

POETiCA REViEW



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POETiCA REViEW is a quarterly literary journal of poetry. We aim to give voice to the many disparate and marginalised voices within the artistic community, locally, and internationally, regardless of notoriety or who is currently favored by this or that magazine. Our mission is to inject new blood into the poetry scene.

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Editor: Mark A. Murphy
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Joseph Arechavala 2poems

Somewhere

There's a dictatorship
a brutal, murderous dictatorship

Somewhere

(Does it matter where?)

Where orphaned children cry
in rubble-filled streets

Where the screams can be heard
almost every night –
hot nights, cold nights –
followed by shots – it doesn't
sound like the movies, you know –
no echoes of bullets, only echoes
of screams

What to do when they come?
Scrape and bow and chuckle nervously?
Fight only to be dragged away?

Fear, historically, has always been an
effective device for control, the smooth sultry
voice of control

The room, dark, bare, the only
reflection from the lone bulb the
sweat on his brow

somewhere

people walk down a city street
verdant trees and crowded cafes smelling of mocha
Oblivious

Somewhere

In August

families picnicked on Bavarian hillsides
French girls teased French boys
butterflies laid their eggs before dying
rifles were cleaned by nervous soldiers
dogs barked in deserted evening streets
blackout shades were purchased with
grim faces

In August

cows and pigs were bled after slaughter
English children went swimming in
the Channel, English mothers eyeing
warships' smoke in the distance
birds sang a late summer song before
flying south, ants labored to store food
Poles looked over their shoulders as
Germans languished in
the camps

In August

dolphins raced before destroyers
chickens hatched and mothers gave birth
with agonized cries, shells were piled
high by sweaty men in undershirts
harvest wheat was separated from the chaff
engines were greased, bolts tightened and
boots polished

In August

innocence took
a struggling,
gasping
breath,
and hope
withered

Sarah A. Etlinger 1 poem

Rehearsal

The sky is smoky milk: it will rain later.
I'm thinking about the moon
and its tradition of memory
while we rehearse for evening,

for summer's long dusks
when the grass hums in a green fermata
that stays as long as we want
and the air is filled with marbles
of birdsong,

rehearse for silence only summer
invites. Now we're on the porch,
a piece of prairie grass in your teeth
draped lazily as your body over the steps.

Tonight the stars are heavy.
The sky bends under their weight.
We wait for rain, for tongues of wind
at the windows, stemming our wakefulness.

Shana Ross 1 poem

Irony

To bury something
effectively
you must
dig deep -
which means a friend,
looking in
on this very scene
looking at
you
cannot be sure
this is a different act
from *unburying*
secrets long
locked safely
in the dirt
beneath us.

Jennifer Jordán Schaller 2 poems

Vagina as Top Hat

I choose you first,
my favorite game
piece in Monopoly.
With your full crown,
you match my frock
coat made of black
silk; that's a lie, I
don't own a frock
coat. But I wear you
even though use of
you fell into decline.

I wear you: wide-
brimmed, ornate, and
opalescent. Comfy in
my morning dress,
I wear you, like JFK
wore you back in
1961. I once saw a
man pull a rabbit out
of you, but you perform
better during weddings,
funerals, and horse
races: any destination
that screams class.

Sometimes you are collapsible, a canal that can be breached.
J.P. Morgan rode in a limo with a roof so high, he never had to take you off.

Letter from the Editor

You should be more reverent
when you write about your vagina,
for it is the birthplace of us all,
origin of the cosmos.

When you write about your vagina,
never mind that one time,
remember, origin of the cosmos.
Forget your cervix made a stew.

Forget that one time
what looked like hamburger meat,
spewed from your cervix.
The nurse said it was fetus,

what looked like hamburger meat.
Pieces of creation made you toxic,
stagnant fetus sat in your birth canal.
Why tell me this now?

Cosmic soup of creation could've killed you,
that imagery is offensive.
What is a canal anyway?
Don't remind me of blood.

That imagery is terrible.
I don't want to know about clots;
don't remind me of blood.
You might offend someone.

I don't want to know about clots
when you write about your vagina.
You might offend someone.
Can you be sympathetic

when you write about your vagina?
Can you alter your truth?
Be more sympathetic when you write.
Behold, vaginas.

Rick Campbell 1 poem

Morning in the Eastern Sky

It's hard to remain ignorant these days.
The full moon drew my eye when we turned
for home, two stars hung above the State Park fence.

All I know is the morning moon is bright still.
That last night it was eclipsed. But
last night was cold and I did not walk

my dog. This still dark morning
my phone app draws lines in a virtual sky
I read that it's Venus with Jupiter below.

My tea kettle whistles me into the kitchen.
Super Blood Moon. Wolf Moon, Indians
said, because winter wolves howled

from dark hills to stars above. We have
only the rumor of a wolf here, rumor
of a panther too. These pine hummocks

are home to coyote and bears; home
to whatever moon returns
year by year, season by season.

Sandy Green 1 poem

Anyone Home?

Stardust-covered telescope
stands beside the door and waits to
unfold its legs
point its face toward the sprinkled sky
squeeze the stars and chip-faced moon into its optical tube
draw the children to stoop and squeal
discover other exothermic bundles of gases in the sky
ignore a creature peering down its eyepiece at us.

Frank C. Modica 1 poem

History Repeats Itself

after Martin Niemoller

I clapped when they came
for the whistleblower because
he was selling out America,
poisoning patriotic American minds.

I cheered when they came
for the Democrats in Congress
because they hate America
and they want to take away my guns.

I raised a Budweiser toast when they came
for the RINOs in the heartland of the country
because they all were secret Democrats
and going to hell anyway.

I waved my MAGA hat after I mildly
questioned the China trade tariffs
but they came for me anyway.
There was no one left to speak for me.

David Appelbaum 2 poems

hummingbird to the window

I'm all used up

hearing me say *I'm done*

meaning dry finished history

flown in from South America
distance and time
vibrate with true feeling

my own thoughts
and fingerprints
their glorious stuff

we look
(if bird eyes are frontal)
and nod words across
the thin glass pane

—can we come down
from the clouds now?

—yes, but only for a short
visit

Lesson

one small crow
to larger one
listening

isn't it time
(that doesn't exist)

to learn
once and for all

the difference
it makes

to pass over
the seed bed
for the corn silk
and kernels

to survey it all?

whereas the other
heard

to crow
is to count

the future present
among one's possessions

and eat here now

Michael McCormic 3 poems

REVOLUTION 9

Drop the needle

Kill the lights

number nine

number nine

“This must be what acid’s like?”

Her blue Marantz eyes

hot breath on my cheek

I listen for clues

and prepare for revelations

FARM GIRL

black ribbon red bow

in another's garden

flower seeds we planted years ago

too hard the season

too soon the frost

blossoms freeze and dance

away on thieving winds

DEPRESSION

Lantern sputters

in a hollow hole

Eggless shells

groan and crack

A hungry fox

climbs the stair

eyes shining

in the failing light

Richard L Ratliff 1 poem

Mountain

Can a memory that lasts and lasts
Become a pebble on life's shore?
And as time goes on - a rock, a bolder
After years a hill, a mountain, a range
Something solid — beyond memory
Something to touch and feel
A permanence

Richard Stuecker 1 poem

Evening Walk

An urgent wind thrusts us,
relents an occasional pause
to our daily walk. Not knowing
what might blow in,
our faulty pace quickens us
to remember much we lost
that meant everything once,
now flutter, swirl, vanish
into the moonless sky.
Turning back, the way
we always turn toward
where we come from,
against chill reminiscence
rising less and less, more and more
we lock the door to still the night.

Sejal Ghia 1 poem

Marin Headlands

Back from the guided meditation,
my friend dumps her still
matcha tea
after a long moment
of agony: “does the cup go
into compost, recycle or trash?”

I look out the window,
at the waves
crashing
on the rocks,
crushing
the Sisyphian surfers
in their thoroughly wet suits.
My heart swells as one rides

a beast of a wave.

I draw
my eye
back to my

beast of a mind,

ride it
with my breath.

After dinner, we roast
our first s'mores,
scout for a smokeless spot
to warm our Birkenstocked feet
and watch the

bonfire
break
into
fireflies.

Phoebe Marrall 2 poems

I'D NEVER TITLE A POEM "HOPE"

Find a thought, little heart.
Beat, beat, find a way out.
Search and seek, look
straight into the light.
Look into dark, too, look more.

My heart, my eyes, still search.
Recesses contain ore.
My finger feels along, pokes.
My heart supposes relief
where there is only night.

GO, AND FEAST YOUR EYES

You must go down and visit those dream sites:
black places in hot parking lots, corners in
asphalt nearly melted, shimmering with white lines
and absolutely still in lethargic midday sun.

You must go to those forests Made in China:
lamps in boxes and fake flowers spilling from racks
mounted high above your reach with perfumed candles
and plastic Halloween pumpkins on rods.

You should go to the stark yardage rolls:
scrim cloth and light linen evened out above damask
and upholstery covering woven maroon and white,
and common broadcloth in starry prints.

The dream-fields, empty as they are fixed:
they await habitation, as dried mud awaits water,
for new fingering of red and blue plastic tote bags
and catchment of your eye in the solitude of pleasure.

Abisiama Udorn 1 poem

WE DO NOT BELONG.

With eyes to see beyond the day,
hands with the speed of the tiger
I know for certain,
we do not belong here
where mortals dance and play
living for pleasure daily.
We do not belong in the drudgery of rest
of fantasies, dreams with eyes closed
for we dream with our eyes wide open
creators of worlds the world over.
We take you by the hand
lead you to anguish - pain
in the pages of a book
No! We do not belong here
in this playground for mortals
we go where men dread and angels dare
between earth and heaven we dwell
bodies out of a mortal body
beings finding space in one abode
all trying to survive.

We do not belong here
feet firmly planted on earth
We do not belong in time
for time is stopped, nature on recess.
We do not belong in the watery dispensation
in the ache, the thirst for water
for our soul is a spring ever dripping
you and I together, for our abode is within
the pages of a book, the contours of a story
the linings of a poem, the colours of a song
the tales of a painting, the silence of a play
the inner horrors of a comedy,
the spell of a romance,
the tunes of a mystery
the whispers in our heads,
we go where men dread and angels dare.
Our anguished bodies plod on in this time
awaiting divinity in outpouring,

You and I, We do not belong here.

Never have we belonged.

Anthony DiMatteo 4 poems

Gaze

For three days these mountains
have watched me. I have asked
the two of them nothing, afraid
of the ashes in my mouth.

Sometimes I wander near.
They disappear, their iron glare
looming above hemlocks,
that one with the broken face

or the neighbor who rolls away
from the ugliness of his mate,
rising up like whipped cream
to a fabulous point. Now

it seems to sleep curled into
its crown in total ease,
its million year domain.
The riven one is never restless

nor does it rest, but there it is,
not nothing, its cleft so deep
once dealt – was it a meteor? -
it's become silent as death.

And what of the canyon between them,
formed out of nothing, chorus
of absence binding all three
in a friendship as old as stars?

From inside the dark hollow
of a mouth, we make a world
from water, breath, and words,
but no route to escape or hide

from a mountain's penetrant gaze.
My call fades out like gravel

in the canyon's ripping stream.
It will outlast all we know.

Living for Two

You're inside my pocket now.
Lovely tree or sweet birdsong?
I take you out to hear it.
Through me you still have
being, self, soul.

Look how silent the bay
beneath wintry clouds.
You shudder in the cold.
Your eyes light up. I hear
waters lap, and you're gone.

You told me to live for two.
I do, then walk back alone.
Fated to be without you,
I will never let you go.

You're inside me now,
a last respite of home.

Lost Friend (To J. V.)

You are not in the room with my dead mother
who sees the seeking in my eyes. She says,
"You have lost a friend but not friendship."
And then she disappears. The waters of memory
flood through the windows, and we walk
high up in the Rockies on the way to Crystal Lake.
The snowed-under pass proves impassable.
We find beneath towering sugar pine
a dry spot and pitch camp. You make a fire
as I wander about plateaus of rock
for a last view. I look back to where
far off you sit like Buddha, the fire
crackling as the night comes down.
I wave back but you do not see or do not
wave back. The mountain still holds
the answer. I use your fire to return,
a point of light reaching out of gloom.
You smile: "There is no place I'd rather be."
And I say: "Part of us will never leave."
We laugh. We drink in the silence
that still floods my dreams. A perfect
moment we shared, earned together
after a hard trail. The silence told us
why we came there. I did not know then
how the dead speak to the living inside it.
Nor did I foresee your silence would grow
so different from mine. My calling out
faded away before a mountain's wall,
whose stone you mimicked by the fire then,
only to become one to me, my lost friend.
This is what she meant: friendship burns within.

Not Better Late

On the morning of my resurrection,
I wander streets never seen before,
with little cottages against the sea
immense and lovely to look at alone.

I walk among pansies, chase a newt,
press up against a window to see if
anyone is home where the water runs
in a yellow sink. But no one is there

who knows my name or can be seen
at this early hour when birds mull about
on lawns for the cool dew. I despair
of eating but recall I have no hunger

except for lingering where white linen
left out all night hangs heavy on the line.
A thought stops me in my airy tracks -
how you held me and folded over me

so that I never wanted to die.
Now I have no way to promise you this.

Bob Meszaros 2 poems

The Scenic Overlook

No bucket seats; no seat restraints;
it is nineteen fifty-nine, and we are parked
on West Rock Ridge, on Baldwin Drive.

Our overlook is empty; the Hudson's grill
is pressed against the wood and wire guardrail;
it is pointing, upward, at the sky.

Red-faced and out of breath, my right arm
curled around your sun-browned shoulders,
we are waiting for the night.

*

Closed to traffic and young lovers,
weeds now fill the cracks around
the shattered wooden guard rail;

frayed and rusted cables, the sloughed
off skins of wire snakes, lie limp
and coiled around each concrete base

where thick white wooden
posts and wire cables, as taut and trued
as long-stemmed daffodils and roses,
once held us poised for flight.

Cairn Builder

Years of weekend day trips, harvested
in old coat pockets and draw string bags

the rocks gleaned from state parks,
from beachfronts, from a terminal moraine.

Now, my back and shoulders cracked
and bowed from forty years of lifting thick lead
blocks and stage four cancer patients,

on summer afternoons, I watch my gnarled
hands stacking stone on polished stone, building
cairns on wooden benches, on tree stumps,
on slate rock garden paths.

Alone,
each cairn becomes a calling,
becomes a shattered body healing,
a single column rising slowly—balanced,
upright, bone on polished bone.

Alla Vilnyansky 1 poem

Mise-en-scène

As with Andy Warhol
something broke, was lost, given away.
Squandered: abandoned
left unexplained, unanswered.

Things were being confiscated, denied, offered up
there was a disagreement, fabrication
the inability to protect—to restrain.

Sue Scavo 3 poems

[BESIDES, NEAR BY] / [REACH, ATTAIN]

At the edge of things: after words and before, it is enough. Enough to be out of the place where words failed me. Enough, to enter the possibility of words. The fire still a warming kind. The light dim.

At the edge of things, the company, oh, the company. How they walked on water. How they owned their words and how I could listen, how I could roll a few of theirs on my own tongue. How they welcomed me. Enough, these ramparts of their words and murmurings. How they have built what I have longed for. How I could stay forever, head bowed. Like sanctuary. Like sanctuary inside of sanctuary. Enough.

HE

I know this place; it is not a place of fear. [Does she think me afraid?] A place of sighs, perhaps. Here, the one I know best, here we discuss. Here, we consider. [Only one thing that plucks at me here.] I know this place. Does she think it is not a good place? It is good. I will usher her in, show her the goodness. My name known here. I am known and will make her known. We move through the hordes, to the lightened space, to the fortification. My name lightening.

SHE

Let me follow in the wake of his naming. How it parts the sighs that push against me. It is dark here, dimmed. I follow in his wake and his name creates space. Ushered, I feel, and named. He names me the same as his name. Isn't this what I always wanted? To stand with a name, any name. Next to? Isn't this what I always wanted – to be named?

[CAUSE TO BE, MAKE INTO] / [A RUNNER]

Be careful who you trust! one said. *Be careful what you say!* said another in retort. The air in my lungs thick with sound and squabble. *Trust me*, one said; *No, trust me*, the other responded. No air to breathe between them. I turned, reached, scampering [outside of my body] for another voice [desperate] and brought it close. [You must understand, *utterly*.]

Love, she said, *seized me*. *Devotion*, she said, *compelled me*. *Love*, she said, *choose for me*. *Fault*, she said, *love, devotion*. *Fault*, she said, *my story*. *Fault*, she said, *all the stories*.

I loved, she said, *the first one to touch me*. *I loved*, she said, *the touch*. *Who would not have followed love then, who would not have bowed in devotion? It is the way of love. It has always been the way of love. Are there not stories and tales beyond memory to prove my story. Are there not tales of one following her beloved, even though he be torn apart. Always gathering his pieces. Always gathering him. To the ends of the earth, to this end. Love*, she said, *took me and gave me a story*. *Love, devotion*, she said, *became the only way*. *I finally had a story I could fit into, I did not need read more to find another. Who was I not to follow the one given me?*

I wept at her story, how it swirled. How it was a place to fall into.

HE

She longs for story; I will tell and show her the stories I know best – the spin of love and duty, passion and over-passion. How these stories urge us to pity. I have made [will make] them mine so I can be the one to give them to her.

SHE

I would hear a story. So many stories swirl around [inside] me, dizzying, so many stories thundering, thundering, never stopping. Stop, let me hear one story, just one story. Will I find new life through story – through her story [who is she], through his [what is his story], through the ones he tells? So many stories, crowding, knocking the breath out of me.

[TO SWALLOW]

Ask for another, ask for more, ask for a different story of future, another story of past, ask about logic, about science, retort then ask again, ask for another name, another's name, ask and ask and ask and take it all into the throat, take it all in, gorged throat, gorged belly, gorged words, gored.

Like dirt, like muck, like sleet, like rain so dirty it burns, like wanting to tear something apart, like tearing, like wanting to howl, to loud, to hurl; like dirt, like muck, like words thrown in my gullet, my mouth, like chewing, like chewing, like a dog on a bone, like a dog chewing death, like a dog whimpering as she chews.

*Once there was a girl who filled her breath with salt water
and remembered song.*

HE

All I need do is throw more stories into her mouth. How she follows me, chewing, asking. She knows how to ask, to be the one to write down one, then another, then another. To be the storyteller of the city, of her city, as I am the storyteller. To know of what happens next. [How proud I am of her.] Always looking to what is next. Ask away, ask me, ask me.

SHE

Tell me one story, tell me another. Tell me of heroes, mine. Tell me of the past, of the future. Is there science in it, is there a map? Tell me of beloveds and of beloved places. Tell me of the nature of things so that I can understand, so I can map. Tell me, tell me.

Contributors

Joseph Arechavala is born and bred in New Jersey, leading a boring, humdrum life and commenting as best his feeble skills allow. A high functioning autistic, he is the father of two grown sons and has been married for 35 years to a quite patient, loving woman. He has had poems and stories published online and in print, and published a novel, *Darkness Persists*.

Sarah A. Etlinger is an English professor who resides in Milwaukee, WI, with her family. A Pushcart and Best of the Net nominee, she is author of two chapbooks (*Never One for Promises*, Kelsay Books 2018) and the forthcoming *Little Human Things* (Clare Songbirds). In addition to poetry, interests include cooking, baking, traveling, and learning to play the piano. Find her poetry at www.sarahetlinger.com and on Twitter at @drsaephd.

Shana Ross is a poet and playwright with a BA and MBA from Yale University. She bought her first computer working the graveyard shift in a windchime factory, and now pays her bills as a consultant and leadership expert. Since resuming her writing career in 2018, she has accumulated over 40 publication credits, including *Anapest Journal*, *Chautauqua Journal*, *Ghost City Review*, *Mad Scientist Journal*, *The Sunlight Press*, and *Writers Resist*. She is the recipient of a 2019 Parent-Writer Fellowship to Martha's Vineyard Institute of Creative Writing, and serves as an editor for *Luna Station Quarterly*.

Jennifer Jordan Schaller's poetry and essays have appeared in or are forthcoming from *Tiny Seed Literary Magazine*, *Literary Mama*, *Cutbank*, *Creative Nonfiction*, *Ascent* (this essay was nominated for a Pushcart), *Sonora Review*, among other places. And she had a radio story on *This American Life*. She teaches English and college writing in Albuquerque.

Rick Campbell is a poet and essayist living on Alligator Point, Florida. His latest collection of poems is *Gunshot, Peacock, Dog*. (Madville Publishing) He's published five other poetry books as well as poems and essays in numerous journals including *The Georgia Review*, *Fourth River*, *Kestrel*, and *New Madrid*. He's won a Pushcart Prize and a NEA Fellowship in Poetry. He teaches in the Sierra Nevada College MFA Program.

Sandy Green writes from home in Virginia USA where her work has appeared in Bitter Oleander, Blue Nib, Existere, and Qwerty, as well as in her chapbook, *Pacing the Moon* (Flutter Press, 2009). BatCat Press published her limited-edition chapbook, *Lot for Sale. No Pigs*, in June 2019.

Frank C Modica is a retired teacher who taught children with special needs for over 34 years. His writing is animated by interests in history, geography, and sociology. Frank's short story "Homemade" was selected as an Honorable Mention in the Midway Journal 2017 -1000 Below Flash Prose and Poetry contest. His poem "Rainbow Bus" was the 2017 Champaign-Urbana Metropolitan Transit District Poem Contest winner and was featured on all the local buses for a month. His work has appeared in Slab, Black Heart Magazine, The Tishman Review, Crab Fat Literary Magazine, and FewerThan500.

David Appelbaum has worked in the university and in publishing, and is an author who specializes in the work of writing. His most recent books include *notes on water: an aqueous phenomenology* [Monkfish, 2018].

Michael McCormick's award-winning fiction, poetry, and articles have appeared in many journals and anthologies. He is currently writing an urban fantasy novel. Mike belongs to the Science Fiction Writers of America (SFWA), Science Fiction Poetry Association (SFPA), Codex Writers Group, League of Minnesota Poets (LOMP), and The Loft Literary Center. Mike & his wife Laura split their time between Saint Paul, Minnesota and Lake Superior. They enjoy travel, hiking, Tai Chi, and perplexing cats. They have two grown daughters and a growing collection of books, vinyl records, ceramic owls, peculiar rocks, and other anachronisms.

Richard L Ratliff is a baby boomer, born and raised in Indianapolis, Indiana. His midwest ties have built the foundation and setting for his poetry. He is a Purdue University graduate with two years of engineering turned into a degree in English Literature. All of these eclectic combinations have given him a career as a boiler and combustion expert and poet. He has over two dozen published poems and three books on Amazon

Richard Stuecker is a poet and writer who graduated from Duke University in 1970. A Pushcart Prize nominee, he is a student at the Bluegrass Writer's Studio MFA program at Eastern

Kentucky University. His poems have appeared in or been accepted by *Tilde*, *Former People*, *Pegasus*, *Main Street Rag* and *District Lit*; creative nonfiction in *Hippocampus*, *Connotation Press*, *Brilliant Flash Fiction*, *Crambo*, *Louisville Magazine* and *Delmarva Review*; book reviews in the *Louisville Courier-Journal*. A collection of essays on conscious aging, *Vibrant Emeritus*, was published in 2014 by John Hunt Publishing (London).

Sejal Ghia grew up in Mumbai where she received a degree in mass media from Mumbai University. She currently lives in Oakland with her husband and a dozen houseplants, where she's working on a book of limericks. Her work is forthcoming in *The American Journal of Poetry*.

Phoebe Marrall, orphaned at the age of nine, was a survivor of The Depression and of a grueling childhood. When she died in 2017 at the age of eighty-four, her daughters Jane Hendrickson and Camille Komine inherited hundreds of poems she had written. They remained unpublished during her lifetime, but it is the intention of her daughters that a collection be compiled for readers to appreciate. "Relief, Have You a Name?" is currently a work in progress, being edited by Gayle Jansen Beede.

Abasiama Udom is a poet and writer. She currently is studying Education and has interests in matters of the afterlife, human nature, politics and creativity. When not writing Abasiama is sleeping, dancing or causing trouble. She can be found on Twitter @AneuPoet

Anthony DiMatteo's recent poems and reviews have sprouted in *Cimarron Review*, *CladeSong*, *Cortland Review*, *Hunger Mountain*, *Los Angeles Review*, and *UCity Review*. His current book of poems *In Defense of Puppets* has been hailed as, "a rare collection, establishing a stunningly new poetic and challenging the traditions that DiMatteo (as Renaissance scholar) claims give the poet 'the last word'" (*Cider Press Review*).

Alla Vilnyanskaya was born in the Ukraine and raised in the U.S. She came to Philadelphia in 1989 with her parents. She holds an MA from Miami University and an MFA from Columbia University. Her work has been published in several online and print journals. She is currently working on her first full length book of poetry

Sue Scavo is a writer and dreamworker living in Vermont.

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

Response to submissions, from 1 week to 3 months.