

# The Big Windows Review

Issue 40 Summer 2025





***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.**

**Design and digital images by  
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## ABCs of NYC

alpha males need to chill  
before alpha females take the reins  
careful now, they're on to us  
do not tarry, this is a modern verse  
evidently versatile  
forego your presuppositions  
giggle at the mind made-up  
holler at your reflection  
ignite its resurrection  
just do this in private  
kisses in public  
lovers in attic  
moments in movies  
numbers in phones  
ostentatious window displays  
public displays of affection  
questions of guilt & retribution  
running on hudson river piers  
suddenly deciding to turn back  
troubled by a mind at rest  
underwhelmed by the glories that be  
vulnerable, unafraid  
wondering when you'll meet again  
xylophone. always.  
yonder way, we discover a  
zoo in central park like holden.

### Sandy

Where her ashes sank exactly I cannot remember,  
somewhere in the Monterey Bay between Paradise Point  
and Sunset Beach, not odd because she could not swim.  
Soil was her province, and forget-me-nots  
her favorite flower, those four-week soft blue blooms  
dotting our walk like earthly stars, seeds  
that would stick to socks and shoelaces  
to travel and embed in another soil.

She gave us seeds to bloom in our garden,  
and I have spread those infant forget-me-nots  
down by the creek walk nestled amid ferns  
and wild blackberries during the viral sequester,  
and in the next three springs have watched them  
root and spread, how people brushed  
against the stems and scattered the seeds  
until the whole walk is now dotted with blue.

This is her fitting tribute, a small quiet beauty,  
which is how she lived, not with the brassy blare  
of rhododendrons or aspirations of foxgloves  
spiking into the air, just these little stars  
at our feet grasping to take hold, to stick to our clothes,  
our shoes, to tell us we are luckier than we think.

## Dreams Before Waking in Eight Parts

1-

Time lapse photos:  
multiple moons in waxing,  
waning phases. Coronas  
of ambient light.

2-

Ghost images trapped in  
scaling mirrors. All of them  
trying to get out.

3-

Inverted hour glass.  
Time stalled in mid-  
descent.

4-

Dry ice mist fills  
orchestra pit simulating  
arctic waste. Frozen music.

5-

Ghost light on bare stage.  
Spot lights on polished wood  
stage. Empty seats face  
the reflective glare.

6-

Mist rising over still  
water. A lost world  
found.

7-

Tsunami wave breaching  
sea walls. A scatter of  
skiffs left behind.

8-

Black sun over red desert.  
Cracks in the earth where  
nothing grows.



## The Secrets They Whisper

I catch the flinch in your eyes.  
Do you think I chose to live like this?  
I once owned a bed, a sofa, and a kitchen table.  
Hope sat beside me in the mornings, warm in the steam of my coffee.  
My hands held dreams.  
My hands cradled children.  
Then, the ground crumbled under me.

If you see a woman huddled on the street, take another look.  
I see a survivor.  
A woman who raised herself from the wreckage—and walked.  
My scars tell stories of love lost and nights survived,  
of battles fought with nothing but my breath.

Try walking miles with your whole world strapped to your back.  
You laugh at my layers. They keep me warm when the nights bite.  
Here's what you don't know—how strong you are until the ground becomes your mattress.  
I didn't choose this, but I choose to keep breathing, even when it hurts.

You wrinkle your nose? Judge?  
I take care of my bags. They're clean—and if you don't think that takes work—you've never had to wash everything, every day, with nothing.



But you don't care, do you?  
Your glances cut sharper than hunger.  
Hunger doesn't define me—it's just another battle I fight.  
Your pity lands heavier on my soul than my burdens.  
I don't need it.  
I walk upright, even when the world expects me to crawl.

Every night, I sing to the stars.  
They don't care where I sleep.  
They whisper to me—  
truths you're too scared to hear,  
secrets the sheltered never know.



## Noah Built the Ark

I've promoted the hustle  
There's blood in the streets  
Lust and envy never tasted sweet  
I run and duck for cover  
Fame comes tomorrow  
Dying just to get a name  
I will kill for a nickel or dime  
Many broken promises

Is it any wonder  
Why the world's still turning  
I'm in need of a big hug  
Too many cars on the highway  
Hate comes soft and hazy  
The candy that I need  
Spending my life in hell  
Wearing the best clothes  
Get the slapping wherever I go

The water is rising  
Spent some time on a lifeboat  
I'll see the fire next time  
I'm always switching lanes  
The water is rising  
Spent some time on a lifeboat  
I'll see the fire next time  
I'm always switching lanes

## Red-Blue

Forty-four seconds. Forty-three.

The digital counter drops. Gregor wipes his sweating forehead.

Clever bastards. An analog bomb, ancient technology, immune to sensors. Blocks of Semtex, enough to fragment the ship. Bodies drifting in space. A dead crew and dead alien diplomats.

An interstellar war sparked by fanatics and triggered by the device under his fingers. And no one to stop it but him.

Twenty-one seconds.

Two wires. One choice. Red or blue. No guidance from the handheld. A pair of wire cutters.

Fifty-fifty odds. Gregor thinks of his wife, his little boy.

Now, choose. Cutters ready.

Eight seconds. Seven.

Snip.



## Thereafter Blues

At the crossroads between Claireview Street and Millshire Avenue, two men, by happenstance, met each other below the streetlight that shined a lonely beacon beside snow-covered fields, stretching into a darkness of blue. One man tipped his hat, though his face could not be spoken for, and the light above him shadowed his features as he reached into his pockets and pulled out a pack of cigarettes.

“Lost?” He said to the wanderer and held out the open pack—only two were left, but he insisted: “It’s alright, take it,” he gestured to the hatless man. “I asked if you were lost.”

“I was just heading out of town,” the hatless man said, looking back the way he came.

“Out of town? With no proper footwear?” He asked with sincerity, pointing at the man’s lack of shoes, and the holes in his socks. The hatless man was utterly confused, but this confusion only mounted when he glanced down at his feet and saw he had no boots on at all.

There was a surprising jolt through his body in this realization, but it faded into numbness as he closed his eyes and recalled the moments before his meeting below the light: tires screeching themselves of rubber, the wailing of engines coming right at him.

Opening his eyes, the man was still holding the cigarette out to him when a rumble broke the silence between them. Headlights cut through the snowfall, and upon their entry, so too did the shrieks of terrified children, and the grinding of the battered vehicle against asphalt. As it came into their view, he could see then that the front end of the car had been crushed, and atop the shattered windshield sprawled a mangled figure without shoes.

## Tattoo Artist

He comes back from Japan  
with a dragon tattoo, the artist  
says give me some skin, sticks  
his barb in with the colors  
of choice, and sets to his back-  
breaking work, graceful circles

are a good way to start, he tells  
his canvas not to move, this  
will hurt but stay still, there will  
be blood, the needle burns  
but you'll get used to it,  
even come to crave the pain,

beg the artist to go ape, which  
is to say epic, on your body,  
turn the skin into a text  
that keeps on unscrolling—  
the most gruesome images  
make the biggest impression.

I write this poem because  
I too work with ink.

## **Cleaning Out My Mother's Shed**

An old pair of python skinned  
Cowboy boots ( they've shrunken so much  
I can't get my foot into them ! )  
Newspapers from Boston and Portland Maine  
A poster of Jimi Hendrix  
A thank-you note from Shannon  
For the English paper I helped her write  
Mardi Gras beads  
Spoken Word Cd's  
3 dozen books  
A tape of Malcolm x's speeches  
A tribute to Shannon I wrote  
That was published  
A turntable  
Albums by Billy Joel, Elton John  
George Carlin, Carole King, Barbara Streisand  
And the Beatles  
A VCR  
My high school diploma  
Baby pictures of my nephew Joshua  
Receipt of a Greyhound Ticket to  
San Francisco, May 1994  
Acceptance letters from  
Each my publications  
A picture of Shannon  
I thought I'd thrown away



## Darkness Shaping Light

For now it flickers,  
the porchlight left on  
for the return of our souls.

We fear the bulb may crack  
in the weight of darkness,  
and not that far away  
the lighthouse pulse  
grows dimmer,  
its revolution slowing down,  
ghost ships in the night  
wailing blindly for shore,  
the light from our eyes  
not bright enough  
to lead them home.

## **Ghostblind**

The dead would like  
to know us better.  
They gesture wildly  
but our fleshy hereness  
shines too intensely  
for us to see them.

Between the streetlights,  
the desk lamp,  
and the microwave's  
digital display,  
we've left no darkness  
that's dark enough to haunt.

Forgetting that the dead  
are always with us,  
we grieve their loss.

Only in horror films  
do we remind ourselves  
that life and afterlife  
once kept fewer secrets  
from one another.  
The living and the dead  
are now such lonesome souls.

### Second Fiddle

I woke up with an uneasy feeling; something had happened.

The Stock Market — something had happened in the world while I was asleep and the stock market had somehow been affected. I quickly opened my CNBC app.

Nothing ... only a photo of Sen. Elizabeth Warren looking like one of the Furies, resembling a mother with a poker up her ass scolding her child. Below, another photo, this one of our President wearing a shit-eating grin that told the world he had just gotten laid.

I scrolled farther down.

I shouldn't've. I was met by Bernie, scowling, not the face anyone would choose to wake up to ... okay, maybe his wife, but she has to.

I clicked on WhatsApp; perhaps my publisher had sent me a message, as yesterday I had emailed him the proof-read copy of my novel. Nothing.

I saw there was an unread email. An acceptance for one of my stories? The email looked promising: "We enjoyed reading your words ...." Not a good beginning. Words? Not 'your story'? I continued reading: "While ...." I stopped. I didn't have to read further; another 'unfortunately' letter.

I patted the bed covers, as Roma, my playful cat, usually slept with me. But she wasn't on the bed, nor had she been all night. Where was she, and where had she been?

I jumped out of bed. Not a good idea. I have neuropathy causing vertigo. I stumbled, hit the night table beside my bed and knocked over my 18th century blanc de Chine lamp which came crashing down on the hardwood floor. At that moment, I wished I had laid down softwood flooring as my 18th century Chinese vase was now in pieces.

I needed to unwind and cheer up. I asked Alexa to play songs by Edith Piaf, my favorite singer. "Non, je ne regrette rien". Exactly what I needed. It took me back more than 60 years, to lunch with Marc and Vava Chagall in Saint-Paul-de-



Vence. During lunch, Marc asked me, “Qu-est ce que tu veux pendant ta vie?” I didn’t hesitate to answer, “J’espère que je ne regretterai rien.”

While Piaf sang I began searching for Roma. I looked in my bathroom where I keep her litter box in the shower. She wasn’t there. I went to my study; she often lies beside my chair. No Roma. I next walked to the kitchen. In the morning she’ll sit there, waiting for the wet food I feed her. She wasn’t waiting ... but I heard her little cry. I looked, and there she was, on the heated floor of the conservatory.

“What are you doing here?” I asked as I petted her.

“Meow,” she said.

“Do you want some food?”

“Meow.”

“No? What, then?” She looked away. I followed her eyes.

A mouse.

During the night I had become second-fiddle to a mouse in Roma’s life.



## Love Skirmishes

Let's make war by making love,  
you proclaimed,  
provoking me,  
that spring afternoon  
by the sea.

We shot each other complicit glances,  
we recognized our battlefield,  
ready for a hand-to-hand fight,  
armed with tongues and lips,  
nails and teeth.

We advanced and retreated,  
without giving each other respite,  
conquering high ground and trenches  
until we both laid exhausted,  
mutually victorious,  
in a blissful embrace.

## **Sudden Accelerations, or I Hate to Say This but ...**

The white-capsule, white-pink-and-black  
box of Good & Plenty is  
no better or worse than the yellow-orange-  
brown Reese's Butter Cups wrapper.

In a circle of mint-green chairs  
each child, in turn, reads aloud  
from *Around the Corner*.  
The book's title seems a metaphor for fate,  
and the circle a circle of mortality.

Culture vulture that I am, I wonder  
if singer Pearl Bailey and actor Dorothy  
Dandridge knew each other. Google  
could tell, or a looker, listener  
who was alive when they were alive.

In the dark of my celibate room, I rise  
and shine, thinking I moved far away  
from the person I should have married,  
and the person I wanted to marry moved  
far away from me.

Within these walls, Bill,  
who was in lumber, passed away, and Carl,  
a handwriting expert, settled.  
I wonder if either, or both, ever admired  
the beauty of leopards.

The dark underbelly of humanity lies  
behind the sunny skies of filmmaker David  
Lynch's Blue Velvet, and Mulholland Drive.

One night, on a riverbank, it was still  
light outside, I rubbed red-green leaves  
from a poison ivy bush on my arms.  
I wonder, have you ever bitten into tinfoil,  
say, from a gum wrapper?

Dana was walking and fell through ice.  
He got out of the freezing water,  
and to a phone booth and called his mother.  
That happened after the night of Anselm  
Hollo's poetry reading. Hollo said,  
"Anything can be a poem." Dana, sitting  
next to me, said, quietly, "If it's good."

When musician John Coltrane did an album  
with vocals, he chose Johnny Hartman,  
whose voice is as smooth as water poured  
from a decanter into a glass,  
and whose life was ill-fated, due to an excess  
of alcohol, according to Wikipedia.

The sound of dice shaking in a cup,  
a sequence of soft clunks, is pleasant,  
though I'll be damned if I can recall  
my hand shaking such a cup.

Have you ever stuck your fingers  
in a bowling ball,  
or petted a mare's mane, or been bitten  
on the back of a leg by a Wheaton  
while mowing a lawn?

Note money's similarities: Abraham Lincoln on a five-dollar bill, Alexander Hamilton on a ten. Both names start with a and end with n; both men died from being shot by pistols, Lincoln from behind in a theater; Hamilton in a duel on a promontory above a river.

Have you ever sat in a garden? I haven't,  
but I weed a small garden,  
shaped like a shield curved  
on one side, straight on the other,  
and, at the bottom, pointed. In my garden  
red roses, a stone throw a brown milk box.

Weeding a garden is like writing a song  
or a poem. The poet Stanley Kunitz,  
in Provincetown, tended a garden.  
Its array of colors and blooms  
startled passersby.

I wish I could act as well as Barbara Payton,  
the femme fatale in James Cagney's film  
Kiss Tomorrow Goodbye.

Google could tell me the name of glass  
with diamond patterns in it,  
that you can see yourself in,  
like the two glass doors of a big brown  
cadenza I saw myself in,  
when I was nearer a floor than I am.

Face the invisible mirror, I tell myself.  
The person I should have married  
was blond and easy to get along with;  
the person I wanted to marry  
was brunette and hard to get along with.  
Boxing fan that I am, I remember Emile  
Griffith and Benny Paret. Griffith, years  
after their third, fatal match in the ring,  
said, "I couldn't get along with myself."

On the baseball diamond, shortstop  
Luis Aparicio  
tosses the ball to Nellie Fox,  
who fires it to first  
to get the out that ends the game.





## The Hermit Observes

Living alone, monkish, I've no need  
to lock my doors against the coming night.  
The birds of Spring nest where they please,  
iris and peony coming near.  
The neighbor's cat, my only visitor,  
uses my fresh turned garden.  
Across the flood plain headlights blink  
between the trees on off on off going home.

## Trip Advisor

Here came the ocean sneaking back  
after pulling out yesterday with no so longs  
We will ignore its obvious infidelities  
Sol the dehumidifier and Luna the water magnet  
have worked together to create Thursday  
and given the visiting eyes on the balcony  
a glimpse of the cosmic flywheel everyone  
will then go down to breakfast reassured

\*\*\*

## To This Waiting

I brought a book a moth at the window  
coffee heated by red spirals  
light wrapped inside a little twisted bulb  
I brought patient expectation to a grid of tiles  
spider head down as if six thirty  
appliances assembled in rapt silence  
the book so poignant its pages were tissues  
in anticipation

\*\*\*

## Michelangelo Variation

If his figures awaited release from rock  
then angels were probably already in the paint  
It was just a matter of brushing them out of the bristles  
and into the air above the apotheosis

\*\*\*

## Olympic

How to enter the water like passing through glass  
without disturbing the surface a loving limitation  
a perfected falling the simple parameters of height  
and surface and how many twists between them  
ending in tens and a kiss of no particular nationality

\*\*\*

## Texts

Writing is a hand book hand hand in hand  
longhand taking hold of cursive like a rope  
A book of hours in Carolingian Minuscule  
testamentary evangelistic commemorative  
calligraphy on skins indexing memories

## Stand Tall

My front tooth  
    is recessed  
restless  
maybe it has someplace better to be  
like that  
inflamed balloon  
at the back of my throat.

It's scrawny  
small  
the kind of tooth  
bullied and poked  
and told to step back in line

I encourage it to  
Stand tall  
Be proud  
Strong  
Resilient

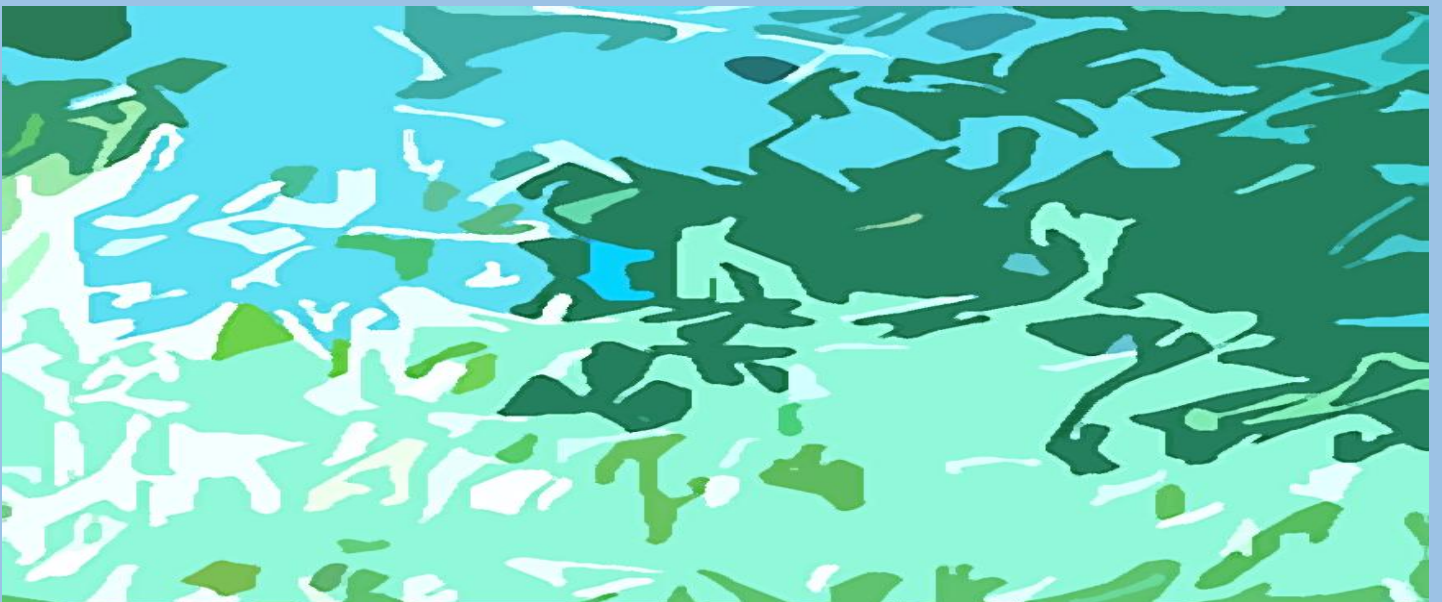
"Be yourself," I say.

And when you've hit the wall  
have the balls to  
shout "fuck it, I'm  
walking"

Peel yourself from the  
grey decay  
you're wrapped in

Hike the El Camino  
Climb Machu Picchu  
Drive an RV across the States,  
writing about how hard it is  
to dislodge yourself from  
your family, your friends, your dog.

And if you're lucky enough  
to be sprinkled with pixie dust,  
Don't sneeze  
Don't blow  
Inhale  
Snort  
Breathe  
Ride that high all day.



## Hundred-Acre Brook

Its blue line on the map begins amid  
close-together contour lines,  
at 1900 feet, miles from any trail.

Must be a spring up there.  
It'd be worth the bruises and scrapes  
of bushwhacking to find out.

This one joins Shannon Brook  
below the waterfalls. Afterward, it is all  
Shannon Brook—like a wife

taking her husband's last name,  
though still herself.  
One stream, then, down to the lake.

The goal of working backward  
to its source would be  
to know the brook, beginning to end:

its lifespan, so to speak.  
(Except that it still keeps on coming.)  
If I ever did locate the spring,

I would kneel to drink,  
and return refreshed for whatever day  
the sea will receive me.



## fire hall

i.

the man and dog are silhouettes  
black ghosts against cobalt  
trekking the high thin line  
of a reservoir horizon  
boundary water between ceded ground  
and inverted native soil

it's an invented sky  
free of crow and cloud  
small trees  
are instilled with imported birdsong

the man carries a walking stick  
the dog is unleashed  
stony banks  
bleed afterbirth of snow  
flushing into the creek below

power line derricks sprout  
like giant weeds  
like neo-totems that carry dominion  
in this age of loss

the old man's silhouette throws  
a frail shadow  
from his vantage he sees  
an invisible distant place  
like the moment before lightning flashes  
like white-collar thievery  
like a promise

the dog sniffs and runs and jumps  
carefree and agile

what was once hunted  
no longer cowers

ii.

the traffic hums on chiseled ground  
scuffing through scattered a-frames and ranch homes  
the sun was always restless  
the sacred dna: out-numbered

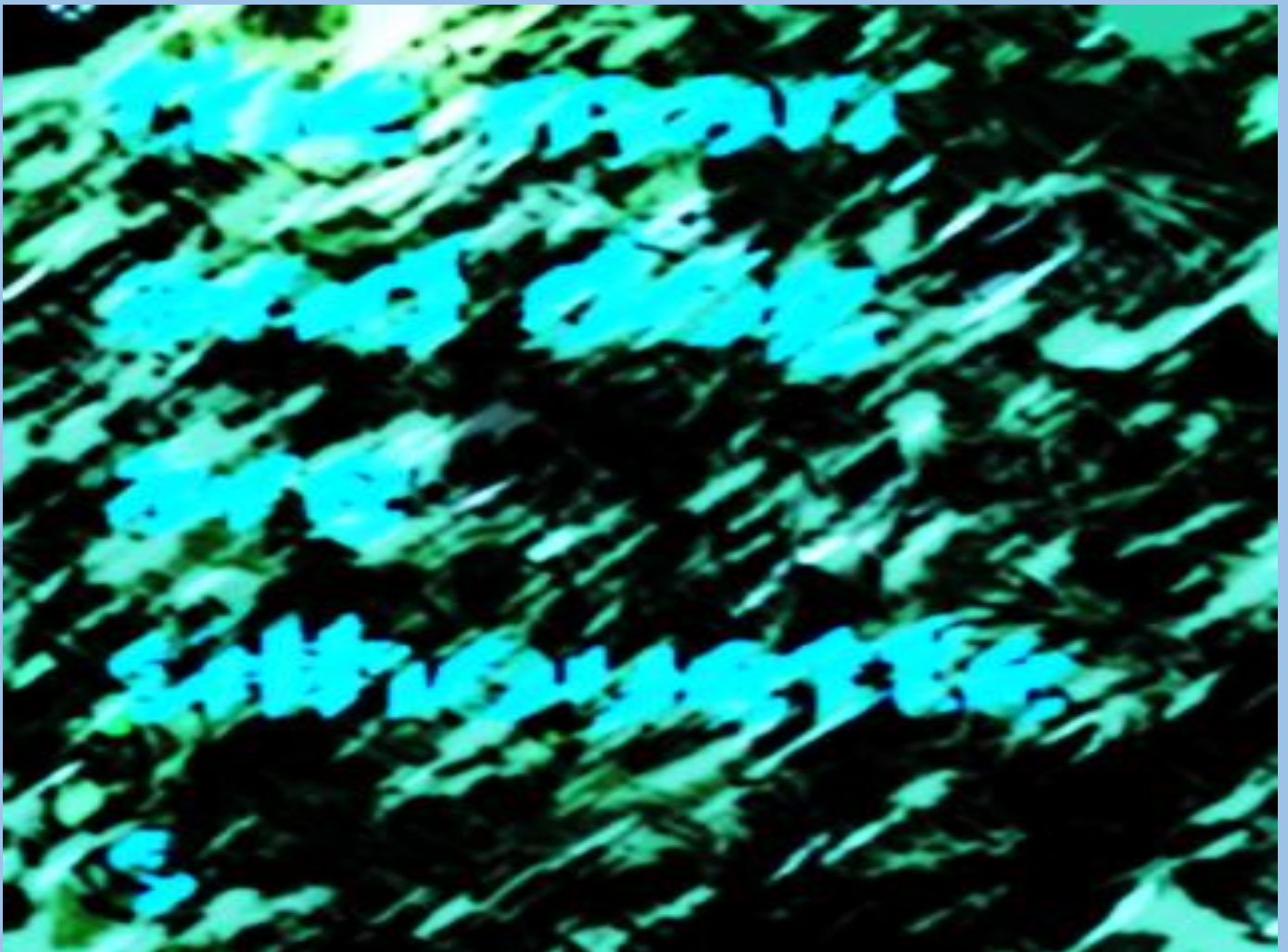
drenched in the color of our willingness  
tainting decay with flowers  
memory: a sacrificed intelligence

iii.

the silhouette floats  
disguised as a human being  
he steadies along with his veteran's limp  
and his walking stick  
the dog is as playful as the daylight allows

approaching the path below along the creek  
the old man whistles a song with  
a stolen melody  
then pulls a small coin from his pocket

drowns lincoln like a stray seed  
in an oily mud puddle  
a hope that will never germinate



# Roger Singer

---

## Pointing

motionless

staring at  
the cemetery  
she pointed  
to each that  
she once knew

one hand  
to her chest  
the other  
to block the sun  
as a gentle wind  
slipped over  
green leaves  
touching her hair

### **waiting for the bus at the world's edge**

i stand, rain tasting like unanswered prayers. behind, the station groans, its peeling paint a wound too ancient to mend. i wait, knowing the bus a lie. then, he arrives, a man assembled from some malignant elsewhere, his suit too clean for this squalor. cruel slits for eyes pierce the void. a stagnant puddle mirrors us. that's when it sees me, and i it—the thousand-eyed, thousand-mouthed thing, clawing at a non-existent door. an impossibility made real. i try to scream, but silence, iron-heavy, chokes my voice. the man smiles, a chasm splitting the earth, a smile that bleeds the sky. he nods, not to me, but to the rising thing, its hunger primordial. he breathes dust, bone, the air before the world's end. i watch. the thing emerges, slick skin pulling free like a lost nightmare, teeth gleaming in the gloom. i am paralyzed, mute. it grows, limbs elongated and warped. i blink. the puddle, the thing, the man—vanished. the street is empty. only the iron taste lingers, a swallowed secret.

## I Know That My Redeemer Liveth

The hour is announced short,

Westminster Chimes missing  
a middling B, ringing

in our heads, remembered,  
duller, less loud,  
than the struck G,F, and E

No one is fashionable today.  
The count comes in too soon,  
off-beat; vanities burn  
out of time, in the difference,

smoke

the color of lungs  
drying, sucking  
raw air between buildings,

history breach born

before the first chime  
of the series on a fixed scale  
of what must be noon.



**we were both nickelodeon kids**

perhaps both the stoop kids,  
the squids and fillburts of  
our generation. asked by classmates  
why we're *so quiet* but deadpan existentialists  
in our real worlds, when the uniform  
sheds and we stare into the  
glowing portal of somewhere else  
from the sanctuary of our beds.  
*you cope with humor*, he tells me  
as we couch-lock and doom-scroll  
together in harmony.  
in therapy, i learn that my inner  
child is being silenced and exiled  
by all the other parts of me,  
the drinker, the judge,  
the caretaker, the obsessor—  
my therapist tells me  
*there are no bad parts* in me,  
while i wonder if she was a disney  
kid or a cartoon network kid,  
leaps and bounds different  
views on the world  
(especially those courage  
the cowardly dog kids).  
my inner child may be in exile  
from myself, but his can see  
mine through a heart's glued-together  
pieces. they find each other somewhere  
among all the adults in the room

and sneak away to a pillow fort  
with cinnamon toast crunch and  
reruns and laughing and—

somewhere else we're still waiting  
to know if we'll ever leave the stoop.



## A Simple wine reduction of the muse

You wish  
for something  
smoother warmer  
than hands  
with velvet gloves  
to run over legs  
wilder than hips.  
For once  
she's willing  
and tongues  
run along roads  
forking in every  
direction.

## He's Not My Dad's Friend

Uncle Li's yellow teeth flashed through the stainless-steel gate to our apartment as I opened it. Every time he came, he'd tell his wife he was visiting a friend.

In his hand was a bulging red plastic bag. Through its translucent layer, I saw apples pressed together, forming a heart shape, and bananas tracing wavy lines. But these weren't the fresh fruits from the market; they were unsellable ones from his store.

I didn't like his fruits—the banana peel was covered in tiny black spots, overripe and tired, the apples were dotted with brown spots, sour to the taste and soft, losing their crispness, and the oranges' skins were wrinkled, their once-plump moisture gone.

I took the bag and turned toward the kitchen. As I removed the imperfect parts, the fruits made a fine fruit salad. Mom told me not to be picky about Uncle Li's fruit—they were better than the packaged and neatly cut supermarket fruits. Those, too, were no longer fresh but presented in their best form.

Mom's eyes curved into crescents, her smile holding the sparkle of stars. She wore crimson lipstick, green tea-scented perfume, and her favorite red dress. I knew it was time to return to my studies.

In the living room, Teresa Teng's song flowed like a gentle river, the melody of *The Moon Represents My Heart* drifting through the air. I didn't need to open the door to see they were waltzing. Before Dad got sick, I'd never seen Mom dance. She said Dad didn't like her dancing; he didn't like many things about her. Yet, he encouraged me to learn Latin dance, no matter how hard it rained, he always took me to the studio. Whenever they fought in the living room, with the sound of

breaking teacups filling the air, I'd dance the tango in my room. After he passed away, I stopped, but Mom's steps began to move, with Uncle Li.

The numbers in my math textbook moved across the paper, infected by the melody. I put down my pen and walked toward the door, opening it a crack.

The oak table was pushed aside, now resting against the edge of the sofa. The curtains were drawn. Mom had turned off the ceiling-mounted lamp and switched on the recessed lights. Under the warm yellow light, everything looked cozy, tender.

"Today is my birthday," Mom whispered as she twirled.

"Wish you're happy every day."

"Can you stay a little longer?" She looked into his eyes.

He held her tightly, one hand caressing her back. "My wife will become suspicious."

They continued to spin with the music, Teresa Teng's voice echoing in the air: "You ask me how deep my love for you is, how much I love you..." Mom rested her head on his chest and closed her eyes.

I picked up a slice of apple with a toothpick. It made a crisp sound between my teeth, and the sweet juice burst on my tongue. Surprisingly, it was delicious.

## Contributors

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**Azure Brandi** graduated from NYU. Publication history: “Style” in *New Croton Review*’s Spring 2023 Volume; “You Can Deny” in *October Hill Magazine*’s Winter 2024 Issue; “Persona as Art” in *Virgo Venus Press*. Forthcoming: “The Currents” in *The Underground* Volume 30; “On Beauty” in *Afterimages* by Thirty West Publishing House; “Earl” in *Alien Buddha Zine* #76; “Bowie Effect in Blue” in *Soup Can Magazine*.

**Jeff Burt** lives in Santa Cruz County, California, with his wife. He has contributed previously to *Big Windows Review*, *Willows Wept Review*, *Heartwood*, and *Williwaw Journal*.

**Alan Catlin** has a new book out, *Landscapes of the Exiled from Dos Madres*. Coming soon, a new long poem *Unattended* from Cyberwit and Work Anxiety Poems from Roadhouse. *His Still Life with Apocalypse* will be published by Shelia na gig Editions in 2026.

**Lynne Curry**, Ph.D., is the author of “Real-life Writing,” <https://bit.ly/45INbVo> ; “Writing from the Cabin,” <https://bit.ly/3tazJpW> ; [www.workplacecoachblog.com](http://www.workplacecoachblog.com) ; Navigating Conflict: Tools for Difficult Conversations (<https://amzn.to/3rCKoWj> ; Managing for Accountability: A Business Leader’s Toolbox (<https://bit.ly/3T3vww8>); Beating the Workplace Bully: A Tactical Guide to Taking Charge (<https://amzn.to/3msclOW>) and Solutions 911/411, (<https://amzn.to/3ueSeXX>)

**Jakima Davis** has been writing for almost 25 years. She’s been published in underground publications such as “The PEN,” “Big Hammer,” “Marymark Press” and many more. She has also been involved in mainstream publications such as “Hanging Loose,” “Trajectory,” and “Iconoclast.” She’s had poems translated into German, Portuguese, and Spanish; she’s posting her poems on Facebook to gain a fanbase.



**Marco Etheridge** is a writer, occasional playwright, and part-time poet. He writes in Vienna, Austria. His work has appeared in one hundred and fifty reviews across Canada, Australia, the UK, and the USA. He is an editor for *Hotch Potch Literature and Art*. Author website: <https://www.marcoetheridgefiction.com/>

**Jesse Hamilton** writes, "I am a writer from Michigan who enjoys dabbling in many genres and going wherever the ideas take me. I have only been writing prose for a few years, and have only been published in a few small publications, but I aim to keep finding my voice and experimenting with it."

**William Heath** has published four poetry books: *The Walking Man*, *Steel Valley Elegy*, *Going Places*, *Alms for Oblivion*; three chapbooks: *Night Moves in Ohio*, *Leaving Seville*, *Inventing the Americas*; three novels: *The Children Bob Moses Led* (winner of the Hackney Award), *Devil Dancer*, *Blacksnake's Path*; a history, *William Wells and the Struggle for the Old Northwest* (winner of two Spur Awards and the Oliver Hazard Perry Award); a book of interviews, *Conversations with Robert Stone*. He received a Lifetime Achievement Award from Hiram College. He lives in Annapolis. [www.williamheathbooks.com](http://www.williamheathbooks.com)

**Erren Kelly** writes, "I am a Two-Time Pushcart nominated poet from Lynn, Massachusetts . I have been writing for 32 years and have over 300 publications in print and online in such publications Hiram Poetry Review, Mudfish, Poetry Magazine(online), Ceremony, Cacti Fur, Bitterzoet, Cactus Heart, Similar Peaks, Gloom Cupboard, Poetry Salzburg and other publications. My most recent publication was in Pyrokinetion Literary journal; I have also been published in anthologies such as "Fertile Ground," and Beyond The Frontier." My work can also be seen on You Tube under the "Gallery Cabaret," links. I am also the author of the book, "Disturbing The Peace," on Night Ballet Press. I received my B.A. in English-Creative Writing from Louisiana State University in Baton Rouge. I also love to read and I love to travel, having visited 45 states and Canada and Europe. The themes in my writings vary, but I have always had a soft spot for subjects and people who are not in the mainstream."

**Robert S. King**, Athens GA, is cofounder of FutureCycle Press. His poems appear widely, including *Chariton Review*, *Kenyon Review*, *Midwest Quarterly*, and

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**Tom Laichas** is author most recently of *Three Hundred Streets of Venice California* (FutureCycle Press, 2023). His work has appeared or is forthcoming in the *Hawai'i Pacific Review*, *The Los Angeles Times*, *Plume*, *The Moth* (Ireland), the *Irish Times*, *BarBar*, and elsewhere. He lives in Venice, California.

**E. P. Lande**, born in Montreal, has lived in the south of France and now, with his partner, in Vermont, writing and caring for more than 100 animals. Previously, as a Vice-Dean, he taught at l'Université d'Ottawa, and he has owned and managed country inns and free-standing restaurants. Since submitting less than three years ago, more than 100 his stories — many auto-fiction — and poems have found homes in publications on all continents except Antarctica. His story "Expecting" has been nominated for Best of the Net. His debut novel, "Aaron's Odyssey", a gay-romantic-psychological thriller, has recently been published in London.

**Marcelo Medone** (1961, Buenos Aires, Argentina) is a medical doctor, Pushcart Prize, and Best Small Fictions nominee fiction writer, poet, essayist, journalist, playwright, and screenwriter. He received numerous awards and was published in multiple languages in more than 50 countries around the world, including the US. He currently lives in Montevideo, Uruguay.

**Peter Mladinic's** most recent book of poems, *Maiden Rock*, is available from UnCollected Press.

**Ben Onachila** is a trail runner, avid gardener and reader. He is the author of two chapbooks with the Orchard St. Press, *Homecoming* and *Anubis Stands Close By*. His poems have most recently appeared in *Quiet Diamonds*, *Creosote*, *Abandoned Mine*, *Heart*, and are forthcoming in *Trajectory*. He lives in Pisgah Forest, N.C.

Poet and visual artist **Allan Peterson's** most recent book is *This Luminous, New and Selected Poems* (Panhandler Books). A recipient of the Juniper Prize and an NEA

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**Doug Raphael** practices architecture in Halifax, Nova Scotia, where he lives with his three children, wife, and Wheaten Terrier. He has been published in “Studio East 94-95” (Dalhousie University Press), “The Affordable Homes Program” (McGill School of Architecture) and “Planning Housing For Change” (McGill Affordable Homes Program). He is currently enrolled in the creative writing program at Dalhousie University and is struggling to figure out how to make writing a full-time gig.

**Russell Rowland** writes from New Hampshire’s Lakes Region, where he has judged high-school Poetry Out Loud competitions. His work appears in *Except for Love: New England Poets Inspired by Donald Hall* (Encircle Publications), and *Covid Spring*, Vol. 2 (Hobblebush Books). His own poetry books, *Wooden Nutmegs* and *Magnificat*, are available from Encircle Publications.

**Dan Sicoli** lives between two Great Lakes in New York State where he co-edits *Slipstream*. He will have a new poetry collection out from Ethel Press in 2026. Recently he’s had poems included in *Abandoned Mine*, *BlazeVOX*, *Evening Street Review*, *Hellbender*, *Hobo Camp Review*, *Home Planet News*, *Loch Raven Review*, *Ranger*, *Rye Whiskey Review*, and *San Pedro River Review*, among numerous others. On weekends he beats on an old Gibson in a local garage rock band. <[www.pw.org/directory/writers/dan\\_sicoli](http://www.pw.org/directory/writers/dan_sicoli)>

Dr. **Roger Singer** is the Poet Laureate of Old Lyme, Connecticut. He has had over 1,000 poems published on the internet, magazines, and in books and is a 2017 Pushcart Prize Award Nominee. He is also the President of the Shoreline Chapter of the Connecticut Poetry Society.

**Marvin Smith** is a poet from Ohio. He prefers to let his work speak louder than his bio. His poetry is inspired by the absurd, the uncanny, and silence.

**Matt Thomas** is a smallholder farmer, engineer, and poet. His recent work can be found in *Ponder Review*, *The Thieving Magpie*, and *Common House*. *Disappearing*

*by the Math*, a full-length collection, was published by Silver Bow in 2024. *Cicada, Dog & Song*, a second full-length collection, will be published by Serving House Books in 2026. He lives with his family in the Blue Ridge Mountains of Virginia.

Writer, professor, and dancer, **jessie caitlin ventulan** (she/they) resides in Southern California with their partner and kitty. In addition to writing poetry, they write fiction, study ballet and contemporary dance, fangirl over drag queens and professional wrestlers, and enjoy making soups and cakes.

**Richard Weaver** volunteers with the Maryland Book Bank, CityLights, and the Baltimore Book Festival. In his spare time, he's the official writer-in-residence at the James Joyce Pub in Baltimore. Previously, he was an Assistant Professor at the 3rd oldest Jesuit College, where he taught in the English Department and was the Head of Library Circulation, and acting Archivist. His first published poem appeared in *Poetry* magazine, April 1975. In his less-than-spare time he reads for *Slant* magazine.

**Huina Zheng** is a college essay coach and an editor. Her stories appear in *Baltimore Review*, *Variant Literature*, and more. Nominated three times for both the Pushcart Prize and Best of the Net, she lives in Guangzhou, China, with her family.







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