

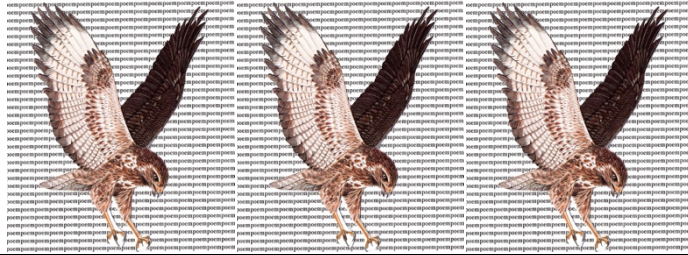
THE SEVENTH QUARRY



POETRY

ISSUE THIRTY-SIX
SUMMER/AUTUMN 2022
SWANSEA'S INTERNATIONAL
POETRY MAGAZINE

THE

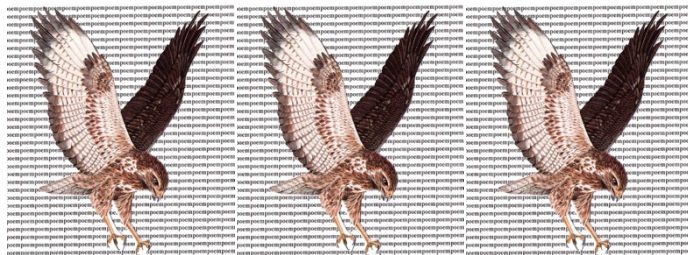


SEVENTH



QUARRY

**SWANSEA'S INTERNATIONAL
POETRY MAGAZINE**



**ISSUE 36
SUMMER/AUTUMN 2022**

**EDITORIAL
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This issue features work from America, Canada, England, India, Ireland, Romania, Scotland, Spain and Wales. It also includes a Poet Profile of Greek poet Maria Mistrioti and an interview with American poet and collage artist John Digby.

The collaboration between The Seventh Quarry Press and Stanley H. Barkan's Cross-Cultural Communications, New York, continues into 2022.

Many thanks to the contributors published in this issue.

Special thanks to Stanley H. Barkan for allowing me to use the lines from his poem *Morning Poet*, from his book UNDER THE APPLE TREE, on the magazine's back cover.

Peter Thabit Jones, Editor

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(photo © 2022 Peter Thabit Jones)

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AT THE IMMERSIVE VAN GOGH EXHIBIT

While one visitor sees Van Gogh's self-portrait
on a vast wall, upside down,
sinking into the sea as a sunset,

another sees that face reflected on the floor,
right side up, rising from the water
as a well-fed seabird,

and another sees those eyes sliding
across a visitor's chest as she moves
across a glass globe in reflection,

while another sees her own eyes
mirrored back from a glass prism tower
as her eyes merge with Van Gogh's—

maybe Van Gogh, too, had a different experience
each time he looked at one of his portraits,
incompleting the painting each time he looked—

as those masked, sitting in socially distanced
pandemic circles, see this moving portrait uniquely,
whether they're lying down, leaning left or right,

whether turning their heads, or on their heels,
whether watching the fractured features as the face
projects across a jagged, reflective sculpture,

or carrying that fractured face away on themselves,
unawares, on their own body surfaces,
in this shifting kaleidoscope of Van Gogh brush strokes

actively painting across every surface of 3 vast rooms,
across the floors, across the walls, across the ceilings,
as each room opens into each other's changing vistas,

brush strokes creating and recreating his irises as they bloom,
his sunflowers as they enclose me, my hmmm
hmmming like a buzzing bee's on the sweets,

and visitors are bending with his potato eaters,
sitting with his card players, stretching up
into his cypress trees, winging over

rippling red-green waters with his birds,
as the arches of the Arles asylum, where
he was committed as fractured, go swimming

in multiple directions all around the room,
and the floor is rising in shimmering rivulets
with music embedded in the vibrant colors,

then falling into the starry night cosmos swirling
all around no absolute perspective,
as old faces are melting into young faces,

into dazzling hues in creation's fluid universe,
where visitors are turning into paintings,
entering the fidelity of otherworldly dimensions,

where paintings are all process in motion,
and visitors are all painters with their own
moving perspectives, shifting realities,

and millions keep participating across the US,
across Italy, across Brussels, across the UK,
with the man who died penniless, obscure,

because being alive means eyes need to brush
with branches of light and resounding colors
so they might sing in art's glorious hills.

Gayl Teller America

FLASHLIGHT/New and Selected Poems by Gayl Teller.

Published by Cherry Grove Collections, USA.

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CORONA COPERCABANA

On a bleak, blustery afternoon,
hidden inside thick woolen hoods,
big black-out lenses, thermal gloves,
fur-strapped winter coats, wrapped
in mufflers, high socks, heavy pants,
faces masked up to our glasses,
identity traces were mostly erased,
so we seemed sci-fi, scary-movie ready
to shoot a scene across the grey,
deserted state park parking lot.
I couldn't tell friend from other,
we so looked the same, so I kept
greeting others as if we'd met before.
And as we began raising our hands,
thrusting up angles with our legs,
then shaking it up, bouncing gravity
waves off our burdened bodies
to "Sex on the Beach," singing
"I want to have sex on the beach"
beneath our masks, while dancing
with the song we heard inside our heads,
knowing life is short, but these
pandemic days are long our song,
our breathing made more potent
with the dying, the shootings, the prayers,
the open air adding esteem in our lungs,
feeding our bodies' rhythms to our song,
to the life that is here, the life that could be—
Is there worth in erasing our features?
Should we all look the dingy same
so we can greet each other as friends?
Can we not learn to love the resonant
rainbow eyes, hair, skin, the human friend?

Gayl Teller America

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IN KYZYL

Love sprouted in my uncle's heart in the springtime when all the buds sprang open. He saw the world in a new light; the length of a day was more than a few light-years. To understand this, he claimed one must burst open, and lovers must move like lightning and winds. He began singing with all the migratory birds visiting his branches, got to know after all the birdsong has beginnings inside an egg. The breeding of his speech was like the soul entering a body. He was experiencing the value of making meaningful new sounds, combining silence, thought, and voice with the musical instrument, his throat, as if an air coming through a flute.

Birds and some frogs can produce two distinct tones, but where we come from in the central Asian Russian Republic of Tuva, throat singing is practiced by all humans. We can produce two different pitches at once—a low rumble and a high whistle-like tone called *Khoomei*.

We are all nomadic peoples, all in love with our horses and nature; our songs have the ability that doesn't sound like any human sound, nor can imitate it with such a degree of motor control. Although our songs were traditionally to sing babies to sleep or in games women played during the long winter nights while the men were away hunting, occasionally a love song is composed by a man newly falling in love. Sometimes my uncle sang in the yurt while I played the *byzaanchy* he built for me by hand:

*In the winter month,
while the birds were singing,
I was on my knees,
confessing to her
my longing and desire . . .*

Sultan Catto America *Translated by the author from Tuvan

DAUGHTERS OF THE HILLS

The sun is not bright enough
To dry their clothes and hair
So men put on wet clothes
Blame their women.
Fingers freeze
Knitting needs to be stopped
Wails from the next door house
Another girl child is born !!

She counts time
Through the holes of the knitting needles
Another hard day to count.
Another girl child is born in the neighborhood
They are furious!!

Christmas time
Snow is falling in the hills
Tourists around, throwing snow balls
With joy and mirth around the mountains,

the widow keeps on knitting new mufflers
For the daughters of the hills, yet to be born .

Mandira Ghosh India

**THE SEVENTH QUARRY PRESS IS ON THE PRESTIGIOUS POETS
& WRITERS, INC, NEW YORK,
DATABASE OF PUBLISHERS**

**The Seventh Quarry Press has been recognised as a quality publishing
press by Poets & Writers, Inc, New York, and will be added to their
database of publishers.**

**Many thanks to Gayl Teller, American poet, for nominating
The Seventh Quarry Press.**

DAWN RELEASE

A chink of light. No more.
Then the door, you know
In intimate detail, grates open.
Grudgingly.
As if it had forgotten its purpose.

Slow sullen stares.
Not microphones or cameras,
Face you on the other side.
Watching you,
Always watching you.

All the bright optimism
Of so many years ago
Is now bundled up
In a torn grey overcoat,
Tossed at you as you leave

You walk the last
Agonising hundred yards
To the plane squatting like a mirage
On the tarmac
And do not dare look back

You have no expectations.
This new day begins
Without fuss or fanfare.
But slowly, imperceptibly at first,
The world changes.

Derek Webb Wales



TWO AM SOUTH BANK RESURRECTION

She knew then there was nobody
who shared what she thought
to be her vision of paradise.
How could there be?

And he was certainly no saint
squatting with her among the slops of beer;
broken bottles tracing dreams
in shards of glass.

But still he was not prepared
for what happened next
as her tear-grained face was lit
by the intrusive flicker of the torch.

Briefly, momentarily, her face
had its own luminance: dove white
and taut as the doped tissue of
his modelplanemakingyouth.

Then she smiled lopsided and
nose-dived onto the concrete,
satisfied with her own
insignificant mockery of life.

Derek Webb Wales

REMEMBERING VINCE CLEMENTE/Edited by Peter Thabit Jones

Contributors: Martin Abramson, Stanley H. Barkan, Maryann Calendrille, Gina Clemente, Maryann Clemente, Natalie Goldberg, Frane Helner, William Heyen, Dr. Olimpia Iacob, Carolyn Mary Kleefeld, Kathryn Szoka, Gayl Teller, Peter Thabit Jones

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AUTUMN LEAVES GLOW 2020

Leaves at my feet whisper hope,
I gather them into a pile,
they are like wild children
dancing a strange dance;
their alluring colours cheer
me as the light fades.
Sirens wail like banshees
leaving an icy trail,
everything is shifting at speed,
hidden faces, hidden smiles, hidden lives.
Muted tongues magnify an eerie ambience,
a space becomes a void.

The allotment shed is still the same,
homely beneath the trees,
the fork and spade are companions,
they never lament.
Familiar items have an added glow,
the beetroot crop tastes sweeter
as if their aim is to please.
The land transforms undercurrents,
daffodil bulbs are sleeping.
A full moon looks in my window
as it moves along.

Ann Flynn England

THE LISTENER

The room had an austere ambience,
a woman sat uneasily on a chair.
The listener's tempo transported the storyteller
across an ocean
to a classroom with undertones.
Figures rigged in black attire
dominated a godly kingdom,
the rattle of rosary beads sent
signals to pupils pinned behind desks.
Prayer was a ritual that shaped time.

When the child was waist high,
a schoolbag was an unwelcome appendage
that led to a place of shadows.
Nomad children had to sit on the classroom floor,
words that flew from forked tongues
left a ghostly trail.
Dialogue became an anxious exchange,
blunders blew lines.
Byways offered rivers and trees,
the town had a melancholy air
as if forsaken dreams dallied at doorways.

Ann Flynn England

STORMS

I grip onto you as this ship rocks,
The twisting waves like gyres
Pitch and pull us port to starboard
And I'm pulled under again and again
By the limbs of this delicious storm.
You are at stern, sailing us through
Whirlpool and typhoon, Poseidon's
Wrath made-new. I see the bolts of
Lightning as I grip your neck,
Flashes of white light, my voice is
thunder in your ears. We roll together,
This tidal desire, the human urge
To outlast the ocean's force, to surf
And ride its thrusting force, which seeks
To throw us off, to cast us asunder.
We reach the shore together as storm breaks,
Bodies that have seen the wreck,
Have touched the treasures of the sea,
Have out-stormed the wind and rain
And lay here, together, survivors,
Winners or something like that.

E. A. Moody Wales

MEASURE TWICE CUT ONCE

For my father

You pass me the tape as we work
Side by side; measure twice
Cut once, you tell me, caution
In your eyes, as if some careless past
Mistake had left you momentarily lost.
You tell me this each time, a mantra
In case I forget and make a careless cut.
My smooth hands instinctively steady
The wood that your rough ones cut
And we both stare at the saw
As it eats its way through plank,
Inch by slow inch. We hardly speak,
Except in Tools. We both step back
And eye the finished job, Right, you say,
And I nod an approve. It's done now.
You let me take your toolbox
To the car these days, I carry it carefully,
Placing it like a newborn into the boot.
As you drive away, I stand watching
Your car shrink with its precious cargo
Inside and think of how complex
The human heart is.

E. A. Moody Wales

BY CHRISTMAS

For the best of men

By Christmas, summer's heat will cool,
The glare of its white light will soften,
Allowing you to look into the open sky
once more, to feel the lightness of snow
against your face, its baptism of new.
By Christmas, your paperweight heart,
so heavy now, the papers that it pins,

Will turn and lift, its kaleidoscopic core
a treasure not a trap, you'll feel the
strength of its polished glass.
By Christmas, the season of our love will
change, those Autumnal walks amongst
fallen leaves will hold us in their hands
when winter comes, I'll give you a harvest
of seeds, new fruit for hungry times,
the taste of Summer's load will burst
and ripen in our mouths.
By Christmas, I pray that all these things
That I am holding on to, wrapping them
like gifts to parcel and send to you,
will arrive in time, that you will see
and know their sender, take them in,
custodians of time and sorrow passed,
and we will turn together towards
the fresh promise of a new year.

E. A. Moody Wales

TODAY

Some days sparkle
from dawn to dusk.

Others drag hours
through mud or dust.

This day may flower
or hide in its husk.

But my day will find
the sunlight it must.

Jim Gronvold America

SCREAMING TO ESCAPE FROM ALL LIMITATIONS
AN INTERVIEW WITH JOHN DIGBY
BILL WOLAK

John Digby was born in London in 1938. He began writing Surrealist poetry from the early 1970s. He was influenced by Breton, Eluard, Arp, and Desnos. Although he was living in England, the first publications of his Surrealist poetry was in America during the time that he worked with George Hitchcock on *Kayak Magazine* in California. Three books of his poetry were published by Anvil Press Poetry in London: *The Structure of Bifocal Distance* (1974), *Sailing Away from Night* (1978), and *To Amuse a Shrinking Sun* (1985). These were illustrated with his black and white collages, a medium he has continued to expand from figurative to abstract over the past several decades. Over the years, he was published in Wales, France, Belgium, Germany, Colombia, and Romania. His poetry is included in the *Penguin Book of English Surrealism*. In England, he was the co-founder of Caligula Books. For the last 38 years, he has lived in Oyster Bay, New York, where he co-founded (with his wife Joan Digby) The Feral Press, which publishes digitally produced limited editions of illustrated booklets of poetry and short fiction. As of 2017, the press has migrated to New Feral Press: <http://www.newferalpress.com>. For the past several years, he has been collaborating with Hong Ai Bai on an extensive project, publishing books devoted to English improvisations of classical Chinese poetry.

John Digby and Bill Wolak have been friends and collaborators since 1976, when they were first introduced to each other by the poet Nathaniel Tarn.

Bill Wolak: Both your writing and your collage work is filled with a deep love of animals. How did you become so interested in animals?

John Digby: My grandfather brought me home a picture book of English birds, so bird books, and later natural history books became a passion for me. I fell in love with the pictures, and he taught me to read using all the descriptions of the birds, their nests, their eggs, and their haunts. So from an early age, I developed an interest in aviculture—soon I was hunting for books on foreign birds. My interest in birds began to broaden, and this was due to weekly radio broadcasts on ornithology by James Fisher. I believe it was my grandmother who suggested to a friend of the family to take me to the zoo for the day. It was there that my “birding” days began. Inside the aviaries, I stood entranced completely rapt in wonderment. By the time I was 14, I became a keeper at the London Zoo.

BW: Isn't that young to be working in a zoo?

JD: I lied about my age, but my knowledge of birds and natural history got me the job, and, as luck would have it, I found myself working as a keeper in the small bird house. Very early on in my career at the Zoo, there came a policy that the keepers had to attend lectures on all animal, bird, and reptile subjects. Maybe this prompted me years later to enroll in the Working Mens' College to get myself an education. It was there that I fell in love with poetry.

BW: Which poets did you begin reading around that time?

JD: I was and am still particularly fond of John Milton, William Blake, William Wordsworth, and John Keats. In addition, I enjoyed Matthew Arnold, especially his poems, "The Scholar Gypsy," "Thrysis" and "Sohrab and Rustam." Later, I discovered Rimbaud's "Le Bateau ivre." Rimbaud's poetry released my imagination from its constraints. Next, quite by accident, I discovered the Dadaists. Everything to them was absurd. This feeling that reality was absurd confirmed something that I had sensed since childhood, perhaps because I grew up during the horrors and confusion of the War and because I'm a little dyslexic. Reality always seemed slightly uncanny and inexplicable. Finally, I began to take an interest in Surrealism. I became fascinated by the idea of Surrealism. I searched out many translations of surreal texts from various European languages. But the one Surrealist whom I believed to be a superior poet was Robert Desnos, whose poems were tinged with superior imagination and an eerie spiritualism.

BW: When you first started writing poetry, what were you attempting?

JD: Writing poetry for me was endeavoring to find my own imagination. However much I failed, I had this "feeling" that at least I was trying!

BW: So how did you begin writing Surrealist poetry?

JD: I began by experimenting with dream imagery and various aspects of the absurd. Little by little, I found my niche. Gradually and with a great deal of luck and perspiration, I managed to get my poems accepted in various magazines. I must admit, I did better in America than England, but, nevertheless, I succeeded in publishing in both countries. Then my big break came when Peter Jay, the founder of Anvil Press Poetry, took on my first book of poetry *The Structure of Bifocal Distance* and allowed me to design my own book cover with one of my collages.

BW: Do you remember the first collage that made an impression on you?

JD: Once I was drifting around the Tate Gallery, where I saw one of the first collages I can remember. It was called "The Mystic Rose" and was, I think, by one of the Nash

brothers—Paul or John. The collage was constructed with a cut-out full-blown rose, hovering in the middle of some vague countryside scene with the sky, if I remember correctly, showing a few drifting clouds. I stood in front of this collage completely transfixed. Knowing absolutely nothing about Surrealism, this collage spoke to me like nothing I had never seen before! I could work the collage out in my mind, but this simple juxtaposition of the rose against a pastoral background seeped into my psyche. It was disturbing in a way. It astounded me like something that has always been there, but has only recently been discovered.

BW: Was there anything in this particular collage that affected your process of creation?

JD: Perhaps it was from “The Mystic Rose” that I first was able to formulate my main goals in collage: arresting the viewer’s attention by creating an unusual juxtaposition that looked as if it had always existed and appears to be absolutely “natural.”

BW: Did any other Surrealist artists interest you at that point?

JD: René Magritte, Kurt Schwitters, and Max Ernst, especially his three collage novels that I bought in Paris: *La Femme 100 Têtes*, *Une Semaine de Bonté*, and *Das Karmelienmädchen Ein Traum*.

BW: What was your collage-making process like in the beginning?

JD: To me, curiosity is the key word for collage. It was always a pleasant pastime for me to cut up images and rearrange them differently, or hopefully to give some pleasing effect, for example rearranged with a dream-like ambiance. I have often thought that collage is a springboard to express new themes and subjects. It’s all well and good sticking chicken heads on humans and giving flying fish feet for jest, but that’s all been done before. I say this because the tradition of Ernst appears to carry on infinitely like a machine set in motion. More than three-quarters of a century after his influential hybrid collage figures made a stir, the tradition of black and white collage appears to be still immersed in his imagery and tradition. Oddly enough, I have most recently returned to the hybrids myself to make collage books with a young Russian artist, Dasha Bazanova, about flood myths and global warming, so I guess what Ernst hit upon in his narratives are universal archetypes that will continue to have significance.

BW: What was it like making your collages in those early days?

JD: In the beginning, I was at the time not interested in black and white collage. I started in color. There were so many color magazines, booklets, periodicals, publications with illustrations that the sources seemed endless. I honed my skills at hunting through second hand bookshops and soon built a collection of colored materials. Also, I found

that on certain Friday evenings in London, especially in the West End, offices and shops literally threw out hundreds of printed materials. I guess, in a sense, I was doing a “Kurt Schwitters”—not constructing like his collages, but leaning toward a figurative style while composing collages out of found scrap materials. I began to construct hundreds of collages with a rubber cement called “Cow Gum” and scissors! Within a month of my collage beginnings, I could have filled a gallery with these creations. I was happy cutting, rearranging images so that they appeared absurd and surreal. Soon a friend introduced me to surgical scalpel blades, which added a further refinement to my technique.

BW: How did you go about studying collage?

JD: I actively took an interest in collage on display. I haunted bookshops, galleries, and museums for collage and books about collage. It certainly was an art that was practiced around the world. It was a popular medium. In Paris in those days (the 60s), almost every gallery had an exhibition of collages, and by Hover Craft and a pleasant train trip, Paris was within easy reach at a reasonable price. Collage was healthy! So why not partake and join in the movement, “all power to collage,” “change the world by collage.” It was more than a game; it was a philosophy. I believed in collage!

BW: How did you make the transition from color collages to black and white?

JD: At that time I was still actively writing Dadaist and Surrealist poetry and reading a great deal of other things. I came across a line of poetry—it might have been Pablo Neruda, or another poet: “I work alone surrounded by men who toil with their hands.” The line stopped me in my tracks. Here I was, sitting at home after working in an office, cutting up colored papers and rearranging them! I felt like an idiot! I looked at all my color collages, bundled them up with all the materials that I had collected, and left them out to be collected the following morning by the garbage men. Good-bye collage, I thought. I abandoned collage or collage abandoned me, who cares? There was enough of it already drifting around the world—tons of it piling up. It seemed to me that there was a distinction to be made between collage and paste-ups. Many people think their collages are collages when they are actually paste-ups—a collection of hopeless, arbitrary images pasted together in the name of collage.

BW: So what redirected you back to collage?

JD: I discovered George and his barrows at Farringdon Road. George was an open-air book dealer. From him I purchased a box of black and white plates depicting insects. It was much later where I purchased my first set of “hurt” volumes of Picturesque Europe

and other sets including Picturesque America, Picturesque Palestine, Picturesque Egypt played a major influence in my concern for the pastoral. Gradually over the months, I also picked up several bird books, a few by the Rev. J. G. Wood, and a set of *The Royal Natural History*, edited by Richard Lydekker. I also began to take an interest in his black and white plates of various other themes and topics. Without any purpose in mind, I soon began to build a collection of black and white images in wood and steel engravings. I had no thought of using them as like all the natural history books together with the bird books. I began to make collages from that black and white material. Black and white collages, I thought, should make me think. They should demolish all the distractions of color and make me want to develop an idea of structure within its limitation. Fighting against the grain of color collages should push me to struggle to say some things that are extremely difficult to express in a limited form.

BW: So what was the subject matter of your first black and white collages?

JD: My earliest black and white collages were figurative scene in the Surrealist tradition, arresting and disturbing. They were dramatic and often accepted for magazine illustrations. The major change in my work came in the 1980. I was already living in America, and that was when I realized that my book materials—made from wood pulp paper—were acidic and that “Cow Gum” dries out. I made a trip to visit the paper conservation lab at the National Library in Washington, D. C., where I first became aware of archival papers and pastes. This led to writing *The Collage Handbook* in 1985 and completely rethinking my ideas about collage materials. Nineteenth century black and white engravings of people and places were plentiful enough, but how to use them in a new involved archival considerations and the idea of recycling. I learned how to de-acidity paper. My images of birds, butterflies, animals, and fish took on new meaning when I started to think about the destruction of nature and of the human cultures depicted in my old books. I decided then to do a series of butterflies depicting various ethnic people from around the world dancing their traditional dances. I also wrote a book of my own poetry with butterfly illustrations. It was called *Fluttering with an Attempt to Fly* (1994). The fragility of butterflies that manage to migrate over wide territories had always interested me as paradoxical. In leafing through books about voyages around the world, the idea of butterflies making their journey had come to mind again, so I began to imagine them as witnesses to sacred dance around the world.

BW: Can you describe the techniques that you use in making your collages?

HD: The essence for all is the same. Cutting delicate pieces of paper and integrating them so that the completed image appears seamless. In all my work, I back image papers onto long-fibered mulberry paper so that I can easily cut with a scalpel blade without tearing the images. My early work included hundreds of birds and animals made this way, and I continued doing them for decades probably because of my love to them. In

one early series, I came upon a new style. I was into doing figurative work, and I was cutting out a figure from an illustration that happened to be an old French journal that was falling to pieces. I had purchased the volume from one of the bookstands along the Seine. I kept the figure, which I was going to use for a collage, to one side. I placed the background to another side and started working with the figure I had cut out and other pieces I had cut out for the collage. As I searched among all the papers and books spread out before me, I suddenly noticed the previous sheet from which I had cut out the figure and saw that in the hollow space where the figure had been another image appeared. It was a landscape on the sheet underneath that it was obviously unrelated to the collage I was working on. I discovered that by combining the landscape with the silhouette of the figure I could create a new kind of collage. The series that emerged was called “Beside Themselves.” I found that viewers interpreted these collages as containing two related narratives, which really pleased me. In general, it appeared as if the landscape and figures in the hollow space were in the thoughts of the characters in the foreground.

BW: Did Max Ernst’s collages have an influence on your black and white collages?

JD: Certainly he or his inventiveness opened up doors in my own unconscious, and his idea of narrative collage continued to influence my figurative style. Whatever might be said, Max Ernst invented or discovered black and white collage. He made it his own. A totally new form of visual art came into being. That cannot be disputed.

BW: Were there any other collage artists who influenced you at this time

JD: Around the early or middle sixties, a friend of mine introduced me to the poetry of the Czech writer, Jiří Kolař—I did not know at that time he was a collagist. Later, I was reintroduced to his works as a collagist. I saw a few reproductions of his birds, in which he took out their bodies and replaced them with older colored pictures of renaissance paintings. These struck me as incredibly dream-like. Also, I was astounded by his collages that were called “rollages” or “cubomania.” These collages consist of using more than two images. He takes the two images and cuts them into ¼ inch strips and pastes them down alternately, thus creating a movement with two separate image. I must admit that this “rollage” style somewhat fascinated me. The technique was quite simple and yet extremely effective. I began my own “a la Jiří Kolař” collages and endeavored to progress in this style. So I began making what I call splits in black and white using multiple copies of the same print.

BW: What other types of things influenced your collages?

JD: Both art or myth influenced me, especially the Australian Aboriginal works—more myth than art. I share the same belief with the Aborigines, that all objects—natural ones in the world—have an inner “spirit,” “life,” and/ or “presence.” I made two trips to Australia and then based several series on what I experienced there: “Spirit of the Pinnacles,” “Boomerangs,” “The Nymphs,” and “The Waves.” Another perpetual

influence has been the poet and artist William Blake who declared as what I take to be his artist's statement: "Everything that lives is holy." Among religious art—though I am not in any traditional way religious—I am also fascinated by medieval manuscripts, particularly the structure of dense pages and the amusing "drolleries" that comment around the edges and represent the sexual and secular elements of the manuscripts. I have been making collage "drolleries" for many years, using them to illustrate books and finally making my own book of them.

BW: At some point, you began to create less representational collage and moved more towards abstraction. How did that happen?

JD: One day, I had an idea for creating abstract collages using illustrated papers in a new way. I pulled out *Picturesque America*. I had often used the rocks in this book, and indeed I have used the flowing water as well a great deal as fragments of interior landscape in my birds, fish, and animal collages. The rocks themselves have always fascinated me, and in various collages I had manipulated them in all various positions. I decided to abstract the rocks. Firstly I photocopied the rocks sixteen times, and then I cut them out and pasted them on a large, single piece of mulberry paper. I drew over the rocks with paste, and, after the sheet was dry, I abraded the surface with sand paper. I also did the same with the rolling waves, but this time I used a quick drawing overlay with black ink before abrading the surface the sandpaper. The results satisfied me. The organic shape of the rocks and water abstracted in this manner gave me a new set of abstract patterns with which I can expand my repertoire of images and textures. I started to do the same with multiple copies of plates from Dover Press books and was able in that way to construct papers of all varying shades from pale gray to black, which I used in a series called "Split Images" and for many other abstract works.

BW: What tools do you use in constructing your collages?

JD: A collagist's tools are paper, paste and a pair of scissor or blades. Rarely does a collagist draw, sketch—or paint. Firstly a de-acidifying agent is necessary. That is extremely important. While early collagists used wheat or rice starch, in recent years synthetic co-polymer pastes have become available, and if these are used it is important because they are flexible. A good source for such pastes is a bookbinder's supply store or a company specializing in archival library materials. Glue should not be used under any circumstances. It is an animal by-product and discolors and eats through paper. Nor should rubber cements or sprays be used. They dry out and the whole work disintegrates as a result. Acid-free papers are important. A wide range is available, and papers that are not acid-free in origin can be de-acidified and given permanence. With a top-line copy machine or a computer and scanner paper images can also be copied onto acid-free

papers. Acrylic medium and gel are also useful to coat papers and give them a barrier against oxidation.

BW: Is there a difference between collage and painting?

JD: The structure of a collage has little to do with the structure of a painting. For example, painting talks about foreground, middle ground back ground, but this sense of space is rarely created by design in collage. Painters seek to give the illusion of volume and depth of field, but collage is more concerned with flatness or surfaces raised outward in layers toward the viewer. Painting rarely is concerned with edges defining objects; collage very frequently is about the texture of edges. Narrative paintings rarely reference figures to previous paintings, but narratives in collages use figures that already have a reference in prints from which they were taken.

BW: What makes a good collage? Only originality?

JD: There must be something more than that. For me is about ideas and the structure of balance. With all the different images one has at hand, it becomes important to be able to juggle all diverse elements and have the capability to order, to construct a unity that makes a collage. Collage teaches that nothing is static—everything is on the move, racing toward progress, until progress itself becomes ancient. Collage is a voyage. You never know where it is going to take you.

John Digby Discussing the Making of His Collages:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dMVvJBVcbqs>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Mtca7QPIwJw>

Also By John Digby

The Structure of Bifocal Distance, Anvil Press Poetry, 1974

Sailing Away from Night, Anvil Press Poetry and Kayak Books, 1978

To Amuse a Shrinking Sun, Anvil Press Poetry, 1985

Miss Liberty, Thames & Hudson, 1986

Incantations, The Stone House Press, 1987

Fluttering with an Attempt to Fly, Ragged Edge Press, 1994

The Arches. with Tony Curtis. Seren Press: Bridgend, Wales, 1998

Me and Mr. Jiggs, lulu.com, 2018
Drolleries, lulu.com, 2019

Also By John Digby and Hong Ai Bai

Horse Poems in Chinese Tang Dynasty, The Feral Press, 2011
Six Songs from Ancient China, The Feral Press, 2011
Three Neglected Chinese Women: Three Neglected Tang Poets, The Feral Press, 2011
A Break in Passing Clouds: Improvisations on Chinese Poems, Cross-Cultural Communications, 2014
Passing Memories: A Collection of Chinese Poems on Cold Food Festival, Cross-Cultural Communications, 2016
Chinese Poet-Emperors, Cross-Cultural Communications / New Feral Press, 2017
Chinese Flower Poems, Cross Cultural Communications / New Feral Press, 2018
Fragile Kingdom: Chinese Insect Poems, Cross-Cultural Communications / New Feral Press; 2018

Also By John Digby and Joan Digby

The Collage Handbook, Thames & Hudson, 1985
Food for Thought: An Anthology of Writings Inspired by Food, William Morrow & Co, 1987
Inspired by Drink: An Anthology, William Morrow & Co, 1988

SHE TELLS ME

She tells me that her flesh is
Inhabited by thousands of birds
I remove the rivers from her
The soft sleeve of sleep

And discover
Twin mountains of blood
In which dolphins suddenly
Flash into the sunlight

She is a child born too soon too late
Time that has lost its passage
A secret gathered from the language of birds
Her hair ripe with the games of sunlight

Now I can imagine her
She turns to song to blood to stone
Circling this world
A flame passing through the earth's shadow

John Digby America

NIGHT SONG

Night with its velvety fingers
covers our eyes
with its sooty touch
and we curl ourselves
into a ball of breathing dust
the size of a child's clenched fist

in my sleep
I sing you a star
a distant star shimmering
among the inky depths
and it whispers my song to your ears
luring your dreams into my arms

asleep my heart
a patch of blood splashed against the night
comes beating at your breasts
announcing the birth of another star

John Digby America

theseventhquarrytheseventhquarrytheseventhquarrytheseventhquarry

TAVISTOCK SQUARE PARK, EARLY AUTUM

Black painted railings
of the small city park
keep red buses and
the real world out.

A bronze statue at its centre
is burnished by a mid-autumn sun
that warms lads lounging
on the grass, and fragments
of being lost in rock and roll
drift gently towards the young couple
laughing at the newness
of their stories, past the man
who taps soft red moccasins
to his earphone's rhythm.

I watch pigeons peck
for leftovers and
brown leaves stir
like crabs
in a green sea.
Seasons turn,
face winter.

Caroline Johnstone Scotland

**Awarded the 2020 Korean Poets Society of America/
Miju Poetry & Poetics English-language Award**

**GARDEN OF CLOUDS/NEW AND SELECTED POEMS
by Peter Thabit Jones**

Published by Cross-Cultural Communications, USA
ISBN 978-0-89304-236-3 Price: \$ 20.00/ £10.00

MAYFLIES

Grief is a marketplace
 of longing, ghosts
we catch a glimpse of,
 try to hold on to,
 pick up
like candy floss
that melts before
it hits a hand or mouth,
 transient dreams
like mayflies
 are a thousand hauntings.

Caroline Johnstone Scotland

Owner of Pembrokeshire performing arts venue publishes contemporary novel inspired by tourism's dark underbelly of crime

From the Welsh coastal town of Fishguard to the golden sands of Goa, a new novel by Glen Peters takes an unflinching look at how unsustainable mass tourism is engulfing traditional communities across the world. The story has a strong Welsh connection with its protagonist, Ceri, hailing from Fishguard, yet its main action takes place in Goa. While fiction, Glen uses the novel to examine several real-life issues associated with tourism-related crime.

One of the real-life stories that moved Glen to write this book was the tragic murder of 15-year-old tourist, Scarlett Keeling, in Goa. Glen's own extensive travel and research has allowed him to tackle the themes sensitively and authentically resulting in a deeply intriguing story that will have the reader hooked.

The author Glen Peters, who lives in Wales, is of Anglo-Indian heritage and has previously written and published two crime novels. He manages a successful renewable energy and construction business and together with his wife runs Menter Rhosygilwen, an arts charity.

***The Day I Died* by Glen Peters (RRP £9.99) is published by The Conrad Press and can be ordered from Amazon all good bookshops.**

EYE TO EYE

This blue can't contain
the sky -

it flows over
to still water

the aspen still
hushed in conversation
not quite ready to quiver
kiss the morning
and deliver light

A face-off with a fox
each of us charcoal shadows
to the other
before the sun
almost nose to nose
waiting for one of us to
step aside

Neither did. So close
we could see the
eyes of our other
shadow in the
creep of sun
at the treetops,
every change of blue
to blue
the music of
the planet spinning round

Burt Rashbaum America

EMPTY FEEDER

The hummingbirds are
gone. Their
trill, stilled

 as
autumn accelerates

the trees' dying,
the spectrum of gold
 morphing with the sun's

ascent, the accent
 of time arcing
 towards winter's dark
mornings, nature
 denuded, frozen
 in a monochromatic

death even as a
 grey light rises
 to kiss the clouds
and make forever
 of an afternoon.

Spring is distanced
 while the earth
 slumbers, then sleeps

awaiting its
 temporal
 unmasking.

Red, alone, unmoving
 awaiting one last
 guest, perhaps

alighting for a feed
 before hitching a ride
 on a goose

to Texas. Somewhere
south, where
others will fill

Burt Rashbaum America

WIDOWER'S SUMMER PROJECT

He meant to build a room. Loose lumber leans
against his fence. That's proof—this is the time.
He'll square windows, frame doors, sketch out straight lines
with chalk. He's bought new tools, shiny. They lean
dry, sheltered by eaves. But his nights are lean—

His time leaks away. His hands are too soft
for sharp work. But he means to do it this time.
Loose glasses slip down when he kneels. The lines
aren't strict. At least, that one he drew got lost.
Gray concrete won't set. All night it stays soft
as gum. And nails slide, saws just won't align.

Why do ghosts need rooms? He wonders and leans
on stucco, rolling a bottle of lime
pop, cool, on his forehead. He hasn't seen
her—nights stay vacant. But a new room means
purpose. Means the séance will work next time.

Mark J. Mitchell America



CALON LĀN PLAYED ON A STEEL GUITAR (AFTER MIDNIGHT)

Dark was the night, Iesu, cold was the ground,
and the boy'd waited long, cross-legged,
sandwiched between walls at Llanrhystud –
his back to the iconic one, eyes close
to closed, he faced the lesser seen
*Fe godwn ni eto.**

Hypnic jolt, the man appears –
not of this time but in this time; death
and life, odd headlights in his eyes.
Our boy'd've felt a fool if no one'd shown
but now wishes himself in the mountains:
Llewellyn, Glyn Dwr, Penderyn, no telling.

He'd not risen from the chilled ground
when the figure lifted the resonator
rested across his legs. Steel body cradled
and rocked by surrogate arms
and torso – eagle-white fingers

flicked from nowhere a sliver of slate
to slide across the strings.
The melody took a phantom form,
haunted the night, haunted the boy
who'd sworn he'd spent till dawn
with the greatest lover
up against that wall.

With the sun, a six string and a sliver of slate
he took to Cardiff, Caernarfon, Merthyr...

**We will rise again - Cymraeg/Welsh*

Brett Evans Wales

INSIDE OUTSIDE

By day and by night
the light is everywhere
it shines in the torments
and the brushwood of everyday life

it is poetry in the plains
as in the cities
it is written
it is said
it is sung
in all tones

no need to look for it
it is there outside
as well as inside
it is always there
in the movement
and in the rest

Huguette Bertrand Canada

A NIGHT SCENERY

A night scenery
is a splendid work
unfolding in silence
at dusk

it makes its nest
in the starry eyes
when the moonlight passes by
embracing the amazed hearts

in a shared silence
it revives all dreams
unfolding in a landscape of peace

Huguette Bertrand Canada

THE SEVENTH QUARRY SWANSEA'S INTERNATIONAL POETRY MAGAZINE

aims to publish quality poems from around the world. Poets from the U.K., Albania, America, Argentina, Australia, Bulgaria, Belarus, Canada, Catalonia, China, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Guatemala, Holland, India, Iran, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Korea, New Zealand, Nigeria, Philippines, Pakistan, Portugal, Romania, Russia, Serbia, Sicily, Slovakia, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, and Switzerland have already appeared in its pages.

Each issue features a Poet Profile, a batch of pages given over to a chosen poet. There is also a Books and Magazines section, which provides details and brief comments on received publications.

The magazine is a cooperating partner with Stanley H. Barkan's Cross-Cultural Communications publishing company, New York. The partnership has already contributed to the magazine being displayed at several prestigious literary events in America and the publication in the magazine of work by the late, Pulitzer Prize-winner Stanley Kunitz.

The magazine is contracted to The Poetry Library's (Royal Festival Hall, London) prestigious digitisation project, which ensures sample copies of the magazine are featured on its very popular website: regarded by many as the best source for poetry in the U.K. EBSCO (USA) archives digitised copies of each issue of the magazine. The magazine was featured in THE GUARDIAN, one of Britain's leading daily newspapers, in April 2006. It was also awarded SECOND BEST SMALL PRESS MAGAZINE IN THE U.K. 2006 by PURPLE PATCH (U.K.).

The editor has organised THE SEVENTH QUARRY PRESENTS poetry evenings. The first, at the Dylan Thomas Centre in Swansea, featured a visit by American poet Stanley H. Barkan. In its collaboration with Cross-Cultural Communications, The Seventh Quarry Press has organised several international festivals, which have taken place at the Dylan Thomas Theatre, Swansea.

The magazine is now 64-88 pages and appears twice a year, in Winter/Spring and Summer/Autumn.

UK: £4.50 per issue or £9 for a year's subscription (two copies). USA: \$15 per issue or \$30 for a year's subscription (two copies).

Further information at www.seventhquarrypress.com or seventhquarry@btinternet.com

WHY MY WIFE RE-READS OLD BOOKS

after William Heyen's Vehichles

"I really love *Sotah* by Naomi Ragen!" my wife says. I agree but remind her that we both read that book a long time ago when we were invited by Rabbi Wohlberg to have dinner with her here in Merrick. "Yes," Bebe says, "but it's like reading a new book now or visiting an old friend. After all, when we first read it, it was 1992, that's 28 years ago." "True,"

I say, in agreement, "but I have so many other books you haven't read that you can read for the first time. Like novels and stories by Maugham, and many books by Steinbeck and Hemingway." "But I've read all of those a long time ago.," she says. I say, "Then re-reading them would be, as you say, like for the very first time, since it was so long ago,

no?" "I'm just happy with reading Ragen," she insists, "as if for the 'first time' now." "I'll find some other books for you in my library," I offer, "that are classics, like Balzac, Dostoyevsky, Singer . . . which you haven't read, for you to read, *really* for the first time. And if you've read them before, they'll all, like *Sotah*, be for the very first time."

Stanley H. Barkan America

THE BRIM

The hat maker said,
your head is so small and round
you might be a child

Thank you, I think,
I said. But I still have a
a funeral to go to;

I need black crepe
and dignity. No veil, but
a wide brim, perhaps,

so I can create
my own shadow, like a bird
seen in a film on death.

Thirty years gone now -
my ill-advised black heels that
pierced the green heart grass.

Sarah Davies England

SHUGGIE BAIN

You're sitting in a middle class
pool of sun (through mortgaged windows)
Drinking coffee (insta, yes, but branded)
reading the papers.

Yesterday someone asked you
Have you read shuggie bain, read shuggie bain yet,
you're Scottish, aye?
The last added as a nudge joke.

I'm from the North, and have been asked
If I grew up in shellsuits, la?
Yes, I wore a pearl grosgrain nylon
number to my wedding.

Yes, I've seen the coal shed
in the house where you were born
and saw where once, they'd had to put a bathroom in.
Yes, my Dad once had to wear council trousers.

Seems our personal ancestries
are always streets in black and white,
kids with old men watchfulness
or super saturated snaps of truant days.

It's never the good life, or the period dramas,
narrow rules and great wide lawns
except to play the help. We're not bred for this paradise -
dresses that stayed white, hereditary architecture.

Sarah Davies England

HOME repairs

I know memories hide deeply in nooks and crannies
counting on returning one day
to burn us with doubts

I know they disguise themselves in sermons
or in the soft voice of dream angels

But I went shopping with memories
and now they dress in colour and they're proud
of what they've become

We traveled together and changed cities
became a part of the ocean

We are not just foam in waves anymore
we don't see shadows in our conversations
and our bodies have mapped anew
without blueprints of stale conversations
where weeds love to place
roots

I've come back from winter because I trusted
the wisdom of the stones.

Raquel Torres Spain

THE READER IN THE MIRROR

I remember in my skin
the illness of uncertain times
looking for uplifting news in
the press

In the end everything flamed in a bonfire
Tyrants snugged in the ashes
to be reborn

I remember cold beaches as tombs
for opposition leaders

In the mirror I don't recognize my face
or the rebellious words I write
I am still silent but unlike them
my words are now free to bite.

Raquel Torres Spain

**VIDEO FROM NEW ZEALAND
HOLD ON TO THAT SKY WHILE I TRANSPOSE ITS COLOURS**

It's spring here but you sent an autumn sky,
which shouted to your world, "Look up at me!"
as the mighty star began its evening prayer
the spectacle rose above the Tasman Sea.
This was a moving sunset to remember,
for here the season's dial was set at grey;
while the world's eastern eyes were slowly closing,
here we were waking to a primrose day.
But now we devour the transient scenes together:
surging patterns that bleed into the night,
colours and shapes will surely be forgotten,
threatening cloud will leach them from our sight.
How small the world, great human mind, when I
can share in springtime your autumnal sky.

Jean Salkilld Wales

BEYOND CLOSURE, a novel by Val Norris.

Published by Cambria Books/www.cambriabooks.co.uk Price: £12.

'We see how human emotions can be unruly and unpredictable and can transform the course of an ordered life'— from the book's blurb.

A superb read—Peter Thabit Jones

TO RUTH

(Ruth Bidgood, 20th July 1922- 4th March 2022)

You told me how, in 1941, you
walked with your boyfriend quietly through Port Meadow
not far from Thames, and watched the nesting moorhens,
not talking much, not asking what came next.
You vowed you'd write, you did exchange long letters,
and he survived, but married someone else.

And now it's 2022, and war
again, not that it ever stopped, or will.
I see them, lovers clinging to each other
in tears, before just one gets on the train –
the young men not allowed to cross the border –
and time winds back, the scene is just the same.
Two students walk, him with his call-up papers,
and you a girl the age of Sophie Scholl,
across a field of memory, and it darkens,
and I'll remember, though your light grows frail.

Merryn Williams England

AFTER CATULLUS

'I don't look for your approval, Caesar, or care whether you are a black or a white man'.

Why is that face all over social media?
Why must I contemplate it night and day?
I have no wish for your approval, Caesar,
nor interest in the vapid things you say.

Are you Stalin that I must keep staring,
fishlike, at your perfect suit and Brylcreemed hair?
Courtiers surround, another day they'll stab you;
include me out; with me you rank nowhere.

Merryn Williams England

from THE GARDEN OF ADULATORY

This is the making of my mistake

Knots of grass, blue flame and lavender—
lilies of the Nile and a borderline of sage:

a garden of sand, stone and Zen solitude,
a beach surrounded by a garden of rock,
sea grass Posidonia, and a blur of shells:

Everywhere a swamp of color and sea,
gulls and more gulls, and in the near distant,
a pair of shearwaters and one large cormorant,
the quiet wind shaded by hints of blue.

Michael Brownstein America

THE AIR WE CANNOT UNDERSTAND, THE WATER WE DO NOT SWIM IN

A spackle of dandruff
snow over black earth
as if it were greasy hair
tangled in thorn and wet soil,
fury and the last remnants of coal.

When he went inside,
There was a tearing sound,
The way wood moves away from nails
And then a chipping away,
A pulling from--

How passionate the sick, worrisome the breeze;
Heavy the breath, abrasive the water.

Michael Brownstein America

OUT THERE IS SO CLOSE

The radio blurts out
a motorway pile-up
on the route behind,
the night dark and thick
in pursuit, reaching for me
to explain machinations of chance.

Somewhere will be
a missing hello,
somewhere bad news
will explode its words,
an emotional bomb
to shatter someone's life.

By fifteen minutes grace
I can grieve for carnage,
not be a marker on history
of a motorway battleground,
and Death is asking questions
of my road concentration.

Tomorrow the media
will try to apportion blame,
but we're all victims
of the way we live.
Our capacity for rashness
means not all wars are big.

These incidents fit
like made-to-measure.

Gordon Scapens England

THE CYCLICAL NATURE OF HURT

I was six, she was four,
and I tried to save her
with a tear-stained prayer,
terrified of loss.

I must have got it wrong
for she died in the night
leaving a space like a journey
after diphtheria had its way.

Next day the world
was a burden I couldn't shake off,
its weight buried me
in meaningless words.

There were no answers
to heal all the wounds
I thought were questions
swarming around my head.

Just a few days before
we sang a birthday song
to a neighbourhood cat
we thought understood.

Now I still fight tears
when the past calls out to me
with that song, so direct
so innocent yet so laden,

'Happy birthday to you'.

Gordon Scapens England

The Seventh Quarry Press
is a member of the Cyhoeddi Cymru/Publishing Wales (CCPW)



MOON'S MUSCLE MEMORY

Archeological Inventory at Tranquility Base
—The Lunar Legacy Project

It was the lightest, simplest of touch, but
it burned. Exquisite of course.
And captivating.

Out here, at Tranquility Base, only loneliness now.
But,
doesn't moon water have muscle memory? It can't
be too hard to prove.

Appears there's nothing at Tranquility Base to stop raw desire,
it'll just flower up again like any arm does, or some palm
in some cases might—water just claims its own presence.

Any sensitive touch may be felt for a brief moment, a briefest;
perhaps one should be careful where, when they reach out.

Skin isn't like raw moondust, not incredibly soft nor inviting regret.
Skin leaves its own wake in water if touched or unwrapped.

And gravity has no sense nor memory, might blindly throw out touches.
Memory is fallible, we know—serves up ever-present happiness, ditches the rest.
Memory's umbra and penumbra cannot replace now-soft hands or wanting skin.

Advancing shadows are recollection of sin—to never touch or ever be close.
At end, memory can do anything, even recirculate itself, even rekindle itself.
At end, memory knows zero of self; it searches for warmth in any distant arms.

At Base, now that everything's gone home—desolation, except for one gnomon, lost,
buried in moondust's fabric.

Full stop about forthcoming tenderness, especially any human variety.

What happens when all longshots play out, in touch or mostly empty water?
Either flow breaks wide open or moon water comes to a sudden halt.

Robert Keeler America

BOIRA INEXISTENT

La boira enterra el matí
deixant el món en la tenebra.
No hi ha vent, no hi ha llum,
No hi ha foc, no hi ha fum.

Les memòries han desaparegut
en la ceguera del moment.
Obsessionada pel passat i pel futur,
has mort sense conèixer la llum.

Les emocions s'han amagat.
En un món sense amor,
en un cor sense passió,
no es poden expressar.

La raó ha embogit:
en un món sense pensar
en un espai sense innovar,
en la prudència del silenci.

La buidor és l'únic refugi,
on pots contemplar
com la boira del matí,
desapareix en un somriure...
Sense compromís.

INEXISTENT FOG

The fog buries the morning
leaving the world in darkness.
There is no wind, nor light,
There is no fire, nor smoke.

Memories are gone
in the blindness of the moment.
Obsessed with the past and future,
you have died without knowing the light.

Emotions are hidden.
In a world without love,
in a world without passion,
they cannot be expressed.

Reason has gone crazy:
in a world without thinking
in a space without changing,
in the prudence of silence.

Emptiness is the only refuge,
where you can contemplate
how the morning mist
disappears with a smile ...
without commitment.

Xavier Panades I Blas Wales

RED GUITAR

A guitar lets me travel
across any continent--

despite my warbly voice,
I sing. Notes pour out, and,

like kids, they dance
without knowing any steps.

Kenneth Pobo America



CIRCULAR SHAPES, SUN, TOWER

Oil on canvas by Robert Delaunay

Grown-ups agreed that
the police station couldn't fly.
Though when I looked out
of my window I saw it
with great wings making circles
in clouds. They called me
imaginative, meant as an insult.

In arithmetic, chalky claws
on a board, numbers added up.
Numbers are steep bridges
across a dark river. Any test
that I failed, and I failed many,
broke the bridge, dropping me
into the water. I washed up

on shore and became a tower.
The sun made me grow
liquid bricks.

Kenneth Pobo America

HISTORY LESSONS AT HMP PRESCOED

The snow fell with the regularity of the tallyman who
knocked weekly at mother's door while Dad was at
work. Decades later Welsh Wednesday prison flurries
precipitated will-it-be-cancelled thoughts for tomorrow?

On anticipated forest walk, sighting of mighty buzzard's
nest allowed me to get one over a new inmate still
coming to terms with crisp, clear air and touch of flora
and fauna. Gussed I suddenly spotted it using acquired
countryside knowledge. All I knew was what I had done.
Actions not changed. Consequences remembered.

Sitting in midweek history class, lessons of life reflected through draughty penned-in hemmed-in classroom windows. Worthy projects designing posters for a world war already fought, won, and lost in equal measure for ordinary folk. Regarded to be rehabilitation.

Not a 'your country needs you' but internal regrets rumbled with more raw might-have-been occasions. *Your family* needs me. Sunday call to daughter and ex-wife perpetuating mistruth. Meander, mislead a past. Slit their trusting wrist. On Welsh prison Wednesday's history class spent in debate with an arsonist.

Andrew C. Brown England

MILFORD HAVEN MEMORY

Sham 69 on a mizzle afternoon darkness blocking stifling creativity replacing sense of a nothing.

Vinyl LPs reflect life. No remembrance of arriving at the beginning only awareness of finality, end of existence. Step off precipice of porcupine conundrum, sharpened conclusion pointing directional chaos set on this-way-and-that satnav to salvation. 1969 wasn't where it began although sham starts in twelfth year.

Rainy Morrissey Sunday blusters memories of Milford Haven where pubs were only open for locals. Steamy #windows displayed warmth generated from youthful car full of moistened drips of freshness, fermenting friendship now long disappeared.

Listening to Sham 69 vinyl LPs, writing poetry, and playing Spider Solitaire...nothing on the telly...a Morrissey Sunday reminding me of Milford Haven on a rainy Sunday where all the pubs were only open for the locals...steamy windows in a car full of warmth and friendship now long disappeared. I learned that Jeremy

had died two years ago, Nick died this month. I am currently undergoing chemo for Pancreatic Cancer.

Andrew C. Brown England

WHEN THE POET IS A HERMIT

His pen is an emperor ruling his notepad,
his Muse dangles from a forgotten chandelier,
the distance in the hills seduces his phrasing,
the tower of his body kneels to the words,
he writes to load the barrel of the void.

Jason Visconti America

THE MOON UNFORTUANTELY IS

A boomerang that never made it back,
a stone rolling over in a gem cutter's dreams,
the distant mast of a hopeless shipwreck,
a destination with no signpost of the trip,
a tool left idle on Heaven's rack.

Jason Visconti America

A LESSER GRADE

I am only a trail of string spinning down an alley,
I am the puddles of yesterday's rain,

I am the pianist whose flinch disturbs the melody

I prowl through the circus tent untamed,

I am the ape leaping for the dangling berry.

Jason Visconti America

WHEN READING THE NEWSPAPER

I am lost in this jungle of print, I have parted the pages with the measure
of a blacksmith,
I have hung in the air the ropes of the main event,
I have scurried toward stories with the blind purpose of an ant,
I have stripped clean the heroes down to the spirit,
I have waved off the villains with the hand of a student.

Jason Visconti America

SAXON SUIT #11

(For Henry)

The ocean of mutilated tears washes
Over the star studded sky of rich black loam.
Wounds in my throat are exorcized by the blue
Tits soft flight and minor collision with my window;
A tender breeze full of the hope of spring blows through
The pierced metal sheet that stops suicides.

My evening dreams still linger behind my eyelids
Shut now, letting the fresh air wash away the sepulchre dark,
Wash over my skin, still aware of last winter's embrace,
No more, no more will I with broken tongue retreat
Into cobweb filled corners, worshipping the worm
That eats away my air, making its bed in the depths of my heart,
Fragile as a boy's confidence.

Let the ocean's full of bones and so lost tears
Of humans, navigating by star and burning light
Swallow me, take me down to the depths
Where sun nor moon can penetrate.
In this lair of dark light, I will birth myself
Not bound by iron nails or crowns coated in thorns.
I will wash away scripture with these hands
Still regarded by my mother (where is she?) with tenderness.

On the surface grasping for new-born air,
The stars awake after such a long winter's sleep,
Reflect in the dark waters of the iris,
So free from mercurial hate.
Oh let the rivulets of star light
Fill the pores of my untarnished skin,
Let me breathe, let me breathe, oh such salt air,
So free from taint.

A single dove flies from the moon;
white light cascading down the sky
And there is a silence so pure, so whole
I know my years of grief have been ingested by
The ocean, and while the moon will inevitably
Be blocked out by dark clouds,
I know the white dove shall sail through the stale air
Cutting apart the clouds
And I will breathe such a clean sweetness,
And I will think of Henry, with your
Superman pictures and song lyrics
And Ernest declarations that you've bought Sylvester Stallone's
Mansion for 79 million.
I will breathe this salt black air for you, for me
And will remember, remember you,
And when fresh-borne feet reach the land of my mature years
I will take you with me and maybe both of us
Will be gilded by the sun, so long hidden.

David Rudin America

SAXON SUIT #12

(For Henry)

On the shores of recompense,
Crabs pierce sunlight with claws of ancient time
Dreams, whisperings, buds growing in the hospital garden,
Meeting the fragility of light as the softness of spring
Falls like a star caressing the night's sky;
A god's tear bringing waking dreams down from the darkness
Into skull, empty for a moment, for a single resplendent beat

I am free from sorrow, which has stalked my every thought
Since death scuttled into centre of my childhood iris
And birthed tears full throated and easeful,
As the moon coats some silent shore,
And I featherless, full of bony light
Pace around this room sterile
And dense with the unheralded grief of men,
Passing, fitfully in to shadow, into the dark hands of time,
Enclosing tender years blooming fragility
With no lover to nurture each deepening root.
Don't cry Henry the lyrics you brought to me
Are full of your individual beauty
And while your mind is shipwrecked on a continent
Free from reality's eye
I see you, I hear you and you are loved.
Don't cry Henry the world will flood with such tears.

David Rudin America

MONTGOMERY STREET

for Norman

Over Rugelach from Zabar's
we hunt and peck amongst the
keys to our half remembered
youth--all ten of us--first cousins
sitting around the SEDER table,
three tables actually shoved together
against a wall festooned with photos
of aunts and uncles in sepia
portrait shots now in bright brass
frames. And Grandpa at the helm,
the sheen of his rimless glasses
announcing, not his presence alone,
but the world he once came out of,
that village of thatched houses and
unpaved roads. And Grandma somehow
invisible, yet still by his side in a flowing
gown, her coffee-black hair now
gathered back behind her ears.

Sarah for whom some of the cousins
are named. In the mist surrounding
her eyes she can make out her
grandchildren's faces and she can
tell they have one way or another
snared her smile. Some are ballerinas,
musicians, rock stars, the sly smiling
boys calling themselves the HAIRCUTS
And mostly all playing one instrument
or another, the very atmosphere tuning
up.... So where are you now my cousins
I can see you in the distance we call the
present on Montgomery Street, the sky
more amber than gray, the light filtering
through each and every gaze. Because time
created this mystery. The darkness that
curdles our faces transforming all of
you into one.

December 10th 2021

J.C. Hand America

A BURNED MATCHSTICK

the road was a skinny
burned matchstick –
black and flaked brittle,
a twisting jag thin.
and every town we enter
is edged with fallen
roofs, and fallen
over rafters, their elbows
propped to stonework
and some vestige
of a slate,
delicate in position
as the flakes
of burned match-ash.

though too,
there is construction –
diversions flickered, their signs
a saltish orange,
as of a matchflame,
dismissing the source
and returning.

night falls. we drive.
pass the occasional
city in darkness, like the ducked-
under sparks
you see between char
as it cracks into blackness
and plays a warm hell
with perspective. the burn
on black earth
on a lakeshore. some logs
being found, some bog root.

DS Maolalai Ireland

ARETHUSA

Muscles worn from the hunt,
I swam the weltering waters,
supple as a fish,
my hair weeded in the
streaming, flung back, free –
My voice alive, alive!

The rumble deep within
the riverbed took
me by surprise – I grabbed
my clothes, I ran

His thunder voice,
heavy in pursuit
to silence me,
opened a channel

of fear somewhere
deep within

I lost my voice, became mute,
Lost my shape, became water,
Pliable and indistinct,
A mist that vanished
upon your touching.

Opened a chasm
and tunnelled deep
down, deep,
Shut up and stilled a thousand years
Until... until the cracks appear –
My voice rings out through sundered rocks,
Breaking through walls of oppression,
To torrent flows, loud and clear:
I am Her,
I am here.

Rebecca Lowe Wales

FALLERS

A sticky swoon of wasps,
satiated on Autumn's juices,
explores the hollowed-out chambers
of an apple.

Sweet smell of cider rises
from mulched orchards,
Beneath our boots,
leaves swirl and crumble
sunset shades - gold,
vermilion, crimson.

The wasps have lost
their bearings,
Tired and woozy
with no sunshine
to warm their wings,

They crouch until
they, too, grow cold
on Summer's indifference.

When evening comes,
We'll pluck the fallers
from our paths, stuffed
into pockets to stew
with blackberries
and sugar to make jam.

Months later, at our table,
we'll remember it all – the low,
lazy hum of the wasps, and how
everything died so beautifully,
so precisely in its time –

We'll sip their tender juices,
and be thankful.

Rebecca Lowe Wales

LA SOURCE

I shall miss this unknown woman
walking slowly, gracefully to the spring.
Dreamily, she looks about her,
at the valley, golden-green in the summer sun.
She takes the water and slowly, dreamily, returns,
scattering the butterflies around her feet:
blues, and clouded yellows and glittering fritillaries.

When I fetch water,
(aware of its origins:
limestone-filtered; of its history:
used by all previous generations
back to the people of the caves along the lane),
when I walk to the source, the deep, clear pool
under the conical roof, the butterflies spring from my own feet,

appear magically from the meadow herbs,
centuary, self-heal, basil and marjoram,
flutter and settle once more, the skippers, browns and coppers.

I walk slowly in the heat of noon, conserving energy,
knowing that I lack her grace, her supple poise.
If we had spoken she would be ordinary, pleasant, perhaps,
no longer mysterious.
Better, maybe, that she remains a memory,
an enigma.

Tina Manthorpe England

WRENS

No fledgling wrens
have ever necklaced my throat,
nestled soft and warm,
clustered in unison,
yet still I string together words,
hoping for pearls
to fall from pen to paper...

No wise old granny
ever said to me
You'll be a poet, my child...
Yet still I garland my rhymes,
garner my hatchling memories,
hoping for whispered gems,
a winged amulet for the future.

Inspired by Michael Hardnett: A necklace of wrens.

Tina Manthorpe England

theseventhquarrytheseventhquarrytheseventhquarrytheseventhquarry

MOURNING MIST

The cloud ranks dropped now, aqua sky,
fall strata cloak, hung valleys low,
as if an autumn ode recalled
has missed bone creeping, barren, cold.
A spire shoots through fold clogging wool,
ambition to find god for man;
from here we look down on the cross,
but lightning rod predominates.

What is our judgement of the scene,
some hope that sun, demystify,
burn off the veil, tears dissipate,
and tear away blocked view of green?
The fog more yellowed, fossil smoke,
like Hades, corporation dump,
Coedpoeth, 'wood-hot', under milk,
Welsh village gossip, mine, mill, well?

Is breaking dawn, a mourning time,
or prospect of shades cleared away?
Grey rolling stone, scree mountain side,
transfigure fields laid out below.
The winter waiting in the wings,
though angels flying for the spring -
less warmer climbs, in climate change -
will dun for smog come clean again?

Stephen Kingsnorth Wales



GWELTAZ

old man in a dark room
writing myth and the half-remembered
in the language of invaders

patient recorder of the past
collating entries only substantiated
by the reverence of others

lone voice from the valleys
his unreliable authority absorbed
into our blurred remembering

stranger with two names
straddling the embattled border
between mythology and fact

journeyman chronicler
weaving apocryphal tales into history
across an imagined divide

mystic holy man and bard
his work an isolated survivor
among discarded manuscripts

shining no light in the dark
his legacy the persistence of dragons
and a contrived rivalry,

his strapline *nonsens yw hanes*:
for we retain only what keeps us content
with our assumed identities

Jeff Gallagher England

theseventhquarrytheseventhquarrytheseventhquarrytheseventhquarry

FLOTSAM FUGUE

Leaves and seaweed
arrive from the depths of blue
to this strand of sand and pebbles
the thin line of our certainty

Downed green mulberry leaves
swirl around the summer house
after a storm
cling to the foundation with
lobed yellows and leathery browns
tubular stems trailing
like freed seaweed beached

Waves tear the slender stalks
holding fast to underwater rocks
Their leaves go belly up on the shore
green-glass sea lettuce
olive brown bladder wrack
purple Turkish towel.

I dreamed the sky rained down a sea
saltwater sheeted
past starfish clutching meteors
nebulae in turquoise pools
black chasms of ghost fish
civilizations before the time of light

Jan Seagrave America



THE STATUES

Our faces which were proof against ruin
wither in the fresh rain:
Touch us—we are salt,
a waste of images,
breaking down, breaking down.

They will come at sunset to exploit
and pity our retreat,
to gather fragments of our hope,
a base for building. We are salt, and seed.
Desire will raise new cities over us.

William Leo Coakley America

NORMANDIE ELEGY

in memory of
Alain Salmon

You had kings in your blood,
An ancient house so full of young life,
Children, a dancing wife
You built a refuge for
With your own hands, your perfection of art,
With your whole body, your noble heart.
You had everything, everything to lose.

Why should not your friends come to you?
Come from your Paris to sit with you,
To feed you bits of what you loved,
To help you laugh at death.

William Leo Coakley America

WHEN I GROW

I want to be a tree trunk
Fallen in the forest
Covered in mushrooms and lichen
When I grow into death

A meadow just after mowing
Pushing new flowers into the sun

I want to be reborn
As a 91-year-old woman
Who can no longer remember
Her joys and sorrows
I want to be her
Epiphany of memory
Reliving it all for her
When the rain begins to fall

I want to fall into the sea
Burned out, Icarus in a final descent
Laughing as I realize
The follies that held me in the sky

The ashes of a volcano
Fertilizing the crops of earth

I do not wish to be reborn
As an I separated from thou
Let there be only renunciation
Of all that tears us apart
Let there be only acceptance
That two does not exist

Charles Watts England

LONELY ROAD

“...the road itself, when he reached it,
in that loneliness that was everywhere,
seemed, like a stray dog, to be looking
anxiously for company.”

Kenneth Grahame
The Wind in the Willows

How goes your search
For meaning in this ragged world
Of empty hallways and doors
That keep closing as you pass
Of all the great books
That put you to sleep
Of all the people
Who forget your name

And then you see her
Dancing on the edge of mystery
Pulling you beyond
What might have been
Pulling you into the void
Of love, of need, of letting go
Pulling you into a life
Complete and unexpected

You stroll, jog, stumble, trudge
Cross the road because the road is there
Calling sometimes for you
To walk alone in agony

Calling sometimes for you
To walk together into the light of day
Calling sometimes for you
To run through life

Like a dog runs across a shallow river
Never looking down and never
Missing a step

Charles Watts England

THE GIRAFFE IN ROCKEFELLER PLAZA

The sheet of sun slips down
the glass and burnished foil facades
of the Art-Deco cluster of buildings
surrounding this solitary giraffe,
impossibly tall, impossible to accept
in the artifice and illusion here:
a temporary zoo in this urban plaza,
a stage set to study the odd in nature.

Gangly legs prop the body and great neck,
swaying like a construction crane in wind.
This animal grows more alarmed as it totters,
slipping on the smooth slabs of sidewalk,
as the people press closer, pointing cameras.

The head, crowned with twin horns, turns slowly
to stare at the master of nature out of its mind,
at humans alive in the city's ephemeral cage,
faltering to keep their towering equilibrium
and sedated by a deep amnesia of Eden.
That is the terror we catch in the creature's eye,
and in the upturned squint of the crowd is wonder.

Royal Rhodes America

clopotul

tu chemi pe viii
ce își plîng plecații
și fulgerelor le oprești avîntul
iar la furtuni fărîmi
întregul
rotundul cerc al turbulenței

ai carnea consistentă
în sunete
ce vine din limba
ce lovește bronzul
cuvintelor cuprinse
în efemerul duh
în care se îmbracă veșnicia

în aburul străveziu

hymen astral e noaptea
prin care flacăra străbate
o împreunare
care încîntă și înfricoșează
imn pe fruntea zeului
ce le primește ca ofrandă
pînă la iasomia gurii înflorite
pînă la deschiderea aripilor
umbre prevestitoare
atingeri fierbinți
ca ale stelei
ce-și taie înflăcărată
pe cer
un drum al iubirii
spre clipocitul întunecos
al izvorului
în aburul străveziu
al inimii
unde timpul rămîne singur
rătăcitor în aerul pustiului

* * *

cu un acut simț al smereniei
unul care
– sunt cazuri –
impune un anume respect
țin pieptul rezemat în țepușă
rămîn treaz
pînă cînd plînge
vîntul din sud
și vîntul din nord
c-au rămas fără pînze
doar o batistă
ca un steag
care desparte
viață și moarte

sunt păsări obosite
din zbor
planînd
coboară spre odihnă
în jur
de-atîtea ploi
sunt toate îmbrăcate în verde
ca proaspăta frunză de măslin
și dragostea își pune blînd capul
pe brațul nopții
înalt
o lungă așteptare
închide pleoapa înceată
peste vise
multe copleșite de tristele poveri
ce se adună
în timp ce anii
se strecoară cum fumul
peste apa dimineții

Cassian Maria Spiridon Romania

THE BELL

You call the living
 who mourn for those who are no longer with them

and stop the lightning bolt's spur
and knock down
the whole
 the round circle of the storm's turbulence

Your flesh
 is but sounds
that come from the language
 that strikes the bronze
of words
in the ephemeral ghost
enveloping eternity

IN THE TRANSLUCENT STEAM

Night is an Astral hymen
 through which passes the flame
an embrace
 which delights and frightens
an hymn on the forehead of the god
 who receives them as an offering
up to the jasmine of the mouth in bloom
up to the wingspread
foretelling shadows
 hot touches
like those of the star
 which ardently cuts
a path of love
through the sky
to the dark murmur
 of the spring
in the translucent steam
 of the heart
where time remains alone
wandering in the desert air

with an acute sense of humility
 one in which
 there are cases
that impose some special respect
I lean my chest against the stake
I remain awake
until the southern wind
 and also the northern wind cry
because they have no longer sails
but a handkerchief

 like a flag
that separates
 life from death

They are tired birds
flying
then hovering
to come down to rest
for so much rain
all around
is green
like the fresh olive leaf
and love gently puts her head down
on the long arm
of the night
and the long wait
makes the slow eyelid descend
 over dreams
many overwhelmed by sad loads
that gather up
while the years
steal away like smoke
over the morning's water

Cassian Maria Spiridon Romania
Translated by Olimpia Iacob & Bill Wolak

REPORT ON THE REPORT

We find fragments, notes or clues
in an early catalogue of the poet's works
he'd rejected all vocabulary as culturally constrained
and wrote only with punctuation
but the catalogue itself peters out
perhaps as the poet abandoned text altogether
or was called up, sent abroad some say
to take up a bureaucratic position at his family's insistence
at this point the time-line splinters
soon multiple individuals with the same name
draft treaties, inventories, manifestos
set up shipping companies, revolutionary cells
are reported to have married an heiress, died
become a missionary priest.

There is silence for some years and then all at once a deluge of publications. Silence again.

A collected edition was announced
simultaneously by publishers in Frankfurt and Cadiz
accompanied by bitter lawsuits
when war broke out the editions were postponed or forgotten.

In the digital age the gauntlet is once more uptaken
by a mid-western university, but there are 'issues';
no font contains all the appropriate characters
none can be devised without collapse into incoherence
and there are whispers of something stranger
the project director wordlessly replaced
researchers brawling in the corridors, hacking each others' work
a preliminary report ceremonially burnt on the college lawn.
We have not yet given up hope.

Geoff Sawyers England



JULY NIGHT RAIN

—*for Hil*

Kissing your neck in the darkness, I hear thunder,
not close by, not yet, but nearing.
Even before we had gone up, the wind
had built itself into a frenzy,
the branches and leaves of the oak and maple trees
thrashing as we stood behind the screen door,
marveling. Deepening shadows
in the ravened leaf mass, arched over
by green sky and broken by the stutter-flash
of distant lightning. The panicked movement
then of the tree limbs as the rain bursts down,
a kind of hysteria in them,
old men thrown from a foundered boat,
and as we turned to each other
I thought of how, in my distant boyhood
as far back as I could remember, my lifelong
craving for a storm would rise at the first rumble
from above. And as we climbed the stairs
I thought of how, in my boyhood,
I would have thought a man my age an old man.
Kissing your neck in the darkness, I hear thunder
closer now, as the first swell breaks over our bed
of the fragrance of July night rain--every cell
of my body, down to the fine hairs rising
on my arms, down to their roots,
charged, powering me toward you.

Ralph Culver America

theseventhquarrytheseventhquarrytheseventhquarrytheseventhquarry

THE MASTER'S CONCEIT—SPRING EVENING

*Who would sorrow alone in the springtime?
Faced with this you must drink straightaway.* —Li Bai, tr E. Eide

Li Bai, you look so weary. All the wine
is gone. It's just as well—another cup
wouldn't extend the night a minute longer.
Somehow you staggered down these ragged stones
with no one to lean upon—another miracle—
to let your feet dangle bleeding in the stream.
A bowl of gold coins glitters on the water.
Ignore them, poet. Lie back instead and gaze
at the high moon on his watch. How much more wine
has he had than you? Composing lines
in your head about the joys of drink and women
although you're alone and weeping, certain that
the moon's verses are putting yours to shame
as he sings to the faint stars gathered near him.
And not a word will you remember, come the dawn.

Ralph Culver America

BY MOONLIGHT

The waxing crescent moon stares
down at me through the slats
of the half-drawn window blinds
As I settle onto my meditation cushion

Outside the birds stare up at
the moon goddess and recite
their evening prayers in their
myriad of shared tongues.

As I battle to sink into my zazen
and the night darkens its grip
I hear the birds pray that one day
we might someday be free to fly.

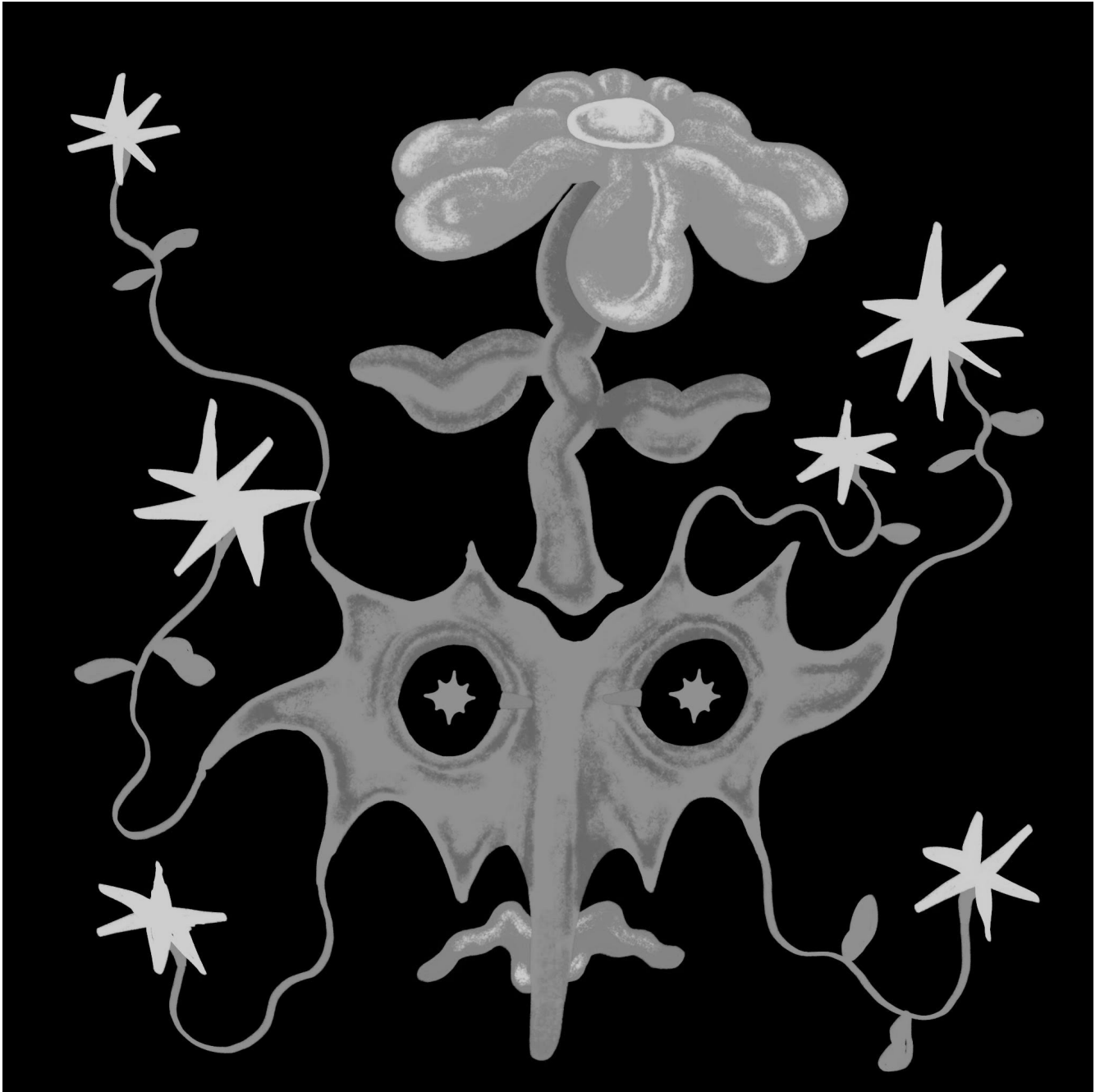
The moon pays none of us need
wishing only that she was a star.

Lou Faber America

SITTING ROOM, TY NEWYDD

The cat crawls into my lap
and curls loosely, disjointed
shaping herself to muscle
by turns grown taut and softly numb.
I stroke her neck, soft
the warmth of life reaching
through my fingers, deep
into the twisted sinews of my heart,
but it is your cheek I feel
the muted outline of your jaw.
Her outstretched claws
pierce my sweater
barely touching my breast
but it is your nails,
dragging slowly
through the tangle of hair
that mats my chest.
She stares through my eyes
but it is your eyes that gaze
into my once dead soul.
She purrs in contentment
but it is your whispered “goodnight”
I carry deep into my dreams.

Lou Faber America



Flower Mask © 2022 Evan Elias

SENSUAL LIVING

To my eyes light is or is not,
my ears hear or don't hear you,
I can or can't smell sweetness or rot,
I am touched or not touched,
taste is missing or savored.

But river eagles see through water
Bat ears sense moth wings
A distant vulture smells the dead
A monarch drinks just milkweed
And cat whiskers graze the unknown

Science tells us light has speed
But does it slow as it curves?
At how few parts per million does
infinitesimal odor become the undetectable?
Could we ever hear the world breathing?

To failingly understand these things
My senses are kidnapped into thoughts
unfelt, unsmelled, unseen, unheard, and tasteless.
And well beyond my grasp.
I accept science on faith.

Ed Ahern America

UNNATURAL DISASTER

Gruinard

Five hundred pounds was what it cost
to buy that isle. Amidst a war,
land requisitioned just off shore
might keep a world from being lost.
Once older residents were tossed,
new animals dispersed, a corps
of scientists released a store
of anthrax, then kept fingers crossed.

Film captured how the sheep were sauced
alive. In days all died. Soon four-
score carcasses were burned, no more,
according to reports long-glossed.
At last, when forced to kill each spore,
officials did, or so they swore.

Jane Blanchard America

VANTAGE

Saint Simon's Island

As often happens here, a western wind
has shifted to the south. The balcony
is yet again the perfect place to spend
a happy hour or two, especially
at half-tide. Pelicans provide a show
by going after supper. How they dive
straight down to strike whatever swims below
the surface of the ocean! Such a drive
is necessary for survival on
this planet. Meanwhile, grackles peck at grass
beside the beach till appetite is gone.
Above, an osprey makes an awkward pass
while holding headfirst some impressive catch
with weight enough to be almost a match.

Jane Blanchard America

Gwrthryfel / Uprising: An anthology of radical poetry from contemporary
Wales, edited by Mike Jenkins.

Gwrthryfel / Uprising takes us on a journey to the heart of Cymru. Edited by Merthyr
writer Mike Jenkins, co-editor of 'Red Poets' magazine, with artwork by Gus Payne, this
ambitious anthology of radical poetry explores Cymru's history, hardships, rebellions
and resistances. The book is sponsored by Merthyr Trades Council, the GMB union, and
Left Unity Cymru. £12 including p. and p. ISBN 978-1-912710-48-5

www.culturematters.org.uk

LOST IN SPACE AT DRURIDGE BAY

Our revealed low tide beach is silver-sheened and vast,
the foreshore boundaried by heaps of bladderwrack.
Small white crabs, spiralled shells, and piled worm casts
with twinned tunnelled holes – stud sea-coal dust, fanned black.

The foreshore boundaried by heaps of bladderwrack
invites our feet to choose, and tread divergent paths –
studded with tunnelled holes and sea-coal dust, fanned black.
Trailing separate arcs, hopes of shared pleasure are dispatched.

Inviting our feet to choose, and tread divergent paths –
connection fades into distance, drowns in our plethora of space.
Trailing separate arcs, hopes of shared pleasure are dispatched.
Holding hands, even waving, are beyond use, fall to waste.

Connection fades into distance, drowns in our plethora of space.
We started in step, together. Later, our trodden tracks contrast.
Holding hands, even waving, are beyond use, fall to waste.
Our revealed low tide beach is silver-sheened and vast.

Ceinwen E Cariad Haydon England

TRYING TO WRITE

Words flit in the belfry of her brain,
its corridors gloomed from doom-scrolling.
She longs to write, scythe paths open, dream
free away from night. Instead, lit candles flicker
out in frigid fake-news draughts, and thoughts
snuff out as well. Until, desperate, she trudges

through her backdoor. Blinded by sun on snow
her head is cleansed. Her sight clears to reveal
a wren, nut-brown, balanced on a bare twig.
She cannot find a lexicon to save the world,
but she might picture this moment, this bird
in snug, tight lines within a tender haiku.

Ceinwen E Cariad Haydon England

FORTHCOMING: AUGUST 2022

UNDER THE RAGING MOON/

One Night with Dylan Thomas in Greenwich Village

A new drama for the stage by Peter Thabit Jones
co-published by The Seventh Quarry Press and Cross-Cultural
Communications (USA).

ISBN 978-0-89304-638-5 Price: £6.99/\$15

THE LAST SUMMIT

i.m. Derek Mahon

You had made that arduous trip
late in the day,
and against the odds of age;
you had climbed
as high as you could go,
carrying your own tools, your own pack,
and a certain knowledge of where
to put the pins and ropes in place,
in a way that made you always
a great asset to the rest;
so, in the gathering darkness,
when the large tent was pitched
on that narrow plateau below the summit,
and the old work-watch
had finally stopped ticking;
I imagine that you,
in your quietly sublime way,
were probably tempted to say:
'I am just going outside for a walk.'

Martin Mc Carthy Ireland

AFTER THE CURFEW

That night she came to me,
after the curfew had been lifted,
and I was amazed to see
the miracle I had finally been gifted.

That night she spoke freely
of things she had been unable to say;
'and now, what matters really
is to leave nothing else get in the way.'

That night I answered her
with words of equal fire,
because I did not want to err
and lose the flame of that desire.

That night she stayed,
and took with little fear,
the chance our hands had prayed
for, when we had watched so many disappear.

Martin Mc Carthy Ireland

REPORT AMONG THE TREES

There is a presence, a society
Among the trees, messages I must have lost
Or that had nothing to do with me.
I am eavesdropping but it is all code
And not to understand even the gist
May be acceptable or nearly good.

This twilight as the leaves finally fall,
If I find peace it maybe among the trees
Not knowing their secrets. I cannot tell
But life in the undergrowth will go on.
Because I am old they speak in whispers
And tell me that I may hear very soon.

Perhaps they are still speaking of the dead
(It is the day of All Souls) and I am
Doing little more than watch the old shade
Change in the trees. Yet I know I return
Each year to listen and will surely come
Hoping, though secret, their words will remain.

Ian Caws England

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CRASH OF WAVE

Within the crash of wave,
polarities fuse,
and quickly dissolve into
more than they have been.

Our dualities vanish
when we merge,
yet somehow we become more.

Yes, our unification
seeds our strength.
And we go beyond
where we have been.

Carolyn Mary Kleefeld America

IMMORTAL SEEDS/BEARING GOLD FROM THE ABYSS

by American poet and artist Carolyn Mary Kleefeld. POETRY.

PRICE: \$23/£17. ISBN 978-0-89304-857-0 (co-published by The Seventh Quarry Press,
UK, and Cross-Cultural Communications, USA)

‘Like a lovely wreath on a Cenotaph, Immortal Seeds: Bearing Gold from the
Abyss displays the elegance of heartfelt grief. The numinous imagery of Carolyn’s
artwork provides us with glimpses of the infinite love and deep reverence that Carolyn
held for David’—George DiCaprio, Environmentalist, Father of Leonardo DiCaprio.



Our Fugue (30" x 24", Acrylic Paint on Board, 2021)

© 2022 Carolyn Mary Kleefeld

POET PROFILE: MARIA MASTRIOTI, GREEK POET



Photo © 2022 Maria Matrioti

Maria Matrioti was born in Arcadia. She lives in Chalkida of Evia. She studied at the faculty of Social Workers and at a Journalist workshop. The course of her inspirations is mainly the Homeric Odyssey. Maria Matrioti has published many poetry collections and some literary studies. She is included in Greek and foreign anthologies. Her poems have been translated into English, Italian, Polish, Romanian, Czech, Chinese, Arabic, Korean, Spanish, Ukrainian, and Mandarin. She has

participated in many International Poetry Festivals and she was honored with special Greek and International Literary Prizes, like the Special Diploma and the Medal “Nikolaos Kriezotis” by the Prefecture of Evia and by the Municipality of Chalkida for her Cultural contribution to Greece. In 2004, during the Olympic Games in Athens, she was awarded the State Prize –Medal and a Special Diploma by the Polish Ministry of Culture, at the request of the Polish Ambassador in Greece at that time Mr.Grzegorz Diemidowicz. The Prize was awarded by Aleksander Kwasniewski, who was the President of the Republic of Poland, for her contribution to International Literature. In 2019 She was awarded the ‘HOMER –THE EUROPEAN MEDAL OF POETRY AND ART’ and the ‘IANICIUS –INTERNATIONAL LITERARY PRIZE OF KLEMENTS IANICKI’ for her Contribution to European Literature. These Prizes were awarded by Dariusz Tomasz Lebioda PH.D, the President of The European Medal of Poetry and Art HOMER. Maria Mistrioti is a full member of the Greek Literary Society and a member of the new members judging committee. She also is an Organizer of International Poetry Festivals in Greece.

Peter Thabit Jones: When did you start writing poems?

Maria Mastrioti: I started writing short stories and poems when I was still 8 years old! I was born in a beautiful mountain village of Greek Arcadia. There within the beauty of nature, I climbed on a gray stone and made. . .recitations of my poems! I continued to write, but my first collection of poetry was published several years later, in 1985, by a great Greek publisher Odysseas Hatzopoulos – Cactus Editions. At this point, I would like to note that I am rather an oligografos. I often think of the words of Anton Chekhov, that: talent is, more to erase and less to write.

PTJ: What poets/writers influenced you as a beginner poet?

MM: I have read almost all the Lyric Poets of Greek Antiquity, as well as many important ones of contemporary Greek and world literature. But the greatest Master to me is Homer. The Homeric Odyssey records the eternal adventure of man, in space and time. “Perpetual motion of life and death”. Then my life was rather unusual with sharp contrasts and contradictions. My life is a Homeric Journey. But I can say that I am particularly fascinated by the poetry of Ezra Pound, as well as that of T. S . Eliot, who, in fact, has strong influences from Pound! I am also thrilled by the depth of Edgar Alan Poe’s poetry, as well as the tragedy of his life. From the Greeks I particularly love the poetry of Manolis Anagnostakis, Miltos Sachtouris, Kostas Karyotakis and the tragic poet Maria Polydouri, for which I have done a long-term literary study. But let me repeat, that my great influences and my stimuli are related to Homer. The greatest Source of Poetic Inspiration for me is Homer’s Odyssean Adventure of life. I would like to emphasize, however, that, apart from any influences, the personal style

of writing is important for every real poet.

PTJ: Is poetry important to modern Greek readers?

MM: Poetry, as you know, has a rather limited and “special” readership. It is true, that the novella and the novel are more accessible to readers. Next, I have the feeling that many of the contemporary poets are more concerned with their publicity and with superficial public relations. But, nevertheless, poetry is a light in the darkness. Poetry has a special power because she defends Peace, Justice, Freedom, Love among people, among Nations. So, the true poets will always exist and true poetry will remain alive, as a higher form of the human reason, from Homer to the infinite and the eternal. . .

PTJ: What are you working on the moment?

MM: At this time I am making the last corrections to a work of mine, which is a poetic composition and will be published in the Fall of 2022. I also continue to work on a ongoing study of mine on the work of Federico García Lorca, whose poetry also moves me deeply. However, lately I have been living more with the agony of translating poems of important creators of contemporary world literature. This is because I am preparing an International anthology of poetry, which will be published in the summer, for the 3rd International Poetry Meeting, which I am organizing for next September in Greece. Dear Peter Thabit Jones, I would even like to add that on this beautiful occasion, I had the great pleasure and honor to read some of your great poems. I am truly fascinated by your poetry, with its low tones, its lyricism, the agony of existence and its philosophical implications. Thank you very much, with warm greetings from Greece.

From the poetic composition of Maria Mistrioti : “for the night is close...” –Edition Vergina - 2017

1.

“for the night is close...”

“or the night is close-follows the light-“ [Odyssey k,ver.86]

I tried not to depict only the memories
But every time
I knew almost from the beginning the result
I travel

With the present tense in flames
The future tense
Is shuttered in the causality of things

I speak with you
and like those peasant women
when they lament for the separation
They leave on the wet ground
a branch of rosemary
-as a talisman for the journey-
and a ripe pomegranate
which encloses their red tears

2.

Some day
there will talk about us
the cyclamens the ones you picked up
to decorate my black dress
The springs that you painted in their mirrors
our internal pictures
Some day
there will talk about us
all those which make the pain shine
like the trees shine while they bleed
from the weight of snow

3.

“Then we entered straits in great fear of mind” [Odyssey, ver. 234]

The wind insists on its chaotic routes
Sea beaten the governor counts the lost comrades
He feels the desire to return to Kirki's island
He is welcomed by a woman
with long gray hair and rotten teeth
She offers him red wine

and lays a bed for him in her deep wrinkles
In the tarnished mirrors of her eyes
he distinguish
disfigured in the air
the face of Elpinor

In the land of Lestrygon- Cactus editions -1988

Maybe someday we will talk
about trains which did not leave letters
about ships which lost the desire for return
Or even
about the young night watchman
who insists on whistling
when the dusk loots the day

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Greece -2021

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Translation by Mrs. Lamprini Botsivali, teacher of English

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A Review of Byron Beynon's *Where Shadows Stir* by Caroline Gill

The Seventh Quarry Press, UK, 2021. PRICE £6.99 STERLING/\$15

ISBN 978-1-9196100-1-6

This impressive collection from an accomplished and highly talented poet from South Wales is not only a joy to read, but also a pleasure to handle on account of its fine production. The cover image of a blackbird peering through a 'jigsaw of branches' (see: 'The Red Leaves') offers a compelling foretaste of a *chiaroscuro* world of half-hidden images. Keats knew the potency of what he described as 'stirring shades'; Beynon's shadows create a multi-layered atmosphere of presence and absence.

While some poems are set on the Continent in places such as Arles and Lisbon, many are rooted in Wales, the proverbial Land of Song. The blackbird's open bill on the cover signals the music which rings out from leaf to page. Britten, Debussy and Miles Davis are referred to by name; Beynon also mentions the 'sharp notes' experienced at Llanfair Ar y Bryn, resting place of William Williams Pantycelyn. Those familiar with Wales will recognise 'the rain's beaded notes' ('Sounds') trickling through the lines; waves, and rivers like the Loughor, provide a backdrop of constant flux. Metaphorical undercurrents course through the collection, waiting to be teased out of a water-web of political history and contemporary affairs. Occasionally the poet's message is more direct: 'oil containers' and 'binbags' represent the 'dark shadows' that cause 'strangled pain' in our 'micro-beaded waters' ('Rivers and Oceans'). The plosive letter 'd' in the ninth line highlights the equally emphatic nature of 'despair'.

Beynon confronts 'the turbulence of loss', to borrow a phrase from his poem, 'African Lanes'; but the Climate Crisis is not the only aspect of life under the spotlight. In 'View from Ferryside', the first and last words, 'History' and 'memory', cannot be ignored, despite alluring mentions of 'water-music' and pure air. History may be the lens that 'invigorates the past'; but sometimes what has gone, has gone. The poem, 'Kidwelly and The Gower', alludes to the spirited Princess Gwenllian, who sacrificed her life for her homeland.

The work of artists, such as Vincent van Gogh ('Hôtel-Dieu, Arles'), and writers, such as Dylan Thomas and Alun Lewis, provides a tinted lens through which the poet exposes further visions of his world. Those 'first red leaves of a Keatsian autumn' are supported by a striking instance of synaesthesia:

*... individual melodies
fragrant with colour,
scent the hungering wind ...
‘The Red Leaves’*

The word ‘hungering’, especially in the context of the word ‘red’, suggests that this is not merely a seasonal spectacle; consider, for instance, the tuberculosis that would gnaw away at the lungs of Keats and extinguish the sparks of future poems. Beynon returns to this theme in ‘Autumn Leaves: Miles Davis’, the final poem of this collection, in which he mentions ‘a view of leaves on fire’ in the context of an equinoctial ‘impulse to preserve the day’. The penultimate poem, written in memory of Keats, includes the arresting lines,

*I stand in a small space
where death entered at eleven o’clock ...
‘The Spanish Steps, Rome’*

The red of flame and pain in this collection is set against its complementary colour, as shown, for instance, in the refreshing ‘apple-green’ in the poem, ‘Pierre Bonnard’s Window’. Orange, blue and maroon-pink are also mentioned in the poems, adding richness to the palette. The spectrum, however, is made up of light; and just as sound is interspersed with silence, light is seen against the shadow it creates. The effect is not only a wistful tension, but also a sense of ‘natural balance’ (‘Autumn leaves: Miles Davis’), ultimately represented by life and death, as demonstrated by the two masks in The Keats–Shelley Memorial House in Rome.

The reader is invited to gaze through open windows and picture frames, and to experience ‘the companionship of a mirror’ and a blind man’s ‘sense of touch’. Beynon glides with ease from the kaleidoscopic to the microscopic and the universal, recording change, not only via maps but also through literature. An underpinning layer of a history that has not always favoured the nation of Wales is set against an occasional and lyrical hint of *hiraeth*. The poet advocates a culture in which ‘language makes a difference’ (‘A Child Reading’); and, like Keats, he values the freedom of creative expression. The importance of the Welsh language, in particular, is highlighted, along with its melodic contribution to what is described in ‘Refugee’ as a ‘universal beat’. An exquisite pair of intensely personal poems, written for Beynon’s parents ‘at Ninety’, affords the reader a glimpse into the intimacy of the family home. ‘Roots’, the poem that introduces the pair, shows the poet ‘at one’ with his mother’s voice, ‘that sense of place where her tongue rests’ when she speaks Welsh.

Edward Thomas, of ‘Adlestrop’ fame, is depicted not only as a poet who listened to

nature, but also as a writer who observed the subjects, human and avian, that make up 'life's gallery' ('A Blackbird Sang'). Those who read Beynon's masterful collection will sense for themselves the compelling rhythms of land and sea. They will explore what it means to examine and embrace the breadth and startling detail of our humanity as we all edge

*nearer to that otherness
where shadows stir.*

Caroline Gill England



IN FEBRUARY 1941

My father at thirteen watched
the searchlights focused high

into the Swansea sky
as bombs fell like burning tears.

Flowers opened in the earth
as the dismembered town disappeared,

blasted by the uninvited guests of war
when rubble and death

entered the Brynhyfryd streets,
flames thrived in the Tawe air.

In the funereal smoke of night
the living breath consumed,

lives wept wounds
on kilns of stone,

the coughed homes
pale and timeless

as each room held
unique silences before

man-made engines
brought an unnatural fury

to the contents of a winter's month

Byron Beynon Wales

AT LIMESLADE

Early morning, a bay opens
towards an inconsistent sea,

a greasy film on the quiet
surface of the water

where a beer can floats
with the tide's pulse.

Nearby another artery of communication
hardens as the day's warning light

shapes the colour of this scene
where cold steps descend,

a witness to insecure waves
expanding from an unsettled horizon.

Byron Beynon Wales

FORTHCOMING

AUGUST 2022

Drama: *Under the Moon/One Night with Dylan Thomas in Greenwich Village* (a Drama in Four Acts)

by Welsh poet and dramatist Peter Thabit Jones
co-published by The Seventh Quarry Press and Cross-Cultural
Communications

A SPECIAL ROMANIAN POETS ISSUE OF THE MAGAZINE

Translations by Dr. Olimpia Iacob

AUTUMN 2022

A collection of poems by American poet Sultan Catto



THE SEVENTH QUARRY PRESS

LOOK OUT FOR ISSUE 37: Winter/Spring 2023

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Ed Ahern, Jane Blanchard, Carolyn Mary Kleefeld

“The morning poet came early
like a worm waiting to be devoured
by very early birds hungry for words.”

from MORNING POET by STANLEY H. BARKAN

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