editor
Wayne Berninger

editorial advisors
Melissa Berninger
Alexa Carter-Rodriguez
Barbara Henning
Mary Kennan Herbert
Jake Matkov
Michael Sohn
Lewis Warsh

cover artist
Lewis Warsh

La Disparition #2, 2009, 16” x 20”, collage on poster board

Downtown Brooklyn: A Journal of Writing is published by the English Department at LIU Brooklyn. We thank Gale Stevens Haynes (LIU Vice-President of Operations) & Dean David Cohen of the Richard L. Conolly College of Liberal Arts and Sciences for their encouragement and steadfast support over the years. Issues 1-22 of the magazine are available in the Periodicals Collection of the LIU Brooklyn Library and in the Little Magazine Collection of Memorial Library at the University of Wisconsin, Madison. Issue 23 and this issue are available only online. Please visit http://thelongestisland.blogspot.com.

LIU encourages freedom of expression. The views expressed herein are those of the authors and not of the editor, the English Department, or LIU.

number twenty-four  /  ISSN 1536-8475

All rights revert to authors upon publication.
from the editor

It is with no small amount of sadness that I announce that this will very likely be the final issue of Downtown Brooklyn. When I took over as Editor in 1998-99 (issue 8), our annual print run was 2000 copies. Since then, a series of budget cuts at LIU has forced us to reduce our print run, first to 1000 copies in 2009, then to 500 copies in 2013, and then to zero copies in 2014, when we produced our first online-only issue. While I am grateful that we have been able to produce issue 24—another online-only issue—I regret to say that as of this writing, a way forward for the magazine is unclear. Until such time as our funding can be restored, I have no choice but to say that the magazine will be on indefinite hiatus.

I am happy to report that Downtown Brooklyn has received many compliments over the years, but such praise is not mine alone. It also belongs to a host of other people, without whose enthusiasm and dedication the magazine could not have survived as long as it has, and I want to take this opportunity to thank them for helping to make the magazine such a wonderful publication and one that has reflected so very well on the English Department and on LIU Brooklyn. With regard to those instances in which the magazine has fallen short of expectations and for all errors that have made their way into print (or pixilation), I take full responsibility.

The list of people I have to thank is very long (see the index in this issue). Please forgive me for not thanking everyone by name here.

I must begin with Barbara Henning & Rudy Baron, with whom I founded Downtown Brooklyn in 1992. Thank you for creating and entrusting us with the magazine. I hope you’re proud of what we’ve been able to achieve.

To the 81 people who have served (in some cases for many years) as editors, associate editors, assistant editors, copy editors, members of the editorial committee, and/or as my editorial advisors—some of you without ever publishing your own work in our pages—thank you for the generous donation of your time and for your untiring labor and expert advice.

Eleven of the abovementioned 81 were graduate assistants assigned to work with me at various times between 1998 and 2009, and they deserve special acknowledgement. Thank you for working so hard and for generally making my job easier. I am not so vain as to assume that you learned much from me, but I hope that look back with fondness on our work together.

Finally, to the 463 poets and prose writers, and to the 47 visual artists (illustrators, sculptors, painters, comics artists, and photographers) whose contributions have so enlivened our pages, thank you for trusting us with your work. You are the magazine’s heart, and I sincerely thank you from the bottom of mine.
downtown brooklyn
a journal of writing

number twenty-four
2015

5  Tony Alterman
   Jibarosoy 54
8  Wayne Berninger
   Loodjie Louisca 55
9  Connor Bowen
   Harry McEwan 57
12 Bruce Chadwick
   Jim Murrell 60
17 Cynthia Maris Dantziec
   Steve Newton 70
18 Kathryn Duré
   Angela Nichols 76
20 Wendy Eng
   Howard Pflanzer 77
21ff Collages by Lewis Warsh
   Lithographs by Jennifer Rauch 80ff
22 Robert Feinstein
   Danielle Pryor 81
25 Sarah Francois
   P. J. Salber 82
31 Sarah Ghoshal
   Michael Sohn 87ff
36 Barbara Henning
   Mike Traber 88
40 Mary Kennan Herbert
   Lewis Warsh 91
45 Annie Herman
   Tejan Green Waszak 93
50 Casey Hutchison
   bio notes 94
52 Lindsay Infantino
   index 100
Tony Alterman

THE FRAME

—for Zion Nefesh

That Saturday night, 9:41
the projector jammed -
an anxious moment, as

we stared at the faces of the cast
awkwardly frozen mid-expression,
costume-draped, each filament and fold

tailored to the contours
of their paused off-balance bodies,
the set meticulously planned

not a cellophane wrapper timelessly
idling midair in the frame,
the light adjusted, filtered -

though a shadow, just visible
in that 24th of a second
was a remnant of the actress

who had exited the scene
too quickly to be present
at the cinema this evening

when the film stopped
and the silent soundtrack rolled
while we held our breath, briefly.
AT THE ROTUNDA

Here they come again
one after two,
two before three
round the track
again and again
the rush of air
the sweat, the challenge -
not to die. One
with thumb and index
finger splayed, she
paws like a bull
grimaces, lighter though
than hummingbird wings.

Here they come again
galloping, teeth
bared. One alone.
This one with baton,
poking the autumn
air, hair in a bun,
she looks good in sweats
I think – then two together
one behind, focused on
pushing air aside.

A child's balloon
gets away and rises
over the green, string
attached, like a blue sperm
whale surfacing
purposive, one from many.
I take a breath,
deliberate – coffee, death –
get up and stroll
across the rotunda
narrowly missing
panting, racing
two and three and one.
Wayne Berninger

A GUIDE TO INTERESTING VACATIONS

A man walks through a park, one with trees and a bridge that connects a piece of land with itself. As he diverts from a paved path, the man encounters a squirrel speaking French in a cumbersome Russian accent.

_How on earth_, the man thinks, _has a squirrel found such time to travel?_ The man approaches as the squirrel marches around the trunk of a tree, describing the physical properties of a nut.

“Bon jour. Excusez-moi,” the man says.
“Est-ce que vous parlez anglais?” says the squirrel.
“My French is no good. English better.”
“Sorry to interrupt your practice, but I am curious: Where are you from originally?”
“Kazakhstan.”
“Russian is your native language, then?”
“Kazakh my first, but I speak the Russian too, yes.” Squinting, the squirrel delicately shakes the nut and listens for its contents.
“Four languages!” the man says. “You speak four languages?”
“Just the three, really. I am novice with the French.”
“Why teach yourself French?”
“I want to have the stronger grasp of French Existentialism,” the squirrel says as its eyes track a veiny leaf swaying on the air. “I read the Sartre and the Camus and the Cioran in English and Russian, but I feel I missing something in the translation.”

The man scratches a rash on his belly, a reaction caused by the buckle of his belt.

“You know with Sartre,” the squirrel proceeds, _No Exit – hell is the company of others? I do not understand. I like company; I like others. I like you and we have only just met._

“Thanks.”
“Maybe I just an ENFP!” The squirrel laughs. The squirrel converts the nut to a chair, brushes off its paws. “And Camus,” the squirrel continues. “The guy says I want to live forever and I want everyone I know to live forever, but I will necessarily die and everyone I know will necessarily die, and that makes life absurd. I get it, but what am I to do with this knowledge? Pursue a joy like collecting nuts? How is that any different from the fate of Sisyphus, pushing the same boulder up the same hill? Yeah, some nuts are better than others, but how does today’s nut truly differ from yesterday’s? Or last week’s?”

I like pecans, the man thinks. Pecans and cashews.

“And Emil Cioran, with all his metaphysical alienation and somber reflections on suicide, he can make a cloudless day quite gloomy, no? I mean his first work is titled, On The Heights Of Despair. But he has a point. If my life is ‘simply an accident,’ why should I take it so seriously? Then again, how do I take seriously a man who openly called himself a Hitlerist and supported the Night of Long Knives? I have a lot of Jewish friends, not to mention gypsies and gays. But that raises a whole other issue of judging a text versus the person who authored it.” The squirrel hacks up some phlegm and pats its chest. “Is like with Woody Allen. I love the guy’s films. Hannah And Her Sisters, it change my life. Is he good role model? Even if he did not strictly speaking break the law, the guy married his step-daughter. No one’s perfect. Forgive the digression. Don’t get me started on Polanski.”

Across the park, a hound whines. The squirrel secures the nut and casually scuttles three feet up the nearest tree trunk.

“In summation, I am intrigued, but left in want. I think if I learn the French and perform a detailed close reading in these texts’s original language, I will gain a better understanding of the themes and ideas behind French Existentialism, as well as a grasp on my days. As the Russian squirrel saying goes, ‘Tchaikovsky could not crack this nut!’ But you have to keep chipping at it and hope you’re not in pursuit of an empty shell.”

The squirrel returns to its practice, articulating the curvatures of the nut, as the man wanders back to the paved path.
The man crosses the bridge. *Where do I go on days like today?* he wonders. The man kicks a divot into the grass underneath the bridge, and then crosses back over to the other side. *So this is where I go.*
Bruce Chadwick

THE PRISONER OF SECONDARY SCHOOL ENGLISH EDUCATION

She goes about her business helping her students dig into the oft-ploughed fields of literary language, looking for the fossilized remains of the ages, lying underneath bare ruined choirs, hiding their stories under layers of volcanic ash, a veritable valley of ashes, a vast sepulcher: What’s hidden beneath? Can anyone dare to guess? To eat a peach?

She points and harangues at these innocently ignorant armies clashing by day, hoping to discover wing’d seeds that lie cold and low beneath a dark sycamore in the forests of the night hiding under dead, brown leaves......

What had she imagined before she ventured out into this bizarre Byzantium, looking up at the moon-filled night, wrestling with an energy all tensed up and raring to go? Dazzling visions they were, a Second Coming, out of a dream twice deferred, in front of her then, like a planet on her table. She remembers her Old French Masters, those monuments of unaging intellect, whose books she read. They seemed to know what she needed to learn: Readers “create and disclose at the same time, disclose by creating and create by disclosing”; and, “For the book is no longer a material reality. It has become a series of words, of images, of ideas which in their turn begin to exist.” Where do they exist?
“There is only one place left for this new existence: my innermost self.” The text, c’est moi? We cannot not think “except in the language that we have inherited” and, therefore, when we read, we encounter ourselves, that is, language: We “cannot legitimately transgress the text toward something other than it, towards a referent … or toward a signified outside the text whose content … could have taken place outside of language.” No hidden true meaning, lurking beneath the words, outside the text? “To read is to find meanings, and to find meanings is to name them; but these named meanings are swept away towards further names; names invoke each other, come together, and their conglomeration calls out to be named anew; I name, unname, I rename: thus passes the text.” Et voila: “There is nothing outside the text.” She has a plan:

Now among school children, she thinks: we will bathe in language, be enveloped in a glorious profusion of images: golden daffodils, cloudless climes and starry skies. We will discover ourselves. Such divine madness. We’ll sing, we’ll dance to the runes and rhymes of early times; I’ll quote from Wordsworth’s *Ode* - syrupy sweet song to nature, longing and reflective: the sheer beauty of his language embedding itself into their innermost selves. What will they say? How will they respond? We’ll begin a great journey into textual adventures, *a cappella*.

What really happened: The dawn crept in on little cat feet, A slow awakening to the grim structure of another ode, of desert places; empty plots, in barren settings; annotated apparatus gone mad, the slings and arrows of bulleted memos, falling softly but swiftly into chambered mailboxes like petals
gently descending from a wet, black bough. 
A funeral in her brain. Unreal city of cubbyholes and airless 
rooms, of chairs and erasers. Empty half-pint milk cartons. 
Empires of ice-cream popsicle sticks. This rage for order, 
repeating [deja vu] the plain sense of things, 
vapid mimetic meanderings, dull scrapbooks of plans. 
Pock-marked answer sheets, a grim array of undergarments. 

Is this all there is? She must dutifully direct the choir, 
A cipher for dreaded hymns, spoken but not sung, 
chosen, but not understood. Already, she is disillusioned and 
it is only ten o’clock. Her students will not know the grandeur of 
those angels hijacked for this desultory task of pathetic parsing, 
in these drafty dungeons with sterile seats from dead trees. 
Never know how they sat up night after night, 
peeling away the husk, releasing the vapors, 
revealing the heart, as Mary H. wrote, one poet 
who knows what lies beneath without that parsing. 

And the students? They endured. 
As for her? Nevermore.
SERENDIPITY IN THE MEDICARE OFFICE

I sat on a metal folding chair waiting to be called. You sat behind me, talking on your phone. I was vaguely annoyed.

Just then nature called. What to do? Didn’t want to lose my place. I wrote my name on a slip of paper, turned around, and asked if you could knock on the bathroom door if my name is called.

When I returned, a vague “thank you.” Then something went “click,” a switch turned on. Your face came into view. I turned around again. Conversation.

Next thing, we’re walking. And talking. In Starbucks. Three hours of just about everything and more.

Me: mid-sixties; you: mid-forties, telling me things that I felt as though I already knew, an old friend. Life is complicated.

Meeting for dinner sometime later. The night was warm, dusky. You: Walking up Fifth Avenue, smiling, your cell-phone aglow as you shut it off, and then…

Sitting down, we stared at each other. The glow of candles frame your face, your eyes straight and clear, mine jumping out of my head. Your eyes. Lips. Your scent. My God.

*****

Food and wine in a chic restaurant. A “golden moment.” The most beautiful woman in the world right before my eyes asking me in. A promise so sweet.
We met again. Continued talking, in words that began to veer away from their positions, an asteroid splitting apart in the galaxy. Two minds, two hearts, two sets of baggage. *Differance.*

The heart jumps at what the eyes can see.
Cynthia Maris Dantzic

**DOWNTOWN OH, BOY!**  
(Apologies to *Downton Abbey*)

I’d like to write right  
On paper, not on glass, but  
Calligraphically.

After all these years  
I can’t keep you on my shelf!  
End of an era?

Read this on your screen  
Then print it out on paper.  
Any difference?

If you don’t print out  
These poems that you’re reading,  
They’ll vanish in air.

But don’t let them go.  
Another way to keep them  
Is to memorize.

Let’s budge the budget.  
My poetic petition:  
Pay for our paper!
Our failures define us.
Never will others proclaim
   We are significant.
That is wrong, the reality is,
Our failures are unacceptable.
   Thinking that
   I am special
Is inconsequential
And I know living only for success
   is the way to go.
Being hard working, motivated, and determined
   Is a ridiculous inclination to have.
   Forgetting about those days
   Will not be easy, but I will try.
Accepting everything happens for a reason
   Is something unknown to me.
   Giving up
   Was how I handled my shortcomings.
   Determination
   Was a farce.
   I knew that
Others thought I would never overcome.
   That might be so,
   Unless I look at the glass half full.

(Read from the bottom to the top now)
#inecantbreathe

Force me to *breathe* begged the weeping child
whose lungs are no longer filled with water
gone

from the comforts of its mother womb

Witness the bright lights of the here and now.

Let me *breathe* begged the weeping man
Pleading with his eyes

for his lungs

though not filled with water

found themselves
clogged

by the
restraints

of

injustice

Rights of Passage

....restricted,
dimmed,
closed off.

THIS is what you left the comforts of your mother's womb for,

Complacency has outlived its usefulness.
It is unsustainable.
It is unacceptable.

Welcome to the reality of the here and now.

Are you ready?
FOUND POEM: PRODUCTIVE GROWTH

Four seasons pyramid preservation,
With a retractable sun roof,
Cross-pollinating apple trees promenade
Spruces trafficked routes, ideas fueled

Avant-garde, nouveau educators,
Cantilevers, bridge
Hamlets of neo-futuristic students, burgeoning
Works infused with indefatigable patience

Fêted by collective, quintessential,
Amplified unprecedented splendor
At Valle de la Concepcion altitudes
Productive growth.

I made my first collages in 1996. They were image-based, like most collages, cut-outs from magazines. I did a series of 24 4x6 collages on poster boards. I always wanted to do collages and artist books so I decided to do it. I then realized I could make color xeroxes of all the small collages and create a series of books. For the first group of 24 I created an edition of 4. I made 4 copies of each collage and pasted them in books, which I bought in art supply stores.

I continued doing image-based collages until 2006 when I started using letters. I cut letters from magazines—white letters on black backgrounds, black letters on white backgrounds, and letters of various colors. I covered poster boards—8x10, 11x14, 16x20—with letters. I became aware of the shapes of letters, and then the sizes of the letters I was cutting out, but most of my decisions (where to put the letters) were intuitive and in the moment. I didn't attempt to spell any words with the letters, not at first. I became involved in clustering letters—a lot of A's, for instance, in one corner. Often the letters overlapped one another, but not by much. I began to see that variations were possible.

I did one collage just using the letter "E"—both capital and lower case, a kind of homage to Georges Perec who wrote a novel, La Disparition, without the letter "e". In another series of collages, I spelled out the words "Hysteria" "Obsession" and "Paranoia." The possibilities were endless. I did a series of SOS collages. I did about 5 very large letter-collages, 30x40 inches.

Then I realized I could do image-based collages and cover them (partially) with letters, so that the image showed through as well. I've been doing these for the last few years. I like doing collages in series, so if I do one in a particular style I often do several in the same style. I listen to music when I do all this so it's all pleasure and a relief from the writing/reading mind that I'm using the rest of the time.

- One Track Mind, 2011, 16x20, collage on poster board
- The Head & The Heart, 2011, 8x10, collage on poster board
- Show of Hands, 2002, 8x10, collage and water colors on poster board
- This Means You, 2012, 16x20, collage on poster board
Robert Feinstein

“INNOCENT...I’M INNOCENT!”

The recurring nightmares started shortly after I moved into Linda’s room. She had gotten married and moved to Queens with her new husband. I had always wanted that room. It was bigger and more airy than mine and its windows faced a pleasant backyard, rather than the alleyway I was used to seeing.

They always began with me slowly walking through a long gas lit, brick-walled corridor. At the end was a thick wooden door which had a small, barred opening near its top. As I grew near to it, the door would open on its own, as if to personally beckon me into the misery that it enclosed. There was the sound of a heavily clanging hammer, which grew louder as I walked. What I saw beyond that door was a large room, also lit by gas lamps, which contained several barred casements. However, the focus of my vision was less the room, but rather the bent back of a figure who was busily making shoes.

I was afraid of that shoemaker, but always found myself approaching closer to him. And as I grew nearer, he apparently sensed my presence, turned around and stared at me. His was a most unpleasant countenance: pale and gaunt, with a long, cavernous beard and just a few strands of blanched hair, growing from above what must have been the saddest face I had ever seen.

For a few moments, we would just look at each other. Nothing was said. Then he would quietly, but with a hint of rage say: “Innocent...I’m innocent!” After that, he would return to his hammering and I would wake up.

I was well aware that time was passing, during the many nights I had these encounters. Sometimes the pile at the old man’s feet would consist of only four or five shoes, and at others, there would be more than a dozen. I could feel temperature changes too. There were nightmares in which that workshop was frigid, and others when the heat was so oppressive I would be
heavily sweating. Sometimes I was neither hot nor cold. On those occasions, I would discern, despite the clamoring of his sledge, the faint chirping of birds in the distance.

Eventually, I hated even to go to sleep, for I had come to expect the nightmares. I was unable change that feeling, although I have always thought that expecting something can make it happen, and that can include death, itself. Despite that realization and resignation about what was transpiring within the confines of my now no longer new bedroom, I needed to at least try to end the nightmares. I was not sure if it would work, and if it failed I was prepared to move back into my old quarters.

I had become certain that there were magic words that the elderly convict wanted to hear…words that would exorcise him and give us both some peace. I tried to say them on several occasions, but the words stuck in my throat, and the nightmares continued. But there was this one time when I was able to blurt them out, loudly and quickly, just after hearing the now familiar: “Innocent…I’m innocent!” To that I replied: “I believe you. Yes, I believe that you are innocent!”

Hearing that, the old man’s demeanor changed for the first time. His doleful, angry face smoothed out and his lips slightly turned upward, in just the faintest hint of a smile. He had the look of intense gratitude. The eyes blinked several times, and a tear meandered down one of his cheeks, and then his eyes closed completely, while he nodded to me.

My hunch was right. The nightmares ended and I was never troubled by that sad, lonely spirit again. That was all he wanted from me. He just wanted someone to believe him and to verbally acknowledge his innocence.

I do not know why he was arrested in the first place, but it must have been for a terrible crime. But whatever it was, I am certain that an injustice had been done to him. I know that he really was innocent. And I think he must have eventually died in there.

---
End Note: I grew up at 1146 President Street, between Nostrand and Rogers Avenues, in the Crown Heights section of Brooklyn. My apartment house was built in 1929 on the site that once was the outer wall of the President Street Jail, sometimes known as the Kings County Penitentiary. Built in 1847, it held prisoners until 1905. The fortress-like complex, which extended down to Crown Street, was demolished in 1907. Also currently within the site are St. Ignatius Loyola Church and Medgar Evers College. It was a horrible, austere place and the diet of the convicts primarily consisted of bread, tea, and an occasional breakfast serving of corned beef hash. In 1887, after a particularly sadistic warden decided to eliminate the the corned beef, an infamous riot, which came to be known as “The Hash Uprising,” ensued. It was brutally suppressed, after three days. Routinely, some of the prisoners would be marched out, six days a week, under guard and in chains, to labor on local construction projects. Other prisoners…the physically weaker ones, were kept inside, where they made shoes and brooms. All of this is true Brooklyn history. But what of the nightmares? Did they actually occur, or did I write a work of fiction? I’ll leave that to my readers to decide.
The first pang feels like I have been hit in the stomach with a football. I know something is wrong. I know before the blood. I know before my husband’s eyes bore a hole into mine. I know before the doctor’s confirmation. I am working too hard for someone pregnant. I am supposed to take it easy. There’s no such thing as taking it easy when your quality of life depends on two incomes.

At the second pang, I head for the bathroom. I have to make my way upstairs and it’s painful. I crawl up the last four steps. I am scared. I just know something is wrong with the baby. I already know this baby will be a girl. I have bought pink dresses and painted the nursery with a fairy theme. There is something wrong with this baby. I can feel it.

This has happened before. The first time I felt cramps and pain, I went to hospital in an ambulance. The doctor told me that because of the illness I have, it was bound to be a difficult pregnancy. He told me that if I had any concerns at all, I could call. He told me to be careful. The doctor told me to take it easy and I have. I only work twice a week at Planned Parenthood now. I have made adjustments. I am getting paid less. This cannot be happening after all the changes I’ve made. This cannot be happening after all Patrick and I have been through to get here.

I think with a warm bath and closed legs maybe I can stop it from happening. No dice. When I get into the water, I feel it. Something pushing against my cervix wanting out of my goddamned body. It hurts. Before I lose consciousness, all I can think is Patrick is going to be mad. No, he is going to be furious.

When Patrick comes home an hour later, he finds me unconscious in a bathtub tinted with blood. There is no need for words. He pulls the bath plug and rinses me off. I regain consciousness. There are bits of things in the
water. They are red and sticky. He wraps them in plastic and tosses them in the bathroom trash bin.

He dresses me like I’m a child. “Monte bra’w. That’s it, Baby. Arms up.” Suddenly I am not cold anymore. I am enveloped in my favorite gray pullover. He is the best husband I’ve ever had. He is my only husband. “Kanpe. Easy, Easy. Step out. That’s it,” he says. My favorite navy blue sweats are now draped over my lower body. Yes. He is the best husband in the world.

Then I remember what all this is about and my limbs go weak. He catches me. “It’s okay. Kanpe. I need you to keep standing. We are going to the hospital. I need you to keep yourself together ’til we get down the stairs.” I nod and find my courage to climb down steps. I take my time. He is silent.

He takes me to the hospital. The doctor takes a sonogram even though I insist it’s not necessary. I know the baby is gone. I know it like I know the sky is blue and grass is green. I know it like E=mc². I know it like gravity is 9.8 m/s². I know it isn’t necessary. This idiot doctor wants to confirm. He tests. I am right. There is nothing there.

The doctor is insensitive. His hands are cold. The gel for the sonogram is absolutely arctic cold. The doctor doesn’t seem to care. All I keep thinking about are his cold hands. Until he says the worst possible thing there is to say at a time like this: “All the parts are working and can go again.”

He says it as if I’m an Easy-Bake Oven. He says it like I’m a ride at Six Flags. He says it like it’s no big deal. He says it like I didn’t just lose a life. As if I could think of such a thing at this moment. But I see Patrick’s grim smile with my peripheral vision. He is thinking it. I know he is.

I sleep in the baby’s room on the butterfly rug. I pile all the little clothes and shoes around me and I hold on to the bits wrapped in plastic while I stare up at the painted stars. I stay up late watching Tinkerbell dance across the ceiling and thinking about my empty uterus.

But when I finally fall asleep, I dream of my little girl, Marie. I dream she has curls. I dream of her in the pink satin number that rests on my belly. I dream that I am holding her in my arms. When I wake up, I am disappointed. Patrick has yet to say a word about me digging the pieces from
the trash. He doesn’t even try to pry me from the baby’s room. It’s beautiful in here. It is fairy-themed. I painted it green myself. The Tinkerbell nightlight is Patrick’s contribution. When I open my eyes, I begin crying again.

In the morning, Patrick comes in twice. Once to wordlessly offer me breakfast, which produces a shake of the head and another crying fit. The second is to kiss me goodbye. I am so convinced he is angry with me, I don’t want him to kiss me. He ends up forcing a kiss onto my forehead like my father used to do when I was a child. When he leaves, I kiss the plastic I fished from the bathroom trash.

I know I have to go to work myself. I know I have to move on from this. I know I can’t wallow in this forever. But, I can’t face the world today. I grab my cellphone from the inside of the bassinet.

“Hi! This is Planned Parenthood. How can I help you?”
“Hey, it’s Jeannette.”
“Hi, Jeannette. You are never late. What’s up?”
“I need the day.”
“I will let the manager on duty know.”
“Okay.”

I set out to do housework. Patrick complains a lot about the state of the house. Today, I am going to impress him with dinner and a clean house. I am going to prove to him I am a worthy wife. When I do the laundry, I wash the baby’s clothes as well. I put them away in the drawers. It is nearly impossible for me to throw away the bits. I toss them into the bathroom trash. I end up fishing them out again. I toss them in with the smelly fish and pork rinds in the kitchen trash. My gloved fingers still dig for them. When I take out the trash, the last thing to go is the baby bits. I mumble prayers from under my breath. I remember telling the doctor I just knew God had honored me with a girl. He maintains that it was too early to know for sure. I could feel my girl. I had a relationship with this thing growing inside me from its first moment. When I place the black bag on the corner I can feel renegade tears stain my cheeks. I am throwing away my baby. It isn’t much of a baby. However, I had felt the quieting of a life inside me. Yesterday, I sat
in a pool of blood. For all intents and purposes, it was a baby. It was my baby.

But I am done with this. Being sad is full-time work and quite frankly I don’t have time for it. I google “easy to cook dinner.” I choose the Food Network recipe for skillet rosemary chicken. While the oven preheats, I chop potatoes. The tedious task nearly wipes my mind of all bad memories. I don’t realize just how many potatoes I have cut until I get to six or seven. That is way too many potatoes for just me and Patrick. I take the chicken Patrick has already seasoned. I place both in the oven at the same time at 450 degrees. I am instantly sure that it is a bad idea. They probably would cook better separately but this isn’t exactly my thing; cooking.

Fifteen minutes later the smoke alarm goes off. I smell it. I am in the kitchen. I have set a timer. I did everything right. But the food burns and the baby died. I feel lost. I open the windows and the front door. I wish the smoke out. I sit at the marble counter and I think. I’m a failure. I suck at being a woman. I should’ve never been one. I can’t cook, or clean, or give birth. I’m useless. I uncork a bottle of Champagne. Cheers to myself…the awful woman. And for the first time my tears feel authentic. It isn’t about the burnt chicken.

**Patrick**

She was beside herself. I could tell she knew I was angry, and I was. The doctor had warned her several times. The doctor had prescribed bed rest. The doctor had said a lot of things forecasting this. She merely ignored him. Her maman would blame me for this. Her maman would say I should be able to control my woman. But Jeannette is so difícil. A traditional Haitian housewife she is not. There is no way I could’ve made her stay home and mind the doctor. If the case was attributed to my lack of manhood, I would blame it on her lack of traditional femininity. She had too much Amazonian, trop fanm su li.

Even the doctor was giving me stares of disapproval during her exam. Don’t they know? You cannot control a woman like Jeannette. She’s a butterfly. If you try to hold her too close, she will fly away. I love her just
that way. That crazy wild intuitive emotional mess—that was my Jeannette. Yes I love her exactly the way she is. Now how to deal with this mess? I had no idea. I couldn’t consult my traditional parents, for their solution would be to impregnate her again and lock her in the house. Of this I have no doubt. They don’t know that I love her as a butterfly. They don’t know that Jeannette can’t cook a lick and would prick her fingers if she had to sew a button on my pants for me. They know that when they visit there is food in the home. They know that the house is spotless. We do not discuss how it came to be this way, but they assume Jeannette is a bon fanm. As a good wife, she possesses the impeccable skills associated with housewifery. In my parents’ minds, she can cook, clean, sew, and mind children. Those are the skills one looks for in bon fanm. If they knew she was the opposite, they would’ve picketed the wedding.

When I came home, I smelt burnt chicken. I could smell it right away. It was mixed in with Febreze—a feeble attempt at covering up having burned dinner. I laughed.

“Jeannette?”

“Yes,” she replies.

“What did I tell you about cooking in this house?”

“You said…don’t,” she says.

Then she begins giggling. She laughs like she owes the laughing bank money. It’s been so long since she’s laughed so hard. Then the tears come like torrential rain.

“I’m an awful wife,” she says.

“Non, who told you that?” I ask.

“I did.”

“You don’t have the right to judge. You’re my fanm. Only I can judge.”

“So what does the judge have to say?” she asks.

She stares at me hard. This is the moment where I can make a choice that will change the course of our lives.

“Bon fanm. Toujours bonne ma femme. Always good.”
I am angry, but I swallow down the words I want to say. It would do no good to shovel blame onto her back. The situation is dangerous enough. My wife is sensitive.

In my head, I am shouting. How could you not stay home? Who made you a doctor? What made you think you knew better? In the present, I hold her head in my hands. I wipe her tears with my fingers. She is beautiful and she is mine. Ma fanm.

“So, what do you want to order in?”

“Thai?”

I shake my head. I have had enough of Thai.

“How about Haitian food?” she asks.

“You read my mind. I want duri ak poi kole.”

“You always order rice and beans. I bet there’s beans growing in your intestines.”

“Oh, yeah,” I say.

I begin to tickle her mercilessly. She laughs and laughs.

“I’ll show you beans,” I say.


Our relationship is like a writer and the page. Sometimes you can’t help but love the page and sometimes you can’t stand her. Sometimes you feel both at once but you write anyway because your love is worth it.
There’s a way things are done that makes me want to pull out my teeth to be different. If I stay here, I’ll surely follow the wisp of sameness around the corner and perch myself on its porch and drink bad wine on hot days in boat shoes.

I am just trying to find a way to morph but this world won’t let me because I have made connections, tied ropes, hitched anchors, slapped Velcro together in haste, taped corners, fused bodies in embraces we don’t dare question, made phone calls, many phone calls on the way.

And still she stands up there, close enough to see, put together, polished so I can see the way her hands shine, her mountain is easier to climb, her work comes to her in the night when she’s never too tired to fight, she follows me anytime I forget to do the wash.
WILLIAM

Can you drop the ribbon?
When you hold it so tight
like that, I’m sure we will
stop breathing.

It’s not your fault you have
his name and his weakness
and inability to move
beyond her pot

of Hungarian goulash,
her hair so bright
it can’t be real, her
expectations.

When you’re older,
you’ll marvel at how
you can’t take care
of your own children.

Your sister will escape
to Cali, start a family
that doesn’t live in
the shadows

behind the ugliest
wallpaper you know.
You’ll give in to it all,
lose yourself
to the drink, let
the kids think you’re on
vacation, languish,
yellow,
in a cheap hospital gown.
FIRST MEETING

Careful, practiced hands.
Girlish hands from
wrists of contraband and fluff.

   Enough.
I’m filling out the form.
Walking through the door.
Hogging all the spit shanked boar.

   You can pick up my dress tomorrow.

Come up the walk up.
Bring your navy hat, your sailor’s cap
Sicilian swagger and storm.

She was born in New York City in the 1920s
and she hung out at the cafeteria with the girls
on Tuesday afternoons. She asked,

Freddy, can I fix your button?
A GIFT FOR ME

I want to sit you on the couch and follow your thoughts like maps until they end up in front of me, at their final destination. I want to hug you. I want to crawl into your lap and be surrounded by the way you surround me. I want Friday nights five times a week. I want no-sleep and laughter and skin stuck on hot, leather seats. I want to pick you up and hold you above my head and let my poems rise out of my ears and into yours. I want to look through a telescope and see an alternate Earth where there is still a you and me and I can feel their wavelength too. I want to clap my hands to create newness. I want to ride the interstate with four legs and two wheels, grabbing on for the life that I always knew, just always knew, you would pop up in. I want tiny candles in large, dark rooms. I want to bake you a cake. I want us on top of a brick wall, looking down at the decisions we have made, cloaking success around us in bursts. I want to get so lost in the conversation I almost forget that I love you more than green grass, more than sated hunger, more than perfectly sealed envelopes and crisp apple juice. I want to tie a ribbon around you and bring you to me ten years ago, present you as a gift I could never live without, open you wide and dig in.
When I give an exam to my class
Vincent secretly copies pages
from Wikipedia right into his paper,
for something he could have
easily written himself. Revise it,
I say. Then I ride my bike from
Union Square to Thompson Street.
Windy with pollen everywhere.
Others swell up and sneeze,
but I cough. While large slow
moving storms send one swell
after another across the Midwest,
a group of tourists with suitcases
follow a guide leading them
into a bar for mojitos. If you don't
protect your intellectual invention,
if it's any good, it will be copied
almost immediately. The tourists
look at us on the sidewalk while
a political peacock with faded
plumage is still preening and
campaigning in North Carolina,
shuffling pointlessly through a zoo.
LIMITATIONS

Thanks to the statute of limitations Pereny, an art forger, continues to make meticulous re-creations of famous artists for far less. Meticulous and resourceful, some Egyptians claim the US plotted to install the Islamists’ presidential candidate. An NBA player is caught snoozing with an airline blanket pulled snugly around his neck. Eating lunch at the Hungry Toad, Someone says, Did I ever tell you the story about blanket-blank? Most of the conflict was because he was arrogant and a student-womanizer. I guess poets can be as mean-spirited, manipulative or even as sleepy as anyone else in academia or in the NBA for that matter, maybe more so.
ON THE BOTTOM RUNG

Logan slips on the bottom rung of the slide. He stands up and starts to cry. Looking at me, he frowns and says, "Gramma, I'm always falling down." Some say hitting bottom is a prelude to a rebound. Fossils of fleas were ten times bigger then and their mouths were sharp enough to feed on dinosaurs. Our mouths, teeth and tongues are orchestrated to enunciate the inner and the outer. Crouched down, Patti Smith is naked and clutching the top rung of a radiator while staring directly into Mapplethorpe's camera. The strange and sulky beauty of always. A reflection of gas flames from the fireplace, flickering on the window as the planet moves closer and closer to the end of its life span—this ravishingly beautiful earth
A DAY LIKE TODAY

My love wants to stop by and suddenly he's here. He misses me he says and he wants to try again. It’s as if we’ve been together without interruption. I want to believe him and even though the word of the day is forestall, the eggs in the Hawk nest are high up and a baby hawk is pecking its way to daylight. We hold each other quietly, then walk around a big flowering pear tree at the 8th Street entrance to the park, the bodies of the trees leaning this and that way, relaxing into darkness, just as we were minutes earlier in the dusk-dim light.
Mary Kennan Herbert

EDITORS AT LUNCH, BACK WHEN THEY MIGHT TALK ABOUT SUBMISSIONS TO A JOURNAL

Well, you think that old poet has anything left? Why not take her out once around the track to see if there’s anything left. You know that old saying about the old gray mare, she ain’t what she used to be. To the knacker, eh? Like Boxer’s fate.

Who was Boxer? The strong and spiritually pure draft horse in Orwell’s Animal Farm. Sounds like a Disney story. Well, could be, with an Orwellian truth, like in his shooting an elephant story. Getting close to the old poet’s fate, morning glory.

The next issue is going to be pretty skinny. We don’t have enough decent stuff from new writers. What we need are more poems about heavy metal. Music is always the solution to spiritual woes? Steady as she goes,

Let’s look seaward for a change. Seahorses, they’re kinda pretty. They’re not beyond the pale. Whatever that is. So did you try that old poet one more time around the track? Time her? What about a match race with Greyhound?

Wrong horse, wrong story. What we need is an idea readers in THIS century will want to read. They don’t have to read, they just have to watch, watch her move just one more time around the track and back. That’s poetry.
WILD PONIES

Yes, we have seen them at the edge of the sea, on Sable Island near Nova Scotia, and the Shetland Islands. Look again, on the Eastern Shore of Virginia: Assateague Island, Chincoteague, there they are again. Like our beach dreams surging forth again, free.

What do we want? A pony! The child’s dream surfaces, leaping free of the ocean’s foam, nostrils wide, ready for salt sprayed grasses, hearing the gulls’ demanding cries, braced for wet sands and ticks, and despite ticks, on shore the coat gleams once again, like me.

They are not tame. These ponies must be “broken,” before we ever ride them across the beach to buy a burrito, before we grow too old to ride a pony, before the young rider decides to chase a biped in a bikini. They are not tame. They remember freedom before you discarded it. Like me.
THE LIBRARIAN’S LIST OF FAVORITE MOVIES ABOUT HORSES

On slow afternoons when students are using the library for flirting and mating,
a librarian with straw-colored hair and long equine face remembers

summers with horses. Can you think of another coupling as congenial? Summers with
horses!
National Velvet kicked off Liz Taylor love. Horses leap

and haze complement a soundtrack of hoofbeats and worried whinnying. Then came The Great Dan Patch and, ultimately, Seabiscuit and War Horse.

Horse movies are all the same. They promise a happy ending. They deliver, the apple,
the sweet gallop across an endless meadow.
WHY DO PHOTOGRAPHS OF HORSES SPEAK TO ME WITH SUCH SORROW?

The owner of a gentleman’s haberdashery in Manhattan kept a fading photo on display, an affectionate portrait of his favorite Hackney mare and her frisky foal, the two shown in the heart of the city, with cobblestones underfoot, not the forgiving turf in a Connecticut pasture, but a stableyard in the East Forties.

Like an insistent poem, that picture reminded him of something dear, and he wanted it here, near the cash register, close to the rack of blazers on sale, and ties tied to the carriage era now past. The foal leaped and romped with youthful joy, its placid dam waiting for harnessing, the equipage never to return.

And look at this one: on the wall at the unemployment office in Brooklyn, A large dapple-gray draft horse, probably a Percheron, stands tethered to an iron ring in Fulton Street, near the handsome Dime Savings Bank building, one hundred years ago, when a big horse might symbolize money, as it patiently waits for us to see.
KINDNESS

One hot summer in St. Louis, Danny, the horse who brought milk to our neighborhood was befriended by a boy who would pilfer ice from the milk wagon, break it up into small chunks and give these fragments to Danny. An appreciative horse, Danny would carefully lip the cool balm from the boy’s hand. Thanks, pal, he seemed to say, shaking his head up and down. Thanks.

True story. The boy would follow that horse from block to block, from our street to the next, to see if further refreshments might be warranted. I would watch from my perch on the front steps, marveling at the expression of love I saw. The boy would stroke Danny’s neck, speaking softly while our summer softly faded. I would wait for the mail to arrive, waiting for LIFE, and when I looked up, Danny was gone. I could still hear, very faintly, the sound of his hoofbeats.
Annie Herman

YOU

tiny figure tucked among
heaps of coal, a flower bending
beam of light with empty body
you are just
like me,
hiding from moon’s hole
not quite full.

Like a tiny clam
clamped to the leg of a water beetle,
in perfect order you are curled
beneath me,

Before dusk-
Where do we go
from here to the beach,
somewhere warm and endless
where bodies like ours
take up less space, lounge under umbrellas
watching water
drift away.

There are buildings out here,
people going in
and out
dressed in uncomfortable clothes,
scanning and lusting
after one another what goes on
inside and around
is what scares me.
Everything, for you
are just like me, curious to know
who, after dusk
will straighten all the ties,
mop the alleys with second hands and opera songs
to lull the cats to sleep.

This hole-
left crumbling,
a wilted lotus kissed by
the contrast of autumn leaves
in summer. It’s only hot,
not a trace of stray bark blowing
through the hushed streets.

The earth, like me
holds sleeping things.
At 93, she watches her weight, 
er her body takes up less space, skin begins 
to melt through bone. 
She looks at the butter, lifts her fragile hand 
to push it away. The veins, breaking through her skin, winding 
and converging at the knuckles, telling elusive stories about a love 

whose profile stares at a cherry wood frame on the wall. Love 
is all that remains. Every now and then the frame shifts weight, 
leaning to the right. She straightens it out, winding 
her finger through the soft, pastel brushstrokes from collar to neck where his 
flesh begins. 
She closes her eyes, makes a fist, and squeezes her left hand as if trying to 
 crush her bone. 

Now the age suits her well, the crescent moons below her eye resting on beds 
of bone 
covered by pale skin that has been maintained and remains un wrinkled 
because of love. 
When she says grace, she closes her eyes and holds my hand. 
I can feel the weight 
that remains in her grip. After *amen* she looks to us, begins 
to see her own life unwinding. 

Even though the prayer is complete, our hands 
remain locked, as does her glassy gaze upon us, back and forth as the bone 
rests like a stone beneath her eye. She begins 
her silent autobiography in the space between us. Our love 
reminds her of her own. I am flattered so that the weight 
of my arm shifts to his waist. I let go of her hand
to leave room for private dreaming. I look to her hand, see my future in her melting veins, the day I may be winding my fingers through the lines in a photograph, redistributing the weight of a frame on the wall. The bones beneath my eyes making half moon beds to break the wet beads made by love so they bump, curve, and flow like question marks to fall where the chin begins

into the space where autobiographies are made. We all begin to watch the cardinal through that window. It lands on the railing and flies away. I hand her the bowl of buttered noodles, now that its clear- the place of love in this room. She throws a dollop on the plate, stabs a cluster, winding the remaining pieces around her fork. I scrape the pork off the bone before putting it on her plate. He passes the basket of rolls, the weight—

heavier than expected because of a knife left inside. I look outside. The weight of the crabapples makes the branches droop like question marks. As fall begins, a baby on the way, I hope she will see what her bones have created. What her hands have made, all the fingers winding through flesh, and the flesh that love makes. love weights, winding begins, hand bone.
There are over 200 bones in the human body. Without them, flesh would have no structure, love no curves to make. The weight of an apple tipping the hand.
It all begins unwinding.
THE BEAUTIFUL BIRD WHO NEVER WAS

I took a walk across the Brooklyn Bridge today. Lazy legs carried me down the path and began to buckle as if the frigid winds were freezing my joints. Why I chose to walk into a wind tunnel in the middle of a New York winter, I couldn't tell you. However, after witnessing a chilling death, I have been fiddling with the idea that perhaps there was some ironic, fate-related demonstration of the "what-is-outer-reflects-inner" concept at play.

Twas’ the middle of the bridge where I paused to contemplate whether making it to Manhattan with frozen, stiff legs would be any better than going back to Brooklyn in the same condition. Without an answer, I began scanning the horizon where the murky meets the musty, then gazing down back to my toes and continuing behind myself upon the passing cars making their loud vroooms and occasional honks and spirit-filled curses. A blonde boy sticking his face out of the backseat window drew my attention. He clearly was not wearing a seat belt. How careless, I thought, along with several other remarks of bad-parenting which I would never say aloud. My eyes followed the car with the boy and just as my thoughts were receding from conscious observation, all of the sudden the boy tucked inside the car, and out spat a brilliant white bird no bigger than a crow! Had the boy been sharing a backseat with this feathery fellow the whole time? It was more likely that the bird flew in through one of the moving vehicle's windows, through the car, and out the other side! Its grand wingspan stretched delicately to counter the impeccable momentum of its initial ascent. Stunned by this bird's precision and courage, I began to wonder if there is an extemporaneous bird culture we humans have yet to take seriously. Perhaps this window-act is a sort-of initiation of aerial mastership, a wing-ed trick, or perhaps this particular bird is simply a total dare-devil-badass and showing off to all the other tails posted upon the historic brick openings.

I glanced closer, now squinting my eyes and shifting them from a range of the bird back to the boy whose face reappeared in the open window of the
black Camry. The bird began to descend and dance in the most peculiar way, as if it were morphing into some evolutionary being, like a Pokemon entering a new phase. The boy, once again, withdrew his face, startled by his rising window which the driver's grimace indicated should have been up all along.

I traced my eyes back to the animorphing hooter. As it spiraled down towards the ocean, I noticed the most enchanting glare on its wings from the illuminating sun. At this point, I was truly impressed with this foolhardy, pulchritudinous bird!

But just as this magnificent being ended its flight towards the icy, trash-blemished harbor of New York, I saw a most horrific truth. There, the bird floated, wading in the Styrofoam clumps and broken bottle cap bits and a cat's old play mouse and a ticket to the best night ever and a journalist's hottest story and a child's happy meal wrappers and some empty bottle of chaser from an underage alcoholic and all the cigarette butts of the destructive souls that inhabit this city. It was then I realized there was no beautiful bird after all. Instead, wallowing in the green waters, lay a white plastic bag shimmering the same story of all its new-found brothers and sisters which bob nearby: the story of carelessness. It was there, gazing down at the cloudy bay with freezing winds reddening my nose and face that I realized this sad axiom; that the majestic entities who once flew freely above our heads have been replaced by man-made planes, 'copters, bags, and other unnatural disappointments. I watched the once fabulous flyer deflate into a plastic bag. As its decrepit, limp body slowly sank into the depths of this nightmare reality, leaving behind all those who have witnessed the death of what was once beautiful, its last words to be dragged below were worn upon its very being in red capitals, "THANK YOU! COME AGAIN!"
Lindsay Infantino

RED RIBBON, JAWBREAKERS

The milk fat fills the glass
like opening a door to find it a door,
to find my mother’s hand holding
the towel for her father, waiting at the kitchen sink
while he wipes his fingernails clean, only to scrape
them again after dinner,
after the milk is out
of her hands, after the pouring is over.

At the grocery my mother buys polish
the least like cream.

Love is her father
saying her legs look fat in brown.
She loves brown. She buys it all,
then throws the bottles away.

At night
her mother eats a chocolate bar in bed.
When she knocks on the door with drink
my mother whispers
into cupped hands that carry wind.
The water is good. She is thirsty.
FIXTURE

Something dangling
from the ceiling
like the spider on your back
who is strong
and won’t die
even when the cat swats
and the spider falls to the couch
it disappears inside the gap
you always meant to fill
and each time you sit with your back
pressed against the empty now
you expect for the spider to crawl out
even though it isn’t rational
to think it has lived
its entire life
waiting for you
looking out
my open window
8 floors up
at a human log
wrapped
in plastic and wool
floating dreams on a
savanna of snow
crushing the
winter grass
a flashlight
under his
plastic bag home
illuminates
meditations
on the state
of nature
as Rousseau
is lost
to some of
my students
running late
to my 9:30 class
Loodjie Louisca

IN BETWEEN PARADISE AND HELL

The big blue round moon hissing its light all over town

Children running and playing hide and seek

Fireflies flying along in the rice fields

Like the reflection of the stars in the sky.

The water running in the river in sync with the croaking of frogs

Almost like a symphony

Palm trees bowing to the wind in the backyard praying for rain

Adults sitting on their porch surrounded by little ones

While rocking tales out of their chairs

Big eyes, little bodies looking upward

Mouths open with astonishment

For every ending was as mysterious as the previous and next to come

"Jean planted a chicken foot and every night he'd pray for it to grow

And after years of prayers chicken feet actually grew out of it" (Gasp)

The gas lamp in the living room makes every object jiggle
Every time the wind whistles
In the blue night everything seems peaceful and dreamlike
Once the day light awakes
So does hunger
And each day becomes a battle for its own meal
The Gray House (an excerpt)

"The Gray House" follows the story of Roland "Rolly" Fortin, a teenage boy of French-Canadian and Swedish descent.

’74 was when they started calling me queer. Before I knew it myself, but not too long before my family, my high school and, eventually, even the local Klan chapter would expose my—what to call it? Relationship? Liaison?—with the black kid I was neighbors with.

Back then, my family lived way out on the corner of a country dead end that only had two other houses: the old farmstead next to ours where DeWayne lived, and an older, abandoned one about a hundred yards deeper into the scrub—the Gray house, it was called, since its last occupants were from a distant branch of our township’s founding father. Now the old Victorian was nothing more than an oversized honeysuckle trellis, its yard taken over by goldenrod and milkweed. When we were little, Mama told my big brother Freddie and me the house was haunted by the ghost of old lady Gray. But we knew she only said it so we wouldn’t go horsing around inside. Of course, we did anyway. Only once or twice, though, I think. A ghost would have added to that place’s allure, but apparently even old lady Gray saw fit to haunt elsewhere.

There was a fourth house, though. Its presence selectively forgotten; its owner a perennial source of contention between husbands and wives. Yes: Miss Claudette Dupree’s shack, down the dirt road that extended past our dead end. Claudette was a topic spoken of only in whispers. Tightly-knotted ones. And strictly in the sanctuary of the South Jersey Central High School boys’ room. BBC was how she was referred to, for Big Black Claudette, or Big Black Cunt, if you were ignorant like Freddie’s brain-dead best friend Arne Peterson, who Dad called the Jersey state vegetable. You’d go to BBC’s at night, cash in hand. Fathers took their sons there, so they’d be more confident around pretty white girls. Splitting the Black Oak was a rite of passage. Everybody did it, but no one ever fully owned up to it. Some
nights, my family would watch one pickup truck after another rip past our house with only parking lights on. Most of those trucks sported Confederate jacks in bumper sticker form. But that was par for the course in Grayville. In the winters, when the honeysuckle tangles went leafless, we could see the headlights come on when the trucks went into the woods. And we’d see her sometimes, too. Big Black Claudette. Usually from our screen porch on hot summer nights, driving past in her heap of a caddy, and Mama would stop fanning herself and whisper, “Den svarta häxan.” I don’t think Dad had a clue Mama’s words meant “black witch.” Even without translation, Mama’s tone delivered the message. Dad’d give a deep chuckle every time he heard her say it. Claudette was the only black person I never heard him call a nigger.

I only got a good look at her once, back when I was eight. I’d gone with Mama to the A&P one night near 10 p.m. ’cause she’d had a hankering for herring snacks. Turned out, Claudette was right in front of us in the last open checkout lane, and the old white lady in front of her was a nickel short for her quart of milk, wanted to pay by check, but couldn’t locate her checkbook in her gargantuan purse, whose entire contents were steadily appearing on the register belt, carefully placed, like she was setting up a Christmas nativity. Mama, who never raised her voice no matter how upset she was, heaved a huge sigh to show her annoyance. That was cue enough for Big Black Claudette to turn around and attempt pre-checkout dissatisfaction solidarity in the shrillest voice I ever heard: “Alva, can you believe this shit?” Mama just gave a noncommittal, “Mmmmm,” and shook her head. Not only was that the first time I’d ever witnessed a black person address my mother, and do so using her first name and a cuss word, it was also my only glimpse of the legendary Claudette’s face, full-on.

She was heavy but pretty—kind of a baby face, soft black skin, red lipstick, dainty nose, high cheeks framed by a red wig. I was scared of her on instinct. Maybe because she never took off her sunglasses, and Mama always said that was rude. Maybe because of the sheer force of her presence. Her sexual corpulence. Whatever the reason, I hid behind Mama until it was our turn to pay. Then I watched Claudette through the plate glass, carrying her
groceries out to her car while the bag boys loitered and snickered behind her back, never offering to help like they always did for Mama.

I asked Mama in the car, “Why didn’t you talk to Miss Claudette?”

All Mama said was, “Because she doesn’t go to church, älskling,” which confused me, because, even though I was the crucifer, Dad had stopped going to church by then, too. So I never knew whether to believe the Claudette stories or not. I asked Freddie once, but all he said was, “You’ll see.” His grin terrified me.
Jim Murrell

THE JOURNAL OF THE POISONED LIGHT
—an excerpt

October 2009 – December 2009

Walter Benjamin on Proust’s sleepless nights of creation: “For the important thing for the remembering author is not what he experienced, but the weaving of memory, the Penelope work of recollection. Or …, rather, a Penelope work of forgetting?”

No… this is not a forgotten Conan Doyle story, although it involves a sort of locked room full of a mystery to be unraveled.

Sometime in late August … perhaps early September of 2009 (it has all sort of run together in a muddle of memory) I was diagnosed at Weill-Cornell with prostate cancer. In response, after reading as much as I could stand, going to meetings of prostate cancer survivors, visiting and calling a few specialists in New York, a series of e-mails between myself and the father of a friend and researching Sloan-Kettering online --- I opted to be treated, at Cornell, with external beam radiation without the additions of chemotherapy and/or hormone treatment. This is pretty much the plain and unembroidered fact. An accomplishment really, since as you all know, even under the most ordinary circumstances my mind is full of embroidery.

It has to be said that “opting”, such as it was grew stronger and more emotionally logical as I daily created a new horror film concerning the possible consequences of the alternative: surgical removal of the prostate. I mean folks, honestly, my penis! my testicles!, all the glorious internal plumbing that made them work, these shining, wonderful, steadfast comrades who had served me so faithfully, so interestingly since I became aware of their existence. What sort of friend would I have been to subject them to the possibilities of impotence, incontinence and mutilation at the
hands of a mad, robot –manipulating surgeon. A machine! A scalpel wielding machine is employed whose obedience is demanded remotely! My mind floods with successive images of Homer Simpson simultaneously wolfing pastrami on rye and in cheerful ineptness fumbling isotopes down the back of Lenny’s pants --- the lives of Springfield and the nation held in the balance. (“I’ve done more than a thousand of these …” he tosses off, by way of encouragement, through the sieve of a glazed, affectless blue-eyed smile) How is it possible to trust shiny, rimless glasses after “Marathon Man”?

Prostatectomy. Usually accompanied by “radical”, as if the noun unclothed is not gruesome enough and deserves more costuming. Radical for root, rootedness, rooting out, torn out by the roots, an extirpation, flashing knives sent to solve the root of the problem. Then, everywhere inside the ugly climate of that word, for me, was pain, butchery, finality. My maleness, broken and disfigured for always.

(Riverine, these neural processes, complex and delicate and utterly destructible. Meanders, tributaries, straightaways on which erection depends, the cargoes of sensation and ecstasy… the grammar of the long moan that replaces all language, the ball lightning that empties the mind while you burn exhausted in the dying of its shimmering.)

That I’d met and spoken with numbers of men who had had this surgery and seemed perfectly fine and happy and healthy made no difference. Out in the unreadable territories of my mind there were those other men for whom the outcome had been a misstep that could not be mended.

And yes. I was chicken-shit frightened at the idea of being cut open (the urethra must be severed internally and then reattached once the prostate is out … think of all those ruined, weeping garden hoses, wrapped in duct tape to see them through the summer, sputtering rainbows in the sunlight. *That is* what I thought of). In any event, it became increasingly clear that the alternative: lying naked on a metal platform receiving needled beams of
high-powered X-rays for fifteen minutes a day over a course of forty-five
days was not going to be the equivalent of a sumptuous eight-course meal,
followed by a visit to a sumptuous male whorehouse, either (the sorts of
things that would make a simple mind happy – a prize, maybe, on a very gay
“Price Is Right”).

I emotionally geared up. And in the course of gearing, I thought I should
keep a journal of what these days would be like. It was meant to be daily
reportage … impressions. After all, a boy from the Bronx doesn’t do battle
with cancer every day, at least, not on such a theatrically technological stage --
-- a chance, at last, to take center stage and overact for all I was worth. Of
course, as it turned out, me being me, it became less a daily record and more a
sporadic look through the changing window of an anxious fever dream.
And there was the struggle for shape: disordered and achronic, the new laid
over a palimpsest and that painted over the original experience, orders of
iteration in a hall of mirrors --- changed, changing almost as it happened, the
product of a mind --- racing, racing and rage-filled and scared. And
untrustworthy.

…

Stich Radiation Center -- “Dramatically raising cancer cure rates.”

The waiting room: wood paneled, deep carpet, quiet… except for the
tasteful and barely audible flat screen. Everything is comfort and
comforting. During these morning arrivals, Regis can be seen but not heard:
which is, if civilization is not to crumble into dust, how it should always be.
Large portraits of Cornell’s moneyed benefactors observe us beneficently
from the walls. “Yes!” it occurs to you. There are, in fact, unexceptionally
pleasant, apple-cheeked and elderly men and women who are able to write
million dollar checks for linear accelerators while musing on the trellises of
woven climbing roses (cream, blush at their hearts) and clematis (explosions
of fragrant, purple starfish) in their gardens. And, for a moment, in a carved
block of remembered sunlight, a Maine garden stands up: green and flowered, crystalline and redolent, the breath of the sea sweeping through my clothes, across my skin. Pollen storm glitters, pennants of spider silk in shadow and then suddenly out, the dusted air gilded and visible. A man who loves me calls me to lunch, “… come the fuck on, it’s gonna get cold”. If I am murdered by this assassin, this ridiculous whoops in a line of code, I see this, too, will be murdered. There are irretrievable musics. Didn’t Roy, puzzled, tell us as much for always in the vanishing blue truth of Rutger Hauer’s eyes, sapphires bayed by winter: “I’ve seen things you people wouldn’t believe. Attack ships on fire off the shoulder of Orion. I watched C-beams glitter in the dark near the Tannhauser Gate. All of these moments will be lost in time … like tears in rain … time to die.” (Blade Runner, 1982)

But … I think I am choosing to not go gentle.

...
But we’re getting ahead of ourselves. Let’s have a more exacting recall of that August and beginnings. It occurs to me that today is August 31, 2011 and I am two years out from Dr. S explaining the essentials of the pathology report that give the week-ago, painful biopsy its real meaning. The biopsy: an anesthetized yet nonetheless excruciating probing in your ass that allows an ultrasound guided spring-loaded hollow needle to sample several small tissue cores from various regions of the prostate. A troublesome lobed plum, our prostate: an Edenic fruit capable of pleasure and various reproductive assistances but in middle age and beyond, in the male of the human species, enlarging and causing a reign of terror regarding urination. And then, of course, every now and then, at random: nurturing seeds of riot, overthrow and death. A very Christian organ --- all genetic innocence with, perhaps, a little core of time-lined programmed, Old Testament spite at its center.

(And verily, it came to pass somewhere in the days of his majority that James, the son of James, himself the son of James [a family, apparently lacking in the capacity for boredom] [and then, perhaps before, another, a cane cutter, black and exquisite, setting ablaze the field stubble to make way for the next year’s rum, whose master’s tongue refuses to shape the poem of his Ibo or Mende name], all of them the children of Ham --- may they be forgiven, these children, their outrageousness in not believing all they have been told is proper to believe about themselves --- did find himself awakened, as if into a dream of fog and accompanied, ridden, of a sudden, in this dark part of the forest, by an even darker and darkly intentioned companion come without pain or announcement. And the child, Jimmy, who lives inside this third James, who is now called Jim, did cry out in sore beseeching, saying “Cast yourself down before the Lord, our Father who gives balms, and dispels shadows, and prepares picnics in the face of death that He might smite this companion and return our life to us, whole.” [An absolutely forgivable Pavlovian response ignited by all those early Sunday mornings in the pews of St. Margaret’s and those chastising, morally rectitudenous wool suits.] And how hard little Jimmy must have wept surrounded by his fears
and his stacks and stacks of Plastic Man and Aqua Man and Captain Marvels --- when his older, boorish self --- sighed, “I just don’t believe in any of that shit anymore”.

In an unused blue room, (Let’s call it Air Force blue; mingling a gray gravity holds this blue to life saving seriousness --- no frivolity here.) V makes part of the initial record that dictates how I shall lie beneath the volleys of X-rays to come. She explains patiently as she goes. I hear only … Barbados? And it eases me. All the walls and ceilings of the accelerator rooms are muted in this blue. A white concave oval is inset in the ceiling above the examining table, like a halved Faberge egg, its recessed light opalescent against the hushed light required of the examination. Think Art Deco, think Radio City. Best of all in the rooms is the inspired thought of a filigreed expanse of stars flung across these ceiling’s heaven. In gold tracery, the constellations remind you of the vastness and perspective of a larger, less threatened self. That Cassiopeia, the Dippers, Orion, the Southern Cross are all in the wrong places is beside the point. They are here to offer succor.

In preparation for the poisoned light, a series of precise measurements must be made of the ventral face of my lower body, waist to knee. A cast maker will create a molded form that captures these numbers and which the technicians will use to insure the accelerator’s focus and distance and angle for my 15 minutes of supine, naked passivity. Fame, alternatively, will remain elusive. During these days I’ll lose all sense of body shyness, the remotest inkling of physical shame or modesty evaporates.

(At once, all the air in the locker room has moved perceptibly to the left. Philip, Wesley and I stand in the vacuum, still wet from the showers, trying to pull on our tighty-whities as quickly as we can; the rich, humid dankness is mined in mixing layers of eight year-old boy, Lux soap, chlorine, urine from the toilets, a history of jock straps and feet. We are being judged; we are being pushed outside of the giddiness and fun of the day. The drunken excitement of Mr. Ciccetti taking us to swim and pizza and away from school
and the third grade science prize and the boys of class 3-1 in togetherness, prideful, self-congratulating --- we are pushed outside. We three examined, assessed, judged by our ten classmates. Roman appoints himself spokesman of a congealing consensus. “I think it looks weird.” Frank chimes in, “Yeah, I don’t know nobody like that.” and snickers --- he has a lazy eye and smells unwashed on most days --- I think tomorrow, I’ll find an opportunity to accidently stab him with a pencil. Wesley, only slightly daunted, tries to explain this … circumcision from a learned perspective. He and Philip are Jewish. He knows that it has to do with God and a sign. The faces, impassive but ungenerous, say they are not buying the probability of a God-ordained, special club for pee-pees. I don’t even know that. I don’t know anything. It hasn’t occurred to me that I am maimed or that I would ever need a defense surrounding my injury. Humiliation: hot, electric, prickling … liquid over the skin, behind the ears. High up, just under the roof, a row of Palladian windows cannonades bolts of bright afternoon down on to the floor. Too late to be invisible.

Time accumulates these signs of difference and all I do not know [serial and exhausting, these crushes on all those anonymous nineteen-year olds playing tennis three blocks from school. Why make them nineteen? It seemed then to have an erotic and romantic resonance.] a wall of stalagmites, a wall down in the cavern of the self and each mineral-bearing drop pushes you further out until a life outside is borne in silence, in concealment, the raw bitterness of it held at the back of the throat.)

Yet, how easily the constraints of being an eight-year old proper, little black Episcopalian fall away. The shadowy always-chorus of West Indian women, their disapproving, pursed lips, their mauve Sunday hats, too, are made cinders beneath the scourging of the poisoned light. I’m mildly irritated only by the unfashionableness of this tired hospital gown, its silly, repeating print, its complicated arm holes --- all hiked up to my waist. Each day, before they seal me in and scurry away to the safety of their triple glazed window, Peter and D. arrange my limbs; adjusting the exact shape of today’s
petrification (it will change as new areas of my prostate are perused). They are kind, with a practiced cheerfulness (well … not D, particularly, a frowning bitch who seems always to be having a bad day). In turn, I wear my pleasant, cooperative face, my eyes sparkle bottomless “thank you”s. I strangle my detachment. Of course, my vulnerability swings wide open. It’s a hateful game of Whack-a-Mole. Dammed, the scalding lagoon behind my forehead pushes out against my temples. So, yes, there it is --- the selfish cliché --- WHY THE FUCK ME?! I resist treating them as body slaves to a Caliph whose behind they wipe and for whom they must throw themselves on any daggers should the cutthroats show up. Maybe, I’m the bitch.

This chilled room, my chilled ass. The freezing, sealed space counteracts the build-up of heat in the accelerator, I think. I feel I’m performing a burlesque in a morgue.

I’ll see the cast every now and then, my name affixed to it --- possibly the remnant of some terrible skiing accident or clue to the passage of a molting snake? Often it lies, on a pile of similar forms, startlingly white in the room’s concentrated, post-treatment glare. Finally, I’ll be given a tattoo: three tiny dots in a triangle at the point where my right upper thigh meets my groin --- an all-time, personal registry mark like a printer’s calibration for colored images, a reference , a slightly off-center bull’s eye.

Somewhere, I look at magnified, microscopic pictures of the cancer’s cellular unruliness and disorder. In black and white, they show “before” --- normality, governance, control and “after” --- mindless expansion, distortions of shape, kidnap and corruption. Like James Whale’s Frankenstein mob of torch bearing villagers they flow and flow, in choreographic whorls, in wonderful chiaroscuro, round and round hills and knolls and copses, and up night mountain ridges to lay burning waste to the mill. Well … in this case, me. In fact, in their wildness, the dis-integrating patterns of this mutating anarchy are really quite beautiful: a fractal’s idea of melting order in the cross section of a bee-hive. Wouldn’t you know it? Death would be pretty.
The pathologist’s assessment? I am a Gleason grade 7. For no good reason, I see wholesale buyers in fall farm sheds judging a season’s batches of maple syrup or honey--- the world heaped in windrows of fallen vermillion and yellow leaves. The Gleason score is (should we continue the theme of revolution?) the oncologist’s means of establishing an overall baseline of chaos, by comparing the varying states of raised fists and grumblings in the harvested tissue cores. There are cellular communities in which murmurs of dissent have not been heard --- loyalists, for whom the word of the Central Authority still has meaning. While elsewhere, rock-throwing is rife, the tumbrels are full, and to the cacophonies of rabble excitement the heads and blood of rulers roll in the streets. (I am trying my damndest to wedge Madame Defarge in here, she just won’t fit.) By contrasting these relative levels of innocence and drama and then adding them a number is arrived at, a quantifier of concern, an alert. To enhance the complexity, (Why should any of this be straightforward?) all 7’s or 6’s or 8’s are not equal in their comparative criminalities. A seven cobbled of a six and a one core, for instance, or say a five and a two might carry greater menace than, perhaps, a three and a four. I am three and four. I flee, immediately, into the fortified and optimistic tower of “perhaps”.

(To be continued, wherein, among other things, Dr. P belatedly discusses further possible consequences of prolonged radiation treatment. “Oh! So this painful urination, this diarrhea I’m experiencing …?” Really, I’m only concerned to know if my semen will eventually glow in the dark. It’s always entertaining to have a parlor trick at an orgy.

In a bewildering reversal the dietician and Dr. P now agree that I should not be taking vitamin supplements. And unmoored from gravity, I’m left to recede farther and farther away from the world to places of idle wonder and safety:
By arrangement of the Devil’s mean-spirited but fun loving perversity, Faulkner, Cormac McCarthy and William Gay all meet, with seeming serendipity, at a bar in hell. Predictably, there is a knife fight. Innocent patrons (well … they are at a bar in hell, they must have done something awful once), lovely people with no axe to grind, no involved dog, nary an ox to be gored are bludgeoned, thrown through windows. Of course, William Gay is immediately gutted but …)
Steve Newton

IN DREAMS UNBIDDEN

Black eye
    on the subway
    showing around
    dark glasses

Talking on
    a cellphone
    crying on a
    Central Park bench

Lower East Side
    twilight
    junkies on the nod
    babies in strollers

Begging for spare change
    in front of
    Grand Central
    eyes cast down

Tanker in the harbor
    heading somewhere
    in the wild world
    white capping wind

Who is to say
    if I wasted my life
    hitchhiking
    across the country
Before you went to acting school
   another life time
   that still comes back
   in dreams unbidden

All these years later
   afternoons of regret
   the rocky recesses
   of the heart
The Unseen

A fishing boat chugging
Out to sea under a bridge
Oregon early in the morning

Bridge arcing high overhead

Another boat following not
Far behind under grey sky
Other side of the bridge

Passing between here and there

Above unseen fish swimming
Through currents and depths
In this country of souls

Waiting to cross over
Elvis Poetica

I was sitting on the front porch of the parent’s house of one of the guys in the band I was playing in, during that summer of 1977.

We were doing pretty well in our hometown, getting drunk every night of the week and on the nights we played out putting the pedal to the metal, doing shots along with the beers and then eventually bringing tall glasses of Yukon Jack up on stage and leaving them on our amplifiers, or at least some of us did, the rest dashing to the parking lot to toke up and do lines on breaks while a biker named Barrel held things together at the door, Harley chain for a belt, beard hanging down to his chest.

We were sitting on this porch drinking beer and smoking in the twilight when one of the other guys in the band walked up on the lawn and said that Elvis had died. All of a sudden there was nothing to say. We all went out to a bar where we chain-smoked cigarettes, played Elvis songs on the jukebox, and got trashed, hammered, drinking far into the night.

But that’s not the important part. It’s that scene on the porch, all together, one guy who died of drink years later, and who shared a birthday with Elvis, sitting there in the summer evening, at a time when all of us were still amazingly young, unaware of how deeply this moment was touching us, or of how we were nowhere near as tough.
as we wanted to look, thought we looked, smoking cigarettes and acting cool, and far more attractive, even hot, in our youth, than we ever realized at the time,

nothing yet to compare it to, while people all over the world were wondering how this could be, that the laughing boy in the movies and on TV and stage could have gone away, leaving all of us confused and sad and unclear about what he had ever meant, other than he made us dance and smile.
Kindling

Dry twigs, paper,  
birch bark, lint.

We gather our kindling  
in the snow and wet.

Nothing to be gained or lost, nothing to do  
but the work, gathering kindling in the clouds

that hang on mountainsides, the  
mist above rushing streams.

Maybe fire will result, maybe not.  
The gathering is enough for now.
Angela Nichols

AT THE MUSEUM

clarboils withconfetti

toscrmallow its. truthsin colloquy across

brokeencard table

carnival broke free its bound

the carnival is watching its audience now

instead

how can there be luminescence without

verdant—virulent—viridian

& fluttering bellow within a whisper

spun truths only green fairy can tell:

—a bubble of reality

next of other floating worlds

inexpressible decoration

Against Which.

two magnets propelled—repulsed

spindly sphere

soar in their dirigible minds

they’re not trying to make a point

the shaped re-imagined by the shaper
Howard Pflanzer

CONEY ISLAND

Where are the rabbits scurrying over the sandy shore
Screams from the cyclone
Wait

The rabbits up there are hopping around
Descending on the parachute jump
Frolicking on the rides at Astroland
Cavorting with the penguins at the aquarium
They are breeding everywhere
Overrunning everything
It is truly rabbit island tonight.
THE RODENT ACADEMY

They’re coming from everywhere to attend the classes
They’re racing out of from the sewers, the garbage cans, the subway tracks
All the millions of holes in the walls
The mice and the rats all slicked out in their finest fur
Eager to register
Presenting their birth certificates
Motivated to learn
Eating new facts
To hone their survival skills
To study new infestation techniques
To keep winning the war
They’ve waged for centuries
The scourge of civilization
The vectors of disease
Hungry for dominance
They are all honors students
Ready to take on the world
That can never exterminate them
No matter how hard they try.
A COUNTRY THAT DIDN’T EXIST

Where were your grandparents born she asked
My father’s parents were born in Galicia
A part of Poland, a country that didn’t exist
But it contained millions of people
I know they were there she said
But no one was aware of them
Just the Austrians, the Germans and the Russians
Who divided that country
My grandfather Joseph told a story of how the Emperor Franz Joseph Visited his shtetl with his retinue and solders
Parading through the town square
The Jews were jubilant honoring their beloved emperor
Who gave them equal rights and privileges
As citizens of the empire
My grandfather got a legal last name from an Austrian official
The more you paid the better you got
Pflanzer, rooted in the earth, a planter
Certified in a folded beige naming document
In three languages German, Yiddish and Polish
No more Joseph son of ... ad infinitum into the past
Poland did not exist at this time
But people lived there
Passionately existing while it didn’t.
Whenever I see people walking down the street wearing little Bluetooth headsets, I think of the Borg, a fictional pseudo-race of cybernetic organisms depicted in the *Star Trek* universe. The Borg manifest as cybernetically-enhanced humanoid drones of multiple species, organized as an interconnected collective, the decisions of which are made by a hive mind. This is achieved through forced assimilation, a process which transforms individuals and technology into Borg, enhancing, and simultaneously controlling, individuals by implanting or appending synthetic components. According to Wikipedia, “The Borg have become a symbol in popular culture for any juggernaut against which ‘resistance is futile.’”

In that fictional universe, the price of enhancement is control, the subjugation of all individual wills to a collective mind, which runs counter to many of our cultural notions about what it means to be human. The parallels to the real world of digital devices seem obvious; like all good sci-fi, it's only a slight exaggeration. Our assimilation is not forced, of course. Yet few of us are resisting, because we're largely convinced that being interconnected is a good thing. (I am trying to avoid the words "hegemony" and "false consciousness" here. Also, references to dystopian movies like *The Matrix* and *Minority Report*.) Still, while we are not mere pawns of our technological domain, we are not quite its masters, either.

People often compare digital media to “the air we breathe,” using a hyperbolic analogy. We can physically survive without our devices, for now. Someday, people might not only wear gadgets—as depicted in this series of lithographs—but also *embed* gadgets and, in a sense, *become* gadgets. This series of linocut prints examines tentative movements toward a Borg-esque hive mind.

- *Digital Waves I*, 2010, 16" x 11", ink on paper
- *Gadget Overlay*, 2010, 16" x 11", ink on paper
- *Still Searching*, 2010, 16" x 11", ink on paper
- *Shadow Gadgets*, 2010, 16" x 11", ink on paper
TO MY INNER CHILD

Silly child!
Stop your hurt
Stop dwelling on the past
that will not change.
Stop dwelling on the present-
it is what it’s supposed to be.
Stop dwelling on the future-
it’s not yet for us to see.

You poor, silly, stupid
Child-
release your fear
forgive yourself
for the anger your felt
and for the hateful words
you allowed to escape your lips.
Forget
the times your tried to
steal yourself
from the world.
The world was not yet ready
to see you spill your blood.

Silly Child.
You are beautiful.
Silly Child.
You are loved.
Silly Child.
You are worth the world.
and damn, Silly Child,
You are here for a reason.
He recognized the well-oiled smell
before the thirty-eight
snugged up behind his ear,
and heard the steel click as the hammer fell;
saw the red splash at world’s end
BAKING

I find myself
above the pastry cloth
cutting Christmas
out of sugary dough.

Collecting the scraps
(grandma called them Fetzen)
I wad them up
for rolling out another sheet,
but the scraps have scraps
so I dab at the cloth,
subsuming them.

I recognize that motion
of my mother’s hand in mine
and of her mother’s hand in hers –
the DNA of Christmas baking
WEATHER

Were I the wind
that shuffles the rain
north and west
of the city,
I would whisper
(but only to you)
a warning that
it may slide southward,
given the falling pressure.

So take your umbrella;
I’ll wear my rubbers.
WHEN I WAS FIVE

When I was five
I walked alone
the mile or so
from school to home;
my frantic family
feared the worst
and searched by car,
on foot, each path
I might have taken
except the one
I’d learned
by rote and took.

They taught me well,
but every turn I took
in later years
distressed them, shook
the faith they held
that I would get
from there to here along
their beaten path.

The trips down
blue highways,
the road out of
Damascus;
detours along
a broken boulevard;
the drive to
pavement’s end;
or kicking gravel
along an
unmarked track

were not the lanes
they thought
they planted
with their guidons,
but each one led me,
alone,
at last
to home.
The section titles refer to different glass-blowing techniques Scarpa had the Venini workshop use to produce his glassware.

The altered sonnets in the second section are, in order, Charles Baudelaire's "La Beauté" ("Beauty"), Stéphane's Mallarmé's "Sonnet in -yx", and Gérard de Nerval's "Delfica".
After Carlo Scarpa Venini 1932-1947

for Carlo Scarpa

Michael Sohn
In this period he searched for pure beauty trying to model a fluid material with the rigour of a clearly worked out project but the immediacy of the execution of Oriental calligraphy.

He thus created several hundred unique pieces: forms blown by the unpredictable mastery of craftsmen, the joyous freedom in inventing decorations.

Guido Pietropoli, “Carlo Scarpa’s Hands.” In Marino Barovier, Carlo Scarpa Venini 1932-1947
Incamiata “Cinesi”
Je suis belle, ô mortels! comme un rêve de pierre,
Et mon sein, où chacun s’est meurtri tour à tour,
Est fait pour inspirer au poète un amour
Éternel et muet anxi que la matière

 comme un s
  igé à la bl
    qui dépla
      et jamais

es grandes
runter aux p
ours en d’aus

Car j’ai l’air d’emprunter aux plus fiers monuments,
Les poètes, devant mes grandes attitudes,
Consumberont leur jours en d’âpres études;
Car j’ai, pour fasciner ces dociles amants,
De purs miroirs qui font toutes choses plus belles:
Mes yeux, mes larges yeux aux clartés éternelles!
Ses purs ongles très haut dédiant leur onyx,
soutient, lampadophore,
ilé par le Phénix
cinéraire amphore

alon vide : nul ptyx,
sonore
puis
sont dont

Mais proche la croisée
Agonise selon peut-être
Des licornes ruant de

éphante nue en
ans l’oubli ferm.
attillations sitôt le
La connais-tu, DAFNE, cette ancienne romance,
Au pied du sycomore, ou sous les Lauriers blancs,
Sous l'olivier, le myrthe ou les saules tremblants,
Cette chanson d'amour qui toujours recommence?

Reconnais-tu le Temple, au péristyle immense,
Et les citrons amers où s'inscrivaient tes dents?
Et la grotte, fatale aux hôtes imprudents,
Où du dragon vaincu dort l'antique semence.

Ils reviendront ces dieux que tu pleures toujours!
Le temps va ramener l'ordre des anciens jours;
La terre a tressailli d'un souffle prophétique...

Cependant la sibylle au visage latin
Est endormie encor sous l'arc de Constantin
— Et rien n'a dérangé le sévère portique.
Ses purs ongles très haut dédiant leur onyx,
L'Angoisse ce minuit, soutient, lampadophore,
Maint rêve vespéral brûlé par le Phénix
Que ne recueille pas de cinéraire amphore
Sur les crédences, au salon vide : nul ptyx,
Aboli bibelot d'inanité sonore,
(Car le maître est allé puiser des pleurs au Styx
Avec ce seul objet dont le Néant s'honore.)
Mais proche la croisée au nord vacante, un or
Agonise selon peut-être le décor
Des licornes ruant du feu contre une nixe,
Elle, défunte nue en le miroir, encor
Que, dans l'oubli fermé par le cadre, se fixe
De scintillations sitôt le septuor.

Je suis belle, ô mortels! comme un rêve de pierre,
Et mon sein, où chacun s'est meurtri tour à tour,
Est fait pour inspirer au poëte un amour
Eternel et muet ansi que la matière.
Je trône dans l'azur comme un sphinx incompris;
J'unis un cœur de neige à la blancheur des cygnes;
Je hais le mouvement qui déplace les lignes,
Et jamais je ne pleure et jamais je ne ris.
Les poëtes, devant mes grandes attitudes,
Que j'ai l'air d'emprunter aux plus fiers monuments,
Consumeront leur jours en d'austères études;
Car j'ai, pour fasciner ces dociles amants,
De purs miroirs qui font toutes choses plus belles :
Mes yeux, mes larges yeux aux clartés éternelles!
La connais-tu, DAFNE, cette ancienne romance,
Au pied du sycomore, ou sous les lauriers blancs,
Sous l'olivier, le myrthe, ou les saules tremblants,
Cette chanson d'amour... qui toujours recommence?

Reconnais-tu le TEMPLE, au péristyle immense,
Et les citrons amers où s'imprimaient tes dents?
Et la grotte, fatale aux hôtes imprudents,
Où du dragon vaincu dort l'antique semence.

Ils reviendront ces dieux que tu pleures toujours!
Le temps va ramener l'ordre des anciens jours;
La terre a tressailli d'un souffle prophétique...

Cependant la sibylle au visage latin
Est endormie encor sous l'arc de Constantin
— Et rien n'a dérangé le sévère portique.

Ses purs ongles très haut dédiant leur onyx,
L'Angoisse ce minuit, soutient, lampadophore,
Maint rêve vespéral brûlé par le Phénix
Que ne recueille pas de cinéraire amphore
Sur les crédences, au salon vide : nul ptyx,
Aboli bibelot d'inanité sonore,
(Car le maître est allé puiser des pleurs au Styx
Avec ce seul objet dont le Néant s'honore.)

Mais proche la croisée au nord vacante, un or
Agonise selon peut-être le décor
Des licornes ruant du feu contre une nixe,
Elle, défunte nue en le miroir, encor
Que, dans l'oubli fermé par le cadre, se fixe
De scintillations sitôt le septuor.

Je suis belle, ô mortels! comme un rêve de pierre,
Et mon sein, où chacun s'est meurtri tour à tour,
Est fait pour inspirer au poëte un amour
Eternel et muet ansi que la matière.

Je trône dans l'azur comme un sphinx incompris;
J'unis un cœur de neige à la blancheur des cygnes;
Je hais le mouvement qui déplace les lignes,
Et jamais je ne pleure et jamais je ne ris.

Les poëtes, devant mes grandes attitudes,
Que j'ai l'air d'emprunter aux plus fiers monuments,
Consumeront leur jours en d'austères études;
Car j'ai, pour fasciner ces dociles amants,
De purs miroirs qui font toutes choses plus belles:
Mes yeux, mes larges yeux aux clartés éternelles!
Corrosi
Trying to understand fully what he dealt with, recreating in his mind the sense of what the craftsman had tried to produce according to the unique and specific balance between form and matter, was both useful and playful for Scarpa.

Mike Traber

EVERGREEN VOL. 3

We were sitting at a candlelit table
drinking Dubonnet on ice
listening to Roy Orbison three minute operas.

Having grown up Catholic we wondered about past nuns
could they smell Dubonnet on our breaths
did they have eyes in the back of their heads
to see a teenage girl wearing make-up
to see a wise guy
in the last row
zipping paper airplanes through the window.

“A candy colored clown
they call the Sandman”
Roy Orbison sang In Dreams.

I stutter-talked about operations
medical tests misread
eating Barium while an X-Ray filmed.
“I missed becoming Draft Bait
and wasted in Vietnam”

She was a big-eyed woman.
her eyes growing bigger
at the surprise of words,
eyes ringed by hair
pure as the black night sky.
Oh, Pretty Woman
“Mercy” Roy Orbison growled.

I stammer talked about later operations
“Life is a ditch and then you bye
though you try to keep on keeping on.”

“That’s why I sing.”
Roy Orbison sang Blue Bayou
in English, she in Spanish.

“Something like a bird
I sing to fly, to flock,”
she chirped
“to keep on flying.”

One-third of an opening act
one-third of the Stone Poneys
she was swelt in 1968.
With jowels
a harvest of years
there is more of her to love.

“Singing to keep flying,” I muttered.
“Isn’t that why you eat?”
Linda took my water glass
and emptied it over my head.

While I was in the men’s room
drying off with a paper towel
Ms Ronstadt finished her dinner, my dinner
and my glass of Dubonnet.

“Dessert time,” she called when I returned.
“Something like a bird,” I replied.

_Only The Lonely_
Roy Orbison sang.
“In dreams I talk with you.”
Lewis Warsh

LITTLE GREEN APPLES

Smile like you mean it.

Let the cards fall out of the sky.

The snows of Kilimanjaro melt over night.

“Come out with your hands up.”

There’s a flood watch advisory for the tri-state area.

People I used to know take off their clothing in a dream. The last line comes first, with no end in sight.

My heart is in the right place at the wrong time.

What else is new?

A package of lemon wafers for the long trip home.

A word to the wise, but no underpants.
NEW PANTS

I was caught with my pants up. With my pants down. Does it matter?

I went to the dressing room and hung my pants on a hook on the door. I mean

the pants I was wearing (and which were wearing out) as opposed to the pants I was trying on. Sometimes I bring more than one pair of pants into the dressing room. I misjudge what I look like now in comparison with what I looked like then, as if (in the long term, the long haul) anyone cares. I tried on a pair of new pants and opened the door of the dressing room so I could see myself in the mirror. “They look OK,” a little voice said, it was coming from inside my head,

as I took off the new pants and put on the old, took the pair of new pants to the cashier and paid for them, more or less.
Tejan Green Waszak

HER

Let the feeling you get
when she wraps her hand around you
as her skirt flaps in the summer breeze
brushing your legs
bring about a natural curve to your lips
in the colder weather
**bio notes**

**Tony Alterman** holds a Ph.D. in Philosophy from The Graduate Center, CUNY (2000) and is now an Adjunct Assistant Professor of Philosophy at LIU Brooklyn, where he teaches introductory courses in Philosophy (ancient, modern, logic and ethics). He has also taught at Baruch College and Hunter College. He has published in philosophy (primarily on Wittgenstein, the philosophy of music, and ethical issues in information technology) and has delivered many conference presentations, about half of them in aesthetics. Several of those were on the philosophy of literature. Aside from two slowly emerging collections of poems, he has nearly completed a book of short fiction (2 novellas, 3 short stories and a slightly fictionalized memoir) entitled *Losing Yourself*. The stories are thematically related in examining what happens to us when displacement and loss challenge our sense of personal identity. He is also a songwriter and performer with one commercially available album, *Sunshine Through Hasty News*, which he recorded under the name Tony Ultimate. / **Wayne Berninger** is an alumnus of Jacksonville University in Florida (BS, English 1990), LIU Brooklyn (MA English/Creative Writing, 1992), and LIU Post (MS, Library and Information Science with a concentration in Rare Books and Special Collections, 2014). He works as an administrator in the English Department, where his responsibilities include advising all undergraduate majors; managing the website, blog, and social media; and teaching first-year composition and core literature courses. Wayne co-founded *Downtown Brooklyn* in 1992 with Barbara Henning and Rudy Baron and thereafter served as Editorial Committee member for several issues. He was Editor of issues #8-24. / **Connor Bowen** is working toward his MFA in Television Writing & Producing. / **Bruce Chadwick** was an adjunct instructor in the LIU Brooklyn English Department off and on from 1977 until the mid-2000s. He taught an array of courses, most recently English 14, 16, and the former 17. He also served on the Assessment Committee. He is now teaching writing part-time at Kingsborough Community College, CUNY. His academic interest is in reader-response theory, and he is currently working on a book proposal on reading theory-
Cynthia Maris Dantzic, Senior Professor of Art, has been a longtime contributor to *Downtown Brooklyn*. She and her students contributed art to issue 5 (1996), and since issue 12 (2003), she has contributed art, calligraphy, and/or poems to every issue. Her ninth book, *100 New York Calligraphers*, appeared in the summer of 2015. She continues to show work in drawing, calligraphy and photography in a number of New York galleries. / Kathryn Duré is working toward her BA with a double major in English and Political Science and a minor in Psychology. / Wendy Eng is an alumna (2012) of Long Island University. She earned her master’s degree in Adolescent Education, Biology. Her work has appeared in past issues of *Downtown Brooklyn*. / Robert Feinstein published a short story in *Downtown Brooklyn* #15 (2006). His stories have also been published in *The Jewish Forward* and *Hatikvah*. He has authored several hundred nonfiction articles, primarily about the history of recorded sound and the U.S. Civil War. He graduated with a BA in history from LIU in 1965 and holds graduate degrees from Brooklyn College and Pratt Institute. / Sarah Francois a student in the LIU Brooklyn MFA for cross-genre. Born in New York. She has been writing since the sixth grade. She has attended writing conferences and workshops like Aspen Summer Words. She finished her undergraduate career with a B.A in English with a concentration in creative writing. She is an MFA student at LIU Brooklyn. She doesn’t feel like she chose to write. The work of words chose her much like lightning chooses what to strike. For her, there is no other choice. / Poetry by Sarah Ghoshal has been published or is forthcoming in *Arsenic Lobster*, *Reunion: The Dallas Review*, *Empty Mirror*, *Red Savina Review* and *Broad! Magazine*, among others, including *Downtown Brooklyn* (wherein her work appeared under the name Sarah Kolbasowski). Her chapbook, *Changing the Grid*, is available from Finishing Line Press. She earned her MFA from Long Island University in 2008 and teaches at Montclair State University. Sarah lives in New Jersey with her husband, her eleven month old daughter and her dog Comet, who flies through the air with the greatest of ease. / Barbara Henning is the author of three novels and nine collections of poetry. Her most recent books of poetry are *A Swift Passage* (Quale Press); *Cities and Memory* (Chax Press); a collection of object-
sonnets, *My Autobiography* (United Artists); and *A Day Like Today* (Negative Capability Press, 2015). As a long-time yoga practitioner, she brings this knowledge and discipline to her writing and her teaching at writers.com and Long Island University in Brooklyn, where she is Professor Emerita. Barbara founded *Downtown Brooklyn* in 1992 with Rudy Baron and Wayne Berninger. She served as Advising Faculty Editor for issues #2-9 and as an Editorial Committee member for several issues over the years. / A widely-published poet, **Mary Kennan Herbert** teaches literature and writing as an adjunct professor in the English Department at LIU Brooklyn. Mary served as Copy Editor and/or Editorial Committee member for issues #7-24 of *Downtown Brooklyn*. / **Annie Herman** is an alumna of LIU Brooklyn (BA, English & Media Arts, 2003). Since then, she has taken classes in the Creative Writing MFA program at the University of New Orleans and participated in a Writing Residency at the Ezra Pound Center for Literature in Brunnenberg, Italy. Her work has been published in *The Blue Fog Poetry Journal, Words-Myth*, as well as *Downtown Brooklyn*. She lives in Philadelphia, where she teaches Special Education and group fitness classes and continues to study and write poetry. / **Casey Hutchison** is a bit of an oddball humorist and self-proclaiming anythingst. She is a woman. She doesn’t shave herself anywhair and she religiously writes her invented acronym of P.O.O.P.F.A.R.T. (People of our Planet Find a Real Truth) in places that would get her in trouble if she mentioned them in this public bio. She is an undergrad at LIU Global and has landed herself in Brooklyn, New York, after traveling to several countries in Latin America and Southeast Asia. Studying Global studies with a minor in Gender studies, her world continues to un-define itself and seems to be forever growing into an ambiguous mist of being. / **Lindsay Infantino** is a degree candidate in the English Department’s Creative Writing MFA program and a Teaching Fellow in the undergraduate Writing Program. Her plays have been produced by The Outer Loop Theater Experience, and her fiction has appeared in *CutBank*. / **Jibarosoy** is a professor at LIU whose work has no remote connection to poetry. He requests that the reader be kind. / **Loodjie Louisca** has completed the English minor and is working toward her BS in Biochemistry. Her photographs have been exhibited at
Harry McEwan is an alumnus (2015) of the LIU Brooklyn English Department’s Creative Writing MFA program. His work has appeared previously in Downtown Brooklyn, as well as in Brooklyn Paramount and Dovetail, NYU’s literary magazine. His fiction has also been featured in the online journal Those That This (thosethatthis.com). His stage plays have been produced in Chicago; Minneapolis; Macon, GA; Lynchburg and Norfolk, VA; and NYC. He is the recipient of a Best Original Screenplay award (2002) from the Rhode Island International Film Festival. He is the co-founder and editor of visceral brooklyn, a literary journal published online by the LIU Brooklyn Creative Writing MFA program. After a long absence from LIU Brooklyn, Jim Murrell recently returned to complete his degree (BA, English/Literature, 2014). A poet and a member of Other Countries, a black gay men’s writing workshop, he has published Bermuda and a collection, Medinas of Air, with Vega Press. In 1963 (his junior year at LIU!), Murrell published a short story, “A Journey to Where the Kings Are,” in Helicon, the literary magazine then published by the English Department. In Fall 2015, Jim will begin graduate study in literature at CCNY. From 1992 to 1999, Steve Newton was an Assistant Professor of English at LIU Brooklyn, where he also served as Director of the Writing Center. He is now a Professor of English at William Paterson University. Angela Nichols is an MFA candidate in the Creative Writing program at LIU Brooklyn, and will be graduating in 2016. She has a B.A. from James Madison University. Formerly an adjunct professor in the English Department at LIU Brooklyn, Howard Pflanzer (MFA, Yale School of Drama) is a playwright, lyricist, and poet. Luddite, a new play, was recently read in the Jump/Start series at the Medicine Show Theatre. Living With History: Camus, Sartre, De Beauvoir premiered at Medicine Show in 2011, and On the Border, his play about Walter Benjamin, was also produced at Medicine Show, in 2007. Pflanzer was a Fulbright Scholar in theatre (2003) in India where he directed the world premiere of The Terrorist at the National Center for the Performing Arts (NCPA) in Mumbai, lectured, and conducted a playwrights’ workshop. He is the winner of a Play Commission in Jewish Theatre from NFJC (Jersey Nights at Medicine Show), a NYFA Playwriting Fellowship, two ASCAP
Awards, and a Puffin Foundation grant; and he is co-winner of an NEA Media Arts grant for the opera *Dream Beach* (with Michael Sahl). His plays and musicals have been performed at La MaMa ETC., *(The House of Nancy Dunn with Steve Weisberg and Andy Craft)*, Playwrights Horizons, Symphony Space, Medicine Show, Kraine Theater *(Cocaine Dreams)*, The Living Theatre, 2011 Malta International Theatre Festival *(Alien, in collaboration with Teatr Palmera Eldritch, invited to LaMaMa)*, and broadcast over WNYC and WBAI FM. Pflanzer has held playwriting residencies at Fundacion Valparaiso, VCCA, and the Ragdale Foundation. His poetry has appeared in many publications. *Dead Birds or Avian Blues* (excerpts from the manuscript of which appeared in issue 18 [2009] of *Downtown Brooklyn*) was published by Fly By Night Press in 2011. / **Danielle Pryor** transferred to LIU Brooklyn from Pratt Institute, where she studied creative writing. At LIU, she is working toward her BA with a double major in Psychology and English (with a concentration in creative writing). / **Jennifer Rauch** has taught journalism, communication and honors courses at LIU Brooklyn for more than a decade, including seminars such as “From Boob Tube to YouTube” and “Digital Disenchantment & Analog Alternatives.” Her research looks at the values and practices of people who use activist and alternative media as well as new movements applying the concepts of sustainability and mindfulness to media production and use. Rauch has a Ph.D. in mass communication from Indiana University, where she was a Chancellor’s Fellow, and many years of experience as a writer, editor and public-relations professional. She contributed an essay on "Slow Media as Alternative Media: Cultural Resistance through Print and Analogue Revivals" to the forthcoming *Routledge Companion to Alternative and Community Media* (ed. Chris Atton). / **P. J. Salber** is a librarian and library administrator who was Library Director and an editor at *Newsweek*. He came to LIU Brooklyn as Assistant Library Dean and the Coordinator of User Services in 1996. He retired as associate professor in 2013. His poems have appeared in several little magazines, he has been a frequent contributor to *Downtown Brooklyn*, and he is currently working on a collection of his work. / **Michael Sohn** has been teaching in the first-year Writing Program at the LIU
Brooklyn English Department since 1997. His poems have appeared in *Downtown Brooklyn* and *Zen Monster*. Michael served as an Editorial Committee member for issues #6-8 and issues #12-24 of *Downtown Brooklyn*. / **Mike Traber** attended Emerson College before coming to LIU Brooklyn, where he completed his BA (English, 1974). His poems have appeared in *Kaleidoscope, Ariel, The Villager, The Raintown Review, Bellowing Ark, Potpourri, Passagers, Red Wheelbarrow* and *The Distillery*, as well as *Downtown Brooklyn*. / The most recent books from **Lewis Warsh** are *Alien Abduction* (Ugly Duckling Presse, 2015), *One Foot Out the Door: Collected Stories* (Spuyten Duyvil, 2014), *A Place in the Sun* (Spuyten Duyvil, 2010) and *Inseparable: Poems 1995-2015* (Granary, 2008). He is editor and publisher of United Artists Books and teaches in the English Department’s Creative Writing MFA program. Lewis served as an Editorial Committee member for many issues of *Downtown Brooklyn* over the years. Lewis is the only contributor whose work appeared in all 24 issues. / **Tejan Green Waszak** is an alumna (2010) of LIU Brooklyn’s Creative Writing MFA program. While at LIU Brooklyn, she worked as a tutor in the Writing Center and then as a Graduate Teaching Fellow in the English Department. She is a writer, writing consultant, and college English instructor living in NYC. /
INDEX

Staff, Issues #1-24

2. Jennifer Ambrose, Associate Editor (Graduate Assistant) 13.
5. Joan M. Baker, Editorial Committee 4, Editor 5, Layout 5,
6. Rudy Baron, Associate Editor 1, Editor 2-4 & 6-7, Copy Editor 5, Editorial Committee 5.
8. Kenneth Bernard; Editorial Committee 5, 8, & 9.
9. Wayne Berninger; Associate Editor 1; Editorial Committee 2, 5 & 7; Editor 8-24.
10. Sigrun Birna Birnisdottir, Associate Editor 4.
11. Sarah Blazer, Associate Editor (Graduate Assistant) 14.
12. Marilyn Boutwell; Editorial Committee 5, 6, & 8-15.
15. David Brunt, Editor 4, Editorial Committee 5-11.
18. Josephine Clark, Copy Editor 5.
22. Jacqueline Dolly, Editorial Committee 4, Editor 5.
26. Paula Griffiths, Assistant Editor (Graduate Assistant) 10.
27. Mary Hallet, Editorial Committee 14.
30. Barbara Henning, Faculty Editor 1, Advising Faculty Editor 2-9, Editorial Committee 10 & 12-14, Editorial Advisor 24.
31. Mary Kennan Herbert, Editorial Committee 7-15, Copy Editor 8-10 & 18, Editorial Advisor 16-24.
33. Katherine Hogan (or Katherine A. Hogan); Editorial Committee 2 & 3; Copy Editor 5, 6, 8, & 9.
34. Khaleel Ismail, Editorial Committee 9-11.
35. Walter Jacobsohn, Editor 5 & 6.
39. Robin Keslonsky, Assistant Editor (Graduate Assistant) 9.
40. Sarah Kolbasowski, Editorial Advisor 16.
41. 'ren Kocun, Editorial Committee 5.
42. Angela Koritsoglou, Associate Editor 12 (Graduate Assistant), Editorial Committee 13 & 14.
43. Michael Ladd (or Michael C. Ladd); Editorial Committee 5, 8, & 9.
44. Josh LaMore, Editorial Advisor 23.
45. Kathleen Large, Assistant Editor 3, Editorial Committee 5.
49. Diane Macaraeg, Associate Editor (Graduate Assistant) 15.
52. Allia Abdullah Matta, Editorial Committee 11 & 12.
55. Phaedra Moore, Editorial Committee 11.
56. Lorinda Mouzon, Assistant Editor (Graduate Assistant) 16.
59. Steve Newton, Editorial Committee 8.
60. Louis Parascandola, Editorial Committee 15.
62. Jon L. Peacock, Assistant Editor (Graduate Assistant) 18.
63. Laura Phillips, Associate Editor (Graduate Assistant) 11.
64. Naomi Rand, Editorial Committee 5, 6, & 8.
65. Clenn Reed, Editorial Committee 7 & 10-12.
66. Giorgios Qure-Lacroix Retsinas, Associate Editor (Graduate Assistant) 17.
67. Sandra Rigo, Editorial Committee 2.
69. Karina Sang-Petrillo, Associate Editor (Graduate Assistant) 8.
70. Morgan Schulz (or Morgan M. X. Schulz), Editorial Committee 12-15, Editorial Advisor 16.
72. Seph (or Seph Rodney), Editorial Committee 4-6, Copy Editor 6.
75. Joy Surles, Editorial Committee 12.
77. Lewis Warsh; Editorial Committee 5, 6, 8, & 10-15; Editorial Advisor 16, 18, & 24.
78. Elizabeth Weaver, Editorial Committee 12 & 13.
79. Garth Wolkoff, Editorial Committee 7 & 8.
81. Sharman Yoffie, Editorial Committee 12.
Poets & Prose Writers, Issues #1-24

1. Goduwa Abdullah, 2, 4-7, 9, 10, 12, & 13.
2. Jennifer Abeles, 8.
3. Arjun J. Achuthan, 2,
5. Afonso S. Albergaria Jr., 2 & 4.
7. Stuart Alleyne, 8.
8. Liliana Almendarez, 18 & 19.
19. Melissa Antinori (or Melissa Berninger), 10 & 17.
20. Pam Arnett, 21.
22. Matthew Augustus, 23.
23. Souhir Ayach, 11.
25. Walter Balcerak, 13, 14, & 16.
26. Mary Ballweg, 3-6 & 9.
27. Katherine Balmer, 12.
29. Rudy Baron, 1-7, 16-18, & 20.
31. Tina Barry, 19, 21, & 22.
32. Gina Batista, 11.
33. Jeremy Beauregard, 16.
34. Felice Belle, 21 & 22.
35. Michael Bennett, 15, 17, & 18.
36. Nick Benson (as writer), 3, 8, 11, & 14; (as translator), 9.
41. Larry D. Bernstein, 6.
43. Sigrun Birna Birnisdottir, 4 & 5.
44. Eric Blake, 6.
45. Dmitry Blanshteyn, 17.
46. Sophie Bloomfield, 19.
47. Michael Bonanno, 7.
49. Marilyn Boutwell, 5, 6, 9, 10, 12, 14, 16, 18, & 22.
52. Sertiaira D. Boyd, 4.
53. Lawrence Bracey-Johnson, 15.
55. Avalon-Amber Branker, 1.
56. Barbra-Renee Brighenti, 1.
60. Sonia Mae Brown, 13 & 15.
61. Tina Brown-Ware, 1.
62. David Brunt (or David N. Brunt), 4-9.
63. Miriam Budner, 8.
64. William Burgos, 5.
65. Nicole Burns, 15.
66. Richard Burns (as translator), 10.
67. Margaret Bynoe, 5 & 7.
68. Grace Callendar, 5.
69. Bart Cameron (or A. Bart Cameron), 11 & 12.
70. Ana Campusano, 11,
71. Vanessa Carrington, 3 & 4.
72. Diane Carroll, 9.
73. Alexa Carter-Rodriguez, 23.
74. Ashley Carter-Sinclair, 14.
75. Clay Casey, 6.
77. Yoseli Castillo, 2 & 4.
78. C. P. Cavafy (trans. George Economou), 8.
80. Bruce Chadwick, 12-16, 18, 22, & 24.
81. Chia-Lun Chang, 22.
82. Kathie Cheng, 8 & 9.
83. Vitaly Chernetsky (as translator), 10.
84. Mariya Chernikova, 11 & 12.
85. Renuka Chinapen, 11.
87. Crystal Choy, 11.
88. Kim Ashley Chua, 19 & 22.
89. Earl Clark, 9 & 12.
90. Jeff Clark, 4.
91. Clairea Clay, 4.
92. Gina Concepcion, 14.
95. Thomas Conklin, 9.
96. Jeanette Coon, 1.
97. A. M. Cordero, 1 & 3.
98. Brenda Coultas, 6.
99. Steven Cox, 12.
100. Chris Croton, 6.
101. Laura Cruz, 7.
102. Omayra Cruz, 16 & 17.
103. Chanta Daniele, 9.
104. Cynthia Maris Dantzic (or Cynthia Dantzic), 12-24.
110. Michael DeSerio, 16.
111. Valerie Deus, 12 & 14.
112. Theresa Diamond, 6.
113. Diana Diaz, 11.
114. Amy Dipreta, 9.
116. Roberto Dominguez, 11.
118. Jack Donovan, 1.
119. Mark Dow, 8, 12, & 13.
120. marita casartelli downes, 16-19, 21, & 22.
121. Kevin Doyle, 16.
122. Ilya Dubinsky, 17.
123. Tiffany Dunbar, 15.
126. George Economou (as translator), 8; (as writer), 9-11.
128. Colin Enriquez, 12.
129. Howard Faerstein, 10-14.
131. Catherine Filloux, 11.
132. Sidney Fink (or Sidney S. Fink), 11, 12, 14, & 15.
133. Andrei Finocchiario, 6.
134. Samantha Fischbeck, 17.
135. Almaz Forsythe, 3.
137. Sarah Francois, 24.
138. Courtney Frederick, 12.
139. Varvara Galperina, 17.
140. Christine Gans, 14-19.
141. Mina Gendy, 17.
142. Sarah Germany (or sgermany), 6 & 7.
143. Janelle Germany-Coles, 11.
144. Andrew Gettler, 3.
145. Wally Glickman, 10, 11, 13, 18, & 21.
146. Dana Glumons, 9.
147. Joanna Gonzalez, 21-23.
149. Stephanie Gray, 17-20.
150. Stacey Grayson, 14.
151. Karl Greenberg, 5.
152. Paula Griffiths, 10.
153. E. Tracy Grinnell, 11.
156. Peter Gunter, 4.
158. Susan Halio, 12, 13, & 15.
159. Noel Nantambu Hall, 3 & 4.
160. Wil Hallgren, 9-13 & 16.
161. Robin Hammerman, 3.
162. Shannon Hammon, 5.
163. Eric Han, 10.
164. Kmur Hardeman, 18.
165. Lynn Hassan, 13.
166. Michael Hassan, 9-14, 21, & 22.
Barbara Henning, 1-5, 7-10, 12-18, 21, 22, & 24.
Bethann A. Henry, 17.
Mary Kennan Herbert (or Mary Herbert), 3-24.
Aimee Herman, 20 & 21.
Annie Herman, 18 & 24.
Enid Hernandez, 17.
Robyn Hillman-Harrigan, 21.
Darchelle G. Hinson, 11.
Pearl Hochstadt, 1.
Danny Hoey, 14.
Katherine Hogan (or Katherine A. Hogan), 1-4, 6-11, 13, 15, & 20.
David Hollister, 10.
Lew Holton, 10.
Patrick Horrigan, 3 & 4.
Daphne Horton, 19 & 20.
Lisa Huang, 19.
Yan Hong Huang, 17.
Casey Hutchison, 24.
Tony Iantosca, 19 & 20.
Giuseppe Infante, 19-21.
Lindsay Infantino, 24.
Gulay Isik, 20.
Khaleel Ismail, 9.
Christopher Iverson, 22.
Rachel Jackson, 19.
Karlene Jackson-Thompson, 11 & 12.
Walter Jacobsohn, 1-6.
Maggie Jaffe, 7.
Tyrone James, 7.
Lisa Jarnot, 5, 6, 10, & 11).
Karen Jasper (or Ren Jasper, or ‘ren Kolcun), 5, 8-13, & 15.
Chelot R. Jerome, 11.
Tanya Jerry, 9.
Jibarosoy, 23 & 24.
Elaine Johnson, 11.
Belynda Jones, 17, 20, & 22.
Jamey Jones, 18-20.
Patricia Spears Jones, 18.
Zilvinas Jonusas, 10.
Tyrone Joseph, 3.
Alystyre Julian, 10.
209. Kate, 19-21.
211. Tiani Kennedy, 21.
212. Tom Kerr, 11.
216. Darlene Kinderman (or Darlene K. Kinderman), 1 & 2.
217. Eleanor King, 11.
218. Jason King, 5.
220. Rosamond S. King, 14 & 17.
221. Sarah Kolbasowski (or Sarah Ghoshal), 14-19 & 24.
222. Angela Koritsoglou, 12.
223. Michael C. Ladd (or Michael Ladd), 4, 5, & 8.
224. Kimberly Lamm, 11.
226. Hollie Lane, 8.
227. Kathleen Large, 1-5.
228. Ann Larson, 10-12, 17, 19, & 21.
229. Christopher Leary, 13.
230. Tamara Lebron, 18, 19, 21, & 22.
231. Ermin Lee, 7.
233. Linda Lerner, 3 & 4.
234. Michael Levine, 1.
235. Valerie Lewis, 6.
236. Xiao-Ming Li, 11.
237. Andrea Libin, 9, 17, & 18.
238. Aaron Lieberman, 13.
239. Tim Lieder, 16.
244. C. London, 10.
245. Amyre Loomis, 21 & 22.
246. Loodjie Louisca, 24.
248. Gina Luben, 11.
249. Kristina Lucenko (as translator), 11.
250. Cheryl Mabry, 5.
251. Diane Macaraeg, 14 & 15.
252. Shawndell McAllister, 8.
255. Elspeth W. Macdonald (or Elspeth Woodcock Macdonald), 18-22.
258. Anna Kay McNally, 15.
259. Vasyl Mahkno, 10 (trans. Vasyl Mahkno, Richard Burns, & Vitaly Chernetsky) & 11
261. Anna Malmude, 4.
262. s.manor, 17 & 18.
263. Jaime Manrique, 18.
264. Charlotte Marchant, 10 & 12.
265. Ruth E. Margraff, 8.
266. Sayde Marzolf, 11.
269. Rosemary Maude, 4, 6, & 9.
270. Bernadette Mayer, 17.
274. Marlyn Menelas, 11.
275. David Middendorf, 23.
277. Jeffrey Miller, 6 & 7.
278. Lindsey Michael Miller, 15 & 16.
279. Alex Mindt, 19.
280. Katrinka Moore, 8, 9, 11, & 12.
281. Phaedra Moore, 10.
282. Noam Mor, 4, 6, & 9.
284. Danielle Moskowitz, 18 & 19.
285. Lorinda Mouzon, 16.
286. Cecelia Muhlstein, 12.
287. Takeema Muller, 11.
288. Deborah Mutnick, 3, 4, 10, & 15.
290. Lori Sue Nadler, 4.
291. Matt Nagin, 11, 17, & 22.
294. Margot Marie Nasti, 16 & 17,
298. Marcia Newfield, 3, 4, & 7-12.
300. Kimarlee Nguyen, 23.
301. Angela Nichols, 24.
302. Ieshia Noel, 11.
303. Phyllis C. Noel, 22.
304. Connie Noschese, 1-3.
307. Toby Olson, 8.
308. Sophia Ortiz, 13.
309. Dan Owen (or Daniel Owen), 21-23.
311. Karl Parker, 6 & 13.
312. Trish Parker, 13.
313. Asja Parrish, 21.
316. Tiffany Patterson, 21.
317. Zahra Patterson, 17-19.
319. Tashima Pearson, 11.
321. Yvette M. Pennacchia (or Yvette Pennachia), 2-4.
323. Mark Raymond Perkins, 17.
324. Padmini Persaud, 7.
325. Ronald J. Pestone, 8, 9, & 12.
327. Margaret Peterson, 14.
328. Letitia Pinkney, 11.
331. Laura Phillips, 10 & 11.
332. Wang Ping, 16 & 17.
Carol Polcovar, 10 & 12.
Frank Post, 2.
Manuel Gonzalez Prada (trans. G. J. Racz), 16.
Kristin Prevallet, 9.
Samantha Pryce, 4.
Danielle Pryor, 24.
Victor Puello, 10 & 12.
Asha Punnett, 13.
Maurice Puryear, 4.
G. J. Racz (as translator), 8-11 & 13-23.
Naomi Rand, 6.
Masood Ranginwala, 6.
Jessica Rao, 5.
Angeli Rasbury, 22.
Cordell Reaves, 3 & 4.
Clenn Reed, 6, 7, & 9.
M. A. Reid, 15 & 17.
Joseph Reister, 15 & 16.
Giorgios Qure-Lacroix Retsinas (or Giorgios Retsinas, or Giorgios Q. Retsinas), 12, 13, & 15-19.
Leslie Anne Rexach, 20.
Kevin Reyes, 12.
Felicia Reynolds, 17 & 19.
Kristen Rial, 1.
Sandra Rigo, 1 & 2.
Memoona Rizwan, 19.
James Roberts, 14.
Mebane Robertson, 9 & 11.
Beatriz Alzate Rodriguez, 19-21.
Harold Rodriguez, 15.
Michael Rodriguez, 10 & 12.
Lisa Rogal, 20-22.
Don Rogers, 2, 4, 5, & 8-10.
Jessica Rogers, 16 & 17.
Tenisha Rooney, 11.
Gennecis Rosado, 3.
Lindsey Royce, 6.
Anele Rubin, 2, 6, 8, 12, 15, & 18.
Desiree Rucker, 20-22.
Jesse Ruderman, 10.
Yolaine St. Fort (or Yolaine Mareus-St. Fort), 8-10, 12, 13, 16, & 22.
P. J. Salber, 10, 14, & 17-24.
Felix Maria Samaniego (trans. G. J. Racz), 14 & 17.
Jamiyl Samuels, 8.
Jhon Sanchez, 19.
Karina Sang (or Karina Sang-Petrillo), 7, 8, 11, & 12.
Micah Savaglio, 20 & 21.
Lauren Scarlino, 17.
Morgan M. X. Schulz (or Morgan M.X. Schulz, or Morgan Schulz), 12-17 & 21.
Amos Schumacher, 8.
Heather Schuster, 2.
Laurence C. Schwartz, 1 & 2.
Michael Schwartz, 1-3.
Jean Scott, 6.
Seph (or Seph Rodney), 3-5.
Purvi Shah, 17.
Shahn, 9.
Sarah Shapiro, 15.
Alex Sikarevich, 4.
Eleni Sikelianos, 8.
Leanne Trapedo Sims, 4.
Emily L. Sisley (or Emily Sisley), 5, 8, & 17.
Abigail Sison, 22 & 23.
Sharif Skinner, 11.
Bob Slaymaker, 8 & 9.
Carolyn A. Smith, 18.
Pamela Sneed, 17.
Michelle Madigan Somerville, 10.
Joe Sorge, 8.
Deidre Soto, 12.
Stephen Soreff, 17.
Dylan Sparrow, 14.
Robert Donald Spector (or Robert D. Spector), 6-17.
Lara Stapleton, 11.
Chris Stroffolino, 7.
Danielle Stuger, 11.
Darren Subarton, 7.
Jane Suda, 13.
Pamella Sudlow, 6.
Joy Surles, 11 & 12.
Mark Svenvold, 2 & 3.
Anna Szalkiewicz, 2.
113

418. Colette Tardiff, 14.
419. Jason Tarnowski, 7.
420. Roger Thomas, 11.
422. Andrea Tirrell, 23.
423. Tiffany Toale, 15.
425. Henry Toromoren Jr., (or Henry Toromoren), 5 & 7.
426. Mike Traber, 8-19, 21, 23, & 24.
428. Adam Tworkofsky, 7 & 8.
430. Nick Valinotti, 3-6.
431. Yekaterina Valuyeva, 17.
433. Angelo Vargas, 8.
434. Leonid Vasilevskiy, 10.
436. Mary Walker, 18 & 19.
437. Sarah Anne Wallen (or Sarah Wallen), 20 & 21.
438. Orlando Warren, 5-9, 11-14, 18, 21, & 23.
440. Patricia Washington, 11.
442. Elizabeth Weaver, 10, 12, & 13.
447. James Whitaker, 10.
448. Artress Bethany White (or A. B. White), 1 & 2.
449. Craig Steven Wilder, 2.
450. Dwayne Williams, 8.
452. Sharon Williams, 11.
453. Spencer Wise, 16.
454. Joe Wolff, 16.
455. Garth Wolkoff, 7.
456. Wei Wong, 15.
457. John Wright, 8.
458. Guozhou Wu, 17.
460. Larry Young, 13.
462. Amia Zoecklin, 17.
463. Mark Zuss, 1.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th><strong>Visual Artists, Issues #1-24</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Hisae Aihara, cover &amp; eight-page portfolio 15.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Stuart E. Alleyne, illustration 6.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Joan M. Baker, cover design 5.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Elizabeth Bates, cover &amp; eight-page portfolio 13.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Sam Beltran, illustration 6.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Kenneth Bernard, cover &amp; four-page portfolio 18.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Robert Bunkin, four-page portfolio 17.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Chris Cai, illustration 5.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Delsa Camacho, cover &amp; four-page portfolio 9.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Lucia Canarte, cover &amp; four-page portfolio 14.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Cynthia Maris Dantzic (or Cynthia Dantzic), illustration 5, four-page portfolio 16.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Francks Francois Deceus, cover &amp; four-page portfolio 7, cover &amp; four-page portfolio 10.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Shubert Denis, four-page portfolio 8.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Charulata L. Dyal, cover &amp; four-page portfolio 17.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Simone Epps, 1 page of four-page portfolio of cellphone contest winners 22.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Sam Ferri (or Samuel Ferri), comic 16, cover &amp; four-page portfolio 19.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Franklin Garrett, front cover 3.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Joanne Gawrys, illustration 5.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Michael Grimaldi, four-page portfolio 21.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Cheryl Gross, cover &amp; four-page portfolio 6.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Gina Guarino, cover photography (for design by Wayne Berninger &amp; Laura Phillips) &amp; four-page portfolio 11.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Lynn Hassan, cover &amp; four-page portfolio 12.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>Esther Hyneman, front cover 1.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>Leon Jansyn, illustration 5.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>Patrick Jewell, four-page portfolio 19.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>Mariko Kobayashi, four-page portfolio 12.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>Hoa Le, illustration 5.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>Donna Li, illustration 5.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>Hilary Lorenz, cover &amp; four-page portfolio 23.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>Ed Maietta, front cover 2.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31</td>
<td>Peter Maslow, four photos distributed throughout 6.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32</td>
<td>Rosemary Mayer, cover &amp; four-page portfolio 16.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33</td>
<td>Saade A. Mustafa, illustration 6.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34</td>
<td>Thanhnh Nguyen, illustration 6.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35</td>
<td>Sean O’Meara, four-page portfolio 14, cover &amp; four-page portfolio 21.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36</td>
<td>Juan Ortiz, illustration 5.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37</td>
<td>Slava Polishchuk, illustration 6.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Name</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>-----------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38.</td>
<td>Patrina D. Powell-Gourdet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40.</td>
<td>Marie A. Roberts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42.</td>
<td>Linda Romano</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43.</td>
<td>Crystal Rose</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44.</td>
<td>Andrew Thomas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45.</td>
<td>Lewis Warsh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46.</td>
<td>Lisa Deloria Weinblatt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>47.</td>
<td>Constance Woo</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>