

Gyroscope Review

Fine poetry to turn your world around

*Issue 19-1
Winter 2019*



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Constance Brewer & Kathleen Cassen Mickelson

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Submissions: *Gyroscope Review* accepts previously unpublished contemporary poetry submissions through our online submissions system, gyroscopereview.submittable.com/submit. Please read our guidelines before submitting.

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FROM THE EDITORS

Happy 2019 to you!

We are excited to launch our new year with this winter issue of work from 38 different poets, some of whom will be familiar names. Many of the poems touch on the chill of winter, its darkness, its tendency to turn us inward. From Steven Dale Davison's "Footprints" to Tricia Knoll's "Seduction Mean as a Snake" to Elaine Wilburt's "Untitled Winter Haiku 2" there is much to be said about life in snowy places, about the purity of those white expanses and the danger hidden in that magical landscape tempered by the coziness of home. There are poems that do not mention snow or ice, too, so if you've already had your fill of winter weather and chill, you will still find something in our pages.

There is more to be excited about as 2019 takes off. Here at *Gyroscope Review*, we are already making plans for National Poetry Month. We have two things in mind, both that involve getting the voices of poets we've published in these pages into the world as much as possible. We've created a new YouTube channel for *Gyroscope Review* that we will make use of every day during the month of April. In the meantime, find our channel (Editors at *Gyroscope Review*) and subscribe so you don't miss a thing. We'll release more information as these next few weeks unfold. And, watch for a big announcement on Groundhog Day when we kick off our very special Quatrain Project: four lines, many voices, stanza after stanza. We think you'll like it.

Those of you who have read us and supported us from our beginning issue in 2015 have noticed our trend toward sharper commentary, inclusiveness, and honor for voices that struggle to be heard. Our Fall 2018 Crone Issue was a stunning example of that trend. We hope to continue showcasing voices that enrich us all with their thoughtful views, their diversity of experiences, their compassion toward all. We refuse to lose hope that poetry and other arts can shine a light through the depths of winter and whatever else darkens our days.

Stand up, be heard, do good. *Ars longa, vita brevis.*

Constance Brewer, Editor
Kathleen Cassen Mickelson, Editor

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POEMS

SECTION ONE

FOOTPRINTS

BY STEVEN DALE DAVISON

Across the meadow
white shadows of footprints
filled by windblow

SOMETHING ABOUT MARRIAGE

BY LOIS MARIE HARROD

It's not that one morning you decide
to walk out of your little house—

the cabin at the edge of the Minnesota woods
or the semi-detached in rural New J
and go into the cold in your thin cotton gown
and calloused feet,

it's the chill that slides into your kitchen
and stands behind you

as you measure out the coffee,
the nip that slips into the bedroom as you bent to smooth the sheets,

like one of those ghosts you've dreamed
wafting down the corridor

at the mental hospital, the sudden rush
of cold that makes you know

how solitary you are. And you are not sure
if the icy wraith is telling you something you already guessed

or if this is a revelation:
the fire in the hearth

which you have imagined flickering all these years
is gone.

Of course, sometimes like frost
the chill is brief.

MY HUSBAND COMMENTS ON HOW I'VE LET MYSELF GO
BY HOLLY DAY

he tells me I remind him
of a beached whale lying in
bed in the morning I close my
eyes and imagine myself
being picked apart by the claws of
tiny sand crabs burrowed into
by thin red beach worms
gobbets of flesh ripped

from my carcass by flocks of sea gulls
luring even the raccoons down
from the stubby forest
following the shore. he asks me
if I feel ashamed of myself
and I don't answer because
I feel dead already I'm
too busy

imagining the shock of
girl scout troops stumbling across
my massive corpse in the shallows
the feel of their tiny hands
on my body joined by the larger hands
of Greenpeace workers and passing
tree huggers as they try
to push me back
into the water

hoping somehow that this half-eaten
cold and lifeless body might
magically come back to
life and swim away if only
they could get me back
into the water.

I WORRY ABOUT FISH AND THEIR FRIENDS
BY JOHN M. DAVIS

for starters
their face is always in their food.
they swim in garbage, breathe our sewage.
as a rule they abandon their children.

most seem utterly incapable
of swimming in a straightforward way.
sidewinders in an underwater world
they slither and slide —
cuttlefish alter color, size and shape;
clowns, puffers and blowfish reel by —
good for nothing
except stirring up a little mud.

it gets worse:
killer whales hunt in pods;
sharks go crazy on the scent of blood;
triggerfish, knife fish, plain old roughies —
merciless monsters in a roaring waste.

think jellyfish by the jillions.
gelatinous bags of peptic organs and gonads;
just so many spineless creatures
tossed by tides, swept by currents, self-satisfied.
beneath it all, flat fish and bottom feeders.
whole families of flounders lay on their backsides
mute and myopic, lazily watching
with their wandering eyes.

THE WRONG GOD

BY CLAIRE SCOTT

I followed the wrong god home
he strutted with a hip hop gait
so positive, self-assured, lightly humming
a few bars of a Bach cantata

Ich habe genug

so I followed, scrambling to keep up
until we reached one of his many mansions
glowing friendly in fading dusk
leopards and lambs curled
on the lush green lawn

I checked him out on line
could he change water to wine
did he offer gluten free wafers
did he promise no right wingers would
slip past St. Peter: pass, pass, pass

but that was then
when we still believed in a future for all
no one percent stealing the show
grabbing the best parts of the planet
trampling the oppressed with Gucci boots

now I listen to the frayed chords of his choir
the bleat of terrified lambs, the snap of jaws
see his dented chariot, his decaying
house, his creeping crabgrass
& withered black-bone trees

an aging god & me scrunched together
on a tarnished throne watching
endless loops of *The Ten Commandments*
drinking bottle after bottle
of cheap white wine

HISTORY OF THE MOUTH
BY NEIL CARPATHIOS

It was placed near the brain where it's located so the time it takes for a thought to reach the tongue would be quick. But God realized His mistake when Adam told Eve, "Why not try bamboo leaves to look a little less hippy?" He should have put the mouth as far away from the brain as possible. Should have put it on the soles of our feet, like the butterfly. By the time a thought moved down through our neck, chest, legs, ankles—we'd get it just right. We'd, even now, have to take off our shoes and socks to curse, or proclaim our love. We would kiss by pressing our bare feet together, too. When you saw two people kissing you'd know it was the real deal. Worth the effort. No polite pecks or fake smooches. And, like the butterfly, who flutters and floats as light as air, we wouldn't overeat because eating, too, would take more effort. All this God realized too late. It was just one of many things, if He could, He'd do over.

AN ANSWER TO A QUESTION MY BROTHER ASKS ME
BY JIMMY HOLLENBECK

Once, you asked if I'm scared to die. We were on the porch,
and you told me about the first time you contemplated suicide.
The cold air outside pumped our lungs like so much smoke.
I thought about how, each year, leaves shrivel and jump
from the trees. Sometimes, I think I can hear my veins tighten
with blood, and I'm afraid they'll overflow.

Father, tell me what death is like.

Now, I'm on a different porch, and you're not here. It's cold, I blow
cigar smoke into the bright morning. At the bottom of the porch,
a crow makes a guillotine of its beak. I read a book in high school
on numerology of crows that said *a single crow marks death*. The snow
mutes the world like a finger on a tuning fork; it's that simple.
Sound becomes pure, white silence. Thanksgiving, my grandfather
sits alone in the living room because he can't hear any of us. My heart,
a broken mirror, refracts everything it sees. I have a question,

Father: what is death like?

Strip me of arteries, peel me like a forest fire, leave me scorched,
barren. I'll still be here on the porch, listening to crow carrion-consume.
Death may follow: I'll make a friend of her; tell her all my secrets. We'll lay
together in bed and she'll use me until I'm out of breath. I'll be her marionette,
one day, and her voice will come from my sin-mouth, this curse-tongue
will lick away my fears. Right now, I'm alone, and I can hear the snowfall.

Father, tell me what death is like.

THINGS I'D TELL YOU IF I KNEW HOW TO REACH YOU

BY JOANNE ESSER

About these dreams I've been having lately where I crash my car, scrape the chrome against hard things, scratch off paint, dent the metal, and me at fault, always.

And this urgency under my skin, electric charges misfiring as if synapse sparks are badly timed, random leaps from neuron to neuron across too-wide spaces.

This unexpected February fog, all wrong. Clouds should be frozen, not hungrily moving; the way they suck white snow away and spit back grime.

You know how I look through windows all day, a bad habit.
The glass is smudged with the residue of old rain and fingerprints.

How fragments of memory poke me like spikes: buildings I don't recognize but believe I should know, steep rocky hills unlike my real landscape, streets I can't recall walking.

The news anchorwoman is wound up too fast, a robot gone berserk; her words bang my head too loud. What she says seems important, crucial gibberish I can't decipher.

That everything is bigger than the person who watches it. What I record is only a fragment of what it is, a pale snapshot from one angle, full view unobtainable.

How I planted so many bulbs last fall: crocus, daffodils, a frenzy of faith, but I am afraid they won't come up in spring. Or I'm afraid they might, and I'll be responsible for them.

WINTER POEM: AT THE CABIN

BY JANICE S. FULLER

Snow on the railing
undisturbed.
Chickadees, nuthatches
black capped, red breasted
feast at the feeder.
Unexpected warmth wakes beetles
eager to annoy our day.

Deep cold gives way
to the possibility of walks
in the woods or down Linda Lane,
checking tracks for deer
or neighbors.

Family has left, quiet has arrived
with empty rooms, piles of laundry.
Melancholy now
at the sight of game pieces
missing from their boxes,
scraps of chips
settled in abandoned bags,
ashes and dead embers
signs of evenings 'round the fire.

Love lingers
in echoes of conversations
that hang about the breakfast table,
in laughter caught in corners of the house,
in kisses clustered near the door.
Love lingers in the silence and the evidence
of Christmas at the cabin.

DOUBLE VISION

BY JANET KAMNIKAR

We are driving toward Fairplay on 285,
toward snow-covered mountains
that loom rather than tower.
At 10,000 feet, even the fourteeners are close.
The closer we get,
the more strangely familiar the shapes:
blunt, angular, sharp-cornered
chunks of pure white
like giant snowbanks
carved by a vicious wind.

I remember Dakota snowbanks --
the solid walls, the fortresses
hard as concrete, that formed
wherever the wind chose.
And always, there'd be an artistic flourish,
a swoop and a dip,
as though the wind wanted us
to have a feel for what
mountains were like.
Plowing the snow did little good;
the wind just filled the cuts again,
until we gave up
and lived with the new topography.

*On my ninth birthday, April 3,
the whole town turned out
to watch the railroad's rotary plow
finally break through
the hard-packed drifts
that had held all of us hostage for weeks.*

*The first time a boy ever walked me home,
we climbed together over the snowbank
that marooned my house at the end of the street,
the snow pearly-white in the moonlight.*

I look ahead of me again –
those are mountains, no doubt about it.
But flatlander that I am,
I know these peaks.
Mountains and snowbanks merge,

and I am both here,
and in that other, there.

YOU REMEMBER HER
BY LENNART LUNDH

I'm sure, the woman with the spare room full of analog clocks of all sizes and ages, full of their gears knocking escapements, some running faster than the rest, no two striking the same except by accidents of differing speeds. Her life was equally chaotic, yet somehow it worked just enough that someone always loved her, reciprocated care and comfort, helped her make the bed they used as loudly as a room full of clocks. She also had one wall in the foyer, the short one across from the door, covered in keys, bright and dulled, exquisite and antique, all hanging silent and used. Her lovers knew their time with her was finished when the key that fit their heart was added to the gallery, leaving only memories immortal and intact.

NEW YEAR'S INVENTORY
BY PAMELA SUMNERS

I like the ones with Picasso faces,
Angular, not avuncular.
I like the pure strange Cubism
Of a hermetic brain. I like the
Ones who'd raid knowledge
Guarded at Fort Knox. I like a
Shambling walk, the ambling gait.
I like the Atlantic shimmer of
Some eyes, and their shoals,
Too, which sometimes wreck me.
I like their abstract divining. I
Like librarians, taxonomists,
Puritans ill at ease, all painting
These overstrike shapes of a self
That you say you detest — these
Quirks, chin angles, strange colors —
All the strokes that I love best.

NIGHTFALL

BY MARIAN KAPLUN SHAPIRO

Darkness is
 an invitation to
 the tunnel of maybe

to the promise of
 unknowing, to re-
 arranging the filaments

of glass in the
 kaleidoscope
 according to the in-

visible anatomy of
 shadows. See how
 the setting sun, lighting

our way with gold, calls us
 every afternoon
 to the ghostly realm

of evening, of night time
 waltzes without meter,
 prayers without words,

songs without pitch.
 Mysteries. What ifs.
 Dreams. Another.

another and
 another morning.

LIGHT / OF NEWGRANGE AT WINTER SOLSTICE
BY MARY ELLEN TALLEY

I.
my good works determine entrance
to the passage tomb / I traipse upon green sedge /
so much wild tuft growing above kerbstones / my heart
shimmies past carved crosshatches / my mother
lets me trace and follow semi-circles / triple spirals
on smooth rock until I sleep / until shadows startle me /
I am not as awake as if I were a modern clock face /
human face / what is it about face that draws attention /
I follow seasons / where gleanings / from my pagan history
know no sound reason for a virgin birth / for any
spinning dreidel / floating lantern / my future / but today

I make toy rainbows / I make shadow play /
I make prisms on a dewy leaf / come out / come out /
whatever is cast / recast / this is my megalith
I work the sheer joy shaft of shine /
no matter how doubtful / they will count my days /
add me to a calendar / I watched stout folk pull
heavy stones / along the River Boyne /
my mother said my red hair was born of sun
and moon / I was born on the longest night /
I make the year into a circle / light to light /
dust to dust / crust of the earth turns pale
under my toes / my mother's trust / entrusted to me /
I go barefoot upon cairns / without dislodging any stones /
I know / I am / unknown / I follow the procession
into the sanctuary / and wait for my birth

II.
no matter
that some settling
has occurred
these five thousand years
I shine / I shine /
and here I am /
I pierce the light box /
I am the certainty of a cupped circle /
whatever it holds inside hands /
I make the earth's round lips
say / *Oh*

MATZO BREI IN FOUR EASY STEPS

BY DAVID COLODNEY

- 1. To create this Passover favorite, first take matzo, break into small pieces, place into a bowl. Cover with hot water for one minute. Squeeze out water.**

Why is this night different from all other nights?

On all other nights we eat bread or matzo, while on this night we eat only matzo.

Too many nights we ate dinner with the TV on. I remember my father swearing the first time he saw Boy George on MTV.

Ashkenazi Jews are Jews of European descent. Ashkenazi Jews think they are better than other Jews.

- 2. In a small bowl, beat one egg with salt and pepper to taste and add to matzo. Mix well.**

Why is this night different from all other nights?

On all other nights we eat all kinds of vegetables and herbs, but on this night we eat only bitter herbs.

My sister always defended Boy George. She'd dress up like him: same-style hats, braids, makeup, calling herself Girl Jill as she danced to the dinner table.

Sephardic Jews are Jews of Middle-Eastern and South American descent. Sephardic Jews think they are better than other Jews.

- 3. Heat frying pan with a little oil. Pour mixture into the pan.**

Why is this night different from all other nights?

On all other nights we don't dip our vegetables in salt water, but on this night we dip them twice.

My mother picked dinner time to start fights with my father and sister. Meals often ended with no one speaking to each other.

We called ourselves Jewish but we never did any Jewish things except stay home from school on the Jewish Holidays and eat Matzo Brei on Passover. We thought we were better than other Jews.

- 4. Brown one side and turn over. Brown the other.**

Why is this night different from all other nights?

On all other nights we eat sitting upright, but on this night we eat reclining.

Boy George, the gender-bending lead singer of Culture Club, a moderately successful mid-'80s pop group, is not Jewish.

My parents brought us up to think everyone was Jewish. I once thought this true until my mother's complaints about the stores closing Christmas and Easter because of the *goyum*. She said the *goyum* thought they were better than Jews.

I grew up thinking we asked four questions on Passover. But it's really one question with four answers.

WHY I DON'T LIVE IN FLORIDA

BY JANET KAMNIKAR

The table is set; the loaf is sliced.
Dinner is waiting in the oven,
a sturdy pork roast, with its old mates,
steadfast potatoes and carrots.
It's a winter evening, one that began early,
at five o'clock when the sun went down.

It's cold outside, about zero,
and there's enough breeze to make
the windchill quite dramatic.
In here, we're warm, content, and safe.

I rarely feel this awareness of blessings
in the summer when we work
and play incessantly
because there's so much light.

I am an animal in my den:
not exactly hibernating --
luxuriating is closer to the truth.
I do not hope for an early spring.

SECTION TWO

SEDUCTION MEAN AS A SNAKE

BY TRICIA KNOLL

Soft snow, inch after inch, a few hours on the clock,
a porch chair sports a downy ten-inch pillow. Each twig
grabs bragging rights to long white evening gloves
and wind-bows to the great wonder of the universe.

That's how it starts, as if winter's world is magic,
sunshine pierces the white to squints, plush
up to the wells around the blue spruce, mashed
where someone tried to walk a dog. Squished
into inches of ice on the road with so-what hashtags
from chains in a town without plows. At the bottom
of a bowl of steep hills, days upon days
of inches upon inches over the boot tops,
the little dog's cough.

Now daggers haunt the roof. Three feet
of saber rattling, overhang, danger.
The sky grays up for more ice, double dose,
freezing rain that over a day or maybe two
might melt snow. After ice. Then floods.
The plagues. Rivers full, over the edge,
and we see dog pee in old snow,
how the kids are all over the fun
of sledding, and everyone is out
of eggs. Housebound makes a good person
mean as a snake, come too close I strike,
or grab a dagger and gut the sad-bent rhodies.

THEY ARE WATCHING

BY ANDY MACERA

You keep thinking they are watching,
especially your father-in-law
and favorite aunt,
born on the same day and equally gone;
your best friend's parents — they
lived next door for more
than forty years;
the sixth grade teacher who
never liked you,
all seated in the front row of some
celestial balcony overlooking
your life, and
whenever another goes
you confidently walk the runway
of their shadow,
modeling a sharp suit
sewn from the commandments,
convinced that this time you will change,
the funeral home a halfway house,
unhooked from the heroin
of asshole,
passing before them,
their lush breath a wind chime
whispering *he's a good boy*, imagining
the applause, the smiles,
so different from their actual faces,
stern and disapproving,
heads shaking,
hands scribbling feverishly
on notepads. They know better now.
How easily you slay self-control
at the slightest sound of an enchantress,
push and shove your way
onto the crowded train of temptation,
eagerly book the next flight
to the city of sin,
which is why their seats are empty,
as if they had never existed,
and you were incapable of vanishing.

DRIVING HOME ON THE KEELER STREET EXPRESSWAY
BY DAVID MIHALYOV

He rose like a cut-rate Jesus
asking for forgiveness, holding
a cardboard sign telling us he was
a vet, homeless and hungry.

After the rush hour cars moved past
he sat on an upturned bucket
head down, looking disappointed
in the offerings of the day.

It would be easy to pull over
and talk for a few minutes.
Sometimes you just have to talk.
Ask where he served, if he has any kids,

understand that everyone has a story,
a rationale for how they find themselves
standing at an intersection, holding a sign.
I could spare a twenty,

even if he spends it on booze or pills.
I'd like to think one day, maybe today,
I will pull over instead
of pretending he's not there,

some body who doesn't exist
when another car blocks
my line of sight. It would be simple
to give him his humanity,

but that would make both of us sound noble –
for all I know he could be a fucker.
Instead I drive on, leaving it for another day,
or another person, to build that bridge.

COMMUNION DAYS

BY APRIL CLARK

I saw Jesus in your eyes the
day you told me that you didn't
want to see me anymore, so
that your mother might respect you.

I see Jesus in my father,
and my father once saw Jesus.
Jesus told him that his oldest
child (me) would grow up strong, and
marry gracefully at thirty
five, and have three kids, and never
be a faggot. Sorry dad. I
don't know what to say. I'm nothing
that you wanted me to be

for me
(for you).

I'm

just the tranny that you worried
you would take home from the bar. Do
you remember saying that to
me, one silty summer Sunday
afternoon?

And

all the time I feel so empty,
so I stuffed myself with three loaves
of communion bread and then a
glass of wine, and in that moment
I felt Jesus in my heart. (And
in my chest, and in my throat. A
sour taste, a crinkled sour
face. And retrospectively it
may as well have just been heartburn.)

TSK FROM THE DEAD

BY LAURA GRACE WELDON

I shouldn't stack dishes in Jenga piles
but our cupboards are crowded from keeping
what our mothers and grandmothers used.
I use them too, hoping the blue milk pitcher
and cut glass butter dish take up space
in newly forming memories,
though neither the people we love
nor the things they cherished last long enough.

This afternoon I break the lid of a Corning Ware
casserole older than I am. As it shatters,
I swear a long-dead relative *tsk*
behind and slightly above my left shoulder.
I hear disappointment
weighted by all that dish held

until I realize it's an ironic *tsk*,
from a far more cosmic viewpoint.
One that knows
antique clocks kept in working condition,
documents stored on the cloud,
and 10,000 daily steps
can't keep us from losing everything
in our short spangling acceleration
from birth to whatever waits after death.

Her *tsk* implies the afterlife is lit
by awe, a transitory wattage here.
It shimmers in a stranger's hand
reaching out to stop a fall,
in a smile unfurling on a face
long closed with grief,
in the startling wonder of hearing
the dead *tsk* when we break a dish.

MELVIN

BY E.H. THATCHER

You came to me in winter. Compact,
radiator-skin cracked and coated in Band-Aids.
Me, seventeen, shoulders heavy
and prickling. I urged you through
Detroit, white '96 Neon.
Christened you Melvin and never
changed your oil. Us, on The Lodge
or I-94—highways where your wheels
turned my tensed shoulders to dust.
Windows rolled halfway down, heat
blasting on my toes, Zeppelin all the way up,
Pall Mall burning. The kind of freedom
advertisers bleed to repackage.

By summer, your cup holders covered
in layers of incense ash and dried pop,
your right speaker busted, one headlight
blind. Before I put you down
we slog the old roads. I drive you
by the factory in Auburn Hills where
you were conceived, eat a Coney
on your hood and weep
some mustard onto my jeans.

Years later, I admire your gravestone,
a Michigan license plate dangling
from my bedroom wall. In a different state,
a bus pass singing in my pocket.

THANKS FOR ASKING
BY LENNART LUNDH

how things are going, the world's treating me, my life is. Seriously. I needed that. Not that I think the cosmos has singled me out for special attention, good or bad, Job or Solomon. It's just that, honestly, this girl is tired, but not I just need a vacation worn out, certainly not going postal with a pistol in each hand weary, never ever hanging from a rope tossed over a beam in my lake view loft exhausted. Just tired of being standing room only squeezed into a subway car twice a day every working day, one hand clutching a strap for balance, the other holding my purse like it held state secrets, wishing for a third to smack the creep with the back of his free hand on my ass into the next car. That's all. I love my life, my job, the city. It's just that one thing, ten times a week, that makes me cry at night for a private island or a cabin deep in the remotest forest. That kind of tired, thanks for asking.

LATE WINTER SCHOOL DAYS

BY JENNIFER JUDGE

How I hate the spelling of February,
those middle letters nearly invisible,

so easy to forget in a month that is entirely
forgettable, sodden lawns, muddy bits of

ice still clinging to roadsides,
grass the unnatural color of a car left to rust.

Construction paper heart wreaths
and the black silhouettes of dead presidents

cut out by unskilled grade schoolers:
here Lincoln's hat is missing part of its brim,

Washington's wig has gone askew.
Wadded-up tissues bloom in piles on school desks.

At home, teakettles scream in frustration,
the dog sighs in sleep endlessly, and the

clock tells it same old boring story.
The trip home is always too long,

smells like rain, gasoline, and dirty buses.
Winter has settled in — an uncomfortable yoga pose.

BODIES: BECOMING

BY CHRISTINA HARRINGTON

While my tea steeps, I think about:

The moment when tea becomes tea,
how much of the blooming red is needed
before you can call it by its name?

A pearl is created when a grain of sand
irritates soft pink oyster flesh.
The immune system can only respond
by wrapping the invader in something
more forgiving,
more palatable:

Layers of sheer
milky splendor,
thin as tooth enamel.

Tissue winds itself around itself:
Less a foreign irritant,
more a sleeper agent.
It acts without your permission
(but if it is you, does it need to ask?)

It wasn't there and then it was
(don't say tumor, say mass)
worthy of your attention and fear and
long, punching needles
stealing soft, pink parts of you.

A star hypernovas into a black hole.
Coal crushes into diamond.
But what about the moment in between?
The act of becoming?

Between biopsy and diagnosis,
diagnosis and treatment.

When a grain of sand is
no longer a grain of sand
but hasn't yet become a pearl.

GRAVEYARD SHIFT
BY DAVID COLODNEY

The living room TV blasts CNN
rattles the kitchen wallpaper paint
peeling like an onion my wife stirs
soup warms leftovers

I wrap my arms
around her waist

Syria to Parkland violence rages
daily life a minefield these days
genocide in places I can't spell
neighborhoods nearby fall prey
to the drive-by

I look for answers in the popcorn
ceiling of this rented place

when the kids come in for supper
I flip on cartoons and hold my sons'
hands a last touch
before I change into my nightshift
clothes work boots

kiss them goodnight

STILL LIFE WITH KNITTING MILL & WORKING PAPERS
BY MICHAEL JACKMAN

A poem yarn-spun,

A yarn-spun poem.

 Poesie in motion, carriages
 run greased across the needle beds,
needling the beds, white yarns running
those bloody machines of Christmas, 1972,

and cable-knit sweaters rock row by row
 into cardboard crèches.

Needles sing, oil bleeds, yarn unspools.

I stack fat new cone-spools under old,
 twelve pairs, two per machine,
 end-to-end, and then again, quickening,
tying the tiny weaver's knot,
a knotty place to be

at sixteen, working second shift,
me and those twelve machines endlessly delivering.

The bus delivered me

 December evenings, high school winter break;
I passed the Catholic church's crèche
where Mary and Joseph knelt and pressed hands,
 loved the poor boy in the manger.

Knotting, nodding. Don't let the yarn spin out.
"Trip the switch, drop a stitch," and the sweater runs.
 Trip the switch, one less machine to bear.

Needles hooked, unhooked, ascended, dropped
weftwarpweftwarpweft cams turned. Jacquard cards on chains advanced.
Jackman, what are my cards--Jack's-cards? I tied knots, tied knots.

After two a.m., passed the crèche again,
 waited for the bus to deliver--
 that son is loved so very much.

A spun-yarn poem,

A yarn-spun poem. Aye, as puny as I was
I kept the wool-blood running,

clasped hands around the cones, pinched
index and thumb together, the circled prayer
that tied the weaver's knot.

Two a.m. in the grave-yarn shift,
I pull the master switch. The banging, hissing
factory floor goes quiet as one's family,
and in the emergency lights
the machine-shadows stretch for decades.

COLD STORAGE

BY BRUCE ROBINSON

Frost on (just about) everything,
from pumpkins to prose. Words
just about glacial, scars

on the névé, like thick water,
iced isinglass, only lies avail,
heat only possible by means of fiction.

Wounds on the porch all winter
cold feel the cold polarity mulling
in your hands, feel it from the house,

all that's bitter contracting
like the head of whatever it was
that became known as turtles,

internal telescope, the slow fury
of power, jealous light
the disillusioned stars

you wish upon all night
(it's the magnetic metro-north
and opposites attract)

And when the sun warms the porch
words scratching at the door
and rising from the snowline

in a pen kept warm and ready
the way the old stories tell,
then for a while all's well

but all has its habit of cracking,
sun failing like the star
they've always said it could be,

horizon a crease, a fold, the frost's
assertion of the burn of its dominion,
word, world, old Sol compressing

like that old enemy, like paper.

WEIGHTLESSNESS
BY CAROL L. DEERING

Tonight the stars flake
and groan

 over alfalfa fields,
igniting the dark

snaky road
behind the ambulance

on our way
to Emergency.

I should have grabbed
my tripod, wide-angle lens

patience, as they'll
make us wait.

You lie looking up,
bright lights

focus on ancient calm,
awe laced with

smash-ups, distant
radioactive flares

varied exposure,
drifting digits

cold and immense,
a radiance, a cure, a cry.

Freefall, recovery.
The buoyancy of sky.

BIRD WATCHING IN WINTER
OR
A STUDY IN CONTRAST
BY JILL SELL

black against white
three crows
plowing paths
strut to the seedgold
buried beneath snow

I like them
because I can see them
no binoculars
no telescope
no squinting
no looking over bifocal lenses
no trying to get up close enough

crows are not rare
or colorful
or graceful

I do not have to consult
Audubon or Peterson
to tell what they are
or why they are there

they ignore oiled sunflower
and thistle seed in the feeder
and would rather rifle through
the over-the-edge overfill
or beakstab the stale hot dog buns
the neighbor's dog missed on his rounds
scattered below

but still I say I like them
for their outstanding abilities

READING HER POEM ON A WINTER MORNING
BY JANICE S. FULLER

Minus 19 this morning in the Northland.
A rose-colored line hovers in the grey
as the sun battles the horizon.
The cold comes to mind first, dominates
the beauty that dwells here as well.

No wind. Only the flutter of chickadee wings
and the branch that barely bounces as the bird sits,
fluffs its feathers against the frigid air.
No movement of human or cold creature
across the snow. The ice finally finds its depth,
relieved to once again be safe.

The morning glow spreads as I read her poem
and remember the lines about the dog
and birdsong are my favorites.

LITTLE DARK DAYS
BY JOHN WINEYARD

Little dark days
My friend Will explained
To me are how we Welsh
Describe the *gaeaf*

Of course the words were not
Little or dark or days
The words were Welsh words
Words I cannot pronounce, or hardly remember.

But the beauty of them
Held snug in Will's colloquial
With a knowledge that
These days lead from dark

To less dark, to more light
to spring
then summer
only to return back again.

And in this short Welsh phrase
I understood
His wisdom, gained from
70 winters of ...

Dyddiau tywyll bach

SECTION THREE

WHAT IS MY POEM DOING IN YOUR HOUSE?

BY BERNICE MBADUGHA

My poem was not in the cradle between my last sonnet & my next sestina. Instead of raised letters, my hand felt an eight-&-a-half-inch sheet of flat grey linen. Hearth & yard failed to yield my poem's unmetered feet. Beyond the gate Steve walked his bulldog & his corgi. Cane in one hand, leash in the other. I shut my eyes & sniffed the settled air: my poem's hyacinth, dirt, &

unripe-apple scent led East. The big poet's house lay East. I've never gone there. I knew she gave salons. Old-fashioned ones. Artists & writers. Sculptors & musicians. Woe! My poem's metaphors like baby teeth; her snaggle-toothed, jagged lines; her barely slanted, not quite rhymes will bring dishonor to us both. Ah, me! Those touch-&-go metonymies. No doubt, the willful

creature will face rejection at the door. Then she will sit, waiting, on the step—Hark! The smell of hyacinth ended bodiless in front of the house—The big poet had taken my poem in! I knew badass is the better part of embarrassment, but a “Got Poetry?” tee roars lightly, so I rasped tonal bluster: Hello, I'm—*I know who you are. Come in.* The big poet led me to a wooden

dining table, covered, like mine, in piles of folded laundry. Our domestic sharing did not temper my stance: I'd like to know what my poem is doing in your house. The big poet's straight-to-the-point demolished my badass: *She said you're a recluse. You don't attend enough readings. You don't submit enough work.* I half rose. Unabashed, the big poet went on & her next words sat me

down again: *You tell her take a nap when she wants to dance.* Busted. Readers, skip the next twenty-five words. Listeners, put your hands over your ears for eleven seconds: I wanted what was best for her. *No, you wanted what was best for you.* Readers, listeners, I tried to warn you. The big poet beckoned me to follow her into the living room: We drank red wine & scrunched

among multicolored pillows. We listened to jazz—Taylor, Carter, Coltrane, Davis, Monk. We talked craft till we dozed. We followed Sunlight back to the dining room. The big poet swooshed aside a pile of laundry. We drank Peruvian coffee & ate toast with *aguaymanto*. My poem appeared. I offered my arm; we started home. We saw a stone that captured the colors of the six

a.m. sky. I wanted to pocket it, but I thought the big poet might be watching—not us so much, but the sky itself, a masterpiece of Mother N: blues & yellows & tans & pinks & shots of orange that made one imagine O'Keeffe's signature at the far end of the horizon. We walked alongside newly yawning grass & gently unfurling petals. We collected a barrel full of new & borrowed

images. There was nothing to talk about. There was everything to talk about. Steve was walking his bulldog & his other corgi. Inside, everyone else was asleep. I opened the kitchen windows & the smells of hyacinth, marigold, nasturtium, borage, & bee balm blew in. I brewed the sample of Peruvian the big poet gave me. We sat down at the green kitchen table & got back to work.

A CARGO OF PERSPECTIVE
BY MICKI BLENKUSH

Everything they had was borrowed; they had nothing of their own at all...
Mary Norton, The Borrowers

I'm thinking about the state of the world
like it's a place to someday visit.
When I was young,
I wanted most to shrink.
To meet Arrietty behind the walls
and learn how she made do.
Thread and postage stamps.
Paucity here. Usefulness there.
There are forces taking sides
and we're missing the little things.
When you're small, a thimble
can hold enough.
Playing card empire.
A needle for a spear.

GIRL ON ICE
BY JILL SELL

frozen oak leaves
encased in Tinkers Creek
not in amber, but in ice
in January

I skated over them
blades cut through
those closest to the surface

others protected
deep deep
in clean ice
stems twisted
brown tips folded back
trapped where they lay
framed in crystal

I skated along, alone
blades echoing the afternoon
white spray when I stopped

sometimes, tired,
I would sit on the ice
and place my mittened palm
on the frozen tributary

meltdown

released, the leaves
lost their sparkle
their brilliance
their magic
wet, limp in my hand

I skated on
knowing nothing about
thin ice

THE RIO GRANDE CAFÉ
BY CAROL L. DEERING

See
the taco lady

her ruby slippers
hanging out one side

of a papier-mâché taco,
her arm bent over her eyes.

She's resting while the jukebox
slides another oldie

and the toy train roars around
again. Each flash of light

as the doors swing open,
she's off in migraine-aura land.

The flautas, enchiladas,
ear-splitting chatter below

fuel the thunder-sunset
ripples of her eyelids,

the lightning roots
of her crinkly hair,

her fainting
brilliance

in this depot,
a timeless

fragile
allure.

THE SEA A CRUMPLED SHEET
BY ANN LOVETT

tinned
 beaten by sky

folds form
 form again

the world's body
uncontained
 spills
and spills
its gritted flesh
onto the beach

 roll
the water ever
forward
 grind
smooth the edges

glass and stone
and skin and
 come breath
 come

creatures of blood
and bone the air
opens
 creatures
finned shelled
 come

horizons
steeped in fog

that anxious
edge and
 the ruined wake

 breaking

INVOCATION // THE BEAST THAT SCRAPES OFF THE TOP LAYER
BY GREGORY KIMBRELL

The girl shields her eyes from the shaming sun
that drags itself higher and higher still over the

black beach and the wreckage of their hijacked
yacht. Although the rain has passed, the empty

sky seems more ominous than one with clouds,
and the terns that nest in the rocks crouch low

to protect their eggs. The woven gold chain of
a locket containing no photograph twists itself

around the driftwood cross marking the burial
location. There are places for people who defy

laws decided on earth, and places also for they
who defy God's. When the garbage washes up

on shore, even the Devil despises it. The coast
is long. And the going is slow, because there is

no path around the boulders. However, a cave
is set in the cliff face, and the skeleton-colored

phosphorescent moss on the steps that ascend
into the earth glows only when the day is done.

IDENTITY AS (AN INDEX IN FRAGMENTS OR INCOMPLETE THOUGHTS)
BY JIMMY HOLLENBECK

after Matt Bell

Aging, fear of, as in my fiancée finding gray hair in my beard, as in watching my mother's mid-life crisis, as in my younger brother smoking in the garage, as in family.

All Falls Down, as in, *if I were a country, my national anthem would be*, as prophecy.

Anxiety, as scrawled twice in a journal, *anxiety anxiety*.

Arrows, tattooed on my left bicep, as impulse, as needing direction.

Al, as in –coholic (see Father), as in *like father like son*.

Babadook, as metaphor for grief.

Baseball, as speedy centerfielder, as in knowing the lineup of the '84 Tigers by heart, as Whitaker, Trammell, Gibson, Parrish, Evans, Jones, Grubb, Lemon, and Bergman.

Beat, as rhythm, as generation, as in *the only ones for me are the mad ones*.

Bottle Cap, tattooed on my right bicep, as for beer, as at first hating the smell of, as lager, helles, IPA, imperial, porter, stout, sour, cider, and saison, as everyone who thinks it's a moldy hamburger.

Cameras, as high school class I didn't sign up for, as collection of, as displaying them in my apartment like mummies in a museum.

Carrion, as in the decaying flesh of a dead animal, as meditation, as reincarnation, death as sustenance.

Casket, as in those I've seen in them, as myself in one.

Chicago, as in that time you and I couldn't find *Dot Dot Dash*, as in walking down Sheffield avenue drunk off peanut butter beer we drank in a glass shaped like a bicycle horn, as Seurat's *A Sunday Afternoon on the Island of La Grande Jatte*.

Cold, as external and internal, as the goose bumps on your arms as tiny hairs stand straight up like soldiers at attention, as I warm you up under the blankets, as what people say I am.

Compass, tattooed on my right forearm, as first tattoo, as my ex-girlfriend joking that I got it because I lacked a moral one.

Death, fear of, as trying to resist, as succumbing to, as giving in and letting your breath go out of you and not returning, as the trees that die and return each year.

Detroit, as hometown, but not really, as the phoenix that rose from the ashes, as that old cliché, as Labor Day Jazz Festival, as Miles Mosley's prophetic voice growling through a microphone at hundreds of bopping heads, as the fingers that tickle the keys, as spontaneous trips to the Eastern Market, as decay, carrion.

Entropy, as chaos, as what ensues, as in my sink overflowing with dishes, as my messy desk and its newspapers, the bed that never gets made.

Exigency, as urgency, as to figure things out, as the smoke filling my eyes and my lungs, as the drink at the tip of my tongue, as tossing back my head and swallowing.

Fall, as in the season, as in the feeling, as in the dead carrion of trees, as the smell filling the air, as in my brother's passion for skydiving.

Father, as spitting image, as living shadow of, as he whom must not be named, as contraband in my mother's mind.

Flask, as a small collection, as in four total, as in I usually forget mine, as in the time we went to the movies with them in our jacket pockets, as in pouring whiskey into cheap cardboard cups watching actors mean mug and brood on-screen.

Fountain Pen, tattooed on my left forearm, perfectly straight to all but me.

Funny, as in, *you're so funny*, as in that phrase spoken out of awkward obligation.

Future, as in concern for, as in expectations, as in *you're going to do something with your life*, as constriction, pressure.

Gay, as a name prescribed, as not fighting another boy in the locker room in sixth grade, as judgment through one syllable, as what people called me, their teeth forfeiting laughter after pushing me to the ground.

Hair, as in it keeps growing, as in I look like a young Doc Brown.

Handwriting, sloppily done, as being told I'd make a good doctor.

Hipster, as others' definition of me, as liking jazz and good beer, as being told I only liked things because of how *uncool* they were, as in *you're uncool*, as the finger pointing to define me.

Humor, dark, as in *why are you so dark?*, as in *is that a coping mechanism?*, as not having an answer so I make yet another joke about my dead dad.

Iceland, as ale forged from the water of glaciers running through mineral-rich lava, as the tiny bite of shark at the bar on the end of men's shots.

Imposter Syndrome, as in *I've fooled you all*, as the fake moustache and trench coat that hide my ineptitude, my utter incompetence, unshakeable.

Je Viens De La, translation *I come from there*, as not a place, as the frozen sun that sets out west, as in *show me the world we're waiting for*, as *take me home*, as the expense of sanity.

Jimmy, name for, as prescribed by mother and father, as after my grandfather, a name inherited, as not my own, some ill-fitting hand-me-down.

Joke, as in I've got plenty, as in *Helvetica and Times New Roman walk into a bar*, as in the bartender who doesn't serve their type, as being one, as feeling, as being told I am one.

Kill, as the word that slumbers deep in my hippocampus, the thought of the knife, the fear of the act, or of acting upon.

Lamar, Kendrick, as the rapper, as in the time I feigned sickness at work to go to the concert.

Latin, as in *vino veritas, sic semper tyrannus*, and *barba tenuis sapientes*, as *brutum fulmen*.

Lemur, as derived from the Latin *lemure*, as meaning *ghosts* or *spirits of the dead*, as their haunting song through Malagasy forests, like meaningless thunder in forgotten plains.

Memoirs, as in two possible titles, *Almost Cool* and *Everybody's Second Best Friend*.

Misanthropy, as being told I'm *so* good with people, as the sound of snapping necks, as the feel, as the *brutum fulmen* of my mind.

Nerd, as being told I am one, insult as compliment, as embracing the term.

New York, as vacation, as The White Horse Tavern, as Dylan Thomas' ghost, as Ariel and his anxious driving, as defying gravity with you, as getting lost in the veins of the underground city, as maneuvering late night subways and their dead rats.

Ochlophobia, as the heart that flutters on trips to the grocery store, as forcing myself to crowded bars and still feeling alone.

Past, as nostalgia, as lone nights playing catch with the brick wall of my house, as sneaking into R rated movies by having a friend's mom pretend to be my own, as staying up past the moon with friends, wanting to grow up.

Querken, as suffocation, the inability to breathe, the gasping for air that is all this small town has to offer, as my incessantly tapping leg, wanting to run.

Rap, as more poetic than poetry, as performance, as the pump of my aggressive *lemure* heart, as song of *the* self, as the desire to be taken seriously.

Ravens, conspiracy of, as symbol, one meaning death or messenger, as the Greek god of prophecy, Apollo, as carrion-consuming, as the damned souls of murdered peoples.

Spain, as the place of cheap wine, as the botanical garden and the frogs who celebrated us, as *Guernica*, as *The Great Masturbator*.

Suicide, as the first funeral I went to, as being seven and being told my father died of a broken heart, as not understanding until ten years later after my high school graduation when I asked my mother for the truth, as the smoking cocktail of alcohol and antidepressants.

Superman, as waiting for, as escapism, as mother's duality, as playing catch with me because there wasn't anyone else to do so, as never missing a single game.

Tabanid, as horse-fly, as bloodsucker, as borne of carrion, as disease-ridden, as the large compound eyes and short antennae of time.

Tabefaction, as emaciation, wasting away, as myself in a casket, my rotted body screaming through death horrors, as myself as carrion.

Time, and its presence, as constantly breathing, as the sinking ship I can't jump off, as the violently flapping wings of a hummingbird, as tabanid.

Uncertainty, of future, of truth, past, and present, as the shaking fingers that play a quiet chord in a minor key, as *Between the Devil and the Deep Blue Sea*.

Vaaljapie, as immature wine, as imposter, as the implication of class, as impropriety.

West, Kanye, as talented bastard, as my fiancée who teases me for listening to, as hating that I don't hate his music, as hating him.

Xanthous, as yellow, as my red beard, as yellow-bellied, yellow-haired, as crimson crimes committed, as in *blood red*, as in *red blood*.

Yiddish, the self as an incomplete list, as fabrication, as in *I'm not*, as in *zhu met in kop*, the buzzing in my head.

Zoanthropy, as self, as the beast of burden let loose, as myself on all fours, as the fur growing thick and dense on my jowls, as my howling at the xanthous moon in unfamiliar tongues, as my ever-shifting teeth sink into carrion, the bloody word dripping from my tongue, *lemure*, the ghost of dead and incomplete languages.

ASTRAL CHORUS

BY LAURA GRACE WELDON

"Stars resonate like a huge musical instrument." Bill Chaplin, asteroseismologist

Late for chores after dinner with friends,
I walk up the darkening path,
my mind knitting something warm
out of the evening's words.
The woods are more shadow
than trees, barn a hulking shape on its slope.
I breathe in winter's perfect air, aware
I am happy here in this place, this life.
The chickens have come in
from their wanderings. Lined up
like a choir, they croon soft lullabies.
A flock of stars stirs a navy blue sky.
I can't hear them, but I'm told they
sing of things we have yet to learn.

ALIEN ALIEN
BY TOTI O'BRIEN

If belong is something
to be built
and believed

before

clouds of insularity
conceal chronic solitudes
deep bites of separation
bleed themselves to the bone
nailing upon flipped chessboards
dried up postures
unmovable
oppositions

*finally ripped away
en route towards liberty*

old flags float
unanchored
squinting at promised lands
seeking for ground
improbable

WINTER LOVE

BY SARAH BROWN WEITZMAN

George Bellows exhibit of winter paintings

It was surely the cobalt rising out of the whiteness
of snow that Bellows loved working later in the warmth

of memory, that glint of sapphire and lapis lazuli
and not the zinc white of absence

and loss, nor the just-after blur and bleach
but the heaved-up snow of shoveled drifts

plastered on in a thick impasto. Bellows knew
the many whites of winter: river ice, frost

on the windows, grey melts, icicles like tallow
candles, train smoke, the gauze of falling flakes,

water rushing over stone, the brocade
of trod-upon snow and here and there the glistening

of you beside me like a sign of spring
beginning the thaw of love.

AT THE CEMETERY
BY LENNART LUNDH

near sunset, though with angry clouds and sloppy, wet snow filling the air it could have been any hour, visiting her grave and fanning the memories that form the only afterlife we can count on from this vantage. Odd how some plots showed no traffic in the gray slush, while others recalled the patterns of a dozen diagrammed dances overlaid, odd and also sad to wonder if nobody cared, if it was the weather, the time, or just a slow day for the departed who might not even be there, bashful as they are when we speak, bashful or indifferent to what they left.

LAYING STICKS

BY DARWIN PAPPAS-FERNANDES

avoid picking new growth,
locate the straightest fallen branches,
drop them onto the storm-bred frame,
remember, occasionally:
crosshatch for stability,
be mindful not to knock it down,
leaves between layers for warmth.

crawl inside,
check the insulation,
look for gaps, see that
the wind stays out,
job well-done,
look for six friends
to bring inside,
to be close, enclosed.
fifth grade.
home-maker.

today it takes more than just clockwork movement,
to construct the skeleton house.
lists must be composed,
materials catalogued,
occupation quickly becomes taxing.

scribble warding-off runes around the doorway,
cushion the floor with needles and detritus,
barter for productivity to replace feeling,
remember occasionally
to reach for stability;
even if they're bent or twisted, pray the branches just be steady,
even if they're pliable, still growing,
do what's necessary to keep the wind out.
identify the gaps by listening for winter,
by feeling along the scaffold for where the cold comes in.
trying to make a house for the mind,
trying to turn blockades into shelter for the heart,
trying to keep warm in a cold world.
my forts more jagged now than in childhood:
framework was easier then.

twenty three.
still laying sticks.
but there is only room inside for one.

PERIOD DREAM WITH PORCELAIN

BY ADRIANA UGARTE

you were in the kitchen ripping
chipped wallpaper, two purple pansies
sweetly bundled on the table

you were at the clothesline
finding my shape in the sheet, a linen mirror
frothy white, pulpy as almond meal

you were in the bathtub, convex and soapy,
carving out a knife with your finger
into the you-less air

you were in the attic with night-blooming
jasmine, holding an illustration I loved
of some child with a lily for a body

and sightless, you stood in the driveway
under clouds made of faces,
the sky ahead, a bruise

you were hanging from the oak tree
legs sprawled and spinning,
and I was you as well

WHAT A HOMETOWN WEIGHS
BY LAURA GRACE WELDON

Dusty bags of promising heft
thudded into cars of men
who'd left the farm, like my dad,
there to buy pet food.

A Toys R Us parking lot, crazed with cracks,
sprawls where the feed store stood.

My father taught fifth grade at Coe School,
its brass doorknobs and oak floors gleaming 76 years.
Rooms where cursive ghosts lingered on tall chalkboards
now replaced by a blank-faced rectangle
packed with identical cubicles,
no playground in sight.

A forest behind our house
opened to fields of tilting fence posts
where an old horse grazed, unimpressed
by wilted carrots we offered.

It's paved over now, green gone except
where lawn companies spray and mow.
Their machines sound nothing like his blocky teeth
tugging mouthfuls of soft swaying grass.

Car dealerships and food franchises press tight
to the land like a bully's hand over a mouth,
while the past crouches, silent,
waiting for "olly olly oxen free,"
but of course it's a ruse
tricking the next generation and the next,
the last of their fragile things
stored in a tiny history museum
until that too, is gone.

WINTER'S RECKONING

BY DAVID MIHALYOV

I've begun hardening, turning inward.
Dark when I leave, dark when I come home,
I'll miss the day if I'm not careful.
Little sun this overcast season to entice

me to poke my head outside.
Nature slows during winter,
recuperates, why shouldn't we?
Mid-December's warmth had tricked

the hyacinths into sending test shoots
to taste the air, judge if it was time to wake,
reaching for an April sun that wasn't there.
Now, I hear the diesel engine

from streets away. The heavy drop
of the blade and the rough scraping,
like a dulled razor across a sensitive throat.
I clear the bottom of the driveway

where the plow has strewn a blockade.
Across the street Winston maneuvers
his snow blower, a gloved hand raised
in greeting now the closest we'll come

to conversation until spring,
our neighborhood in social hibernation.
Disgorged snow from his machine arcs high,
like water from a summer sprinkler.

Summer. A time when the hyacinths –
those advance scouts – will already have withered.
Today the water crunches underfoot.
The hyacinths have their answer.

ON SLEEP'S CUSP
BY NANCY K. JENTSCH

Let me burrow
in the hollow
of earth's
cupped hand
coddled
as if by an eggshell
lined with lavender

even destiny's tremors
strum a lush lullaby

UNTITLED WINTER HAIKU 2
BY ELAINE WILBURT

wrapped in a quilt—
the toasty aroma
of baking bread

CONTRIBUTORS

Micki Blenkush lives in St. Cloud, Minnesota, and works as a social worker. She was selected as a 2017-2018 fellow in poetry for the Loft Literary Center's Mentor Series program and was a 2015 recipient of an Emerging Artist Grant awarded by the Central MN Arts Board. Her writing has recently appeared in: *Gravel*, *Midway Journal*, *Postcard Poems and Prose*, *Typishly*, and *Crab Creek Review*. More can be found here: mickiblenkush.com

Neil Carpathios is the author of five full-length poetry collections, most recently *Confessions of a Captured Angel* (Terrapin Books, 2016) and *Far Out Factoids* (FutureCycle Press, 2017). He edited the recent anthology, *Every River on Earth: Writing from Appalachian Ohio* (Ohio University Press, 2014). He is an associate professor of English and Creative Writing at Shawnee State University in Portsmouth, Ohio.

April Clark is a junior at the University of Washington, pursuing a BA in both English and Comparative History of Ideas. She did not attend high school and, instead, started at UW as a freshman at the age of 15. She has been writing poetry on her own for a number of years, but has not previously published any of her work. April is also a transgender woman, and is interested in using her writing to explore questions of gender and body politics.

David Colodney's poems have appeared or will appear in journals including *St. Petersburg Review*, *South Carolina Review*, *The Chaffin Review*, *Gyroscope Review*, and *Poetry South*. David holds an MFA from Converse College, and he has been a staffer for *The Miami Herald* and *The Tampa Tribune*. He lives in Boynton Beach, Florida, where he serves as Associate Editor of *South Florida Poetry Journal* and emcees its bi-monthly poetry reading series.

John M. Davis lives in Visalia, California, where he teaches at The College of the Sequoias. His work has appeared in numerous journals, including *The Comstock Review*, *Silk Road*, *Reunion: The Dallas Review*, *Bloodroot Literary Magazine*, *Illya's Honey*, *West Trade Review*, and *Dart*. *The Mojave*, a chapbook, was published by the Dallas Community Poets.

Steven Dale Davison has written several short plays, one produced in New York City and several in verse that were produced for webcast. He has published several nonfiction book chapters, magazine articles, a long essay. He has written several short stories, one novella, and a novel. He has worked as a professional journalist and in business and marketing/communications. Mr. Davison was awarded a writing scholarship by Earlham School of Religion in Richmond, Indiana.

Holly Day's poetry has recently appeared in *The Cape Rock*, *New Ohio Review*, and *Gargoyle*. Her newest poetry collections are *A Perfect Day for Semaphore* (Finishing Line Press), *In This Place, She Is Her Own* (Vegetarian Alcoholic Press), *A Wall to Protect Your Eyes* (Pski's Porch Publishing), *I'm in a Place Where Reason Went Missing* (Main Street Rag Publishing Co.), and *The Yellow Dot of a Daisy* (Alien Buddha Press).

Carol L. Deering has twice received the Wyoming Arts Council Poetry Fellowship (2016 and 1999). Her poetry appears in online and traditional journals, and in her first book, published in fall 2018: *Havoc & Solace: Poems from the Inland West* (Sastrugi Press). <https://www.caroldeering.com>

Joanne Esser writes poetry and nonfiction in Minneapolis, Minnesota. She has also been a teacher of young children for over thirty years. She earned an MFA from Hamline University and published a chapbook of poems, *I Have Always Wanted Lightning*, with Finishing Line Press. Her work appears in *Welter*, *Into The Void*, *Passager* and *Nostos*, among other journals.

Janice S. Fuller is a speech pathologist turned poet who lives in the Arizona desert and on a lake in Wisconsin. Inspiration for her poems often comes from her life in these two very different places. Janice's poems can be seen in *From the Depths*, *Gyroscope Review*, *Pasque Petals*, *The Remembered Arts Journal*, *The Heartland Review*, and forthcoming in *Without Words Anthology* and *SPLASH!*.

Christina Harrington received her MFA from Sarah Lawrence College, where she was the managing editor on *LUMINA* vol XIII. She has been pursuing a lifelong dream of working in comic book publishing, first as an editor at Marvel and now as the managing editor at AfterShock Comics.

Lois Marie Harrod's 16th and most recent collection *Nightmares of the Minor Poet* appeared in June 2016 from Five Oaks; her chapbook *And She Took the Heart* appeared in January 2016, and *Fragments from the Biography of Nemesis* (Cherry Grove Press) and the chapbook *How Marlene Mae Longs for Truth* (Dancing Girl Press) appeared in 2013. She is published in literary journals and online ezines from *American Poetry Review* to *Zone 3*. A life-long teacher (high school, Penn State University, The College of New Jersey), she currently teaches at the Evergreen Forum in Princeton. Links to her online work at www.loismarieharrod.org

Jimmy Hollenbeck is a graduate student/assistant at Central Michigan University. His hobbies include brewing beer, reading comic books well past the typical age, and listening to jazz and pretending he understands it. He hopes to graduate December 2019 with his M.A. and to pursue an M.F.A. following that.

Michael Jackman teaches undergraduate and graduate writing and creative writing at Indiana University Southeast. He lives on a small homestead not far from Spickert Knob, with his partner Sarah, son Theo, dogs Rufus and Monty, cat Naomi, Mr. Albert Squirmy No Cats Hamsterdam the Hamster, and five chickens: Philomena, Tabitha, Sasha, Camilla, and Ingrid. Jackman's publications include *Carbon Culture Review*, *Florida English Literary Review*, *Gyroscope Review*, *Hospital Drive*, *Jewish Currents*, *Pegasus*, *The Thomas Merton Seasonal*, *The Louisville Review*, *Nebo*, *Poetica*, *The New Sound: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Art and Literature*, and *Spank the Carp*.

Nancy K. Jentsch has taught German and Spanish for over 35 years at Northern Kentucky University. She has published scholarly articles, short fiction and poetry in journals such as *Journal of Kentucky Studies*, *Eclectica*, *Aurorean*, and *Blinders*. Her chapbook, *Authorized Visitors*,

has been published by Cherry Grove Collections, an imprint of WordTech Communications (2017). Seven of her ekphrastic poems appear in the collaborative chapbook *Frame and Mount the Sky* (2017). Her Facebook writer's page is <https://www.facebook.com/NancyJentschPoet/>.

Jennifer Judge's work has appeared in *Literary Mama*, *Blueline*, *Under the Gum Tree*, *The Comstock Review*, and *Rhino*, among others. She has lived, worked, and created in northeastern Pennsylvania her entire life. She teaches creative writing and composition at King's College in Wilkes-Barre and is the organizer of the Luzerne County Poetry in Transit program. One of her poems was recently selected for permanent inclusion in the Jenny Holzer installation For Philadelphia 2018, appearing in the lobby of Comcast Technology Center. She earned her MFA from Goddard College and lives in Dallas, Pennsylvania, with her husband and two daughters.

Janet Kamnikar lives in Fort Collins, Colorado. Her work has been published in *Fort Collins Rabbit; get born; Plains Song Review; Spitball, The Literary Baseball Magazine; Still Crazy; St. Anthony's Messenger*; and *The Avocet*.

Gregory Kimbrell is the author of *The Primitive Observatory* (Southern Illinois University Press, 2016), winner of the 2014 Crab Orchard Series in Poetry First Book Award. His poems have appeared or are forthcoming in *Phantom Drift, Infinite Rust, Otoliths, Rogue Agent, Rune Bear*, and elsewhere. More of his writing, including his sci-fi/horror magnetic poems, can be found at gregorykimbrell.com.

Tricia Knoll is a Vermont poet. Her most recent book *How I Learned To Be White* (Antrim House) received the Gold Prize for Poetry Book Category for Motivational Poetry in the Human Relations Indie Book Prize for 2018. She intends to spend much of the Winter of 2019 writing about snow. Website: triciaknoll.com

Ann Lovett is a poet and visual artist living in Ashland, Oregon. She holds an MFA in Printmaking from Tyler School of Art and an MFA in Poetry from Warren Wilson College. Recent publications include the *Bellevue Literary Review, Arkana*, and an anthology, *The Writers Studio at 50*.

Lennart Lundh is a poet, short-fictionist, historian, and photographer. His work has appeared internationally since 1965.

Andy Macera is the recipient of awards from *Plainsongs, Mad Poets Review* and *Philadelphia Poets*. His work has also appeared in *Mudfish, Pearl, California Quarterly, Straight Forward, Off The Coast, Poetry Quarterly, Old Red Kimono* and other journals. He lives in West Chester, Pennsylvania.

Bernice Mbadugha's poems have appeared or are forthcoming in *Drumvoices Revue, The Bread Loaf Journal, Callaloo*, and several anthologies, most recently *It'll Come Like the Rain Fallin'-A Tribute to Sonia Sanchez*. Mbadugha earned an MA in English from Middlebury Bread Loaf School of English. Previously, she received a BA in Comparative Culture from University of California, Irvine. She has attended Rutgers-New Brunswick Writers' Conferences, Writing

in Place in Spartanburg, South Carolina, and the 2018 Bread Loaf Writers' Conference. Mbadugha teaches high school English at a Psychiatric and Behavioral Health hospital in New Jersey, where she lives with her Ridgeback Billie.

David Mihalyov lives outside of Rochester, New York, with his wife, two daughters, and two dogs. His poems have appeared in several journals, including in *Concho River Review*, *Gravel*, *New Plains Review*, *San Pedro River Review*, and *Timberline Review*.

Toti O'Brien is the Italian Accordionist with the Irish Last Name. She was born in Rome then moved to Los Angeles, where she makes a living as a self-employed artist, performing musician and professional dancer. Her work has most recently appeared in *Gyroscope Review*, *The Birds We Piled Loosely*, *Pacific Review*, and *Italian Americana*.

Darwin Pappas-Fernandes works in the publishing industry in New York City. She graduated from Smith College in 2017, having majored in English and American Studies, with a concentration in poetry. Writing, and writing poetry in particular, has been a passion of hers since childhood. *Gyroscope Review* is the first place her poetry has been published and, she hopes, the first of many.

Recent work by **Bruce Robinson** has received Best of the Net nominations and appears or is forthcoming in *Mobius*, *Fourth River/Tributaries*, *Pangyrus*, *Indolent Books/What Rough Beast*, *Blueline*, and the *Beautiful Cadaver Project*. "And still there are harps and whippets on the castled and pit-headed hills."

Claire Scott is an award winning poet who has received multiple Pushcart Prize nominations. 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*.

Jill Sell is co-founder of Three Women in the Woods: Words and Images, a non-profit collaboration between a nature poet, photographer and visual artist. Their free, traveling exhibit is dedicated to raising the awareness of the need to preserve and conserve America's woodlands. Sell was also the co-founder of the Cuyahoga Valley National Park Nature Writers Workshop. She lives in Northeast Ohio where you have to be tough to live in winter with lake effect snow. Bring on the hot chocolate. With marshmallows.

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.

Pamela Sumners is a constitutional and civil rights lawyer from Alabama. Her work has been published or recognized by 20 journals and publishing houses. She lives in St. Louis with her family, which includes three rescue dogs.

Mary Ellen Talley's poems have recently been published in *Raven Chronicles*, *U City Review* and *Ekphrastic Review* as well as in anthologies, *All We Can Hold* and *Ice Cream Poems*. Her poetry has received two Pushcart Nominations.

E.H. Thatcher received his MFA from Chatham University, where he served as the Margaret Whitford Fellow. His work has recently appeared in *Heron Tree*, *Weatherbeaten*, *Soul-Lit* and *Up North Lit*. Currently, he serves as Assistant to the Regional Co-editor at *IDK Magazine* and is working on his first book of poetry in Hamtramck, Michigan.

Adriana Ugarte lives in south Florida and is a first-year MFA candidate at Stetson University. She has been previously published online by the Academy of American Poets.

Sarah Brown Weitzman, a past National Endowment for the Arts Fellow in Poetry and Pushcart Prize nominee, was a finalist in the Academy of American Poets' Walt Whitman First Book Award contest. She is widely published in hundreds of journals and anthologies including *Gyroscope Review*, *New Ohio Review*, *North American Review*, *The Bellingham Review*, *Rattle*, *Mid-American Review*, *Poet Lore*, *Miramar*, *Spillway* and elsewhere. Her books are available from Amazon.

Laura Grace Weldon is the author of *Blackbird* (2019) and *Tending* (2013). She's written collaborative poetry with nursing home residents, used poetry to teach conflict resolution, and painted poems on beehives although her work appears in more conventional places such as *Verse Daily*, *J Journal*, *Neurology*, and *Penman Review*. Connect with her at lauragraceweldon.com.

Elaine Wilburt's poems have appeared in *hedgerow*, *Jalmurra*, *Failed Haiku*, and *Under the Basho*, among others; devotionals, in *The Word in Season*. Forthcoming poetry will appear in *Foliage Oak Literary Magazine*, *bottle rockets*, *The Cresset*, and *Akitsu Quarterly*. She graduated from Middlebury College and lives in Maryland with her husband and five children.

John Wineyard is an artist and writer from the north of England. He is interested in the gaps between things, be they objects or metaphors. He makes objects so he doesn't have to write things down and he writes things down so well, you get the picture. His daily life consists of working with students, enquiring minds bringing new perspective to the well-known and commonplace. He has exhibited locally, nationally and internationally.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Our next reading period runs January 15-March 15, 2019, **or until the next issue is full.** Submissions accepted from this reading period will be published in our Spring 2019 issue.

If you are a writer who loves to produce seasonal work, please keep in mind that the January-March reading period will consider seasonal poems related to spring. Do not send us your winter or summer or fall work for this reading period. General submissions without a seasonal bent are always welcome. Please refer to our guidelines for more information. They are available on our website at gyroscopereview.org, as well as through our Submittable account at gyroscopereview.submittable.com/submit.

All submissions must come to us through our Submittable account. No submissions will be accepted via snail mail, email, Facebook Messenger, Snapchat, drone, carrier pigeon, singing telegram, fortune cookie, or any other delivery method.

Watch our website and our social media (Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram) for news on the Quatrain Project, a giant collaborative effort we will launch on Groundhog Day in anticipation of our fourth anniversary of bringing you fine poetry to turn your world around.

Thank you for reading.

