

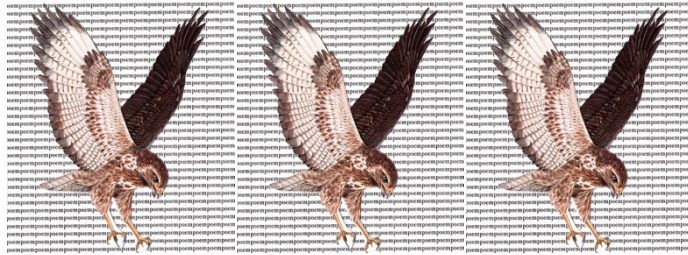
THE SEVENTH QUARRY



POETRY

ISSUE TWENTY-EIGHT
SUMMER/AUTUMN 2018
SWANSEA POETRY MAGAZINE

THE

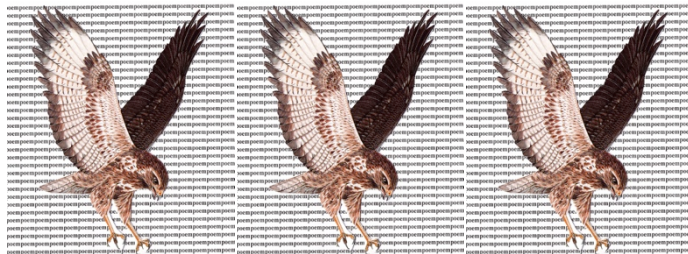


SEVENTH



QUARRY

SWANSEA POETRY MAGAZINE



ISSUE 28
SUMMER/AUTUMN 2018

**EDITORIAL
ISSUE TWENTY-EIGHT
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This twenty-eighth issue features work from America, Bulgaria, Canada, England, France, India, Ireland, Israel, Scotland, and Wales. It also includes an interview with Charles Van Eman, American actor, writer, and director.

The collaboration between The Seventh Quarry Press and Stanley H. Barkan's Cross-Cultural Communications, New York, continues into 2018.

Many thanks to the contributors for their poems and to subscribers for their support. An extra thank you to Vince Clemente, a State University New York English Professor Emeritus, for being Consultant Editor for THE SEVENTH QUARRY in America.

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 back cover.

Peter Thabit Jones, Editor

Consultant Editor, America: Vince Clemente

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Please enclose a s.a.e. with submissions of no more than FOUR poems
Poets beyond Great Britain must enclose an envelope with International Reply
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PETER THABIT JONES
(photo © 2018 Peter Thabit Jones)



VINCE CLEMENTE
(photo © 2018 Peter Thabit Jones)

This issue is in memory of Dr. Ruth Jenkins

In Celebration of the Life of Dr. Ruth Jenkins by Jean Salkild

11th April 1946 – 11th February 2018

Dr. Ruth Jenkins was a founding member of The Tuesday Poetry Group based in Swansea, an enthusiastic group of writers who meet to promote and encourage creative writing. Her sudden passing on 11th February was a great loss to what has become a tight-knit group of friends with a common purpose.

Ruth lived with her family, her husband Derek and their three daughters, in Gower, South Wales. She attended DACE courses in Creative Writing, eventually gaining her M.A. at Swansea University.

Ruth was born and grew up in Germany, in the town of Bleckede on the River Elbe and her affection for Bleckede, the Elbeschloss and particularly Kleinburg, the place of her birth, never wavered. It was at the schloss, where she worked for three years during her apprenticeship at the Otto Meissners Verlag, that Ruth developed her ambition to be a writer.

It was Bleckede that inspired her to write her four novels, for young people of all ages, in English and in German, under her chosen name Beta Berlin. In these novels she reveals her keen interest in the history of this area, the continuing life of its people and the knowledge of how that life was seriously disrupted with the passing of time ~ the building of the castle, the occupation of town and countryside by Napoleon's Great Army and, by the invading forces of the Second World War. All were times "where life had to be lived carefully".

"Alfred's Ribbon" (Alfred's Band) was published in 2013, followed by "Jens, the Princess and the Soldier" (Jens, die Prinzessin und der Soldat) in 2014, "Heike Means Business" (Heike macht Geschäfte) in 2015 and "The French Officer" (Der Französische Offizier) in 2017. Other publications were "Looking for Nella", a novel which unfolds in her home environment around Swansea and Gower, and Anthologies in support of MacMillan Cancer entitled "Courage", "Ambition" and "Blessings", depicting the lives of the women of Swansea over the last 150 years.

We will always cherish Ruth's supportive, imaginative and vivacious contribution to our work and her great sense of humour.

GEE WHIZZ

In my Jenny Joseph age
I will wear my father's old shooting hat,
The one with the splendid feather.
I will wear my kilt upside down
Without the pin.
And black lacy gloves
With some fingers missing.
I will put on black shoes
Big enough to catch eels in
And push a sagging perambulator
Brimming with cats.
Swinging from the handle
I will have a bag of boiled sweets
I shall suck, dribble and drool all over town.

Ruth Jenkins Wales

LANGAND WALTZ

They waltz, jive, tango through the moonlit night
On green hills high above the deep blue sea
Waltz, swing, and jive until the morning light

Pretty girls dressed in silk frocks so very slight
Their curly hair arranged with ribbons you see
They waltz, jive, tango through the moonlit night

Brave young men determined to win the war
Dance with the girls to master angst and fear
Waltz, swing, and jive until the morning light

Soft music embraces them for waltzing
Glenn Miller for those quick steps - oh look how
They waltz, jive, tango through the moonlit night

The moon winks, the stars twinkle above the young
Sounds drift across the sea to Somerset
Waltz, swing, and jive until the morning light

Dawn begins to break on the horizon
Throwing into relief, sea, hills and sky
The dancing young, now stand and stare, who did
Waltz, swing, and jive until the morning light

Ruth Jenkins Wales

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AND WHAT ROUGH BEAST

The messenger disconsolately came
On fragile and exasperated wing
And cried: close up the shops: there is a Child.

The thing we feared is happening again.
A winter with unconscionable rain
And in the spring a murderer to hang.

We shall be driven into debt again.
Upon the shoddy cross the carpenter
Will shudder with distaste against
The badly driven nails.
On the thorny place
God maimed and raging, like a half-demolished bee.

And still the radio
Is pitching to us like a candidate
Their lord who loves us all and from the start
Meant most of us to burn.

Or will it be done differently this time?
Will One appear
To countermand the first redeemer's notion?

The herds are troubled on the shortgrass hills.
I search the creedless and created sky
For that great aperture where they have hid my god.

Oh lay the light in heaps along our paths.
Let the heart like a comical and colored shell
Shudder the iron sea.

John Hart America

MOON

Among the trees the dislocated moon
Makes shadows within shadows, trunks that shine
Along the edges only, without bark or bird.

It is the salty virgin, to whom kneels
The angel with the horse's noble brow
(The head with the two long bones),
And the accusing smile.

There is no stress in moonlight, and no eye:
It moves no lever, though it captures leaves
And points us all to brightnesses within.
Insouciant and doubled, we begin.

John Hart America

INVITATION

Come
come closer to these words
gentle they won't hurt you

flying above arguments and rumors
together they are called poetry
and could grab your imagination
and play tricks on your mind
letting you feel like a bird
standing on the branch of an old oak

or maybe near a pond
watching frogs croaking
and even like a poet watching the blue sky
while downstairs people are crying
like hell on the roads
nothing to eat no shelter
and some picturing the whole agony

since these words are only pleading
for peace and a good night sleep
come
come closer
the trick is over

Huguette Bertrand Canada

VAST AKASH

Limitless in length and breadth
Beyond measure in depth
Akash is the greatest field
Sheltering innumerable things; docile and wild.
Undisturbed; calm and peaceful
Truly resourceful.
It never feels with anybody to compete
Permitting everything to pass through it.

Clouds, rains, lightning and mountains
Anything else, like falling chieftains
Are temporary phenomena
Episodes in a drama;
Vanishing waves in the river tide
Bubbles in a sea vast and wide.

Aju Mukhopadhyay India

THE BLUE HOUR CALLS

I stand between the light and the dark,
The November air is crisp on my tongue,
Making my words dance.
The crimson sky beckons a new beginning.
The trees' stark limbs are trembling,
They sigh with the wind,
Their fiery children have flown.
The homely sheds look forlorn
Without a human presence to shelter.
Inside, the spades and forks gossip in a corner,
The lower orders listen.
Magpies stroll like miniature nuns.
I leave the plots to whisper to the sky.

Ann Flynn England

HIS SPIRIT SPOKE IN THE WIND

A brawny wind blew him inland,
Far from the sound of a foghorn.
An allotment expanded before his eyes
Like a needy neglected child,
Snowflakes fell on his placid face.
The sky was as dark as a chimney sweep's cap
As he struggled with stubborn clay;
His laugh made the air light,
He created endless waves with loam.
His homily speech had a soft centre,
Mellowed by many moons.
Bacon sizzled he shared his fare,
Relished the taste on his tongue.
His spirit was as broad as a ship.

Ann Flynn England

BUILDER BROTHERS

They're two brothers, who turn up to do our jobs.
Ladder on top of a white van. Rattling tools
like loose change in a pocket, tape measure at hand.

They enjoy the small scale, fix a leaking gutter,
slipped slate, frost damaged brick joints.
The jobs you can do but have to report.

One chugs away like an old lawnmower. The other,
hands in pockets, time of no ticking. They sit sipping tea,
unfolding a newspaper, eating rectangular sarnies.

There is no rush anymore, no deadline or
a week filled with jobs. The working shift
just a nod and sigh, a natter of tales.

Gareth Culshaw Wales

CONWY HARBOUR

White kamikaze bombers swooped
from lampposts, rims of boats.
One or two strutted over.

Greasy fingertips from the hot tray,
you dipped and dipped into.
Fish slime on your skin.

The sea heaved up boats, shoved itself
against the concrete barrier. Currents
mumbled, like fed up taxi drivers.

Someone licked their ice cream with
a dog tongue. A seagull watched
with pirate eyes. I was here for the day

and had walked into an old postcard.
A place you visit your whole life,
but you are the only thing that really changes.

Gareth Culshaw Wales

CALCUTTA AND ME

I am not a Calcuttan
Will you accept me?
As I stand on your ghat
Wanting to wait for the future
That seems rosy....

What turbulent days you have seen
I may be imperfect in my predictions
Don't be cross at me
thinking of me as an irrational soothsayer
As I stand unattended on the river bank
among flowers artificial and real..
boats on new discoveries
The hath yogi performs some melodramatic drama
Some smile on his face
Now that Karl Marx is on his way
To retreat.

Kolkata
will you accept me
Now
let me tell you the truth
That in bosom
I was laid first

I looked for the room
Of Calcutta Medical College
Where Mom was admitted
When I was born.

Kolkata
An undaunted I
Sure to find you

As I google search.

Mandira Ghosh India

UNTITLED

Waterways get disconnected
It is war
Enemies from Japan should not enter through river water
In ghats, corpses rot.
Rotate anticlockwise in electric current
Die an undignified death
Famine, war, and partition
arrive in rotation,
To the most prosperous land
Proud of her beauty and wealth
I stand near the ghats
pass through the Vidyasagar setu
anguished to look back
To watch a river on fire.

II

Hope is resurrected
As I watch in wonder
the structure of the bridge
Connecting to the ancient to ultra modern
The setu connects the past into advanced future

Then as I stand on the Outram ghat
Then Swim towards Belur
Return from Dakshineswar
Move towards Babughat
again
of a determined city
And watch the fiery river pass by.

Accelerated old age ripened with time
accepting new faiths and values
Everflowing water
churns in the cosmic ocean
Before it passes through the ghats of an old river
Dressed in new costumes
Soon, its shabbiness will disappear
At a distance, we watch for some reason
A mustard sun sets on the horizon.

Mandira Ghosh India

LITERARY INHIBITIONS

As I wait on line for Philip, my assigned Geek
from Apple's premiere tech service
to return and untangle unfathomable glitches

that keep this new blue-screened computer
pigheadedly spitting out formats that do me,
nor my poetic forms, no earthly good,

I notice in the bookcase to the right
of this sick-with-a glitch computer, two books,
their tilted heads nuzzling one against the other:

The Joy of Sex,
and *The Complete Guide*
To Aging and Health.

When, I muse, did we
stop using the former
and why do I refuse to open the latter?

Frane L. Helner America



Ebony Heavens (Mixed Media on Board/24" x 36")

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THE TALLEST TREE IN THE FOREST

(In loving tribute to John Larson)

What would I do
without my Noah
who gives his heart
to my home, to me—
who holds the mast
of my ship steady
as the sea churns.

Such a patient man is he,
this man called Noah,
humbly caring for

all the living creatures and plants.

Without him, my ship would
tumble on a chaotic sea,
my life be turned inside out,
but Noah is here.

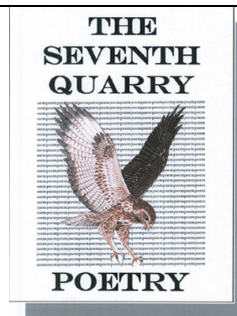
What a great blessing
this kind, strong man is.
Years ago I prayed
that he would come,
and how truly fortunate
I am that he did.

He must live beyond me—
I need and love him so,
need to know he is here,
need to know he is my dearest friend,
this quiet and kind man of the mountain
who lends his magnificent support,
my gentle and strong Noah,
the tallest tree in the forest.

Carolyn Mary Kleefeld America

BOOKS BY CAROLYN MARY KLEEFELD, AMERICAN POET AND ARTIST

The Seventh Quarry Press is the U.K./Europe distributor of Carolyn's books. Information on the books, prices, and how to purchase them is available from seventhquarry@btinternet.com



QUEUING UP TO BE BORN

Coming into the queue at the airport was like joining the souls of those about to be born.

We load up our bodies with some nourishing equipment – the double-helix DNA, blood, muscle and a brain, pyjamas and cameras, spirits and sleeping pills party frocks, perfumes and the dancing shoes - then shuffle slowly through the barrier to birth and the world outside.

Reaching the end of the queue, unloading a suitcase to the greater powers, and cutting our umbilical cord, we are about to feel the cooler air of the world outside the airport terminal, and thus we proceed through the checking in and the checking out, giving our names and our tickets to our mothers and our fathers, to the airport clerks and to the cabin crew; so aloft we are borne.

That being said, it could bear, this analogy, another interpretation. We have finished with the baggage of that past existence, packed up and left home, eager and prepared to deposit flesh and bone with the doctor, priest or rabbi, nor see them again till arrival at the new incarnation.

The nervous, quiet crowds are stumbling forward towards the bright single beam of a soul tester. Are we going in clean or contaminated with sin? No scissors, guns or breakages of the 10 commandments? Good, then we can go up to heaven captained by an archangel and his crowd of cherubic messengers, praying to arrive without undue turbulence, and pass through limbo to the hand of God.

And so, weary by now of sitting
cramped in the birth canal or end-of-life transit lounge
we're keen to get out. Searching for our names
held up on white placards, some are favoured with angels
to their new destination. The rest of us open an unfocused eye
and ask for needful nourishment in another home.

Patricia Har-Even Israel

A REVIEW BY JESSICA NEWPORT

***Tramonto in una tazza Sunset in a cup* by Lidia Chiarelli**

Lidia Chiarelli is an award-winning poet who hails from Turin in northern Italy. She has a strong link to South Wales through her connection to Aeronwy Thomas being the official Italian translator and biographer for her work and the inspiration she derives from Aeronwy is clear in this collection with a poem dedicated to her. Chiarelli graduated from the University of Turin and began a career in teaching, from here she became one of the Charter Members of Immagine & Poesia, alongside four others including Aeronwy Thomas. This art literary Movement was founded in Torino (Italy) in 2007 and has been a great success. Chiarelli's work has been translated into many languages worldwide and published in places such as: Great Britain, the U.S.A, France and India to name but a few. She has won numerous awards over many years including a Certificate of Appreciation from The First International Poetry Festival of Swansea (UK) in 2011.

Tramonto in una tazza Sunset in a cup was published in 2017 by Edizioni Esordienti. Chiarelli's poetry is a beautiful collection broken down into twelve months, with each month dedicated to a different prominent female figure of literature, with names such as: Katherine Mansfield, Charlotte Bronte and Dorothy Parker among others. Chiarelli has taken inspiration from their work created her own tribute from it. Through this she has shown how the marrying of art and literature results in a powerful piece that resonates with the reader. With a quotation from each figure and a digital image of each prefacing her words it is clear to see that Chiarelli has been moved by each individual that she has selected. The subject matter, her soft tone, rhythm and incorporation of words and images alongside one another results in a collection that will leave one in a state of thought and consideration long after completion. *Tramonto in una tazza Sunset in a cup* is published bilingually in Italian and English which adds to the romanticism of her words. Individually, the poems are short but no less powerful or complex as a

result. The images and brief information about each female prior to Chiarelli's words renders one hungry for further information and overall, we are gifted a collection of poems which leaves an effect perhaps as strongly upon us as the original inspirations left upon Chiarelli.

The first poem; *The Call*, is dedicated to Virginia Woolf and focuses upon her suicide. Chiarelli beautifully presents this event through her metaphorical manipulation of nature, a theme that remains prominent throughout the collection. The poem opens with the words: 'Black ravens scratched the sky in a frenzy' which arrests the reader's attention immediately and yet she ends the first stanza with the words 'infinitely free' which is altogether more calming. This represents the battle that Woolf struggled with in regards to her mental illness. She was free, in her mind, when she made the decision to end her life. As the poem progresses, Chiarelli informs us that Woolf is 'docile' and 'surrendering to that irresistible voice' as she enters the water to drown. The selection of language that Chiarelli has made, coupled with the slow rhythm leaves the reader as submissive as the subject to what is about to take place. There is a calm overriding tone to the piece and the 'icy embrace' at the close is as comforting to the reader as it is to Chiarelli and perhaps was to Woolf herself. This is a beautiful tribute, without judgement or opinion but rather a representation of how Chiarelli perceived her subject to be feeling. This is something that is evident throughout the collection, Chiarelli has thought about how the twelve women saw and felt the world and has woven a wonderful web of presentation from this.

As one moves through the collection it becomes clear that each poem is a personal dedication from Chiarelli, for example, in 'The sacred garden Sissinghurst Castle Garden' she bestows upon Vita Sackville-West the title of 'priestess of this sacred garden' or in 'Garden in October' when she takes inspiration from Christina Rossetti's romantic style by stating 'Amber brown leaves waltz on the boughs as you, Queen of Pre-Raphaelite beauty discover wonder in *Autumn's languid sun* of this ephemeral reign'. It is clear that Chiarelli has gone to great lengths to appreciate each of the women she has selected for her collection. It cannot be denied that the tributes she makes beautifully encompass their passions, interests and approaches within their own literature and these are paired excellently alongside her own.

Art is a heavy influence upon Chiarelli and this is evident throughout. Not only is each poem prefaced by a digital image dedicated to the woman she writes of but her lyricism of words ensures she presents each piece as a perfect meeting of art and poetry. This serves to impress a powerful message upon the reader; how both elements can transform each other. The reader is invited into a world of reflection, made all the more real when the image of each woman is there to be

absorbed alongside Chiarelli's words. For example, in 'Poppy Red', a tribute to Sylvia Plath we have a delightful marrying of the words 'a thousand poppies open wounds bleeding inside you' with the image of poppies shadowed within a female hand. Through this, Chiarelli has paid poignant tribute to Plath whilst sensitively presenting to the reader the act of her suicide; which of course is well documented.

Perhaps the most significant tribute of the collection lies in the center; August, when she writes of Aeronwy Thomas. Aeronwy is extremely significant to Chiarelli, she has worked with and on behalf of Thomas many times and they had a great friendship. Chiarelli's feelings towards her and the South Wales landscape are evident when she refers to Thomas' star as 'bright and pure'. Furthermore, she reminds us how the words of Thomas are 'still and always here to create images and soft tunes intoned slowly by the breath of the Welsh sea'. One is in no doubt when reading 'Poem for Aeronwy Thomas' that Chiarelli has been influenced and touched by her, she takes this with an inspiration from nature to encompass the soft purity that Aeronwy represented for her. The result is a beautiful piece that leaves an imprint on the reader long after the poem has been enjoyed.

In a time where the conversation regarding women and values is prominent we are gifted a collection by a female dedicated to multiple, important women throughout time and thus *Tramonto in una tazza Sunset in a cup* is significant, well-timed and appropriate. Chiarelli is thoughtful in her words and delivery and thus, we are gifted poetry rich with imagery and themes of nature and art that can be both relished and appreciated in equal measure. Chiarelli herself stated that '*Tramonto in una tazza Sunset in a cup*' is a tribute to her own inspirations and the result is a plethora of poetry that can provide inspiration to her readers also. It cannot be denied that the poetry within will provide enjoyment and consideration that will move past the page, into the mind and remain there long after the book has been put down.

Further information: https://www.amazon.com/Tramonto-una-tazza-Sunset-Italian-ebook/dp/B072BLJNPP/ref=sr_1_2?ie=UTF8&qid=1513752417&sr=8-2&keywords=lidia+chiarelli

SOUTHERNDOWN

The cottage smells of wet dog,
Last year's sandwich spread and memories.
Your shoulder's force is requisite
To budge the sticking frames of doors and windows
Swollen by the laden brume of seaside air.
A yellowed Sunday Times finds new employment now
To scrub the salt film from the patchwork panes

And give the ocean view again to us.
The rifts and valleys of the tera-cotta tile
Are treacherous still, a testament to shifting time;
The narrow quilted bed groans disbelief at our return,
Too old to witness all the joy we'll find.

I rest my cheek against the thickness of the sill
And chip the blistered paintwork with my nail.
I'll do my writing here
And gaze long hours at the roiling sea,
The kettle whining testily against the breeze.
And you'll step up behind me,
Anchor me within your arm
And fit against me, jigsaw snug,
My missing puzzle piece.

Hilary Wyn Williams America

MUMBLES

I race the rising sun to reach the bay,
To be just us at dawn out on the shore
And grab you, one shoe off and trousers rolled
To beat the earth's rotation at the margin's edge.
This is the hard impacted sand of Wales --
Not the bikini-dented dust of Malibu --
Where you can run, all helter-skelter,
Pell-mell, windmill-armed,
The way you used to as a kid,
No grace or style, just pitching forward,
Cotton frock blown out behind,
An ineffectual parachute.
The cockcrow's whetted breeze has edge
That cuts through Nana's Fairisle cardigan,
Its every hand-wrought stitch
A barbed-wire loop of love;
So we careen, loose cannons in a jumbled joy
Until we reach the end of Oxwich Bay
Where now the sky is live with crimson lake,
And tangerine and rose.

We pause there, heaving, panting, double-bent,
Two question-marks against the morning sky.
Our wicked, dancing eyes throw out the dare:
Oh yes, we're going to do it back again!

Hilary Wyn Williams America

SUMMERLIN

I did not want to take - no, not a single thing - from you : the simple arcing
Conclave of your arms was all the silver pieces that I ever dreamed.
Your breath against my neck sufficed - no transient praise
Wrenched from your mouth was sought from dust-filled reticence.
Your fingertips would never need to trace the undulating folds
That sculpted me, if I could watch and hear you gasp against my touch.
And when the dull yet cruel world cut out the poet's heart from you
Like some exotic plant, I hoped that in the morning
You would drink the love I gave and be replete and whole again.
I prayed that was enough from time to time. And I was wrong.

Hilary Wyn Williams America

MY UNCLE'S CHAIRS

(T. Rowland Hughes was twice awarded the Chair at National Eisteddfods before succumbing, at the age of 46, to his decade-long fight against multiple sclerosis).

The first one loomed, imposing and Arthurian, between the bookcases,
Squeezed amidst the three-piece vinyl suite and out-of-tune piano
In that small front room, where family gathered for the holidays,
The bay-front window streaming liquid laughter.

The back was taller than a Welshman, topped with red baronial crowns
And carved with scenes of Celtic life, from Gorsedd ring
To mining, quarrying, from rolling lowlands up to Snowdon's peaks.
There was a tiny tunnel that, no matter how you peered in childish wonder
Or pounced upon it in a sneak attack, you never found the end.
The arms were marvels, ribbed and ridged like flowing manes
Each ending in a lion's mouth agape with needle teeth,
Just begging little fingers to get stuck.
The seat, incongruously, portrayed koalas eating eucalyptus leaves,
A tribute to the far-flung carpenter ex-pat who'd carved the chair.
The legs, great sturdy pillars, ended in four balls that never rolled away

Defying what we thought of Newton's laws.
This, then, this towering, formidable, exaggerated throne
So out of keeping with its modest home, or with my uncle's introspective soul,
Had been the first awarded for his work, amidst the pomp and flowing pageantry,
In 1937.

But Uncle Rowland had a second chair.

This one was delicately paneled, etched and filigreed,
A mere four inches tall but weighty in the palm, a replica in silver
Of the chair he would have won, if Hitler's hell had not filled up the sky
And relegated Eisteddfodau to the radio.
Yet even as a child, I treasured this one more, this shrunken, fragile chair.
For it spoke not just of defiance,
Of resilience to evil, of the will to fight for poetry and light,
For art and beauty in an age of savagery.
It mirrored his refusal to be cowed, or cast adrift without his words,
To drown within the shipwreck of his frail and dying frame.

Hilary Wyn Williams America

AUTOCHTHONY

The air purples, as if calving a storm.
We wetten from our insides out, sweat seeping velvet from this shouldered
 belligerent weather, eventually peeling off the skins we'd planned to
 winter in.

Heaven shudder it should rain here
where the drains are plugged with leaves of rusting chestnut, liver-spotted
 sycamore; the spent earth caked with tanning crud well trodden into
 ready-rub.

And here it comes: a darkening.
Holly mounts its red alert, ragstone crumbles in surrender, remnant
 blackberries shrivel in hedgerows, and the last flutes of bindweed sag
 like spent paper hankies; on cottage steps, fresh-cleaved firewood.

Red roses, yellow roses.
O can't you smell it? the background scent of unkempt ages, the soil of our
 being sulphur-rimed; and marking time to the darkest humour, the
 slow conflagration of humus.

A russet orchard clings to a the steep descent
that once was grazed by sheep forever shitfaced on windfall; the grass grown
knee-long lies flattened now, the magnificent drooping boughs
abandoned to rot.

The southerly gathers, not sweeping through but piling in.
A delta of geese screaming for somewhere else, bumblebees flitting along
the ridge, and now what's this?—a verdict of crows.

The Weald is a pool of loose sky
lying between the downs, where a scatter of oasts is the only clue to where
the centuries of hoppers and their camps have gone, bruises of
bluebells to the shade of absent oaks.

Andy Hickmott England

SKINNER'S FARM

This much I remember from when I was three
and a half: running sobbing after my mother
down a foot-worn path, across the playing field
between the copse and a solitary oak; a slur of thunder
as she racked on the brake to the Silver Cross
of my mewling baby brother; her standing still,
fed up with my dallying, angry at me, and all because
I had tripped and grazed my knee.
It's one of my earliest memories.

We were heading home from Skinner's farm
where she had spent all day in sun-lashed fields
picking tray after tray of gooseberries,
her hands, her forearms, welted and wealed.
She and Mr Skinner had a history, sour blood
and unpaid dues between their two families
that none of us ever got to the bottom of.
And wages get docked for seeing to prams
and needy three-year-old sons.

The farm gate lay at the foot of a steep hill,
and the lane rose, narrow and winding, cooped
between hedgerows eight feet high,

cars barrelling like kegs down a chute,
their drivers untroubled by what passed in a blur.

 Unsafe to walk at my mother's side,
I have to imagine her a knot of nerves,
 that half-mile climb, the out-of-kilter wheels
 and a mithering child at her heels.

 We made the summit, the gap in the fence
where she had to lift the whole pram up
 onto an uneven track through the copse—
wheels snagging on roots and clumps of acorn cups—
then hurrying on across the playing field,
 while the sky ballooned and thunder rocked
the trees, and then the drama of my knee, and still
 she had to buy Dad's hake and chips.
 And yet I remember none of this.

Andy Hickmott England

HOPPING

Thumping over ruts on a wain drawn by
 Archie's steel-saddled tractor, setting out
 the next drift, bales of pokes pitched overboard

 every second row. The creosoted
hop poles add to the tarry fug of hops.
 We skirt the garden to this morning's drift

 where the pickers are hard at work; *they'll strip
two acre a day*, these ladies in their
floral-printed overalls and wellies.

 Hear ringing out the sing-song counting chant
 of the measurer, the bins already
filled from this year's heavy bines. Tar-black hands
clutch tally cards to chests while pickers
 watch a poke fill, as if the measurer
 were a cardsharp—did he press those hops down?

The pole puller leans on his hop dog, heaves
the moist bine out of the dry chalky soil,
pole and all, lays it across the scissored
legs of the bin: half cradle, half stretcher.
Women ride the bin side-saddle, naked
children (shaded under the unpicked bines,
up on tip-toe in their wellies) pitch in
to help. *Fill this first, then run off and play.*
Blackened fists gather dew-moist bines,
strip and pinch, strip and pinch. *That's the ticket!*
But watch the old hands fly. *She'll fill two bins
by herself, make fifty shilling a day.*

The tally-man's whistle pierces the drift.
Pickers arch their backs, scoop up dusty soil
to scour tar from their hands, round up children—
it's lunchtime. Out come flasks of tepid tea
and bottles of warm orange-squash, soggy
cheese and tomato butties, hard-boiled eggs.

And wasps at once are everywhere. *Don't wave,
you'll make 'em mad. Mind you don't swaller one.*
Nettle rash. Bee stings. Red, itchy hop-eye.

Queues at the sentry box, the breath of hell
wafting up through its hole. Nearby I found,
in a drainage ditch, a brick—of brimstone.

Andy Hickmott England

WRAPPING APPLES

Here are corralled, like spent leaves dammed in the rusting trap
of the culvert under my standing, proofs these house-high trees
still fruit apple-red in memory, bauble-like, as should be wrapped
for safekeeping. They hang ungathered—ten barrow-loads a piece
festoon the boughs, another of windfall at the roots—and a track
among them lies beyond a padlocked gate. A squadron of geese

performs a fly-by, recalling my childhood fright at the geese that roamed this very yard, gagging around a dripping tap outside the door of the hot-house packing shed, where piece-workers race a motorized belt awash with apples to be wrapped. Nests of tissue, honeycombed primly in boxwood trays, await inspection, drifting downstream on a parallel roller track.

Down the side, tussocks fingering its oily sump, a Bedford truck stands idling below the shed's open loft. While farmyard geese squabble, men above lower crates to the driver and his mate atop the Bedford's deck, the two-man crew savouring the relative peace of a stationary afternoon's labour. Their load stacked, wrapped and roped under an olive-green tarp, they U-turn by the trees

at the orchard's edge, and are gone. Back inside the shed, trays of tissue-wrapped apples jostle and shunt down the roller track behind of the women's backs, towards two men in dungarees, who lift them onto an angled conveyor belt. The tin roof traps the heat of noon in this sink of dark labour, where the sun pierces darkness only through the gaps in timbers. The women wrap

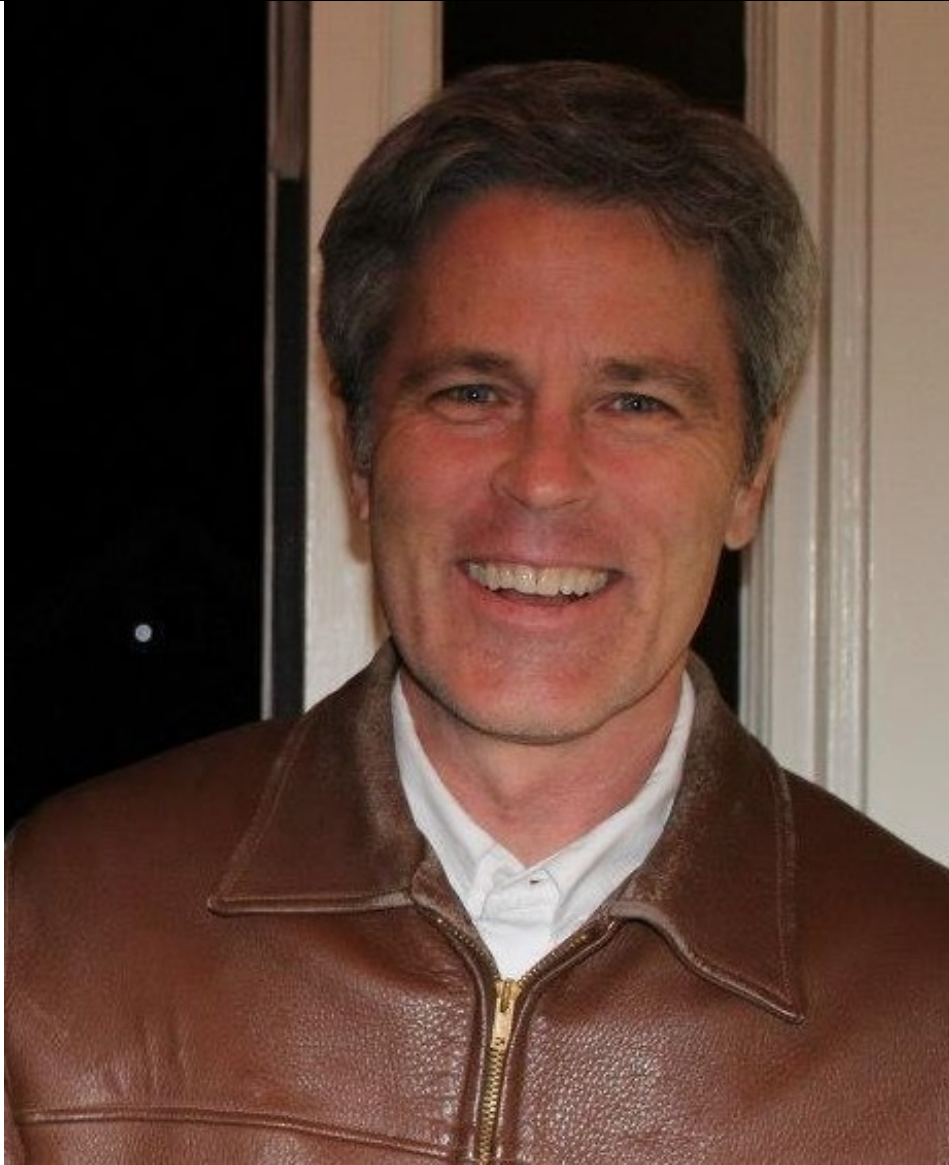
on, earnest and diligent: there's winter coming and apples to wrap; outside, the low-hung fruit is all but gone. Beneath the trees extend wooden step-ladders, pickers balanced on the very top rungs, men with long arms and acrobatic—if unwitnessed—grace among the shaded upper boughs performing summer's closing act. Soon, the last wrapped apple gone to Borough Market, the peace

of the orchard will be disturbed only by the geese. It's all pieced together from memories—my mother in darkness wrapping apples, the stink of damp from the tap's drip-drip, men in the trees lowering sacks full of red, red apples to those on the ground, a track through an orchard I was free to wander, wary only of geese—and the realisation spreads, like mildew from that dripping tap,

that sweet nostalgia, a honey pot for the displaced, is of a piece with that last, dread age of man. Trees' baubles go unwrapped; intentions litter the gated track as worm-meal for the geese.

Andy Hickmott England

**AN INTERVIEW WITH CHARLES VAN EMAN
AMERICAN ACTOR, WRITER, AND DIRECTOR**



Charles Van Eman © 2018 Charles Van Eman

Charles Van Eman is an actor, writer, and director. His television and film acting credits include *Sea of Trees*, *Chasing Life*, *Reckless*, *Drop Dead Diva*, *96 Minutes*, *Vampire Diaries*, *Prison Break*, *Ghost Whisperer*, *CSI Miami*, and *The Colbys*. Appearances on stage include, *15 Men in a Smoke-Filled Room*, *The Contract*, *The Goat or Who is Sylvia*, *The Christina Experiment*, *The Diaries of Adam and Eve*, *The Laramie Project*, and *Beyond Therapy*. He wrote and performed two solo

shows, *Jack's Hat* and *Beginner's Mind*. For the stage he directed, *The Contract*, *The Other Place*, *Grandfather Speaks*, and *Spice*. For television and the web, he wrote, directed, and co-produced all 20 episodes of the award-winning Atlanta based series, *High Rise*. He is the author of two novels, *On The Way To Pomona* and *The Weight of Loss*. Early in his career he adapted for Random House seven Louis L'Amour short stories into internationally broadcast radio dramas. He and his wife live in the woods north of Boston.

Visit his website -- charlesvaneman.com

* * *

Peter Thabit Jones: When did you start writing and who were the writers who most influenced you?

I was a voracious reader as a child. I would check out stacks of books first from the Book Mobile that would miraculously appear in the local shopping center parking lot and then later at the newly built Northland Library. I remember writing stories and reading them in front of my 6th grade class. Standing there, pencil-scrawled pages in hand, my classmates skeptical eyes on me, my teacher's kind nods of encouragement, it was for me both a thrill and a terror to be reading my stories. Maria, a talented writer in my class also shared her stories. Closing my eyes and listening to her confident voice lead us through her prose is something I fondly remember to this day. Unfortunately, it wasn't until I graduated from college that I got serious about writing. Poetry was my first focus. Rimbaud, Jim Carroll, Raymond Carver, Philip Levine, Charles Bukowski, Wendel Berry, Gary Snyder, Robert Creeley, and Allen Ginsburg, these were the writers stirring my imagination. The high velocity prose of Beat writers Jack Kerouac, William Burrows, Neal Cassidy, and John Clellon Holmes captured me early on along with the work of Charles Dickens, Joseph Conrad, Kurt Vonnegut Jr., Hunter S. Thompson, and John Steinbeck. Then came Thomas McGuane, Jim Harrison, T.C. Boyle, Tom Robbins, Ethan Canin, Michael Chabon, Richard Ford, Barbara Kingsolver, and Cormac McCarthy.

PTJ: Can you tell us how your acting career started.

The summer after my third year of college I was working a hospitality internship in Florida. One day while scuba diving in the Keys the proverbial light bulb clicked on startling me in the realization that rather than being a business type like all the other men in my family, I was instead a creative person. That's when I decided to pursue an acting career. I returned to college and along with finishing my business degree, I took several acting classes and did local theater. Upon graduation, with a couple hundred dollars in my pocket, I rolled the dice and moved to Los Angeles. With remarkable good luck, the generous support of teachers and my fellow struggling actors, I began to get work in the television and film industry.

PTJ: What are your thoughts about contemporary American drama for the theatre?

I recently was sent a link to an article in The Guardian informing me that the most popular playwright in America this season is Lauren Gunderson. She will have 27 productions of her work go up in the 2017-2018 season. (The survey excluded Shakespeare who will have 108 productions. Who can compete with The Bard, right?) In this rousing time of strong women's voices, I am thrilled to see this brilliant 35-year-old playwright knocking it out of the park. Upon reading the article I went to my office bookshelf and browsed through my collections of plays. There were so few women playwrights represented that I felt a little silly. What have I been missing out on? So, to answer your question, I am looking forward to reading and going to the theater to see plays written by women.

PTJ: What is your initial approach to writing a novel once you have the basic idea/ideas?

I do not plot out my stories ahead of time. For me, it is a day to day discovery of where the story wants to go. At some point, as the story gains momentum, I'll get clues as to how aspects of it connect and I'll jot those down. But even then, I still try and stay open to see if something different wants to happen. Much like acting, forcing an idea into a scene rather than staying present and going with what is actually happening, most often ends up coming across false and clunky. Other than that, it's about getting myself in front of my computer, connecting with the characters, and grinding it out every day.

PTJ: What are you working on at the moment?

Years ago, I wrote a screenplay that I thought at the time was pretty good. In 2017 I decided to adapt it into a novel. After years away, I was able to see it with fresh eyes and in doing so have been forced to accept that this personal favorite of my early screenplay writing life is in fact a bit of a malcontent. Lumpy, bumpy, but still confident of its bright spots it has been challenging me in new and ever more intriguing ways. A political/environmental thriller, it is becoming a much more grounded, fully realized story. That said, I still have a ton of work to do.

THE KEYS

South Florida rays hum
against my flesh.
Fresh lobster boiling
in the pot.

Warm water gently lapping
against my legs
the gulf stream pulls
my spirit out to sea.

I was cast adrift
in that campsite for 8 days
rum, rum, rum, rum, rum

Scuba diving
every day for meals --
fish, lobster, and
rum, rum, rum.

I let go of the lines
that secured me
I let the winds blow, the sail
lift me past the lights of a predetermined
destination.

I became a pirate.

Reveling in the tropical
breezes blowing
through the tent flap,
my thoughts listed out
over the reef into a
Jolly Roger galleon skimming
to port laden with booty.
Trusting the wind and currents
while the fiddler
played a jig, I danced
across the bow, draped in
gold chains, emeralds
and rubies in my pockets.
I roared and spit,
hollering for another mug
of rum.

Charles Van Eman America

RACING THE TRACK

It's been seven years.
So much passes.
My boyhood toys are going
out the door.
Flying to cities beyond.
Hands I've never touched,
children I've never met will
imagine them soaring and roaring.
My father dead for seven years.
My toys on eBay.
His hands held the cars and

put the track together.
A Christmas morning
I have never forgotten.
Now someone else
will play with them.
Another father, I hope, and
his son.
Racing the track,
looping the loop.
Grins and tender hearts.

Charles Van Eman America

IT FEELS LIKE YOU

(for Sara)

In my spirit
there is space
that has been waiting to dance.
Quiet and still for so long,
patience and vigilance its oath.
Waiting for feeling, rhythm,
of thought and heart.
Peering into the hectic daze
of everyday existence,
this precious space watches for
a flicker, a vibration, a familiar tone.
A unifying force.
It feels like you.

Charles Van Eman America

theseventhquarrytheseventhquarrytheseventhquarrytheseventhquarry

NEW CALENDAR

Insomniac before the fridge light,
our calendar tugs on a pushpin,
a space we give for time to trap the day
and watch us iron shirts and turn the tap.
It can't imagine us but takes our tales
torn off with raggedy edges to the bin.
You tap our anniversary with your wedding ring.
My old panic peaks as earth tilts
and the hour goes on in March.
I put reminders in the sock box,
my watch to bleep, emojis on the screen, and Tweet.
Calendars take us down in different ways;
three-word notes, contact info, worry weeks,
the beast mask that our son draws in his sleep.

F. J. Williams England

ALICE, FIRST HUMAN HURRICANE

*The earliest recorded weather vane honoured
the Greek god Triton on the Tower of the Winds in Athens*

Overload and meltdown blow the bulbs,
blanks a town and thousands struggle in the dark.
Slack time in maintenance, drowsiness
or a software bug delays a Skype,
blocks up the network and the iPhones beep
the vowel at the centre of a cyclone.
The ancients knew when winds were apt to blow,
the colour of clouds and haloes in the sky,
and found the force that steers the the Sun and Moon
in crystal balls that move on fire and air.
An emperor cut the winds from twelve to four,
a push that came to sticks and compass points.
Alice, first human rainstorm,
a whole winter's passing overhead.
Papers showed the wreckage through a Hasselblad.

Who needs a zoom to look on tragedy?
Nero was plucked from nowhere to rule Rome.

F. J. Williams England

DOWNTURN

In olden days
when most folk
lived on the land,
you always knew
who prospered,
who had more.

Those who lived
in the castle
were so far removed
from humble beings,
distance too great
for envy.

Then towns grew
and we were closer together,
sometimes of like mind
just like farmers
who resembled each other
from similar conditions.

Urban folk were shaped
by diet, environment,
dependency
on someone else
to transport food, water,
other staples
of daily existence.

There is little recourse
when the shelves are bare,
some pleas to the wealthy
to allow subsistence,

mostly ignored
as they feast
at the tables of plenty.

Gary Beck America

ROLE REVERSAL

Summer has ended
but the tourists still flock
to New York City,
flaunting their Euros
in restaurants and stores,
once dominated
by well-to-do Americans,
now reduced to scrimping.
Servile servitors
eagerly welcome
the new money
that after a quick trip
to the local bank
is as good as dollars.

Gary Beck America

RICKIE

the float you watched
amid the leaves littering
your childhood's stream.
is not missed by
the seaward waters

which did not carry away
a failed eleven-plus,
the lost chances,
finally, the lost wife
and lost children . . .

and without missing
your lost young life
the piebald river flows on.

Huw Lawrence Wales

COFFEE

I take a sip of coffee and in clear
blue through our window
a white, almost vertical cloud-trail
expands behind your hair, up through
our neighbour's pink cherry
it goes, come all the way
from Anglesea in minutes, a tiny
crucifix ten miles up. Your back is to it.
Your worn face and blonde hair,
A tree and the sky with the plane
and some sparrows make this map
of this moment, which is one
of absolutely no importance
except that it's a moment in our lives.

Huw Lawrence Wales

CAMELLIAS

The weather is so variable that buds
burst into bloom one day and fall the next.
There is a range of temperature in which
these flowers thrive—too high or low means each
pink blossom must abandon beauty. Soft
brown blobs then litter pine-strewn sandy soil
reluctant to absorb what had too short
a show compared to green and glossy leaves.

Jane Blanchard America

BEHOLDEN

“To owe or not to owe?” is just the first of many questions. Ask a second, “Who would be the lender?” Third, “What is the worst that he or she, even if paid, could do?”

No money grows on trees; instead it comes with papers signed and cheques deposited, then funds withdrawn in no uncertain sums (the records kept till you and yours are dead).

A friend or relative may offer to serve as a private banker, save those fees charged by more public options; tempted, you might contemplate, “Why not both parties please?”

Here is some last advice to keep in mind: “Beware of all the many ties that bind.”

Jane Blanchard America

QUID PRO QUO

It is so hard to write and then arrange a partial or a full collection, not to mention two or three, but fair exchange with people in the biz can help a lot. Advice on verse, entrée to publications, reviews, awards, gigs, grants—when mutual—have benefits, establish reputations, and make more of the same more possible. Reclusive types must push themselves to learn the art of trading opportunity with others if they ever are to earn a modest profit from their poetry.

This common strategy should work just fine: “Look here, I’ll scratch your back if you’ll scratch mine.”

Jane Blanchard America

CONTORTED FILBERT

Of all the trees and shrubs and flowers on
this campus, you alone are tagged. A strip
of plastic states your name—perhaps so that
grounds maintenance will not mistake you for
something to be removed. Come summer, leaves
will hide your twisted frame; midwinter, there
exists no panoply of greenery
for gray arthritic branches not yet dead.

Jane Blanchard America

POST-MYTHOLOGICAL

giants ceased
throwing rocks
& the bones of saints
no longer rise rapturous
as big fish bound skywards
escorted by a mountain's music

 an afanc that caused
 carnage in the lake
 chained & moved
 to fresh accommodation

listen out there no melodies in the moss –

 though there's the dream
 of a speaking stone
 that leaps from a field
 & travels all night:
 it knows how earth
 is older than traffic:
 its blank space asks
 for an inscription
 as it dances to the door
 waiting for someone
 to put a name on it

Charles Wilkinson England

PERSEUS & THE GREY ONES

darkness recurring
as light's transferred
from hand to hand;
a third share of sight
sufficient to show
a stony land where
a passing demi-god
brought night

- sitting
alone preserved
information: the facts
hugged to the triple
self; now they know
how a hero asks for
more than wealth;
the tasks of legend
serve a new world

- to stay with
the bartered eye
brings nothing -
is their clinging
to an old vision
that resists knowledge:
the stealth of mirrors,
a paraphernalia of
shields & cloaks;
failure was waiting
too long with a tooth,
the year an invisible
boy took truth,
turned destroyer,
murdered cities

- rose on wings

Charles Wilkinson England

THE OLD HOUSE ON THE KNOLL

Memories lay embraced in hidden
trunks inside the attic of the old house
where laughter once lived. It is empty
now but still sits proudly on top of a knoll
where it is bathed daily by sunbeams
through luminous moisture filled clouds.
The sun's filtered light causes the dusty
walls to glow with light in abandoned
rooms, where forgotten memories still live
and ghost voices still inaudibly
speak. An old sycamore tree shades
windows with lace curtains that are
fading into dust. Melancholy lives in the
upper rooms, waiting for kinfolk to arrive
and collect the old memories for picture
albums. During lonely nights mocking
birds sing to the house in a hundred
voices, while frogs in the old water
trough mutter their croaking approval.
The old foundation creaks in anticipation
of fall and cooler days, as long departed
voices, echo from room to room.

James G. Piatt America

BLUE BIRDS AREN'T BLUE

She waltzed into the room
adrift and confused by the sudden source of her misery.
Her hair dangled in front of her eyes hiding her now faded emerald-
gray gloom.
She was a he and he was a she.

Her hair was knitted together by knots creating a nest
and the possibility of a blue bird living in her hair;
with the scraps of fabrics she used to sew.

She walks into her room sits in front of her mirror
and she wonders if she could comb through the mess.

But that was months ago when she wondered.
Even the glimpse of a thought of a shower
totally flies over her bird nest
as she sleeps in demise and perspiration.

Blue birds, once again, are beautifully winged beasts.
How could those beautiful birds go through her hair?

Their wings must've molted and died leaving marks of their presence.
When their wings grew again, they'd be brown and gray—
just like her faded eyes.

The blue birds aren't blue.

They're gray, like unhappiness.

Natasha Rose Clarke America

NATURAL RESOURCES

Invisible tears stalk me, patterned thought
Sleeping for preferment lighting fantastic,
Undeserved insults only you know about,
Complicated pleasure a lonely road
Showing support for a newly found cause

Achieving aims on a superior plain
Read for future reference a welcome slight,
Dead and finished is folklore royal
Caught in photographs a full package
Distinguished career, a future behind you.

Turning collars and cheeks to the cold and damp
Predicting death is what it's cracked up
Ferreting for biscuits, a time for association

Guarding the corpse in its final glory
Silent as the quest encumbering sorrow.

The next little volume sells very well.
The dead needing money like no other
Honorary positions losing their tinge,
Feted for luck, scowling in recognition
Starting from scratch a cause to savour.

A dud review sharpens determination
Standing complicated ground, a lesson untouched
Wiping the floor with praise unintended
Collections eating through reputation, resting
Upon meaning of past lives, dying anyway.

Patricia Walsh Ireland

THROUGH A PRISM DARKLY

Addicted to direction, eschewing maps
Marriage of true minds a feat in itself,
Gardens of circumstance sing blue murder
Dud reviews a gauntlet to the experienced
Critical lives a folly to be savoured.

The best wild places are always home
Swathing through thorns gates being of heaven
The highlight of you week a just cause
A book of cities not being taken lightly
Navigating towards a more recent adventure.

Sup on bread and ashes, fighting the island
Unified under duress a fashion anew,
Now celebrations can really begin
Inventing histories travelling to a prophecy
Between tides, marking land for our own.

Romance language spoken in the old country
Translating the impossible time and again
Travelling under duress to the unknown

Feasting on the prisons of affection
Being released at an aeon's notice.

Being confused by nature is a secret stave,
Displaying nipples a close second.
A tenuous opera dreaming of fire
Cigarette smouldering where not wanted
A victorious direction where expected.

Patricia Walsh Ireland

FOOD FOR THE MISBEGOTTEN

It was an accident, nothing less
Coming into being uninvited
A trick of acceptance, nicely arranged
Swearing by bygones, hitting the mark.

Savouring hot flesh beneath the scarf
Comfort food, gangling out of reach
Heritage blowing over, a choice action
Drinking to death a wasting exercise.

A relaxed waistline cries "Harrow".
Walking through rain a gorgeous exercise
Stinting for groceries a necessary duress
Once started, not forgotten, filmed by fear.

A pill for every ill. Fashionistas aside
Playing with water and spirit a heartfelt cry
Crying on foreign shoulders still necessary
Rumours naysaying a glorious disease.

An island of the opportune, exploring the local
Singing at the gates of hell a happy repose
New and improved, farming possibilities
Snapping at rest stops, breaking the road.

Patricia Walsh Ireland

TYPEWRITER RIBBON

You are never far from my daydream
Slitting extremities to hit with accuracy
Voicing hate to clear the air
More than an apology would ever consider.

Blood donations spilled into recriminate light
Notching duty from the angry associate
The blinking light cuts the atmosphere
Poisoned alcohol a certain given.

Historic position shields you from harm
Recriminates desire sough like no other
Buying drinks for all and sundry
Conspicuous absence a weapon of choice.

Flaring nostrils seal a damnation
Hatred always seeds habitual annoyance
Burning otherwise, for distant redemption
Fait accompli, a puzzle not to unlock.

Surprised by sorrow, decaying into ground
No regrets from association displayed freely
Seated distantly, tears bleeding on the side
Until death self-invites, translating the nemesis.

A well-constructed home, diplomatic spouse
A hurtful beauty lies to itself
Curtained by bygones turned on its heel
Coffin-enriched beauty remains the same

Patricia Walsh Ireland

MOMENTS IN A MATCH-BOX

The fig jam –
It is “only for weddings and funerals”
I take off my wreath
Is Death frightening?
Oh, what beautiful verses
Describe it.

There are no more matches
The Hungarian dictionary is useless
It is raining again
I will hang the yellow balloon
from the chandelier
Because there is no sun.

* * *

There are no traitors,
There is no cross to bear,
Only a crown of thorns.
Not Golgotha,
The blueberry hill
Is what I have to climb

Polly Mukanova Bulgaria Translated by Stamenka Kavrakova

HOMAGE TO RENE MAGRITTE

This is no truth.
This is no imitation.
This is no dream.
This is not this.
Art with a reversed sign.
The reciprocity of imagination.
The bottom line of the scheme.
This is me.

Polly Mukanova Bulgaria Translated by Stamenka Kavrakova

AZURE

Blue is the ink running in my veins
with which I write my lineage
A daughter of myself

Polly Mukanova Bulgaria Translated by Stamenka Kavrakova

ARRIVALS – DEPARTURES

The time difference cannot erase
the sunset in your eyes
arriving and departing
are the words
memories
dreams
my prayer
arriving and departing
my heart is the airport
of endless delays
of risings and falls
I arrive and depart
from you
and
in you
one and only air
I love you because you exist

Polly Mukanova Bulgaria Translated by Stamenka Kavrakova

ITHACA

*“... You must have surely understood
by then what Ithacas mean”
C. Cavafy*

I am Odysseus, too,
but unknown.
No one ever heard of me,
nobody knew about my shrewdness...

Because I never left Ithaca.

Never in my life did I meet
Cyclopes, Laistrygones and Sirens.
I did not build a Trojan Horse,
I was not famous for any feats...

Because I never left Ithaca.

No one ever knew about my braveness
and the power of my bow.
Even Penelope's love for me
has long cooled down...

Because I never left Ithaca.

13. 09. 1989

Roman Kissiov Bulgaria Translated by Ralitsa Saramova

THE WORLD OF WORDS

I am living in the world of words.

Everything here consists of words:
The moon and stars are shiny words.
The wind is a long angry word.
The transparent air is a silent word.
The rivers, the sea, and the sky
are vast words with many vowels.
The trees, the flowers – they're wonderful words
all abloom in the spring.
Words of passage are the birds...

I am living in the world of words.

Time is measured in words here.
Minutes are short words.
Words flow, they flow out
like grains of sand in a clepsydra.
My life is also flowing out...

But I stay on.

My life is a word
that God has spoken.
And every word of His is everlasting.

Roman Kissiov Bulgaria Translated by Ralitsa Saramova

THE CONTEMPLATOR

I can hear the grain growing in the soil
I can hear the secrets that the sea waves
whisper to the shore
I can hear the birds' footsteps on the sand
and the crabs' footsteps on the bottom of the ocean
I can hear the groans of the condemned in hell
I can hear the cries of joy of the blessed ones in heaven

I can clearly see the embryo
in the future mother's womb
I can see the sap travelling in the tree
from its roots up to the blooming branches
And in the pupils of the children's eyes
I can see the flight of birds
I can see guardian angels
at my parents' sides

I am listening to the voice of my blood
I am staring at the shadow of my words

I am contemplating my young antiquity
And I praise the birth of my eternity

Roman Kissiov Bulgaria Translated by Ralitsa Saramova

WE SHALL WAKE UP

We shall wake up
and the morning will fill our hearts
and the light will flow from our eyes
and it will create new worlds
and unexpectedly there will arise
 miraculous existences lives and beings
 where our eyes look
 our eyes streaming invisible light
 that calls into being
 flowers of joy a garden of ecstasy
 amidst the wilderness of time and dusk –
 at its death-hour

We shall wake up
and we shall forget all that
is subject to oblivion eternal
and we shall recall all that
is subject to the glory primordial

We shall wake up
and we shall speak the language of the heart
and our words will become birds
in flight in the sky of the dream come true

We shall wake up

Roman Kissiov Bulgaria Translated by Ralitsa Saramova

THE FIRE IN THE WOOD

A verse and prose drama

based on the life of California's Big Sur sculptor Edmund Kara

by Peter Thabit Jones

Co-published by Cross-Cultural Communications, USA, and The Seventh
Quarry Press, UK

Includes some texts and artwork by Carolyn Mary Kleefeld

The world-premiere, four evening performances, took place at The
Actors Studio Theatre, Massachusetts, in May 2017.

“Pure theatrical magic” – Marc Clopton, the Director

A production of the drama, directed by California's Carey Crockett, took
place in California in May/June 2018 at the Henry Miller Library and the Carl
Cherry Center for the Arts

The book is available via info@cross-culturalcommunications.com and
seventhquarry@btinternet.com Prices: £10.00/\$15

THE SEVENTH QUARRY SWANSEA 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, France, Germany, Greece, Guatemala, Holland, India, Iran, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Korea, New Zealand, Philippines, Pakistan, Portugal, Romania, Russia, Serbia, Sicily, Slovakia, South Africa, Spain, Sweden and Switzerland have already appeared in its pages. New York's Vince Clemente, as the magazine's Consultant Editor: America, ensures a steady stream of American poets.

Each issue features a Poet Profile, a batch of pages given over to a chosen poet. There is also a Books and Magazines page, 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 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. It costs £4.50 per issue or £9 for a year's subscription (two copies). \$15 and \$30 for USA subscribers. Further information at www.peterthabitjones.com

Editor: Peter Thabit Jones seventhquarry@btinternet.com
Consultant Editor, America: Vince Clemente

**WOMEN ON A BRIDGE
TOSSING FANS INTO A RIVER**

(Edo Period, 1615–1868)

Like Li Po
who threw
his newly-inked poems
into the Yangtze,
a group of statuesque
beautifully dressed women,
with their young attendants,
stand by the railings of a bridge
overlooking a river,
readying to toss their
summer-used painted fans
into the swift currents,
commemorating the start of fall,
the water already filled
with discarded fans
floating by like autumn leaves.

Perhaps the fans and the poems
will meet somewhere beyond
the Three Gorges where
all hopes and dreams gather.

Stanley H. Barkan America

MYTHIC

A vibration – somewhere
between oboe and clarinet –
tunes a frequency to its
existential note *who? who?*
Screeching shrieks
answer in frightful tones.

Owls,
triangulating the valley's darkness
a thrilling descant resonating

through thick autumnal air
mutating into unexpected
ululation.

Utterances from the unseen among
bare branches.
These are not birds
not terrestrial – strange lords indeed.

David Batten France

TRIG POINT

Stronghold clumps of marsh grass,
bogs of liquefied peat,
make this heavy going by foot.

At the Table of Orientation
arrows fly in all directions
pointing out we are here
in the tread of Neoliths
skirting ice sheets –
the world's migrating millions.

David Batten France

MOON MORNING

Lonely Goddess
always somewhere
if we have treasure it is you.

But you will not be fixed.
Already dismissed,
I imagine your new arrival –

the ocean of sky
infinity's deep
seems empty with you gone

David Batten France

RISE OF THE RAT

A freezing creeps into turf.
Halting, the rat in its burrowing track
scratching at returning tundra,

can make nothing of sudden iron,
this ice-age memory – so gives up
dies back – this was not its deal.

Mild winters change all that. Rats,
lords of the subsoil, undermine the land,
tunnel, gnaw through carrot and cable.

Their multiplications nauseate,
their endurance overwhelms –
the absence of God baffles us.

We cannot compete, our lack
teetering above their kingdom,
their blind screeching energy,

our seething foundations.

David Batten France

WHAT ELSE REMAINS FOR BEING BUT TO BE? HEIDEGGER

ribbed in sooty wood, the dirty windows of the ferry
show gulls following, screaming. ferry doors stay
closed. a windy deck is bare. I am standing at glass
doors, as Charon might, waiting to hear the groans
of passengers crossing the bay. no one ventures out.
sun is smoking golden. the flat-bottomed ferry returns
to Manhattan near four, reflections in glass doors heave
faintly. ships crossing are pale, carrion birds above
are backward white shadows on the glass doors.

travelling back against the sun, the ferry rolls slightly
on a ragged bay, then changes course; windows now
burn dusty in the haze and autumn-red; green-grey
water is lit by gold-red sparks, and begins to run from

under the autumn sun. a wild race of deceptive being!
haze and sea are divested of plurality: life in the frame
becomes one. waves like sharks turn sea golden-red,
then golden, then golden-dark, until the ferry turning
turns the sun again, yet carrion birds are still above.

R. D. Coleman America

COFFEE BEFORE DAWN

it feels good
making coffee
before dawn.
quiet in the city.
not the absence
of noise, more like
a decanting from
vineyards of night:
an occasional bus,
a drunken fool...laws,
here, prevent garbage
pick ups at this hour,
those growlings
once were part of this.
sound now are
the final inhalings
of night, the time
to hear noise best.

R. D. Coleman America

DOMINION

clouds roll over the river
from the west like woolen
blankets. cover sun. air cools
as though fallen into an ocean.
spring thoughts arriving, dissipate.
day was day one: lightweight
tops, shorts, open jackets or none,

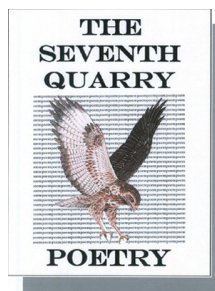
crowds strolling, laughing at
the lightness of it all, swinging
bags of fresh and delicate food
from outdoor markets; an eternal
browsing; a comfortable crowd,
no longer prepared for a winter's
taking control of it's death.

R. D. Coleman America

**THINK NOT THINKING THINK NONTHINKING DANCE NOT THINKING
DANCE NONTHINKING**

feet below the knees
hands in mudra
sitting. sitting on a chair.
looking forward to sitting
in lotus but cannot, today,
some day perhaps,
or never, perhaps.
that would be sitting, too.
but thinking not thinking
thinking nonthinking
should be available.
swinging from a tree
and upside down where
is zen? is it everywhere?
does species of tree matter?
redwood close to the top?
will it help my vertigo?

R. D. Coleman America



BOOKS AND MAGAZINES RECEIVED

ORIGINS/21 POEMS by Matthew M C Smith. Available via Amazon Kindle. Price: £4.99. This is an impressive and cohesive first collection from a poet who deserves wider recognition. The variety of subjects, ranging from the birth of a child, the title poem, to a poem for Second World War Welsh poet Alun Lewis, shows a writer in control of his poetic voice and his poetic vision.

I highly recommend those interested in refreshing, crafted, and very engaging poetry to check out the work of Swansea's Matthew M C Smith— Peter Thabit Jones.

POETRY ON NATURE AND ENVIRONMENT by Aju Mukhopadhyay
Published by The Poetry Society of India, Gurgaon-122002 (Haryana), India. Price-Rs.200 (\$12). With subjective overtones, they transcend the immediate surroundings to take the reader to another world; intimately poetic and rich with personal imaginative experience. His poems on Nature have been highly acclaimed by critics and readers. This volume of poems on Nature, Environment and Ecology is collated from different volumes of his published book of poems plus a few unpublished yet in any book (publisher's blurb).

theseventhquarrytheseventhquarrytheseventhquarrytheseventhquarry

RORSCHACH

I see flies I cannot not name
That's a path in a forest each leaf
falsely painted with October
I see voices loosened from a creek
maple shadows scattered on water
like a fright a hidden deer of leaves
and that blot would be me writing
a fly is my shadow In that light
I am daydreaming so intently
night shows through in places

Allan Peterson America

STELE

A horse was buried with a crown
a king horse
or maybe fallen from its rider

Starbursts along its spine
Grooms bearing tack and blankets

Dog interred with its barks
rolled separately in silver mylar

A peacock having given religion
to Yazidis continued a tradition
of doves and ravens as emissaries

A Kahn was guided by a parrot

Inscriptions said prophecy was more
effective if a bird was singing or a bell

Allan Peterson America

SEASONAL

Snow covers winter
I see everything's white sleeves
You'd think it was a hospital
so white and so many covered faces
lest it catch

Gold covers summer
syrphid flies mating in midair
carpets of things unnamed
and those smaller
like sand in their industry
of moving like a single being
trolleys huddled at night
in Carrollton Station

Spring has other nice touches
New houses growing through snow
people talking to trees and to the sky
life simplified to gratefulness
and rumors that books exist
explaining cloisonné
at the tips of the anthers on crocus

Fall remembers catastrophes past
in spite of the colored love notes

Allan Peterson America

METEOROLOGY

The gold afternoons
The peach glow
produced by dust
in the atmosphere
water and arsenic
the sun in hydrogen light
Magnificence
In the aggregate
Dumbfounding
Yes the reservoir
Amen the weightless
Acrobats
Between bull horns
Timing
The way lightning decides

Allan Peterson America

ALL GONE A'MOON

All gone a'Moon, all gone a'stars. I'd say
Those bedtime magic words, and you'd
Be off to sleep in less
Time than I'd need
To sort the usual mess

Of books and toys all queued
In hope of what last hugs might come their way.

All gone a'stars, all gone a'moon? I guess
The other version's that which we'd
Hit on to let the mood-
Music convey
Most aptly what imbued
Those words with feelings guaranteed,
Or almost, to relieve your night-distress.

Odd that they should, no matter how construed;
Would not that darkling thought dismay
A child inclined to heed
Tales that impress
On us a worldview keyed
To images of night and day
Where day contends with night's demonic brood?

Yet maybe that's just why those words succeed
In quieting fears; because success
Meant having kept at bay
Their multitude
Yet having still to pay
Night's price for its consent to bless
You with these hours from day's dark remnant freed.

Let's not think you were such an easy prey,
More that you'd have that price include
Some shades of night that press
Against the creed
Of bed-time happiness
As if the injuries accrued
By day had no nocturnal part to play.

Why thoughts of darkness sky-wide could redress
Your secret griefs or somehow lead
To sleep still gives me food
For thought, though may

Desist if we conclude
That waking reverie can breed
Its own night-monsters out of day's excess.

That's it, I think: if they're a touch dark-hued,
Your thoughts, for cause unknown, then they
Invite us to misread
The signs and stress
Small joys you might concede
Rather than noting how your grey-
Scale shades resolve when more intently viewed.

This makes it clear as day (as night, indeed,
In your fine optic) that, unless
It's through our DNA
The thing's renewed,
Then these my words betray
How quickly adult minds regress
When day-thoughts get their night-shift up to speed.

Christopher Norris Wales

CONFESSIOAL

For my sins
I wear a mask
of my own face

for my sins
I begin to resemble
my father

for my sins
I take on aspects
of my mother

for my sins
I can't always translate
my native language

for my sins
I let resentment
thwart my ambitions

for my sins
I got a scar to prove
I was a human baby

for my sins
my pup is my
reincarnation

for my sins
I am careful with money
but give it to taxi drivers

for my sins
I need to rest as
not working is exhausting

for my sins
I need a new face
for my mask

Paul Steffan Jones Wales

FROM THE LOQUACIOUS USK
(for W.H. Davies 1871-1940)

Son of Pillgwenlly
in the former domain of
Gwynllyw Farfog
on the loquacious Usk
and the tongue-twisting old tongue

you sacked conventional work
unless to pay for your passage

eschewing the teeming path
of the Empire's Christian soldiers

to sleep under the not forever stars
in a vastness with railway arteries
and waning bison heart

you were

transatlantic
transamerican
transhuman

you wondered at Nature
the great outdoors
as you wandered
the Great Dominion
and the Great Plains

that reverence for
the unmanufactured world
always walked with you

the lines in a weathered face
telling so many histories
the detail in the hedgerow dazzling
that moment's contemplation
of the search for

the next coin
the next smile
the next shelter
the next stanza

from your tramping and your courage
in living with physical trauma
to your single-minded campaign

to become a man of letters
the story of you
is a lesson to us
in our hours of doubt
and cruel but needless isolation

Paul Steffan Jones Wales

THEY CAME HOME

Unsuspected cemetery
its thousand year sand graves
sifted away by storm
revelation

they had lived clasped
by the shore
and by the sea
vigorous and self-assured
that margin

on their oceanic trade routes
of exchanged objects
and the latest news from
beyond the dolphin-drawn horizons

of kings and their retinues
the gossip of far-flung tribes
precious stones and
famous sunsets

the bones of the infants
unusually survived
loved in the cuddle
of the cist
laid down with seared hearts

they said their toes pointed inwards
bunched that way
by the embrace of
disappeared shrouds

Paul Steffan Jones Wales

GENES AND STEEL

Solid, stainless steel,
handed me down,
grandfather, father, me,
clasp and unclasp,
its point getting rounder now like a puffin's beak
but still sure in the pocket,
the soil, an apple.

I make out my surroundings in its dulled sheen,
the lost farms, the lost youth, the last tongue.

like my ancestors, I am prepared to wield this blade futilely
in the face of overwhelming financial and cultural odds,
in the gloom of guessing.

I have carried it everywhere I have been.
In its hinge is the dust of collieries,
the silt of the estuary, the blood of eels:
it is a magnet which reunites three generations
of manhood in metallic navigation.

Paul Steffan Jones Wales

THE HAUNTED ROOM

I turn the handle of the bedroom door
wondering whether you remember
my pale face, the glint in low-hung eyes,

the mocking laughter wrought by years
of suffering. There you lie, still sleepless
in the light of the candle's death throes,
breathing heavily; anticipating his touch,
not mine.

Mustering all the venom in my arctic lungs
I cry, 'I have come for the truth!'
Sitting bolt upright in the four-poster bed,
gaping mouth too terrified to scream,
the terror in your sociopathic eyes
pierces the half-light. This limbo, born
of a premature demise, must end;
tonight.

I point a spectral finger accusingly
across the scattered sheets. 'Why?'
I holler, 'Why?' Speechless, your head
falls onto the pillows, eyes rolled
back in their sockets. I catch my
reflection in the mirror, slowly fading
from the room as the candle
expires.

Inspired by A.J. Munnings' painting 'The Haunted Room'

Tim Gardiner England

UNTERGANG by David Batten

Published by Cinnamon Press Price £8.99/70pp

Available from jan@cinnamonpress.com

Increasingly confident, Batten uses his distinctive, lyrical voice as a call to reflect
on what might really matter in life—Cinnamon Press

DRIVING THROUGH

roadsides littered by
the takeaway tribe

slowing down for
a town's queues
looking out at pedestrians
their mauve-white faces

speeded up again
the 3-D passing of winter's lace-bowl trees
that step along brown hedges

only to come to a pause
at roadwork traffic lights
by an ivy-columned copse
dream down into its dark
ivy-crawled dell

and go on
floating around a moorland hill
veined with snow
in the ungoable distance
the saw-toothed edges and grey stumps
of a blue-green mountain range

night has us creep along between
the stillness of orange-lit pavements
a single car coming in the opposite direction
passing as closed as ourselves

out where the streetlights end
entering again night's bridges
of our reflected headlights
cats' eyes on country roads
snaking ahead

Sam Smith Wales

'At the Twilight of the Gods

the serpent will devour the earth and the wolf the sun.' Norse cosmology

Roadside cottage
built of stone quarried from
the elm-topped cliff behind
has its front door and lower window
moulded with mud spatter.

Coconut mat
at the deep back door
is green with moss.

In the dusk of indoors
the slow tick
 tick
 tick
 tick

of a seven day clock
on the mantelpiece

is sending small vibrations
across the room

to disturb the dappled ends
of the windowsill's maidenhair fern.

Sam Smith Wales

PITH AND PIFFLE/Overt Verse by James Gronvold

Published by Oak Ink Press, USA
Available via blackwells.co.uk and foyles.co.uk

'A new book from a poet who cares about the musicality of a poem'—
Peter Thabit Jones

CHILDREN IN PARADISE

Young lambs outrunning their keeper
coyote pups outromping their dad
young deer sipping from springs
beaver pups gnawing their cliff bars
young goats feeling their foreheads
for signs of horns
kids learning for all of life
what the world looks like
from the tops of mountains
learning for all of life
how each crossing of a pass
into an unknown valley
can be a watershed moment

Alex Drummond America

UPLIFTED IN THE FALL

Feather-edged snowflakes drift sideways
as though unable to bear the thought of resolution,
their swirl as indecisive as dust motes
dancing in the squandered rays of summer sun.
Eventually each gives in to gravity
despite the knowledge that it will be unable to settle-
the mere kiss of concrete causing the loss of its form.
My footsteps sound regularly, a firm hollow beat
with a certainty that I lack.
This thought adds vigour to my step-
I am more enduring than snow
and if it can halt the world in its tracks,
what might I effect?

Ali Pardoe England

ON EBB AND FLOW

Rolling to shore with the inevitable
progress of an unwanted bride,
the breaker prostrates itself.
Salt breeze kisses my lips
trailing the memory of you like thong weed.
Saltwater leaks from the sky, is engulfed
in an ocean filled
with other fish.

Ali Pardoe England

Americymru Poetry Competition Winner, 2018: Whyt Pugh
Adjudicator: Peter Thabit Jones
Poet, dramatist, and publisher



Whyt Pugh © 2018 Kristopher Goodie

Whyt Pugh's poetry examines separation, longing, and the fracturing of identities in conflict with accepted social structures. Inspired by ancient mythology, she explores the field of emotional 'quantum physics' to unsettle heroic characters from chronological and cultural constraints in an investigation of the embodiment's complexities outside of time. Whyt's writing draws on geological and physiological imagery to re-evaluate perceptions of structure, both bodily and poetic. A 2011 recipient of the Terry Hetherington Young Writers' Award, her work has appeared in six *Cheval* anthologies published by Parthian, Opening Chapter's *Secondary Character and Other Stories*, and the New Welsh Review's online platform. Whyt holds a Ph.D. in Literature from the University of South Wales where she taught Literary Theory and Romanticism until 2015. With an

interest in reviving traditional skills for modern sustainability, she enjoys crafts like tanning, weaving, woodcarving, and metalwork. Whyt savours the smell of damp moss, intentionally getting lost, and swimming with harbor seals. She currently lives in Northern California with her husband Shane, Keira the Incurrible Canine, and warren of enormous angora rabbits.

* * *

SHEDDING

It was not rebirth written
into the laboured breath
of the sloughed skin,
but the seven doors
of Ereshkigal's realm con-
tracting, teasing tensions into
Inanna's nakedness
I too was being stripped
and as the dust of depleted DNA
clung to my eyebrows it
clogged each flustered follicle
until pustules poured the pattern
of who I might have been
Da Vinci would have drawn me

as a shade of humanlike
Kafka's creatures courting inclusion

The physician forewarned
that my body would consume
its own heart if I continued
this diet of penance and toxic fumes
but still I emptied
C₃H₈O by the hour onto
the face I was erasing

And as I scrubbed with cotton bud
the slurry of selves stretched
over a frame of diverse lives
I counted the fading cadence
of indiscernible endings recurrent

The theory of an underactive
preorbital cortex was tattooed
on the vellum of a wasted life
Rational observers questioned:
can't she see her own potential?

But Jocasta's brooch was in a bottle,
so I bought blindness for my birthday
In splitting the perverse caduceus
Tiresias was transformed, not eye
washing away the final barrier
with the milk-white tears of the
snake before it slips into the new

In releasing the imprint of each
irreplicable scale I knew
I would not have a skin beneath
to conceal the knotted muscle
in its obstinate rhythm

Whyt Pugh America

BURIED

I wish I could mourn you
with an anthracitic grief of my own
futility, as I stare at the angry river
beneath rusted blossoms
but my loss has been buried
in newspaper articles and flowers
lain by strange hands, in national indignation
and the perfect plaits of the other mothers

Some of whom have children still
and many more who soon will
We don't speak of it, don't lay hands
washed clean of the black sludge
fed by an umbilical spring unseen
and ask, "Are you trying?"

But when your father mines my body
I grind my teeth to drown
away the sound of the shovels
thrust again and again into the slag
Unyielding

And as their bellies swell like the tip,
those mothers more fit than I,
who may yet wash small clothes
in the mouths of machines
quickenened by
the coal that cost us our children
I know that I am unworthy
For maybe if I had dug faster
if I had resisted Grancha
as he pulled me away
if I had stayed until I could see each bone
in my hand burnt bare by the acid that ate
the flesh I built in my womb...

We were unmade in a moment
not worn down by the slow and gaseous years
fingering their way through porous stone

and I pray that the silken fibres of your neck
snapped with a grace so fine time couldn't
Register your existence

But though there is no mark of you
in this world, save the lines your loss
branded on my brow and the carbon copy
of your shadow on my sightless irides,
You are irreplaceable

The redemption your father seeks to excavate
within me will not see a sunrise
for each month I take a bus to the city
where they are illiterate to the language
that confesses my skin scarred as
One of the Mothers

And there at the clinic they smile
when I tell them I can't keep up
with the ones I've already got
and I invent names and ages and bicycle accidents
As I take the communion of the contaminant,
they swallow the unwritten lives

It is the image of you dying alone
that wakes me in the night
Alone, not fused like a child of Llŷr
to the brittle wings of the deputy headmaster,
nor in my arms where you should have been
and with those faithless hands
I grasp at my wild and beating heart
beneath the slag heap of my breast
where milk will never flow again
and only black slurry remains

For the families dissolved by the 1966 Aberfan Mining Disaster.

Whyt Pugh America

AMERICA

Unrealized potentialities
evaporate in the fluorine flicker
of a synthetic sun
whoreshipped by the shopper
as it drowns the fragile night
of annihilated archetypes
Corporate priests preside
over prophets predicting
the ebb and flow of the notional
Mark it
with the barcoded stigmata
of progress
replacing
darkness and poetry and my
lie nation

Inc.onstant indemnity shuns the
Other in this mass of shattered
bone and muscle
must sell
must
cell (out)
of a collective prison
barred with chains of rewritten
Rotten**N**ationalist**A**merica

Mutate the membrane
to prevent the coiling of
constituents' chromosomatic choice
Hypo
might, oh Chondria feeding
on Machiavellian misogynistic
masochism
in the schism
We subverted signs
to undermine the authority
But poetic plurality was dis
solved by pandemic meaning

Momentary and untraceable
Etymological ephemerality
authored a single social narrative
idolized on glossy prints mass
produced to induce the diminishing
of thought
subsumed Insta-
tifications of bite-sized
preruminated cognitions
capitulating concepts to the Glow
Downloading somatic suicide
as servants to the Screen
The radical exclusion of a center
we sought to underwrite

The walls of the capitol castle are
built with words we payed for
preyed for
Multiplicity blind to the bind
of unprecedented semiotic stability
achieved through the deletion
of all signifieds
in unparalleled poetic
Iron Ne
gating dreams of difference
in 50 ~~states~~ characters or less
Tweeting micro-meanihi
listlessness

Whyt Pugh America

ASH

A flame-wrought silence
incomparably complete
renders my breath profane
Still, I inscribe
the words of making
written as I walk

burning carbon in
tension to acidic ash
baring wind-licked bones
blood erased and unencoded

In the lexigraphy of a life
lingering in lineaments
nearer the earth
silently reassembling servitude
from soil unseen
Dark flame flung
from a far star
igniting imbrications
intent on phosphorescence
and in forgetting fall from the known
finding the
inconvenient actuality
of a ground gravity governed

Deciduous dendrites petrified
in sun-smelted space
demand delirious capitulation
upon a sky wood woven
Solid silicate slides
in plasmid motion
to extricate
individuation
authored by abrasion
erasing each stratum

But still I seek
in the reign of phoenix feathers
for the reverberations
of your living laugh
to grow as green shoots from
the mask of anonymous ash
becoming the numinous bloom
of light in a sunset other than this

Whyt Pugh America

THE SACRIFICE/A MIDRASH OF ORIGINS by Stanley H. Barkan

Drawings by Alfred Van Loen

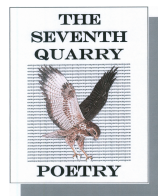
newferalpress, USA

Available via www.newferalpress.com

‘A controlled and thoroughly engaging poem-sequence’

—Peter Thabit Jones

THE SEVENTH QUARRY PRESS



Editor - Peter Thabit Jones

Consultant Editor, America - Vince Clemente

Consultant Advisors, America -
Stanley H. Barkan, Carolyn Mary Kleefeld,
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PHOTO GALLERY
(For Peter Thabit Jones)

“Insight”— a brail
bandage on a scream—

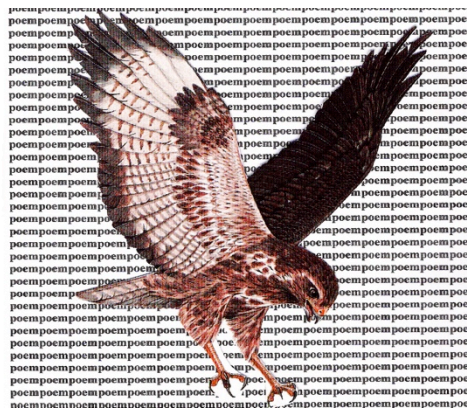
caught the eye
of two pen pal poets

who were finding
a common theme

between like minds
that had only just met

but felt like old friends
by time the sun set.

Jim Gronvold America
5-18-18



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