



# *Gyroscope Review*

*Fine poetry to turn your world around*

*Fifth Anniversary Issue*

*Spring 2020*

*Issue 20-2*



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Spring 2020

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Constance Brewer & Kathleen Cassen Mickelson

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## A FAREWELL AND THANK YOU

After five years as co-editor of *Gyroscope Review*, I am moving on. To what? My own writing projects, including my blog *One Minnesota Writer* where I plan to promote other writers' publications alongside my own essays on the writing life. I will now have more time to focus on collaborative projects already in the works. Poetry will continue as part of my writing practice.

And what a five years it's been. One of my core beliefs as a writer is that time spent on an editorial staff is valuable for understanding one's place in the world, learning compassion for the efforts of others, and contributing to the promotion of literature for all. *Gyroscope Review* is the third editorial staff I've been on and the one that I've helped most to shape. Constance Brewer and I go back several years, to our time together at the now-defunct *Every Day Poets*, and we've created a place here for contemporary poets with many different voices. This is work to be proud of. And I am.

With this fifth anniversary issue, I felt the time was right to shift the masthead. Constance will carry on, of course, as editor. Her vision is clear and her skills are sharp. She has been a wonderful co-editor; I couldn't have asked for anyone better to work with these past five years. Our new assistant editors Elya Braden and Hanna Pachman have already proven themselves capable and kind in their reading of submissions; I have high hopes that their voices will also help shape the future of *Gyroscope Review*.

The poets who send us their work every reading period have touched my heart in uncountable ways. From the poets whose work takes my breath away to the poets whose work doesn't make it into these pages, I am continually impressed by the bravery that accompanies putting a poem out there into the world. It is no small thing to try to convey a moment, a snapshot, a heartbreak, or a joy so someone else can see it inside a poem. This is an art that is sorely needed in the world, one that has the power to change another person. Poets are powerful. Poets carry the stories of this world forward. They offer lines to speak aloud as needed.

This issue is one of our best. The poems contained herein remind us that spring will come even in the darkest of times. Life will find a way. And we, too, will find our strengths, bring them out into the open, and change what must be changed.

Thank you to all the poets who sent us work and thank you to all of you who read poetry. Keep it going. You are bright spots in the night sky.

-Kathleen Cassen Mickelson  
Editor  
April 2020

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# POEMS





# Section 1



**GEORGIA O'KEEFFE'S LAKE GEORGE WITH CROWS, 1921**

BY KAREN GEORGE

At the spire of the world, Crow Mother surveys the Trinity of creation: Heaven, Water, Earth. Her three sons glide, wings wide, in an arc over the azure oval framed by a rim of brown mountain and a blur of turning trees — dark, pale, crimson. In a thin strip of ashen sky, a long cloud bisects a creamy moon. It's dusk. The black triad heads to their night roost.

A Cooper's hawk leaves a junco's torn feathers, strings of intestines in snow by my patio. Seconds later, a crow swoops, guzzles the remains, every drop of blood — the white once again pristine.

**SPRING EMBRACES YOU**  
BY BONNIE BILLET

an unexpected lover  
after a long winter

pink saucer magnolias  
damaged by late frost

Japanese dogwood  
show white bracts on bare branches  
the air frigid then warm

then warmer the dark pulled back  
the wind pushing rain  
flowers looking at you

with intent  
everyone speaking at once  
so much beauty

it breaks you open

**AFTER QIN GUAN'S "A DREAM"**

BY TOM MONTAG

Spring rain. Flowers  
burst into bloom

along the road  
as if a dream.

The whole mountain  
shines. The stream runs

deep. The yellow  
orioles are

everywhere. Clouds  
above me move

and change, dragons  
and snakes coiling,

striking, finally  
letting blue sky

show through. And, drunk,  
I lie here now

in the shadow  
of some old vines,

unable to  
tell north from south.

**INTERREGNUM**

BY NANCY K. JENTSCH

The day after gauze  
draped the moon  
eager geese muster  
seeds rumble  
underground  
frame the space between  
where crocuses reign  
for now  
crowned with haloes  
of honey

## ON THE SENSIBILITIES OF SHEEP

BY SHERRY RIND

*The sheep is said to be naturally dull and stupid. Of all quadrupeds it is the most foolish.*—Aristotle

The day the ram stepped through the spaces  
in the cattle grid, we stepped after--  
as the goats, cows and even the dog could not--  
to the grass and new clover in the town square.

People bleated at us and dogs barked.  
Strangers, we owed them nothing.  
We chewed grass and our thoughts  
of wandering. We prefer to stay  
at the place where we arrive, if we are together.

The shepherd heaved us into his truck  
as if we could not remember the way home.  
We read his face, the mouth-corners skipping up,  
and went to him willingly. We saw the cattle grid  
pass easily beneath us. This time he shut the gate

and set the dog in motion,  
tick tick at our legs,  
the black eye promising calamity  
and the blue warding it off.

The sun never sets faster or slower  
but man and dog barked  
to hurry us, neat and close,  
into the corral for the night.

I woke and saw none of us,  
even the field gone  
as if I were falling down a rift  
farther and farther from my herd,  
tiny glints far above.

The loneliness carved out my heart  
and I cried for my companions  
until their bodies pressing soft against mine  
gave me back to myself.



## BUCKET LIST

BY NANCY K. JENTSCH

Spend time in a barn  
where hay is stacked

for a whiff of last spring's blooms  
and next week's milk

Walk outside in the rain  
long enough for hope to wash you

in water charged by lightning  
and drawn to its ground

Take a lap around the park  
at half your normal speed

see a burl you've passed before  
imagine the kaleidoscope within

Consider the perfect sphere  
of a Michigan blueberry

before it caresses tongue and palette  
sweet with a late summer finish

Sit by the four o'clocks  
to watch them unfurl

when they join night's first sighs  
exhaling hue and scent

**IN THE GARDEN**

BY HOLLY WIEGAND

“Bury it down deep,” she says.  
The robin, overdue, chortles.

Spring is born rich and generous. Lemon sunlight —  
a brightness that clings behind the neck —  
catches the drops of sweat crowning her forehead.

Wet, woody perfume of wakened earth,  
the scent of apple trees and life, engulf the garden.

Dampness seeps into socks. Mud-crusting  
fingernails hide the seed. Her crows’ feet eyes glint  
with wisdom of earth and heaven.

She looks at me, knowingly.  
“For if she isn’t rooted deep, how can she grow?”

**JUNE: TRIAD**

BY ERIN COVEY-SMITH

Rain:

The perennial garden says no, ebullient  
defiance. No – it won't all collapse, not  
even the heavy-headed peonies,  
the taproots won't all wash away, not  
yet, not today, not even in all this rain.

Solstice:

The day fades, subtle and pink,  
hesitant to relinquish its bright hold  
as if, inexplicably, not weary.  
The quiet birds sing sparse, wise lines,  
as if unplighted, doing what they know.

Light:

I am called to visit the light, the bird-laced  
light, the evening light at the top of the stairs,  
after the rain, the light that falls on the desk,  
the desk which looks out to the garden,  
where the green light glows—ardent, wild, free.

**SENRYU**

BY AYAZ DARYN NIELSEN

an earthly affair-  
your cool, green skin  
pressing against mine

## THE SPRING OF 761

BY CHARLES WYATT

And Du Fu sees flowers everywhere  
His neighbor's on a ten-day bender

He sings of flowers wine and poetry  
Is he the first to say swarm and tangle

They catch him up as he wanders about  
Still he offers them a toast

Peach blossoms and the Abbot's grave  
Now he's found a smoky haze

And lost himself  
Here there's mostly mud

A weed whose name I don't know  
Has found a sweet spot in gravel and cement

Doing weed work as well as that old man  
Does poems

Some daffodils beat up by all that rain  
Still get yellow right

They will last a week but not much more  
Any poem knows what that means

# Section 2



**A MESSAGE FROM MARY**  
BY CHRISTY BAILES

It's a Saturday for the holiest of creatures,  
and here I sit  
    because my biking buddy has a catarrh.

Sure, I was invited to go on a group hike  
    to learn about birds as bards,  
        but all be damned if I can't trust my tibia  
    to withstand terrain's torment  
        for seven miles,

and if that's not enough,  
    I sprained my wrist  
    from sleeping.

It has come to writing my life better than it is,  
    although Mary Oliver's bird just flew into my bedroom window,  
unnerving my cat  
    and splatting my pane  
        just to tell me, "Don't do that."

So I will tell you what you don't want to hear:  
The spirit gets stronger as your soma slips into disrepair,  
    laming one limb at a time  
    although I shouldn't complain,  
        I have run four marathons and ridden across Iowa.

But I want more.  
    I want to run half-marathons again.  
    I want to bike across the United States  
    and sleep in a hammock suspended between trees,  
        rather than  
debating such a sad writing idea as  
    whether a washer can erase memories from clothes.

I'd rather  
    be  
        raising brawny biceps with a rough cry  
over a finish line  
        or rolling through small towns  
    with a proud, distinctive stench.

"Give me birds or give me death,"  
    I say,  
as I hope to ride my life better than this.



## A GOOD CITIZEN IS A HAWK

BY HAOLUN XU

i.

This is captivation. I mean, that is  
what lies between the bases of all charisma. I have lived there for so long  
in this blackened wilderness  
and *only now* I recall that I have never seen a red-tailed hawk die.

Sure, I've seen the clumsy and plimsoll corpses of seagulls.  
Their deaths are truly cannibalistic, their body a tale of incest. They share flesh,  
they also share defeat. This is a label  
of codependency,  
and the rule is we avert our eyes to this form of love (or survival.)

ii.

Hawks, understanding a higher form of regency,  
perform their own rituals. No, not death,  
but *yes* a passing.

The method was simple. Take the left talon, sweep a flip,  
and cut a slit in the air. Preferably it is overcast  
enough that you can swipe a notch behind a cloud.  
The raptor, for the sake of all hawks,  
slips into the scar,  
and disappears forever.

Slowly, the wound in the middle of the air  
heals. The clouds part into the fabric of time,  
and we all forgive ourselves the next day.

iii.

Every fifth month, a hawk flies thirty-seven feet north of the church bells.  
The rule is to be silent. The wind catches the forelimbs,  
and the shadows against the feathers, the calamus, all tremble.  
The hawk splits into six.  
The new figures intersperse, splitting the previous titles amongst the other,  
and ultimately fly away. This is the death, and birth of hawks.  
The fable of savagery,  
complete and restarting,  
cloning, marauding

## THE OCEAN IS TIRED OF MY METAPHORS

BY TRESHA FAYE HAEFNER

The ocean is a drunk  
mother sobering up. Her long sob

against land a broken lullaby.  
Tangled seaweed. I walk

on the shore of my morality.  
Ambition broken into shells.

She keeps reaching  
for my ankles,

that sloppy slapping of her hands reminds me,  
I'm tired of being.

Chasing Blues. Fishing  
for commandments.

Like any creature  
she grinds herself

to grit. Bones of dolphins.  
Black knuckle of crab.

When the ocean sings  
it is a dirge. Smoky.

Haunting as silk.  
She cracks the carapace of vessels, licks their bones.

Embarrassed by all the salt  
she has swallowed.

I hold my hand up  
to block the glint of sun flaring over her face.

Now she slides her arms up  
the breast of apology.

Now she withdraws  
more of my mind

back into the cravings  
of the sea.

## LANGUAGE OF LOST LIGHT

BY PATRICIA NELSON

How do I recall the broken light  
that blew singing into a sky of holes?  
The disassembled song is wild now  
scattered like the page-white birds.

I see one bird made of shape and heat.  
Its wing is the color of rock.  
But it flies as high as wanting does.  
It ravel color like a severed cloth.

What can I use to follow it?  
My ear, a little hole of stillness:  
door that takes me inward,  
apart from vastness and mistake?

The eye that sets the day alight  
and measures how it circles?  
The eye is just a dial. Its light is flat.  
Its sum is small and black, and moves.

I want it all: the start, the tilt,  
The thing itself and not the shadow.  
The error in which even the destruction  
is a kind of dancing.

Not just the small and level  
birds of earth. I want to catch the whole  
and half-remembered swaying song.  
The stamen that strews the long white air.

## THE ROAD OF SIX IED STRIKES

BY STEVEN CROFT

I stare out a bullet-proof square of glass,  
the familiar broken buildings dotting  
all the sand-colored streets of Husseinia  
while he tells us he hasn't slept for seven days

We slide along a canal  
cut from the Tigris, into an open vista  
of farmland

and he tells us his suspicions  
about his fiancée's fidelity, not with the half-  
I-don't-care-humor of many soldiers, but  
spitting words half-bitten with paranoia

an ongoing monologue that really says nothing  
like wolves circling the edges of a bad dream

and I think of the rumor in the tent,  
told in low tones, that he will be held back  
when he goes home on leave, put on Rear D

and I think after six IED strikes, more than any  
of us, more than anyone could stand, God,  
let it be true

Let his war with insurgents  
be over, let the dysfunction of buried bombs  
that blew the air from his lungs and thoughts  
from his brain six times

as they tried to reach him through the shaking  
iron carriage of Humvee armor  
become a memory

like the now settled plumes  
of exploding sand that carpeted ballistic glass  
with darkness as they reached six times  
for the sky under his bad star

His war with swirling psychological ballast  
and mind-bending frustration  
just beginning

**AFTER HE ZHU'S "MOURNING"**

BY TOM MONTAG

Entering the house now  
everything is different.

We had come here together.  
Now I am alone.

The tree in the yard  
has lost half its leaves.

An old duck flies by himself.  
The dew on the grass

across the plain begins  
to dry in the sun.

How can anyone leave  
his old home and a new grave?

I lie on our empty bed  
and listen to the wind.

Now who will trim the lamp for me?  
Who will mend my ragged clothes?

**ZAWIYA MOUNTAIN VILLAGER**

BY STEVEN CROFT

Peace a mirage in the distance  
its waveform disrupted by every  
missile, barrel bomb, broken roof,  
burning wall

Driven, feet over ground  
carrying some wrapped khubz  
and a prayer mat  
into the future

Now spirit walking the earth  
seeking rest like the rivulets  
of rain down his spine  
somewhere, anywhere

**NEW COMB**

BY LAUREN TRAITZ

reclamation— a leaf turned over,  
its under-sided, other-colored face

pointing up to the sun, some  
spiraling fingers of vine

climbing concrete,  
choked green

and the charred limb  
of something many-armed and sunken

beneath wisdom's weight, alive  
again, a hive—

coated with viscous, amber light  
packed into the shadowed wound

## ABSTRACTION

BY RILWAN TUKUR

### 1. abstraction

•

something sneaky  
about nights & poetry  
behind the back of sleep,

how my muse & lines  
lust in space like neons  
how they glow, humming

in our skulls like the silence  
of graveyards. something  
sly about how darkness

is a path to another light  
of new captions for thoughts,  
each as a picture asking

for an interpretation  
in the orifice of a mystic.  
something about a thief

in the skin of a bard,  
stealing words from marbles  
in a bystander's oblivion.

something about a jin  
in words blown into the air  
as a spell, a powder, to manifest

from the lips of conception.  
something about the forces  
of nature in the organs

of science, that literature  
does diagnose effortlessly.  
something about how it

comes alive from the crucifix  
like the wake of a 33 year old.  
something about the ethereal.





**IN PRODUCTION: THE FLAMBOYANCE OF FLAMINGOES**  
BY CAROLYN MARTIN

Today the Bolshoi proudly announced  
their world-renowned ballet of swans will play  
the lead in this new ornithologic musical.

A paddle of ducks from Des Moines are lined up  
as understudies and a waddle of penguins  
from the Miami Zoo as the chorus line.

Set in New York, this classic dramedy  
tracks a congress of crows as it uncovers  
a raven conspiracy to kidnap ugly ducklings

and deliver them to a kettle of hawks  
terrorizing Central Park. In a pivotal scene –  
a party set in a posh high rise –

socialites are flamingoes in disguise  
and looming owls spy from the balcony.  
Script writers are keeping major plot twists

in the wings. It's anybody's guess why  
piteous doves fly through every scene  
and penguins, in a tour de force, sing off key.

## DEVOLUTION

BY DOTTY LEMIEUX

The road is narrow  
It is dark and Lisa drives  
the Volkswagen slowly away  
from the writers' conference  
I sit behind and light her cigarettes

Every few hundred feet our headlights  
bounce back at us, reflected  
off a patch of fog on the road  
then brightens again  
along the winding highway

We are driving  
to a town called Marshall  
where the houses sit on stilts  
the bar leans out over the bay  
Lisa says we'll find men who won't judge us  
on our poetic style

Beyond the signpost  
fog obscures the bay to our left,  
walling the road in front of us  
and I think -- *So this is what it's like  
at the bottom of the ocean  
dense and we grow fins.*

# Section 3



**SENRYU**

BY AYAZ DARYL NIELSEN

robotic mistress- -  
oh, oh, which of her buttons  
did I just push!?!

**OLGA**

*(Picasso's First Wife)*

BY MAUREEN SHERBONDY

Unflattering.  
That's how he paints me now.  
Ugly.  
Not a lean ballerina  
or graceful beauty  
dancing across canvas.

Go ahead. Mock me  
with cartoonish caricature,  
brush me into insanity,  
humiliation. To live on  
this way after  
my final breath.

Take on a lover,  
that seventeen-year-old  
child. Leave the world  
a crazed-mess picture  
of me. Limbs askew. Show them  
the jealousy monster that rises  
inside each of us.

## LITANY IN LONG DIVISION

*after Mary Oliver*

BY PAT PHILLIPS WEST

You do not have to live in this world  
on your knees. You don't need algebra  
or a formula, something with  $x$  and  $y$   
all over the page. You already know  
the answer resides inside your core,  
deep blue hard as sapphire—a color  
visible only in ultra-violet light,  
a source beyond mathematics.

Don't wait for him to use his hands,  
like furious steel talons  
to squeeze into your body, holding you  
to the point of suffocation.  
You only have to let your courage  
spiral out of itself, like ferns uncurling  
from their fetal position.

This long slow division  
taking a fraction of you each time  
he laughs at the sound—  
that thwack—your body makes  
hitting the linoleum. Or the slap  
of his leather belt on your bare skin  
until tears—  
beads of salt-filled glass  
fall shattering on the floor.



POSED

BY JEFF SCHIFF

Humor me Sweetz

I want you  
facing the south wall first

beneath the jutting tillandsia  
where the jaguar waterspout  
is sure to tease

the photographic edge  
into noteworthy depth  
Turn in an arc Lovey

so the gemmed light  
refracts off your specs  
yet dodges an optic trail

Hang tight beyond the trench digger  
Hug the shaved ice stand  
Keep pace with the gaggle

we've seen  
strutting its adolescence  
from the doors

of *Colegio Cristiano Los Brazos de Jesus*  
Play the decoy *mi alma*  
alongside the bootshine

where they gather to hear the lottery results  
where they beat their wash into clean paper  
where they slink into social services

where they deal *conquian* and shoot *cinco*  
and meld three and four  
into Blue Bird and Thomas bus seats

Yes dear you are complicit  
Yes dear there's thievery in it  
Yes dear I should ask before I snap the shutter

POEM#1

BY RAY LEVY-UYEDA

in social emotional learning  
there's a little black box of questions  
teachers, called by a first name  
explain spooning  
    what an erection is  
    what it means when a friend no longer likes you and how  
    women can love  
        women

girls, because that's what they are,  
sit in a circle, learn adult things,  
and the way that bodies are pleasurable and  
dangerous, or,  
    (just) pleasurable

it's california so it never gets too cold  
but there's one class, in the winter,  
where a question reads,  
    "what is butt fucking"

and the room floods with a warm laughter  
but for every question the first-name-adults  
give real answer, and the girls, because that's what they are  
    learn later by way of a pregnant  
    absence, that what had happened was called  
    respect

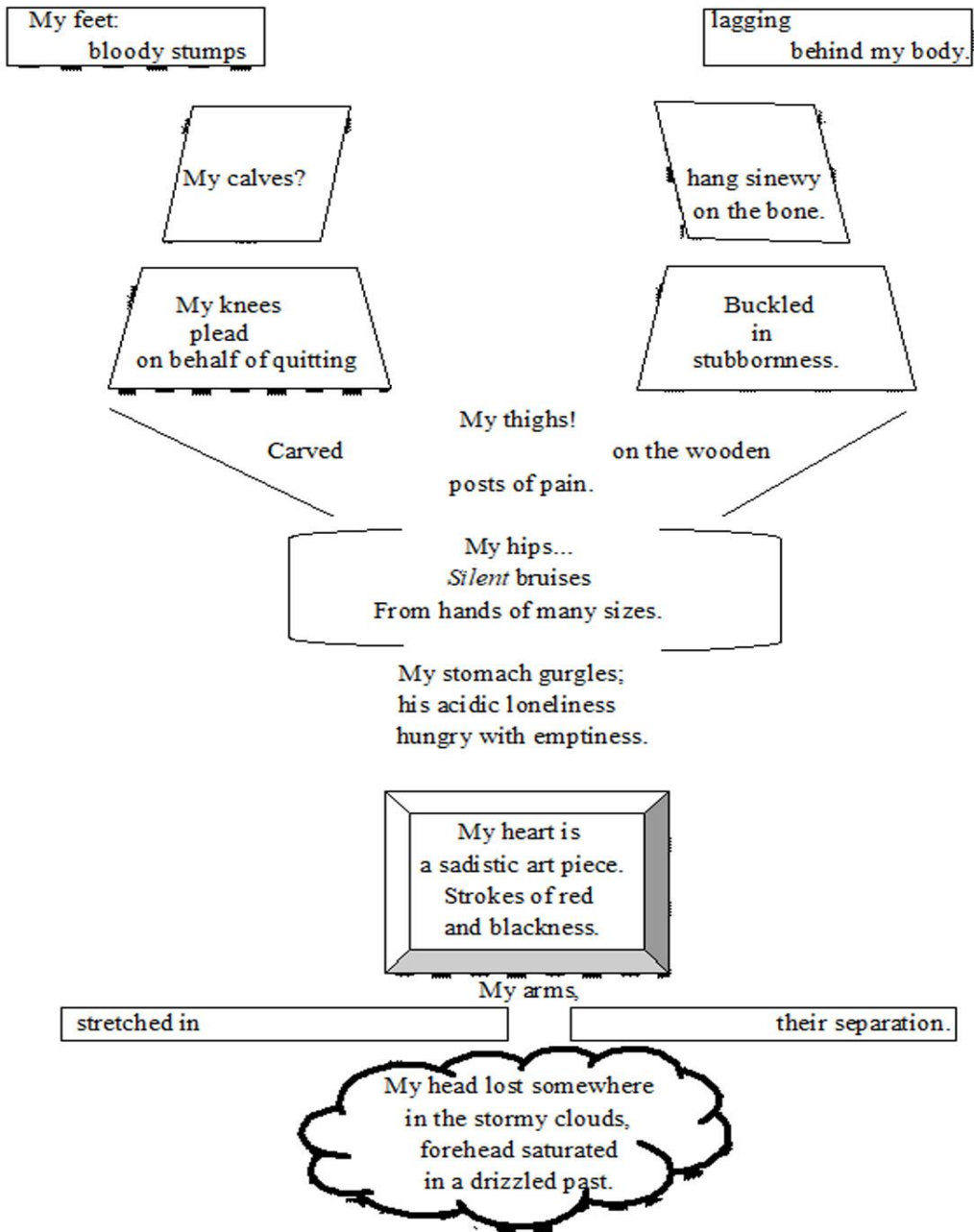
and later on adults much preferred  
the things they could buy  
    than answers to questions  
    even if they knew them

there was a question about blood  
and one about breasts  
and one from a girl who liked to touch herself  
    another from a girl who liked to touch herself  
    and felt bad about it

and the girls, because that's how adults saw them,  
take turns playing dress up  
with adult ideas, and  
adult knowledge  
    almost convincing themselves that it was true.

BODY/MIND  
BY MARIGOLD

BODY/MIND  
BY MARIGOLD



THINGS TO TELL MY DAUGHTER

*after Warsan Shire*

BY TRISH HOPKINSON

When the warmth rushes in beneath  
your skin from your heels to your hips  
and flutters up across your cheekbones

[like my cheekbones] and out  
the reddening edges of your ears—I say,  
daughter, do not mistake that for love. At first

touch, second touch, third—I know  
[like I once was] you will not be sure.  
Remember, this will not be

your only opportunity. I say,  
a whole migration of monarchs  
have yet to brush by.

When it happens, do not mistake  
urgency for love. Love evolves from practice  
—like rolling up on pointe shoes

or drawing symmetrical faces.  
I say, remember real love  
evolves from careful gestures

[yes, even from men] the urge to protect,  
the pull to sit quiet with you  
while you write letters

or talk on the phone, set appointments,  
steep tea, or pick out a pant suit for yourself—  
to notice your desires

and complete them, even on days  
when desires are unspoken. Love, I say,  
evolves from more than fire.

**CREMATION I WASN'T ALLOWED TO ATTEND**  
BY PREETI VANGANI

My virgin shell, was it wider  
or narrower than the slit in the pyre

through which mother was set to flames?  
Penetration, my first stage of grief.

Bombay sweat curdled under my bulk-  
purchase thongs. The city's gutters overflowing

the way I squirted pretend moans into ears  
and ears of hungry boys. The smell of sex

leaked into my theater of loss. Every performed  
orgasm, a rhythmic contraction of muscles

to forget which parts of my baby soft mother  
must have surrendered to fire first. My body,

bent and spent. My body, a fist  
of ash of the whole girl she birthed.

My earthly heat, never more alive. What else  
could I do but keep on disappearing?

POEM INSPIRED BY MY DAUGHTER'S HOMEWORK  
BY ALISON STONE

Burn myrrh for flu, wolfsbane for jealousy.  
Some "romantic" songs' refrain – jealousy.

Which ruins a relationship fastest –  
illness, money stress, weight gain, jealousy?

Least fun of all the deadly sins. As a  
virus slips into a vein, jealousy

enters a heart. Othello knows. Stage-right,  
Desdemona's dead again. Jealousy

and ambition addled Lady Macbeth.  
Abel murdered Cain from jealousy.

Man and stepson wrestle for one woman's  
love, tethered by the chain of jealousy.

Poor Hera's only given one plotline –  
vindictive wife, insane with jealousy.

Racists thrilled by Black and Jew turned rival,  
feeding fear, rancor, disdain, jealousy.

Created in Yahweh's image? Of course  
we're jealous children, remain jealous. See

nothing change, squabble after war. We swear  
off drink but won't abstain from jealousy.

Egg frying in a skillet, the flame turned  
up high. *This is your brain on jealousy.*

We pass flowers, jewelry stores, names carved in  
stone. The last stop on love's train – jealousy.

## IDENTITY

BY RANIA ATTAfi

My feminist father would never claim this identity.

My feminist father is ashamed of knowing  
what's in the cupboards of our kitchen,  
where we keep the detergent,  
how to properly do the dishes.

My feminist father is embarrassed  
by his love for cooking and lecturing me about it —  
be kind to your casseroles, he tells me,  
be gentle with your ingredients.  
I catch the smile that tugs on his disapproval.

My feminist father feels guilty  
for not wanting to go out every night,  
for preferring to stay at home.  
He settles into his cozy corner.  
We blame the cold for keeping him in.

Yet, My feminist father would never claim this identity.  
Instead, it claims him.

**A PERFECT SCORE (DIVORCE)**

BY TOVA HINDA SIEGEL

When did I learn to score the orange peel?  
To make that slight slash?

The beginning slice was hardly noticeable  
the membrane barely touched.

Four equal sections  
so that each dimpled piece of peel  
came off  
without cutting deep into the flesh

Then, each piece of flesh  
split off into its own segment  
not bruising the piece next to it.

I longed to hold  
three pieces close  
while I willed the fourth  
to leave, to disappear, to be gone.

He left but looked back.  
What remained were three pieces.  
Together. Sweet. Whole.



## WHERE'S THE BUTTER?

*props to Nora Ephron*

BY CATHLEEN CALBERT

Glistening on my lips. You may kiss me.  
I'd tell you, but then I would have to kill you—softly—with my eyes.  
Shall I fetch the flour and sugar as well?  
I believe it's still in that cow's belly. Why don't you go see?  
Can butter exist on the same spatial-temporal plane as margarine?  
It's in heaven, along with my best poems.  
The butter has returned to sunshine.  
It's atop orange scones waiting for us in London. Book the flight and I will go.  
The dead housewife knows.  
On my hips. Didn't you notice them dimple into grins?  
Where are my wrenches? Where's my 401K?  
Butter plumped me up with too much pride: why should I be pleased to know the difference  
between salted and sweet?  
I've used it to grease the wheels of progress.  
In silver packets on ice. Shall I have the waiter bring some for your baguette?  
My special friend plays "hot cross buns" with me on Mondays. Best to let sleeping dogs lie,  
don't you think?  
Can you use it in a sentence, e.g.: *When I last shopped for eggs, I found them in the dairy  
case.*  
Why speak of butter when my eyes are the color of clover honey?  
The butter ran away with the broccoli. It lives on the other side of the moon with the dish  
and the spoon.  
It has flown off with the gypsy moths. They shall return in spring, their wings glinting in the  
light.  
Do you prefer "butter" or "buttery"?  
"Butter" or "matrimony"?  
It's in the closet, where I keep the bodies of seven men. Never touch the keys.  
Listen with the ears of a blind man: perhaps the butter will speak. *Here I am. Find me.*  
I dream of butter on cobs of corn, on rolls of wheat, on the tips of your fingers.  
The butter has stained our sheets.  
What has butter to do with love?  
I don't know, my dear, I don't know where the butter is.

**MINERVA'S OWL**

*after Hegel*

BY CLAIRE SCOTT

*the owl of Minerva flies only at dusk*  
only at the end is the plot revealed  
like an Agatha Christie mystery where  
the clues click in place on the last page

only at the end do we discover why  
a fire destroyed, a lover strolled off  
a sister lived on sighs and saltines

only at the end  
when shadows slide across the field  
and we wait for the silent flight of wings  
the wisdom of an owl

**ADAM: THE FIRST LANGUAGE**

BY PATRICIA NELSON

*— When Dante meets Adam in Paradise, he asks him what the first language was. He also learns that Adam's real sin was impatience, not waiting to receive the knowledge that God intended to give him when he was ready.*

First language? Impatience — that scattering  
when I came striding with my swinging voice.  
My thoughts went like eyes among the freer objects,  
desiring their wildness, not seeing a whole.

Naming was the gate the creatures passed  
in the singleness, the separateness I could see.  
The world around them deep with words for rarity:  
brighter, taller bags of air like waves or sunsets.

My language did its clumsy dance with objects,  
I with my ear always against the noise,  
turning like the owl's mask of moon  
snatching little cries of light.

My words dried like the bones of the dead.  
My understanding broke, window by window.  
Then the white air came back, petal upon petal,  
and different sounds like a thickening of bees.

PENELOPE WALKS WHERE THE DULSE IS LAID OUT LIKE SHROUDS  
BY LOIS MARIE HARROD

Look — last night  
where

the moon slipped  
into the sea

and the waves  
glossed over each other

in glass  
layers,

the aprons  
we tossed —

slicks and tatters  
parching on the rocks.

Oh, love, love  
leaves so little —

as if moment  
were millenium,

as if we would not  
need this garb again.

**PHYSICISTS AT THE BEACH**  
BY L. SHAPLEY BASSEN

*Quantum mechanics, not Newtonian physics, applies to subatomic particles. Both the position AND momentum of a particle cannot be known with absolute precision. Either can be known precisely, but then we know nothing about the other. This is the Heisenberg Uncertainty Principle.*

HE

He is thirsty, observing  
the woman lying on her side on the hot sand,  
cheek upon brown arm, eyelids closed, jeweled with sweat.  
Her hip is the curve the sky slides down blue,  
and the bone beneath is the point all lines derive from.  
It is therefore clear... there is no gravity,  
only the curve of space, irresistible and slippery  
as the sides of the well where all cool waters pool.

SHE

Newton arranged it neatly.  
Discretion in all matters great and small.  
Each fits in its space sweetly;  
collision occurs predictably or not at all.

In your arms before the ocean,  
More modern theories of motion  
become real.  
What I feel  
is either the parting of waves  
or  
where you are in me.

**A ROSE, A WOMAN**

BY SCOTT WIGGERMAN

Deep as necessity,  
a body folded, perfected.

The garden, a bare smile  
of milk and bone.

An empty pitcher of moon.  
Odors close about throats.

The dead in white,  
coiled as scrolls and illusions.

Night bleeds petals,  
the sweet drag of flowers and feet.



# Section 4





## NOTES ON MY FIRST BOLLYWOOD SCREENPLAY

BY PREETI VANGANI

I write the back stories in this family drama like it's my religion. The producer says it's inessential. He emails, *(At best, the past can be accommodated*

*as a quick-cut montage. Transition to the protagonist's current conflict. Give her a minor victory. Tell us simply why she's unable to love?)* The answer rattles in the formative years,

I argue and see myself morph into my therapist. How she preemptively slides the Kleenex box towards me before saying: your mother, your father.

*(But remember this isn't their film, assume they are gone.)* There's never enough screen space for grief but plenty for dance and song. *(Can a song advance the narrative?)*

Can I ask my dad to stop singing O Saathi Re in the bathroom then? The one from Omkara -- an Othello adaptation. As in the last film they ever saw together in a theater. He hums to the thrum of the shower: *Aa chal din ko rokein, dhoop ke peeche daudein. Come, let's stop this day from ending, let's run after sunshine.*

This is the story he tells me filled with the same daily vigor as towel drying his back after a shower. *Omkara – a real tragedy. The reel was faulty. The film kept stopping, thank god your mother sneaked in pistachios in her dupatta. We left before it was over.*

Missing the big deaths. The way I landed home three hours too late after my mother closed her eyes. A decade later I will remind Papa how it all ends. How Desdemona is pretty, even in death.

Another email, *(How else can you resolve these characters?)* I lay memory out on an edit table. Hold delicately in my hands the scissor which is this mind: One blade, loss. The other, time.

NASHVILLE LOOKS LIKE AN INCONVENIENCE STORE  
BY EMILY ELLISON

My father refuses to move through metropolises,  
his lungs congesting  
until he honks,  
    inconsolable. So he says,  
*Nearby is a preferable place.*  
*Less people.* My father loves  
rest stops as if he were perpetually weary, collecting  
souvenirs for avoiding  
everything.

    On the outskirts of the unwanted,  
my father bought a snow globe.  
He asks that I care about it,  
this city behind glass  
reflecting  
the most fragile  
statues, his ornamental children.

## GREAT CLIPS

BY BARRY PETERS

Who knew Great Clips opened  
this early on Sunday mornings,  
customers congregated on chairs

pewed in front of sun-christened  
plate glass eager for their discount  
haircuts, mine coming from Divine,

her nametag reads, who homilizes  
about the best class in beauty  
school: not the slippery tricks

of upselling shampoo and mousse  
but the after-hours collaboration  
in the bar, tyro stylists trading wisdom

about child care and carpal tunnel,  
comfortable shoes and the best scent  
to mask the smell of cigarette smoke.

How to make ends meet, Divine says,  
scissoring my dead ones to the floor  
while I calculate what to tithe for a tip.

PICTURE POSTCARD

BY JOHN M. DAVIS

I can't say *I wish you were here*  
as I'm here  
because we couldn't be there together.  
I thought of remarking  
on the weather  
and wondered whether you'd be interested  
in what it's like here today (rainy)  
but in the end, I left the postcard  
blank  
with just an address  
to guide it to you

and you picking it up  
looking at the picture  
seeing nothing you know  
nothing but another landscape  
another tropical isle  
the shape of things far away  
and seeing the absence of words:  
at last, a perfect poem.

## BAILA MORENA

BY JESSICA MEHTA

It wasn't all bad. I remember  
the good, and it wasn't in the big moments  
(it never is). The year *en Moravia* whipped  
me raw with the scaling Tico Spanish,  
the dirty buses and whistles trailing  
from scooter saddles. But that quiet day  
the rain twisted my locks  
into a frenzy and pressed the cotton closer  
to your heart than I ever got — that

is our Costa Rica. Tucking into *casadas*  
while the *queso* vendor across the street  
shouted *palmito* specials to the downpour.  
*¡Aqui solo calidad le vendemos!* The flies  
hugged us close in the tiny *soda*  
shop while *Baila Morena* lulled us all  
into a stupor deeper than Imperial  
could ever muster. We knew the *palmito* in the city  
would never compare to the fresh wonder  
balls sold in huts papered with banana leaves  
along the winding rainforest back roads.  
You knew I was already half gone  
by the urgency of my swallows. And I knew  
it would take years shrouded

in a different love,  
a different life,  
to ever listen to that song again.

**ON THE WAY HOME FROM THE MEETING**  
BY MAUREEN SHERBONDY

Route 85 edged in sleepy pine trees  
slips by at this late hour.  
The dark southern sky is lit by the moon.  
It's not so bad. There were sugar cookies  
on the table near lists and agendas.  
Kind faces stared back across the room.  
No one you would ever invite  
to a holiday party at your house, still.

The road passes both behind and ahead.  
Miles forward your new husband  
waits in that warm house. You left  
the old husband on a road  
in a state you no longer remember.  
Your children are sprinkled along highway  
signposts in faraway places.

It's okay. The right partner  
will soon meet you at the door  
with his impish grin, a cup of coffee  
just the way you like it,  
and those arms that you are always  
so sad to let go of each morning.

## AIR GUITAR

BY LENNY LIANNE

In the racket and crash of night thunder,  
I swear I'd hear the hard rhythms  
of whacked-out rock and roll, plus  
the smash and fracture of countless guitars.

In the morning, the worn wood doors  
exhale and, while the grimy windows  
remain streaked with yesterday's rain  
as though someone cried a long time,

I shy away from glimpsing outside,  
recollecting how I'd paced and fretted  
I'd lose him as he stood in the open,  
braying and playing air guitar

to each stroke of jagged lightning that surged,  
unfettered, across the far-reaching sky.



## DIDDY BOP

BY D'YANNA COFFEY

We have our ratty Reeboks, with two holes in the back, a smudge of dirt and faint green smears on the sides from playing outside, because grandma says don't come back in her house before dinner.

The rattling of change in our pockets mimics a broken washing machine as we run through the dark, cloudless morning to the bus parked outside the mass of burnt, brick buildings that make up Washington Avenue. Grandma watches us from her doorway - our hoodie, faded a dull red with the bright white Walmart tag hanging out the back, our cheap, translucent backpack revealing two wooden pencils smushed against a dark purple binder, and the beads rattling at the bottom of our braids like a tribal opera. Grandma smiles, sweeps the damp mess of beer bottles on her doorstep, then slams the door behind her.

That night, in our old ratty t-shirt, with a hole in the front and a bright red juice stain at the bottom from the HI-C held tightly in our hands, our brown eyes are wide, and our thin arms flail around in swift flashes of brown. We smile, revealing a row of crooked teeth as we watch P Diddy in a music video way past our bedtime. Like the other poor kids on Washington Avenue, we dance too.

## **SHEEP**

BY JAMES K. ZIMMERMAN

unlike a sounding pod  
of whales intoning shaman  
chants and howling lullabies

unlike a slyly winking  
murder of crows that  
gossip among themselves,  
salacious over last night's  
steamy roadkill

unlike a bubbling hive of bees  
in evening congregation  
after solo flight in hazy sun  
to bring bouquets of sticky  
pollen to their queen

more a school of mackerel –  
silver cloud refracted  
in salted light – that flees  
slashing jaws of cod  
and tuna rising up, flash  
of steel from deep below

or a bed of irises craning  
thin blue necks in unison  
to drink a fading glimpse  
of pink in the western sky

they turn as one, as one  
at the sound of a shuffling  
step or muffled cough, one  
thought in twenty woolen  
heads, attention tuned  
in forty quailing ears

they stand as one, each  
waiting for the others  
to come toward, they shy  
away until a singleton –  
scout, spy or pseudopod –  
takes a halting step  
toward the split-rail fence,  
a flicker of initiative  
in golden slitted eyes

am I to be the sacrifice  
he asks himself, the lamb  
of god? the one to lead them  
to the fertile field, rutted  
road, hay-filled barn?

he holds a hoof mid-air, then  
backs away, reabsorbed  
into bleating folds  
of the receding flock

again one thought in twenty  
woolen heads, attention tuned  
in forty quailing ears

again they turn as one  
again they turn away

LESSONS FROM THE HERMIT, SLUG, AND FERAL CAT  
BY CAROLYN MARTIN

(With thanks to Alicia Ostriker's *The Blessing of the Old Woman, the Tulip, and the Dog*)

1.

To be alive  
says the hermit  
is to feel  
the cave ooze moss  
and my skin  
thistle-green.

To be alive  
says the slug  
is to hide  
beneath hosta leaves  
believing no cruelty  
will uncover me.

To be alive  
says the feral cat  
is to wait  
at the sliding door  
until her coffee cup's half-full  
and she readies my bowl.

2.

To be awake  
says the hermit  
is hear the evening breeze  
chant vespers  
through cracked stone  
and modulate each verse.

To be awake  
says the slug  
is to curl beneath  
a flower pot  
until the gardener  
passes by. Relief.

To be awake  
says the feral cat  
is to find the softest dirt;  
squat, deposit  
dinner's residue,

then scratch a lid on it.

3.

To be at peace  
says the hermit  
is to homeschool  
the demons  
who are the outside-  
in of me.

To be at peace  
says the slug  
is to rest through  
sunburnt days and revel  
in the crunching  
music of the night.

To be at peace  
says the feral cat  
is to find  
a catbird seat  
while squirrels squabble  
with Steller's jays.

4.

To be wise  
says the hermit  
is to recognize  
dreams chase me  
and beg for a wish  
on starless nights.

To be wise  
says the slug  
is to understand  
there's more to me  
than slime trails  
around the yard.

To be wise  
says the feral cat  
is to understand  
the vacant bowl yesterday  
does not predicate  
abandonment today.

**VESPERS**

BY JOHN M. DAVIS

in a life dedicated  
to heaven's music  
bells call  
reminding us  
how thin is our strip of light  
between night and night.

I ponder my day  
its gifts:

our sun-star  
its warmth  
this earth

other worlds  
and their many moons —  
iterations  
upon iterations  
solar systems across galaxies  
and I wonder at the source  
of all this shining.

an outburst?

a song?



## CONTRIBUTORS

**Rania Attafi** is a Feminist Tunisian Poet. Her debut poetry collection "*Stardust*" was published in 2017. She graduated from Manouba University with an English Literature, Civilization and Linguistics degree. Currently, she is an English teacher.

**Christy Bailes** is currently pursuing a second master's degree in creative writing from CSUS. Just recently, *Dovecote Magazine*, *Panoplyzine*, *Calaveras Station Literary Journal*, and *Inkwell Journal* published her poetry. In 2016, she received a master's degree in English and creative writing from SNHU, where she studied with Patrick Culliton. During this time, *The Penmen Review* published 18 of her poems. Before obtaining her first master's degree, she studied poetry with Lynne Knight and won an honorable mention twice in the Mattia International Poetry Contest. In 1993, she obtained a bachelor's degree from Eastman School of Music in clarinet performance.

A native New Yorker now in RI, **L. Shapley Bassen** was the First Place winner in the 2015 Austin Chronicle Short Story Contest for "Portrait of a Giant Squid". She is a poetry/fiction reviewer for *The Rumpus*, etc., also Fiction Editor at <https://www.craftliterary.com/>, prizewinning, produced, published playwright: <http://www.samuelfrench.com/author/1158/lois-shapley-bassen>, 3x indie-published author novel/story collections, and in 2019, #4, *What Suits A Nudist*, poetry collected works at <https://www.claresongbirdspub.com/featured-authors/l-shapley-bassen/> FB Author page: <https://www.facebook.com/ShapleyLoisBassen> Website: <http://www.lsbassen.com/>

**Bonnie Billet** has lived in Brooklyn since high school. She has worked as a landscape contractor and has been retired for 5 years.

**Cathleen Calbert's** writing has appeared in *The New York Times*, *The Paris Review*, *Poetry*, and elsewhere. She is the author of four books of poems: *Lessons in Space*, *Bad Judgment*, *Sleeping with a Famous Poet*, and *The Afflicted Girls*. Her awards include the 92nd Street Y Discovery Poetry Prize, a Pushcart Prize, and the Sheila Motton Book Prize.

**D'yanna Coffey** is a professional content writer. Her writing experience can be traced to her pursuit of an undergraduate degree in English. In this venture, she has developed experience with academic writing, creative writing, and journalism. Coffey served as an editor and writer in the 2019 publication of her universities' published magazine, *On Tap*, where she also contributed two articles of her own.

**Erin Covey-Smith** is a writer and visual artist living in Freeport, ME. She holds an MFA from Concordia University in Montreal. Her work may be found in the anthology '*A Dangerous New World*' and in the *RAW Art Review*, among other publications.

**Steven Croft** is an Army combat veteran who now lives on a barrier island off the coast of Georgia. He has two chapbooks, *Coastal Scenes* (2002) and *Moment and Time* (2015) and has recent poems in *Sky Island Journal*, *As It Ought to Be Magazine*, *Poets Reading the News*, *So it Goes: The Literary Journal of the Kurt Vonnegut Memorial Library*, *Third Wednesday*, and *San Pedro River Review*.



**John M. Davis** lives in Visalia, California, where he teaches at the College of the Sequoias. His work has appeared in numerous journals, including *Reunion: The Dallas Review*, *The Comstock Review*, *Gyroscope Review*, *Curating Alexandria*, *Silk Road*, and the *Rockford Review*. The Dallas Community Poets published his last chapbook, "The Mojave".

**Emily Ellison** is a third year MFA poet at Texas State University, where she also works as an Teaching Assistant for their English faculty. Her work is upcoming or found in *Rock & Sling*, *Breakwater Review*, *Gordon Square Review*, and *Haiku Journal*, among other places. Emily lives in San Marcos, Texas with four cats and an abundance of plants (withering at the moment).

**Karen George** is author of five chapbooks, and two collections from Dos Madres Press: *Swim Your Way Back* (2014) and *A Map and One Year* (2018). She has appeared in *South Dakota Review*, *Valparaiso Poetry Review*, *Adirondack Review*, *Louisville Review*, and *Naugatuck River Review*. She reviews poetry at Poetry Matters: <http://readwritepoetry.blogspot.com/>, and is co-founder and fiction editor of the online journal, *Waypoints*: <http://www.waypointsmag.com/>. Visit her website at: <https://karenlgeorge.blogspot.com/>.

**Tresha Faye Haefner's** poetry appears, or is forthcoming in several journals and magazines, most notably *Blood Lotus*, *The Cincinnati Review*, *Hunger Mountain*, *Pirene's Fountain*, *Poet Lore*, *Prairie Schooner*, *Radar*, *Rattle* and *TinderBox*. Her work has garnered several accolades, including the 2011 Robert and Adele Schiff Poetry Prize, and a 2012 nomination for a Pushcart.

**Lois Marie Harrod's** collection *Woman* was published by Blue Lyra in February 2020. Her *Nightmares of the Minor Poet* appeared in June 2016 from Five Oaks; her chapbook *And She Took the Heart* appeared in January 2016; *Fragments from the Biography of Nemesis* (Cherry Grove Press) and the chapbook *How Marlene Mae Longs for Truth* (Dancing Girl Press) appeared in 2013. A Dodge poet, she is published in literary journals and online ezines from *American Poetry Review* to *Zone 3*. She teaches at the Evergreen Forum in Princeton and at The College of New Jersey. Links to her online work [www.loismarieharrod.org](http://www.loismarieharrod.org)

**Trish Hopkinson** is a poet, blogger, and advocate for the literary arts. You can find her online at [SelfishPoet.com](http://SelfishPoet.com) and provisionally in Utah, where she runs the regional poetry group Rock Canyon Poets and folds poems to fill Poemball machines for Provo Poetry. Her poetry has been published in several lit mags and journals, including *Tinderbox*, *Glass Poetry Press*, and *The Penn Review*; and her fourth chapbook *Almost Famous* was published by Yavanika Press in 2019. Hopkinson will happily answer to labels such as atheist, feminist, and empty nester; and enjoys traveling, live music, wine-tasting, and craft beer.

**Nancy K. Jentsch** is a second-career poet who has spent most of her life teaching German and Spanish at Northern Kentucky University. She has worked to instill a passion for language in her students and to broaden their horizons through study abroad. As a poet, she seeks to exercise her passion for language and open new views for her readers. She has recently published poetry in *Eclectica*, *3 Elements Review*, *Soul-Lit and Panoply*. Her chapbook, *Authorized Visitors*, and seven ekphrastic poems in the chapbook *Frame and Mount the Sky* were published in 2017. Her writer's page on Facebook is <https://www.facebook.com/NancyJentschPoet/>

**Dotty LeMieux** has been published in several small press publications and anthologies, including *Solo Novo*, *Writers Resist*, *Rise Up Review*, *Poetica* and more. She has had three chapbooks published and a fourth coming out from Finishing Line Press this year. She lives in Northern California with her husband and two dogs.

**Ray Levy-Uyeda** is a poet and writer based in the Bay Area, where she grew up, left, and returned to. She enjoys things that are easy, like the Bachelor, and things that are hard, like relationships.

**Lenny Lianne** is the author of four full-length books of poems, published by two different presses. She recently finished a chapbook-length manuscript, *Mermaid Out of Arkansas* and is looking for a publisher. She has won awards from the Wergle Flomp Humor Poetry Contest, *Tidepools*, a literary journal and the Poetry Society of Virginia. Lenny holds a M.F.A. in from George Mason University and has taught poetry workshops on both coasts. She lives in Peoria, Arizona with her husband.

**Marigold** lives in the enchanted mountains of Western New York. She writes poetry, plays music, hikes and does tarot readings. The artist participates in open mic nights and shares her work on Instagram. She previously published her poem "When I Hear the Name Andy," in *Awakenings Issue 9: Erasure*.

From associate professor of English to management trainer to retiree, **Carolyn Martin** is a lover of gardening and snorkeling, feral cats and backyard birds, writing and photography. Her fourth poetry collection, *A Penchant for Masquerades*, was released by Unsolicited Press in 2019. She is currently the poetry editor of *Kosmos Quarterly: journal for global transformation*. Find out more about Carolyn at [www.carolynmartinpoet.com](http://www.carolynmartinpoet.com).

**Tom Montag's** books of poetry include: *Making Hay & Other Poems*; *Middle Ground*; *The Big Book of Ben Zen*; *In This Place: Selected Poems 1982-2013*; *This Wrecked World*; *The Miles No One Wants*; *Love Poems*; and *Seventy at Seventy*. His poem 'Lecturing My Daughter in Her First Fall Rain' has been permanently incorporated into the design of the Milwaukee Convention Center. He blogs at The Middlewesterner. With David Graham he recently co-edited *Local News: Poetry About Small Towns*.

**Patricia Nelson** has worked with the "Activist" group of poets in the San Francisco Bay Area. This is a Neo Modernist group. Venues where she has published include *Blue Unicorn*, *The Listening Eye*, and *Mojave River Review*. She has a new book out, *Out of the Underworld*, Poetic Matrix Press.

**Ayaz Daryl Nielsen**, veteran and former hospice nurse, lives in Longmont, Colorado, USA. Editor of *bear creek haiku* (35+ years/160+ issues) with poetry published worldwide, he is online at: bear creek haiku poetry, poems and info. Among other deeply appreciated honors, he is especially delighted by the depth and heart of poets worldwide whose poems have a home in bear creek haiku's print and online presence.

**Barry Peters** lives in Durham and teaches in Raleigh, NC. Publications include *The American Journal of Poetry*, *Best New Poets 2018*, *I-70 Review*, *New Ohio Review*, *Poetry East*, *Rattle*, *South Florida Poetry Journal*, and *Third Wednesday*.

**Pat Phillips West**: Her poems appear in *Haunted Waters Press*, *Clover*, a *Literary Rag*, *San Pedro River Review*, *Gold Man Review*, and elsewhere. She is a multiple Pushcart and Best of the Net nominee.

**Sherry Rind** is the author of five collections of poetry and editor of two books about Airedale terriers. She has received awards from the National Endowment for the Arts, Anhinga Press, Artist Trust, Seattle Arts Commission, and King County Arts Commission. Her most recent book is *Between States of Matter* from The Poetry Box Select Series, 2020.

**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*, *New Ohio Review*, *Enizagam* and *Healing Muse* among others. Claire is the author of *Waiting to be Called* and *Until I Couldn't*. She is the co-author of *Unfolding in Light: A Sisters' Journey in Photography and Poetry*.

In addition to *That hum to go by* (Mammoth books), **Jeff Schiff** is the author of *Mixed Diction*, *Burro Heart*, *The Rats of Patzcuaro*, *The Homily of Infinitude*, and *Anywhere in this Country*. His work has appeared in more than a hundred publications worldwide, including *The Alembic*, *The Cincinnati Review*, *Grand Street*, *The Ohio Review*, *Tampa Review*, *The Louisville Review*, *Chicago Review*, *Indiana Review*, *Willow Springs*, and *The Southwest Review* in addition to others. He currently serves as the interim dean of the school of graduate studies at Columbia College Chicago, where he has been on faculty since 1987.

**Maureen Sherbondy's** work has appeared in *Prelude*, *Litro*, *The Oakland Review*, and other journals. Her most recent poetry book is *Dancing with Dali*. [www.maureensherbondy.com](http://www.maureensherbondy.com)

**Tova Hinda Siegel's** work has appeared in *Salon.com*, *I'll Take Wednesdays*, *On The Bus*, and several anthologies. She holds a BA from Antioch University and an MS from USC. A midwife, cellist, mother, grandmother and great grandmother, Tova has studied with Jack Grapes, Tresha Faye Haefner and Taffy Brodesser-Akner. A mother, grandmother and great grandmother, Tova and her husband live in Los Angeles.

**Alison Stone** has published six full-length collections, *Caught in the Myth* (NYQ Books, 2019), *Dazzle* (Jacar Press, 2017), *Masterplan*, collaborative poems with Eric Greinke (Presa Press, 2018), *Ordinary Magic*, (NYQ Books, 2016), *Dangerous Enough* (Presa Press 2014), and *They Sing at Midnight*, which won the 2003 Many Mountains Moving Poetry Award; as well as three chapbooks. Her poems have appeared in *The Paris Review*, *Poetry*, *Ploughshares*, *Barrow Street*, *Poet Lore*, others. She has been awarded Poetry's Frederick Bock Prize and New York Quarterly's Madeline Sadin Award. She is also a painter and the creator of The Stone Tarot. [www.stonepoetry.org](http://www.stonepoetry.org) [www.stonetarot.com](http://www.stonetarot.com)

**Lauren Traitz** is a Los Angeles based poet who has lived in three out of four corners of the continental United States. She has been writing poetry since puberty and suspects the two may have helped each other along. Lauren studied philosophy at Tufts University and is currently training to be a psychotherapist. She has worked with humans, llamas, dogs, and letters, and has twice saved tortoises from becoming roadkill.

**Wren Tuatha** is pursuing her MFA at Goddard College. Her first collection is *Thistle and Brilliant* (FLP). Her poetry has appeared in *The Cafe Review*, *Canary*, *Sierra Nevada Review*, *Pirene's Fountain*, *Lavender Review*, and others. She's editor at *Pitkin Review* and *Califragile*, journal of climate change and social justice. Wren and partner author/activist C.T. Butler herd rescue goats in the Camp Fire burn zone of California.

**Rilwan Tukur** writes from a coastal axis in Lagos Island. His poems are inspired by existence, memories, creation, lust, love and identity. His poems have been published in *Lunaris Review*, *Libretto Magazine*, *Art Of Peace Anthology*, *Z Publishing* (Best Emerging Poets 2019) and elsewhere. He won the Brigitte Piorson Monthly Poetry Contest (March 2018) and shortlisted in many others, including the Collins Elesiro Poetry Prize (June 2019).

**Jessica Mehta** is a citizen of the Cherokee Nation. Space, place, and ancestry inform much of her work. She is currently a fellow with First Peoples Fund and her book "*Selected Poems: 2000 - 2020*" just won the Birdy Prize from Meadowlark Books. Learn more at [www.jessicamehta.com](http://www.jessicamehta.com)

**Preeti Vangani** is an Indian poet & personal essayist. Born and raised in Mumbai, she is the author of *Mother Tongue Apologize* (RLFPA Editions), her first book of poems (selected as the winner of RL India Poetry Prize.) Her work has been published in *BOAAT*, *Gulf Coast*, *Threepenny Review* among other journals. She is the Asst. Poetry Editor for *Glass Journal*, a Poet Mentor at Youth Speaks and holds an MFA (Writing) from University of San Francisco.

**Holly Wiegand** is an English doctoral student at Boston University. A Montana native, she enjoys fly fishing, kayaking, skiing, and discovering what it means to be human. Her poetry has previously appeared in *DASH Literary Journal*, *Polaris Literary Magazine*, and *Peregrine Journal*.

**Scott Wiggerman** is the author of three books of poetry, *Leaf and Beak: Sonnets, Presence*, and *Vegetables and Other Relationships*; and the editor of several volumes, including *Wingbeats: Exercises & Practice in Poetry*, *Bearing the Mask*, and *Weaving the Terrain*. Poems have appeared recently in *Chiron Review*, *Unlost*, *Pinyon Review*, *Better than Starbucks*, and *Allegro Poetry*, as well as the anthology *Lovejets*.

**Charles Wyatt** is the author of two collections of short fiction (a third is forthcoming), a novella, and two poetry collections. He lives in Nashville, TN where he was principal flutist of the Nashville Symphony for 25 years. [www.charleswyatt.com](http://www.charleswyatt.com)

**Haolun Xu** is 24 years old and was born in Nanning, China. He immigrated to the United States in 1999. He was raised in central New Jersey and is currently studying Political Science and English at Rutgers University.

**James K. Zimmerman** is an award-winning writer – most recently the E.E. Cummings Award and the Edwin Markham Prize – and frequent Pushcart Prize nominee. His work appears in *Pleiades*, *Chautauqua*, *American Life in Poetry*, *Vallum*, *Bellingham Review*, *Nimrod*, and *Reed*, among others. He is author of “*Little Miracles*” (Passager Books, 2015) and “*Family Cookout*” (Comstock, 2016), winner of the Jessie Bryce Niles Award. He can be contacted through his website, <https://jameskzimmerman.net>.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

Gyroscope Review is ready for summer! Bring on the flip-flops.

No special call, themes, or demands for the Summer Issue, just looking for kick-ass contemporary poems to read while we while away the long hot days.

Our next reading period begins on April 1, 2020, and closes June 7, 2020, or when the issue is full. During that time we will read submissions of previously unpublished contemporary poetry for our Summer 2020 issue. The Summer issue comes out in July, so we welcome summer-themed pieces. Please do not send spring/fall/winter poems. All submissions must come through Submittable. Any submissions sent to us via email or any other method will not be considered. Drones will be shot down. Cute children bearing poems will be given two ponies, an espresso, black markers, and sent home. People muttering "Alohomora" to breach my mailbox will be counter-jinxed and get detention in the Forbidden Forest.

Please put your poems—no more than four—in one document, each poem on its own page. No headers or footers. Title your file with Last Name, First Initial, and Summer 2020. Please, please use normal fonts like Times New Roman, Arial, and Calibri. Use tabs to move lines over. Formatting is hard enough without encountering mysterious Word weirdities on the page.

More information is available in our guidelines ([www.gyroskopereview.com/guidelines/](http://www.gyroskopereview.com/guidelines/)). We encourage you to look at past issues and become familiar with the kind of contemporary poetry we publish. New writers, old writers, established writers, and emerging writers all have a place among our pages.

Thank you for reading and see you in the summer!