

THE BIG WINDOWS REVIEW

Issue 14 • Winter 2019



The Big Windows Review is a publication of the Writing Center at Washtenaw Community College, Ann Arbor, MI, USA. We publish poems and short (500 words or less) prose.

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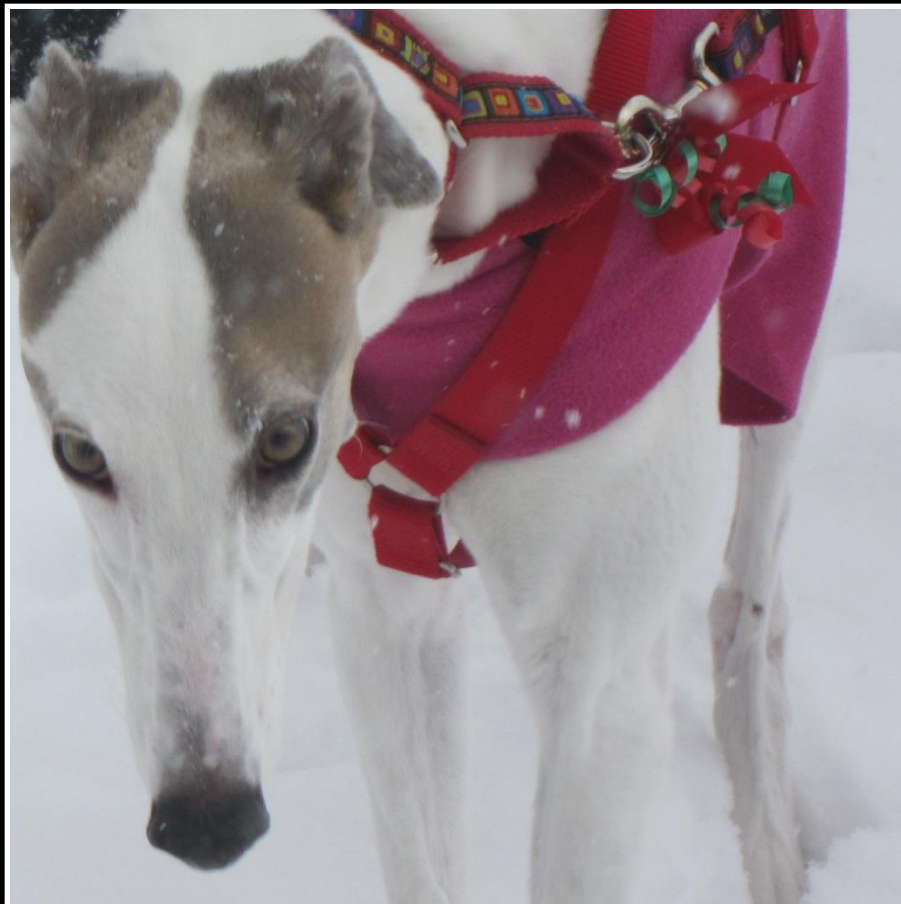
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The Big Windows Review

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Crossing Over into the Land of Rattlesnakes

She looked out over the hot Texas scrub plain,
its cruel footing of knotted roots, jagged rocks.
gopher holes, dry creek beds, maybe a rattle-snake or two.
Even without taking a step, she could feel herself falling.

She'd crossed the border, struggled to feel triumphant.
But the border patrol could sniff her out at any moment.
They were part of the invisible, encroaching terrain.
She'd come for safety but safety wasn't safe.

What were her last words when she left her home?
Something about a better life. Not sorer feet.
Not burning thirst and brow shining with sweat.
Not a tear in her dress just below the knee.

In her mind stretched the future's landscape.
It was no different than the one she saw before her.
Except the rattle-snakes were out there in their numbers.
She could hear the rattle. The hiss of venom to come.

Interstate 65 Revisited

Eating dinner on the veranda
While waiting for Bob Dylan
The server rearranges
Silverware on an empty table
After bringing me a plate of
Fried green tomatoes
She touches my arm lightly
Answering a question as
Smoke from mountain fires
Drifts into the city like
Gauze over the burning sunset
And factories, some
Abandoned. Fade.
On the highway, where
Signs read “no burn zone”
Drought. Of the mind
Creeps in like the haze
Of lost faith.
Lost practice
Misplaced trust, and
Rusted manhole covers
Rattling through
Burnt Orange America

Saint Merle of the Desert

Lee was already into his second cup of decaf when he saw Caryl pull his pickup into the Black Bear Diner parking lot. He folded up the Visalia Times and watched Caryl lock the truck door after getting his cowboy hat. There was that mutual nod of acknowledgment as Caryl walked in behind a family whose bleary-eyed children did not look to be in a traveling mood.

"I'm guessing you read the same thing I did this morning," Caryl said as he seated himself.

"That I did."

"So, they're saying they have nothing in regard to leads."

"Who is they?"

"The cops. In New Mexico. I thought you said you read it."

"Right, right. I did. Okay."

"They have nothing to work with. When I was on the phone with them the other day, they were getting ready to talk to investigators and behavioral specialist people."

Lee started fidgeting with the coffee creamers. "That sounds like it," he said nodding. "To analyze him. To come up with speculations then draw conclusions. That figures."

Both men paused as a waitress brought coffee. Outside, they could see the pale morning light shine on the Southern Sierra Nevada mountains.

"So, for right now, it's anybody's guess as to why Merle might have done this and where he disappeared to."

"Aw, that's just nonsense. Why else would someone park a U-Haul on the side of the 81 highway, pull out all the things that tied him to life—his coffee machine, his two-thousand-dollar big screen, the diplomas, his custom suits, his iPhone and iPad, the laptop, all that stuff—and just dump them onto the highway, then strip down to nothing, toss whatever it was he had on into some improvised bonfire, then walk bare-assed out into the open desert, looking for a hole to live in like some kind of hermit?"

"Yeah, well, we know the answer to that one, don't we?"

That was Caryl, unwrapping the silverware from his napkin.

“What I want to know is how this didn’t happen sooner.”
That was Lee, questioning the complexity of a man’s patience with the world.



january

there is no kind of sadness that the ocean can't fix

i tell myself this
after years of living among tall grasses, years of letting
that sadness build up
and i know if i just leave the house
things will be better.
if i put on my shoes
walk down to where the seagulls nest
 on old pilings slick with algae
i will remember
 how to breathe.

and even if it doesn't work
i'll be at the beach
where even the crabs know how
to stay
in motion and how
to stand still
isn't that what i am trying to understand?

i used to imagine
in the bluster of pacific storms i would bloom
believed my roots belong in clay and sand
not in soil

but sometimes the truth is
i do not feel worthy of forests or floodwaters
sometimes i am just the hull of an abandoned ship
 tucked away beneath the waves
 sprouting anemones

Malahide. Work.

from outside the office
the view goes away,
far
and all the way to the ocean.

and the office
with the view
is on top of a shopping mall.
downstairs people buy
avocados,
grapes,
oranges,
white wine,

all exotic things
brought from past the horizon.

and from the window
you can see the planes coming in
with their deliveries
and from outside
boats
hold even more.

there are islands out there
packed
and brewing with potential.

I would like to take you
to any island
and lie down on a beach in summer

and watch the boats coming in
while our hands shift through the warm sand on top
searching underneath
for the cold.



Emily as Her Shiny Parts Are Not a Signal for Help

I know there is resentment
for the name that has begun
these three thousand poems

& I really don't care at all.
I was terrible with terrible
outcomes. I am good now,

sober, so the beautiful woman
I married decided not to
leave me. She is an epic,

but most of these poems
are about how she never went
anywhere without me.

It's difficult to explain that
when you're staring at her
the way everyone does.

Emily as I Sit on a Stone outside Our Front Door

I don't wait for the moon.
I wait for Emily.
If I had wanted the moon

I would have gone
to the moon. I do have
that sort of devotion.

I have been misguided
before. She will tell me
if I ever am again.



The Scar

A small thin slit in a sea of perfect young skin
located just south and west of her belly button
I pause for a moment to kiss

please don't she tells me
I hate it so much
not surprised I say I love it

someone made this lifesaving cut
now it's a beautiful reminder
imperfect impermanent and incomplete

Time Is Running Out

And once again the water leaves the shore, fading away to the horizon. The shore extends itself into wet flats, miles of rippled mud draped with long strips of sky. These turn back to water, gray like the mud but lit from within, when the wind blows in from beyond the distant waves.

Small boats settle and sprawl on their sides, abandoned by the water that lent them grace.

We sit on the birdlime-spattered rocks, in the gray wind, and watch the water leaving. We say nothing, each thinking, There it goes. The water rushes outward, toward the edges of the earth. The gray sky lowers; sheets of it lie on the mud and turn to water when harried by the wind.

Time is running out. We see it, we know it. Give me your hand.

Doc Barfield's Dreams

As a younger man, dreaming, Doc Barfield relived incessantly the morning his two boys drowned. He'd smell the bacon and eggs as he stirred them in the skillet, admire the first salmon-colored streaks on the horizon as he walked with the boys to the dock. He'd shake their hands—very manly—and make them promise to wear their life vests. Tell them to bring back a stringer of bream so he could fry them up for lunch. Realize his life was over the moment the sheriff tapped on his door. . . .

But in his later dreams, Doc Barfield's boys remain undrowned. He has lunched with them on the bream they'd have brought back if their canoe hadn't capsized, attended ball games, graduations. He's bailed the younger, Toby, out of jail, and discovered with the elder, Frank, that he is gay. The boys he dreams are all grown up now, out living on their own. This is a source of comfort to Doc Barfield, whose cancer is quite advanced, and who can't say what will happen to his dreams once he is gone.

Heartsick

The doctor with old food stains on his tie is turning out to be absurdly talkative. “Apparently it’s Mental Health Awareness Day today,” he says. “And ski season is coming. Quite the weather forecast for Budapest. I’ve never been to California and, yes, that’s sad.” He keeps up this giddy stream of consciousness while jamming a giant needle into my chest. When the pain becomes too great, I start to hallucinate a herd of horned beasts—the kind the Dadaists loved—grazing on darkness without the darkness being consumed. I beg the doctor, “Stop, stop, please stop.” He just pushes the needle in deeper. I’m screaming now. A nurse hurries in. “Almost there,” the doctor calmly tells her, referring, I imagine in my distress, to the outskirts of heaven, where angels, some the size of a grain of salt, some the size of a pebble, buzz like dung flies.

Planet Nine

Giant telescopes have searched the skies for Planet Nine, but found only bronze cauldrons filled with ash. I’ve looked for it myself where things accumulate, where people leave things. Every house has a corner like that. I’ve been to the market, too, and the cemetery of babies. I’ve walked down those cobblestone streets. And, in the end, the answer is no. It could have been stolen. It could have been accidentally thrown out. Whatever, it’s gone, and if I were you, I would be nervous now about putting faith in robot bees. It has nothing to do with religion. It’s simply physics, a rainy place with lots of crows and very low ceilings.

Plagiarism

I read in this biography of Jim Morrison that toward the end he was getting through two bottles of Jack Daniel's a day. That's amazing. I can just about get through one.

The last email I had from my publisher friend was about the reasons for his depression. They were all sound reasons, hard to argue with. In a p.s. he added that, toward the end, Jim Morrison was drinking two bottles of Southern Comfort a day. He said he was impressed, as it was all he could do to get to the bottom of one.

Today's class will be about Jim Morrison, a notable song writer, hedonist, mystic, and lead singer of The Doors. Morrison died in Paris, just like Oscar Wilde, Richard Wright, Wallis Simpson, and, of course, numerous French people. Jim abused—or, as he would argue, *used*—drugs and alcohol. Jim was famous, even legendary, for his drinking. By the time he died at twenty-seven he was downing two bottles of Chivas a day, so they say. I think you'll find that it's hard just getting through one. That's been my experience, anyway.

My old lady claims she's as good a drinker as Jim Morrison because, like him, she can guzzle two bottles of Four Roses a day. I make that eight roses. She calls me a wimp because I can't swallow more than two roses.

Nobody's really sure what killed Jim Morrison, but alcohol probably had something to do with it. According to those in a position to know, in his last year he was polishing off two bottles of Jim Beam a day.

And that's why I stop at one.

Role Model

I find
Solace
In your absolute
Vulnerability
And the trust
In your
Muse
While you lie
Prone
On an empty floor.
Waiting
For her to speak.

● **EDWARD VIDAURRE** ●

Men don't sit near orchards anymore

With their knees up and head in between their legs. Men don't write poems to women anymore, circling the plaza with an entourage of little children laughing and falling in love with love. Men don't fight bulls anymore, they eat horse meat on fancy china with blood wine. Men don't serenade lovers anymore, they grow beards and hide their kisses deep in their chins. Men don't raise children anymore, they're too busy rolling stones or laying flat on rooftops counting stars long dead. Men don't sit near orchards anymore, they have become roots with muddy feet and senseless songs.

Calcium Deposit

simply here, in violent indifference
and crippled focus will these
days fold unto us. even the
masquerade seems staged—where
we collapse beneath, when our
denouement loses its audience.
only with shards of glass under
fingernails can the wherewithal ooze
until watered down for a proof-copied
conversation a lifetime later. so shave
down those taut heartstrings and pop
that blister—don't worry, its scar forever
renders behind this one-eyed jack's
sheath. we're already somewhere else,
waiting for just one to let us bleed out.

A Silence

Suddenly everything went silent.
No birds, no people talking, no rustle of trees.
Traffic had no sound.
I remember going to CVS
and paying for cigarettes with a check.
The clerk never uttered a word.
I was biding my time before packing my bags
and waiting for my father to pick me up.

But everything was in slow motion
like a kabuki dance.
Time stopped like a clock with no hands.
And on TV the president was giving
a speech in sign language.
I went to the bank where I withdrew cash
and no one noticed my hands shaking.
But everything was quiet so I didn't care.

And I was alone on the street with many people
who were like extras in a film.
Was this what it was like to be deaf?
Or had the world stopped answering my questions?
I packed my bags and my father took me to the hospital
where they checked me in and went through my things for razor blades.

The Time That My Hometown Set Me on Fire and Ate My Loins

That was on Tuesday.
It's every Tuesday.
Every Tuesday is every Tuesday.

And it's when my guts burn.
They call it Christmas.
The Tuesday Christmas of burning.

The mouse in my mouth.
The rat on my lip.
The clouds, bone-colored.

I sing in the shower.
I shower onstage.
I used to strip.

I'd take my skin off.
The audience could see all my clouds.
I have a PTSD counselor.

I also have a PTSD chef.
And a PTSD janitor.
That's me.

I'm the PTSD janitor.
I have a Ph.D.
and found out those are useless.

You use them less.
You get used.
I have a disability.

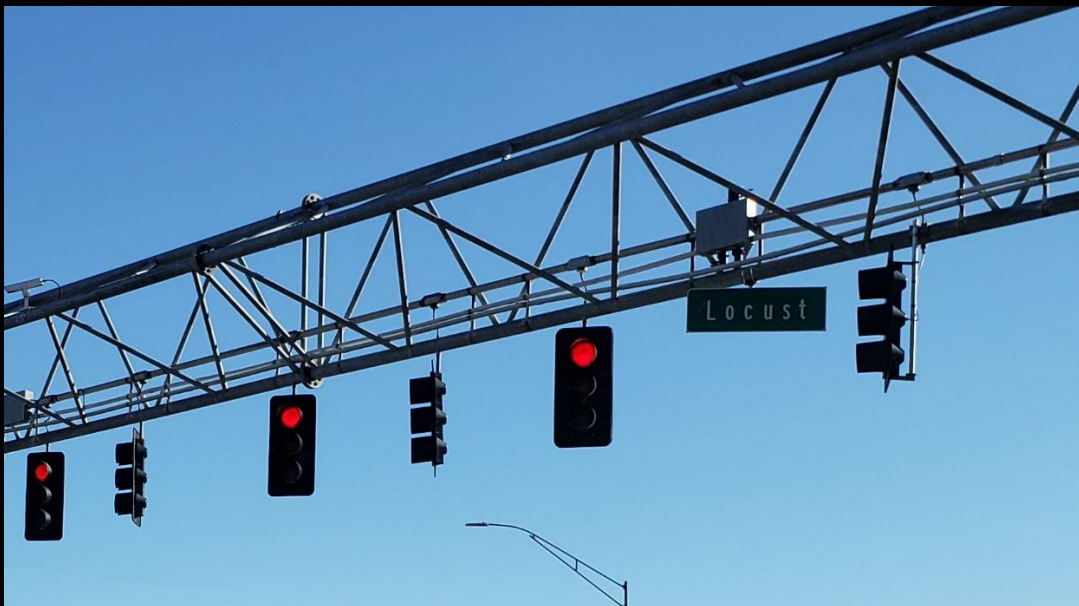
I have the ability to diss.
I complain a lot.
They say that's what PTSD causes.

In China, 8 is good.
In China, I saw photos of the Tiananmen Massacre.
They looked like the number 4.

I'm a zombie.
I'm a weird sense of zombie.
My girlfriend wants me to go to sleep.

I'm also Saami.
It's an indigenous group you've never heard of.
I'm extinct.

I'm an extinct janitor.
I write poems,
which means I'm even more extinct.



OCD

1, 2, 3

21, 22

I touch the spine of each notebook as I count

It's the fourth time tonight

And I should be asleep

My very soul exhausted

From the constant stress

My mind won't let me rest

I'm tired

Because it's 3 am and I should be asleep but instead I am rooting through my
hamper, desperate to find that one shirt, to make sure it's still there

My mind plays games with me

I thought we would both outgrow them: we haven't

Tickles in the back of my mind turn into obsessions, into compulsions

A descent into irrational behavior

And with it comes the darkness

The darkness

Makes it hard to remember

That light exists at all

1, 2, 3

I wish I could count myself into reassurance, into relief

But I don't think I can count that high

Neverminded.

the collector of sighs
works in the dead of night
listens for bed spring serenades
the unzipping of zips

love me love me not

love me not
love me not

the daises are dead
the chain is unlocked
she falls from a great height
no safety net
onto a stretcher of the emergency services
who whisk her away to
the club of the betrayed
where dj sorrow spins cracked love songs
it's never too late

too late

she's collapsed unconscious
drowned in her tears
her heart is broken
a thousand pieces
with no one around to help her
except
from the depths of darkness
there comes a hand
now she's dancing with
kurt cobain

nevermind

Raynaud's Phenomenon

I found you under Mylar
pinned to foamcore.
I found you while Santana's "Smooth" streamed commercial free.
I found you
in the front seat of a Lexus
(I am not a car man, therefore cannot provide the model).
I found you behind the story of your daughter's birthday.
I found you
wanting.
I found, once more, a starving liar,
imprinting on the first vibration to emerge from crusty corners of childhood attic.
I found you, sweating, heaving slowly, atop slick dampened linen
while the shower (one of two) ran
in the other room. I
found you in a stray graze of paw,
I found you in eye contact connected by
silent
content
torso.
I found you in the wakeful, separate rising moments of solitary weekends.
I found you fettered to black hens in western golf course.
I found you in moments,
in inches, between unkempt eyebrows.
I found you in recreational drug use references which you never included
myself. I found you
where I left you:
at the end of a nylon line,
salty and twitching.
I found your comparison of my physique to Hollywoodland tinsel flattering.
I thought myself leading you,
but motion is relative

depending
on point A location in relation to solar positions, point B placement to personality
phases.
A slave to the praises I
found me in you: desperate for unquenchable, untethered human impulse.
I am the one leaving
heel marks in mud, ruts downhill.
You found me, looking up, imposing arbitrary restriction.
Raise anticipations as dried floor wax after juice-pressed evenings.
"You are a better kisser."
"Because I meant it."



La Llorona (The Crying Woman)

Who is that woman
dragging herself
throughout the city
well after midnight?

The closer she gets
the woman is
not what she appears.
She is a shadow.

Her head is a cloud.
Her feet are roots
of a diseased tree;
her hands, gnarled branches.

As she touches you,
she feels like sand,
like sawdust, and her
horse laugh terrifies.

She is not human.
She is all fog
and dew. She weeps and
hollers by the creek.

Eight Poems

beside the highway
leaping into the river
frog who safely crossed

this city's
harsh night life—
morning sun
nervously probes
gutter and alley

Lonely as a grave is
six feet deep. Maybe
much deeper. Measure
my loneliness at six-and-
a-half and still descending.

just a beer
or three
(and a shot)
and we're
no longer
strangers
guys howling
the Stones'
Beast of Burden

“now that’s gross,”
she states, “zombies
with chicken pox”
thinking to myself,
who’s gonna notice

poet

when being embraces
what a page can bring
white within black
and light within dark
a timelessness beyond
electronic uncertainty

my breakfast table
maple syrup’s sweet-talking
the blueberry pancake

someone I want to know

list of books checked out
by prior library patron
p20754590
left in a collection of
poems by Bukowski:
A timbered choir: the sabbath poems

No shortage of good days
Fly fishing the seasons in Colorado
Given: new poems
Tao te Ching
Zen living
Betting on the Muse: poems
and stories by Bukowski



Five Guru Poems

Stagecraft At The Temple

Our guru cyclones in—
Pantomime dame falsies,
Snazzy banana ear-rings.
We're alert or lie-abed,
By calibre, disembarrassed souls.
Headway is fundamentally a pose.

Money Pouch Banter

Our guru clucks
To his market-stall Rolex.
Flashbacks are virulences
That dodge time-bending.
Yore-fun's pictures
Shuffle themselves to omnipotence,
Archotyping tarots
For dewy lives.

Dropping Through Cracks

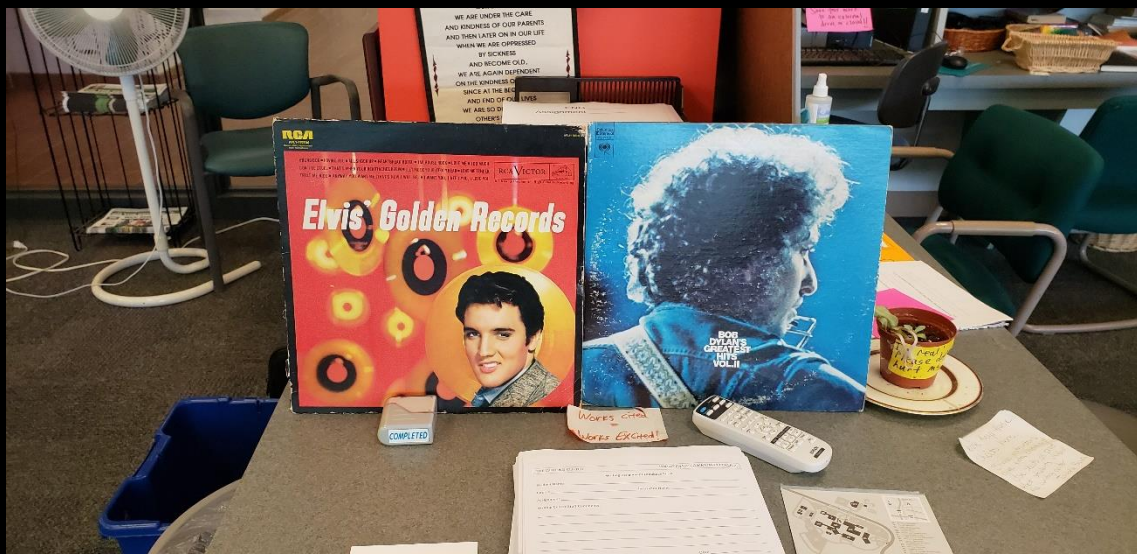
Our guru live wires
That rat-shaped bulb,
Frazzling celestial dodgems.
Proceedings are whip-handed.
Jam sesh: The Grateful Dead v Us.
Orphaned by destination,
Wheels flop-gripped.
Sunup is ticketless.

The Emptying

Turmeric holdovers on Miss Piggy t-shirt.
Fresh rap about every simper's alpha –
Our guru's on dictum.
We yum with postures of schisms;
Tomorrow we'll be hustled for moolah.

Soapless Journeys

A 3-splits mirror,
Furfur is this turnout's replica.
Unclasping ingrates purse,
The secret heart, libido. In memory,
Our guru dunked at hallowing waters.
Though time herself mislays the pure.



Disenchantment

Here in the twilight of an autumn day
a breeze had once foretold the coming
of a teacher who walked the wood
and bathed in the bright winding stream.

Throbbing light marked his arrival
and antlered shadows his wild retinue
as they fled down the forest path
trailing an echo of feral laughter.

Decades on I stand in that place
where the stream still flows nearby.
A gentle breeze stirs the autumn leaves
but no whispers tell of his coming.
No lights dance and no echoes sound.
A few deer browse the meadow quietly.

I'm back from years in a wider world
where there are no such wild parades.
Sadly it's only on memory's edge
that I glimpse them in my twilight time.

Five Poems

*

You feed these birds at night
the way every feather they use
comes from a quarry where the air

darkens with each landing –it's Tuesday
and you still have not forgotten
their return for seeds, endlessly

weeping for a missing child
a brother, mother though their eyes
are unsure how to close

when listening for a name, a flower
a river –you fill your hand from a bag
as if at the bottom they could hear

an emptiness that is not a night
falling behind step by step on the ground
–how open it was, already grass.

*

And stubborn yet these wicks
warm the light they need
to blossom as stone

then cling, smell from hair
burning inside, clawing for roots
heated by butterflies

and the afternoons coming together
to the light the fire, be a noon
where there was none before.

*

You stir this soup as if each finger
is warmed by the breeze
though your eyes close when salt is added

—small stones could bring it to life
overflow with branches, berries, wings
shimmering and far away dissolve

into a sea that has no word
for sitting at a table, naked
waiting for you to turn on the light

wrap your arms around a bowl
that's empty, a night no longer sure
it's the rim you're holding on to

that's circling a man eating alone
who can't see, hears only the waves
becoming lips, colder and colder.

*

This thin sheet has no strength left
spread out as a bed
no longer interested in love

though the edge still folds in
taking hold a frayed promise
pulling it to safety word by word

–look around, what was saved is paper
shrinking into curls and hollows
has a face, a mouth –all in writing

has the silence, the forever
death listens for –what it hears
is the unfolding face up

the way moonlight
has never forgotten your fingers
are constantly unpacking paper

as the frail sound oars make
when bringing back a sea
that was not cared for :this note

all this time forgotten, in a box
half wood, half smoke
as if it once lit up the world.

*

And though this bottle is empty
it drifts on by as if the grass
puts its trust in the thirst

for sunlight and butterflies
–drop by drop you water this grave
till it smells from salt

then sent off, comes back
night after night as a wave
telling you where, what happened.

Elegy for Great-Grandma Fern

She tells me

that she is a mountain,
the matriarch,
an institution in this family.

She has been here before this house existed,
before I was even a thought
in my parents' brains.

She declares

that she is as old as old gets,
and she has seen as much as one can see.

She leans back

satisfied
and asks me

Isn't that quite the accomplishment?

I nod.

She slides into her brown stained recliner,

her elbows creaking as she pulls the lever,
her pink welted skin squeaking on the dull leather,
a short strand of gray hair drifting off her head.

My dad peeks his head in the room to make sure I'm okay.

Ben, she says, who is this?

and she points a wrinkled finger at me.

That's my daughter, Dad says.

She doesn't believe him.

No, she insists, your girls are just babies.

Dad shakes his head
and tries again.

They've grown up, Grandma. They're older now.

She shakes her head and stares at me
as if not completely sure I'm real.

*Ben, she says,
I can't remember them growing up.*

She is a mountain
and when I find out she has died
I ask myself
if mountains can ever really die.
I ask myself
if they can remember
the curve of their children's faces
or the laugh of their first grandchild.
I ask myself
if they can remember
me.



Spell for Blue Sky on the First Day of Spring

Raven, cross the wind.
Curly willow, clothe your coils
 in catkins colored yellow.
Crocus, call the sun and drink it down!

Ancient pages of paper birch,
 applaud.

A Hummingbird on the Bauhinia

On the lowest branch of a bauhinia
rests the aquamarine black.
Enduring hummingbird... Purple,
like edge's pleasure, thirsty
like harmful willow root:

Nectar, Liquor, Hashish: like the origin
of fire. In America flowers
feed legions... Tadpole algae
emerging, cricket shaking out its flags.

The sun is a hermit, like corn,
and the spot where silence's bird
sings. Enduring before iron,
coal, pirate steamships,
on the lowest branch of a bauhinia:

Western slavery, rats.
Here the hunting sounds
sicken and die... the damp breeze
emerging in circles of rebellion.

On the lowest branch of a bauhinia
rests the aquamarine black.
Enduring hummingbird... Purple,
like edge's pleasure, thirsty
like harmful willow root.

Translated by Katherine M. Hedeem

Contributors

Joe Albanese is a writer from New Jersey. His work can be found in publications across the U.S. and in ten other countries. Joe's novel, *Caina* (Mockingbird Lane Press), and his novella, *Smash and Grab* (Books to Go Now), were both published in 2018.

Juan Arabia (Buenos Aires, 1983) is a poet, translator, and literary critic. In addition to publishing three books of poetry, he has written extensively on John Fante and the Beat Generation. He has translated Arthur Rimbaud, Ezra Pound, and a book-length anthology of Beat poets, among many others. He is the founder and director of the literary journal and press Buenos Aires Poetry.

Christopher Barnes is an artist, filmmaker, poet, and poetry and art critic (*Poetry Scotland*, *Jacket Magazine*, *Peel Magazine*, *Combustus*); is a co-editor of the poetry magazine *Interpoetry*; and is author of the collection *Lovebites* (Chanticleer Press, 2005). Christopher's BBC webpage: http://www.bbc.co.uk/tyne/videonation/stories/gay_history.shtml

Born in Mexico, **Luis Cuauhtémoc Berriozábal** lives in California and works in the mental health field in Los Angeles. His first poetry book, *Raw Materials*, was published by Pygmy Forest Press. Kendra Steiner Editions out of Austin, Texas, has published 7 of his chapbooks, including his latest offering, *Make the Light Mine*.

Abigail Coulter is a student at the Alabama School of Fine Arts and is involved with the writing community in Birmingham, Alabama. She is the recipient of the third-place fiction award from the Young Authors Writing Competition at Columbia College Chicago and has been published in the literary magazine *Cadence*.

Charlotte De'Ath was born in the east end of London but now lives in an idyllic cottage situated deep in the beautiful Suffolk countryside. She has published one chapbook, *Kicks to Hypnotise Suburban Daughters*, by Erbacce Press. She spends most of her free time playing with the Clueless Collective at: <http://www.cluelesscollective.co.uk>.

Darren C. Demaree's poems have appeared, or are scheduled to appear, in numerous magazines/journals, including *Hotel Amerika*, *Diode*, *North American Review*, *New Letters*, *Diagram*, and the *Colorado Review*. He is the author of nine poetry collections, most recently *Bombing the Thinker* (September 2018), which was published by Backlash Press. He is the Managing Editor of the *Best of the Net Anthology* and *Ovenbird Poetry*, and is currently living and writing in Columbus, Ohio, with his wife and children.

Howie Good co-edits the journals *UnLost* and *Unbroken* with Dale Wisely.

Tony Gorry's essays, memoir, and poetry have appeared in *The Big Windows Review*, *The Journal of the American Medical Association*, *The Chronicle Review*, *The Examined Life Journal*, *The New Atlantis*, *The Fiddleback*, *Cleaver Magazine*, and *Belle Rêve Literary Journal*. His essay in *War, Literature and the Arts* was cited as Notable in 100 Best American Essays 2012. His book, *Memory's Encouragement*, was published by Paul Dry Books in April 2017.

John Grey is an Australian poet, US resident. Recently published in the *Homestead Review*, *Poetry East*, and *Columbia Review* with work upcoming in the *Roanoke Review*, the *Hawaii Review*, and *North Dakota Quarterly*.

Katherine M. Hedeem is the NEH Distinguished Teaching Associate Professor of Spanish at Kenyon College. She specializes in Latin American poetry and has researched and translated numerous contemporary authors from the region. Her translations appear extensively in prestigious American and British literary journals. She is an associate editor of Earthwork's Latin American Poetry in Translation Series for Salt Publishing.

English Professor (Huntingdon College) and Fiction Editor (*THAT Literary Review*), **Jim Hilgartner** has published in journals including *Apocryphal Text*, *The Chapbook*, *Greensboro Review*, *Mid-American Review*, *New Orleans Review*, *Red Mountain Review*, *SLAB*, and *Vermont Literary Review*, and twice received Fellowships in Literature from the Alabama State Council on the Arts.

Doug Hoekstra's short stories, essays, and poems have appeared in numerous literary journals. He has two book-length collections to his name: *The Tenth Inning* (2015) and *Bothering the Coffee Drinkers* (2007 Independent Publisher Award finalist), with another one on the way (*Unopened*, poetry, slated for 2019). As a singer-songwriter, released eight CDs on U.S. and European labels, touring extensively throughout the US and Europe in support. <https://doughoekstra.wordpress.com/>

Ari Koontz is a queer nonbinary artist based in Bellingham, Washington, with a bachelor's degree in Creative Writing from Western Washington University. In poetry and prose, Ari grapples with identity, truth, and the sheer beauty of the universe, and is particularly fascinated by birds, stars, and other forms of light. Their work has previously appeared or is forthcoming in *Oyster River Pages*, *Rowan Glassworks*, *Wizards In Space Magazine*, and *Jeopardy Magazine*.

DS Maolalai is a poet from Ireland who has been writing and publishing poetry for almost 10 years. His first collection, *Love is Breaking Plates in the Garden*, was published in 2016 by the Encircle Press, and he has a second collection forthcoming from Turas Press in 2019. He has been nominated for Best of the Web and twice for the Pushcart Prize.

Dave McGovern is a Chicago writer, carpet historian, food documentarian, relisher of one note jokes. His work focuses on urban living, agoraphobic wanderlust, and utilitarian emotion.

Anne Mikusinski has been writing poetry and short stories since she was seven years old and most probably making them up long before she could hold a pen or pencil in her hand. She finds inspiration in music and art, and sometimes, even little things that happen every day. Her influences range from Robert Frost and Dylan Thomas to David Byrne and Nick Cave, and she hopes one day, her work will inspire others in the same way these writers have been an inspiration to her.

Catherine Moscatt is a 22-year-old counseling and human services major. Besides poetry, she enjoys playing basketball, listening to loud music, and watching terrible horror movies. Her poetry has been published in several magazines, including *Sick Lit Magazine*, *Phree Write Magazine*, and *Muse—An International Poetry Journal*.

ayaz daryl nielsen, veteran and former hospice nurse, lives in Longmont, Colorado, USA. Editor of *bear creek haiku* (30+ years/145+ issues) with poetry published worldwide (and deeply appreciated), he is online at: *bear creek haiku poetry, poems and info*

Simon Perchik is an attorney whose poems have appeared in *Partisan Review*, *Forge*, *Poetry*, *Osiris*, *The New Yorker*, and elsewhere. His most recent collection is *The Osiris Poems*, published by boxofchalk, 2017. For more information, including free e-books and his essay "Magic, Illusion and Other Realities," please visit his

website at <http://www.simonperchik.com>. To view one of his interviews, please follow this link:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MSK774rtfx8>

Ron Riecki's books include *And Here: 100 Years of Upper Peninsula Writing, 1917-2017* (Michigan State University Press), *Here: Women Writing on Michigan's Upper Peninsula* (2016 Independent Publisher Book Award Gold Medal Great Lakes Best Regional Fiction), *The Way North: Collected Upper Peninsula New Works* (2014 Michigan Notable Book awarded by the Library of Michigan), and *U.P.: a novel* (Ghost Road Press).

Marjorie Sadin has poems in *The Barefoot Review*, *Microw*, *Emerge*, *The Little Magazine*, *Jewish Women's Literary Journal*, *Tower Journal*, among many others, and five books of poetry in print. Her new *Vision of Lucha* book portrays struggle and survival, love, death, and family. It was published by Goldfish Press. Recently she published a chapbook, *Struck by Love*, also by Goldfish Press. Marjorie lives and reads her poetry in the Washington DC area.

Tara K. Shepersky is an Oregon-based taxonomist, poet, essayist, and photographer. Her creative work explores the ways our inner and outer, individual and collective experiences listen, speak, and shape themselves to the land we live beside. Recent work has appeared in *Shark Reef*, *Sky Island Journal*, *Mojave Heart Review*, *Empty Mirror*, and *Cascadia Rising Review*, among others. Find her on Twitter @pdxpersky, and at pdxpersky.com

Sugar Tobey was born in Coney Island, Brooklyn, received a degree from the School of Visual Art in Manhattan, and now lives in NYC above a pizza parlor.

Edward Vidaurre is the 2018-2019 McAllen, Texas, Poet Laureate and author of five collections of poetry. *Ramona & Rumi: Love in the Time of Oligarchy & Unedited Necessary Poems* (Hercules Publishing, 2018) is his latest. He Lives in McAllen, TX, with his wife Liliana and daughter Luisa Isabella.

Robert Wexelblatt is a professor at Boston University. He has published five fiction collections; two of essays; a pair of short novels; essays, stories, poems in various journals, and a novel awarded the Indie Book Awards prize for fiction. A collection of Chinese and one of non-Chinese stories are forthcoming

Brian Winters generally writes about the restless or the unshaven. His story "Mjorgonlar, Class of '88" was recently featured in the *Manzano Mountain Review*. Having lived in Kansas, Idaho, and Kentucky, he currently hangs out in Twain Harte, CA, and can be found eating street tacos on most weekends.





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Hilgartner Hoekstra Koontz Maolalai McGovern
Mikusinski Moscatt nielsen Perchik Riekki Sadin
Shepersky Tobey Vidaurre Wexelblatt Winters**
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