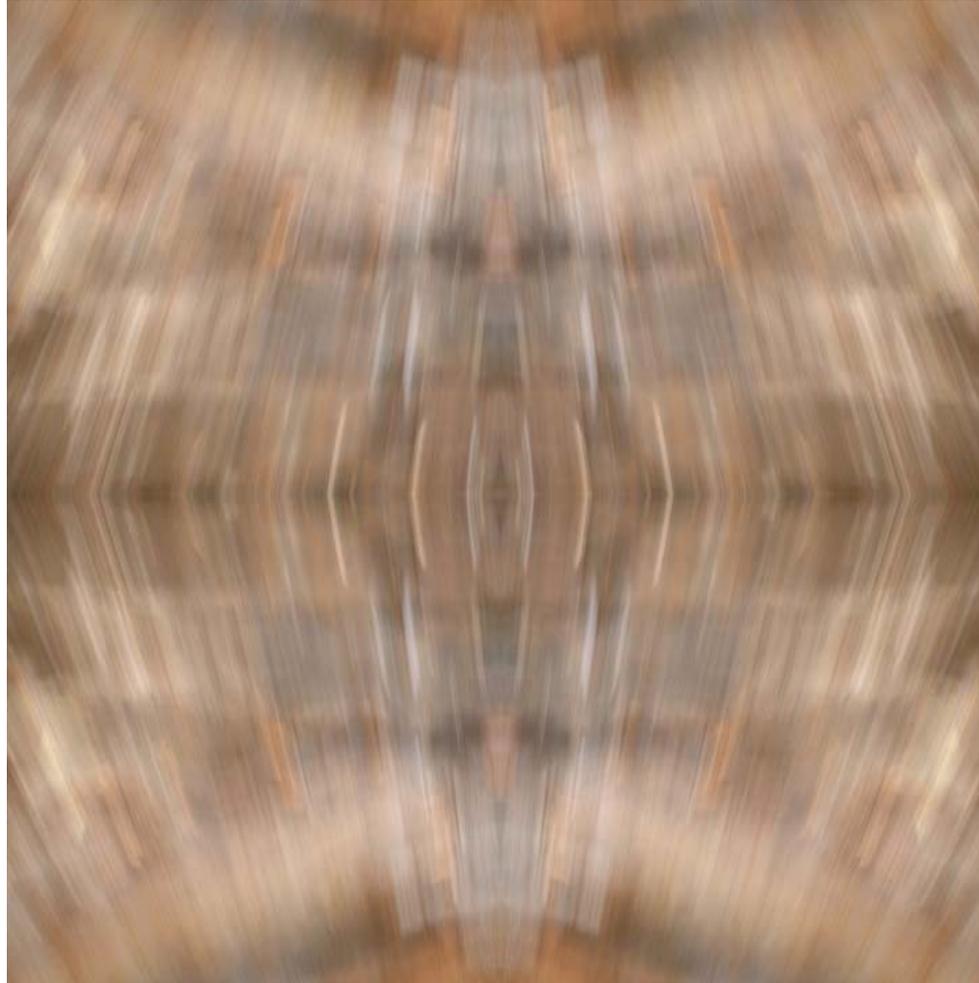


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Michael Adams

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On the Evening of the Winter Solstice

1.
When the sun sets
in December far
to the south, when the last light
of that solstitial day strikes
the rising flanks of the mountain, something
climbs out of my body and begins
to ascend the cold sky, shedding
its weight of years
and crippled birds,
opening
to an infinity
of blazing suns.

It is on that day that I know
the inevitability
of dissolution,
that I know the worm and bacteria
are kings of far more
than the soil, and that the air
I breathe was breathed
by Christ, Buddha, Lao Tzu,
and all the uncounted legions of the dead.

It is then I know
before long the iron of my blood
will unclench itself
from my blood to become
a meadowlark, a mole, a fish,
a rusting nail, that the long
bones of my body will wash
to the sea to become

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Nautilus and coral reef,
and my breath become the sharp wind
of mountain ridges,
the sighing breath of trees.

2.

What is a man?
By himself,
nothing, but as a decaying
leaf, a rotting plank
that will one day become
again a great pine,
a wolf born to run down
the heaving flanks
of a mountain meadow
made flesh,
that is a man.

Let him take comfort,
knowing that he may one day
become a child and the air
that will fill the lungs
of a child as it takes
its first breath, the cry
by which he announces himself
to sky and earth.

On Reading Pablo Neruda

Late at night, rain streaks the window,
wet streets glisten in the headlights of passing cars.

The house is silent except for your breathing.

You've been reading Neruda and are filled
with the ocean and the drowned, uplifting arm,
the wind trading blows with the rain.

The darkness is palpable and boundless,
a companion offering the gift of solitude
and the certainty of loss.

Dear reader, stop wherever you are, whatever
you are doing and imagine
a cold night, late autumn—
You are sleepless, alone
in a quiet house with soft rain falling.
You gaze out the window into centuries
of night and storm.

Maybe the voice of someone lost to you years ago
whispers at your side,
maybe, within your chest, a flight of loons,

the beating of your own dead father's heart.

Michael Adams is the author of nine books of poetry and has been published in numerous anthologies, literary journals, newspapers, and general interest magazines. His most recent books are *Steel Valley* (Lummo Press, 2010), and *If You Can Still Dance With It* (Turkey Buzzard Press 2012). He has worked as a laborer in a steel mill, an urban planner, a climbing and rafting guide, a college instructor, and a natural resources manager. He lives in Lafayette, Colorado, with his wife Claire.



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J.J. Campbell

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love just got thrown to the floor

the best minds of
my generation found
a bullet long before
their minds could be
corrupted, polluted
or taken from them

and with each
passing day i only
wonder what's
keeping me from
joining them

fear

apathy

boredom

faith

or some perverse
thought that love
still exists

another sweaty
night alone

love just got
thrown to the
floor

left there to wait

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with the other staples
of my shitty life

bottles, pens and
poems

and i suppose once
i stop finding magic
in those three

i'll finally be ready
to accept my fate

J.J. Campbell lives and writes on a farm in Brookville, Ohio. He's been widely published over the years, most recently at *The Camel Saloon*, *Dead Snakes*, *Zygote in My Coffee*, *ZYX* and *BoySlut*. His first full length collection of poetry, "Sofisticated White Trash," was recently published by Interior Noise Press. You can find J.J. most days on his highly entertaining blog, [evil delights](#).



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John Dorsey

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there's the door

growing up
my father always let me know
that it was his way
or the highway

"there's the door," he'd say
just loud enough
to let his anger soak in

one night
i took him up on it
hiding under the radiator tank
behind our mobile home
with a package of stale peanut butter crackers
& a mason jar of lukewarm tap water

i stayed there for hours
as the sky got dark
as my mother yelled
my name into the air
echoing like an appalachian wind chime

"there's the door," he'd say
i can still hear it
take comfort in it
hum it under my breath

just loud enough
so that my 9yr old self
can always remember the words

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[poem for justin
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as he collects lightning bugs
in a mason jar
to find his way home

poem for justin vincent gillespie

i'll admit, i was a little offended
when you drunkenly banged on my door
asking where you could find
a prostitute at 4am
as if i just looked like
the kind of guy who would know

a few minutes later
i floated you a number
and went back to sleep

you baby faced
maybe not even legal then
but already known as crazy justin
on the corner of 14th & pine

you came back all excited
for 60 bucks
"she'll let you fuck her in the ass
and won't even make you wear a rubber," you said

but it was your heart
that needed protection from madness
crazy justin who could dance all night

after that it became a regular thing
and when you got expelled
we'd just listen to old records
until you had to go to work
driving a limo up and down broad street
and past rittenhouse square
and the corner of ludlow
where you'd be sure
to pick up a girl every night
telling each of them
that they made your heart sing
like billie holiday
until the sun came up

and when you died at 28
there was no great parade
just more silence

but then who needs music
when you already know
how to dance

in the street

John Dorsey is the author of several collections of poetry, including "Teaching the Dead to Sing: The Outlaw's Prayer" (Rose of Sharon Press, 2006), "Sodomy is a City in New Jersey" (American Mettle Books, 2010), "Leaves of Ass" (Unadorned Press, 2011). and, most recently, "Tombstone Factory" (Epic Rites Press, 2013).



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Lynette G. Esposito

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Perception of Nails

I stepped on a nail imbedded in a rotted board
when I was picking blackberries entwined with poison
in the woods behind my house one early spring—
reaching for fruit that stained my finger tips and tongue with dark
juice.

Alone, my right foot impaled on a rusty point
I thought, "Jesus, this hurts."
...

held the board down with my left heel and pulled...lifted myself free...
climbed back over the fence, plunged my leg half way up my calf into a bucket of
ice water, drank orange juice in a coffee cup to avoid going into shock, contemplated
stupidity, the hole in my foot...the screaming pain...the scar...the feeling
of a shoe filled with blood when there was none,
the understanding that comes from being impaled on a nail
and how the lure of fresh fruit led me to this.

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[About the Writer](#)

Lynette G. Esposito, MA, Rutgers, has been published in *Readers Digest*, *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, *US1*, various literary magazines and others. She lives with her husband, Attilio, in Mount Laurel, New Jersey.



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Linda Nemec Foster

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Silent Bells

They would make no sound
if they tried to embrace the wind.
Deep in your heart you know this
but you fashion the heavy chimes
out of cold stone and blue fire,
concentrate on the thing itself, not
on what it can never become...

a friend who walks in a yard
filled with lilacs, the purple
fragrance finding its way
to her daughter's open window.
The wind stirring her hair...

but not moving these weighted shapes,
skeletons of stone, whorls of clay,
the glazed surface that reflects
enamel, porcelain, brick. Your face
alone at the kiln trying to coax
music from your rough and mute hands.

The Dream of Maine

—for Margo Carlson Berke

You've never been there
but your hands imagine
this place where land,
sea, and sky come together
so effortlessly, it reminds you

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of the perfectly woven cloth—
seamless, without beginning or end.

And, just as effortlessly, the brown
hill rises from the beach
and rocks become green-covered
with strands of kelp, like tossed
hair combed by the ocean. As if
every color you layer on the paper's
surface leaves your hand
and creates its own life—
as persistent as the clouds
overwhelming any hint of blue.

But what is beyond the horizon
of this place you've never seen?
Only this: you surrounded by Maine.
Not a mere postcard in your hand,
but Maine. And your son
still young enough to hold
in your arms and the deep cobalt
of the ocean, a small gesture away.

Linda Nemec Foster is the author of nine collections of poetry including *Amber Necklace from Gdansk* (finalist for the Ohio Book Award in Poetry) and *Listen to the Landscape* (short-listed for the Michigan Notable Book Award). Her most recent book, *Talking Diamonds*, was honored by *ForeWord Magazine* as a finalist for the Book of the Year Award in 2010. Foster's poetry has also been published in numerous magazines and journals such as *The Georgia Review*, *Nimrod*, *North American Review*, *New American Writing*, *Connecticut Review*, *River Styx*, and *Quarterly West*. From 2003-05, she served as the first Poet Laureate of Grand Rapids, Michigan. Foster is the founder of the Contemporary Writers Series at Aquinas College.



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Maria J. Keane

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Surface Quality

It is no wonder
we appear
like hot breath on glass,
transitory,
at best misting a surface
subject to fingerprints
controlling our atmosphere.

No cleverness or subterfuge,
just gradual revelations
streaking the nature of our interiors,
obscuring reality
with cold visions.

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[Surface Quality](#)

[About the Writer](#)

[Maria J. Keane](#) is a visual artist, educator and published poet. She received her B.A. from *Hunter College*, N.Y.C. and a Master in Art History from the *University of Delaware* (Phi Kappa Phi). She is an Arts and Letters member of the National League of American Pen Women and an artist member of the historic Howard Pyle Studio in Wilmington, Delaware. She served as an Adjunct Professor of Fine Arts and Art History at *Wilmington University* (New Castle Campus, from 1984 to 2009.)



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Jane Rosenberg LaForge

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Brooks Avenue

How many times might I repeat it: a walk,
A wheeze, a sunset with the right ash to
color it, a savior without the machinery
to turn water into air, blood into nutrients.
On the street where my father endured
arguments over the china, and how much
would it cost for the next hospital visit,
I switched about like a little whore, rubber
bands on my wrist as if they were bangles,
or the beads of a Chinese counting implement.
I yearned to be damaged, to keep up with
the older girls, like blood horses: how many
shadings of a banned word's meaning, but
their lungs were still sweet and pink at that
point, and their legs like raw current: The path
to nightfall the stars took, fire and rind in a ring
of brittle product. All this thanks to a December 26th
habit, my grandfather crashing the first day
of the winter meet at Santa Anita, to collect a
season's worth of debts. From the gamblers he'd
reap enough for a summer rental, and a few more
months of his son's breathing without consequence.
There might be medicine for that now, blood in the
throat and nostrils, to soothe the bricolage of
tissue and hemorrhage, gaping trees and their
stiffened roots; although for now, it is only
approved for the more elegant animals.
The salt water always censured my make-up,
pinched at my toes, undid my blisters. My
grandmother could do nothing but polish lacquered
wood and upholstery for when relatives came

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[Brooks Avenue](#)

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and deposited their disquiet on the sand, for the shore to take it like so much dross and lipstick. If breath is nothing; If it is the first hesitation that lasts beyond the sacks and fluids we are born with, then murder is everything, buried treasure, history, and a guarantee more powerful than any silver nitrate in the tear ducts. At birth, some of us are wiped clean, and others are burdened by rumination over every instinct: what the celebrity by association must have drawn upon just as he was shot crossing this same street, during a gang war, or a drug deal; in a chapter the local journalists tried to build their careers with, when this should have been a movie. It would make as much sense as what film's most famous dinner companion once said, as he drove down the streets of his childhood and wondered if his friend was hungry, after conversation's surfeit.

[Jane Rosenberg LaForge](#) lives in New York City with her husband, daughter, and her daughter's cat. She is the author of the full-length poetry collection, "With Apologies to Mick Jagger, Other Gods, and All Women" (The Aldrich Press, 2012) and four chapbooks of poetry. Her experimental novel and memoir, "An Unsuitable Princess: A True Fantasy/A Fantastical Memoir," will be published by Jaded Ibis Productions in 2014.



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Adrian Manning

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The Ferries, New York

We were riding on the ferry to the statue of liberty
and I was commenting on the life jackets.

My wife had noticed that they were stored above
our heads on wooden planks with a very small
space between each one.

We'd never get them out of there I said
there's no way to get them free.

A little old lady, looking worried, nodded in agreement.
We won't need to use them I reassured her. She smiled
and we continued on our journey.

Later that day turning on the evening news in the hotel
We learned that the Staten Island ferry had crashed into
its dock that day and a number of people had been killed
by the impact.

I knew the life jackets wouldn't be of any use I thought.
But this time I kept it to myself.

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[The Ferries,
New York](#)

[About the Writer](#)

Adrian Manning hails from Leicester, England. His poetry and prose have appeared in numerous chapbooks, broadsides, print and on-line magazines around the world. He is also the editor of [Concrete Meat Press](#).



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Bernadette McBride

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Ceremonies

—After great pain, a formal feeling comes—
—Emily Dickinson

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I No Way to Prepare

First they call to say
they need you back—
a second mammogram
maybe an ultrasound
and you wait—

a biopsy
four days more
another call
and you hear
nothing past

...cancer...
till the number
she gives you to call
today today today

—and you cry
call your husband
home from work—
sit together

as the formal feeling
tiptoes in brings
a ceremony of business

like the first week
after a death in the family.

II Post-Op Bruises

This week they've turned apple green—and gold,
dappled as the forest floor in April, its soft mounds

curved at the base of a great climbing tree. The indigo
of the first two weeks has squinted into the growing light

at winter's end, bowed to the body's intention
not to remain in the dark but fold itself outward despite

the bind of surgical bra, the strict regimen—neck to waist,
armpit to mid-chest, like a flowering seed drinking

snow water and the balm of attentiveness, imploring each
to demonstrate their bountiful promise.

III First Outing

You packed the bread, I packed the wine,
you, the glasses, I, the checkered cloth.
You found the stream, I, the stepping stones.
You held a walking stick, I, your hand as we crossed
to the open glade. You found the spot, I the shade,
where we laid the cloth, the bread, the wine,
the glasses. We forgot the lemon, the knife,
fixed as we were on our little eucharist, our
private trinity: you, me, the gloried day.

A former Poet Laureate of Bucks County, Pennsylvania, [Bernadette McBride](#) has been honored as a Pushcart Prize nominee, second-place winner of the international Ray Bradbury writing award, and both a finalist and runner-up for the Robert Fraser poetry prize. She has taught Creative Writing at Temple University, and conducts poetry and fiction writing workshops in the Bucks County region. Her work has been published in numerous journals and anthologies nationally and is forthcoming in the UK. She directs the monthly Poets Reading Series at Farley's Bookshop in New Hope, PA and has read her own work for Public Television in New York City and PhillyCAM in Philadelphia. She is the author of *Waiting for the Light to Change* (WordTech Editions, 2013).



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Ann E. Michael

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Road of Dreams

[glosa on a tanka by Ono no Komachi]

*My longing for you_
too strong to keep.
At least no one can blame me,
when I go to you at night,
along the road of dreams.*

Twilight is not a closing door
it opens into quasars,
spiral-armed galaxies,
the schoolyard of my childhood,
flight, promise,
my longing for you—

whether the owl is calling
from the ice-laden pine
or the fireflies flash
in the fine mesh of summer,
too strong to keep

too-long hidden, my love.
But you are as far
as the future, daylight
shows me nothing of you.
At least no one can blame me

for my abandoned bed,
the way I wander the dark,
roam the faintly-lit kitchen
and listen for meteors
when I go to you at night—

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barefooted, my hair uncombed,
grieving, sleepless, lost
amid black holes and cold gas clouds
gravity propelling me toward you
along the road of dreams.

Poet, essayist, librettist, and educator Ann E. Michael is Writing Coordinator at DeSales University. Her work has been published in many journals, including *Poem*, *Natural Bridge*, *Ninth Letter*, *Runes*, *Diner*, *Sentence*, *Slant*, *ISLE*, *The Writer's Chronicle*, *Schuylkill Valley Journal of the Arts* and others, as well as in numerous literary anthologies. She is a past recipient of a Pennsylvania Council on the Arts Fellowship in Poetry. Her chapbooks include *More than Shelter*, *The Minor Fauna*, *Small Things Rise & Go*, and *The Capable Heart*. Her full-length collection, *Water-Rites*, is now available from [Brick Road Poetry Press](#).



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Sonnet Mondal

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My Chained Faith

The far-flung whistle of the *colliery*
and of the *Calcutta-mail*
calls me every day after dinner.

The train's shrill echo and
rhythmic melody of wheels
form a sublime image of
the girl out of my dreams,
waving and smiling;
screaming and crying;
standing and waiting
just for me amidst grasses,
trees and hedges that wave
in solitude and hope.

The curvature of the lopsided land
plays hide and seek along with
the clouds and moon blurring realism.

My belief is incurable and so is
the facade of pleasure that I show
while I follow compellingly,
the whistle of the colliery.

My faith lies in the train,
in the wilderness and
the vaporous figure of my love
while my whims are chained
with famine and society
that may identify me as a mad
once I leave my job and run
into the hazy backwoods.

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[My Chained Faith](#)

[About the Writer](#)

Sonnet Mondal is an Indian Poet and the founder of *The Enchanting Verses Literary Review*. He has authored eight collections of poetry. He was featured as one of the *Famous Five of Bengali youths* by *India Today* magazine in 2010. His works have appeared in several international literary publications including *The Stremez* (Supported by The Ministry of Culture, Macedonia), *The Sheepshead Review* (University of Wisconsin, Green Bay), *The Penguin Review* (Youngstown State University), *Two Thirds North* (Stockholm University), *California State Poetry Quarterly* (California State Poetry Society), *Nth Position* and *Friction Magazine* (New Castle University & New Castle Centre of Literary Arts) to name a few. Sonnet is the pioneer of the 21 line Fusion Sonnet form of Poetry. His works have translated in Macedonian, Italian, Albanian, Urdu, Arabic, Hindi, Telugu and Bengali. Most recently, he has been enlisted as a National Record Holder as *"The First Indian to write a new type of Sonnet Poetry"* at the Indian Book of Records.



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Robert Rosenbloom

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Creche

Add some rabbis, a *mohel*,
the *mohel's* assistant to hold the knife,
wise men enough for a *minyán*, more angels,
donkeys and camels double-parked
on a palm tree-lined street,
a backyard lemon tree.
Drag the innkeeper over with his wife.

Let them see who they screwed.
Let Orion stalk the papier-mache sky.
Let there be a *kiddush*-
wine and sponge cake,
shnaps, a Roman tax collector
on a smoke break,
the open flame, boiling water,
blood-stained knife--
this kid could bleed--
the virgin mother
and her eight pound baby boy
screaming his way into this world,
this child fathered by time
whose given name is Joy.

**A mohel is the professional
who performs the ritual circumcision.
A minyan is a prayer quorum.*

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[Creche](#)

[About the Writer](#)

the Somerset Poetry Group. His poetry has appeared in the *Paterson Literary Review* and *Lips*. He's the author of a chapbook, *Reunion*, published by Finishing Line Press. His day job is lawyer. He lives with his wife in Bound Brook.



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Wendy Schermer

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In The Ice Time

she walked on blue
and silver crystals
that cracked and splintered
beneath her fur boots.

As she walked,
slivered ice shards
clinked on the icicles
that hung from ledges
below her track.

It was a time
of walking into her breath,
of frozen thoughts
and words,
of large nights
and small days,
of sun glinting off snow,
of reflections
so bright,
they blinded the newcomers
who had no understanding
of the unforgiving,
unending,
frozen landscape.

She was born
into the time of ice
and moved through
her frozen world
as if she had
designed it
in her dreams.

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[In The Ice Time](#)

[About the Writer](#)

Wendy Schermer was born in Detroit, grew up in Philadelphia, and is now a resident of Arden, Delaware, where she has lived for the past eight years. Wendy shares her home with a dog and two cats who have been steadfast companions since her two sons became adults and made lives of their own in Philadelphia and Brooklyn, respectively. Although Wendy works full-time for the State of New Jersey's Judiciary, her real love is writing.



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Lisa Sewell

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The Poetics of Space (2007)

When among all the other drivers
on the Roosevelt Expressway you brake
to a stop beside where he has fallen
or lain down to sleep it off in the turning lane
and after removing his ratty shirt
and filthy Levis—it happens that quickly—
defeated by the resonances he keeps trying to describe
he reaches through the drivers-side window
to scratch your face and pull you by the hair
toward the ones who all this time
he has been talking and talking to,

who wouldn't try to make it stop and frantic
raise the automatic window, catching him
beneath the arm until his cry of pain and terror
matches yours exactly, and like the indifferent
drivers all around you, step with real fear,
hard on the accelerator to gun it toward
away from there, the consolations of good listeners?

For isn't their sympathy and outrage
well deserved for best intentions, your tried
for Christ's sake bloodied face to help
and what else could anyone, would anyone
when faced directly with *the act itself,*
the sudden image, the flare up of being suddenly
unconstrained or confined to the imagination?

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Space \(2007\)](#)

[About the Writer](#)

Lisa Sewell is the author of *The Way Out* (Alice James Books) and *Name Withheld* (Four Way Books), and a chapbook, *Long Corridor* (Seven Kitchens Press), which won the

2008 Keystone Chapbook contest. She is co-editor, with Claudia Rankine, of two collections of essays: *American Poets in the 21st Century: The New Poetics* and *Eleven More American Women Poets in the 21st Century: Poetics Across North American*, both from Wesleyan UP. Recent work has appeared in *Ploughshares*, *Harvard Review* and *Drunken Boat*. She lives in Philadelphia and teaches at Graterford Prison and Villanova University where she is co-director of the Gender and Women's Studies Program.



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Michael Steffen

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Initial and Pass On

We earned what we earned
because of him. We were his

brilliant stock marketeers grazing
on bagels and kopi luwak.

He was our boss, our glad hand,
the bulging briefcase.

5:45, an unknotted tie
signaled his impending departure.

He compelled our diligence
by his lack of insistence upon it.

When the Dow tumbled,
he was forced to lay off friend

after old friend,
his set jaw summoning them

behind closed doors—
the limp handshake,

a few months' severance—
until what was left of him

collapsed like a concertina.
I cried when I read the memo.

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[Initial
and Pass On](#)

[About the Writer](#)

Michael Steffen is the author of three collections of poetry. His first, *No Good at Sea*, was published by Legible Press in 2002. His second, *Heart Murmur*, was released in 2009 by Bordighera Press. *Bad Behavior*, his third collection, was published by Brick Road Poetry Press in 2012. A long-time resident of northeastern Pennsylvania, Michael was granted a 2002 Fellowship from the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts and has had poems appear in a wide variety of journals including *Poetry*, *Potomac Review*, *The Ledge*, *Poet Lore*, *Rhino*, *Smartish Pace* and many others. He is a Y2K graduate of the MFA in Creative Writing Program at Vermont College and currently lives in Lancaster, New York.



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F. Omar Telan

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Loss

Her billowy, nighttime clouds tremble
as she presses her eyes into her hands like stamps.
Dropped on the table, her glasses sound like lead.
She is a film student, and I have re-defined loss.
No, I said. There is nothing I can do to rescue your data.
Yes, I said. Your data would include your films.
I know this sounds trivial. But what this translates
to is "You have lost your life's work. The part of your brain
you exorcised so that you may live without the weight
of it, these voices you have trapped in the failed husk
of a hard drive have crept back into the corners
of your eyes and the proof of your worth as artist
and therefore person is nothing more than a series of scratches
on a metallic plate that no longer spins."

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Color

Her mouth reminds me of calloused tree bark
growing around a wound. "You changed the color
of my computer."
"Excuse me?" I ask.
Her fingers extend toward me a tangle
of kinks and cricks. "My computer
used to be completely aluminum."
"Ma'am, there is no way to change the color
of your computer. Your computer isn't painted.
It's made of black plastic and aluminum.
I would have had to have copied all your files
and applications into an entirely different computer."

Her face a carved mask, unflinching stare.
Hollowed out sockets filled with standing water.

In all seriousness F. Omar Telan was born in Industrial Philadelphia during the 1876 centennial. With his decidedly halo halo background, Omar adds a singular perspective to Asian American expression. Neo-Futuristic, omgsototallygoth, and absolutely suburban fabulous, Omar appeals to his fellow artist who understands how satire sometimes involves eating children. Boom-bastic and introverted, he fascinates the casual audience with his ability to plumb the underbelly of his own psyche while simultaneously appreciating delicious, chilled plums.



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Lynne Thompson

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Voyage

It's another kind of *listen* I go for.
It's not new.

It's an African flame tree below wind rifle.
It's a high skies' dust-to-dust foot dance

(and I already know there's character
in its color: an elephant's bellow as cerise;

Lamu's white sea crash; aging dhows a-slap
against grey-bearded planks, also crashing.)

The chordophone;
the drumbeat.

It's the surprise *whoop* of myself, sounding
like the homeland I've always never known;

like a magnet cut from its stalk, a dream of
flying, then drowning, or long affliction.

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[About the Writer](#)

Lynne Thompson, with multiple Pushcart Prize nominations to her credit, is author of two chapbooks, *We Arrive By Accumulation* and *Through A Window* and of *Beg No Pardon*, winner of the Perugia Press Book Award as well as the Great Lakes Colleges Association's New Writers Award. Recent work has appeared in numerous journals including *Ploughshares*, *Sou'Wester*, and *Spillway* where she is Review & Essays Editor. Her latest manuscript, *Start With a Small Guitar*, will be published by What Books Press in the fall of 2013.



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Dave Worrell

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Cityscape

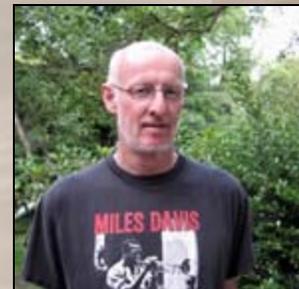
On the North-South freeway, my daughter's words return.
Last Monday—my sixty-first birthday—she told me
that when she was ten, she sensed that she was the wrong
one, somehow—the wrong daughter. Nothing fit. The shoes
were too tight. The other kids knew it was picture day—
they all had worn clean white shirts. The hookers smile
and wave as I turn onto Broadway from Morgan Boulevard.
The sky at dusk is fading, wrong, but gives graying contrast
for the black power lines, for the clump of still-leafy oaks
and locusts. The city's electric glare has put out the stars
and yet they remain—the waning moon has risen above
the TV-antennaed row houses. Last Monday night,
as the Bolt bus pulled away from the curb, my daughter
waved from the window, wearing my old gray fedora.
Light's last moment, when all imperceptibly shifts
to absence. Nothing fits, yet all will be there
at first light—wrong, but as it was and will be.

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[About the Writer](#)

Dave Worrell's first chapbook titled "We Who Were Bound" was published in August 2012 by Casa de Cinco Hermanas Press. His poems have appeared in U.S. 1 Worksheets, Mad Poets Review, Exit 13, Wild River Review, Fox Chase Review and Adanna. He has performed his music-backed poems at Chris' Jazz Café in Philadelphia and The Cornelia Street Café in New York.



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