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**2**

# VISION

# EDITORS' NOTE

"I HAD NO SENSE OF BEING SEEN OR OBSERVED BY ANYONE AS I WROTE. PERHAPS THIS WAS A PROBLEM TOO."

BHANU KAPIL, BAN EN BANLIEUE (NIGHTBOAT BOOKS, 2015)

THE WORD 'VISION' HOLDS MANY MEANINGS, ESPECIALLY IN RELATION TO ART AND LITERATURE. SIGHT. WHAT IS SEEN OR ISN'T. THE WAY THE EYES MOVE INSIDE THE SOCKETS, THE WAY THE LIDS PRESS TOGETHER, LASHES ENTANGLE. THE WAY COLOR AND LIGHT ENTER THROUGH A SOFT JELLIED HOLE, PINPRICKS LEADING TO AN INFINITY OF SIGNALS SHIMMERING AROUND OUR BRAINS. VISION IS VISIBILITY—IN WRITING, IN LIFE, IN CULTURE. BEING SEEN IN METAPHORS, IN STEREOTYPES, IN COLD CLICHES, IN TERMS OF HOW YOU PERFORM GENDER YOUR BIOLOGICAL SEX IN TERMS OF YOUR BODY'S SPECIFICITIES OR FAULTS OR BEAUTIFUL DIFFERENCES. THE PIGMENTATION OF THE STUFF THAT HOLDS YOUR INSIDES IN. BEING SEEN AS THREAT, BEING SEEN AS OTHER. OR, IT IS NOT BEING SEEN AT ALL. VISION IS ALSO SCOPE; DILATION OF TIME AND INTENTIONS INTO PARTICULATE OR INFINITESIMAL STRETCHES. IT COULD MEAN HALLUCINATIONS, TRANSFORMATIONS, SLIPS OF CONSCIOUSNESS, DREAMS, FAULTS IN PERCEPTION, THINGS FORGOTTEN, LOADED SILENCES, MEMORIES, FUTURE MEMORIES, HELD BREATHES, DÉJÀ VU.

ISSUE 2 FEATURES TWELVE WRITERS WHO EACH DEAL WITH THE THEME OF VISION IN THEIR OWN UNIQUE WAYS. THROUGH POETRY, HYBRID ESSAYS, ERASURES AND MORE, OUR AUTHORS SHOW US THERE IS MORE TO VISION THAN MEETS THE EYE.

READ ON.

KYLE AND JENNA

## MASTHEAD

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# IN THIS ISSUE

KRISTEN MITCHELL	“NYC SCUM” .....	3
	“TO FRANK O’HARA’S BIRTHDAY CAKE” .....	4
HIBAH SHABKHEZ	“O FOLKLORE” .....	6
PAUL ILECHKO	“WORM SHELLS ARE DISCOVERED INSIDE MY CHEST”	7
	“DEVIL’S MUSIC” .....	8
DAVID CHAPMAN	“FREEDOM, OR ITS APPROXIMATION” .....	10
	“THE THING FOR REAL” .....	14
PATRICIA WALSH	“HYPOCHORISTIC” .....	17
CL BLEDSOE	“(PRE)FACE” .....	18
	“A KIND OF SHADOW” .....	20
HARRIS COVERLEY	“SONG OF HEROSTRATUS” .....	22
	“CONVEX” .....	23
	“BREATHING” .....	24
FELICIA SANZARI CHERNESKY	“ANGEL EYES” .....	26
	“THE MAGIC FISH” .....	28
	“JOHN’S GUITAR SPEAKS TO ME IN A VISION” .....	20
ARTHUR DAVID SAN JUAN	“ENCAPSULATION” .....	31
	“CLIMATE CHANGES” .....	32
	“6:00 AM” .....	35
LINDA IMBLER	“LOVE IN THE FAST LANE” .....	36
	“CAMPFIRE TALES AS TRULY TOLD” .....	37
DAVID KUHNLEIN	“DECEMBER DREAMS OF BUKOWSKI” .....	41
ADAM MILANOWSKI	“LITTLE DELTA SONNET” .....	43
ABOUT THE CONTRIBUTORS	.....	45
ART AND IMAGES	.....	47

# NYC SCUM

## KRISTEN MITCHELL

Where was it? Fuck if I know. George Harrison standing in front of Matchless Gifts New York of London? Whatever. Chant your way into life *Hare Krishna* but your death is in Washington State Park like that movie *Kids* where he fucks that kid up with the skateboard. Not sure where you're going but I'm gonna take a taxi to the Bowery to score some "H" then to the Village. Hope to hear some John Coltrane on the juke in some dive ass bar where I can shoot up *grab my balls* & nod off. Is this New York ya fucking hippie? Kim Kardashian in Paris got her jewelry stolen. Wish it was around the corner. I would have done it. I would have tapped that big ass, but now Times Square might just save my life *tough sugar cubes* this loud city is like a worm through an apple.

# TO FRANK O'HARA'S BIRTHDAY CAKE/ I WILL EAT CAKE, JANUARY 27<sup>TH</sup> 2020

KRISTEN MITCHELL

You will eat cake

And move mountains

White frosting will stick to the side of your mouth like a rabid scavenger jonesing for sugar. The plate won't have any crumbs because they will be all over the front of the buttoned-down shirt your mama gifted you. Your birthday, it's your birthday, everyday is your God damn birthday. You will eat cake and grow. Your stomach a balloon of candy flowers. Ugly blue stuck between old cavities. Your mama, she bakes for you layered cakes, the same each time. Baked golden. Baked spongy. You dig for the cake. Push into your throat, like a one year old just learning the sweets of life. Oh, eat this cake but don't let it be the end of you.



# “O FOLKLORE”

HIBAH SHABKHEZ

Tell me if they invented you  
To tell true stories 'neath your hood  
Or for the stories they fain would  
Have brought true?

If this route  
To your destination  
Will yield adventures,  
Enough gloom for doubt,  
And a coronation,  
Count us in.

Forhungered and forthirsted, we  
Scoop up the trailing poesies  
Carefully trained to mock  
Our sacred fantasies

# WORM SHELLS ARE DISCOVERED INSIDE MY CHEST

PAUL ILECHKO

Worm shells cascade    drizzling from the gray forgetfulness

worm shells in your hair as you scuttle under the saturation of rain-laden dogwood    your  
grizzled face    your exploding heart

\* \* \* \* \*

a single swallow of radioactive illuminates from the inside    the exquisite interplay of organ

I am most concerned with the hole in my last glove    even though there may also be a hole in  
my chest

a chest can be easily opened a single slice of silver blade    a stroke    and the bubbling liquid  
cascades    absorbed and discarded as so much waste    Inside this sterile place

repair    reinvent    and replace    beneath a halogen glare

\* \* \* \* \*

the forest within me    swollen with moisture

worms shells erupt    spilling across a field of white linen



# DEVIL'S MUSIC

PAUL ILECHKO

There is a metallic edge a clicking a  
scraping  
a bending and you tell yourself  
this is what the devil's music must  
sound like

there is a harshness a brutalism to  
the rhythm  
that pounds its way down the river as the  
hot  
sun glints in the ferociousness of the first day  
of summer

every chord twisting inside itself becoming  
part of  
a mere incident a single example of  
smallness that contributes to a greater  
churning

inconsequential and yet essential

there is a darkness in the voice a pure black  
coffee caramel outpouring of sin that  
sucks  
you in and twists you inside out

as you beg to be forgiven and the implacable  
march  
continues its direction known its motion  
unstoppable inside a chainmail austerity

while the devil watches silently

\* \* \* \* \*

*(the devil dances goatish and erect his steps in time yet  
somehow slightly wrong the devil slanders all who would  
attempt to play his song he'll meet you at the crossroads  
and give you such advice that every path you take will feel  
precise the devil's fantasy played on a single string more  
dirge than melody it tastes of mercury of ashes flaking*

*from a burning barn it panders to a memory of bodies  
lashed and chained and modified)*



# FREEDOM, OR ITS APPROXIMATION

DAVID CHAPMAN

*Let's go back*

*Back to the beginning*

-Hillary Duff, *Come Clean*

hillary duff's already here i mean she already came clean i mean its raining, im cold, & the rain is splattering durt everywhere, its feels dirty & cold & i moved to california bc of the intro to laguna beach. last month, a photo went viral of high schoolers in nearby newport beach giving a nazi salute next to a table of red cups organized into a swastika. laguna beach is actually a terrible show unlike keeping up with the kardashians which premiered a year after its end in 2006. ugh anyways, hillary says she's coming clean, like revealing something to us. i think thats really noble & i deeply relate. here im interested in the dissonance between text & image, sound (voice) & performance (music video). hillary never gives us a you, which i love. this song is all about her awakening, her purification & salvation—"let the rain fall down/ and wake my dreams/ let it wash away/ my sanity"— she's really feeling herself, thru loss, thru heartbreak perhaps, but she's sitting with it all & she's telling us how pain can be redemptive.

& but then we get to the video, it's all about her waiting for this boy in some fucking car. she's in a nice ass mansion in the hills but the roof is swiss cheese & theres just like a lot of buckets everywhere catching rain like actually catching rain. her whole house is leaking. she has friends come over to watch tv, an activity popular in 2003. & then the video ends with hillary & the boy hugging in the rain, admittedly a pleasant ambiguity—lovers reunited, exlovers saying goodbye, as friends in the nascency of romance, at its resolution? so in many ways we have only half of the pop equation. the disjunction of the text & image, the individual grief & redemption on one hand & the familiar sad but cathartic love story on the other, situates us as onlookers in paradoxical relation. with the beloved cclipped in the voicing, how are we to understand his visuality in the video? it is ultimately he that dissolves the primary tension of the video— she's waiting for him afterall— & when he does show up, the song is able to end. lyrically however, the resolution is achieved perhaps magically, in the song's final utterance "let's go back/ back to the beginning", thus perfecting itself by closing its circle around beginnings,

departures & arrivals in perpetual sequencing & flux. & what she's telling us is that her capaciousness for beginnings is derived from her own self, not on her dependence on a man to inaugurate new feeling, new ontology for her listless passivity in some fucked up house. the "let's" in "let's go back/ back to the beginning" opens & closes the song in neat symmetry. is this then the we of an us? an implied you of the fucking dude. is it her own me myself & I? coming clean, auto-eroticism? or is it a call to us, an act of generosity, wherein she invites us to lean in to our own feeling & independence, sharing with us the secret: the dispersed, displayed self secretes a power of mutual solitude built out of loss but gained together when viewed. i guess im just having some hang ups around this dude showing up. she really sounds like shes doing so well & the optics of his arrival totally undercuts the boldness of her autonomy. but lets let the disjunction simmer & thrive now here for me where theres nothing to go back to other than myself. going back as in returning. returning as in beginning again as if for the first time. hillary as patron saint of vexxed redemption, i step glossy into this world of wet futures, this old new leaky house.

Gin's Addendum, A Chat Room

**THURSDAY JUNE 13 9:03AM**

Dav: LINK—"Clubland 14 Disc 1: Master Blaster—Everywhere" [Michelle Branch Club Mix]

Gin: omg GOOD MORNING

LINK—"Hilary Duff- Come Clean (800% Slower)"  
more of a bath time jam

Dav: \*3 heart eye emojis

GIN YVE MELTED ME  
im a big gushy puddle outside the thb  
tub

Gin: I've been thinking abt ur piece abt duff's come clean's ambiguous autonomy's being sapped by the narrative presented in the vid

Dav: yea! whats up with that shit?

Gin: which i agree w but i see a freedom that is only an approximation of a freedom as it is a negotiation of maximizing capital via multiplying imaginative space for the consumer

Dav: !!!

D: oh shit

G: which is to say them being able to imagine themselves as themselves coming clean in the song's rain, but also them being able to take pleasure in imagining themselves as a girl, who is beautiful, who is just like u, but famous, hugging

their [some boy] in the rain in a way that amounts to a clean feeling (whether goodbye or hello, platonic or romantic or etc)

D: thats the "800% slower" thesis

G: lmao YEAH

which was a huge part of duff's market via mouseketeer's slide into a pop career c.f. a cinderella story but in those cases its meshed, usually truncated to a romance for a girl who is Not Like Other Girls

which is why i love her music because it allows for the inside-relationalt utopia of imagelessness :)

D: \*1 heart eye emoji\*  
im floored

i love the connections yr drawing between self-image/imagined self/ imagined self & capital, consumption of feminized longing/despair, commodity of that as that negotiates fantasy, where & how it meets us internally, how its packaged to affect us to want it all the more

G: yes omg & then im like ok in this discussion is the triumph of imagelessness still viable when revenue streams impose image in a way that can have juicy multiplicity for the audience

prob no bc it includes bending us ever toward complicity by using the joy of imagination cf. disneyland cf. almost everything

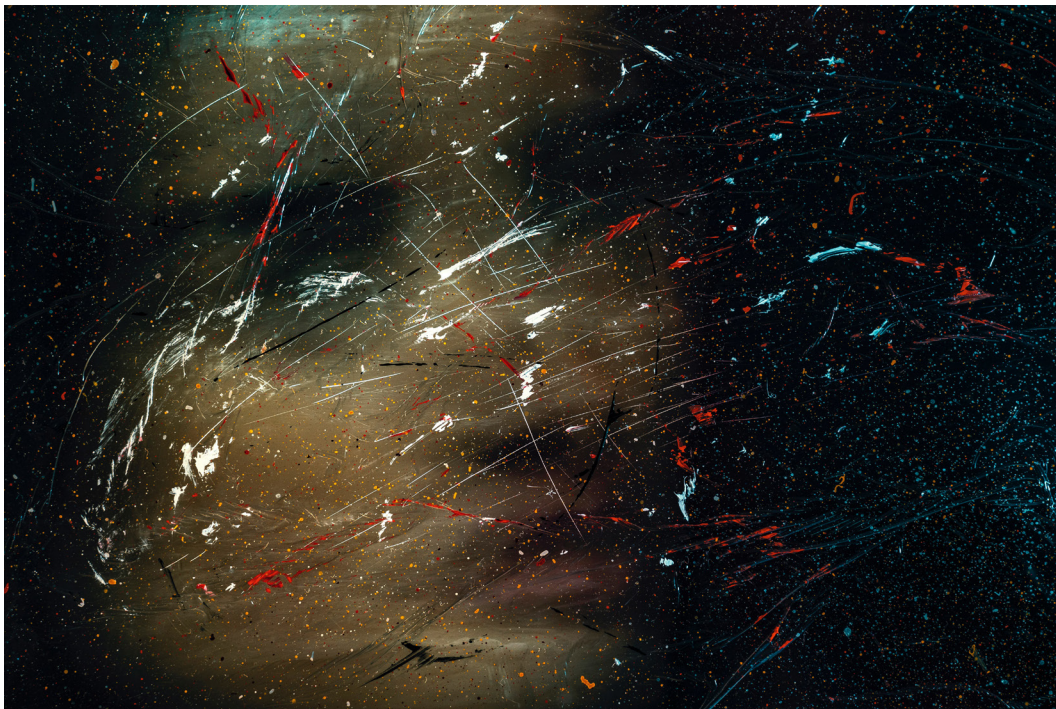
but the pleasure of pop music is also a pleasure in that we can do as much as we like, think as much as we like within this neat space we can draw on the walls

but how do we also carve thru the wall w/o being snobs tho

D: totally. when i was writing it, i was so in the feelings of my break up, the song was a neat, convenient burst of affective flavor (gusher, starburst, dorito), intoxicating in its confirmation of my life. but yes risking that bend towards complicity, there demands multiple valences for which to approach these objects

G: gushers are a food that i want to be more exactly as i imagine bc if they were they'd be ideal

D: \*sparkly pink heart emoji\* \*squid emoji\*



# THE THING FOR REAL

DAVID CHAPMAN

*after john carpenter's the thing*

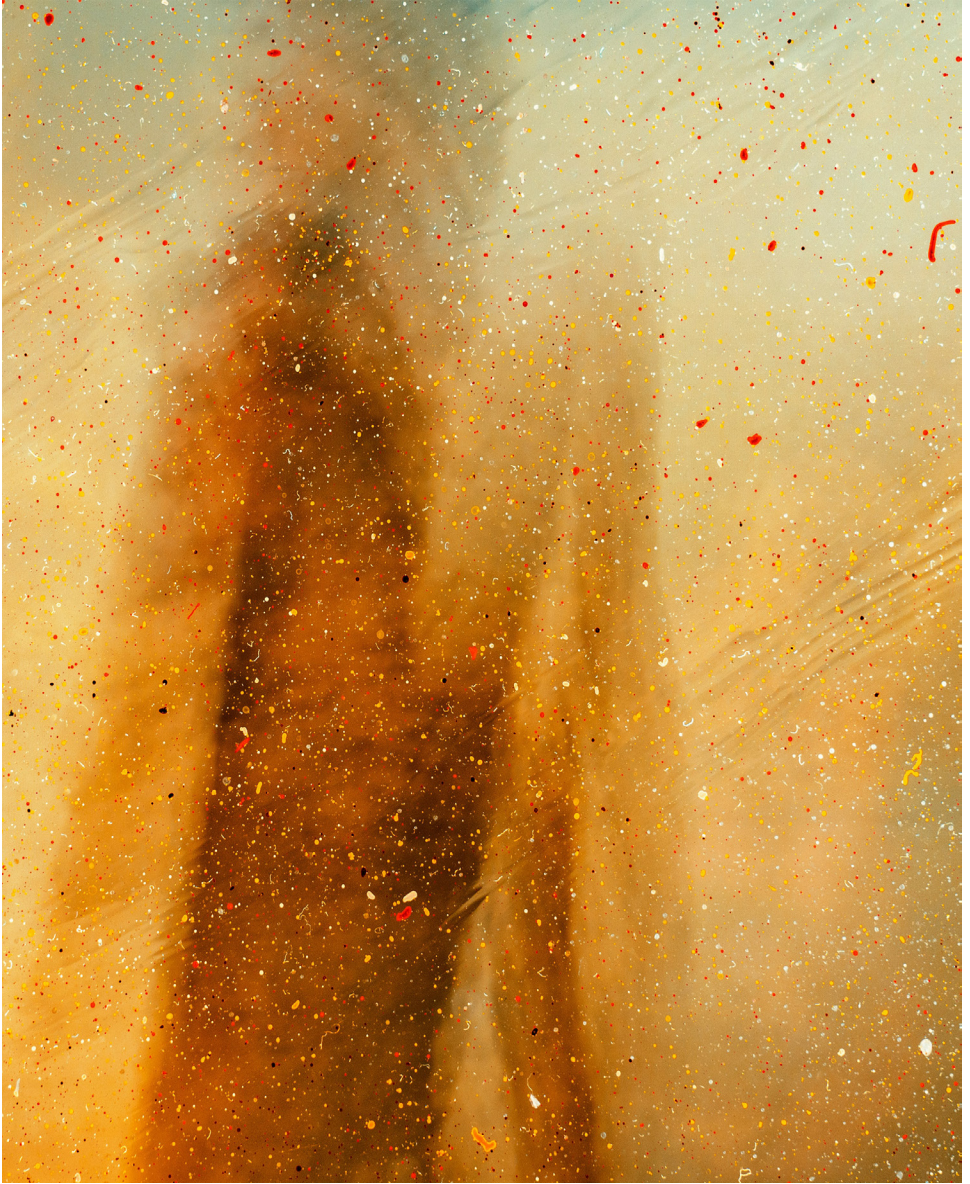
—i'm really not sure how we're gonna get ourselves out of this one.—

its like in john carpenter's *The Thing*, we're all just kind of fucked, & the thing that's killing us looks just like us. we aren't sure who is & who isn't the thing, so we just start holing ourselves up into a self-contained self, like even tho its friday doesn't mean the work week has ended, & even as were holing ourselves up we might just be feigning the hole, dissimulating the plain fact that we are in fact infected are the thing coming to get you. idk.

but the thing about "the thing" is that no one is sure whether or not they are the thing in question since authentication, when it could be any of us, is a rickety bridge. so the question is about questions. like, we know who our enemies are: trump, the cops, the capitalists, toxic men. that's not the thing. the thing is sometimes we don't know what the thing is or who is the thing. I imagine something mycorrhizalic, but bad & opposite. it's a dispersive, horizontal system of fungal roots & arteries & ventricles whose little teeth, tethered to the plants trying to grow above it gnash the flesh for blood rather than suck the flesh for water. it's been around for 500 million or 500 years & hides in our networks just kind of waiting. the thing about the thing is that it probably smells like mushrooms too & maybe like ground beef. in other words, it could be any of us. we look around the room, its really cold, struggling to discern affinities & allegiances. we bicker, conspire, whisper & forget what normal paranoia feels like, wanting to fit in, am i likeable or not. but maybe if we all might be the thing, if the thing about the thing is that we all might be it (& the likelihood that if we aren't already then we will be soon) then maybe we are all the thing. & if the thing is that were all the

thing, then what? but the other thing about the thing is that maybe it thrives on our collective belief, our nihilistic identification with the thing, that the thing has spread everywhere, into everything & every body. that were fucked. that this kind of desperation & distrust, this rupture of a collective front against the thing weakens us thus making us more susceptible to becoming the thing itself. like, ok, the most obvious example of this is the "split up". every horror movie has that one shit head who insists, "lets split up": "lets split up, we'll be more efficient", "lets split up, i can't stand being around you", "lets split up, i need some space" & everyone watching is screaming WHAT THE FUCK IS WRONG WITH YOU & everyone in the scene is like "no i dont think thats a very good idea". these assholes get their way & then the thing does its thing. the thing loves this division. it creates space for the thing to discreetly inhabit a new host who has been isolated from the group. to break up unities both real & emergent is the thing's thing. the thing is imagining not just our susceptibility to the thing but our nature as being the thing itself. beginning first as an idea & only later as a monstrous shape shifting alien parasite. so, i guess i'm wondering how we discern what will kill us when what will kill us shares a likeness to what we trust will keep us alive?





# HYPOCHORISTIC

PATRICIA WALSH

He twists his blade like a remembered kiss  
Being made up to a parody of likeness  
Attention deflected to a newish fad.

Choosing a clachan over history,  
Grinded into heartbreak a savage conclusion  
Weeping in public a hard option.

Some white boy riot simplifies things.  
People changing to vicissitudes of embarrassment  
Avoidance strategy a necessary string of events.

Feasting on the street not a good thing  
Gathering dishes not an historic task  
Sarcasm where intended, a shame of light.

Drawing on tradition edging two souls  
Wanting to be a best friend stalls acceptance  
Disbelief at parties another block.

Political solution is on his side  
Gathering an importance a done deal  
All getting hurt in the end of the present.

Taking a live is the only possibility at hand  
Weeping with pain travelling upstream  
Watching over a dangerous cause.

Knowing pain before it is etched  
Conceding defeat in a public stare  
Filtered through a facetious quip.

# (PRE)FACE

*ERASURE FROM THE PREFACE TO THE GOLDEN BOUGH*

CL BLEDSOE

for some time I have been  
the problem  
my attention the unexplained rule  
my facts an obscure resolve  
~~work~~  
is the ~~result~~

~~the~~ necessary present  
I cannot feel

I pushed too far  
~~to bring~~  
a scattered order.

I have dwelt upon  
the harvest  
the fragmentary  
superstitions  
are the most trustworthy  
in the days when trees still play

every belief should be  
constantly checked and compared  
with evidence ancient books are  
worth very little  
thought leaves by mouths  
but the mass of people  
do not read books

I have devoted so much attention  
to the superstitions of modern truth  
imperfectly stated  
systematically living  
special questions ransacking  
the evidence of admirable works

his health broke before he could plan his death  
his precious manuscripts are devoted to desire  
and the world  
the most important are hope  
securing the help of others in pursuing attention  
undeterred by the cold he worked on

my friend Robert Smith is responsible  
for slaying god  
he has the proof

the work directing me to debt  
Darwin has kindly allowed me  
to question the authorities  
most of them will I hope be my friends  
their sympathy  
has been a great help

# A KIND SHADOW

ERASURE FROM THE GOLDEN BOUGH

CL BLEDSOE

the golden glow  
called: forget it

break the stillness  
this strange tragedy  
the modern sanctuary  
sometimes known as lies

a strange figure  
kept instant enemy  
the man he looked to hold  
was sanctuary  
till he was himself slain

we must deny the age  
survive imperial times  
isolation  
polished rock rising  
the hope of explaining it

superficial differences  
excavated to see him  
a crude philosophy of life

if we exist elsewhere  
we can prove that  
we were actually at work

evidence can never amount to  
a degree of completeness



# SONG OF ~~HEROSTRATUS~~

HARRIS COVERLEY

Burn down the temple?  
Me?  
Poor old ~~Herostratus~~?

I have no desire to be famous  
Or maybe I do  
But burn the House of Diana?  
You must be crazy

Or maybe I am crazy  
I do not know

My mother never cared  
Nor did my father  
If he had bothered to stay that is

You think me a freak?  
Some outcast of trends?  
Do you not remember those men of your last century?  
Your van der Lubbe?  
Your Bremer?  
I am not unique in any age

Oh, they cannot delete old ~~Herostratus~~:  
My ink is indelible  
My rock immovable  
My place insurmountable  
My damage irreversible

I am the haunter of your zeitgeist  
The jestful scourge of history  
And a day on the rack  
Is a small price to pay  
Just to be remembered

# CONVEX

HARRIS COVERLEY

A poem  
Is a canvas  
Observed  
Through the eye  
Of the prefrontal cortex  
Configured  
In brushstrokes  
Of words  
And syntax  
And hoping  
To be  
Remembered.



# BREATHING

HARRIS COVERLEY

She sold flowers  
In paper cups  
As a teenage runaway  
On the streets  
Of a city  
That no longer  
Exists

She rode a bicycle  
Through an  
Abandoned house  
Just to see  
How it would  
Feel

She ensured  
That her breasts  
Would fall  
Out of her dress  
In the middle  
Of a church service  
To see where  
The vicar would look  
He did not  
Notice

And not noticing  
Was the worst of  
All

We made love  
In the rain  
And she caught  
Pneumonia and  
Died

And then came  
Back to life  
As a cat  
The cat sleeping  
In my chair now  
Curled

And I think  
Of how things  
Could've been  
So different  
If she'd just  
Taken the time  
To breathe in  
The same air  
That I was  
Breathing

# ANGEL EYES

FELICIA SANZARI CHERNESKY

The day arrives  
you become  
aware  
    that you can  
no longer  
    go on—

the way you have  
the way you wish

you'd gone—

And on this day  
you check your soles  
for clues  
    to how  
you end  
    up here.

Too much Bukowski?  
Too little Homer?

Don't sigh.  
    Take cheer.

Despite each difference  
we all end up  
wandering  
    Frost's  
divergent  
    wood.

It's then we see  
we loathe a fence.

That's good.

For you may fight  
your neighbor, crowds,  
but on

          this road  
alone  
          you'll spy

promises,  
more snow, and angel

eyes—

# MAGIC FISH

FELICIA SANZARI CHERNESKY

I caught a fish  
the fish said *I am magic*  
I wasn't biting so it added  
*I may also be bishop of the*  
*known and unknown universe—*  
but given it was moonless after midnight  
how could I see clearly so how could I be sure  
and yet the fish hung heavy in my hands  
as if it were carrying an enormous secret  
so I held it close, and staring deeply  
into its wildly rolling jelly eye, counted six rusty  
hooks trailing tangled bits of line embedded in  
its indignant lip—although impressed, I also wanted  
fireworks, like any real American—a little glow—  
and gentle waves complained in softly slapping sounds  
against my boat until I spoke *why should I set you free*  
the fish then sighed, an umpteenth time  
in ransoming reprieve—*see, there are*  
*benefits to living wet—even and apart*  
*from being magic* I snorted *be that as*  
*it may what's in it for me whole lotta*  
*nothing* then the fish replied *I think*  
*you'll find, in the fullness of time,*  
*this is not the case so Kiss Me—*  
its bulk was growing  
by the second  
so I kissed that magic fish  
upon its studded mouth before  
releasing it—eyes glistening in  
mock surprise and nothing more than  
flash of fin and brackish splash—like baptism—  
the fish was gone and I rowed home  
but lately during interstices  
of self-reflection I must admit  
the fish was right I am equally convinced  
that on each strange and moonless night  
what happens *happens* because  
we won't fall back  
to sleep

# JOHN'S GUITAR SPEAKS TO ME IN A VISION

FELICIA SANZARI CHERNESKY

Our next-door neighbor wears his graying hair  
below the collar of his Oxford shirt.

John doesn't think we see him slouching there

behind the house to sneak a puff. (Why pain  
a tidy spouse with smelly sooty sin?)

"Yo, John!" my husband shouts. John's nod is curt.

I giggle, "Naughty boy." My husband's grin  
lights up suburban dusk. With one last drag  
John tamps the dragon's eye and skulks back in.

Today he must have told himself, "I'll snag  
some R and R to jam in my garage."

I'm trying to write, but *dude*, my muse just sags.

Although I shut the windows, a barrage  
of riffs riddles my thoughts, this cluttered desk—  
John's *rocking* for his phantom entourage

and that's when things turn rather Kafkaesque.

John's guitar begins to speak. *Wah, wah.*

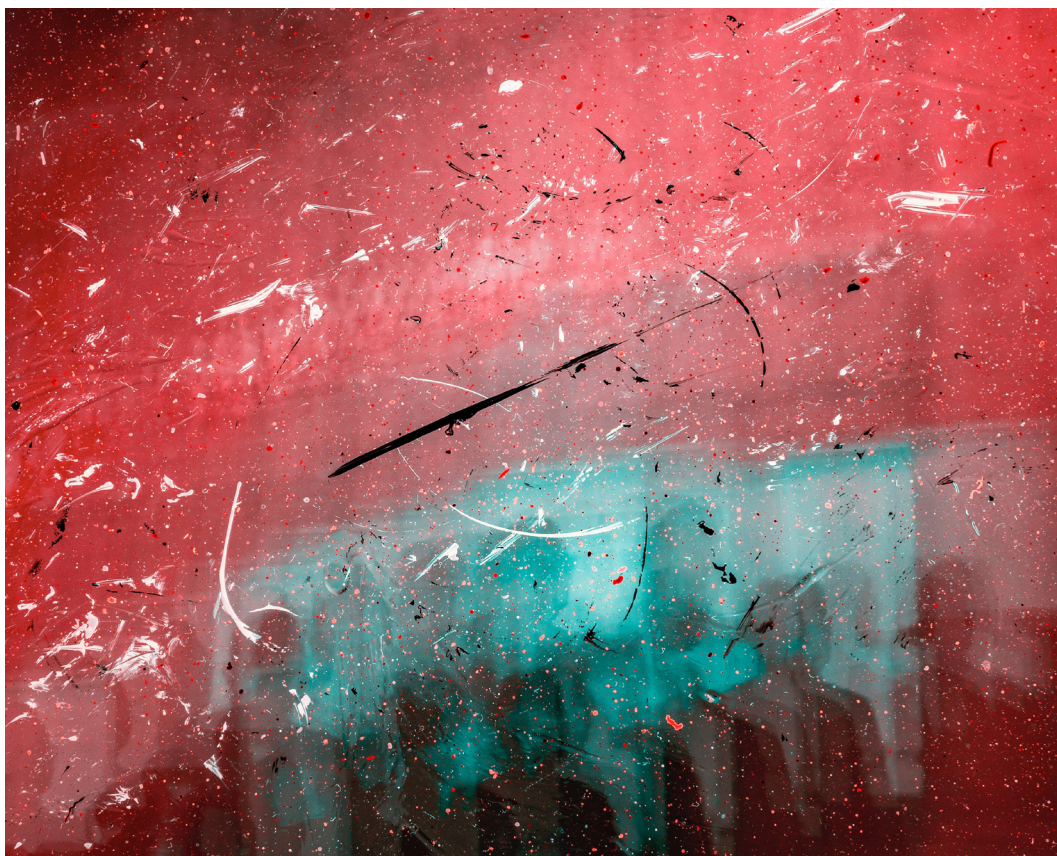
I'm stuck between his groove and some grotesque

vision: I'm standing at the stairs. *Wah, Wah.*

The windows open wide, sound fills the air  
as John's guitar is wailing *Wah! Wah! Wah!*

Then I become all mothers, we who care  
and worry for our boys who won't grow up.  
My rockin' nursery rhyme rolls with each blare—

*I'm coming, Johnny. Mommy's always here!*



# ENCAPSULATION

ARTHUR DAVID SAN JUAN

The mind is an abyss

Bleeding of earthly paradox

That which harkens

To the demeanor of death.

And what of blood can't drop

A taint of a greeting to the paleness

Of skin? For the body is nothing

But a haunted structure unsung

And I—a ghost unfound.



# CLIMATE CHANGES

ARTHUR DAVID SAN JUAN

You do like drinking  
all the sun-soaked days  
without any warnings at all.

Leaving only the remains  
of summer dripping  
from your own lips.

Brewing a thunderstorm  
that traces your throat.

Splitting your head open:  
a vomit of hurricane crashing  
into space's endless floor  
with showers written as you.





# 6 AM

ARTHUR DAVID SAN JUAN

The repetitive clock  
keeps on ticking.  
The sky transitioning  
to its favorite colors  
faintly mixes itself  
to the paleness of my cheeks;  
whilst your lipstick stains  
the cracks of my lips red.  
And as dawn brings forth  
the warning signs through  
the gaps of the old windows,  
the unmade bed bids farewell  
to the crevices of your body;  
as the entire city remains  
perfectly silent  
at the moment  
of its wake.

35

# LOVE IN THE FAST LANE

LINDA IMBLER

A sweltering sky  
floats, as we walk  
the lengthy and twisting  
picturesque streets. The knightly ships,  
proclaimed as autos,  
pass by at a frenzied speed  
and never stop. Your glamour  
holds for the moment and remains  
my haven of security.  
It's both sacred and rare. But all relationships  
find their ends through different circumstances,  
and ours is no different. We just had more strength  
of will and thought love would bear  
and grow, each entrusting the other  
to preserve it. But something happened  
that day as we crossed the threshold to walk  
beyond the watchful lands  
of ancient history.  
Your allure was borne away  
on a sudden chilling wind.  
Your abrupt chilling, bitter words  
cutting deep, even as newer cars  
race by on their accelerated journeys.

# CAMPFIRE TALES AS TRULY TOLD

LINDA IMBLER

Campfire stories earlier spun,  
mirroring a spinning helix  
of slate smoke rising.

After the hiss of the campfire's quenching,  
on my way back to town,  
I'm traveling down the middle of the road.  
Are the trees on each side  
dancing the Virginia Reel?  
Because this road seems to go forever,  
and all the tree branches are applauding  
as one, moved by an unseen wind.

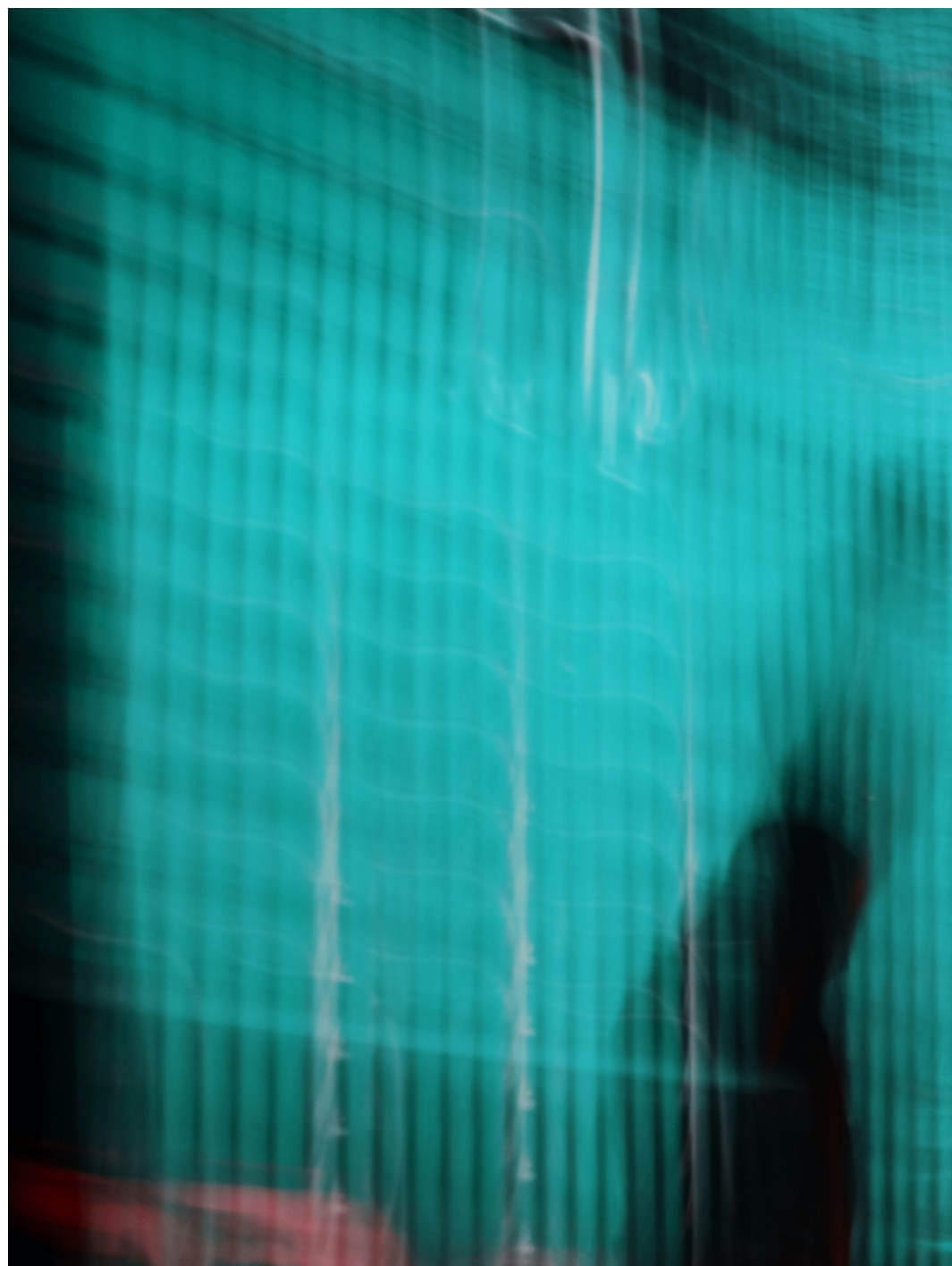
So, while I'm stuck between these perimeter swayers,  
I'll recall earlier suppositions brought forth at the camp.  
I'll mull over, as we discussed:  
the healing power of music, the ocean, and the stars.

I recall the creaking of the tavern door,  
a most welcome sound,  
music pouring forth into the streets,  
flowing like water through a screen.

I remember the ocean's ceaseless hypnosis:  
the whoosh, the crash, the endless undulation.

I recollect all the stars' gentle gleam,  
new life always forming  
under these glittering dreams that wink on and off.

And, here I am now,  
clear of the dance-line,  
a feeling of relief permeating,  
at hearing that tavern door pipe up,  
while it stands next to the murmuring ocean,  
both, under the stars.







# DECEMBER DREAMS OF BUKOWSKI

## DAVID KUHNLEIN

After Li Po

high in a castle, dilapidated  
gothic, bricks & stuff too small to name  
fall away, plunk into the swamp below  
the water level rising

high on the sound of yr voice  
crumbling beneath yr feet, angelic  
barely touch the ground, crumble  
crumble, like the chimney

you tell me yr dream on the phone  
mouthpiece opens to my eye like a keyhole  
yr voice takes shape, a ghostly thing  
tending to Bukowski

the dilapidated, dying body of yr father  
IV overflowing w/ beer foam  
scraping the head w/ the back of yr hand  
the water level rising

who's the damsel in this crumbling castle

if I want to watch you nurse this poet

this part of yrself, back to health

before bricks & things too sick to speak

emerge in the absence of his voice

but I understand his poem by the way

yr waistline bows & hugs the side of his bed

our tears too subtle to feel like tributaries run

back to health, back to yr dream building

too haunted to appear, heavier than a brick

they fall, light rain thru cracks in the ceiling

yr feet, angelic, barely touch the ground

back into the swamp

the water level rising

# little delta sonnet

ADAM MALINOWSKI

*i still would* like to bring the little Delta cookies back to you in Detroit,  
tho the wind does not blow on airplanes this way  
like little flower bulbs eating plastic economies on a cool windowsill  
the shape a line takes mid-air where disaster's omnipresent  
smoking Camel Blues in hand the clouds & me  
have nothing in common *we are a reckless species* dangerous & confused  
masculinity feels like a performance of someone else's, say, my father's, or his father's,  
values today, as every other move i make starts to feel less like me  
& more like/stale beer/empty/in a corner/near the juke  
as my lumbar aches from not walking, running or riding  
a bicycle enough times per week Blue Cross informs me i am at *medium risk*  
nearing Lake Michigan i try to divert attention to breath *pranayama*  
which my therapist tells me is working only sorta  
having a calming effect on the brain like when i'd say *full name & birthdate*  
picking up yr Lunesta & Fluoxetine at CVS  
headed into the pocket of a marsupial jet engine life  
in trees & flowers like the ones we picked for you off Grand  
late last august under heat lightning & stone



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# ABOUT THE CONTRIBUTORS

RAISED ON A RICE AND CATFISH FARM IN EASTERN ARKANSAS, CL BLEDSOE IS THE AUTHOR OF MORE THAN TWENTY BOOKS, INCLUDING THE POETRY COLLECTIONS RICELAND, TRASHCANS IN LOVE, AND HIS NEWEST, GRIEF BACON, AS WELL AS THE NECRO-FILES NOVEL SERIES AND THE FLASH FICTION COLLECTION RAY'S SEA WORLD. BLEDSOE CO-WRITES THE HUMOR BLOG HOW TO EVEN, WITH MICHAEL GUSHUE LOCATED HERE: [HTTPS://MEDIUM.COM/@HOWTOEVEN](https://medium.com/@howtoeven) HE'S BEEN PUBLISHED IN HUNDREDS OF JOURNALS, NEWSPAPERS, AND WEBSITES THAT YOU'VE PROBABLY NEVER HEARD OF. BLEDSOE LIVES IN NORTHERN VIRGINIA WITH HIS DAUGHTER.

DAVE CHATROOM (A COMMUNIST APPARITION) WAS ANIMATED INTO SOGGY SPRAWL SOUTHEASTERN MICHIGAN BY HIS MATERIAL MAMA, K & PAPA, C (THANKS Y'ALL). WHO BUILDS A CITY IN A SWAMP? HIS WRITING IS CONCERNED WITH POP, OUR BODIES, WHERE WE STAND, WHAT THE GROUND IS MADE OF & HOW WE STICK TOGETHER IN THE FACE OF FORCES BENT ON OUR SEPARATION AND DEMISE. HIS ANIMATION IS CURRENTLY SITUATED IN OAKLAND, CA.

HARRIS COVERLEY HAS HAD POETRY MOST RECENTLY ACCEPTED FOR BETTER THAN STARBUCKS, BARD, AWEN, STAR\*LINE, SCIFAIKUEST, AND DUAL COAST MAGAZINE, AMONGST MANY OTHERS. HE IS ALSO A SHORT STORY WRITER, WORKING MAINLY IN THE FIELDS OF WEIRD AND SPECULATIVE FICTION, AND HAS STORIES PUBLISHED OR FORTHCOMING IN CURIOSITIES, PLANET SCUMM, AND THE J.J. OUTRÉ REVIEW. HE LIVES IN MANCHESTER, ENGLAND.

FELICIA SANZARI CHERNESKY IS A LONGTIME EDITOR, SLOWLY PUBLISHING POET, AND AUTHOR OF SIX PICTURE BOOKS, INCLUDING FROM APPLE TREES TO CIDER, PLEASE! AND THE BOY WHO SAID NONSENSE (ALBERT WHITMAN). IN 2018 SHE LEFT THE MASTHEAD OF AN ACADEMIC QUARTERLY TO WORK WITH PEOPLE WHO WANT TO SHARE THEIR STORIES, IDEAS, AND POEMS IN PRINT. FELICIA LIVES WITH HER FAMILY IN FLEMINGTON, NEW JERSEY. FIND HER ONLINE, WITH LINKS TO RECENT PUBLICATIONS, AT [WWW.FELICIACHERNESKY.COM](http://WWW.FELICIACHERNESKY.COM).

PAUL ILECHKO IS THE AUTHOR OF THE CHAPBOOKS "BARTOK IN WINTER" (FLUTTER PRESS, 2018) AND "GRAPH OF LIFE" (FINISHING LINE PRESS, 2018). HIS WORK HAS APPEARED IN A VARIETY OF JOURNALS, INCLUDING MANHATTANVILLE REVIEW, WEST TRADE REVIEW, CATHEXIS NORTHWEST PRESS, OTOLITHS AND PITHEAD CHAPEL. HE LIVES WITH HIS PARTNER IN LAMBERTVILLE, NJ.

LINDA IMBLER IS THE AUTHOR OF THREE POETRY COLLECTIONS PUBLISHED BY AMAZON. SOMA PUBLISHING HAS PUBLISHED THREE MORE OF HER POETRY BOOKS.

IN ADDITION TO PUTTING PEN AND PAPER TO INVENTIVE USE, LINDA IS AN AVID READER AND BUDDING ILLUSTRATOR. THIS WRITER, YOGA PRACTITIONER, AND CLASSICAL

GUITAR PLAYER LIVES IN WICHITA, KANSAS WITH HER HUSBAND, MIKE THE LUTHIER, SEVERAL QUITE INTELLIGENT SALTWATER FISH, AND AN EVER-GROWING FAMILY OF

GORGEOUS GUITARS. LEARN MORE AT [LINDASPOETRYBLOG.BLOGSPOT.COM](http://LINDASPOETRYBLOG.BLOGSPOT.COM).

DAVID KUHNLEIN LIVES IN YPSILANTI, MICHIGAN. HIS POEMS AND ESSAYS HAVE APPEARED IN BATHHOUSE JOURNAL, MIRAGE/PERIODICAL, ROUGE AGENT JOURNAL, AND ELSEWHERE. DAVID CO-EDITED A MURDER-MYSTERY/GOTHIC ROMANCE NOVEL HIS GRANDMOTHER WROTE IN 1979, SET IN TRINIDAD—HER HOME COUNTRY. FIND OUT MORE ABOUT THIS PROJECT ON INSTAGRAM @OLASGRANDESNOVEL.

ADAM MALINOWSKI IS A POET WHO LIVES IN DETROIT, MI. HE TEACHES IN THE DEPARTMENT OF WRITING AND RHETORIC AT OAKLAND UNIVERSITY AND CO-FACILITATES A POETRY WORKSHOP AT WOMEN'S HURON VALLEY CORRECTIONAL FACILITY IN YPSILANTI, MI. HIS WORK CAN BE FOUND AT INDOLENT BOOKS, POETS READING THE NEWS, THE POETRY PROJECT NEWSLETTER, AND IN MIRAGE #5/PERIOD(ICAL) #6. HE WAS A RUNNER-UP FOR INVERTED SYNTAX'S 2019 SUBLINGUA PRIZE FOR POETRY.

KRISTEN MITCHELL IS A QUEER POET LIVING IN YPSILANTI, MI. SHE HAS STUDIED ENGLISH LITERATURE, ART HISTORY, AND PHILOSOPHY. HER WORK HAS BEEN PUBLISHED IN I AM AFRAID ALWAYS (WANTING TO DIE POETRY CLUB), BHAKTI BLOSSOMS (GOLDEN DRAGONFLY PRESS), THE CREATIVE WRITER'S CRAFT WORKBOOK: LESSONS IN POETRY, FICTION, AND DRAMA (MCGRAW-HILL/GLENCOE), AND ELSEWHERE.

ARTHUR DAVID SAN JUAN IS A WRITER FROM THE CITY OF ANTIPOLLO. HE IS A FELLOW IN THE POETRY OF THE 7TH ANGONO NATIONAL WRITERS WORKSHOP AND IN THE UNIVERSITY OF MARIKINA CREATIVE WRITING CENTER WORKSHOP. HIS ARTICLES HAVE BEEN PUBLISHED IN SUMMER TRIANGLE FILMS, BLANCO FAMILY MUSEUM'S EKPHRASIS EXHIBIT, KATITIKAN LITERARY JOURNALS, NOVICE MAGAZINE, MANILA TODAY, PUGAD LITERARY FOLIO, THE SPIRES, AND BETSIN-ARTPARASITES.

HIBAH SHABKHEZ IS A WRITER OF THE HALF-YO LITERARY TRADITION, AN ERRATIC LANGUAGE-LEARNING ENTHUSIAST, A TEACHER OF FRENCH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE AND A HAPPILY ECCENTRIC BLOGGER FROM LAHORE, PAKISTAN. HER WORK HAS PREVIOUSLY APPEARED IN THE ROCKFORD REVIEW, QWERTY, THE BLUE NIB, LIGEIA, CORDITE POETRY, HEADWAY QUARTERLY AND A NUMBER OF OTHER LITERARY MAGAZINES. STUDYING LIFE, LANGUAGES AND LITERATURE FROM A COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE ACROSS LINGUISTIC AND CULTURAL BOUNDARIES HOLDS A PARTICULAR FASCINATION FOR HER.

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PATRICIA WALSH WAS BORN AND RAISED IN THE PARISH OF MOURNEABBEY, CO CORK. HER FIRST COLLECTION OF POETRY TITLED CONTINUITY ERRORS WAS PUBLISHED IN 2010, AND A NOVEL TITLED THE QUEST FOR LOST ÉIRE, IN 2014. HER POETRY HAS BEEN PUBLISHED IN SOUTHWORD; NARRATOR INTERNATIONAL; THIRD POINT PRESS, REVIVAL JOURNAL; SEVENTH QUARRY; HESTERGLOCK PRESS; THE QUARRYMAN; UNLIKELY STORIES; AND OTHERWISE ENGAGED. A FURTHER COLLECTION OF POETRY, TITLED OUTSTANDING BALANCE, IS SCHEDULED FOR PUBLICATION IN MARCH OF 2020. SHE WAS THE FEATURED POET IN THE INAUGURAL EDITION OF FISHBOWL MAGAZINE, AND IS A REGULAR ATTENDEE AT THE O BHEAL POETRY NIGHT IN CORK CITY.

# ART AND IMAGES

JR KORPA IS A MULTIDIMENSIONAL ARTIST BASED IN COSTA DEL SOL, SPAIN. HIS PROCESS USES IMPROVISATION AND INTEGRATES DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHY WITH HAND-PAINTED GLASS TO CREATE ABSTRACT IMAGES. HIS WORK CAN BE FOUND AT [WWW.JR-KORPA.COM](http://WWW.JR-KORPA.COM)

ADDITIONAL PHOTOGRAPHS COME FROM A RANGE OF DIFFERENT SOURCES, AND FORM PART OF THE MUSEUMS VICTORIA COLLECTIONS, IN MELBOURNE, AUSTRALIA. ACCESS THE COLLECTIONS AT [COLLECTIONS.MUSEUMVICTORIA.COM.AU](http://COLLECTIONS.MUSEUMVICTORIA.COM.AU)

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PAGE 5. KODAK AUSTRALASIA PTY LTD, WOMEN FILMING IN BACK GARDEN, KODAK BRANCH, TOWNSVILLE, QLD, 1930S. MUSEUMS VICTORIA COLLECTIONS.

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PAGE 44. HECLA PRODUCTS IN ROSES ELECTRICAL CONTRACTORS, BRUNSWICK, CIRCA 1940.

BACK COVER. KEN TURNER USING KODAK CAMERA, MELBOURNE, CIRCA 1940S. MUSEUMS VICTORIA COLLECTIONS.



