

Gyroscope Review

Fine poetry to turn your world around

Issue 17-3
Summer 2017



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Constance Brewer & Kathleen Cassen Mickelson
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FROM THE EDITORS

I have to admit I'm not much of a political poet. I can't respond with poetry in the heat of the moment. It's not who I am. By the time I have something to say on a subject, months and sometimes years have passed. Maybe that's okay. Maybe some of us need time to absorb, ruminate, and comprehend. Maybe the initial anger turns into a slow burn. I don't think it ever goes away. It just mutates and reappears in poems when you least expect it. I felt the stirring of those feelings when I read the poems we assembled for this quarter's issue. Poets had something to say on the political chasms and cataclysms. Poets are not accepting the status quo, and that gives me hope. And inspiration.

The poems in this issue are pointed and heartfelt and outraged. A feeling of loss permeates many lines, but with it comes hope, and resolution. The people are not going to fade quietly into the sunset. They're going to crank up the volume to deafening and play until change occurs. They're going to tear down the walls. I can learn a lot from these poets. Turn it on, turn it up, and always let people know how you feel. So read on for the future. A positive future we can build together.

- Constance Brewer, Editor

I confess to a massive amount of delight with the poems we saw at *Gyroscope Review* for our summer issue reading period. There was some gelling of ideas and reactions to all the world's insanity that gave an edge to much of what my co-editor Constance and I decided to publish. There has been enough time since the election of Donald Trump for reactions to stew into thoughtful responses, for poets to really consider what is going on not just in the US but all over the world as the divisions between left and right, liberal and conservative, labor and corporations grow ever sharper. The chasm between those who define success as monetary gain and those who use other measures deepens daily, and the canyon between tolerance and intolerance broadens into utterly desolate terrain.

Amidst the seemingly universal messiness, my delight is with the responses of our poets to all of it. I'm delighted with the way skilled poets, among other artists, craft heartfelt reactions/reflections for the audience to consider, how poetry offers the chance to be part of a vast wake-up call. I'm delighted with poets who choose to remain in the difficult conversations that occasionally boil over, the same ones that elicit a Trump Tweet storm or push Theresa May to call an early election that then backfires. The poets in this issue take on war, climate change, trade relations, Everyman's economic distress. They explore pain, unfairness, irresponsibility, and loss. But they also explore hope in the form of our feelings toward one another, the sun's daily reappearance, our grasp on memories that sustain us, and the continuation of our species. These poets are not going to let hope die.

For me, current events and art are inseparable. Even though we have our fair share of poems that offer escape from the daily news, we would be remiss if we failed to include those who take it on. This summer, the 50th anniversary of the Summer of Love, maybe it's time to reconsider how we tune in and what we tune out. But let's not drop out. Let's work for a better world, one that spreads some love.

- *Kathleen Cassen Mickelson, Editor*

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POEMS

SECTION 1

VIEW FROM A BRIDGE

BY JAMES GRAHAM

Upstream, the imperceptible smooth flow
becomes a carnival of penny waterfalls,
pouring as if from amphorae and ewers.
In the mind's eye, there are monsters.

*This is what happened at El Mozote.
the soldiers came in armoured cars.
They thought it was a rebel stronghold.
There were no rebels there. They locked*

The canopy of beeches, profligate and high,
admits the sunlight in brief pools and flickers,
and packs of hardy alders here and there
enhance the banks and guard them from the spate.

*the families in their homes, and left them
overnight, afraid. Then, in the morning,
they took the men outside and killed them.
After their midday meal, they raped*

Just below the bridge, the water
gathers at the rim of a rough circle,
tumbles, makes little waves that wane
towards the centre of a mirror-pool.

*the women. They bragged about some
schoolgirls they especially enjoyed.
They shot the women. Then one by one
they slit the children's throats.*

I see myself in the mirror-pool. The sky
is far below. I wave. I see myself wave back.
This wandering river is clean, but does not
wash the pooling blood from the mind's eye.

GRENDL'S MOTHER

BY SALLY ZAKARIYA

*At night that lake
Burns like a torch. No one knows its bottom,
No wisdom reaches such depths. – Beowulf*

She sometimes relives the birth,
the watery bed beneath the lake,
the deep pain,
the fear and love and guilt,
the hopeless hope that somehow
her son would prevail.

She sometimes envies that other mother,
the one whose son killed Grendel with
his bare hands,
tore the arm throbbing from his body.

Schooled in rage and jealousy, her own
boy had no ordinary childhood –
ripped rats apart to drink their blood
and feed the hate that deepened
as he grew.

She sometimes wonders what she
could have done,
if she could have taught him love,
and yet her own wrath at his death
says otherwise.

Nameless in her fury, incandescent
in her rage, she sets the lake ablaze,
awaits the mighty Northman –
brave Beowulf,
king and hero, slayer of monsters.

He strikes, she falls, joins her Grendel
in death at last.

Who mourns the unnamed mother,
who seeks revenge as she did, who
remembers her as something more
than water witch?

Yet would we not all fight and die
for even our most wicked child.

HERE COMES THE STORM

BY OONAH JOSLIN

The air is green
a thick translucence clings like sweat.
It sounds green,
muffled heavy multi-layered like wet
sheets of paper.
It smells green in a mossy way
and every leaf is limp with expectation.

Roses close.
Birds quit their song.
There's hush.
The next door cat returns to base.
It won't be long.

It won't be long before the first
longed for drop plips to ground
and in seeming slow motion
too laden to move fast,
raises dust.

It won't be long before the brattle
splits the cloud,
lights the garden purple.

A sudden fork
impresses itself upon the retina;
a cataract has been
removed from the soul
by the sudden operation of a storm.

POEM SAVED FOR PARTS

BY LYNDI BELL O'LAUGHLIN

A woman sits on a bucket in Sudan,
one arm a cradle,
while the other waves flies
from the sweet mucous feast
of a baby's infected eyes,
and the woman's ears
are ringing a sound
that sloshes back and forth
like a tangle of seaweed under a pier,
and isn't it a shame that
sound makes such poor soup,
except in a Whole Foods
where Alabama Shakes
plays fresh in the background
and another woman is looking for a
twenty five dollar dry skin brush,
happy to be reminded
how in-season the kale is.
Meanwhile, the officers have determined
the subject was shot
right there on Denver Avenue,
providing an excellent instruction
in the unexpected
to Mrs. Carmichael's third grade class
who happened to be looking on
from the windows of a stopped van,
and a dog in the alley around the corner
licks dry ketchup from a McDonald's
wrapper behind a pharmacy dumpster
that has, since he returned from Iraq,
served as a meeting place for Doug Blake
and his friends. Good thing intention
carries such a disproportionate share
of redemption. Makes us feel really good,
about how bad we feel about breaking things,
how sorry we are,
that we won't water the garden.

THE EXHUMED

BY SUSAN L. LEARY

for the patients of the Mississippi State Lunatic Asylum, established 1855

It seems as though Mississippi
has gone mad:
because in a few months when the ground
has softened
and all the well-adjusted nineteen and twenty-somethings
have gone home for summer,
in their place will rise from unknown tombs
all the shaven heads:
the maimed,
the sent away, the misunderstood in their filthy
gowns—7,000 of them,
disquieted by the dirt, screaming
for their mothers.
And what will come of passersby,
those who have come to walk with coffee back to their offices
after a pleasing lunch?
They will make history.
They will hold scissors.
They will stand on steps with white teeth, cutting ribbon.
But what of a ceremony for the dead,
for the unnamed,
for those whose mouths were shoved with rags so their own teeth
would not bite their tongues?
Give them this land.
Give them their mothers.
Let this grass be what life can grow from the sterile
halls of the asylum.

CEMENT MIXERS

BY JENNY MCBRIDE

They're standing in front of the clinic
Big and wide as ignorance
Two men with signs spelling
Patriarchy in large letters
Clanking with insults.

The woman climbs out of a van
Where her husband and three small children
Give her a wealth of family.
“Jesus! God! Baby! Holocaust!”
Yell the men from the curb
But the veiled woman knows
They mean her harm.

A cement mixer rumbles
Down the four-lane road
Shaking everything in its path
With a senseless roar
While it slowly spins the final paste
That will suffocate another
Breathing bit of Earth.

The mother and her teenager
Have a crucifix dangling from
The rear view mirror.
The girl pulls her hood so tight
Around her innocent face
It's like a burqa.
“God! Killing! Doctor! Regret!”
Howl the dozer men
But the girl ducks in the door
To save her life.

Another cement mixer,
It's logo spinning dyslexically,
Races past on its way
To seal out the bees or the trees
Or anything that might try
To live its own life.

The two men stand and rumble.
In their bellies churn
The flesh of innocent animals
They call breakfast.

They belch poison gas
To gag the women
Whose demand is to make their own decisions.

BLAST RADIUS

BY T.J. SMITH

Null-point and everything has already always been connected.
To depict is to glorify. To ignore is to be damned. Forward then
The tongue probes senselessly the wet red absence of enamel
To the quick. In this there is no augury of peace.

When the bomb goes off the pressure is enough
To shatter teeth into an opalescent dust.
Are you imagining it now? This pleasure
Is reserved for you alone. Truthfully

No sieve is fine enough to isolate this shining
From the rubble. No attempt will be made
To reconstruct an identifying record,

You alone will feel it, in your mouth
On the other side of the world,
A cold dull ache behind your teeth.

SOMETIMES A BODY IS JUST A BODY

BY MARY SESSO

Breasts don't write to cancer and say I wish you were here, but if bone marrow grows bored, don't think it won't pump itself up and dance, attracting curious cancer cells that will stop by uninvited.

Feeling melancholy is not a sin as long as you do penance by rescuing moonbeams dead-ended on your pillow.

Heap imagination around you, sit in its lap and don't let age wear it out.

Hypochondriacs wrap their arm around their complaints. The complaints put on blue eye shadow, pearl earrings and dream they're the life of the party.

Capture images playing tag with your sleep and then let them stretch and run in every direction.

I want to teach my body patience when my muscles get mad at me for not moving but all I want to do is sit all day inhabiting a poem.

Bodies are not created equal. Some break out in a sweat looking at an unfinished poem. Some break out in a sweat when a blank piece of paper pulls their eyes into a garden where there is no rain.

Sometimes a body is just a place to live.

MELTING NORTH

BY STEVE KLEPETAR

Away from the quickly melting north,
away from the crack of craters tearing
open on scarred and sacred ground,
we wander with tears of sleep
still in our eyes. Through the night
we burned, shadows of a fever,
or an afterimage left by a silver sun
on the torn skin of sky.
We burned until our bed sheets melted
and our blankets were consumed.
We burned above blue ice,
and glaciers poured away as we advanced,
fire in our touch
and everywhere the rising sea.
We woke in pillars of flame,
finding our faces rippling on surfaces
of glass, fearing that our bodies
had turned to breath, to smoke,
that bone and flesh could mingle
and rise, insubstantial as a cricket trapped
in a jar, tossed on the lakeshore by careless boys.

BLANK PAGE

BY MIKE JURKOVIC

It's been a while since I
started w/a blank page.
So often
there's bullshit
from poems past
awaiting mitigation.

Crooked thumbs.
Protestant mist.
What words I collect
to say nothing
you haven't heard or
already know and
have accepted as
the bone forensics
of the human condition
and moved on.

Knee deep in our cultural moss,
soldiers blow up.
Rebuild.
Blow-up.
Rebuild and
still the rat's nest reigns.
Which must be what Einstein meant
by insanity being
the business of repetition.

There goes the pursuit of happiness
you might say but I'd say
the show is just beginning
because I wake up each day
wired and ready
to torch a senator's home.
Make his wife
as unsafe as mine and see
if he changes
his mind.
Her mind.

They all suck,
no matter the gender
they live or deny.

Speaking of imperial decay,
did you know nearly
ninety-four percent
of American flags
come from China?
No shit. I kid you not.
I may be off
a percentage or two
but that's my
margin of error.

So take it
or leave it
I'm lenient that way.
I didn't mean
to bust your balls
but that's how
this one
turned out.
I lost its theme
stanzas back
and sometimes
you gotta
free fall
before
the smoke clears
and the Potemkin Village
falls to ruin.

“DO THE HEAVENS YET HATE THEE THAT THOU CAN’ST NOT GO MAD?”

—HERMAN MELVILLE, *MOBY-DICK*

BY ACE BOGGESS

It’s okay to play the role of Yorick in young Hamlet’s formative years,
but once you’ve been a skull schooled in slowness,
don’t poke eyes above the ground,
mad with laughter that comes across as silence
in your long, steady art. We fall apart,
down, to pieces—each of us—at least once in our lives.
Stress on the job, a cheating lover burning with delight,
drink & drugs, bills that can’t be paid & must—we slip
into our crazy shoes, then dance. Next: a lifelong ban.
No one wants a two-time flake digging up the roses with his teeth,
reeking of easy wine, sour orange, blood staining
his cuticles & the corners of his eyes.

THROWING THE BONES

BY LYNDI BELL O'LAUGHLIN

It's early in the morning,
in that drowsy space where
one is not limited
by gravity or conscience,
before the light casts herself
onto a single blade of grass,
and I lie here in bed thinking
about things like that first spark,
I mean, what set it off,
that first little flare that was me?

I imagine I began with a couple misfires,
click, click, spark, like that,
and I don't think love had much
to do with it, parents both barely
old enough to have lost
their palmar grasp reflex,
but once I took hold,
there seems no end to the curiosities I
can see from my perch in the cheap seats;
kidney markets, nipple rings, trickle-down economics,

although it did take awhile to realize
that there will be no figuring it out,
ever,
that there are a lot of words
and a lot of feelings,

but you never know if
you have them in the right order
until it's too late,
in the same way a palm tree planted
in the spring in Greenland
might feel just fine,
through that first summer.

I know a guy who told me
once that life is simple,
We are born, he said,

*a certain amount of time goes by
while we dangle from
a rear view mirror
like a pair of giant velvet dice,
then we die.*

I think it odd that a surgeon
who spends his days same as a mechanic,
only with latex gloves,
could view human life that way.

Doesn't he notice the red pearls
that fall to the floor
when he slices someone stem to stern?
The scholar and prostitute;
the arrogant splatter of the philosopher,
droplets of lover,
the confused drag marks of the exile.
What's all that? I asked him.
Pictures and words, he said,
refusing to bring feeling into
the discussion at all, and
I wanted to set him on fire,
click, click, spark.

Afterwards, dig his bones
out of the ashes,
just the phalanges.

IN THE WAITING ROOM

BY HOLLY DAY

He comes into the lobby holding the little plastic bag
knuckles white and tight
as though he doesn't ever want to let it go.
He drops it on the receptionist's desk

like a lion dropping the broken body of its cub
after some horrible accident, some catastrophic mauling
face contorted in resolution and anger
dismay and confusion. From where I'm sitting
in the back of the room with the other happily fat, pregnant women
reading magazines about breastfeeding and diaper technology
I can see just enough of the tiny gray body inside the bag
the parts not wrapped in white tissue paper

one thin arm, impossibly small and delicate
a perfect little foot
no blood.

"The doctor asked me to bring this in," he says loudly
challenging the look of dismay on the receptionist's face.
"She didn't pass it until this morning." The receptionist takes the bag
with one quick, practiced sweep, hiding it between her body and the wall
as she takes it in the back room for the doctor.
As she leaves, the man stares us all down
as a group
daring us to acknowledge his presence, his anguish,
daring us to recognize

pain.

HIS SKIN A GLEAMING RUST

BY MARISSA GLOVER

Issued a travel visa to a distant port,
I enter this man's fraternity of freckles,
knowing that it's dangerous for women
to trespass here—where flesh conspires—
knowing others lost their way long before
they were dashed against the rocks.

Navigating currents with fingers, tongue,
tracing then tasting the reds and browns
burnt into too-white skin, a labyrinth
of damaged cells, pigment, hues—
I choose the concave of elbow, riding
the swell of bicep flecked by sun,
finding cobble lit in constellation,
a dangerous navigation.

His skin a gleaming rust of siren specks
that shift and dance on salted waves,
I'm dizzied in mandalas. Thrashing, gasping—
baptized without ceremony, I cry out
to trident gods and slip beneath the sea.

DISPOSSESSED

BY JAMES GRAHAM

They had good soil. The common Sun and rain
were generous, warmed their bright eyes and made
limbs strong and gentle. Their children
ran and climbed and tumbled. But good soil
is coveted. As if a thundering host had thrown
itself against them, fiery and murderous, their land
was taken by thieves: a cruel conquest
which in thieves' language is called purchase.
They were put to flight. The city rained
no mercies on them. They rested where the Sun
baked the hard ground, beside a smouldering
garbage heap; they were cast away. Now they live
in a rain-fed country, but have little water.
Power flows through cables; they must steal it.
Their homes are rigged from boxes and old iron.
The land is fertile; they are often hungry.
No more than a mile from wealth, their home
is an exoplanet, harsh, too distant from its star.

ELEVEN O'CLOCK
BY SALLY ZAKARIYA

*Antarctic Dispatches: Miles of ice collapsing
into the sea – New York Times, May 20, 2017*

Ice slides down the mountain
glaciers slide into the sea
ice shelves shear off
from the rock base
like opening zippers

If astronauts watch from space
they can see the lands
grow smaller, the seas
take over, the cities
inundated, the people
drown in their own
consumption

If they excavate
millennia from now
will they recognize
the species they unearth
will they name us
homo destructivus
homo irresponsibilis
homo suicidilis

PAY PHONE

BY CLAIRE SCOTT

first you need to find a pay phone
which isn't all that easy
since you just arrived yesterday &
can't see very well what with all this soot & smoke
& heat, OMG the heat
then you have to wait in a long line
there is plenty of time
snaking around the fire pits
every now and then tapping
the one in front of you with a bony finger
hurry up
there is no hurry here
you hope you have a few coins left
that your quarters didn't slip out of
your pocket into last night's putrid river
that Charon didn't steal them
when you were dozing
you shove the skeleton in front of you
hurry up
there is no hurry here
finally it is your turn/you dial the number
the number you have engraved on your heart/
or what is left of your heart
you wait for her to pick up
longing: to hear her voice
eager: to tell of your journey
missing her: terribly even though it has
been only a few hours since her cool hand
since her pleading eyes
what's that I can't hear you who is this must be a bad connection try again
she hangs up
you shuffle to the end of the line
hollow bones clacking

SECTION 2

TAXONOMY

BY MARIAN KAPLUN SHAPIRO

Leaf we call you. Blueberry.

Clover. Bee. Lake. Tree: Maple. Birch. Pine.

Woman, I call myself. She who loves you.

CROW MEASUREMENT

BY SALLY ZAKARIYA

Four crows spaced equally apart
on a cement wall by the restaurant,
their mental measurement seemingly
infallible, eight inches wing to wing,
no more, no less. I'd need a ruler
or a measuring tape to make sure,
but I'll trust the crows, having no
ruler at hand and little or no reliable
spatial reasoning myself, always
losing track and getting lost. I bet
crows never get lost. You see them
wheeling in the air, diving, soaring,
croaking throatily to each other,
maybe about space and how high
to fly or how far apart they should sit
on a wall or a wire or some other
crow-friendly spot or maybe even
about me and my odd earth-bound
admiration for their instinctive sense
of where they are and where they
should be. But wherever they are,
I'm pretty sure they know
it's the right place.

ALL THE LONG GONE DARLINGS

BY STEPY KAMEI

I considered earth

a mad miracle;

Observed her with black alacrity.

I now walk wary, in a
Nightfall frost.

Love is my haunt.

Halt.

I hoard honey in my heart.

I, his prisoner, considered my lover's gestures:
They poise and grieve as
Skinflint trees.

A misfortune like
Black figs, his
Darlings.

As he hived in my head, I said:

*Love is a nightfall frost.
Do I unbalance his heart?*

Now, no blind in my eye, I hurl all the chaste air, bound round

a flash like

love intact

Now, I go blind, as night's eclipse gnaws me through.

To purgatory
I go
Like a planet,
 my darlings.

To earth,
I go

Sourced from the following Sylvia Plath poems: *Pursuit, Street Song, Dialogue Between Ghost and Priest, Epitaph for Fire and Flower, The Beggar, Spider, Spinster, Crystal Gazer, November Graveyard, Black Rook In Rainy Weather, On the Plethora of Dryads, The Other Two, All the Dead Dears, Rhododendron*

FALLING THROUGH CLOUDS

BY STEVE KLEPETAR

*“I stood fast where the whole world might see
my hands’ utter emptiness”*

Neruda

The woman who fell through clouds
opened her hands to wind:

she drifted on currents woven from shreds of song.
She held nothing but the thread of her life

wound around palms and thumbs.
Thoughts buzzed past her eyes, her hair

streamed with memories and rain.
How often she had spoken her favorite word,

carved it with a pen into the flesh of her arms.
How often she had floated into the mind of a bird

sailing the river, losing itself among leaves.
She sought cold waters draining through caves.

She taught her daughters to make bread from stones
crushed fine, to rub tables with oil. The women sing.

Lights ignite the evening sky, or so it seems when
windows darken and the ocean of sky rolls over roofs and trees.

MOTHERING

BY SANDRA KOHLER

The birthday card from my sister proclaims
on its front, "There's only one way to feel
about having a sister like you." I open it to read,
"Lucky." I want to laugh and can't, thinking
of all the feelings she would never admit,
denying ambivalence, even complexity.

Were we both too young to talk about complexity, though she was eighteen to my eleven,
so that we never addressed the situation between us?

We were sisters. We were motherless sisters. Our mother, who had just died, was, she felt, more
her mother than mine. I felt that too. Because she was the older sister, because she was the
favored sister, because she claimed to love mother unambivalently.

I did not know that I loved my mother. I may have thought I hated her. I knew she made me
angry and lonely, frightened and angry, lonely and rebellious, rebellious and frightened. I must
have thought these feelings fit with hate, not love; I couldn't have known they can be part of
either, both.

Last night I dreamt about a woman who in the dream
is my mother, though nothing like her in demeanor,
looks. It's evening, she's dressed to go out, I ask where,
she says "back" to a museum or theatre where she works.
I'm disappointed at her leaving, the prospect of being
alone. She'd sensed I wanted to confide in her, and I had.
I don't remember her advice, just that it was kind, wise.

Whose daughter am I?
My father's? Who told me one morning,
after walking home from the night shift
in a thunderstorm that he wasn't scared
of dying, just of being mutilated,
crushed by a falling tree.

My weak and whimsical father
who French kissed me once,
taking me onto his lap, after mother
died, who worried about my being
alone overnight on his boat
with my older brother.
I am his daughter, afraid and longing
for what I know I shouldn't want,
afraid and lying about what I do
and don't fear.

Whose daughter am I?
My mother's? Whom I remember
in vignettes that are chaotic, don't cohere;
anger and terror, rage and sorrow: hers, mine.
We were one child, one mother together
in a cruel prison of pain and fear. Yet
one morning, forty years after her death,
sitting in a Quaker meeting house,
at a time in my life when I felt no one
would miss me were I to die, I see a woman
who looks like her, like my mother,
and I am flooded with the loss
I couldn't feel when I was eleven
and she died.

Whose daughter am I?
My sister's? Whom I wanted to be
a tender mother to me, who played bait
and switch love games, who let me wait
alone on a city subway platform,
twelve years old, for two hours,
whose lies about what she would do
or not do were a lesson
I memorized in order
never to be like her.

There is a small paring knife in my kitchen whose blade is the reverse of what one expects:
the straight side is the cutting edge, not the curved. Because of that, it's easy to cut oneself using
it. My sister's visiting me, we're women in our fifties, together in the kitchen, cooking a meal; I
warn her about the knife. Yes, she says, it's counter-intuitive.

Counter-intuitive: something about our whole relationship is counterintuitive.

Now that my sister, like my mother, is dead, there are small indelible absurd or ugly or strange memories of her that recur, like the one about the knife, or the subway platform, or the time when I showed her a picture of my college son's exquisite girlfriend and she asked me, don't you hate her?

Not every time, but sometimes, many times when I look into the mirror, I see her. I've always hated looking like her. I still do.

From the Audubon Outdoor Almanac, on her birthday, August 26: Watch for migrating nighthawks overhead at dusk.

For years, on my birthday I would phone my sister to thank her for mothering me. For the more than fifty years since our mother died, she's insisted that mother's death was the worst thing that ever happened to her, crueler than the sudden death of her husband of forty years. I never asked her why it wasn't the worst thing that ever happened to me. I saw only her vision, her version of the story: I was essentially unharmed because she became my mother. Only recently have I come to see the underside of this: motherless mother, playing at mothering me, replacing my mother, she stole her from me, left me doubly motherless.

Are we never done?

Today, writing a sympathy note
to a friend whose sister has died,
I'm flooded by strange belated
mourning, not for my dead sister,
but for the child self
she mothered,
motherless.

UNFORGIVING. WHISPERS

BY ACE BOGGESS

One cried after reading my novel, she said,
because she found it beautiful.
Another, because it was about her.
I wanted to because it ended,
but my tears were so like little words, &
I'd spilt enough I might not write again,
my pinky moist against the page,
unforgiving. Whispers
I opened with a skeleton key &
found inside them truth—
mine, hers, the other *hers*—
a stranger's message ribbon-
tied & placed in a memory box.

COMMITMENT

BY LINDA BALDANZI

Tiny hands holding breasts
Tiny faces sucking nipples

I sit on a boardwalk bench,
in my hand gin and tonic
on the rocks

In grammar school I picked
names for my three children
Tim, Tod, Ted, Ted my father's.

Triplets. I would only have to
get pregnant once.

My fiancé-to-be wants children,
wants my answer soon.

I wanted kids yesterday,
today I am not sure,
today I want the world.

In the short ether of life
one must deal with owned truths.

The scent of tenderness wafts in the air,
then wind's unpredictable impulses
muss your hair, topple a tree.

We don't know what there is for us.
The invisible rest in our eyes
the silent resides in the song of a Thrush.

If only wise words spoken by
a river bend could be heard.

Dealing with a remnant of the childhood
game hide and seek—
What am I hiding, what do I seek?

A baby's tongue is a house giving orders.

MEDITATIONS

BY DAN DARRAH

in a life of hanging off her father's arm in
armoured vehicles and MH-47 chinook aircrafts, she
became obsessed with the uninvented power of ocean water, its
temerity, the violence of its thrashing waves feeling to her so natural and prehistoric
so as to be accidental and somehow beautiful, waves which
grabbed and held her attention closely on overcast days on trips out east
as she hung off the mast of her brother's boat,
staring out across the violent waves in unshakable acknowledgements that even if
no weapon had ever been furnished by human beings in all of our civilization,
her dad could not have survived *this*, she figured in her head,
in the same way you can't survive old age.
she felt she was learning not that we need to survive forever,
but beginning to believe that there are right and wrong ways to die, all of which
became evident to her less like ideas and more like articles of faith
that dictated to her that her kids would not join the army or own any guns or
ride bikes without helmets but also that
her kids would not be encouraged to cower from the sun on sticky-air summers,
or to fear scraped knees from fence-hopping or fear drowning in the face of swimming.
she had a way of saying *fear this* and drumming it into herself
with heart-pounding-i-hear-murderer's-boots-coming-up-the-stairs terror,
but also drumming into herself the phrases *love this* and *risk this*
and *spend your life in pursuit of this*
with the same concerned urgency and devout belief because
above all she was determined to learn, determined
to be widened by his passing, to derive something from the pain,
or to create something to help absorb it, prove it was
lightning trapped in a mason jar and not just
empty energy constantly glowing inside of her, taking
and not giving back.

SOMETHING THE CURRENT KEPT

BY JEFF JEPPESEN

I earned a nickname one summer at camp
washing tin plates on the bank of a surging river.
They laughed at the joke they thought I was making
sliding so slow down moss-slicked rock
as cold water filled my hiking boots
chilled my knees
slid so slow
(no one took my hand)
iced my torso
slid so slow
then closed over my head.
I wasn't stronger than the undertow.

And so I knew
this is how it ends
I'll die here no matter what.
(why wouldn't someone just take my hand)
I should make myself ready for whatever happens after.
So I let the current have me and felt calm
watching sunlight glint across the surface above.

I let the cold current have me
rocketing boots-first through the rapids just under water
and missed every jagged edge of rock.

You've seen it coming, but the river gave me back
laid me out gently into a gravelly backwash
shivering and coughing
but no cuts or gashes.
Not one bruise.
(no one took my hand)

Oh, they cheered me and grabbed me.
"We thought it was a joke, we thought you were
dead. Let's call him Crash."
The fire that night couldn't warm my bones.
I couldn't blow the musty smell out of my nose for days.

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

BY MICHELLE BROOKS

Before the puppet show, Melissa and I split
a stolen Valium. As the children gathered,
a dreamy feeling descended on the eighth
grade me, benevolence for all I saw -- the cheap
hand puppets, a mouse and giraffe who
became Jonah and the whale. I put my mouse
into the mouth of Melissa's giraffe while God
waited for Jonah to get himself right. He'd
run from Nineveh only to suffer. Brother
Buddy complimented us on our performance,
telling me that longsuffering was my fruit
of the spirit. I didn't sound good, even medicated
against harm and boredom. I didn't know then
that you didn't have to be swallowed whole,
that you could swallow the whale and not
know you were trapped by what was inside you.

FROM RADI, TO ULNA

BY YU-HAN CHAO

I nestle against
your notch
named for me
you, head and
crown above me
though I am
the one
anterior, lateral,
larger at distal,
where my notch
named for you
meets your head:
the paradoxical,
surprise 69
of human anatomy.
Proximal: capitulum mine,
trochlea yours.
Distal: our styloid
processes on pointe.
Bodies meeting
two points,
sheet of interosseous
membrane in between
I lean, you stroke
we'll always
fit
just so

WANTING TULIPS

BY SARAH DICKENSON SNYDER

The power to undo the bonds
of nature—changing sea levels

changes everything, what will grow
and not grow. Tulips will drown.

(I wonder why I head to beauty
instead of food—the rice rising

I've seen along the roads
of Vietnam, endless

patched paddies.)
But a tulip head—

the way it reaches to a sun,
how its petals open

as palms do, unfolding
what is needed.

ELECTRIC SKIN MUSEUM

BY CHARLES KELL

Put your finger
on the wind's crease.
Dance hall rages

with casket bass.
Our wrists flick
back shadows

from the lamp.
She drags a slip
chain across

the floor whistling
red blended blue
I'm screaming for you.

Heat beads raise
& damp. Hit skin
skips—dress in rags

hangs off. Can
taste black cloud
with my tongue.

Can run in place
until the sun breaks
down. My sick

flower. My ferris
wheel on fire. I'm
screaming for you.

DEEP EXPECTATIONS

BY KEN POYNER

We are not the Titans we were meant to be.
Here, in the crowded nothingness between worlds
We are the shadow of glass: spindly things
Left too long in the cold, spending
Our effervescence first on our own hopes,
Then on our mission, then on ourselves,
And lastly on the unbalanced mechanics of simple being.
If we arrive, we will be an example
Only of our simple survival, of a fact:
That arriving is better than not arriving.
Planet, moon, star nebula – you care
To be sampled by us as little as we care
To be sampled by you. But examples we are.
One alien poking a dry humor at another
Alien and asking: why are we unlike?
Everything is motion. Who has come to visit whom?

NOTHING

BY ASHLEY MEMORY

While the rest of us groan as we
shoulder boxes down concrete steps
you roll your wrist to a spider-webbed
dolly with only one wheel.

We risk our lives to drive on ice &
you mosey into the office a day later—
well-rested & cheery after a 2-minute
commute from a road cleared first.

Devoid of a personal life you tunnel
into our own families like a vole,
ingratiating with a thousand little favors
no one asked for.

For all that you failed to do & for all the chaos
you wreak by doing nothing & because nothing
you manage to do ever matters, I cast you
into the nadir of nothingness—a black hole.

As you free fall toward singularity
gravitational forces will squish
your body into a single strand of linguini
that twirls & crumbles into oblivion.

Your demise goes unnoticed until
a backyard astronomer trolling for
Saturn spies a tiny porcupine of light.
He wonders. Final belch of a star?

What do you see? asks his wife
who thinks they should have bought
the leaf blower instead of the telescope.
Nothing, he snaps. *Nothing at all.*

BOTCHED HOMUNCULUS REVISITED

BY MICHAEL WAYNE FRIEDMAN

A concave
image in a spoon
recedes to the center
point of motionless space,
sharp and pointless in the grasp
of my hand it moves towards hot
soup, dips into an envelope of
broth and is muddied by
translucence. Invisible
heat from the
nuked
Ramen
wets my
face, lifts
my wrecked
body to
weightless
alignment,
a distraction
of salt and
heat. My
body,
stopped
in its
tracks
for the
appointed
moment
of a
lunch
break,
resumes
its slow
clarity
back
to the
present.

SECTION 3

LIFE IN THE TIME OF TERROR

BY MARISSA GLOVER

after Manchester

I. Primary

The initial blast wave hits the body.
Barotrauma. Air-filled cavities are most susceptible:
Don't breathe. Cover your ears. Cower down.

Only distance decides who lives and dies.
Pray for infinite kilometers.

II. Secondary

Airborne shrapnel penetrates the body.
Hardware is weaponized. If there were time,
you would recognize these metals.

Nails from the backyard tree house. Nuts and bolts
you used to hang the television on the wall.

III. Tertiary

The body takes flight. Flesh and bone
recreated into missiles; children grow
into sledgehammers. No one is safe.

Let go of the hands you hold. Run.

IV. Quaternary

All that is not mind or spirit self-destructs.
Concrete begins to collapse, crushing
those who cannot escape. Skin catches fire.
Smoke invades the lungs. Debris falls from the sky.

...

Beneath the survivor's guilt, doctors identify
cochlear damage and try to predict your future:
perilymph fistula? basilar membrane rupture?

But you won't know the extent of the damage
until "Bang Bang" plays on the radio fifteen years from now,
on a day when your daughter might've married.

THERE'S A CLINIC IN FRANKFURT

BY LYNDI BELL O'LAUGHLIN

My neighbor, Olivia, is prone to spells
of confusion and confession, fiestas really,
where she will unburden herself of thoughts
that create links between images, such as

a hot spark making a run for it
through a gap in the crooked grate on a burn barrel—
and a celibate nun in Chicago,
who reads Sharon Olds poems by porch light
behind the rectory, every Thursday night after
Fr. Mullen has left for his psychotherapy session.

Olivia will do this on blank sheets
of recycled paper. Over and over again
she will lie down with black ink,
pull a nimbus blanket of words up over herself,
will watch the festive but delicate evaporation
of blunders, as they become a pile
of dead worms on a wet sidewalk.

Some poems are hidden from the general public,
lest they result in her being burned at the stake,
or sold to a lab for research purposes.

“It’s okay, Olivia,” I say. “Rest now.
We are going to take a little trip.”

“THIS SAD BAG WITH ANIMALS INSIDE”

BRUCE BOND

BY LOIS MARIE HARROD

I'm not just talking about the selves, so many,
the good dog at your feet, the bad dog

on the braided carpet, the one that snarls
when the former neighbor appears

lies down to be petted for that strange woman
who writes books about vampire fairies.

And I am not talking about that burlap bag
with those little puppies one dead and four almost alive

that my mother held under water until they ceased to move,
saying to herself they will go back to dust

whatever I do, she not being interested in taxidermy.
I learned too that there is not much we can keep

and if we manage a thing or two,
our children won't think it precious anyway,

but only the sack I am right now,
this *sack-of-the-time-being*,

the cells of my children lodged in my brain,
the ones those nine months I was pregnant,

made their strange trip from the placenta to my gray matter,
those cells that may keep me from getting Alzheimer's.

I am saying I know those cells are there,
by the sorrow I feel at my daughter's sorrow,

the way I can't bear her husband of ten years
leaving her with an infant and a two-year old

for another woman, I am thinking how
he did not have any of her cells in his brain

and how now I wish those little children
did not have any of his little animals in them.

ARTICULATION

BY YU-HAN CHAO

Top or bottom—an important question.
Atlas, bottom, pierced his transverse processes
but paradoxically likes to be
on top. Axis has spine and body, no
extra holes, prominent odontoid process
(ten cruelest punishments of Ching Dynasty:
one of them the iron saddle), Axis
rides on top, no protection, vertebral
foramen tightened by transverse ligament.

Pivot diarthrosis means no, condylar
diarthrosis screams yes. He holds up the
world by its occipital condyles, bone
against bone until loss of homeostasis.

SEEKING SUBJECTS AGED 18-45 WITH NO HISTORY OF PSYCHOSIS

BY ASHLEY MEMORY

Do you ever feel confused about what's real or imaginary?

Until the first email arrived, Mona willy-nillied through life, somersaulting like a gnat in the wind. Boring bank job, cheap apartment, only a hamster to nuzzle. *Anyhoo*. Nothing special about Mona.

No anyhooing about the kind message from the mysterious no-reply. Her senses sharpened. Clink of coins in her drawer, alfalfa musk of Mr. Nibbles, nightly bee-bee-buzz of cicadas. Was anything real?

Wonder if things that happen have special meaning just for you?

When on her birthday a stranger deposited a check for \$10.75—month and year of her birth—*Any-ha!* Another message. The bald man with a crookneck cane looked just like her dead Uncle Bill.

Worry that others are talking or laughing about you?

Her co-workers slunk away, snickering into coffee mugs when Mona entered the break room. The flyer for the office picnic disappeared from the corkboard. *What picnic?* harrumphed lead teller Debbie Dow.

Ever feel that others are trying to hurt you?

A collision with a skateboarder on the sidewalk—*Watch it, lady!*—knocked Mona flat on her duff. *Any-oww!* Then there was the Thanksgiving fall from the stool. *Gravy boat!* shrieked her mother. *You broke my gravy boat!*

When they pink-slipped her—*First National is no place for daydreaming*, they said—a tremor of elation passed over Mona's body. Yet at home she packed and she paced. No word from no-reply. The emails, a dream?

When at last she heard *knock-knock-a-knock* her heart swelled and she skipped to the door, suitcase in hand. *Is there room for Mr. Nibbles?* She dared not breathe. *Any time,* said Uncle Bill. *Come along now.*

LIKE HER VOICE AFTER MATH

BY MIKE JURKOVIC

I hear nothing on the radio
that incites me like her voice after math
and her touch in the autumn rain.
Pulsing from Detroit. Detroit. Detroit!
Whatever happened to Detroit and why
does the sun
burn third world there?
Did we not hear
the business of war
and business. Short sell.
Duck 'n cover. *Nowhere Man*.
A lazy sunny afternoon.

The roll off Tuscadero
and the five harmony winds.
Pearl Jam. Joni. Prince.
Guitars. Bass. Drums.
A B3. A tambourine
and a chick singer in shorts.
Or behind her piano
bringing life to the Bronx.
Burning the Village
w/her rock 'n roll words.

Bonham. Coltrane.
A host of names
that make verbs. Make the music
inseparable from where
we stand. In the sunrise coloring
the sunset. As natural as default.

BUT NOTHING'S ON FIRE

BY JEFF JEPPESEN

the boom loud as a shotgun
because the firework never launched upward
before it blew
and now we are inside it
blue gold red and green little suns
sizzle past me behind me beside me
smells acrid but
the most beautiful thing I've ever seen
and none of us are hurt not even a scorch
clean misses all around the backyard
so let's try it again using a new cardboard tube

twice
we get to be inside a living firework twice
do you fucking believe it?
it's over so quick which makes it rapturous
makes it exquisite
makes it art
all five of us missed again
checking ears and beards and bellies
trying to wave away the smoke
we laugh so hard until wives and girlfriends
and other cowards
yell at us to get our drunk asses back inside

OUT OF TUNE
BY ACE BOGGESS

In a lull from the lull of my life,
I pick up my battered acoustic,
strum chords that sound like elephants
screeching as they trample a grove.

I haven't played in weeks,
my heart not in it, hands
aching as if bones have snapped &
need repaired. The sound I make

is a sad one—loss, yearning, absence.
Where does a man find his rhythm
when time passes & songs of his youth
no longer soothe? I've slept

in the silence of a black & empty room.
I've slept while outside a storm raged.
I have been asleep too long &
gone like my Washburn out of key.

The strings are corroded,
the pick guard covered with dust.
Awareness leads me
to a place I've forgotten,

sound I've chosen not to hear,
song not my song
but still in me, readying
for the tuning to begin.

STARGAZING

BY SALLY ZAKARIYA

When stars fall, I want to see
the furious streaks of light
they scribe across the sky.

Camping in California, you said,
you could count the shooting stars,
but here in the East, our city lights
hemorrhage into the heavens,
obscuring who knows what
astronomical marvels.

I'd like to think a comet
arced across the continent
the year that we were born,
wonder of wonders – two
polar opposites – the twain
they said would never meet.

I'd like to think a falling star
landed near you on a California
hill, pointing you toward the East
to pluck me from my lonely life
and brighten my star-lost nights.

WATER PARADE

BY STEVE KLEPETAR

Today we looked over the river as darkness fell,
draping itself around contours of water,
making the world seem comfortless and cold.
The river surged through its own dark body.
Owls hurtled through trees.
We were overcome by shadows in our eyes,
their liquid thickness on our tongues.
Then we lit candles, thinking that an act of grace.
Needles of flame leapt from wicks and melting wax.
We smelled the burning, and bent toward the river
like little gods summoned to attend.
We saw the water parade slipping downstream
between the banks, felt the glow of torches
flickering on water's skin. We saw girls
in their dresses of blue and gold, with cats' eyes
glittering in the dark. We heard ancient songs
and climbed the rope ladder of their melodies.
In spaces between words, we sensed a slight
splashing of oars as boats floated by. It was then,
in the sweetness of that sound, we recalled our names
and reached to reclaim our stations between the stars.

ODE TO THE DOPPLER EFFECT

BY A.R. ROBINS

On the shoulder of 51
I can hear your operatic ocean
before and after cars crash into the air
like stones in small puddles.
Some are whining bullets delivering
families to summer beachfront homes.
Others are soldiering boulders delivering
corn and soybeans to distant peddlers.
Every vehicle a fingerprint of music,
its own snow plow for sound.

I am your quiet witness.
You are relative to me, yet
I am moved by your spiraling sonic rumbles.
You remind me that if a tree falls in a forest,
and no one is around to hear it,
its echo could never be more beautiful
than the chorus of that same fallen oak
firing into the night on the rickety trailer
of a sixteen-wheeler on Highway 51.

WINGS

BY SUE HOWELL

Two dragonflies mating on my back door,
Twelve legs kaleidoscoped on the white wood,
Translucent wings fluttering, suggestive,
Long brown bodies joined at the ends, soundless.
By late afternoon they have disappeared,
Perhaps to die, their purpose accomplished,
Like salmon in the shallows after spawning,
Or worker bees impregnating the Queen.
We saw your dragonflies on the front walk,
A friend tells me. I sift through azaleas
Dusty in the heat, hostas flowering
Their last. I see no dragonflies, no eggs.
Like all creatures made for sex and death,
A moment in life's swarm, a gentle breath.

SUMMER FRAGMENT

BY BARRY CHARMAN

The apples are too heavy for the branch
I watch all summer
as it droops lower

and lower still
but never snaps
just cradles the fruits
of its years

its only reward
the reverence
of rotten apples

THE OPEN WINDOW

BY MARY SESSO

The memory is powered by the scent
of incense in church--
I'm sixteen again in my hour
of Adoration at St. Ann's.
The wooden kneeler is exacting
penance from my skinny knees,
the stained glass window is open
and a startling, sapphire blue sky
rushes in stealing my attention.

Someone's glass rosary beads
chinkle, reminding me to pray,
but it's 5 a.m. and my mind wanders.
I notice the lilies on altar, love
how their breath surrounds me,
then think of the boy who stuck
his tongue in my mouth when
we kissed on the front porch.
I worry it was a sin. I didn't like
his warm spit, though I liked kissing,
the way he pulled me close
and hugged so tight I could feel
his hardness.

One lit votive candle on the table
in front of my pew flickers,
resurrecting its red glow. Contrite,
I light another, hope I'll be forgiven
before the window's breeze
puts out the flame.

BENEDICTION

BY JOHN VANEK

If the shade of this ancient oak
is not a house of worship

that twinkling light through its leaves
not the flicker of prayer candles

these azure and magenta wildflowers
not elegant stained glass

that distant drone of honeybees
not God's own Gregorian chant

the meadow's fragrant scent
not the finest incense

that soft singing stream
not a cathedral's choir

the spiraling clouds
not marble steeples

those white ship's sails
not novices gliding to vespers

and this warm velvet wind
not the breath of the Almighty

then I am satisfied to be
a contented fool.

CONTRIBUTORS

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Barry Charman is a writer living in North London. He has been published in various magazines, including *Ambit*, *Firewords Quarterly*, *Mothership Zeta* and *Popshot*. He has had poems published online and in print, most recently in *Bewildering Stories* and *The Linnet's Wings*. He has a blog at <http://barrycharman.blogspot.co.uk/>.

Dan Darrah is a student at Ryerson University in Toronto. His first poetry collection, *What Else We Could Be Doing*, was published in March 2017 through Permanent Sleep Press.

Holly Day has taught writing classes at the Loft Literary Center in Minneapolis, Minnesota, since 2000. Her poetry has recently appeared in *Tampa Review*, *SLAB*, and *Gargoyle*, while her newest nonfiction book, *Tattoos FAQ*, is coming out from Backbeat Books at the end of 2017.

Michael Wayne Friedman received his MFA in Creative Writing from Queens University at Charlotte. His poems and book reviews have appeared in *Tule Review*, *Syzygy Poetry Journal*, *Wherewithal*, *Yellow Chair Review*, *Camel Saloon*, *Plum Tree Tavern*, *East Jasmine Review*, *Stray Branch*, *Main Street Rag*, and others.

Marissa Glover lives in central Florida, where she is a mother, teacher, and writer. Her work has appeared in various places including *The Opiate* and *Rat's Ass Review* and on her parents' refrigerator.

James Graham was born in 1939 in Ayrshire, Scotland, in a rural cottage lit by oil lamps. He was a teacher for thirty years, but would rather have been a celebrated journalist and best-selling author. Most of his published work is poetry, which has appeared in numerous print and online magazines. His third collection, *Becoming a Tree*, published by Troubador Press, is currently available.

Lois Marie Harrod's most recent publication, *Nightmares of the Minor Poet* (Five Oaks), appeared in May 2016. Author of six poetry books and ten chapbooks, she also writes short stories. Her work has appeared in journals and online ezines from *American Poetry Review* to *Zone 3*. Visit www.loismarieharrod.org.

Sue Howell is a former teacher with degrees from Tulane University and Southern Illinois University who started writing poetry seriously after leaving the classroom. Since then, she has published poems in *Passager*, *Southern Indiana Review*, and various regional journals. Sue was a finalist in the River Styx International Poetry Contest and the Tennessee Williams Literary Festival contest. Most recently, her poems have appeared in *Naugatuck River Review*, *Minerva Rising*, and *Zoomorphic*.

Jeff Jeppesen lives and writes in Warner Robins, Georgia. His work can be found in *Every Day Poets*, *Gyroscope Review*, *Strange Horizons*, *The Linnet's Wings* and *Every Day Fiction*. For several years, he was an associate editor at *Every Day Poets*.

Oonah Joslin is poetry editor at *The Linnet's Wings*. She writes poetry and micro-fiction. Her book, *Three Pounds of Cells* (ISBN: 13: 978-1535486491), is available online from Linnet's Wings Press and you can see and hear Oonah read in this National Trust video: <https://youtu.be/FXkca9vcUyQ>. The first part of her novella, *A Genie in a Jam*, is serialized at *Bewildering Stories*. You can follow Oonah on Facebook or at Parallel Oonaverse (<https://oovj.wordpress.com/>).

Mike Jurkovic is a 2016 Pushcart nominee, whose poetry and musical criticism have appeared in over 500 magazines and periodicals but have generated no reportable income. Full length collections: *smitten by harpies & shiny banjo catfish* (Lion Autumn Press, 2016). Chapbooks: *Eve's Venom* (Post Traumatic Press, 2014), *Purgatory Road* (Pudding House Press, 2010). Anthologies: *WaterWrites & Riverine* (Codhill Press, 2009, 2007), *Will Work For Peace* (Zeropanik, 1999). Mike is the president of Calling All Poets, a monthly open mic event in New Paltz, NY, and is the producer of CAPSCASTS, performances from Calling All Poets, available at www.callingallpoets.net. Music features, interviews & CD reviews appear in *Elmore Magazine* and the *Van Wyck Gazette*. For more information, visit www.mikejurkovic.com. He loves Emily most of all.

Stepy Kamei is a freelance writer living in Los Angeles. She holds a B.A. in Linguistics from San Francisco State University, and her poetry has appeared in *Calamus Journal*.

Charles Kell is a PhD student at The University of Rhode Island and editor of *The Ocean State Review*. His poetry and fiction have appeared in *The New Orleans Review*, *The Saint Ann's Review*, *IthacaLit*, and elsewhere. He teaches in Rhode Island and Connecticut.

Steve Klepetar's work has received several nominations for Best of the Net and the Pushcart Prize, including four in 2016. Recent collections include *A Landscape in Hell*, *Family Reunion*, and *How Fascism Comes to America*.

Sandra Kohler's third collection of poems, *Improbable Music* (Word Press), appeared in May, 2011. Earlier collections are *The Country of Women* (Calyx, 1995) and *The Ceremonies of Longing* (University of Pittsburgh Press, 2003), winner of the 2002 Associated Writing Programs Award Series in Poetry. Her poems have appeared in journals including *The New Republic*, *The Beloit Poetry Journal*, *Prairie Schooner*, and many others over the past 35 years.

Susan L. Leary is a lecturer in English composition at the University of Miami in Coral Gables, Florida. Her most recent creative work appears or is forthcoming in *Clear Poetry*, *Steel Toe Review*, *The Copperfield Review*, *Antiphon*, *Cold Creek Review*, *Dying Dahlia Review*, *The Big Windows Review*, *After the Pause*, and elsewhere.

Jenny McBride's writing has appeared in *The Rappahannock Review*, *Third Wednesday*, *Common Ground Review*, *Tidal Echoes*, and other journals. She makes her home in the rainforest of southeast Alaska.

A former city dweller, **Ashley Memory** now lives with her partner, the sculptor Johnpaul Harris, in the wilds of southwestern Randolph County, North Carolina, where she wakes to the arpeggio of the pileated woodpecker. Her poetry and prose have appeared in *The Naugatuck River Review*, *The Thomas Wolfe Review*, *Pinesong*, *Wildlife in North Carolina*, *Romantic Homes* and numerous other literary journals.

Lyndi Bell O'Laughlin lives in Wyoming. She has a degree in nursing, and writes poetry to give her marauding bands of observation a place to settle. Lyndi's work has appeared, or is forthcoming, in *Blood, Water, Wind, and Stone: An Anthology of Wyoming Writers* (Sastrugi Press, 2016), *Troubadour: An Anthology of Music-inspired Poetry* (Picaroon Poetry, 2017), *Gyroscope Review*, *The New Verse News*, *Unbroken Journal*, and elsewhere.

Ken Poyner's latest collection of short, wiry fiction, *Constant Animals*, and his latest collections of poetry, *Victims of a Failed Civics* and *The Book of Robot*, can be obtained from Barking Moose Press, at www.barkingmoosepress.com. Look for the flash fiction work *Avenging Cartography* in mid-2017. He often serves as strange, bewildering eye-candy at his wife's power lifting affairs. His poetry of late has been sunning in *Analog*, *Asimov's*, and *Poet Lore*; his fiction has yowled in *Spank the Carp*, *Red Truck*, and *Café Irreal*. For more information, visit www.kpoyner.com.

A.R. Robins lives in Missouri with her husband and two cats while working on her MFA at Southeast Missouri State University. Her fiction has been featured in the podcast *Second Hand Stories*. More of her work has been published or forthcoming in *Foliage Oak*, *Fredericksburg Literary and Art Review*, and *The Dead Mule School of Southern Literature*.

Claire Scott is an award-winning poet who has been nominated twice for the Pushcart Prize. Her work has been accepted by the *Atlanta Review*, *Bellevue Literary Review*, *Enizagam* and *Healing Muse* among others. Claire is the author of *Waiting to be Called* and the co-author of *Unfolding in Light: A Sisters' Journey in Photography and Poetry*.

Mary Sesso is a retired nurse who volunteers at The National Children's Center. She is active in three poetry workshops and is a member of the Writer's Center in Bethesda, Maryland.

Marian Kaplun Shapiro is the author of a professional book, *Second Childhood* (Norton, 1988), a poetry book, *Players In The Dream, Dreamers In The Play* (Plain View Press, 2007) and two chapbooks: *Your Third Wish* (Finishing Line, 2007) and *The End Of The World, Announced On Wednesday* (Pudding House, 2007). A Quaker and a psychologist, her poetry often embeds the topics of peace and violence by addressing one within the context of the other. A resident of Lexington, she is a five-time Senior Poet Laureate of Massachusetts. She was nominated for the Pushcart Prize in 2012.

T.J. Smith is a New York-based poet originally from Jacksonville, Florida. He studied German and Creative Writing at Princeton University and is currently completing an MFA in Poetry at NYU. His work has appeared in the *Nassau Literary Review*.

Sarah Dickenson Snyder has two poetry collections, *The Human Contract*, (Aldrich Press) and *Notes from a Nomad*, (Finishing Line Press). Selected to be part of the Bread Loaf Writers' Conference, she has had poems published recently in *The Comstock Review*, *Damfino Press*, *The Main Street Rag*, *immix*, *Chautauqua Literary Magazine*, *Piedmont Journal*, *Sunlight Press*, *Stirring: a Literary Journal*, *Whale Road Review*, and other journals. In May of 2016, she was a 30/30 Poet for Tupelo Press. One poem was selected by Mass Poetry Festival Migration Contest to be stenciled on the sidewalk in Salem, MA, for the annual festival, April 2017. Please visit <https://sarahdickensonsnyder.com/> for more information.

John Vanek is a physician and poet with works published in numerous literary journals in four countries and showcased on public radio. He has garnered awards in both fiction and poetry, and has been invited to read his work at colleges, the Akron Art Museum, the Cleveland Clinic, and the George Bush Presidential Library. He has also judged poetry contests and taught creative writing classes at the high school level. His poetry book, *Heart Murmurs: Poems*, is available at amazon.com.

Sally Zakariya's poems have appeared in 60-some print and online journals. She is the author, most recently, of *When You Escape* (Five Oaks Press, 2016), as well as *Insectomania* (2013) and

Arithmetic and other verses (2011), and the editor of *Joys of the Table* (2015). Zakariya blogs at www.butdoesitrhyme.com.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Submissions will be accepted for our Fall 2017 issue beginning on July 1, 2017, and closing on September 15, 2017.

All submissions must come to us through Submittable (www.gyroskopereview.submittable.com/submit). We do not accept submissions via email, social media, snail mail, or any other channel.

Please read our submission guidelines at www.gyroskopereview.com/home/guidelines/ for complete information.

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