The Mitre
1997-1998
Bishop's University
The Mitre
1997-1998
104th edition

Editor: Kirsty Robertson

Bishop’s University
A literary tradition since 1893
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cover art by Toge Heersink, illustrations by Kirsty Robertson
Revival

You penetrate my dreams.
I thought sleep an escape
from the hollow sound of the Syrinx
reverberating in my mind.

As I drift into the night
a quiet melody invades
gently coaxing its way deeper within
until I can taste the sweat of your brow
while you dance wildly with abandon
the darkened fields trampled by the weight
of your hairy hooves.

I pray to a foreign god for salvation
the resonant reed confuses progression
even the moon has turned a blind eye
your enticement the only way.

They say you died in a manger
yet you live on inside of me

Cori Klassen
Ancient

This ecstasy of the zorba
Forgotten worlds of Plato
Life is joy
The cradle of civilization
Ignites into a fiery bliss

Nikoh! Profound

Change

This feeling of conformity
Holds its presence
Like Pavarotti
The cellular solution
Becomes the elite
Among the aristotelian past

Nikoh! Profound

Sherbrooke, By Lauren Cruikshank
Femme

Souvenirs et solitudes à la pointe d'une bougie
L'amour moite, qui respire
Ton respière, là, qui déchire là-bas... dans moi
Le plaisir, au risque de multiplier la cicatrice
Une larme, qui te développe, qui m'enveloppe... viscéral
Ta foi, ton cœur, ton sexe, c'est à toi, femme.

Stéphane Cardinal

Untitled

A fool, a fool,
giggling at a butterfly

on a pink cup
"Butter, Butter, Fly!"

Caroline Houde

Little Flower

The field of Sunflowers, is like a little kingdom for the small child, walkin'

Never ending garden, of sun-golden flowers Cadencing with the wind, Ballet.

World of Dreams, Song-birds in a magic wood Haunted, by imaginary friends for the small child hidden...

While closing her eyes, a butterfly whispers to the Bee, "isn't she lovely!"

Caroline Houde
Words so Born

Oh, what bitter kiss is that
When sharpened tongues let fly.
For from the jilted lover spat
Such cutting words and sordid lie.

So hard it seems, but with such ease
A fruit so ripe, worms turn so green.
So quick to rot with such disease,
Forbidden fruit, repeated scene.

And from larvaed kiss comes no moth,
Nor winged beauty sees the skies.
Of late, this birth seems once too oft.
Should words so born mean life’s demise.

Alas, tis left, for one’s heart to choose
That one so chide, be hard to lose.

In Response to Hardy’s ‘The Oxen’

Go then! And see in yonder coomb
whether beasts of the burden there be;
with knees to the ground as in front of a tomb,
of awaiting expectantly.

For although Faith faded fast with Time
and eyes opened to Truth about Man,
at least you were able to buttress your mind
with a Hope, as we never can.

Our Age is a time beyond Bible or Cross
and your God just a thought from the past.
Yet at times I wonder at all of our loss,
and what is there truly that lasts?

So, go and search for your kneeling beasts,
return to the childhood dreams.
For given a chance to have Hope, at least,
might not be as bad as it seems.
Child of Dreams

Cold, rainy nights
I lay in slumber.
My dreams
the key; a promise.

My painted wings;
stained glass beauty.
Nearly weightless
begin my voyage.

The peaceful air lifts me up;
carrying my soul.
Bitter reality
Cracking like thin ice.

With restless spirits,
I soar above silver streams.
Freedom’s hands
rest on my shoulder.

Among the white clouds
I feel the sun’s warmth.
Fresh breeze
gently moves my hair

My simple eyes reflect
large green mountains.
Great splendor
takes my breath away.

Gentle creatures scurry
along the ground below.
Quite busy
living without fear.

At first light
I am traveling home.
Quickly realizing
I am simply a child of dreams.

Renee Robidaux

Cross the Dream Ocean

The sweetness of surrender supports my soul
As I lay watching you;
Your dun curls a golden softness breathes, in
The arms of a pale few.

The hour grows weary of the loveless day,
When I no longer here;
The swarming sunshine with its silver rays
Will all but disappear.

Tracey Millen
A Raven sits proud in a tree overhead
No, it's only a crow...
But no matter.
The tree could be a tropical palm
No, it's only a pine...
But no matter.
The sun shines now, but soon it will fade.
The stars will shine... Do shine...
Have shone - with crystal perfection.
A satellite races across the night sky
It looks like a star that's lost its home.
A shooting star splits the black-
It looks like a star without a home
An asteroid in flames in the gases I breathe!
But what if I didn’t know?
Maybe the sky is falling-
maybe the Gods are calling.

Imprinted lines swirl beneath the page
like waves on the ocean - they roll-
salt spray streams down my face with
The force of a spiritual awakening.
Nature's initiation into a life gone by.
Cold, wet, the sting of salt in my eyes.
Still I don’t move - I am home-
I need seconds, minutes, days...
This salt, a satellite, a Raven...
Too soon it will pass-
it is gone
and so-
am I.

No Matter

photograph by D. Vouliouns

Tim Pearson
The roller coaster

a slow climb
cranks screeching in pain
fighting to rise
struggling to reach
the end of the slope

waiting on top
an unexpected peak
revealing a drop,
unavoidable danger
fear

fall from the sky
like stars
only without the light
the brightness
nor hope

choking
on the bulks
of stomachs
lodged in throats
stealing breath
quieting cries

gathering speed
plunging
into infinite
darkness

cranks screeching in pain
fighting to rise
struggling to reach
the end of the slope

waiting on top
an unexpected peak
revealing a drop,
unavoidable danger
fear

fall from the sky
like stars
only without the light
the brightness
nor hope

choking
on the bulks
of stomachs
lodged in throats
stealing breath
quieting cries

gathering speed
plunging
into infinite
darkness

the daylight
reappears
suddenly the world
is spinning
out of control
shadows unrecognizable

the ride slows
passengers disembark
one by one
amazed
exhilarated
they have escaped
the terror
that is life

Vanessa Liston
The Mitre 1997-1998

water water water water water
my case enshells me
hinders my activity

eventually I will be the most unhindered
with no use for limbs of warm blood

the power to hypnotize, the power to render gelatinous my prey

sleek and simple
silver smooth straight
and waiting to be born

simple strand
white poison
golden fascination
sandy strength
lovely slithering hell

finger

alien
love

unborn
active

limbless sheba

Sara Brady

The Sweater

This sweater I am wearing (100% wool)
was knitted by my mother
twenty five years ago
each stitch a declaration
of love
when she was pregnant and
couldn’t afford a ring.

He wore it often
Tenderly traced the cables,
unconsciously fingered the mistake.
Kept him warmer than gold
When he couldn’t pay for heat.

This sweater lasted twenty five years
Saw Canada score in 1972,
The Berlin Wall fall,
The Cold War finish.
Picked up the smell of burnt leaves
and peat moss.
Stayed young, while others grew
old inside it.

This sweater I am wearing,
was copied by my mother,
sitting by his death bed,
each new stitch in desperation,
in hope,
of saving the suicidal threads
of this old sweater
which catch on passing nails—
the unravelling of a life.

Kirsty Robertson
Drawn into conflict
brushstrokes in the dark
the humble clown
a desperate fool
beside the wishing well
a fantasy, a clever ploy
rusting like a broken toy

Water falls from clouds of grey
their heavy load disposed
the truth therein a grand repose
scattered upon the ground
no sound
or voice
a space for choice
and children all around
My son and I set up our telescope to catch Venus climb the pre-dawn sky. Our hands were chilled, they fumbled in the crisp and the cold. Silence roared its dominion.

The night moved, startling the snowy landscape, and it grew into something uncanny.

We peered deeply into the heavens, into the cold, the vast and dark, tried to understand, failed, despite our focus to contemplate how powerful this can be. This globe, lost in the awesome silence where stark beauty is so compellingly articulate,

and as we spoke, I saw his eyes capture the pale tints of dawn glowing into consciousness.

How sad it is to think that in this vivid moment of aliveness, the truth is that I cannot freeze time; he is only a boy for so long.

At that moment I saw beauty ascendant, reflected and deathless in those bright brown eyes. In the here and now, the eternal.

One more peek into the eyepiece, the planet glowed among the untouchable stars and I heard him whisper to himself, 'Poor homeless star.' It was then that we were swept into an enduring transcendence before birdsong slipped into day.

Frank Willdig
The Death of Romeo and Juliet

Do you believe in the power of love
Or, in the love or power?
What an ultimatum she proposed;
A decision must soon be found.
Time to fly south, three days forward,
Because I - I have to.

What is love?
In which boundaries are those feelings
-contained.
A walk in the park, a kiss on the cheek,
Symbolized by the reading or words,
Or a circle of gold.
Once thought to be impenetrable,
Now unable to protect.
This love has brought life twice to be.
The futures of two,
Her Majesty would decide.

Success. measured in coin and bill.
The richness of Kings, there for the taking.
Be all you can be,
not what you want to be.
You can’t reach for your goals
You must reach for theirs.
A raise, more travel, a bigger name.
A failure would become of me,
For if not taken was this opportunity.
My name would be famous.

Trees die. politicians kiss.
Lies are made of words.
Metal melts, millions die everyday.
But a name, a name lives forever.

Light, dark, light. dark.
The alarm rings at seven,
As he wishes forgiveness from heaven.

Romeo loved Juliet
Beyond gold and power;
so much it was worth death.
Their was a story of true love.

Why have they died?

Lee Kaizer
Alone

The world has moved on
and left me behind.
A relic of times and thoughts
long gone.

I am the last of a dying breed.

I see things change
with alarming rapidity.
The old is cast aside for the new
so easily.

Will it be that way with me?
It has already begun.
I think of all those who came
with open arms and loving smiles.

Then cast me aside,
Like so many times before.
Leaving me alone.
Loneliness soon leads to rage

That burns the core of my being.
It dies quickly
and a cooling lake of sadness takes its place.
I drown in that lake

As the waters engulf me
I know that I am the last.

And I am alone.

Matt McCarney
Yellow

The Mitre 1997-1998

The tenth floor balcony;
it was high enough.
Some courage, and my friend Smith & Weston;
there was time enough.
Cars fly under the overpass;
the medium was low enough.
My Gillette in the bath tub;
it was sharp enough.
Sigh...
Here I am.

Tomorrow

All within to bleed without,
to bend, to break,
spill forth life's candy apple resin.
O to be filled with tomorrow!
Tomorrow is a life less ordinary.
Less than this is more than all I am
in late night solitudes,
where black and white
take up the fight
for grey.
Tomorrow I am reaching for rainbows.
Ultraviolet! Infrared!
A host of spectral superheroes,
elusive as truth,
which must yet guide this ship to harbour.
There is no light,
no midnight sentinel.
There is no sound,
no morning song.
There is only a place growing ripe with promise.
Stiff-limbed and fumbling,
I must pluck the seasoned fruit or watch it fall
from grace to the
graceless
ground
below,
there to rot,
the decomposing carcass of a dream.

Victor Rodriguez

J. Muir
Everyone in the World is a Genius

First of all, the word "genius" holds so much clout. It shouldn’t; recognized geniuses are no more important to the world than anyone else, really. What is the world? What is the universe? It is what you are, therefore no one in the world is more important to the existence of the universe than you. Therefore the only person really necessary or pertinent is yourself. Secondly, recognised geniuses are supposedly gifted with abilities and/or intelligence beyond that of ordinary people. You, simply by being born (a feat in itself when you actually think about it), have created a universe that no one else could possibly imagine. No one else could do that for you which automatically makes you superior to everyone else in abilities and intelligence. Thirdly, we’re all going to die and the earth will cease to exist so any recognized exceptional abilities have no real meaning anyways. Therefore any and all forms of recognition are useless: so, the world (meaning the world of people) doesn’t have to recognize you as a genius for you to be one. Which means, fourthly and finally, that everyone is indeed a genius but, it doesn’t really matter.

Sara Brady

The rampage sale

I

the south tamworth methodist church rummage
sale has turned into a rampage
tale

the new minister has deeply offended
the congregation and now the news
is on the lawn

along with the bric brac nick nack
displayed on a herd of saw-horse tables
while tongues clack

of his offense too great to be here described.
but little bits we know - the old hymnals
given in the dead’s memory

are gone - and a group of curly white-haired
women are thuribly incensed.

holy smoke!

II

rummage comes from the old french rum
for the hold of a ship
and to search thoroughly

among the things stowed on board.
today’s sale has turned up items
from the basement to be sold to pay for
the furnace heated with iraqi oil
but not the minister's salary
a rampage tale

which makes these empty rum bottles
glinting in the sun shatter
with the anger inside.

these human-like vessels will
all be dismounted from their
saw-horse chariots

and herded back into the basement
under the nave in time for
tomorrow's nine-thirty a.m. service

there they will sit like rows of bottles
with their caps on (except for the men)
waiting to be filled with shards of sermon

about jesus entering the temple
and overturning the tables
of the money changers

"my house shall be called a house
of prayer but you are making it a
robber's cave"

Brian Scott Kelley

Drawing by Gord Carter
Le bal des mal-aimés

Voyez, voyez les danser
Ils tournent en rond toujours et toujours
Sans jamais s’arrêter
C’est le bal des mal-aimés la danse macabre de tous ceux que
la vie à trop blessés

Ici et là courent des enfants incestués
Pour l’instant ils ont tout oublié
Mais un jour, rejaillira leur passé
Et ils comprendront pourquoi ils viennent ici danser
Mais, pour ce qui est du moment présent
Leur joie illumine cette salle
Pourtant, comme dans ce monde que vous appelez “normal”
Tout ceci n’est qu’illusion; car ils ont mal en dedans
Chaque instant une épine s’enfonce encore plus profond
Dans leur cœur d’enfant déjà plus bon
Dans leur cœur d’enfant devenu adulte trop tôt...
De cet embrouillami qu’est leur cerveau
Un éclair furtif jaillit
Ce petit morceau de mémoire déjà enfui
Ils ne l’ont pas vu
Car ils se sont fermés à tout ce qu’ils ont vécu

Le bal des éclopés continue
Cette ronde n’en finit plus
Ils tournent, tournent et tournent encore
Pour étouffer leurs esprits et leurs corps
Mais ces paradis artificiels
Ne les feront jamais atteindre le nirvana, le ciel
Car ils ne peuvent fuir leur souffrance
Elle est ancrée très, très creux
Seule issue: la démence
Mais même en se fondant dans celle-ci, ils ne pourront
s’enfuir... D’eux

Nansy Jean-Baptiste

I am not of matter
Indivisible with age
Maybe stoned
Maybe loved
But always in a cage

I am just a shadow
Acting on a stage
Maybe stoned
Maybe loved
But always in a rage

Steve Polley
Serenade

I hold her hand
It extends from her thin arm
and her protruding shoulder
cocked and awkward,
to her pulling neck and head.
Then I see her beautiful
face in all its pallor,
Stripped of all its joy, its song, its score
Blank stares, but I am
happy to just hang on
Hiding my tears
Swallowing my despair
Harnessing the shame as it
washes over me like the
wares of my tears on her bedsheets.

Words leave my mouth
My eyes peer out at spring
No bloom, this year
Her garden has overgrown
My memories to keep her company
Are my only comfort this day.

The birds chirp on out of habit
But feel the void in their refrain
For their fearless leader
Couldn’t hear the serenade.

Behind me

Behind me lays a land of untainted hopes
and dreams.
A freedom that can be expressed no other
way.
Fate that turns in your direction and no
concept of time;
Opportunities lay in wait for the search
to begin.
Blue skies that contain only one cloud,
not two;
And fresh air that digs the dirt out of the
corners of your soul.

How I wish I could turn around.

Caroline Cunningham
Squishy

The phone rings and Ramona answers it. Emer can tell it’s Jake by the way her voice gets all pearly-soft and secretive. His plans fell through, he is calling in for backup, Emer thinks to herself. That’s Ramona, she muses, girlfriend on call, available always, but only for you Jake. Tonight she’s mine. Emer reminds herself this, but certainly doesn’t believe it.

Turning out the phone conversation, Emer curls up in the nook of the couch, and flips the television on. She knows this situation well.

The next morning Emer sleeps through her alarm. After showering, she yanks her clothes over her still-wet body. She smears honey on her slightly burnt toast, grabs her coat and keys, and rushes frantically to the bus stop.

The trees outside are still drippy from last night’s rain. The morning is dankish and dismal. A bus finally arrives, and she somehow manages to make it on time.

When 1:00-lunch finally rolls around, Ramona does not show up. Emer’s lunch plans are now shot, so she eats at the cafe across the street with Patty and Lisa. She doesn’t mind, much.

Ramona calls around four, but doesn’t apologize for lunch, or for last night. Instead she talks about how much fun they are going to have tonight.

Emer isn’t sure about this. She and Violet have plans, or had plans anyway. Regardless, she tells Ramona. “I guess.”

Emer then calls Violet and cancels, saying she’s starting to feel sick, a sore throat. Afterwards she does feel sick, but it is guilt gnawing away at her, in the pit of her stomach. At six o’clock Emer heads home.

As she unlocks the door, she finds Ramona’s stuff strewn all over, and a mess of food out on the counter. Squishy meows, and rubs his furry self against her legs.

Emer takes off her shoes and jacket, and throws the mess into Ramona’s room. She flips on the radio and opens up a new can of Whiskas for Squishy. For herself she makes pancakes. The dishes go into the sink.

She puts on her purple-wool sweater, fixes her hair, applies eyeliner and lipgloss. It is almost 7:30; the movie starts at eight. She tries calling Ramona at Jake’s. There is no answer. She might as well watch television she figures, and sinking back into the couch. Emer clicks through the channels.

Squishy hates Ramona, and when the door bursts open twenty minutes later he heads for the safety of Emer’s room. It is not just Ramona that walks in, though. Jake is there, too. He says hi to Emer, and she blinks back tears of disappointment.

“We were thinking of going to Sid’s party,” Ramona says casually. “The show is probably sold out by now, and we’d have missed the beginning anyway.”

Emer doesn’t bother trying to hide her disappointment, but Ramona hardly notices. They end up going to the party.

An hour later they ditch Emer. Politely, of course. They say they are going back to the liquor store, and won’t be long. When they finally do get back they are hammered, and all over each other. They make a quick retreat to some
furnitureless room on the second floor.

Emer hardly knows anybody there, and is not in the mood to be sociable. She takes her beer, and heads downstairs, ending up underneath an old grandmother-knitted afghan, flipping through magazines.

A fairly gimpy drunk comes down, and starts asking her stupid questions. She mumbles some reply and keeps on reading. He goes back upstairs.

Emer is ready to leave. She goes up to the second floor to get Ramona and Jake; from the sound of it, however, they are not quite ready to leave. She makes other arrangements.

After paying the cabby she runs up the front steps to find a note from Violet and a coldish thermos on her doorstep. Chicken soup. She unlocks the door, and reading the note, carries the soup inside.

Emer runs herself a hot bath, and lavishly empties out a ginormous amount of Orange-Satsuma bubbles. She slides into the tub and immerses herself, face down, into the steaming, fragrant water. She has had enough.

She is sick of it all; it is making her tired.

Emer is beginning to come to the realization that it is Ramona who's making her tired. She misses her old friend, the real one, who had actual strength and integrity, and a core. Ramona did not used to be like this.

Now, Ramona is all soft and squishy, like drowning soap, or something. You can't get a handle on her anymore, because she will just slip away. She is slowly dissolving into a syrupy liquid, and soon she will not even be there at all.

When the water becomes all tepid, and Emer becomes all shrivelled, she pulls the plug. She can feel the water being suctionned down around her. She thinks of Violet.

Emer wraps a towel around her body, and one around her tangly, red hair. She reheats the soup, and sitting curled up on the couch, fingers tight around her warm mug, she gently rocks herself back and forth. Squishy snuggles up beside her.

Day breaks, and Emer stares out the small window, watching the sky turn mauve and tangerine. She packs her treasures and her essentials, and a few tins of catfood, into her backpack and sits it by the front door. She makes a quick call, and resumes her position, with Squishy, at the window.

Her taxi will arrive shortly. She just hopes that Violet will still have her.
My Knees

Upon my knees, my head hung in shame,
tears flowing freely, an expression of my guilt.
I cry out to the Lord, but my voice gives way,
the despair flows over me.

You say stand, but I am weak
You say walk, but my legs will not hold
You say knock, but I see not the door
You say love me, but you I can not find

Upon my knees, my head hung in shame,
the despair flows over me,
the despair flows over me.

You wrap your loving arms around me.
I am strong, I stand
My legs hold, I walk
I see the door, I knock
I find you, I love you

You love me, hold me, forgive me.

Upon my knees, my head hung in prayer,
your love flows over me.
your love flows over me.

Standing

Standing in this heat alone
Being consumed by fire
Can the flames ever depart
When fueled by such desire?

Passion, white hot, searing flesh
The naked eye can’t see
And this longing in my soul
Refuse to set me free

The mind just isn’t strong enough
To make them go away
For nature has its own designs
And fate will have its way

Jeremy Prince

Linda G. Mitchell
Childlike

My pen is magic. It radiates colours and rhythms, also meaningful things.
The power of preference, of understanding as well.
But it knows confinement.
It embodies repression.
Without voice, it can only wander by guided hand.
The Wanderer

I am the wanderer
That slides through the bright lit skies
I've taken the third highway to the skies
Making way for two other inbred
Side by side they travel
Side by side they gallop through the clouds
Their nostrils expire gushes of burnt coal
Their main whips the air with thrust
These are the inbred of thy vestal
A ruthless angel of death and of renaissance
Her kiss dictates the verdict of my heart
It is the stallions that curses or purges
THE VICTIM first
It is the stallions that sears the heart
THE LOVER second
It is the stallions that disembodies
THE MATE third
They become man
One man that grinds his teeth awaiting for that kiss
I am the wanderer
And I have seen her
I have seen her breasts sway at each thomp of her word
I have seen her hair that defies every whipping movement
of the black stallion's main
I have seen her body's stature flow like milk through
celestial skies
Whom who sees, foresees and seeks thy beauty of my vestal
Perishes surely under the unforgiving light of sight
I promise to touch thy vestal
I promise to strip myself

I promise to let my light shine
This light barely shown to others
The nakedness of her body makes me shiver
Your smile makes me quiver
And I hold you
And you hold me
Knife of silver at hand
Ready to stab
Each others hearts
For love

Stephane Cardinal

Twenty-two

Someone who'll wipe the tears from my cheek
And make it real.
This is what comes to mind
as my eyes close and
my lips purse to snuff
out 22 candles
on a cake before me

Caroline Cunningham
To Dean & all the other boys

all the voracious boys
leap out of high volt photos
images with furrowed brows
and god tipped dagger eyes
swirls of brownblondblueblack
to form symmetry of hunting foxes
worried about halo stars
and
the white scattered on film
between the closing black lashes
shutter to capture all the
pretty boys are
plucked like chickens
to be frozen and eaten
deprived of colour to reveal
their fine white bones.

Kendra Thayer

Mystified

Surrounded by a mist, I walk an unfamiliar path.
Beyond I see a man, he poses a threat to my journey.
Pretending not to see him I continue along my way.
The soil now crunches monotonously beneath my feet.
Suddenly the air sweetens, why I wonder?

I start to forget about the path,
my mind travels into times gone,
such pain, sorrow and happiness I can see.
It all seems like a dream to me now.

Grass now covers the soil,
it feels good against my sore feet.
I stop for a second.
The smell in the air is stronger now
I am drawn towards it, why I don’t know.

Then I see her, naked, the grass flowing around her body.
I feel to run, but I can’t, something about her captivates me,
she holds out her hand towards mine,
I take it, she feels warm.

The man beyond still watches but every thing is familiar now.
I know where I am, we start walking, hands still linked.
Where she is going I do not know, nor do I care,
for while I am with her the world beyond just fades away.

Paul Alleyne
Dedicated to Lara
Désespoir pour la mort...

J'ai peur, seule, le soir
mais c'est ma vie que je passe esseulée
ma seule amie est la mort
et même elle ne veut pas m'accompagner
Déjà, elle m'a trahie:
Je lui avais dit tout ce que je ressentais
mais elle s'est enfuie
En riant de moi et elle riait, riait, riait...

Enlevez-moi ma peau!
Je suis si mal à l'intérieur
Déchirez-moi en mille petits morceaux
pour que je ne sois plus rien qu'un faux malheur
qu'on oublie que j'ai existé
Je ne veux plus penser:
cessez-donc de me voir
je veux me fondre dans la nuit et le jour
je veux que disparaisse mon horrible reflet dans le miroir
je veux disparaître pour toujours

J'ai mal... À moi
Je ne veux plus souffrir par votre faute
Je suis déjà morte...
Je crois!

Nymphale's Dream

Sweet Baby lullaby,
Caught in the web of night
Laughing on the moon swing
Swinging, up to Cassiope
Back to Cancer,

Sweet Baby lullaby,
Riding on Pegasus
with laced wings
Leaves of gold, shining stars,
Like satin pearls
in a bed of corals

Sweet Baby lullaby,
Silk ribbon Embroidery
Muted pastel palette

The gem which Dims the Moon

Nansy Jean-Baptiste

Caroline Houde
Gerald the mouse was fascinated by the sheen of his floor. That is to say not his floor exactly, but the floor on which he was sprawled. Legs akimbo, tail askew, Gerald was passionately embraced in the process of deconstructing his prior perceptions of the floor. Previously, back before this saga began, Gerald had thought very little of the floor. It seemed like such a normal floor, boring, shiny, dirt ridden, and unbiodegradable.

The floor did have merits; despite being dull and listless as floors go, it had always been a consistent source of food. Crumbs, crusts, small mouldy pieces of cheese. All of it had been routinely embedded in the cracks between the tile, dropped by the hand of a careless God and left for Gerald to find.

Now, however, the food was gone, and in its place a glassy shine. The cracks had been filled with a plastic laminate, and the entire floor was gleaming maliciously at Gerald, whose pupils were rapidly dwindling to pinpricks from the glare of the florescent light off his newly hostile world.

It was not only the glare that caused those pinpricks to appear where pupils should be, but Gerald had it out for that florescent light. We've all had that lovely uncomfortable feeling of being penetrated by the cancer of 500 watt light bulb rays. This was where Gerald was at this moment, under a considerable amount of discomfort and disorientation from the evil cancer producing agent of the dark force. Turning off the cancer was not an option, for as Gerald had discovered only moments ago, it was untouchable.

Before his tumble to the cold tile, Gerald had decided once and for all to stand up to the light entity, as menacing as it seemed. No matter how evil the monster appeared Gerald was sure that his mother was right when she said that all he had to do to put a stop to any uncomfortable situation was to assert himself clearly. So he hiked up his fur and brushed up his whiskers and approached the blinding light. Once he got up to it, he had no idea how to make it stop. How to kill this strange other being? Gerald had no idea, all he knew was that the emanating light had to be stopped. The cancer must die. Since he didn't have a mirror (to force the cancer to take some of its own horrid medicine) he figured his overly moist tongue would do just as well. Inadvertently, as he held his mucus membrane out as a reflective sword of Good, he swayed and slammed the tip of his tongue on the source of all death light rays.

The shock had sent him tumbling, plummeting to the now absorbing and arousing tiles. Gerald took stock. Nothing seemed broken, and while spots of colour were dancing around his eyes, they seemed to have synchronized themselves into a regular routine, complete with light music not unlike that of the great Dick Dale. Gerald liked surf-rock, a predilection arising from many nights in front of the television as a baby mouse, watching all-night Frankie & Annette film festivals. Beach Blanket Bingo was a particular favourite.

Gerald staggered to his paws and started for his hole. Maybe it was best to just forget the light, forget the tile, and just try to sleep this off. The dancing spots were performing some sort of big dance number; the closing from The Music Man or perhaps Oklahomal. Band swells. Big brass hit. Off to bed. Dragging his back paws, which had gone strangely numb, Gerald was about a foot from sanctuary when a shadow interposed itself between him and the cancer agent. Gerald smelled saliva, dried urine, and his own fear. A low growl began to roll around the room, and through the haze, crashing through the dancing lights (now doing the pink elephant scene from Dumbo), one thought rang clear: cat.

The cat launched itself from its hiding place on top of the microwave. Low-level microwave radiation had given the cat a much more aggravated form of cancer than Gerald's, and the
cat had been driven quite mad years before. It actually thought Gerald was a miniaturized form of Frankie Avalon, and the cat had not appreciated Beach Blanket Bingo nearly as much as Gerald. The cat hated beach movies, surf music, and nursed a longstanding grudge against surf-guitar great Dick Dale. He was, in all respects, Gerald’s natural enemy. He spun in mid-flight, overshooting Gerald and preparing to land and pounce back to compensate. The cat was as new to the floor laminate as Gerald, and was surprised to find himself skidding out of control four feet backwards, right into the laundry chute. With a yowl strangely reminiscent of a riff by surf-guitar great Dick Dale, he plunged into lemony-fresh darkness.

And yet the yowl of Dick’s guitar continued. Gerald, puzzled and intrigued, spun around to face his hole, his home, straight on. And lo, there in front of the hole belonging to Gerald was his idol, his obsession, his secret lover, Dick Dale. Oh my God, thought Gerald, I must be hallucinating. I must be dreaming. And lo, he was, and his Dick disappeared in a puff of drug induced logic. Sighing in resignation that his life would never be complete, and his erotic goals would always remain unfulfilled, Gerald headed home for the day to eat some cheese, and watch MTV in his drawers til the sun came up, which incidentally since he was a mouse and lived in a hole in the wall of some idiot who could control mouse infestations, never actually happened.

Having resigned himself to a life without sex, Gerald lit a cigarette and sat back to contemplate the nights activities. Pupils were still pinpricks, and after the injection of nicotine into his bloodstream Gerald felt ready to go and do something, do anything. But what was a stoned mouse supposed to do when the only available companion was a laundry hampered cat who was deranged with anger and cancer cells. Besides, that constant foaming was really unattractive when forced to spend long periods of time with it. Ugh, what ever happened to animals that cared about their appearance? What was the world coming to? Shit.

Haggard, confused, and more than a little tired, Gerald hauled himself into his bedroom. It had been a heck of a day, and he wanted nothing more than to grab some shuteye. He sank into his bed, the rubber form fitting around his tiny frame. Gerald had eschewed the regular mouse-bed-construction materials, insulation and shredded paper, in favour of the idiot’s discarded prophylactics. The smell was rank when they were freshly retrieved, but faded after a few days and the comfort of the soft plastic was without parallel.

Nibbling idly on a rubber tip, Gerald felt soothed. The cat was shredding dirty linen in the basement, the idiot was snoring in the next room, and the laminate would crack with time, letting the crumbs, crusts and cheese build up anew. Life was sweet, or at least as sweet as a junkie mouse could hope for. Somewhere, Dick Dale beat a mighty riff on a guitar, and Frankie, teeth gleaming in a perfect sunset, hit a beachball high into the air.

Gerald slept.
His Hands

His hands are like wildfire.  
They burn to the touch,  
but are beautiful to watch.

He hides them  
Keeps views in his pockets,  
in sleeve ends  
because he is shy  
But brushes hair from a cheek  
Gentle.  
The strike of a moth  
in the dark

His hands could tear a soul  
from beneath the skin,  
could tame the buzzing  
of a thousand bees  
could hold a shadow from the night  
But instead  
reach down to tie a shoelace.  
Oblivious.

These hands could make a fortune  
could break a heart,  
could cast spells and magic  
But instead make shadow puppets-  
Butterflies streaming across  
untamed fields  
to entertain  
his little sister.

Kirsty Robertson

photograph by D. Vouliouris
Gravity sucks. 
A poorly executed mission of sight. 
Vision, as visceral as any of the senses, 
relative in its perception, 
and blind to magicians' tricks. 
Sunsets are light 
Colours are light 
Horizons are light 
She is all light. 
Sound and touch and taste and smell should keep her from being an illusion 
but these senses can be tricked as well. 
I am the speed of light. 
I am the constant. 
The distance between her and I, the reaction of my spinal cord in response of her ... 
Sight is vestigal in love. 
M. Crowther 

There was a distant look in her eyes 
As I thrust my love upon her, 
And no matter how hard I tried, 
I knew her thoughts were of another. 
Even as my voice grew and cried 
She lay there still and staring. 
So together alone we lay 
Until she snuck away with the morning. 

Emmet Street 

Dual Citizenship 
i carry with me in my heart (carry with me; always) 
Sacred Instructions: “When in Rome, do” and so (un?)happily do I Sp/ lit my mind and soul. 
But never heart; it remains whole and full of that endless Duality. 
I carry with me; always 
A Dichotomic love: A burden of Two-ness of forever missing- 
No matter where my heart is. 

Thank you e.e. cummings 

Clarissa Treadwell
Java Jive

I am an all purpose coffee maker
that will churn your stomach
as I red with upturned switches.
I am the cold mug of death
that lies 3 days unnoticed in the sink.
I am the soddened filter
stained brown with garbage rot.
I am alone in an empty house,
awake when you come home,
in a shut drawer - unused.
But sometimes I am alive in the morning
as I rise with the steamy aura of blind sunlight.

Unfamiliar

A world so different but
Yet familiarity sets in
As if this world had always
Existed within this soul
Hazy towers of a land
Basked in millennia of Thought

What mysteries do they hold of the past?

Extortion fills the gap
Of Thought today
Sleep has ravaged the land’s resources
Empty vessels
Roam Aristotle’s backyard
Carbon dioxide replaces the nectar of the gods
The sleeper must awaken

Nikoh! Profound

Kendra Thayer
YeARNING FOR MYTHOLOGY
THAT WILL CRADLE
INSECURITIES
THAT WILL CODDLE
LOGIC
THAT WILL SOOTHE
THE SITUATION,
CONDITION
WHAT HAVE YOU,
WOE.
OUT OF CONTROL,
IN YESTERDAY'S TOMORROW.

Steve Polley

Happiness

If all was dark
With no hope of light
Would you stay?
Knowing that we only had each other.
For nothing else matters
If you truly have
What everyone seeks
And this is what we have.
Even without light
In darkness
Our beauty shines through
For everyone to envy.

Mathieu Kuhn

Rosebush

I woke up again
with a smile I'll turn my head towards my dearest friend
I woke up again
And pushed away the crumbs from the bed
(you see) when daylight came I was lost
I moved around within my thoughts
You held the demons inside your eyes
And lit a smile as you smoked and cried

I walked away again
from your eyes They kept me up late at night
Wondering just how or what to feel
Or if there's a chance to get near

how much you hold inside
is how much you show outside
containing all your smiles with all your tears
wrapping yourself within your fears
(and) if the rosebush is not too sharp
perhaps I might be able to steal your heart

(Don't hold demons inside your eyes
you're gonna light a smile while you cry...)

(for Natasha)
Scott Baker
Forever

In our younger years
We live for the moment,
The moment where lies,
Is as it's fullest

We live for the thrill
For we are young.
We feel the life inside us,
Following free

The freeness we feel causes
Us to miss our path
As time goes by
And we reach the end.

We all go our,
Separate ways.
Our true path is the one
In separation from the whole.

But the life we will always flow
And there is happiness all round
Us and we live
Forever.

Jamie Leigh Ramsey

Antarctica.

What mighty and fearsome deities thunder
across these churning polar skies!
What roiling black and blue heavens
bolt over these battered coasts
with forty foot waves, flailing the ice and stone
as if beating it back to creation!

What awesome gods of pure black terror
carved this world with blasting breath,
yet, in the process formed curves and slopes
of such beauty and grace
that all life is less for not witnessing it.

All life but one,
white and small against Antarctic's vastness,
high above the thrashing sea.
The albatross glides along the edge,
in the midst of the bottom of the world,
growing great from seeming insignificance.

Frank Wildig
Love Poem: Without Words

A word-
To match you?
To find you?
To release you?
A search for a word-
To frame you?
To know you?
To set you free?
A need for the WORD-
A flame, a candle, aflame:
Inside you,
 Burning from behind your eyes-
The PURGING WORD,
The dispersing fire.

Matthew T. Meanchoff

Time stands still in the heat of the midday sun.
Black cars slowly drive by with their headlights on.
In the distance a mournful song plays on the radio.
It seems all the brilliant colours now shine with a faded glow.
The days slip away, the autumn winds wall.
Blackness falls like a long dark veil.
Stars gently flicker as if they were laughing.
Shining down upon everyone. What is one man's passing?
Bitter cold, frozen air fills my lungs
While I watch children catch snowflakes upon their tongues.
Each flake unique until it melts upon the ground.
Time stands still as the snow falls down.
Nothing seems changed but everything has.
I want to run down the street and cry
A MAN IS DEAD!

Emmet Street
Life's Next Sunrise

When the sun rose this morning,  
I landed on this beach.  
This beach of fast moving waters  
And a slow moving shore.  
With the hot sand,  
I formed a small mound.  
As the sun lifted higher towards heaven,  
I molded it into a castle and  
With my plastic shovel  
I dug a deep, beautiful moat.

Sometimes the water is wild here.  
The waves beat against my shore,  
Drown my moat and  
Swallow my castle.

When the blistering sun  
Was above my head  
I met you.  
We locked hands  
And danced along the beach,  
With scorching sand between our toes.  
We frolicked in the mysterious water.  
We ventured deeper- together.  
When the waves grabbed at me  
And tried to haul me away,  
When the ocean's salty blood  
Stung my deepest wounds,  
Your strong grip never loosened  
And always pulled me back to security.  
Together our sturdy hands recreated my  
Ruined castle.

The sun is about to slip beyond  
The wicked sea.  
When it drops,  
So will our hands.  
We will walk in separate ways  
Down the beach.  
Tomorrow, when the sun rises  
I will land on a new beach  
Where the sand is hotter and the water,  
Rougher.  
A new beach where no one will hold my hand  
When I go too far.  
But that sand castle we created together  
Will rest in my mind  
Forever and forever  
Even against the most vicious waves.
Sunset

With curls red golden,
eyes pale blue,and dress emerald silk,she entered this world
of metal and smoke,
of death and destruction,bringing a special gift.

She had no family,no memories,no name to call her own.So the old ones called her Sunset,for they could remember a time when the sun set golden red against a pale blue sky

Now the sky is shades of gray and green,and the sun is never seen.She reminds us of days gone by,and of days spent in the sun under a pale blue sky.

The gift she brought was her beauty, her innocence,her simplistic way of thinking.She brought this world a new kind of hope.Hope for the healing of the nations,and for the end of the wars that have plagued
this world for many generations. She gave us hope for our children and our children's children, hope that they might live to see the next generation grow up and have children of their own.

She was a gift from God when most believed that God had given up and left this world.

Soon her memories returned, one by one, and, slowly, she told us the stories of her life.

She spoke of green hills and snow-topped mountains, of a time when there was peace in the world and the world to her was no more than an island called Insfail.

Now her stories spoke not of her life but of other places she had seen. She told of a wooden horse being rolled into a city a night, of a virgin giving birth to a child in a stable, that child as a grown man dying on a lonely hill.

There were tales of people being stoned for their beliefs and of countries being torn apart in search of a religious artifact. She told of the discovery of a new world on the other side of an ocean.

Now her tales became gruesome, describing the slaughter of innocent people for their gold, people made slaves because their skin was not white, and their fight for freedom.

The stories became worse as time went by. Stories of a world at war, of men dying in deep trenches, of two ships colliding in a harbour, killing innocents by the thousands.

Now she spoke of a world at peace, but people were still dying from lack of food for the world was in a depression. A small country attacks another, throwing the world once again to war.
This time she told of people being burned alive because of their religion, and of a dark cloud rising from an island.

Her tales worsened, as the countries of the world splintered into pieces and they became covered in smoke and pollution, slowly killing the earth. She was getting closer, in her descriptions, to the world we know.

Her next tale was the story of the world of our time. She spoke of the built-up smoke that is our atmosphere, of the waste that fills our oceans and seas.

The young ones didn’t believe her tales, for they knew only the world around them, but the old ones knew she spoke truly. When they were young, the old ones of then told the same stones that Sunset told.

As the day finished, Sunset told her final tale. It was a tale of the future, of the world that would be known to our descendants.

She spoke softly and her words showed us a world where the sky was pale blue and the sun set red golden. Where everyone could drink clean water, breath fresh air, and spend the day in the sun.

As she spoke, the gray/green clouds parted, and for a brief moment in time, the sky was pale blue, and, as we watched, the sun set red golden.

A beam of light came down from the sun and Sunset left through the hole in the sky.

Her dress of emerald silk became a beautiful hill,
sitting on the horizon.
Her red golden hair
became the fiery sphere
sinking low behind the hill,
and her pale blue eyes
became the sky
that filled the rest of the gap
between the gray and the green.

For the rest of lives
we would remember
that we had witnessed
the first sunset
in the better part of a century
and the departure of Sunset.

The sunset would not be the last,
and Sunset is called our saviour.
Many think that she was
one of God’s own angels,
sent from heaven
to save us from self destruction.

But those who met her
remember her only as a girl
with curls red golden,
eyes pale blue,
and a dress of emerald silk.

Mieka Tilley
Lines of Varied Emotion

It is too late now,
I've lost it;
however, I am not sure if ever I did possess it.
She thought I did,
thought we did for that matter.
Once, maybe twice upon those times,
when we kissed, maybe then I too was convinced.
But after the act while I lay there beside her,
watching her in that perfect state of beauty and rest,
Embraced by her presence.
I could never decide.
I teetered on the balance,
on the edge of indecision.
Choosing between what was, or maybe, what was not.
But like many who have come before, I too eventually fell off.
Losing whatever it was that now leaves me so empty.

I swear, it’s the coffee!

Old truths but a lie in disguise
Foreshadowing the backbone we are not.

Big Bang Black light
For Fear Night light

Turbulent skies in closed minds
Murder she wrote did she.

Easy to swallow
We have the power of light
Never underestimate the might of night

Oceans murdered the fury of sight,
Showers of ashes for us to breathe.

Go to Hell, Bastard!
I’m an alien abduction
Believe in me, Bastard!
Why can’t I find Twix bars anymore?
Fuck.

Follow my blaw blaw blaw
And I will lead you raw raw raw
Kill yourself to hide hide hide
And live the magic ride ride ride
Gullible.

Scott Doherty
Here and Now

Confusion's ever pushing hard
Pressure on the soul
Insides screaming endlessly
Blood in mind grows cold

Struggle without gaining
Running out of steam
Summon strength remaining
Waking from the dream

Dreaming dreams of days gone by
Slipping back in time
To a place when I was yours
And you my love were mine

These tremors unmistakable
Feelings sharp and clear
These memories are forever
For they live inside each tear

Linda G. Mitchell

Robbie Hinds and Brendan O'Flaherty
Throwing in the Apron

(Based on my favorite stereotype)

"Get in the kitchen!" her husband does brood. He's awfully hungry and is craving some food.

She straps on her armor, approaches the heat, while her dearly beloved kicks back his feet.

For a second she questions her role in the house, but he is the lion; she is the mouse.

She opens the door to that dungeon of flame while under her breath she curses his name.

She isn't a servant, nor is she a maid. She's performed for ten years. Her dues are all paid.

"Is it ready yet?" The beast quickly states.

"Go and wash your hands. Supper will be on your tray. Was it busy at work? What a beautiful day!"

"Enough of the small talk and get me the bread. I earn the money, you keep me fed."

The camel's back broke. The last straw he did pluck. His guardian angel fled and wished him good luck.

She turned on the water and her eyes they did flood. She was hunting for pity. She was thirsty for blood.

"How dare you say that, when I slave from rise. You'd see all I do, if you opened your eyes."

"I want to go dancing, eat breakfast in bed. I'll go to work. You clean instead."

"It's my way or nothing or I'm out the door. You're lost without me. I WON'T take anymore!"
(A man thinks he's a god, with a woman at his feet. What he doesn't know, is she's humble not meek.

She won't ever complain unless it's allowed. She'll fight for freedom and make the rest proud.)

The story does end with her briefcase in hand saying, "Did you season the meat, dear, it tastes awfully bland?"

photograph by D. Vouliouris
The Colour of Margarine

My friend looks at herself in the mirror, and sees her face cascading downwards into rolls of rubbery flesh, her thighs rising like bread in mounds of mashed potato cellulite, her stomach swollen into a cauliflower although she is five foot seven and weighs ninety six pounds.

Her mother says that it is a stage and refuses to notice the backs of knees open like yawns, wrists like marbles beneath thin blue skin, the breeze catching her dress on hips like hitchhiker’s thumbs. She is a modern sculpture, but human. She has not menstruated in three months.

She will not let her boyfriend touch her when they make love. Or not love, for her it is another form of exercise. And he backs off eyes nervous like a colt when she removes his hand from her buttons afraid that he will pass right through her.

My friend cannot look at herself in the mirror because she sees inside herself and watches fat, the colour of margarine pumping slowly through her veins She is addicted wants to slit her wrists to let it loose pouring out of her body leaving her weightless, floating, free. But she is afraid to die because they will lay her in a coffin exposed, naked, and everyone will see her.

Kirsty Robertson

Under Your Shoulders

All that is important Is said without words Not that actions speak louder Words can’t say enough. I look in your eyes To the depths of your soul And feel your emotions Under your shoulders. Love penetrates my soul As you wrap your wings around me Like an angel your beauty captures me And I never want to let go.

Mathieu Kuhn
A poem for my father before he died

I wasn’t told how this would be.
Why didn’t anyone fill me in?

Oh, I forgot, that just doesn’t happen.
I can’t take all this anymore,
But the mask doesn’t show it.

Nobody said it would be easy,
But nobody said it would be this hard.

I miss the days that will never come back.

I miss that carefree feeling that I vaguely remember having.

But the moon doesn’t hide away just because of a few clouds;

Which means that there is still hope.

There is always hope, we just have to search for it.

Please Dad, don’t give up searching,

Because we can’t lose the moon to darkness.

Dee Buckle
Bloom

Swallowed temptations
That would never see the light
Lost in my confusions
That flutter with failing flight
I’ve seen the darkness
Which shines so very bright
It’s eating my patience
I’m losing my child’s sight
But from the corner of my mouth
I can feel it start to bloom
Coming from deep inside of me
From a dark and hidden room
It starts with anticipation
That releases all the doom
It ends with the smile
But the feelings always loom

The bright side of the Moon

What is it that you see today?
Where do you really want to go?
Walk barefoot through the forest,
Beneath a canopy of leaves,
Sunlight filters through the trees.

The shadows cast a gloomy light.
The quiet seems to frighten you.
What evil lurks behind the trees,
in this completely foreign place.
It’s as strange to you as outer space.

She says she is dying inside.
The answers don’t make sense
And the questions don’t make dollars,
And the dollars cannot be ignored,
I think I’ve heard this all before.

Come with me into the forest... And take off your shoes...
Feel the earth beneath your feet... Feel the strength of the earth...
Mother... Like a living goddess... Mother...

The earth breathes
The leaves dance
The sun sings
the wind whispers
nature lives

and will survive...

I will not watch you fall again.
You will not need to hide again.
The sun may fade but that only means,
the moon will come out soon,
and we can gaze on the bright side,
of the moon.
In Passing

Heaven's tears fell like children on the angry street
broken fresh flowers swept away
upon the almighty, all consuming american dream.
no more than it does seem,
I remember...

the wisdom of the quiet wind, and the laughter
of clear waters gently carving
the rough stones so smooth... soft to my sight,
beside the shadow of jagged peaks,
mysterious and calm,
sentinels, the home of ancient spirits,
sanctuary...

The spoiled bride in mourning wept
and tore the comfort from her breast,
as man went mad in endless flight
consuming grace to warm his self made night,
forever cold, the price of arrogance bold,
forgotten...

Names written in a book, deceive the eye
though it may look, as promises were meant to keep,
alive the fear down in the deep.
dead ink upon burning page,
the ashes of desire and rage
drift away upon the wind so softly
spoken...
Stone Fence.

To think that bare hands and broad shoulders
Split the seamless earth in two,
Cleared the field of granite boulders
To plant the old world new.

Ploughs and sweat fell here, I'm sure,
Pure muscle made this boundary line,
Turning brush to fields and pasture,
The 'what is yours' and the 'what is mine'.

Now the fence lies under a canopy
Of second growth, shrubs and goldenrod,
The struggle long ended to keep these fields free,
They're back in the hands of some arboreal god.

Yet lies this trace under brush and vine,
A memorial having passed the stage.
Of horse drawn mowers, scythes, and twine,
Forgotten in this rootless age.

I've heard Time's a refreshing river,
And that past was no Arcadia,
There were reasons it was left to wither,
Into this most modern Utopia.

Reasons To Live

Live for the beauty of a sunrise
Live for the crisp smell of Spring
Live for the enchantment of friendship
Live for the romance of love.
Live for the artwork you produce
Live for the sun warming your soul
Live for the wonder of a child's smile
Live for the comfort of a cat's purr.
Live for the purity of a fresh snowfall
Live for the joy of smelling flowers
Live for the peacefulness of rainfall
Live for the awe of the Earth.
Live for the chance to laugh until you cry
Live for the comfort of a friendly smile
Live for the clarity of a bright blue sky
Live for the calm of walking on a beach.
Live for the opportunity to read by candlelight
Live for childhood memories of walking in the rain
Live for the warmth of being loved
Live for the excitement of your wedding day.
Live for the bliss of holding a newborn child
Live for the chance to offer unconditional love
But above all of these wondrous things
Live for the love of being yourself.

Frank Willdig

Kylene Mellor
A Warning from Mother and Son

The mild winter morning has piled the snow gently outside the windows at an early hour; the cool eastern winds were heard to lightly blow, while the sparrows slept silently in the bower.

The day slid by in the usual manner, bright noon giving way to quiet afternoon; Clouds drifting in to unveil the sunset’s banner that daily unfurls to greet the evening moon.

Now darkness crept upon the land, and temperatures dropped along with the rain that froze in the grip of el Niño’s hand, to transform the world; Water into ice.

The Frost was heard to say, this would suffice. Freezing rain would pilfer man’s power, to reveal madre naturas’ power to the world; leaving millions freezing like the rain.

Darkness had enveloped the frigid world, and winter waged on like the Cold War. Her dog, the cold, bit to the bone. Long dark night, sat solidly in place.

Unrelenting ice marred the earth’s gentle face as a reminder of Her presence. Soon the ice would melt, revealing the scars, leaving mankind to ponder their essence.

Once again water would begin to flow along with man’s electric power, but human knowledge will have to grow for spring to come and earth to flower.

Steve McClung

Candyland

He thinks he’s so fulfilled
But truly an empty shell
Is he, a core rotted away by vague words
spoken from other people’s mouths.

He lives in Candyland
sugar-coated self-love
Superficially yours,
He trolls around helping others “find the light”
For him, Eternal damnation
in the land of Onion Rings,
Round and round again

He looks for her; she of unsurpassing qualities
to which no one displays.

Puts himself on a pedestal,
Greets the masses with fillers passing as hello’s
Looking down on his admirers
with breath like fire.

He eats their originality alive
Like a dragon who thinks himself a prophet
When he truly is not.

Caroline Cunningham
A Poem in Remembrance of the Best Haluski Maker
This Side of Slovakia

I remember your warm smile;
no matter the conditions outside the house or the conditions inside the house.

I remember your slow steps
and the creaks you made upon the hardwood floor.

I remember our bedroom chats:
I, sitting at the end of your sloped bed,
you, on that hard wooden chair,
asking me if I wanted your jewellery,
then telling me about village life and how you used to ax the heads off chickens.

I remember your laughter,
and how you rolled your R's when you said, "Merry Christmoose".

I remember how I sat in the wooden chair by your hospital bed
and stroked your hand, and how you squeezed mine back;
how you tried to speak to me, to tell me another village story,
but the sounds of those words just wouldn't come out.
Time

One could argue over and over
About the meaning of time.
The ones who live in dark and gloom
See time as a predator that looms over;
Waiting...
Before it runs out for us.

The ones of bravery and might
Suggest that it is the shedder of light;
But naivete as such can spell one’s plight.
Perhaps it has no meaning at all,
Yet time is on the minds of all.

Proudly, I say I know what time is about;
For you see, for us my dear, it won’t run out.
Time is a follower, and nothing more;
It will follow you, the one I adore.

Delusion

If you want me to think otherwise,
Show me pink instead of white;
I’m comfortable with colour.
I rejoice in life,
spirit
as do you-
Your words blossom,
cascade-
but your thoughts are caught
between capital letters.
Why punctuate that
whose essence is free?
Go, mask yourself in layers,
cloak your head in wool...
You won’t escape
what has been strung
on a captive instrument.
Your heart may
experience music, but
your mind will never allow
harmony.
The body is stranded.
An island...
Unfortunately misled.

Meg Sullivan
Taking a Trip

Sometimes when life seems to be dragging me down
I take a trip to where you are and suddenly I am seeing a
world through Rose coloured glasses
What was bad, doesn’t seem so anymore.
I can smile and laugh without breaking into tears.

And you know exactly what to say... all of my troubles
just disappear with the retreating waves.
And I don’t need to speak
I don’t even need to look at you
just being in your presence is enough.

After my visit I can return to the cruel world, where no
one seems to care
Stronger, better, happier.
Once again, being the person I once was,
before the wind broke my sail and left me stranded.

Bed

Legs and arms
out stretched and far
away from your side;
a lying effort
not to scar the scene.

Sheets of white
wrapped up in hazy feet
too tangled to keep me awake.

In those we hours I
remember all the times
waking up when you’re not there, still thinking
I am no more empty than the bed.
New Beginnings

The man's eyes sparkle, in the mid-day sun.  
His face betrays a smile, at a memory recollected.  
He searches his heart, finding an ache of longing.  
A sparkle, a smile, an ache for what had been lost.

He begins a journey, knowing not when it will end.  
Searching high and low, from one corner to the other.  
His heart knowing, knowing it's not all in vain.  
Never stopping to rest, always continuing forward.

Upon a hill, his journey leads him.  
His heart knows, this is the last stop.  
The smile fades, knowing it's not to be found.  
In its stead, he finds a newly blossomed flower.

It's flown from him, leaving him with a memory.  
A sign and a dream, yet all that he needs.  
He vows to move on, to continue his search.  
With a touch of a flower, it begins...

I feel for you, I really do.  
To walk with such an air of radiance  
as though you owned the pavement of our lives.

I see men like flies stuck to shit  
following the smell of what they know best.  
Who are you in those glamour fashions?  
The mask is so thick that I barely recognize you as one of our own.
It sickens me to think of the slick mass of stuff which hides you so well one would think you were made of porcelain.

You deter young minds so that they too feel the shame of Natural.  
They too Mask.  
They too Own.
Sweet mother of my earth.
My eyes reek with sadness.
I feel closed without the wind
of my father who has rocked
me into sleepiness night after night
Friends cannot see the light of his darkness.
I am certain that with enough
persuasion his light would gleam enough
to glow.
Enough to show them that father earth
helped build us too.

Isabelle Lussier

Reasons for J.

Pre-
The most aesthetic thing.
The most ephemeral thing.
Like a blue jay
in a field of Monarchs
I am taunted
and hungry.

Post-
"Aren't you coming to bed..?"
"In a minute. Soon."
"Not long?"
"No."
"Good."

The most wordless thing.

M. Crowther

The Dock

For as long as I can remember, the dock has always
been a kind of magical place. Not because it cannot be under-
stood. Not because it's all that mysterious either, although it
has been known to appear so in the delicate grip of a creeping
maritime fog. Not even because it plays host, from time to
time, to some of the most marvellous human creations I've
ever seen. The tall ships, the three-masted schooners, the
majestic ocean liners, the monstrous oil tankers. No. The dock
is pure magic because it manages to be both old and new at
the same time. It contradicts itself. Not clumsily like a floundering
politician, but with grace, and style. At times, like now, I sit
quietly on its edge, dangling my legs high above the ocean
below, and stare down into the seething blue. I sit and try to
fathom its miracle. It is understood easily enough, I suppose.
The materials, the iron moorings, the rubber tires strung on all
sides to prevent the boats from spoiling their paint jobs, the
entire cement and asphalt construction of the thing, are all
relatively new. Mid to late sixties probably. But the tradition
which this dock represents is as old as the sea itself. Physically
only slightly older than myself, its spirit (if docks can be said to
have such a thing) is ancient, experienced, haunted by the
ghosts of a thousand dead seafarers; possessed by its earlier
wooden incarnations. Sometimes I like to imagine the timber
skeleton of the old dock lurking somewhere within the con-
crete exterior of this one, whispering its secrets. I like to be-
lieve that the soul has remained constant. Actually, what's left
of the old dock can be seen about a quarter mile down the
coast line. A few rotting logs jutting sharply out of the rippled
water surface, and a jumbled pile of splintered lumber and
miscellaneous debns resting wearily upon an otherwise im-
maculate shore. An "eyesore" some folks call it. What the hell
do they know, anyway?

I used to come here to fish. At least, that's the premise
by which I was able to escape my wife and our Water St.
apartment for an afternoon. I must admit that not much fishing
got done, and still less actually got caught. The harbour waters
have had pretty slim pickings for awhile now, I guess. Sad,
really, but I’m not much for fish anyway. Annie knows this, and
often wondered why I even bothered wasting the energy. I
don’t think she’d understand. She’s only been to the dock once
to buy lobster for my birthday. So I told her that I gave what I
caught to Mr. Farthing and his wife, Gladys. They’re an older
couple who lived here, and in the same house, for a thousand
years I’d say, give or take. Old Farthing used to cast about with
the rest of the boys down on the dock until he developed
severe arthritis in his reeling hand. He kept going until the pain
was so unbearable his rod just flew out of his hands under the
weight of a mackerel no bigger than a telephone receiver. Trag­
dedy, really, knowing how much he loved the company and
the taste of fresh fried mackerel. So me and some of the oth-
ers took pity on him from time to time and dropped off a
sampling of anything we actually managed to catch. Of course,
I used to give everything I caught to the old fart because, like I
said, I’m not much for fish. He was appreciative enough, I
suppose, but his body language generally exposed a resent-
ment of my younger, less petrified hands. Who could blame
him really? Eventually, age makes infants of us all.

Like the other day, for instance. I had a relatively suc-
cessful day on the dock, hooking three good sized mackerel in
less than two hours, so I made my way to the Farthins’ think-
ing how happy the old guy would be to have fresh fish for his
next three meals. I mean, who wouldn’t? Other than me, that
is, because, like I said, I’m not much for fish. Anyway, as I’m
approaching the old Victorian that he and his wife have lived in
for centuries, I notice him sitting outside on his front stoop,
sipping tea and watching the Gallagher kids across the street,
fighting with each other. Does he see me coming? No. Wait,
he’s standing up to wave. I wave back congenially and indicate
my prize, soon to be his, expecting a broad, slightly toothless
smile of recognition. Instead, nothing. No wave, no smile, just
Farthing’s crumpled old back as he turns to retreat into the
house with his tea cup. Oh well, he couldn’t have seen me
after all, I say to myself, quickening my pace a little as I reach
the gravel walkway leading to the front door. Perhaps nature
was calling, or maybe he just wants more tea. I’m sure he’s
not avoiding me. What a funny old man I was bringing him
fish, after all. Three good-sized mackerel, for god’s sake, caught
with my own two hands!

Approaching the door mildly indignant but still smiling, I
tapped lightly on the screen extenor.

“Mr. Farthing? It’s Ben. I’ve got some fish here for you if
you want them. Three in fact. Man, I just couldn’t miss today!
You should’ve seen us hauling ’em in! getParent

“Thas fine, Ben. Jess set dem on da porch an he’ll get
dem in a bit. I’m afraid he’s indishposed at da moment.” Gladys,
his wife, calling from somewhere out of sight. A nice old lady
but impossible to comprehend since a stroke left the right side
of her face paralyzed. It’s taken me three years to get past “Hi.
How are you?” with her, and I still have trouble making out the
big words.

“Oh. O.K.,” I say hesitantly. Then I just placed the fish
on the railing and went home. What could I do? I wasn’t about
to force Mr. Farthing to acknowledge my superior fishing skills
by chasing him down and beating him with three stinking mack-
erel. Maybe I should’ve kidnapped Gladys and messengered
the fish to him in greasy brown paper. A Sicilian message.

It wasn’t until I rounded the last corner on my way home
and saw the huge Catholic church at the end of Water St. that
I realized what was going on with old Mr. Farthing. It occurred
to me that I had seen the same thing with my grandfather just
before he died. No words. No smiles. Not even a friendly
noddle of the head, just the retreat. The shutting out of the world.
Like all he needed was contained within the four walls of his
bedroom universe. A warm place to rest his head, a lifeline
to sustenance (my mother), content to float forever in the amniotic comfort of satin sheets until the moment of rebirth, his entrance into the new heaven and the new earth.

Is it always this way, I wondered? Maybe. I guess I'll find out someday, probably sooner than I'd like. Sometimes I think I can feel the wrinkles in my skin grow deeper, more pronounced. Sometimes my imagination gets the best of me. Still, perhaps it's not all that bad, feeling older, growing younger, dying. Who knows? Those who have gone before us I suppose.

So now I come to the dock but I never fish. I sit and try to fathom its miracle. I sit and I wonder how something can be both old and new at the same time. I come, and I sit, and sometimes I make my own contribution to the gigantic pool of salt water below, but I never fish. Like I said, I'm not much for fish.
Kelly's Cup (a song)

Chorus
I'll color in my fear
I'll color you in my dear
Color in my fear

Shadows thrown against the wall
A reflection of days and moments gone

Each shadow is a mirror of me-
Each shadow is a mirror of you

Hello- I'm on the outside looking,
I see my mirror I see you there... (chorus)

The wind is blowin', window's open
Shut me out don't shut me in

(and) every smile the shadow gave me
is every frown the mirror made me give... (chorus)

When it's cold outside you'll see me
I'm freezing every bit of beauty

See my eyes (they're) shaking in me
I'd look but all I'd see is scaring...me...

uNAt/AL/eD

It just kills everything
In the body
That's why
she had braces.

Words tattooed
On cracked lips
Wide open - as her eyes,
As black balls in the night
Rolled back - with no gargled
sound escaping

her teeth, her mouth, her eyes
are a binary machine with no word
to describe it
Like this poem has a frame
To surround it.

Scott Baker/Kelly Shipway

Brendan O'Flaherty
In my dreams I never talk

Ancient dreams & age old myths
walking, waking, taking shifts
through the ancient echo walk
in my dreams I never talk

fire-bright red & ice-cool blue
grating, grinding, comfort too
leading down the pebble rock
in my dreams I never talk

upside down & inside out
hiking, hawking, always doubt
reeling from the crucial shock
in my dreams I never talk

reed-thin arms & fat-wide thighs
fighting, fondling, never dies
far from them they seem to mock
in my dreams I never talk

grasping hands & faltering steps
crouching, clinging, seeking depths
at the door a violent knock
in my dreams I never talk

cheating death & breathing life
biting, baking, cutting knife
grab the knob and flip the lock
in my dreams I never talk

try to cry & try to shout
leaking, lying, swim without
twisted strangers halt and gawk
in my dreams I never talk

Heather Coutts

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Sunday, November 2nd at 9 a.m.

The window frames me
Like some sick and twisted picture
A stooped, bent over man
Staring at the outside world
Waiting...

The sun crests the trees
And stares into my soul
I am torn open and laid bare
For that glowing red eye

It calls me out
Of my self created cell
Where I hide with my books,
And my bed,
And myself.

She calls me out, but I wait
To see a different face
More beautiful than the sun
And she will fly up to my window

Hold out her hand
And draw me out
Into the day.
Where I'll unfurl gossamer wings
I never knew I had

And she will pull me into the sky
And teach me to soar
High above everything
That would keep me down

In this new place
We shall live

Matt McCarney
Spirit

The Merry Maid of Winter,
Flakes of white gaze of winged fairies.

Sprinkle of gold dust floating in glass jars,
ancient pottery engraved by sharp blaze.

Heavenly creature
Japanese paper feathers,
Holy fragility of life
Transparent wooden support.

He is Night. The Darkest of nights with perhaps only a sliver of the moon in the sky. The sky is not clear, but covered over with dark clouds. He has no landscape to him, except perhaps that of a crowded city. The kind of place where one could easily be lost and forgotten.

As Music, he is something without words. Possibly Techno, with its constant beat yet drastic changes.

He is a Storm. Dark Clouds in the sky with rain and drizzle coming down, but not too hard. There might be that occasional rumble of Thunder, but the sun peeks through also.

He is anything from the Big T-shirts he wears, to his Sunglasses. More so his Sunglasses because of the way they hide his eyes from all the world.

He is not food, since he does not eat, but rather his Strong cigarettes and the dark Guinness that he loves so much.

He would never be one of those constantly happy people found working at Disney World, casting Insincere Smiles at the Passersby.

As a Metallic Object, he is his Watch, his Ring, and the "Elmarie" that once hung from his neck.

As an Animal, we discussed this one. I think that I will make him some sort of Big, Lazy, Black Panther.

As a Motor Vehicle, he will never be the black SAAB convertible that he desires so, but rather one of the Dead End Mopeds of Paris.
Norberta McFarland: A Continuing Poem in One Part

Grandma's house
stunk
of age
and of absence.
Her living room—a museum—
of dead portraits of peaceful relatives,
and her polished piano
(metronome in constant motion)
It was a manifestation of
past presence made present absence.
I could almost see
the ghost of grandpa
looking out through his vintage binoculars
to old Casa Loma.
Behind him, his daughter
sets the metronome in motion
while my mother pensively looks on.
As I do now.

Matthew T. Meanchoff

The Passion of My Heart
Dedicated to Leslie J. Nelles with all my love

The Greatest Riddle

It cannot be bound, that which is both lost and found,
Both void and round.
It passes by without a sound, and my simple mind it doth confound.
Such thoughts weigh me to the ground.
It is purple bleeding red and yet weighs under a pound.
Now I hear no other sound.
For my heart is far away and runaway bound.
What could it be?
There is but one possibility

The Greatest Rhyme

Love.
What else is there to say?
Such a word that is twisted every day.
What do I mean when you see my eyes a glean.
You are supreme and I but unseen.
You turn my blackest night into my brightest day.
Thus it is suffice to say,
That I feel for you in every beautiful way.

Michael R. McCormick
Why I hate poetry

I don't understand what happened to rhyme,
If I were a poet, it would be used all the time
I guess poets forget about such literary devices,
when all they can think about are life's little vices.

When did poetry start excluding the metaphor?
Most people would not know what to use it for
This absence of comparisons brings me such pain
just like a springtime without any rain.

Which brings me to another issue...
almost all poems require a tissue.
I don't understand why most poems are sad,
they're bringing me down and they're making me mad!

I like poems about puppies and bees
or even about a child who has scraped both her knees.
Our bodies aren't empty like most poets think-
We've got guts and intestines with many a kink.

You may ask then why I bother to write this,
for my honest opinions may make you hiss.
I'd just like to remind you we're not all born poets,
some, just like Homer, should stick to the donuts
If all bad poems could be thrown out the window,
I promise this will be the first to go!

Krista Tilley
NOT TO BE TAKEN AWAY