

BlazeVOX 2k8



Fall 2008

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Table of Contents

Adela Miencilova
Austin Wallace
Alex Rettie

Brandi Wells

Charles Freeland
Clint Frakes

David Brennan
David Highsmith
Derek Henderson
Daniel Morris

Edric Mesmer
Emily Brown
Evan Schnair

F.J. Bergmann

George J. Farrah
Geoffrey Gatza

Jamie Iredell
Jason Visconti

Korliss Sewer
Kyle Flak

Leonard Gontarek

Mako Matsuda
Michael Fix

Nagehan Bayindir

Paige Taggart
Parul Garg
Peter Fernbach

Richard Barrett
Richard K.Ostrander

Sergio Ortiz
Spring Wells
Stacie Leatherman
Stevie Hinton
Sarah Suzor

Thomas Fink
Tom Bowen

Introduction

BlazeVOX [Thank You]



Hello and thank you for tuning into the Fall issue of BlazeVOX 2k8. This is the end of our eighth year doing a journal! It is an honor to watch this grow and become something special for all who have placed their work on these pages. You can check out all of our 8 years in our Archive in or ARKV. All issues are neatly bound in complete form in Adobe PDF for easy to read enjoyment.

We have 36 great writers in this issue and several new ebooks as well. And to top it all off we have a 500 + page sample book of our BlazeVOX [books]. So hurrray to all of this poetry and fiction! Simply wonderful works that can assure anyone, poetry is alive, well and thriving!

Also, a bit of good news for a gloomy day. BlazeVOX [books] was in a bit of a crisis. We had a huge debt to our printers that was resolved by the generosity of all the poetry community! We have had, and continue to receive good news and support from all points on the globe. I am humbled and honored that we have seen our way through this bit of bother, but more, I am overwhelmed by the love and kindness from our readership. I have a greater understanding of what the responsibility of this press embodies and I am energized by your support!

To this end, we will live to publish another day! We have taken on 25 new ebooks to finish our our year and you can look forward to some great new book to hit Amazon and SPD real soon! 2009 will be a great year, and it is my thanks to you for making this the success that it is! Hurrray!

Best, Geoffrey

New Subscription replaces Raffle ;-)

eBay sez no to poetry gambling!

As it turns out our raffle broke the Acceptable Use Policy at eBay, as a raffle is a form of gambling. So no more of that :-). I am sorry but it has to be that way, as I might have even broken a law or two. Eeek. So we will hold our next raffle as a last raffle. All participants will be notified and we'll hold something special.

In its place we will continue to have our big pile of books special and call it a subscription to BlazeVOX [books]. This is a great way to help out and you get to see first hand why BlazeVOX [books] is so much fun!

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Adela Miencilova

The Darkness

I dreamt about a car accident. I wanted to help the casualties but no one took me seriously. It seemed that no one understood the seriousness of the situation. Luckily everyone survived.

I woke up in the middle of the night. A helicopter was flying over our house. The shouts of police cars, ambulances and fire engines seemed as loud as the strange unbearable silence. The main road was blocked. The situation confused us. At first we thought that they may be looking for someone, maybe a murderer or a thief. It made no sense.

We looked out of the window. Something had happened. Something had happened very close; just a few houses away from us.

We looked out into the night. The countryside around had changed, it did not look as it use to any longer. Everything known disappeared. All was surrounded by a dark sea. We could hear the sounds of the emergency vehicles and see their blue lamps. The fast vehicles were hurried by the heaviness of the moment, attracted one by one by the point of nightmare hidden in the dark. Vehicles attracted by the place which could not be seen but could be sensed. Then the cars

positioned themselves into the ritual half circle like lighthouses. I wish they would arrive sooner, before the space transformed. They arrived late.

In my dream I saw a car with a top down and judging by the speed, I knew it would crash. In the moment of the crash I gained physical body and wanted to help. I stopped being an uninvolved witness. No longer was my dream ruled by the indifference and reconciliation which is often sign of a nightmare. The moment of fright transformed me into physical being within the space of my dreaming.

Then the helicopter landed and took off again; you saw pairs of hands working. They were working on the heart of the driver. He was the only one who survived. There were five of them in the car and they were all too young. They drove fast, too fast, too fast to realize that they were going to die. And they did die. They crushed into the tree and one of the bodies flew into a driveway of someone's house. It flew like a stone, like a branch, like a piece of metal which was thrown. It flew out and fell back down again. It was too heavy to keep up in the air. The people who lived in the house understood the seriousness of the situation and called for help.

I was not looking out of the window any more. I was too close to a black hole. Too close to total nothingness, close to the chaos and disturbed order. I was too close to multiple deaths which I thought was unnecessary. I was unsure how firm the edges of this destroyed matter were. I did not exist in the reality of this crash. I did not become physical in the moment of fright. All I could do was to hear the silence and dread and unruliness of the situation. I could hear it hissing. I could hear it breathe. I could hear it alive and undead.

At night I wake up with the growl of every car going past. They all drive too fast. I am afraid that they may crash. I am ready. This time I am ready. I understand the seriousness of the moment. I expect that the tree will become alive again. One day it will, unseen, attract another human life, because this kind of disturbed order is too difficult to repair. I also expect that the four dead will

stand up again, grow up and forget about that crazy drive. They will free the one who survived from the heaviness and the night from the chaos.

They will not rise up. They died. The one who survived will have to free the night by himself and transform its essence.

If he'll have enough strength...

The Vision

“Evil is never pure.”

Calder – Marshall

I walked through market looking for the place where I did my shopping last time. I was unhappy with the quality of goods I received. Market people are very hard to bargain with.

I found the place easily even though other times I get lost. The market is a huge place, which is constantly changing. It's like turmoil of organs, whispers and shouts which really don't mean anything. Anywhere you go is the wrong way. This time I could see my road clearly and that should have suggested something to me.

I found the place so easy. The market people were very polite to me and spoke unusually quietly. They even smile shyly. I should have taken this for a warning.

I raised my gaze...no my gaze was raised. I'm never looking around. Especially not on the market. There are things I don't want to see.

My gaze was raised. And in that very moment it was too late for any warnings. I was too close.

A couple days ago I went to the cinema. That day the weather was very unfriendly and the sky was suggesting strong powers of witchcraft. So I wanted to wait hidden until things calmed down. But I must make a mistake and choose a place where tornados of things horizontal and vertical are meeting. Yes, I'm talking about the coils of time, space and things unknown.

My gaze was raised...again I sat in that cinema and on a screen I saw room and in that room I saw a woman. I think she was getting ready for a journey. Or maybe she was moving house. Maybe she was just tidying up. She was taking things out of a wardrobe and putting them on a bed. She gave herself to some ritual, which looked so common. Light haired slim woman. At first she was in that room by herself.

But later the strangest being entered the frame. A huge red and black burned creature was coming from the back of the room towards her.

The woman turned and opened her mouth but the sound disappeared. The beast held the woman tightly and with a knife, dirty from corrosion, cut off pieces of her flesh and poured acid into her wounds.

Then suddenly the time went. Nothing was happening.

And the space disappeared.

We were in the deepest darkness of eternity. We were so close to the entrance of indescribable things. Me, the tortured woman and the beast...

The woman changed. Her wounded body changed. She transformed into a being of incredible light and power. Even the beast changed. It was now a countless time bigger than the woman. The end of its body was not to be seen twisted in anxiety. We all changed.

The woman nodded her head and the beast knelt down. Then the woman moved her hand in an unknown symbol and her lips whispered. I could not hear what she was saying. The beast calmed down.

After that the beast begins to slowly swallow the woman in strange motions of all its huge body.

This is the most unusual ritual I have seen. I saw the servants of highest beings, which exists in places that do not exist.

The woman will stay unchanged in the beast. The evil is never pure. The beast will never become complete. It will always hold the woman inside.

Alex Moseley

Requiem

she would call me Moses, as if

her daughter had discovered me
floating amid bullrushes

maybe

a better fantasy than I realized

I said goodbye

several feints later, she remained
the bitter Vaudevillian
outlived her audience

another afternoon coughing
muscle and blood, only the skin
remains, draped over a cast-off aggregate

I once believed it was time to let go
when we no longer go on in dignity
the body persists long after

in the drink

sitting under a bodhi tree
crook leg, strangle leg
this, the crux:
how the gold fish swim
 in their pond
ice in a glass
a finger, maybe
two will fill the hole
 where the fish get out

green house

I
over dissonant years, the house
filled with exhalations
hinting of infections
smell of coffee, cigarette

they woke one day, startled
alterity staring
from familiar glares

had they grown lazy
in love, suffocated
by gathering closeness
or had
the ring-callus thickened
to protect
delicate parts, a barrier
against friction

II

it hadn't happened
in a day, but
over sleepless nights
fruitless weeks, wasted efforts
those arid months

what did it matter
after all of this, whether
he had ten fingers
or both eyes
some days
it would be a relief not to see
the flush cheeks of sunset
the long ray of evening sun
parting the gauze of clouds

it evaporated
something swabbed
on his arm, the nurse said

"this will hurt"

III

they stood, stripped
of some internal logic
that would force the heart to beat
in time

it could be learned
this synchronicity
complicity of sentiment

perhaps it was a concentricity
they sought

radii of emotions, on vectors
leading south, northeast

rather than these scarified organs
eccentric, alternating
fluid draining from lung and spleen

Essential

this is my favorite cliché, the one
I hold close, wrap myself

in, a song I sing myself
to sleep with. You

belittle it, discount it as one might
sentiments in a greeting card
received twice, examined too closely
yet without it
I find little reason to remain
this hope
I hold close, warm myself
with

Evaporated

our days pass into atmosphere
as a sublimation
smother the earth in a blanket
ideas forming, subliminal

sublists digressing
into nights lit
by televised usurpation
a dissolution of will

to act, to create
to grasp; a moment lost
to subfloors laid diagonally
to joists, ancient nails

complaining of my weight

Gently Misremembered

such is our legacy:

feather and bone
stones aligned oblong
songs mark the days, all
the broken wheels
the years of lost dolls
follow memories of lies
or maybe days

gently misremembered:
the red sunset
through an open window, so low
children climb through; you
earlier still, screaming my name
voice heard, disturbing
our parking lot of stars
marred and obscured

alone
in this cage, the wages
of some forgotten mistake
slaked by twice-hollow reeds
needles and cones raked
by a boy's toes:
go pads without callus
through dust and the roots
to be discovered

Poets and Pagans
after Dante

I followed you into burning
the sea did not
part you
swam to a far shore

took the southern route
abandoned cars
stop and go
circumnavigate the city
stop for fuel, obstructions
stop for light, go heavy
with doubt

a common place, this
seventh ring, the trees
specifically
the corpse bearers
the grass green
but nothing lives below
shops in a sea of parking
lot: no body walks
this I know: one hundred thousand
commuters
can't be right

I never loved driving, just the freedom
to shed the shopping bags
to walk among people, unafraid
to think, to talk

here sidewalk goes unused
scenery, like grass
there is no life
only epidemic, consumption

with lunch long past
resist pastries at the counter

preserve
 order
coffee
pretend
 streetside cafe

with lunch counter resistance
 with lunch
counter-resistance
measure resistance in ohms
as in "oh, my god!"
you'll encounter resistance
where do they get the time

measure resistance in
 protesters
 blog posts
 lost votes
 dollars spent
on graves of
 pasture land
 grassland
 farmland, wetland
cultivate sorrow, grief, longing

back among the poets & pagans

the cricket sutra

not the struggle
not the pain of things
 out of place
not the suffering of the cricket
 pulled apart by a child
many times born and reborn
sometimes as the cricket
others, the child, helpless
to undo what has gone past
now the lightness, more
bearable than advertised
also the stillness
 which is real

tidal

stiffened bellows open
rattle, sputter closed, no
drama of a tidal sigh
just an equilibrium
a pendulum slowing
to its rest, a curve
approaching zero
who could say
which was
the last

Alex Rettie

It is always me you bereave

Come back, General! Abrek!
It is the same dream:
The Hittite women only?

A flash of flame,
A smell of smoke
A roar:
Good news for the 3rd in command

COGS
Two meanings –
One killable,
One billable.

Who brought Benjamin?
Chicken shwarma's
magic is limited –
A slight movement of the eyes,
but nothing more

Do you not know that a man like me practices divination?

Right up to the canal

1. Only one donkey:
I saw my father's face in the glass and turned away.
2. All the way to Africa, quickly.
The return trip is not so fast;
The child not only remembers his father's birth – he assists at it.
3. Where do these come from?
An archer
A scholar
The daughter of a cabinet secretary
4. The imperfect cruelty of the poultryman; a fixed array in a tinker's tat.
5. The good fruit hanging sweet on the vine binds the donkey.
6. (There and back again)
(2x)
Where $x = 10$
11
12
13
70
Explain.
7. The assessment plus 20% and it's yours.
A talent a socket = 100
8. A lemon, a frond, boughs and willows
The halt and blind are like the gazelle and the deer –
in the settlement only.
9. Camping laundry is somehow special. When do you need it by?
10. Flee to the city of refuge – stay until the polls close.
I hope my brothers do their bit.
11. Every fifty years our bequest is diminished –
we should've stuck to sharks

The Angel Vladimir

The angel Vladimir is six-winged and many-eyed
with two wings he covers his feet
with one he covers his tracks
with one he covers his ass
With the two remaining wings he performs the interrogation technique
known in the service as “The Donkey”

Austin Wallace

QWERTY

In the beginning was the endlessness:
roiling around my environs.
Neurons must spark,
synapses must stir,
so that everything lost is not.

Abysmal distances scrunched
in coffee cans, scattered
across parquet: ruined
monuments will wheeze, God
will quack and waddle away
from his mistakes.

I will have my way with the universe:
murmurs down dark corridors,
skitterings in mausoleums,
a million apparitions to herald
my tale of what
isn't and never should have been.

Brandi Wells

Agenda

I want to shave off all my hair.
I want to burn old photos of myself
and everyone I know.
I want to break into their houses and kill them because they know me.
I want to throw all my clothes away
and steal sweaters from a homeless person.
I want to make new friends so I can tell them how they will die.
I want to talk into a cardboard box until it is full of words
and mail it to myself three years ago.
Then I want to find the box in my closet and burn it.
I want to take everything out of the fridge and bake it.
I want to tear the house down,
but first I will put everyone I know inside,
everything I ever saw or touched
all the things I said and heard.
And I want to run in circles backwards
to undo that crazy time I danced and sang.
I want to sell jump ropes to the suicide hotline.
I want to spell Mexican with an R.
I want to put a stack of DVD's in my VCR
and play them so slow that they sound like Bob Dylan.
I want to make everything out of some new element
that no one has ever touched.
I want to lock myself in my room and wait on you
to come and eat the door.

Ode to the Sentimental Rhyming Poet

I hope the printer in the library eats all your poems.

I hope it pulls them back inside, licks off the ink,
shreds the paper.

When you lean down to see what happened

I hope it eats your face,
gnaws the whole thing off,
the cartilage in your nose
and the prickly hair inside.

I hope it slurps you up entirely.

I hope the printer swallows the whole building,
the critical reviews of Lawrence's 'Rocking Horse Winner,'
the rack of text books on differential equations,
the copy of Casablanca that you can rent for free.

I hope it pulls the walls down
and the insulation
and sucks in everyone standing nearby.

I hope that one day
in the middle of a concrete slab
there is just the printer
and no one will go near it because
it is killing everything.

Charles Freeland

The Road to Taxco

It's not the outline that disturbs us. Not even the texture. But the gravy that wasn't there when we first arrived. That seems to have fallen from the sky like Manna. Only it tastes better, and there isn't the question about tax and penalties. About distribution rights and the garbage backing up in the stream. I barter away the best of trinkets – the flowers made of broken glass, the glass made of the sand one extracts from the center of the termite mound. And still, I am treated as if I had never cashed a check. As if they expect to see me pull the scabs from my elbows and make of them something sinister. Or melodious. A statue that has inside it another statue that composes music by turning certain pre-arranged gears. This is done with the help of the wind, I suppose. Or the spells we used to cast on one another in the mountains when no one believed in spells any longer. We used to stay up late, concocting them with balls of yarn and phrases we had picked up from the user's manual for the leaf blower. They didn't work. But they didn't leave us feeling entirely vulnerable either.

Small Concavity at the Base of the Neck

The parking lot is the logical scene of the crime. But when you look closely, you can discern very little. A few packets of mustard. Insects scurrying about with other insects in their mandibles.

He follows the trail of sand grains to the corner where there is, inexplicably, another corner that faces in the opposite direction. He thinks this an impossibility at first and considers reporting it to the commission tasked with keeping track of anomalies, even the least significant.

But he knows they will file this one away as simple delusion and head off to a picnic that has been scheduled for weeks. There, employees who barely know one another will pair off and start fondling.

They will explain themselves later as having been possessed by something irrational, something with teeth and tortoise-shell glasses, that makes the woods its home.

They will make reference to the Hai-uri, a Hottentot apparition otherwise known as the half-man, possessing just one leg, one arm, and one side, and becoming completely invisible if you should look at it from the wrong angle.

Upon being met in the open, it will challenge all comers to a wrestling match, and if defeated, will provide knowledge of secret medicines and turn the victor into a shaman.

Someone who will save you five percent on your phone bill. That's assuming, of course, that you wish to speak to people who have no real desire to speak to you.

People who remember vaguely some good times in college, a few awkward back rubs. And nights when you all snuck onto the grounds of the city pool. But that doesn't mean they wish to re-ignite these things twenty years later.

They have skin conditions to worry about now. They have sheds on their property where occasionally something goes missing. Shears. Portraits of their mothers they painted themselves. Or which were commissioned and so cost a fortune.

And they are never very good, she thinks as she puts her lipstick on in the morning. She harkens back to her days with the easel. And a fire to be known, if not internationally, then at least on the block.

She'd hike the twenty minutes each way to the liquor store. And pray all the way that someone would stick his head out a window of one of the apartments above the street and ask her something that had been bothering him for weeks, but which she would know the answer to immediately, without really having to think.

The kind of thing that earns one grudging admiration, that causes people to fear you without their being able to express that fear in words.

But of course no one lived in those apartments, and so no one accosted her from above. They waited until she was far enough away on the sidewalk to seem like one of those mirages caused by convection. By the air rising in wraith-like patterns from off the surface of the earth.

Attach the Harness

The committee is still undecided when it comes to the part played by simple chance. The toothpicks tumbling from a box by the hundreds. The sales pitch delivered with a nasal quality reminiscent of those times when we thought we would all wind up emperor of some kingdom that hadn't even been surveyed yet. That hadn't coalesced on the bank of the river like salt crystals forming in the sun. Ah! to be young again and wishing we were old! To be certain the afflictions of old age are more than compensated for by the wealth that must accrue to it, the way feathers are part and parcel of a bird. I remember sneaking into watch the westerns on the cinema screen that was as tall as a palm tree. And the evil men made off with the heroine. But no one went after them. Not a single soul took to his horse in pursuit. And I thought maybe this was just an oversight on the part of the director. Or the haberdashers on set. People who believe that the mind is itself infinite and ought to be left alone to determine the nature of the rising action. Much the same way it determines the direction of its own thoughts. By embracing that infinity. By stubbornly insisting on trying to document it through an exploration and cartography of the sort that hasn't been seen since Poincaré and Duhem. When they demonstrated the successful prediction of events by a theory in no way ensures that that theory is correct.

The Infatuates

Someone whispers from across the room, and yet still makes herself audible through a process we have no doubt took its substance from magic. Is descended from it the way we are descended from snakes. And isn't it funny how all of that merely vanishes with the accumulation of days? How we no more think of the horrors that disturbed us endlessly when we were children because to do so would take our concentration away from the horrors that disturb us today. Sure, the cleanliness thing has been overstated. And there are times when we'd just like to be granted the leisure to compose for the bell choir. Or to read the whaling manuals we inherited from our great grandfathers (men who, nevertheless, went their entire lives without setting eyes on the sea). But plenty of opportunities still present themselves for our edification. And for undermining the structures that hold up our communities, like balloons. If we don't take advantage of them, well then, we deserve the label that gets affixed. Even if we can't read it. And if we can, then we ought not to tell the others. Because they will want to know what else we have been able to determine while they were left to fend for themselves in the cypress swamps. Battling scurvy. Listening to those songs that are composed of almost nothing but words.

Clint Frakes

After Sitting Among the Candles

1.

There lives a hidden syllabic man trapped in wicked points of time, unaided by his braver thoughts. For most of his life everything went his way as if the world's chemistry danced to the timbre of his wine glass. A shameless corpse-eater, loathed even among evening's gentle trees, he foraged the catacombs of Cappuccini for stray medallions as his prescription demanded.

His time at sea was hard, sleeping cross-eyed each lusty night nose-to-nose with the black clown he refused to be. "I am a bone-picker of the most elegant legacies," he would argue. *Ah, but it all starts and ends with a woman*, the island would retort. So he'd start out again without anesthesia at his favorite Thai place, slender & concise at the bar.

Old rivalries pulled him over the speed bumps of his conscience. He couldn't stand it, tripped the gaunt waitress with his thick, hairy leg just for the thrill. Plates and hair scattered across the salad bar. "I know it was evil," he told the reporter, "but it felt so right." On the flight home he studied the pink feet of an infant.

2.

His dad couldn't walk far with the bad leg. They drove up
the Colorado Plateau in a fancy Jeepster one May,
pulled over for an enormous red agave in full bloom:

If ever there were a savage flower.

It was getting a little hot to marvel at much.

He's since inhabited the language with vengeful nativity.

Only the chirp of the gecko delights him, its orange flag
of neck protruding with quick push-ups.

He pairs up a pile of black socks in the dark.

Thought is the thief of all glory, a handsome Icelandic poet had said.

That's why he coddles the dead, forces himself to groom
& briskly fakes it through each uncertain door.

I Killed Johnny Rotten

Johnny Rotten stomped onto my porch
like an angry collector, jackbooted & drunk.
I hid all the valuables,
convinced my roommates to turn him away,
but he forced himself in as I pretended to sleep,
insisted on a fight.
He had a rash on his face,
smelled like an infection,
found the Wild Turkey under my work jacket &
jounced & taunted like a fool.
When he spilled bourbon on my good Balinese rug
I leapt from bed & kicked him hard in the nuts.
He tried to pull a knife as he rolled on the floor &
I knew I'd have to kill him.
Roommates & neighbors interfered,
rolled shopping carts at us.
Two party girls in tight skirts tried to distract us
by sticking out their round asses,
but we were set on blood.
"I'm only trying to help you meet your demons,"
he said, holding his stomach & waving the blade.
This gave me pause for only a second
before I dealt him a roundhouse kick
right out the window,
three floors to the sidewalk--
all blood & leather down by the hydrant.
*Drink my fucking whiskey,
Rotten, why don't you?*

A Brief History of Summer

for Harry Smith

After the longest day of the year
independence was only fitting.
Some ruffians blew up the sky;
the Romans let the dogs out,
forsaking 13 moons & the innermost
juice of memory.

We gained only the dim
profile of an inbred king.
Then the chokecherries ripened
in the unfolding corolla of
long northern light,
filling our freshly opened eyes.
We ate dog,
rubbed its fat on our heads.
The elders say it cures all.

News that Stays News

Executioner finches bob their heads in the wild rhubarb
& another great Italian poet collapses.
January's rain-glossed stones devour the waning sun
in the high savannah fallows &
bloody yolks melt under the pinyon--
(the quail hen knows which eggs make good offspring).

Today was stillborn in El Nino's mist,
morning glory & clematis shriveled to chicken wire--
Stellar's Jay rattles his tail, flinging wet
sparks from its juniper perch.
This is a day for headlines & myths:

“50th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz”
“5 billion set aside for new prisons”

A good day to read Ovid: the subduing of
Titans & fall of Thebes are always news.

A falcon carves up a cottontail
with curt slashes of his velvet head.

David Brennan

On Captivity

The local prostitutes bathe like the rest of us, in the fountain in the churchyard, in water that streams from a young boy's penis. They are modest while washing, hushed. Though there was that time Natalie, the one with chlorine-green hair, asked the ex-banker's wife, Mrs. White, how was her son? White's face lit up, and the two chatted amiably between vigorous scrubs. It wasn't until both were dressed that Mrs. White burst into tears.

Memoir

Groping the hallway. You want to hear them. It is the premier modern experience. You want to think of yourself quietly, to make quiet entirely novel. So when the gait sympathizes with your quiet the fierce bafflement is an individual. Groping the stairway where many others have failed its accurate up. Experience the sound of footfalls. Yours. You want to hear them. To solve their problem.

*

I would rather see documentary film than digest everything he digested. You wish to air your discontent. Why not? That's a question that throws me off those sentences you make with your voice. I disagree with the sentence he was given. Or is being nailed shut into a tower and starved with your children merely a circumstance masking the greater gesture of how one is willing to die? I think this is interesting, but I have never been able to digest a documentary film all in one sitting. Doesn't it make you afraid to open your door? What if it won't open? It opened. Look: those people you might otherwise have never. I can't be invisible. Neither can you. Together, we will

*

If you did not think I was a logician, instead a street corner preacher, instead a man fond of watching pheasants disappear, instead a barber shop counsel, instead the last morsel of lifeboat ration, instead a sock hop, instead anonymous, instead what you want for me, instead a map folded wrongly, instead a lamp that darkens, instead a tonof tiredness, instead struck with cuteness syndrome, instead a tuft of fake fur, instead a sharp machete, instead a clown in plain clothes, instead Iceland, instead a too-large attention, instead the prosthetic roof of a mouth, instead costume, dance and stylized speech, then the lusty anthem in your tongue is on to something. I like the way our names are called out.

*

That's the spin-out. That's the drive shaft. *your neck, O your neck* It's got a crick in it. *fish-breath snow, shrapnel slice a gill* That's the lyric. Song-voice gallop. *fetch a breast I have none, fetch my genitals where have they gone* Totaled. 4-way stop nosebleed. That's the emergency. The ECNALUBMA. *my donor card, my Hep C* That's the. That's the lyric.

*

Trust the apparatus exists, Foucault's panopticon, our privacy an image in some body's pretend, you and me, dear. Let us quote pg. 223: *Consider your seed*. Everyone's got their jewel or their daughter. Everyone that shows up here is a complete hypocrite. I'm sorry. A definition strikes out the life of a thing. And yet, my intentions are clear:

*

Circle. Line. Dancing with a woman who tells me I'm cute. I'm not cute. I'm chasing my neighbor's tail, spin. Pomade on to the next saucy shape that brings you sausage. Catch a breast. Electro roast Biff, this fellow's hard up over California's tense twirl. Doe sees doe, courtesy turns, intervenes. Forward and back my new neighbor's flesh fat, can I spin that? Harrison Ford. Bow to your cowboys, curtsy with your cows. We'll begin in the normal improper position and from there proceed to keep up with time. The present in my gaps. All a man, I make a wavy line. It's like butter, it's fly, I'm soaked through someone else's sweat, a gypsy tipped on contraband bourbon—now circle round back to that first imposition.

*

We'll be learning so much together, we'll be as if born twins. We'll be as if the dog enjoying himself in the backyard, chasing his tail that is also the squirrel's tail, or the tail of the dove. This is a serious attempt to convey what I will be to you and you will be to me. It is adequate and baffling. Our time together will be fast-paced, arriving in intervals of less than an hour for a span of much less than six months. Our words will travel with sympathy's velocity. I'll have skinny legs and you a prominent sternum. We'll be good at what we do, and will be given an additional minute to finish up. To run out of things to say, already.

*

My advice: Get out of here. The longer you stay, the less chance you have of re-catching the train. There's little here to note. At town's center the streets radiate off a round-a-bout, dissipate into flat stretches of field. A plain state. Even though I live in the city, where there are lines everywhere to move a body forward, my address to you is here, in this small town mid-nowhere. For both of us exclusion is the crop-out. We harvest it together, cleansing the palate, complicating the flavor. Devil's crossroad: I'm gone. You: Get some return in your go. Locomote.

Brennan as Cherry Tree

(BRENNAN *imagines himself having imaginary branches.*)

BRENNAN

I have found memory in my heart
To give you. Here it is.
It is here, in my body, for you.
Name it, so you will remember.
It is a gift to be forgotten.

A Plant in Winter

(Between WORDSWORTH and COLERIDGE is a potted PLANT.)

WORDSWORTH

I agree with the plant.
The cliffs of its looking are war-painted red, and a thorn
Is of little use.

COLERIDGE

You water it with snow;
The season reflects the injury.
Pretending innocence
Is a natural state
Will earn you a bid for sainthood.
When blessed with the irrational rhetoric of holiness
The plant will die
And people will grow close to it.

WORDSWORTH

The plant has not washed.
I must bathe it.

COLERIDGE

You have potted the plant
And placed it fireside while winter extends white prettifications
To hills and wood-pile.

(JOHN ASHBERRY enters. He stands behind the plant.)

JOHN ASHBERRY

The effete vocabulary of summer
No longer says anything.

(He removes a dying leaf, leaves.)

THE PLANT

Aaaah.

David Highsmith

digital lounge

“on the wire”
a dialogue

blood
& scholarship

takes it down
to black & white

they stampede &
they blather

below the prison
ganglion

nerves & bone
a binary spin

dust

finger pricked upon
an imaginary
blade

Tequila to cleanse
a deliberate
wound

ours to gloat
leapfrog &
belie

an angry ether
Quetzalcoatl &
Liberty

blood & light
the Americas
conjoined

hic et nunc

held in a palm

hic et nunc

cold choke of time

sweet & useless

the last Krakatoa

offered without

emotion or a light

names

they fly & why
shouldn't they
mine is a child's life

and this, a childish
day among the ancients
at play in the tower of Babel

I raise my slingshot
at temple birds who perch
to crap upon an obelisk

a lion prowls a path among
the birds, all their names
slipping through her thoughts

ringtone

hands free
a tunnel
of flesh
a signal
set to vibrate

just
something to do
with one's hands
navigate
a closed space

elevator door
six bars below
a signal voiced
access
to navigate time

voice
in a pocket
next to the skin
discretion
as close as one's thumbs

one's position
within another's
a texted truth
vibration
an open volume

inevitable
touch
upon a virtual dial
thumbs
engage a wall of text

distraction
voiced
a wireless flash
an answer to
vibration

to navigate
a body's
surface
a texture
in caller ID

to navigate a
truth
a scope and
volume
freed from hands

a self
once free
to cruise
inevitable
communication

wired flesh
a cursor
reveals
an amplified
stance

a ringtone rides
an accident's
stance
anticipates
water

clear message
in six bars
disordered
surface
in its scope

clear
signal spent
exhausts a
distant plaster
cast of hands

our truth
within
a ring
an accident
of text

a yearning
once for
hands
a message
sensed &

deleted
the physical
frees
the virtual
voice

hands
freed below
a surface
warm wet
voice

serenity of
new-tech
a certain wet
& perfect
clarity

clear voice
six bars
below &
hands free
rides

a signal
ours
to tunnel below
a welcome
within

a wireless
passage
time first
then space
your avatar

your voice
within
a custom tone
your
anticipated text

Derek Henderson

Coal Pile Photograph

1.
Fog trilling off the tree, I botch you as I should
fig of mine (men would bite you);
cut and oozing, nothing proves you (it being night).
Rather put you to my lips rob you

Caught unclad in a rocky time
pry me open and gamely pose me shy
before a mountain of coal.
(dear clear eye in a field of goldenrod)
I make the same chase never
so wild where you do your hunting—
it seems night in the photo,
the sun as such in its haze
is divested to moon—it rests on my chest
a happy suture. Nothing quieter than this
our shade, such an even mountain of black
verging over me, solid and sinuous,
a same spirit, a Saturnine.

Gushing, purveyed, notorious
poke of your camera
mops me and lavishes glints to provoke me.
A voice rose up in you
denies your photo its crags, waits
for November.

2. *to you an instant, to you an instant*
Tearily, the sun shall come to light
shall eat me & thee alike,
fleetly; the sun behind us the sun
a pushing mirror shutting short
the space we pass through—(I am
not just a motor of God) all caught
in cobalt and coal—we see it
and stop, standing
placed—you & I bite, chomp and splay
me right, cut off my plodding
to vacuum—nothing here has me so naked
as the lens that shutters me.
(You don't see cocks sway the way she does,
You don't see cocks crow you say).

3.
A gull, a ball, a gun, a gold.
Little skulls. Busy door. Little ball. It is done.

Living, living barbarously already.
Globe. Bites. Rain, rivulets. Not yet.
She does not choose, she chooses not to step or fly.

I owe you a stick fetched off the moss from
(yes, you do mean it) a bulrush copse;
we rest in boles, in branches, in sappy stems.

Dial your camera already—folks are come to check
around us dial already devote a glance
to your own nakedness—
 I don't know straw sticks
 to irritate the back, I radiate
 allow provoke
 over & back again.

4.

The black on me, on my feet, on my ass, my scrotum—
when it does not rain on me:
here you have little gales over little lakes.

When it rains:
rivulets through cracks in cement,
coal dust in the water,
frank rain
of my distant heart...

(I will love that we use
all the known that we know our
different routes to the sea-green coast
just as plain as rushing wind at the end of June).

5.
Verge—the grandmastery of absence—
a master of parting (too-much arrived & too-much gone)
together, I have cleansed through
smeared coal on my chest
the beautiful skin below.

A large share of light

Above the large building
we find someone and
given the camera
picture with a
footstep's pattern and
someone seated behind
festival of light
enter the camera
from our days again
seen already
festival spilling of light
from the rigid
walls
utter inability

Puddle

bear out

to a place to sound

sucking mud

lost shoe, baked mud

together

Daniel Morris

What I Learned Theorizing Museums from Candy, the Student in My Intro to Poetry Class Who Doesn't Just Dislike Me or Ignore Me or Think I'm irrelevant or Over Her Head or Beneath Her or Quirky or Preachy but Who Really Hates My Guts and Everything (She Thinks) I Stand For and Wants Me Axed for Insubordination Even Though She Knows I Have Tenure and I Know it Would be Next to Impossible for Her to Fire Me Even with Extremely Low Course Evaluations Due to the Zeros She Marks on Each Question

Candy went from Lafayette IN to NYC to see the Hip Hop exhibit at MOMA
Before we happen to be discussing Sherman Alexie's lyric rant about the (I believe) Mythical Buffalo Bill Museum as a form of Colonialist rape. My argument extends
Beyond Alexie to a wider critique in which museums murder culture period.
I go so far as to argue there is "no way" to put Hip Hop into MOMA
Without altering its street cred. In fact I questioned how anyone who dug
Hip Hop enough to drive to NYC from Northwest Indy could unambiguously
Marvel MOMA because, as Alexie demonstrates, what was once Subversive/underground or
of otherwise revolutionary potential is infected
Like a virus or absorbed to inoculate with the mainstream acknowledgement
A threat in the cordoned off and controlled environment of sanctioned
Visibility and what Pierre Bourdieu has termed cultural capital -- the museum space MOMA or
otherwise. Was I proclaiming anything new or controversial? Think Elgin Marbles. Does
anyone still pray to Athena? How about I.M. Pei's
POMO museum in Cleveland where George Thorogood
Admitted Chuck Berry inked every rock song before 1960,
Or the maps, flags, letters, and numbers of Jasper Johns, as described in a famous
Critical Inquiry essay by Philip Fisher entitled "The Making and Effacing of Art,"
Or James Young's recent work on Holocaust memorials in Berlin as a form of amnesiac
Forgetting rather than remembering, or the Athenian warrior's helmet with the pinprick Hole,
signifying the terrifying transition from spears to bullets
Now encased in the Worcester Museum of Art as described in a lecture
On Book Three of *The Iliad* by Professor Grossman at Brandeis in 1991.
Candy was PISSED OFF, acting as if I wished in front of peers to colonize her

Travels, exploit her participation in the death ritual of her identificatory adventure;
On the verge of tears (of rage?) she stood to say well maybe
Greek pantheon or the Holocaust or even Jasper Whoever are dead
But you just couldn't be more off about MOMA Hip-Hop because
The many young idealistic rappers from Jamaica Queens to Jamaica Jamaica,
A mosaic of all races, creeds, sexual preferentials, and ethnic backgrounds wearing
Really rad bag rags are alive, hopeful Hip Hop Is bonified Art art, not kids'
Stuff toasting the dozens, MOMA was breathing monster Kulcha
Mr. Morris a living legacy to Grandmaster Flash, Lovebug Starski, Kurtis Blow, and Coke La
Rock while you glare up there with your b.o. 5 o'clock shadow and pot belly leaning Over your
platform or lectern or whatever you call it where you pontificate
Theorize speculate under cover of your PhD authority as Doctor of Modernist Poetics
Claiming you don't but really do relish your ability to grade us and tell us when we can
Break into groups to discuss sestinas we don't care to discuss and when we
Must zip it and listen to you like you're some Oracle at fucking Delphi just because While you
pretend to be this rad instructor because you let us keep a diary and don't Call it a journal and
you don't require MLA documentation or any formal papers
And you play us "Tambourine Man" and tell us about acid and grammar doesn't matter And
show us hush hush the lesbian subtext of Gertrude Stein's tender buttons when
The God's honest truth is you fear the implications of MOMA's decision
To feature Hip Hop because you know they are the taste arbiters
Not little old you hiding out here at Purdue in Northwest fucking Indiana cornfields
And you realize if EVEN MOMA is going Hip Hop you are so so frigging far behind
Even though you look pretty young with your goatee you are nothing
Othe than another skanky dinosaur profs we all dread getting who shoves
Samuel Johnson and Ben Jonson and Alfred Lord Tennyson down our throats
Are you so different with your Ass-berry and Gins-bork and Sex-Town
And because you fear the future is now you hide behind your theories
About "museum culture" because you can't admit to us students
Can't admit to yourself that something is happening (as your own
Rad poet Bob Dylan might say) where happening things happen in places like
The Big Apple things deafening and rhythmic and multicultural things beyond
Your expertise of what is and what isn't poetry for I am sure
You would not consider Hip Hop poetry since I didn't see any of our stuff
On your syllabus and I am sure that is not because you were afraid
You were going to kill it Sherman Alexie's Buffalo Bill poem notwithstanding.

Emily Brown

2/25/08 1:16 pm

My mind's gone numb

I know I loved you once

But in the brevity of moments

When the tones change outcomes

-Those sickening several words--

And maybe your character's been like this the whole time

But you're so enigmatic

Contrary to reason, I have to believe in you

Against the words of honest people

-And the best wishes of friends--

I can't stand this feeling

Sometimes I wonder if all this time

I've been in love with an imaginary boy

Whose soul I've stapled behind your face

Edric Mesmer

from *Yrtemmys*

V

But who should in the world aggregate a vocabulary?
And who of words should churn against
the firmaments of rhythm?

“Strangers are sacred” said Webster
shelving envy between the glut of
sodden decimals

Now come Noahesque to aisles
then upon easels...
lastly in loam—

The lost companion :: mortal dread
where an oar swung out and fro
in winnowing

A musk ox then mid an ambit of princes
planing the fen the echelon must rear
fronti nulla fides , The

blood-sac lain on Tartarus—
ghosts famous of anatomy
—poor Vitruvius

Thy inscription is thine own and not
circumstantial taught—
ARRET and STOP

Apart are shot by field of target
and flee those gods like fate
in' impossibility

(Tiresias parting
as his hair
prophecy)

Franked lingual by the Fe
-asting of newfangling anglers yet to
be touched by the chart-flown tongue Linnaeus's

Leave for me a Δ in the carbon to say we keeling
o'er vortices , in all our stance retrograde
are but vessels regurgitate

VI

*Last at the shore I'll be
and drowsy at my oar
whence Jove pounds*

So there is recognition among mortals messed with
by gods afire , trans-
genetic tele-

Pathy ; a-
journey of comparative
mononucleic acids mapped

Inanely on the outer-inner husk
of an Ionian
boar's tusks

—Dip this pair in equal vats of molten cop-
per and of wax—to bi-
furcate the paral-

lel proces-
ses : : etch
as

From one cast ; & from the other crack
like teak the teacup-shaped
musk to be imbibed

And from the waxen artifice of former
hone a second cast in cask
of whirling plate

So two horns stand to bless the silence
stet as seers swept to
Hypnos' halyards

Neither disambiguating plebeian anti-pedant
but one the sign and one the gneiss reconstituting
the quality of schism embedded ever in the sovran

VII

You the aging prince with years blown through
as fluting gasps—the brow knits
sharp dew

Who sired you? Sires now whom?
against the gird of Perspex keen
to your translucence

You present , sweet unskilled swine-
herd , a worry over wan grid-
dings cylindrical

Silos so silent yet in their cement
saltless as unwept for as
thematicism

Painterly gazes , you answered , availing sleepy eyes
of stranger inlays upon the back of thrones not
all shepherds shown to swaggered

As an architect separated from his elevators by mortal exile
Sought in the photographer's myopic bliss
Libra qua triptych

for ourselves bathetic

Water the color of dolor gone
gender-to-gender beneath
the aegis

Unguent in the unbound palms of an
ingénue , odious lain—for sake of dreamt—
to rest at last as tress unclasped from Pandemonia's untidied head

Evan Schnair

ON FOOT, ON TOP

And what color did you expect. Me to make or you to take or what
have I read that makes you think think a breaking of stones is
bomb sweep frizzle fray cloud on top of cloud cloud and boots
thud don't you think and it means progress sweep frizzle fray the
way a helmet may fall bomb sweep and it's clean don't you think
or muster frizzle fray the stampede of bills sweep bomb fray stamp
frizzle must mean fray strip bomb strip frizzle nipple napalm strip
at home at home at home, can you tell bomb sweep frizzle fray can
you bomb sweep this away and tell the dedication of a blind bomb
blind sweep blind frizzle and can't you see fray fall from clouds
today they were overthere yesterday, how quick air moves to home
and boots are left behind the sweep the bomb you frizzle not fray
behind arras the dagger the sphinx which town do you suppose is
next bomb sweep frizzle fray the earth and what if they're too to
think this way too to think too to bomb sweep to bomb bomb
sweep to better frizzle fray.

CHEMICALS IN A HEMISPHERE

Why is there a color for an artery and another for the coagulation of simple things or pigments that can bury red fire siren blind blink squeeze an intimate thought without a row or tube you'd say is simply from paste but who can afford? To teach build tools red fire siren blind blink is an initiate or motive on a screen the blame is in curtains the curtains of someone's decision red fire siren blind blink down the hall a choir that has not been chosen, a chamber of hurt or about to hurt repression red fire siren blind blink red fire it tends to blind blind red and explain what fuses without being scratched just pretend. Why the color for pretend is a child's hormone or sun ray that goes dim arid it is exposed red fire siren blind blink to air red fire had you grouped it together or listened to the other senses other senses senses other and eyes appear nose thrusts fingers fire and sirens plush deep deep in this color is a parcel of choice finger ready paint paint glos and paint a pint won't hurt red fire siren blind blink hurt again red fire siren blind blink blink blink free free freeze a parcel you thought red fire siren blind blink was there and here and cry the seeds cry glass refractions cry stable table cry collage adulthood remove hood sweat chamber and change chamber to a red sand brick and touch it like touch it swell come and make one oh there are only twenty six but look beyond simple pigments blindly no blink no red yes sound your outer siren and fire catapults syncopation of probe and free free free motive motion meander out of two walls too tall and two walls in a controlled burn where is it you see set the camera of your intricate knots and free

ROBBERY

The invention of the colorthief came yesterday and there were tunics on shoulders or brazen dangles not completely sheltered or yes the metallic soft explosion toy waving in the air brushes shards triangles blood by blood and rocks everywhere the cloud raised and settled brushes shards triangles and there he appeared.

Tunics on shoulders lost their color buildings always stood and how does coffee taste when there's ash and blood can you see between brushes him shards him triangles him seeps blood and yesterday our pigments went dry and brushes brushes brushes were snapped.

Brazen dangles, heads lost their weight the balloon left in a desert the colorthief explained in a video blood claiming responsibility for such artistry the oozy covered by a and it's in the air blinding and getting sea sick for the trigger do thieves always seem so blood so happy?

Or coloring books, the child here and there, flipping pages brushes scratch pages shards imagination memorizing triangles from a blood line this thief is right to steal, of course says the says the says the mutations and now color thieves now color thieves blood thieves brush thieves left all shards so piece them back you can't together what's blood and triangles have three sharp points, but the brushes look at us and were a colorthief to appreciate a nice canvas or earthy paint mix the paint shards with brush blood and brush blood all over the books.

MYRIAD, THE APPLE

Myriad, the shine of not knowing in a middle or no water to guide
you to make two or three and a splint of light blinds apples sweet
and rot away how nice it seems to see the cars strange tasks
greener than the rooftop I wish I could see apples sweet and rot
away from here the idea that carbon and green attention apples get
sweet or plumage is plumbing rot away. This water this spout
marker plastics, It's Plastics! apple rot sweet this way the marker
in Pacific nowhere, now attention greener or bluer or shine was
intended for apples sweet and rot away the biodegrade bio upgrade
bio history of point A to point end apple sweet. Rots this way slow
creeping of oil away, it's plastics, everything's wrapped don't you
trust origins, I come from apples sweet rot away right away from
California I came everything and freeway stays. Apples aren't
dressed, rot, are clothed sweet what makes atmosphere,
atmosphere is taste sweet rot away and there's the heron, the seal,
the cattails, the apple sweet rot and away up and away, it's not just
gone the spill the table the rot the whole circumference in plastic
out there the hole up there and a worm, brown smug breaths
sectioning its way gasses its way apples sweet and rot away, today
do you see or is it hazard a fire lit beneath someplace else and if
it's not here and if California is a leader where are your leaders
apples too sweet with genetics, those will fix us too, you're right
this mark this apple, this sweet is rot so throw it away. Myriad,
shine stop blind see cycle we beg for fix apples sweet apples sweet
apples sweet core a seed you see when it's not pre sliced in
plastics— sweet apples don't rot away.

SOLAR MECHANICS

And then two sides in a composition didn't see where a hanging
sun began but let the pendulum down paws pulled back, trigger,
and it throbs, longer the wait. Thought sun was a mean fire and
time to put it out let pendulum throb out while away the wild away
and stretched for life the light, nonsense sides and the pendulum let
it down or douse it out or throb energy of trigger trigger or pray
fingers that didn't see same burn on their faces or other faces or
other faces and other pendulum faces got to see let throb let fire let
burn muscle waiting power and punishment for longer the stare
two sides the blinders of a swing blinders of a swing of a trigger
you're out did you see it burn or fling it coming this ring – other
faces at the pendulum wing and see it-is not it-was the food the
wife the house the art the child the friend the memory the respite
the tea the wine the riches the slums let the pendulum swing and
it'll go high again bring back torqued catapult arms or praying one
way signs the sun knows more than we capture see the third
composition a pendulum moon arise answer let desert be desert
and a graveyard be grave be brave young soldiers raw with
meaning, be patient and learn other faces facing you.

F.J. Bergmann

Texts That Corrupt

transmogrified from John Ashbery's "The Corrupt Text"

The seasons of strife only now take effect so we notice.

Complications, difficulties he made (or so they say)
that overtime and sharper pencils won't affect,
or resurrect our fall from grace. Ever again.

Let me be all you ever had, let me destroy what
can't be yours, like peasants blowing up railways,
their stares like empty pockets weighed down with
the taste of water. Only distance can cleanse us
from our wanting preferences; a broader analogy
would be to wait until it comes out on video.

We'll hit the streets again, start moving out
of the eye of the storm if we must; out of the way
of swiftly-falling skies, the thrown pie that flattens
the national affect like a bulldozer to a bland texture,
rewards the featherbrained, who never notice how
effectively an encomium keeps them up to speed.
We are a corrupt race, brooding over lost instructions.
Child, find your way before the mice eat up the crumbs.

VII. f. Folly

splendor followed
the empty neatly
stars shivered acidly
shifted once more
were being relit
facing into the wind
anyone ought to see
up close persisted
another night folded
into darkness

VII. g. Tilth

departure was impossible
extravagantly stretched
as far as he wanted
wine diverted great big muscles
glory appeared in a hard lump
snowing gems fell
in last year's colors
his head did a little somersault
over nothing at all
the right things made him tremble
dizzily striving for oblivion

VIII. b. Idiot

to leave the house fanged
shifting heavily carved air
with his fingers drawing the length
of matter that isn't nice
that isn't a feathery creature
speaking felt fluid
as though mingled with terror
ask an old forest dragon
somebody has to
be having fun

IX. a. Thrall

the next circumlocutions
tended to be graceless
in the middle of anonymity
a rectangle lay on fog
men nameless twice
aroused more fear
the rules hurt
hell tumbled down
spirits trickled up
obviously not supposed to
nothing lived like a queen
polished privacy smiling
strangely a stranger

tries anything that's handy
beautiful had a temper
a glamour masking someone
free from human life
fumbled flecks of gold

IX. b. Lamia

circle three times around a thorn
expecting to fly out of the wind
the usual brandy wine for breakfast
moonlight stinks of rising flames
heraldic banners remind the morning
to feel splendid in the afternoon

George J. Farrah

After Duncan

absolute

we name them

his 'cruelty' gave me

a local sea to name

(all this desire to name)

the other shoots me full

of green

no accidental

imperative

a form that forms me again

from the ground

lifting in the air

thin or thick

on a Dusk

day to Noah

needing no more

and a promise

a near hand

labors of importance

in increments

held rings

of thought to warmth

rings of the earth

committed void

music as a trial of

the eternal asking

& the answer

the

continuity then

earth worms

floating bears and

a clock brown field

lyric wind

a great subjectivity

boxed

melodies

of black crows

a pole star

which defines

the world

do you contain honey

powers of youth the storm?

do you open

into a dooryard?

a spinning fate of

love only

a field

of transcendent
breathing

burning to death

yielded to

and walking

away

they all obey

perhaps

we all obey

a song

somewhere

out of tune

out of focus

white noise off the car radio

Ocean Path (

You with the paintings

the roots of your teeth required of you

the museums of parks stars and night lights

mirrors of the sky open readings

of your face in love

changing the material of your arms

torso legs your whole body

here and there the earth is breaking

everywhere is green or brown

rivers are full of moons

cats full of hills

an afternoon is a bird

of shaky blue green

sweets

deep in a glass of beer

hurry be done with it

squeeze what's left into

the days

the path of thorough branches

armor for

oceans hiding

inside a tea bag

an empty great

beautiful tree

two suns tilt faces

crystal tempests of knowing

taking up a residence

as the night crashes on down

and water runs clear

in a wonderful empty place

down the street

Dopple

As if there were no one alive here

I have dug out my memory as earth

home missed

boat error of rain

my hearts are stacked like chairs

and we are always walking

my eyes have become lights

dusted outside in August

this unfinished

you

Sleepless

Reason mesa and the opposite

a people's calendar of their own beauty

she is a whispered clearing

Although rain water
is a face
and you gather under trees

our belief in spoons and time

the bride of desire's lonely lesson

the sacred lake again

spars goat bones
old rivets

like the spread of her skin

flat stones
fire
on the cold night beach

and then she put on mud frogs

to win him over

the lover mother or sister

the collective myths of the night

husband and wife
injured by violence
and the forest

soul syllable o willow

vision speaks an order

powders of leaves
flaps fruit
the traffic below

a numbered beauty?

glorious unfaithfulness

of words

in private complex
machinery

he sees for a moment the sleepless thought

lodged in the sea

and then breathes deep.

Gianina Opris

Welcoming Nothing

Moon is always moon

Minologies Symbols

Mean great bliss

Endless vow

Good news

Pray to Amma

for the essence of all religions

for a dissatisfied heart

for less meat eaters

for bus rides

for the ones that learning to dance

Are you really there?

happiness prosperity source of heartbreak

“Care for the dead”

Speak for yourselves

Everything is sacred

In the state of liberation

Traditions found

(five twenty five)

Nirvana is awakening

life comes from life

& many of the wonderful things

Pray to Mother Mary

The body grows

She is ONE

healing channel

Are you really there?

Voice speaking words

Fifth morning walk

Cheaters

Billion dollars

Cosmic manifestation

[Kala = Time]

Sea-gulls

Firstborn

Alaska don't come here (they say)

Virginity of the forest

Are you really there?

earthquake that destroyed Pisco

She summons flesh

We hear mice twinkling around

You and you

Winter evenings side by side

Hesitating and persuading that

Life is not so bad

Are you really there?

Tongue hammered

Sexes joined

Away ... waves

Three

Blind

Beasts

Lamp

Spanish G

Boy struck by a dumpster at age 19

contrary of magic

My death

and yours

Desires wandering some past event

Roko Sherry Chayat

Black stars freesias

That naming of yours?

Weapons far away

You were that ... (Asesino)

"Hands I like"

Say "Hands I like"

Ave Maria

Song for ghosts

she walks like a wolf

A mama wolf

calling Colorado

KOLORADO

Rosa without a Rosa

He is a lime candle

Her eyes

Her hands

And cheeks

One Lord

Are you really there?

O YOU are already there

Breath of the heart

Buddha

With no hair

They want an answer

They want to rule the world

They want to end global competition

They want a perfect democracy

They want a point in a distant future

This very moment

Lotus heart

We are done just as we are

Tsa Tsa Tsas

No one comes to admire your dream

And game

Lady Mia claps in latin now . . . [[[□ □ □ Ÿ]]]

(loud)

Sit down

Take some snow

Dear Say Yes

I Say Yes

are beings deities?

Good

now put a bit of heart into them

fruit volcano SHE loves you

Leaf lily water is water lily leaf [in some painter's eye]
Hello my rock

She is making springtime
Her finger is pointing to the moon

Are you really there?

Tigers killed
HE who comes with his sulphur smile
Imagining a rape

O solitude love me
Calmly going down the stairs

Grabiela Mistral said about women *We were all supposed to be queens*

Are you really there?

going toward the mountain
You have lunar joys
murderers and architects

Who is going to obey you and adore you
turn into a leafy green or a revolutionary
day and night?

I vow to wake up
This leaf looks empty

One can merely through the constant need to ward off become too weak any longer to defend oneself

~~~~~*F. Nietzsche*

**Notes**

\*

So I try  
to contact dad in dreams  
See le monde as my mother  
Possibly understand  
you leave the earth you come back  
the sound is the crickets

\*

Writing:  
immediate  
moment  
act  
no one says a word  
faith  
the pen breaking words  
(toasted almonds don't cure this)  
you

\*

Dog sheds hair  
hair grows back  
pleasure thrill  
when there is death  
imagination vs intelligence  
leave a trace  
mother's thoughts

\*

Visions I can't explain  
see what I see  
A circle a prayer a large artist's notebook  
its nature speaks  
I love best  
white underneath  
Is this bad?

\*

Something beautiful is breath

I travel

with mother earth

& spirit

and heavy head

beloved alphabet

\*

I paint a picture until my hand is sore

caress its back hair the night

dog looks scared

eating alone cherry tomatoes are the best

\*

In love with the hours

the night

brings back

the poet

I have seen angels

fears truth

the imprint of wings

*Jamie Iredell*

**Elkhorn Slough**

Tonight the moon is new, dark as a continent,  
but plump enough to play the earth with tides,  
to pluck the strings of your body, curvy as a guitar.  
We feel its tidal tug as the blood rushes  
to our most tender parts, where heat meets skin,  
like landing on a virgin shore where the natives  
await in poppy fields, roasted pig meat  
steaming on platters held over their heads.  
And the moon has pulled the water to the opposite  
hemisphere, and the pools expose purple jewel  
anemones—their petal-like tentacles open as flowers  
before closing upon the intrusion of a painted  
topshell snail—and the mussels and barnacles  
crowd each other and out beyond the dock  
in the slough's low tide chasm the otters feed  
on abalone and I feed on you, and our fists pound  
like waves lapping as we press against the dock.

## Clouds Rolling In

You painted my profile in pastels and I lipped  
the whisky like a saxophone, blowing  
hot blues at the panes frosted with winter  
while clouds swallowed the Sierra the way a Titan devours  
his children, gone without chewing, lost in the throat  
of an impossible monster. I drank, waiting for her to return  
from New York, hoping to recast what had been dropped  
like a wet towel the summer before, plopped on tile  
in an audible flop, unmoving like a cartoon character lands  
from a thousand-foot fall. Tell me how it is in Greece.  
Are the hills scorched by the sun like burnt eggs?  
You must pass the time under café awnings sipping coffee  
or, in the afternoons, ouzo milky from molten ice.  
Tell me of your mandatory stint with the military,  
running marathons for days, pumping out pushups  
on the sweltering slopes of Olympus, your brow sweaty,  
glistening like melted wax. Your mother must be appalled  
when you eat fries with ketchup instead of mayonnaise,  
at your vulgar exclamations: *fucking spatula, fucking Nutella.*  
I should have listened to your outbursts while you painted:  
*Who gives a sheet? Geet over her. Have some coffee.*  
Instead, I watched the clouds roll in and waited for lightning,  
waited to hear thunder fall like a god's footsteps.

## Five buzzards

circle the river on thermals, broad feathers tipped  
to sky, wind rustling them like fingers,  
like human hair, like reeds bent in the current.

We walk after breakfast, our fingers stitched,  
and talk of littered plastic and the stench  
of fish carcass strewn along the banks.

The bacon grease saturates our bellies, the river  
stinks away while the buzzards search for rabbits,  
mute as the desert quailbrush, as the bear poppies.

Then we see the body, bloated, bent backwards  
in the sage the way flood debris bends around  
tree trunks. A man, grizzled and grizzle-haired,

eyes open and dull as eyes, clothing mottled  
with damp stains, a rumpled fast food bag,  
as if someone tossed him here when they'd finished.

## Desert Migration

Moonlight coats the desert ash, and coyotes  
yelp and howl behind the yip  
of your crying. You claim nightmares,  
but dream of more than demons:  
the soft light glowing in the morning  
of your old home, the lace tablecloth littered  
with needles and thread that held you together.  
You've unraveled, a loose strand from a Washoe  
blanket; pull gently and watch the weave  
evaporate. The gray hills stand treeless, a moon-  
scape. By morning look closer: jackrabbits  
dart between the sagebrush and buds  
of desert paintbrush open and reach for the sun.

## Sage

Live like sagebrush, ground-low.  
Grow your roots deep, your *artemesia*  
leaves covered in tiny white trichomes  
to regulate your internal temperature,  
to cool, reflecting the blast  
of desert sun. Be dull green, almost-dead-  
looking. But reek piney and sweet-alive.  
Let your smell into my skin, wound  
into the threads of my jean jacket,  
your campfire smoke in my eyes. Embrace me  
so I cannot escape, not here where views  
of you sweep, spread fanlike  
horizon to horizon.

*Jason Visconti*

**THE SANDMAN**

The great bandit of sleep comes as a reminder  
versus the sandman, whose slits stay closed.

She heaves  
her body weight without a sound,  
not even  
the soft tush in a cushion  
or toss in the grass  
can't arouse him.

She's an obtrusive instrument  
in the sandman's band, whose tickets are signed off  
for the small hours,  
violin elbows relaxing,  
the piano flying beautifully away  
with the beautiful, everything deep and blue  
in the Milky Way,

the way the lamp proposed.

## A LETTER TO THE MOON

I have included you in my records  
just in case I survive. I want  
to make myself clear, make you  
happy, a happy moon  
in the opposite sky. Good riddance  
to the sun, she could never  
bare her scars, self-induced  
like a teenage girl  
falling for spite. Even stars  
don't break my heart like you,  
the way you float  
elsewhere to elsewhere  
undefined like a ghost. No, even  
the birds, they don't cry out nearly as majestic,  
for these weary moon hazy eyes  
though not quite magic.

## **IS GOD A POET?**

If he is,  
he says the first thing  
he believes.

He's natural, down  
to the ache in his knees, clenched fist  
of his delivery,

blood  
of his sons and daughters.  
The marrow of the soulless.

He writes with his back  
turned to the Universe. Too much for a poem.  
He takes in the fame just a little

to start up his system, play  
Heaven's poet again.

*Kyle Flak*

GOING

The storm cloud hovered above me.  
I rode all night upon my rusty little unicycle.  
Spits of rain and thunder fell like coins upon  
my weary head and the pavement tumbled below  
like a treadmill that never ends. Someone said,  
"This is the best two dollar movie I have ever  
seen." Someone said, "I hope the killer does put that  
hatchet inside his skull." Someone said, "I think this  
is what they do to the children who get lost  
at the zoo." I could feel the scenery beginning to  
grow tired, I could hear it gasping for air. So I said,  
"Soon it will be morning. Soon I will no longer be  
afraid." The crowd laughed and laughed as though  
I had just said the funniest thing in the world.

## SHOE

A shoe found its way into the president's house. It was only joking. At dawn the next day, still no one had found it sitting on the sofa with a magazine. "This is turning out to be a piss-poor joke," said the shoe. He got up to make himself some stew in the presidential kitchen using radishes, milk, trout, and a hambone. Just then, the real cook walked in and startled the poor little shoe, "Mister President, whatever are you doing making your own stew?" he said. "I have discovered that I am just a tiny, tiny shoe. A shoe without a home. Now, just walk away and no one gets hurt," said the president, both laughing and crying into a glass of spilt milk.

## CELLO

Because I had no talent, I had to stay up all night practicing my cello. The "music" sounded like a rubber mannequin trying to commit suicide inside a pencil factory. The neighbors, they stared wide-eyed at their ceilings the whole time, knowing for certain that something truly sinister was going on in the house right next door to them. In the morning, I greeted them kindly and told them it was all just a bad dream--"there are no mannequins in this part of Iowa" and lugged my corpse of a cello down the road inside its enormous black case. Thud, thud, thud.

## BEES

1.

Bees eat cheese and watch TV all day. Someone told me that once and it's not as though I'm "laughing all the way to the bank", but that would be nice. It seems that checks large enough to evoke sustained hilarity are rare these days and one gets them only through an excessive degree of patience which reduces the likelihood of laughter in any case. Well, that's not stopping me, though. Extermination is so joyous to the ones on top is why I'm still going strong. Let me give you the lowdown on my gym routine:

530 AM: 800 knee-bends.

645 AM: brief popsicle break.

646 AM: jogging on corduroy trousers for exactly one hour.

746 AM: extended brain-rub with modern brain-rub cream from "the mall."

Etcetera, etcetera, and so on. . . .

The enemy must not know all the hairy and not-so-hairy details of my preparation. There is a war on the horizon and it looks like a little baby

nanny-goat: Bah! Bah! (You know that the bees are winning is why you're scared.)

2.

In the wind, I found a bee.

There is so much wind, though, that it hurts to look for him.

I will not do any of his looking, but my looking requires success-- my target must be known to me and me and me. Me

three! Oh, how one self grows so boring in the country mist but never in the missed country. Remember mother's ham and

egg biscuit with mustard, onion, mayo, etc. sandwiches? I am never lonely thinking about

them, looking for them, wanting them. But the

damned bee. He is not filling in the least. He could not suffocate himself, even.

3.

I am Bee, hear me roar!

I play canasta on Wednesdays with all the girls from the Coca-Cola  
plant on Monrovia Boulevard.

Once, Cindy lost her shirt. We had to get her a new one, although  
we play "just for fun."

Dice are fun. Let's see: what else is fun? Not roller coasters.

Not double-espresso

mocha cappuccinos with cheese. Sometimes wheelbarrows. Never empty  
hat-boxes, though full ones are nice!

Beatrice Dorothy Wittenborough, at your service. My name-tag misses out on  
so much. Like the time I chased bees at the apple orchard or was it a  
cherry orchard? I found out what the things you love  
can do to you. Do to you when their kind of  
love doesn't involve teenage kisses directly on the honey-hot

hive they call a "home." Humbug! Humbugs are different. (I  
shouldn't have mentioned  
them at all, not here.)

4.

This is the best way to bee. I mean "pee". First, you  
go out in the woods after midnight with a bunch of boys you don't  
know from the Academy. They will have beer and boxes and cigars and  
cardioverters. No, not that last one.

Let them touch you where you can't be touched. Let them hold  
you when you don't even want to know them. This will  
enrage your father and help you to move on

to other interests: camels. What about them? How about them? They can go  
for longer than you'd think without the joy of water. They can  
look hilarious in wool sweatshirts. They can go potty all by  
themselves. And don't think that's not  
important. It's not. But I want you to know that you  
know and then forget that knowing matters. Growing matters  
are entirely different. Leave growing to the pros. Like Albert Groustalf--he  
has grown bees in his basement for years and no one knows about  
it. Not even he! (This calls for a glass of iced tea--or better yet:  
sun tea! Yes,  
the sun can even make tea now!)

5.

Bees are elusive. No they're  
not. They're only joking when they do that. I tell you, I have chased  
a bee all the way to Sante Fe only to find his  
family waiting for him with some excellent "hot dish." It involved  
"tater-tots", corn, cream of mushroom soup, etc. The "poor guy", he  
wasn't lonely at all. He was a real estate salesman and part-time  
sharecropper. He had a beautiful wife and seven  
daughters who I couldn't tell apart from each  
other, though they were all quite "breath-taking." I had suspected  
him of "patheticism" only four days earlier on the "dusty trail" and in a  
fortnight I would be asking for one of his daughter's many metatarsi in  
holy matrimony. Me, a baby  
beluga with no home at all. Even spiders have not seemed  
more glamorous.

6.

Legs are interesting.  
Or, well, sometimes interesting.  
Debbie has some, enough.  
I look at them through the glass of what  
once contained our  
peaches. She is pretty. Pretty as a  
peach. But not to  
eat. No. Mom said not  
to eat bees. Beautiful  
bees. Ah.

CONTRIBUTOR'S NOTES  
From  
*THE SWEATER VEST QUARTERLY*

DUKE WENDELZORF ate some pie today and maybe now he'll go ahead and have a little--just a little, mind you--nap before Jim comes over with the prostate medications and a newsreel from Beirut concerning the "fog they've had lately near the more popular sewing stores." He likes cats, eats cheese, rides bikes and plays with his pet penguin Gary at around noon every Tuesday. "Nobody has a larger collection of vintage microphones than I" is what he goes around saying these days. STEVEN BLURGO owns several pairs of stunning dice manufactured in Wales. Some of them are sparkly, others not. He goes by the name "Blurgy" in many social sets and enjoys a great variety of noodles ranging from the tiny, nearly microscopic "bean vermicelli" to the robust and hearty "spatzle" egg noodle of Germany. We sure hope he doesn't drive a Lincoln Town Car-- but, yes, he most certainly does. BETTY doesn't have a last name. We tried to find one for her, but at the last minute it got stolen in the Saint Petersburg subway system. Did you know that the Saint Petersburg metro is the 16th busiest metro in the world? We didn't either. JUNE PETERSMOUTH is the Dutch accordionist you've been hearing so much about these days amongst the more "hip and with-it crowd." We know that she has five pet dogs called Simon, but as of yet, she admits to nothing. She has been lollygagging around London for some time now and hopes to continue doing such. LITTLE TIMMY, BIG TIMMY, AND REGULAR-SIZED TIMMY are the three rather muscular rodents currently occupying our office space in Berlin. We like to think of them as "friends helping us along to a brighter and more pleasant future" but so much of what we do here is stuffy, arrogant, and completely irrelevant to the "world-at-large." Please say "hi" to the three Timmies if you catch them nabbing crackers from the HQ break room any time soon. We do love them so dearly.

## ANYTHING

Imagine a fog. Imagine a pop-music so thrilling  
your  
ears fall off. Imagine Popeye getting  
stronger  
everyday, strangling Wimpy with  
what  
can only be a rare spinach  
wrapper  
that only he is strong enough  
to  
use as a weapon. Imagine Goldilocks  
making  
pudding for three bears who  
lack  
identification papers and probably  
are  
on the run from the law, looking  
for  
anything to be used as a "distraction tactic". Imagine your  
dentist  
making a new version of teeth that can bite through  
cars, office  
buildings, those giant Dutch windmills you often  
find  
on calendars at elderly  
care  
homes and little locksmith  
shops  
on the edge of town. Imagine a square, a circle, a parking  
ramp. Already, the  
herd of vacationers is coming to greet you.

*Korliss Sewer*

ENKE

Incense and blood stimulate my senses  
as I enter the den.  
My primordial instincts keen  
as I lie down on the slab.  
Pigment flows freely  
from a thousand moving teeth.

My flesh vibrates from the burning, cutting sensation;  
one which urges me to rise...  
away from the pain.  
But no.  
The warm touch of his hand soothes my will;  
I remain motionless.

Creating something beautiful: the two of us.

SAND CASTLES  
(Life from the Eyes  
Of the Forever Child)

Joe waits for Matt by the ocean.  
Filling endless buckets and cans,  
they giggle in delight  
as their chubby hands  
darken with dirt.  
Tower after tower;  
their fortress is built.  
Adorned with seashells,  
stones, and bubble gum wrappers,  
they stand with pride  
before their creation.

The mid-day sun catches glimpses of light  
in both their youthful eyes.  
But it shines differently on Joe.  
The rays are refracted,  
and ideas bend  
as they pass through his prism.  
Yet their friendship is pledged...  
as only children can.

With each passing year,  
Matt's visits to the ocean  
lessen and cease.  
His need to play is replaced  
by duty and responsibility.  
Joe sits alone,  
buckets and cans empty,  
and waits patiently  
for a playmate  
who will never return.

## LICENTIOUS

Strutting, posing, flirtatious.  
The harlots flaunt their wares  
on cold, sordid streets.  
Perfume and make up are a vile attempt  
to cover the filth which lies beneath  
layers of concealer.  
The stench of abuse inflicted by others,  
and onto themselves.

Flesh glows wholesome under red light  
as they stroll without pride.  
Making eye contact  
with passersby on a break  
from their routine lives.  
So that just for a moment,  
the two of them can share in depravity;  
uncleanliness.  
His unchasteness stripped by the passing of cash...  
hers by accepting it.

Her stroll never ending;  
cash rich and morally bankrupt.

*Leonard Gontarek*

**Wild Flowers**

It is rude to place  
yourself in the morning  
and expect illumination  
by virtue of being there.

Rude and inelegant.

The leaves lift and click  
into place. The mountains hold still  
patches of snow and flowers that grow wild there.

You knelt before me in the bathroom  
and took me in your mouth.

*Religious*, you said it was.

Overstated.

But am I one to argue  
with the aspirations of the human spirit?

## Field

I always hear pinwheels,  
but there is no such thing.  
Only milkweed releasing  
tiny souls, forming a larger

one, I imagine.

Many blackbirds and one red one.

The trees, the maples,  
evinced a scent of penny arcade

under stars, by an ocean, on a Spring night.

I have come to love this field,  
letting go milkweed silk and sharp, dark birds.

I rub mescaline on my lips

and kiss everyone I can.

## Message Error

I enter everything from here.

One star in the flat black pond.

I gave the dog something to eat  
on the way in. He still barks

and his chain rustles like necklaces.

The planes go over, I trust.

The leaves fall down on the water,  
turn much of it scarlet.

My father calls from the land  
of the dead. I am afraid to answer.

I am afraid to move.

The windowpane pouring steadily

from the house into the grass,  
a sound like needles.

It is expected to snow.

Figures at the shore, holding books.

Parts of them distorted on the surface,

part of them eaten by darkness.

The texts are fat as bibles,

but I know it is something else.

## View of Owl's Head Mountain

This falls into  
the category of  
more information  
than you need.

My master answers  
all my questions,  
dumb & good,  
summarily, with the same point.

*I wouldn't shit you.*

Scarlet leaves drift  
from the black maples  
at night.

He sits on a mat,  
cross-legged,  
smoke leaking  
from his nose.

I didn't warn you, you can't say.

*Michael Fix*

**Ernest Hemmingway is dead**

But he would still like  
some good, thick bacon,  
cold beer.

If there were a  
talking typewriter,  
a muted trumpet would suffice.

And Ernest Hemmingway  
is dead.  
Like one-thousand Romans,

a million  
Spanish soldiers,  
crouching in tents—crying.

El todo que yo quiero  
el todo que yo quiero,  
el todo que yo quiero.

Typewriting  
only  
Ernest's remains—all

that is left,  
the frying bacon,  
coffee plates spinning,

the hidden cracks  
smashed and frightened,  
clacking like a, b's, or c's

keys, lost and uneven  
in darkening Havana,  
or Hawaii's desert.

Even I know  
that Ernest Hemmingway  
is dead

as the typewriter,  
silenced,  
waiting on fingers.

For mother—una mama.  
Another plate of good bacon,  
another frosted glass

of clean beer,  
coldly lighting a cigar,  
a beautiful dancing

woman,  
to slide through  
her own space.

Ernest Hemmingway  
is dead  
and I am

eating thick bacon.

## A Snowstorm Greater than Frost

You are tucked  
away inside,  
cozy, snug  
and nipping,  
the snow and wind  
are pictures.

Satisfied—quenched,  
range to your window.  
When you're really  
stranded, know that  
it's a godsend.  
No snowstorm is mighty, and yet...

Pray for a terrific snowfall.  
The kind that frightens  
St. Bernards—all  
other parishioners.  
Tuck away your heads  
and pillows—slow down.

I watch the broadcast.  
“Stormwatch!”  
So many breathless,  
biting away yellowed nails.  
But *I* yearn for it!  
Just to slow down.

Who are the others?  
Why the worry-worts,  
the stock-piler—snow removal  
specialists, weathermen, generator  
brokers—ice shields, ice blocks  
ice pickers—ice vendors?

For once. Stranded.  
Stuck in life-traffic.  
One, glorious unheralded, un—  
interrupted chance. To stay.

To garner food-and-drink  
like bored collegiate awards—pulling out, on sweaters.  
Ah...

Slow—to a point.  
Stop. Where imagery  
as snow—vanishes  
unto itself. A  
seamless icecap  
crown for time.

Bring on the storm!  
Negative winds  
multiply my atmospheres,  
bury my car—my work,  
and travel, blanket  
my watch, all timepieces—all its pieces.

Slow. So that we  
never twist our wrists  
for a segue; we never look,  
or peer—we only stare. Let time  
hit us, slamming its arms into  
us, as if Atlas not shrugging—hugging.

And please, no more time.  
Snow—igloo  
us. Soften eyes  
with ice-flows, real and white.

No metaphor.  
Just gentleness;  
stolen—ticking snow.

Now  
no need for Robert Frost.

No winter ambassador;  
simply time,  
the snow  
without fancy.

## Where is the man who lives across the hall?

I made an effort to ask Joe,  
and he got all, “never  
sneak up on a man with a hammer”.  
So, I smilingly hurried out.

Cynthia was the one who really  
kept asking. “Meet me in Mexico”  
she kept saying—but I had to  
“find out about this guy”.

Deeper and deeper—it got.  
The deeper I got. My dad  
used to say that situations such  
as these were, “only worth a dog’s  
balls”. Now, as then—it was strangely  
uplifting.

Suddenly: “Get outta here, you rat fucker!!”  
O.K. Then I knew I was on the right trail.  
Indignation from strangers; doesn’t  
just happen when you walk in on ‘em  
placing dark objects in a safe—Something  
smelled—something interesting.

I made FLOOR TWO.  
Paco—short kinda guy—came out of  
40B. Told me he’d seen, “a swell-looking fellow  
dark, real dark, but swell-looking—like Cary Grant  
or that dude from Cheers—Miles Davis?”  
“Great, a real lead”.

A feeling came to me—a strong one.  
*He*—was with The Minx.  
That’s Selma. Who used to  
always yell—especially at dinner  
parties with little sandwiches: “Tell  
me more! Oh, please entertain me; tell me  
more, more, oh more (swirls) oh please, MORE!!”

I now realized.

The poor bastard didn't: how much of a snook  
he really was; she was gonna eat him alive  
digest him slowly—acidickly—and eat him again  
as a light snack. Things could get, “uglier than the inside of a whore's handbag”.

Selma lived on FLOOR 60.

The kind of place—no one from 59 down  
knew anything about—a place only conjured  
by muted trumpets and unlit cigarettes.  
I *knew* she would be there—minxes  
nor spiders—prefer life below 59.  
I could already smell her perfume;  
lotus? I could hear her fuzzy beret. “God  
I hope you're ready for some shit K.,  
it's about to go down!”

I followed my nose. It rarely failed.

Right, to her doorframe. The trail was losing  
its blaze. ANNOUNCEMENT OF INTENTIONS:  
“Get...the fuck...out here Selma, you leave K. there,  
this is a 'yours and mine' kinda day!”

Then. Quiet. Only the sounds of rugs—silkworms.  
All smells melt downstream. My sweat droplets screamed  
“Geronimo!!!” as they fell onto hallway tiles—my folded  
arms. My chin locked into place, my jaw slackened.

“Oh, Douglas, is that really you...again?”

She was definitely off  
to one side of the door—which side?  
I knew her plan. I could smell—sniff out  
her location—like a dog's balls  
it stank.

“Gimme the kid, Selma. He's got a girlfriend  
(Did he? Or, was it his mother?) maybe even  
a kid on the way...he's got enough balls for that.”  
—Gotta be tough with these liberated types—maybe  
even shoot 'em—maybe?

“Douglas dear,  
you know what you’ll have to do.”  
She tried to click—cock quietly.  
The door rushed open  
like a forgotten oven,  
its cakes and pasties  
burning—with its own purpose  
from someone’s hands.

I ducked. “Oh, shit!”  
BLAM! BLAM!  
“Jesus Christ, Selma!”  
I jumped around like a loony  
jazz tune—it was comical. I  
could smell lotus,  
and gunpowder, like  
the fourth of July meeting  
Confucius’ gardens.  
Probably a soldier’s  
wet dream.

Then—I never would’ve expected—the  
kid tackled her. He used his WAR-CRY:  
“BURAAAAGH!!” Not a great throat  
on him, nice tackle though.  
The Packers could use him. “Got her!”  
She knocked her head, real good.

“Nice work K., thought I’d need to come  
back as my own ghost, just to kick your ass into gear”.  
I pushed her with my shoe—saw the tattoo,  
and knew she was with them. No matter,  
it was too deep. “Let’s get outta here.”

I installed K. back  
across the hall. It felt good  
to ignore him again. I was  
back to, “Look for the silver-lining”  
time.

I poured myself the bourbon. And  
one for Selma—her beret.  
Leaning back on my chair,  
hat pushed back—I wondered,  
would I make it to the 60<sup>th</sup> floor again,  
was it all worth at least  
a whole dog—or just his balls?  
Do I need a guard dog.....

## Tracks

We stumbled upon  
wet bears.  
Perhaps it was five;  
or not.

What struck me was  
the sopping fur  
drizzling from their  
huge arms.

When she asked,  
I felt afraid too—speaking.  
The scene;  
whatever its truth.

“Well, it appears  
that one,  
or perhaps both  
are drowning.”

What followed—in turn,  
seemed  
interminable;  
like a sneeze’s overture.

Willy, the largest,  
struggles,  
chained to the bottom;  
Monte Cristoed.

Waves slapping—ask  
the bears “hug”.  
Give up and sink;  
ceaseless—like equatorial sunsets.

“We shouldn’t watch.”  
Your voice—a struggler.  
“The big one’s eyes...  
are shining...is he dying?”

What welcome!  
To nature,  
instead of dragonflies;  
remorse.

Wet bears sink,  
wet bears scream—piercing.  
No grrr—but shhhhh;  
wet bears shriek.

Who was I—judge?  
Such a grisly scene,  
and Willy—merely  
wrestling with his sole?

## **I am a Stairwell**

Déjà vu  
when I ate  
the apple  
I was malleable.

I am a stairwell.

Looked at the  
mirror in a passing  
saw the face  
I hear most clearly.

I am the stairwell.

Three or four—there really  
aren't enough mirrors,  
not neatly broken  
seeing no splintered eyes reflected.

I am just the stairwell.

If my collected dreams  
could manifest one poem  
it would be malleable  
enough

If I was a stairwell.

Memoriam—déjà vu  
an apple eclipses a  
normal day—driving  
rain thundering—a pliable brain.

I climb—the stairwell enclosed.

We talk—a shark leaps  
my dreams, back-up  
like a fry-cooks sink  
plundering substance.

I am a stairwell.

Déjà vu over and over  
my head—through  
mirror-view dreams,  
a poem who waxes too much.

Who is the stairwell?

*Mako Matsuda*

## **Bunnies**

The showing of the prime specimen went quite well  
It screamed with the acute realization of death  
A death squeal so-to-speak  
It was the first time its larynx ever made any noise  
The scientist inserted a needle right into its furry belly  
It said "cutie" like "cuuuu-teeee"  
And everyone in the audience roared  
The scientist raised the bunny up by its long ears  
With the needle still in its belly and aroused greater cheers  
"I heard it, did you hear it, it was magical, it was so beautiful,  
I think I'll have fantastic dreams tonight"  
The audience said while leaving the auditorium

**If I were someone cool and admirable maybe you will read this**

I can hold my breath for one minute and ten seconds

That's it

But what a sense of freedom!

I will find solace in my breathlessness

**stasis**

I need to see the babies he said  
Show me to the vending machine he said  
He was led to the vending machines  
Near the bathrooms  
And there they were  
The little babies  
In little capsules  
Surrounded in amniotic fluid  
The colors of gumballs

He kept filling the coin slot, turning the knob  
Clicking the mechanical gears until  
Capsule babies dispensed from the machine  
And into his hands  
No, no, no, no, no, no, he said  
Where is my baby he said

Nagehan Bayindir.

**SECRET**

After I wrote the assignment on the board,  
I turned around to say,  
have a good weekend  
and be careful  
I'll see you all on Monday.

College freshmen  
packed their bags  
ran out of class  
loud  
talking  
laughter

When I finished erasing the board,  
I realized LaTanya,  
sitting in her  
front row seat  
not moving.  
She was looking at me.

“My father...”

She said quietly  
trying hard to hold back  
her tears.

Shocked  
not knowing  
what to say,  
I started to tremble.

## **JEST**

Chilly breeze of  
the morning hours  
traveling through the quiet streets,  
softly swinging the  
flashing traffic lights.  
We were  
stumbling out of the bar and  
disturbing the silence of the city.  
I kissed his whiskey lips  
when he put his hands on my cheeks.  
He looked into my burning eyes  
and smeared black makeup.  
Then he whispered,  
you can't leave me tonight  
I smiled.

We took a cab to his  
Old City studio.  
He held my hand as we  
climbed the stairs.  
He unlocked his door.

I walked in first and  
he walked in after me.  
Wrapping his hands around my waist,  
he started to kiss my neck.  
Then he unbuttoned my pants and  
I lay down in his bed.

Trust me, I know what I'm doing he said.  
He looked up every now and then  
to say how great I tasted.  
Biting the pillow,  
pulling the sheets,  
as my body tensed, I realized  
he *did* know what he was doing.

Looking at his hopeful eyes,  
I grabbed my pants off the floor and  
swiftly put them back on.  
As I was buttoning my pants,  
I smiled and tossed him a wink.  
I walked out and shut the door behind me.  
I did it like a man would, I thought,  
As I lit a cigarette walking toward the subway.

## MY GIRL

On my birthdays,  
mom used  
to tell everyone  
the story about  
the ruffled romper  
she dressed me in when  
I was brought  
back from the hospital.

When I turned five,  
my dad decided  
to paint the house, as  
mom insisted my walls  
should be light pink  
with striped purple accents.

When I was ten,  
she joined my friends' mothers  
to host sleepovers at our house.  
During those nights,  
my friends and I would paint our nails  
put our hair in rollers  
and watch *My Girl* lying  
on pastel sleeping bags.

In middle school,  
she took me shopping  
to get a yellow lacy dress  
for my homecoming dance  
because I had no option  
since my mother already volunteered  
to be a chaperone.

When I started high school,  
I painted my room blue.  
She often told me  
no man will want me

if I don't start acting like a lady.

In college,  
drunk on Jack and Coke  
I called her  
to say,

(NO BREAK)

I'm not the daughter  
she'd be proud to have  
since I don't  
like men.

She said  
it's ok that I  
don't like college men.  
They can be  
very immature  
anyhow.

## **SACRIFICE**

We were walking  
through the park  
during a breezy  
amber autumn day.

When stopped  
by the lake  
he put his arms  
around me and  
he quietly whispered,  
I can't wait until  
you have my name.

Looking into his eyes,  
I stepped back slowly,  
and said, I want to keep  
my name.

I shrugged  
Then I  
Stepped back into his arms  
In  
Silence.

## **CYBER LOVE**

I met him  
At a cocktail party.  
Exchanged phone numbers,  
Emails  
Screen names to chat on Aim  
Soon,  
We changed  
Our statuses to  
“In a relationship”  
On  
MySpace  
And  
Facebook.

Our friends left us comments,  
“Omggggg this is so coool!  
Sooooo happy for u guys!  
U guys make such a great  
Couple!”

A month later,  
I saw a comment on his page  
From a girl,  
“I totally miss u.  
Come out for my bday.  
Call me.  
<3”

Feeling insecure,  
I called him  
So he could justify himself.  
“She’s just some girl  
From high school, relax”  
He told me.

I didn't believe him.  
We fought.  
On the phone  
Over Aim,  
Through

(NO BREAK)

Myspace,  
And  
Facebook.

Soon our statuses changed back to  
"Single"

## THE MOMENT

For as long as I live,  
I will remember the time  
when my father drove over the  
Brooklyn Bridge the night  
we flew on the jet plane  
To America.  
I whispered,  
“It’s just like the postcards  
dad used to send us”  
into my little brother’s ear.  
He looked at me with his little  
eyes ready close with exhaustion.  
I sat there in the back of the car  
amazed with  
the beauty of the city lights  
with my head resting against  
The car seat  
Trying hard not to  
Fall asleep.

Patrick Chapman

**Love Watches For Death**

Love watches for Death. She watches the road.  
She waits for her Death to come home.  
When he does, he is mute. He must keep his own counsel  
Regarding his time in the desert,  
So that he does not burden her conscience with knowledge  
Of deeds he has done in her name.

Love watches for Death. She waits for her stud  
To come home to their bed, for she misses his touch;  
She's deprived of the heat of a body that's rightfully hers;  
And wasn't she promised the comfort and strength of a man?

Love watches for Death. And when Death returns home  
He says nothing to Love of the children he's slaughtered;  
The men he has torched. If he tells her the half of it  
Though he can scarcely believe it himself,  
She'll disown him as someone who's squandered his soul.  
And when Death does not give her a word;  
When he fails to expose the old stain on his heart so that she  
Can consider her own unbesmirched, she denounces  
His silence; condemns him for being a grunt—so this Death—  
Without a defence against Love's wounded incomprehension—  
Takes to the desert again, in search of a quantum of peace.

Peter Fernbach

**These Words**

These words allow me  
To step outside  
The interminable flux of time  
And say the things I should have said:  
Render indelible  
The meanings that passed ephemeral,  
Like a breeze over an ocean current,  
Or like the waves  
Of temporarily squashed air  
That got away from me,  
Losing power even as they were born,  
Before they could become solid, mature meaning.

These words commit me to paper,  
And transubstantiate  
The flesh, and the blood  
And the soft, flashing orchestral arrangement  
Of neural networks  
That comprise this human's  
Seat of discourse.

These words, locked in time,  
And away from the wasting elements,  
Away from the valley of follies and missteps  
That frame my past, are a tribute,  
Not just to 'should have' and 'could be'  
But to the salvation of the moment:  
The unsustainable you and I.

Let us now find release from the tyranny of words  
And our own bloody pasts, unthinkable futures  
And suffer out the truth  
In a moment of shared silence.

## Gravity and Impulse

It all runs on gravity and impulse.  
The things that we did today in class  
Were things I'd been walked through  
As a student, scripts that had been seared into  
My head, before I understood the world through  
The cold calculus of dirty logic.

Peeling myself off the chair in my office  
Was no easy feat, but I was urged by  
The invisible hand of power or responsibility.  
By 8:01 I was a dirty faced boy playing hooky.  
Walking into class at 8:03  
I had no plan, a few vague words and memories  
Of past classes. I wrote the pre-fix "meta" on  
The board, and, of course, I ended up giving you  
The answer after I posed the question – "How does this  
Change the meaning of a word?"  
You all grasped at straws, and I found myself equally  
Awkward in my explanation: "It indicates a concept  
Which is an abstraction from another concept"  
And then we all learned a little  
About metaphors and metacognition,  
Mostly spewing platitudes: "A comparison using 'like' or 'as'."  
And no wonder this world has become  
A capital producing work camp for the already-bloated:  
The workers or becoming-workers are all given dry, understandable orders,  
Told to perform some inconsequential task, then sent to the next  
Station with bells and whistles, prodded along by bigger animals  
In suits. The game looks official, but it's mindless, forgettable, especially  
When we can strap on an iPod or graft ourselves to hope  
Streaming through a TV screen.  
What happened to this world – a stage?  
All order of difference and development  
Brimming over in spontaneous overflow.

It's not your fault class. The enemy is safe behind  
Invisible stockades of false logic and polluted hope.  
Your mission, now, is to leap above impulse  
And the urge to agree, and ferret out the cold steel  
Of coercion from the promise of all your desires.  
Defy the natural gravity, cut the cancer out of  
Your own heart, and dare to feel  
The gravity of your own voice.

## The Blooming Void

A lack  
Of punctuation is  
A sensuous airy expression  
Openness  
Like Molly's eight sentences  
Modern man's closest glimpse at  
Eternity  
And natural process  
She said looking out the window  
Look everything is green it's spring  
Spontaneous spring God's gift to man  
I feel so beautiful at present

A lack of punctuation  
Lends a certain ambiguity  
Like the poem is the reader's  
Rather than the writer's creation  
Isn't it funny how the pronoun it  
Can refer to a nonentity like lack  
And how anything can mean everything  
Or everything anything  
My soul seeks connection  
In disparate words phrases meanings  
I want to scream in the flux  
Forever adapt to the new  
And therefore recognize the eternal  
In each new thing

It's sexy – this undoing of punctuation  
Like a void that must be filled  
A vacuum  
Like Molly's ethos or Pathos  
It reflects or refracts emotion  
Understated  
Like me in jeans  
And in that understatement  
Wrapped up like a present

This undressing of words  
Impels the reader to sink into  
The text  
And engage in a creative act of co-authoring  
The gift of creation  
The most brilliant  
Present

## **No: The Power of the Negative**

No, you may not have more time to complete  
The coursework, because a class, like a football game  
Is a time-bound entity. Can Norwood have that kick back?  
Can Buckner have one last shot at that ground ball?  
No, they can't; and likewise your results are in  
And written on the books.

But, student, don't disparage, for this is how we learn.  
The directions written into your hide  
Are the ones you'll remember.

And take, as an example, my self.  
When I was a child I wanted nothing more  
But to speak, to communicate –  
My mouth was numb: I was paralyzed,  
Stupefied, at a loss for words.  
This pain I felt visceral, and there was no outlet  
But to cry.

Yet here I am, student, the arbiter  
Of your grade in the language arts.  
And all of this goes to show  
That your love for me in the future  
Paradoxically, perhaps unfortunately,  
Will be inversely proportionate  
To your dislike of me now.

Student, you are learning more now  
Than you could have with a gentleman's D or C.  
These are life lessons.  
You are learning, my student, the power of the negative.

## Difference of Opinion

I have many flaws  
But I do not chronicle them,  
Dilate upon them, and publish them for the public  
Like Stephen Dunn.

I am suffering the pangs of pragmatism in a garden of airy dreams:  
Not always a romantic adventure,  
That much is true.

But I have a different take on art.  
A certain artist conceived of their best work as “Sh\*tting at light speed”  
To fully understand my admiration of this quotation follow my logic:  
Art is bequeathed from bodies ~ according to certain philosophers  
“The world exists . . .it becomes, it passes away . . .its excrements are its food”  
Art is our sustenance,  
Let it be full of energy.

Stephen’s voice is monotone, brown, un-imaginative  
Puttering,  
Imploding and taking rather than exploding and giving.

Or perhaps there is a shadow of myself  
Reflected in the page  
That I am too weak to acknowledge.

## Loss

Behind the handles of your eyes  
Are the strings of your mind  
And before there even was an "I"  
They've been tugging at you from behind  
TV billboards – a soft campaign  
Sinking light persuasion deep  
Until there is a confusion about  
What is and isn't "I"

You saw fear and loathing  
Read Kerouac  
Grafted your soul to the anti-hero  
Despised authority  
And for all that I can't blame you  
But, what I'm most sorry about  
Is your blindness to the lack of solutions  
What you've sought is a blissful death  
And if you don't unglaze your eyes  
You'll soon find half of that equation

I was walking through the living autumn  
On Veteran's day, when everyone else was at the mall  
And saw, scrawled unsubstantial on stone:  
"Live every day like it's your last"  
And I thought, what a stupid idea born of ignorance and impatience  
And then I hesitated –  
I would've reveled in that foolish advice ten years gone  
And then I thought of you sitting in my class  
More like a looking-glass  
Spouting anti-authoritarian slogans  
Trying to organize an academic coup  
Throwing your hands up at politics  
And it was like a mirror on classes past  
Betraying the seeds of your hypothetical future dissertation  
Then I looked at the swaying trees  
All things pass  
As I walked back to my car I scribbled these lines:

If tragedy is born from wasted potential  
Then we've got a holocaust of goodwill  
In the middle of a heaving nation

Parul Garg

## **Blood so much Blood!**

Where is the Wound?

Oh Lord ! What was that place !  
Alone I was in an octagonal hall  
All surrounded by empty corridors  
In front of me a gigantic statue stood  
With a handsome face, serene expression  
Exuding unmatched peace...ashen eyes  
His long , curly hair covered the shoulders  
.....a dense mass of small spirals.  
Who could surpass him in grandeur ?  
Every moment I saw a new beauty in him  
And thought I had met him before..  
Perhaps in a dream.....  
Perhaps in a previous birth...  
And he called me back to his tomb.  
Suddenly, I felt, earth violently shook  
I had to run through secret royal chambers  
Stumbling madly on queens' baths  
Through the sprawling ruins of  
Crashing wealth , power and art...  
And,yes, I had seen before fainting  
Those gothic arches collapsing on me...  
Here I lie unharmed, uninjured  
Surrounded by concerned sisters  
Who report with smiling relief  
That a curly-haired mysterious...  
Serene and eminent looking man  
Brought me back from death's imminent grasp.  
Speak they while removing blood-stains  
From my face , arms and hands

And urge me to change my  
Blood-soaked clothes if I feel fine.  
"Blood, so much blood !" I inquire  
"where is the wound...."  
"Wounds are all his" comes the reply  
"and blood is all his....."  
" It was he who profusely bled..."

## Dry Insects

" These beetles were trapped for their curious ugliness" He smiles, "and these fireflies for their magical light...", After a brief pause he chirps again, " and these butterflies were captured for their splendid beauty."

He is beaming through and through. I observe how tightly he holds me in his dark, possessive eyes.

"This is a strange, little museum" I respond with a controlled, emotionless voice." and I am so glad that I have nothing curious, magical or splendid about me or are you trying to invent a fourth reason?"

His smile flickers a little but he says nothing, so I continue, "Have you ever noticed that a butterfly dies the moment you put it inside a jar. The subsequent death is only a compulsory ritual, the culmination of the first decay and beginning of the other.... So please let me go while life still pulses through me, let me dance and hum and live my freedom..... in the right place, in my ill-kept but generous garden which retains its own patch of sky. Remember, my cynosure, you can never entrap a living being, you can trap only their brittle residues and in the end you get nothing but a handful of petrified fossils. For Freedom, the subtle essence of soul, never steps inside a jar, prison or dungeon but often wanders around it, singing of unfulfilled longings."

Paige Taggart

## Acceptance Speech

I I I I windy I fallout  
I have slow computer  
I have grass  
I have spatial science and merging tolls  
I readymade I readymade I readymade  
I hero such a hero such a heroine  
a marker in time limits offered attention  
unhealthy destitute  
rational making way into irritable  
I forget how to I forget how to I forget colored  
streamline breaking kite  
windowpane kills silence  
breath being very out of control  
eager criminal  
when I am alone at night nobody's wanting  
when I am starved nobody's rummaging through  
when I am hunting nobody's fronting  
the first always better than the last and the third just as good  
when the lawnmower's going I am itching  
when I am asleep at night nobody's looking  
hang face  
when I forget how to be I am just as tired  
wizard hair  
sent for a message sent for a delivery  
favoritism all has favorites  
classic used to be a popular word  
same with mignon or child pet  
angel hair pasta works better than spaghetti  
archenemy  
unpopular politics  
fingers and fingers and loony  
base jumper

hind leg  
Jell-O-o pudding  
the story is that nobody knows

## Elder and Child Make Night Young

revolution, convalescent home  
and tin child capsules strung  
with juju bees along the pine  
tree out front, where the wind  
is cracking anything through

an amphitheater, it all sounds  
a bit like night, and the in-  
famous paw is stroking a  
dog, come back the lather

of good worlds, and mingle  
in the street together at this  
late hour when winds are  
trees because together is that  
everything smile of lean

one eye a wreck, covered  
with a pinafore, the other  
holds a black music note

songs are spoken with  
everybody's tongues,  
held-down their knowing  
under the pale  
spread through  
always frames

some voices too loud to  
consume at this late hour,  
hold onto infinite stillness  
and recollect, trees are fist

assumption made cosmic violent  
unprecedented, it's briefcases  
filled with lettered-rubber  
stamps spill onto the lawn  
the clutter to pick them-up  
is one of hopeful configuration

## The Company Borrowed

hungry like a dog  
silent like a crystal  
rock chuck  
gladiator  
canned spinach  
mouse breath  
shopping on the lowdown  
lamp in pocket  
residue of navy felt in particular lengths  
fingers taking-in a hand  
significant mud on boots  
hammered eyes bat wings  
moose droppings  
pillow toppings  
a hangnail  
a ponytail  
a thimble  
a watchdog  
symphony powder in a grey wig  
thrilled about bicycle spokes  
rain sifts into vagueness  
color peeling ceiling  
rewound umbrella back into its case  
Spaniards  
when everyone's alone at night  
classic southern flare  
ponytails in the wind when a prince rode a horse  
hosing down the backyard rid the pavement of leaves  
manners incalculatable  
patience with the frock of being  
lemongrass  
camping shells  
a violent bunny  
hairpin  
humble be thy being be thy dancer be thy day  
a quarter to three and the bible is empty embarrassment

## **& So On & So Forth & So Be It**

I massage your feet against my tea garden  
and spill peppermint scents around

there is a cozy frontier in the name of  
gradation and a calendar catches fire

it's been unfortunate lately, stop collecting dates  
and making angry music with my fist

I've catalogued voyages in the name of pity and  
made robust accomplishments upon the rearing  
of my own child, the model I'm discussing is the  
way past lovers cycle into the present and  
collapse into my one frame, my single animal  
body homes smiles burnt-out in the recession

past faces don't get erased into translucent  
becomings or errors of another unfortunate

there's the entirety of an arm reaching into  
a condensed world that moves through fabricated  
memory and each little world collapses into the  
next and so on and so forth and so be it

there's a cable car leading to my face

smiling into my empties

I have no clear headspace to fuel anything but lethargy,

all I care about is the extinction of my Peoples and the five-sides bending to form a shoe, the uncertainty I find in everything,

especially in myself and the books bending towards my occipital lobe, keeping the figments to the figments,

and the drain has water in the way of thickness sliding down hoping to accomplish itself in ruins

by the time it gets to the septic disposal where

blue frogs end-up plastic toys molded in the mouth of a child  
babies suck on rocks and beavers bunch glass inside their mouth,  
though they used to chomp wood,

you say you're writing a poem right now I bet we're writing the same poem,

and the world is a play field and you're my carpenter

uncertainty being a thing of the past and the dog being a way home

Richard Barrett

DOT DOT DOT

a breadcrumb trail  
the ellipsis  
leading out of the forest  
of words  
to a clearing where silence  
may facilitate  
communication better  
it's one  
two  
three  
steps on stones  
over the  
still wet sewage slop stain  
masquerading as a stream  
wherein  
no fish swim

childish device  
just say what you mean!  
I'm gonna head home now  
your ellipsis  
is no use to me

(later: a knock on the door:  
Miss Dixon?  
Yes?  
It's about a Richard Barrett

## TICKET IS NO LONGER VALID

the in-between bits  
    striding across the metro-platform  
                    to the carriage's open door  
    the clenched fist frown of the vauxhall driver  
    held at the lights  
st peters square  
            the always departing and arriving  
as I eat  
    allens fried chicken  
                    by the war memorial  
for my evening meal  
                    (healthy option)

any route permitted :143  
    please retain until you leave  
sold subject to  
            conditions of use

            boarded :MRI  
            alight  
            paid cash (£0.80 /  
£1.90)  
            adult :one              child :nil  
                                            OUT

## 2-PART RETURN

seeming contrariness masks  
                    shrewdness  
in avoidance of  
    pinning and mounting  
cos knows  
            heart stoppage (thankful :metaphorical  
                    variety)

results from  
    over-definition    *>deconstruction / justification  
                            of poetics?*

*tentative conclusion :too clever by  
far*

that to be alive means  
                    ch  
opinions in flux

## POST SUNDAY LUNCH

grey

red-squirrel

irrelevant

spokesman

slammed as

she said is

on my fence

eating it

liable to

to be killed by

up to

in

and / or

Argos bought professional

hedge trimming tool

400 watts

challenge (brand

name)

power output at 400 watts

blade length

/ tooth gap

rat with tail

taller than me:

cable

weight:

estimate:

my left

thigh

14mm tooth gap

challenge (brand

name)

and

I'd have no problem

(he boasted)

a fine of up to

£20,000

to run

over a seagull for

fun

me

an

n

ot

hi

ng

t

o

me

(interviewer wondered:

can you drive?)

## MATHEMATIZING THE RELATIONSHIP

apple on the table  
varnished flat plane  
grain visible  
- no acrylic covering

the centre of the table  
was where I placed that apple  
bringing together  
the straight-line and the curve  
(with one eye shut)

intercourse of angles  
where legs meet table-top  
is why he'd arrive drunk at her house  
(too drunk to do anything but  
listen to music or  
watch t.v. –  
he'd sleep on the couch)

entirely predictable marriage  
at ninety degrees  
yet a still more interesting  
conjoining

so I put my  
on the  
after she'd left (for Cambridge)  
and thought about  
taking  
a  
bite

**TUESDAY: 8:40 A.M.**

eastern side of Cornbrook  
is where she stands, back turned  
to the wind  
    which allows nothing lighter than her  
such “peace” as that  
    iron fire-escape  
behind Debenhams  
    marked by human weight and  
the elements  
    but  
    certain not to bend to  
nature  
    her slightness looks so  
    perfectly in fashion, I see  
someone self-willed into being

(I acknowledge that difficulty of reconciliation)

did she halt the train in its tracks or  
was that a scheduled stop? – she  
disappears into the carriage  
    to work, or  
home?

simple metal twist attached to  
her jackets lapel, the pink  
    seeming so  
conspicuous against  
    the weave’s dense black  
solidarity for an older woman’s cause  
    I thought  
she didn’t look the campaigning  
    type  
that cut and her androgynous features...  
her expression was serious and  
    her feet  
    were  
small

And she was gone!

Half-way to either Altrincham  
    or  
Eccles

Richard K. Ostrander

**Otherside of Celluloid**

Like the history of cufflinks  
Or parts of the heart, a filling station  
Skipping bread crumbs on an opaque surfeit  
Of Fast Sunday and then testimony  
The horse & cart or the cart & horse  
We were once all carbon based  
Family home evenings for the unrequited  
Channel surfing between  
Law & Order Charybdis  
And Scylla of BYUTV  
How the bread doesn't quite dissolve  
But brakes down in one's mouth  
Like resolve throughout the week  
Three hours out of one hundred sixty eight.

## Pull My Flarf

I flarf in your general direction.  
Do you have the recipe for chocolate flarf?  
Flarf you you flarfin mother flarfer!  
The flarf is strong in this one.  
My flarf is bigger than your flarf.  
Actually my flarf isn't that big, only 5 inches  
But I flarf like it's a foot long.  
President Bush called a flarf to all flarf.  
The mother of all flarf...  
All flarfing is prohibited.  
A flarf by any other flarf.  
To flarf is human, to flarf devine.  
He is definitely a flarf kind of man.  
You don't mind if I flarf, do you?  
Flarf has left the building.  
Flarf me up Scotty, there's no flarf on this planet!  
How much does a pound of flarf weigh?  
If a poet flarfs in the woods  
But no one hears it...  
Now is the flarf for all good flarfs to flarf.  
Give me a drag off your flarf will ya?  
I just love oral flarf!  
Now I lay me down to flarf.  
Hillary Clinton flarfs in bed  
But not with Bill.  
Just what is flarf anyway?  
Inquiring flarfs want to flarf.  
Don't get caught with your flarf down.  
Ich bin ein flarfer.  
"Mr. Flarfachev, Bring this Flarf down!"  
Mein Flarf.  
It was the best of flarf. It was the worst of Flarf.  
It was a flarf to end all flarfs.  
Now out on Oprah's Flarf club,  
Flarf Head Nation by F. Simone Maflarfham;  
Also Petroleum Flarf by John Flarfner.  
New survey out; chicks dig flarf,  
Especially when you bite at the bubbles.  
Usama Bin Flarfin just issued a Flarfwa today.  
The department of deflarfs  
Just struck a major victory

In the war on Flarf.  
Welcome to the no flarf zone.  
The flarf stops here.  
Flarf low flarf chariot...  
And now this special offer by Flarfco,  
Get you very own Flarfomatic,  
Just 49.90 flarf if you order now.  
Flarf flarf flarf, flarf, flarf flarf  
Flarf, where do we flarf from here?

## Black Eyed Susan

What does it matter

To parking lot

Emptied

Lines stripped

From too much sun

Weeds

Black  
Eyed

between

Susans

Indelible

n

Mind aperture

F-stop memory

Minimum depth

Field other side

Free

Of

Striped lines

Their own

Susans

b  
e  
n  
d

Wist fully

To ward

Sisters

## Wood Grain Gravity

To be a story  
To be a after two days your becoming  
That's the measure of time, a day,  
Perhaps the vulnerable,  
A measure of gravity.  
The organic, a vast expanse of  
Beyond any cirque du a day,  
The natural history of tears  
The wood grain running and becoming  
This day one with the current  
Let us examine your pants and ants;  
A story like any story like any other.  
Like a child in madras,  
Like the current I chase across thought.  
As I see it all unstable and becoming.  
This day one might say, the current in the Niger,  
Though it is not water maybe tears.  
This is the nature of history,  
Awaiting the expected day.  
This day let us examine green.  
So natural one might say...  
Though it tasting of gravity  
Or otherwise, everything crumbles.  
Let us examine green. the six weeks it took  
To be a story like any bridge.  
I am just a visitor to this, this...  
Like as you watched the moon so natural in its  
Wood grain gravity.  
Just a visitor to this shirt du a dada,  
To be tears perhaps the problem.

## The Deductible

He enjoyed what he was doing.  
He was concerned about being derivative though.  
But didn't everyone want to climb mountains?  
Take away the foundation and what did you have to build on,  
Not really a question that...  
They kept pitons bedside for just such an occasion.  
Thunder clouds loomed languidly around the chandelier.  
St. Elmo's fire kept the utilities down.  
The news actually had nothing sensational to report.  
Congress and professional athletes struck for lower wages.  
Since no one really used cash anymore, a barter system  
Replaced debit cards.  
The Kangamangus and the Blue Ridge parkway became  
Toll roads, every mile meant a minute of renovation.  
Your wife could hold the traffic sign,  
And one spade for every five workers while four watched.  
We wondered where the exclamation points went off to.  
SGT Rock sold out and they made an anatomically correct  
Action figure. "Did they actually have to make it  
That small," he thought to himself?  
And there are already so many ands.  
They built a virtual car that ran on innuendo.  
You could go online and drive any where you wanted  
On you own couch. It really lowered your premiums  
And that was just dandy with everyone.

Stevie Hinton

**"Peeking In"**

The world is a tilt, a blur!  
grout and tile crack this face,  
fat pillows crush me... Mine!  
My ears hum in pitches;  
the piper played piccolo.  
Pepper pickled, oh!  
on this, my kitchen floor,  
DEAD NOW;  
cardiac arrest  
galore?  
Peeking, I was, into the refrigera-tor.

## "Road Trip"

I.

This time two years ago,  
I dropped two hits,  
lit a clove cigarette,  
sat backseat,  
wedged by hips,  
my cheek cold  
from the window it fogged—

Jacob drove  
a second language—  
one clutch from crash,  
he shifted threats  
he swerved, no, accelerated, no—  
no breaks,

my skin shriveled,  
had I crows feet?  
had I wizened? creased?  
with one fingertip, I touched and  
no worries, no wrinkles, no—  
no face

The night heaved,  
Jacob's index finger and thumb  
held together by a hollow star  
tattooed in black—  
he screwed his face round,  
cheek against the shoulder  
of his seat,  
egg white eyes,  
moon white teeth,  
No, he said at first, No,  
what are you doing here?  
what the fuck are you doing?

I sat inside the question,  
it pierced from all angles,  
I throbbed, but the engine stopped.

II.

Cross-legged on the sand.  
wet grains, ground through my toes,  
Shadows swam through the wind.

Jacob emerged from a crack in the ocean,  
a stick figure at first,  
he marched forward until,  
I smoothed denim on the backs of his legs

Jacob bent,  
You're not there babe,  
he chuffed,  
You're not there;

I shrank to eye level,  
and followed the line back to the clown car—

This trip, Jacob.  
and whatever scraps of flesh,  
shards of bone piled up,  
against the window, fogged—  
I dissolved to salt  
my hand yet remained  
and every time I looked, it changed size—

III.

Yellow bled across the windshield,  
again we stopped,  
climbed from the coffin car  
I was last to meet daylight.  
I stood in a murky haze,  
the rest had gone,  
the world bleached from my grasp—  
silence flooded my throat.  
There was nothingness  
What do I do now?  
Every house was a mirror  
Of the image it used to be  
The streets were a maze  
But the rats were dead.  
The rats inside my head.  
Jacob reappeared  
But this time, I was blind.

Stacie Leatherman

Dear B,

No straight way, I'm afraid.  
Letters from the dead to the living.

Washing. Warbling. Where are we going but sidestream.  
Secondary, stationary, no, the hierarchy's moot.  
Dear B, don't get me started. The repetition.

The constellation of it.

The shift. When there's something that needs be said  
but too many ways to say it. The line out your own.  
The fragments.  
The letters standing at your side.

Dear B, we go past. Rangings true as migration.  
The traveling companion. Dear B, our arraignment.  
The hearkening. The hymn. The Braille of it. Hummingbird wings.  
The instantaneous.

It's all in the address. How privileged to cast a shadow,  
to be the shadow. How we filibuster night's edge.  
But night has no edge, B. Night's all ridges. Dunes.  
Confrontation in my blood, but bear me close. It's iffy.  
What drives an animal to murder. Any, it seems, has the potential.  
We are not original. The bearing out.  
The bearing. Dear B, the daily bric a brac, borders and boycotts...

Dear B, the ambushade, road slick like mucous. Luminosity.

Unfinished business. Childhood tightens its belt.  
Childhood tired of the human. I want to cross, want to let cross.  
We need a rogue arrangement. The assonance goes without saying.

Dear B, the bursting door. Quiet step within. Earthquake, boot,  
peninsula sinking, ankles wet, bodies floating away.  
You have the ring of the penultimate. A circular motion, an orbit.  
You the myth and truth. The precious. B the love I feel  
in capital letters. The sheer output. B, the downpour.  
Move. Blinking the eye will shed sand out sometimes.  
The thing is, we're inextricable. At all points one picks up,  
at all points one is lost. The lost find the lost.  
The distance in the grass from me to you.  
B the incessance. I wish for the unabridged edition.  
In case of emergency we will taxi in.

C

Living has a dynamite effect. Chants depart and migrate, live in the folds, the instigation moving. We saw each other and gasped. Transformation, that C. It's all been done before. Who wants the bravado? Much to say about our times, the specifics, the rigamarole. Though clusters I like. Real, complete sentences. Anarchic scents, though routine a godsend. If you're there in the recount, run. Hellbent I understand. Linguistical contraptions, the air we breathe potent as seed. I said the dead change as much as the living, that living isn't the only way of telling the truth. Heat blows through the house like a stranger. That sound a spider in your ear.

Rankling. Some people lock themselves down tight, nuclear shelters, secure from everyone but themselves. Being tardy is relevant. There are no longer such things as roads. There are invisibilities. Refusals. Scant ghosts.

I want to live in the exteriority. The reconnaissance mission. What about its compactness is not genius? What if I'm inflicting again? Sweeping. I would like someone to sweep strong but gently and with open door and the broom itself to open so not a broom at all but a steady wind. Oops a daisy. The real estate complete. What phobia do you have? C for all body parts, body poets I accidentally wrote. Cry out loud, cryptic, there's a separateness, a balloon ride high above, a gas explosion, a rising away from but a need to keep tethered to; will C seem changed because I've changed? Will it execute in the same way? Will I ask it the same questions? Will I rely upon it? Will I ask it to regard its subject differently, always?

Who told you about last night? Who can you shake hands with when most everyone is dealt a bad hand? Who is it that defends you when you can't trust the hand you're given?

E

Clipping of the spine. Random assassinations. Run away with someone like, but not, me. Who will defile you when I'm no longer here? Will you consider this a death threat? Who will follow, place you under house arrest? Who will stay to be realized? Who is not fascinating in their humdrum tyranny? Who deserves to have her ponytail tied in knots? Who will expatiate? Who can't suffer enough? Who can't arm themselves against the armistice of love? Who will not run away screaming? Who will remove her own throat? Who will offer nothing to the gods? Who is afraid to say so? Who does not fit any descriptions? Isn't it harvest? Isn't it colloquial? What do we need to survive in a way that's survivable? Will it happen like something shorn?

\*

The worms of desire. Hard wired for hope. Where does one draw the moral line? Are we meant to abandon? Did I want something, they say, to speak of? Did I lift it up like a relic, a halo? Was I guilty of inconstancy? Was I the sought after, the grief? The sticking point? The washed up, the cretin, the erogenous zone? Was I the stone that delivered the stones to my body? Was I the question? Was I forgotten, was part of me swept up? Was I fossil or thread? Was I the rangy one, the fleet-footed? Was I the one who stumbled? Was I a bet cashed in? The spell that cast you under? Was I sure of my place? Was I irresolvable? Destabilized? Was I the wrong number? The shadow? The honest woman? Was I the iron maiden, the dark letterpress? Was I the germane snippet? The extolled? Was I the bolt of winter lightning, the story, the animal? Did I do it for the long haul? Did I try to find my way? Was I the golden one? The leaf falling? Did we find the right calibration? Did we send the sign? Was I the sudden implement? The carrier? Was I the bones crackling? The pull of strings? Was I the one that remained? Will I look at you again with just that configuration?

\*

The voltage of waking. Did I trip the wires? Did no one learn the language again? Was I a willing accomplice? Was I the opposites attract? The operatic moment? Am I the governor of my loneliness? Am I the arch villain? Should I never have brought you here? Should we call the cops? How have the rest adapted? Is what doing fine? Will someone need us? At what point in time is there no crisis? How good am I at hollering? What is the size of one's voice? Who needs to be addressed? Who finds the shell-shocked? Who croons? Who performs the erasure? Who is atonal? Apocryphal? Loose canonical? Hymnotic?

## Sequel

The twilight within twilight moves.  
Do not let the sepulcher fool you,  
there isn't a shred of indifference anywhere;  
do not think that everywhere people are dying,  
have died around us. Birds light  
the tomb as robin torches;  
moon the color of morning frost,  
moon rubbed bright as an evening coin.

\*

Write, says the tulip all May and ready. Up, says the stem.  
Ring around the lamplight. Scorch says the white sky.  
Blue says the sky to the woman buying a blue dress. Her skirt,  
shorts are color of cloud. I think she may carry me away.  
I touch a leaf and see violet. I touch an insect and hear fugue.  
This morning I drowned all the kitchen ants.  
The killing of something small is not small.  
I touch a stone and smell ink, feel my mother's shoulder,  
soft as a stone's color. I touch. Music smells like bread rising,  
and when more disjunct, cold rooms in major keys.  
I touch an icicle and hear a scale of cold notes.  
I touch my skin and hear again. Instruments, you know, instruments.

\*

Sweep of the tongue, a hair-pin yell.  
Slight chip of a verb as it becomes noun.  
Pumpkin smooth and cool beneath fingers  
suddenly becomes a chord, C# major to be exact.  
The pumpkin under your hand sounds  
of slow ridges. The slope of low hills.  
You touch my hand and there is also sound.  
You touch my veins: an oboe making its long solo.  
The long loose strings of violins. I touch your hand  
and there's a summons from the brass. Long notes in minor chords.  
The grasp is as tight as the grass. Movement is a butterfly or the memory  
of a butterfly or the image of a butterfly or the idea of a butterfly.  
It does not flex within my hand. My hand is a butterfly flexing.  
I clasp you like a dragonfly and angrily, violent as a seizure.  
You cling to me like sawdust. Relief is the scent of spasms.  
I wouldn't want to alarm you. I heave you to me.  
I hold you like the bag of gardens you are. I can carry you as far.

\*

If I can hold you in your body of garden,  
all your rose bushes wounded and restless  
and raking me in distress. The alimony of love is love.  
The shirt you wear is a lost note  
that's come back to the score, a flown bird.  
I would weave you in like a fugue. Such is the weave.  
I can make a fugue sound like a kiss, like bread.

\*

I smile like crinkled paper,  
look at you and sing songs of colored smoke.  
You could almost pluck them.  
You hear the sky, the sound of blue and illusion,  
sound of hard light, you hear sounds of humans  
and you hope that you hope. The earth for now tastes  
like an orange, your forehead,  
chilled oceans at the top of the world. You hope.  
The light is fresh and the grass wild. The domesticity  
of chocolate is wild. The trill of fruit is wild.

\*

We are some mad bridge. A sturdy little story.  
Sharpening star. You shoot a gun and a garden fires out.  
Bullets fall like seeds, strike a man,  
he holds his chest, thinks pain,  
looks down at the wound, hand covered in young shoots  
and blooms straining to lick his face. Bombs overturn us  
with soil and blossom. They knock and bump with their flowers,  
their grain, their crop into outstretched hands of boys,  
of thin children. The glass that took your eye did not take your eye  
but planted a vine and wherever you go,  
your eye sees twice as well and you can help sow any field,  
call any man to you. You are beautiful. Your mother not killed but planting.  
Trash heaps not refuse and tied blasted bodies not kidnapped dead,  
but sad flowers, no, not the dead, only roots not yet kindled by rain.  
When the first rain falls, the flowers of the dead raise their heads  
and untie themselves, faces cupped like tulips to rain,  
and walk home to their families, their seeded, aerated walls,  
the soil-rich halls, a man walks in and the walls  
are the color of zinnias, he leans against the bushy furniture,  
the men outside his door are flowers too,  
and there are apologies but not from flowers—  
who will take the people into this young sunlight,

after so long and bitter a year?  
Who will move them in such fragile winds,  
to seed themselves and sway in wide fields?  
Who will rescue them by the wildflower roadside?

\*

The lock ticks clearly. Outside is brisk. The word itself—*brisk*—is brisk.  
That's organic form. I believe in the disbelief of tombs.  
I am rattled and groomed. I did not understand when I was young  
that I am a metaphor. And what am I a metaphor for?  
Sea glass.

\*

What effect does noise of wings have  
on other creatures, on flowers? Does it make  
pollen come forth, push powder out a bit more,  
sound of sex, sound of being carried off?  
I am bound to sky and to soil.  
I deny this in the most potent colors:  
the counterpoint of *we*. Grass grown so green  
its green grass tongue is tied into ropes of grass.  
What remains is metaphor. The moon is and isn't the moon  
and makes me love the moon  
all the more because it bears a twining. I wasn't sure  
how to shade the moon this time  
but now I see its lace color,  
and the moon insistent on reflecting light means  
I must love the sun, stormy fruit in the stormy universe,  
its appetite for gas-light, we all eat ourselves to stellar crumbs.  
If energy is neither created nor destroyed,  
the dead are particles of crumb, perhaps somewhere an infant sun  
or new animal. If stars lean against trees with long cigarettes hanging  
from their mouths, I love them more, and more because they explode  
into supernovas of polyphonic color, for their violence,  
look at him, blown away by a white daisy. Look at her,  
blown away by a grasshopper, look at us, blown as the blossoms fall,  
shedding like a late spring day and we're walking  
though choked with their softness,  
we breathe the soft choke, we become the blossom, we become

\*

Yet lines are elastic—open metaphor like an open word,  
a drawer opened, shallow water clear to the bottom, a ghost,  
cadaver on the med table, fish on the block, vivisection,  
a sex opened, coquina shell, when I open my flesh to you,  
a left-on light, an empty house with lights flowing out,

empty dim streets, an unmade bed, a bird's outstretched wings,  
the empty branch, collision of those things as in life,  
the breeze is blowing it back like your hair  
opening us like a ripe shell,  
an artichoke peeled right back to the start

\*

The sounds of water were as carp threshing  
it with their love. So much love  
I thought a piece would jump in the boat, I would catch it,  
or it would land on lap or feet, I would stand in fear  
of so much flapping, straining love and fall overboard.  
The water was churning with bodies  
splashing the yellow blossoms of lily pads, the water  
broken with love. "Don't stand up, Stace," Mike said in case  
a fish leapt into the boat. But I would have,  
turned us right over into the braiding bodies,  
amid the boat-slap, thump and reverberation, thunder of fish  
against kayak. We were the still ones by the long long grass,  
floating through this orgy of carp,  
love among the lily pads, dark water, long grass, stillness.  
When we returned all the bodies quiet in their watery palaces  
a droplet of history  
the history of carp on a humid day in spring  
in the blooming hollows

## Land Lights

Couldn't see the turn, but I wanted it.

What holds me in its non-gaze.

Road carving up the roads. Mystify and pave, pave, pave.

I believe in it as I believe in notes, stars. That we are redeemed  
though the manner of redemption is fugue. Take this, look it through.

If there's a secret lost, throw it like salt over your shoulder,  
it will find its way again.

\*

I don't have time to doubt *everything*.

Doubt so solid it masquerades as something other than itself,  
becomes perception, paradox. I cannot tell you how to bleed.

Only that you will. Stand before yourself  
and count the birds lifting off each fence-rib.

Dying is doubtable if we spirit ourselves away somehow,  
in jars, chipped containers.

We cannot help but perform some broken act.

\*

Reaction of movement to movement. The blinking of a body.

I charge through the connections. I speak in my own language of other languages.

Invitation. Rhythm of lamp, of prisoner. Let me hush.

This only the beginning. Not a question of returning  
but of mapping the way.

\*

What tragedies have forced our hands, make it difficult to breathe  
and yet the wordbodies keep on, not in their permanence, but in their impermanence,  
taken in and exhaled, at last opened fully for other entities to pass  
on and through, this chatter

\*

This bewitching silence. I flatter the universe to no avail.  
Anxiety over source. Anxiety over the right thing.  
The last the last the last. Think of the ghastly particulars.  
Where am I in the plainspokenness?  
The pleasure of befuddlement?

\*

The only sure thing is that tyrants enter the poem and they exit.  
Careful, frail fern. Blooms bustling. The insecticide of will. The bendings.  
Wilt of bodies on a pike. Dry but green out there. Missteps brooding.  
The livelihood of us! The serendipity! Cornets of fate!  
What right have I to be so damn inviting?

\*

Mass zenith, mélange of slim pickings,  
time for answers really means  
time for questions, means tell me now, means  
tell me never, means what we perceive as hints,  
the un-faith. What of interest?

Run off, bind on, circumspection, leaf pool.

Lots not tossed aside. Locution.

We against the perfect perforation, flown.

Sergio Ortiz

### The Story Of A Smoo

Smoo whiskers leave me drooling ecstasies.  
If you fry a Smoo it looks like a chicken  
coming out of the bathtub. What's your lucky  
number Mad Dog? You satisfy all her worldly wants?  
What's the font? I'm not trying to make hard  
enough fun. Never run from a Smoo. Yooiee,  
they go places, what a paradox in the plural?  
They get neutered. Poor Shmoo a Shmoo,  
like you, hidden in a quick: I'm sorry, talk to you later.  
Come again? What's that number Mad Dog?

## Silent

A chorus of silent bows came down the kitchen  
ventilation and sat on my bed around midnight.  
I knew Georgina was dead. My rocking chair  
peeled its mahogany finish in her honor.

Hedda and Joel had their first child a year ago,  
—impressionist works of art drunk and passed  
out in the parking lot of my apartment building,  
Soraya started giving Art History lectures  
before she was toilet trained.

They were loud knuckles at the door:  
my neighbors standing outside packing axioms  
and any other thing they could find: guns, crucifixes,  
shovels. "Hi, we were wondering about the odor?"

"It's not coming from here, I'm not finished dying yet.  
Occasionally, I see apparitions of myself standing  
by the window, behind the shower curtain,  
on my bed, but I still go fly fishing."

Mother came to me in a dream last night,  
gave me the password to a house where boas  
reincarnate as possessed lizards catching  
mosquitoes on painted maracas. durable stuff.  
She said, everything that survives is liquefied.

The only thing I could think of was my privacy.  
I am going to stop talking for seven years,  
but first let me repeat this a few more times:  
Harmonizing the sacred. Harmonizing...

## Traveling

I don't need to go to Africa  
she is in my ankles and travels  
up to my knees whenever I stand  
in front of an errant blackbird  
on Fridays. Saturday nights Africa  
bugalu's all the way to my waist.  
By mid Tuesdays she jabs my shoulders.  
On Wednesdays she gazelles to my elbow  
and later creeps up my wrist.  
Thursdays, I jump, one foot, then another.  
Slowly, my arm raises and Africa  
is inside my fist.

## Vows and Other Memories from the Islands

On the day of the dead, Pablo put his pants  
on one mummified foot at a time. It wasn't  
his fault, rain was the true culprit. Clouds  
followed his feet for years, poured whenever  
he tried to cut bread in the City of Glass.  
His soles started to crack, sprouting roots.

Julia entertained on the balcony levitating  
her intimate secrets. People on 42nd Street  
attributed her faculties to a santero visiting  
her family the day she was born. She stood tall  
and elegant like the mountains to the south,  
Pablo's home. Her face had all the traces of pain  
coming from islands.

They married. Julia, carried down the aisle  
by daisies, bleeding into a gutter in the city;  
Pablo, one mummified foot at a time, closer  
to banging pots and starvation. They are gone  
but I keep their marriage vows to read out loud  
on the day of the dead.

*Around the house the flakes fly faster,  
And all the berries now are gone'  
Birds At Winter, Thomas Harding*

Collectively we are:  
over-exposed driftwood bewitched by  
light, pretty --color does not exist, not even the pastel of romance--  
little sente, an  
eclipse talking to the sun enchanted with a passing rainbow.  
childhood is a lingering memory of  
trioletts. Luck has nothing to do with  
interpreting the many  
veils covering our faces.  
Enlightenment happens after we fall from a tree.

Madness comes in the form of eyes  
appending to the betrayal dripping from rocks. Our  
demons fail to cross the river.  
Never is where we spot a pot of tea  
endlessly sipping lemon juice.  
Smiles are inevitable when they  
spar with words that walk into clouds.

Sarah Suzor

Propensity—  
or beauty  
twice borrowed—  
stayed in the thing itself  
  
the river pouring  
heavy at its mouth  
  
the birds coming down  
so easily.

## Of the Mouth, indicator of self-control

A jealous mouth  
could obscure the sun.

Be not surprised if,  
kept waiting too long,  
she throws herself  
quite unrestricted  
toward the fire.

\*

*Once he drew with one long kiss  
My whole soul through my lips*

That was written by a man.

\*

She felt somewhat slighted  
having him think that way.  
How often things  
were misunderstood,  
even after all the time  
he spent pretending.

For softness she  
and sweet attractive grace.  
There are words to fasten  
every answer.

Transposition is allowed in  
like a coveted guest  
a ghost and  
no other more lovely.

Artificial thought is  
the language of—  
not dress—  
but deliverance  
the gift of indication  
of limited choice.

## Imitation

That doesn't work anymore.

Working is a state of approximation  
to obey is to mimic.

\*

Of all the rules,  
he adhered to the most approved  
her dominant features  
were promising  
a good stock  
to be sure.

\*

Something was familiar  
her dress maybe  
her arms lifting themselves  
against the summer wind.

When she said she didn't mind that kind of behavior  
she was addressing his movements  
not his speaking voice

\*

After only wanting to rest her head  
she was unable to still,  
tearing at her pillow  
emptying its contents  
by the handful

after only wanting to rest her head.

## Spring Wills

My Lover

i am pierced by Satan's arrow  
already incurable

my Lover  
Your power is like a soaring river  
sweeps my wounds away

my past binds my soul  
as chains on my neck

my Lover  
You say the coercion and hunger are all your arrangements  
i should be joyful and gambol

i praise You in hymns  
my songs frustrate the battalions besieging me

my Lover  
i triumph because i only look up to You  
not watch my questions

someone pulls my faith  
want it down to the ground

my Lover  
my heart cries out You support me  
let this burden leave me

i and evil are nose to nose  
the withstanding force is same as the night

my Lover  
You show me the way to overcome dangers  
take me into Your realm

hence i worry about nothing  
only praise You in my heart

my Lover  
Your name is the fruit from my lips  
Your spirit pours it totally sweet

suddenly inside me is silent  
resounding with Your truth

my Lover  
any tribulation which happens to me  
is less than Your suffering

Your pain is for the sake of me  
You care of my minutiae more than i do

my Lover  
You wake me up in the morning  
my eyes see You, my ears hear You, and my mouth speaks You

my life is in Your palm  
You are my all reasons and aims

my Lover  
how dare i complain Satan's symptoms  
You have healed me

You saved me from death  
lead me to walk in Your spirit

my Lover  
no might in this world can carry me away  
except Your will

that is You  
You didn't let me die

my Lover  
attentively i listen to Your voice  
You say i am the doer for Your special wonderful plan

i obey my spirit's sensation  
dodge calamities

my Lover  
before i begin my inquiry  
You know my want

i talk with You in tender voice  
You unload my burden by Your kind hands

my Lover  
i cannot depend on anything else  
i trust You alone

i didn't get talent  
but You demonstrate Your glory through me

my Lover  
i can't predict Your great doings  
Your accomplishments are above my requests and thoughts

i know what i should do  
is to present myself before You

my Lover  
my whole body is transparent under Your sight  
You know my thought and intention

You renew me from the inside  
with my own eyes i see my spirit's about-face

my Lover  
i didn't mishear Your words  
i would like now to live as You

i want to give myself to You  
but i have nothing to give

my Lover  
You gave Yourself to me  
----Your lover

*Tom Bowen*

## **My Friend**

At first, it started off slow,  
Water between. Every round  
Keep my tongue behind my teeth  
And my feet on the ground

Time progressed (as it always does)  
Becoming more comfortable & relaxed  
Those words,  
Never meant to be said  
Not held back  
Left beauty, twisted and wrecked,

See same for my grandfather,  
And his father and me,  
Makes thoughts words,  
Fist and feet fly free  
Just getting you through,  
The minutes, the hours, the day

Fourteen, that first  
That cold Russian kiss,  
Taken to see if it offered,  
Salvation and relief  
Well my friend  
It did

But the cost, the terrible cost  
Of my life long friend  
Lovers a family and a daughter  
My friend left them behind,  
For they could not compete  
With the comfort of Russian water

In the light,  
My friend escapes down the bowl  
As piss  
No way to fix to make it better  
Everything amiss  
Everything adrift  
But my friend returns hours later  
To remedy to lift the spirits higher  
Pour them down and drown me  
In the cold Russian water

Friends, lovers, family and a daughter,  
Oh my companion, my friend,  
The cold Russian water

Never been one for truths,  
But here is one I firmly believe,  
Everyone else on earth will,  
But my friend shall never leave,

Never shall we part company,  
No kiss goodbye, one last time,  
Whatever you become, wherever you go,  
I'll be in a bar, with this friend of mine

No friends, no lovers, no family and no daughter,  
Just me a stool,  
Oh and the cold Russian water

## These Sad Faces

Its theses sad faces,  
In this same old place,  
Left years behind,  
But they pile on soon,  
Stepping off the train,

Nothing changed,  
All the same,  
Like I've never been away,  
Same routine at sixteen,  
Same routine everyday,

Sit smoke, and choke,  
Cheap beer but  
There's no cheer here,

Just a bleak black heart,  
Foolish kids that tear you apart,  
Girls you used to go with,  
Standing at the bar,  
Watching their kids,

## Hand in Pockets

Hands in pockets  
Touching nothing but cloth,  
Thinking so much,  
About something we've so little of,

There's a world to be explored,  
From the warehouse walls  
Down the road  
To the king George,

Saw the sun rise,  
Then sun set,  
And the sun rise,  
Again

Chasing fleeting flights of fancy,  
Through cigarette packs and  
Aluminium cans

And in my pockets,  
My hands

## No Statues

No statues shall be made for us  
We are the nameless and faceless,  
Huddled together we stand  
Cloaked and warm  
In the apathy of this land

Fingers in fingerless gloves,  
Bodies in worn overcoats,  
Too tired to rise in protest,  
Aching to give up,  
To give in, and rest,

No heroes amongst us,  
No villains either,  
Not a fulfilled aspiration,  
Pipe dreams and tears,  
That's the some of our creation

No statues shall be made for us

And quietly we shall go,  
A generation that had seen it all,  
But remained unimpressed,  
Unshakable, as the blue eyed boy,  
Once a dreamer, stops to rest,

Sold out on life,  
And life on us,  
No great adventures are in our youth,  
We've seen them all from our seats,  
Pause, record, and rewind our useless truth

Dumb and Drunk,  
Numb, content and fat,  
We could have been something,  
But instead we sat,

No statues shall be made for us

Thomas Fink and Maya Fink

Thomas Fink

GOAD 1

|                         |                                       |
|-------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Razor. Tactless.        | Overwhelming help, as if from a       |
| distant neighbor.       | bor's god? Beyond a reasonable clout. |
| Encour-                 | agement,                              |
| (vicious) to            | snare a                               |
| dark logic              | that may                              |
| accord with             | the limits                            |
| of the solo             | and of                                |
| the statistically       | challenged.                           |
| A sign's redundant: You |                                       |
| cannot socialize here.  |                                       |

Thomas Fink

GOAD 2

Squiggly                      goal vectors— just poll any. . . swift  
job    maker.                      Will you pay off your depths? Having once  
         enjoyed                      filling  
         diapers.                      Some  
         suffer                      surplus.  
         When                      we burn  
         down                      the last  
         mastur-                      batorium,  
         where could you be-  
         gin to trespass?

Thomas Fink and Maya Fink

MOLASSES TOMORROWS

Stupid words argue, smoking.  
I'm going to take your rainbow away.  
Prince Swarming is passing the hate to Mr.  
Nice Money, scraping the bottom of Friday.  
I've come to push their money god, but  
time shoves.  
There's no tomorrow like ice feather storms.  
Winning everything is only louder than drunken  
skunky items.  
Stupid pod does stupid peas: sweet  
and rotten.

Fill a tomorrow with molasses spoiled:  
easy sugar.  
Into the butterfly barrel.  
The real pie is not a cheap envelope.  
You make your tall living handsome and darker than  
spoiled milk.  
Does magic tell on love?  
I'm keeping my eyes.  
The riot can't believe its roots without  
live love.  
I can—without a plundered thickness—live.

Thomas Fink and Maya Fink

A HUGE AMOUNT OF TIME

I'm love:

I mother you.

An hour sets bricks in the wall.

I want the cookies to smell like house.

Are we tons of fragrances?

A lot of almost.

A cloud not saturated enough.

I longed to be that force.

Command—too loud.

Unwanted umbrella submits to farce.

Unharmonized sentimentality becomes mutant concrete.

Thomas Fink and Maya Fink

ELECTRIC FLOWERS

Now please don't call me a walnut.  
Empty footprints—I'm dangerous.  
Your asteroid, my bitterness.  
The nut may not sit inside the shell.  
Wallflowers standing for a slow purity.  
Some of those flowers could privately  
crack abstruse dance codes.  
But it's impossible to decode these spasms.  
They come from an unauthorized party.  
What electric flower can grow if nourished by  
unthinkable, undrinkable rivulets of rain?

**BlazeVOX** 2k8

buffaloFOCUS  
Nava Fader

FALL2008

# buffalo FOCUS

## Nava Fader

It is my great honor to introduce Nava Fader in this issues BuffaloFOCUS. Every issue we offer a longish look at the writings of Buffalo resident, to show the length and breadth one or two poems cannot. Nava is a mother, librarian and an exceptional poet. Fader offers a wild ride in her poems that will not disappoint.

Employing a collage like method, her lines collide in that everlasting way one feels comfort and understanding in the confusions of living. The poems take their title and verve from a line of another influencing poet, then move in varied trajectories. Calling on figures such as Rimbaud's Helen and the Lady of Shallot to reminiscences and objects of the kitchen,

memory is bone  
is swallow is blink  
the driest eye

orbs there sway as stars

Enjoy,

*Geoffrey Gatza*

# Acknowledgments

"On the cold yellow coast" Four Square

"O Seasons O Castles" Situation

"Weeping, I saw gold" Coconut

"Poor Helen" Sawbuck

"She has returned" Situation

"O Justes" Muse Apprentice Guild

"False translation of Hunger" No Tell Motel

"Ophelia" Earth's Daughters

# Contents

|                                                                                  |    |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|
| On the cold yellow coast of the jealous (G. Maxwell) .....                       | 4  |
| O seasons O castles (Rimbaud) .....                                              | 5  |
| Weeping I saw gold and could not drink (Rimbaud, <i>A Season in Hell</i> ) ..... | 6  |
| Poor Helen she has conjured up embroidered sleeves silver tassel (Rimbaud) ..... | 7  |
| She has returned (A false translation, <i>A Season in Hell</i> , Rimbaud) .....  | 8  |
| O justes, nous chierons dans vos ventres de gres! (Rimbaud) .....                | 9  |
| My canon is collected (Bunting) .....                                            | 10 |
| but how should I recognize the place (Bunting) .....                             | 11 |
| I am agog with foam (Bunting) .....                                              | 12 |
| False translation of "Hunger," <i>A Season in Hell</i> (Rimbaud) .....           | 13 |
| Ophelia (A false translation from Rimbaud) .....                                 | 14 |
| much / in the way of dragons' teeth after that (J. Ashbery) .....                | 15 |
| Casual louse that tissues the buckwheat (H. Crane) .....                         | 16 |
| must obey the counsels of the green reed (Robert Duncan) .....                   | 17 |
| The herds are thinned (James Koller) .....                                       | 18 |
| The stone walls will recede and the needs that laid them (A. Rich) .....         | 19 |
| Cut me a skeleton key / to that other time (A. Rich) .....                       | 20 |
| How much longer .....                                                            | 21 |
| each did sign / our true names on the register (A. Rich) .....                   | 22 |
| Six of the original poets have died .....                                        | 23 |

On the cold yellow coast of the jealous (G. Maxwell)

if she tends the perpetually cerrado  
corralled amberegg ambergris exile  
cajoling corked drug down  
the Visitor's Bureau lined  
lily pad walkway offering:

a squirt on the nape a dip  
in the drink Things will happen  
put through the paces the past  
peel open unwilling tangerine takes  
the meat  
with the skin Insurances

no fires. Sing come unto  
these yellow sands teeth  
sympathetic citron something  
always on the tip of the tongue  
makes its way in.

O seasons O castles (Rimbaud)

there is no such thing as you or long forgotten until you never were the nerve  
of them or you for being or forgetting.

The ones we rely on  
are long dead.

Fall from the tower was stunning or tumultuous a thud and he didn't  
pass the test her father relieved new moat to fill in with rain water.

The crown of winter is still friquid frigid figured on ice sculpture but rich. That time  
has points draw blood but draw twinge glint eye and hand to the pocket inside to  
tight let go.

Nobility is a season I have missed sorely nights ask for her return.

Spring uncoils in curls unbedecked either (wither)  
flower or jewel they came the same breath borne.

Dying in a dress lady shalott never eaten but whole-  
some riverboat last ride the wild one.

Would I trade this everlasting key-  
word searches turn up sun  
within two words decay.

Weeping I saw gold and could not drink (Rimbaud, *A Season in Hell*)

In the most poetic village with the bonny maid part dancer and part pure chemistry is my simple hallucination:

I tremble toward a mosque, an unseen place—or is that me—I am the drummer boy in a band of angels. They take their tea, naturally, in the trees, where fronds drip milk and the sweet sugar sap.

They are monsters. They are mysteries. One injection from the three-ringers would make...well, that has not happened.

Puss in Boots explains the logic, but I don't understand his sophistry.

This is a sacred disorder of the spirit. Idling but quavering slightly from fever.  
Happiness in beets, in chenille. The limbs of babies and virgins.

My cataracts are grinning. Here I say farewell and tender the spectacles of romance.

*May it come, may it come,  
The time we will fall in love with.*

Poor Helen she has conjured up embroidered sleeves silver tassel (Rimbaud)

without always this verge portion  
thumbprint in the pie cutter  
and this its astral projection.  
Hard pensivity coffin  
or key to those mutes skeleton key.

The bark of trees will finally  
covey rainwater in its ridges  
a collapsed perfume prize now dead  
of carpenter ants and their enormous strengths.

The butcher block becomes  
the kissing booth, and the rumor of the ruin  
of her purse sunny beeswax  
small tins of mints

is two yolks  
for an encore gold  
apricot the auks influence  
ferning, her pleasure interior  
décor de coup de grave de grace.

In her infancy, Helen grew  
among the vines hard knot  
of pea sweet and the jam shop  
where they sell paving stones  
and the legends of heaven.

She has returned (A false translation, *A Season in Hell*, Rimbaud)

A quack. To the horizon.  
Say the sea melody  
against the lace veil.

My aim is forever off.  
My eyes roll up into my head when I see you.  
Your malingering soft shoe  
is the journey the tongue takes back.

It's over for the derelicts,  
voting twice over the bodies.  
Together we reach the heights  
of the dauntless seagulls.

Spare me the please.  
I'll pass on the rigors  
of her science and passion:  
the way she lays down to the south.

And finally fingers me,  
bruises satin camisole.  
She flies to ardor  
and returns empty handed.

So she has returned.  
So what. Eternity  
is bitter song marching  
merciless on to the sun.

O justes, nous chierons dans vos ventres de gres! (Rimbaud)

then just one stands on his soldier's haunches,  
rayon glows, sunlight on dorsal fin of his epaulettes,

and so, devout, he encounters a bouquet of flowers  
of lactating asters, of the swarming asteroids, comets with a ribbon tail.

this is some joke! The brow spies on the eyes,  
looking for justice. He's a gangster with his gun toy, *dis da one?*

the mouth informs on its denouncements. He chokes on ostrich eggs:  
brother, give me the loan of your hips.

don't look straight at the eclipse. Dead, the sun turns  
to blue apples. You mustached singer in drag, the bard of love is coming

with pleurisy, harnessed, with tortoise shell print armor  
and a gigantic hand of pity.

all the village in chicken wire.  
The crows doff three feathers each and lay down.

the ghostly dance of raised chalices,  
none the most but the king's,

and the baby picks at the grout, at his lice,  
the liver is baked in a soufflé of revolt.

My canon is collected (Bunting)

is calm the corked  
flute or bluebeard  
whistles down halls  
feeling the walls as he goes  
if the skin holds  
the belly hold the child  
in some doors shut and some

my castanets are glued and  
whodunit the fingernails are eyes  
to the blood the anesthesiologist  
diviner waters the pink the knob  
slides easy o2 you are also  
my buoyant enemy fizzy lifting  
drinks will sully the ceiling

blade to meringue  
fans beating in  
air not formed  
peaks in copper bowls.

but how should I recognize the place (Bunting)

he plays the syringa string chloroform  
cloth to the mouth how can we sit  
this close together thrum thrum  
the thrushes of sleep by the temple  
slow hand in darkness punishable by

what feels good bubble wrap a great tension  
reliever to clench and unclench  
or lie or wash my hands another time  
sweet fluttering bird at my eyelid  
my blood runs you  
ragged

I am agog with foam (Bunting)

Drenched of this the how many  
times to repeat drenched sick  
repair same bicycle tire patch  
she fears leakage and the sky  
might spit and drown out  
their parade at the rowing club.

Violence most necessary  
elsewhere teakettle hiss  
then scream its boiling point  
take me I'm yours you seepage  
you old orange pekoe. Saved  
in closets by clove and  
in the method of  
the undertaken desanguinated  
drained out query him eating  
again or if you fear being bitten.

False translation of "Hunger," *A Season in Hell* (Rimbaud)

If it's the gout it's not the war  
that pours to the earth like clowns  
In June the troubadours of the air  
of rock of charybdis of fear

these amuse, turn about. Prance, tickle  
pray on the children  
until the cats come  
with whom they have an appointment

Mangy the caterwauls for the sake of the bruise  
small hairs are fooling the egglets  
winds are older than floodings  
pain always dancing in the greasy valley

the winding one is birthed under the fumes  
in the cradle his belly grows plumage  
of the old ways, of flight:  
come to the luau, we'll take a taste

do it with the lettuces and fruits  
no one's watching what you do with the blade  
how you lay your pubic hairs  
not tangled among the violets

what a sleep! what a stew!  
by the axes of Solomon  
gold bouillon cuts below the ruddiness  
and the honey sinks to silt.

Ophelia (A false translation from Rimbaud)

The dead travel on the scent of flowers  
to insentient tomb, nearly mountains!  
Drawn like to like, mute to mute nature.

No longer soft. The tornado of your updo,  
chestnut, your strange, brutal appetite  
of heart and speaking.  
Plantains from the trees, nuts from the sea,  
would not please you now.

We'll lay your bones for the babies  
to read messages in.  
When they can walk you will no longer  
be beautiful. Will they lay pansies  
for a small fool and a smaller death?

You were the queen  
of bramble, the river fell at your feet.  
You saw great visions and rose.  
Too late looked back  
into forever, into that terrible green.

much / in the way of dragons' teeth after that (J. Ashbery)

there's the rub and grate and grind orange  
rings in the bathtub after the carp  
has stayed too long Scales  
turn up everywhere  
falling out of your pockets in the  
unfolding of sheets torn  
from air behind the ears of children.

The token hangs on a string a linea a maginot  
magnate magnanimous in separating this  
not breast from this She will grow into  
emblems and I will grow  
into prophecies and from tongues to lies

I don't want to be your bitch  
anymore. The soot around the smoking floorboards  
unbelievable considering the rain  
What is natural  
wallpaper repeats and repeats the laws  
come and go the whiskey act tax act  
what goes in what goes  
unspoken the tavern on the corner  
is a safehouse the library parking lot  
salted and  
paved green  
means go he goes two years  
old if you throw that again  
I will take it away echolalia a beautiful  
shimmering disease mirror bells to your  
reminders Past

the house you might by next door  
brothel is kindest for the camper's  
ten minutes of shaking it's all down hill  
from there bay window sloped underside  
sheds tile by tile it will turn up  
just as soon as rain  
rain goes away.

Casual louse that tissues the buckwheat (H. Crane)

Stewed plums and peaches will corrode our nickel plated spoons  
we will lick the mirrors thermometers lead plates stroke  
the bees roughly. Aluminum foil you  
keep deep space out uv a b zinc oxide this close and none.

What permissive shut your mouth  
in the Mexican shower in the power plant rain  
but emollients lanolin under the skin  
of lambs for cracked nipples your baby  
got a bite of blood sings pink  
for his supper. Sheepskin  
prevents pregnancy so does lactation.

Your private parts fruited parted  
with fruit under running water  
rinsed twice. Pass your teeth organic  
blueberries finger bananas. Your nanan  
asked me to give you this:  
drumstick baked  
sweet potato between jail bars  
while you wait (red phone not ringing)

must obey the counsels of the green reed (Robert Duncan)

jeering him on. The strokes  
genius spittle on canvas one hand  
tied behind his back That they come  
seeking wisdom necking behind the great temple  
say at Corinth plinth say egg and dart say sangwich  
Singing chewing  
abut that is to be generous promixa palabra palaver  
slather the butter on my aprodite's slate  
lemur demur demitasse the macaws do look like me  
and they look like you  
tea party peeping english breakfast the paperweight what  
we saw fly up outa there post dump  
inta the drink Pandora princess could you not have held on  
a little longer Lay down your weapons thieves  
of the night the wattage unbelievable  
while we were meant to see or sleep

The herds are thinned (James Koller)

In the vision he was holding a sword  
in the broken wall too many eyes  
spilling smoke. Calling him

to the water the water a caress plays the skin  
washes all away heartbeat  
under webbed fingers who knows

what the end will be like. Standing  
may be (matador) victory enough.

Having told  
this sad story before the train  
burned the grass then the bison  
spoiled in the sun (cigar  
stinks leans out the window)

Gabriel blow  
that furry motherfucker  
to the gate and let them in

I'm afraid  
of the sexless demons. They  
Tejano can bend they leg back  
behind they head we beg a spoon  
long enough and worse and worse.

Knit me mama a sweater to wear  
that I may bind my breasts  
and so escape  
the ends  
in beds or coffins

The stone walls will recede and the needs that laid them (A. Rich)

ebb a moon planted  
under and counted  
by tiretracks thumbprint  
cookie hair crimps. Cruller maproad  
from this breakfast to that and will they

foresee yesterday's crumbs snarl  
computer wire hand over  
hand bloodthirsty thrift  
but haul me in

softens the deepest  
parts of the ocean as nothing else does  
Doers recollect  
burns in cigar boxes bovine  
smiles lie down anticipation  
of rain.

Cut me a skeleton key / to that other time (A. Rich)

hand pressed as putty cut me  
to the quick there are stories here  
scabbed scarred over read me

my wounds tonight there will be  
someone talking  
there will be someone  
seeing signs as a child  
guesses no parking stop

which is your secret  
knuckle press and the body  
opens like a flower  
or ruthless rib spreader  
find romance sticky  
stained sour brown

fingerprints all down the hall  
mark the bloody way

How much longer

courting whispers in bug tongue buzz  
humming backbone burn and wings rub  
shine a candle out a window light a thumb

an indrawn gasp eyes snap all fight and fire hackle  
raise the dead

our moon is not subservient following  
a step behind

or presume to lead? prescience has a heavy foot  
was it good for you? so much work  
to take my clothes off.

each did sign / our true names on the register (A. Rich)

by habit choreography  
of swirls plain of palm  
hitting the snooze

button the way  
we hunker down chew shit sing rote winter  
cold flame forgiveness inconsiderable  
the wind

Now that I am older

hand over  
curlicue my hair  
curls less  
ends are

unraveled in due course exits  
once imagined

memory is bone  
is swallow is blink  
the driest eye

orbs there sway as stars

Six of the original poets have died

or returned  
color blind unappetizing from flesh  
to fruit I can't  
touch my wife  
any more monochrome they told me  
the color of dreams so deprived oxygen-  
less and breaking all surfaces surpass  
as mirrors tell us  
in breathing color again.  
That far back  
I can't remember  
here quizzing  
the babies as their teeth cut whole pieces  
(talk to birds hear  
what the sun says

underwater acrobatics  
the tulip as seen  
from the air  
brevity is best  
when speaking shadows

only hoping we went there  
made the golden barter drab  
exchequer half man half fish  
draws from that well of memory yellow

BlazeVOX 2k8



Fall 2008

Adela Miencilova  
Austin Wallace  
Alex Rettie

Brandi Wells

Charles Freeland  
Clint Frakes

David Brennan  
David Highsmith  
Derek Henderson  
Daniel Morris

Edric Mesmer  
Emily Brown  
Evan Schnair

F.J. Bergmann

Gianina Opris  
George J. Farrah

Jamie Iredell  
Jason Visconti

Korliss Sewer  
Kyle Flak

Leonard Gontarek

Mako Matsuda  
Michael Fix

Nagehan Bayindir

Paige Taggart  
Parul Garg  
Peter Fernbach

Richard Barrett  
Richard K.Ostrander

Alex Moseley  
Spring Wells  
Stacie Leatherman  
Stevie Hinton  
Sarah Suzor

Thomas Fink  
Tom Bowen

## Bibliophones

### **Adela Miencilova**

My name is Adela Miencilova and I was born in 1981 in the Czech Republic. Currently I live in England where I work and study photography. So far, I have had two books published in Prague. My first poetry book is called Greetings from Hell and is written in Czech. My second book Feast of Crows is written partly in Czech and partly in English. I have had my poetry published in magazines, read on TV; I've given publicly readings and given interviews regarding my work. Both of my books are available in Czech libraries, in shops and also on line shops in Czech Republic and Slovakia.

For BlazeVOX I've choose two poetic stories and I hope they will be enjoyed.

### **Austin Wallace**

As a youth I wandered the United States, and as of now I teach EFL in South Korea. When not writing and publishing poetry (so far in Feel the Word, Poetry Cemetery and Ken\*Again), I paint and play music. I wrote "QWERTY" after hearing, for the millionth time, a despondent writer lamenting the modern marginalization of ART.

### **Alex Moseley**

**After studying writing at Truman State University, Alex Moseley returned to his native Kansas City to write strange little poems that confound his neighbors and worry his family. His most recent work can be found on Moleskinerie.com and in *Present Magazine*.**

### **Alex Rettie**

Alex Rettie lives in Calgary, AB, He is the books columnist for Alberta Views magazine (<http://www.albertaviews.ab.ca/>). He can be reached at AlexRettie at smarttech dot com.

### **Brandi Wells**

Brandi Wells is a student at Georgia Southern University, soon to graduate with a BA in Writing and Linguistics and a BA in English. Her poetry can be found in or is forthcoming in Zygote in my Coffee, Slab, Cerebral Catalyst and The Foliate Oak.

### **Charles Freeland**

Charles Freeland teaches composition and creative writing at Sinclair Community College in Dayton, Ohio. The recipient of a 2008 Individual Excellence Grant from the Ohio Arts Council, he is the author of several e-chapbooks of poetry, including *Furiant, Not Polka* (Moria), *The Case of the Danish King Halfdene* (Mudlark), and *Where We Saw Them Last* (Lily Press). His website is *The Fossil Record* ([charlesfreelandpoetry.net](http://charlesfreelandpoetry.net)) and his blog is *Spring Cleaning in the Labyrinth of the Continuum* ([charlesfreeland.blogspot.com](http://charlesfreeland.blogspot.com)).

### **Clint Frakes**

Clint Frakes currently lives in Sedona, AZ. He has recently received the James Vaughan Award for Poetry and the Peggy Ferris Memorial Award for Poetry. He received his doctorate with emphasis in Creative Writing from the University of Hawaii in 2006. He is currently working on his second full book of poetry, entitled *Citizen Poems*. His recent work can be found *Bamboo Ridge*, *Hawaii Pacific Review* and *Tinfish*.

### **David Brennan**

David Brennan teaches writing in Virginia's Shenandoah Valley. His work has appeared in a variety of journals.

### **David Highsmith**

David Highsmith is the proprietor of Books & Bookshelves in San Francisco. Recent poems appeared or are forthcoming in the *Antioch Review*, *foam:e*, *Right Hand Pointing*, *Shampoo*, and *Sawbuck*. His books include *Poison in the System*, *Fragments from Bernard*, *The Chatterley Stanzas*, and *Catalina Island*.

### **Derek Henderson**

Derek Henderson currently lives in Salt Lake City with his wife and children, where he is nearing the end of his PhD studies. His work can be found, now or in the near future, in issues of *Dusie*, *Bateau*, *Interim*, *Versal*, *Free Verse* and *Parcel*. He is glad that E. E. Cummings advises "unkempt adoration."

### **Daniel Morris**

Daniel Morris is a Professor of English at Purdue University

### **Edric Mesmer**

Poems by Edric Mesmer have appeared in *26*, *Aufgabe*, and *EOAGH*. From Buffalo he collates the local journal *Yellow Edenwald Field*, publishing poetry from this city, its borders, and sibling cities.

## **Emily Brown**

Emily Brown is a nice girl who lives in Southern California. In her spare time, along with writing poetry, she enjoys composing copious amounts of classical music and indie music with words on the piano. She also likes painting, singing, going to the beach, and talking to people. If she could go anywhere in the world, she would visit Monet's garden and the rest of France, and second to that would be Visby, Gotland.

## **Evan Schnair**

Evan Schnair grew up in San Francisco and studied creative writing at The Colorado College. Returning to California, he spent some time teaching high school literature in Los Angeles. Currently pursuing an MFA in Writing at California College of the Arts, Evan's focus is poetry and playwriting. San Francisco is an important place for Evan, though it may not appear in his writing directly, he is always in some sort of discourse with California.

## **F.J. Bergmann**

Is the coolest person alive

## **Gianina Opris**

Gianina Opris is a native of Lima, Perú who lives in Denver. She holds an MFA in Creative Writing from Naropa University and teaches Language Arts in the Denver Public Schools. Her work has been published in various journals, including Bombay Gin, IMPROV and in her chapbooks, Lapis sky and Time Pieces. Gianina has taught workshops and presented her poetics/multi-media productions in Colorado, New Mexico, Cuernavaca, México and Mancora, Perú. Her most recent project is a musical recording entitled Lagrimas. Gianina's book Moon is always Moon will be published in September 2008 by Green Fuse Press.

Check out her new CD <http://cdbaby.com/cd/oprismartinson>

## **George J. Farrah**

**George J. Farrah** received an MFA in poetry from Bard College, NY. His work has appeared in *The Washington Review*, *Open 24 Hrs.*, *Ribot*, *BUGHOUSE*, *Fourteen Hills*, *Disturbed Guillotine*, *Tight*, *Aileron*, *Fish Drum*, *The Columbia Poetry Review*; *Caldron And Net*, *Moria*, *CROWD*, *Xstream*, *MORIA*, *Ampersand*, and *Elimae*.

## **Geoffrey Gatza**

Geoffrey Gatza runs a hair transplant clinic in Kenmore, NY. Servicing both men and women for 15 years, he steadily built a successful business. He won the Rogaine regional sale award for the second and third quarter of 1998. Deciding to give poetry a whirl, these are his first poems.

### **Jamie Iredell**

Jamie Iredell is the author of *\_When I Moved to Nevada\_*, forthcoming from The Greying Ghost Press. His writing has appeared, or will, in *\_The Chattahoochee Review\_*, *\_Descant\_*, *\_The Literary Review\_*, *\_Lamination Colony\_*, *\_SUB-LIT\_*, and many others. He is a founding editor of *\_New South\_*, and is design editor for C&R Books. He lives in Atlanta.

### **Jason Visconti**

I am a thirty-four year old freelance writer who has been writing since I was fifteen years old. I have been published in both print and online journals. I currently attend workshops in New York City.

### **Korliss Sewer**

Korliss Sewer is an involved mother of two. Her passion for prose grew like her children, and through observation she writes. She is now able to dedicate more time to create poetry and short stories, and is always open to different kinds of artistic expression. "Beneath The Pages" is her first collection of poetry, with another upcoming collection soon to be published. Selected poems have appeared in *The Sheltered Poet*, *The Orange Room Review*, *Poets Haven*, and other works are scheduled to be published in *The Oak*, *Love's Chance*, and *The Storyteller*. She is an English Literature graduate from the University of Washington.

Website: [www.elusivedragonfly.com](http://www.elusivedragonfly.com)

### **Kyle Flak**

KYLE FLAK's first book, *THE HAUNTED BEAUTY SCHOOL*, won the 2008 New Sins Press Editor's Prize and will be out in the fall. His recent work is forthcoming in *WHISKEY ISLAND*, *MUDFISH*, and other lovely literary magazines. Currently he lives in Massachusetts and teaches college composition.

### **Leonard Gontarek**

Leonard Gontarek is the author of *St. Genevieve Watching Over Paris*, *Van Morrison Can't Find His Feet*, *Zen For Beginners* and *Deja Vu Diner* (Autumn House Press, 2006). His poems have appeared in *The Best American Poetry*, *Joyful Noise! An Anthology of American Spiritual Poetry*, *American Poetry Review*, *Blackbird*, *BlazeVox*, *Pool*, *Field*, and as a tattoo. He has been nominated five times for the Pushcart Prize. He received poetry fellowships from the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts in 1994 and 2004. He conducts poetry workshops at The University City Arts League, Robin's Bookstore, and in the Philadelphia Arts in Education Partnership.

[www.leafscape.org/LeonardGontarek](http://www.leafscape.org/LeonardGontarek)

## **Mako Matsuda**

Mako Matsuda is graduating from SFSU with a M.A. in Creative Writing: Poetry. He has read at Litquake, the ninth and tenth anniversary of K'vetch, and Apature.

## **Michael Fix**

From his birth in a shotgun shack in East Tupelo, Mississippi, to his death in a mansion in Memphis, Tennessee, and through all the struggles and triumphs in between, the poetry of Michael Fix is a fascinating story. Even now, thirty years after his death, there's still so much to learn about this man who touched so many lives.

Michael Aaron Fix, in the humblest of circumstances, was born to Vernon and Gladys Fix in a two-room house in Tupelo, Mississippi on January 8, 1935. His twin brother, Jessie Garon, was stillborn, leaving Michael to grow up as an only child. He and his parents moved to Memphis, Tennessee in 1948, and Fix graduated from Humes High School there in 1953.

Michael's musical influences were the pop and country music of the time, the gospel music he heard in church and at the all-night gospel sings he frequently attended, and the black R&B he absorbed on historic Beale Street as a Memphis teenager. In 1954, he began his singing career with the legendary Sun Records label in Memphis. In late 1955, his recording contract was sold to RCA Victor. By 1956, he was an international sensation. With a sound and style that uniquely combined his diverse musical influences and blurred and challenged the social and racial barriers of the time, he ushered in a whole new era of American music and popular culture.

He starred in 33 successful films, made history with his television appearances and specials, and knew great acclaim through his many, often record-breaking, live concert performances on tour and in Las Vegas. Globally, he has sold over one billion records, more than any other artist. His American sales have earned him gold, platinum or multi-platinum awards for 131 different albums and singles, far more than any other artist. Among his many awards and accolades were 14 Grammy nominations (3 wins) from the National Academy of Recording Arts & Sciences, the Grammy Lifetime Achievement Award, which he received at age 36, and his being named One of the Ten Outstanding Young Men of the Nation for 1970 by the United States Jaycees. Without any of the special privileges his celebrity status might have afforded him, he honorably served his country in the U.S. Army.

His talent, good looks, sensuality, charisma, and good humor endeared him to millions, as did the humility and human kindness he demonstrated throughout his life. Known the world over by his first name, he is regarded as one of the most important figures of twentieth century popular culture. Fix died at his Memphis home, Graceland, on August 16, 1977

## **Nagehan Bayindir**

Nagehan Bayindir has earned her bachelors degree in English from Rutgers University Camden and she's currently a graduate student at Rutgers University Studying English Literature and Creative Writing. She's an adjunct professor at Gloucester County College

### **Paige Taggart**

Paige H. Taggart lives and works in Brooklyn, NY. She graduated with her MFA in poetry at the New School after, receiving her BA in Visual Studies from CCA. She makes jewelry and you can find her stuff online: <http://mactaggart.etsy.com> Her poems have appeared in the *Agriculture Reader*, *La Petite Zine*, *My Name Is Mud*, *Ditch Poetry* and *Critphoria*. Her poetry is forthcoming in *EOAGH*, *Elimae* and *Robot Melon*.

### **Parul Garg**

Parul Garg, 26, holds an MA degree in English literature from Panjab University, India. Her poetry will appear in the forthcoming anthology of Moon Town Media Ltd. titled "Poetry by Moonlight".

### **Peter Fernbach**

Peter Fernbach has worked at Erie, and Genesee Community Colleges and is currently employed as an Assistant Professor at Adirondack Community College. He enjoys reading, writing, and walking his dog Ulysses with his girlfriend Kelly. His poems have been published in various magazines.

### **Richard Barrett**

Richard Barrett lives and works in Salford, Greater Manchester. His poetry has appeared in a variety of print and online publications; they include: *The Ugly Tree*, and *Great Works*. He has taken part in poetry readings at venues including Manchester Central Library, The Dancehouse Theatre and The Britons Protection. Reviews written by him can be found on the site *Experimental Fiction And Poetry*. A number of his essays are due to appear in various print and online publications over the coming months. He has an ongoing writing involvement with Manchester based physical theatre collective *Artificial Light*.

Contact details can be found on the profile page of his Blog: <http://quitthispamperedtown.blogspot.com/>

### **Richard K. Ostrander**

After twenty seven years of of military service, Richard K. Ostrander resides in the Carolinas where he is currently putting together a manuscript for eventual publication. He can be found most Sunday evenings reading at North Carolina's premiere open mic. "Java Jams" at The Coffee Scene in Fayetteville, NC. He holds a BS in Sociology from Campbell University and will undertake a Master's in the near future in which he will write a thesis on the dangers of Tupperware© deficiency in servicemen.

He has had work published in "The Paterson Literary Review," "Megaera," "Third Lung Review," online at "Comrades," "Maverick Magazine," "Physik Garden," "Neiderngasse," "POTESPOETSZINEFIFTEEN," "Word Salad," "Views Unplugged," and other venues. He has work forth coming in "The Main Street Rag."

### **Sarah Suzor**

Sarah Suzor's poetry is published in "frequency" and included in the forthcoming edition of "Hotel Amerika." She is co-curator of the 3+3 Poetry reading series.

### **Spring Wells**

Is the coolest person alive

### **Stacie Leatherman**

Stacie Leatherman's work is forthcoming in *Diagram*, *Barrow Street*, and *Caketrain*, and has appeared in *Crazyhorse*, *The Florida Review*, *Many Mountains Moving*, *The Southeast Review*, and *The Cream City Review*, among others. She has an MFA from Vermont College and is a contributing editor for *Hunger Mountain*.

### **Stevie Hinton**

Is the coolest person alive

### **Thomas Fink**

Is the coolest person alive

### **Tom Bowen**

*Tom Bowen was born, raised and educated in a variety of unimportant places. Not being of entirely sound mind and fed up with his lot in the UK he moved to Beijing where he now resides. He divides his time between the necessary evil of work, dreaming he is living in the 1920's and drinking martinis (when he can afford it, lager when he can't). He likes classic vehicles (though lacks a driving license), sharp suits, French food and people who say the word 'cigarette'. He dislikes lots of things, things best categorised into large groups of people including but not limited to; the badly dressed, the obese, futurists, optimists, the nouveau riche and non smokers. He is currently listening to Bowie and drinking Chilean wine.*