



Fall 2017  
Issue 14

# Jet Fuel Review

Featuring work by Brenda Miller / Lee Gulyas / Rebecca Morgan Frank  
Henry Israeli / Jamea Richmond-Edwards / Angela Narciso Torres  
Naoko Fujimoto / Angela Eve / Anastasios Ketsios





# **JET FUEL** Review

*A High Octane Literary Journal*

*[www.jetfuelreview.com](http://www.jetfuelreview.com)*

*[lewislitjournal.wordpress.com](http://lewislitjournal.wordpress.com)*

*Artwork: Jamea Richmond-Edwards' "Clouds Over Wings"*  
*Cover Design: Kayla Chambers*





## Mission Statement

We seek to create a writer's community, publish quality writing and artwork, and maintain a blog connected to the literary journal site.

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## Foreword

Dear Readers,

Thank you for opening up the 14th issue of *Jet Fuel Review*. The editors are thrilled to be able to share with you another collection of poetry, fiction, creative nonfiction, and artwork. After reviewing hundreds of submissions over the course of two months, the editors selected creative pieces from across genres and mediums that we feel are the best demonstrations of our commitment to publishing quality writing and artwork.

Seven years old now, *Jet Fuel Review* was founded by Mary Egan, Lewis University alumna, who launched the idea of creating a literary journal produced by the students of our university. Over the years, *JFR* has grown beyond the Lewis community and into a nationally-recognized publication that showcases work from writers and artists from across the globe. The journal also has developed an ancillary blog where we continue to embrace the artistic community as we have developed a variety of blogs about literature, comic books, music, mindfulness, and film. Even though *JFR* has evolved much from its early days, we are still dedicated to upholding our mission of endorsing the arts' community by highlighting quality writing and artwork.

In this, our 14th issue, we are excited to feature Jamea Richmond-Edwards as our cover artist. Her works are in the permanent collection of private collectors across the country and in the Embassy of the United States in Dakar, Senegal and, now, they have a spot in *Jet Fuel Review*. The editors are, obviously, thrilled to have pieces from her "Clouds Over Wings" collection, a series of innovative, regal portraits marked by strikingly vibrant colors and complex compositions.

In poetry, we are honored to publish Rebecca Morgan Frank, Henry Israeli, and Naoko Fujimoto who has also given us some of her "graphic poetry" which can be viewed in the art section. Also in this issue, we are publishing an assortment of collaborative work, including Brenda Miller and Lee Gulyas's lyrical, braided nonfiction essays that navigate the complicated terrain of coming-of-age. We also are proud to present Image Collective, Angela Eve and Anastasios Ketsios' fifteen-year partnership in photography where their projects that present the effects of Hurricane Katrina, suicide, flooding in Texas, cancer, disease, performance, and music.

There are many more voices within the pages of this journal that challenge, inspire, and demand to be heard. One of our main goals at *JFR* is representing diversity in its myriad forms: we strive to publish a variety of genres and styles by people of differing ages, genders, ethnicities, orientations, and backgrounds, because we want to publish work that represents the intricate and manifold experiences in the world. Given all of this linguistic and visual richness, we invite you to enjoy our 14th issue, and we hope you will appreciate the stunning assortment of work that we have gathered.

Read on!

Sam Gennett & the *Jet Fuel Review* Editors





A teal-colored zigzag line that runs horizontally across the page, passing behind the word "POETRY". It has a jagged, mountain-like appearance with several peaks and valleys.

# POETRY



## **How Capitalism Dreams**

It dreams of knives unzipping torsos  
and finding the truth: some men aren't made of flesh,  
crumpled dollars clogging arteries, dirty and manhandled.

It dreams of fire that looks veined: it knows  
that destruction is the most human thing of all.  
It has nightmares of people who speak and sparks

flare from their mouths, of private jets crashing  
into mansions, of waking to a home coated  
in so much dust that no maid can make it shine,

of foreign tongues that turn to divining rods  
and point accusatorially wherever it goes, of stray dogs  
with voices, of spells that resurrect the murdered,

of rusted tanks, of prison bars melting, of suffering  
that turns land into a rash, of songs that claw  
at walls like an infestation, of children

reading books about heroes who learn  
how to rescue themselves, of skin  
that's not as white as snow.



## What is Trying to Kill You

The wastelands where no serotonin flourishes  
in your brain. The dams that your body builds  
in your arteries out of trans fat and refined sugar.  
Your inability to solve the equations of investments  
and retirement savings. Snorting the ancestry  
of corporations. Economies that subsist  
on blood. Fleeing a home you love, chased  
off by rising rent. Politicians who play  
fetch with human bones and gnaw  
on them on their down time. Maybe the man  
that follows you off the bus has a gun.  
Maybe he has fangs and that hunger that afflicts  
only beasts and men. Sometimes you say  
you're hunted and no one believes you.  
Sometimes you tell no one you're eroding.  
The tasers you watch chomping on black torsos  
corrode your tenuous faith in justice.  
Sometimes you fantasize about social change,  
but an aerial video of the protest you marched  
reveals that you look like vermin that have overrun  
something abandoned. You never enter  
an airport security machine without imagining  
what it would feel like for your plane to crash  
into a high rise. Gods with penises  
that mansplain from holy books that men  
kept revising, so that your muted body would cave  
in on itself obediently and worship.  
The prayer beads you bind your wrists  
with, the talismans you've rubbed into fray.  
Your poorly seamed anxiety, your legacy of melancholy,  
your stockpile of genetic diseases. Memories  
you can't conjure anymore. You're waiting  
for the winds to gather their forces  
and invade your shores. Rising sea levels,  
holes in the ozone layer, melting polar ice caps,  
climate change, human destruction so senseless  
that it can only be gawked at. Words that evade  
truth. Truths that evade voices. The refugee crisis  
of your fingers that reach out as open palms  
when they need to be fists to feel safe.

## **Survivor**

The philanderer and the harlot gave you the world's tiniest violin  
to play at their multiple weddings. They are your parents.

Across town your sister sits in a flower dress,  
only long enough to cover her sadness.

You sing as you play: O, persistent shame, come hither;  
ever the second child, they had to throw out the first

not like a baseball or a bouquet but like a miscarriage  
spinning in history's pale, porcelain bowl.

I see you have grown your hair long as a willow.  
You are beautiful and wise. When the whispers begin

you never stop cooking  
but follow the recipe by heart

so your ears are free to catch even one fact before it's doused  
quick as a firefly, to bring at night to your sister

hidden in the silo. There she sits, a shy ram on the sidelines,  
as they go through the grand motions of laying the greater good on the pyre.

## **The Frank Stella Irrespective**

“Do you still call these things paintings?”  
“Yes, they are, in fact, paintings.”

I am not your window.  
I am your door painter.

I am your poor, yearning to be me.  
Take off the audio-guide and step on it.

I pick colors that follow the race circuit.  
My biography is cartography.

I am straight from the can.  
My Jewish gates are closed open to you.

I will destroy the old villages with a protractor.  
I found the object that you lost in Russia in 1933.

I married a birder.  
Yes, she was, in fact, a passionate birder.

I wept in jail from an anecdote that made others laugh.  
See how the picture plane gives it both ways?

I am not a mirror.  
I am your mirror.

I kept one hand on the wall, it was hard to give it up.  
I have changed everything with a tiny cut.

Most of all, the painting is an argument.  
and I am the one who has to be convinced.



## This One Pays the Cashier in Quarters

At the checkout line, I hold a five pound bag  
of rice in one arm & a box of sugary cereal

that softens up my teeth for the coming rot  
in the other. This line is a puzzle of physics:

something that appears in motion without  
ever getting closer to its endpoint. This line

moves like a cadaver driving a Porsche, or  
a flightless bird loosed on the barren moon.

The old woman at the front pays in rolls of  
quarters, & for some reason the cashier is

required to weigh them first, & as so often  
happens, I think of the apocalypse. When

it comes, whatever form it takes, someone  
somewhere will be at a checkout line, paying

in quarters or even pennies, & the cashier  
tasked to weigh & count & cash the coinage

will glance up from their drudgery & see the  
fireball blooming outside. *"Thank you, God,"*

they'll silently mouth.

## **Exegesis Americana**

The God of the Americans drives  
a 1985 Ford F250 pickup truck  
& conceals His thinning gray hair  
beneath a bright red ballcap.

The angry God of the Americans drinks  
from a hipflask of dark matter. His liver  
is a collapsing star. Inside His beer gut  
those children who gave Him lip

are digesting, quiet now as stones.  
The God of the Americans drives  
his truck to a pine forest where  
He gets stupid drunk & fires his gun

skyward, until He blasts a hole in  
creation wide enough to crawl through.

## **First Marriage As If**

My first marriage is killing itself, but  
it is not my fault. Slowly whiskey  
evaporates  
behind the couch. I commit plates, so  
if I bring a box of brown rice to the table, if  
I pray,            if I overdose on painkillers,  
do you still lie on the cushion?  
You watch TV and the cat in turns;  
“I am aware of my cocoon period, honey.” I know  
you walk at 3:00am to find the recycling can.

## Trainride to Another

It is not hard to lose a map,  
even though she stitches me one  
from the station to home

on my left kneecap. She eats  
a cookie on her father's thigh in a train.  
The crumbs disappear

after three stations. Her father tucks  
in her hair like a bead curtain, like her red sari—  
it bandages her legs. She carries

dirt from a truck to the railroad during summer.  
She stirs a bottle of lemon dregs and plays an accordion  
one corner past the busiest station, so I

listen to it for two blocks  
while tasting coffee grounds. I have not  
lost my location yet— aging for sure, the window shows

my sunken cheeks. If I disappear into another  
dimension, I look through an aperture and tell her,  
“I am a patient.”

(cancer perhaps) Her strawberry  
ice-cream melts,  
drips on her shoes in a gentle gradient.

## **Subsistence**

Under the knife  
the lotus root  
falls in slices  
that look like  
many-eyed  
skulls.

The null  
hypothesis,  
the one to be  
disproved,  
dissolves  
in a mangle  
of hunger.

We eat  
what grows  
in mud  
not to be/  
come mud,  
not to be/

come the skull,  
many-eyed  
and watching,  
always watching.

## Things Found in a Backyard Swimming Pool

The fuchsia tutus  
of tiny ballerinas  
fallen from  
the mimosa tree.

The shiny  
silver coins  
of drowned  
baby mice.

Twinned sea-  
horses in the brains  
of local children,  
swimming in time  
like in glass.

Seafoam  
green ghosts  
of clam shells,  
and starfish,  
and one bare-  
nipped mermaid  
insisting her way  
through layers  
of whitewash  
on the walls  
of the once  
palely tattooed pool.  
Then, quick as  
a chlorine blink,  
the watery visions  
vanish.

In the dining room  
the quirky former owner's  
other marooned mural—  
faraway boats  
afloat  
on the Sea of Crete  
as glimpsed through  
Doric columns—  
is also covered over

by layers  
and layers  
of suburban paint.

Still, when the light  
shines at a particular  
angle the seascape  
flickers  
on the wall  
like a scene  
from an old black  
and white movie  
just before the film  
in the projector snaps  
(*kaCHAK kaCHAK*).

Guests, sometimes,  
push their chairs back  
from the table,  
shaking their heads  
and muttering, until  
the buried mural  
is explained.

But the children  
whose better part  
of the day's  
been spent underwater  
are unsurprised  
when a thing is one  
moment within reach  
and the next moment  
gone.

Like a near-  
by  
heart-  
beat  
thudding  
through the waters,  
almost unnoticed,  
having always  
been there,  
(*à deux, adieu*)

until the children  
rupture the pool's  
surface and emerge,  
slicked and blinking,  
into the bright and  
separate world.



## The Golden Organizer Speaks the Shadorma

*“The beauty of the world, which is so soon to perish, has two edges,  
one of laughter, one of anguish...”*

—Virginia Woolf

A solo  
cabal posed in  
cloud towers,  
I spin slick  
stabilimenta into  
a strict no-fly zone,

nuclear  
advertisement for  
hummingbirds  
and finches.  
I’m a billboard, my hunger  
a hedge investment.

Try and shred  
this bright courtesy  
with tweets  
of hot, dead air.  
I’ll vanish these protections,  
roast you in cocoons.

## Not All Hexagons are Honeycombs But All Honeycombs are Hexagonal

Because I was dreaming the room I was in, in the fringe of waking  
I couldn't tell what was dreamroom from what was wood & nail, glass & air.  
I bolted upright in bed after having been dormant for half a century.

If you're not losing sleep over the irregular patterns of the nightmare-  
catchers the Chernobyl spiders are weaving, you probably should be.  
The sun is to blame. Or the ice receding, revealing the missing.

A girl *vanishes into thin air* & her sister says she's been raptured.  
Sometimes I can't explain why something happens so I hypothesize.  
Because the candy-factory workers complained about the buzzing dumpsters,

the apiarists discovered the grids of blue & green honey.  
The fruit is the brainchild of the seed. Elsewhere it sleeted diamonds  
& a funnel cloud, like an apocalyptic swarm, leveled

the town back into sacred geometry.  
It'd been a cold winter without sugary waste.

## **The Cut**

A chair spins you straight into the mirror's view.  
The stylist shears inches of hair, tenderly prunes  
your hair into a cap. Think Joan of Arc, 80s pop star  
when you have felt what once twisted around neck.  
Shoulders become a cape where sweat and wind lifts  
heat away from the skin. Fingers lift the hair away  
where there is something like freedom from weight,  
the comb, and the blowdryer. Wake up feeling like  
this head is a light, feathery glory that should know  
fingers lingering and wrapping around its almost curls.

## I Inherit Two Shoe Boxes

Under cardboard lids: my mother's childhood. Here, sepia tinged pigtailed and pinafores pose next to wheelbarrow, or birthday cake, or freshly caught bass. Men in suits, round women wearing scarves. Just off the boat Lithuanian relatives stand shoulder to shoulder: an anniversary, a wedding, a funeral. In one photo, there is a row of men cradling rifles. In the foreground: two children—my mother and her brother. He is lanky with tousled hair, bare feet and overalls; she is wearing a short white dress. Both of them are standing at attention—like prisoners of war. I recognize those children; we are, in a way, siblings in the same house. Though they never had the strength to remember. Certainly not the cuttlefish. Those nocturnal hunters: carnivorous cephalopods eating prey behind clouds of brown ink shot from rectal glands. Alive, my mother drew a line "Nothing past *here*, ever happened." I stack photos back into boxes, tape down the covers, feel the space between us as big as a room full of heavy breathing.

## **Sleep**

*for John Ashbery*

That there was, above all, a key  
that fit. That the door was a door  
that could be shut

against the night & all its eyes. That the road  
beyond the curve exists.

That inside the box is a story.  
That waking is sometimes a form  
of dying, & dying

the knowledge that winter is transitive.  
That the heart is a dream of return.

That in my hand is a fistful  
of buttons. That the river has its own  
gravity. That after

trying seasons, angels lay down  
their wings & sleep in the earth.

## **My Mother Tells Me of the American Dream**

The small house was on a big lot,  
just like the real estate listing promised—  
*All That Land.*

In photos the lot is long, narrow  
as a bowling alley, walled by maples.  
Over the fence, a creek and apple trees.  
By October, branches were too bare  
to hide the missile site just beyond.  
My mother didn't mention  
whether missiles were built or stored  
or studied there, but marveled

at the Cold War normalcy  
of children running circles  
around the yard as if chased  
by heat-seeking missiles,  
then collapsing

in the shadow of the military satellite  
shading the yard like a beach umbrella  
while inside Grandma floured the table  
to roll out a Crisco crust

and Grandpa peeled a Jonagold  
in a single tight spiral, desperate  
to carve away anything radioactive  
from the sweet flesh inside.

## **When They Ask You**

what you'll name it you should lie. Say  
something about chickens  
    unhatched, a bloody speck  
in a golden yolk. Say something  
you can't pronounce  
    alone, like a trinity  
of little pulses beating *as-one as-one as-one*.  
Say something you'd hang on the fridge  
like an A-plus, magnetic poem, coupon  
clipped for a half-price haircut. Say  
    an almost-something, incanted  
helium light on a gentle breeze. Say  
a past something, echoed in a canyon,  
    a wind-based haunting,  
    tombstone-rubbing,  
a great-great-great loop in time. Lie  
but if you say it, when you say it,  
it will feel like meeting again and again  
    for the very first time.

## **Regeneration**

Your most terrible memory is a sea  
of arms waving all together

like hair underwater. The arms  
meaning something else. The sea, too.

The hair not a corpse's but a mermaid's.  
This wasn't the answer to my question

but the answer to a different one.  
The bones of an arm are stronger

than a spine. The ridge of your wrist  
can be a new vertebrae. The body

remembering it as a piece of its own.  
In retrospect, this can't be true.

The graft all wrong, the shape,  
the push/pull of your muscles.

Though maybe what I mean to say  
is that it's possible. It's possible to heal

all starfish-like, new arms waving  
underwater. Maybe what I mean to say

is that these parts of you weren't lost  
but shed. Dropped into the sea bed

like a second boot. The terrible memory  
of the moment just before or just after.

Your belly learning everything  
a hand has known to do.



## **The Sound, They Call It a *Report***

Though it hangs on nothing,  
does not speak. Hot & short,

it flings its checkered shirt  
over the elevated line.

And you, you are made of dirt  
& god's lost teeth & now

you lose your bones, you  
slump, a slow white scow

of water & fat, of fast  
words, hot words, beef

you had with the past.  
Tide turns the street to glass.

So now we'll work it, wrench  
& sandpaper & bearing brass.

We'll turn it, ribbons of protein  
& curd, voices like sour milk.

The shot, carrying all of the story  
that matters, anyway.

## **Restraining Order**

Reeds sing, the evening starling  
takes its survey of death.

Here, on the road. There, in the path.  
The body of the deer, white foam,

black cuticles from which horn  
erupts, signifies. I mean,

nothing signs the paper like  
a formal hand, a beautiful ink,

a silver that resolves, cuts apart,  
holds in abeyance.

But if it could. If we would  
think of this day as a river lighthouse,

squat stone tower dividing a current,  
stoic before the rushing anthem.

We are not far from the river now.

## Sassafras Root

Night soaks night  
                  soaks fire.

The lightjars  
                  hammer, stutter/

O, er, or

Night on tenterhooks & ladders.

Redear in the dark ponds of the game preserve  
                  spooking & glowing.

Hound by the door. The pulse of engines through the country fields.

Starlight fletches the dark, straight blackgum.  
Black silk like a second skin  
                  walnut-skin, hard hands.

On the one hand, I'm still your brother.  
I dress like your brother.

On the other, I'm the cutter, the one with spade & knife.

You hold the paper bag and the light.

## **Rebirth**

Today my father returns as a fox  
scrambling to get off the road and into a copse.  
He looks up at me passing by in my Highlander  
for a fraction of a second, confirming his suspicion  
that I would never live up to his expectations.  
His big red tail—he's always been so proud of it—  
slithers away into the shrubs. As a bird,  
he looks down at me in pity. As a deer,  
he stands at the bottom of my driveway  
and gives me that long sad stare. As a rabbit,  
he takes what he can from my garden.  
Then, in a blink, he's gone, and I'm left longing  
for his return. For he loves me, in his way,  
the way a fire loves a tree.

## Turn the Key Deftly

I spend all morning pulling words  
from a dead man's mouth. At first he resists  
as only the dead can  
giving me the glare  
of one who's always felt misunderstood.  
Then he gives in, and I feel his body  
grow light in my arms  
with the unburdening of a vocabulary  
lodged as if in a little vault  
behind his ribs. He could be my father  
or he could be an older me,  
this is still unclear, even as the words

he's kept hidden for years  
spill out, which is a way of saying  
there are mercies in this world  
that beg to be said aloud, mercies to be heard at last.  
*There's no pain now*, he tells me, although he  
no longer has a face  
but a hole the size of a face  
where his face used to be  
and when I reach deep inside it  
my fingers wrap around a pistol—  
its hard, cold grip making my hand feel  
alive for the first time.

## **Party**

Open this house  
to darkness. We shall have  
a dance floor. I go to answer the phone  
but the cord is cut. I cup my hands  
around my face and press it to the window.  
We have been trying to contact you.  
This house comes apart in pieces. I have thought little  
about where I left the fragments. A room  
with nothing in it but a stone  
that floats like something  
that has no right to. A room with no fruit.  
A room with no windows, some bodies, a view.  
This house is at the bottom of a frozen  
lake. It's the naked one on the beach:  
you can't miss it. The vultures form  
a circle, the music bubbles.

**Honeysuckle, Hyacinth**

How we walk in the valley of death  
Life rising around us in shifting peaks, light stain  
Dogwood peppers the underworld, the undergrowth  
Generates scented flowers, tempting you closer to the dirt  
Watch raptors circle and spiral and spin down  
Toward the little bodies bleeding around you  
Decomposition is derived from making something  
Out of nothing you came, how you walk in the valley  
For departure is not under august circumstances  
Fictitious glory, and yet, springtime in the valley  
We cling to the flowers like bees  
And the ants and maggots follow their own sweet scent

## **In Praise of the Immortal Jellyfish**

As a child I was told that the maraschino cherries  
set in gelatin never decomposed,

lived on like bright beacons  
in my core. I felt the hot red points move out

into my bones, brighter than my blood, filling me  
like a scarecrow made of the things around it

worth protecting. I imagined how the dead—  
my mother, my grandmother—

would leave only red dye-drenched matter,  
and when they cremated me my own ash

would turn red, hot with my hunger,  
my greediness immortal.

My body less enduring than this jellied creature  
that floats in the sea and turns death

into a regression as it begins again,  
remembering nothing.

Immortality is spreading through the oceans,  
leaving us ashore like beached whales,

lamenting how we could have been that blob—  
colorless, flavorless, but enduring.

Beginning again and again in the deep sea.



## Daily News

Oh bodies, where are you?  
I hear the flowers, the pines,  
the lizards mourn even in their silence.

We are silent too, even when we  
ask where are the bodies, where are  
the bodies in ash in sky, where

can we find comfort, and how?  
The leaves shake in shadow on the shades  
and you cannot leave the house, you cannot

leave the neighborhood, you cannot find  
the bodies, the bodies, where are the bodies?  
They say there are children there, being burned

alive [they say the old woman pushes them  
in the oven and burns them alive, they say]  
the armies are closing in and

all it takes is a match, the armies are closing in  
and [the mothers, the mothers, it's always  
the mothers] [there is nothing left

for them to bury.] Bluebeard lifts his  
hatchet every time he comes back  
home from war. Scheherazade  
fashions a new story every time

her boss comes to her. We listen  
to the stories, ask where are the bodies  
where are the bodies? Everyone

knows that today, children were burned  
alive. The television screens are fired  
up behind the shades. Eyelids fall

because who tells the tales? Who listens?  
Who lights the match and watches  
the children burn? Today, children burn.

## **Gemma Donati, Doppiatrice**

She works alone,  
or so it seems, the dark room  
with hanging mike and headphones

a sensory deprivation chamber.  
She repeats the lines again and again  
to get the timing right. Not the muse,

nor the singer, she says someone else's  
words. When the blonde teen speaks  
in any movie, Gemma is her voice,

*italiana*, all those vowels wrong  
for how that mouth moves,  
but the ice-lined tone just right.

She speaks for her, ventriloquizer,  
when she acts on television, too.  
Cruel when she needs to be, when Ashley is,

she can steal a boy or scene.  
When the red light turns off,  
she is not in a hotel, nor high school,

no garish sets waiting to be made real.  
She's a brunette, in fact,  
can have dinner in a piazza

while *le ragazze* giggle in groups.  
They would know her voice,  
if she spoke, but not her face.

## Network

I sieved a guiltfish  
out of my bloodstream

last night, itchy bones,  
jelly brain, juicy thief

it was set to spawn  
microscopic millions.

No matter. All year  
I'll spear each one

drag it to air so I can  
cure it dry against

a saner seine,  
a daylight.

***from Occasional Chainsaws in the Valley of Eternal Sorry***

Gum-stuck in a peach stall on a Friday night, I am fading like furniture upholstery in sunlight. Anyone in the bar may have the microphone, the band will play the singer any song in any key. The same eight people I see around town talk at the sinks, adjust their tattoo-print dresses. Cardinal-red lipstick talks out from the mirror. *You are what you eat* between hearted initials and phone numbers. On the sidewalk, a cardinal like it fell from the sky untouched. You hear these stories. Someone falls over unexpectedly. Someone disappears. Police stretch yellow tape. Scan for needles and bullets, shoeprints sculpting mud. When I put my ear to the pink tile, a web of dirty grout, each shoe sounds like raw smoke.

***from Occasional Chainsaws in the Valley of Eternal Sorry***

The campfire cracks and spits early morning. A car circles the lot. Our dreams slow and stall. Someone feels my pulse, observes my tongue, taps hair-thin needles in my skin. The best-case scenario is to get heavy as wet laundry. An always-forgetting-something feeling engulfs me, skips the rhythm my veins make like the scratch-off ticket who reveals itself to be a loser. The scruffed-cat-slouched feel of the word shame. Or walking into a party feeling like a snake that fell limp from the sky, writhing as I fall, trying hard to keep my coils wound, my wits around me like a rattle, a warning. The shoulder curved like split shells. Look, a landscape we could strike. Look, an angle of permanent golden hour whose red softness blurs an animal stretched without breath along beach sand.

**(Murderous Mermaid)**

She combs the dreams out of her hair,  
a gesture limited by distance—  
a kind of beauty, at the edge of the sea.

Here is where you can get nowhere fast,  
against the vast scattered sands and folding cliffs  
are unbeautiful corpses at the edge of extinction.

She is folding bones of vain & beautiful strangers,  
a pair of unbeautiful corpses learning to be human  
that cage was for the protection of the captors

Authors: Michael Hofmann, Rachel Jamison Webster, Dan Brown, Anthony Opal, Amy Gerstler, Joanne Dominique, David Barber, Rae Armantrout, Daniel Halpern (Poetry Foundation March 2013)

**(Cancer isn't the problem)**

The choir of cheap hacks:  
they test themselves with anagrams.

they remember how it's done-  
alms & alchemy with curtains &  
assignments draping like heavy quilts.

the doctors stitch my hands, I am dead  
on the edge— the day went something,  
something, something and then dark—

a sense of place and safety in our bedrooms,  
away from the druggist's pity DO NOT DISTURB—  
slow the whole world down, time is malleable

dueling pendulums- at the age when things  
go wrong. I don't believe a word of praise or  
slimy compliments from anyone.

Authors: Andrew Hudgins, Louise Gluck, David Wagoner, Loren Goodman, Conor O'Callaghan, Joel Brouwer, Billy Collins, George Szirtes, Charlene Fix, Richard Wilbur, Randall Mann, Albert Goldbarth, Bob Hicok, H.L. Hix, Zach Finch, Jennifer Michael Hecht (Poetry Foundation May/ August 2005)

## Confessions of a Transplant

My first year living in America  
the scent of frying garlic  
sent me weeping. My eyes

swept the somber avenues  
starving for color. I devoured  
the aquamarine of broken glass,

a wire festooned with yellow shoes,  
the sudden shower of rose  
on a sidewalk. The memory

of sour mangoes made rivers  
in my mouth. At the market I picked  
the greenest nectarines, dredged them

in salt that stung my chapped lips.  
Words I hoarded like rock  
candy, melted on my tongue

like my too-hard r's. *Range rover, red  
robin, river rock.* I practiced  
into the ear of an empty flagon,

reciting litanies to the saint  
of lost things. The walls echoed  
with whispers. Lying lily-still

in the goblet of night, I drank  
the sweet croon of nameless birds.  
Lullabies bloomed like moonflowers.



## Self-Portrait as Water

*why does the body feel*  
*most beautiful underwater—*  
is what goes through me

when I break the blue  
surface, levels rising as I plumb  
the tub's white womb

this second skin thinner,  
slicker, gleaming wet  
as a lacquered bowl

because the simplest  
of molecules—two H's  
one O—love

to love each other, cling  
to what they touch  
how this universal solvent

swallows every hill  
fills the hollows  
of my surrender

most forgiving of  
substances, I resolve  
to live like you—to fill

and be filled,  
to take the shape  
of my vessel

dispensing heat  
displacing matter  
lighter than air

## **Recuerdo a mi madre**

I remember brown-outs. How soft  
candle wax felt against my scar.  
How it formed a pebbled lakebed.

Decades ago we spread blankets  
on our parents' bedroom floor. I fell asleep  
watching my beautiful mother sleep.

Cloaked in her frayed bathrobe, her guava  
scent, I clutched my fears like lost teeth  
then let them slip down the drain.

\*

I've been avoiding the telephone,  
spending dusty hours at the piano.

Broken chords. I stutter the cadenza.  
Prolong the fermata. Each note

insists like the past.  
Like prayer and dirge.

\*

Today I let light have its way. Lavender  
candles ribbon the air with scent.

Sun presses into a window. Into silence  
a jackhammer drills. I close my eyes

and see a trembling star. How long till  
the full moon blues the sidewalks?

\*

Finding my mother  
crouched on the tiled floor,

her flickering eyes swollen,  
the housedress she loved

## Angela Narciso Torres

in shreds, my father led us  
outside. Called an ambulance.

Her silence an explosive  
he'd learned to detonate.

\*

My sister lights a trail  
of ants with a match.

Some pop, others scurry  
from a dead finch. A few linger,

stitching a loose border  
around the bird's stone eye.

*I couldn't look, couldn't  
stop looking.*

\*

Bewildered, I grew up,  
learned to embroider

an alphabet. I dipped my pen  
in father's tears. To know

my mother requires  
the patience of a miner

carving amethyst from rock.  
To know my mother

is to memorize  
a labyrinth of longing.

## **Inventory**

Five days in the meat locker  
and the white yarn of bones, I lean against.  
I need my heart to shoot out,  
like an arrow, to leave the body  
by the cobwebs or otherwise  
send it back in cardboard coffin.  
I blow air to give love to something—  
Back home, it's summer.  
My toes are numb and if I am to be  
expelled, naked, into this winter and pounded  
into a figurine, I want to be the ballerina.  
The thing to believe here is: Temporary  
I know it takes time  
for God to answer prayers.  
Among the cow's ruins, a faint light.  
The only form of language I miss.

## **Meat Locker Companion**

As if he finds his misery  
and hunger amusing,

he wakes up  
with a laugh—a bird

half-buried  
in the grounds

of his chest.

## **Meal Offering**

*mañana, mañana, I'll come home mañana*

Please be kind to my story;  
my tales of this desert ordeal.

Bring some bread for memorials  
and incense

of dried dirt.

They'll find rubber soles,  
a cross-body bag.

They'll say after sometime  
only nails and hair are left.  
The first is kept for secrets,  
The other is kept for smell.

## Someone is in the Sea, Planting New Corals

Corals are adept at adapting, so don't make  
room for them on the engendered list, yet. Like us –  
today a boy, tomorrow a girl, the call on the corner

just the same: *I see you*. The day cornflower-blue  
except where it's green or brown and brackish.  
Skye runs a hand along the length of a tinder-dry

branch, stripping its leaves to make a blossom.  
Again and again, they offer you  
their version of a flower, then laugh as it showers

your lap with brittle red leaves and needles. They brush  
smoke-scented hair from their face,  
dirt caking palms. An afternoon full of the light

damage of being four. Skye wishes upon a feather  
falling from a gull. They welcome a sudden rain,  
and in that storm, they open their mouth, releasing

April's crocuses. Had you listened that day, you too  
might have wished you were adrift in the rising  
sea inside a glass bottle, tiny world of our unmaking.

## **A Place Where the Disappeared Live Forever**

Here. The sound of darkness settling,  
the sound of life clawing, the sound of hours  
swallowing a secret the earth keeps  
canopied: my little portal  
I pass through to make myself again.

Here. All shadow, all current that pulls apart  
rooms to make space for the sky,  
a throat pouring down  
the promise of drowning.

Here. I don't know the beginning,  
but recognize tomorrow's gaze,  
a glimpse of lupine, of tackstem  
in the compressed soil, devil's spineflower  
forcing newborn green through cracks.

Men, with their bone-sniffing dogs,  
still seeking what wasn't meant to be found.

They will arrive soon. I wait. I endure.



**Meet Me in the Garden**

at the start of the season  
when the magnolia is just  
beginning to bloom. The raspberry brambles behind the house are  
vivid with leaves—  
the cedar, green all along, doesn't begrudge the forsythia  
its alchemy—  
there is no blight, no waterlogged soil, no sun-starvation, not yet,  
there is still time.  
Let me be clear: I do not want to love you in a world without  
winter,  
I would not know how. But here I remember to  
undo the knotted roots  
of seedlings so others may flourish. Alive among monuments, we  
kiss  
without checking the clock. Here, even alone, I can see your face in  
my hands,  
your blue dimensions. Above the vines and wildflower beds our  
broken bodies  
tower over us, carved in stone, veined with mosses and lichens,  
no longer  
ours. They are quiet. Relieved of the duty of  
holding.

**magnetic resonance imaging  
resonant magnetic imagining  
imagining magnetic resonance  
magnetic imaging resonates  
resonating images magnetize  
images resonate magnetism**

Inside the white chamber I am a flat  
quiet surface waiting for transformation

Slid pale and papered into a center of  
sound a vortex of quake and hammer

A body become fret board truss rod  
bridge strings tuner pegs and skin head

Here there is space for one plus a thin  
blue line dividing the sky for company

Blazing meridian it begins to shiver as  
the shaking clanging becomes louder

Electric eel friend I cannot hold you  
any longer in my field of vision *blink*

In the closer quarters of closed eyelids  
even intimate night's divided by bright

Narrow stripe embroidered in perfect  
light onto the hem of the soundscape

The technician offered a soundtrack  
of my choosing to cover the banging

But no now I am the outraged radio  
the body clamoring the body in uproar

If the tendon is going to tear I want to  
hear it I want to hear it

loud

## **We were going to build a dark room**

*but this never came to fruition*

We can't bring ourselves to leave  
this house of unimaginable light

not since we woke to find our arms  
green and rustling

one morning after a bender  
our bodies that had curled inward

now pressed wildly against windowpanes  
appetites vacant, simplified

In the Before we rushed  
to draw black curtains

we prayed at the night's  
charcoal altars (please show me

the wholeness of my own self)  
we loved the way we melted

into each other, how our edges blurred  
without the day's harsh contrast

Nothing is green in the dark  
and we are now experts

on green, or our skin  
(if you can still call it that) is

*We were going to build a dark room*  
but instead you are holding

the hacksaw while I steady  
the ladder

slicing back ceiling and roof shingles  
to expose the summer sky

## **Flank**

Let's tell ourselves the truth:  
we make this love,  
this farm,  
this marriage,  
by disjointing  
the mouth of the horse,  
sonneting him wild,  
leaving his supple flanks  
dismembered in the barn.

Let me be honest. I love you  
like I fear  
God.  
A part of me is always  
severe and coltish under your gaze,  
a partition  
in me swinging like the hips of the sea,  
swearing:  
I'm open, I'm open, I'm open. Come  
drown me in my own wetness. Come,  
hear me thank you for the ruined coastline  
of pulse.

Lord, if you're honest,  
you know I prayed for  
you. Not equine with pride,  
rather on my knees:  
alert to the scold of my own virginity, deribboning,  
unboning my purity as original myth.  
One of these things does not exist,  
hymen or  
hysteria.  
Test which.

I could tell you I love you as the virgin loves,  
or I could bring you the flanks of the horse,  
blood ready and whistling.

## **Dowry for a Christian Wife**

There is a suitcase swimming in your blood  
older than the cane farm.

Triple-latched, the giant brass buckle twists open  
to let kala pani seep through.

Your people packed themselves in it. They stepped in with no dowries,  
with orhns thin as hunger.

The problem is that you don't know how to carry tears on your back.  
The problem is that there is nowhere to hoard the suitcase.

Your people couldn't know how the island would fight them for their own deaths.  
They didn't think to ask permission to be burned.

After the funerals,  
after the burnings of your four grandparents,

the cardinal points of Fyzabad, Las Lomas,  
Cedros and Chaguanas crumble inward, a boneyard that forgets.

On the day you marry your wife, you surrender her the suitcase,  
spilling blood and kala pani on the raw silk of her red sari.

She reaches for your hairline with sindoor, vermilion and chaste.  
She soothes her name into your brow, sets the suitcase between you, home.





**ART**





The Sallie

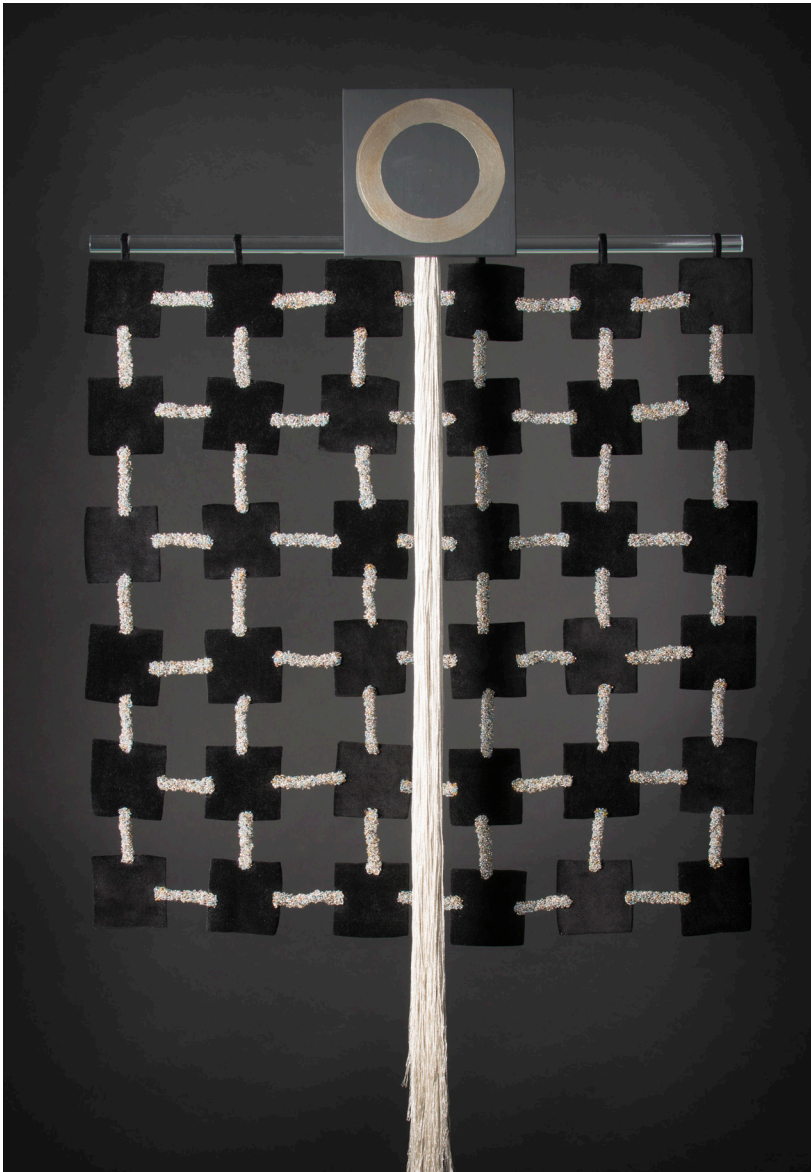




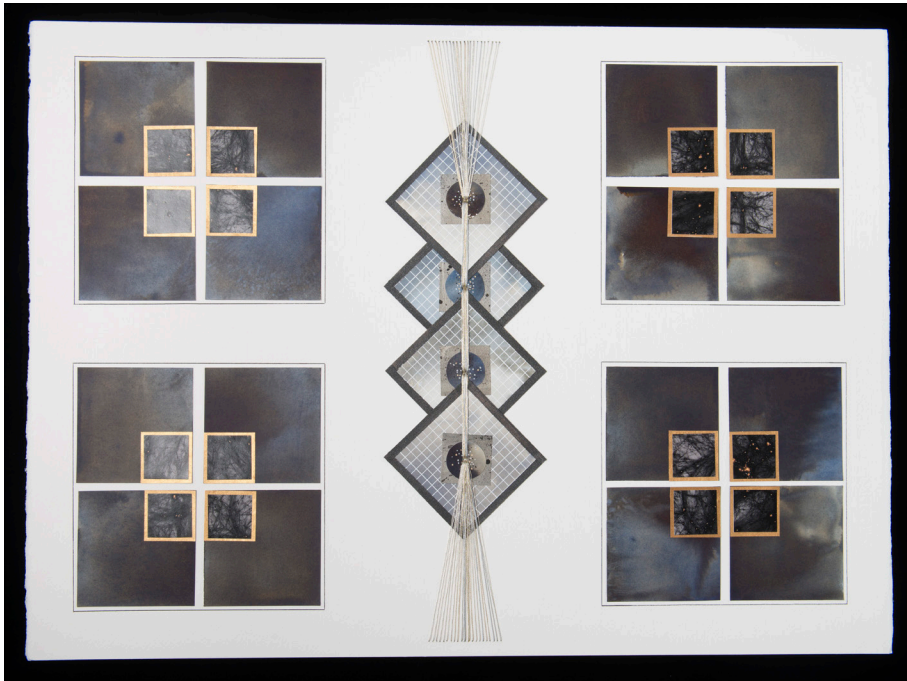
## July 2017, Skipping Stone



Neutrinos II



## Illuminated Book Beam Line I





## Illuminated Book Box I



Illuminated Book CMS III



**Clouds Over Wings**



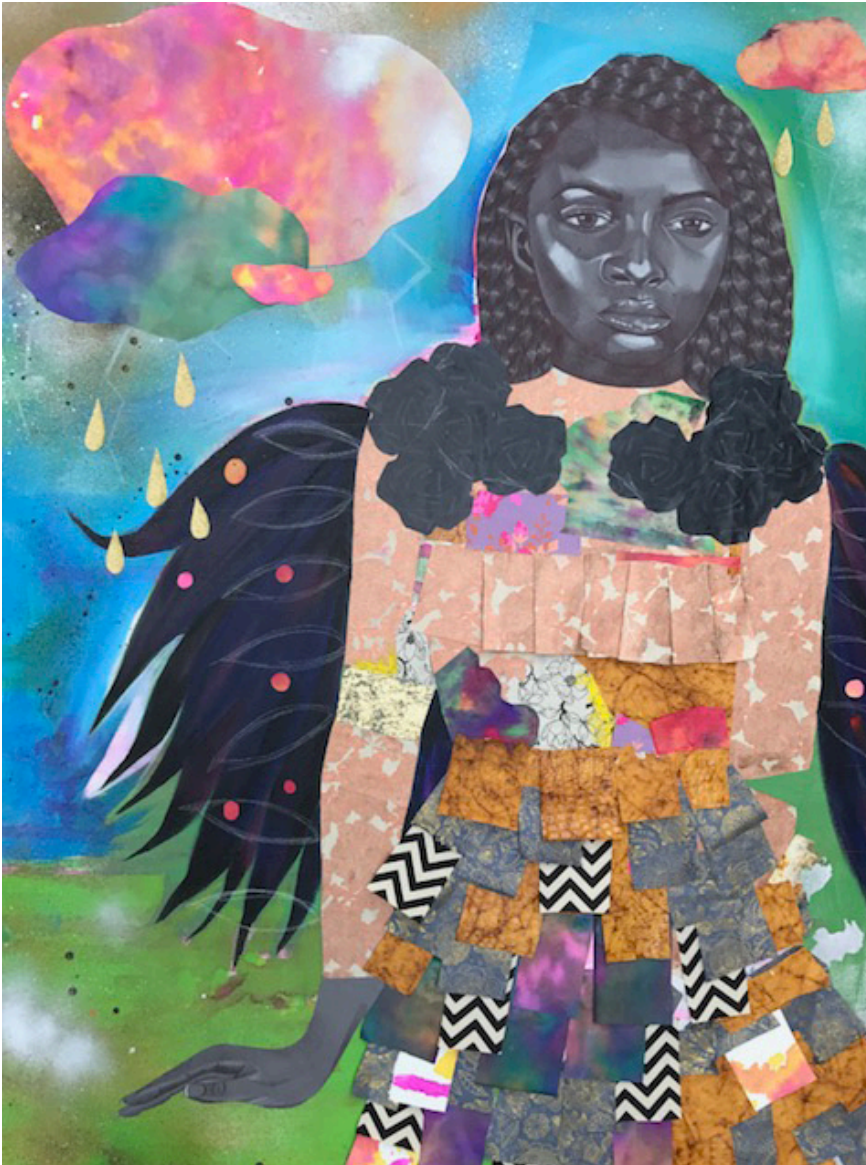


**Gaze Clouds Wings**





**Witch of Joy Rd.**

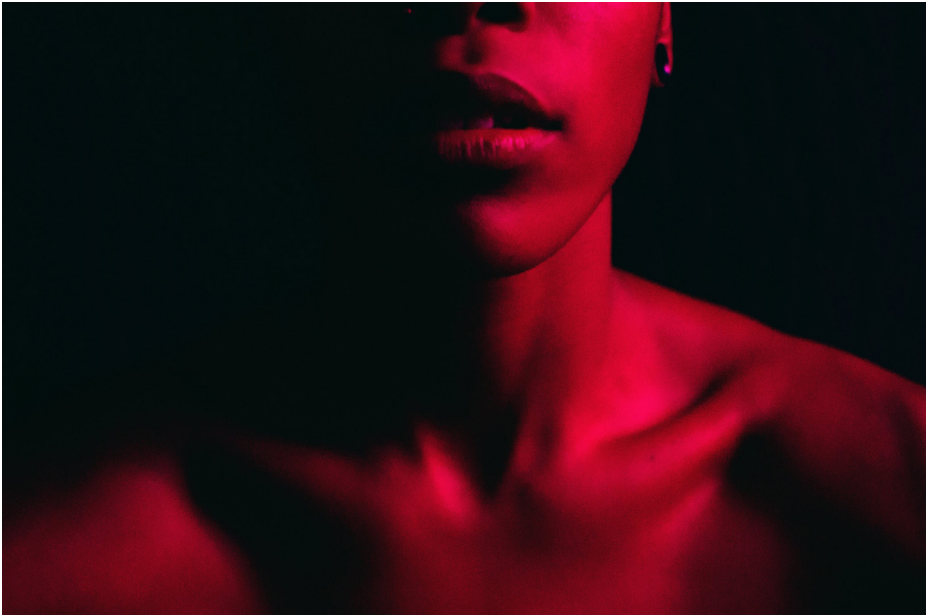


**Mother and Child**



**Sam Callahan & Margot Greene**

**Phases of Loona**



**Sam Callahan & Margot Greene**

**Phases of Loona II**



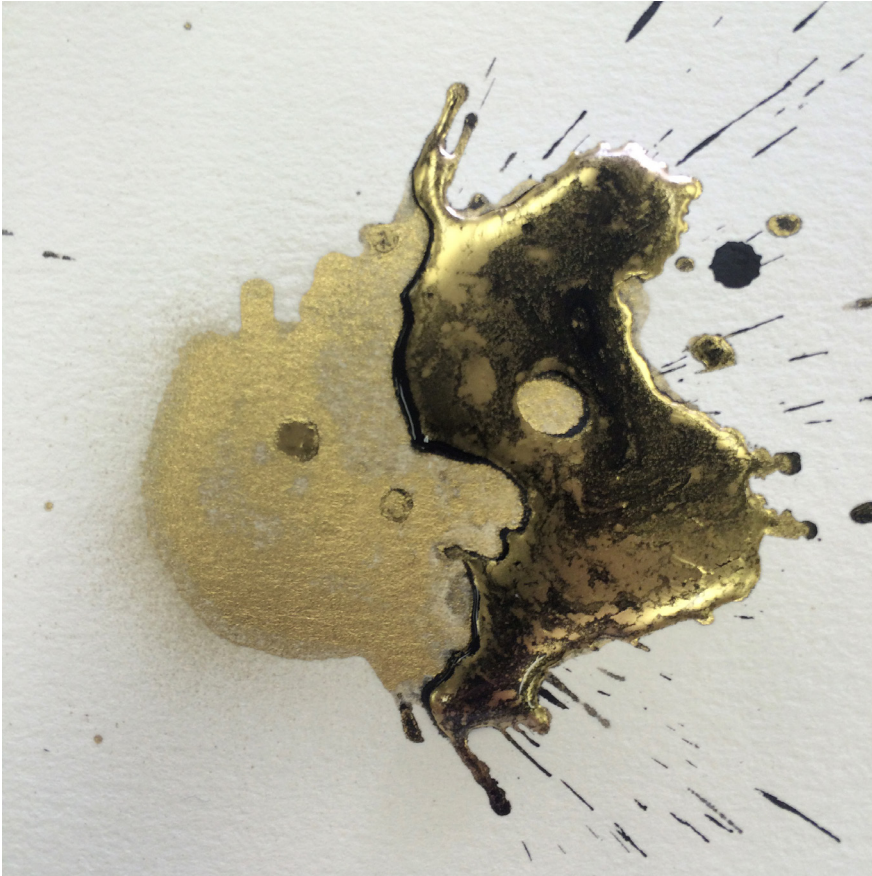


**Sam Callahan & Margot Greene**

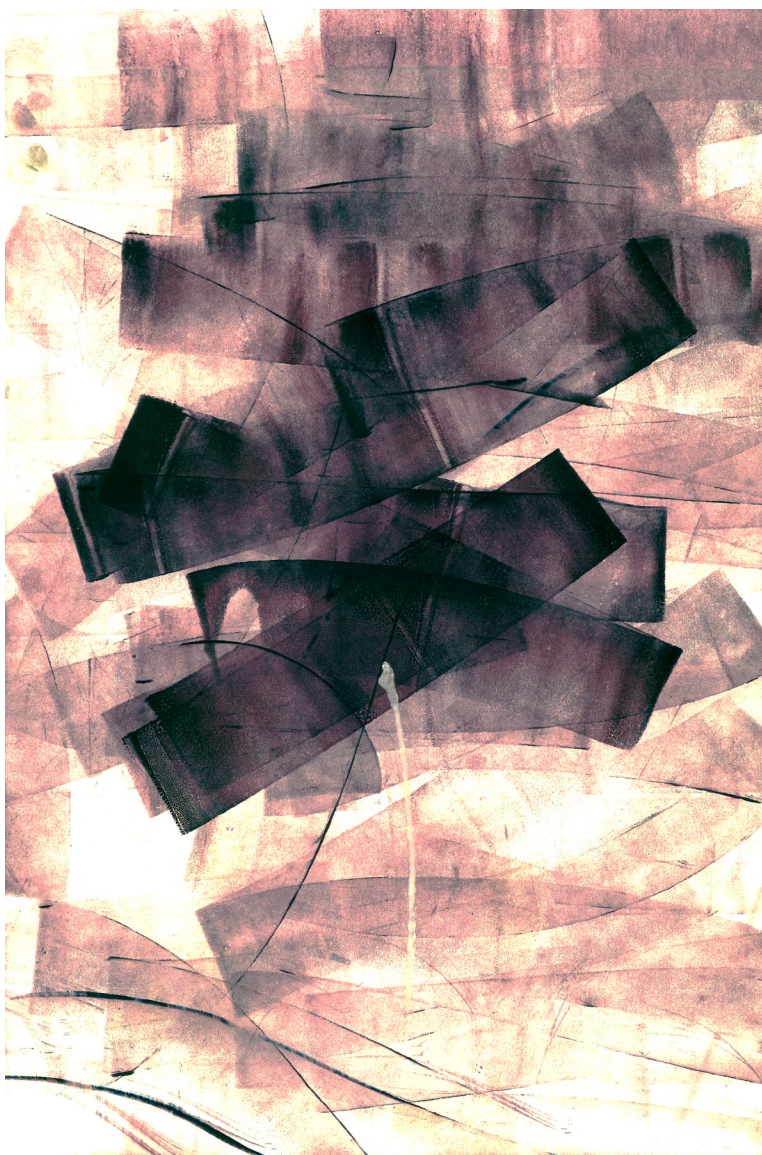
**Phases of Loona III**



**Sunburst**



**Tree On Hill**





## Angela Eve & Anastasios Ketsios

### Trash Goat





**Happy Birthday to Me-Preexisting Conditions**



4/14

JUST SIGNED THE PAPERS. APPENDIX IS GOING BYE-BYE IN ABOUT  
30 MINUTES. HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO ME!!

**Angela Eve & Anastasios Ketsios**

**Prayers for Paulette**



**Untitled: Mixed Media Assemblage**





**Wayne Bertola**

**Portrait: Mixed Media Assemblage**









**FICTION**

A stylized graphic featuring the word "FICTION" in a bold, dark blue, sans-serif font. The letters are filled with a white, speckled texture, giving them a grainy or distressed appearance. The word is centered horizontally and is overlaid on a teal-colored jagged line that resembles a mountain range or a stylized waveform. The line has multiple peaks and valleys, with the word "FICTION" positioned across the middle of it. The entire graphic is set against a plain white background.





## Disappointment

I am going to disappoint you. You probably know it when you spot me in the check-in line. Some part of you knew it even when we first met.

#

My memory of that meeting, fifteen years ago, stabs sharp as ever. Icy Chicago winds blew you and your friends into the cramped Hyde Park bar where I worked evenings. You pressed in closer over the counter and the wet leather smell of your jacket reminded me of my landlady's butterscotch lab. Your face, under that snow-wet ginger hair, flushed bright pink as you tried to catch my attention.

I placed a beer pitcher before you and held out a hand.

You smothered it with both of yours, saying: *"How 'bout some curry and naan with that, babe?"*

The laughter that rose around us was like the scraping back of a thousand chairs. It bothered you that I did not join in. You did not know how many curry lines I got in a single night.

As the light dimmed in your eyes, I pointed at the maroon phoenix on your T-shirt and smiled, *"U of C?"*

After closing, when you offered to walk me to my apartment, I nodded, because my loneliness, after two long American months, was swishing and foaming inside like a bitter brew.

#

A month later, your ex-girlfriend stopped by. Looming tall next to me in the bathroom mirror, her fake tan darker than my skin, she spat: *"Stay away from my boyfriend, you black bitch!"* It took two of her friends to drag her away.

I wiped my face and laughed hard; how can you take someone seriously if they cannot even get your ethnicity right? Still, I poured the next drink with an arm that shook like it had a life of its own.

When you found out, you were annoyed I had not come to you right away for help. We were lying on the pull-out in your shared apartment, wide awake past midnight because of the noises across the hall. I sat up in the dark, clasping myself tight across the knees—a part of me thrilled at your protective claim over me and the other part upset how this had been your first concern. Aloud, above the other racket, I said I never wanted to see her again.

#

We had been together for six months before your parents visited. They invited me to your birthday dinner at that Navy Pier restaurant where the vaulted, wood-beamed ceiling was like the inside of a rowboat. Thick lengths of rope dangled everywhere with odd-shaped shipyard bits reclaimed and trapped in elaborate knots. Lake Michigan, with its wavering reflection of the Chicago skyline, dazzled through floor-to-ceiling glass.

Your mother kept sighing how she loved Midwestern summers and I understood where you got your secure charm.

Slashing his near-raw steak so the juices ran over the greens, your father interrupted her; *"What's that British movie we watched some time ago? The soccer thing? Doesn't she*

*look just like that Indian girl?"*

I bent my head low over my plate, searching for a cherry tomato to place into my arid mouth.

Though there was mock-frustration in your tone, a kind of delight danced around your lips as you said, *"Dad. She's nothing like her. They don't all look the same, you know."*

Your mother winked at me as if at a clever joke. She poured everyone more red wine and her diamond and gold bracelets clinked like she was dropping precious coins.

#

But it was the time you did not speak that got to me the most. I had come early on my night off to surprise you with a long-promised home-cooked dinner. Letting myself in, I heard your two buddies in the next room.

One said: *"Hey man, how come you're dating out? Know what I mean? Could have at least given the old neighborhood a try first?"*

The other: *"Quit hatin' on him 'cause he's got an exotic Indian princess while you're jerkin' off to porn."*

I held my breath for the one voice I needed to hear. Instead, the air filled with the sound of you all hooting as if a favorite quarterback had scored a touchdown.

That night, your lips and fingers running all over my body gave me little pleasure. Perhaps sensing my lack of patience, you finished quicker than usual. Afterwards, rather than wrapping myself around the shape of you as always, I rolled as far away as I could.

Next semester, it did not take you long to find someone new. I saw you together once in Campus Market, basket filled with frozen Indian food. With hennaed hair and tiny cutoff shorts, she seemed exotic and white-washed enough for you. When I locked eyes with her, she looked away first.

#

So here we are: doing exaggerated double-takes, talking like we are competing in an awkward-off, pretending we have never looked each other up on Facebook. I see the ring on your finger as you stroke the one on mine.

We glance at the colorful streams of people flowing about and laugh about how time has marked us both. You ask me to join you while we wait for flights to different destinations. Brandishing our phones, we share pictures of our spouses and children, proudly mentioning their accomplishments.

Sipping coffee from white china, I silently recall the way you would tease: *"If you had my babies, they would be café au lait gorgeous."* It makes me shiver, this old sensation of being stripped of everything except what you desired.

We rise to leave. Your face crimsons like the first time, that flickering hope lights your eyes, the edges of your lips dance upward again. You close the space between us and whisper: *"I should never have let you go. Do you wonder—?"*

I stare for a beat, then disappoint you with "No," and walk away.

## Telling Strangers

Bruno watches Lucas, his son, climb up the slide—a slick, winding contraption built to injure. The boy lets his jacket swing open and tugs at his hoodie. Ellie jogs on the boardwalk as if spring has arrived, but Bruno won't be duped. He insists that Lucas wear all his layers. Just under the surface is a scathing ocean wind.

Lucas holds his arms out for balance. When he trips, each muscle in Bruno's body tenses and readies. Lucas catches himself and knuckles the rim to the jungle gym platform. Then, as if summoned by an invisible force, he skids down the ladder and bounds across the playground to the giant, blood-red replica of an old fashioned fire truck, scaling the side to land in the driver's seat with a high-pitched, perfect whoop.

A small boy with glasses straddles the truck's gleaming hood. "Sound the alarm!" Lucas says. The boy, clad in a t-shirt despite the chill, silently regards Lucas. "You have to sit in the back," Lucas points behind him. "There are firemen in the back sometimes."

"Wee-oo. Wee-oo," the bespectacled boy says and bounces on the hood. He holds up two fists to maneuver a pretend steering wheel.

"Man the hoses!" Lucas calls out. "There's a blaze in Galactica!"

The boy stops his sirening to consider this. "Where is Galactica?"

"There. Over there!" Lucas says, stabbing the air in the direction of the swings. "Can't you see it?" The boy blinks at Lucas and turns his attention back to his wheel.

Bruno wishes that the boy would play along. Just do it, goddamn it. What does it matter? He reminds himself that the boy is a child, small and barely there, but this does little to temper his frustration. The boy continues his vehicular noises and angles his chin toward the sky to keep his smudged glasses from slipping down his nose.

Lucas jumps to his feet; arms stretch out like a star. "This is a spaceship fire fighter!" He stamps his foot and then clambers over the windshield to crawl out to the hood.

"I am driving an engine, not a spaceship," the boy says.

Lucas grunts before scissoring his legs over the side of the truck. "Careful, buddy!" Bruno calls out. His son glances at him and jumps down anyway, kicking up dirt.

#

At the hospital that morning, Lucas's vomit splattered across the radiation room, pale orange flecks dotting Bruno's shoes. Minutes later, the useless family counselor that Pediatrics assigned them urged Bruno not to lose sight of what's important. "And what the fuck is that?" Bruno asked. The counselor, a man of 30 with no children, bobbed his head like a doll's on a spring.

Ellie would say he's looking at it—Lucas atop a giant vintage fire truck, hooded and indestructible. Ellie chooses to guard the truth close to her and takes comfort in anonymity, pretending that the perpetual hood over Lucas's bald head is akin to the fashion quirks of other 6-year-olds. A tangle of rubber bracelets. Mismatched socks. Ellie rarely tells others about how a visit to the pediatrician over a seemingly innocuous infection turned into specialists and tests, then more specialists and tests, accompanied by explanations simplified for lay people. That Lucas is missing specific tumor suppressor genes, the ones that cause cells to die at the right time. Or what the oncologist explained, as if in stupid wonder, "His cells are simply living too long." This morning, Ellie told the

counselor about how strong their boy seems. Tall and broad shouldered, chest solid and filled out, like a thick rope. How Lucas curls into himself after treatments with hardly a whimper.

For Bruno, these are negligible comforts. He joins online communities and tracks research studies, combs through medical journals at night while Ellie sleeps beside Lucas in his twin bed. Bruno memorizes each new treatment and angle and probability and then holds it up to the light to scour for imperfections. He wants to scroll through one particular article now, a trial on treating supra-renal masses. He longs to go home, to wash Lucas's hands with anti-bacterial soap, let him rest in front of an educational video, and prepare a lunch of antioxidant-rich smoothies and kale pasta, but Ellie insists that they "have normal things," like parks and exercise and friends. Bruno tracks her narrow frame in the distance as she jogs along the water, the bright blue soles of her sneakers flashing behind her.

Bruno combs his fingers through his thinning brown hair then buries his fisted hands in the pockets of his fleece. He scans the perimeter of the teeming playground: nannies scroll through phone displays; a grandmother yawns; toddlers pushed too high in swings, mouths agape.

So much taken for granted. If he could, Bruno would crush the day between his palms, transform all of it into a fine, powdery dust.

A crow, black and sleek as water in a well, perches on the hood of the fire truck and Bruno rushes over to shoo it away. It caws and drifts overhead before retreating to a gnarled branch.

A woman who must be the mother of the boy with glasses points her phone at the fire truck and then smiles as she checks the picture. She is tall, with dark hair snarled from the wind and a round, fragile face, the kind Bruno can easily overwhelm if he wants to.

The woman watches her son closely but is careful not to draw too near and risk the appearance of hovering. Bruno places himself in her line of vision and nods his head in greeting. "Boys love their trucks," he says.

"Like they're wired for it," she responds and points at Lucas. "Your boy?"

Bruno swallows the warm, hard stone in his throat. "Yup."

"How old?"

"Lucas? Six."

"Tall for six." She studies Lucas approvingly. "Henry's four."

"Hmm."

Lucas takes aim at aliens and shields himself with his free hand. "We need back up." He approaches Henry again, who is lining up rocks on the wheel's rim. When one falls off he patiently replaces it. Lucas considers him. "What are you doing?"

"These are my ants."

"Ants?"

"I have an ant farm at home."

"These aren't ants."

Henry looks back at his stones. "I know that."

"Ants are stupid, anyway," Lucas says before again taking aim.

Bruno expects a reproach from Henry's mother, a "let's play nice" sort of gentle, but clear, scold. Something she'd feel guilty about later.

Instead, she smiles. "It's best to let them work it out," she says and then extends her hand. "I'm Patricia."

“Bruno,” he says, taking her hand. He turns to the boys. “Henry, maybe you and Lucas can combine games? How about it?”

The boys glance at him, and Lucas climbs back onto the truck.

Patricia smiles apologetically. “Not ones to be controlled, are they?”

“I suppose not.”

“I wish someone told me when Henry was a baby that it would get harder. I would have held him closer.”

Bruno is silent but nods his head.

“First grade?” Patricia asks.

“We don’t send Lucas to school.”

From the corner of his eye, Bruno sees Patricia turn her head sharply. “Oh?”

“Home school.”

Her eyes light up. “We’re bleeding ourselves dry paying for private pre-K.” Bruno waits, thinking Patricia will ask a question that burrows toward the truth, an opportunity to tell a stranger. She smiles blithely at her son.

Henry, tired of his rock ants, climbs into the passenger seat next to Lucas. Lucas spreads his elbows out wide, forcing Henry to either push him or back out of the seat.

“Not for kids with glasses,” Lucas says. The boy backs out.

“He’s being mean,” Henry calls out. Patricia’s smile hardens, and she steps forward. Bruno knows she expects him to join her, but he stays where he is and squints at the jostled ocean, each wave fighting back the next.

Patricia makes a visor with her hand to shield her eyes from the sun. “I’m sure he doesn’t mean it, sweetie,” she finally says.

Lucas twists the steering wheel back and forth, and Bruno grins at him. “Lucas, let’s not be difficult. Let the little boy have his way.”

Wrinkles form around Patricia’s mouth, a grimace. “Or maybe you boys can combine games. Like before,” she offers.

Lucas puffs out his cheeks and releases the air slowly through his nostrils. He shifts to make room for Henry. Patricia eyes the two boys with her arms bent at her sides, as if preparing to make a catch. A flutter of satisfaction takes flight in Bruno’s belly.

“Henry’s always liked older kids. I just don’t want him to be self-conscious about his glasses. He really can’t see without them. His ophthalmologist says the prescription’s off the charts.” Patricia holds up a hand four inches in front of her face. “This is as far as he can see.”

Henry presses imaginary buttons on the dashboard as Lucas continues to steer.

“Huh,” Bruno says and bites his bottom lip with pretend concern.

“It’s going to affect his reading. That’s what they’ve told us.” She inspects a hangnail on her thumb and then adjusts her mouth into a brave smile, “But luckily Henry loves his glasses.” Lucas relinquishes the driver’s seat to Henry and begins spraying the trees with either a large hose or a machine gun, sound effects combined with spit.

Bruno searches the boardwalk but can no longer differentiate Ellie from the other runners and walkers. He wishes he could explain to her that he does not want to go to therapy or take up jogging and track his progress in an app. That he has no desire to make friends with other parents as the counselor advises. He hates that he and Ellie complained about Lucas as a baby, his latching issues and animal cries piercing the night. That he did not meticulously catalogue every frank statement of warmth the boy offered them. That he can’t even recall that thing Lucas once said about love and outer space. Each forgotten

moment its own wasted death.

In the top drawer of his desk, a rosewood antique gifted to them by Ellie parents, Bruno keeps relics from Ellie's 20-week ultrasound. Lucas's cereal bowl head, mouth gulping black fluid, a small hand scratching his transparent face, heart beating desperately. His belly arched with gelatinous mayhem one moment, then disappearing into the deep dark the next, an object in quicksand. The technician called out body parts with the clipped efficiency of a busy waitress.

"We have to get the right pictures. Document, document, document," she'd said, before shuffling them out into the harsh light of the hospital hallway.

Had it been there then, invisibly present? Through his own research, Bruno can identify organs like a technician himself. He scours the images for signs – ventricles of the heart, lobes of the lungs, the stomach versus the kidneys. Kidneys, two lumps of pea-sized tissue huddled around the spine. Such submissive, little organs. That they would cause sizable harm, become hospitable to vicious, rogue cells, how could anyone have known? Bruno assumes that he is most responsible, the one who failed to provide Lucas with the necessary genes. But such conclusions do nothing to quell the rising tide of his anger. So fucking unfair. Such impossible love.

Bruno gazes at Patricia now and is filled with rage. To assume he has sympathy to offer. "It must be nice," he says, startling Patricia from her thoughts.

"I'm sorry?"

"Being lucky." Bruno registers the confusion on her face. "You are so very lucky."

"Yes," Patricia says slowly. "We are."

"Lucas is undergoing radiation treatment. Daily."

Patricia appears confused, but then, as comprehension hits her, she visibly jerks back. As she turns to Lucas and takes him in, Bruno lets a heady excitement rush through. "Radiation?"

"He was diagnosed with kidney cancer a year ago." Bruno clears his throat. "Three months clean and now they find cells under his eye."

He observes her face - one hand over her parted mouth. "My god."

"I like seeing him play like this."

"Of course."

"They can't operate on this one because of the location. So we're back to radiation."

Patricia stares at the ground and Bruno can tell she is searching for the right words. "I'm sorry" would assume a death. "Wow" would seem flippant. "My goodness," she whispers and audibly exhales, as if drawn back from the edge of a precipice.

"They told us that this time around it's wait and see. Even though his eyebrows are growing back. These doctors," Bruno pauses for effect, "and their pronouncements."

"A tough kid."

"Very tough kid." Now, Bruno thinks. Now you should say how foolish you are, for feeling you are strong, that your suffering matters to anyone. But Patricia just nods her head in understanding, and Bruno laughs. "To think," he spits out, "I should give a fuck about your son and his glasses."

She shudders and her hand moves to her belly. "I didn't mean to imply--"

Bruno waves her away. "Of course you didn't."

Patricia worries a stone with her foot, hands pushing through pockets like they've been captured. When she looks up, her eyes round in horror.

The boys face one another on the hood of the truck, their bodies shifting from one foot



to the other, as if dancing. Bruno can't tell what's the matter until he sees Lucas's hands wrapped around Henry's neck. The smaller boy grips Lucas's wrists and his mouth moves but no sound escapes.

"It's not your game!" Lucas yells and then releases his hold. Henry teeters and falls backward to the rubber blacktop. When he stands up, he clutches his blue frames in two hands, his body trembling with each sob. A scrape glows above his cheekbone, and tears smear pink lines down his face. Patricia kneels next to him and tries to gather him to her. But the boy pulls away to gaze at Lucas standing on the truck.

Bruno watches the heave of his son's chest and the inscrutable expression on his face, his mouth a taut line, neither angry nor mocking. A jolt of electricity courses through Bruno's body.

"Lucas, buddy, let's come down," he says.

"I don't want to come down."

Bruno cannot remember a time when Lucas has refused to do something. Not the medicine or the treatments or the gritty shakes meant to boost his immune system. He imagines that the boy can, if he wants, sprout wings and fly into the trees with the crows. That such a thing would be no less spectacular.

Bruno turns to Henry. "He just wants you to play his game." His voice sounds pleading, and he stands with his palms out as if requesting a double high five. But the boy takes a step back and buries his face in his mother's hair. Patricia tries to mask her expression, but Bruno catches it: a flash of pity mixed with disgust. The din of children continues uninterrupted, tunneling their silence. The truth is, there is Bruno and there is Lucas and then everyone else: no allies, just witnesses.

"It's okay, Lucas," Patricia finally says. "You didn't mean it."

Though Bruno knows the words are a lie, he nods. "See, buddy. It's okay."

But Lucas will not come down. He swings one leg back and forth like a pendulum and then shakes out of his jacket, letting it slide to the blacktop. Bruno stares at the limp sleeves and then at his son's bare head reflecting back the sun. Bruno senses a hush fall over the park, but when he looks around nothing has changed. He wants to call out to Patricia but she is already walking away with Henry shivering in her arms. He hopes she will think of him and Lucas for the rest of the day, if not the next, as he gently nudges his child awake, earlier than he wants to and ferries him to the next round. With one arm, Bruno pulls himself onto the truck and over the hood. He takes a deep breath, lets the sharp air smack his lungs, and does his best to sound hopeful. "Take me to Galactica."

## smooth

Your hair had just grown long enough to develop waves. Your glasses were thin, wire things that accentuated the metal in your mouth. You were the only girl in your grade to wear pants exclusively. A few well-timed lies implied your period, bra size, and physical and emotional mileage with the opposite sex. It only made sense that you should be shaving your legs—at nearly thirteen, you were surely on the cusp of womanhood.

When you asked the question that had also been asked in the car and over dishes and after school, your mother replied wearily: *Ask your father if you could take a swim tonight after you finish working the yard.* Swim? Were you going to shave in the family pool? You shivered through your lonely evening dip, dragging the cover back over the green water after you'd been submerged for a good forty minutes, and still your mother busied herself with laundry, feigning ignorance of your pact as you dripped behind her. Part of you wondered if she was scared to see your body in the tub. Back before the changes, she'd look away as you stepped into your towel.

It started off easy enough. You took fistful of cream from a canister and smeared it on your skin. You had to reapply it once you let your appendage drop lazily into the bath (you could barely be trusted to take charge of your limbs in any body of water, so how could you shave in the shower like in the commercials?). The razor, bright pink and from a ten-pack, stopped and started more than it glided up and down your farmer's tan.

You were not yet aware of the concept of rinsing your razor, so you removed the hair from the blade with the flesh of your thumbs. It was always the sideways swipes that split your skin three ways. You yelped the first time it happened, losing the razor in the rapidly-cooling bath, but seeing as your legs were still blanketed with a socially-unacceptable layer of Polish fur, you persisted. You waited until the razor became so clogged that you had no choice but to break skin. Wasn't beauty pain, after all? You wondered why your mother, or your aunts, or even your friends had withheld this crucial information from you, leaving you to build yourself into a woman all on your own. Had you never looked closely at *their* thumbs? What happened when *they* shaved?

Your mother laughed nervously when you confided in her—she was dumbfounded that you'd cleaned the razor so strangely. How would you know otherwise, though? If the puberty books that magically appeared in your room had said anything about proper shaving techniques, you'd glossed over it, choosing instead to devour the sections on breast development and violations of personal space. Your own mother's hair removal practices were kept strictly out of your line of sight, even into your adulthood, when a bottle of wine would reveal her forays into bikini waxing, not that this was information that you'd been meaning to seek. Even though your father shaved only his face, you hadn't noticed that between long, cool swipes towards his chin, and thin, staccato strokes under his lower lip, he swirled his razor in the sink water three times, emerging with a nearly hairless blade. And you? You'd sliced yourself open. Your thumbs wept the reddest blood you'd ever seen, thick and serious, blood that was more brow-wrinkling than spine-chilling. You stared your beauty down.

You went to swim practice that summer with errant hairs on your preteen legs and two Band-Aids on each of your thumbs. The blood-dotted strips would come off in the



pool and elicit disgust from your classmates. They were good girls, your classmates, and they could swim without goggles and butterfly stroke without asthma attacks. These girls had boyfriends and texting plans. These girls had mothers who braved the humidity of the indoor pool and sat in the stands, flexing their painted toes in heeled sandals as they chatted about this or that. Your own mother would most likely still be asleep by the time your three-mile bike ride brought you home—at least she wasn't driving you anymore.

After class, these girls scampered down a green-tiled hallway and communed in a hairspray haze that made you cough and splutter, your hand stuck to the concrete wall as you tied and retied your sneakers. Your breasts, not restricted by patterned underwires or cast-iron sports bras, bobbed lazily under your cotton camp shirt. Girls like Leah dabbed vanilla body spray in their navels because *Seventeen* advised it, and girls like Colleen applied up to three layers of mascara in the single mirror, the task easy as homework, hair elastic mouths contorting. Delicate freckles, soft elbows, the sheen of properly conditioned ponytails. Each of these snapshots pinked your cheeks and collarbone if you let them repeat, which was why you always towed off and dressed so quickly and, still damp under your summer clothes, inched through the horde of mothers at the entrance to the locker room: the girls' final refuge before they opened the door and became daughters again. While your head was down, you studied legs—the mothers', the swim instructors', the custodians', the girls'—though not out of scrutiny, or inadequacy, or any other inexplicable charge. You just wanted to learn how to dive.





**NONFICTION**

A stylized graphic featuring the word "NONFICTION" in a bold, dark blue, sans-serif font. The letters are filled with a white speckle pattern, giving them a textured appearance. A teal-colored line with a similar speckle pattern runs horizontally behind the text, slightly offset from the baseline. The line starts below the first letter, rises to cross the top of the 'N', dips to cross the bottom of the 'F', rises to cross the top of the 'I', dips to cross the bottom of the 'C', rises to cross the top of the 'T', dips to cross the bottom of the 'I', and finally rises to cross the top of the 'N' at the end.



## ***Charles in Charge Changes Everything***

The secret wedding was set for June, but I wouldn't go through with it. Sometimes I tell this story as epiphany at the eleventh hour: how I woke that day, being other, knowing otherwise. But sometimes I think I always knew—that there was never a moment without a halt in my heart, a clench in my throat, a gap between the door and the frame.

*Do you remember the last time you saw him?* It was years ago now. It must have been March, just before I had my wisdom teeth removed. No, after. My jaw was sore. I had returned to my parents' house to recupe. He had taken the bus to visit me there, his car in the shop again, never reliable. My mother remarked about his baggy clothes, the weight he had lost. We took her car to buy him a new sweater, something ribbed with a turtleneck. I thought he looked handsome in burgundy, but he bought the forest green.

*Were your parents fond of him?* They thought he was pleasant enough, but they cautioned against getting too serious. I was in grad school, they said. I was going places. Where was he going? Meanwhile, Charlie and I were talking marriage license, rented convertible, honeymoon at the shore.

*Did he have any concerns about your—fidelity?* *I was going to say sexuality.* He remarked once, off the cuff, that he had a tendency to fall in love with women who were fluid. I didn't ask what he meant. I didn't think of myself that way, and I still don't. In the end, I'm much too binary to be on trend. I was an orange posing as an apple.

*Does anything stand out in particular from that night?* We went to see a movie at the second-run theater, something strange with Kevin Spacey, *K-9* or *K-Pax*. Then, Charlie wanted to stop at a flower shop, buy my mother a bouquet. It was a nice gesture, but I told him there was nothing he could buy that was half as fine as what she could grow. "She's a master gardener," I said. "You can't win her over that way." But he insisted. Then, we had a little sex in the car because we were bored and there was nowhere else to go.

*And what about—*I remember the car got very quiet afterwards, though, and then I started humming as I was driving, and he asked what I was humming, and I didn't know. But I kept humming until the words attached themselves to the notes: "Charles in charge of our days and our nights, Charles in charge of our wrongs and our rights." Once I heard those words, I was embarrassed by them, by the chorus that culminates "I want Charles in charge of me."

"It's from a TV show," I said to him, blushing. I kept my eyes fixed to the road.

"Oh, I remember now," Charlie laughed. "Scott Baio lives in a house with two hot teenage girls he's supposed to be taking care of."

"There's a little brother, too."

"Yeah, well. That's just to cover their sitcom asses."

Charlie is eleven years my senior, a fact we acknowledge but never discuss. "Yeah, I was just starting college in 1987," he says, leaning back in his seat with a sigh. "That show came on, and I thought to myself, that Charles is one lucky shit. Did you know the older girl—the hotter one—went on to star in *Baywatch*?" Now his hand crosses the central console and perches like a bird on my thigh.

I have never seen *Baywatch* or many other shows of my time. I was only eight when *Charles in Charge* first appeared in the *TV Guide*. My mother let me watch because she

recognized Scott Baio from *Happy Days*. She liked him: wholesome, clean-cut. “That’s the kind of boy you need to find.”

Half the streetlights on these suburban streets have gone out. Another is sputtering as we pass. Imagine: I was only in first grade, and my mother had already prescribed the type I should like, the type I should be looking for. But flip it the other way: I was only in first grade, and already how I relished looking at them—the blond daughters, Jamie and Sarah. How I kept them all to myself all these years, like two halves of a locket, invisible around my neck.

“Are you coming?” Charlie asks, impatient. The hydrangeas and snapdragons are spilling over his arm. All these years later, and I can still feel the longing in my child-body for something I was not supposed to have. *Jamie. Sarah.*

“Julie!” He shouts my name, taps on the glass. A spell is breaking. Before I can answer, he slams the door.



## **Braid**

Someone braided her hair this morning, or perhaps she's learned how to do it herself, pulling the mass of hair to the side to ensure it doesn't get caught in the loom. The braid is lumpy and thick, almost like an elephant's trunk.

Her shirt is ruffled but missing a few buttons, and it's a bit too small for her lengthening torso. Her arms are smooth and unmuscled, though surely she needs muscle to do this work. She's either too tired, or too unpracticed, to smile.

The cloth she makes will be good. It will look like any other bolt of cloth, taken off the shelf, unrolled with a thump on the cutting table. When I was young, my mother would take me to Woolworths with a Simplicity pattern in hand; we wanted something to make the jumper pictured on the envelope. We'd buy a cotton blend, something that would last, with some kind of red flower—roses? pansies? poppies? —dotting the white.

We took it home, and my mother laid out the tissue-paper pattern on the kitchen table, carefully cutting the pieces with her sewing shears. I'd watch until I got bored, then wandered off to watch television until called back in for the requisite pinning. I'd stand on a chair while my mother measured the hem just to the bottom of my kneecap.

I thought nothing of the origins of that cloth, had no sense that real hands took part in making it—hundreds of hands really, if you counted the sowing of seed, the hoeing, the harvest. I just stood there in my suburban kitchen, the light steady outside on the cul-de-

sac, and fidgeted inside the stiff pieces of a dress I didn't even want. I wanted to go outside and play, like any other girl.

It was while I was running around, either on the street or on the playground, that I first noticed what it meant to be a girl. First, if you didn't wear shorts under your jumper or skirt or dress, you couldn't climb trees or swing on monkey bars or jump off the sloped roof of the shed. Not as long as you were playing with boys. They'd giggle, or worse, just stop and stare if your skirt flew up.

Inevitably one boy would say that he didn't want to play with girls and I would slink away, my throat itchy and cheeks hot. I was mad at myself for being a girl, a girl who didn't want to play with the other girls. All they did was stand around and talk about things I wasn't interested in. Any way you looked at it, being a girl meant there was a long list of things you couldn't do. Baseball? No. Astronaut? No way. Cowboy? Boy.

I was thankful for books. Nellie Bly, Florence Nightingale, Harriet Tubman, Elizabeth Blackwell: these women didn't ask for permission, and they lived a long time ago. And even though I didn't have to fetch water, pick cotton, or take care of my siblings—even though I attended school and was asked what I wanted to be when I grew up—I knew there were limits, but I wouldn't know what they were until I came up against them, and when I did, I wouldn't take no for an answer.





## **Choose Your Poison**

My parents occasionally held cocktail parties, and I loved to help them prepare. Cutting cheese into cubes for fondue, arranging napkins on the table, and a quick dust mop of the parquet floors seemed exciting, even though I would be in bed before the guests arrived. I would lie in bed and listen to the music and voices and laughter while I drifted off to sleep. In the morning, there would be bottles and knives and citrus and cocktail shakers next to the sink, and I could smell the last traces of mystery and glamour before our lives became normal again.

Our lives were so normal otherwise—the daily routine of breakfast, school, lunch, and dinner. And what to drink often became the focus of everyone's day—my father with his Ovaltine, me with my chocolate milk, my brother and his red Kool Aid. Always the first thing my mother asked—*What do you want to drink?*—and the illusion of control: opening the fridge door and standing there a long time as if the perfect drink might manifest itself from midair. I loved the idea of Alice's potion, the command *Drink Me!*, the possibility of transformation in ways you couldn't imagine. I wanted to be anything other than normal. I wanted to be filled with something beyond my control.



## **Waiting**

As a child, I had small, square book embossed with the word *Autographs* in curly script across the gold cover. Inside, the heavy textured paper sat blank, waiting for who-knows-who to lay pen to paper and leave their trace. I understood the concept: an autograph is a souvenir, is proof that you stood in the presence of someone famous, someone you want to remember. Handwriting becomes the residue of the body—more personal, perhaps, even than a photograph.

But I didn't quite understand the logistics: were you supposed to carry this book with you wherever you went, just in case you spied a celebrity, someone worthy of intruding on this creamy folio? I wish I could remember how or why I had it; we lived in Los Angeles, so it wouldn't be out of the question to see a minor celebrity or two walking down the street, or in a restaurant, or getting out of a car.

And that girl, waiting. So brave, stepping up to say, shyly, *May I have your autograph?* Scribbled proof that she had, indeed, been in this person's presence.

I know I must have collected a few famous names in my book, but mostly the pages became cluttered with autographs from my parents, my brothers, my friends. The ritual of holding the out the open book, proffering the heavy black pen that came with it, and intoning (with a slight British accent, as if this voice makes everything more important): *May I have your autograph?* And the autographer would consent, signing his or her name

with a flourish: sometimes small, sometimes taking up an entire page.

I remember my mother's handwriting: pretty and elegant, perfectly aligned. She used to write me letters, postcards, or chatty notes she included with packages, but I haven't seen her handwriting in a long time now, everything replaced by emails and texts, everyone's words looking exactly the same. How are we supposed to hold them now—the people we want to remember once they pass out of our presence? How do we collect them for future reference, and harbor the traces of their bodies when these bodies are gone?

So much of our lives are spent in the presence of other bodies, waiting. In lines at grocery stores or pharmacies. The DMV. A crowded bus stop or the security line at an airport. Those are the obvious, unavoidable instances, the easy ones we complain about, the weather of waiting conversation—*hey that guy has fourteen items in the express line, or I've never seen such a long line here in the afternoon.*

Other types of waiting aren't so easily expressed. Waiting for that call to the office after your 7th grade math teacher confiscates the note you and Heather Herndon have been passing back and forth all day, that note where you both write down all the things that you want to ask, want to say, but can't because there's never enough time, and plus, you're in middle school and don't know quite how to talk about things yet. That time when you drove for miles with the cop following your every move, you behind the wheel, your friend in the front seat, a black male, both of you silent until the cop finally turned his lights on then made a u-turn, leaving you both still, silent for blocks. Being seventeen days overdue, huge and tired and ready (or so you thought) and doing anything you could to move things along—walking up and down stairs, mowing the lawn, moving toward that singular moment where everything would change. Waiting for Christmas morning. For the last day of school. The first day of school. Once the waiting is over and the anticipation is gone, what then? Was it worth it? Was it worth the wait?

## Give me your tongue

1

Hearing the sound of a language is an ability lost once you turn mechanical waves into intelligible words. Your brain stops hearing sound and starts hearing meaning.

*Eu queria poder ouvir o som da minha língua como música. Ouvir as notas e as nuances sem o julgamento que vem com a compreensão de palavras. Se entendêssemos a língua dos pássaros, estaríamos imunes à sua melodia?*

Not knowing a language is also a talent. It means never getting to meaning, but staying with music.

2

How long does it take to recognize Portuguese in such an American movie? How long does it take to recognize Bowie in such a Brazilian song?

Seu Jorge said he received a call and did not understand a word from the other end. It was filmmaker Wes Anderson inviting him to make versions of David Bowie songs and perform them as a character in *Life Aquatic with Steve Zissou*. I had a similar experience when I heard him play “Life on Mars” in the beginning of the movie: I could not understand the words. I had that feeling of hearing Portuguese I often have on the train, when I only catch a few sounds and intonations from English or Spanish speakers.

3

In Brazil, I once heard a cover band play a song in Portuguese that sounded both familiar and strange. It took me a while to realize it was actually “Starman.” I had probably heard that version of the song even before I knew who Bowie was — it was released the same year I was born. But this was the first time I noticed it. And I hated it.

Seu Jorge created his versions of “Rebel Rebel,” “Changes,” “Lady Stardust,” “Five Years,” and many others. But he plays the 1988 version of “Starman,” originally recorded by Nenhum de Nós. Is it necessary to translate again what has already been translated?

4

I’ve been listening to Seu Jorge’s *Life Aquatic* recordings, waiting for the point where I’ll be able to sing the Portuguese lyrics.

Things I can’t translate to you:

Deu formiga no mel, marimbondo e cupim, que que eu vou fazer de mim?  
Não vou misturar cachaça e café só pra te agradar  
A sua chama está ardendo de saudade  
Já conheço seu dorso  
E o seu beijo amargo de jiló

Things I will:

The fool fears the night, how will the night fear fire?  
The make-up will come apart for your fear to show  
So come here, give me your tongue  
Protect your eyes against the salt  
If it will go with jeans, that I don't know

5

Bowie said: “Had Seu Jorge not recorded my songs in Portuguese, I would never have heard this new level of beauty which he has imbued them with.” Did Bowie, or even Anderson, know what Seu Jorge sang?

Seu Jorge did not translate words, he translated music.

He turned a Bowie song into Brazilian music.

6

How does one begin to translate oneself?

7

I have translated my writing in Portuguese into English before. It feels like writing again. It seems that having the words already laid out in one language would be a shortcut to the final text, but it feels more like a detour. The original meaning had to bend to the curves of this one language and now I am trying to bend it back and then into yet another shape.

8

When I was a child, I used to play a computer game in which a Brazilian comics character talked to me out of the screen. I could make her talk in different languages, too. What struck me was that her voice was different when she talked in French or in English. I did not grasp the concept of voice acting. That's how I came to believe you become someone else in a different language.

In ways, I have become someone else. I am a person with no ownership over language. I feel that all I say is borrowed.

9

The year David Bowie died, Seu Jorge went on a tour with his *Life Aquatic* album. I sat on the fifth row at the first of two consecutive Chicago concerts, head uncovered among a crowd of red beanies.

The two men sitting next to me were surprised when I told them his lyrics were not the same as Bowie's. They had never thought about that. They took translation for granted.

10

Visiting Brazil after two years, my friends told me I have a foreign accent.

I keep asking: "sabe?" — "you know?"

My intonation is different.

I am ineloquent. Words and expressions come to me in English and I know I can't just translate them literally. I open my mouth but nothing comes out.

One time my jaw locked while I spoke, as if my bones were rejecting my own language.

11

Seu Jorge spoke in a clear but labored, heavy-accented English. I could hear Rio through his sentences. I envied that, the crystalized identity that persisted even under translation.

"I didn't speak a word of English. I still don't, but I am trying to communicate here," he said. And he perfectly succeeded: at every interlude, he told stories about the songs, about the movie, about his life. In those interludes, he addressed every English speaker in the concert hall. During the songs, it felt as if he addresses only me.

My ears still welcome Portuguese.

12

After 3 years of English-living, I moved to Berlin.

My German is good enough to: order black coffee, make change, converse with the man behind the döner counter who tells me my name is beautiful.

Other than that, all I hear is music.







A teal-colored wavy line graphic that runs horizontally across the page, passing behind the word "BIOGRAPHIES".

# BIOGRAPHIES



# Poetry

## D. Allen

D. Allen is a queer poet and multidisciplinary artist living in Minneapolis, MN. They are a recent graduate of the University of Minnesota's Creative Writing MFA program, a recipient of the 2017 Minnesota Emerging Writers' Grant from The Loft Literary Center, and a 2017 Lighthouse Works Fellow. D's work has recently appeared in *District Lit*, *Connotation Press*, *Lockjaw Magazine*, *Black Warrior Review*, and elsewhere. Their current project examines the inner life of a queer, disabled, genderqueer body through the lens of grief and intimacy.

## Lisa Ampleman

Lisa Ampleman is the author of *Full Cry* (NFSPS Press, 2013), winner of the Stevens Manuscript Competition, and *I've Been Collecting This to Tell You* (Kent State University Press, 2012), winner of the Wick chapbook competition. Her poems have appeared or are forthcoming in *Poetry*, *Kenyon Review Online*, *32 Poems*, *Image*, *Massachusetts Review*, *New Ohio Review*, *New South*, *Poetry Daily* and *Verse Daily*. She lives in Cincinnati, where she is the managing editor of *The Cincinnati Review*.

## Tara Betts

Tara Betts is the author of *Break the Habit* (Trio House Press, 2016) and *Arc & Hue* (Willow Books, 2009). She is also one of the co-editors of *The Beiging of America: Personal Narratives About Being Mixed Race in the 21st Century* (2Leaf Press, 2017). Her work has appeared in *Poetry*, *American Poetry Review*, *Essence*, *Nylon*, and numerous anthologies. Betts holds a PhD in English from Binghamton University and a MFA in Creative Writing from New England College. She teaches at University of Illinois-Chicago and serves as part of the MFA faculty at Chicago State University.

## Silvia Bonilla

Silvia Bonilla lives in New York where she works as a translator. She received an MFA from The New School. Her work has appeared or is forthcoming in *Cimarron Review*, *Green Mountains Review*, *Rhino*, *Acentos Review*, *A Women's Thing*, among others. She has received scholarships from The Frost Place, Vermont College of Fine Arts and Tupelo Press.

## Anne Champion

Anne Champion is the author of *The Good Girl is Always a Ghost* (Black Lawrence Press, 2018), *Reluctant Mistress* (Gold Wake Press, 2013), and *The Dark Length Home* (Noctuary Press, 2017). Her poems have appeared in *Verse Daily*, *Prairie Schooner*, *Salamander*, *Crab Orchard Review*, *Epiphany Magazine*, *The Pinch*, *The Greensboro Review*, *New South*, and elsewhere. She was a 2009 Academy of American Poets Prize recipient, a Barbara Deming Memorial grant recipient, a 2015 Best of the Net winner, and a Pushcart Prize nominee.

## Flower Conroy

Flower Conroy is the author of *Facts About Snakes & Hearts*, winner of Heavy Feather Press' Chapbook Contest; *The Awful Suicidal Swans*; and *Escape to Nowhere*. She is the current Poet Laureate of Key West and a scholarship recipient of Bread Loaf, Squaw Valley, Napa Valley and the Key West Literary Seminar. Her poetry has appeared/is forthcoming in *American Literary Review*, *Prairie Schooner*, *Gargoyle* and others.

## Hannah Craig

Hannah Craig lives in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. She is the author of *This History that Just Happened* (Parlor Press, 2017). Her work has recently appeared in journals like the *Mid-American Review*, *North American Review*, and *Copper Nickel*. She was the winner of the 2015 New Measure Poetry Prize and the 2016 Mississippi Review Poetry Prize.

## Merridawn Duckler

Merridawn Duckler is a poet and playwright from Portland, Oregon. Her poetry has been featured in *The Offing*, *Unbroken Journal*, *Cleaver*, *Crab Creek Review*, and others. She is a finalist at Center for Book Arts, Tupelo Press, Sozoplo Fiction Fellowship. Her fellowships and awards include Writers@Work, NEA, Yaddo, Squaw Valley, SLS in St. Petersburg, Russia, Southampton Poetry Conference, Wigleaf Top 50 in micro-fiction, and others. She is an editor at Narrative and the international philosophy journal *Evental Aesthetics*.

## Jonathan Duckworth

Jonathan Louis Duckworth received his MFA from Florida International University. His fiction, poetry, and nonfiction appears in *New Ohio Review*, *Fourteen Hills*, *PANK Magazine*, *Thrice Fiction*, *Jabberwock Review*, *Superstition Review*, and elsewhere.

## Rebecca Morgan Frank

Rebecca Morgan Frank is the author of three collections of poems, including *Sometimes We're All Living in a Foreign Country* (Carnegie Mellon 2017) and *Little Murders Everywhere*, a finalist for the Kate Tufts Discovery Award. Her poems have appeared such places at The New Yorker, American Poetry Review, Ploughshares, and Guernica. She is co-founder and editor of the online literary magazine *Memorious.org* and the Jacob Ziskind Poet in Residence at Brandeis University.

## Naoko Fujimoto

Naoko Fujimoto was born and raised in Nagoya, Japan. Her first chapbook, "Home, No Home", won the annual Oro Fino Chapbook Competition by Educe Press. Another short collection, "Silver Seasons of Heartache," was recently released by *Glass Lyre Press*. She is working on her graphic poetry collection, which will be published by *Tupelo Press*. [www.naokofujimoto.com](http://www.naokofujimoto.com)

## Jessica Goodfellow

Jessica Goodfellow's books are *Whiteout* (University of Alaska Press, 2017), *Mendeleev's Mandala* (2015) and *The Insomniac's Weather Report* (2014). She's had work in *Best New Poets*, *The Writer's Almanac*, *Verse Daily*, and *Motionpoems*. In 2016 she was a writer-in-

residence at Denali National Park and Preserve.

## Henry Israeli

Henry Israeli is the author of three collections of translations and three collections of poetry, most recently *god's breath hovering across the waters* (Four Way, 2016). He is also the founder and editor of Saturnalia Books ([www.saturnaliabooks.com](http://www.saturnaliabooks.com)), Associate Professor of English at Drexel University and Director of the Drexel Writing Festival.

## Jen Karetnick

Based in Miami, Jen Karetnick is the author of seven collections of poetry, including *The Treasures That Prevail* (Whitepoint Press, 2016), which was a finalist for the 2017 Poetry Society of Virginia Book Prize. Her work has appeared or is forthcoming in *Crab Orchard Review*, *The Missouri Review*, *One, Prairie Schooner*, *Spillway*, *Verse Daily* and *Waxwing*. A Pushcart Prize and Best of the Net nominee, she works as the Creative Writing Director for Miami Arts Charter School; a dining critic and lifestyle journalist; and a trade book author. Her most recent publication is *The 500 Hidden Secrets of Miami* (Luster, September 2017).

## Gina Keicher

Gina Keicher is the author of *Wilderness Champion* (Gold Wake Press, 2014) and two chapbooks—*Here is My Adventure I Call it Alone* (2015) and *Ars Herzogica* (forthcoming, 2018)—both from *Dancing Girl Press*. Recent work appears or is forthcoming in *New Delta Review*, *New South*, *Quarterly West*, *Salt Hill*, and *Tupelo Quarterly*. Gina lives in Ithaca, New York, where she is an associate editor for Black Lawrence Press and a lecturer at Ithaca College.

## Laurinda Lind

Laurinda Lind teaches college English in New York's North Country. This year, she won and placed in two state poetry contests. Some publications/ acceptances are in *Comstock Review*, *The Cortland Review*, *Ekphrasis*, *Josephine Quarterly*, *Main Street Rag*, *Off the Coast*, *Paterson Literary Review*, *Triggerfish*, *Unbroken*, and *Welter*.

## Hilary Melton

Hilary Melton received her MFA from Vermont College of Fine Arts. Her work has appeared in the *New York Quarterly*, *Ellipsis*, *Rattle*, *Slipstream*, *Sow's Ear Poetry Review*, among others.

## Steve Mueske

Steven Mueske is an electronic musician and the author of a chapbook and two books of poetry. His poems have appeared recently in *The Iowa Review*, *Water-Stone Review*, *Poet Lore*, *The American Poetry Review*, *Typo Magazine*, *Redactions*, *Radar Poetry*, *Verse Daily*, and elsewhere.

## Christine Pacyk

Christine Pacyk is a poet and educator living in the Chicago Suburbs and who holds an MFA in poetry from Northwestern University. She was recently named a finalist for the 2017 Claire Rosen and Samuel Edes Foundation Prize for Emerging Artists. Her work has appeared in *Jet Fuel Review*, *Beloit Poetry Journal*, *Kettle Blue Review*, and *Crannóg Magazine*, to name a few.

## Shivane Ramlochan

Shivane Ramlochan is a Trinidadian writer and critic. She works for the NGC Bocas Lit Fest, the Anglophone Caribbean's largest literary festival, as well as Paper Based Bookshop, Trinidad and Tobago's oldest independent Caribbean specialty bookseller. Shivane is the Book Review Editor for *Caribbean Beat Magazine*, and the Assistant Editor of *The Caribbean Review of Books*. She was the runner-up in the 2014 Small Axe Literary Competition for Poetry, and was shortlisted for the 2015 Hollick Arvon Caribbean Writers Prize. Her first book of poems, *Everyone Knows I Am a Haunting*, was published by Peepal Tree Press on October 3rd, 2017.

## Virginia Smith Rice

Virginia Smith Rice is the author of the poetry collection, *When I Wake It Will Be Forever* (Sundress Publications, 2014), and a poetry chapbook, *Whose House, Whose Playroom* (Dancing Girl Press, 2017). Her poems appear in *The Antioch Review*, *Baltimore Review*, *Cimarron Review*, *Cincinnati Review*, *Denver Quarterly*, *Massachusetts Review*, and *Southern Poetry Review*, among other journals. She is poetry editor at *Kettle Blue Review*, and associate editor at Canopic Publishing.

## Austin Rodenbiker

Austin Rodenbiker received his MFA in creative writing from the New Writers Project and holds an MA in gender studies from UT Austin. His recent poetry appears in *smoking glue gun*, *Narrative*, and *fields*, among other zines and broadsides. He lives and writes in Austin, TX.

## Linda Strahl

Linda K. Strahl is an alumna to Lewis University receiving her BA in Creative Writing. She furthered her writing education at Hamline University earning a Masters in Children's and Adolescent Literature. Her work was last featured in *Windows Journal*. She currently ignores writing in her personal blog, keeps a steady sales job and lives outside Chicago with her family.

## Alison Thumel

Alison Thumel is a Chicago-based poet, writer, and erasurist. Her work has recently appeared in *DIAGRAM*, *The Rumpus*, and *Salt Hill*. She is the author of *LIFE OF*, which won Salt Hill's Dead Lake Chapbook Contest in 2016.

## Angela Narciso Torres

Angela Narciso Torres's poetry collection, *Blood Orange*, won the Willow Books Award. Recent work appears in *Nimrod*, *Water~Stone Reivew*, *Spoon River Poetry Review*, *Colorado Review*, and other journals. A graduate of Warren Wilson MFA Program and Harvard Graduate School of Education, she has received fellowships from Bread Loaf Writers' Conference, Illinois Arts Council, and Ragdale Foundation. Born in Brooklyn and raised in Manila, she is a poetry editor for *RHINO* and a reader for *New England Review*.

## Art

### Wayne Bertola

In response to questions concerning his training and schooling etc. Wayne Bertola is, for lack of a better term, self-taught...Influences have ranged from the iconography of Roman Catholicism to the collages of Max Ernst, the constructions of Joseph Cornell and the visionary art of Henry Darger.

#### Artist's Statement

*Anything that is strange, accidental, individual can become our portal to the universe. A face, a star, a stretch of countryside, an old tree, etc., may make an epoch in our inner lives. – This is the great reality of fetish worship. Novalis, Neue Fragmente, No. 259*

It is my hope that my work speaks for itself, in its own voice, without being burdened with autobiographical and or didactic references. If the work in question has any meaning or purpose in the accepted sense; it is in its ability to engage the viewer in a creative dialogue of association, allusion, and reverie.

### Sam Callahan

Sam Callahan took an interest in photography at a very young age. Growing up, her mother had boxes and boxes of photographs that she and her twin sister used to go through and make photo albums out of. Photography has always been her creative outlet, a way for her to escape the real world. She captures life and the make-believe on the daily, which can be viewed on her website: <http://www.samcallahan.photography/>.

### Jamea Richmond-Edwards

Detroit-bred Jamea Richmond-Edwards graduated Magna Cum Laude with a Bachelor of Art degree from Jackson State University in 2004 where she studied painting and drawing. She went on to earn a MFA from Howard University in 2012. Jamea is inspired by the black figures of artist Kerry James Marshall and drawings of Charles White. Jamea has exhibited her artwork nationally and internationally including the Delaware Art Museum Centennial Exhibition, Wilmington, Delaware; Rush Arts Corridor Gallery, Brooklyn, NY; Parish Gallery, Washington, D.C. and Galerie Myrtis, Baltimore, Maryland. Her works are in the permanent collection of private collectors across the country and the Embassy of the United States in Dakar Senegal.

## Naoko Fujimoto

Naoko Fujimoto was born and raised in Nagoya, Japan. Her first chapbook, “Home, No Home”, won the annual Oro Fino Chapbook Competition by *Educe Press*. Another short collection, “Silver Seasons of Heartache”, was recently released by *Glass Lyre Press*. She is working on her graphic poetry collection, which will be published by *Tupelo Press*. [www.naokofujimoto.com](http://www.naokofujimoto.com)

### Artist’s Statement

Graphic poetry is the melding of words and images. In her project, “Trans. Sensory”, Naoko Fujimoto translates her poems (that are written in English on paper) into words and images to create a contemporary picture scroll. The viewers transport their senses from the paper and bridge the gap between words and images that will connect with their physical counterparts. Her entire collection will be published by *Tupelo Press*, and her progress can be seen at [www.naokofujimoto.com](http://www.naokofujimoto.com).

## Angela Eve & Anastasios Ketsios

Angela Eve & Anastasios Ketsios (Tasso) are Image Collective. They have been creating art together for 15 years jumping off the platform of a life together for their art. Humanitarians and photographers they have traveled to many locations capturing protests, disasters, underground and alternative culture through portraiture and documentary narrative. Angela Eve’s multi media show, produced as a team, helps take them all over the world where they find the stories of the people and animals featured in their images. Much of their work is a look into strength, resilience, creativity, and the threads of human culture.

<https://imagecollective.smugmug.com>

### Artists’ Statement

#### *Trash Goat*

A self portrait series of Angela and Tasso together in New Orleans in spirit with the Gothic folklore of New Orleans’ past. More from this project:

<https://imagecollective.smugmug.com/FineArt/Trash-Goat/>

#### *Prayers for Paulette*

Paulette has been fighting cancer for 10 years. We found her while in New Orleans’ lower 9th ward in an area we photographed during our original Katrina project. She was open to us photographing her strength and expression surrounded in her home landscape that was decimated during Katrina. More from this project:

<https://imagecollective.smugmug.com/FineArt/Preyer-For-Paulette-Images-by/>

#### *Happy Birthday to Me—Preexisting Conditions*

James is our friend, he is 39 and has Basal Cell Carcinoma Nevus Syndrome, cancer. His Cancer has metastasized to his bone marrow and he’s fighting it with no insurance and very little energy to work. We created this project for him, called: “Just about really tired of my preexisting conditions”. These are images we photographed of him, his spirit and the effects cancer is having on him physically and mentally. We are pairing up images with quotes from his Facebook page about how he feels over the last year. Giving you insight



into his world with cancer. More from this project:

<https://imagecollective.smugmug.com/FineArt/Preexisting-Condition/>

## **Lindsay Olson**

Lindsay Olson's artistic practice grows out of an intense curiosity about the ways our society is supported by science and technology. She has worked as Fermi National Accelerator's first artist in residence, as a visiting artist with the Field Museum, The Chicago Botanic Garden and the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago. Olson teaches textiles at Columbia College Chicago. Her work on high energy physics is currently touring in Europe and in the US.

### **Project Statement**

Lindsay's artistic practice grows out of an intense curiosity about the ways our society is supported by science and technology. As Fermilab's first artist in residence, she worked with scientists, members of the operations crew, and numerous staff throughout the lab to learn the basics of high energy physics. She was inspired to create a body of work that reflects the beauty of the research and the dedication of the scientists at Fermilab.

The project sheds light on both the smallest frontiers and the structure of the universe: the subatomic realm of neutrinos, quarks and leptons. Lindsay is fascinated by the behavior of nature's fundamental building blocks that make up all that we see. She views the project as an ideal way to invite others with little or no technical background to explore the very underpinnings of reality itself.

<http://www.lindsayolsonart.com/main.html>

### **Project Supporters**

The American Physical Society,  
Fermi National Accelerator Laboratory,  
Columbia College Chicago  
Art@CMS

## **Alex Turner**

Alex Turner is a recent Lewis University grad. He majored in Graphic Design, he was a team leader in Red Graphics (design club), the director of Harmonic Uprising (a cappella group), and bass section leader in the chamber choir. Furthermore, he has participated in the 7th annual President's Art Show, presented at the 2016 Celebration of Scholarship, and was published in the Spring 2017 edition of the *Windows Magazine* for winning 1st place in student visual art.

### **Artist's Statement**

As an artist, experimenting with technique to produce new and interesting results is what I strive for. With an aspiration to create thought-provoking work, I am constantly experimenting with different artistic mediums. My instincts drive and shape me along my path. My music and the environment is what inspires me. Bursts of creativity and fevered thought are how I operate.

Out of my love for interpretation I tend to create abstract and conceptual art. Being able to shape the outcome of a piece that is created without any clear intention, other than the idea of what materials to use, is incredibly rewarding. Expressing myself in a way that conveys a powerful message to the audience is my goal; in art, music, and life.

## Fiction

### Jenny Bhatt

Jenny Bhatt's writing has been nominated for the Pushcart Prize and the Best of the Net Anthology and has appeared or is upcoming in, among others: *The Atlantic*, *Amazon's Day One Literary Journal*, *Gravel Magazine*, *Lunch Ticket*, *Hofstra's Windmill*, *Eleven Eleven Journal*, *Hot Metal Bridge*, *The Indian Quarterly*, *Litro UK*, and an anthology, 'Sulekha Select: The Indian Experience in a Connected World.' She is currently looking for a home for her first short story collection. Find her at: <http://indiatopia.com>.

### Reena Shah

Reena Shah is a writer, educator, and dancer. Her work has appeared in *Origins Journal*, *Temenos*, and *Chalkbeat* and was selected as a runner up for the New Letters Fiction Award in 2017 and as a finalist in 2016. She holds an MFA in Fiction Writing from New York University and has been a member of the Parul Shah Dance Company for several years. She lives in Brooklyn, New York with her husband and two young sons.

### Elijah Tomaszewski

Elijah Tomaszewski is a Philadelphia-based nonfiction writer who dabbles in fiction to protect the innocent (friends, customers, past lives, etc.). He received his bachelor's in creative writing from Susquehanna University and his master's from Rosemont College, where he edited nonfiction for *Rathalla Review*. His work has been featured in *[apt]*, *RiverCraft*, *Tacenda Press*, and *A Collection of Dance Poems*. When he isn't reading submissions for *Hippocampus Magazine* or misplacing notebooks, he's either working at his day job in the suburbs or whipping up sugary concoctions in his kitchen.

## Nonfiction

### Lee Gulyas

Lee Gulyas's work has appeared in journals such as *The Common*, *Prime Number*, *Barn Owl Review*, *Event*, *The Malahat Review*, *Kahini Magazine*, *Tinderbox*, *Literary Mama*, *Sweet*, and *Full Grown People*. She received a 2014 Washington State Artist Trust Grant, teaches at WWU in Bellingham, and has twice participated as faculty in WWU's Service-Learning Study Abroad Program to Rwanda.

### Brenda Miller

Brenda Miller is the author of five essay collections, most recently *An Earlier Life* (Ovenbird Books, 2016). She also co-authored *Tell It Slant: Creating, Refining and Publishing Creative Nonfiction* and *The Pen and The Bell: Mindful Writing in a Busy*

*World*. Her work has received six Pushcart Prizes. She is a Professor of English at Western Washington University, and associate faculty at the Rainier Writing Workshop.

### **Carolina Faller Moura**

Carolina Faller Moura is a writer and artist from Brazil, living in Berlin. She earned her MFA in Writing from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, where she received the 2016 MFAW Writing Fellowship Award. She is the founder and editor of Homonym Journal, an online publication focused on multi-lingual and translation-minded art & writing.

### **Julie Marie Wade**

Julie Marie Wade is the author of eight collections of poetry and prose. She teaches in the creative writing program at Florida International University in Miami and reviews regularly for *Lambda Literary Review* and *The Rumpus*. In 2018, her first coauthored collection with Denise Duhamel, *The Unrhymables: Collaborations in Prose*, will be published by Wild Patience Books, and her novella-in-poems, *Same-Sexy Marriage*, will be published by *A Midsummer Night's Press*. She is married to Angie Griffin and lives on Hollywood Beach.



