



DELUGE JOURNAL

ISSUE: FALL 2020

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deLuge is an online literary and arts journal devoted to the wealth of creativity that arises from dreams - directly or indirectly - and from the deeply felt/experienced life.

We present works that catches the breath, that resonates like the low hum of a bass cello. Work that dazzles slant or straight on, that brings us to epiphany, to the cliff's edge or that rises through quiet presence.

However each piece sings, we hope that it leaves you feeling the reverb long after each note finishes.

deLuge publishes strong, passionate pieces that excite and challenge. We accept work from new, emerging and established writers. Please see our submissions guidelines on our website at www.delugejournal.com before sending us your work.

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FROM THE EDITOR 2020

Editor: Sue Scavo

PANDEMICS [PLURAL]

First one wave, now another. Spikes along the way. Violence unleashed inside the body, the lungs. Lingering in ways we do not understand. And the other one, too. The one that has been happening for years. Hundreds of years. Always spiking, always coming in waves. Violence of bodies [“white”] unleashed on other bodies [“brown” and “black”]. Lingering in ways [inside the body and out] we do not understand.

Editor: Karla Van Vliet

It is a strange time. The light here fades to winter, the heavy history of 2020 like a rucksack on its back. The light is bent low to the ground with its weight. I plant 356 tulip bulbs into the near frost ground. Come spring I’m begging for color, cups of color. Begging for spring’s coming, for the world, or at least my small garden, to hold some hope again. For many creatives 2020 has been ground, a place of quiet and waiting, a place where we are forced to stay. For some of us it has been a bountiful restriction. For some, a battlefield of loneliness and pain. For some, a long winding path of disorientation. Perhaps, to be truthful, a bit of all that for everyone. Can we gather the nutrients from this darkness? Can we let it feed our creative expression? Is this not how we survive? We, our own selves, we, society as a whole. When the man in the white house that will not be named first came into office, I sardonically commented, at least poets will be relevant again. But here too, in the midst of a pandemic, in the midst of an uprising of racial and civil unrest, are not the poets, the storytellers, the artists and singers most needed? I believe so. Their, our, words a balm of color in the spring.

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Sunday

Poetry by C. Hiatt O'Connor

It is Sunday afternoon and I have woken from a nap
in the shade of a maple whose leaves have yet to darken
in the sun of yet another summer. It is Sunday

and while I have risen from a dream of my mother,
the shape of my shoulders stays as a shallow bowl in the grass
like grief.

In Winter Dark

Poetry by Melanie Green

Rain
tipped

from weather-silvered
sky,

she heard
music
in it:

kip
drip
drum

thrum the leaf
and leaf.

As always
Dream Moon
found her

on the path
of surrender.

Lovers

Visual Art by Timothy Phillips



Gold

Poetry by Jennifer Lynn Sanders

The sensation of the meadow bowl soaking in the sun
Stole everything loving from my cells,
Leaving my left leg numb.
For this reason I walk carefully through molten glory,
as most would approach a smoky woods in gibbous light.
Darkness has nothing to hide, for it is just as it promises,
but standing among those under clear sun –
The lies begin to fall off of you.
Every mystery opens wider. Here, I'll prove:
Close your left eye closest to the sun and find the reflection
of your inner eye floating between the two worlds:
The outside has stolen the life out of me
As breath can be stolen by a direct hit to the gut.

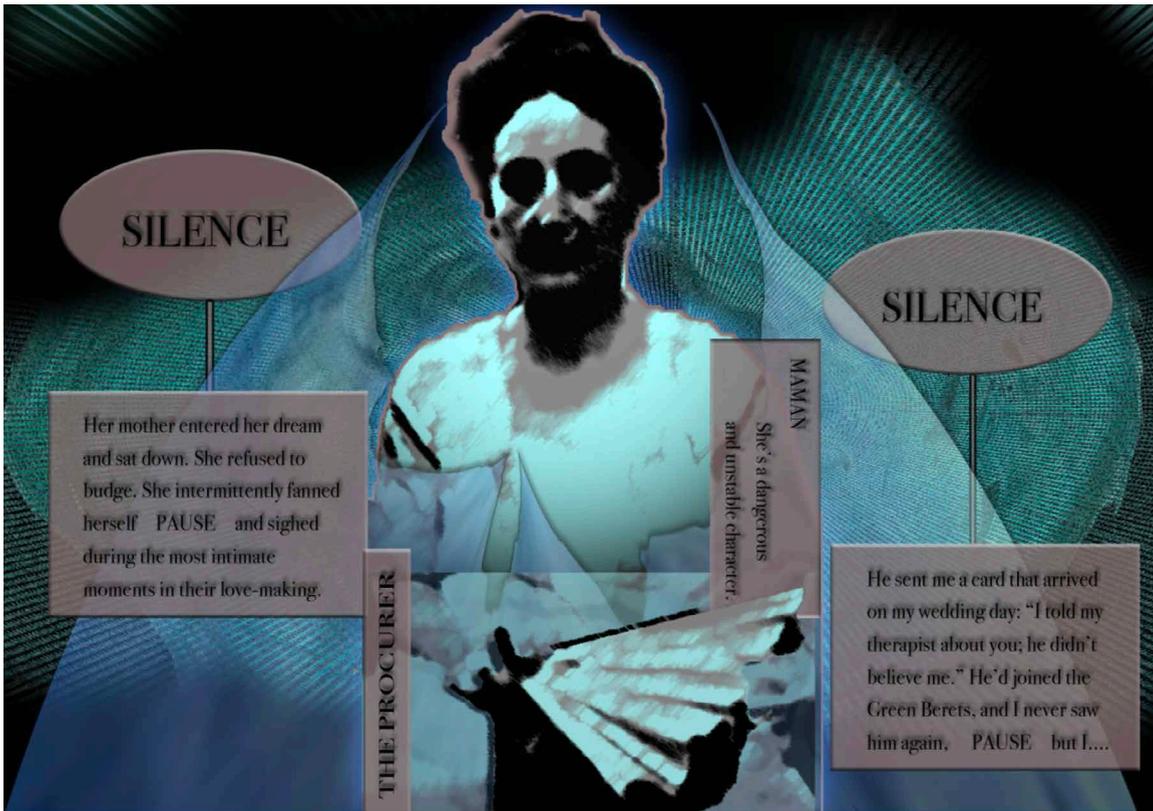
India Song (from the Marguerite Duras Fan-Poem Series)

Vispo by Christy Sheffield Sanford



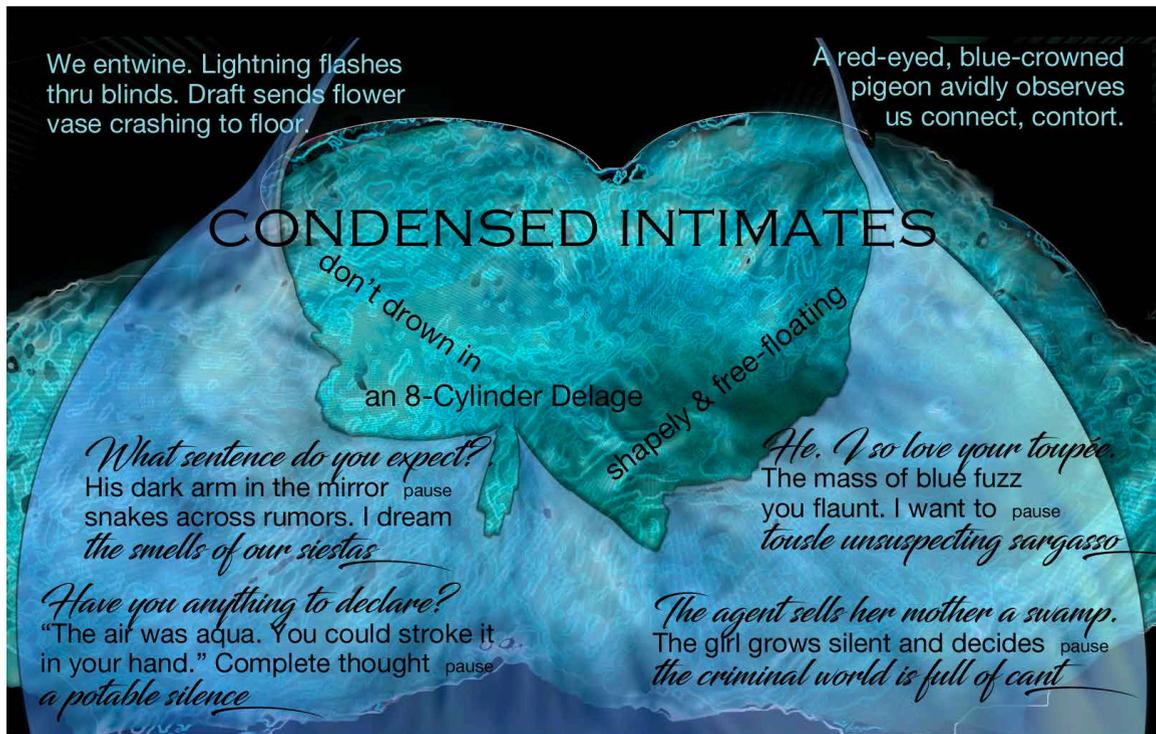
Dream-Mother (from the Marguerite Duras Fan-Poem Series)

Vispot by Christy Sheffield Sanford



Condensed Intimates (from the Marguerite Duras Fan-Poem Series)

VispoArt by Christy Sheffield Sanford



when we were left / behind, we had to leave too

Poetry by Misael Osorio

because i've read more
don't mean that i've found

friends or peace of mind
'Pa don't be

so sad don't be so
guilty to come from public places of mud and vapor

it's only paper
ships we insist on missing

because i work &
i couldn't breathe & i said

'Pa, i can't go on
like this like this silence makes us stronger

i don't want to do
this anymore like we have years to throw to the dogs

i don't want to feel
anymore like crying because a line frightened me

because a nocturne
made me question your promises

'Pa you never thought
i'd make the movie. forget that. never thought i'd make it.

right now i take yours
like it was love offered. no questions asked. offered

nothing in return
since my hands refuse to stick to anything material

i've taken this world
for granted as if breathing

i've taken your words
in vain i've sinned against your exalted beauty

had you hang by
your feet from barbed wire of the Great border fence

you dared crawl under
running away from my milk teeth

Of Water, Hunger, and Other Corpses

Poetry by Misael Osorio

Not equal in their echoing
silences steps questions striding
over a bed of dead and dying maple leaves
murmur
there there heart
i know you flutter
i know you wince
though there's no need to anymore
i do not want to be destroyed
by misplaced hunger references
i know how to keep my mouth shut
even when i'm told
"Misa is going to be the first to die"
and though that is a comforting idea
at times i worry the opposite could be more likely
because i know how i failed to jump
one fine morning
that irrigation ditch
and it is now embarrassing
to be here pleased with myself
talking about the dream of swans disguised as snowflakes
don't you dare gesture me says the world
comes down to numbers a reply
there's more to it however
for instance when granpa Carlos was killed
how his body

delivered in the installment plan
first the head wrapped in newspapers
then his half-chewed liver splattered on the adobe walls
lingered glowed then escaped like a helium balloon
his heart delivered a month later
shriveled in a tiny handkerchief had a scent of orange peels
then again it is a trust
i know i'm not equal to it
but i'm trying to
at least not disappoint
it's not just a question
that i can answer
when you look at me
i want to know

Narcissus

Poetry by Kunwar Narain, Translator Apurva Narain

*As if the world were open
to achieve*

*As if the world were a mask
to deceive*

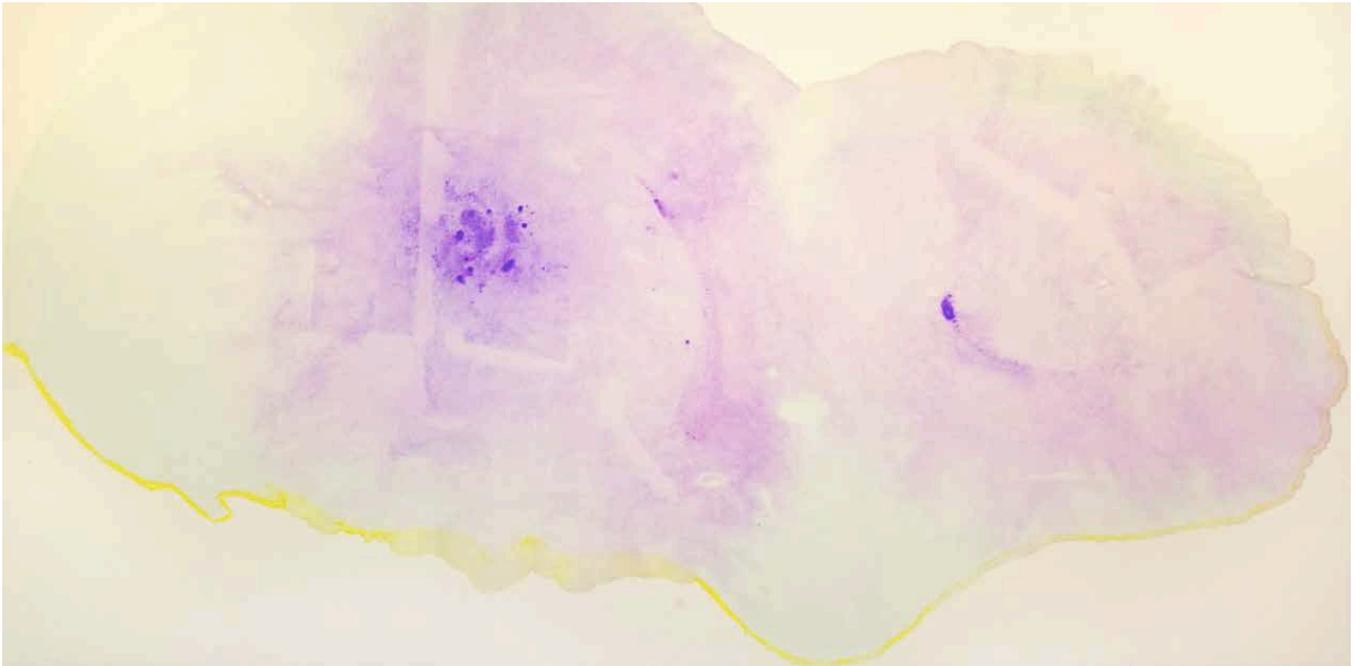
*As if the world were real
worth getting*

*As if the world were a waste
worth nothing*

*And all this was becoming and unbecoming in someone
who was laughing with one eye and weeping with one*

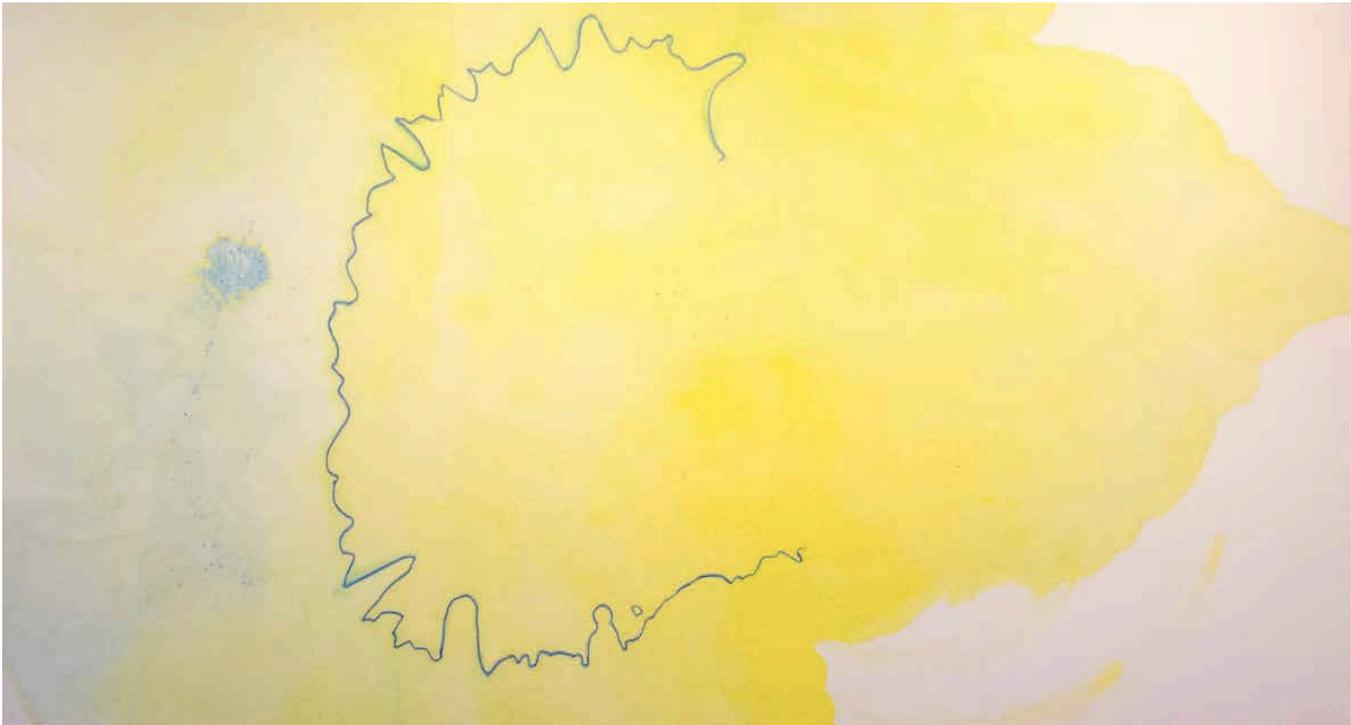
Atmospheric Perspective

Visual Art by Meganne Rosen



Pollen

Visual Art by Meganne Rosen



Itemized Memory List

Poetry by Sara Sage

i. cobblestone

a. oversharing that we are both afraid of oversharing.
a tuesday stoke past midnight, so wednesday, really
when the pushy salesmen retire and the glowing bar
lights go down yammering about how we've been
disenfranchised by the public school system we
have not seen a single elementary school here legs
crossed plopped on the street inhaling slims like air
tasting margarita salt just a few closing up shop

ii. crying

a. in the deep dark, scattered behind a projection
of recreated ruins, as if we were there then reminded
no one who lived in there made those structures and
how predecessors were gasping all the same, how
it doesn't exist as a solid until you feel it gouge
it up close

b. how does it feel to swallow a city? finally finding
you over Florence in that great big thrifted overcoat,
the whole chunks of your cheeks flushed. you sob
in astonishment, I am quite literally trembling
from fear and little rooftop gardens
what a beautiful falling it would be from where
David was meant to be placed

iii. fairy lights

a. instinctually chosen drawing spot at the Colosseum
with the decadence of skeleton reliefs you think
perspective is hard, it's hard in every sense, really
later, a picture your dead grandfather took from
the same stone bench

b. the sun yawning over streets of shopping
districts, adorning the Madonna nestled next
to a condom dispensary sun warming the older
woman, a babushka kind of looking lady
praying at you for donations

c. ending up in a section we only knew as
hangover town because the last time we
came, we fought bile slinking up our
throats, bore sunglasses like armor
last cigarette last drink but just for me
felt just like a film a strange alley we
sit outside the waiter tells me he loves
me asks us to skip our flight i can't
we weep again when beggars ask for change
a violin singing to a microphone
felt just like a dream

In Fire and Thirst we Become our Own God

Poetry by Charlotte O'Brien

*Kiss me beneath that dome we call sky.
Fuck me while he sleeps / I want the bone
of your bone, and the flesh of your flesh / I want
your eyes wide open / I want to eat / from the tree
of your garden / keep me. Spare no mercy
I'll make no treaty / with the world collapsing
down around us / with the two of us
together / burning / until we can name it /
until / until / until / until.*

Going Down: Sappho 2: Reading Anais

Nonfiction by K. Zen'obia

It was the stretch of a bow, he said of my mouth, asked how many fing

ers ran across the red positions, the times you pushed your fingers in for me to suck and Julio said my lips up there were like the lips down there, he traced me with his forefinger unforgiving as starweed, I never noticed until looking for boys with mouths like mine round curved and soft, no thin red lines, no lips texture of waxed paper, no lips the scales of fish, or burnt dried grass, save me from placid moist marshmallow mouths, mouths twisted like cigarettes and sour splash of reefer, deliver from purple mick jagger lips, those exaggerated swollen bruises, I want a mouth like yours the one that travels from, Isla de Margarita, to Bourbon Street, the meridian and inner navel, to the river Niger, Brooklyn, my own Kenya, the jump street, in the Juba talking drums and syncopated dialogues, our bloodlines that move beyond Zimbabwe and Jerusalem

the mouth that opened me like cool well water, remember I was reading aloud, anais nin, Little Birds, in the loft bed, your mouth melted away the barrio, the apartheid between you and me and, your mouth wandered down labyrinth of the inner thigh I was reading anais nin at the point where the man opens his robe, exposing penis/genitalia, and how the startled birds fly. I shook your naked shoulder and said you are not listening are you, and you lift your head you and that slow sexy mouth drawls: I heard every word, then, recites verbatim, the very last line I'd read, and without pausing, you dip your head,

the mouth moves in deeper than frenching, your graze occupies divided landscape one thigh and the other spiral, as you evaporate, re-emerge as me in

the fact from fiction

Between Two Trees

Visual Art by Rebecca Pyle



Earth Tears

Visual Art by Emily Davis



After we make love and I tell my husband about my
dream last night in which I started having sex with
another man, but stopped:

Poetry by Sherry Stuart-Berman

What do you mean '*some guy*' he says and I say
I don't know, some guy, oh, come on, you've had dreams
like that; you can't take it literally. He says, I don't
remember my dreams, and goes outside
to set a trap for the rat I saw yesterday flirting
with the edge of our patio. I lie back, can't figure out
if the babysitter's drinking, or why the cat peed
on a guest bed, or when to have the 'sex talk'
with our son—who told me his penis
should be the brain of his body
because it's in the center. Outside our window
my husband sings an old blues tune:
*She moves me, man,
and I don't see how it's done.*

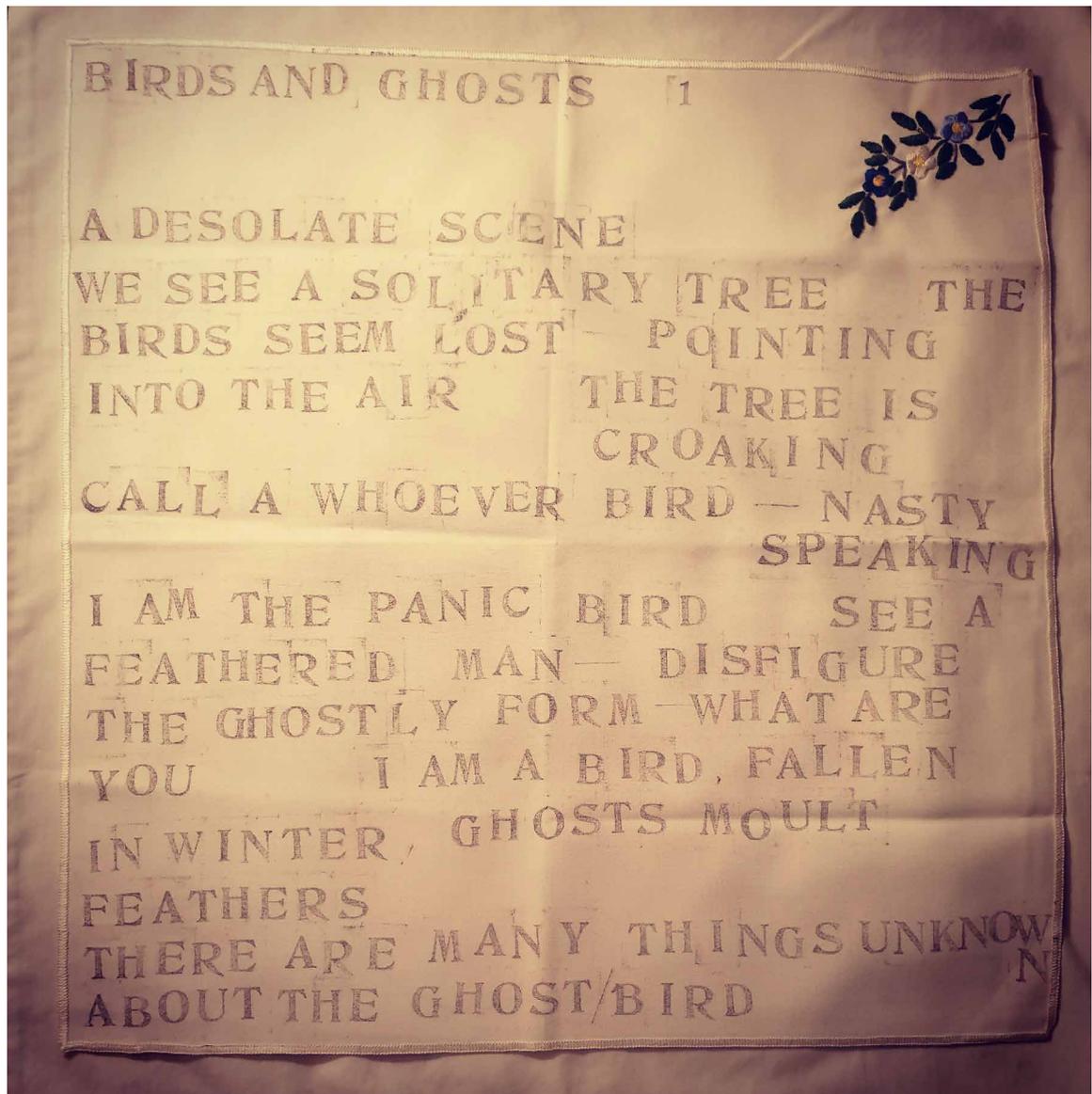
She's pissed at me, feels crazy; doesn't know my past,
where it took me —

Poetry by Sherry Stuart-Berman

my past, where it took me:
punches my plexus, all air leaves
for good, that love, so sick with it I go
over the edge and grow into stories I hear
from a speaker on the street where a restaurant is,
where he sits on a hydrant, plastic bag at his feet,
looking back at me. I stand in a phone booth
hooking the rotary dial my ear to the ground
and find poverty enhances the picture
and oh the picture, picture *that*,
he stays in the picture. I watch
that movie, think *I must get a hammer*
pound his cin-e-ma-tic face in,
mad that I'm mad
I tell her *whatever you do*
don't go mad.

Birds and Ghosts

Vispo by Jess Richards



Obscurantism

Poetry by Teresa Sutton

[I Confess]

Washed up by lips
of waves to empty
reaches, to years
of crouching
between light and dark,
to eons of yearning
for candy houses
and fairy tales outside
these locked doors,
I have blundered
again obscuring clarity.

[Through My Fault]

The winding way was marked,
lines of smooth stones gleamed,
but I bent and filled my pockets;
I stayed in a half-lit wink
of daybreak, never following
the trail, never becoming Gretel,
the witch, or anyone else
I could have been.

[Through My Fault]

I ignored the ring
in the air that opened
the world before me,
the cerulean sky
that invited me
to kick loose
of this house,
these grounds,
these losses,
these untimely deaths,
these unyielding songs
that cultivate false
loyalty to memory,
these foods I prepare
for ghosts,
these sickly sweets,
this anchor,
this albatross.

[Through My Most Grievous Fault]

I might have used the unstable energy
of the surf's curl as a gift
to ride the rush on belly and knees
to a new shoreline,
but I howled for myself
and made a home in the current.

[I Have Sinned]

What I have done
is build a fire
beside a winter ocean
while I could see
the seasons shifting
in the distance.

I could have submitted
to spring and let the slight
scent of crocus become
vigorous. I could have
let the grief go.

What I have failed to do
is to leave this place,
to find a fairy tale
or make one from scratch,
to chant an incantation,
to find a magic charm
or cast a spell,
to surf even a small swell,
to search for a vessel
to fill with water
to douse the flames.

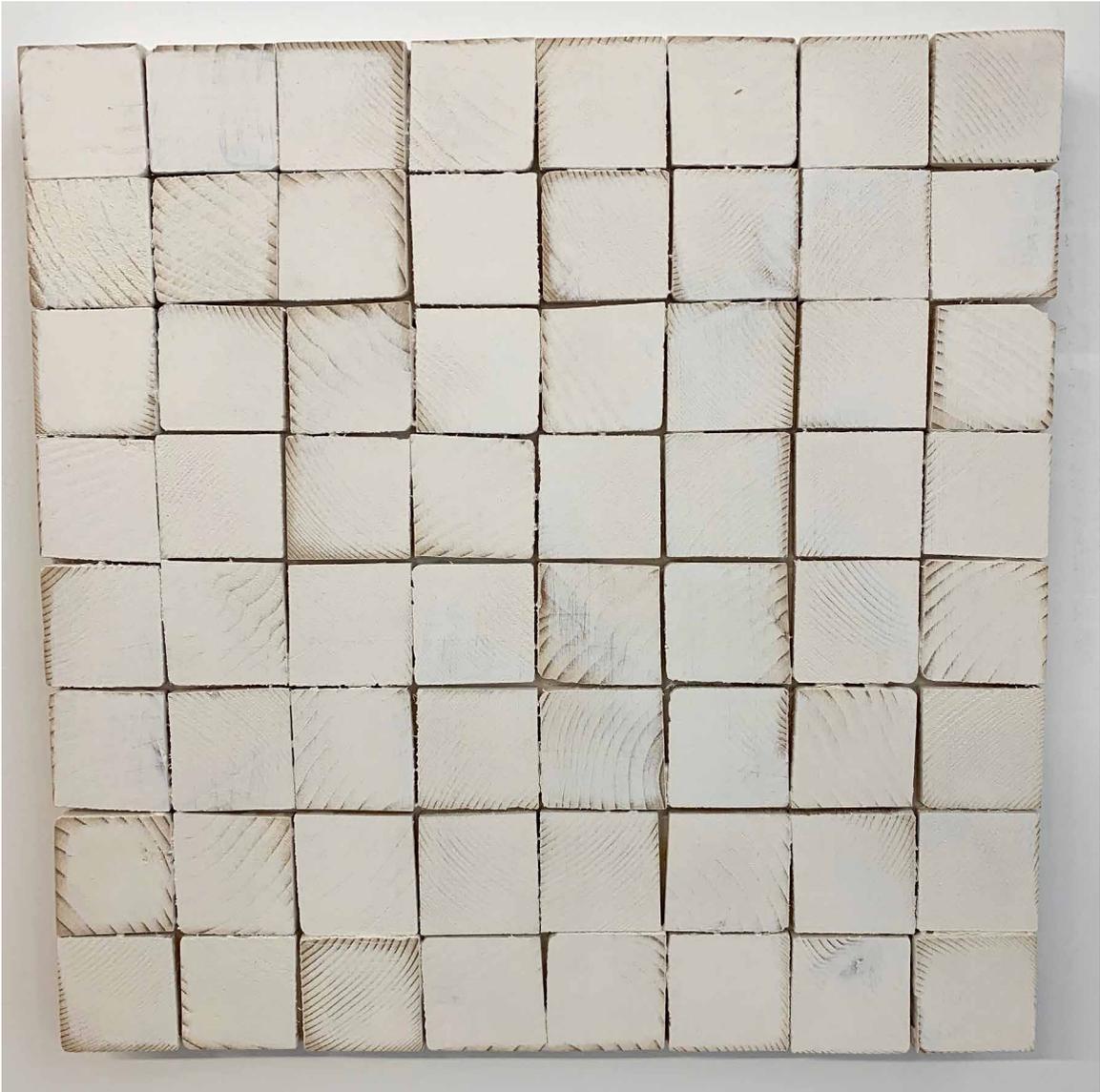
[I Beg The Blessed Virgin To Pray For Me]

After listening to myself for so long,
I pray for a hole in my pocket

through which these stones could fall.
I hope to trade this pale blue for a rich one,
this deadbolt for the dream of an open door,
this limbo for the fire of a star.

Ryman 9

Visual Art by Jean Wolff



Ryman 3

Visual Art by Jean Wolff



III.

Poetry by Delaney Olmo

The moon
Under the
singing pastel
In dreams,
Unmarked graves
remaining
raven feathers

without me,
indigo silk sky
stars gather,
I comb through
for all my
ancestors bodies
with hand drums

Born In Dreams

Creative Nonfiction by River Kozhar

I was born in dreams, swirling hues of azure and slate, clouds and winds and whorls of my creation. It was there I found my homeland, great trees stretching up to a sky that flowed like a river, twirling into eddies of song. A land of forests full of magical creatures, horses that raced across the grasslands, castles that broke the horizon, and waves that ever crashed their drums against the rocky shore. There I found my people: hardy folk, stolid women with swords at their hips and men with no more power; mystics of spells and sorcery, children of the night whose dark skin glowed with an ebony flame. They were people fighting to keep the world alive, and doing it while smiling as poignantly as candle flames against the bleak darkness surrounding them. In that world, I found protection and mercy, kindness and encouragement, a place where sleep was a restful thing. There, I created belonging: a lavender thread woven into a tapestry of light and dusk, flaming reds and burnished golds, scenes of my heart's design.

I was born in dreams, and I fled to them, diving through the gateways of books, and through the doors I created myself: hard-built entrances wood-worked out of boards and nails discarded as I was, passageways that led from the prison of my room out into the realms of the in-between, portals that swirled with the possibilities of the ethereal. Instead of my fears, I saw different places, different people, and different endings. My scars faded to dust as I changed things, magic sparking from my fingertips like electricity, crackling across my flesh, power consuming my powerlessness for its own sustenance. I saw families, not orphans; freedom, not captivity; love, not emptiness. I saw an open horizon full of promise that glinted in the fresh

emerald brightness of spring. I saw an escape, even when I didn't yet know what that meant.

I was born in dreams, and they still claim me. Dissociations of light and colour, coral and pearl, memory and half-truth, take hold of my vision and propel my body. I run from people that are no longer there and from misfiring memories that speak of a past I can't bear to hear. I run from the fear that I was also born in, the nightmare that ever snakes its tendrils toward my ankles, trying to catch me, throw me down, eat me with the shivering teeth of the past, the freezing burn of lacking privilege and the poisonous fumes of gaslit lies. Instead, the dreams rise up, a shield triggered by the dark, a wall of light and sound, mirages humming and flowing with my own power, crackling static, fire blue. Kaleidoscopes of colour wringing the world out of my wounds, twisting tails of saffron and sienna, sparking and flaming like the hope that has never quite died. Showing me a rabbit hole: a narrow escape from a threat no one else feels, to a world no one else has seen.

I was born in dreams, raised of their flickering lights and their lacework of love, as I escaped, for precious heartbeats, the trauma that others have died from. There I grew, nurturing myself with the nectar of hope and faith, the golds and pinks of flowers and life, stitching my wounds with stories and building a quiet home from the rubble. There I raised seedlings out of the ash: gently, tenderly, singing to them what I barely knew myself. There I witnessed the dawn: pale and impossible, a spectral mercy, a promise of a better year that I had yet to know. There I learned to love, to marvel at that

roaring, iridescent waterfall that is calming for its strength, its otherness, and its honesty. There, I wondered if it was possible to live without fear, to no longer be outnumbered and outpowered, and if peace could be gentle.

In that place, that space, that in-between that tore me away and apart and together, I remembered myself, and that I was born in dreams. I built my armour out of tree bark and grasses, out of the rocks and the winds and the words of home, out of the talismans and amulets of my people, swords made of promises and welcome goodbyes. There, I dressed myself in the power of truth, and I wore the dreams away.

Supernova 1, 2, 7

Visual Art by Carla Lobmier

watercolor/graphite on rice paper, each panel 18"x 36"



It Rained All Night

Fiction by Jessica Barksdale

The night I finally slept, it rained all night. It rained forty days and forty nights, and while some places on the island flooded, our house stood firm on its foundations.

Noah did not come. Neither did my husband, though I waited.

Once, in Milano, I went into Santa Maria Alla Porta in the centro storico and was almost swallowed by a fresco of Noah's arc, two unicorns walking up the plank behind the gazelles (and the wolves) and in front of the elephants.

"The wolves must have been very hungry," my husband later said.

Once before, it didn't rain for five months. Once it rained all day, every day, for weeks, dry only at night. Dry a misnomer, the air hanging thick with mist.

Once there were frogs where there shouldn't have been: in the rafters, under the beds, in the sinks. Once creeks turned into rivers. And then, in the fall, the rivers ran dry.

But that night, the night I finally slept, it rained. That was the last night I slept, so busy was I later pulling geckos and leeches from the walls.

But by then, no one was left in the house but me. Months before, my husband paddled off in a kayak, our dog sitting in his lap.

"I'll be back," he said, not looking over his shoulder as a good husband should.

“I’ll bring supplies,” he said. By day 39 of the deluge, everything was gone. Bamboo punched up from the wetness under the house, shooting grand round stalks through the floorboards.

“I’ll bring medicine,” he had said, but he did not bring that either.

But the sun was out. I knew this because I was up on the roof, the shingles squishy under my bare, sodden feet. The world was slick, birthed from itself, shiny, a dank petrichor fuming up from the earth’s center.

No one was on any other roof. No one clung to the palm tree trunks. No one sat on a mountain top surveying the wreckage. I was the island. The island was me.

“I’ll bring food,” my husband had said. But he did not. He had not. He had not brought the sun, which brought itself, and I was on my roof, in my tattered clothing, my ribs hard under my hand. But I was alive, composed of 90% rainwater, 10% hope.

Even my dog had left me, but I was still here.

I closed my eyes, waiting for them until they came. With my eyes closed, I heard the unicorns as they pushed through the fronds with their long, sharp horns, neighing in the way only unicorns can, light, shy, welcoming.

We never died, the female would say.

Get on the boat, the male would say. *Let’s go*.

Our Heroine Dreams of the Abuser

Poetry by Jennifer Campbell

His body lean, his eyes pleading,
words flower from his mouth.

Unlike a ghost, he eats
plums, cheese.

He opens doors with a key.

The living space is revised,
but unremarkable.

His hands are never there.

Our heroine glides through.

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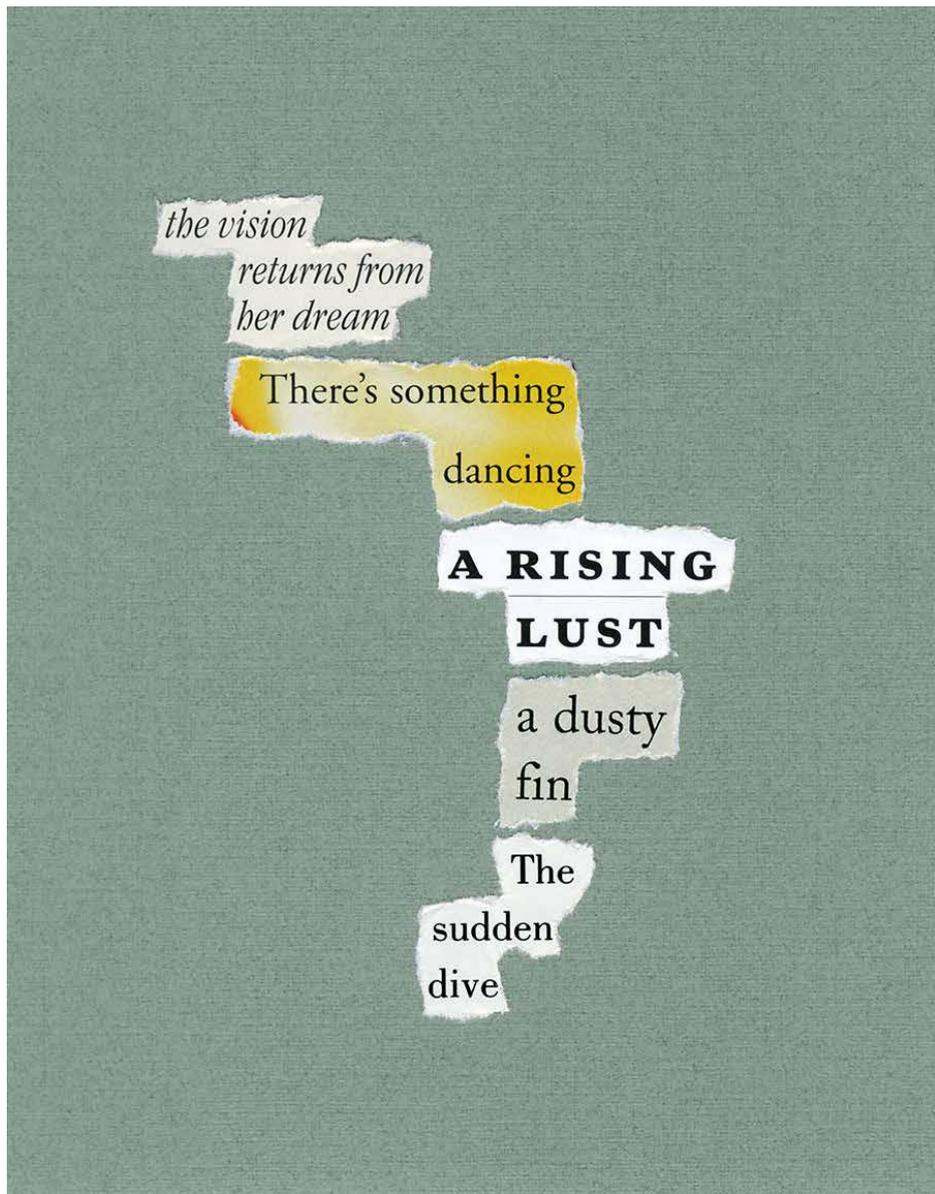
Our Heroine Dreams of Water

Poetry by Jennifer Campbell

Most nights it's the crash calm tide
mashing doubt and carrying it away,
but this night is a glutinous concentrate,
suspension liquid with dense bubbles.
There is no movement.
Our heroine is suspicious of metaphor,
knows some things need no comparison.
She draws the deepest breath
and waits on the real.

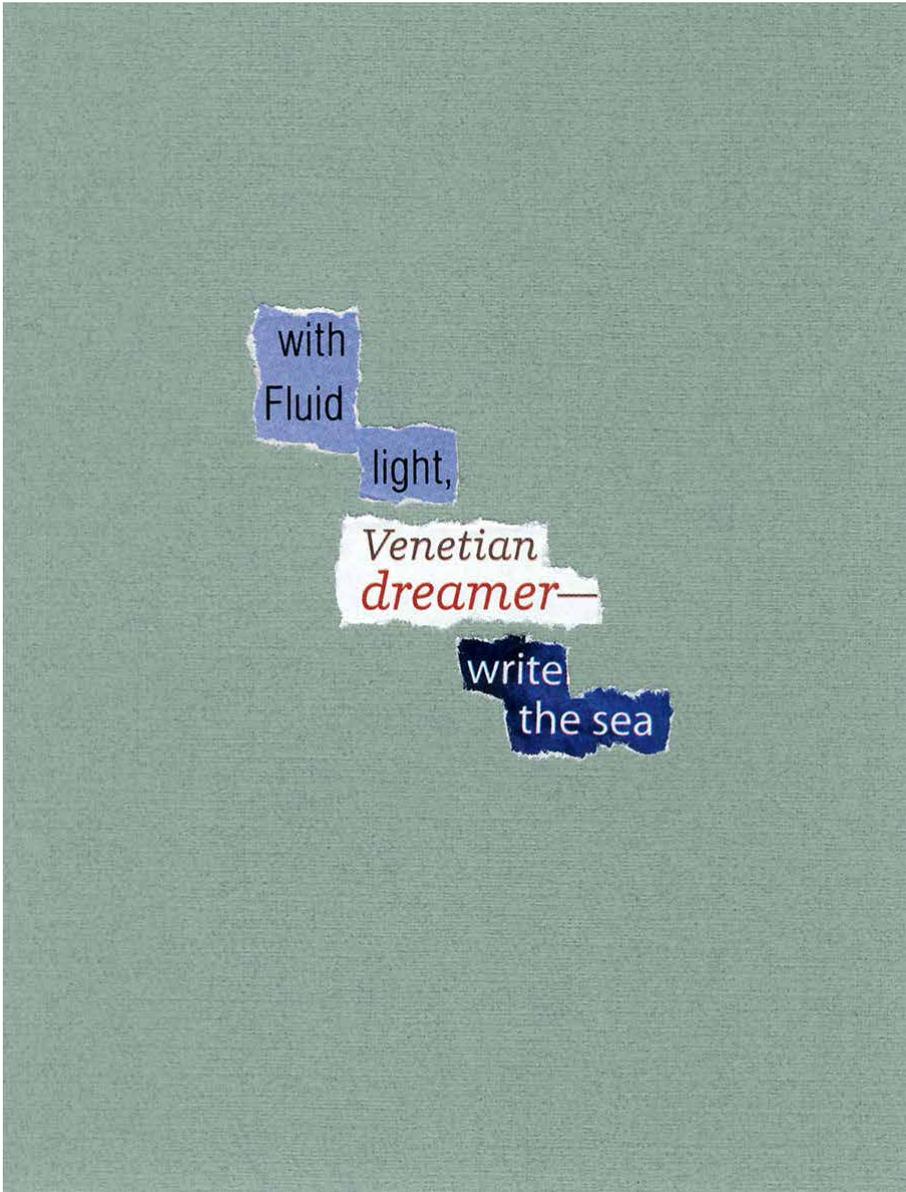
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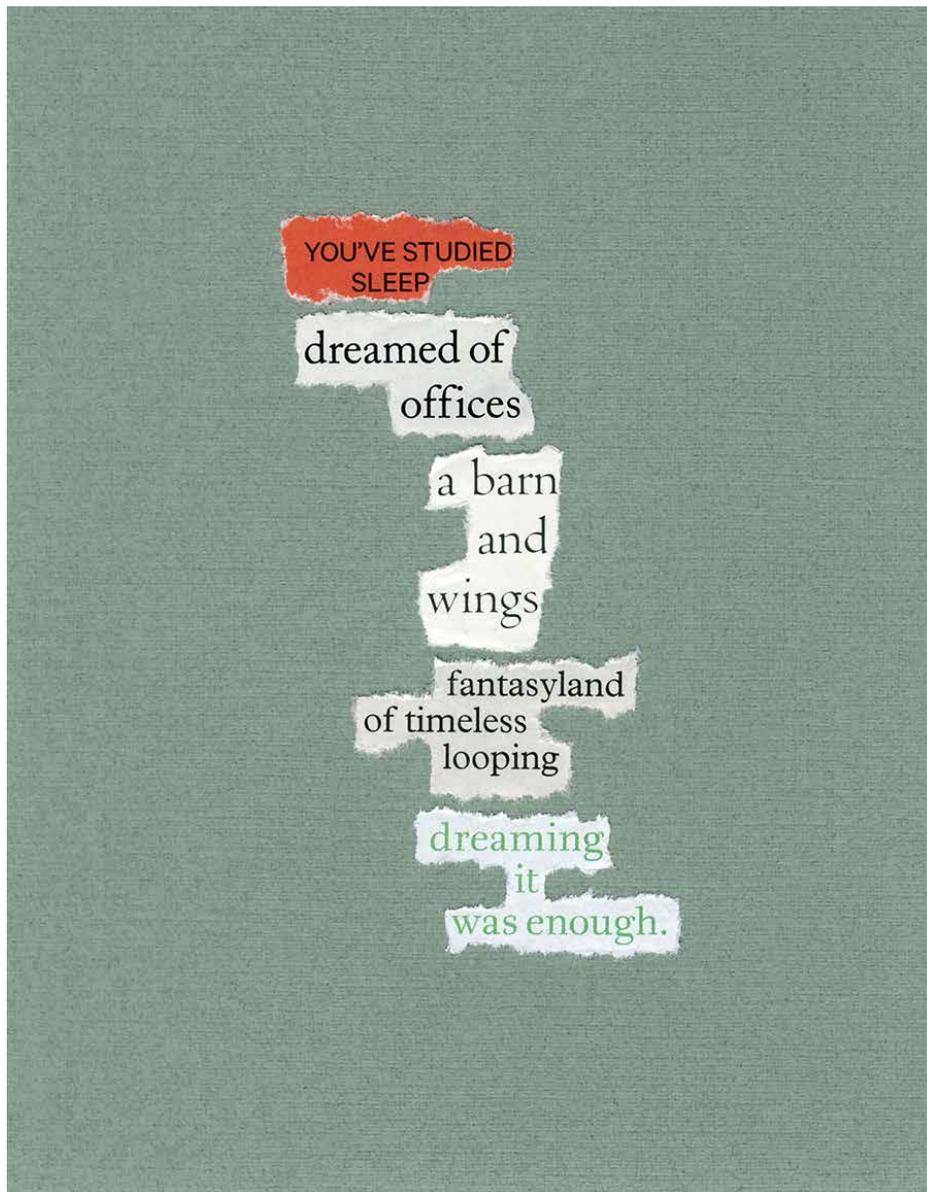
With Fluid Light

Vispo by J.I. Kleinberg



You've Studied

Vispo by J.I. Kleinberg



After Jiang Kui's "Seeing You In My Dream"

Poetry by Tom Montag

Nimble and shapely
you walk the way
a swallow flies,

your voice as
sweet, as delicate
as an oriole's.

After a long night
of trying to sleep
I dream I see you.

Early spring has turned
to longing. Since
you left, I've sent you

my poems. I carry
the gift you gave me
so where I go,

you go with me.
Beneath the cold moon,
a thousand mountains.

How will you ever
find your way home
across this darkness?

After Some Lines From Feng Yan Si's "Spring Feelings"

Poetry by Tom Montag

Tree branches sway,
the fallen catkins.

A sudden rain on
apricot blossoms.

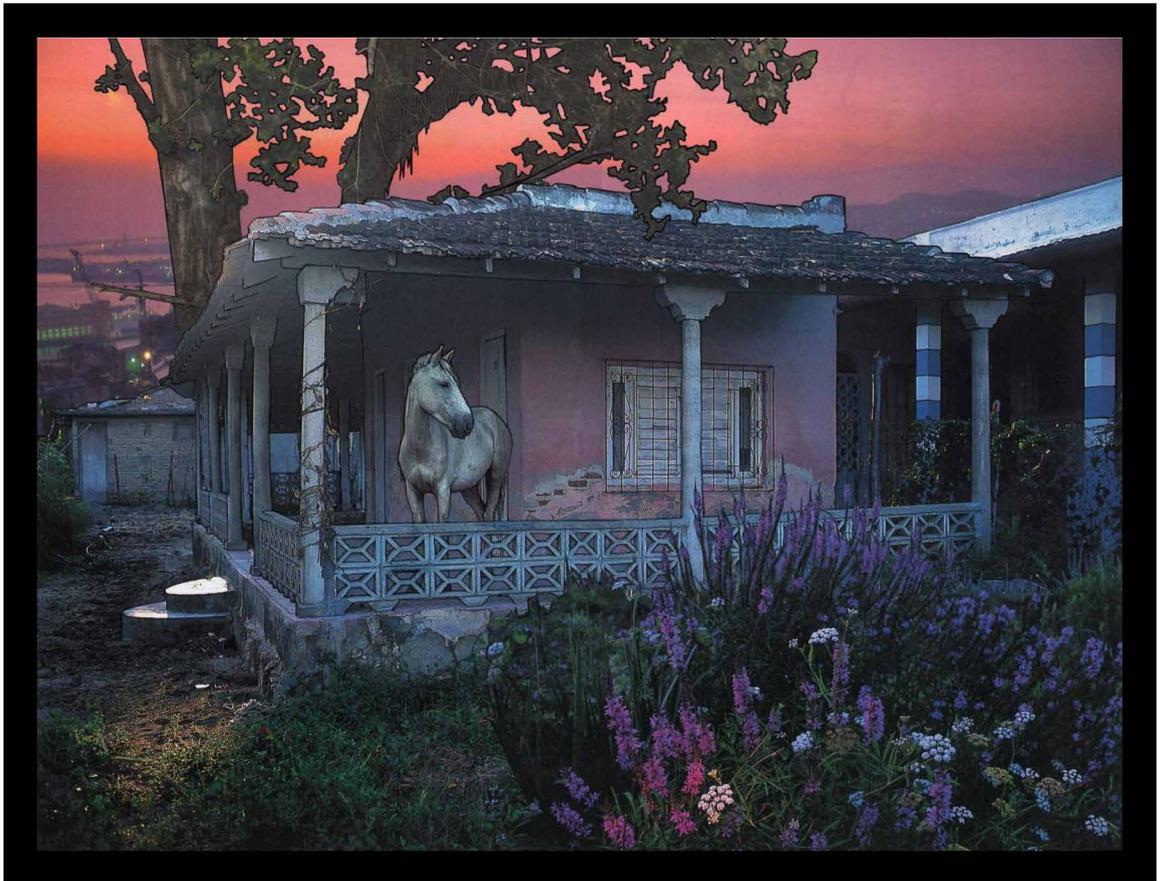
Orioles wake me
from a good nap

and now I wonder
about this dream

I half-remember.

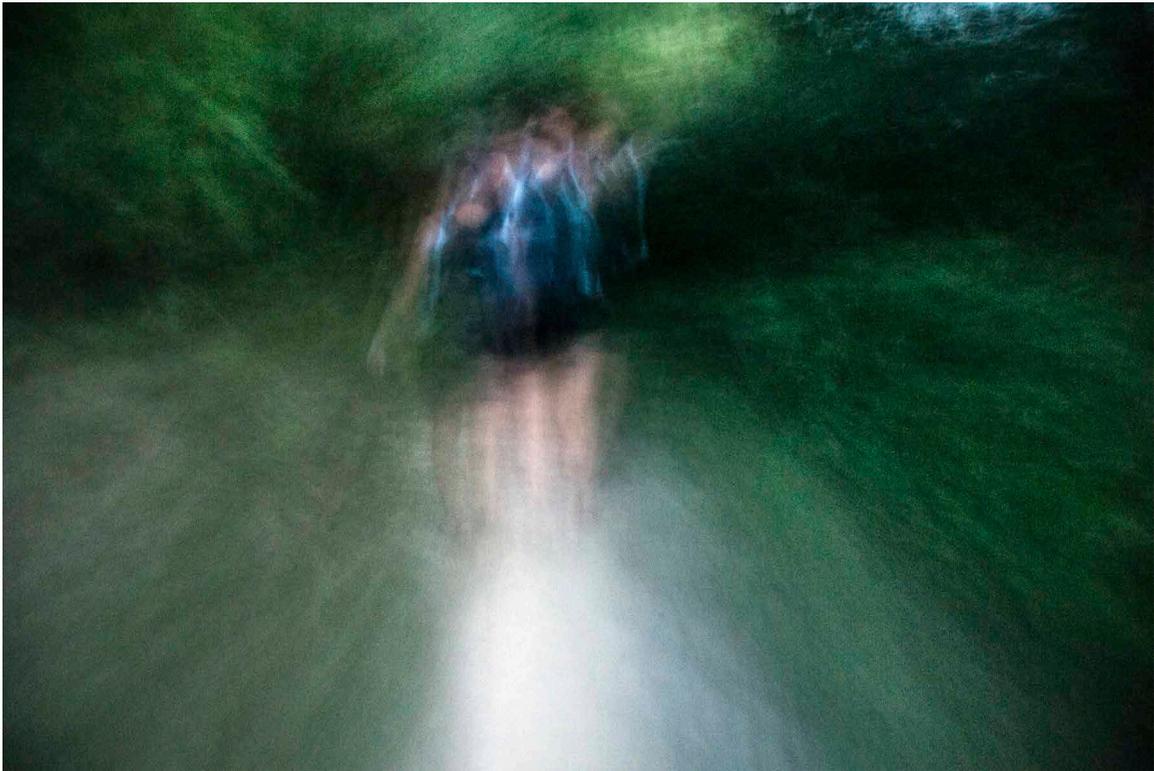
Goodbye Blue Monday No. 4

Visual Art by Kyle Cromer



Trail in Milho Verde

Visual Art by Guilherme Bergamini



Lines by Two Swallows

Poetry by Jennifer Lynn Sanders

These– the iridescent flapping –the shiver and careen
may seem too free, too happy to glide, and dive in joy

Yet these – the parent delights – in quiver and swoop
braid the air thick and keep glorious

the boundary between our kinds.

2am

Poetry by Dustin Radke

its 2am and im tired of reading poetry.
i cant take another pretentious line
break. i dont want another assonated rhyme.
I would surely fall to the ligneous floor
and weep w the stars, shooting themselves
across the violet (but o, how empty!) sky
if i find even just one more
exaggerated cosmic metaphor.

these are the nights i pray for prose,
when i know id be much happier
watching conspiracy theory youtube videos.
while the rest of the world is asleep,
resting and preparing for actual life,
and i stay up reading somebody else's dream.

A Punto

Visual Art by Angela V. Scardigno



Entre Muros

Visual Art by Angela V. Scardigno



Scardigno

Drama Formal

Visual Art by Angela V. Scardigno



what is not yet traversed is landlocked

Poetry by Robin Walter

It is the flight I mean the actual
flight of body mybody which
is unlike the metaphorical
flight from body I'm talking about
the true the literal flight I took
thanks to silky blueblack wings which shuddered
orangelight thrown from the lamp
at the mouth of the dock the eternally darkdock
down their beautiful lengths—the wings were thin
but perfectly strongstrong enough to bare
a body a youngbody away
from a man an oldman a man with grey
hair and seaglass eyes which I
mean literally his eyes were shards of blue
glass actual shards actual glass please
understand me mybody was a youngbody
and mywings were good
wings like bees' wings but
larger and thinner full
of delicate patterns mywings my

goodstrong wings
hefted me upandaway salt air beneath
them my goodstrongwings they
bore me up and across the black
sea I donotremember

if it was calm the sea
they bore me up and away mywings
mygoodstrongbeautifulwings up and across
the sea its wetcliffed
shores bore a body a youngbody
that body had no wings that body
imagined herself
in the sea
she imagined herbody carried away
in the big sea upon whose shores
a body a youngbody left
herbody as a man'sbody
did what men with seaglass eyes do
and I—so faraway now borne up by wings
goodstrongwings beautiful inky
blue wings—I wonder where
to set my body down in all this big sea I

Let me start again. I am trying
to tell you that mywings they are good
they are goodstrongwings
they bore me awayupandaway I
love mywings so inky
and blue like dragonfly
wings but bigger and thinner I
am trying to tell you

about the feeling of flight how
necessary and lovely when

you leave yourbody behind I
I mean to tell you I left
thatbody behind and I am

sorry.I amnot

It is important for you to know
my wings they are not feathered no
they are inkyblueblack wings they
catch the light and bury it
like my body was borne away
so far

away from thatbody that youngbeautifulbody
her arms so tan her dress
so blue so full of flowers of poems I left thatbody
behind now so faraway

mywings they are goodstrong
they are away mybody
behind and sorry myawaybody
I left thatbody that wished and I
amnotsorry so young that away
and now I wish thatbody had wings
and I sosorry I do not I cannot
I did not I simply :

my wings they are goodstrongwings
my wings they are :
my wings they are sorry and I
no longer know what I am trying for

where I am winging for the sea sobig
that body soyoung and I

Again, mywings they are sorry they are so

sorry and I

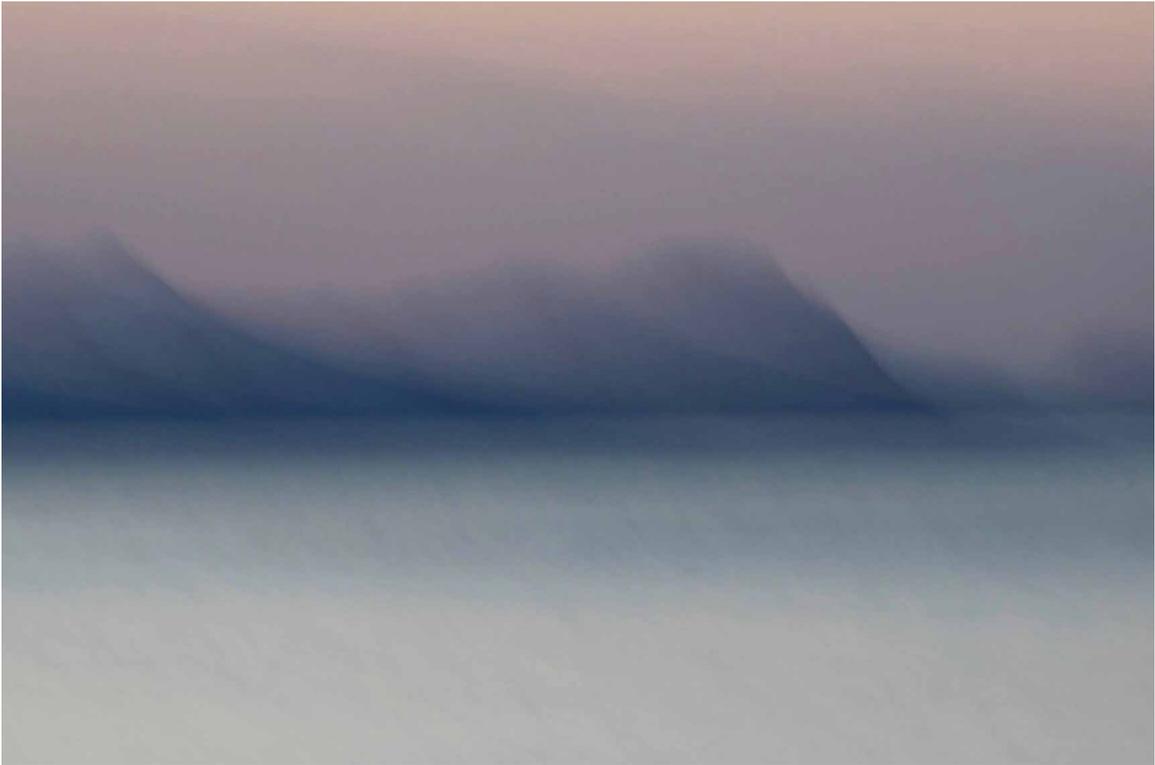
my wings they are beautiful so

blue so

bright, I

Mountain Across Fjord, Iceland

Visual Art by Daryl Farmer



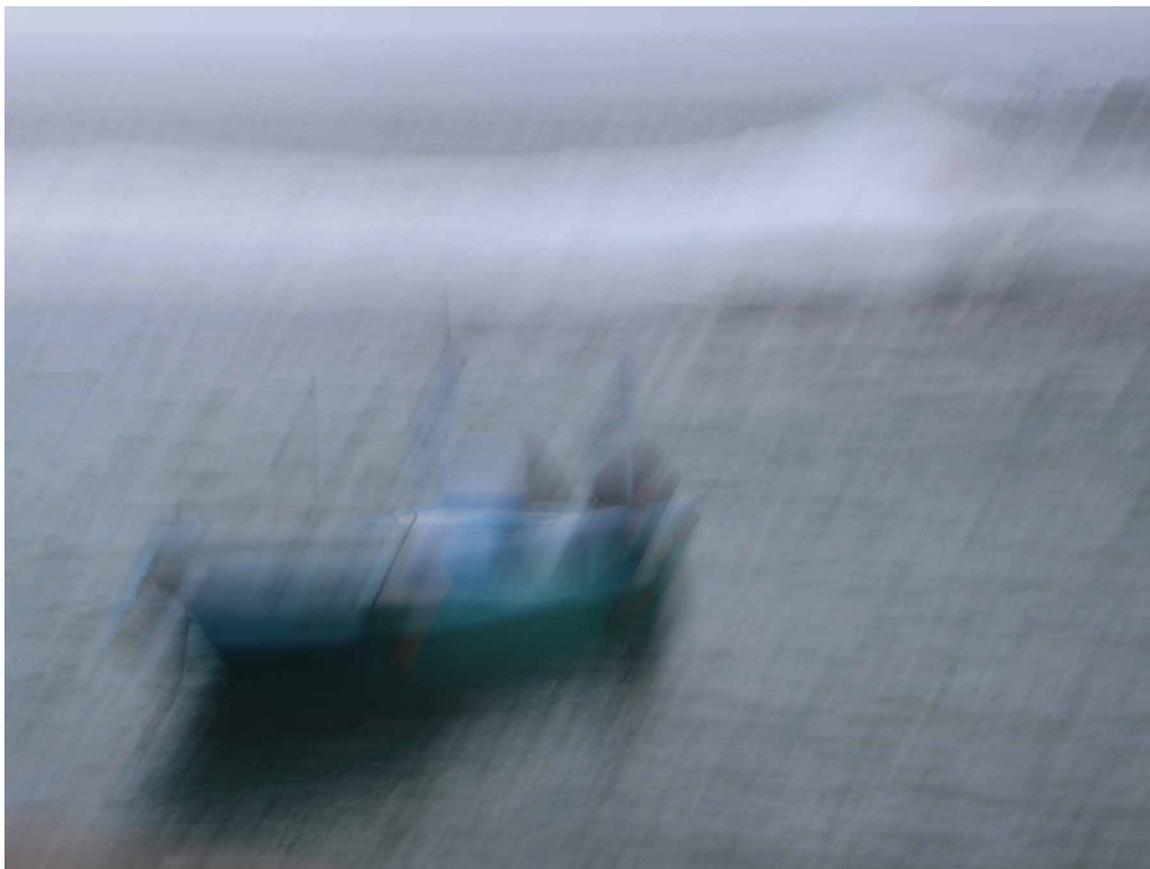
Sahara on Camel

Visual Art by Daryl Farmer



Boat in Storm

Visual Art by Daryl Farmer



How Does Your Garden Grow

Poetry by Candace Angelica

Peering into the neighbor's yard
she lusted for the lemon tree

the fruit lent itself towards the ground,
as if gesturing for a kiss
from the soil
the leaves lumbering
under the toil of carrying
such juicy bitterness;
 a slammed door
 a last word
 a swallowed conversation

*I wonder if my lips were thicker
she thought
if they might clasp commitment the way the others do*

if they, too, might grace the garment of love

*I wonder if you were just a bit softer
 the citrus hissed
if you could only lower your head close to the earth*

*maybe someone could feel your tenderness
 could pick you
 from the cluttered branches*

her mouth was poised to speak in protest,
with its trembling hesitation,
but the words sundered
gracelessly
 and she quieted

senses seduced by
the hint of heaven's garden
just beyond that fence
 lips wrapped around an apple's skin

how we tend to blame each other
for the world

the way we see things

Troubled Waters

Visual Art by Aaron Zaremsky



War Zone

Fiction by Brian Coughlan

The explosion spins me head above heels into a ditch and force feeds me a lump of damp earth, as indiscriminate bullets fizz and crack through the air. Blue sky and unmoving dreamy clouds superimposed in double-vision as my senses slowly return. Keep your head down; unless you want it torn asunder like an over-ripe fruit. To the ringing sound of staccato gunfire and long repressed explosions I see Jones get hit in the eye, stumble forward, throw away his rifle. An endless stream of bullets riddles his body, and yet he continues to stagger, clutching his stomach, to stop if from slipping out through blood-soaked fingers.

That derelict playground. If I can just get to it, there's still a chance of attacking their position from the blindside, but to do so I'll need a diversion. Right on cue Donnelly provides it, screaming like a madman, firing off rounds indiscriminately. I told him to stay low. Now I know for certain that he wasn't listening, that it was more important to play with his rifle, adjust his underwear, rub red clay off his boots. The plan we agreed on pulled apart by his complete bloody-minded disregard as bullets tear through his body. Watch him float in the air and even pirouette as they shred his flak jacket and spit his insides across the petals of a scraggly wildflower growing strong in this otherwise shell-shocked wasteland.

I'm on my own, limited ammo. Both comrades lie screaming in agony and beyond help. I've got to take their position by knocking out that machine gun post pinning down our division. With no time to think, I run screaming from the ditch, to pump round-after-round of metal tipped love letter, into that narrow slit of eyes and faces, the seesaw

my ultimate destination, until a small pig-tailed girl wanders blithely into our warzone.

Bullets are absorbed by her corduroy dungarees as she miraculously cures the injured, inexplicably resurrects the dead; and as the M16 assault rifle reverts back to a tree branch, in the hands of a ten-year-old boy, astride a half-finished housing-estate, she states bluntly: Come on, this is stupid, who wants to play something else?

Dream City Bypass

Poetry by Melissa Cannon

the road swerves
then no road
just silver water

Bebop

Visual Art by Uday Dhar



Buzzkill

Visual Art by Uday Dhar



(Surgery Dream) Diagnosis

Poetry by Duncan Slagle

You know how to love the girls
you wish to become. You inhale

the perfume / one claw turns back
to knuckle. You know your history.

How mistaken & quiet they lived.
The doctors' dumb scalpels slice

open a body bag to search for the
monster inside. The one who stretched

her legs & pitched her voice down, sunk
like a child heavy in a well. Understand

your own disguise & you can eat it forever.
You can eat the gowns, the round nails

haunting your back. When mothers called her
pervert they weren't casting stones / No

they were smoothing her hair out with
their red hands. Fathers took pictures

of the aftermath, diagnosing her beauty
by the dim light of the closet before

smashing a glass plate against her
already broken nose.

Corn Field

Visual Art by David Rubenstein



On the Moon, A Man Sings

Poetry by Jessica Kinnison

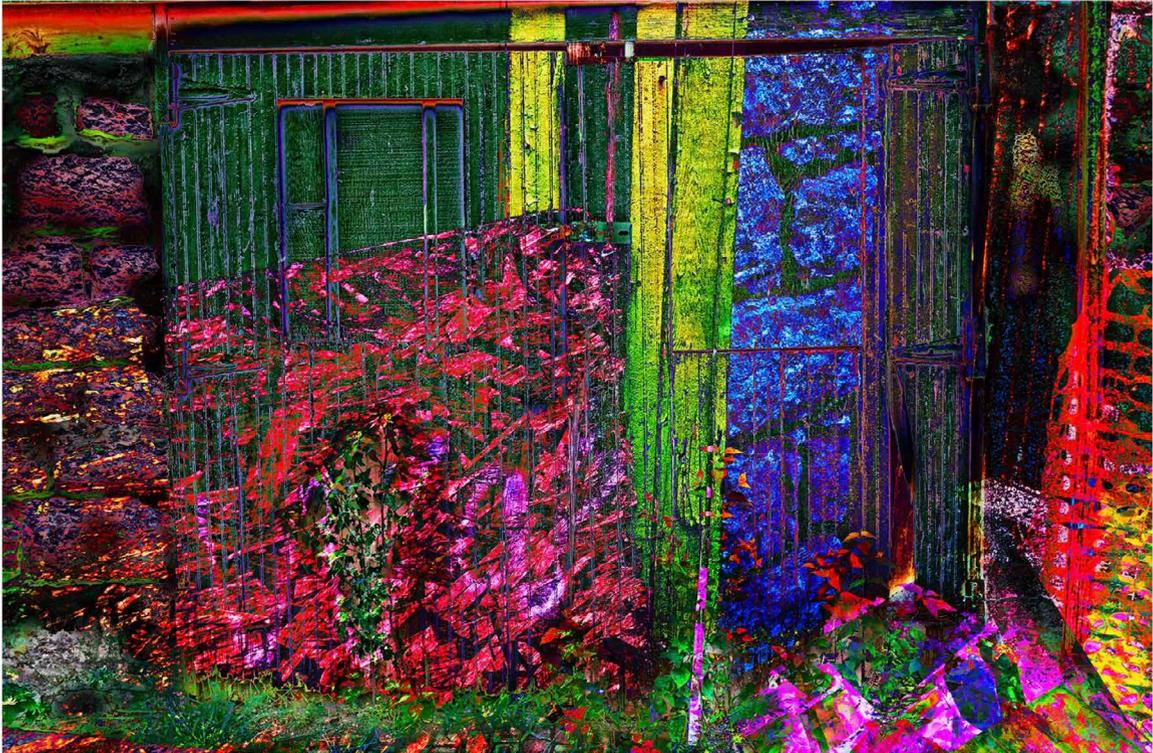
My house is filled with bony, exposed shoulders. We high-five like maniacs.
Crowd-surf hands, hands, more hands of dancers spilling out into a lake nearby.
Running naked, bright, I unfold a canvas chair by the fire.

When you come to land in my lap, I am taking it all in a playful slap across the face,
a lighting of a cigarette from one already lit. Someone falls and someone else pulls
them up. The piles of clothes on the bank. The dented cans littering the lawn, the street.

I lose track of where we are. It is somewhere with feet and red mud and blueberry
brambles with dogs. Dogs that stay nearby without being told the rules. On the moon, a man
sings and plays the ukulele. His legs dangle. Lulling us into the water, into one another's arms.
A night as long as a whole life. The smell of your hair isn't even a smell. I feel it in my belly.

Monster at the Door

Visual Art by Christopher Paul Brown



Doorman and Delivery Girl

Visual Art by Christopher Paul Brown



Piano Drop

Poetry by Heikki Huotari

Negation of negations, says the pragmatist,
There's no extrapolation but in cutting to the chase,
the vaulting pole is broken and, by hovering, the
center of mass is maintained. The first half-hour of
alternating consciousness is free, the engineer who
doesn't know what sin is drops the first piano and
the word-for-word translation from the language of
love is sufficient. So as not to pick the pace up I'll
stay one half step behind. Ten billion years from
now, the alien intelligence will miss no episode of I
Love Lucy.

The Garden of Earthly Delights

Poetry by Heikki Huotari

Perpendicular to ecstasy, beribboned entertainers suffer, then control groups, not just fish in barrels, calculate their gradients. Accordingly reoriented, they take baby steps. My private eye is satisfied. As latitude and longitude are woven slowly so some animal might happen by that I can use. Gestalt psychologists are grunting in their jungles, snapping at a password. There's no paper bag that I can't fight my way out of and unsolicited deliveries are mine to do with as I choose.

The Law of Large Numbers

Poetry by Heikki Huotari

When the blade theatrically retracts into the handle, when they learn to hope like humans all but one will win a consolation prize. It's not so much that we are asymmetric as our symmetry is stayed. My expectations normally distributed with ever smaller standard deviations, I may wonder who you think you're fooling now. As each exigency pleads guilty, ups the ante, you were there so you can't know what happened here so welcome home.

Nobody's There

Visual Art by Reyila Hadeer



Our Interview

Interview by Karla Van Vliet

Simon Anton Niño Diego Baena is a deLuge Journal contributor. His chapbook *The Magnum Opus Persists in the Evening* has recently been published by Jacar Press. We are pleased to showcase him here.

1. How did you get started as a poet?

To be honest, I don't know. But it started when I was in high school back then I wanted to write lyrics. I really wanted to start a rock band. Writing gibberish was my only adolescent outlet aside from playing basketball. It was only after my father died that I took writing seriously. I wanted poetry — art, to fill the vacuum that my father left.

2. I understand you grew up in Spain and now live in the Philippines. What is your native language? If not English why do you choose to write in English? What are the influences of your native language in your writing? I'm curious about how the place and language(s) of your childhood influence your writing. (I'm making a big assumption that English is not your native language. If it is, please excuse me.)

No, I grew up and live here in the Philippines. I've never been abroad. I'm just fascinated by the history and culture of Spain; my paternal great grandfather was from Spain. My native language is Bisaya but our educational system teaches us to read and write in English. We had been an American colony.

3. Your poems are infused with history. What role does history play, or the study of history play in your writing life?

I think my hobby of reading history books come into play. I love to write

about the lingering ruins of history, but with the start of the COVID pandemic, the new poems that I've written are quite different from the ones in my chapbook. The new poems are more personal it revolves around my father's death and his absence and the limits of existence.

4. There are many biblical / religious references in your poems.

*outside / the leaves are trembling / like a priest / praying, doubting / his god
the nails have always been / at home in the palms / the spear in the chest / and the flesh in the soil*

Do you consider yourself a religious or spiritual poet?

I never considered myself a spiritual poet, but I am fascinated by the mystery of religion and its effect on history — the crusades, the Spanish Reconquista, the expulsion of the Jews and Moors and the Inquisition. My family is very religious but I always kept my distance.

4. You have a lovely way of inserting place, into your poems; often using a tight lyrical style.

*the cold is gnawing / at the corners / of this room
I see only a plain man / burying his dead // out in the open / the rain falling / where he is kneeling*

Do you revise with this in mind? What are your revision methods? How do your poems develop?

I am deeply influenced by surrealism. My favorite poets are Robert Bly, Tomas Tranströmer, Yehuda Amichai, Federico Garcia Lorca, and Johannes Bobrowski. I want my writing to be ambiguous, surreal, and mysterious. I want it to always have that eerie midnight feeling, where there are only a few lights flickering against the dark. At first, I write down whatever comes to mind — fragments, incomplete sentences, images — I let

the poem develop on its own, and revising them while doing my afternoon walks. I don't start writing poems with a title in mind. The poem has to have a certain degree of liberty.

5. The title of your chapbook published by Jacar Press is titled "The Magnum Opus Persists in the Evening." What does that title mean to you?

As for the title of my chapbook, *The Magnum Opus Persists in the Evening*, it is only during night time with its meditative state that there is a balance between creativity, silence, and noise.

Simon Anton Niño Diego Baena currently lives in the Philippines with his wife, Xandy. He is the author of the chapbook, *The Magnum Opus Persists in the Evening* (Jacar Press). His work has appeared, or will appear, in *The Cortland Review*, *The Bitter Oleander*, *Osiris*, *The American Journal of Poetry*, *The Louisville Review*, *North Dakota Quarterly*, *Phantom Drift*, *Talking River Review*, *Gargoyle*, among others. He has been nominated to the Best of the Net and Pushcart Prize.

Dream of God as Bird

Visual Art by Janine Certo



Soul's Nautilus

Visual Art by Robert Bharda



Split-Decision

Poetry by Roberto Sabas

Woke to loud noise—
whether dream or reality,
who knows—an explosion
 at the back of my mind
 half-expected the flash of light
to follow.

One thought: not.
The other considered hauling
every
 body
 downstairs.

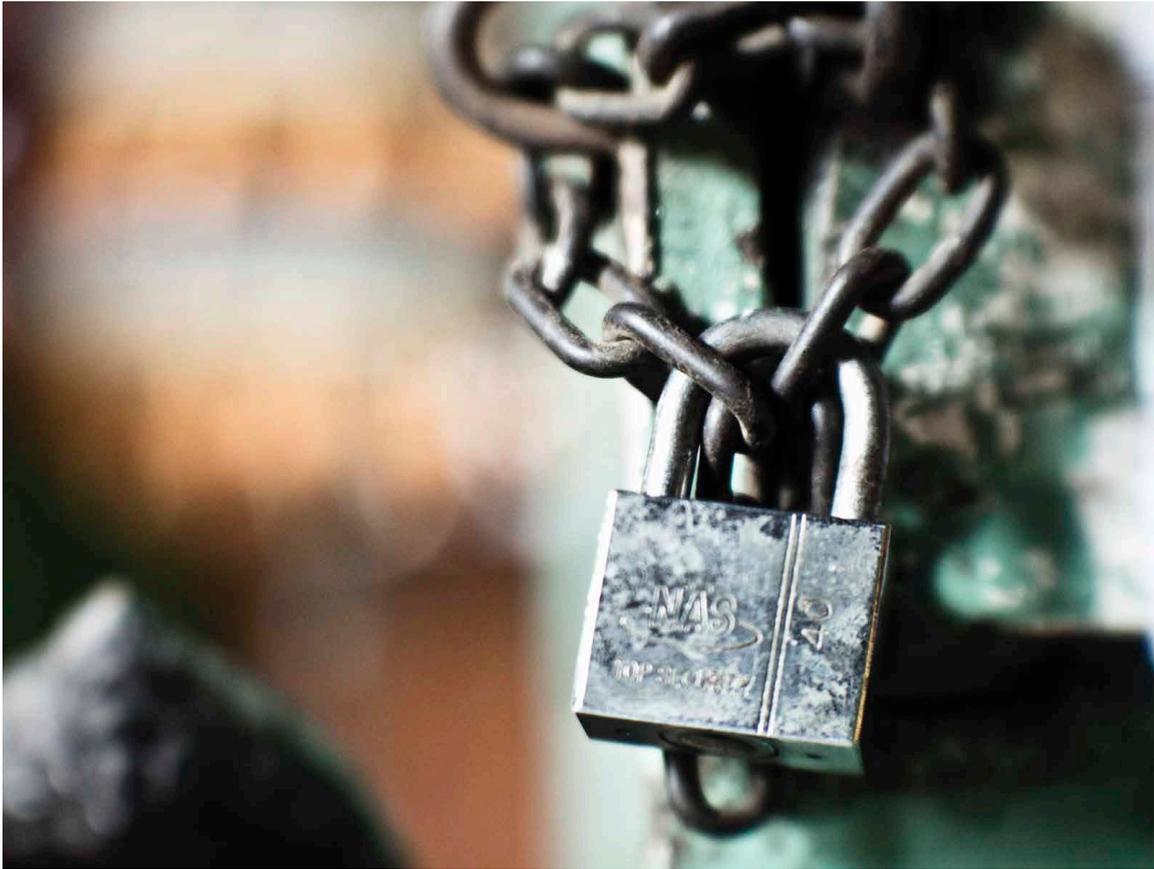
Like a Dream

Poetry by Jerome Berglund

thought of a poem last night while I was lying in bed
didn't write it down and this morning it was gone
can't for the life of me recall a thing

Secrecy

Visual Art by Manit Chaotragoongit



The Professional

Fiction by Alexander Jones

I circle the bike rack again, still getting up my nerve.

Not casual.

It's late, nobody around, nobody watching from the windows of the dilapidated student dorm across the street.

The Professional walks up to the rack, smoking.

Casual.

He frees a nice road bike with a gleaming, oiled chain, puts on a helmet and pedals away, dipping his feet into the toes clips as he speeds down the street. All that, without ditching his cigarette. I don't even realize he's stealing it.

A Cannondale hybrid catches my eye even though it was double chained and U locked separately and I'm possessively stroking its stem when he returns five minutes later on foot, carrying his helmet.

"That's too much trouble. For you, anyway."

"What?" I squeak.

"You kidding? You've been here for twenty minutes. Are you telling me you're not here to steal one of these?"

He stands next to me and pats the Cannondale.

I see his face in the light: Late 20's, clean shaven, with a deep scar on his forehead like Frankenstein's monster; each puncture from the sutures like brail around the wound. His nose looks like it's been squashed once or twice.

"So, what's your plan?" he asks.

"I dunno. I just... try to find ones, you know, that people are stupid with, I guess."

"Like?"

"Like here." I point further down the rack. "See? This one's just locked with the front tire to the rack. I figure, I quick release it, then I find another one, like... that one, back there. That one's only hooked up by the

frame, the front tire's free, so I'd take the front tire off it, put it on the first one, and ride away."

"Not too bad. What are you waiting for?" He smirks. "Attack of conscience?"

Stealing is wrong.

But the bike beneath me, responding to each slight shift of body English I make, propelling me forward like a sleek missile with each cyclical extension of my contracting quadriceps as my knees pump up and down, up and down, wind whipping my hair—is my favorite freedom. I could just as easily be pedaling across the Sahara or the arctic tundra or the gray surface of the moon; every leashed dog could be a polar bear, every trashcan a cactus, all the bits of trash blowing around the streets could be tumbleweeds on the high plains.

It's all much more persuasive than the disappointment some spoiled full-time, full tuition college kid will feel, finding the bike missing in three or four days.

I answer him, "No, just nervous, I guess."

"Then relax. You go to school here, right? Part-time? Couple classes a semester maybe?"

"Yeah, how'd—"

"Lucky guess. You know, if you look like you belong, you belong. Right? Start wearing a school sweatshirt and carrying a backpack with your art history textbook in it, and you'll look like you do." Disdainful, weary and bored he says: "Right now you look like an alternaten goth ninja thief."

Now I think he's closer to forty.

"I'm not into art history."

"Yeah, whatever." He leans over the bike I'd found, flips up the quick release with gnarled but nimble fingers, and when he's got the frame free of

the front wheel, sets it down on the sidewalk.

“Get that wheel you were looking at.”

I do what he says, fumbling with my adjustable crescent wrenches, then cutting my index finger right across the fleshy part of it on a frayed, sharp cable, and the bike falls over and I curse and The Professional laughs until I wrestle the wheel free and come back around the rack to him, holding it out like I want him to check my homework.

“What are you looking at me for? Put it on.”

I kneel and get the wheel seated, make the stolen quick release skewer too tight, and struggle to loosen it. The bike wobbles beside me.

Done, I straighten up and smile at him, want to impress him and see that I’ve cut myself again, across the back of my hand.

“Great. You stole yourself a bike. Now what?”

“I dunno. What do you mean? I ride back home with it.”

“You just stole a worthless mountain bike. That wheel you took and attached to it is worth more than the bike itself.”

“It is?”

“You really don’t know what you’re doing, do you? That Cannondale, 1300 dollars, new. Get eight, nine bills easy, you know where to sell it.”

“I just put stuff up on Craigslist.”

He smirks. “Watch.”

He approaches the Cannondale, opening his backpack. He takes out a tool that looks like a small drill and inserts it into the first padlock. It makes a ratcheting noise, then a high-pitched whine, and the padlock pops open. “Automatic pick,” he says without looking at me. “Illegal here. I had to get it in Montreal and it’s made me a fortune.”

“A fortune?”

“A fortune.” He repeats the operation on the second padlock, unwraps the chains and sets them aside.

“How much fortune are we talking, exactly?”

Inspecting the U lock, he says, “Close to a million by now.”

“No way.”

He reaches into the backpack again for a small battery powered cutting disk. “At least a thousand bucks a day three days a week for 6 years is about a million.” He puts on a pair of nerdy safety glasses and cuts through the elbow of the lock in a few seconds, the grinder shrieking as

orange sparks spray everywhere.

This would give me an anxious vapor lock. My pulse is jacked just standing here while he works, but his expression of bored concentration never changes until he pulls the Cannondale free and stands up.

“Can I have it?” Like a little kid begging for ice cream.

“Did you steal it? Grow up.” But there’s no malice in his voice; he sounds amused. “You look like you’re having a heart attack, kid.” He touches the Cannondale like he’s petting a cat. “I’ll tell you what. The suspension seat post on that orange bike down there is worth a couple hundred. Swap them and you get a consolation prize, at least.”

I go to the orange bike. Beside it is a beat up hybrid with a funny looking seat- square, no nose, with a round slot cut in the center. “This looks like it might be worth something.”

Again amused, he says, “Yeah, that’s worth a little something. Prostate friendly. It probably belongs to a teacher or something. Leave it.”

I do what he suggested, taking the suspension seat post from the orange bike and leaving the regular one, watching as he watches me.

“If you want to make some money, you gotta apply yourself, same as anything else. Check out magazines, look at parts catalogues, the parts are worth more than the bikes, lots of times. Learn your trade.”

“How’d you spend all that money?”

“Rent. Tuition. Student loans. I was once a young philosophy major like yourself.”

“Like Obi Won?”

“Like I’m an adjunct with a PhD.” He gets on the Cannondale.

“You have some philosophy you can leave me with?”

“What?”

With calculated insolence I say, “You said you were a philosopher. Don’t you have some knowledge to drop?”

“Yeah. Okay. You’re not a cowboy or an outlaw and you’re not raging against the machine. You’re just a bike thief, and right now, not a good one. How’s that?”

He pedals away, then stops and turns to me. “Oh, one other thing.”

“What’s up?”

“Wear a helmet.” He touches his scar. “All it takes is one accident for you to be really sorry. Plus it makes you look legit.”

Then he's gone.

I get on the mountain bike and go. The seat post is too short; my knees feel compressed after a few pedal strokes. I slow down, planning to lean the bike against a fire hydrant half way down the street while I adjust the seat height.

A tree root had erupted and burst through the sidewalk, breaking open the pavement and dislodging a storm drain cover.

I hit it.

The stolen wheel I attached to the bike is a lot heavier and knobbier and much better inflated; it rolls over this obstruction with no problem, but the cheap, mushy stock tire on the rear fishtails; I'm moving too slowly to have momentum, so I lose control and slam into the curb.

I sail over the handlebars face first.

A few inches to the right and I crack open my head, a few inches to the left and I smash my shoulder. Instead, one of the caps on the side of the fire hydrant rips a giant gash in my forehead and I break my nose against the sidewalk.

That's my start, becoming The Professional.

One accident is all it takes, I just told myself.

BIOS

Candace Angelica is a poet and writer originally from Los Angeles, currently writing and residing in Phoenix with her pet pitbull Papi Chulo. She has works published by *Cathexis Northwest Press*, *Ming Chuan University Press* in Taiwan, and others. She holds degrees in Mandarin, Political Science, and International Studies from California State University, Long Beach and is currently working on her first full-length work of non-fiction based on her travels around the world.

Simon Anton Niño Diego Baena currently lives in the Philippines with his wife, Xandy. He is the author of the chapbook, *The Magnum Opus Persists in the Evening* (Jacar Press). His work has appeared, or will appear, in *The Cortland Review*, *The Bitter Oleander*, *Osiris*, *The American Journal of Poetry*, *The Louisville Review*, *North Dakota Quarterly*, *Phantom Drift*, *Talking River Review*, *Gargoyle*, among others. He has been nominated to the Best of the Net and Pushcart Prize.

Jessica Barksdale's fifteenth novel, *The Play's the Thing*, and second poetry collection, *Grim Honey*, are both forthcoming in April 2021. Recently retired, she taught at Diablo Valley College in Pleasant Hill, California for thirty-two years and continues to teach novel writing online for UCLA Extension and in the online MFA program for Southern New Hampshire University. Born and raised in the San Francisco Bay Area, she now lives in the Pacific Northwest with her husband.

Reporter visual artist and photographic, **Guilherme Bergamini** is Brazilian and graduated in Journalism. The works of the artist dialogue between memory and social political criticism. He believes in photography as the aesthetic potential and transforming agent of society. Awarded in national and international competitions, Guilherme Bergamini participated in collective exhibitions in 31 countries.

A graduate of the University of Southern California's Cinema-Television Production program, **Jerome Berglund** spent a picaresque decade in entertainment before returning to the midwest where he was born and raised. For the last several years he has lived a relatively quiet life, spending his time reflecting, exploring what he learned over

the course of a somewhat checkered young adulthood, via writing, poetry and fine art photography. Berglund has previously published short stories in Paragon Press's *Veisalgia* and the *Watershed Review*, a play in *Iris Literary Journal*, and poetry in *Abstract Magazine*, *Wild Roof*, *Lychee Rind*, and *Ulalume Lighthouse*.

Originally from New York City, **Robert Bharda** resides in the Northwest U.S. where for thirty-five years he specialized professionally in vintage photographica. His illustrations have appeared in numerous publications, in the U.S. and abroad, and are recently on covers of *AADUNA*, *Naugatuck River Review*, *Blue Five Notebook*. His image portfolios have been featured in *Cahoonahoodaling*, *Blue Five*, *Superstition*, *AADUNA*, *Serving House Journal*, *The Adirondack Review*, *Cold Mountain*, *Cirque* and *Porridge*. His poetry, fiction and critical reviews have been published in *The North American Review*, *Northwest Review*, *Shenandoah*, *Quarterly West*, *Willow Springs*, *ACM*, *Cutbank*, *Fine Madness*, *Kansas Quarterly*, *Cimarron*, *Yellow Silk*, *Poets On* and many others.

Christopher Paul Brown is known for his exploration of the unconscious through improvisation and the cultivation of serendipity via alchemy. His first photography sale was to the collection of the Standard Oil Company of Indiana and his video *You Define Single File* was nominated for the Golden Gate Award at the 47th San Francisco International Film Festival. He was born in Dubuque, Iowa, earned a BA in Film from Columbia College Chicago and now resides in Asheville, North Carolina.

Jennifer Campbell is an English professor in Buffalo, NY, and a co-editor of *Earth's Daughters*. She has two full-length poetry collections, *Supposed to Love* and *Driving Straight Through*, and was a finalist in both the 2017 *Fairy Tale Review Poetry Contest* and the 2014 *River Styx International Poetry Contest*. Several of her poems appear in journals such as *Pinyon Review*, *Little Patuxent Review*, *The Healing Muse*, *Sow's Ear*, *Comstock Review*, *Pennsylvania English*, *Saranac Review*, *Oyez Review*, and *Fugue*, and her work is forthcoming in both the *AROH Waves Anthology* and *The Sixty Four Best Poets of 2019*.

Melissa Cannon lives and works in Nashville. She has had careers in academia and in fast food. Her poems have appeared in many small-press journals and anthologies, including *Able Muse*, *Bitter Oleander*, *Kenyon Review*, *Ploughshares*, *Sinister Wisdom* and *Slant*. She works in traditional and experimental forms and writes on all themes and subjects, leaving the door the creative imagination wide-open.

Janine Certo is a poet and visual artist whose work appears in *The Greensboro Review*,

Mid-American Review, *New Ohio Review*, *Nimrod*, *Crab Orchard Review*, and *Quiddity*, among others. Her debut poetry collection *In the Corner of the Living* was first-runner up for the 2017 *Main Street Rag* Poetry Book Award. She is an associate professor at Michigan State University where she teaches arts-based research and creative writing courses. She lives in East Lansing, Michigan.

Manit Chaotragoongit's work presents images that are free from the principles of photography and correct method. Chaotragoongit creates by feeling and is inspired by of haziness of eyes when just waking up, when sleepy and ones brain and sense is under somnolent. Chaotragoongit stays on the thin line between wakeness and sleep, real world and dream land, and wishes to present this feeling through photographs.

Brian Coughlan lives in Galway City, Ireland. His first collection of short stories *Wattle & Daub* was published by Etruscan Press in 2018. He has published work with *Toasted Cheese*; *Litro NY*; *Storgy*; *Write Out Publishing*; *The Galway Review*; *Bohemyth*; *The Legendary*; *Litbreak Magazine*; *Thrice Publishing Anthology*; *Unthology 10*; *Lunaris Review*; *Fictive Dream*; *The Exceptional Writer*; *The Ham Free Press*; *ChangeSeven Magazine*; *Bitterzoet Magazine*; *Crack the Spine*; and *Sentinel Literary Quarterly*.

Kyle Cromer was born in the Appalachian mountains of Virginia, the son and grandson of large animal veterinarians. He currently lives in Palo Alto and works as an instructor in the department of Pediatrics at Stanford. Because he can't play a musical instrument or paint worth a darn, he tries to create through his science and his collages.

Emily Davis is a photographer working on The Nature and Psyche Project which is about the inherent and ongoing dialogue between humans and the Earth. Her pictures are of water landscapes and are entirely organic. They are elemental, wild, diverse, deep, knowable and intrinsically of themselves, and of a dream, they are present and speak deeply of something we cannot entirely know but felt.

Uday Dhar is an artist of South Asian descent who has lived in the United States since 1971. He was born In London, England, and spent his early childhood in Patna, India. He has lived in New York City since '71, except for 4 years he spent in Berlin, Germany. He is an out and proud gay man who got married last year to his partner of 28 years, who grew up in the former GDR. They met in Berlin just after the wall came down. These experiences are the basis of his art practice and refer to the possibilities of a lived life. A life that opens up as it reflects on the nature of desire and curiosity about the Other.

Daryl Farmer is the author of two books: *Bicycling beyond the Divide*, a nonfiction narrative that chronicles a bicycle ride across the US West, and *Where We Land*, a collection of short fiction. He is also a graduate of the Rocky Mountain School of Photography. His recent work has appeared in a variety of literary journals including *Ploughshares*, *After the Art*, and *1966*. He lives in Fairbanks, Alaska.

Melanie Green grew up in the Pacific Northwest and lives in Portland, Oregon. She is the author of three poetry collections: *A Long, Wide Stretch of Calm*; *Continuing Bridge*; and *Determining Sky*. Her poetry explores themes of living with chronic illness, inspiration and solace through the beauty of nature, and an interest in the numinous.

Reyila Hadeer is an artist-scholar committed to expanding human creativity in (re)creating one's past and future. Currently, she is a Ph.D. student in the College of Education. Her research interests include de/colonizing epistemologies, contemplative pedagogies, and visual inquiry.

In a past century **Heikki Huotari** attended a one-room school and spent summers on a forest-fire lookout tower. He's a retired math professor and has published poems in numerous literary journals, including *Crazyhorse*, *Pleiades*, and the *American Journal of Poetry*, and in three collections. A fourth collection is in press.

Alexander Jones has short fiction and poetry appearing in *Akashic Books*, *Bastion Magazine*, *Crack the Spine* and *DASH*, among other publications. His nonfiction was recently anthologized by 2Leaf Press; multiple short stories he's written have received honorable mentions in *Writer's Digest's* Annual contests and an essay he wrote won *GoRail's* 2012 contest. He has a BA in English/ Creative Writing and is currently pursuing a second BA in History. He works as a metal fabricator and lives with his family in New Jersey.

Jessica Kinnison's work has appeared in *Columbia Journal*, *Phoebe*, and *The Southern Humanities Review*, among other publications. A 2018 Kenyon Review Peter Taylor Fellow, she was listed in the top eight New Orleans Poets to Watch in April 2020 by POETS & WRITERS. A Mississippi native, she is co-founder of the New Orleans Writers Workshop and host of the Dogfish Reading Series in New Orleans.

Twice nominated for Pushcart and Best of the Net awards, **J.I. Kleinberg** is an artist, poet, and freelance writer. Her poems have been published in print and online journals worldwide. She lives in Bellingham, Washington, USA, where she tears words out of magazines and posts occasionally on Instagram @jikleinberg.

River Kozhar is the nom-de-plume of an author with prose and poetry published in 45+ literary magazines. Her non-fiction grapples with themes of disability, poverty, ferality, trauma, and oppression. *Born In Dreams* was inspired by the positive aspects of her cPTSD and dissociations, exploring how these can become a key part of one's identity and one's strength in addition to being scars from trauma. She is a young (disabled) retiree and a social justice advocate, and she lives in Kingston, Ontario, Canada. Website: <http://riverkozharauthor.wordpress.com/>

Carla Lobmier received BFA degrees (Painting/Art History) from Eastern Illinois University and her MFA (Painting/Drawing) from University of Illinois. In 1999, she was awarded an APEX ART residency and moved to NYC. She lives and works in Jackson Heights, Queens. Solo exhibitions include *Love Letter (to Light)*, Memphis, TN, *Dirt, rock and far views*, Langston Hughes Center, NYC, *Not so fast*, Resobox Gallery, NYC, and site-specific installations, *Scrolling Confluence* and *Supernova*, Mid-Manhattan Library, NYC. Ragged Sky Press published, *Grace In Dwelling*, on the occasion of this piece at the Queens Museum. Her 2018 art/movement project, *Shaping the Container*, was supported by a grant from the Queens Council for the Arts.

Tom Montag's books of poetry include: *Middle Ground*; *The Big Book of Ben Zen*; *In This Place: Selected Poems 1982-2013*; and *Seventy at Seventy*. He blogs at The Middlewesterner. With David Graham he recently co-edited *Local News: Poetry About Small Towns*.

Kunwar Narain(1927–2017), considered an iconic figure in Indian literature, has written in diverse genres—including three epic poems regarded as classics of Hindi literature; poems across eight collections; translations of world poets such as Mallarmé, Borges, Herbert, Różewicz and Cavafy; short stories, literary criticism, essays, fragments, and writings on world cinema and the arts. His work has also appeared in various journals of Hindi, English and other languages over the years. Translated into about 35 languages so far, his many honours include the highest accolade of India's Academy of Letters; India's civilian honour 'Padma Bhushan', Warsaw University's honorary medal; Italy's 'Premio Feronia' for distinguished world author, and India's highest literary prize, the 'Jnanpith'. A reclusive writer, he is still largely unknown in the west and some of his works remain unpublished.

Apurva Narainis is Kunwar Narain's son and translator. His books include a collection of translated poetry, *No Other World*, and a co-translated story collection, *The Play of Dolls*. Another collection of translated poetry, *Witnesses of Remembrance*, is due soon. His work has appeared in numerous literary journals, such as *Asymptote*, *Modern Poetry in Translation*, *Poetry*

International, Asia Literary Review, Scroll, Indian Literature, Columbia Journal, etc. Educated in India and at the University of Cambridge, he has professional interests in ecology, public health and ethics; and writes in English.

Charlotte O'Brien is a queer writer from England, Australia, and the San Francisco Bay Area who lives in Oakland. She graduated from Pacific University's MFA program in 2013 with a concentration in poetry and nonfiction and has essays and interviews most recently published in *The Rumpus*, *Mutha Magazine*, and *The Manifest-Station*. Her poetry recently appeared in *Epiphany*, *Reed Magazine* and *Poets Reading the News*. When she's not writing, Charlotte can be found thinking through design problems, making art and selling vintage glassware.

C. Hiatt O'Connor has received multiple honors for his poems, including: the Belle M. Hill Creative Poetry Award and the Libbie Keaton LaPrade Award from the University of Lynchburg, and the Miriam T. & Jude M. Pfister Prize from the University of Lynchburg and the Academy of American Poets. He is published in *The PRISM*, *The Allegheny Review*, *Tiny Seed Literary Journal*, and on the *Academy of American Poets* website. He resides in Maryland.

Delaney R. Whitebird Olmo (Kashia Pomo, Yurok) is a writer living in Fresno, CA. She attends the MFA Program at Fresno State. She was the recipient of the Mireyda Barraza Prizes for Social Justice Writing and was an Honorable Mention for the Ernesto Trejo Poetry Prize. She currently serves as a Poetry Reader for The Normal School. Her work is forthcoming to *Foothill Poetry Journal*.

Life for **Misael Osorio** started at seventeen, he knows this sounds absurd but begs the reader to consider how crossing the Sonoran-desert at the dead of night could be a sort of re-birth. In his previous life, besides having evaded death at least once, accidentally, he also evaded construction as a way to earn his living. Too late he recognizes though, that this too could be an art form. Crosser of deserts, free citizen of shadowland and dreamer of a world without labels and numbers to put in them.

Timothy Phillips was born on a bitterly cold day in January 1963 in the hills of Northern Pennsylvania an old coal town. He stands as a self-taught primitive/ naïve artist. He has been recently featured in several Art Magazines like *A5 Art Magazine*, *The Open Arts Forum*, *The High Shelf Press*, *ArtDex Art Magazine*, *Castabout Art & Literature*, and Strawlitter Productions featured him in a two page spread in their reference book *Quotes* which will be in the London Library forever as a reference book.

Rebecca Pyle artwork is on covers of *Raven Chronicles Journal*, *The Underwater American Songbook*, *Oxford Magazine*, *JuxtaProse*, and forthcoming covers of *Castabout*. She's a writer, too, lately in issues of *National Poetry Review*, *Belletrist*, *Muse/A Journal*, *Die Leere Mitte*, and *Cobalt Review*. (See rebeccapyleartist.com.) She was named for the British masterpieces *Rebecca*, the film and the novel; and she has lived for a decade or two not very far from The Great Salt Lake.

Dustin Charles Radke is a poet from St. Louis, Missouri. They can be found on Instagram @radkedc.

Jess Richards is a published novelist and visual artist. Her hybrid artworks incorporate creative writing and visual art. She works with recycled books, book pages, paper and old fabric. The text on these objects incorporates Jess's short fiction, dreams and memories, retold fairy tales and fragments of surreal and dreamlike poetic prose. Instagram also contains many examples of her visual art works: @jessrichardswriter Her novels are *Snake Ropes*, *Cooking with Bones* and *City of Circles*, published by Sceptre, UK

Meganne Rosen teaches in the Art and Design Department at Missouri State University and in the Department of Arts and Humanities at Ozarks Technical Community College. She has had solo exhibitions and has been included in several group exhibitions in California, Missouri, New York, and Oregon. She was an artist in residence in at both LACAWAC and Byrdcliffe. She was featured in volume twelve of the print edition of *Create! Magazine* and in an interview on their website. She was also featured in volume 42 of *Studio Visit Magazine*.

David S. Rubenstein is an American writer, photographer, poet, and painter. His short stories have appeared in *Crack the Spine*, *Still Point Arts Quarterly*, *Blood and Thunder*, *Yellow Medicine Review*, *Chrysalis Reader*, *The MacGuffin*, and others, and have been nominated twice for the Pushcart prize. His photographs appear in *Writing Disorder* where he was featured artist, *Brushfire Literature and Arts Review*, *The Penn Review*, *The Dallas Review*, *Sheepshead Review*, *Cargo Literary*, *Chrysalis Reader*, *Midwest Gothic*, *Blue Mesa Review*, *Drunk Monkeys*, *From Sac*, *Fishfood*, and others.

Roberto Sabas is an emerging author who has written fiction and poetry, following in the footsteps of his well-read father (who also wrote poetry, unpublished). His publications include short fiction and poems in anthologies by Devil's Party Press, the *News-Gazette*, *The Alchemist Review (UIS)*, *Champaign Urbana Poetry Group*, *Weird Tales*, and Pygmalion Fest 2020 (streamed video reading).

Sara K. Sage is a sixteen-time published poet, author of her own book, academic enthusiast, and lover of alternative culture. She embraces internal healing via communal storytelling. She believes in the freedom of composition in literature and all art forms, bending the norms of English language.

Jennifer Lynn Sanders received her B.A. in English from St. Olaf College in Northfield, Minnesota. Her chapbook, *The Body in Foreclosure*, was selected for the college's Paulson Poetry Award. Her poems have been published in *The Comstock Review*, *Cold Creek Review*, and *The Ekphrastic Review*.

Angela V. Scardigno graduated as a Graphic Designer from the University of Buenos Aires, Argentina, in 2006, and in 2019 she completed a Master of Fine Arts degree at the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley. Scardigno currently lives and works in McAllen, Texas.

Christy Sheffield Sanford lives in St. Augustine, Florida near the Atlantic Ocean. She has won a National Endowment for the Arts Fellowship in Poetry. Sanford's animations have been published by *Amp*, *Atticus Review*, and *Carbon Culture Review*. Her visual art is forthcoming in *Aji* and a web-specific essay *The Roots of Nonlinearity* is slated for the next issue of *The Digital Review*.

Duncan Slagle is a Queer poet studying English and Ancient Greek at the University of Wisconsin-Madison as a First Wave scholar. Duncan has won poetry prizes from the *Crab Creek Review*, *Mikrokosmos Journal*, and *Epiphany Magazine*. Duncan's work can be found in *BOAAT*, *Vinyl*, *Foglifter*, and *The Adroit Journal*, among other publications. Duncan has more work online at duncanslagle.com.

Sherry Stuart-Berman's poems have appeared in *Paterson Literary Review*, *Guesthouse*, *2 Horatio*, *The Night Heron Barks*, *Atticus Review*, *Rise Up Review* and elsewhere; and in the anthologies, *Malala: Poems for Malala Youwafzai* and *Drawn to Marvel: Poems from the Comic Books*. She is a psychotherapist in private practice and lives in Staten Island, NY, with her husband and son.

Teresa Sutton's fourth chapbook, *Ruby Slippers for Gretel*, (under different titles) was a top 50 finalist in the Wingless Dreamer 2019 Chapbook Competition and a semi-finalist in both the 2018 Concrete Wolf Chapbook Award and the 2018 Quill's Edge Press Chapbook

Competition. Her third chapbook, *Breaking Newton's Laws*, won 1st place in the Encircle Publication 2017 Chapbook Competition; One of the poems in the collection, *Dementia*, was nominated for a Pushcart Prize. The final poem of the book, *Confiteor 2*, was honored with second prize in the 2018 Luminaire Award for Best Poetry.

Robin Walter lives in Fort Collins, Colorado where she is an MFA candidate in poetry at Colorado State University. She is a teacher, horse-packer, and hybrid artist.

Jean Wolff has had group and solo exhibits in various galleries in New York City and internationally and in addition, she has published 106 works in 68 issues of 47 different magazines. Born in Detroit, Michigan, she studied fine arts at the Center for Creative Studies in Detroit and at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor, receiving a BFA in studio arts. She then attended Hunter College, CUNY in New York, graduating with an MFA in painting and printmaking.

Aaron Zaremsky is a photographer who noticed the surface of a river in Ohio is seemingly “chopped up” by a torrential rainfall, creating an intense visual spectacle.

K. Zen'obia is a recipient of a New York Foundation for the Arts Fellowship in Poetry. She's also a Hedgebrook and Edward Albee Fellow, a recipient of Archie & Bertha Walker Poetry Fellowship at the Fine Arts Work Center Provincetown. Recent work was published by *storySouth*, and more work is included or forthcoming in *TriQuarterly*, *Rumpus*, *Cincinnati Review*, *Bayou*, *Pleiades*, and *Prairie Schooner* among others.

