

SONIC BOOM

...for writing that explodes



issue twenty-four

April 2023

(Poetry, Prose, & Art)

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THE POETRY SHACK

Looking Out the Window at Night

John Grey

Darkness is only half the window.
The rest is my face.

I am the king of the frame,
the ledge, the parted curtains.

The glass is my queen
but I plan to throw it over
for the moon.

The reflection of the wall behind me
is the extent of my current subjects.
But if I can't rule the stars,
why bother.

The Present Absence

Joseph Salvatore Aversano

And the thing in the Kim Ki-duk film I recall most—
and it's the strangest thing—is how when after
the young apprentice makes off with the
precious Buddha statue from the monastery

his aging master doesn't even try to replace it
but instead sits facing the space the Buddha was in

and the old wall that was always behind it.

I love you like yes I'll try your hobbies

Mycab Miller

when you weren't home,
I practiced tying the rope into the climber's knot you taught me

until my fingers were figure eights and I lost my palms
binding them into my harness.

I'll tell you a secret:
it isn't because of unknowing fingers that I ask you

to lean in
close

and check that I am tethered
before I climb.

Tables of the Moon

Ron Scully

Lune in French—smooth as light;
sentence drawn with repose,
long legs of a reclining nude.

In German, hard edged monde;
dense marble export the Tuscan ridge,
an arm fixed by Michelangelo.

Or egg of some ancient deity,
a reminder of indeterminate sex;
coiled to break back on the world.

Perhaps the distant clarinet
of Beethoven's "Leonora", no...
tonight, she'll play trump card.

Phases of the name turning in my hand.
Mind's crescent, time to place your bet.

Therapy

Sara Sowers-Wills

There is nowhere to go to scream.
The kids will hear.
The neighbors will hear.
Every wall in the house echoes.

But sometimes
the mailman leaves letters and junk
at the end of the driveway
and doesn't make eye contact.

PAPER LANTERNS

blackbirds in flight—
all I have
to recover

– Maria Teresa Sisti

line-editing the cosmos of autumn leaves

– Aidan Castle

one day chased into another wolfsnow

– petro c. k.

another crocus just in case

– Vandana Parashar

february rain what would happen if i didn't

– Kerry J Heckman

last seen spring ago

– Aishwarya Vedula

anosmia the flowers my eyes smell

– Eavonka Ettinger

why no shuffle, hummingbird

– Chidambar Navalgund

zill-chime windlight in the poplars

– Kelly Moyer

flute moon out of breath with every tune

– Surashree Joshi

a few pages apart no verb

– Richa Sharma

a past participle however much I dust

– Ashish Narain

from one infinitesimal to another a lifetime

– Chidambar Navalgund

the significant nothing in nothing

– Aishwarya Vedula

holding a storm tacenda

– Arvinder Kaur

evening prayer
I congregate
my day

– Tazeen Fatma

[content]

– Rob McKinnon

the river the raïndrop and i rasāsvāda

– Arvinder Kaur

PROSE

My Mother's Mold

Angeline Schellenberg

My mother and I wake with gravel imprinted on our arms and legs. At our backs, a familiar path; at our feet, a mountain blocks our way. How long have I been dreaming about dancing naked on the other side? *What do I do?* my eyebrows ask. *Find a way around? Start climbing?* My mother doesn't answer. She is building a giant quinzhee on the path, out of snow she made herself. *I need a sheltered spot to serve guests,* mother explains. *This funeral-sized pot of hamburger soup won't eat itself.* But there is no one else. She pinches her fur hood around her cheeks. Already her roof is melting. *Eating...eating,* I think, the way forward, on the tip of my tongue. I press my hand on the base of the mountain. It jiggles. It has a greenish hue and smells like lime.

Nested Loop

Chidambar Navalgund

Your nerve endings are responsible for the feelings and emotions you experience. A bit of an irritation here, a fierce glance there—all of it happens in the nerves and neurons. How do you deal with this fact when your desire is to be a little more than your body? A little more than what you feel and think. A trap.

inside a web of my own making samsara

Burning Hearts

Howie Good

That building over there had been set on fire. I still can't forget the screams of the animals. The man responsible was eventually found hiding in a ditch. He had been trying to escape by climbing a glass mountain but kept sliding back down. A mammoth would later appear, looking for its mate. Local ruffians would beat it to death with sticks and tire irons and metal baseball bats. I felt weirdly out of place, like I was walking down the winding streets of Old Town Prague thinking about Kafka and his broken engagement to Felice and the blackness on all of the statues.

Morning Music

John Paul Caponigro

The morning tune is Clair De Lune, so into the kitchen comes a feathered fantasy with two webbed feet to add a horn of delight with her orange beak. Who knew that waterfowl favored weather music? Vivaldi never fails to delight big white wings with every season. Come Daphne play Chloe, revel as the bath is drawn, and sail away. With pinions in water and water in the air, hail, hail these rhythmic Rites of Spring. Living music sings in every key. Bobble Barber. Adagio, piano, piano, lento, lento, rest without stress, be still, stop. No matter if the goose is loose, what's left behind will go down the drain. Back Bach. Save the Requiem; it can wait. The rest is never final. She will lay another egg.

Skip repast. My measures are out of time. I'm late for my own choruses. I flock to school. Exasperated with my chronic tardiness, the vice principal stopped calling my mother long ago, and now he no longer looks up when he waves his finger like a baton at me. What was it this time, Rachmaninoff? How come it's never a rock and roll? Maybe then you'd be on time?

Missed Signals

Richard L. Matta

We're in a room packed with card players. The din is low, the air slightly stagnant, and the game is duplicate bridge. It's like playing chess with a deck of cards. Sometimes I wonder why I play; it gives me a piercing headache. Must be Max, my sprightly eighty-four-year-old partner. He's a former university librarian, invites me to the symphony on occasion, and indulges in chardonnay during intermission, when he enjoys pointing out mistakes orchestra members made. We've played bridge on and off for two years. He's intense, remembers every play, though it seems he's been spending too much time inside, staying up late, practicing on-line. He's also lost considerable weight, looks paler and less inclined to find pleasure in the game. Today, after the game, we talk outside, likely to review my misplayed hands and bidding auctions gone bad. Instead, we philosophize about a state law allowing terminally ill adults to self-administer lethal drugs at the time of their choosing. I'm puzzled about the topic, but he always surprises me with his depth and breadth of knowledge. A few days later his daughter contacts me. We meet and she hands me his bridge book. On the first page in his script, "my dear bridge friend, see you on the other side."

winter wind
fading footsteps
behind a foggy pane

Thangjing Eromba

Sukla Singha

Eat cold rice with eromba to keep the body cool in summer.

Since the doctor advised against eating meat in scorching heat, father now brings a bagful of thangjing from the market every day. Mother firmly grasps the stem in her coarse hands, removes the spiny skin to reveal the soft, velvety white-brown fleshy substance beneath.

In a large steel bowl, boiled potatoes are mashed with green chillies, salt, and water. Soft thangjings are then generously tossed into the mixture.

Scraping off the layers of a century's pain, mother mashes derision with compassion, heartaches with hopes. In sweltering heat, she prepares a bowl of thangjing eromba thrice a day, her fingers soaked in slimy desires.

Eat food cooked without resistance to keep the body cool in summer.

I pour ghee atop hot rice in an air-conditioned room in summer.

the necklace

Vidya Namika

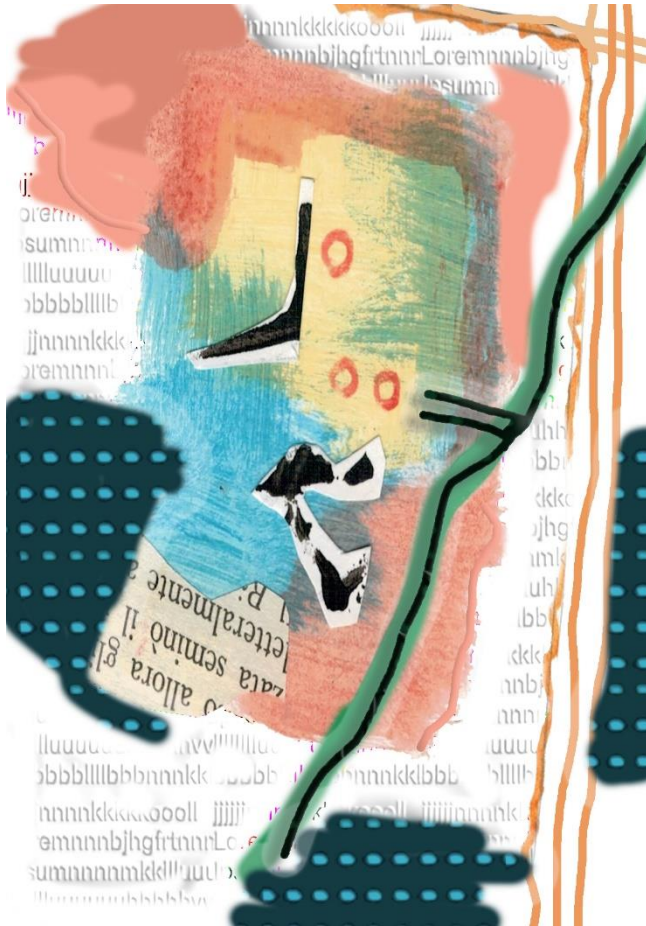
the little girl, maybe eight, touches it again and again to see that it is there, it stays there. the necklace hangs loose around her slender neck. every pore in her body feels its heaviness. she had been told several times by her mother that her mother had given it to her. there were only two generations written on it but it felt like several. the little girl could count days, weeks, and years. not generations. but what her mother told her flowed in her blood. whenever she played *tokkudu billa*, whenever she jumped on one leg, crossing one box to another, the necklace would rise and fall too, the somewhat sharp edges piercing her delicate skin, making her acutely aware of the weight of generations she was carrying with her.

the little girl could never imagine her ammamma with the necklace around her neck. she never wore much jewellery, anyway. if not for the elongated, pierced holes that made her ears almost reach her shoulders, she would never have noticed the diamond studs ammamma wore. there was the yellow metal around her wrists that had weathered with age. it had caught the grime of the years, the dull sheen of once-upon-a-time. she squatted on the floor in padmasana, her back slightly bent, with the Bhagavad Gita in front of her on a wooden reading rest. she would read the scriptures aloud sometimes, and at others, silently. only when someone spoke to her did she respond. for a woman who had raised more than eight children, her silence was somewhat strange. the little girl did not have any recollection of ammamma ever petting or cuddling them. there was always an air of distant reverence around her.

the necklace had an existence of its own, carrying with it the youth and the dreams, the joy and the pain, the laughter and the silence of a mother who passes it on to a daughter. it has always belonged to daughters—a woman becoming, coming to herself. sons can never claim it. once in a while, for several years, it goes into oblivion. it resurfaces with the idea of an unborn daughter. the necklace seeks its wearer and tells a story to the one who finds it. buried in thick memories, stored in a steel locker, the necklace waits for the daughter that should have been.

VISUAL ART

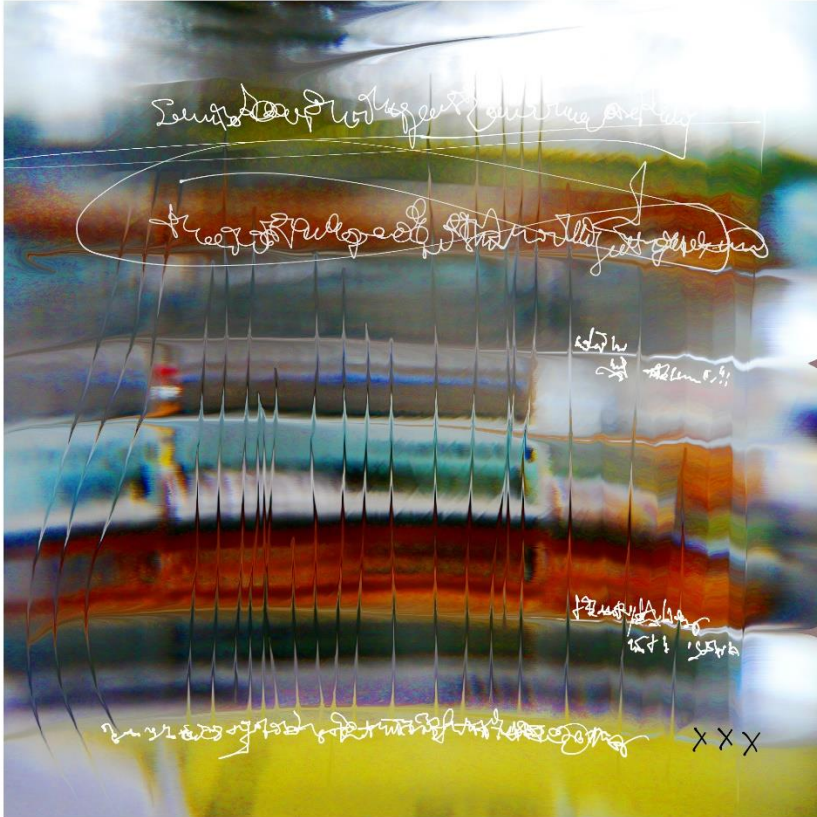
Pianeta Terra by Angela Caporaso



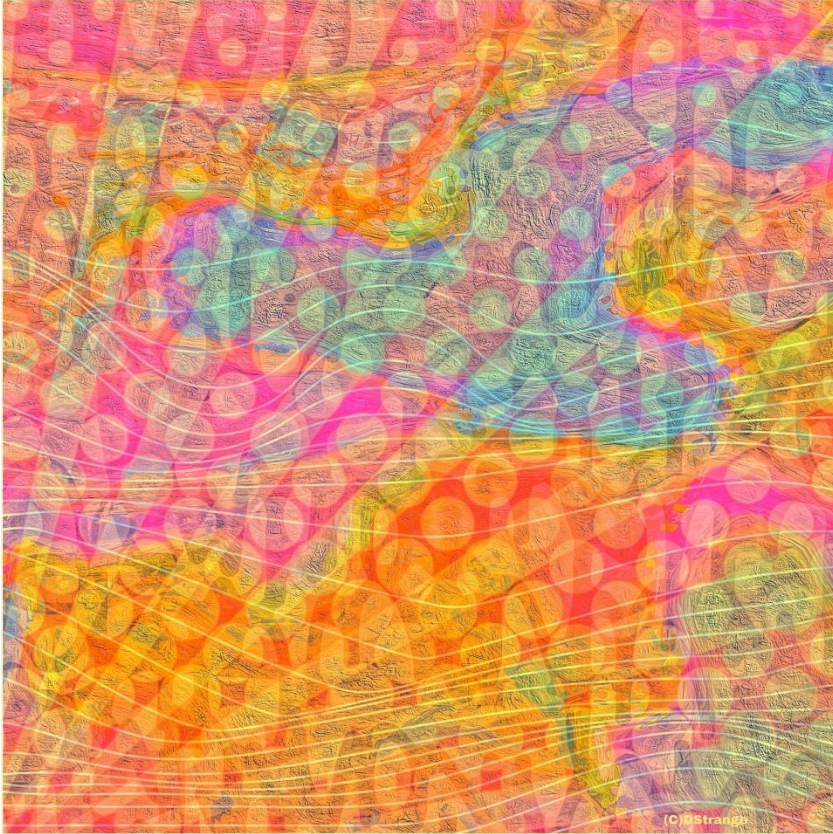
Colors Will Tell the Onset of Spring by Beate Conrad



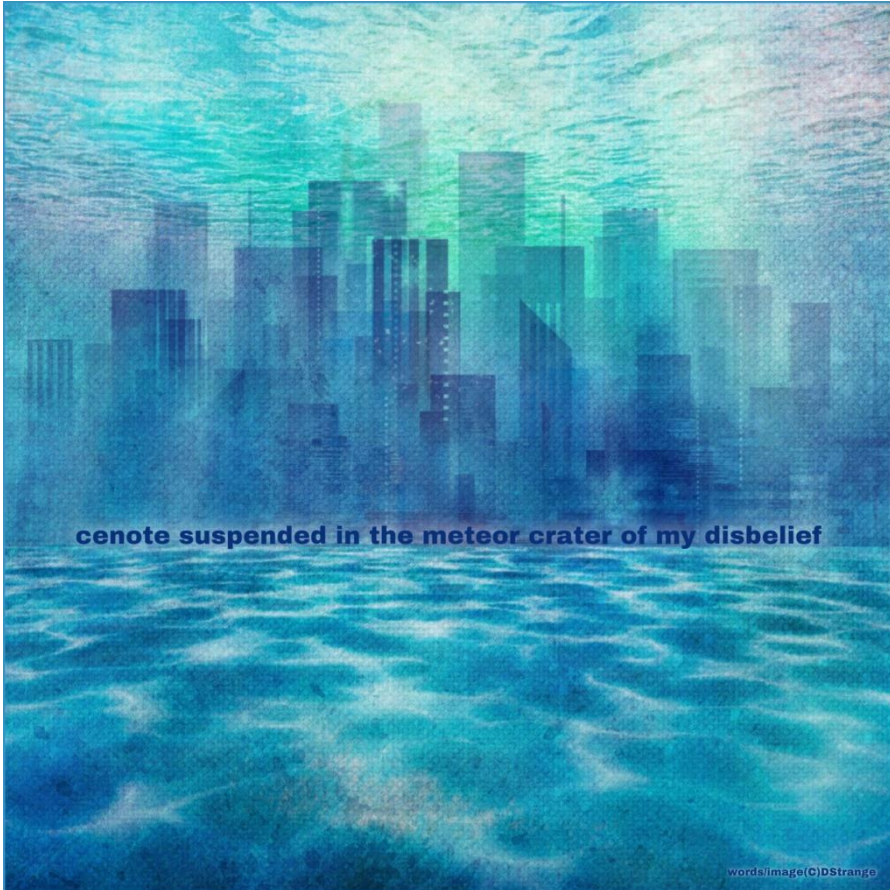
The Perks of a Postcard Summer by Beate Conrad



crepuscular rays by Debbie Strange



cenote by Debbie Strange



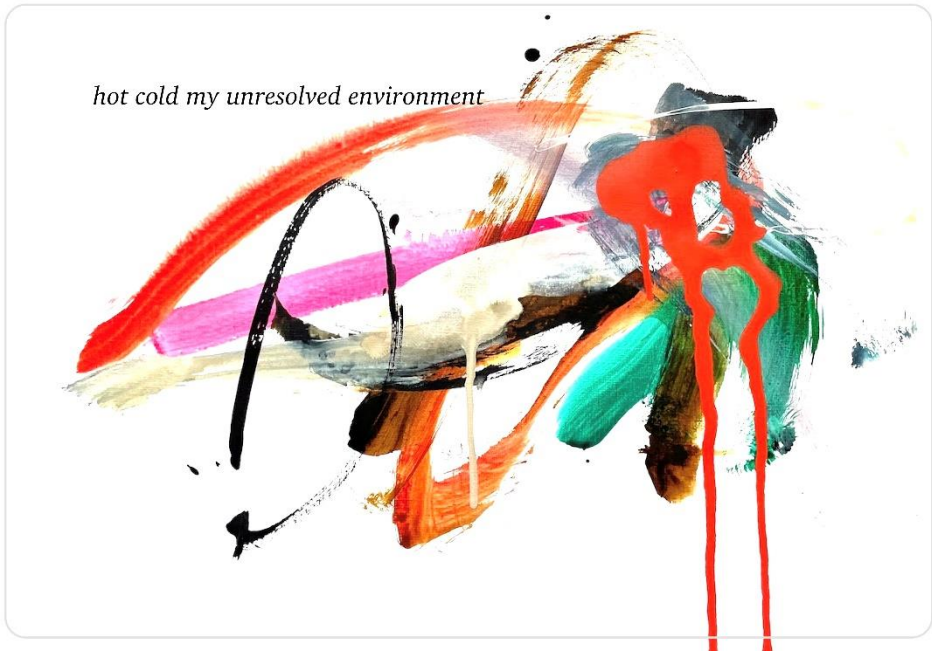
Johari Window by Dhaatri Vengunad



Armchair Travel (Seagull) by Donna Caffrey



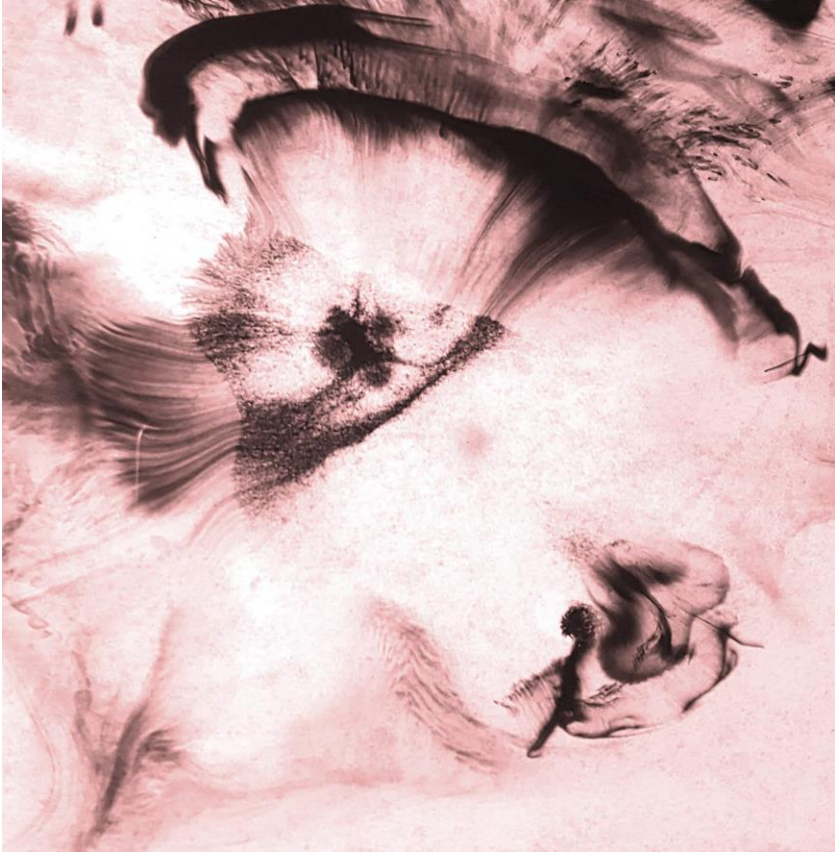
hot cold by Ella Aboutboul



Stairs II: The Fall of Men by Flávio Vidal Carvalho



Sheltered by Julie Schwerin



Geranium by Laura Cantor



One Way by Luciana ALonso Ferrero-Luixchel



Prendo fuego a Barcelona by Luciana ALonso Ferrero-Luixchel



Registro de otoño by Luciana ALonso Ferrero-Luixchel



Oars by Madcollage



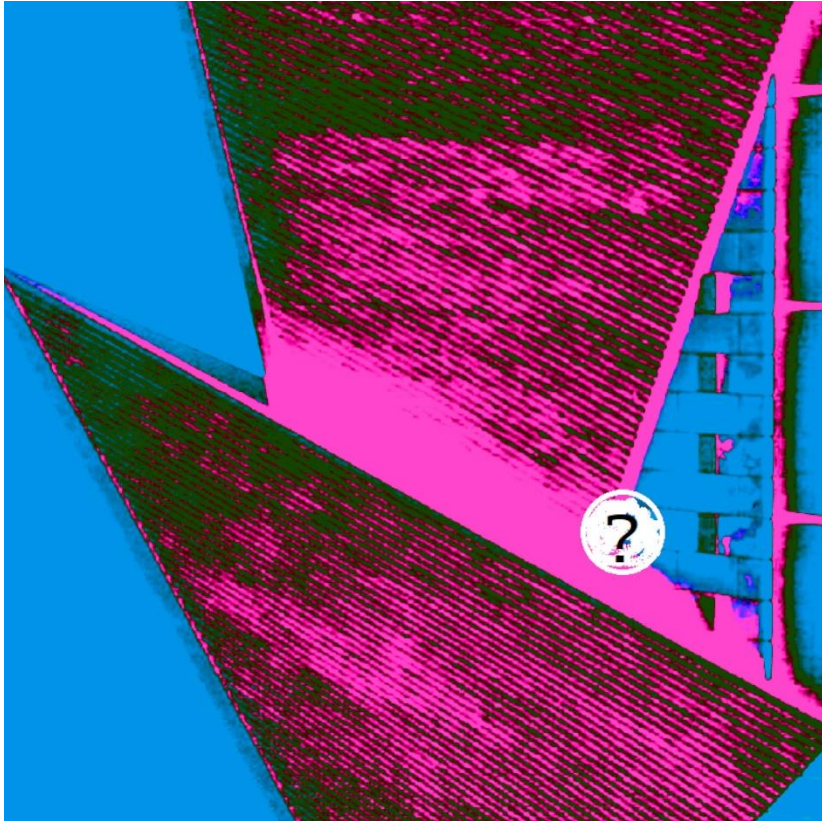
Mr. Wilson's Neighbor by Madcollage



One Seed by Marcia Brauer



geographies: Katamatite by Mark Young



Freedom by Neerja Chandna Peters



Saadhaka #2 Neerja Chandna Peters



Evolution of Beauty by Penny Wasmund



Dorothy's Suicide by Sam Heydt



Tired by Sam Heydt



CONTRIBUTORS

Aidan Castle is a nonbinary poet whose work is informed by neurodivergence and a passion for nature. He loves the brevity and directness of haiku, and the haiku community. When not writing, Aidan enjoys drawing, painting, playing board games, and taking long walks in the fog. He lives in Tacoma, Washington.

Aishwarya Vedula is a literature student, avid reader, budding poet, and a visual artist from Bilaspur, Chhattisgarh, India. Most of her days are spent contemplating her thoughts and later drafting them. She feels alliteration is her better half. Aishwarya has contributed to several anthologies as a co-author.

Alexander Limarev is a freelance artist, mail art artist, poet, and curator from Russia/Siberia. He has participated in more than 1,000 international projects and exhibitions. His artworks are part of private and museum collections in 72 countries. His artworks as well as poetry have been featured in various online publications, including *Briller Magazine*, *Iconic Lit*, *Maintenant*, *Ekphrastic Review*, and the *Killer Whale Journal*, among others.

Angela Caporaso was born in 1962. A visual artist from Caserta, Italy, she began to take an interest in figurative arts in the eighties, exhibiting repeatedly both in Italy and abroad. Since her first exhibitions, she has revealed a constant strain towards new expressive languages.

Angeline Schellenberg wrote the Manitoba Book Award-winning *Tell Them It Was Mozart* (Brick, 2016), the KOBZAR-nominated *Fields of Light and Stone* (UAP, 2020), and *Paradigm Riffs* (At Bay Press, forthcoming 2024). Her latest stories appear in *New Flash Fiction Review* and *The Dribble Drabble Review*. She hosts Winnipeg's Speaking Crow open mic.

Arvinder Kaur specializes in English literature and Media Studies, both of which she has taught for more than three decades in the postgraduate colleges of Punjab

and Chandigarh. She has a passion for Japanese short form poetry, loves sunsets, and jacaranda blossoms. She lives in Chandigarh with her family.

Ashish Narain is an economist by profession and a haiku poet by choice. His work has been published in online journals like *Prune Juice*, *Modern Haiku*, and *Frogpond*. He lives with his wife and two sons in Manila, Philippines, and has almost got them to agree his poems make sense. Ashish is on the editorial team of *haikuKATHA*.

Beate Conrad lives and works in Germany. Since 2012, she is editor-in-chief of the international haiku magazine *Chrysanthemum*.

Chidambar Navalgund, from Belagavi, India, is a graduate in Criminology. He currently works as a Social Media Manager for multiple chess organizations. His interests include visual and found poetry, collage, and photography. Chidambar's work has appeared in *whiptail: journal of the single-line poem*, *Under the Basbo*, *Unstamatic Magazine*, *tinywords*, *Otoliths*, *Prune Juice*, and elsewhere. His debut chapbook, *the sound of healing*, was published by Yavanika Press in 2022. He aspires to be a civil servant.

Debbie Strange is a chronically ill short-form poet and artist whose creative passions connect her more closely to the world, to others, and to herself. Blog: <https://debbiemstrange.blogspot.com/>

Dhaatri Vengunad is an artist, book illustrator, and visual communicator who loves cats, colours, tea, and is an average dreamer in this world.

Donna Caffrey's interests are eclectic. Her art practise involves study and experimenting with paint, clay, collage, textiles, and threads. The tactile experiences of these mediums takes Donna to her to her happy place, when she captures a time, a moment, an image, and the feelings of her world.

Eavonka Ettinger arrived at haiku after a journey through theatre, film, spoken word poetry, and teaching. She is grateful to her writing community for inspiration and growth. A few places her work has appeared are *Poetry Pea Journal*, *Failed Haiku*, *Akitsu Quarterly*, *Prune Juice*, *Scarlet Dragonfly Journal*, and *Cold Moon Journal*.

Ella Aboutboul is a designer and enthusiastic apprentice of the creative muse through writing, brush work, and rediscovering treasures in the wastepaper basket. She lives in West Sussex, UK.

Flávio Vidal Carvalho is a self-taught multidisciplinary Portuguese artist, writer, and poet (in his spare time). The love for art and the discovery that he could be “many” in art creation – singular and multiple – opened countless and fruitful possibilities for being, living, doing, and creating. He is trying to publish his first book.

Howie Good’s newest poetry collection, *Heart-Shaped Hole*, which also includes examples of his handmade collages, is forthcoming from Laughing Ronin Press.

John Grey is an Australian poet and US resident, whose work has recently been published in *Stand*, *Washington Square Review*, and *Floyd County Moonshine*. His latest books, *Covert*, *Memory Outside the Head*, and *Guest of Myself* are available through Amazon. John has work forthcoming in the *McNeese Review*, *Santa Fe Literary Review*, and *Open Ceilings*.

John Paul Caponigro is an internationally collected visual artist and published author. He leads unique adventures in the wildest places on earth to help participants creatively make deeper connections with nature and themselves. View his TEDx and Google talks at <https://www.johnpaulcaponigro.art/poetry>.

Joseph Salvatore Aversano lives on the Central Anatolian Steppe with his wife Asu. His most recent poems have been published in *Modern Haiku*, *Otoliths*, and the previous issue of *Sonic Boom*.

Julie Schwerin is an associate editor at *The Heron’s Nest* and a member of the Red Moon Anthology Editorial team. She was instrumental in establishing several haiku installations in the Midwest, the most recent of which is *Words in Bloom: A Year of Haiku* at the Chicago Botanic Garden.

Kelly Moyer can often be found wandering the mountains of North Carolina, where she resides with her husband and two philosopher kittens, Simone and Jean-Paul.

Kerry J Heckman is a therapist and writer in Seattle. Her poems have appeared in *Mayfly*, *Modern Haiku*, and *Frogpond* among other publications.

Laura Cantor is a printmaker, painter, and mixed media artist living in the Bronx, New York City. She has an art degree from Empire College, SUNY and an MFA from Lehman College, CUNY. She is fascinated by the patterns of bridges, water towers, and other urban architectural forms.

Luciana ALonso Ferrero-Luixchel is the Director of the Salieris de Van Gogh space and art gallery. She finds her place, her certainties, and the irrepressible need to make known the powerful, eloquent, and transcendent force of expression that art offers. She has developed her artistic career in different types of visual arts such as painting, design, photography, and illustration of children's books.

Madcollage is a formally trained collagist who believes art is an appallingly underutilized therapeutic tool. Scissors, paper, and glue—a simple art worker, low in the food chain.

Marcia Brauer is a mixed media artist currently living in Northern California wine country. She has exhibited her work in Minnesota, California, Italy, and Switzerland, as well as several online exhibits, art journals, and artist exchanges. Her works is on Instagram and Facebook @Marcia Brauer.

Maria Teresa Sisti began to read, study, and write haiku in 2014. She has participated in literary competitions obtaining important awards. Her poems have been published online and in printed magazines in Italy and around the world. She was listed in the European Top 100 haiku authors and published her first haiku collection, *Piccoli semi di arancio*, in 2021.

Mark Young was born in Aotearoa/New Zealand but now lives in a small town in North Queensland in Australia. His most recent book is the downloadable PDF, *XXXX CENTONES*, available from Sandy Press.

Mycah Miller is a CA-based poet, artist, and motorcycle safety instructor. Her work has been featured in shows and publications nationwide such as *Vagabond City Lit*, the *Berkeley Slam*, *West Trade Review*, and more. Find her work @MycahMillerArt.

Neerja Chandna Peters, a New Delhi-based artist, uses abstract geometry for spiritual expression through her paintings and drawings, which are in acrylic and pen, playing with light, colours, and lines. An award winner in Biennales and International exhibitions, she recently had her solo exhibition in Portland, USA.

Penny Wasmund is a mixed media artist, caricaturist, and teacher of all things “art”. She creates works with bright colors and many layers that will have the viewer seeing something different each time they look. She is inspired by faces, vintage photographs, and animals. An avid art journal enthusiast, Penny spreads the benefits of journaling to all. Website: <https://pennyscolorfullife.com>

petro c. k. lives in the aggressive greenery of Seattle, but lets no moss grow on him – he wears all black instead. Since he started writing last year, his haiku and other short-form poems have already been widely published in dozens of eminent journals, and have been nominated for several Touchstone and Pushcart awards.

Richa Sharma resides in Delhi NCR, India. She loves reading and writing poetry in her leisure time. Since 2019, her work has appeared in numerous online and print journals dedicated to Japanese short poetry. She hopes to continuously develop a quality of natural writing uniquely her own.

Richard L. Matta grew up in New York’s Hudson Valley, practiced forensic science, and now lives in San Diego with his golden-doodle dog. Some of his work is found in *Ancient Paths*, *Dewdrop*, *San Pedro River Review*, *New Verse News*, and many haiku journals.

Rob McKinnon lives in the Adelaide Hills, South Australia. His poetry has featured in *Kontinuum*, *Wales Haiku Journal*, *Poetry Pea Journal*, *Bloō Outlier Journal*, *Failed Haiku*, *Trash Panda*, *Cold Moon Journal*, *Chrysanthemum*, and *Prune Juice*, among others.

Ron Scully is a retired bookseller, former chess player, and part-time poet. In lieu of daily meditation, he practices Japanese short-form verse. He also pens lyric verse when given. Ron is the author of the mini chapbook *Still Lives* and the chess-inspired chapbook titled *master pieces*, both of which were published by Yavanika Press.

Sam Heydt is a visual artist who has lived/worked in Paris, Venice, Amsterdam, Athens, Buenos Aires, Sydney, Reykjavík, Udaipur, and Vienna. Esteemed as one of the pioneers of the recycled media movement, Heydt works across mediums and employs a range of materials, often reinventing and trespassing their associative use. Her work is internationally exhibited.

Sara Sowers-Wills teaches linguistics and writing at the University of Minnesota Duluth, and researches cognitive approaches to language. Her creative work has appeared in *Pleiades*, *Interim*, *Denver Quarterly*, and elsewhere. She enjoys the explosive sunrises and extreme cold in Duluth, where she lives with her husband and two daughters.

Sukla Singha lives in Agartala with six cats and a human.

Surashree Joshi is a confused millennial who is trying to write six books at a time and trying to find out who she really is.

Tazeen Fatma is an engineer, poet, enthusiastic learner, and a dreamer from India.

Vandana Parashar is a postgraduate in microbiology, an educator, and a haiku poet. Her haiku was shortlisted for the prestigious Touchstone Award 2020. She is the Associate Editor of *haikuKATHA* and Feature Columnist for *whiptail: journal of the single-line poem*. Vandana is the author of the chapbooks *I Am* (Title IX Press, 2019) and *Alone, I Am Not* (Velvet Dusk Publishing, 2022).

Vidya Namika was born in Kavali, a small town in Nellore district, Andhra Pradesh. She post graduated in English literature from the University of Hyderabad. She quit her long teaching career to pursue higher studies. Vidya's poems have been published in *Muse India*, *Neesab*, and *Sonic Boom*.

FINIS.