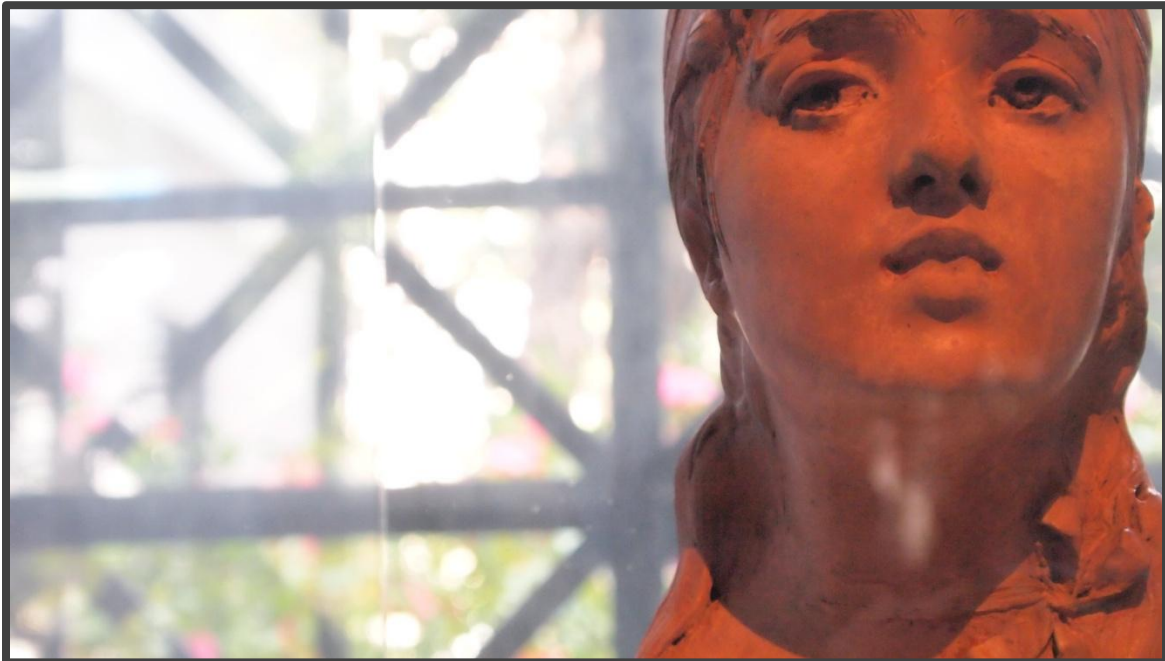


# *Lingerpost*

Issue # 4

July 2012



*(Photo of August Rodin's "Bust of a Young Girl" (1868))*

# *Lingerpost*

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## Letter from the Editor:

Thanks for visiting us.

In *Letters to a Young Poet*, Rainer Maria Rilke advised, “Be patient toward all that is unsolved in your heart and try to love the questions themselves, like locked rooms and like books that are now written in a very foreign tongue. Do not now seek the answers, which cannot be given to you because you would not be able to live them. And the point is, to live everything. Live the questions now. Perhaps you will then gradually, without noticing it, live along some distant day into the answer.”

And we are loving the questions, the quest, and the living.

As always, thanks to the amazing and wonderful poets and artists who contributed to this issue.

Enjoy,

Kara Dorris  
Editor-in-Chief, *Lingerpost*

**CAROLINE KLOCKSIEM**

*Meet me with two winged horses*

What I never got  
to tell you—  
Woke up clutching  
the phone at 2 am, bird-  
less quiet of bedroom.  
My body won't  
be getting any better—  
It doesn't matter  
how many dollars  
you have, just know  
automatically where  
to find me—The far off  
tweeting. Thicket above  
aflutter with stars. Absent  
words and absent  
that easy green  
guidance you can't find  
from water.

**CHARLENE LANGFUR**

*The Garden Seems Far Away Today*

Memories of collecting seeds in a paper cup,  
checking what is up around the stems,  
a bug here, a dead stalk there.

What needs tending matters. All of it.  
The smallest sprout, the first growth of the radish  
busting out of the ground, green, forthright,  
infinitely tiny. It never backs down.

In my mind the idea of the garden seems far off,  
slipping away into the past.

Even so, my feet are on solid earth,  
on dirt so black it defies description,  
evades gravity. So black it makes you dream of what  
is to come from it, dream of sweet yellow corn, fat brown onions  
from the dirt with spirit, white beans, light green pears,  
earth at the heart of all of it.

The garden is the best place to kiss under a new moon,  
its seed-small prayers.  
I know. I ready the hoes,  
the rakes. Steady up. I imagine rows, plot  
earthy embankments, ditches to drain off water.  
You have to get it right to keep the plants dry.

I collect jars to prepare for what comes next,  
to prepare for what needs saving.

I know we are always in need of saving.

## **DAPHNE STANFORD**

*Letter in December*

On the dim blue horizon, a tree line; on the morning walk, a song, repercussion of coupling in your head, beating a drum tap of want, of God, help me forget—branches laden with snow you don't want to see on that line. Cones are waiting for spring to be dropped—when animals will tear & bite them apart.

You find the shortest, the darkest, the kinkiest hairs on your head, pull them out at the root. Pluck & pinch, like a flame—out. Stop removing roots from your head. The thinning is inside, now. The cones on trees, up close, they seem— You grasp at branches, want to feel each sprig, each frost-covered needle, as something to be revealed.

The December snow is rain, frozen & globuled together, is the fence & earth melting at breakneck, is the surface & lack of surface, is the pillar & the mountain, is the man & the boy-turning-man, is what fell the morning after you left his house, is not here but inherent in the incessant patter & drip, is the force of what will be here, weathering.



**MICHAEL MORELL**

*The Danger of Staring*

Into the late night I watched ice crystals like stars form in the backyard.  
By midnight and moonlight I could make out blades of grass  
curling their slender backs under the season's weight.  
My vision shifts the way you step onto a bus and see all the people  
at once, at first, then hook onto an empty seat next to the woman  
staring out the window into the past, recalling her first love.  
When I click into the puzzle piece next to her my back bends  
toward the tug of everything she is reaching for.

**DANA YOST**

*Prairie Storm*

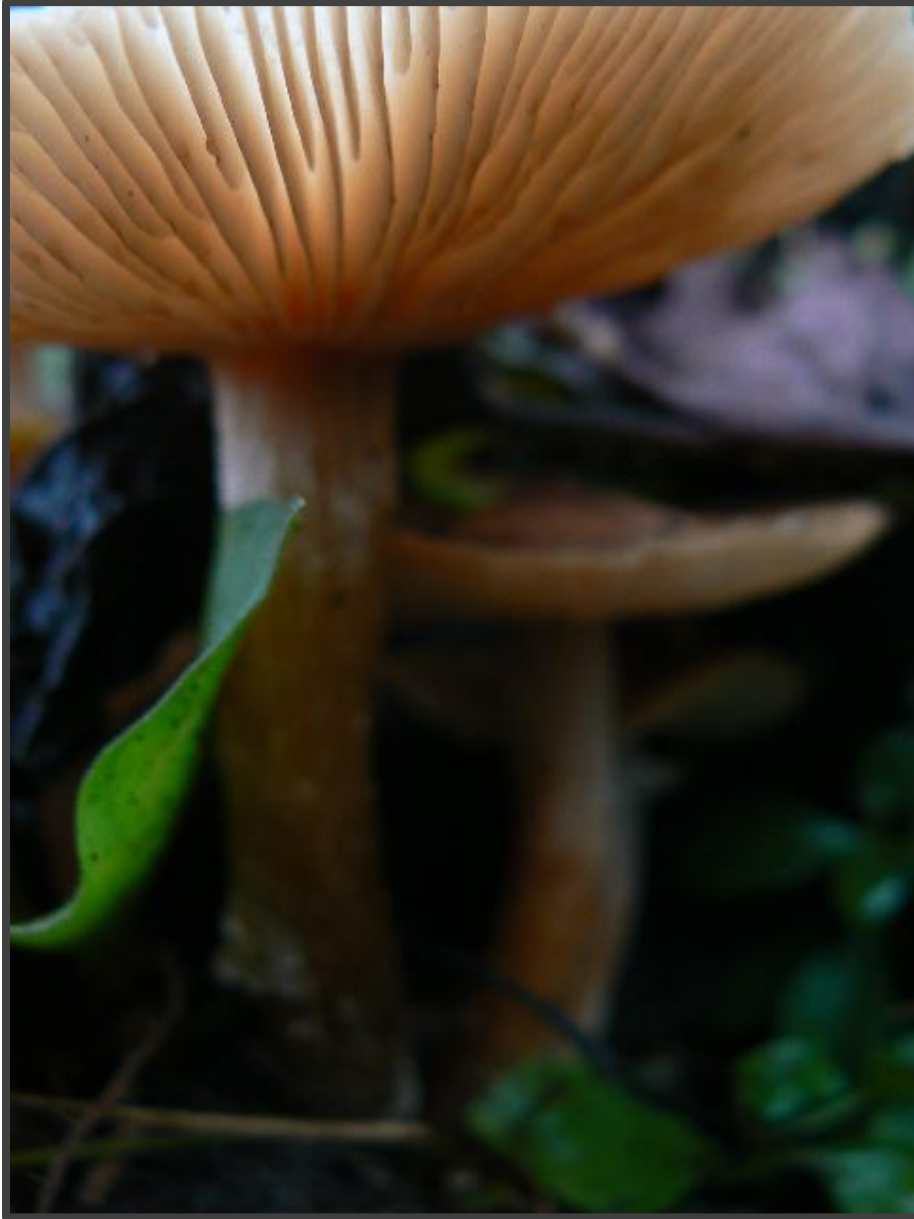
The bruised half-hour after a prairie storm,  
layers of sickly white, sun-starved cloud  
and ill, disoriented, gray-whale sky  
overlap and hang, the storm a dumbfounded thing  
droning away to the east. There are no  
mountain-sized thunderheads in a storm like this,  
just a slow thickness that means rain and relief to brittle farmland,  
perhaps some vicious downdrafts that strip and twist a grove of maple,  
but nothing that lands you in the news.

And be grateful for that.

The news comes for the dead, the shredded, the sobbing,  
the images that can't be explained by science or God:  
half a house in splinters, but the baby's bedroom left perfect and pink;  
necktie rack blown forty miles, ten ties still attached, clean;  
farmyard mud driven through the pores of the century-old farmhouse's walls,  
the house still standing and solid, but the interior looking as if painted in dirt, every  
wall, every floor, every threshold, even the bathtub,  
and the wife on the front steps, wordless  
and her palms as muddy as if she'd been swimming in earth, silently  
permitting entrance to seemingly every oddity-seeker in Minnesota.  
The storm today performs none of that.

It is business-like and plodding, and the bruises will heal,  
and that is enough  
to keep the prairie living, blossoming for a few more weeks.

**IKA DUPRASS**  
*Glowing Mushroom*



*Bursting Through*



**MICHAEL FITZGERALD-CLARKE**

*Creation*

1.

I dwell in possibility  
-- Emily Dickinson

A pair of slippers finds a pair of feet.  
A pair of voices argue. Who  
is comfortable next to a mountain  
or next to nothing? Such is  
the argument.

She is pregnant. I wish  
her a sky like ours.  
I wish her many loves,  
and a love above many.  
In the window, in

the very glass, my  
faith is absorbed, but I  
know it is there. In  
the sky most birds turn  
blue—even clouds

if we let them. In the  
storm, a pair of gods  
quarrel—this is poetry,  
we clamber into the blue  
glass, and things happen.

**JOHN PALEN**

*Cellist*

Working on this piece  
I imagine a man and woman,  
a small apartment, a dark time.  
You hear intimate conversation  
in a language you don't speak,  
but if I do my job you'll sense  
its bitter drift, begin to imagine  
their story working itself out,  
their fate. The climax comes  
with a shift to thumb position,  
a slide down the fingerboard  
past the landmarks of open strings  
to dead reckoning. I practice,  
get it right twenty times, miss it,  
start over. I have to be able  
to nail it on three hours' sleep  
with the flu, a child in trouble,  
an old man bobbing his head  
in row three, the story now  
his own, out of my hands.

**AMY BRYANT**

*American and Not*

*Things to Think About When Your Visa's Expiring*

In fifty days you'll be in the passenger seat of Maggie's car  
smack in-between Tullamarine airport  
and wherever "what-the-fuck-am-I-doing-with-my-life" is located,  
and you'll be watching the other cars on the road,  
you, who can never tell what's a good idea  
and what's a terrible idea.  
And you'll be heading back to real life  
also known as fuck all  
also known as riding a bike to school  
in the dark and in the rain, for the sake of inherent American ambition.  
You might cry but more likely your identity will shatter and  
it  
will  
paralyze  
you.  
But fate, that's all we can call it, will get you on the plane, and it will truck along  
all the way until amber waves of grain and purple mountains majesty  
spill out underneath;  
and America will happen, no matter what.

*Full Stop*

His lover will soon depart him.

It's been written on the calendar, since  
before he knows, before her face was his.

And wholly composed, he'll let her go

never to have said he loved her

or to neglect their cold weather walks.

Her traces on his life will go in the desk drawer

and they'll never discuss how much sleep she got on the plane

or how her mother greeted her at the airport

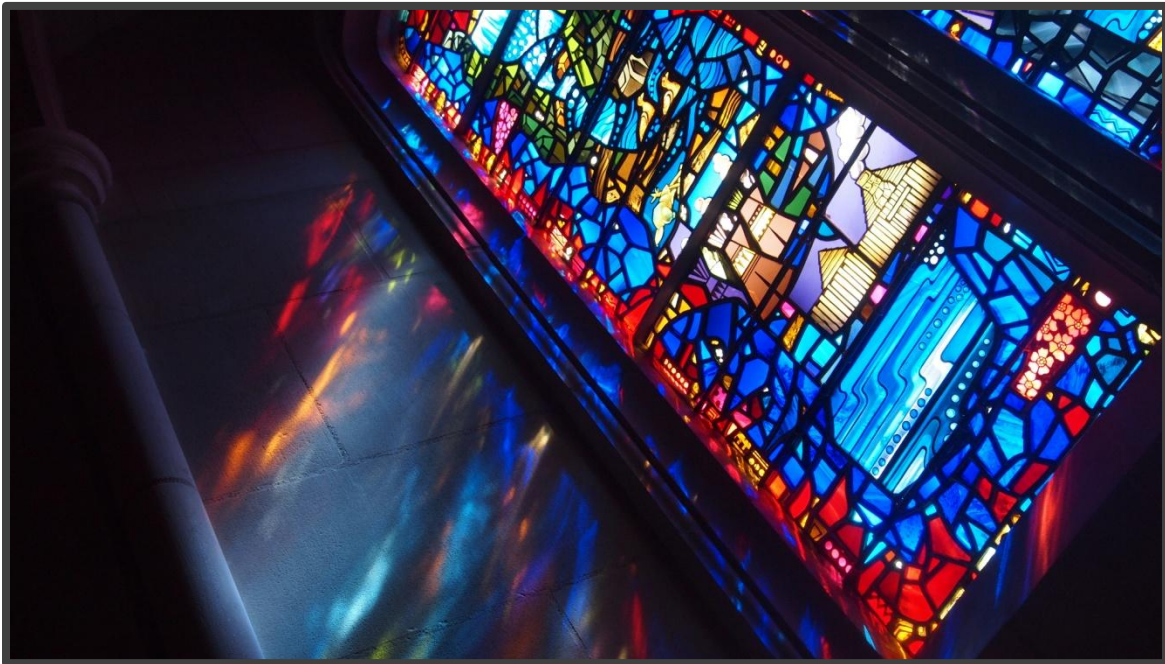
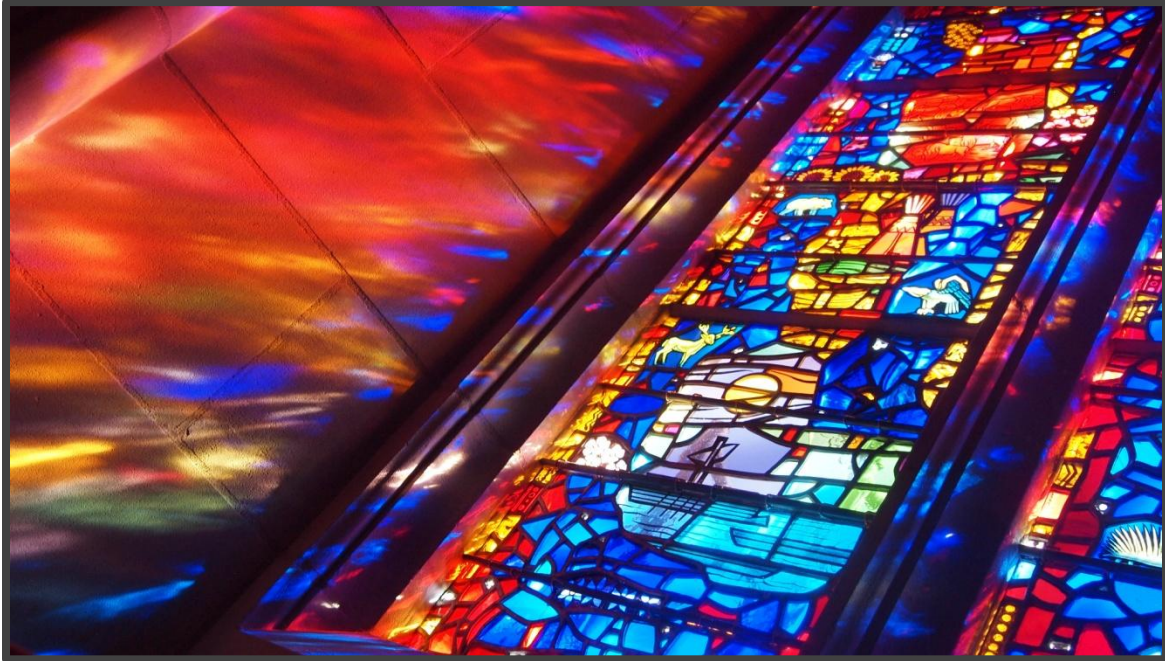
or how long it would take her to drive to Guadalajara.



*Brittany Said We Used to be Underwater*

I was somewhere  
somewhere after Darwin and before Alice Springs  
and I noticed living cemeteries everywhere  
scattering the land, my reminders to love strangeness.  
Things that aren't mine;  
in the form of everything.  
And that's when I said, or thought, Australia  
you will break my heart.  
It rose out of the land or rather out of me and I know,  
I know now that the termite mounds will not miss me when I'm gone.  
Uninhabited space that breathes,  
it is so cognizant.  
Apprehends me, becomes me, and  
all my lovers' sisters watching their brothers grow away from them  
and grow different  
don't replace it.

**C.J. HEAD**  
*Day and Night*



**ANDREW SPIESS**

*Dilation of Late*

1

Dream out of focus  
Fragment  
Stark faculties

The sharp call  
of crickets drifting  
and riddling  
the cold spaces  
of my inner recesses.

In the swallowing night  
dried leaves skitter  
on the street leaving  
footsteps in my ears:

Footsteps that fold  
and collapse,  
The implications of folds,  
My mind folding over  
like skin.

A fabric so thin  
it must be  
touched to exist.

2

Shadow-eyed, I

watch moths  
beat themselves  
to death  
against  
the streetlamps

listen to the rhythmic  
knock of their bodies  
against light.

Moths like desperate  
knuckles knocking  
against doors

the knock and flutter  
of thoughts  
and stuttering talk,  
the limitless flickering  
of their wings.

When they drop  
my eyelashes  
catch them.

3

There is nothing  
but what is near to us.  
If you don't believe me,  
go down the street  
and drift around.

Eels of light slide  
from dim streetlamps.

Like eels, my thoughts  
radiate from my bulbous  
head, bleed together  
like a blend  
of yellow episodes  
or a bowl of soup  
between two lovers.

My voice like an eel  
with heavy teeth,  
drifting through curls

of smoke.

I only have to close  
my eyes  
to possess myself.

**ANNE GERMANACOS**

*Navigating a labyrinth in sound*

**Compressed energy, spatial dynamics**

When does a trip end?  
Stepping across the lintel—home?

When does anything, including the relationship end?

When you do, no doubt.

\*

How to distinguish between recollected and represented?

\*

Think about spanning a void.  
Jump!

\*

Cast iron? Wrought.

\*

Timeless, unlocalized.  
(mortal, finite)

\*

A boy whose father fought in the war. How could he ever

\*

Of course she was like a mother to us. Our mother had—at one time—been like a mother to her.

\*

What?

What!

## Vinegary olives for lunch

That coupling yesterday, while satisfying, also stirred us mad.  
My body won't stop filling; the water keeps running.

\*

Why I deny those trees their right to rooted stateliness?  
My own unrooted self, a deal breaker.

Darting translucent lizards—another matter.

\*

Sometimes impossible to empathize with an inert object.  
A tall cypress, a rose (a thorn), a fistful of sand.

You are not inert, but my access to your thingness is finite.

Blow me a kiss!

\*

Vincent (VG), I've been denying you.  
Your fiery cypresses, your spiraling stars.

I wouldn't cut off an ear—not just yet.

\*

No zoo, no cage, no whip.  
All the animals wandering through town, loose and free. Trumpeting.

This steady eros, sometimes unsteady.

\*

Still-life?  
Still life.



**Now that he's in the other room, I miss him.**

I read about houses without interior doors: just one between inner and outer, just one.

\*

A shrimp fisherman's schedule—set by the moon.  
(sounds like a woman)

\*

Are you the type of person who repairs your own (fishing) nets?

\*

That person (non grata) keeps showing up.  
Impossible to excise, we can put her in an alternate trajectory.  
(Launch her to the moon.)

\*

People who stutter in one language but not the other (or the other).

\*

The signs portending disintegration:

\*

Did Penelope ever really know? Can a bed be everything?

\*

Food may undo you.

\*

Coming home to an empty house, you always know who's greeting you.

\*

Aren't there two sides to every wall?

\*

Do Odysseuses return?

Do Penelopes unweave?

How would you navigate a labyrinth in sound?

## **That crow's wings**

flapped wind that reached my ears.

\*

Would you walk down Market St handing out small change to strangers?

How often have you swum in circles, ecstatic?

*Make waves!*

Take a penny.

Take a dollar!

Aberration turns fashion.

(give it time)

\*

Ritual annihilation of the sacred object frees the worshipper.

Throw away the beans?

\*

Have you known any wind sailors?

(Sailed with them?)

Mary Poppins.

A nanny.

(no goat)

\*

What do you think of sample books, the kind with soft fabric pages, their only story a pattern in shifting color?

\*

Someone once said: only whores wink.  
*Is that true?*

**BRYAN RICE**

*Raw Material*

There is no further use  
for the liquid glass  
we blew to the size  
of a cathedral  
and forced  
through the eye of a needle,

or the cockatoo  
we shrank to nothing  
and set loose  
into the open throat  
of a canyon.

We must learn  
to profit from the loss  
of a paper boat  
sent skimming toward  
expectant hands  
on the opposite shore.

**JIM FUESS**

*Abstract Painting #266*



*Abstract Painting Worm Wars #2*



**TIM KAHL**

*The String Of Islands*

The string of islands is as long as a vein and the  
creatures living on the rocks are met by  
the saltwater that washes against, around  
and over, that anticipates the swirl and cluster—molecule by molecule.

The instinct to form is sudden. It is occasion and spray,  
a game of numbers where both rock and cloud  
get wet.

The string of islands is writing its name. Its name  
is used by students of geography to signify beauty turning  
back in on itself. The name is attached to every other  
name in the library of place names. There is no sequence  
from one to another.

Each is paired, three-connected,  
connected to four, five, six; a cascade begins  
and forms a complex  
in phases that cycle.

The arbitrary dust is organized by impulse.  
System verging. System trained.

The string of islands is in transition,  
edging, edged by the random drift of  
development that emerges, that issues forth  
the tentative organic and is fit among the schemes  
of sand, schist and granite.

The asteroids and comets are not cheated either.

Their origins are pure process...  
the sea itself is more than the story of matter.

And what is the advantage of a  
chemistry of coupling, of tripling,  
of veins stretched out toward  
infinite degrees of order?

The mutual is faster to contain the flow.



**COURTNEY FAIRHELLER**

*Persephone*

She brought me the freshest tangerines,  
grapefruit, mangos and  
honeysuckle, baby's breath,  
tiger lilies; she handed me the Earth  
from her palms,  
I think she would have captured the sun in a jar  
if her arms had been long enough.

One day as she slept  
I broke free  
and ran until I reached a field.

I was so amazed by how  
intimately the wind's breath felt  
on my bare shoulder.  
I did not see the leaves turn into  
stinging nettles,  
but I did see him approaching.

They said that after he took me  
my mother scratched out her eyes  
so she could no longer cry,  
and he forced my mouth open  
with pliers  
so even when I went home,  
I could never go home,  
I could never be safe again.

*Fallen Angels*

They wear fedoras and Rolexes,  
wings dipped in oil.  
boots pimped with goosebumps.  
In the new fiction aisle  
they read chimeras and griffins into being,  
a caramel macchiato steaming in their talons.

They ride their Hybrids, steering into  
Chaos with malice in their headlights.  
They bought stocks in Hell and they'll wrangle  
women for the cha ching their mouths make,  
whipping tramp stamps into their skin.

In the heavens, they pinch the bosoms of clouds,  
they wring nipples for rain,  
but the skin of their backs still crawls  
itching for wings.

**FLOWER CONROY**

*Episodic Memory*

Turbulence: that muffled  
half-moan disturbed/ battling itself.  
You stand in the trailer's hall.  
Your father's drawn-out groans.  
Twenty minutes pass, your mother pulling  
him up from the semiconscious  
pit of himself. Who could find one's way out  
of such slumber's cyclone? Remember this moment.  
What you saw in the half-dark  
of that off-limits room: the limp  
imitation silk comforter rankling  
off bed's edge slushing to the linoleum;  
foot & calf  
of a man & of what you heard.  
When it happens almost twenty years  
later, a new nightmare, you will  
not be present but it will be there in you.  
You know now dreams that clench  
you by your throat—you awake because you  
cannot scream. The opposite  
of your first birthday—how they clapped  
when you rubbed cake into your eyes.

**KELLY DUMAR**

*Singing Over Your Bones*

I know where you live now, grandmother – I know. Your ash bones blow on this wind that rises out of silence like my song for you: Flora, lover of wildflowers, speechless one, mute about crimes in your own home. Without murmur or complaint, lonely and old, you were sent to the afterlife by way of a funeral which many attended, except your two daughters who boycotted, and two sons who fled mid-stream when seized by stomach cramps, and a last son, little piggy, who skipped to stay home.

I had never – not in public - lifted my voice in song when I sang at your funeral. I had not been asked, no one gave me permission. It began as a cough does, clawing the back of my throat when the minister woke us from our dream of what his sermon could be by clearing his throat and invoking a moment of silence, in your memory. And, like a cough, there was no stopping it - cut loose from my throat, cracking the silence to pieces –

Hush little baby, don't say a word, mama's gonna buy you a mockingbird. . . and if that mockingbird won't sing. . . daddy's gonna buy you diamond ring. . .

There was perfect attendance but no singing at grandfather's funeral, years before, which nobody boycotted or got stomach cramps from, and during which all your five children kept their fingers crossed to keep from pointing them. I'll tell you a secret that spilled - some fathers' sins are eternally mesmerizing.

The night you lay dying in your hospital bed, I was tucking my daughters into theirs, singing a lullaby when you called my name, I swear. I kissed them and hurried, hoping to reach you in time. In the ghost-light of that room your spirit, already gone begging, whispered, Help me heal things that I left broken. Since I am a dutiful granddaughter, I do. Because, I won't sacrifice my children's hearts, those delicate seeds, to silence. If any word out of my mouth - my womb - could slice the fingers groping toward their innocence, I would cut, with my word, through steel or strings - I would cut family ties before they bound my children's seed hearts to a lie.

You died in my arms with all your unsaid words, those tramps, floating homeless, around the bed. They hitch hiked a ride on the intake of my breath. They set up camp in my belly. And now, when I sing, I send them home.

**JESSICA HARKINS**

*I dream to find you*

I dream to find you,  
child-oracle, a wider  
compass, the bright-striped  
eye that spins—  
opening me into a larger fate.  
You, who make  
sense of the house's  
discomfiture, separate  
the sickening  
tangle of my nerves —  
make each clearly  
a part of something  
else — oh child  
in your dark voice  
clear and bright. You  
who love all, who know  
why I have come—  
who speaks as though  
we were in mid-  
conversation.

## Sisters

A woman avoiding names  
walks through a forest where carcasses  
hang, each named “woman.” Traitor,  
black-laced, metal bolts through her  
lying throat, needles in her hands for poisoning;  
whore, whose flesh draws flies  
that crawl and spawn larvae;  
wicked stepmother cruelty  
has twisted and broken them; witches—  
they are worse. They are pockets of shadow:  
each square opens its darkness  
and falls into mine, a black window  
through which she looks—not a witch  
but a reflection that I fear—and she,  
no person, but an accumulation of fears  
laid atop one another (and yet I hope  
for her). I walk through the hanging ones,  
bodies held in burlap so that  
the meat has slumped, their own bones  
crushing what sinews are left—  
oh sisters, you were never alive.

## Nocturne

Somehow our clothes have always  
lain on the ground. I woke  
in the room where they were, like old signs,  
pointing in haphazard directions.  
Oh it is not his smell on the collar—  
it is the smell of sun too long on dust  
that has already become how I remember  
his scent. He is gone, replaced by sun  
before I saw him, and has been left  
to what my imagining can do  
with the details. He is taking off  
my skin as I write, write closer  
to that fragile one he remembers  
in his room, where bone-like  
window frames guard the night, and his demon  
has a disappearing face.  
I know, I know, and the body  
shudders; I undressed you, I let you go.

## CONTRIBUTOR BIOGRAPHIES

Amy Bryant is an undergraduate at University of Oregon majoring in Psychology and minoring in English Language. She spent the 2011-2012 school year abroad studying at La Trobe University in Melbourne, Australia, where she formally studied poetry for the first time.

Flower Conroy's poetry has appeared in *Saw Palm*, *American Literary Review*, *Psychic Meatloaf*, *The LABLETTER*, and other journals. She is currently an MFA student at Fairleigh Dickinson University. Her collection of poetry "Escape to Nowhere" was published by Rain Mountain Press.

Kelly Dumar is a playwright and fiction writer whose plays have been produced around the US and are published by Heuer, Brooklyn, and Youth Plays. "Singing Over Your Bones," has been performed at the Our Voices Festival and the Culture Park short play marathon. Her short story, "Monarch," will be published in the "Open Road Review" in August.

Ika Duprass likes to get into nature, under the undergrowth and up onto trees. She aims to ever increase the ability to forage for her food and hungers for a large garden of perennial edibles. She does not currently possess the qualifications needed to identify mushrooms fit for human consumption.

Courtney Fearheller is a writer of fiction and poetry. She recently graduated from Lafayette College with a BA in English. She spends most of her free time writing, reading, and listening to music. She is following her love for creative writing and starting her first book, the first of a trilogy.

Michael Fitzgerald-Clarke, an Australian poet, is the founder and editor of *The South Townsville micro poetry journal*. When he's not burning the midnight candle responding to submissions, Michael chips away at poetry-related projects: manuscript editing for other poets, writing his own poems, and, intermittently, working on his collected poems.

Jim Fuess works with liquid acrylic paint on canvas. Most of his paintings are abstract, but there are recognizable forms and faces in a number of the abstract paintings. He is striving for grace and fluidity, movement and balance. He likes color and believes that beauty can be an artistic goal. There is whimsy, fear, energy, movement, fun and dread in his abstract paintings. A lot of his abstract paintings are



anthropomorphic. The shapes seem familiar. The faces are real. The gestures and movements are recognizable. More of his abstract paintings, both in color and black and white, may be seen at [www.jimfuessart.com](http://www.jimfuessart.com).

Anne Germanacos' work has appeared in over eighty literary journals and anthologies. Her collection of short stories, *In the Time of the Girls*, was published by BOA Editions in 2010. She and her husband live in San Francisco and on Crete. [www.annegermanacos.com](http://www.annegermanacos.com)

Jessica Harkins' poems, translations and articles have appeared (or are appearing) in journals such as *Stand* (U.K.), *Agenda*, *Salt Magazine*, *ARS Interpres*, *Forum Italicum*, *The Comstock Review*, *Redactions*, *White Whale Review*, *Drunken Boat*, *Third Wednesday*, and *Chaucer Review*. A native of rural Oregon, she lives with her husband and two sons in central Minnesota, where she teaches writing and medieval literature at the College of St. Benedict / St. John's University.

Caroline Klocksien's poems have appeared in such journals as *Hayden's Ferry Review*, *The Pinch*, *BlazeVox*, and others. A Massachusetts Cultural Council Fellowship recipient and 2011 Pushcart Prize Nominee, her chapbook, "Circumstances of the House and Moon," is forthcoming from Dancing Girl Press. She lives in Tuscaloosa, AL with her husband and son and two orange cats.

Tim Kahl [<http://www.timkahl.com>] is the author of *Possessing Yourself* (Word Tech, 2009) and *The Century of Travel* (Word Tech, forthcoming). His work has been published in *Prairie Schooner*, *Indiana Review*, *Ninth Letter*, *Notre Dame Review*, *The Journal*, *Parthenon West Review*, and many other journals in the U.S. He is also editor of *Bald Trickster Press* and *Clade Song* [<http://www.cladesong.com>]. He is the vice president and events coordinator of The Sacramento Poetry Center. He currently teaches at The University of the Pacific. He currently houses his father's literary estate—one volume: Robert Gerstmann's book of photos of Chile, 1932.

Charlene Langfur is an organic gardener, a rescued dog lover, a New Jersey born southern California. A Syracuse University Graduate Writing Fellow, her writing has appeared in many journals and magazines, *Literal Latte*, *The Adirondack Review*, *Poetry East*, most currently in *The Toronto Quarterly*, *The Stone Canoe*, *Steam Ticket*, *Ninepatch* and the next *Hampden Sydney Poetry Review*.

Michael Morell is a Philadelphia area artist whose writing and photography has appeared in *Paterson Literary Review*, *Rattle*, *Modern Haiku*, *A Hundred Gourds*,

and others. He is a former associate poetry editor for Schuylkill Valley Journal and Mad Poets Review. Michael is currently pursuing a Master's in Applied Meditation Studies at Won Institute.

John Palen's *Open Communion: New and Selected Poems* was published by Mayapple Press in 2005. A collection of short fiction, *Small Economies*, appeared in January, also from Mayapple. New poems have appeared recently in *Gulf Stream*, *Sleet*, *New Verse News* and elsewhere. Palen lives in Central Illinois.

Bryan Thomas Rice has published poetry and non-fiction in various journals, including *The Common Review* and *Arch Literary Review*. He lives in Ohio.

Andrew Spiess lives in Bowling Green, Ohio and is studying creative writing at Bowling Green State University. Music and meditation, along with poetry, are among his passions. He has mostly contributed to small local publications for friends.

Daphne Stanford is originally from Carpinteria, California, but now resides in Boise, Idaho, where she reads poetry over the airwaves at her local community radio station, KRBX 89.9 FM. She holds a BA in English from Reed College and an MFA from University of Oregon. This is her first publication.

Dana Yost worked 29 years in daily newspapers. He is the author of two books: *Grace and The Right Place*. His third book, *A Higher Level*, comes out this fall from Ellis Press. He lives in Forest City, Iowa.

**C.J. HEAD**

*US Botanic Gardens*

