

**The Mitre 2005  
Between the Lines**



# The Mitre 2005: Between the Lines

112th Edition  
Bishop's University

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## Introduction and Acknowledgements

The theme for this year's magazine came easily enough, playfully sparked by the photo we chose for the cover after most of the written submissions had come in. *Between The Lines* relates very well to many of the works, which mean much more than they say at face value, with topics as specific as Spartan war, as elusive as the nature of women, as classic as time. A great deal of thought and effort has gone into each piece, and into the magazine as a whole. I only hope that my organization reflects this in the best way possible.

It has been an adventure and a challenge to edit the 112th publication of *The Mitre*. The tradition that accompanies the magazine is both prestigious, and daunting. I am so grateful to have received all the help I did. Firstly, I must extend my gratitude to Dr. Noni Howard, singer/songwriter David Francey, Anne Cimon, David Solway, Eric Ormsby, Robyn Sarah, Munira Judith Avinger, David Weedmark, and D.G. Jones. In addition to the many student contributions, these nine professional writers were gracious enough to submit their work, including some original, previously unpublished pieces.

Many thanks to my Editorial Assistants who were a world of help to me throughout the entire selection and editing process. I am indebted to Tim Doherty for his expertise and guidance, and Jim Benson for his patience, and Joy Chandler for her smile. Thank you to the contributors, and also to you, the reader, for helping aspiring poets and artists find their voice. Finally, a big thanks to the S.R.C., the Humanities Department, Bruce Stevenson - Dean of Student Affairs, and one Sir John Falstaff who has not been forgotten.

As with any joining of creative minds, the finished result is more than the sum of its parts. The artwork and poetry influence each other, the reader adds their own interpretation, and the magazine takes on a life of its own. This process of discovery has been, for me, the most fascinating part of all. I will now leave you to your own journey between the lines. Happy reading!

- Jenn Kang

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Rosary

NeeNee Lajoie

## Poem for my Dear and Faithful Wife

*Ian Jones*

O Muses!

To these unworthy globes o' mine,  
Pray, reveal your form divine.  
O Shine the matter and the might,  
And let me be thy lanced knight.

Author Me!

Sophia sang, nymph of yon wood,  
So I penn'd her, well as I could.  
Soaking the sheets with gusts o'  
Inky imaginative flow.

O Muses!

Allow this humble servant more,  
Than mere view of thine chamber door.  
Entrance me o' the hall o' Venus,  
Yield to the thrust o' mine genius.

Fill Me!

Page after page o' emptiness,  
Mine stamina she needs—no less.  
A lesser man o' lesser skill,  
Could handle not this mighty quill.

O Muses!

Upon arrival, be not coy,  
Tis' only fusion bringeth joy.  
Let flow thine waters feverish,  
That with mine pole I mightest fish.



Sign Me!

The pace abides, the end I see,  
On me comes, sweet melancholy,  
Tis' been Man's goal since time o' Seth:  
Expel the word; die the little death.

## When The Sky Fell

*Gregory Wood New Hampshire, January 22, 2005*

Tonight, the sky wept.  
And the tears were frozen,  
So we wiped them with plows.

A heart had grown cold  
Then burst in a storm,  
That buried us in sorrow.

Ah but what a heart  
That could ever feel so much,  
To swell as large as the sky.

And what incredible delight  
Could freeze such a joyous thing,  
Simply because it is gone.

Only a magnificent love  
That could not be controlled,  
By natural powers alone.

So now we must wait for the sun  
To melt these beautiful tears,  
And soak our world in sweetness.

## Genesis

*Etienne Domingue*

For Dr. Ross Osmun, inspired by his Recital of Friday, October 29th 2004

Harmonies roared; in the darkness, the audience audibly gasped. Perched upon a long-legged treacle, the Alchemist caressed the teeth of a great black monster – what else could this keyboard be? Obviously it was no machine, but itself a living thing, with strips of gleaming ivory chewing on its master's mad ideas. The beast's innards described eldritch patterns within their great coffin-like casing; they twirled and wound around the frame, contracted and retracted, lawless tendrils, ivy-like and restless. Hammers tempestuously struck countless brass strings; each such wire was connected to a writhing abomination, to a valve or to a tube, all part of the bizarre paraphernalia of grisly apparatus wrapped around the surreal instrument.

The symphony poured immense havoc of sound into the empty air, sending echoes drifting through the hollow chambers of the ruined mansion. Melody built tensions and released them; at the same time slime oozed onto a slab of obsidian placed directly underneath the beast's elongated body. Each note, each chord combination, each fleeting trill contributed an infinitesimal dose of some nameless fluid. The result would be an homunculus, a creature born fully-formed before the fascinated eyes of a gigantic crowd ofimps and boggles.

Isolated in his trance, the Alchemist ignored everything of the life stirring a few feet away from his fretting fingers. Prior to his performance, he had meticulously tuned every part of the instrument – tonally, and otherwise. He had tightened every cord and every screw, seen to it that everything was properly aligned. Much was at stake – the precious *Ens Primum Vitae* dripping from the

vials cost him more than he was willing to admit (perhaps even a small part of his soul).

Would tonight be the end of his lonely years as the immortal father of monstrous hordes? Would his music finally achieve the ethereal beauty of the song of the spheres? Would he create the perfect companion, or just one more imp to join the legions trailing in his shadow?

He had tried the naivete of the ballads, the staggering splendour of the fugue, the stubborn dignity of the sarabande... Each had produced its own kind of beast: feathered things, slithering things, things that lurked in the dark and howled at the moon. Each time, disappointment had dragged him deeper into despair, and it is with less and less sanity that he attacked every new opus. Between fits of rage, his mind relentlessly sought the answer to the only questions that ever mattered: what exactly had the Gods played, that it created Her? What could he play, that would remake Her, deathless?

Tonight the mother of monsters sang a most peculiar nocturne – music came directly from the meandering coils of the Alchemist's brains, song like none that ever was chartered onto staff paper. This time, the Alchemist thought, he would put in the full of his experience; joy and horror would alike mingle, good and evil memory dance on the white and the black notes.

An hour passed while this thunder rolled. The last movement was intoned and ended just before the final cadence – for this one meant Death. The old man climbed down from his lofty seat, and hurried to the bed of obsidian. All his children were silent, like so many statues fallen from a gothic façade.

But here is the most pathetic tableau of this sad story: when he saw his work, the Alchemist only screamed. For there on the black glass lay, shaking with the fever of recent Creation, the greatest and most useless of all his exploits: an exact duplicate of himself.

## Neglected

*Munira Judith Avinger*

The wind is picking up,  
blowing in rain from the west.

I cover the firewood.  
No time to split it today.

Gunshots in the distance.  
I hope the deer run fast.

I walk to the big apple tree,  
one of the oldest trees I know.  
The trunk is split down the middle.  
Half grows to the south, half to the north.  
New limbs have sprouted from the rotten trunk.  
Life hangs on.

The dry leaves blow.  
The clouds roll in.

This rocky land is neglected.  
Blackberry bushes and thistles thrive.  
The barn has fallen down.  
The woodshed leaks.  
The garden fence sags.

Our energy is like the wind.  
It moves through,  
blows things around,  
then passes.

Nature goes her own way.  
'Neglected' is a human word.

from *Hidden/Cache*, Borealis Press, 2005

MUNIRA JUDITH AVINGER was born in the US and moved to the Eastern Townships of Quebec in 1992. Munira's first book, *The Empty Bowl/Le Bol Vide* was published by Borealis Press in December, 2000. Her second book, *Lifting The Veil/Soulever Le Voile*, was released by Borealis Press in October of 2001 and her first novel, *Julia*, was published by Borealis in December of 2003. Her next book, *Hidden/Cache*, will be released by Borealis some time this year. Shortly after moving to the Eastern Townships, Munira built a little cabin in the forest. Most of her poems have been written in this cabin. She does go out into the world to give poetry readings and teach writing workshops, but the time she values the most is spent in the cabin, writing, meditating and playing music.

## ...Winter Sleep...

*Benjamin Elliott Jan 28th 2004*

It has come to that point  
in the wee hours of this  
crisp and cool morning



that I glance at my bed  
and notice the beckoning sheets  
staring at my weary eyes.

I must heed their call  
and bask in my own calm  
concealed  
by a woolly comforter...



Because it Comforts.

Snug beneath a flurry of expanding molecules  
Peaceful stillness is the only warmth brought  
To a cold conscience  
Thawing worry away and its icy grip  
Melting it into nothingness  
and Seeping into the abyss of slumberous thought

**The Monumental Thunderstorm:  
Reflection on Extension Seven**

*Coplen Rose*

Somewhere in sub-Saharan Africa  
a storm rolls in off the felt.

The thunder brilliantly bellows as  
the lightning forks hard against the countryside.

The air is charged with static and fear,  
the world flees for cover.

In vacant streets the water riots,  
tearing with it chunks of earth.

The city has soiled itself.  
The storm pounds down harder,  
fighting for submission.

On monument hill she stands.

A fire of ecstasy burns in her deep brown eyes.

Her long charcoal black hair clings to the seductive grin on her face.

She knows she's standing on the edge:

The edge of the world,  
the edge of life,  
it's all the same by this point.

She watches the lightning,  
its raw power blasting away at the settlement below.

In fascination she counts the strokes of white on the darkened sky,

She's well aware every other hill has been hit.

She waits patiently for our turn,  
visualizing the moment.

The hairs on my arm raise and my adrenaline spikes  
as I notice a tension in the air.

She glances towards me calming my nerves.

Time slows to compose itself,  
dragging its feet against the wheel of fate.  
In that incomplete second when time seems to stumble,  
she draws near.

With shortened breaths she takes my hand  
The moment has arrived.

**Reading the Calendar**

*D.G.Jones*

but one would not be he  
who had nothing but plenty  
-- Marianne Moore

Jean-Paul Lemieux has plenty  
only of space . on my  
calendar for March:  
half a horse and rider, the rest  
the falling snow

a dark sliver of, I suppose a  
far off sun, suggests the plenitude  
of the snow-filled air

--Voltaire's  
quelques arpents de neige?

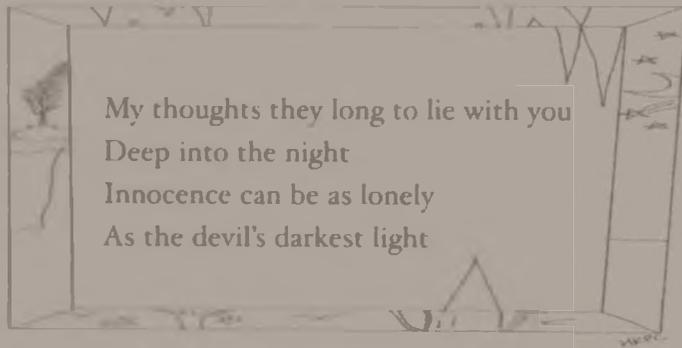
--peut-être l'univers?

oh, half a horse and  
"I got plenty of nothing" makes  
Lemieux a happy man

D.G.JONES, recipient of two Governor General's Awards, resides in North Hatley and taught at Université de Sherbrooke until 1994. Recent publications include *The Floating Garden* (Coach House Press, 1995) and *Wild Asterisks in Cloud* (Empyrean Press, 1997).

## A Thinly-Veiled Verse

Kayla Webster



The Kiss

Lori-Lee Thomas

## Writing Drunk

Winner of the F.G. Scott Creative Writing Contest - Tammy Taylor

Bubble bubbles in my beer  
Being drunk is not what you may think  
There is the dizziness of the head  
The inconcolasble numbing of the cortex  
Which detaches ones abrains from ones abodys  
Sight becomes sound  
How can you drive like this?  
I can not even see  
Fuzzy fuzz

Mumbling mumble my drink is tall king  
I know how to shut it up!  
Morish landscapes seem clearish to me now  
Though my mind is full of cotton  
Where is my brain?  
Pour brain  
Lost and wondering like a meandering ball of twine  
Here Kitty-Kitty  
Let's wrap the dog up for Christmas  
Blather, Babble! stop that  
I feel like I'm drowning in a vat  
Only it hasn't come to that yet  
Am I still alive?  
Little worm, what are you doing here  
You should be outside?  
I don't wanna go outside  
It's cold. I'm cold.  
I need another beer.

## The Yukon

*David Weedmark*

The river keeps roaming north  
before winding west,  
beyond noise-encroached borders,  
beyond bricks and cut lumber frontiers,  
and beyond the persistent moans  
of distant highway traffic.  
The river is caring  
in what she leaves behind.

The water is closed and black  
from a distance,  
but clears with your focus,  
quickenning,  
without reflection of clouds or sky.  
The sun angles low,  
peering into the river's chest  
at cool, speckled nuggets  
and jagged grey cuttings  
defying treasure,  
lightened with perception.

At her shore, immersed  
to the elbows and shins in her cold,  
I empty my labour into my pan and slough,  
pulling the sand from the gravel,  
refining the black from the sand,  
peering for gold in the black.

This Raven, my harsh-throated familiar,  
dives from my shoulder,  
as an arrow pointing towards  
the river's northern dream.  
And I am alone.

I let the water filter the past  
and let settle the deposits  
through time where they would rest.  
Naked birch and pale pine  
shoulder around me.  
Beyond, dark mountains weigh down,  
blind gravity covered with white cloths of snow,  
carefully tucked into thin etches and creases.  
Beyond, more distant harsh mountains.  
Beyond, more bearded snow,  
more furrowed grey and layered pale blues.  
Beyond, more sunlight arching low  
between layers of grey troubled silence.  
Beyond, more spaces,  
more rocks, more sand, more gravel.  
Beyond, more passion, more heartache,  
more stories to tell.

But now, with patience,  
I keep working the river.  
And now, with more patience,  
the river works on me,  
and I am naked to its torrents.

Numbed, bruised and weary,  
I keep pouring myself and sifting,  
pouring myself into the pan,  
pouring myself into the river,  
pouring myself and sifting.

The river is caring  
in what she leaves behind.

DAVID WEEDMARK is a Canadian poet and novelist. Although he lives in Ottawa, he does much of his writing in the Gatineau Hills of Quebec. His collection of poetry, *First Stirrings*, was nominated for the Governor General's Award in 2004. His third book, *Postcards from Paris*, will be released in May 2005, a collection of poetry, prose and sketches.

## IF THE DOLPHIN COULD TALK

*Noni Howard January 3, 2005*

he would tell you,  
floating from his blue sea mist  
surrounded by light

of the freedom of space  
to do what you please  
and NOT ask any living thing  
Permission  
for this life.

i have been witness  
to many things , he says ,  
but none so beautiful  
as an ACT of LOVE

given to me in the wind  
and sea salt of our bodies  
and have NO fear .

For i am touched  
by the GODHEAD  
and have no secrets  
from the pure elements  
that made me /  
i give back  
my gift.

DR. NONI HOWARD, originally from Canada, is a poet, teacher, writer, publisher and therapist. Her company New World Press was founded in Vancouver B.C. in 1974. Recipient of numerous grants, awards and degrees, she has been a producer for many of the world's largest poetry festivals. Her books in print include the Politics of

Separation, Almost Like Dancing, The Anthology of the First Annual Woman's Poetry Festival in San Francisco, Share My Fantasies and Tiger Balm. The Politics of Love, her book of selected poems and a new novel are forthcoming.

Now living in California, Dr. Howard spent 21 years of her life in Quebec, and was Editor of the Mitre for four of her five years at Bishop's, which resulted in two B.A.s: one in English Literature and the other in Comparative Religion.

In May of 2004 she was awarded by Frontier University (of Nova Scotia) a Doctorat - honoris Causa of 'Social and Cultural Anthropology'. In June of 2004, Dr. Howard received a BA in 'ETUDES QUEBECOISES' from the same university.

In March of 2005, she was named PRINCIPAL of Frontier University (its first woman Principal) and her first duty as Principal will be to boost enrollment.



Untitled #6.2

Chris Ju

CHRISJU graduated from Bishop's with a B.A. in Fine Arts and a B.B.A. in Marketing. He lives and works both in Quebec and Beijing, China. He is currently working on a large-scale installment to be presented at the Fine Arts Academy of Tianjin, China this year. The works included here are from his production entitled Anti-Greensbergian, composed of large-scale mixed-media paintings.

## Stream of End

*Eva Grabowski*

Lift your lids,  
My sweet Moroccan poison,  
And speakslither with caution,  
Musical, like a silken trail,  
A mile-long tapeworm,  
Blank verse, corralled by habit and order,  
(I already know the decadence in your mouth)  
Simple backdrop and navy blue static,  
My meandering perversion,  
(if only you knew)  
You have a god-like body,  
Warm and devastating  
(such a shame).  
You emptied the acts  
I carefully rehearsed,  
Until they spit, screamed, tore,  
Cracking split,  
Splinter snap,  
Marrow bone,  
Dust crunch,  
Dry heave grit,  
Twice burned ash  
(did it ever really exist?)  
No longer green, usurped,  
Beaten beaten,  
Defeated  
(my plants told me about you,  
what you didn't do when I left you in charge).



You merely observed,  
Answered,  
Nodded in response, careless,  
Recognizable only to another void,  
Heedless at obscurity,  
Never asked,  
Indifferent as a lethal dose,  
Boasting like pharaoh dormancy,  
Magnetism and Earth,  
Feigning force,  
Engine thunder,  
Tidal push,  
Baking heat  
Seemingly complete, always entryless.  
You were most reliable at holding the weapon steady,  
(oh how I could have loved you),  
Onto which I hurled myself,  
With a running start,  
And an idiot's grin.



## The 'chill spot'

*Jeremy I. Freed*

The Booker T. Washington High School for Performing and Visual Arts is a modest building of orange brick, plopped haphazardly between a busy freeway and a disused railway line. It occupies an area of downtown Dallas once inhabited by prostitutes and dope addicts, but is now in the full throes of an aggressive urban renewal. The bordellos have given way to condos, the crackhouses to playhouses. The district now boasts art galleries, a symphony center, and several theatres. Flanking the school building are two parking lots (no one walks to school here) and they are full of cars glimmering in the sun. It is early September, and the heat has just recently dipped below unbearable, and now rests soothingly between uncomfortable and balmy. Afternoons here are quiet. The students are all indoors, and the only sounds are the steady whoosh of the freeway, and the dissonant crowing of grackles.

A bell rings and within seconds the birdsong and traffic noise have given way to a crescendo of voices. Doors swing open, and bodies erupt from the building shouting, laughing, jostling, onto the lawns and into the parking lots.

The front lot is only partially owned by the school, most of it is used by the business people in the nearby office buildings. It contains an invisible boundary, beyond which students are free from school jurisdiction, and this is where we go to furtively smoke cigarettes and joints, meet our friends, and plan our afternoons. Today is Friday, and there is a palpable feeling of jubilation in the air.

"Dude, you should have seen her face." Ollie says.

Annie, his girlfriend adds, "Oh, she was so pissed off. She looked like she was about to shit herself. Fucking bitch." Ollie is

a broad shouldered boy with a disarming grin and a shaved head, Annie is small, and overcompensates with attitude. They are dressed identically in white wife-beater t-shirts and black Dickies trousers. They are discussing the biggest story of the day: a fight with a freshman.

I sit with my back to the fence and listen to them talk. My best friend Gordon stands a short distance away. He was there when the fight took place, but says nothing.

Gordon is an imposing, clownlike figure. He is over six feet tall and solidly built. He is dressed in baggy shorts, a torn golf shirt and flip-flops, the ensemble accented by a pale, tattered cowboy hat. His voice and gestures are reminiscent of a television funny man, always joking. Gordon is accidentally charming, and very popular. His prevalent attitude is one of lazy nonchalance. Today, like most Fridays we have plans to hang out after school.

"Say, playa, you ready to roll?"

"Sure," I say, "What you wanna do?"

"Let's go blaze one back at the house."

"Alright."

We make our way across the gravel, towards Gordon's Jeep. It is unlocked, and smells like a mixture of citrus air freshener, Camel Lights, and weed. It's an old car, but Gordon loves it. And it suits him. I put the same Cyprus Hill CD we've been playing all month in the CD player, and we tear out of the parking lot, bass pounding, spraying gravel behind us.

\*\*\*

My home is close to school, less than ten minutes' drive, so we often retreat there in the afternoons. The neighbourhood is much like that of the Arts District, once a lot poorer, but being quickly gentrified by the young high-tech types flooding into the city every year. There are still signs of its history, the odd crumbling

bungalow or block of cheap apartments, but these now look out of place amid blocks of stylish white townhouses, like the one to which my family moved.

A green canopy of live oak boughs shades the small patio, and the late afternoon sun angles just above the roof. Smoke curls in the yellow sunlight like the tail of a lazy dragon. I cough, take another hit from the pipe and pass it back to Gordon. We are seated at the 'chill spot': a section of the backyard behind my family's home. Gordon reclines in a sagging armchair, and rests his feet on an equally shabby coffee table, both rescued from a nearby dumpster. This is where we come to hang out, chill, smoke weed, and talk. I sit across the table from him in a folding lawn chair. This corner of the backyard doesn't get much sun, and smells like decaying leaves and soggy cigarette butts. Mariachi music from the apartments next door wafts over the fence. Someone yells something in Spanish. From inside my house I can faintly hear the radio, and the clatter of my mother moving in the kitchen.

"What's Dilweed doing tonight?" Gordon asks.

"Dunno. I don't think there's anything going on." I'm still watching the smoke, fascinated by the way it catches the filtered sunlight and dissolves into the air.

This is an unusual scenario for a Friday afternoon. Life in Dallas for high-school kids is the same as in any other city anywhere in the country. It's boring. There's very little for us to do if we don't want to go to the movies. We're not old enough to buy alcohol, but drugs are readily available. And being seventeen, we all have our driver's licenses. So we get stoned and drive around. Every now and then someone's parents will go out of town and there'll be a party, but this weekend promises to be painfully quiet.

The dog door flaps, and our shaggy oversized poodle appears

from the house. He goes straight to Gordon, wagging his tail furiously. Gordon playfully grabs his ears and blows on the dog's face. "What, fool? What?" The dog struggles to get away, and sneezes as he retreats towards me. Gordon laughs. "That's right, dog."

We sit for a few more minutes in silence before he speaks again.

"Say, you got anything to drink?"

"Yeah. Get me one too."

"Say what? I'm the guest, fool."

"You're closer," I say.

"Uh uh girl." He says clowning the voice of our math teacher.

"You asked."

Gordon concedes, feigning a great offence, and goes inside to get the drinks. The screen door slams and he returns shortly with two burgundy cans of Dr. Pepper.

"Thanks, Mrs. Freed" He calls over his shoulder.

\*\*\*

With the sunset the heat has dissipated somewhat, and as we drive, cool air drifts through the open windows. Our plan for the evening stands, for the moment, at going to the 7-11 where our friend Tom works, and talking to him. We are listening to Snoop Dogg's *Doggy Style*, his groundbreaking first album. We both know most of the words, and rap along to the CD as we drive.

*Murda was the case that they gave me...*

The 7-11 is a short drive from my house, and across the street from the stately, oak dotted campus of Southern Methodist University, which caters to the children of wealthy Texans, for whom the ivy league is just beyond their reach. We pull into the parking lot and turn off the car. The music stops abruptly, and the quiet night floods in. It is still relatively early, but the street is mostly empty.

Tom sits on a bench outside the store, smoking a cigarette, looking pissed off. He's a few years older than us, but graduated from Arts only a year ago. He's painfully thin, has acne and a nose that looks like it's been broken several times. He is a remarkably talented actor, a recovering drug addict, and a notorious liar. His life generally appears a total mess, but he never seems to care.

"Guys. What's up."

"Hey, Tom."

"What are you guys doing tonight?"

"Shit," says Gordon, "there's nothing going on."

We position ourselves around Tom on the bench, me sitting, Gordon leaning against the window of the store.

"So what's new?" I say.

"Same old shit, you know. Just working."

Another car approaches, a silver BMW, blinding us with its headlights as it parks. Two pretty blond girls get out, and walk past us into the store. Tom smiles at them as they pass, they pretend not to notice.

"Excuse me, fellas," he says, stubs out his cigarette, and moves inside.

Gordon takes Tom's seat, and says nothing. We stare out at the parking lot, and the buildings of the university residences beyond. He lights a Camel and spreads out across the bench, arms outstretched, legs splayed.

I turn to look inside the store. The girls are buying ice cream and diet cokes, and Tom is flirting with them as he takes their money. They emerge, get into their shiny car, and drive back across the street.

Gordon breaks the silence, "Have you heard that new Q-Tip album?"

"No. Any good?"

"Yeah, there's a couple of good tracks on there. It's alright, not as good as any of the old stuff, though."

"Oh." We sit quietly for a few more minutes, before I speak again, "I'm hungry."

"You want to go get some food?"

"Might as well. You?"

"Yeah, sure."

We wave goodbye to Tom, who looks up from whatever he's doing inside and nods to us, before looking away. Back in the Jeep, the music starts up again and we're off, down darkened tree-lined streets, through the quiet Dallas night.

*Alanna Fernandes*

Blinking slowly;  
No longer partaking in  
The Universal Pocket  
Solidarity  
Becomes the gift of the plagued.

The sky glimpses behind  
Feet nimbly brushing the sand,  
Barefoot as the rocks.

White night follows  
This rip  
While wind compliments  
Intention:

A perfumed soul is mended.



Chickadee

Beth Girdler

### To Spring

*Zoe Nadeau Boucher*

inspired by Keats' to Autumn.

Trite, such a season of renewal  
Infant to the emergent vividness  
Exploiting its nurturing golden breasts  
With fructuous embraces: passion's call.  
Symphonic choirs chanting various scales,  
V formations of flapping feathers beating  
Time: a pulsating metronome tale  
Of effortless fable awakenings.  
Morning dew buds bursting out of their shells  
Stretching arms and legs, casting aromas  
As frail as the reflective water pond.  
Attracting honey bees from their stripe cells  
Ensnaring them to ticking farewells 'cause  
Noon's pungent radiance burns and fades dawn.

### Sacrifice

*David Weedmark*

Bleed me with wine,  
and drain my body,  
slowly,  
with too much caffeine  
and the sharp dry reeds  
of your cigarette smoke,  
before my heart springs out  
as an overwound clock  
from the delirious hours  
of your slow, grinding love.

From this moment on,  
I will eat only pastries  
and chocolate.  
I will erode myself  
with distraction.

I will not sleep again.

I will dive without fear  
towards every sunrise,  
towards every sunset,  
towards every gesture  
of your body,  
until I succumb  
to the precipice  
of your beautiful,  
hesitant lips.

## Breakfast on Sunset Boulevard

*Coplen Rose*

Author's note: Writing this poem, I had the image of a steam roller paving over a palm tree. At first, the bricks are built tight around the tree to choke it (hold it up) and the "new tactic" is just to build the street over the tree.

I lay within a cold brick garden.  
each misshapen brick bounds brightly in my face.  
A confession: I border with the branded world.  
Refined, yet blatantly branching beyond the bureaucracy  
nearly there  
so close yet held, restricted, confined.  
The red and saffron bricks support me,  
building a base to hold me up,  
my legs fight to stay fastened within the course earth,  
stretching, tearing, gripping.  
My feet, toes curled, hold strong in the moist chocolate ground they  
grasp.  
A new plan!  
A new tactic: the pavement expands  
The rock-like weight presses down upon my forehead,  
The garden of trapezoidal gum-drops mourns.  
"Failed Cubes," I scream  
as the light of my last dawn slowly creeps across my body.  
Touching my soul and stealing my  
Mind.

## Wasabi

*The Water Solubles*

They sit like two trees glistening from a light rain  
Their roots holding together her dark brown mane  
There I sit with sushi on my plate  
Looking at my chopsticks, I contemplate

She puts her hands around those trees  
Oh lord, I'm getting weak at the knees  
She reaches those sticks towards my food  
Didn't want to turn away in fear of being rude

Baby give me some of your wasabi  
Take these chopsticks and bring them to my lips  
You drive me crazy

When I go home I can't even sleep



## GOLD WOMAN

Noni Howard February 26, 1990

she has a longer silk dress now  
she likes to show off her legs  
in the cheap panty hose the  
americans bring she thinks she  
stands taller in imported clothes

she likes gold leaf the yellow  
light from the temples of Bangkok  
she hears shines like that  
a light reflecting the sun  
pure/  
a clean cup of water

she is lucky:  
she has a room and a following  
which means something for herself/  
one bill in ten is folded quietly  
in a bit of string a nephew  
comes for the rest

she knows there isn't much time  
time is something she is made of  
but others aren't  
time she says comes in hours  
may be minutes  
rationed like everything else  
even the Buddha lived a second at a time

in the meanwhile  
there are the shoes she has been given  
the ones with the new soles

to think about  
they're local of course  
but sunlight and misconceptions/  
beautiful trap  
for women  
to embrace in / five inches taller  
a way up in the world

as indestructible as her earning power  
pure  
like a clean cup of water.

turn them over  
admire the antique bronze slippers  
an altar at which to worship  
inlaid and perfect

the thick new rubber  
imprinted  
SAIGON

## Public Slaves

*Winner of the F.G. Scott Creative Writing Contest - Tammy Taylor*

Meet the public slaves.

These servants belong to no man.  
Or woman (don't forget the women).  
They are free for all to use and abuse.

See how we parade our slaves?  
You find them everywhere you go.  
What good is a public slave if they  
Are not there when you want them?

They drive our buses,  
Take our children to school.  
They scan our groceries,  
And bag our food.

They can be any sex, any race.  
They can do any job with ease.  
There is so little that they can not do,  
You only need one and everything is done.

Our slaves are polite on command.  
They are forever courteous;  
They must smile upon us  
And make us feel as if

They are happy to see us.  
No matter how rude we are,  
They have not the right to ask of us  
What we ask of them.



Drawer of Wisdom

Andrea Robertsdotter

## Party Music for the Dead, in Three Movements

A triptych inspired by recent developments in global politics for performance by *Doppelgänger Effekt*

### Red Lethe

No escaping the ignominious conflagration;

I don't believe there ever really was a reason.

Yesterday is so many stains on our reputation

That we forget who is to blame.

I'm sitting by a stream and all I see are corpses floating,

Mauled to the extreme, faces sullen, mouths gaping.

The way to Hell is paved as I silently keep on gazing.

If I went for a swim it would be all the same.

But now there's something that I have in mind.

It's not much but I always find a

Little help is always welcome.

No, moaning won't make that river dry.

It doesn't matter what we try

We have to start somewhere,

Somehow.

No postponing the times of our admonition:

The profits that we build provide no secure absolution.

Complacency bespeaks the triumph of a new religion

Where Hell alone gets all the praise.

We're killing time and killing all sorts of things besides,

It's not a war but we are counting losses on all the sides.

Can't turn back the tide so we'll just build an ark and decide

The ones who live and those who die.

But now, there's something that I have in mind.

It's not enough but I still find a

Little help is always welcome.

No, moaning won't make that river dry.

It doesn't matter what we try

We have to start somewhere,

Sometime.

### Ululate, Plorate

Iao le'eh

Bemoan,

Woe is the land of Savage Youth

Where Europe has imposed a disease

She neither loves,

She neither loves nor understands.

Bemoan,

That roads were laid

With no regards as to where they lead and

Bemoan that roads were laid

With no regards as to where they land.

Bemoan ye muses,

Ye Furies howl,

Maenads your robes rend,

Your robes rend in lament

And sound the toll of Nature's

Sick Death,

Sick Death with your frenzy throes.

Iao le'eh

Bemoan,  
The waste life of whole continents,  
Their blood and sweat spilled in vain  
To please the West,  
To feed the West's discontentment.

Grieve and resent the sacrifice  
Of virtue and of Stately Grace  
Downtrodden, and condemned  
To repeat our mistakes in our place.

Bemoan ye muses,  
Ye Furies howl,  
Maenads tear out your hair,  
Tear out your hair in lament  
And sound the toll of Nature's  
Sick Death,  
Sick Death with your frenzy throes.

Iao le'eh.

### **Petition to the American Caesars**

It is not enough to ask  
Where you possibly have gone wrong.

It is not enough to question  
Why we will never bow to you.

Though our blood is not so different  
It is about time you find out

The one you have been shedding  
Is nothing less than G-D's Own.

G-D's Own Land?

Where have the Levites gone?



G-D's Own Land?

And the blooming staff of Aaron?  
Have you traded your liberties  
For this Empire in prison  
Just to carry across the seas  
This Whore of a War?

All Empires fall in due time  
All Empires fall.

The Sovereigns of the Nations  
Our hypothetical leaders  
Falling prey to covetousness  
Want their share of your Empire  
To do away with simple pleasures  
And aspire to grander things  
Like the slavery of all the Tribes  
With the World Bank pulling the strings.

G-D's Own Land?

Where have the Levites gone?

G-D's Own Land?

And the blooming staff of Aaron?  
Have you wept the last of your tears  
For the Towers of Babylon  
Just to carry through your frontiers  
This Whore of a War?

All Empires fall in due time.  
All Empires fall.

Your limitless horizons  
Have seen mushroom clouds sprouting;



It is not the worst of visions  
But it's only the beginning.  
Not so far back you could still see  
Great hordes of Men were struggling  
For a Peace that never could be  
In a Land drained of all its dreams.

G-D's Own Land?

Where have the Levites gone?

G-D's Own Land?

And the blooming staff of Aaron?  
Have you traded your liberties  
For this Empire in prison  
Just to carry across the seas  
This Whore of a War?

All Empires fall in due time.

All Empires fall.



## Cosmopolitan Blue

*David Weedmark*

Slowly drawing me out  
with your careful,  
sleepy buckets,  
you woke me,  
homeless,  
with a sudden  
outward gesture,  
scattering me in pieces  
everywhere in cosmopolitan blue,  
snagged in treetops,  
sticking to the moon,  
towards the grass,  
towards the earth,  
towards oblivion,  
muddy, sloppy pieces of me  
dripping down your arms.

## Speak in Tongues

Winner of the F.G. Scott Creative Writing Contest - Tammy Taylor

I don't  
Parlez-vous  
Sprekein die  
Ni shou  
Comprends-tu  
No hablo  
Yi xiao  
Understand



I love myself #1

Chris Ju

## Morris House Poetry Reading Series 2005

Each of the following renowned Canadian poets visited Bishop's University this year to read their poems, through a series organized by Michelle Ariss. It has been a wonderful experience to enjoy both their poetry and their presence here in our midst.

DAVID SOLWAY's most recent book of poetry is *The Pallikari* of Nesmine Rifat [Goose Lane Editions, 2005]. His previous volume, *Franklin's Passage* [McGill-Queen's University Press], was awarded *Le Grand Prix du Livre de Montréal*. His latest collection of literary criticism is *Director's Cut* [The Porcupine's Quill, 2003.] Appointed poet-in-residence at Concordia University for 1999-2000, he is currently a contributing editor with *Canadian Notes & Queries* and an associate editor with *Books in Canada*.

ROBYN SARAH was born in New York City to Canadian parents, and grew up in Montreal. A graduate of the *Conservatoire de Musique du Quebec* and of *McGill University*, she is the author of seven poetry collections and two collections of short stories, and her works have been published widely in Canada and the United States. Her collections include *The Touchstone: Poems New and Selected* (1992), *Questions About The Stars* (1998) and *A Day's Grace* (2003).

ANNE CIMON is a Montreal poet. She spent time living in the Eastern Townships to aid her recovery from a life-threatening illness in 1994. She has recently published her fourth book of poetry and second bilingual edition: *An Angel around the Corner/ Un ange autour du coin* with *Borealis Press*.

ERIC ORMSBY's poetry collections include *For a Modest God: New and Selected Poems* (1997) and *Araby* (2001). He has been published in a number of literary journals, and is a professor at *McGill's Institute of Islamic Studies*.

## Merlin Recovered

David Solway

I made a pilgrimage alone  
but heard the song that Merlin heard.  
I dreamed that I was locked in stone,  
trapped in the favor she conferred;  
  
who bound me first with spells and charms,  
then slowly paralyzed my will;  
I fell into her perfect arms  
and found that they were mineral.  
  
I slept in stone a thousand years,  
my sinews fused into the rock;  
I heard the earth shift in my ears  
and listened to its pebble-talk.  
  
The lizard crawled upon my flank;  
I felt the spider's shadow creep;  
the sea-hawk perched; and rank on rank  
of shale-ants marched upon my sleep.  
  
I learned to suffer patiently  
the circuits of the bear; and all  
came clear that had been dark to me  
before my long escorial.  
  
And now these mortises of stone  
release the man who could not walk;  
I slowly disengage the bone  
from the intelligible rock

that held me captive for my good  
and taught the pilgrim to endure.  
The witch sings still what song she would.  
The sound is cold and sweet and pure.

## Ripples

Robyn Sarah

Down in the tunnels where buskers  
compete with Muzak and the roar of trains  
for small change and moments of grace,  
  
Down in the tunnels where we doze  
and shunt, and jolt awake  
to stream in schools  
down passageways,  
  
Today from up above we heard a voice:  
*Service is interrupted on Line 2  
for an indefinite delay  
due to an incident at Station X.*  
  
Down in the tunnels, we all knew:  
we knew what that meant.  
Somebody jumped.  
  
Someone  
went up for air.

Reprinted by permission from Questions About The Stars, Brick Books 1998

Sutton, June 14, 2003

Anne Cimon

Rain, rain,  
want to enjoy  
the day, rain  
drops  
in the artificial pond,  
a shell at the bottom  
looks like  
an open palm,  
a stone turtle  
at the edge.

Ferns,  
delicate  
green lace,  
such pleasure  
in beauty,  
wet, wet  
leaves  
pebbles  
pennies  
in the pond.

Bones ache  
feet cold  
fresh air  
grass for the cat.

\*\*\*

Inside, a small window  
frames nature,  
a dish of potpourri



on the sill,  
a touch of home.

Nature calms  
a bird sings.

Mist outside.  
I try not to see  
the electric wires

I look for what I love.

Two pines  
almost twins  
but nature is full  
of quirks and knots.  
Branches droop,  
clouds are light  
heaven's light.

As I gaze out,  
a woman walks  
in the garden.

Green leaves,  
clay pots,  
vegetables grow  
as I write.

There is a breeze  
in the room  
and a bouquet

of irises

lilac-coloured

one

white



Reprinted with permission from *An Angel around the Corner/Un ange autour du coin*, Borealis Press, 2004

## **Kehaar**

*David Solway*

for Richard Adams

He has a Charlie Chaplin walk  
as if his webs were two sizes  
too big: Splayweb we could call him  
if we hadn't called him Kehaar.  
His wings, not yet moulted, are like  
nets of speckled fish, each feather  
twitching for its lost element.  
At first, wary, timid, instinct  
kept him from us, and that long black  
pick of a beak kept us from him—  
till, with time and hunger, the small  
tentative negotiations  
of approach at last concluded  
in his agreeing to survive.  
At night we find him in the shed  
tucked under his feathers; in the day,  
when not practicing his wing beat,  
he turns his head to the garden  
wall and waits: for water, for fish,  
or for the appropriate wind.  
He permits my wife to approach  
with tiny Chinese steps, a bowl  
of fresh-caught scorpion fish in hand.  
She bows to him. He retreats, puts  
a little English on his neck  
to get his eye at the proper  
tilt, pauses, observes, advances.

Then she retreats with just the right  
degree of human deference.

It's a week now he's settled in,  
our Kehaar. He still can't fly, but  
he holds his own against the toms,  
avoids the snake, and is polite  
to the gecko and the fruit rat.  
One day he'll take off, sleek and quite  
unChaplinsque, to wheel up there  
with the other white predators,  
remembering nothing. We'll wish  
him wing luck then, though out of need  
no less than his to soar, crave some  
smallest imperfection in his flight.

## **Solstice**

*Robyn Sarah*

A sly gift it is, that on the year's  
shortest day, the sun  
stays longest in this house—  
extends the wand of its slow  
slant and distant squint  
farthest into the long depths  
of our wintry rooms—to touch with  
tremulous light, interior places  
it has not lit before.

Reprinted by permission from *Questions About The Stars*, Brick Books 1998

## Cellar

*Eric Ormsby*

This is where we keep them: toy trucks  
with busted wheels, the broken stuff  
we can't get rid of, our old books,  
the splintered chair, the fractured tabouret.

There's something stagey in our garbage.  
The furniture is theatrical and grim.  
Our repudiated gestures still live there,  
six feet under the kitchen. They wear  
the vague insulted look of slighted relatives,  
belonging, but pushed aside.

The dark place gives  
reluctant nobility to these disowned things.  
I picture other broken objects down here,  
not always on view: behind the dead palm,  
a litter of stillborn phrases, the snapped  
bunches of words, the shivered promises,  
those dusty entreaties that still snatch the throat  
—insistent as panhandlers or evangelists,  
those shrill solicitors at Christmastime  
whose poor clothes shine in the snowy light.

## Ottawa: The Cardinal

*Anne Cimon*

Judith drives  
in the twilight.

We are lost  
in streets with huge houses  
and clipped lawns.

We search for the pub  
where we are scheduled  
to read our poems.

Hungry,  
nerves frayed,  
we stop by a curb  
to look at the map.

From my rolled-down window  
I notice a bird  
on the sidewalk,  
it's a cardinal.

We were just talking  
about cardinals,  
how rarely we see one.

It must be female  
as its colour is muted.

We admire it  
for a moment  
a meditative moment

before we find our way again

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## Milkweed

*Eric Ormsby*

The milkweed with its stringent silk  
Erect in October when the long blades lie  
Burnished to glistening under a dwindling sky,  
And the trees have the accents of things about to die,  
Startled my glance, the way the tressed and milk-  
Bright strands of its hidden diadem  
Peep from the knobbed and gathered pods.  
A field of milkweed, where each black stem  
Juts from the cold earth, catches the sun  
At its palest declination. Spun  
Inside themselves, concealed in the husk  
Of their future, the folds of the seeds  
Are pleated upon themselves, are wound  
The way a woman wraps a shawl at dusk  
Over her shoulders. The weeds  
Are populous. They column neglected ground.  
Tassel and toss the smudged air of the fall.  
And from a little distance the stalks rise tall  
And shattered, porch and peristyle  
Of some yet undiscovered ruin. Meanwhile,  
At the breeze's twitch, the seeds rise  
Upon the air, are lofted, puffed, they float  
In the sunset, flutter like white butterflies  
And inhabit all your sight. With no note  
Struck they lilt on the wind, speckle the slope,  
Already winter-darkened, with small swales of hope.



*Simalcrum geranoides* 'albidus'

Catherine Aikman

## Cash 2

*Winner of the F.G. Scott Creative Writing Contest - Tammy Taylor*

Good morning. \*beep\*  
Do you have any \*beep\*  
Thing under \*beep\* your \*beep\*  
Cart? 2 x \*beep\* 3 x 4013 code  
Do you \*beep\* have \*beep\* any  
Coupons? 4011 balance code  
4061 code \*beep\* \*beep\*  
\$45.98 Please. Thank You.  
Have a nice

\*beep\* Afternoon. \*beep\*  
Do \*beep\* you have 4 x 4958 code  
Anything under 3 x 4058 code  
Your \*beep\* cart? 2 x \*beep\* I  
\*beep\* need the \*beep\* potatoes.  
06260950052 code I have to  
\*beep\* Scan \*beep\* the potatoes.  
2 x 4062 code 4064 balance code  
\*beep\* I \*beep\* \*beep\* need the  
\*beep\* Beer \*beep\* too.  
\*beep\* \*beep\* Do \*beep\* you have  
033630001 code any coupons? \*beep\*  
\$105.35 Please thank you have a nice

\*beep\* \*beep\* Evening. \*beep\*  
My brain \*beep\* is not \*beep\* here \*beep\*  
At the 4664 balance code moment  
5 x 4012 code Please 2 x 4593 leave  
\*beep\* 4747 balance code  
A message \*beep\* \*beep\* with my  
\*beep\* Body after \*beep\*  
The next \*beep\*

## SHELLING PEAS

*Noni Howard California*

She is standing over the sink  
Shelling peas; their round green orbs  
Like newly hatched eggs  
Under her hands.

'You're buying that much?' he asks  
at the roadside stand  
as they purchase fruits and vegetables  
for the night's dinner.

'It looks like a lot but  
once shelled it is very little,' she replies.  
He nods and takes her hand.

Much later, the green seeds  
Growing in her hands are heavier  
And the strainer becoming full.

He comes behind her and she can feel  
His hot, halting breath on her neck.  
He blows into her ear and kisses her  
long neck all the way down.

She feels the hardness of his body  
Pressing into hers.

The green seed orbs drop  
From her hands.

As she stops shelling peas.

## The Tragic And True Tale Of Tiny timmy's Tree Trapped Kitten\*

Ian Jones

"Sixteen-year-old Priscilla" twinkles Mother mary to Father flanagan as she retracts the door "*wishes she could*", he replies as he embarks his hat upon his clutch. Mother mary is off down the hall. "*go back to school. But she is too*", she prattles over her shoulder to Father flanagan. "*weak. Three months ago, on*", he postulates politely. They partake of the parlour overhanging the river. "*death's doorstep, she was brought*" Mother mary says, indicating with her over-stuffed arm the stout club sofa while she engages the club seat with her rotund mass of ripe dilettante. "*to the Centre by her aunt. The Catholic sisters took her in*"? Mother mary queries offering the platter of chewy cream-puff sugar snacks. Father flanagan stokes the fire of his sockets and snakes a special one. "*and nursed*", he says with his orifice overloaded. Mother mary employs her fine skills with the bubbling pot, nursing sweet nectar along lines into cups.

The air is a brick with coming questions. The season for plucking is nigh; it's charity time. Father flanagan's begging bowl is well oiled and ready to do the Junior Varsity All-State 7 Time Champion Team no small amount of good. For this annum, they were to match with the Senior Featherweight Squad From The City for The Blue Ribbon. Seeing as all the marbles were firmly on the line, Father flanagan was hitting the suppliant trail like never before.

"*her back to life. But her fate is sealed too. She is*"? asked Mother mary, intend on receiving her due of meagre conversation. "*in the advanced stages of AIDS*." Father flanagan mutters and sips of the tea-bag solution. Dainty and fine, Mother mary's china splits her

lips and drenches her muscular root as she sums and divines what the offer will be.

Father flanagan unhinges his orator's tool and launches straight in. "*When she was nine-years-old, her uncle repeatedly raped her*." He states with authority, entrenched in his intelligence that her devotion to the Team has been secure to these many years. "*He was infected. Priscilla whispers 'My uncle raped me and then the sickness started.' Once she became sick, her mother rejected her. 'My mother is a teacher'*!" Father flanagan continues with much passion.

"*she does not want to see me*." Mother mary interrupts the good Father. "*I don't know why. She stays with my two sisters. She said*," Mother mary says as she fetches her check book. Father flanagan acquiesces solemnly; Mother mary has class and feels the cockles of her bloodpumper warm with Hometown Pride.

"*you are HIV positive. You give others your sickness*." Mother mary says as she passes the generous cash settlement. "*Her aunt and her niece are now her only family*" replies Father flanagan as he inserts the object of honour into the place of its keeping. Unpleasant tension skirted, the illustrious pair whiled away a jolly good 56 minutes with the taking of tea and toast, talking of Michelangelo etc. etc. and of course they discussed the upcoming Annual Women's Auxiliary Charity Fundraising Event. And of course they discussed poor Tiny timmy down the block's tree trapped kitten. The Men in charge had wrestled with the conundrum for 3 whole hours before restoration of Tiny timmy's kitten occurred. Tiny timmy cried the whole time. What a Tragedy.

\* The dialogue of both Father flanagan and Mother mary in the preceding tale is taken from the true life story of a young African girl whose life was destroyed by the AIDS virus. To read more about her and the African tragedy that goes largely ignored in our times please visit: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/background/aids/aidsinfrica.html>

## End of the Track

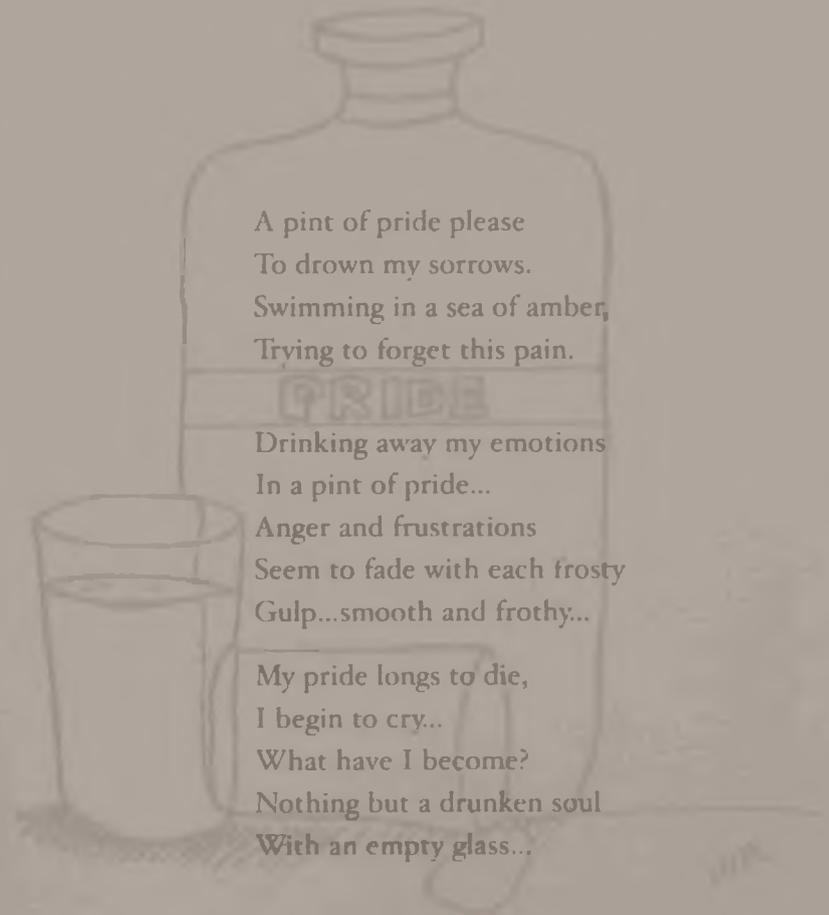
*Will Greaves September 26, 2004*

The years start to add up like  
so many empty bottles left lying  
around the apartment, once full  
of promise but now used up and gone,  
replaced by some hazy memories and  
the vague idea that I had a  
good time, whatever I did with them.  
Time has started to pick up speed with  
the relentless determination of a  
rollercoaster just cresting the top  
Closing my eyes won't stop me from  
being hurled forward,  
but opening them will only confirm to my  
disbelieving mind that the track does,  
in fact, end.

The only option, then, is to keep  
them closed and hold on with  
passionate dependence to those  
strapped in next to me, and  
hope that when this cart goes  
sailing into the foggy sky that  
we all get flung out together,  
and break through the clouds  
to touch the teasing stars on  
the other side.

## Pint of Pride

*Cecily Van Horn*



A pint of pride please  
To drown my sorrows.  
Swimming in a sea of amber,  
Trying to forget this pain.

Drinking away my emotions  
In a pint of pride...  
Anger and frustrations  
Seem to fade with each frosty  
Gulp...smooth and frothy...

My pride longs to die,  
I begin to cry..  
What have I become?  
Nothing but a drunken soul  
With an empty glass...

## Emma/Jane

*Jenn Kang*

She's been up all night, working on her novel. When she gets an idea, she lets it control her for hours. I came out here to give her privacy. I'm lying on my back on our small patch of grass, (they call this a backyard?) watching the clouds.

We're so different, Jane and I. She, the pale Englishwoman with chestnut-brown hair and gray-blue eyes, always looking dignified in the carefully applied makeup that she uses to hide the wrinkles of her endless worrying. She has smoked herself into a tall, gaunt frame. Her fingertips are raw from her constant nail biting. Hung with silver jewellery, and clothed in ethereal black, she tries so hard to be miserable. Her most carefree laugh has hints of reserve in it. This is Jane - complicated, melancholy, yet always graceful Jane. No matter how often her quirks bother me, she remains Jane - the love of my life.

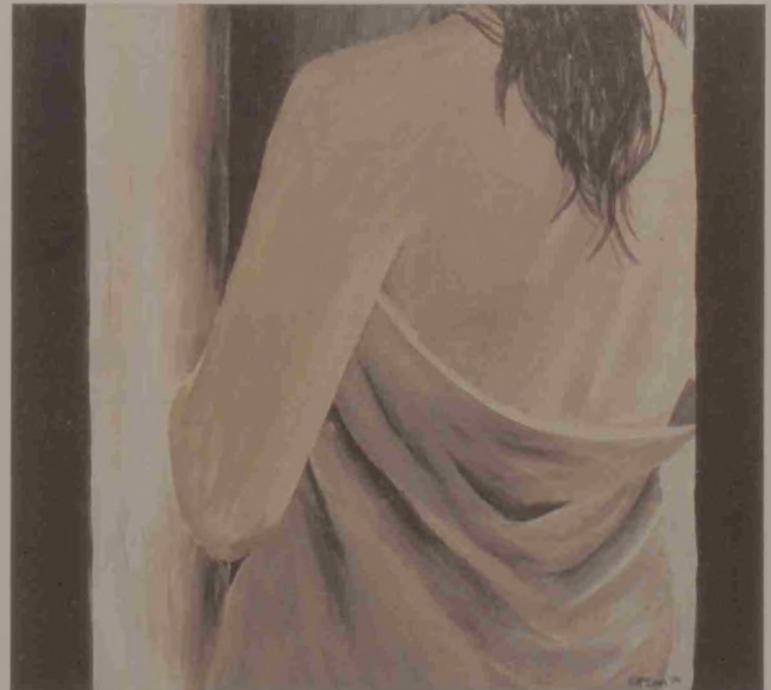
And then, of course, there's me - the chubby little Dutch girl, with golden-blond hair and hazel-green eyes. I hardly ever bother with makeup; at 25, I could still pass for seventeen, but why would I want to? I feel the grass tickle my legs through my powder-blue stockings, and see the dew sliding off my cherished Mary Janes.

I wonder what Jane thinks of me, deep inside. What does she think about the way I've almost always got a smile on my face, threatening to become a loud, long, laugh? What does she think of all the little habits that I don't even know I have?

I wonder why everyone (including me) always dwells on differences. Maybe because they're more obvious. But there are so many things that we have in common. We're both artistic freaks. Jane, the writer, and me, owner of a little pottery shop on Queen St. We've got a similar sense of style, except when it comes to clothing, where I want bright colours and Jane wants a complete lack thereof. We decorated our apartment together, with only a few small squabbles.

We love coffee shops and good books, intelligent and thought-provoking conversation. We're two extreme junk food addicts, and are always ready for a jesting battle of wits. We sing and dance to the Golden Oldies, one of the times when I know I'll always see Jane smile. Maybe she's laughing at my ear-piercing antics (I admit, I sound pretty horrible sometimes), but when we're happy together, it never seems to matter why. We love the wild outdoors, and hate the smog of downtown Toronto, where circumstance has placed us. Above all, we love each other, and have overcome great obstacles to be together.

I stand up slowly, and wipe the grass and dirt from my dress. I pull open the squeaky back door, and step into the kitchen. I bet Jane could use a cup of coffee.



Hush

Christine McLean

## A Short Wooded Walk

*Coplen Rose*

Sometimes I think I see people in the woods,  
Sometimes I see people in the woods.  
Travelers of a distant age, lost in thought.

These massive voyageurs  
Traveling hundreds of back-breaking kilometers  
over rough uncharted land.

Dragging only their wanigans  
The whole 95 kilos of their existence,  
Up hill and vale, through creek and river  
Just to find another slope...

Do they know where they are headed?

Fuck No

Do they even care?

Life for them is a simple pot of stew,  
served in a dog bowl.

Their mark, their sign  
is the blazed trail of slash cuts left in their wake.

Tree to tree, swamp to swamp.

Here these men suffer and die,

Running from the cities they try to escape.

As mankind spreads, they run deeper into their wooded bastille.

Always trying to find just one more untouched lake,  
one more un-scaled hill.

At night I hear their maddened screams, echoed by the lonely wolves.  
I howl too sometimes, in hopes that I might someday join them.

To find a pond to call my own.

## THE RITUAL OF THE CONCH

*Nomi Howard*

she wades through the conch shells  
pink, iridescent  
the color of woman  
at her core.

In her hands  
are the opal shapes

of sea, the deep recesses  
of color  
the fragmentation of  
wind and time.

turning to face the headlands  
longing to remain  
she holds the  
twin balances of  
earth and sea.

she raises them  
as the pink petals  
fall at her feet.



## Grim Cathedral

David Francey *Ayer's Cliff, Quebec, November 8, 2001*

The events of September 11th, 2001, as they unfolded on my TV screen.

The grim cathedral's arch alone  
Towers over dust and stone  
Monument to flesh and bone  
Twisted, stark and bare

And the floodlights' sharp relief  
Magnifies the weight of grief  
In the ruins that lie beneath  
That emptiness of air  
The papers from the building flew  
Hung in the air, in a sky of blue  
Souls of the newly dead and gone  
Shone so bright on a Tuesday morn

In the canyon streets, the towering cloud  
Tumbles on the running crowd  
Falling like a funeral shroud  
Darkening the sun

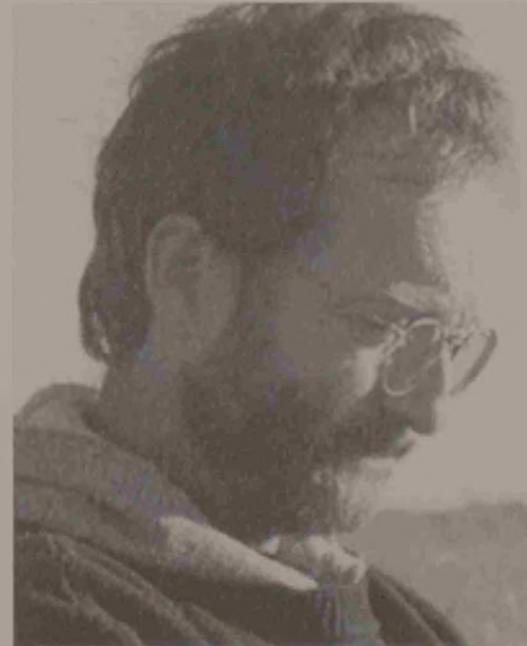
Staggered statues, concrete grey  
Man as ashes, dust and clay  
Desolation of the day  
Falls on everyone

The papers from the building flew  
Hung in the air, in a sky of blue  
Souls of the newly dead and gone  
Shone so bright in the morning sun

I watched it on my TV screen  
Devolution of the dream  
Images a nightmare scream  
To wake the likes of me

A charnel house of sight and sound  
Familiar streets a killing ground  
The day they brought the buildings down  
Down for all to see

DAVID FRANCEY was born in Scotland and moved to Toronto when he was 12. Winner of two Juno awards for his albums "Skating Rink" and "Far End of Summer", his new album, "Waking Hour" is currently nominated for a third. An extraordinarily talented singer and songwriter, David worked as a carpenter in the Eastern Townships and lived in Ayer's Cliff for many years. He, his wife Beth, and their family now reside in MacDonald's Corners, Ontario.



David Francey

Beth Girdler

## Continue

*Roxanne Hickey*

Numb

Numb

Numb

Benumbed.

Feeling Now.

Something.

Not much

Not sure.

Lost.

Happier.

Confused.

Sad.

Life.

Continues.

And I continue with it -

This makes me smile.

This is the first time I am able to.

Continue.

It is nice to know that

Life.

Does.

Continue.

And so do I.

So do I.

## Virtus (excerpt)

*Stefan Szary*

Author's Note: This is a piece of historical fiction; it is set during the 2nd century in Rome. The characters here are two gladiators who are for the first time revealing to one another the reasons that led to their misfortune of becoming Rome's warrior-slaves.

"Well," said Caius leaning back as Felix had, letting lethargy take a hold of him, "at least we ate like true Romans tonight."

Then another surprise, Felix actually smiled.

"They want us to fight tomorrow, Barbarian. They want us to be well fed and rested for the show. A man faces death better on a full stomach. But yes, at least tonight, we have eaten like Romans."

The two sat there for several more minutes. By now the sun was setting and the room they sat in was beginning to be cast into shadow. Suddenly they heard the noise of the door opening again; behind it stood the same slave that had brought them their dinner, accompanied still by two guards. They were, however, not alone. Two women, their togas immediately identifying them as prostitutes, stood behind them. They were not exceptionally pretty but they were young.

"Again," said the slave in his practiced fashion, "the noble Germanicus wishes his gladiators a night of contentment so that their minds may be clear for tomorrow." With that he stepped back and let the two women step in.

"They're yours, Barbarian," stated Felix not even bothering to glance up at the women, "but they leave right after."

Caius looked at the women, they awaited his answer and it suddenly struck Caius that they were much like him. Bodies owned and trained for a purpose. It had been because of lust that he had been doomed to this place. He looked at the women for a moment longer and decided.

"None for me either."

"If you wish it there are men here as well," replied the slave.

"Leave us, swine," snapped Felix, rising.

The girls quickly left the room replaced by the guards who lowered their spears at the menacing Felix.

"Then accept the wine," stated the attendant slave indignantly, "at least you can drink before you die." With that he put down a large jug in the center of the room and locked the door once again.

Taking up the wine Felix sat back down on his bed and poured himself more drink from it.

"You could have taken one, or both, Barbarian," he said before he took another long draught from his cup.

"I've no need," replied Caius. "My belly is full and I hope to be level headed tomorrow. I knew a few prostitutes once; my former master entertained them often. They always seemed so angry to me, but their eyes held something more, something sad. I did not wish to see that the last night I may have; I wish for my dreams to be sound."

Lowering the cup from his face and brushing away the small drops from his beard Felix looked at Caius from across the room, his eyes barely visible in the fading light.

"Morality from a barbarian," he stated more to himself than to Caius. "Indeed these are strange circumstances, though here too sits a centurion gladiator."

This pricked the ears of Caius. He had known that Felix had been in the legions but he did not know that he had commanded. This had been a strange night indeed. Caius had learnt in one evening as much or more about Felix than he had in the weeks he had spent training with the man. He watched the old soldier continue with the wine, yet he did not dare request any for himself. Felix had offered him the companionship of the prostitutes; it appeared he intended the wine for himself.

"Strange circumstances abound in this place," stated Caius attempting to start more conversation - he would see if he could poke more holes into the wall that surrounded Felix.

The sounds of lovemaking began to be heard from outside the door. Apparently several other gladiators were more willing to indulge in the generosity of Germanicus.

"Why are you here, Barbarian?" asked Felix.

The bluntness of the question surprised Caius. The light was fading but he could still see the reddening face of Felix across the room. Apparently the second batch of wine was not as tame as the one that had accompanied dinner and Felix was enthusiastically finishing it.

"You speak of strange circumstances and morality as if you have lived as a citizen, yet you are a German. How is it that the blood of a mild mannered barbarian has been sold to this place?" asked Felix.

"By the will of the gods I assume," replied Caius.

"Damn you and the gods," replied Felix taking another deep sip of his wine.

"I was attending my master at his supper," replied Caius, giving in and reliving the fateful night that he had played out in his head a hundred times. "His guests were of noble class and the matron of his neighbor drew me aside midway through the night. She was elderly and cruel, the hand maidens that attended her bore the marks of her anger on their faces. Perhaps because of the wine, she embraced me in the hallway and in shock I dropped the platter I was carrying to the supper. My master at once came and witnessed the act. The woman's husband was a senator and was patron to my own master; his order was that I was to be killed. My master I assume had pity on me and sold me here instead of having me executed, yet here is as good as any death sentence I suppose."

"You are an unlucky fool, Barbarian," replied Felix. "Had you appeased the woman her lust you may yet still be safe in your master's house serving wine and caring for children."

Caius resented the remark from Felix, the event had happened so quickly that he hadn't had time to react. The woman had grabbed him and in her kiss, sentenced him to his death. Caius knew that there had always been the chance he would die violently or be sold to the salt mines of Libya, but he had not committed any crime for this punishment and it angered him that Felix ridiculed his misfortune.

"You then," shot back Caius angrily, "how does a centurion of the legions of Caesar come to share a room with a barbarian slave and share the sentence of death in the arena?"

Only silence followed the quick question. The quiet continued until it began to carve into him, making him feel steadily more uncomfortable in the room. The sun had set outside by now and the window in the wall no longer betrayed any ray of light, the only sound coming from Felix was the raising of his wine cup to his mouth and the lingering sounds of lovemaking from the hall.

"It is because of you, Barbarian," replied Felix after a pained silence, his voice rasping in the dark. "Because your people threatened the Rome I love, I followed my general to make war on your homeland, and it was there that my undoing was made."

"You talk in riddles, Felix," replied Caius more cautiously. He did not want to anger his companion and it appeared to grieve Felix to talk of his past.

"Many of your people are blond. Did you know that, Barbarian?" continued Felix. "It is a rare sight in Rome where the fair hair of the north is worn by rich senator's wives as wigs. Hers was no wig though. Barbarian, her hair had been kissed by Sol himself."

Caius sat silently and let Felix continue, the old soldier's voice seemed to be directed somewhere other than where he sat, but he listened intently nonetheless.

"She clung to her breast a small babe, her younger cousin I would later discover. His cries of fear and calls for his mother echoed across the burnt out village. She was alone. She had come back to look for other survivors but had met me instead. I thought she would have dropped from fear just at the sight of me. She threw herself at me, offered herself in what Latin she could speak, and begged me to spare her and the child."

Felix paused to take another draught from the mug of wine, he paused again before continuing.

"I picked her up from the ground and hid her then in a small shelter near where the village had been. I brought her rations from our camp nearby while carrying out my patrols. I could only visit her every few weeks. She could have left me any time she desired to rejoin her people, yet she stayed. I spoke to her of the city, while she talked of the wilderness. Eventually she offered herself to me once more, but this time it was the woman she offered and not the body.

"If found, she would have surely been sold into slavery and sent back to Rome to become the play thing of some decrepit senator. I hid her for months, she and her child cousin. The campaign had ceased for the winter and I was able to keep her secret.

"I arranged for her to accompany a merchant back to Narbo on the southern coast where I could reach her once the campaign was over and take her as a slave. You see, Barbarian, we are not permitted to marry in the army. The only way I could have had her would to have owned her as a slave; a slave in name only, though.

"In spring, Marius, my second, discovered her and dragged her back to camp by her hair. He had the child slaughtered. At camp, she had been ravaged by the men. Returning and seeing this I was

hurled into a rage. I cut down Marius and denounced my position by doing so. In return I was stripped and caged and made to watch as they executed her. Her crystal eyes upon me in the last breath of her life haunted me until I reached Rome. The sight of it haunts me still.

“So we share our sorry histories at last, Barbarian, you and I. We speak of the strange circumstances that have brought us here. The wiles of an old matron that doomed an innocent and naïve slave, and the treason of a centurion of Rome who fell in love with the enemy and forfeited his life because of it, strange circumstances indeed.”

Silence once again enveloped the room.

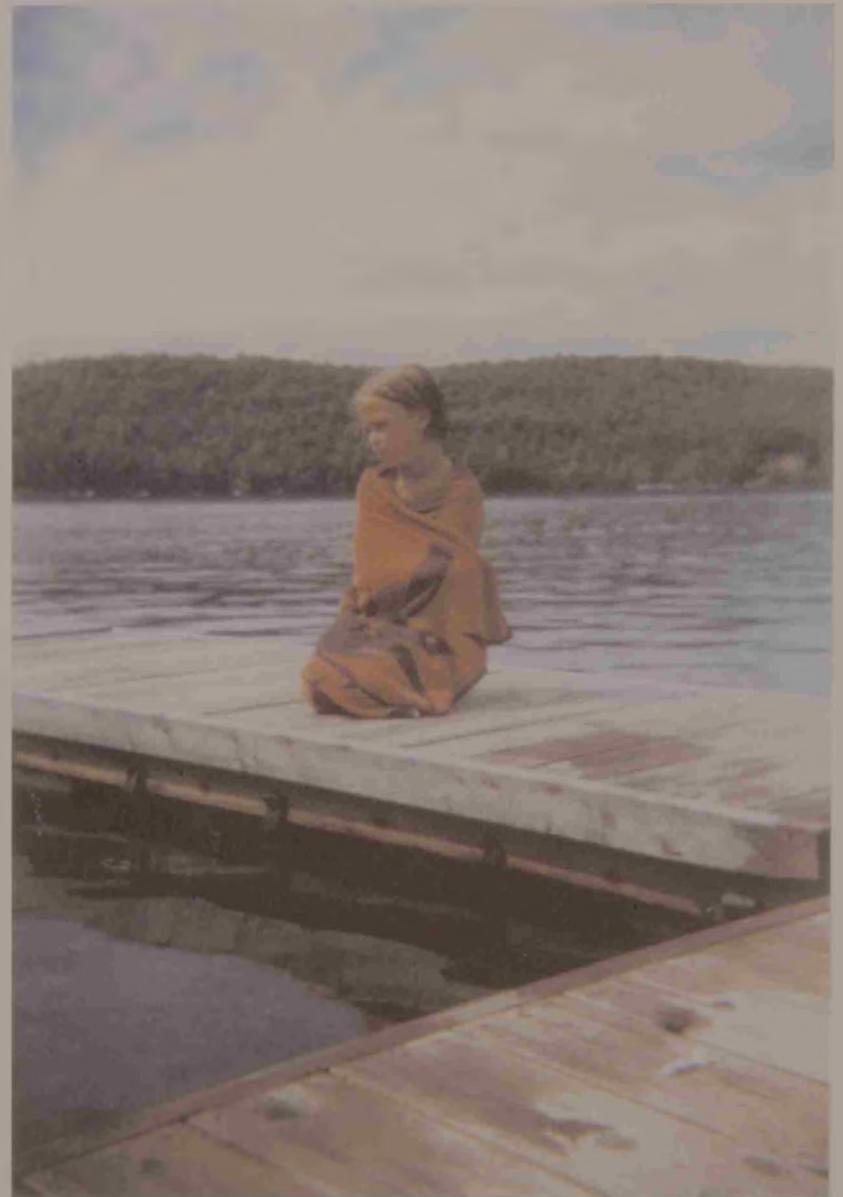
Words would not come from Caius' mouth; the only noise was the pattering of feet as the women from the other rooms began to depart. Felix's story had not settled Caius and after a moment he could only think of one thing more to ask.

“What was her name Felix?”

“Her name was Aolica, Barbarian,” and with that Felix would speak no more, the darkness hiding the tears that streaked his face.

Caius sat for long while, silently in the dark until he heard the cup drop from Felix's hand and the soft snoring of the old soldier across from him. It would be longer still until sleep claimed him as well.

When slumber finally came his dreams were filled with green forests and snow clad peaks. A blond woman like Felix's Aolica cradled him in her arms and sung softly to him in a tongue Caius knew. Her face was warm and her smile pure. The dream filled Caius with a sorrow he had never known.



Lucie

Cristina Cugliandro

## Strategies and Deceptions in the Golden Lion Pub

*frugale*

### Strategy Part One

YOU guy, or baffling men as a whole;

noisy cigarette breath in seducing labor to my hunted female self  
paralyzed, it won't fight the verbal heresy back.

hands busy around your shaft-ed shaped beer while you're trying  
to keep a hand on any shoulder - mine or yours - i dream as a  
typewriter would.

and my prose is getting clear and clearer, and i feel not the urge  
to hide behind metaphors anymore, why can't you read me, why  
can't you read me -

(...)

and my texts are getting lost among others worn out and old,

and my words are the eyes of my brain for you can see through if  
you want as dusk puts on a window necklace daily

you would witness me naked or in a bathrobe, about to take a  
cold mountain shower behind some artificial plants, unbottling a  
hot wild beer in a finnish, misty setting

without, of course, the thousand retirees or workaholics defending  
their spa massage turf, this relaxing oligarchy

no we're not retired yet, the sex season of life blooms and  
expands when bitter pride meets a stout blonde.

## Deception Part Two

Had I liked you but never shown  
your guts appeal to me  
When you quote women studies' speech  
to get laid easily

While chatting with uptight students  
like she who never fought  
But to come back home after dawn  
or spend all before thought.

Your grown beard and bohemian smile  
I've been watching from here  
Behind the counter of the bar  
my loose tee says 'John Deere'

You don't mind 'woodworker women'  
from what I have noticed  
But when I approached you shyly  
the uptight student hissed.



Untitled

ANGE [Andrea Cook]

*Alanna Fernandes*

Unfortunate song  
Drip, drip, drips its way along  
To a child's smile.

## Let's go to the fair,

*Ian Jones*

We can dip our apples,  
You can drizzle your caramel,  
All over my seed-filled flesh.

We can play games,  
I can show you my muscle-y arms,  
You can take the bear home.

We can go for a ride,  
Slowly sauntering,  
Up  
The track we go,

*Peaking, then falling and flailing and laughing and crying out as we rush racing to the*

Stop.

Actually,  
Let's just go home and fuck.

## In a Tavern

*Eleanor Gang*

Pyotr stepped out of the cold into the warmth of the smoky tavern. His glasses fogged up immediately and the frozen sleet on his mustache began melting, running in rivulets onto his lips and into his beard. "Hey, Vladimir," he called out to the man behind the bar wiping the counter with a striped dish towel, "coffee! I'm half frozen!" He polished his glasses on a large handkerchief he produced from his pocket and made his way to a table, placing his outer garments on the back of a chair.

"Pyotr, it's been too long!" said a large, gaily-dressed woman as she wrapped her ample arms around him in a bear hug. "We hardly ever see you anymore!"

"Yes, Damiana, I'm sorry, but the baby's been sick and Maria is pregnant again, so she's not feeling well. I'm only here for a moment to warm up, then I must go home."

Damiana held him off at arm's length and gave him a practised evaluation. "You sit, I bring you some hot borscht. Vladimir, vodka for Pyotr!" Before he could protest, she was bustling off to the kitchen, barely squeezing through the wide door frame. Soon, she was back with the soup, a plateful of potatoes, thickly-smearred black bread, a mug of beer, and a bottle of vodka.

Unwilling to appear rude, Pyotr started spooning up the steaming borscht. The tavern was filling up with regulars and the band started to tune up. He recognized Fredrik on accordion, Ari on fiddle, Stephan on drums and Taras with his guitar lighting up a cigarette. My, how that man could sing, and Ari, his violin could bring down blessings from the Virgin. Maybe I'll just stay for a few songs, thought Pyotr to himself.

The room was dim, lit only by the candles in red smoky glasses on the checked-cloth-covered tables. As the men smoked, the

air became filmy, as though a gauze curtain hung just in front of their faces. Feeling mellow from the hot food, relaxed from the vodka, and his feet finally thawed out, Pyotr began enjoying himself. The room got smokier, the music wilder and the conversation louder. Soon there were two empty vodka bottles on Pyotr's table, the other chairs now occupied by acquaintances happy to see him and share a drink. When Taras launched into a song about the unfaithfulness of women, Pyotr suddenly remembered Maria at home with the sick baby. He dug his watch out of his pocket and realized he had been in the tavern for three hours! Oh no, she would kill him!

"Vladimir," he yelled at the barman, "black coffee!"

Damiana hurried over. "Pyotr, have some more vodka!"

"No," he cried, "coffee, black! I have to go or Maria will kill me!" He quickly fumbled on his outerwear, wove his way through the now crowded room, and stumbled into the clear, cold night.



Spider

Ilana MacDonald

## WARRIOR

*Noni Howard*

for Marlena Rose Skye



Our hands are in our laps  
resting quietly,  
pure freedom  
of the moment  
one hand on one hand.

Who would have thought  
these hands  
could kill  
if need be ...

but they have used  
such power  
before.

Women's hands together  
are gentle  
to the touch;  
we must be all things  
to all people  
and we are.

For the moment  
the gentle touch is assurance  
that  
our power is there  
whether it be as a leaf  
or a birdsong



the masonry  
of what we have created  
will stand and prevail  
beyond time.

## Terrestrial Eclipse

*Winner of the F.G. Scott Creative Writing Contest - Tammy Taylor*



Last night I saw moon  
Swallowed by Earth  
Moon fought bravely  
Not going in silent flight

It had been so bright in the sky  
It made Sun jealous  
So Sun sent Earth  
To take Moon away

Moon was a white cookie  
In a halo of blue light  
Earth nibbled at it slowly  
Crumbs of blue light fell away

Moon struggled vainly  
Shining forth in darkish orange  
Until the end  
With a flicker, the pilot went out  
Last night Earth swallowed Moon  
Adding Moon's light to its own  
But Sun is jealous - One day  
Earth will be swallowed by Sun



I love myself #4

Chris Ju

## The Between Time

*Munira Judith Avinger*

The infinite reaches of sapphire space  
shine at twilight, the between time.

Bats slip like shadows through the garden mist.  
Fireflies appear in pulses of light.  
The vegetables breathe in the emerald wind,  
drink the diamond drops of water  
left from the afternoon's rain.

The sun burns ruby red in the west.  
The vegetables leave their rooty nests  
of golden garden earth. They dance  
in the mist with the fireflies like fairies  
with feathery carrot top wings,  
like elves with red-trimmed beet-green cloaks.  
The tractor stands guard like a blue-plated dragon.

And she who bent in the morning sun  
to pull the weeds in great green handfuls  
watches quiet from the back yard deck.  
Her mind slips silent like the shadowy bats  
into the mist, the between-world veil  
of mystery, still as the gathering night.

from *Hidden/Cache*, Borealis Press, 2005

## A musing.

*Jeff Strain*

I tripped over a line dividing myself from the friends of my youth. On the one side lay certain names and appellations; on the second were other terms, different though corresponding. And so, in surveying that great and heretofore uniform plain, I beheld things paired one with another, and held distinct, and separate. On my friends' side, for instance, was the word 'adult', and on mine, the related 'child'. There were further such estrangements: Responsible, irresponsible. Conscientious, oblivious. Comfortable, uncomfortable. Benefit, burden. Found, lost. "Winner." "loser."

As I continued along that strange divide, and those strange divisions, I began to see pairs that had not been visible from my first perspective. New terms arose, curious, such as settled and settler, nomad and steader, sought and seeker. On the heels of which came still more wheeling binaries, stretching out and out over both horizons: sleeping held aloof from Waking, convention from Invention, submission from Inspiration, death from Life.

But I was not yet satisfied.

I tried to follow that line, to know the whole of it, its end. I wanted to wrest from that chasm its greatest conceits, its most profound revelations, and as I descended, the walls on either side grew dark.

Clearly, others had come before me.

The banks drew tighter now, worn smooth by the passage of countless fingers, innumerable pilgrims. I wondered if the first, the very first, had cut their hands on the rock. Had they bled, exulting in that first measure of flesh, human flesh, against the hanging globe, the immeasurable deep? No: the first were those who had wandered this divot into the earth.

I could go no further. I came to a pile of bones, a floor of bones, and the light failed completely. As I turned again towards the sky, I saw it made small and sterling, a single streak through the infinite dark. It was again that same line, made brilliant, and all the couplings were revisited, in rapture, united and undone, bounded by nothing so much as void.

And then the earth closed, and I was no more.



I Bambini

Cristina Cugliandro

## On Barachois Beach.

*Frank Willdig*

There was no trembling in your voice;  
the waves shuddered and broke gently  
before our feet,

and the receding tides withdrew  
the day belonging to us,  
withdrew the season slowly.

Sight, sound, the scent of air,  
the taste of youth, friends, all  
seemed carried away by the gannets and terns,  
and I thought of the solitude of the sea,  
those silent birds going off somewhere  
leaving you alone with me,

and before you could utter a sound  
I kissed and swallowed your words,  
dispersing my own sadness

to the golden light of late summer  
and the healing waves  
that washed our footprints away.



Anima terrigena 'visus'



Catherine Aikman

## We Three, We Three Hundred

*Will Greaves August 14, 2004*

The coming grayness looms high above the horizon,  
an inescapable cloud past which I cannot  
see or hear or touch.

It bears down upon me like an angry storm on a lonely beach,  
so close that I can see the silent roar of an infinite cyclone of sand  
whose grains stood alone and were unable to withstand  
the raging breeze.

I link arms with my brothers and together we turn  
and face the fury of the wind,  
our strength cemented in the foundation of a thousand lifetimes lived  
in a thousand nighttimes' memories, strength based on a faith  
in no gods but ourselves and no divinity but our own mighty trinity.

We three, we three hundred, we stand immovable,  
grains neither flowing down to the sea nor passing through the hourglass,  
caught up in no storms but those that we will create,  
able to stand and let the coming blankness break over us  
with the confidence that we will emerge unovercome,  
confidence born of the knowledge  
that our Thermopylae will not come today,  
and that we three, we three hundred can battle the coming hordes  
until our last sun sets.

## The Hand-Tree

*Coplen Rose*

The most powerful connection  
between man and nature,  
is that between a hard splinter  
and a soft palm.

## Nearly Midnight

*David Francey Knowlton, Quebec, December, 2000*

The view through my windshield on a drive alongside Brome Lake,  
Quebec - in the dead of night, in the dead of winter. This is a love song  
for Beth and for the Eastern Townships. They are both so very beautiful.

Moon is high  
There's a veil of cloud  
Like a wedding dress  
A funeral shroud  
The land lies sleeping  
Stark and still  
Chain of lights  
On the darkened hills  
  
It's nearly midnight  
And I'm nearly home  
And I'm travelling down  
This road alone  
  
Snow and shadow  
Blue moon light

Farmhouse window  
Warm and bright  
Promised shelter  
From winter winds  
Absolution  
For a passing sin

It's nearly midnight  
And I'm nearly home  
And I'm travelling down  
This road alone

On a silver journey  
Through the night  
The distant stars  
Winter bright  
In the darkened world  
Of this road I'm on  
You are the light  
The coming dawn  
Lake lies silent  
Still as stone  
Hard as rock  
White as bone  
The telephone poles  
Stagger drunken home  
Down the twisted roads  
Of the great unknown  
  
And it's nearly midnight  
And I'm nearly home  
And I'm travelling down  
This road alone

## The Tale of the Mighty Giant Bean

*Sam Janzen*



Smooth Jazz

Andrea Robertsdotter

Long ago in a forest far away, (It was a magic forest so that no matter where you are on the planet, it is always far away, depending on your definition of far of course. That is to say that it was never all that close at hand and also means that it was in some sort of freaky other dimension where one can never get where one is going, but that is neither here nor there.) there was a man named Oliver. Oliver was a small man who came from a long line of ancestors (much the same as everyone else) who never had any excitement or ever went on any adventures of any kind.

'Wait a second, this is sounding a lot like Lord of the Rings. Oliver isn't a Hobbit is he?' boomed a voice from what looked like a bowl of jelly candies and sounded quite like what you would imagine a narrator to sound like.

No, he isn't a hobbit; I was just thinking that myself. Startling coincidence though, don't you think?

'No, I don't. I am a bowl of jelly candies. Since when do they think? You must be crazy, talking to yourself and giving innocent bowls of jelly candies - who just happen to be laying around - voices and the uncanny ability to think coherently.' The bowl promptly winked out of existence in a confusion of reality and perception.

Anyways, Oliver was out doing some wholly unremarkable and completely uninteresting thing when he decided to do something that, had it been noteworthy in any way would have been recorded, but seeing as it was not, was lost in the sands of time (or dead leaves of time, or whatever you feel the need to describe it as when someone decides not to write something down because they don't want the reader to become comatose from boredom).

Suddenly, a mighty giant bean jumped out of the forest and came running at Oliver with the sharpened stick he decided was a good idea to use as a weapon.

Oliver didn't like the look of this particular mighty giant bean, so he took down his ordinary cast iron frying pan from the nail it was hanging from and hit the bean, on what could be argued was his head, hard enough to knock him unconscious, or at least as unconscious as a bean can be. He then took the bean's pointy stick and threw it in the fire.

What happened next may shock and appall some of you, so I encourage anyone with a weak stomach to skip to the next paragraph or just keep reading because it really isn't that bad. What happened next was that he decided it would be a good idea to string this so called "mighty" bean (let's face the facts here people, how mighty can a bean, no matter how giant, actually be?) by what could be argued as would be his feet and hang him next to the frying pan until he was dead and dried.

That's the end of the story. What? I never said it would be an interesting tale. It is about a bean and a guy who never does anything interesting for crying out loud! Did you think he would just get up and go on some grand adventure and encounter dragons, trolls, and end up über rich and living with elves? Ha. Yeah, right.

## Forest Fire Circa 1942

*Coplen Rose*

The knurled, bone-white fingers  
tear upwards  
through layers of grey bedrock.  
Their ghostly shadows paint black scabs on the scarred earth.

The scene befits a Venetian graveyard  
as thousands of corpses float atop the soil.

Their pride still intact as they drum to attention,  
armless bodies saluting us in our boats.

The sad emotion of misery still lingers  
as these naked trunks tell the story of the horrors they faced.  
Each one of them a war torn body left for dead on a foreign battlefield.  
Like soldiers, these torsos bear the fight long after the war is over,  
long after the world has forgotten the cause.



Rome

*Cristina Cugliandro*

## My Days

*S-M Langlois*

Where I am from there are no streetlights or sidewalks and the population of cows outnumbers the population of people. Every night you will either hear or see the coyotes along the railroad tracks, and every Tuesday my town gathers around the baseball diamond for the games.

When I was young shafts of light pushed through the leaves.

Nights were cool and quiet, and the air always smelled sweet. You're being followed by glowing eyes, but no one is afraid because everyone knows better.

The best days were the dirtiest, stealing our fathers' tools to build our own world. Battles that spelt the end of time ended when dinner was ready, and a hectic Tuesday was spent looking for a missing jersey or glove or hat. On the really bad days you looked for all of them.

I close my eyes and long for those days again, but no matter how tight I shut my eyes I will never be able to go back. I've been told not to dwell on the past, yet I would give anything to smell that air once more.

As I look on the soccer field where the diamond once stood, and as I look at the dead tree and pile of wood that was once our fortress, a wave of sadness washes over me and I can't help but mourn my childhood. I refuse to let go of my past, it was a battle lost and won on a baseball diamond, a tree fort and the road in between.

I may not be able to run the bases or spend the day lost in our world now, but I know that when I close my eyes for the last time I'll go back there and smell the air once more.

NOT TO BE TAKEN AWAY

TOWN

A close-up photograph of a zebra's body, showing its characteristic black and white stripes. The stripes are vertical and run diagonally across the frame, creating a strong sense of rhythm and texture. The lighting is soft, highlighting the individual hairs of the zebra's coat.

# Bishop's University