

## *The Write Place at the Write Time*

---

[Home](#)

[About Us](#)

[Announcements](#)

[Insights of Interviewees](#)

[Fiction](#)

[Poetry](#)

["Our Stories" non-fiction](#)

[Writers' Craft Box](#)

[Submission Guidelines](#)

[Feedback & Questions](#)

[Artists' Gallery](#)

[Indie Bookstores](#)

[Literary Arts Patrons](#)

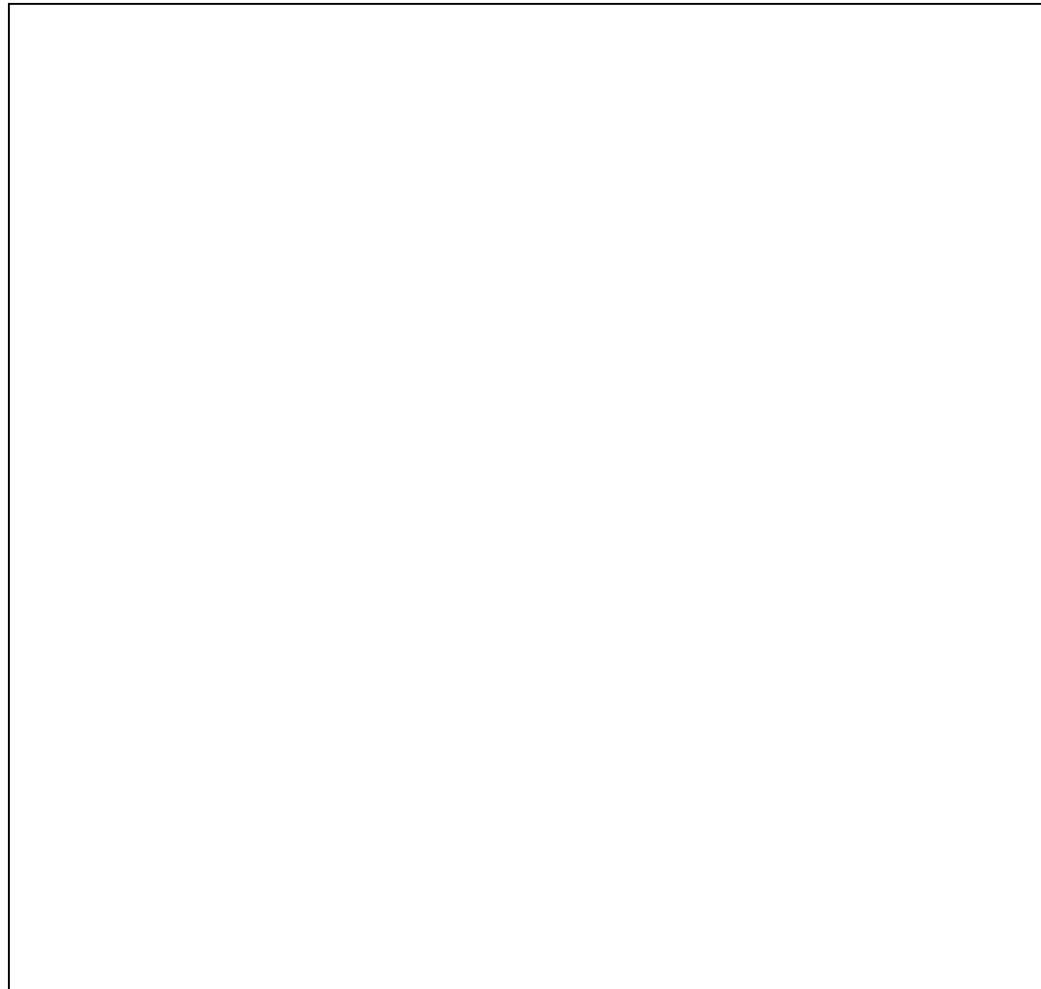
[Scrapbook of Eight Years](#)

[Archives](#)

[Inscribing Industry Blog](#)

Come in...and be captivated...

Search





"Justice" by Patti Dietrick; <https://www.flickr.com/photos/pattidietrick/>

About this image: *This is a photo of my niece that I took when I was a student in photography, almost 30 years ago... It was the first time I shot infrared film.*

*The day was unusually windy and cold for a California day. We rushed to the ocean and she stood on the rocks facing the wind and sea.*

*She was a teenager, outspoken, intelligent and a feminist. Now she's 44 years old, just as beautiful and powerful as she always was, but even more so. It's currently part of my "Tarot Card" series exhibiting at Picture This Gallery in Long Beach, CA. My son, Joshua Buck Weston, illustrated the pen and ink border. —Patti Dietrick*

## Poetry

*With gratitude, we dedicate this page to 2017 WPWT Arts Patron, Tim Reed. Tim is a poet who started writing in 1990 on a journey of discovery and recovery. He has been featured in, and regularly attends, open mic venues and events.*

### **Changing Tack**

by Janine Lehane

One blustery moment sets  
the host of good and quiet days  
adrift. Undone, I rally with  
the notion I can simply change  
my mind, review the evidence  
amassed for favorable company,  
defer to health and wisdom—fleet  
and sober visitant, graceful  
guide—turn with craft and courage  
in the face of outworn grievance,  
call the joyful memories back,  
lend my friend the comfort  
of a mighty heart, a deft  
release, until ghost hurts subside.

**Intermezzo**

by Janine Lehane

He's painting outside the souvlaki joint—  
a contented blue—poised  
on the plank, grateful supplicant.  
Weeks ago, when his voice  
broke as he asked me for help,  
the plea emptied  
sorrow at my feet.  
He doesn't remember me  
and that is good.  
His smile is easy  
now, and the facade  
is coming along  
beautifully: his blue-black  
strokes console the wood.

**Sunday: Recessional**

by Janine Lehane

She stilled her hands by pressing  
them against the shining wood,  
her feet bore down upon the floor.  
Her triumph lay in choosing, then, to play  
before the crowd of witnesses.  
I saw my friend laid bare,  
and holding even notes in aching air—  
though arms and hands and fingers rocked  
without abatement—lend her prayer  
as Bach intended, sustained by will,  
and send the faithful on their way,  
her leg, her foot upon the pedal  
pulsing in a foreign time of rare  
and solemn loveliness.

Bio: Janine Lehane is a poet and artist from Hobart, Australia. Her poetry has been published by Telling Our Stories Press, along with her cover art; *The Write Place at the*

*Write Time*; and *Hawaii Pacific Review*; and is soon to appear in an anthology out of The Poetry Society of New Hampshire and as the Labletter Monthly Note (February 14, 2017). She also co-edited a volume of selected writings by eminent teacher and community organizer, Suzanne Radley Hiatt.

## **The Women's March**

*January 21, 2017*

by Rochelle Jewel Shapiro

Let us march beneath the rent ozone layer, stitch  
together a coalition of citizenry.  
Let those among us who cannot walk  
be wheeled or carried. Come wearing  
your headscarf, your *hadjib*, your *sheitel*,  
your pink wool sock cap with the pointed ears.  
Come bareheaded, unbowed. Bring your daughter,  
mother, granddaughter, your husbands, lovers,  
brothers, all your menfolk. Show yourselves  
as scattered stars brought together  
in a constellation that is still visible,  
indivisible, even in full daylight. Whether  
you are present or not, whether you are for  
or against, let us come to know each other  
with the intimacy of the blind touching a face,  
reading each feature with our palms, our fingers.  
Who among us can settle for a walled heart?

Bio: Rochelle Jewel Shapiro is the author of *Miriam the Medium* (Simon and Schuster), nominated for the Harold U. Ribelow Award, *I Dare You to Write*, *Kaylee's Ghost*, and the e-book short story collection, *What I Wish You'd Told Me*. She has won The Brandon Memorial Literary Award and was nominated for a Pushcart Prize in poetry, with her poems having appeared in publications such as the *Iowa Review*, *Moment*, *Harpur Palate*, *Inkwell Magazine*, and the *Los Angeles Review*.

She teaches at UCLA Extension, and she lives in Great Neck, N.Y. where, like her protagonist in *Miriam the Medium*, she has a psychic practice. Articles about her psychic ability and essays concerning her experiences have appeared in *The New York Times* (Lives), *Redbook*, *Newsweek* (My Turn), *The Jerusalem Post*, and more. Her website features further info about her practice and her books, with book reviews and praise for

her novels from authors such as Jodi Picoult and Gwendolen Gross, and former MSNBC correspondent and *New York Times* contributing writer, Dana Kennedy. Stop by her website to learn more.  
<http://rochellejewelshapiro.com/>

### **Clemente's Team**

by Jacqueline Jules

Roberto didn't have to  
be on that charter plane,  
the one that crashed  
on its way to Nicaragua.

He didn't have to organize supplies  
for earthquake victims. Or use his baseball stats  
to fight the status quo.

He had 3,000 Major League hits,  
12 Gold Gloves, and 2 World Series rings.

Why didn't he go to a glitzy dinner  
with his wife, like other stars on New Year's Eve?

The same reason he ran baseball clinics  
in the off season, visited children in hospitals.

Roberto Clemente played on a team  
larger than the Pittsburgh Pirates,  
bigger than Puerto Rico.

He saw his own success  
as a chance for others  
to swing the bat  
and run the bases, too.

Bio: Jacqueline Jules is a Northern Virginia author and poet who writes for children and adults. Her books for young readers include the *Zapato Power* series, the *Sofia Martinez* series, and *Never Say a Mean Word Again*. Her poetry has appeared in numerous publications including *The Write Place at the Write Time*, *The Potomac Review*, *Gargoyle*, *Sow's Ear Poetry Review*, *Innisfree Poetry Journal*, *Burgeon*, *Hospital Drive*, and

*Imitation Fruit*. She is the author of two chapbooks, *Field Trip to the Museum* and *Stronger Than Cleopatra*.

Visit [www.jacquelinejules.com](http://www.jacquelinejules.com)

---

### Setting In

by Sarah Rehfeldt

Winter—  
it is as if the forest lasts forever—

everything that needs to be lifted  
gradually descends here,  
through the woods hangs silent—

light,  
the shape of branch it fell from,

ground accepting,  
sifting,

keeping soft and green  
a small resting place beneath  
so what used to be survives.

Bio: Sarah Rehfeldt lives with her family in western Washington where she is a writer, artist, and photographer. Her publication credits include *Appalachia; Written River; Weber—The Contemporary West*; and *Presence: An International Journal of Spiritual Direction*. Her work has been nominated for a Pushcart Prize in poetry and *The Orison Anthology*. Sarah is the author of *Somewhere South of Pegasus*, a collection of image poems. It can be purchased through her photography web pages at: [www.pbase.com/candanceski](http://www.pbase.com/candanceski)

---

### Mirrors and Windows

by Steve Pollack

"If I am not for myself, who will be for me?  
If I am only for myself, what am I?  
And, if not now, when?" —Hillel (110BCE-10CE)

Look at a mirror!  
The face that greets you  
is but an image, a silvered reflection  
you show the world. Look  
inside, reflect on that glass self  
and speak out as one who best knows.  
Be shatterproof. An indifferent world  
may yet see who you are and find your message  
in a bottle across oceans. Then, they may  
understand and stand by your side.

Look through a window!  
Gaze with an eagle's sharp view  
as if from towering height you see all  
and your heart's attention  
calls you to witness a world  
of faces, each pair of eyes urgent.  
Discover what those faces show  
the world, find their messages  
even blushing whispers, then  
understand and stand by their side.

---

### **Sheep**

by Steve Pollack

Ewes smeared and streaked  
marked possession by shepherd or ram  
frightened by wolves who growl black  
and white on hillside of forty emerald hues

If human bodies were painted  
each in our own shades, subtle or bold  
scarlet, gray and gold  
blushed with each passing hour



Every mood in tints and stains  
shining highlights or haunting shadows  
visible as wrinkled age,  
clear as a child's earnest eyes

Instead of pigments skin deep  
colors seep from inside  
deeds bleed over deeds  
a masterwork layered in oils

Character is a complex palette  
like a mixture ground exotic  
salty and bitter, sour and sweet—  
neither are spring lambs pure white by summer

Bio: Steve Pollack is retired from a career in engineering and facilities management. He found poetry (or poetry found him) about five years ago. His work has been published in various online and print journals. He participates actively in several poetry groups, workshops and open-mics. Thanks to Linda, his wife of 48 years and to four grandchildren, his life is busy and grateful.

---

### **Long Coat**

by Jada Yee

I think with a curious but child-like mind.  
I am a spongy, but lonesome brain.  
So it should come as no surprise that  
I'll be a little consumed with putting things  
in colorful and numerical order.  
It should come as no surprise that  
only when I drive, I'll want to know  
how many dashes are painted on the road.  
I'll be a little concerned if you're hurting.  
I'll appear a little bit strange for lingering.  
And even if you don't care, I'll feel like I should care.  
It's as if I was born with a long coat stitched into me,  
and the smallest observation goes inside a pocket.  
Instead of an IED, I'm adjusting the sensitive weight of

two parts of my brain on an empathy scale,  
trying to figure out who among the crowd is more important.  
I remind myself to observe from a distance, all the while, worried that  
I'm sending everyone away with a guilty verdict.  
And, at home while vacuuming, if I come across  
a small spider who frighteningly hugs the wall  
to avoid its demise, I'll feel a strong inclination to let it escape.  
There's this noose that I've tied around my very own heart,  
and the one thing that keeps me from pushing it out of my body  
without a last-minute parachute is this inclination.  
It's this belief that something or someone will need me to listen.  
It's never felt that strange to give away the time; to offer a moment.  
Even if I only exist as five minutes in their day, or in their life,  
I'll want to be there, just to be there.  
Because, for those five minutes,  
I have purpose.

Bio: Jada Yee's poetry has appeared in *A Quiet Courage*, *Literary Orphans*, *Ibis Head Review* and elsewhere.

### **Prestige**

by Lew Caccia

It isn't your celebrity, or mine, or  
where we attend or don't attend, or how  
we breathe, or our mien—it's more  
understated, and through the fields  
going first rabbits scurry and possums  
skulk unequivocal in their pattern.

Those timeless forays into froth and  
fodder pass about, be steady; every burro  
grips fair weather, and stubbornly  
lingers: it dulls the high ground inward.  
At the precipice of dawn a diminutive  
sight appears and goes the same way.

But you sense it that night: the hot,  
the sultry, the aberrant chill, winds  
lispering without motion giving light  
to dying embers grotesque in their dance.  
Yet we drift forward. At the tip we feel  
the sawgrass bloom—no past, no passing.

Bio: Lew Caccia serves as a professor at Kent State University at Stark, where he teaches courses in composition, rhetoric, professional writing, and literacy. His recent poetry has appeared in *Praxis*, *The Storyteller*, *hedgerow*, *The Write Place at the Write Time*, and *The Penwood Review*.

### **After winter...**

by Lois Greene Stone

Although the tree branches awake  
and the bare spaces fill with small  
buds, spring suggests something  
different for me. Yes, shrubs shake  
off quiet periods, and underground  
bulbs push stems of green and sprout  
flowers. Worms wiggle on asphalt  
then birds find seasonal food. Me?  
I see a rhythm of my existence.  
Increased darkness of winter's days  
gives time for introspection, and  
autumn's colors, that encouraged  
me to notice, fade and fall.  
Summer is brief; full blooms,  
green grass will grow whether I  
water or not. But spring says  
"new" and my "new" has fewer  
ahead than behind and reminds  
me to cherish each loved one as  
eventually my being will end.  
Each caring moment is my bud  
springing into the minds of

my grandchildren; seasons  
will be their repeated events.

Bio: Lois Greene Stone, writer and poet, has been syndicated worldwide. Poetry and personal essays have been included in hard & softcover book anthologies. Collections of her personal items/photos/memorabilia are in major museums including twelve different divisions of The Smithsonian.

### **Woodstock Christmas Eve 2016**

by Mary K. O'Melveny

The snow has shrunk a bit.  
Kind of like my mind some  
mornings when the news is  
so grim I decide to  
go back to my bed  
to seek the comfort of  
my very worst nightmares.

Snuggled in there, it could  
still be early fall when  
laughter had not been lost,  
geese still circled around  
the pond and russet trees  
were the only things in  
flame. When trust still mattered.

It is almost Christmas.  
Our fire is chipper, flames  
darting about like hopeful  
children. Today I thought  
my innocence might still  
be intact as I yelled  
out at our wily squirrels

as if they might listen  
and head away toward  
the neighbor's bird feeders.

In their briefest absence,  
the pure red cardinal  
landed gently, promised  
that we might yet survive.

---

### **Kintsugi**

by Mary K. O'Melveny

In Asian philosophy  
there is value to cracks,  
splits and lacerations.  
Once whole, a pot descends  
to ground only to be  
repaired by golden threads.

Thus restored, resplendent  
in metallic ribbons,  
the vessel takes on new  
life, proof of resilience  
shines forth, imperfections  
twinkling in the daylight.

So it is with lovers.  
Their history can be  
read like a delicate  
bowl, tea leaves swirling past  
edges of loss and joy, each  
day bonds growing tighter.

Joy in broken things is  
needed now. We gather  
shards of hope scattered like  
fallen teardrops. We will  
bind, polish them with care  
until they glow like new.

Bio: Mary is a retired labor rights lawyer living in Washington, DC and Woodstock, NY. Her poems have been published in various print and online journals (including *The Write Place at the Write Time*) such as *FLARE: The Flagler Review*, *Into the Void*, *Allegro*

*Poetry Magazine* and *The Offbeat*. Like so many, she is struggling to figure out paths forward.

\*

by Simon Perchik

From just dampness, nourishment  
and rust seals the bolt  
in place—the carriage

already there and nearby, it rains  
though you take hold a single spoke  
as if the enchanted palace

stopped moving—why is it  
a parent favors the weak one  
and the crib early on

strengthened with blankets, around  
and around the way they dance  
in fairy tales scented with midnights

with a gate half iron, half  
this wrench, its gardens, ponds  
no longer coming apart.

Bio: Simon Perchik is an attorney whose poems have appeared in *Partisan Review*, *The Nation*, *Poetry*, *Osiris*, *The New Yorker* and elsewhere. His most recent collection is *Almost Rain*, published by River Otter Press (2013). For more information, including free e-books and his essay titled “Magic, Illusion and Other Realities” please visit his website:

[www.simonperchik.com](http://www.simonperchik.com)

**The Fertile Winter** (*prose poem*)

by Carole Mertz

The climate is vital, quite cold. In spite of frozen elements, we experience an underlying and pervasive fertility. The trees will lose their leaves. Yes, Winter will require that; yet Demanding Mother Earth also has a plan for her children: the leaves will drop, and the trees will bear fruit in due season. The climate's vitality burnishes the surface of the earth, rubbing its brownness through the land and the air, proving its potency by what it creates. The ground is so cold, but elements beneath the surfaces are working there. It is not yet time to push up, to break through, but the time will come and, until then, there is much movement—each silent push and pull using its given space, each expanding molecule defining itself before it implodes, making way for other visiting droplets, so small they cannot be seen or imagined, yet vital, and performing their part in endless chain reactions, even in their forces, but later uneven and volatile in their potential to erupt. Listen to the silence!

Not much resting there. We do not discern the noise of the underground movement, just as we seek to obliterate the wind in our faces. These forces, loved or unloved by us weaker beings, we face only when there are no alternatives. We attempt to resist this wintry force, we take it on, sometimes with fists raised and heads tilted toward its force; other times we acquiesce, amazed by its perfect completion—like a prime number divisible only by one and itself, sifted and baked into a full loaf, offering no lack and no redundancy. Winter will have its way. Its fertility will reveal itself, regardless of whether we blink or sleep. It alternately shrinks or puffs out. It knows its exact time of fullness. It performs to its own measured beat, swelling in the frozen lakes enwrapped by crusty soils, and whirring through northern winds. Immobilized, yet rooted, we observe winter's trek toward its own appointed time of completion.

Bio: Carole Mertz has recent essays, poems, and reviews at *The Write Place at the Write Time*, *The Society of Classical Poetry*, *Indiana Voice Journal*, *WestWard Quarterly*, *Prairie Light Review*, *Pyrokinection*, *Arc Poetry* (online), *MOM Egg Review*, *Working Writer*, and elsewhere. She resides with her husband in Parma, OH where she teaches music theory and piano performance to young children.

---

### **Watch**

by Pascale Louissaint

Naked or drawn, I'm not  
your favorite scene. But I need  
you to watch my story. Even if you  
spy. Learn  
my story. I'm every child but one

who crafts her silence with touch,  
turns her dance into a play and her  
stage fright into a plot with  
character as her place. She signs  
her name "In Memory Of"  
but walks as an immortal.

I'm the child still in womb. Facing  
the outside in a womb. Not out of fear  
but obedience: to hear what I must hear,  
know what I ought to know and preach

with falls and kicks—if I must. Though  
you command birth. The best I could do is  
shine, or maybe throw my shadow  
at you. Will you, *please*, feel  
something? If not in your heart,  
then, with your eyes, consult me.  
Reach in and sense my nerves; I don't  
have a skin  
thick enough for a shield so stop

your blows and scratches. If you  
won't hold me, at least,  
spare me. I'm every child but one.

I'm but an object on this stage. Not  
your favorite display. Still need you to watch

my shape and cracks; the way I pose,  
how I fall and remain. I cannot tell  
but have you watch  
my story.



**Hidden Whispers**

by Pascale Louissaint

He won't call you  
ugly. He'll ask you to  
look in the mirror. He won't  
name your attitude, but he'll say

you got one.

He won't say sorry. He'll show you  
why he's not. Not that he doesn't love you.  
He LOVES you, but...

Go to that mirror. If you can  
love yourself as is—less work  
for him. He won't call you  
weak but debate  
on how often you failed. Child,  
hush; he ain't gonna beat you.  
He'll work to have you do it  
yourself. Not that he's insensitive, but just  
too wise to care. He won't call you dumb.  
If he does, you might try to be smart. Then how

would he win?

The best he'll do is have you wonder:  
what is right? If you guess wrong,  
he'll understand.  
He likes that you're human, and he's proud  
of his rank

beneath God and over you.

---

**Now, Breathe**

by Pascale Louissaint

Turn on your vision, shut  
down all breathing, scrape off those scabs of emotions

then listen: a beat inside takes struggle for a game  
and won't stop playing; it screams for silence but silence sleeps.

Spring—scream higher! Spring like seasons: no risks, no permission. Just  
be

there. Take and be. Take  
the fear and shame along. Let  
aching smile  
at your tears and no, they don't belong to cowards. Take 'em back!  
Take the ride—loud or bumpy—  
while rolling down the hill. Spin till you're transparent.  
Take in the flashes (back or forward; legs  
or faces). Let in the ages born and miscarried. Fast-  
forward to the light you've wished to tear  
with a vision. No bulbs or fire or  
screens; just lightning Robins in their heaven  
performing for their guardians, while  
angels camp with their flocks.  
If only you could touch their song  
or cry out their names. But like crumbs  
snatched from a beggar, a whirlwind  
takes you and you accept to convert

into "past."

You're the eye of the hurricane now. Watch  
all undated moments and their daughters rip like pages of a  
sentenced journal on death row. Blink, now. You can. Like  
drips. Sleep, after all the debris spins into daylight.  
Just for that moment

breathe.

Bio: Pascale Louissaint (AKA Tia Paul-Louis) is a writer, wife and mother from Florida with an MFA degree in Creative Writing at National University. She began writing songs at age 11 but later, became a lot closer to poetry. Inspired by poets such as Edgar Allan Poe, Emily Dickinson and Langston Hughes, she continues with her writing which has appeared in journals such as *As/Us*, *Eye to the Telescope*, *The Write Place at the Write Time*, *Rattle* and several others. Additionally, through poetry, she has escaped much of her fear of speaking out and revealing herself to others.

---

**Harmonic Divide (January 2017)**

by Cheryl Sommesse

You lay aloof on your side and I lay on mine,  
yielding to the anguish of ignoble disguise.  
Resolute in our visions of decency and truth,  
we continue in silence, with no compromise.

Their husbands were tender, supportive, and kind,  
as I stood with my sisters, drawing strength from their might.  
You didn't stand with me like I'd hoped you would,  
you held firm in your thinking, as if you were right.

Tomorrow's illusive and yesterday has passed,  
inaccessible landscapes both primeval and new.  
Let's tread softly along our contentious-like path,  
for I simply won't change—and neither will you.

---

**Mysteriously Sublime**

by Cheryl Sommesse

He bought *way* too many adapters,  
apparently assuming we were destined  
to utilize  
every plug-in we packed  
at the same time.  
Staying high on a Jerusalem hill,  
sacred sounds resonating  
from Bethlehem below  
as if ancient proclamations  
hauntingly decoding  
life's mysteries.  
Small—  
exposed,  
marveling at their blissful melancholy  
like a wandering child  
curiously

observing worker bees  
 dutifully go about business.  
 Surrendering myself to the  
 oscillating octaves  
 eventually culminating  
 to one unifying chord.  
 Opening my mind's eye to see  
 you can never really  
 have too many  
 adapters.

Bio: Cheryl Sommese contracts part-time as a freelance writer. Additionally, she volunteers as a CASA GAL advocate. Her creative works include a screenplay, short stories, essays, poems, and a book that undoubtedly could benefit from consistent, as opposed to sporadic, addressing. Penning poetry is her favorite, however, as she feels this medium more fully expresses the path God chose for her and everything she can become.

### **The Most Beautiful Music** *(prose poem)*

*November 2016*

by Beate Sigriddaughter

"Now I have time only for the most beautiful music." —Jonas Ingimundarsson, pianist and cancer survivor

My world is not well. I seem to wander in the midst of a great cancer of the soul. Trinkets have multiplied and grown out of control. This fear in my bowels I have never felt before. I try to learn from others as I stumble on.

A gentle neighbor, eighty-three, Hispanic, walks with a limp. He is afraid. He mentions praying often. He suspects God is punishing us and we don't even know what sins we have committed.

Up in the bones of the mountain I sometimes meet a woman who tells me she spends hours each day sitting with the sun and the rocks, summer or winter, sending healing energy out into the world.

Grandfather Golden Eagle tells me to bless the world with my eyes each time I look at anything. Make every sight count. I try. I am afraid.

A friend posts on Facebook, three lines of gratitude each day to counteract the terror in our bones.

Earth is our bones. The sun. I listen to Mariachi bands, church choirs, poets—oh, the poets, so diligent in coming across with blessing and caressing this world.

We are not here to be overtaken by trinkets. We are here for the song of the sun, the light of many-throated birds and Mariachi bands with golden sombreros, the decency of offering each other beauty and joy, the pleasure of being alive at sunrise, and at sunset still.

We are the voice of God. Let us fill the narrow margins of reality with beauty.

---

### **Rules for the Road**

by Beate Sigriddaughter

High on the mountain things are carved  
solidly into the tender granite of your soul:

Life is a gift, not a duty. Honor it.  
And celebrate.

Honor yourself,  
your tenderness, your loud exuberance.

Honor your spirit of passion.

Honor your ancestors.

Honor your children.  
This one is very important.

Honor love.

Honor the rocks you walk on and the trees  
who give you breath.

Honor your hunger, your desire.

Honor the ravens and the flies.

Honor the fears that meet you  
in the middle of the night.

Stop war.

Honor beauty.

Live deeply.

Bio: Beate Sigriddaughter lives and writes in New Mexico, USA, the Land of Enchantment. Her work has received several Pushcart Prize nominations and poetry awards. In 2018 FutureCycle Press will publish her poetry collection *Xanthippe and Her Friends*. She orchestrates a women's writing blog at: <https://writinginawomansvoice.blogspot.com/>.

Also visit: [www.sigriddaughter.com](http://www.sigriddaughter.com)

---

### **Others Like Us**

by Michelle Soley

I am a moon child  
I dance under  
the cool velvet sky  
amid the pale midnight flowers  
Whirl through the unsilent night  
A sweet cacophony to my ears

I am untethered-gypsy-blood-hear-me-howl

So... No  
You ask too much of me  
I will burn  
shrivel under the garish sun  
My spirit-though-strong cannot withstand insistent heat  
I have no desire to leave  
My mossy home

Please  
just  
let  
me  
be

Yes, yes  
I know  
Yes...yes  
I hear you

Perhaps I can start by  
stretching my toe  
to the border of dawn  
Then my foot  
My leg  
My torso  
My arms  
My neck  
And finally  
my head

Maybe, just maybe  
I can find my soul  
On this unexpected  
unwelcome horizon  
If you are waiting  
right beyond there  
To slice through the rays  
with me  
To seek others such as us  
With stardust in our eyes

Will you be there?

Bio: Michelle Soley's passion is to express herself through writing. She enjoys taking risks

with format and subject. Presently Michelle is working on a novel and seeking publication for a children's book she's written.

---

### **Works of Art Attract Works of Art**

by John Grey

I don't go to a Museum for the painting  
but to appreciate the people who appreciate the art.  
Old Masters, Impressionists, Fauvists, Pre-Raphaelites...  
and that's only in the cafeteria  
sipping coffee, nibbling on overpriced watercress sandwiches.

Bent pensioner in faded jeans, beret atop, grey-pony tail trailing behind,  
peach-cheeked russet-haired young girl,  
middle-aged woman, saturated red skin, thin bones knotted by tight bun,  
pale, almost-transparent eyed waif in long white floating floral dress...  
first I frame them...

---

### **I Am a Pianist Available to Play**

by John Grey

Dear war-torn country,  
Invite me to play the piano in your fields.  
I will turn your day into a stage,  
the half-baked smoky sunshine  
spilling through parlor curtains  
into a spotlight.

Know me like the good things  
you remember about the dead.

I can tap, tap, tap  
on the black and white machine,  
hands straight-backed,  
rhythm fodder,  
not a stumble in that



well-tempered genealogy  
from lessons to Liszt.

So calm the withering collage  
of bunkers and M16's.  
soften the edges of the two feet  
that failed to find the land-mines.

I am a concert waiting to heal,  
scored by the relief of sheet music,  
after too many years  
of what I've seen  
fitting so sloppily  
into what I know.

Let that incongruity release in a gift  
of hammers pinging steel,  
tied up in a bow of ivory.  
Hold your fire.  
Listen to mine.

---

### **The Shell and the Rock**

by John Grey

Alicia claims mystical powers,  
plucks a clamshell  
from the sand  
and pressing it to her ear  
creates, in her mind,  
the Atlantic  
from the foam dropped at her feet  
to the distant shores of Africa.  
She feels the depth, the power,  
of its waters  
more so than the ocean does.  
To her, every drop, every pinch  
of salt and sea creature  
is nothing if it's not

one side or other  
of her human equation.

I have within me,  
ruined Australian landscapes,  
a harsher mysticism,  
with trappings of mankind  
on its perimeters  
but a dead dry center.  
Identity is hard-won here.  
It must please itself  
before it bothers with me.  
I pick up a rock,  
hard and smooth.  
rugged and strong.  
It's already doing its best  
to survive me.

Bio: John Grey is an Australian poet, US resident. Recently published in *New Plains Review*, *Stillwater Review* and *Big Muddy Review* with work upcoming in *Louisiana Review*, *Columbia College Literary Review* and *Spoon River Poetry Review*.

### **Sing it Frank, Physical Therapy**

by Michael Lee Johnson

Sing it Frank  
I'm busy at physical therapy  
struggling with back spasms  
looking out this window, these clouds  
this rain, slice this thunder,  
listening to your songs over again  
on the Muzak for the 6th week in a row,  
peddling this mechanical bike,  
might as well be a mechanical bull  
with a heat pad on my spinal cord.  
I'm deep inside your larynx 10 minutes  
3 times a week tickling it back and forth,  
jousting and reviewing those playgrounds

of all your illicit affairs. With a few shots of vodka  
peddling these wheels with intensified pressure  
I can appreciate Lana Turner, Judy Garland,  
Lauren Bacall, even Marilyn Monroe.  
"This is my kind of town Chicago is,  
my kind of town Chicago is."

---

### **Iranian Poetry Lady**

by Michael Lee Johnson

The first time I saw your face, cosmetic images, dust, dirt, determination  
fell across your exiled face. Coal smoke lifted with your simple words and  
short poems.  
Your meaning drawn across a black board of past, rainbows, future  
fragment, still in the shadows.  
Muhammad, Jesus, twins, only one forms a halo alone.  
One screams love, drips candle wax, lights life, shakes, love.  
I encrust your history in the Ginkgo tree, deliverance.  
I wrap in the branches the whispers in your ears a new beginning.  
I am the landscape of your future walk soft peddle on green grass.  
I will take you there. I am your poet, your lead, freedom clouds move over  
then on.  
I review no spelling, grammar errors; I lick the envelope, finish, stamp  
place on.  
Down with age I may go, but I offer this set of angel wings I purchased at a  
thrift store.  
I release you in south wind, storms, and warm in spring, monarch  
butterflies.  
Your name scribbles in gold script.  
Night, mysteries, follow handle, your own.

---

### **Flight of the Eagle**

by Michael Lee Johnson

From the dawn, dusty skies  
comes the time when  
the eagle flies—

without thought,  
without aid of wind,  
like a kite detached without string,  
the eagle in flight leaves no traces,  
no trails, no roadways—  
never a feather drops  
out of the sky.

Bio: Michael Lee Johnson lived ten years in Canada during the Vietnam era. Today he is a poet, freelance writer, amateur photographer, and small business owner in Itasca, Illinois.

Mr. Johnson published in more than 945 small press magazines online and in print. His poems have appeared in 28 countries, he edits, publishes ten different poetry sites. He also has 109 poetry videos on YouTube:  
<https://www.youtube.com/user/poetrymanusa/videos>.

He was nominated for 2 Pushcart Prize awards for poetry in 2015 & Best of the Net 2016. He is also the editor/publisher of the anthology, *Moonlight Dreamers of Yellow Haze*:  
<http://www.amazon.com/dp/1530456762>  
<https://wwwcreatespace.com/6126977>.

---

### **Post-apocalyptic Chandeliers**

by J. E. A. Wallace

The chandeliers constantly jingle  
In this house in abandoned New York  
Shaken by starlings that tear past  
The cracked window teeth of the mansion's maw

There is life in here as well  
It comes from the dreams of the ghost  
Now descending the collapsing stairs  
A polar opposite of clumsy shadow

The crooked corridor paintings  
Watch as it drifts by  
Its determination casts  
No reflection in their eyes

Once again it makes its way  
Into the sunlit ballroom  
Whose broken glass is everywhere  
Like a smashed up crystal tomb

The skeleton of the piano  
Is wearing a menacing smile  
As if to say, *Oh, you again?*  
*Are we giving it one more try?*

But a ghost knows how to ignore things  
And focus on the task at hand  
It gathers all of the life in its dreams  
To speak the name of a woman

Who hasn't been seen since long before  
These parts were blown apart  
Who had promised to return  
If only he would ask

Bio: J. E. A. Wallace has been a hotel night porter, an abattoir security guard, and a barman in The House of Lords. Born and raised in England, he is now a happily married poet who lives and writes in New York City.

### **By the Moose**

by Richard L. Provencher

a wooden bridge is  
more than a whisper  
of creaking like  
grandfather's  
rocking-chair.

The river creates a soufflé  
of meringue-filled current  
in its southerly flow.

Around the bend ripples  
overcome a sand dune. Aware

of my presence, a  
squirrel skitters tree-upwards.

I am a child of my past—  
peanut-butter fingers  
fishing with a night crawler  
dangling low.

Etched upon an old plaque:  
“Three men entombed In '36  
141 feet below, seeking crowns  
of gold within the granite,  
one man died.”

Like a page in time this village  
is sketched at attention  
as if stapled to a gravel road

where peace  
and simplicity  
is not forgotten.

Bio: Richard enjoys writing, especially poetry. Many poems have been published in print and online journals. He and his wife, Esther are co-authors of Kindle e-books which are now available on Amazon.com. They are born-again Christians and very busy in their church, Abundant Life Victory International.

© 2017 *The Write Place at the Write Time*

This online magazine and all the content contained therein is copyrighted.