

THE INNISFREE POETRY JOURNAL

An Online Journal of Contemporary Poetry



The Lake Isle of Innisfree

I will arise and go now, and go to Innisfree,
And a small cabin build there, of clay and wattles made:
Nine bean-rows will I have there, a hive for the honeybee,
And live alone in the bee-loud glade.

And I shall have some peace there, for peace comes dropping slow,
Dropping from the veils of the morning to where the cricket sings;
There midnight's all a glimmer, and noon a purple glow,
And evening full of the linnet's wings.

I will arise and go now, for always night and day
I hear lake water lapping with low sounds by the shore;
While I stand on the roadway, or on the pavements grey,
I hear it in the deep heart's core.

—William Butler Yeats (1865-1939)

Welcome to *Innisfree* 7. With this issue we celebrate the third anniversary of Innisfree's founding. In those first six issues we've had the privilege of sharing with our readers poets as varied and accomplished as Eric Pankey, Terence Winch, Martin Galvin, Moira Egan, Bruce Bennett, Dan Masterson, John Surowiecki, Grace Cavalieri, Barbara Lefcowitz, Ann Knox, Sandra Beasley, Nancy Naomi Carlson, Jehanne Dubrow, Judith McCombs, Barbara J. Orton, J.D. Smith, Rose Solari, John Allman, Jared Carter, Barbara Goldberg, John Hoppenhaler, J. Ladin, Louis McKee, Brent Pallas, Katherine E. Young, Robert Farnsworth, Carol Frith, Elisavietta Ritchie, and many others.

Innisfree 7 continues our series of Closer Looks at the poetry of a leading contemporary poet, this time with a generous selection of poems by Marianne Boruch. I expect that any readers unfamiliar with her work will find this to be a revelatory experience, one that will surely inspire you to read more widely from her books, including her most recent collection, *Grace, Fallen from* (Wesleyan University Press, 2008).

Readers and poets have asked how to obtain the website address (the url) for a particular poet whose work appears in *Innisfree*. The answer is that if you hover your cursor over the poet's name on the contents page or in the green side-column, the url for that poet will appear in the grey bar at the bottom of the browser.

As with *Innisfree 6*, we provide an option for readers to obtain this issue in two hard copy formats, a PDF download as before, and now, a printed volume of the current issue, at cost, at Lulu.com. Just click on the appropriate link at the top of the Current Issue page. That link will take you to Lulu.com, an online publisher, where you can order a copy of the issue from them. Using print-on-demand technology, Lulu will ship you one or more perfect bound copies of *Innisfree 7*.

The Editor
editor@innisfreepoetry.org

Innisfree 7, September 2008

THE INNISFREE POETRY JOURNAL

An Online Journal of Contemporary Poetry



Masthead

Editor, Greg McBride

The founding editor of *Innisfree*, Greg McBride won the 2008 *Boulevard Magazine* Emerging Poet prize. His chapbook, "Back of the Envelope," is forthcoming from Copperdome Press. His work appears in such journals as *Bellevue Literary Review*, *Connecticut Review*, *Gettysburg Review*, *Hollins Critic*, *Salmagundi*, *Southeast Review*, and *Southern Poetry Review*. His website is <http://homepage.mac.com/gregmcbride/>.

Publisher, Cook Communication

Cook Communication provides support for new writers who seek publication of their work and publishes the work of emerging and established poets in the pages of *Innisfree*. Its website is www.cookcom.net.

THE INNISFREE POETRY JOURNAL

An Online Journal of Contemporary Poetry



Submission Guidelines

(revised September 2008)

The Innisfree Poetry Journal welcomes submissions of original, previously unpublished poems year round. We accept poems for consideration only via email from both established writers and new writers whose work is excellent. We publish well-crafted poems, whether in free verse or in traditional forms, poems grounded in the specific, which speak in fresh language and telling images. And we admire musicality: we welcome those who, like the late Lorenzo Thomas, “write poems because I can’t sing.”

Please observe these guidelines closely:

Deadlines

February 1 for the spring issue, August 1 for the fall issue. Submissions received after these dates will be considered for the next issue.

Details

1. Include your name, as you would like it to appear in *Innisfree*, in the subject line of your submission, e.g., “Wallace Stevens” or “W.B. Yeats.”
2. In ONE Word document, submit a bio and up to five poems attached to an email addressed to editor@innisfreepoetry.org. (If you do not have Word, please use rich text format.) Format all poems flush with the left margin—no indents other than any within the poem itself.
3. Simultaneous submissions are welcome. If a poem is accepted elsewhere, however, please be sure to notify us immediately at editor@innisfreepoetry.org.
4. Send only one submission per issue.

Assurances

In making your submission, you are assuring *The Innisfree Poetry Journal* that the work is your own original creation; that it has not been published, electronically or in print; that it has not been accepted for publication elsewhere; and that you are 18 years of age or older.

Rights

By accepting a poem, *Innisfree* acquires first publication rights, including the right to publish it online and maintain it there as part of the issue in which it appears, to make it available in a printer-friendly format, to make the issue of *Innisfree* in which it appears downloadable as a PDF document and available as a printed volume. All other rights revert to the poet after online publication of the poem in *The Innisfree Poetry Journal*.

THE INNISFREE POETRY JOURNAL

An Online Journal of Contemporary Poetry



Innisfree 7, September 2008

A Closer Look: Marianne Boruch

Liz Abrams-Morley	26	Kathryn Jacobs	64
C.B. Anderson	28	Dan Johnson	65
E.C. Belli	29	Susan A. Katz	67
Therese Broderick	31	Judy Kronenfeld	70
Mary Buchinger	32	Lyn Lifshin	73
Edward Byrne	35	Diane Lockward	76
Jenn Blair Campbell	38	Judith McCombs	78
Norma Chapman	40	Bettie Mikosinski	81
Antonia Clark	43	Mayuku Omeresanine	82
Robert Farnsworth	45	Scott Owens	83
Roger Fogelman	51	Roger Pfingston	86
James Grabill	53	Les Prescott	87
Catherine Harnett	54	Oliver Rice	88
Marc Harshman	57	Elisavietta Ritchie	90
Michael F. Hogan	62	David Salner	92

THE INNISFREE POETRY JOURNAL

An Online Journal of Contemporary Poetry

A CLOSER LOOK: Marianne Boruch



photo by Will Dunlap

In these pages, Marianne Boruch shares with us a generous selection from both her *Poems: New and Selected* (Oberlin College Press, 2004) and her recently published sixth collection, *Grace, Fallen from* (Wesleyan University Press, 2008).

Attention is a beautiful thing, and much in demand. Probably more of us want it than know how to give it. Marianne Boruch's recent *Poems: New and Selected* has the wonderful, commanding power of true attention: She sees and considers with intensity. Her poems often give fresh examples of how rare and thrilling it can be to notice. . . . Trusting observation, having the ideas and feelings emerge as continuations of that action of noticing—where others might force a sentiment or a bit of philosophizing onto things—may be a mark of genuine poetry.

Thus did former poet laureate Robert Pinsky call our attention to the work of Marianne Boruch in his Washington Post "Poet's Choice" column on April 24, 2005. I offer his words as a means of alerting those readers not familiar with her work to be alert as they engage the poems themselves below. Marianne Boruch's sensibility draws us into closer contact with this time and place we inhabit through those nuances of perception granted to the genuine poet and, beyond sometimes, into the strangenesses that lurk within our times and places and ourselves. Her poems reward the reader open to experiencing the particular world created by each poem.

As the poet Barbara Ras has recently observed about *Grace, Fallen from*, "Marianne Boruch attends to mystery, to absence, to our all-too-human frailty and folly. Yet in reckoning with what we lack, she floods her poems with intelligence, ripples them with humor, and instills in them a musical, sensuous abundance."

Marianne Boruch is a Professor in the Department of English at Purdue University and founded its MA/MFA program in creative writing. She has taught at Purdue since 1987 as well as in the Warren Wilson College MFA program. Over the past two decades she has published a series of rich, distinctive collections of poetry:

Grace, Fallen from, Wesleyan University Press, 2008
Ghost and Oar, Red Dragonfly Press (chapbook), 2007
Poems: New and Selected, Oberlin College Press, 2004
A Stick that Breaks and Breaks, Oberlin College Press, 1997
Moss Burning, Oberlin College Press, 1993
Descendant, Wesleyan University Press, 1989
View from the Gazebo, Wesleyan University Press, 1985

She has also published two illuminating collections of essays:

In the Blue Pharmacy: Essays on Poetry and Other Transformations, Trinity University Press, 2005
Poetry's Old Air, "Poets on Poetry" Series, University of Michigan Press, 1995

Marianne's poems appear widely in such journals as *The New Yorker*, *The Southern Review*, *The Georgia Review*, *Virginia Quarterly Review*, *The Iowa Review*, *Massachusetts Review*, *New England Review*, *TriQuarterly*, *Poetry*, *American Poetry Review*, *Prairie Schooner*, *Gettysburg Review*, *The Antioch Review*, *The Nation*, *Ploughshares*, *Partisan Review*, *The Yale Review*, and *The Paris Review*.

Read more about Marianne Boruch online:

<http://www.valpo.edu/english/vpr/keyesessayboruch.html>

<http://versemag.blogspot.com/2004/12/new-review-of-marianne-boruch.html>

http://www.ronslate.com/twenty_poets_name_some_new_favorites_celebrate_national_poetry_month

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A7883-2005Apr21.html>

POEMS BY MARIANNE BORUCH

I. from *Poems: New and Selected* (Oberlin, 2004)

THE HAWK

He was halfway through the grackle
when I got home. From the kitchen I saw
blood, the black feathers scattered
on snow. How the bird bent
to each skein of flesh, his muscles
tacking to the strain and tear.
The fierceness of it, the nonchalance.
Silence took the yard, so usually
restless with every call or quarrel,
titmouse, chickadee, drab
and gorgeous finch, and the sparrow haunted
by her small complete surrender
to a fear of anything. I didn't know
how to look at it. How to stand
or take a breath in the hawk's bite
and pull, his pleasure
so efficient, so of course, of course,
the throat triumphant,
rising up. Not
the violence, poor grackle. But the
sparrow, high above us, who
knew exactly.

ELEGY

Before the basil blackened. Before plates
slept in their cupboard. Before the streets
were snow. Before the song started in the throat
or crept sideways into the hands that hold the cello
or the moon spilled to nonsense all
over the floor. Before color composed itself
to twenty names for blue, or was it green or was it
red? Before seeds entered the ground
to transform themselves. Before cake was eaten, before
the icing bubbled up and crystallized. Before
all that sugar. Before shells
when things were moving in them and the sea
made a noise. Before our son grew so eye
to eye. Before worms made their fiefdom
in the compost. Before sleep refused the night
and the clock kept ticking. Before the hospital
took the soul from the body, dark
from dark, and the long drive home. Before the dog
stopped mid-bark to bark and the cat rose
from her stretch, unblinking. Before every moth
in the flour stilled its wings. Before the stain,
before its memory in the wood
grew wider. Before the garden gave everything
to weeds. Remember that, O charm
to forget, to go back, to vanish? Before
the dead appeared at the edge of my vision. Before
the grace to be broken was broken.

SYMPATHY

I drag this big bed to the window
which takes years probably
as garden spills, as birds darken,

the tree outside
slips into her farthest ring, heave
of new bark, water, wood air.

I think she listens so
near the window, pressing
her strange light. I sing

o ragged quilt over the whole world,
meaning to say: such is my simple grief,
this great dim street

glistening with boys.
How their mothers thin them down,
calling them home,

quiet baseballs, a few
blue stones. What secrets
in a boy, pitching the last gladness

high into evening: curve,
cut, I hear it fallen
at the window, crying to be let in.

MY SON AND I GO SEE HORSES

Always shade in the cool dry barns
and flies in little hanging patches like glistening fruitcake.
One sad huge horse
follows us with her eye. She shakes
her great head, picks up one leg and puts it down
as if she suddenly dismissed the journey.

My son is in heaven, and these
the gods he wants to father
so they will save him. He demands I
lift him up. He strokes the old filly's long face
and sings something that goes like butter
rounding the hard skillet, like some doctor
who loves his patients more
than science. He believes the horse

will love him, not eventually,
right now. He peers into the enormous eye
and says solemnly, I know you. And the horse
will not startle nor look away,
this horse the color of thick velvet drapes,
years and years of them behind the opera,
backdrop to ruin and treachery, all
innocence and its slow
doomed unwinding of rapture.

DELPHINIUM

Near the exquisite vulgarity of the chickens,
delphinium casts passion
inward, until it purples
into rich targets. This one is lame, splinted up
with a split rod, quickly
like someone lit a fuse and stepped back.

All day the wind's been low static
and near the house the sound
of men fixing the chain saw. Delphinium
could care. About this, or rain,
or the chickens busy complaining, outraged
about everything, and dropping themselves
fitfully into mounds of dust. They'd bury themselves
if they could, eyeing the woods
through their little ball bearings.

The delphinium never angers.
It learns quietly, by rote: stars
are stars. Better to keep grass down, forestalling
violence. The pine is a brother, sardonic
and plain. Genius deepens, a deep

blue thing, too rapid
to see completely. I am this blue, the delphinium knows
vaguely, I am
poisonous. The delphinium loves
the sound of that: *poisonous*, like the true gift
perpetually offered.

THE KINGDOM

Long afternoons in bed, we loved
to talk about the woman
on the EL, remote
as a rabbit and that intense,
who froze at every stop
until the train
leapt up and knocked us back.
But she'd
lunge forward in her seat,
pedal in a fury
we never biked with, even uphill
or after dark, while the thing wheezed
and clanked and roared on
to the next station.
She'd ease as the speed let up,
sucking air like a swimmer, shrinking down
to her curious deadpan.

Our room floated then, nearly
out its window
at anything so strange, your arm relaxed,
cool across my belly.
We'd think of her—that woman
wild again, that
whole train back, rattling off
its *here* and *here*
and *henceforth*: Lincoln Avenue, Armitage,
Oak Street's dazzling deadend beach.
Not ours, of course.
Of course, hers. Or so
she thought, glaring *ingrates* at us once
in some station's high-dive calm,
ennobling herself
for the next great surge.

An unmade bed for days, that bed,
dusk settling like sugar turning a water glass
sweet and murky. We thought of her
a lot, the way we wondered
everything: not love exactly, not that, more
what that woman say, say
when released, she
looked down at her kingdom—
sure those obvious streets, but such alleys,
glittering and twisting

TREE

Its disguise was ugliness, and ants
in cheap parade, up and across,
and electric wires cut
right through at a heartless angle
to keep Walter Cronkite on at the neighbors'
so proud of their TV.

Thick, thick as too much
of too many summers is thick,
three and a half kids to get human arms
around it.

In the dark, it rose up
like the drawing of a tree a girl might make
to scare her mother.

I was there. I was almost asleep
but the moon—or was it a porch light
left on all night?
What I didn't know
is what I still don't know,

that one loves
ugliness as one loves beauty,
which is to say, how the dead love
because they've given up on love: *the ants?*
okay, really—broken branches? fine, fine

II. from *Grace, Fallen from* (Wesleyan University Press, 2008)

(copyright 2008 by Marianne Boruch and reprinted by permission of Wesleyan University Press. All rights reserved.)

STILL LIFE

Someone arranged them in 1620.
Someone found the rare lemon and paid
a lot and neighbored it next
to the plain pear, the plain
apple of the lost garden, the glass
of wine, set down mid-sip—
don't drink it, someone said, *it's for
the painting*. And the rabbit skull—
whose idea was that? There had been
a pistol but someone was told, no,
put that away, into the box with a key
though the key had been
misplaced now for a year. The artist
wanted light too, for the shadows.
So the table had to be moved. Somewhere
I dreamt the diary entry
on this, reading the impossible
Dutch quite well, thank you, and I can
translate it here, someone writing
*it is spring, after all, and Herr Muller
wants a window of it in the painting*, almost
a line of poetry, I thought even then,
in the dream, impressed
with that “spring after all,” that
“window of it” especially, how sweet
and to the point it came over
into English with no effort at all
as I slept through the night. It was heavy,
that table. Two workers were called
from the east meadow to lift
and grunt and carry it
across the room, just those
few yards. Of course one of them
exaggerated the pain in his shoulder.
Not the older, the younger man.
No good reason
to cry out like that. But this

was art. And he did, something
sharp and in the air that
one time. All of them turning then,
however slightly. And there he was,
eyes closed, not much
more than a boy, before
the talk of beauty
started up again.

A MUSICAL IDEA

At the second light, you turn, the boy tells me.
I turn. A musical idea. Turn then,
when a light in any house goes on.

Dark end of the day on the street. Dark
late afternoon in November.
In any kitchen—revealed: the hum

starts in the freezer, down
the lower shelves, takes the stove back
to its fire. The sink is an absence:

one tea-stained cup left to seed.
I live somewhere. But to walk away
is a musical idea. Because a corner means

make a profile to however once
you were. Once a child, I kept turning
full-faced into everything, never

saying a word. You like
to think that, my brother says. I heard you
plenty of times. And you were hiding.

HAPPINESS: THREE DEFINITIONS

1.

Can you be too happy? Put some
in a box. Tape it. Put it on that
shelf over there. Come Sadness,
little dog no one likes
but you're sweet, you are,
in your way. So I go
to the woods with that dog.
I don't teach it anything. Not *heel*,
not *fetch*, not
protect me from monsters.
He hardly looks back at me,
never brings me
a stick to throw past him
to the river. The river
doesn't shine in these woods. Doesn't
make a sound. There's an old
washing machine in it. A couple
of shoes. Or three. No match
for any other, one with laces
drifting above it, like
some languid sea creature,
tentacles bleached, wayward,
not caring a bit if the fisherman
comes with his net
or not. I'm that happy.
I don't care either.

2.

Which leads to a question. Can
happiness make you stupid? (I love
stupid, said Stupid. What? said Smart.
But that's a different story.) The world
looks great without
sepia, without eye trouble, the moon,
one moon. And all this blinding
daylight, just what we wanted, yes?
Question: do you relish
or endure? Two curious
adjustments on the lens. Or three:
it depends, you said or I said, not sure
what to fix for dinner. (Did we

remember limes? cilantro?
coconut milk?) Meanwhile, how
stupid to *qualify* stupid, said
Stupid. Or was it Smart at the window,
talking to no one in particular, squeaking
the balloon into the shape of a duck
or a windmill.

3.

In fact, things happen
in threes, said everyone after the second
disaster (those strokes, that trainwreck—you
name it—an earthquake, a flood). We
eyed the room, each other, checking
the door—is it locked for the night?
Then I slept and dreamt people
walking in lines, carrying their picket
signs: *no third thing!* I could
belabor this. I could say as my
long ago friend did: how do you get there?
First you go there! Then laugh
myself sick. Or tell that dog:
no, Sadness. You have to stay home.
You can't nuzzle the leaves
with me all afternoon. But the way
he looks up, out of focus, so eye
to eye.

SNOWFALL IN G MINOR

Overnight, it's *pow!* The held note
keeps falling. And only seems
slow. Because it's just
frozen rain, what's the big deal? the checker
in Stop and Shop told me.

Save warmth
like stamps. The fade of their color
in the 1920s. Airmail. The pilot with his
skin-tight goggle helmet on his
miniature head could be
snow-blind.

All heads are small. Mine's
lost as a thimble
in this weather. Where
a finger should be and be
sewing, every thought
I ever thunk.

I love the word
thunk. Never used.
It lands, noisy
metal in a bucket. That's
the last of it. No echo
for miles of this

snowfall—as in
grace, fallen from,
as in a great height, released
from its promise.

WHAT GOD KNEW

when he knew nothing. *A leaf*
looks like this, doesn't it? No one
to ask. So came the invention
of the question too, the way all
at heart are rhetorical, each leaf
suddenly wedded to its shade. When God

knew nothing, it was better, wasn't it?
Not the color blue yet, its deep
unto black. No color at all really,
not yet one thing leading to another, sperm
to egg endlessly, thus cities, thus
the green countryside lying down
piecemeal, the meticulous and the trash,
between lake and woods
the dotted swiss of towns along
any state road. Was God

sleeping when he knew nothing? As opposed
to up all night (before there was night)
or alert all day (before day)? As opposed to that,
little engine starting up by itself, history,
a thing that keeps beginning
and goes past its end. Will it end, this
looking back? From here, it's one shiny
ravaged century after another,
but back there, in a house or two: a stillness,
a blue cup, a spoon, one silly flower raised up
from seed. I think so fondly of the day
someone got lucky
and dodged the tragedy meant for him. It spilled
like sound from a faulty speaker
over an open field. He listened from
a distance. *God-like*, any one of us
could say.

FEBRUARY

That sparrow on the trash again, one
leg missing, he
alights and drops down, alights
in this cold, and crooked,
drops down again though he could
fly. He has to, most of the day
I imagine, into its
exhaustion, those moments he
finds a window sill or a patch
of old leaves under some
overhang, his one leg, good wire,
pulled under him, feathers
puffed out—swollen thing, ridiculous—
for warmth. All the lives I
might have had: this one,
oh, this one.

O GODS OF SMALLEST CLARITY

If only those perennial opposites, the bully
and the sweet worried one
slept, kept sleeping. Not side by side,
not the lion and the lamb, just that most
ordinary blind passage, brief
and profound, as it happens
all over the planet. I mean the prince
who's happy with gardening, and the other kind
plotting someone's downfall, each
going under for the night. Which is to say, not
our usual taking turns at it, not Greenwich
or daylight savings or eight flight hours from here
equals five hours early or late but right now,
this minute, by my marvelous powers
of desperation and delusion, it's
soldier and monk, Sunni and Shiite,
republican, democrat, all Muslims and Christians
and Jews and those of us quietly
not anything to speak of, no reason or rhyme or
respectively about it, no tit for tat
but every one sleeping. And the president
curled fetal, his aides and think-tankers
all twitching in their dreams as dogs do,
on the scent or the chase, hours,
many hours to come. For that matter, the Pope is
drifting off and the greeter
from Wal-Mart, and the magician come out
of a long day's practice in a sword-crossed box
rests now, exactly like the oldest woman
asleep on her side, empty as the young docent
at Ellis Island already certain
it's robot-work, telling the country's vast sad story
of promise and trouble. And I think so many
miners home from their dark to this
gladder one, sprawled out
on their beds where exhaustion is fierce, no longer
patient. Every child in the world sleeping too,
hunger, *once there was*, but not here
in this dream, no gunflash, no flood.

Every mother minus panic. Every father
finding his daughters, his sons right where
they should be. Even
the torturers gone into that place they might

nightmare what they've done.
But not yet, not for a moment. And of those
who were done *to*, for them the rope and hood
and diamond-toothed wire, all banished
a few hours, forgotten
as dream is, in this, the real dream
to ink it out, beyond reach.
Believe me, I want to see
the despicable go down as much
as you do, and the innocent shine. But that's
sleeping too. Or so I try,
an experiment which may be stupid,
full of *less* not more, as in *pointless*, as in
hopeless, as in *less than nothing*
because—o gods of the smallest
clarity, let nothing happen
for an hour, for six hours. Rage.
Let that sleep too, its sorrow
no longer a brilliant rant, no longer anything,
a wash, a confluence of great waters
seen from a distance, the horizon a matter of
on and on where a speck out there
might well be a boat, the figure at the oars
untangling and stretching out. One eye
closed, then the other: welcome
no moon, no stars.

Liz Abrams-Morley

BIRD'S EYE

It's an answer to a prayer
never uttered,
the way sun breaks through
as you rise above clouds.

At the airport below, you left
your definition of January:
wind, sleet, snow,
the de-icer blowing

green goo onto wings
turning the plane the bright hue
of pureed spinach,
as when, for so many rote years

you stuffed baby food, homemade,
into small sterilized jars
and moved on auto-pilot
entombed in every bitter season.

How long since you've seen
clouds, really seen them—

this angle, bird's eye, white-backed
below you, bellies gray and overfed,
facing downward, emptying
out their treacheries: storm or ice.

Or maybe not.
Flying south now, maybe you've
left foul weather behind you;
maybe all clouds are cumulus,

bellies white as their backs,
white as refined sugar, white
and pale as the driven snow
first spied on a new land by a planeload—

Sudan's Lost Boys, already thrice displaced,
who had been taught the simile
while scratching lessons into Kenya's
unforgiving baked earth,

but remained naïve about what
awaited them: their promised future,
the part they were never told,
how snow= tactile+ wet+ cold.

Liz Abrams-Morley is the author of *Necessary Turns*, forthcoming in 2010 from Word Press, *Learning to Calculate the Half Life* (Zinka Press, 2001,) and *What Winter Reveals* (Plan B Press, 2005.) Her poems and stories have appeared in a variety of anthologies and journals. Co-founder of Around the Block Writing Collaborative, (www.writearoundtheblock.org), mother, wife, and lapsed family therapist, Liz wades knee-deep in the flow of everyday life from which she draws her inspiration. She lives and writes in Philadelphia, PA, and is on the MFA in Writing faculty of Rosemont College.

C.B. Anderson

AFTER CHURCH

Along the river, random shadows dapple
the narrow, willow-bowered beaten path
which leads directly from the white-washed chapel
to gravel banks where shriven couples go
in summer to redeem the aftermath
of doing time in church. A few canoes
invade the lazy ripples—somewhat slow
against the gentle current, faster when
their prows are aimed downstream—and viewers lose
themselves in elemental tug-of-wars
between their habits and their dreams. Amen
once stood for closure; now it only breeds
dissent among the galley slaves whose oars
are locked in mud.

The sandwiches are dry;
the bread's been spread with less than what it needs;
it's much too warm to slather mayonnaise
without the fear of taint; and though they try,
the waders near the landing cannot quite
evade the tide of imminent malaise
arising from the waters.
It's only Sunday,
with hours of light and all the coming night
for wondering how the day will break on Monday.

C.B. Anderson was the longtime gardener for the PBS television series, *The Victory Garden*. His poems have appeared in numerous print and online journals over the past five years. One of his poems, published in *The Raintown Review*, was nominated for a Pushcart Prize. His e-chapbook, *A Walk in the Dark*, is posted on the website of *The New Formalist*.

E.C. Belli

IN THE MEANTIME

A ma Grand-Mère

Long blades extending,
sessile leaves cry a stem
as cold rain pools.

They stare, from a grey
stone afar, while two young ropes
sink your stiff oak chest

and *un petit buis*—quiet
shrub—sits lethargically
on your André's grave.

GRAND-MAMAN

She smelt of old
age. She smelt
of clothes
tightly packed
and stored
in the winter-
clothes trunk.
For as long
as I knew her,
she smelt
that way.
I never thought
that I would
pack winter
clothes tightly
in the winter-
clothes trunk,
in the middle
of winter,
just to smell
her again.

E.C. Belli studied creative writing at Columbia University in the City of New York with Sophie Cabot Black, Mark Strand, and Emily Fragos. She was selected to participate in Columbia's Honors Poetry Workshop along with six other students and received Writing Departmental Honors upon graduation. Her work can be read in *Spoon River Poetry Review*, *Iodine Poetry Journal*, *Poetry Salzburg*, *The Columbia Review*, *Absinthe: New European Writing*, and *International Poetry Review*; it is also upcoming in *Borderlands: Texas Poetry Review*.

Therese L. Broderick

ON A TWENTIETH ANNIVERSARY

~for my numismatist

Darling, for decades you have lived
with ancient Chinese coins, square holes
punched through their centers. Collecting,
cataloguing, weighing their merits.
You chart their journeys more certainly
than you could my own. Or I yours.
Love eludes calculation, enduring apart
from the grooves of figures and words.
We are that space contained by the metal
of marriage. Tonight by candlelight,
let's count out twenty pieces, then add
fifteen more for our daughter. Many coins
are flawed: off-balance, chipped, worn.
Of course we keep them—they, dearest of all.

Therese L. Broderick is a freelance poet and teacher residing in Albany, NY, with her husband and daughter. Her publication credits include *Poet Lore* (forthcoming), *Spoon River Poetry Review*, *Puerto Del Sol*, *The Louisville Review*, and elsewhere. Visit her “Ekphrasis” blog at poetryaboutart.wordpress.com.

Mary Buchinger

PRECARIOUSNESS

I've felt it before—once, when a train
roared toward our rented villa, halfway up
a mountain in the Andes where
there were no tracks and we
bolted into the dusk outside
while the ground heaved, and fixed
our eyes on the hanging plants
swinging back and forth
from the columns of our deck;
the dogs in every compound singing
with bright terror. And one night
in Quito, Ecuador, we were roused
by the jingling of the hotel windows
—not breaking, but awake and rippling
in their casings. All we could do was run
out into the street, stand and wait,
with all the couples, families, tourists,
anxious together in the dark.

That was twenty years ago, and mere
minutes in dwellings we didn't own;
now, another kind of shifting, just as
unsettling—soundless and long,
as the tired foundation of our
loose-limbed house slouches
into a softening earth. This place we've
brought our children home to, this old
New England Victorian with its new floors
and paint, is losing its footings; its doors
no longer square their frames. The walls
have begun to hunch around the windows
and to spring thin rivers of cracks running
parallels and diagonals across our fresh greens
and yellows, revealing the old wattle and daub,
horsehair and glue, brittle, crumbling, beneath,
and no waiting it out in the street as we watch.

HOUSE SURGERY

Money buys you a lot of attention
especially money spent on a thing
gone wrong, like a foundation, say,
of an old house, where there is little
room to maneuver so each field stone
and ragged chunk of concrete floor
must be removed by hand, by
many hands over many months.

Today, the chief bricklayer introduces
himself and his attending assistants.
You've already met the contractor
and his interns, clasped hands,
read your future in their eyes.
They've warned you yours
is a special case, a challenge
they will do their best to rise to.

They promise to be gentle
—to support what is there
as they rebuild and replace, yet
from day to day, some doors
upstairs won't budge, new cracks
appear in walls. You feel the peril
of stints, clamps, temporary measures.

No guarantees of long-term health
as the team unearths old arteries of
clay sewer pipes—among the oldest
in the country, they exclaim. There is
no telling what the ground will do, what
piece of earth you've bought yourself.

LESSON

I didn't know to wish for a solid
house foundation until it started
to sink; didn't know how tender
peat could be, how vulnerable
vegetal mass, how subject
to drought a patch of earth
how brittle walls, how ingrained
my notions of plate tectonics
until I recognized the continent
of Africa pulling away from
Pangaea, right there on the
red dining room wall, and
just below, the sheetrock seam
rising slowly into Tetons, so
slowly I cannot mark it
in a day.

Mary Buchinger's poems have appeared in *AGNI Online*, *RUNES*, *The Massachusetts Review*, *Versal* (Netherlands), and other journals; she was the recipient of New England Poetry Club's Daniel Varoujan Award, judged by Marge Piercy. Her collection, *Roomful of Sparrows*, (Finishing Line Press, 2008) was a semi-finalist in the New Women's Voices Series. She holds a Ph.D. in applied linguistics and teaches writing at the Massachusetts College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences in Boston.

Edward Byrne

BRIEF REPRIEVE

The autumn air still fills with a bittersweet
scent of burning leaves from a neighbor's yard.

A thick line of smoke rises over the thinning
trees, climbing high alongside migrating geese,
though curving slightly in whatever warming
breeze we might feel coming from among gusts
blowing just above a stubble of southern fields
and turning further toward the northern border
of this state, where even the lake water remains
unseasonably mild. Often, when I was young,
I wondered why my father sighed each time
he called such a brief reprieve from the cold fall
merely a magician's trick, but today I catch
myself saying that old phrase much the same way
to my teenage son as we rake our lawn together,
both of us knowing this will not last very long.

YELLOW ROSES

Only three weeks before leaving Italy,
we had discovered that quaint old café,
an imitation of American dinner clubs
where someone told us we just might
find the kind of solo jazz saxophonist
who could hit those quick high notes
we had remembered hearing so often
back in the States. As music played,

a bluish gray haze of cigarette smoke
always hovered over the open piano

lid, and sipping a glass of white wine
one final time together that evening,

I felt as though the night might never
end. All around, small petaled heads

of long-stemmed roses bent, nodding
from tall crystal pitchers, the golden

blooms glowing like bright bulbs able
to illuminate every table in the room.

BURNING LEAVES

Though cold enough
for snow, I know bright sunshine

leaning across the lawn
and tilting through storm windows

of my enclosed porch
will warm the air trapped inside.

But here, choking smoke
rises slowly from a high pile of these

oak leaves gone gold
and brown nearly a month ago,

raked late in the season
by a neighbor with blistering fingers.

Farther off, large clouds
begin to drift in, each one shifting

with a growing wind.
By the time twilight slowly turns

to nightfall, that smoky haze
will dissipate in the starless dark,

even the sharp scent
of burning leaves will fade away.

Edward Byrne is a professor of American literature and creative writing in the English Department at Valparaiso University, where he serves as the editor of *Valparaiso Poetry Review*. His first full-length collection of poetry, *Along the Dark Shore* (BOA Editions), was a finalist for the Elliston Book Award. A chapbook-length collection of poems contained in *The Return to Black and White* (Tidy-Up Press) was selected by Library Journal as among "The Best of the Small Press Publications." Work in his third book of poems, *Words Spoken, Words Unspoken* (Chimney Hill Press), was awarded the Cape Rock Prize for Poetry in 1995. His fourth book of poems, *East of Omaha*, was nominated for a Midland Authors Award in 1999. His fifth collection of poems, *Tidal Air*, appeared from Pecan Grove Press in 2002. A sixth book of poetry, *Seeded Light*, is forthcoming from Turning Point Books. He has won a number of awards and fellowships, including an Academy of American Poets Award, the Donald G. Whiteside Award for Poetry, and a Utah Arts Council Award for Poetry. His poems and articles of literary criticism also have been published in numerous literary journals or anthologies, including *American Literary Review*, *American Scholar*, *Ascent*, *Crab Orchard Review*, *Greensboro Review*, *Missouri Review*, *North American Review*, *Quarterly West*, *Southern Humanities Review*, and *Southern Poetry Review*. In addition, he has written many film essays or movie reviews for newspapers and magazines.

Jenn Blair Campbell

WHAT CALLS HER TO WATER

This morning the antler still sways
in the cold of the creek

I wade, tracking the habits of salmon.
Treading between bodies I find myself

jealous of the bones people keep:
bear claw, clavicle, fishbone, scapulae,

limbs lining sills and shelves, uncommon
icons, secrets carelessly dropped,

bits of soul unloosed: what reveals itself
when the house decays, when skin thins,

is borne away. What still lives
shifts direction, swims

across sandbar and rock pool,
into dark recesses, heart

crimson, flesh not yet greying
beneath leaves that dot

the water's surface. A flash of sky
between branches, sometimes November

sun the silver of scales.

VISITATION

Witness the way grass lies flat
beneath the feeder, a fleeting
supplication to the mass it bore.
The burden of frost

is nothing to heat's bristly bulk, bone-
crush of paw, shoulder and haunch.
Wrought iron post, once straight,
now apes the stranger's hunch, curves

in grace to kiss the rimed earth.
Birds flit from eave to limb, agitate
over suet strewn in the foray.
What need born

of hunger comes this late December?
What unfinished moon will tell
of her wonder? Search for signs
furrowed in woodflesh, depressions

etched in winter pasture, an acceptance
of what was, and is, and is to come.

Jenn Blair Campbell is from Yakima, WA. She received her PHD in Creative Writing and English from the University of Georgia in Athens where she currently teaches. She has published in *The Tusculum Review*, *Copper Nickel*, *MELUS*, *SNR Review*, and the *Hamilton Stone Review*. Her research interests include Victorian and Romantic Literature.

Norma Chapman

I LONG TO LIVE

where the undeserving
poor eat truffles
and sleep under goose down
comforters, while the deserving
rich go to jail and stay there—
in that place where Marx
and Christ converge.

My friend Eleanor says,
*The reason trees
are so restful
is that they have no opinions.*
Eleanor and I are stuffed
with opinions, but on our walk
along the C&O Canal,
we leave them in the car
to squabble among themselves.

This moment is the hardest
place to live.
I keep trying to pin it down,
a live butterfly squirming
in my sweating hand,
and I want to yell, *Stop, wait!*
Is this what Buddha warned against
and why Goethe's Faust nearly went to hell?

I THINK I'M IN LOVE

I'm 16. My cousin Wilma has a friend who has a friend who's 23, a veteran of World War II, and he flirts with me.

He looks like he stepped out of a movie.
I don't believe a word he says, but I want to hear more.

I peel the faded sunburn flakes from his back. I don't burn.
He kisses me, gently. At night, alone, my pajamas hurt my skin.

I take them off. The sheets hurt my skin. I put my pajamas back on. In the evenings, I do my homework, listen to Paul Robeson

and Ravel on the phonograph. My family lets me smoke and have a beer while I study. It's 1947. They're freethinkers

and the *Daily People's World* arrives in a plain brown wrapper.
I make the honor roll. I'm good at chemistry and English and algebra.

I want to be a doctor. He and I go out on weekends—to Hoover Dam, to walk in the canyons, to a roadhouse to dance. He's the only man

I could ever dance with. My junior year is over and the summer is over. What passes for winter in the desert is over.

It's spring. I want him to call. I want to listen. He takes me to visit his cousins on the reservation. We like each other.

One night he puts his tongue in my mouth and says I shouldn't let anyone else do that. No adult has ever talked to me about sex.

He asks me to do one thing for him, just because he asks. I think, *Yes, yes of course*. He says "Don't go to college." I look at him and laugh.

He never speaks to me again. I don't understand. My aunt writes to me when I'm at Berkeley to tell me he's married the homecoming queen.

They have children, five in a row, no stopping.

SCANDALS OF 1937: MY PARENTS DIVORCE

When I was twelve, my stepsister whispered
in my ear the only sex education I ever had
and told me my father slept with Georgia Hydock
and Elizabeth Ray after I was born.

When I was eighteen, my father said, *I let
all my wives get the divorces. It was a good
thing your mother bruised so easily.*

I was six when they divorced.
Now a movie rolls in my head.

Harold's truck moves down our driveway.
There's a palm tree in front of the house.
The sun is just up. My mother gets out of the truck.
Her feet and legs up to the knees are tiny.
The rest of her body is round. As she steps
to the ground, she wobbles. My father runs
out the front door. Mother walks toward the house,

Father's mouth is moving. This is a silent film.
He grabs her arms, lets go, and hits her in the face.
Harold gets out of the truck. The tiny veins
on his nose and cheek glisten bright red.
The two men walk toward each other.
Harold puts up both hands. My father hits him
on the jaw. Harold falls and doesn't get up.

The screen goes black. There are no credits.

Norma Chapman's poems have appeared in *Passager*, *Innisfree Poetry Journal*, *Iris*, *The Sow's Ear*, and *River Styx*. She began writing poetry after turning sixty. A recipient of a 2003 Maryland State Arts Council Grant, she lives in Brunswick, a small town in Western Maryland.

Antonia Clark

SISTERHOOD

Rebecca and Rachel. Those were the names
we wanted, instead of Ellen and Anne.
I taught her how to tie her boxy brown
corrective shoes, to tell time, do times tables,
tell when the coast was clear, to tiptoe,
lie, create a stir, slip out unnoticed.

The cellar smelled of musty rags, dusty jars.
We waited there for signs, for coded messages
from Ethan Allen and the Green Mountain Boys,
and later, from Frankie Pascarelli, Billy Cutts,
waited to be rescued, to fall, weak and sighing,
into their arms behind the furnace.

We turned forbidden words on our tongues
like sour lemon drops, words we dreamed
of saying to those boys. We scrawled them
on slips of paper, dared one another to slide
them into locked drawers, under closet doors.

When parents found them, we learned
to think fast, run faster, always imagining
worse disaster. At night, we held each other
and shivered, pretending we were the sisters
in the news who'd fallen into a well.

ORTHOPEDECS

I've heard how easily bones break,
disintegrate, how hard they are to build,
set right. You hear, every day,
of bad backs that will never give up
their pain no matter how strong the rods
of steel the spine is made to bear,
of crippled limbs, arthritic hands,
diseases that knob and hobble.
An old woman has a hold on me,

leaches my calcium day by day,
cackles that she'll steal my finger joints,
crack my ribs, one by one. She lays
her bony hand along my skull,
taking my full measure, biding her time.

WOODWORKER

To see if they measure up, he sets
one plank beside the other, sights
along the edge, and checks
for bowing. Satisfied, he makes
his measurements and markings,
quick flicks with the pencil he tucks
back behind an ear. I love

a man with the smell of fresh-cut
wood on his hands, who can handle
brace and bit, band saw and blade,
He takes his pleasure in birdseye,
tiger, ribbon, and flame, speaks
the language of heartwood,

a man with an instinct for how much
pressure can be brought to bear
on whatever he touches, when
it will stand strong, when
it will naturally give.

Antonia Clark works for a medical software company in Burlington, Vermont, and is co-administrator of an online poetry forum, The Waters. Her poems have appeared in *Loch Raven Review*, *Mannequin Envy*, *The Pedestal Magazine*, *Rattle*, *Stirring*, *The 2River View*, and elsewhere. She loves French food and wine, and plays French café music on a sparkly purple accordion.

Robert Farnsworth

MATTERING

Sometimes hearing new music,
the kind that thrills the triceps,
starts a cool cascade in the nape,
I wonder what if I'd heard this

back at twenty? Would my life have
turned, prompted by this beauty,
for good or ill, elsewhere? What if
then this something-like-a-door

had swung open inside of me?
But no, this melody could not have
existed then, at least not just this
way, and something in my body seems

fit for it only now. Now come May
I crank the skylights open, let
a slow freight train's trundle pour
in on evening air, and spend uncertain

morning light replacing the world
with testimony. The exterminator
waves his brass wand gently along
the brick foundations of my neighbor's

house. A circular saw suffers through
fresh lumber, behind doubled hammer
blows at work on a distant roof. More
efficiency, durability. . . . And this more

comprehensively gorgeous music
I play again, again, avid for the taste
it gives of experienced, jubilant sorrow,
from which derives an old premise

even journalists would dismiss—
the world is growing, growing up;
a world that makes such music,
where every fervency of yes and no

admits a gentle irony, but where
honest admiration of the sky is still
required, that world must be growing
more complex, more aware. It isn't.

It is not. Suffering, pleasure, or
awareness of old suffering, old pleasure
simply come to seem more layered
and acute, like this changeable

spring sky. The floater in my left
eye veers across humid air that coils
from the street in a blast of sun, which
then diminuendos as the piano starts

battering the room with strange chords.
And if I know the simple hunger that
makes me confuse coincidence with
design, complexity with growth, music

makes me know, insists upon my
knowing. And insists as well, tenderly,
terribly, upon another knowing,
undulantly rising in the distance.

SOUND CHECK

Shape the mind so as to have it, among
the hours, repeatedly assailed, as if by
some demand imperfectly remembered,

and north light will say, Answer this,
after a long July day has sunk through
the refuge you've made of memory's

holdings: mismatched windows, a floor's
vague slope, furniture long since sold off
or burned, smells you wait, unaware,

to recognize again, answer this big tent's
evening air. Beneath the PA speakers
the drummer stamps his high hat,

tightens up the bass skin. The guitarist,
squinting as if peering into how it
should sound, twists a string toward E,

and the canvas walls belly in around
a hundred chatting voices. Imagine you
have to explain a flow of insinuations,

to descant for them a comprehension—
that child you saw today, staring at herself
in a hubcap, then, sudden, strong, just

as they all sling on their instruments,
the strained, beloved face in the coffin
arrives: no more, no more evenings,

chords, or clouds. She was tired, tired
of the brook's vague laving of stones,
emerald and nickel, of all the vast and

elaborate world's complicity with
itself. Then the music begins its loud,
ravishing accusation of the dark.

DR. PAYNE

For my money, the sound board guy
is screwing up: more sonic energy
than the hall's air can hold, so much
you can't even hear what key the chords
belong in. The runway into the crowd
is the Raft of the Medusa, adrift in
a maelstrom of imploring arms.
The singer grimaces and gyrates there,
while guitarists take brisk walks
to the edge of the stage, knock-kneed,
ecstatically fingering their axes,
they then leap up and bound back
to the blank wall of speakers, like
some manic backfield, or garage hands
in a frantic tire shop. Bird or dragon
logos, like the personal badges
of Great War fighter pilots, strobe
on a screen, while swinging spots

swim as from guard-towers over us.
I don't want to be skeptical, but
between numbers I do want to tell
my son and his birthday buddies
what a monster Jimmy Page created.
I keep it to myself, watch instead his
gentle refusal of the sweet-smelling
joint approaching down our row.
Something feels scripted about all
of this, lacking in the frenzied joy
or political rage or Dionysian
communion I seem to remember,
or maybe I just can't detect it anymore.
Maybe it's beyond me. It's a bit
troubling to realize the only way out
of the mosh pit would be on the hands
of the dancers. Of course, the doctor
told me just a week later, the main
problems here you can't do anything
about: you're male and you're aging.
That is indeed so, but so ripe for,
yet impervious to riposte. I'd never
tell her, of course, how studiously I'd
sidled away from the first condition,
and what could my denial of the second
matter now? The past, as my son
later told me over supper, was just
the past. Inert, you mean, I said,
though I was smiling too. He had
a point, but valid only so long as
his will obscured the other, shifting
points accruing as his past. Things
can creep back up on you, I said, but I
didn't say—you'll see. It wasn't long
before, inscrutably, he began asking
about his adopted friend's origins
in Bombay, saying that never knowing
where he came from would trouble him.
Well there you are, I didn't say,
funny how the past might not stay still.
And the doctor's vague exasperation came
back to seize me then, just as that evening,
out of a little echoey string-picking came
the sudden, ghastly blast of power chords.

CHORD

To watch people manage enabling
devices—braces, walkers,
wheelchairs—always spells up
uncertainly in me, striking
all the minor notes of knowing,
or supposing what's denied them—

distances, the means to wander
there, to saunter toward hard
purposes, to shape the air
and light with a casual dance,
to devour sumptuous textures
bodily. All that. But then a mild vow

seems woven through the delicate
spokes, glistening either side
of the chair, as it unfolds
beside the car. My looking
becomes listening. To melody
still heard, in the small, achieved

space of evening, soon to be lit
with lamps and gentle speech—
cooking, talking, reading. Shelter.
Fragile, miniature, made-believe.
And outside, still to come again,
all that fiery, unfathomable dark.

NOSTALGIA

for J.G.F.

Midnight alone. I could have made
my house my own with saxophones
or cellos, but hear those guitars?
They're still what gets me and they've
got to be loud, loud as these big
chords belled down the years. There!
There! They're how we'll be history,
how we'll be quaint, how we'll swing
ourselves up the long fish ladder
of middle age, how we'd like to believe
we might become someone's idea

of romance. How the blood can still
be blasted across provinces the careful
mind forgot, still know this pleasure that
makes that mind love its own defeat.
Once just some adrenal trigger maybe,
now they're how we'd hear the lost
(beside ourselves & baffled but
still thrilled) hopes in which we met
ourselves those years ago. Nobody
home, nobody wants me now, no
calls, no one to meet in the country
of old men, so I can crank it up and doze
here in the gale of guitars, mysterious
storms that love once strangely brewed
in my bloodstream. I can see them
lightning in the distance. I remember
how I followed them across state lines,
through all the bridges' narrowed eyes,
how in open cars we wore the brazen
chords like quicksilver breastplates.
Loud sun, loud rain poured all over me
and those I loved. Elders said you'll
use it up, use up all that devotional
passion, those verge-of-weeping smiles,
that sexual simmer—don't do it,
don't. I had to, as they did. And now
into the distances that music makes,
that music flings around my shoulders
like a cape whirling up in some old
wind, out of the here-take-this,
the won't-stay-done, the repose,
reprise, the run-around, out of my
sing-in-those-chains days I'm
sauntering with a smile. Listen
to those guitars. We were
as foolish and brave and certain as
anyone before us. What we knew
the young will never know.

Recent poems of Robert Farnsworth's have appeared in *The Southern Review*, *Antioch Review*, *Smiths Knoll* (U.K.), *Malahat Review* (Canada), *Triquarterly*, and *Ploughshares*. Wesleyan University Press brought out his two collections, *Three Or Four Hills And A Cloud*, and *Honest Water*. He teaches at Bates College in Lewiston, ME, where he lives with his wife and two sons.

Roger Fogelman

BUTTERFLY MESSIAH

Fluttering in from the horizon,
Wing on wing, from the Spring of time,
They come, a gossamer horde
Semaphoring in the endless day,
They meet, mate, and provide
Provender for their young,
And then they die.

But now from this
Another wave is generated to move on.
What then? Well, they believe
That crumpling one brood on another brood,
An infinity of butterflies will coax
An archibutterfly to come,
And lead them from a world of birds and wasps,
And other accomplices of woe
To where the whole taxonomy will bask,
Subjected to eternal shine,
And all the vacuum of the past,
The hurried haste, the glut of spawn
Is justified.

So what are we to say?
Well, birds and butterflies and men
Form an economy of souls
At whom we laugh at our own peril;
And the winged hieroglyphs
Provide a puzzle which
Our whole life is too short to puzzle on.

So here we end, all tantalized
At the solution of the butterflies.

Roger Fogelman was born in New York City in 1940. From an early age, he wrote poetry and for the next 45 odd years, he has continued to produce poems on various subjects, such as nature and

the human condition. He won the Morrison Poetry Prize at Cornell University and the American Academy of Poets Award at the University of Virginia. His work has been published in the American Academy of Poets' Commemorative Volume, 1965; the *Cornell Writer*; and the *Nassau Review*. Dr. Fogelman graduated from Cornell University in 1960 and received an MA and PhD in English from the University of Virginia. He also holds an MS in TESL from Queens College. He currently resides in New York City.

James Grabill

BELIEF

Let's make this as quick as it can be. I don't believe
in the donkey of clover when everything parks a car
on the back of a molecule, if that's what it does.
When what weighs is what might float, and the weight
of river water allows for the newly tamed next electrons.
When a person lights the room, and the walls can finally
become themselves. When what a person cares about
deposits a wreck on the beach: health care, dollars,
the Statue of Liberty, good films, etc. When in shadows
of Farm-All iron wheels, a man in Ohio sees root muskets
glowing darkly under the rapids. And I think this even
if suddenly everything breathes when anything breathes.

For I believe in the one only person, the next one only,
and a next, and a next prayer-beaded, sweat-salted
exchange when a dragonfly reaches an overgrown field.
Daylight has already known nothing and made its will out
to a body that readily shows its ancestors, not to mention
the spiral brain tower in Barcelona or elephantine gymnasium
before us. Buddha prayed as a human, because he had to eat
or die. Quickly he lived for free. I believe he saw
that when we take too much for granted, prices rise
and at once the cost of honest breath is suffering.

James Grabill's poems have appeared in numerous periodicals such as Willow Springs, Poetry East, Ur Vox, Field, East West Journal, and The Common Review. His recent books of poems are *October Wind* (Sage Hill Press, 2006) and *An Indigo Scent after the Rain* (Lynx House Press, 2003), and he has two collections of creative nonfiction, *Finding the Top of the Sky* (Lost Horse Press, 2005) and *Through the Green Fire* (Holy Cow! Press, 1995). He lives in Portland, Oregon, and teaches writing, literature (Beat Lit, Creative Nonfiction, & Shakespeare), and sustainability.

Catherine Harnett

FALLING

In this room, unremarkable and warm, I hold the chair, support my body as we stretch and bend in gentle yoga class. I am afraid that I will fall like the women in my family did, their bones thin as paper.

My mother was a bird, her little skeleton, a frame to hold it in, the heart which failed her in the end. She reached for chairs or counters or our outstretched arms to right herself. I watched her stagger, topsy-turvy and ridiculous. So many accidents: cracked ribs, fractured vertebrae. She shrunk just like her mother had, both frail, chirping things.

With each move, my mind returns to freshman Modern Dance, my black Danskin, Mme. Le Fevre with her Isadora scarf demanding that we become storm, or rage or tiger, her music avant garde and jarring. I am not who I am now, tests confirming the slow degradation of my bones. I am the girl whose wrist is safe, who would just sustain a bruise.

MUSIC LESSON

My daughter takes her weekly lesson from the woman trained at Julliard, demanding and aloof, who teaches pieces we have come to hate. Thank God we are through Christmas and its cheery melodies. In the outer room I wait for the hour to be up, listen to my daughter struggle with the notes. When she says goodbye to us, the teacher drops her eyes; she has recognized my graceless metamorphosis.

It has spread; they cannot get it all. My hair is thin as my father's was at seventy; the taste of metal in my mouth. My daughter plays Fur Elise over and again, her small hands, her concentration. Does she know that spring will be the end of things for me? How awkward it will be letting go just as the bright birds perch, the hostas and the ferns, thought dead, emerge each year.

It feels unfair to have to leave among the beginnings
of so many living things. Soon the weeping cherry's leaves
will green, the numbered days. I pray my girl will play
her heart out at the June recital, remembering each note,
how it is played *poco moto*, with a little motion. I wait
for spring to come, and its endings; I hear my daughter
practicing again, the hard middle of the piece,
the metronome ticking time.

BEQUEST

Cadavers provided to medical students are usually identified only by age and the cause of death. Students sometimes feel that naming their cadaver honors its life.

Well here I am, all yours. Skin and bones,
but still a find. Bequeathed to you, I'm cold
and quite inflexible, so unlike myself.
You are still a boy, look at the way
your hands tremble with the knife. Is mine
the first heart you've ever had? So pale
and unremarkable, it was my assassin in the end.
All dolled up and rosy once, it broke so beautifully.
If you choose to name me—and I hope you do,
please dispense with names like Millicent or Pearl;
I'd like a modern one that ends with double "e" or
something foreign I could wear a peignoir in.

There were nights I wondered how I'd look
in just a sheet, and whether you'd take notes,
and who would keep me company in that cold place.
Maybe a derelict, a John Doe who no one missed, or
some girl whose tattoos said everything we need to know.
Or perhaps someone like me, fresh from the Home
after a rousing game of hearts. I've looked so forward
to your touch, your gloved hands, the humming light.
You will be the very last who enters me. I guess you'll do.

EXECUTION

His last wish is plum or peach,
fruit with something pink around the pit,
juice that lingers on the chin, one sweet
bite to break the skin. He has never wanted
anything so much, except that girl who sent
him here, her stunned glance when it was done.
There is nothing left except the hours.
There is so much fruit.

We lay together on our bed and watch the news
unfold. There is no clemency. After years, our hands
no longer touch. Nothing lingers on the skin. Pears
languish on our tree, once bountiful, filling bowls
throughout our house. There is nothing left for us
except the hours and hours. So much time.

Catherine Harnett is the author of two volumes of poetry, *Evidence* and *Still Life*, both published by the Washington Writers Publishing House. Her poems appeared in the *American Poetry Review*, *the Chattahoochie Review*, *Fine Madness* and numerous other journals. She also writes fiction; her short story "Her Gorgeous Grief" originally appeared in the *Hudson Review* and is included in the anthology *Writes of Passage*, which is a collection of coming of age stories published in the *Hudson Review* during the last fifty years. She lives in Fairfax, Virginia, with her daughter.

Mark Harshman

FOUR MOVEMENTS AFTER CARL RUGGLES

1

Mountains, large mountains, and black.
Mountains upon mountains stretching back
large against sky, clouds of mountains,
of shadows, reaching and turning again and again
back upon themselves, black tumbles of rock
higher and higher in a thin, last sliver
of rainy light, darkening in night.

2

The sky so filled with rock, black, shadow
so much mountain the sky barely squeezes through,
and where it does, torn with wind, the clouds
stream in ragged tatters.

3

Talk as if you know, as if you
know anything about anything,
as if time and facts could manage it, could
assemble back the black faces of those crags,
spill as large as they were
the clouds of them out here,
as if they were words, their shadows, the tumbled reach
of horizon they dominated, the silver plate of sky
riven with tracings,
as if a language were there
to be understood, believed.

4

Had I not been small once and tucked
into darkness once a day, week after week,
once upon a time? Had I not seen dark mount
the bedroom walls larger than the space between
all I knew, a sky high with lightlessness,
and know then that this would be a part of me,
and nothing to do with fear this, that place before,

where the repetition of nights upon night
practiced a way back into the welcome dark.
Enough, then, to know nightfall as a house
of comfort, full of clear views, vistas
where mountains reached beyond black,
spilled rocks into gaps strewn with shadows,
cracked and torn, and clouds
raced with silver and finally, further,
a pale, thin horizon stood
through which might return the dreams
that perpetuate believing
in such things as these
endlessly.

PIETÀ

These fragile leaves
give the best light,
silent torches of gold frost
lighting the setting dusk-light.
Off and below the curve of the hill
the poplars rise to meet her.
She comes to see them,
their incendiary fall,
their passage as certain
as that one of his
who was her own.
She comes each day
to learn at this place,
where the hollow cleaves the hill,
to learn by heart her remembering
of where in the slow, burning light
they, these old poplars
on this old ground, where they go.
She would follow
as far as Hamlin stone
into its dark hold of lives
if death's piping would show her reason,
would follow now into this wood,
under these poplars, their slow fire,
go into the rain, go in this cold
into the heart of what's lost
too soon, too early

to rise, to come again
quick and light.
She would go to find
if under these leaves,
their last light, there was something, some clue
could give back the path
her life led before, could return
its light, its comfort.
But what light there is
fades, lifts tall,
regular shadows
returning to her only the weather,
the season, the minutes,
the wind a drench of fog,
the road a lash of distances,
the earth a maze of hills,
and there, in those hills,
their ancient stone,
will be the only succor,
their time alone
long enough
for forgetting and remembering,
for remembering
the way the leaves were golden
mirrors the evening the news came,
for remembering as she must,
as she did then, the quality of stone,
its holdfast against life, herself,
remembering to return, make the fire,
make, in its gentle shadows, over stone
a light, a meal,
and afterwards reach toward sleep,
remembering in the cold room
to pull the comforts
to her chin,
the quilted swirl of crazy pieces,
their twining branches of cloth
like a twining tracery of leaves,
these few leaves at the last
the only light, a glimmer
vouchsafed
of the last light.

THE OPEN BORDERS

—for J.

At first any chance would have done,
I'd have taken any, a dance, a movie, some
old friend to plant the words
between us, any that might have filled the air
already heavy with summer, and tense, words
to erase inhibition, extend boundaries, syllables
to translate what was, could be
so sweet . . . crazy
it was what you could do to me there
upon that foreign land of yours, your fingers,
the small buttons of them opening
and closing upon me, your lips, the smell of your hair
couldn't it have been easy, come easy,
those words I wanted to come
to each other as if finger to finger, familiar,
so familiar there would be none
of this forethought, no planning,
just the evening, this place
drenched with birds, their songs,
the path long with flowers and sky,
the promising all of a world
surreptitiously doing this, our courting,
for us, it falling in love with us,
and so might we have each other
stumbled over our quiet
wordless into such a place, a place
so small in the wide world
no one would think to bother it with words,
not even us, a space
so perfectly beyond
compass and map, blue lines and ink,
that it might hold time timeless
and give back to us
for having been there,
blind and breathless,
ourselves,
within the open borders of love.

Raised in rural Indiana, Marc Harshman has lived his adult life in West Virginia where, for many years, he was a grade school teacher. Periodical publication of his poems and essays include *The Georgia Review*, *Wilderness*, *Southern Humanities Review*, *Shenandoah*, and *The Progressive*. He is the author of three chapbooks of poetry including most recently *Local Journeys* (Finishing Line, 2004). He is also the author of ten children's picture books including *The Storm*, a Smithsonian Notable Book for Children. His eleventh children's title is forthcoming from Dutton/Penguin.

Michael F. Hogan

NEWPORT, THE FIFTIES

I was raised in the decade of the death of the elms
with the sight of Sputnik twinkling in the night sky
where one could walk the last of the driftwood beaches
and see weathered cottages beyond the dunes.
Before the rise of condos, before the presidency was for sale
when you could still ride a horse up Harrison
and knew most of the cops by name.

On red and orange Novembers where the tang
of burning maple and oak leaves filled the crisp air
Goelets and the Vanderbilts were real though outsized
and we watched from the statue of Rochambeau
naval destroyers perched off King's Park
like gray scavengers among twelve meter racers
manly crewed by tanned Australians.

The great swing of winter hurled snow in mid-December
to drift above our porch to second-story windows
and the washed sheets on backyard clotheslines
cracked and snapped in my mother's red-knuckled hands.
Cold sun blinded young sledders on ice-covered snow
and reckless boys skated past the Lilly Pond where
saltwater marsh met the fresh spring.

Then Easter with tulips and jonquils
and women walking out with white dresses and straw hats
and corsages and carnations and the Hallelujah Chorus.
Nuns at Salve Regina escorted not-quite-convented girls
as the first buds appeared on the trees
and the March breeze tossed the stars and stripes
over the courthouse memorial of war dead.

We walked over the dead each day then and knew it.
From colonial sabers under the lawn of Trinity
to the Spanish graybeards at Touro
the ground was full of ghosts, and trees with angels.
In the damp tunnels of Fort Adams catarrhal soldiers roamed,
and in the foam of the waves on Narragansett Bay
floated the light souls of young seamen.

When summer at last lacquered the seaside canvas
it became a town least like itself.
Then all the damp regiments retreated underground;
the sailors were chased from the Thames Street bars
and the cobblestone streets swept cleaned and gentrified.
All the shops were preening and pretentious
with inflated prices foreshadowing what we'd all become.

THE HISTORIAN

The historian forgets what century he's in.
This is not a bad thing.
The bridge he walks across at twilight is devoid of cars
and he can hear the dark water flowing below.
No house is more than two stories
and the streets wide enough for only one carriage to pass.
At nightfall the lamplighter comes
and there is no glare beyond the small flare of the gas
so that stars in their myriad brilliance shine as if over Sonora.
The only satellite is a pale moon which follows him dimly
as he passes the church (still open at this hour!)
when a drunken penitent inches his way to the altar on ragged knees
and a lonely widow prays at the side altar to the Virgin of Sorrows.
There are rumors of wars to the north
but the citizens here are untroubled in their dreams:
this life and the life hereafter is one seamless pageant.
Soon it will be morning and then evening again
the constellations wheeling across the sky
the cobblestone streets holding the heat of the day
as the historian makes his return down the vacant street
across the bridge
and lamplight flickers on the dark waters below.

Michael Hogan is the author of fourteen books, including *Making Our Own Rules* and *The Irish Soldiers of Mexico*. His work has appeared in *The Paris Review*, *The American Poetry Review* and the *Colorado Review*. He currently lives in Guadalajara, Mexico.

Kathryn Jacobs

WHEN EXPLANATIONS DON'T HELP

(in memory of Raymond)

It's hard to live with someone you can't see.
Like living with a ghost: you learn the rules,
but it's another thing entirely
to follow them. For instance, swallow tails:
elongated and slim, like scissors in
a surgeon's hand. Until you see one fly:
two tails, one body. Naturally you spin
about to point . . . and jerk, and stop, and try
to look as though you didn't. People stare,
or glance behind you quickly, and away,
because you clearly saw somebody there,
and crazies make them nervous. You could say
you used to know someone who used to care,
and birds make you forget, but . . . that's okay.

Kathryn Jacobs is a poet and medievalist at Texas A&M University. Her chapbook of poetry, *Advice Column*, appears from Finishing Line Press in November, and she has an e-chapbook sponsored by Poetry Midwest (*The Boy Who Loved Pigeons*). Her poems have appeared widely in such journals as *New Formalist*, *Measure*, *Washington Literary Review*, *Acumen* (UK), *Pulse*, *Slant*, *Candelabrum* (UK), *DeCanto*, *Quantum Leap* (UK), *Mezzo Cammin*, *Deronda Review*, *The Same*, *Contemporary Rhyme*, *Ship of Fools*, *Eclectic Muse*, *Barefoot Muse*, *Mobius*, *Chimaera*, *Toasted Cheese*, *14 by 14*, *Wordgathering*, and *The Interpreter's House* (UK), and *Road Not Taken*. She has also published a scholarly book on literary marriage contracts in the Middle Ages and Renaissance (University Press of Florida) and sixteen articles in periodicals. She has two daughters. She lost her 18-year old son, Ray, in 2005.

Dan Johnson

ON THE LAST NIGHT

On the last night, near some ferns, a star
revealed the little bone to me: part of
somebody's knuckle or thumb, I thought.
But it was smaller than human, light as
an eggshell in my palm. When I looked for
other pieces, worn equally smooth or
scattered and chipped, all I found was
the pulse in my throat. The stream
swelled with muddy clouds; each
tree leaned into one darkness, dim
branches clattering. I listened
as long as I could, still wanting
the whole hand, the paw.

WHEN VICTORY IS DECLARED

An old woman's eyes shine
and people gather near the swollen canal.
A child's breath hangs beside me in the air.

Overnight, a fence appears. Everyone hears
hammering, the motors and trucks.
Soon the fence is topped with wire.

Something beyond our reach is nearly complete
like a castle rising out of fog,
or a dozen shovels dropped at my feet.

The crowd moves slowly toward the square.
Voices go silent beside the fence.
It's the first day of spring.

THE DAY'S STORY

So this huge flounder washes up overnight.
Next morning, some kids carry it to the dock

and we come to watch its twisting mouth.
I say it's sleeping off a hangover.

A woman is singing somewhere.
The children stare into flounder eyes.

Someone wants coffee. The children are
burning in the sun. Flags go slack.

So then they heave their catch
into the low waves. It starts drifting

holding the last of our ambition.

Dan Johnson's poetry has appeared in three collections, most recently in *Come Looking* (WWPH), and in a variety of journals, including *Rattle*, *West Branch*, *Gargoyle*, *Delmarva Quarterly*, and *Poet Lore*. His poems have also been anthologized in *31 Arlington Poets* (CD, Paycock Press), *Orpheus & Company* (University Press of New England), *Hungry As We Are* (WWPH), and *A Fine Frenzy: Contemporary Poets Respond to Shakespeare* (University of Iowa Press). He is public information representative for the National Ecological Observatory Network (NEON), and lives in Chevy Chase, MD.

Susan A. Katz

DREAMING MISSOURI

Last night I dreamed
Missouri; it could have been
Wisconsin, I've never
been there either, it was
Missouri because I liked
the way the word fell
off my tongue, slowly
like a distant siren fading;
once

I dreamed adventure, stars, solar
eclipse, Atlantis
sinking but I drowned
beneath a swell of tears
and someone else's screams
surfacing
from sleep, my eyes
believed the solid feel
of walls, the boundary
of ceilings; last night

it was Missouri, unnamed
streets and faces blank
as wind-washed sand.

Days move precisely into
nights and nights are races
I must win, I fortify
myself with dreams as tame
as names of places
I have never been.

THE SEPARATE SIDES OF NEED

I

Mother, he was meant for mountains,
meaning always to go, he stayed

more generous than wise, he kept
his promises and stored his dreaming
like secrets escaping now and then
in whispers from his eyes; so sure
of him, I dreamed him more than father,
while you believed him more than man.

Understanding nothing of his death,
we thought to measure time in years;
betrayed, his grin was boyish still,
his skin tan and weathered, his hands,
his hands that promised everything, strong.

Beyond the wreckage
of our separate lives
we moved like cripples
to each other's need
and carried him a while
in sorrow like a heavy
sack, willing him away
calling him back.

II

Beside his neatly tended grave
you bend to ivy wrinkling to stone,
parting the years to find him cold,
your fingers stroke the marble
of his name, sorrow beating at you
like storms that break
against the trunks of stout stone trees.

III

Oppressed by rusting gates that hung
at angles to the wind and concrete paths
that buckled to a frozen soil, knowing he
would not warm his hands beside the fire
of our grief or settle for a place
that did not breathe, I looked
for him where mountains move
through space to time.

IV

Against my cheek, I feel his breath
warm like tears, and hear his voice
remembering my name; his fingers stretch
like shadows to my hand, across
the face of afternoon.

He comes now often,
wrapped in winter and lives
like sleeping things beneath
a covering of snow; Mother,
I cannot go with you again
to worship at his bones;
he is here, what need
has he for stones.

Susan A. Katz is the author of three poetry collections, *The Separate Sides of Need*, *Two Halves of the Same Silence*, and *An Eye for Resemblances*. Her work has appeared in *The American Scholar*, *Negative Capability*, *The Kansas Quarterly*, *Anthology of Magazine Verse* and *Yearbook of American Poetry*, *When I Am an Old Woman I Shall Wear Purple* and numerous other literary magazines and anthologies. She lives and works out of her home in the Litchfield Hills of Connecticut.

Judy Kronenfeld

BLESS HER

A bit of good luck spurts
from the phone—your daughter's swooped
on a coveted job—and you let out a whoop
from your diaphragm, you high-five
the air. It's been black as hell's
receiving dock around home; now you're bathing
under a cascade of light in a Baroque painting:
the sound of your shout wants to ripple out
and touch the far shores, the light
wants to coat more bowed heads,

but there's no one to tell.
Your confidante has been having a bout
of very bad luck and you know to call
would be flaunting a red boogie dress in the midst
of a funeral. Oh the grief
of the nicked, tarnished
human soul! Yours, because you want her to thrill
to your luck as if it were her own;
hers because there's no way she can.
You wish you could hear
your mother (dead) shout
Gott Sei Dank!, gratifying
the assumption that good luck
belongs to her progeny as surely
as white purses to July. The ripples
fizz out; the light grows dim
as a 40-watt bulb.

So you ring up a cousin
on your mother's side,
you haven't talked to for—what?
a year?—and bless her!
Brava! That's
my girl! her voice exclaims,
bouffant with smiles, bolstering
the illusion families are for.

*But really, how did she get
so good about good luck? you're thinking
as you embark on the inflated
luxury raft, Elect. It can't be because
she's "family," since most of the clan excel
at the deflating sneer (when your
luck grows, there's less to go
around) —*

*I always knew she'd get
ahead! your cousin says in her
larky voice. You practically
levitate off your seat. Expedited
by winged Fedexim, the news of your luck
speeds past the Powers-that-be—
It's up to! it's over the Cherubim
and Seraphim! It's hurdling
the ninth circle of Paradise! It's splashing
into the n-e-e-c-t-a-a-r of the r-o-o-o-s-e-
of light! And the rose, wholeheartedly,
nods.*

NEW BLOOM

Cloud-foam lavender, heart-glow
topaz, arrow-pierce of blue—the colors
of attraction, my eyes the bees
which come to dwell
flying and alighting,
my eyes the humming
birds, drinking in the nectar
of the buds newly opening
their scarlet throats,
then skimming over to the star-field
of snow-in-summer
shimmering
like the last sparks
of Roman candles. Can it be
that now when my body
no longer sends or receives
the frantic Morse code
of desire, the world itself
can signal, the world itself
be received?

Judy Kronenfeld's poems have appeared in many journals including *The Portland Review*, *Poetry International*, *The Cimarron Review*, *The Evansville Review*, *Natural Bridge*, *The Louisville Review*, *Spillway*, *Pebble Lake Review*, *Hiram Poetry Review*, *Spoon River Poetry Review*, *The Pedestal*, *Barnwood*, and *The Women's Review of Books*, as well as in anthologies including *Blue Arc West: An Anthology of California Poets* (Tebot Bach, 2006), and *Red, White and Blues: Poets on the Promise of America* (Iowa U. P., 2004). A book of her poems, *Shadow of Wings*, came out in 1991 (Bellflower Press), a chapbook (*Disappeared Down Dark Wells, and Still Falling* [The Inevitable Press]) in 2000, and another chapbook, *Ghost Nurseries* (Finishing Line Press) in 2005. Her collection, *Light Lowering in Diminished Sevenths*, won *The Litchfield Review* Poetry Book Prize for 2007 and was published by *The Litchfield Review Press*, in summer, 2008. She teaches in the Department of Creative Writing, UC Riverside.

Lyn Lifshin

CHAMPLAIN, BRANBURY, THE LAKES AT NIGHT

always women in the
dark on porches talking
as if in blackness their
secrets would be safe.
Cigarettes glowed like
Indian paintbrush.
Water slapped the
deck. Night flowers
full of things with wings,
something you almost
feel like the fingers
of a boy moving, as if
by accident, under
sheer nylon and felt
in the dark movie house
as the chase gets louder,
there and not there,
something miscarried
that maybe never was.
The mothers whispered
about a knife, blood.
Then, they were laughing
the way you sail out of
a dark movie theater
into wild light as if no
thing that happened
happened

MIDDLEBURY POEM

Milky summer nights,
the men stay waiting, First National Corner
where the traffic light used to be, wait

as they have all June evenings of their lives.
Lilac moss and lily of the valley
sprout in the cooling air as

Miss Damon, never late for thirty years,
hurries to unlock the library, still
hoping for a sudden man to spring tall from the

locked dark of mysterious card catalogues to
come brightening her long dusty shelves.
And halfway to dark

boys with vacation bicycles
whistle flat stones over the bridge,
longing for secret places where
rocks are blossoming girls with damp thighs.

Then nine o'clock falls thick on lonely books
and all the unclaimed fingers and
as men move home through bluemetal light,
the Congregational Church bells

ringing as always four minutes late,
the first hayload of summer rumbles through
town and all the people shut their eyes
dreaming a wish

Lifshin's *Another Woman Who Looks like Me* was just published by Black Sparrow at David Godine October, 2006. It has been selected for the 2007 Paterson Award for literary excellence for previous finalists of the Paterson Poetry Prize (order@godine.com). Also out in 2006 is her prize winning book about the famous, short lived beautiful race horse, *Ruffian: The Licorice Daughter: My Year with Ruffian* from Texas Review Press. Others of Lifshin's recent prizewinning books include *Before It's Light* published winter 1999-2000 by Black Sparrow Press, following their publication of *Cold Comfort* in 1997. Other recently published books and chapbooks include *In Mirrors* from Presa Press and *Upstate: An Unfinished Story* from Foot Hills and *The Daughter I Don't Have* from Plan B Press. Other new books include *When a Cat Dies, Another Woman's Story, Barbie Poems, She Was Last Seen Treading Water, and Mad Girl Poems, New Film about a Woman in Love with the Dead*, came from march street press in 2003. She has published more than 120 books of poetry, including *Marilyn Monroe, Blue Tattoo*; won awards for her nonfiction and edited four anthologies of women's writing, including *Tangled Vines, Ariadne's Thread and Lips Unsealed*. Her poems have appeared in most literary and poetry magazines, and she is the subject of an award-winning documentary film, *Lyn Lifshin: Not Made of Glass*, available from Women Make Movies. Her poem, "No More Apologizing@" has been called among the most impressive documents of the women's poetry movement by Alicia Ostriker. An update to her Gale Research Projects Autobiographical series, *On the*

Outside, Lips, Blues, Blue Lace, was published spring 2003. *What Matters Most* and *August Wind* were recently published. *Tsunami* is forthcoming from Blue Unicorn. Arielle Press will publish *Poets (Mostly) Who Have Touched Me, Living and Dead. All True, Especially the Lies summer of 2006*. Texas Review Press will publish *Barbaro: Beyond Brokenness* in March 2008 and World Parade Books will publish *Desire* in March 2008. Red Hen will publish *Persephone* in March 2008. Coatalism press is publishing *92 Rapple Drive* and Goose River Press will publish *Nutley Pond*. for interviews, photographs, more bio material, reviews, interviews, prose, samples of work and more, her web site is www.lynlifshin.com.

Diane Lockward reviews Barbara Crooker

Crooker, Barbara. *Line Dance*. Word Press, 2008. 80pp. \$17.00.

In *Line Dance*, her second full-length collection, Barbara Crooker paints life as a dance. Her dancers perform at weddings, parties, and reunions. They dance through the garden and while doing the laundry. They change partners; sometimes they dance alone; sometimes they stumble. But they keep on dancing. They are the living and the dead who weave their way back and forth between the past and the present, through dance lines and poetic lines.

Crooker scatters poems about dancing throughout the collection. The title poem, which serves as the preface, is followed by “Miss Susan’s Dance Academy,” “A Sonnet for Mr. Rutherford,” who had his own School of Dance, and “Fortieth High School Reunion.” All kinds of dances take place—line dance, ballroom dancing, ballet, dirty boogie, and even “the dance of love” as Crooker lifts dancing to the metaphorical level. Undergirding this central motif are numerous references to dancing. The dark vegetables in “Eggplants” do a “lovely dance” and invite us to join in: “Come,” they say, “sway with us in the dark.” In “Listen” we are told that the “cardinals red song dances in your blood.” And in “This Poem” sheets on the clothesline become sheets of paper doing “their own kind of crazy dance.”

The collection comes alive with motion. People dance, but they also travel, cook, garden, and climb. All of nature participates in this frenzy of activity. In “The Slate Grey Junco,” for example, wind “rattles the windows, shakes the house, / and blows the snow in great sheets across the yard.” Crooker energizes her poems with skillful use of personification. “The moon spills its milk” and “Two crows / resume their argument.” A hummingbird wears a cape, and a crow plays a guitar. “. . . trees breathe in what we exhale, / clap their green hands in gratitude,” and “Morning / draws her curtains.”

Of course, we can’t have a dance without music. That music is provided by such poems as “45s, LPs,” “One Song,” “Question Mark and the Mysterions,” “Blues for Karen,” and “My Middle Daughter, on the Edge of Adolescence, Learns to Play the Saxophone.” We also find singers, especially rock singers, scattered throughout—Frank Sinatra, Bruce Springsteen, Jimi Hendrix, Mama Cass Elliot, Janis Joplin, and Elvis.

Numerous references to singing add to the joyful noise. In “Gratitude” “the whole world sings.” In “The VCCA Fellows Visit the Holiness Baptist Church, Amherst, Virginia” the visitors, upon arrival, find that “the choir is already singing, swaying to the music.” The poem ends with a musical metaphor: “. . . our hearts / lift out of our chests, tiny birds flying off to light / in the red buds, to sing and sing and sing.” Several poems bring in instruments—piano, chapel bells, guitars, and drums. Others incorporate song lyrics. Nature, too, makes its contribution to the music. “Hard Bop” refers to mockingbirds singing. In “Valentine” even “the snow is busy, composing / its small white music . . .”

The music motif is aided by this poet's ear for the music of language. In "Zero at the Bone" Crooker cleverly repeats the first syllable of "ticket" in the last syllable of "arithmetic." In "Arabesque" she uses a lovely echoing technique in "sunlight / *filtering* through the plane trees, / a dance of shadow and leaf. / Café *filtré* shimmered . . . // roses everywhere, / crinkled and rucked *flirts* . . ." "The Slate Grey Junco," with its "snow, folding back / on itself, warping and woofing / the scarf of the storm," gives us a series of hard syllables and the rock and roll of the *f*, *s*, and *r* sounds. "Poem on a Line by Anne Sexton, 'We are All Writing God's Poem'" uses anadiplosis. Note how each new line or sentence picks up a word from the preceding line or sentence:

I've driven into spring, as the woods revive
with a loud shout, redbud trees, their gaudy
scarves flung over bark's bare limbs. Barely doing
sixty, I pass a tractor trailer called *Glory Bound*,
and aren't we just? Just yesterday,
I read Li Po: "There is no end of things
in the heart," but it seems like things
are always ending—vacation or childhood,
relationships, stores going out of business,
like the one that sold jeans that really fit—
And where do we fit in?

The dancers may sometimes be out of step, the musicians occasionally out of tune, but this poet never is. With admirable poetic craft, Barbara Crooker sets in motion a dance that her readers will find consistently graceful and familiar.

Diane Lockward's collection, *Eve's Red Dress*, was published by Wind Publications in 2003. Her second collection, *What Feeds Us*, appeared in 2006, also from Wind. Recent work appears in *Poet Lore*, *North American Review*, and *Prairie Schooner*, as well as in the Poetry Daily anthology and Garrison Keillor's *Good Poems for Hard Times*. Diane works as a poet-in-the schools for the New Jersey State Council on the Arts. Her poems appeared in *Innisfree 2*.

Judith McCombs

HUMAN LOVE POEM

Sun wakes us, and the squirrels yell
from ice-slick trees. You stroke my breast,
I curl around your newborn warmth
and give you milk. Small skull, small foot,
we share the river of your thirst,
the blood-warmed slope you burrow in,
the breathing murmurs and the pulse
that drifts into your feeding sleep.

Outside, beyond your dreaming hands,
tree shadows vein the ice-bound roofs.
Raccoons break elder buds, or fight
for bread I left beneath the tree;
their young go hungry, cold, go nowhere
in our subdivided world.
Is it the fit survive? My species'
cunning and its luxuries
prevail: therefore in helpless trust

you nuzzle, suckling, predator
as I am predator, the fierce
inheritors of earth: therefore
I do what any creature would:
I turn to you, and feed my young.

ODDS

It is true that those who push the weak ones aside
to get to the lifeboat/the ammo/the grub—
who marooned on an island of ice
lie in their tents, nursing their grudges,
threatening and filching while others provide—
may live to be rescued, beget, and die in warm beds.

And those who are lost early on, without issue, stay dead.

And those who go out on the floes or the edge of the cliff
to bring back the eggs/the hatchlings/the seal meat for all,
who when birds and mammals have left
and no ship appeared, make soup from skins and offal,
and share it out fairly, so all may live—

even those who secretly give scraps of their own
to the sick and the hungry-eyed young
may live to be rescued, raise children, and die in warm beds.

Can we ask evolution, or whatever god
is calling these shots:
Why are you stacking the deck for both sides?
Are goodness and greed equally fit to survive?
Or would you rather, after that fuss
in the garden, keep the big-headed creatures like us
from fixing the odds?

AFTER LONG FLIGHT

Who knows where joy first was, or next will be?

After those hours of night becoming grey day,
the long flight home passing over the ever-lit cities,
the last sleeping cliffs like map-shapes fading,
we saw, as we climbed through clouds in aquarial light,
our plane's shadow float like a toy on cloud banks below,
riding the wave-troughs, the fathoms, the risings.

How many time zones, breached in our sleep, go under
before light slants on my face, and yours, and below us
the earth takes shape, white waves on our new-found shore?

Then the tiny old man in a frayed Chinese suit
across from us, alone and bent in his waiting,
quietly raised the white pasteboard box from his lap
to the amber light in the plane's scarred window,

and finches sang out, unseen, and his grey wrinkled face
eased with their song, and we and others
were washed with his joy, though he never looked up from his place.

How could we thank him?

He passed through the terminal doors
bearing his treasure before him, rapt as a boy
given charge of a lantern or torch, to show his elders
the path that leads through darkness to a full summer lake.

Judith McCombs grew up in almost all the continental states, in a geodetic surveyor's family. Her work appears in *Calyx*, *Nimrod* (a Neruda Award), *Poet Lore*, *Poetry Northwest*, *Potomac Review* (Poetry Prize), *Prairie Schooner*, *Prism*, *Sisters of the Earth*, and on-line in *Beltway*, *Innisfree Poetry Journal*, and *Not Just Air*. She has held NEH and Canadian Senior Embassy Fellowships, and Michigan and Maryland Arts Awards. The poems appearing here are from her *Habit of Fire: Poems Selected & New*, a 2006 finalist for the Milton Kessler Poetry Book Award. "Human Love Poem" won first prize in the 2007 Arlington Arts GREEN contest. She teaches at the Writer's Center in Bethesda, edits for Word Works, and arranges the Kensington Row Bookshop Poetry Readings.

Bettie Mikosinski

WITHOUT THE SHADE OF LEAVES

Thin strands, spun
from sun, turn
through days of wind
then rain, breathing
slow—the way
limbs move now
a different sound, bent
by wind—his fingers
stiff, unable to climb damp
threads, spun with only dreams,
skin—a piece of wing.

Bettie Mikosinski lives in Annandale, Virginia with her husband Casey. Bettie writes, publishes poetry, and gives poetry readings in the Washington DC area. She has studied in various University poetry workshops with Roland Flint, William Stafford, Lucille Clifton, and Margaret Atwood. She won a prize for fiction and a prize for poetry, placing a poem in The Writer's Center book, "Center Pieces." She has been published in *Rustlings*, *Phoebe*, *Center Pieces*, *NotJustAir.org*, and *Potomac Review*. Bettie has been a featured reader at: the Town Hall in Leesburg, Virginia; the Potomac Review Reading Series at St. Elmo's Coffee Pub in Virginia; Barnes & Noble-Bowie, Maryland; IOTA, in Arlington Virginia; "Poets on Poetry" dialogue reading at the Arts Club of Washington; Kensington Row Book Shop; Poesis in Arlington Virginia; Kensington Day of the Book; and The Writer's Center, The Friends of William Stafford birthday reading.

Mayuku Omeresanine

NSUKKA

Undulating green hills surround this town;
Frightful to natives in the past and even now.
The hills slopping gently up and down in a continuous stretch;
isolating it from neighbouring towns.
The original people of the land with footstep pattern galloping in adjustment to the hills.

The earth made of rough red stone harsh to foot-wears and leg alike.
This is Nsukka with its cold wind;
The trees atop the mountain of a darker shade of green than the mountain.
The cry of the vegetation fauna active and loud.

Mayuku Omeresanine is 25 years old and has just graduated from the University of Nigeria where he studied Economics. He lives with his Mom and siblings in Warri, Nigeria. He likes reading novels and history books. When he is free he watches Football matches.

Scott Owens

THE LAND ABOVE THIS LINE IS OAK AND HICKORY—BELOW IS PINE

From Thomas Anderson's 1817 Map of
South Carolina's Edgefield District

The difference between granite and clay
falling away to limestone, between trees
that break and those that bend out of the ground
roots and all, between stars blacked out
for half the year and those that shine year-round
faint but sure through yellow bristle of pine.
The difference between sandspur and beggar lice,
mistletoe and muscadine, plateau and sandhill
running out to plain, between names like Frogmore
and Clover, Soul's Harbor and Hard Labour Creek.

Each day they meet at the line like old friends,
shake hands above it, share the earth below.

Growing up along this line we knew that pine
meant climbing higher on limbs getting thinner
with each step upward, that oak meant broad limbs
branching out from the same trunk, a cradle
you could hide in past nightfall.

This is a very specific place in every mind
it touches. It will be something you swung from,
something you crossed despite the danger of buckshot,
something you held tight before you,
your back bending against its going away.

In winter even the river stands up like a line.
It may now slide off the bed it has made
and not spread or fade into earth,
but splinter, shard, run like a great tongue
across your doorstep, dividing your house in half.

"Your house is sliding down the hill
and will soon be in the road," says one
to the other. "Yours is caving in
on itself and will be a pile of rubble
by next year." They depend on this.

“Died mostly of death,” she says,
“like any day that won’t last.”

He spends his days counting, drawing lines
on maps frayed with rain. There is hardly a boundary
he hasn’t crossed, though even he can’t see
the lines he swears are there. The secret meaning
of the line is that it’s made to be climbed
over, crawled under, walked around.

THE IMPOSSIBILITY OF STILLNESS

I turned my back
to the stream, not wanting,
for once, to see movement.
I lay down, flush
to the ground, stared
in perfect stillness
at a clear sky, held
hands from wringing,
kept fingers from turning
blades of grass.
I quieted thought,
calmed away anxiety,
remorse, let tensions
slip like rain
into the earth
beneath me.
Nothing came.
Nothing rose
from the pool of the past
to pull me back.
I waited.
Nothing moved me
to tears, laughter,
words.
Still,
there were things
I couldn’t stop,
breath, pulse,
desire.

SOUL SOCIETY

This is my son's spot, where the river
turns and heads away, a place he widened
with his own hands, scooping out sand,
to a beach of his own making. He likes it here,
beneath the biggest tree around,
out of sight of everyone else.

The water is high today and orange with mud.
I've disturbed a flock of starlings,
gregarious in their warnings, their proclamations
of squatter's rights. I shouldn't be here.
I should be back with the others,
mingling, playing the good host,
but I've just read a poem about patterns,
and now I see honeysuckle climb
the spiral stair of a sweetgum tree.

Everything grows here, things I cannot name,
some wild lily at my foot, a five-leafed vine,
something almost like dogwood, a tree
with its own camouflage, green on lighter green.
How long would I have to stay here
to turn to something green?
I used to know how to be alone,
to move from solitude to belonging,
but now I can't fight the urge
to go back and be with those I came from.

Scott Owens is the author of *The Fractured World* (Main Street Rag, 2008), *Deceptively Like a Sound* (Dead Mule, 2008), *The Moon His Only Companion* (CPR, 1994), *The Persistence of Faith* (Sandstone, 1993), and the upcoming *Book of Days* (Dead Mule, 2009). He is co-editor of *Wild Goose Poetry Review*, coordinator of the Poetry Hickory reading series, and 2008 Visiting Writer at Catawba Valley Community College. His poems have appeared in *Georgia Review*, *North American Review*, *Poetry East*, *Hayden's Ferry Review*, *Cimarron Review*, *Greensboro Review*, *Chattahoochee Review*, *Cream City Review*, *Beloit Poetry Journal*, and *Cottonwood*, among others. Born in Greenwood, SC, he is a graduate of the UNCG MFA program and now lives in Hickory, NC.

Roger Pfingston

FRANCIS

Beatific, even in cement,
though a bit tilted by the industry
of moles in a rose garden,
the saint leans against the maple.

A chipmunk squats on his head
munching manna from the bird-
feeder swinging under the weight
of a quarrelsome duo, finch
and towhee.

Higher still, wind
whistling through their wings,
doves flutter down to line the limbs
where they murmur among themselves
with the unassuming patience of their order.

DOING WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE

All day the leaves do
as they did the day before
and will tomorrow.

My neighbors appear
with rakes and riding mowers—
serious intent.

Mine is no less so,
musing at my desk, naked
to the moment, pen

raking the slow fall
over paper, little pile
of maybe something.

Roger Pfington's work has appeared recently in *Poetry Midwest*, *U.S. 1 Worksheets*, and *DMQ Review*.

Les Prescott

THIS DESK

was passed down
from one sure hand to another's.
I cultivate drawers and dark corners
where love flourishes.
It's the way the sun sings on its surface
this summer morning
that reminds me of time shared
gathering gem after gem
in search of the durable. I polish
these gems to pass down
to another sure hand.

Les Prescott is a Scotsman *Glaswegian* living and performing in Berlin. He spends a lot of time in a cottage on a tiny island on the outskirts of the city where he writes or conceives most of his work.

Oliver Rice

IN THE SERENGETI

The air smells of dust.

The savanna stretches for miles,
broken by granite outcrops,
a copse of thorn beside a water hole.

The eyes of the Cape buffalo are blue.

Of the hunting dog are brown.

Of the gunman gray.

ONE KEEPS A FEROCIOUS DOG

These walks are just earnest
and elevated enough to please our journals,
these episodes of the town,
the Parkinson house behind the pickets,
the monument on the square,
barberry, whitethorn, and woodbine.
Thoreau building an arbot in Emerson's garden.
The brown thrashers, the wild pigeons
in twos and threes.

They are digging a cellar on Texas Street.

Even so.

Even so.
Do you feel it?
That something else may be the case?
Something worse than disquietude
along the ridge above the Lexington road?

Among the duckweed floating on the river?

AT THE MOTEL FOR PREDESTINED LOVERS

Is this quite what you have reckoned,
such a décor, suspected odors,
intimations of stain, a silence
attentive to the rustle of the street
and of the mores?

How you thought the expectant person
would pace off the afternoon?
Toss the magazine aside?
Skim the phone book?
Lie across the bed, recollecting
the scent of mountain mahogany,
gulls at low tide?

FIGURES

It is the street of the nature of things.
Note how they arrange themselves
according to the stimuli,
their credulities,
their syndromes.

It is the afternoon of what happens.

Oliver Rice has received the Theodore Roethke Prize and twice been nominated for a Pushcart Prize. His poems have appeared widely in journals and anthologies in the United States, as well as in Canada, England, Austria, Turkey, and India. His book, *On Consenting to Be a Man*, introduced by Cyberwit, a diversified publishing house in the cultural capital Allahabad, India, is available on Amazon. His poems have appeared in other issues of *Innisfree*:
http://www.authormark.com/artman2/publish/Innisfree_6_21/OLIVER_RICE.shtml

Elisavietta Ritchie

APPLE-PICKING QUESTIONS

Could this year's bumper crop
have snapped so thick a limb?
Did deer like misplaced kangaroos
stretch high, shake the branch too hard?

True, the trunk's half-dead,
woodpeckers pocked the shiny bark
for secret cities of bugs.

Apples indeed fall near the tree.
Most are hornet-bored and green.
My progeny scramble for what looks ripe.
Inbred in our genes, the need to climb,
swipe fruit, fear death from bees.

What do I know of my gene-bearers' lives
at any stage of their particular games
of picking fruit or friends or fights?

Can one feel the aches in another's head
or guts? Pain of their scrapes? Dare I blame
their natural yens, unrequited as mine
for Fujis and Goldens high overhead?

What did *my* parents divine of my Grade-A life,
the funny man in the stable who begged to pet
my six-year-old pussycat? Or the boy, fifteen,
flame-haired as I, who leapt in my bed, and out?
The later clandestine now moribund swains
who wooed me with apples and cider, spiked?

What did I know of my parents' lives,
why my mother slurred, my father strayed?
How they talked across oceans in dreams?
Why still, to the end, they loved and grieved?

We can only teach progeny how to peel
the scabbiest apple skin with our teeth,
like Eve bite through, then, sticky and sweet,

spit for the deer the wormy core
and six glistening mahogany seeds
arsenic-laden, yet reputed good-for-the-heart.

HOME COMING

A blue baroque pearl enchained
on the wrinkles of a moribund dame,
I yearn to dive home, beyond the tide.

A lump of needled flesh on a skinny bed, alone,
cut off from sun, sea, stars, mosquitoes, butterflies. Half-dead.
Sparrows grow anxious on the concrete window ledge that I

cannot reach to scatter crumbs from the hospital's under-done
muffins. At certain awkward angles the doubled moon, waning,
injects more dry ice into my insomnia. Most of all, torn

from the furnace of your embers warming my bones,
I understand if you can never touch this body again.
I worry your rashes worsen under the strains.

Yet now you carry me over the threshold as if a bride
and fold me into our wide warm bed,
which may only be a beginning.

Elisavietta Ritchie's 15 books include *Real Toads*; *Awaiting Permission to Land*; *Spirit of the Walrus*; *Arc of the Storm*; *Elegy for the Other Woman*; *Tightening The Circle Over Eel Country*; *Raking The Snow*; *In Haste I Write You This Note*; *Flying Time*. Editor, *The Dolphin's Arc: Endangered Creatures of the Sea*, and others. Her work is widely published, translated, and anthologized. Ex-president for poetry, then fiction, of the Washington Writers' Publishing House.

David Salner

THE UNSUCCESS

A mirror hangs over the bar, showing me
a big man on a stool, seating himself
with some difficulty. Now we're shoulder to shoulder,
two beefy men. He's probably a salesman, after a day
of nibbles and no bites; I'm a steelworker, tired out
and ready to drink. He's the well-dressed one.
He grins nervously and seems to be in need
of saying something deeper than I want to hear.
"I've had a lot of unsuccess," he says.
Why not just say *failure*? I ask myself.
He orders a round for both of us. "Thanks," I grunt,
not exactly pleased to be sharing a drink
with a man whose unsuccess is so apparent.
I catch another glimpse of the two men in the mirror,
shoulder to shoulder. "No failures, *per se*,"
he says, a little loud above the music, "but a lot
of unsuccess. It's like when you play basketball as a kid—
you're never going to become Allen Iverson, ever,
so you could hardly be classed a failure when you don't,
despite the years of practicing fakes and no-looks.
The way things worked out—" and here he pauses
for his voice to tighten like a wrench
over the syllables—"I was a major unsuccess."
His fingers drum the bar beside his drink.
"My wife is cooking dinner," I tell him,
my shoulders conveying the apology. "Thanks for the drink."
The barstool squeaks, as I stand up,
hold the last of my watery drink before my eyes,
in a gesture more heartfelt, toss it down.
"I've had my share of unsuccess," I nod at him
and leave. "I could write a book about it."

David Salner worked at manual labor for twenty-five years as an iron ore miner, steelworker, furnace tender, and machinist; his fourth collection of poems, *John Henry's Partner Speaks*, is now available from Word Tech at www.wordtechweb.com/salner.html. His work has appeared in *Threepenny Review* and *Prairie Schooner*, and new poems are in current or forthcoming issues of *Atlanta Review*, *Southern Humanities Review*, *High Desert Journal*, and *Elixir*.