

# Red Wheelbarrow

LITERARY MAGAZINE

National Edition, 2023



KRISTIN LINDSETH: Abandoned Village  
bronze, 33" x 16"x 18", 2021



NIMAH GOBIR: *Cole Ave.* oil paint on wood panel, 40.5" x 20.5", 2020

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS

Diana Argabrite

Rose Black

Margaux Guiheneuc

ASSISTANT EDITOR

Grace Li

SCREENERS

Darrell Dela Cruz

Grace Li

Stephanie Stein

Cynthia White

EDITOR

Ken Weisner

# Red Wheelbarrow

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LITERARY MAGAZINE

SEVENTH ANNUAL POETRY PRIZE



ART: PATRICIA DIART, JESSICA DIANA GARZA,  
NIMAH GOBIR, KRISTIN LINDSETH

ENGRAVINGS: GRÁFICA SIQUEIROS,  
VILLA DE ETLA, OAXACA DE JUAREZ



POETRY: SALINAS VALLEY STATE PRISON  
AND BEYOND  
UBALDO TEQUE, JR.

TRANSLATION: FERNAND DUMONT,  
SALVADOR ESPRIU

From 1976 to 1999 this magazine was known as *Bottomfish*, a name that referred to neglected, overlooked writing that had (metaphorically) fallen to the bottom of the sea. We hope that *Red Wheelbarrow* also signifies unpretentiousness and the casting of a wide net in search of new, exciting young writers as well as an ongoing commitment to originality, courage, and craft.

*Red Wheelbarrow* publishes twice a year. The national edition publishes literary and artistic works from all over the country and the world. The spring student edition is open to De Anza students. We welcome submissions of all kinds, and seek to publish diverse styles and voices. Submission deadline for 2024 national edition: September 1st, 2024.

#### Submission Guidelines

- Poetry: submit up to five poems to [weisnerken@fhda.edu](mailto:weisnerken@fhda.edu)
- Fiction: submit one short story (up to 5,000 words) or up to three flash fiction pieces
- Drama: submit one play or screenplay (up to 5,000 words)
- Creative Nonfiction: submit one personal essay (up to 5,000 words)
- Photographs and Drawings: submit up to five digital files (.jpg, .tiff, or .psd format)
- Comics: submit one b/w strip

#### The Red Wheelbarrow Poetry Prize

Deadline, July 31st, 2024

Guidelines and Submissions:

<https://redwheelbarrow.submittable.com/submit>

All *Red Wheelbarrow* poetry prize submissions are judged anonymously.  
Keep your name and contact information separate from actual submission

*Red Wheelbarrow*

De Anza College

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Front cover: Kristin Lindseth, *Dadaab Refugee Camp*, ink wash, 30" x 24", 2019

Back cover: Nimah Gobir: *Repotting*, oil paint on wood panel, 20.5" x 40.5", 2020

Frontispiece, p. 2: Kristin Lindseth, *Abandoned Village*, bronze, 33" x 16" x 18", 2021

Frontispiece, p. 3: Nimah Gobir, *Cole Ave.*, oil on wood panel, 40.5" x 20.5", 2020

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Before I Was a Gazan  
Naomi Shihab Nye

I was a boy  
and my homework was missing,  
paper with numbers on it,  
stacked and lined,  
I was looking for my piece of paper,  
proud of this plus that, then multiplied,  
not remembering if I had left it  
on the table after showing to my uncle  
or the shelf after combing my hair  
but it was still somewhere  
and I was going to find it and turn it in,  
make my teacher happy,  
make her say my name to the whole class,  
before everything got subtracted  
in a minute  
even my uncle  
even my teacher  
even the best math student and his baby sister  
who couldn't talk yet.  
And now I would do anything  
for a problem I could solve.

—Reprinted from *Red Wheelbarrow*, 2017

## 2024 is the Yehuda Amichai Centenary

Born Ludwig Pfoefffer in Wurzburg, Germany, on May 3, 1924,  
Amichai died in Jerusalem on September 22, 2000



### Like the Inner Wall of a House

*Yehuda Amichai*

Like the inner wall of a house  
that after wars and destruction becomes  
an outer one—  
that's how I found myself suddenly,  
too soon in life. I've almost forgotten what it means  
to be inside. It no longer hurts;  
I no longer love. Far or near—  
they're both very far from me,  
equally far.

I'd never imagined what happens to colors.  
The same as with human beings: a bright blue drowns  
inside the memory of dark blue and night,  
a paleness sighs  
out of a crimson dream. A breeze  
carries odors from far away  
but itself has no odor. The leaves of the squill die  
long before its white flower,  
which never knows  
the greenness of spring and dark love.

I lift up my eyes to the hills. Now I understand  
what it means to lift up the eyes, what a heavy burden  
it is. But these violent longings, this pain of  
never-again-to-be-inside.



## I, May I Rest in Peace

I, may I rest in peace—I, who am still living, say,  
May I have peace in the rest of my life.  
I want peace right now while I'm still alive.  
I don't want to wait like that pious man who wished for one leg  
of the golden chair of Paradise, I want a four-legged chair  
right here, a plain wooden chair. I want the rest of my peace now.  
I have lived out my life in wars of every kind: battles without  
and within, close combat, face-to-face, the faces always  
my own, my lover-face, my enemy-face.  
Wars with the old weapons—sticks and stones, blunt axe, words,  
dull ripping knife, love and hate,  
and wars with newfangled weapons—machine gun, missile,  
words, land mines exploding, love and hate.  
I don't want to fulfill my parents' prophecy that life is war.  
I want peace with all my body and all my soul.  
Rest me in peace.

\*

From *Patuah, Sagur Patuah*, (Schocken, 1998). English translation from "In My  
Life, On My Life, in Open Closed Open," translated by Chana Bloch and Chana  
Kronfeld (New York and London: Harcourt, 2000).

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KRISTIN LINDSETH: Aleppo, bronze,  
25" x 15" x 11", 2020

## Untitled | Stephen Kuusisto

I take a bird as counsel  
Say to my dead father  
“Life was given us  
So we will sing.”  
“Come closer,” he says,  
“The snow journeys  
Straight through us.”

When I Can't

A map flops open at a worn-out seam.  
I'm more a stranger to my mind.  
Or my mind's a stranger to what's left.  
A harsh neighborhood I'm coming to,  
not the comfort I once found here.  
A frayed map, a dwindled road. Someone

strides in, brimming grocers' bags,  
one foot on the step, to balance the load.  
What do I know of the shadow that trails us?  
Seems it knows us better than we do—  
sure of the tales that could be true,  
that bring us back, smiling, unasked.

*from* Lewy Body Journal | Charles Atkinson

Once More to the Hermitage

*Winter Storm, New Camaldoli, Big Sur*

Downshift for the two-mile climb,  
finally paved, throat still clenched.  
Decades, I've been *gifted* here—  
health and family, travel, love.  
*Wisdom years*, they call them now,  
and turn me nearly inside-out—  
dark for light—for a share of me.

Most of this life I've chased after things—  
*here*, not *there*, *these*, not *those*. Some  
things I'm learning about this choice:  
there's no end—until there is. Don't  
wait for the next guilt moment,  
unlikely gift from a distant domain—  
hands through sheets, this guttered rain.

Drombeg Stone Circle, Cork | Amber Coverdale Sumrall

*ten days after my father's death*

When I stroke her auburn head, blazing white star  
above her nose, the mare in the field below  
the stone altar—where friends will gather  
in a ritual of release for my father

whose bullyrag spirit is restless  
who does not believe he is dead—  
shows her teeth.

I have an apple, Robin says, reaching into her pack,  
moving to take my place. Before she finds it, Kim extends  
her open hand and the horse bites down, draws blood.



## Stain | Amber Coverdale Sumrall

I can still hear her screams as she sits trapped at the sewing table,  
needle puncturing her thumb, pinning it fast to the green velvet

she is fashioning into a skirt for me. I bolt up the stairs, find her  
slumped, face contorted, colorless. Thimblefuls of blood pool

beside the sewing machine. How quickly red turns to brown  
outside the body. Who called the ambulance? Was it me, stomach

swirling at the sight of her, pinned and helpless as a butterfly?  
Who unlocked the wheel to free her? Was I four or five?

Who stayed with me after she was taken to the hospital,  
as I threw up in the sink, afraid she would die? Not my father,

who never left work early, come hell or high water. Later, I follow  
the drops down the stairs, across the living room carpet,

out to the brick walkway, stains like pomegranate seeds,  
a trail for a father to find. Might this quicken his heart?

## Mi Papi | Adela Najarro

I carry sulfuric fog. I carry atmosphere.  
I carry a bottle of Flor de Caña, rosquillas,  
and a steaming volcano caldera.  
I carry memories of when he held my hand.  
He is a glass of lemonade that needs more sugar.  
I carry Papi inside.  
We would walk around the corner  
to Mitchell's ice cream shop.  
He would let me order whatever I wanted  
and listened to my little girl chatter.  
After we got home,  
I would hear the front door open, again.  
Then close. As he left,  
my father would skip down the stairs,  
whistling a happy tune.  
He skis down a mountain in my dreams  
and smiles through a mustache.  
I tell him the condo next door  
has nearly doubled in value  
and we have bounced back  
from the recession. I carry his ambition.  
I carry his broken tongue.  
I carry mangoes, nacatamales, y pinolillo.  
I don't have his straight black hair,  
but I share that wink in his eye.  
He is all right. He has been forgiven.  
When did I do that?  
Hey, Papi. Does the sand from Cerro Negro burn?  
Can parrots fly with ash on their wings?  
It would have been nice to salsa  
with him at my cousin's pachanga  
but instead, I foxtrotted with a man  
who couldn't pronounce my name.

## Juanita Falls | Adela Najarro

In her own home, her feet slip out from under. A slow fall  
in the kitchen. *I'm all right*, she says on the phone.

Her spirit is ready to flee as her body fails and falls  
but she's still here. And I want her stories. I want her not to end.

With her brothers at the beach, her life began by falling  
onto sand. The next time she fell, it was off a horse. She tried

to hold on. Rising into sky, she lingered next to a leaf, then fell  
breaking her clavicle. Bumping her head. She left Managua.

She took a seat on a Pan Am Flight before she softly fell  
asleep. She carried our souls in her baggage. My brother

tucked in a lace bra. I was a bookmark in a poem she read falling  
through sky. When she awoke, her tongue twisted broken rhymes

about cocodrilos in a river, a tortilla with not enough. She fell  
into a new country. My father caught her, but let go. She gave him

her body, menstrual blood, and babies. With his touch, she fell  
apart. Then back together. We climbed into a station wagon loaded

with sweaters and boxes. She drove through Tejon Pass, finally falling  
into herself. In Pico Rivera, Downey, Cerritos, Torrance, she stood

behind a beautician's chair cutting hair and pinning curls. She fell  
back to sand, beach bonfires, laughter with her children and a new

husband. Her bones never broke. Looping backward, her head craving  
rich moist earth, Juanita falls through time.

# Winter Solstice | Claudia Meléndez Salinas

*For Víctor*

On our way to the airport we listen to the horns and the drums  
that barely drown the roar of hurried drivers zipping by  
Ya se va el manicero, ya se va

I dance on the seat    a soft shoulder sway    left right left right  
the sensual    *tururururururu ruru ruru*    *tururururururu ruru ruru*  
filling the space that's waiting for us    but dare not enter.

It will be a short trip he finally says  
I bite my lip and resist the urge to snap  
that's what you always say

Instead I stare into the road a crowded pre holiday Silicon Valley madness  
of Teslas speeding by cutting in front of big rigs  
a no-no, my uncle the truck driver would rage  
white knuckling the semi's steering wheel.

Storm clouds close in on our way    mocking me  
knowing that I will have to drive back alone  
in the rain    again.    This is what you get I tell myself

for partnering with a heart firmly planted two thousand miles  
beyond the border fence    but since he's known the other woman  
far longer than he's known you — since birth, in fact — can you blame him?

The time will be brief    I tell myself    as I watch him disappear  
among the throngs of travelers    ready for their yearly fix  
of softer winds    rolling 'r's    other worldly foods

and bucket loads    of extemporaneous hugs.  
Time will fly    shadows will live longer  
Spring eventually returns    I tell myself as I look for

The horns and the drums in the glove compartment  
a futile attempt to wrest the cold hand  
tightening its grip on my heart

But the horns and the drums also long for softer winds,  
for kinder beats, so they sneak into a backpack and stow away  
two thousand miles beyond the border fence

## Right Now | Sarah Rabkin

*For Chuck*

When we were still new together,  
we spent a night by a mountain reservoir  
reeling through a universe of stars.  
Lying with you, I couldn't help myself—  
a silent hallelujah rose in my body,  
thrumming a single unbidden chord:  
"Forever," it sang,  
"forever and forever, amen!"

In the morning, you warned me:  
Too long a dutiful husband,  
tethered till recently to vows made  
before your wings took shape,  
you couldn't promise me tomorrow,  
let alone a lifetime.  
You could only tell me that right now,  
there was nowhere you'd rather be than here.

That might have been an ending;  
instead it opened a door.  
In nearly thirty years, neither of us has mentioned forever,  
while more and more  
our moments dip into something like eternity.

Yesterday I came into the bedroom  
to wake you from another daytime nap.  
They stretch into long hours now,  
your body so silent and still,  
its frail slenderness almost nothing  
under the thin fleece throw.  
You opened one eye, then the other,  
worked to pull yourself from dreaming  
into the dreamlike state that fogs your days.

We're still reeling through those stars, my love,  
along with all the other creatures.  
I don't know what comes next,  
or just how to live this ending  
that is beginning—  
only that it is happening  
one moment at a time  
and that, as always,  
I love you right now.

*from American Analects* | Gary Young

When Gene could no longer hold a brush, he moved into a small house without a studio. One of his old paintings filled the wall above his kitchen table, and I would study and admire it whenever we sat there and talked. Gene's work encouraged contingency and interruption. Whenever lines or fields of color collided, he embraced the unexpected rupture of his intentions. Gene said, in old age, there's no longer a need to defend oneself. The metaphor we create for our own survival is difficult to dismantle, but not impossible. He said, I know that this is a prelude to dying, but the vapor of imagination is intoxicating, and the days indescribably beautiful. From my seat, I could see the slips of paper that Gene had taped to all the cabinets in his kitchen. One said, *plates*, another, *bowls*, and on the silverware drawer, *silverware*.



*from* American Analects | Gary Young

I was never sure what was going on inside my father. I tried talking to him, but he never listened to anything he didn't want to hear. Still, the last time we spoke, he said, I had the strangest dream last night. It was like a story, not just terrifying little bursts. I've never had a dream like that before. I don't remember exactly what I said to him, but just before he died, he left a message on my answering machine: You mean nothingness is a *thing*?

*from* My Caruso | Stephen Kuusisto

*What does the tenor do when he's not singing?*

Caruso watches a butterfly. It's the Adonis Blue (*Polyommatus bellargus*). The wings are blue as dying lamps. It feeds on nectar of marjoram. He senses how all the world is heartbreak. How we all stand accused of what we never become. But the butterfly, blue as one of death's errands is sugary, unconscious, weightless in the air.

*The Boy Tenor and the Singing School*

Summer and green lizards sun themselves in the heat of afternoon. Only the city's singers are awake, practicing through the hot hours. The windows of the singing school are open and birds fly in and circle the high ceilings.

Caruso at ten understands that environment is malleable. With the tin lid of his pencil box he scatters medallions of reflected light across the ceiling, causing the birds to plunge and swoop as though pursued by a bird composed of light. All around him boys are laboring to produce scales that will satisfy Signor Pignatello, a sullen man who seems to forget the boys who sing before him.

Caruso pushes a canary around the room with the lid of his tin box. Light glitters like fish scales, darts like minnows. Signor Pignatello stands like a statue, hands in his vest pockets, balding head pointed vaguely upward, a man contemplating lunch or maybe a cottage in the woods surrounded by bubbling streams. Caruso's canary, goaded by reflections, circles that balding head swooping ever closer. The boys are singing, obedient to custom. Tall windows, fat sunbeams, rainbows of dust particles. The afternoon so hot and still the dust motes hang in the air. Caruso has divined that all things are possible and tips his little box. The canary alights on Signor Pignatello's left shoulder. Our own Saint Sebastian! And the man doesn't notice. The bird holds perfectly in place alternately lifting its tiny pimento colored feet. Now it turns sharply, dips its beak into Pignatello's ear and the man feels nothing! This is an early lesson on the labor of art and the rewards of practice.

## The Orchardist Ages | Benjamin S. Grossberg

When I was young, I dreamed of western-Pennsylvania hillsides dotted with apple trees, an orchard bisected by dirt roads, and the slow sunrise drives out there, stopping at each section to inspect the different varietals. An expanse of Gala, a county of Macoun. Fuji, Rome, and Cripps Pink. It was about scope then: an orchard best apprehended aerially, the shape it might make across a map, rectangles of dark green that would indicate my own apple country, its orderly, gridded citizens. And me—potentate with a sprayer truck, the large white canister in back sloshing with the good health I could, from the wand end, liberally bestow.

These days I think I could have it in two trees, my kingdom, just enough to pollinate each other, like hands strung together in a cat's cradle. It would take only as much land as you'd find on the side of a suburban house, the little strip before the next yard starts. Two trees, and me buzzing between them, alive even to the curling of a leaf if aphids took residence there, a ladybug alighting to feed on them—a bonsai care gone full size. Each cut, each press of the Felcos in my hand could encompass the whole experience of pruning. Each apple twisted off the branch stand in for a bushel, for twenty bushels. After all, how many apples can a single man eat? I have come late to love.

## ARTIST'S STATEMENT: NIMAH GOBIR

I am an artist and educator based in Oakland, California. My work explores how I came to inherit the complexities and nuances of my Black identity from my family. My figurative paintings capture the expressiveness of a face in reaction or at rest and how bodies accommodate and respond to other bodies in space. Artworks source my siblings' and Nigerian-born parents' memories while honoring their individual experiences and essential humanity. I draw from personal and autobiographical histories to imbue paintings with images that are at once tender and powerful. Each painting expresses the way family members and loved ones' relationships are reflected in one another and the way that their everyday habits shape and enliven their living spaces.

Composed with expressive brushwork, hand-stitched embroidery, and household textiles, my work layers multiple textures into intimate domestic portraits. My use of found fabrics evokes hand-me-down clothes, quilting material. The textiles intentionally feature repetitive patterns to mirror the way homes, relationships, and memory take on a banality while being uniquely dear to each person. Through scenes of my sister and I getting our hair braided as children or my parents posed on a couch covered in the patina of early adulthood, I contend with the enduring results of diaspora and the renewal of belonging to a home.





NIMAH GOBIR: **Tumi** oil paint, fabric and embroidery thread on canvas, 38" x 52", 2023



NIMAH GOBIR: **Golden Hour** oil paint on canvas, 30" x 40", 2022



NIMAH GOBIR: **Chico State** oil paint, fabric, and embroidery thread on canvas, 27" x 32", 2022





NIMAH GOBIR: *Fresh Kid L*, detail oil paint, fabric and embroidery thread on canvas, 40" x 24", 2022



NIMAH GOBIR: Lake and Paradise oil paint on canvas, 29" x 20", 2022



NIMAH GOBIR: I Miss You oil paint on canvas, 36" x 36", 2022



NIMAH GOBIR: **Free Donut** oil paint and embroidery thread on canvas, 18" x 24", 2022



NIMAH GOBIR: 27 oil paint on canvas, 40" x 30", 2022



NIMAH GOBIR: **Naming** oil paint and embroidery thread on canvas, 40" x 30", 2022

## RED WHEELBARROW POETRY PRIZE

Poetry Center San José and *Red Wheelbarrow* are excited to publish here the winners (along with finalists and selected semifinalists) of our seventh annual poetry prize. Ellen Bass was this year's judge.

\*

### 2023 Winners

1st Prize: "Color Guard," Amy Miller, Ashland, OR

2nd Prize: "Resurrection," Kate Gray, Mosier, OR

3rd Prize: "The Orchardist in February," Benjamin S. Grossberg,  
West Hartford, CT

These poets will receive awards of \$1,000, \$500, and \$250 respectively, and Gary Young of Greenhouse Review Press (Bonny Doon, California) will produce an original broadside of Amy Miller's winning sestina, "Color Guard."

Bass writes: "I found 'Color Guard' to be emotionally compelling and admirable in its craft. The poem sustains its form with originality all the way through. 'Resurrection' has fresh and vivid detail, description, and imagery, as well as a wonderfully breezy narrative voice. 'The Orchardist in February' is pitch perfect, delivering an indelible image precisely."

\*

### 2023 Finalists

"I Would Also Miss Wind," Shelly Stewart Cato, Jasper, AL

"The Root," Kate Gray, Mosier, OR

"Fluid," Dayna Patterson, Bellingham, WA

"Bryant Park," Jamie L. Smith, Salt Lake City, UT

"Some of What He Told Me," Jamie L. Smith, Salt Lake City, UT

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### *Selected Semifinalists*

Catherine Anderson, "Spring"

Dawn Dupler, "Hometown as a Gallon of Gasoline and a Light"

Carolyn Oliver, "To Frank, Our Gallant Goldfish Dead These Thirty Years"

## Color Guard | Amy Miller

They must  
be in love, these two  
soldiers  
stepping backward over flat tombstones  
flush with the grass, their eyes  
on each other as they unfold the flag.

Flag  
as laundry: the washday dance my mother must  
have traced a thousand times, her eyes  
signaling my father, two  
steps backward, grip, fold. The tombstones  
all bear names of sailors, soldiers,

tripping up these two soldiers—  
one, the woman, flag  
gripped in her white-gloved hands, edges of tombstones  
catching on her small heels—must  
she look at the man that way? The two  
of them have eyes—

entirely, embarrassingly—eyes  
for each other, but they're soldiers'  
looks, trusting, knowing, a world hidden between them. Two  
more twists and the flag  
opens, while my father is closed in stone below. I must  
keep watching the flag; concentration is a gift. The tombstones

lie in its shade, mute, their tombstone  
names raised, brass-bolted, all eyes  
on the wind billowing the stripes upward for a moment. They must  
be soldiers  
in love, these two striding toward each other, the flag  
their dwindling child: the two



of them tugging its corners, making it two  
times smaller, four times, eight, while the tombstones  
finally flash in sun again and the flag  
recedes to a strip, a square, a delta. Their eyes—  
I see now—are red, weary, these soldiers  
folding up after another war. They must

get so tired of these flags. In two  
hands, the man offers it to my sister, eyes on hers. Tombstones  
couldn't hold emptiness better. As all soldiers must.

## Resurrection | Kate Gray

The year after my mother stripped off  
my father like a horse-hair bra, her body  
loosened like spoiled pasta (he stole  
her bones) until lunch every day when three  
women who spoke with smoke sat  
at our kitchen table, and my mother laid  
place settings and cloth napkins, shook  
whiskey sours into sour glasses, dished tuna salad  
on lettuce beds, and they groaned  
over the local zoning commission's latest  
atrociousness (a stop sign, my God, in town),  
and the friends who left their husbands to fend  
for lunch rocked the kitchen chairs like dories  
on the open sea, patted their coiffures (pink plastic  
rollers cradled their heads in bed), and my mother gulped  
laughter like a bear standing in rapids when salmon  
leap upstream, her lips quivering, teeth big.

## The Orchardist in February | Benjamin S. Grossberg

Like an ink drawing  
in which the artist has  
left most of the page  
white, has sketched in  
only the stark lines  
of dormant trees,  
and here and there  
a crosshatching  
of shadow to give the  
freshly snow-struck  
landscape contour,  
to give it depth.  
No bird landing. No  
squirrel perched. Not  
a sound. But  
boot prints: a line  
of them approaching  
the trees, and, like  
a lasso, encircling each.

## I Would Also Miss Wind | Shelly Stewart Cato

It was poetry, almost.

*Hey Mama,*

*How are you? I'm doing fine. Tell  
everyone I miss them. When I get out,  
I want to play with Chipper in the sun  
and fish for bream in the hill pond.  
Eat your fried chicken.*

Private prisons have private-pay restaurants serving fried catfish, mashed potatoes and gravy, and hamburgers.

He missed last year's family beach trip. Then, this year's. We can't remember where he was—rehab or jail or jail or rehab.

*Mama, it's so cold here.*

Some private prisons do not turn on the heat. At least one in Louisiana does not and is not monitored.

I don't want to go dark here,  
but it's dark here.

We had our first video chat this morning.  
Twenty-five dollars for three minutes. His  
head shaved. His skin windshear white.  
Raccoon-eyed. Bloated. Crying? Fighting?

Private prisons offer texting and tablets and video chat.

It comes at a cost. That's the point.  
All this comes at a cost.

Some days I try and put myself in his place, think about what I would miss:  
A sunset, a rainbow, a robin?

More.

Thunderheads like low flying saucers. A leaf spinning its  
face and stem toward light. A plane skywriting a proposal.

Spading my heel through sand to write:

*I LOVE YOU FOREVER.*

A woodthrush nest. Blackberry-stained fingerpads. Brambles?

No. Be honest.

The sheen of long black hair, my daughter's face when  
she spots three dolphins arcing whitecaps.

Telling someone, anyone you love:

You have muffin crumbs on your bottom lip.

Your eyes turn Patagonia blue in that shirt. Your tag.

It's sticking out.

The Root | Kate Gray

*after Camille Rankine's "Inheritance"*

to be what's left            of what's left  
the thick            red root            of a toppled  
   cedar            a syllable  
   of a valley's echo            a shell  
of an ocean's roar            no matter the rain            the fire  
the clay fashioned of a god            whose followers bear  
   what comes            in order to bear more  
   I am the dry  
   seed            shattered from a broken  
   plant            and plunged  
into the shadow of a woman            afraid  
   of shadows  
   my mother white            washed her own  
rape            the cyclone-cycles            of her true love and  
   the man she married  
   the eye of silence  
never seeing            outside its own force            this  
   is my body            I am the red  
   that's left            the root that won't  
   let go

## Fluid | Dayna Patterson

My 14-year-old asks me to stop introducing her as my daughter, asks instead for *kid*, her short blue hair all hidden beneath the purple cap her grandma knitted, the cap she calls her *soul*, and if a soul can be a cap and a kid can be both daughter and son, fluidly moving hour to hour, day to day, from one to the other or in between, I wonder what else I've failed to imagine. And although I've been expecting this request for years, their ask stirs up all the swans that moments ago were quietly grazing in the field of my soul, and if my soul is a troubled flock of tundra swans gyring up into sky the color of my kid's fading hair, where will they land? I'm the 2nd daughter of a 2nd daughter and he/she/they are my 2nd no longer daughter or sometimes daughter and sometimes a blue sky filled with sun and sometimes weather I know better: grey rain a satin percussion and stratus clouds and fog curling up from the lake's surface. Don't I know how words matter? How one word can shape a world, shake a womb? So I'll call her my cumulus, him my shifting river, them my curlicue of mist, my capricorn, my seagoat, my fogbow, my snowball, my drizzly afternoon, my virga, my bright iridescence. Land here: love them in every form.

## Bryant Park | Jamie L. Smith

Often, when I'm going to the library,  
I don't go inside. I eat  
my double-quarter-pounder with cheese  
a few seats over  
from the Fashion Week spectators, or look  
into those gilded Park Terrace windows,  
feed sparrows croissant crumbs, or count  
tourists emerging from the bellies  
of double-decker buses. When pear and cherry  
blossoms let go, something like snow  
falls and coats the sidewalks,  
invades my hair, and I'm in love  
with how little I matter  
amongst all of it, how the trains below  
enter and exit with a sigh. Mostly I've come  
to catch my breath  
on the granite steps. My friend came once  
and scattered ashes on the grass  
below a magnolia, returned to find  
a picnicking family perched  
on that exact spot  
where what was left of our loved one  
dusted the earth. Whatever the me of me is,  
one day, that too will diffuse, and what's left  
will be blown beneath somebody's shoes,  
or into the mouths of tulips  
the children uncrown in fistfuls.



## Some of What He Told Me | Jamie L. Smith

There will be terrible days: flat-tire-on-your-way-to-work days,  
train delays, “it’s not you, it’s me”  
and “we need to talk” days,  
days another doctor says, “the treatment isn’t working as we’d hoped— ”  
and more nights spent waiting bedside afraid  
if you get too absorbed in *Poetry* or *Bloomberg Business Review*  
you’ll miss your friend’s last eye-flutter  
or inhale. One day you might take the wrong job  
for all the right reasons, leave the woman and the city you love  
behind. Or maybe you’ll stay, and wonder  
on nights after too much gin if that job would’ve been  
your salvation. Some years you’ll buy black dress after black dress  
and have weekends when you’ll leave one funeral early  
to get to another, and you’ll keep those mass cards  
tucked with the rest in a desk drawer you can’t open  
without replaying whatever unkind thing you said  
that you didn’t think would be the last thing you’d say to your friend,  
and you’ll hate me some days (it’s okay) for opting out  
of all of it. You’ll hate me more for the 6pms I’ll miss in winter  
when the last light brightens the floorboards  
below your window  
and the snow is so new it seems impossibly white  
and you’ll want to touch it as much  
as you want to touch my face.

## Spring | Catherine Anderson

My black jeans off, I'm sitting  
in one of those white plastic chairs  
that cradles your hind end  
like a sugar scoop, my thighs  
covered by a piece of old brocade  
the tailor passed to me as he turned away  
with my chalk-marked skirt billowing  
gardenias, the one that cuffs the back  
of my calves in a breeze but now lies  
resplendent on the ironing board under  
the tailor's hand as he pushes aside  
a pin cushion the size of an orange,  
and lifts one of two irons next to  
a pair of metal shears the moment  
I fear a water bottle will topple because  
a one-eyed calico cat whose name  
I know to be Agnes happens to walk  
between the water and the scissors,  
just before the final press of the newly  
hemmed skirt of petals and stems, the one  
I would like to skim not my calves  
but a little shorter, to crest the top  
of the knees once the alteration  
is complete, this second day of April  
in the year of our Lord 2022 when  
I look past the rose calendar still showing  
the month of March and the black  
and white photograph of a Shetland pony  
in a bowler hat, and wonder how long  
beauty will last in the world, not knowing  
the answer, but just thinking of my skirt,  
how soon I'll put it on and twirl a little  
for final measure, then wear it  
home instead of my jeans.

## Hometown as a Gallon of Gasoline and a Light | Dawn Dupler

Strike a match and press it to the dog's hide. Urge the deer tick to let go. To be brushable. To be grindable beneath the heel. Tuck dynamite inside a hill's rocky crevices. Slow fuse. Detonation. Cloud of stones raining over wheat. Watch it give way to a new highway. As one town empties itself into another into another. We can't unknow the real history of this town. Fires. Explosions. Burning crosses. Outlines of a fleeing family scorched in grass. They smolder in places they tell us never to go. Barns burn down for many reasons. For the history they don't talk about. For the history they do.

To Frank, Our Gallant Goldfish Dead These Thirty Years  
| Carolyn Oliver

Regarding preservation: how much is aimless,  
how much meant for later use? Things put up or tucked  
away, salt-packed for the dark to save: wedding quilts  
and green tomatoes, things in jars, tongues on tape,  
Shackleton's Antarctic whiskey crates. Bog people,  
to complicate the case, those leather body bags  
with half-shorn heads the peat refuses to digest . . .  
I've been pickling in these mysteries, Frank, the brine  
of other lives. Seems every room's a root cellar,  
each ladder splintered memories I feel obliged  
to climb. Do you recall a time before you knew  
of slotted spoons and gravel (Pepto-pink), before  
the greasy view from your glass hexagon, gutted  
of Red Rose tea? Could you remember lilacs, Frank,  
how they were overcome with snow that spring? Beneath  
their fragile boughs we marked your resting place and read  
the solemn rites (perhaps you've learned our ardent care,  
in fish-flake form, led straight to your demise?). Because  
we held, back then, concrete beliefs about respect  
and coffinry, we laid your corpse in Styrofoam  
and so for years I thought your gracile bones were ours  
for finding, deep below the treehouse shade. But now  
my brother says there's nothing left, I should revise:  
imagine you as meat for neighbor cats, your casket  
(with clementine scale-smudge clinging) less artifact  
than roadside nuisance, carted off by tiny truck  
to transfer station, and thence—crushed between a lost  
retainer and CD jewel case (Eve 6, split)—ditched  
on a landfill's working face, whose lid of earth  
is watered down each day, to sink what we preserve.

I wrote the Frontiersmen into poetry because he was always there  
| Thomas Dunn

looped, hanging in the syntax;  
in the breath; period; each pause  
I wonder if the spirits left to haunt  
know their name and I walk the land  
so that it knows me.

Lungs hemorrhage, soft clouds puddle  
on the breath. The wind, cold cuts. I step  
into that blade of night. Eyes like fish-  
bowls—oblong, and flushed. Strung chords  
with stacking sixths, ninths. Begging  
for resolve—

wrote the frontiersmen into poetry  
because he never left. Set in the  
mountain trails lifted by a valley  
birthed birdsong. Woodpecker thuds  
chitter on top of the peaks. Light made  
shadows on the green. Pine needles  
painted mandarin orange peels. A jet  
jagged skid marks in the sky.

I wheeze up the street. The clouds below  
brewing a storm drooping on the un-  
sung slopes listening to the breeze bow  
an orchestra—a violin in a void.

## ARTIST'S STATEMENT: KRISTIN LINDSETH

The sculptures that I create reflect some of the universal experiences of being human; life experience of men and women of diverse cultures, ages and backgrounds, particularly with respect to inner experience.

Since 2011, I have been focused on the international refugee crisis, beginning with ink paintings made immediately after the Haitian



earthquake and tsunami when the lines of people waiting to receive food and water seemed to stretch for miles and were shocking to see. When the Syrian civil war began in 2015, I began making bronze sculptures along with the paintings. People were losing their lives in large numbers while trying to cross the Mediterranean Sea to safety. The refugee

crisis mushroomed with bombings in Yemen, Somalia, and South Sudan and other parts of the world and there are now 108.4 million people forcibly displaced from their homes worldwide. The sculptures that I create are dwellings representing the kinds of homes being lost due to violent conflict, especially in the parts of the world that seem to be largely ignored in the U.S. news. These dwellings are small representations of the emptiness that is left when people cannot return to their lives and must start all over.

I began the series with the creation of uprooted vessel forms which are a metaphor for lives that have been cut adrift; lives that are cut off from the land, from family and culture and memories and which are now embarking into the unknown.

The idea of venturing into the unknown has now expanded into the realm of the psychological as I began to reflect on the many ways in which we all face the unknown at some point in life.

[www.KristinLindseth.com](http://www.KristinLindseth.com)



KRISTIN LINDSETH: Mountain Crossing ink wash, 30" x 24", 2019



KRISTIN LINDSETH: **Caravan** watercolor, 30" x 24", 2022





KRISTIN LINDSETH: Desert Crossing Yemen ink wash, 30" x 24", 2019



KRISTIN LINDSETH: **Safe Arrival** ink wash, 30" x 24", 2019



KRISTIN LINDSETH: Ancient Architecture Yemen watercolor, 30" x 24", 2022



KRISTIN LINDSETH: **Building a Home in Dadaab** watercolor, 30" x 24", 2022



KRISTIN LINDSETH: Idlib Refugee Camp watercolor, 30" x 24", 2022



KRISTIN LINDSETH: *Caught Between Worlds* bronze, 37" x 33" x 19", 2020



KRISTIN LINDSETH: **Arrival** bronze, 41" x 35" x 20", 2018



KRISTIN LINDSETH: Aleppo Bedouin House bronze, 26.5" x 22" x 18", 2020



## Dream | Rose Black

I pace the deck of a Phoenician ship,  
rectangular sail quilted with leather belt.  
A carved horse's head juts from the prow,  
and at the stern the tail of a fish  
rises above the water. On board  
all humankind across time.

When the great fire comes, flames race  
across the bow. The sky explodes,  
and the passengers turn to ash.

In the morning they come to life again,  
but will again turn to ash, this time forever,  
unless each drinks from the cup of water  
I ladle from an earthen bowl set  
at the ship's heart.

Most passengers line up. I scoop the water  
and hand it to them, one by one. I watch  
them drink. I must do whatever I can,  
soon it will be too late.

One passenger, dressed in suit and tie,  
says, why should I believe you? I don't  
need your water.

Again the raging fire comes.  
Those who did not drink turn to ash.  
I say enough had taken part to save us,

I say enough must take part to save us,  
to save the ship that carries all.



## Recollected Parts | Doren Robbins

The returning ship. Port Angeles. Whole destinies of decisions, patterns, connected to that time. From the port the sea is porcelain. Mute. Is all porcelain mute or is there a porcelain chord we're incapable of comprehending? What are, why must there be, what does it fulfill, the demands to be mute?

Boarded the overnight ship from Ancona to Corfu. One of those your about to lose everything or still have everything to lose moments. A ship from the Ionian Line "The Flying Fish." More on the flying fish than the Ionian side of things. Outside the heavily mended net below the flexed fish wing, the whole telescopia on the overnight sky, the winter parts, the other ship behind the Pleiades, the star animal, possibly a bull, possibly pawing a hunter's belt. He had that raw under a heap feeling. The whole ensnarement unedited is what I mean. The contradictory impulse. The contradictory impulse that fails. The daydreaming realism paradox. The psychological rule—you have to stand over yourself with a whip if you want to get through, then stand over yourself with a whip for agreeing to do it.

I was redefining him. I was looking at the man who taught him what he knew till he was seventeen giving him a thousand-dollar bill in the third to last dream before the intermission part. I could still make out the familiar thick fingers. There were starving monkeys with human faces in the city he returned to.

No coincidence.

Welcome and welcomer.

He fed them, he broke a spoon digging out something frozen and sweet from the bottom of a container. Everything held in the broken off bowl of a spoon he found, wrapped in a tide of his mind.

The direction. Part Four of the same thing.

Enough of it. How things stand. You eat your soup with a stone in the broth. You can't eat around the stone. The stone goes down with everything else. The rule is: no exceptions. You have to redefine him. You have to rethink everything that brought you to the 1977 until now giving-you-the-whirlies conclusion about him. I had to stop eating.

I put my whip down

I set the fish stew aside

he was mostly the fish tail

the skeletal part

the fishtail fan.

I ate one of his fish eyeballs.

It was a kind of surveillance.

Not all of the garbage of humans is visible.

You need that eye inside of you, you need all the evidence you can get.

Long Arms Introspection | Doren Robbins



## Translation Feature | Fernand Dumont



Fernand Dumont was born Fernand Demoustier in 1906 in Mons, Belgium. As a student, he studied law and took it up as a profession. In 1931 he discovered the French Surrealists and became a lifelong proponent, befriending himself to both Andre Breton and Paul Eluard. Although he wrote sparingly (publishing only three short works during his lifetime), Dumont was an influential member of the Belgian surrealist movement, being a close friend of fellow poet Achille Chavée and participating in both the RUPTURE group of 1934 and the Surrealist Exposition of La Louviere in 1935. At the outbreak of WWII and during the occupa-

tion, Dumont continued to work as a lawyer. However, as a result of his leftist views, the Nazis arrested him in 1942. He continued writing in prison, completing both the poem “Liberty” as well as his semi-autobiographical treatise “The Dialectic of Chance in the Service of Desire.” Dumont was ultimately deported to the Bergen-Belsen concentration camp where he died in 1945, shortly before the liberation. —*A. Gent*



Above: Dumont, far left; Chavée, far right, with surrealists of Hainhaut and statue of Rimbaud.



# Liberty | Fernand Dumont

*Prison cell 193*  
*Mons, Belgium*  
*June 1942*

## I

We dreamed of her so often  
defended her so long  
cared for her  
and loved her so much  
they took her away from us  
and threw us in jail

## II

Where is she now?  
— At home

What does she see?  
— Our absence

What did she say?  
— She is sad

What is she waiting for?  
— Our return

## III

In the patch of sky  
left for me to daydream  
I see a finger of fire write her name

\*

As you draw  
let your hand run over the snow white page  
The flower of her profile will bloom under your pen

\*

Her  
gestures like a statue half buried in sand  
her eyes the color of sky  
her lilac shadow  
overflowing

\*

We dreamed of her and go on dreaming  
every night  
We spoke of her and go on speaking  
every day  
until they return her to us

\*

You who have always known her  
You who will one day read this  
think about what it means  
about what we suffered

\*

They cannot see her  
They even ignore her existence  
They will never be forgiven



## IV

Yesterday  
suddenly  
out of the blue  
without warning  
they gave her back to you

It was in the yard  
they called your name  
you turned pale  
and we were worried

a little later  
we saw you leaving  
from the gate  
and when you turned to wave goodbye  
we knew you were trying to hide  
how happy you were

then  
they closed the doors again

for you  
the most beautiful world  
the world of liberty

for us  
the saddest world  
the world of our cell  
with its peephole

But we followed you  
we never stopped following you for a minute  
we returned to the familiar house  
the women the children the neglected garden  
and everything that gave us joy

And we thought about you seeing them  
and talking to them  
and reassuring them

and we felt our hearts  
fill with a tenderness that made us suffer  
the way we suffer the wings of hope  
when they beat against the bars of a cage

## V

They took her away from us  
at a moment's notice  
without explanation  
not even as a joke

— no

They took her away from us  
simply  
because they were told  
to take her away.

And before long  
we are struggling to live  
we are struggling to live not thinking  
but searching

carefully  
day after day  
for a path  
The long path of time that leads us to her  
the long path of days and nights motionless  
that passes through rain across endless fields of boredom  
that we must keep from being overgrown  
by the bindweed of melancholy  
or the blind and bitter brambles  
of despair

## VI

If I think of anyone I think of Paul Eluard  
of the grandeur of his example  
of his pride in the face of misfortune  
of his incorruptible dignity  
of his unwavering friendship  
unique  
irreplaceable  
UNSHAKABLE  
That and the knowledge that we are right

## VII

It's been fifty days since we came here  
It's been fifty nights we've spent  
one hundred pearls  
gray pearls for days in a gray cell  
black pearls for nights in a black cell  
more than enough to make a necklace  
a necklace of time lost

when we could have spent just one day  
one day of liberty trembling  
around the neck of the broken and silent statue  
of our life

### VIII

In the past  
She opened the windows to the morning sun  
glistening off her golden hair

Today  
I can no longer watch the sun go down  
I only see the black bars it puts up on the white wall

\*

In the past  
in the deserted streets where I went exploring  
her shadow was always next to mine

Today  
in the triangular yard between high walls  
The only shadow that reaches me is the shadow of a guard

In the past  
she came every day to sit at my table  
I looked her in the eyes and we were happy

Today  
I no longer remember her smile  
and her voice  
her voice stifles a cry

## IX

One day  
we will leave here  
it will be so sudden  
we will have no time to prepare

but she will be there  
as if she had been waiting for us  
since the first day

She will be trembling softly  
small pale and cold  
her smile creased with worry  
her face clouded by great sadness  
and our throats will be so dry  
we're not sure we will be able to speak

but she will take us gently by the hand  
and what she says to us will be so beautiful  
then and only then  
will we finally let go of our tears

*Translated by Andrew Gent*

Translation Feature  
from *The Skin of The Bull* | Salvador Espriu

Salvador Espriu (1913-1985) is an icon of Catalan literature. Writing mostly during the dark years of Franco's reign, Espriu gave voice to a resistance rooted not in a specific political ideology, but rather in the Catalan language itself and in an unwavering commitment to the Catalonian identity and culture it embodied. In pursuit of this commitment, Espriu risked his own well-being not so differently from his



more politically-minded compatriots. He read his poems at clandestine, anti-Franco meetings; and he signed manifestos and petitions against torture, which landed him on a state police watch list. Ultimately, Espriu became a revered figure of the resistance and, in the post-Franco years, as an outspoken advocate for Catalan culture. The poems that appear in translation in this issue come from one of Espriu's books, *The Skin of the Bull*, first published in 1958, the darkest years under Franco. In contrast to his other books, which

tend to be existential—dealing with matters of life and death—this text, though we find familiar images, stands out because of its politics. Espriu was not a follower of a specific political ideology. For him, the struggle during the Spanish Civil War was not a battle between the “good” and the “evil” but rather a tragic fratricidal conflict among factions throughout the peninsula as well as among his fellow Catalans. In the poem XLVI, for example, he promotes “the bridges of dialogue” and the love his compatriots must have for “diverse reasoning and voices.” During the oppressive years under Franco, this was, understandably, a minority view among the Catalans. At the same time, the book was considered a great political poem. We, today, can appreciate the value Espriu gives to dialogue and diversity: how with mutual acceptance a people becomes truly free. It took courage to say this in the bitterly oppressed Catalonia of his time.

Concerning Espriu's use of "Sepharad" in these poems: in an interview in 1979, Espriu said that "Sepharad" was a myth he invented for himself referring to the "dispersion of the Jews to the West." However, the word "Sepharad" is reminiscent of "Sephardim," referring to the Jews of Spain expelled from that land centuries ago. Espriu, a scholar of Greek, Roman and Egyptian cultures as well as the Hebrew Cabala, was, one would think, familiar with the term and its history. One would guess that his "invention" of "Sepharad" had its roots in the chronicles of the past. In any event, in *The Skin of the Bull*, the term appears to refer to the entire peninsula and all its inhabitants. In other books, however, there seems to be a parallel drawn between the use of "Sepharad" and the oppression of his people in Catalonia.

—Sonia Alland

*Ed. Note:* Espriu's interest in Cabala and Jewish culture and exile is the subject of critical attention including by Harold Bloom and Teresa M. Vilarós, whose article "A Non-Place After Destruction: Salvador Espriu's Key to Salom, Sinera, and Sepharad" appeared in Volume 9, Issue 3 of *Sephardic Horizons*, available online. As she writes in that article: "In a gesture that somehow relates to the Sephardim keeping their language and key to home, Espriu holds on to Catalan as the key able to provide a path to the lost home, its lights, colors, and smells, its trees, sea, and skies—even if only as a trace, only as a cemetery."  
<https://www.sephardichorizons.org/Volume9/Issue3/Vilaros.html>

—kw

I

El brau, en l'arena de Sepharad,  
envestia l'estesa pell  
i en fa, enlairant-la bandera.  
Contra el vent, aquesta pell  
de toro, del brau cobert de sang,  
és ja parrac espesseït per l'or  
del sol, per sempre lliurat al martiri  
del temps, oració nostra  
i blasfèmia nostra.  
Alhora víctima, botxí,  
odi, amor, lament i rialla,  
sota la closa eternitat del cel.



*from* The Skin of the Bull | Salvador Espriu

I

The bull, in the arena of Sepharad  
charges the spread out skin  
and flicks it into the air, a flag.  
Against the wind, this skin  
of a bull, covered in blood,  
is now a rag thickened by the  
sun, forever delivered to the martyr  
of time, our prayer  
and our curse.  
Simultaneously, victim and executioner,  
hatred, love, lament and laughter,  
under the closed eternity of the sky.

*translated by Sonia Alland and Richard Jeffrey Newman*

XXI

Molins de Sepharad:  
esdevindran els somnis  
a poc a poc reals.

Molí de vent, molí de sang:  
cal moldre fins els ossos,  
perquè tinguem bon pa.

Baixem, per les paraules,  
tot el pou de l'esglai:  
ens pujaran mots fràgils  
a nova claredat.

*from* The Skin of the Bull | Salvador Espriu

XXI

Mills of Sepharad:  
will become dreams  
little by little real.

Wind mills, blood mills:  
we must mill until the bone,  
to make good bread.

Let us descend, with language,  
deep into the well of horror:  
fragile words will rise with us  
into a new clarity.

*translated by Sonia Alland and Richard Jeffrey Newman*

XLVI

A vegades és necessari i forçós  
que un home mori per un poble,  
però mai no ha de morir tot un poble  
per un home sol:  
recorda sempre això, Sepharad.  
Fes que siguin segurs els ponts del diàleg  
i mira de comprendre i estima  
les raons i les parles diverses dels teus fills.  
Que la pluja caigui a poc a poc en el sembrats  
i l'aire passi com una estesa mà  
suau i molt benigna damunt els amples camps.  
Que Sepharad visqui eternament  
en l'ordre i en la pau, en el treball,  
en la difícil i merescuda  
llibertat.

*from* The Skin of the Bull | Salvador Espriu

XLVI

Sometimes it is required  
that a man die for his people  
but an entire people should never die  
for one man alone:  
always remember this, Sepharad.  
Make sure the bridges of dialogue are secure  
and look to understand and love  
the diverse reasoning and voices of your children.  
Let the rain fall slowly on the sown land  
and the air pass like a widespread hand,  
soft and benign on the wide fields.  
Let Sepharad live forever  
in order and in peace, in work,  
and in the difficult, and deserved  
freedom.

*translated by Sonia Alland and Richard Jeffrey Newman*

LIV

Nosaltres volem  
només  
amb esperança  
humil,  
la plenitude eternal  
de la rosa,  
una suprema eternitat  
de flor.

Mentre les cases de la nit  
es tanquen, una a una,  
i la foscor s'endinsa  
cap a les deus  
de l'alba,  
els nostres ulls aprenen  
dels més sensibles dits  
de cec  
a mirar i saber,  
a comprendre  
amb lent amor.

Així hem resseguit  
els rius i les muntanyes,  
la seca altiplanura i les ciutats,  
i dormim cada somni  
dels seus homes.  
Hem estat amb el vent  
en els camps, en els boscos,  
en la remor de les fulles i les fonts,  
i anem escrivint  
en aquesta pell estesa,  
en un cor amagat i immortal,  
a poc a poc el nom  
de Sepharad.

*from* The Skin of the Bull | Salvador Espriu

LIV

We wish  
only  
with humble  
hope  
the eternal plentitude  
of the rose,  
a supreme eternity  
of flower.

While the houses of the night  
close, one by one,  
and the darkness deepens  
until the light of day,  
our eyes learn  
from the most sensitive fingers  
of the blind  
to look and to know,  
to understand  
with slow love.

Thus we have traversed  
the rivers and the mountains,  
the dry plateaus and the cities,  
and we sleep the dreams  
of our people.  
We have been with the wind  
in the fields, in the woods,  
in the murmuring of leaves and of fountains,  
and are writing  
on this skin spread out before us,  
on this hidden and immortal heart,  
little by little the name  
of Sepharad.

*translated by Sonia Alland and Richard Jeffrey Newman*

## An Empty Place | Stephen Kuusisto

Every morning the wisdom of trees  
And the blind man who touches them  
Didn't you know about the book of the pine  
The ministerial book of the birch  
A favorite page is on the willow just down hill  
Planted long ago, forgotten, untended  
Its Lucretian bark tells a hundred stories  
The day we disappeared  
The day we came back  
The wind which passed three days ago  
So many tales of atoms and tears  
And flowers standing open beside graves  
And here at the base of the tree  
Beside the mushrooms, Lucretius himself:  
"Man's greatest wealth is to live on a little with contented mind; For  
little is never lacking."



Wild Horse | David Allen Sullivan

*Words dry and riderless,  
The indefatigable hoof-taps*  
Sylvia Plath

snorts  
to announce its presence  
Flank waves  
ripple  
as I snag  
the mane  
fist it tight  
and hoist myself aloft  
I swing my legs  
over  
the muscled girth  
press my face  
to horseness  
It rears  
gallops off  
I bend low  
duck live oak branches  
and as it vaults  
a stream  
spine ridges up into me  
but I hang  
on

I'm no centaur  
we're not one creature

Mastering this  
isn't possible

I hold on for dear life  
wait for it to tire  
                                Dismount  
when it drops its head  
to muzzle and tear  
                                the grass  
Slap my hand against  
the vast hillock  
                                of its neck  
Dirt clouds up  
around  
                                my already  
vanishing hand-  
print

At El Teatro Campesino (This is it) | Claudia Meléndez Salinas

This is it  
My life at the edge of creating, of breathing,  
of crossing borders between  
motherhood, career  
life as a daughter, a wife, a writer

Everything and nothing  
Todo bien a veces  
y mal muchas otras

This is it  
A life created with that which was given  
the gifts of words  
of good memory now waning  
of passion and wrath all in the same container  
ready to explode at everyone's peril

This is it  
A body that's been given  
the dark hues becoming darker under the sun  
the wide hips that know no birth  
the fragile ankles  
the fabulous hair that makes up for everything else.

This is it  
The minute spaces in between confusion, frustration, tears  
frantic text messages from a child in distress  
from a comadre mired in sorrow  
from a friend triumphant after a fight  
from an adolescent high on meth  
devouring frosted flakes by the kitchen sink

This is it  
The faces of the past building a future

El Fin del Mundo Zoot Suit La Carpa de los Rascuachis  
Luis, Eddie, Lupe    masks and calaveras  
staring at you    mocking you    reminding you  
You're not getting out alive of this one  
so just savor this because  
this is it.



The “Gráfica Siqueiros” engraving workshop was born in 2017, inside the Santa María de Ixcotel Prison in Oaxaca de Juarez.

Created by César Chávez and Jason Pfolhl, the project was named after the famous Mexican artist David Alfaro Siqueiros, a communist political activist, imprisoned in 1962 to serve an 8-year sentence. They accused him of having organized student demonstrations, which turned into riots, sowing chaos in the capital for several days.

Gráfica Siqueiros is now operating with workshops in four different jails around Oaxaca city, giving the incarcerated women, men and teenagers an opportunity to meet artists and learn techniques of printmaking, painting, stencil, cinema, art therapy, etc.—and meeting different artists from all over the world who come to teach them inside the prison.

Margaux Guiheneuc, a French tour guide whose adopted country became Mexico has now been living in Oaxaca for 5 years and supporting Gráfica Siqueiros by exhibiting their art in her gallery, A Ver Arte Galerie, located in the center of the town.

Since 2021, Margaux has been connecting tourists of her own “City Art Tour” with the artists of two different jails of Oaxaca by exhibiting their woodblock prints and handicrafts as well as organizing exhibitions in Oaxaca and in France.

In October, 2023, for their 6th anniversary, the incarcerated artists of the



Incarcerated artists of the Detention Center of Villa de Etla with their woodblocks



Exhibition: “Facades of Oaxaca” at the A Ver Arte Galerie, Oaxaca, Mexico

Workshop “Taller Siqueiros” (in the detention center at Villa de Etla, Oaxaca) worked on a serie of woodblock prints with the theme Fachadas de Oaxaca (Facades of Oaxaca). The exhibition is made up of twenty-three images (woodblock prints) representing walls, doors, and histories of the beautiful colonial City of Oaxaca de Juarez, including songs, memories of their free lives, and often walls of the city, present and past—along with walls of the prison.

In addition to creating the prints, the artists have been writing about their inspiration and motivation to participate in this project. Margaux, the project coordinator, writes that “each incarcerated artist teaches me about life and art, and how to value every moment of freedom. These inmates motivate me in many aspects of life.”

If you wish to support the project of the Taller Gráfica Siqueiros and the incarcerated artists you can purchase original engravings from Margaux Guiheneuc, by contacting her by email: [vamosoque-tours@gmail.com](mailto:vamosoque-tours@gmail.com)



ODILON CHAVEZ MARTINEZ: **Torre** woodcut print

For me, facades, walls and doors represent my environment, moments, experiences, places I have been, by day, by night, memories from the past and places where I would like to go again.

Consider the eyes that watch us every day, the walls that shelter us from the cold during this stay and our passage through this place. Where are we going? With such high walls and big eyes in every corner, we wait for the moment when the walls fall (and the doors of freedom open).

Para mi las fachadas, muros y puertas representan mi entorno, momentos, vivencias, lugares en los que me he encontrado, el día, la noche, recuerdos de lo que fue pasado y lugares en los que me gustaría volver a estar.

Son los ojos que nos observan todos los días, los muros que nos cobijan del frío en esta estadía y el paso por este lugar. A donde vamos? con tan altos muros y grandes ojos en cada esquina, solo se espera el momento en que caigan esos muros (se abran las puertas a la libertad).



JOSÉ NICOLAS GARCIA: Fachada de Mitla I woodcut print

Something so interesting: the facades. They give beauty to our city, Oaxaca, which is already beautiful in itself. The main thing, for me, is to express the greatness of the Zapotec culture, to which I belong.

Algo muy interesante, las fachadas. Le dan la belleza a nuestra ciudad, Oaxaca, es hermosa en sí. Lo principal, para mi, es expresar la grandeza de la cultura zapoteca, al cual pertenezco.



JOSÉ NICOLAS GARCIA:  
Fachada de Mitla II woodcut print





ÁNGEL ERICK MEDINA MATEOS: **Solar** woodcut print

“Solar” is a representation of what every prisoner wants, which is to one day be able to see the prison door from outside, receding behind one's back. Facades are like us humans, we have scars, history and a lot to tell, just stop for a moment to listen.

I am motivated as an artist by the power of unity between people, that regardless of circumstances, we are all human beings. To those who view this art: open a window to the opportunity to get to know each other and see that in each engraving dwells our humanity.

“Solar” es una representación de lo que todo preso desea, que es la de un día poder ver desde fuera la puerta del penal, alejándose a espaldas de uno. Las Fachadas son como nosotros las personas, tenemos marcas, historia y mucho que contar, solo detente un momento a escuchar.

Estoy motivado como artista por la fuerza de la unidad entre personas, que sin importar la condición, somos seres humanos. A quienes vean este arte: que dejen una ventana abierta a la oportunidad de conocernos y que miren que en los grabados queda una parte de uno como ser humano.



FERNANDO LOPEZ HERNANDEZ: **San Patron** woodcut print

Facades, walls and doors to me personally represent freedom, which back then, like many people, I did not value..

Fachadas, muros y puertas en lo personal representan a mi libertad y que en su momento, como mucha gente no lo valoraba.



OSCAR VASQUEZ MONTEALEGRE: **Esperanza** woodcut print

I was motivated by the wish of going out through this big door without anything detaining me. Here is the ability to go back to a different image, different walls, different doors, different paths, a different life and be free like the birds. Through my art I am free in my thoughts, my soul, my wishes...imprisoned but not completely. Walls, doors and facades represent dreams, visions, hopes, freedom.

Me motivó el deseo de salir por esa puerta grande sin que nadie ni nada me detuviera. Aquí es el poder volver a ver otra imagen, otras paredes, otras puertas, otros caminos, otra vida y ser libre como los pájaros. En mi arte, estoy libre, en mis pensamientos, mi alma, mis ganas,...estoy preso pero no del todo porque yo estoy aquí presente. Las fachadas representan los sueños, las visiones, las esperanzas, la libertad.



JAVIER LOPEZ SANCHEZ: **Lo bello de la muerte** woodcut print

I wanted to point out that when we die a new door opens for us and things awaken that we weren't aware of during our life.

Quise dar a notar que al morir se nos abre una puerta nueva y despiertan cosas que nunca en vida teníamos razón de ella.



AARON LARACILLA: **Vista desde la 17** woodcut print

“La 17” is a cell that is located on the second floor of sector “C” of the prison in the town of Etlá and shows the landscape that can be seen over the wall of the church of Las Peñitas through the cell window. “Vista desde la 17” also shows the horizon through the prison bars, the daily life, and how uncomfortable it is that everywhere you look the first thing you see is bars. These facades represent the yearning of the outside, freedom, being able to travel and know new places, smells and flavors.

“La 17” es una celda que se encuentra en el segundo piso del sector “C” de la cárcel de la villa de Etlá y se muestra el paisaje que se vislumbra por encima de la barda de la iglesia de las peñitas a través de la ventana de la celda. También mostramos aquí el horizonte a través de los barrotes de la cárcel, el día a día de los presos, y lo incómodo que es que para todos lados que mires lo primero que veas sean barrotes. Esas fachadas representan la añoranza del exterior, la libertad, el poder viajar y conocer otros lugares, olores y sabores.



EDWIN GARCIA: **Al Zocalo** woodcut print

The evocation of those days of harmony, rebellion and madness, is to sit in that room of infinite things, is to close the eyes and feel that freedom, and remember the university and those classes in which we received our academic training.

La evocación de aquellos días de armonía, rebeldía y de locura, es sentarse en aquella sala de las cosas infinitas, es cerrar los ojos y sentir aquella libertad, recordar la universidad y aquellas clases en las que recibimos nuestra formación académica.

## New Poems & Art—Salinas Valley State Prison and Beyond

Salinas Valley State Prison is five miles north of the city of Soledad, in Monterey County, California. It houses close to 3,700 men. The D-Yard writing workshop was started in 2012 by prison psychologist Dr. Benjamin Bloch and the poet Ellen Bass. For ten years several Bay Area poets continued in-person workshops with inmates in the writing group as well as supplying them with poetry prompts from afar during the pandemic. The poetry program then switched to A-Yard where recreational therapist Ms. Lisa Wu provided facilitation and leadership. Although the A-Yard program is currently on a hiatus, program teacher Rose Black in particular has continued to correspond with inmate writers, including after their transfer to other prisons, ensuring our ongoing ability to publish representative samples of their work.

As Ben Bloch wrote in 2015: “In a world where volition is systematically crushed—and not only by the people in uniform—the workshop’s purpose is to offer participants the opportunity to embrace creativity as a way to actively transform their experience, to become makers and creators.” *Red Wheelbarrow* remains committed to publishing the voices of inmates alongside the work of non-incarcerated writers and recently received a grant from Right to Write Press, newly under the auspices of the William James Foundation, to continue publishing the art and poetry of incarcerated writers alongside the work of the non-incarcerated. Thanks to Laurie Brooks of William James Foundation and to Rose Black, Lisa Charnock, Julie Murphy, and Hannah Sward of Right to Write Press for helping find new ways over time to maintain these programs to benefit inmate writers.

## New Poems & Art—Salinas Valley State Prison and Beyond

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POETRY FEATURE: UBALDO TEQUE, JR.

This past summer, a request from our gifted inmate student, Ubaldo Teque, Jr.:

*Can you send me love poems, sonnets? . . . I love the way that emotion takes me toward the mountains, forests, and lakes.*

I was happy to comply. Soon Ubaldo began to send me his love poems, written for a very special woman in his life. *The great Pablo Neruda wrote 20 love poems; I will write 39 and hopefully publish them in my book!*

This exchange is typical of the passion, perseverance, and power Ubaldo exhibits in all he writes, whether it's poetry, memoir, short stories, or essays. Spanish or English.

This discovery, that all held within can be expressed through language, enables Ubaldo to transport himself to a place where he can heal, hope, breathe, and love. Where he can connect with nature, in short supply inside the prison where he lives.

*When I write poetry, Ubaldo says, I am not in captivity.*

In October, 2020, Ubaldo's first collection of poems, *Nino Inmigrante*, was published by Right to Write Press, a nonprofit formed to promote the growth of writers in California state prisons. In that collection, Ubaldo writes of his early life in Guatemala, then his years in Southern California (*As a child, the gangsters smiled and patted me on the head. They looked buzz.*) Then of Salinas Valley State Prison, he writes:

*Keys dangling, every hour unlocks; I can't open any door.*

Safe journey, Ubaldo: explorer, fearless traveler.

— Rose Black

## The Lower Bottoms | Ubaldo Teque, Jr.

*for Modesto Amador & ferny J. Chavira —resting in peace*

1.

Where I'm from the streets are  
numbered North to South.  
Loaded firearms, shotguns, and assault  
rifles reign.

“Play At Your Own Risk” plays in the background.  
The wire rims sit on white-wall tires decorating  
the two-door primed cutlass lowrider full of  
bullet holes.

Tattoos cover grief.

Mamita swears that L.A. is better than Guate.  
I hate holidays. All my family is far away in  
San Lucas dancing around the Volcán de Agua.

2.

It's like this: As a child, the gangsters smiled and patted me on the  
head. They looked buzz. Cruel tongues always speak of disrespect.

The city is rotten in drugs; he died, she passed away, how old? I won't  
deny it. I sold them and used them too.

My American dream used to be green. Counting years slowly, I  
learned the hard way.

Before ferny died he sported a blue L.A. Dodger cap; I think of us a  
lot and in my sleep I hear him say, “Carnalito, it's gonna be alright.”

Keys dangling, every hour unlocks; I can't open any door.

Modesto passed away three years ago. Will my heart stop beating in  
here, or back in the City of Angels, under the avocado tree, on the  
corner of 39th and Grand Avenue.

Long Night | Ubaldo Teque, Jr.

Good sleep I hardly get any  
the nightmares  
  are way too many  
my sleep is fractured  
gray drowsiness  
  adorns  
the chilly autumn morning  
the wind and the scorching sun  
  have lost their touch  
dreams are like assets  
I don't have any all I own are  
memories  
  some are well founded  
radiant and true  
  but the others are corrupt  
full of blood splatter and wrong  
so why is it so disappointing to be  
  awake           at dawn?  
because true sleep and rest  
will only come when we perish  
  and our spirits move on  
how I would enjoy deep sleep like that of  
a cat  
cushioned by its white fur coat  
without a worry                   while  
an old gray plastic mattress  
  on top of a cold metal bunk  
remind the prisoner                   that again there won't  
be a good night's rest  
  sleepless again  
the moon   the stars   darkness and me.

## Jailhouse Lawyer | Ubaldo Teque, Jr.

Back in 2003 I was housed at the Salinas Valley State Prison. I wrote to Father Gregory Boyle, aka Father Gee, from Homeboy-Industries out in East Los Angeles. I asked him if he could sponsor me. I needed to take a paralegal course that was offered by Blackstone Career Institute out in Emmaus, Pennsylvania.

I gave him my word that if he sponsored me I would assist other indigent prisoners. Father Gee responded in less than a month. He paid 14 payments of \$55 dollars and in late October of 2004 I graduated. I learned about the branches of law and it was a good course, but my hands-on training was earned in the prison's law library.

Two African-American jailhouse lawyers, C.P. and G. S., took me under their wings and gave me a crash course in state and federal law/post-conviction appeals.

I was working on my case when a fellow prisoner within the block reached out to me. He needed me to help him in the Federal District Court. All state sentenced prisoners in California get a pro-bono appellate lawyer to work on their direct state appeals all the way to the California Supreme Court. Once the direct appeal is final, if the prisoner can't pay for a private lawyer he/she is on their own. That was the case for A.P. and me. I helped him, although I was busy, not because I had time. I needed the experience, so I asked him for his trial transcripts and minute orders. I had to review all of his case.

At times state appeal lawyers bypass important grounds. A.P.'s appeal lawyer did miss a ground, so now I had to stop his one-year statute of limitations by submitting a writ of habeas corpus to the State Appellate Court. I now had to exhaust this new claim before proceeding to the Federal District Court. I also filed for ineffective assistance of counsel on the appeal lawyer. A.P.'s counsel at trial asked the court for an identification expert and the judge on the record said, "Experts take up too much time," that's a violation of due process.

Being that this would become my first win in the courts, I told A.P. , "Once you're back in the court, if the judge offers you a deal, take it, as long as the life sentence comes off. He went back to court, refused a 20 year deal, then went back to trial. This time the expert was allowed to testify. Although I helped overturn his conviction I felt that because of my advice I had lost.

Fast forward to 2019. I'm now at the California Medical Facility (CMF). I'm on the waiting list for college and a job assignment. An elderly prisoner, A.H., had just been denied for the seventh time by the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation Board of Prison Hearings (BPH). He was a lifer on his 31st year of incarceration on a 17 to life sentence.

A.H. asked me if I could help him with this injustice. I had free time, so I asked him to let me read his BPH transcripts and that we would go from there.

I read the transcripts and I came across the page where BPH said A.H. had no knowledge of domestic violence, when indeed the record showed that he did. I went to the prison's law library and found the case that I needed, *Inrepalmer2019*. I wrote out the rough draft, then onto typing it on a habeas writ. A.H. sent it out to the Superior Court of his county.

A few months later as I arrived at the chow hall for dinner A.H. called out to me, "I have a response here from the court." I asked, "Is it a thick envelope or is it thin? I asked because usually denials are a one page notice and an order to show cause is thicker. He was holding a thick envelope.

The good news took him by surprise, and I finally saw some hope in his eyes; I got his right foot in the door. The court appointed lawyer assigned by the court did the rest. Three months later the Superior court Judge rendered its decision. He ordered A.H. to be released.

A.H. went back to Board on 12/1/20 and he was granted parole. He went home in early February, 2021. But he was a Mexican national and soon ICE picked him up. He was 81 years old, and during his 31 years of incarceration he never received a serious rule violation report, a 115. That's a hard feat in prison.

I've been in prison 24 years. My sentence is Life Without the Possibility of Parole (LWOP). I've helped many prisoners get back into court. I just shared two cases. One left a sting, the other gave me hope in the courts vs. BPH. I learned the law out of necessity. Many prisoners reach out to me, but today my time is limited: college, self-help groups, and work. I'm content that I've kept my word to father Gee and I believe that soon LWOP will be abolished here in California, giving us who have that sentence a chance at a new start.

*from* Love Poems for Kassandra Alicia Chavira  
| Ubaldo Teque, Jr.

IV

Morning is a new beginning  
of times cold, warm, or wet,

alone with the rosary asking  
for protection & guidance.

Only trusting the wind—  
she's always felt on arrival.

Deception rules the inside,  
surrounded by masks.

Letters, calls, and poetry help  
penetrate the outside.

Mentally strolling through the Guatemalan  
forest, morning—please bring a level-headed day.  
Her letters & voice let them satisfy my  
yearning for company.

Her soft kisses echo through my mind,  
punching me into the remainder of the day.

Far away for now, morning—please remind her  
that the keyhole is slowly turning,  
the hummingbird encourages us to go  
forward. . .

## VI

The coffee's fumes dance around the  
cup's circumference, twisting into thoughts.

I write poetry for the flower that resembles  
the sun.

My beloved, please don't let the world corrupt  
you with its trends.

The wind will tempt you, stand tall!

My love will be constant & true.  
Letters, poetry, art work, & my voice  
will replace those empty desires that our world offers.

The gap between you & me has a steel curve,  
a gold chain that can't be broken.

I look forward to the moment, Kassie, when my  
eyes will finally have you close, your nose, eyes,  
& smile. My hands will only have the boundaries  
you give them.

I'll never forget that Sunday, my love, it was  
a quarter to December when we first met.

## VII

The moon knows my pain.  
The sun tries to help me forget.  
Bluntly, I pronounce her name.

The sun rising, then setting,  
the most beautiful see-saw,  
while the moon admires him.

Effective communication is losing  
popularity, cell phone towers  
replacing trees, tongues retiring.

The woman does not need make-up.  
She needs love & attention.  
Thank you for accepting the exhausted me.

My fingers lift her shiny black hair.  
My light brown eyes beam with desire.  
She speaks, I melt.

In darkness,  
lightning brightens the forest,  
exposing the river, brush, & me.



## XI

Lying, thinking late at night,  
past wrong turns have led me here—and to you.

The candle stands tall next to  
the 110 Harbor Freeway, its light  
bounces off your long black hair.

You and I connect like the streets,  
your sexy voice echoes through the  
alleys of my mind.

Traveling over 500 miles inside of  
cards, letters, messages, & phone calls,

time lost me inside of years,  
but justice clears old lies. Your stare  
just like the sunflowers, beautiful & rare.

I swear to the earth, water, & sky,  
that you're the one.

## The Ocean | Ubaldo Teque, Jr.

*Inspired by Pablo Nerudas's "El Mar"*

Ah yes your waves coming and going  
comfort me  
your salt and sand scent help me  
forget  
far away I see three seagulls walking  
chasing each other  
the sun's rays lightly touch my skin  
giving me hope  
just me and the ocean  
inland I can't find tranquillity or  
justice  
the ocean is the only one that helps  
me      time elapses      then  
I remove my hands from my ears  
welcome to my hour of meditation  
here      within incarceration.

## Would You Rather | Ubaldo Teque, Jr.

*after Ada Limon*

*Would you rather?* She asked over the phone in a devilish tone, so I played along. My answers were never wrong.

*Would you rather be poor or middle-class?*

I love beans and rice.

*Would you rather join the boy-scouts or a street gang?*

A poor boyscout, for sure.

*Would you rather serve a 35 year sentence straight or do life?*

I'd have 10 years left.

*Would you rather a Big Mac or a Whopper?*

I'm a descendent of kings.

*Would you rather Kim Kardashian or Marilyn Monroe?*

Oh, I don't know.

*Come on, answer, she demanded.*

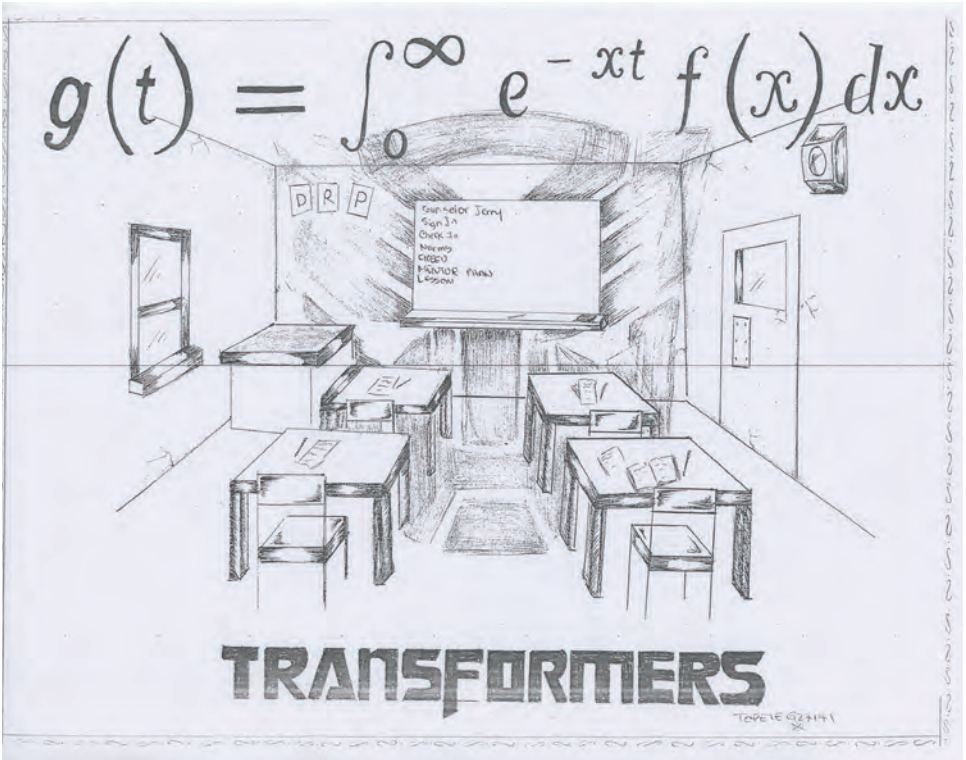
That's not fair, I replied, one is alive and the other is dead.

*Oh, I guess you're right,* she said.

But wait, I said, now that we're on this subject, what's up with you and me?

Suddenly, my 15 minutes were gone!

Transformers | G. Anthony Topete



Pen & Ink, May, 2022

## Transformers | Ubaldo Teque, Jr.

When you hear that word perhaps action figures come to mind, or movies with cars transforming into robots. But the title Transformers was given to our Department Re-entry Program, run by Center Point, Inc., within CDCR. Twelve prisoners began this 28 week group on Cognitive Behavior, which covered Motivation for Change; Understanding Anger; Victims Impact; Thinking for a Change; and Parenting Inside-Out.

We began in November, 2022. We were all strangers, or familiar faces in the wing or out in the hallway. As we jumped into the curriculum we became more vulnerable. The honesty and trust came naturally. I felt very comfortable around these men, who would become my DRP brothers.

At first many within the group questioned the curriculum. We felt we were being treated as if we were kindergarten kids. But then I learned many valuable things and today I pay attention to the way I feel. That is very important for anyone living in our world today. Victims Impact enlightened me on so many things I never knew, and learning empathy helped me to fully grasp and understand what victims go through after they experience trauma.

In every class I learned something not only about the modules, but about every single person within our group. I paid close attention to what each member shared and I took notes, which I will consult in the future like I always do on those days when nothing seems to go my way.

Like every other person in here, I am a work in progress. But I do have to admit that I've come a long way and I'm almost there. The youngsters in our group taught me how dumb I used to be. I see that at their age they do think, and I'm proud of them for that. The older men taught me many things too, that we are men who took the rough path in life but we make the best of it. The LWOP\* & death

row prisoners—all three of them—give me the strength on those days when I don't want to get up, on those ugly days when nothing goes right for me. I remember them ALWAYS smiling as they walk to group or to work. I pray for all my brothers in here that we all get a second chance at life.

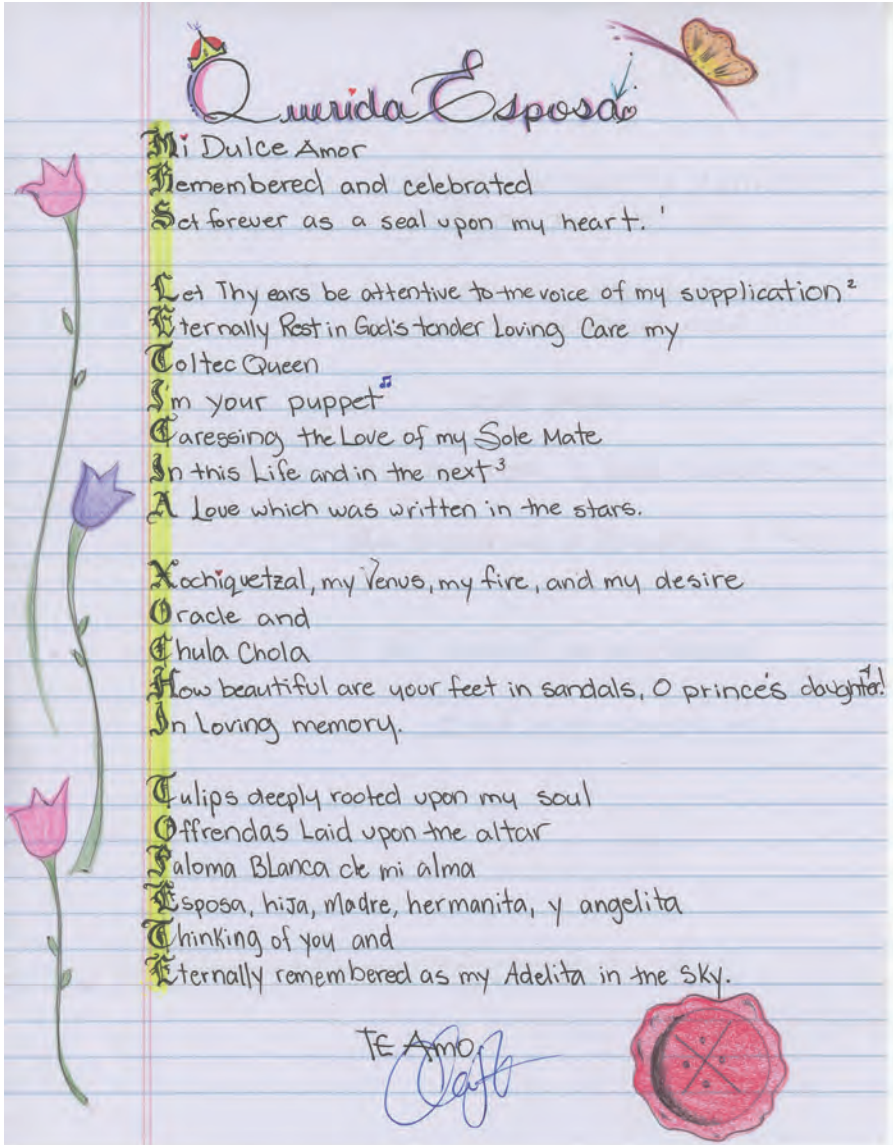
I appreciate our counselor, Jerry, who opened up about his past and made me feel comfortable, so that I too was able to share my journey on the streets with alcohol, and engaging in risky behavior.

I missed my DRP brothers so much that I enrolled in the second part, Integrated Substance Use Disorder Treatment (ISUDT). I'm so happy to be back with them. As we continue forward together, I know that I will be receiving more valuable knowledge from them. And if it weren't for my DRP brother, Topete, I wouldn't be sitting there by his side or writing this essay. He is my inspiration for writing and art work.

I recommend DRP to everyone within CDCR, and I hope that they, too, find what I've found: good life skills and brothers. Remember, "Disappointment is inevitable, discouragement is a choice."

\*LWOP: Life Without the Possibility of Parole

# Querida Esposa | G. Anthony Topete





*Heaven Sent*  
She conquered the dark rocky terrain of Xochitlan  
and penetrated the fog of the uncultured mountain  
with her beautiful fragrances...

My Sole-Mate  
My Adelita in the Sky

The free streams of Aztlan  
Were able to Kiss her divine foot  
And suspended their path happily

An Aztec Queen  
And her Warrior  
Xochiqueztal  
y  
Yacateuelli

Mrs.  
Leticia Xochi Topete  
R.I.P.  
By:  
G. Anthony Topete  
G27171



## Heaven Scent | G. Anthony Topete

Mi Dulce Amor

She Conquered the dark rocky terrain of XOCHITLAN  
and penetrated the fog of the uncultured mountain with  
her beautiful fragrances ...

My Sole-Mate  
Adelita in the Sky

The crags so enjoyed the kind caresses  
The heat of her eyes, that the sweatness  
Softened their hard innards:  
And new lovers became the rude mountains of  
Iztaccihuatl- y- Popocateptl

Mi Chula Chola

The free streams of Aztlan  
Were able to kiss her divine foot  
And suspended their path happily  
Mrs Leticia Xochi Topete R.I.P  
Aztec Angel...Toltec Queen, & her WARRIOR  
XOCHIQUETZTAL-y-YACATEUCTLI

## First Love | Koray Ricé

I remember the first day we met  
mmm...mmmm...mmmmm love at first sight!  
Me? Tall, skin dark, face handsome,  
Her? . . . . Blackman Kryptonite, skin kinda crystal like.  
This is something new, I've never been through,  
Couldn't feel my face when I was with her!  
Heart-beating piston-like, neck covered with face sweat,  
Body hot like I was wrapped in bear fur.  
She didn't talk much,  
Nope, just got right down to business.  
It was party-time for both of us,  
We had a night to remember by the time we finished!  
Started on one side of town, ended up on the other  
At a party of another, with friends, an ex-girlfriend, and my younger brother.  
The white girl had me moving fast on the floor, ooh wee she had a gift.  
She didn't wear white diamonds, I knew the moment I took a sniff!  
Nope, her scent was more natural, had me feeling on top of the world,  
Swear I've never felt like this before, and I've dated a lot of girls.  
Smelling her scent was fine, but I lost my mind,  
Gave her my heart, body, and soul.  
Letting her in worst mistake I could ever make  
No "Me", No "I" Now I'm hers, she has full control.  
Felt like I was in a vise-grip, DAM she had a hold!  
Couldn't break it, couldn't shake it, no matter how hard I tried she  
wouldn't let go.  
First I asked, then I told her, "WOMAN JUST LET ME BE!"  
My plea fell on deaf ears, she was having a blast with me.  
One day I thought this will be my last day of life,  
She and I were in a motel, it was raining, and we had a hellava fight.  
I broke a chair, kicked the T.V., punched the wall, and flipped the bed,  
Grabbed her, slipped, fell backwards and hit my head.  
It was all a dream, I thought I fell backwards,  
Wrong! man, I wasn't even close! (L.O.L)

Woke up handcuffed in back of an ambulance,  
A nurse told me I had overdosed! (woah)

Now I'm off to prison, that's fine, things could've been worse.  
Instead of waking up in the back of an ambulance  
I could have been "forever sleep" in the back of a hearse.

## Just a Little Unsteady | James Humdy

Entrapped inside a visual vortex,  
a fool is what I've become,  
pondering over the what if's,  
while battling with my mind.

So before you take my hand,  
please understand I'm a broken man,  
for my situation has been proven  
to be dire.

I exhort my interest,  
my passions often dance around  
the edges of my heart, like soft  
flames around a candle.

So take my hands now, and  
place them inside yours,  
and together we'll walk  
through a world of possibilities.

I conjure a song that harmonizes  
without vocal sound, in the hopes  
that someday you'll hear me.

Long in the distance I'm without sight,  
I'm without touch, how lonely am I!

This is the picture of a broken man.

I paraphrase your words  
like a precocious student, eager to learn.  
I look into your face, and ponder your  
thoughts, and sense your sincerity.

So I'm asking you clearly,  
Will you help me?  
Will you hold the keys to my secrets,  
slay the demons that haunt me?

This is the story of a broken man,  
where love has completely failed me,  
far away into the desolate, where  
flesh becomes bait for those who  
would prey upon me.

My nerves are that of brittle string  
that disintegrates upon touch.  
I've walked an unsteady road,  
where each step  
is a matter of survival.

These words of blunt sentiment  
are at the core of a broken man.

## The Gift | James Humdy

It isn't unusual that the neighbor's dog howls at the midnight moon.

It isn't unusual that some afternoons I drink to lighten my mood,  
although I end up all alone on a cigarette-stained couch.

It isn't unusual that the prideful person has desires,  
and becomes plagued with his own greed.

But being unusual makes you unique, special in a way no one else  
can describe.

Humility is often found at the depths of desperation.

And to be humble, unusual, and different from all the rest, could most  
certainly be defined as a gift.

# Salinas Valley State Prison | Jessica Diana Garza

Ms. Jessica Diana Garza  
T-32625 AS-127L  
SALINAS VALLEY STATE PRISON  
for Justice Week Mr. Weisner's  
A-YARD POETRY WORKSHOP  
Ms. W., Instructor  
Ms. W., Teacher of  
THE RED WING BARROW

12 / 22 / 22

See  
the  
Prison  
or  
render  
all  
etc

"SALINAS VALLEY STATE PRISON" S -  
(there is a Prison Art, Visual Prison Art Ink work of this)

- Criminals worn starry night sky, ink swirling night sky  
looked down upon a swarm of prison numbers,  
whose violence remembered in crimson bloodspost stains.  
Aged in wrinkles of a crease lined hardscrabble face,  
etched in every day and all night long that she,  
Salinas Valley State Prison, live'd.  
Had ever her prison inmates night-yard sky,  
misbehave in such calamitous inhospitability?  
Her Gangbangers haunted by chagrinning shades  
of their own bullet riddled dead... Whose  
shadows gathered as darkness came with her  
Night flying raptorial ravening ravens!  
As the crow flies crowing their boasts,  
Cant cawing in negretudally prideful,  
sycophantically upbeat rap rants.  
Their black feathered highlights shine a corpse wake  
in eerie glow of inimical gunmetal blue.  
Awakening the endless snaking coils of sharp razor-wire,  
whose rows and rows and double rows of chainlink fence,  
that seem to go on and on forever in miles surrounding,  
the prison grounds like a huge monster Venus Flytrap.  
Waiting ever so patiently to electrify the captured inmates;  
Sucking the life juices electrically out of ghetto sons.  
Their boney carcuses left to litter graveyard prison yards,  
where tumbledweed thornbushes crown their skulls.  
Many a minority prison inmate sacrificially died for societys ills!  
Born of a rough start dieing imprisoned a starry night skied.  
While the Ruff-start dogs get loved and go free...  
The prison guards see from behind face masks they wear.  
As starry Hosts from heaven look so down upon us,  
when the criminals imprisoned journalled of this night,  
a crazy whirlwind swirling dust and sky-Northern Lights like;  
Salinas Valley State Prison's ink swirling night sky to remember.

Starry Night Sky | Jessica Diana Garza



Pen & black tattoo ink, 2022



Salinas Valley State Prison: Starry Night Sky  
| Jessica Diana Garza

title: "SALINAS VALLEY STATE PRISON" 12/22/22  
Criminuous Worm (Starry Night Sky) <sup>Mr. Weisner's Poetry</sup> <sup>for Solstice Week</sup> <sup>for Ink swirling night sky</sup>  
Made & created in Pen & Ink from life without the subjects knowledge. <sup>Prison Factors are all done in Ink</sup>

The male officer is R. Cervantes; the female officer works the clinic. Her name is J. Morris. The little white curly haired dog's name is a female dog named 'Gidget'. She recently got Adopted. The inmates are Volunteers in a Dog Training Program known as "Ruff-Start" at SVSP. On this particular day it was extremely windy, more windy than usual. The night brought rough winds and a starry night sky. The prison inmates heard that I'm a Laywoman-Journalist being trained by Prison Journalism Project: [www.prisonjournalismproject.org](http://www.prisonjournalismproject.org) at 3501 Southport Ave., #204 Chicago, IL 60657, My contact is at 2093 Philadelphia Pike #1054 Claymont, DE 19703 My artwork to them goes to: PJP Art Department 2625 Alcatraz Ave. #328 Berkeley, CA 94705 As is customary with me; I also wrote a lengthy Poetic writing with this Ink Prison Art of the SVSP at: Ms. Jessica Diana Garza, CDCR# T-32625 SVSP A5-127L, P.O. Box 1050 Soledad, CA 93960 (The writing is too lengthy to fit here). Of the windy Starry Night in prison when the fellow inmates knowing I love Journalism, and my Prison Art; so they came to my cell to get me to Journal and also draw a portrait of it all; while they dictated their observations for me to draw into the prison scene (In front of Building #3) and write into Journalism. I quoted into written form of the prison inmates own words of observation. Whether they really saw, or just imagined it; I drew it as described by them that, I, along with them, perceived in and throughout the interplay of wind, dust, shadow & light. Until they said: "Yea, thats it!" And here it is, along with its written Poetry (see separate sheet).

ereby Drawn & Documented: "Salinas Valley State Prison's Starry Night Sky". By Yours Truly,  
*Love Always* Signed: Ms. Jessica Diana Garza 12/22/22  
# T-32625 SVSP A-Facility

## 1959 Prison Timepiece | Jessica Diana Garza

1959 Prison Timepiece, in black tattooed ink, is reminiscent of the 1959 city vice I was advised against, and the bets as scapegoat I lost that cost my freedom. Late nights of syncopated jazz, Beats in back alleys where dark smoke filled pool halls that called to the young, stylin' sharp to the nines. Old gangsters catered to Lady Luck's dice, and a .38 special in gunmetal blue.

\*

I've been in and out of prison for a long time and have been mixed up in various sorts of crimes. But throughout my lifetime I've loved and owned many automobiles. One year, when I was still in my 20s, I owned eleven cars and a truck, all at the same time. People gave them to me to pay off the debts they owed. Later, with a little bit of help, each time I paroled I bought a car. Three special ones that I remember well were a Cadillac, a Mercedes Baby Benz, and my last car, the 1959 Chevy in this drawing.

The 1959 Chevy was from back in the days when Americans were amazed at the idea of space travel and space ships So the automobiles were made in the style of rockets with wings.

1959 Prison Timepiece | Jessica Diana Garza



Pen & black tattoo ink, 2022

Mystical Women | Jessica Diana Garza



Pen & black tattoo ink, 2022

## Mystical Women | Jessica Diana Garza

Mystery, magic, and lore foresworn, born of enchanting incantation. Souls captured in photographs or ripped and burned, for failing to be the family that came with the frame. Black Magic's Mystic Veil incognita behind her black latticed balcony window.

Mystical Women bestrewn in flight or fright.

Sun, earth, moon in solar eclipse, moon in lunar eclipse. Shooting star that begat magical mystical women's mastery of that long-hidden magic incantatory spell.

Came they in olden times: prospectors and merchants and houses of ill repute; snake-oil salesmen selling magic shows; blackface minstrels pantomiming enchantments, and fortune tellers pulling black magic out of black top hats.

Riot of Prison Rain | Jessica Diana Garza



Pen & black tattoo ink, 2021

## Riot of Prison Rain | Jessica Diana Garza

Riot of prison rain began as prison uprisings usually do, with scattered gangs of prison inmates voicing their complaints about a prison guard mistreating them one too many times. For reasons of its own, the rain came later.

Fast upon the heels of inmates complaining, a more organized form of protesting began, and its celebratory tone relieved the boredom of others, so that even those unconcerned with the initial complaints soon joined in the fray.

The protest had turned into a wild party. Suddenly, however, the skies began to darken, drizzle, and then rain hard upon the party-goers. This angered some of the inmates, who looked up and raised their fists in solidarity, now aiming their complaints at the sky for daring to rain on their parade. One complainer shouted, "When it rains, it pours!"

The prison inmates who didn't quite cotton to getting wet began running to escape the lightning and thunder, which the more superstitious inmates likened to having angered the heavens. This mass confusion then erupted into chaotic violence. The prison guards donned full-fledged riot gear and rushed forward. Tear gas grenades and canisters began going off, block guns firing and flares flying. The inmates in turn began destroying property. The riot of prison rain took on a life of its own, a full-fledged riot. A riot of prison rain!

## The Falling Apart of Fences | Rose Black

Our fence has almost finished its rotting, it is falling apart. Soft plywood sheets lean over the earth, wispy layers peeling away from their bodies. The dark-green ivy and blackberry brambles that hold and protect are being cut down.

In a time of fences falling apart, beetles, ladybugs, and the spiders that eat them will have to inhabit another space, and in a time of thin separation there will have to be other ways of passing through whatever comes next. Holes in the old fence

big enough for a bird to fly through, and a small hole, perhaps from the path of a bullet. Long fingers of cracks. An inconsistent fence, for sure, some parts sturdy, but most weak and porous, needing only the slightest push to topple. The wind twice pushed-pulled

a weakened sheet in opposing directions. We'd find it next morning, laid flat on a bed of brown leaves. No human hand had done this, knocking in and through, crossing the boundary between us. Night animals crawled underneath and around—raccoons,

skunks, lizards, mice, an occasional snakes. On the other side by the railroad tracks, crabgrass and chickweed; huge double-faced letters, yellow and blue; a green dog with sharp teeth, big as a bull. We build a new fence, fifteen feet high. Disrupted ants

make nests in its shadow, dark ivy reaches and clings. What wants to cross over will cross over. The fence isn't solid in moonlight. I now know more people dead than alive, in this time of thin veils, in this time of fences falling apart.



## Red-Hot Friction | Paola Bruni

*For J.P.*

At first, he'd tried to live  
more, swagger disease  
into submission by flaunting  
prose like a matador's red cape.  
Along with proffered  
chemicals, he sucked  
language into that central line,  
let it swirl around the tender  
ruin of his veins, crying  
out for Persian and Latin  
American poets, for diction  
and fiction, for unruly winds  
to rise him from sleep,  
hyped up on steroids,  
jamming his fingers  
into the keyboard,  
phosphorescent light washing  
him like a shroud  
from an alien realm, meteor,  
red star, bitten by primitive  
teeth, communism of  
cancer burrowing further  
and further into flesh,  
mind muddled, moth pressed  
to the inside of a sealed  
glass jar. I wanted to be beside  
him, the red-hot friction  
of living while dying—  
a seduction. Don't we want  
to rub up against fragility  
so we have a sense of it?  
Time is a magic trick  
where we hold all  
the cards, until one by one,  
they vanish?

## Reading the Score | Becky Roberts

*Shostakovich's 5th Symphony:*

*"A Soviet Artist's Response to Just Criticism"*

There's a record player,  
and Steve had borrowed the music  
from the library, Shostakovich 5th Symphony.  
Four of us huddle around  
the giant conductor's score,  
following the music.

It's easy to lose your place,  
so I focus hard, watching the lines arc  
and fall on the page  
as the music swells loud, swallowing  
everything. Steve turns pages, cuing  
as basses push through the violins  
in the opening sonata, summoning Beethoven,  
the one classical composer allowed  
by the Supreme Soviet.

But the melody disintegrates,  
moves to bassoons, then recombines  
in a dark waltz. Piccolos shadow the violins,  
a knife's edge. It becomes unbearable, so the oboe  
takes us into the forest with all  
the tenderness of late summer leaves

floating down a river,  
horns join. Suddenly we're in D major  
as strings float through.  
Maybe it's enough to love your children, work  
for their happiness  
and watch seasons turn.

Birdsong breaks through  
the darkness, a little room opens up  
as the oboe looks around.  
But always the strange march interrupts,

bodies in trenches,  
in the snow, Babi Yar.  
The piano hammers low octaves, trumpets  
rattle, a military  
parade become a circus, spinning faster  
until it breaks apart.  
From the silence, a flute and horn  
lament what can never be said,  
In quiet farm yards people wonder,  
feed their animals,  
watch the road.

## II

A slow movement,  
counterpoint in strings, always shifting,  
uneasy. Tell your story to the cow  
as you milk her at night,  
stroke her warm flank, weeping  
with loneliness.

The oboe calls again in the quiet.

Crying in public is a crime  
in the Soviet  
utopia. Yet people wept.  
The requiem was for them, for the 800  
executions a day.

For the heart that must  
hunker down hope  
for a few moments of peace, or at least  
rest. Ignore the disappearances, manage  
the shortages, find ways  
to get through.

### III

Folk melodies break  
into lusty trombones and cellos,  
a finale with drums blazing, crowds forced  
to cheer for the Tzar.  
Basses harnessed to the cart,  
hearts hammering.

Until it twists  
into dissonance, crumbles to ash.

Stalin approved this  
music, but he must not have been listening.  
Yes, it's the struggle of the proletariat.  
Always.

The hammer  
falls and it's your neighbor. No reason.

A sled slips over the artic  
to Norway, threading  
between gun towers. A few  
make it to embassies, stagger  
over mountains to Turkey.  
The celeste floats  
the melody across the darkness  
of the steppe.

The composer's uncle, his sister, friends  
never return  
from work camps.  
Shostakovich is summoned  
for interrogation.

He tries again  
with long heroic phrases, but it unravels,  
underneath. Then basses,  
timpani, ominous.

IV

Out of the silence, horns tell  
a simple story—a farmer  
with thirty acres of wheat, an orchard,  
a love of books.

But the snare, quiet, always  
marches somewhere in the background.  
Triumph finally bursts out.

Shostakovich must hide  
most of his music in a drawer.

When he finds the required  
ending, violins chant their one note loud  
as they must, timpani beat down  
the law, brass  
and woodwinds quiet.

We sit in silence for a few beats  
as the record clicks off.  
“Man,” someone says. I can’t speak.  
my throat is too tight.

As fascism blooms,  
that dark narcotic, who will stay?  
Who will ask us  
to say the unnamable?

We followed the notes so intently,  
as if our lives depended on it.  
Thirty years later, I remember  
how the music connected  
us, gave grief and terror a shape,  
how the darkness  
took us like battering rain.

## On Some Verses of Virgil | Bob Dickerson

After the pick and ax are sold, after the claim is filed,  
After the spasms and the circling flies,  
After the locket is tossed and the pocket picked,  
After the church bells cease their ringing,

Who arms the wagon train?  
Who draws its sour-lipped Eastern faces?  
Who drives the fence post? Prunes the sagebrush?  
Who rides in feathers through log cabins?

Let us never forget to twist the rope, to spin the chamber,  
Let us always forgive pederasts, moguls, their bright smiles,  
The strangers who waylay us when our heads are turned,  
The snake oil, the dust, the broken boots.

Let us remember Thoreau, his words about the Mexicans,  
And Wild Bill, his back to the door,  
The sound of spurs, the cards spilled on the floor.

If the weather holds—write it down!—  
We will reach Kansas before morning.

## Kind of Blue | Sam Kauffman

Slinking into a still hue of blues  
Haunting trumpets dart in and out  
Like taxi horns in freeloading traffic  
And cling like silk onto full figured riffs  
When winsome modal notes wear sleek cobalt  
Where soulbeats throb from smoky bars  
Blue in moods of so what  
Sway like humid lovers on rainy nights  
To the clink of ice in shot glasses  
And afterhours shades of whisky, sweat and old scotch—  
Smooth as muted cool  
Luxurious tracks of indigo distilled intimacy  
Stretch without strict resolutions,  
Improv exhales unashamed sketches  
Of empty barstools and empty arms  
As modes of blue undress into serendipity  
When newborn sounds wrap limbs around  
Old scores of stale melodic staves  
Steady bass lines underscore mellow beats  
Unperturbed ruminating pulse,  
Slow percussive murmurs churn,  
Like a rhythmic subway hum of all blues slow walking  
In mystic measures of ebb and neap attraction—  
A perpetual kiss slides slow into a kind of blue.

## New House | Paola Bruni

On the balcony's eave, the mourning dove built  
a nest, her beak like a potter's palm shaping  
twigs and hair into a rough-hewn bowl. But it wasn't  
withstanding and each day, I discovered an egg gone  
liquid on terra cotta tile like an ink blot,  
ochre yolk strewn, dove undone, rendered impossible  
and the mother perched on the wooden rail  
in front of my chair watching me watch her  
for what seemed like hours although it was probably  
only minutes—a single brushstroke in time,  
the two of us sheltered in the common sympathy  
of loss. My womb emptied more than once, children fallen  
from the generous gathering of blood and muscle.  
There's no holding onto what must pass from this world.  
I've tried, erecting a tomb in my body, lined  
with the language of what could have been. Although,  
with every decade, there's less to imagine.  
In this new house, mourning doves pluck dry grasses  
from winter-weary plants, bathe in the rose-colored bowl,  
prink on the Privet hedge. I watch from behind glass,  
not wanting to disturb, not wanting  
to be found lacking.



## Missing | Robert Pesich

In 2020, 100,000 of the quarter million women and girls who went missing in the U.S. were black, brown or indigenous. Black women and girls make up just 13 percent of the female population in the country but accounted for fully 35 percent of all missing women in 2020.

—*The Neglected Epidemic of Missing BIPOC Women and Girls, Serial No. 117-69 (Hearing before the Subcommittee on Civil Rights and Civil Liberties)*

for Kaysera Stops Pretty Places and Akia Eggleston

*Sigo en la sombra, lleno de luz*  
-Miguel Hernandez

We go into the dark lit from within  
in search of our missing  
looking for evidence in the cracks in the sunlight  
and in the voices in our dreams.  
We ask the authorities for help  
and they declare we must wait  
for one day to file a missing persons report.  
while our grief grows and so too its shadow.

We search the fields ourselves for anything  
even a strand of hair a red thread among the thistle.

Authorities state she is just another runaway.  
To file a missing persons report we must wait  
for two days. And if she is running away from death?  
Our grief grows and its shadow now stands  
and walks with us and ahead of us.

With ropes and hooks and nets  
we drag the rivers ourselves looking for her  
in every handful of clay a glint  
maybe her grandmother's ring or grandfather's bracelet.

Authorities report that she is out there  
with her boyfriend, that she'll return after the party  
just you wait and see they say  
to her mother and father and boyfriend.  
Grief flies, sings in the blossoming dogwoods.  
Grief's scent in every meal, in every pinch of salt.

We visit the encroaching man-camps  
whose residents specialize in extracting  
resources from the earth the body  
rv neighborhoods mushrooming along the interstate  
the sound of the doorbell is often silence  
a wild barking a racking shotgun  
the same broadcast heard in the churches  
of mines and rigs and corporate detention yards

Authorities move us off past reporters  
waiting for the story to go blonde and bleed  
a little local color to improve the ad returns  
never mind the police chief and DA moving money again

We search along the interstate rest-stop bathrooms  
back of all-night diners no-tell motels weed-fields culverts  
our grief moving alone and with others  
its shadow surveilled from the road and the sky.  
We receive official letters  
Our condolences to you and your family, there is help  
meaning please mollify your grief, meaning  
please find your way to be at peace now and silent

To ignore this forever wound of questions and absences?

The shadow grows over the land  
authorities beat it with batons and their heart grows weak  
some with their bare hands try to suffocate it

only to erase their own face  
we hear they shoot it wherever however  
and the great shadow buries the report  
deep into their ears to ring forever  
it rises now a 3,000 mile cold front  
cities browning out while in the dark  
we sing her name  
lit from within

## ARTIST'S STATEMENT: PATRICIA DIART



The following images document a series of art actions I made with “The Cape.” It was initiated soon after seeing the video of George Floyd’s murder in May, 2020. My cloak is hand embroidered with a letter to my father who was a violent white police officer in Baltimore.

Though it tells of the domestic violence our family suffered while he was a cop, it is interwoven with contexts that converge with questions of power, bigotry and racism, gender violence and child abuse. Who has dominance and authority has long been problematic in the history of America as it pertains to race, gender and class and these particular power dynamics continue to be felt by many today. My performances speak to how the secrets of a familial environment both form and reflect significant aspects of our social fabric. With a 12-foot cape, I traveled to 30 places in the United States including police stations, city plazas, museums, and civic protests. I committed to kneeling for two hours, and after each action, I wrote short essays about my experience.

Allowing my cape to be seen in the public sphere gave others a chance to witness profoundly disturbing truths, and this, in turn, may have permitted them to question their own hidden histories. Many viewers were moved by the art actions, and expressed their compassion, anguish, hope, and fear to me. I was deeply touched by them, and with time, I also began to feel the weight of my story change in ways I hadn’t anticipated; their resonance helped to dissolve much of my own burden and pain. For more information, see: <https://thecape.substack.com>. After receiving a grant from the San Francisco Arts Commission, I am also in the process of creating a book on the series of art actions.

I am very fortunate that photographer Chris Tuite happened upon me at Central Station in San Francisco in February, 2021. He had been photographing the BLM movement, and with his talent and keen eye, he would go on to document over fifteen of my art actions in California. See his work here: <https://www.christuitedphoto.com>.



PATRICIA DIART: **The Cape** Central Police Station, 766 Vallejo Street, San Francisco, California. February 8th, 2021, from 3:00–5:00 pm.

*Photograph by Chris Tuite*



PATRICIA DIART: **The Cape** Brooklyn Center, Minneapolis, Minnesota.  
April 15th, 2021, from 4:30–7:30 pm.  
*Photograph by Chris Tuite*



PATRICIA DIART: **The Cape** Hennepin County Courthouse,  
300 South 6th Street, South Side, Minneapolis, Minnesota.  
April 14th, 2021, from 3:30–5:00 pm.

*Photograph by Chris Tuite*



PATRICIA DIART: **The Cape** Hennepin County Courthouse,  
300 South 6th Street, South Side, Minneapolis, Minnesota.  
April 14th, 2021, from 3:30–5:00 pm.  
*Photograph by Chris Tuite*





PATRICIA DIART: **The Cape** Downtown Police Station, 19 N 4th Street, Minneapolis, Minnesota. April 13th, 2021, from 3:00–3:15 pm.

*Photograph by Chris Tuite*



PATRICIA DIART: **The Cape** Sacramento State Capitol, 1315 10th Street, Sacramento, California. August 17th, 2021, from 1:30–4:00 pm.

*Photograph by Chris Tuite*



PATRICIA DIART: **The Cape** Sacramento State Capitol, 1315 10th Street, Sacramento, California. August 17th, 2021, from 1:30–4:00 pm.

*Photograph by Chris Tuite*



PATRICIA DIART: **The Cape** Hollywood Police Station, 1358 Wilcox Avenue, Los Angeles, California. February 26th, 2022, from 11:00am–12:30 pm.  
*Photograph by Chris Tuite*

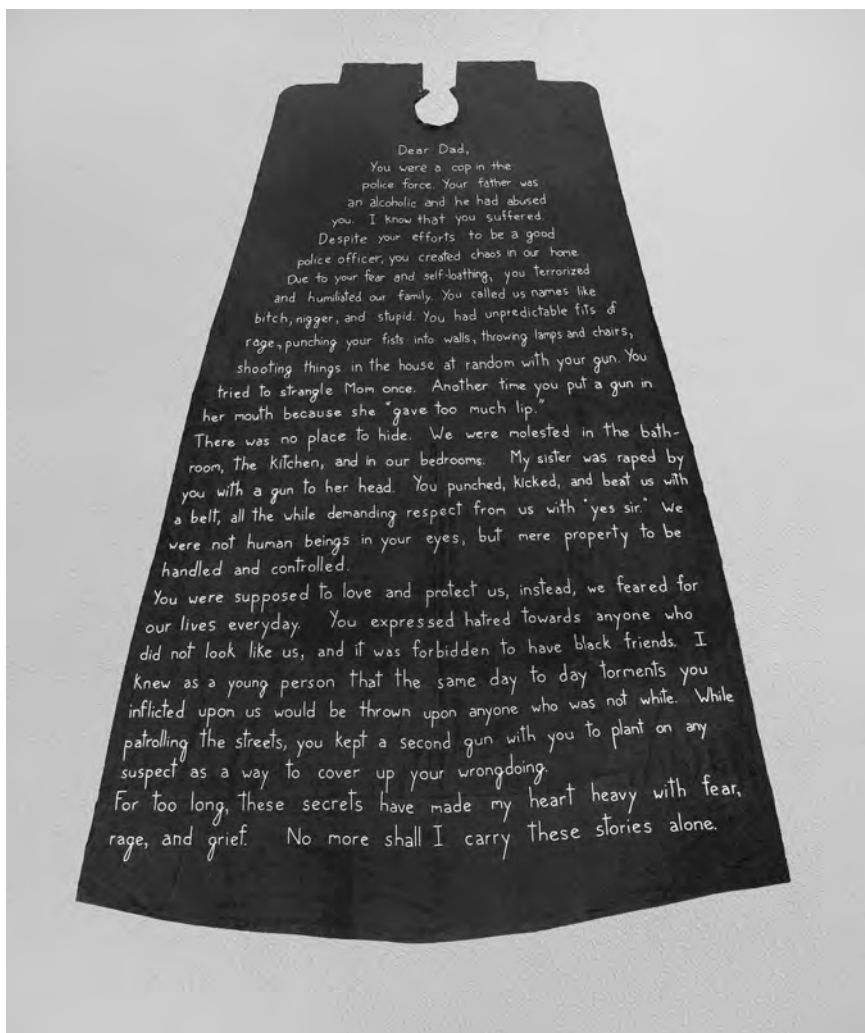


PATRICIA DIART: **The Cape** SFMOMA, 151 3rd Street, San Francisco, California. May 15th, 2021, from 2:00–3:30 pm.

*Photograph by Chris Tuite*



PATRICIA DIART: **The Cape** The Hammer Museum, 10899 Wilshire Blvd,  
Los Angeles, California. February 26th, 2022, from 4:00–5:00 pm.  
*Photograph by Chris Tuite*



PATRICIA DIART: The Cape

## Bee | Frances Hatfield

One hot dusk you found a bee, cinnamon colored,  
resting on the kitchen screen door, so you stopped  
yourself from slamming it, and let it rest there,  
wondering where it came from and where it was going,  
feeling good about yourself for helping one small  
life hang on a little longer, but the sound the door  
would have made echoes in you, an almost, a what if.  
And then you cried, thinking your gesture meant nothing  
because the bee was dying anyway, like all of them are,  
like everything is, and then you were crying  
for yourself too, and everyone you'd failed,  
for all the doors you slammed and slammed again  
hard, for all the leaving you did trying not  
to be left, down to the smallest gesture echoing  
down the years, looking away from the baby,  
afraid she did not love you, like your mother did  
to you, and her mother did to her, and you went on  
crying for a long time, a river and then a flood  
of plain hard grief, washing away your excuses  
and all the places you've tried to hide,  
dislodging the boulders of shame, the mental prisons  
and the guards with their clubs and goads.  
You sat on the kitchen floor and cried out all the rivers  
in your body and all the salty seas, while the bee  
listened quietly like a priest hearing confession,  
and when the waters subsided, you rested,  
you and the bee, marveling at the beneficence  
of air, clinging to your net  
of falling light.



## The Truth About the Heart | Andrew Gent

We always talk about the heart  
as if it were a real thing,  
when what we mean is  
that part of the brain  
that tells us stories.  
The endorphins

colored  
pink for happy  
and red so dark  
it is almost black  
for sad.

We talk about our feelings  
in the third person, as if  
they weren't there.  
As if they weren't  
listening  
to every  
last  
word.

When, in fact,  
it might be true.  
They might be deaf.  
Mute. Blind.  
And acutely  
temperamental.

So let's hear it  
loud and clear  
for that overzealous  
tub thumper,

the heart.

The one part  
of us, the rest  
can't live  
without.

And let's  
save a few words  
for the veins & arteries,  
those thick red ropes  
that keep it, wild  
beast that it is,  
firmly in place

roaring and snorting  
like everyone's worst nightmare.  
The blackened furnace  
our parents warned us  
never to go near.

## Dinner Alone | George Lober

Six months after my mother died,  
my father stopped having dinner  
with his children, preferring instead  
the blank strip of kitchen wall  
between the cabinet and the doorway  
leading to the yard out back.  
Without explanation, he'd sit  
each night on the wooden chair  
beneath the wall phone, eating  
from a plate balanced on his lap  
or perched at the counter's edge,  
eyes focused on the four of us  
at the dining table ten feet away,  
always with the expression of a man  
trapped between duty and loss,  
seeing clearly the span of our ages,  
calculating our respective weights.

## Fiction, 101 | Sally Ashton

Start at the moment when everything changes.

If nothing changes, what's the story?

The main character will be a most unlikely person.

Desire drives the action.

*Show, don't tell*, Chekov admonished, *don't tell me the moon is shining, show me the glint of light on broken glass.*

It's a hero's journey, the way full of unseen dangers, your hero unprepared.

If she comes to a river, it will be muddy, wide, full of crocodiles.

Make sure to show the glint of light on broken water, the crocodile's eyes unblinking.

The story won't end *She wakes up. It was only a dream.*

If she drowns or crocodiles tear her apart, the story becomes tragedy.

If she sits down refusing to go on, it's tragedy of another sort.

And she *will* wake up—many times—sometimes after dreaming, but the crocodiles are always there.

Her only escape is to cross the river. She has no idea how.

The story will get worse before it gets better.

In the nick of time, help arrives.

When this is all over, the world too will be changed.

*Don't tell me the moon is shining . . .*

I will see the broken glass.

Show me, if you can, the glint of light.

## A Paper Tent | David Allen Sullivan

I unflap the folded note  
and fine pencil lead grains  
trough and roll. I hasten to re-  
balance the missive, contain

what it contains, these granular  
artifacts of her living hand.  
Words she sought to hide inside.  
Ways to conjure those she loved:

*I must wait a few days before seeing you.  
You are too momentous; but remember, Sue,  
it is idolatry, not indifference.*

Even Susan she had to keep  
at a necessary distance. Cross  
the gap in a leap of words.

They catch my throat and shake  
me dry. I refold the note.

Slide it back into the plastic sleeve.  
Re-box and return it to the scowl-  
faced Harvard librarian of Special  
Collections. I have been pretending.

I have never loved anyone.  
I never crossed the threshold.  
I stare at the unknocked door.  
Dare myself to move. The woman  
tartly asks if there's anything else.

There is, but I have no words.

## Valentine | Lynn Glicklich Cohen

So what, that we drink too much, insult my sister,  
hog attention, laugh until a coughing  
fit brings tears. Our punishment is to not sleep,  
to forever wonder what everyone thinks of us now.

How skillfully you whip our faults  
into froth that I skim with slotted spoon,  
flick thick wads into the sink, where it oozes  
down stainless sides, like shame itself, towards the drain.

Admit it: neither of us is going anywhere.  
There are diagnoses for what we are.  
You love me until it chokes; you feed

and deny me, scorn my dilemmas, disrupt my  
suicidal plans. And I allow it all,  
my one and only Self.

## Eye and the Elephant | Moira Magneson

When I despair, which is often these days,  
for this fractious world so bent  
upon itself, I go back  
to that Sunday morning in Chitwan,  
woodsmoke scenting November air.  
Alone and walking a footpath  
to the river, I come to a clearing  
where I spot a mahout and his elephant.  
Catching my stare, he beckons me  
to their side. Soon I am feeding her banana leaves.  
She smells dusty and sweet. Her pink-mottled ears—  
deckle-edged, ragged—flap. I pat her skin,  
its rough warm comfort, then look into her eye,  
her right eye, so brown and deep  
and steeped in sorrow. Her gaze a transom to my self,  
my heart a pail holding the moon and stars.  
I am speaking the language of elephants. And then,  
she lets down her trunk. Lightfooted,  
I climb that great leather ladder, traverse  
the landscape of hide and shoulder, until  
I'm straddling her, toes brushing her ears.  
We walk together—such magnificent gentle steps.  
*Hatti Hatti mero saathi.*  
And I am content—rocking, rocking—  
just behind her domed forehead,  
dust rising from the ancient earth.  
*Hatti Hatti mero saathi. O noble being!*  
How beautiful to be cradled in the heart  
of the world. *O elephant!*

Backyard Moon | Patricia Aya Williams

someone said hey  
look at that moon

so we stopped  
what we were doing

to look at you  
rolling over

the canyon  
rolling over

the hills rolling  
over our houses

our fences  
someone said hey

let's eat and we all  
even the dog

watched you roll  
over our table

grab a plate  
and fill it



# At Youngland Under the Redwoods | Stephen Kessler

*For Gary & Peggy Young*

Youngland abides by its own laws  
defying time, gravity and fire—  
gravity a bit less  
when big trees crash through the roof  
to let sunlight in. But the birds  
bingeing at the feeders, the goldfish hiding  
or dashing beneath the floating leaves of the ponds,  
the sprawling gardens, libraries, galleries, kitchens and collections  
make even a monk's retreat above the creek feel spa-like,  
restorative, breathable without sirens or motorcycles  
ripping through the synesthesia.

The cats are gone,  
and the resident goat,  
but the BAD DOG posted along the driveway  
outlives more than 40 years, and the shop up top  
where kayaks were fabricated in a lost age  
of little magazines, cold cuts and watery beer  
is archeological, layers of art and verse  
buried to be unearthed by the curious  
discovering immortal ephemera  
caught in the ink pits.

It is a land where metaphors mix promiscuously  
and languages interbreed and spill their seeds  
because there's too much evidence to contain,  
too much stuff to store, too many rats and raccoons  
to leave even inorganic matter undisturbed.  
Prose flows downstream whispering Chinese.  
Wisteria climbs to astronomical heights  
spilling purple light everywhere for a few May days.  
Wild ferns gossip quietly with the banzai.  
In the warm skies of spring streaked lightly with cirrus  
nothing is echoing.

Seeing a Friend After Thirty Years | Ralph James Savarese

*for Steve Taft*

It's like finding a sock behind  
the wishing machine:  
agitator you and agitator me  
at last re-paired.

Comely Pinkos in our ladder  
years (the world on ire,  
the country in goons), each of us  
climbing toward what?

We're medical marigolds well  
past their bloom.  
(When you're old, everything  
is a malaprop

or mondegreen, and your ears  
might as well be  
toilet bowls on a wall. "What  
didya say?")

We have our sick. Let's get our  
beets and hike out to  
that cabin you built in the woods.  
Like heaven, it's

a *drye* establishment, meaning  
no water but plenty  
of bourbon, and Jesus is a wood  
stove. Listen

to the firebox cackle—it sounds  
like breaking bones.  
The future, that fun-loving doctor,  
has been waiting for us.

To him a bedpan is a flying saucer.  
With neither outhouse nor  
inhouse, we can piss the time  
off of the front deck.

Untitled | David Denny

haunted by neither  
past disasters nor  
future eventualities  
ginny finds now just fine

right now she marches  
before me on a sidewalk  
littered with storm debris

stepping over broken  
branches  
stopping to sniff  
the rich parts where  
dark standing water lingers

her jaw is relaxed  
her ears are pricked  
her tail is poised  
to wag

she knows we are headed  
toward sunshine maybe  
some sparrows or crows

she picks up a stick  
sits in a dry spot  
to chew

a squirrel tops a  
nearby fencepost

her whole being rises  
stiffens and straightens

her left front paw  
lifts & cocks  
in anticipation

its too bad really  
im not a hunter  
ginny would love  
chasing down prey  
carrying my dead  
in her strong jaws

but we are suburban dogs

domesticated yet  
with primal instincts  
intact

instincts that must needs  
be tamed

continually

nevertheless  
in her presence  
i live brighter

night has passed

the morning  
before us

like a bounteous table  
set with fresh  
warm bread  
the wine open  
breathing its small  
fragrant breaths

& in the center  
a jar filled with  
blue bells  
newly gathered  
from the green hillside

Bloom | Meredith Davies Hadaway

i.

Rainwater, hose water—  
the same source, but only one brings  
news from thunderous skies.

ii.

Flowers need rain as we  
need flowers. They teach us  
to bloom.

iii.

My hydrangeas refuse to be  
blue. As my friend's hair is now  
allowed to be white.

iv.

All I hear from the silent roof:  
No rain, no rain, no rain.

v.

The sun burns brighter,  
but the moon grows dim as we  
open into sky.

vi.

Rose, a messenger.  
Lovely name, past tense of rise.  
Presently, a scent.

vii.

White irises have raised their heads  
in a garden I did not plant. They just  
appeared—small, ruffled gods.

viii.

Returned like a cat, agile and  
sweet, rain swivels at last down  
the windowpane.

ix.

Fragrant even in the dark, my roses  
end with weeping.

## A Morning Walk | Thomas Dunn

thinking about you  
on my way up.

At first, assuming  
I see you  
but it's someone else  
while climbing Potrero  
passing white  
blossoms,

Magnolias and pink  
flowers—all in the eye  
of the morning calm,

I want to call you  
but it's six  
and you wake up at  
seven? eight? —

so having an hour  
(or two)  
to myself, I sit  
on a bench watching  
ships roll in from the Bay.

Bridge glistening  
its light on the water.

Sun tiger-striping  
the waves  
orange and dark  
grey mirroring  
stratus off the hills.



I'm thinking a lot  
about Frank—

how he says we choose  
to call someone  
on the phone  
or write a poem,

but when wasn't a phone  
call a poem?

A raincheck  
for anything I'll explode  
if I don't find a way  
to say right now

## I'd Rather Not | Andrew Gent

I'd rather not know  
when I am going to die.

Struck down  
by a bus out of no where  
while crossing the street  
thumbing through a book  
of poems by an unknown poet.

Or when the clock in my chest  
stops ticking  
because someone forgot  
to wind it.

I want it to be a surprise.  
I want my last thought  
to be as clear as the rain

that will be falling that day.  
The rain that will be

the only tears I shed  
at the thought  
of everything

I failed to do  
in this world.



KRISTIN LINDSETH: Building a Home in Dadaab  
watercolor, 30" x 24", 2022

## Contributors' Notes

**Sonia Alland** translates from French and Catalan. She has published works by the French writer, Marie Brossard: *The Hermitage* (Northwestern University, 2001) and *The Legend* (Seagull Books, 2013) as well as two volumes of poetry by Salah Al Hamdani: *Baghdad, Mon Amour* (Curbstone Press, 2008) and *Baghdad, Adieu* (Seagull Books, 2018). Publications from the Catalan are: *Portbou: a Catalan Memoir by Maria Mercè Roca* (Pinyon Publishing 2020) and works by the Catalan poets, Narcís Comadira and Feliu Formosa. Her translations of their poems will appear in a special Catalan issue of *Metamorphoses* to be published in 2024. She has also translated the poet, Salvador Espriu, in collaboration with Richard Jeffrey Newman, and co-translated one of Salvador Espriu's plays, *Antigone*, into French.

**Catherine Anderson** lives and works in Kansas City with new immigrants and refugees and has published four full-length collections of poetry. Her latest work, *My Brother Speaks in Dreams: Of Family, Beauty and Belonging*, is a memoir exploring how her life was touched by her brother, a man who had autistic traits and a unique style of speech.

**Sally Ashton** is a writer, teacher, and editor of *DMQ Review*, an online journal featuring poetry and art. Author of four books, her fifth collection, *Listening to Mars*, is forthcoming, 2024 with Cornerstone Press. She served as the second Poet Laureate of Santa Clara County, 2011-2013. Her work has appeared in numerous journals and anthologies and is headed to the Moon with the Lunar Codex Project later this year. [sallyashton.com](http://sallyashton.com)

**Charles Atkinson's** *Poems: New and Selected* was published in fall 2022 by Hummingbird Press. His collection *The Only Cure I Know* (San Diego Poets Press, 1991) received the American Book Series award for poetry; a chapbook, *The Best of Us on Fire*, won the Wayland Press competition. A third volume, *Because We Are Men*, was awarded the Sow's Ear Poetry Chapbook Prize. He has published two full-length collections, *Fossil Honey* and *This Deep In*, with Hummingbird Press, and two chapbooks—*World News, Local Weather and Skeleton, Skin and Joy*—with Finishing Line Press. Having retired in 2007 after a long career teaching composition and creative writing at UC Santa Cruz, he lives in Santa Cruz County with his wife, writer and teacher Sarah Rabkin.

**Rose Black** lives and works at Renaissance Stone, a sculpting studio in East Oakland. Her poetry has been widely published and she is the author of three books: *Clearing*, *Winter Light*, and *Green Field*. Her first two books are included in Yale's Beinecke Library for the Yale Collection of American Literature. Rose teaches poetry at Salinas Valley State Prison and is one of the founders of Right to Write Press, a nonprofit that promotes the growth of emerging writers who are incarcerated in California state prisons.

**Paola Bruni's** poetry has been nominated for the Pushcart Prize and has appeared in numerous print and online journals as well as popular anthologies. Recent poems can be found in *The Birmingham Review*, *Five Points Journal*, *The Adroit Journal*, and *SWWIM*. Additional work is forthcoming in *Ploughshares* and *Spillway*. Her debut book of poetry is an epistolary collection titled "*how do you spell the sound of crickets*" (Paper Angel Press, August 2022). She lives in Aptos, California by the sea.

**Shelly Stewart Cato's** writing has recently appeared in *Rattle*, *Southeast Review*, *Poet Lore*, *Washington Square Review*, *Harpur Palate*, *New Ohio Review*, and *TriQuarterly*. She lived

in the Mississippi Delta for 25 years and now writes near the Warrior River in Walker County, Alabama. She is passionate about genre bending and experimenting with forms, blurring lines between truth and imagination. She is passionate about loving humans in this space in this now.

**Lynn Glicklich Cohen** writes poetry from her dining room table in Milwaukee, WI, where outside, birds and squirrels gorge on seed-nut-berry mix purchased in 30 pound bags. She has been published in numerous literary journals. She is grateful to *Red Wheelbarrow* for supporting her work. Lynn can be reached at: [lynnlicklichcohenpoet.com](mailto:lynnlicklichcohenpoet.com).

**David Denny** is a poet and fiction writer. His most recent books include the poetry collection *Angel of the Waters* and the short story collection *Sometimes Only the Sad Songs Will Do*, both from Shanti Arts. His work regularly appears in journals such as *The Sun*, *Narrative*, *Catamaran*, *Rattle*, and *California Quarterly*. More info: [daviddenny.net](http://daviddenny.net).

**Patricia Diart** has been a multi-media artist since 2001. Her work has been shown in Germany, Cuba, and in San Francisco with The Lab, SFAC, and New Langton Arts. The *S.F. Chronicle* and *The Star Tribune*, Minneapolis, published articles about *The Cape* in 2021. Kim Schuck (San Francisco Poet Laureate) selected one of her writings for her *Poem of the Day*, and she recently received a grant from the San Francisco Arts Commission to create a book for *The Cape*.

**Bob Dickerson** has published poems in *Tarantula*, *Beet Magazine*, and *The Coffee House Papers* and was a featured Poet of the Week for *Nomadic Coffee*. He has also collaborated with the New York artist Karen Hatch to create the bestselling objet d'art *Woodsmen*. Avant-garde bookmaker Roger Berger has assembled a museum-quality volume of several of Bob's works entitled *Selected Poems and Other Oddities* (Reece Brothers Publications, Tirane, Albania). Accompanied by singer-songwriter Ina Johnson on the banjo, Dickerson has performed his poetry at Flash Fiction Forum, Kim Addonizio's annual Poetry Salon, Peninsula Literary Society, the fabulous Willow Glen Library, the Stoneham Jazz House Concert Series, Peter Kline's Cafe Bazaar Writer's Salon, and the annual Beat Poetry Reading at the Beat Museum in San Francisco, and on street corners throughout this great land of ours. He is currently putting together a book of new poems with the working title *Bring Me the Typewriter of Jesus Ponderosa*.

**Fernand Dumont** was a Belgian surrealist poet, perhaps best known for his "Treatise on the Faries" written for his daughter Françoise. During WWII he was arrested by the Nazis, which is when he wrote "Liberty." He died in 1945 in the Bergan-Belsen concentration camp at the age of 38.

**Thomas Dunn** is a multi-media artist, poet, and experimental filmmaker from Midland, MI. A proud graduate of Eastern Michigan University in Ypsilanti, Thomas is currently completing his MFA in Writing at the California College of the Arts in San Francisco.

**Dawn Dupler's** poetry has been featured on the buses and trains of St. Louis's MetroLink and in journals such as *Natural Bridge*, *Whiskey Island*, *Moon City Review* and others. She has an MFA in Creative Writing and teaches English at the St. Louis Community College after retiring early from a career in engineering.

**Salvador Espriu** (1913-1985) was the author of plays and narratives, but he's especially proclaimed for his imposing opus of poetry. In addition to earning some of the most prestigious awards in his native Catalonia, including the Gold Medal of the Generalitat de Catalunya in 1980, Espriu's work has been recognized internationally, most notably with the Montaigne Prize from the Universität of Tübingen in 1972. He was also a Nobel candidate in 1971 and 1983, with no less an advocate than Harold Bloom.

**Edwin Garcia** is an incarcerated artist currently living in Oaxaca, Mexico.

**José Nicolas Garcia** is an incarcerated artist currently living in Oaxaca, Mexico.

During **Ms. Jessica Diana Garza's** imprisonment, she has been committed to creating original prison art. Determined to depict her own prison experience, she incorporates dreams, self-portraits, sketches of the many animals with which she identifies, and memories of food and drink from her pre-prison life: She writes: "Good artwork seeks a place of honor that breathes life into the soul of the artist that created it. I spend hour upon hour on line work, composition, and perspective. I'm just glad to be able to share my artwork and writing with anyone who has the opportunity to see it. She writes: "Why did a child eating mangoes while meditating conquer her fear of bats?" "While I savored the sweet, juicy, distinctive flavor of a ripe mango, the effect of sundown was a supernatural light on its multicolors. Multicolors of a ripening mango. It was awesome to look at."

**Andrew Gent** lives in New Hampshire. His first book of poetry is [*explicit lyrics*] from the University of Arkansas Press. Current work can be found in recent issues of *North Dakota Review*, *Under Review*, *Thin Air*, and *Tipton Poetry Review*.

**Nimah Gobir** is an artist and educator based in Oakland, California. Through paintings and installations, her work primarily explores the nuances and shared experiences of being Black. She draws on photo references collected from both family and personal archives. Gobir completed her undergraduate studies at Chapman University with a B.F.A. in Studio Art and B.A. in Peace Studies. She has an M.Ed from Harvard Graduate School of Education with a focus in Arts in Education. In 2020, she completed a fellowship with Emerging Artist Professionals SF-Bay Area. She has shown work at the Museum of the African Diaspora, SOMArts, The Growlery, and Root Division, where she was awarded the Blau-Gold Studio/Teaching fellowship. She is represented by Johanson Projects.

**Kate Gray's** latest poetry collection, *For Every Girl: New & Selected Poems* (Widow & Orphan House, 2019) presents a chronicle of queer affirmation. Her first novel, *Carry the Sky*, (Forest Avenue, 2014) stares at bullying without blinking. Her book of poems, *Another Sunset We Survive* (2007) was a finalist for the Oregon Book Award and followed chapbooks, *Bone-Knowing* (2006, Gertrude Press Poetry Prize), and *Where She Goes* (2000, Blue Light Chapbook Prize). She's been awarded residencies at Hedgebrook, Norcroft, Soapstone, and Storyknife, and a fellowship from the Oregon Literary Arts. She lives with her partner and two impetuous dogs in the mid-Columbia River Gorge.

**Benjamin S. Grossberg** is the author of the chapbook *The Auctioneer Bangs His Gavel* (2006), winner of the Wick Poetry Chapbook Series, and the full-length poetry collec-

tions *Underwater Lengths in a Single Breath* (2007) and *Sweet Core Orchard* (2009), winner of a 2010 Lambda Literary Award. *Sweet Core Orchard* was named after an orchard that he managed in Ohio, and rural living often informs his work. His book *My Husband Would* won the 2021 Connecticut Book Award. Grossberg taught for many years at Antioch College, and is now director of creative writing at the University of Hartford.

**Margaux Guiheneuc** is a French tour guide living in Oaxaca, Mexico. She specializes in giving tours of Oaxaca art, handicrafts, hiking, and bird watching, and also works weekly with inmates on art projects through Grafica Siqueiros at CERESO Villa de Ella and Cereso Femenil Tanivet in Oaxaca. You can contact her through [vamosoque.com/vamosoquetours@gmail.com](http://vamosoque.com/vamosoquetours@gmail.com) if you want.

**Meredith Davies Hadaway** is the author of four poetry collections, most recently *Small Craft Warning*, a collaborative volume with artist Marcy Dunn Ramsey. Her previous collection, *At the Narrows*, was winner of the Delmarva Book Prize. She is currently the Sophie Kerr Poet-in-Residence at Washington College in Chestertown, Maryland.

**Frances Hatfield's** first book, *Rudiments of Flight* (Wings Press 2013), won the Gradiva poetry award from the National Association for the Advancement of Psychoanalysis, and was a finalist for the Texas Institute of Letters Poetry Prize. She is a Jungian analyst in private practice in Santa Fe, New Mexico, and a senior training analyst for the C G Jung Institutes of Santa Fe and San Francisco, and the Inter Regional Society of Jungian Analysts. Her work appears most recently in the *New Mexico Poetry Anthology 2023*.

**Fernando Lopez Hernandez** is an incarcerated artist currently living in Oaxaca, Mexico.

**Mr. James Humdy** was born in Lynwood, CA, and raised in Watts, Imperial Courts Projects. He says that *Hard Way*, the book he completed in 2020, published by Right to Write Press, was a step towards a change and helped him to say what he really felt without being judged.

**Sam Kauffman** has spent over twenty years writing in various literary genres along with teaching junior high, leading workshops all over the US, presenting for the Literary Stage, CWC and the San Mateo Library. She has been an Artist in Residence at a school in New Mexico. She is an award winning lyricist and poet.

**Stephen Kessler's** most recent book of poems is *Last Call* (Black Widow Press). His op-ed column appears every Saturday in the *Santa Cruz Sentinel*.

**Stephen Kuusisto** holds a University Professorship at Syracuse University and is the author of the memoirs *Have Dog, Will Travel: A Poet's Journey*; *Planet of the Blind* (a New York Times "Notable Book of the Year") and *Eavesdropping: A Memoir of Blindness and Listening* and of the poetry collections *Only Bread, Only Light*; *Letters to Borges*; and *Old Horse, What is to Be Done?* His newest poetry collection, *Close Escapes*, will appear in the near future from Copper Canyon. He is also completing work on a creative non-fiction book-length manuscript, *My Caruso*.

**Aaron Laracilla** is an incarcerated artist currently living in Oaxaca, Mexico.

An internationally exhibiting sculptor, painter, printmaker and college art instructor, **Kristin Lindseth** lives and works in the South Bay Area, and her work has been represented in over 200 exhibitions regionally, nationally and internationally. Her sculptures and intaglio printmaking are found in private collections in the United States, Sweden, Germany, Spain, France, England, Greece and the United Arab Emirates, and in four museum collections in California. Lindseth is known for her intensely felt paintings and sculptures of the human experience. In her art Lindseth expresses the experience of men and women of diverse cultures through figurative and symbolic sculptures and paintings. She has sculpted in clay and made cast sculptures in bronze for 25 years, and she also works in wood multimedia sculpture. Solo museum exhibitions of Lindseth's work have been held at the Euphrat Museum of Art, 2023; the San Luis Obispo Museum of Art, 2021; the Siskiyou Arts Museum, 2020; New Museums of Los Gatos (NUMU) 2020; the Peninsula Museum of Art, 2016; the Morris Graves Museum of Art, 2013; and the Los Gatos Museum of Art, 2011. Lindseth's work has also been exhibited in numerous other museums and galleries. She has taught drawing, sculpture, and digital art since 2005.

**George Lober** is the author of two books of poetry, *Shift of Light* and *A Bridge to There*. His poems have appeared in numerous journals and e-zines, including the *Monterey Poetry Review*, *Homestead Review*, *Eclectic Literary Forum* (ELF), *Quarry West*, *The Sandhill Review*, *Porter Gulch Review*, *The Anthology of Monterey Bay Poetry*, and *The Listening Eye*. He is a former winner of the Ruth Cable Memorial Prize for Poetry, an Emeritus Senior Lecturer at the Naval Postgraduate School and currently lives in Monterey, California.

Born and bred in northern California, **Moira Magneson** has worked as a truck driver, television writer, river guide, editor, and community college instructor. She is the author of the poetry chapbook *He Drank Because* published by Rattlesnake Press. Her first full-length collection of poems *In the Eye of the Elephant* will be published by Sixteen Rivers Press in 2025. Moira is also the author of the novel *A River Called Home* which will be available in 2024. A long-time student of Buddhism, she lives in a small town in the Sierra foothills with her husband Eric Magneson.

**Odilon Chavez Martinez** is an incarcerated artist currently living in Oaxaca, Mexico.

**Ángel Erick Medina Mateos** is an incarcerated artist currently living in Oaxaca, Mexico.

**Amy Miller's** *Astronauts* won the Chad Walsh Chapbook Prize from *Beloit Poetry Journal* and was a finalist for the Oregon Book Award, and her full-length poetry collection *The Trouble with New England Girls* won the Louis Award from Concrete Wolf Press. Her poems have appeared in *Barrow Street*, *Copper Nickel*, *Narrative*, *Red Wheelbarrow*, *ZYZZY-VA*, and numerous anthologies. She lives in Ashland, Oregon.

**Oscar Vasquez Montealegre** is an incarcerated artist currently living in Oaxaca, Mexico.

**Adela Najarro**, whose extended family emigrated from Nicaragua, is the author of four poetry collections: *Split Geography*, *Twice Told Over*, *My Childrens*, and *Volcanic Interruptions*, a chapbook that includes Janet Trenchard's artwork. *Letras Latinas* has selected *Variations in Blue* for publication in 2025 through Red Hen Press. In 2023, the California



Arts Council recognized her as an established artist for the Central California Region and appointed her as an Individual Artist Fellow. More information about Adela can be found at her website: [www.adelanajarro.com](http://www.adelanajarro.com).

**Richard Jeffrey Newman** has published three books of poetry, *T'shuvah* (Fernwood Press 2023), *Words for What Those Men Have Done* (Guernica Editions 2017) and *The Silence of Men* (CavanKerry Press 2006), as well as a chapbook, *For My Son, A Kind of Prayer* (Ghostbird Press 2016). In addition, he has co-translated three books of classical Persian poetry, most recently *The Teller of Tales: Stories from Ferdowsi's Shahnameh* (Junction Press 2011). Newman is on the executive board of Newtown Literary, a Queens-based literary non-profit, and he curates the First Tuesdays reading series in Jackson Heights, NY. He is Professor of English at Nassau Community College. His website is [www.richardjnewman.com](http://www.richardjnewman.com).

**Carolyn Oliver** is the author of *The Alcestis Machine* (Acre Books, forthcoming 2024), *Inside the Storm I Want to Touch the Tremble* (University of Utah Press, 2022; selected for the Agha Shahid Ali Prize), and three chapbooks. Her poems appear in *Copper Nickel*, *Poetry Daily*, *Shenandoah*, *Beloit Poetry Journal*, *Southern Indiana Review*, *At Length*, *Consequence*, and elsewhere. She lives in Massachusetts, where she is a 2023-2024 Artist in Residence at Mount Auburn Cemetery. ([carolynoliver.net](http://carolynoliver.net))

**Dayna Patterson** is a photographer, textile artist, and irreverent bardophile. She's the author of *O Lady, Speak Again* (Signature Books, 2023) and *If Mother Braids a Waterfall* (Signature Books, 2020). Honors include the Association for Mormon Letters Poetry Award and the 2019 #DignityNotDetention Poetry Prize judged by Ilya Kaminsky. Her creative work has appeared in *EcoTheo*, *Kenyon Review*, and *Poetry*. She's the founding editor (now emerita) of *Psaltery & Lyre* and a co-editor of *Dove Song: Heavenly Mother in Mormon Poetry*. She lives with her husband and two kids in a little patch of forest in the Pacific Northwest.

**Robert S. Pesich's** work has appeared in *MiGoZine*, *7x7*, *The Bitter Oleander*, *SandHill Review*, *Santa Clara Review*, *Content Magazine* and other journals. Work also appears in the anthologies *Wondering the Alphabet* (Bitter Oleander Press, 2017) and *And We the Creatures* edited by C.J. Sage (Dream Horse Press, 2003). He is the author of *Model Organism* (Five Oaks Press, 2017) and *Burned Kilim* (Dragonfly Press, 2001). He has received support from SVCcreates, Silicon Valley Community Foundation, and was thrice a Djerassi Resident Artist Fellow. He currently works as president of Poetry Center San José, at Swan Scythe Press and as a research associate at Palo Alto Veterans Institute for Research and Stanford University.

**Sarah Rabkin** is the author and illustrator of *What I Learned at Bug Camp: Essays on Finding a Home in the World* (Juniper Lake Press, 2011). After teaching writing and environmental studies at UC Santa Cruz for more than 30 years, she now works as a freelance editor and workshop leader. Sarah is seeking a publisher for *The Quiet Activist: Healing the World by Doing What You Love*. She lives in Santa Cruz County with her husband, poet Charles Atkinson.

**Mr. Koray Ricé** was born and raised in Compton, CA. He is a talented writer of poetry, rap, R & B, & urban fiction. Koray Ricé's pen name is KR, which stands for Keep Reading. He has one daughter, 24 years old.

**Becky Roberts** teaches creative writing, American literature and composition at De Anza College. A lover of both words and music, Roberts earned BAs in both music and English/creative writing at UC San Diego, and later a PhD in Literature from UC Santa Cruz. A full time teacher, Roberts still finds time to garden, cook, sing, play guitar with her jam group, sing in an opera chorus, write poems and stories, and quite recently, a novel. Her poetry and fiction have appeared in *Red Wheelbarrow* and *Porter Gulch Review*, and she has performed her work at San Jose's Flash Fiction Forum.

**Doren Robbins'** work has appeared in many publications, including *The American Poetry Review*, *Another Chicago Magazine*, *The Iowa Review*, *Lana Turner*, *Salt*, and *Sulfur*. In 2020, Spuyten Duyvil Press published *Sympathetic Manifesto, Selected Poems 1975-2015*. He spent the first half of his work life as a broiler man and continental line cook, then a carpenter, and finally taught writing at several colleges, including literature and creative writing at Foothill College 2001-2022 (Emeritus 2017-2022).

**Claudia Meléndez Salinas** is an Indigenous Mexican Chicana living in Salinas, California. Her writing has been published in *La Jornada*, *Latina Magazine*, and other publications in the United States and Mexico. She is a co-founder of *Voices of Monterey Bay*, a bilingual online news magazine. Her poems have been published in *Journal X*, *LatinoLiteratures*, *La Raíz Magazine*, and her poem "Transitioning" was the recipient of the 2022 *Red Wheelbarrow* Poetry Award.

**Javier Lopez Sanchez** is an incarcerated artist currently living in Oaxaca, Mexico.

**Ralph James Savarese** is the author of two books of prose and three books of poetry. He's also the author of a chapbook of ekphrastic poems, in response to the paintings of Tilly Woodward, called *Did We Make It?* He lives in Iowa.

**Jamie L. Smith** is the author of the chapbook *Mythology Lessons*, winner of Tusculum Review's 2020 Nonfiction Prize, selected by judge David Lazar. Her work appears in publications including *Southern Humanities Review*, *Ruminant*, *Bellevue Literary Review*, *Pigeon Pages*, *San Antonio Review*, *Not-Very-Quiet*, *Red Noise Collective*, and recent anthologies by Indie Blu(e) and Allegory Ridge. She was listed as a Best American Essays Notable in 2021. She is a PhD candidate in English literature & creative writing at University of Utah.

Santa Cruz poet laureate **David Allen Sullivan's** books include: *Strong-Armed Angels, Every Seed of the Pomegranate*, a book of co-translation with Abbas Kadhim from the Arabic of Iraqi Adnan Al-Sayegh, *Bombs Have Not Breakfasted Yet*, and *Black Ice*. Most recently, he won the Mary Ballard Chapbook poetry prize for *Take Wing*, and published *Black Butterflies Over Baghdad* with Word Works Books. He teaches at Cabrillo College where he edits the *Porter Gulch Review* with his students, and lives in Santa Cruz with his family. <https://dasulliv1.wixsite.com/website-1>.

**Amber Coverdale Sumrall** has lived in Santa Cruz County since 1972. She is the author of *Litany of Wings*, and *Refuge*, collections of poem, and has edited or co-edited thirteen anthologies including, *Storming Heaven's Gate: Spiritual Writings by Women*, and *Women of the 14th Moon: Writings on Menopause*. Her poems have been featured on The Writer's Almanac. For twenty-eight years she co-produced the annual In Celebration of the Muse readings. She leads writing retreats in Big Sur, and travels often to Ireland, her home away from home. Her third collection of poems will be published in 2024.

**Ubaldo Teque, Jr.** is a Guatemalan poet, essayist and memoirist from Southern California. His poetry and prose have appeared in *Red Wheelbarrow*, *Pilgrimage*, and other publications, and his work has been featured on the Central Coast Poetry Show on Community Television.

**Mr. G. Anthony Topete** was born in East Los Angeles. He served 9 years in the U.S. Army Infantry, and three years as a Red Cross Director of Disaster Services. He is proud to have commanded the finest chapter of Brown Berets in the Country. He writes: "as Chicanos, Xicanos, we are trilingual: English, Spanish, and Nahua, with our own linguistic community, a very different culture. In Nahuatl, the term 'heaven' as it commonly appears in doctrinal Nahuatl texts, is ILHUICAC, a relational word meaning 'in the sky'—a semantic calque from Spanish cielo." Mr. Topete has two sons and two daughters.

**Chris Tuite** is a freelance photojournalist based in the San Francisco Bay Area. He has always been fascinated with how a moment can be frozen in time with the click of a shutter. He found early inspiration in photos of the 1960's, through timeless classic rock photographs and iconic imagery from the Civil Rights Era and the Vietnam War. For rates and availability, please reach out via email at christuite16@hotmail.com.

**Patricia Aya Williams** grew up in San Jose, CA and now lives in San Diego with her husband Chris and their dog Binxy. Her work has earned a *Red Wheelbarrow* Poetry Prize and Steve Kowitz Poetry Prize Honorable Mention and has appeared in *Dunes Review*, *Santa Clara Review*, *The Good Life Review*, *San Diego Poetry Annual*, *Writers Resist*, and *Origami Poems Project*.

**Gary Young** is the author of several collections of poetry. His most recent books are *That's What I Thought*, winner of the Lexi Rudnitsky Editor's Choice Award from Persea Books, *Precious Mirror*, translations from the Japanese, and *Taken to Heart: 70 Poems from the Chinese*. His books include *Even So: New and Selected Poems; Pleasure; No Other Life*, winner of the William Carlos Williams Award; *Braver Deeds*, winner of the Peregrine Smith Poetry Prize; *The Dream of a Moral Life* which won the James D. Phelan Award; and *Hands*. A new book, *American Analects*, is forthcoming. He has received a Pushcart Prize, and grants from the National Endowment for the Humanities, National Endowment for the Arts, the California Arts Council, and the Vogelstein Foundation among others. In 2009 he received the Shelley Memorial Award from the Poetry Society of America. He teaches creative writing and directs the Cowell Press at UC Santa Cruz.

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