



# Gyroscope Review

fine poetry to turn your world around

Spring 2022





# *Gyroscope Review*

*fine poetry to turn your world around*

Issue 22-2  
Spring 2022

Copyright © 2022 *Gyroscope Review*  
Constance Brewer

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopy, recording, or any information storage retrieval system, without permission from the editors. For information about permission to reproduce selections from this magazine, contact the editors by email at [gyroscopereview@gmail.com](mailto:gyroscopereview@gmail.com).

Submissions: *Gyroscope Review* accepts previously unpublished contemporary poetry submissions through our online submissions system, [gyroscopereview.submittable.com/submit](https://gyroscopereview.submittable.com/submit). Please read our guidelines before submitting. For further information, visit our website: [gyroscopereview.com](https://gyroscopereview.com).

**Editor:**

Constance Brewer

**Assistant Editors:**

Elya Braden

Betsy Mars

**Logo design, interior design, layout, copyediting:**

Constance Brewer

***This issue's cover art:***

*Sun Burst* ©2022 Kathleen Cassen Mickelson

*Interior Photographs* © 2022 Kathleen Cassen Mickelson

## **From the Editor:**

Welcome to Spring, 2022! It's always a relief to get to spring, with its warming weather and lengthening days. (in our Northern Hemisphere) Everything looks brighter. Flowers pop up. Birds sing louder. Many poems in this issue have that lighter feel, a playfulness that is much appreciated. There are also serious poems that address the uncomfortable issues of living in the world in 2022. We welcome both types of poems and everything in between. I know the lighter stuff can be hard to write but it lifts an editor's soul to see them come in. With the world as it is, we need all the bright spots we can get.

The Spring Issue also marks our seventh year of producing Gyroscope Review. It's been an interesting learning experience over the years. We've come to love seeing familiar faces as well as fresh new ones in the submissions pile. Every submission we hope to unearth a gem or 50 to share with you. That excitement never gets old. Each anniversary is a chance to renew our dedication to bringing you new and exciting poems to read. Thank you to the Spring 2022 poets whose work takes us on familiar and sometimes unexpected journeys. We couldn't do it without your magical words.

Constance Brewer

## Table of Contents

<b>Section One</b> .....	7
Second Sevens.....	9
by Kenton K. Yee.....	9
Bird of Impossible Dimensions .....	10
by Catherine Abbey Hodges .....	
A Poet Applies for a Mortgage .....	11
by Sarath Reddy .....	
What It's Like Is.....	12
by Stuart Bartow.....	
A Sonnet Broken by Someone Else's War .....	13
by Cecil Morris .....	
Can I Fit This Fear in a Box the Size of a Sonnet?.....	14
by Dick Westheimer .....	
TikTok.....	15
by Noah Cohen-Greenberg.....	
Lasso Around Time .....	16
by Testimony Akinkunmi.....	
Turkey Buzzard.....	17
by Wendy Taylor Carlisle .....	
Tomorrow I Will Be Sweet God .....	18
by Alfred Fournier .....	
The Coconut.....	19
by Lois Marie Harrod .....	
The Calling .....	21
by Oz Hardwick .....	
Worry and Bravado .....	22
by Lavina Blossom .....	
Neutron Stars May Not Be as Squishy as Some Scientists Thought.....	23
by Angeline Schellenberg .....	

Fit-Bitten .....	24
by Will Wells.....	
A Momentary Retraction of Grief.....	25
by Lisa Creech Bledsoe.....	
Seeds from Her Seven Gardens .....	26
by Cathy Thwing.....	
<b>Section Two</b> .....	27
Satan Had Always Been in Love with Eve.....	28
by L. Shapley Bassen .....	
Play It Again, Sam.....	29
by Lois Marie Harrod .....	
I counsel survivors of car crashes .....	31
by Ron Riecki.....	
Qualia and Quiet in the North .....	32
by David Goad .....	
Leaving The Sea: A Love Poem.....	35
by Dorothy Howe Brooks .....	
Wind.....	37
by Robbi Nester .....	
Love, Persephone .....	38
by Alyson Peabody .....	
A Woman With a Lost Name .....	39
by Florence Weinberger .....	
At the Class Reunion .....	40
by David Colodney .....	
Ode to Band Life .....	41
by Susan Barry-Schulz.....	
On Second Avenue .....	42
by Marc Alan Di Martino.....	

Thick cut .....	43
by Rebecca Dempsey .....	
Purple Towel.....	45
by Penelope Moffet.....	
This Moment Right Here .....	46
by Laurie Kolp.....	
Trying On .....	47
by Hilary King .....	
Road Ghazal.....	48
by J.R. Solonche .....	
<b>Section Three</b> .....	49
Begging for More .....	50
by Stellasue Lee .....	
4:33.....	51
by Judith Taylor.....	
birds on a wire.....	54
by CJ Muchhala .....	
Saguaros .....	55
by Douglas Macdonald .....	
El Tiempo .....	56
by Bonnie Proudfoot.....	
The Boat-maker's Art.....	57
by Shaheen Dil.....	
Stop Killing Us: June 2021, Tenerife, Spain .....	60
by Julie Weiss.....	
Elegy.....	61
by Martin Willitts Jr. ....	
Good Birds .....	62
by James Penha.....	

Welcome Back.....	63
by Victoria Melekian.....	
The Ice Storm.....	64
by Mary Lou Buschi.....	
the country I inhabit .....	65
by Eva Eliav .....	
A History in Brief.....	66
by Kathleen Wedl.....	
Storm Warning .....	67
by Jane Ebihara.....	
Grace .....	68
by Judy Kronenfeld.....	
Migratory Birds .....	69
by Russell Rowland .....	
day's end .....	70
by John M. Davis .....	
For Christopher Robin.....	71
by Bonnie Proudfoot.....	
Contributors.....	72
Announcements .....	80

## Section One







## SECOND SEVENS

BY KENTON K. YEE

One plus seven is one in digits,  
eleven in herons, sung or spirited.

One plus seven is one in feet,  
not rhymed in rhythm as three in sleet.

Indeed!

One plus six in dice  
makes seven,

leaving doohickeys for breakfast  
on tap in Vegas.

Come one, come seven!

Seven times seven makes  
plumes in Paris,  
gumbo for grub,  
cats on nip plus seven squibs.

Lemon, lemon, fruit obsessions.

The ones are breeding  
sevens.

Salvation is a rabbit  
in your sight, not  
its bones on your plate.

## BIRD OF IMPOSSIBLE DIMENSIONS

BY CATHERINE ABBEY HODGES

*everything  
is changed forever all the time.*

*-Bob Hicok*

This afternoon some cirrus clouds  
formed the wings of a huge bird  
and it felt important that a bird of impossible  
dimensions would be spreading its wings  
over Central California. I like beauty  
as much as the next person and those wings  
were so beautiful I hurt my neck  
trying to make out the rest of the bird but no luck  
it had left its wings there  
starting to fray a little  
at the edges and come apart a little where they  
joined and I thought maybe that was important too  
along with the fact that they were still beautiful  
as they were coming apart  
as they became  
something  
else.

## A POET APPLIES FOR A MORTGAGE

BY SARATH REDDY

I desire more than a roof of clouds, a floor of sod  
to walk on burnished tile, polished pine  
watch rain streaming down double paned glass  
on evenings by the hearth aglow  
a hardbound anthology of suffering teetering  
in one hand, the other clutching a glass of merlot

A torrent of forms to fill, my life on display  
in round numbers, balances, liabilities  
scores, statements, stubs, net worth appraised,  
compounding indebtedness  
to those I can never repay, all the love I have taken  
greater than what I have given.  
Am I worth the risk?

They request a list of liquid assets  
to which I reply that I am seventy percent water,  
and what does not evaporate will remain  
as the ash that feeds the apple orchard,  
or collects as alluvium at the river's mouth,  
the silt that gathers into stone.

## WHAT IT'S LIKE IS

BY STUART BARTOW

a summer moth that gets into your house.  
Because you like moths  
you catch it. Keep it  
cautiously, trying not to harm.  
No exotic, but dull, colored buff-beige.  
You can feel the moth  
in your carefully closed fist.  
As if you were holding inside your hand  
a heart. There isn't much time  
before it destroys itself, before it beats away  
that fairy powder for balance that  
the wings need. Those scales  
a strange armor  
it's shedding in the cocoon  
of your hand. There isn't much time  
to get to where it came from  
in the first place, to get  
to the screen door  
and heave it gently into the dark.



## A SONNET BROKEN BY SOMEONE ELSE'S WAR

BY CECIL MORRIS

War passed us for more desolate and God-forsaken landscapes  
where people prayed at home or in streets with their eyes closed,  
the offertory the sound of drones tuned to a demonic scale,  
the doxology a lover's whisper interrupted.

When the trees ran out, they gave their own limbs. When they came  
on the news, we organized a daring rescue mission for their dogs,  
their poor abandoned dogs scavenging like animals the ruins.  
Delight rippled through us when we found their dogs bilingual  
and capable of wagging our hearts. The dogs of war came to us.  
They scratched and sniffed and circled right or left before lying down  
to sleep. The dogs told us good smells gather everywhere and fleas  
and sun and shade and silent reflection. They did not miss  
the shrapnel and broken glass, and though we tried and tried  
the dogs of war refused to fetch the things we threw for them.

## CAN I FIT THIS FEAR IN A BOX THE SIZE OF A SONNET?

BY DICK WESTHEIMER

This morning, my neighbor fires rounds at beer cans with his AR.  
I flinch like a rabbit at each crack and keep as far  
away as I can. When the shots stop, I walk by and greet  
him, though I'm told he thinks I'm one of those "elites,"  
which I am, if by "elites," he means my tribe, which he might.

At sunset we gather with friends on Zoom and quietly light  
our Havdalah candles. I gaze at my face haloed on the screen,  
sip the fruit of the vine, cradle the spice box, inhale the sweet,  
then douse the flame in wine. Out of the quiet Ed shares the news:  
a friend, a Rabbi, taken hostage.

Silence. *Yet another Jew.*

The wind picks up. Sleet ticks at our windowpane.  
We shiver even in our fleeces. *Never Again* goes the refrain.

Susan suggests we light another candle. I kindle the flame.  
*Always again* I think, flinching like earlier that day.

## TIKTOK

BY NOAH COHEN-GREENBERG

Facebook is dead. TikTok is on fire.  
California is on fire. New Orleans is  
drifting down the Mississippi.  
Refugees are drifting through the  
Mediterranean. Thanks in part to  
your generous tax dollars, lifeboats  
are being blown up. Palestine is  
being blown up. Any city worth its  
weight in oil is either atomizing or  
being atomized. We're also pleased  
to announce that you're going viral,  
along with your mother, your fuck  
buddy, your pediatrician, and the  
coronavirus. What you're feeling is  
all the rage.

## LASSO AROUND TIME

BY TESTIMONY AKINKUNMI

How much of the goodness of God should I count  
to balance this grief? How many dreams should I  
pay as bride-price to these vengeful waters?  
I see blood, pointing at me with accusing fingers  
telling all who will hear that I don't deserve  
to be a family member.

Sometimes, I just want to call God to  
ask why sorrow must be an ocean?  
As to why my nation must be a harbinger of doom?  
Is it not enough that I no longer bleed  
blood, I no longer weep tears?  
Or is Nigeria also becoming a valley of dry bones?

Ah! I want to throw a lasso around time  
and drag it back to when I was never born.  
For I wonder what difference would a dream make  
to a broken nation?

## **TURKEY BUZZARD**

BY WENDY TAYLOR CARLISLE

They are like gods in the trees, the vultures.  
We call them turkey buzzards, although they are neither.

They would be regal if they weren't so ugly, or maybe  
they are ugly and regal, like the Hapsburgs,

whose family name comes from high German for  
hawk castle, but hawks are hunters

and our vultures are weak-footed scavengers.  
You see how I did that, gathered up the vultures

into our family like that, acknowledging  
what they are in the air, our flying kettle,

the local clean-up crew for confused tourists  
mistaking armadillos for garbage on the road,

unable to dodge the doe leaping out from the verge,  
for hunters who abandon what's left

of butchered deer carcasses back in the scrub —  
dogs first, then vultures at the bones —

our uglies who come back to roost in the pasture oak.  
Resting like that, they are properly called a committee,

but when they feed, vultures, like vengeful deities,  
are known as a wake.



## **TOMORROW I WILL BE SWEET, GOD**

BY ALFRED FOURNIER

*Found poem from Matthew, Ch.13 & Sylvia Plath's "The Arrival of the Bee Box"*

The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden  
The box is locked, it is dangerous  
There are no windows  
so I can't see what is in there

The kingdom of heaven is like a merchant  
looking for fine pearls  
I put my eye to the grid  
I lay my ear to furious Latin

The kingdom of heaven is like a net  
like a roman mob, a box of maniacs  
It is dark, dark  
and I can't keep away from it

The harvest is the end of the age  
In my moon suit and funeral veil  
pulled up and burned in the fire  
I am no source of honey

## THE COCONUT

BY LOIS MARIE HARROD

My father stood at the end  
of the kitchen table

and elevated the hairy ball  
above our heads

so we three sisters  
could see

its three soft pores  
through which he hammered a nail

so the milk would drip  
into three juice glasses,

a tablespoon each,  
milky liquid I did not like

though I knew enough  
to pretend otherwise—

my father so elated  
with this strange gift

he brought home  
from a parishioner.

Don't misunderstand:  
no father, son, or holy ghost

this time—nothing particularly  
sacred or carnal—

just the knowledge  
that he would be disappointed

if we did not gulp  
the cloudy communion down.

Later he bashed  
the shaggy shell

into bite-size pieces  
and I, the oldest,

choked  
this mash down too.

It's how I've swallowed  
a lot of things.

## THE CALLING

BY OZ HARDWICK

Apology taps at the front door, barely audible above the tick of the Doomsday Clock and the cat snoring on the best chair. I answer to find it dressed like a friar who's walked all the way from 20's Hollywood in his grey habit and dusty sandals, staff in one hand and shallow bowl extended in the other. It wears the sad, sad face of a silent movie, so pure and abject that it shows neither age nor gender, only contrition, writ large as a billboard on Sunset Strip. Of course, it wants to come in, to sweep aside the cat and warm its blistered toes at the hearth; it wants to tell me the lessons it's learned on its sad perambulations; and, in turn, it wants to hear my confessions, nodding its head like an oil well out by the Museum of Tolerance, rusty but gushing with compassionate tears. It wants to taste the meat that's cooking in my dream kitchen and slip between the sheets of my second-best bed. But I've read my Chaucer and Langland, and my shelves sigh with a chorus of tutting Anons, so I close the door without saying a word as a voice behind the hedge calls *cut!* There's a card on the mat, with a still from The Nun's Story and *We have been taught to forgive* in neat italics. One day I'll be sorry.

## WORRY AND BRAVADO

BY LAVINA BLOSSOM

I have feared my arm might fly up suddenly. I saw this once:  
a woman walked into the library and her arm rose toward the ceiling,  
hovered above her head, the hand swiveling from the wrist  
like a vigilant snake. She used the other hand to pull it down  
the way she might have righted a scarf dragged upward  
by a forceful wind.

I have worried that in a lapse of focus I might wander  
behind a stray dog or cat or follow a scent into an alleyway  
where I'd be bludgeoned. A concentrated will must guard my feet.  
I've been concerned that a word might shoot from my mouth  
without forethought. The meanest coarsest word in a most  
sensitive moment could alienate everyone I care for, irredeemably.

These things are possible. I know this absolutely. And yet, I move  
among others openly and often. I have that much recklessness.



## NEUTRON STARS MAY NOT BE AS SQUISHY AS SOME SCIENTISTS THOUGHT

BY ANGELINE SCHELLENBERG

This white hair at the top of my braid  
is all that remains of winter. Is there a word  
for equal parts fascination and revulsion?  
Deciduous was first used of shooting stars  
and testicles before it lent itself  
to falling leaves. The woman who woke  
right before her own cremation —  
was she relieved? Why did my husband tell her story  
just as I fell asleep? How many rabbits  
are copulating this second? I wonder how  
people who play radios outdoors feel  
about songbirds. Is the feeling mutual?  
My childhood was a failed attempt  
to sort my mother's brooches. All those  
Mandarin-learning neurons wasted.  
What do beavers think right before  
they take a fallen hydro pole between  
their teeth? When I was pregnant with my first  
embryo that survived, I wanted  
my burgeoning houseplants, snaking  
from their pots of filth, to die.

## **FIT-BITTEN**

BY WILL WELLS

A tyrant raised his palace on my wrist  
To capture time and log the steps I take.  
Strapped in his harness, it's pointless to resist.

He tracks each goal that I have met or missed.  
My carbs are monitored, and my pulse rate.  
A tyrant raised his palace on my wrist.

Harsh overseer, he watches and insists  
I slog more miles, reduce my food intake.  
Strapped in his harness, it's pointless to resist.

And when he dies, the pattern will persist.  
An heir will surely follow. Make no mistake!  
Another tyrant's palace on my wrist.

And even worse, I'll pay him to enlist  
The latest options to rule me and berate.  
Strapped in his harness, it's pointless to resist.

The bitter truth is I have been possessed.  
And that possession measures out my fate  
Through a tyrant shrunk to manacle my wrist!  
Strapped in his harness, it's pointless to resist.

## A MOMENTARY RETRACTION OF GRIEF

BY LISA CREECH BLEDSOE

I was or wasn't somewhere particular  
when I replicated. Transcriptions bloomed,  
fanned out, pulled away from each other.  
Nuclear envelopes disintegrated —  
a milky haze drifted away.

There was a time of condensing, or  
lightening — the end result felt clean  
but not twinned. I gazed at myself  
and did not remember this green.  
Wasn't it leaden, always?

I didn't know the atmospheres,  
the chemical furies were still —

*available.* Now

sheets of diamond rain drive inward  
toward a radiant night.

## SEEDS FROM HER SEVEN GARDENS

BY CATHY THWING

She sends seeds in her letters.  
When Dad died, I got carrots.  
Mom's divorce delivered parsley.  
Nick's drinking; I sow cabbage.  
I want gossip and zinnias.

No news, good news. No catmint,  
too. We harvest tragedy.

## Section Two





## **SATAN HAD ALWAYS BEEN IN LOVE WITH EVE**

BY L. SHAPLEY BASSEN

Satan had always been in love with Eve.  
Before, She was Tree and He, Anaconda.  
Her breasts were apples. Jealous Jehovah.  
How could Job's wife be the mother  
of the ten replacement children?  
Where is the justice in her genetic ruin?  
Besides needling Jehovah by  
sadistically torturing Job, Satan's motive  
was Job's wife, an easy incarnation of Eve  
for Him to recognize. See? Jehovah sulks,  
goes silent until a Son corrects His errors.  
Satan eats apple pie. Eve exults.

## PLAY IT AGAIN, SAM

BY LOIS MARIE HARROD

What we leave  
behind becomes  
what we desire.

Take desert ants  
who drag crumbs  
backward home.

Researchers say  
they memorize  
the forward scenes

and reverse them  
in bitty brains  
to nest return.

And perhaps reverse  
*is* the only way of knowing  
how we came

though gods condemn  
the backward glance,  
Lot's wife looking for Sodom

and Orpheus  
making sure  
Eurydice is still

behind. And haven't  
we, *imitatio Dei*,  
said the same:

*get over it*  
when friends replay  
their shopworn woes —

the unforgiving matter,  
the controlling dead,  
all the tattered injustices

that happened  
tears ago—  
while we ourselves

continue scribing  
our own dull versions  
of *Paradise Lost*,

rarely asking  
what revelation  
we hope regained.

## I COUNSEL SURVIVORS OF CAR CRASHES

BY RON RIEKKI

The numbers keep increasing.  
The room is full.  
I start the meeting.  
One of them tells me I have a strange job.  
I tell him that all jobs are strange.  
He's a plumber.  
He asks me if his job is strange.

I don't want to say his job is strange.  
I do a breathing exercise with them.  
The room walls are painted the color of pencils.  
There are a few fake flowers on the wall.  
You can tell the flowers were painted years later.  
They feel like they were painted by high school freshmen.  
They are winter flowers.

I wonder why they would choose winter.  
Winter here lasts nine months.  
Maybe that's all we know.  
Pregnancies of blizzards.  
And these strange flowers in a strange season.  
I should have my eyes closed.  
I realize no one has their eyes closed.

No one is breathing.  
They are all waiting for me to do the exercise.  
They are all holding their breath.  
They remember the moment  
when the windshield opened up,  
the sky entering  
into their skulls.

## QUALIA AND QUIET IN THE NORTH

BY DAVID GOAD

### I. Evening in Upstate before Leaving

A dot of three Amish cast long lines, fishing into  
Otsego's water-stained gold under the spilling sun.  
Ahead, two mallards couple in matching pattern around the dinghy tipping  
Slightly on the still surface of the lake, darkening with each passing  
Second. Beyond the mile-wide bay, Kingfisher Tower, waits to communicate  
Its one word, blinking, for us to decipher not now, but again and again later;  
A moment is a secret meaning much more later, we think,  
As the angled sun strains through thin branches of pine, pouring  
The last sediment of its bottommost color,  
Splashing murk and night, discrediting those forms of three Amish,  
Drifting to the far bank where they will unload their evening catch.

### II. Lunch in Concord, Mass.

On our way to Maine, July opens its blue, green day  
Along Main Street. A lady in the dimly lit Helen's, likely Helen,  
Matron of the frappe, queen of all diners or dives, who knew your father  
From her years let go like moons, sets noon sandwiches and hand-cut fries  
Under our noses drawing in the good scent of fat. Borne from bitumen,  
We hurried trippers in the front booth, thinking our American thoughts,  
Eat in passing, the manner of road travelers, leaving little evidence on mind or plate,  
Except our soon forgotten words, those loose crumbs ready to be cleared  
And cleaned moments after the front door shuts behind us.

### III. A Drive to Maine

Route 1 descends in sea fog, leaving only  
Line shapes of pine among clapboard shanties,  
And squat motels painted in variant yellows, paler now as each form  
Huddles together to make one roadside, peering blankly at us passing  
In silent greeting. The salt stench informs us of the coast where,  
Over the wind-stretched forest at our side,  
An old mill cottage waits for us to ignite  
Soft yellow lamplight near our smooth bed.

#### IV. Conversation by the Sea

"Her home in Thomaston, Tenant's Harbor, this cottage  
Owned by that Knox, monogrammed on our towels."  
Pulling the sheets close, "should we make coffee?" So close you could smell the starch.  
From the far wind, "it feels out of place,"  
Backdraft of creosote, "they think you are great."  
"Dark roast?" "Last night everything was okay."  
Through raw morning stomach, "a well-to-do New York family"  
"I washed dishes each year of college." "You always find ways to be alone."  
Looking at you now, curls in volumes, "there's a mountain near Camden."  
Dressing into cold clothes, "no clouds today."  
Embers renew last night's fire in the front room, "I come from nothing."  
Waves keep rhythm on rock, always "there on the table with the cream"  
"You care too much about things." "Which jam?"  
"A long line of poor farmers."  
Looking at the blue sea meeting blue sky.

#### V. With You in Monhegan

On this island men have died many times, their west-bent  
Gravestones now see us off to sea in the water  
That held, centuries before, their summery feet that swam  
From this shore, but always returned  
To feel the bite of sandy heat beneath their heels dragging home.  
Now as the ferry putters us into distance, the island's outcropped sides  
Merge with the pewter clouds until all of it becomes one smooth stone,  
And from that stone, to gravel, reducing eventually to nothing behind our wake.

#### VI. Rockport in Summer

The lobster traps of old Bearskin Neck, poised in position,  
Form neat towers along the finger-thin pier of Motif #1. Everything in the  
Harbor rises under each stray swell; the red and blue-hulled  
Vessels nose the air, their upcurved bows point out to that blue field,  
Sniffing like chained mutts waiting for release.  
We sit by this scene as the shaded inn holds our cool room,  
Empty at the back of the bay, where white linen, clumped over the bed as we left it,  
Re-forms the ghost of our night bodies calling us quietly back again.

## VII. Route 2 Going Home

Past Gloucester, the long gold glint of road  
Leads us to faraway Berkshires, by now settling in season,  
Their tired bodies slumping in late summer, let lark  
And finch pick the loose skin of old hayfields.  
Here in this middle, between coast and mountain,  
Between our own erosion of mind and body,  
I cannot help but think of you sitting beside me,  
Our hands, two branches twisting in their young wood,  
Touch occasionally in turns or stops  
Of our drive. The road, a simpler love,  
Now sounds the long low om of our four tires,  
As the sea, the island, Helen's, and the  
Crooked Neck of Rockport, now all one,  
Burn phosphorous wick at the back of our minds,  
Growing faint in each night's long turn around us.

## LEAVING THE SEA: A LOVE POEM

BY DOROTHY HOWE BROOKS

*aboard the S/V Unfurled*

He stands at the helm,  
both hands on the wheel,  
feels the slight vibrations  
of the engine beneath his feet.  
He knows this boat,  
its inner workings  
and how it responds  
to his touch. Knows every sound,  
that rhythmic purr and swish  
of the engine, like breathing.  
Knows it instinctively,  
after all these years,  
as well as he knows the rhythms  
of his own wife's sleep beside him.  
No wonder, he thinks,  
fishing boats have names  
like Sallie Mae or Lucy B.  
Theirs is an intimacy  
born of mutual dependence  
like a long married couple.  
Shared good times, shared trials.  
And now he prepares to leave,  
to pass his boat on to a younger man.  
Everywhere he looks  
he finds a memory: the foredeck  
where the tiny yellow bird  
came to rest for a spell  
on the long journey across Florida Bay;  
the spot under the windshield  
where his wife set two croissants  
to warm in the sun each morning;  
the radar where they watched  
the black storm that followed them  
to Key West. One last time,



he unfurls the sails,  
hears their flap and flutter  
like a bird shaking out its wings.  
The breeze catches.  
The boat leaps forward on the wind.

*for Reg*

## WIND

BY ROBBI NESTER

used to be a god, many gods, deities devoted  
to all directions, all points on the map—Anemoi  
and Vayu, so many others, driving powerful  
vessels across the sea, barques and brigantines,  
canoes, clippers and cogs, swelling the sails,  
tumbling the waves' skirts, begetting sweet  
breezes, bearing gold and silks to faraway  
ports, battering ships to bits against the rocks.  
These days, the wind has lost its employment,  
has become a feral dog, yellow as dust, turning  
over trashcans in the alley, herding tumbleweeds  
into the streets. It lashes eucalyptus, sending  
shredded bark raveling down the trunk. It shakes  
the leaves, shouts like a drunken reveler.  
Then it pipes down, with only a branch or  
a fallen oak to remind us what wind can do,  
how it can pick up houses, reduce them to sticks,  
shatter windows and doors, take down a town,  
douse it with seawater until it drowns.

## LOVE, PERSEPHONE

BY ALYSON PEABODY

Disdain hangs in the rafters  
above our wedding bed of bloody pulp  
you expect me to rot at your bedside  
drawing flies from the floorboards for a feast.  
Expectations are your parasites you plant in me  
like the pits laid in my stomach from seeds.

I've been bartered as a heifer doomed to hell  
might as well hang a bell 'round my neck  
it'd be more honest than my name  
synonymous with vacant days  
just four syllables rolling off the tongue  
splattering into the dank ground.

Above me I bet there stands an Earth  
filled with faces knitted with  
questions in their brow, disappointment  
forming crescent moons in the pit of their eyes.  
How I'd love to pluck every moon out  
to cast them back into the sky  
so no one becomes the fate that has swallowed me.

I wince at the shadows you've cast in my mind  
tugging thoughts of you like thorns  
eradicating every trace laced through my lips  
lore wrote me to be your manic pixie dream girl  
sent to soften your edges, God forbid the way  
you've cut down every kind thing  
that mistook you for a man, hoping  
someday to instill hope in the hopeless  
falling victim to misguided savior complexes.

If hands hold you captive with the promise  
for pomegranates and freedom just out of reach  
remember the unconditional love of your own heart.  
If this is his love  
snuff it out so no other eyes see its embers  
let them smolder into oblivion  
before another woman gets burned.

## A WOMAN WITH A LOST NAME

BY FLORENCE WEINBERGER

A woman with a lost name takes brown into her mouth:  
roan, dun and chestnut, burnt umber.

Tastes horse;  
traces mane, hooves, withers, onto the dank rock canvas of her cave.

Her flanks quiver.  
She draws in her cheeks, slicks her lips, calls on her body's wellspring. Spits.

Scoops up drifts of sand, eroded rock, dried blood of feral pig and bison.

Smears into shape with a knot of her hair or the nibs of her fingers  
the flaring things she saw down on the plain and wants to be.  
Wants to mount.  
Wants to race.

Deep in these caves her horses kick down the walls, dig themselves out  
and they run  
bearing on their sweat-hot backs the women who otherwise tended the fires.

Who otherwise still would be there, waiting.

## AT THE CLASS REUNION

BY DAVID COLODNEY

it's nice to catch up with old friends even though we keep up on Facebook, so the questions we ask seem like follow-ups instead of the queries of the long out of touch. Sure, Michael's addiction to Internet porn after his 50<sup>th</sup> birthday comes as the evening's headline, but it was not totally unexpected, nor Michelle's proclamation that she still has "blowjob lips" even without added fillers & shots. After the drinks warm us like a blanket, we talk more about who isn't here than who is, recalling Roger & Mario & the others who got death out of the way early & the chat turns morbid until I realize the DJ is playing "Don't Stop Believing" for what seems like the 30<sup>th</sup> time, maybe once for each year we've been out of high school. I walk to the cash bar & loosen my tie when I run into Sandy, who lived in my building & was rumored to have slept with every senior – except me – & she still looks like she did: strutting in an emerald form-fitting dress & has my guy friends' mostly hairless heads spinning like tops & *now* she finally seems interested but all I can think of is that none of us liked Journey in high school except the cheerleaders & jocks & I didn't hang out with any cheerleaders & jocks. I wish the guy would play Springsteen as Sandy slithers closer & I look around at the faces both lit & shadowed by a ceiling of dimmed & drab chandeliers, the lines on some of my old friends' cheeks individual roadmaps that have led them here to spew gibberish we don't fully believe about the money they've made flipping houses & their kids getting into Stanford or Yale. Most of us just struggle to suck in our guts & soften the gray & hide how our hands tremble slightly when we greet each other. I am glad we only do these every 10 years although at some point fate switches it to every five & we're nearly there. At the class reunion, when the lights pop on like an interrogation, we confess we haven't gone where we thought we would. I call an Uber & plop into the back, unable to shake the feeling that we are off a time yet timeless at the same time. I grab my phone from my pocket & begin tapping Sandy's number, squinting to read the digits she scribbled on a damp cocktail napkin because I am not wearing my glasses.

## ODE TO BAND LIFE

BY SUSAN BARRY-SCHULZ

if you're familiar with the inner workings of a spit valve  
if you recognize the particular and probably toxic odor of valve oil on cork  
if you've spent an inordinate amount of time adjusting your music stand to just the  
right height  
    and angle  
if you've had to borrow a pencil from the third chair again  
if you've figured out that most shenanigans emanate from trombone section  
and that the trumpet section encompasses the biggest collective ego  
if you've turned your head to catch a glimpse of the drummer whose eyes are hidden  
behind long  
    bangs as he's counting out his part  
if you know the singular satisfaction of returning your chosen instrument to the plush  
    velvet foam covered lining that carefully cradles its every curve  
and are reassured by the snap of a case latch  
if you've had to stop to buy a new pair of shoes on the way to a winter concert  
if you understand the significance of black pants and a white shirt vs. black pants and  
an off-  
    white shirt  
if you sat in the bleachers in the cold wearing a hideous uniform with a ridiculous hat  
if maybe you got ice cream after or maybe you didn't because your parents were in a  
fight with  
    your brother  
if you carried that cumbersome case by its handle or on your back through icy parking  
lots  
    and narrow bus aisles with a mixture of pride and embarrassment  
if now when you happen to catch a few measures of Dvorak's New World Symphony  
    it makes you smile  
or you can play along with the percussion parts of Sleigh Ride or the Overture of 1812  
and are moved out of proportion by any John Phillip Sousa march or Star Wars medley  
even if you haven't touched any of it since high school  
don't worry  
it wasn't a waste  
you should know  
that that music never leaves you.

## ON SECOND AVENUE

BY MARC ALAN DI MARTINO

The waitress plunks down a pastrami-on-rye  
thick as a Yiddish-English dictionary  
next to a piping-hot bowl of matzoh ball soup  
with *kneidlach* the size of softballs, instructs us:  
“Give the better half to your better half.”  
Coke-bottle glasses bob slant on her face,  
her fragrance from a previous century.  
Hebraicized letters jitter in the window,  
dance gold-on-black in gaudy flashes.  
There is a touch of Eastern Europe here  
of old Ukrainians and older Jews  
though most of us packed into this restaurant  
are tourists. My wife fumbles with her sandwich,  
clasps it with all ten fingers. “Go ahead,” I say  
“eat.” She squeezes it to a manageable  
width, bites off a cautious corner. She is sold.  
The Yiddish theater croons again in our mouths.

## THICK CUT

BY REBECCA DEMPSEY

The sortie isn't definitive but is exemplary.  
There'll be further battles with disbelievers.  
It's a fight, a clumsy dance, a ritual.  
The teen behind the glass counter,  
hairnetted, latex gloved hands moving  
towards the mortadella, skimming  
the prosciutto, skirting the salami,  
and the chorizo, to hover near the sopressa.  
It's always the pancetta I require.  
God, I'm tired. But I persist.  
Eventually they'll convert. For now,  
he grabs the mild,  
laying it down heavy in the slicer,  
cutting it without asking.  
As if I don't know the recipe or my mind.  
Finished with the pancetta, it's a mere graze.  
He raises a pale wafer, a deli priest  
holding communion. Double handed.  
'For garnish,' he invokes.  
I strategise for this skirmish.  
'No: not garnish.' I explain:  
'Cut thicker than bacon.  
Like this. Thank you.'  
I hold up fingers spread apart.  
'Oh,' he says, puzzled, but disinterested.  
It's because it must be hot, spices visible,  
chopped wedges thick for the fat to bubble  
and spit in the pan, flavour forming  
a full body the bolognaise is built upon.  
But here, pancetta is an accompaniment,  
an afterthought, like I am. A minor note,  
amongst a throng, lacking  
the zest of a main event.  
'Is that the hot?'  
He looks, shifting his supermarket  
vestments. Again, his hands reach  
into the display, passing a benediction  
over cold deli meats arranged on an altar,  
dressed in plastic. He can't find the hot.



We pause. It's a truce. A comprise:  
this time I take the mild, cut thicker,  
but not enough, in this  
endless holy pancetta war.

## PURPLE TOWEL

BY PENELOPE MOFFET

I told myself  
you do not need  
a purple towel.  
And I agreed,  
reasonable as anyone  
who edits letters  
for a living.  
Still  
there's no gainsaying  
what the heart  
leaps toward.  
It hangs sweetly  
on a silver rack  
above the toilet,  
aglow before  
a sun-colored wall  
beside a shower curtain  
patterned in green bamboo.  
Old as I am,  
I wash and dry myself  
with wine.

## THIS MOMENT RIGHT HERE

BY LAURIE KOLP

We are eating fried fish at the Golden Corral on Good Friday  
when you say the doctors are playing with your platelets.  
Dad is telling my husband about the scarcity of new trucks  
and my sister and her partner are talking about tattoos.

I am so confused. People line up at the buffet like ants.  
Dishes rattle together as the busboy wheels his cart around  
and tries to take my plate away before I have finished.  
You are still complaining about your platelets getting

so low after chemo when someone shouts tornado.  
The windows become magnets drawing folk to take a look.  
A few rush to the bathroom, some crawl beneath tables.  
Dad says his 1917 Chevy was worth a trade-in— no,

he meant 2017—as we all start to laugh, as we cram closer  
in the booth and my sister tells her partner she will never  
get a tat like that, as the wind howls outside and the tornado  
on the horizon passes as if it's more important than

this moment right here.

## TRYING ON

BY HILARY KING

I can't find parking at the store I need to go to, but the shop across the street has open spaces. So I go in. The space is light and airy, the racks full but not crowding, the lighting pleasantly warm on my face. I notice this place sells everything I ever wanted to wear but never dared to: leopard-print pants, crop tops, horizontally-striped A-line skirts, camping, small business ownership, farming. Farming? Try it, the sales clerk says. She's dressed in black, and her bangs are epic, like an old black and white photo of a library in Dublin. I find myself in the dressing room trying on lambing and FSA loans. Heavy boots. I lift my feet, try dancing. How's the fit? the sales girl calls. I stick my head out of the dressing room, the velvet curtains heavy on my shoulders. I can't tell if I'm swimming or drowning, I tell her. Do you have anything in cafes or bookstores? Maybe a bakery? As the sales clerk shakes her bangs no, an older woman wearing a measuring tape around her neck and rows of silver bangles up each arm approaches. Let's take in the acreage, she says quietly, and perhaps remove the sheep but keep their idea. As she lays the tape against my waist, her bracelets move without a sound.

## ROAD GHAZAL

BY J.R. SOLONCHE

Middle English *rode*, from Old English *rād* ride, journey; akin to Old English *rīdan* to ride.

Okay, let's get this show on the road.

The #2 greatest Bruce Springsteen song is "Thunder Road."

The #5 best country song of the 1970s is "Take Me Home Country Roads."

"Afoot and light-hearted I take to the open road"

is the first line of Walt Whitman's poem, "Song of the Open Road."

An influential novel from the Beat generation is Kerouac's *On the Road*.

The #37 ranked movie of all time is *Mad Max: Fury Road*.

A famous American novel by Erskine Caldwell (1932) is *Tobacco Road*.

A network of trade routes between East and West was called the Silk Road.

In Old Norse, the ocean was known as the "whale-road."

Perhaps the most famous road of all is "The Yellow Brick Road."

So, Solonche, do you have one more for the road?

No, I'm done. It's time for me to hit the road.

## Section Three



## BEGGING FOR MORE

BY STELLASUE LEE

He's on the street, hand out, asking  
for money. He could be a bronze statue,

downtown, standing at a bus stop.  
He's stock-still, shoulders rounded,

unkempt, stringy hair, eyes the color  
of dirty dishwater—I walked by him

many times over the last few weeks.  
It's been a good month, so I decide to help,

spread the wealth around. I give him a tenner.  
He asks if I can make it a twenty.

I laugh because what else is there to do.  
This needy guy wants me to double down.

It makes me sad he isn't grateful,  
yet, I honestly can't imagine what

he has to be grateful for. I get lunch,  
and buy an extra ham and cheese.

When I retrace my steps,  
he's a statue again, hand immediate.

I place the sandwich in his hand.  
He says, *Will you get me a coke?*

## 4:33

BY JUDITH TAYLOR

*(John Cage's 4:33 performed online in lockdown by Red Note Ensemble and guests, 3/7/2020)*

What are you going to play? Everything. Silence.

Softly at first, the rain is tuning itself on the glass.

A goldfinch sways on the highest branch of the hawthorn tree, then flies away.

A gesture is made in Paris. We raise our instruments.

I

A framed silence. Vertical lines divide it from the silence that came before, which was merely waiting. Now we are where attention places us.

The rain keeps up its damping. The birds will not return while it plays.

Somewhere, maybe Paris, maybe Munich, a heavy door swings to in a tall, echoing stairwell. The Department of Music, sounds like. Or a shared stair, a space between apartments.

Here, and there, and there, we sit in front of our webcams, paying attention, in a space we cleared for performance, a silence we set aside for this.

The second line releases us into a different silence. There we breathe, shift our position. Wait.

II

Page two, or maybe four, if you count the dedication. A vertical line. Another frame that stretches away before us, disappearing over the page.

The sift of rain, the pattering. Not enough rain to make the downpipe sing, or the roof contribute drumming.

People walk by outside, across our silence. They conduct themselves as always. Maybe we are the ones playing into the space that they have assigned to what they are doing out there.



When you reach the end of the page, turn over. Try not to rustle paper.

And someone left themselves muted. Lack of technical nous, or cheating? Are they contributing a silence? Is it different to ours? If so, how?

A gesture, again, in Paris. A pause, again, of silence.

### III

And the final frame. Its closing line is visible through the thin page.

A feather lodged in the square of grass outside is an indication that though the glass maintains a silence, the wind is rising.

And the screen freeze-frames a moment. There is a technical problem: underwater noise, misprocessing what's received. Then reset, connection, silence.

A part of me - sentimental? - hoped for goldfinch sound. And a part - satirical? childish? - wanted starlings to come scrapping along the wires outside. But rain maintained their silence.

Rain. From as early as this language is written down, a device for sadness. A worn-out key to an old, elaborate, heavy box of emptiness.

Why do we want to write what we write on silence? Why do we play this?

We are trying to frame what waits outside the frame. We are trying to say whereof we cannot speak, if available language comes with correspondences made already.

Listen. Re-place the frame. If there must be a frame, lay it across some other space. Between the lines, the keys, the clefs, the instructions, the phrasing, listen.

And a last gesture. The final line. We are freed, to applaud ourselves, each other, and speak. Some of us reminisce about other times, and silences.

We release ourselves, close the connection, walk away, each of us into some other space.

#### IV

The rain gets heavy. Percussion all afternoon, then it dies away.

I revisit the score, the lines, as the birds return, as they squabble and sing outside,  
asserting dominance

over the airspace and the sources of food. Their song lays down their own divisions  
across the garden.

I listen in silence.

*Cage's score in proportional notation can be seen online at  
<https://hyperallergic.com/85779/the-original-john-cage-433-in-proportional-notation-19521953/>*

## BIRDS ON A WIRE

BY CJ MUCHHALA

like  
    whole  
    notes  
quarter notes  
  
falling  
  
    rising  
  
in glissandos  
    of silence  
  
improvised —  
  
    a canon with  
        no coda

## Saguaros

Now the sky splits open its blue skin and the saguaros stand tall in the Tucson morning – they have an awareness we cannot know – the crackling heat is rising as we head to the airport – beyond us the wells are drying – farmers are truck-hauling water for crops – we race down Alvernon past Quik Mart past Cubesmart past Kids-With-A-Smile Preschool I look out the side window where it says “OBJECTS IN THE MIRROR ARE CLOSER THAN THEY APPEAR”

Note: Alvernon Way is a street in Tucson and the places mentioned on it exist as of winter 2020.

### SAGUAROS

BY DOUGLAS MACDONALD

## EL TIEMPO

BY BONNIE PROUDFOOT

In Madrid, minibikes weave up narrow blocks,  
grates over shop doorways unlock around 2-ish,

we pace ourselves, my aunt, my cousin, me,  
reset our clock. We are three generations,

a distance that disappears viewing Goya, El Greco.  
Imagine an ocean passage, Ellis Island, Brooklyn,

then Queens, everyone within inches. Grief and strife  
pierce apartment walls, thread into the bloodline.

"If anyone asks what you are," my mother instructs,  
"tell them you are American." I try. Strangers

see right through that gambit. My mother dies  
at 64, just before my cousin is born, this cousin

whose fingers swell and throb as mine and my aunt's do,  
as my mother's did. In *El Parque Retiro*, beside

the Crystal Palace, a dark-haired woman sits  
at a folding table with a Royal typewriter.

"Give me a theme, and I will give you a poem,"  
her poster promises. "*El tiempo*," I say. Time.

"*The matter of time*," she types (*en español*),  
"*is immaterial, a bubble. Two dogs face each other*

*from each side of a spiral.*" She says the words come  
from the air. The letters push into soft vellum, ink already

starting to fade. In a Barcelona café, a Flamenco dancer  
spirals her veil, glances over her left shoulder. The past

is gaining ground, it's snapping at her stamping heels. We clap  
faster and faster, hold tight to each other when she bows.

## THE BOAT-MAKER'S ART

BY SHAHEEN DIL

### I.

I remember watching the boat being built —  
the decadent lines of it,  
the shine of wood,  
hand-polished surfaces gleaming,  
sleek, tempting,  
half-done and up on trestles,  
still looking for all the world as if it wanted to leap into the water,  
sails unfurled,  
bow springing above the waves,  
aft slicing through sprays of spume.

The boat-maker's hands gentle,  
sanding the sides.

Unaware of the camera's gaze,  
voyeurs peeping through lenses  
trained on his hands,  
he worked while we watched,  
absorbed and unconcerned,  
secure in his place as master-builder,  
preserving tradition —  
a yacht with sails,  
no fiberglass, no engine.

### II.

I imagine Galatea being chiseled  
with that same precision —  
the maker chipping at the perfect form —  
fusing design and desire.

### III.

*On the Ganges delta, crisscrossed by rivers,  
fishermen abandoned wooden sailing boats and dugouts  
(designs over 3,000 years old).*

#### IV.

In Narsingdi Ghat boat-builders stand  
ankle-deep in mud,  
lung his hitched up around their hips,  
building power boats and motorized dinghies  
using traditional tools  
    *(hammer, nail, chisel, wood planer, bow saw, lathe)*  
and mass-produced engines  
    *(cheap, efficient),*  
the fire of focus in their eyes.

Their hands gentle,  
the hull bending to their touch.

These boats are both love and livelihood —  
they are to fish,  
to eat,  
to live,  
to race —

The ancient forms modernized for speed.

#### V.

*Not to be confused with Bangladesh's ship-building industry  
in the dockyards at Buriganga or Chittagong,  
vying with China, Japan and South Korea  
to export ocean-going vessels and warships.*

*Back to historic pre-eminence —  
in 1770, Bengal built 223,250 tons of ocean-going ships —  
compared to only 23,061 in the restive American colonies.*

#### VI.

The Mazhi launches his finished nauka,  
beating back thick fronds of lotus leaves clustering the edges  
with his long pole,  
slicing through pink blossoms,  
the boat glides into the river,

phut phut of the engine starts,  
black fumes trailing behind.

Nets cast into the deep of the inlet,  
marked by buoys.  
He will return before dawn the next day  
to harvest his catch.

## VII.

The *Apache Star*,  
a fiberglass monstrosity,  
dove into the water like a red rocket,  
engines roaring,  
achieved speeds of 115 knots —  
set a world record from Miami to Havana  
and back.

## VIII.

Charon lifts up his oar,  
pushes off from the edge.

The ripple of black water making no sound.



## STOP KILLING US: JUNE 2021, TENERIFE, SPAIN

—for Anna and Olivia

BY JULIE WEISS

A car seat bobbing on the Atlantic.  
Trembles of baby hair, shed while Anna  
slept on rides between her parents' homes,

pried loose by bickering winds, anxious  
to tuck a relic of the slayed girl into a locket  
of memory. One-thousand meters deep,

two duffel bags anchored to the seabed,  
one stuffed with Olivia, dressed  
in her tennis uniform. Blood the powder

of drugs. Body crawling with the crustaceans  
of her father's spite. The other bag, empty.  
An abandoned boat, a splatter of blood,

a poem that refuses to name a beast  
or mourn his plunge into whatever  
inferno his hooves may have dragged him.

A parish priest, dragging Beatriz's name  
through the junkyards of social media.  
Divorce, he says, a leading cause of murder.

A young girl, Olivia's age, perched  
on her father's shoulders in a choke  
of protesters, holding a rainbow-colored sign:

*"Stop Killing Us." How many more children  
will be dumped into the ocean of a parent's  
jealousy?* Beatriz screams. A nation on its knees,

praying she will rock Anna one more time  
before relinquishing her to the earth's  
long, long arms, where Olivia lies, waiting.

## ELEGY

BY MARTIN WILLITTS JR.

I stay quiet  
until the sun flattens on the landscape,  
and the map of the day unfolds  
its long dream of innocence.

I kneel among the broad ferns,  
the flushed skin of the dew.  
Sparrows sing straightaway into heaven.  
The cut pines preach: more praise, more praise.

I stay quiet  
in the gossip of who is surviving  
among the silence  
praying to be safe. Sparrows sing to the sun;  
the scrub pine prays; foolishness rises.

My grandparents survived the 1918 epidemic,  
but grandfather buried his relatives  
in the far-flung back fields, near the slur of the river.  
He did not know the word *influenza*,  
but he knew its cruel touch on stillborn babies.  
Grandmother boiled all the sheets,  
moped their rooms, burned mattresses.  
Grandmother prayed that those days, those failures,  
never return, said, *Is it God's will they died  
and not mine? Which is mercy? Which prayer?*

I kneel on the stillness,  
keeping my prayers tight  
for *hope* and *not giving up*. I hope the sparrows  
take my prayers  
into the clear and penetrating light.  
A lesson is not lesson if it is not learned.

I can only tidy my small place in the world.

## **GOOD BIRDS**

BY JAMES PENHA

When farmers ready Bali rice fields  
    down come the white herons  
to feast first on unearthed eels  
    who'd languidly enriched the soil,  
then to stop and savor mites and mice  
    on march against the grains.

## WELCOME BACK

BY VICTORIA MELEKIAN

Spring burst through the first  
lockdown—birds, oh my, the birds  
sang night and day, grass greened,

lupine and poppies bloomed galore,  
and tiny finches nested in hedges  
outside the glass patio door.

We watched nature cycle through  
its rhythms as our own went haywire:  
cooped up, penned in, shut down.

The season's star was a yellow surprise,  
a wild snapdragon that plopped into  
an empty spot and flowered all summer,

gone in early fall. Now, a year later,  
it's back, settled in place,  
just like family home for dinner.

## THE ICE STORM

BY MARY LOU BUSCHI

Knocked out the power  
leaving us camping  
by the fireplace for weeks.

The velvet couches covered in thick plastic  
look like far off glaciers, Inuit families  
living there, eating charred fish,  
never fighting. Our bedrooms,  
mysterious caves left in wreckage.

The night before the storm my brother  
woke me, asked me for my coin  
collection and anything  
in my piggy bank, promised  
he'd pay me back.

I got out of bed, felt the cold crack  
up through my bare feet.  
I was too young to understand  
desperation. Too young to see danger  
while admiring the incomparable  
beauty of a frozen tree in moonlight.

I imagined the Inuit family around a small fire  
sharing stories, sharing how hard the world is,  
the mother stroking the chapped cheek of her  
son who plays with a stick that he flicks  
in and out of the flames,

while my mother is a distant figure, walking the yard,  
now a museum of glass, searching for her son.  
There are open power lines lining the streets,  
as my father adds logs to the existing flames  
that jump and lick trying to defy gravity.  
The boy finally lets the stick go. We are all  
falling. There are fires everywhere.

## THE COUNTRY I INHABIT

BY EVA ELIAV

the country  
I inhabit

a wooden bench

furnished with cold coffee  
and a book

I'm sitting beside  
a bank of purple flowers

bougainvillea  
scentless  
varnished by sunlight

at times so familiar  
I could draw a detailed delicate picture  
of their progress  
from seed to blossom

sometimes so alien  
I sit and gape

an old woman  
startled by the faces  
of her children

## A HISTORY IN BRIEF

BY KATHLEEN WEDL

I'm from bean fields, shocked wheat, seed caps, canned peaches,  
long johns hanging cardboard stiff on the porch.

I'm from five and dime—dad forcing smiles at indoor chores  
ringing up lady things, paper dolls, candy leeches.

I'm from nuts and bolts, stacked paint cans, pitchforks, lawn mowers,  
guns, China place settings—parents' easy smiles.

I'm from convent school, town dances, ripped lips from braces,  
late night cars purring beneath mounds of snow.

I'm from hospital wards, monitors, bed pans, hands reaching  
to be held, one who made me holy, one who spat in my eye.

I'm from rivers of sweet woodruff, chorus  
of coral bells, hydrangeas deigning to bloom  
and these four giddy poppies waving in spring.

## STORM WARNING

BY JANE EBIHARA

the birds are ravenous  
charge the feeder like war planes  
honed on enemy lines

foolish with plenty they  
toss as much as they devour

this is not about hunger —  
not even about birds

there will always be days when  
everything threatens to be torn

days with questions  
more ominous than forecasts  
than clouds

days of *what if*  
days of *perhaps*

followed by days  
of *enough*  
*too much*

this will always be true

It keeps returning —  
the day you said no

to tomorrow —  
pushed everyone away

and I prepared to fly  
into the fist of a storm



## GRACE

BY JUDY KRONENFELD

Icy, sharp-edged morning—  
the shattering bark  
of unseen dogs sends  
sudden birds flapping away  
in fast bursts.

Almost swifter than my eye,  
one throttles back—engines  
at a dampened thrum—  
near the leafless plum  
outside my study window,  
and floats  
to the close branch,  
delicately touching down  
with a grace I envy,  
as my mind tries to flee  
“suspicious” on a CT scan—  
which could shatter me.

## MIGRATORY BIRDS

BY RUSSELL ROWLAND

Cedar Waxwings in burgeoning foliage  
flocked beside Hawkins Brook yesterday,  
gone today—lines of longitude not  
on any atlas, just in avian printed circuits.

Long lines reversible, up the continent,  
under heaven. Traffic south and north,  
from Eden to Armageddon.

I see the lifeline on my palm extend itself  
out of the village into unsettled places,  
like kite-string whose papery wings are hid  
in hazy leagues of altitude. But tugging.

Migration of souls is largely a matter  
of having two habitats, empty sky between:  
love maybe one haven, death the other.

There wasn't time to ask the Waxwings  
which is better, if they even know.  
What could they say: Just come, just go.

## DAY'S END

BY JOHN M. DAVIS

swallows sail  
                    down the long swale  
cupping last light, singing  
until they bank  
                    and dip out of sight.

out of caves come winged things:  
bats that flap small capes  
                    over landscapes. pinging  
echoes incite a fitful flight.

evening hardens into blindness  
                    like the closing of an eye.

## FOR CHRISTOPHER ROBIN

BY BONNIE PROUDFOOT

Thanks for sending me that photo  
of our trip out west, Grandma's hair  
in curlers, peeking out the camper door,  
your forehead almost reaching my chin.  
Home, reading Winnie the Pooh  
by flashlight, our knees made a pup tent  
from the blanket. Through the walls,  
Mom did dishes. Dad's jaw did not  
unclench. We had pockets stuffed  
with secrets. How else could we  
get by? We always needed to ask  
permission. You loved Eeyore,  
mourned his missing tail. I loved  
the Hundred Aker Wood, so huge,  
tiny sets of tracks heading somewhere,  
like they knew which way to go.

## CONTRIBUTORS

**Testimony Akinkunmi**(He/him) is a Nigerian law student of Yoruba origin. He loves telling tales and arguments about change and pain. He has been featured in *theshallowtalesreview*, *Qwenu*, *hub*, *Wrr* and many others.

**Susan Barry-Schulz** grew up just outside of Buffalo, New York. She is a licensed physical therapist living with chronic illness and an advocate for mental health and reducing stigma in IBD. Her poetry has appeared in *New Verse News*, *SWWIM*, *Barrelhouse online*, *Nightingale & Sparrow*, *Shooter Literary Magazine*, *Kissing Dynamite*, *Bending Genres*, *Feral*, *Quartet* and elsewhere.

**Stuart Bartow** lives in Salem, New York. His two most recent collections of poetry are *Green Midnight*, published by Dos Madres Press, and *Invisible Dictionary*, a collection of haibun and haiku, published by Red Moon Press.

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: originally at <http://www.samuelfrench.com/author/1158/lois-shapley-bassen>, now <https://www.concordtheatricals.com/p/1563/the-month-before-the-moon> ; 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/?modal=admin\\_todo\\_tour](https://www.facebook.com/ShapleyLoisBassen/?modal=admin_todo_tour) LinkedIn <https://www.linkedin.com/in/lois-bassen-11482a5/> Website: <http://www.lsbassen.com/>

Watched by crows and friend to salamanders, **Lisa Creech Bledsoe** is a hiker, beekeeper, and writer living in the mountains of Western North Carolina. She is the author of two full-length books of poetry, *Appalachian Ground* (2019), and *Wolf Laundry* (2020). She has poems out in *Dead Mule School of Southern Literature*, *Chiron Review*, *Otoliths*, *Pine Mountain Sand & Gravel*, and *Quartet*, among others. Website: <https://appalachianground.com/>

**Lavina Blossom** writes fiction as well as poetry, and she paints and works in mixed media. She is growing a California native garden to support local fauna. Her poems have appeared in various journals, including *3Elements Review*, *The Innisfree Poetry Journal*, *Poemeleon*, *Common Ground Review*, and *Ekphrastic Review*. You can find some of her art at <https://www.dailypaintworks.com/Artists/lavina-blossom-7365>

**Dorothy Howe Brooks** has had poems published in *Tampa Review*, *Atlanta Review*, *Broad River Review*, *Valley Voices* and *Chariton Review* among others. Her full length poetry collection, *A Fine Dusting of Brightness*, was published in 2013 by Aldrich Press and her fourth chapbook, *Subsoil Plowing*, was published in 2020 by Finishing Line Press.

**Mary Lou Buschi** holds an MFA in poetry from the MFA Program for Writers at Warren Wilson College and a Master of Science in Urban Education from Mercy College. Her poems have appeared in many literary journals such as *FIELD*, *Willow Springs*, *Indiana Review*, *Radar*, *Thrush*, *Tar River*, *Cream City*, *Pank*, *Rhino*, *The Laurel Review*, among others. Her second full-length collection, *Paddock*, was published by Lily Poetry Review Books in 2021.

**Wendy Taylor Carlisle** lives and writes in the Arkansas Ozarks. She is the author of four books and five chapbooks. and is the 2020 winner of the Phillip H. McMath Post-Publication Award for *The Mercy of Traffic*. Her work appears online and in print most recently in *Atlanta Review*, *San Pedro River Review*, *Freshwater Review*, *Rattle* and others. Her 2008 book, *Discount Fireworks*, was reprinted online by Doubleback Books. Her website is [www.wendytaylorcarlisle.com](http://www.wendytaylorcarlisle.com)

**Noah Cohen-Greenberg** grew up on a hay farm in upstate New York. He studied literature at Exeter College, Oxford, and Williams College, where he is a Roche Fellow, a Wilmers Fellow, and a winner of the Dunbar Student Writing Award.

**David Colodney** realized at an early age that he had no athletic ability whatsoever, so he turned his attention to writing about sports instead of attempting to play them, covering everything from high school flag football to major league baseball for The Miami Herald and The Tampa Tribune. David is the author of the 2020 chapbook, *Mimeograph*, and holds an MFA from Converse University. A two-time Pushcart nominee, David's poetry has or will appear in multiple journals. He serves as an associate editor of *South Florida Poetry Journal* and lives in Boynton Beach, Florida.

**John M. Davis** lives in Visalia, California. His work has appeared in numerous journals, including *The Comstock Review*, *Descant (Canada)*, *West Trade Review*, *Reunion: The Dallas Review*, *Bloodroot Literary Magazine*, *Caesura*, *Gyroscope Review*. His third chapbook, *The Mojave*, was published by the Dallas Community Poets.

**Rebecca Dempsey's** works are featured or forthcoming in *Ligeia*, *Elsewhere Journal*, *Schuylkill Valley Journal Online*, and *The Hyacinth Review*. Rebecca lives in Melbourne, Australia, and can be found at [WritingBec.com](http://WritingBec.com).

**Shaheen Dil** was born in Dhaka, Bangladesh, but currently lives in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Her poems have appeared or are forthcoming in *The Critical Quarterly*, *Four Quarters*, *The Journal of South Asian Literature*, *The Pittsburgh Quarterly*, *Golden Streetcar*, *Rune*, *Passager*, *Masque&Spectacle*, *Gyroscope Review*, and *CALYX Journal*, among others. Her poem, “River at Night” won Honorable Mention in the Passager 2021 poetry contest. Her work has appeared in two anthologies: *Poetry Chain: An Anthology of New Verse* and *Waiting for you to Speak*. Shaheen’s first full-length poetry collection, *Acts of Deference*, was published in 2016 by Fakel Publishing House in Sofia, Bulgaria.

**Marc Alan Di Martino** is a Pushcart-nominated poet, translator and author of the collections *Unburial* (Kelsay, 2019) and *Still Life with City* (Pski’s Porch, 2022). His work appears in *Baltimore Review*, *Rattle*, *Rust + Moth*, *Tinderbox*, *Valparaiso Poetry Review* and many other journals and anthologies. He lives in Perugia, Italy.

**Jane Ebihara** is the author of chapbooks, *A Little Piece of Mourning* (2014) and, *A Reminder of Hunger and Wings* (2019). Her full-length collection, *This Edge of Rain* (2021), has been nominated by the publisher for an Eric Hoffer Prize. Her poem “Last Kiss” (*A Constellation of Kisses*, Terrapin Books) was selected by former Poet Laureate, Tracy K. Smith as a feature on her podcast, *The Slowdown* and nominated for a Pushcart Prize. Ebihara resides in rural Warren County New Jersey where she currently serves as Associate Editor of *The Stillwater Review* and Poetry Contest Editor of *Tiferet*.

**Eva Eliav** received an honours BA in English Language and Literature from The University of Toronto. The child of holocaust survivors, she grew up in Canada and now lives in Israel. Her poetry and short fiction have appeared in numerous journals, online and in print. She has published two poetry chapbooks: **Eve** (Red Bird Chapbooks, 2019) and **One Summer Day** (Kelsay Books, 2021).

**Alfred Fournier** is a writer and community volunteer in Phoenix, Arizona. His poems have appeared in *Gyroscope Review*, *Welter*, *The American Journal of Poetry*, *Hole in the Head Review*, *The New Verse News*, *Third Wednesday* and elsewhere. New work is forthcoming in *The Indianapolis Review* and *Sin Fronteras / Writers Without Borders*.

**David Goad** is an attorney who currently resides in Washington DC. He lives with his partner and little puppy, Pennie.

**Oz Hardwick** is a European poet, photographer, occasional musician, and accidental academic, whose work has been widely published in international journals and anthologies. He has published nine full collections and chapbooks, including *Learning to Have Lost* (Canberra: IPSI, 2018) which won the 2019 Rubery International Book Award for poetry, and most recently the prose poetry sequence *Wolf Planet* (Clevedon: Hedgehog, 2020). He has held residencies in the UK, Europe, the US and Australia, and has performed internationally at major festivals and intimate soirees. Oz is Professor of Creative Writing at Leeds Trinity University (UK). [www.ozhardwick.co.uk](http://www.ozhardwick.co.uk)

**Lois Marie Harrod's** 18th collection *Spat* was published in May 2021 and her chapbook *Woman* in 2020. Dodge poet, life-long educator and writer, she is published in literary journals and online ezines from *American Poetry Review* to *Zone 3*. More info and links to her online work [www.loismarieharrod.org](http://www.loismarieharrod.org)

**Catherine Abbey Hodges** is the author of three full-length poetry collections, most recently *In a Rind of Light* (Stephen F. Austin State University Press, 2020), and two chapbooks. Her first book, *Instead of Sadness*, won the 2015 Barry Spacks Poetry Prize from Gunpowder Press. Her poems appear in venues including *Narrative*, *Southern Review*, *Tar River Poetry*, *Atticus Review*, *Nimrod*, *Chicago Quarterly Review*, *Verse Daily* and *The Writer's Almanac*. An award-winning educator, Catherine writes in, and teaches from, the foothills of California's Southern Sierra Nevada. [catherineabbeyhodges.com](http://catherineabbeyhodges.com).

Originally from the Blue Ridge Mountains of Virginia, **Hilary King** is a Pushcart-nominated and Best of the Web-nominated poet now living in the San Francisco Bay Area of California. Her poems have appeared in numerous publications and anthologies.

**Laurie Kolp** is an avid runner and lover of nature living in southeast Texas with her husband, three children, and two dogs. She is the author of *Upon the Blue Couch* and *Hello, It's Your Mother*. Laurie is currently working on a project to honor her father, who passed away unexpectedly in 2021.

**Judy Kronenfeld's** fifth full-length poetry collection, *Groaning and Singing*, was published by FutureCycle Press in February, 2022. Her prior collections include *Bird Flying through the Banquet* (FutureCycle, 2017), *Shimmer* (WordTech, 2012), and *Light Lowering in Diminished Sevenths* (2nd ed. Antrim House, 2012), winner of the 2007 Litchfield Review Poetry Book Prize. Judy's poems have appeared in *Cider Press Review*, *Cimarron Review*, *MacQueen's Quinterly*, *New Ohio Review*, *One*, *Rattle*, *Slant*, *Valparaiso Poetry Review*, *Verdad* and other journals, and in over three dozen anthologies. She is Lecturer Emerita, Creative Writing Department, UC Riverside, and an Associate Editor of Poemeleon.



**Stellasue Lee** was a founding editor of *RATTLE*, a poetry journal, and is now editor Emerita. Two of her books have been entrants for the Pulitzer Prize, and her *New & Selected Works, Queen of Jacks*, is now available. She won the grand prize of Poetry to Aide Humanity in 2013 by Al Falah in Malaysia. Dr. Lee received her Ph.D. from Honolulu University and works privately with students who are dedicated to learning how to write. Her students are all over the U.S. She wants you to know she was born in the year of the dragon. [stellasuelee.com](http://stellasuelee.com)

**Victoria Melekian** lives in Carlsbad, California. Her poems and stories have been published in *Monkeybicycle*, *Mudfish*, *Literary Orphans*, *Atlanta Review*, *Valparaiso Fiction Review*, *Word Riot*, and other anthologies. She was a runner-up in the 2018 Bath Flash Fiction Novella-in-Flash Award, a runner-up in the Women on Writing Summer 2019 Flash Fiction Contest, and has been nominated for a Pushcart Prize. For more, visit <http://victoriamelekian.com>

**Penelope Moffet** is the author of *It Isn't That They Mean to Kill You* (Arroyo Seco Press) and *Keeping Still* (Dorland Mountain Arts). Her poems have been published in *Gleam*, *One*, *Natural Bridge*, *Permafrost*, *Pearl*, *The Rise Up Review*, *The Sow's Ear Poetry Review*, *The Ekphrastic Review*, *Verse-Virtual*, *Gyroscope Review* and other literary journals. She lives in Southern California with her two bossy and amazing cats.

**Cecil Morris** wiles away his retirement---after 37 years of teaching high school English!--reading, writing, and riding the bike that doesn't move through scenery of podcasts and boredom. Right now, he might be reading Louise Erdrich or Sharon Olds (or David Kirby or Tony Hoagland or Maggie Smith) or trying to learn the names of all the birds that visit the yard he shares with his indulgent partner, mother of their children. He has poems appearing in *Cobalt Review*, *Ekphrastic Review*, *Evening Street Review*, *Hole in the Head Review*, *Talking River Review*, and other literary magazines.

**CJ Muchhala's** poetry has appeared in anthologies, print and on-line publications and art / poetry installations. She has been nominated for the Best of the Net award and twice for the Pushcart Prize. She lives in Shorewood, Wisconsin.

**Robbi Nester** is the author of 4 books of poems (with 4 other books waiting impatiently in the wings to find a home). She has also edited three anthologies of poetry. The most recent of these is available for free online at <http://www.poemeleon.me/peruse-the-mall>. She is an elected member of the Academy of American Poets. Her website may be viewed at <http://www.robbinester.net>.

**Alyson Peabody** is a young writer from Portland, ME. During her high school years, her poem “Mr. Moonlight” won first place in the Short Poetry category at the 29th Annual Belfast Area High School’ Writers Banquet. More recently, her monologue “I Forgot to Knock” was produced by Cold Comfort Theater during the 2nd Annual Festival of Short Plays. Her poem “Helen’s Garden” won first place in the 2020 Plunkett Maine Poetry Festival. She has self-published three anthologies titled *Gardens* (2016), *Idio(t)syncretasies* (2017), and *Pink Heron* (2018)..

A native New Yorker, **James Penha** (he/him) has lived for the past three decades in Indonesia. Nominated for Pushcart Prizes in fiction and poetry, his work is widely published in journals and anthologies. His newest chapbook of poems, *American Daguerreotypes*, is available for Kindle. His essays have appeared in The New York Daily News and The New York Times. Penha edits The New Verse News, an online journal of current-events poetry. Twitter: @JamesPenha

**Bonnie Proudfoot’s** fiction and poetry has appeared in many journals. Her novel, *Goshen Road*, (Swallow Press, 2020) was selected by the WNBA for its Great Group Reads and long-listed for the 2021 PEN/ Hemingway award. Her first book of poems, *Household Gods* (Sheila-Na-Gig Press), is forthcoming in Summer of 2022.

**Sarath Reddy** enjoys writing poetry which explores the world beneath the superficial layers of experience, searching for deeper meaning in his experiences as an Indian-American, as a physician, and as a father. Sarath’s poetry has been published in *JAMA*, *Off the Coast*, and *Please see Me*. His work is forthcoming in *Another Chicago Magazine*, *Poetry East*, *Hunger Mountain*, and *Please See Me*. He lives in Brookline, Massachusetts.

**Ron Riecki’s** books include *My Ancestors are Reindeer Herders and I Am Melting in Extinction* (Loyola University Maryland’s Apprentice House Press), *Posttraumatic* (Hoot ‘n’ Waddle), and *U.P.* (Ghost Road Press). Riecki has edited eight books, including *Here* (Michigan State University Press, Independent Publisher Book Award), and *The Way North* (Wayne State University Press, Michigan Notable Book).

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

**Angeline Schellenberg** wrote the Manitoba Book Award-winning poetry collection about raising children with autism, *Tell Them It Was Mozart* (Brick Books, 2016). Her elegy collection *Fields of Light and Stone* (University of Alberta Press, 2020) is shortlisted for the 2022 KOBZAR Book Award. She has poetry chapbooks with The Alfred Gustav Press, Kalamalka Press, Dancing Girl Press, and JackPine Press. Her micro-fiction has appeared recently in Canadian, British, and American journals. Angeline hosts Speaking Crow, Winnipeg's longest-running poetry open mic. An amateur potter, photographer, and spiritual director in training, she lives with her husband, adult children, and rescue dogs.

Nominated for the National Book Award and twice-nominated for the Pulitzer Prize, **J.R. Solonche** is the author of 26 books of poetry. He lives in the Hudson Valley.

**Judith Taylor** comes from Perthshire and now lives and works in Aberdeen, where she is one of the organisers of the monthly Poetry at Books and Beans events. Her first full-length collection, *Not in Nightingale Country*, was published in 2017 by Red Squirrel Press, and she is one of the Editors of *Poetry Scotland* magazine.

<http://sometimesjudy.co.uk/>

**Cathy Thwing** has been teaching at community colleges since receiving her MFA in Creative Writing from Eastern Washington University. It's that moment when students respond to the spark of their own voice in writing that continually brings her renewal for her own writing. Gardening, cello, yoga, and video games fill her life's other nooks and crannies.

**Kathleen Wedl** is a life-long Minnesotan, where well-behaved words rain onto parched notebooks. During and since her 50 years as a nurse specializing in behavioral health, her notebook has help bridge a gap in understanding of herself and her world. Her poetry has been recognized in contests and journals. When not reading, writing, and enjoying nature, you may find her studying the pairings of good food and music, especially in the company of family and friends.

Five times nominated for a Pushcart, once for Best of the Net, **Florence Weinberger** has published five books of poetry, most recently *Ghost Tattoo*, from Tebot Bach. Poems have appeared in journals including *Calyx*, *Rattle*, *Miramar*, *River Styx*, *Ellipsis*, *Poet Lore*, *Comstock Review*, *Baltimore Review*, *Nimrod*, *Cider Press Review*, *Poetry East*, *Shenandoah* and numerous anthologies.

**Julie Weiss** (she/her) is the author of *The Places We Empty*, her debut chapbook published by Kelsay Books. She was a finalist in Alexandria Quarterly's First Line Poetry Series, a finalist for The Magnolia Review's Ink Award, and she was shortlisted for Kissing Dynamite's 2021 Microchap Series. A two-time Pushcart Prize and Best of the Net nominee, her recent work appears in *Orange Blossom Review*, *Minyan Magazine*, *Sheila-Na-Gig*, and others. Originally from California, she lives in Spain with her wife and two young children.

**Will Wells'** most recent full length poetry volume, *Odd Lots, Scraps & Second-hand, Like New* (Grayson Books, 2017) won the 2016 Grayson Poetry Prize. His previous collection, *Unsettled Accounts* (Ohio Univ./Swallow Press, 2010) won the Hollis Summers Poetry Prize. An earlier poetry collection won the Anhinga Prize in Poetry. His current mss, which includes the poem from this submission, is two thirds complete and has a working title of *Enduring Damage*. I have poems forthcoming, or in current or recent issues of *Comstock Review*, *Cortland Review*, *Alabama Literary Review*, *Birmingham Poetry Review*, *Connecticut River Review*, *River Styx*, *Image* etc.

**Dick Westheimer** has - in the company of his wife Debbie - lived, gardened and raised five children on their plot of land in rural southwest Ohio. He has enjoyed picking bluegrass music with his neighbors and running and walking the trails on his and neighboring farms. He is a Rattle Poetry Prize finalist. In addition to *Rattle*, his most recent poems have appeared or are upcoming in *Cutthroat*, *Minyan*, *Paterson Review*, *Silver Birch*, *Pine Mountain Sand and Gravel*, *Chautauqua Review*, and anthologized in *I Thought I Heard a Cardinal Sing*. Much of his work can be found at [dickwestheimer.com](http://dickwestheimer.com)

**Martin Willitts Jr.**, edits the *Comstock Review*, judges New York State Fair Poetry Contest. Nominated for 17 Pushcart and 13 Best of the Net awards. Winner of 2014 Dylan Thomas International Poetry Contest; Rattle Ekphrastic Challenge, 2015, Editor's Choice; Rattle Ekphrastic Challenge, Artist's Choice, 2016, Stephen A. DiBiase Poetry Prize, 2018; Editor's Choice, Rattle Ekphrastic Challenge, 2020. His 25 chapbooks include the Turtle Island Quarterly Editor's Choice Award, *The Wire Fence Holding Back the World* (Flowstone Press, 2017), plus 21 full-lengths includes Blue Light Award *The Temporary World*. His newest is *All Wars Are the Same War* (FutureCycle Press, 2022).

**Kenton K. Yee** divides his time between northern California and an undisclosed location. His poetry appears or will appear in *The Threepenny Review*, *The Indianapolis Review*, *Ligeia Magazine*, *Plume Poetry*, *Summerset Review*, and *Tipton Poetry Journal*, among others. Kenton taught at Columbia University, studied at LSU (Baton Rouge), and attended the Iowa Summer Poetry Workshop and the Key West Literary Seminar. He is working on a mystery novel.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Summer 2022 Issue is an open, unthemed issue. Send us your 'hot' poems, your thoughts on the world, your musings on nature. We're open to political poems but be subtle—no rants. The Submissions period opens April 1, 2022. We welcome all poets, whether emerging or established. We welcome all types of poems and poets. Rhyming poetry is a hard sell, unless done well but we're willing to look at almost everything. No racist, sexist, anti-LGBTQA+ or any other -ist poems. We're not the magazine for that. Check our FAQ page and guidelines for more details. As always, read previous issues, they're available for free on our website, or buy a print copy off Amazon or Book Depository.

We will close submissions if we get all the poems we need, so submit early. We also close to submissions for the month if we reach our submissions cap.

Please read our full guidelines on Submittable:  
<https://gyroscopereview.submittable.com/submit/>

Thank you for reading!



# **Gyroscope Review**

**fine poetry to turn your world around**

[gyroscopereview.com](http://gyroscopereview.com)