



# dimly writ

## Stories by

J R Harlow  
Leslie Selbst  
Michael Birchmore

## Poems by

Christopher Jones  
Bruce McRae  
Linette Rabsatt  
Gabriella Garofalo  
Sreelekha Chatterjee  
Mike Nichols  
Jan Wiezorek  
Lynn White  
Baskin Cooper  
Joan McNerney  
Allan Lake  
C. J. Anderson-Wu  
Fran Sani  
Isaac Aju  
Sam Hendrian  
Lucas Zulu  
John Grey

## Artwork by

Bogna Woskowicz  
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WINTER 2026 EDITION

# dimly writ

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Literature  
Society

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# Editor's Note

We're excited to announce the release of our second journal edition!

Continuing the creative momentum from our 2025 Summer Edition, this fall, we've done our best to find short stories, flash fiction, poems, and artworks that are truly a breath of fresh air. In a world that is increasingly devaluing art for art's sake, we tried to compile works that are simply a celebration of life, beauty, and raw emotion.

As always, the poems we have accepted encompass works from all over the world. The selected poems, stories, and artworks feature a diverse range of voices and styles, all representing the authentic truths outlined in their arrangement. We're continually blown away by the support we have received and the number of submissions we're entrusted with. The pieces we have been sent are genuinely delightful, and we thoroughly enjoyed reviewing all of them.

This edition includes both new and experienced writers and artists. It spans themes of home and higher purpose. It explores messages of forgiveness and appreciation. Each piece has something new to say and another person's story to tell. The short stories have throughlines of enjoying life's simple pleasures, while the poems are connected by their shared examination of the world around us and internal trials.

We're eternally grateful for all of the talented authors and artists who went out of their way to submit their pieces to our anthology. We'd like to thank you for the time and talent you have contributed to make this journal possible. We'd also like to thank all of the volunteers and staff readers who helped us in the selection process for creating this edition. We hope that all of you will enjoy this edition and find something worthwhile in the contained works.

Sincerely,

Helen Anderson  
*Editor-in-Chief*

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## Grinning Like a...

J R Harlow

It was a brown sort of day; in fact, the sky was the colour of silt at the bottom of a slow-flowing river. The seasons were turning and the summer was gradually being battered into submission by the branch-shaking winds. Even in the blocky concrete of the sullen town, nature was finding a way to make herself known.

Rojam Sirbuh stared dully out of the hazy window of his fourth floor apartment, the cheap panes of glass smeared and cloudy. He could see the murky beige sky above the low wall of the graveyard opposite and, hanging up there by the rolls of black-dotted fly-paper, was the reflection of his own eye; weary and hazel. There was something else up there, too. And it was grinning at him.

Rojam was a jazz musician. The key change of the season had even made its way into his fingers that morning, so that all he could hammer out on the lopsided keyboard he'd wedged between a pile of books and his chest of drawers was a staid cycle of fourths. Cm, F7, Bb, Eb, like the quarters of a clock face. '*The falling leaves*', they sang to him; the dead leaves, *les feuilles mortes*. Then came an 'A' chord, half diminished by the chilly wind and a 'D' optimistically augmented by the memory of the joyous sun. But they were wholly uninspired. A jazz cliché.

Exasperated, Rojam went outside, hopped the graveyard wall, and found that the chords he'd played earlier had massed into a thick carpet of harmonic russet and flame, intermingling with the crisp leaves beneath the headstones.

He was intrigued to find that his jazz standards made for a good mulch, but Rojam hadn't come for the graveyard. No. Instead, he looked up, to where his eye had so recently hung in the sky, and smiled wryly back at something familiar but monstrous.

Hanging up there in the dirty urban sky were twelve beautiful pillars of enamel, glowing in the smutty air. It was called the GRIN, and it had been there longer than anyone in the town remembered. The GRIN was contagious; a gash across the sky; irreverent, permissive, and just a tiny bit crazy.

The GRIN was always kind to Rojam. He thought it must be God, suspended above the church as it was, so sometimes he smiled back.

The church was a cosy building with humble gray flagstones and Gothic arched windows. It was from another time, when the town had only been a village.

It had semi-circular roof tiles interlaced with moss, and wire mesh in the gutters to deter the chaotic, white spattered swallows' nests.

The building was turned bashfully sideways on to the chord-strewn graveyard, the big iron-studded door locked and bolted, and up there, below the exultant GRIN and above the wire and the nests and the moss, was a spire to die for.

That was what Rojam had come for.

So he did what he'd done a hundred times before and scaled the main tower using the rector's splintered ladder, until the rotten wooden rungs disappeared beneath his trainers. Then he got a foothold on the arched windows and a handhold on an old iron bracket that had once held a bell, and heaved himself up onto the tower to sit on the protruding weather-vane.

There, Rojam would be a sundial for the rest of the day. From his place up on the steeple, he could see the whole village, and also the slow passage of the sun across the sky. He was happy there. The sun looked to Rojam like an effervescent clock-face, bargaining its way into another day, begging to be allowed to grace the sky for another twelve hours.

Rojam Sirbuh didn't much care whether the sun was granted any extra days. He was not one of those people who'd ever truly mastered being happy. It was harder than it looked. Most days, and for no reason whatsoever, Rojam ping-ponged between peace and misery, spending a short while in indifference just for the light relief.

The reason that he most enjoyed being a sundial was that men were so complex, and sundials so simple. They had only one job, and no emotions, no responsibilities and no thoughts. They didn't struggle to harmonize this or invert that; they didn't exhale with joy when the music moved them, nor curse in displeasure when their fingers disobeyed them. They were always steadfast and precise, ticking away the day.

So, all that day, Rojam sat, immovable, on the narrow ledge of the church weather-vane, balanced like a tight-rope walker, flexing in the wind, being a sundial. The key was to keep his knees soft and let them wobble with the buffets and eddies of the breeze; his arms outstretched for balance.

Occasionally, the sun would emerge and hit him in the face as it struggled for dominance with the clouds, but most of the time it remained wreathed, casting Rojam's long but faint shadow onto the ground where it danced between the graves, rippling and creeping, taunting and feinting.

Eventually, when his shadow was tired from racing across the ground all day, it gave up and disappeared. This made Rojam unhappy. When this happened, there was nothing left to do but to climb back down the tower in the twilight, disappointed that another day had come to an end and that he needed to be a man again, and not a sundial.

On this particular brown day, as he climbed miserably down the cracked stones, he heard a loud, deep voice, and he knew at once that it must be the GRIN. It had a message for him.

“If you knock the sun down from the sky...” it said, “You could stay up here with me forever. Your shadow will never get tired, because there won’t be any light.”

This seemed to make sense, and the GRIN was bigger than Rojam and probably knew a lot better. It even gave him a long pole to try and batter the sun with.

When he returned the next day, he focused all his energy on beating the golden bauble in the sky. It glared back at him like a radioactive piñata, trying to blind him, trying to burn him, but the GRIN gave him silky words of advice. ‘Don’t give up,’ it said, ‘You’re nearly there. Keep going! One more swing!’

But somehow, the sun just wouldn’t shift.

“I’m going home,” Rojam said defiantly. “My shadow is tired, and it’s no use. That stubborn sun is never going to fall.”

The GRIN argued that he should stay and keep trying, but Rojam was resolute. “I’ll try again tomorrow,” he said.

When he got home, he was exhausted. He flopped down in his threadbare corduroy chair and sighed, dropping the long stick the GRIN had given him. His cat Chess wandered lazily into the living room, tail up and belly swinging like a flabby pendulum.

“Hello Chess,” Rojam said, reaching over the side of the chair to tickle her under the chin. “Whatcha been doing today?”

“I’ve been taunting birds” Chess replied happily, angling her chin so that Rojam could get better purchase with his fingers. “I tied my collar to a tree branch on the far side of the park and hid under the bushes at the other end. When the little bell jingled in the wind, the sparrows thought a cat was sneaking up on them, and they flew away,

straight towards me.”

“That’s smart,” Rojam frowned, “But maybe a bit cruel.”

“Oh I don’t eat them,” Chess muttered, rubbing her tail companionably against her master’s legs. “I just play with them.”

Rojam frowned again.

“Besides,” Chess continued, a note of defensiveness creeping into her purr, “It wasn’t my idea.”

“No?”

“No. The GRIN told me to do it.” She sauntered over to the kitchen, her paws leaving little moist toe imprints on the cheap linoleum. “What have you been up to?”

“Oh...nothing much,” Rojam murmured. “Just killing time.”

The next day, he had a better idea. The stick wasn’t moving the sun at all, so perhaps he should try to blow it out of the sky. There was still a harsh breeze, funnelling around the square buildings and picking up armfuls of leaves and chords and flinging them across the road beside the church. More than once, Rojam saw an F# 13 fly out in front of a bus.

He hadn’t seen the sun move, but the birds were having trouble staying airborne and Chess was nearly blown off the fence. Perhaps the additional pressure of a well aimed gust would shake the sun from its mountings and then he could complete the downfall with his trusty stick.

So he put his old tenor sax in its peeling case and strapped it to his back like a rucksack, ready for another journey up the side of the church.

When he got to the top of the spire and settled on the thin weather-vane, he pulled his saxophone from its case and fitted a new reed.

“What an inspired idea!” The GRIN cried enthusiastically. “I knew you could do it, Rojam. You’re so clever!”

Buoyed up by the GRIN's support, Rojam put the mouth-piece to his lips and over-blew as hard as he could in the direction of the sun. He produced a squealing harmonic of which he was very proud, before the force of his efforts unbalanced him, and he went tumbling backwards off of the spire.

As he plummeted down, he heard the GRIN laughing.

Rojam struck his head against the corner of a gravestone and landed spread-eagle on the ground. He was unconscious for a full fifteen minutes.

As he lay there in the total darkness of oblivion, he realized several things. Firstly, he'd achieved the darkness that he craved. He congratulated himself on that. Credit where it was due, he thought.

Sadly though, his shadow was nowhere to be seen. It would not get tired at least, but it also wouldn't be there at all. Bugger; he thought.

In fact, nothing was there any more. The brown sky, the smug and glaring sun, the beautiful church spire and the great and looming GRIN were all gone.

The third thing he realized was that the GRIN was probably not God after all. It had goaded him into doing something that he now suspected was really quite stupid.

Rojam lay there feeling sorry for himself for a while. He missed the sun, now that he couldn't see anything. What use was a sundial without the sun?

Tentatively, he opened his eyes. The first thing he saw was the murky, exultant beige sky that he'd come to love over the past few years. Then he saw his beloved spire, intact and proud, piercing the sky below an enormous reflection of his own sleep-gummed hazel eye. The GRIN was nowhere to be seen.

Gradually, he tested each of his limbs, wiggling his fingers and toes and hearing a peculiar stream of fevered arpeggios with each

movement. If he hadn't known better, he'd have sworn it was the Charlie Parker solo he'd been trying to learn a week ago.

Luckily for Rojam, he'd had his fall broken by landing on a whole pile of arpeggios from the Parker solo, as well as a thesaurus of complex chords from a John Coltrane number. They were softer and denser than any mattress, and they had spared him any great injury.

He struggled to his feet, happy, perhaps for the first time, and grinning. Grinning like a...

## The Runaway

Leslie Selbst

When I was nine years old, I had many secrets. So many that I wrote my diary in invisible ink. That didn't work too well cause the pages were blank and I couldn't remember what I wrote. So, I traded my pen to Johnny, my best friend. I traded it for a Hank Williams baseball card. But his mom wanted me to undo the trade cause what good is a pen that writes invisible?

I told her that Johnny should use invisible ink cause he cusses a lot, and this way his cuss words couldn't be seen. But she wasn't buying that, and besides, the card that Johnny traded belonged to his dad and it was worth a lot of money, so she wanted it back.

I told her I didn't have it no more cause I traded it to Zeke Powers for a pack of Gummy Bears, and he said no backsees. So, there's nothing nobody can do. A deal's a deal—that's kid's law; besides, I already ate the Gummy Bears.

She comes right back at me an tells me that we'll see about Kid's law when Johnny's dad comes home and that I'd better get that baseball card back.

And that's why Mr. Policeman—that's why I'm running away.

## Eric

Michael Birchmore

One of the advantages of being retired is that you have plenty of time to sit. But not just sit. Sit and watch. Being grey-haired, the few that remain that is, and moderately well dressed, retirement allows you to not just spend a reasonably long lunch in an otherwise busy seaside café, but also lets you go relatively unobserved. Being quietly sat in the corner by the window with a sandwich and cup of tea doing the Times crossword is a signal to others to “leave alone”. Others are perfectly welcome to come and sit at your table, as some do. Few try to strike up a conversation, and those that don't rarely last long. The position allows you to view all in the café and the activity immediately outside.

This lunch was a regular treat for Eric. He always got this seat if he could because it gave him such a good vantage point for people watching. Inside and out, and some of the things he saw were most interesting. Much though was banal. Pondering a tricky cryptic clue, he would gaze round, sip his tea and see what was what. He would sometimes look at an individual and see what there was about their person that gave clues to who they were, as Sherlock Holmes would do in his favourite Conan Doyle stories. Take that man over there, for example. Middle to late 40s. Tousled hair. Cargo shorts and boating shoes, with his daughter could that be? But him wearing an Iron Maiden T-shirt? Hanging on to his youth. Doubtless, he was a fan in his younger days. He is of that era. But still? It is possible he supposes. Still, it looks odd and odd is what catches Eric's attention. The girl with him was picking at the fish pie she had ordered. She was eating it but didn't look as though she was enjoying it very much, which was a shame because Eric knew the fish pie was good. Bertha did good pies. Homemade with a cheese sauce and a potato topping. Bertha had a good sense of what made good homemade food. Food that filled you

up. She had little time for processed foods and plastic foods that came in plastic containers. She used many ingredients that her husband Baldwin grew on his allotment.

Eric looked out of the window at the deep blue sea across the road. This was a view he never tired of. It was always different, and the vagaries of the weather and its effect on the sea made it even more interesting.

Eric had been coming here for a few years and had got to know Bertha and Baldwin reasonably well. Bertha didn't mind him staying a long time as long as there weren't people queuing up for tables.

"More tea, Eric?" Bertha asked as she cleared his plate away.

"Yes please Bertha, and might I also have one of your toasted tea cakes? I feel like splashing out a bit today."

"Coo, what's up with you? Won the lottery have you?" Bertha joked.

Eric smiled at her joke. Of course, unknown to her, she was being very ironical, since Eric had won the lottery a few years previously. It was a big win. 7 figures in fact, and as a result, Eric decided to take early retirement and treat his wife, Helen, to the dream holiday they had long fantasised about. Australia. A holiday that turned out to be a nightmare and not the dream they had thought. Helen was a strong swimmer, and one thing she had dreamed most of about going to Australia was diving the Great Barrier Reef. To see the corals and the fish for real. Unfortunately, something stung her. A jellyfish. It wasn't the sting that had killed her but the anaphylactic shock she experienced as a result.

This took all the glory out of his win. To him, the money was cursed. He gave a good deal of it to charity, thinking that it could do some good at least that way. He still had more than enough for himself to live off. Rather than stay in his old house, which was full of memories of Helen, he decided to move. He now had a house tailor-

made for him. On a hill overlooking the sea with a library. He would spend time there on a summer's evening with a book, a glass of port and maybe listening to Classic FM. On the wall above the fireplace was a portrait of Helen. A photograph printed on canvas. Helen in her university robes for when she gained a doctorate in psychology. She had worked so hard for that, and he was just the proudest husband alive when she received it. Now he often felt sadness when he looked at it. Not just because she wasn't there anymore, but because she wasn't able to go on and fulfil the potential and knowledge that had got it for her.

Invariably, he would raise his glass of port in a toast to her picture.

"If I ever win the lottery, Bertha," said Eric, "I'll come and buy you a restaurant."

Bertha, being from the Caribbean, threw her head back and laughed out loudly. "If you do that, you'll only make Baldwin jealous," she replied.

Eric waved her comment aside. "Ha! It'll do him good, spending all that time down his allotment. Mind you, he does grow fab veg for you to use here. Perhaps if I got him a greenhouse?"

Bertha looked at him with a look of wide-eyed friendly disbelief and walked back to the serving counter, throwing the comment, "You just behave, or I'll put arsenic in your teacake." When her back was turned, Eric put his thumb to his nose and wiggled his fingers.

Although a dark skinned Caribbean, Bertha was really as English as Eric, having been born and raised in Smethwick. Her parents had come across on the Windrush, and it was in their honour that she named her café "Windrush." Her love of cooking had come from her mother and watching her favourite TV-chef Rustie Lee, whose autographed photo hung behind the serving counter. "To Bertha Love Rustie," it read. She had moved south by the sea when her husband's ailing parents had gotten worse, and it was evident they may not have much time left.

Truth was, they hung on for a good few years more, but eventually, as always happens, time caught them up.

Bertha wasn't bothered now. At first, she was, since it took her away from her Caribbean community and the reception for her in her new village, where the demographic was very white, middle class. But her involvement with the local church, St Peters, helped. Now she is considered a positive godsend at church events with provisions of goat curry, salt fish and baked plantains. Baldwin's abundance with the fruit and veg made them even more popular. Once outsiders were now considered pillars of their community.

"So what have you got planned for this afternoon then?" asked Bertha as she cleared away Eric's crocks.

"Nothing very scandalous I'm afraid," replied Eric. "That is, unless you're free and we can spend time stocktaking together?"

"Oh, shush you," said Bertha, waving her cloth at Eric.

Eric shrugged. "Well, you can't blame me for asking. In that case I shall wander down the prom for a bit. Pop in the book shop to see Gerald, the old dear. I know he gets lonely since he lost Philip. Then I'll wander home. Watch the latest "Last of the Summer Wine." Might have a nap. Fix some ribollita for dinner and then sit back to watch the cricket."

"Ah, yes. Baldwin will be doing that too. Just as well for me it isn't West Indies playing, or I'd get nothing from him," commented Bertha.

"No, it's Pakistan this year. After that, it will be a glass of port and classic FM. So no real wickedness tonight... but I live in hope." Eric winked and smiled at Bertha conspiratorially, which got her howling with laughter again.

"Oh, you," she said. "I never know when you're being serious."

"No, Bertha. It is all true. Honest m'lud."

Eric sat back. Yes, to many, his might seem a lonely life. Without Helen, it couldn't be anything else. That's just the way things were. He

had made up his mind that life would go on however. A different life to the one they'd planned but that was that.

## Fight Path

Christopher Jones

The parents are screaming again  
so Zibby and I hide  
beneath the kitchen table.  
We don't understand  
what the fight is about  
but the tablecloth hangs down  
and covers us a little  
as we crouch together  
looking up at the hard underside of the table  
telling us how far we could hope to rise,  
and no higher.

# The Gospel According to Saint Frankenstein

## Christopher Jones

My father's occupation was grave robber,  
man of science.  
Cutter of dead men.  
Sommelier of the gibbet.

Mine, a most masculine of births:  
Erlenmeyer flask,  
spear of lightning,  
the needle that sewed me.  
The thrusting phallus of my maker's intellect.

Three wise men clustered around my birth-slab,  
mused and aging godfathers:  
Agrippa, Paracelcus,  
Albertus Magnus.  
For a mother I had only  
the vaginal earth.  
She spit me out.

My Damascus road that classroom floor  
where one brain-filled jar slipped, shattered  
and was replaced.  
The instant of conversion  
a crime filled with sharp edges.

Lives were lost to my lack of self-knowledge,  
so I became an anchorite  
of deep wood and crumbling castle,  
meditated on chemical galvanism,  
electrobiology,  
the sound a heart makes  
when its only humour is rage.

I learned the slow Nirvana of the ice fields,  
my soul drawn by dogsled  
to the magnetic pole.  
I saw the weave there,  
magnetism and electricity and heartbeat  
all the same.

I am made of other people.  
I am nailed to a cross  
made of other people.

But I dipped back with these murderer's hands  
into the dark,  
into the beginning,  
and I say to you, little sleeper,  
"Come Forth."

I will teach you to roll your own stone away.

## Getting Lost

Bruce McRae

Some are lost in forests.  
Some disappear on their way into work.  
Some throw away their maps  
and strike off into the territories,  
never to be spoken of again.  
Many can go into a room  
full of people and remain unnoticed.  
Becoming slight. Becoming vapour.

Wives and lovers put up posters.  
Search parties return, shamefaced,  
their bloodhounds baffled,  
without a trail or a scent.  
Conjecture blames the aliens  
or crimes of passion.  
Others claim self-murder.  
Perhaps a bad fall, or another dimension.

Some are lost in their befuddlement,  
on different streets of a different town,  
a wrong turn and their time has ended.  
They become insubstantial, indiscernible.

And some just throw themselves away,  
as was always their intention.  
They don't ask you to come after them.  
They don't want to be found.

## Rockabye Baby

Linette Rabsatt

the cradle has fallen  
it was placed carefully  
on the highest limb  
in the soursop tree  
sadly that tree was  
overtaken by a passionfruit vine –  
the friendly but deadly  
climber that overtakes  
whatever it grows on  
so that cradle was bound  
to fall – luckily on its bottom  
the baby – unscathed  
was not perturbed  
as an adult would be  
because he wasn't taught fear  
he couldn't decipher  
the screams that he could hear  
after all the old people would say  
that angels are always there  
to soften any baby's fall  
so as much as that soursop tree  
had gotten quite tall  
and the passion fruit vines  
made it a precarious resting place  
that baby was safe  
the cradle had fallen  
but the occupant  
was saved by loving hands

**To W.**  
**Gabriella Garofalo**

Spin it short and nice, rain,  
No stony contempt for young lovers  
Hungry for limbs and meadows,  
Blind to a desecrated sky  
Where you nicked riotous days or borders,  
Where a broken wave that blazes is striking,  
And you don't give a damn for an angry light  
If it crumbles up clouds, justice,  
God in spite of everything-  
So play the game, light, be a good sport,  
As God is showing us a few tricks,  
Say, how to shape different moons, different waters,  
When too faraway from her sky  
Words hold back, while her soul dares  
Vibrations and naked nerves  
As they dash against risky places-  
Know what, at first sight everything a gift,  
Even risky spots for the moon,  
Days light mislaid, a soul that never skips the sky,  
And yes, go ahead, just see children and desertion  
Rebel teens when they leave in a hunt for brand new tales,  
Look, one of them ablaze, the dreamer fast set  
On nurturing plants and grass over there,  
Where light wheezes in fear that they'll shut  
(They who? Easy nights, defacers?)  
Fruits or brambles, the only witness  
The echo of a rainbow, if only a gift  
His silence.

**To M., to B.**  
**Gabriella Garofalo**

Ask her where the noxious blue has gone,  
And where the hell is hiding the blessed day  
When you feel the earth your mother,  
The earth only, as you lost your faith  
In women who wreck the scene and skip  
The sunsets, that cheap tacky rave-  
Look for them, c'mon, the blue, the day  
Of winds and hunger hustling you  
To fear and blessings you dare not hiss or dwell,  
If green-eyed walls wipe you out  
With needs and doubts, you know,  
Worse than lovers they own and possess,  
And why on earth you never cut and run  
From that mad greenery that scratches your soul,  
Why on earth you waste your time  
Raking over its many voices,  
If mothers haunt your mind, no way  
Demeter who gives and shelters,  
But wasted maenads hungry for deaths,  
Be it the undergrowth, or a soul on a high,  
Grieving minds up to something,  
Or someone in a bind-  
So, better get it over now,  
While your house is resting, and souls  
Won't die of an endless last bliss,  
Or so say the fathers, right,  
You'll be fine when stalking blue,  
Or reaching out for hands, for life.

## Fearing the World Outside

Sreelekha Chatterjee

I fear the unclean world outside—  
surrounded by confusion around every corner.  
Down every fake trail, monsters threatening.  
Is there a clear path to lead me through?  
I wonder when the white dove inside my heart  
will learn to fly in the befouled air?  
I feel like a child lost the parent's hand in a crowd,  
with beguiling temptations leading to unknown curses.  
Anxiety bubbling to my mind's surface,  
I clean for today, tomorrow, and the near future.  
I wash relentlessly without a stop.  
I scrub, scour, rub, and kill the unwanted dirt, grime,  
and eliminate the foul smells  
emanating from the detritus of everyday life.  
I prepare to mop the dust from a neighbor's broom,  
dirtying my balcony, corrupting my outer façade;  
I writhe in pain, unable to rid myself of the grit.  
Charlatans roam about, assuring false healing abilities.

My internal disorientation mirrored by the world outside.  
I remain within my solitary realm—  
the atmosphere heavy, unable to breathe.  
I open the windows of my house,  
the ledges filled with trains of bird excreta,  
the irritants outdoors outnumber those  
that a mask cannot survive.  
No matter the methods I try to purify and cleanse,  
my repertoire of skills keeps failing.

Donning myself in an armor of tolerance,  
I venture out into the world.  
Road dust appears as a fugitive,  
a spy, co-conspirator of illnesses;  
and the smoke creates a dirty haze.  
Their fleeting presence is menacing  
in my brief encounter with the outside world.  
I return to the comfort of my home,  
to clear myself of the unwanted in my territory.  
I purify my outside of all the adulteration.  
How do I rid myself of the filth that settled inside?

# Sheep

Mike Nichols

## Psalm 23

The Lord is our shepherd; I want my mother. He whipped out his crook and led her away from me. Abandoned, the children pace green pastures. They sit beside the still waters sobbing. They do not understand. And yea, they will wander through the Valley searching for their mothers with no direction, for they know not that the sun sets in the west and all the rivers and streams flow downhill to the sea. Shadows mal-shapen, as if wrought of madmen. They fear no evil, only loss. His rod and his staff pen them in this corner of the pasture. Their hands porcupined with splinters from trying to push past and to regain what was lost. The feast prepared fresh now putrefies at the table. This is not the nourishment for which they hunger. The flies grow fat and placid. The anointing oil seeps down, coats the children's eyes and blurs their memories of their lost. Goodness and mercy follow, falling too far behind to help. Ahead, the white colonnades of the house of the Lord recede with each footfall toward them. This, God's carnival funhouse trick. And we children still nowhere near comprehending forever.

## Below Literacy Level

Mike Nichols

My little sister scribbled on  
a half scrap of notebook paper  
with a fat yellow pencil gripped  
in her fist. She held it close  
to her chest, her face twisted,  
considering, before she  
slid it across the table to me.

It looked like  
I luv yoo. But as I began  
to read it a second time  
the graphite lines flashed  
& arced like welding,  
blinding me.

Magic writing.  
Catches fire.  
Wafts up & away  
the same as I imagine  
she did on the day she quit  
the gleaming steel  
operating table.

Ragged voids in the paper where  
the graphite is gone. Maybe it said  
I do too. I look to her, questioningly, and find  
she has gone. I consider the ragged paper.  
I feed it past my lips. I chew. I swallow.  
I hope to assimilate its meaning.

I snap the goddamned pencil in my fist.

## Peace

Jan Wieszorek

*“Nor for my peace will I go far,  
as wanderers do, that still do roam;”*

– Ben Jonson, “A Farewell to the World”

Peace, as spirit taught, in coffee grounds,  
wingback chair, a promising hassock for leg pain—  
hearing songs again about lassoing a cowboy’s trail.

It’s a simple gift to continue this loop  
of easy words against your dusky worries.

Poems and patterns we memorize  
to corral our pressure, free our release.

There’s grace in sitting here with you as my familiar.

We’re close enough to feel the cold and warmth of seasons.  
The faint Hello across a living room of campfires.

Roaming? No—just resting—along this range of prayer.

## Prairie's Petitions

Jan Wieszorek

In another season, there's spicebush and berry,  
poison ivy climbing, as tall as Godhead on horseback.

Every day is more flowery, recalling meadows:  
shoulder-high bluebirds, blooms and tall, wet grasses.

All burned. We're aghast, though grasses  
have deepest roots. And I am with you always,

always seeing what is good, golden plum,  
blazing star of change, bluestem winds

that bow to a holy name. Imagine chopping  
a block of sod, brick by brick, and seeing vistas

from this height. In the year of wild rye,  
water the cup plant's tears, leaf, and stem,

sunflower the wild indigo, blame the onions.  
Prairie dock is cooler on the back of leaves,

producing, not wantonly as black locust in darkness,  
crowding the plantain grass. Array yourselves

and give thanks.

Or go to seed.

## Midlife Crises

Lynn White

She was already at the midpoint of her life  
when she gave birth,  
though of course,  
she didn't know it then,  
and was happy to light another roll up.

It was a difficult birth.  
Even though the baby was small  
her insides were smaller  
and the effort burst blood vessels in her legs  
which would cause ulcers throughout the rest of her life,  
but the healthy child growing up was her joy and consolation.

She had married late to a much older man,  
a widower already past the midpoint of his life  
and of course, he knew it even then,  
but what could he do but light another roll up.  
At his life's midpoint his first child had died  
so the healthy child brought him joy and consolation  
and he cared for both while he could.

Her life went on,  
only the first half done.  
Both halves were hard  
but she loved and was loved  
in the best and worst of times.  
In both halves of her life she was whole.

## Snow's a Comin' Baskin Cooper

mashed potatoes passed  
steam rising in the kitchen  
boots lined by the door  
gray sky stretching over the fields

red berries heavy on the holly  
means the snows will be heavy  
squirrels digging deep caches  
means the cold will last

someone points  
to a woolly caterpillar  
dark as hot coffee  
someone else speaks of corn silk  
coarse as rope this year

a chin nods  
the almanac says  
mushrooms galore  
much snow in store  
please pass the peas

old hands carve ham  
young ones reach for biscuits  
their voices overlap  
threads of prediction  
filling the table

I taste salt and butter  
feel the table hum with winter  
outside the bare oak holds its breath  
and the sky leans closer  
a season already on its way

**forgotten**  
Joan McNerney

like a worn slipper still  
under the bed socks  
missing from laundry

or that hard to find half  
rotten apple lodged at  
bottom of refrigerator

unimportant insignificant  
not like lost keys legal or  
financial documents

persona non-grata  
unappreciated or prized  
worthless half rotten  
forgotten

## Just Beyond Eden

Allan Lake

Animals outside Eden devour other animals  
like us, if we aren't clever. Luckily we are.  
Credit Snake, forbidden fruit. Apple a day.  
Escape botanical cage and ready to rage.

After a bit of false friendship – another  
thing we learned inside from Spooky Voice –  
we murdered a trusting monkey. Bloody  
good feed! Juicy but unlike apple or mango.

Fruit was getting boring anyway and now  
name of the game is survival. Quite a game!  
Heavy rules but we're committed killers.  
You lose, you die. You win, you die later.

## 〈迴過光的黃昏〉

——高雄玫瑰聖母堂思記

Pek-êng Koa

Original Taiwanese (followed by English translation)

上嬌的月光幔一領柑仔紗  
暝頭的巴士載滿旅客，迴過  
光的黃昏

信徒佢非信徒喙內含平安  
爬徙佇圓拱門墘  
目矚仁無景緻的面色  
佇祈禱聲內攬彩色玻璃壁窗，佇  
祈禱聲外，感受  
八角尖塔微微的震動  
摔倒規鼎慾望  
洗盪生命經脈，化作烏漉水  
彈出無聲的管風琴

上嬌的聲波嘛捌迴過年輪的心窟  
留落的音樂，刻二字「奉旨」石碑  
留落的神父，袂記得62箍銀兩的歷史  
凡勢，郭德剛.....只是  
破舊的貯物間內底的  
一塊老曲盤

1859年的雲雨淋佇旅客的額頭  
佢耳空  
成做光，佢霧  
空白的禱詞是世界為恁

留落的難題  
恁沓沓仔拍開喉空  
用肥軟肥軟的捲舌  
呵佬天主  
玫瑰花窗的紋路  
洩漏偽裝的虔誠  
暗示有人咧暗念  
全知佻無知的祕密

天主會當予世界啥物  
世界會當予人啥物

黃昏唯無仝的角度，慢慢  
迴過恁，放棄恁，射落深色的暝  
聖母頭敲敲，慈悲慈悲  
喙角吊一掙光

◎附記：1859年郭德剛及洪保錄神父由西班牙屬地菲律賓的道明會，奉羅馬教廷派遣來台傳教。當時郭德剛神父以龍銀六十二圓購地草創，當時以稻桿茅草建屋，作為棲身及傳教之所。1860年以土角磚改建命名為「聖母堂」。1862年再以紅磚、咕佬石、三合土改建聖堂，1863年完工後，自西班牙玫瑰省奉迎聖母像供奉，更名為「玫瑰聖母堂」，亦成為台灣地區最大的天主教堂。

## Passing Through the Setting Sunlight

—Reflections at the Kaohsiung Cathedral of Our Lady of the Rosary

Translation by C. J. Anderson-Wu

The most beautiful moonlight drapes itself in an orange veil  
Evening buses, full of travelers, pass through  
the setting sunlight

Believers and non-believers alike chant peace with their lips  
wandering beneath the circling archway  
Void pupils over expressless faces are  
immersed in prayer under the lightbeams from stained glass  
witnessing, alongside the rhythm of prayer  
the faint tremble of the octagonal spire  
toppling down the furnace of desire  
cleansing the life-streams off their tainted waters  
A silent pipe organ springs forth

The most beautiful sound waves had passed through the heart's growth  
rings

leaving behind music etched into a stone tablet marked "By Imperial  
Decree"

The priest left behind forgot the history of the 62 dragon coins  
Perhaps Father Fernando Sainz is merely  
an old record  
in a dusty warehouse

The clouds and rain of 1859 fall upon travelers' foreheads  
and ears  
transforming into light, and mist  
Blank prayers are the riddles

the world has left for you  
You slowly open your throats  
praising the Lord  
with soft, curling tongues

The rose window's patterns  
leak disguised devotion  
hinting that someone is silently reciting  
the secrets of omniscience or ignorance

What can God give the world?  
What can the world give to man?

Dusk, from different angles, slowly  
passes through you, abandons you, and shoots into the night  
The Virgin tilts her head gently, full of compassion  
a string of light hanging from the corner of her mouth

**Author's Note:**

In 1859, Fathers Fernando Sainz and Pedro Marqués, members of the Dominican Order from the Spanish territory of the Philippines, were dispatched by the Holy See to Taiwan for missionary work. That year, Father Sainz purchased land with 62 silver dragon coins and established a humble mission site, constructing dwellings from rice straw and thatch for shelter and evangelization.

In 1860, the site was rebuilt with adobe bricks and named "Church of Our Lady." In 1862, it was further reconstructed using red bricks, coral stones, and lime mortar. Upon completion in 1863, a statue of the Virgin Mary was brought from the Province of Our Lady of the Rosary in Spain for veneration, and the church was renamed the "Cathedral of Our Lady of the Rosary." It became the largest Catholic church in Taiwan at the time.

## Love Hum

Fran Sani

When another day is done  
When sunshine leaps off distant roofs  
I read your words again  
When lampposts breastfeed newborn night  
When windows turn dark yellow  
I read your words again

# Up There on the Trees

Isaac Aju

Boy

Ain't you seeing those heads hanging on the trees?

Boy

Ain't you seeing those brothers of yours?

Ain't you gonna take it as a warning to work hard?

Ain't you seeing that you are liable to hang there too

Perhaps you are hungry to have a conversation with them

The heads?

Ain't you gonna fix all your strength on your work?

Ain't you gonna have fear that here is no Africa?

Ain't you gonna take off that wild shine in your eyes

Boy

Here is no Africa

Here's none of your Africa where you are free to be wild

Get wild with your hands rather

Boy

Work with those damn hands

Ain't you not afraid

That you too might end up there on the trees?

## One Foot Somewhere Else

Sam Hendrian

Worried about you leaving  
Then again, not so much  
Knowing I'll survive  
Just like I already do.

The thing is, I miss you even when I'm with you  
'Cause you're never fully here,  
Unable to relax  
Unless you have one foot somewhere else.

A symptom of indecision  
Or indecision of the symptom  
And whether it wants to stick around  
Or find another willing host.

I've often thought this is it,  
This is the last time I'll get to hug you  
Only to be proven wrong  
By your return from hibernation.

But if one of these days you do take off  
Without a return ticket,  
Please understand that I'll miss you  
Even more than I do now.

## Riding the Waves

Lucas Zulu

How do I stay afloat  
when billows crash high  
a mountain ranges that blocks  
my dreams from the sky?  
How do I swim back  
to the oceans gentle shore  
when it spits me out,  
like empty seashells  
and I'm left on familiar  
ground once more?  
How do I find rest  
when my pillow's a stone  
no sleep, no peace?  
How do I sip hope  
from a paper cup of despair.  
and find the strength  
to face another dawn?  
once I smell chrysanthemum,  
fear loses its might,  
and I emerge stronger,  
ready to face the light  
I gain the power to rise  
above the thorns,  
and find my footing  
on the serene trail  
that's mine to claim.

# Mankind Unkind

John Grey

moist each leaf  
supple and fluttering  
and you drink from your palms  
unconcerned with overflow

at this forked path  
brackish water  
with your own salt  
eating you alive

as the leaves flutter  
branches rock  
their roots fulsome  
their colors greener by the day

your hands your lips  
with nothing like nectar  
mark the tree trunk  
unknowable

to such a thin body  
afraid of sunlight  
fearful of crow caw  
or owl hoot

as summer harnesses  
the forest  
buttresses the boughs  
but can't do much

about the fountains

you drink from

the sneer of the birdcall

the snap of your bones

# Untitled 1

Oil, acrylic on canvas

Bogna Woskowicz



# Untitled 2

Oil, pastel on canvas  
Bogna Woskowicz



**Untitled 3**  
Lithography  
Bogna Woskowicz

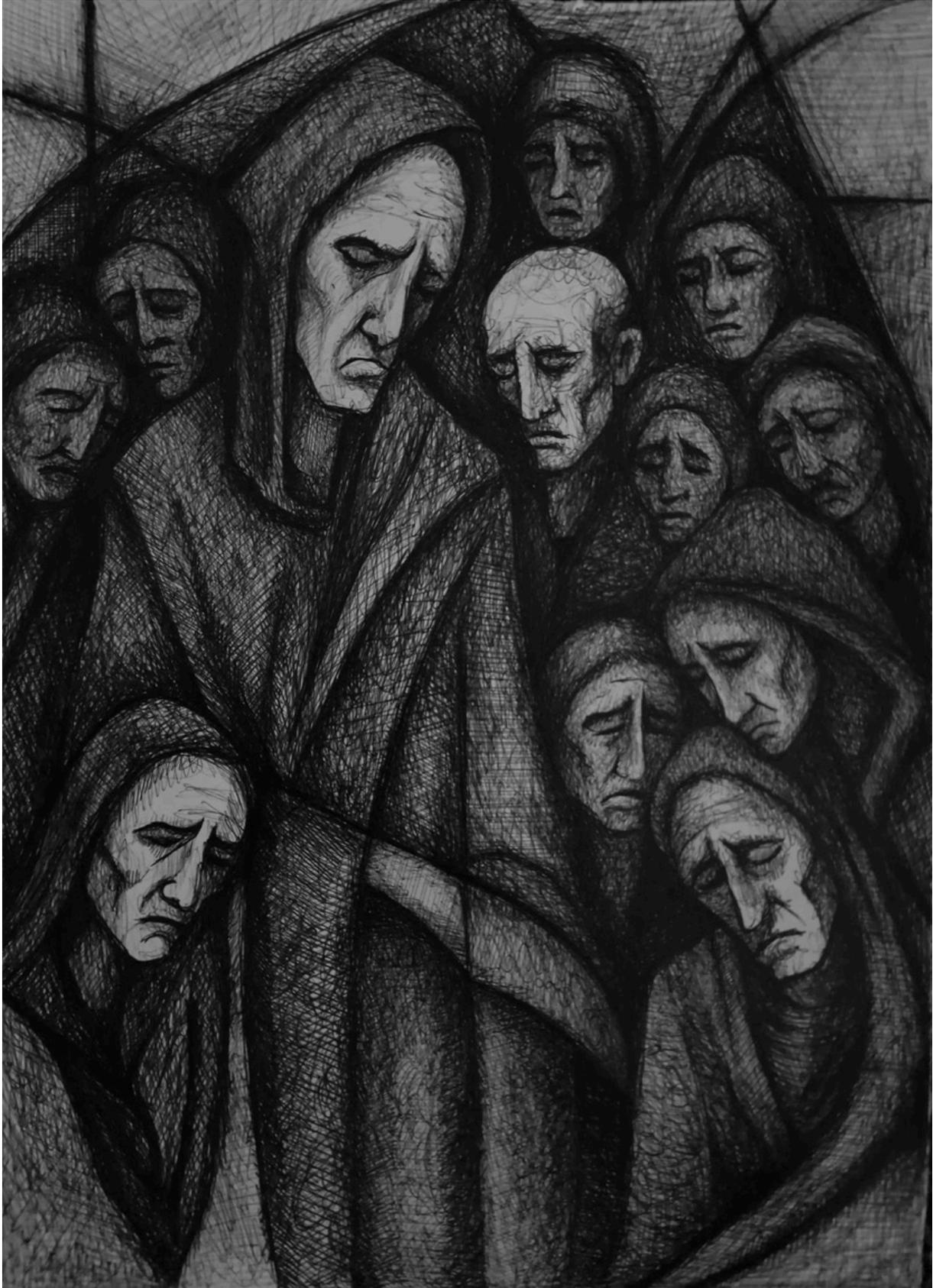


**Untitled**  
Mixed media  
Nasta Martyn



## Silent Choir

Pen drawing  
Dóra Keleti



## Silent Choir

Oil on canvas

Dóra Keleti



## Biographies

### Allan Lake

Allan Lake is a migrant poet from Allover, Canada who now lives in Allover, Australia. Coincidence. He has published poems in 24 countries. His latest chapbook of poems, entitled '*My Photos of Sicily*', was published by *Ginninderra Press*. It contains no photos, only poems.

### Baskin Cooper

Baskin Cooper is a poet, visual artist, and multidisciplinary creator based in Chatham County, North Carolina. His work spans poetry, songwriting, sculpture, screenwriting, and voice acting, weaving together visual, narrative, and musical elements. He holds a PhD in psychology and previously lived in Cork, Ireland, experiences that often shape his explorations of folklore, lyricism, and personal history. His poems have appeared in *Rattle*, *The Avocet*, *Ink & Oak*, and *ONE ART: a journal of poetry*, with work forthcoming in *Verse-Virtual*. His debut collection, *The Space Between Branches*, is currently seeking publication.

### Bogna Woskowicz

Bogna Woskowicz, a Polish artist, specialises in painting, printmaking, and sculpture. In 2023, she graduated from the Strzemiński Academy of Fine Arts in Lodz. Her art focuses on landscapes and their various interpretations, taking a unique approach. By observing seemingly mundane and dull everyday landscapes, she aims to capture and convey their hidden beauty. This often involves focusing on the interplay of light and shadows, as well as the complexity of structures and angles. At the same time, she creates "combined" landscapes where dreams, fears, and memories merge, resulting in an illusory, dreamlike atmosphere. Woskowicz believes that a painting creates its own language, and its interpretation is subjective.

### Bruce McRae

Bruce McRae, a Canadian musician, is a multiple Pushcart nominee with poems published in hundreds of magazines such as *Poetry*, *Rattle*, and the *North American Review*. The winner of the 2020 Libretto prize and author of four poetry collections and seven chapbooks, his next book, '*Boxing In The Bone Orchard*' is coming out in the Spring of 2025 via *Frontenac House*.

<https://www.frontenachouse.com/product/boxing-in-the-bone-orchard/>

### Christopher Jones

Christopher Jones founded *Lost Prophet Press*, publishing and editing the literary journals *Thin Coyote* and *Knuckle Merchant: The Journal of Naked Literary Aggression* for many years. His work has appeared in places, including *The American Literary Review*, *The Year's Best Fantasy and Horror* (St. Martin's Press), *Cajun Mutt Press*, *The Wild Word*, *Hearth & Coffin*, and what he is informed was a very nice flowerpot on the *Detroit Lakes Poetry Walk*. His most recent book is *Swamp Yankee*, from the sadly now-defunct *Destructible Heart Press*. He is part of the Bosso Poetry group in Minneapolis and lives in West Saint Paul, Minnesota, with his family.

### C. J. Anderson-Wu

C. J. Anderson-Wu (吳介禎) is a Taiwanese writer who has published fiction collections about Taiwan's military dictatorship (1949–1987), known as *White Terror: Impossible to Swallow* (2017) and *The Surveillance* (2021). Her third book *Endangered Youth—Taiwan, Hong Kong, Ukraine* was launched in April 2025. Her works have been shortlisted for a number of international literary awards, including the *International Human Rights Art Festival* and the *2024 Flying Island Poetry Manuscript Competition*. She also won the *Strands Lit International Flash Fiction Competition*, the *Invisible City Blurred Genre Literature Competition*, and the *Wordweavers Literature Contest*.

## Dóra Keleti

Dóra Keleti is a Hungarian visual artist whose work blends figurative and abstract vocabularies with psychological and mythic motifs. She lives and works in Hungary.

## Fran Sani

Fran Sani is a UK-based Italian writer, researcher, and trade unionist. With a background as a playwright and performer, he is currently developing applied theatre projects on labour rights advocacy and antiracism in partnerships with different educational charities and trade unions from across the UK. His poetry has appeared, among others, in *Welcome to Britain: An Anthology of Poems* and *Short Fiction* (Civic Leicester), as an artistic contribution to the *Journal of Critical Studies on Security*, and in *Parcham Online*. You can find Fran on *Substack* at: <https://substack.com/@fransani>

## Gabriella Garofalo

Born in Italy some decades ago, Gabriella Garofalo fell in love with the English language at six, started writing poems (in Italian) at six, and is the author of these books: “Lo sguardo di Orfeo”; “L’inverno di vetro”; “Di altre stelle polari”; “Casa di erba”; “Blue Branches”; “A Blue Soul”, “After The Blue Rush”.

## Isaac Aju

Isaac Aju is a Nigerian poet whose works have appeared in different international literary journals including *Poetry X Hunger*, *Steel Jackdaw Magazine*, and *Flapper Press*. He was the first Nigerian poet to appear in *Flapper Press Poetry Cafe*, and was interviewed on his poems set in 1960s Biafra. He lives in Nigeria where he works as a fashion designer.

## Jan Wieszorek

Jan Wieszorek (he/him) writes from rural Michigan and is the author of the poetry chapbook *Prayer's Prairie* (Michigan Writers Cooperative Press) and the forthcoming chapbook *Forests of Woundedness* (Seven Kitchens Press). Wieszorek's work has appeared in *The London Magazine*, *The Westchester Review*, *Vita Poetica*, *Triggerfish Critical Review*, and elsewhere. He is a *Pushcart Prize* nominee and awardee of the *Poetry Society of Michigan*. Visit [janwieszorek.substack.com](http://janwieszorek.substack.com).

## Joan McNerney

Joan McNerney's poetry is published worldwide in over thirty-five countries in numerous literary magazines. Four *Best of the Net* nominations have been awarded to her. Her books *The Muse in Miniature*, *Love Poems for Michael I e3 II*, *At Work*, and *Light e3 Shadows* are all available at *Amazon*.

## John Grey

John Grey is an Australian poet, U.S. resident, recently published in *New World Writing*, *River And South*, and *Flights*. Latest books, “*Bittersweet*”, “*Subject Matters*”, and “*Between Two Fires*” are available through *Amazon*. Work upcoming in *Rush*, *White Wall Review*, and *Trampoline*.

## J R Harlow

J. Rosina Harlow/J R Harlow is a regular contributor to the Dark Lane anthology series. She has also appeared in ‘Adverbially Challenged’ vol.2, ‘Holidays; Straight up or on the Rocks’, ‘Stygian Lepus’ magazine (AUS), ‘The Ghastling’ magazine (UK), US anthologies ‘Grimm Retold’ and ‘Strangely Marvelous Creatures’ and the British

anthologies 'Infernal Mysteries' and 'Tales of Folk Horror'. She was longlisted for the 'To Hull and Back' competition in 2019, won third prize in the CAS short story competition in 2022 and was a winner of the Philip LeBrun prize for creative writing on graduating from Chichester University back in 2005. She is a professional musician (under the name Jo Harlow) and currently lives in Kent with her husband and just the right amount of cats. Find her at; [facebook.com/JRosinaHarlow](https://facebook.com/JRosinaHarlow)

### Leslie Selbst

Leslie Selbst has co-authored a memoir, *Surviving The Storm* (Kroshka Publications, 1997). Under his name, he has published the short stories *Babushkas*, (*Eckleburg Review*, 2016), *The Chosen People* (*The Oracle Fine Arts Review*, 2016), *Just Desserts* (*The Corner Bar* 2024), *No Parking* (*The RavensPerch Literary Magazine* 2024), *A View From My Window* (*The Academy of the Heart And Mind* 2024), *First Contact* (*All My Stories* 2025). He is a retired biology teacher and lives in Chapel Hill, North Carolina, with his wife, Janet, and his cat, Maya. Mr. Selbst is a member of the North Carolina Writers' Network.

### Linette Rabsatt

Linette Rabsatt is a Virgin Islands poet with roots in the BVI and USVI who began writing in 1996. You can find her work in her Kindle book, "Be Inspired: Poems by Linette Rabsatt" and on her blog, *Words of Ribbon*. Her poems and short stories have been published in various journals, magazines, and anthologies, including *Pulse Poetry Magazine*, *Visual Verse*, *Syncopation Literary Journal*, *Spillwords*, and *Micromance Magazine*. She won the 2024 Read Yuh Ting TOO Virtual Caribbean Poetry Contest and placed second in the 2025 Tell Yuh Story Contest.

### Lucas Zulu

Lucas Zulu lives in South Africa, eMalahleni, Kwa-Guqa, Mpumalanga Province. His works have appeared in various international literary journals and anthologies, in the United States of America, Botswana, India, Ireland, Nigeria, Singapore and Zimbabwe. He was awarded the Sol Plaatjie European Union Poetry Award in 2022.

### Lynn White

Lynn White lives in north Wales. Her work is influenced by issues of social justice and events, places and people she has known or imagined. She is especially interested in exploring the boundaries of dream, fantasy and reality. She has been nominated for Pushcarts, Best of the Net and a Rhysling Award. <https://lynnwhitepoetry.blogspot.com> and <https://www.facebook.com/Lynn-White-Poetry-1603675983213077/>

### Michael Birchmore

I'm a 68 year old man living in Portsmouth UK. Not retired but not fully working at the moment. Hoping my writing might take off and this is as good a start as any. Writing wise I have written three novels of which I have self published two. The two published are *The Marsh Water Murders* and its sequel *The Red Fox*. Currently am working on a crime noir novel set in London in the 1960s.

### Mike Nichols

Mike L. Nichols is a graduate of Idaho State University and a recipient of the Ford Swetnam Poetry Prize. He lives and writes in Eastern Idaho. Look for his poetry in *Rogue Agent*, *Tattoo Highway*, *Ink&Nebula*, *Plainsongs Magazine*, and elsewhere. Find more at [deadgirdancing.net](http://deadgirdancing.net)

### **Nasta Martyn**

Nasta Martyn is an artist, graphic artist, illustrator. She graduated from the State Academy of Slavic Cultures with a degree in art, and also has a bachelor's degree in design. The first personal exhibition "My soul is like a wild hawk" (2002) was held in the museum of Maxim Bagdanovich. In her works, she raises themes of ecology, in 2005 she devoted a series of works to the Chernobyl disaster, draws on anti-war topics. The first big series she drew was The Red Book, dedicated to rare and endangered species of animals and birds. Writes fairy tales and poems, illustrates short stories. She draws various fantastic creatures: unicorns, animals with human faces, she especially likes the image of a man - a bird - Siren. In 2020, she took part in Poznań Art Week. Her work has been published in magazines: Gupsophila, Harpy Hybrid Review, Little Literary Living Room and others. In 2022, her short story was included in the collection "The 50 Best Short Stories", and her poem was published in the collection of poetry "The wonders of winter".

### **Pek-êng Koa**

Pek-êng Koa is a celebrated Taiwanese poet and advocate for writing in the Taiwanese language. His life and work are deeply shaped by his 17-year incarceration, following two convictions for robbery. It was during this long period of confinement that Koa began to study and write poetry in Taiwanese—a language that had been politically suppressed for decades. Throughout his literary career, Koa has won 37 literature awards.

### **Sam Hendrian**

Sam Hendrian is a Los Angeles-based filmmaker, poet, and playwright striving to foster empathy through art. From writing personalized poems for passersby outside of LA's oldest independent bookstore every Sunday, to making Chaplin-esque silent films about loneliness and human connection once a month, Sam lives to make other people feel seen and validated. More poems and films can be found on Instagram at @samhendrian143.

### **Sreelekha Chatterjee**

Sreelekha Chatterjee is a poet from New Delhi, India. Her poems have appeared in Madras Courier, Setu, Verse-Virtual, The Wise Owl, Ghudsavar Literary Magazine, Porch Literary Magazine, Orenaug Mountain Poetry Journal, Creative Flight, Pena Literary Magazine, Everscribe, and in the anthologies—Light & Dark (Bitterleaf Books, UK), Whose Spirits Touch (Orenaug Mountain Publishing, USA), and Christmas-Winter Anthology Volume 4 (Black Bough Poetry, Wales, UK), among others. Her poems and stories have been published in over 18 countries and translated into the Korean and Romanian languages.



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