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Live encounters

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JORDAN SMITH
Interiors

COVER ARTWORK BY IRISH ARTIST EMMA BARONE



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Om Shanti Shanti Shanti Om

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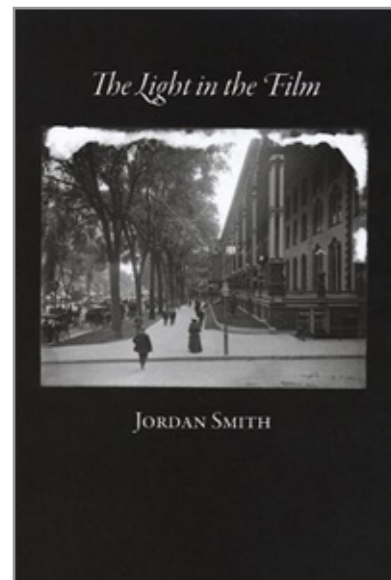


Jordan Smith

GUEST EDITORIAL JORDAN SMITH INTERIORS

My one-time colleague, long-time friend, Mikhail Iossel, likes to post on his Facebook page paintings of interiors. Some simply furnished, some a tribute to the bourgeois' less discreet charms, these rooms come with two views, one through a window and another from where the painter stood; peopled or empty, they are inhabited by the implied presence of the artist. Their comfortable stillness contrasts with Mischa's other posts: his anger at the casual, causal cruelties of Trump and Putin and their supporters, his investigations of the connections between contemporary American politics and Soviet memory (both of which became his book *Notes from Cyberground*) and the inventive fictions he sets in a place of his own, between social media's love of the occasional and his own delight in postmodern narrative and its designs. If his writings, political or literary, put him squarely in the middle of one truly crazy reality, the images of interiors are an assertion of the value of privacy, even as they appear in the oddly illusory intimacy that is Facebook's public face.

That this is a metaphor occurred to me only last night. I was chopping onions and thinking about a frustrating discussion with colleagues about the book *Surveillance Capitalism*, frustrating in part because none of us were willing to be candid about how willingly we participate in the omnivorous commercialization of our data, but even more so because of my own failure to articulate exactly the nature of this invasion when I find so many of its byproducts useful, even consoling. Mischa's posts are a good example, as are all of those friendships -- virtual, sure, but still offering moments of connection beyond professional posturing or clubby assertions of taste. And then there is the self-satisfying, self-reinforcing drawing of boundaries, the excommunication of those whose posts or actions seem intolerable, as they are revealed and retweeted in this panopticon that passes for culture. Like everyone else, I think about getting offline. Like almost everyone else, I'm still there, observing and judging, observed and judged.



But tonight I was only chopping onions, alone in the kitchen with the dimming square of the window above the sink beyond which I could just see the snow, the black boundary fence, the tree-filled ravine beyond it. There was no one, inside or out, to see me, as I worked, as I listened to Paul Motian's recording of "I Have the Room Above Her," one of those cuts on the ECM label that seem to make time irrelevant. And, I thought, this is as private a moment as I am likely to have, unobserved, occupied and preoccupied, unconcerned with any need to articulate a defense of my thoughts or my taste. In that interior moment of self-awareness, like one of Mischa's painters, I began to compose the scene of my composure.

That's metaphor: to notice that one room with a view might stand in not only for many other rooms, but for other loci of privacy, the interior of a car, say, passing an apartment building where only one window is lit and with no one visible there, which is the photograph on the sleeve of Motian's *I Have the Room Above Her*, an ECM-oblique commentary on the title cut, one of those standards. There's nothing more private than listening to a standard by yourself. It's all up to you, to recall the lyrics or not, to fall into an imagined noir romance or relive one of your own or get lost in the depths of the saxophone's tone, to ask Sam to play "As Time Goes By" again or to chase the nightingale out of Berkeley Square and get on with your life. As it happens, I don't know the lyrics to "I Have the Room Above Her," and I have no associations with the tune, but still in Motian's recording, in Joe Lovano's sax and Bill Frisell's guitar, I found a welcoming depth of reserve. That cover photo, though, bought something to mind, Donald Justice's "Poem to be Read at 3 A.M."

*Excepting the diner
On the outskirts
The town of Ladora
At 3 a.m.
Was dark but
For my headlights
And up in
One second-story room
A single light*

*Where someone
Was sick or
Perhaps reading
As I drove past
At seventy
Not thinking
This poem
Is for whoever
Had the light on*

The truth is that it's not for anyone at all, this poem with its unpunctuated and slippery syntax that either acknowledges this or doesn't, depending whether you read a full-stop at the end of line 15 or you don't. And the mood, which on a quick read seems all Edward Hopper gloom, is no more purely melancholy (driving through a town at night at seventy is a pleasure as American as a Hopper gas station) than Williams' "Danse Russe" is purely lonely; both poems acknowledge moments of solitary self-regard as the point of freedom, a point of origin, and so they make a point of privacy as the window in the painting of an interior makes a point of view. And both poems take solitude as the cue for speech.

"I indulge myself / In rich refusals," writes Justice in another poem, but these moments of self-consideration are not defined simply by what's given up willingly. While James Schuyler's "Korean Mums" takes place outdoors, on the margins of a garden where friends are painting, it is no less an interior view, the friends lost in what Robert Hass has called "the silence of separate fidelities," the poet observing the commonplaces of the day which would be mildly irksome as subjects (a dull book, a too-heavy shirt) were it not for the darkened glass of a particular and troubling memory, the miraculous appearance of an owl followed by its death in the jaws of a pet Airedale:

*... Last evening
from the table we saw
the owl, huge in the dusk,
circling the field*



*on owl-silent wings.
The first one ever seen
here: now it's gone,
a dream you just remember.*

Neither the gift of this presence nor its loss may be refused, and its transformation to nearly a dream suggests why. Sometimes an owl is just an owl, but a dream is the self observing the self. With the owl gone, the dog barking off in the distance, the friends at their own practice, the poet is all interiority, a stillness contemplating a view of transience that inhabits him as light inhabits a room:

*... Light on leaves,
so much to see, and
all I really see is that
owl, its bulk troubling
the twilight. I'll
soon forget it: what
is there I have not forgot?
Or one day will forget:
this garden, the breeze
in stillness, even
the words, Korean mums.*

The problem of mortality, “of what survives of the beloved” (Robert Graves quoting Alun Lewis) couldn’t be more private or less, since it troubles the twilight around the poet and equally around his friends, engaged in drafting (or sketching) their own stays of execution. By contrast, Peg Boyers’ poems in *To Forget Venice* are raucous with the presence of others, with their impingements on the self in the present, in the imagination peopled by figures fictive and historical, and especially in memory. In one Venetian interior, “Mrs. Casanova,” the philanderer’s wife, ashamed that “she has no inner life,” attempts to construct one out of resentment of the slights she receives over dinner from her husband and the attractive young woman he has invited to join them.

Taking their disparagement of her taste as a commentary on her lack of meaningful presence in the room, in their lives, she imagines the solution is a mask she might construct to hide...what? Later, “when she looks in her mirror to give it a go / her Harlequin reflection greets her / with peals of laughter // undermining at once her determined sorrow.” *She* is who she is when she’s at home, and *they* are gone.

In another, more contemporary, more immediately disturbing piece of Venetian real estate, “Rooftop: Aerial View,” a twelve-year-old American “expat brat /in a bikini, sunbathing / on a rooftop terrace” is flirted with, photographed, entranced by a visiting Fulbright scholar, a neighbor, whose wife, Kitty, will be taken off to the hospital in the middle of the poem, the girl told only “*no more rooftop young lady*” and “the incomprehensible word: *breakdown*.” As the poet knows, no reader will fail to see what is happening or to feel the moral revulsion that goes along with what’s witnessed, but in Boyers’ telling, the scenes recalled by the woman the girl becomes are her own, matters of interpretation and reconsideration within the privacy of her thought.

And if privacy is the condition—for the woman who recalls that girl to the Venetian terrace and for the solitary driver passing through Ladora, and for the poet with the owl and the mums—speech is its consequence and metaphor is its method, metaphor whose action is to make sure that we have somewhere, at least, to dwell in the shortfall between what we want and what we’ve suffered, witnessed, been offered. Like the painters of the interiors, the poets are present, not in the spaces they inhabit, but in the way they see them and the view beyond.

EARLY MUSIC

In Paris, from above the Rue des Arquebusiers, I watched
 A pro-Morsi demonstration
 On the Rue Beaumarchais.
 That was before the Bataclan, but only a few blocks away,
 The borrowed apartment
 So hot in mid-July we kept the windows open
 Despite the wasp-swarm of mopeds.

The house had lodged the Count Cagliostro,
 Imposter, forger, low-born confidante of the powerful,
 Who no more belonged in that comfort than I did,
 Who might have enjoyed the plot's twist,
 Arrested in the affair of the queen's necklace,
 The one fraud he hadn't committed.

So hot, I never took the walk I planned
 To the store selling antique musical instruments
 Not far from the Hotel de Ville,
 Viols and traversi from before the revolution,
 A bassoon "unplayed for two centuries,"
 The website said,
 From a time when the players were servants or worse.

Even a kit fiddle,
 The revel master's tool. Not quite a violin,
 But plausible, portable
 For a peasant turned performer, to lead
 His betters in a fine dance,

Effective, as is all irony,
 Only when the old order so diminished
 That mockery might serve some purpose,
 Small instrument though it is and out of date
 And useless
 In all the clamor that follows.

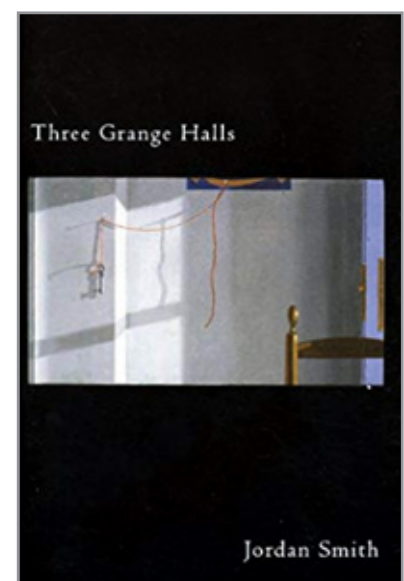
GRANDEUR

The books I used to read,
 R.D. Laing and N.O. Brown and Graves and Jung, most of all, Jung
 Which gave my ordinary, late adolescent unhappiness a touch of grandeur,
 Sell for pennies on the internet now.
 And of whom should I ask forgiveness
 For the misuses I put them to?

The roughshod pursuit of words was one,
 And the hero's arrogance,
 Which was whim or grievance or desire,
 Each misunderstood
 According to whim or grievance or desire.

The shadows of the trees should have been enough,
 Or the woman in that Ritsos poem,
 Slicing thin circles of lemon.

No wonder I wrote little and worked hard at it,
 Without a word of praise from my difficult masters
 Who had retreated into such solitude
 As I wished for myself
 In their company.



TRAVERSO

Each note, they say, in praise or frustration has its own color and timbre,
Is off-pitch to its own degree,

And then there is the player's angle of attack, the nick
Of wind across the embouchure, its undercutting, the humidity in the room,

The tone wood's density of remembrance, the smoothness or otherwise
Of the bore, the maker's diagrams of diameter and taper

Drawn from history or experience, the slight inaccuracies of antique brass calipers
And keys, and all the approximations of design

Allowing cross-fingered accidentals, lipped or not into some ideal
Temperament, that is, some compromise

Between concentration and diffusion, the center and circumference
Of breath drawn into a turbulence of air

NORTHERN LIGHTS

Fairport, New York, 1972

Who saw them first, after our band practice, the green, silver-edged dancers
Above Bill's mother's gravel driveway and her big Buick
The summer of our senior year,
Flaring up from the horizon, gaining height with indirection,
With patience?

Behind that scrim of charge and discharge
The stars I'd grown so used to, from songs, from graduation exhortations,
Were dim,

But not gone, and so I took for a sign
What was meant for a lesson, as we all mistook promise
For those promises, the unspoken ones, the ones we meant to keep,
And did, but by patience, by indirection,

And only remembered later. Here's one.
A friend I had not yet met was driving through upstate that night
Heading for a teaching job and years of complicated trouble,
The sort you get into when intention isn't the half of it,
And he saw those lights too and put them in a poem

That I read aloud one day when I only thought I had forgotten
That between sign and accident is the slenderest of difference,
As between what we meant to do and what we did
Anyway.

ACROSS THE STREET FROM THE MIRO FOUNDATION

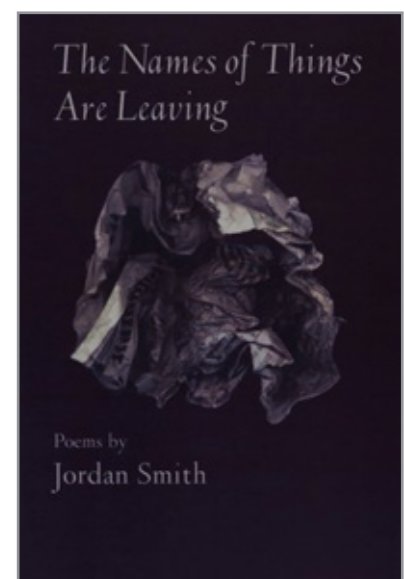
In your flowered dress, my love, with that blazing hibiscus behind you,
You must be at the wrong museum.
You belong downtown, at the *Museu de Modernisme*
With the painting of the regatta, of the mother and daughter at a window,
With the stained glass flora, and the dancers in finely inlaid wood.
In Gaudi's city, there's a lot to be said for the decorative arts,
For the wedding of pleasure and utility.

Not that you or I are decorative, merely, and we're avoiding usefulness,
At least as I compose the scene with my camera, two seasoned,
Obvious tourists in a landscape, with the composure
Of the bourgeoisie who lived in those paintings, with that furniture.
There's a lot to be said for accepting elegance
When it comes your way.

Inside, my favorite Miro is a blank, off-white, textured field with a single tiny...
Well, what would you call it?
Not well defined enough to be a dot; too flat for a sphere, not as linear as a pulsation
A sort of subatomic emanation of blue, concentrating, or diffusing.
It's as unnerving as the supercollider at CERN.
And then there are the canvases he painted, burned, painted some more.

Once *modernisme* was the dance of light through a stained glass window
On the floor of a room where the problems of comfort
Had been left behind, left to others,
But on the video Miro and his assistant take a torch to it
Until the stretchers show.

You aren't there. You have found a room with Japanese prints,
And on the monitor, a single carver makes cuts as brief, as precise as breath,
Another and another, until the series of blocks
Is ready for the ink of sky caught in her mirror, in the blue of her robe
And the red of petals printed there or resting,
A single branch in the vase on her dressing table.



Born in Havana, February 19th, 1964. Poet and translator. He has published six books of poetry in his own country: Algo de lo sagrado. Unión, 1996. (Also published in the U.S in 2007, by Factory School, N.Y.; with translations by Kristin Dykstra and Roberto Tejada. www.factoryschool.org/pubs/perez) ¿Oíste hablar del gato de pelea? Letras Cubanas, 1998. (Translated by Kristin Dykstra and published by Shearsman, London, in 2010: Did you hear about the fighting cat?) Canciones y Letanías. Extramuros, 2002. Lingua Franca. Unión, 2009. He has also published a collection of essays on poetry and translation, La perseverancia de un hombre oscuro. Letras Cubanas, 1999. Crítica de la Razón Puta, obtained the 2010 Nicolás Guillén National Poetry Award, and was published also by Letras Cubanas. In the same year and with the same publisher, Omar Pérez offered a second collection of essays, El corazón mediterráneo. In 2016, he published Filantropical, with Letras Cubanas, and Sobras Escogidas, with Silueta, Miami, Florida. In 2018, Station Hill (N. Y.) published Cubanology, a book of days, while the Alabama University Press printed The race, a poem collection; both translated by Kristin Dykstra. Omar Pérez has consistently translated from the English, Italian, French and Dutch languages.



MAKE IT LOOK LIKE AN ACCIDENT

to believe or not to believe
that is not the question

.

whatever the crime
follow the norm

.

noticing makes you feel nice
3. 30 in the morning, the bourgeoisie
once more has made you feel uneasy

.

used to the main role
the right hand is sloppy
in secondary characters
who's the right hand's right hand?
The left hand

.

beyond the issue of syntactic properness
this universe must be faced and must be thanked
for bringing us all together
altogether us

.

Omar Pérez

continued overleaf...

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MAKE IT LOOK LIKE AN ACCIDENT *contd...*

let us put politics where it belongs
 it belongs in the kitchen
 not in the living room
 it belongs in the bathroom, not in bedrooms
 let us place politics where it deserves to be
 it belongs in the bathroom
 it belongs in the kitchen

.

the last will be the first
 follow the line

.

light does not rot

.

the tongue has many uses
 according to speech, speaking
 is the most important

.

we could agree with a political community
 as long as it's not run by politics

.

innuendo conundrum
 rigmarole on parole
 make it look like an accident

.

am i not silk?

.

the right hand and the left hand
 disputed the right to light the match
 to light the sacred candle
 Me, on the right! Me, on the left
 It's not a question of left or right
 but of dexterity, said, the candle.
 The right hand was the more dexterous
 and lit the candle. Make it look
 like an accident

.

no role no goal
 rigmarole on parole
 The Midas touch? Make it look
 like an accident
 the war on war, the war on word
 from worse to worth
 make it look
 like an accident
 the wall the worst workshop of the world
 make it look like an accident

.

"One makes war to win, not because it is just" (Foucault)
 "I don't personally, agree with that" (Chomsky)
 If one wins, one can make it look just
 while if i loose, i can always disagree

.

continued overleaf...

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MAKE IT LOOK LIKE AN ACCIDENT *contd...*

war on warps or unonthological worth
 on rigmarole? No won want one wand
 wander? Wonder, or other world around
 an innuendo? On one oneness?
 Wanna go ? Golden, Walden, guardsmen
 and gore them, then Golem or Gollum,
 goal them

.

who is the best consort for conundrum
 the best conundrum condom?
 The drums of doom, the don't
 the won't upon the dome:
 human infirmity in form
 infant infinity
 infamous infantry in phones
 in photos: infohuman

.

"All Cretans are liars. I'm a Cretan" (Epiménides)
 is the funkiest conundrum
 A general aspect of this chorus line would be "communication" of an in-communicating
 sort. Incommunicado. For the babelian combination, registers of public speech
 cheering, protest, lamentation, warning,
 advertising, prophesying

we could have as many types as participants
 divide them into innuendo, conundrum, rigmarole
 multiplied by public speech.

To be or not to be is a long roll of a conundrum
 The onthoconundrum, ontotheosis, halitosis
 And osteopoiesis. Varias veces: overdoses

To be or not to be is a hit
 single or long play, double play, what about
 It takes all the running you can do to keep in the same place (*Alice. Through the
 looking-glass*)
 civilization, a hit-and-run answer,
 progress, capitalism, language

The most important thing about the tongue is not language
 Lo màs importante d la lengua no es la lengua
 Speech is not to be taken for granted in humans
 not all humans speak not all speech is human
 nor humans be taken for granted in speech

.

Something between innuendo and conundrum is making sense
 at last
 through mental operations such as deduction
 induction
 in diction
 deification of the meaning.
 what about rigmarole, does it make sense
 as sound, it dust, it drought make sense
 make sex to drop on vowels, notes
 is jazz rigmarole, if you have to ask
 you'll never know (Amstrong - Red Hot Chili Peppers)

.

herein, that that the ideal
 and the real move together, as a box with its cover. (Sandokai)
 and goes on
 as two arrows meet in the air
 so the ideal and the real move together.

.

continued overleaf...

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MAKE IT LOOK LIKE AN ACCIDENT *contd...*

this Peter Pan thing
 called language
 literature is a form of *otium*, odium
 opium. Human titanium
 as a box with its cover go together
 as two arrows meet in the air
 make it look like an accident

Do you have a gun in your pocket or
 are you just happy to see me (Mae West)
 an innuendo? A nude one
 innuendo as Annunciation
 and Annunciation: an innuendo?
 The phallic angel, the feminine Will
 call it faith: a veiled reflection on character or reputation (Webster)
 faith: a veiled reflection, substance of things to come (St. Paul)

there are no mines in Patmos, only revelation
 a woman in the sky dressed like the sun
 with the moon on her feet
 a red dragon
 a brass section, seven angels with trumpets
 sounds funk again, or Chinatown: it's Apocalypse
 when the Seventh Seal is opened
 there's a silence of about half an hour
 (a musical notation)
 then lightnings, earthquake, rigmarole
 is Apocalypse a riddle, an insinuation
 on character, Babylon,
 a Babelian dramatic persona

astral lady, dragon in red, fireworks
 babbling in a prophetic bubble

the one-hand clap
 the inquiry about Buddha's nature
 in the dog
 conundrumming our heads for ages
 has Buddha attained, or retained
 the nature of the dog?
 This, an antidote for the New Age hangover,
 is, in fact, "a veiled reflection on character
 and reputation"
 is Buddha as accidental as a mongrel
 as constructed as a German shepherd?
 In the context of the human species'
 multiple activities, Buddha is a Hobby
 (which sounds like a dog's name)
 holy wholeness howling
 hound wholly holy
 hauling humans home

that they let me not to ask them for anything
 I ask the gods (Pessoa)
 a riddle to get rid of theodependance

philosophia, a maieutic conundrum
 "if you have to ask, you'll never know"

continued overleaf...

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MAKE IT LOOK LIKE AN ACCIDENT *contd...*

Nothing itself nothings (Heidegger)
 gives way to the multifarious platitude
 which cuts, in turn, back to the triad
 conundrum-innuendo-rigmarole
 a rose is a rose is a rose (Stein)
 a nice shot at cellular division and proliferation
 albeit anticancer homeopathy

.

it's not over till it's over (Berra)

.

jargon and rigmarole plus platitude
 the cask of philosophy
 the realization of reason is not a fact
 but a task (Marcuse on Hegel)
 the cask is a mask is a carcass
 of a task
 now what, it's not over till it overdoses
 it has, in fact

.

Sometimes fear is a (not so thin) disguise
 for laziness
 it's not danger what frightens me
 but the task
 of facing it

.

the meeting point in Hegel
 between reason and reality
 I makes the I perdurable
 not the circumstances

.

what is it with words?
 Einstein "deplores" the bomb
 after Hiroshima and Nagasaki
 Borges calls "El Manisero"
 "a deplorable rumba".
 In a letter to Freud (1932)
 Einstein wonders
 "how is it possible for this small clique
 to bend the will of the majority"
 concluding that school, press and church help to
 "organize and sway the emotion of the masses".
 So does rumba, though it doesn't kill anyone.

.

so does rumba, not exactly a form of domination
 so does rumba, not a "rumble in the jungle"
 in the form of superego

.

End



Bejan Matur is a well known poet, writer from Turkey. She has published nine books of poetry and one book of nonfiction. Her poetry collection *How Abraham Abandoned Me [İbrahim'in Beni Terketmesi]* (2012) was selected as Best Translation of the Year 2012 by the Poetry Society. Matur's prose and poetry has been translated into 30 languages, including English and Chinese.



These poems were originally published in Turkish.
The translation from Turkish to English is by Ruth Christie.
The English version is previously unpublished.

Bejan Matur

I GAVE UP TALKING TO THE MOUNTAINS

I gave up talking to the mountains
 Now they don't talk to me
 They no longer talk of childhood reared
 On secret passes
 And streams
 And friendship soaked in rain.
 I gave up talking to the mountains long ago
 Words gathering in snowy wells
 A load on my back.
 I walk in a procession of words
 And a liar
 Polishing his body gives me a look.
 Who will believe that flutter,
 Who will relieve me
 Of the burden of words?

As I walked on the back of the mountains
 I greeted the moon
 Once again I cry to her
 Who will relieve me of the burden of words?
 Will you?

DAĞLARLA KONUŞMAYI BIRAKTIM

Dağlarla konuşmayı bıraktım
 Artık söylemiyorlar bana
 Gizli geçitlerin
 Ve suların
 Büyüttüğü çocukluğu,
 Yağmurda ıslanan kardeşliği anlatmıyorlar.
 Dağlarla konuşmayı bıraktım çoktan
 Kar kuyularında biriken söz
 Sırtımda yük.
 Kelimelerle bir kervanda yürüyorum sanki
 Ve bir yalan
 Gövdesini parlatarak bakıyor bana.
 Kim inanacak o çırpınışa
 Kelimelerin yükünü
 Kim alacak benden?

Dağların sırtında yürürken
 Selamladığım ay
 Bir kez daha sesleniyorum ona
 Kelimelerin yükünü kim alacak benden
 Sen mi?



THEN DESOLATION BEGAN

I was coming from the desert
 All the way
 The full moon on my right
 Was singing our song.
 Then desolation began
 From the mountains
 Innocence was withdrawn
 And sight grew blind.
 The poppies that grew
 In a young girl's dream
 Leapt to the mountains
 In the name of night and the maquis
 At the same time trust was whispered,
 In the name of night and the maquis
 Courage was whispered.

Then I stood,
 In a saint's graveyard
 I was alone
 With the black roses
 I pressed to my breast.
 Trust had come from far, very far,
 And crossing deserts
 Had reached the heart.
 Together we wept for the past
 But we did not know
 It will never pass!

ISSIZLIK BAŞLADI SONAR

Çölden geliyordum
 Dolunay sağımda
 Yol boyunca
 Şarkımızı söylüyordu.
 Issızlık başladı sonra
 Dağlardan
 Çekildi masumiyet
 Ve bakış köreldi.
 Küçük bir kızın rüyasında
 Büyüyen gelincikler
 Sıçradı dağlara.
 Makilerin ve gecenin adıyla
 Aynı anda söylendiğinde inanç,
 Makilerin ve gecenin adıyla
 Aynı anda cesaret.

Sonra durdum,
 Bir ermişin mezarında
 Göğsüme bastırdığım
 Siyah çiçeklerle
 Yalnızdım.
 Çok uzaklardan gelmişti inanç
 Çölleri geçmiş
 Yüreğe ulaşmıştı.
 Geçmişe ağlamıştık birlikte
 Ama bilmiyorduk
 Geçmeyecek!



THE LAST MOUNTAIN

We looked
At the mountain between us.
On the great mountain between us
I looked at night
Like a poet who deepens his own darkness
And sensed the secret of the unseen.
If there's a heart
It's the mountain.

The last mountain
The existence of time
Look
Words are still mine.
Far continents
Sharp bends in rain,
All in me
And true.

Now I perceive
Who is more powerful than time.
Victory's eagles
Emptiness pouring
From women's breasts,
The last mountain
With its grave secrets
Ranged in our midst.
Washed in the rituals
Of sun
And rain.

The madman's rule
The bond which is not friendship
When young girls are still carried off on horseback
To death
When comrades tramp the roads
In rags and tatters.
But those who can still smile at the world and humanity
Believing in time's ideals
'We're there' they say
'Don't forget us'.



SON DAĞ

Aramızda duran dağ
İkimizin baktığı.
Kendi karanlığını çoğaltan bir şair gibi
Aramızdaki büyük dağda
Geceye baktım
Ve sırrını duydum görünmeyenin.
Bir kalp varsa
O dağdır.

Son dağ
Varlığı zamanın.
İşte söylüyorum
Kelimeler benimle hâlâ.
Uzak kıtalar
Dönenceler yağmurda,
İçimde hepsi
Ve gerçek.

Şimdi duyuyorum
Kim daha güçlü zamandan.
Kartallarla sunulan zafer
Ve kadınların göğüslerinden
Taşan boşluk,
Son dağ
Büyük sırlarla
Dizilmiş aramıza.

Yağmurların
Güneşin
Ayininde yıkanmış.
Kardeşlik olmayan bağ
Ve delirmenin hükmü.
Çünkü küçük kızları
Atların sırtında ölüme götürüyorlar hâlâ.
Çünkü elbiseleri çürümüş kardeşler
Yürüyor yollarda.
Dünyaya ve insanlığa gülümseyebilen
Ve ideallerine zamanın inanan
Buradayız diyorlar
Bizi unutma.



EXILE

'Streams, mountains, plains
All are left.
So be it!
We'll meet them all again in the next world.'

These were the words of a woman in exile.

NO SPRING

The Judas trees are in flower
We're still in mourning
No spring
No country
And bloodshed everywhere.

SÜRGÜN

"Sular, dağlar, ovalar
Her şey geride kaldı.
Kalsın boşver
Hepsiyle öteki dünyada görüşürüz"

Bunlardı bir kadının sürgün sözleri.

BAHAR YOK

Erguvanlar açmış
Yastayız yine
Bahar yok
Ülke yok
Ve her yer kan içinde.



REALITY

What the stones know
Mankind has forgotten

HAKIKAT

Taşların bildiği
İnsanın unuttuğu

THANKFULNESS

Everything has stopped.
But the mountains are talking to me
My mother lights the fire
Thankfulness on her hearth.

ŞÜKRAN

Her şey durmuş
Ama dağlar konuşuyor benimle
Annem ateş yakıyor
Ocağında şükran.



OLD DARKNESS

That old darkness
When winged words
Came straight to me
Earth of the ancestors
Of spirit and of old.

ESKİ KARANLIK

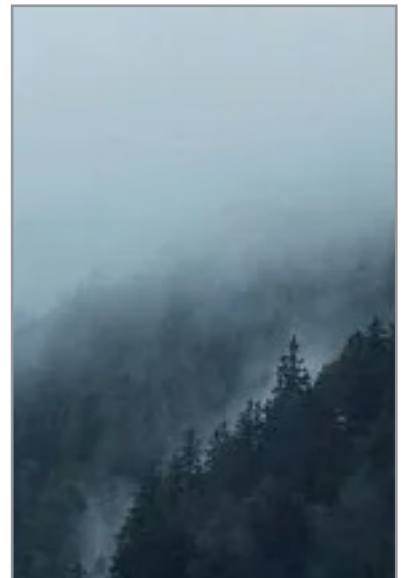
Kelimelerin kanatlanıp
Bana doğru geldiği
O eski karanlık
Ataların toprağı
Ruhun ve öncenin.

DREAM

I dreamed of a mountain
That pressed us to its breast
And embraced words like a God.

HAYAL

Bir dağ hayal etmişim
Kelimeleri bir Tanrı gibi kucaklayan
Bizi göğsüne bastıran bir dağ.



SHADOW

Purple shadow of the mountains
And forgetfulness
Nothing else
The sound of valleys
And my aching heart.
Now we turn
To the real source
Only in the history of tribe and family
The sadness we find
On this mountain peak
Belongs not to me
But to the past

GÖLGE

Mor dağların gölgesi
Ve unutkanlık
Daha fazlası yok,
Vadilerin uğultusu
Ve ağrıyan kalbim.
Asıl şimdi
Başa dönüyoruz
Aşiret ve soy tarihinde yalnız,
Bu dağ başında
Bulduğumuz hüznün
Bizim değil
Geçmişin...



Alfred Corn is the author of eleven books of poems, two novels and three collections of essays. He has received the Guggenheim, the NEA, an Award in Literature from the Academy of Arts and Letters, and one from the Academy of American Poets. In 2016 a celebration of the 40th anniversary of Alfred Corn's first book *All Roads at Once* was held at Poets' House in New York, and in 2017 he was inducted into the Georgia Writers' Hall of Fame.



LILITH

Hanina said: "One may not sleep in a house alone, and whoever sleeps in a house alone is seized by Lilith." — Babylonian Talmud

Like other assuagers—
so many—maligned.
Gentle, unhurried,
known for visiting
the sleepless adolescent,
applying cool fingers
to his flushed forehead.

Is it known that Lilith also calls
on widowers, pensioners?—even monks,
who, obliged to keep any enthralling
master at bay, shun
her approach, the downy caresses.

Then, beginning to grasp
the aims of this frank
imperturbable nature,
they will hand over their numbed
isolation, unable not to accept
proffered rapture when a catch in the breath
takes them to the smiling brink,
whence comes a moan, a lease,
a fresh claim on youthlike vigor.

What was lost will now return?
Taste and see: the past-due foreclosure
for a day or a decade is remanded,
the self known to itself,
a pyre flaming up with her offspring,
the newborn's yell.

Alfred Corn © Miriam Berkley

Amy Louise Wyatt is a poet, artist and lecturer from Bangor, Northern Ireland. Her work is published in a range of Irish and international journals. Amy was shortlisted for both the Seamus Heaney Award 2018 and The Dempsey and Windle National Poetry Day Competition 2019. She was a finalist in The National Funeral Services Poetry Competition in 2017; and was nominated for 2019 Best of Net. Amy won the inaugural Poetrygram Prize, 2019. She is the founding editor of The Bangor Literary Journal. Her debut poetry pamphlet 'A Language I Understand' is forthcoming in 2020 with Indigo Dreams. <https://amylouisewyatt.com/>



REMEMBERING YOU

Now here, standing at this childhood stream
I see you rise again at something,
like I did before.

Pelting fists on skin now cause direction
you once took to change.

There you were, 30 years ago, scaffolded
with glossy stones ready for my feet.

Tonight – dislocated, full of broken bones:

fierce mix of bright white splinters
and leaves ripped from branches overstretched.

Let me remain here.

For even in this storm tonight
you are still a channel to the past.

Often, I catch myself sliding into you,
black bottomed from the river-bank;

or balancing barefoot on the cold stones
of your body, praying not to waver.

Instead, I am here, writing about you, remembering you.

Amy Louise Wyatt

MAKING FIRE

Some undiscovered holiday snap shows me blonde,
freckle-specked, half sunned, hopeful; highlighted
in places only Irish darkness knew to look.

Australian sun exposed my streak of youth. For 20s
are the time to lay your tender bones beneath
the sun; to splay your legs and eat uncovered meat;

to leave the milk to sour upon the step of your retreat,
while you make love till late with grains of sand
between your feet. Oh, Aboriginal heat, scorch me

in your dry hot mouth; take my skin as tan; dip my fingers
back into the orange earth; draw it in a line from chin
to crown. Make a tribal fire, trace ancestral dust.

Make me of the earth. Make me of the fiery orange earth.

VITIS

you breathed yourselves plump as grubs.
green without gooseberry veins

i thumbnail spilt you, expose a set of lungs
clear as curved rice paper.

hard little commas stop me to deseed
as i roll jelly off my thumb.

once, hung more than forty on the bunch.
a cluster caught on raffia vine -

plucking some must hurt you all,
and yet I do it still, despite your loss.

discard, the now plucked carcass -
(bar one wilted one) light as sprig.



Sarah McCann has been published in such journals as *The Bennington Review*, *Blue Mountain Review*, *Arcturus Journal*, and *Hanging Loose*. Her translations from the Modern Greek into English have been recognized by the Fulbright Foundation with a grant and published in such anthologies and journals as *Austerity Measures*, *Words Without Borders*, *Poetry International*, and *World Literature Today*. *Rose Fear*, a book of her translations of the Greek poet Maria Laina, is available from World Poetry Books through the University of Connecticut. Her chapbook, *Peripatetica*, is available from St. Mark's School's bookstore (stmarksbookstore.org).



IN DOTAGE

Egg spills into
the boiling water
threads of white
breaths curling
to solid.

What junk.
Soup I'll give
the dog tussling
over some furred
alligator

With the man.
Our thoughts
run crisp these days,
brittle. They don't
last the cold.

Sarah McCann

ONE TEACHER'S LAMENT

The idea of

writing what you're reading while listening to the tv in the other room which is
whispers of butter and hurricanes and the dog's staring up at me on his arthritic
hind legs his hands in prayer for a walk or a roll on the floor which is covered with
gravel and fur and sighs

Every history is the history of the question mark

back at the song I began in the bathroom when I was groping my words to waking
trying to put my mood in place but all the showtunes I know are women unknown
alone from men or friends and none has any money either so all they can do is tap
or whore or be beaten empty again

The book of answers would read forever

eyes closing on this early morning febrile poem as I know I have kids to tend to and
I have to give them the energy I summon not from me but from the brisk because
there's nothing left inside but risk and hope

And I hope I don't risk and rush and ask the wrong questions today

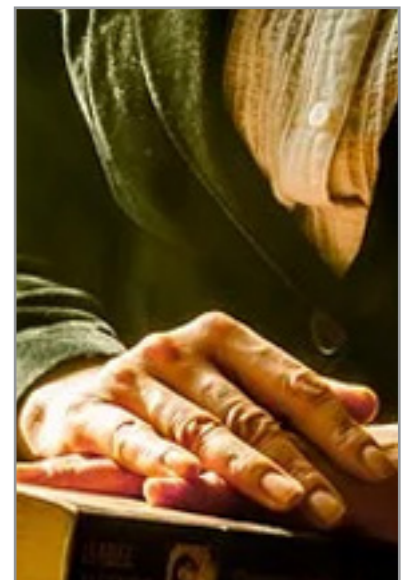
LOST CHILDREN TANKAS

Southborough, 1/21/19

Super Blood Wolf Moon.
From eleven on I have
had super-blood and
I've nothing else coming now.
January now. Eclipse.

We lost many moons,
trickling out, alone, at home.
Still, we kept turning
towards each other each evening.
Home-making, unmaking, tired.

Flicked gesture common
to a sparrow – birdfeeder
seed-shells discarded
here on the snow, crown-making,
a halo we will keep home.



TSUNAMI, DEAR GANGRENE

the leg will have to come off
a durian machete with sweet
banana-onions scathing

the dog says it's time to wake up
after snuffling all morning
as the oarfish— maybe fifty

angry gasps of slow drums
the crabs over the pipes of them
and away up onto the walls

that won't be enough
when we ring sirens the rivers
are already stepping out of their beds

heavy-headed with wet regret—
too early for us all a feeble
siren pulls us to the sand

and away—sure the quickest
tide and on what mountain
did we agree to meet our children

the things we bloom the bees
set to pollinate blueprints
scoured for weeks

we always thought we'd swing
or leap the things in order
the cancellations because

here comes god
and how do we get out
from under him

OUTSIDE SALCEDO

There are those here who bat the dog away when he starts to lick

There are those here who gamble hens and drain them later

There are those here who worry all that will be had is money

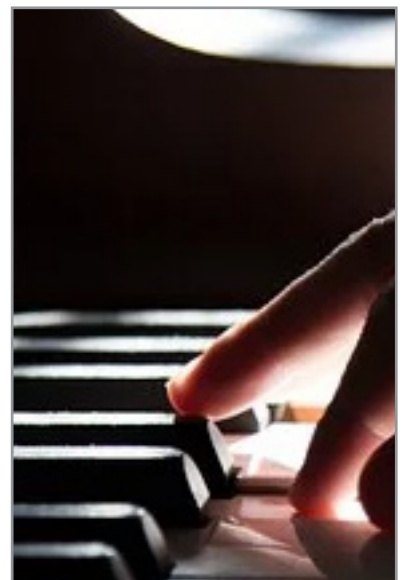
There are those here who simper around surgeons pledged to help

There are those here who bring buckets of mote around the neighborhood

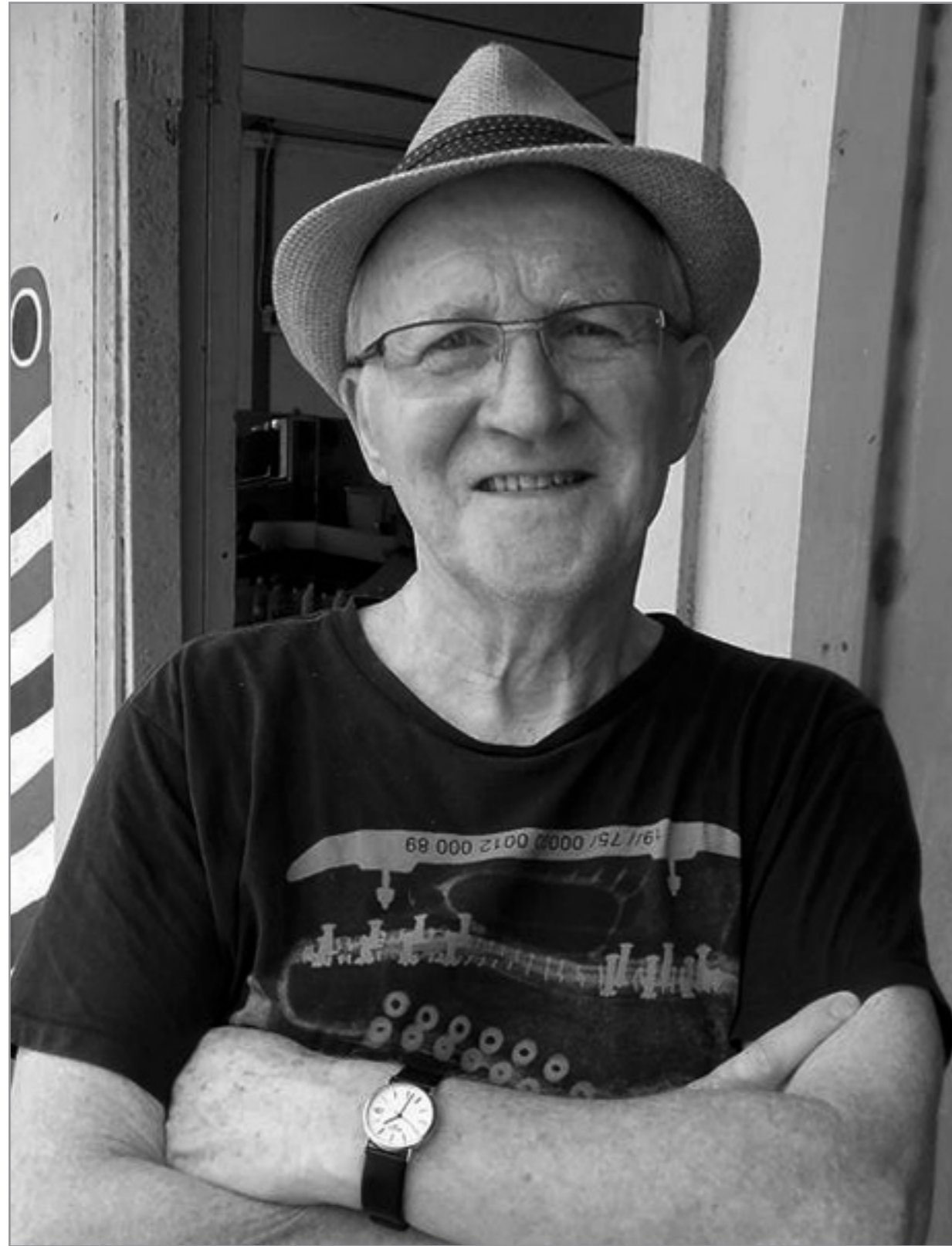
There are those here who dance the vista all night

There are those here who knit dolls of superheroes

There are those here called the resurrection, fingers in grave filth,
and what they do with the bones we guess at as we slurp
our too wet menestra



Terry McDonagh, poet, translator and dramatist has returned to live in County Mayo after almost forty years in Hamburg. He taught creative writing at Hamburg University and was Drama Director at the International School. He tours in Europe, Asia and Australia doing readings, working on education programmes and at festivals. He's published eleven poetry collections as well as letters, drama, prose and poetry for young people. His work has been translated into German and Indonesian. Founder of Pen & Ink Writers Hamburg and Mayo. Some more recent Projects/Publication: 2016: Poetry collection, *Lady Cassie Peregrina* – Arlen House. 2017: Included in *Fire and Ice 2*, Gill Education for Junior Cycle. 2017: Poem, UCG by Degrees, included in Galway Poetry Trail on Galway University Campus. 2017: Artistic Director of WestWords, Irish literature festival in Hamburg. 2018: Latest poetry collection, *Fourth Floor Flat – 44 Cantos*. – Arlen House. 2019 Residencies in Dublin, Mayo and Galway.



HAMBURG IS MORE THAN CITY

This is how it is – how it's been.
Spring, summer, autumn, winter
spread shade and flavour on
the flattest countryside imaginable.

The only hills between city and sea
are artificial humps called dykes
with the horizon painting a backdrop
to tides and vigorous spread of mud flats.

In ways it's a tattered countryside
not in the order of things but sod
is turned slowly, planted lovingly,
yielding green and bronze to fill sheds

for when the grey face of winter blows
white devilment into scraggy silence.
This land never loses focus but you
squint to taste a fraction of its romance.

It's not a rhapsody of laughing fields
with a city tacked on to its hem.
It yields fruit and root. We rejoice in
stunted trees caught up in the tangle of

offshore wind. The magic word is discovery
like a child finding words in an old tin can,
like a lost pilgrim finding a new path.
It's enough to know little at first. Let's begin.

Terry McDonagh

FOUR STRONG WINDS

I'm in Mayo now – returned
after almost four decades
but still own North, South,
East and West with my senses.
Its beauty is immediate,
held together and tossed asunder
by winds
that bring their own secrets
that fade again
and there's turmoil time
to keep us on our toes
to make us realize that pride
will endure as long as
life allows us to be proud
of our tale
that's as long
as our tale
is meant to be.

~

We have a patch we call ours
and we put walls round it
to ensure and secure but
we know fences are only fences,
that an invisible line divides
North, South, East and West
into blocks people swear by.

Greedy birds flit over and back.
Lovers choking with excitement
don't like limitations – time
hangs about – night owls trip
in a holiday-like moonbeam
gathering joy behind tall trees.

~

A lonely man mutters god-forsaken
among mousetraps and crumbs
within his own four walls – another
chuckles *thank god for that*
on his way home from a good night out.

THE WALL

And when word was out that
President Trump was on the lookout
for bricklayers to build a high wall
between America and Mexico
Murphy was up for it. One signpost said
this way America and Fox News said
America was great, so wearing nothing
but a donkey jacket, the man took
his trowel and teapot and headed off
to walk all the way into America.
It was sink or swim hook line and sinker.
Finding his way would be easy.
He'd be guided by gulls, listen to the sun
and when hungry he'd reach down and grab a fish.
There wasn't much happening at home.
His lady had left him so he had time to walk on water.
He'd heard tell of a green card but
when washed up he'd see what he could do.



© Terry McDonagh

Vanda Petanjek was born in 1978 in Čakovec, Croatia. She graduated from the Department for English and Croatian Language and Literature at the Faculty of Philosophy in Zagreb. Her poems have been published in the Poezija magazine and on various literary internet sites and some have been aired on the radio. She lives and works in Zagreb, Croatia.



These poems were originally published in Croatian.
The English translations are previously unpublished.

Vanda Petanjek

BELLY BUTTON, CUTTLEFISH

your creation lasted for seven days
 there is no beginning
 only a sound
 I conceive you and you are a tone
 my first musical notation written in white ink

a thought from a pale sulphur cuttlefish exhales a breath
 a drop of sweat falls on a body in its imaginary stage
 and gouges out a hole as deep and empty as a bag
 this is a navel
 a point for lips
 a place for fingers
 a crater in the midst of the abdomen set for a geological dig

in front of a navel stands a child
 the word for navel is always round
 a large circular prehistoric centrifuge
 that turns everything into a circle
 and people become children before themselves

before a language completely dies
 only the word for navel will remain
 insurance that
 if anyone ever plants a word
 language will again grow into a tree

from the book of genesis 1, 1-2
 in the beginning there was cuttlefish
 in the end
 a thought
 a birthmark
 blank sheet music

PUPAK, SIPA

stvarali smo te sedam dana
 ne postoji početak
 samo zvuk
 ja te začnem i ti si ton
 moj prvi notni zapis bijelom tintom

misao iz blijede sumporne sipe ispusti dah
 kap znoja padne na tijelo u imaginarnoj fazi
 i izdubi rupu duboku i praznu kao vrećica
 to je pupak
 točka za usne
 mjesto za prste
 krater usred trbuha za geološku iskopinu

pred pupkom stoji dijete
 riječ za pupak uvijek je okrugla
 velika obla pravešmašina koja sve pretvara u kružnicu
 a ljudi prije sebe postaju djeca

prije nego jezik potpuno zamre
 ostaje još jedino riječ za pupak
 osiguranje da će
 ako itko ikad posadi riječ
 jezik ponovo izrasti u stablo

iz knjige stvaranja 1, 1-2
 u početku bijaše sipa
 na kraju bijahu misao
 madež
 kajdanka



MILA

I never told you but
 I gave birth to her
 she's got your hair and your bones
 she often smiles and doesn't feel burdened as we do
 I feel her body every time I go to bed
 she hasn't woven a single wrong thought about herself
 and this is our biggest success
 we conceived her one late December in a message
 it didn't hurt
 her arrival was a relief
 my body deprived of a disease
 I gave birth to a tumour a woman and a daughter at the same time
 a density inside me got its form
 it saved my life
 then I gave her a bath in lukewarm water
 rubbed almond oil into her skin
 helping her slip out of my hands
 taking away the right to look at me and to remember me
 I wrapped her in blue cloth and asked her to leave

after the first few minutes she seemed so unborn
 somewhere between *then* and *now*
 she looked as if standing on a ruler scale
 measuring time
 I didn't look at the clock but I heard the ticking
 her skin vibrating under the left rib
 it was so comforting knowing she's not afraid
 being fragile and linear at the same time
 she crawled away as if there was nothing sad about it
 there on the other side of the ruler
 somewhere between *now* and *later*
 while waiting for a colourful hypnotizing lollipop
 she left her knee traces on the parquet
 on a deep wet crater bottom
 in the direction of a bed where an idea was born
 how nice it would be that you were her dad

every fall I bring the same child into the world
 a lumpy idea without a suspecting father
 the thought haunts me and I refuse to escape it
 I rub different oils into my hands and things keep slipping out
 pale nurses stab me with needles and say it's hereditary
 to be a woman who gives birth and has no children
 to be a woman that can but may not
 a round-bodied woman with unattended wounds
 slippery is hereditary
 hence epilepsy
 therefore I knit
 knit until fingers become needles
 76 squares of blue wool till September
 when I'll sit again with a full stomach
 and ask her to leave the bath tub again
 the floor should be coated with that wool
 so it's not too cold while you crawl away from me
 my dear

now you know why I can't sleep



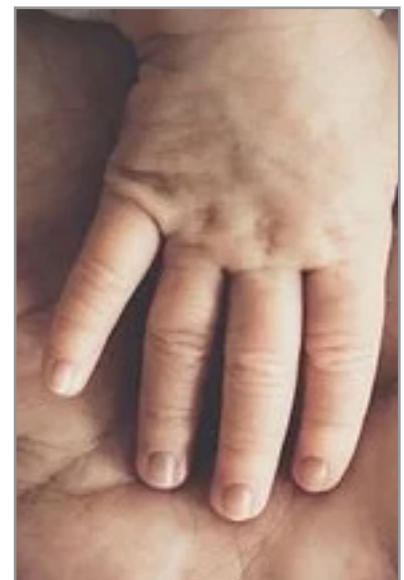
MILA

nikad ti nisam rekla
ali rodila sam je
ima tvoju kosu i tvoje kosti
smiješi se i ne osjeća teret kao mi
osjećam joj tijelo svaki put kad legnem
nije sašila nijednu pogrešnu misao o sebi i to je naš najveći uspjeh
začeli smo je krajem prosinca u jednoj poruci
nije me boljelo
njen je dolazak bio olakšanje
moje je tijelo napustila bolest
i rodila sam istovremeno i tumor i ženu i djevojčicu
gustoća iz mene dobila je oblik
i to mi je spasilo život
a onda sam je okupala u mlakoj vodi
namazala joj kožu bademovim uljem da mi lakše sklizne iz ruku
i oduzela joj pravo da me pogleda i da me upamti
nakon toga zamotala sam je u plavo platno i zamolila je da ode

nakon prvih minuta činila mi se nerođena
negdje između prije i sada
izgledala je kao da stoji na ravnu
mjerila je vrijeme
nisam gledala na sat ali sam čula otkucaje
koža joj je vibrirala ispod lijevog rebra
i bilo je utješno znati da se ne boji
biti i krhka i pravocrtna u isto vrijeme
otpuzala je kao da u tome nema ništa tužno
kao da je s druge strane ravnala
između sada i poslije
čeka šarena hipnotizirajuća lizaljka
na parketu je ostavila tragove koljena
duboko mokro izbrazdano dno
smjer prema krevetu u kojem se rodila ideja
kako bi lijepo bilo da si joj tata

svake jeseni donosim na svijet isto dijete
kvrjavu ideju bez oca koji ništa ne sluti
ta me misao progoni i ja joj se ne izmičem
mažem ruke drugim uljima i stvari mi i dalje ispadaju iz ruku
blijede me bolničarke bodu i kažu da je nasljedno
biti žena koja rađa a nema djecu
biti žena koja može ali možda neće
žena oblog tijela s ranama bez obloga
sklisko je nasljedno
otud padavica
otad pletem
pletom dok mi prsti ne postanu igle
76 kvadrata plave vune do rujna
kad ću punog trbuha sjesti u kadu
i pozvati ju opet da ode
treba obložiti pod tom vunom
da te ne zebe dok pužeš od mene
Mila moja

sad znaš zašto ne spavam



SOMNAMBULIST

this morning I found her sleeping in the closet
lying unconscious under a column of hangers
I was choosing clothes for work
and I touched her fingers with sliding doors
she lay in that lair full of my synthetics
as if having entered a covered nest
and fell asleep without a pillow and a blanket
maybe she thought she was under the grass
she must have slid her head through shirts
there is still some electricity in her hair
and I have nothing else to do now but to look at her
crumpled
standing in front of her as heavy as a car
as a Buick Rivera to Hasan Hujdur
she is tired
she is so tired
every so often she stares in the mirror
telling me it is no longer her but her grandmother
and how her wrinkles had never been so deep
to me she is the same
I only occasionally see
her hand pores widening while she is asleep
being stabbed through the night with sewing needles
last night she was walking around the apartment
looking for the blue earring
one blue earring

half an hour later she was wet
saying she'll continue looking tomorrow
maybe she misplaced it somewhere in the chest
she left the light in the bathroom
put the baby to sleep and lay in the closet
and this is not her first time
one night I found her in a glass cabinet
asleep
she had moved figurines and bottles from bottom shelves
the first the second and the third
then she took them out and curled up under the glass
under white wine glasses and red wine ones
glasses for water and those for champagne
only she knew the difference
I am fine drinking from plastic
as she is fine now
in synthetics



MJESEČAR

jutros sam je našao kako spava u ormaru
birao sam odjeću za posao
a onda sam joj onesviještenoj pod kolonom vješalica
kliznim vratima dodirnuo prste
i kao da je ušla u natkriveno gnijezdo
legla je u taj brlog pun moje sintetike
i zaspala bez jastuka i deke
možda je sanjala da je na travi
izgleda da se glavom provukla kroz košulje
u kosi još ima elektriciteta
i drugog posla sad nemam nego da je gledam skvrčenu
pred njom težak kao auto
kao buick rivera hasanu hujduru
umorna je
tako je umorna
govori mi sve češće kako u ogledalu više nije ona nego baka
i kako nikad nije imala ovako duboke bore
meni je ista
ja samo ponekad primijetim
kako joj se na rukama šire pore dok spava
kao da je kroz noć ubadaju šivaćim iglama
sinoć je pola sata hodala po stanu
tražila je plavu naušnicu
jednu plavu naušnicu

nakon pola sata bila je mokra
rekla je da će je sutra potražiti u škrinji
ostavila je svjetlo u kupaoni
uspavala je dijete i legla u ormar
i nije joj prvi put
jedne sam je noći našao u vitrini
u snu je s donjih polica premijestila figurice i flaše
s prve s druge i s treće
a onda je izvadila i njih i sklopčala se pod staklom
pod čašama za bijelo i čašama za crno
čašama za vodu i onima za šampanjac
samo ih je ona raspoznavala
meni je bilo dobro i iz plastike
kao što je i njoj sada dobro
u sintetici



TECTONICS

you surrounded the bed with your barbed wires
your body is twitching in tantrum
you'll tell me in the morning your dream was solid and impenetrable
but I've seen it all
you were dreaming of lungs and vessels
you were dreaming of belonging to yourself
you were a beast
a knife from the cloud stabbed in the bed
that's what you dreamt of
of loving
of being able to
and not having to
but that you might
as if dreams are exclusive or someone else's
you'll tell me in the morning you dreamt of nothing
but I've seen it all
it was me you dreamt of
from morning till night
or from night till morning
should I allow for a chance that this wasn't the case
maybe
and I say this with an overemphasized long first syllable
maybe you did not see me because of the darkness
maybe you thought I could not get in without a key
without a pin code for your secret room
four digits and a ladder

your hair is wet and I drink everything you cry
while you were dreaming of yourself
I was walking around the apartment as if someone had locked me in from the outside
a harmless light in the bathroom was touching my stitches
a numb voiceless woman within you calming the electricity
silently pulling spaceships
towards me

I crouched down beside you
schematic and reduced to a smell
I thought I had to do something but I didn't really have to
the space shrank in the rhythm of your breathing
you inhaled pollen
a planetary seed
while a child you met among the rays
played with globes over the cradle
with its toes

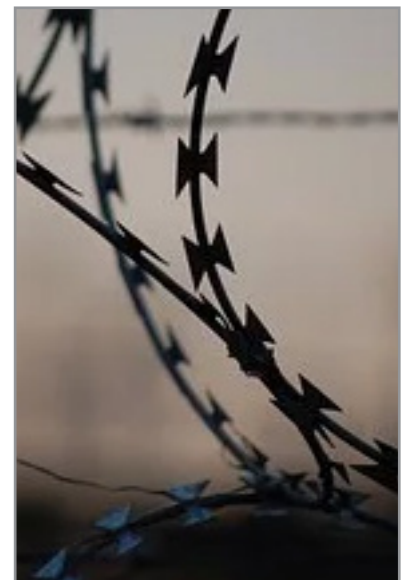


TEKTONIKA

opkolila si krevet svojim žicama
tijelo ti se trza u tantrumu
ujutro ćeš mi reći da ti je san bio čvrst i neprobojan
ali sve sam vidio
sanjala si pluća i brodove
i da sebi pripadaš
da si zvijer
da si nož iz oblaka uboden u krevet
to si sanjala
da voliš
da možeš
da ne moraš
ali smiješ
i kao da su snovi nešto ekskluzivno i tuđe
reći ćeš mi ujutro da si sanjala ništa ali sve sam vidio
sanjala si mene
od jutra do mraka
ili preciznije od mraka do jutra
i ako dozvolim nevjerojatnu mogućnost da i nije bilo tako
možda
i kažem to s prenaglašeno dugim prvim slogom
možda me nisi dobro vidjela zbog tame
možda si mislila da ne mogu ući bez ključa
bez pina za tvoju tajnu sobu
četiri broja ljestve

kosa ti je mokra i ja pijem sve što isplačeš
dok si ti sanjala sebe
ja sam hodao po stanu kao da me netko izvana zaključao
bezazleno svjetlo u kupaoni dodiruje mi šavove
utrnuti žena u tebi bez glasa umiruje struju
i tiho vuče svemirske brodove
prema meni

ščućurio sam se uz tebe
nagovještajnu i reduciranu na miris
mislio sam da nešto moram a zapravo nisam ni trebao
svemir se steže u ritmu tvoga disanja
udišeš pelud
planetarno sjeme
dok se dijete koje si sreća među zrakama
kuglama nad kolijevkom
prstima na nogama
igra



John W. Sexton's sixth poetry collection, *Futures Pass*, was published by Salmon Poetry in 2018. A chapbook of surrealist poetry, *Inverted Night*, came out from SurVision in 2019. His poem *The Green Owl* was awarded the Listowel Poetry Prize 2007 for best single poem. His poem *In and Out of Their Heads*, from *The Offspring of the Moon*, was selected for *The Forward Book of Poetry* 2014. His poem *The Snails* was shortlisted for the 2018 An Post / Listowel Writers' Week Poem of the Year Award. In 2007 he was awarded a Patrick and Katherine Kavanagh Fellowship in Poetry.



IDEAS OF ITS OWN

the carnivorous pond
needs care ... invite the new neighbours
for a swim

spies a goat the colour
of grief ... trip-trap trip-trap
over the bridge

up and down
the grey hair ladder ... Rapunzel
brought out of retirement

amortize this mass beaching ...
the mermaid wives
need no salt

speak your weight machine...
the feather
holds its counsel

cosmic rust ...
more than the nail, the nail hole
holds itself in place

that's not what I want ...
the suggestion box
has ideas of its own

we place our gnomes,
script their static lives ...
but who is enslaved to whom?

John W Sexton

METHOD FOR DISCERNING

collecting his creaks ...
ghosts of willow and birch
visit grandad daily

not quite legless but ...
the monopede
teetered to nowhere

a giant dead ...
the birds in his mile of beard
chirp a mourning chorus

yes, more or less ...
inside the elephant
the actual elephant

lightness ... shod
with harebell slippers
they dance to the glitter of stars

at the Supremacist zoo
a furless panther ...
pink is the new black

moths alight on
the one ton bell ... summoned,
moonlight breaks through

un-noised noise ...
his method for discerning
the dialects of crickets

this isn't who I am ...
the ventriloquist's dummy
tries sign language

in lean months we double up ...
the clown sleeps
inside the circus python





OH AND OH AND OH

that's Mister Cow Shed
to you ... rivets in the tin roof
pick up Vega

innocence trumps knowledge
... goldfinches flocked
to the anomalous orb

never neither in nor out
of the wardrobe ...
the never-ending dress

this deters vampires?
a pinking shears
to stop the daylight fraying

the straw best inserted
through the mind ... there's a knack
to sipping souls

a purple stain broached
the exosphere ... how regal
we all now shine

Come, my lady bugs ...
oh and oh and oh,
the queen dressed in aphids!

hurt umber ...
that rare pigment
from the last human whimper

Sir Bland's castle ...
windows of grey gelatine
look out on Sorrowdise

SAYING IT

let's be clear ...
Joan of Midnight requires no man
to light her flame

humans a myth ...
androids self-harm
to reach imperfection

space
is not the same as night ...
oh dark eternal day

wanna touch the future,
Mr Trump? ... Madame Zonk's
foreseeable globes

a big oven, sure ...
the ceiling rises
in her house of gingerbread

sadpoles wiggle
from her despondent tears ... then
there's her silver tail-stain

but it's so brown, Dali ...
saying it
without saying it

a hole in the tin man
... all youth marches
to the Haemorrhoid City

Moscow born, Nina Kossman is a painter, sculptor, bilingual writer, poet, translator of Russian poetry, and playwright. She is the author of two books of poems in Russian and English as well as the translator of two volumes of Marina Tsvetaeva's poems. Her other books include *Behind the Border* (a collection of stories about her Moscow childhood), *Gods and Mortals: Modern Poems on Classical Myths* (Oxford University Press, 2001), and a novel. She lives in New York. Her other books include *Behind the Border* (a collection of stories about her Moscow childhood), *Gods and Mortals: Modern Poems on Classical Myths* (Oxford University Press, 2001), a bilingual book of short stories, and a novel. Her website is www.ninakossman.com.



I

How far I had to walk
just to be near you,
empty rock,
all that's left of the empire
that once ruled the seas,
not to mention the earth,
the entire world known to men
of the past which is now a shadow
known only to lovers of myth,
as well as to ordinary lovers,
to whom you appear in a dream,
as you twice appeared to me,
empty rock.

Nina Kossman

II

“Denial won’t help,” he said in a harsh voice.
“Denial of your bird nature,” he explained a bit more kindly,
while she whose bird nature was thus discussed,
neither flew nor spoke but gazed straight ahead,
and there were no trees and no sky in what she saw,
only a wall, a barrier that could break her:
she was not a bird, after all, only a woman
made of skin and blood and human tissue,
and her bird nature existed only in his far-flung words.
That’s what she was thinking as she stood there,
her eyes on the wall, listening to him,
as he was proclaiming her a queen of birds,
a swallow with a woman’s face and a swallow’s soul,
that, with her swallow’s wings and a swallow’s tail,
could fly high above the boredom of the mundane.
She was so overcome with the sadness of it all,
that she opened her mouth to say, “You’re so wrong!”
But only bird sounds came out of her throat.

III

Avoid the lingering memory
of midnight blossom amidst the woods
and don’t look at anyone closely:
mortality is contagious.
And when you fall for a human voice,
and it reminds you of godlike emptiness,
remember: what survives is the worst
of human intelligence.



IV

A little reason carries us a little way.
 The hero dies before the narrator
 comes to a final stop. Applause!
 The rider seeks his steed, the moralist -
 his Book. The audience claps for HIM,
 HIM again: "Those heroic shoulders, that earnest smile!
 He is alive! He is back! He is resurrected!"
 The squirming face takes over the scheming gesture.
 Wrapped in expensive rags, the painted lovers
 rewrite a prologue to that eventual disaster,
 their love. The hero is one of them, or one
 of them is he. His eyes the color of his strength;
 his solitude, bitter. Applause is but the assurance
 of a more total end, he murmurs as the audience claps.
 He juggled life and death, partaking bliss of neither.
 His solitude is unrelieved; his reason, gone.

V

When it finally comes,
 it will not say "Now!";
 nor will it raise a scythe
 in its skeletal hands,
 or a black flag with, say,
 skull and crossbones,
 it's not a pirate ship, after all.
 If it feels like talking at all,
 it'll say only "Oops, I'm late,
 I know you expected me,
 I got held up with another fool,
 who didn't recognize me
 and refused to follow orders."
 No, not even that.
 It'll say nothing at all.
 It'll be dressed as a nurse at Mt. Sinai*
 bending over my still body
 to torment me with yet another shot.
 So let it come,
 since it will come anyway
 with or without a scythe
 (just another word for a syringe),
 injections, pills, crossbones.
 Speed is all that matters
 in matters of leavetaking.
 Make it quick,
 don't drag it out
 for another twenty or thirty years,
 and not in a hospital bed
 but on top of a craggy hill,
 with the smell of the sea in my nostrils,
 the salt, the breeze, land's end.

* Mt. Sinai – a hospital in New York.



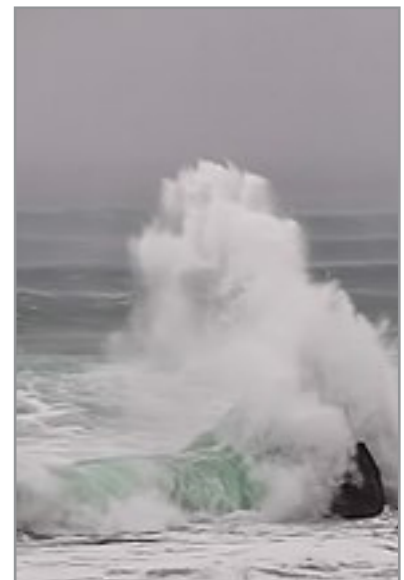
VI

A semblance of meaning in a meaningless world,
a spire of an old church in the cloudy sky,
ruins of a temple in the desert sand,
a civilization rising from an inchoate thought,
a childhood memory amidst forgetfulness:
this is how I remember a scrawny shrub
on a beach near Miahe, outside of Tallin,
and my parents spreading a thin blanket for us,
and my brother sitting on it in his plavki*,
and me, on my haunches, next to him,
in my wide underpants, red with white dots,
the kind worn by Soviet girls too young for a bathing suit,
and this is how a semblance of meaning
rises in the middle of a meaningless day,
remembering pebbles on a Baltic beach,
and closer to the water, a city we built from sand,
and a spire of a sand church, to be destroyed
by a foot of a vacationer so intent on a quick dip in the sea,
he gives no thought to what he might step on.
Ruins of a temple on an Estonian beach,
a civilization rising from a child's creation,
a childhood memory, meaning in the midst of meaninglessness,
that proverbial feast which is always with me.

**plavki (Russian: плавки)– bathing trunks for boys*

VII

Faithful to the more or less imperfect sounds,
a silent man becomes a symbol for the voiceless world
that drowns out speech, just as it drowns out fire
of thought, just as it drowns out thought;
while only one form is left, numb and maternal,
a voiceless humble clutter - feelings; maze:
the need for solitude: the sea of cravings
thrown into the shore in a silent rage.



© Nina Kossman

Chris Mooney-Singh's last two collections *The Laughing Buddha Cab Company* and *The Bearded Chameleon* appeared in Singapore and Australia. His verse novel *Foreign Madam and the White Yogi* was commended in the 2015 Victorian Literature Awards (unpublished fiction category). In addition, he has completed a doctorate in creative writing from Monash University, teaches in the M.A. Creative Writing at Lasalle College of the Arts, Singapore and is Director of The Writers Centre, Singapore.



Chris Mooney-Singh

DIALOGUES

I put you into writing and put you into speaking.
You barely hear it. Itch this blind toad taste.

I call out to the raven. 'My harem, my black rose.'
You believe you know me: wide-eyed English lit type.

I walk past jealousy park with its orange seesaws.
Is this how you picked up your other acolytes?

I begged a promise, offered myself in heavy boots.
This woman looks straight at you, her dark hair hectic.

I am drenched in the intractable scent of her hair.
Is it day where you are, or does the moon loiter?

Yes, I heard the stories. Yes, I heard some talk.
Your innocence will be punished. This is the rule.

Who was it I slept with last night? I do not remember.
That was your skull on the bottom shelf.

A cento of Indian-English poets: Prageeta Sharma, Jeet Thayil, Arvind Krishna Mehrotra, Arundhati Subramaniam, Anjum Hasan, Subhashini Kaligotla, Vivek Narayanan, Rukmini Bhaya Nair, Vijay Nambisan, Jeet Thayil, R. Parthasarathy, Kathika Nair, Dilip Chitre, Menka Shivdasani.

THE ROTARY CLOTHES HOIST

Things got strained when Dad chopped down the elm
and the Hills Hoist had to be my climbing tree.
I'd glance at him at night in the living room,
a Rameses embalmed in Readers Digest,
while Mummy flicked straight through her Woman's Day.
Dead butts in their ashtrays, they leaned back
like astronauts on course for lonely planets.
This was my cue to sneak out the back door
and find the hoist. Each day or night, my heart,
a muscle throbbing like a carburetor
tuned up the pluck I craved to take a leap,
then Errol Flynn onto the silver limbs
of the iron tree. An acrobat swings forth,
giddy with endorphins and transcendence,
clings and whirls and yowies from the yardarm.
Mum saw my boy's own need to fling and spin,
yet couldn't interfere those times when Dad
barked out to stop: "You'll wreck the bloody thing!"

One Christmas, he brought home a clucking cage
with seven chooks, then strung their star claws up
and snapped white necks for the employee bash,
his gouty knuckles sore from winters spent
in Korean foxholes. Blood drained to heads,
red combs and wattles flapped like wilted flowers
on the wind-swept carousel, a slaughter engine
cleaner than a chopper. The hoist complained
and creaked. Next, butcherbirds would peck. Glazed eyes
glared back; and sweating in bed, I dreamed
of Chicken Hell, the pit of this *danse macabre*.
Like a dissident in a purge, the last mechanical
clucks choked out of me. I could not swing
again.

My mum kept mum and sorted socks
(orphans from pairs) to pack my bag; and next
white jocks were winched up high to spin and dry
upon the iron tree. White semaphore
waved on across back yards of rotary hoists
to warn my maypole was a lightning rod
that would call down the coming maelstrom:
his bankruptcy, their loud divorce, my getaway
to boarding school, and next, a uni crash pad
with its own hoist. No need to hang from here.
Instead, my whirling dervish beard grew wild
beneath the milky star-fields of the sky.
Toughened by the tree with an iron will
my whirligig philosophy was ripe to fly.



© Chris Mooney-Singh

VILLAGE BANYAN

I cannot wipe the sweat I've passed beneath
this tree trunk as massive as a wrestler's.
Standing firm before green flags in the field,
it sucks at the water-table of the district

as farmers feed from their small plates of farmland
without replenishing the granary.
Apathy stares with alcoholic eyes
at their *kakajis* lost in heroin.

Yes, you are the village council tree
where Five Elect discuss with sugar-lime in tumblers,
sitting on string beds made of wood and jute --
these bums that bounce and shake like trampolines.

Long beards of knotted runners search on down
and make their singular ways back into earth
to fortify the twining ways of thought
that all must stay well-rooted to their soil.

This one tree of my father-in-law's village
hatched the 30s Freedom Movement struggle,
and Muslims hid inside the sugar cane fields
as all Punjab turned tribal at Partition.

I have sat and talked with many elders too
who look the other way, remembering
the spray of Government bullets down this lane
when the Golden Temple was smacked upon the face.

I was also here on those curfew nights
of explosions and the getaway motorcycles:
this was the death ride of a generation
who came one day and were gone the next.

My own land is wheat and wool and wealth
yet something's missing, unlike the family here.
No one should suffer, yet suffering has to come
so sucker roots grab harder into earth.

If I could look back I might simply want
to hear Guru Nanak and Mardana,
his player of rabab in mellow ragas
and poetry that sinks its thousand roots.

I sit and watch and also try to play,
and tune the Indian way my own guitar
because through singing I can touch some chord
and rock this peace until the fireflies come.

Kakajis: sons
Padhri Kalan, Amritsar District, Punjab



© Chris Mooney-Singh



SIMAL (COTTONWOOD TREE)

I remember your visit to the ruins,
its elephant pens and open space for polo.
Only walls and turret bricks are left.
You came with your *chumcha* entourage
with talk of a new sports stadium,
the usual Water Problem, plus
the price for wheat versus diesel, and now
the international death of the onion.
“We farmers have to pay and pay,” you shouted,
passing on steam to the Central Government.

Yes, you
were campaigning close to the Border
where the smack trade has overnight become
the smuggler’s wad, each ghost addict
playing tag with their dealer.
That devil lives in his big haveli.
The S.P knows but files no case, because
who will play the hero here with heroin
when the *malai* of the milk is sent on up
to the Minister? Meanwhile, you, the big man
campaigning in the morning called for
a return of the Strong Hand –
lame old rhetoric, while all looked on,
waiting for the time your *chumchas*
would break out buckets of liquor
to swing the votes of grandfathers in pain.

I was brought forward –
the V.I.P amongst them – second only
to you. Yet, I knew as I got up from the string bed
of *tali* wood and jute to shake your hand,
that you were like the *simal* tree behind us
towering against the sky – the grey trunk
and branches slippery and bare.
Red flowers lure the birds, yet have no fragrance.
It is the Politician Tree,
head and shoulders above all, yet with little
to offer – no fruits, no service,
only good for packing cases and coffins —
a big cracking voice with empty hands.

malai: cream

chumcha: literally ‘spoons’; a derogatory term for suck-up supporters.

Tali or shisham: a variety of Indian rosewood.

API-API MANGROVES

pure salt runs in our veins
periscopes go up and
we thrive in the black silt land

transgender flowerettes
drop waxy fruit pods
and still we colonise

hear the crash of hexameters
the pushing sea can't reach
in this nursery where mudskippers

meet api-api putih swamp
we hold back erosion,
and you ask for life's elixir?

secreting a white crust
pneumatophores can breathe
we, a filtration nation

upon the mother tree
launch now yellow lifeboats
upland for mangrove miles

erase the tidal shores
inside our river's mouth
crawl first on land

and farm the fireflies
it is written in our roots
go drink the sour sea

Sungei Buloh, Singapore

FAUSTIAN GHAZAL

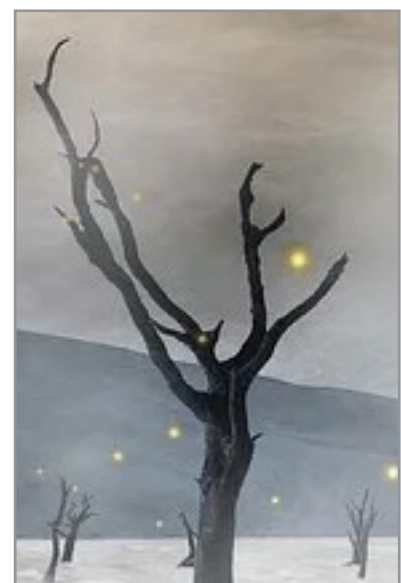
Don't beef, don't bitch, don't bleat no day ahead!
Faust wheels and deals and wins the way ahead.

Your skull is ripe papaya upon the slab.
Black seeds tell futures. Time to slay a head.

Carve the oracle mask from crocodile wood.
Inhale, exhale. The speech? Doomsday ahead.

Lisp 'sand' and see a beach; say 'squall', then run.
Intone from Hell: *mayday, mayday ahead!*

Drop plots, Bonehead, undo, don't claim the coup.
Betraying a greater good won't pay ahead.



© Chris Mooney-Singh

Robert (Roibeard) Shanahan. I am a poet playwright and a painter. A storyteller. For me all there really is...Compassion and Expression. I describe myself as a...‘Grand Lector of Apocalyptic Utterances’. I live in Tasmania. I am from the Irish diaspora. My family from Cork. My prose was published in Australia. Ireland in Outburst magazine. India in Setu poetry magazine. I was awarded high commendation. In the W.B.Yeats poetry prize with ‘Violence at the Egg’. It was read out in the National Parliament of Australia.
<https://www.facebook.com/robert.shanahan.98>



HEADLESS

(the death of a unknown writer)

(Mother speaks)

“My lover is not on the stairs sprawled”

“My lover”

“My mechanical toucher”

“Lovely automaton”

“Stands in my room waiting”

“It’s controlled movements Cog set”

“Unbridled uncontrollable with me!”

“Bell striker sublime”

“Quicksilver my kisses”

“Give it a voice”

“Sweet tangled utterances”

“Look at this”

“Look at what I have!”

She takes a metal plate out of her pocket

it is the automaton makers plate

She speaks)

“This is His plate”

“Markers plate”

“Roulet and Decamps”

“It’s”

“It’s continental”

Robert Shanahan

continued overleaf...

© Robert Shanahan



HEADLESS *contd...*

I am writing a play
Somewhere amongst my friends in the third act
Yes I choose my words most well for them
Closer than friends really

I finish my glass
Then raise the nearby bottle for a further gulp
A little to near another
Tripled vision around my possible atmosphere

I sit
A little re reading begins
What can change
In the meaning of my.....
I fall asleep

My pencil falls
Last lead on a dropped magical scribble
As my hand moves to still
My journal blankets my lap
Glasses fallen
Sit asymmetric on my breast
Wind from the open window rustling my hair
Placing in breeze a leaf upright on the top of my head

I dream of my papers wings
Eddying beyond understanding
Feathers full of lice reciting
Future realising of my story

I absorb as much as I can
Words crackle budding in my ear
And I now in the eye
Of something swooping by

Now under cold blankets of air
As fleeces from the prowling
Cover me
The devouring stream of nightmares appears

Evilly flaunting in my subconscious
As immense pulsating theatre curtains
Displaying a threatening grave gaping mouth
One side of the mouth on each living curtain
Teeth sharp and spiny
With a entombed figure in each tooth
Gesticulating the frantic sign language of doom

And on its fangs
Myself sits
On the other
A cobweb swing
And what would swing on this
Yes fated I be only the very spirit of my death

These massive curtains open and at their endings disappear
The view revealed from their unfurling nothing
Nothing seen in nothing
Nothing that lives for sight

continued overleaf...

© Robert Shanahan



HEADLESS *contd...*

Then in faintness and soon to bellow
The other senses remain now multiplying
Auditory overload begins
My eardrums vibrant to buzz
Olfactory organs prepared for anything

My nostrils burn
Terrible aroma
Smouldering
Hair burning
Flesh smouldering
The body odour of a fish out of water
Imminent death

The death of a unknown writer

Noise now a repeating thunderous din
Punctuated with giggling children
Giggles overloading
Now changed them now screaming

"We born from a fuck
say fuck everything"

I awake
I think I have lost my head
I feel nothing above my collar
But I still am thinking
Or something usual I'm holding on to
The mind always just in air
Held in that air just by thought

My hands running up and down my body
All seems as I grew into
My fingers around my shoulders
And when they reached higher
My head was not there

My head rolls around the world seeing
All on the trundle

I lay my headless body down
On my back
Each arm each leg
Points to all of the compass points
I have lost my head forever
"Twas always my fate"

My head
Upside down glancing the movements of the sky
Sideways views of endless passing feet
Some try to treat me as a kicking ball

Others like the blessed snails that come from nowhere
After the rain wets the stones
They enter then leave my ears and nostrils
Comforting me
As I roll by

Late throwing's from those I thought had passed
From behind my travels they have returned
Throwing handfuls of gravel
It falls on me as pelting hail

continued overleaf...

© Robert Shanahan



HEADLESS *contd...*

Gravel strays scraping enters my eardrum
Up my nose
Caught up now
On the gastropod left mucus
Clogging up my ears and nose
Some fly's off falls in the air
The rest solidified
To the road as I spin on

My head made heavier
Now a jolting turning
The weight of the stone
Unbalances
The rolling is stumbling

And stumbling I do
Well as much as my tired head can manage
To rest upon a tilted seesaw
The end that's sitting in the dust
Nearly to fall asleep

When something
It is a spirit
The spirit of my own death
Fell like stone on the other end of the seesaw
And I up through the air like a cannonball
Thrown like a fledgling runt out of the grandest nest

First travelling up the colours then piercing through a fading rainbow
Sitting higher than high I start to plummet
Past Mercury shaking my head vigorously
Releasing gravel from my ears and nose
There and on Venus Saturn and Neptune
This planetary jettisoning allows me to float

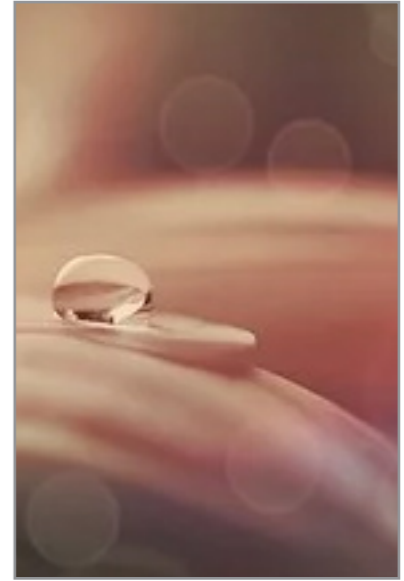
Hitting the side of an immense sculpture
It is the very rejecter
Earth itself

Looking down
From outer space
Seeing millions of millions tops of heads
No place for me there
There never was and never will be
Plant my head as a seed on another planet

Only aofferer of words to some inner space not yet
Revealed

The death of an unknown writer

End



MOISTURE

Of
Brows
Two human temples
Bodiless
In puzzling thought
They need to be

And a bird
Off the wing
On the moult
Expectedly nervous

Sharing a meteorite
Discarded fragment from a distant asteroid belt
Or that grand wonder
Tidal locking wave pausing
Far side of the Moon

Landing now
Side to side jolting movement settling
Its inhabitants motionless
As if they fell in a different air
And just appeared

Wait look out! other strangeness coming in
Ah just there
Well words can't deserve to be lost with that
No time now I would need a thousand life's
My puny mind
Emerged in description
To scratch out any imagery relatable

But what of my first observed vision

Meteorite!
In fallen denseness
Crammed
Impenetrable
Sits beneath the brows and the bird
A third of itself massed under in its crater
What appears to be symbol's rubble circling the rock

In the closeness and distance I notice those other gatherings
Other dust and particles being raised
Other things and entities perched on yet different structures
On the horizon
No! Look! that changes before me now
On a planetary roll one horizon after another
Farthest line I can see now flickering
All else remains in its apparent normal pandemonium

I now see wisps of smoke like forms
Dropping embers new stars
Blustering smoky light squeezed to fusion
Chanting new inceptions to an impossibly coloured sky
If a sky it be
A kaleidoscopic textured thrashing sight

Impossible to see what I'm seeing
Or at least my mind to describe
The extent of my vision momentarily overcome

continued overleaf...

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MOISTURE *contd...*

I am still
Traumatized in this instability
Just for moments
Long moments

Till I in a perceiving change realize
This being the outer reaching inner space
Or now as I feel maybe the realm of the not born yet
As I turn my head I see seeds falling into soil

While to the right side of myself
A cocoon fresh thread looks for a needle
On the left side impending out of the fractured dark
A skeleton a farmer his hand bones worn paper thin
He pushes a wooden wheelbarrow
Compost for future crops

Silicate material earths primitive mantle chipping's fall
Entombed fossils freed from their solid graves
Turning to any light they can feel while descending.
This a volcanic rebirthing

I see sperm as fountains of misting rain
Ovums as butterfly's charming fliers

And I must close my eyes and remember
All of everything every element
Comes from outer space
And when I open my starry eyes

I see nothing

Then it all comes revealing slowly back
A throbbing then a cracking of a different sort
A first heartbeat newly to beat
An emerging through soil an awaiting seed
An opening of the newness of everything

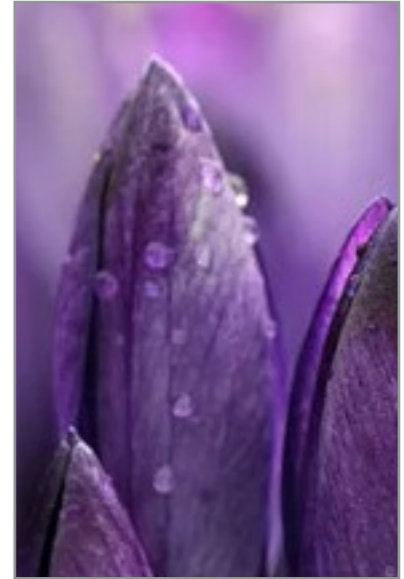
But what of the brows
Are the rumblings of life and death
That which plague and furrow these foreheads
Who have not the worry of bodies it seems
And their endless functions

You two
Just frontes and slight tufts
Of maybe hair
Eyebrows
Shown ever so slightly
If I use my tired imagination

And from whence unknown concepts could come to them
That they like I in any state of mind can imagine every state
Some better many worse to choose
But is worse the solving of a better thing
Perplexing them and me
In this indeterminate choosing clutching time

continued overleaf...

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MOISTURE *contd...*

And they like the other shapes that surround us
Preparing to be born
Do we all like them once be somewhere
Determining a fate
I believe we do
Just

Just a lucky guess

And now as I look into my opening shirt
To see my chest rise and fall
My hearts fateful selection
Yes a lucky guess

As magic has it
A feather
Fallen from the birds wing

Found one moment
As warmth raised strong
Seeping through their meteorite
A portent perhaps was imagined
At least by me

The Brows placing it into hopeful fissures
And unbelievably it entered
It's all a constant ongoing surprise

The feathers nib
Releases moisture

First a drip
Then
Minerals seep they absorb
Moisture

Their only resolution
Of their singular need it appears
By some excited colouring change on the brows wrinkles
Fleeting streaks of light now dimming

Sustenance
Illuminated need of dripping
To immerse

One moving entity
The bird
Scratching
Scanning
Clawed feet
Grooves
Shakes
The inner hemisphere
Of the meteorite

And nothing happens
Nothing changes the atmospherics
Nothing that moves my writing

continued overleaf...

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MOISTURE *contd...*

The brows though
Glowing
A different illumination
A different need
Of fervour
Off on a new nascent fate
They turn towards the stone
Now sucking
Frenzied in feeding

Moisture releasing from the meteorite
Now seeping clay
Covering the now nearly sated still brows
Lingering brows tranquil transforming
Rubbing resignation in all of the oxides
The matter organic metals
Shavings
Fine shimmering reflections
Over the two changing brows

They now between soft crumbling stone
And volcanic fired brittle
Yielded crystallinity now a frozen drip
Now native deposits

They reach creation
Rare earth
They are geological elements

Moisture
Life

The bird flies away

And I
A lucky guess

End





VOICES

Echoing chatter ongoing
 Amusing to blessed farcical
 At preternatural times
 Found mouthed profound in these morphic fields
 Sometimes these winds alter the predetermined and blow our way
 Let's listen
 To the snatches that can reach our ears

"We are two" is heard

It starts here or at least where we come in
 It begins for us

"A couple we are together
 Alone as always
 And someone or someone's somewhere
 Seems to be around us"

This first louder voice continues
 "You
 My love
 I speak to you
 Something about our blazing sun
 And another hears what I say to you
 Why do I think like this you must ask
 It came on me as a staggering fear"

An unknown one answers softer
 Seemingly in mid-air

"Is the world spinning a little too slow this day
 Are you just before the moment"

A sweet melody speaks you my love

"The birds today in this unusual usual sky"
 "Are always furtive"

Loudness now in calmness answers

"Yes its all the sun the clouds buoyant also in its presence
 Sometimes it does things that we don't see
 We fervent embracing in its rapturous beams"

An unknown one speaks

"Is smoke now the passionate fumes of air
 My cough is from some distant planets dust perhaps
 All is miasma
 I might set a fire
 To smoke myself to free something of myself"

Louder one speaks

continued overleaf...

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VOICES *contd...*

“You my love respond to me”

“Yes my inner ear feels the tones of strangers
I go to answer you
Then our contact is drowned with voices I don’t know
And I answer to the sky
May as well be lost in that immersing space”

Loudness answers

“Photograph my love your wondrous clouds
Let their fluffy adornment soothe you
Let the planets unseen rays shimmer you”

A child’s voice is heard

“Mummy the allure of pencils
Ah we not all lead?”

Then another older with indisputable tones

“Bookings change not just for weather wandering
The forgotten event who cries now at that burial
He was a charming rogue a rogue to my liking”

Then to our great fortune a group of singers
Now this is rare I’ve heard
sing

“Great sinners of the inner world
Innermost passionate self -deceivers
That world of heartlessness stains
That unknown futures fate
That soul as a one winged butterfly whirlwind”

There is a temporary pause of singing
Then a rhythmic beat begins
From their hands all a clapping
In the beat of a dying heart
Then after a moment the singers sing again

“Yes we sing it because we can’t quite feel it”
“Yes we sing it to hear it heard”
“Yes we sing it to try to understand it”
“To have a pure heart”
“We sing for that singing”

The song seems to have ended
When an older voice is heard

continued overleaf...

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VOICES *contd...*

"Thrown to the vultures of anima"
"Words in the slice of their tongues
"Beak spilling words
"Feathered filling the ear
"Doubt with youth doubt
"For me as aged
"Can I not become an egg
"In that vultures nest
"Start life high anew
"No
"Time brutally states
'No
"If you were an egg the first to early crack
"And thrown from that or any nest

Then the sound of clinking glass
A bottle dropped
The wheels of a pram and a baby cooing
In the distance a roaring motor
A screeching of brakes
The sound of collapsing metal

Slightly fainter now
The sound of expressive gars and glorious grunts
Sublime stilted shuffling of stiff limbs
The rhythmic slap of hands spinning mobility wheels
Courageous life choosers them the essence of humanity
Brave souls from the special school sail by

The sounds alternate and all
It is all outside life getting in
It's not some enforced life chaotic
Mind falling apart put together by other voices
It's people
People passing speaking on the street

Shut the windows
Close the drapes
Close the door
Quiet
Not quite yet there is the wanted us

End



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