

Atlanta salutes the Sydney 2000 Olympics  
with a celebration of Australia's finest literary athletes!  
An in-depth interview with Australian poet  
John Kinsella highlights a dazzling display  
of wizardry from the land of Oz.

ATLANTA



ATLANTA  
REVIEW

REVIEW

# AUSTRALIA

*Interview with* JOHN KINSELLA

Robert Adamson • Peter Bakowski • Bruce Beaver  
Joanne Burns • Lee Cataldi • John Forbes  
Dorothy Hewett • Peter Minter • Dorothy Porter  
Gig Ryan • Chris Wallace-Crabbe • and many more!

*Edited by* JOHN TRANTER

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**ATLANTA  
REVIEW**

Volume VI, Issue Number 2

# ATLANTA REVIEW

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*Welcome!*

Like many of us, I suspect, I've wanted to go to Australia ever since I was a kid. At one point it looked like it might really happen: my dad was a tool and die maker, and Australia was looking for skilled craftsmen. I remember spending hours dreaming of the turquoise waters of the Great Barrier Reef. Down Under...the Antipodes...the other side of the world. Or, as the natives fondly call it, Oz. Fine place for a colony of those exiled convicts, our childhood dreams.

In honor of the Sydney 2000 Olympics, we bring you Australia's finest *literary* athletes. Editor John Tranter, one of Oz's finest poets himself, has assembled a cast of stars too seldom seen in the Northern Hemisphere. You'll find that even the sky is different Down Under. Be prepared for new constellations to swim into view.

Poetry flourishes in remarkable places throughout this issue. Arab poet Saadi Youssef shares "everyday life" during the siege and bombing of Beirut. Courtney Brkic served as a forensic archeologist in Bosnia. Army ants and colorful characters abound in Jeffrey Dye's Cameroons. Al Maginnes ponders the outbreak of school violence in "Boys." And E. M. Schorb shares a heart-stopping experience.

Opening the mail the other day, I was thinking of how rarely one gets a real letter these days. Email is a sort of compromise between a telephone call and a letter. (We certainly couldn't have done this issue without it.) But the old-fashioned, handwritten, heart-to-heart kind of correspondence seems to be a vanishing breed.

How lucky the *Atlanta Review* family is, then, to be constantly receiving a multitude of "letters" from around the world, full of humor, joy, and the deepest human feeling. Thanks to *Atlanta Review*, the world's best letters are constantly falling out of nowhere into our laps, like a gift of grace. Sharing in this experience is a privilege rich and rare in these increasingly hectic times. I hope you enjoy it as much as I do.

*Dan Veach*  
*Editor & Publisher*

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## Divining

He has cut the willow branch  
this morning, now he paces  
the pasture west of the house.  
Jointed in a V, the slender sticks  
rise and fall.

*The first words on the page  
are pure faith. There is no way  
to prove if they divine intent  
or if these few lines  
will peter out, a dry pocket.*

He follows the arrow  
of his makeshift rod, elbows  
locked against unseen leverage.  
Fescue, brittle from the months  
without rain, crackles under  
his boots.

*The pencil dips and bobs,  
witching for what lies  
down below the words,  
following the current  
of meaning.*

“Do you believe?” he asks,  
his hands adjusting mine. I feel  
a heaviness along the green switches  
and something more,  
a buzz in my palms. “Water  
will find water,” he murmurs.  
The rod bends and holds,  
bends again.

*Susan Moon*

## Preface

The Future is uncertain  
and requires an introduction.  
Her pranks usually take  
unimaginable turns,  
falling mainly into two parts:  
what will be and what will never happen.

In reading her work it is important to remember  
that she does not prepare her manuscripts for publication.  
But special thanks are due to her Editor, the Past,  
for his help in our understanding her process.

Her creative perseverance continues  
even under the duress of fortune tellers, speculators,  
and deconstructionists.

Her technical abilities are amazing—  
the way she descends so quickly upon her reader,  
moving you from the now,  
without your even knowing it.  
I suspect her work  
will make you laugh and cry.

*Elizabeth Powell*

## Hay Fever

Here I sit, eyes overflowing, ears clogged,  
dam bursting in my nose when I bend over,  
reminding myself that Goethe composed while seasick  
and while playing the lover.

*Amour and mal de mer*, puissant conditions  
that overwhelm our everyday defenses  
(which might assist a poet—see Rimbaud's  
derangement of all senses)

have settings on Verona balconies  
at midnight or on rocking, wave-washed decks  
which give exotic gloss to unromantic  
physical facts.

Hay fever, on the other hand, stays home,  
confronts its pained reflection clutching a bottle  
of antihistamines. Its abject woes  
are never fatal.

Here I sit working with what I have.  
Peevish self-hatred shoves aside self-pity,  
sneering, "*Goethe? Rimbaud? You poetic  
Walter Mitty!*"

Begone, self-hatred. Take self-pity with you.  
Hay fever, leave me for another year.  
And you, clownish, toad-eating alter-ego,  
disappear.

Let pen scratch, fingers drum, let all the work  
of literary harvest tide begin,  
so that the fruit of this September night  
be gathered in.

*Reagan Upshaw*

*from Daily Chores*

*Poems written during the Siege of Beirut, 1982*

**A Raid**

The room shivers  
from distant explosions.  
The curtains shiver.  
Then the heart shivers.  
Why are you in the midst of all this shivering?

**Water**

A woodpecker drinks,  
a star drinks,  
the sea drinks,  
and the bird,  
and the house plant drinks,  
and the children of Sabra drink  
the smoke of exploded shells.

**A Room**

Nothing in it except a bookcase  
a bed  
and a poster.  
A jet fighter flies by  
lifts the bed in the air  
and the last book,  
and tears with a rocket  
part of the poster.

**Electricity**

Suddenly we remember the night of villages  
and orchards  
and going to bed at eight.  
Suddenly we learn the use of dawn.  
We hear the muezzin's call  
and the rooster's  
and the peaceful village.

**Where**

Where does this boy go  
on this strange evening?  
A water bottle and a grenade  
tacked to his wide belt  
and the weapon that never leaves him?  
Does he head for the sea?  
Ah, this strange boy!

**Radio**

In dump grounds or in palaces  
our radio comes with us  
between tea cups passed around,  
and explosions here and there.  
We may sing a little.  
We may sleep a little.  
And our radio remains  
like the bugle of judgment day.

## Rations

What are we going to buy with them?  
Isn't it enough to have one shirt,  
an old pair of jeans,  
half a loaf of bread and cheese,  
and flowers we pick from behind the fence?  
What are we going to buy with them?  
Maybe a moment of acclamation.

## Artillery

It thunders at dawn  
and the sea encircles the city like smoke.  
It thunders at dawn  
and a bird is frightened.  
Are the planes here?

In the empty apartment  
the plant falls silently  
and the dishes shiver.

*Saadi Youssef*  
*translated by Khaled Mattawa*

## Turanj

Driving through dead towns  
I shivered as ghosts watched  
from blackened doorways.  
The smell of dead chickens and trash  
worked their way into my hair.  
Even after washing it with soap  
and hot water, it has been absorbed  
by my pillow and sheets.  
I wake up face down and shaking.

Towns which looked intact on the horizon  
were shells when we neared.  
Schools were scarred with mortar holes.  
We passed the Knin jail where they had raped  
and tortured, and where blood stains  
and human excrement still clothe the walls.

When I returned from that planet,  
I dreamed of frozen graves  
and of the wild horses  
which wandered onto the roads and rolled their eyes.  
In the dream there was an old refugee woman  
who sat me down and fed me cake and *rakija*.

Were you sad when you first saw your house, grandmother?  
Oh, very sad.

And was there anything left?  
No, nothing. They had burned it all.

Did you cry when you saw it?  
No. The tears were gone as well.

*Courtney Angela Brkic*



## Boys

What invisible wires twitch the grimed hands  
of the unlovely teenage boy sipping coffee  
the waitress made him pay for before  
she would serve him? The regulars' voices ground  
to a slow halt when he sat at the counter, smell  
of leaf-mold and weather trailing him.  
And some eyes still measure him while the dissection  
of morning news resumes.

Today the news is filled with a boy who killed  
his parents and two classmates, shooting  
until his gun was emptied. In the last months,  
a handful of boys, drunk on rage and firepower,  
have murdered, tiny snakes turned quickly,  
suddenly deadly. Those well-scrubbed faces  
from the front page share nothing with this boy,  
his veil of dirty hair and nose stud,

his nails rimmed with chipped polish.  
Whatever rage he owns was ground  
to powder long ago, dissolved in the rain he slept in  
last night, scattered across the map  
of recent history. The coffee drinkers blame the President,  
suggest arming teachers, move on to sports.  
Fat thumbprints of rain blot the windows,  
darken the sidewalk, as if the sky,

bloated after a big meal, loosened its belt  
and sighed, sealing us in here,  
leaving me to sip the same black liquid  
the boy is drinking and ponder  
the bottomless cup of rage  
those gun-toting boys drank from,  
where I wet my beak more than once  
when my body was all projectile,

the world a target I couldn't hit,  
no matter how loudly I exploded.  
I had to walk a lot of nights through rain  
before I understood how small  
my anger was, how it would always join  
the world's collection of angers  
and wash away, like the drops that make  
this unbroken rain, each one aimed at something.

*Al Maginnes*

## Inward Breaths

Through us  
Our lungs our bodies  
Our skin  
Love breathes  
It eats and sleeps  
Wakes to the alarm  
Dirties dishes  
Teases the baby  
Is sustained by the same take-out that we are  
Is taken for granted  
I believe

Time  
Alone cultivates  
Unconsciously interpreted gestures  
Bodies an extension  
One of the other  
In touch without thought  
I believe

In sex with the lights on  
Thwarted by a crying baby  
Laughter and embarrassing noises  
Snooze buttons phlegmy throats  
Mornings where everyone hates one another  
In weekends wasted  
I believe

In wounds that won't be kissed away  
Words that can't be swallowed  
Or buried or forgotten  
Pride understood forgiven  
Inadequate apologies  
In problems too big too hard  
I believe

In bonds of flesh and life

I know your inward breaths  
Sharp gulps of defenseless  
Given up in joy fear pain orgasm  
You know mine  
Each breath an exchange  
A moment a strand  
In binding us  
I believe

*Sandra Christianson*

## Voluntary Complexity

To hell (and I don't mean symbolically)  
with simplicity, austerity, clarity.  
I'm tired of minimalist, unadorned,  
stark, stripped-down, zen-garden bare.  
To hell with rooms without clutter,  
poetry without license, art without metaphor,  
body without magic (the heart a pump,  
the brain a computer—give me a break),  
stars without myth (the sun a nuclear reactor),  
love without mystery (it's only hormones).  
I want life intricate, elaborate, rich,  
too heavy to hold in one hand,  
too sumptuous to digest in one sitting,  
life that sounds like a hundred choirs  
singing different music from a hundred balconies  
all at once, that looks like sedimentary rock  
stacked with the history of oceans,  
that tastes like salt and wine,  
smells like woods in spring—  
flowers pushing up through rotting wood,  
layer upon layer of mould,  
last year's mat of leaf and fern;  
life like a church built on a Roman temple  
built on a Celtic shrine built on a Neolithic tomb;  
like my study with its dolls and scripture commentaries,  
ink pots, angels, rubber chickens;  
like a huge ancient house inhabited forever  
by the same clan—Grandma's books  
and Great-grandpa's chair and Great-great Aunt Sophy's silver,  
somebody's threadbare velvet curtains and Persian rugs,  
somebody's empty laudanum bottles slipped between the walls,  
five-hundred-year-old roses in the garden,  
the roots of trees cracking through the deepest dungeon,  
a thousand pairs of tattered slippers kicked under the bed.

Mary F. C. Pratt

## Jason's Quest

On the table in your parents' kitchen,  
you spread your blueprints like offerings to the gods.  
But go back before you go farther with your plans,  
go back until you remember your boyhood of silence  
and the primitive grunts of your parents,  
back to when you believed  
your name was the nasal *Jhn* they called you,  
back to when you thought all hands made words.

Remember how easy it was to believe  
your parents were just like everyone else's,  
that all their voices were soundless as acorns,  
that angry words were fast, silent fingers,  
that mothers did not sing while they ironed and  
fathers did not shout their sons' names from bleachers.  
All you knew then was your mother's throaty coo,  
the soft fragrance of her hair,  
your father's arms beneath you,  
his eyes like dark plums, and always  
the busy, chattering hands.

You learned the possibilities of hands.  
Yours like theirs grew large and strong like  
the bow of the vessel that other Jason built.  
Today you gather your tools like Argonauts:  
the saw in your hands can level a tree,  
the bobcat you drive can move whole pieces of earth.  
You can give them what they never had.

But your real golden fleece is beyond this place.  
You cannot give them the piccolo or tuba,  
the telephone ring, the delicate crack  
of an egg, chink, thump, crackle, purr.  
Wad of paper. Words.  
What would they do with it anyway,  
their hands would want to know.

Barbara Presnell

## Season's End

It was heady doing Lesson One  
In Trig, with all its sines,  
Its openings upon and glimpses of.  
Its arcs had flung us in trajectories  
That vaulted us past earth-bound  
Frosh, and made us sophomores.

I took my ticket out to reassure myself.  
Saturday, September 18<sup>th</sup>, 1949.  
Bleacher seats, the game at 2:00  
And not yet noon, Rob with homework  
Tangents, me with mine, we waited  
For his sister Stella who was treating us.

She seemed a goddess to me at her far remove  
Of seventeen, as if on stage and floating  
At a distance I could not surmise. She entered  
In her bathrobe, right, still glowing from her tub.  
My heart usurped the space from chest to throat  
Although I tried to keep a poker face.

Then with a carelessness that maybe Bergman  
Could display with grace, she flopped  
Upon the love divan and opened her biology.  
Had all the world gone blind? Could no one see  
She was unique, unreproduceable, a one-time  
Confluence of cones and radii?

She settled in and from the corner of my eye  
It was—it was dear Lord, her silken thigh.  
I saw red hair. My blood cried out  
As must have Newton's when the apple  
Hit his head, or Kepler's when he spied  
The Milky Way, and knew he was at mystery's door.

When Fortune rains its gold on you it pours.  
Perhaps we rode the subway but we flew.  
Before we took our seats we hugged the railing,  
Right above the dugout, watching warm-up,  
Stella with her red hair lighting Ebbetts Field  
While Duke was fungoeing to Peewee Reese.

Then from the outfield, urgent, hurtling  
Toward us in its horsehide majesty  
A baseball sped. From the dugout  
Stepped Van Lingle Mungo with his mitt,  
Prepared to spear it, but it took  
A tricky bounce and passed him by.

Was there a doubt that on this afternoon  
The ball was meant for me? Because  
I was the whole of everything. Because  
God smiled on me. Because my tests would all  
Be passed with A's. I leaped on winged feet  
Up to the sky and made a one-hand bruising stab.

Then Mungo, cruising over, tanned from catching  
Too much sun, exchanged these words with me,  
Just inches separating us. "Good going, kid.  
You're ready for Class B," and spat. Blue sky.  
Red hair. This day. All rain had been denied,  
Perhaps forever as the world benignly let us play.

*Earl Coleman*

## Beauty Weekend

Robbed of our elegant week in Old Quebec  
I plan this consolation for my daughter,  
Turning fourteen, and her best friend:  
Beauty Weekend.  
Not a thing I ever dreamed  
Fifteen years ago when, awash in *retsina*,  
I asked you to my rented attic room  
where you could never stand upright.  
So our reclining led to other things  
And finally to this girl,  
Impossibly sleek and lovely  
Giggling here under a plastic cap,  
Hair smeared with roan mud,  
Her blithe friend, a blonde, going blonder.  
Afterward, no mirror gets passed by  
Without a shameless look,  
And I, coolest mom, deem them old enough  
To stroll the mall alone,  
Looking for strange chunky shoes  
And little sparkly butterflies to clip in  
That unnaturally shiny hair.  
There are worse things than being  
A failed bohemian. With one false move  
I could have missed this rangy wonder,  
Elbowing her friend, whispering  
“Damn I’m beautiful”  
Thinking me out of earshot,  
Not knowing how my heart holds on  
With joy.

*Nancy A. Henry*

## His Children’s Room

*for Charlie*

As the day dribbles to night  
his man-strength drops away  
from endless little doings; pouring  
purple cups of milk and juice,  
slicing strawberries,  
locating lost rubber snakes,  
scrubbing crayon from the walls, reading  
the moon book till binding cracks.  
Where are hard muscles? Where  
is quickness, power, cool drink  
and fresh meat? A leopard paces  
back and forth within, trapped,  
yellow eyes blink, waiting.  
The man pads to his children’s room:  
They sleep as if safe—pure  
flesh, wholesomely content.  
He’d chew the throat of any intruder,  
even the leopard’s inside of him.

*Clifford Paul Fetters*

## Ants

### *Les blancs*

Ex-patriot and foreign service types

Exaggerate the ants,

“Army ants”

“Driver ants”

“Soldier ants,”

Brag on them

Like campaign ribbons. Peacocking

*En congé* in some northern capital,

Third whisky at elbow,

They never fail to make the ants their martyrdom:

“Yes, but worse than the vipers

[The tub-thumping rain]

[The ever-spastic bowel]

[The hellish heat]

Are the bleeding ants.

Voracious little buggers.

They'll snatch your Granny

If they catch her napping.

Went through our kitchen last month;

We couldn't head them off.

They even ate the sponge!”

### *Les noirs*

Up-country and *villageois* types

Know those narratives

For the fictions they are.

The ants do consume

Every living thing

Too dumb or too slow

To get out of their carnivorous,

Serpentine way,

But they aren't afflicted

With conscious malevolence.

Moreover, they're easy to step over;

And they won't march through

Fire or kerosene,

Or fashion little leaf-boats

To float emergency moats.

Forget those old movies.

Most important, it's not the sponge

They crave and devour,

But the banquet of garbage bits

Gathered within.

The sponge is just collateral damage.

*Jeffrey L. Dye*

## Sim Jean Keeps the Memory Of the War of Liberation

After palm wine and kolas  
Sim Jean always wants to talk  
“*Du temps auparavant,  
Quand nous faisons le maquis*”  
And every black shoe and *képi*  
Marking time in the *Nyong et Kélé*  
Was some self-appointed patriot's  
Bull's-eye. Pour him another *gobelet*.  
Once he's rolling, Jean can recall  
Ambush, mass poisonings, *le garrot*  
En route to an impromptu *pissoir*—  
All kinds of free-hand mayhem—  
*Mon Dieu*, they kept it hot *pour les grands nez,*  
*La nuit comme le jour. Les collaborateurs aussi!*

And if he can find his feet  
When the *calebasse* is *vide*  
Jean will march you down  
To a covered hole in the ground  
Behind the *ancien dispensaire*,  
Pull up a broken wooden box  
And make you moonlight inspect  
The sad armory he salvaged  
From that cookie-cutter war:  
Five or six abused Mausers wrapped in oily rags  
—“*Tu vois? Nous sommes toujours prêts!*”—  
Under a landslide of clips and loose shells.  
One more sentimental revolutionary  
Who can't give up the terror.

But there's no need. Not here. Not where shed blood  
Roots like bamboo, and the agency of revenge  
Is juju. Recently, *M. le Président*,  
*Son Excellence, El Hadj Ahmadou Ahidjo*  
Proclaimed a system [sic] of highway checkpoints  
A precaution worth the exercise.  
Look ahead: uniformed half-wits  
And children shouldering *mitraillettes*,  
Strips of gay cloth spouting from the muzzles.  
Two guys with *carte d'identité* problems  
Tumble out the back of the bus  
At the bottom of the hill  
And belly-crawl for the forest wall.  
Outside the gates of Bafoussam: four heads on pikes.

Jeffrey L. Dye

## Les Pieds de Minyéle Joseph

So long as he lived  
What work he did,  
In whatever weather,  
Wherever he went or stayed  
He was afoot and unshod.  
And when he died, Dürer's hand  
Could not have commanded them.  
Heels and balls more scar than skin,  
Splayed like dried fruit;  
The toes gnarled and skewed, amok,  
Anarchist outcroppings  
Beyond the discipline of any last.  
When Joseph climbed the narrow path  
To his *villâge natal*  
The sentient forest knew  
And welcomed his footfall.

*Jeffrey L. Dye*

# AUSTRALIA

## *Feature Section*

*edited by*

John Tranter



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## Introduction

When nineteenth-century British novelists needed to get rid of troublesome characters, they packed them off to Australia. No one ever went there, and it was difficult for them to sneak back to bother the hero and heroine.

Those characters eventually married one another and had troublesome children; Australia is full of their offspring.

Two world wars, massive immigration from Europe and Asia, affordable air travel to Europe and the Americas, and now the cheapness and ubiquity of the Internet have changed the place.

These days Sydney can remind you of Singapore, or Silicon Valley, or San Francisco's Chinatown. Melbourne, with more Greek-speaking people than any city except Athens, is sometimes called the Athens of the South. We have the most admired multicultural television network in the world, broadcasting programs from all around the planet in more than fifty languages, with original soundtracks, and all with Australian English subtitles.

Our poetry has changed too. In the nineteenth century it attempted to ape British nineteenth century nature poetry, but the attempts were seldom successful. Nature down at the bottom of the planet was far from kindly, and the seasons were upside down and inside out—Christmas in Australia is often a matter of heatwaves, shark attacks and raging bushfires. And in August, when Europeans draw their shutters against the heat and sink into siesta, Australians can lose themselves on windy ski slopes more extensive than all of Switzerland.

The strongest influences on current Australian poetry are fourfold: the vigorous developments in post-war poetry from Britain, from Europe and from the Americas, and our own local experiments since the 1950s. A ferment of new ideas and conservative reactions against them ran through Australian society in the late 1960s and 1970s. Politics became a matter of passionate argument—we were involved in an unpopular war with North Vietnam for many years—and there were rapid updates to our film, television and literary cultures, in attitudes to tertiary education, to drugs, and to women's issues. Poetry reflected and worked through all of those debates.

The legacy for the last decade of the century is a rich diversity of voices and themes. For all the distant strangeness of Australian culture, it is also a familiar modern world in many ways, and poetry—as it has for thousands of years—brings us essential human themes to reflect on and to savour.

*John Tranter, Sydney, 12/99*

## Lavender Ink

Look, there she is: Miss Bliss, dozing  
in the shade of a Campari umbrella. Beside her  
a book—something brilliant: Callimachus,  
let's say, printed in an elegant Venetian type—  
half-read, with the most alarming

metaphors to come,  
and a glass of gin, a cool dew  
blooming on the crystal, the air  
kissing her skin  
and the neighbour's hi-fi playing  
'I Can't Get Started' in a distant  
corner of the afternoon.

The yachts on the water.

The tinkle of ice.

I'm thinking of you, reinventing Sydney  
a thousand years from now, and not  
getting it quite right: missing the  
delicate hangover, the distant murmur  
of the city, the scent of this ink  
drying on the page.

*John Tranter*

## Today We Have Naming of Poets

The good American poets are the best in the world. The best European poets under 50 are very good (several over 50 are better than best). Asian poets abound, so does plankton.

The good English poets are very good but not the best in the world.

Now we come to the New Zealand poets and the best are very good indeed—no naming of parts.

The Australian poets of course must be considered apart from the rest and with the uttermost critical integrity—They deserve this—Where are they?

*Bruce Beaver*

## High Tide

There is a long silence every poet dreads  
when heat clouds the sky mauve-grey  
and there is not the faintest flicker of a leaf

The self is like a limp curtain hanging still  
until a southerly has swept the stagnant air  
turning it cool and clean.

Now the body's framework stands upright  
and flesh is curved as if a sculptor might  
have worked in clay to build up form and shape.

The wide doors of the boatshed are propped open,  
and the skiff waits on the slipway—but not yet.  
The swimmer dives, and rises, shaking

his sleek, wet head. Water, air. His body  
can never have enough. He braces himself  
against the pull of the incoming tide. His limbs

are fluid. He lets them go with the current,  
drinks in the departing light, the first points of stars  
and a ghost moon turning gold.

He swims through the broad band of light, then floats  
counting the stars until they form in clusters  
he can't decipher. Odd words come

like fish leaping. Tireless,  
down the long track of gold he travels.  
Water under the moon's pull bulges

over the beach. Now he can speak  
with the tide's voice. Darkness,  
night and the moon are his.

*Vera Newsom*

## The heart at 3 a.m.

Outside  
clouds  
search for the moon  
amongst the litter of stars.

I listen to the clock,  
read the book  
of my blood.

I ask myself:  
What do I know?

That water erodes stone,  
that loneliness erodes a human being.

I see us,  
standing crossroads,  
unfolding maps  
of pain and wishes.

What are you thinking  
when you buy a painting?  
What are you thinking  
when you buy a gun?

The night is full of ambulances and dreamers.

I think the meaning of life  
is to shed our armour:  
that's why  
I navigate my heart  
to paper,  
that's why  
we risk  
diaries, beds and kisses.

Sadness stands on the street corner,  
asking for money.

It's cold  
and he has only  
one arm.  
Our coins are not the sun,  
our coins are not kisses.  
This is the way  
the world  
fails itself.

An hour slithers down  
a hole in the world.  
What is it hunting?  
The wearied city  
rests its neon head  
upon its dirty sleeve.

Each breath is a ticket.  
Where are we going?  
There is only one hangman  
in the house of regret:  
he lives in the mirror  
that sleep  
often hands us.

I stand on the balcony,  
look out  
over the city.  
I cannot count all the rooms  
that ache  
for the waterfall  
of a girl.

*Peter Bakowski*

## Catullus 51

To me he seems charmed as a god,  
or, if legal, charmed above gods,  
seated by you repeatedly  
    gazing, getting

your sweet laugh. Unhinged by love  
his senses fly: on seeing you,  
Lesbia, my voice loses power  
    (can't think to speak)

but my tongue ties flat, subtle fires  
break burning down my limbs, my ears  
ring deaf, at once two pitch black nights  
    close down my lights.

Easy, Catullus, your demise;  
easy your excess, your desire.  
How else do great cities, kings, fall  
    but easily?

*Hugh Tolhurst*

## Holiday in Kosovo

*in memory of Jello Biafra*

Some people still suntan, some people still  
commit atrocities and do it well.  
Bill says it's not time to go tank busters,  
the Adriatic fleet just sees the cruise  
missile cruise the beach, then video kills  
Red Star Belgrade at NATO HQ:  
no Adriatic sailor views the screen.  
The boys are looting late in Kosovo  
and forget to ring home, letting young kids  
smoke dope at unity rock gigs in clubs  
where no bombshell gets around the bouncer.  
The cruise missile is very cigar shaped  
and they do not watch your television.  
Some darkling mohawks play Dead Kennedys  
in barking English in a Belgrade dive,  
*"It's a holiday in Cambodia  
where people dress in black,  
a holiday in Cambodia...."*  
Your three minute punk classic raw and right  
to back the rolling credits  
for a sly, superpowered, twentieth century  
fashioned between hairspray and the ironing board.

*Hugh Tolhurst*

## Fair Cop

Tiny, jewel tragedies  
sit winking in the past,  
minute on any global scale  
yet compact, all the same  
of pressurised sadness

a story found its way to me  
returned from weeks in Europe  
how a friend found my six-year-old  
(left behind) sitting, as he thought  
unobserved, on a doorstep  
crying quietly to himself

hot coals heaped on my head  
that haven't cooled in all this time  
a guilty, impotent grief. It still seems  
the seeds of every later pain  
lie there, in that moment  
of my absence

*Cath Kenneally*

*Fair cop* said by criminals when they've been caught fair and square.

## An Irish Reel

An Irish reel that's always been a favorite  
on the Lucky Oceans radio show—  
Lucky reminds us it's called *Old Hag,*  
*You Have Killed Me,* and with that  
I receive an image of dark-shawled women  
walking two paces behind their men  
they still do in parts of rural Ireland  
a country, too, where girls and boys  
are segregated, and for longer, than  
in most others

Back in the wide brown place,  
Honest John, our Baby Boss, decrees  
by magisterial sulk that here there shall be  
no more 'chairperson', no 'him or her', but  
'he' and 'his' shall be heard once more  
in the land, and only 'he'  
—all contracts to be signed  
by the Man in Charge, boyo!

Yet an Irish reel still sets me mentally  
going through my paces, sometimes my feet,  
too—Irish Dancing medals gather dust  
at home—our flying girl-child feet  
on concert-hall boards were liberated  
by the forms they learned  
we were lifted up, we believed  
we belonged to that soulful band  
our dresses with their brief green capes  
mimicked the priests' own robes

Just this morning, we hear on JJJ  
two of the young activists at the tent city  
behind the NSW parliament. One is Kitty  
O'Gorman, the other is Peter O'Brien,  
begorrah!

Battered Irish stereotypes I can't let go  
a populace outraged by oppression  
(not only their own), crafters of beauty  
in words and music, crafty, too  
Gerry Adams begins a magazine chat  
with a reference to Yeats (*too much sacrifice  
makes of the heart a stone*), and I warm,  
comrade-like, to Yeats, the old fraud  
and the way Adams has him  
at his fingertips

*Cath Kenneally*

## Screens, jets, heaven

Lightning above the bay.  
Sky night shimmers.  
We almost scent rain.  
Jet engines shudder on curfew  
then cease.  
Rain doesn't come.  
The hills shape the clouds.  
Blind stars—always.  
By midnight they are covered  
with the noise of our life.

We know heaven is vacant.  
But on screen we are beautiful  
in the pulse of the cables  
dying in videos of memory—  
our light in the dark frame,  
the neon of a dirty world.

The midnight special  
screens old rock and roll  
a purity in its black and white moves.  
So we find solace  
when we peel back the covers.  
We sing raw  
but still beautiful  
skimming the light from a song  
wrecking harmony, sublime  
and nonchalant.

Dawn sneaks us in, awakened.  
A new wind is in from the south.  
Out there the sea,  
the new day's jets.

*Jill Jones*

## Possum Skin Garment

Look at my possum skin  
cloak.

It cannot be replaced  
with your colonising  
garments.

I am force-fed  
repeatedly  
bible—bullets—baccy  
plour—tea

Your white chugar  
leaves us with a  
colonial legacy of legalised  
genocide—diabetes  
asthma  
cancer  
colonial psychosis.

Cloak me with your  
whiteness these victorious  
Victorian garments.

My spirit will continue.

I refuse to be conquered and  
post-colonialised.

My story which is yours  
tells of strength, survival, and  
on-going dreams. Come closer,  
feel the possum spirit. This can  
be our pathway home.

*Lisa Bellear*

*baccy tobacco plour flour chugar sugar*

## They said smile

Put on your Sunday clothes, if it is too cold, then wear  
a government issued blanket, damn useless those things,  
not like kangaroo and possum skin. *Smile at this*, I look  
toward this whitefulla with glasses and an accent, his mob  
must be long way from 'ere.

*Smile, please smile, I have a heck-teak schedule to complete.  
Can I tell you something funny, interest you in some trinkets?  
Do you lot have to look that way? One more time, one more chance  
to be your best. Fine, up to you lot, whatever happens I get paid,  
smiles or no smiles.*

Stupid little whitefulla, there is no reason to smile, here in this cold  
shabby studio. I have heard of these places, the smells, strange lights  
and the funny way the whitefulla speaks. *Smile, smile, smile over here,  
look up to my right, your left.* Maybe we smile afterwards for fun,  
when he's finished talking. Maybe not. Smile, sure I can find reasons to,  
we all can, but not right now. We are a dignified gathering and today  
we shall not do as this whitefulla asks.

*Lisa Bellear*

## Observatorium

I dredge again into memory for the sweetness  
of the unattainable. It is a complex compass,  
it is simplicity itself. I rotate the dome  
of the planetarium: scan the flashing firmament for home.

West is nostalgia, the pangs of history,  
the sweetest and most sacred, a miracle-land  
or lake of delight, regret, illusion: a territory  
where time is eternally vanishing as it shows its hand.

East is perpetual motion, the old wheel  
and the new with its spokes lacquered, or studded  
with gems and pebbles, its rim covered  
in cards: I prise them off each morning to reshuffle, redeal.

South is the night, the quaking of the ground  
and the blurring of vision, noisy report of a dim salute  
from the suburbs: welcome to the circumnavigating mute  
armada, patrolling the royal mosaic, the inverted crown.

North is the moment the needle urges, the unstillable  
longing for time that ceases to vanish, the all-answering hum  
when the wheel pauses, the tremors subside: a syllable  
sounds the world, the diamond and the heart are one.

What time is it? Still daylight or the dark?  
My telescope is back where it began, full circle, stark  
in its outline against the shimmering vault.  
Maybe the eyepiece is at the wrong end. That's not my fault.

*Alex Skovron*

## The Moonlit Creek

falling asleep to the repeated note  
of the mopoke hidden in the garden thicket  
I am a child again  
listening to the mopoke's call  
from the moonlit creekbed  
or standing by the German piano  
singing *The Last Rose of Summer*  
(my father's favourite song)

it's there by the moonlit creek  
if you bury me deep enough  
I promise I won't go walking  
at night through the flocks of sheep  
to worry the neighbours.

*Dorothy Hewett*

*Mopoke* an owl of the genus *Ninox*, found in Australia and New Zealand,  
and having a call which resembles the word "mopoke."



## Early One Morning

The cat is dead and the black rabbit  
but the fox is still free  
to leap through the kitchen window  
at midnight clattering the pans

early one morning you found him  
hidden behind the sofa  
lifting his muzzle in a snarl  
but sitting there in the first light  
your hands hanging loose on your thighs  
you questioned him in the language  
you always use for an animal  
backwards and forwards you went  
in a friendly conversation  
he copying every intonation  
in his foxy whine till you told him  
*well I think it's time you went*

as if you had given him permission  
he sidled out through the door  
pausing and taking his time  
looking back once and testing the air  
with his red brush trailing behind him  
he loped away through the orchard  
making for his own wild bush  
on the other side of the railway line.

*Dorothy Hewett*

## There are places they won't go

There are places they won't go,  
places they'll lose an acre or two  
by keeping a safe distance, the crop  
edgy and frayed where discs  
didn't dig deep or where the seeder  
ran out of super and grain, denuded boxes  
like black holes drawing on each other's emptiness,  
wheel-kick on loam-clod as the tractor  
struggles to pull the machine  
the hell out of there, though almost  
wanting to be close—bright parrots  
sarcastic in fruit trees, saying "it's fine over here,  
the fruit is good." But they know better,  
it's a patch to be avoided, old house  
boarded up, water tanks rusted through.  
"What a waste," says an outsider. The reply:  
"Brings a glow to the rest of the place."  
The shame hidden there, the bulk  
of the farm productive, well-managed.

*John Kinsella*

## Ride to Grantchester Meadows – Ride 1

It's not quite a rural ride  
and the conditions of work  
don't prescribe the energy  
displaced by the body

cycling in the crack-of-dawn  
mist, a cold sweat triggering  
a sparrowhawk as you exclaim  
what you don't mean, the town

edging into pasture and hawthorn  
hedges and a roadside thick  
with thistles, stinging nettles  
and upright hedge-parsley,

the cows placebos for the vegetarian  
within consumers who wander  
and jog and let dogs loose  
by the walkways, the river

backed by burnt, cut, and summered  
fields, errant waterbird stretched  
on the veneer of glimmer over the dingy  
water – so clean with morning, the sun

burning like a wet fuse, the breath  
of cows on your legs, their shit  
making things grow like publicity:  
propinquity and self-efficacy

bringing you all home: fit,  
purposeful, verdant, pastoral,  
indulging in the history  
of vole and rat and mouse

dead on the doorstep  
of Grantchester Meadows.

*John Kinsella*

Just outside Cambridge, England, Grantchester Meadows is famous as the place where Rupert Brooke lived. Members of the Bloomsbury group took tea here, and Sylvia Plath and Ted Hughes walked its paths. Byron's pool is also here, where Lord Byron is said to have gone skinny-dipping with his drunken mates.

## Interview with John Kinsella

John Kinsella, originally from Western Australia, is now a Fellow of Churchill College, Cambridge, England. He has written and published many books of poetry and prose, and is the editor of *Salt*, an international poetry journal. He is also a co-editor of *Stand* magazine (UK) and the International Editor of *The Kenyon Review* (USA).

Rod Mengham is a poet and critic who teaches at Jesus College, Cambridge, England. He is the publisher of *Equipage*, a series of contemporary poetry books and pamphlets.

Rod Mengham: Everyone who knows your work has learned to think of you as an Australian poet for whom a sense of place is of immense importance. But I have also got used to thinking of you as a poet who lives and works in Cambridge in England. Has England become a place in your work, do you think, as well as an especially useful place for your work?

John Kinsella: Well, I guess I'm a poet of "scapes"—of the land, of language, of cultures. Things are never fixed for me; everything is in flux. Australia is one of my reference points, but so is Cambridge. I'm interested in how these nodal points move through and against each other.

Of course, one has to be able to separate national identity from notions of place. The blackbird and the blue jay and the grey squirrel [introduced] mean as much or little to me as the English-born Cantabrigian. The local mythologies of the willow or elm or oak become parts of my own spatial vocabulary.

I am most familiar with the wheatbelt region of Western Australia, but I am becoming increasingly familiar with fenland landscape [the low-lying fen country around Cambridge]. Of course, the fact that my childhood wasn't spent in the fens, and that I'm not privy to the inherited "language" of the place, will mean a certain level of association will never be reached.

But Cambridge is like an island—and, indeed, geographically was in a region of islands—with a large transient population. This is my other

home now. It is as valid, from a work perspective, as a source of "home" imagery, as the wheatbelt of Western Australia. Politically, however, the implications are different. And this is what interests me.

Rod Mengham: People seem to have got into the habit of referring to your work as if it formed two separate strands, "Australian" and "International," broadly speaking. But in your more recent publications, particularly those issued in Cambridge, the two strands are intertwined. Is this the way you imagine your work will continue to develop, raveling things up together, or could there be a need to unravel them again?

John Kinsella: It will continue this way, I'd guess. I'm interested that you say "Australian" and "International." One would associate the "pastoral" aspects of my work more with Australia, the linguistically innovative with the "International." But it was working within the "rural" Australian tradition that I decided to look to more international approaches, to be more experimental with form and language. This was a political decision.

The deployment of a euro-"pastoral" tradition in Australia seemed ludicrous, and a kind of anti-pastoral developed. We're talking about an invaded space, from a farming perspective. A land that has been ecologically devastated. Salt is the most prominent image in my work. Much of the Western Australian farmlands have been devastated by salt caused by a rising water table, itself caused by the clearing of trees, which have a deep root system, and their replacement by shallow-rooted wheat and other crops.

I'm interested in something I've called "international regionalism"—finding a political and international English for poetry that allows for the specificities of regional identity. In a world of mass communications it seems impossible to be anything but this. Occasionally the two separate and the strands redefine themselves, but you can never escape what you've done before, so that particular process is informed by the other—to write "straight" immediately becomes a metatextual act!

Rod Mengham: In many ways the most significant developments in your recent work have had to do with its generic diversity. The drama connects quite naturally, almost seamlessly, with the poetry. But the fiction seems to be exploring a quite different area of concerns....

John Kinsella: Yes, I've always thought of the theatre as a poetic space. My favourite dramatist is Beckett—and the use of space works as annotations or lacunae to or of the speech text. Speech text is pure

poetry. It shapes itself into mental sound units. So I ask myself, which *is* closer to thought, speech or writing? Or the space of the theatre? Fiction is decoration. It's a construct. It is set up as a field for negotiation—of character, place, speech, text. One's concerns with fiction are scientific.

Rod Mengham: What about influences? It looks as though your work has been susceptible to successive waves of quite different influences. I wonder about that, also about the earliest influences, which are less easy to conceive of. Which writers (if any) seemed exemplary to you at the start? And are there any figures that you have kept in mind throughout the course of your writing career?

John Kinsella: At first—canonical figures, I'm afraid! The Romantics—especially Keats and Wordsworth, Milton (specifically *Paradise Lost*), Wyatt, Spenser, Donne, Marvell...and Clare, Sir Walter Raleigh, John Wilmot...Dickinson, Whitman, Villon, Rimbaud, Baudelaire, Rilke, and so on. I became obsessed with Mandelstam when I was around twenty, though this phase passed quickly.

The next phase was the twentieth-century modernists. Discovering the work of John Ashbery opened imaginative doors. When I came across the *OuLiPo* (via Perec's novel *Life: A User's Manual*), I developed a thirst for experimental work. Gertrude Stein was a trigger. Language poetry hit me in my twenties and entirely changed everything about my approach to writing, and more importantly, reading. And then the Cambridge school, most significantly [the poet Jeremy] Prynne.

Most of these influences remain. I re-read them, and reassess my work in relation to the various readings I've engaged in over the years. All of these poets are read against the background of Australian poetry. They are a parallel stream.

My mother wrote poetry, so Australian poetry was part of the household. Kenneth Slessor, Judith Wright, Robert Adamson, Dorothy Hewett, Les Murray, Michael Dransfield, Francis Webb, Gig Ryan, John Forbes, and John Tranter undid the way I read the "canon." When I came to writing an "Australian Pastoral," the "school poets" I returned to were Robert Frost and Thomas Hardy. One American and one Englishman. The tensions are there, the historical and colloquial similarities—and massive differences. But not the linguistic tools for undoing the pastoral construct. Prynne undid everything. Undoes everything.

Rod Mengham: It's obvious, I suppose, that John Kinsella is a being for whom writing is quite unthinkable without a constant exchange of ideas, things flowing in all directions. A very important part of this constant intermingling of projects and practices, arguments and challenges, is the editing you do. This must take up a significant amount of your mental space, what with your chronic obligations to *Salt*, *Stand*, *Kenyon Review*, and the great range of other occasional commissions. Is there a basic agenda underlying all this output?

John Kinsella: The key word here is exchange. A writer doesn't exist in a vacuum, though sometimes I get the impression that certain writers would like it to be that way! The really important things in my life—my veganism, ecological concerns, working through my writing to overcome racism, sexism, and bigotry in general—are informed and focussed through dialogue. I like to talk, I like to listen. Editing is the most active form of this in a literary sense. What I have to say is one dot in a pointillist landscape. It's the other dots I find really interesting. Or maybe the other pixels in a virtual space.

I want to bring seemingly disparate voices together in order to clarify, intensify, or demolish a particular argument. I'm extremely interested in the "science" of rhetoric. The grammar and component parts of the argument. But I'm as focussed on how to undo rhetoric as on how to command it—it's the political possibilities of rhetoric that fascinate me.

The thing that links my various editorial projects is diversity. No particular voice is authoritative, is "right." Everything is to be held up to scrutiny. The reader reinvents each text, though subtexts are drawn editorially. I'd like to think *Salt* has broken down barriers between different "groups" in Australian and international poetry. This may be wishful thinking. But in the end, it's about the readers—for them I hope it's created texts behind the texts.

I like the idea of the project. In a sense, my writing is all part of one project with many variations. All rewrites of the same thing. The basic unit for me is the word, though I'm inclined to think I'll end up with a smaller unit as a base than this. My editing other people's work and my own projects are part of the same process. None of us owns words. We need each other.

Recently I've been working with artists, photographers, musicians, a cultural critic, and a sound engineer. The range of the projects is growing. And they're all connected. Hypertextually. Collaboration /editing / dialogue are also about trust and loyalty. I value friendship above all

other things. Editing, at its best, is a process of trust and honesty. Subterfuge in text is okay, but not in the personal editorial interactions. Editing allows you to get personal as well as impartial/theoretical/literary with a piece of work. It's interactive.

Rod Mengham: Since you've mentioned Prynne, I'd like to ask about your take on his writing, since it is clearly so pivotal for you. What about all the work you did preparing for the publication of his *Poems* in 1999? Did involvement in that process, that kind of editing, materially affect your understanding of the texts?

John Kinsella: The book was originally to be published by Folio (*Salt*), my small press—but grew until it reached the stage where we needed to co-publish. Fremantle Arts Centre Press [in Western Australia] did heaps of work and provided Bloodaxe [UK] with the final text, while Bloodaxe did a magnificent job in producing both the hard and softcover under the three-way publication deal.

My partner typed and set the text which I copy-edited, followed by Jeremy himself, Cate Sutherland at Fremantle Arts Centre Press, Tracy Ryan (my partner) again, myself, and Jeremy. Jeremy had originally given us a disk version of the *Poems* volume but it was incompatible with the software we were using—it had to be entirely retyped. Clive Newman from FACP looked after the business side of things. I actually conceived of the project in 1993 while hitchhiking in the South-West of Australia with an early edition of Prynne's poems in my bag. So, it has been a saga. A wonderful saga.

I'd always had a deep respect for the poetic and intellectual qualities of Prynne's verse, but hadn't appreciated the spatial dimensions of the text itself until it came to preparing the book. In early discussions with Jeremy it was agreed that we'd have to look to a format that would allow for generous margins. I remember talking with Jeremy about the British Library MS. Cotton Vitellius E.X. of Skelton's *Book of The Laurel*, and how its wide margins had left a fair amount of the text intact after the 1731 Ashburnham House fire. Obviously the discussion was ironic, but the point remained that, like the frame of the painting, the frame of the book and the "white space" surrounding the text are an active part of the work.

In a print pamphlet, the position of the staples—that is, staples as colons, etc.—is relevant. Nothing is haphazard. So the moment we entered into the project of publication the texts became active. Font became an interesting subject—we ended up with a form of Garamond

after considering Bembo. Font is both an aesthetic and political choice—machine-produced fonts playing into the very product fetishisation that Prynne has worked against from early in his writing, and with his publication. As librarian at Gonville and Caius [Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge] he has access to a wonderful collection of technical and artistic books relating to the history of text and book production. He lent me copies of his favourite font books, and I became so obsessed with them that I began a cycle of poems that eventually became part of my Graphology cycle—a project I will pursue until my last writing moments. If Prynne is about encryption on the level of meaning, he's also about inscription on the level of text. [His book] *Red D Gypsum*, published after the *Poems* volume had been edited, is interesting in this context. A book about the encryption and inscription of pastoral motifs, of the vacant lots filled with the waste of production.

It is impossible for me to discuss the effect that working on the Prynne volume has had on my work. It has become part of it. I'm editing a book of essays on Prynne's work and am writing a large piece on the Prynne proofs—they went through many phases—for *South Atlantic Quarterly* at the moment. The annotated Prynne proofs are a work of social and cultural significance in themselves. No, they are volumes of poems unique and entire in themselves.

Rod Mengham: You've been very adventurous with collaborations involving other media, but there is a far greater number of poetic collaborations. This kind of project is still an unusual one, despite historic precedents, but it seems to be second nature to you. How do you go about the planning and executing of this kind of challenge?

John Kinsella: It's to do with the "ownership" of words. The point being that no one owns them. Given this, it seems much more interesting to work collectively on text production. Collaboration on poetry projects varies greatly in its strategies. For example, the *Zoo* volumes which I worked on with Coral Hull over eighteen months—due out with Paper Bark Press [New South Wales, Australia] in mid-2000—was a case of writing individual poems around a central theme, sending the work via email to each other as a piece was completed, and building a book from this process. The order of individual poems was set after we decided we'd covered the ground we'd mapped out in the early stages of discussion.

The publishers wanted each poem to be identified by initials, but I was less keen on this. Thing is, readers often want to impose "authorship"

on what they're reading as a kind of critical security. In the absence of a canon there's "taste and discernment"—a worry!

Other collaborations have been "anonymous"—such that the authors have worked on the same text, and the beginning and the end of each contribution are blurred or totally undefinable. A few years ago I did an email exchange of poems with Susan Schultz, as I did with Tom Raworth and Keston Sutherland. The Raworth was interesting in that after it was completed Tom "gutted" the work and extracted his pieces, which he reused in other projects. I later published a work called "alterity: poems without Tom Raworth" utilising "my" bits of the construct. I'm involved in many collaborations at present, and in many ways this is what interests me most.

The next volume I have out is a shared one with [Australian poet and playwright] Dorothy Hewett called *Wheatlands*. It's set in the wheatlands of Western Australia, where Dorothy and I have long associations. Dorothy, of course, from the first half of the century, me from the 60s to the present day. The poems are primarily taken from earlier volumes though we've both contributed a fair number of new works. Ray Coffey from Fremantle Arts Centre Press has edited it, using photographs from a variety of family sources. The early correspondence between Dorothy and myself is where the real collaboration took place, apart from the questions of association, geography, culture, history, and influence. The external editor introduced another variable into the collaborative process.

Rod Mengham: There's a strong political bearing in your work; it raises various questions about political responsibility. Not just of the spectacular variety, but in the sphere of everyday life. You've already spoken about the politics of land-use in Australia. What are the other subjects on the political agenda that should be given highest priority?

John Kinsella: It's a cliché, but I do believe everything is political. I believe in responsibility and accountability. In the mid-eighties I was heavily involved in the anti-nuclear campaigns. I hesitate to say "movement," because no "movement" would have me at the time—objecting to my linking of this "single" issue to events in Nicaragua, third world debt, apartheid in South Africa, land rights issues in Australia, and so on. In fact, when I was arrested at a wharf protest against nuclear warships being in Fremantle Harbour (or just being, generally!) the local senator for the nuclear disarmament party refused to help me get out of the lockup whilst in there bailing out her crew of P.C. protestors. No love lost there.

I'm a pacifist. And I'm a vegan anarchist with a commitment to developing a language to facilitate small unit/group living. The mere mention of the word "anarchist" has people running or mocking. I'm using the word in a practical and specific way. I'd always been interested in Kropotkin [Prince Peter Aleksevich Kropotkin, 1842-1921, Russian geographer, author, and anarchist], and in the eighties lived in a number of "groups" of friends. We were active against people like Jack Van Tongeren's Australian Nationalist Movement, against nuclear proliferation, logging in the south-west forests, and extremely pro Aboriginal land rights.

I believed—and still do—in the ability of small groups to self-regulate, to "make" their own law, and to be morally responsible through self-regulation. The State protects and dehumanises simultaneously—one learns to live within it, even to accept it, but never to give in to it. One of the great things about the Internet is that it allows for small communities to co-exist with their "real" external existences. I live in a Cambridge College—my relationships with my colleagues and the world in general are "anarchistic." I don't see a contradiction in this. I've mentioned "international regionalism" on many occasions—the commitment to respecting regional integrity whilst facilitating global dialogue—and, in a sense, this is at the core of my belief system.

As an ethical vegan my prime concerns are with animal welfare issues and questions of exploitation generally. I don't believe that animals should be used for human gain, nor should they be patronised in that "food chain" kind of way. I'm against all forms of genetic engineering and the use of animals in any form of research. In essence, I feel that humanity can socially, intellectually, artistically, and "spiritually" progress without exploiting the physical and natural world in the way it does/we do.

My co-editorship of *Stand* magazine in England has been important in this—*Stand* has a long history of a politics of the left, which I find amenable to my ethical concerns. I'm keen to ensure that it stays this way and that its interaction with and promotion of various literatures is done in a non-appropriative and non-patronising way. For me, all centres are fringes.

Rod Mengham: Andrew Duncan has asserted that your work discards both European and Aboriginal myth-systems in favour of original mythic creation. That's quite a statement. I have two questions about it; one concerns the kind of relationship that any non-Aboriginal poet has

towards Aboriginal culture, and the other is about the extent to which any contemporary poet could or should be a myth-maker?

John Kinsella: I don't have any "rights" to any aspect of Aboriginal culture. What I do have is a right to consider and criticise the invasive interaction the culture/s I'm a product of had, and have, with Aboriginal cultures. Through personal friends as well as literature, through historical circumstance and geography, Aboriginal cultures—especially Nyoongah [the aboriginal cultures of western and north-western Australia]—have always been part of my life. I'm happy enough to interact when and where I'm welcome, and certainly insofar as I'm impelled to by the actions of other non-indigenes in Australia.

One thing that deeply bothers me is that when outsiders read any work that mentions an Aboriginal name or reference to Aboriginal mythology in a positive sense, they consider it a case of Jindyworobakism—a desire to create an Australianity, a nationalistic portrait, by integration and connection with the pre-settler/invader cultures. [The "Jindyworobaks" were a self-named group of nationalistic white Australian poets in the 1930s and 1940s, who sought to integrate themes and images from the local antipodean environment into their poetry.] These so-called outsiders may fail to see that you can interact ironically—and at times are compelled to—with this "heritage."

My most recent attempt to deconstruct the language of these interactions—and their presentations within the "western canon" (if you like) is *The Benefaction*—a Euro-explorer text that ironises its own terms of production. The narrative is reported as a record of survey and claim, though the method of that "claiming" is so obviously unethical that no legitimate claim can be made.

It's often said that I work with myth—traditional myth with something like *The Lilith Poems*, contemporary myth with [the Australian gold-pro prospector and explorer] Lasseter, and cross-over with Nebuchadnezzar—but I'm not sure that "contemporary" is the most useful word. What I'm dealing with is the association with a particular kind of language of recollection and projection through naming and memory systems.

It's about the way information is retained and reprocessed at a particular time, within a particular culture, and most importantly, when those codes are removed from the culture in which they have evolved, and placed into another. Questions of appropriation—yes—but also a positive hybridisation and production of a "language" that will challenge the

dominant system. Myth can be used to contain/imprison—but also to undo/liberate. It's how we deploy memory sequences that matters.

Rod Mengham: In Louis Armand's reading of your work, there is an emphasis on your use of ellipsis (and he's thinking about "Syzygy" and what has come since) as something which has the character of a cicatrix, as if what has motivated that kind of textual manoeuvre is damage, trauma. It's an intriguing idea, which clearly echoes an important thematic preoccupation, but does it reflect the range of uses, reflected in a range of tones, rhythms (above all the sheer movement of the verse) that your ellipses are surrounded by and infused with?

John Kinsella: He might be right. But it's precipice stuff in terms of the field of the page. That's literal. The damage comes in the inability of language—ultimately—to deal with moral distress. The animals are going to be killed, forests are going to be cut down, white Australian poets are going to borrow Aboriginal song cycles and recycle them as national tropes. That's the trauma. It's personal as well—to do with addictions and loss and a recognition that effectiveness is often topical.

It's right to talk about tone and rhythm because ellipsis slows things down, causes us to ask: do we want to go there, where have we been? It's the intrusion of the authorial voice. The self is deployed ironically everywhere else, even at the most sincere of moments, but not when words have become dots. Because that's all printed words are. Atoms making molecules and so on down the timeline of materiality. In performance the voice and the body replicate the delays, the hesitations. For me, the page has always been as important as the stage. The mark as important as the voice. Maybe my basic unit is the "text" rather than the "word."

And physically, the ellipsis is where the page tears....

## tabloid

o for a patio in salad bright stripes  
with a view of the pool curved as a hip  
and tiled in truth blue and dental  
dream white, where the ladders gleam out  
like a cadillac's chrome you gaze  
up from the barbie pink lilo in your new  
bikini of luminous lime to catch the  
pineapple ring that has just dropped from  
the sky on your laquered big toe  
and you whistle the tune of the  
mouseketeers' show almost in tune;  
you hear them prepare for the big barbeque  
right over your shoulder—shrimp and  
t-bone stacked high as a flag, they'll  
light the whole thing with fresh copies  
of the news of the world

*joanne burns*

## Crunch:

You got me to do up  
the zipper on your black vanity  
cocktail dress.

Like stuffing dough  
into a baking tin.

I realised why  
it's girls who help girls dress.  
Resistance fighters from way back.

Although, I know that  
the freckled flesh of your back  
will be more than willing  
to accommodate  
its undoing.

Such is the lament  
of the handmaiden  
and the bias of zips.

*Keri Glastonbury*



from "Wasp Diary"

*God bless each corner of this house  
And be the lintel blest  
And bless the roof-tree overhead  
And bless each place of rest...*

1

The first day we realise  
this is serious  
I read her Dennis's poem  
& learn  
the frost will get them.  
But the frost doesn't come.

Summer's extended  
just for the wasps,  
underwriting their expansion.  
They are dependent on it.  
Their technology too has limits.

A movement nearly electronic,  
fridge and computer  
unnerving me now  
with their connivance,  
turning to wasp song.

A whole wall of them  
within the wall  
& arching out now  
into the roof-tree,  
a human house  
gone live & porous.

What have we done  
to deserve this?

4

In comes the hit man  
to do our dirty work.

Warm & gentle  
he respects his target.

Six feet, he says, like the depth  
a dead man sinks to

or the length of a man on his belly—  
creeping sniper,

nest with a mission  
like the cyst I harboured

so big the doctor wondered  
how it could fit there  
without something bursting.

A surgeon, then.  
A bedside manner.

Four times he visits  
& it still isn't over.

He's sorry, but we should go now  
& wait for the all-clear.

5

The flat they have given us  
in the interim  
mimics the contours  
of the other

with subtle distinctions  
so we trip over ourselves  
the door that opens outward  
the switch that isn't there.

And on the ground floor  
so we know  
the noise we must have been making,  
thinking ourselves insular  
when cellular,  
stirring things up there.

The furniture  
ours in another shade,  
as if this were a dream-world  
or that set of off-colour images  
we call memory.

Like the wasps shifting strategy  
testing another point  
of entry, we move on beside ourselves,  
biding time till we can return  
to the scene of the crime.

7

Our flat has that fake look  
of purity after trauma.

The polite reception  
for a brother's funeral.

The repainting  
after an axe murder.

How do you live there?  
The chairs, though, left up

on the tables, our normal clutter  
gone straight now, like an addict

after a near miss.

*Tracy Ryan*

## Rock Fish Dying

Impact of water on rock  
drowns other sounds,  
so why do I seem to hear  
the fish in the creel  
gasping air, wide-eyed,  
sensing the cold, sweet  
onrushing tide on their  
luminous skins, in their gills  
as they stiffen and die.

*Jena Woodhouse*

## The Unimaginable

North of the falls I am silent.  
Silence is the sun. The sun,  
undoing knots in my ears,  
is a punctured fireball  
and we grow from that.

There was a night sky.  
Thick moonlit clouds bristling  
with ionized quiet. Then  
lightning cracking up,  
the demiurge's belly-laugh.  
Is speech that? There

was a flood in this gorge on  
whose unstable ground I camp.  
Cliffs became its riverbanks.  
Trees as old as my knowable family  
toppled, roots kicking at the sky.  
Rocks shorn of their mossy beards  
were older, reborn. In this

void, this muteness, a log is  
shedding bark over dark fertile mush.  
Beetles, joined end-to-end  
small with large, are stepping in sync.

This silence, this place, as  
unimaginable speech. A path  
I overlooked. A skink, basking.

*John Mateer*

## The Analogues

Those speedboats on the Boobera  
as if along an ancient spine  
wincing under water

or Harley-Davidsons in church  
throaty on the sacred tiles  
and heading for the altar.

*Geoff Page*

photos

it was a wonderful winter for pears  
or was it spring I have  
photos of your gallantry  
in different kitchens is this  
the post-modern condition

I remember

what we ate I remember  
subjecting you  
to the dark side of my disposition

the gulf this evening  
is more perfectly opalescent than  
a Freemantle pearl if I  
could condense myself into a jewel I would  
lie on your neck  
and try not to burn

*Lee Cataldi*

visit

even if they arrive  
incarnate apparently smeared  
white with clay or ash  
or caked with black dust with such  
warmth of welcome such  
smiles of pure delight

we are so pleased to see them but  
waking in the real dawn our  
mouths parch with horror

these

friendly and beautiful dead

inhabit us

*Lee Cataldi*

## Death

### I

Cure death's skin  
till it smells like leather  
and feels like chamois.

Wear it this winter.

### Just

don't let the corpse  
get up  
and wear you.

### II

You're forty-five.  
When are you going to learn  
discretion?

For once  
hold your tongue.

Don't rush  
to tell death  
everything.

### III

The skulls of your comrades  
glow in the candle-light

glow pinkly  
as they carouse

it's been a good night

lots of drink  
lots of drugs  
lots of sex  
(or talk of it)

but it's too late  
for you

way past your blurring  
bedtime.

### IV

Stepping over the threshold  
of an old photograph

you're sneezing  
dead faces

you want to scratch  
the paper

until something  
squeaks.

### V

Does envy die  
too?

Does postmortem envy  
balloon with its own gas  
and rot?

Or does envy survive  
everything

and glow  
like a post holocaust  
cockroach  
with horrifying health?

VI

Every moment  
is death's waiting room

you can bob  
on the diamond-chip river  
one moment  
like a pelican

but the moment may move  
inexorably  
to the next  
where you're waiting,  
like Lorca  
flayed of poetry  
in a silent room,  
with rust in your gut

waiting  
for a man  
all beak and claw  
to call you in.

VII

You can't sleep off  
this last pea on your plate  
that might dart to your breast  
and grow

you lie stiff  
and your breath chokes  
as you approach

the tangling kingdom  
of empty palaces  
where everything tastes  
of autumn.

Sleep sweet.

Listen to your own blood  
like the sea.  
And eat that pea.

VIII

*for Emma*

And at the end  
perhaps  
there'll be a straggling  
smell

a smell  
of eye-watering  
summer

a smell  
purring  
along the bluestone lane

one last trick  
one last leap  
of roses.

*Dorothy Porter*

## Big Idea

*Why can't I ever say believed itself in the center?*

Pam Rehm

Evening condenses again  
to be led inevitably to walking  
on the earth, clouds' cycles  
of evaporation & light refracting  
as peak's gold glow, cool, then cold,  
the dark sky removed as condition, explanation,  
your twilight actually happening  
*because there is no today* as silent  
as this, reminded by the weight of curiosity,  
division, the west's fine green lake  
open amongst fire and the sharp  
coalescence of stars.

Your voice is another's  
language. We learn to move  
again as space, determined,  
sometimes flooded by each tree's shudder  
in the breeze, its dark ore  
*where I lift you in emptiness where*  
*I will open the road of lightning*, light  
calligraphy drawn on the skin  
and burnt against *mortality*, laughter,  
your incandescent song worn  
with the invention of wholeness.

The children we forget to name  
tug at dreams remembered,  
our bodies' resistance folded  
with welcoming unutterable crests, rooms,  
wheels of seeds and feathers  
tied to the ceiling of transition.

The day rescinds its matter & ruin,  
to wake within corners, to cross  
stalks bleeding from the hands of lovers  
as angels bloom from the edges of eyes  
and glance for what we'll do  
with them, blue light or red outside  
the walls received for all  
we care, the gradual garden  
& caterpillar's transmutation  
hurried as a stick struck  
again and again into earth.

Leaves' several circles fall into  
a future of windows, the beautiful country  
shining with teeth of possession.

A thousand windows glow fibrous  
as the broad night radiant, empty,  
a lasting silence advanced  
and retreating, our city intersected by  
centuries of spring. You say  
the natural world is better  
than nothing, furious that meticulous tenderness  
hinged *for what we want to take*  
*inside of us*, identical, vanishing with  
the simplest hunger pressed as a face  
listening to water, or a history of stones.

*Peter Minter*

## Two Sonnets

### IV

I'm a johnny-come-lately in this, but he  
Shares my very personal sixth of May:  
One day after mother, and flammable Marx.  
It's crucial for some to think disconcertingly  
And have to leave their city in the end,  
Still draining the psyche's muddy Zuyder Zee,  
Dragging to the light those hawks and snakes,  
Those metamorphic peacocks of desire.

He taught that you can't oil the squeaky wheel  
If it has gone silent. Find it first.  
It might even be a part of your first trike:  
The sex was there because it wasn't there.  
The bloodless wound precisely the one you missed.  
He said, tell all the stories that you like.

### VI

Part of my self would love to master  
Versatile verses that might contain  
Bamboozle, billy-cart, bonk, and bonzer,  
Teasing language to fill up the frame.  
I'd lay the pigments on like van Gogh  
(Daub, dazzle, design, and dread),  
Treating the page with dense impasto,  
Following where my verbs have led.

But in the other lobe, I respect  
The way that Gaia might look at us,  
Located in between oak and insect,  
Introspective and querulous  
So, before the appalling infinite,  
Try it again with a *not* in it.

*Chris Wallace-Crabbe*



## Screen

Take the road she took see where it goes

the strangest house on the block still stands  
the little girl in the leaves is the love of my life

each blade of grass wrapped in gauze  
commits our future happiness to memory

All this alleged wishing to be lucky

if you can't squander talent well what can you do  
with this stack of change in your pocket

catastrophes can't be predicted only named in advance  
everything means more than enough

*Kate Lilley*

## when you remember

How the perfect days of early love  
stretch out to hold you.

While the storm pelts down  
search for a reality less in keeping  
with a 1950's language quiz  
with its built-in failure rate.

I put away that bit of glass  
that found its way into my bed—  
keep dreaming of that five-star  
hotel you think I live in, when  
things hurt you, while I  
live without that libel,  
ache sometimes for safety,  
make up words  
to the rhythms of a prayer.

*Dīpti Saravanamuttu*

# Cropdusting

1

It is best not to stand inside  
a fibrous groundswell  
as an aerial agriculturist

sweeps in to blister earth  
with chemicals after the flame  
cultivators have failed to end

the snicker-snicker of army worms,  
red spiders and boll weevils.  
Best to watch and listen

from a distance, upwind  
from where a turbine-driven  
Ayres Thrush or Funk Fairchild

is dogfighting with itself,  
drilling the air with grains.  
All toxicity works in theory.

For the lowdown on fact  
and grief, ask the parents  
of twelve-year-old Anne Fermanagh,

late of North Carolina,  
who chose a path home  
through a field on the day

some Ace let down a rooster-tail  
of State-approved rain  
then banked away, leaving her

soaked and burning.  
Two years later the rain returned  
and went to ruin inside her head.

2

Flyers die too, most publicly,  
at the end of tight descriptions  
of trees and tail-clipping wires,

pinned by star pickets  
to wing-furrowed soil,  
or buried to the struts

in selections of fenced-off water.  
For now, stay clear and imagine  
the undersides of planes

and what they leave  
as speedboat hulls and wakes,  
seen from a shallow weed bed.

Late in the season,  
when spindlewires come  
to harvest the bolls from pods;

when threshers lift  
wet spikelets from the rice,  
arrive to find a gleam

of irrigation channels  
like sheet metal strips in sun  
and remember

when cropdusting was another word  
for engine roar and danger:  
the tally of the grounded dead

hand-gathered and sewn  
into country stories,  
told before knowledge

of the risks of mouthing  
processed poisons  
and correct political names.

*Anthony Lawrence*

## Where are the dark woods?

they were always there  
from the beginning  
infant eyes open and blink on them

the world as it always was  
unredeemed by history  
abashing child's sight in a whitening room

and other quotidian amputations  
flaring distantly now a starry abstraction

inflamed absences  
eat the scratched and damaged skin  
imagined as soul

but who can afford to flinch at pain  
the one gate left open?

that memory of complete sufficiency  
a dark pulse of heaven

we have already been there and won't go back  
astir in the knived light

*Alison Croggon*

## Critique of Practical Reason

Avoid the peopled day  
Knifed, he folds back into the flock  
Silver trucks weave into pink night  
Waves wrap distance and the background trickles  
stone-grey sea

Peace talkers wander through the palaces  
Our allies profit from our foes  
The studied ads are peeling on the walls  
Birds quack out of season  
The first to fall is art  
Time clammers out in suburbs  
at the station where you wait with news

*Gig Ryan*

on first washing up  
while thinking i was  
leonard cohen

the collared sparrowhawk that has come  
to balance on the draining rack  
beats the sink to froth with its banded wings.

my father's eyes gaze out of the bird.

"i think," he says, "you've run the water too cold...  
are you really leonard cohen?"

"dad!" i reply, "is that you?"

rain grabs at the window like a clutching hand,  
but the sparrowhawk does not speak again.

soapsuds whirl like oneiromancy.  
(the whole house smells of lemons.)

when i walk outside to the squalling wind  
i don't believe i'll get wet, but i do.

*Ted Nielsen*

## Father's Day

I carry sugarbags of coke from the gas works,  
at home my fingers smudge the cream painted icebox.  
My father throws spuds onto our fire at night  
that send clouds of sparks up into the dark flue.

On the hill trucks growl and strip their gears.  
I imagine the peach-faced finches in Madagascar.  
After tea my father slumps in his kitchen chair  
his tall brown bottles empty on the dining table.

At school each new morning I fail my tests.  
My mother's face hardens when I try to speak.  
Outside the cuckoo chicks squawk from magpie nests,  
while the hedge-man trims the hedges on our street.

Our mother irons starch into my sister's being  
from her straight black hair to her uniform's box-pleats.  
My brothers bob down along the learning stream  
heading for their lives, biting the heads off difficult words.

*Robert Adamson*

## The Return

I often dream about the ocean  
and would like to write  
a long ode to water, because I live  
on a drought stricken flood plain  
next to a sea where a baked delta  
opens between glittering sandstone cliffs  
& the dunes and beaches make holiday resorts  
seem like colonies in outer space.  
Where are the green islands? Where are  
the sticky hibiscus flowers,  
the paddocks full of clover and grass,  
the intricate mangrove swamps  
& the mud that squelches between your toes?  
Instead I am covered in salt—  
the same brother you forgot  
whose wounds were like rumours  
of the rains' failure  
but who returns even so, just as the wet arrives  
after weeks of dry storm lightning out to sea  
& who stands in front of you  
dressed in his flash city clothes  
but suddenly shy, like a stranger embarrassed  
by wet footprints and tears  
& the sudden atmosphere of drama.

*John Forbes*

## Nothing is Diminished by Distance

The decades stack like folding chairs,  
and you're in this room of steel and linen  
Here are the monitors that sound the heart's depth.  
Here are the machines that censure the future.

And suddenly it becomes forever and forever  
and forever. And you return to the  
tip-toe, hush-now Sundays when your  
father's clogged valves give air  
the weight and shimmer of mercury.

If you could pare back the seasons  
to that lost bountiful summer, you would  
live in the long white house on the cold-water coast.  
You would sit outside on the roofed veranda.  
You would sup at the pine-wood table among  
terracotta pots of lavender and lemon verbena.

This is your childhood. Let the air be balmy.  
Let the sky be a remarkable shade of blue.  
Let him, that sparkling man, your papa, clasp your arm  
and rasp of things that do not matter:  
Like the move from the Winter Palace,  
like the annexation of the hinterland,  
like the necessary tyranny of your poor mama.

In the room of steel and linen the clock keeps on sticking  
Here hope is concertinaed into seconds.  
Your father's fingers, in yours, clutch like birds' feet.  
Let go of his hand. Step around and past the monitors  
and out of the ward. Walk away from the building.  
Remember that nothing is diminished by distance,  
neither prayer, nor the memory of great pain.

*Ronn Morris*

## AUSTRALIAN CONTRIBUTORS

**Robert Adamson**, author of fourteen books, was instrumental in the growth of the "New Australian Poetry" of the 1960's. He was editor of *New Poetry*, founder of Paper Bark Press, and recipient of the National Book Council's Banjo Award and the Grace Levin Prize. He discovered poetry while in jail as a young man. Recent collections include *The Clean Dark* and *Selected Poems 1970-1989*.

**Peter Bakowski** has appeared twice before in *Atlanta Review*, in the Atlanta Gold and Great Britain issues. Widely published internationally, his books include *Thunder Road*, *Thunder Heart* (Nosukumo, Melbourne 1988).

**Bruce Beaver** was born in 1928 in Manly, New South Wales, where he still lives with his wife Brenda. Author of fourteen poetry books, he received the Patrick White Award (1982), the Christopher Brennan Award (1983), and the New South Wales Literary Citation in 1990.

**Lisa Bellear** grew up in Brisbane and now lives in Melbourne, where she is studying for a doctorate in English at Latrobe University. She is a visual artist, writes radio plays, and is a volunteer broadcaster on the community radio program "Not Another Koori Show." (*Koori* is an aboriginal word for the aboriginal peoples of eastern Australia.) Her first book of poems is *Dreaming in Urban Areas* (University of Queensland Press 1996).

**Joanne Burns** is a Sydney writer of poetry/prose poems/short fiction/monologues. The most recent of her ten collections are *aerial photography* (Five Islands Press 1999), *penelope's knees* (University of Queensland Press 1996), and *on a clear day* (UQP 1992). A program of her monologues, *missionary positions*, was broadcast on the ABC National Radio program "Soundstage" in August 1999.

**Lee Cataldi's** books include *Invitation to a Marxist Lesbian Party* (Wild and Woolley 1978), which won the Anne Elder Memorial Prize; *The Women Who Live on the Ground* (Penguin 1990), which won the Human Rights Commission Prize; and *Race Against Time* (Penguin 1998), which won the New South Wales Premier's Literary Award for Poetry in 1999. She has worked to document indigenous Australian languages, and is co-translator of *Yimikirli; Warlpiri Dreamings and Histories* (1994). Selected by the Australia Council for a Literature Residence in India in 1998, she has also performed with Adelaide's multimedia cabaret, Stageflight.

**Alison Croggon's** writing includes poetry, prose and plays. Recent works include *The Blue Gate* (shortlisted for the Victorian Premier's Prize) and the novella *Navigatio*. She edits *Masthead* literary arts magazine and in 2000 will be the Australia Council Writer in Residence at Cambridge University, UK.

**John Forbes**, who died in 1998, was born in Melbourne and grew up in Malaya, New Guinea and Sydney. Regarded as "one of the last of the wild men of Australian Literature," he edited *Leatherjacket* and *Surfer's Paradise*. Of his eight books of poetry, our selection is from *Damaged Glamour*, which he was working on when he died. (Brandl and Schlesinger, Rose Bay, Australia, 1998.)

**Keri Glastonbury's** first book of poems, *Hygienic Lily*, was published by Five Islands Press in Wollongong in 1999. She received a New South Wales Emerging Writers Fellowship in 1998.

**Dorothy Hewett**, born in 1923 in the wheatlands of Western Australia, overcame great adversity to become one of Australia's most acclaimed and controversial poets and dramatists. Her 25 books include *Wild Card: an Autobiography 1923-1958*; *Bobbin Up*, about her experience working in a spinning mill; and *Collected Poems* (1995).

**Jill Jones** is a Sydney freelance writer and literary organizer who has appeared in numerous journals worldwide. Her books are *The Mask and the Jagged Star* (Hazard Press 1992), which won the Mary Gilmore Award in 1993, *Flagging Down Time* (Five Islands Press 1993), and *The Book of Possibilities* (Hale & Iremonger 1997).

**Cath Kenneally** is an arts journalist and broadcaster in Adelaide. Her books include *Harmers Heaven* (Little Esther 1996) and *Around Here* (Wakefield Press 1999). Her novel *Room Temperature* will be published by Wakefield Press in 2000.

**John Kinsella** (see interview.)

**Anthony Lawrence** left school at 16 to work as a jackeroo and later joined a writers group in Wagga Wagga. He won the \$10,000 Newcastle Poetry Prize in 1997. Now living in Hobart, Tasmania, he is the author of six poetry books, the latest being *Skinned by Light*, which won the inaugural Queensland Premier's Award. His first novel, *Lapwing*, will appear in 2000 from Pan Macmillan.

**Kate Lilley** teaches at the University of Sydney. She is editor of *Margaret Cavendish's Blazing World* (Penguin Classics) and has published widely on women's writing and modern poetry. Her first book of poems, *Versary*, is due from Folio/Salt in 2000.

**John Mateer** was born in Johannesburg. He has two poetry books, *Burning Swans* and *Anachronism*, from the Fremantle Arts Centre Press. *Barefoot Speech* is forthcoming from Fremantle in May 2000. His latest chapbook is *Spitting Out Seeds* (Anatman, Melbourne).

**Rod Mengham** (see interview.)

**Ronn Morris** attended the University of Melbourne, where she was associated with *Anti-Thesis* magazine.

**Peter Minter** is a Sydney poet. His first collection, *Empty Texas*, was published by Paper Bark Press in 1999. He is currently working on an anthology of new Australian poetry with Michael Brennan, to be published in 2000 by Paper Bark Press and Craftsman House.

**Vera Newsom** is a Sydney poet, author of *Emily Brontë re-collects and other poems* and *The Apple and the Serpent* (Hale & Iremonger 1992).

**Ted Nielsen** has published in numerous Australian journals. His first collection, *search engine*, was published by the Five Islands Press New Poets Series in 1999. He lives and works in Sydney.

**Geoff Page** has lived and taught in Canberra for many years. He is the author of thirteen collections, including *The Secret*, *Collateral Damage*, *Winter Vision* (UQP 1989), *Selected Poems* (1991) and *Gravel Corners* (Angus and Robertson 1992). Apart from poetry, his main interest is jazz. He did a reading tour of the U.S. in the 1980's.

**Dorothy Porter** has published ten books, including five collections of poetry and three verse novels. Her best-known work is the verse crime thriller *The Monkey's Mask*, which is currently being made into a feature film. Her latest is the verse novel *What a Piece of Work*.

**Gig Ryan** is poetry editor and reviewer for *The Age*, Melbourne. Among his five poetry books, *The Division of Anger* (Transit Press 1981) won an Anne Elder Award, and *Pure and Applied* (Paper Bark Press 1999) won the Victorian Premier's Award. His songs also appear on two albums: *Six Goodbyes* with Disband (Big Home Productions 1988) and *CD Real Estate* with Driving Past (Chapter Music 1999).

**Tracy Ryan** is currently living in Cambridge, England. She was born in Perth, Western Australia, and has published a novel as well as three books of poetry in Australia, the latest of which, *The Willing Eye*, has just been published in Britain as well.

**Dîpti Saravanamuttu** lives in Melbourne. A recipient of the Arthur

Macquarie travelling scholarship, she has taught at Kings Colleges, University of London. Her poetry books include *Statistic for the New World* (Rochford St. Press 1988) and *The Language of Icons* (Angus and Robertson 1993).

**Alex Skovron**, born in Poland in 1948, is the author of three collections: *The Rearrangement* (1988), which won the Anne Elder and Mary Gilmore Awards; *Sleeve Notes* (1992); and *Infinite City* (1999), shortlisted in the Melbourne Age Book of the Year Awards.

**John Tranter** has published fourteen collections of verse, including *Gasoline Kisses* (Equipage, Cambridge, UK) in 1997, and *Late Night Radio* (Polygon, Edinburgh) in 1998. *Different Hands* (Folio/Fremantle Arts Centre Press), a collection of experimental prose pieces, was published in 1998. He co-edited the *Bloodaxe Book of Modern Australian Poetry*, and is the editor of the free Internet magazine *Jacket*, at <http://www.jacket.zip.com.au/welcome/html>. A selection of his work appears in the *Norton Anthology of Modern Poetry*.

**Hugh Tolhurst** has translations from the Latin included in the forthcoming Penguin Classic *Catullus in English*. His publications include *Filth and Other Poems* (Black Pepper Press), which Adam Aitken describes as "classical, but post-barbarian in technique," and the satire *Point Ormond, Shipless* (Vagabond).

**Chris Wallace-Crabbe**, poet, essayist and wit, is an Emeritus Professor in the Australian Centre, University of Melbourne. His *Selected Poems 1956-1994* (Oxford University Press 1995) won the D.J. O'Hearn Prize for Poetry and the Age Book of the Year Award. His latest collection is *Whirling* (O.U.P. 1998). In a more playful vein, he has edited *Author, Author! Tales of Australian Literary Life* (O.U.P. 1998). Author and editor of over thirty books, he is recipient of the John Masefield Award, the Farmer's Prize and Grace Leven Prize for Poetry, and the Dublin Prize in Arts and Sciences. He is interested in tennis, drawing, cloud formations, and flora.

**Jena Woodhouse** has appeared in *imago* and other journals, and in *The Nighjar*, the 1997 Newcastle Poetry Prize Anthology. She is from Brisbane, Queensland, and currently lives in Athens, Greece.

## Adam Calls the Names

Where did he get such notions? *Rhinoceros?*  
My question unasks itself by not mattering—

“Careful,” he says, “careful,” as we cross  
The stream on a fallen tree. Bare feet on rugged wood

While he calls out names, swift child in a simple game,  
Chirping to them, lowing at them, naming them,

Ridiculously. He gives them their color, their smell,  
Substance in a word. From giddy,

Light-headed nothings, they come forth in sharp relief  
Against the light, solid in vocabulary, perpetuated.

All the trees were asleep, all the words unspoken,  
And this—this entrusted mission, this rapture—

Fills the forgotten places. We hadn't been aware of nothing,  
Merely occupied it. Now the abandoned

Solititudes recede—and we bend under the weight  
Of names as far as we can see.

*Savannah V. Derien*

## Dust to Dust

*Big deal! I'm used to dust.*  
Epitaph requested by Erma Bombeck

I follow you everywhere,  
sift under edges of doors,  
coat newly-waxed

floors, hitch rides  
on your dog to hide  
under your bed, eavesdrop

on intimate conversations,  
bedevil you  
cradle to grave.

Even then, I've only scratched  
your surface. Think  
of the Big Bang,

particles colliding  
in intergalactic explosions.  
You may choose cremation

to escape my gritty embrace,  
but the fire that consumes you  
leaves a fine gray dust.

*Barbara J. Mayer*



## The Fourth Daughter

When you're the fourth daughter, all the good traits are taken: dependable, musical, smart, pretty. So you settle for goofy, mouthy, wild. You become loud, thunderous, so the fact that you're transparent as a rain drop, or a dried leaf threatened by even the lightest wind, remains hidden.

When you're the fourth daughter, all the best boyfriends are taken: the lawyers, doctors, engineers, Catholics. So you date the guy with the scar splitting his top lip from where he ran his Kawasaki into a tree, or the aging guitar player, chronically poor and misunderstood.

When you're the fourth daughter, and a Taurus, they will make jokes about child-bearing hips, the boys who moo softly as you walk by. A Taurus should not handle delicate things: the sick, flowers, negotiations, poetry. The whole world is your china shop. Your life, the ruminating cud.

If you were a Leo, or Gemini, your hips might sashay, strut, dance. One snap from a Scorpio tail sends legions to their deaths. But your bovine hips just keep churning out kids, occasionally a poem, some hand-sewn curtains. Your ruddy-faced children head-butt your knees, teach swear words to their pale cousins.

*Bonnie Flaig*

## Doppler

The start of a new day. I listen intently for the weather forecast: *Mostly cloudy, with busted glass under bare feet. A slight chance for a gunshot wound in the afternoon.*

*Overnite—  
rain, changing to hot coals in the bathtub. And, for the weekend: more fog.*

*Robert Nazarene*

## Bear Facts

Where the suet feeder hung, the tracks  
of bear declare its fate. A frozen  
pile of scat regards me. Too bad  
the cold's so forbidding else  
I'd trace the bear to its den and ask  
how easily the snack went down.  
But today's a day of blood-test,  
my cholesterol level suspect,  
so I have to drive to the local  
hospital, where everyone dies,  
and bare the crook of an elbow  
so a fumbly technician can thrust  
a needle into a vein and suck  
a measure of blood so dark-red  
I can never believe it's mine.

Something eloquent in this act  
eludes me, but the blood expresses  
not only the fragility,  
but the desirability of flesh  
in terms even Mary Baker  
Eddy would have to respect.  
At Mount Auburn Cemetery  
Mrs. Eddy's grave lies dusted  
with feathery new snow. One day  
I'll visit her there to make sure  
the telephone hooked to her coffin  
isn't ringing. Until then I'll trust  
medical science to monitor  
my humours and keep me gushing  
like a spring pool refusing to freeze.

I'd love to track the bear and touch  
its snoozing bulk. The hot stink  
of its presence faintly lingers  
like a dream of life after death.  
The frozen heap of feces emits  
no odor, only a ghostly  
notion of bear that I treasure  
for its earthen simplicity,  
my own blood churning more freely  
for this hint of reckless mammal  
I can never hope to emulate  
except at the most naked level  
of meat and hide and bone and blood  
and enormous brooding within.

*William Doreski*

## Heart Failure

I have made my moon landing at night  
by way of the emergency ward,  
on the strong black arm of a nurse.  
My wife is the other woman,  
and between the two women I enter,  
seeing, reflected in glass, my red car  
half up on a curb, and mal-angled,  
the glare of the high beams showing  
my terrified wife's confusion.

There is no air in that car,  
there is no air in the night,  
but there is air in the hose that the nurse  
claps to my turning-blue face,  
and strength in her arms that are used to  
the harsh struggles that have plagued her existence,  
strength that I finally can share in.

I lie in a gown in a room,  
and the silent killer says nothing.  
He signalled, I guess, with red flags.  
I paid no attention. I'd developed  
an elephant's hide, an armor for the arrows  
of insult that poor boys endure.  
From childhood, when I was raw,  
and my nerves could actually bleed,  
I worked on this suit of armor,  
oiled it and flexed it and shined it,  
but now it belonged to them,  
the physicians who prodded with wonder.

"Didn't you notice a thing?  
You sound like a sidewinder, rattling."  
"I thought I caught cold in the chest."  
But I had no desire to know  
because I had no desire to stop.  
I could see that they thought, "What a fool!"

All but the black nurse, who knew  
how the poor slid the slippery slope  
that stress and the pressure on blood  
grade for the struggling-upward.  
She pulled at my ear, and said, "Tough guy!  
He don't take no crap from his heart."  
She knew how the pressure builds up,  
as you climb in the ignorant ghetto,  
until you would break, or be broken.

"How you doing, baby? Better?"  
"I feel better, but now I'm embarrassed."

—embarrassed at being so weak,  
ashamed of my heart that can fail,  
ashamed to have such a heart—  
No lionheart, no Coreleone, I.

But they tell me it's stress that's at fault:  
the heart is okay, the tests show.  
The angel nurse flattens my hair,  
pulls at my ear, and says, "Go!"

*E. M. Schorb*

## In Heavy Fall of Rain

The water comes and comes and bends the grasses  
flat, pummels the land with slant and shining  
fists. I am not reconciled to this, unable  
in my drenched and swelling state to praise  
the deluge, see behind the shifting sun  
the green I most will grow from. Is even flood  
well-meant that storms and strains the banks  
and boils and takes and makes that stunning roar?  
O, age comes on me strange and wild as this  
with crack and hiss, no easy sunlit pass  
on stubbled harvest fields, but chaos, noise,  
the never-letting-up of wind, the drowning rain.

*Jeanne Lohmann*

## Archway

The arch of pink "Cécile Brunner" roses leans  
toward the house, its cheap support eroding.  
Rust cripples the joints of metal poles  
succumbing to the weight of time and a lush  
season now of spicy blooms and springy exuberant canes.  
It was a gift, a bargain, in a bad year  
of too many losses, too much harsh hope.  
I knew it, even as I planted the bristling bush.  
I knew it, even as I said *yes, please* and *thank you*  
to well-meaning people with agendas more  
pressing than the well-being of this old-fashioned  
rose's arrangements. I'm in no hurry to fix things.  
Time enough in a dry season, I assure myself,  
to prune to stem and roots, to push  
over the rotted metal and build again,  
this time deliberately, this time alone, a new dome  
a new doorway of thorny vines and crowning flowers  
to step through into what remains of my only life.

*Diane Gage*

## Handstand

There isn't anything that's not important. Your toes must be pointed, knees locked, buttocks clenched to the edge of pain. Ribs arch, torso elongates to an elegance impossible elsewhere. Shoulders extended, you glare at your hands. So much for the easy part, and truly, it is easy; you need only get there and freeze the parts into place, then a corner of your brain will keep them cold while you turn inward, to the challenge. No one but another gymnast would guess that it lies in the pressure from ten whorled pads, in the hinge between hand and forearm. Adjusting by microns, fingertip, wrist, you play as a child, gravity the most beautiful of toys. You could stay up forever, the world inverted but in such perfect balance that coming down is like a small death—the line breaks, your feet touch the mat, your spine reclaims its ordinary curves; you are dull and mortal as before.

*Linda Sue Park*

## San Francisco: Ongoing Concerns

The molten core hasn't cooled, and plates  
Shift suddenly. A tourist on  
The crust of life, I walk on wobbly creases  
In the structures left impermanent.  
My travelers' cheques are predicated on  
A stable ground, a venue of exchange  
That meets criteria of solid earth.  
But these soft boulevards recurve  
Through flawed contractions; any moment may  
Reveal a random creak of sullen continents,  
and all the banks will close.

*Larry Rubin*

## Looking for Frisco

*with thanks to the Central Maine Directory*

Faatz, Fabricatore, Fabian,  
Fairburn, Fairweather, Farrago,  
the moods riffle like willow  
fringe in sunsqualls, chance  
shaped by alphabet, tribe,  
by Faiths, Falconers, Farmers,  
by dreams and omnivorous toil,  
a book of momentary deities,  
of unscored notes plucked  
on an aphasic mandolin.  
A bookful of questions begged.  
Has Feather met Fletcher  
or Flye? Should I could call them,  
Harris them? Jane, you're Falling.  
But aren't we all? How far?  
How the ponderables mount!  
How much is Tiffany Farnsworth?  
How is Doug Ferrin? Why  
is Don Fearon? How severe  
A. Feaver? Each a full degree of  
evanescent poignancy. A. Factor.  
Is she? For how long, for whom?  
How much is a Fillion, Tina?  
I wish I were Walt Whitman  
in "The Sleepers," a bodiless visitor.  
So many of us need condolence  
for how time and usage have smirched  
our good names: the first American  
Finks were no squealers. Mike  
the mighty river man talked tall.  
And what of the Funks, once grand.  
Do they need to meet the Fanjoys,  
the Felixes or Johnnie B. Free,

to visit Frisco? As I did once,  
so Frisbee'd by the sixties, so lost  
there, on the edge of the Pacific,  
I didn't know if I was Faust or Fellini,  
Feeley or Furbush, Fish or Fowle.

*Peter Harris*

## Self Seeking

*The luminous island of the self trembles and waits...*

Lawrence Durrell

Look, it's all very well to talk about narcissism and solipsism and the various other isms, but we're supposed to stick to what we know. Right? And, besides, what about Plato and the whole unexamined life thing?

Not that the recommended subject matter is any easier to penetrate, in practice, than quantum mechanics or linguistic determinism or what women really want. "Know thyself," advises the Delphic Oracle. Easy for her to say.

I mean, is it really possible to make sense of the morass of images, the extraneous noise and wobbly camera angles associated with the low-budget *cinéma vérité* project that goes on in one's head? And feelings? Forget about it.

Still, the luminous island beckons, the focus of the universe, its sole reason for being, while all those conjectural others flicker feebly in the background, fulfilling their only plausible purpose, that of providing a context.

And the oracle smiles patiently, saying "Yes, of course it's all about you. But what I really meant was that I was bored to tears with all the earnest pilgrims. The term 'know' was meant to be taken in the biblical sense."

*David Catron*

## Like A Carp

Some days I feel like a carp  
lolling in shallow water,  
sunlight reflecting off my dinosaur skin,  
my lazy mouth vacuuming scraps  
of refuse passed over by other fish,  
the pretty fish, the surface feeders,  
those that jump and twist for the crowds.  
They can pluck mayflies out of air;  
inhale frogs that sun themselves  
on lily pads; swim upstream  
against all odds; dazzle with brute  
strength when dumb enough to get caught.  
Spectacular fish, colorful fish,  
zooming up and down rivers, lakes, ponds.  
While underneath them all is me,  
lollygagging on a murky bottom,  
kicking up silt with my swishing tail,  
gorging on junk food, enjoying the weather,  
wondering what's on t.v. tonight.

*Michael Stegner*

## Decaf Zombies of the Heart

For several hours now, for several days and maybe even weeks, while Regret kept licking the stamps, while Despair lost the letters, while I forgot to feel the door of this burning satire before opening it, for several hours, I mean tonight, this very night, I watch in horror as these decaf zombies stumble through the heart's heavy traffic, how their touch drifts off like the smoke from our cigarettes, how each word they speak loses its place in the unread narratives of each wart and cut, each lost love or mystic vision of their lives. Tonight, of all nights, when the stars are louder than I have ever remembered, when the grass listens so attentively, I have this desperate desire to kiss the dark side of the moon, to play only the broken string of your violin, to kiss your anger on its forehead, your pain on its lips, and I have this desperate desire to jimmy open your heart like an amateur thief, and maybe it is my own manic soul chasing you down the corridors of the past that makes me so impatient with a poet who can imagine the end of beauty, or whose Love dozes off in an empty bus station waiting for a ride anywhere, or whose poems dance through magazines like electric ballerinas but whose heavy words clog the arteries of each last line. Tonight I have the greatest impatience for those love poets whose words moan from bar stools like dull politicians nodding the world into another war. How their stars blink like the muzzles of guns! How they doze to the sounds of a screaming bomb! Tonight, I'm going to find a poem that somersaults through your soul like a desperate circus performer.

Tonight I feel sorry for those decaf zombies who only turn over in sleep when a siren or dog announces its own risky self, whose tired arms fall across the breasts of their lovers like ice-bound trees. Tonight, I'm going to rev up the jukebox of desire. I'm going to take a pick axe to the grave of every abandoned feeling. Tonight I want to drive the back roads of your dreams looking for a house to break into, forgetting the heart's land mines, and I want to step carelessly everywhere tonight of all nights, still awake, and after so many days, and even weeks after the clocks have walked off like innocent bystanders, because maybe there is only the shell casing of this moment about to shatter, or maybe it is just morning rounding the corner like a door to door salesman—whatever he's selling I'm buying. I tell you, the way I feel the sky better put on its armor. In my dreams the phone is ringing or someone knocks at the door. There is an open window at the end of each sentence for you. Maybe I am only that quarter moon pinching a star awake over your shoulder—*do you hear me?*—taking my words from libraries of the wind, my dreams from the heart's barracks, but sensing, too, the sound of your soul arriving before you do, the way, as a boy, I'd lay my head down on the track not to sleep, but to listen for approaching trains.

*Richard Jackson*



## Cosmology

Foolish—to want your body  
of blood and ashes,  
dust and ice,  
brittle like the mane  
a comet drags across the void?  
To want clay, rain, and hail,  
your changing extinction—  
knowing, beneath your features  
the beauty of a perfect skull,  
lurking.

Gone into your tornadoes,  
sand storms, oceans, stars,  
thousands of suns  
fast to melt into a vapor  
under your skin.

Half-awake at night,  
I shall fall into your flesh  
of fire and molten rocks,  
of ether, pneuma, atman,  
all words failing us.

*Marie C. Jones*

## Snapshot with Siberian Mammoth

Pincer action, a gem of a strategy  
for so many generals, illustrated here in ivory.  
Darth Vader's helmet. New Guinea nose.  
Bone as pugilist. The dog-like toes.  
Whatever match struck and flared in his puffball  
of a cranium, where eyes of rainbow jasper smoldered,  
has guttered and gone out—whatever's old, he's older.  
Finger the abacus of spine and tail,  
those barrel staves of rib to hold the rum  
of a life, which long ago dribbled out onto snow.  
An ice-age funeral parlor or museum?  
A lugubrious curtain makes it hard to know.  
But posing beyond his reach, we have that grin  
of having escaped—for now—the gathering in.

*K. E. Duffin*

## Dairy Country

Tonight you drive a road  
as narrow as a dairyman's life,  
peppered each side with cemeteries

and cows standing still as flat stones,  
back to your bed in town,  
where lanterns glow in low clouds.

Remembering the kiss from Frizzel Hill  
your stomach hops like crickets,  
back and forth, back and forth,

your way winding through shivering shadow,  
woods spreading their gown to the river.  
You are homesick to go back to her

and low your desires,  
to help her bring in the firewood,  
to stand behind her when she listens

to the peepers in the mud pond  
as the moon goes down to sleep.  
But you keep driving and the farms

erase themselves, pink old men  
struggling to keep them for their lanky sons.  
Orange lights burn from windows

in old white houses and guide you  
to where you belong. But where?  
If from a raised shade

someone calmly waved, you might  
stay in these flying hills,  
join the woman

who would keep you always  
till your hands become patched  
like hay fields in late summer

and you die quietly one night by the fire.  
But no. You will die in town  
with your dreams running back

down the road, your life  
a pasture and your past grazed  
by cattle in your hills of regret.

*John O'Connor*

## CONTRIBUTORS

**Courtney Angela Brkic** lived the last five years in Croatia and Bosnia working as a writer, translator, and forensic anthropologist. She is now a Times Fellow at NYU's Graduate Creative Writing Program. She has appeared in *Folio*, *The Midland Review*, and *Slightly West*.

**David Catron's** work has appeared recently in *The Nassau Review*, *Oxford Magazine*, and *Parnassus*.

**Sandra Christianson** is a Norwegian/American Indian attending the University of North Dakota Grand Forks. She has one daughter, Nadja, age 3, and a farmer husband, Joe. This is her first published poem.

**Earl Coleman** became a full-time writer nine years ago, and has since published in 300 magazines and been nominated for a Pushcart Prize.

**Savannah V. Derien** is a graduate of the University of Iowa's writer's program. Her work has appeared in *The Wisconsin Review*, *Rhino*, *Missouri Review*, *The Lyric*, *Iowa Rag*, *Borderlands*, and others.

**William Doreski** teaches creative writing at Keene State College. His two latest books are *Robert Lowell's Shifting Colors* (Ohio U. Press 1999) and the poetry book *Suburban Light* (Cedar Hill 1999).

**K.E. Duffin** received a Ph.D. in the history of science from Harvard before turning to poetry. Poems have appeared in *Verse*, *Partisan Review*, *Sewanee Review*, *Ploughshares*, and others. Also a visual artist, Duffin's etchings have been exhibited internationally, published in *Harvard Review*, and collected by the Boston Public Library.

**Jeffrey Dye** served as a Peace Corps volunteer in Cameroon, West Africa. His work has appeared in *Green Mountains Review*, *Laurel Review*, *Threepenny Review*, *Prairie Schooner*, and *Yankee*.

**Clifford Fetters** worked as an actor on and off Broadway for twelve years. He now lives, acts, and writes in Seattle. His poems appear in *The New York Review of Books*, *G.W. Review*, *Blue Unicorn*, *The Contemporary Review*, *ELF*, *Puerto del Sol* and many others.

**Bonnie Flaig** teaches at Rochester College, Minnesota. She is the mother of two small children and, yes, is a fourth daughter.

**Peter Harris** appears in *The Atlantic Monthly*, *Beloit Poetry Journal*, *Chelsea*, *The Literary Review*, and *Denver Quarterly*. He

also writes the Poetry Chronicle for *The Virginia Quarterly*.

**Nancy Henry** has appeared in *Psychopoetica*, *American Poets and Poetry*, and *The Aurorean*. She practices welfare law in rural Maine.

**Diane Gage** is a writer and visual artist living in San Diego. She has a chapbook, *THAT Poem, Etc.* (Laterthanever Press 1994), and work in *Plainsongs*, *Seattle Review*, *Puerto del Sol*, *National Forum*.

**Richard Jackson's** poem is from his Juniper Prize-winning manuscript *Heartwall*, which will be published by the U. Mass. Press in 2000. A poetry impresario whose projects include *Poetry Miscellany*, *Mala Revija*, PM Books and the Slovene Poetry Exchange, he won a Pushcart Prize for a previous poem in *Atlanta Review*.

**Marie C. Jones** grew up in Europe, receiving an M.A. in English from a French university. She now lives in Denton, Texas with her graphic artist husband Richard Jones. Her work has appeared widely.

**Jeanne Lohmann's** most recent of five books is *Granite Under Water*, companion to her prose journal *Gathering a Life* (both from John Daniel & Co.). *Between Silence and Answer* was published by Pendle Hill in 1994. She appears in two chapbook anthologies, *Gathering Stones* and *Ends of the Earth* (New Market Press).

**Al Maginnes** was nominated for the National Book Award for his first collection *Taking Up Our Daily Tools* (St. Andrews College Press 1997). *The Light in Our Houses* won the Lena Myles Weber Todd Award from Pleaides Press and will appear in June 2000.

**Khaled Mattawa** has appeared in *Poetry*, *Kenyon Review*, *Antioch Review*, *The Pushcart Prize* anthology, and *Best American Poetry*. He is author of a book of poems, *Ismailia Eclipse* (Sheep Meadows Press 1995), and translator of two books of Arabic poetry: Hatif Janabi's *Questions and Their Retinue* (U. of Arkansas 1996) and Fadhil Al-Azzawi's *In Every Well a Joseph Is Weeping* (QRL 1997).

**Barbara J. Mayer** is a Mooresville, NC poet whose work has appeared in *The Spoon River Quarterly*, *Karamu*, *Savannah Literary Journal*, and the American Book Award anthology *I Am Becoming the Woman I've Wanted* (Papier-Maché Press). She received the First Prize for Light Verse from the Robert Ruark Foundation.

**Susan Moon** has work coming out in two anthologies and in *Calyx*. Blue Begonia Press will publish her first chapbook next summer.

**Robert Nazarene** has appeared in *Callaloo*, *Nimrod*, *Washington*

Review, 5 AM, and other journals.

**John O'Connor** works as an organizer for the Musician's Union. His work has appeared in *Boomerang* and *Peregrin* and won second and third prize in the Randall Jarrel national poetry competition.

**Linda Sue Park's** first novel, *Seesaw Girl*, was published by Houghton Mifflin in 1999. She has poetry in *Poetry Ireland Review* and the *Irish Times*. She teaches English as a Second Language in college.

**Mary F. C. Pratt** was born in 1949 in Vermont, where she is a member of the Spring Street Poets, an orchard worker, and a deacon in the Episcopal Church. She and her husband have a grown son.

**Elizabeth Powell** has published in *The Harvard Review*, *Black Warrior Review*, and *Sojourner*.

**Barbara Presnell** has appeared in *Negative Capability*, *The Tar River Review*, *The Florida Review*, and *The Laurel Review*. Her chapbook *Snake Dreams* (Nightshade Press 1994) won the Zöe Kincaid Brockman Award, and her second, *Unravelings*, was selected best book of 1998 by the North Carolina Poetry Council.

**Larry Rubin** has published three volumes of poetry, with the University of Nebraska; Harcourt, Brace & World; and David Godine. His poems appear in *The New Yorker*, *Poetry*, *Harper's Magazine*, *Sewanee Review*, *Yale Review*, *Kenyon Review*, and many anthologies, including *The Norton Introduction to Literature* (W.W. Norton 1991) and *A Geography of Poets* (Bantam Books 1979).

**E. M. Schorb's** latest collection, *Murderer's Day*, won the Verna Emery Poetry Prize and publication by Purdue U. Press. Published in *The Southern Review*, *The Yale Review*, and *The American Scholar*, he recently won the Ludwig Fogelstein Foundation Grant. Forthcoming novels from Denlingers: *Scenario for Scorcece* and *Paradise Square*.

**Michael Stegner** is an attorney in Camden, SC, married, with three sons. He appears in *Sulphur River* and *Piedmont Literary Review*.

**Reagan Upshaw** has two chapbooks, *Anemic Advent* (White Walls Press) and *On the Cape* (The Press of Events). She reviews poetry, does poetry and art collaborations, and reviews art for *Art in America*.

**Saadi Youssef** was born in Iraq in 1933. Author of fifteen volumes of poetry, a novel, and translations of Whitman, Cavafy, Ritsos, and Malouf, he is one of the most influential poets in modern Arabic. Throughout a life spent in exile in numerous countries, he has written every day to establish poetry as his spiritual homeland.

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