prime Minister's Literary Awards and the 2013 Stella Prize. In 2011 she won the Bruce Dawe National Poetry Prize. Her work has been published in Australia, New York, London and Indonesia, and she has just completed a new poetry collection *South in the World*. She lives in Melbourne with her partner and daughter.

Lucy Beckett is British and was born in 1942. She was educated at Cambridge University and worked for thirty years as a schoolteacher (Latin, English, History). She has published eight books, including a collection of poems, a major study of Western writing read in a Christian context, and two novels. A third novel will be published by Ignatius Press in 2014. She is married, has four children and lives in rural Yorkshire.

Lyndon Walker was born in Queensland, Australia. He graduated with a Masters in Psychology in 2009. Walker practices as a Psychologist, Psychotherapist and has been published regularly in Australian and international literary journals. He undertook a world reading tour in 1994, and in 1996 was awarded the Pablo Neruda Prize for Poetry. He has published five books of poetry. He is a father of one adult daughter and lives alone in a northern Tasmanian Town.

Mark Kirkbride lives in London, England. He writes fiction and poetry. His novel *Satan's Fan Club* will be out with Omnium Gatherum in 2013. His poetry has appeared in the *Big Issue*, *Morning Star*, *Mirror* and anthologies. Website: www.markkirkbride.com/

Mark Riboldi is a writer and Communications professional living in Sydney, Australia. He is an enthusiastic amateur photographer, plays guitar poorly, and once worked in a hostel in the Czech Republic because it looked like fun. It was. Mark used to work as a media adviser (spin doctor) in the rough and tumble of Australian politics, where his training in Creative Writing was particularly useful. He likes dumplings and beer and socialists, mainly.

Mia Anderson is a writer, an Anglican priest, a gardener, an erstwhile shepherd and a long-time actress. Her one-woman show *10 Women, 2 Men and a Moose* showcased then-contemporary Canadian writers. She has published four books of poetry: *Appetite* (Brick, 1988), *Château Puits '81* (Oolichan, 1992), *Practising Death* (St Thomas' Poetry, 1997), and most recently *The Sunrise Liturgy* (Wipf & Stock, 2012). Her Long Poems "The Saugeen Sonata" and "from The Shambles" have won awards.

Mike Bannister was born in Worcestershire, England. The Fourth Warming (1944) was nominated for the Housman Society's Poetry Prize. Publications include *Greenstreet Fragments* (2003), *Pocahontas in Ludgate* (2007), *Orinsay Poems* (2010), and *The Weir of Orinsay* nears completion. *The Second Scrivener* received The George Crabbe Memorial Prize. And *The Best British Poetry 2011* (Salt) includes "Satin Moth." Bannister also chairs "The Café Poets" a venue for working poets in East Anglia.

Natalie Shapero is the author of *No Object* (Saturnalia Books, 2013), and her poems have appeared in *The Believer*, *The New Republic*, *Poetry*, *The Progressive*, and elsewhere. She writes and teaches at Kenyon College, where she is a Kenyon Review Fellow.

Patricia Young's eleventh collection of poetry *Night-Eater* was shortlisted for the Dorothy Livesay Award in 2013.

Paul Grams earned degrees in Linguistics and English Literature, taught in the Detroit Public Schools, mostly grades 6-9, for 30 years and ran scholastic chess programs there. He has published two books of poetry. He is now retired in Baltimore enjoying his grandchildren.

Paul Hetherington is the author of two poetry chapbooks and eight full-length poetry collections, most recently *Six Different Windows* (2013). He was founding editor of the National Library of Australia's journal *Voices* (1991-97) and is one of the founding editors of the international online journal *Axon: Creative Explorations*. He edited three volumes of the National Library's edition of the diaries of the artist Donald Friend and is head of the International Poetry Studies Institute.

Paul McMahon, from Belfast, Ireland, holds an MA in Writing, with distinction, from NUIG, Ireland. He won first prize in The Ballymaloe International Poetry Prize (2012), The Nottingham Poetry Open Competition (2012), The Westport Arts Festival Poetry Competition (2012) and in The Golden Pen Poetry Prize (2011). He received a literature bursary from the Arts Council of Ireland in 2013. His poetry has been widely published in journals such as *The Threepenny Review* and *Southword*.

Peter Branson has been published in Britain, the USA, Canada, Ireland, Australasia and South Africa, in such journals as *Acumen*, *Agenda*, *Ambit*, *Anon*, *Envoi*, *London Magazine*, *Warwick Review*, *Iota*, *Frogmore Papers*, *Crannog*, *Columbia Review*, *Able Muse*, *Barnwood* and *Other Poetry*. He has won prizes in recent years including in the Petra Kenny, firsts in the "Grace Dieu" and "Envoi" and in the 2012 Wigtown. His third book *Red Hill: Selected Poems* was published recently by Lapwing (Ireland).

Peter Norman's first poetry collection *At the Gates of the Theme Park* (Mansfield Press, 2010) was a finalist for the Trillium Poetry Book Award; his second book *Water Damage* came out with Mansfield this year. He has two books forthcoming in 2014: a novel called *Emberton* (Douglas & McIntyre) and a poetry collection with Goose Lane. He lives in Toronto.

Phil Davey has dual British and New Zealand citizenship. His poems have been published in a number of magazines, including *Oxford Poetry Now*, *Poetry London*, *Apple* and *Illuminations*. He has an MA in Creative Writing from the University of New Brunswick in Canada. After a number of years in Oxford, Trieste, London, Milan and Brussels, he now lives with his wife, Chiara, in Varese in the north of Italy.

Preston Mark Stone holds an MFA in Writing from Sarah Lawrence College and was a winter fellow at the Fine Arts Work Center in Provincetown. He lives and works in Philadelphia.

Randall Finnerty is a visual artist who specializes in drawings and works as a computer graphics animator on animated short films for the National Film Board of Canada. He has exhibited his work extensively in Montreal and across Canada. Born and raised in Timmins, Ontario, he has lived and worked in Montreal for the past 22 years. He raises two children with his partner, photographer Loren Williams.

Richard Kelly Tipping was born in Adelaide, South Australia, of Scottish, Manx and English heritage. He lived in the USA (1974/75), UK and Europe (1984/86) and is a long time resident of Sydney where he completed a doctorate at the University of Technology. Richard has published twelve books of poems and word art including *Subvert I Sing* with Redfox Press (Ireland) and is known internationally as an artist working in sign language and typographic poetry as sculpture.

Robert Carter has published award-winning poetry, short stories and novels internationally. His work has been translated into several languages. He wrote and directed a feature film of his first novel, which won awards at festivals around the world. More information, including his latest work can be seen here: www.thirstthefilm.com

Ros Barber is author of the verse novel *The Marlowe Papers* (Sceptre 2012), winner of the Desmond Elliott Prize, joint winner of the Authors' Club Best First Novel Award and long-listed for the Women's Fiction Prize 2013. She has published three poetry collections, the latest *Material* (Anvil, 2008) received a Poetry Book Society Recommendation. Born in Washington D.C. to British parents, she lives in Brighton, England, and is currently Visiting Fellow at the University of Sussex.

Rosamund Taylor was born in Dublin in 1989. She was shortlisted for the 2012 Live Canon International Poetry Competition, had two poems long-listed for the 2011 Montreal Prize, and was a runner-up for the 2008 Bridport Prize. Her poems have appeared in journals in the UK and Ireland. She has worked in animal shelters and veterinary surgeries, but is currently writing full time, working on a novel for young adults as well as on poetry.

Rosanna Licari is an Australian poet. Her collection *An Absence of Saints* won the 2009 Thomas Shapcott Award, the 2010 Anne Elder Award, the 2011 Wesley Michel Wright Award and was shortlisted for the 2010/2011 Mary Gilmore Award. Her interests are varied and she has worked with different forms including haiku and haibun, text and audio as well as page poetry. In June 2013 she was a Fellow of the Hawthornden International Retreat in Scotland.

Ruby Turok-Squire is an undergraduate at Oberlin College and Conservatory, USA, studying English Literature and Music Composition. She grew up in Cambridge, UK. She recently started writing poetry and doesn't imagine stopping.

Sally A. Moore has been published in *The Globe and Mail*, *Word Weaver*, and *Heart So Open, Soul So Wide* (Amherst Writers and Artists Press). Her writing credits include a prize from the Ontario Poetry Society, a long-list from the Montreal International Poetry Prize 2011, and award-winning film credits. Recent recipient of the Len Cullen Writing Scholarship, Sally is currently working on an historical fiction trilogy and holds certificates from Humber School for Writers.

Sarah Rice is a Canberra-based art-theory lecturer, visual artist and writer, who co-won the 2011 Gwen Harwood poetry prize, amongst other awards. Her limited-edition, art-book of poetry *Those Who Travel* (Ampersand Duck, 2010), with prints by Patsy Payne, is held in the collection of the National Gallery of Australia, and her poetry has been published in numerous journals and anthologies, including *Award Winning Australian Writing* and *Best Australian Poetry 2012*.

Sharon Black is originally from Glasgow but now lives in the Cévennes mountains of southern France. She is widely published and won The Frogmore Poetry Prize 2011. Her poetry collection *To Know Bedrock* was published in 2011 by Pindrop Press. www.sharonblack.co.uk

Sharyn Brady lives on the Central Coast of New South Wales, Australia and also resides in countless fictional worlds woven by words and whimsy. She holds an MA in English Literature from Macquarie University, which included a research thesis on the underground man in literature. She was a finalist in the 2012 Qantas Spirit of Youth Awards—Written Word. In 2013 her short story “The Last Crusade” won the Manifest Creative Arts Prize.

Simon Miller teaches English and Drama at an international school in Thailand where he lives with his wife and three growing children. He has written several plays for young people. His own childhood was spent between Botswana and England and he has rarely stopped exploring since. Social history, culture and the natural world are his key fascinations, particularly the points where all three meet.

Stevie Howell’s poetry and literary criticism have appeared in numerous journals and periodicals throughout Canada, the US, and Ireland. She works as an editor for a quarterly magazine and at a mental health hospital. Stevie is currently completing her first volume of poetry, slated to be published in fall 2014 by Ice House Press (an imprint of Goose Lane Editions).

Susan Glickman works as a freelance editor, primarily of academic books, and teaches Creative Writing at Ryerson University and the University of Toronto. She is the author of six collections of poetry from Signal Editions of Véhicule Press, most recently, *The Smooth Yarrow* (2012), two novels *The Violin Lover* (2006) and *The Tale-Teller* (2012), the *Lunch Bunch* trilogy of children’s books, and *The Picturesque & the Sublime: A Poetics of the Canadian Landscape* (1998).

Susan McMaster is the past president of the League of Canadian Poets and has published some 20 books and recordings, recently *Paper Affair: Poems Selected & New*, *Pith & Wry: Canadian Poetry*, and *Crossing Arcs: Alzheimer’s, My Mother, and Me* (Acorn-Plantos, Lampman, and Ottawa Book awards finalist). Projects include *Branching Out*, the first national feminist magazine; *First Draft*, *SugarBeat*, and *Geode Music & Poetry*; and *Convergence: Poems for Peace*, which brought poetry to every parliamentarian in 2001.

Suzanne Batty’s first collection of poems *The Barking Thing* was published in 2007 and she completing a second collection. A short story author, Suzanne also writes for theatre and has taught Creative Writing for 15 years.

She is interested in working with people experiencing or recovering from mental distress. Her most recent collaborative project has been with an avant-garde musician, arranging one of Suzanne's poems for three soprano voices. Suzanne lives in Manchester, UK.

Tim Bowling is the author of ten poetry collections, most recently his *Selected Poems*. He has been twice nominated for the Governor General's Award and is a Guggenheim Fellow.

Tracey O'Rourke divides her time unevenly between England and Mallorca. She is a published poet and has been involved in several writing initiatives in schools and has taught Creative Writing at a well-known university in the north of England.

Victoria Korth is a poet and psychiatrist living in upstate New York. She recently completed a Master's Degree in Creative Writing at the State University of New York, Brockport. Her thesis *Tender Warnings: Narrative Tension in Lyric Poetry* explores the relationship between narrative elements in her own life, biography revealed to her through her work as a physician and the lyric impulse. Recent poems have appeared in the *Worcester Review*, *Passager*, *Barrow Street*, and *Limestone Journal*.

Vincent Marksohn currently resides in Brooklyn, NY. He is a graduate of the University of Vermont and Co-Editor in Chief of *The Cause Arts Quarterly*. His work also appears in *Cocktails at the Apocalypse* (Ra Press). His poems often imagine historical or familial experiences he was unable to witness. Vincent hails from a small fishing village on Long Island's muddy North Shore and although he's caught many fish, none were in the vicinity of home.

Wayne Hodgins lives in Montreal. He is a widower of seventy years old. Wayne worked as a computer programmer for Environment Canada for 33 years, and retired in 1995. The inspiration for the poem came from his wife Sharon, who passed away seven years ago. In the fall of 2006 she entered the hospital, diagnosed with incurable cancer and a remaining lifespan to be measured in weeks. Wayne married her in her hospital bed on Sept 10th, and she passed away the next month, on Oct 16, the day after her birthday.

Wayne Price was born in south Wales but has lived and worked in Scotland since 1987. He writes both poetry and fiction and has been a major prize-

winner in many international poetry and short story competitions. His debut short story collection *Furnace* was nominated for the Saltire Scottish First Book of the Year 2012 and long-listed for both the Frank O'Connor and Edge Hill awards. He teaches at the University of Aberdeen and is working on a novella and a first collection of poems.

Yvonne Blomer has published five collections of poetry, most recently *The Book of Places* (Black Moss Press 2012). She is the co-editor of *Poems from Planet Earth* (Leaf Press) an anthology out of the reading series Planet Earth Poetry in Victoria BC, of which she is the Executive Director. Her poems have been widely anthologized in Canada and the UK. She is currently working on a travel memoir and her collection *Caged* is forthcoming with Palimpsest Press in 2014.



Notes on Editors

Mary Dalton is the author of four books of poems, most recently *Merrybegot*, *Red Ledger* and *Hooking* (2013). *Merrybegot* won the 2005 E.J. Pratt Poetry Award. *Red Ledger*, named one of *The Globe and Mail's* Top 100 Books of the Year in 2006, was shortlisted for the Atlantic Poetry Prize. Dalton is Professor of English at Memorial University of Newfoundland in St. John's.

Keki N. Daruwalla has eleven volumes of poetry including *Collected Poems* (Penguin 2006) and *Selected Poems* (ARC Publications Todmorden (U.K.)). *Landscapes* won the 1987 Commonwealth Poetry Prize (Asia). *The Keeper of the Dead* won the 1984 Sahitya Academy (National Academy of Letters) Award. He has three collections of short stories and his novel *For Pepper and Christ* (Penguin) was shortlisted for the Commonwealth Fiction Prize in 2010. He served as a Special Assistant to the Prime Minister of India in 1979.

Kwame Dawes is the author of over thirty-five books, including sixteen books of poetry, the most recent being *Wheels* (Peepal Tree Press 2011). He is Glenna Luschei Editor of *Prairie Schooner* and Chancellor's Professor of English at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, and a faculty member of the Pacific MFA program in Oregon. His awards include the Forward Poetry Prize, an Emmy, the Barnes and Nobles Writers for Writers Award, a Pushcart Prize, and a Guggenheim Fellowship. His collection *Duppy Conqueror, New and Selected Poems* will be published by Copper Canyon in 2013.

Michael Harris was born in Glasgow, Scotland and grew up in Montreal. Harris has written seven books of poetry, won several prizes, and has been published in leading journals in North America and Europe. He has given over 200 readings throughout Canada and around the world and has translated the complete poetry of Marie-Claire Blais. Harris is also the founding editor of Véhicule Press's Signal Editions. He has edited over fifty books of poetry by over thirty-five authors. In 1994, he edited *The Signal Anthology: Contemporary Canadian Poetry*. His most recent book *Circus* (2010) was shortlisted for the Governor General's Award.

Kendel Hippolyte is a Saint Lucian poet, playwright and director and a recently retired lecturer in Literature and Theatre. His poetry has been

published in journals and anthologies internationally as well as in six volumes published between 1980 and 2012. He has performed his work in the Caribbean, Europe and America at various literary festivals and book fairs. He has edited anthologies of poetry and also been a judge in literary competitions, most recently the Bocas Festival.

Medbh McGuckian was born in Belfast, Ireland and studied with Seamus Heaney at Queen's University. Her poem "The Flitting" won the 1979 National Poetry Competition. In 1980 McGuckian won the prestigious Eric Gregory Award. Her first collection *The Flower Master* (1982) won the Poetry Society's Alice Hunt Bartlett Prize, the Rooney Prize for Irish Literature, and an award from the Ireland Arts Council. *On Ballycastle Beach* (1988) won the Cheltenham Award. Her honours also include the Bass Ireland Award for Literature, the Denis Devlin Award, and the American Ireland Fund's Literary Award. She won the Forward Prize for Best Poem for "She Is in the Past, She Has This Grace."

Sean O'Brien is a UK poet, critic, broadcaster, anthologist and editor. He is Professor of Creative Writing at Newcastle University and Fellow of the Royal Society of Literature. His first six individual poetry collections have all been given awards and the seventh, *November*, was shortlisted for the 2011 T. S. Eliot Prize, the Forward Prize, the Costa Poetry Award and the 2012 International Griffin Poetry Prize. His *Collected Poems* was published in 2012.

Robyn Sarah is the author of nine poetry collections as well as two collections of short stories and a book of essays on poetry. Her poems have been anthologized in Canada, the United States and the UK, and have been broadcast on Garrison Keillor's *The Writer's Almanac* and included in his anthology *Good Poems for Hard Times*. Currently poetry editor for Cormorant Books, she lives in Montreal.

Nicolette Stasko was born in the US of Polish and Hungarian heritage but has lived in Australia since 1979. Her work is widely anthologised and she is well known as an essayist and critic. She is a recipient of the Anne Elder Award for best first collection and has been short-listed for the National Book Awards and the NSW Premier's Prize. Nicolette has published six volumes of poetry including *Glass Cathedrals: New and Selected Poems* and most recently a chapbook *Under Rats*. She is also the author of the best-selling non-fiction *Oyster* and a fiction *The Invention of Everyday Life*. Nicolette is an Honorary Associate at Sydney University

where she completed her PhD in English and lectured part-time. She currently lives in Sydney.

Chase Twichell is the winner of the prestigious Kingsley and Kate Tufts Poetry Award (2011) and the Alice Fay Di Castagnola Award (1997). She has received numerous fellowships for her seven books of poetry. She is also the translator, with Tony K. Stewart, of *The Lover of God* by Rabindranath Tagore, and co-editor of *The Practice of Poetry: Writing Exercises from Poets Who Teach*.



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