

# POETiCA REViEW

Summer 2022



Featuring the work  
of 45 poets...

Issue 14

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Issue 14

Chief Editor: **Mark A. Murphy**

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# Lara Dolphin

## December 14

Oh mother, mother, where is happiness?  
My quondam dreams are shot to hell.  
I grow old though pleased with my memories  
I have a lot of edges called Perhaps  
I love people who harness themselves, an ox to a heavy cart,  
There is always something to be made of pain  
I stand in the cold kitchen, everything wonderful around me.  
In casual simplicity--  
Pretty women wonder where my secret lies.  
But one day, I know,  
it will be otherwise.

## Antonis Balasopoulos 2 poems

### The Raven

The raven is a kind of parody;  
a winged vandalism  
at the expense of the letter.  
Because, though we were created  
in the image of a face,  
we have fallen into the similitude  
of a sign worn thin  
by interpretations.  
And so, we would have liked  
to be shiny and black  
and cacophonous  
and to leave the traces of rakes  
on the snow-covered earth.  
This is what the crow is for us:  
A “nevermore” darker  
than the parrot’s and more decisive  
than the sweet loquacity of the nightingale  
a mirror we break  
intentionally, despite the seven  
years of bad luck. As to  
what we ourselves are for the raven  
I don’t know. Ask

the wires and ask the grain fields  
that have gone yellow with madness  
and get away, get away from  
this poem.

## The Birth of History in Herodotus

Onesilus taught me two things  
about the nature of history: the first is a buzz,  
like that between stations in A.M radio—  
cries, threnodies, words  
from which the articulation is missing.  
The second is a bitter aftertaste in honey,  
the thought, in other words, mechanically  
deposited by bees as they labour  
in the empty skull.  
“I was aware”, this thought says,  
filling the hall of the cranium  
with a voice in Minor key,  
“but I didn’t really know.  
I looked but did not see.  
And I was born too late  
too late from the start.”

## **Dan Flore III 2 poems**

### **I just wanna come home dad**

I remember the big green weeds  
when I asked if I could come home  
*"I'm right down the street at Don's couldn't I just come home?"*  
the answer was no  
on the way back to Don's I wrapped my body in the leaves  
and smashed through the chipping white painted walls and exposed brick  
right into the house

## HER FLORAL DRESS

her  
floral  
dress  
goes  
into  
full  
bloom  
when  
she  
smiles

# Ernie Brill 1 poem

## Mitosis

I was born in 1945:  
We celebrated just being alive;  
For who could calibrate the cost  
Of the smoking cauldrons of the Holocaust ?

Lately I sense a strange impression  
Of sources of my and my mom's depression.  
Some swear it's genes. Science claims it's true.  
I maintain other features factor too.

I read an essay in a magazine:  
A therapist for many years has seen  
Jews and others with a strangling sadness  
That, on occasion, converts to madness.

She feels that many post-war mothers' wombs  
Struggled with a stupefying doom.  
I daydream, muse: did in her placenta  
Another fetus of growing terror enter?

Of all who died by 1945  
Thousands of skeletons were found alive  
My Russian and American GIS  
So stunned rumor claims the sights maimed their eyes.  
Can I re-feel my mom's nine months with me,  
She transfixed by newsreels tragedies  
Paralyzed by grim-skinned starving faces  
Whose gummed spit seeded her inner spaces?  
Did horror flourish in our blood-streams  
With eerie nourishment beyond despair?  
Did minute fingers clutch and claw our dreams  
Of the barely sensed malformed scrabbling there  
That, later, for me and my mother Bess  
Became a subterranean process  
Shrinks might dub PTSD regression  
A stillborn again source of our depression  
To my mind there's no ifs, buts, or maybes:  
I was born with a complex choking twin  
Tangling with a mangled sibling within:  
A blood-red, half-dead bawling Holocaust baby.

## Cathy Thwing 2 poems

### How to Find Your Way Home

Take a right at the horseshoe  
lane, past the green utility box,  
over the cracked pavement

down to the end of the road,  
where two pines grow,  
ten times as tall as your brother  
and sister--about their height  
when they were planted.

The pines are gone?  
So is home, then.  
Keep going, past the white Victorian  
on the corner, to the brick  
apartment building. Head  
into the back, go low  
to the basement.  
See the red door?

It's bolted?  
Then home is shut,  
too. Keep on. Go  
across the mountains  
to a faraway town  
between two rivers.

Fires rage. The town  
is burned, college closed.  
What was your home  
fills with ash.

Head south, through the desert,  
past sky islands,  
in the shade of the arroyo,  
under the mesquite.  
There is home, for now.

But when it's gone?  
Where then? Home  
keeps moving, shifting,  
burning down, flooding.  
We lose it one way  
or another, until all we have

is the home within.

## **Cross Ways**

In truth, it doesn't matter  
which road you take,  
this one or the one not  
taken. Either way, you take  
what comes what may

And place one step  
after the next,  
one breath  
after the beat  
of every pulse.

In truth, all that matters  
is this: You're here.

# Alan Lake 1 poem

## Pile of Puzzle Pieces

19 hitchhiking back and forth across Canada  
for something to do 63 waking after first heart op  
11 bouncing about in back of Daddo's half-ton with  
other unrestrained village brats 5 enter strange house,  
see baby who will be my parents' other son 23 on motor-  
bike in Ibiza, long hair flying in face of a young woman  
whose coat catches in spokes 17 frost 'forests'  
on every window of my freezing bedroom  
where I play records: Bob, Gordon, Joni, Janis  
65 we salivate as a woman bakes bread in a home-  
made oven up steep Sicilian hill with view of Aeolian  
Islands 15 driving my silent grandfather's black  
Falcon much too fast for the sand and gravel  
road to Eagle Creek 44 itinerant teacher poses  
as expert on literature and other creations of  
restless minds 35 just off plane at Tasmanian  
airport surveying distant hills of my unlikely  
adoptive country 10 ice-skating at outdoor rink  
in village Saskatchewan 18 leaning on seawall at  
Vancouver beach with no money in pocket 30 fishing  
from green and yellow skiff on nameless lake in  
northern Saskatchewan 21 arrive Cape Breton  
Island as missionary of something and nothing  
49 daughter and I paint our West Australian house,  
unaware it will only be demolished by a 'developer'  
70 pandemic re-flattens our world so we sit tight,  
masked against infection 0 slide out, cry out

## Edward L. Canavan 2 poems

### crooked lines

for real is all games and gamble  
fate nothing more than a spinning twister

ripping things up from the root  
and heaving them every which way

chaos is the norm  
nothing ever makes sense

it is only our mind filling in the gaps  
that makes it seem that way

we are here and not  
always and never

and that  
is all.

\*

## wild once

sheltered from the mad city  
as riotous joy explodes thru the night

times ago it might have been me out there  
on fire with victory and hopeless abandon

with no reason not to paint the town  
every goddamned night

in for a penny  
in for a pound

but some lines we cross silently  
somewhere near the half-century mark

maybe knowing better  
maybe just tired

cutting our losses  
and sitting more out than in

content to have lived thru it before in one way  
and live thru it now in another

maybe just feeling grateful to still be around  
long enough to see things from the other side.

## L.K. Galanter 2 poems

### That Which Is Wrong

Seventeen minutes ago I was in love  
you were a supernova  
at the edge of heaven

Slipping through the window  
I've already moved on  
sometimes we learn the most from losing  
sometimes we make mistakes and call them coincidences

I love that your ghost continues to complain  
this is where the guardian angels come in  
keep silent about all that love  
how do I stop speaking to the invisible?

I was wrong about desire  
life is lonely in the best of times  
the moon is the problem

Time is a long sunrise where we wait for our halos  
we're drowning in the unknown  
now the only language  
is a forgotten dance

[Lines from *Dialogues with Rising Tides*, by Kelli Russell Agodon]

## Enough Time

There wasn't enough time in the world for him  
despite the watches up both arms  
and the pocket watch hanging from his vest  
*You have a real hang-up about time* I'd say  
*No, I just have more of it.*

In the end, that didn't save him  
didn't give him one more day or minute  
he didn't think for a second what I would do  
without his shoulder or his ear  
or where I would go

And now we wander  
in a timelessness that all his watches  
cannot track, cannot tell us when the alarm will ring  
and wake us again to that bright sunny day

# Chella Courington 2 poems

## The Sun Blazes Blue

The sun blazes blue in Portland today  
I think about her drinking

I drive to Rite Aid for my prescription  
of Ativan I think about her drinking

I grill the boys cheese sandwiches  
sliced in rectangles where she's drinking

I drive the boys to the neighborhood  
pool wondering why she's drinking

I read under a yellow umbrella  
see them splashing where she's drinking

I spoon tomato soup into brown bowls  
fearing his betrayal left her drinking

I wake at 4 a.m. tossing in dark  
the house quiet and she's drinking

An old man sprinkles seed to attract birds  
in their digging I see her drinking

Wondering whether mourning doves carry  
grief in their sad song I hear my daughter drinking

## A Daughter's Confession

This is how it begins  
I open the Chardonnay cork bits float

stranded inside the glass waiting  
for me to drain the bottle

*Mindful drinking* my therapist advises  
Today I don't start till 3 p.m.

six hours later than yesterday three  
hours later than yesterday's yesterday

I track the wine  
what and when and where

Chardonnay Monday 12 p.m. Kitchen  
Chardonnay Tuesday 9 a.m. Bathroom

*Alcohol is potent poison* my therapist warns  
I empty the past down the drain

I don't watch news don't listen to NPR  
I buy a flat of pansies purple and red

their faces five velvet petals heart-shaped  
and plant them in soil loose and dark

rich with humus community alive  
reaching for roots

Dry four days my fingers like Ophelia's  
edged in dirt what her tender hands

could have nurtured had love lasted  
Chardonnay Monday 8 a.m. Bedroom

## Fred Gerhard 2 poems

### Disassembled

to be myself            means  
          to be            my story  
private moments        recalled,  
ordered into            words  
oracle vowels            inaudible  
          shared here in a letter  
                  to you

who may not reply  
in the safety of  
your                      self  
kept                    a                    part  
          still my story remains  
my                      self  
          dis        as        sem    bled

I hand you the pieces  
          one by one  
                  like sand

## Ghosted

It may not be obvious,  
but he'd become tedious.  
Though I wouldn't show it.

Once it was clear to me,  
not overt, but clear,  
that I had everything I needed, I was free to go.

And besides, what could he say?  
He kept wanting to text, or talk, or visit,  
and it was no longer clear what we were,

and I needed to explore the summer –  
friends, sex, ideas.  
You know what I mean.

To have a life.  
A summer I'll  
never forget.

Oh yeah. Like I was saying,  
he just kept caring way too much  
like his life depended on it or something.

And I can't carry a friendship like that.  
At all.  
So,

I just ghosted him.  
That was like a year before the wake.  
Weird.

What?  
How would I know if he was lonely?

## Douglas Colstan 2 poems

### “The Once Magical and Mysterious Target”

Once ‘magical’ and ‘mysterious’ ... the optimal potential of each emerging moment (the aim, standard and criterion) – the inevitable passing of events (from future to present and then to past), personal participation, drive, energy and vigour in harmony with social and cultural groups is restorative of health and wellbeing.

Throughout time, the mind, expression, countenance and appearance targets this – only life ... including (on occasions) social status, moral character, clothes, the body, reproduction and the ‘I’ (one’s identity).

Coarseness is akin to inferiority or a type of prison.

The body is principle – it is the whole entity (three dimensional and substantial). Comprising manners, attitudes and behaviours it ‘does’ ... and is experienced personally.

Clearly and obviously, feelings, sentiments and emotions may be associated with reputation, circumstances, friendships, love and affection ... regret, remorse, agitation, conflict, sentimentality, being grateful, responsiveness and influence, too, may be associated – and affected by – emotions and perception.

Proficiency, expertise, intelligence, purity, energy and vigour – even, perhaps, that which is like a ‘goblin’ or ‘demon’ – is an expression of the mind.

Peaceful, harmonious, gentle and kind societies (including groups of families) distinguish and differentiate peace, happiness, health, strength and prosperity ... repeatedly.

一一一  
段段  
神神  
奇奇  
的的  
时时  
光光  
身身  
体体  
情情  
感感  
精精  
神神  
和和  
社社  
区区  
康康  
复复

## “A flock of birds, the ocean, a pier, chains, bollards and a watcher”

A group to heed – perhaps the objectionable or ‘damned’ ... the sea of the same, the port city ‘Firm-Hard-and-Ruthless’.

To chain, bind or be a vessel or a bridge obstructing, blocking, standing tall or supporting, echo, harmonize with and become reconciled to the same.

Keep watch and guard this: the person involved in hopes, observation, desires, wishes, fame, reputation and position.

Guardedness – defending, protecting, conserving and watching – may be a portion of a greater whole, or, all that matters ... and it can imply stature or occur from a height, individually, separately or in unity, but, it is done in relation to something or someone.

Surprisingly and unexpectedly, all peace, harmony, warmth, kindness, gentleness, temperance and reconciliation supports and leans upon the vessel ‘Scholarship’.

To be part of the chain that is strong and intimate is the beginning and end – it is foremost and genuine leadership ... the code (or cipher) of singular and entire good fortune, gentleness, expansion, novel fashion and abundance.

Unpleasant things are multitudinous and gather with that which is identical and different ... and the whole.

者一 一个  
望群 个  
守鸟 码  
个海 头  
一洋 铁  
和一 链  
柱个 系  
船码 船  
系头 柱  
链铁 和  
铁链 一个  
头系 守  
码船 望  
个柱 者  
一和  
洋一  
海个  
鸟守  
群望  
一者

# Paul Ilichko 1 poem

## Sonnet to Measure Language

The killing fields are lit by a quiet moon  
and here I am in the belly of a god squeezing words  
from a paralytic larynx shouting out loud that all  
poetry is language poetry someday soon we shall  
fail to penetrate and existence will end  
I check the clock and it's slightly late and I know  
with a sudden intensity that my time has passed  
self-pity is corrosive and this town has no need  
of me there are people sleeping in the streets  
frozen on a winter's night there are homes  
that will never be rebuilt still coated with the mud  
of tragedy the oil and grease of desperation  
abandoned to the gods of weather who played  
their ace card rains which fell to a biblical degree.

# Massimo Fantuzzi 1 poem

## Hole to Feed

*(Set like fog, her face from behind the familiar window.)*

Let the amethyst, I go on repeating myself,  
let the field show itself  
and let me go for its lime dive  
faithfully  
in its severe refuge of caskets.

Tide's wild haste has reached this fugitive,  
just another hollow breath  
left congesting  
from death's all but reluctant curtain  
drew by your soon dead master.

Laid alight, liquid Moon and cloudy Noon on their leave,  
both feeling wet-cheated redundant  
to my disentangled circadian state of affairs.

Weeks of headaches it took me to recognise that that drumming wasn't in fact the  
harsh compulsion of a bitter old woodpecker but other gravitational plot working the  
floorboards, reverberating its adjustment to some weight intrusion and tune devotion

I  
could not counterbalance tiptoeing this askew about the thrum of a heart  
left the whipping orbitals.

## James P. Cooper 2 poems

### Stenciling Another Kill

When I see the bodies of opossums,  
raccoons, and deer alongside the road,  
I am reminded of the career NCO  
who used to run down rabbits at night.

Assigned to the team always ready  
for emergencies, I rode with this sergeant.  
Mid-shift, about 4:00 a.m., as if stopping  
for lunch, he used to park his pick-up  
on the flight line, with the lights off.

After a half-hour, he flipped on his lights,  
sighted his prey, and swooped down  
on them, targeting both adults and children.  
I sat in silence, grimacing, when he started  
laughing and turned to see whether  
I enjoyed hearing the thud under his tires.

The number of kills if stenciled on his truck,  
would have taken up not just  
the driver's door but that entire side.

Maybe like Sisyphus, his punishment never  
ends as he gets reincarnated as a rabbit  
at the moment it attempts to outrun and evade  
capture by zig-zagging in front of a truck.  
None of its attempts ever lead to safety.

## **Under a Dark Sky**

Miles from the nearest  
cluster of houses, whose lights  
confuse the migrating moths,

we park next to a field, hear  
the swish of cows, their dark shapes  
moving toward the fence

as you mount your camera  
on its tripod in the gravel road.  
We wait. Cows wander away.

Throat singing, frogs perform  
their songs of lust, daring us  
to add our song, until you cry out

at meteors. Their bright tails swim  
across each shot, their getting  
pulled inside exhausts them.

# Steven Deutsch 1 poem

## Wounded

The phone rang  
but I hesitated  
to take Jim's call.

Are we born  
with the need  
to avoid

human misery?  
Perhaps that  
is the source

of accusation—  
witch, warlock  
bad things happen

around you.  
And Jim had  
more than his share.

It wasn't  
like he complained.  
He rarely did,

but I was afraid  
I'd catch  
his unhappiness.

I thought I detected  
a sob in his voice—  
his mutt Felix had run off

and Felix was all he had  
left. We scrambled  
the neighborhood

and searched for hours til Felix  
came wandering back  
at dusk, hungry

and thirsty  
and unaware of the crisis  
he had caused.

Clear and very cold tonight.  
but for now, at least,  
we would all stay warm.

## Darrell Petska 2 poems

### Seasons of Darkness and Light

Deepest night and brightest day hold vigil at the window—  
Within, a large teddy beside the chest of drawers  
lies in hibernation, but Corduroy Bear, propped  
on the changing table, stares blankly across the room.  
Dust like baby powder films his overalls, as it does  
Baby's First Year lying on a shelf and Winnie the Pooh,  
Tigger and Piglet immobile overhead.

Silence weighs upon the bassinet, the rocker  
near the window, the floor's on-the-go play mat.  
The room's closed door, the cheerily painted walls,  
contain the stillness. Sounds from without—muffled words,  
treading feet, the dialog of dishes—lack substance,  
fading like a swallowed sigh. Here, all remains inviolate  
before seasons of darkness and light, sorrow and hope.

Epicenter of the house, the room sits, a stifled heartbeat,  
an open question. No key rests in its lock,  
anguish the sole prohibition to entrance.  
How long can slumbering space withstand sun's play,  
moon's lullabies, the finely honed points of stars?  
On the closet door awakens Little Boy Blue.  
Fishermen three on the wall's wide sea  
wait to rock in an old wooden shoe.

## From the World Desk

Grandpop's laptop teeters at desk's verge,  
displaced by Grandson's Legosphere

a boy's fleet fingers conjure tiny bricks  
into wonders of the world

an old man's hands twist and tuck  
sound into lifelines of meaning

24" x 44"  
empires of words and Lego bricks  
crowding the world's flat edge

Grandson builds, tears down, reimagines,  
Grandpop spins stanzas, stews, retries:

like inverted mirrors,  
an old man assessing where he's been,  
a boy big-eyed for tomorrow

astride their wind's strong current  
through far-flung, waking dreams

lords of creation  
all the world around and about them  
nascent, tractable, expansive

24" x 44"  
a boy yearns for more space,  
an old man, more for time.

## Mary Paulson 2 poems

### On Being

I'm guilty of nothing. In the negative, my xy limitations  
piss me off. I wake up dispirited, gravity bound. Bound. In the positive, limits  
prevent disruption, emotional blindness. I'm prevented from losing  
my place: cog 937 million, 650,702 thousand plus nine. I'm guilty  
of nothing; just moving things about down here—  
symbols, calendars, algorithms, street signs, naming conventions,  
superstitions. The moon is three days dark. I'm human,  
luminous, a flash like a firefly and just as important.

## Bad Luck

No hats on beds, open  
umbrellas, whistling  
in the house, don't  
feed the dog at  
the table! Dogs don't have  
birthday parties! it's a sacrilege—  
bad luck needs no explanation.

Daddy and I  
smash a pomegranate on the back  
steps for good luck, thin  
juice bleeds hot pink all  
over the concrete. My mother  
watches from the window,  
shaking her head—  
that stain will never come out.

Every time I leave the house  
I know anything  
can happen. Each bird call, each  
wind rush's a coded message:  
*Be afraid! Stay home! Watch yourself!*  
Look at your feet when you  
walk. You could die, step right off  
a cliff in the fog—

# Tim Resau 2 poems

## STREETSCAPES

Another cracked city sidewalk—  
chalk outlined—  
yellow caution tap—  
a police scene.  
Another blood-filled gutter.  
Several shots were fired—  
Someone said: *Waz drug related*  
A young person's  
shadow in leaky blood,  
like a lost or smudged fingerprint.

The city weeps.  
The city creeps.

See, it's slowly disappearing  
with its fogged-out memory  
of a historic but forgotten past,  
like the glory of a nation,  
dwindling.  
Alas, it's out of gas at last.

The city weeps.  
The city creeps.

Vacant store fronts displaying  
signs of hope:  
For Rent - Lease to suit.  
Apartments too: First month free!

And as the forgotten family's department stores  
collapse like yesterday's lost sale,  
we rush towards the corner's drug department,  
to select a bag or two, & we get high to forget  
who we are & what we are becoming—  
or to erase the city's noble history,  
after all, it's a new world, baby!

The city weeps.  
The city creeps.

## HOTEL ATLANTIC

We'll arrive in the November rain,  
carrying suitcases packed with ancient photography.  
We'll arrive alone but somehow together—  
with all our old forgotten friends,  
who're lost and need to be remembered:  
— *Oh, we be so lost ...*  
with antique thoughts in the autumn highway rain,  
driving in constant middle-age pain toward the Atlantic—  
across which we all once came,  
carrying photo-albums filled with European reminders  
of our losses and our gains—

We'll be together and alone ...  
we'll be held captive like shadows within a new-age fear.  
Caught holding the precise x-ray of our displaced lives,  
like patients caught naked  
in the frozen amber of a highway sign.

The old fashion nicotine haze of the November rain,  
driving toward the Atlantic,  
across which we all once came.  
Most of our families are now behind, like buried memories  
in the autumn cemetery of someone's lost mind.

We'll be going toward the Atlantic,  
this November in the old fashion nicotine haze,  
together but alone.  
Going toward the Atlantic, the Hotel Atlantic  
in the rain of memories together but alone with  
the middle-aged pain of faded family snapshots,  
across which we all came, together but alone  
... in the rain of all the middle-aged pain.

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# Robin Cantwell 1 poem

## a brief history of time pt.2

When I think of Earthrise / from Apollo 8  
Fanfare For The Common Man / plays somewhere in my soul  
at least / I think it's my soul  
that is to say / if man *has* a soul  
or if I can find / a pair of headphones in time.  
Then I think / how far we have to travel  
in space  
before we can travel back / in time  
to Wordsworth / and his sublime.

All he had to do / was climb a hill  
and there  
in the dissolutions / and rivulets  
the birth of imagination  
and in those dissolutions / in those rivulets  
did he exact / the look of wonder  
but now / where is left to go  
what journey / is left to take  
as we spell out our names / in straws from the sea  
and drag our tarps / like old man Ahab / across the empty waves.

Excuse me, waiter / this fish / tastes like Teflon to me.

They call it / the Cave of Altamira  
inside / you'll find  
the great hall of polychromes  
the first paintings / known to man  
paintings where / bison's age / like a Renaissance fresco  
dreamers of the cave sky  
waiting / for the matador  
also / for a Saturn V  
I wonder what they'd think / of Tintern Abbey  
I wonder what they'd think / of Aaron Copland  
or at a stretch / the technological singularity  
maybe we can get / Elon Musk / to go back and ask them  
before he turns off the lights.

But most of all / I wonder what they'd think  
of what we've left behind  
a waste land / of old electronics  
a soup swamp / of fallen trees  
how lucky we are / never to feel their shame  
or answer questions like / why don't you like oxygen

are you the real Jesus / only  
instead of wine / your turn water / into NFTs?

And in a flash I see / the emergence of the neolithic man  
and then I hear the drummers sound / their revelation  
and then / and then / in a flourish  
at the echo / of the gong  
I realise / from the very beginning  
since the dawn / of time  
I've actually been thinking / of The Blue Marble / from Apollo 17.

# Lorraine Caputo 1 poem

## To Capture the Starlight

The garúa & rain  
of these past days

lifts with the night  
to reveal many stars

& Mars so bright, so red –  
the not-too-distant sea

receding, its voice calling  
through mangrove & saltbush

past tangles of espinillo  
bedding around towering opuntia –

a night of dreams calling  
me to rest, to capture

starlight & visions  
that have eluded me

for so long

# Nolcha Fox 1 poem

## What I Leave Behind

I will to you  
all the words I've written.  
Break each one apart, letter by letter.  
Vowels are sweet, eat them.  
Throw the rest in the air  
and watch them spark and fade.

I will to you  
my early morning quiet.  
Listen, you can hear the starlight  
whistle to the moon.  
Watch the birds paint colored  
sunrise as they fly across the sky.

I will to you  
the paths and roads I've walked.  
Follow my footprints  
in dust, in mud, in snow.  
Feel the winter bite your nose.  
Catch the yellow leaves that fall.

This is what I leave for you.  
What will you leave for me?

# Chuck Joy 1 poem

## CALENDAR ABUSE

a daily calendar, 365 square paper pages  
tacked in a stack on a plastic stand,  
each page printed with an affirmation

You're Doing Your Best  
Life Is Exquisite  
one page meant to be removed each morning

Clark followed that advice  
every day of his life until  
one cold winter night and  
at odds with his wife he  
tore that day's page away  
right after their silent supper

Focus On Your Own Behavior  
the next page read,  
Clark found that observation helpful

only a few days later  
Clark removed a page early again,  
this time at noon

Happiness Is A Choice  
spoke something to Clark, soon  
he was pulling two pages at a time,  
by March it was already June

# Ann Waddicor 1 poem

## The Artist

The artist, in the widest meaning of that word,  
makes pictures of mundane things and events,  
placing them before us to jog the brain into action,  
see, perceive the world,  
and seeing understand its complexity, its beauty,  
its ugliness, its presence intensified by a word,  
a colour, a sound,  
a touch of magic in our everyday lives.

The stick that Zen monks use  
to awaken the meditator from sleeping,  
the look the Katakali dancer receives  
if he doesn't get it just right,  
the strict etiquette of the archer,  
achieving the bullseye in one,  
all culminating in an aesthetic, athletic,  
perfected expression of human consciousness,  
displayed as a work, elevated to the description, art.

# Lavinia Blossom 2 poems

## The Scream

after the painting by Edvard Munch

Two women, heads held high,  
stroll along the railing, deep  
in conversation about themselves.  
They're paying no attention  
to the burning sky, the water swelling  
in a blue-black wave to  
swamp the tiny boats. But he  
has seen, stands, hands to face,  
head glowing yellow like a  
lightbulb upside down, his body  
undulating with the bridge, which  
will collapse. He has begun  
to panic, lips stretched wide  
He's trying hard to warn  
us, cannot make a sound.

## Salvador Dali's Don Quixote etching as Tarot Card

Your future lies in these two riders. The little one on a mule in the background could be you. Will he stay silent? Close up, The Leveler, human or inhuman? It's your guess--which would you see as the greater threat?

Likely because it's protocol, I see you've sent a scout on foot to bring in extra troops, although wouldn't you suppose that stallion's stilt legs, all bone, must stumble? Will you charge, or simply wait? My bet is

that you tend toward sitting tight as that spin builds to, possibly a cyclone, winds 100 miles an hour that will sweep wide and wider. Have you harbored a stubborn trust that someone who's a "real"

scientist will be able to control this menace--if it's genuine? Watch as the near one twirls its lasso. Will it catch you off guard? The signs are here and ever clearer of what's next—unless you heed this card.

## **Yvette A. Schnoeker-Shorb 1 poem**

### **THE FLOW OF SOULS**

We bleed into one another's  
worlds, not quite empathy  
nor projection, simply  
quiet energy passing  
soul to soul, some unspoken  
consensus, hence broken  
boundaries, downed barriers,  
because we do not know  
how the need for connection  
affects our capacity to deny it.

# Rachna Singh 1 poem

## The Spectre

I dreamed a dream, a dream that shocked me to the core,  
I dreamed that death and disease were knocking at Mankind's door.

In my dream I saw the shadow of a wild bird of prey,  
I saw man cowering in fear, pallid and grey.

In my dream, I saw a hearse with the dead in its fold,  
I saw the Grim Reaper taking a toll of both young and old.

I dreamed a dream, a dream that shocked me to the core,  
I dreamed that death and disease were knocking at mankind's door.

In my dream, I saw mankind, solitary and adrift,  
I saw a demon affliction, insidiously creating a rift.

I dreamed a dream, a dream that shocked me to the core,  
I dreamed that death and disease were knocking at mankind's door.

In my dream, I saw Man impotent and torn,  
Powerless to de-fang the monster that had taken the world by storm.

In my dream I saw Nature shaking her head in pain,  
For Man had broken her realms asunder for his own petty gain.

And now Man stands denuded and shorn,  
His arrogance and pride tattered and torn.

With a start I wake up to find,  
The spectre of death had Mankind in a bind.

Death or reprieve, Man knows not his lot,  
Will it be another losing battle, though well-fought.

Or will the world arise like a phoenix from its ashes,  
Claim lost ground and fill in all the gashes.

A prayer, my trembling heart, chants with fervent force,  
Return deadly fiend back to your venomous source.

I dreamed a dream, a dream that shocked me to the core,  
I dreamed that death and disease were knocking at mankind's door.

# Thomas Hutchinson 2 poems

## Waiting Out a Sickness

I lay, pulling the four corners of the opposite wall together  
with my fingers crossed behind my balding spot,  
and try to stow our present away

I gather our house around the light switch,  
make waves from the collected haze,  
and ease them through the tightening lens

Why does the ceiling fall? A sky, in time;  
memories of your kiss within it,  
steeped into the dissipating cloud

Its weight moves through my body,  
like the need to please you,  
my unfocussed thoughts

And so I fold our story for a top pocket,  
but lay it against my bare chest, and wait  
for a bitter wind to reveal all

What is it in the wind, wrapping  
its fingers against the windowpane  
that draws me from my brittle pause?

## Sugar

She wears watermelon fingers  
between her toes,  
and walks through the living room, moving  
sea fret aside,  
her sweetness so daunting  
that it makes for the four walls  
and hides inside of their own, growing quiet

I wait on the edge of blue water  
for your voice to pass through,  
for your head to rest against mine, floating  
like a lonely buoy,  
and for the sight of your arrival  
to pull the curtains closed,  
blocking out the night sky

# Fred Maus 1 poem

## Listen Now,

I have some things to say to you. Actually you blur together, my old lovers—I don't know who you are, the men, the women, older than I was, younger, some that somehow wore on for a long time, some that barely happened. You seemed so distinct.

When we were together, I said things to you, things I meant, things that became lies, always things I had said to someone else, when they also became lies. I am uneasy. I do not need to see so many connections so clearly. Is my life in the past?

Now I know that protecting others from their limitations was not a good way to live. My sadness sticks in my ear like a bad song. The moment when many things come together in a big insight is as easy to forget as every other moment.

The terror we felt of each other's power, because we never talked about anything. Your self-loathing and mine, so boring. Where do tunes go? The stupid feeling of obligation, that you have to hate someone because of what they did.

*These* are the years when I am learning what it is to be alone. Music is still somewhere between the memory and the reality of the displacement of those impossible human relationships. Still, I try to learn by writing things down.

I have learned that being with you was a lot like being alone, but less quiet. I had a dream that felt like fun. Remembering it, I was inconsolable. When will I learn to feel the beauty in my own sadness?

## John Muro 2 poems

### Summer at the Quarry

The next best thing to love,  
you insisted, wasn't the delicious  
trespass or even the precipitous fall,  
but leaving land wingless for some  
point of near-distant air just  
beyond the fingertips that gave  
way to howls and the sudden,  
panic-stricken plunge into a  
shock of cold water leaving  
one of us with a desperate need  
for breath and a hunger for one  
last chance to take in a summer  
sky that had just transformed  
into a fire as large as a county  
with contrails of cloud expanding  
like the luminous remnants  
of some cosmic explosion that  
delicately burnished brownstone  
walls and spread across the water's  
surface in an iridescent slick  
of laurel-pink and purple oil,  
and leaving me, in your view,  
unable to distinguish the purely  
pleasurable from the beautifully  
tragic or reminding me of my  
perverse want to favor the empty  
allure of the ephemeral over the  
cruel, reckless and desperate  
beauty of the here and now.

~

## Ambit

I thought by now the weight would  
have been lifted, but I still see you  
in dreams that keep me from sleep,  
confounded by a life spent in search  
of solace and unable to shake the past.  
At times, it retracts and draws me,  
unwillingly, towards the center of  
anguish or else slackens and becomes  
more loosely bound providing for the  
sweeter fictions of freedom, but soon  
I come to feel like an afflicted animal  
that has worn to finely powdered dust  
the fatigued perimeter around the stake  
impaled by those acts we both know  
were beyond forgiveness, and I can  
see, even on these hopelessly overcast,  
finely fractured, early-in winter days,  
the price of loneliness and the bareness  
of things and how eerily it still glistens  
in darkness and weighs upon me even  
as I vainly attempt to wish it all away.

# Tony Brown 3 poems

## New Village

I'm telling myself  
I'm not here  
but I am here

in front of  
a duplex  
with two flags hanging

on one side  
a rainbow flag bearing a peace sign and  
the redundant word PEACE

on the other side  
that Nazi-sanctioned thin blue line version  
of the American flag

and in this town  
I'm certain  
someone thinks

it's a beautiful thing  
that they can coexist  
but all I can think of

is crematoria and  
my god this is  
the town where

I grew up and  
how the hell  
did it happen and

how the hell  
did I not end up  
here and

how the hell  
is this  
not hell

## Time

The time is now 8:00 AM.  
Shoppers are already beginning  
to shout at the meatcutters  
that they're holding back meat to crank up prices  
and where is all the hamburger?

The time is now 8:30 AM.  
In the checkout line a masked but angry man  
is ranting that his 11 year old nephew  
doesn't know what the USS Constitution is  
and it's docked less than 50 miles from here  
and what useless crap are they teaching kids  
instead of that these days?

The time is now 8:40 AM.  
Someone drives by laughing as I walk to my car and  
I hear the words "mask" and "sheep" and "idiot"  
and my fists tighten around the loops  
the overfull shopping bags that are garroting the hand  
I might need if I have to fight.

The time is now 8:45 AM.  
No less than eleven freezing people  
between the store and home holding signs asking for help  
and the only difference between them and me is a bad car,  
a bad house to call home, a week or so of basic food,  
and the keyboard I use to beg in place of a cardboard sign.

The time is now 9:00 AM —  
or never. Time to take the watch off so I can be  
free of the ticking; free to surf the Big Wave  
as it storms through all these people  
waiting for The End who can't see  
that This Is It.

## Fragment

In the middle of the night you wake

and in your mouth is the word  
that will save everything  
currently in peril,

and you cannot pronounce it,  
and soon enough you forget it,  
but not the knowledge  
that you once knew it.

It poisons your magic for a long time.

## **J Farina 2 poems**

### **winter umbrellas**

a deluge of rain  
upon an afternoon  
under winter umbrellas  
exquisite for daydreaming  
the cypresses and dead roses  
shuddering in the northern wind  
the sky a sodden grey cloak  
covering for hours puddling lawns  
as vacant eyes stare into rainy dreams  
as far as the horizon allow them  
the light is all dullness  
shadows and cold fog  
mist and muddied gardens  
gasping in the sunless air  
weighted with leaden rain  
drowning in its incessant waves

## **suspire**

(at the Van Gogh exhibition)

you draw me into your dark canvassas  
under evening stars pulsating gold -  
and mid-day skies maddening with crows,  
reflected in your anguished eyes  
you form me into coal-black shadows,  
in rooms that never see the sun -  
and walk unseen, a silhouette  
against the garnet death of day  
you mix me into your bright palette  
with rapid strokes infused with rage  
onto what was nothing waiting to be,  
the mirror of your days  
in agitated colours, you swirl and blot me  
in landscapes of ferocity, drowning in your irises-  
in fields, slanted with your pain

# Douglas K Currier 4 poems

## Death's coming

*Con todas mis muertes  
y me entrega a mi muerte,  
"Artes invisibles" Alejandra Pizarnik*

I know attempts at preparation are useless.  
She can come as she did for my mother,  
unexpected. She came with a dog or two  
to soften the fall into night -- woke her,  
then pushed her over into an early morning  
vigil, where her life did not need to flash  
before her eyes – there was time. My mother  
must have known she would not rise from that floor.

My father chose the drug-induced memories  
of sleep, the shudder over the hacking cough,  
surety over struggle, silence over the endless ask.  
I imagine his life came in fragments, his memory  
hopping stone to stone across the Styx, too anxious,  
too cheap, to wait for the ferry, coins in hand.

## Death

I don't know her well,  
but I remember her  
– adolescent fantasy  
– invariably, improbably  
beautiful and arrogant.

Whenever she singled me  
out, it was magical and brief.  
That would be love, or  
infatuation remembered fondly,  
a moment when I held  
my breath for as long as I could,  
not believing my luck.

## **Becoming my father**

Now that I've become my father,  
I realize I only half understood the man.  
He was hard work. He worked as if  
our lives depended on his work,  
as I suppose they did.

I never understood the dream part,  
the desire he had, the vision he brought  
to the house, the barn – everything he built  
or fixed – fence, shed, sugarhouse.  
Perhaps I know what he wanted as well  
as he did, which seems not at all.

Now that I have become my father,  
I finally understand the truth of his arthritic  
grasp, always just short of a good grip,  
on all that relentlessly escapes.

## Wednesday night

Death is a Wednesday night.

Death is stuck in the barrio again  
washing clothes after dark. The sun  
is too hot to bear during the day,  
and the machine is broken again.

She's at the outdoor sink in back,  
beating shirts and pants, underwear  
and work socks against the slanted  
sink surface made to resemble  
a rock in the river. She's under  
the one lightbulb that flying insects  
find so exciting. She's sweating, braless,  
and beating Wednesday out of the clothes,  
hoping her husband will drink too much  
to want to fuck her after she showers for bed.  
She hopes the clothes will dry by morning.

# JC Rammekamp 1 poem

## Mendel Abramovitch Escapes, 1944

Shlomo Kushnir led the uprising  
organized the digging of the tunnel,  
getting hold of the weapons,  
rounding up the men.  
The underground passage led to the forest  
where the partisan bands lived,  
took us in.

I was among the first  
to climb into the tunnel that March day,  
even though I'm claustrophobic,  
terrified of being squeezed dead  
in a freak collapse.

A hundred of us made it out  
of the Koldzyczewo Work Camp,  
in German-occupied White Russia,  
including a number of us Jews.  
We killed ten Nazi guards with the stolen explosives,  
but they caught twenty-five of us,  
before we all got out, including Kushnir.  
Shlomo killed himself before  
they could torture him and then kill him.

## Michael Lee Johnson 2 poems

### *97, Coming to Terms & Goodbye*

*(An atheist faces his own death)*

Wait until I have to say goodbye,  
don't rush; I'm a philosophical professor  
facing my own death on my own time.  
It takes longer to rise to kick the blankets back.  
I take my pills with water and slowly lift  
myself out of bed to the edge of my walker.  
Living to age 97 is an experience I share  
with my caretaker and so hard to accept.  
It's hard for youngsters who have not experienced  
old age to know the psychology of pain  
that you can't put your socks on or pull  
your own pants up without help anymore—  
thank God for suspenders.  
“At a certain point, there's no reason  
to be concerned about death, when you die,  
no problem, there's nothing.”  
But why in my loneliness, teeth stuck  
in with denture glue, my daily pill box complete,  
and my wife, Leslie Josephine, gone for years,  
why does it haunt me?  
I can't orchestrate, play Ph.D. anymore,  
my song lyrics is running out, my personality  
framed in a gentler state of mind.  
I still think it necessary to figure out  
the patterns of death; I just don't know why.  
“There must be something missing  
from this argument; I wish I knew.  
Don't push me, please wait; soon  
is enough to say goodbye.  
My theater life, now shared, my last play,  
coming to this final curtain, I give you  
grace, “the king of swing,” the voice of  
Benny Goodman is silent now,  
an act of humanity passes, no applause.

\*Dedicated to the memory of Herbert Fingarette, November 2, 2018 (aged 97). [Berkeley, California](https://www.berkeleycalifornia.com/),  
U.S.A. Video credit and photo credits: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qX6NztnPU-4>.

## Poets Die (V2)

Why do poets die;  
linger in youth  
addicted to death.  
They create culture  
but so crippled.  
They seldom harm  
except themselves—  
why not let them live?  
Their only crime is words  
they shout them out in anger  
cry out loud, vulgar in private  
places like Indiana cornfields.  
In fall, poets stretch arms out  
their spines the centerpiece  
on crosses on scarecrows,  
they only frighten themselves.  
They travel in their minds,  
or watch from condo windows,  
the mirage, these changing colors,  
those leaves; they harm no one.

## Sarah Sassoon 4 poems

### Root Canal

This is why we have bad teeth  
in my family  
I thought it was all the grinding  
dreams in dark nights  
but it's root canals  
running deep  
decay

I can't fit anymore stories in my mouth  
I can't swallow the suitcase of sorrow anymore  
I can't chew ba' aba tamar on the Tigris River  
I can't sip the bitter coffee of remembrance  
these roots are losing their grasp

It's dead  
the dentist says  
almost gone  
I know it's all gone  
like the Judeo-Arabic my grandfather spoke  
if I speak he will understand  
but I can't say a word  
my mouth hurts too much

Deaden the nerves  
will I lose everything  
a tooth never loses its roots, he says  
but it's not secure

I could have told him  
even with roots I am not secure  
he has to plant a post like a tree  
because all I want is a tree  
and a crown to protect  
my forgetting  
zirconia metal memory  
doesn't die looks natural  
when I open my mouth  
like I always belonged

Maybe it's good I don't feel anything anymore  
won't mind this empty mouth  
where I come from  
displaced  
memory

## Once upon a time in Baghdad - A Ghazal

I was born in a pot of memory, a strong, hot cardamon simmer of Baghdad.  
My grandmother stirred in me, lows and highs, the Tigris River of Baghdad.

My grandfather smiles at last, speaking of island swimming days in the A'Ḥiddeqel.  
Girls can't swim, but I swim across the mile-wide bank, a tide ripper of Baghdad.

The spices smell a strange riot of running away, a girl by herself in the *Souq*,  
seeking mountains of figs, silks and poetry—all the shining silver of Baghdad.

I climb a date tree though it's too high, though girls aren't allowed to climb free.  
Hands are not for giving away but for clasping, dates, a sweet sliver of Baghdad.

Sometimes I wake up at night and can't remember which country I'm in.  
My mattress is not on the roof under stars dreaming a fever of Baghdad.

The safest place for a woman is in her kitchen, then under her *abaya*.  
Every woman needs an *abaya*, my heart wears a murmur of Baghdad.

Round boats like doughnuts, row boats for fishing, men, hard working oars.  
A girl is like a fish hooked and enjoyed until the very last bone glimmer of Baghdad.

Some basements are for resting in, cool, dark, away from sunlight that tells the truth.  
You can't take such basements with you, so you become cool, dark, bitter of Baghdad.

The Great Synagogue seats a thousand worshippers. It has no ceiling.  
Who will tell them, the ground is ever-shifting, uprooting a quiver of Baghdad.

A girl from Alliance Israélite Universelle can say mother in four languages.  
Even in English I can't say mother, my tongue a leftover wither of Baghdad.

I've never tasted *Kaymak* and *Kahi* drizzled with honey and safety — what I miss the most.  
How wonderful to grow fat on clotted cream, water buffalo milk, my never of Baghdad.

Staying, crowned a queen, four sons, a cow worth her weight in gold bangles.  
Leaving, for my sons I wring dates, muslin memory, sweet syrup giver of Baghdad.

Play with me Muslim neighbor, Christian neighbor, any neighbor. Eat flat bread.  
My fence low, door open, oven hot ready to reopen, see me, a sister of Baghdad.

You can shake all the orchard trees and discover only dates, but I want fine, purple figs.  
I find some on the 'Jewish Bridge' no-one remembers. Come walk a shiver of Baghdad.

Searching for Al-Rashid street I frantically search for my Arabic name, *joy* and  
*delight*.  
Hebrew princess, exile echoes empty in my *Al-Yahud* blood — a whisper of Baghdad.

## Growing Up with Judeo-Arabic

On the way to the Tel Aviv train station with two Arab guys  
from Akko and a girl from Haifa who tells me she's not sure  
which to call herself - Arab-Israeli or Palestinian

(I want to call her friend)

I say - I want to learn Arabic

they gush - You must

- I want to learn Judeo-Arabic

they laugh at me - Why

would you want to learn that?

I want to ask - why are you laughing?

Do not take the dash away

I need to keep

this beat steady and strong

every thing depends

on this thin line

connecting dreams

and disbelief

Because:

it's the high note of my grandfather's Passover chant

it's the panhandle of thanks for saving my life in the Farhud

it's the pressure of a friend's palm indented with a premature goodbye

it's the praying bones of Ezra the Scribe left unguarded

it's the bridge of return to the backyard fig tree I want to climb

it's the seed I want to replant

My hand crossing the border

of what could be

I know I don't remember

but just because words

are broken

doesn't mean they're not here

## Reading Sumerian Verse

we still pray for the same things  
fertility  
harvest  
homes

the goddesses  
the crops  
the grounding

and yet there are still refugees  
running away from our blind spots  
into the sun's glare into preserved  
clay engravings blotted burials  
and we don't turn our heads for fear  
of tripping falling  
to the floor  
in prayer

we need to pray

we are nomads of normalcy  
we are features of fate  
we are doomed days  
pretenders past

drinking coffee - there is thirst  
reading tablets - there is clay  
speaking chit chat - where is God  
is there anything else  
to say

say it

# Mihaela Melnic 2 poems

## **Dam around the heart**

Two pigeons trampled by a car  
lie flat on the asphalt with broken wings  
like two angels dead from longing for heaven  
but daffodils grow tall and straight like candles  
in the nest of your ground  
in spite of the frost

The second month of winter is always the most terrible  
but the trees will soon cry flowers  
like a dream broken into small pieces  
scattered behind you

It doesn't hurt what can't hurt, you know, such as nails  
that are cut  
and buried with spells and superstitions  
near a brass fence and it is painful to bury  
anyone, anything and anytime

Don't forget to cry a bit in secret, a bit  
in plain light, or the dam you've built around your heart  
shatters and the pain  
will drown you

## Out of the comfort zone

I only have a weed pipe left, you say,  
from those days of broken-legged  
middle-class dealers  
and dreams of universal justice  
sprinkled with felony

So charmingly you take distance  
from your comfort zone,  
you, shifter of skin, color and mindset  
as you hold on to philosophy and scientific  
witchcrafts

I don't tell you things about myself;  
you'd like them too much  
and I'm not here to give you pleasure  
but, there, take this coin for when  
you were homeless

I didn't know you back then  
but you should acknowledge that  
I walked barefoot along dirty streets  
and felt what others felt

My fishnet tights had holes bigger than your spells  
after each flamenco dance and I know where  
your eyes are roaming now

There's music in your gypsy veins  
when you say: my skin screams to be marked now that  
I'm still young and finally bleached on both sides

But your essence stays with you, sly lad.  
Don't we know it?  
I can sense it in my throat and it chokes me  
as you speak in tongues  
from a harmonic chest that deserves  
a tattoo - a mandala of past life trains;  
some missed, others taken on the fly

## Joe Sarnowski 1 poem

### Goes Without Saying

Because   goes without saying  
I shall refrain from saying   but let  
The absence of   hang  
Like the memory of a lost key to the door  
I denied was there or the truth  
Of that painful thought I swept away  
Hoping   would be carried off  
With all the other rubbish of a rubbish-filled life  
Not realizing   will forever cling  
To the bristles of the broom  
Leaving a trace  
Across the floor under every step  
So that   doesn't go anywhere  
And yet goes everywhere  
Without saying

## Joshua Gage 2 poems

### The Green Bottle

Darkness fingers the house  
in which the tongue's true color  
is revealed. Every sound  
is relevant to the water left  
standing in the road. A handkerchief  
offered to the hibiscus falling  
off the ledge will be  
my new instrument. Her terrible warmth  
seeped between my fingers.  
On the eve of the eighth day  
stunned by the hunger, I placed  
her name in the hearth. Someone  
has given the gift of blood  
to the woman in the pool of light.  
A green bottle washes up  
on my shore. Written in tight letters:  
"I never loved you."

## **Algid Canticle**

The sea has fallen asleep  
and the fishing boats are dreaming.

In the ambience of the evening,  
there floats the perfume of heartache,

that fragrance summoning ghosts  
of aromas sacred and martyred.

Winter is coming--her tattered robe  
floats on the salt of the waves.

My heart is an abandoned monastery  
left by monks who lit candles for you.

The wind unfolds its keen through my cells  
to sweep the dust and ashes to sea.

# Alyson Plante 1 poem

## Flood Waters

My eyes open for a moment and the words come rushing up;  
the groundwaters reach the surface, everything is saturated.

I don't want to be awake right now,  
all I want to do is sleep,

but if I don't write this down  
it will be lost to the shadows.

I adjust the brightness on my phone,  
too much light for 4 a.m.

My bed looks like a hurricane swept through in the darkness,  
five quilts twisted and tangled—a necessary churning.

I'm familiar with such chaos; there will be standing water  
to deal with first thing in the morning.

# Duane Vorhees 1 poem

## EDITS

The world began as a poem.

The carping stars perused it and demanded change:  
stanzas altered or deleted, periods collapsed,  
crust hardened, axes tilted,  
poles reversed, landmass adrift.

Mountains became oceans, and glaciers plains.  
Form after form became extinct.  
"What good is stegosaurus, anyway?"  
"Isn't Neanderthal redundant?"

When stars tired of bickering over every biota and comma  
they placed mankind scribes to recompose.

# Bob Meszaros 3 poems

## The Tree Trimmer

After fractions and percentiles,  
after nouns and verbs, subjects  
and predicates, at fourteen, he knew.

Shunning ropes and harnesses,  
free soloing above backyards, avenues  
and neighborhood side streets

fifty years before Wells and Burnett  
fell from El Capitan and Half Dome, fell  
onto television and smart phone screens

where spotters and commentators  
on newscasts and in documentaries—  
in the persistent daily chatter of notoriety—  
made famous their names.

Fearless, alone, day after day,  
month after month, for twenty-five years  
only the high limbs called his name.

And when he fell,  
he fell without a sound.

## Waiting

After cables and steel braces failed,  
defying arborists and logic, one trunk  
remained, lengthening and leaning, year  
after year, high above the parked cars  
and the telephone wires.

Now, at eighty, I dream of Hondas, Toyotas,  
of a 1954 Hudson Commodore Six. And again,  
as on other restless nights, I am in the driver's seat  
listening to the sound of wires snapping, of a car  
roof buckling, of my windshield shattering.

Dreaming, until another day begins  
with the tree trunk still in place, its crown  
full-leaved, heavy, arced high above the wires  
and cars that line my street, waiting, above  
the bedroom in which I sleep.

## Final Extraction

The dead weight gone,  
trimmed and carted off  
to dumps and lumber mills,  
only the stump remains, one  
round flat table top between  
house front and sidewalk.

On a morning in December  
the arborists return, slowly  
backing their bright yellow stump  
grinder off of the flatbed  
onto our lawn.

For an hour the neighborhood  
windows rattle, the house frames  
shake, as the serrated rotating blade  
descends, grinding the thick old roots,  
shredding memory, turning tree  
rings into mulch.

## Kim Przybysz 2 poems

### Oh the fight against loneliness

Oh the fight against loneliness-- that  
gnawing need to keep the silence at bay--  
finds one here, a nameless airport bar.  
A frequent flier sits tapping his anxiety  
into the countertop, a morse-code-shout into  
the abyss. The man to my left mumbles  
a complaint into the last of his Manhattan--  
or is it an Old Fashioned?-- heaves a sigh,  
and tosses a twenty down before wheeling away.  
The bartender is in her fifties, wearing  
the kind of eyeliner that seems to stand for  
something-- experience, tough breaks-- like  
the rings of a tree trunk, grain pointing to what  
the chopped oak has managed to endure.  
She calls me Tinkerbell, and I don't even mind  
(maybe it's pity; maybe it's the wine).  
I'm thankful for the affection, despite the  
certainty that I'm not the first Tinkerbell to  
while away the hours here, scribbling poetry  
on napkins, grateful for this glass and  
the solitude of crowds.

## Immersion

My sister thinks I'm doing it for the entertainment--  
the sound of my mother-in-law's laughter,  
but it's only for me. I need to feel the suds smack my skin,  
lick the salt off my lips, the catch-your-breath  
cold September air wed to that reprehensibly  
perfect Atlantic ice water.

I think of a conversation with my father,  
who mistook me for a Pisces.  
"No," I told him, "I *am* the water."

Blame my penchant on astrology, or a habit formed  
over years of dipping into any body that would have me;  
sitting on this slab of wet rock in northern New Hampshire,  
muscles tensing in anticipation of each wave that folds  
into me, I'm not thinking about my sister's rolling eyes  
or even the warmth of my widow mother-in-law's laugh  
after years of silence.

I am the wave.

Collapsing against the breakwall after an undulating  
journey across half the globe. I'm fluid, cosmic.  
One million pieces tickling smoothed rock--  
the world's wet, its blanket over all of it.

My mother-in-law laughs, and I don't hear her.  
Now it's only *shh* over stones--  
hush--  
and I recede into everything.

## Beth Mercurio 2 poems

### When the Light Leaves Us

Your bed is ready. Fire stoked.

Whiskey & wisdom  
Morphine & cigarettes

Come—

Your violent heart, welcome

A rich velvet sofa

To throw yourself upon

Your old friends are all here,

The curtains drawn

The sun no more.

## Into Ether

The hour has come for me to sit again.

Who isn't a dreamer?      There must be a storm & sea air.

The malignity of the sea, upon the beach

A lover gone to the light house.

Remoteness was your home.      Until the music came.

It filled & packed your days,      as poetry does mine.

It drives me from disaster.

You have made the deeper mark, full of veins & beauty, dark beauty.

Remorse turns over & over in the mind.

I wish to see you.

Keep some whiskey for me.

## Elisa Subin 1 poem

### **There Will Always Be More to Say and Something to Weep Over**

No kaddish for the not yet dead, just a waiting, a preparation, mindlessly collecting small stones, you told me once you had a fear of tight spaces & how as a young girl you'd skip the elevator & run up the stairs to get to your friend's apartment, but you haven't been young for so long and I do wonder if you ever got over that fear

or maybe your tiny frame will need a bigger coffin

I'd heard enough stories from friends of seeing a dead parent in a darkened movie theater or on line at the supermarket in some beach town on the Jersey shore, please don't do that, but I can't tell you that or anything else, just move 6,000 miles away,

and hope I can outrun your ghost

Odd that Jerusalem is a city without ghost stories, ghosts, yes, but no ghost stories, there are plenty of ghost stories on Long Island and probably a fair share up in the Bronx too,

but we never go back

Just dig in our heels wherever we are, or at least sketch brittle memories in a small sketchbook, but how do you draw hollow wind blowing through empty parking lots

# Mark A. Murphy 5 poems

(from 'The Ruin of Eleanor Marx,' Moloko Plus, Germany, 2022)

## Brief thoughts on Politology

*for Ralph Friel*

Try as we might to humanize the past,  
we are found wanting, but not  
through lack of trying.

Try as we might to tell Eleanor's story,  
the world only wants  
tittle-tattle,

scandal, gossip, hearsay. So, we struggle  
to tell the truth, though Eleanor's  
heart was free of doubt

when she fought  
for what she believed,  
whether women's emancipation, the 8-hour day,

an Irish free state,  
the abolition of slavery,  
the Commune, or the proletarian revolution.

\*

No film-noir to portray the human disregard  
for self.

No Hollywood romance to portray the desire  
for companionship, approval, love.

No Reality TV to hang on to every bit of angst,  
lover's quarrel, indignity, torpor.

\*

No reason to relegate  
Eleanor's life to a historical footnote  
simply because words like liberty and equality

are *passé* in our reality,  
and the next big thing online  
is what we ate for dinner or who is talking to who.

No quarter conceded  
to the rebellion's purest daughter.  
Surrendering her-self to shield her father.

Protecting the cause to which she concluded her life.

# Dreams of My Father

*Thrice he broke the staff of the Versailles flag  
hoisted on the barricade of the Rue de Paris.*

Prosper Olivier Lissagaray

i

Where some men are weasels,  
other men are bears  
like the fire breathing Lissagaray –

Soldier of the Commune  
Last man standing on the last barricade  
in the Rue Ramponeau.

ii

Little wonder, Eleanor Marx  
courageously gave up  
on her hymen, for the monumentally tortured,

weather-beaten French Adonis.  
Alas, her heart  
(being only her heart) no longer belonged

to daddy, which left the old sourpuss  
spitting feathers.  
Bereft at the loss of his alter-ego.

iii

Certainly, ‘Lissa’ was the man  
who most reminded Tussy of her father,  
but the wild eyed,

moody exile, was still a man.  
A world-weary man  
who would throw down the gauntlet

at her feminist resolve.  
To stick it out  
and not become just another mom-to-be,  
at home on the range.

## Mohr's Shadow

*...the human mind has for more than 2,000 years sought in vain  
to get to the bottom of it all*

Karl Marx

After *Das Kapital* is published in 1867 -  
the cumulative effort  
of fifteen years hard slog

(receiving neither critical acclaim  
nor popular interest)

Mohr escapes from his study  
broke  
and beaten.  
Unable to pay his debts  
or buy food.  
This new setback spells misery

for all concerned. Above all, the book  
fails to ignite the masses,  
who show  
neither curiosity or concern  
for book or harbinger of their liberation.

\*

A kick in the chops for author, party and family.

Not least of all Tussy, the apple  
of her father's eye –  
The would-be transliterater of the Marx/Engels  
*Nachlass*...

Already, half-buried in the Round Reading Room.

Up to her neck in her father's fictions.  
Dreaming her life on the London stage.

## No Marx, ~~No Marxism~~, No Utopia

No Frederick Engels. ~~No Paul Lafargue.~~  
No Wilhelm Liebknecht. ~~No Karl Kautsky.~~  
~~No Daniel DeLeon.~~ No Clara Zetkin.  
No Georgi Plekhanov. ~~No Eduard Bernstein.~~  
No Rosa Luxemburg. No Karl Liebknecht.  
~~No Nikolai Bukharin.~~ No Vladimir Lenin.  
~~No Alexander Bogdanov.~~ No Leon Trotsky.  
No Vasyli Grossman. No Jose Marlategui.  
No Alexandra Kollontai. ~~No Georgy Lukács.~~  
~~No Ernst Bloch.~~ No Anatole Gramsci.  
~~No Karl Korsch.~~ ~~No Walter Benjamin.~~  
No James Connolly. ~~No Friedrich Pollock.~~  
~~No Max Horkheimer.~~ No Wilhelm Reich.  
~~No Herbert Marcuse.~~ No Bertolt Brecht.  
No Eric Fromm. ~~No Theodore W. Adorno.~~  
No Jean Paul Sartre. No George Novak.  
No Raya Dunayevskaya. No Edward Grant.  
~~No Eric Hobsbawm.~~ ~~No Jürgen Habermas.~~  
No Louis Althusser. No Alan Woods

No Marxist worth his salt, to consider self  
above suspicion.

No Marxist yet, to unriddle the fiddle  
of history.

# Human-shaped Emptiness

*The only way to avoid the void,  
is to plunge endlessly into another.*

Nora Hollin

Empty your emptiness

into our emptiness

And let us toss the abyss  
within  
into the abyss

without

\*

Fill the void with our defiance

\*

Return us to the nodal point  
of stubborn rebellion

# Contributors

**Lara Dolphin** is an attorney, nurse, wife and mom of four amazing kids; she is exhausted and elated most of the time.

**Antonis Balasopoulos** lives in Cyprus. His poetry and short fiction have appeared in printed and electronic reviews in Cyprus, Greece and the UK. He has published three poetry collections (*Multiplicities of Zero*, *White on White*, *The Book of Creatures*) and a book of short stories (*The Cube and Other Stories*).

**Daniel J. Flore III's** poems have appeared in many publications. He is the author of 4 books of poetry. They are *Lapping Water*, *Humbled Wise Men Christmas Haikus*, *Home and other places I've yet to see*, *Pink Marigold Rays* and *Written In The Dust On The Ceiling Fan*.

**Michael Lee Johnson** lived ten years in Canada, Vietnam era. Today he is a poet in the greater Chicagoland area, IL. Published in 42 countries; 244 YouTube poetry videos. Michael Lee Johnson is an internationally published poet in 43 countries, several published poetry books, nominated for 3 Pushcart Prize awards and 5 Best of the Net nominations. He is editor-in-chief of 3 poetry anthologies, all available on Amazon, and has several poetry books and chapbooks. He has over 536 published poems. Michael is the administrator of 6 Facebook Poetry groups. Member Illinois State Poetry Society: <http://www.illinoispoets.org/>.

**Ernie Brill's** pioneering collection "I Looked Over Jordan And Other Stories (Boston South End Press 1980) was optioned, and performed by Ruby Dee for PBSTV SERIES "With Ossie and Ruby. Brill has a MA in English from San Francisco State University. He received a \$4000 grant for literature from NEW YORK STATE CAPS (CREATIVE ARTS PUBLIC SERVICE and has published widely in the US and Canada (*River Styx*, *Ice Floe Press* (Toronto), *Dart*, *The Atherton Review*, *pif*, *Oxford University Press*, *Prentiss-Hall*, Canada (Toronto), *ISSU*, and others.

**Cathy Thwing**

**Allan Lake**, a stray from Allover, Canada, now writes poetry in Allover, Australia. Latest chapbook of poems, 'My Photos of Sicily', published by Ginninderra Press, 2020.

**Edward L. Canavan** is an American poet whose work has most recently been published in *Poetry Quarterly*, *Harbinger Asylum*, and *Spillwords*. His second poetry collection entitled "Protest and Isolation" was released by Cyberwit Press in July 2020. Born and raised in the Bronx, NY, he currently resides in North Hollywood, California, where he practices Buddhism and listens to MC5.

**Lea Galanter** is a Seattle-area editor and writer with a background in history and theater. After writing plays for many years, she stumbled into the world of poetry and has never looked back. Her poetry has been published by Really System, River and South, Panoply, LitFuse, and appears in several anthologies. She ventures regularly into the spaces between words seeking secret messages.

**Chella Courington** (she/her) is a writer/teacher whose poetry and fiction appear in numerous anthologies and journals including *DMQ Review*, *The Los Angeles Review*, and *New World Writing*. A Pushcart and Best New Poets Nominee, Courington was raised in Appalachia and now lives in Central California. With five chapbooks of flash fiction and five of poetry, she has a recent microchap of poetry, *Good Trouble*, Origami Poems Project, and a forthcoming microchap, *Hell Hath*, Maverick Duck Press.

**Fred Gerhard's** poems have appeared in *Pif Magazine*, *Entropy Magazine*, *Sylvia Magazine*, *Heavy Feather Review*, *Global Poemic*, *Harpy Hybrid Review*, *Black Moon Magazine*, *Asylum Magazine*, *Amethyst Review*, and other magazines and anthologies. He was the past editor for the *Chelmsford Poetry Review*, and one of the founding members of the Concord Poetry Center, in Massachusetts. He lives in a small town in rural New England where he wakes each morning to the sound of ducks, who know that he can hear them.

**Douglas Colstan** is still married with a great wife and two kids (it does happen) and he is also in the process of enrolling in a PhD (towards producing a speculative notated memoir of a 1st Century CE Greco-Roman author) ... it is intended to be an innovative project in Creative Nonfiction.

Poet and songwriter **Paul Ilechko** lives with his partner in Lambertville, NJ. He is the author of several chapbooks. His work has appeared in a variety of journals, including *The Night Heron Barks*, *Feral Journal*, *Iron Horse Literary Review*, *Gargoyle Magazine*, and *Book of Matches*. His first album, "Meeting Points", was released in 2021.

**Massimo Fantuzzi** is a British-Italian dual national born in Milan living in Leicestershire. Author of a collection of poems and prose poems, *Marcia Gioie* (Alkalea, 1999). After his degree in Education, since 2001, works in supporting SEND individuals of all ages in schools and residential settings. Member of the editorial board at *Triggerfish Critical Review*, recently his poems have appeared in *Alba*, *Morphrog*, *Poetry wtf?!*, *Grey Sparrow Journal*, *LiteLitOne*, *In Parentheses*, *Bosphorus Review of Books*, *Bombay Gin*, *The Honest Ulsterman*, *Poetry Salzburg Review* and *Orbis*. From his window on the National Forest, he dares to keep score of the lasting proceedings between treetops, low clouds and other liminal frontiers.

**James P. Cooper** has published poems in *Connecticut Review*, *Red Rock Review*, *Apple Valley Review*, *Gulf Coast*, *Indiana Review*, *Flint Hills Review*, and *Dragon Poet Review*. He is a poetry and art editor for Choeofpleirn Press and blogs occasionally at <http://redmooncafe.blogspot.com>.

**Steve Deutsch** has been widely published both on line and in print. Steve is a three time Pushcart Prize nominee. He is poetry editor for Centered Magazine. His poetry books; *Perhaps You Can* (2019), *Persistence of Memory* (2020), and *Going, Going, Gone* (2021), were all published by Kelsay Press.

**Darrell Petska** is a retired university editor. His poetry and fiction can be found in *3rd Wednesday Magazine*, *First Literary Review—East*, *Nixes Mate Review*, *Verse Virtual*, *Loch Raven Review* and elsewhere ([conservancies.wordpress.com](http://conservancies.wordpress.com)). A father of five and grandfather of six, he lives near Madison, Wisconsin, with his wife of more than 50 years.

**Mary Paulson's** writing has appeared in multiple publications, most recently in *Thimble Lit Magazine*, *Tipton Poetry Journal*, *The Metaworker*, *Months to Years*, *Chronogram*, *Pine Hills Review*, *Backchannels*, *Discretionary Love* and *A Thin Slice of Anxiety*. Her debut chapbook, *Paint the Window Open* was published by Kelsay Publishing in 2021.

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**Robin Cantwell** is a London-based playwright, poet and fiction writer. With themes ranging from toxic masculinity to the technological singularity, his writing has appeared in *Silver Birch Press*, *Fauxmoir*, *A Thin Slice Of Anxiety*, *Molecule Literary Magazine*, *Visual Verse*, *81 Words* and *Nine Muses Poetry*. His short stories are regularly featured in *Pure Slush's Lifespan Series*.

**Lorraine Caputo** is a documentary poet, translator and travel writer. Her works appear in over 300 journals on six continents; and 20 collections of poetry – including *On Galápagos Shores* (dancing girl press, 2019) and *Caribbean Interludes* (Origami Poems Project, 2022). She also authors travel narratives, articles and guidebooks. Her writing has been honored by the Parliamentary Poet Laureate of Canada (2011) and nominated for the Best of the Net. Caputo has done literary readings from Alaska to the Patagonia. She journeys through Latin America, listening to the voices of the pueblos and Earth.

**Nolcha** has always written, starting with poop and crayons on the walls. Her poems were published in *WyoPoets News*, *Duck Head Journal*, *Ancient Paths*, *Dark Entries*, *The Red Lemon Review*, *Agape Review*, *Bullshit Literary Magazine*, *Storyteller's Refrain*, *Wilder Literature*, Paddler Press, the 2022 WyoPoets chapbook *Emergence*, *Gone Lawn*, Levatio's first issue *Serenity*, and *Spirit Fire Review*.

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[My Father's Ghost Hates Cats: Poetry for Stumbling Through Life Poetry | Nolcha Fox, Poet \(nolchafox2.wixsite.com\)](#)

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**Rachna Singh** is the founder editor of a literary and art international e-magazine The Wise Owl. She has a Masters in English Literature & and a Ph.D in 'Cinema & Fiction.' She has authored 3 books viz. 'Penny Panache', 'Myriad Musings' 'Financial Felicity' & 'The Bitcoin Saga. Her collection of women centric short stories 'Phoenix In Flames' will be published shortly.

**Thomas Hutchinson** lives in Newcastle upon Tyne and works in manufacturing. His poetry has previously been published in *La Piccioletta Barca*, *Runcible Spoon*, *Dreich*, and *The Trouvaille Review*, among others.

**Fred Maus** is a musician, writer, and teacher. He teaches music classes on a range of topics, for example a recent course on "Music in Relation to Sexuality and Disability." He is a trained teacher of mindfulness meditation and Deep Listening, and a student of object relations psychoanalysis. He has published poetry and prose memoir in *Citron Review*, *Live Encounters*, *Palette Poetry*, *Roanoke Review*, *Vox Populi* and elsewhere. He lives in a house in the woods north of Charlottesville, Virginia, and in Roma Norte, Mexico City. *The Oxford Handbook of Music and Queerness*, which I co-edited with the late Sheila Whiteley, has just been published.

A resident of Connecticut, **John Muro** is a graduate of Trinity College and a lover of all things chocolate. A two-time, 2021 nominee for the Pushcart Prize, John's poems have appeared in numerous literary journals and anthologies, including *Barnstorm*, *Euphony*, *Grey Sparrow*, *Poetica*, *River Heron* and *Sky Island*. His first volume of poems, *In the Lilac Hour*, was published in 2020 by Antrim House and it is available on Amazon. *Pastoral Suite*, John's second book, was scheduled for release in June of 2022, and it is also available on Amazon. You can contact John on Instagram @johnmuro.

**Tony Brown** is a poet and musician from Worcester, MA, USA. He has been writing and publishing for over 50 years.

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**Charles Rammelkamp** is Prose Editor for BrickHouse Books in Baltimore. A poetry chapbook, *Mortal Coil*, was published in 2021 by Clare Songbirds Publishing and another, *Sparring Partners*, by Moonstone Press. A full-length collection, *The Field of Happiness*, will be published in 2022 by Kelsay Books

**Michael Lee Johnson** lived ten years in Canada, Vietnam era. Today he is a poet in the greater Chicagoland area, IL. He has 248 YouTube poetry videos. Michael Lee Johnson is an internationally published poet in 43 countries, several published poetry books, nominated for 4 Pushcart Prize awards and 5 Best of the Net nominations. He is editor-in-chief of 3 poetry anthologies, all available on Amazon, and has several poetry books and chapbooks. He has over 536 published poems. Michael is the administrator of 6 Facebook Poetry groups. Member Illinois State Poetry Society: <http://www.illinoispoets.org/>.

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**Duane Vorhees** is an Ohio boy living in Thailand. He taught in Korea and Japan for many years. Hog Press of Ames, Iowa, has published three of his poetry collections, THE MANY LOVES OF DUANE VORHEES, HEAVEN, and GIFT: GOD RUNS THROUGH ALL THESE ROOMS.

**Bob Meszaros** taught English at Hamden High School in Hamden, Connecticut, for thirty-two years. He retired from high school teaching in June of 1999. During the 70s and 80s his poems appeared in a number of literary journals such as En Passant and Voices International. In the year 2000 he began teaching part time at Quinnipiac University, and he once again began to submit his work for publication. His poems have appeared in The Connecticut Review, Main Street Rag, Tar River Poetry, Concho River Review, The Courtship of the Winds, The Hungry Chimera, Naugatuck River Review, The Courtship of the Winds and other literary journals. He has fully retired from teaching and is now preoccupied with his poetry and his three grandchildren.

**Kim Przybysz** is a high school English teacher in Western New York. She earned her M.A. from the Bread Loaf School of English, where she studied literature. She enjoys spending time outdoors with her husband and their son, Townes.

**Elizabeth Mercurio** is the author of the chapbook *Doll*. She's Assistant Editor at *Lily Poetry Review* and earned her MFA from the Solstice Program. Her poems appear in *Third Point Press*, *The Wild Word*, *Thimble Magazine*, and elsewhere. She was a finalist in the Cordella Press Gwendolyn Brooks Poetry Prize.

**Elisa Subin** is a poet whose work has appeared in *Deracine Magazine*, *34 Orchard Literary Journal*, *CCAR Journal: The Reform Jewish Quarterly*, *Thimble Magazine*, *Not One of Us*, *Jam & Sand*, and *Nebo: A Literary Journal*, among others. She won an Honorable Mention in the Reuben Rose Poetry Competition.

**Mark A. Murphy** has published 8 books of poetry. His latest collection, 'The Ruin of Eleanor Marx' is published 2022 by Moloko Plus, Germany, and as an Ebook by Venetian Spider Press, USA.

# Mission Statement/Editor's Note

“What the mass media offer is not popular art, but entertainment which is intended to be consumed like food, forgotten and replaced by a new dish. This is bad for everyone; the majority lose all genuine taste of their own, and the minority become cultural snobs.” W.H. Auden

There is only one standard for artistry of any kind, and that is excellence. This is not to exclude anyone from practising art. On the contrary, we wish to encourage the production of art from everyone, regardless of class, race, ethnicity, faith, disability, sexuality or gender. Many myths about art and literature have been propagated by various professors and academics in the West over the centuries (mainly by white, middle and upper class men, in the modern epoch) that would exclude most of the members of our society from doing art.

***POETiCA REViEW*** stands in contradistinction to those values that promote the ‘good’ as esoteric, whilst excluding the vast majority from participation. We hope to give voice to the myriad of disparate voices within the artistic community, locally, and internationally, regardless of notoriety or who is currently favoured by this or that magazine. Our mission is to inject new blood into the poetry scene. We will not shy away from political poetry or indeed any poetry with an ‘edge’ (poetry at the margins).

The ‘great’ and the ‘good’ are not untouchable. Our ability to discern and define what is ‘good’ and ‘bad’ is what defines us as human beings. It is fundamental to our intellectual and emotional make up. One might say, it has become part of our human nature. But human nature is not immutable, nor are our ideas. Notions of ‘good’ and ‘bad’ change over time. However, what is clearly unacceptable to us at ***POETiCA REViEW***, is the exclusion from doing art of any writer or artist on the grounds of any social or institutional barriers.

‘High art’, W.H. Auden lamented, only continues to exist in our society because its audience is too small to interest the mass media. Our mission is to make ‘high art’ accessible to all. Finally, we have no hidden agendas, our house is open. We exist to promote diversity. The only agenda for ***POETiCA REViEW*** is the search for excellence. Read, enjoy and feel free to submit!

# Submissions and Guidelines

**Before we go any further with our submission guidelines please note: we only publish work that excites us and we have confidence in (tickles our aesthetic taste buds) which means what we publish comes down to personal tastes. If we don't publish your work, it's not so much a judgment on the quality of your writing, as a reflection on our own personal preferences.**

**POETiCA REViEW** exists to promote the work of new and older poets alike, the less fortunate, the dispossessed, those without a voice, but encourage the artistic talents of all, not just a privileged minority.

All are welcome to submit. We believe a poetry ezine/journal with the philosophy of 'inclusivity' at its core can act as a springboard to support further artistic development, and encourage writers to keep producing and to participate more widely in the art scene.

**POETiCA REViEW** appreciates the hard work of others involved in the arts. It is our belief that all thinking beings are capable of producing good art, talents vary enormously among individuals, but we humans share a common language of ideas and feelings and can all make our individual contributions felt in the social and artistic life of our society. We look for the 'good' in everything, whether it is enjoying a good meal or looking at a painting or reading a poem.

Please submit up to 5 poems at a time (40 lines max. each poem) in the body of the email and as an attachment. Times New Roman. 12-point font only.

All submissions to be sent via email to: [poeticareview@gmail.com](mailto:poeticareview@gmail.com)

Response to submissions, from 1 week to 3 months.