

Yggdrasil

A Journal Of The Poetic Arts

March 2016

VOL XXIV, Issue 3, Number 275

Editor: Klaus J. Gerken

European Editor: Mois Benarroch

Contributing Editors: Jack R. Wesdorp

*Previous Associate Editors: Igal Koshevoy; Evan Light; Pedro Sena; Oswald Le Winter;
Heather Ferguson; Patrick White*

ISSN 1480-6401

Table of Contents

INTRODUCTION

Silverio Gabriel de Melo
Poetry is

CONTENTS

Christopher "Irish Goat" Knodel
I Have Closed Love's Door
A Sonnet of Sensuality
Fear Will Deny You

Mark Young
Mineral Terpsichore
He chose the buffy coat as the sample of choice
A line from Amelia Earhart
Contradictions
Juan Ignacio railed at the skylight's vast scheming
octet

David Francis
Medieval
Sourceless
Returns Don't Work
Opacity
Aquarium
Midlands

Felino A. Soriano

A selection from Fragmented Olio

(from Antecedents)

The wait toward winter's usual anticipation

A rewind

Decided

Gary Langford

10,9,8,7,6,5,4,3,2,1

In the Writer's Room

In the Asylum

In the Greed of Things

In the Apology House

Steve Klepetar

You Who Teach

Street Clothes

At the Barricades

In the Studio of Last Goodbyes

In the Place Where Faces Melt

Karen Alkalay-Gut

Flamingos

Learning to walk

Loop

My kindle

She has a knife

Touch the fear

POST SCRIPTUM

Nessa O'Mahony

For the day that's in it:

Leap Year

Introduction

Silverio Gabriel de Melo

Poetry is a door and window

...

Porta e janela
Porte et fenetre
Tür und Fenster

....

With a Language of its own
all doors lead to other doors

...

for a door by any other name is a door.

.....

Mach die Tür auf
Ouvre la porte
Abre a porta
open the door....

....

All windows tell what goes on outdoors.
Embroidered curtains hide what goes on inside

....

Komm zum Fenster
vient a' la fenetre
Vem a' janela....
Come to the window!

...

A poem is a door window panel.
Take a peek
How is it like inside?
How is it like outside?

...

"Ephphatha! - Be opened

...

Open Sesame!

...

Go in...go out... go find out.....

....

....

A mind is an epic poem
It speaks a poetry that is common to all languages

...

Listen! Look! Let the Light come in!
Listen! Look! Let the Light shine out at night

....

...

All poetry is a form of prayer

...

Open the door and see

....

Open the window and take a look

...

Say to yourself a poem..

...

Listen to the music
If it speaks your Language
Don't knock, just go in....
Don't fret, just go out...
Whatever you do, just do not close the door!

Christopher “Irish Goat” Knodel

I Have Closed Love's Door

Nevermore, I have closed love's door,
the pain from it's too much to bear.
She's come a-knockin' like before.
Nevermore, I have closed love's door,
I've rowed my dingy from that shore,
and I have nothing left to share.
Nevermore, I have closed love's door,
the pain from it's too much to bear.

A Sonnet of Sensuality

Within dark dreams eclipsed by my desire,
a beauty's image for which I do yearn.
The waxing passions fueling my heart's fire;
myopic, and without requite will burn.
Her pallid breasts concealed in satin sheer,
and shapely thigh does lead to supple flank.
A tiny mole on cheek; enhanced veneer,
but dimples nape to hip secure her rank.
However, it has naught to do with loins;
before her I was never this transposed.
Both vibrant and alive as she enjoins;
erotic and hypnotic, I proposed.

Few have known the complete accord of life,
or know it can be found with one's own wife.

Fear Will Deny You

Fear will deny you of your dreams.
They might have already been tossed.
Courage is needed, it seems. Or,
fear will deny you.

Never find love; that is your cost.
You think that I'm using extremes.
Too scared to approach, now she's lost.

There's no way around; yet you scheme,
and pray you and fear are not crossed.
You avoid life's greatest theme, and
fear will deny you.

Mark Young

Mineral Terpsichore

So much

is curtain time, serpentine, snake hips, snake oil, keep the aspidistra flying

Soma

is carrion, carry on, carry one & hope there's no reminder

Some are

intense, in tents, midnight at the oasis, date palm, Blake rhyme, tyger, Joanne Kyger

Summary

is justice, just cause, just in time, sirloin served in a rich wine jus, just because

Summery

is warmth, width, blue sky, research, re-search, reassert

Sum

is adder, bladder, sniper, viper, bosom buddy

Satsuma

is plum, riddle, paradiddle, paradigm

He chose the buffy coat as the sample of choice

My Dad was the
frigging KING of
trite. He had this
very simplistic
idea that there are
inherent laws in-

dependent of place;
&, ever since a
species of jumping
spider endemic to
New Zealand featured
on Johnny Carson,

that anyone hosting
a web series or
tv show based on
a single premise
would never garner
any testimonials.

A line from Amelia Earhart

The number of people living with HIV has increased, as has the number of churches converted into trampoline clubs.

I am aware of the hazards. Waxing isn't for everyone. Everyone is so socially sensitive. Gone are those once important personal

x & y variables that informed one's life. They now have less effect than rubbing grape jelly onto a robot with a broken leg.

Contradictions

Just watched Marvin Gaye on Ovation / dressed down in dressing gown & pyjamas / & looking as if a little detox / rather than the Sexual Healing he was singing about / stood more chance of prolonging his life.

Juan Ignacio railed at the skylight's vast scheming

Monday was a nice
day, but the chicken
wings were too

cerebrally opaque
for my taste—nothing
near the smell of

dinghies & keelboats,
but bad enough to
need to burn candles.

octet

I visit my usual
hairdressing

salon. Today
the staff have

all gone similarly
short & blonde.

Which stylist is mine?
Who'll shape my avatar?

David Francis

Medieval

1

the little survivors of the funeral
dwarfed by the clock tower,
the time wrong
through the bare branches

the oblivious man
leaves the deli
carrying his 'paper,
rounds the corner

2

the very black clothes
the very white shirts
of the funeral-workers

on a winter day
that luckily
is not cold

Sourceless

Sunday night
gets late soon
in winter light:
a window reflects
a warehouse-empty No -
transparent – strangely –
above a storefront
desolate as though
inside hibernate
villagers while
outside plough pillagers
seeking wine
to warm – like a neon sign –
the thawed guts
of the grainy world that abuts
that glass there
with its cold sourceless
glare.

Returns Don't Work

Returns don't work
You must see
The whole thing out
You can't cry wolf
The wolf is death
Commitment is all

Better to bang your head
Against the cul-de-sac
That's all I've got to say
Nobler to fail at Plan A
Than to succeed at Plan B

The wolf is death
Fear is the sheep
You can't hide in a hole
You can't dig that deep
Light is how only
A feather can fall

You fall pain-hard
Like a jumped seesaw
The wolf's at the door
The open door
The lion is love

Now it's your turn

Opacity

The reflection in
the window keeps the loner
from seeing inside;
they will think he's staring:
he sees his dark abstracted face.

Aquarium

Sitting in a corner café
with a good view
on the day on the strike
except the window's closed,
a slow man comes by,
leaning, peering, taking
long looking at us,
and fills the whole
pane with his body
and his sunglasses, his cap,
his cane, with neck
turned, looking: I think
at once of the giant aquariums,
the whales and eels and those
who walk and drift at the same time.
And worse, I think
of the tentacles of a squid
in a restaurant tank,
the way he clings
to the window that displays him.

Midlands

1

Sea gulls are drowning me in their ocean
through the claustrophobic streets
sandstone cathedrals whiz by like arrows
umbrellas herd people into the mall

A ravishing girl
veers into the cobblestone passageway
her straps falling over her soft-bronze shoulders
and arms

The columns with their hanging boats of flowers
and winged lions with mermaid figureheads facing
the tenor saxophone invisibly
echoes

in the fluorescent sky
the gulls lowering, darting bat-like

until suddenly the tourists are dead
and with them goes the plangent horn

the paving stones regress to lime
and start their procession down to the river
homesick for the quarry

the skeins of drifters
in black light

I feel vulnerable on the bench
alone with the favela pigeons

2

Barbaric masks loom and leer at me
trapped in the telephone box.

The screams of a drunken provincial town
kept me awake in the street-facing room.

Can you hear them over the long distance –
over the Atlantic's cold green waves?

A trio halts and asks for directions.
One asks me questions, idle-curious.

The other hauls him rudely, dismissively:
the street is bereft of intelligence.

Through the night fights flare, brazen voices raise.
The sickly light alerts the ruined day

despite the unsecurable curtain.

3

The chair has been taken in. This is what the night can mean.
The fountain, though made of stone like the deep grudge of one spurned,
hosts eternal-flowing streams, flood-lit, lovers at its base.
The lovers have left by now. High heels clog on the pavement.
The barmaid comes with the slops, pours them in the letterbox
and pours the rest down the curb then shuts the black oaken door,
cracks it and says a few words to the old man with the cane
skirting the wrought-iron spears that wind to the cul-de-sac.
Why did I leave her behind? Why didn't I invite her
to the black Avon River that she wouldn't see, sleeping?
A gate on the passageway. The chairs are stacked by the pub.
The bench in front of the church. This is what the night can mean.

A rewind

The song sat
stilled within the palm of the holder's
good hand. Each

lyric wrote wander
into the eyes' philosophy of touch with
search as notion an
ungraspable act of persuading
warmth to visit
frequent amid cold's
hour of sleep's absent
cultivations.

Decided

The
name
of
your only beginning. A handling
of rhythm rode the tongue of
parental impulse to
 gauge the body
 more so in sound than of
bone and the structure of combining
dual identities. Each
 recessed meaning
of bilingual expression each
conformity of truth
still bends beyond
the original state
 of provided
 elation, —and interior
to devotion is the maneuver to
burgeon its method: you're becoming again

then again in the echo of
growth's double-sided language.

Gary Langford

10,9,8,7,6,5,4,3,2,1

Your best round will contain a favourite score; your call.
Your driver can be a premium wine, remembered at ten dollars a sip.
Your wedge can be an argument on the edge of plots to success.
Your putter is true to you like nobody else you have known.
Each putt has a string that is tied to your mind's direction.
Your bag is fresh as you wake up on mornings of optimism.
A regular wage gives you some certainty, irrespective of hard shots.
An irregular wage sees you wedged in an underground car park.
Our own melodramas are usually faint-less in a hole-less script.
Letters fall through days as faithfully fervent as common feathers.

I buy new drivers to hit my way out of a crisis on the fairest way.
I hold the sinuous head that rises up to kiss me in a pro-am comedy.
There is also a freezing from its own bite, its own depreciation.
Share markets lie before us all. Profit is exciting in the nerve wracks.
Workability is usually no more than two groups per holes in time's pegs.
Above that is a war, bags colliding and clubs shooting off handles.
Spectators join in, alarmingly so, as you are unaware they are there.
The golf course becomes a suburb. The suburb becomes a city.
iPhones send each tragedy out, shot-less, held up in distant pity.

We pack ourselves up in used golf bags in preparation for flight.
Breaking up is the weather of our lives, hour after throbbing hour.
Destinations have expensive hands that grow on the river plains.
Treachery is an easy front. Truth looks us in the eyes as a moody child.
The Sunday round sees one become larger, the other small and wild.
Measure yourself up in the last handicap - or benefit - of your family.
Try to avoid the shot of anger; you are a wretched bloodied putter.
It might turn out that you are watching yourself in the mirror.

We meet after years in the trees. I try to argue a collapsed body.
Both of us feel it's an unfair delivery; rules are poor tools.
I see the girl who ran with me like a deer, my lovely dear.
Then we owned each other's ambition; always a let down and fear.
Now there is merely a faint swing. We talk less, to lie less.
Like a shadow. Like a pure statement of simple ball drops.
I am with you in the fall of red rain in the course's artery.

I am a gold member of the most expensive life club.
My first marriage was in the rough wedging well.
Our child fitted into my golf bag as a modern pram.
You decided our boy was hit on the head - clubs or balls.
This was notably when he changed into a surgical she.
Truth became a small t, a large R with -uth to us all.

I admit yelling four instead of love saw my wife withdraw.
Sexual intimacy has its own course structures; dreams on greens.
In our last year together we couldn't match a nine-holer.
You divorced me on the grounds of a golf obsession.
Drugs are easier to understand than a neatly dressed confession.

Now the only thing we have in common is our boy/girl.
My choice is a boy due to a larger drive down the fairway.
I also know golfers have to accept the score on imperfect days.
He/she can wear high red boots with heels in my dad's eyes.

My new wife is a golfer, hammer hands in a leather skin industry.
I fell in love when I was consistently outdriven and easily out-putted.
Do you promise to love, honour and avoid playing golf together?

We do. We did. I play in mourning. She plays as a low handicapper.
I am in the rut of an idealogical putt. My spinal chord plays a guttural tune.

Ex-wife laughs. Wife frowns. Son/daughter signs my card that afternoon.

In the Writer's Room

We wake up in our room, whether doorless or windowless inside us.
Beauty has its own architecture, laid out by us as an artwork.
We adapt this to a personal call in the letterbox or on the internet,
more so when a bright disguise crosses the country like a tourist.
Dickens wrote *David Copperfield* because he wished to be David Copperfield.
I wrote *Newlands* because I wanted Reynolds Updike to be my grandfather.
If your work is stolen from other books, be an inventor of language:
'I did it for my kids. You know the expectations they have today;
I'm an insurance salesman so I'm used to lying on a company's behalf.'
Critics gather in the street outside, pleased if they put us on our knees.
People can be so inventive, blaming writers for beating up others.
Bowels can be emptied in the corner, blinking like a wounded owl.
I have decided to put you in one of my plays in a supporting role.
You don't mind. We have a lot to tell each other in the here and now.

Which city are you living in? You go to many. I go to hardly any.
Few of us match you for speed, six countries, four days, on speed.
Seagulls grow at railway stations to become flighty unreliable characters.
Beaks peck us to order on the stab line, regardless of the rain line.
This is called imagistic realism. You agree, blithely disregarding symbolism.
Two daffodils are in a glass on the table. Each sees this differently.
Rooms have their own conundrums. One blind opens, the other snaps.
You wonder about planning a major work, blood, madness and victory.
You fish in the room. Radio is a pot plant. A fire bursts in your work.
Able to kiss the sky. Able to kiss judgment. Able to be your engine.
You turn around in case your enemy is stalking you.
There is a comfort post like first memories, first achievements.
My first was at primary school, announcing my story had a hidden bomb.
Bullies scattered in case the rubbish I invented might actually blow up.

There is a bat in night's sky, attached to you in a restless flight.
I can see the comedy in Shakespeare's tragedies so I am ignored.
I am ready for my enemy at the gate, gun in my letterbox.
A television script in another city gave me my first trip on a plane.
My best books and plays were written in the shade of fruit trees.
I learn the public may change my story to one of their own.
There are always judges in the courtroom of discontent.
They dress themselves to enjoy sentencing me in smugness.
This can be when you are tied to a chair, unable to move.
This can be when a committee drives you into the ground.
I write about you in casual coldness. You are the fool, page fifty.
This is your age. That gives you a lonely blast before launching.
You dress up in a coat of absurd babies, wailing to get your way.
I hold you patiently, knowing of King Lear's jagged crown.

Walls are kindly bookcases, smiling up to a universal ceiling.
A few of the contents take off without a single clearance from the tower.
You measure success in book sales. Royalties are five star hotels.
I turn the corner, side tracked by acid free premium quality paper.
I ruminate well, I percolate sweetly. Words are held up at customs.
Do you have anything to declare? A witch cackles. That is me.
Letters collapse on the floor, unable to put themselves together again.
A full-length stage play is served up as a ten-minute duologue.
A novel rings up as a radio story, and we know how short they have to be.
A poetry collection takes off as a flight of exclusive haikus and cinquains.
I have become a cartoon, one hand a small friend, the other a large rock.
I decide to change this into a song, only my table willingly walks away.
My chair takes off to send me through the air into the bookcase.
My books join up with the others to land on me in a bookies race.

In the Asylum

Name me an asylum and I will name you a small public area.
A reflective car was there in my first visit like an absent full stop.
I was on my red school bike, parked lonely in a single bike rack.
A hospital's car park is a bank account of multiple floors.
An asylum's is a one class country school under the trees.
The sleepy eyes of the inmates are pulled in as wedged circles.
Good intention is a mistaken identity. Ghosts are in mind claims.
They have hard lips. They only admit mistakes when caught out.

Amo is Indo-European, often confused with ammunition's war.
Translation can be in the invading armies of love.
You are mine (ownership). I cannot let you go (my third arm).
From the time I walked through a university's portal as a student,
I called them asylums. The latin is a place of peace, not pieces.
This grew when I lectured many through my own portal.
The more I was published, the more opposition worried I was right.
Every book was a bomb. Every show was as proprietor of the night.

An eyeless hunter steams through our dreams.
We are not good at saying no. We stand in a queue for fast food.
Show me a person without a worry. I will try not to say liar.
The rich worry to be on the tax-less road to getting richer.
The poor worry to be a spectator at the game to get poorer.
A family heater was bequeathed to me. We all need heaters.
I can sit on mine cheerfully. A bare bottom burns gently.
I sing. We all do if we are sentenced in the bottom field.

Even here we hope to be constructed as social engineers.
The day has a false heart. We try to be in the garden without fear.
We like to understand why a white light blinks above us in the sky.
We are opened up like a pomegranate to ooze with buoyancy.
My most difficult degree is love. My answer is to talk a lot.
Love is my foreign currency in a comical invention.
I taught the refugees love, a word used more than swearing.
How many of the little balloons do you use in a day?

A girl waits outside the castle under an even-tempered tree.
Her father is locked up; beating bones without a memory.
He believes she will be locked up in the uniforms get hold of her.
The gate bridge will go up. Sentries are crocodiles in the moat.
Alice in Wonderland is Alice in the Asylum, neatly dressed.
Acorns fall around her. He watches silent faces with helmets.
He doesn't recognise his daughter's bright helmet. Or her.
In asylum history his Galileo is a horse he once bet on.

Berryman lost his tap. Plath's art was in the oven of a British winter.
Pound pounded himself in a prison, counting up the spider's webs.
Dransfield held a candle in his hands; skin melted as he did.
Uncle Owen rang me to sink in his trenches.
You can set me a test for my Galileo.
I return to counting language. Tchaikovsky's 1812 Overture plays.
I become a soldier, able to walk out before war is declared.
Nobody appears to notice I have slipped off the list.

You welcome me in your skin. I write songs for you.
You wash yourself clean every breakfast, lunch and tea, then chew.
I know we are finished. I have become a past tense, a third person.
Your narrative is new, as you smile on redefining your third one.
Yet we both walk in the streets and cafes of loneliness.
I acknowledge we are all inmates. Glasses fall from our eyes.
Choose the one you prefer: dark walls, wires of the screaming;
spring's room, a slightly incredulous peace. I smile in history.

In the Greed of Things

Greed has its own cities, its own towns and its own countryside.
We are welcomed into fat Buddhist bodies to enjoy the contradiction.
Arms taper themselves as heavy weapons to axe our enemies.
Legs grab Italy's torso, ground into the Mediterranean with a single boot.
Breasts are islands of misunderstanding. Battles crop up as a victory-loot.
Hips are a cautious whimsy in the belief life's a soldier's camp in the cheeks.
We are born into this geography; courted; generations suffer the after-effects.
The heart beats through continents of conquest and temporary possession.
In the corner is a comfort post. We tie ourselves to this for a confession.
On the scaffold history has a noose around its neck. We erect descriptions.
Shakespeare writes on kings and queens. Payment of village food is mean.
Large horses haul wagons of imperial coins through centuries of warfare.
Pyramids are Egypt's furniture. Layers of golden thought lie around mummies.
Roman hooves roam over Europe's armament. Hadrian's Wall is built casually.
Khan throws coins at the Chinese. Less die than in the building of the Great Wall.
Ottomans loudly rhyme time, being slightly deaf, crossing over those who can hear.
Art produces anguish. Painters are sculpted to death if they don't sell at exhibitions.
Opposition is beheaded. Corpses are cheap meat for the dogs that follow armies.
Coins are religiously placed in the eyes. Mouths are stitched in a foreign currency.
Squadrons take hold of our world, bearing over horses in flights of restless fancy.
A long arm reaches us truly, camouflaged in the custody of comfort clouds.
Above the arms are vagrant gas eyes. I am your eye. I am head splendour.
Be forewarned. I am the greedy bastard ladies catch in a wild kiss.
If paid I will blow you up, fashionably dressed in a suit of sparkles.
Your spirit is surprised, as we have never met before. Words are my passport.

Science chokes along. Chemicals become bombs of ungracious fancy.
I love you is a grenade, button pulled on a luminous sound of sad clouds.
Make-up is a soul note on a slippery floor. We kiss doubt passionately.
Lies and love are cousins, united when the word selflessly - or selfishly - swings.
Characters are searched on the greed tree in the credible plot of obscenity.
Behind benches judges deny pondering on toilet seats as much as justice.
We smile at paintings of Jesus nailed to a cross; he always looks sad.
An argument is he survived as a deep breather; meditating death.
He became a fisherman, feeding villages as fish queued to be in his nets.
We prefer nail holes being sealed as doors. Sad eyes are reflective planets.
Tell me one period of history that last longer than Ghandi without greed?
Don't say movies; studios open up as happy little toys on large profit margins.
I witness call-ups, into the army of greed, which becomes the entire horizon.
Weapons are a philosophy. Bullets are patrols before we can be blown up.
Tunnels run under the surface of countries, whether to escape or conquer.
Trade talks end up louder than they start. There are accusations of greed.

If traders lose their arms or legs there can only be a scream in the bleed.

An

unimaginable

falling

of

greed.

I look up to see parrots squawking, turnings gowns into umbrellas.

Golden coins fall from the umbrellas. We run out in waves from our homes.

As I do from the attic to lift myself above a cauldron of bones.

In the Apology House

This morning I manage to slide out of bed without an apology.
I carefully put on my clothes without making a fashion statement.
My shoes tighten until my eyes pop before relaxing in silent comedy.
Point made. Point taken. My shoes are neatly fitted in feated satire.
I got your name wrong. Emotions leak as a dressed down apology.
Desire is real estate, a forgotten habit, a forgotten truth.
Some people love like a dropped coin when it's all in the loins.
I seldom love yet apologise in the hope of being a pedigree lover.
You write me up as a critic of a showman with a superficial heart.
Life is confused with playing the lead repeatedly in your movies.
You are a diesel truck in a hurry, running over me in glee.
Truth is the frame. Frames leave the chair to hobble along.
I am at the roof of the tongue; frequently taken out to be hung,
by teeth that are painfully cut off below the gum line.
Faith lies in the eve of destruction, casted on a worry stage.
Mystery approaches in a loveless hole to explain the unexplainable.
My defence is to be a neurologist, lauded by brain matter.
I have learnt to look wise, even if I forget what you say.
Soft hands; killer bones; love squeezes; you break in caustic tears.
Music in our ears does not need gratitude yet we constantly say so.

Children greet us in faint surprise, sliding in noisy rows from the sky.
You are dealt a hand you never wished to take or make.
The moon undresses over your eyes in which I am reflected.
A child is up an apricot tree on bended knees to eat every apricot.
There is a ballooning out to become a giant apricot.
I make you my new child, painting a white light in a darkening abstract.
You smile. Neither of us is any good in why land. I apologise.
Our story writes itself. You don't do well as the pages turn:
homework never done; you blame us all. Saying it's cool upsets you.
Petty crime is the headlines, stealing food and clothing lacks impact,
as opposed to murdering everyone you see before morning tea;
fast food devotee, a suburb in which a bees aviary is just as large.
I tell of a comfort cloud. *The child is father of the man* – Wordsworth.
You are a comedian, telling me words are never worth much.
I laugh, then apologise. Your horizon is a wedge on a knife-edge.
I am glad when you leave as a rebel, sounding like I once did.
My dried up paint brushes are returned from where you hid them.
My landscape reflects an old habit and don't measure up.
I add a rubbish dump, burning in the background as a modern symbol.
In the wreckage I am the British philosophy of Turner. Sorry Sir Turner.

I have enough time to count the hairs on my largest private brush.
One hundred and eighty seven, though I stop when my brush objects.
A hair is cast out in each count, disappearing as a random hope.
In the silence I determine to be bedded in an artist's boudoir.
The price is myself, or the artist I meet in a painter's true landscape.
You can lose hairs in each stroke of a hand that might not be yours.
Artificial hairs are not the same unless Made in China is your name.
Fame comes when my head is sculptured in the National Gallery.
I never meet the sculptor. She makes me the size of her left hand.
I try to carry bundles of you with me around the gallery.
Delicate pleasure allows me to apologise in tiny reminders.
If you search for me you will need to ask for a traveller's guide.
In this way sleep will also welcome you as a long lost friend.
My brain is shiny black to laugh along to surprise the rest of me.
I suggest you all acknowledge me. You enjoy the label, low achiever.
You see yourself as a guerrilla. A large eye opens to dress me down.
I am bourgeois; picking you up on time is particularly disappointing.
In my final stroke I list myself as one of your memories.
Only an apology flies in to land resolutely in the chamber of sorry.

Steve Klepetar

You Who Teach

can end this plague of coin and sweaty
palms, you who teach the afternoon

prism of rain, you who can identify
and bless the punished earth.

And now rhododendrons explode
color against cool and hesitant green

outside your creaking door, and red
oaks shiver back to life, clusters of peony

jab their way into these rivers of sun.
Do you who teach grasp in your burned old

hands a way to read across the gaps of time?
I would leave now, if I could, knowing less

than you who teach spirals and arcs, who
weep, teaching fractals burned into sleeping flesh.

Street Clothes

In her eyes, a hundred crows, horizon blackened
with their wings. Around her the city has gone

quiet; even juddering jackhammers
are still. Crows crowd out little circles of sky,

then sound floods back. Cars rush up the avenue,
and everywhere the creak and screech of birds.

She is pinned to rippling windows, flung
into sidewalk rivulets, her body grown light

as mist. Around her, faces drift, water
in a wind-swept pond. Everything, she recalls,

is mostly space. All edges blur, joining the flow
of an endless parade. Holes appear in the afternoon,

some fabric rent or ripped away, the magician,
now in street clothes, grinning among his machines.

At the Barricades

Tonight police roam
everywhere.

Streets are cordoned off.
At the barricades

I explain,
point in the direction

of my home.
A delegation has arrived

from a country far
away in the blurry clouds.

Their wings are broken,
their beaks have torn holes

in the sky,
their black eyes

burn with the hunger
of a thousand days.

My radio chatters.
Now, back in my kitchen

I slice a tomato's red
meat, my hands run wet

with juice, sirens blare,
faces loom at my windowpane.

Footsteps pass the door,
its lintels daubed with rusty blood.

In the Studio of Last Goodbyes

He paints beneath what's hidden
in the hand's warm flesh

those delicate bones, how
they finger ripe apples in the last

rays of September
sun, how their whiteness

glares against subtle greens
and reds. His x-ray wisdom always

knows how hungry earth
waits long, but will surely be refreshed.

He paints the smile that will never
fade, the one that welcomes lovers and fools

and cheers the dancer as she nears
her final cabriole. It's the grin that will sing

to the girl chanting jump rope games
and trumpet aged heroes back to the body of dreams.

In the Place Where Faces Melt

A woman kneels in the rain beside seven children
one holds a rainbow, one a dove
the woman's face streams, raindrops cling to the children's hair
a boy holds a disc of gold
a girl holds a silver flute to her mouth's little o
it is impossible to see fingers through mist
and mud, but the woman's hand seems to touch a girl's cheek
grips her slight shoulder as if to keep her from fading in the dim light
one child laughs, one beats a drum
they are gathered in the place where faces melt
where years meet, compressed into space infinitely small
where the man and his son are the same age
where a grandchild turns five and meets her vivid father
hanging upside down from the climbing bars
where a woman kneels in the rain, not minding her muddy knees
where her daughter's hair is a crown of rain
where the gifts she gives pass from hand to hand
where the land floods and floods, where waters recede
where boats come to rest, and where, at last, all tunnels end.

Karen Alkalay-Gut

Flamingos

I know flamingos
I know flamingos
From a flowered bathrobe
My friend's mother wore
in the fifties while she waved
Her cigarette holder
And a trail of smoke followed her hand

I know flamingos

I know flamingos
From art nouveau etchings
A pair of them in profile
Framing a mirror
Making me feel like a lady
When I was just a little girl.
I know flamingos

I know flamingos
Fighting in a cloud of pink
Over nothing in particular
In the municipal zoo
Their beauty blurred
By the pettiness of their passion.
I know flamingos

Learning to walk

You need someone else around
when you're just learning to walk

It could be
just a friendly wall
if you're really brave

But a warm heart
and strong hands
guide your feet
to a stronger place

Loop

My roommate said I tried to escape
On my last night in the hospital.

I think I remember wandering the halls
Maybe also being led back to bed,

I am sure
that in the morning when I woke
The rails of my bed were locked.

But it could also be
My roommate
Hit her morphine button
Once too often

And my wonderful nocturnal freedom
was just a figment of her imagination.

My kindle

is always with me.

Like a drug
it eases my mind,

while I wait
for someone

who is late
and there is nothing
to look at.

It is entertainment,
an old undemanding friend.

But when I read a printed book
it is a conversation.

It's not just the heft,
smell of print, feel of a page.

I like to write in margins
as if I am a partner

participating in
the narration.

She has a knife

she has a knife
she is young, thin, small,
holding a knife
Her arm is raised
her Hijab
highlights her eyes
They fix on me
She is running
with a knife
She is a child
she wants to kill
Her arm is raised
the knife points at me
she has a knife
I have a gun

Touch the fear

first with the fingers of your bad hand
the one that was burned
before the pain

Then again
both hands clutching it
by its ever-changing neck

Yes. It is true
whatever you fear
can kill you

But you'll die
strong

Post Scriptum

Nessa O'Mahony

For the day that's in it:

Leap Year

Bonus every fourth,
evenings stretch
into a full day
of extra chances.
Ironic, then,
to learn the progenitor
was one for whom
another date
would prove terminal:
March's Ides
more than a match
for a day that dawns
in quatuor.
Immortality assured,
he would enjoy
a night off
calendar.
Cave quid vis.
Be careful
what you wish for.

Copyright Information

All selections are copyrighted by their respective authors.

Any reproduction of these poems, without the express written permission of the authors, is prohibited.

YGDASIL: A Journal of the Poetic Arts - Copyright (c) 1993 - 2016 by Klaus J. Gerken.

The official version of this magazine is available on Ygdrasil's World-Wide Web site
<http://users.synapse.net/kgerken>. No other version shall be deemed "authorized" unless downloaded
from there or The Library and Archives Canada at
<http://epe.lacbac.gc.ca/100/201/300/ygdrasil/index.html> .

Distribution is allowed and encouraged as long as the issue is unchanged.

Note that simultaneous submissions will not be accepted. Please allow at least 90 days for a reply.