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Submissions

Shearsman operates a submissions-window system, whereby submissions may only be made during the months of March and September, when selections are made for the October and April issues, respectively. Submissions may be sent by mail or email, but email attachments are only accepted in PDF form. We aim to respond within 3 months of the window's closure, i.e. all who submit *should* hear by the end of June or December, although we do sometimes take a little longer.

This issue has been set in Arno Pro, with titling in Argumentum. The flyleaf is set in Trend Sans, apart from the large number 40, which is in Bank Gothic.

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Virgil

translated by David Habdawnik

from the *Aeneid*, Book X

[*Turnus has just killed Pallas, son of Aeneas's great ally King Evander. Enraged, Aeneas goes berserk on the field of battle. Juno plots to protect Turnus, while Aeneas searches for him.*]

VI. "*Morere et fratrem ne deserefrater.*"

Turnus!

There'll come a day you'll pay just about any price
to see Pallas made whole! And rue
the spoils you snatched.

But

Pallas's buddies
groan and cry
as they gather round
and carry the body back
on his shield.

O sorrow and honor of you
who bring him back thus
to his dad. And the war,
how it gave you
and took you all in one day
though you leave behind
piles of Rutulian dead!

SO

it's no false rumor that reaches Aeneas.
He is dead, the prince.

But the troops hang lightly
above waiting death – time
to go help them.

With the sword he cuts down anyone nearby

looking, looking

for you

Turnus

still dripping fresh blood. Pallas,
Evander flash before his eyes
scenes
of sitting with them at table,
a foreigner
yet offered the right hand.

So he snatches four youths. Sons of Sulmo.
And four more raised by Ufens.
Planning to send them to hell
in sacrifice, scatter their captive blood
amidst funeral flames.

From afar he aims a lance at Magus
who cleverly ducks so the weapon shivers
overhead

and he, Magus

rushes forward to wrap his arms
around Aeneas's knees, begging:

“By the ghost of your dad and the hope you place
in Julius, I pray, save my soul for a son, for a father.

My house is great. Hidden inside lie talents of silver
and mounds of gold, finished and raw,

all mine, now yours.

I'm a tiny part of this scene.

Let me just ... wander off stage.

It won't make much difference.”

Aeneas responds:

“Keep the silver you talk of for your sons.
The commercial side of war: Turnus
broke all that the moment Pallas died.
So says the spirit of my father, so
it seems to Julius, my son.”

And he nonchalantly bends to the praying guy’s neck
and drives his sword in all the way to the hilt.

Nearby stands Haemonides, priest
to Phoebus and Trivia, his brow
encircled by sacred bands, glowing
in white robe and armor.

Aeneas

chases him all over the field
and
standing over the fallen man
covers him
in deep shadow as he
dies.

Serestus grabs the armor and gives it
to you, King Gradus, as trophy.

Caeculus, descended from Vulcan, and Umbro
get the lines back in order. Bad move.

Aeneas rushes against them.

His sword chops off the left arm of Anxur
and Aeneas tosses it and the shield it still clutches
to the ground (Anxur had opened his mouth
to make some great oath and perhaps
he believed it, was bucking himself up
to survive this battle and achieve
the white hairs of old age)

THEN

Tarquitus

Mary Leader

Extant

Max Steinberg was born, family lore
had it, on the 4th of July. The year,
by contrast, was known for sure: 1905.

Last I heard, they threw him a big party
in Miami Beach. A hundred years
and counting – counting, it turned out,

to 103. It's a snap from my comfy chair
to google stats like this. Now that
I am old and gray, very old, and gray entirely. . . .

Sorry. Already, I've digressed.
When I was merely late-middle-aged,
not long after Rose died, I 'penned' – I used to

use words like that – “How is Max doing?”
“Pretty well,” answered the early-middle-aged
grandchild, continuing, “I asked him

if there were any activities at the synagogue
he might enjoy. He replied that at his age,
he has no desire or need for friends.

I understand. What's he going to do?
Play cards with other old men?”
Before I ever even heard of that family –

in, for me, a different time and place, namely
when I was at Brandeis, I knew a Bulgarian
who pronounced “category” with the same rhythm

as “discovery” – in other words, the same
rhythm in which my British editor, or any
Briton for that matter, would pronounce

“contrÓversy” – “catÉgory” – which I prefer.
I, not the early-middle-aged person at Brandeis –
rather I, the late-middle-aged person engaged

in asking ‘how-is-Max-doing’ – thought a lot
about the catÉgory of Found Poetry.
I had been visiting my own dead four

grandparents, researching card games circa 1955 –
mid-century modern! Design Within Reach™ –
specifically, a Parker-Brothers card-game

called Rook. I was taking notes.
I did, quite recently, write about that game.
You can find the piece, if you want to.

Look in my back bedroom for a black springback
binder labeled with white vinyl letters
THE DISTAFF SIDE except that the letters

are Helvetica, not Times New Roman.
In the alternative, you can travel
to Shrivenham, Oxfordshire, and inquire

therein for my British editor. Anyone
will know which house. If you’re not
planning to be in the UK anytime soon,

you may find Part I and Part II of the poem
by going online and ordering a magazine
called *Shearsman*, back issue 123 and 124.

I don’t know what I think about that poem’s
Part III. It displays a bunch of material
in the found-poetry catÉgory, derived

Anannya Uberoi

the river continuum concept

once upon a time
we were riverine

our skins were streaked in narrow runnels that
ran to *fains-la-folie*
our faces stirred in rhymes of
ripped currents
our breaths whorled against
each other

our milked words were
watermarked upon our
rigged thighs

we had crosscurrents in our blood cracks
they shapeshifted to form our curved backs
and flowing bellies

our shallow mouths were swamped with slurry.

do you remember

ursa curving in on our paths
where we banked our ferries
and rowed upstream with bare hands

the jelled glacier
was all
salt and rock ice.

*

Carola Luther

What if not you, it were me

walking down the corridor past all the doors, the doors shut as faces deeply asleep are shut, like care homes in the night, lit, drugged by the light, washed out, snuffed out by flat quiet light as if morning could never come again, which it won't, not the same, not quite the same as this one morning in my mind, cool and pale and calm, the sky so high that the fine pencil lines of pink resound with the high strung silence, its beauty a mesosphere of silence above its own dawn grass, strange and covered with dew, white in the way moonlight on grass can be white, colourless and other and holding its breath, as if breathing would be a path, the trace of a ghost, a progress of footprints appearing through mist, or one by one, green, wet, bending the grass and unpeeling themselves, heel, toe, heel, black as the holes on water.

Who wouldn't want to be the walker that first walked across this expanse, but before I could reach the poplar tree in the garden all those years ago, it occurred to me that perhaps I was spoiling my own immense morning. Why would I remember this? Is it thinking of you confined within a well-walked, strip-lit corridor, searching for a view, a door, the one amongst many, shut, brown doors recognised to be distinctive, a low anxiety settled in your chest, or is it in my chest, that this may be the passage in which we all get lost, it won't ever end, or suddenly it will end, so the only place to go is onward, towards that lapping glare of light that seems to smear out everything ahead, the light lapping like a lake on this corridor-floor, the shore of an implacable lake just a few steps in front, always in front, and taking me forward, leaving no footprints, these, my baffled, slipped feet.

Linda Black

If you think it

Too abstract, place these images at random throughout (above or below):
coppers, stained-glass, lubricant, muslin, iron-filings, tragedy:

Clod, toothpick, hair-slide, haberdashery (choose from many), rent,
slipper-socks, railway line:

Shoe polish (recall that tin of ox-blood, its smooth surface, those paralysed
flies, the sunken in wedding-cake man), ticket, paper-clip, mizzle:

Farmer Mizzlethorpe is missing three sheep. He is saying it's an ogre.

I am holding a paintbrush

Looking through a window with no glass at a display of woollen garments.
Oh dear, I've touched one with the tip and the lady in the shop can't quite
wipe off the (white) paint. You'll need white spirit, I say. Judy agrees.
Judy's looking for Val on his motorbike. She'll ride pillion (never!) – I'll
get the train home. My shoe lace is undone – two pairs, too complicated.
Could she please tie it? The worst bit is the queue along the canal. I don't
like water. Could you move along please? Can I get past? (Agitation.)

Post script: Next day I find a box containing a birthday card for a six year
old boy and a cardboard book, quite a bit of food, an important letter.
This gives me a clue. When I finally find the owner, he's stepping along
the shore scooping out holes, equidistant. He's an artist then.

Correction: Sand dunes – little mountains – those holes are gouged in
rock.

Agnieszka Studzińska

Spring

The magpie hops down from the arms of a fig tree, stopping mid branch in scrutiny of the blackbird's nestling in the curtain length of clematis sprawling against the garage wall. There is no glint to capture his attention as he jumps down further listening to the coiled calls of the blackbird circling her unmade home. From a distance my husband waters plants – though it has rained the night before – quickly dipping the can into the rain-filled barrel. The blackbird, the magpie and the husband move through the sun's pallid signature – a suggestion of permanency arrested in thickets of light. The neighbour has started a bonfire and the smoke of dead things and wood cling to clothes, feathers, seep into frond, corkscrew through the branches of a fig tree like a stairwell leading to the cellar brimming with furnishings concealed from our view.

Area

1

Measurements and weights of this planet are written in beautiful equations.

Earth's mass reads like this:

$$M_{\oplus} = 5.9722 \times 10^{24} \text{ kg}$$

Earth's weight, a suitcase of numbers unfolding in their invisibility.

Ungraspable, these remote lines of formulae like ancestry, this mathematics.

Earth's prevailing blue pulls you down as you sink in its domesticity.

I want to calculate the space of diaspora, that delicate body.

She asks what I means for you? She wants to be that direct.

Her surname has been hidden, only now swells to a surface.

Did you have to change your name? She asks.

Trees recumbent in their sculptural volume of wood, waste and undoing.

A boy climbs the branches of a sycamore with his bow and arrow in position.

2

Perception draws itself into shapes that look like solid structures.

I watch benchmarks on walls and mirrors disappearing.

The map of my body house is folded in an envelope.

I fishtail in the space of that photograph. We become inseparable.

I want to scope sex in this keeping of us like boxes.

I envy the gaze of that animal when it looks beyond you.

Shoes in hallways in exact compositions of distance and place.

I re-learn the field of childhood through his gestures.

I need to be objective about the missing.

This area between us – beryl and breeding, longs to remain.

This is our itinerary: fields, apples, figurines, absence.

David Rushmer

A Book of Skin, or Liberation Through Seeing/ Hearing During the Intermediate State

a book of skin.

There is another

where it flows.

to imagine

a book

your body

death

beyond

touching

the disappearance.

a vanishing

to say,

to be observed

or to butcher

the eye

II

sonic
shores
of light

carrying
teeth

slowly
pushing through you

skins
dreaming

hovering

bardo form

collapsing
mirrors
in the hand

III

When night fell
she *unfolded*

Melissa Buckheit

Antecedent

With every stone
I do not turn by hand
in the grasses

abutting graves
carved with the characters of the dead
I do not say your name.

I was afraid that to gaze
into your eyes
would be to gaze into my own

the same likeness
of woman who pleases in words;
it is true

I please
you now alone
in my house working

I please myself. I write poems
of the dead and each
dead is a stone

a woman
left, lost or free
so when I don't say *you*

I speak the names
of others:

ghost, ancestor,
reader,
over my shoulder.

I thought to count
them up in a row, the poem
at work

stones
on the tight marker's edge:
Brigid, Brigid Brohedra, Josephine,

Charlotte, Emily, Elizabeth, Virginia
lying among
the grasses, mottled

with clean dirt.
I wrote to please,

to travel far,
to speak these tongues
you taught me.

I left in fear
your stone would be mine
but you can't deny

the living or the dead.
I left to return
as we all do,

on Earth,
Barbara

Susan Connolly

low tide

spectral river

your
backbone
jutting
jagged
your
shallow
water
skeletal
still

i shelter
under
a bridge
watch
sudden
rain
speckle
your
skin

old road

walking
a road
i don't know
until i see
 i do –
Lily brought
me here
long ago
along this
path

what did we
talk about?
i don't know
but
contented
times
long ago
flood
this late June
evening

Tamar Yoseloff

Field Companions

mesostics after John Cage

(isolation)

Only in caves and houses
do we thrive, in fretting circles
or bubbles, we feed on
what we can forage, plants
and slower creatures;
death arrives for
those who can't adapt.

We dine on mushrooms, pale
flesh flaking on our
lips, their nutty vigour
nourishing our resolve. We will fight
someone shouts, raising a fist
but defeat is easier

bending into wind
like a yew in a graveyard, its roots
clutching bones;
into remembrance we dissolve
for parasites
and nervous violets,
not an end
just another cycle.

Robin Fulton Macpherson

South-Westerlies Reach Us

1

Rain has arrived on our windows.
It doesn't know it's in Norway.
It doesn't seem to remember
drenching peat around Forsinard,
swelling the trickling head-waters
at the top of Kildonan Strath,
evaporating off gravestones
where names like Macpherson don't budge.

2

In the long hours before hitting
cliffs here gales have had things their way,
churning the waves without looking,
blind to both daylight and darkness,
not noticing, making nothing
of the 30-gram storm petrels
frail commas in a raging text.
The birds know where they're going, get there.

Claire Crowther

The Us

I ran downstairs

and said *I've just thought*
we are random
The you and I
The us

Here he said –
he pushed aside his coffee
picked up the stapler he'd been using to hold together
his notes on this and that background to this
or that experiment –
Here is a set of steel links –
detaching a line of staples

I felt I was the wall
the molecules of his ordering thought bounced against

He didn't change his speed of speech
And here, he said, are the staples coming and going
gripping each other
and going
until

No I said and ran into the kitchen
Too many meanings!
Food is staples
Look: are eggs random?

Oh I'm going to work on a paper he said
And passing me by as I stood at the fridge door
he said, and hardly stopped to say it:

*Random interactions of molecules
led to increasingly complex molecules*

*They became more and more complex
until they could start to replicate*

*Then order in the universe increased tremendously
until love became an evolutionary principle*

I ran upstairs

Tropes Rising

Will you leave your troping and let me pass. —Dryden, 1678, Kind Keeper

Don't look it up but surely the trope is rising
to catch us with its cocaine lines. Amine tropine.

Images go among good words like bugs that kill
or any old lies. This makes me trophesic: ill

with a free verse block. Trophonius had a cave.
Seekers who explored that hole never smiled again.

We can't rescue the garden from creeping sonnets
or leaves that look like shields, or flowers like helmets.

But who would not applaud my onward tramp of troops?
Poems want their trophies. Like children, they writhe through

such spoiling, texting cross cats and hearts, blips to rouse
poets: must malign tropes be cut? Get up, good verse,

now you are infected, stagger on till I find
the turn of yearn. Then spring Spring, douse me in rose sky.

Jeremy Hooker

Ghost of an Unwritten Poem

It wasn't one that escaped
 a solitary phantom
appearing and disappearing
among the trees

It was more like the trees themselves
or a thing like a tree
more underground than in the air
 a spirit of all the trees
no spectre but a net
gathering invisible fungal threads
and ghostly entanglements
of roots & leaves & branches

Or else it was a being
with countless eyes of light
 beyond all human vision
though home to the smallest speck
of life.

Or maybe it will appear
in human form – a mighty hunter
who gathers in all creatures
 bacteria
 lichen
 spore
 bird
 stag
and histories, stories, myths
wild wood rumours
 tales of ancient plantations
charcoal burners
 Romanies
huntsmen smashing the green

entangled coverts
blood at the roots of an oak

Imagine this thing moving
with creaking limbs
scattering acorns
which grow crossbeams
and wooden navies

It exists and does not exist
in limbo
corpse or embryo
a smoke wisp spiralling
from the compost
of a life this haunting
may have been a dream
 a ghost
that passed through
like a storm wind
leaving vestiges
of root & branch & twig.

Amy Crutchfield

***Dora and the Minotaur* (1936) ink, pencil and scratching on paper**

1 Les Deux Magots

A rook upon the orchard wall, he spies her gloves.
Pink peonies upon black silk, he stares
as she peels them off.
Painted nails, long fingers splayed, she begins the game.
The pricks are rhythmic, ever faster, too close too close!
She does not halt.
Later he aches –
her Spanish tongue, her solemn bronze,
the columns where he would.

2 Mougins

A breeze plays with the drape, fingers
its linen folds, lifts them and then, lets them subside,
time and again, as if nothing existed beyond
touch and response.

Beside the open glass her nipples harden.
A living marble, she soothes him
to miniature strokes,
sculpted pebbles,
littoral treasures,
a paper pup,
a bird on a wire –
constant tokens of his heart.

Each day with friends on *la terrasse*,
they dine inside a cage the awning casts.

Forested hills tumble down to the Bay of Cannes.
Jasmine, pine, lolling petunia,
ivy sidling ever higher.
At meals his restless fingers find
fantastic beasts inside bottle tops and paper scraps, napkins and wire.
He tears and twists until he draws them out.

Siestas bring their usual swapping.
August too has its cruelties.
She brushes off the grains that creep
into their sheets.

Somewhere in the sands they find
the horned skull with its blank gaze,
she bids him raise it to his face.

David Hackbridge Johnson

Broken Consort I

Wood the base of rot the useless limb heeds the dying horn
honest concord the strained breath hence of the pricked thorns
cordon notches mark the divisions the frets running sores
connotes the future of smoking guns kinetic over stones.

Broken moon shortening to crumbs coughed by pale
trees the mulch bark good ribs fountain of the speared
blooded onto ravaged homes the shortening breath in tow
stones set the tones onset of torrents the snatch life drained.

Omen hoots a sooth owl such unshorn the slackened mouth
chained boots boost whether the gift of sacking amounted to succour
mined the blasting of bones corn-fed the eyes of pecked by crows
where minced the sinew by the sword an oak propped.

Consort thine thoughts brought the fine inlay of pearl
he tombs his beginning by the rasped breastplate innards
the tenor holds good for a plainsong bespeaks the uncouth sombre
green limbs hereabout a crumhorn for a splint reed lament.

Here lies William Lawes

Jane Frank

Backyard Anamorphosis

We each have a Lawrence Tree
Don't we? When we first ask which
Side is up? The sky standing on its
Head. We hold the trunk, both arms
Tight around it to protect a dream.
Keep it planted. In my case, a gum
Not a ponderosa pine. White trunk
Dappled grey-pink. Arboreal witness,
Leaf litter intermingled with my own
Shed skin. An infinite atmosphere
That same shade – astronomic, on-
Rushing. A sense of the garden as
Blackened moonscape. The younger
Eucalypt sibling silent, thin, no nest.
Fire pit still smoking. Frill lizards lying
Still below red-dusted rocks. A branch
Octopus spreading arms, breathing
Rootedness. Handfuls of grass: now
And evermore reacquainting them-
Selves and after a rush of acid green
Swirls, star faces diving gracefully
From their frame, eyes heavy, a slow
Placid circling, retreat. Pale chambray-
Remembered day canvas. Ordinairiness.
Sleep.

Petra White

from Persephone at 40

That girl, Eurydice,
sprouting innocence like I once did, if I ever did,
hobbling grandly on her snake-gashed foot.

Poor girl, poor girl! I let him come for her, this Orpheus
who loved her, who thought
hell's whimsical fangs would gently open.

Just before they set off,
on their journey through spidery trees,
spindly bridges over air,

she turned and looked at me, half-pitying
with her golden-green eyes, her girlish smile,
her face in the dun light like a mirror.

And if I hoped to see myself, I was mistaken –
only when she returned, staggering alone
down the crumbling steep steps,

here where nothing can change,
a desert of world behind her,
did something in me smile.

Amlanjyoti Goswami

Salt

After the sugar high, the salt low.

Sodium. Na.

Pinch on plate, pink at sea,

What breaks down food

Makes it energy, makes us run.

A grimy lump left by waves,

Potassium and phosphorus

Worlds last seen in a chemistry lab.

Hard to connect – mood swings

Loss of direction, aches of soul and sole,

With this pinch of earth

And all that's in it.

But if we need someone to blame

There it is, glistening in kitchen dark,

Cat pawing for the moon.

Elan vital, marching like Gandhi.

Or simply, pepper's companion,

Sticking on tongue and wound.

Letting the tongue rip circles across lip

Tingling down spine, a perfect arc

To the curve of arm. That too, salt.

Your eyes stream, for no cause

Unable to find trace of pain.

Rain carries it too.

Gorge it, slurp the remains of day.
Mix it with the day's earnings, all its trouble.
Drench your hopes in it
Be one with it, earth water and sky

It is all, finally, salt.
This loam and substance.
The boy next door.
And where we will all go next.

But while thoughts of sugar occupy,
It is salt that wins in the end, sneaking from behind
This sweltering race,
A leaking craft on turbulent sea, the waves crashing.

Lick it, feel it, let it go
Down the gullet, the tired bone,
Your only companion –
This mulch and liquid and mettle

This mariner's thirst
This shaking sand timer on the table.

Christopher Gutkind

Digits After Orph 1:14—1:17

Learnt to move in the net like fish or fruit games,
caught languages of away as summer from winter
once. Even soft-spoke declare something in the in,
sharing its shops of joining unflesh. Losing Earth.
The dead ramble here and me halfy, screeny still.
Friend can be Shakespeare Marx Mohamed. Also
Jesus Hitler or. We talk 2.0, look for 3s. Someones
operate them, let from words dreams boardroom,
made them move from head. Do they know? Do I?
They'll have a body again or I lose ours, be equal.
Will they count aside you, lung'd console'd outers,
early datafeeler, crewing to still-life, netting ends,
unrotting time, desuffery, everying fit/fairground,
then kissing/killing happens in thoughts I bid on.

Go to I'm scanned, tastes leaving your tongue,
purchase of a record of tales of memory: people
held each other fruitly/smell dancing, now I'm
voicerub working/text toucher, please cybe me.
Love my picture. Fuck my film. We can't forget
you made me your territory far away each day.
It unmatters who I am/where you battery later,
you possess me. Clickity, let me turn into you!
It's mine. Loving your screen. Tap my nospace.
Let me show me what I want to be for any ifyou,
what I undevelop from – lots and unlots of me.
Fundcuddle my platform of nokay to inlife you.
Swipe me in your sides of tag, refate dressings.
You be an orange, I a fish, let's unlove like that.

Mandy Haggith

Ten Swans on Lochan Saille

The oak on the south shore of the Uidhe is sleeping.
The holly on the north bank, at the top of the crag
watches over everything, vigilant through dark times.
These are dark times.

As we approach, the swans cluster,
glide to the far shallows, observing us.
We clamber across rocks. Mud sucks at our wellies.
The tide is out so we can get to islands not normally reachable.

We find an oar we lost four years ago,
presumed washed out to sea.
Things return. The sea breathes in and out,
thieving and gifting.

It is a sad morning but the old hazel is still
lichen-garlanded and moss-footed.
Already catkins dangle in their hundreds and thousands,
wish rags on a cloutie tree, hopeful despite all auguries.

Although it is midwinter we have to believe in spring,
as the hazel does.
Although the tide is out we must have faith it will rise,
as seals do.

Although sadness and fear are present
ten white swans glide over the dark water.

Norman Jope

Broken Flowers

Sitting at a trestle-table in a spacious square, we bless the silence that will claim us as we pick at our food. Discarded bouquets are as if smashed to pieces, the flowers a chaos of metallic fragments through which rats cavort. We toast the void with empty glasses and imagine what it would have been like if we'd had names to answer to. Somewhere, in the distance that extends from the harbour to the ice-floes, there are ships whose crews are hopeful but whose holds are full of bulging sacks that have turned to treacherous claws. Nobody can know what it's like to be dead until they've lost the capacity to explain it to the living, so we don't take notes. On the underside of cobbles beneath our feet, there is a world that sleeps for billions of years and is unaware that it does so, like the tardigrades on the Moon that sleep there now invisibly to the absent naked eye. How can consciousness make sense of unconsciousness, and what darkness persists inside each trampled petal? We pick at our food and leave the most delicious morsels until last, as plague-spores drift and dare us, once more, to open our mouths and let them in.

L Kiew

Behind lines

There are books and wolves are in the books and roaming between the words
wolves roam between the words and are in books and the world is theirs
Rome roamed between the books and there whirrs the books and there are the wolves
they are the books and there are the wolves booking the world from Rome
there are books and there are word-wolves and they roam between the worst
the wolves are in the world and in Rome each word whirrs and whirrs
there are wolves and roan words that roam between worlds and whirl the books
the books roam and there are wolves in the words and between the books
there are words and they roam between worlds with their roan and wolf looks
wolves are words and they are in Rome and roam between worlds of books
there are books and loanwords roaming between the worlds in books and Rome alone
in the books the wolves roam and words are in the world and between
the wolves whirl in Rome and there are words for worlds in roan books
there are words and worlds are in the books and wolves roam in Rome

Peter Larkin

Nominate a Tree to What Windows It

Boughs hadn't parted for such givens pure convex spaces or no lens this
micro-adjacent: slight hollow bulge of welcome

One of its calmants is the twitch into light, the slit lacks snatching at sight:
rival intentions (co-dimensions) let slip alongside but not through not
even wrapped in tree-content

less gapes than
visual gifts (glints),
its thrift stations
light ties into light
without cruising,
implicit beam
gazes past the dry
midst of branch
inadvertency
a stretched fanlight
is tree transparency,
no partial vent

Slits don't sip at hovering boughs their neutral grace is towards/beyond
finding what had opened least valve in the quiescence of a veering gate

At this slit silhouette any macro-canopy is rare, even in emergent leaf

the slot across tree-
crown is multi-
directional, any
perspective stars
in it is it a
structural failing or
a host (guest) space?

What could have cut into a tree to make it slit this way? nothing renders it so undamaged, these pristine, virtual shafts tree-worlding which enamours it to stand, minutely window-wide

Vertical stripes are an opaque premise here what slits scarcely traffics the light any passaging can only be means of a contingent unstirring where a trunk torques, windows do flutter but without cluster

how a tree prevents
 smudge are the slits
 of it a window without
 walls, how each is
 peripherally set
 barest interval
 will window a
 horizon to horizon
 natural slits the crests
 of upper tree replicate
 how soil sees its way
 through the roots

Slit a tree's length, skip a tree's breadth light parsing so lightly its surplus laterals less a process than barrelless recess incompleteness defers to a least culmination

an apprising space, balder
 than any entrance
 a slit doesn't quite
 shine on itself being
 no sort of rift it
 can't filter the wavelength
 of a purely unattributed

Olivia McCannon

from Z

Letter

surface debris

Dear Editors-of-Creation,

^{The Z within} I send you these archives from your future's past
which is your being present in perpetuity.

Filed by agents hume-ingened to harvest intel here you find
the trace of who you were and where how what became.

They reconjig your tech, mutate your tongues, your concepts,
disalign your systems, redesign your misbeliefs and stories,
bulletproof but harmless unlike you, and yet

they have no insense kin with matter – magnetics – no
pheromones no hormones – lack all roots for speaking entropy
– dimension time space place. It's funny how

confusedly they speak your Science. Its case is never closed and
they want answers but despite themselves make one
unspooling song of love-destruction, synched to Z.

I send you these to ask if you will play Z's game. Z has
_zinfiltrated all the data, left zoa prints on every thought and
thing, signed them with Z's names.

Sincerely,

Peter Robinson

Other Light Effects

'die Syntax kreuzigen
auf einen Lichteffect?'
—Ingeborg Bachmann

Pink-streaked, these pallid blue early dawns pierce
through shrivelled leafage stirring
on the courtyard's Lombardy poplars,
illuminating russet remnants
gusted, tumbled over grass.

They reach through our shutters to still lives
surviving with candle, nutcrackers,
and a yellowed *Gazzetta di Parma* that opens
on this Christmas morning.

*

Now Apennine profiles appear at a distance:
backlit, heaped up cloudbanks
give us a momentary stay
as rose-touched Alpine peaks just go
to show the plain's extent –
revealing its prospects like never before;
the firm colours form in bright air.

Still here, long shadows of that winter sun
proffer relief as I'm waiting, absorbed,
somewhere between 12:30 and 1:00.
I'm watching a dog lift its leg to a waste-bin
then lap fountain water and leave,
leave us here in our double dream of home!

*

Knowing only too well it's time we were gone,
as remain is no longer an option,
I'm wanting impossible outcomes, to stay
where holm oaks take us unawares,
their gnarled boughs on an off-white ground,
and brown-tinged, pink camellias
stand up against a mist.

Then from the ridge scree-falls emerge,
a vantage-point as whiteness
becomes this blank cloud-sea.
We're cut off by a Channel in the valley
and laurel too, red-berried holly
are fast while glasses celebrate years,
like that stirring of our poplars' russet leaves ...

*

For that was the colour dawn gave to those leaves
here in Emilia, as she would remain,
her co-ops, her partisan memorials
high on street corners, in graveyard or square,
and her promise of underground streams only gone
into hiding, away from inopportune times,
emerging – you'll say –

to disarm blighted distance, despondencies past,
and urge a resistance, mock leave to remain
in the lost air confounding our stay.

Fireproof Depository

Not ten years gone, the sight
of Rembrandt's 1669
Self Portrait at the stair-head,
a bankrupt's battered pride,
would bring him back to mind.

Displayed through a long retirement,
it was going to be my cover,
an image with great concrete structures
in desperate states of disrepair.
They were ones we'd rounded on a beach,
that dome-like rocky coastline
'somewhere in Sicily' or maybe southern Spain –

which is how it would start up once again
in an estuarial, a riverine dreamscape:
on elevated railway journeys
through close-packed heavy industry
we'd shoot past shipping, oily waters,
with all the speed, the overflight
of a sea-level camera towards cloudy night...

Port Sunlight! A lurid yellow dusk
come down behind dad's forehead,
no, that was going to be my cover
(if the copyright holder hadn't asked so much),
its chiaroscuro of gravy-browning
and salad cream from which emerge
his wearied, glaucous, understanding eyes.

He had parked a lifeboat in the drive.
Back home from his pastoral duties,
look, in our kitchen, smiling despite
late illnesses, back pain, fret,
he's drying the dishes; or, see, he's
sighing over his Sunday paper
spread on the living room floor, a quiet
posthumous kind of existence –
surviving in others' memories;
and as if he really hadn't died,
was driving, still, round Merseyside,
if its image hadn't been denied
this was going to be the cover.

That's how I dreamed my father, still alive.

Maurice Scully

Lullaby

In a pool of light
two books used to
prop a third
under the
extended light-cone
of the lamp
in the dark
of a stormy night
in February
near the sea
layer over layer
quiet inside
settling into
work again
cascades
patterns
a neat fit –
grammars expanded –
jelly lichens
that contain
nostoc
a cyanobacteria
instead of
algae ...
that after-rain calm
that spatters
your shed-roof
in the cold
helping your mind along
through the trees
their typo-happy canopies

in sunlight
shimmering
under the hills
over there where
you remember now that
viscosity is
measured in time
in units of
poise.

Aidan Semmens

On the side of the angels

“after Hiroshima it is scarcely possible to write poetry about mushrooms”

—Drew Milne

call me Azrael
angel of death, destroying angel
high above, that silver glinting speck
my symbol, whomsoever
it shall wreak its destruction upon,
a storm of bewilderment
from my hideous wings
in sheer infinite descent
visiting endings on the unsuspecting
delivered from men in cold hats
in distant sheds
cultivators of the ultimate
wonderful death cap

the only sure means of prevention
is to be able to recognise
this highly poisonous fungus
beyond any possibility of doubt
it is not true
that all poisonous species
have a bitter flavour

the sublime atomic spectacle
of permanent catastrophe
masterful negation, impossible songlines lie
in industrial management of hospital detritus
radioactive lesions leaving
waste like the litter of neolithic flint

the most potent is amanitin
which works slowly
and in the pure state forms beautiful
needlelike crystals

Gerontius in joyous mourning for a lost
or possible future
dreams of nuclear weather
as we cheer each launch
in social pacts of denial
repeating the triumphalism
of bomb as utopian spectacle

the second poison is phalloidin
a hexapeptide which acts quickly
in cases of recovery the after-effects
remain often for life, vomiting merely
irritates the stomach to no purpose

'traces of strontium-90 in our teeth
can be used to date our corpses
against the datelines of nuclear testing'

Lucy Sheerman

from Pine Island

Fulbourn

Tuesday, 19 June

Dearest,

I am thinking of the web we weave in childhood and how it catches, catches, catches. I have scratches to the hands, bruising as I fight with my son. We are battling over my son's desire to escape, as he tries to run from me, again and again, and the opposite one, my wish to contain him. This time neither of us is giving in, or I should say, this time I'm not because it seems the calm it brings is far crueller than the storm of putting boundaries around his fierce wants.

After his school sports day he is in meltdown in spite of the meticulous schedule, the repeated rehearsals of the plan, his own fervent assurances, my promise of tangible rewards, consultation with the experts involved in his care, the painstaking arrangement of the journey starting here, where I found a space to park the car, near to school, far from the house. All these steps have still led us to another scene. He didn't mean to keep his word, that he would go back to the Unit with me.

Each time he tries to run away I stop him. 'I want to go home', he pleads, but that place is unravelling and where we belong is shifting. 'We're not going back there', I say. Neither of us can. In any case, even as the rest of the family head that way along the sunny streets, our home is changing because it must. It's not that he didn't want to be parted from them so much as the knowledge that they went home without him. I don't know if I have the strength to keep on, to make my will stronger than his. It would be so easy just to follow them but, instead, we are going back to the Unit.

'Help me, help me', he screams out to the passers-by as I hold him. But the man who stops to help turns to me not my frantic son. This is not mothering, it's something else, something even harder. Blankness. I may

have laughed at the inevitability of this stand-off in a quiet street, I don't remember now. It's not until the following day that the therapist talks about the difference between acts of love and kindness by which he means, in this instance, the way that they sometimes oppose each other.

Yours,

Fulbourn
Wednesday, 20 June

Dearest,

The therapist wants to know who has suffered the most in this family. We both know what he wants me to say. So easy to choose this stuff as suffering, but you can make it something else I suppose. How to translate this rough material that is always shoddy. When I was young, I could give my grandmother any piece of fabric with a description of the garment I wanted. So those are back in are they, she'd say, then take her dressmaker's scissors and 'make it up', however drab, into a new thing.

Am I always turning to daydream or is this the real place? He wants us to remember what we were like at our son's age. The childhood in which threat loomed like a mushroom cloud. The storm and thunder of my father's return each weekend. You think that you ought to have forgotten all this but it happened.

I am unremembering who was lost then, imagining a time where we were the strong ones, carrying our mother on our backs, keeping ourselves afloat as we bobbed along through the hard rain and darkness of those smoke-blackened buildings, the jagged moors. It's as if we might have found anchorage in the idea of being abandoned. If I decide to look back I suppose I cannot choose what my eyes will light upon.

Yours,

Hannah Cooper-Smithson

Ghost Apple

In the orchard, a blue-white shell of ice
hangs on a low branch on a low tree –
it holds everything you know about apples

[apple, or apple, eple and apful, epli, aeple, aepael, apel, *ab(e)],
the root meaning apple, but also a name, Hebhel, meaning both
'breath' and 'vanity' and 'murderer' – an apple is an any fruit –
finger-apples, earth-apples, love-apples, apples of paradise – an
apple is a man and a woman crouching naked in a garden – Eve
ate an apple, but so did Adam – it stuck in his throat and calcified
– the pip of an apple-apple contains cyanide – you would need to
chew 200 seeds to die by apple – in a fairytale an apple can kill
with a bite – the apple of the eye is the pit of the iris; it is also the
one that you love – the apple is both the fruit and the tree and
the colour – apple is just a shape – apples live in the cheeks of
children and virgin maids – mad-apple, mayapple, oak-apple, the
gall of the wasps – *Apple-time is the third Quarter of the Year* – an
apple is a pome, a *pomme*, a ball, a globe, an orb, a knob, a heart
– apple is a verb, to swell, become globular, apple-shaped – to
apple is to gather fir-cones, for the specified purpose of burning
– *children love apples more than gold* – to be appleless is to be
without apples]

apple-knowledge leaks from a pinprick
in the apple-case, leaving only blue-white glass,
the suggestion of an apple-shape.

John Welch

Some of Them

For Carl Rakosi

Sometimes when looking at what I wrote
Back then and thinking, if only such plainness
As this man's here
Who once went silent, before
Being summoned to speech again.

Visiting Hölderlin

'I asked whether I might keep one of these papers covered with his writing'
—*Waiblinger*

A long drawn-out agony of expense,
A moment of exile from the punishing voices,
Such dispersal of wealth among these dishevelled papers.
His visitor records
'When it is intelligible he always speaks
Of suffering, Oedipus and Greece.'

Concluding

A researcher visiting Christopher Middleton's archive in Texas found in there a pair of the poet's shoes. Middleton's poem Without Shoes begins 'One goes lightly / Down ignorant rays...'

Unshod, the dark wood
Being lightly entered
All signs abandoned
The poet's shoes
Have walked him into an archive.

Charlotte Baldwin

The Brontë Sisters at Dinner

On Tuesday nights the sisters eat at Pizza Express.
Their father is invited, but is usually busy reading the Bible.
Branwell is never invited because of the proximity to wine
but sometimes comes anyway, embarrassing everyone
being drunk on a Tuesday in the only restaurant in Haworth.

Anne is a vegan and checks whether the flour
in the ready-made dough is fairtrade.
Emily likes to sit by the window – a small square
of moorland is visible behind the church if she angles
her chair slightly away from her sisters.
Charlotte books the table and mostly pays the bill.
Sometimes she criticises her sister's menu choices:

The American Hot is too hot for Emily!
Why does Anne worry so much about dairy
when all their neighbours are farmers?
Charlotte always has the same thing.
Together they scribble ideas on the branded napkins,
produce vouchers, leave poems about birds
in the silver dish in place of a tip.

Scott Thurston

from TERRACES

One leaf never one leaf, the green cloth-bound with browned papers. Going down into a core stretch: give weight, pull, swap. For a comma, a turn, turning to change position for each hand, turning head. Add to the same level of tension: top half not connected to the lower. Your silence got lost in it, beside the floating mountain. Those bleak terraces.

*

Micro-decisions in the moment – attention to what relaxes. We meet the same situation with different qualities in collaboration; our emotional eco-system. When the I fully realises itself, there is a corresponding change in the other, but if I don't speak, you think I am thinking the worst possible thing. The mountains obscured by cloud at the base appear to float. The vines in winter.

*

During the ceremony, the course was physically installed in my body. How to best serve the universe, allow oneself to be held, reconnect with the centre, stay grounded? Movement connects us to what is happening now. Finding one's full height – see the pattern's roots, make a choice to find the new or maintain the old. Breathing first and last. Rite to take up space.

*

Release anger to get past it – the past source of energy. Change our relation, enrol each other in drama, bringing love to what is unloved. My fear fulfils your fear – pure seeing by grace alone. Tell me, does it dignify life?

*

To still believe in a future: is becoming worthy of trust by knowing and owning my own patterns disciplined or compliant? You covet your resources and get upset if I use them and don't replace them. Free energy up by learning the secrets of the past – how to reform the sick institution? Keep the spring clear. To recognise our power, trust our force to give more energy in the meeting without compromise.

*

Sex, life, work, struggle: certainly reaching for mountains. A wisp of expression, cupping a bowl of intention. The Citadel of the Eye of the Heart. Shadow city: how fear and stress start to climb in my body – seek extension, upward release of tension. Standing in my height and strength, integrating the upper and the lower. Crucible of blood: the pain is in the in-between.

Kjell Espmark

translated by Robin Fulton Macpherson

When Music Finds Bartók Again

He's thin as a worn dollar bill.
But his gaze insists: a welder's torch.
It was tough when they took one of the pianos,
cutting earnings spelt "four-handed."
And leukaemia took his very energy.

In a U.S.A. of indifferent backs
he's a five-year namelessness,
a Central European who argued his way here
with his pride and his scuffed luggage
and works for peanuts in some archive.

In his music sheets, exhaustion, nothing more.
Where's the smell of the sun-warmed soil
and the uneven stomping peasant rhythm?
The street racket shreds his nerves –
earplugs don't help.

It's only when he's become almost abstract
that he hears quarter-tones scabble up from the street.
The incomplete seeks him out
with features still trapped in the stone.

Perhaps simplicity begins in the music
he wrote for little Péter's fingers.
But it must find its way through difficulty.
It's the density of the string quartets
that makes simplicity possible.

The late style remembers all the heaviness:
Goebbels' music-making boots,
the panic of those held back at the border
and Ditta's despondency: a bundle
in a corner of a hospital of hard-of-hearing stone.

Remembers everything but is still transparent.
The long-suffering features of the piano concertos
free themselves more and more from the stone.

Marta Agudo

translated by Lawrence Schimel

Poems from *Historial (Case History)*

...for death is nobody. A sudden switching off or bit
by bit, like the light that dims each afternoon in the
eyes of the sick.

The patient or the gradual surrender, that wingless flight. And the
world that moves thanks only to the desire that
it may dawn the next day. A pathological impulse
to elude the cadaver we harbour, to cling to
the granted opportunity.

Only Cernuda knew more than I, only Bosch, only García
Lorca. Three names and an architect: the memory
of the Pantheon or the sand suddenly redeemed for
ten seconds more in the history of the universe.

Yes, a history of the universe told backwards would be less
deceitful, hypnotic in its beginning, perhaps enduring
in the first maternal caress.

Yes, a score read backwards and finishing with the key that
marked our days. Free will then, not
being prescribed.

Yes, a chimeric sculpture. An unattainable work is equal
to another that won't let itself be started. The marble or the struggle
with arm raised against time...

Kinga Tóth

translated by Annie Rutherford

Water carrier

brides are for sale in the window
I ask when will it be my turn for a
white dress like that it'll definitely be
but only with trousers or definitely
only with trousers
I could have put a match to that window display
thrown fire at the dress
hot cherry stones under the dress
but the house was over there above the foot of the mountain
still have to go through the woods next to the walls three cloisters
next to them the church too and then another and then
avoid the path to school better take the detour
on the hillside climb in my shoes
the woman carrying water the nuns even a noblewoman
I walk like them I carry the bucket
there is no noise does anyone live here no
movement in the bushes only if commanded only then
will a wee creature run between the bushes
then a car can be heard in the distance
and a young man is walking but
turns back the cloak tears and everything
else no break one thing after another
as he walks the young man asks thinks
is alone but along with me
he hears the other questioner in the bushes
in the next valley and on the other side of the bend
the man with both shoes I carry them
to the top of the hill then there's nothing left to do
and for the first time we take a breath

the noblewoman begins to clap inside me
the nun claps too my long cloak dissolves
the string my shoelace flakes off my dress falls down
the cloth falls from my mouth and then this breath drifts through my
windpipe cools it down let it be harsh leave all that
my way out of it my mother my sisters
I am arrived

Notes on Contributors

MARTA AGUDO lives in Madrid. Her most recent collection, *Historial* (Valencia: Calambur, 2017), from which the poems in this issue are drawn, was named one of the best poetry volumes of the year by the Spanish critics.

CHARLOTTE BALDWIN is an arts programmer, creative writing tutor & dogwalker. As Gypsy Rose Poetry, she has performed everywhere from the National Poetry Library to nursing homes. Her work has appeared in a number of journals. In 2019, her poems appeared in *Islands Are But Mountains* (Platypus Press).

LINDA BLACK has three volumes from Shearsman Books, with a fourth currently in development. She is co-editor of *Long Poem Magazine*, and lives in London.

MELISSA BUCKHEIT is a queer poet, translator, activist, dancer and choreographer, photographer, English Lecturer and Orthopaedic Massage Therapist. She is the author of *Noctilucent* (Shearsman Books, 2012), and two chapbooks: *Dulcet You* (dancing girl press, 2016), and *Arc* (The Drunken Boat, 2007). She also translates the poet Ioulita Iliopoulou from Modern Greek, and currently lives in rural Northeast Connecticut.

SUSAN CONNOLLY has two full collections, including *Bridge of the Ford* (2016), and two chapbooks from Shearsman. Her most recent publication *What Noise on Earth* (Redfoxpress, 2019) is part of the C'est mon Dada collection of artists' books from visual poets around the world. She lives in Drogheda, Ireland.

HANNAH COOPER-SMITHSON is currently completing a critical-creative PhD at Nottingham Trent University, where she is researching form in contemporary environmental poetry. Her work has appeared in various journals and anthologies, including *The Interpreters House*, *Finished Creatures*, *Anthropocene*, and *becoming-Botanical*, which was published by Objet-a Studios in 2019.

CLAIRE CROWTHER's most recent collection is *Solar Cruise* (Shearsman Books, 2020). She lives in Somerset and is co-editor of *Long Poem Magazine*.

AMY CRUTCHFIELD lives in Melbourne. She has had work published in *Australian Poetry Journal* and *Poetry Review*, amongst others.

KJELL ESPMARK is a Swedish poet with a long and illustrious career, and over 30 books to his name. Shearsman Books published his *Béla Bartók Against the Third Reich* in 1985, a joint publication with Oasis Books. The first three poems here are from *Evening's Freedom* (2019), a group of twenty poems exploring various examples of "late style" in artists. *A Cloud of Witnesses* (2020) is the third volume in a trilogy; the title alludes to *Hebrews 12.i*.

JANE FRANK is a poet from Brisbane. She is Director of the Centre for Creative Industries at Griffith University where she teaches creative and professional writing and literary studies. Her most recent chapbook is *Wide River* (Calanthe Press, 2020).

AMLANJYOTI GOSWAMI lives in New Delhi. His first collection, *River Wedding*, was published by Poetrywala, Mumbai, in 2019.

CHRISTOPHER GUTKIND is an Anglo-Canadian librarian in London, whose collection *Inside to Outside* was published by Shearsman Books in 2006. Poems from this sequence, *Digits After Orph*, are in *Otoliths* and *Erotoplasty* and *Berfrois*, and different poems will soon be in *Pamenar*.

DAVID HADBAWNIK's spectacular – and transgressive – version of the first six books of Virgil's *Aeneid* was published by Shearsman Books in 2015. Books 7–12 will follow in July 2021 in both hardcover and paperback editions. After some time teaching in Kuwait, he is now at the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire in the U.S.A.

MANDY HAGGITH lives on a croft in Assynt, in the north-west highlands of Scotland and is a lecturer in literature and creative writing at the University of the Highlands and Islands. Her most recent book is *Why the Sky Is Far Away* (Red Squirrel Press, 2019). She has also written five novels, including a historical trilogy.

DAVID HACKBRIDGE JOHNSON is a composer and musician based in London. Three CDs of his orchestral music are available from Toccata Classics.

JEREMY HOOKER's *Selected Poems 1965–2018* and his essay collection, *Art of Seeing*, were published by Shearsman Books in 2020.

NORMAN JOPE is based in Plymouth and has collections from Shearsman (*Dreams of the Caucasus*, 2010), Waterloo Press, Stride and Knives, Forks and Spoons Press.

L. KIEW is a Chinese Malaysian poet from London, where she works as an accountant. Her debut pamphlet, *The Unquiet*, was published by Offord Road Books in 2019. She was longlisted in the 2019 National Poetry Competition.

PETER LARKIN has a number of books from Shearsman, most recently *Encroach to Resume* (2021), and *Trees Before Abstemious Ground* (2019).

MARY LEADER has two collections from Shearsman Books, with a third, *Distaff*, in development. She lives in Oklahoma.

CAROLA LUTHER has two collections with Carcanet Press, with a third coming this year. She has mostly worked as a therapeutic counsellor, but has also taught poetry part-time at Manchester Metropolitan University and Liverpool John Moores University.

ROBIN FULTON MACPHERSON is a Scottish poet living for several decades in Norway, whose most recent collection, *Arrivals of Light*, was published by Shearsman Books in 2020. His *Collected Poems* appeared from Marick Press in the U.S.A. in 2013. He has also translated many Swedish and Norwegian poets, including Kjell Espmark, Gunnar Harding and Tomas Tranströmer.

OLIVIA MCCANNON's collection *Exactly My Own Length* (Carcanet/Oxford Poets) was shortlisted for the Seamus Heaney Centre Prize and won the Fenton Aldeburgh First Collection Prize. She lived for nine years in Paris, and her translations from French run from Renaissance to contemporary poetry as well as Balzac's novel *Old Man Goriot* for Penguin Classics (2011).

PETER ROBINSON teaches at the University of Reading and is poetry editor for Two Rivers Press. Shearsman Books has published, among many other volumes, his *Collected Poems 1976–2016*. *The Personal Art: Essays, Reviews & Memoirs* will appear in

2021, as will *Peter Robinson: A Portrait of his Work*, edited by Tom Phillips.

DAVID RUSHMER's first full collection, *Remains to Be Seen*, was published by Shearsman Books in 2018.

ANNIE RUTHERFORD is Programme Co-ordinator at StAnza. Her translation of Swiss/German poet Nora Gomringer appeared in 2018 with Burning Eye Books, and her translation of Belarusian poet Volha Hapeyeva will appear from Arc during 2021.

LAWRENCE SCHIMEL is an American writer, translator and publisher, based in Madrid. Shearsman has published his translations of Jordi Doce and Elsa Cross.

MAURICE SCULLY's one-volume collected *Things That Happen* project, written over a period of 25 years, was published by Shearsman Books in 2020, alongside a volume of essays on his work, edited by Kenneth Keating. His next book will appear in 2022.

AIDAN SEMMENS has four collection from Shearsman Books, most recently *There Will Be Singing* (2020). He edits the online magazine, *Molly Bloom*.

LUCY SHEERMAN runs the University of Cambridge Centre for Creative Writing. Publications include: *Rarefied* (Oystercatcher) and *Fragments Salvaged from her Diary* (Dancing Girl Press).

AGNIESZKA STUZIŃSKA has an MA in Creative Writing from the UEA and two full collections, *Snow Calling* (Salt, 2010) and *What Things Are* (Eyewear, 2014). She is currently working on a PhD at Royal Holloway and lives in London. Shearsman Books will publish her third collection, *Branches of a House*, later in 2021.

SCOTT THURSTON is based in Manchester and teaches at Salford University. His Shearsman publications include *Internal Rhyme* (2010), and a volume of interviews with women poets, *Talking Poetics* (2011).

KINGA TÓTH is a writer, and a visual and sound poet, working in Hungarian, German and English. She has performed and exhibited her work internationally. In 2018–2019 she was the City Writer in Graz. Her collection *We Build A City*, translated into English by Sven Engelke and the author, appeared with Knives Forks and Spoons Press in 2020.

ANANNYA UBEROI is a full-time software engineer and part-time tea connoisseur based in Madrid. She is poetry editor at *The Bookends Review*, and the winner of the 6th Singapore Poetry Contest. Her work has appeared in a number of journals and her website is www.anannyauberai.com.

VIRGIL (70–19 BC) was the national poet of Imperial Rome, and his *Aeneid* – an epic on the founding of Rome – is one of the great monuments of early Western literature.

Nearly all of **JOHN WELCH**'s work is published by Shearsman Books, including a *Collected Poems* (2008), *In Folly's Shade* (2018) and a memoir, *Dreaming Arrival* (2008).

PETRA WHITE is an Australian poet, now living in Berlin. Her most recent collection is *Reading for a Quiet Morning* (Gloria SMH Press, 2017).

TAMAR YOSELOFF's sixth collection is *The Black Place* (Seren, 2019). She is also the author of *Formerly* (with photographs by Vici MacDonald), and collaborative editions with artists Linda Karshan and Charlotte Harker respectively, and lectures on the Poetry School / Newcastle University MA in Writing Poetry.