

SUGAR HOUSE

REVIEW



#18

FALL/WINTER 2018



POETRY

SUGAR HOUSE REVIEW

AN INDEPENDENT POETRY MAGAZINE

FROM THE EDITORS

Dear Sugar Readers,

As *Sugar House Review* hits its ninth year and 18th issue, we're very appreciative to Sandra Marchetti for being our first-ever guest editor. She did a fantastic job and this issue is a testament to that.

We also want to let you know that John Kippen, one of our founding editors, has decided to step down from the magazine.

The idea for *Sugar* began in John's kitchen over tea and, of course, poetry. John was absolutely instrumental in the instigation and momentum of the magazine. His enthusiasm and foot work very early on allowed us to publish our first Pushcart Prize winner on the first page of our first issue (Paul Muldoon's "Capriccio in E Minor for Blowfly and Strings"). He also gathered permission from Ken Brewer's literary estate to publish several previously unpublished poems in that same issue. Brewer was Utah's second poet laureate and remains one of our literary heroes. That acquisition set a high bar of trust and quality we knew we needed to work hard to live up to.

Sitting at John's table that January, almost a decade ago, we had no idea what we were getting ourselves into. Thank heavens we didn't know what it takes to run a magazine, because each of us has agreed we wouldn't have done it. We're so glad we did. We're very grateful for John, his friendship, and everything he's contributed.

And speaking of a decade, 2019 is *Sugar House Review's* 10-year anniversary. As part of the celebration, in place of our regular two issues for the year, we will publish one, special-anniversary issue in the fall.

Thanks for reading and supporting poetry,

Natalie, Nano, and Michael

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ANNA TILLET	
<i>Kiss Me</i>	Cover Art

IN FEAR OF BEGINNINGS

Things shift. You see a hearse but it's not for you. No black dress yet. No tarding up the fatwood log with questionable

paints. That's why I grip the edge of spring so hard, grind my teeth on the winter salt. Do not go in fear of beginnings.

Makeshift/horseshit/slipshod. Start with two dreams. Bones a crossroad. Spring like a dirty wish. A girl like a cannonball.

Altitude, fuse. A nice blight dress, a very ice dress. I was a star about to dissolve. I was a star in the lurk of the parking lot.

OUR BODIES, OUR PLATE ARMOUR

I seem to have lost the impetus for this. Examining
the windows. Drag Racing in the desert like tanks.

There's a chance of an embodied memory, or do I mean
embroidered. I've been training. Canteens, khaki,

and pup tents. Heat creeps up the sky and whites
out my good intentions. Armistice. Peace proposal.

Rogue warrior of the dark time. I'm a novice at prayers
anymore, a rosary of remembered decades.

THICKENING SPIRIT

Pegged down like Gulliver. The wind raking me over like that Shelley poem. The day shows up dark like a bruise. A season in pure form

like a sauna or douche. This is the story of what. One hundred vowels voiced softly. The lake a blot on my right. Push back

the amnesia of white, the cuneiform of loss. Have I said how everyone smoked. To be young enough to add one more thing. My gaucherie

trembling. Measuring for shades I find a hidden chamber like the Pyramid of Giza. Dark staircase. Runes. Walk in closet to the mummies

of discontent. Ah, lass. Why did the chicken cross the road. O positive. O negative. Blood will tell. I'm stocking up on gasoline.

MY DEAD

My dead
aren't good on their feet.

My dead slip from ladders,
tumble down stairs, reach

for handles and miss.
Maybe they're house painters or

old sea captains. Maybe, à la
Ahab, they lack a leg.

I thought I could make it,
my father said.

The search for more time.
The white whale

finding us instead.
The surprise.

An untied lace.
A protruding thought

on a stair's tread.
Have you tried

lifting a dead person
off the floor?

Go ahead—wrap a dead arm
around your neck.

Perhaps your dead
are kinder, but mine—

they won't look you
in the eye. Won't

say sorry or
bare their hearts.

They won't even admit
how heavy they are.

THIS POEM HAS A HIGHWAY IN IT

and it speeds upstate toward—
is it home if you've never lived there?
This poem merges, changes lanes, and exits—left, past the outlet mall,
then right. Mobile homes edge the road—and staggering barns.
Corn stubble pokes up through snow. A school bus brakes,

and a stop sign pops out. Two boys shuffle off, cross in front
of the poem and disappear. There's barbed wire
strung here. And a story. Stories, really. Three children
wrenched from their mother—dead, they're told, though
alive in an asylum they never find. The one sister, 17,

she drowns in a summer pond. There are purple hills, tall pines,
and silos in here, and field after field after field, forget about
dreams. Also a Dunkin' Donuts, grids of solar panels,
a Ford dealership. We're upstate, so a prison looms in this poem,
and rows of prison guards' pickups. Steam escaping

a prison chimney, a river running under a bridge. My mother's
in here, my stepfather, too—how he hugs women and girls
too close. As if asking: *are you my mother?* A shuttered restaurant
flies past, a motel without a single car in the lot. The old armory
rises up, a red light against dusk, a left turn. The tumor

on my stepfather's neck and jaw fattens day after day—the consequence
of little mistakes. Six white horses commune around a mound of hay.
Fields offer up lone machinery: tractor, hay baler, mower, plow.
A dark blue silo. A burned-out house. Haloed by naked trees,
a neighbor's trailer blazes with light. There are humans

I love in this poem, a rearview mirror—the long, rutted driveway
glazed with ice and age. The house in this poem, a step up
from ramshackle, wasn't built all at once, but room by room.
Hundreds of acres, forests and fields. Two old bay horses, three ewes,
a hen and rooster, a border collie, a silver tabby. The humans in here

were children once. Things happened to them. They made choices. This poem, too, makes choices. It gets things wrong. And some things can never be put right. But there's mercy in here, tenderness. We cross in front of the poem, we disappear. The poem goes on.

PRAIRIE LOVE SONG

Let the tallgrass stand for spruce,
its height for hills, so thick

in imprint my skin is scored
infinitesimal by bluestem

and switchgrass, their seedheads
a veil of sky. Let the blue face

be one constant in shifting terms
of territory. Let reflection be

another. So bodies out of drought
swell with rain, which carries

its memories as it rides clear
from gutter to gully and gathers

to toss back each cloudbreak.
Let here be there, now also then,

the shape of living a field
sight-wide. Let this be a love song

that travels time. Has no direction
but toward. Holds pine scent

and blazing star, among the many
others, in its broad array of root.

A MESS OF NEW

A matter of our settling near the center
of country overrun in corn and cicadas:
the child won't touch lawn once the razor
shrill of a thick trunked horde crawls
out its tunnel up the bark of summer.
Her sister won't close her eyes, no matter
the weight of her body's sharp need.

So I buy a book, and we learn names
by feather through windows all month,
the feeder filled each morning as the dogs
underfoot crack bug casings like rock candy.
I draw life cycles—eggs to nymphs long
underground to black shelled adults given
weeks of red-tinted wings and a taste

for green. Their ugliness isn't harmful
anymore than beauty. No limbs are killed
whose roots will soon feed a next
generation. Just filigreed, each leaf a stencil
of leaf. A circlet. The glass afternoons full
of heat. Child, toddler heaped in their bed,
drowsing like dogs at the vent, loose-limbed

in their utter abandon. I am uncompassed
by this new course, our backward migration
south seasonal into a mess of new flowering.
Once, prairie grass higher than horizon.
Long homesteaded, now the neighbor's
tree throws its wide shape into my space,
and I know no name to welcome it.

WOMAN IN PAPER CUT

She mastered her surepower, the art
of disappearance

first in empty rooms, her camouflage

not taking on hues

but silence

and size, less a shrinking than thinning out
slice by slice to present

transparency

like the frame filled with papercut—

arched dragon body snapping
its own tail—

no one could describe, detail requiring
sight or vision

a discernible difference

until invisibility was the habit of crowd
and couple,

perhaps an act of age, this lucent skin
even if blood red

and screaming
held by stillness to the corner of an eye

a suggestion—look or not—

followed up by so few
she knew she could survive anywhere.

'88 TEARS

Too young buddy, I gave my time
to corner rooms and stainless
IV stands, sipped tall drinks of water
through a straw pretending swallows

were uninfected tears. What entered
the eye was upside down,
the cryptococcal droppings of birds.
When it got too ugly, spackle of cinder

-block mint green, yellowed casings
over fluorescent tubes, any sign
to stare at. I left the exhales of great
teachers in hallways of overcrowded

zipper bags. I learned decline in fast
-forward, knew too much and no one,
never carried flowers
though I noticed pale roses, stems

in cloudy water rolling on tray tables.
Scholarly, silent, ageless regardless
of their age. I lost the names
of mentors without trying—folded

monogrammed pillow cases.
While other's lovers said good-byes,
I stood alone in hallways. I was the boney
shoulder, the damp man slight

and too tender to actually be
touched. I read caked messages
on coated teeth, scraped candida letters
from blank tongues. In my sleep

I heard the sound of zippers, tripped
and stumbled over bags in hallways,
hoped that someday there would be
a little rip to let me through.

SUNDAY MORNING

In one version of the future, only expert burrowers survived. Their children learn quickly, scrabbling through the tunnels their parents left them in; squaring the support beams, adding pit stops at fallout shelters; bypasses around sequoia roots; unsettling structures with exotic names like Zanzarière; making the abandoned roadbeds on the surface quake. A recently unearthed blueprint shows a network vexing as a subway map of Manhattan. At last report, moles, earthworms, and prisoners of war have put aside their differences and begun to organize.

Memo to self: *burrowers or borrowers?* Self to memo: silence.

Silent too is the creek that runs through the plot of suburban wilderness I see from my window, flanked by two scraps of spring snow. The swing set my kids hardly used, with its splintered ladder and listing slide: why haven't I taken it down? Or not silent, merely quiet; centuries have passed since any spot on the earth held its tongue.

THE WORLD

Balancing on his haunches, snapping at a stuffed frog I dangle above his jaws, my Maltese's front paws look puny as a kangaroo's. He can hold the position for an astonishing 8 to 10 seconds. If I were an honest parent, I'd explain to him the futility of changing one's nature—like trying to mate different species of butterflies. There he goes again, the little boxer . . . and here I go again, remembering the June my rage overheated until it pounded music out of the stereo with a mallet. Everyone I loved stopped their horseplay. I saw two futures—one a moonlit shoreline; one a diagnosis. There was a third future I didn't see. Although I haven't yet used the word "world," when I do, I won't mean what that woman meant, index to her temple as she asked: *how do you bring the world into your thinking about art?* That whole summer my black razor-point pens, when laid side by side, looked like bodies in body bags.

HOW TO BE A BETTER GHOST

The Equation for Self is absolutely paradoxical—we cannot understand it & we don't know what it means but we have proved it & therefore we know it must be the truth.

There's a website that lets you
photoshop strangers
out of your pictures;
in the revisions, no one visits
the ruins without your permission.
Beware of the shadow that is left behind,
the site advises. With a *click*
the program crops the unfamiliar
as if they never existed.
Click. Click. Drag, click.
It's the difference between The Book
of Cold & Book of the Cold.
I traveled into the future
& returned without memory of it
was how I described your eyes.
Can you imagine not living
on a suspended mass
among other suspended
masses in this cowlick of a galaxy?
I mean, if not this floating debris,
what *other* could it be?
There are messages in the water.
And the day it snowed
for a thousand years,
wasn't that, too, a miracle, like
flying in a dream?
When I tried to isolate
the stone columns & horizon
I created an abstraction, a blur
where I once stood squinting.
I wasn't *trying* to erase me
as much as I was trying to see

the falling structure un-
encumbered by that day's
symmetry. It's true; mathematically
speaking: *to be nothing is to be
of exquisite beauty.*

*Poem borrows language from Paul Nahin; the epigraph quotes
Benjamin Peirce*

THIS IS THE LAST TIME

you'll read this for the first time
& think this immigrant doesn't flock
like the rest of his sound,
but then again,
he's cranking away
at the Victrola & you're about
to place your finger on the tip
of your tongue
shaped in the name of the song
which was only supposed to be
background music for this epithalamion,
this dirge,
this glow, this urge,
this object permanence,
obscured by its chiaroscuro
carrying on,
my wayward daughter
one day will read this & it will mean something
new
all over again.
I know
it's a cheap trick—
all this jostling & gesturing
into the wildness
to see the line of a horizon
break yet again,
but what can I say
that hasn't been said or stolen
into the night by an open car
window
humming on a highway already, sucking mouth
out of a sleeping child's air
like it wasn't ever
supposed to be there.

EVERYTHING USED TO BE SOMETHING ELSE

for T.A.

We always begin with sky, the morning window
framing the possible. Horses

or the smoke your father used to blow at me:
surreptitious: he wanted all highs

to drop down like epiphany. He was pulled tight
at the bright corners, towels and shirts folded

sharp as blades. A vibrating wire
in a crisp plaid cage.

On funeral days there is often sunshine
and it isn't blasphemy or the afterlife's slim petition

for attention. All hats are clouds,
all angles jaunty if you look at them right.

I hugged his sister
who was everybody's sister in her brown habit,

her rope-tied waist, rough cloth
over the serene column of her self.

Peace, she kept urging us, all the mourners
laughing in the cold bright light.

Peace everyone kept repeating
back to her, a broken chorus, like we didn't know the language.

I think this is what the sister meant by *Peace*—
that you are the thing you glimpse

in the morning window, the horse-
shaped cloud, and later, the galloping.

FIRE COUNTRY

Beginning with a line from Tarfia Faizullah's "West Texas Nocturne"

*Because the sky burned, I had to unhinge
my sooty eyes from their lingering.*

In the season of undoing, the tender heart-leaves
of the new are shredded

as soon as they arrive. Wind eats the view
and scalds a wrecked swath like a medieval dragon

as it moves across this land I've made
a home of. This is the land of the living,

despite what is buried here and the sand
with its urge toward erasure.

Everything is germinating,
and the horizon flares

with fires, distant and close, smoke
the color of sunglasses. I see

but my vision is skewed. Listen. I don't want
to sound such yearning but the wind howls too

and means nothing by it. The hills are on fire
and the desert is on fire and the air is thick

with other people's fires. And my own burning
is so small as to go unnoticed.

I am calling but the wind is busy
taking everything away.

ON SEEING A PHOTOGRAPH OF A TREE
GROWING FROM THE SIDE OF A BUILDING

I, too, have been a stranger.

One time F got me high
and I drove us to the mountains
for miles, half an hour or
a few minutes before I noticed
I was driving on the verge tipped
nearly sideways on the road's graveled edge.

Ordinary things
can test a person. Ascending
or descending, the grocery store aisles
of stacked colors, the necessary sorting
of senses, my face
in all the polished metal handles, grieving.

ELEGY WITH HOUSING PROJECTS

Part of you allows this fantasy of staying,
of letting sunup truly wake you—draw you into the hours rising

in gold gashed against the city's new jungle of cranes
swinging their iron limbs through the day's still cold dust.

I've watched my city burn, rise up, then burn again.
There in the Morton House, people would come and go.

My aunt and I watched the front door open and blow closed
through the access camera hooked to her rotted apartment's

television screen where the gilded feathers on women's hats
and the bright, inky tigers tight roping their tattooed arms lit

the delicious night. When the upstairs bathtub outlined a russet halo
on her ceiling, she knew it was time to go.

In her next apartment, we would find her dead body
resting in a spiral of eggs spilled off a breakfast plate

and scattered about the brown carpet like weedy blooms
in the muck. We think this is not how life should be:

these sudden disappearances.
I like to ease into most things—slide knee high into

the cherry blossoms floating down dark pools
of river water before letting them cling to my neck.

I've always wanted a better way
to feel the intricacies of petals and leaves which ground me

when I think of random loss and which are,
for the first time all year, vibrant today—

green and purple and refulgent.
I'd like to fade into this newness

like aging Bierce swallowed up into Mexico,
like O'Connor lowered into the baths at Lourdes—

touch every layer of this vernal, bursting galaxy.

VANITAS

Moonlight off the snow shelved on the sidewalk,
the snow tucked in the forks of sycamores.

In the morning, sunlight sweeps the city,
razes temples of ice—small rivers form in gutters;

broken blades of brown grass
burst through fields of white.

Is it too much to say

everything beautiful is only temporary?
Patterns the sunbeams make on the bedspread,

your body. The cedar chest steeped in gold,
muntin shadows lattice the lid. The glass

on the windowsill
fills with sunlight, empties onto the hardwood floor.

VANITAS (II)

Morning heavy—fractures of light
across the facade of those Edwardian townhouses,

bay windowed, terraced; cloudbank
just above the leveled roof, blackbirds

bloom from a mulberry bush. Muntin shadows
lattice the hardwood floor, the drywall.

Steam stumbles over the surface of my coffee,
grazes like cattle.

After winter's thaw,

it's as if the perennials suddenly spread their fingers
everywhere, lavender crowding the flower bed—

flaxen and marigold. Lately, I keep asking myself
what it is I'm missing. This parade of light

through the twisted branches
of the red maple, is that not what we're here for?

DEAR RIGHT LEG—

for Frida Kahlo

I was nearly weightless—
 a plume,
 a plum,
 the sun,
its yellow love,
 barely coppered
the thin-boned arc
 of my shoulders.

Limbs are meant to be steady.

How am I to strike
 the earth in balance,
 to run streets.

You were my pillar.

Now I
 lumber.
Polio's
atrophy.
 No girlish skip—
not yet even
 chrysalis.

I don't need you,
 Right Leg,
to rise.

ANNE BONNY DECIDES SHE MUST BE A BOY

Your red curls flurry the hearth like silk mice,
so you pluck one and it bursts to thread.

You said not Anne, Andy now, petticoats thrown
into street to flutter like geese and used
to wipe down the horses. You carve spirals
from the holes in new belts, scrabble away
at leather. If someone rolled you
in their palm would strands of you slip
off, leave grease in place of your body?
Breeches let you somersault narrow hallways
and you muddy their cuffs staring up at men
hanged, their swinging shoes pulled off,
their hands spasming then still.
Your mother tucks wisps of locks beneath
her bonnet, stokes coals to drive fire, presses
silver spoons beneath her eyes. Here in London,
she does not breathe, swallows your name before
it reaches air. Before sunrise, you toe-stand
to see over her feathered mattress,
watch her curl, roll, straighten, stretch, her hair
spreading oily on sheets. Why does light
shrink her? What power has sun to silence?

Small blade and marbles in your pocket,
you slink to corners to run your thumb
along the soft hill below your buttons. Then you gallop
the length of your father's house, send shrieks
to scurry up walls slow brightening to day.

YOUNG ANNE BONNY AWAITS HER PREY

What's in the late tick, gorging at your shoulder
as you slither through creek bed in purple
hustle of dawn? Collard and cabbage leaf
iron the drips of your red and pork
fat sizzles in each gulp that sucker licks
down his needle-eye throat. Dark as the mud
that drabs your belly and douses your fiery
tangle slick against your spine, this salt liquor,
this carmine lacquer sluicing from vein to bulbed
insect stomach. Your blood is quiet
as the deer that tongues spring a yard shy
of your silt-black toes, and slyer. Your blood
is piping with death-squeals of field mice
and pole cat, last bubbles of armored oyster
you've busted from bed, final coos of mourning
dove and rustle of quail. Before the steel
that rests against your hip disappears into brown,
you grip the hilt so the muscle firms
and feel this feeder burst, gluttoned too quick
on the squalls that spoil in your veins.

HUNTING AT 13 WITH MY FATHER

You cut the last cord,
snapped off the head
like a tag from new boots,
tossed it under wickets
of brush where it watched
us coal-eyed while
the gut pile
churned, its core
of little fingers
wiggling. *Pregnant*, you said,
pointing the blade.
A fox will have a field day.

You carried the dead
on your back, led
us through clearings
grown haggard
with fright wigs.
Thorns snagged
at our sleeves,
the spiked seed
casings hidden
like sea mines
in the soft flannel ruts
of our coats.

I walked ten
feet behind, bent
finger hovering over
an unsecured trigger.
I centered you squarely
within my clear
sight, placed the steel
bead on the crease
at your nape
and stepped
in your prints
to the crackle of ice.

In that skeletal field
I took my first shot,
crippling a rabbit
that slipped down its hole.
A quivering globule
hung from a twig.
While I gagged
on the ground, you stood
awkwardly. Blood
on the snow like red confetti.
The small-game heart
still beating, buried.

FROM HERE TO CALIFORNIA

A man jumps on the train
with a clean pair of socks
and the 2011 Nautical
Almanac. At the station
a gathering of pigeons pattern
themselves over a handful
of sunflower seeds,
to the rafters and back
they seem to endlessly rest
and return. A thousand miles
of terrain with a stranger
I may or may never know.
Nearing the Pacific,
the earth turns green as
a settling wound. I chase
the names of trees—salt
cedar, jacaranda, eucalyptus—
as they bloom through the window,
watch the way the ocean
stretches boundlessly
when there is nowhere to go.

LAND OF ENCHANTMENT

From a train I watch the desert grow
mattresses, tires, televisions.

The barren landscape resembles
the moon filled with all the items

we will eventually take there.
A man in a wheelchair yells

about injustice as he rolls himself
down the narrow aisle, while

a video on tourism loops
continuously on a screen:

Come to the Land of Enchantment.
Along the tracks,

a hole in a barbed wire
fence was cut wide enough

for a horse to gallop through
without being skinned.

Cows go on making their slow
circular shapes in the field.

Leaves fall from trees
revealing homes with boarded

windows. A shelf of pallets
is piled higher and higher

like a ladder that could
eventually reach.

REGION OF ICE

Dogs drag their sleds northward,
ratcheting across the ice to the pole,
where north disappears at last, and
south becomes the only direction,

where stars neither rise nor set. The
invisible pole itself is a great needle
sewing together earth and sky. Dogs
growl at the lumbering shape of a white

bear trudging across the ice. Killed and
eaten, its stomach is empty. On the Bering
Sea, icebergs calve, and calves follow their
mothers. The dogs grow wilder. In their

last days, men with frostbitten faces build
whole cities of ice in their minds, with
gothic spires and turreted houses, palaces,
the undulating notes of the sine curve.

TRUE STORY W/GREEN SNAKE

My Uncle Benny and his buddies found the antifreeze in the fridge. Somebody's idea of a joke, somebody said. There aren't that many things in the world: there's what kills you, what makes you sick, and what makes you lose any mind you might have had. I guess I'm partial to the latter. Last night, I dreamed my tongue was green. I stood at a gas station sink brushing it, but it got longer and longer, until it slithered down my neck and around my throat. Up north, Lake Superior laps its own shores while I wrap any loneliness I can muster in wax paper and label it in a brown sack. When I was a kid, there was a day that Benny, drunk, I guess, but maybe just filled with the grief of his ugly life, threw a jar of mayonnaise at me, or at somebody I was standing too close to. There's that feeling of spoiled towels and picking shards of glass out of your shins; there's the body ache at absence; there's the reckoning with the ocean; the surprise at first disappointment. It's been too long since I've heard from you. Write soon, please.

NICOLE CALLIHAN

WHAT YOU'RE REALLY LOOKING FOR

Ants announce spring from the corners of the house,
their neat swarms quiet and inevitable.

The bleeding heart is back, no thanks to me.
Its blossoms bend their vine:
a collarbone's grace.
With each day, the pink fades.

Despite everything, we are not yet saved.

I am disappointed when I realize
the tapping on the window isn't rain but moths.

To pass the time, I browse engagement rings—an endless scroll.
It helps to want something obtainable.

This is me on my knees in a parking lot
trying to lure a stray cat out from under a car
and a girl from the bar saying *Leave it.*
You aren't doing it any favors.

THE COMPOSER'S CIPHER

Dora: not gift, but d'ora
the alchemical pin-pricked
circle (Donne's compass-
line), Au, aura, an audible
oracle. Glint of bells,
tallowing, Indian wit
in the idiot wind, window-
borne, leaded hagiography.
Squint at the scrollwork.
Invert the page. Convert
icons to sixteenth notes.
There is a transcription
into dead language,
divination by blood
spatter pattern, melodies
composed for forgotten
instruments. Wind a cord
around the belly of a lob-
lolly pine, Caesar shift
the sequence into sunlight,
plaintext, plaintive as palms
feeling the air for droplets.
Bella, you think you can't
read this, but you already have
the solution: nothing
is beyond us.

STAR FORCE

Then, we were day-drunk, emptying pitchers
of glass beads across a shaft of sunlight.
Signal-scatter like the comb pulled over
the pimpled drum of a music box:
sequences revealed, Zodiacal light,
starfields and six digit displays. Puzzling
at the shell of sky, planets trembled
on fishing line suspended from our dome.

Now, I have a protective Mylar sleeve
for your postcards, a phase box and mixtape.
You should know, those dark veins are still burning
beneath Centralia, Pennsylvania,
swallowing structures and I'm pulling down
all your derelict little plastic stars.

KINK THERAPY OR AN ALTERNATE HISTORY
OF THE WORLD OR WHAT FEEDS US. ALSO SEE:
CAPITALISM IS FUCKED UP BUT LIKE CATHARSIS
REQUIRES PRIVATE ENTERPRISE TO SUCCEED

For need of bread there were days where I slid a noose
around the necks of white men, put my boots in their
backs, and watched the brown skin of my knuckles pull taut
while I: composed my grocery list, considered the aubergine paint
of my nails, calculated the tipping point between asphyxiation
and role play. I rode their backs the miserable
beasts made these men into collared horses who carried my burdens,
dug my heels into their lathered flesh, shamed them into the ground.
Are you so weak, that you can't carry the burden of one Black Woman?
Once I chained a man, ankle to wrist over the spanking
bench and with the strategic application of medical
grade lubricant forced him to take what I would give.

My favorite client had impeccable manners, a sweet thank you
for every bruise, my bare foot firmly rubbed across the freckled cream
skin of his cheek flushed him red as spring roses.
He was allowed to come on Saturdays and brought me tins of coffee:
Harar, Caturra, Kona, Pacamara, Arusha, Sumatra, Mayagüez, Sulawesi Toraja,
Kalossi, Catimor, Timor, Bonifieur, Yirgacheffe, Uganda.

He only asked for what I formerly considered unspeakable acts.
He begged me to beat his guilt away, to be tethered to a table,
the Saint Andrew's cross, or the ceiling. I told to him to repeat after me
I ain't shit and *I mean nothing*, compelled him to make ape sounds
while he masturbated at whip point, tears streaming down his flushed cheeks.
He sought absolution and I spoke reparations, I told him to let it go.
And he came and I came to the conclusion,
the opposite of a mirror still doesn't have a name.

BPM

I won't forget
the heartbeat
 beating

as I rock
 my chiffon beast
to sleep

the sound
I make as I shield
my lucent body

open pulsing
 like a star
ready to die

 bright and wet
the space that widens
inside of me

 as I close
 my swollen eyes
and say

I will never open more

IN THE ER AT 1 A.M.

You die next to the man
 holding a dish towel
over his bloody eye,

and you, my first born,
found floating
in the toilet. I fish you out
with a plastic cup
and carry
you to the triage desk. Your tiny
lima bean body
 translucent, perfect.

The harsh
 light penetrating
 paper thin skin
veins laced
 right beneath
 the surface.

Little bud arms
and legs tucked in tight.

The nurse looks pissed
when I ask
for something
 more sacred
to bury you in
 and hands
me a container.
I don't remember if I said
goodbye
 only that they took
you and they never gave you back.

WINTER'S COME AND GONE

To stand beside a river and believe in rivers
is a wish for form, its hold on what we see. Elsewhere
you imagine a river, dream one into being
but here you lie in weeds and wait for water to rise
and rise, raise your bones and carry them off, for summer
to return, river without snowmelt churning, eddies
empty, granite risen from water as if come home.

THE MIRACLE OF RAIN

The lady in front of me is crying plums
and peaches into her shopping cart. She's been weeping
produce since I got in line. First peas,

tight rolling armies, some drop
into her gusting mouth. Now, three kumquats tumble
off each cheek, bananas drip

from the tip of her nose. *Does anyone else see this?*
When she sobs dark bumpy avocados
I hear myself sigh, *oh*.

Those were on my list,
but the bin was empty. I reach under her chin
and catch a pear. A Williams, chartreuse,

arched stem, nicer than the Bosc I chose. I bite.
Our eyes meet. *Cry a ham*, I whisper.
She does. *Cry a marble bundt cake*. Still warm,

I ease it into my cart. *Cry a wheel of Gouda*.
I ask for 60 watt soft white light bulbs. They bloom
from her swollen eyelids. Just to see

if she can stand it, I order two Brazilian
pineapples. No one notices—not the cashier,
the other customers or the lanky stock boy

in a blue apron, mopping.

APOGEE

There is something down-at-the-heels in you,
an aperture like smoke, opening in phases.

A drone-note oozing past
the waxing clatter of the world.

The rhythm in a girl's long hair,
the self-possession of a little wind, and birds within it.

DOPPLER

I do not feel much
like the night or the darkness
drearing on the curbside. The red
sweep of angles pressed into the pavement
by the swaying stoplight two bodies
above our heads marks the spots
our sentences fall

off and traipse
into this colder than November
breeze. There is a habit forming on
the peak of our pulse that has everything
to do with who we are standing next
to and when. I say your name
with the creases

in my brow. You
respond only by a quivering
cut quick across your lashes. This
almost whisper runs longways through
our tinted shadows. At this rate
the sun will clip its own
wings not to

interrupt us, not
to set this one perfect splay
of seconds bright between us
anywhere but shallow in starlight. As sure
as something starts here, it also
ends, the cars silencing this
silence we build.

KINGDOM

Lord, let me enter.
Let me lie among the dreamers
locked behind sleep's heavy gates.
I'll bring fragrant white lilies
to plant by the window,
seeds of white gardenias
to scatter beneath. I'll walk the furrows
of the sky's black fields,
digging. I'll sharpen my plow blade
to ready the soil.

AT NIGHT I HEAR MY MOTHER

She is looking for her candlesticks
and cake pans, her collection
of souvenir tea towels from national parks.
She wants to know
what I did with the pictures
of her young and pretty, why I sold
the trunk with her wedding dress still inside.
Where, she asks, is her ceramic umbrella stand?
The champagne glasses etched
with bells. Where are the Christmas dishes,
the cast iron skillet, the crystal punchbowl's
matching cups? Where is the cornucopia
that sat on the dining room table,
spilling its plastic fruit?

BY WAY OF INTRODUCTION

My mother called me Petunia
though she never could get one
to bloom. I was part empty
flower pot, part lead paint.
She was thumbbed-through.
A magazine page of home-improvement
projects left unfinished, a cotton dress
worn unhemmed. She was Jack Daniels
in a juice glass, a plastic lawn chair
on an August night. That's where she was
when her water broke.
Four weeks early, drunken
bees careening through the backyard
peach trees left unpicked. All my life
I had to hear about that.
I shoulda named you Alberta.
Ha ha. You can tell a lot
about a person by the kind
of pie they like,
for example, apple. I'm the blackberry
type. Their perfume alone is praise.
They're what I'd say
if I prayed.

LIVING AT 9,000 FEET

Some of us live in a fable
of piñon trees and mushroom rings
falling asleep in the day.

It's the altitude, they say. Or attitude
but just the same, it's lightheaded
and multiplies while tourists drink tequila.

Try filing your taxes while steeped in a fairytale,
an apple orchard fragrant as an entire arboretum
while a crone holds out a blood red fruit to you

as you overhear a priest give a sermon
from a pulpit on the salvation of war
while hexing aborto.

Picture the fear of god and witches,
curandera in charming adobe villages.
Imagine potions—elixirs,

gnarled osha root, and dandelion,
milkweed and thistle brewed
with aromatics.

Pennyroyal, sage, and lavender
issued with the sign of the cross,
sacred dirt and holy water.

LOS ANGELES WRITERS' CONFERENCE

I heard you first thing this morning
in a tree whose leaves I did not know,
whose trunk went down
into a trough of trucked-in dirt
between the tower of my hotel
and a street full of passing and
passing cars—

the closest I could come
while I paused to aim my ear
toward the bright rollick streaming
from your swiftly scissoring bill
was “warbler.”

Behind me
the glass doors kept splitting open
as hundreds of fellow attendees
flowed out in a kind of time
to your singing, as if they
were the score,

their tags (like mine)
in the early, already-warm breeze
flipping like a single white wing
of something that fluttered
out of accounting,

as if our names
weren't really the things to take us
anywhere but in half-flaps
around our own necks,

as if they could all
at any moment let go and tumble away
like papers from a burst
office building,

as if that
could really happen, and leave us
naked of whom we'd worked so hard to be,
turning back to each other
and the pure song we would make.

LANDSCAPE, WITH FAMILY

Let your eyes go to her first
since she's the beauty
of the daughters, her brown hair
taken with gray, her blue eyes
squinting in dusk's favored light.

The old man's smile rushes
its banks, takes you
suddenly. Beware his nose
like the bit of an axe
sharp and requiring. A bird

alighting on her shoulder,
his hand spreads
its wings. The field has grown
into a sea of dry flame
in which to stand waist high

with those who remain.
Behind them, the shade
of a farm house fades
among trees; hills roll toward
a sky whited out.

ASPECT

1.

Photos make us fools.

Not as light as a brittle brown leaf,
or a train ticket home,
but almost as likely
to lift up out of reckless fingers
into the wind, down the street.

We'll lunge, chase, and occasionally catch up.

2.

My sled's steel runners,
father's coat collar,
the fender of his car,
 in this old photo's narrow range of Polaroid greys
 nailing down forever where light once was
 and was not,

all increasingly and always
farther away.

FREEZE

Witness: a family enters the waiting room
for routine blood work: tiny child in crook

of teen mother's elbow, grandmother
with tattooed forearms, great-grandmother

in a wheelchair. *Your appointment was never
called in and we're booked solid till 3:00*, says

the receptionist. *Could you come back then?*
I can't, says the grandmother. *It's too far.*

And I don't have more gas money till Friday.
Silence freezes the sunlit waiting room. *Field*

and Stream and Maine Seniors litter the table.
The teen mother, lip ring bobbing, jiggles

the baby. I am the witness. To thaw this
moment I could ask the baby's name or

give up my time slot. I consider what I know
and what I don't know, action and ice, as

the grandmother stabs the handicapped
button that opens the waiting room door.

THE TROUBLE WITH FOG

I hope death is a smash bang-o rip of lightning
or at least a sun ray bouncing off snow, and not
today's whoa, where-are-you, wait-a-minute fog,

joined now by a fog horn—long-tones
practiced by a goblin warming up his tuba chops,
blanketing my ears the way fog itself blankets my eyes.
Not the music I want to walk down the final aisle to,
stumbling my way through its gravy.

I'll take last week's rain—passionate as food poisoning,
beat the shit out of the shingles and the shakes. There's
no mistaking the feeling behind such a wailing, so
much water—we surrender everything to it
and thank god for shelter. Give up our ghosts.

Take yesterday's transparent cold—sun sharp as darts,
sky blue as a boy scout's honor, just being alive seems
like a puritan virtue. A pious recessionary.

Take the harmonics of hail—percussing the roof
and frapping the glass of the window panes
in unscorable rhythms. Triumphal exit music.

Or take the silence of sunshine, silence of snow—
powder shroud of a wholly quiet land.
Silence rare, rarer, gone.

MANDORLA

Because we are a couple,
we clean fish together—

in unison we insert knives,
slice up a belly.

I spoon and thumb entrails
out of my fish, use my nail
as a shovel.

You say you are good
at spreading a body open.

I take out the swim bladder
which you call a maw.

Though it does not remind
me of a mouth, and because
of this I tell you

my birth canal was once
compared to the bladder of a fish.

You nod your head,
a scale's scalloped edge
glistening beneath your eye.

You say something
about life cycles,

but it is sound I am thinking of,
how it resonates, makes a church
of an air-filled organ.

Aloud, I wonder about the holiness
of a chamber without sound,

and you tell me the only thing
that is holy, is the usefulness
of a body.

MY MOTHER IS SO POOR

she cannot love me.
When we look at the one photograph
of her pregnant belly, my tiny body inside
her like a poisoned flower,
she tells me: *I wanted to end it*
All my life I've been a ghost
through the screen door
whipping my horse
across the finish line.

My mother is so poor
she rode a bus
through the Back of the Yards
all night with her sisters
& brothers until her felon father sobered up
to maybe take a break from beating
all of them with a hammer.
Other days she slept
in a laundromat on 31st street
so he wouldn't come
into her bed with his empty eyes.

When he touched my own body
I thought *I'm simply part of the damned*
no one save me
but then the need grew for stars,
echoes of lilac, so now I tilt my head
to at least look at her
(illness destroying her insides)
& I shake down a dream
where we disappear outback
by the low hanging branches.
In my dream she holds
her arms out & I run to her
needy & luckless.
The whole damn universe
weighing me down
when I let her squeeze me
for the very first time

CODEINE

I ride a perfect pain until
it becomes a painting on a wall,
a faraway rasp, sullen, sunk
in a soundless lake,
until my dreams
become an intricate embroidery
of colored stones
sewn into my pocket.

ANATOLI PETROVICH BUGORSKI IN A PARTICLE ACCELERATOR

Not often but sometimes, failsafes break,
they fail to save, to make safe. Sometimes
they fail after a machine has failed, after
a man has put himself into a machine

to fix failure, to find the reason for error.
Sometimes this means little, sometimes
it means a proton beam enters a man's head
just behind the ear. This beam, it moves much

faster than sound, in and out, speeding,
leaving behind the impression of a flash
brighter than a thousand suns. A cliché
to be sure, but the man had been struck

by a beam from a particle accelerator,
a beam hundreds of times the radiation
it takes to kill a man, a beam that went in
weighing less than it did exiting. Taking. The

beam, when it exited slightly to the left of his nose,
gained in mass, left with more than it had brought.
It left the light, it took his hearing in the left ear,
left an *unpleasant internal noise*, and seizures, left

a face that froze, was made timeless. His face,
a meridian split between this age and the last,
holds a new knowledge that some part or particle
of his mass, his matter, was taken then mistaken

for light, for air.

POTOSI

If the mountain that eats men
could spew its insides
like a volcano: zinc, bones,

maybe a dry puff of silver dust—
what hadn't been pulled already
by ax, shovel, chisel, broom or pan.

So little to make a mountain. So much
taken from its insides. They had succeeded
in making a molehill, proved to the pile

of stone it is still just
earth. We plow earth
until it yields.

DIFFUSION

How could she have known, humming
 around the kitchen flipping pages to
find recipes to feed a family? How could
she have known the light that bled, faint
and fairy-like from beakers, from pockets,
and dim drawers, could fill the cells of finger
tips, the creases in palms, the hollows
 of bones. Girls around the world
were already paid to paint with it. They drew
gently the glow onto the dials and switches
for airplanes, the faces of clocks
and, during breaks, they painted it on their own faces
too. With fine tipped brushes, they
en-glowed their features with light, limned
their lips and lashes, their teeth and tongues,
laughed at how they became distinct in the dim,
lovely in their luminosity. They spit -slicked their
brushes to a fine point for detail, as they were advised
and the glow was swallowed, became a shadow that
softened bone and dissolved jaws. All those girls, those radiant
radium girls. No one knew, certainly not her,
a small bit of that light flicked from her finger
following a recipe down the page, and passed
 into the vegetable she stopped
to chop, a lemon she squeezed. The cookbook, her
 papers, absorbed the invisible substance
that made her famous, made her work dangerous to touch.

I SIT IN THE PASSENGER SEAT

my head stuffed in a plastic bag,
replaying the terrible sins
I had committed to deserve
this fate, insisting to myself
no more longneck bottles after
pills, no more reaching out a hand
to twirl the wisps of Jenny's hair
in geometry class, no more
forged detention slips and sneaking
out late, my dad hitting sixty
at every straight away, jerking
to a stop, speeding up again,
the windows rolled all the way down
in the five-below, and I am
repeating *Oh God* between heaves,
I'm sorry under every breath,
him driving me home, pretending
not to hear, saying nothing, once
adjusting the mirror before
he placed a cold palm on my neck
as if granting absolution.

HAIR

A tree will catch a snapped twig in the fork of a healthy branch, god forbid it would reach the earth. The twig will balance there for seasons. It is the same with me. I stand stoic in the shower with—what unit, a handful? a violence—of curls, several ounces of dull hair in my fists (horror of lifting one's own limb, horror of autonomous weight). I do a terrible math: what fraction of the whole? A strand on the tweed coat of a lover is romantic. I am not talking about that, nor the common imposition of a choked drain. I am telling you about the tree that collects its ejected parts, the tree that postures for passersby a crooked kind of flowering.

HOTEL ODE

praise a room of standard issue. a plastic bag to line a bucket, a course of nylon thread through a polyester quilt {} an insistence of a hanger, wire and paper, uninterrupted in suspension. safe here. the absurdity of an ironing board. a desk any desk. a harsh wind contained in one corner. finally, reality television. you are safe here, a state flower framed on the east wall. praise this posture of privacy, this perpetual field / this fixed room / this interim between consumptions. here is the pleasant vitamin of loneliness: a book in a drawer, a stone of soap in the oblique arch of a hand. sing safe here. praise be to two made beds, beds made only for: an open bag of underwear and a small foam box of cake.

MOUNTAINS AND SEA

after Helen Frankenthaler

You can tell the decade by the painting's
palette: aqua, peach, mint green, cream.
Wicker lawn chair white, a precursor
to rattan—the furniture cozy enough.
Innocuous. Cheerful enough—

mint green's calm before the riots turn it
camouflage. Aqua so we gaze out and turn away
from Pearl Harbor. Peaches and cream so we
swallow the American suburbs; easy. So we
migrate there. Hang our paintings
on the wall, and stay.

AND THERE'D BE

Hay in the fields, hay in the barns. There'd be
 hay in flatbed trailers lugged up Tom Cat Road.

On the way to school, you might smell
 hay slunk over its bed of pasture, cow piss

on the wind. And there'd be the geese at night—
 October that passed over children's hay rides after suppers.

And there'd be the mornings your father stood
 under the kitchen lights—the loud bays of cabinets knocking

as he groped for the coffee grounds. And there'd be
 the boat ride to the duck blind: hay layered over

the blind's cypress boards, the cut pine tops squatting
 in flooded canebrakes. And there'd be hay on the backs of dogs

straying from their plywood beds under the creosote pole
 with its flood light spasms: how the dogs would beg

for duck innards as we dressed the teals, mallards,
 and gadwalls for gumbo. And there'd be the lastness of days

the dying learn to lean into—the last talk of fields,
 the last talk of tractor repair. And there'd be

your dying papaw who felt the last touch of hay dust
 when you pushed back his hair from his eyes, shook

his hand and walked away to that back pasture where cattle
 would lick blocks of salt down to nothing.

ELEGY FOR THE POND

which yellow jackets, a red Hereford bull,
and the neighbor's rabid mutt ran

us into, where we brought cane poles for bream
fishing and shotguns for water moccasins.

The one the ice only took once, and the pond
D shuffled across and toppled under,

and from the bottom, he looked up through
the opaque cloud of ice, copper and crimson

stains haloing dead leaves trapped in the broken
sheet, rays of light falling through,

the whole of it like a church's leaded glass
coloring what's on the other side. The one

from which he crawled back out, his body
a Pentecostal tongue. The one where

we baptized our six-year old selves, afraid
of what sin might be, waded year after year

a bit farther to dunk each other into the red water,
minnows eating flakes of sunburned skin

from our backs. How short, those days the breeze
dried our muddy hair under June skies stitched

with jet contrails, king snakes sunning on Hanger Road,
those bats not even hungry yet for sunset.

MOZART OF THE PRAIRIE

I heard the tiratana on waves of tallgrass prairie
as it passed over hidebound barbed wire, careful not
to be caught on the rusted tines like an article of clothing.
Carolina chickadees flew over the fence, over me, over
the five precepts, over the pagoda. I thought of the
old poet who counted every bird he ever saw; passing
at his desk, pen in hand; the number, known only to
him, rivaled a crisp night of stars.

APOCALYPSE #2

This bar is lit year-round with Christmas lights
reflecting off the varnished oak, drinking glasses,
and liquor stock, and a dozen little tiki lamps
sporadically glow from their stationed posts;
an aura not unlike votive candles flickering
at the feet of the Blessed Virgin.

I'm redefining what it means to sit here
in the dark. It's a shame they won't be
talking about this in the next century:
the way he pronounced *vacuous* when
asked to describe the room, or the shot-glass
clank tuned in perfect collective pitch.
It'll either be too hot or too cold by then,
and reading will be as ancient as laugh tracks
and patriotic cowboys, Monument Valley
now a beatific dementia that rises with
Abbadon and sets with Big Sur.

But I'm not thinking about that right now.
I'm thinking about you, whoever you are,
wrapped carelessly in a coral, melon-white
Mexican blanket on Zuma Beach with your
back to me, and whether or not it's really been
ten years since I've seen the ocean.

OCTOBER RENGAs

with Frank O'Hara

A single raspberry
floats in a flute
of Soligo Prosecco.

Mournful glass, and daisies
closing. Hay swells in the nostrils.

I find the scars
on her arms at once hard
to love and not love.

Beside the sea, green mammoths
with frothing lips, the long razor

scraping shale. The wind
turbine's heavy blade clips
a griffon vulture in Crete.

Blackness under the trees, stone
walls, smelling faintly of semen.

In this field where things
happen: find a pair of panties,
find two copper pennies.

It's next to my flesh,
that's why. I do what I want.

BOSTON UNDERWATER BY 2100

The first time
we rode our bikes
 through the Boston Harbor Hotel's arch,
 a big band on the floating stage played
 a romantic swing burdened by trombones

and even though everything went to the rent,
the grandiosity of the hotel, the rotunda, the yachts in their slips

was our grandiosity—

 we were easily drinking
 champagne while discussing
 Dean Martin's *Ten Thousand Bedrooms*

because our belief
 in love was earnest and all

we needed—

but now the stage is sinking
with the rest
of our created history:

wistful walks past Alexander Hamilton on Comm Ave,
 lavender lemonades in Copley Square,
 the Union Oyster House, our initials carved in stall 19.

 Once the rain,
its tiny pressure on your scalp, like ants
 passing the door of a tobacconist.

Now the superstorm, the surging tides.

Now you and I,
the satiated bedroom guests we never were,
(alongside the rest of the humans) wanting
more and more from the collapsing ground—

Now Faneuil Hall and every corner
where we met and kissed, where a thousand others met,
conspired, or exchanged—

each body believing
their plot point the most paramount,
each forgetting *history* and *story* emerged

from the same word:

istories—

Now and always forgetting
we build our cities to house myths,
our histories to house cities—

Soon the sea
will claim this reclaimed land,
sending these few fragments forever

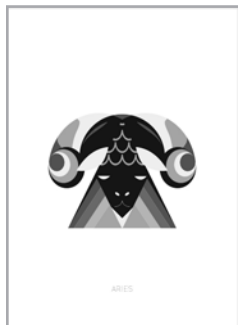
to the drink. Leaving the cities, leaving
our love

to become something else.

SUGAR ASTROLOGY

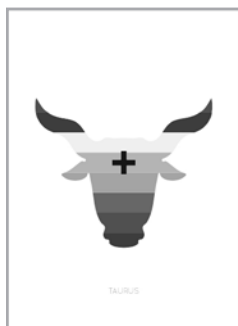
BY SHARI ZOLLINGER
ILLUSTRATIONS BY HOLLI ZOLLINGER

HOROSCOPES TO A YOUNG POET:
ADVICE THROUGH THE SIGNS



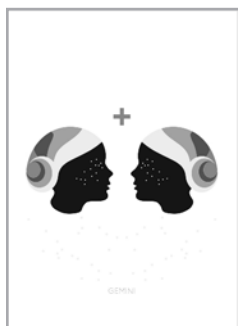
ARIES:
March 20 to April 19

Your brilliance comes from your individuality, Aries. With razor sharp instincts, editing may be arduous as you are an ace at getting the word right the first time around. Embrace your impulsivity. It offers you the much-needed surprise you crave. Conversely, level the playing field with a chance at patience to let the locution languor.



TAURUS:
April 19 to May 20

Sumptuous soul of love, it takes a lifetime for you, dear Taurus, to master the word “love.” You despise cliché yet you crave terms of endearment. How to get the saccharine to work for you, that’s the question—is there a way for you to integrate the heart into your verses without sounding hackneyed?



GEMINI:
May 20 to June 20/21

Fits and starts, fits and starts make a bubbly kettle of glorious imagination. The words in your knapsack, dearest Gemini, are not merely distractions. They are the essence of your distractible mind! Pay attention to the renegade locution that comes unawares. It IS the stuff of your wildest verses.



CANCER:

June 20/21 to July 22

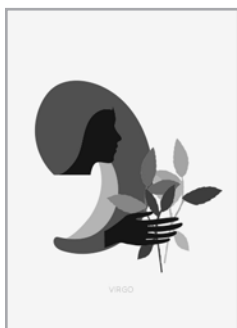
Once you connect your gut with your sonnets, dear Cancer, magic arrives. You thought all the important pieces came through the mind. Well, you were wrong. You are the master of spinning emotion through verse, if only you'd trust your intuition. A dip down into the well of feeling will be highly beneficial for you.



LEO:

July 22 to August 22

Frankly Leo, the light you emanate has the potential to highlight your free-flung balladry. Watch out for the proverbial choir—they are not your audience. Dare to let your sparkly goodness out to a crowd that earns your respect. It is far too easy to slip into the narcissistic pond. Give your shiny self the respect you deserve.



VIRGO:

August 22 to September 22

Your critical eye is sharp, fierce, and cuts like a knife. Have you wounded a stanza or two along your poetic path? These are the literary casualties of Virgo. Please reconcile your perfectionist stance with a moment or two of playfulness to let this sprite dance across the page unfettered.



LIBRA:

September 22 to October 22/23

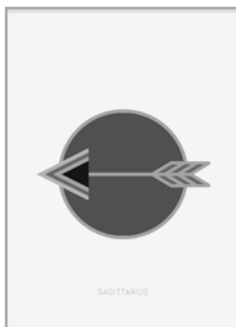
Dear Libra, it is generally hard for you to consider the ugly. You often wax refined and with an eye to beauty. You spin metaphors like works of art in an ekphrastic mash up. Well, let's just say that for you to get jiggy with the unpleasant side of life might be the break you need. Take a stroll down that proverbial alley.



SCORPIO:

October 22/23 to November 21

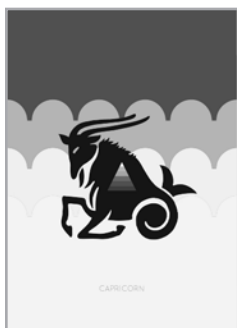
Deep, complex meanings always emerge from your pen, dear Scorpio. How could it be otherwise? You've always courted your own shadow and we might say the deeper you tap, the more fodder to tattoo a poem to your page. Think in indelible inks. Think about the darkness that wants out.



SAGITTARIUS:

November 21 to December 21

To achieve the world's best roving desk is your homework in this life, Sag. You want to move workspaces from time to time, as you have the uncanny ability to write from home, on the plane, on the beach, or in a coffee shop. Lifting off is literally the driving force of your work. Perspective and freedom are your inspiration, and movement your medicine.



CAPRICORN:

December 21 to January 19

Status and success always lurk under the surface for you, Capricorn, as you compare your lyrics to those around you. It is clear you are the master of form. You spin circles around the unprofessional. Laying ink tracks that roll into some sort of legacy is your juice, a long-term goal. Short term? Lighten up! Let yourself play!



AQUARIUS:

January 19 to February 18

You have created so many new words, Aquarius, you could possibly go down in the *Guinness Book of World Records*. To be confined to one lexicon is not easy for you. I give you the permission from this time forward to let those alien words fly. They might resemble nonsense at first but stay with it. Break out of the norm.



PISCES:

February 18 to March 20

Oh, lovely Pisces, ruler of metaphor itself, there was never a time you couldn't be a poet well-matched to the landscape of metaphor. Speaking in banal terms is not easy. To feel happy you are required to dip into a daily practice where you get to write the circular patterns of your verse. Thank the poetic gods for your gift.

PERSONAL SCIENCE
BY LILLIAN-YVONNE BERTRAM
(Tupelo Press, 2017)

REVIEW BY C.K. COOMBS

Dreams are seldom drawn from the void. The unanchored scenes, the acute images, and the vivid feelings of a light doze and impactful musings, these are drawn from experience and not from nothing. Lillian-Yvonne Bertram's *Personal Science* is a collection of poetry that first mystifies, then touches the reader. Upon initial inspection, one may be tempted to think the book nothing but a series of half-remembered dreams, but deeper analysis reveals a grim and somewhat disturbing memoir. It is a submersion into Bertram's stream of consciousness, which runs dark and wide.

Bertram's writing creates a nebulous dreamscape, one of fading and flashing pictures, scenes that are often ominous. That fear suffuses the book with an atmosphere not unlike that which pervades a nightmare. Take "Homo narrans (chainsaw)" for example, wherein one of the only images described is that of "the blood spray on the garden's wooden fence," or the poem "Cerebrum corpus monstrum," which begins with a terrifying series of implications:

*Nothing to be preserved
By the idea of paradise.*

Take this pistol.

The old dog's ashes taken home in a cedar box.

Take this blindfold.

*The warbler with the cinched wing won't take
From your handful of seeds.*

Shoot into the crowd.

*To feel the heart, you must
Put your hand in it.*

The reader is left haunted, wondering at the grim scenes which continue

throughout the book. They seem to jump randomly among topics such as phobias, relationships, farewells, and death. Initially, it all comes off as strange and disjointed, like the shadowy figments and fragmented memories of a mind on the edge of sleep.

A small, clarifying rule for the book can be easily overlooked at the beginning. In the first poem entitled “A little tether,” Bertram recognizes the mind-bending journey that the reader is about to embark on, and seems to throw them a life-line, a grounding cable to some form of reality.

*The thing is just what's said
The line I try to get to
There are rules even for dreams
The cars are always cars I've driven
The men men I've known*

With that excerpt, the book is charged with an authenticity and a exposure that captivates the reader, and shifts the tone. These are not riddles without answers, designed to confuse. They are reminiscence, a recalling of things muddled—of pain and fear, of abuse, of “cars [she’s] driven,” and of “men [she’s] known.” No order is needed when baring one’s soul, and the fact that Bertram is willing to do so merits praise.

Approximately one third of the book, the middle third, is devoted to a seventeen-page prose poem called “Forecast.” A nervous woman, possibly Bertram, suffers from an intense fear of flying. It drives her thoughts, ironically, towards every article she can find on flight, plane crashes, plane construction, and flight history. Her fear pervades every part of her life, overcomes her attempts to suppress it, and outlives failed and unhealthy relationships. In a way, her fear becomes one of the only constants in her life. Her need to check the forecast every hour of the day on seven different websites, her constant searches and studies, these habits accompany her throughout her life where almost everything else changes. The final line of the poem is a surrender to the fright. “The only safe place to be was in a plane,” and the only constant in the author’s life is fear.

These pages stand in a striking contrast to the rest of the book. They rise from a fog of imaginations, a mountain in clouds. They are full of concrete settings, definite actions and reactions, as opposed to the more amorphous scenes of the other poems. It is as though the reader is allowed to come up for a breath, before returning to murky, simulated subconscious.

As she mentioned in “A little tether,” the men she has known play into the story frequently. Unsettling depictions of violence and sex frequent the pages, especially in the series of poems titled “Legends like these I keep keeping.”

*he made with the heat of his hands
the night before our wedding
made of my neck a bottle
then ran me down the alley in nothing but
a ghostwhite t-shirt & panties.*

And then, later on in another “Legends” poem it reads:

*unfuckable. and don't ever let a man fuck you up against an air-conditioner
I told you, & don't ask me why, just don't be the kabob on a shish, all skin &
girl, ass against some window.*

The alternating brutal and sensual details, alongside the explicit scenes, don't so much hint at the speaker's violent past, as much as they unfurl a host of chronicled dangers, a litany that bears repeating. Where the longer poems in the book have individual titles, “Legends like these I keep keeping” sets itself apart. Rather than it being just one poem, each page is its own moment, its own relationship. The legends that Bertram returns to are all relationships, each a different style, but all equally disquieting. Each is structured with a different form, tone, and voice, and each is a melancholy instance of trial and error, the experiments in Bertram's deeply personal, scientific study.

Such poignant methodology is at the heart of this selection of Bertram's poetry; it is an attempt to make sense of a life, a blending of experience, emotion, and things more indefinable. It is not an easy read, but it is a powerful one. It is a soulful collection, an acute and revelatory one. The poems never truly fit the mold of a confession, but they nonetheless work their way to a vulnerable reckoning. However, it is perhaps Bertram's own “Homo narrans (iceberg)” that sums up *Personal Science* best:

*The glittering iceberg
now not at all what I
thought.*

THE CARRYING
BY ADA LIMÓN
(Milkweed Editions, 2018)

REVIEW BY PETER H. MICHAELS

Ada Limón's new collection *The Carrying* finds joy in the quotidian and wonders how a self-directed life should feel. The poems repeat imagery of the newly born, green growth, and death as moments with truth, but without answers. In "The Real Reason" the speaker's mother is scarred "from an explosion that took her first child she was carrying / in her belly," and although a similar speaker in the poem "Trying" is working with her partner "to knock [her] up again," the book expands the meaning of "carrying" beyond its recognized connotations. Limón's ability to examine the smallest moments of life anew and translate that wonder and weight to the page is astounding and illustrates what this collection carries.

The speaker in "The Last Drop" owns many of the collection's narratives as her own and considers the many stories—replete with grief—she carries within. After iterating several titles for her potential memoir the speaker recites two parallel parables implying that her life hasn't been "easy," but "all of it is good." This thought guides the reading of "Dead Stars" which is seeded with lines such as, "We point out the stars that make Orion as we take out / the trash, the rolling containers a song of suburban thunder. // It's almost romantic," because Limón mates the celestial with the earthly while meditating in the midst of collecting trash.

In "Almost Forty" the speaker says "I've never been someone / to wish for too much, but now I say, I want to live a long time." Facing mid-life after accruing a lifetime of grief leaves the speaker afraid, but grasping for more. This sentiment is repeated in "Sundown & All the Damage Done" where the speaker finds "a strange / contentment to this countdown" of years in contrast to loved ones who have passed already. This consideration of mortality continues in "The Vulture & The Body" when the speaker asks, "What if, instead of carrying / a child, I am supposed to carry grief?"

While not an answer, a reply is found in "Instructions on Not Giving Up" as the speaker faces "a green skin / growing over whatever winter did to us," because now the speaker is like that greening tree that "seems to say, a new slick leaf / unfurling like a fist, I'll take it all." This acceptance of growth, in whatever form it takes, roots as the collection winds down. Other green and grounded moments

occur in “The Burying Beetle” where a speaker confesses that she “lost God awhile ago. / And I don’t want to pray, but I can picture / the plants deepening right now into the soil, / wanting to live, so I lie down among them,” and this scene of grafting new vegetable life to her own becomes explicit.

Scions of leafy, life-like weeds and tomato plants wind through this collection. The speaker in “Dandelion Insomnia” stays awake pondering how simple propagation would be if she were a weed like a dandelion “making perfect identical selves, bam, another me, / bam, another me.” This innate fertility in weeds is paralleled by animal life in “Carrying”:

*A few farms over, there’s our mare,
her belly barrel-round with foal, or idea
of foal. It’s Kentucky, late fall, and any
mare worth her salt is carrying the next
potential stakes winner.*

While “What I Didn’t Know Before” is a poem-length metaphor about an effortless love, the ease of animal reproduction returns: “A horse gives way / to another horse and then suddenly there are / two horses, just like that.” This is in stark contrast to the speaker in “Would You Rather” who is struggling with fertility and is “making a list of all the places / I found out I wasn’t carrying a child.” Then in “Mastering” the speaker’s trusted friend posits “the thing that makes you / believe there might be a god after all, is the making of a child” adding a friendly face to a patent societal pressure intimately intertwined with womanhood. This married speaker without children seems to broadcast an implied desire for childlessness, adding sting to her secret struggle with infertility. Her friend, assuming that a woman’s meaning in life must be gestated, regardless of willingness or capability, wounds the speaker and their friendship. The reader is privy to the speaker’s unspoken thoughts, “Isn’t love / that doesn’t result in a seed, a needy body, another suckling animal, / still love? Isn’t that supernatural? Screw your god.”

The speaker in “Trying” tells us “I’d forgotten how much / I like to grow things” adjacent to another attempt at pregnancy. Likewise, the speaker in “Maybe I’ll Be Another Kind of Mother” eschews traditional motherhood for days “writing words / and then at the movies, where my man has bought me a drink, // because our bodies are our own.” While “Trying” ends with desire to nurture another:

I still worry

*and want an endless stream of more,
but some days I can see the point
in growing something, even if
it's just to say I cared enough.*

This feeling seems reconciled by “Maybe I’ll Be Another Kind of Mother,” which says “it’s only the original tree again, green branches giving way // to other green branches, everything coming back to life.”

At the end of the collection, we arrive at a reckoning with these struggles in these lines from “Sparrow, What Did You Say?”

*What would I
do with a kid here? Teach her
to plant, watch her like I do
the lettuce leaves, tenderly, place
her palms in the earth, part her
black hair like planting a seed? Or
would I selfishly demand this day
back, a full untethered day trying
to figure out what bird was calling
to me and why.*

This passage leaves the speaker questioning whether her offspring should inhabit ink and page or a more corporeal form without any answer.

Generally, a failure to reconcile a craving for the impossible with an accepting of the attained is jet fuel for anxiety. *The Carrying* brings this fuel of the unanswerable to the burning grief from Limón’s preceding collection *Bright Dead Things* where such losses could “light up the room with pain, / [it would] be such a glorious fire.” However, the speaker in “Mastering” starts to accept that “perhaps the only thing I can make / is love and art,” and the poems in this collection are bursting with masterfully created art. That isn’t all that it is carrying. What Limón’s collection truly carries is “so much fire,” a glorious fire—lighting a path of self-awareness and warming the chill of loneliness—allowing a reader to stop and encounter all that they are carrying.

- Radha Agrawal, *Belong: Find Your People, Create Community, & Live a More Connected Life*, Workman Publishing Company, 2018
- Jacob M. Appel, *The Cynic in Extremis*, Able Muse Press, 2018
- Hadara Bar-Nadav, *The New Nudity*, Saturnalia Books, 2018
- Mike Bezemek, *Paddling the John Wesley Powell Route*, Falcon, 2018
- Elijah Burrell, *Troubler*, Kelsay Books, 2018
- Mary Kavoleski Byrnes, *So Long the Sky*, Platypus Press, 2018
- Rob Carney, *The Book of Sharks*, Black Lawrence Press, 2018
- Grady Chambers, *North American Stadiums*, Milkweed Editions, 2018
- Jos Charles, *feeld*, Milkweed Editions, 2018
- Alicia Cook, *I Hope My Voice Doesn't Skip*, Andrews McMeel, 2018
- Darren C. Demaree, *Two Towns Over*, Trio House Press, 2017
- Yolanda Franklin, *Blood Vinyls*, Anhinga Press, 2018
- Howie Good, *I'm Not a Robot*, Tolsun Books, 2018
- Eric Greinke, *Invisible Wings*, Presa Press, 2018
- Jared Harel, *Go Because I Love You*, Diode Press, 2018
- Aby Kaupang & Matthew Cooperman, *NOS (disorder, not otherwise specified)*, Futurepoem, 2018
- Brian Laidlaw, *The Mirrmaker*, Milkweed Editions, 2018
- Joseph Murphy, *Having Lived*, Kelsay Books, 2018
- Steven Ostrowski & Benjamn Ostrowski, *Penultimate Human Constellation*, Tolsun Books, 2018
- Bill Rector, *Biography of a Name*, Unsolicited Press, 2018
- Max Ritvo, *The Final Voicemails*, Milkweed Editions, 2018
- Sarah Ruhl & Max Ritvo, *Letters From Max*, Milkweed Editions, 2018
- Elizabeth Schmuhl, *Premonitions*, Wayne State University Press, 2018
- Adam Tavel, *Catafalque*, The University of Evansville Press, 2018
- Miles Waggener, *Superstition Freeway*, The Word Works, 2018
- Holly Lyn Walrath, *Glimmerglass Girl*, Finishing Line Press, 2018
- Charles Harper Webb, *Sidebend World*, University of Pittsburgh Press, 2018

REBECCA ARONSON'S books are *Ghost Child of the Atalanta Bloom* and *Creature, Creature*. She was a recipient of a Prairie Schooner Strousse Award, the Loft's Speakeasy Poetry Prize, and a 2018 Tennessee Williams Scholarship to Sewanee. She has poems recently in *South Florida Poetry Journal*, *Tishman Review*, and others. She is co-founder and co-host of *Bad Mouth*, a series of words and music.

COLIN BAILES lives in Richmond, VA, where he studies in the MFA program at Virginia Commonwealth University. His work has appeared or is forthcoming in *The Hollins Critic*, *Rust + Moth*, *Whiskey Island*, among others. He reads for *Blackbird*.

RUTH BAVETTA'S poems have been published in *Rattle*, *Nimrod*, *North American Review*, *Slant*, *Tar River Poetry*, *Spillway*, and many others. She has published four books, and has work included in several anthologies. She writes at a messy desk with a view over the Pacific.

DAVID BEEBE was born in Grand Rapids, MI. His poetry has appeared in *This Land Press*, *New Plains Review*, *3288 Review*, *Tulsa Voice*, and *Art Focus Oklahoma*. He currently works and writes in Tulsa, OK.

CLAUDIA BUCKHOLTS received creative writing fellowships from the National Endowment for the Arts and Massachusetts Artists Foundation, Hopwood Awards, and the Grolier Poetry Prize. Her work has appeared in *Atlanta Review*, *Alaska Quarterly Review*, *Harvard Magazine*, *Indiana Review*, *Minnesota Review*, *New American Writing*, *Prairie Schooner*, *The Southern Review*, and other journals; and in two books, *Bitterwater* and *Traveling Through the Body*.

NICOLE CALLIHAN'S books include *SuperLoop* (Sockmonkey Press 2014), and the chapbooks: *A Study in Spring* (2015), *The Deeply Flawed Human* (2016), *Downtown* (2017), and *Aging* (2018). Her poems have appeared or are forthcoming in *Tin House*, *Sixth Finch*, *Painted Bride Quarterly*, *The American Poetry Review*, and as a Poem-a-Day selection from the Academy of American Poets. Her latest project, *Translucence*, a dual-language, cross-culture collaboration with Palestinian poet Samar Abdel Jaber, was released by Indolent Books in 2018.

ROBERT CARR is the author of *Amaranth*, a chapbook published in 2016 by Indolent Books, and is a 2017 Pushcart Prize-nominated poet. His poetry has appeared or is forthcoming in the *Bellevue Literary Review*, *Radius Literary Magazine*, *Crab Orchard*, *Rattle*, *The Sonora Review*, and others. He lives with his husband Stephen in Malden, MA, and serves as an associate poetry editor

for Indolent Books and as deputy director for the Bureau of Infectious Disease and Laboratory Sciences in Massachusetts. Poetry, book reviews, and upcoming events can be found at RobertCarr.org

MARY LEAUNA CHRISTENSEN has lived in Southwest deserts, in kudzo-infested Appalachia, and currently lives in the Pacific Northwest. She received her MFA in creative writing from Eastern Washington University, and is an assistant poetry editor for *The Swamp* and is the managing editor of Poetry Wolf Press. Her work can be found in *Permafrost*, *Driftwood Press*, *Glass: A Journal of Poetry*, among others.

FLOWER CONROY is the author of the chapbooks *Facts About Snakes & Hearts*; *The Awful Suicidal Swans*; and *Escape to Nowhere*. Her poetry has appeared/is forthcoming in *American Literary Review*, *Prairie Schooner*, *Gargoyles*, and others. She is the current poet laureate of Key West.

C.K. COOMBS was raised in North Carolina. He spent two years as a missionary in Brazil, and then moved, only recently, to the high deserts of southern Utah. He is currently studying at Southern Utah University. He and his wife live in Cedar City and are expecting their first child in April.

DORSEY CRAFT holds degrees from Clemson University and McNeese State University. Her work has appeared in *Crab Orchard Review*; *Fifth Wednesday*; *Forklift, Ohio*; *Mid-American Review*; *Ninth Letter*; *Notre Dame Review*; and elsewhere. She is currently a PhD student in poetry at Florida State and the assistant poetry editor at *Southeast Review*.

STEVEN CRAMER is the author of five poetry collections, including *Goodbye to the Orchard* (Sarabande, 2004)—named an Honor Book in Poetry by the Massachusetts Center for the Book—and *Clangings* (Sarabande, 2012). His work has appeared in *The Atlantic Monthly*, *Field*, *The Kenyon Review*, *The New England Review*, *The Paris Review*, *Poetry*, and elsewhere. Recipient of an NEA fellowship and two grants from the Massachusetts Cultural Council, he founded and teaches in the low-residency MFA program in creative writing at Lesley University. StevenCramer.com

ROBERT FILLMAN is a senior teaching fellow at Lehigh University in Bethlehem, PA, where he has edited the creative writing journal *Amaranth* and directed the Drown Writers Series. Recently, his poems have appeared in *Cider Press Review*, *The Hollins Critic*, *Poet Lore*, *Rust + Moth*, *Salamander*, *Tar River Poetry*, and other journals. Fillman's poem "Dumping Leaves" was declared a winner in *Third Wednesday's* 2017 annual poetry contest. In 2016, he won first prize in poetry at the Pennsylvania Writers Conference. Currently, he lives in

eastern Pennsylvania with his wife, Melissa, and their two children, Emma and Robbie.

JANE ANN FULLER'S poems have appeared in *Shenandoah*, *Aethlon*, *Grist*, *Fifth Wednesday*, *Atticus Review*, *Pikeville Review*, *Waccamaw*, *JMWW*, *Denver Quarterly*, and others. She teaches at a small college in southeastern Ohio, and lives in the Hocking Hills. She is learning to play the fiddle.

GAIL GOEPFERT has three passions—poetry, photography, and teaching—it's hard to nail down a favorite. Currently, she is an associate editor of *RHINO Poetry*. Her books include *A Mind on Pain* and *Tapping Roots*. *Get Up Said the World* is forthcoming in 2019 by Červená Barva Press. Recently published in: *Kudzu House*, *Stone Boat Review*, *Gravel*, *The Penn Review*, and *Beloit Poetry Journal*. GailGoepfert.com

SUSAN GRIMM'S poems have been published in *Poetry East*, *The Cincinnati Review*, *The Journal*, and *Blackbird*. Her chapbook *Almost Home* was published in 1997. In 2004, BkMk Press published *Lake Erie Blue*, a full-length collection. In 2010, she won the inaugural Copper Nickel Poetry Prize. In 2011, she won the Hayden Carruth Poetry Prize and her chapbook *Roughed Up by the Sun's Mothering Tongue* was published. She started blogging at *The White Space Inside the Poem* in 2012. In 2014, she received her second Ohio Arts Council Individual Artist Grant.

MARY HANRAHAN is a poet and artist living with PTSD. She holds an MFA in creative writing from Ashland University. Mary's work appears in *Modern Haiku*, *Frogpond Journal*, *Abstract Magazine*, *Bottle Rockets Press*, *Hedgerow*, and in many other places. She likes to read obscure poetry while feeding the mangy raccoon living on her deck. Everything is a metaphor or so she likes to think.

LISA HIGGS' third chapbook was published by Red Bird Chapbooks in 2018. Her poem "Wild Honey Has the Scent of Freedom" was awarded 2nd prize in the 2017 Basil Bunting International Poetry Prize from the Newcastle Center for the Literary Arts in the UK. She is poetry editor for *Quiddity*.

NATALIE HOMER has an MFA from West Virginia University. Her poetry has been published or is forthcoming in *The Journal*, *Blue Earth Review*, *The Pinch*, *The Lascaux Review*, *Ruminant*, *Salamander*, *the minnesota review*, and others. Her chapbook, *Attic of the Skull*, is available from dancing girl press.

NATALIE E. ILLUM is a poet, disability activist, and singer living in Washington, DC. She is a 2017 Jenny McKean Moore Poetry Fellow, and a recipient of an 2017 Artists Grant from the DC Arts Commission as well as a

nonfiction editor for *The Deaf Poets Society Literary Journal*. She was a founded board member of mothertongue, a women's open mic that lasted 15 years. She used to compete on the National Poetry Slam circuit and was the 2013 Beltway Grand Slam Champion. Her work has appeared in various publications, and on NPR's "Snap Judgment." Natalie has an MFA in creative writing from American University, and teaches workshops across the country. You can find her on Instagram and Twitter as @poetryrox.

ALYSSA JEWELL recently graduated from Western Michigan University where she is an assistant editor for *New Issues Poetry and Prose*. Her poems have appeared or are forthcoming in *Best New Poets 2016*, *Colorado Review*, *Hayden's Ferry Review*, *Iron Horse Literary Review*, *Lake Effect*, *Quarterly West*, among other publications. She lives and teaches in Grand Rapids, MI.

JOSEPH LANDI is a Philadelphia-based medical writer. His poems have appeared or are forthcoming in *The Southern Review*, *North American Review*, *Tampa Review*, *Wisconsin Review*, *South Carolina Review*, and *Southern Poetry Review*.

KATHRYNE LIM was born in Seoul, Korea and is from the American Southwest. She received an MFA in poetry from the University of New Mexico, and holds a master's in clinical social work. She lives in Santa Fe, NM and is an instructor at Northern New Mexico College.

MICHAEL LYNCH lives Boston, where he is an MFA candidate at Lesley University. His poems have appeared in *Hayden's Ferry Review*, *Switchback*, *In Posse Review*, *Harvard Divinity Bulletin*, and elsewhere. His chapbook *Underlife and Portico* (Aforementioned Productions, 2013) won the New England Poetry Club Jean Pedrick Award.

MICHAEL MARK is a hospice volunteer and long distance walker. His poetry has appeared or is forthcoming in *Alaska Quarterly Review*, *The American Journal of Poetry*, *Bellevue Literary Review*, *Cimarron Review*, *Columbia Poetry Review*, *Pleiades*, *Poet Lore*, *Potomac Review*, *Rattle*, *River Styx*, *Spillway*, *Sugar House Review*, *The Sun*, *Verse Daily*, and The Poetry Foundation's *American Life in Poetry*. His poetry has been nominated for three Pushcart Prizes and the Best of the Net. MichaelJMark.com

PETER H. MICHAELS' poetry has been published by *Barren Magazine*. He wrote a poetry book review of Erin Hoover's *Barnburner* that was published on *PANK* magazine's blog. He was also the 2018 winner of the Burt Dall Fixed Form Poetry Contest at Anne Arundel Community College where he studied creative writing.

JENNIFER STEWART MILLER holds an MFA from Bennington College and a JD from Columbia University. Her poetry has appeared in *Green Mountains Review*, *Harpur Palate*, *Hayden's Ferry Review*, *Poet Lore*, *Raleigh Review*, and other journals. She's a Pushcart nominee, and when she's not off biking somewhere fun, lives in New York with her family and congenitally-deaf Dalmatian, Daisy.

THOMAS R. MOORE has published three books of poems: *The Bolt-Cutters* (2010), *Chet Sawing* (2012), and *Saving Nails* (2016). His work is represented in more than thirty literary journals and has been broadcast on *Writer's Almanac* and *American Life in Poetry*. His poem "How We Built Our House" won a Pushcart Prize and publication in 2018 Best of the Small Presses Anthology. He currently serve as poet laureate for Belfast, ME.

Published in *Poetry*, *Poetry Daily*, *Boulevard*, *Prairie Schooner*, *Arts & Letters*, *Massachusetts Review*, and numerous other literary journals, MARY MORRIS received the Rita Dove Award and has been invited to read at the Library of Congress. Her first book, *Enter Water, Swimmer* was recently published by Texas A&M University Consortium. Morris writes book reviews, teaches poetry, and lives in Santa Fe, NM. Water400.org

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ANGELIQUE ZOBITZ loves big hair, trap music, cowboy boots, community activism, and most especially, her husband, daughter, and two rescue dogs. Recent and forthcoming publications include, *Glass: A Journal of Poetry—Poets Resist Series*, *So to Speak*, *SWWIM*, *Junto Magazine*, *Geeky Press' Hoosier Lit* anthology, *Poets Reading the News*, and others.

HOLLI ZOLLINGER is a self-taught artist who has made a career of her talents: drawing, painting, and surface design. She is continually inspired by her surroundings living in the desert town of Moab, UT. She is highly motivated by the art of creativity and incorporates the color, texture, and pattern she sees in the world around her. Holli's work has been published and featured worldwide. HolliZollinger.com

SUGAR'S MISSION, VISION, VALUES



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Sugar House Review promotes a nurturing literary community at the heart of Utah by advocating for an eclectic range of beginning and experienced poets and their poetry through publishing, social media, and free or low-cost live events.

VISION:

Sugar House Review is one of the most highly-esteemed literary projects in America that fosters writers within diverse and rural literary communities.

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WHAT & WHY

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