

BEAR REVIEW



Bear Review is an online literary journal of poems and micro prose out of Kansas City, Missouri. Published twice a year, in fall and spring, *Bear Review* is made possible by its readers' help and support. The editors, Brian Clifton and Marcus Myers, would like to express their gratitude to everyone who has contributed to the journal.

We read submissions year-round at www.bearreview.submittable.com. Send up to five poems or one to two short prose pieces (maximum: 500 words). We will consider a long poem, as well as a sequence of interconnected short sections of a short story, as long as it promises to keep the fire stoked. We are open to simultaneous submissions as long as the writer notifies us immediately about an acceptance elsewhere.

Cover art, *Fur Traders Descending the Missouri* by George Caleb Bingham, 1845.

©2014 to the names of individual authors and photographers. Subsequent rights revert to the author of a literary work upon publication with the provision that *Bear Review* receives credit as the first publisher.

MIRIAM GAMBLE	
YOUR HORSE	11
SARCOPHAGUS	12
MADELINE COTTINGHAM	
FROM "YELLING FROM THE LOWER FIELD"	13
MEGAN KAMINSKI	
DANIELLE	14
MARGOT	15
GINA MYERS	
SNOW DAY	16
DREW COOK	
SNOWBLIND	17
THE ONLY LOVE POEM YOU WILL EVER NEED	18
ERIC PANKEY	
TO FIX AN IMAGE IN MEMORY	19
SNAPSHOT WITH MY BROTHER	20
CLAY LIPSKY	
FROM "BEACHDAZE"	21
ANDREW REEVES	
CAPGRAS SYNDROME	22
ANDREW JOHNSON	
WEDNESDAY NIGHT	23
JOHN GALLAHER	
WHEN WE SAY "CAUSE" WE ONLY GO BACK SO FAR	24
WHY PEOPLE CONTINUE TO WORRY ME	25

JONATHAN BOOTHE	
<i>NAOKO'S BODY AND THE MOONLIGHT</i>	26
MATT EICH	
FROM "THE INVISIBLE YOKE"	27
SUGAR LE FAE	
<i>PAPYRUS: FOR CAECILIUS</i>	28
PAIGE LOCKHART	
<i>JUGGALO MOON</i>	29
<i>STELLAR DEATH</i>	31
ADAM LONG	
FROM "KENWOOD AVENUE"	32
MARK JACKLEY	
<i>MILL TOWN</i>	33
WAYNE MILLER	
<i>LEAVING THE HOSPITAL</i>	34
<i>FOR HARPER, 20 MONTHS OLD</i>	36
AUDREY KEIFFER	
<i>DEAR GHOST,</i>	37
SHERRIE FLICK	
<i>THE WORLD, FLOATING</i>	38
ADAM LONG	
FROM "KENWOOD AVENUE"	40
JORDAN STEMPELMAN	
<i>IN EVERY DREAM HOME A HEARTACHE</i>	41
HAINES EASON	

<i>1881: A LAKOTA CHIEF, AFTER HIS INTERVIEWERS HAVE GONE</i>	42
CLAY LIPSKY	
<i>FROM "BEACHDAZE"</i>	46
JENNY SADRE-ORAFI	
<i>THE BURN I PUT</i>	47
JODI FAYE	
<i>MIDLAND FORD HIGH SCHOOL ART CLUB</i>	48
KAREN CRAIGO	
<i>WEATHER DIORAMA</i>	50
ANGELA VOGEL	
<i>FOR GOODNESS' SAKE</i>	51
CHRISTY LEE ROGERS	
<i>A CONVERSATION WITH SELF FROM "OF SMOKE AND GOLD"</i>	52
JONI LEE	
<i>CUSHIONED BY A WAVE</i>	53
EMILY KOEHN	
<i>THE SMALL HOUSE</i>	54
SCOTT LEWIS	
<i>OCTOBER</i>	55
SEANN WEIR	
<i>A PORTRAIT OF HESTIA WITH YOU AND ME IN THE BACKGROUND</i>	56
SEAN THOMAS DOUGHERTY	
<i>DEAR COREY</i>	57
CLAY LIPSKY	

FROM "BEACHDAZE" _____	58
ALEX LEMON _____	
PLEASE STOP TALKING AND LET US LISTEN _____	59
MAUREEN HIRTHLER _____	
FILM _____	61
CHELL NAVARRO _____	
LIKE BARE ELISION _____	62
NATASHA MIJARES _____	
MIRAGE _____	63
LOGAN WHITE _____	
FROM "TTALO" _____	64
SARA RYAN _____	
VESSEL _____	65
CONTRIBUTORS _____	

Miriam Gamble

YOUR HORSE

Doesn't look like much
under the burden of the gear –
the pack saddle and the panniers,
the fly fringe improvised
from the tip of its tail.

Is without back shoes
and stumbles through the streets
of the tilting town,
its cobbled and concrete laneways,
where sour women watch
with faces like cobs.

Is carrying your bread
and your body,
your soul and your money,
for five hours straight
up a mountain sheer
as a pail – so high,
on cresting it you're drunk
on a single beer.

Relieved of you,
and loosed into
the lurid mountain grass,
is hard-bodied, metaphysical.

Could trample you to death but won't.

Miriam Gamble

SARCOPHAGUS

In the middle of the night,
stashed into a niche
in the mountain's side,
I plied your body with my body.
A silver horse stood over us,
waiting for light.

Eventually the cattle-bells
returned over the hill
and the animal
relaxed its watching. You
started breathing.
O your skin was leper white.



Madeline Cottingham

FROM "YELLING FROM THE LOWER FIELD"

Megan Kaminski

DANIELLE

Lie down on the ground. Lie
down on the ground like that.
And I will carry tree limbs and
bush scrawl. And I will build a fire
to warm paw and foot. I'll gather
blue stones from the riverbed and
soft leaf to pillow tender bodies.
Please just murmur syllabic interludes
and rest my head on furry arms.

Megan Kaminski

MARGOT

This afternoon I fell flat. I wept and dangled
feet over the frozen creek. I listened to my echo
carry into sleeping hills. The river dammed
up with branches and I nibbled roots,
mouth soiled and hands cracking cold.
I looked for prints in fresh powder
bedded down in thick brush.
How quiet the evening—purple berries
fat on trees, trees hissing through snow.

Gina Myers

SNOW DAY

Easily distracted
by the diamonds
 in the floor tiles.
 This winter day
everything
has come to a standstill
in Atlanta. The ice weighs down
the tree branches outside
the window, and further out:
 the empty streets.
 A lone Chevy truck fishtails
as it approaches a stop sign.
Days like this everything
feels slowed down
 & I can forget
for awhile the rent check due.
I can forget that there is anything happening
outside of the walls of my brain.
Just Sunday
we sat at Lillian's, drinking
leftover champagne.
The sun a respite
from what
already felt like a long winter.
And it was easy to pretend
it was summer, the popping
bottles fireworks on the 4th
of July—the grill fired up.
But now the mood
has turned elsewhere,
as January's high hopes
fizzle into February's
 day-to-day. It's best
not to flatter the new year, says Schuyler.
Better to call it Mutt.

Drew Cook

SNOWBLIND

On thirty-three, past sawed-off ohio's
highest point, I reach the end, business-
wise, of a gravid snowfall. & my o
my the air seems seconds after in this

&this&this second pulled apart pulled
together by a big white bomb. My tires
mostly in troughs left by strangers, space culled
from unroaded space: let's trust them. Why are

you here, the speedometer asks, sinking
below twenty. In this the bathyscaphe
of my dreams we might slip beneath drifting
snow, might ease into the ditch, so safe

as any sleeping seed might be, let's wait
for a lasting sun, let's wait: can we wait?

Drew Cook

THE ONLY LOVE POEM YOU WILL EVER NEED

one night, at the grand & central Exxon,
a crack dealer tried to punch me. the fine
hairs on his fist tickled my cheek. later,
driving home, i could still hear my own heart.

that was in september, the month of your
birth, and, in my car, i thought, what a thing,
& this warm night, one of the last warm nights,
we ought to be at gulpha creek, lying

atop the picnic tables on our backs,
bracketed by mountains and swift, shallow
water, the wildflowers still leaning north
in the last warm air of the last warm month.

the sound of the water, the arrhythmic
cracking of aged pines aging, the pale light
of stars spilling into the narrow gorge:
o them's must've been somebody else's

mermaids. in every now and now and now
we trade all that is possible for one
thing that is necessary. by the grey
midday light of january, herons

stand in cold water that looks like soapstone,
that looks like it must feel, watching for fish.

Eric Pankey

TO FIX AN IMAGE IN MEMORY

As in a prelude, themes recur and evolve.

(The uncanny, for instance,
a thing which ought
To have remained hidden, but has come to light,

Or, not quite an opposite,
the held secret—

A secret only because it is guarded.)

To abstract,

one withdraws, disengages from,

Considers apart from, takes away secretly. . .

The French doors
 (one cracked open at this hour
When I had meant to look out and beyond)

Offer reflection, a double self-portrait

At odd angles with itself
as if two men
Consulted on something they'd prefer you not hear.

Eric Pankey

SNAPSHOT WITH MY BROTHER

He called dibs on being the evil twin. What malice, meanness, and malevolence remained, he claimed in a game of “Rock, Paper, Scissors.” His paper to my rock, his rock to my scissors. . . as if he knew a split-second before I did the shape my hand would take. He wrote nihilist slogans with soap on the Junior High’s shop windows and from fifty paces dotted the i’s with a bb gun. He froze flies in ice cubes, transplanted the head of one grasshopper onto another’s thorax, invented elaborate tortures for those taken in war. Cowboy? Indian? He didn’t care. There was cruelty enough on whatever side he found himself. What joy he knew! In his presence, I was morose, sullen as I kicked at the gravel and scuffed my polished school shoes. In the games we played, he made me the accomplice, sidekick, deputy, henchman, and minion. I got good marks in everything but penmanship. He had cursive down, even the upper case Q for which there is so little use. The goody-two-shoes, I tattled, told on my brother, although my parents swore I was an only child.



Clay Lipsky

FROM "BEACHDAZE"

Andrew Reeves

CAPGRAS SYNDROME

i always think things twice.
you wear a new disguise—

what gives you away
is in your eyes—not

in what you say. when
you kiss me good-

night, you don't taste the
same—i have to spit it out

in the sink when you aren't
looking. i have to think twice

about taking back the breath
you steal in your sleep

and each morning i
wake to her singing

only to find it's you in
the kitchen cracking up.

Andrew Johnson

WEDNESDAY NIGHT

She called it a conundrum, this space between close of business Wednesday and start of business Thursday, and aside from the four seconds she spent considering the acronym for start of business—how it didn't seem correct, how it must be something else, how it happened to resemble the last thing she said to him—she focused her attention entirely on the conundrum, which would arrive in three hours and yet still remained a shapeless void, lacking content, drawing near, and belonging to her alone.

WHEN WE SAY “CAUSE” WE ONLY GO BACK SO FAR

Profound insights can arise from simple questions. Who's going to argue with that? Not me. But there are so many ways to get at all the things that can still stand some getting-at. For instance, one could sit and ponder the big questions and come up with simple insights. It's a four-term economy, yielding all manner of outcomes. We've now thought of two. In addition, we could have profound insight from profound question and simple insight from simple question. But we can't stop there, not if we want to be thorough. We could say these terms, which they do, sit within a gamut of possibility, the limits of which they only gesture toward. Then we move to examples and everything we've built escapes into biography: One time, in high school, I was in a kitchen at 2 a.m., because in high school weekend memories, it's always 2 a.m., and Brendan and Charlie had some beer and sang the complete Jesus Christ Superstar to the kitchen cabinets, illustrative gesticulations and all. My insight had more to do with the fact that I sat there through the whole thing, than it did the performance itself. Everyone else left at some point. Was it a simple question or a profound question, a profound insight or a simple one? It wasn't even in language, it was more a feeling, watching them circle, and then watching myself just kind of being there . . . I did that once as well while washing dishes at The Blue Dolphin. There were two of us (with assorted guest artists), 1982 or 81, in the kitchen singing all of Pink Floyd's The Wall, including guitar solos. Particularly the guitar solos. It has to do with the nature of the soul, the communal presence of music within us, kitchens, and alcohol. To be able to say "from this point of view" and to be able to "entertain" a notion, is to be there as well. To stand in the simple presence, in much the same way that we call what surrounds us "the air," that we jump "into the air," and astronauts, what do they call space when they step out into it, or from the moon, as they jump into it? One thing ends and the next one begins. It's a halfway insight or a three-quarters insight, like the way, on a plane, when you feel the unavoidable significance, as the flight attendant reminds the passengers that "the nearest exit may be behind you" and how in your best dreams as well as your worst dreams you're naked.

John Gallaher

WHY PEOPLE CONTINUE TO WORRY ME

You can dish it out but you can't take it. Is there anyone that doesn't apply to? Well, yeah, I guess as soon as I say something like that there will be an avalanche of examples of those hardy souls who walk away from train wrecks. Which will only result in my getting a bit defensive, though I shouldn't be, because it's only a question, right? It's all fun and games 'till someone loses an eye, and then it's an eye for an eye. We're on The Lazarus Train, next stop, back to the land of the dead. Maybe it'll only be a tour. And we'll have to sit with people who can take it, real high-energy types. I kind of hate them. It's mostly jealousy. Who wouldn't want to be a high-energy type who can take it? So my favorite drink is coffee. I'm a coffee junkie. Pity me my status update, as, with my coffee in hand, I went to the art debate, where the famous poet was going to be letting loose and having loose let back upon him. A real art pugilist, who would pull the gummy heart from the gummy bear as this is this edge we cling to. We have teams and the teams erupt in applause. The trick is where you shop for uniforms, because what happens is rarely unpredictable, with some raised voices and mic grabbing, but the whole thing started off, and this suddenly occurs to me to be the important part, where the artist, let's call him Tony Hoagland, before whatever it was the day was going to be remembered as happened, was talking to some children, and he knelt down to meet their eyes, and laughed at something they said. There's a career I've often wondered about, the career of the theater plant, the one who sits in an audience to clap first, but just barely, and to laugh a bit louder than everyone else, but just a bit. It's how the rest of us know when to laugh and clap. Then, when laughing bothers us, we have this other theater plant to beseech Saint Penelope, Patron Saint of Poor Weavers. And there is also good in this world.

Jonathan Boothe

NAOKO'S BODY AND THE MOONLIGHT

1.

On the metro
my eyes are red
with rain
that could not bring silence
or carve the U of sound
from a funeral bell.
You have become the color of my words
drawing yourself from nearby leaves
to fill my mouth
to make the hue of my name or yours.
And between this window and the moon
is your body
moving through white blood
before first light
before the shadow and the dew,
your fingers turning out the stars
to speak darker:
a word, draining the need for winter
from the pale of your face,
a final breath to keep me young.

2.

Who hasn't felt his heart tugged
by a slivered moon
or walked on legs of wine
'round red halos on linoleum
hearing her voice
in the shushing wind?
Naoko.
The sound of the world creaking,
of the road being watched
as she departs
smaller and smaller
until just a mirrored fleck
in the eyes of a wasted life.



Matt Eich

FROM "THE INVISIBLE YOKE"

CARMEN 35

Gaius Valerius Catullus (ca. 84-54)

Poetae tenero, meo sodali
velim Caecilio, papyre, dicas,
Veronam veniat, Novi relinquens
Comi moenia Lariumque litus:
nam quasdam volo cogitationes
amici accipiat sui meique.
quare, si sapiet, viam vorabit,
quamvis candida milies puella
euntem revocet manusque collo
ambas iniciens roget morari,
quae nunc, si mihi vera nuntiantur,
illum deperit impotente amore:
nam quo tempore legit incohata
Dindymi dominam, ex eo misellae
ignes interiorem edunt medullam.
ignosco tibi, Sapphica puella
Musa doctior: est enim venuste
Magna Caecilio incohata Mater.

PAPYRUS: FOR CAECILIUS

—after Catullus

Paper, please tell my friend and tender
poet, Caecilius, to leave the walls of New
Coma and the shores of Lake Larius,
and come to Verona.
I've got certain thoughts from a mutual friend
I want his take on. So, if he's wise
he'll eat up the road—walking away
even if a bright girl calls
his name a thousand times,
and, clasping both hands
around his neck, begs him to stay.
This girl, who, truth be told,
suffers from an inoperable love.
Ever since she read a draft of his latest epic,
flames eat at her innermost marrow.
I forgive you, poor girl, smarter
than a Sapphic muse. It really is charming,
Caecilius's poem-in-progress, I mean.

JUGGALO MOON

People could hate on Sid all they wanted: call him a faggot, a bitch, anything. If it weren't for his juggalo family, he'd probably be living under his tombstone by now.

Sid's legs sway and dangle off the edge of a truck bed spraypainted with first names. He watches the deep grooves of spinning tires flick specks of mud on tents, shoulders, Faygo coolers, all over so many frosted hair tips twisted like thick spider legs. When Juggalos get together, they embrace all kinds of shit. At Sid's first Gathering, the mud, the hand-clasped, lean-in shoulder hugs tell him he can quit being lonely now. He's forever down with every single one of these clowns.

"What is a juggalo? He drinks like a fish. And then he starts huggin' people like a drunk bitch. Next thing, he's pickin' fights with his best friends. Then he starts with the huggin' again. Fuck!"

Back at home, in the high school lunch line, a plain looking girl told Sid he smelled like tuna and gasoline. He pulled a bottle of orange Faygo out the pocket of his JNCO jeans, his pockets made deep to hold the words of all the shit talkers and haters, all the hallway eyeball hate. A pot-belly scabnut with bird's nest hair interrupted the clean fizz of carbonation under Sid's lid, Sid's untwisting, unwinding breath.

"Just cuz you're a Juggalo doesn't mean you gotta drink Faygo all the damn time." Sid, Sid, stay calm, forgive. "Drink another soda for once, you piece of shit."

"I like Faygo," Sid took a swig, felt his heart beat blood again. He could feel the mud splatter on his skin again.

Whenever Sid takes a drink, he feels whole. It lets him picture his family members in the next town, back in Ohio, or across the world, all of them sipping on Faygo, too. He replaces the selfish pricks, the cold and unaccepting faces with his brothers his sisters, his nieces his nephews, the Juggalette he kissed until they pulled away white-lipped. His family's not in the same room with Sid, sure, but they're all sharing a drink together, everywhere. It's like being lost and looking at the moon, knowing that others see it too. Except Sid prefers to grab the damn thing out of the sky, drag it through the stars, hold it in close and taste it.

Paige Lockhart

STELLAR DEATH

From space, hands tied, her demise
and fading frame blanketed with flames,
storms with first names blinked giant eyes.
Hollow wind exhaled the guts of her veins.

The noises drilled my ears, Earth's feeble pleas.
Its sobbing fits and dazed arguments
thundered my skull, a filthy flood. The birch tree
and its branches snap. My mind, spent.

When they covered her in soil, I rained
on miniature umbrellas. Her grave,
a black speck that never ended,
cleaned with dirt, not the sun's rays.

Grief unzipped my molecules down to their atoms,
hunting for the positivity that hides in ions.



Adam Long

FROM "KENWOOD AVENUE"

Mark Jackley

MILL TOWN

The day dims on the hillsides. They drink me in. It is
not like a grave. A grave.

Wayne Miller

LEAVING THE HOSPITAL

The world beyond the window

was no vaster
than the world inside the room,

just more diffuse. Window

like the screen
of an imaging machine—

on the other side:
luminous, shifting cavities.

(Stop moving, I said and said.)

You looked at me
as though I were an aquarium.

But I was a fist
forced up inside my skull

with no room to unclench.

The nurses tended
to my swollen bags of saline—

lightfilled syrup,

already part of my body,
hanging there.

When they untethered me
at last, I suddenly

was simplified. The doorway

at the end of the long hall
opened

onto this beautiful declivity:

my body
was tucked back into me.

Wayne Miller

FOR HARPER, 20 MONTHS OLD

I imagine your sleep
as a flashlit tent

in the narrow dark
of your room—

and when your beam
slides suddenly

across the nylon
we hear you stir.

Through the radio
umbilicus of the monitor

you come to us
aerated

like tapwater.
You're dreaming—

and the unknowable
reservoir

of you
becomes in that moment

more clearly
unknowable,

yet fills our room.

Andrey Keiffer

DEAR GHOST,

you and lightning exclaim
well together. Your penchant for black
everything made me
bleed. These colors

deduce me into a key
around your neck for a map
inside, lined in gold.

I never knew your home
until I hung my red bra from it.

Dear ghost,
I could smell your smoke
through the window screen.
Your laughter lodged
into my larynx

like a storm. Sounds I recite
until I suffocate every threadbare
arm you've gifted me.

I never knew your home
until I could smell it in stale cigarettes.

Dear ghost,
night drained through you
when my eyes streamed down your spine.
Shove my skull against the wall,

I never knew your home
until you strung my tongue and body from it.

THE WORLD, FLOATING

The sky wins today. Big sky, tiny snowflakes. I didn't say a word last night. Just watched Scott's lips move, move, move. Finally he said: "Have anything to say to that?" When I continued to listen but not speak, he yelled. Then he said, "Look at me."

And I looked at him long and hard. And then this thought: I don't like you. I thought it over toward his head. I turned back to the window, where I wished for a knight to come riding through the haze of streetlights and misty snow. Where I waited to know what it was I should say, exactly. Where I spied the stray tiger cat slinking around, looking from house to house deciding which one would be his home tonight. The cat has a walk like a skinny cowboy, its haunches slipping from side to side. Cool and trim, this cat. Everyone on the street loves him up from time to time. I thought: Pick me. But the cat stopped in front of Bill and Marty's place, cocked its head, and then maneuvered up onto their porch, tail straight like a periscope.

Then the street empty and quiet, lit like a stage by the lights above. One popping on, another off, yellow and sickly on our mailboxes and collective lawn ornaments—gnomes, flamingos, birdbaths, flags.

The front door slammed. The tap of Scott's heels faded like a second hand down the street.

The world often requires action. People want clear fact-filled statements. I just want the rambling words to stop. If you sit long enough, you can wait out just about anything. I've learned this trick. It's the closest thing to magic I know. Silence. A magic wand in reverse.

Take back, take back, take back. And then you're sitting alone, like you've wanted to in the first place and little flakes of snow flitter down outside the window.

I met Scott at a bar. A bad place, they say, to meet a boyfriend. But it was a quiet pub with a fireplace. It was a homey, more like a living room. This was in another town, months back. Scott followed me here and settled in. Happy enough. But then, the quiet descended. I went my separate way inside my head. When he couldn't follow, all that talking started. Planning talk and advice talk. Getting out of the house talk. The talk-talk-talking.

One morning I told him to just go ahead and leave. By the look on his face, I could have just as easily slapped him.

And yet now as morning rises up on my street in a hazy frost, I see him. A few feeble flakes of snow search about, wanting to land on him, but miss as Scott walks at his steady clip. He's making his way down the middle of the street. Looking thoughtfully from side to side, sauntering with his own cowboy hips.

At first I can't see the bundle of flowers he has at his side. He's holding them down and slightly behind, as if to hide the plastic bag from his better self. He can't see me, but I'm looking at him, my lips moving behind the glass.



Adam Long

FROM "KENWOOD AVENUE"

Jordan Stempleman

IN EVERY DREAM HOME A HEARTACHE

How the harsh avoids
the wash, some tide
of reading too much
in bed, besides, the fields
stay the fields, even
yarn, even when I opened
my mouth it was dark,
violets shocking the flour
this nervousness, since
the nervousness pushes off
mainly, dutiful, sweet you
be, though, sweet fallen
too, slow, in the overnight
perhaps, always, sometimes,
well, that's over, and I enjoyed
talking to you lying down
because I felt safe, no bugs
in this place, rattlesnakes,
of course, nearly perfect
unsettling of the unloved
worn moon that might form
smart about it sometime soon,
I said, October through
February, not wanting words
seen, simple, the sexless old
corn, speaking of breakfast,
the time I drove through miles
of such snow, that coffee mug
steaming on the roof of my car,
now, nothing like that, here
you said the same story, less
words, years after, more or
fine and we all believe such
stories when they misbehave
the moment we expect ourselves
to settle down, strange seen
world alone, strange shown back
restroom or dried dinner'd
beans, goofy adaptations of
nudity, but no pictures survive
to ever really prove it.

Haines Eason

**1881: A LAKOTA CHIEF, AFTER HIS INTERVIEWERS HAVE
GONE**

It is a strange world
That allows dead soldiers' descendants
Come hear tell how I slayed their fathers.

My confusion must mean I am a relic.

I did possess wisdom enough, though,
Years past, to hold appropriate action expertly
At arm's length. Within reach; without embrace.

Weighing the gathered tribes' chances
Against every additional white carcass.
A trail of them, bleaching—buffalo under empty sky.

Sometimes in patches the prairie—
Grasses dark as clouds—it yet resembles those beasts.

::

Our tribeswomen still work as they always did—
Scrape and dry hides, smoke fish, gather wild turnips
In Dakota fog—

Making anew daily our language of motion.

But we no longer climb and descend
The ladder of the plains, following the sun.
Our river and wind history, swirling,
Collects in reservoirs, roads, telegraph wire.

It is a strange world
That stops moving while birthing new days.

::

Between the changes there are still visions.

Morning of the last great war,
The river a glacier of white-green snow water,
Around us raw earth enriched with children crops—
The stoutest gathering of all Lakota branches.

Chiefs smoking pipes in silence
In the central lodge—gray breath rising
Through a white hole folded in the skin roof.

To the south an unnatural thunder, then;
Rising in a roar the tribes spoke through us,
Looking for, calling us. Clack of rifles,

Rounds coursing in waves like hail;
Dressing as we rode, daubing dark dyes
Over cheeks, under eyes. Tying back the hair.

*Warm, the gelatinous blood
Slips from under their scalps.*

*Screams, one last stand to another, up ridge,
Down. Dispatching them in piles.*

::

I told the visitors all I could remember,
But they came for small certainties, what they call
Facts—names, marks on uniforms.

Which tombs should go where?
They asked all this, their expressions unchanging.

All I know: this life has vanished in one *hokabey*.
On my hands is all this now in darkness.

Quiet holds me all the time—
Nothing but earth and light meeting
At the line of my eyes' height.

The night quiet is deepest, my body waking me

Their horses screaming in the pines

Holding myself as I urinate
I feel slick and firm the soldiers' testicles slip free
Under my knife. Hairless young faces

Shot through and left to gape at clouds
Are drug from knots of corpses,
Are torn in pain too coarse for screams.

No reaction from the visitors as this was written down.

::

I am forced always to return
To this present, to where here I am
Standing, absent long enough to fade,

Not fully disappear, from time. My past must be true
In this present. But I am, in all myself,
Hollow now. Emptied. Unsteady.

Cold, coffin-sized room. Tacked together
Over this rank latrine dug in a field.

::

Outside in the stars I wrap myself in patchy furs
Over stiff hemp shawl.

Lately I have begun to sketch these thoughts.

Paper reminds me of feathers, its dust, smoothness.
Of our paint horses. Men and boys we raised

To fit horses, to fit into a force
That drove a cavalry crawling into their last hills.

*Dusk, and I am the force behind the wind,
I am holding the man with the curled blond mane.*

Beside now a loose cabin made of logs,
On feet more bone than flesh,
Wrapped in darkness broad as a Dakota sun

We are brought together.
All this time and still we cannot speak.

I do not hate him or his people now;
I wish only for movement.

It has begun to snow—dry and sharp.
In my palm each flake is a just action.

Each its own awful blessing.



Clay Lipsky

FROM "BEACHDAZE"

Jenny Sadre-Orafai

THE BURN I PUT

I was fed the sun
for breakfast every day
for thirty-five years.

I grew rays for arms
and my core, my core glowed
into everyone's sky.

And I became afraid of my self,
my heat, the burn I put on each sea
for how long I don't know.

I looked past the waves,
saw fathers dipping their babies
into the tides and back out.

There's nothing more true than:
I burned and burned the past
of everyone's first steps alone.

MIDLAND FORD HIGH SCHOOL ART CLUB

Eight of the ten members of the Midland Ford High School Art Club stood on a path in Letna Park, staring up at the large red metronome that kept time above the Vltava, listening to their art teacher and chaperone Sally Kenton-Warren, who had visited Prague 12 times, tell them the spot where the thin red line moved evenly to and fro had once been home to the largest monument to Stalin ever built anywhere. A few members pondered the symbolism of the metronome. Others just looked at it.

Sally Kenton-Warren, or Sal, as the art kids called her, wore flowing skirts and you could talk to her about things and she wasn't a hippie because she enjoyed a nice steak every Friday, but everyone was pretty sure she smoked pot. Not that she would ever do it in front of her students, or admit to it, even, but she would get this amused look on her face when it was brought up. And if there's one general rule you can trust, it's that pot is brought up at least once in every high school art club. No one is exactly sure why because no studies have been done, but there are certainly some theories floating around.

The president of the club was Kyle Melore, a pretty talented sculptor and also a white boy with dreadlocked hair. The vice-presidency was shared by two best friends, Annie Wyrick and Cynthia Kruse, who dressed alike in all black, wore black lipstick, and often murmured private jokes into each other's heavily pierced pale ears.

Club Secretary Maggie Bevins was absent. She'd had an emergency appendectomy a few days before the trip and was laid up. It was a real tragedy for both her and her boyfriend Andy, who had been very seriously dating for four months, and who were planning on doing it for the first time in Prague, a fact that Andy told the group on the second night of their

trip when he was buzzed off half a beer. He said he'd tried to stay behind in Michigan to keep her company, but his parents didn't want to eat the \$300 deposit for the trip, so here he was in Europe. He'd had no choice, he shrugged.

Tim Watkins, who held no office, was also missing. He'd run away a few days before the trip, had taken the dollars he saved to be converted to koruna and hopped on a Greyhound bus, it was thought, to an unknown destination. He left a note for his mother, stepfather, and little brother, saying that he loved them, that they shouldn't worry about him, but that he just couldn't stand staying in that small shit town with its close-minded people for one more goddamn second or his head would explode. There was a world he wanted to see, he wrote. He didn't want to take some stupid trip to Europe and then just come back, he wanted to *live*, dammit, to *live*.

Karen Craigo

WEATHER DIORAMA

My son's task:
make a diorama
of a barometer.
Find a way
to showcase
pressure.
Tonight we envy
the tornado girl
her very specific
scene: twisted
sock, tiny toy
cows set flying.
Somewhere
in this town
a family piles
tennis balls
as hail. Somewhere
tinsel hangs
like rain. Maybe
our shoebox
could cave in
on itself. Maybe
it could explode.
At any rate
we've painted it
blue and there
are the requisite
cotton balls
representing clouds.

Angela Vogel

FOR GOODNESS' SAKE

When the mourning warblers land on neglected land,
it's March's miscarriage and trick.
Olive above, yellow below, their thin
eye rings are barely broke with song.
They are shuttered out of our home work,
but pain betrays their luminescent frames
waved away, Alice-small, their room an open cup.
Grief has weaved a nest around their ventricles.
Woe has towed its axis to their home.
The male's repetitive chip, exalted in the throat,
is opera's quiver, fat with feeling, foreign
grief to we who soft-speak hard things,
all our widows off the lawn,
emotionally handkerchiefed, not flying
like our wits about us.



Christy Lee Rogers

A CONVERSATION WITH SELF *FROM* “OF SMOKE AND GOLD”

Joni Lee

CUSHIONED BY A WAVE

Water filled the house
when she died. Cardinals cooed to her
through glass while the basement drowned.
I swear her face blurred,
her head falling as if cushioned
by a small wave. Teacups and lungs
became weightless. Pillows, the sofa,
and her glasses hovered
around her as she rose toward
the ceiling, nose bumping plaster.
I watched her float past in a dress
like a funeral of wet branches.
The windows leaked,
siding bulged under such restraint.
Silence pushed against her eardrums,
quieted the cold indoors.
As if loneliness were an absolute
discovery. Her arms drifted
from her sides, dreaming fish
poured from her pockets.

Emily Koehn

THE SMALL HOUSE

The house I dreamt for my daughter and me was no larger
than a thumbnail with raccoons pawing at the walls as if
the walls were invisible twine threaded, as if raccoons knew

the history I wanted to shrink and stockpile in the attic once
it was mine. I could feel their hunger. What it would be like
to curl inside, all ripe with place and small like a second.

And now I pretend to put this house in my pocket at work
while coworkers finger their coffees, talk highways and new
houses scraping trees, talk of places already instilled with correct

medications where newness is seeping as if we could open
the walls and reveal a heart beating. And I half-listen, hear
words like water flowing outside our small house. What it's like

to touch an ant. Who is the bandit now. I'm running out of
places and it's time to find the age for my skin. You see,
I do not give enough to anyone and even raccoons fork over

lives for morsels. A feeling can just bulge and what's it like
to simply wake up. Dreaming is more like preferring than
wanting. Show me a fear inside a fear like where do you feel it

in your gut and where can I touch you right now. But more
like the ant I am, covering surfaces I've been before, stashing
life and then to never look again. I want places like something

lit up inside a brain. Places that are hallowed with aim,
and then I'll ask whose daughter is this in the light so bright
you can see and feel at the same time, this skin, this second.

Scott Lewis

OCTOBER

Who would bother inventing it again?
A mathematician maybe? The counts &
culls & calculations of the heart. Love framed
in a calendar. Minutes of meetings
scribbled on a Post-It note. Minutes
meeting minutes & turning into hours.
Ours is life with expiration. Dating progress
with obstacles: the split pea stagnant
film over the water, the low slough
choked with frond & mud, the prospects of afternoon.
A tour of the winds and stumps that haunt Lake
Conway can wait. Perhaps the road will talk to us.
We two were histories before we met.

Seann Weir

A PORTRAIT OF HESTIA WITH YOU AND ME IN THE BACKGROUND

Hestia waits in your bedroom, she spent all night in the mire washing off her father.

 She fries, for you, a toad
named after your brother and sticks a single candle in his mouth.

She says your light bulbs are filled with inch-tall nymphs.

 Hestia has you starve for twenty nights,
then feeds you bowls of sand and lamb fat.

Hestia locks her eternal suitor in a trunk. She lets him out for parties with her friends.

 He's a club-footed titan,
no, a slim-boned gimp, he dances, dribbling invalid-spit. I'd sell my sister's hair to be him.

Hestia says hell is a chorus of star-famished nights, genitals adorned with ice,
 the stain of blackberries shoved

up your nose. I say paradise is tangled in her hair, a marriage of twenty headless crows.

Do you realize you are the woodpecker she keeps for its feathers? You belong
 in a paisley cage.

Do you ever think that the moonlight is too busy to keep her company,

or when preening on a Sunday, that she forgets you?

I'll remind you she leaves her garters to bask in the gutter.

 Hestia returns one phone call
for every twenty I dial. She beckons you and me to live among her swine.

Hestia pulled my car out of a mothering snow ditch. She hid my license in her hair
 and made me

recite her address. Hestia buried my keys beneath a prayer of hammers.

Sean Thomas Dougherty

DEAR COREY

We walk through life dressed in imaginary drag, sequins like hair nets on the workers at the Plastek factory we drive by fast in the A.M. of summers where we spent our last quarter on a last song, before closing. Before closing the door to the things we want to forget. But can we never turn the knob or do we help each other, and then to stand there in the doorway, the past's brilliant light burning us, the shadows of who we were. Draw me a picture, a silhouette of that man I was and I will fill in its face with the man you were, or the face of a friend, the one who spoke to himself in the room made of music and torn spines, or the one who slept with his guitar, the strings we dangle by—



Clay Lipsky

FROM "BEACHDAZE"

Alex Lemon

PLEASE STOP TALKING AND LET US LISTEN

You are more likely
To be stung bloated

& dead, by a swarm
Of bees, than be killed

By a gun-toting burglar.
Fingernails grow faster

Than toenails. Every four
Days you have a new

Stomach lining. You will
Produce a swimming pool

Of saliva in your life
Time. Eating a backpack

Of prunes each day
Will make you piss

Rainbows. Hallucinogens,
Diuretics in the gas-tasting

Tap water. The beach bristles
With glass shards & triops.

Dig yourself that hole
With so much fervor

That you're can taste the hot
Damn in the world

Firecracking around you.
Stare into the sun. Pay

Attention to what the clouds
Say. Everything begins, then

Ceases to exist before beginning
Once again. Throatsilver. Stardust.

Deadflesh. Insects are being
Born inside you & it burns.

Maureen Hirthler

FILM

When I was a child, I believed my father could control time. He loved home movies. In 1960, this meant a bulky camera and real film. He would shoot a family gathering, and then deliver the film to the locally owned drug store, where it was sent out to be developed. Several weeks later, he would bring home a tightly wound roll of film, and we would have “Movie Night.”

In my favorite movie, I’m sliding down a tall snow pile in front of our home in Northeast Pennsylvania, dressed in a little snowsuit, laughing and waving at my father. Our living room was dark; the images black and white and silent. My father would show me coming down, then reverse the film and show me sliding up, then down again, over and over, laughing. Time forward, then backward, entirely at my father’s command.

Now, I realize that I was wrong. He can’t turn back the years like film.

Chell Navarro

LIKE BARE ELISION

The windowpane answers
the question with an echo.

The rain spilled out
of the sill. One last exhale.

What was the question?
I make you the night,

dream of the storm
that swallowed you whole

& carry a box of ashes
over the threshold.

Natasha Mijares

MIRAGE

Mangled goddess of the thirteenth calle,
Cigarette burns painted caramel on your skin.
You and the roosters twang at dawn,
The day brought by the singing cocks.

Mars as a girl.
Fanning yourself
Under the naked light bulb's
Fluorescent flora.

Don of the F train.
You stand in the partition,
Passing under your fake Fendi coat.
A Persian prince.

Concealed meat,
Tucked in a drawer,
Smelling of fruit.



Logan White

FROM "ITALO"

Sara Ryan

VESSEL

I was never taught how to have sex,
the contortion, the opening of myself.
I know how to paint myself an empty vessel
before the first crawl of skin.

I was born waiting to be filled,
a spacious corridor,
an empty mug.

I am anatomy of void,
a motel vacancy,
a bare, drained lake.

I am a waiting meal,
a glistening display of meats and skin.
I flip inside out and back again.
My bones click and snap when they're touched.

When I drink in a person,
take them into my caves,
I am a complete vision.
A pulsating, stitched creature
rocking in lulls of breath.

There are bowls that a body builds,
echoing cups.
Isn't every fill a privilege?
A silky favor?

To choke full the begging warm shelter,
to quench the drought of the body,
to be finished, a solved equation,
a stacked deck
of skin and hearts and crush.

Contributors

Jonny Boothe lives in Omaha, Nebraska.

Drew Cook grew up in Hot Springs, Arkansas, and the voices and landscapes of the Ouachita Mountains continue to inform his poetry. After modest successes in the field of Information Technology left him cold, he has decided to return to school.

Karen Craigo teaches English to international students at Drury University in Springfield, Missouri. Her work has appeared in the journals *Poetry*, *Indiana Review*, *Prairie Schooner*, *Puerto del Sol*, *The MacGuffin*, and others. She is the author of two poetry chapbooks, *Someone Could Build Something Here* (Winged City Chapbook Press, 2013) and *Stone for an Eye* (Kent State/Wick Poetry Series, 2004). She is a former fellow at the Fine Arts Work Center in Provincetown, Massachusetts, and has received two awards in poetry and one in creative nonfiction from the Ohio Arts Council. She is the nonfiction editor of *Mid-American Review*, and she also serves as an associate editor of Drury's national literary journal, *Ginkgo Tree Review*.

Sean Thomas Dougherty is the author or editor of thirteen books including *All You Ask for Is Longing: Poems 1994- 2014* (2014 BOA Editions) *Scything Grace* (2013 Etruscan Press) and *Sasha Sings the Laundry on the Line* (2010 BOA Editions). He is the recipient of two Pennsylvania Council for the Arts Fellowships in Poetry, an appearance in *Best American Poetry* 2014, and a US Fulbright Lectureship to the Balkans. Known for his electrifying performances he has performed at hundreds of venues across North America and Europe including the Lollapalooza Music Festival, South Carolina Literary Festival, the Old Dominion Literary Festival, and across Albania and Macedonia where he appeared on national television. He has taught creative writing at Syracuse University, Penn State University, Case Western University, Chatham University and Cleveland State University. He currently works at a Gold Crown Billiards in Erie, PA and tours for performances.

Haines Eason and his wife, poet Joni Lee, are recently returned Peace Corps volunteers, having served in Morocco. Haines has had poems in numerous journals including *Boston Review*, *Pleiades*, *New England Review*, and *Yale Review*, among others. He is the author of the chapbook *A History of Waves*, selected by Mark Doty for a Poetry Society of America Chapbook Fellowship. He and Joni presently live in northwest Missouri.

Sugar le Fae is a poet, translator, songwriter, photographer, and radical faerie. He received an MFA in Creative Writing from UBC, and is currently pursuing his PhD in the Department of Gender, Race, Sexuality, and Social Justice. His work has appeared in numerous journals in the U.S. and Canada, most recently *Plenitude Magazine*.

Jodie Faye lives in the Czech Republic, where she writes short stories and teaches English to children.

Sherrie Flick is author of the novel *Reconsidering Happiness* and the flash fiction chapbook *I Call This Flirting*. Her flash fiction has appeared in many anthologies, including *Norton's Flash Fiction Forward* and *New Sudden Fiction*. Her stories have recently appeared in *Ploughshares*, *Corium*, *Cortland Review*, *Chicago Quarterly Review*, *SmokeLong*, *Passages North*, and *Revolution House*. She lives in Pittsburgh and teaches in Chatham University's MFA program.

John Gallaher's most recent books are *In a Landscape* (BOA, 2014) and, as editor, *Time Is a Toy: the Selected Poems of Michael Benedikt* (with Laura Boss, Akron, 2014). He lives in rural Missouri and co-edits *The Laurel Review*.

Miriam Gamble is from Belfast in Northern Ireland. Her first collection, *The Squirrels Are Dead*, was published by Bloodaxe in 2010 and won a Somerset Maugham Award; her second, *Pirate Music*, is published by Bloodaxe in September 2014. She lectures in creative writing at Edinburgh University.

Maureen Hirthler is a physician and MFA candidate at the University of Missouri-Kansas City. Her work has appeared in *The Yale Journal of Humanities in Medicine*, *Annals of Emergency Medicine*, *Hippocampus*, and *The Intima*.

Mark Jackley's new book of poems is *Appalachian Night*. Previous books include *Every Green Word* (Finishing Line Press) and *Cracks and Slats* (Amsterdam Press). His work has appeared in *Tampa Review*, *Sugar House Review*, *Melic*, *Sleet*, *Crate*, *Rougarou* and other journals. He lives in Sterling, VA.

Andrew Johnson is an essayist living in Kansas City, Missouri. His work has appeared in *Crazyhorse*, *Killing the Buddha*, *Sonora Review*, *The Pinch*, *MAKE*, *Confrontation*, and elsewhere. He is currently working on a collection of essays.

Megan Kaminski is the author of *Desiring Map* (Coconut, 2012) and seven chapbooks for poetry. Her current project *Deep City* explores the body and the city as architectures in crisis. She lives in Lawrence, Kansas, where she teaches creative writing and literature at the University of Kansas and curates the Taproom Poetry Series downtown. <http://www.megankaminski.com/>

Audrey Victoria Keiffer is a writer and visual artist currently residing in Chicago, IL. She received her BA in English–Creative Writing from the University of Missouri–Kansas City in

2011, and interned at *New Letters Magazine*. Since then, she has ambitiously juggled several projects, is co-founder of the Chicago textile design organization and studio, The Patternbase, edited its forthcoming book published by Thames and Hudson Publishing, *PatternBase: A Collection of Contemporary Textile + Surface Design*, and has been voraciously writing poetry.

Emily Koehn currently lives in St. Louis, Missouri. Her work has been published in *The Denver Quarterly*, *Pleiades*, *Seneca Review*, and elsewhere.

Joni Lee's poems have appeared in *H_NGM_N*, *Juked*, *Calyx: A Journal of Art and Literature by Women*, *Poemmemoirstory*, and elsewhere. She is currently serving as a Peace Corps volunteer in Morocco.

Alex Lemon's most recent book is *The Wish Book*. He is the author of *Happy: A Memoir* and three other poetry collections: *Mosquito*, *Hallelujah Blackout*, and *Fancy Beasts*. An essay collection is forthcoming. His writing has appeared in *Esquire*, *American Poetry Review*, *The Huffington Post*, *Ploughshares*, *Best American Poetry*, *Tin House*, *Kenyon Review*, *AGNI*, *New England Review*, *The Southern Review* and *jubilat*, among others. Among his awards are a 2005 Fellowship in Poetry from the NEA and a 2006 Minnesota Arts Board Grant. He is an editor-at-large for Saturnalia Books, the poetry editor of *descant* and frequently writes book reviews for the Dallas Morning News. He lives in Ft. Worth, Texas, teaches at TCU.

Scotty Lewis lives in Conway, Arkansas and is currently seeking an MFA in creative writing at the University of Central Arkansas. His work here is a blend of formal and performance poetry. Outside of classroom, he spends his time tromping through Arkansas's back country fishing in every substantial body of water, hiking the Ozarks and Ouachitas, and seeking those rare spots where cell phone service always fails.

Paige Lockhart resides in Kansas City, Missouri, where she slings burritos at a local Mexican restaurant. Her work has appeared in *Bayou Magazine* and *Weave Magazine*. She holds a BA in English from the University of Missouri-Kansas City.

Natasha Mijares is a senior studying poetry and art at University of Miami in Coral Gables, Florida. She is the managing editor of *Mangrove*, University of Miami's undergraduate literary journal and interns for *The Miami Rail*. She has been published in *Elysium Literary Magazine* and *BAOBAB* and participated in a fellowship at the *New York Summer Writer's Institute*.

Wayne Miller is the author of four poetry collections, most recently *The City, Our City* (Milkweed, 2011), which was a finalist for the William Carlos Williams Award and the Rilke Prize, and *Post-* (Milkweed, 2016), which is forthcoming. He has also translated two books—

most recently *Zodiac* (Zephyr, 2015; forthcoming)—by the Albanian poet Moikom Zeqo and co-edited three books, including *New European Poets* (Graywolf, 2008) and the forthcoming *Literary Publishing in the 21st Century* (Milkweed, 2015). Wayne teaches at the University of Colorado Denver and edits *Copper Nickel*.

Gina Myers is the author of *A Model Year* (Coconut Books, 2009) and *Hold It Down* (Coconut Books, 2013). Originally from Saginaw, MI, she now lives in Philadelphia where she hand assembles books for *Lame House Press* and serves as Senior Editor of *Coconut Magazine*.

Chell Navarro is happy to report that she will be entering the MFA program at UMKC in the fall of 2014.

Eric Pankey is the author of ten collections of poetry. A new book, *Crow-Work*, is forthcoming from Milkweed Editions. He teaches in the BFA and MFA programs at George Mason University.

Andrew Reeves is originally from Springfield, MO and recently moved to the Kansas City area for his first year in the MFA in Creative Writing at UMKC.

Sara Ryan is a senior studying poetry, art and psychology at University of Miami in Coral Gables, Florida. She is the editor of *Mangrove*, University of Miami's undergraduate literary journal. She has been published in *Uncommon Core Anthology*, *Wingbeats*, *Eunoia Review* and *Boxcar Poetry Review*. She aspires to get her MFA in Poetry after graduating from UMich.

Jenny Sadre-Orafai is the author of *Paper*, *Cotton*, *Leather* and four chapbooks. Recent poetry has appeared in *Linebreak*, *Redivider*, *Eleven Eleven*, *Thrush Poetry Journal*, *PANK*, *Rhino*, *Sixth Finch*, *ILK*, *iO: A Journal of New American Poetry*, and *Poemeleon*. Recent prose has appeared in *The Rumpus*, *The Toast*, and *Delirious Hem*. She is co-founding editor of *Josephine Quarterly* and an Associate Professor of English at Kennesaw State University.

Jordan Stempleman's recent collections include *No, Not Today* (Magic Helicopter Press 2012) and the forthcoming *Wallop* (Magic Helicopter Press 2014). He edits *The Continental Review*, runs the Common Sense Reading Series, and teaches at the Kansas City Art Institute.

Angela Vogel is the author of *Fort Gorgeous*, winner of The National Poetry Review Press Book Prize, and the chapbook *Social Smile* from Finishing Line Press. Her poems appear in *Best New Poets*, *The Journal*, *Gulf Coast*, *Cimarron Review*, *Green Mountains Review*, *Southern Poetry Review*, *Barrow Street*, *Verse Daily*, etc. Awards include the Southeast Review Poetry Prize, Honorable Mention in the Tupelo Press Spring Poetry Project, a Maryland State poetry fellowship, and four Pushcart Prize nominations.

Seann Weir is a poet and undergraduate at the University of Missouri-Kansas City where he studies English with an emphasis in Creative Writing. He lives, writes, reads and studies strangers in Kansas City, Missouri.