

Version (9) Magazine
ISSN 2818-4874

Edition 1
Volume 7
© Copyright Autumn 2024

Copyright Statement Official

All selections are copyrighted by their respective authors.

All rights revert back to authors upon publication.

Any reproduction of these poems without the express written permission of the authors is prohibited.

Authors are responsible for their included selections.

The views and opinions expressed in the included poems are those of the individual authors and not of *Version (9) Magazine* nor this said magazine's individual editors.

***Version(9)Magazine* encourages for the promotion of poetry the sharing, dissemination and printing of this PDF E-book in its integrity unaltered.**

“Citation exquisite for your determining.”

Struck upon tympanum of the mind, implosion of sound, effect of poetry we interpret it. Where we lie between, options to become us, the poem as movement of sound or, more, inarticulate invention, determines who we are and what become as poet. Such determining unintentional but natural, all same. We find who we are in how we perform, and how we perform found in what is said, and this not simply content, but also connections, of sound, of images, those graphemes on paper. All these what a poem could be, involve as must involve, and then how we might go about it.

What the poem makes in us is shape we give it. Uttered out, its sound forms wavelengths to our inner voices, and cut down on paper those arrangements of symbols, their layout of import to meaning if later interpretation. All our editing, as such, to involve frustrations over sound, feel, appearance on paper. Organs become implicate the overall process of creation, and with it all stemming from what ears note and eyes judge with that look on paper while the meticulous ordering of letter, phrase, metered count, imposes.

The science of one's own poetics here notwithstanding, however respected, it is the relation of sound and sight that make for the sense and effect of poetry. This art, like any, presuming, for its best success all absence of any handicap, ocular / oracular, the eyes and ears of both poet and reader, for this art form, deeply matter, to both creation and experience. It is to ears and eyes the forms of this art form extend and stem out from in the moment of both creation and curatorship. There is a bearing that occurs of one manner or another, as there is a visioning that necessitates out of it. In the grapheme put down to arrange, order, and have take shape, (shape itself begging a question of vision) this act comes out of effect of sound and that desire to create the best effect of one.

That spectacle of poetry, and it is indeed considered just as such when considering any instance of the experience and performance of it, necessitates the question be posed of how text and sound, involuntarily, can be experienced simultaneously. Layouts denoting an editorial process, it is just such that hold for as much a sight of a poem—its look, its appearance, its proper ordering to align with best overall effect, best intended representation—for all graphemic orderings are just such, representations of something other, even if not at all real and then what. They are of what stands as both sound and sight in the poet's mind pouring out over into their creative intention. The page becomes locus of both poetic endeavor and therefrom experience, allowing ever, to certain extent, its intending repetition. This so same for pages either electronic or papered. In any case, and both, the poet's craft is a laying out of sounds and sequences that both lay claim for their equal importance though we know that unto each what value is given it is a matter of interpretation.

It all pushes to fore, then, the question of audience, noun itself, and including sense of the audio, and for this consideration we include at once their role as participators and interpreters. In the end, be it contrary or not, the poem is written for another to hear, read and/or engage with in the manner of being heard through the event of performance (which necessitates the fact of interpretation of text yet again, and this for the purpose of relaying and giving out to an audience orally what lies inscribed as text; proof, of course, of poetry's profoundly relational nature).

It is because of the play of text and sound, and the involvement of audience given the role of reader, that poetry's relational nature keeps poetry bound, for many poets, to a responsibility for formal, communal engagement; the sense of justice a history of poetry will show, fuels the poetics of many a craftsman. Poetry, in this light, is only impossibly a selfish act.

As this magazine engages the publication of varied poets, consideration is made to consider if not the performance of poetry, then certainly its provision. This current issue gratefully holds interview with a poet who, understanding the relational nature of poetry and the importance of communal impact, brings to light for us that ensuing aspect, the *performance* of poetry. Current thoughts of poetics do well to consider the question of the performance, and this latter in all its myriad forms, of poetry. Well-versed in the implications of linguistics and the weight of the theoretical on the poet's craft, it is poet Penn Kemp who shares of her experience and insights into the role and nature of performance in the consideration of the poetic craft. We are grateful of her sharing as we celebrate gladly again all the senses of the poetic she and all poets engage and give life to, as per form.

Contributors

Alison Hicks

Sharon Kennedy-Knolle

Sean G. Meggeson

Lynn Hoggard

Jayanta Bhaumik

Mark Belair

Mark Goodwin

Michael Lee Rattigan

Robert Guard

Tom Stuckey

Penn Kemp

C.W. Bryan

Benjamin Harnett

J.D Goodman

Robert Rothman

Joshua Martin

Jerome Berglund

Nathan Anderson

Mark Young

Ivan de Monbrison

Michael Templeton

Joseph D. Reich

Allison Hicks

Postseason sonnet

Most games my father attended on his own.
He'd stop in at UMass practices,
lone man in the bleachers. Coaches would look for him and wave.
He'd make the drive with his friend Fred on old Route 2,
along the string of gloomy mill towns,
the bleached-out sign, *Leominster: The Pioneer Plastic City*
They'd celebrate or commiserate with ouzo at a Kenmore taverna.
No city is harder on its fans than Boston, my father used to say
in those days before the curse was lifted.
I agreed on principle with my college roommate and the sophomore next door,
the Yankees were a no-class team.
It was my son who drafted me: I signed with another city.
I never liked the Red Sox and the Patriots once they started winning.
After interring my father's ashes, we made the pilgrimage to Fenway. The Yankees won.

Evergreen

Late Sunday afternoons we used to make love,
from our bed look out the side
window to tops of pines above the roof
of the house across the intersection.
Mentally erase power lines, all we had to do,
to find ourselves on a back country lake.
A friend who became a professor of philosophy
told me years ago that any statement made
about metaphysics is nonsensical.
I wrote a one-pager on What is an individual?
without understanding the question.
Metaphysics and Epistemology,
what is there to know and how we know it.
I don't remember what I said.
From time to time I think about how I might answer now.

*He held radical light, Ammons writes,
as music in his skull:*

Biologically, experientially, philosophically, nonsensically.

. . . when the light churned and changed

*his head to music, nothing could keep him
off the mountains*

What do we do but by saying things
call up what cannot be said.
If nonsense, we flirt with it, take it to bed,
show it tops of mountains and evergreens.

The tree and the dog

There must be things I'd want
if I could stop thinking of what I don't.
Anything I'd wish would change reality—
no wishing that away.

In January they'll cut the copper beech.
Has any tree been the object of so much moaning?
Enough, it's coming down. Nothing
I can do. The oak will have to spread
its shade brush the west side of the house.

The dog, the dog, lumpy bowl of oatmeal,
baseball rising to the left of his tail,
just yesterday took two forty-minute walks
in one day, a feat that used to be routine,
he hasn't pulled off in the past two years.

What I already have, days transparent.
When Japanese maples drop orange and crimson,
an old dog, a walk, however long he'll make it.

Whale heart

The largest hearts on this blue planet
belong to blue whales, who dive
to a thousand feet, beyond sun's reach,
where krill they feed on live.

The heart that powers the body that writes this
is not so big.

Its species hunted whales
from boats with spears, plunged steel into flesh,
rendering their bodies for food, oil for our machines.

Once we all lived in an ocean we shared.

Some curious came up onto land,
gave up breathing water for air. Blue whale's
hooved ancestors too, who returned to sea.

Legs that could no longer support bodies
tucked up into skeletons.

Phalanges grew long.
They streamlined. Ear bones strengthened
to hear great distances under water.

My species stranded between sea and sky,
looking up, looking down,
wanting to be anywhere but where you are,
rising and falling on a land-locked sea.

Nightingale with arpeggio

The composer interviewed on the radio
said he was trying to do something different
from scales and arpeggios. Sometimes you want
to depart from what's been done,
writing to a nightingale or marking crane's progress
in brush and ink, invoking blithe spirit
or palace of skulls.

Chord unhinged, tide coming in and drawing out,
breath hanging, unsounded breaks,
body released, flying up.

Coda to a poem unwritten

What more to say?

Do not defend against the wave bursting
into our cup of rock. Hold fast
in the rush, strain microorganisms and salts
carried on the current without knowing or consent,
dissolved in language bathing us.
Let not the day's warming dry our ocean,
the machine that breaks upon us
bringing sustenance.

Sharon Kennedy-Knolle

Our summers in the Hamptons

were spent in a rented barn, temporary depot
where my father set up summer shop
managing deliveries—bar towels, napkins, tablecloths—
to his fine-dining clients, restaurants like Spring Cloves,
where we'd stop and drop off extras,
forbidden linens for a free Coke.

The barn, warm old soul, loomed on the edge
of Bridgehampton's browning potato fields,
where migrants worked dry rows in the distance.

Dragged along, I stood around, wondering
about its weathered planks, high rafters, owl long gone,
listening for ghost stories it held
in its slatted light air, a warped cathedral prayer
while I played at whirling dervishes,
dreaming about the Shinnecocks, first settlers,
who now sold roadside mini-moccasins and bright-beaded hatchet earrings,
or the Bridgehampton Candy Kitchen, where the fried chicken was always good...
Mostly we'd eat at home, making the three-hour drive, bucking traffic.

Short-sticking customers, that drive, the hours, the chronic help turnover—
my father hated all of it, me too.

Nonsense! Mother always said, but I just knew.

So at 9, I'd already started eyeing the handsome young driver
who'd drop off his empty laundry truck,
wink at me and roar away like Bronson on his motorcycle,
leaving me spinning
dirty in a drought cloud.

Earth backwards

Sometime later I learned how hard
Violetta (fellow morning group member)

slammed her hand against the wall,
screaming delight at the victory kill,

a little of the lounge blotched with bee smush,
fuzz stuck to her waving palm.

Not wanting to interrupt,
“Pt politely walked out
from group, saying nothing”

(your usual answer to DBT, the new talking cure).

Yet another migratory wrong in Bumbledom,
misguided from the milkweed to the ward

and somebody else got her a tissue.

Always such a good boy, the facilitator added, “Pt bothered by his peer’s behavior...was excused;
otherwise Pt maintains perfect attendance.”

Questioned later, you emphasized the high respect
you held for wildlife
(withholding that the rest of us, including yourself, could go to hell).

That was pure family pride; we’d have all done the Buddhist same.

But the smocked ones scribbled,

“Pt has profound disgust with people...seeks affinity for animals, large and small...must process
event with facilitator... Components of antisocial and narcissism,”

as I found through FOIA, months later,

buried in your thick, thick file, “Progress Reports”

small, torn page of stinger humanity

against all the diagnoses, pill refills,

and weekly reality testing:

“Can Pt spell ‘earth’ backwards? Easily.” Checked “Sane.”

In the schult hitch

You were still submerged
in me, without first breath,
and yet you must have been gasping,
having shuddered the thud,
floor-faced, fisted blows, echolalic yells,
as I fought off your father from strangling me
and you, trapped in that '50s trailer (\$150/month,
dirt cheap for a first-year grad student)
parked in an otherwise Iowan evergreen world,
tree farm, where, winter soon,
all day, every day chainsaws.

Just yesterday after lunch your father said, "Gee, that was thirty years ago,"
with a wonder as if it's all almost dream, nearly lie,
pine needles swept under the rug
(along with the mug shots, the neck impressed with bruises
and even the call that came in the deadly quiet
after they hauled him off,
his mother, ever kindly, ever sweetly
asking for the money to post his bail,
so hard to believe).

I knew back then he'd have a hand
in killing one of us—you or me—
and sure enough, he did.

Sean G. Meggeson

My heart fell to my ass

My heart fell to my ass and I can't walk.
Can't spell or scan at the moment, ether.
Didn't bite dust, but munched a lotta dirt.
I stored my tears in a nice cardboard box.

Shipped it to big Boulder, Colorado.
Dry and crust of rainwater there. A flag
pole there from which to hang my pants. Let me
never forget how those pants once held my ass

like birthday month and the flappy yelping
for presents and party night surprises.
Like the market's promise of big chedda.
Like the first three months of lovey-dovey.

But, a little rain feels good, just falling
wherever, nothing kept out by cardboard.

Rhythm and romance

my body goes one way
my mind the other

my weak knees
my 13 year old fists

I have no rhythm
I knock down kids

in the parking lot
after school

everyone cheers me on
I felt guilty but moon-walk

as mine enemy's on all fours
and I knee them in the side

until they smooch the slush
and I red in the face

grade 8, the beginning of
my high life in dance

John Cale
Denver, 1995

we hope
he'll play that cover

the one
makes you feel

you know
poetry & prayer

beyond
the brutality

god brags
to beauty

he doesn't say
a word

instead
gives an encore

doesn't play
that song

burning
with darkness

you want to storm
backstage

force John Cale
to his piano

your will
is wild

half blade
half prayer

my will
is too

ten years pass
I see him

in Toronto
bored and pissed

he snarls
don't live in the past

somewhere in Borges

the
idea
God
left us
a
divine
signal

something
like:

if one believes in numbers
believes numbers infinite
has never experienced infinity—

god
where's
the beauty
tigers
panthers
pumas
wet
hot
tongues
eyes
on
you

Luna
is
still
Sombra
eats
first always

Lynn Hoggard

Motor scooting

“Got a new white paint that lasts longer,”
he says, smiling broadly, wearing cast-off clothes,
standing beside his secondhand motor scooter.

“Your house number will stay on your curb
for several more years now. Thirty dollars total.”

Straddling the curb, he starts painting.

“Chris my name.

Live in a one-room trailer
with a bunch of feral cats.

All I need.”

Happy in the fringes,
so brief the human contact,
this feral man
thriving—
his habitat.

Night

Stillness
and silence.
Emptiness a concept,
not a presence.
The world, regardless,
goes on worlding.
I can stand aside
or engage.
Which shall I do?

Engage.
Here.

No fly buzzed

Watching the room darken,
I could feel my breath
slowing, more shallow
each time.

No bird sang.
My heart, bags packed,
shuffled and waited,
shuffled and waited,
and shuddered...

Jayanta Bhaumik

Filling the boats of favours

An eye is happy holding her branches,
breeding her seeds. Here and there,
everywhere. Only eyes know their fruits
scattered like pupils.

Day and night, eyes birth
unending leaves, found in every poem.
Lonely whims, wander now everywhere,
searching for plants.
Every poem light and steady.
Every poem, an unstoppable wading poem,
waddling through its own words.

A listener hisses and the ants march.
A direction becomes a storm,
eventually smacking smaller globes,
splashing upon faces looking like you have
all the reasons forgone just an hour ago, – then
again all the mores waiting at the knap.
The idyllic river flowing cool and you feel like
being its boat full of peoples, favours,
thoughts.

All boats you never know drowning
in your eyes, a secret known to
the next ferryman on the row.
But you carry, those eye-making boats.
Those eventual boats.
That ant race and river.
Nonstop, and here and there.

Face value

Face is never barren or a blot. A knowledge of cumulus seems like heaven. A clearing, created all by itself, suddenly takes over a charge of morning, and you ask, is it now that the new date of paradise begins from? Exactly when an overcast sky bursts out, and it takes only six minutes to be all over. And then a feel of ebbing shhh-silence. Airs now more transparent than glasses. Now's the time, catch its hands and possible spinnerets. How can you so differently define a fie ... only some amorphous jigs ready to bring wonderments for your love.

Say a hi to her.

Sometimes, there is no reason why we write such lines in our diary. There is a secret curl in the design of every fruit.

Knowledge, the invisible dynamo, buzzing in the hollow. You say, time, time, time, so repeatedly, as if to sense a hidden face changing in an unknown labyrinth. Sometimes, something when happens, and happens nothing under your talus, you can see what is named as old.

Everything then is so desperately clear, for they live the success of finally being lost.

First time

First time I see them – ghosts,
they seem busy tearing their grey off.
Tough, like old appurtenances, just too much.

We carry those lifelong pandoras,
until we clearly can see we are just
crowns and cutouts from a droplet.
We love this, love, milieus, fazed-out.
Meanwhile, moonlights first time all frozen,
a sky first time a bigtime blackhole,
suddenly a denouement at this night,
a courtship, a carriage.

Ghosts our age are all
vapid bored mothers.
With their mouths made up of glass.
Teeth of glasses, and glass tongue too.
When we hear their words,
we think we live their segues, our generations
reflecting cool smiles.

Mark Belair

Midsummer market

The cool smell of misted
fruit saturates
the sunny sidewalk outside
a busy market—its awning shade
inviting, its cashiers clattering
deep in its darkness, its burly staff
stocking from bulging, waxed boxes, some
shoppers, strolling out, already munching,
seeds and stems and cores and peelings
flipped into corner trash cans
by the freshly chilled patrons
as if the hot day's
fruitless aggravations.

Their silence

The calm silence of my close friends, the trees, kept me
company as I explored for what boys explored for back then:

a squiggly worm, a darting squirrel, a chipmunk chase,
a swooping owl, a flock of geese, floating ducks.

And when the setting sun woke me
to the fact that I was lost, I looked for

help from my friends who, without moving, seemed to
turn their tall, barked backs on me, their silence growing

starker as dusk fell to dark, and no appeal to my acquaintances—
the wildflowers, the wind, the ponds—even, finally, the moon—

worked, all of nature made one
by an indifference to my plight.

And though, eventually, with luck,
I found my way home, I remained—

if safe in bed—
lost.

Disaster responses

In a newspaper photograph, a young Indonesian fisherman,
cloth cap worn low, rows his narrow boat away from shore.

In another, a young woman in Cambodia peers leftward
toward the swollen Mekong River.

Hands working a single oar, the Indonesian skirts
burning trees that rise from shallows dark with smoke.

At the Mekong River's edge floats a fishing boat
the Cambodian's husband and children work to repair.

The fire cost Indonesia miles of the woodlands that line its shores.
The Cambodian flood killed dozens, and rice crops were destroyed.

Fire and flood have again struck, yet the Indonesian, his boat
piercing the smoke, seems possessed of a calm so complete

that his passage into the sea's clarity and abundance—
into his livelihood, his open future—appears assured.

While the hard set of the Cambodian woman's face tells us
ferocity, after this close call, will guide her way; tells us

she means to keep, at any cost, the life she has built, one
embodied by the prize that pierces her left ear, a treasure,

her defiant look says, never to be sacrificed and sold:
a ring of gold.

The raincoat

His raincoat
is what home he
has, this otherwise
homeless man, a long, light
tan raincoat
soiling down
the front and sides, his history
seemingly written there, a history
of nothing rejected, everything
retained, the history
of a hoarder
of indelible stains
now blended into
one darkness, one
that in the rigor of his refusal
to discriminate—
he walks with the calm of a saint—
renders him radiant.

Old school

The first woman he kept watch over, as a boy,
was his fragile, widowed mother.

Next was an aunt who appeared at their apartment,
eye blackened by his drunken uncle.

He biked over and gave his uncle a scolding
only a tearful, wounded boy could get away with.

Later, in high school, he met a girl who thrived on
his attentions, so he spent his life in care of her and

their aunts and great-aunts and his mother-in-law—
and, of course, his cherished daughter.

My father never followed sports, owned guns, got drunk,
craved fast cars or ran with a pack of male buddies.

With family violence the hidden, widespread, ruinous
mill-town norm he witnessed, safeguarding women

was the old-school way this fatherless boy
became his own, fierce man.

Mark Goodwin

i would like to be able to say i/t

(a cycle of five poems)

PERSON – place
from where and in
to which places flow

POEM – bone
papery white and part
of our skeletons' alphabets

.

The person end of the poem's beginning

Descartes was poorly. He haunted Him
self as a ghost in a bowl – a

'cogito' cut

-off from his own body and the place
-world healthy bodies entwine

with. Descartes con
torted his person

hood into a spook carried

in a skull by a
vehicle of fall

acious flesh. He believed

his abstracted holy soul to
be his corpse's driver.

But body is all, just as life
-world is all. World & body are
equiprimordial. Body is part of
world, made of the same act

ual flesh as

world ... and world

is only felt and moved
through by animated/ani

not happen *at*
the same time, they

the same time. A body is a place
of sorts, and is (through

of this nexus of life can be called
'mind'. Mind is the place place & body

all a body's actions are as
thought, because thought is

as the flesh of world/body's
movements. And place is what

emotion. Place is all around and all
through, and is that which

Phenomenon-focused poets put
feeling selves in actively

poems. 'Stanza' means room and is a part
icular kind of spatialness, or roominess. In

a moved-through house each room
may embrace a person's

body and each

room can be held
in a person's memories. It is through

mating body. They do

happen *as*

movement) crossed over and
through with world's places – as
'chiasm'. The experience

play... out/in ... so

we move through/with ... with/through

places *us*.

imagined virtual places ... places *felt* as

the places that stanzas are that we
can *re member* (our)selves

It & an I
a rite self trait

it remembers through
the sharp

criss-cross of a hedge

that *it* does
not remember and that i don't

remember with a bright
sound like a stone thrown

into a pool

that stone *it* has always
felt wobbling the water just

beyond the edge of some
thing or some

where i dreamt for

i have never picked
up the last

bone of an animal with

no name that crawled a
long my forearm but

that *that* is why

i have been to the top
of a tree carrying a

memory of a creature that clings
to the one last leaf

that i have never been to
that leaf shining at the very

tip of existence

that i have seen some
how gleaming so

far up in (my) mind

and yet now i have to admit
that i have never seen

where that leaf connected to its twig
the twig that
snapped with

what
what

what i always used to say
when i felt

snow between my toes
and when the pain was crystal

they always said
to me you are

our son yet the frost
of forgetting has wrapped

your steps and now

i know that the melting
of solid words is what

builds the river of *what*

what i don't
know how

to say and
yet gets

said

i do not want to flow away in saying's wet speed for i have always wanted to make a leaf
of speech a gleaming

shape just at
a tongue's t

ip
and i was always the kid who brought into school the hollow sound of daydream to wear
when i was afraid and i was never

the kid who stole footsteps from the untrod air and oh

i hate how air
can be taken

into lungs and not
felt and yet

oh

i love how
air can be

taken in
to lungs and

not felt

for my favourite smell is the burning of air in lungs until *it* is
a softest soot of words and so *its its its*

its favourite feeling is
the silk of

such soot pushed

from *its* hope my

worst feeling is the virus that dissolves the
soul connections of flesh the

virtual snot of *it* not be
longing to felt

world

and i
think i

will
feel

better if i
just move my

jaw not
as if eat

ing but si
lently as

if speaking i try
not to leave foot

prints too deep for

the one truth i learned in school was only the invisible & silent are
solid & noisy enough to feel the full

ness of world and the one

truth i try to forget (but fail to) is how the solidity of
world fractures through our being

being examined my *it* re
members to for

get this dis
ruption you

see

it's my favourite thing
to do in the world ask only

questions that cannot be an
swered and if
i could avoid any fate it would be
not to not

speak with the wealth of

silence

and if i could do
anything in

the world it
would

be be in

the world and at
the end

of *its* life i

would like to be able
to say

i/t

remember(s) through
the sharp cross

-criss

of a hed
ge

Mirror myth

Mirrors are the instruments of a universal magic that converts things into spectacle, spectacle into things, myself into another and another into myself. – Maurice Merleau-Ponty

a one unseen in
a glinting woods is

fragments of twigs'
shadows

dancing out

out out in
a dim else

of where

and a woods'
glinting is

stars
jostled & fractured by
trees

an un
one in
an old

oldest dark is

now on
the move

slowly sliding along a
dew-bed

azzled hedgerow her {or his or else's}

un
glimpsed abyss-hiss
presence just

shaking a world's wet jewels re

lent
less

a one
on their

way

to a lit

interior of walls-&-doors-&-corners to a

house holding your

body

she'll or he'll {or even it'll} arrive just
at the

mom

ent you dis

like on your
like on your

like a velvet

waiting

surface that is
cover the smooth cool

i

would un
fold

a page
before

it was
paper

i

would do
no ink's

unseen
gestures

would be
empty

of words
them

selves

Notes & Acknowledgments

The Person End of the Poem's Beginning is much informed by Maurice Merleau-Ponty's concepts of *chiasm* & *flesh*. It is also informed by the following phenomenologists, place-philosophers, & embodied-mind philosophers: Gaston Bachelard, Edward S. Casey, Martin Heidegger, Mark Johnson, Geoff Malpas, David Morris, David Seamon, & Dylan Trigg.

I am grateful to Daniel Clark & Elinor Clark – the editors of Briefly Think – for their prompt which inspired the prose-version of *The Person End of the Poem's Beginning* (first published by Briefly Think here <https://brieflywrite.com/2023/05/10/mark-goodwin-the-person-end-of-the-poems-beginning/>). I am also grateful for their further questioning which inspired *PERSON – place POEM – bone*, which begins this cycle.

The lantern-like question *Where does the person end and the poem begin?* opened a door for me ... allowing me to condense – through poetic compression – some of my reading-journeys across phenomenologies of embodied-mind & place.

The poem *It & An I* becomes thanks to poet Miggy Angel ... and a set of questions he delivered to me.

The poem *i* becomes thanks to Leia Butler (editor at Full House) asking what *I* might do instead of making poetry.

Michael Lee Rattigan

City sketches

1

A leaf thrown aside by the rain

her face through a handful of unsold papers,
lips worn as any stump, eyes the pauses
between a city's December winds

words, like clouds, uselessly imploring.

2

How easily the unhinged
adopt a characterful stance, redolent
of self, of slightly dapper tatty unconcern:
like this fellow, with his stuttered formal trousers,
spilling hoisted steel-blue shirt, and long dress coat
almost Latin Quarter in its dishabille.

One arm rests on a hip,
while the other crosses his chest in a loop
of smoke. Only a hand's tremor
gives him away.

3

London leans about you,
lit hive off speckled track,
doubled reflection
 in the window's eye

across night's broken dark.

Transformed

Enduring judgement from within
the jolt of each dimension rising
through anchor-less tears.

As if a leaf chose to fall further
as it falls bodiless, mindless, organless
breathless, transparent – larger than definition
closer to God.

Snap. Then silence.
Pain loath to leave the body.
A blind request for help from another part
of the ward. Someone else's alibi.

A void. The pressure of what cannot
be touched wringing out each breath like a rag
until one sees, finally, a body (one's own) in a reflection
that does not give way to will, or fist.

A stick-man stares into the abyss.
A girl's dress spins in the sun.
A hair's breath on the spine
that overwhelms.

Lines in search of...

foreign welcome a switch on language never learned
prayer for those who sleep in strips of cloth a sought-for question
a tear-polished image a picture scribbled on a fridge-door to heaven.

Quickening

in the ear
a syllable of witness,
suffering joy's perfect work
to destroy the wall between.

*

piercing every point

carving signs on the bark
of electro-cerebral silence

birthing the in-between.

*

an upward fall,
deep-known question's triple gallop
in loving key

sea of glass, arm-reviving
root's possibility of blessing
unbearably brighter than self.

Tuberous

stone-exhausted rites of infinite fear
bladed by no separate light
seemingly clutch hands
with imperative love

dimensions added to eyes
through green unfiltered emotion
chime's almost hypnotic background whirl
feet-first at measureless speed

by known separation's immeasurable degree
throughout cross-sign continents
angular facets painfully flower
split cord of double breath

words added toward forever
our emotional inveterate
besides fragile illness's
nevering despair

two-sided garment's opaque clarity
primed by simple thought
knowledge of each whole part
forgets no rose we were

through varied tone-to-be-lost memory
cell's perpendicular growth over death
arm's delay toward wing
given heart's single solidarity

saliva-wounded fruit to come
reverse effects ripple forward
ascend with every
downward look

unmemorised song instantly known
by glimpses of organic swell
half-open-doored commitment
of spirit's metacarpal grace

joy so unfortunate to last
beyond mouth's serrated gesture
deadly collision with death renounced
past strength of letting go

Robert Guard

For the woman who recently buried her husband

You've been a giver;
now it is time
for you to take
something for yourself,
for you alone,
time to let the wind
comb only your hair,
the water wash over
only your skin,
the sun reveal
only your shadow.
You are the gift
that keeps on giving;
time to receive
what you did not ask for.

Rain in Miami

It rains at exactly five-fifteen,
like the woman in the flower print
decides it's time to show a bit more leg.
We steam like crabs;
some open umbrellas,
while others walk in the light
downpour.
The clothes change,
but every day is the same;
everyone in Miami knows this.
It's what you do with it:
Do you bow at a quarter after?
Do you give thanks,
not knowing to what?
Lift your brow, feel
the little moments of now
tapping your eyelids;
wherever you are,
consider it a privilege
to walk in the rain.

Breathing water

Move toward water,
cast your breath to the current,
feel it pull you like a fish
downstream to a fork;
one side leads to eternity,
the other to an eternity of yearning.

“Is there a difference?” you ask;
what is that aching, that life
stretching its fingers and toes?
Is that you meeting your obligations,
the future pressing against you like cotton:
your breath, the undertow.

Deciduous

Trees are the world's greatest healers;
they're also the best storytellers.
I will tell you one as if I am an oak
reddening in the late October sun,
about the old men standing in a circle,
masters of time and space,
last in line the locust,
technically not a tree but a weed.

You stand under the willow
wearing your pain like new grown bark.
If I had known how terrified you were,
I would never have invited you
this far into the story.
Trust your uncle in wooden shoes,
the elm offering her shoulder,
the willow begging to be of use;
take root here, with me.

Tom Stuckey

Dog chop-suey

in the end it's too fierce
and big
the
teeth
too little
the chance
and
boy turns
tears
into lost islands
that has
cannibals for cooks
and undertakers for mothers

get a stomach
strong
and early
for
- life's
thin
veil
smart enough to call it
when they call you over
to be friends with you
knowing you
made love
with
the cannibal's
reality

Two headed Serpent

two heads are good for the long grass

a moustache from age 11 kids made fun

learnt to strike true to eat to live

dug underground love not home

scales green blue shiny red

underground wars planned

hawk takes the four eyes,

into the sky

all hope light will find

A walk around the ship

the diesel exhaust pumped away
and followed the broken sea as we turned
now the smell chips and old school dinners out of the fans up top, mixing with
the sea air.
old style music playing out of the little speakers throughout, where ever i
stepped;
behind the life boat, up the stairs; deck to deck
down deep below, with the dirt and lack of colour
where the oily men work and
even further down, behind locked steel doors.
swaying on the stairs on the way back up, leg burn, soul burn,
and out into the giant's mouth,
thick black behind, and thin slit land ahead.
his name was nigel, he talked
and said, "that's the eddison, and when she flashes,
it lights up my bedroom, on a clear night, 14 miles away; we still have an hour."
He talked about being an islander at heart, and sewage in the sea, and
the government getting it wrong when VETs were on the street and foreigners
were given houses.
that it was actually, the weather that foiled the spanish armada,
and they got washed up in Ireland, where they are still buried today.
about how he was a VET but never talked on what happened in all those WARS,
how one night a ship got wrecked upon the eddison, and the life boat crew at
the time
had to row out in to a storm.
but the ship had already broken up further away so
the lifeboat itself
could not get back in, lost to the storm.
how he wanted his fisherman friends to
drop him off at the eddy so he could kayak back when the conditions were right.
and how the far right
was rising up.
how gas companies were clever
and that if they had an office somewhere all their
windows would be smashed.
I thought about all that Nigel had said and
looked out at the eddison slipping into the dark,
the sun that lit up the sea and face of the cliffs of the island
and especially about the person who had lived,
in the eddison.

How salt is made

when you're driving fast for too long
the world starts to go in to reverse
and finally arrives
at nostalgia

and at the end of the road
are fields with
water channelled
and dammed
into pools
lots of pools
like a chess board

where they work
with long rakes
in the sun
day after day
for years

until the wounds on their
hands no longer
feel
the sting

Weather forecast

the truth is
it's usually found by 5.30 p.m.
by this time all
the hate,
love,
and colours,
have been washed up
into view.
by this time i have read
the news of
bitterness,
to the sound of
a symphony.
heard the dog bark,
too much,
at nothing.
tried too hard
at everything.
seen the look
on others faces,
squeezing to
much juice
out of it too.
by this time
there is something
about the empty buildings
out there
in the rain,
and
the wind.
abandoned,
and
failing
perfectly,
that just makes
sense.

It came to me in peace time

every time she puts her fingers into my muscles
and smooths out the knots
for days
i think of meat
and fucking

but at home where all the fantasy
and value packed meals
sit in
the mind
and the microwave
timer goes off
like an old bomb

the men remain outside
they are fixing
the mothers by
saying 'please love me'
and the mothers are saying
'please leave me'
to the endless fire in the blue blood sky

Penn Kemp

With open heart

My solicitous hospital attendant escorts me to the theatre
offering the usual blue hospital gown open at the back
It won't do for my upcoming heart operation unless
the front is lifted to my chin She hands me a fancier
gown a frilly light blue with a slit open at the chest
one of the nicer ones kept in store Now I'm prepped
she leads me to the operating room There the surgeon
stands gloved and ready by the table She's introduced
as Ellen/Emma or Emily the name I don't quite catch—
a small solid woman with chocolatey eyes maybe from Bulgaria She greets me
with smile and scalpel

*

Hopping on her table I feel I'm in firm hands But
afterwards I'm surprised to find I am alone on the table
chest open my heart and red ribs exposed to the air
Who will sew me back up? Bloody flaps of skin want tying
to cover that which was never meant to be revealed
I don't mind waiting for the needle to thread since soon
I'll surely be active again once recovered But now
my surgeon has gone home to her family it seems
unorthodox
to leave this wound wide open and my heart pulsating
on the off beat as I watch my heart throb
I always did take metaphors literally but this is beyond
the pale Courage mon coeur mon semble ma soeur
Keep it together

Heraclitus, ongoing

Books I read are in the process of shaping, shifting
each time I open them. Not just pages but the content
won't let me step into the same novel twice. Characters
talk back and letters dance jigs that won't stand still.
Nor do I step into the same house twice. When I come
home, the front hall shifts to accommodate the change
I bring in my wake from outside realms. And the place
itself has contentedly settled within my absence.
I don't step into the same dream twice. Oh, I try to return
to change the story to divert the flow from disaster. But
the dream flips a new twist into its narrative leaving me
to contend with eddies and currents I never suspected.
I don't step into the same grief twice. Each has its own
taste, bitter, sweet or bittersweet, its intense specificity.
marked distinct and marking me. Every sorrow forms
a trail you know me by, sure signature of some loss.
I don't step into the same life twice. Whether I step
into the same death is anyone's guess. So many small ones
you'd think would prepare me but who knows what
awaits us over on the other side, *en la otra orilla*.
I don't leave my shoes on the bank and wade in.
I don't recover what is swept away in the current.
Every poem hovers on the bridge over metaphor.
I don't step into the river at all.

Invocation beyond building digital bridges

Invoking “The Decade of Healthy Aging”, we applaud elders who have so much to teach and more to learn as we enter the digital forum for ways to connect with our beloveds across space and time. We can do this, because we so want to be with them by hook or by zoom, Skype and Facetime. That yearning pulls us to learn what we need to explore this new realm of digital reach. How? We watch our grandkids approach new modes, prompted by curiosity, unafraid to fail and fail again until gleefully they triumph. We too try and have fun trying, unabashed, if we adopt that attitude of play, and adapt to new ways of reaching out. Minds stretched and limber, we go beyond building digital bridges to engage with the other side of the screen, unknown and tantalizing with possibility. We bridge the gap, we continue to grow, and so by definition young in flexibility, on novel ground, our neighbourhood wider and us wiser. Resources abound, as we expand into creativity, that dance between self and others, beyond age and aging. The necessary tension of creativity is excitement—the pull between solitude and the community, between what we’ve learnt over decades and what we continue to absorb.

Leviathan meets Behemoth

As I meditate my way into sleep, images surface.
A whale eyes an elephant across a great divide.
Their mammoth presence is equally balanced
in each hemisphere across the corpus collosum.
This thin bridge separates the two spheres as if
they were different dimensions now in contact.
Whale swims her blue ocean in the left hemisphere.
Elephant strides out from jungle fronds into sunny
desert of tawny brown. Huge eyes interlock intensely,
sending signals I don't understand, communicating
with one another by sonar vibrations. The sound is
too low for me to interpret though my chest resonates.
As if I'm anxiously eavesdropping at my parents' door
in the uneasy certainty they're discussing my mishaps.
As if leviathan and behemoth are the adults in the room,
comparing notes on young humanity's last misadventure
and its consequences for the future of the planet that such
magnificent, concerned creatures share between them, for now.

The circumstances of poetics—an interview with Penn Kemp

- 1. If we set limits to the task of poetry we become as if bound by problems that circumspect questions as to nature and purpose. Knowing these may and do facilitate an understanding (the French *entendement* weighs on here) would illuminate reasons why poetry remains under attack and, in popular marketing senses and nuance, victim to neglect. All same, we would be wrong to neglect any argument that sound is first foremost facet of the poetic task—the working with, in and for, .. sound. In a sense, sound, and here is one definition of this phenomenological element not fully clarified, is the very meaning of poetry, as it would be of language inevitably. The buccal and pneumatic combining, physically, give to poetry its purpose and appeal and that aspect some might call beauty. We, let it note, are holding back on the schizophonic question of the sound heard in head alone when engaging text. But let us to begin here—what relates for you in your task as poet between the poem as sound and sense, as pertaining to and conveying and engendering sound but as well with this and by nature within it, sense and meaning and these for your reader, capable of the auditory or not?**

Which comes first, print or sound in a poem's creation? I hear a line, then struggle to lay it on the page. Play is the conjoining thing, and wonder : the Magician in the Tarot juggling possibilities through as yet unmarked dimensions. A poem first announces itself through sound rather than meaning for me. That is because sound is so literally embodied. Sound conveys a depth of feeling that words alone cannot express. The body is a sounding board, without sounding bored. Sound is primary: through the permeable membrane of our mother's womb, we assimilate the muffled sounds of our mother tongue, its rhythms and cadence. Our first response. (Still relevant: McLuhan posited that the Catholic church lost much of its felt weight when microphones were introduced. The cathedral as living body no longer resonated.)

- 2. There can become of any poetic endeavour, be that of recorded and relayed sound poetry or not, sharp delimiting between what can be seen as the poetic text voiced (by poet, performer, reader and all these, perhaps, as same, at some times) and this same imprinted. The text, and its meaning, and its consequent effect as voiced and as put into print and this onto media of paper or screen, is, for some, wholly distinct and, for equally some, contraindicative the one to the other. In your own reduction of poetic text, what lines of consideration is it for you must be followed—the text as imprinted and how it shall manifest and be experienced visibly by readers, or how that text shall sound, have effect on ears their tympanums or formative of sounds inside of heads? What imports most for you in consideration of and solicitude for poetic effect in the creation of verse?**

Upending Points of View

Since the discovery of perspective, the visual has been privileged. Our eyes have been taught to read critically, to judge and appraise.

While sight is foregrounded in our culture, sound surrounds, sneaks under and enters the body unawares—ears hidden behind our eyes.

While the eye drains energy, sound steals our attention. Sound feels below the censor into sensory awareness. Sound sets its own tone.

Trackless, sound cannot be traced the linear way that eye perceives. Vowels sounded without meaning don't elicit interpretation by mind

as much as perception through other senses: synaesthetic medleys resounding wave upon wave, colour, vibration, resonance embodied.

The human voice can then portray both environment and inner space. We listen more like children, ears alert to touch and to be touched.

3. It may prove best to hold here onto the performative in our questions surrounding your work and the meaning of poetry. It stands that authorial intent, and we hope this not near conjecture, seems paramount in the poetic endeavour of creating text. All the same, the question of breath, of spiration, at once drawn-out and to-without from inspiration, is fuel to the fire that sparks creation. To the extent that we consider the body of a poet's work there needs be, and our instinct is perhaps to forget this common consideration of the body and how it manifests, engenders even, the work from within it, consideration of that physicality that informs and performs, and perhaps in some instances these two simultaneously, the essence of text. The experience of poetry, under such guise, would be intensely haptic, and for reason of this fact we are so often 'touched' by a poet's poetry. Given this, what pneumatic element, turned phonic, or not, forms and informs your poetic creation? How does your body, its working and machinations, and these we know vary and alter through the expanse of careers, influence the body of your work and that intent of reaching, of touching, audibly, psychically, spiritually, your reader? To what extent is the body of your text, given to voicings thrown-to, over-out and over-to others who experience what we can legitimately call an ethical breath of contacting?

Whose perception is this, anyway?

For me, a poem is haptic, emerging from the bellows of lung, the solar plexus, the pelvic floor. In sounding, the poem is the translation of air in exhalation, the necessary exaltation of communication in columns of air, a direct transferring into the ears of the audience. The poem lifts off the page to the aural stage, conveyed by body, by physical presence. Take for example, my latest collection, *Incrementally*, a text of 88 pages and album as [free ebook](#) and [audio recordings](#). In his recent review on <https://prismmagazine.ca/>, Richard-Yves Sitoski writes: both text and album “should be experienced simultaneously. Not simply because they inform each other, but because they combine in creating a multi-modal whole. The haptic qualities of a book address our senses of touch and sight, while the recordings move us aurally through time and linguistic flux. This is sound poetry that uses a score. The written text is not so much a book to read as one to watch, in the way that looking at a sculpture from all angles is a form of watching the play of light and shadow and how form changes with perspective. The poem on the page is

an entirely different medium, in which the laws of proportion apply: the visual sense of how the words are placed on the page, and where. The page is canvas to the poem through the medium of ink or type: a kenning.”

A kenning, a keening. And a kerning to show how type looks, as an art form of its own. The poem on the page is a kind of notation, indicating pause and emphasis, for sounding the piece.

4. The notion of poetry as ethical act hereby fascinates us. It should be considered, as such, how it might best be understood by considering chiefly that other and their ear, physical or not, that experiences your verse. In hearing your verse, there must come to the fore, again, the question of speech and its experience. In the hearing of your verse, it is, in a sense, that ear of an other, ready fan to be sure, that appreciates your work and grows it out of the performative, this within their person. If your work conveys speech through utterance of sounds to be appreciated and, thereby, inevitably appropriated by readers, where does that leave you as poet, as generous conveyor and performer? Is it possible, and this may be bleak but only initially so, that all poetic endeavour, like a mothering, inevitably prevails only in that nature of loss, of taking, of sad if not even maybe painful and painstaking release unto the world? How much of poetry therefore is about breathing goodbyes?

I don't hold on to my own interpretation of a poem as a given, as correct. Schooled by Derrida when he gave a summer class at U. of Toronto, I understand that the poem in the reader's hands is then in part his or her creation. Once a poem has embarked upon the world, who can tell its ethical manifestations and ramifications on those who read it? A sharing open to reception: the poem is an offering, a gift. How it is received is not really my concern, however curious I might be as to its effect.

But poetry has affected my own ethics in its straight-backed demand for utter truth, for uttering truth, the truth of the moment as beheld by the poem. I am changed. As poet, I am required to live up to the poem's unstinting requirement for honesty, for articulating the many shades of perception. I cannot hide. No wriggle room for deceit or pretence. Though there is always endless expanse for the play of language.

In the recent disclosures around Alice (and Jim) Munro's betrayal of her daughter, we learn once again to discern between the character of the author and their writing. Knowing more of this writer's biography, we can read her work with different insight. Writers' like Rilke, for example, wrote glorious poetry but in giving his all to his work, he did not take time to attend his own daughter's wedding. And though we can't excuse Pound's antisemitic rants, we can still read his *Cantos* with pleasure.

My sense of the ethical has shifted over time, given the different stages of a life as poet, mother, wife, and activist. How much do we give to our art? Jung suggested we need to choose life or art as our priority; we cannot do both. As a single mother raising two children with limited support, I tried to find an ethical balance, getting up at 5 a.m. to write until they woke up and required total attention. Another ploy was a bridge the gap by including their in collections like my *Some Talk Magic* (Ergo Productions). It's an impossible balance. Over my lifetime, the pendulum has swayed widely. Because I put poetry as priority, I did not consider myself selfish; I was in

service. Every artist, I believe, has to be narcissistic to some extent, in the service of that art. Now, at eighty, my time is my own at last.

Poetry for me goes deeper than ethical concerns, deeper than morality. It reverberates from source, surfacing at a level before words, before thought, before philosophical principles. Before human concerns, even. Poetry is not beyond good and evil, but it arises before any such differentiation, just as the natural world is amoral, without any kind of judgment. Poetry is uttered from heart, by heart, not from the head. We still might read Wordsworth's *Prelude* for its incantatory beauty, while skipping over his later philosophizing.

As an activist, I learned that poetry can move people to change, one heart at a time. My little "Poem for Peace in Many Voices" was performed by 3,000 people on World Heritage Day. It has been translated into 136 languages and produced as a 2 part CD and two volumes (Pendas Productions). For many years, I was part of a movement, *100,000 Poets for Change*.

How do we activists act for the environment? Through our talents. Hence my love of collaboration: what a delight to perceive words in another medium, interpreted through light or sound or movement. And yes, the touchstone to the poetic is touch, touching.

What do I owe to my community? For decades, I felt a moral responsibility to teach what I had learned as a poet, to pass on that kind of legacy after sixty years of writing and publishing. I taught from my book on creativity, *What Springs to Mind* (Pendas Productions). What would inspire? Articulating my writing practice, grounded in spirit. Methods to cultivate writing habits; modes to inspire; reflections on editing, performing and publishing. Stories from the community of poets I knew. I no longer feel that obligation, though I still give workshops and readings from time to time.

My tendency now is to retreat into my garden, partly to conserve energy. More so to contemplate the last stage of life, the welcoming of a wider space beyond ego, beyond the demands of social commitments. The sense of presence I feel is more of a gift. The formative nature of the poem and its cursus are still imperatives, but with less pressure to share, to be heard. Ding an sich: the creation of a poem in itself is satisfaction enough. If there were no journals, or readings, or awards, or residencies or schools, or even books, I'd still be making poems.

5. We lead to a key point inadvertent that poetry implicates passage. As poems convey sound as much as meaning, there is an aspect of journeying and with this, passage, that holds. Loss and grieving involve of passage, but these same are followed by relieving and reliving in those endless readers, our destinations as writers, who, in a sense, hear those sounds once dear to us in our creation of them, remade live in their likewise simultaneous creation of them, being culminant at end-point of passage. What then is proper to your texts as you create them and sound them if not those waves that carry them, those ears that hear and relay them and, in end, inculcate of them in terminus to rite of passage? If poetry is indeed a sounding, and we gather from much of your recent work this remains how it is to you, how is it poets should accept that communal task of making what is sounded an impression, however violent such may be, allowing for some other, and hopefully many

more of these, readers, to not only re-appropriate, soundly, but, also, carry on then, and this so in all perhaps their soundings and with these their re-creations?

This question strikes a personal chord, though you could not have realized why. My latest manuscript, *ACROSS*, is a threnody, dedicated to my late husband, Gavin Stairs, who died in September 2021. Three years and a breath ago. So yes to loss. You also touch on labour, releasing the newborn poem into the world, however vulnerable. But though it's sweet when a pup of poem finds its forever home, that's not my business primarily. The labour is in the writing, shall I say the manufacture of the poem by its *makar*, its progenitor. The release is sheer joy, is relief in completion. Regret creeps in when one suddenly realizes a necessary change of word or line break, a correction that would seem no longer possible once the poem is published. But wait, there is always an anthology, a new collection into which the revised piece can fit... Paper is retrievable, not irreparable like paint. I remember my artist father ruining a lovely painting with one brushstroke too many. The poet can always turn to a fresh page, that white expanse...

Writing is a lonely task but performing is communal. I often invite the audience to join in a participatory performance to raise the roof and reverberate through realms of mutual creativity in sounding. Many of my sound poems are that invitation to join in. Knowing their rhythms, I become the conductor, dividing the attendees into several parts and then drawing the different sections forth in waves of sound. And so, even when the poems are translated, I can still conduct a performance because the rhythms remain paramount. When I was performing at various universities and colleges in India, the translated poem would be in the hands of the participants. I could then lead the class in sounding together, without knowing the language.

My next performances are in Toronto. On Thursday, October 10, 2024. 3:30-4:30, I'll be sounding as part of "New Sonic Poetries" at OCADU Waterfront Campus, 130 Queen's Quay E, Level 4R. Then on Sunday Oct 20, 3-5pm. "Art of Improv", with Bill Gilliam and Eugene Martynec (electroacoustics) at The Kensington Sound Studio in Kensington Market, 170 Baldwin St, Toronto, ON M5T 1L8. Afternoons of poetry/ voice and improv, right up my alley! Details are up on www.pennkemp.weebly.com.

6. It remains to ask of the performative, to enquire as to how this relates to you as creative artist and that what it is you do as same. We would do well to consider the term itself, perform, in addressing this question to you—perform as per its connotations, notably that it is *by something*, *per* some avenue or method, that effect is achieved, affecting those others we address to. Poetics, as per this definition, becomes the only means not then and in itself, of giving performant *lieu* to something and we are wont therefore to ask what this is to you, what precisely it is that is given *place* and how it might affect you in determining of your performance?

The working (playing) title of my collection of sound poetry in process is: *Performancy*, divination through form. Now in its formative, performative stage, the piece is cocooning: a persona, an imago of shapes and sounds yet to be revealed. It will be released by the beloved Hem Press as text and audio next year. Details will be up on <https://www.hempressbooks.com/authors/penn-kemp>.

« Every poem is, somewhere, both a form and an act of love. » —Carl Phillips

And form itself ?

from Middle English forme

(“shape, figure, manner, bench, frame,
seat, condition, agreement”), from Old French
forme, from Latin fōrma (“form; figure, shape”),
perhaps from Etruscan *morma, from Ancient Greek
μορφή (morphḗ, “shape, form”), possibly of Pre-Greek origin.

So, Performance.

To do something deliberately, flamboyantly and
melodramatically in a social setting, solely
for the attention you believe it will garner for you.

I am pro forma performanj working in an effective way.

Purr form

7. In all these, we have done here to be ethical and consider of the other, and there arises from this tendency the notion of the formative nature of the poem and its cursus. You have held a fantastic career in poetry marked by a givenness to others—how has poetry, and a career in it, been manifested as ethically forming of the person who makes it, yourself in this instance, and of the person who engages it?

Coaxing a Poem

We poets who want affirmation ape
our better angels in a hall of mirrors

endlessly reflecting
without reflection

till we learn that to be open
to the oracular is lots more

fun than expressing
self. So let the words through and be
astonished.

Let the words speak themselves. Let them
tell their own tale, no chaser. Listen

and let them utter the utterly prophetic
whether

it be enigmatic, ambiguous or
arcanelly augural.

Let the Sibyl speak. Obscurity
may be her middle name but

interpretation is a game best
played for joy

in puzzle, joy in
abstruse prospect.

Scenarios then play out unthought of
options, unheard of possibilities—

Consider, to be with the stars and
currently flowing under their influence.

Mouth,
allow yourself amazement in being
transfixed, transfigured, thought

out loud. Speak, memory. Louder.
Lighter. Longer. Consider it said.

C.W. Bryan

Chicken Salad

Sometimes I'll roast pecans
with cayenne & brown sugar
—even on summer mornings.

It will smell like you
& I will fold the pecans into
chicken salad. You will not eat it
Not because it isn't good, but rather
because you are allegedly in love

with someone else.
He is allergic to nuts.
& you love him anyway.
I will make a sandwich
with the chicken salad I made for you.
& I know before I even taste it

the bread will be so dry I choke.

For Isabella

Pull every lock on Butcher's Bridge
to test the fortitude of love, to learn
that love is largely gold and red,
with a few silver scratched symbols
time-worn & worried in the yellow streetlight.

The opera house is shuddered up. Its
crinkled eaves exhale the knots
from sullen shoulders.
The quiet footsteps quieter now by the
impossible size of midnight.

Like a murmuration we move seamlessly
by rote mechanics, feeding into
the veins of the Triple Bridge.
It moves as we move, past the emptied public offices,
restaurants, deserted bars or barges.

With the moon so shied away,
the dragon wing unfurls black
despite the blue-gray persistence
of its cold and clammy flesh.

Together, in Florence

Silhouetted on the backdrop
of a gamboge-to-burnt-orange
canvas, she tucks a stray
wisp of hair behind her small ear.

Four fingers pressed to the anvil,
Four fingers in the stirrup;
the horse is imperceptible
except for its long, thin shadow.

It gallops silently, weaving in and out
of a walk and a dead sprint—dependent
on the venue. Slowly past the church,
black as a bullet train past the rehab facility.

There is no time to live again.
Her bare feet are bloody and open
as a palm. A dead stop in front of
the fortune teller. But she is out for lunch.

Four fingers to push one strand of hair,
a smile so delicate that it steals the air
from every single love song on the radio.
I could tell her fortune right now.

But that's bad for business, so we wait
for the slow future to return to us.

October

It is just me today.
The ants have frozen in place.
October arrived in the night
like a huge, white wall.

There is not enough warmth
in their bodies to lend an ounce.
I exhale. The sun arrives,
owl-winged and too late.

Landscape painting

A slight tilt to the left—
The new houseplant, green and brown
in the basin of polished white
ceramic. There is a worm in the soil.

His pink body adjusts, of course,
to the tilt. The same brown soil
envelopes him. Outside, the
black wall is riddled with holes

from the dozens of times a painting
was hung and quickly replaced by another.

Benjamin Harnett

The artist

Certainly, here's a poem on the subject of generative AI one might accurately entitle "The Artist" for you:

That Plato's Academy, where he tutored the young rich of Athens in philosophy, did not give its name to the place, but rather the place gave its name to the thing strikes me as significant to this problem in an inexplicable way.

Etymology reasonably might describe "academia" as "the way into the city," which it was. I once censured Plato for exiling the artist from his perfect polity, but now I am not so sure.

Artist, or to use the more current term, "maker," which fits better to the Greek "poet" anyway, a demiurge, a creator, content, a simulacrum-ator, image of in place of the thing itself, so they had a word, for example, for clouds that portend wind, but no rain.

Who is the artist but an imitator, making nothing new but copies, fantasias of likelihood and similarity? I imagine the artist, or do not have to, since I am this same: creating nothing *ex nihilo*, hating everything that I fashion to make. So Plato talked the talk, but taught with poems crafted in imitation of intellect, riddled with mistake.

How's that for a take?

The fly

We look down at the fly, even as
it looks down upon us.
Not “he” or “she” but “it”—
a distinction we doggedly maintain.
How critical this must be:
Far easier, then, to laugh
at this lower being’s misadventures.
Look, here’s a video, the fly
twists of its own head. God—
what a cock-up! What a self-
own . . . if it had had a self.

What a ridiculous mistake
we could never betake ourselves to:
a little overzealous in its self-
cleaning, that robotic, relentless tic
(yes the fly is clean), and, whoops!—
the world spins, no longer
any connection twixt head
and thorax. Well, now, like St. Denis,
the fly lives for some time
like that. Holding its own caput,
stunned but determined through its end.

What a laugh: We all are
flies,
this very one, twitching
our forelimbs in anxious
time-serving,
until a
certain resection.

Game days

Mark me down as a vessel
buoyed by civic pride.
I'm happy for the local girls,
whose basketball team
is on a wild, winning ride.
Underdogs, small-town kids,
totemic spirits
for troubled times.
On game days, I have come
to understand, the bus route
out of the village is plastered
with red, white, and blue signs,
signifiers pointing
to the community's hive mind:
go get 'em, nothing but net,
crush the outsider,
do them despise.
Tear out their eyes.

On game days, I have come
to understand, something
simmers in the earth:
dragon's teeth
the demigod hero sowed,
and watered
with blood, and waiting
to rise.

Furniture doctor

Please, my bureau, she's very sick.

Sometimes the entirety of a poem
can go by very quick.
What I am trying to say,
well just read the words:

Furniture doctor,

how does that make you feel?

I think of gorgeous antiques
with failing hearts,
I think of a beaten-up old chest
that once sailed the seas
for larks. I think of rattan-seated
chairs whose bindings have
broken, gone slack.

I think of myself
aging, needing a refresh,
needing just
that right kind of polish,
distilled with a thousand years
of practice, of prior art,
from the poison-red berries
of the lacquer tree.

You will agree,
call the furniture doctor,
for me.

J.D Goodman

The Benjamin Cross-Point

I'm going the street upon presumption
of innocence, or
presumption of rain;
eyeless skull of our metal
snake downtown bus reflects a
steel boot in aimless drift and loss;
bad luck streak in the pornographer's
basement.

Romance lives in styrofoam boxes and
stapled gloss paper.
Five blocks to the graveyard—radiating
fish-smell—
it pours.

Deny corner hanger-ons a nickel to eat
The richest among us get bob evans
Then sleep in hours.
I owe you that email, I owe you that time
I owe you earlier presumptions.

I owe you childlike living
in time, access at all time, at hand
now—conquered, finally, in a flash bulb.
All distance gone.
You are here
as I am here.
My feet are still wet;
I still read the paper.
Life creeps up
like a ghost behind your arm.

Birdspeech

Father you resent
draws a logical equation on your tongue;
this is no dream. It is not fallacy,
but he will not read his own writing.

You shut up your jaw and sigh.

Rush hour in Oakland

Boysenberry smell; the McKee Place blues
A weird ripple in the traffic.

It's always an event,
Christmas lights or bikers.

See a friend of mine; coat against the cold
buckled tight. And cigarette,
corner of his mouth and Atwood.

Wind in his hair, through the rearview
watch him step into the street.

Bound east; podcast in his ear.
Supper's on the stove—
I'm gathering dust.

Tithonus

Awake through the end of a short night, a
dawn chorus, a tridentine mass of carapiced
lovers here, to greet her;
summer is creeping through the clouds and
the high strain of spring
is passing on.

Some boreal, sensing the smooth turn
of the atmosphere departs to catch
her, carry her round body high; and
though we laid together, once
she is so far up, up
and I am an insect, down
in the blaze of the sun.

Hotel morning no. 3

Midnight's agents return, in
a haze of middle age and joint pain
once-blunderbusses, now targets,
homes for nesting crows.

“Has there ever been a day so clear?”
he asks. He's made a jawrest from his fist.
The sky has jagged edges
which his offspring do not see.

Distant boats on far shoals
wear fog like jerseys. Somehow,
he knows this. Somehow, he knows
lots of things.

Somehow, he can taste a mountain flower.

The sky has jagged edges
his house on shifting soil, he can do
so little to chase the children down
their fairy paths.

But he can taste a mountain flower
bite down hard to offset the ache, and
he will sleep a long time tonight.

Robert Rothman

March 14th

I baked a pie this morning
to celebrate the great day.
I am pi mad--marveling at

the unfathomable spill of ratio

that has been calculated
to thirty trillion digits,
and never repeats a pattern
or has end. This is mathematics

that gives goose bumps and makes

me celebrate and shout. This is
number-numbing shivering
wonder, as when love surrounds
you in a circle of paradise
and lances heart with a shaft

of heat across your circumferenced form.
This is the good news that should
be printed daily. Straight line,
congruent triangles, algebraic
equations, you are boredom
and humdrum before the cosmic
grandeur of pi. The rational
beats its head against the not-
to-be-contained, never

to be captured, transcendental
visitor from a higher realm,

which bestows its magical offerings
in tree trunks, puddles, acorn cups,
hazlenuts, and moon. This 3.14

the sun is out, round and
golden as my Dutch apple pie,
radiant in its fullness, filling out

the circumference of the silver
tin. A cut, a slice of pie,

can't lessen pi, and even
when this pie is done, pi
like the sun, absent from our sky,
is always there. And, lo and
behold, even when the sun
will cease, pi will never die.

What were you thinking?

What were you thinking Anaximenes, Leucippus, Democritus? Did you never consider scaling a peak with sharp view? To use those philosopher legs to clamber up Mt. Olympus, Mt. Ida, or Mt. Smolikas, and see the great circle surrounding? Did you not ever sit at sunsets before the Aegean, Mediterranean and Ionian as the sky curved the horizon? Or lift eyes from papyrus scribble and see the blue hanging like a canopy over you?

Your thinking, ancient ones, was, to be honest, as flat as a balloon pricked and gone empty. Still, to be fair, you had flair, panache, and wild imagination. The stories of travelers reaching the end of earth and coming to heaven's gate or a great cliff where they would fall into a void, excite. I wish you could see it, actual photographs from space, showing the earth as it is: a great sphere with magical blue expanse between green land. How you would marvel. and shout to the skies: *flat thinking be damned!*

Joshua Martin

[tip], > education itch jacuzzi

> just [IN/DEX] whisp = = =
fully OBSOLETE screen dOOr
> [bLOB oF silken ashes,,
] shaving // / weep As
G-R-A-V-E-S [,]

| restoration mIx a
freshly painted section
> > > > generational
pull UP [bar/DoMe],,
\$\$\$\$\$ /,\ = = = ((
millions ERUPT))),
, out-of-contenxt rAnGe,
| = = = =

take YOUR seat [admire]
fluff / whiff / drift / scorn /
<<< [surely syrup ANTI
>>> sticky buffet OrB

= wIID scar TISSUE
t-o-r-t-u-r-e tOnE
; ; = tUnE = ; ; TeaMs
////////////////////
sheer CHEER report
////////////////////
N - o - N - E b/u/t
lonesome freakshows

, | dominated hippo
, lasso education globe
scourge OF higher ALPS
= elevation dunno = |

% % = % , [lair] % // ;
'whisper bucket listless
accessible bLiMp nay=
sayer=s // (bUsTeD) //
analogous heart transplant
] programmatic larynx [,
waiting r-o-o-m LINE
.....

ponder deli MuCk #
(OR chagrin) / activity
, sinkhole rapidly un=
tenable IOOp dUPe @
@ @ = = = / / / / / heave
/ / / / / HO! = = = = =

NoIse < gesture < , /
gRiP Start-Up grouch (
munch) crunchy
privation handkerchief
) ‘the daily curricular
machinery ladder!!
!!!’ = [camera] crew
MaNsIoN dimple hoop=
barely approximations, / =
, =
/

| alleyway RaGe [crEEp]
dirt [the devilmaycare]
diamond farting restore
| = rightful tongue bleach
(call-UP) / surrendering
fan opposition lAb

at minimum, a grammar like an abacus

 jammed
, in sUcH a scenario:

 un=
 hinged an 'error' &
left
hand
calls >>> MiNgLe tHuMb - - -

 circulatory pun
 arguing [attention!],
ear-cleaner, ,
 metaphorical
 clothing :
 BooK oF
 archaic WiNtEr ; /
alliterative
 captivity, , non-specific
 Oracle - - -

 sounds funny
 between illusions
 jump
 barstool
 contracts
, distant
 wayfaring hIp, ,
NOUN sags >>>
 traveling
 scholarly brewing
 cathedral
 PuNs
 <<<, , , :
 instant
 contrived
 shelter
, was toxic
 [inhaling], ,
FrEqueNt skin
 ulcers
 D-a-n-c-i-n-g

Raw clarity of a deer hoof

POW! :

glide discursive windows
smelling of formaldehyde
quavering in doppelganger
bookbinding mental drift /

whimpering, all in a randomized vision
covered in tiny merry-go-round leeches
stumbling vertigo callused dissonances
waving at blank-faced hipster hippos //

. Looped, keenly, a shoving vortex quandary
facsimile with little purposeful napping ids
collided, jotting down, rendering quicksilver
as monopolistic chiming torture paradoxes . . .
allowable
shiver . . .

/ mouthfuls of skipping
genealogy errands : Next Room
/ Next Day //
a villager conjures extracurricular
orgies - - -

disguised as PAINTED onion FLESH,
empires boiling under the glare of turbulent innovations - - -

an immense seashell burping

,
narrow surface gulleets repeating status shields

, imposters reusing hooks

, opinionated toaster oven performing
explanatory autopsies

///

: before filtered eggshells
a foreign entrail glows
with wintery wardrobes
pushing alcoholic boils // // // ,

.
'One wave, the never closed,
viewed as the aftermath of
plotless chess movies.'

Archival fallout shelter

jumping, a joke, the hologram witness
stubs merging toenail apple cores
rendering stench like a pencil roof
bottled ^ dripping thumb ink olive oil
. / the pharmacist
jumps into a pool of slinky evaluations
pausing before galloping digital sewage.
\

[wander, pressed & spiteful, collapsed
nearest wig master screaming
sullied medieval altitudes] / . . . \

ER - - - studious registration
whips - - - plus or minus a
scaly refrigerator shoehorn,
then up=dated motions
splurge (collected?) (obscured?)
a justification issue of magazine
finding aid . . . Pod clear, noun
gusts monkey wrench plebs . . .
/,
exacting shell
blameless quotations
rattling allowable warts
droop flipping hounded balm

the push becomes nearest,
the shovel bursts narrative
legacies of unfathomable
novocaine cheerleaders,
once decreased a little un=
wavering. Hodge-podge jury.

the scamming halos
punt drowning nomenclatures
though purely dehydrated
marshmallow zoot suits
/ . \

merge, glasses shatter,
radio zombie piano tuning
resourcefully a parachute

[disengaged] as the pants
wallow in the looking glass
fuzz disciplines like a
slow motion basement
radiologist . . . if it

drips . . . pleased, an
outcast [accessibly
cut-up / collaged / curved]
with canisters revealing
expected clouded conversations
[pulling?] [un-planned?]
. . . the policy remains
displaced,

sorting umbrella libations
whole eating weekends
until status quo
implosions.

Jerome Berglund

performative washing of hands in company when entertaining move the chair stubbing toe on keeps putting it back
slip 'n slide competing in the winter olympics big water but on the other side you're still
here scalp pincap le didn't even see it coming engizver
bury red face in the morning floating in the puddle experimental executions dine at
dash small prints

Dessert

new pile of glass in the
me spot... I hope not

squeak of rubber soles
walker inches sharp

one long cherry cigarette huffed too quickly...

the bed is made steel cut oatmeal can't get work done until

sharp squeak of rubber soles walker inches

HI-SCORE
2000

150

when nutritionist doubles
as profiteer interest of conflict

dust burns
black first
then the ochre
comes quetzalcoatl

can dish
it out
but can't
take it
...comfort
food

What
can I do?
Nothing... What can
I do: Listen

fold plaster conceal spotting
from the squeamish

Papier-mâché

missing knife turns up place they least expected to find it
 prefer bullion not much poetry
WESTER Ninacrots - not
 with waste and fluids would cast Chloroform
 shot, N
 dog ing bu
 d loon dog ing bu
 from underground
 crack in s
 many
Jerome Berglund
 hound flees lab trembles sky will have its way
 a whip but

E t e m e n a n k i

Putting up high-rises. E. p. on shake their ads filling at gyms b. m. ull-rinke. ple. r. B. of-wok n d d d upside d o n. n rental lice s. e. :: any one going. Jing abo in thas. E. 3 for. Egnatagarner. more acceptan. n. h e h e. n. moral arguments avoided told. em to to corp back with warrant, if he'd open'd they'd have taken him.

Rushmore

performative washing of hands in company when entertaining

move the chair stubbing toe on keeps putting it back

slip 'n slide competing in the winter olympics

big water but on the other side you're still here

scalped pineapple didn't even see it coming

energizer bunny red face in the morning

floating in the puddle experimental executions

dine and dash small prints

Dessert

fresh from the wash mostly briefs, socks inside out... outside in

cigarette huffed too quickly... one long cherry

walker inches sharp squeak of rubber soles

new pile of glass in the same spot ...I hope not

steel cut oatmeal can't get work done until the bed is made

Papier-mâché

fold plaster conceal spotting
from the squeamish

when nutritionist doubles
as profiteer interest of conflict

dust burns black first then
the ochre comes quetzalcoatl

can dish it out but can't
take it ...comfort food

What can I do? Nothing...
What can I do: Listen

Western

not much poetry in cracking a whip but many prefer bullion

missing knife turns up place they least expected to find it

animated loon dodging buckshot, chomping carrots – notes from underground

she's seen things worked with waste and fluids would cast Chloë Sevigny

hound flees lab trembles sky will have its way

Etemenanki

putting up high-rises plump geese look on shake their heads
filling out forms becomes full-time employment proof-of-work model
upside down rental license :: anyone going to do anything about that?
not eating meat garners more acceptance when moral arguments avoided
told 'em to come back with warrant, if he'd opened they'd have taken him

Nathan Anderson

A walk through the [washing] [down] [nothing]

e
x
p
e
n
s
International acclaim violating ////////////////exegesis
v
e

} }half ringing the round ((sound))

ALL OVER THE WINDOW

AND

THE FRAME IT CAME WITH

_____what more than a monstrous

r-- (eventual #1)
e-- (eventual #1)
o-- (eventual #1)
r-- (eventual #1)
d-- (eventual #1)
e-- (eventual #1)
r-- (eventual #1)

HEAVY (heaving)

WHAT A HEAD TO WEAR

TO

WEAR

WHAT A HEAD TO WEAR

how glamorous



Reverberating excuse (pantomime)

as.....the.....visitor

S*A*Y*S (or) S*T*A*Y*S

*volume
returning*

#####with salt on his hands!!!!!!

#####and a movement his own!!!!!!

#####and this tired selection!!!!!!

*wearing out the hat
instead the
head*

‘not anymore you won’t’

‘tired of the (singing, still singing) sunrise’

a s t h o u g h i t s t i l l

improves

dis-
proves

*in any case
I've tired
out my
legs*

*well worn
well worn (x2)*

Spanish (reverse) Lithograph

haaaaaaaarrrrrrrrrkkkkkkkkkk

what a superfluous

j.
u.
n.
c.
t.
i.
o.
n.

[[as simple as the hope in K]]

“”

“”

‘HERE WE GO ROUND THE...’

‘HERE WE GO ROUND THE...’

‘HERE WE GO ROUND THE...’

‘HERE WE GO ROUND THE...’

what sour milk and mild amputation

sun stroke of the soul!!!!

(mention it again won't you?)

as
special
as
the

i.

Mark Young

Four poems from 100 titles from Tom Beckett

#14: Next to you

I keep thinking it's the
title of a Carpenters' song;
but that, it turns out, was
"Close to You." NtY is still
a song — or, rather, many
songs — sung / written by
many people, from Sting
& The Police — the last song
so Wikipedia, that font of
inane ephemera, tells me

that the group performed
together — through to, more
than four decades later, a
totally different song, this
one country, included on
the ninth studio album by
a US band called Nightfall.
So many different takeouts.
Fleas on a dog. Something
I wouldn't like to be next to.

#36: I know you are watching me

Perhaps it's CCTV, or perhaps it's via
An adjustment to that small camera that
Rises up out of the top of my monitor
And which I forgot to pull up so there was

No vision of me for the first few minutes
Of that Skype interview I recently did. Those
Items are the tangible ones, easy to do. But
Don't forget that there are other means of

Monitoring a person, invisible, imagined.
Even a psychic GoPro, shoulder mounted.

#78: *My body, my ghosts*

Writing letters is actually an intercourse with ghosts.

- Franz Kafka, *Letters to Milena*

It might be my body, but I share my ghosts with Kafka. At least that's what I'd like to think. It might lessen their uniqueness, but it gives them much more cachet than being the ectoplasmic effluvia of some hermit from the South Pacific. Plus they're spectral, which means no

need to be concerned about waking one morning to find yourself transformed into an *ungeheuren Ungeziefer*—especially when you then get poorly translated, & be forced to live as a cockroach for the remainder of your life.

#91: Prologue to a study of waiting

What do we know about Godot? Only that he had a long white beard & a propensity for running late. So much so that some game-developers became sick of waiting for him & created their own game engine to build their applications on. Called it the Godot Engine.

Among its outputs is a small single-player quest game called *Where's Sam Beckett* in which, after overcoming increasingly difficult challenges, a mystical house on the banks of the River Liffey is finally revealed, with the no longer elusive Godot waiting by the front gate.

Ivan de Monbrison

Five poems

I can not do it you know mom...

(in vain)

dust shoved down the back of my throat and my hands gloved by my skin

the hand stretching out to grasp a passing wing
and yet
your corpse
barely broken down
is not real anymore
words unreal too silence is a but stump left behind us still burning on the ground

in the wake of this amble
the animal has fled
and left in the corner
at the opposite
this other self than you

nothing

abjection stays mute

dried blood on the face

the tongue goes over the mouth

from one lip to the other over and over memory is just a cry

going from one cage to another

a fragmented body

I watch you slowly decaying

in front of me

and I dare not touch the memory of you (inside me) with my hands dipped in blood a teeth-less
mouth

with the cry sewed to the lips

as if made of silence

Michael Templeton

Apoem #4

We must nourish our revenants, the ghosts of that other life; they are, after all, formed of the same spirit as this life—the life that we are currently in because of choices we made and circumstances over which we had no choice—as if this life were formed of something more material, more immutable—the same elements and the modes which express those elements enliven this life and the revenants of that other life. The living life and the life of the revenants all feed from the same elements. Choose the right vantage point, view it all from above, or perhaps from an oblique angle, and all vibrations and rhythms are seen to align and synchronize, the waves from one point form a refrain with the waves of the other and cause the swell to rise; bodies in motions are in an ideal syncopation to cause passions to reach their highest pitch, and the heat and light from both points are expressed and directed toward maximum intensity. The coolness of the waters spread across both points toward all extremities to attain a complete relaxation of intensities.

Yet, shift the perspective and the revenant emerges to reveal that other life in which all elements remain at play, but the vibrations and rhythms are seen to pass each other on different registers, waves roll, peak, and break undisturbed by other waves of an exact same length, height, and intensity as the waves are stirred by other gravities and movements, and even other seas; while those bodies so in tune and syncopated perform a dance with other bodies that had been invisible from the previous vantage point. Still, those points of origin can and do exchange intensities, and the spaces that separate these points (and bodies) often serve to accelerate these intensities in unforeseen ways which make it possible for revenants to perform the dances of passions, vibrations, and rhythms that become strong enough to register within the life that is, disturb the fluid of the life that is, so as to form waves which express that other life, and this is why we must nourish our revenants and ghosts of that other life.

Revenants and ghosts will inevitably occupy durations; this we grant them from their inception whether we are aware of it or not, and the intensities that stir vibrations will unfold as durations, thus the rhythms and refrains. Refrains necessarily open the space necessary to continue durations and make way for more durations to break through the stillness that precedes so that the openings of duration combined with the movements stirred by vibration (rhythm and refrain), initiate extensions which can combine with intention, and revenants and ghosts may begin to take on the appearance of a positive consistency, one that is autonomous from the life that is, even as these movements, extensions, and intentions vibrate within the space of absence, these features are themselves absences, although they can and often do intrude via insinuation into the life that is. Not adjacent, internal, or external—never outside the present but always beyond and the beyond, and always having been—always having taken place in what will have been, in what we will have known.

Nourish nurture, feed and imagine... or not. The hauntings remain, and it is certainly better to engage the revenants and ghosts than to deny them since they will gain entry through some ulterior means. It is the nature of the word, or words, to insinuate; the word “insinuate” itself demonstrates its capabilities with the snake-like ssss sound and shape bound between the authority of syllables of such overwhelming finality, loaded as they are with such an excess of

vowels, those letters-symbols which function from on high due to the preciousness of their rarity, consonants being in such abundance by comparison.

At some point, these revenants and ghosts will take on the independent actions of form remembering itself, and this will have nothing to do with the will or desire of the life that is and take place entirely in the spaces of that other life wherein desires that once were ours still burn for objects that were never ours, this is a key aspect of that other life, as if the objects of desire in this life are ours since all objects, when properly observed, are wholly other and not objects at all but for us, images of images, figments of misrecognition.

The space of memory retains what is remembered and what is forgotten. It is not that which remains or does not remain, but the space for what can remain which holds perhaps more promise for what is lost than what remains. All that memory has lost exceeds what it can presently conjure, and that other life, then, stretches out beyond us. The life that is may be constructed more by what is not than what is, and that other life, the one populated now by revenants and ghosts, the being of absence is what provides the ground and consistency for the life we live, we who are not yet revenants and ghosts. Against the blank, we imagine the image of the image to be firmly present as it continually falls away from the present, never to have ever been present, we will look toward the future to discover this present that we will have been. As passions, desires, and even dreams begin to tire of us and we are finally able to rest a little from nourishing these revenants and ghosts that are the shades of what we will have been, of what we will have known in the future when we remember or when we are dazzled by the solarization of the space of forgetting and blinded by all that we no longer know.

Apoem #5

The task now is to speak of that which is perpetually leaving us, receding from view at precisely the same distance and proximity even as we from our vantage point and the receding object are never truly stationary or in motion, at least not through space, and to speak of time in inaccurate if not entirely wrong since movement through time is the stuff of fancy; this movement, or lack thereof, the appearance of movement (image of movement/movement image) of the receding object is more properly an ungraspable and inarticulable folding of tenses and tensions, or the positioning, not the position which indicates fixity and stability, of the past, present, and future along grids of intelligibility, but utterly beyond (the beyond, or not) of language. What is known in the sense of being included in knowledge even if imperceptible and included in knowledge because plausibly knowable, while not necessarily perceptible or in any way of the order of phenomena. Thus the need for an invented poetic language (rather than prose, scientific language, or poetic language properly speaking), that is, while also insufficient, can potentially explore the “not” of the “poem,” the apoem, the apoetic language that gives us the apoem—the no poem.

Receding: the future past appearing a present; a return of the future in an impossible break, rupture, seizure, even that make the space of memory possible, the precondition of remembering which will include what is remembered and what is forgotten. Therefore a present tense that is always past yet preferable to the spectacular future generated from the canned relics of the past that are stored in the empty space of the impossible present.

To return to the object: an image, a collection of images, a general series of collections of images—but maybe these terms are entirely inadequate—a constellation or images that coheres around and within a gravity and physics that exceeds us—this will animate and enliven the dead, the haunting, the revenants and fill the absences with what is known, the images of what is known in any case, and since the object is perpetually receding, there exists only the perpetual writing of the object and its revenants drawn from this constellation of images all the while I/you/it remain in a space that can appear to be a fixed point, although this is illusory, while all motion, or at least the perceptions of motion, take on the consistency of fixed points on grids of intelligibility.

These are matters of potentiality, of what has come to pass and continues to come to pass, and what can never be but could have been and therefore forever remain in the space of remembering along with (and occasionally of as much or greater importance than) those things that came to pass. Of ghosts and revenants and what remains and what is still becoming.

Synthesis is a lazy vice.

And who is to say that these revenants do not precede us, that these shapes and shades are not made of all the pieces of knowing and of experience that will come down to us within the preformed chaos into which we are introduced, our heads and souls filled with nothing but the propensity to remember, to emulate, and to make what is not ourselves into ourselves? The chaos gives way to a chaotomic set of directions and courses, and the revenants and ghosts are left with no option but to haunt since their voices have been silenced by the emergence of the empty forms that are the now. These are pagan dreams of what precedes but what remains in the space of remembering along with all that is now unremembered. The shades of experiences we never

had but are features of the primordial emergence from chaos. The vibrations, rhythms, and refrains that become audible have their correlative vibrations, rhythms, and refrains that can never be heard.

And what of the dialecticians and analytical philosophers, those who would seek to distill everything not into an essence but away from an essence, away from that which is essential because the essential is plural and in motion. They lead us away from what may well be invisible but is of such critical importance, indeed, what remains even as these vandals of the heart and spirit deny them. The dialecticians demand numerical values; they demand equations in which all things may find a marker of each thing's existence, and they would blind us to the idea that there are no "things," only that which is coming into itself. They deny motion, intensity, and extension. They either cannot grasp or refuse to grasp the dynamics of the space of remembering. Motions and dynamics. And these dialectical vandals would have us leave our revenants and ghosts, would have us forget that region of the space of forgetting that is specifically for what is forgotten but still with us. Our revenants and ghosts suicided by reason.

Apoem #6

the space of forgetting (sublime space)

Breathing The hidden of things

Visibility_

the primordial space of divinity

-- hauntings

-- revenants

The shadows of what remains can be expressed (expired?) with and in the breath, the converse of an absence, the ghost of a ghost, the haunting that is that other life diffused now in the breath (inspired?); deeply and perpetually hidden but present in as much as presences are, in all their absence. Thus, a space of and for that which is beyond comprehension (respiration?), the sublime, a sublime space, if it is even possible to talk of such things, space being by definition a geometry of containment and the sublime being that which is over and above geometry, containment, spaces; a space that is sub-liminal underneath, prior to, proximate yet always distant (that receding object), the liminal, limnological bottoms of rivers, and therefore beyond (the beyond) the breath (conspiration?). Uncontainable, unnamable—it take the breath away. To be breathless, as a lover, to be awe-struck, and therefore filled with breath, completely and overwhelmingly in-spired, inspirated with the breath of being, love, breath of life. In that other life that is not alive.

Does it all demand a delirium, a state beyond the beyond—over and above (a sublime delirium? Is there is any type of sublime that is not a delirium? Is the sublime forever tainted with a terror that comes too close? Can we locate/name/instantiate/insinuate a sublime delirium that provides us with a means of escape from the common?); a delirium of the moon: selenomania, and the primordial divinities thereof, put in the care of a writing that allows us to withdraw our language from the world, and to detach our language, this would be the language of this delirium of the moon and withdrawal—withdrawal from the light of day in which I can let free all that haunts and in doing relieve that which haunts from being a haunting; granting what haunts, granting revenants the freedom to remain within the space of forgetting on the momentum of its own motion.

Momentum, motion... to remove or dissolve the veil; the breath that pulls back the veil. But then exhaling and restoring the barrier yet cutting off the traces of the interior. The breath released into the undifferentiated outside. In the same manner as words, language, and the traces of words and language. We lose the breath/words as it withdraws from the body, and the body from breath/words. Breath and language become aspects and features of that other life as they are released from the life that is. To exhale (write) is, perhaps, to die, to enter into a death, and each utterances or breath is the trace or sign of the death of the one who breathes/speaks/writes.

To approach, then, a sublime terror as we breathe and write our death since each word, each breath is the last even as breath/word is always the first, is always the renewal of both the life

that is and that other life; each breath/word/trace is the last and the first as each is marked on a page and mark the expression of the a pneuma in the world in the hidden of things.

The pneuma is of the order of the capillary, as opposed to, say, the river which follows as continuous flow in one direction; depth and forces of flow riser and fall according to depth (this depends on still more forces and variables such as wind, precipitation, drought geological movements, the accretion and erosion of earth, etc.); capillary movement is in all directions. There is no forward or backward, up or down; it moves in the same way as breath. The fluid dynamics of the pneuma is that same as breath, and it animates, invigorates, innervates—brings life to those revenants of that other life in the hidden of things and causes them to move beyond (from/within the beyond), to attempt to shed their shadow status even as they are pure shadow and shade; the pneuma could potentially cause the absent ones to *re*-present in their very absence in death, filled with the breath of a pneumatic marker/trace/word. The most tangible haunting.

the primordial space of divinity precedes, it would seem, the life that is; it would necessarily precede that other life, since that other life is coextensive with the life that is. But perhaps this has gotten off track with outmoded temporalities, and the primordial space is not a function of pasts, and presents, and futures, but is primordial in the sense of always being at the center and on the periphery, proximate and infinitely far, the immediate for which we are always too late, and if there is a reverence to be attached to the primordial space of divinity, it is found in the way we do things like walk among trees and small rivers; the reverence for tree roots, lichens and moss, and the bones of dead deer cleaned by coyotes and the black headed vulture—of corvids and things. The divinity is the revenants and hauntings that are never present because forgotten, and the weight and momentum of what has been forgotten.

Joseph D. Reich

On one of those baseline studies/double-blind tests

Part III.

74.

the difference between fluff & peanut butter & potato kugel

75.

the punchline & all those cruel things which led up to it

76.

getting it all out during recess a mad little hero
forgiven & forgotten in your favorite flannel with
mud caked all over the patches of cords gradually
turning to the holy sands of the spirit & imagination

77.

“i don’t know what to believe!”
is where almost all philosophies
naturally stem and spring from

78.

people are so phony and full of it in this world
and eventually just seem like a hole hell of alot
of junk mail, while the build-up and repetition
just always made you feel so alone not giving
a damn about that metaphor if a tree falls in
the forest or not, as your supervisor at the
mental health clinic who constantly breaks
confidences and talks behind clinicians backs

says we gotta one day get the wives together
and my first thoughts, hope i’m not included
case study #1

i remember when used to be a social worker waiting every morning in principal's office for my clients and this mother who would always show up out of breath with her son's clarinet telling the secretaries sorry he forgot it while they very respectfully humbly would smile (from this repetitive ritual) subliminally understanding the unconditional love of a lovely mother for her child...

case study #2

that vice principal with the reputation of screaming and hollering at the kids sent into his office as if this was supposed to be some sort of tough love dickensian discipline only really retraumatizing them and making them regulars...

case study #3

that client our first session with his mom bragging how he had been through 5 or 6 therapists and i'd be the 7th completely unaware i was exactly like him as a kid and relished the challenge eventually having him gabbing up a storm at least giving him some chance in this world...

case study #4

working the boy's shelters in providence, rhode island running the anger management groups resentful that they even had to be there in the first place due to some form of parental neglect or abuse and this boy just bursting out loud "place smells like straight ass!" while i instantly retorted "smells like ass or straight ass?" which instantly cracked them up and made them hysterical which is what you call a "breakthrough" (in a certain sort of distorted way developing trust and able to connect and relate to) with kids who have been lied to and shitted on most of their lives...

case study #5

returning home bloodshot brokedown dead to the world
bumpadabumpa just to get on the highway to a wife and
newborn i loved more than life itself with a brand new pair of
infant overalls from the mall and coconut shrimp from that 99 pub

79.

bucky dent thurman munson & goose gossage
clattering in the spokes of your bicycle...

the sacred seasons on your shoulder

80.

that milkman who you never met
or saw like god or santa claus
with those morning bottles
glazed in dew suddenly
showing up fresh and
filled up left at the door
of your backyard porch

81.

we got more accomplished
on the lush lawns of childhood
where a real good day got put in

practically experiencing
& going through
every emotion

never underestimate or take
for granted the imagination
& promises made to friends

our version of heaven was that schmaltzy
music played in that flickering lounge down in
key biscayne, florida & a whole life to look forward to

82.

god coming through
the clouds every morning
like a boy shooting marbles

83.

living in that shattered snowglobe with
it always falling down an inside job
looking in but also looking out

84.

studying album covers was pure escapism
picturing whole other realities & existences
in my opinion was a certain sort of
human growth & development

85.

when feeling stagnated going shoplifting
loving the challenge ironically leaving
the album "hooligans" on the bus
i guess feeling guilt-ridden

86.

waiting in the early evening (mother
consistently tardy) to be picked up
outside the y bloodshot & shivering

87.

outside the synagogue cause required
for bar-mitzvah wondering if this was
what it was like to be a man feeling
eternally deserted & abandoned

88.

that tradition & custom where a door
was left open for elijah while felt like
the beginning of the welcoming
of ghosts & phantoms...

who were you gonna be for purim & passover?
haman? raskolnikov? old man goriot?

the lawnmowers starting up
leaving a trail of echoes at dusk...

89.

always wondered if those local commuters
had died years ago would anyone know?
always wondered if they were alive
there'd be a similar outcome?
always wondered if that young strong
muscleman tickettaker was the father
figure we never had & all those opaque
pasty passengers simply dysfunctional
family members who didn't give
a damn if you were alive or dead?
always wondered if those punched tickets
right over their heads proved they existed?
always wondered if they bleed & weep & scream & cum?
always wondered if that rum & coke might allow them to cope?
always wondered about those passed-out party girls who looked
more like fallen angels from the nightclub & if they ever made
it back to their safe & secure daddy's little girl midnight homes?
always wondered who were the real heroes & villains in this
faceless exodus back to the stillness of deathly-silent suburbia?
always wondered with all those briefcases & newspapers
while world already torn into a hundred-million pieces
would cause their eyes to at last finally open & get it?
always wondered about that absurd, mean-spirited
aggressive custom of snapping & folding the paper
(like the opposite of an origami artist with no
imagination) sexless soulless with no manners
or etiquette as if no one else existed around
them & will even go so far as to pathetically
rip it so no one else can possibly get to it?

always wondered if they were on one of those
top-secret cellphone calls would finally 'get through'
& one day just learn to not be so self-important
& self-absorbed & get a clue or creative bone?
always wondered if they were just visiting jail
'do not pass go, do not collect two-hundred' would
inspire them to get out of the mental prison they're in?

always wondered if like some sort of plato parable
& them just looking out into fleeting silhouetted shadows
from deep dark windows would anything at last exist at all?
always wondered if their delusions ever meet 'the illusion'?
always wondered how all truths lied in desolate emptiness
of ticket booths & telephone booths transporting you
away from all forms of brooding & the blues?
always wondered when they at last pay their dews & pay off their mort/gauge
become new men or just broken down superheroes not being able to get out of
the routine & ritual & decide to go into work just a little later & work less hours?
always wondered if the commuter ever really gets back home to where it all started?

90.

parable 1

after you return home from college
there is a certain surreal silence
you can't quite make out while
your house seems like a museum
of past characters who play roles
simply going through the motions
you no longer know what about along
with silhouettes and shadows especially
at closing time during the nocturnal hours

parable 2

reality becomes walking out the dark theater
bleary-eyed, brooding, into the bright, beaming
sun through puddles after an apparent rainstorm
not really caring or giving a damn what is what
this becomes the metaphor for 'mixed feelings'
your being taking in all these brand new forms—
the spare simple sound of swollen rivers, scent of
mud & magnolia & glistening sidewalks & homes

parable 3

backed in the corner by life
she did the best she could
and was a good sport and
looking back that's all that
can be asked for and in
my opinion in mind body
spirit and soul what love is

parable 4

freedom is just
a feeling that lasts so long
while never take it for granted
cuz before you know it it'll be gone

parable 5

o! the idealism of youth
no period of more
beauty or truth

91.

most substitute all their pain and suffering
into self-imposed crises and drama as opposed
to considering a humanistic type of sublimation
transferring it to romance and love taking in all
the keen shapes and forms and world around them

92.

if we never give up
i do believe we get
tougher & stronger
but perhaps a little
more fragile
& sentimental
& in need of kisses
& hugs & spooned
with tea & crumpets
by the light of bogie
& bacall or was that
tracy & hepburn
who all experienced
their fair share of loss

93.

if only we made the effort to more concretely
define language as opposed to language defining us

prejudice pre-judas passing instant judgment
with way too much jealousy & pettiness

herodotus was leftover erotica

94.

wittgenstein very similar to nietzsche
in their (obsessive) nature whose keen
social observations & 'interrogations'
pretty accurate but still ended rather
lonesome & isolated in the madness
of the beauty of the alpine mountains

95.

so many great scholars
have something of a silly
slapstick sense of humor
as if needing some kind
of punchline (instant-gratification
or cathartic release) after all that time
devoted to the proclamations & proof(s)
(& counterarguments) of a rather absurd life

96.

every great writer becomes something of a savior and has no idea what you're talking about when you ask them so says hemingway was just trying to write a good story when awarded the nobel prize for literature for "the old man and the sea" eventually couldn't save himself and put a bullet in his brain (the paranoia and melancholia drinking and all those falls took their toll damaging the brain) while so many writers went the same way tennessee williams jean genet

97.

we originally get motivated & inspired by the concept, sensibility & aesthetic while comes by no coincidence goes all the way back to our instinctive primal interests, dreams, fantasies & traits & characteristics from our identity exhibited in early-childhood

98.

our cultural & topographical landscape can bring about a sense of situational depression even making us numb take for example when heading towards our destination with those farm animals next to the stripclub next to the motel next to the ice cream stand next to the y & the cathedral on the corner before you cross that massive industrial bridge to get to the metropolis famous for its arts & culture & nightlife & recent uptick of petty crime, suicide & recreational drugs

99.

man gets measured by certain obscure criteria like birth rate, murder rate, per-capita, the housing market, stock market, state of the economy & inflation

the news programs tell us we'll be hurting at the pump...

how come never once by spirit, survival of the fittest, olfactory senses or the seasons?

100.

why is there always this obligatory
ritual & custom where neighbors
feel this compulsion to invite you
over to barbecue to prove you
got social skills & can mix &
mingle to get to know you
better & just feel so much
more uncomfortable in
your own skin awkwardly
standing there forced to have
to discuss matters with people
you got absolutely no respect
for or anything in common with
(chemical engineers & men who
work for the water company talking
about these swales in your backyards
& still don't know what swales are)
& just want to runaway with your
burger & brew & creep back
across your lawn through
your screen door back
to where it all began

101.

in the end you become something
of a squishy tuna fish sandwich
—a mug of light beer and ice
keeping an eye out on the weather
and world affairs —spring comes
late out here to the mountains some
where around mid-april as you start
to plan those projects of repainting
your porch planting a couple more
honey crisp apple and bartlett pear

Biographical information

Alison Hicks

Alison Hicks was awarded the 2021 Birdy Prize from Meadowlark Press for *Knowing Is a Branching Trail*. Previous collections are *You Who Took the Boat Out* and *Kiss*, a chapbook *Falling Dreams*, and a novella *Love: A Story of Images*. Her work has appeared in *Eclipse*, *Gargoyle*, *Permafrost*, *Poet Lore*, and *Smartish Pace*, as a finalist for the 2021 Beullah Rose prize. She offers community-based workshops under the name Greater Philadelphia Wordshop Studio.

Sharon Kennedy-Knolle

My poetry has appeared or is upcoming in *Bluestem*, *Chicago Quarterly Review*, *Cider Press Review*, *Juked*, *Lips Poetry Magazine*, *MacGuffin*, *Round*, *Midwest Quarterly*, and *Pennsylvania English*, among others, while my dissertation was published as *Writing Reconstruction: Race, Gender, and Citizenship in the Postwar South* (University of North Carolina Press, 2015). Theory does not specifically inform my work, except in the most abstract sense; I tend to embrace a Derridian, unreliable narrative point of view, and I tend to rely on the lyric as a mode of survival, a stance drawn from my own experience as well as influenced by Greg Orr..

Sean G. Meggeson

Sean G. Meggeson lives in Toronto, Canada, where he works as a psychoanalytic psychotherapist. He has written and lectured on such topics as Lacan & James Joyce, neurodiversity, and alternative rock. Sean recently has had poems published in *In Parentheses*, *Stink Eye*, *Psychoanalytic Perspectives*, *A Thin Slice of Anxiety*, and others. He will have a poem in the November, 2024 issue of *Uppagus*. Check out his blog: www.lippykookpoetrymachine.blogspot.com
@lippykookpoetry

Lynn Hoggard

Lynn Hoggard received her Ph.D. in comparative literature from the University of Southern California and taught at Midwestern State University, where she was professor of English and French and the coordinator of humanities. In 2003, the Texas Institute of Letters awarded her the Soeurette Diehl Fraser award for best translation. Her books, *Bushwhacking Home* (TCU Press, 2017), and *First Light* (Lamar University Press, 2022) won, respectively, the 2018 and the 2023 Press Women of Texas awards for best book of poetry.

Jayanta Bhaumik

Jayanta Bhaumik is from Kolkata, India, from the field of esoteric studies and counselling. He works in India and Singapore. His past works can be found in Poetry Superhighway, Juked, Poppy Road Review, Blue Lake Review, Vita Brevis Press, Cajun Mutt Press, Fourth & Sycamore, Scarlet Leaf Review, Madswirl (their Contributing Poet), Streetcake Magazine, Acropolis Journal, and elsewhere. He is available @BhaumikJayanta

Mark Belair

My poems have appeared in numerous journals, including *Alabama Literary Review*, *Harvard Review*, and *Michigan Quarterly Review*. Author of seven collections of poems, my most recent books are two works of fiction: *Stonehaven* (Turning Point, 2020) and its sequel, *Edgewood* (Turning Point, 2022). I have been nominated for a Pushcart Prize multiple times, as well as for a Best of the Net Award. Please visit www.markbelair.com.

Mark Goodwin

Mark Goodwin is a poet-sound-artist, fiction-maker & re-thinker who speaks and writes in differing ways. He is also a walker, balancer, climber, stroller ... and negotiator of places. Mark has a number of books & chapbooks with various poetry houses, including Leaf Press, Longbarrow Press, & Shearsman Books. His latest chapbooks are: *to 'B' nor as 'tree'* (Intergraphia, Sheffield, October 2022) & *Of Gone Fox* (The Hedgehog Poetry Press, Clevedon, April 2023). Mark lives with his partner on a narrowboat just north of Leicester, in the English Midlands. He tweets poems from @kramawoodgin, and some of his sound-enhanced poetry is here: <https://markgoodwin-poet-sound-artist.bandcamp.com> [Please note: if you publish, by the time you do this biog might've changed – I'm expecting a chapbook called *Is* & a full-length called *At* to be published in the spring and the summer/autumn ...]

Michael Lee Rattigan

Michael Lee Rattigan (Caterham, UK) is a poet and translator who has lived and taught in Mexico and Spain. He translated the first complete collection of Fernando Pessoa's *Alberto Caeiro* poems (Rufus Books, 2007) and contributed to the *Selected Writings of César Vallejo* (Wesleyan Press, 2015). He is the author of three poetry collections, *Liminal* (Rufus Books, 2012), *Hiraeth* (Black Herald Press, 2016), and *as grass becomes flesh* (Black Herald Press, 2023). The poems selected are taken from the above mentioned collections.

Robert Guard

Robert Guard has been published in *Harpur Palate*, *Amoskeag*, *Apricity Magazine*, *Chapman Law Review*, *California Quarterly*, *Chaffin Journal*, *Clackamas Literary Review*, *Courtship of Winds*, *DASH*, *Down in the Dirt*, *El Portal*, *Glint Literary Journal*, *Midwest Quarterly*, *Nixes Mate Review*, *The Opiate*, *Perceptions Magazine*, *Poet Lore*, *riverSedge*, *The Round*, and others. Robert attended the *Kenyon Review* Writers Workshop and studied under David Baker and Rosanna Warren. He worked for thirty-five years in advertising as a writer and creative director. Robert teaches yoga and has an energy healing practice. He also conducts workshops on various health and fitness topics including meditation and stress reduction.

Tom Stuckey

Tom Stuckey writes poems and stories and lives in the UK. He has been previously published in *A Thin Slice of Anxiety*, *Pulp*, *PUERILE INTENTIONS* and other magazines. He intends to publish a book with a collection of his work later this year. His website is: <https://tomstuckey.com/>

Penn Kemp

Poet, performer and playwright Penn Kemp has been celebrated as a trailblazer since her first publication of poetry by Coach House (1972). She was London's inaugural Poet Laureate (2010-13) and Western University's Writer-in-Residence (2009-10). Chosen as a foremother of Canadian poetry and Spoken Word Artist (2015) by the League of Canadian Poets, Kemp has long been a keen participant/activist in Canada's cultural life, with thirty books of poetry, prose and drama; seven plays and ten CDs produced as well as award-winning videopoems: multimedia galore. Penn's new collection, *INCREMENTALLY*, is up as e-book and album on <https://www.hempressbooks.com/authors/penn-kemp>. Penn is active across the web: updates are on www.pennkemp.weebly.com, <https://www.facebook.com/pennkemp/>, www.pennkemp.wordpress.com and www.pennkemp.substack.com. Follow her on Twitter, Instagram ([pennkemp](https://www.instagram.com/pennkemp)) or <http://facebook.com.pennkemp>. See <https://soundcloud.com/penn-kemp>.

C.W. Bryan

C.W. Bryan is a student at Georgia State University. He lives in Atlanta, GA where he writes poetry, nonfiction and short fiction. He is currently writing his weekly series, Poetry is Plagiarism, with Sam Kilkenny at poetryispretentious.com. His debut chapbook *Celine: An Elegy* was published with Bottlecap Press in 2023

Benjamin Harnett

Benjamin Harnett is a poet, fiction writer, historian, and digital engineer. His poetry has appeared recently in *Poet Lore*, *Saranac Review*, *ENTROPY*, and the *Evansville Review*. He is the author of the novel *THE HAPPY VALLEY* and the short story collection *GIGANTIC*. He lives in Cherry Valley, NY with his wife Toni and their collection of eccentric pets.

J.D Goodman

J.D Goodman is a writer from rural Maryland, currently based in Pittsburgh, where he is studying for an M.A in philosophy at an undisclosed university. His writing has appeared in Wild Roof Journal, The Belfast Review, Litro, and the Closed Eye Open, among other venues.

Robert Rothman

Robert Rothman lives in Northern California, near extensive trails and open space, with the Pacific Ocean over the hill. His work has appeared in *Atlanta Review*, *Meridian Anthology of Contemporary Poetry*, *Tampa Review*, *Willow Review*, and over one hundred twenty other literary journals in the United States, England, Ireland, Canada, Wales, and Australia. Please see his website (www.robertrothmanpoet.com) for more information about him and his work.

Joshua Martin

Joshua Martin is a Philadelphia based writer and filmmaker, who currently works in a library. He is a member of C22, an experimental writing collective. He is the author most recently of the books *O! fragmented glories* (Argotist Ebooks), *Prismatic Fissures* (C22 Press), and *peeping sardine fumes* (RANGER Press). He has had numerous pieces published in various journals. You can find links to his published work at joshuamartinwriting.blogspot.com

Jerome Berglund

Jerome Berglund, recently nominated for the Touchstone awards and Pushcart Prize, has worked as everything from dishwasher to paralegal, night watchman to assembler of heart valves. Many haiku, haiga and haibun he's written have been exhibited or are forthcoming online and in print, most recently in *Bottle Rockets*, *Frogpond*, and *Modern Haiku*. His first full-length collections of poetry *Bathtub Poems* and *Funny Pages* were just released by Setu and Meat For Tea press, and a mixed media chapbook showcasing his fine art photography is available now from Yavanika.

Nathan Anderson

Nathan Anderson is a poet from Mongarlowe, Australia. He is the author of numerous books and has had work appear widely both online and in print. He is a member of the C22 experimental writing collective. You can find his work at nathanandersonwriting.home.blog or on Twitter/X/Bluesky @NJApotry.

Mark Young

Mark Young was born in Aotearoa New Zealand but now lives in a small town on traditional Juru land in North Queensland, Australia. He is the author of more than sixty-five books, primarily text poetry but also including speculative fiction, vispo, memoir, and art history. His most recent books are a pdf, *Mercator Projected*, published by Half Day Moon Press (Turkey) in August 2023; *Ley Lines II* published by Sandy Press (California) in November 2023; *un saut de chat* published by Otoliths Books (Australia) in February 2024; and *Melancholy*, a James Tate Poetry Prize winner, published by SurVision Books (Ireland) in March 2024.

Ivan de Monbrison

Ivan de Monbrison is a person affected by strong psychic disorders that prevent him from having what others may call a "normal" life. He has found writing to be an exit to this prison. Or maybe it is a window from which - like an inmate - he can see a small square of blue sky above his head. His writing often reflects the never-ending chaos within him, but contrary to this mental chaos, the paper and the pen give him the opportunity to materialize this in a concrete and visible form. Writing can feel like a slow death, but it's better than mere suicide in the end.

Michael Templeton

Michael Templeton is a writer, independent scholar, guitar player, barista, cook, and accidental jack-of-all-trades. He is the author of *The Chief of Birds: A Memoir* published with Erratum Press and *Impossible to Believe*, forthcoming from Iff Books. He has published articles and essays on contemporary culture and numerous works of creative non-fiction. He lives in the middle of nowhere Ohio with his wife who is an artist.

Joseph D. Reich

Joseph D. Reich is a social worker who lives with his wife and teenage son in the high-up mountains of Vermont. He has been published in a wide variety of eclectic literary journals both here and abroad, been nominated seven times for The Pushcart Prize.

“Citation exquisite for your determining”

After words

A collect gathers of purpose, of voiced accord segments of pages combine, wholehearted to effect such communal spirit as above mentioned and introduced and now playing out with in that coming to close such collect proposes. Possessed of it, and each these it likes with, shows the effect—poetic—of a reader’s appropriation, taking and turning into something as else/other than what, perhaps, originally had been left, intended. Possession is half-step to what makes anew in that vitality half-had if grabbing forth on to carry it as so and for such. Become as yours, ... the purpose to any such publishing endeavor.

Here if held quick, steadfast to its becoming, is the noise that takes it to the rephrasing with only that new purpose of sound each, as poem and voiced, deposes. It is as soundbites voiced in head that, there, lines are on that, the voyage of sound to meaning, purpose, and feel. And it is inquisitiveness best makes for that newness each contributor, aware of or not, lends to. We sell this, giving voice to that ethical opinion our interviewee mentions.

Sound and image irretrievably, deeply, connected, we enfold intention of each issue in the engagement and play of sound with word and all the new meaning given, even if personal, quiet, possessive. All such collection of words into endless formations makes notion of the image of a page with same collected on, like sound painted, so structured by each the contributor composes. This opens to the newness of possibility technologies of sound and video production often collaborate with.

But the effect is all the same, technologically induced or not, of putting out sounds, of bearing and gladly allocating. It is of a new spirit of arrangement and rearrangement, of openness to both sound and sound technologies that perhaps here unfolds with. Such openness intrinsic to the spirit of poetry where perhaps this latter is undeniably moving; such openness this magazine celebrates of, and in its digitalization is only its proof of.

The voice, then, and all our questions it surrounding, gives purpose to an element of the production of poetry and sound that separates, we have seen it, voice of reader from poet. What then of such mechanical dimensions, those electronic diffusions that give-out to in make of newness poetry itself means to harbour? Such would be the nature of any such “reading”— in our presence at public assembly, in the solitude of audio recording, in the quiet of our own head at which we so often gather to remake with. There, in that locale, as at any other, we fathom the full purpose of poetic encounter— that movement of self to Other in whatever form and however manner, text as sound, over-again, always proposes. Therein its locus, hereat our bereavement, if for something lost, then forever yet there re-sequestered, restored, and purposefully made own by and for some Other, their ear giving life to, knowing by. Such knowledge, newfound and heard of, remains this magazine’s purpose. We commend whatever outcome any of its reading, in what however manner, re/produces.

Kind regards,
Editor

