His First Death

My son died when he was born
for ten or more seconds
while I drew in three long breaths.
The hand pump hissed
and his face was dusk. I dreamed
the dreams mothers dream
for their first sons—kick and suck,
pupils that tighten in sunlight,
stand, walk and run; act-out
and talk-back, eye met by eye,
roll in wet grass. Three beats
passed. His Dixie-cup chest
inflated, then crumpled. I drew in
and released my own great
useless lungloads, each profligate breath.

Rebecca Foust

The Poetry Reading, 1982

It was the day after I buried my son.

At the library that hot afternoon
Gwendolyn Brooks' vibrant voice wrapped me
in a blanket of words, held me
in the arms of metaphor and crooned
a lullaby of tenderness, a love song
for mothers who had lost their sons in war,
on violent city streets or cancer wards.

I had not slept for many months.

I held onto her voice
rising, falling in the ancient rhythms
of women grieving together.
After she read, I waited, then went to her.
She took both my hands in hers and said,
"My dear, I do not know what has happened
to you, but I am sorry. So very sorry."

Gloria Masterson-Richardson

The River in Winter

After Thoreau's "The Pond in Winter"

If you listen you can hear the keening
sounds at the end of warm, the end of autumn
as it moans from the river. One cold day
in late November the gelatinous water
thickens, slows then squeaks and creaks

until its skin shimmers and cold freezes
to cold, an artery of fresh water
turning to ice and stopping the river's flow
to heart-shaped Lake Saint Clair.
In mid-winter when the sun is pale, the lake

a frozen plain and temperature ten below,
stout men wearing parkas and hats with ear flaps
chop holes in the lake, fish for perch
and pickerel and drink schnapps while the wind
from the north howls around their shanties.

On a late March day, after weeks of thawing,
freezing, cracking you can smell the green breeze
from the south whispering across the frozen
landscape. Restless floes split apart, push
against each other on the river's banks,

blocks and sheared prisms of *solidified azure.*
Cities of crystal ice near the river's mouth
break and rip against sea walls, piers and docks.
The ice jam roars, crashes, then gives way
like grief contained too long in a frozen heart.

Gloria Masterson-Richardson

Holding Hands

The last time we went to bed together
near the end of our long sacred shack-up
we lay side by side with your hand in mine
as it was that day in Radio City Music Hall
the Rockettes' legs opening like scissors
when I slipped the signet ring off my finger
and slid it onto yours, love and hormones
pushing us closer to finding a common bed,
the movie Alexander's Ragtime Band
with dancing and singing about the Easter Parade.
The next day we walked down Fifth Avenue
part of the Easter Parade two Alabama Jews
become New Yorkers for the day
you wearing a white dress and red hat
your high heels shaping your calves lovely
your hand in mine as we veered off from the parade
and found our way back to that room I still call ours.
A few weeks ago I woke up to find your hand cold
thought you had gone and lay listening for breath
until it came and told me you were still here....
Your hand, which your parents held
when you crossed streets or were afraid
and which they reluctantly gave me
sixty years ago, has been magic
most recently your voice as you've filled
scores of notepads with scrawled words
and spoken volumes in the night
as messages have flown in sleep
from your hand to mine.

Robert Barasch

Gacela of the Bright Omen

The deer lie down & leave the forms
of their breathing matted in the long grass,
Braille the wind brushes across—

sleep of many streams, lungs of camphor, nameless ache...

That language will outlive us, the signs last longer than the stones:

a river a wolf crosses will taste of ash,
I once heard. Carry a mockingbird feather
& forget the way home, sleep beneath a wolverine pelt
& suffer a seven-year hunger.

If you hadn't once turned from a road
because a line of crows flew beside your car,
we never would have met—
is it one of those that nests in your hair

while you sleep, that leaves its tracks near your eyes?
I'm losing my sight, you tell me—

how long will the books keep their letters,
before there are no faces
to go with the names?

I look to the flames
that open pinecones, wonder
at the heron's silhouette
crossing the spring moon—

what moon draws the blood from your lip?

We can only pray, in a little prayer of one syllable
that runs the width of a breath & the length of a spirit...

we can only smear a cross of ash
on each eyelid, & listen for someone to repeat our namesakes—

blackbird on the cattail, ghost in the sycamore, green cinder—
& wait for the dew to wash our feet,
for the deer to rise up, & leave, in the long grass,
an imprint of our bodies.

Mark Wagenaar

It's not the light

It's not the light
that I will miss most,
for they say the dark
is full of light,
whole beings made of light,
tunnels, spheres,
fields of glowing gold,
they say,
those who have returned,
with some regret,
to tell their tale

It's not blue skies
or green grass
not the deep red taste
of strawberries in June
or the thick salt smell
of ocean marsh in August
not the talk, the laughter
not the moon or stars
or the rush of wind
through tree and cloud,
that will draw me back
to gaze upon this world with longing

But the warmth,
for they do not talk of warmth,
those who have returned
full of awe and wonder,
to tell their tale,
they say the light is *dazzling*,
urgent and alluring,
but, not warm

And I will miss the warmth
of sun's heat held
by old gray stones
long after sun has set,
the scorching sand
beneath my feet in summer
the rays that burn my back
and dry the ocean's deep green chill,
the blaze of firelight in autumn,
the warmth of winter kitchens
kindled in the cave
of dark December nights

But most of all,
the warmth of flesh on flesh,
an infant curled upon my chest,
heart beating heart to heart,
a child's head sleeping
underneath my chin,
my head nestled, cheek to chest
within the warm curve of a loving arm

So creaturely,
this pulsing warmth,
will draw me back
through ceaseless lifetimes,
to drift in warm dark amnion,
to wait, unknowing and unknown,
for the day
when I can plunge
headlong, squalling,
back to life
and be caught
by the warm hands
of the world again

Mary Dowd

I Will Wobble up a Crooked Street or Two

I will leave by the French doors,
stopping only for minor landmarks:
salty shadows, for example, underneath
a desert tamarack tree.

I will take no provisions; I will grow lean,
living off my own flesh.

I will walk through midnight and make a point
of carrying several afternoons in my backpack.

Blind apple, aspen, and pecan:
I will wait often in the shade of trees.
I can be anywhere. January, for example,
or May.

Pine, cottonwood, sycamore, willow:
I will count sidewalks in Taos

and likely stop over in several places
for the translucent, missing faces
of people I have loved.

In small towns, I'll wait by dovecotes,
write my journey down on dressed stone.

Some doors open wide, and some
open just a crack. I will depart.

I will journey to the ocean, seas away
from the closed circle of here:

Seattle's Pacific, South China's Sea, or
New York's black Atlantic.

I'll compare the dip and roar of tides,
bathe in the waters of swell and rush.
I will breathe seawater foam.
I will eat stars.

Mary Frith

Message for a Time Capsule

Perhaps some of you, coming after, will want to know:
I lived in the time when we stopped speaking poetry
and spoke in prose. That was the start.

Believe me: I saw snow so heavy it broke the roof,
I saw cedars shake their white winter fur.
And moss was shorter but greener than grass.

On our hill, water still ran wild. None of us could catch it.
Dandelions. Daisies. Queen Anne's Lace. We had them all.
Even blackberry, prized for its fruit.

There were wars and rumours of wars. The misbegotten words rushed past.
How many hummingbirds? I didn't think to count.
In rain, water flared from their wings.

And once I set foot on a great glacial sheet,
but mostly kept to common things:
the clearest blue light beneath the snow,

crystals of ice that grew on windowpanes; rabbits, snails
that sailed around the house and back. This is what I knew of earth,
and how we were loved, but failed to love enough.

Pamela Porter

The Propaganda Experts Write Harry Houdini's Eulogy

We thought we'd bury him in a casket, his legs and arms
caressed by his favorite handcuffs.
We thought we'd seal the cover, then wrap chains around the walnut wood
and padlock them shut so we were certain
nothing could get in
or out.

We wanted to stop everyone from thinking of him,
that wily showman, full of hidden locks and picks,
always breaking free no matter what,
his smiling wrists red and bloodied.
We wanted to stop them from thinking of his Chinese Water Torture cell—
those thoughts kept breaking that glass and
letting the water run out.
After all, no one knows this better than us:
if you don't think of a rainstorm, there can be no flood.
If you don't think of a spark, there can be no fire.

We wanted to put shackles on everyone's brains
so no one would have to picture him again, suspended high in the air
between buildings, wriggling
from his ropes and straight jacket,
or being lowered in a locked wooden chest
into the gray skin of the Detroit River.

Please listen to us: We trace only straight lines.
We state only the facts: A grain of sand, a pool of oil, a rifle.
All we wished for, really, was this:
For that which is captured to stay
captured, for that which is wrapped in chains to stay
wrapped in chains
until we decide to let it out.
For what is dead to stay dead, our soldier posed by the body
that we're sure will never rise from the dust.

Our words capture the world and encircle it
the way a python's intestine surrounds the softness of a rabbit.
Our words say yes, or
they say no. No interruptions,
please. Please
no illusion, no magic.

We don't want Harry's forehead to break through the surface
of the river, stunning the crowd to gasps and applause.
We want no mysteries or speculation, only
what we can hold in the palms of our hands.
We cannot hold water. We cannot hold Houdini.
Our purpose is not to entertain, or amuse, or to hide a key
that will open a hundred rusty locks.
Our goal is to take any detoured thought and keep
it quiet, to bury it, to hold it inside the straight jacket of
our minds for a long time
until it is silent, and truly ours,
a seed squeezed to nothing by the darkness.

Bill Meissner

Why Professor Gao Sings

Professor Gao removes her glasses and tells her students to close their books.
It is the last day of the spring semester in California.

I will sing, she says. First in Chinese, my imposed language
when I grew up, and then in Mongolian, my native tongue.

The American students roll their eyes. Professor Gao stands.
She's not tall. This is a love ballad, she tells her Ethnic Studies Class.

Strong and clear, her voice rises above the roar of the campus lawn
mowers. It slips through the open windows, and the red rhododendrons.

Her hand waves to indicate the woman's part, a whip slashes the air as her
lover rides away. Professor Gao grows taller to reach the high notes.

The students lean forward, stop chewing. The song reaches its ending.
Silence. The students are not prepared. It sounds so sad, they say.

Professor Gao nods. The next song soars. The words are more Slavic.
The melody clears the pink and white blossoms of the fruit trees.

It spirals above the redwoods. And like a kite in a gusty wind, sails towards
heaven, sweeps over the Pacific and on to the steppes of Inner Mongolia

where it glides, eagle-like until the strike of the arrow shatters it and it falls
among the tall, shivering grass, leaving no more imprint than a sigh.

This is even sadder, the students say. A young man in Rastafarian locks
puts up his hand. Why do you sing, Professor Gao? he asks.

I was nine during the hunger years of the Cultural Revolution, she says.
My father was a teacher, my mother a poet. She wrote about being free.

Her poetry was decreed anti-Mao. She must repent. Of what? She asks.
She's to appear for self-criticism sessions until her brain is purified.

Because of her sick bones, I take her on my bicycle to the People's Square.
She spreads a dish cloth on the ground before kneeling.

A boy my age with a red scarf 'round his neck knocks her down,
removes the rag towel. She crunches on the hot concrete.

Young people laugh as she retracts the lines brushed on rice paper
she has sewn together with thread. The pages tremble in the breeze.

She confesses litanies of offenses. We return day after day, week after week
until the capitalist poison is aborted from her mind like a dead embryo.

We say nothing during the long rides through Hohhot. She doesn't raise
her eyes as she kneels on her bourgeois legs. I look away, high not low.

My mother still writes but now her fine calligraphy exalts the Great Leader.
She composes hymns of adoration: inspirational slogans written like psalms.

I uncover her code. The word *idiotic* burns in her head but she bleeds
enlightened on the page. *Incomparable* proxies for *despicable.*

I'm afraid to say the wrong thing. I coil in silence. I am an ambulatory stone.
When I turn eleven a classmate gives me a note. Meet me after school, it says.

Her name is White Jade. Her father has a secret violin. She teaches me notes.
Everyday I follow her home. She plays and sings from Madame Mao's operas.

One day we collect wool left by grazing sheep on barbed wire. The grass soaks
our felt and cardboard shoes made by our teacher and musician fathers.

With the city to her back, White Jade projects her Chinese opera voice
into the air, to the far away nomad's yurt we see under the wooly clouds.

Sing, she says. I open my mouth. After two years of been buried alive, my
voice seeps out, small, timid, unsure. Sing, she insists. The words gush forth

with the force of water held against its will by a man-made dike. We sing about
girls like us. We shape our own words on the Chairman's patriotic slogan songs.

I celebrate that morning in Inner Mongolia; it was spring and I was eleven.
And this is why, on the last day of class, I sing, answers Professor Gao.

Claire Hsu Accomando

On Those Joshua Tree Plains

Tumbleweed wind, canteen
of thirst, a knapsack filled with sand:
any of these memories could
leave me homeless once again.

Every chance they got, my parents
stuffed our ancient Ford with mis-
matched clothes and cans of beans,
then pulled me from my sleep

so they could drive all night to those
hard-knuckled lands that they loved.
On those needled plains, I was the slip
of the canvas tent's shadow

melting into nothing
but a wish for a small backyard,
blossomed and lawned,
where even the shade would be green.

And how to explain my father
and mother, so injured by their lives,
they preferred to camp alone
among the stone and ocotillo,

over friends and home?
What did they seek from those
furious spaces that didn't want us:
ground so hard it would hold

beneath their feet; land so set
in its ways it would never betray them?
Radiance so blinding they could
almost believe we were saved?

Margaret J. Hoehn

Something is Cracking

Three decades east
you were a child turning
six. You were a wish
just made, a promise still

whole. Like the yellow
piñata in the shape of a star,
that floated from a branch
in your family's small garden.

Then, one by one,
you and your friends
put a blindfold on, were given
a stick and twirled about

until you were dizzy.
This happens to us all
in various ways.
Is it any wonder that at times

we stumble through our lives,
shattering what we love,
or striking wildly at sky,
connecting with nothing?

There is no shame in being lost
or hurt or confused.
Or even in falling
to the ground on your knees,

scrambling for any
colorful bit of sweetness
you can cram in your mouth
or clutch in your hands.

Margaret J. Hoehn

A Photograph is Locking Its Doors

The click of the camera's
shutter is a latch sliding

shut. It's the sound
of a moment locking its doors

so nothing can enter
or leave that room where

the bright bands of sun
on the wall behind your

smiling face never move;
the steaming cup

of tea in your hands
never grows cold;

the pears on the table
in the red porcelain bowl

stay forever themselves.
And even after your death,

you are still in that room,
young, and safe, and smiling.

Margaret J. Hoehn

Photograph, Germany, 1970

On sloped ground next to the playing field
she has built, for herself alone, an almost human
figure—faceless and sexless, with the glazed
smoothed coat snow acquires when over-handled
and compressed. To her left, just beyond the border

of the picture, is the house she lives in
and from which she can ride her white,
three-speed bicycle, out through the front gate,
over the cricket pitch, down past the pig farm
and into Bergen-Belsen; a house that contained,

toward the end of the war, eight hundred
sixty-nine Gypsies, Jews and others—overflow
from the camp next door as Stalin advanced
and Hitler panicked and prisoners were shuffled
west. Even if I could, I would spare her

nothing. To her right, beyond the border
of the picture, is the cemetery
where, three decades from now, between the dark
gum line of the hedge and a full-grown cedar, the bones
of sixty-four bodies will be reburied, unnamed

and all together, in a plot the size of a double bed
after being uncovered by the German workers
breaking ground for a new gymnasium
right where she is standing. Right under her feet.
She is ten and adept at dropping her net

over resting insects; adept, already, at killing:
Peacock, Cabbage White, Sulphur Yellow;
Mantis, Cockchafer, Devil's Coach-horse: in her
small room a parquetry of bodies on plastic
fold-out tables and every specimen labeled

with region, with country, with nearest town;
with date and host plant and method of collection.
She collects even her failures in small jars—

Heads without antennae, heads without bodies,
bodies without wings—a crush of shape and colour
against glass, the aftermath of mishandling
or of running, wildly, swinging
her net overhead. Here and there, the bald
gleam of a wing case, the swollen comma
of a scorpion's sting. I know her curiosity

is fueled by love, so what stand should I take, now,
when I know she comes to regret it? She rotates
her jars each week—like her mother rearranging
her ash trays and cut-glass vases, those ceramic
ornaments and bowls from Elba—for a different

effect, for a new mood. And for now, her daily
remorse is so small the rain devours it overnight
and she can sleep without dreaming
in that house. She is simply a girl, squinting
against sunlight and snow and beneath that snow

and the thin soles of her black boots, bones
in their mass grave, and by the time she returns
here she will be almost fifty and the dead
will have followed her into every poem and every bed
and the sun will be holding hands with the shadows

on its walk through the cemetery as she stands
on the curb of their new grave. But, for now,
she is simply a child in love with the world:
Ground Beetle, Copper, Clouded Apollo;
Woodwasp, Fritillary, Alpine Argus.

And she doesn't know it yet, this girl,
but she is destined to become my most valuable,
lost possession, this girl with a heart like a beetle
under bark. I know that her innocence
is genuine. This girl, bludgeoned by sunlight,

in a world where death has not yet connected
the dream and the dwelling place.

Jude Nutter

Grip

The Grand Canyon, mid fifties. My father
stops my brother and me on the descent of
Bright Angel trail. A stranger has approached
asking him for a light. My father strikes
a match against a granite rock and cups
the flame with his hands—the good one
that will hold steady as any rock nearly into
his eighties, and the bad one, the one
that took splinters from a fir tree that exploded
next to him in the Hürtgen Forest in the
winter of '44. That hand will shake and
twitch until the end, and anyone taking hold
of it, as my brother and I would often
that day, would feel the crosshatching
of scars left when all the deep splinters
were removed. My father and this man
will talk there on the trail, smoking
their unfiltered cigarettes. They will step
politely aside for the touristed burros
and solemn hikers bound for the river.
My brother and I will grow impatient
and misbehave, forcing my father's attention
by throwing rocks at hikers on the trail
loop below us. My father and the man
will shake hands, not with the bad hand,
but with my father's good hand, the one
that could crush a steel beer can by itself.
That same evening the man will visit
our room on the second floor of the Twilite
Motel in Flagstaff, Arizona. That motel
is still there, on Route 66. Never have I driven
past without seeing my father and this man

on the balcony, smoking and talking. I remember
the funny way the man held his cigarette,
between thumb and forefinger, his hand
with the palm up. My brother asked my mother
why the man talked funny, and she said hush
and reached into a big canvas bag and asked us
which comics we wanted to read before bedtime.
The next morning the sun rising over Gallup,
New Mexico, would wake us in the station wagon,
the voices up front edgy with thermos coffee,
our mother saying the boys are awake, and my
father saying isn't it about time for breakfast.
In the booth of a roadside coffee shop
our parents would argue about the man,
my mother finally turning her head away
into a fierce silence that would last until Amarillo.
My brother says he remembers none of this.
Whenever I mention this man's name, Fritz,
to my brother, he becomes angry, saying over
and over that Fritz was someone else, just
another deadbeat, a drifter who happened
to work a while at the plant and then didn't
show up for work one day. Perhaps he's right.
Brothers' arguments rarely get resolved.
At least here I am free to arrive at the place
that is my own memory, a place even a
brother's arguments will not reach, a place
where one night a man sits on the balcony
of the Twilite Motel and acknowledges complicity
for an explosion that destroys my father's
hand in the Hürtgen Forest on a freezing night
when the hand itself is too frozen even
to feel the pain of its shredding—this place
where that man bums a light and later asks
my father about work, this place where

my father tells the man the plant might
be hiring soon and he would put in a good
word—this is our place, my father's and mine,
the only place my father and I have left,
the only place not taken over by the proteins
that went to work in his brain like glue.
We meet in corridors now, or on porches.
The orderlies always say let us know if
you need anything. I tell my father it's me,
his oldest son. I say my name, and he whispers
back a name he heard first in Arizona, a name
that still roams free of the protein glue.
I nod at the name and take the hand he offers
not the one that was once his good hand,
the one that alone crushed steel beer cans
flat—that hand withered when one side
of him went dead. No. I take the other hand,
the one he once described as raw hamburger.
I take that hand and all its scars into mine.
It's our first meeting again. In a voice
so weak and raspy that I have to lean
next to his shoulder to hear, my father
tells me that the weather is always wonderful
where he works. He says I'll like it there.
I'll get real wages for a full day's work.
His words come full of saliva now, and I take
the slick string swinging from his mouth
into the palm of one hand. "I think I'll like
it too," I tell him. There's a pause, then he nods.

Michael Lee Phillips

POETRY 2009 CONTRIBUTORS

Claire Hsu Accomando's collection *Evaporation* won the San Diego Book Awards first prize for a poetry chapbook. She appears in the *Christian Science Monitor, California Quarterly* and *American History Magazine*. Her book *Love and Rutabaga* (St. Martin's Press) is a memoir of her childhood in France during World War II.

Robert Barasch is a retired clinical psychologist now living in rural Vermont. He appears in *Confrontation, Connecticut River Review, The Bridge, Anthology of New England Writers,* and *Poem.*

Laurel J. Black is an associate professor of English at Indian U. of Pennsylvania, teaching courses in writing, sociolinguistics, and ghost hunting. One of her delights is reading cookbooks.

Christopher Buehlman was the winner of the 2007 Bridport Prize in Poetry, and one of six finalists for the UK's Forward Poetry Prize.

Ron De Maris appears in *Poetry, The New Republic, The American Poetry Review, Sewanee Review, Ploughshares, Tampa Review, Southern Review, Iowa Review, Ploughshares,* and *Paris Review.*

Amy Dengler, winner of the Robert Penn Warren Award, is author of *Between Leap and Landing* (Folly Cove Books, 1999).

Mary Dowd is a physician based in Portland, Maine, specializing in addictions among the homeless. Her poetry appears in *Diner, Permanente, Bardsong,* and *Shambhala Sun.*

Melanie Drane An expatriate for eighteen years in Bonn, Berlin, Vienna, London, and Tokyo, in 2006 Melanie became the first non-British poet to receive the UK National Poetry Competition's First Prize. From 2002-2004, she served as writer-in-residence at Interlochen Center for the Arts. Her poetry has appeared, or is forthcoming, in *The Iowa Review, The North American Review, Nimrod, Comstock Review, Poetry Review* (UK), and *Witness,* which awarded her the 2002 Witness Emerging Poets Prize.

Simon Peter Eggertsen appears in *Istanbul Literary Review, Catholic Times (Trinidad), Dialogue, Salt River Review,* and *Wordbridge.* He received First Prize at the Whidbey Island Writer's Conference in 2008.

Sharon Fain's chapbook, *Telling the Story Another Way*, won first place in the 2003 Pudding House competition. Her work appears in

Nimrod, Southern Poetry Review, Midwest Quarterly, The Literary Review, Crab Orchard Review, and *Poetry East.*

Rebecca Foust won the 2008 Robert Phillips Poetry Prize. Her winning book, *Mom's Canoe*, will be published by Texas Review Press in 2009. She appears in *JAMA, Nimrod, Margie,* and *Poetry East.*

Carol Frith, co-editor of *Ekphrasis*, has chapbooks from Bacchae Press, Palanquin Press and Finishing Line, and a book forthcoming from David Robert Books. She appears in *Seattle Review, Cutbank, MacGuffin, Measure,* and *Main Street Rag.*

Margaret J. Hoehn practiced law for many years. She has four chapbooks and a book, *The Trajectory of Sunflowers* (The Backwaters Press, 2004). A chapbook, *Five Prayers for Apples*, is forthcoming from Spire Press.

William Keener is a writer and environmental lawyer in the San Francisco Bay area. His chapbook *Gold Leaf on Granite* won the 2008 Anabiosis Press Contest.

Steve Lautermilch's chapbook *Fire Seed & Rain* won the 2008 Longleaf Press competition. Recent poems have also won prizes from *The Comstock Review, Ekphrasis, The Marlboro Review*, The New England Poetry Club, and the the W.B. Yeats Society of New York.

Michelle Maher is a professor of English at La Roche College in Pittsburgh, PA. She recently appeared in *The Georgetown Review* and *The Chautauqua Literary Journal.*

Gloria Masterson-Richardson lives on the edge of the sea in Rockport, Massachusetts. Her chapbook *Sea Smoke* won a "Best of Show" award from Frontiers in Writing, 2008.

Bill Meissner's first novel, *Spirits in the Grass* (U. of Notre Dame Press) won the 2008 Midwest Book Award. His books of poetry are *American Compass* (Notre Dame), *Learning to Breathe Underwater* and *The Sleepwalker's Son* (both from Ohio U. Press), and *Twin Sons of Different Mirrors* (Milkweed Editions). His website is http://web.stcloudstate.edu/wjmeissner/.

Jude Nutter was born in North Yorkshire, England, and grew up in northern Germany. Her poetry books are *Pictures of the Afterlife* (Salmon Poetry), *The Curator of Silence* (U. of Notre Dame Press), winner of the Ernest Sandeen Prize and the Minnesota Book Award in Poetry for 2007, and *I Wish I Had a Heart Like Yours, Walt Whitman* (U. of Notre Dame Press).

Jennifer Perrine's first book of poetry, *The Body Is No Machine* (New Issues, 2007) won the 2008 Devil's Kitchen Reading Award in Poetry. Her work appears in *Black Warrior Review, Connecticut Review, Crab Orchard Review, RATTLE,* and *Third Coast.* She teaches at Drake Universtiy in Iowa.

Michael Lee Phillips graduated from Fresno State College and pursued journalism, technical writing, photography, and many years of teaching. Having resided in Greece and Ireland, he now lives in the high desert region of Southern California. He appears in *The Antioch Review, Beloit Poetry Journal, Cutthroat, Nimrod, Poetry Northwest, Southern Poetry Review,* and *Cimarron Review.* His book manuscript *The Man in the Barrel* was a finalist for the Anthony Hecht Prize.

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Resolve

To love October's bite, its swagger.
Its Cossack boots and Isadora sweep
of scarf. Its storm-trooper march across my lawn
while I watch, greedy for more
reds, more thick broad slaps
of wind.

Ah, the meek inherit nothing,
will never taste
blood
or caviar.

I want to feel
the muscles of your throat
against my thigh,

even the slightest tug
of teeth. Listen

to the poor leaves swirling,
spiraling, like villagers spilling across the tundra,
fleeing the Huns.

Pity them.

Last wish: hard ground tensing beneath me,
the air savage, rife
with keening birds.

Elizabeth Volpe

Waiting for Bear

I sleep with my shoes on,
my ear pressed to the night-mantled end of day
as the dark comes down.
I do not like myself this way
with a heartbeat that flutters like birds,
predation lit in my spine at the great unknowing.

He settles himself just outside the frame of barn,
muscles climbing themselves over great complex of bone,
a dark form that pours itself through matter,
fur as black as sump oil.

The summer corn, all shuck and silk,
shifts as he passes.
He tumbles the straw wagon, the hay forks and rakes,
the busy landscape everywhere undone.

In moments like these you think of all those things
that have gone from your life,
eyes wide open to the possibility of one more loss
that cannot be carried, and then

the latch catches, the siding and tarpaper
are pulled from the henhouse, the hinges are lost
to economy and precision of claw. The floor joists groan,
losing their long bargain with nail and screw.

He has already culled the stock from the neighboring meadow.
I vow I will not let his bear-hunger make bloodbags
of my poultry, no feathers scattered or wings broken,
hanging like petals fallen open.

I am nothing more than reaction; anger is just fear all the way out.
Standing in trampled cornflowers and clover
I come at him with voice, loud and wide and clear.
He raises dust in his escape, lifting his shadow off me.
There are four good hours until dawn, before the path into morning.
The sky is a necklace of stars.

Jamie Morewood Anderson

Myotis Lucifugus

Second week in July and Tennessee corn fields
grow thick with green swords that fence in the wind.
A storm brewing in the Gulf has sent thunderheads
thumbing up the Mississippi and summer drought
is over for a time. Country church steeples spear the sky.
When I was a boy, I wanted to climb
into our church steeple and talk with God.
One Sunday I found the door unlocked
that hid the ladder. I worked my way up slowly,
terrified at my own curiosity. Instead of God,
I found a clapperless old bell, a smearing
of pigeon droppings and a dead bat, which
I hid in my inside coat pocket to sneak home.
I sat on the family pew next to my mother,
thinking how mortified she would be
to know that I was taking Holy Communion
with a dead bat in my pocket. I swallowed the host
and remembered that it turned into the flesh of Jesus.
To make matters worse, the sermon was on angels.
A presence in my pocket pressed against my chest,
and I felt the bat's heart beat with mine.
At home, the encyclopedia said *Myotis Lucifugus*
(little brown bat). In secret, I buried it
in our animal cemetery with a turtle, a rabbit,
and two faithful dogs. I spread its wings out
one last time and asked God to accept the steeple bat.
Fifty years later and I'm still talking to God,
usually when I'm driving alone looking
in the rear view mirror as if God
were in the back seat counting red barns.
Today I know that *Lucifugus* comes from the Latin
meaning *shunning the light.* I think of the bat
asleep in the steeple that pointed toward heaven,
when all along paradise was flying in darkness
over the Forked Deer River, a gut full
of mosquitoes, a gift of summer rain.

Bill Brown

Alternate Sources of Fuel

Like roaches, the books scatter to all corners
of my friend's house. Originally quarantined
in the study, they now scurry through the kitchen,
make nests in the living room. "Don't get me wrong,"
Dan says, "I don't promote radical, left-wing acts
such as reading. But if the whole grid goes down,
I'll need something to burn to keep myself warm."
Here's Whitman, chilling out on the coffee table.
Plato, lecturing the shot glasses on the liquor cabinet.
Melville's white whale, beached on the stairway.
Dan is joking about setting books aflame, I think,
but not entirely wrong in noting their potential as fuel.
If you could trace my life backwards from today,
you'd arrive in a world that was colder and thinner.
The younger version of me is a boy who speaks
very little. He's in second grade. That kid
is wary of the other kids, but drawn to the teacher—
a woman, who reads stories to the class to end
every afternoon. Watch how she reads. What flies
from those pages, if not some type of sparks?
And look at the boy, how closely he listens—
his eyes becoming wider and brighter,
so focused and filled with early fire.

Matthew Olzmann

Virginia Beach

Our only vacation and I doubt I was more than six when we piled
into the DeSoto and drove from northern New York the 2 or 3 days
it took us to reach the shores of Virginia and its sinuous beaches:
my first glimpse of the ocean, waves of sand and water
under a sun throbbing like a great heart. Our magic carpet
was a second-hand taxi furnished with jump seats folded
flat to support a couple of air mattresses for my sister
and me to sleep or sprawl with our pillows and blankets and listen
to all the programs on the radio, time rolling by as smoothly
as the ribbon of highway leading from our dingy rented apartment
to a land of wonder, enchantment—my parents so gay, so young
(still in their twenties, unimaginable!) anticipation sweetening
the hours. *Vacation*—the sheer luxury, the novelty of it—a word
as thrilling as my father's baritone booming along with Al Jolson!
How I remember always missing him, waiting for the moment
he would stride through the door—the stories he contrived, trinkets
he would feign to discover hiding in his pockets—my chest leaping
just to have him home, all the excitement I'd ever known—
and now to be together here, all of us, by the luminous sea:
its flats and tide pools stretching near to the horizon,
our buckets filled to overflowing, the dappled surf alive
on our skin—sunlight dancing over the waters, our hearts dancing.

Linda M. Fischer

Tongues

Another time, she told us,
her mother mortified her
by packing in her lunchbox
a tongue sandwich. No one
would trade with her

and most of the first-graders
squealed ruthlessly, revolted
by the pink slab. The Wonder
Bread, innocent and white,
was all she ate—

she threw the meat away, knew
that was sacrilege, a waste,
her mother would have scolded—
but what were her choices?

Could she have borne
the raw scorn of six-year-olds
nine months of school days, always
sticking out their tongues at her,
laughing "lunch time, *ha ha*"?

She was too weak
to walk the hallways with the
strength of wild indifference;
first grade frightening enough
without incurred stigma:
Girl Who Eats Tongue.

We wondered if she told her
mother that she'd no longer
eat organ meats or if she
kept throwing them away.

But she was smart—
even at six, understood
economics and informed
her immigrant mother that
peanut butter was cheap.

Cheaper than tongue,
did not spoil quickly, besides
it was American and
that should be reason enough.

Now she says, "How early
we lose ourselves...."
She can't even say this
in her mother's tongue.

Ann E. Michael

Race for the Moon

Big for fifth grade,
muscular, busty—and blind,
Kathy sat back at a low table holding
her steel-gray Perkins Brailler
and a stylus and slate,
pressing paper to pits, creating
a cryptic maze of Coptic dots.

It was whispered that Kathy
had *started*, the first of us,
and her mystique deepened
as we took turns as escort
to the bathroom stall, silent sentinels
listening to the rustle of tissue,
the scuffing of saddle oxfords on tile,
wondering what mysteries were working
within such confines, small as a space capsule,
Kathy at the controls of a one-woman voyage—
she our explorer, we her Houston. Roger that.

When CBS talked us through
Apollo 8's lunar flight,
Kathy had no need for sight.
Fingertips tactile, curved as corneas,
she tapped away at the Brailler's keys,
capturing Cronkite's illustrious words,
rolling out her own constellations,
whole lunar landscapes, colorless and craggy,
leaving us all covered in a fine layer
of her afterburner's rushing dust.

Teresa Haskew

New Horizons

Off to the planet Pluto goes the rocket probe.
To NASA's stepchild planet: smallish, icy globe
Encumbered by a too large moon, and not always
The solar system's outermost. Its orbit strays
So wildly as to bring it nearer us, just now,
Than Neptune. Not detailed enough as would allow
It place in science fiction, nor enough a threat
To up-to-date cosmology as would abet
Creationism, it awaits the anxious end
Of nine-plus years to reach it, and perhaps extend
Our grasp on nothingness. Another slap at Verne,
Who would have done the PR better:
As the burn
Retards the fly-by, cameras can soon discern
Ice palaces, Plutonians in polar gear.
Moon worshipers, although with such a solar year
They'll need huge calendars. Across the methane snows
Marks of a Plain of Nazca? Is, as we suppose,
Iditarod their way of life, and their old age
To wait to be abandoned on the Ice? Rage, rage
Against a too long lasting light: from sun at most
A slightly brighter star among a bluer host.
Stray, late discovered, to astrology unknown,
You may influence horoscopes, but not our own.
For all whose futures at the moment have no sign,
"Born under Pluto" may say pearl or may say swine.

Turner Cassity

The Lion and the Gnat

"Begone! you petty pest, you less than penny's worth!"
The lion used such words as these;
a fiendish midge had plagued his ease.
At that the gnat declared scorched earth.
"Do you suppose," he asks the beast, "your regal rank
can frighten me, can make me crawl?
An ox could best you, to be frank,
yet I can drive him to the wall."
The gnat has hardly voiced these facts,
while circling to survey his meal,
when, trumpet blaring, he attacks.
At first he takes his time to wheel,
then falls upon the lion's neck;
this makes the king a nervous wreck.
The lion foams and rages, lightning in his eyes.
He bellows; other creatures tremble, run, and hide.
And this distress, these outraged cries,
all rise from tricks a gnat has tried.
The puny gnat torments the king in every wise.
At times he bites his back, and then he pricks his snout;
he buzzes up his nose, then out.
The lion's astronomic rage inspires awe.
Unseen, the demon triumphs, and he laughs to view
the maddened beast who's sparing neither tooth nor claw
in wild contortions, even shedding blood as, through
his anguish, he does grievous damage to his skin.
He whips his tail with frantic force from side to side
and beats the blameless air. His fury does him in
at last, fatigues him, brings him down; he's mortified.
The bully bug pulls back with glory written large
and trumpets triumph much as he'd proclaimed the charge.
He flits about and cries, "I won!" but on the way
he's tangled in a spider's snare;
once victor, now he too is prey.

What useful lesson can we learn from this affair?
I'll name you two: the first is that among our foes
the ones that we must fear the most are often those
of smallest size. The other: whom great peril spares
can die from tumbling down the stairs.

Jean de La Fontaine
translated by Emery Campbell
from the French fable
"*Le lion et le moucheron*"

My Frangipani Tree

"So that's the girl you want, is it?"
Homprang mocks me—
"the one you write

whispers woe
in the grieving mead
with the sweet white flowers
and the bitter seed?

"But oh my no, *kuhn* poet dear,
you have no taste—no culture!
The malingering one
cannot be grown
in a pleasant home like ours,
or grace a commoner's garden!"

And then the Princess Sirindhorn,
that loyal Siamese angel sister,
changes the name, rewrites
my misbegotten tree's
girl-story!

She was too grim before, you see—*Lan Tõme,*
the older generation groaned—
"Storm Torn Tree of Grief," "Sorrow's Thunder!"
Only the Wat could weather such regret
the Princess recently announced
on government radio,
only the holy Wat could grin
at such despair,
or say, or bear it!

She knew before her gift no trusty Thai
would ever deem to have
the *Lan Tõme* tree at home—
it only graced the temple yard or wept
its sweet white scent
at the village crematorium.

Now its mournful shade's been
cast anew as a lovely girl that says
"Come live with me, I'm *Leela Wadee*—

My willowy breeze
plays in your gentle tree!"

it's springing up all over!

Oh, I'd love to say "okay, please do!"
but water too pulls worlds apart,
I know, and air makes rain
and floods us—
the bright-skinned undulating breeze
wrapped in the silk sarong
with the smiling limbs
and the black, black hair
blows up another sort of thunder!
I'm just a man who gets things done
and know that girls like this
shake down the oak and split
the hardest western beam asunder!

But the pool of Siamese meaning says
mai pen rai, "make no ado"—
that's better!
For flexibility in mind and limb
is always free just like
this groaning, gracious tree—

and wife Homprang,
now it's *Leela Wadee,*
is free
even with me
and let's me say
I love to grieve a storm—
and gaily with me grows it!

Christopher Woodman

Bad Haircut: A Concise History

When he told me his name was Cookie,
I knew I was in trouble, but I let him shampoo
my hair anyway and tried hard not to think
of the bad haircuts that have scarred my past.

Those events in time that have left an indelible mark
on my life, not unlike the important dates
we read about in our school books,
changing the course of history.

Take September 4, 1974, for example,
the South of Boston Massacre, with kindergarten's
opening day looming and my father playing
barber. The tears that spilled onto my cheeks

did not deter the blades of his scissors
from singing that sinister song as they marched
over my scalp and took no prisoners.
Then there's the Boxed Ear Rebellion

of August 29, 1976, when being fully aware
of the pending massacre, I took to the streets in revolt
and refused to hear my mother's calls from the kitchen window.
Despite my spirited defiance, I was apprehended

by my brothers. But I did not go quietly.
My protests were heard throughout the neighborhood
until I was forced to acquiesce
and watch my sideburns retreat to my temples.

May 13, 1980 marks my initial foray
into the world of barber shops, thus beginning
the Hundred Shears War, where a ruthless contingent
of barbers or stylists with questionable names

gave questionable cuts. I never stood a chance.
My history with scissor-toting strangers who knew
what was best for my hair began with a bald guy named Chick
and brings me here today with the aforementioned Cookie,

who is practicing what I call full-contact hair cutting,
where a part of his body is always touching a part of mine:
chest to back, leg to leg, crotch to elbow. And when he brushes
the fallen hair off my arm, it is so close to a caress that it startles me,

diverting my attention for a moment from the incredible
amount of hair that surrounds the chair like an ocean.
And now I'm drowning in that ocean, trying to keep my chin up
as I watch Cookie massage some kind of mud into my scalp,

but when he coos how wonderful I look, I go under.
I see a little light above me that is my life, that realm of disorder
where for weeks my colleagues will fail to hide their pity,
where my wife will console me as she fits a cap

over my new look, where my son, too young still
to have experienced this himself, will look at the wreckage
that was my head and ask if I'm okay. "Daddy," he'll say,
cupping my face in his hands, his brow lined

with worry, "Do you want me to kiss it?"

Dan Memmolo

The Glass Ceiling

In a summer field
Of blooming mexican hats
And oxblood lilies
I glimpse your ghost

Crouching
Then pouncing

Scattering sparrows
Like windgusted leaves
And casting no shadow
Under noonday sun

But you only dreamed
Of scattered sparrows
From that warm windowsill

And those
Are not sparrows anyway
But invoice slips

And you are not in
A summer field
But an autumn cubicle
Breathing in minutes

And exhaling days

Harold Whit Williams

Landing

Like driving off a bridge—we always think
about it but never do it—but what if we did,

just once, breaking through those Jersey barriers,
shattering concrete, sparks fleeing the tires

like birds startled from their nests, guardrail
splintering, brake and accelerator both

gone dumb without the ground to hear them,
wingless flight—it can't be pretty—awkward

as a child's first somersault, turning the world
around and landing—

well, there is no landing; they say you never land
in dreams—or if you did, you'd die—

so you just keep on churning air and bracing
for the end and wondering if the world will toss

its objects after you or not. That's how
it feels to drag my legs across

the bed and slide them
to the floor.

Meredith Davies Hadaway

Master Mechanic

Immigrant son, all he wanted was
to be the best God-damned mechanic ever.
He'd lunge in and grapple an engine's heart,

its pulse pounding in the tappets, throbbing
in the thoraces of pistons. Master mechanic,
his operating room was the corner garage, the whirr

of his impact wrench whining down the streets.
He'd wipe his hands on a greasy rag, overalls splattered
with warm oil, and break your heart with

his learned prognosis: *You're gonna need*
a new transmission. On Saturdays you'd see him,
car hoisted high on the lift, reading its belly

as if it were a map, tugging tie rods, tapping differentials,
his dark eyes studying the beast as if in awe
of its soot-black beauty, running his hand

over the still warm tires to feel the story
of their miles, the journal of their journey, the
treads rubbed bare, still humming of the road.

Angelo Giambra

Song for the Seamstress

She was always taking in and taking out.
When I outgrew pants, waist bulged tight,
she simply took them out. Baggy shirts
she'd pull and pin and stitch to take them in.

She took in neighbors' clothes as well,
the Singer stacked with pants and dresses
like neatly folded dollar bills. In they
came, out they went, a turnstile turning

customers round and round as she slipped
the coins into her apron. Evenings,
the house would sing with the song of the
stitcher's rat-a-tat-tat chatter.

There was nothing she couldn't fix
or mend, shorten or fluff out.
There was no need for new in her make-do
world, you took in, you took out.

Angelo Giambra

Carlos

I wonder what he eats for breakfast,
this fifty-something year old man
who makes a building run,

whom we met tonight in the Bank Street College
boiler room as part of a social studies curriculum
where kids learn about interdependence.

He reminds me of my grandfather, who, like Carlos,
came here from another country and knew
how to run machinery, had the same easy smile

and strong hands that would hold my baby feet
to make me sleep and when I was sixteen,
would fix my red striped Hello Kitty watch

with a flick of the fingers, twisting wires into place.
When Carlos wakes up, surely before dawn
to get to the boiler room by 6:45, is it from a night

of dreams with electricity? How does a mind
that knows what makes fire spark in a giant
chamber of pipes turn itself?

On the subway home from our tour of the basement,
a man next to me studies instructions:
How to treat and fix an AC unit.

All over the city every morning
people are waking up to keep things going;
they make me wish I knew what to do

with my life, with tools. What if, every single morning
before the light came, I knew I was on my way to a place
that I could pick apart, put back together, understand?

Christine Poreba

Indispensable

"They'll find out what they're missing when I go,"
you said, with rising bitterness,
drawing on your cigarette.
But I thought no, the waters always close,
and someone else with his own vanities
will come, replacing yours and all you are,
as you did years ago, without a thought
of someone dragging on a cigarette,
on his third beer, in some deep-shadowed bar.

Roger Craik

Homecoming

Recognized he was, but only by
his good old dog. Some creatures
unfailingly sniff out their kind.
Go wherever you want, you'll still be
who you were. I can hear the echo
of Penelope's inquisitorial questions,
hear the yarn about the suitors, but
the dog! That dog went straightway
to be petted by your weary hand.
Silence foils distrust.
Love that's true does not need words.
If a touch is all it takes
then the gods
have lost their evil game.

Günter Kunert
translated by Gerald Chapple

Monologue

Yellowed copper engravings
in crumbling folios portray
me still. Descriptions of me
vanished long ago into pulp and
paper mills. Why
is there no talk of me
anymore? How come
my picture's never in
the paper? I've even
been banished from the dreams
of the bludgeoned masses. I'm
long forgotten and estranged
from my own self so now I
don't know
who I am or was or what's
with this blindfold and
why the scales and why the sword.

Günter Kunert
translated by Gerald Chapple

German Elegy

One good German and another
and another
don't know what happened
is happening and will happen
Were absent but present
in spirit or in mind
ears plugged before
the shots were heard or only
the words before that
or just the warning to listen the other way every time

No geographic borders

the divided sky meant nothing
blind deaf dumb
like the sacred macaques that guy
and him and him too
obeying orders to freeze
into bronze that always
turns out to be plaster.

Günter Kunert
translated by Gerald Chapple

the second time

You are not the token Jew in book group
any more than you're the token tennis
player or token resident of Evanston
although I have appreciated your Jewish
perspective when we read both *Augie March*
and *The Pianist* but especially when you
matter-of-factly told me that the co-op high
rise building where I live on Lake Shore
Drive in Chicago didn't admit Jews when
you and your husband were looking for
a condo, which would have been the same
time that my dad was taking us for rides
downtown along Lake Michigan on Saturday
night to look at where the "rich Jews" lived
when really it was where the Catholics and
Protestants lived and all this time I believed him
which goes to show you never know about people
'til you get to know them, as he also said, but
he was right the second time.

Jan Ball

Prison View

First moon in five months
full outside my window
at the Martinsburg Correctional Center
where I've just arrived six hours
from my former jail home.
Same spare walls, spiritless meals,
but new clothes & a new view:
a field of short grass, scrub & dirt
like a nature preserve in Kenya,
vast, unreachable sky, few stars &
moon. I cling to that great dot
in these hardest nights of hardest days.
It warms me with love
like a faded, broken Valentine,
swears, *I'll see you again,*
I'll wait for you, I will....

Ace Boggess

The True Blues

Not the music, that sustained whine
of guitar and bard in four four time,
or the swimming pool eyes of a girl
who smiles at you. Not the lips of
corpses fished from icy rivers, or
robins' eggs resting in a whorled
nest. Not the skies hawks ply when
winter clouds vanish east from west.
The true blues, from the human heart
torn, are those deep, blackened blues
that bruise the soul, blues that can't
be seen or sung, but only borne.

Peter Sipchen

Listening to Rutter

for Robert Scandrett

I watch the man sway.
Gloria, as if by miracle,
flows from his hands. He points
and throats of trumpets
join bells of sopranos and tenors,
braying in answer, conduit
and obedient to the one will.
Miracle and excelsior,
technical matters to this man
here in the house of worship
where he executes liturgy,
afflict my heart such that what I pray
rises from deep in my belly, almost
against my will, and I am
a resonating chamber
set upon by the holy
in a sanctuary constructed of steel,
brick, and mortar, mere technical
matters of architecture and sweat.

The man conducts from the ground up.
His feet shift under his body
as if to balance the weight of the music
perfectly over the planet,
his hands inscribing the shape of time
into the air before him.
His mind fixes on intonation and entrances
I suppose, but what he conducts
to ground
unspeakably changes me.

Peter Munro

Chestnut

I touched a chestnut sapling
in the Georgia mountains.

My friend writes of the great trees
and their vanishing,

but I have seen a young chestnut,
tender and green, rising from its ashes.

I, too, write of loss and grief,
the hollow they carve

in the chest,
but that hollow may shelter

some new thing,
a life I could not

have imagined or wished,
a life I would never

have chosen. I have seen
the chestnut rising,

luminous,
from its own bones,

from the ash of its first life.

Rebecca Baggett

CONTRIBUTORS

Kim Addonizio's four books of poetry include *Tell Me*, a National Book Award finalist, and *Lucifer at the Starlite*, forthcoming from W.W. Norton this fall. Other books include *The Poet's Companion* (with Dorianne Laux), *Ordinary Genius: A Guide for the Poet Within*, and the novel *Little Beauties*, a Book of the Month Club selection.

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Jan Ball teaches ESL at DePaul University in Chicago and sings with the Sweet Adelines. She appears in *Nimrod, Iodine Poetry Review, Connecticut Review,* and *Mad Poets Review.*

Larry "Ace" Boggess is currently incarcerated in the West Virginia correctional system. His poetry has appeared in *Harvard Review, Notre Dame Review, RATTLE,* and *Atlanta Review*. His books include *The Beautiful Girl Whose Wish Was Not Fulfilled* (Highwire Press, 2003), *Displaced Hours* (novel, Gatto Publishing, 2004), and *Wild Sweet Notes II*, an anthology of West Virginia poetry.

Bill Brown has four books of poetry, most recently *Late Winter* from Iris Press, 2008. He teaches at Peabody College of Vanderbilt University and The Writer's Loft at Middle Tennessee State University.

Emery L. Campbell, a navy pilot in World War II, is author of *This Gardener's Impossible Dream* (Multicultural Books). He appears in *Light, Midwest Poetry Review,* and *Parnassus Literary Journal.*

Turner Cassity, one of America's most distinctive poetic voices, died on July 26, 2009, at the age of 80. Please see the *Welcome* page for more information.

Gerald Chapple lives in Dundas, Ontario, Canada. Winner of a Translation Award from the Austrian government, his translations of Günter Kunert appear in *Agni, Grand Street, Seneca Review,* and *Osiris*.His book of Kunert translations will be titled *A Stranger at Home.*

Susan Cohen has two chapbooks, *Backstroking*, winner of the Acorn-Rukeyser Award, and *Finding the Sweet Spot* (Finishing Line Press).

She works as a journalist in Berkeley, California.

Robert Cooperman is author of ten poetry collections, including *The Words We Used* (Main Street Rag) and the forthcoming *A Dream of the Northwest Passage* (March Street Press).

Jeff Crandall is the Executive Director of Floating Bridge Press. His poetry collection is *The Grief Pool*, from Firestorm Press.

Roger Craik, a native of England now teaching in the U.S., has three books of poetry and a chapbook *Those Years* (2007). He appears in *Fulcrum, The Formalist, California Review,* and *Artful Dodge.*

Rex Easley is an English professor at Thomas More College in Crestview Hills, Kentucky. His poetry and fiction appear in a number of national and regional literary magazines.

Linda M. Fischer's chapbook *Raccoon Afternoons* was published by Finishing Line Press in 2007. She appears in *Ibbetson Street, The Aurorean, The Chiron Review,* and *Avocet.*

Brieghan Gardner lives and teaches in New Hampshire. Her work appears in *Poetry East, Eclipse,* and *Water-Stone Review*, and won the Dorothy Sargent Rosenberg Prize in 2007 and 2008.

Angelo Giambra's poetry appears in *The South Dakota Review, Ballard Poetry Journal, Tipton Poetry Journal,* and *Freefall Magazine.*

Meredith Davies Hadaway is the author of *Fishing Secrets of the Dead* (Word Press, 2005). She appears in *Poet Lore, Zone 3, Gulf Stream,* and *Poetry International*. She serves as chief marketing officer for Washington College in Chestertown, Maryland.

Vernita Hall is celebrating her first appearance in print here.

Marc Harshman taught for many years in a three-room school in West Virginia. He appears in *The Georgia Review* and *Shenandoah,* and has a chapbook, *Local Journeys*, from Finishing Line Press.

Terresa Haskew appears in *Kakalak, Emrys Journal* and the anthology *Fruit of the Banyan Tree* (2009). She lives with her husband Ben in Greenville, South Carolina.

Jean Hollander won the Eileen W. Barnes Award for *Crushed into Honey* (Saturday Press). *Moondog* was a winner in the Quarterly Review of Literature Poetry Book Series. She received a Gold Medal from the City of Florence for her translations, with Robert Hollander,

of Dante's *Inferno*, *Purgatorio*, and *Paradiso*.

Janet Jennings owned and ran Sunspire, a natural candy company. She appears in *Agni, Apalachee Review, Poet Lore, California Quarterly, Runes,* and *Sierra Nevada Review.*

Sarah Kennedy teaches at Mary Baldwin College. Her books include *Home Remedies* (forthcoming from LSU Press), *A Witch's Dictionary, Consider the Lilies, Double Exposure,* and *Flow Blue.*

Günter Kunert was "encouraged" by the East German government to leave East Berlin in 1979. One of the most versatile German writers today, he is the author of over thirty volumes of poetry.

Mary Soon Lee was born and raised in London, becoming a U.S. citizen in 2003. Her story collection *Ebb Tides and Other Tales* was published by Dark Regions Press in 2002.

Dan Memmolo has poems in *Free Lunch, The Ledge, Natural Bridge, The MacGuffin,* and *Slipstream*, and a chapbook, *Beat Surrender*, from Main Street Rag. He lives in Rhode Island with his wife and son.

Michael Meyerhofer's first book, *Leaving Iowa*, won the Liam Rector First Book Award. His second, *Blue Collar Eulogies*, is forthcoming from Steel Toe Books. He has also published four chapbooks.

Ann Michael is Writing Coordinator at DeSales University. She appears in *Natural Bridge, Minimus, Poem, Runes,* and *The Writer's Chronicle*. Her most recent chapbook is *The Minor Fauna* (2006).

John N. Miller is a retired English professor. His latest chapbook is *Between Home and Abroad*, from Main Street Rag Publishing.

Marjorie Mir is a retired librarian living in Bronxville, NY. She is editor of *Poet's Cove* at MonheganCommons.com, and a previous winner of *Atlanta Review*'s International Poetry Competition.

Peter Munro is "a fisheries scientist who works in the Bering Sea, the Aleutian Islands, the Gulf of Alaska, and Seattle. He has had poems published here and there."

Irene O'Garden's poetry has found its way to the off-Broadway stage (*Women on Fire*), into hardcover (*Fat Girl*), children's books (*The Scrubbly Bubbly Car Wash, Maybe My Baby*), and numerous journals and anthologies. Her new verse play, *Little Heart*, will star Amanda Plummer. www.ireneogarden.com

Matthew Olzmann was a 2006 and 2007 Kundiman Fellow. He appears in *Cortland Review, Hanging Loose, Minnesota Review,* and *Cranky.*

Christine Poreba teaches ESL and assists in editing *Apalachee Review* in Tallahassee, Florida. She appears *Subtropics, Natural Bridge, Swarthmore Literary Review,* and *Rattle.*

Suzanne Roberts' books include *Shameless* (2007), *Nothing to You* (2008), and *Plotting Temporality* (forthcoming from Red Hen Press). She was named "The Next Great Travel Writer" in 2008 by National Geographic's *Traveler* magazine. She teaches English at Lake Tahoe Community College in California. www.suzanneroberts.org

Richard Schiffman is freelance writer and commentator for NPR. His poetry appears in *The New York Quarterly, The Southern Poetry Review, The Pedestal,* and *Poetry East.*

E.P. Schultz lives in the Driftless area of Wisconsin. He appears in *The Sow's Ear Poetry Review, Inkwell Magazine, Chronogram,* and *Hawk and Whippoorwill.* His chapbooks include *Misprints and Legends, Desert Poems,* and *Third Floor Window.*

Peter Sipchen lives near St. Louis, Missouri. His poems appear in *Main Street Rag, Hurricane Review,* and *Poem.*

Christine Stewart-Nuñez is the author of *Postcard on Parchment,* (2008) winner of the ABZ First Book Prize, *The Love of Unreal Things,* and *Unbound and Branded* (both from Finishing Line Press)

Catherine Tahmin is clinical psychologist and hosts a monthly poetry reading and open mic in Petaluma, California.

Elizabeth Volpe's *Brewing in Eden* won the Robert Watson Poetry Award from *Greensboro Review*/Spring Garden Press. Her work appears on *Verse Daily* and *From the Fishouse*, and in *River Styx, Connecticut Review, Crab Orchard Review,* and *roger.*

Harold Whit Williams, formerly guitarist for the band *Cotton Mather*, now works at the UT Library in Austin and writes poetry.

Christopher Woodman lives with his wife Homprang in Chaing Mai, Thailand, where they manage a retreat specializing in herbal medicine, Thai massage and other healing arts. www.homprang.com

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