

SUMMER 1966 / VOLUME VII / NUMBER 2 / ONE DOLLAR

# Poetry

NORTHWEST



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SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT

CAROLYN KIZER, editor and founder of *Poetry Northwest*, has resigned to take up duties in Washington, D.C., as consultant in literature on the National Council on the Arts.

DAVID WAGONER was appointed editor of *Poetry Northwest* in February; however, the poems in this issue and several of those to be included in the next were selected by Miss Kizer.

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POETRY NORTHWEST      SUMMER, 1966      VOLUME VII, NUMBER 2

Published quarterly by the University of Washington. Subscriptions and manuscripts should be sent to *Poetry Northwest*, Parrington Hall, University of Washington, Seattle, Washington 98105. Not responsible for unsolicited manuscripts; all submissions must be accompanied by a stamped, self-addressed envelope. Subscription rate, \$3.50 per year; single copies, \$1.00.

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Distributed by B. De Boer, 188 High Street, Nutley, N.J. 07110; and in the West by L-S Distributors, 552 McAllister Street, San Francisco, Calif. 94102

POETRY  NORTHWEST  
VOLUME SEVEN      NUMBER TWO

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SUMMER, 1966

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*Bernice Ames*

**Three Poems**

FOR BONNARD

Morning and noon  
give you light  
in brush strokes.

Grapes rubbed of dust  
secure your color  
at a simple level.

The glare of your seeing  
shines in the shadows.  
Rain happens elsewhere.

A nude lifts her leg  
in studied grace.  
What flesh can never contain

enters this room.  
Leaves from your trees  
brush me green.

What winter can hold you  
riding my vision  
through this moment's sun?

~

## IN MIDDLE YEARS

Now with the road under construction  
and a constant vigil for soft shoulders  
I train my eyes ahead, my hands on the wheel.

And the wheel has always journeyed  
has never stopped. But around what curves  
did I floor the accelerator?

Slowed by the smell of tar I notice  
the landscape seems to wait while I consider.  
Trees rise up in new name and vegetation quivers.

Hills happen too often  
and I hesitate. Could I have gone  
the other way and this car held together?

Lights blink far away and roadside stands  
hurtle past with their last fruit  
of the season, their withering intentions.

## RESCUE ME, NYMPHEAS

When you walked away from me in the wrong room  
Monet suffered a stroke. I lost my footing  
fell into his coil of lilies and took root.

Tangled in silence, purpled with the same water  
over time's changing stream of walls  
I stretched like the stems that must be there

to sudden my surface, to bring up a light  
Monet had overlooked; but blurred pigment  
reached everywhere, puddled inside of me

till, anchored yet floating  
among white becomings, I guessed the sky  
and was glad to be in Giverny,

glad it was not Mt. Kalsaas in fog  
white-wishing a world fatigued in snow.  
I can breathe my own blizzard.

Spreading green hands on hobbles of water  
I tried for shadow in museum glare  
but somehow I violated the distance Monet demands

and was discovered—by an organdy girl  
waving yellow ribbons she must have picked  
from *WISTERIA* three frames away.

From leaf loop and straggle I cried French blue  
but you and the girl had your own conversation.  
I eased from the light by rising lily!

*Alberta Turner*

## Two Poems

### FROM MY MOTHER'S MOTHER

I have you  
In the fine red lines  
Of your inner nostril  
And your short sniff  
When you answered father;

Then, at the brown upright piano,  
On my right, at treble;  
When I tossed my head,  
You said to stop  
Showing off;

And last, in your high bed;  
You spoke of a silk quilt  
For my birthday;

I swung on the bedpost,  
Almost kissed you.

My mother cried  
When you left your worn-out body ;  
I knew what she meant,  
But you didn't want it.

My body is wearing out.  
My daughter plays a white upright piano ;  
She sleeps in your bed  
Under a nylon quilt.

~

#### THE TEST

I don't know just when  
Sameness began,  
Nor was I alarmed ; hadn't plates  
Appeared at each meal clean,  
With the same liver or beet pudding,  
The same asparagus on them ?

Nor was I alarmed  
By seeing the same faces,  
Though once I'd have met  
A stranger like you by asking,  
"Do you keep whippets ? Are you going  
Toward Houston Street ?" Now I seem  
To have just come  
From wherever you've just been ;  
But that's all right. Places repeat.

No, stranger, old companion, what frightens  
Me is the small white dog on your leash.  
My knife is sharp ; I shall cut its throat.  
Only then can I be sure :  
When you cry—and I don't.

~

*John Montague*

#### THE TROUT

*For Barrie Cooke*

Flat on the bank I parted  
Rushes to ease my hands  
In the water without a ripple  
And tilt them slowly downstream  
To where he lay, light as a leaf,  
In his fluid sensual dream.

Bodiless lord of creation  
I hung briefly above him  
Savoring my own absence  
Senses expanding in the slow  
Motion, the photographic calm  
That grows before action.

As the curve of my hands  
Swung under his body  
He surged, with visible pleasure.  
I was so preternaturally close  
I could count every stipple  
But still cast no shadow, until

The two palms crossed in a cage  
Under the lightly pulsing gills.  
Then (entering my own enlarged  
Shape, which rode on the water)  
I gripped. To this day I can  
Taste his terror on my hands.

~

*Stefan Baciu*

Three Poems

CARTAO DE IDENTIDADE

Há um mês ou dois  
entre tantos turistas  
chegando em aviões  
em transatlânticos  
contados  
fichados  
rotulados :  
cada um  
um sorriso  
um colar de flores  
um copo com suco de abacaxi  
um taxi  
um hotel  
uma praia  
uma música  
a volta da Ilha.

Há um mês ou dois  
parece que sou  
pioneiro  
nesta terra  
sem idade :  
quando tiro os sapatos  
sem espanto  
à noite  
vejo finas raízes  
brotando nas solas  
chegando das árvores  
molhadas pela chuva  
de sol.

~

*José Varela-Ibarra*

Three Translations

I.D. CARD

A month or two ago  
among crowds of tourists  
arriving by plane  
by boat  
each one numbered  
each one stamped  
each one a smile  
each one a flower necklace  
a cup of pineapple juice  
a taxicab  
a hotel room  
a sandy beach  
a song  
an island tour

It's been a month or two  
it seems I am  
a pioneer  
in this ageless land  
when in the evening I  
throw my shoes aside  
and without horror  
I see thin roots  
growing out of their soles  
rainsoaked  
suntanned.

~

VOZES

Uma máquina de escrever  
e um pássaro  
ouvem-se no parque  
escrevendo  
cada um  
em outro idioma  
o mesmo poema.

~

CARLOS MÉRIDA EM WAIKIKI

Um maya passeia entre yanques  
carregado de cores  
como um arco-iris  
ninguém conhece a sua estatura  
só as palmeiras  
como na Guatemala  
ou no México  
lhe dão boas-vindas  
com chapéus de folhas  
acompanhando-o até a esquina  
onde seu corpo  
pinta um mural de sombras  
na primeira parede.

~

VOICES

A typewriter  
and a bird  
are in a park  
both writing  
in different tongue  
the same poem.

~

CARLOS MERIDA IN WAIKIKI

A Maya walks among the yanks  
full of colors  
like a rainbow  
no one knows here  
his true stature  
only the palmtrees  
as the ones in Mexico  
or Guatemala  
welcome him  
with a palmleaf hat  
accompanying him  
to the corner  
where his body  
paints a mural  
of shadows  
on the hot walls.

~

Five Poems

GEMMELL AND QUIEL

*For Ed Stone*

the damned frogs keep belching in my heart  
and i had so wanted to be deerlike at the dance  
when i was introduced to the princess  
the fat one gemmell said belch and again belch  
and quiel gave a muddy laugh as brown frogs laugh  
naturally the princess died and the king spat  
we met behind the smaller cathedral  
and when he ran me through gemmell died at once  
we were buried together which is indescribably awful  
but not half so awful as the queen on her bed  
brown quiel laughing between her white breasts  
as the kings royal lips freeze inches above

~

THE ZOO CLUB

In the roof  
of the Zoo Club  
lives a bear  
    with yellow fur :  
    a yellow bear  
He eats lovely ladies  
In the cellar  
    lives a purple (purple) hawk  
He eats ugly gentlemen  
Under a chair (simply)  
    lives an orange snake  
He eats everybody else  
Membership is limited  
Lunch is long

~

COUNTLESS TRUCKS

How many times  
have you died  
as I lay awake  
in the light from  
the neighbors' rooms?

The countless trucks  
that have crushed you  
the diseases of brain and bowel  
the casual assassins  
have made my blankets twitch

I've told the children  
made the phone calls  
walked the proper streets  
I've rented new houses  
and bothered your clothes

If you will cough  
you can have my pillow  
our neighbors are asleep  
perhaps they are dead  
I'll cough and you wake

~

COIN OF

as i told my coin operated dentist  
when things are bad you know  
i like to jump in my wife with the car  
and just drive you know  
and kill turkeys and small  
furry things not fast enough gimpy kids  
then my quarter ran out  
and his hands were full of teeth

~

MICHAELEEN AWAY

Come home. Your clothes are dead.  
They hang in dust unworn—how many years?  
My shirt moans on the red chair.

Silence hardens, stale, unsliced.  
The squatting air is semi-breathed.  
The lamp I light still burns at noon.  
The same glass rims the tablecloth.

Come home. You left your face in the mirror.  
I dare not look as I brush my teeth.  
I scratch on sheets soiled when you left.  
I'm about to try on your hats.

~

*Joanne de Longchamps*

Two Poems

DAME HORTENSE WHISPERS TO ZORBA

A young man turned to me with love  
and did not think of bed—  
a clack of quick surprise  
cracked inside my head.  
He brimmed with waiting words,  
a wanting to be heard, not held.  
I made a face of listening,  
my fingers clasped themselves  
and while he spoke I scratched this song:

“The will of vanity is steel  
against this lesson  
and like a notched and crooked knife  
it will be broken.

Learn again if you are woman.  
Be honed to wisdom on a stone  
until with every gift foregone  
you will not know which yawning death  
to call your own.”

Such pretty lies come for my singing  
who can't afford the songs of pride  
or nights for resignation.  
A simple spendthrift of despair,  
my windows and my wounds stay open.  
Beldame of bellropes I must ring  
true or false to all alarms,  
the cracked bells of my rapture  
swinging from my arms.

~

WOMEN LOOKED FOR AND REMEMBERED

To find by sea light,  
women in the sun  
is to imagine one  
and a thousand nights held in  
and hoarded to be given:

women with promises they keep,  
prodigal of gifts  
and gifted as god-makers  
to many men or one:

orientalists of appetite, their fierce  
gay goddessing performed  
for a shapely reason  
to lie sleepless down;

love made to nothing prove  
but love of making love.

~

Two Poems

STORM

(In Memoriam J.F.K.)

Birds in the bisque  
Light singing around the sumptuously-quilting  
Hog-trough's opaline, transfigured twitch  
Till virtue seems the very farm of life,  
O tragic mauler, you storm that came here  
Uncollared—and now I  
See going off dark  
Behind the trees—what's the barn-door's prudent  
Horseshoe compared to what you've nailed high  
On the east! Fantastic. You've got me tingling  
Like the nineteenth century out here.

Not that the dream  
Of our mourning, ever, we're like to slap into being  
—Wart-red though so many calloused sun-flats  
Wince and fire beneath this up-pitch of colors  
Appalling as a primer—  
Yet I can see, Lord, what you send for you get:  
From further back than  
Any wind-wrecked beech  
In standing water—balladist of no soiled song—  
Surges now the racy American arcane, flings  
Genuine sky-distilled wood turpentine  
Over a people full of rusks,  
Makes sure each county-corner knows its Jefferson.

THE TRIAL

Though the sofa comes out first,  
So pink on a winter's day  
A sense of black migraine  
Surrounds it, the fat-eyed  
Blonde blocking the way  
And steaming for murder perks up

Despite how fast things move.  
End-table, lamp, and as quick  
As rolling the rug from the floor—  
What! Are the bastards back  
And barreling the bric-a-brac?  
She gapes. When chair legs kick

Snow off the railings and snake  
All three men along as if  
Having to clown, or freeze—  
But, where the purring van  
Rapidly waits, get rolled  
Straight into gunny sacks,

It shakes her. Jeez! Besides,  
Turning almost as one,  
And with three hops and a run  
Slow enough for her to catch  
—Beneath an unusual haste  
In seizing the bureau next—

Their steady hanging action  
Of squeezing by unvexed  
Where boys would stand and frown,  
These experts in and out  
And breakneck back again.  
So, maybe, movers are moved?

Her mouth, repeatedly open—  
As if at least one judgment  
Pronounced upon her head

By a quite different Golden Dome  
Were getting occultly unsaid—  
Closes now with a smile

For the royal state of affairs.  
Don't call her dispossessed!  
This trial has just begun—  
And, Lord, she'll make them hum!  
But although, dusting past,  
Trip by trip by trip,

They seem to represent,  
Uphold, and defend the same  
Hanky-Pankian Law  
That bids her stand pat,  
Shame! Whatever hope  
Their reeling file sustains,

Man by man by man,  
In dizzying her disdain  
With constant turnabout,  
The fact is this Court rests  
On nothing but the truth  
Behind their exhausted eyes—

Whose fond looks now belie  
With melancholy zeal  
The actual bringing forth  
Upon three backs, piecemeal,  
As final verdict, the Bed—  
And humping it to the street.

She stares, beyond amazement.  
A window's open wink  
At nothing left but the floor  
Impels her to the brink  
Of no less than a shriek—  
But hell! Too bored to shrug,

She simply pulls her mind  
As if it were in a sling  
Still tighter till it shows  
"So they wanna play dumb,  
Who cares?" and, for added slam,  
Throws one fast bump, two more:

"Quick-over is the style,  
Men, and damn the stairs!"  
—Thrilling, herself, to the roar  
Of a motor revving up  
In the chill noon as if afraid  
Of nothing but starting from dead.

*Michael Porges*

DEATH & EMILY BRONTË

She met him at her brother's funeral  
But never discussed his behavior or look  
If he was fat, scrawny, gay, or sardonic,  
She did not say or put it down in a book.

She had had other loves—the heath in flower  
Or winter snow. Rain, thunder, rhythm, wind.  
But human lovers, no. She could not hear  
The dark imperfect music of mankind.

Perhaps all sickness is but lovesickness  
She coughed, couldn't sleep, had trouble climbing stairs.  
She took this as her struggle and her fate  
She did not want to meet him unawares.

See a good doctor? Certainly not.  
At the last minute she cried, "Yes, I will."  
She had caught sight of him through a dark window  
And he came to her over the windowsill.

*Robin Magowan*

## One Poem and Five Translations

### THE FOUNDER OF CITIES: SYRTOS

He sits in a spoon of shadow  
Happy, free. Through momentarily  
Stilled palms a fragment  
Of wind flaps. Pine columns  
Sing  
In a sand-  
Ripple back.  
Fortune.  
Silence.  
Under him the yes of olives salaams  
Their beaded blues  
Grays  
Dolphining out  
Over a tinder of bright  
Basket yellows, stitched  
With horses, goats,  
Figs, small rooster  
Colored houses  
Under a tree  
The white bell  
Of a peasant's shirt  
Crumpled. In  
The spade cool stillness  
A poplar  
Jets a bubble towards the sun  
Leans on it, grows  
Whinnying softly  
As what it sniffs  
Changes and becomes fishlike  
Full of seaweed, odor,  
The hank of fields, the flakes  
Smearing the water like a fine gilt.

The hours wait, unseen, heavy.  
Nothing moves. In a silk distance  
Only blueness, space,  
A little harbor  
Writhing, oyster  
In the still  
Pointed sun. Happiness  
Is what the insect throat makes  
Moving downwards with him  
In a dream of wavering  
Brooklike streets  
Houses whose loukoum white courtyards  
Open, tiny  
Shell-filled  
In a smile of red  
Blossoming pomegranates  
Secrecy. Silence. A skirt's  
Occasional flower-print splash.  
In the stopped dark a hand  
Crosses, the white frond  
Of a palm, promising.  
He takes it, moving now, head  
Bent, delicate  
Winglike gestures.  
He is dancing, drawing  
Her under his huge soft beak  
The circles of her being uncurling  
In a distance of wind  
Scented archways  
Over whose white lidded surfaces  
Bees crawl, and no word ruffles.

*Giuseppe Ungaretti*

**Five Poems**

UN' ALTRA NOTTE

In quest' oscuro  
colle mani  
gelate  
distinguo  
il mio viso

Mi vedo  
abbandonato nell'infinito

~

VEGLIA

Un'intera nottata  
buttato vicino  
a un compagno  
massacrato  
con la sua bocca  
digrignata  
volta al plenilunio  
con la congestione  
delle sue mani  
penetrata  
nel mio silenzio  
ho scritto  
lettere piene d'amore

Non sono mai stato  
tanto  
attaccato alla vita

~

ANOTHER NIGHT

In this darkness  
with hands  
of ice  
I make out  
my face

I see myself  
deserted in infinity

~

NIGHTWATCH

A whole night spent  
stretched out beside  
a companion  
shot  
his mouth split open  
at the gums to the full moon  
the congestion  
of his hands  
working down  
into my silence  
I wrote  
letters full of love

Never have I felt  
so attached  
to life.

~

SAN MARTINO DEL CARSO

Di queste case  
non è rimasto  
che qualche  
brandello di muro

Di tanti  
che mi corrispondevano  
non è rimasto  
neppure tanto

Ma nel cuore  
nessuna croce manca  
È il mio cuore  
il paese piú straziato

~

NOSTALGIA

Quando  
la notte è a svanire  
poco prima di primavera  
e di rado  
qualcuno passa

Su Parigi s'addensa  
un oscuro colore  
di pianto

In un canto  
di ponte  
contemplo  
l'illimitato silenzio  
di una ragazza  
tenue

~

SAN MARTINO DEL CARSO

Of these homes  
all  
that is left is a fragment  
of guttered wall

Of those  
who used to correspond with me  
not many  
are left

But in my heart  
not a cross is missing  
My own heart is  
the most devastated countryside.

~

NOSTALGIA

When  
night is breaking up  
(shortly before spring)  
and seldom  
anyone goes by

There settles  
over Paris  
a dark film  
of tears

In the song  
of a bridge  
I watch  
the thin  
limitless silence  
of a young girl

Le nostre  
malattie  
si fondono

E come portati via  
si rimane

~

#### INIZIO DI SERA

La vita si vuota  
in diafana ascesa  
di nuvole colme  
trapunte di sole

~

*Dino Campana*

#### Five Poems

#### FANTASIA SU UN QUADRO D'ARDENGO SOFFICI

Faccia, zig zag anatomico che oscura  
La passione torva di una vecchia luna  
Che guarda sospesa al soffitto  
In una taverna café chantant  
D'America: la rossa velocità  
Di luci *funambola che tanga*  
*Spagnola cinerina*  
*Isterica in tango di luci si disjà:*  
Che guarda nel café chantant  
D'America:  
Sul piano martellato tre  
Fiammelle rosse si sono accese da sé.

~

Our own  
sicknesses  
ebb

And as if carried elsewhere  
this remains

~

#### BEGINNING OF EVENING

Life sheds itself  
in a diaphanous  
spiral of round sun-  
quilted clouds.

~

*I. L. Salomon*

#### Five Translations

#### FANTASY ON A PAINTING OF ARDENGO SOFFICI

Face, anatomic zigzag that eclipses  
The grim passion of an old moon  
That is suspended from the ceiling  
In a tavern like an American  
Cabaret: the red kinetic  
Lights a *rope-walker appears to touch*  
*A Spanish ashen girl*  
*Who hysterically dissolves in a tango of lights:*  
That looks in on the American  
Cabaret:  
On the pounded floor three  
Red flames light up by themselves.

~

IMMAGINI DEL VIAGGIO E DELLA MONTAGNA

...poi che nella sorda lotta notturna  
 La più potente anima seconda ebbe frante le nostre catene  
 Noi ci svegliammo piangendo ed era l'azzurro mattino :  
 Come ombre d'eroi veleggiavano :  
 De l'alba non ombre nei puri silenzi  
 De l'alba  
 Nei puri pensieri  
 Non ombre  
 De l'alba non ombre :  
 Piangendo : giurando noi fede all'azzurro

Pare la donna che siede pallida giovine ancora  
 Sopra dell'erta ultima presso la casa antica :  
 Avanti a lei incerte si snodano le valli  
 Verso le solitudini alte de gli orizzonti :  
 La gentile canuta il cuculo sente a cantare.  
 E il semplice cuore provato negli anni  
 A le melodie della terra  
 Ascolta quieto : le note  
 Giungon, continue ambigue come in un velo di seta.  
 Da selve oscure il torrente  
 Sorte ed in torpidi gorghi la chiostra di rocce  
 Lambe ed involge aereo cilestrino. . . .  
 E il cuculo cola più lento due note velate  
 Nel silenzio azzurrino

L'aria ride : la tromba a valle i monti  
 Squilla : la massa degli scorridori  
 Si scioglie : ha vivi lanci : i nostri cuori  
 Balzano : e grida ed oltrevarca i ponti.  
 E dalle altezze agli infiniti albori  
 Vigili, calan trepidi pei monti,  
 Tremuli e vaghi nelle vive fonti,  
 Gli echi dei nostri due sommessi cuori. . . .  
 Hanno varcato in lunga teoria :  
 Nell'aria non so qual bacchico canto  
 Salgono : e dietro a loro il monte introna :

METAPHORS FOR A JOURNEY AND A MOUNTAIN

... after the nocturnal hidden struggle  
 The more powerful second soul had broken our chains  
 We awoke crying and it was a sky-blue morning :  
 Like shadows of heroes they sailed :  
 Of the dawn no shadows in the pure silences  
 Of the dawn  
 In pure thoughts  
 No shadows  
 Of the dawn no shadows :  
 Weeping : we swore our faith to the sky

The pale woman who sits on the last slope  
 Near the ancient house still looks like a young girl :  
 Before her the valleys unwind uncertainly  
 Toward the steep solitudes on the horizons :  
 The kind old woman hears the cuckoo singing.  
 And the simple heart tested through the years  
 By the songs of the earth  
 Listens quietly : the notes  
 Reach her, continually ambiguously as in a silken veil.  
 From dim woods the torrent  
 Moves off in sluggish eddies skims the boundary  
 Of rocks and envelops the airy blue. . . .  
 And the cuckoo trickles two veiled notes  
 Quite slowly into the blue silence

The air laughs : in the valley a trumpet blares  
 To the mountains : the group of raiders  
 Dissolves : they fly in lively leaps : our hearts  
 Jump : they shriek and cross beyond the bridges.  
 And from heights to infinite dawns  
 The echoes of our two humble hearts  
 Watchful apprehensive swoop down the mountains,  
 Tremulous and vague in lively fountains. . . .  
 They have passed through a sweeping line :  
 I do not know what Bacchic song they rise to  
 In the air : behind them the mountain thunders.

E si distingue il loro verde canto.

Andar, *de l'acque ai gorgi*, per la china  
Valle, *nel sordo mormorar sfiorato*:  
Seguire un'ala stanca per la china  
Valle che batte e volge: desolato  
Andar per valli, in fin che in azzurrina  
Serenità, dall'aspre rocce dato  
Un Borgo in grigio e vario torreggiare  
All'alterno pensier pare e dispere,  
Sovra l'arido sogno, serenato!  
O se come il torrente che rovina  
E si riposa nell'azzurro eguale,  
Se tale a le tue mura la proclina  
Anima al nulla nel suo andar fatale,  
Se alle tue mura in pace cristallina  
Tender potessi, in una pace uguale,  
E il ricordo specchiar di una divina  
Serenità perduta o tu immortale  
Anima! o Tu!

La messe, intesa al misterioso coro  
Del vento, in vie di lunghe onde tranquille  
Muta e gloriosa per le mie pupille  
Discioglie il grembo delle luci d'oro.  
O Speranza! O Speranza! a mille a mille  
Splendono nell'estate i frutti! un coro  
Ch'è incantato, è al suo murmure, canoro  
Che vive per miriadi de faville! . . .

Ecco la notte: ed ecco vigilarmi  
E luci e luci: ed io lontano e solo:  
Quieta è la messe, verso l'infinito  
(Quieto è lo spirto) vanno muti carmi  
A la notte: a la notte: intendo: Solo  
Ombra che torna, ch'era dipartito. . . .

And their green song is distinguishable.

To go, *from waters to whirlpools*, through the valley's  
Slope, *into the deafening light murmur*:  
To follow a tired wing down the stooping valley  
That beats and turns: to go desolate  
Through valleys until in clear blue serenity  
A gray little village with varying towers  
Emerging from sharp rocks  
Appears and disappears to our alternate thoughts  
Above our arid dream, cloudless!  
O if as the torrent that collapses  
And stays under a changeless sky,  
As at your walls the spirit inclines  
To nothing in its fatal going,  
If at your walls in crystalline peace  
I could stretch out in a changeless peace  
And reflect the remembrance of a divine  
Serenity lost O you immortal  
Soul! O you!

The harvest, eager for the mysterious choir  
Of the wind, mute and glorious down paths  
Of long tranquil waves for my sight,  
Undoes the bosom of golden lights.  
O Hope! O Hope! By the thousands  
Fruits glisten in summer! A choir  
That is enchanted is in its murmur melodious  
And lives by myriads of sparks! . . .

Here is the night and here to watch me  
Lights and lights: and I far off and alone:  
The harvest is quiet, against infinity  
(Quiet is the spirit) mute songs go  
Into the night: to the night: I listen. I  
Who had departed am nothing but a shadow come back.

VIAGGIO A MONTEVIDEO

Io vidi dal ponte della nave  
 I colli di Spagna  
 Svanire, nel verde  
 Dentro il crepuscolo d'oro la bruna terra celando  
 Come una melodia:  
 D'ignota scena fanciulla sola  
 Come una melodia  
 Blu, su la riva dei colli ancora tremare una viola. . . .  
 Illanguidiva la sera celeste sul mare:  
 Pure i dorati silenzi ad ora ad ora dell'ale  
 Varcaron lentamente in un azzurreggiare: . . .  
 Lontani tinti dei vari colori  
 Dai più lontani silenzi  
 Ne la celeste sera varcaron gli uccelli d'oro: la nave  
 Già cieca varcando battendo la tenebra  
 Coi nostri naufraghi cuori  
 Battendo la tenebra l'ale celeste sul mare.  
 Ma un giorno  
 Salirono sopra la nave le gravi matrone di Spagna  
 Da gli occhi torbidi e angelici  
 Dai seni gravidi di vertigine. Quando  
 In una baia profonda di un'isola equatoriale  
 In una baia tranquilla e profonda assai più del cielo notturno  
 Noi vedemmo sorgere nella luce incantata  
 Una bianca città addormentata  
 Ai piedi dei picchi altissimi dei vulcani spenti  
 Nel soffio torbido dell'equatore: finché  
 Dopo molte grida e molte ombre di un paese ignoto,  
 Dopo molto cigolio di catene e molto acceso fervore  
 Noi lasciammo la città equatoriale  
 Verso l'inquieto mare notturno.  
*Andavamo andavamo, per giorni e per giorni: le navi  
 Gravi di vele molli di caldi soffi incontro passavano lente:  
 Sì presso di sul cassero a noi ne appariva bronzina  
 Una fanciulla della razza nuova,  
 Occhi lucenti e le vesti al vento! ed ecco: selvaggia  
 a la fine di un giorno che apparve*

JOURNEY TO MONTEVIDEO

From the deck of the ship I saw  
 The hills of Spain  
 Disappear, the golden twilight  
 Hiding the brown earth in the green  
 Like a song:  
 Like a blue song  
 Of a lonely girl from an unknown place,  
 A violet still trembling on the bank of the hills. . . .  
 The azure evening languishes on the sea:  
 Even the golden silences of wings  
 Crossed slowly minute by minute in blueness. . . .  
 Distant golden birds tinged  
 In varicolored hues crossed the heavenly evening  
 From more distant silences: the ship  
 Already blind crossing battering the darkness  
 With our shipwrecked hearts  
 Battering darkness, its azure wings on the sea.  
 But one day  
 The solemn matrons from Spain climbed aboard the ship  
 With turbid and angelic eyes  
 And breasts heavy with vertigo. When  
 In a deep bay of an equatorial island  
 In a quiet bay much more profound than the nocturnal sky  
 We saw rising in the bewitching light  
 A white city asleep  
 At the foot of the highest peaks of the dead volcanoes  
 In the equator's turbid breath: till  
 After much screaming and many shadows in an unknown country  
 After much clattering of chains and much inflamed fervor  
 We left the equatorial city  
 For the restless nocturnal sea.  
*We went on and on for days and days: the ships  
 Heavy with sails limp in the hot gusts of wind passed opposite us  
 slowly:  
 Nearby on the upper deck there appeared a bronzed  
 Girl of a new breed,  
 Eyes shining, her clothes to the wind! and here: wild at day's end*

La riva selvaggia là giù sopra la sconfinata marina :  
E vidi come cavalle  
Vertiginose che si scioglievano le dune  
Verso la prateria senza fine  
Deserta senza le case umane  
E noi volgemmo fuggendo le dune che apparve  
Su un mare giallo de la portentosa dovizia del fiume,  
Del continente nuovo la capitale marina.  
Limpido fresco ed elettrico era il lume  
Della sera e là le alte case parevan deserte  
Laggiù sul mar del pirata  
De la città abbandonata  
Tra il mare giallo e le dune. . . .

~  
GENOVA

O Siciliana proterva opulente matrona  
A le finestre ventose del vico marinaro  
Nel seno della città percossa di suoni di navi e di carri  
Classica mediterranea femina dei porti :  
Pei grigi rosei della città di ardesia  
Sonavano i clamori vespertini  
E poi più quieti i rumori dentro la notte serena :  
Vedevo alle finestre lucenti come le stelle  
Passare le ombre de le famiglie marine : e canti  
Udivo lenti ed ambigui ne le vene de la città mediterranea :  
Ch'era la notte fonda.  
Mentre tu siciliana, dai cavi  
Vetri in un torvo giuoco  
L'ombra cava e la luce vacillante  
O siciliana, ai capezzoli  
L'ombra rinchiusa tu eri  
La Piovra de le notti mediterranee.  
Cigolava cigolava cigolava di catene  
La gru sul porto nel cavo de la notte serena :  
E dentro il cavo de la notte serena  
E nelle braccia di ferro

There appeared the wild shore down there next to the endless sea :  
And I saw the dunes  
Like dizzy horses that dissolved  
Into limitless grassland  
Deserted without houses for anyone  
And we turned flying from the dunes and there appeared  
On a yellow floodtide of the miraculous abundance of the river  
The marine capital of the new continent.  
Limpid fresh and electric was the light  
Of evening and there the tall houses seemed deserted  
Down below on the pirate's sea  
Of the abandoned city  
Between the yellow sea and the dunes. . . .

~  
GENOVA

O fleshy brazen Sicilian matron  
At the windy window of the maritime alley  
In the heart of the city hammered by sounds of ships and trucks  
Classic Mediterranean female of the ports :  
The outcries at evening resounded  
Through the gray pink of the slate city  
And then the noises were quieter in the serene night :  
In the shining windows bright like stars I saw  
The shadow of seamen's families pass by : and I heard  
Songs slow and ambiguous in veins of the Mediterranean city :  
It was a deep night.  
While you, O Sicilian, from the hollow window panes  
In a grim interplay  
Of concave shadow and vacillating light  
Were enclosed up to the nipples  
In shadow, O Sicilian,  
The Octopus of Mediterranean nights.  
The crane on the wharf in the hollow of the serene night  
Creaked creaked creaked in its chains :  
And in the hollow of the serene night  
And in its iron arms

Il debole cuore batteva un più alto palpito : tu  
La finestra avevi spenta :  
Nuda mistica in alto cava  
Infinitamente occhiuta devastazione era la notte tirrena.

~  
ERMAFRODITO

Ermafrodito baciò le sue labbra allo specchio  
In un quadro profondo  
Nerastro appare rosea, biaccosa la carne di lui sullo sfondo  
Di Ermafrodito in spasimi molli affogato  
Dal paese della chimera eterno e profondo  
Dove perdesi l'anima fantasticando  
M'apparve affacciato alla superficie del mondo  
Ermafrodito risveglio che inanellò l'acque insaziabile di  
giungere al fondo  
Ermafrodito in spasimi molli affogato.  
Dal fiume maledetto dove non canta la vita  
Ti levi talvolta pur nelle notti lunari ed appari  
Alla finestra mia colla madreperlacea luna  
E stai come uno spettro vigilando il mio cuore  
Che si consuma alla luce funerea lunare  
La primavera anche ti è amica talvolta  
E passi lontano coi venti odorosi pei prati  
Brucia il cuore al poeta mentre riguardano i bovi ;  
Ma sempre sopra al mio letto vigila la bocca stanca e convulsa  
Il vago pallore del volto e delle tue bionde chiome.

The weak heart beat a louder throb : you  
Had darkened the window :  
Nude mystical up high hollow  
The Tyrrhenian night was a devastation of innumerable eyes.

~  
HERMAPHRODITE

Hermaphrodite kissed his lips in the mirror  
In a deep blackish painting  
His flesh wet white in the background appears rosy  
From the eternal and profound country of the chimera  
Where the soul is lost daydreaming  
Hermaphrodite crushed in soft spasms  
Seemed to me appearing over the surface of the world  
Hermaphrodite awakened when he ringed the waters, eager  
to reach bottom  
Hermaphrodite crushed in soft spasms.  
From the damned river where life does not sing  
At times you arise even on moonlit nights and appear  
At my window with the nacreous moon  
And stay like a spectre watching over my heart  
Which wastes away in lunar funereal light  
Even springtime is sometimes friendly to you  
And with the fragrant winds you pass at a distance through  
the fields  
The heart burns in the poet while the oxen stare ;  
But ever above my bed the tired and convulsed mouth watches  
The charming pallor of your face and your blond hair.

Two Poems

SALVATION IN KAMAKURA

Winds tore the sea,  
blew down trees,  
and soaked thatched roofs  
through the dark noon  
of today.  
Red "prayer was answered" flags  
flap in the wet wind  
as streamlets of sweat like rain  
trickle down the big bronze skull  
of Buddha. . . .  
Waterfall mountains  
flood paths, roads,  
streets and city square  
with mud and water everywhere,  
as temple pools and lotus ponds  
overflow their old stone sides  
and golden carp  
swim in rivulets  
through city ditches  
to the sea. . . .

While impassive men  
with dipping nets  
stand in streams  
and scoop up golden fish  
by bucketfuls  
to return to Buddha pools  
at five hundred yen a head.

~

OMORI

Slouched in a bus seat  
I stare at a worn *zori*  
through the hole of a 5 yen coin.  
The bus is moving nowhere  
round and round  
I think I passed the station twice  
I saw the sign "Omori"  
without a tree in sight.

Sakutarō too once staggered  
around these streets  
with eyes sunken as *sake* cups  
and a soul that sang  
a poetry of disease  
sadness, and groves of trees,  
singing alone in a lonely world.  
An old man who also lived near here  
once described to me  
the scene of Sakutarō  
lurching along these ancient streets  
(some were only river beds  
back then—  
when Omori had a beach)  
bounding off of fences  
probably looking for a bench.

Slouched in a bus seat  
I spiral through history  
looking at a worn *zori*  
through the hole of a 5 yen coin.

~

Three Poems

BACKSLIDING NATURALIST

The round moon wandered in the pond;  
The swan slept on, head drowned in its own wings;  
And I, high on the bank beyond,  
Awaited with a stone in hand  
That confluence of magic-mongering rings.

I laid that spell as it came on—  
And raised a wrinkled foam around my stone.  
The moon returned . . . but not the swan.  
I wondered, dry on my measured lawn,  
What climax would that waking eye have known.

~  
POEM

No snow has ever fallen on my lands.  
Yet wolves are lying in the willow trees,  
And rooks, my old and trusted enemies,  
Have left my grove and me in migrant hands.

The rooks shrieked Black, and I deserved *that* flout.  
But how, how understand this color gray  
Which blends with leaves like summer's shadow play?  
It blots the cracks that find distinctions out.

With rooks, I chose to war—to guard my lies;  
With wolves, choice seems a myth dreamed in a cage.  
They never howl their laws, or smell of rage;  
They only breathe my air and wait like spies.

Come, rooks, bring back your flytings to my wood.  
And let me end by siring my own grave—  
Not martyred by these traceless wolves that waive  
My blame, and geld my flaws of ownership.

CONTINUITIES

A vein is greening in the vine's brown skein.  
Which shadow claims the triumph of estate?  
The line is too fine to explain.

Before night's body feels its change come on,  
The limbus of dawn's unseen eye glides round.  
The line is too fine to be drawn.

The eyes that warmed the sockets turn to stone,  
Before their beds of flesh have lost their heat.  
The line is too fine to be shown.

As the breath that fed two lives goes out in moan,  
A living head breaks through the belly's tomb.  
The line is too fine to be known.

Out of the silent plain—the world's gray gist—  
Crop up the blistered and the blinded heads.  
*This* line is too fine to exist.

~  
*John Ridland*

FOUR AGAINST WALLACE

"I am half-sick of Stevens," said  
The Lady of Shalott

I  
My uncle Giles, the notable gourmand,  
Cautioned me softly while the lobster shells  
Cracked, in the blue insouciance of his gaze,  
And inward went the contents of the claws,  
The legs, at last the back. The uncle swelled,  
Not in his fury, but that swollen pose  
Denoted satisfactions of the skin:  
Yet who would let the grubby urchins in?

Spectacular punctuations! In my sense  
A mottled dream of murphied innocence  
Begot complaisance which begot contempt  
As this and thus beget their epitaphs  
In that and therefore. Where the Magnifico sat  
A hundred Niggers grumbled in a squat.

II

Behold, Magnifico, your worlds are dead!  
The fluffs of Florida, the cockatoos  
Of Yucatan, partakers of green seas,  
All metaphor in the end. We spit pa-too,  
Pa-too, pa-tui, and we bang the jingle  
That every sea-beast dwelling in the dingle  
May roll and muscle to your dry ragout.  
And yet, Seignior, we are your servants, too.

But that begets and what begets befalls  
In mad combatance for your fabled meals  
On sweet of punch and plum. The ready drink  
Begets flamingoes which partake of pink.  
The piddlingest of bardies, it is said,  
Swells like a bird a-twitter when he's read.

III

I cannot summon trumpets, or bronzed gongs,  
Or golden fruit that touches to the palms  
Soft on the boughs—where bends that winter branch  
From swarming white that smothers, without shape,  
The tall and perpendicular respects  
Which death defers. Upon my bending arm,  
Come, arm of shadows, under shadows turn,  
Master the falling shadows as you burn.

The burn's the thing! The silly links of fuel  
And perfect mouth of shadow have begun  
To torch my touch and lavishly belie  
Our poignant sacristies of wasting stone—  
As if your happy chants were not despoiled  
Whenever those ephemeridae die.

IV

Begat, begotten, and begetting still,  
I am the silly be-thou of a tool  
Not turned in heaven, but shafted in a grove  
Where angels flop in graven paysages.  
The singing masters of those altitudes  
Dischord the perfect panoplies they sing,  
And perfect psalms whose perfect host you are  
Deceive, despoil, and blank the fartherest star.

Blame not my lute, or fruit, or losing game,  
I am the knickers of the man I am.  
I am the master sergeant of my swash  
And swell the swollen stomacher and sash  
That belted in the green and vigorous miles  
Of that notorious gourmand, Uncle Giles.

~

*Franz Schneider*

AUTUMN

(from the German of Karl Krolow)

The wind answers unasked.  
Maple and birch leaves die of it.  
Everywhere there is death,  
But nobody talks of it.

O Mort, vieux capitaine—  
The cold composure,  
Considering the fate of others.

A child sings of the passing year.  
In the open mouth shines  
The rose-colored palate.

~

Two Poems

FREE LANCE

And now I mope about the house alone:  
Cereal that crackles seems like company,  
Wrong numbers set me spinning toward the phone,  
The mailbox pokes its life-or-death at me.

And who are these strange creatures in the hall?  
Smug nine-to-fivers with their we-know eyes.  
Run to your cell-blocks, run—hypocrites, all!  
If you think being free is easy, by God, *you* try.

~

TO A FRIEND RESCUED FOR OUR LOVE

After even a long sleep, again  
You wake. Never the one to seek our help,  
You sought out death's other face.  
Amazing, that you did not find the warm  
Sun enough. And can you now succeed  
In choosing life—and not oblivion?

Your ego laughed once at oblivion,  
It's fair to think that it will laugh again.  
You long ago learned how not to succeed  
In everything you couldn't really help:  
What mattered was, there was something warm  
To go toward always—more than just a face.

You never showed your secrets in your face  
But held them back—for what? oblivion?—  
And stopped, unwilling to believe the warm  
Occasion had arrived. Well, love again  
Comes to your rescue, and again the Help  
Wanted columns dare you to SUCCEED.

Yet on your own terms you indeed succeed  
If only you would look love in the face  
And, living, say: *But this needs all my help—  
I, too, must work against oblivion,  
For I am wanted everywhere again!*  
Amazing, that you did not find the warm

Sun enough—but wanted it to warm  
Your night. *The sun lies!* you cried. *Succeed  
In this, or never light my sky again!*  
And was this all to conjure up a face  
To stand for warmth against oblivion?  
Friend, do not hesitate to call out *Help!*

*Help!* Do you not hear us call out *Help?*  
We, too, in darkness seek the sun, the warm  
Hand to lift us from oblivion.  
No one alive can ever quite succeed  
Except in this: the dark that we outface.  
And now you come—no ghost, a man again.

*Help!* you cry out. And somehow you succeed  
In grasping our warm hands. You turn your face  
Toward us—not toward oblivion again.

~

*William Witherup*

Two Poems

FOR EVE

I

It is as if the hand of God,  
brushing over us in the night,  
incised my skin and removed a rib.  
On waking I find a roe in my arms;  
red petals trickle from my wound  
and a Persian angel is blowing a rib flute.

II

I wake up in an unfamiliar garden.  
Leaf, petal, vine, snail, stone  
separate from the mist;  
our bodies, twined together like vines, take form  
freshly shaped from wet clay.  
Your lips, your ear, your throat are still moist.  
I kiss them, savoring in my mouth the juices of creation.

III

It is as if I have been inhaling sacred leaves  
and am oracle to the strange syllable of your name.  
I chant in a foreign tongue a prophecy to myself:  
Eve. Eve. Eve. Eve. Eve—  
a subterranean sound like an underground spring,  
a distant rushing as of a stellar wind.

IV

A loved woman is turned earth receiving male rain:  
the heat and smell of you penetrate my sleep.  
I return, a butterfly emerging from the dark,  
to a bed thick with corn blossoms and pollen.  
O Eve. White Painted Woman. Mother of corn and precious shell.

V

We have held each other briefly in time  
performing a water-ballet in the surf.  
I wake to find you have gone,  
the sea shell imprint of your ear on my shoulder.

VI

Is each union of lovers  
the opening and closing of a cosmic valve?  
I send you this poem as a charm  
against the closing of that valve;  
that we do not become casualties,  
drowned lovers washed up on the bleak littorals of freeways.

~

SEQUEL

Though I repeated the proper words:  
moon, wind, blood, bone, pollen,  
and mixed strands of your hair,  
your menstrual blood, my semen  
and earth—the formula failed  
to coerce you. But there is  
still the solace of song.

Standing now on Goathill  
in a circle I've drawn  
with a bone; dressed in skins  
and shaking a rattle  
of dried deer hooves, I give  
your name to the dark winds  
of the American night.

Below in the Mission  
disconsolate men receive  
your name in their sleep.  
May it transform them briefly  
as it has me; they wake  
to step across doorsills  
into fields of bright wheat.

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BERNICE AMES lives in Los Angeles. Alan Swallow is publishing a book of her poems, *Antelope Bread*, this year.

ALBERTA TURNER teaches English at Oberlin College in Ohio.

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ROBIN MAGOWAN teaches at the University of California, Berkeley. The five poems by GIUSEPPE UNGARETTI, translated by Mr. Magowan, were written during World War I.

I. L. SALOMON, the well-known critic and translator of these poems by the Italian poet DINO CAMPANA, spent last year in Rome, where he visited Campana's tomb and the mental hospital where the poet was confined at the time of his death.

HAROLD WRIGHT teaches in the East Asian Languages and Literatures Department of Ohio State University.

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Our cover is by CLARENCE HARRIS, a Seattle printmaker who has exhibited in a number of national shows.

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THE EDITOR