NOON | journal of the short poem

ISSUE 13
March 2017
bird’s-eye view
torn wet and applied
to the appetite
silverfish damage to the prologue
tossing an oak gall
with multiple exit holes –
a terrorist plot
cars parked over the hopscotch
DESTRUCTED REFRAIN

In Israeli explosion sixteen die,
Moscow blast kills ten.
The death toll
is only going to rise.
In Israeli explosion sixteen die.
Today
we are walking through pieces of men,
and women have no face
to cry.
In
Israeli explosion
sixteen die,
Moscow blast kills ten.

Miranda Barnes
BOMB

casualty
counts

omit
plants
pets

appliances
the
shift

of
the
axis

around
which
the

story
spins
our backyard trees –
their unconditional
unconcern
verified as fake news –
my takeover as ruler
of myself

George Swede
The truth comes out.

You kill yourself.

And go back inside.
WATERHEAD

Summer downpour
on tin roof
beating out
apocalyptic tattoo –

Motörhead
blasting on the stereo
just barely
keeping up.

Mark Terrill
nebulae of gnats talk radio

Robert Witmer
ISSA

irksome
mosquitoes
consoling
even
so
the crow inside the night inside the crow

for Cherie Hunter Day
A noctule is a bat, a noctuid a moth. A noctuary
an account

of what passes
during the night. A noctua

another moth. A noctivagant
wanders at night. When you want
dreamy
music pro-
cure a nocturne. A poem is like
the night

half the time. What shines

in the darkness
is noctilucous.

John Levy
NOCTURNE

illumined rain indigo rings

rain indigo rings illuminated

indigo rings illuminated rain

rings illuminated rain indigo
LOOKING BACK

Mom hasn't been all there, wherever there is, for a long time now. Slides like hers begin with bits of information lost, blanks we fill in moments later or not and move on. When did she slip away? A few years ago she told me, "I'm losing my memory, you know, it's horrifying." Her aspect was flat, her tone matter-of-fact. The situation brought to mind a Hiroshi Sugimoto photograph of a darkened movie theatre where he set up a camera loaded with black-and-white film, trained it on the screen, and opened the shutter for the duration of an entire movie. The beautiful architecture of the old theatre is faintly illumined by the screen. And the screen itself? All light, nothing but a glowing rectangle, what remains after every moving image is played out from beginning to end.

lack of a line
between ocean and sky –
scattered ashes

Mark Harris
threading the needle a line of faint heartbeat
low clouds during the visit
alphabet pieces
in the newborn’s name
three score and ten years – 
light at the end of 
the bedroom hall
for the sparrows

black-oil
sunflower seed

color of
his breviary
scrub and scrub till the ink comes off

John Martone
Of this silence
I can tell you nothing
it can’t say for itself.

John Phillips
WORDS AT DUSK

The words I lost at dusk: *amulet, totem*. If only to defy
the onslaught of the rust.

The aging of the airtight mind. The verses made of dust.

Tomorrow is for what? The autumnal sun
sinks beyond the stables and the barns. The pasture suddenly dimmer as if lit by antique chandeliers.
WAKING IN A MOTEL ROOM FROM AN EARLY EVENING NAP

to the steady thrumming of Vermont rain.

Eyelids open
to an unfamiliar ceiling.

The coffin’s inner lid is never far away.
How to know how to compose a life?

Trumpet buried in the ground. Trumpet buried in the sky.

So What is the score for timeless ness in time.

But for here there is no heaven.

Peter Marcus
Sunday Mass
spit-shined
prison shoes
empty saxophone the wind in the trees

Johnny Baranski
LINES LIFTED FROM WILLIAMS’S PATerson

– a trumpet sounds fitfully.
the flame's lover
the strictness of beauty
What does it matter?
cooperation is the key,
and happiest non sequiturs.

Take up the individual misfortune
the snow falling into the water,
a green bud fallen upon the pavement
its form no longer what it was:
the green bush sways: is whence
in the air, slow, a crow zigzags
no message in
falling
blossoms blossoms

John Levy
THREE JISEI (辞世三句)

Doom,
Unhurried,
Blooms at leisure.

○ ● ○

The only distance
Worth traversing
Is moonlight.

● ○ ●

Fallen maple leaves lead,
Like a red carpet,
To Hades.

Benjamin Perez
on the other side
of the river
the ferryman is drowning
man-made lake
swimming in
our own imaginations
a sea breeze
encrypts messages
from the edge

Hansha Teki
NIMBUS

Or does it mean that the tide escapes while the fish are tethered to the jetty?

Mark Young
low tide
I remove the lid
of a sardine can

Olivier Schopfer
data migration humpback over the waves

Deborah P Kolodji
in the dream it made sense:
you were a bird
then invisible
    then a bird
again
in the dark
  an anvil
  or an identity
what part of the fog isn’t an ear?

Johannes S H Bjerg
IV
the eye roves the world beneath its lid
two vowels magnetized in a phonetic clasp

Vasiliki Katsarou
unifying the fields …
falling snow
CLEARLAKE

for Charlie Parr

I never pray, but when I do,
it’s to be more like fog
in the pines around a lake,
to discover inside myself deer
and other ghostly animal life.

Brian Beatty
INSTRUCTIONS

My master Ikkyu instructs that I lose myself in her scent like a large cat loosed on a holm: golden eyes, soft claws that deliver.

Ikkyu, Ikkyu, you old devil, you.
THE TRAMP

in the graveyard
said: Jesus

is coming soon
you know

I’ve only taken
to drink

as a temporary
measure

Paul Rossiter
from *Heaveng*

1.

Between Lewis’s “it would have to be the biggest hoax ever perpetrated”

and the holy, blank scrolls that Monkey finds you could drive a starship

*Beelzebub tells tales within the dead body of his spacecraft*
Could weariness really be the point? *Bien sur.*

No height; no width; no depth; no color:

all the mad purpose of a mad universe.

*Which you can write down but probably shouldn’t say aloud*
Best thought, next thought, next jetting of thought as language.

“What’s in his head do you think?”

Blood has its lexicon; spilled blood another.
How do we find our own way back. With mist rising like the aftermath of some kind of manna from the desert’s freshly broken heart.

Ok. Love. That’s the plot.

_Tomorrow Is Cancelled 2_
There is what is unthinkable & what comes after. The forest fire that devoured the ponderosas & left the educational center unscathed, for example. The volcano that collapsed, leaving the illusion we could climb down to the other side of the world, the happy understory.
On a day that was beautiful except it was election day November falls through a drunk & unforgiving moon waves cut like accordions up under the dock & for a slow moment in the illusion that we are walking on water we lock pinkies & try to recreate our lives which seem – inscrutably – to have become mistakes.

Tomorrow Is Cancelled 8

Emily Carr
In Brussels we argued by a tenement playground named for Jacques Brel
The mannequin flit of twilight’s last owl

Andrew Cantrell
snowflakes on a broken truce
no two failures
are alike
Errors are like your friends –
They pull you out of the
Morass of perfection.
Before I get
There I’m not
Even here, is
How not speaking
Japanese feels like
To the one
Who speaks Japanese
In, yes, English.
There are so few selves
That people projecting them
Show up for.

Alan Botsford
m (ⅰ) n e
art school
fixing
the urinal
THE NEW INSINCERITY

there is not much in poetry that remains unsaid
but that it should be said is not your responsibility.

Charlie Baylis
PROLEGOMENON TO A SITCOM

The epic evaporates,
Leaving a couch
For us to sit on,
The ironic family which knows
How to stall life
And step
Into the closing
Gap and can’t stand
The future which is already
So bored of us.

Adam Rosenkranz
void if detached

the rise of the meritocracy is the first book i bought over the internet

* * *

if you entered this webpage without going through menus, click here to learn about the cemetery project

* * *

void if detached
keep this transfer as proof

Evelyn Posamentier
from ‘Passengers, Bus Number 86’

switchback eyes
rank her suspicions
are thriving without
being spelled
are frittering clock changes
and carillon superstitions
in the bent wake
of sleek grief
the wire style of afflictions
tufts where once a pasture

Tom Daley
DROUGHT

A woven basket on the flat public lot in wind makes suspicious improvisations topsy-turvy

topples to

someone petitioning the sky to be in love with thunder.
COYOTE

for Andrew Schelling

Listen

soon the young will follow
elders to the edge

of song

be led to the same wild

movement a branch
of the family

at deer.
A MOMENT BEFORE BREAKFAST

Reflected
as in any metal spoon
your face upside-down
placed
into your mouth
(metallic
taste) then
withdrawn blurred
wet-faced
revenant of
reflection
lampoon of spit
and wee pillages
of torpor
all there is.

David Giannini
how to unclasp
your silence

persimmon peel
under my fingernail

Pearl Pirie
her brief
dish towel dance
outside the rain

Tony Burfield
FLIRT

could
you
be
around
the corner
balancing
on
one
leg
plagiarizing
the scent
of
rhododendrons
with
your
hazardous melancholy
wisteria in full bloom the rest escapes me
menopause
a swan hisses
dementedly

Sandra Simpson
violet light
your need
to be violent
transfer of power
a foul ball rattling
magnolia leaves
revolving door
the man with an eyeball
tattoo
carousel carver
shaving one last bit
of horse tongue

Bill Cooper
SUBWAY

We step into car three. The light brightens as the tin tapeworm rattles down its hunger, chews deeper into the dark heart of the city. We step out served. The light dims.
DOWN HILL

This morning I saw
a white-haired man
going slowly
down hill
on his old bicycle,
one boot heel dragging.

An old man
doing everything he can
to hold back a smile
is an old man smiling.

I smile, he waves.
“Brakes don’t work, never did,”
he shouts back to me.

Norman Klein
ATTENTION

the railway workers
cross the line
stepping
casually
over one
live rail
(turning to
each other
and talking)
and then
the other – they
do this every
day, almost
not noticing
they’re doing it
carefully

Paul Rossiter
from ‘dancers on stage’

0'00”
0'05”
0'10” to step once
0'15”
0'20”
0'25”
0'30”
0'35”
0'40”
0'45”
0'50”
0'55” is to risk falling
1'00”
1'05”
1'10” to stumble
1'15”
1'20”
1'25” is not to have risked
1'30” falling
1'35”
1'40” falling
1'45” is like death

Adrian Nichols
deep silence falls in geometry
smoke rises from an illusion of future

Jacob Kobina Ayiah Mensah
Ersatz this once cosmic circumference love bends in the irony of

odd coincidence not from but to the freedom upon a posthumous now the space watching the wild god of seawind radial starprints how hitherto in mind the truth attempts

Rebecca Lilly
ONCE

the way he crouched to write
those letters in the dust
made them pick up stones

when they moved in closer
his knowing half-smile
locked them in their glass houses
fumbling with the keys forever

Mike Dillon
from ‘Subway Poems’

3-26-13

It’s one of those infinite skies again, the kind painters love. So many clouds and so much blue – as if the two were simultaneously possible.
6-7-13

Poetry writing
is a most inconspicuous
activity.
You can write a poem
about a person
3 feet away
and they have no idea.
You can write a long poem
about a person
3 feet away from you
and they have no idea,
ever will.
For whatever reason, the late middle-aged populate 7th Ave. at 11:30 a.m. on Friday, October 18, people like me. It isn’t a pretty sight. Do any among us have our best days ahead? Like America always does?
PERMUTATIONS OF A FALL DAY

Today leaves are down in the Northeast
Leaves are down in the Northeast today
Are down in the Northeast today leaves are
down in the Northeast today leaves are
down in the Northeast today leaves are
down in the Northeast today leaves are
down in the Northeast today leaves are
down in the Northeast today leaves are
down in the Northeast today leaves are
down in the Northeast today leaves are
down in the Northeast today leaves are
emerging from
the wind’s long ripple through meadow grass –
clouded sulphurs
morning sun
on mossy stone
the words alone
almost enough
ROOM

Keep it simple, blue tablecloth, black ink, hand curved to write a signature – the white sheet requires at least a mark.

No one, no one alone looks into empty skies.

Curtains are drawn black pen laid down on blue cloth. This initialled letter is complete.
EVENSONG

Bells in the distance –
Debussy’s cloches à travers les feuilles –
here leaves fall and there’s a hiss
cats scuttle through faded flowers
they own this place.
Somewhere in the air between
the pulse of an insistent toll.
Heart just beats.

Julie Sampson
unclothed of telling
her sojourn
on the knife’s edge

Markeith Chavous
north wind a night of long scars

Mark Brager
POEM FROM CAPROCK CANYONS

Winter
hasn’t done with us –

its chill a breath
along the canyon face.

Within
the river’s insistent

drift,

listen. Dark

cradles dark.

Steve Wilson