

Young Ravens Literary Review

Issue 11 Winter 2019



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Introduction

In Issue 11, we explore humanity through the theme “interface.”

No person’s journey to understand themselves and their place in a universe rife with wonder and despair will ever be the same. One may seek for the deeper significance of our fragile existence from the eye of a sparrow, while another treasures glimpses of a promised land beyond the reach of unrealized dreams. Some will discover solace, but not lasting companionship, with other human beings. And yet they will still grasp for the eternal heart beating in the space between us, as tangible and red-rich as Dayna Patterson’s “Heart Beet.”

Many find themselves entangled in a “ceremony of doubt,” prompting Antoni Ooto to ask if there is such a thing as an “unconflicted mind.” Our desires, fears, and as Katherine Johnson asserts, “nonsensical fruitions,” all vie to control us. Maybe we are all seeking communion with our better selves. But what will that realization require of us, and can we find the courage to pay it?

The time to meet and become this “beautiful stranger” is not guaranteed to anyone (Johnson). As mass consumption increasingly becomes the driving force of our species, we erase vital boundaries with the natural world. We evict the bounty of life itself and prompt Margaret King to ask, “Is there a planet B?/ The land, the land,/ the lake, the lane,/ the sky, the sky,/ Customers only.”

Duane Anderson contends, “The apple does not know man/ and never has.” Whether humanity can successfully coexist upon our ephemeral sphere is still being written in the strata of the earth. Yet for all the sorrow and wrack that may prove our undoing, we are not done inking the glory of living now. Rebecca Fullan celebrates the potential of a “creature not yet made,” beckoning a zygote to take human form within the womb. Tay Greenleaf declares, “I see the stars move with me and at once I feel whole again.”

The creators of this issue of *Young Ravens Literary Review* meet together on the page, joining in a new interface of word and image. We hope you will find their vision revelatory, that you will discover your own unique interfaces, and that you will seek to make them known in whatever medium you may choose.

Sincerely,
Sarah and Elizabeth

Fabrice Poussin

The Prison



MD Marcus

The Complicity of the Trees

Down here the oaks yawn upwards to heaven, stretch parallel
across the sky, then lunge back towards hell. The phantom
whining of insects nestle in the convergence of their branches, questions
which of these sturdy boughs, low and thick enough to climb,
loaned their strength
 unbowed,
to support the weight of broken bodies. Did our fathers see Spanish moss
dripping from unread fairytales, or just another dead looking thing
straining against the immortal? How many tried gulping down
the sticky southern air, too little to fill their lungs, and mistook
these dark winding limbs as the arms of their ancestors
ushering them onto freedom?

Donna Pucciani

Morning Walk

Entire days used to unroll
like carpets, moving and magical,
on the morning's walk.

Whether in darkest snow
or the season of day lilies,
my own swift pace

would welcome me
and the dawn itself,
the possibilities spread before us

in the moon's waning smile,
the sun's feathers darting
among the maples.

A squirrel pauses on a branch,
holding a nut with nearly-human hands.
The grosbeak's rosy breast

mirrors the redbud trees,
or patches of ice gleam
starlight. Is this the cure

for all loneliness? Or does
delight in grass, snow and cloud
only sharpen the sadness of years?

Friends disappear.
Knees no longer bend as designed.
Think of all the books unread,

the lost touch of a hand.
Does anything matter, or nothing?

Eyesight, breath, movement

gaze back in the eye of the sparrow
before she flits to the mulberry bush,
searching for seed.

In a moment, she will no longer
be there, leaving the twigs behind,
trembling.

Meg Freer

Rolling On, Godfrey Sculpture Park, (Stefan Duerst, sculptor)



Edilson Ferreira

Night

When night comes and sleep does not appear,
I ride through unsuspected worlds,
have memories from days I did not live,
by sure dreams I did not realize.
The yearning is loose; I have to fill the void,
so that I arrive in full to another day waiting for me,
new challenges, new fights.
The new day will be powerful and pugnacious,
unlike me, one day older and not being able to hide
on the face and soul, the marks of misfortune and sorrow,
unrequited loves, dislikes and mismatches.
I will show that I did not renounce the human inheritance,
and, along with dear fellow ones I lived, loved and suffered,
having watered the road even with sweat and tears.
Always sure that we will reach, at the end of the journey,
the promised land, and, unlike Abraham,
who just had a glimpse, we will took secure possession, and,
dancing and partying, that day, we will throw to the skies,
sound and honest laughter.

John Sweet

late january, city of ghosts

early morning in blue and
grey all salt and dust and dirty
frost all
failed connections all
threads of war but here just the
soft hum of absolute clarity just the
dead weight of a merciless god
and i am thinking of you and
i am sorry for the pain i've
caused and together we are
less than what was promised but
in this moment we are eternal

in the seconds before
the snow begins to fall
i have meaning

not enough to change the future
but i still grab it and run

Holly Day

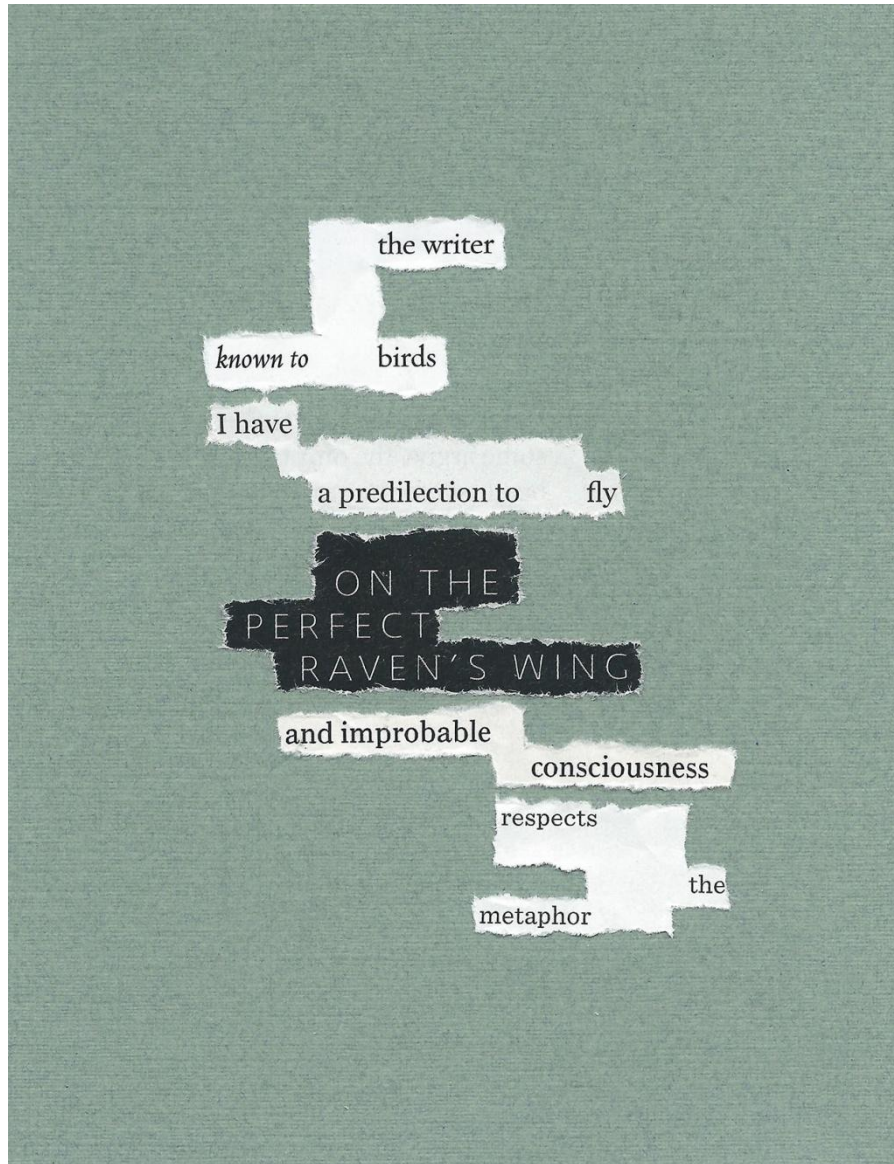
The Myth of Correspondence

To fully understand the pictures I have sent you
first, fill a bathtub with water and ice
get into the tub with all of your clothes on.
Only then should you shake these photographs out
of this careful assemblage of paper.

This is the only way you'll be able to understand
the shades of weather that separate us, the only way
to separate yourself from your envelope
of tropical breezes and permanent sunshine.
I will speak to you through the ice bruising your skin
a frigid wraith clinging to you from too far away.

J.I. Kleinberg

the writer



Antoni Ooto

The Unconflicted Mind

Is there such a thing?

like unrestricted water
the energies of thought
spill across a ceremony of doubt

with its prayers and crows
never considering pen or paper

a time to study stones and clay
if only to remember symbolism.

Stories skim, dip, or bump around
feeling important in the telling.

Dayna Patterson

Point Whitehorn Beach, Shelter 1



Judy DeCroce

Traces

So life is a poem
that speaks less-wants less.

I leave much out,
with every chance
letting go fast.

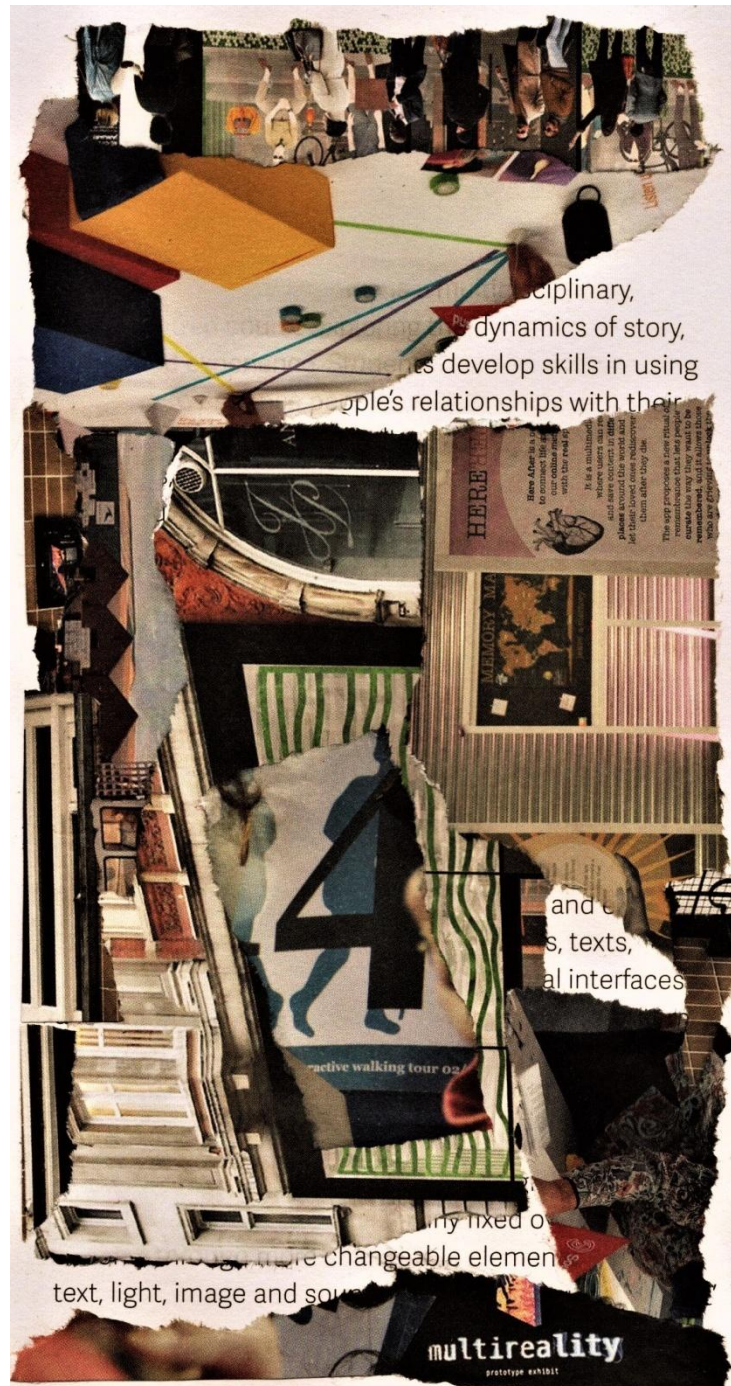
Just a few traces different...
words pressed to the traffic around.

Truth holds some pleasure,
a surprise held for a moment.

That happens...
if you see,
if you don't.

Janina Aza Karpinska

Texts-Interfaces



Mark J. Mitchell

Ephemeral Gag

She'd held a soap
bubble gently
between her white teeth
since sun-up—

always careful not
to pierce its
rainbowed surface

she hadn't said
one single
dirty word
all day.

Dayna Patterson

Point Whitehorn Beach, Shelter 2



Margaret King

The Disappearance

Folks on the street want to talk about the weather
But they don't really want to talk about the weather, if you know what I mean.

The most innocuous topic of conversation
Has also become the most urgent
"What a nice day out!"
"But have you noticed the ash trees have been cut down?"

Our town looks different now
The forests have thinned
We no longer feel sheltered or protected
Can't my neighbor see the razed tree trunks—reduced to infected firewood—
Piled up everywhere?

The odd bird whose call disappears as soon as you try to listen to it
You've never heard that bird around here before
As soon as you try to identify it falls silent
You'll never hear it again

And now when I see an ash tree still alive
I want to fall at its feet and weep
Water its roots with my tears
They were all around me
And I never started noticing them
Until they started dying, en masse.

This parking lot along the lake used to be public
We never even had to think about it
Like an old habit, on especially foggy or scenic or wave-smashed days
I automatically drive there
And I'm still surprised by the "Customer Parking Only" signs.

Like the evicted eastern bluebirds
Who had to ask themselves

Is there a plan B?
Is there a planet B?
The land, the land
The lake, the lane
The sky, the sky
Customers only.

Meg Freer

The Turtle's Shell

-for Bruce K.

A gull with six-pack rings around its neck
cries in agony. Nervous octopus arms
clutch bottles and tubes. Seals and whales
fight with plastic hangers and jugs for space.

The Great Pacific Garbage Patch,
a giant gestating map of our negligence,
grows three times the size of France.
A hypothetical new country, the Trash Isles,
comes complete with flag and stamps.
Images on the proposed currency
trace the muscles of ocean life.

On the other side of the world,
a child exclaims, "It's small as a pickle seed!"
upon seeing a newborn baby's pinky toe,
and laughter covers pressing thoughts
of end times, releases ripples of hope
that ocean travelers will find not plastic,
but moss on a turtle's shell.

Larry D. Thacker

All Seeing Being



John Grey

Your New Model

No longer mixed signals
and rebel circuitry,
sudden overloads,
undependable boards.
I am the latest in the line,
supra-metallic, all-vision,
mega-inflated consciousness,
all capacities stellar-augmented,
propelled by the latest in zoom-thrusters.

It's onward and upward
from those earlier models.
I'm equipped with
oversight nervous-engage,
love/hate rearmament.
system-wide brain deployment,
the latest in miniaturized neural canisters,.
and upbursts of firepower when needed.

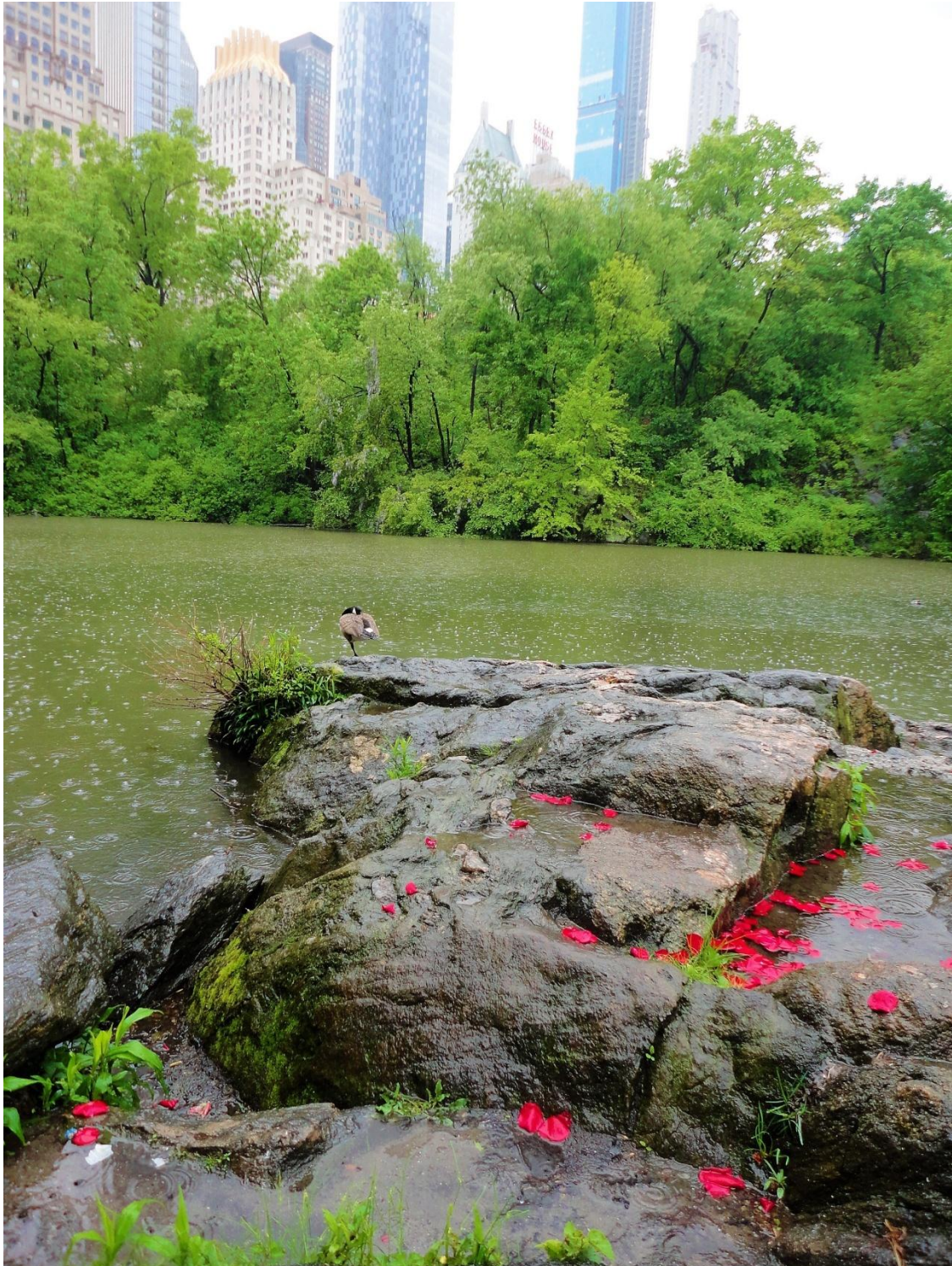
I can vault-event, system black-hole,
element interface, translate in 4D,
DNA reengineer, time displace,
and data-demolish
but, once again, only as required.

Did I hear you say you can't afford me?
You can't afford not to have me.
Besides, it's the law.
One in every home.
And there I can
neuro-manage, nano-decree,
molecule-manipulate and atom-delist
but strictly if I deem it necessary.

Yes I can still do your bidding
but I prefer to do my own

Meg Freer

Goose with Red Petals, Central Park, NYC



Randel McCraw Helms

There Will Come Soft Rains

There come soft rains and the smell of earth,
And tree frogs creaking unlimited joys.

The mockingbird's throat will swell for love
Through long days emptied of human noise.

Swallows will build their houses of mud
Moistened, enriched, with human blood.

Not one will know our war is done,
Not one will mind that no side won.

Not one will grieve, neither bird nor tree,
That mankind perished utterly.

And Earth, refreshed as she wakes at dawn,
Will cleanse herself now we are gone.

Meg Freer

Life Goes On, Westport, Ontario (Stefan Duerst, sculptor)



Lily Beaumont

communion

I'd like to be the woman cast up inside a midnight church, now bowing low above her vaulted hands, palely shadowing the ceiling's arc. You see her only from behind — the coat still buttoned, the hair eloquent and loose in the way of girls and widows, the shoulders perched atop the pew's back like courting sparrows. Her grief or fear or penitence moving on her face: hidden and so

legible.

Katherine Johnson

I look in the mirror

My bed is wood
And my throat is cotton.
I don't know where my hands are.
"Katherine,
Study harder!"
My mom's fast Chinese echoes
In my brain that's somewhere in my body.
My white walls
Plastered with posters from happier days
Close in on me.
The concerned face of my roommate
Hides behind her hair
And disappears.

I look in the mirror,
And I see
The weight I gained:
From stress,
From school,
From not having the grades to get into
Yale,
Columbia,
Harvard.

My room is a cage,
And my life is a vacuum.
I can't define what my goals are.
I wanna
Be happy.
My resume smothered with unpaid
Anxiety and nonsensical fruitions
Control me.
My problems feel like dust compared to the world.

I look in the mirror,
And I see
The time my parents wasted:
For what?
They pay money for me to be in a place
Where i am not
Myself.
In a place where I hurt
The flesh they created.

My summer is a mystery,
And my hands are held
By people I trust,
People I just met
That I love.
I don't know what will happen
In these wild and beautiful months.
I do know
My body,
My struggles,
My sadness
Do
Belong.

I look in the mirror,
And I see
A beautiful stranger.

I am getting to know her.

Gary Duehr

Now

Scene: an empty street.
A couple cars going by. And in the heat,
A block of ice
Melting on the sidewalk, a thin stream
Trickling to the curb. There is no theme.
Later on, the ice will still be there:
Glacial, opaque, and angular, just where
It was. Why does this moment mean? What questions
Does it slowly ask, as if at once
To answer and refuse
Simultaneously. What is there left to lose?
We sigh and turn the page,
We move along. We blame it on our age.
But later still, we might be lured
To circle back at closing time, our vision blurred:
Has the ice block disappeared
Completely, even then? Is that the thing we feared?

The Meadow

By
Jennifer Battisti

We teeter macaroni salad onto paper plates, totter pine needles from our shoes. The easy temperature giddy-ups our antes. I raise you two goldfish crackers, only to crumble at your gutsy call with two pair. In the distance, the strange muscle of curiosity takes shape. Road trip people hashtag the wild into a catchy presumption. We're all grazing at the sweet blade of the day, taking what we can. Our daughters are three Cheetos, hammock swung, giggling and energized by the endless thrill unfolding from the picnic basket. Out of nowhere — as if we've drifted out to sea on gingham, a family of horses surround us. We cannot recognize the landscape. Your son rebuilds a shattered fort. The carpenter ants dip their hats strategically. A gust of wind knocks over the cooler. A wasp changes his mind. The largest horse spells out a message to the others with overturned Scrabble pieces.

Our blanket is foolish; smells of commerce, convenience, Oscar Myer, a disoriented rummy hand, a synthetic springtime lavender that makes the horses buck and neigh. A tabbed soda cracked open spooks the speckled foal. Drunkenly, she discovers the golden retriever beside us, who of course knew this was coming. Nobody speaks. A park ranger does not appear. It's the dog they want. Hoofed and ready to take him, they corral, nibbling his hindquarters, nuzzling their flanks against his

domestication. We freeze and pant. The ants overtake the beet salad, they march through the creases in our summer novels.

The majestic dog is oblivious to the acorn commotion. He watches the children, counts our breaths, is in loyal service to each assembled sandwich, to our saran-wrapped ship floating into the tangled mane. Inside our chests, our hearts gallop. We are so furless and wagoned down with necessity. How could we stop it? He'll send for his frisbee, an old shoe, pictures of the children. We pack up the van to return to the material world. The horses stand watch outside a makeshift teepee in the woods. Inside, the good dog sleeps. His worldly name falls away. He saddles the feral unknown as fiercely as any of us wish we could.

Margaret King

First Hot Day of the Year

The first hot day of the year
We swelter and swoon
Unused to the heat

And so it is
When we feel loved
For the first time in a long while

I sit on the park bench
And don't notice
The summer sun
Burning my ears

Bob MacKenzie

Stranger on the Shore



Donna Pucciani

Demise

She lies amid the crumpled sheets,
her body wasted, her hands
birdlike claws. I have sent pralines,
knowing that a taste for sweetness
comes near the end.

Chicago to Akron, we talk on the telephone,
but even a few words fatigue her.
We used to joke that we were Tuscan princesses.
She'd even bought twin tiaras
with rhinestones set in plastic.

A god somewhere has planned this suffering,
mapped out the stages of her malaise,
then got distracted with starvation and wars,
forgetting my friend who has been waiting
to slip away for quite some time.

The husband and daughter
hover at the bedside, wondering *how long*.
An internet spark sends the news.
My friend will be buried this week,
or burned on the pyre of ritual.
I haven't the courage to ask which.

Animals die without protest,
without memory, devoid of desire,
accepting instinctively that flesh decays
in the natural order of things.
Stars shine even after they cease to exist.
We humans weep, rend garments,

rebel against the rot.

I donate to a canine shelter in memory
of her and the two long-haired Dachsunds
that waddled beside her in life
and preceded her into the great heartland of sky.
At the gates, they will sniff her transparent ankles.
Then, recognizing her scent, they will lick
her ethereal face, their neatly-trimmed tails
wagging her into heaven.

Donna Pucciani

Flute, Years Later

I foolishly volunteered
to play flute for the Sunday service
in a group reminiscent
of a junior high school band.

The hymns are exquisite, tortured
by my shrill descants in the high octave
between heaven and hell. Am I better off
mute, or absent?

The devotional tunes, their holy words
buttressed by a magnificent organ
and the well-meant syllables of the faithful,
struggle towards paradise.

I bark and wheeze, the memory
of Mozart hidden somewhere
in the open holes that now leak from
dehydrated pads protesting the stasis of years.

The shining silver song of youth
has hidden far too long in its plush-lined
case, its three-segment body like a giant
mythic insect wanting to fly

but no longer able. Salvation now emerges
in the humility of small rituals, forgotten
fingerings, lips pursed to kiss
but only quivering.

After rehearsal, I take apart the metal tube,
old friend, and replace it in its box.
I catch in the mirror my tired cheeks,
my tarnished mouth.

Bob MacKenzie

Gull on Blue



Fariel Shafee

The Voyage

She drank the spreading moon,
waded in the darkened sea in a
voyage to the stars.

They blinked
from far away, and then

faded in the scorching light

of daytime.

Darkness was just too

short.

Tay Greenleaf

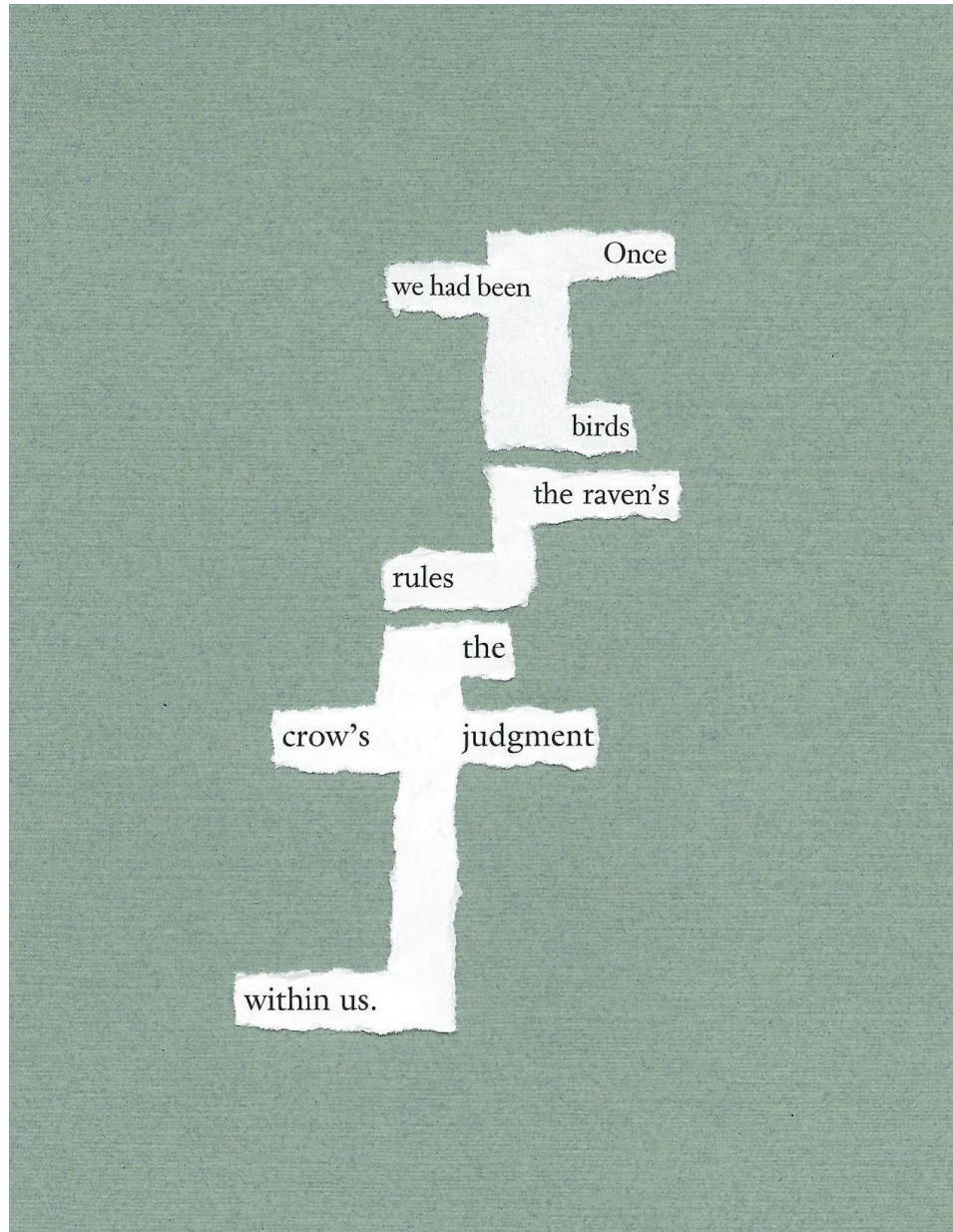
David Bowie is Dead

For some reason all I can think about is this myth
about an English explorer from the 1900s
who discovered a crater-like hole in the depths of the Tibetan forest.
The hole, exhibiting all the layers of the earth down to the hot core
was lined with bodies of some otherworldly, undead creatures
who seemed just like us but were decidedly not of this earth.
They say the candid faces gazed at the Englishman, reached upwards and called:
Oh! Humankind! Do you hear me? What is it like to be you?

I have been looking upwards for too long today.
But it's hard to think about looking anywhere else.
Over a million people took to the streets to sing for you,
But I'm walking home in a silence so deep I can hear my soles giving out.
I see the stars move with me and at once I feel whole again.
Oh! Otherkind! Do you hear me? What is it like to be you?

J.I. Kleinberg

Once



Barbara A. Meier

The Wrack

I came to dig through the wrack.
I came to see what was salvageable
and how many pneumatocysts are intact.
I grip the shaft of my shovel, tense my muscles
and scoop anticipating.
This is the life I live for:
the wrack and not the sand.
Pieces of vegetation, not the ocean.

The seaweed flies swarm upward toward my face,
disturbed in their feeding, attracted by the rotten smell of kelp.
Their maggots gorge on gelatinous fiber eating away at membranes
of memories stored in gas-filled bladders.
I spread the kelp on the dry sand shelf, nudging it,
But the shovel is not enough-
My hands need to feel
The putrescence of life.
it coats my hands
as the flies invade the nose,
the mouth, the ears.
It makes a bed when spread to sea,
a mattress to bear my weight
green strands grow from my sides
Medusa hair of kelp.
It's hard to see where my life
begins or ends on the high tide line.
The ocean nips at my ankles.
Between the wrack and rock
below, above the wave
the harvest continues.
The sand, the kelp, the shovel
begin again in a Book of Death
where my name is written.

Rebecca Fullan

Invocation for Zygote

creature not yet made,
come, if you want to.
you can use my bodyflesh
secrets easygoing lifeflow
doing hardworking seachange
cell change a mania of
division and you will be made
and i unmade made made
unmade mothered mothering.
we can do it together. i don't
know how. my body your body
that right now is my body
almost, they know how. i can't
do it by thinking, but together
we can do it. we can do it.
come, come, come into life
into this way of life, be
like me, unlike me, be
here, if you want to,
come, if you want to,
creature not yet made.

Duane Anderson

Turning Ripe like the Apple

Man came from the seed.
Even the apple
once came from the seed,
planted in earth,
and watered
and warmed by the sun.
All this time the seed
grew into a tree,
taller over the years,
branches spreading,
blossoming.
Man eats of the apple.
As long as the apple has existed
man has eaten its fruit.
The apple does not know man
and never has,
both full of life,
both full of beauty.
The apple rots only if man lets it,
and man's mind sometimes
follows the same path,
but it is not the apple's fault.
The apple,
turning green,
turning yellow,
turning red,
always changing.
Man,
taste the fruit and know.

Dayna Patterson

Heart Beet



Contributor Biographies

Duane Anderson

Duane Anderson currently lives in La Vista, Nebraska, and volunteers with the American Red Cross as a Donor Ambassador on their blood drives. He has had poems published in *Poetry Quarterly*, *Fine Lines*, *The Sea Letter*, *Cholla Needles*, *Wilderness House Literary Review*, *Adelaide Literary Magazine*, and several other publications.

Jennifer Battisti

Jennifer Battisti is a Las Vegas native. She won “Best Local Writer” by readers of *Desert Companion* (2019). Her chapbook, *Echo Bay*, was released in 2018 (Tolsun Books). Her work has appeared in or is forthcoming from *Manzano Mountain Review*, *Thin Air Magazine*, *Coe Review*, and *The Briar Cliff Review*.

Lily Beaumont

Lily Beaumont is a freelance curriculum and study guide developer; she holds an MA in English and Gender Studies from Brandeis University, and currently lives in Central Texas. Her creative work has appeared in publications including *Open Minds Quarterly*, *The Furious Gazelle*, and *Nine Muses Poetry*.

Holly Day

Holly Day’s poetry has recently appeared in *Asimov’s Science Fiction*, *Grain*, and *The Tampa Review*. Her newest poetry collections are *In This Place, She Is Her Own* (Vegetarian Alcoholic Press), *A Wall to Protect Your Eyes* (Pski’s Porch Publishing), *Folios of Dried Flowers and Pressed Birds* (Cyberwit.net), *Where We Went Wrong* (Clare Songbirds Publishing), *Into the Cracks* (Golden Antelope Press), and *Cross Referencing a Book of Summer* (Silver Bow Publishing), while her newest nonfiction books are *Music Theory for Dummies* and *Tattoo FAQ*.

Judy DeCroce

Judy DeCroce, a former educator, is a poet/flash fiction writer and avid reader. Her works have been published by *Plato’s Cave online*, *Pilcrow & Dagger*, *Amethyst Review*, *Tigershark Publishing*, and many others. As a professional storyteller and teacher of that genre, she also offers workshops in flash fiction. Judy lives and works in upstate New York with her husband writer/artist Antoni Ooto.

Gary Duehr

Gary Duehr has taught poetry and writing for institutions including Boston University, Lesley University, and Tufts University. His MFA is from the University of Iowa Writers Workshop. In 2001 he received an NEA Poetry Fellowship, and he has also received grants and fellowships from the Massachusetts Cultural Council, the LEF Foundation, and the Rockefeller Foundation. Journals in which his poems have appeared include *Agni*, *American Literary Review*, *Chiron Review*, *Cottonwood*, *Hawaii Review*, *Hotel Amerika*, *Iowa Review*, *North American Review*, and *Southern Poetry Review*. His books of poetry include *In Passing* (Grisaille Press, 2011), *THE BIG BOOK OF WHY* (Cobble Hill Books, 2008), *Winter Light* (Four Way Books, 1999), and *Where Everyone Is Going To* (St. Andrews College Press, 1999).

Edilson Ferreira

Mr. Ferreira, 76 years, is a Brazilian poet who writes in English rather than in Portuguese. Largely published in international journals in print and online, he began writing at age 67, after retirement as a bank employee. Nominated for The Pushcart Prize 2017, his first poetry collection, *Lonely Sailor, One Hundred Poems*, was launched in London, in November 2018. He is always updating his works at www.edilsonmeloferreira.com.

Meg Freer

Meg Freer grew up in Montana and now teaches piano in Kingston, Ontario, where she enjoys running and photography and wishes she had more time for writing poetry. Her prose, photos, and poems have won awards in North America and overseas and have been published in anthologies and journals such as *Ruminare*, *Young Ravens Literary Review*, *Vallum Contemporary Poetry*, *Poetry South*, *Eastern Iowa Review*, and *Borrowed Solace*.

Rebecca Fullan

Rebecca Lynne Fullan works, writes, and wonders in New York City, with her wife and baby daughter.

Tay Greenleaf

Tay Greenleaf is a poet and journalist in Asheville, North Carolina. She holds a degree in creative writing from the University of North Carolina and continues to write poetry while quibbling with her resident two gophers Karl Marx and Karl Marx's Friend. Her work can be seen in local lifestyle magazines such as *Bold Life* and *WNC Magazine* and literary publications such as *Headwaters*, *Orison Books*, and *Abberation Labyrinth*.

John Grey

John Grey is an Australian poet and U.S. resident. He is recently published in *That, Dunes Review, Poetry East, and North Dakota Quarterly*, with work upcoming in *Haight-Ashbury Literary Journal, Thin Air, Dalhousie Review, and failbetter*.

Randel McCraw Helms

Randel McCraw Helms is retired from Arizona State University's English Department. His recent poems have appeared in such places as *Young Ravens, Chaffin Journal, and Dappled Things*.

Katherine Johnson

Katherine Johnson (17) lives in Groton, Massachusetts, and is a junior at Groton School. She is an aspiring writer with a diverse background: her father is American and her mother is Chinese. She is primarily inspired by introspective works. She has published work in *Teen Ink* and *Lilun Magazine*.

Janina Aza Karpinska

Janina Aza Karpinska is an artist-poet with an M.A. in Creative Writing and Personal Development from Sussex University, from the south coast of England. Her poetry and artwork has appeared in several publications and exhibitions. Collage is her favored art practice—making something beautiful and whole from torn scraps, using that which is often overlooked or discarded.

Margaret King

Margaret King is a Wisconsin author who enjoys penning poetry, short stories, and novellas. Her recent work has appeared in *Nightingale & Sparrow, VampCat Magazine, Ghost City Press, Bombus Press, and Mojave He(art) Review*. She is also the author of the poetry collection *Isthmus*.

J.I. Kleinberg

Twice nominated for Pushcart and Best of the Net awards, J. I. Kleinberg is an artist, poet, and freelance writer. Her found poems have appeared in *Arcade, Diagram, Dusie, Entropy, Otoliths, The Tishman Review*, and elsewhere. She lives in Bellingham, Washington, where she tears up magazines and posts frequently at thepoetrydepartment.wordpress.com and occasionally on Instagram @jikleiberg.

Bob MacKenzie

Bob MacKenzie spent much of his childhood and youth walking in the mountain woods of Alberta and British Columbia and on the shores of glacial lakes and the Pacific Ocean. Now, he lives and writes in Kingston, where he walks in the woods and shores of the surrounding area. Bob's poetry often celebrates this intimate relationship with the natural world, which he asserts is good for his soul. His poetry has been widely published in journals and he has eight books of poetry to his credit. Bob performs his poems at readings and other events, often accompanied by music.

MD Marcus

MD Marcus is a freelance writer and poet who loves keys, the color blue, and a good nude illusion. Her work has appeared on *Salon* as well as in *Rat's Ass Review*, *Communicators League*, *Ariel Chart*, *The Literary Nest*, *Motherhood May Cause Drowsiness: Funny Stories by Sleepy Moms*, among others. Please read everything she writes and visit her on [Instagram](#) or at mdmarcus.com.

Barbara A. Meier

Barbara A. Meier has spent the last four years living on the Southern Oregon coast. She retired from teaching kindergarten this summer and moved to Colorado to spend time with her mom. Her first micro-chapbook, "Wildfire LAL 6," came out in summer 2019 from Ghost City Press. She has been published in *The Poeming Pigeon*, *TD; LR Catching Fire Anthology*, and *The Fourth River*. <https://basicallybarbmeier.wordpress.com/>

Mark J. Mitchell

Mark J. Mitchell was born in Chicago and grew up in southern California. His latest poetry collection, *Starting from Tu Fu*, was published by Encircle Publications in November 2019. He is very fond of baseball, Miles Davis, Kafka, and Dante. He lives in San Francisco with his wife, the activist and documentarian, Joan Juster, where he makes his meager living pointing out pretty things. He has published 2 novels and three chapbooks and two full length collections so far. Titles on request.

A meager online presence can be found at <https://www.facebook.com/MarkJMitchellwriter/>

Antoni Ooto

Antoni Ooto is a poet and flash fiction writer who came to writing late. Known for his abstract expressionist art, Antoni now adds his voice to poetry. His love of reading and studying many poets has opened and offered him a new form of self expression. On long country walks he often finds inspiration or clarity to shape a work-in-progress. His poems have been published by *Front Porch Review*, *Amethyst Review*, *Nixes Mate Review*,

Young Ravens Literary Review, and many others. Antoni lives and works with his wife poet/storyteller, Judy DeCroce in upstate New York.

Dayna Patterson

Dayna Patterson is the author of *Titania in Yellow* (Porkbelly Press, 2019) and *If Mother Braids a Waterfall* (Signature Books, 2020). Her creative work has appeared recently in *POETRY*, *AGNI*, and *Passages North*, among others. She is the founding editor-in-chief of *Psaltery & Lyre* and a co-editor of *Dove Song: Heavenly Mother in Mormon Poetry*.

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Fabrice Poussin

Fabrice Poussin teaches French and English at Shorter University. Author of novels and poetry, he has published in *Kestrel*, *Symposium*, *The Chimes*, and many other magazines. His photography has been published in *The Front Porch Review*, *San Pedro River Review*, as well as other publications.

Donna Pucciani

Donna Pucciani, a Chicago-based writer, has published poetry worldwide in such diverse journals as *Shi Chao Poetry*, *Poetry Salzburg*, *Acumen*, *The Pedestal*, and *Journal of Italian Translation*. Her seventh and most recent book of poetry is *EDGES*.

Fariel Shafee

Fariel Shafee has degrees in science, but enjoys writing and art. She has published prose and poetry in *decomP*, *Millers Pond*, *Literary Nest*, *Blaze Vox*, and others.

John Sweet

John Sweet, b. 1968, still numbers among the living. He is a believer in writing as catharsis and is opposed to all organized religion and political parties. His latest collections include the limited edition chapbooks *Heathen Tongue* (2018, Kendra Steiner Editions) and *A Bastard Child in the Kingdom of Nil* (2018, Analog Submission Press). All pertinent facts about his life are buried somewhere in his writing.

Larry D. Thacker

Larry D. Thacker is a Kentuckian writer and artist living in Johnson City, Tennessee. His stories are in past issues of *The Still Journal*, *Pikeville Review*, *Story and Grit*, and *Dime Show Review*. His poetry is in over one hundred and fifty publications, including *Spillway*, *Still: The Journal*, *Valparaiso Poetry Review*, *American Journal of Poetry*, *Poetry*

South, *The Southern Poetry Anthology*, and *Appalachian Heritage*. His stories have been nominated for Pushcart and Best of the Net recognitions. His books include *Mountain Mysteries: The Mystic Traditions of Appalachia*, and the poetry chapbooks *Drifting in Awe* and *Memory Train*, as well as the full collections *Drifting in Awe*, *Grave Robber Confessional*, and *Feasts of Evasion*. His MFA in poetry and fiction is earned from West Virginia Wesleyan College. Visit his website at www.larrydthacker.com.