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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 Wagener 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.
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?

~

BERNICE AMES
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.

~
CARTÃO 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.

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 MÉRIDA 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.

P O E T R Y
N O R T H W E S T
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 quiet 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 quiet 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
MICHAELLEEN 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 rusk's,
Makes sure each county-corner knows its Jefferson.

~
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
Dolphinizing 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.
Giuseppe Ungaretti

Five Poems

UN' ALTRA NOTTE

In quest' oscuro
colle mani
gelate
distinguö
il mio viso

Mi vedo
abbandonato nell'infinito

~

VEGLIA

Un'intera nottata
battuto vicino
da 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 più 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 disfa:
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 silenzii
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 piu 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:

P O E T R Y
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.

Il languidiva la sera celeste sul mare:
Pure i dori silenzi ad ora ad ora dell’ale
Varcaron lentamente in un azzurreggiaire:
Lontani tanti 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 il suo alato cielo.

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:
Si 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 rosi 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 mediterranea.
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

GENOA

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, biacosa 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 risvegliò che inanelò 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 per i 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.

~

HERMAFRODITE

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.
H a r o l d  W r i g h t

T h e  P o e m s

S A L V A T I O N  I N  K A M A K U R A

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.

O M O R I

Slouched in a bus seat
I stare at a worn  z o r i
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  z o r i
through the hole of a 5 yen coin.
Flot eece Gould

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 ownerhood.

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

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
Begat complaisance which begat 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 com batance 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.
Edward Watkins

Two Poems

FREE LANCE

And now I mouse 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:
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.
About Our Contributors

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.

John Montague teaches at the University of California, Berkeley.

Stefan Baciu was born in Rumania and is the author of more than thirty books. He is currently teaching at the University of Hawaii and so is the young Cuban José Varela-Ibarra who translated these poems from the Portuguese.

Robert Hershon is a trade magazine editor in New York City and has published poems in numerous periodicals.


Frederick Bock has published poems in most leading American magazines, including Poetry Northwest.

Michael Porges lives in Southern California and has published in a number of magazines.

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.

Florence Gould, whose poems and short stories have appeared in a number of magazines, teaches English at the University of Washington.


Franz Schneidler teaches at Gonzaga University in Spokane.

Edward Watkins lives in New York City and has published widely.

William Witherup lives in San Francisco.

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

Prize Awards are given annually by Poetry Northwest, thanks solely to the cultured and charitable handful of people listed above. Nearly all of them have supported us from the very first. Without them, Poetry Northwest would not be sailing into its seventh year. With more of them, we could have art reproductions in the contents, not just on the cover, as we have done occasionally in the past. We think it important for our magazine of poetry to look beautiful, to match its contents.

The Editor