



MIPO *Oesias*

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CONTRIBUTORS

Shorts

David Olimpio
Melissa McEwen

Poems

Ron Androla
David Krump
Fred Longworth
J.A. Tyler
Laura Sheahan
Marie-Elizabeth Mali
Lara S. Williams
Sam Rasnake
Sarah Sarai
Samuel Peralta
Luc Simonic
John R. Cornwall
J. Michael Wahlgren
Sheila Murphy
J.P. Dancing Bear
Michael J. Martin
Jess Burnquist
Michael Milburn
Ron Campbell
Chris Pexa
Barbra Nightingale
Ken Taylor
Diana Adams
Adam Field
Laura McCullough

Ron Androla

What Are You

What are you doing?

I'm rolling a captured marble
Of night wind inside my vessel-ed
Hands. What are YOU doing?

Listening to the edges of echoes
With slit wrists as eardrums.
What are you doing now?

To allow my body to blossom
Requires absolute blindness &
The death of precognition. So

I pray like anyone else desperate
Prays without teeth with
Poems. What are YOU doing now?

Wearing fine nicotine lace, my skin
Pores bubble tarry amber pools.
My golden fog hair levitates over

October, over weird moons of the Moon
As it arcs across the Southern Sky
& backyards of defeated, slaughtered neighbors.

What am I doing? Swimming
Against a wave of skulls toward
An endless skull horizon. Pork-chops

Are nailed around my jaw. Glasses
Made of ham.
I am lighting a wooden match

With my throat.

Ron Androla

The Eyes In The Trees

To distinguish wood from bone a frightening spider
Laces echoes with listening. Jaw, a chunk of baked
Clay, teeth like a rain of stones, her hinge

Rust sanity. Sun dust, skin cells, plaster atoms, visual
Memories of sand, immersed with the last years of
Miles Davis. Her eyes slide into my eyes, elastic

Gamma. Beneath my skin cloth her ghosts
Swim with breakable mermaid skeletons.
Cars are painful, wailing walruses in gray light.

Necessity browns the crust, & the trees. Her
Holy stare from hellish, spiritual
Complications occurs after the brightest fire.

Ron Androla is the author of many out-of-print books & books few read. He lives with his wife, Ann, in Erie, Pennsylvania. His website is pressurepress.ning.com where all sorts of strange, odd things occur deep underground.

Account 74: FAQ

David Krump

What should I do if I catch a tagged fish?

Slit its abdomen and notify your nearest God.

How can I be certain I'm not something's pet?

The best answer to this question is a question.

How do you survive?

One stone. Five yeses.

If the elephant raises its trunk, does it mean my loved one has died?

Only if you view the moon before the sun has parted the western pines.

Are all forms of payment accepted?

All of them, save sacrifice. No exceptions.

Can we expect rainbows and dried bones?

Dry dry. Bones bones.

The girl, you know, with the big ones...

Is this a question?

Dies horribly?

Occasionally.

And what about a child?

Your husband will greet you with tears.

Go on.

With geraniums he's stolen.

He steals?

Geraniums, sometimes. 1, 2, 3.

Daughter of the Middle Border?

You're new aren't you?

Like the rose that died inside the bud.

Too many ants?

Too many sad falls.

Can you tell me a sad story?

Yes.

It changes?

Nothing.

Would you rather my river flows backward until all minnows die?

Until all minnows died.

Are you a minnow?

Who's asking?

Can I choose more than one flower?

Your knees are too dark. The sun. All day.

Unless clouds?

One can't forget clouds.

David Krump

Account 17

If it is morning, it's morning
and the idiot should have woken me.

A triumph, a book and one crayon.
Just one crayon, one waterglass drawn

when my father died, I said yes
it'll get worse. Engine parts

and accoutrements toward
bad boxes. Heartache. Bearings.

Morning number nine and the damned
fish keeps crying, overflows

forest stump, bracken bees, bugs.
You know rollerskating girls?

Please tell me you know and go
off as weeping groomsman

holstering clean revolvers.
Something's done.

Krump's work appears in Colorado Review, OCHO, Poetry, and Poetry Review. He's been awarded the Ruth Lilly Fellowship, the Lorine Niedecker Award, the Poetry Foundation/Newberry Library Fellowship in American Poetry, and the Dorothy Sargent Rosenberg Prize. He also writes plays. One of these plays sold out its run and was filmed by Wisconsin Public Television. He's working on a few projects with deadlines and serious people. He's a poetry editor for Poets/Artists.

David Olimpio

Counting Weights

The guy I want to become is a guy I've never met, but I see him at the gym almost every day. He's in his mid to late sixties. He carries a newspaper with him while he works out and he pauses between sets on the weight machines to read from it. He's short and built like a wrestler—in pretty great shape for his years—and he walks kind of hunched, like he's walking into a very strong wind. He always wears a baseball cap and his skin suggests he works outside. He's got hair in places he shouldn't. And no hair in places he should. But his thick white mustache fucking belongs right where it is.

Aside from the way he looks, everything else I know about him is a product of my imagination: He's smart, but he doesn't talk unless he has something to say. His humor is understated, like his strength. He loves the people in his life to the point that it hurts.

Outside the gym, we are strangers. Except for that one time when we found ourselves standing next to each other in line at the Shop Rite. He was buying a frozen dinner. I probably was buying ingredients to make a smoothie. Or getting a fresh bag of rawhides for Honey. We were both still in our gym clothes. Familiar looking people outside the normal setting. There was this brief moment of recognition on our faces. Like, Hey I know you. We nodded at one another. In my nod, I said something like, *I think I am like you*. He said, *Be careful what you wish for*.

I don't need to know him. I'm pretty sure I don't want to. The way he is in my head is the way I want him to stay. He is alone, but not lonely. He understands that his life is about performance and playing the role of the

person he wants to be. And he can become it by living each day like he believes it. Not believing it is not believing anything. And not believing anything is dying. And he came close to that once, and he's never going to do that again.

And I think he probably comes to the gym because he needs to get out of his head. In his life, there are these days he can't escape. Some of them are good. They are so good they make his heart burst. And some of them are bad. They are so bad—they make his heart burst. But none of them are forgettable. And remembering them is what makes his life good. And remembering them is what makes his life unbearable. And so he comes here, day after day, and he reads the paper, and he lifts these weights, and he walks against a strong wind, and he fights his mortality. Because he still can. And if he believes in anything, he believes in the pain, because it makes him feel alive. And he wonders how many more of these days there will be. How many more weights he'll find himself under. How many more papers he'll bring with him.

I spoke to you about this the other night. And you said you liked my weight on you, even as you pushed against it. My hand, hard set against your cheek. Fingers touching your hair, wet with sweat. My thumb penetrating your lips. Your head back, your mouth opened to me. I said, *I am like you*. You said, *Be careful what you wish for*.

David Olimpio grew up in Texas but currently lives and writes in Northern New Jersey. He believes that we create ourselves through the stories we tell, and that is what he aims to do every day. Usually, you can find him driving his pick-up around the Garden State with his dog in the passenger seat.

Fred Longworth

Modifiers

I said it was a bear.
She said it was a big brown bear.

I said it looked hungry.
She said it looked very very hungry.

I said it was bounding toward us.
She said it was bounding toward us single-mindedly
and voraciously at a alarming speed.

I said, "Outa here!" I tore off my backpack
and shimmied up a tree.
Then I shouted, "Omigod! Look out!"

She said, "I definitely believe that urgently fleeing
this vulnerable stretch of verdant sylvan hiking trail
would assuredly afford me a propitious margin of —."

A lifetime San Diego resident, Fred Longworth restores vintage audio components for a living. His poems and micro fiction have appeared in numerous print journals, including Caesura, California Quarterly, The Pacific Review, Pearl, Pudding Magazine, Rattapallax, and Spillway. Online publications include kaleidowhirl, Melic Review, miller's pond, Stirring, Strong Verse, and Verdad.

J. A. Tyler

Variations of a Brother War

(Controlling Triptych)

Trenching

Who controls the line controls the side. That is what a man next to Miller says: Who controls the line controls the side. Miller asks What line? and the man responds by putting his heel in the dirt and drawing one between himself and Miller. That line he says, Or one like it. And Miller is not sure if this is a line he should cross, or not cross, or if by being where he is, on this side, he is already in control. Miller does not feel in control. Miller feels the opposite of control. Miller feels openly lost.

Supersession

Who controls the bullets controls the war a man says to Gideon. Who controls the bullets controls the war and then he spits into the dirt and a circle goes from dirt to mud. Gideon stretches his arms. Gideon reaches. Gideon yawns. There are always bullets Gideon says, and then there is a gap between him and the man where a forest grows. A river running side to side. There is a lake the size of a mouth. There is a war and Gideon understands what it means, and that there is no logic when the birds have all gone.

Touch or Tag

Who controls the game when it is over their mother used to say. She said it from the porch. She said it down the valley. She said it up the hill when Gideon and Miller had gone to pluck out the sun. She said it to them at night, when their eyes were closed, when all they were looking at was pretend stars leftover from an imagined sun, the going down of all that is. Who controls the game when it is over she would say, and then there was the sound of rifles firing. And then there was quiet.

J. A. Tyler is the author of ten books including the recently released INCONCEIVABLE WILSON (Scrambler Books, 2009) and the forthcoming A MAN OF GLASS & ALL THE WAYS WE HAVE FAILED (Fugue State Press, 2011). He is also founding editor of Mud Luscious Press. For more, visit: www.mudlusciouspress.com.

Laura Sheahen

The Oracle at Delphi

mostly I make stuff up
sometimes I babble just for fun
what I tell kings and senators
I base on eenie meenie

I breathe the fumes
and smile drunkenly

when kids come
the teens in love
I try to guess
I try to give them hope

I can't see earthquakes
I didn't know who Oedipus would marry
if that horse will work at Troy
it's news to me

but at night when the cave air clears
I press my ear to wet rock
and I hear it

deep water under the earth
where the gods chatter

they don't know anything either
and they sure don't care

but sometimes I know
when the old widows come
expectant mothers
boys heading off to war

yeah I know

the girls Zeus will want
the girls no one will want
it doesn't take a genius

I'm sick of the truth
and sick of my stories
sick of the gods
and sifting their gossip

they can't see the future
but they see the present
and do nothing

I am glad I hear deeper than them
a low gurgle umbilical

the next gods
the ones who will kill them

Laura Sheahen's poems have been published in the Dark Horse, In Posse Review, the Manhattan Review, Orbis, and other literary magazines. She lives in Cambodia and works in humanitarian aid.

Marie-Elizabeth Mali

Rapacious

You wanted to be a good wife,
so you tried to kill me when you wed,

locked me in the basement—no food,
water, light—because you didn't want

to scare him. But I love men
who are not mine, catch their glances

and claim them. When I dance
through your body, they grind against me

and I grind back. To you, I am forest fire
and dry wood, twister, the tidal wave

that makes villagers scramble up trees.
You fear me, your body's mortar

crumbling in the hollow places.
But you miss the point. I worship

lingam as fulcrum of the universe.
Your marriage means nothing to me.

Only God meets this hunger. You want
to know God through your husband?

Unchain me, let me climb the stairs
and live in your house.

Marie-Elizabeth Mali is the author of Steady, My Gaze (Tebot Bach), forthcoming in February, 2011. She is a co-curator of louderARTS: the Reading Series and Page Meets Stage, both in New York City. For more information please visit www.memali.com.

Lara S. Williams

Blue Wheat Night

Our wheat trickles from their stems in artful funnels,
collected in baskets hole-stuffed with wet paper. We
grind them to dust by the force of arm and stone
and cream their ashes in water, flour and salty goat's
butter. The oven, cleaned with lemon juice, fires
by hot willow twig deaths and chunks of poplar
smacked free from a copse leaning near a southern
perimeter. We dip our fingers in walnut hummus,
waiting for the stiff smell of heat to transform into
weightless breaded baking. At sunset the loaves are
cooled, cut and coated in sticky mulberry jam;
sometimes honey if the bees have survived winter's
wooing. Under a blue moon we pass pieces around
a circle, drink fingers of peat scotch and brush each
crumb into ant hill mounds, destined for the quick
peck of chickens hungry for our slow grown dough.

Lara S. Williams has been published in Voiceworks, Cordite, Antipodes, Islet, AustralianReader, Snakeskin, Blue Crow, Writer's Eye, Rose and Thorn and page seventeen and has work appearing in Magma, Verity La, Island, Red River Review, Agenda and Neon. After creating the blog The Great Affairs she regularly self-publishes travel articles and is currently the copy editor of Open Radio North Korea in Seoul. She completed her double degree in literature and creative writing at Wollongong and Sheffield Universities and is undertaking her masters at Edinburgh in 2011.

Sam Rasnake

Third Draft, Suicide Note, Found in a Book

– Yukio Mishima to Yukio Mishima, November 1970

Your life is craft, a terrible shadow of words in the knot of sword vs. pen, scratched in blood for all the days turned years of child to man to art – as it was intended, as its truth and perfect purpose drift the hard silence of an empty, miserable world and the modern guise you've learned to hate

Truth always hides in art, you say, in a stroke of the pen, long sweep of the brush, the plucked string, in sad laughter of grief, and the Noh, Kabuki, St. Sebastian, all rites of love and death under a bleeding sun, the sky as cold as the deepest winter in Japan –

The horses have fled, the pavilion, burned, and the woman of pain with her dark razor watches over your sleep, your last day, last moment, last samurai

The quiet, steady motion of the hand, such beauty beyond words, is your art

Sam Rasnake's work has appeared recently in FRiGG, OCHO, BLIP, Shampoo, Poets / Artists, Six Sentences, Naugatuck River Review, Dogzplot, Ramshackle Review, A-Minor Magazine, and BluePrintReview, as well as the anthologies Best of the Web 2009 (Dzanc Books) and BOXCAR Poetry Review Anthology 2. His most recent collections are Lessons in Morphology (GOSS183) and Inside a Broken Clock (Finishing Line Press). Rasnake edits Blue Fifth Review, an online journal of poetry, flash, and art.

Sarah Sarai

A Scarlet Moss

It was weird. Mom disapproved
and Pop started shaking
like he'd seen a fluffy pooch.
He has his fears.
I stripped.
So what if I'm blubbery.
I want to roll on whorish moss.
I could wake up or you could
set fire to the marriage counselor.
Love so slippery needs handles.
Wedding planners are a food group.
So is roast beef.
The horseradish of a different color is pink.
Perhaps you're hip: Work sucks.
That one gets folk fired.
Her husband's mean.
I hope a scarlet moss does cover the land.
All I need is
rub its science fiction with bare feet.
The human soul has been invaded.
Rub it and heal.

Sarah Sarai's poems are forthcoming in Gargoyle, Boston Review and others. Her poetry collection, The Future Is Happy, was released in 2009 by BlazeVOX [books]. She also writes fiction (Storyglossia, South Dakota Review, ragazine and others) and comments on poetry, fiction, the sublime and more at my3000lovingarms.blogspot.com.

Samuel Peralta

The first joyful mystery is the Annunciation

As she prayed in the waiting room, she felt
Vertigo wash over her. Her doctor
Entered, beckoned her into his office.

Gently, said they'd confirmed the hCG
Results she'd gotten two days before, then
Asked how she was feeling, what she would do.

Throwing up every morning on her mom's
Immaculate bathroom floor, what'd he think?
And then, when she was about to tell him -

*myrrh and starlight, birth
apparition, psalm and verse,
revealed elation:
inside deep a new life stirred,
advent, annunciation*

Paused. Suddenly, not knowing why, she felt
Luminous, joyful, sorrowful, glorious,
Everything at once; yet certain that, while

Nothing would be the same, she would welcome
All to come, arms open, with virgin grace.

Samuel Peralta has won awards for his poetry worldwide, including a Palanca Award for his collection Pacific, and recognition from the BBC, the UK Poetry Society, and the League of Canadian Poets. At the forefront of the new media literary renaissance, he accepted an Innovative Technology Achievement Award from the Digital Literature Institute for ebook software development. As @semaphore he placed #1 worldwide in the Shorty Awards voting for the Best Poetry on Twitter. His poems have appeared in Existere, OCHO, Seedpod, Undercurrents, and other journals and anthologies. His poetry blog can be found at www.samuelperalta.com.

Luc Simonic

her mother has your key

like at the end of the movie -
then morning where locked
out of your own home you
smoke wondering
how the rainbow silk chiffon became
thick navy cotton canvas without
the weaver's or the loom's mere blink -
even now it's hard to tell where one ends
and the other begins.

like at the end of the movie a false
sense of more than a hero's
awareness - where breakfast
got missed over shear
circumstance again -
feed the dogs
the sum of a dark night.

unknown how this will add up
to the cleaning of skunk chuck
from the canine's neck: hydrogen
peroxide mixed with baking soda
and liquid dish soap (to cut the grease) -
remove her collar (you will) in the garage.
lay it then (you will) in the horse trough
and leave it there...
shut the automatic door
by depressing the button.

or (like body-art) how two way mirrors
get used by cops
and voyeurs and long

archaic mensa words reside alone
in sacramental blogs
only ten people read.

only ten people. next thing
you know it will be nine.
after that, eight.

a two year old counting
backwards is ahead of the curve,
but will freeze completely
hung up on simple words like
sun, moon, stars,
and auntie.

it's winter (thank goodness since skunk is ranker
in heat) and this fact
is halfway evident at seven
PM in the garage, at four on the
porch, at noon walking alone
transformed by the actions of any random
gaggle - like at the end of the movie
when you find yourself longing to do it all
but are stuck outside because
there is nowhere else you need to be.

you eat grass together
and when it's your turn to stick
your neck up on patrol,
the grass waits.

Luc Simonic is on an indefinite sabbatical from poetry – but it not by fast rule of law. He loves God, Himself, His family, and other people – in that order. He often asks himself, “How can I love anyone else if I don’t first love myself”.

John R. Cornwall

It Would Be Small

should death transcend
tonight
it would
be part
only of one
small shadow
of lesser note
than one white
stretch of dancing
light
the moon casts
on snow.

death would be small
tonight,
a lesser
thing
than one dark
twig which
lets fall
its pattern
on the dazzling
field
below,

contented,
accepted,
valuable
as any
closure.

John R Cornwall hails from the North West of England, watching the moors change when dog-walking, and quite remarkable they are, too. Purple heather, wild garlic, the scene and sight of butterflies, may-flies in summer, the odd dragon-fly

J. Michael Wahlgren

Aubade: Lake Seneca

While weeds reach out blindly
As a coat, I renovate the sun's lengthy
Hand: slant my eyes so as to make my way

toward wordings that are out of date, per se.
I have strummed the lake's plot where
characters bathe in glances without faces

Any paused moment like something out
of a storybook. There's a little hook a weight
Down from the bridge, row house after row

House, church for few. You made a confession
In the waters to be born again. Old maps in ex-
change for blueprints of a useful nature waded, too.

J. Michael Wahlgren is author of Valency (BlazeVox, 2010) & Silent Actor (Bewrite, 2008). He is publisher for Gold Wake Press.

Sheila Murphy

(UN)YIELDING

He decides to be my friend and takes me by the arm onto his continent,
where I, a wholly-owned subsidiary, remain lost for the duration.

When is Moses scheduled to return,
with an IPAD full of policies?

Our friendship is epoxied so onlookers have no role.
The only inference to be drawn is yarded into an end zone.

I dramatize my solitude. He speaks volumes and with constancy.
I listen to my own mistakes turn colors for which there is no paint.

He fracts into a diatribal innocence to ensure
that I unlearn my name as well as I have taken on his own.

Sheila E. Murphy's most recent poetry book is Toccatas in the Key of D, released in August 2010 by Blue Lion Books. She lives in Phoenix.

J.P. Dancing Bear

Song of the Brass Golem

First rain and I feel the rust
within my metal skin—

born to malformations
all those places on my body
where cooling cracked

and layers upon layers
of my flesh oddly fell
upon the bone.

I hear the cruel children
and their songs behind me
as I shuffle-step the hard walk

home. And though taunted
I have no room for hate
within the chambers

of my envious heart.
I slide the locks, draw
the curtains of the compartment

I call *home*, after another tedious
day as a doorstep.
Everyone has a purpose

and a place, So the *they* say.
And *someone for everyone*,

is often said too. Though

I cannot imagine that
poor other soul, trapped
in her amalgam body.

A small prayer over candles
and my green dust breath
for no one else.

At night my father phones
with his pride and
commanding encouragements.

I eat brass tacks for dinner,
nodding before the TV drone
and dream of becoming an idol,

young upon the screen—stage
lights gleaming
from my polished skin.

Faces of adoration, hands
reaching to touch
this life redeemed.

And each night in the fantasy
panel glow, I fashion
my mouth to sing.

J. P. Dancing Bear is the author ten collections of poetry, most recently, Family of Marsupial Centaurs (Iris Press, 2010) and Inner Cities of Gulls (2010, Salmon Poetry). His poems have been published in Mississippi Review, Third Coast, Natural Bridge, Shenandoah, New Orleans Review, Verse Daily and many other publications. He is editor for the American Poetry Journal and Dream Horse Press. Bear also hosts the weekly hour-long poetry show, Out of Our Minds, on public station, KKUP.

Michael J. Martin



A mother can be a mother even if biting her daughter's hand clean through.
Even if cracking her skull with an Emeril.
Diamonds in your eyes, the birds no longer sing
they argue. This glass sink of ours is filled with spare bits of faith.
Her daughter loves me for other reasons—

she's wearing a very short dress. I call her shirt Gemini: House of the Twins,
and do not apologize. Yesterday morning she lollipopped her finger
said I want to love the plug then disappeared. Alloy'd.
We heard her voice wondering how Guevara became
an aesthetic. Everything important eventually is a t shirt
or some bracelet you wear, we tried telling her
but the signal dropped

Michael James Martin is a low budget crime fighter. He feels poems in his body though the doctor says it is likely just heartburn. Second opinion pending. Social justice and the unveiling of unsavory government mechanisms is important to him. His poetry is, you know, around.

Jess Burnquist

Socratic Method with Pearls on a Cliff

Where exactly is daylight being saved,
and why Hektor's bones like beads
After the funeral pyre leading us to
Wonder what can really be preserved.

Animals.

I don't know why the dying ground squirrel
Reminds me of you as its legs tremble. Lately
I love you is quivering as apology. Begin backwards
With an answer other than yes.
Do you feel ledge-like when you think in those terms?
Words like tether, rough patch...

There is an unintentional rescue being performed
And I will ask you now to address which part
I fulfill because I am immediately
Athena and Aphrodite without direction—
Inarticulate war, this broken arrow. Or maybe
I am just succumbing to an ancient ceremony
One that ends in thick ash, bones on a string.

Jess Burnquist earned her M.F.A. in Creative Writing from Arizona State University. Her work has been featured in Poets & Artists (O&S), Persona, Natural Bridge, Clackamas Review, and Locuspoint. She is a recipient of the Sylvan Silver Apple Award for teaching and the Joan Frazer Memorial Award in the Arts. Currently, Jess teaches English at Combs High School in San Tan Valley, Arizona. She resides with her family in the east valley of Metropolitan Phoenix.

Michael Milburn

Unleashed

Inspecting the spot on the trail
where your dog treed a man
she wanted only to befriend,
I thought it could have

been me up in that tree.
Lately, I can't tell whether
you just want to be friends,
and I don't ask.

Earlier, at a stream running fast
with snowmelt, your dog swam
while mine raced along the bank,
tangling me in the leash.

On the way back to the car
you told me about the man.
Standing beneath the tree
I understood the feeling

of not knowing how scared to be--
the dog prancing below,
the woman coming into view,
whistling and calling.

Michael Milburn teaches high school English at the Foote School in New Haven, CT, and lives in Hamden, CT. He writes poems and essays, and has published most recently in Ploughshares, New England Review, and Poetry East. His essay "Death Wish" was named a Notable Essay in Best American Essays 2010.

Melissa McEwen

The Train Dream

The train doesn't stop in Blumefield. It stops in WyndSOR and Heartford, but not in Blumefield. From Heartford it goes straight into WyndSOR and Rutha May doesn't understand why it just can't stop in Blumefield.

When she is done with washing the dishes she sits by the window in the kitchen and listens out for the sound of the train as it makes its way into WyndSOR from Heartford. Rutha May often imagines that the train runs right behind her house. She has detailed dreams at night about the conductor and in the dream she arranges with him to stop his train in the back of her house, even though there are no tracks. She would be on the back porch, luggage and little Sarah at her feet, waiting to get on that train after the cooking, cleaning and washing were done. She wouldn't come back either. Even though she would miss all her children –Jamesetta and Jimmy and Junior and Jim; she'd even miss the big old dog Buster that could die any day now.

She used to dream of going on the train alone and leaving little Sarah behind, too, with the rest of them, but she always feels sad on the train, in her dream, without her. Little Sarah is the youngest and wouldn't be able to fend for herself. Jamesetta is young, but grown, and she knows how to fight. Besides little Sarah is the one she loves the best. She is the one James let her name only because she promised to make him sweet potato pie every Sunday for a month if he let her name her. Little Sarah looks more like her, too. The others look like James. They have his big head, his big mouth, his loud voice, and his heavy feet.

Whenever Rutha May is in the kitchen, sitting on the cold radiator and dreaming, and the kids are off playing in the backyard, and it's a little after five, James pulls up in the driveway and slams the car door when he gets out. He isn't angry; that is just his way. The loud bang of the door shakes Rutha May out of her dream and she goes to the oven to fix his plate.

Rutha May eats standing up. The stove is her table. It isn't because there is no room at the table to sit; it's because she hates watching James eat. She is glad that he eats with his wide back towards her; she doesn't have to see his face when he scarfs down his food and chugs his Coke. She can still hear him, though, and the way he smacks on his food makes her skin crawl. She wonders if other men eat like that. She is sure that they don't. She is certain that other men have more class than James.

Melissa McEwen: *The Train Dream*

She sees men in the grocery store that look clean and washed in their fresh clothes. She wonders why her husband doesn't want to look good and smell good. James wears stretched out tee shirts with holes under the arm and around the neck. He owns more than five sea green tee shirts and Rutha May can't stand it. She even buys him decent looking shirts from The Salvation Army, but he never wears them.

James never appears on the train with her in her dream. He would ruin it with his loud voice and his musty, shapeless tee shirt, his dusty unzipped jeans and his worn-out shoes. He is so sloppy and Jimmy, Junior, Jim and Jamesetta are taking after him.

Every time Rutha May tells them to take a bath, they protest and James always says, "They are boys. They don't need to bathe every day."

And Rutha May complains, "They haven't bathed in weeks!"

"They're boys," James shouts.

"Not Jamesetta...she's no boy, but she might as well be..."

"They're kids," James says.

And Rutha May would go upstairs to run the water for little Sarah. She is too young to protest. She looks washed and shiny like an apple after her bath and Rutha May would hug and smell her forever if she could, but there is cooking to be done and cleaning, too.

If Rutha May could walk to Hartford or WyndSOR, she would, but it's too far. She would drive, but she doesn't have her license or her own car. She would take the cab, but she never has enough money. She would ask someone to take her, but she hates begging for rides. She would take the bus, but how would she hold the luggage and little Sarah, too? If only the train stopped in Blumefield –right behind her house.

Melissa McEwen, born in Hartford, Connecticut, is the poetry editor for Poets/Artists, have has had poems and short stories published in various anthologies, literary magazines, and journals (online and in print). In 2008 and 2010, two of her poems have been nominated for the Pushcart Prize. Her chapbook Saturday Pie was published in 2010 by Goss183.

Ron Campbell

The Emblem

She sewed her emblem on my shirt
(while I was wearing it)
And it hurt.

She used a single strand of her hair for thread.

(I had seen her use the same strand as a leash for a dragonfly.)

The needle was
(coincidentally)
As sharp as a needle.

She sewed inexpertly.
Long thimbleless fingers pushing steel
Through the emblem
And the shirt
And my skin
And out of my skin
And through the shirt
And through the emblem
Over and over.

I winced at all the u-turns.

When she was done she cinched it with a hard tug.
She had to lean close to cut the thread with her teeth.

(Her hair smelled like wheat and dusk.)

And I wore that shirt.
And time passed.

(On the emblem was stitched her name in gas station
cursive. Did I tell you?)

And the sun and the wind and the rain
Turned that shirt into tatters.
A ragged flag of an unknown country.

But the emblem remained, a faded reminder.

Sewn to my chest.

And that was the way it was.

Until eventually
After the passing of a long heave of starless nights
And an effervescence of summer evenings
And a slumbry of afternoons
And a blearyness of dawns
And after the crossing of many rusting bridges
And way too many elevator rides
And silent taxis
And fluorescent places
The emblem wasn't there anymore.

(It had fallen away and I hadn't noticed it.)

But you can still see its oval outline
In the white tracery of scar tissue exactly where

She sewed her emblem on my shirt
(while I was wearing it)
And it hurt.

Ron Campbell

Recipe

Love.

Take 1 part dragonfly juice.
1 part evaporated ice,
1 wisp of smoke
And add a heaping spoonful of lateral gravity.

Combine 1 part delighter fluid,
1 part joy venom
And some complicated syrup.

Add 3 awkward glances,
2 catcalls
And 1 hubba-hubba.

Add a twist of fate,
A float of hope,
And 1 drop of flopsweat.

Stir until dizzy.

Rim glass with fingernail clippings or the crushed lenses of a pair of Victorian opera glasses.
Garnish with a little umbrella of parchment upon which is written a suicide note or a sonnet.
Pour into a mug of burnished moonstone or a hypodermic.
Best served in an inny belly button.

Ron Campbell is a poet, playwright and artist born in Santa Monica, California and based in San Francisco. He received the Fox Fellowship for Distinguished Achievement in 2009 and is the author of the titles of two unwritten collections of poetry The Detourist and In Corrigible. Two of his poems, Tin Cup and Speak Now were published in 2010 in Psychic Meatloaf Contemporary Poetry Journal. Ron is a performer of several one man shows including R. Buckminster Fuller, The History (and Mystery) of the Universe, The Thousandth Night and The Boneman of Benares. He currently makes his living with Cirque du Soleil as the lead clown in Kooza. His poems, plays and artworks may be viewed at Scrutinies and Tangentia (roncampbell.posterous.com) His website is www.SoarFeat.org

Chris Pexa

There will be no translation

Big-bellied Girl sat down on her bed. She could feel the cold through her third sock and the cold emanating from the log cabin walls and the tiny, magic circle the wood stove made was a slightly bigger version of her own belly, the child inside her. She would name her baby Donald, but only after she had placed it in the earth, like a fairy tale bean, burned a plot of ground that was too frozen to dig, but opened to the white men in overalls who had arrived from across the lake and spent all day with her, saying nothing as she lay in bed, smoking cigarettes, all their smoke curling toward the blood still black on the floorboards, saying nothing (in what language?) about the little mouth stopped with silence. Much later, she would dream of chasing down his cry, stumbling through a huge house full of smells of cedar and antiseptic, she would become lightheaded, like a balloon hovering above a heating vent, and set off herself, drifting like river ice.

Chris Pexa's poems have appeared in Hayden's Ferry Review, Crab Orchard Review, Juked, and other journals. He is pursuing a Ph.D. in English Literature at Vanderbilt University and lives in Nashville with his wife, Melissa, and daughter, Wren.

Barbra Nightingale

Probabilities

Think about change.
Think random. Think equation.
Think event and reinvention.
Do a balancing act, separated
by a fine line of rationality.
Think analogy, think this is to this
as sanity is to nuts.
Salted or not only tips the fulcrum
briefly, not a permanent effect.
Stack on the scale things to be weighed:
decisions whose cost is dear.
Words once light, now driven underground.
An argument no one is having.
What is the likelihood, truly
that I'll be where I am
the same time you're where you are,
listening to the wind going grey
all things being equal?

Barbra Nightingale's latest book, Two Voices, One Past, was a runner up in the Yellow Jacket Press chapbook contest and was published in 2010. Previous books include: Geometry of Dreams (2009), Singing in the Key of L (1999) The Ex-Files (2009), and several other chapbooks. She had a poem on Narrative Magazine's Poem of the Week, June, 2010, and has had over 200 poems appearing in journals and anthologies. She teaches English, literature, Poetry, and leadership at Broward College where she was awarded the Sun-Sentinel Endowed Teaching Chair, and a Professor of the Year award, both in 2010.

Ken Taylor

affair with the poetry editor

she sips her chamomile tea,
lifts my poems off the stack
to her face – takes in their essence.
she taps the meters on her thigh.
eyes them sideways –
wants my poems to please her.
she vets them first with her skin,
the drift of her neck,
the thirsty map of her back.
she lets my poems raise her skirt,
flirt with the hairline of her lap.
she weighs them facing
the memory of her favorites,
the history of excellence.
she crumples them to see if they
brace against her pressure,
tenderly smooths them to see
if new texture renders extra play.
she sets them down and goes to sleep
but keeps the images for her dreams.
she gives them hope with her delay.
in the morning she turns them
into kindling – the edges catch quickly –
burn the wedges of wood in the stove.
then air and momentum
poke the small conflagration
so that oak smoke and poem smoke
extend in skeins up the chimney pipe –
bound for their sources.
the similes and metaphors
unravel in the night sky –
the vapor rolls to a single
word before disappearing: no.

Ken Taylor lives and writes in North Carolina. His poetry has appeared in Chattahoochee Review, The Stony Thursday Book, The Fish Anthology, elimae and is forthcoming in The New Guard. He was a runner up to the 2010 Fish Publishing Poetry Prize.

Diana Adams

Half-full

Today ends, colour
without design

no walking no coffee
no bacon no piano

dear tongue, you might
find a star in the pantry,

pigeons do their night
commute, their one concept

rests between
boredom and skill

I profit from impeccable
dress, memory

and a mirror. The phone rings
I pretend I'm in the right place.

Diana Adams is an Alberta based writer with work published in a variety of journals including Boston Review, Drunken Boat, Fogged Clarity, Oranges & Sardines, The Laurel Review, Ekleksogaphia, MiPOesias, Shampoo. Two e-chaps (Bath Days, Wolf Fox Egg Moon) were published by Menendez Publishing. Her third book of poetry Hello Ice will be soon published by BlazeVOX Books.

Adam Fieled

from **Mother Earth**
#2

Listen, now that I've got you alone I need
to break a few things to you. You think
this guy is going to make a responsible
father? Look how shiny these shoes are,
and you know why? I took the time to
have them shined. This guy has hands
that shake, eyes that dart, lips that curl,
and it's all because he can't take care of
himself. You think having two kids at
once is going to be glamorous? Do you
really have that much of a martyr complex?
Please, here's another Diet Coke, I know
this isn't fun for you, especially because you
have to cab it back to the subway. I'll pay.

#3

Look: the boy-child sleeps. Of course, he left
a cigarette in the ash-tray; sudden death's here.
I take his sleeping hands, place them on my
belly, just so he knows, at least somewhere in
the dense green fog of his existence, what's about
to happen. My breasts are watermelons, it's sick.
His hands are limp. I'm damp: I still want this man
(if he can be called a man, if that bald pate signifies).
To think, that all he's swallowed in this are lies.
Of course, tiny streaks of spit mar his pillow.
I bought them of course, and their blueness works.
He'll leave me lit too, and wanting a real father.
Yet, do I take the blame for this hideousness? Yes.
Two babes are sleeping while I get undressed.

Adam Fieled is a poet based in Philadelphia. His latest book is "Disturb the Universe: The Collected Essays of Adam Fieled." His poems and essays have appeared in Jacket, PennSound, Poetry Salzburg Review, and in the & Now Awards Anthology from Lake Forest College Press. A magna cum laude graduate of the University of Pennsylvania, he also has an MFA from New England College and an MA from Temple University, where he is completing his PhD.

Laura McCullough

Chorus

Luanne's bare shoulder inches from him seemed to vibrate under its skin, luminous and freckled at the same time, goose-bumped in the chill air or from emotion, probably both. If Diego was good, he knew, he would touch her, comfort her. What must be going on inside her body, he wondered? That body, the first one he'd known close up, the first female one, the secret small places he hadn't expected to like: her ears and under arms, behind her knees, the crease at the top of her thighs, the smell of her back, right between her shoulders, a musky, almost burnt odor, or the loamy, green scent of her sweaty temple and scalp. No one had told him anything about this; nothing he'd read or seen had prepared him for that. It had all been about the hole, that's even what a lot of guys had called it, and the need to get into it with fingers if nothing else, but then your wang for sure. And that had been everything everyone had ever said it would be, and he wanted it again as soon as they'd been done, but that wasn't what was so amazing. No, they'd hidden the real secret, or maybe it was that there were no words, no words men could share with each other, about the minutes after sex holding her against your ribs, feeling her nuzzle under your bicep by your still pounding chest, the feeling like when he played his contrabass, like the rhythm of something larger than himself suddenly coming into alignment, or like a hundred somethings – anything: trees, roads, rivers, voices – gathering and that chorus being a reflection of the universe.

Laura McCullough

Barricade

Luanne was as startled as if another trigger had been pulled, and in a way it had been, the contrabass blast a low vibration, the noise shooting from its bell with nowhere to go but out from the brick wall which acted against any diffusion, and Luanne was right there, her head below the bell with the school's colors and logo, the sound pounding the back of skull, and she doubled forward over herself, cradling her belly as terrified as if another shooter was shooting, and she gripped her gut because it hurt, this sound cutting through her, and she felt as if someone had just punched her in the belly, and she hugged this unimaginable baby, crossed her arms over the belly that didn't yet protrude. Oh god, she thought, the baby. She came up mad, and spun to Diego almost letting her fists cut loose to hit him. All she did was cuff him with her left hand across his arm, the one angled over his chest. "Jesus, Diego," she said and cocked her neck back, her pretty face screwed up. Diego focused. If nothing else, putting his mouth to the contra could do that for him; pull his mind together clean and simple. In front of him, he saw a swarm of students all looking at him, most of them facing out away from the school watching the cars still arriving, the press, more police, parents who managed to get through the barricade at the school entrance or who had parked somewhere along the roadways and walked through the woods. The students had all kept their bodies faced that way, toward the action, but had swiveled their heads and upper bodies to look. Almost everything had stopped for a moment, and a cop yelled across the sea of heads now, "That'll do, son. Put that thing down." And Diego averred, feeling instantly reduced and childish.

Laura McCullough has four collections of poems, PANIC, winner of the Kinereth Gensler Award and forthcoming from Alice James Books Jan. 011, Speech Acts, forthcoming from Black Lawrence Press in fall 010, WHAT MEN WANT (XOXOX Press), and THE DANCING BEAR. She has two chapbooks, WOMEN AND OTHER HOSTAGES, forthcoming from Amsterdam Press, and ELEPHANT ANGER, published online at Mudlark.



David Olimpio

Melissa McEwen

Ron Androla

David Krump

Fred Longworth

J.A.Tyler

Laura Sheahen

Marie-Elizabeth Mali

Lara S. Williams

Laura Sheahen

Sam Rasnake

Sarah Sarai

Samuel Peralta

Luc Simonie

John R. Cornwall

J. Michael Wahlgren

Sheila Murphy

J.P. Dancing Bear

Michael J. Martin

Jess Burnquist

Michael Milburn

Ron Campbell

Chris Pexa

Barbra Nightingale

Ken Taylor

Diana Adams

Adam Fieled

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