

ADANNA

LITERARY JOURNAL

Guest Editor
RAE GOUIRAND

Founder and Editor
CHRISTINE REDMAN-WALDEYER

Adanna accepts poetry, fiction, essays, and book reviews. Please send a proposal for reviews. All submissions are electronically accepted in one file, preferably a word document file with a cover letter and a three to four line bio.

Visit our website for further details:
www.adannajournal.blogspot.com

Adanna
P.O. Box 547
Manasquan, New Jersey 08736 USA

ISBN: 978-0-9836463-4-1

Credits

Cover Art: Lara Popovic
Cover Title: Illumination

Back Cover: Quyen Truong
Cover Title: Hope

Cover Design: David Crews

Artist Statement

My photographic work is a meditation on journeys, and the transformational impact of external passages on inner space. My search is for beauty in decay, disused buildings, and places of abandonment. 'Illumination' was taken on a seven hour walk through the dockyards of London.

—*Lara Popovic*
Cover, Illumination

Artist Statement

The eternal, endless dimensions of painting never cease to fascinate me. Using this medium, I delicately touch, drip, drag, splatter, and spray felicitous hues and pigments across flat surfaces to suggest the turbulent, tumultuous movement roiling in our lives. Engaging the prism of painterly traditions, I refine/redefine my personal history to reflect and learn.

As an immigrant, I find that art transcends language as a means of communication. Visual imagery can invoke questions, inculcate discussions, and thus expand our conception of social, economic and cultural realities.

While the Vietnamese culture roots me, I aim to understand what compels the waves of immigrants in America, my adopted home. Via art, my identity as a Vietnamese American woman flourishes. The visual medium enables me to find like-minded individuals. I share my experiences to encourage cross-cultural, multi-disciplinary dialogues.

—*Quyen Truong*
Back Cover, Hope

Note: The painting is about the "Bui Doi" - or the Amerasian children born in Vietnam after the war.

Adanna's Mission Statement

Adanna, a name of Nigerian origin, pronounced a-DAN-a, is defined as “her father’s daughter.” I chose to name this literary journal Adanna because women over the centuries have been defined by men in politics, through marriage, and, most importantly, by the men who fathered them. In college, I was inspired by women such as Anne Hutchinson who had the opportunity to study under her father. Today women are still bound by complex roles in society, often needing to wear more than one hat or sacrifice one role so another may flourish. While this journal is dedicated to women, it is not exclusive, and it welcomes our counterparts and their thoughts about women today. I only ask that your submissions reflect women’s issues or topics, celebrate womanhood, or shout out in passion. This special issue is dedicated to love in a contemporary world.

Christine Redman-Waldeyer, Founder

Introduction

Christine and I had just begun to discuss this "Women and War" special issue when the world learned of Adrienne Rich's passing last spring. Rich's argument that "war is an absolute failure of imagination" points, I think, not just to the recognition due creative work for its revolutionary potential, but also the vital distinction we need make between acts of revolution and acts of destruction. In honor of Rich's legacy as thinker and poet and human, we put out a call for work that considers the cost of all that which is not born from imagination, and the fact and life of the imagination.

Because: it is a fact. It is a reality. All inventions are. All generations are. We ask you, reader, to consider these works, and your own, and to commit to entering more revolutionary work into the world.

We'd like to offer special honors to Andy Wass and Deborah Paredez for their pieces, and to thank all our remarkable, brilliant contributors for offering their generous, generative acts here.

And Adrienne. For everything.

Rae Gouirand
Davis, California
31 December 2012

Contents

Introduction

Rae Gouirand 6

First Place Winner

Andy Wass, The War of Horse

Runner Up

Deborah Paredez, Memorial Day Ghazal

Contributors

Janet A. Baker	13
Judith Barrington	14
Eleanor Berry	17
June Blumenson	19
Kay Merkel Boruff	23
Jane Byers	26
Helen Marie Casey	30
Angie Chuang	31
Jan Clausen	36
Jane Ebihara	41
Lois Parker Edstrom	42
Nancy Gerber	44
Melinda Goodman	47
Laura Hamblin	53
Lois Marie Harrod	54
Penny Harter	56
Vicki Hudson	57
Janet R. Kirchheimer	61
Joan Kresich	62
Alessandra Lynch	63
Maura MacNeil	71
Farzana Marie	73
Robin Martin	77
Cynthia Neely	79

Tisha Nemeth-Loomis	82
Amanda Newell	85
Megan Obourn	86
CE O'Rourke	89
Coco Owen	90
Deborah Paredez	93
Ellin Sarot	99
Lee Schwartz	100
Lani Scozzari	102
Andy Wass	105
Edytta Anna Wojnar	113
Diana Woodcock	117
Elaine Zimmerman	119
Closing Notes	
Christine Redman-Waldeyer	121
Biographical Notes	125

**W
O
M
E
N

A
N
D

W
A
R**

Janet A. Baker

Fallout Shelter

In the late 50's in the Iowa farmlands
my sister and I crouched in a dark closet
clutched dolls to our little chests.

Mine was a baby doll with a cloth body
and a plastic face. It had a mechanism
that said "ma! ma!" but that was broken.

We were playing nuclear holocaust.
We held the dolls hard, breathed quietly,
practiced fear.

My sister and I, age eight and ten,
feared the hot blast and the cold nothingness.
Our parents feared communists more.

Mom said communists would take our house.
I could see them with red stars on their sleeves,
see them use Mom's china for everyday meals.

We'd squat in a shack eating out of tin cans.
That's what communists did, Mom said,
they'd come all the way to Iowa and take our house.

My sister and I stayed in the dark,
could not see outside our closet door,
could not imagine obliteration

unless it's everything metal or concrete we'd known
melted into a gray blob.
Maybe that's what nothingness is.

Judith Barrington

GOOD AND EVIL

Where there is light, there is dark.
The larger the brightness, the greater the shadow.
They must stay joined, those heavenly twins
who gazed from the night sky on Blake and on Dickens,
on Joyce and John Lennon, and on my birth too
reclining in the arms of the lion.
Where there is good, there is evil
(which is Castor? Which is Pollux?)
In hell, my words are conceived and born.
In heaven they dress in a graceful form.
My body arches like a Roman bridge
to span the distance from underworld to sky.
The lion has woken.
War, as always, permeates the air.

Judith Barrington

MY WORLD

Barbed wire tangled like tumble weed
scrolls across the top of the beach.
Bombs lie buried in shingle, waiting for
a disobedient child to crawl through
and trigger an explosion. Obedience equals
life in forty-four.

Glass, flesh, brick,
smash and tear, flying through smutty air.

It's a female, bustling world, this house where I'm born
under the left-handed Full Mead Moon of July.
Her sinister light floods the streets.
Her fingers probe the shells of crumpled houses.
Bathed in her glory, women driving Red Cross cars,
old men on the roofs of modest homes, go about their work:
watching for planes, digging through rubble,
dragging out the bleeding wounded.

This is my world.
I have to learn to love it.

Judith Barrington

PERCUSSION

The percussion of war, now and back in time,
now and in every future tense, crams
silence into the blasted ears of those it maims,
tearing off limbs, burning cheeks and lips, shaking
brains into one long forgetting.

And what of the horses
they rode or led or whipped into the maelstrom—
into the eye of the cannon, the snout
of the creeping tank? With sweat and rolling
white eye of absolute terror, in every century
they have fallen like Bucephalus, their trust in us
staining the foreign earth.

Eleanor Berry

Fire All Around

for Adrienne Rich (1929-2012)

You were too young to be my mother
I was too young to be your sister

You with hair the same auburn
as the mother I'd fled

You whose *Leaflets* pressed in my hands
by a summer school classmate
the year I'd married in June
I resisted in the conviction
poetry should stay
clear of politics

~

I camped on the slopes
I did not
breathe thin air and keep walking

I found
a still place in the woods
I did not
get caught up
fighting the forest fire raging around

Focused fiercely on the private
I sought only to keep
the refuge I shared with my husband
safe from the flames

~

Now forty-odd years
since I first read

that early book of yours
wide swathes of land have been burnt over

Some patches of forest
are black and smoking still
Underground in some places
hidden fire
smolders along tree roots

Some slopes and hollows
are stippled green
by seedlings sprouted from ash

Along the horizon new fires erupt
The air is acrid with smoke

~

I am here with my husband
in a different place
which is yet
the same place I was then
layered now with four decades
of shared life

You after years of pain
are dead
Neither daughter nor sister
I do not
follow your lead or take up your burden

But it is partly you I have to thank
no flames have forced us from
these wild fields where
we study flowers, observe the stars.

June Blumenson

FUGU

—deadly pacific balloon fish

No Alaskan cruise ship for me, even if the wilderness guides don't carry guns – I was cool with that – and with the way the guide in hip boots, swinging her legs over the side of the raft, pushed us off right under the noses of bears jumping

for salmon in the Kenai, cold and white capped, and when we landed in the back country and began the ascent up the mountain, it was more than cool how every now and then she called out her warning, hey bear, then stepped over fresh tracks the size of baseball gloves, scat huge and blue, the whiff of damp fur in the breeze.

Surrounded by a multitude of lichen, witches hair, pimpled kidney and flakey freckle that lined the rocky slope like a gallery of primordial paintings, we clomped through the hemlock forest, a cottonwood blizzard swirling around us, and through the filter of mosquito netting, caught a glimpse of the peak, where patches of snow hung around all summer.

It was then, I remembered the white balloons.

World War II surprise packages like piñatas or Trojan horses floating over the sea from Japan, landing in trees and tundra, carrying payloads of explosives. Weather balloons, the army said, so as not to panic the people, thousands of balloon bombs like a school of fugu flying over the ocean – only three hundred recovered, the others – still out there – in forests, deserts, lakes and mountains, unexploded ordnance from Alaska

to Mexico, dotting the landscape, violating the wilderness.

June Blumenson

Let Me Count The Wars

When my oldest brother was killed
by fifty years of smoking,
long after he survived the Korean Conflict,
(the Forgotten War some call it,
sandwiched as it is in between other greater wars,
as if some wars are more worthy of
memory than others),
I stood at the foot of his grave, jolted
by the sound of
a three gun salute –

which war is mine
to claim – I wonder,
the one I was born into or Viet Nam, my rite of
passage that interrupted
a whole generation's privilege,
a generation that demands
choice, has plenty
to choose from and wants more,
or the war on terror I never imagined I'd see.

I still have the silk pajamas my brother
sent me from Japan
when I was four. I never was allowed to
wear them, but I snuck a peak at them now and then
packed away with the exotic
stamps my mother saved from his letters. I traced
the embroidered fuchsia
flowers on the jacket, the ornamental buttons,
how do I love you, let me count

the wars we've lived through
during our lifetime. My mother died
during the Kosovo War, (known as the good war)
at eighty-nine, congestive heart failure,

peacefully in her home.
She outlived her
first born, (my oldest brother), too deaf to
hear the nightly news, she always
confused Iraq with Iran, was survived by five
children, thirteen grandchildren,
and the unborn who will all live during many wars.

Kay Merkel Boruff

Catechism September 29, 1984 Dallas, Texas

Who can be muddy and yet, settling, slowly become limpid? —Tao Te Ching

An explosion implodes the midmorning. The windows rattle. The ceiling fan whirls, circling like an ancient dog, a bitch cur settling her nest. M16s fire in quick volleys. Vietnamese voices screech, their meaning unmistakable. Glass shatters in the hotel window and falls to the bare teak floor. Smoke clouds the dark sky. Drawn to the light, I hear the liturgy—the Viêt Cong strafe, rocket, wait for the explosions, and shoot you as you come into view. The scene recedes. Ringless fingers stroke his pillow. A second explosion in the night.

I stumble to the window, the dream locked in my head, the carpet soft on my bare feet. I open the miniblinds. Heat hits my face like a fist of steel, shocks my tongue thick with sleep, the acidic taste—fear. Black bilious clouds of smoke blur the morning sky over the freeway a hundred feet from the town house. My heart pounds, its beat is irregular. I fumble for my glasses and stare out the window. An orange ball, the shell of a gasoline truck, burns at the base of the flames.

My legs buckle, and I lie down on the bed and close my eyes. I try to see Taos, the mountains, the casita, the cloudless courtyard, the blue cornflowers, the luna moth, the curling, twisting tail caressing my encircled thumb and forefinger, the velvet chartreuse wings and Argusian eyes, the white and black etches brushing my fingertips, opening and closing, opening and closing.

I get up, my hands trembling, my legs weak, throw off my gown and jerk on shorts and a T-shirt and Jon's identification bracelet. The heavy gold links nick the door of the armoire, a bruise appears on my wrist where I jammed on the bracelet.

My neighbors and I stand in the street. Police cars, their lights flashing, have routed traffic and onlookers away from the burning truck shell. In the distance sirens scream.

For a long time after Jon's death, the sound of sirens made me hysterical. My second husband came home one afternoon and found me paralyzed, standing in the parking lot listening to the tornado siren. Another time he woke me up and told me to get dressed, there was a fire, but we were all right. It was on the other side of the complex. He held me tight to his body, stroked my hair and whispered in my ear, We're safe, it'll be okay. I sat on the bed with a blue blanket wrapped around me, looking outside the window, the flames engulfing one section of the complex, smoke filling the sky, fire truck sirens faintly audible. My fingers lace around the Buddhist prayer *hara*, tiny teak beads click between my palms, locust wings shirring in the dry heat, silent chanting. *Nom-yo-ho-rin-ghe-kio*. The phone rings. My best friend tells me she and her husband are leaving with their baby. The police told them they found a dead woman in the unit where the fire started. The police said that the woman's apartment had been burned to conceal her murder. The police said that the woman was bludgeoned and raped with a telephone receiver.

But this fire is not going to burn me. I'm safe. Overhead, a helicopter hovers, its blades beat the air and blow away the heat and dust. A newspaper reporter approaches us and asks what we know about the accident. My neighbor tells him she'd heard two explosions. Yes, she says, she is worried about her house, then she catches my eyes. I try to hide the fear. I bite my lip, not to break down, not to lose control. I brush away the tears with the back of my hand. She walks over and puts her arm around me. She knows I lived in Việt-Nam. She knows the picture I carry of Jon. She knows he was smiling, standing beside the grey Air America helicopter. She knows he was wearing the gold bracelet. She knows I live alone. I stand, clustered with neighbors, and watch the flames die, then rise. I shiver, small and lost, in the hot morning sun. My feet and hands are cold, my stomach in knots, the right side, where I always hurt. I stroke the heavy bracelet's gold links like worry beads. Over and over, I trace the raised letters of his name. I didn't think of Têt and the fires, the burned buildings and the blood on the sidewalk, my feelings of being trapped.

The wind shifts. I couldn't place the smell. The burning gasoline smell. It wasn't the gun powder smell of cap pistols or firecrackers. It wasn't the cordite smell of dove hunting or target practice. It's toxic. It smells good. It's the smell of napalm.

Jane Byers

STABGRASS

Even stabgrass is soft in its infancy
before it matures into hardened tufts
among barren fields of cracked, Congolese dirt
so dry it is impervious to rain,
and water rivulets flow away
towards the rich pasture
on the outskirts of this civil war
that has mastered staying green.
Protected by the abundance of its carpet,
far from trampling militias
this pasture is not resilient just fortunate.

The patches of stabgrass
absorb moisture, despite unyielding ground.
Poor grazing grass, too brittle,
the cost of drought worn in its blades,
still it sways.
What if the stabgrass thrived,
was irrigated with more than women's blood?

Tufts of women, alone,
each one, in south Kivu
as the savannah turns to dust.
Polite international observers ignore the scarred earth,
chant "resilience, resilience,"
and in their hope, marvel at the growth,
these well-wishers sing hallelujah at each violated tuft,
never really knowing their sisters' grief
from a decade of civil war
and its requisite savage rape.

Only a fool expects stabgrass to adapt,
to flourish beneath land mines and bayonets,
when what it needs is water and respite.

Give them a safe place to close their wounds,
hoes to loosen the earth,
trousers to replace their open skirts,
hand guns and cyanide if the soldiers,
with their rape and ruin, do return.

Jane Byers

UBUNTU

Each person has a responsibility to reconcile with the past and move on. — Desmond Tutu

Every notion of peace begins with
the ground zero of you.
Buried deep, or sometimes an open wound
on the landscape.
Unexamined, it fuels wars, strangles compassion,
kills children.

A mother's nightmares of her son's bashed face-
for seven years he wore an Elastoplast
where his nose used to be.
A white doctor has fabricated a prosthetic,
but her son has now run out of skin glue.
Other less lucky black youth drugged
in their cars, sent careening into trees,
the remains buried by security police.

How do survivors heal?
Unravel their "sweaters" of bone and sinew, of scar tissue
unbearable bits of truth, tattered personal effects
of apartheid-era youth.
Card the scant wool,
make permeable what was not,
let out the rot of loss.

A nation heals,
when it chooses understanding not vengeance,
humanity towards others, *ubuntu*.
Amnesty for truth.
Testimony fills the village halls
with so much gun powder and
each person has a match with the strength not to light it.

People come together to examine each other's sweaters,
knit their grief,
with soft wool and lanolin,
across tender, aching skin.

Helen Marie Casey

Marche Funèbre

The terrible dead are coming, always
unannounced, their motives difficult to read,
their faces implacable. So much sadness to eat,
so many regrets, all the unfinished business.
They have learned the art of concealment,
the power of wordlessness. Still they come, as
if we will know them by their absent footfall,
the thundering quiet of unshod feet, the abandoned hint
of breath, merest suggestion of presence. The terrible dead
are certainly coming. They will not embrace us, not any more.
They will not reveal what they know, and do not know.

Note: “The terrible dead” is a phrase from Neruda’s “Burial in the East.”

Angie Chuang

The Women's Sitting Room

*And this is she
with whom I tried to speak, whose hurt, expressive head
turning aside from pain ...
and soon I shall know I was talking to my own soul.*

– Adrienne Rich, “Twenty-One Love Poems”

We stood before the bright blue wooden door, a single spot of color in the long, white compound wall and the dun, rubble-strewn city. Around us, the fumes from the diesel engines and open sewers of Kabul swirled around us, mixing with the dust of the unpaved road.

“This is my aunt’s house,” Laila Shirzai, my Afghan American interpreter and travel companion, said.

On the other side of the wall, I would soon meet two women whom I had been hearing about for three years. They had survived in Afghanistan through the Soviet War, the civil war, the Taliban, and the current U.S. invasion while their sons and brothers fled to America. They were illiterate and had never gone to school. They were the heart of the Shirzai family.

It was May 2004. After September 11, I had begun to report on the Shirzais, an Oregon-based Afghan immigrant family, for a major daily newspaper. Patriarch Daoud Shirzai, a university professor who had returned to Afghanistan to serve in the new Karzai government, had invited me to visit them in Kabul.

I had traveled more than thirty hours, arriving at this house after a bumpy, dusty car ride from the Kabul airport. Laila’s grandmother and Aunt Amina were waiting for us in the women’s sitting room. What would I say to these women? Even with Laila’s help, could we ever understand each other?

Daoud had purchased this house before the Soviet War, when he had started his first university teaching job in Portland. On the northwest outskirts of the city, the house had been built

amid wheatfields, which reminded Daoud of their family's rural village, Shinzmaray. Those fields were long gone, now replaced by a sprawl of other houses crowding the unpaved roads. Daoud had chosen the house for himself, intending to return and live there. But then Daoud's younger brother, Mohammed, was captured and executed by the communists. Guilty by association, Daoud knew he could not come back. His sister, Amina, had taken over the house.

Behind the blue door was a lush courtyard, dotted with rosebushes and fig trees – a rare spot of lushness amid the arid, brown city. The neatly trimmed grass was a bit damp from its midday watering as we walked along one side of the courtyard to a doorstep. We followed Laila's lead and left our shoes amid the many others piled nearby. We stepped up into a small vestibule, and then before a filmy curtain that led into the women's sitting room. Laila's grandmother and Aunt Amina were waiting for us. Grandma, as we came to call her, rose slowly from a cushion, a dark, squat shape behind the curtain.

As the curtain parted, Grandma was advancing toward us and I practically stumbled into her outstretched arms. She wrapped me into a fierce embrace, soft with the black fabric of her large *chador* and a voluminous traditional Afghan dress. How did a woman who had appeared so frail when she was getting up have so much strength? She placed a soft hand on each side of my face and regarded me at arm's length, her glittering black eyes attempting to focus on me. She guided my face through the customary alternating cheek kisses, pressing her cherubic face against mine. Left-right-left. She planted loud kisses on each side of my face. "*Salaam aleikum! Tsenga ye? Jora ye? Stere me se!*" she said.. Peace be with you! How are you? How is your health? May you not be tired!

The octogenerian before me had lost five of her fourteen children to disease or accidents when they were still little. Then Mohammed was taken. She endured the Soviet bombing of her village and stayed as her children and grandchildren scattered all over the world. She had been there through the civil war, the Taliban, and now, the U.S.-led war. Who was I to tell her not to be tired?

Behind Grandma, Amina approached. Tall and solid, she embraced and kissed us with more formality, her eyes not smiling even as her mouth did. Her pale blue dress and white chador set off her brown complexion. She motioned for us to sit next to her on the long floor cushion. I saw, then, how these two matriarchs, full skirts over their crossed legs, firm pillows behind their backs, held court in this sitting room. None of the men of the household – not Daoud, not Amina’s husband, nor any of Amina’s sons – were anywhere to be found.

We shared introductions and tea, the warm cardamom-scented liquid washing over my dust-parched tongue and throat. Then, setting her teacup down on the tray, Amina nodded to us and disappeared into another part of the house.

I sat down next to Grandma as she began to talk. Laila sat on her other side, facing me, so she could interpret from Pashto. Grandma began to speak of Shinzmaray, the family’s village in the Ghazni province. She was only in Kabul because Daoud was there, she explained. She preferred the village to the city. It’s peaceful there, she said. But it was not always that way.

“One day, from seven in the morning to seven at night, the planes kept circling and bombing.” Her voice rose and fell, at times getting caught in a warbling spot in her throat. She gestured with her hands, sticking her thumb and pinky finger out like wings as she demonstrated the swoops of the Soviet bombers. “I can’t hear well because of the bombs.” Laila had shown us how to talk to her, leaning close to her good ear and shouting.

“The bombs,” she said, inhaling sharply, “dropped on people’s crops and tractors. Their livelihoods were destroyed. Before the war started, people had so much land. Horses couldn’t go from one end to the other. But now, the land has been destroyed. People hardly get by.”

Grandma beckoned to me. She put on a pair of thick glasses that covered half her face. She pulled something out of the folds of her scarf, like a magician. It was a tiny black crayon, the size and shape of an eyeliner pencil. “She does this to everyone,” Laila said. “She wants to put kohl on your eyes to beautify you.” Grandma firmly propped my face with one soft but strong hand, and trained the point of the crayon straight

toward my left eye with the other. Laila instructed me to blink down on the tip as her grandmother drew it across my inner eyelids. Seeing the results, Grandma threw her hands up and made a soft sound of delight. In this world of women, familiarity occurred through actions, not words. This instant intimacy was hospitality and, more subtly, a way of keeping me in line. Absorbed into the intricate social order of the household, I would be far less likely to disrupt it.

Now with her glasses on, Grandma studied me again.

“Are you married? How old are you? Where is your family?”

Laila mumbled in English, “I’m going to tell her you are twenty-five, not thirty, because otherwise you’re going to get an earful about not being married yet.”

“Twenty-five?” Grandma said. “Why aren’t you married yet? And Laila too. You should tell her to get married too.”

Laila rolled her eyes.

As Grandma continued to espouse the virtues of marriage, Laila stopped translating and whispered to me, “Change the subject.” So I told Grandma I wanted to show her what I did for a living. Only twenty percent of Afghan women were literate, and nearly all of those who could read grew up in urban areas. How many times in Grandma’s life, if ever, had she picked up a newspaper? Could she understand what a journalist did, and how I had written about her family? I pulled out of a newspaper with my first article about the Shirzais in 2001, one that had many photos, including an old family snapshot from the seventies.

Seeing the front page, Grandma first exclaimed over a portrait of Professor Daoud Shirzai giving a lecture. She picked up the paper and kissed her firstborn son’s image. Then she honed in on the old, black-and-white family photo of Mohammed and his three children, who were now grown and living in Portland. In the photo, Mohammed wore horn-rimmed glasses and an argyle sweater. His children, all younger than six, piled on top of him as he reclined on a bed: Mohib, the oldest, had curly hair and a petulant look on his face. Sarasa had a pageboy haircut and a mischievous glint in her eye. Mina, the baby, was wearing feet pajamas, barely able to sit up. Though

Afghans typically didn't smile for photos, Mohammed's lips were pressed together and the corners of his mouth turned up, as if he couldn't help himself.

Later that year, he had been kidnapped by the KGB from his home, imprisoned and eventually executed for organizing against the communists. His body had never been recovered, and was likely one of 50,000 believed to have been disposed of in mass graves in Kabul. Those that were found had broken bones and gunshot holes to the skulls. Grandma's smile fell. She extended a finger toward the newsprint, caressing her late son's slim face, and then each of the children's.

"Mohib, Sarasa, Mina, their father was taken. And now they are all the way in America," she said. Laila's voice grew quiet she translated. "The war broke so many families."

I felt a tug of regret. I looked over at Laila. "Should I not have shown her that photo?" I whispered. "It's OK," Laila whispered back. "It's good, actually."

Grandma blinked hard behind her thick lens. She folded back the sides of the newspaper and kissed Mohammed's image. She smoothed the paper down on her knee and let him and her grandchildren gaze up at her. She removed her glasses. The late afternoon sun through the sitting room window caught the wetness in her eyes and made her round face glow. She smiled and gripped my hand fiercely. I squeezed back, and swallowed back all that I had planned to tell her about the newspaper. She already had shown me more about it than I could have possibly imagined.

#

The Afghans and Afghan Americans' names have been changed for their protection. They were threatened for cooperating with an American journalist.

Jan Clausen

Veiled Spill #2

Veiled at birth and shut up in a tower

(As I was, as I was)

Swaddled tightly by the rising action

In cloister or seraglio, an operatic caul

Adrift in a vale of templates

For now I see as through a woman dimly

Her face a kind of spillway for allegiance

(Ergo, you must publish it in Europe:

If Helen had known the uses of the niqab--!)

Shrouded in her power like a trance of drapery

Open-veined at evensong and shut up in forever

(As I was, as I am)

PULL HER ASUNDER WITH ENGINES/LEGEND HER

Can't you see my own art's blood come a-trickling down my
veil?

Jan Clausen

Veiled Spill #8

As if rules existed for the killing of people! –Leo Tolstoy

What are we looking at?

We're looking at teamwork

We're looking at redacted
transcripts obtained
by the L.A. Times
through a FOIA request

We're looking at voice transmissions from an AC-130 crew
and the crews of two Kiowa
attack helicopters
hoisted over the hillsides
of rural Afghanistan
plus a Predator pilot stationed
at Creech AFB
in the navel of Nevada
plus the drone's cameraman
in his ergonomic chair--
pilot and cameraman linked
via instant messaging

with a roomful of Air Force
video analysts
in Okaloosa, FL

We're looking at word-clouds over
evidence--
veiled shapes
half a world near
streaming live on Death TV--

(We recognize the workplace ambience
of boredom and banter--)

We're looking at
mind if I take a bathroom break

We're looking at
still a sweet *expletive* target, geez

We're looking at
hope we get to shoot the truck with all the dudes in it

We're looking at
Yeah, this vehicle here, the more I look at it, it resembles
a Ford Explorer like the mid 90's type more square boxed type,
actually probably early 90's with the more square front end. I
could be wrong there, the hood doesn't quite match up with the

lines, but the windows certainly do...the windows and doors look just like a Ford Explorer, and the paint pattern actually

We're looking at

It's a cool looking shot

We're looking at

That guy looks like he's wearing jewelry and stuff like a girl, but he ain't...if he's a girl, he's a big one

We're looking at

So, it looks like those lumps are probably all people

We're looking at

I forget, how do you treat a sucking gut wound?

Don't push it back in. Wrap it in a towel.

We're looking at

MAMs

(Military Age Males)

We're looking at the expression

man-dress

We're looking at

That lady is carrying a kid, huh? Maybe

(Long story short:
airstrike called in)

We're looking at

Uh, be advised we do have what looks to be 3 women
and 2 children possibly trying to surrender to the west of the
engagement zone at this time

All words
belong to the watchers

their targets
on mute

--What exactly
are you
streaming at?

A NOTE ON VEILED SPILL #8

Indented lines are verbatim excerpts from a transcript of exchanges among military personnel involved with a February 21, 2010 air strike against Afghan civilians. The transcript was published by the *L.A. Times* in conjunction with an article by David S. Cloud describing the events surrounding the strike, "Anatomy of an Afghan War Tragedy," *The Los Angeles Times*, April 10, 2011.

Jane Ebihara

Questions for Fujiko

Topaz Internment Camp
Utah, 1942

Was it divine wind— *kamikaze*—
that pushed you to these foreign shores
drove your hopes headlong into
sandy Angel Island?

Already burdened with more
children than your arms could hold
did you look back with yearning
or forward to this American dream?

And when you bore down in lonely childbirth
again and again and again
did you feel the welcoming warmth of homeland
in each tiny Nisei's breath?

When one winter day
weary life gave way
to dusty guarded desert barbed wire
emptiness
tar paper isolation did you ask why?—
dohshite?

Was it silence that you heard
locked out by a language only your children knew
locked up by a country mute with fear?

With what colors did this dusty jewel adorn your dreams?

Lois Parker Edstrom

EAST OF THE MOUNTAINS

For Fran

You know the disposition of grief
how it bends you like wheat,
an undulating field of waves,
swept by a searing wind.

How it twists what you know
to be true, not from lack
of kindness, but because
it knows no other way.

Grief comes disguised in blue
so intense it seems black,
but remember that tender time
in the spring, before summer's heat

dictates the landscape,
how morning dew lingers
in sheltered places and wild violets
flourish in the valley.

Lois Parker Edstrom

THE LESSON OF PLUMS

After year-long illness, a dream.
My doctor stands in the center
of a cultivated field,
the furrows deep and straight.
His brown suit blends
with the richness of the dark soil.
Arms extended, palms open,
his words travel through
sunlit air: *You are ready to grow.*

So simple, so hackneyed,
yet when I awake I know it's over,
the illness that blew in
like a menacing wind and me
a trembling leaf clinging
to what I knew of strength –
now nearly floating
in an autonomy of lightness.

Sometimes it's not about
seeking, but of receiving,
the way a plum takes in light,
an inner ripening that cracks
its perfect purple skin,
and sweetness, an amber rivulet,
crusts along the gash.

Nancy Gerber

SWORDS INTO PLOUGHSHARES

And they shall beat their swords into plowshares,
And their spears into pruning hooks;
Nation shall not lift up sword against nation,
Neither shall they learn war any more.
—Isaiah 2:4

War ain't no good for the human condition
I lost a piece of who I was
On every single mission. . . .
— Jacob George

The drums roll on and the casualties mount. More than 2,000 American men and women have lost their lives in Afghanistan and I often forget we're at war.

I grew up with the sounds of Vietnam ringing in my ears. I was a girl so I couldn't be drafted and neither could my brother, who was born in 1960. The war was everywhere, in the anguished voices of radio commentators naming the dead, in blurred images of smoke and fire on the nightly news, in the blazing gothic letters of newspaper headlines, in the fury of students who took to the streets. Days go by and there's no news of Afghanistan on the front page of *The New York Times*. The paper covers the war as international rather than national news and stories often appear in later pages. What is the name of this war anyway? If we don't give it a name can we pretend it's not a war?

My students at Rutgers-Newark stared at me when I told them I was a pacifist. Killing people is immoral, even when the government tells us it's our patriotic duty I told them. They had brothers and sisters in Iraq. They had scholarships with ROTC. I knew this from their papers, their journals. I don't condemn the men and women who fight, I said, I accuse the government who treats its citizens as fodder, as killing machines. They didn't believe me. There have always been wars, they said.

We were reading *In Country* by Bobbie Ann Mason, the story of a teenaged girl whose father dies in Vietnam when she is an infant and whose uncle, a Vietnam vet, suffers nightmares, depression and flashbacks from post-traumatic stress disorder. I wanted to show them “Born on the Fourth of July” but was afraid I’d gag during the scenes of the V.A. hospital. I was more afraid they wouldn’t share my horror.

The summer I turned 13 we sang anti-war songs at sleepaway camp. The words ripped through me like bullets. My heart bled when I sang “The Great Mandala,” Peter, Paul and Mary’s ballad of a conscientious objector who starves himself to death:

Tell the people they are safe now
Hunger stopped him, he lies still in his cell . . .
We are free now, we can kill now
We can hate now, now we can end the world . . .

Elegies such as “Where Have All the Flowers Gone?” and “Blowin’ in the Wind” pierced my core. I was young, I wanted to live. What if I’d been born a boy? Would I have been forced to carry a gun, to murder against my will?

A year or so after the Iraq invasion rumors began to circulate about reviving the draft. My older son had just turned 18 and by law had registered with Selective Service. Through the internet I found the name of a town near Vancouver founded by American conscientious objectors who fled during Vietnam. Even though Canada had signed an agreement with the U.S. after 9/11 saying it would no longer harbor draft dodgers, I was hopeful we might find sanctuary among like-minded people. In *Of Woman Born*, Adrienne Rich notes that a woman, seeing Rich with her three sons, said to her, “*Vous travaillez pour l’armee, Madame?*” I don’t work for the army, I muttered to myself whenever the D-word was mentioned.

Recently I purchased a bracelet made of parachute cord made by soldiers as friendship and survival bracelets in Iraq and Afghanistan. These bracelets are available through Soldier to Soldier, an organization that helps build homes for disabled veterans. I want to support the men and women who sacrificed themselves for a cause they believed in. I would not choose to

be a soldier but what if I my choices were different? What if I had been a child in a military family? What if I lived in a community where war was seen as honorable and just? Am I not lucky to be able to say there's no such thing as a good war and not lose my family and friends?

In 1970, the year I started high school, I began reading anti-war novels -- *All Quiet on the Western Front*, *The Red Badge of Courage*. The most devastating was Dalton Trumbo's *Johnny Got His Gun*. Trumbo's story of a nameless, faceless, voiceless, limbless soldier explodes on the page. It should be required reading for the entire military. Men and women. Officers. The Commander-in-Chief.

Louise DeSalvo writes in her memoir, *Vertigo*, of the shock she experienced when her father returned home from World War II as a raging, violent man, someone she no longer recognized. My mother's brother committed suicide after years of fighting severe depression brought on by serving in heavy combat during the same war. We often think of World War II as "a good war," justified by Hitler's demonic goals. But even a "just" war makes prisoners of those who are lucky enough to survive.

What if war is really our collective failure to imagine ourselves as the Other-- a sublimation of our fears, a return to a primal stage, where, like two years old, we enact the impulse to murder rather than use our words. "Sword" is an anagram of "words."

Let us beat our swords into words. Osama Bin Laden is dead but the war on terror continues. Maybe the terror is inside us.

Note: The quote from Jacob George is taken from his poem "Support the Troops." It appears in *After Action Review*, a collection of writing and art by veterans of the Global War on Terror. For more information, see www.warriorwriters.org.

Melinda Goodman

Millie's Meatballs

In March of '91
Millie read on the front page of *The Times*
that a private foundation had donated
one billion dollars to the Metropolitan Museum of Art.
Millie thought out loud, "That's the most money
I ever heard of being donated to a museum.
But on second thought," she said, "It really ain't that much.
Take the Middle East..."
Like ripples in a bowl of water
Millie's thoughts returned to December of 1990...
It had been a white Christmas with the Bush clan
Barbara in her nightie
George in his Santa hat
spreading line after line of Desert Shield
on a piece of eighteenth-century Dolly Madison
porcelain in the Blue Room.
Calling Barbara and Millie over for a couple of snorts --
holding one nostril then the other --
feeling the rush...the freeze of it
on his pale pink receding gums... "Oh, Barbara...Oh, Millie..."
George Macbush felt full of the milk of human kindness.
"This here's the shit!" he screamed,
"We're gonna kick Saddam's ass...Yes-sir-ee, Bob!"
He took out a Remington straight blade and started shaving
down a rock.
"Uh oh! I got a real boulder here," he chuckled.
"Stand back! Stand back, ladies! Give the Doctor some elbow
room.
Barbara, hon, willya hand me my reading glasses? That's a dear.
Yep. This is the *real* deal, right here. Better than that
Panamanian crap.
That was half lactose anyway. Better than Grenada.
Humph! Back then I had to pretend to be vice
second in command to Ronald the Clown—
a'bobbing and a'weaving and a ziptiddy doo dah

with that stupid red hair. (sniff)

Meanwhile, Barbara, hearing a lot of noise outside, was peaking through the drapes.

“What’d I tell you about looking out that window?” cried George.

“Y- Y- You said not to.”

“That’s right. So what are you doing?”

“Th Those people. They need money for housing, food, education, and AIDS research.”

“Barbara, Pumkin, you know Daddy has a tremendous national deficit right now. And thanks to *your* son, Neil, a huge S ‘n L bail out to think about.”

“But George, Desert Shield is costing us a billion dollars a night.”

“Shit, Barbara! You are really ruining my head.”

“But George...”

“Bitch, just lay out some more lines. Then shut the fuck up, willya?

You’re as strung out on this shit as I am.

Riddle me this. What you gonna do if just all a sudden there’s no more stash. That’s right. No more carpet bombings.

No more scuds. No “smart bombs”. NOTHING. Cold turkey.

Go to Betty Ford Clinic and tell them:

‘My name is Barbara. I have a one thousand ton a day habit of Scuds and Patriot missiles’?

I don’t think so.

Now listen, I figure we’ve got that Saddam by the skin of his A-Rab balls. A couple more sortees and those sand-niggers’ll come crawling. Y’hear me?”

It was lonely being top dog in the white house.

George sometimes didn’t know who to talk to...so he talked to Millie...

filling Millie’s head day in and day out with all his grandiose I-Am-God gibberish. It was worse now that Desert Shield had turned to Desert Storm. This stuff was potent.

George was so wired he couldn’t sleep.

He was getting gaunt and pale...
 “Desert Storm, Millie, Desert Storm!” said George,
 feeling the drip in the back of his throat.
 Whenever George went on a particularly heavy binge
 he’d keep Millie awake for days and nights on end
 mumbling
 standing by the window hallucinating
 brushing his hands through the air
 watching the trails follow his fingers
 like rockets’ red glare
 bloody against the night sky.
 He saw the trees outside moving in
 shaking and walking closer
 every time he blinked.
 Millie barked to make him snap out of it.
 But George raged on
 ranting about when his sons were children
 Little, stupid brats asking too many questions,
 “Daddy, what are we doing in Chile?
 Daddy, what does ‘de-stabilize’ mean?
 Daddy Daddy Como se dice,
 ‘disappeared’?”
 George thought his children -- Neil, Jeb, Dorothy,
 Marvin and Georgie Jr. -- were idiots.
 “Well, what did you expect?” asked Millie.
 “You lied to those kids their entire lives. Believe me,
 I’ve raised a lot of puppies. They’re just trying
 to make you proud.”
 But George couldn’t hear Millie. He thought her voice
 was just something he ate... growling in his stomach...
 like his lousy policies on ecology...
 especially dolphins...
 “Those dolphins again,” thought Millie,
 “Always protesting something...
 throwing themselves into those tuna nets
 to show their opposition to the invasion of Panama...
 and now the Persian Gulf.”
 When Millie thought of those courageous dolphins
 it made her feel ashamed of her own lack

of political activism.

But some days Millie was just too overwhelmed
to do anything but lie there like a lump.

Between George and Barbara
she was probably the most talked to pet in the nation.
But it was really no wonder. They...George and Barbara,
never talked to each other. And privately,
George told Millie, he wouldn't be surprised
if Barbara's bulging eyes just popped out her head
and danced across the octagon room some day.
"I'm weirded out by the look on her face," said George,
"Like she's seen the devil and been sleeping with him
for forty years."

But Millie knew Barbara was not a friendly sort of witch
She'd married this monster and--even if she could--
she would never have chosen
to twitch her nose and magically
make years of massacres just disappear--
From Ponce to Sharpeville...from Soweto to Bagdad...zip zip
zip!

George had told Millie
the secret to his success one night in the middle
of the Panama invasion when he was still feeling
a little bit worried that the story might leak out too soon
about those mass graves and all the thousands
of poor -- mostly Black -- Panamanians
bombed and bulldozed into oblivion.
"Y'see Millie, the whole time I was sitting up there
in that ole CIA training camp
I kept my eyes on the sparrow...
I knew I was different from those other fellas...
sure, they could kill and maim
but they didn't seem to know how to have fun.
I was *born* to this, Millie.
I knew it back at Yale when I was Skull of the House...
I wasn't just gonna be some lousy ambassadorial

AID/CIA tap dancing little pinstriped cockroach
or some low level hit man. No no no no no no NO.
I was going for the gold. I knew, Millie, in a few years
I'd be head of the whole GOT damn program!
And that's where we are now Millie, baby. PUSHING
with our pedal to the metal
and it feels so good.
It feels so goo-uh-ud,
to know that one day
"any day now"
any time
I'm gonna squeeze off the final rounds
and that'll be all she wrote...
just you and me and maybe...
naw...two is company...leave that popeyed bitch
upstairs with Armageddon
because Arma-gone! (heh heh heh)
Just you and me...
and maybe a couple of CIA fellas
in our "octopus's garden in the sea"
and outside
whirling around in the galaxy
a thousand points of light."

Millie knew the time had come.
George was so excited he was trembling.
She nuzzled into her master's lap and said,
"Shhhhhh... Shhhhhhhh..."
She felt his clammy cold hands on her head
pushing her muzzle deeper and deeper
into his flacid crotch
"Tonight," thought Millie,
"I'm gonna do George like he's never been done before...
then just before he screams 'Hollywood Jones!'
I'm gonna take it off in a single snap.
And as his life slowly bleeds into that
thick Persian carpet
and we're suddenly surrounded
by secret service men

all on their knees
trying to stop the flow
trying to get me to cough it up
I'll just laugh...
Because George, listen to me,
goons like you can't just go all over the earth
killing and starving and maiming
children, women, animals, and men.
Not with Millie in the white house.
'Cause you really are not God, George.
You really are not God, George.
You really are not God, George.
And Millie is one serious, angry,
HUNGRY...vicious beast.

Translated by *Laura Hamblin*
By Majida Mohammed

The Poem Is Stronger

The poem is stronger than the stone—
stronger than a small stone heart.
But the stone's heart is full of honor.
Just as a sculpture resides inside a stone,
so the unwritten poem's beauty resides.
When a sculpture is released from the stone—
it's beauty expands. On the stone
margin of my poem I have carved:
We are staying. We will not depart.

Bio Notes: Majida Mohammed is an Iraqi poet. During the Iraq War she moved to Amman, Jordan as a refugee. She works as a reporter and has published two books of poetry.

Lois Marie Harrod

Baghdad Renga

The gray mole beside the lieutenant's nose
did not desert him in the desert.

So much sand, miles and miles
as the boys hack their humvees
to Baghdad, put on your mask to breathe.

Oh, Daddy, that day you put a sack over your head
and pretended to be a monster—

but when Rachel died it wasn't far from here.
Jacob rent his garments
and poured hashish into his sackcloth.

Painted on the anti-aircraft gun 5454
guarding the airport, ASHES TO ASHES.

The photograph was titled "Dusty"
but the staff couldn't decide whether the object
looked more like nuts or boobs.

A sensual menu from the Roman Empire:
backassward from apples to eggs.

Solomon loved the pummel of breasts
but Adam the apple in his own throat:
Say I am the apple of your ear.

The ventriloquist, good as he was,
couldn't keep his larynx from bobbling.

Charlie ducked down
while Edgar talked through his teeth:
who's talking for the president.

Don't look at me, I am just a voice
dying in the wilderness.

Penny Harter

Hearing Voices

They can speak from anywhere,
though speak is not exactly what they do—
sending a blue mist up from the skin
of a river as it runs beneath a bridge
you are crossing, or kicking dust
from the throat of a roadside bush.

Perhaps the dead use these elements
like ear trumpets—those funnels
tilted toward the ceilings of darkened
rooms, inviting the disembodied
to slide through and ride on the wind
of mutual breath, funnels aimed to capture
wisps of sound and hold them against
the heartbeats of the living.

So settle down and lean your weary back
against the flimsy guard-rail on the bridge,
or sit cross-legged in the dirt at the altar
of an almost burning bush. Fine tune
your instrument to hear beyond the static
of passing tanks and roadside bombs,
and listen.

Vicki Hudson

War Cats

Each night I take the dog out to the lawn for her nightly pee, invariably, meandering across the damp grass, my foot presses upon a transitory obstacle. A brisk shattering sound and before my foot completes its step, I know I've crushed a snail. A little piece of me breaks inside each time. Once, on a date we went fishing. I cried when I tried to pin the worm onto the hook. We watched the manatees instead. These days I fish floundering wasps and ladybugs out of the dog's water dish in the back yard. In Iraq, I sabotaged the base animal catcher's traps since the cats and occasional dog caught would be taken to the trash pit and shot. I'd quietly spring the traps or free a mangy cat caught inside. One morning, my covert little war with the cat hunter became personal.

The living quarters at Camp Courage in Mosul, Iraq were rows upon rows of steel boxes, originally shipping containers. Paths of gravel and stone separated rows of 10 by 5 meter metal boxes with windows, doors and air conditioning units cut into the sides. Off-duty soldiers would sit out front in the morning before work and late into the evening on camp chairs and benches made from scrap wood. My box, called a hooch, a term inherited from the Viet Nam War, was right next to the bomb shelter. Under my hooch lived a pair of kittens.

Wild, hungry little felines. Maybe a year or so old, they have no tarter on their teeth but seemed to have adult teeth. They were small, about half the size of my adult cat at home. White with orange patches, one with a white shoulder and the other a large orange patch. One was more inquisitive than the other. One, I wasn't sure which, tended to sleep at night atop the sand bags at the entrance of the bunker next to my hooch. She was the last creature I'd see before entering my room at night before bed. I liked her there. Having a cat by my room door somehow was a morsel of normality in that abnormal place.

The cats cried in the morning and the afternoon. I thought they wanted food until someone fed them. They kept crying. These wild cats had learned that people meant more than

food. People were companionship and attention. Hesitant and frightened yet wanting to make contact. They butted their heads up against you, sought to rub their backs along your leg. If you moved too fast they'd skitter off under the hooches only to peek out and cry some more. If you moved a hand towards them quickly they'd hiss and open wide to show their teeth. Then, they'd scamper towards you to rub themselves against your leg.

They'd alternate between rubbing against my boots and hissing through barred fangs if I reached down to pet them. Eventually, they'd let me rub behind their ears and stroke their fur and their purring would make a incongruent addition to the camp sounds of generators, clanking weapons and equipment and boots on gravel. When I'd return from my before-bed trip to the latrine each night, I'd see the kittens curled up on the 6 foot high sand bag wall that marked the entrance to the bomb shelter. When I'd return to the latrine the next morning, the kittens would be sitting there to greet me.

Coming home to see the cats wandering around made the days easier. But someone decided that they should soon be gone. Someone's job was to find and kill them. He seemed very dedicated. I saw him staking out his cages. One night when I came down from tower duty, he was crawling around under my hooch with a snare to capture the cats.

/.../

“What are you doing? Come back later when no one is here and it is less upsetting to people. “

“This is when they're here. It's the best time.”

“May you be cursed with the fleas of cats.”

/.../

In my dream, the banging wouldn't stop. It made no sense, didn't fit the movie in my sleeping mind and eventually I realized the banging was outside my dream. The banging interrupting my rare morning to sleep beyond 7 am was underneath me. “What the fuck,” I wondered out loud. Pulling on sweats over my boxer jamies, I stuck my head out the door.

Halfway under my hooch was a body, legs pushing against the earth, trying to move deeper underneath my little box.

“Hey! Who the fuck are you and what are you doing under my room?” I yelled at the worker tearing up the dirt under my hooch. “Get the fuck out from there,” I said as I kicked his feet.

The man that crawled out was dressed in dusty work clothes. I heard another scabbling on the opposite side and then another smaller man walked around the shelter. He carried a noose on a stick. This was the cat catcher and his assistant. The big man who had been halfway beneath my room glared at me. I wasn’t allowed to tell him not to catch the cats.

“Get out from under my hooch,” I screamed at him. “I’m trying to sleep.”

“I have work here,” he gruffly replied, his assistant silent behind him.

“Work when people aren’t trying to sleep. Get the fuck out of here and come back later!”

“I’m just doing my job.”

“Do I look like I care? Don’t wake me up again.”

I stared him down then a few words in Arabic later, he and his assistant moved along.

How in hell had he happened to decide my hooch was the place to catch cats? Everyone along the trail of hooches liked the kittens. The soldiers we had replaced who had gone home had told us about them and the mama cat that had gone missing since these two were born. We all played around with them, set out water or tuna fish or other food for them. We weren’t supposed to, we even had a general order to not interact with any animal, wild or domestic. This was a preventive measure, intended to make sure no one was bitten, or infested by fleas or any other terrible consequence of interacting with feral animals. It was one of those rules that you could get in significant trouble for not obeying. Most everyone ignored it.

Except, there was one guy. He didn’t like cats. Didn’t matter that the cats helped us manage our stress a tiny bit better. Or that with the cats were around the sand fleas didn’t bother the humans much. He hated cats and was very vocal about his hatred. He made the complaint and now the cat catcher had us on his radar and we lived in his new hunting ground. One afternoon,

I returned from work to find a large trap on the roof of the bomb shelter. The cat catcher woke me up a few more mornings and every day I had to see that damn trap.

About 20 meters away was Guard Tower ten. The Hunter liked to put a trap there too. That was one of the few places where at least the trap was in the shade protected from the triple digit degree sun glaring down. There was never any water in the traps. I could spring that trap, and occasionally, when he did succeed in catching a cat, I let the poor feral creature go. The trap on the bomb shelter I couldn't get to. I tried springing it with large rocks I'd heave up onto the steel mesh. Sometimes I got a rock into the trap causing it to spring, but this was not a reliable method. Also, it clearly indicated someone was meddling with the hunter's work, not good if caught. I needed a more subtle method.

One of the problems with living in a small steel box is the lack of a bathroom. The latrine is housed in a larger steel box that requires a walk a few minutes from the hooch. No problem during the day, but who wants to get all dressed for a late night pee? The solution was a number ten tin can. It needs to be emptied first thing in the morning however, (or face the consequence twelve hours later after the half full can is subjected to 120 degrees plus all day). When on yet another day loud banging and scraping under my box jolted me awake, I threw open the hooch door and emptied my half full number ten sized tin can onto the gravel right next to the corner of the hooch. Fluid really splatters when poured out forcefully towards gravel.

“Damn, I'm so sorry.”

The hunter glared at me after crawling out from under the corner of the hooch, pulling the cloth of his pant leg away from his skin.

“I didn't know you were there.”

Janet R.. Kirchheimer

The Olympics Return to Germany, 1972

We gather in front of the television, watch
the summer Olympics, watch
Israeli athletes,
wave their blue and white flags,
march into the Munich stadium.

Supper left on the table, we gather
in front of the television.
Eleven Israeli athletes taken hostage.
We wait.

My mother and father are used to waiting.
Maybe Bertl made it out of Germany and
over the Pyrenees into Spain.
Maybe Ruth avoided the selections in Auschwitz.
Maybe Tante Therese survived Riga.
Tante Mina married a non-Jew,
perhaps she wasn't deported.

"All the hostages are safe,"
announces a German official.
Jim McKay, an hour later, comes back on.
"They're all gone."

Afraid to sleep alone,
I am at one end
of my brother's bed,
he at the other.
I trace outlines
of athletes in the dark.

Joan Kresich

DEAF, MUTE

Why always this order, deaf then mute? Maybe in Arabic
it is silent, deaf. Here in America we don't know
how the words sound in Afghanistan.

The story has broken that our soldiers, heavy with weapons,
called out to the man to stop. But he was deaf, mute.
Terror told him to run, and he did.

Later the villagers huddling around his body tried to explain
to the soldiers. He could not hear, could not speak.
His mother wailed, an ancient desert sound.

Alessandra Lynch

and the quiet life in the arms of a curve

he cut you out sweet paper doll : cut-out eye cut-by-
nose cut-slit
mouth cut-slut out cut out every inch the flimsy petals
your body cut

till you went the white space way the blank the far-far-
away till you took up

his scissors his knives cut yourself to own your shape

/

Cut / Tongue

from mermaid

Clit from hole

Fat from rib

Hair from nostril

Flesh from thighbone

Cut / Cut /

Mermaid-

tongue

Hole-clit

Rib-fat

Nostril-hair

Thigh-flesh. Cut /

as in retract. The body/

the woman you wanted vanished

when you cut

her out of the picture / when you cut into
her skin / pincerd it / shaved it / bulleted it
with pins / when you cut through her mind
with a small set of pliers and a grin.

Already cut to black

Alessandra Lynch

clit

Someone got her clit cut

Someone blindered

led her into the pit

to keep her clit unlit

Keep it clipped

shut

slit

No pleasure now

No meow

Keep it a spit in the dark keep it dark

Keep it safe stuffed keep it so it had enough

Keep it writ

unwrit

Sit without it

Tie back the lobe

Dog screel keen

Keep her on the mark make her the mark

marketable

Make her market

Table her

Mongrel who done her in

Mongrel

and a twisted yellow rag mongering of it

What a butterfly what a lie to dare
write about her as though she is
a flower

Alessandra Lynch

excavation: the bone that has no marrow

Let it dry—let it dry in the ditch—
a roadside bone—innocuous.
Still, hard to reckon with.

You don't know the who of it, barely the what
but once it belonged & longed & had stride. Now it
rises from the poke
& takes your hand as though for a walk

through rain & it is alive again, a man, urging you on
to mr. anonymous
who coaxes & spends you to sand & swings you by another
name. Who never gives his own.

How bloodless he is. Sitting at the white table.
Handsome shirt.
And below: tight undercover pants filled with nothing. A
matador.
More bloodless than this bone you've found.
Ask no more about bone. Don't breathe or swallow.
The stinging
belt, your buckled hip, the blade
chucking your chin, drawn down your neck,
angling toward the breast.

Don't ask about the voice that snarled and nested shriekless in
your ear.
You lived in hoax and hoax is fog. No charm of finches to blast
it clear.
His charm: all harm:

and names?
His/yours. Don't ask Don't ask

*some perversion of a travolta
movie where the girl is swerving in
her spotlight and the guy heats up and woos her from spotlight to
parking lot mercury light and woos her from the strobe to his
throb-throb and / cut to black / but there is no flame or steam
between them only she a stifled scream a horse arrears and he
pressing a knife into her flank and thigh into her human pelvis
screwing the knife in as though to fix a wall or make a shelf. He
made her a wall and shelved her then.*

There's the dry dry bone of
them.

Alessandra Lynch

gang bang

was the city against her

she didn't beg beautifully was stoppered

by all four corners of the field in the bed the pool-table

she didn't beg beautifully didn't splay-leg

didn't play dead already was

gang bang was the city

disillusioning her undoing her threads revoking her knots

refuting her while feeling her up fueling and refueling

its own dead engines flooding gas into the dead mouth

to get it to start

Alessandra Lynch

wolf

The father kept aloof until he heard the low howl
and glimpsed his daughter shudder and drop.

Did he need to open her shirt to examine the bruise
while she strained away?

Did he need to know how deeply the teeth
sank, if a pack had tracked the mud through
her blood? Was he checking to see whether they left
scars on her skin

that wore his mark first, that belonged to him.

Maura MacNeil

Hazard

Nothing arrives without hazard these days.
Wind-kicked glass and boatyard scraps

fill the yard. Further inland cows twirl in the dust.
The eyes of children close against

swells as they hide
between sand-grit sheets.

Nothing is the same but it never was.
Memory of memory so stacked and false,

everything feels broken these days.

You've searched the house for hours
in disbelief that your mother's table linen

and tea cups have been stolen,
then spend other hours

conjuring their presence

on your table just that once.
It's not what you suspected.

Permanence once rattled you.
Now you are terrified of all that is gone.

Maura MacNeil

Night

Planes rumble overhead, overnight, overland.
This is what wakes you.

Yesterday—swallows flew towards the sun.

They are gone—

You find feathers in the grass.

Nests are filled with legs of spiders,
bits of rags, the hair of dogs.

Farzana Marie

OUTSTAYED WELCOME

Your shoes, here, please, let me—
began the litany
of guest-reception,
a deep-fried slew
of gracious imperatives:
*bofarmain** (bustling them in),
sit, stay, further from the door,
(whisking coat away)
*closer to the sandali...**
here, a pillow (you are comfortable...?)
*some shirini...**
and the question of a thousand years—
some tea?

But war wiped the welcome
off
when he chewed his way
through their gates,
king-konged across
ruby-turquoise carpets,
grimy boots leaking gasoline,
hate-gaze setting it ablaze.

*Be-sharmi!**
They cried,
but he was without shame.

War wiped the welcome
off
when he made himself at home,

upturning stove and sink and sandali
(maybe looking for a lost sock?)
and blew snot-rockets
through the south-west window
toward the holy city,

and when he greedy-eyed
their unspent offspring:

Qais, 16, a strong kind of scrawny.
Still young enough to train.
Could handle rough terrain.
I'll take him.

Maryam, 13, had just begun to bleed,
hid behind her chador.*
She was woman. Useful. War burned.
I'll take her.

Rape!

 They cried
Be-sharmi!

Usually when a guest says
I must go,
an Afghan says,
no, no, stay the night;
subtle closure
that honors everyone.
The guest goes.

War never took the hint.
He stayed
stayed

stayed
stayed
till his spit-balls had caved in
the roof and walls
and his rotting breath-fumes
had infected every soul.

Be-sharmi...

*Notes:

Bofarmain = please/come in

Sandali = hot coals under a table covered with a heavy quilt;
many families keep warm by sitting close, under a thick quilt

Shirini = sweets, often served with tea

Be-sharmi = shamelessness – often an indictment of sexual
impropriety

Chador = headscarf

Farzana Marie

HAIKU CONVOY

Cool black milkless steel
Mother of a million tongues
Parched for real peace

Deep creases, round scars
Faces like fields of stories
Her gaze fades slowly

A daughter's first words
Far away a father weeps
Nomads dream of home

Contentment: ice cream
Savored on a warm truck bed
A child much like me

Tending the roses,
Does she think about her life—
Not soft, not fragrant?

Robin Martin

Page from a Gitmo Attorney's Diary

Sometimes in the corner of my computer screen I think I see my clients starving, diminishing; they appear as icons.

The female guard rubbed what appeared to be menstrual blood in a prisoner's face.

We found out that X's client tried to kill himself. The story is in the papers. He'd been on hunger strike since August. He left the room, accompanied by guards, to use the toilet. X felt it was taking too long. Pool of blood. He had hung himself—tongue and eyes popping out—heartbreaking. Don't know how long it will take to find out if he was revived? Why was there a pool of blood?

Day of Action—FAST in protest. The report from Australia was that thousands of people participated in the hunger strike there. Great work! Amazing!

I woke up from this dream and the girl's voice kept speaking. I could hear her. I can still hear her: *Before I was born, my father disappeared and peace came to an end. I imagine. Lulled inside my mother, I learned of this trouble because she stopped sleeping. You could say I became addicted to solving disappearance. This happened 43 days before I entered the world.*

You do not know my name. You don't know my face.

For all my life, my father has been held and now he is on his third year of a hunger strike. Some days I eat nothing and think about him. How does he stay alive not eating anything? We were told that a pipe was put in his mouth and down his throat and that it pumps nutrients into his stomach. When I think of my father in such a position I start to choke trying not to cry. I run and run and pretend not to hear my mother. I want to run so fast that I could build up enough speed to run on the air and then I would climb into the sky, but keep running so that I could hold back my tears. I could run across the African sky. I could run over the ocean and find my father. Maybe the guards would try and shoot me down. But maybe the miracle of my flying would make them respect me.

On the ground I imagine the soldiers noticing me. At first they do not know if they can rely on their own sight. The look of astonishment moves from one person to the next. Then the higher ranking soldier goes inside to tell the Chief.

“Sir, we have identified the flying object and it is a girl, a small girl. She appears to be unarmed.”

“Who else knows about this?” The Chief assumes that the soldier is out of his mind, but he plays along.

“Sir, I think it may be that everyone does.”

The Chief barges out into the compound, where soldiers stand with their heads tilted back squinting into the sun. The Chief is stunned and questions everything. How on earth had he ended up here? There wasn't enough sunscreen on earth to stave off his burning. Since his arrival last spring, he had maintained a lobster-like brilliance. His skin was turning lobster-like hard, too.

I hover above about 100 meters in the sky. One of the soldiers starts singing a Beatles song, “Lucy in the Sky with Diamonds.” The Chief, too, stands transfixed, staring as if there were a great fire in the sky. My long white dress sways. He thinks that something so very powerful, an eminence has come. He will listen to me.

** * **

We were told that my father committed suicide. I do not believe this. Someday I am going to go and see where my father died and how he lived. I don't know how this will happen, but I know I will do this. I feel better because my father is no longer being tortured. Even though. Even though.

If I could fly, if I could fly, if only I could fly.

I can't fly, I can't sleep.

Cynthia Neely

I've Heard Twelve Thousand Bees

Perhaps it was the lateness of the hour
or the tepid taste of metal in my mouth
like tungsten on my tongue, or that flower,
deep vermilion, in the field behind the house.
A million grains of lifting sand, the mica,
sifting sunlight, shoveled into air -
the passing of the day - a little like a
dusty moth or a dusky backlit pair
of sparrows past the corner of my eye.
What is it I'm reminded of? A lie

can lie between you. It's been said,
and I believe, more than a thousand times,
that rhyme's a rhyme with time. Now how we dread
each end of day, finality of line.
Is it the word *goodbye* we see, were shown
that thousand times? I've heard twelve thousand bees
can rise and move as one, to shift a throne
of honeycomb and follow just one queen.
I rise, I rise, I muscle my veined wings
but none will follow. There'll be no gathering.

Cynthia Neely

On Leave, August, 2006

Dawn is raucous with caws,
a muster of crows, the murder a dismal chord
choked and low. I chase
a few from the berries they pilfer, the weight
of their wings, their sweep and arc,
heavy against the air they seize.

This morning's light is slow to brighten the sea.
The sun, wan and winds rise up, cause
boats to toss, their sails, an arc
of white on dark. Ducks skitter in, as if pulled by a cord,
rippled wakes in the back cove. They wait
for storms to pass. While I watch clouds, chased

and darkly gray, no longer chaste
and white like the sheets on my bed. I see
hard lines around his eyes. I'm patient. I can wait;
a smile will lighten him, as birds to the air, will cause
his breath to pause of its own accord.
And I imagine life's a circle, two grand arcs

that meet like clasping fingers. His body's arch
creates an arc of light, an ellipse, changing, chased
by the hemispheres of our forms. His moan's a chord
played long and low, a chance to seize
some gladness, before it's swept away with the caws
of a murder of crows. And I can bear his weight;

I'll keep him whole for now, I'll wait
until he's borne away and arch
to meet him, pray he'll stay, because
his heart is beating in my chest.
His wings are heavy in the air they seize;
he flies away, my ring upon a cord.

The evening sky erupts with birds, discordant;
terns shriek their prehistoric screech, dive and turn, I wait
and sit and sing. I write down what I see:
concentric ripples circle, split, form arcs,
while Ramadi air erupts with sounds of screams, chased
by bits of gristle, glass and steel, a ring, a cord, a piece of sacred
cause.

Still I wait for circles to complete, chased
upon the winds that seized our lives – another's cause.
A ring upon a cord flies in an arc.

Tisha Nemeth-Loomis

My Instincts Thieve and Ash

Surviving is the only evidence
if I was motionless//

I never suffered

wanting is just wanting
language//words crown

a conversation's landscape
words as miracle in the mouth

beyond conditions of silence//that war
//unlearning a body's obligations

//differences//interiority
like another presence wavering

in a forgiving length modifying my
fenced in thoughts//

those surrounded things

my instincts thieve and ash
a posture unrepentant//

I have something to show for it.

Tisha Nemeth-Loomis

Parachuting to Laos

Self-preservation, that reaction
somersault in single rotation

parachute jumping
when you leap for a living gravity

blasts mouth open
crisp seconds now minute-long

the pressure of wind,
women's faces, nameless flicker

clouds cannot recall
abandoned wives, mistresses lovers

dusk's fireworks of artillery
Vietnam behind pupils of your eyes

you recoil slightly war missions' secrets or lies
crowd the air dog tags removed

identity erased with each leap
everything reminds you

Tisha Nemeth-Loomis

The Colorations

ghosted train tracks
the blue dawn stacked against my back

tracking thoughts: what I'd do
for a dream without war, its colorations

leaving//late arriving
passing like trains rushing//calling every abandoned

everyone I am//was I, once? I said I was
one who would never

have to bleed, not in this word
not in this world

Amanda Newell

Intersection

—*After Jehanne Dubrow*

In south Richmond, gang graffiti stains
abandoned buildings, while iron bars fortify
storefronts. Even the homeless vet seems
threatening as he stumbles from car to car
collecting coins while the light's still red.
His rumpled cloak and rusted beard remind me
of Odysseus, who must have looked like this
when he came home disguised as a beggar,
twenty years after sailing off to war.

If I were braver—the kind who isn't afraid
of the city's cement terrain, the ambush
lurking in every dark alleyway,
I would roll down my window and ask
this man if he'd been in the Persian Gulf
or fought insurgents in Afghanistan.
I'd ask him how he drifted here
like a vessel in distress, barely clinging
to the waves. I'd ask that man his name.

Megan Obourn

Speaking of Power

Speaking of power,
nurse Cheryl says
to the friend who holds my hand
and a plush bear
by the name of Anastasia Bernard,
A.
B.
a boy
a girl

Speaking of power,
she says to my stirruped legs,
think of the power I have in these six little words:
you will feel my fingers first
the floor of the vagina tightens as soon as I say that.

Take a deep breath.

Power,
speaking of.

I am on my back
in a room that fits tight
like practical slacks
in the blooming spatter of office complex brickshot
covering Red Creek Drive.

Red I suppose
from the spotting nurse Cheryl insists is normal.
She shows me blood on every tool:
catheter,
speculum,
blades,
swab.
Wipes it from the pillow beneath me,

and shows me the paper towel.

Don't freak,
she says.

The irony.

After setting an egg timer and talking small
of M&Ms in high heels,
she leaves
me wanting to giggle
and forgetting for a moment
that she spoke of her power
to make my vagina contract
then forced something into it.

Cervix means neck.

Necks are easily bruised.

I will feel her fingers first.

Megan Obourn

Warlike

Enyo,
your name a tautology

maybe it's because
it can be
neither metonymy
nor allegory.

What would it look like,
a literal goddess
orchestrating the destruction of cities,
sheet music from the philharmonic of Antiquity

who takes no side
in wars
she never wants to end.
No wonder she is mistaken
for Eris
on the street in shades and Aries' cutoffs,
playing chaos as incarnate
as the landscape of her own name.

C E O'Rourke

Metamorphosis

In Sarajevo, artisan copperworks transform fifty cal
shells into pleasing sculptures, labours of love.

Passchendaele's unending rain
left the landscape shattered, desolate;

men struggled through glutinous muck, dismal
drizzle, unforgiving torrential despair.

Earth herself cried out for the heavy sadness of war.
At the Somme she has since filled

bomb craters with biodiversity ...
ponds grace modern golf courses

fields teem with new life
golden wheat bows to summer sun

kernels of hope
farmers rub between their palms

test for ripeness
meadows green

flowers release
their sweet scent to the breeze

at sundown amphibians sing
across the silent dark

tadpoles return, strive
begin again

Coco Owen

What *Endarken* Meant

No desert lark for that sleepless,
Bittern veteran re-deployed
At whom the dark star stares,
Hooded crow:

A nighthawk is a screeching
Mocking-bird
Engine of self-realization.

& & &

Benighted: her blacked-out,
Personal no-fly-zone hides
The raven's lunatic fear,
Dark-aged and mourning-cloaked.

What cuckoo's nested here,
In the mother of all waking
Nightmares' killing vigils?

& & &

Night hunt: the racked
Insomniac soldiers on in the
Company of jack snipe and snipers,
Hunting the little bustards:

Predator-&-prey, they're night-watching,
Gone on midnight patrol
In no-man's-land.

& & &

Night terrors' oil fields are
Afire: Her welling loneliness.

The black-gold glitter-flickers are
Pricks-in-the-night,

Which shaft her black mood
Womb-deep, unstoppering
An oil-for-blood flow.

& & &

Night sweat's post-traumatic
Tryst with a Blackhawk's
Gunned engine of self-
Abused consciousness:

To her tortured hypervigilance,
Even the swift and sparrow
Glare, nightjar-headed.

& & &

Whose nocturne emission lute-wafts
Red-white lies and blues all over?
Whose PSYOPS études?
War front mind-fucks the star-blooming.

Night-night, rooks of Baghdad,
In your mussed, jizz-jasmined bunkers.
Night-night, Raptor birds-of-paradise.

& & &

The black kite and night-owl startle.
She's an improvised, explosive mind
In a roadside breakdown, then a booted and
Imperial eagle landing Stateside:

That warrior transposition. She sings
The Iraq babbler's mute-swan song.
Beware the sacred ibis, you laughing dove.

& & &

What *endarken* meant—
Flame-thrown shadow-puppetry
On mind's cracked and smoked-glass
Firewall: her mind, mine-swept.

The American cavalry charges in her dreams,
War-unhorsed. A burnt-bridge is breached;
The dark is red- and broken-winged.

Deborah Paredez

Hecuba on the Shores of Da Nang, 1965

Again the sea-machines creep from the east,
their Cronus jaws unlatched and pups expelled.
The scene the same. Again. Again. The sand
now boot-lace muck, the rutted shore resigned.
No words will do. Laments will not withstand
this thrashing tide. It's time for snarling beast-
speak. Gnash-rattle. Fracas-snap. Unmuzzled
hell-hound chorus unbound from roughened tongues.
Kynos-sema keen-keen lash-kaak *nein* grind
then ground and rot and reek and teeth and grief
and gabble ratchet growl: custodian
of woe. It doesn't end. Fleets on the reef,
horizon buckling. To meet what comes
the body cleaves from all that is human.

Deborah Paredez

Last

*"...but from here on, I want more crazy mourning, more
howl, more keening." —Adrienne Rich, "A Woman
Dead in Her Forties"*

The last Huey is lifting off
that Saigon rooftop—
the line of Vietnamese, dark
hair aloft in the blades'
wake, and our relay

team is finishing last
at the annual track meet—
girls angled in staggered
lines, bodies half-turned
back toward the ones

approaching. They'll stay
on that roof and no other
chopper will land—hours
like years, climbing
down, backs against

the emptied sky, ochre clouds
of track dust kicked up and
settling. We run. We finish
last, meet each
other's waiting hand.

Deborah Paredez

Lavinia Writing in the Sand

After Vietnam

Second-hand newlywed bed rocked
by his arched back, gasps for more
air, quickened buckling, then

collapse. This is the first time
his body ricochets
with the crooked electricity,

the first time she sees him
this way, spasm-gripped
as the seizure intercepts his sleep.

Lucky for him, she's fresh
from nursing school, knows
enough to take him into her

arms, still his jaw to keep him
from biting his tongue, turn
his face against the choking.

This is the bed they made
for me. Evenings as a girl
I'd watch him drift off

in the recliner, her voice
from the kitchen, *Make sure
your father doesn't swallow*

his tongue. These days
they say it's not possible
to do such a thing, but

I've seen the body flailing
dusk after dusk after dusk

and the whole house gone
silent.

Deborah Paredez

Memorial Day Ghazal

—still, Hecuba's howl unchaining her voice,
stations cleaving from the train in her voice.

Engine's low thunder: a thousand cranes strung
and unwinged in the skein of its voice.

The trees are bare and veined with ice and still
The stones of strange fruit remain in her voice.

Desert swallow's morning complaint, the sigh
Of languishing stars made plain in its voice.

Rain shuddering down on Canaan—and Deborah
Mud-struck and worn, war chant straining her voice.

Deborah Paredez

Year of the Dog

In the photograph, Mary Ann Vecchio is kneeling
in blood, arms outstretched until her body is nothing
but stripped mast, mouth an obliterated star.
Snowy blossoms shroud the dogwoods
and my mother is just starting
to show. Everything's changed.

Mary Ann won't make it
to California and Mom will
bare her teeth, cage her whimpers
before the Demerol kicks in.
Mary Ann will turn
fifteen the same month
I am born, wanting to leave
Ohio behind her. She'll run
away. Again. I'll enter
this world purpled and yelping.

It's the year of the dog.
Nurses collared in starched
whites, patrolling the floor.

Ellin Sarot

Cala Mesquita, Mahon, Menorca

Now summer, the season: overhead sun
bleaches the sky bone, while below red
stains merely careless beached flesh. Suspended
in the cliffs' updrafts only spying gulls
dive-bomb among sea-green mossed rocks for prey.
Through zonas militares sun-browned men
strut in khaki lines, playing soldier;
raised hands gloved, blandly guardia civil
steer traffic: Cambio de sentido,
it is accomplished here, military
and milk trucks compete death defyingly
round the Esplanade, Todo Por Dios,
Por La Patria the monuments wear.
Above this beach—"small mosque"—a stone tower
the French two hundred years past erected
on Moorish ruins stands, untenanted,
where, age nine, our carpintero, son
of a carpintero, stood at dawn, son
with father facing the Nationalists.
From this dry red earth wildflowers break,
pink and white on cactus, yellow poppies,
sunny breakfast table decoration.
Nights, Hercules glitters over these waves.

Lee Schwartz

Birds, Bees and Wild Semen

He won't eat bottom feeders,
shrimp, scallops, clams,
he says it's not healthy
and religion has nothing to do with it.
I say, more for me.

As for red meat, or free range birds,
he says he doesn't need
to kill an animal to have a meal.
He's happy with kale, tofu,
chick peas, yogurt from contented cows
and water.

I'm not that zen. I will eat anything
that tempts me. Anchovies on
matzoh, frog legs on a bun.
I have no righteous reasons
to turn down fries, fructose or fajitas.
I love to crack a lobster open and suck
out the juices from red claws.
Give me my fin and hattie,
blackened mai mai, stuffed
Rock Cornish hen.

And then you kiss me,
swirl your tongue in my mouth,
lounging on ocean bed crawlers,
scraps of fowl and hoof legged lamb.
Tangled in our wet throng,
you lean in to me and taste the forbidden,
the unsavory, the agribusiness
of death and poor husbandry,
crowded pens, feathers flying.
My moist and warm cove,
the enemy you embrace,
the dreaded morsels of sustainable love.

Lee Schwartz

Passage du Rites

You appear, daughter, at my door
with a silver ball embedded in your
chin, closer to your lower lip;
androgyny's new savage portal.

I calmly assess the amulet
as you offer to make eggs
globus as the pleasure dome
heralding your late adolescence.

A lost comet come home,
irritating flesh, pleasure/pain,
impaling gum, sinews, tributaries,
screwed through to the inner fire.

When you kiss,
hearing the song of Circe calling,
wet lips and tongues stilettoed,
a silver mine spilling sparks.

This shiny globe
reflects all that stand before it,
images of us gawking,
taking in your mannish form:

Dylan hair, black suspenders,
flatbread chest and squared off hips;
the whole universe of love and regret.

You serve the eggs garnished with cheese
cumin and hot sauce,
hot sauce on everything,
like a fire eater downing a poker.

Lani Scozzari

Punished

How I fear the failure
of my body—

The seed-pod hollowed and prickly,
contempt for food I refused to eat?
A single pomegranate hangs from its branch, shriveled.

For years my periods ceased and in each passing blood-free
month
my body ravished, a divided war of starvation, the severed
connection
between hunger and want, thirst and need. How to hold back—

My body the car I drove on sheet ice, waiting—for what—

How to exist just under the surface of enough.

Life grows more wildly than death, its vines: nightshade
bittersweet and thriving constant. Life wanted me to live:
starvation can take years to kill you.

What did I want?

Death's truth too violent. I wanted to live
in her scare alone—shadow in her luster, her flash only prism
against skin.

I rubbed up against her, breath scratchy and soured. I weaned
my female memory—
what is natural?

Those waiting years
for a period, no period—the un-want of a period and now—
my want the same but opposite too.

I want no period but this round I want: life trill: webbed life,
red spark-clash of embryo following cleavage. Momentary
lumination
of egg: electric, magnet.

How opposites grind against themselves, their difference
so thin—a transparent membrane.

In the droughted hollows of regret, I hear my mother's voice,
If you don't feed yourself you'll never be a mother.

Lani Scozzari

The Mercy

On my left, two hawks. Sudden.
The smaller one notices my trespass,
shifts, a light tremor. He calls, warning then rises—slow flap,
slow flap, glide—

One stays. I stop running. We stare: cold, absolutely clear,
she knows my battle: weight
and bulk. Her plumage
fluff and wing.

I run each day, force-hold myself
in the physical: swoosh arms, calves with purpose.
(Am I lost in vanity?) Slick-grease, dangerous asphalt-beauty.

I put my feet to ground. What else can I do—
forgive: the knives
the slow drip of living,
thighs cut down: shiver and slit.

Oh, the mercy I know: it—keeps— living.

Clamor of hawk: I enter thought—
I smell winter, like goldenrods.
We are no self without body.

Andy Wass

The War of Horse

“We hear the engine, not the horse.”

Tomaz Salamun

I.

In the pre-dawn after-apple – terraforming –
I liberally wanted literally nothing.
Literarily nothing.

And how I was equipped to forgive!
and able to say *I am available to you*, still,
already, for sugaring, a fight, for staining;
verily for the War of Horse.

II.

The last prehistoric horse had died out
when the soldier was a farmer,
and the farmer was a soldier.
When land was loved absolutely.

Our brains remember old obligations, though:
to wildness, hair, to divination. And
we’re colonizing one another, aren’t we?
I tame you, you tame me.

We take turns sculling the realms
of wildnesses and kindnesses.
I’m one made of oracle bones: sacred, not rare.
They say I am living for a man, and I know it,

to be raced and worshipped until
something better comes. And it does,
of course, eventually.
Kingship and kinship outweigh

Horse as woman
Horse as woman's
Horse as hunted
Horse as sport
Horse as tank.
Horse as ingredient.

III.

This girl told me her theory on
our lasting proclivity
for shiny things: in our tribal years
or animal days, she said, it was the women,

most likely, looking toward horizons
for any body of water.

Elsewhere, otherwise: the warrior women,
powerful, persuasive. Each is lopping off
the right breast
for operating ease of bow and arrow.

For settling, for distance, for water; more,
for bow and arrow, what would *I* do?
For firing, propulsion, for targeting,
for an aim, for a point to split?

Our brains remember that distant hunger.
And I've got weapons too. I gave up
whatever wanderings for my next Earth,
where I met you,

Horse of shoulder
Horse of sunwalk
Horse of hauling
Horse of process
Horse of bearing
Horse of heartstop
Horse of lesser acres.

Andy Wass

The War of Horse II.

... "and, since he is heavy, and real,

*and sometimes tired after a run
down the river with a light whip at his side,
one must imagine love
in the mind that does not know love,*

*an animal mind, a love that does not depend
on your image of it,
your understanding of it;
indifferent to all that it lacks..."*

Meghan O'Rourke

I.

Our brains remember all ancient longings.
Plus the fact that we have things to protect.

Like that year you went home to her drunk
three or four nights a week, ninety
minutes or so deep into a state
we put you in with "Meet me at"

with "Where are you," with
"He's not home," with "I want more."
Priority was keeping our secret from each other
and especially from the other women in your life.

A war turned to bring us to together.
I had been years yours: it's a new
weather or an old desire caught by
wind and redivided.

To push up against your weight,
orbits would short. An axis would respond.

II.

Our brains remember all ancient lodgings.
And you sure felt familiar quick.
And memory does not behave. It beefs.
I try to be some shadow for you on the door
swinging into the air between
hysteria and love, the air between
obligation, origin.

Surfeit of sugar, of fight, of stain,
he is; my breast, my ease,
my bows and arrows, he is;
my chest and meat, he is;

this guy of archetype,
parataxic, this guy
of punctuating tongue
and general cannonballs.

I break like a horse leg.
I'm movable as land. I see
ritual and romance, testate,
somehow, somehow, to each other.

Moon-drugged and sun-dragged,
I can see across times to where we have
hurt each other so dearly. Still,
this year we invite the world into our house,

where I feed him burnberry pie.
(He doesn't believe in marriage.
Not really. Not for him.)
You try to believe in your

generation and agree. But from birth
you find yourself sank in that ground.
Still resounds the dare
of the world around me. I have
nothing but concession.

III.

My body remembers all
old programming

post- Amazons
post-liberate
post-Maybelline
pre-mothering.

The canter of the 60s
is the gait of my modern guilt.
Post city-sex. Post-New York.

Andy Wass

The War of Horse III.

*“Inventing a horse is not easy.
One must not only think of the horse.
One must dig fence posts around him.
One must include a place where horses like to live;
or do when they live with humans like you.”*

Meghan O'Rourke

I.

[In the post-dawn after apple, horses
leave chem trails from mane and tail, have
surpassed divination.]

And after all of it, I am
happy. Absolutely.

I tried to be modern
and ignore that old famine.
But I *do* like this guy of prolix.
He seems like all kinds of evolutionary good.

Love is not conscription, but
I've left behind the world of Wolfords,
stage blood, and fine coffee – for
minced marital thoughts.

I do, metal. *I do*, meat.
I do, blue cannonball eyes.
Everything is horizontal, deserving.

This guy I've been skinning kisses off of –
He fucks good, clots well, honors me.
No distance here. No bow or arrow.

You remember my first permission, don't you?

I had a cigarette of my own only once –
not for me to smoke, but for you to light.
I liked having something that could invite.

Our brains remembered that old hunger:

before I steadied myself with attempts at value,
possibility, preservation;

before my face was bed-colored and my
skin obligated to you;

before America got so very long, and full of women
who like their hair indefinite;

before I realized I'd become
a collected cosmic spoor

of angel rind, water weight,
wildnesses and kindnesses,

blood moon, datura, bass hum,
horse goddess, land lover,

militater and yet [and so]
mise en place of desires.

Now to figure out to which part of me to tell
I like you living in just my memory.

My brain remembers that old commitment
to the land, to the man,

to destroy you with
the ontogeny of my legs
and penury of mouth.

II.

So I'll silently still protect the horse,

the formative horse,
the three-piece horse. I'll wear it,
gravid or not.

Sure, we have household injuries,
like ink spots, icy steps, heart burn,
wedding cake, linens, lists,
accidence.

My pillowcase next to
your pillowcase is
not my flag of surrender.

I am not just melic.
You are not just camber.
We are muscles among
the mechanics.

III.

I had one dream of being chased
by stood-together stallions;
and in another dream I could not outrun,
and indeed to them I submitted –

The imps of your darling
Darling of your future
Future of your fight
Fight of your family
Family of your making
Making of your mind.

See, for every thing we have made or pared
to fill or figure the world,
we have made some thing
to break it or unmake it.

Edytta Anna Wojnar

2010 WORLD NEWS

Afghanistan: An 18 year, married last year. Brown eyes, saffron flower in her hair. Sliced off nose, torn off ears, because she failed to listen.

Chile: 33 miners trapped in Copiapo gold-copper mine for 69 days. Mineral water, canned tuna, sneakers, double D centerfolds sent down. No casualties.

Germany: The last Love Parade, in a tunnel mismatched body parts of 21 people scattered like puzzle pieces.

Haiti: Earth shook, pulverized and spit back Port-au-Prince. Children mixed with house debris, extracted with bare hands.

Indonesia: Hot July night on Java Island. Nude bodies, woman's legs and arms still in an embrace, scorched under spewing volcanic ash.

Sierra Leone: In Freetown 60 unclothed black men and boys covered with feces and parasites in a jail cell built for 4.

United States: Injecting. Euphoria. No pain. 5 babies delivered in heroin daze, taken by the system. Pain. Injecting. Death from AIDS at 36.

Vietnam: Cleft palate, cancer, extra fingers and toes. Agent Orange still present in mothers' milk.

Edytta Anna Wojnar

SOMETHING SHATTERED

a mug with a chipped rim
slips from my mom's soapy hands
shatters a pile of porcelain plates

from dirty water she fishes out
sharp triangles
before dad sees the damage

I can imagine him yelling
like the time I cracked a glass
while stirring hot tea with honey

a burning stream burst
from his lips
like rounds from machine guns

that splattered his parents blood
red
rotting in bomb shelters

always only pieces left
needless losses he won't accept
in silence any more

Edytta Anna Wojnar

WHAT FLOWS IN OUR VEINS

You are a frog! Zaba jestes!, lips lost
in a toothless mouth screeched
when I skipped by a bag of bones
propped against warm tiles of a coal stove.
One time, crooked fingers emerged
from beneath a dark shawl and pulled
on my neatly braided hair.

I was told, my Great Grandma's mind
was broken
from living too long.

In 1917 she killed her husband, she kept on saying.
Soldiers shot him against a brick wall
but it was she who hid his gun
in their baby's diaper when Germans
searched the kitchen. She didn't know
they would snatch the crying baby from her arms.

I used to be pretty and vain, Baba would sigh,
your grandpa carefree. Then bombs fell. Blood
in the gutters. Fat turned into soap. A bullet
hole in a loaf of bread. Babies frozen
in their cribs. *Baltic Sea turned to ice*
and your mama cried from hunger every night
that winter of 1941, grandma would say
while buttering a slice of bread for my supper.

In the end, she stopped eating.
She was tired
of living.

Now she visits me at night
with stories mama feared
to tell me, points to the doors

mama never taught me how to unlock and,
when I stop eating,
she hovers over my pillow and whispers:
Don't be frightened. Walcz! Fight!

Diana Woodcock

TERRITORIAL DISPUTES

Now my pacifism's put to the test.
Bully cat's gone too far, bit the timid
tom so hard its backside needs suturing—
nearly two-hundred dollar vet bill.
Heard myself threatening to kill.
Always it comes down to this:

good versus evil. Territorial disputes.
The Gaza Strip today. The Everglades
yesterday. And the day before, Asian
man pushed to his northeast limits,
following after a wounded mammoth.
Kotzebue Sound, Mackenzie south to

Saskatchewan, the American plains,
finally Florida to live along the St. Johns.
The Timucua, Calusa, Mayaimi,
Tekesta—people of the Glades. Then
Europe slowly awakening from the Dark Ages.
Rumor the world was round. Spain reborn

after centuries of Moorishness. 1492
Columbus sailing west, taking possession
by flag, sword, cross of the Bahamas and
other islands. And from that point, an endless
string of discoverers, adventurers, conquerors.
Island after island of Indians, eventually

even those fiercest ones, of the Glades.
Say you kill the bully.
Return the timid one, stitches removed,
to the garden. How long before the next
bully appears? Try hard to disregard
the possibility. Ignore the shadow

creeping along the wall. Think positive.
Imagine no hunger, nothing to kill or
die for* in the garden, the timid cat lounging
in the afternoon sun, too lethargic to chase
off bulbuls and sparrows or gobble up
grasshoppers, its purring God's reassuring

all shall be well. But remember the sad histories
of aborigines and so many lost species,
greed the enemy. Not hunger.
I give the bully his own bowl—keep it full
to overflowing, but still he attacks the timid
tom. What can I say?

*John Lennon

Elaine Zimmerman

What Was Left

White post bed on the lawn. Stained
glass window tells an old story.
Textured and glowing, with polished
edges. Two Dutch doors, bold yellow
and magenta. Whether you open
the top or bottom, it's still a junk
yard. Lit up with what was once hope,
now edged in something more costly
than crime. Why she would sell her
right kidney, if only she had one.

Sea glass in a jar on the vanity.
Pink, aqua, soft hue of white lies.
Plucked from the shoreline;
a tumble of broken mussels and
small stone shine. Slim petticoats.
Lace hemlines. Red leather boots
polished up for dancing. She powders
on rouge. Sweet blush of a smile.
Light blue for the eyes. A bit of
pretense holds the day together.

If only someone would buy the green
fence posts. All even and pointing,
as if life were balanced, fair and
hammered in earth, protecting small
gardens from wild rootings. After Iraq,
he dreamed of things he could not say.
Screams each night, louder than her
grabbing, pushing down before the
first birth. But there are no babies now.
Just gin, blades, a loaded revolver.

He spits out recovery at Paul's Redemption.
One year of trying. Like a rock in the mouth;

too hard to swallow. Got a new stutter
as if to say it, talk it, would be to kill again.
His breathing trouble back. Lifeless.
What wolf would turn this corner?
What bear would paw this heart?
Two loops in the sky; circling hawks
close in on carnage. A young woman
buys the red boots, lace slip, some time.

Closing Notes

When I thought of war, I thought about the letter my father and I found in the attic written to my grandfather during World War II after my grandmother passed away. That letter was from Tommy Redman, my grandfather's favorite brother and my father's namesake. In that letter he disclosed that the bombs were dropped during the night in London and that their sister, my father's Aunt suffered from the shakes, a rocking that took over her body.

While doing research for my Master's thesis, I had the opportunity to talk to a couple who lived in London during the bombing. Engaged at the time, they had been separated, conscripted literally off the streets. They were not sure if they would ever see each other again. The wife of the couple worked on barrage balloons.

The word "war" has taken on new meaning for me after Superstorm Sandy arrived in my shore town this past October. It was not a war waged by man but it had the same impact. Superstorm Sandy came at night. My husband waded through chest deep water to the garage to rescue insulin for my oldest son, who has diabetes. We watched the water rise through our floors and waited for the tide to go out so we could make our escape. Violence manifests during crisis. Looting began. Our beach had a military presence for weeks while gas lines were checked and rechecked. Even homes that survived the storm lacked electricity. Food was scarce and fuel was even scarcer. We were cold and schools and businesses were closed. Churches offered refuge and food.

For every story imagined or real, this anthology visits our deepest fears and hope for the future.

Christine Redman-Waldeyer
Manasquan, New Jersey
10 January 2013

**B
I
O
G
R
A
P
H
I
C
A
L

N
O
T
E
S**

Janet A. Baker's poem "Fallout Shelter" is inspired by memories of growing up in fear during the Cold War in the Iowa farm country. Her poem "Burst into Blossom" appeared in the 2011 issue of *Adanna*. Janet is a professor at National University, San Diego.

Judith Barrington is the author of three poetry collections, most recently *Horses and the Human Soul*. Her poetry chapbooks include the Robin Becker Award-winning, *Lost Lands*, and her memoir, *Lifesaving*, won the Lambda Book Award. She teaches for the University of Alaska's MFA program and at workshops across the USA and in Spain. <http://www.judithbarrington.com>

Eleanor Berry lives in rural Lyons, Oregon. Poetry of hers has been published in numerous journals and is included in the anthologies *Breathe: 101 Contemporary Odes* (C & R Press, 2009), *Imagination and Place: Seasonings* (Imagination & Place Press, 2010) and *Visiting Dr. Williams: Poems Inspired by the Life and Work of William Carlos Williams* (University of Iowa Press, 2011), and collected in *Green November* (Traprock Books, 2007).

June Blumenson's work has appeared in various publications including *Nimrod International Journal* as a finalist for the 2012 Pablo Neruda Prize for Poetry, *The French Literary Review*, *Boston Literary Magazine*, *Edge Magazine*, and *Intimate Landscape*. She writes and dances in the Mpls/St. Paul area.

Kay Merkel Boruff, raised in Texas with horses and tumbleweeds, taught school in Sai-Gon, Viet-Nam 68-70 and was married to Jon Christian Merkel, an Air America pilot. When Jon was killed flying in Laos 18 Feb 70, she returned to Texas to teach at The Hockaday School in Dallas for 38 years. She now volunteers at the VA Hospital in Dallas teaching creative writing in the Veteran Recovery Center.

Jane Byers is a writer living in Nelson, British Columbia. She has had poems, essays and short fiction published in a variety of anthologies and literary magazines in Canada and the U.S.,

including Rattle, Descant, The Canadian Journal of Hockey Literature and poetsagainstwar.ca.

Helen Marie Casey is the author of two poetry chapbooks, *Inconsiderate Madness* (Black Lawrence Press), poems about Quaker martyr Mary Dyer, and *Fragrance Upon His Lips* (Finishing Line Press), a poetry series about Jeanne d'Arc, as well as a monograph, *Portland's Compromise: The Colored School 1867-1872*. Her newest book is a biography of the Sudbury artist, Florence Hosmer (1880-1978), *My Dear Girl: The Art of Florence Hosmer*, available from both Black Lawrence Press.

Angie Chuang's work has appeared in *Creative Nonfiction*, *CALYX*, *Washingtonian* magazine, *Asian American Literary Review*, *Consequence*, as well as the anthologies *Best Women's Travel Writing Vol. 8*, *Best Women's Travel Writing 2011*, *Best Travel Writing Vol. 9*, and *Tales from Nowhere*. She is on the faculty of American University School of Communication in Washington, D.C. "The Women's Sitting Room" is an excerpt from her book manuscript, *The Four Words for Home*, which was the Santa Fe Writer's Project Literary Awards 2011 Second Place winner.

Jan Clausen's most recent poetry collections are *From a Glass House* (IKON) and *If You Like Difficulty* (Harbor Mountain Press). Her work has appeared widely in journals and anthologies, including *AGNI*, *Bloom*, *Drunken Boat*, *esque*, *Fence*, *Hotel Amerika*, *Ploughshares*, *Poems from the Women's Movement*, *Tarpaulin Sky*, and *The Women's Review of Books*. The author of eleven books in a range of genres, she teaches in the Goddard College MFA in Writing Program.

David Crews (davidcrewspoetry.com) has poems published in *The Greensboro Review*, *The Southeast Review*, *Paterson Literary Review*, *Wisconsin Review*, *The Carolina Quarterly*, and others. Essays found in *Adanna Literary Journal* and *SPECTRUM*. He both teaches and lives in northwest New Jersey.

Jane Ebihara is a retired middle school teacher who lives in Northern New Jersey. Her work appears in several publications. This poem is about her mother-in-law.

Lois Parker Edstrom is a freelance writer who lives on an island off the coast of Washington. The beauty of the island and her love of art inspire much of her work. Her chapbook, *What Brings Us to Water* received the Poetica Publishing Company Chapbook Award, 2010 and her second collection, *What's To Be Done With Beauty* is forthcoming from Creative Justice Press.

Nancy Gerber received her doctorate in English from Rutgers University. Her work has appeared in literary and scholarly journals, including *Adanna*, *The Mom Egg*, and the *Journal of Aging, Humanities and the Arts*. She is the author of *Losing a Life: A Daughter's Memoir of Caregiving*, and "My Mother's Keeper," a chapbook that chronicles her mother's descent into Alzheimer's.

Melinda Goodman is a 2012 recipient of a NYFA fellowship for fiction based on a submission from her unpublished novel, "A Leap of Leopards". She was one of the co-editors of *Conditions*, the first international lesbian literary journal. Goodman has been teaching at Hunter College in New York City since 1987.

Rae Gouirand, Guest Editor, is the author of *Open Winter*, winner of the 2011 Bellday Prize, a 2012 Independent Publisher Book Award for Poetry, and the 2012 Eric Hoffer Book Award for Poetry. Her poems and essays have appeared in *American Poetry Review*, *Boston Review*, *Columbia*, *The Kenyon Review*, *KROnline*, *Seneca Review*, *jubilat*, *Spinning Jenny*, *Bateau*, *Michigan Quarterly Review*, and other journals, as well as two recent volumes of the *Best New Poets* series. A lecturer in the Department of English at UC-Davis, Nonfiction Editor for *California Northern* magazine, and Director of the Keywords workshop for LGBT teen writers at the Sacramento Gay & Lesbian Center, she is currently at work on a second book of poems and a collection of linked essays.

Laura Hamblin teaches creative writing at Utah Valley University. Her book of poetry is entitled *The Eyes of a Flounder*. In 2007-08 Hamblin lived in Amman where she gathered oral histories of Iraqi women refugees; that manuscript, *Waiting in Amman*, is looking for a publisher.

Lois Marie Harrod's 12th collection *The Only Is* won the 2012 Tennessee Chapbook Contest (*Poems & Plays*), her 11th *Brief Term*, a collection of poems about teachers and teaching was published by Black Buzzard Press, 2011, and her *Cosmongony* won the 2010 Hazel Lipa Chapbook (Iowa State). She teaches Creative Writing at The College of New Jersey. www.loismarieharrod.com.

Penny Harter's books include *Recycling Starlight*, (2010); an illustrated children's alphabestiary, *The Beastie Book*, (2009). *The Night Marsh* (2008); *Buried in the Sky* (2002); *Lizard Light: Poems from the Earth* (1998); *Turtle Blessing* (1996), and with her late husband, William J. Higginson, she co-authored *The Haiku Handbook* (25th Anniversary Edition, 2010). A Dodge poet, Harter read at the 2010 Dodge Poetry Festival. She has received three poetry fellowships from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts, the Mary Carolyn Davies Award from the Poetry Society of America, and a January, 2011, fellowship from Virginia Center for the Creative Arts.

Vicki Hudson lives with her family in northern California. She has a MFA in Nonfiction, in 2007 she was a Fellow at the Lambda Literary Emerging Writers Retreat and her latest book, *No Red Pen: Writers, Writing Groups & Critique*, is available online for download or in print.

Janet R. Kirchheimer is the author of *How to Spot One of Us* (2007). A Pushcart Prize nominee, her work has appeared in journals such as *Atlanta Review*, *Limestone*, *Connecticut Review*, *Lilith*, *Natural Bridge*, and on beliefn.net. She is currently producing the performance film *BEHOLD: Poems of the Holocaust, Then and Now*.

Joan Kresich is a long time teacher now bringing restorative justice to her community, and a writer who loves the alchemy of paring down words until they heat up. She lives in Livingston, Montana and Berkeley CA, in one place listening to the cries of wild geese, and the other, the tumble of urban dialects.

Alessandra Lynch is the author of two books of poetry: *Sails the Wind Left Behind* (Alice James Books, 2002) and *It was a terrible cloud at twilight* (Pleiades/LSU Press, 2008). Her poems have appeared in various journals including *The American Poetry Review*, *jubilat*, *Ploughshares*, and *The Virginia Quarterly Review*. She teaches poetry to undergraduate and graduate students at Butler University, and lives near an Indianapolisian canal.

Maura MacNeil is the author of *A History of Water* (Finishing Line Press, 2007), and her poetry has been nominated four times for a Pushcart Prize. Her poems have most recently appeared in *Shadow and Light: A Literary Anthology on Memory*, *Smoky Quartz Quarterly*, and *The Henniker Review*. She is the co-founder and editor of *Entelechy International: A Journal of Contemporary Ideas*, and teaches at New England College in Henniker, NH.

Farzana Marie is the President of Civil Vision International, a non-profit organization whose current focus is positively influencing future U.S.-Afghanistan relations through connecting, informing, and inspiring citizens of both countries. She returned in 2012 from a 2-year deployment in Afghanistan as an Air Force officer and is now working on a PhD at the University of Arizona's School of Middle Eastern and North African Studies.

Robin Martin has won the 2009 Tennessee Williams Literary Festival for her story "1969" judged by Richard Ford and published in *The New Orleans Review*. "1969" and "Bob and Hope" were both honored by the SF PEN Women Jon Keats Soul Awakening Competition. "Bob and Hope" also won the Columbine award for conflict resolution at the 2012 Moondance

Film Festival. Her story “Number 723, September 10, 2001” is currently published and honored in the online journal *Literational*. She has recently completed a novel, *Out Like a Lion*.

Cynthia Neely is the 2011 winner of the “*Hazel Lipa Prize for Poetry*” chapbook contest by *Flyway: Journal of Writing and Environment*. Her poems have appeared in, among others, *Bellevue Literary Review* (Honorable Mention for the 2011 “Marica and Jan Vilcek Poetry Prize”), *Floating Bridge Review*, *Crab Creek Review*, *Naugatuck River Review* and *Raven Chronicles*, as well as several anthologies.

Tisha Nemeth-Loomis is an adjunct faculty member at Morton College where she teaches literature. She holds an MFA in Creative Writing from Columbia College Chicago, and is the author of *Terrain of My Affection*. Her poems are published in various print and online media. Her critical essays are published at Indiana University Northwest’s literary journal *Plath Profiles*. Tisha lives and works in Chicago.

Amanda Newell’s poetry has appeared or is forthcoming in such publications as *Bellevue Literary Review*, *Pearl*, *Poet Lore*, and *War, Literature & the Arts*. She was the Donald Everett Axinn Contributor Scholar at the 2011 Bread Loaf Writers’ Conference and was recently awarded a fellowship by the Virginia Center for the Creative Arts.

Megan Obourn lives in Rochester, New York. She is an Assistant Professor of English at The College at Brockport, SUNY. Her first book, *Reconstituting Americans: Liberal Multiculturalism and Identity Difference in Post-1960s Literature*, was published by Palgrave in 2011.

C E O’Rourke is an award winning essayist and poet, a self-taught artist, naturalist, and adventurer in our spectacular North American wilderness. Recent publishers include McGraw Hill, Portal Literary Magazine and The Healing Muse Journal.

Coco Owen is a stay-at-home poet and blogger in Encino, CA. She's trained as a clinical psychologist and is on the Les Figues Press board of directors. Her poems have appeared in the *Antioch Review*, *1913*, *The Journal*, *Tidal Basin Review*, etc., and a mini-chapbook from Binge Press.

Deborah Paredez is the daughter of a Vietnam veteran and is the author of *This Side of Skin* (Wings Press 2002). Her poetry has appeared or is forthcoming in *Poetry*, *Crab Orchard Review*, *Feminist Studies*, *Poet Lore*, *Palabra*, and elsewhere. She is the co-founder of *CantoMundo*, a national organization for Latina/o poets, and is an Associate Professor of English at the University of Texas in Austin.

Lara Popovic is a 26 year old Serbo-Dutch writer, and visual artist. She likes kites, poetry, and big hair.

Christine Redman-Waldeyer, founder of *Adanna Literary Journal*, is an Assistant Professor at Passaic County Community College and currently working on her second doctorate in Educational Leadership. Her book publications include *Frame by Frame*, *Gravel*, and *Eve Asks* with Muse Pie Press and she is currently working on a history of Asbury Park, Arcadia Press and on an anthology on *Writing After Retirement*, Scarecrow Press. Her poems have appeared in *Caduceus*, *Lips*, *Motif Magazine*, *Paterson Literary Review*, *Seventh Quarry*, *Schuylkill Valley Journal*, *The Texas Review*, *Verse Wisconsin*, among others.

Ellin Sarot is a writer and editor living in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Her poems have appeared in *Chaminade Literary Review*, *Women's Studies*, and *The Beloit Poetry Journal*, among other periodicals, and her reviews in *The Women's Review of Books*.

Lee Schwartz lives in Greenwich Village. She has studied and grown old with Sharon Olds and Bernadette Mayer. She is a two time winner of the Alan Ginsberg Award of the Paterson Literary

Review. Lee served as Poet in Residence at the 92nd St Y and has poems in the journal *The MomEgg*.

Lani Scozzari holds an MFA from Sarah Lawrence College, where she served as Senior Editor of *Lumina*. She is a recipient of a Key West Literary Seminar Scholarship. Recent publications include *Comstock Review*, *Midway Journal*, *DeComp Magazine*, *Whistling Fire*, and *Saw Palm*.

Quyen Truong was born and raised in Vietnam. She came to the United States at age 7, and studied Visual Arts at Brown University. Quyen worked as a youth arts mentor at Artists For Humanity in Boston for five years and is now pursuing a career in painting in New York.

Andy Wass sends poems, songs, and the occasional fashion story from Baltimore. In 2005 she completed the Jimenez-Porter Writers' House creative writing program at the University of Maryland, College Park. In 2008 she self-published *The Book of Tells*; her poems have also appeared in *The Iguana Review*, *Poetry Midwest*, *Stylus*, and in Ragged Sky Press' anthology *Eating Her Wedding Dress: A Collection of Clothing Poems*.

Edytta Wojnar began writing poetry in Poland in her native language. At 21, she immigrated to America. She lives with her husband and three children in suburban New Jersey.

Diana Woodcock's first full-length collection, *Swaying on the Elephant's Shoulders*, won the 2010 Vernice Quebodeaux Poetry Prize. Chapbooks include *In the Shade of the Sidra Tree*, *Mandala*, and *Travels of a Gwai Lo*. She has been living in Qatar, which shares a border with Saudi Arabia, since 2004.

Elaine Zimmerman is a state and national policy leader for children, an essayist and poet. Publications include poetry in *The Coal Hill Review*, *Lilith*, *Caduceus*, *Winning Writers War Poetry*, *New Millennium*, *Long River Run*, *Friends of Acadia Journal*, and anthologies including *Everybody Says Hello*, *Sleeping with One Eye Open* and *Worlds in Our Words*.

Contemporary American Women Writers. She is a Pushcart nominee and finalist for the Philbrick Poetry Project and Israeli Poetry Peace Prize.