

# Fox Chase Review

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# Fox Chase Review

## 2008 Autumn/Winter Contents

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# Fox Chase Review

Mike Cohen

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## Theo-Logic

No mortal understands  
How one Deity commands  
Fertile seeds and barren sands;

The soothing breeze, the chafing gale;  
Timid rains and brazen hail;  
Air high and rare, and low and stale;

Water and fire;  
Resentment and romance;  
Indifference and desire;  
Destiny and chance.

Virile lads and nubile maids—  
Cancer, leprosy, and AIDS...  
Life rises, crests, and then cascades.

Can it be, for heavens' sakes,  
For lambs' and tygers', doves' and snakes';  
That only one Creator makes  
Such miracles and such mistakes.

And I scarcely can conceive  
How good and evil forces cleave  
To just one God; yet I believe.

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on this Page*

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Mike Cohen has authored two collections of poetry, *Poet's Pilgrimage* and *For Reading Out Loud*, both awaiting discovery and broad dissemination

(perhaps posthumously). Mike's work has appeared in the *Schuylkill Valley Journal*, *Philadelphia Daily News*, *Mad Poets Review*, *Poetry Forum Anthology*. He has presented public readings in various bookstores, coffee shops, and libraries. Mike's current project is *Poetry Aloud And Alive* program at the Big Blue Marble Book Store in West Mt. Airy, Philadelphia.

And yet, sometimes I wonder...  
All of our religions  
Claim success, but who can tell?  
Are those really visions  
Or illusions that they sell?

And if the meek will have the earth,  
And the last shall be the first,  
What will faithfulness be worth,  
Once the roles have been reversed?

When the kings are made to bow,  
And the slaves are all set free,  
And the holier-than-thou  
Turn out lowlier-than-thee,

Will all of our religions  
Answer the same knell,  
As their divided missions  
Wend their varied ways to Hell?

When the last shall be the first,  
And the wealthy have the least,  
Will the blessed be the cursed?  
Will the doubter be the priest?

The faithful all pursue God—  
They're assured that He exists,  
But suppose the only true God  
Is the God of atheists...

### **As the Bulls Run**

If we had waited another day  
or another moment,  
there would have been a different child born.  
The egg would have been the same.  
But the race of the sperm would doubtless have  
crowned  
a different champion. The sperm run  
is chaotic. It is  
a shuffling of the deck, a chance  
for chance to reset itself.  
There is sufficient Brownian motion involved

that victory does not necessarily go to the fleetest.

Life begins always with an element of capriciousness that characterizes it throughout. Were life predictable it would not be worth its own while.

Life is full for being full of choices, conscious and unconscious, whose outcomes cannot be clearly foreseen... small choices that make great unknowable differences, choices made with scarcely a thought, like waiting another day or another moment.

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# Fox Chase Review

Thomas Devaney

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## Pasternak

Piano, piano, piano,  
A decrescendo.  
Such desires as he knew.  
Transparency of the house.  
Error made him lose another  
chapter.  
Right that he should leave  
the enjoyment.  
Now the name of an enormous variety  
of satisfactions.  
And he started forward, fell, arose  
fell again, walked.  
Kursk station on a hot summer  
morning in the year 1900.

## Saline

Saline blood solution.  
A bird's visitation.  
Loss to make.  
It's for you.  
Notice the dawn.  
Extinguishing an insect.



Thomas Devaney is the author of *A Series of Small Boxes* (Fish Drum, 2007) and *The American Pragmatist Fell in Love* (Banshee Press, 1999).

Devaney has worked with the Institute of Contemporary Art (Phila) on a number of site specific, multi-sensory projects, including "No Silence Here, Enjoy the Silence" for the Locally Localized Gravity show (2007)

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## Manichaeian

My ideas of the prize.  
A ship taken by force.  
Nautical waves, nautical waves of light.  
In a privateer The Manichaeian.  
Chilling night, steam-engine afternoons.  
Here I am without you.  
At moments all can spring from all.  
Evil is a catch-all crime pitched  
to its own composite ends.  
Again away from you by the river dock.  
NIKE the Greek goddess of victory in billboard  
bold.

*Three acrostics from the series "Little  
Dictionary"*

and the performance  
"The Empty House" at  
the Edgar Allan Poe  
National Historic Site  
for The Big Nothing  
exhibit (2004).  
Devaney is a Senior  
Writing Fellow in the  
English Department at  
the University of  
Pennsylvania.

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# Fox Chase Review

**Diane Sahms-Guarnieri**

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## Another Shirley Temple\*

A curvy path, down steep steps  
that lead to a sidewalk.  
"Don't step on the cracks."  
I tug on his tattooed arm  
my blue name never washing off.  
His Popeye the Sailor Man's grin  
animated eyes squint.

He turns a doorknob  
opening to barroom  
black as a jelly bean.  
Neon letters glow orange, red.  
"A Shirley Temple and a Ballantine."  
"Like valentine?" I ask.  
He winks.

One, two buckle my shoes  
lift off of a sticky floor  
and I sail to the top  
of a red stool  
bobbing like the cherry  
in my sweet drink.

A jukebox weeps.  
I spin round and round to a 45,  
to a voice blooming:

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Diane Sahms-Guarnieri has won numerous awards for poetry and has been published in literary magazines, anthologies, and online Web sites, including *Philadelphia Stories*, *Many Mountains Moving*, *Northwest Cultural Council*, *Fox Chase Review* and *Mad Poets*

*Review.* She conducts the monthly poetry workshop *Center City Poets at Borders* bookstore located in Center City, Philadelphia and is a poetry editor for *Philadelphia Stories Magazine*. She is working on the compilation of her first chapbook, which should be completed sometime in 2008.

Red Roses for a Blue Lady  
skip to A Tisket a Tasket  
find a dartboard, shuffleboard  
but nobody plays here.

So I feed a nickel to a machine  
and lifting a metal tongue  
cashews slide down a chute  
into my palm.

I watch him empty  
glass after glass of beer  
talking about work, work  
in the mill all night, night  
while I sleep weaving dreams.

Raising a little glass  
he drinks down brown stuff  
like the lemon and honey  
he spoons down my throat  
when I am sick, insists I wear  
raw onions in each sock at bedtime  
to pull the fever out of me  
through my feet.

After another little glass of brown  
poured from a bottle with roses on it  
he downs another beer  
without stopping, burping:  
"Exxcuusse me."

I laugh.  
Red-faced men with whiskers laugh.  
Patting my back  
he orders me  
another Shirley Temple.

My glass sweats.  
The ice cubes rattle.  
I jump down  
from my stool  
lead him out of the dark  
as if we were leaving the movies  
my blue eyes sting tears

from to much burning light.

We turn the corner  
past the red roses that he planted  
up three steps  
through the doors  
and onto the sofa where he stops  
flopping like Popeye  
after Brutus knocks him out.

I reach for his hand.

*\*First Published in Many Mountains Moving*

## Hunger

He arrived at the patched, screen door  
wearing glazed, wingtip shoes  
carrying a hard selling song  
as he entered the room.

His fingers unfolded brochures  
arranging them like place mats  
atop a teetering table  
next to Inky the cat.

Shameful shelves clung close to the wall  
dressed in cans: corn, beans, peas.  
He stared at hunger in their eyes  
and chimed: Books are the key!

Knowledge to feed children: A – Z.  
Order now! There's still time  
I will discount the fairy tales.  
Smiles shined: she marked the line.

The priceless box arrived. Each book  
intoxicating as wine  
gold letters of the alphabet  
embossed upon its spine.

Once Upon a Time, they only looked  
at black letters, groups of words  
twenty fairy tales never to be

sung, never to be heard.

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# Fox Chase Review

J.C. Todd

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## In Absentia\*

Gnats dance, seen  
in the absence that follows  
their leaps, in the unblotched  
halo around the pine.

I could count the gnats  
as an abbess would angels  
on the head of a pin,  
releasing the sheen of brass.

Is this how I see you?  
—archaic, a riddle  
schooling a disciple  
in vision's holy way.

In absence, the gnat's  
unreflective mass  
becomes the shine;  
in absence, I see

you, archival,  
clear as after-  
thought,  
not here.

\*From *What Space This Body* (Wind Publications, 2008)



J.C. Todd is the author of *What Space This Body* published by Wind Publications 2008 as well as *Nightshade* and *Entering Pisces*, chapbooks published by Pine Press. Her awards include a Fellowship in Poetry from the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts, two Leeway

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## Boxwood

So much stink from the shine  
of leaves. Cat pee. Oakmold

under the rainspout. Twigs  
pokey, into your skin,

red balloons rising when  
boxwood pricks you. Nicer

than doctor who sticks needles  
into fingertips and

wipes the blood so fast you  
can't look at what is

in you. *Don't crawl in  
the boxwood*, them say.

*You'll poke out your eyes.*  
Not listening. Listening

to the leaf snap in two,  
pee smell in your nose,

leaves brushing your wrists,  
behind ears and knees where

Mommy touches herself  
with toilet water. Them not

liking its stink at all,  
you keeping them at bay.

## Dolly

Singing there where doctor puts  
the chest thing on your chest

and ear things in your ears  
*do you want to listen?*

Foundation grants,  
and a fellowship to  
Kunstlerhaus Schloss  
Wiepersdorf from the  
Virginia Center for the  
Creative Arts. She has  
an M.F.A. from the  
Program for Writers at  
Warren Wilson  
College and teaches  
creative writing at  
Bryn Mawr College.

*Open wide* doctor says.  
But dolly's mouth's shut tight

*bad girl!* Where's her open?  
By her private place where

you can pull her legs out  
and put pebbles in, one

two three and listen.  
Acorn twig, twig sweet pea.

What's food for inside singing?  
Pink is girls and roses.

### **Lilies**

Breathing lily like petals  
in your head. Sweet so thick,

you take it in like fishes  
breathing, necks slit open—

*it won't hurt*—where water  
flows in like air until

the tails stop swishing and  
you flush them down the toilet.

*All gone.* Bonnie from school  
gone into an iron

lung when lungs inside her  
couldn't breathe. Baby, gone

from Mommy's belly. Mommy  
in her room alone, blinking

like light was bad. Waiting  
for your turn, head heavy

hiding under lilies  
watching kids on scooters

playing cowboys. Eyes stuck  
open, why won't they shut?

Praying to Our Lady  
*let me get up, let me*

*up*, never knowing  
will you walk again.

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# Fox Chase Review

**Justin Vitiello**

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## To the Huichol Nation

we are corn, health  
and prosperity  
we are the salamander  
god of rain we are  
good sorcerers  
butterflies  
protectors of the peyote  
eye of gods  
mothers of children  
candles offerings  
to all our deities:  
sun energy moon  
love and fertility  
eclipse and union  
male and female  
peyote god of the spirit  
wounded deer and eagle  
sent from on high:  
wolf knowledge wisdom  
serpent spirit of the oceans  
origin of all life  
two-headed eagle poised  
between sky and earth

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Justin Vitiello is a Professor Emeritus of Italian at Temple University. He received his B.A. from Brown University (1963) and, after a Fulbright Scholarship to study in Spain (1963-64), he did his Ph.D. in Comparative Literature (English Italian, Spanish at the

University of Michigan (1964-70). He has published numerous scholarly articles on and translations of medieval, Renaissance and modern Italian, Sicilian and Spanish poetry. His books (including those listed below that are for sale directly from him in autographed copies) are: *Il carro del pesce di Vanzetti* (poems, 1989), *Vanzetti's Fish Cart* (poems, 1991), *Sicily Within* (essays, 1992), *Italy's Ultramodern, Experimental Lyrics: Corpo 10* (1992), *Poetics and Literature of the Sicilian Diaspora; Studies in Oral History and Story Telling* (1993, reprinted in 1998), *Labyrinths and Volcanoes: Windings Through Sicily* (essays, 1999), *suicidio di un poeta etnico/suicide of an ethnic poet* (poems, 2004), *Labirinti e vulcani: nel cuore della Sicilia* (essays, 2005), and *amapolas y cardos/poppies and thistles* (poems and poetic sketches of Spain, 2006). He is presently working on another book of poetry in Spanish and English dealing with his recent experiences

## No Title

a dawn of mud and rain  
came sudden with  
another earthquake

the people spoke words  
enfleshing their histories  
of swords trees  
rocks and waters

ancient Antonio speaks chewing  
his words to give them  
form and meaning  
"listen, the water  
and darkness answer...

"our ancestors faced  
the stranger who came to destroy...

"he came to force  
another world on us  
another word and belief  
other gods and Justice...

"his god was gold—  
it spoke:  
"I am the ultimate power"

at times we must fight  
as if we were sword  
facing the beast  
stone facing time

"our ancestors",  
Antonio repeats,  
"resisted like water  
against the strongest streams...

"as we resisted  
our invaders...

"finally they left  
we remained  
like the water of the torrents

in Latin America and  
two other lyric  
volumes in Italian and  
English touching upon  
his family's anarchist  
and tragic history.

flowing out to the sea"

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# Fox Chase Review

**Ellen Peckham**

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## A. Goes Sailing

1982

DAY 1

You go by noon. The afternoon is slept away.  
I break the surface; breathe, flex, dawdle,  
unpressured by presence, being seen. The time  
I waste  
I own. I count it, debit petty claims,  
make lists.

Alone, I wake at whim rejecting dawns  
proclaimed by coffee,  
crossed words.

Unsustained by armatures of "them" I roam the  
house, change size,  
explore exotic carpet temples, overwhelm the  
chandeliers.

DAY 20

How strange it is to find my wedding self of  
proud flesh  
but a shell cage,  
a sieve.



Ellen Peckham has read, published and exhibited in the U.S., Europe and Latin America. She frequently uses both art forms in a single work, the text decorating and explicating and the image illuminating. Her archives of drafts, edits and art are collected at the Harry Ransom Center For

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Grown quiet and quite surprised to find I am  
Less comfortable alone.

In the shower I suddenly know how this works  
And the exact size of a week.

In sleep my wrapping fingers search, infantile  
again.

There is no dawn lover.

By midday, between leftover lunch and laundry,  
I come to know just how much  
I miss you.

### **Disbeliever**

I, the disbeliever,  
Taste the beliefs of others  
And find none fit to swallow  
Yet keep for a hungry time  
Bits of theologies,

Make a collaged prayer book, note  
Arabian Lawrence on how  
The Muslim lives inside his God, an image  
Different to Michelangelo's hovering  
Finger-pointing judge.

Recognize that when we cry  
Until it seems all minerals  
Must be leached away we still are too impure  
To shed freshwater tears as angels do.  
(Thus Origin would have us know them.)

No. Grief, like a mine in the gut,  
Deposits as it recedes acids, rust.  
Strips us to our most animal natures.  
No saints or angels here!  
In a preacher's words

"God does not answer all prayers 'Yes.'"

Yet, thinking over what I prayed for  
When I was young, undiscerning and passionate

The Humanities and a  
7-minute visual  
biography, *Parallel  
Vocabularies*, is  
available on DVD and  
via her [Web site](#).

I now suspect  
There must be Gods to make reply. Godly they  
have  
Answered in the negative”

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# Fox Chase Review

Chad Parenteau

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## Phone Tag

Keep me distracted from housework  
with more boasts of how good  
you look naked, how you prefer  
your undergarments  
in the color of turquoise,  
even under the nobody's-around  
comfort of sweats. Describe yourself  
as the smokin' chick you say  
I deserve after your third glass  
of wine on Friday nights.  
In unspoken words, we'll be thankful  
for the sick dog in your apartment  
and my family needing help back home.  
Each other's stories of what will be  
will have their antes upped  
until we envision ourselves  
losing to each other at strip poker  
with nothing but old library cards  
as our playing pieces,  
our fantasies escalating  
until they are too unfathomable  
to ever become secrets kept  
from the small town circuit.  
My sister will be safe, you  
will never have to brave Boston  
by commuter rail,

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Chad Parenteau's latest book is *Discarded: Poems for My Apartments* from Cervena Barva Press. He helps to host the Stone Soup Poetry series and edits its tribute anthology *Spoonful*. You can [read his blog here](#).

and I can appreciate  
your unseen breasts,  
gemmed in blue-green  
without a letdown.

## **Mom's Birthday**

*for Dad*

Though it's for my sister's wheelchair,  
the restaurant's giant table  
only accentuates your absence,  
a fabled circular meeting spot  
without a leader.

Mom thinks I feel left out  
as she talks with Kristen.  
I am actually pausing  
for lack of your lines  
of what I'm doing with my life  
to prompt me as I sit,  
feeling unworthy to ad-lib.

What's harder to miss  
than the two ton elephant  
in the room where the family gathers?  
The two ton elephant  
no longer there.

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# Fox Chase Review

**Ray Greenblatt**

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## **For Norris, Pessimist**

I have avoided laughter,  
I have even put sunlight on hold.  
I have grown beard and hair  
so I can mumble in a thicket.  
Past hopes lie in vast pots  
around me moldering.  
Sins I have inflated  
into huge balloons  
which rise to obscure  
even an eclipse.  
Each ache I have focused on  
to find its marrow.  
History is useless to me  
for it must be only mine,  
the future equivocal.  
And as I sit here  
on this bald mountain  
human attempts beneath me  
in a alley like any other,  
my expertise becomes brooding.  
I have taken a ragged bite  
out of the face of sorrow  
and what do I see  
what do I feel,  
a moot point  
that circles round again



Diversity has been a hallmark of Ray Greenblatt's writing. He had a poem in an Irish archaeological journal and a book published in England. His poetry was set to music in Italy and translated into Japanese. In addition his literary criticism was featured in Polish. Ray is presently circulating a

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[Over Baltimore  
Avenue](#)

in eternal contemplation.

manuscript entitled  
*Leavings of the  
Evening.*

## Over Baltimore Avenue

The setting sun burnished with gold  
the storefronts of pawn shops, check cashing,  
24-hour bail bondsmen,  
their gates like filigreed wrought iron porches  
overhanging old Spanish streets.

A crooked smile on his face  
he did a shuffle  
to the invisible sounds of lyre and fife  
which stayed with him all through the nights.

In his swirling haze  
he had carried on ceaseless debate  
about life, death, taxes  
in the Four Corner Pub.

He held out his arms  
as if begging anyone's ear  
to carry on conversation  
that never came to a conclusion,  
barely sidestepping the curb  
as he crossed the Avenue  
where the trolley, he dimly recalled,  
once clanged when he was pushed  
in his shiny stroller.

Trolleys like dull arrows  
along his Great White Way.  
Entering the greenness of the park  
fast gathering shadows  
Cobbs Creek minding its business beyond,  
he held up a pint of E&J once more  
to toot his magic horn in greeting  
the gang of chaps approaching,  
a merry band of Robin's men  
slinking across the grass  
eyes slitted under caps  
moonlight glinting off  
their unsheathed rapiers.

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**Amy King**

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## The White of Sacre Coeur Against a Blue Parisian Sky

The white of Sacre Coeur against a blue Parisian sky  
marks passageways that blur whenever we enter this city's face.  
By our bankrupt dreams, we hold onto starkness,  
remember its eyes, and dine in them.

But I'm of little use to persons undercover, hidden  
in these buildings' recesses, the corners of smiles,  
eyes bulging behind curtains, looking for just about anything  
that will pull the cork, boil the blood  
of displeasure tightened by the work of pleasing bosses  
and each neighbor whose fence moves a little closer  
each year, moaning to stroke the package  
left nightly on my doorstep of a milked liquid, bottled and tied  
with a ribbon the color of fairy dust.

They, a secreted them, would have us die to erase that glow.  
Mostly at the height of moon's night do her shady limbs  
work across the properties and lawns they guard with their lives,  
whatever these are, whatever they become, however they burn.  
For your listening pleasure, I turn as old as I was born,  
stroke the bumpy skin of our whisky illness, manage the pyramids  
we've never climbed or crawled within,  
enter the Morocco never wrapped by your feet  
kissing pebbles, visiting your veins, telling you a mythology  
that includes how we are the sores of hope riding  
the backs of tomorrow, mountain peaks we climb  
and shout the names of those to come and those who've been,  
each of us who happens to be the world's greatest against  
every shade of sky, and every sky that cradles our dying heads, still living.

## Why The Wind

Goes in with  
Complete androgyny—  
O fuzzy city,  
Dear communal map,  
Are you made of calcium  
or fire-based fifty proof?

Don't know a hawk from  
a handsaw? I've got a bottle  
that dances long  
after night falls,  
the falling that never begins.

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Amy King is the author of *I'm the Man Who Loves You* and *Antidotes for an Alibi*, both from [Blazevox Books](#), *The People Instruments* ([Pavement Saw Press](#)), and most recently, *Kiss Me With the Mouth of Your Country* ([Dusie Press](#)). She edits the [Poetics List](#),

sponsored by The Electronic Poetry Center (SUNY-Buffalo/University of Pennsylvania), moderates the [Women's Poetry Listserv](#) (WOMPO), and teaches English and Creative Writing at [SUNY Nassau Community College](#). Her poems have been nominated for several Pushcart Prizes, and she has been the recipient of a MacArthur Scholarship for Poetry. Amy King was also the 2007 Poet Laureate of the Blogosphere. She is currently editing an anthology, [The Urban Poetic](#), forthcoming from [Factory School](#). For information on the reading series Amy co-curates, go to [The Stain of Poetry: A Reading Series](#) blog.

Why the wind  
is air thick with tongues  
that makes a hole  
into what gets spoken  
requires hallucinating  
pieces we're missing,

Or not built with, I cry  
to remember what I saw  
in the very ether  
we disappear in.  
We are lava-like,  
and above all,

We are blowing  
red earth at what once  
was a sleep issue,  
now predatory ventures  
carry us toward each other,  
little bleating sexless lambs.

## The Destiny You Choose is the One You Live Through

Back in this province, we've got restaurants, violins,  
land digs to deal with. We go right wing with equal  
rights only for property owners.  
Make a bid. Build a private chain gang industry.  
Suck the tuna from their tides,  
rip the salmon apart midstream. Color their flesh pink.  
Turn what is not only corn into grazing land.  
Make cows eat maize. Cage chicken beaks. Sell onward masses.  
My intestines clang with confectionary histories  
that spill apart, muddying other shores.  
Such domestic matters couldn't be more replete with envy.  
Hold out for a house in the country,  
a two-bedroom city retreat-gone-microbe, off the grid,  
post-lesbian wedding. Spend water but acknowledge:  
scandals are only scandalous when we're invested in them.  
When the world melts its edges, we're eyes on an embroidered center.  
Give me meat, give me U.S. flesh on a stiff neck bone,  
sweep my sleepy glances to the side of the tracks:  
I am known for my peripheral marginalia, crucifixion complex,  
among other familial clutter. Roman Jakobson, you say?  
No. Viktor Schlovsky tearing the seams.  
Claude Cahun pushing pamphlets amidst German soldiers  
that smile, tip their hats to the Jewess and her "sister".  
They burn photographs of gravity and well-enforced plans.  
They turn products of suicide, marching battles into dresses,  
pass their lives in drag, away from habit, beloved intrepid rabbits.

*Note: Font size reduced at author's request  
to preserve line breaks.*

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# Fox Chase Review

Amy Ouzoonian

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## Andronicus

His lack of color is framed by Hemingway's  
Beach.

Gatsby's outsider ink dots each iris,  
Combing the sand for her footsteps.

Though his paper doll shadow  
Wraps an armored heart and this

Only addresses his solitude,  
He will want her in secret  
Not the sweet one, the one who hears  
about how his skin fits, or the accident  
that shook his marble eyes into tapioca  
and his bones into Turban shells.

Not her, but he will want the one  
Who married him to his past, lynched his  
Naked skull up to the movie screen  
Looping Procne and Philomela's story  
Tongue cut, swallow and wagging out like a  
Silver fish  
Crying to the sunless air  
Flopping Morse code to pavement.

There is always someone more filling  
To return to your loins, seasoned  
With self-torture  
Perfumed with Narcissus



Amy Ouzoonian is an Armenian-American poet, playwright, journalist and artist. She received her BA in Journalism and Creative Writing for the Theater from SUNY New Paltz. She is the author of *Your Pill* (Foothills Publishing, 2004) and is the editor of two anthologies: *Skyscrapers*, *Taxis*

Poems  
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[Andronicus](#)

[Philomela](#)

asking "where, where?"  
A raised eyebrow or a hand  
You hope will  
Take it all away.

### **Philomela**

Thrusting her tongue back to choke  
the cries, the porous walls take in  
the lovers sweat and sucking sounds  
bacteria vibrates like dust settling  
over their fist sized love.

Night shares its brilliance with the  
backyard cat's call, gold flecks fall  
and swill, sew themselves to  
her lips until she is soldered shut  
content to be the patron saint  
of pleasure without question.

*and Tampons* (Fly By  
Night Press, 1999)  
and *In the Arms of  
Words: Poems for  
Tsunami Relief*  
(Sherman Asher  
Press, 2005).

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# Fox Chase Review

## Vincent Quatroche

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### Henry, Robinson and Prufrock

...were all having a drink  
together during "happy hour"  
in the corner bar at the end of the day.

Henry, the pussycat  
in black face  
was putting them away  
three to the other guys' one.  
Soon fell silent.  
Glared vacantly glaze affixed  
away from the conversation  
only to occasionally nod  
mumble  
"Yasssssum Boss"  
adjust his glasses  
motioning to the bartender  
for "another."

Robinson carried the  
bulk of the conversation  
speaking emphatically  
about reading the "classics"  
again to perhaps escape  
the shadows of a neglected  
intellectual and spiritually  
suffocating domestic life

### *Poems on this Page*

[Henry, Robinson  
and Prufrock](#)

[Singing Mr. Cedric](#)



[Vincent Quatroche](#) is  
an educator and poet  
from Fredonia New  
York.

and just walking away  
some day from the  
pale gutless specter  
he was fast fading  
away to.

Prufrock  
not really listening  
but was contently  
being rather preoccupied  
self-consciously  
with the shallow impression  
he imagined he was sending  
of a pale introverted angst  
haunted weakling consumed  
by doubt and fear of mortality.

Meanwhile

She sat down the other end of the bar  
with an Oprah "Book of the Month" selection  
she had just purchased at the nearby "Boarders"  
and having just inquired with the bartender  
just who those three strange men were in  
the corner near the window  
and when he replied,

"Don't you know who those guys are?  
They just happen to be very famous writers."

She sighed.

Sipped her Margarita  
and stared intently  
regarding the three men  
and imagining the  
brilliant conversation  
they just *must* having.

The insights

The talent.

The fire and passion  
truly creative souls  
bring into the world.

She sighed.

*"My.....how interesting writers are !"*

## Singing Mr. Cedric

Sing a song of Cedric  
His pockets packed with deny  
four & twenty hours  
he tries to work the daily lie  
and when his head was opened  
all the thoughts began to drain  
Now wasn't a lovely torrent  
to try and keep Cedric sane.

Cedric in his Prayer Tower  
Fricasseeing his palmary capillaries  
His wife downstairs  
in the abandoned son's room  
playing classic Ms. Pac Man Solitaires.

Behavioral programming Disney  
lone daughter child left ingesting cable  
waiting for chemical warfare puberty  
to emblazon and enable.

Sing a song of Cedric  
his pockets packed with deny.  
four & twenty hours  
he tries to work the daily lie  
and when his head was opened  
all the thoughts began to drain  
Now wasn't a lovely torrent  
to try and keep Cedric sane.

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# Fox Chase Review

**Timothy Gager**

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## **Village Smokehouse**

coming back from this joint  
where mashed potatoes hang  
deliciously suspended  
in slow-motion off and on forks and folks  
while ribs hide under blankets of sauce  
and the butter could be wrung off the corn  
we walk, still tasting heaven

a store's neon sign  
blocked by a telephone poll  
reads "god exchange"  
but instead, as we continue  
changes to "food exchange"  
utter and obvious nonsense:  
we would never exchange that meal  
with anyone, not even Him.

## **Between Two Points**

will you catch me  
when I stumble and fall?  
can you catch me  
because I know  
this ledge, I know



Timothy Gager is widely published on the Web and in print. He lives at [timothygager.com](http://timothygager.com).

*Poems  
on this Page*

[Village  
Smokehouse](#)

[Between Two  
Points](#)

this jump,  
so when I ask  
will you hold out those skinny arms  
to the tons and tons of falling years  
which are feathers to me  
to you, boulders,  
and those arms  
no matter how hard  
you try  
will snap  
now, catch me  
I'm falling

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# Fox Chase Review

Frank Sherlock

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## No Such Thing as Unchanged Value

**Note:** *This poem's visual presentation does not represent well within the site's design confines, even at a reduced font size.*

We might be a full & fluid cycle  
of goods backed by assessed illusions    Systems  
cannot become unplayed but I'm tired of being told that  
now's not a time for

dreaming    There exists a movement of desire    Small  
people

hold hands in majesty aside the taller trunks Veterans  
from

the Battle of Utter Heartbreak paper the wish tree in  
daylight & dream in

the shade of the moon tree come sundown Whisper  
through

your mouthpiece into a kidney flower    A solidarity is  
sometimes scored w/ fellow travelers lost or turned around

Poems  
on this Page

[No Such Thing as  
Unchanged Value](#)



Frank Sherlock is a Philadelphia based poet. His work has been published widely in the small and electronic press. He is the author of *Wounds in an Imaginary Nature Show* (Night Flag Press), *Spring Diet of Flowers at Night* (Mooncalf Press), *ISO* (furniture press) and *13* (ixnay press). Past collaborations include work with [CAConrad](#), Jennifer Coleman and sound artist Alex

Welsh. Publication of his most recent collaborative poem with Brett Evans, entitled *Ready-to-Eat Individual* is forthcoming in the near future. Frank has hosted a number of poetry series in the city, the latest The Night Flag Series and is a regular contributor to The Philly Sound Blog.

It's criminal

to make-up a child's face caked in old man wisdom

What's there to know except that almost getting lost is really the ideal

Play the compass Carry a branch around everywhere The leaves

don't have long to go so lend your mark on the movement of

movement & I will pass it on

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# Fox Chase Review

CA Conrad

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"It is a little known fact that Benjamin Franklin's eldest son was treated for an extreme fear of electricity."  
—from a book in my dream last night

Ben Franklin  
(sexy nerd!)  
though I Love  
him so  
did NOT  
invent the  
lollipop  
alas

but he once  
told them all *if*  
*we don't hang*  
*together we will*  
*certainly hang*  
*together*

some poets need  
to hear this  
their lack of  
generosity  
to protect  
imaginary  
careers



The son of white trash asphyxiation, [CAConrad](#) is the author of *Deviant Propulsion* (Soft Skull Press) and *(Soma)tic Midge* (FAUX Press). Forthcoming books include *The Book of Frank* (Chax Press), and a collaboration with poet [Frank Sherlock](#) titled *THE CITY REAL & IMAGINED: Philadelphia Poems* (Factory School Press).

**Poems  
on this Page**

[Poem 1](#)

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is so  
damned  
boring

cross Ben  
Franklin Bridge with  
the American poet  
Frank Sherlock  
the plaque reads:

IN MEMORY  
OF THOSE  
WHO LOST THEIR LIVES  
IN THE BUILDING  
OF THIS BRIDGE

accountants  
factored in funeral  
costs with final  
bill of sale

when will the  
rich be expendable?!  
our ancestors  
failed us in  
this battle  
(must we fail  
another generation?)

who is shit  
on bottom of  
whose shoe?

raise HIGH  
the national  
shoe emblem!

body bags sent  
ahead of this  
war's soldiers and  
the next

"you should dye  
your gray hairs"  
old friend instructs

no way!  
*have a little grace*  
let the body  
have it's say

another  
cold dent  
in the  
seed

NO APOLOGIES!  
NO Mary  
Poppins HERE!  
working Elvis into  
everything is easy  
but not enough  
books to duplicate  
this bookstore smell  
at home unless I press  
my ass into the shelves  
crack a licked bottom of  
Kafka's *CASTLE*  
let it  
open  
up  
inside me

"WHAT!? \$100!? DO  
YOU KNOW HOW MANY  
DICKS I'VE GOT TO  
SUCK TO MAKE \$100!?"  
—drag queen on corner of 13th & Spruce last night

everyone's good  
old days smells  
of a purer state  
of tyranny

it's always  
in there  
whispering with  
a face pointed  
to the sun

I'm convinced the  
distance some people

travel away from  
themselves can be  
measured by the  
size of their  
televisions

meanwhile  
arguments with  
boyfriends have  
distracted me  
from the  
terror of an  
ever expanding  
universe (night  
sky stretch  
mark zodiac)

laying  
around listening  
to old music  
only reminds  
me of  
laying  
around listening  
to new music

a resigned victim to  
the events drinking  
a carton of milk he  
will dream of  
what tonight?

in the library  
all these books  
were new once  
their authors  
excited except  
Emily Dickinson  
of course

I eagerly  
bend over  
far for  
Octavio  
Paz probes

the polarity of  
the world

we left Philadelphia  
by way of the  
Internet

Sherlock told me  
where to find  
Anselm's babysitter  
poem running and  
running from  
babysitter creep

death runs fast  
on e-mail (click)  
WHALEN IS DEAD!

nothing's what it  
could've been and  
let's NOT feel  
okay with that!

*refuse it!*  
*send it back!*

learn ignoring  
dark beyond open  
door or draping  
eye with lid

a Linden  
tree hummed  
at me (if I  
vomit it's my  
shock switching  
to joy a bit  
too quickly)

# Fox Chase Review

Louis McKee

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## Crying Out \*

—When the renowned linguist was run down  
by a car he cried out for help in forty-seven languages

*Ayúdeme*—I'm not familiar with this  
part of town, and neighborhoods change;

a good guess, but maybe this one  
hasn't changed at all, maybe it is old ethnic—

*aiutilo*—or *ezra*, is that right? I remember  
reading somewhere that Pound's first name

meant help in Hebrew. *Helfen Sie mir*—  
that could work, something left over

from Fr. Kelly's German class, a desperate cry  
when my turn was coming but I'd been

daydreaming about Marie's breasts,  
which is how I spent most of my classes,

if truth be told, but now is not the time or place—  
*Aidez-moi*, but it isn't likely that many French

settled here—besides, they would say *m'aidez*,  
what the sailors slurred to May Day, maybe

someone was in the navy—May Day, May Day—  
*au secours*. My grandmother, from Galway,

taught me a prayer: *St. Brigid, go gcuidimid*—  
this is all I've got, the best I can do on short notice,

so, sweet Jesus, I guess it's up to you.

## Empathy\*

For months I've been staring at a large print of the "Guernica" pinned  
to the wall over my desk.

I've been trying to write a poem about 9/11—something I don't feel  
comfortable about,

but think needs to be done. When politics enters my writing, it is usually  
like a dog's nose

poking in from the margin, or some sneaky Kilroy peeking out from behind

*Poems  
on this Page*

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Louis McKee's selected poems were published as *River Architecture*. His more recent books include *Near Occasions of Sin* (Cynic Press) and *Still Life* (FootHills Publications.) Adastra Press has recently issued a letterpress limited edition of his translations from the Old Irish of medieval monastic poems titled *Marginalia*.

a wall;  
whatever I am doing doesn't seem to interest them, and they move along.  
The empty space in lower Manhattan, the emptiness in a million hearts,  
this is what Picasso was showing us. Nazis  
bombed the shit out of a small Basque village in 1937 while Franco  
just stood by.  
It wasn't a very good time for the artist, either. I look at those poor creatures—  
the tortured imagery—the woman with arms outstretched, an anguished mother  
and child,  
a man trampled underfoot, an agonized horse, a bull seemingly befuddled—  
I don't know  
what to say about the events in New York City, I don't know how to remember  
the people who lost their lives.

Recently, I have had my heart broken. Hardly a comparable situation.  
But sometimes I look at the Picasso on the wall and I see the pain in  
those faces—  
pained faces that may closely reflect those who suffered in the  
World Trade Center.  
But what I know is the smaller but horrendous pain I have been feeling.  
I see the anguish, the shock and terror in those faces, and I know that  
last night,  
at the age of fifty-one, I cried, and not very quietly.  
I know that empathy and sympathy can only go so far—that pain is pain, though;  
and if my pain is lesser, less nobly earned, then so be it. It hurts nonetheless;  
these people I saw once on the wall at MOMA hurt, and for a moment I identified  
the pain.  
That sad expanse of black and white, and a bad situation with a woman—  
a silly piece of Art, and a petty, selfish moment—  
this is how we come to elegy, and for a moment I am embarrassed,  
but not because of the tears growing fat in my eyes.

*\*These Poems First Appeared in New Zoo Poetry Review*

*Note: Font size reduced at author's request  
to attempt to preserve line breaks.*

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# Fox Chase Review

**Beth Phillips Brown**

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## **Convenience Store Madonna**

She runs the register  
stocks the shelves  
moves fluidly  
as water over stone  
liquid glass  
or a prima ballerina making coffee,  
not one wasted gesture.  
Economy says all.

It's my bad shift  
(who knows what hers was like)  
morning after a full moon  
but nothing exciting  
like a new lover,  
only a needy child with a stuffed-up nose,  
a stepmother allergy and alligator nightmares,

I've got other kids  
waiting this morning  
a long drive  
to tell dying stories  
to kids  
everyone wants to throw away  
and every SUV on the road is  
an urban assault vehicle  
with their drivers and steering wheels



Beth Phillips Brown is a poet and storyteller in the Welsh and Celtic tradition.

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[Convenience Store  
Madonna](#)

[Consolation](#)

just a trigger/barrel-turn away  
from over-the-edge-of-no-return

and the clerk turns, says  
What you need, baby?  
I'll get you outta here quick.

### **Consolation**

Rain seeps into early morning sleep,  
leaking into a dream.

You don't want to leave  
the man in the dream behind.

He admires your dancing,  
your full body curved as ancient votives.

You want to take him with you  
into the waking world

where the rain is so heavy with pollen,  
a chef could mistake it for saffron.

And you linger in the shower.  
You choose the silkiest shirt in the closet

And later, when you want to be done  
with sticky air clinging to your clothes,

you can't even call his name  
because you don't know it.

You catch your breath  
feeling his eyes caress

through the silky shirt moving  
against bare belly.

He is still with you,  
subtle as breath.



# Fox Chase Review

**Mel Brake**

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## Lazarus

My psyche

But

Is a dark

Like Sybil

And hallow

Guided Aeneas

Realm

This darken part

Like

Of my mind

An enormous

Black giant

She stills

Speaks to me

It's the part

Through dreams

Of my mind

And unexplained

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[First Lady Black  
American Style](#)



Mel Brake was raised in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. He graduated with a B.S. degree from West Chester University. As a romantic, he has written poetry as a method of healing, self-love and to express his inner thoughts and feelings. He was featured poet

at Robin's Book Store  
by Philadelphia Poets,  
Live Poets Society,  
Mad Poets Society,  
Poets and Prophets,  
Manayunk Art Center  
and many others. His  
works are in  
*Philadelphia Poets  
Journal 2007* and  
*2008, Mad Poets  
Review Fall 2007,* and  
*Fox Chase Review  
2008.* He was  
recently the poet of  
the month on [Janet  
Mason's online  
magazine](#). His first  
published CD/  
chapbook entitled;  
*Adoration of The Sol*  
is available at  
[www.myspace.com](http://www.myspace.com).

|             |                       |
|-------------|-----------------------|
| That I know | Unconscious behaviors |
| The least   |                       |
| About       | She says              |
|             | Walk with me          |
| But try     | On the path of        |
| My best     | Darkness and fear     |
| To hide     | of oneself            |
| From        |                       |
|             | Like Lazarus          |
| As          |                       |
| There are   | To psych              |
| Many        | Myself                |
| Secret      |                       |
| Places      | To come               |
| And nooks   | Out                   |
| Surreal     |                       |

Experiential

Moments

Unidentified

Demons

Devils

Symbols

And myths

That in

The day light

I try to

Ignore

As I do

My best

To suppress

The existence

Of My Self

### **First Lady Black American Style**

She is  
Black and  
Beautiful

She is  
Reserved and  
Demur

She is hip  
To what's  
In style  
And has  
A style  
Of her own

She prefers  
To spend her  
Time alone  
When she is  
In pain  
Because she has  
The power to  
Heal herself

She is  
Breadwinner and  
Head of  
Household

She is Michelle Obama  
Dorothy  
Hazel  
Betty  
Saniyyah

She raises  
Her children and  
Her husband  
If she chooses  
To have one

She charts her  
Own course  
And writes her  
Own chart

She is out  
Spoken  
Out in front

Like many heroic  
Black women

And  
In the middle  
Of every situation  
That matters to  
her

She stands on

She is strong and  
Powerful

She sets her aim

She carries  
The burden of  
The world  
Within her legs

From the poor house  
To the White House

And birth  
To maturity  
Boy-man from  
Her belly

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# Fox Chase Review

Adam Meora

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## My Synagogue

The lines of the Italian market are drawn in  
sweet produce garbage  
belly full Alf redo

Stoops crowd Mexican children huddled together  
sharing five slices of pizza  
grocers calling out prices

Let me squeeze you here, God, like the  
shoulders of my father  
I need no other synagogue then this filth

I look up to you like a night shining where only  
day lasts

heartbeat moves faster here then a sweet  
smelling virgin about to lose it inside me

I find my flag  
waving molten gold poring through river of  
blood

How was this market street made  
under the cover of stink?

Will the market still be here in a hundred years?



Adam Meora is a Philadelphia based poet and host of the Blam Series in the East Falls section of the city. He has been published in the small and electronic press.

Poems  
on this Page

[My Synagogue](#)

Will the hooks still hold red meat swaying in the moon lit butcher shop?

Will the fish be tossed and packed into ice, as their eyeballs stare into your soul?

Will the aroma of Asiago, Fontina, and Romana swirl in the nostrils of all those who stroll?

Will the accordion player hum old world songs at lovers passing by?

Will immigrant skin flakes float into gutters heavenly belly and

rise like the hairs on Moses' neck guzzling the Red Sea

fall like a father's kiss on his son's soft cheek?

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