



ATLANTA REVIEW

FRANCE

International Section Edited by

Kate Deimling

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ATLANTA REVIEW

at the Georgia Institute of Technology

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Up to five unpublished poems, without identifying information on any poem.
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WELCOME

Dear Friends—

As I write this, we're in the last few windy March days before winter draws to a close—although the daffodils are soaking up the sunshine and the Bradford pears release their petals like snow rolling on the ground in little bursts. Spring makes me fanciful, I suppose—nature is full of possibilities, and every flower offers a bit of hope in a world that's becoming more baffling and unhinged. Poetry also offers a bit of hope which we must cling to more than ever. Actually—it gives us more than just a bit of hope. Poetry is *always* a panacea. When our leaders disappoint us, we should turn to art to remind us of what is beautiful and meaningful in our lives.

You will find much beauty in this issue—and much to admire. Not only has our France section editor, Kate Deimling, curated a wonderful and often quite surprising group of French poems, but you'll be astounded, as I am, by the variety of work we received from our general contributors. They let us into their lives and show us visions that we would not otherwise see—which helps us to be connected when we face fracturing everywhere. From the humor of Brian Builta's "Effable" to P M F Johnson's deliberately slow-moving poem "The Sloth" to the heartbreaking loss of a parent in Robbie Mata's "The Hunter" and the sudden burst of joy and flavor in Amanda Rioux's "P.M.," you can find a treasure trove of poems that speak to our hearts and our humanity, poems that are musical and image-laden. These are works you can really return to again and again and find something new. I don't have a favorite poem in this issue because I love them all. Maybe you will too.

Speaking of the French section, many years ago Dan marveled that we hadn't released an issue focused on France in all the years that he'd edited the journal. And then when Karen took over, I quietly embraced that quest as my own to bring such an issue to our readers—and yet, even then, we *still* didn't produce one. I won't say it became something of a white whale with me, exactly—maybe more like a wily dolphin—but I have wanted us to add France to our international offerings as long as I've been involved with *Atlanta Review*. (French was the first foreign language I learned, and all my college French profes-

sors adored *les Symbolistes*—not that I minded studying them—so French poetry has a special place in my heart!)

All that is to say that I was so happy and grateful to connect with Kate. She's been an amazing and incredible person to work with, a real dynamo—she has collected all these poems, translating many of them herself (and finding translators for the other poems), and she's really chosen work that is fresh, tries new things with form, and challenges us as readers. (Kate also has a remarkable eye for typos—which I very much appreciate.) I think you'll find Kate's section to be extremely interesting and revealing about the state of contemporary poetry in France.

Before I go, I want to leave you with a quote from Ben Cooper which resonates with me, from “There’s Something on Your Mind”: “The stone you keep in your palm/ can only get smoother.” For me it’s a reminder that if we work the problem (whatever that problem may be), it will become easier. Reading (and writing) poetry strengthens us and gives us courage to face difficulties because it connects us and allows us to celebrate our differences and similarities, and encourages us to rejoice in each other.

I hope that your Spring is as full of poetry as it is with flowers. Please feel free to drop me a note any time—I love to hear from our *Atlanta Review* readers: jc.reilly@lmc.gatech.edu.

Yours In Poetry,

JC

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Aria in E Major

You grew up in New Mexico
and a little bit in Lithuania, so you speak
Spanish and Russian and believe in ghosts.

You believe in ghosts so you sometimes see them
in people's voices and stomachs
when their haunts look like yours.

You collect peppermint and chamomile. You had a collection
of Scottish teapots your evil stepmother gave away, but you
are trying to stop thinking about her in this way.

You have an orange llama that steeps your tea
inside your llama mug with the chip your stepdad sanded
down for you to keep you from nicking your lip.

Your stepdad is usually the hero of the story,
except when he is drinking or off his meds or leaving
you his daughter to mother.

You are not from Michigan, but you like it there. The gorgeous dunes.
You'd like to buy some land where you'll build me a shipping
container home.

Personally, you want a kitchen with two ovens.

You know how to tile and enjoy it. You'd like to space out
something grand for the backsplash on the stove.
As for the saucing and canning, you'll leave that to me.

You line your books up under your bed from tallest to smallest.
Your handwriting in them looks like italics,
which is to say I have never seen another N or Z like yours.

I would recognize your hand anywhere.
It has oval fingernails that go a bit over on the sides
and movements fast and patient enough for embroidery.

You zip me into a dress. You unzip me from my dress.
(This is not sexual. It never was). Your hand is like a mother's
untangling a daughter from the image of the day.

On the eve of a birthday in my 20s, you stay
up to make chocolate crêpe cake, your fingers stacking
layer upon layer of commitment.

You leave me yellow tulips in my bathroom sink.
You walk the knots from my back out with your palms.
You say, *I'll show you a secret* and drop oregano into the hot
chocolate.

You make ceviche in a recycled yogurt container.
You buy discount crab at Sam's club and slit it open with chopsticks.
Open your mouth, you say, and this is the first time. I trust you.

You take the crab's legs and hold them in your hands.
You giggle so softly it cuts. You open their claws and pinch them
around each of my pinkies. *Promise. Promise.*

You sell your plasma and send your family the money.
You sell your plasma again too soon and I wipe
a curl from your sticky face.

You like chamoy and pork tenderloin and aren't a fan
of any of my blended soups. You take your time
with your hands in the water and Maseca.

You score in the 99th percentile of all students taking the MCAT.
But you are more into journalism or sustainable housing,
so you decide to get a PhD in anthropology.

You like to smoke sometimes even though you have a hole in your lung the size of a thumbtack, which for the human lung is really quite big. *Don't be mad at me*, you husk.

You are a little obsessed with *Dancing with the Stars*. You did ballet once.

You are always buying a new pair of shoes and needing to break them in. You are waltzing, somewhere now.

You have gotten a surgery and you would like me to know it is okay you are walking around 48 hours after on a construction site and that I don't owe you any more money for food delivery.

You would like me to know that you can take care of yourself, because you always have. You would like me to know that you don't need to love yourself to do it.

You are drinking coffee at 10 pm because you are going salsa dancing, and you would like me to come with you. You can teach anyone to move. You pop your contacts in.

The last time I saw you was in my truck dropping you off at the airport and both of us were crying. *This is so silly*, you said, *we are going to see each other again*.

You have a nonlinear relationship to time, which is something you slip through, which is something I'm presently trying to understand so that I might see you.

You would rather the Gluten-free Earl Grey Tea Loaf I am making for you come out of the oven too early than too late. You enjoy the goo.

You cover the inside of your closet double doors in pink sticky notes: the plot of your murder mystery novel, which is really about two women, one hard and one soft.

There is no moral to this story,
other than the center of it, which
is tender, as the center often is.

You tell me all the things
you want done to your body
that you have told no one before.

You tell me all the things
that have been done to your body
that you have told no one before.

You wish it had made you hard like me.
You wish you had not stayed so soft.
Let me be the hardness for you, I said then,

as I would say to you now, as I am still
always, somehow, saying: *please, stay
soft.*

Kalyani Allums

Lost in the Woods

The great American beech stands tall,
its autumn foliage scattered about,
the scaly cones of the eastern white
pines have run their course and lay
with broken twigs and whatever else
the forest has decided to discard.

The crunch beneath my feet fills the quiet.

No one travels here other than the deer
and the squirrel, and the wood thrush
that sings its songs. There are fresh
scrapes on the fissured bark of the mighty
tulip, the black bear speaking a language
only nature hears. I have no claws with which
to speak and my voice has no melody.

Even the wind can be heard as it carries
the words of the chattering forest,
with the creaking and cracking of branches,
the rustling of leaves as they tumble along.
The aging white birch with its unfolding
papery skin leans toward me
and whispers, “Where are you going?”

I’ve been here and there and all around,
rubbed my hands against the poplars
and spruces, spotted the white-tailed
stag as it grazed on tree shoots. I’ve
heard the morning dove coo and searched
for the great horned owl at night, yet
this woodland looks unfamiliar to me.

In the distance, the sound of rushing
water is grounding. The babbling brook
bobs and weaves around roots and age-
worn stone, through lush flora and down
steep slopes, until it trails off to where
the forest meets the open waters,
carrying with it the silt of the world.

Sam Aureli

Nuclear Age

I told my wife
to relax a bit
like the neighbor's cat
lying lazily on our porch
and scan the sky
for rain

the world has been tough lately
like a hammer
but there is nothing
to worry about

World War III
is not happening soon

we still have time
to haul in
our tomato harvest,
read the entertainment section
of the morning paper,
and let our dog,
with all its glory,
poop on the grass

while we wait
for the dark-green starlings
to loot
our cherry trees
with their swarming beaks

Simon Anton Niño Diego Baena

Raspberry

My hands drink, sip tulips, when they mold soil in the garden of blossom-dreams. My hands arrange a flowerbed of resolve, a hive of dahlias.

Ruby drupelets cap tips of fingers like dorm room bulbs being absorbed by seastar rays, these raspberries get tied loose, on vine, around a horse's body, change from red, purple, gold, and black, catch the witch tricking the red wild homes.

A bouquet of hair. Only rain drips from the tips, the strands. The red winding curls are a witch's brew in the wind. Scent of a raspberry flowerbed drooping full. And wild, red, wild.

Clayre Benzadón

Effable

Forget everything you've ever learned
about frangipane. The real focus is
the frankfurter, that sweet weight on a plate.
The carnival has flown. Farewell to flesh!
Forget-me-nots not so far-fetched
once you get to know the family borage.
It's not like they are farkleberries, for god sakes!
Flirting in FORTRAN won't get you very far.
It's a love language without Fahrvergnügen. Still,
what a pleasure partaking of farfalle
lightly sautéed with garlic and squid ink.
Many eff words can get you fired. Honestly,
this fan letter reads like a freshman
gushing over a French graduate student.
My apologies. Since I said farewell
to my far-flung friends, it's been
easier to suffer the pitfalls
of the utterly expressible.

Brian Builta

Elegy for Me

I watch as a fellow gardener walks to the fountain with her watering can. She stands at the basin, then turns back, returning with a dustpan that she extends to a carpenter bee struggling in the water. Scooping the bee up like she's ladling soup, she drops him on the patio pavement. The bee wriggles and flies away. "Last week," she says, "a bee stung me when I put my hand down on the rim of the fountain and crushed him. I felt so guilty." Karma and re-birth, baby. I'm sure you've earned a place in one of the six realms. But, as for me. I would kill any bee that stung me and maybe his friends. You do dirty to me, I do it back to you. Yet here I am, with my lungs shot, as short of breath as a drowning bee, wondering whether I'll survive to come back to my plot next year. Ah, goddess Guan Yin, should I beg you to extend your merciful dustpan to me? Mercy is beauty, but a kind of beauty that I've never had an eye for. Below the blue sky, maple trees, now orange and red, are dying and they are beautiful. If I beg, it's not to live, but for a chance to die like the trees, changing into calm clarity.

Chris Bullard

Totality

for Louise Collins

I have friends who saw the eclipse, and they
say you had to be there, they really can't
describe how it was, although they put in
telling details about the smothered light,
the icy touch of the abandoned air.
As if winter were about to return.
A teacher I know stayed grading papers.
Such dedication to ongoing life!
Little belief she had in final things,
totality, what everyone's after.
I got 97%—nothing,
if you crave the sun's obliteration.
How long have I lived on this warm planet?
When will I come to have faith, like a bird?

Joseph Chaney

What Remains

after Sappho

In the breath of night, stars []
above us, your laughter touching me with [].

I stand here, silenced by your light.

Your gaze whispers []. soft breezes carry
your scent, and I []

of the unspoken, I reach for you, [] but my words are frail.
In this moment, my heart is a [] filled with

echoes of your [].

Incomplete, like the [] between our breaths.
I am lost in the beauty of the silence.

Eyes meet, and time dissolves into []. I wish to speak, to
tell you how [] but all that emerges are fragments of [] held captive by
your presence.

I am a soul threaded to you by dementia. Yet I am content in the [] where
the lack of my memory breathes freely.

I remember the way [] but your face, your eyes [] and
slipping through the gaps.
Your [] is a touch like sunlight—warm and
fleeting.

But the colors [] the exact lines of your smile, lost in [].
Only the feeling remains, the [] that we shared,
echoing in the empty [] of my mind.

In the breath at night, the [] soft and trembling, like my voice
when I [] but your face,
it fades into [] like mist, and I grasp at the [], fragments of
something so pure, so vivid, yet I cannot [] onto the image, just the essence of []
you, lingering like a half-remembered dream.

Leonardo Chung

In The Church of Saint Josephs, I Contemplate Harm

*"Do you renounce Satan?
And all his works?
And all his empty promises?"*

—The Renunciation of Sin and Profession of Faith

Kneeling before their white god, halfway between silence and cruelty, an altar bell summons a holy spirit.

Inside me, a trembling—I am the sacrament of holy rage. Welcome. Witness as I enter into the body of a Christ-like figure, Venus, light of the morning banished to the realm of dark, ungodly wombs.

A gutter of flesh. Goat's milk. A candle that burns for no one. I have become a new form—initiated and immovable.

Lord, I have lived in your house, bathed in ancient oils, washed them clean. I have built a home in my body, a body steeped in your displeasures. I've allowed a spirit within me that cannot be named. Can you forgive

what cannot be contained? A forest of blood. A dominion. A black, cloven creature shedding its velvet. The wet earth beneath it.

The altar bell rings again. A new life has arrived, silent and unaware—now claimed as yours. I pray to the empty promises that linger in the air.

Such darkness. Such want. The body of Christ. Your body within me, still. Swallowed and unforgiven.

Babette Cieskowsky

Before She Left

My phone surprised me
with a video
of old photos strung
together, music
added. I was shocked
to be taken back
seven years in such
abruptness, my friend
Ann still alive, her
curly gray-brown hair
leaning to touch my head,
both of us scarved,
glowing in Paris
light. Why didn't I know
better how to love
my friend, accept all
her flaws rather than
gripe how she gave me
a cold? I seem to
possess a compass
needle that points to
a person's weak points,
finding the crack in
the shell, the space in
armor where I probe,
reaching to poke
around for tender
places. And then jab.
Moments of kindness
came back to me, how
once she came unasked
to the hospital
where I was waiting,

my husband under
the knife. Ann got a
grave diagnosis,
an infection out
of nowhere, so cruel
the doctors said they
were helpless. Ann said
“I’ll go then” as though
it didn’t wound her
to see us all not
dying while she must.
Goodbyes, kisses, hugs,
the hospital room
in dimming light. All
we could do was go
on breathing, saying
her name, pierced by it.

Patricia Clark

Notes from the Anne Sexton Suicide Club

Empathy

I understand the need to feel in charge.
I understand laughter at that thought, too.

I know why she needed to close the door
and let death enter—a foot on the neck of love.

With sinew and marrow, I, too, was born by carrying
an impulse and a desire to be poured out

or dried up like dust. I could have ruled the world.
Do you understand? After all, there is woeful in wonderful.

There is mute in communicate. Let's sink deeper
into drunkenness, so the infection can heal.

Whatever this place is for you, for them,
for this circle singing in my ear. It's over now.

Gather what you need. Don't pretend to blossom
if you don't have the well-water.

Jona Colson

There's Something on Your Mind

You're looking at the flowers again, hoping
they will save themselves and close for the wintering

wind. In your ears, a roll of thunder, bringing
a thick coat of forgetful snow—or else the rain

to wash it all away. One way or the other, you'll be
submerged. Now, you see the leaves spinning

in silent misunderstanding. All you can do is stand
still, calling the trees to spark, but they won't. Not yet

at least. That stone you keep in your palm
can only get smoother. I'll leave this offering

to warm itself by the fire. Look at the line of crows bobbing
between the telephone poles—how the wire refuses to move

under their weight. In time, they'll flock to the newly born dead, finally
appeased. I know this feeling well. Look—even the flowers have learned

when it's time to go home. They feel
the hum of distant snow falling

softly on the shallow flames and find warmth within
themselves. Even the rain can't help but disappear

under the watchful eye of the sun. Even the sky
knows it can only ever be a reflection

of scattering light. Even the birds know when it's time
to search for more scenic pastures. And yes,
even you. Even me.

Ben Cooper

The Age of Reason & Enlightenment

People went around all day reasoning and enlightening, painting day lilies. Foxes and chickens talked about their feelings, and the inner child of the spider sat down with the bee and cried. They had it out then modeled web and wing designs. They put their stingers away and signed a SALT treaty to never kill again. Such love. Horses carried union cards and won the rights to sue for undue hardships on their backs. Tomato vines sang when raccoons soothed their leaves. Of course, raccoons were allowed to eat their fruits. Of course. It was the age. Moles and

voles won Nobel prizes in Economics for harvesting dirt. Day and Night agreed that Twilight was their illegitimate child. They rubbed their colors into one another. Everything was reasoned and enlightened. No one memorized the capitals of countries or lists of kings and popes. Everyone and everything were well fed. Germs got along with germs. While worms did floor dances, birds gladly paid their medical insurance. That's how I remember the age, when salmon and sea lions held one another, learned to smile, tattooed *I love you* on their tailfins.

John Davis

How my 5-Year-Old Son Makes Sense of COVID

His stuffed cat Mew-Mew has the *kittyvirus*,
which is making the rounds in his bedroom
at an alarming rate.

We'd quarantined the cat, her tiger-striped self,
under some couch cushions, and we're not sure
if she and her friends can go back
to the All-Animals School in the fall
or at any time—
they're that contagious.

I declare I'm a vet
but he says no, only his friend Louisa can cure her.
Even though it's bedtime, he hasn't held Mew-Mew in days -
it's that contagious. We're in one room
and Mew-Mew's in another
but the distance in cat years
is insurmountable.

Julie Ebin

Baptism in Emigration Creek

The creek splits the city in two. But both banks are the same:
Tall trees of cement hold up sugarcube houses,
Dyed red from a lineage of bloodroots in the soil.
Clouds of beet iron crawl into the air.

As children run along, mercury is mistook for mud.
The treetops have twisted into eaves,
 Their roots into nonsensical banisters that overhang
The molten metal creek.
This is the place where I will bathe my body.

I peel my shirt off—it clings like
The first layer of charred skin.
I slough off my trousers unhook my bra
And step out of my nakedness.

I step down into the creek clutching roots
Listening to the freeway's humming.
There are no stars;
Only streetlights. That,
With my eyes full of water and dust,
Look the same.

Under the supervision of manmade heavens
—a neat row of glowing gods—
I dissolve.

Harper Elder

Soft Spaces

There are places we always mean to return to.
And there are places we never want to come back to.
Such as: your hand on a plate; your beard at 3 AM
on a Google image search; your umbrellaed silhouette
on a rainy day; eggs in a French omelet you cook
when you're sad; a box for handkerchiefs you wear
each day in our underwear drawer; and the opposite:
the cat you said we couldn't take home; your speeding
car as we shouted inside; your white knuckles on the steering
wheel; a glass of scotch filled a fourth of the way as you
contemplated leaving me; concrete under my shoes as I
contemplated leaving you; the four hours when we
ended our marriage for good; the six sleepless hours
after; the half hour when we got back together.
The memories blur as we drive in the old Toyota:
your feet in long, wide flippers underwater by the corals,
how the rocks by the beachside looked as your camera clicked
to capture my pose. You say none of my love poems are
about you. I say if I wanted to, I could have left you.
I would have done it in the summer, with the wind
at my back, as we sit on the wooden chairs outside
looking out the moringa trees in our front yard,
with a pack of potato chips and a glass of water
you always have ready for me, but I am so content
to return to this moment, over and over again,
that I would sacrifice every dream of never returning
to this old hick small town, of running away,
to come back to this house that we have made ours,
and live forever in these moments with you, until I am
the old woman with the sun hat, all grey hair and weak knees,
looking out at the moringa with an old man in a fedora, you.

Angela Gabrielle Fabunan

Ladybug infestation

There's a small infestation of ladybugs
in my home office window, some fluttering between
the screen, some flying against the glass.
I can hear them launching their tough shells
against the pane, slipping between blinds.
I can hear how gently their little feet land,
pitter-pattering against the light, buzzing
their little bodies, trying to find their way out.
I'm taking them as a sign of luck. I'm taking
them as a test of patience, how many times
I can coax hard bodies onto scrap paper
and escort them out the door. I look up
beliefs about ladybugs, see that you're
supposed to count the spots on their back
to see how many years of good luck you're in
for. I count the bugs instead: two crawling
on the other side of the screen, big and bulky,
one small baby trailing behind a bigger one,
one medium-sized lady nestled into the cracks
at the top of the window, a little too far for me
to reach and bring to safety. I wonder if
they're a family, if I'm separating them as I
drift them outside and fling them into the
yard. If they'll find their ways back to each other.

Hallie Fogarty

Six Words in an Ellen Bass Poem Take Me Back to My Brother's Hospital Room

After death/the jaw falls open... “Nakedness”

I stood at the foot of his bed, watching my sister-in-law leaning over him, her cheek hovering inches from his lips.

The doctors and nurses came in, said they'd seen the monitors.

There were tubes and lines they had to disconnect, forms they asked us to sign, words neither she nor I remember.

When we were alone again, the room held a new stillness. Already the blue was settling in.

We straightened the sheets, collected our coats and clothes, our empty cups.

His jaw had fallen open.

She pushed it closed but it opened again the moment her fingers left his skin.

She took one of the extra blankets, rolled it, placed it under his chin.

The cloth was no match for the gravity of his bones.

I helped her try again, with a pillow and a second blanket.

To do so seemed essential.

I suppose we could have covered his face—a thought that didn't cross my mind for years.

His jaw held, half-closed, long enough for us to leave the room.

Jennifer L. Freed

The Diarist

Going through the old journals
that I will burn.
Wouldn't want others burdened
by their mildewed melancholic stench.
Reading them is a torment
but I owe myself that much—
the young struggling mother
the impassioned lover
myself thirty years ago
twenty years ago, ten.
She wrote that her love was a dragon
who would eat its own heart.
Her errors in judgment were magnificent
colossal, embarrassing
how she gave herself away.
Yet she still wrote
and wrote and wrote.
Each sallow coffee stained page a testament,
proof—
that at least I kept this much of myself
for myself.

Rachel Greenberg

Encoded

I'm looking out my window
where the branches of the overlapping trees
are themselves overlapping and creating
such language as branches will do
when engaged in the art of spelling.
A language of patterns and nonlinear thinking,
the way a swift will dart from this point of air
to that, as if selecting letters on a keyboard
to create a word you've never heard.
Though the intricacy of the trees
is surely sounding out the syntax
of some greater complexity. Even, perhaps,
a worldly urgency. As if the swift had rejoined
its flock, all now tapping at my window.
And I swiftly tapping back—the shattering of glass
a bright glossary, phonetic shards through which
the birds and I step quite gingerly, knowing where we now stand
is where understanding once stood.

Ken Holland

Willamette August, Wallace House Park

A sad empty park
Shiny playground equipment
Quiet in the sun

A teen died at Keizer Rapids Park last month, just down the river from here. Dived in at a place of treacherous currents, snags, all manner of unseen dangers. Right there, next to the stability of the dock. Who knew it would end so tragically? That one action, one ordinary action, could end so terribly. That the river, right there, was so dangerous; though it is dangerous everywhere else, and on River Road, and in town and in the rest of the world.

Empty park benches
View the river's lovely sweep
In morning silence

At Wallace House Park mallards peek their beaks through weeds, paddle and do it again. Suddenly they explode into the air together into a dramatic aerodynamic choreography and arc out of sight. Under the water, a crawdad grumbles across the sand leaving a track like an M1 Abrams, moves from under one weed to under another. A broken twenty-foot-tall cottonwood carcass is held ten feet off the ground in the arms of young Oregon Ash trees. One branch still has green leaves on it as if it didn't realize its roots hang in the air like useless tentacles. It no longer touches the ground but the urge to go on fatally remains.

The crawdad, mallards, trees seem unfazed at the news. It is as if, to them, it was expected or perfunctory. Another day on the river, another day in the world.

This park will be gone
One day. For a good reason
Or for no reason

The river water goes by like a timeline, past, present, future. They are all here at Wallace House Park: an age of Kalipuya canoes, then later drift boats, then steamships, junker cars, water skiers, moving from the past, from the spring, one direction, to the future at the mouth, small to large, beginning to end, whatever they might be. From here you can go to Newberg, Wilsonville, Willamette Falls, Portland. You can go to the Columbia, to Longview, to Crims Island, to Astoria and Fort Stevens. You can go to the vastness of the Pacific itself. When you get there, or even if you don't, Wallace House Park is still here, empty benches, quiet playground, along with Salem and Keiser; and upstream Corvallis and Eugene, the Mackenzie and Santiam, and a thousand streams, named and unnamed, you never knew. And if you were to cross the Columbia Bar into the ocean you can pretend that you disappear, though you know that you have to cross that bar and in crossing it you are still you. The Pacific is not the Pacific without you now and now you are not you without the Pacific like anything else in the world.

The future is always crumbling. The past is always terrible. Or not. Or maybe you lived that horrible past and remember it now from a safe distance. And it all happens every day, every moment, one to the next, currents and treachery, mallards and crawdads, eventually, the past eats every future on an afternoon in August, on a river's bench in a park, in this moment that is either a moment that means everything or means nothing at all.

Of course, the park was never
Empty; because I was there.

Marc Janssen

The Sloth

So cumbersome he cannot escape any attack,
but then, he doesn't need to.

A creature of camouflage, with a lineage
ancient beyond understanding, he eats,
slowly, poison. Bark, branch, and root.

Digests the damage so gradually that
it does not weaken him, in fact,
he turns it into protection. Who dares eat
the alkaloids coursing through his body?

He makes his unhurried way through
the rain forest, protected by
the very troubles he happily ingests.

Each day, his body handles ills that
ours cannot, not with the speed at which
we live. Poison being a slow business.

Like many who rely on death, he hitches
along the ground in plain sight, as halting
as a proud man's apology, his tracks
as twisted as any political speech.

But when cocooned on a branch he is
easily misidentified, more coconut
than creature. His odd repulsiveness
an ingenious, lethargic warning.

And the man who emulates him, stinking
in his corner, alone and unconcerned,
chewing on his own grist? Let such a man
be what he will, strong, effective,
long-lived, we avoid him, neither
trusting him nor opening our arms
to his peculiarities. Perhaps, we may
tell ourselves, this is for the best.
We rarely embrace those whose differences
prove so dangerous. Wordless, the sloth

teaches the value of bitterness, as though
his forest were yesterday's mirror,
his sky a well of tomorrow's dark wisdom.

P M F Johnson

Lost Season

I lost a whole season to
the tremor inside my heart. Some of it

was wind, not a terrible loss, but
some was slant light strafing

stacked clouds, columns collecting atop
the cobalt sea, how that would have brought me joy.

I was shaken like a snow globe, sudden
storm and viscous uncertainty, staggering through

that smooth wilderness in search of
stillness. I emerged to a chorus of frogs

erupting into silence at my unsteady step, blue
whale spouts silhouetted against a summer curtain of

fog. What longing happened while I was gone?
Did you spot a comet streaking the sky?

Come, sit with me. Let me close my eyes
while you tell me who you are now.

Jad Josey

A Sonnet of American Sentences for the Spring Equinox and After

In Sisters, Oregon

Underfoot, a pussy willow massacre: furred fusilli, guts green.
Mule deer, black-tailed deer, deer heads mounted on the paneled walls—they all
stare.
Released by brief warmth, ants trickle down from a skylight, then disappear.
The Canada geese pair off in the creek, wash each other as if human.
Before they wheel across roads, pick young tumbleweeds to pickle and jar.
The best flyswatter is coated with a color that bugs can't take in.
Red-tailed hawks coast and glide as if to belie the propulsion of winds.
The full Worm Moon, dangling platinum amulet, pins me with its glare.
A coyote runs the far pasture fences, searching for voles, feasting.
Through static electricity, the tick hops much closer to a meal.
Fissures in the snowcaps appear in the distance: oh, this slow reveal.
You're not supposed to walk on Three Sisters; in dreams you climb, trespassing.
All thoughts now turn to the path of totality, how to be in it.
To survive this season, then the next, is to learn what to navigate.

For Pine Meadow Ranch

Jen Karetnick

First Snow

Sometimes when the night's not night
and the road's longer when we're
heading home across wintered
leaves, sky stiffens; first snow creeps
in as it does like an old
man, its winter eye, at the
hour prefigured of its

waking. Cold rising to each
thing unfinished or not cold,
snow comes to the trees, holding
what falls to it in its light.
How it prefers the present
tense; how it begins again,
and those who ask for nothing

are not forgotten, nor are
those disregarded who've known
the snow; how the trees file back,
the furred yew, the blue spruce wet
with white. Snow winging into
the yard, hasp of snow crossing
the silences between us.

Becky Kennedy

Cape Recurrence

I stand by moss-rock, iceberg-granite,
witness of Wampanoag, sheep pastures and mushrooms.
Mottled now by filtered forest light
—aged parsley, absinthe, storm clouds—
it is weather-worn and meek,
groomed into camouflage.
Yet up close, stone-flecked
with seemingly distant lights,
like a mirror aimed at the sky,
carrying a remembered star-story.
I imagine time captured
or flowing so slowly that it loses meaning.
And the summer kindle-light has heft,
fading the now dried morning swimsuits.
Goldenrod pops with borrowed luminescence—electric honey.
White hydrangea, like a greek hut,
fits into what space is given on a hillside,
reflecting heat that lolling bees
struggle through amidst hummingbirds,
the calls of cardinals and woodpecker.
I talk to my sister on the deck,
where we would take photos with our parents.
The wood is like an old inverted hull—
a catboat starting to be on the buoy too long.
Dried rings of lichen-life show like barnacles.
Pigment-faded greys stalk the edges,
salt-rasp and seasons conjure fine cracks
that deepen in places. Planks loosen.
Now it is our children who find berries,
tend the thyme, eye college.
But for a moment everything feels as it had been.
Birds quiet and nothing moves—not even a wisp of air.
And in that lull the door slowly opens,

silently, though nobody is there—like the past is looking in
to say we aren't as far away as we think,
that it and the present are in a way the same.
I sense my younger self, like pre-storm static,
who is also my future self, invisibly watching.
He comes to deliver a message: tell your father,
sitting around the corner, glassy-eyed with his nurse,
that we will always be there. Tell everyone.

Edward Lees

Mother as Myth-Maker

When I walk in the grim of winter,
frozen cherries poke through
the snow's white.

Part of me wants to see a wolf
lunging towards a red coat's throat.

Part of me knows my mother made me
into a sleeping beauty,

that when I woke
she was an empty house.

I had to ignite a flame
and grow myself up.
Just as my own children will have to,

I learned how to sit with cinders
and tell a never-ending story.

Natalie Marino

The Hunter

I walk through the forest at night,
like we used to do with my brothers.

Catching catfish, fireflies trapped
in a bottle. Summer was distilled

in their pulsing lights. Lanterns
in our hands, your voice cuts

through curtains of moths
in the dark. When Dan called me,

I knew you were gone.
There would be no more room

for disagreement or hope
that we could patch things up.

We only ever talked of trivial things.
You once told me the roads were paved

in orange down in Mississippi.
I hate that I was right when I said

you'd never get the chance to see
who I really am, only the person

I pretended to be when you were around.
His creation wasn't all mine, stitched

together by our two fantasies of what
an eldest son should be. If only

I could have been the hunter
that you dreamed for me to be.

I thought I might bridge our rift
if I wrote a rope of pretty words.

If I became a better poet, or maybe
sold a book, I could be your son.

Robbie Mata

The Bamboo Grove

Wakayama, Japan

Late afternoon, my great aunt
hurried me through the village
on the long path to the bamboos—
*Where we'll toss the melon rinds,
the radish stems and carrot peels
from lunch*, she said.

In the grove the sun fell
from the high sky through endless
leaves, swimming like schools of fish
above my head. I lay my hand
against a swaying trunk, thin
in my palm, brown as my skin.

My great aunt, all business, left
the path. Pushed her feet down
against tough roots, fiercely binding
each bamboo to the others and all
to the earth. What did I know of roots
and supple trunks, of lives and existences
interlaced like an ancient grove of trees.

If there's ever an earthquake,
she said, upending the bucket,
Run here.

Kesaya E. Noda

Blue In Green

I'm trying to master it
in my sixties, playing
just the right notes
now that I am sober
and retired I practice
diligently for no one
but the cat and
what floats out the door
to a chance listener.

It gets better then worse
again, solos
tangle in themselves, spoiled
chords. Then one day
I'll play it just right
and my heart settles
behind the beat
and I can hear Bill Evans
with LaFaro and Motian
live at Birdland
and I am there and here
in the notes
though no one can say
which notes
those are.

Bill O'Connell

High Tide

Eagle Head, Manchester, Massachusetts

Winslow Homer, 1870

The little dog looks aghast. At the edge of the froth of the curved beach cove, it spots a sea monster, just emerged from the greenish plunge. The dog, dark brown and sleek, is poised in recoil, braced on its haunches, thin tail between its legs. Its neck is taut, clipped ears erect, eyes alert. Is it growling? Barking? The sea monster, long wavy blonde tresses flipped forward, drips a steady stream of seawater into the sand. Doubled over, sopping brown dress, skirt gathered in wringing hands. Its erratic shadow nearly reaches the dog. Behind looms a pair of human cormorants, saturated in navy blue with matching mushroom caps. Against a distant cliff, a tiny sailboat wafts. Seagulls drift. Near the shore, a small wave rises. Spent waves flattened, the underside of the rising wave is both visible and not in its deep green and gold opacity. Is that something other than seaweed swirling inside? Tones of green, grey and blue sea and sky rest against the tan sand. Hardly a scene of terror, though the little dog is still frozen in fear. The poised wave looks solid and of substance, but in a moment it will fizz and flatten to sea. How sometimes we see demons in mere shadows. Sometimes we can't tell that a monster is just a girl in a dress. How sometimes we don't recognize our own beloved.

Christine Osvald-Mruz

Moonlight

Some mysterious mood of light enters our window.
In the middle of our haunted dreams, we cry out loud
the love names we choose from a dictionary of myriad,
gleaming stars just above our bowed heads.

The blue night in conversation with every moving,
living being—our humble selves, our children, our animals,
and hovering over the graves of our ancestors.

Some holy beam of light descends from the heavens.
I behold your loving face in this holy stream of glow:
a kind of lucent singing against the glass of our windowpanes.
And inside our room, all is silence and eggshell white.
And I am a helpless witness to such beauty.

An owl's cry pierces the ever so deepening night.

Nestled under the owl's wing—a star.

Beth Brown Preston

Prayer from the Summer Garden

Let me hang in this hammock,
stoic, suspended in time
and in disbelief, as swallowtails
black & yellow, huge as my palm,
read the purple coneflowers
like fortune leaves in tea.

May I delight in this day,
in this buzz-sweet hot breeze
like breath from a stranger
who used to be a lover—
the smell of hot clover
almost brings me to my knees.

May I embrace every fractal,
every willow twig and ant,
every earthworm, finch,
fig, and be-pollened bee,
every pale squash blossom,
and dewy pod of beans.

May I hold fast to pink thistles,
every bold sweetgum burr,
every spadeful of loam,
blue sage bloom or seed,
each tomatillo split,
spiked caterpillar, blueberry.

Even the dogged dandelion
may I hold close, warm, tight—
and to all the day's oracles
that say something new—
as stars explode

and another lover leaves—
may we keep each other
in light, and in truth.

Jessi Jeanne Reath

Design Flaw

Dangling from the guaranteed-money-back-squirrel-proof L.L. Bean bird feeder,
a trapeze artist from the Squirrel de Soleil
who *parle français aussi*,
juggling stolen peanuts upside down,
proud Other in black. The thief!!
Didn't he read the ad's fine print?

Annoyed, you press, *Which squirrel was it?*
As if they wear name badges like the men
who work at Home Depot. As if one
squirrel is to blame for eating all the nuts.
As if Leon Leonwood Bean's creation—
because it is crunchy and all up north—
is any more honest than anything else.
Because L.L. Bean's doors stay open 24 hours

in that optimistic, *can do*, American way.
Because what else matters? This is end stage
capitalism. Bean can get away with selling you
a fishing pole you don't need at 3 a.m.
or the squirrel-proof bird feeder, sell you
a north woods dream, hauled on the backs
of your tired, your poor, any refugee will do,
blessedly returnable up to thirty days.

It would be comforting to believe that
the wrens and red bellied woodpeckers,
the house finches, grackles and sparrows
are outraged by squirrels stealing their peanuts,
or care about said guarantees as much as you,
but they're too busy tucking into lunch.
They already know there's no guarantee.

Elizabeth Rees

P.M.

The moon looks so delicious I just want to squeeze it like an
Orange, extract every last drop of nectar and
Drink it; juice splashing from my chin,
Dripping down my forearms: a sweet and sticky
Kiss.

Amanda Rioux

Under a Thinning Shadow

The pine's been dying now for years—
it took a while to notice, though.

And even once we noticed it,
it wasn't clear if we should let
it live, give it a chance, or bring
it down at once with buzzing blades—

a razing of the hidden rot,
a drastic step to save our home
from all the weight that might come crashing
on precious heads. Why shouldn't we
protect ourselves? And yet, this tree,
this tree is ours—it's here, we know

its trunk and bark, we've glimpsed the moon
between its branches, witnessed owls
and hawks, and smelled its baking needles
in summer sun. How can we take
it down until we really know
it's gone? How can we know it won't

destroy us in its shadow? While
the sun and moon illuminate
the thinning limbs, years cycle through.
We rake the cones into a pile.
We watch the crown—look up and wait—
that's all that we can really do.

Steven Searcy

Ember

After dinner, my sister and me in the backyard
by the hearth, talking about things we regret.
We are in late middle age. Years have softened
disappointment with a patina of quiet wonder.
Silked shadows of dusk smooth the furrows
and laugh lines worn in our faces so that
I can almost see us all those decades ago,
on a night like this one, maybe some Jack Daniels
and a little weed, planning our lives
in the firelight.

Lately, I've noticed her repeating our shared stories
as if I wasn't in them, until I take the hand
of her memory and guide it back to me.
It feels like the onset of a long goodbye.

How about things we don't regret, she says. I'll start.
His name was Harvey and everyone picked on him
because of his acne. We were playing spin the bottle
and I kissed him. Nobody else would.
He died the next year. Leukemia.

I knew in that moment I would write this story.
So she can hold to it once it's gone,
like a signal fire leading the way home.

Christopher Stewart

Isolation: Edward Hopper's *Hotel Room*

In her slip, she sits on the edge
Of the bed, newly arrived, her dress over
The arm of the chair. She still holds
The letter the bellhop just delivered.
Her suitcase is yet unpacked.

Head down, she is the exact
Age of misery. In a strange city,
Where can she go alone,
And what postcards would she buy
Now? Too little time is now too much. It's
Too early to go to bed, and the sheets
Too starched to be softened
By one body. The lobby
Has a pay phone, but what friend
Could she call for this, and no one has
All the change she'd need.

Paintings, like novels, often don't end
How we'd like. Her new hat is
On the dresser, in her purse the return
Ticket—the only thing she's left to read.

Jack Stewart

Swans

In another language the sign for *peace*
can also mean *a swan sleeping*.
This in a poem by Carl Phillips,
something he learned from a friend, two swans

flying beside the car we drove
along the ridge. Dark water below, dark sky
beyond their white wings, not sleeping but beating, enormous
like songs or spirits. It could have been snowing.
Where were we going?
Steadily they flew beside us.

A friend with a terror of birds can't bear the sound of feathers.
Leda, and a swan as big as a god, wings outstretched.
The sister whose six or dozen brothers were turned to swans
until she sewed them shirts with threads of silence.
The children of Lir condemned to live as swans
for nine-hundred years, singing in human voices.
The lonely monk, the swans he blessed and fed,
the swan he became at the end.

And the swan who carried someone's daughter
across the winter river. It wasn't a swan, I know that now.
But she was small on the broad back flying.
The sky was dark, and her father, waiting.
He stood and held out his arms on the other side.

The enormous sky around them all.
The stillness. From across the valley or was it a bell.

I want to go across, of course I do.
But what will bring me back again when all the swans are sleeping.
What will bring me back when all the swans have gone.

Kelly Terwilliger

Canoe

I sent her the video of the two black cats in a canoe
because she has two black cats
because I'd like to be a canoe

and the birds are singing, singing
singing and the cats turn their heads,
their yellow eyes like yellow suns

in some dark universe,
dark because of the distance,
and the sound of water trickling by

the canoe moving, going who knows where
just parting water, parting sound, all seamlessly
flowing apart and together.

She liked it. Texted *wow*. Sent a photo
of William and Walter waiting outside the door.
No, not waiting—Walter already halfway in,

his tail a blur, and William, always William,
out there by the shoes and the doormat with its two
faded dragons facing each other, rubbed dim

with the dirt of so many passing feet. Someday maybe
I will be a canoe. Or lie down in one. Or stand
on the dock as the ghost canoe goes by.

Kelly Terwilliger

Not About X's And Y's

For all turtles, sea- and land-based—the painted, snapping, spotted, musk and wood species included—, it's more elementary than mere X's and Y's, a boy or girl determined purely by the temperature of the mother's nest. When she's basking in the sun atop her unhatched eggs and becomes overheated, you can be certain that there will be a brood of females who'll soon enough be looking for eligible males. You lucky diminishing breeds of males in the globally warming world! Ever hard at labor of love keeping all the females content, none of whom will be smiling in a hundred years or so when there are too few of you left to do the deed on demand—good thing turtles have a life span long enough so that we humans might finally get matters under control.

Jim Tilley

seeds

do you remember | seeds' scent
pale green cracked open | so fresh and sour?
the morning dove| nostalgic voice
recalls with verve | what i know not

i don't desire | a spell of forgetting
i panic at death | as a moth among leaves
past the light | i beheld all my living &
misjudged for stars | i shadow in fear

i loved dirt once | crust under nails
the sound of rivers | the savor of nuts
i have forgotten | i try not to miss
answers to questions | i ask in new ways

Vivian Delchamps Wolf

Surveys, Maps, and Mothers: P

Parallels

imaginary lines circling the Earth's surface in equal distance,
grandmother and I shared a name,
felt the pull of pills, welcomed the intimacy of death
by our own hands—
mother and I shared a body,
slipped under alcohol waves, welcomed the intimacy of death
by our own hands—
parallels of equal distance
orbiting my life over and over again

Permanent survey marks

major reference points, Chicago, Orlando, my grandmother's unvisited
grave,
the slip and slit of hard blade passed from mother to daughter,
my alcohol-induced liver damage—lit shadows on the ultrasound
as my ancestors shark-circle this bleeding body

Photogrammetry

using photography to obtain accurate measurements, a picture
of my grandmother at her sister's wedding—wide smiling
and expecting her second child (my mother),
the 1st grade school picture where I smile a closed-mouth smile,
already trained to hide

Photolithography

a process to transfer the pattern of an image, an underlying pattern
I keep skin-hidden, the transferred image of all the women,
hiding their own daughter pattern,
whose blood still heats my veins

Point

geographical feature on a map that is too small to be called an area,
livable side effects, changing antidepressants (Effexor to Paxil)
because I'm no longer depressed but panic attacks electroshock
me awake—Paxil makes that familiar voice too loud,
the hand I know not to reach for as a cure, the words are thunder
trapped in the tin can of my head—*there is no hope. you should kill
yourself*—

I go back on Effexor, then a higher dose, wait
for things to level out, choose not to choose right now,
I was trained to hold on, to wait, to steady after sinking
and find my way back to breathable air

Pole

North: Chicago, the first dot on my own map, winter-deep history,
my mother's family—relatives I don't know, my grandmother's entire life
from start to violent finish—

South: Florida, memory sticky thick
pulled in a sweet/sour taffy, heat-melted trinket box,
my father's family—relatives I don't know,
little histories sparking lightning all over the state map

Prime meridian

an imaginary line of longitude used as a reference point
for measurement and navigation, a zero-degree meridian—my prime
meridian never cut
a clear path to navigate; it had blurred edges and gaps broken-gone in
the line,
a cavern I would spend years trying to fill
with every hard-edged reinforcement—razors, pills, alcohol, sex,
suicide—submission
in her unholiest forms, a dirty Hail Mary to fortify the line

Private road

reserved for use by a limited group of people,
some women know sex only as bravery—private road unnamed on the
map,
a road I've only traveled numb, drunk, high, barriers blocking
total access to me beyond the body, alcohol—the fastest route
from shame to sex to suddenly addicted—what would my Catholic
grandmother think of me? Her granddaughter,
carrying the name of the Virgin Mary, erupting God's name
for all the wrong reasons, with a woman in the church of my arms

Maggie Wolff

International Feature Section

France

Edited by

Kate Deimling

Introduction to French Poetry

FAIRE ATTENTION

Putting together this international feature on France has been a process of many discoveries—of poets, of translators, of words, sounds, and images. You will encounter poems that stretch down the page, and poems tied up like tiny packages. Some of them reflect images of America at their new readers on this side of the ocean, with references to Emily Dickinson, Walt Whitman, Marlboros, and Snoopy.

Many of them take us through French landscapes, including the forest of Fontainebleau, the farms of Aveyron in the south, and the bocages of the west (defined by Merriam-Webster as “intermingling patches of woodland and heath, small fields, tall hedgerows, and orchards”). This selection features poets all across the map of France—from Brittany, Occitanie, Provence, Lyon, Grenoble, Paris, and even the rugged island of Corsica.

The range of landscapes is echoed in the range of styles, marked by humor, language play, or a lyrical tradition of poetry inspired by nature. Many of these poets express a highly subjective relationship to nature, while simultaneously questioning their own perception. Some poems present difficult surfaces and philosophical density—qualities which, from an American perspective, can seem almost inherently French. I find these poems to be challenging but also expansive, creating a strange movement that bypasses logic and attains a different kind of lyricism. And you will also find what, at the risk of sounding old-fashioned, I’m tempted to call Poetry with a capital P: a tradition of love poetry hearkening back to Sappho or the troubadours, addressing the beloved, marked by longing or loss.

Recreating a poem in a different language is no easy task. French is supple in some ways, and English is supple in others. French creates ambiguity in some ways, and English creates it in others. And, somehow, equivalences must be found. Translators need to slow down to look closely at the text and to listen to it closely, too. We dwell with the poem’s images, we ponder the various meanings of the words, we hear their sounds and try to find ways to create similar effects. Translating is a kind of slow, intensive reading. This is the attention that

poetry calls out for. You can't enjoy a poem if you're in a hurry.

In this age of the “attention economy,” the focus of the human mind has become a scarce resource. As Yves Citton puts it in his book *Pour une écologie de l’attention*,¹ “attention is individuating insofar as it selects what I will be tomorrow by choosing what I see and hear today.” The French poets here pay attention to trees, water, wind, rocks and stones, hands, tongues, bodies, voices, feelings, perceptions. They play with words, they reach into the past, they delve into dreams and visions. When we read their poems, we do the same. When we grant them our attention, we are seeing what they see, thinking what they think.

That is the everyday miracle of poetry.

Kate Deimling

Note

¹ Paris: Seuil, 2014.

Six Poems

WRITING A POEM

- toss all the letters
from Scrabble
- listen to old ladies

WHAT ABOUT YOU, WHERE DO YOU LIKE TO SWIM IN THE SUMMER?

“...after spending my childhood
in turquoise paradises
murky waters frighten me.”

LOVE POEM

loving again
remains the only way
I have found
to endure love

ANGER POEM

eventually
anger begins
to glow in the dark

YET ANOTHER LOVE POEM

like things aren't
complicated enough

YOU WANT TO CHANGE YOUR LIFE?

start with your walls

*Emma Anselmetti-Laffont
Translated by Kate Deimling*

from *The Silence of Words*

8

in the blurriness of twilight
you pierced my heart with an arrow
the way others tear a stocking
somewhat by negligence

43

in the valley of the vanquished
you abandon the abandoned ones
lair
of black flying foxes
washed up on the strand
of true terrors
no need to dress up
the masks were made of flesh

44

in the midst of this jumble
full of unpursued words
and incomplete projects
it's always in the middle of a sentence
that we separate from someone

in the lost sharing out
 of the geography
 of solitude
 indecent agonies
 in these days of panic
 the marks of time
 facing baleful screens
 impassive
 resigned to your sad lot
 the crows have
 entered Paris

if we're ill
 we'll be ill together
 die of solitude
 within solitude
 with no possible reconciliation
 and if we must die
 etc. & co., etc.

Gérard Berréby
Translated by Cory Stockwell

Note

These poems are taken from the collection *Le Silence des mots*, © Éditions Allia, Paris, 2021.

The Girls' Chestnut Tree

For we're but husk and leaf, and naught besides.
But that great death, which within each abides,
that is the fruit around which all rotates.

—Rilke, *The Book of Hours*, trans. A.L. Peck

chestnuts gathered from
the school playground
became my projectiles
thrown at the girls

catching on to my impudent plans
the principal taught me a lesson
staring at me
“That's not how we treat girls”

my mother recounted how
the strict teacher smiled impishly
at her out of the corner of his eye
while scolding me

to put an end once and for all
to this sex scandal
she buried the remaining chestnut hoard

one day we witnessed a miniature forest
beginning to grow
it was around the time of our move

I was allowed to take one
shoot with me
my father carefully removed a
chestnut sapling from the ground
bordering the stream

I played around the tree
it finally grew taller than me
and supplied beautiful chestnuts
shiny and perfectly round
the fruit of my education and
the miscalculation of my mother
it was my tree of women

next to the trunk my mother gathered
a chestnut then gripped it in her hands
a way to treat
rheumatism she said
while handing me another
her very last gift

I slipped a chestnut inside
next to her face as her coffin was closed
returning it to its rightful place
dreaming that one day
a little chestnut would grow there

I can imagine the conversation
between my mother Renée and my grandmother
Lucile who is Poetry now to me
Renée torn between
her sense of what is proper
and her love for her son and plants
it would finish with her saying
it isn't right
a chestnut tree growing on top of a tomb

*Patrick Beurard-Valdoye
Translated by Matt Reeck*

I Read Poems by Emily Dickinson

The first time I read Emily Dickinson, I'm on a little island
in the middle of a great sea.
In a very old country.
In a language I don't understand.
This is kind of like Emily Dickinson's poetry.

*What in the world is this?
these dashes everywhere
you can't understand anything
half the words are missing
I can't read this
there are too many capital letters*

*

Emily Dickinson standing among the mastic shrubs
endures the ruthless gaze of the Mediterranean
“I found—a Creature—Commensurate with me”
she thinks
and in her ancient Agamemnon’s face
her eyes squint, full of cheer

Emily keeps to herself
Emily is an island

To reach her
you must learn to row
she's big as a pebble
you don't understand where she comes from
what she's doing here

She comes from a volcano

I am from the continent
but I reach Emily's island
this builds my arms

I land in the middle of the night

In darkness I wander it
under stars I feel it with my feet
I move a bit blindly
the slope is arduous
but the fragrance pleasant

I move between ground and sky
between sense and silence
I make my way

The pebble hid a mountain
you climb high but perhaps
never all the way up
every peak hides another
and suddenly the sun rises

You're standing
in the wild sage
a little girl

The sea looks completely new

Murièle Camac
Translated by Kate Deimling

Note

The French original was published in *Europe 1137–1138* (January–February 2024).

from *Freehand*

III

God

one day
created the hand

because Longing
could no longer
live its abstract life

of disembodied concept



Some also call it *curiosity*.

*

The physicians call it *movement*.

*

The mathematicians call it *vector*.

*

The grammarians call it *preposition*.



It is

tending toward
waiting to
heading on
yearning for

*

The Hand is transitive

◆

The Hand is a verb in motion.

*

It moves, removes, embues, exudes

*

The Hand is always in a progressive tense.

◆

In the Hand
a long and slow
process
is at work

something
indiscernibly
opens
hatches
unfolds.



A fern,
the Hand is a stem,
rolled up on itself
whose smallest leaves
one by one

ex

te

nd



Like ivy
it climbs
creeps
grips
slips in



Historians call it *expectation*.

*

Stylists call it *prolepsis*.

*

Omens call it *foresight*.

*

Its aspect is imminent.



Folded into itself

is the lotus flower
in bud

*

handlily



In the fullness of the Hand
the two hemispheres of a prayer.

*

Water collects in the hollow of the Hand:
the origin of the world.



Is there any emotion more raw than that of the naked palm
of an open hand?

Lénaïg Cariou
Translated by Cole Swensen

Four Poems

ZERO

Never of a summer
I hold the dog's mouth
Cracked white hands
A pack of Marlboros rolled up in your t-shirt sleeve
A house spider runs as fast as she can
I have memories that catch fire
near a shed filled with nitroglycerin
You had big bucks
you had a gorgeous face
and if I see you
in your white t-shirt
you'd feel shame and pity
like when I look at the face you've left me

LIGHT PANTHER HAIR

You think you're handsome
You think you're sweet
Life put you in a real pickle
Life gave you a right hook to the temple
Hah whaddya think
You aren't fooling anybody
It's a nice title, "Light Panther Hair"
You don't unclench your jaws
You don't snag a smile
You use the word "scram" for "go away"
Life threw a sink at your face
Where's the panther and where's your light hair

SQUIRRELS

I'm writing you a mini-poem
with a bit of joy
the amount that's in
the Short Message System
and it's like running
15 km
with squirrels at your feet

AN ULTRA COOL POEM

I'm trying for a poem that's ultra cool
like Snoopy as Joe Cool
I light up a Kool
the boat sinks*

*Guillaume Dorvillée
Translated by Kate Deimling*

Note

* The French verb *coule* (sinks) is pronounced “cool.”

OCTOBER NIGHTS

unleavened cloud or like a rag
the sky in the west milt plashet
all at once rinsed potbellied depaved
powdered sooty

the sea ordinary sharp
swell naked blade at the very end of the swamps
reed beds and the far-off banal blue swirl
of a bocage

tack snapped lost
same old song at its tumble at its colors
the wind in a lavender vale
nibbles shades out and sings
vertiginous hopscotch mirror and the stars round
squared spit backwards
into the beyonds the assarted hills
and the stumps where it rains

already night further off
vague sack opaque thick blessed attic
so that one may tangle untangle retangle

on the sly
at last a child dreams
beneath his hand the passing rain
patches up a creek moves away

November 25, 2023

*Henri Droguet
Translated by Alexander Dickow*

ECHOLALIA

The night the night starting again
then the rain a vague cloud
gobbet bonnet sticking out is already
dissipating in a hedge the takeoff and tur
ning frilly pirouettes of tur
tledoves three tits that get spooked
a hare all ears and thighs
and sitting on its ass
is standing by at the edge of a harrowed sown field
a deer barks
a common butterfly wobbling
scamping between the gravestones
cuckoo off its perch it's dawn

a slight knell not far off
and nothing visible on the high seas
God undocumented perhaps who passes again passes
over his spoor his leavings
the waves are tracking and dreaming dark
one more time like ash on snow
tossed botched scrap

it's the shivaree the insomniac ruckus
more or less disciplined
of the sea all around beautiful and blue
she takes on her winter odor
and good wind that unsettles and unmasks
assarted the hills and stumps
a clump of nettles where a field mouse beds down
an acre of spelt where it's raining

...and he who unmoored went
goes running for nothing over the earth
and the enameled sea
*the weather will be fine he says all shall be
sharing and common grace*

December 17, 2023

Henri Droguet
Translated by Alexander Dickow

THE DISJOINTED

The wind the little traveling breath fluid
and almost reluctant passes over your faces unstitches
the clouds meringues and chiffonnades
above the roofs in the sky smothered poached crude
leaky basket cataracting at length
that sands the centuries-old bedrock of schists
granites quartzites micas and porphyries
it blows through the streets one after
the other it draws and quarters dishevels
the fugitive sea your malicious pleasure
(*which is a jack-of-all trades*
said the ancient voice)
which beats patient meticulous
a cliff the color of wine

the mist of dawn rises upon the peat
the spindle the laurestine the viburnum
a dolled-up appletree
a beetle goes astray in a tea rose
a wounded thrush descants
the returning passerines start their fanfares

a common buzzard languidly glides
before it all lets go the lightning
a heap of soot hanging there inevitable
the crow stretches wrings itself out
and sends forth its **craaa**

then a human is there wallowing vying
evading nothing
dark and naked suffering
rips him flays him squishes him
innocent deprived he walks
in the end is dazzled

nothing nothing shall anymore be forgotten
neither the sainfoin the barns and the glory poles
the cool shady spots the solitary ash trees
the slight birches a ruined gable

choked with brambles and the stonebreakers
a wood blooms again
the gnawed forest smokes and the trees following
are as elsewhere the loveliest in the world

and the multiple child runs and runs
willy-nilly further than all others
the high hanged clouds the night
feeds his joy in being there

January 1, 2024

*Henri Droguet
Translated by Alexander Dickow*

from *Skyside*

I listen to both the rain and the voices drowning in it.
Drum in place of dreams. Scratches hold the eye at the tree bark's level. A
plane passing by births a rock.
The dogs' voice runs.

A silence, trickle of water held in place by concentration.
The steps become fluid; scratches flow beneath the hand.

A joy, the little flute chasing the hands.
Something lives around the edges of the core.

Here gathers a meaning without name.
A white line crosses body and sky.

Stéphanie Ferrat
Translated by Marissa Davis

from *Pocket Elementary Morality*

Blind wall		Deaf window
	Hide	
Mute room		Absent actor
	Blank	
		Less a theater a hand kerchief
Empty stage		Blind public
	Curtains	
*		
Cage 1		Cage 2
	Silence	
Cage 4		Cage 5
	Silence	
		[... <i>any time</i> <i>bracket</i> ...] ¹
Cage 11		Cage 12
	Silence	

Note

¹ A time window, silent. Read aloud, the “any time bracket” is not pronounced; the duration of the “silence” is the reader’s prerogative.

Observing eye	Unnerving ewe
	Envious
Thundrous us	Theatrical they
	Anthem

I know we
can never be
it's either hymn
or meander

*

Left leg		Right leg
	Specimen	
Bereft leg		Blight leg
	Poetic	

Has this got
a similar shape
to an abdo
men
?

Gross leg Cold leg
Insectoid

Frédéric Forte
Translated by Chris Clarke

from *The Last Season of the World*

Sorrows interrupted by the sound of a landscape dating from the beginning of the world.

Yesterday's hands were trembling, perhaps I didn't choose the right moment to tell myself.

Lost between a flower and seven veils, I fear I'll burn everything that lies toward the sea.

But what liquid on that tongue rolling beneath the bed.

The soft clacking of ankle boots trotting upon the rocks makes my grottos echo once more, and I carry within myself each one of her steps that I heard along the way.

I freed my body while awaiting the deluge of responses.

A truce offered up even to courage.

Sometimes I think the fate of one of those great yellow rocks would suit me better than my own.

Simon Johannin
Translated by Cory Stockwell

Money slips
So quickly
Between my fingers
I write for less money
Than I need to drink

I made love
Twice
In two nights
Love so strong
That it could spit out a sky

I'd give my life
For a bit of hers
For all the madness of spring
To arrive in her belly

*

Surprised are the cats
Who, coming upon your breathless night
And your gait,
Set out to follow you
In single cat file
Their paws in the hollows
Of your paws' absence

*Simon Johannin
Translated by Cory Stockwell*

Note

These poems are taken from the collection *La Dernière saison du monde*, © Éditions Allia, Paris, 2022.

from *Unfasten the Silk of Your Silence*

1

Teach me
how to unfasten
slowly
leaving no wrinkles
the silk of your silence

2

These words scrolled inside a bottle
tossed into the sea
do not hope to seduce you
on a morning walk
the descendants of survivors
who escaped the tyrant's barrel bombs
will discover them
near a graveyard of buoys on Lesbos
they will say that a stranger
once wrote them for another woman
before or after
the shipwreck of that miraculous spring

if these walkers are nostalgic
for places that have disappeared
where barbarians are now setting fires
they will roll themselves inside the bottle
wrapped in the wool stitches
of my words for you

Souad Labbize
Translated by Susanna Lang

Dislodge the enemy tanks
mend the torn map
replant the uprooted olive trees
deliver strings and wood
to the oud maker
I do all that and more
when you say that as you sing
you think of me

Souad Labbize
Translated by Susanna Lang

Genesis

on the first day I lazed around
far from the schedule chains
and the vain preoccupations
while the closed shutters
let through some rays
of the summer day in the clear and sluggish
night of my apartment

on the second day I simply daydreamed
looking at the sky and the clouds
slowly stretching out on my balcony
like a spread out mollusk
at the heart of the unopenable shell
of my new azurial sun lounger

on the third day I twiddled my thumbs
it seemed like I was at the sea
lying on the beach of an ancestral islet
among the flowers and shapeless vegetables
that grow on my patio fence

on the fourth day I just sunbathed
hanging around under the sun until night time
watched the stars and played a few notes
humming along with a slightly crazy old friend

on the fifth day I stood gaping
in front of the wildlife documentaries
seeing the end of my holidays approaching

on the sixth day I had to rest
some questions about the point of existence

thus on the seventh day I wrote a poem

*Perrin Langda
Translated by Pauline Valentine*

Gas Station

a neon sun
where vessels
and flies gravitate

it's only a

gas
station
in the sidereal night

beyond the
double glazing

the real people
waiting for their turn
or for me to disappear

a last drop of humanity
remains

in the feminine voice
of the credit card machine

I would have wanted to help this woman from another time
who doesn't understand a thing
I am a good person
but I have to go

*Perrin Langda
Translated by Pauline Valentine*

from *Shadow, My Cradle*

The ice will have melted,

from between the blocks where cold had trapped
the translucent blue of words
the call will come

for anyone brave enough to climb the heaped stones
to their sharp peaks
and enter that black mouth,
a passage will open in the rock

down to the luminous gap deep inside
where a clearing appears

while clouds of snowflakes dance
before the grotto, changed into petals
falling from the highest leaves
and writing little by little their script of green and wind
onto the mountain—
free words,
living words.

Béatrice Marchal
Translated by Susanna Lang

May a passage open through forests
to reach the veiled sun,

may the rays be diffracted where transparent gnats
flutter in the golden air of autumn,

may the light flow into the heart of the clearing,
filtered by the great pine

and in the living shadow
may our hearts burn, attentive.

Béatrice Marchal
Translated by Susanna Lang

Opening Song

Death your bit clicking my bones
you brush close you snuff
your rotten song up my nostrils

you dance under leafy trees skulking
in cracks of rocks you rasp
your black laugh in the hinges of my hips

—who are you

to weed barren soil then broadcast
in passing the foul stink
of your winds

who dance dancing with your bones
skiffing and jumping around me
your scythe scrapes earth

and you swell sky with your cunning
spine flesh gone gulped
skeleton gnawed

—what do you want now

so many corpses don't they fill you
keep you plump—

I see them sneering
gap-toothed mouth dismantled chin
flung back to the earth
still you champ at the bit

you filth!

*Angèle Paoli
Translated by Martyn Crucefix*

Aviatrix

I

Earth sky sea
utter osmosis
of the androgynous

universe

same tempests same high days
same sails catching the breeze

setting out for—

II

And the fire?

Its form hidden

incandescent passion spurs
the voyager on her way—She?—
leaping borders
the frontiers of the void
the invisible real
experimentation and
revelations

she sea-wolf skipper for the long haul

oceanic aviatrix

O Captain! My Captain! Our fearful trip is done

to what shapeshifting
does your dream of union invite us?

III

and if this were a dancer?

A slim dancer
in this instant inhabited
by the spirit of Icarus
with its multitude of qualities she forgets
to consider the violence
and turns her back
on them

armored helmeted sail-winged
airy—heavy-weight
the dancer readies for lift-off
a billowing of canvases before the breakers
waves whipped by a squall
she's re-made
translates herself into a giant bird
borderland brant goose
ash-grey goose
off the straits of Magellan
the frozen shores

feet stretched towards—
—the next height

she sticks in the sand
lashed by waves
belly and thighs smothered
in the shift of the tides

arms folded
and her head floating
high in the winds

capped by

the exponential sail

the navigator unfurls herself

woman

dazzling windmill

insane encumbered by gilding
of scales

doomed in the air
to an exemplary shipwreck
her blindness
prevented her seeing

she's tail-spin
in the void

O Captain! My Captain! Our fearful trip is done

the frantic poet singing

of inscrutable desire
of dreams commotions

ice-locked in air

of brass

Angèle Paoli

Translated by Martyn Crucifix

a small hollow

there had been a broad ground of possibilities for lounging
a certain stubbornness toward whoever enters by the mid
way by an echo between the teeth at a loss to be withdrawn
we hear readymade a perfect dimension of falsehood

and to smile in the country stopped resident his head
quarters his song his mouth and a few cassettes inside
by way of flat analogy the gush of signs from the brain
as an arable terrain of adaptability the best society of the time

there i rest on reflex bed the stream intruding on my reality
a salon communicates holding onto its initial bearing
you have to imagine a refined little world smashed to the ground

guess that i could go right on knowing you you with the face
under the elements to assure you that we see nothing but you
child in the panel of a dome light lit between us

@rimbaud

*Anne Portugal
Translated by Jeffrey Diteman*

Rural Poems

*

places know better.
than us, it's unsettling.

forty years back,
here in the abandoned car
children played
played played played played the rabalaïres of the hamlet
(bikes softwood knees)

among them,
my mother.

thirty years back,
here by the barn
beside the barn, over here,
under the cherry tree
a heart attack.

today passing
knowing it or not knowing

what does it change

does it change what, nothing.
there's only the cherry tree who knows
places know better than us.

and then again, the taste of cherries too.

*Hortense Raynal
Translated by Limited Connection
Collective*

*

only this.
a meadow.
the first meadow of your life,
kid dirty clothes
you sticky mop of hair!

whole family Sunday
same gestures
country chats like code names
(Go forward. Go back. Go forward. Go back.)
bits of hay like dust of the earth
like insects
escaping the pitchfork
rising to the anger-sky
like the mother, later.

is that what it means to be a family,
to climb one after another onto the tractor seat?
memories of hay pinned on the region.
gold plating on the map.

all these parts glow gilded, like this morning,
when I woke.

*Hortense Raynal
Translated by Limited Connection
Collective*

from *The Art of Bandaging Wounds*

1

I will not conceal from you that my grief is great
some mornings I get up and I have no hands
some mornings I am voiceless my grief is so great
I have the reputation of being a difficult person
that's why I can only live in complete calm
I am rarely believed when I say that I furiously tore off
a lover's ear with my teeth
no one asks why. No one says what fury, what
lover, what ear
they don't believe me
I swallowed it
I don't know why I confide like this
it's possible that already I have gone too far

Lucie Taieb
Translated by Kate Deimling

Me too
my grief is great
I was told to come properly dressed
I understood I had to make myself beautiful
I dressed myself properly
I am rarely believed when I say that I furiously bit and drew
blood
I have on my back the mark of his teeth
I would have liked to remain unmarked
some mornings I'm left speechless
I'd like to be able to speak without being cut off and to listen
without cutting off. This doesn't happen
I ask forgiveness
I'm sorry
I was taught that you have to make up for your sins
or try to do so
take your life
one came and said there were no sins. If I wound you
it's a risk, he bit my bare shoulder
if I wound you I bandage you
I wound you to bandage you
a day will come and we will be at peace
I don't believe it
take your life
and we will be at peace

*Lucie Taïeb
Translated by Kate Deimling*

I dressed myself properly and I made up my face
I showed up on time and I said hello while smiling
they praised the softness of my voice and I smiled again
I resolved not to speak while crying because it's impolite
like eating with your mouth open
I resolved not to cry
I resolved to stand up straight and to move only my lips
and not to raise my voice
what saves you is not an outstretched hand
it's not a word they would have told you
it's not a promise

Lucie Taïeb
Translated by Kate Deimling

Of christ the only wound that moves me is the one on his side
at the surface of his flesh that the country doctor treats
in my dream, the man armed with a razor blade wounds me in
the same spot

I wound him in the same spot
side by side, his head on my shoulder, in the back of a car, we
bleed out

and this man is my brother and me
and the one who is driving leads us to our ruin
we want
to bleed out and for our bloods to mingle
to feel this fraternity
he who wounds me and whom I wound
I will not conceal from you
that my grief is great

*Lucie Taïeb
Translated by Kate Deimling*

from *Nerve and Evidence*

And then so
dear
the soft
 chill
spit thirst
of closed places
when wake us
 the sound
of the other world
 a word similar
 to yours
 of ages
that forgive.

*

Close
looks
 rise from
mornings.
We had been
riddled
with birds
and lands
with strewn yesterdays
holding back the distances
of countrysides
effaced by the
contour of
 the voice.

*Esther Tellermann
Translated by Timothy DeMay*

THE ILLNESS OF STONES

Some stones want to enter my eyes,
they want to pierce my stomach,
stones and a whole cliff want to pierce
my heart and stomach.

They want to wound my arms,
I can feel stones that want to break my cheeks
and my legs.

They wear a thousand crowns on their heads.

They shine,
and they are pale,
I am not afraid of stones.

How
to hold
a face?

How do eyes hold themselves?

*Laura Vazquez
Translated by Limited Connection
Collective*

LAYING DOWN THE FACES

The seeds of my eyes,
the pomegranates of my loins,
I must spend weeks and years
another little survivor
another child eating
they give him the best cuts
they give him the shanks
he must be congratulated
it's already his birthday.

*Laura Vazquez
Translated by Limited Connection
Collective*

IT'S YOU, THESE ARE YOUR BONES!

I eat shoe polish
because I want to scream
and my mouth is full of hair,
of shoe polish, of rotten redcurrants.

I eat asphalt,
I can say that the birds don't exist,
I can say everything,
I have the sword,
I don't have hands,
I can say everything
and my thoughts will cross my lips.

In my stomach, the fish turns.

Do you know you have bones, a skeleton, blood and water?

Do you know you have pumps in your body, mechanisms, motions
and tiny gestures?

Do you know that it's incessantly, incessantly, did you know that
it's incessantly?

Do you know that the liver and the heart talk to each other, that

the eyes and the intestines talk to each other, did you know that the colon and the trachea and the lungs and the pancreas and the glands and the blood vessels all make your every move?

And do you hear what comes out of your mouth?

Do you hear what the trees say?

Think of the old men, of the father, of the mother, of the children, of the fire, of the escape, think of the war, of the meat, of the animals, think of the mother and the father, and the father's father, the mother's mother, think of the first trees, of ruin, of the fish, of the shacks, of the first shacks, of the trees, of the crossings, crossing the water, crossing the earth, the father and the mother, think of the mother, of the father, of the brothers, of the children, of the dogs, think of the wolves.

*

I will have to walk a big kilometer, a big time, a big calendar, a kilometer and I am drawn tight, I contort. Nobody picks up my tongue, that bit of flesh that I love. My tongue.

*Laura Vazquez
Translated by Limited Connection
Collective*

In Fontainebleau

“Let’s leave this road and go left,
Where it’s thinner, then a path runs like a groove,
Trust me, just a few steps through the grass
And here we are before the oldest tree in the forest:
Planted circa 1370, its birth so distant
That our ancestors’ ancestors weren’t around yet.
In the past, it was contemplated like a monument,
Walkers came here as pilgrims.”

“It stretches higher than the oaks around it
And looks like a chimney of yellow snow.”

“Colors on this trunk with no bark left?
At best the whiteness of petrified wax.”

“It fills our eyes (do you admit it?) and our hands
Placed there touch the memory of earth.”

“Like passing your palm over a body of frozen blood:
The sap no longer flows through the wood.”

“Its branches have the desire of arms praying
To a sky that grants or will grant.”

“Wind or no wind, they will break soon
And fall with a racket preceding the end of all noise.”

“Listen to its foliage rustle in the past
Where the light gleams, a gentle captive.”

“Your reverie alone is torn from the silence.
Do you hear *declared dead since 1994?*”

“Men are wrong with their words when they speak
Of life extending immobile,
Standing from roots to peak,
And if you face it with your voice of analysis
And exact figures, then you are more dried up.”

Gabriel Zimmermann
Translated by Kate Deimling

Book Review

Title: *Slaughterhouse for Old Wives' Tales*

Author: Hannah V. Warren

Publisher: Sundress Publications, 2024

Price: \$16

Natural history museums are hypnotic places; pterodactyls and mosasaurs hang suspended from the ceiling; triceratops bones occupy darkened rooms; archaeopteryx fossils decorate the wall, painstakingly sculpted from stone. This summer as I wandered through the Museum für Naturkunde, the Sternberg, and the Field Museum, my feelings flickered between childlike wonder and weightiness. In adulthood, the uncomplicated thrill of dinosaur skeletons coexists alongside an altogether darker and richer transfixion: finitude. My musty childhood memories in museums now signify early brushes with death, and with extinction. Hannah V. Warren's debut collection, *Slaughterhouse for Old Wives' Tales*, turns the museum space into a phantasmagoric sprawl. Divided into four discrete sections (Dinosaurs/ Divinations/ Apocalypses/ Biographies), the book traces an arc through corporeal time, mirroring past extinctions with future catastrophes.

The first section takes place largely in museums. Warren populates her poems with dinosaurs, comparing their reconstructed forms with human bodies, each a mucky jigsaw of tissues and tendons. Her style emphasizes compound language but also fracture, creating tension between repair and rot. In “the bones on the museum floor behind the do not cross tape,” words like “skull-piece” and “bonechip” reassemble brokenness—yet these lines are as entropic as they are lyrical, splintered with caesurae like “rib slice/curved spine//ankle garnet.” Each poem revels in its own contradictory impulse: simultaneously collage and décollage.

Warren highlights themes of decay and regeneration through negation, unwriting poems even as they unfold with phrases like “you learn to unbutcher the monster / to bind the un-wound.” Paradoxical images exist within the museum space, where time becomes compressed around and inside the body.

In the poem “the animatronic model has a broken metatarsal,”

Warren considers the limits of wonderment and temporal suspension as a second-person speaker introduces their sister to dinosaurs. Death and disenchantment become associated with the body. The final stanza concludes:

you wonder how long she'll remember fossil types
or when she'll start measuring her waist
with kudzu & masking tape & dark romanticism

These descriptions showcase the antinomy of museums: their uneasy capacity for both stasis and change. I am reminded of my own complicated feelings in such spaces, at once awed and chilled, achingly conscious of time. In Warren's poems, childhood fascination transmogrifies into ruthless self-examination. Wonder becomes horror. Humans hurtle towards the doomed fate of dinosaurs.

She modulates scope deftly, from a single museum visit to a timescale so immense it encompasses all organic beings. In the poem, "the young scientists speaks to an auditorium filled with her colleagues & they ask questions about her accent later at dinner," descriptions of fossilization and whale fall culminate with the line "you & I & velociraptor & whale occupy the ground like tumors." Enmeshed with ampersands, animals share a grim togetherness in death.

The second section, *Divinations*, conjures a prophetic space where the self-examined body becomes a scrying glass, brimming with futures not yet lived. In the opening poem, Warren writes "we live with the horrors of our own bodies/ornamented machines gnawing into the future" and then later: "we crack open our skulls & listen to the stars move." Poems in this section coil inwards, measuring their waistlines with kudzu and dark romanticism. Flesh becomes bitten, harvested, divvied, and peeled, revealing fraught architectures. In "developing some desire for more than yourself," Warren writes "the fireants in your belly feel trapped & they gnaw at your liver/ wanting to know if they are alive inside something else alive." Images of entrapment and devouring dominate this section. Unlike the dim placelessness of museum spaces, *Divinations* locates itself in a haunted south. Poems grapple with history, geography, and family, vying for escape.

The poem "the last time you sat alone in your parents' house," features one of the most striking moments in the collection, encapsulated by the lines "you tuck your sister's hair behind

her ear before you leave/ & teach her to erase bruises with a frozen tablespoon." In a book so saturated with decay, these gestures resound with the clarity of a windchime. They are not hopeful, per se, but they introduce an element of care that glistens among the wreckage; a bruise can be erased—if only momentarily.

Even in bleaker passages, Warren channels musicality, forging associations through consonance and rhyme. A series of sonorous poems titled "&" function like connective tissue. Phrases such as "bridge ribcages" and "antbites in winter & splinters" create conceptual and prosodic linkages that unite living beings within the landscape. Whereas *Dinosaurs* joins bodies together in death, *Divinations* examines the achy togetherness of life.

The third section, *Apocalypses*, introduces narrative continuity. Interconnected prose poems focus on a second-person speaker, a sister, and their mother. Together, these poems sculpt a fairytalelike sequence evocative of the Brothers Grimm. In the poem "slipping between dimensions & the world ends," Warren examines female bodies as the source of both creation and destruction. She writes, "armageddon is already here, living inside our wombs' spongy lining." Herein lies the greatest paradox of *Slaughterhouse for Old Wives' Tales*: death is birthed into the world. The tension between lifegiving and dying manifests intergenerationally, through familial tension. Warren explores this theme with deliberation, twisting fairytale tropes into gnarly configurations. In the poem "an empty house in the forest," the mother and daughters stumble onto a house with a "smoking chimney, warm cinnamon smell" but also "a ricocheted shackling, a budiedalive tightness." Despite its sinister qualities, the speaker "touch[es] the peeling floral wallpaper & it feels romantic." Poems alternate between romanticizing and dismantling cycles of domesticity. The family becomes trapped in a fairytale where everything is darkly beautiful and nothing seems quite right. Like *Divinations*, this section imagines catastrophic futurity through the bodies of women.

The final section, *Biographies*, functions like an addendum or a postscript. The titular poem compiles phrases alphabetically, among them: "lawless dandelions," "sickly treeline," and "wet stench of a slaughterhouse." These phrases, all peppered throughout preceding sections, showcase Warren's penchant for collage as she unwrites her own poems, using their chunky viscera to

craft something new in a culminative act that blurs creation and destruction.

The last poem of the collection, titled “repeated chorus,” asks:

what does it say about you
that all the women you know
have violently transformed?

This question articulates impossible pressures placed on the female body: to age without ageing, to give life without changing. In Warren’s poetry, no body remains untransformed. Slaughterhouse for Old Wives’ Tales is paradoxical, full of skulls and weeds. Each page brims with a grisly songfulness. Animals die even as they are born; cycles remain static even when propelled forward. Warren is a delicate doomsayer. Wandering through these poems is like touring through a natural history museum choked with dust and ghosts, an attempt to understand the middle of life by working backwards from the end, a reminder that to feel truly present in our own ache and skin, we must reckon with our future skeletons.

Kristin Emanuel

Contributors

Kalyani Allums (she/her) earned a BA in Linguistics and Creative Writing from Emory University. Her work has appeared in *West Branch*. She is currently an MFA candidate in poetry at Rutgers-Newark. She writes about queerness, myth, and language.

Emma Anselmetti-Laffont is a poet, painter, and pianist. Her creative practice revolves around daily life, encounters, and imaginary figures. She has published in the journal *Ouste* and was part of the exhibition Small is Beautiful at 11 Pontac in Bazas. Her latest solo show took place at Dernier Télégramme in Limoges.

Sam Aureli's work began in blue-collar roles, and he earned his degree in architecture at night while raising a family. He has a rich cultural background, having lived in Italy, Australia, and the United States. As an emerging poet, Sam is fascinated with nature, drawing inspiration from his diverse experiences.

Simon Anton Niño Diego Baena's fourth chapbook, *With Different Wars Raging*, is forthcoming from Jacar Press. His work has appeared in *Poetry Daily*, *The Bitter Oleander*, *Osiris*, *The Columbia Review*, and elsewhere. He has been nominated twice for the Pushcart Prize. He lives in the tiny city of Bais (Philippines) with his wife and child.

Clayre Benzadón (she/ they) is a queer (bi/pan) Sephardic (Mizrahi)-Askhenazic poet, educator (adjunct professor) and activist. Her manuscript, *Moon as Salted Lemon* was recently named an honorable mention for Miami Book Fair's 2025 Emerging Writer's Fellowship. Find more about her here: <https://www.clayrebenzadon.com>.

Born in Tunisia in 1950, **Gérard Berréby** emigrated to France with his family at age 15. He is the founder and publisher of the independent press Éditions Allia. His most recent collection is *L'Imparfait du subjectif*. Influenced by Situationism, he is interested in the permutations of fear in contemporary society.

Patrick Beurard-Valdoye is the author of 25 books of poetry and visual arts, including on the American painter John Blee. He recently published *Lamenta des murs* (Flammarion), concluding his "Cycle of Exiles." He was professor of poetic arts at the École Nationale des Beaux-Arts until 2023. He lives in Paris.

Brian Builta lives in Arlington, Texas, and works at Texas Wesleyan University in Fort Worth. He is the author of *A Thursday in June* and more of his poetry can be found at brianbuilta.com.

A native of Jacksonville, Florida, **Chris Bullard** is a retired judge who lives in Philadelphia. In 2022, Main Street Rag published his chapbook, *Florida Man*, and Moonstone Press published his chapbook, *The Rainclouds of y*. Finishing Line Press has accepted his chapbook, *Lungs*, for publication in 2024.

Murièle Camac is a French poet who lives and teaches near Paris. Her poetry, translations, and articles have appeared in many journals and she has published five poetry collections, including *Une femme c'est un Indien* (Exopotamie, 2022). Exopotamie will bring out her next collection, *Une odeur de fiction*, in 2025.

Lénaïg Cariou is working on a PhD in contemporary poetry at Université Paris 8. With the Limited Connection Collective, she translates American poetry into French (and the other way round). Her first two books of poetry, *À main levée* and *les dires*, came out in France in 2024 and 2025.

Joseph Chaney grew up in Tennessee. He directs Wolfson Press. His poem “Riches” was published in *Best New Poets 2023*. Others have appeared in *The Nation*, *Prairie Schooner*, *South Florida Poetry Journal*, *Apple Valley Review*, *Dogwood*, *Spillway*, and *Valparaiso Poetry Review*.

Leonardo Chung divides his time between Illinois and Korea. He recently won first place in the 93rd Annual Writer’s Digest Writing Competition for nonfiction essay and is a finalist for the 2024 Witness Literary Awards for poetry. His work has been published or is forthcoming in *Epiphany*, *Portland Review*, *Writer’s Digest*, *Sweet Lit*, and many others.

Babette Cieskowski is the author of the poetry chapbook “Secrets My Body Keeps” (dancing girl press, 2022). Her poems have appeared in *Zone 3*, *Frontier Poetry*, *Crab Orchard Review*, *Prairie Schooner*, *Juked*, *The Laurel Review*, among others. She currently lives in Columbus, Ohio.

Patricia Clark is the author of *Self-Portrait with a Million Dollars*. She has recent work in *Plume*, *North American Review*, *I-70 Review*, *Sheila-na-Gig*, and elsewhere. She has a new book (her seventh) just out: *O Lucky Day*, Madville Publishing (Jan. 25).

Chris Clarke is a literary translator and scholar currently teaching at the University of Connecticut. His translations include books by Raymond Queneau, Patrick Modiano, Pierre Mac Orlan, Éric Chevillard, and Julio Cortázar. He was awarded the French-American Foundation Translation Prize for fiction in 2019 for his translation of Marcel Schwob’s *Imaginary Lives*.

Jona Colson is Queer poet, educator, and translator. His poetry collection, *Said Through Glass*, won the Jean Feldman Poetry Prize from the Washington Writers’ Publishing House.

Ben Cooper is a poet studying creative writing at Salisbury University. He works as an Assistant Editor at *Poet Lore*, a Managing Editor at *149 Review*, and is published in *The Penn Review*, *The Shore*, *West Trade Review*, *Saranac Review*, *Frontier Poetry*, and more.

Martyn Crucefix's latest collection is *Between a Drowning Man* (Salt, 2023). Recent publications: *Cargo of Limbs* (2019); *These Numbered Days*, translations of Peter Huchel (2019), which won the Schlegel-Tieck Translation Prize; *In Case of Loss* (2023), translations of Lutz Seiler; and *Change Your Life*, translations of Rilke (Pushkin Press, 2024).

John Davis is the author of *Gigs*, *Guard the Dead*, and *The Reservist*. His work has appeared in *DMQ Review*, *Iron Horse Literary Review*, and *Terrain.org*. He lives on an island in the Salish Sea and performs in several bands.

Marissa Davis is a poet and translator from Paducah, Kentucky. She holds an MFA in poetry from New York University and was a 2023 ALTA Emerging Translator Mentorship Fellow. Her debut poetry collection, *End of Empire*, is forthcoming in 2025 from Penguin Books.

Kate Deimling is a poet, writer, and translator from French. Her latest book translation is *The Story of the Marquis de Cressy*, a novel by 18th-century author Marie-Jeanne Riccoboni (MLA, 2025). She is co-editor of *Bracken* magazine and her poetry collection *Time Traveling* is forthcoming from Cornerstone Press (2026).

Timothy DeMay is a postdoctoral fellow in the humanities at the Asian University for Women in Chittagong, Bangladesh. His translations of Esther Tellermann have appeared in *Asymptote* and *Gulf Coast*, and his translations of Moroccan poet Abdallah Zrika have appeared in *Banipal* and *ArabLit Quarterly*.

A professor of French at Virginia Tech, **Alexander Dickow** is a scholar, poet, and translator writing in French and English. Full-length translations include Henri Droguet's *Showers and Bright Spells* (Spuyten Duyvil, 2021), Max Jacob's *Central Laboratory* (Wakefield, 2022), and Sylvie Kandé's *The Neverending Quest for the Other Shore* (Wesleyan UP, 2022).

Jeffrey Diteman is a literary scholar and translator working from French and Spanish to English. His poetry has appeared in *Past Simple* and *Drunken Boat*. His translations have been published by *Harper's Magazine*, *Le Monde*, and *Latin American Literature Today*, with translated novels released by Deep Vellum and Restless Books.

Guillaume Dorvillé is a poet and artist who teaches at the art schools ESAAA in Annecy and ENSBA in Lyon. In free, uninhibited, rapid-fire writing, he dissects daily life with humor. He has published *Chrome*, *Mettre la gomme*, and *Ce que je pense des éclairs* with Editions Vanloo.

Born in 1944 in Cherbourg, Normandy, **Henri Droguet** taught literature in Saint Malo, his home since 1972, until 2004. He has published many books of poetry and prose and his latest collection is *Petits arrangements avec les mots* (Gallimard, 2025). Rather than Normand or Breton, he presents himself as a Celt-made man.

Julie Ebin is a queer human whose work explores sensuality, finding stillness in nature, and motherhood. Her work has most recently appeared in *Solstice*, *Literary Mama*, and *Off the Coast*. A co-founder of the writing group v.e.r.b.a.t.i.m., Ebin lives in Arlington, Massachusetts with one child and zero cats.

Harper Elder is a writer, dancer, and student at Westminster University. She was raised in Utah and has gotten into plenty of shenanigans including, but not legally limited to: being kidnapped to Washington for several months, lying about her height (6'0), and trying to foster an army of rats.

Kristin Emanuel holds an MFA in poetry from the University of Kansas where she studied eco-fabulism and the comics poetry movement. Her latest poems, comics, and criticism have appeared in journals such as *Shenandoah*, *Colorado Review*, and *Ecotone*. You can find a list of her selected publications at: <https://kristinemmanuel.com/>.

Angela Gabrielle Fabunan is a writer and teacher of poetry from the Philippines and the US. She is the author of the poetry collections, *Young Enough to Play* (UP Press, 2022) and *The Sea That Beckoned* (formerly Platypus Press, 2019). She can be reached at www.angelagabriellefabunan.com

Stéphanie Ferrat is a painter and poet from Aix-en-Provence, France, currently residing in the Var. Books of her poetry have been published by La Lettre Volée, Fissile, and L'Atelier La Feugraie. Ferrat runs her own small press, Les Mains, which publishes intricately illustrated books of poetry.

Hallie Fogarty is a poet and artist from Kentucky. She received her MFA in poetry from Miami University, where she was awarded the 2024 Jordan-Goodman Graduate Award for Poetry. Her work has been published in *Pegasus*, *Poetry South*, *Barzakh Magazine*, and elsewhere.

Frédéric Forte was born in Toulouse in 1973 and lives in Paris. He has been a member of the Oulipo group since 2005. He has published 14 poetry collections, including *Transformation de la condition humaine dans toutes les branches de l'activité* (2023). Three of his books have been translated into English.

Jennifer L. Freed's collection, *When Light Shifts* (finalist, Sheila Margaret Motton Prize) explores the aftermath of her mother's cerebral hemorrhage and the altered relationships that emerge in a family health crisis. Her poetry has been nominated for Best of the Net, The Pushcart, and the Orison Anthology.

Rachel Greenberg grew up in the Boston area. She is a therapist and finds writing to be therapeutic. Grief, life transitions, and family relationships inform her poems. She lives in a beautiful rural area which provides inspiration for her writing. Her writing has appeared in *The Sun*.

Ken Holland has been widely published in literary journals and nominated three times for the Pushcart Prize. He placed first in the 2022 *New Ohio Review* poetry contest and finalist in the 2024 Concrete Wolf Chapbook Prize. He lives in the mid-Hudson Valley of NY. More at kenhollandpoet.com

What is there left to say about **Marc Janssen**? Maybe, his verse is scattered around the world in places like *Pinyon*, *Orbis*, *Pure Slush*, *Cirque Journal*, and *Poetry Salzburg* also in his book *November Reconsidered*. Janssen coordinates the Salem Poetry Project and keeps getting nominated for Oregon Poet Laureate.

Born in 1993, **Simon Johannin** grew up on a farm in the Hérault department of southern France. He worked as a temp and a toy salesman before moving to Brussels to study art. His novels *L'Été des charognes* and *Ici commence un amour* came out in 2017 and 2024. Instagram: @simonjohannin.

P M F Johnson has placed poetry with *Atlanta Review*, *Evansville Review*, *Nimrod*, *North American Review*, *Poetry East*, *Threepenny Review*, and others. He has won The Gerald Brady Senryu Award, been shortlisted for the Touchstone Award, and been awarded Finalist in the *Atlanta Review* International Poetry Contest.

Jad Josey's work has appeared in *Bayou Magazine*, *Ninth Letter*, *Passages North*, *Glimmer Train*, and elsewhere. He has been nominated for the Pushcart Prize, Best of the Net, and Best Small Fictions. His story, "It Finally Happened," was included in *Best Microfiction 2021*. Read more at www.jadjosey.com. Reach out on Twitter @jadjosey or Bluesky @jadjosey.bsky.social.

A 2024 National Poetry Series finalist, **Jen Karetnick** is the author of 11 collections of poetry, including *Inheritance with a High Error Rate* (January 2024), the winner of the 2022 Cider Press Review Book Award. The co-founder/managing editor of *SWWIM Every Day*, she has work in *Cimarron Review*, *NELLE*, *Pleiades*, *Plume*, and elsewhere. See jkaretnick.com.

Becky Kennedy is a linguist and a college professor; her work has appeared in a number of journals and on Verse Daily. Her poetry has been published as well in anthologies and collections and has been nominated for the Pushcart Prize.

Born in Algeria, **Souad Labbize** now lives in France. Her poetry collections include *Je franchis les barbelés* (2019), winner of the 2020 Prix de la Méditerranée de la Poésie. Writing for all women who choose exile to affirm their independence, she has also published works of fiction and memoir.

Susanna Lang's chapbook *Like This* was released in 2023 (Unsolicited Books), along with her translation of poems by Souad Labbize, *My Soul Has No Corners* (Diálogos Books). Her poems and translations have appeared in *Prairie Schooner*, *Asymp-toe*, *The Common*, *Tupelo Quarterly*, *Circumference*, *december*, and *The Slowdown* among other publications.

Perrin Langda was born in 1983 and lives in Grenoble. His works include *Poésie assistance 24h/24* (La Boucherie Littéraire, 2020), *Les Maximes de nulle part pour personne* (Voix d'encre, 2018), *Glace Belledonne* (La Pointe Sarène, 2017), and *Quelques microsecondes sur Terre* (Gros Textes, 2015).

Edward Lees is an American who lives in London. His works have been accepted in various journals including *Southern Humanities Review*, *The Common Dispatches*, *Potomac Review*, *Anthropocene Poetry Journal*, and *Moonpark Review*. He has been nominated for Best of the Net.

Limited Connection Collective opens contemporary US-American poetics to the French literary scene and vice-versa. Currently, the collective is based in France, the US, and Canada. Laura Vazquez's *The Hand of the Hand* is their first translation from French to English (Ugly Duckling, 2025). Current members are Lénaïg Cariou, Shira Abramovich, Sidney Cadot-Sambosi, and Camille Blanc.

Béatrice Marchal is president of the Cercle Aliénor in Paris, which holds monthly meetings to share and discuss poetry. She has published a number of poetry collections and critical essays, most recently *Salomé, ma salamandre* (L'herbe qui tremble, 2022), and her poetry appears regularly in French literary magazines.

Natalie Marino is a poet and practicing physician. Her work appears in *Heavy Feather Review*, *Pleiades*, *Rust & Moth*, *Salt Hill*, *wildness*, and elsewhere. She is the author of the chapbook *Under Memories of Stars* (Finishing Line Press, 2023). She lives in California. You can find her online at nataliemarino.com or on Instagram @natalie_marino.

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Kesaya E. Noda is a third-generation Japanese American (Sansei), born in California and raised in rural New Hampshire. Noda lived, studied, worked in Japan, and walked the traditional Shikoku Buddhist pilgrimage. She holds a Masters of Divinity from Harvard Divinity School and works as a writer and editor.

Bill O'Connell lives in Amherst, MA. Publications include: *When We All Were Still Alive* (Open Field 2021); *Sakonnet Point* (Plinth Books 2011) & *On The Map To Your Life* (Dytsicid Press 1992) plus poems in anthologies and literary magazines.

Angèle Paoli is a Corsican poet, novelist, and translator. She runs the online review *Terres de femmes* and received the Aristotle European Prize for French Poetic Criticism in 2013. Recent publications include *La Montagne couronnée* (2014), *Les Feuilles de la Minotaure* (2015), *Artemesia allo specchio* (2018), and translations of Luigi Sorrentino.

Christine Osvald-Mruz is an attorney in private practice and the mother of four sons. A graduate of Princeton University and Harvard Law School, Christine is the daughter of a Hungarian immigrant father who taught French and an English-teacher mother. Originally from Long Island, she lives in Morristown, New Jersey. This is her first poem publication.

Anne Portugal is a poet and translator. She has published a dozen books, mostly with the experimental press P.O.L., including *Le plus simple appareil* (*Nude*, translated by Norma Cole), *définitif bob* (*absolute bob*, translated by Jennifer Moxley), and *la formule flirt* (*the flirt formula*, translated by Jean-Jacques Poucel).

Beth Brown Preston is a poet and novelist with two collections of poetry from the Broadside Lotus Press and two chapbooks of poetry. She is a graduate of Bryn Mawr College and the MFA Writing Program of Goddard College. Her work has appeared and is forthcoming in *Another Chicago Magazine*, *CALYX*, *Cave Wall*, and *World Literature Today*.

Born in 1993 in Aveyron, **Hortense Raynal** is a writer, poet, and performer. Her first poetry collection, *Ruralités* (2021), won the Fondation Antoine et Marie-Hélène Labbé Prize. Other books include *Nous sommes des marécages* (Maelstrom, 2023) and *bouche-fumier* (Cambourakis, 2024). Her work explores the saturation of language and poetic polyphony.

Jessi Jeanne Reath studied Creative Writing and Music at Florida State University. Her poems can be found in publications such as *Slipstream*, *The Jabberwock Review*, and *The Petigru Review*. She currently lives on the Space Coast in Florida.

Matt Reeck is a Guggenheim Fellow in translation. His most recent translation is *What of the Earth Was Saved* from the Hindi of Leeladhar Jagoori (World Poetry Books, 2024).

Elizabeth Rees is the author of *Every Root a Branch*, and three award-winning chapbooks. Her poems have appeared in *Agni*, *Southern Review*, *Partisan Review*, *New England Review*, and *Kenyon Review*, among other journals. Rees currently divides her time between Maine and Maryland and teaches privately.

Amanda Rioux is a freelance writer, photographer, and adjunct English professor. Her work—including poetry, fiction, nonfiction, and photography—has appeared in *Writerly Magazine*, *The Lake*, *The Mantelpiece*, and others. She is currently working on her first novella. Instagram: @MyLoveAffairWithTheWrittenWord

Steven Searcy is the author of *Below the Brightness* (Solum Press 2024). His poems have appeared or are forthcoming in *Southern Poetry Review*, *Commonweal*, *Ballast*, *New Verse Review*, *Blue Unicorn*, and elsewhere. He lives with his wife and four sons in Atlanta, Georgia.

Christopher Stewart is the author of *What Came After* (The Calliope Group) and co-author (with Quraysh Ali Lansana) of *The Walmart Republic* (Mongrel Empire Press). His poems have recently appeared or will appear in *Midwest Quarterly*, *Oberon*, *Bryant Literary Review*, *Oakwood*, *The Perch*, *Connecticut River Review*, *Marrow*, and others.

Jack Stewart was educated at the University of Alabama and Emory and was a Fellow at Georgia Tech. His first book, *No Reason*, was published in 2020, and his work has appeared in journals and anthologies. He currently runs the Talented Writers Program at Pine Crest School in Fort Lauderdale.

Cory Stockwell is a translator. He lives in Minneapolis. Recent translations include Brigitte Giraud's *Live Fast* (Ecco, 2025) and Mariette Navarro's *Ultramarine* (Héloïse, 2023).

Cole Swensen has 20 books of poetry out, most recently *And And And*, which was long-listed for the Griffin Prize. Other books have been awarded the Iowa Poetry Prize, the San Francisco State Book Award, and the National Poetry Series. She divides her time between France and the U.S.

Lucie Taïeb is a French poet, novelist, and translator from German. Her novel *Les Échappées* (2019) won the Wepler Prize, and her third poetry collection, *L'Art de pan-ser les plaies* came out in 2022 from Editions Faï Fioc. She teaches at the University of Western Brittany in Brest.

Esther Tellermann is a poet and psychoanalyst who lives in Paris. A monograph on her work came out recently (Rodopi, 2022), and Keith Waldrop translated her poetry as *Mental Ground* (Burning Deck, 2002). Recent collections include *Votre écorce* (2023), from which this selection is taken, and *Selon les sources* (2024).

Kelly Terwilliger is the author of two collections of poetry, *A Glimpse of Oranges and Riddle, Fish Hook, Thorn, Key*. Her work has appeared in journals such as *decem-ber magazine*, *Main Street Rag*, and *Cider Press Review*. She teaches and performs as an oral storyteller.

Jim Tilley's poetry is inspired by his love of the outdoors, particularly walks in the woods or along a lakeshore or seashore. He has published four full-length collections of poetry and a novel with Red Hen Press. His most recent poetry collection, *Ripples in the Fabric of the Universe: New & Selected Poems*, was published in June 2024.

Pauline Valentine is a translator and scholar specializing in 19th-century Parisian literature. She holds a doctorate from the University of Connecticut and has translated Perrin Langda's collection *A Few Microseconds on Earth* (World Poetry Books, 2019). She shares her passion for French language and culture as a teacher in Massachusetts.

A 2023 recipient of the Prix Goncourt, **Laura Vazquez** (1986–) has published seven poetry collections since *La Main de la main* (2014), which won the Prix de la Vocation. She co-edits the poetry journal *Muscle*. Her poetry has previously been translated into eight languages, not including English.

Vivian Delchamps Wolf is an Assistant Professor of English at Dominican University of California. She researches and teaches American literature, primarily focusing on disability studies and entanglements of gender and race. She is also a dancer and poet.

Maggie Wolff is a poet, essayist, fiction writer, and Ph.D. student in English Studies. She recently won an AWP Intro Journal Award for her poetry, and her work has appeared in *Hayden's Ferry Review*, *Juked*, *New Delta Review*, and other publications. Her chapbook, *Haunted Daughters*, is forthcoming from Press 254.

Gabriel Zimmermann's collection *Depuis la cendre* (Tarabuste, 2018) won the Prix Max Jacob discovery award and the Académie Française's Prix Maïse Ploquin-Caunan. Other collections include *Atlas de l'invisible* (Polder, 2018) and *Lapidaires* (Tarabuste, 2020) (Prix Méditerranée for poetry). His first novel, *D'une aile rognée* (L'Harmattan), came out in 2023.



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