

A painting of a wooden bridge over a river. The bridge has a simple wooden frame with a thatched roof. The river is dark and reflects the surrounding greenery. The background is filled with dense trees and foliage. The overall style is impressionistic with visible brushstrokes.

# Alabama Literary Review

Mayo

# **Alabama Literary Review**

**2016**  
**volume 25**  
**number 1**

Editor  
William Thompson

Fiction Editors  
Jim Davis  
Theron Montgomery

Poetry Editor  
Patricia Waters

Webmaster  
Ben Robertson

Cover  
Majô L. Foy, *The Pond Eddy Bridge*

Alabama Literary Review is a state literary medium representing local and national submissions, supported by Troy University and Troy University Foundation. Published once a year, Alabama Literary Review is a free service to all Alabama libraries and all Alabama two- and four-year institutions of higher learning. Subscription rates are \$10 per year, \$5 for back copies. Rates are subject to change without notice.

Alabama Literary Review publishes fiction, poetry, and essays. Pays in copies. Pays honorarium when available. First Serial Rights returned to author upon publication. Manuscripts and editorial or business correspondence should be addressed to Alabama Literary Review, 254 Smith Hall, Troy University, Troy, Alabama 36082. Submissions will not be returned nor queries answered unless accompanied by a stamped, self-addressed envelope. Please allow two or three months for our response.

©2016 Alabama Literary Review. All rights reserved. ISSN 0890-1554. Alabama Literary Review is indexed in The American Humanities Index and The Index of American Periodic Verse.

# CONTENTS

## **Claire Bateman**

Men as Trees, Walking . . . . .	5
Once We Did Everything Aloud . . . . .	6
A Diagrammed Sentence . . . . .	7

## **G.F. Boyer**

Monarch . . . . .	8
Cornfield Math . . . . .	9

## **Rick Campbell**

My People, My People: Riding the Rails in Coach . . . . .	10
---	----

## **Christopher Childers**

Inaugural . . . . .	24
---------------------	----

## **Catherine Chandler**

Memento. . . . .	25
Lessons at Fall Kill Creek . . . . .	26
The Woodlot . . . . .	27

## **Maryann Corbett**

The Vanished . . . . .	29
Monuments . . . . .	30

## **Stephen Cushman**

Bury a Body on Private Land . . . . .	31
Death Canyon Picnic . . . . .	32
Frailty Syndrome . . . . .	33

## **Jeffery Donaldson**

Over Head . . . . .	34
Fountain Pen . . . . .	37
Found in an Essay by Max Beerbohm . . . . .	38

## **Richard Foerster**

Sitting for the Portraitist . . . . .	40
What the Larch Tree Told Me . . . . .	42
Late Light . . . . .	43

## Contents

### **John Foy**

Contemplative . . . . .	44
Funeral . . . . .	45
Report Card . . . . .	46

### **H.L. Hix**

“How do we move from this limitless condition to responsible action?” . . . . .	48
“Is there a way to wake up?” . . . . .	49
“What might it mean to think that I am absent from or to my own experience?” . . . . .	50
“What would it mean—and what would it take—to end metaphysics?” . . . . .	51

### **Timothy Murphy**

Trimeters . . . . .	52
Division of Labor, an Elegy . . . . .	54

### **Angela Alaimo O’Donnell**

The Still Pilgrim Ponders Two Birches . . . . .	57
The Still Pilgrim Faces the Wall . . . . .	58
The Still Pilgrim’s Insomnia . . . . .	59

### **Hilary Sideris**

Numb . . . . .	60
La Grappa . . . . .	61

### **J.D. Smith**

Lament for the Departed Muses . . . . .	62
In Fact . . . . .	63
Approaching Praise . . . . .	64

### **Ronald Stottlemeyer**

Weathervane . . . . .	65
Snow . . . . .	66

### **James Matthew Wilson**

The Scar of Odysseus . . . . .	67
How Many Exiles in the Monasteries . . . . .	69
All the Hollowed Shells . . . . .	70
On the Distinction between Verse and Poetry, a Classical Solution . . . . .	72

<b>Contributors</b> . . . . .	84
-------------------------------	----

***Claire Bateman***

**Men as Trees, Walking**

There they go, everywhere you look,  
with their stumpy gait—

slippage of shadow, roughness of shank,  
all knuckly protuberance and scraggy skin,

like the noble hardwoods of childhood  
that loosened their roots at midnight  
to wander as they would.

By dawn, each was settled at its post,  
all those churned-up wakes still  
healing over.

Claire Bateman

**Once, We Did Everything Aloud**

Now that it's all text-messaging,  
how ponderous a phone call seems,  
how intrusive!

Behold in our species:  
a ubiquitous shyness,  
newly arisen.

Yet it's not impossible to squint  
toward that distance  
where our ancestors still  
contort their mouths  
in peculiar sequences  
while from the notion  
of actual speech  
we draw together  
to shrink away.

### **A Diagrammed Sentence**

is burnished in flight,  
all extension and emergence,  
transcending every controversy  
between the functional and ornamental,  
the technological and organic.

A diagrammed sentence  
is sinuous and sleek,  
serrated in profile,  
whiplike in acceleration.

As you see, I came too near  
a diagrammed sentence once.  
I should have been warned  
by those astringent fumes,  
that aroma of asepsis.

Now I stump through the world,  
testifying from within my encasing  
of hemostatic gauze  
that the disassembly of my flesh  
was not executed in malice,

and bearing witness  
to what I glimpsed up close:  
something was missing,  
something had broken loose  
or perhaps hadn't ever  
been captured—

not exactly an essence—  
soul—distillation—  
though not unlike that, either.

Only absence could have made  
the sentence so swift  
it failed to cast a shadow.  
or leave a wake.



**G.F. Boyer**

**Monarch**

In a jelly jar  
behind cans of primer,

he resides in a murky cellar window  
biding his time,

a dutiful chewer of milkweed leaves  
to power his silk factory.

Absorbed in his summer project,  
he packs his scrub-brush body

into a green cabinet suspended  
from a stalk.

. . .

Late summer  
he shoulders free—wet, frail,

the orange and black wings  
pleated, momentarily

halted, to stiffen and pulse,  
then capture a current and lift

matter-of-factly  
into the afterlife.

**Cornfield Math**

Reminded of ourselves,  
mirrors of each other,  
we multiply and divide.

We stand tall above soybeans  
near the neighbor's field.  
The clouds bring down our snow.

Through the stripped trees,  
the wind grows colder.  
Now we are seeds,

waiting, half alive.

Now we are seeds.  
The wind grows warmer  
through the budding trees.

The clouds bring down our rain.  
Near the neighbor's field,  
we stand tall above soybeans.

We multiply and divide—  
mirrors of each other,  
reminded of ourselves.

**Rick Campbell**

**My People, My People: Riding the Rails in Coach**

*Everybody loves the sound of a train in the distance*

Chicago, Union Station

I rolled my cheap thrift store luggage into the overcrowded and intentionally ugly waiting area for the Capitol Limited, east bound, Chicago to DC. I wondered what was limited about the route—service, style, class, chairs in the boarding area? The lack of empty chairs, and the prospect of sitting next to anyone I saw there, made leaning against a pillar seem a good option. In 20 or 30 minutes the train should board, but there were no Amtrak personnel around to answer questions or check tickets. There was no line in front of the gate. At least a hundred people were milling around, ready, I guessed, to rush to the door when the call to board was made.

The gates were not really gates, but portals, sort of openings in the wide wall. A woman's voice was screaming last call for a train at another gate over a very bad PA system. She called last call five times, and still, some 30 minutes later people were still rushing through the hole in the wall.

I heard a loud thump on the other side of my pillar and, when I looked around to see what happened, a man was lying on the floor. He had fallen off the bench as he slept. He sat up, confused, way drunk, and seemed surprised to find himself on the floor, and maybe surprised to that he was in the train station. It was clear that he was not going to ride any trains tonight.

While he was on the floor, people's reactions were many and varied. Some laughed, some just said "oh"; when he tried to stand and wobbled around, some said "a drunk" and turned back to what they were doing—which was mostly just waiting for a train. The man's stuff was scattered around him, hat on one side, his paper sacks and plastic bags on both sides of him. A woman tried to help him up, but it was so hard for him to rise and gather his stuff that she had to give up. Eventually, the man stood, walked three steps and fell again. This second fall earned him more laughter but no help. I had been riding trains for 12 days, and I had lost any interest or sympathy for train people. I

went back to leaning on my column and kept it between me and almost everyone else. Drunks fall a lot. We all assumed he was drunk and chances were very good that he was, but if he was a disheveled man with a serious medical condition that affected his balance, would we have afforded him more sympathy and help?

He shuffled past my pillar and it seemed that he was leaving the gate area, but about 10 minutes later there was another thump as he fell again. He was closer to me now, maybe as punishment for my elitism. He rose again—it was like a prize fight with a very crappy prize. The ref should have stopped it after the third time he fell; it was clear he was in no condition to go on, but there was no ref, no one in his corner either. Why was he here? If he was homeless then Union Station was certainly a warmer place to crash than on Chicago's streets, but why at the gate? No chairs, nowhere to spread out. There were probably fewer cops around here; the almost absent Amtrak personnel seemed to be in charge of the gate's crowd. He fell again and this one was bad. He hit his head on one of the poles that hold the ropes that the lines of people snake through. He was bleeding around his mouth. Stay down, I thought. Stay down, there's no sense going on with this. Someone will surely stop the fight now that there's blood. The security guy came over to him. Where had he been the first three times the drunk man fell? Security spoke into his secret agent lapel mike and then said to the drunk, "how you doin' buddy." Which is security speak for *we are going to get your sorry, drunk-ass self out of here*. The man could not or would not answer. Maybe he did not know how he was doing. Honestly, sadly, I just wanted him out of here too.

I was waiting for a train.

2.

"Ridin' that train . . ."

In the last two weeks I'd ridden trains from Cumberland, Maryland, to Chicago, from Chicago to Portland, Portland to Seattle, Salt Lake City to here, and I still had to ride from here to Cumberland. Fourteen days and nine hours on trains, so far. Every train I rode was late. Why are you doing this, some people asked me? Because I could, really; I had more time than money and I had this long held desire to take a cross country train trip. Now, my desire was fulfilled and waning. My desire had been held so

long that maybe I was too old to take a long train trip, especially in my cheapo, cheapo style. No sleeper, no meals in the dining car. But one thing had become clear; I was too impatient to ride chronically late trains. This was, to put a good face on it, a noble experiment. I can't say that the experiment failed, but it was not a success either. After I got to Seattle, I walked like Popeye, but not as fast.

I'm writing this tonight in the Lounge Car—a good place to write, except that the rocking and bouncing train is making my bad handwriting even worse. I am heading east again, toward home I guess. We just pulled into a small station somewhere in Indiana; the real Indiana, I supposed, not Martone's Blue Guide state. I did not hear the station announcement because they speak quieter at night so as not to wake the sleepers contorted and twisted in their seats, wrapped in blankets and sleeping bags, feet hanging out in the aisle. Maybe the conductors knock on the sleeper cabin doors. It seems like an awful lot of my people can sleep all night in these awkward positions, but I can't. I sleep awhile, wake, shift about, and then sleep again. On the Empire Route, most of the stations look like bland little strip malls framed by ridges of dirty, ploughed snow. When I'd get out to stretch my legs and wade through the smokers, each town, each station was as just as cold as it looked from the train.

I don't know where we are and I don't really care. On the trip west I had my schedules, timetables, station names; I was paying attention. I tried, religiously, to know not only where we were but when and where we would arrive next. What I found out, early on, was that we were really late and the times listed in the schedule meant very little. This train left Chicago more than an hour late and it feels like the engineer is riding the throttle pretty heavy—we are lurching and bouncing more than ever before. An old lady trying to walk the car banged her hip hard on the table as she went by me.

I wish Amtrak would just admit that these long distance routes always run late and change the times in the schedule. I had already told myself that a 44-hour trip from Chicago to Portland is ok and I bought the ticket. I would have still bought a ticket even if I knew it was a 48-hour trip. Now, the more I pay attention to the schedule's supposed arrival times, the more impatient and frustrated I get.

3.

“She’s a railroad lady / just a little bit shady”

Train people have really bad luggage—mismatched suitcases, garish colors—and many have suitcases much larger than what one could take on a plane. They are larger than what one is supposed to take on a train too, but Amtrak personnel don’t seem to care about luggage size restrictions except on the commuter runs. When I boarded the Portland train for Seattle, it was the only time the clerk was making people check oversized bags. A lot of train people don’t, if we are to be precise here, have luggage. They carry their belongings in paper sacks, pillow cases, and large plastic bags from department stores. Some outdoors types have giant, but good, backpacks. Some also carry skis, shoe shoes, snow boards, and other large things that I can’t identify.

Most train people don’t get dressed up for their travels—yes, plane passenger’s attire has gotten alarmingly informal in the last 20 years, but train people are a rung or two below informal. The older ones are dressed pretty square, one might say. The young ones have a lot of tattoos, wear hoodies and look like they could be in a gang. They probably aren’t, unless Litchfield, Nebraska, or Galesburg, Illinois has a lot of gang activity.

In the Salt Lake City station, which is really just a big glass cubicle in a parking lot that it shares with the Metro trains, a cubicle where all the windows need a good washing and will probably get them when spring comes, a skinny guy wearing mirrored sunglasses at 3 a.m. got up every ten minutes to sip water from the fountain. Once he glided over to the trash can and threw away an old pair of jeans. That was his only luggage. He sort of flowed like an interpretive dancer dancing what it’s like when a strung-out man is waiting, hard, for someone to bring in some drugs. The westbound train was four hours late. He checked the clock a lot. When the conductor asked for his ticket, he said he wasn’t going anywhere; he was just waiting for the train.

We were all waiting for the train, and I couldn’t help but wish that we were in one of the two fine old train stations that Amtrak had abandoned and Salt Lake City had made into malls or whatever. I could see Rio Grande station on the night sky line—its neon lights made me more discontented every time I looked at them.

It was about 30 degrees when the eastbound train came in only 45 minutes late. We showed our tickets to the conductor

and walked across the tracks to where the train waited, and then another conductor asked where I was going and I said Chicago. He said go five cars down and get on. I'm wondering why the engine is parked where we cross the tracks and the cars are strung out down the tracks. Why are we walking a few hundred feet to get to the cars? This happened in every station large enough to have a long platform—DC, Chicago, Seattle, Portland—in all of them we walked a long way in some pretty cold and rainy weather.

In Cumberland, Maryland, about two weeks ago at a cubicle smaller than Salt Lake City's, but just as dirty, where this long odyssey had begun at around 9:30 at night, the train rolled in from DC an hour late. Before I could take two steps toward the car, or back away, people started scrambling off the train. They were lighting cigarettes as they took their big last step. The conductor would have said "watch your step" but he had been through this before and he had moved to the back of the platform. People were lighting up in mid air.

One woman cursed nonstop. She had no narrative of her grievances; she just ran through a string of *fuck, motherfucker, fuck this, fuck that, fuck*. She wasn't talking to anyone in particular. Most people just laughed at her between desperate drags, like it was a really bad block party or something. They knew they barely had time to finish their one hard-craved cigarette. This gang of smokers—some looking like bikers, some like maybe they had seen better days or that better days might not ever come—knocked me back on my heels. Do I want to get on this train? Do I have to ride in their car? But I did and I got on and found a seat near the front. I figured if train passengers were anything like bus passengers, or students, the tough crowd would be in the back.

It was quiet for awhile, my fears seemed unfounded. Then the woman started walking the aisle, pacing and cursing, and a conductor came and told her that if she did not stop cursing that she would be "put" off the train. For the next few hours she would be quiet for awhile and then break into a torrent of cursing. Then the conductor would threaten her and she would be quiet for a spell. No one seemed to be traveling with her; certainly no one tried to calm her or quiet her. Maybe she was drunk. Maybe crazy, but I doubt that she had Tourette's. For some reason I wanted all of the drunks to have some sort of more respectable medical affliction.

The conductor threatened to put her off again and then I fell asleep for awhile. I woke as we slowed to enter Cleveland. The scene was spooky. It reminded me of what I thought Dresden looked like when I was reading Vonnegut. There were walls without buildings, buildings without roofs, empty streets, and lights that all seemed yellow. As we neared the station there were some sort of large ghostly yellow lamps on poles, like a baseball stadium, but not high enough. The factories, storage yards, junk yards, either abandoned or just closed till the morning came, had the surreal look of the opening scenes of an apocalyptic movie.

I fell asleep and woke again as we were entering Toledo. This time the movie was *Apocalypse Now*, the scene where the river boat makes its slow way into the base that was being shelled by the VC, the sky full of tracers, the Hendrix sound track, soldiers tripping.

I had been wondering how being “put off the train” would work. Unruly airline passengers can’t be put off the plane until it lands and that might be where they were going. These days they would probably be arrested. Airlines don’t use the word “unruly.” On a train, ok, they won’t throw you off while it’s moving and send you tumbling across the ground like a movie bad guy leaping from the train to escape the law so they need to wait until a station comes along, but there are quite a few stations between where a problem person gets on and where she thinks she is going. In Toledo, I found out how it works, sort of.

The conductor came and asked the cursing woman (who had, ironically, been quiet for some time after she moved to the front of the car in order to hide from the conductor) to come with him. She complied quietly and docilely. No curses, no argument, no crying. It was as if she knew she deserved to be put off the train, or she was used to being kicked out of wherever she was. As they passed me I heard him say that she would be taken to a nearby motel where a room had been reserved for her and that tomorrow she could board another train. Not really a bad deal, I thought, unless she had some important appointment later this morning in Chicago. I doubted that she did. I wouldn’t have minded being put off the train in Toledo if I got a free motel room and a ride back to the station the next day. I wanted to see Toledo. Philip Levine had recently told me he really liked it, but, “you have to remember I lived in Detroit.”



#### 4. Companionship

Lots of train people talk too much, but few are very interesting. Many of them seem not to have traveled very much, except to go from where they live to where they used to live, maybe to see family or friends. They act like you too have not traveled much and so they tell you lots of things that you already know about where you are and where they are going. They have a limited sphere of geographical interest that's constrained by their limited experience and imagination. They might express a desire to someday explore the region that their train is passing through, but they seldom want to go much further or farther. Train people are also pretty convinced that what they know is correct and that what they have experienced is all they need to get by. Yes, lots of people think this way, maybe most Americans, but trains seem to concentrate them in one spot and set you right down in the middle of it. A man sat next to me as we left Cleveland and he immediately fell asleep. I envied how quickly he dropped off and how he could sleep without curling up in the seat. He almost looked comfortable, like a man in a Lazy Boy recliner. When he woke the next morning he started talking and I had to talk too. I'm quiet, I'd rather read and stay to myself, but I am not intentionally rude.

He told me about his family in Providence; he told me about being a truck driver, about highways, about traveling in the Sixties, about California, about the Red Sox and the Pittsburgh Pirates. He never assumed that I knew anything at all about what he was telling me. Every now and then I had to say something, like "man, I have been a Pirates fan my whole life. I've been to Forbes Field, I saw Clemente play; I have suffered through the twenty losing seasons." He just sort of shrugged that off and went on. I tried to hint to him that I was old enough to have hitched through the Sixties, that I knew a bit about what it was like, that I too had been to California. He never got the hints.

Finally, he asked where I was coming from and I told him that I lived in Tallahassee and I was a professor there.

"What school," he asked.

"Florida A&M," I said. He finally listened. His eyes lit up and he told this story; when he was in high school he ran track and came to Florida to run in a big meet. When he was there he saw Bob Hayes run.

"The world's fastest man," he said.

“Yea,” I added, “and one of my school’s most famous alumni.” We talked a little about my being on sabbatical and my writing, writing in general, and then he told me about his brother who was a professor out in Arizona and what it was like to be a professor and to be on sabbatical. I started to drift off then and he went to find coffee.

5.

“Pass the paper bag that holds the bottle”

A short list of train people observations—

- They don’t read the signs about where the toilets are located
- They don’t usually know where they are and when their station will show up
- They did not pick up a schedule or timetable
- They bring their own food and drink
- Many look like times are hard, even if they aren’t
- Many need a haircut
- There are not many good looking women (or men) on a train

I am a train person. My duffel’s cheap and patched on the bottom with duct tape. My backpack used to be my daughter’s and it’s got weird stains here and there. I have been wearing the same pair of jeans for four days. My boots are at least ten years old and look older. I have on a flannel shirt, a ball cap; I have long hair curling from under my cap. I have not shaved for at least four days.

I also think that I know a lot of stuff and that I am, most of the time, right about everything I know. If I talk to people, I talk about myself. I don’t ask them what they know and what they do.

There are not a lot of good looking people on this train. Granted, they have been sleeping contorted in their seats; they may not have bathed for 24 or more hours. A lot of the men wear hats, and all of that fucks up your hair. I am pretty confident, though, that most of them did not look that good before they got on the train. I fit right in—bedraggled, disheveled, unshaven, and with hat hair. And I have probably never been all that much better looking than I am now.

I am still working in the Lounge car and listening to my IPOD. It's late, just a bit before midnight; there are a few people in the car reading but no one else is writing. No one has tried to talk to me tonight; do they suppose that a person writing on a train is pretty much a weirdo? Maybe if I did not have the protective cocoon, the cone of silence headphones on, they might ask *what are you writing?*, but I doubt it. Sometimes I write in bookstores, coffee shops, airports, in other public places and no one asks me what I am writing. Writers are weird and I bet train people might even find writers scary.

I don't really like it that I am writing in the Lounge car where everyone can see me. I imagine that they are looking at me and wondering not what I am writing, but why am I writing. Truth: probably no one has looked at me twice, if they have looked at all.

My ticketed seat, a few cars back, has a woman in the seat next to it and she is like a big marshmallow. She seemed to somehow squish down and out and then ooze over to my seat. The border between our seats was ill-defined, especially after her scarf fell to my side and she, getting softer and wider as the minutes groaned on, started to slide right too. Imagine an ice cream cone as it starts to topple; nothing has really happened to shake the cone, but the ice cream, like the universe, tends toward disorder. This woman does too, and we were a long way from Cleveland or Toledo or wherever she said she was going.

This is the first night in the many nights that I have been riding these trains that I have had someone in the seat beside as I tried to fall asleep. The other guy, the talking man, got on at like 3 a.m., and I was asleep as I mumbled hello. But there have been too many twisted-in-the-seat nights now, and I regret not having a sleeper like I have come to regret my stubborn promise to fish only with lures. I have decried live bait for the last six months of fishing and not caught any fish. I hooked something on a Gulp shrimp below a popping cork, but I had gone to my car to get a different lure and something so big hit the shrimp that when I came back everything was gone—shrimp, cork, rod, reel, a 100 yards of line. That was about as stupid as this. I knew I was not going to get to sleep tonight. I couldn't twist and turn, couldn't get my legs up on the seat and cram my head into the window. The marshmallow kept coming my way. That's why I went to the Lounge Car.

I decide that I can sleep in the Lounge Car. The bench seat is hard but it's long. I am not comfortable, but at least I am almost alone. There are two other men and one woman sleeping farther back in the car, but there's no one beside me. No one spilling over on me. No one sleeping next to me, making it even more obvious that I am not asleep.

6.

"I'm sitting in a railway station"

After I am pretty sure that the marshmallow woman has detrained, I stumble back toward my seat. It's about 4 a.m. I need something beneath my butt and hips that's soft. She is gone and so I sprawl out across both seats—hers and mine, two for the price of one. I fall asleep in eastern Ohio. Sometime later, not some time like a long time of sleeping soundly, I am sleeping but also hearing and I someone says Rochester. I wake up even more. This is my home—Beaver Valley. It's not where I am going but I realize that I am about to pass through the town where I grew up. Where I sometimes crossed these tracks to get to the river and throw dough balls to carp and catfish. I struggle to sit up and wake up. In the window I see my face. It's still dark, late February 5 a.m. dark, but even in the dark I know this place. Rochester's few lights slide past and Freedom's oil refinery is next. Then we enter Conway Yards where night-shift workers are switching cars and trains.

Then it's dark again. We are in Baden and no one seems to be awake. The tracks drop down closer to the river and the land rises so that I can't see my quiet little town. I know it's there though. About here there's a baseball field, a few seconds later a darkened McDonald's, then just fields and a creek that, though it never had much water, slides through the bottom of a deep hollow. As we are crossing it I remember that on the rise above sits the little Ehman family graveyard. A few hundred yards farther is a flat plain where Mad Anthony Wayne trained troops, George Washington passed through, and William Clark (of Lewis and Clark) received military training. During my childhood here these historic fields had been almost forgotten and left to weeds and gravel. We practiced Little League baseball here on crappy fields—uneven, full of grass tufts where there weren't supposed to be any and with stones and rocks in the infield.

Rick Campbell

I can't see any of this. It's too dark and the train and I are below the river's escarpment. A few seconds, later dark monsters' shadows loom on the hills—the abandoned Armco mill, another mill and another. All dark. Ambridge is next. We are about 20 miles from Pittsburgh and I am suddenly sleepy again; it's too hard trying to see in the dark and put everything back where it used to be when we all lived here. I nod off and miss the rich folks' station in Sewickley. The train doesn't stop there anymore. A long time ago business men and lawyers lined the station platform and caught the commuter train that took them into downtown Pittsburgh. Then they walked to the Mellon Building, the U.S. Steel building, and past Gimbels, Kaufmann's and Horne's.

When I woke again we were in Pittsburgh's Penn Station; it wasn't a long stop. Not one where we could get off to do whatever people would do in fifteen minutes in the still dark before dawn. Penn Station, (Amtrak calls it Union Station, though few local people do so) opened in 1903. It used to be majestic, rivaling anything Chicago and New York had to offer; it had a rotunda where train cars could be turned around and a great dome. It was called one of the great pieces of Beaux-Arts architecture in America. It was, but now much of it has been sold to private interests. The concourse is closed to the public and the rotunda is no longer operable either. It's almost the same sad story one finds in Salt Lake City. A few minutes later we rolled out again into the dark and I looked at the city, the Golden Triangle; for a moment I thought we were clacking up the Northside along the Allegheny, but I soon figured out that we were rolling down the Mon and that we would pass more dead mills in lots of small steel towns joined like rosary beads and eventually we would leave the waking city behind and climb into the mountains as the sun rose. I went back to sleep.

7.

"I wish I was a headlight / on a northbound train"

Where are we?

*I don't know. The conductor said we just went through Lincoln, or somewhere. I wasn't listening.*

Where's Lincoln?

*I don't know.*

A failure of geography. It does not matter how many times a version of that conversation goes down, how many times sleeping people wake and wonder where they are because they are on a train and it's going to take them somewhere and a voice on the intercom, maybe even a real conductor's, will tell them it's time to get off.

For me these geo-failures are annoying, sometimes even depressing, but that's what I get for eavesdropping. It's hard not to since we are in a confined space. I would like for people to be smarter. It's even more annoying to listen to people talk who think they know what they are talking about. This new morning we are in the Connellsville Station; I'm in the Lounge Car again and two guys close to me are looking out the window and talking. One guy, in a V-neck sweater and blue Oxford shirt, wire rim glasses, a soft spoken man, has an intellectual certainty about everything he says. He's not really a train person; he's a commuter. He's not lost, he's just curious and wrong. He and a fellow commuter are looking at the Youghiogheny River and trying to figure out what river it is. We are about 60 miles southeast of Pittsburgh on the way to Washington, D.C. These two, probably professionals of some sort, are weighing in about how amazing it is that this mountain river will empty into the *Atlantic a hundred miles away*.

They are so certain and so wrong. The things they do not know are many. How far away is the Atlantic? What river this is? Where it is going? The Yough, as it is known, flows northward and that's why the Indians gave it a name that means a river that travels in a contrary direction. The Yough flows into the Monongahela and then the Mon flows into Pittsburgh, joins the Allegheny and forms the Ohio. The Ohio runs to the Mississippi and to the Gulf of Mexico. Maybe at the cosmic, New Age level, all rivers might run into the same sea. But no matter how cosmic these guys are, and they don't look like New Age people, they should know that the Atlantic is certainly much more than a hundred miles away. Two problems converge here—being geographically suspect and being too sure of one's false knowledge.

Sport coat guy and Oxford shirt guy figure that the river they are looking at is the Allegheny. Why? Because it is a river they have heard of; every Pirates and Steelers home game broadcasters mention that we are at the confluence of the Allegheny and the Monongahela Rivers. My commuters know that they are sort of close to Pittsburgh, so they guess a name that's lodged in their

geo-challenged heads. These two know where they are on the train route, but not much else. They can't put Connellsville in geographical context. They don't have maps in their heads.

Shortly after we left Connellsville my friend who was meeting me in Cumberland texts me and asks if I am almost here. I'm late, that's a given, but when will I be there. I think I know where I am, somewhere between here and Cumberland, but that's pretty long line of track. Amtrak, in its false specificity, claimed that we would arrive in Cumberland at 9:19 a.m., not 9:20 exactly, I guess. But of course we were late pulling out of Pittsburgh, late pulling out of Connellsville, so who knows when we will really arrive in Cumberland. Since someone would be waiting for me there, I tried to make a good guess. I read my schedule, did the simple subtraction, 299—239. Sixty miles. I texted that we would be there around 10:30.

Where are you, she asks. I text I don't know for sure but we are in the mountains. I imagine her laughing because there's nothing but mountains between me and her. Where are we? There are no towns or road signs I can see and no way to figure where I am. Nothing says welcome to X Ville. It's like trying to solve a math problem: if a passenger is riding a train but does not know where the train is, which we will call Point A, and the train is running two hours late, how long will it take to get to the passenger's destination, Point B, and what time will the train arrive?

I know this: we are falling in elevation; we just passed through a small unnamed village. Fifteen minutes ago we passed a ridge full of wind turbines. We passed snow. We passed a deer. We crossed a creek. We went through a tunnel. None of this tells me or her where we are.

I've been reading these schedules for two weeks now, but time has become unpinned from reality. Amtrak gave me a schedule that said I would arrive at 9:19, nothing was ever rounded off; it was always immensely precise and very wrong. We never arrived anywhere at the time specified on the schedule. The itinerary was correct; we rolled into and out of the stations we were supposed to; we traveled in space, but sort of out of time. My phone told me what time it was outside the car but not when we would arrive where we were supposed to be. Now, I didn't know where here was. 10:30 came and went. So did 11 o'clock. When I looked out the window I saw mountains and each curve we came out of failed to reveal Cumberland. I looked at the

schedule again and saw that I had used the wrong numbers. I calculated the distance from Pittsburgh to Connellsville, not Connellsville to Cumberland. Two hours and twenty minutes after the schedule said we would arrive, we arrived.

I walked off the train and met my friend who had certainly spent more time in Cumberland, in the shadow of American Legion Hall, than she wanted to or planned on, and then we got lost trying to drive out of Cumberland. Streets dead-ended, cut off by train tracks and Interstate 40. In a final ironic blow, the crossing gates went down and we had to wait for the Capitol Limited to pass before we could drive on. When the gates rose, we drove west on the National Highway and the train continued southeast to Harpers Ferry and Union Station.

The lesson of all this is sort of a not-all-that-deep American Zen. In train time one should be here now. There is no early or late, just arriving and being. What if I had arrived anywhere on time? I missed nothing by arriving late and I would have gained nothing by arriving on time. It's not an easy lesson for me to live by, even if I admit that I had almost all the time in the world. Minutes, hours, days, weeks, they didn't really matter. Even where I was didn't matter most of the time because I was going where I wanted to go and I got there each time. Eastern Time, Central Time, Mountain Time, Pacific Time. Train Time. My Time.

In less than an hour I was in a diner; thirty minutes later, a bar; an hour later, a coffee shop. Five hours after I stepped off the train in Cumberland, I was back in Fairmont, West Virginia. The train journey was over, though I still had to drive to Florida in a couple of weeks.



**Chris Childers**

**Inaugural**

for John Foy

*From that tree on the left, as I have rightly named it,  
temple and wasteland be mine.*

—from an archaic Roman augur's formula, Varro,  
*De Lingua Latina* VII.8

To *contemplate*, you first square off the skies  
from your horizon. Say, "The boundary  
shall be from this tree to that other tree."  
(Always face south.) Now let your spirits rise:  
this is your *temple*. Sit. Relax your eyes  
and wait. A bird may come. A plane. A free  
clearing of blue. Sunlight. A certainty.  
Or maybe not. Be open to surprise.

Don't ask what it all means—that knowledge comes  
late, if it comes at all. Just wait with patience.  
Let the wind riffle pages of the air  
and the sun scatter its few, golden crumbs.  
When you've completed these your contemplations,  
don't leave the temple. Take it everywhere.

**Catherine Chandler**

**Memento**

The afternoon has hushed its radiant  
bravura as the sun's long arc  
spins out its gradient  
in one last  
spark.

It is as if the world has been recast.  
Supplanted by the owl, the hawk  
will slumber hard and fast  
till morning light.  
A clock,

cosmic, chronometric, with a sleight  
of hand, may, in its measured sway  
admit the coming night  
and so compose  
the day

or devastate the angle of repose—  
a sudden avalanche of thought,  
of wild scenarios  
where things that are,  
are not.

And while the unremitting repertoire  
plays out with every toss and turn,  
the star that's not a star  
will advertise  
and burn.

A half a century of lost Julys—  
an old *Old Farmer's Almanac*,  
circled, certifies  
the Thunder Moon,  
the track

of tides, and how and when and what to prune.

### Lessons at Fall Kill Creek

*Altissima quaeque flumina minimo sono labi.*

—Quintus Curtius Rufus, *Historiae Alexandri Magni*

It's been sixty years, but I've not forgotten.  
You and I set off as we do each morning.  
Hand in hand, we walk in the April sunshine,  
father and first-born.

Halfway to the Samuel Morse School, we would  
sometimes stop to see how the creek was faring—  
Fall Kill Creek that runs through Poughkeepsie, draining  
into the Hudson.

Rain from upstate wetlands and marshes — seeping,  
racing southward, coursing through stonewall channels —  
forms a perfect habitat for the bluegill,  
darter and minnow.

Now we're at the Catharine Street and Mansion  
crossing, looking over the iron railing  
at the water, higher than ever, flowing  
silent and placid.

Then your quiet words — how it is that stillness  
mustn't be confused with a lack of passion,  
how it is that rivulets lead to rivers,  
rivers to oceans.

### **The Woodlot**

Eleven years ago we bought this house,  
a cottage on a quiet lane, where trees  
dominate the landscape, where the Town  
of Beaconsfield protects its woods and wetlands  
with an environmental bylaw bible  
thicker than the girth of any oak  
or sugar maple sapling one may wish  
to cut without a permit from a stern  
and rigorous inspector. So it was  
we moved into our house one mid-October  
and filled over a hundred bags with leaves  
we'd raked until our backs and hands could take  
no more of it. There were about a dozen  
trees in our backyard, but the lot behind  
was brush and bramble underneath a stand  
of ash and linden, ironwood and one—  
just one—white birch. It was a wooded lot,  
and it had been the clincher on the deal:  
no rear neighbors. We'd have bought  
it if we could. Some day. Or so we thought.

You and those trees, he grouched, a mild reproach,  
because he, too, enjoyed the privacy  
and loved the flocks of chickadees who fed  
from outstretched hands, the squirrels and rabbits, too,  
who built their dreys and burrows in that wood.  
Wild raspberries were plentiful in summer;  
each spring trillium and columbine  
shot up to ease the slap of April snow;  
and often frigid Januaries seemed  
less so, as northern cardinals' wheet! wheet! wheet!  
whistled through the branches of the lot  
that bordered on our dog's last resting place.  
Last year in early May the land was sold,  
and all the trees, including the lone birch,  
were felled, chain-sawed and hauled away. The laws  
I mentioned don't apply (so I've been told)

Catherine Chandler

to new construction, and a house was built.  
A matching shed. A five-foot chain-link fence  
secures new neighbors from the likes of me—  
the one who trespassed. She who hugged that tree.

**Maryann Corbett**

**The Vanished**

*In the autumn of 2015, the production of paper cards for library catalogs ceased.*

No matter how long ago they completed their disappearance,  
I still expect them,  
perhaps in a sort of narthex just past a pillared entry,  
or off to the side  
as if in a private chapel, or straight ahead like an altar.  
Shrined in the silence,  
modest and single, or ranged in ranks and banks and rows,  
the gods of Order  
lived in their tabernacles of honey and amber maple  
or oak like chocolate,  
darkened at times from the touch of a hundred thousand fingers.  
On every drawer-front  
the face of a tiny gargoyle wagged its brazen tongue out.  
And so we pulled them.  
And the drawers slid waxen-smooth, and the fingers flicked like a  
weaver's  
through card upon card,  
and above the drawers were our faces, our heads all bobbing and  
davening.  
A kind of worship  
it was, with an order of service. A physical act of obeisance.  
Its cloudy replacement  
(perfect in plastic efficiency, answering almost to thought,  
near-disembodied)  
hurries us past the notion of order itself as a Being  
worthy of honor.  
So here I am, misplaced as a balky fourth-century pagan  
mulling conversion,  
but nursing doubts that the powers should be called from the  
general air,  
seeking the numinous  
still in its tent of presence, and longing to keep on clutching  
the household gods.

## Monuments

### *Pioneers and Soldiers Cemetery, Minneapolis*

They look us in the face. Their brokenness  
is scarred where bits are grafted back with mortar,  
their attitude off-kilter where the world's  
upheavals knock them sideways. Their stone speech  
comes garbled through the acid bite of rains  
sour with the hundred-fifty-year-long progress  
that vaunts down Lake Street in the August glare  
outside the wall's wrought-iron rectitude.

Each stands, a presence. Bevels, obelisks,  
round-shouldered roundtops, green cast-metal crosses,  
three regimented rows of Civil War  
martyrs (a name, a date, the one word "soldier"),  
a few actual statues. Where the words  
are legible, here German and there Polish  
keep their detente, the long truce undisturbed  
by a versified Last Trumpet. So the thought  
of variousness feels apt, an old-shoe comfort  
fit for the neighborhood as it now stands,  
its business signs relaxing into Spanglish.  
And we stand, roughly vertical, if damaged.  
Tolerant of our shorts and broad-brimmed hats,  
the stones pose coolly while we snap our selfies.

My dead lie down a thousand miles away,  
scattered across three states, in cemeteries  
run with a view to simplifying upkeep.  
Their rules enforce a flat equality:  
no standing stones to look us in the eye,  
only the flush bronze markers, silhouetteless,  
staring upward at God without a thought,  
unfindable without a shamefaced visit  
to some Dickensian ministry of death.  
The snows of every winter white them out,  
and with the summers, over all this absence  
the great blade of the diesel mower scythes.

*Stephen Cushman*

**Bury a Body on Private Land**

and you should draw a map of the site  
and file it with the property deed  
so the place will be clear to others to come  
as it won't be in this case in two or three summers,  
no casket or stone but just her soft mound  
in the woods on a ridge above a thin creek  
she studied through moods and most kinds of weather  
as though she's snuggled under a quilt  
in fetal position, her hip the high point.



## **Death Canyon Picnic**

From where the road ends walk west to junction and take the left fork. Wind through thin pine, twisted, contorted, to subalpine fir, eventual spruce. Leave behind forest to climb the moraine through meadow to overlook to savor fine views of valley below, parallel peaks, mouth of the canyon. Continue through meadow, sage-covered, sloping, then groves of cottonwood. Head for the portals guarding the canyon, and enter the canyon through narrow notch. Gain elevation up the north side. Stay to the right of cascading creek past thrust formations under sheer walls. After the switchbacks with vistas of valley to snow-summits opposite canyon levels out and walls slowly widen to classic U-shape gouged by the glaciers. Granite slabs here are oldest in the range. Follow meandering, willow-lined stream, keeping an eye out for moose on the banks. For behemoth. Leviathan. This is the spot to turn and return, though no one ever has. Distance: Sufficient. Time: It depends. Difficulty: Tough, too tough to say. Easy for some, very easy, moderate, then there are those for whom it gets strenuous, slightly or somewhat, even extremely hardly unheard of. Drink lots of water. Not that it matters.

### **Frailty Syndrome**

Sarcopenia sounds sort of dirty  
but merely means poverty  
in net worth of flesh,  
muscle mass loss after age fifty,  
perfectly natural, par for the course  
if you make it that far.

Make it that far  
and chances increase you'll hear of the flesh  
as something like grass that wizens and wanes  
or as the weak runt flummoxing spirit,  
a place to stick pins to keep down elation;

yet a place to stick pins to keep down elation  
needn't be bad or an object of hate,  
not in a bison rolling in dust, alone on the plain  
Monday first light, two thousand pounds  
rising to profile, Here's a clear view  
of all my endowments to go with fair warning

to get along now, keep moving, keep moving  
in love with my flesh, not to eat but to touch  
with long-distance fingers, handle me and see  
you're filthy rich, my flesh is yours,  
let's put some meat on the bare bones you pick.

## ***Jeffery Donaldson***

### **Over Head**

1

I find myself, out of the highs  
and lows, sifting love's  
aimless uplifts endlessly,  
wondering where they go

and what becomes of them.  
Take January 1981,  
the early dark, the light country  
walk north of Newmarket,

when, going steady, we stood  
a moment in the narrow lane,  
blizzard ablaze, the whipped-up  
snowfall feathered

into whirled-off cradled  
stillnesses and holds,  
its luring soft spots giving way  
to fetching stirs and gustos,

the silent troves above us  
hanging like a sense  
of our impermanence,  
almost outlasting in its stay.

2

Think of it like this.  
The mind's body or the body's  
mind, that half-turnedwrong-  
way-round pirouette

is not the flame above  
a wax candle, not gilt  
crown propped akimbo  
over the monarch's brow.

Your brain's offspring —  
the I feeling a you  
as an I to be with,  
each other's awareness —

is the twirling vapour  
over a simmering soup,  
its fine-spun wisps jostled  
by kindling underheats

just at low, a hovering-above,  
the sultry dewed ethers  
rising a time over the mess  
of potage, our birthright.

Then the final time,  
when the heat shuts down,  
and the vapours, come  
to a head, ease off,

and the stalling ethers'  
unweights, letting up,  
cool soupward, their fogs  
wading back into the gels

and plumbed unguents less  
quicken, the mists whisked  
into the liquid's liquid liquids,  
the very thought of it.

Jeffery Donaldson

3

Peace to you, dazzling blizzard.  
Godspeed, hard northerlies,  
your phantom hullabaloo  
whirled off in new weathers.

You were something to behold.  
But what fastened us spellbound  
were your upheld wrap-rounds,  
sashaying windwise, a buoyancy

in abeyance, waffling in hiatus,  
intermission's maze so downy  
in its lift, so like what love  
is like that we stopped drifting,

until it must have settled surely —  
the part I still can't bring to mind  
to save my life — on fields of snow,  
endless, as far as we could see.

**Fountain Pen**

I spread my blue privates  
on the creaking line,  
those aired unmentionables

showing wear. Scrawled  
awkward tatters, so public,  
so seen. The skid stains.

Higher up, an inky gloom  
waiting in store will trickle  
down, come evening,

turned like an hourglass,  
and its obfuscations  
will cover entire sheets.

Hang it all. Let the dark  
empty. Come morning, I'll see  
where the blues have run.

open a place in memory  
for whatever abstract notion  
captures its fall

Jeffery Donaldson

**Found in an Essay by Max Beerbohm**

*Only what mattered was changed.  
Only what mattered was gone.*

Your old cottage was deserted.  
I climbed over the gate,  
walked through the long grass.

In the door-post, a small knob  
of rusty iron was a mocking  
reminder that to gain admission

to your house one rang the bell.  
A rusty bell with no one  
in sight to answer it leaves

one to go. Yet I did not go.  
The movement that I made  
was towards the knob itself.

I hesitated. Suppose I did  
what I half meant to do  
and there were no sound?

That would be ghastly.  
And surely there *would* be  
no sound. And if sound

there were, wouldn't that be  
still worse? No footstep  
of yours answering within,

making prints in the dust,  
there in the dark recesses,  
all your inner things lasting.

My hand drew back, misgave,  
suddenly closed on the knob.  
I heard the scrape of the wire

—and then, faintly somewhere  
deep within the heart  
of your shut house, a chime.



**Richard Foerster**

**Sitting for the Portraitist**

Belly, jowls, her sagging breasts  
pencilled, shaded, then erased.

His eyes are knives, she thinks,  
the way he slashes at the canvas.

Gravity's the least of it at fifty-five.  
Her posing naked's not an exercise

in pride but in humility. Frozen,  
crocodilian, some part of her's submerged,

escapes his capturing. She knows she must  
compose herself, focus on the vase of lilies

he's set across the room with its heady  
scent of cloves from Zanzibar. Oceans apart,

still she can see the anthers jiggle like pendants  
on a chandelier when a door opens onto dark

vistas, a susurrus of waves, the tidal heave  
of a lover's breath. Now she is adrift.

Oar-stroke. Brushstroke. The pollen's orange-  
yellow, like saffron robes on Buddhist monks . . .

so many minuscule immolations—  
her every thought a flame, martyred

for his cause, this torture when her mind  
re-moors and she suspects there's nothing

of her now he can't dissect. The blood-flow  
pulsing at her wrist, tiny seismic

spasms, tickles, her fear she'll need to sneeze.

The body's a jack-in-the-box, self-cranked.

It frightens her the lid can pop—*Surprise,*  
*you've got cancer, diabetes, HIV*—uncoiling

its garish face and ragged hair, a future  
no scumbling could ever soften, no reticence deny.

When at last she takes his hand to ease her  
from the sofa, what radiance could be more brutal?

Richard Foerster

## What the Larch Tree Told Me

*after Antonio Ciseri*

Nights when I leave the window cracked  
a mere fissure but it's enough for the day's  
undecipherable hiss and spume to shiver through,

when wordlessness chills me into awareness the dark  
has seeped up all around me, soaked my sheets with worry,  
it's the larch I try to listen for, how it brunts the wind, its boughs

rabbled and whipped, bent back and brinked. A contortionist in  
every gale.  
How it casts wide its long arms. But tonight it says, *Better to yield  
than break.*  
No easy lesson if by yielding one can't see to mend what's yet  
more deeply broken.

*Tamarack, hackmatack*—my garden's axis mundi, like Trajan's  
chiseled column,  
my mainmast and yard—syllables an oracle might utter as cryptic  
comfort,  
a warning and guide. You dissembler of ever-green, I've watched  
you

surrender your needles each fall in molten showers of gold, stand  
bare-sticked and humbled, limbs hobbled with snow.  
*Yield?* Is this all to be threshed of the wind?

Nothing but passive gestures and this  
spiked crown you'd bid me  
likewise wear?

**Late Light**

Late light where I'm reading, then a flurry,  
like moths at the sill, and I see in the soot-

dark panes the wintery white of a beard, the flash-  
back of spectacles into the room. —And the man

I'm yet to know bares a glint of nothingness  
about his eyes: a shard, a shiv that plunges in,

leaving a bloodless wound, the long dull throb  
of awareness. Minutes, years press against the glass

between us; their rattling taps begin to melt and flow . . .  
no, not like tears, no, not like that at all.

**John Foy**

**Contemplative**

*for Chris Childers*

The birch I point to, even though it's late  
to practice any kind of augury,  
is right in line with that old apple tree  
I look upon beneath the sky and take  
my bearings from. It's here I sit and wait,  
though who knows why, to see what comes to me  
—a crow could be a sign of penury  
or something worse to contemplate.

What happens in the temple of the trees  
when wind comes through, as if at will, I'm left  
to figure out, and then a flight of birds  
across the blue above this property  
I try to read, but tell me, who is fit  
to fix the flying into words?

**Funeral**

No word really rhymes with *funeral*.  
There are, though, some that almost rhyme,  
like *useful*, *futile*, *irretrievable*.  
And then there's *tuna casserole*, but that's a stretch,  
and *urinal* is inappropriate.  
I do like *brutal*, *crucial*, *cruel* and *do-able*.  
And what's wrong with *denial*?  
The director of a funeral home  
told me I would leave this *mortal* life.  
He was beyond *contemptible*,  
but that was long ago, when my father died.  
He sold us bogus death certificates  
that were, for *legal* purposes, not *usable*.  
His cufflinks were *incomparable*.

John Foy

### **Report Card**

I got a B for being there  
because I wasn't really there  
the night my father died. I was  
on business down in Baltimore  
and got the message back at home.  
I'd been with him that Saturday,  
but I was in the hospice, then,  
in spirit only when he died.  
In sadness, well, I got an A.  
It was a mandatory class.

I got a C for taking care  
of animals, a dog I had,  
but there was nothing I could do  
when she was taken by disease.  
She went from chasing after deer  
and swimming in the Delaware  
to lying crippled on the floor  
and left on pentobarbital.  
I took her body to the car  
and got an A in bitterness.

I got a D for doing what  
my mother wanted me to do  
when she was in her final years.  
I gave her all the time I could.  
I kept the books and went each week  
to see her in a nursing home  
that was supposed to be the best,  
though it was not a place I'd want  
to have to smell for very long.  
I earned an A in sorrow there.

An F is what I got for faith.  
My prayers were not that regular,  
and once a year I went to church,  
a failing in the eyes of those

who like to monitor such things,  
but if you think of *pain* as *prayer*,  
why, I've been at it constantly,  
and were I graded on that curve,  
then I would get an A and know  
that I had earned the grade I got.



***H.L. Hix***

**How do we move from this limitless condition to responsible action?**

(Annika Thiem)

For principles, these five. Never  
(for no nakedness, not to bathe, not to taste  
of my lover her salt and savor),  
never remove from my waist  
this sisal, tied around it by my mother,  
that hides me from all malicious spirits.  
Drink neither wine nor water  
without the spill that quenches ancestors' thirst.  
Always chant, offering chaff  
(praise Breeze; do not name Calm, do not name Gust).  
At solstice, climb high enough  
to see this season's snow in last season's nest.  
With my own knife, on myself,  
incise in glyphs my history of secrets.

**Is there a way to wake up?**

(Jena Osman)

I was supposed to know them, the couple  
you named, alerting me they'd gone missing.  
(This dream dimmed what all my dreams dim: trouble.  
We never bloomed, but we keep dehiscing.)  
I was at work, in a meeting, a small,  
hot, crowded room. You broke in, insisted  
I help. (Though we were speaking not at all.  
We never stood, never fell, just listed.)  
I was not I, nor you you. (*This* the dream  
lifted from my life: what *feels* fraught *is* fraught.  
And this: I saw your halt and raised you lame.)  
By us, the lost, are the missing best sought,  
so we left together to look for them,  
the couple I should have known but did not.

H.L. Hix

**What might it mean to think that I am absent from or to my own experience?**

(Veena Das)

I can't quite catch my breath. Here,  
because at this altitude, no one can,  
or in such cold. Any more,  
because I am older already than  
they ever were, my father  
or his or his. Always it was sudden,  
the end, though their giving over  
had been steady, like this my giving in.  
Which counts as their forfeiture,  
that collapse, or the deterioration?  
They couldn't catch their breath, either.  
Like father, like son: fall, falling, fallen.  
Here just *is* I know not where  
now that I'm older than he was when.

**What would it mean — and what would it take — to end metaphysics?**

(Hans Ulrich Gumbrecht)

I could be anywhere, in this world  
or in whatever distant other,  
but for the call of I know not what bird,  
the same two notes over and over,  
the second pitch lower by a third  
than the first, no element, neither  
the calls nor the time between them, varied.  
The same, the same, for more than an hour.  
But that I awoke at your side.  
That, though I cannot *see* you or *hear*  
through the wall, I still feel you, in bed  
in the next room. That soon you will stir.  
I'll bring you coffee, hear what you dreamed.  
Meanwhile, this dawn. That bird. You. Now. Here.

## ***Timothy Murphy***

### **Trimeters**

#### I. *Confessio Amantis*

I was immersed in sins  
and not the venial sort,  
Christ's blood up to my shins,  
guilt of grave import,

heresiarch for years  
(decades if truth be told),  
but God allayed my fears  
of hardened heart grown cold,

made Himself manifest  
with all His Spirit's heft  
and lent me strength to test  
what goodness I had left.

#### II. Charismatic

To a spirit fallen low,  
wallowing in despair  
while ripping out his hair,  
shoveling his snow

or falling down a stair  
to bruise a drunken face,  
or kneeling down in prayer  
to beg our Savior's grace,

no Greek word can embrace  
or give so great a lift:  
*Charis* we translate *grace*,  
but *Charis* means a *gift*.

III. Widower

*for R.P.W.*

Nine years after she died  
he's very much alive,  
a minor point of pride  
as he nears ninety-five.  
Lonely, his wilderness  
watered with words, not tears:  
nightly he kneels to bless  
their sixty-seven years.

IV. Feast

Next Sunday Pentecost,  
then Ordinary Time,  
but first the Holy Ghost  
brings me the gift of rhyme  
as once the gift of tongues  
descending from above  
filled the Apostles' lungs.  
They prayed, prayed to a dove.

V. *Bardo Thodol*

Suffering in his bed,  
propped in his easy chair,  
he read *The Book of the Dead*  
to mitigate despair.  
Padmasambhava's text  
dear to my Savior's spouse  
readied him for his next  
life in our Father's house.

Timothy Murphy

## **Division of Labor, an Elegy**

Forever Tenderfoot

Alan could never master the square knot,  
    bowline or taut line hitch  
while puzzling in the cockpit of a yacht,  
muttering softly “You son of a bitch.”

His square knot came up granny every time.  
    I always kept a hank  
astern, a line white with its spindrift rime.  
His knots fell apart at the slightest yank,  
but he could kedge me off a sandy bank  
before the ship’s clock struck its high tide chime.

Thousands of scouts had learned their ropes from me.  
    Alan, unteachable,  
would try again, present his work with glee,  
but my first mate is now unreachable.

Division of Labor

Labor was settled after our third week.  
    Alan would keep our house  
while our small fortune was all mine to seek,  
he the domestic, I the hunting mouse.

The house became hundreds of apple trees,  
    our fortune never made,  
the crushing debts my private miseries.  
The orchard was a glass of lemonade  
where we would share a breather in the shade  
as apple blossoms drifted past our knees.

At sea our labors were divided too,  
    the weather Alan worked,  
my flemished falls, commandments to the crew,  
our tasks divided, never to be shirked.

Apple Keepers

He never touched a chainsaw. That was mine,  
    shaving down to the grass  
the fallen tree trunks wreathed in orchard vine  
so our front-mounted Deere 910s could pass.

I never touched his loppers. They were his,  
    grafting my other task  
to help him carry through his *orchard biz*.  
And though each player sometimes wore a mask,  
my grafting vest hiding a whiskey flask,  
our focus wasn't on what *was* but *is*.

Another task of his was clearing snow.  
    Watching the pressure dive  
he loved to see a drifting blizzard blow,  
squaring his shoulders, manfully alive.

Sneaky Alan

Alan contrived to sneak the weighty stuff  
    into his larger pack,  
knowing that altitude for me was rough,  
a mercy for my chronically bad back.

Near the Divide Alan would choose the site  
    where I would pitch our tent,  
a clearing in the pines, and at first light  
the summer sun would shine without relent

full on our stream bank or a granite seam  
where I shoulder my labors now in dream.

Ever Upward

No giardia, our campsites were too high,  
the mountain sheep carried none in their droppings.  
After our camp was pitched I'd pitch my fly,  
almonds, pepper and lemon juice our toppings.



Timothy Murphy

A weighted line wound round a lower limb  
could snag dead pine, broken beside the fire  
where we reclined until the coals grew dim,  
then slept as must the just after they tire.

The Milky Way a thick blanket of white  
from east to west, heart of our galaxy  
wheeling above us on a moonless night,  
two tokes of weed would stoke our reverie.

We climbed for sheer love of the mountain sky,  
shed of the prairie, my young man and I.

Always West

The Wind Rivers and Beartooth, they were ours,  
one a day's drive, other more than a day.  
See through my windshield how a roll cloud glowers,  
ready to toss the carefully swathed hay.

Bound for Bismarck I always make my crossing,  
one more Missouri for my lifetime list.  
In dream I often see a raven tossing,  
blown all to hell before a crag of schist.

Burrowing owlets dig out of their nest,  
and we believed Heaven lay always west.

**Angela Alaimo O'Donnell**

**The Still Pilgrim Ponders Two Birches**

*I'd like to go by climbing a birch tree,  
And climb black branches up a snow white trunk  
Toward heaven, till the tree could bear no more.  
—Robert Frost, "Birches"*

Late evening sun sets the birch on fire.  
Not the same tree I climbed as a child,  
each branch fitted to my small arch,  
the paper-thin peelings of white bark,  
rough to my fingers, soft in my hands,  
skin upon skin upon skin. No words  
of warning could keep me away.  
And then it was gone one day,

its ugly stump stuck in our yard  
reminder of all we had lost—  
my father, who died that same spring.  
Naked the spot, steep the cost  
to give up all and every thing.  
My birch is full of birds who sing.

Angela Alaimo O'Donnell

### **The Still Pilgrim Faces the Wall**

*Vietnam War Memorial,  
Washington D.C.*

Stone cold amid a field of snow  
fifty thousand names carved in black granite,  
whispering here where the bleak wind blows  
calling to every last man. It  
stands stark, our holy wailing wall,  
unspeakable loss spoken here,  
sons who once walked straight and tall,  
fathers whose burdens mothers bear.

It draws us in, its dark grave wake  
rippling beneath the winter sky.  
What can we give, we who take  
our breaths before these men who died?  
Our shadows frozen, thrown on stone,  
turn away, leave them alone.

**The Still Pilgrim's Insomnia**

At 2:02 sleep bid me adieu,  
booked passage on an early train,  
caught a cab, jumped a jet and flew,  
left me alone in the mid-night rain.

At 3:03 sleep is my enemy.  
It texts me to promise its return.  
Wide-eyed I wait expectantly.  
Night after night. I never learn.

At 4:04 sleep's at my door.  
I've locked and latched it. Shut it tight.  
Sleep's sweet less become my more.  
Dazed I doze and wait for light.

At 5:05 the humming hive  
awakes, and sleep sleeps by my side.

***Hilary Sideris***

**Numb**

The way the letter  
*b* lingers unsaid,

the phantom hum  
of a lost limb,

my own fingers  
& thumb flicker

over the keys  
like candle flame

a blinded scribe  
still sees.

**La Grappa**

I get it wrong but  
the kind Padovana

understands. Without  
comment she takes

a bottle from among  
the oranges, greens,

yellowings lining her shelf—  
the colorless liquid you

love, *forte* but smooth,  
a gift I'll pack or drink

myself, depending  
on the way you say

sorry: *mi dispiace*  
or *perdonami*.

***J.D. Smith***

**Lament for the Departed Muses**

Once Elton John mourned Marilyn Monroe  
And asked a seal for wisdom. (Was he high?)  
But that was lots of years and songs ago.  
The rocket man long absent from the sky,  
Sir Elton finds his fervor cushioned by  
A husband and a spare—and ample—tire.  
The circle of his life now filled with pie,  
How did contentment take the place of fire?

What turning rendered Clapton's hand so slow  
Acoustic "Layla" sounds like but a sigh,  
While Johnny Lydon joined the status quo  
As paid endorser, snarl to lullabye?  
How did Mark Knopfler find his well gone dry  
And, *On Every Street*, his straits no longer dire?  
For these and other voices since grown shy,  
How did contentment take the place of fire?

What truth did Jimi, Jim and Janis know,  
Kurt have to pull a trigger to apply?  
Did they escape the fate of oldies show  
At county fairs and comebacks gone awry,  
Less songs to play than long-time trade to ply,  
The fuel of youth but cinders on a pyre?  
No one would ever say, "Oh yeah, that guy."  
How did contentment take the place of fire?"

So Prince, where did your first funk's fury fly?  
To what condition do you now aspire?  
Though we may never know just when or why,  
How did contentment take the place of fire?

**In Fact**

*Beneath it all, desire of oblivion runs.  
—Philip Larkin*

The longing for oblivion  
Is never satisfied.

Should such nullity descend,  
The mind that would be pleased

Has vanished with its appetites,  
Once met by food or love.

This want, and thoughts of it, imply  
Its failure to be met

So that what must be settled for  
As age or pills take hold

Is languid expectation, yet  
Ensconced in consciousness.



J.D. Smith

### **Approaching Praise**

A patch of bark twitches, then  
bursts into owl-flight.

A leaf like other jungle leaves  
stirs and goes on implicit legs

as, in a fogged mirror,  
a magnified peach pit emerges  
from a chin drawn taut for shaving.

**Ronald Stottlemyer**

**Weathervane**

Sometimes at twilight,  
out of the moments the years  
  
have scattered, I hear  
the weathervane still rattling  
  
up there on the spine of the barn,  
wind slipping through the crack  
  
of copper light slowly closing  
over the aspens, the stone fences,  
  
the water trough at my knees  
trembling with pale light. What  
  
was I then, six or seven, too young  
for all I feel now, seventy years  
  
fallen away from heaven,  
not knowing yet what I have  
  
come to as these moments return,  
the hawk, gray eye of winter,  
  
settling down on his fence post,  
night folded in his wings.

**Snow**

Before you open your eyes  
you feel the weight of it in a quiet

as deep as Siberia. The last  
thing you remembered then

was the wind trying the boulders,  
the night, shaggy, lumbering on.

And the light now, chalky,  
a fog in your half-opened eyes,

your arm swollen white,  
drifted away from you,

numbed, a useless club,  
the footsteps beside it filling,

ashes of millennia  
lightly floating back, settling in.

*James Matthew Wilson*

**The Scar of Odysseus**

In the old stories, on a quest  
For a lost grail, gold fleece, or to refound  
A kingdom sacked so the hearth gods can rest,  
A small crew would leave its natal ground  
And sail beyond the limits of the West.

The sons and wives who stayed behind  
Would wonder at their wandering and wait  
With thoughts of monsters weighing on their mind,  
Until a ship with magical freight  
Appears at dawn, its white sail on dark brine.

Such tales can hardly fail to please.  
For, we lap up the unknown that's made known,  
And sense our lives, in great or small degrees,  
Look like quests too—could they be shown  
In all their menaces and victories.

No wonder, then, we celebrate  
The bliss of bride and groom at their beginning;  
The perilous hours that lead through narrow straits  
But somehow keep the fates' spool spinning;  
The disembarking for a golden estate.

What's more, we see a dark plot swells  
Along the path the schoolboy walks alone;  
And hear behind the girl's first kiss church bells;  
And feel our hearts with his atone,  
When the bond clerk comes clean on what he sells.

Their lives show ours. When we behold  
Some soldier stiffly called away to war,  
Or hear monks pray their office in the cold  
Chapel, we know that their forms are  
Those our lives take when their true depths are told.

James Matthew Wilson

But they must *not* be: we have seen  
The maniac proclaim his destiny,  
And suffered through dull cruise slides, scene on scene,  
As some fool reeled in vanity.  
We cannot always say what our lives mean.

Not just the humble, but the wise,  
Accept the distant idyll for its strangeness,  
Which gives to our lives' plots their just disguise.  
Odysseus wore a beggar's plainness  
So that the truth his love alone surmised.

**How Many Exiles in the Monasteries**

*A man does not join himself with the Universe  
so long as he has anything else to join himself with.  
—T.S. Eliot*

How many exiles in the monasteries  
Copied some painted page in heavy tomes  
And filled its margins with the spry but weary  
Details recalled of their forsaken homes?

Some displaced readers down the centuries  
Have opened Dante's *De vulgari* and found  
Their pains ginned up as pride's rhetorical breeze:  
*Pure language is the great man's native ground.*

When, over cheap newspaper blurbs, one sees  
A plane's white snout shredding the parceled sky—  
A discount angel's posed sublimity  
That loathes outmoded bones—one feels its lie:

The placeless freedom some words have is not  
Ours; they're what's left when our homes go to rot.

James Matthew Wilson

**All the Hollowed Shells**

*in Cahirciveen*

We found a thousand hollow shells left scattered  
Among the rocky, kelp-strewn teeth of shore:  
Such seeping, tight-lipped, stubborn hunks of matter,  
Tossed up by chance and left as dried decor  
For tourists like myself to stow away  
In pockets, as a keep-sake of their day.

Behind me, crumbling stones from a house wall—  
Whose denizens died old and childless,  
The cattle staring listless from their stalls—  
Lie, too, as if with nothing to confess.  
Here, among sand and stone and history,  
Lay broken shells from whom integrity

And fullness have been crushed so that their shards  
Grow iridescent in the tide and sun;  
Though life is weak, it hostels in what's hard.  
I notice all this as I pick up one,  
Its slow, un-minded growth preserved as rings  
Of calcite, unconcerned with what time brings.

Others have thought that they could take shells for  
Their beauty, worn by wind and waters, stripped  
Of life and freed completely of those scores  
From beaks or cracking stones. Their silent lips,  
As pale as the pearls sealed within, have chimed  
On ends of strings, been found in strangers' rhymes.

A dozen times—I have lost count—I've turned  
To this or that girl on my arm to call  
Her the proverbial pearl—that is, the firm  
And definite prize to whom I am in thrall,  
As if all thought and purpose came from her  
Whose face will be, in six months' time, a blur.

But this one with me now will surely last,  
I tell myself, and turn to her in pride  
At her slim waist, the fullness of her breasts,  
The mark, like coffee pooled on her knee's side.  
At night, she reads our travel guide aloud,  
While I imagine us amid a crowd

Of pilgrims scrambling up some rubbled hill  
Or listening as a street player tunes her harp.  
She does this hoping each sight will distil  
In memory, meaning and details kept sharp.  
So would I hold her voice and form in thought,  
Though I sensed a break coming when we fought

Three nights ago, and she saw that my hands  
Were like those of a thief or exile who snags,  
On leaving, things he'll never understand  
But all the same stuffs in his carpet bag.  
All I'd admired in figure, words, and head  
Seemed, then, just one more tour site visited

But, here we are, amid a wreck of shells  
And houses that, in ruins, seem to tell  
More of time's lies and hurt than even they could  
When fishermen and their families still worked here.  
That wreck and ruin is something understood,  
And something that for us is coming near;

Much like the news reports that, years ago,  
Troubled this country that it had been blind  
To the particular sufferings of its own  
For all its principled benevolence of mind,  
When here, in Kerry, bodies of drowned souls,  
Anonymous infants, were cast up on the shoals.



## **On the Distinction between Verse and Poetry, a Classical Solution**

In his introduction to a 1941 selection of Rudyard Kipling's poems, T.S. Eliot begins by asking "whether Kipling's verse really is poetry" at all.<sup>1</sup> He proceeds to group Kipling with the "many writers of verse who have not aimed at writing poetry." And he concludes by insisting that he makes no "value judgement" between verse and poetry, going so far as to praise Kipling as a master of verse, which art form does some things that poetry itself cannot do. Even so, he insists that good verse must, at least from time to time, rise to the level of poetry.<sup>2</sup> Eliot thus leaves us with the impression that the distinction between verse and poetry is more than mere semantics, but of what that distinction consists remains ambiguous. As a poet and essayist who spent much of his career attempting to restore vital meaning to words and actions that have gone dead, been injured by the exhausting trod of history, Eliot can be forgiven for trying to maintain a distinction that does not seem entirely adequate to the reality it is supposed to describe. But, if Eliot makes this distinction, should we? And if, finally, some distinction holds between poetry and verse, how should we understand it? I shall here propose that verse—meaning, in this essay, poetic lines written in *meter*—interweaves with two other elements, which I group under the rubrics *memory* and *metaphor*, to constitute the essence of that paradigmatic and so august kind of *making* that we call poetry.

Readers of Timothy Steele's magnificent study, *Missing Measures: Modern Poetry and the Revolt against Meter*, will recall that no one would have thought to debate whether verse and poetry might refer to separate things, had not Aristotle's long-lost *Poetics* been recovered during the Renaissance.<sup>3</sup> When our first modern literary critics looked upon this ancient precedent for their vocation, they hit upon the following short passage. Early in the *Poetics*, Aristotle writes,

The distinction between historian and poet is not in the one writing prose and the other verse—you might put the work of Herodotus into verse, and it would still be a species of history; it consists really in this, that the one

describes the thing that has been, and the other a kind of thing that might be. Hence poetry is something more philosophic and of graver import than history, since its statements are of the nature rather of universals, whereas those of history are singulars.<sup>4</sup>

As Steele reports, the effort of Renaissance literary theorists to “harmonize” this passage with the work of other ancient authorities on rhetoric led them to draw a conclusion Aristotle himself seems not to have intended.<sup>5</sup> That verse, meaning here metrical composition, is something other than and even outside the essence of poetry was no part of Aristotle’s argument. His *Poetics*, as it comes down to us, is a treatise on dramatic and epic poetry, and Aristotle’s aim is to consider the chief qualities these poetic modes share, which is the imitation or re-telling of an action.<sup>6</sup> They are poetry because they tell fictional stories: they have plots drawn together *not* from incidental historical facts but from internally coherent causal relations. It is in the making of plots that the dramatic and epic poet’s activity primarily consists. Verse may be essential to these modes and indeed to all poetry, but dividing poetry into types based merely on differences of meter, on verse form, does not by itself suffice to define what drama and epic themselves do.<sup>7</sup> Elsewhere, Aristotle will be content to identify poetry with metrical composition in general, writing that prose “is to be rhythmical, but not metrical,” or else it will become verse, by which he seems to mean poetry.<sup>8</sup> Only if we wish to understand the different kinds of poetry relative to one another do we need to pass beyond metrical form to something else—its *kinds* of content (which Aristotle calls the “object”) and its different “manners” of presentation.<sup>9</sup>

But Renaissance readers did not perceive the particular distinctions Aristotle was making for the sake of understanding what makes drama and epic the kinds of art forms they are, because those readers were trying to draw his insights into a more generalized, and consequently less subtle, theory about the nature and function of poetry as a whole. Sir Philip Sidney’s *Defense of Poesy* (1595) offers a classic example of the results. Sidney would propose that all poetry consists in the making of an idealized or “golden” imitation (*mimesis*) that will “teach and delight.”<sup>10</sup> He expands Aristotle’s definition of imitation to account as best he can for all kinds of poetry and presumes he has adequately defined his object. He then observes that poets have “appareled

their poetical inventions in that numbrous kind of writing which is called verse." What he means by "apparel" becomes clear presently, when he insists that "verse [is] no cause of poetry."<sup>11</sup> Further on he will even say "one may be a poet without versing, and a versifier without poetry."<sup>12</sup>

These are incredible remarks coming from Sidney's pen. His poems were among the first true systematic realizations of modern English accentual-syllabic meter such that his greatest achievement as a poet may well be just his bringing English prosody to a perfection so that it could withstand comparison with the classical quantitative meters of Greek and Latin.<sup>13</sup> Furthermore, Sidney himself conceives of this "apparel" of meter as speech's highest perfection, its fulfillment as it were.<sup>14</sup> And this leads him to suggest, with other Renaissance Platonists and humanists, that a perfection of the surface of speech is the very incarnation of the ideal, such that any distinction between thought and expression, content and form, becomes moot. He collapses content into form and celebrates the poet as what we might call the true philosopher, because he eschews the abstract ruminations typical of all philosophers with the striking exception of Plato, in favor of the realization of ideas as form, truth as meter.<sup>15</sup> Perfection of verse is therefore effectively, if not explicitly, perfection of poetry, and because poetry gives us "a perfect picture" of the truths "the philosopher saith," we may go further and say that, for Sidney, perfection of verse is finally the perfection of philosophy, precisely because it collapses the abstract thoughts of the philosopher into the surface or form of the poetic imitation.<sup>16</sup>

I think this is what the great poet and critic Yvor Winters must have objected to in Sidney when he spoke of his "sensitivity to language" that is "greatly in excess of [his] moral intelligence."<sup>17</sup> Winters subsequently notes that Sidney "introduced a mode of perception too complex for his own powers, and was often forced to seek matter in the precious and the trivial" and that "Sidney is concerned" in his poetry "primarily with what he regards as a graceful manner, a polished surface."<sup>18</sup> It would not have occurred to Winters to entertain a "polished surface" as being itself the truth perceived; he most admired the plain, abstract, and often didactic "native" style of the sixteenth lyrics written before Sidney and others introduced Petrarchan conventions into English. But, yes, indeed, this is what Sidney suavely proclaims. While he will insist that poets cannot be accused of being "liars," because they do not claim to speak the literal truth, his argument

for what poetry *does* speak defines it as a concrete, philosophical, and ideal imitation that *transcends* the mere facts of the literal. In this, as we might expect, he claims to be following Aristotle regarding the difference between poetry and history even as he also shows poetry, again, to be the very perfection of philosophy.<sup>19</sup>

Sidney's concern for poetry as surface—for what he even calls “the skin . . . and beauty”—lies in his sense of it as forming an ideal vision, and this “golden” ideal becomes a philosophical model that the reader is intended to emulate.<sup>20</sup> As Gavin Alexander notes in his edition of the *Defense*, Sidney's account of imitation follows Aristotle's by placing it at the heart of poetry, but it considerably expands its scope by joining it to the account Cicero gives in *Pro Archia Poeta*.<sup>21</sup> In sum, the matter of poetry is an ideal imitation of reality, and so qualifies as *mimesis*; the reader is meant to *emulate* what he finds in the ideal form of poetry; and, between *mimesis* and emulation falls imitation, that is, a poetic style modeled on the achievement of past masters. The *imitatio* of style becomes the threshold that leads us from the matter *in* the poem *out of it* to the reader. Poetic form seems almost to bear all things within itself as a kind of microcosm; the poet stands second only to the divine among the ranks of men.<sup>22</sup>

Just as Sidney and his contemporaries overlooked the particulars of Aristotle's ideas so as to arrive at a general theory, so later readers would overlook the subtleties of Sidney's. Rather than perceiving his ambition to merge all thought into the medium of poetry so that it may at last find its perfect apparel or embodiment, they fastened on his dogmatic distinction between poetry and verse. We all know what happened next. Verse came to be associated with “craft,” “technique,” composition, and practice.<sup>23</sup> It is mere form, an empty shell, a dried husk—or at best a convenient container to be smashed as a Greek might smash a plate when the real passions at the party get going. Poetry, on the other hand, came to be a term to be uttered only as one's cheeks warmed with overwhelming emotion and as one's language grew purple or perhaps slurred with some ethereal liquor. For Keats, poesy is indeed the drug that alone makes for the overcoming of our mortal senses so that we may hear the sad music of eternal beauty. For many a romantic, poetry is not a way of writing or speaking, it is rather a way of perceiving. We see into the life of things, writes Wordsworth. More than one hundred years later, a French priest will tell us this is so because poetry is a natural analogue to the supernatural experience of the divine known first

by Christian mystics, and a French philosopher will tell us that poetry constitutes a unique mode of intelligence. It is intuitive knowledge of existence by way of concrete being. Such extraordinary claims have been made for poetry's power that one begins to think, with J.V. Cunningham, that it is not the content of the definition of poetry that any longer matters but only one's fevered endorsement of its almost supernatural moral and spiritual value.<sup>24</sup>

In following this circumstantial cleaving of verse from poetry, we have come a very long way from what Aristotle was attempting to do. He wished merely to understand what the body of poems under study all had in common. No one denies that he was at best only partially successful, but his failure was that his theory did not extend to all the different individual poems for which it was intended to account. Even my students recall ideas of *hubris* and the "fatal flaw" in the tragic hero as if these were universal principles of tragedy, when in fact they do not even account for most of the plays Aristotle had read.<sup>25</sup> But let's credit Aristotle with at least this much. At least his theory was intended to account for actual poems. When one hears the celebration of poetry not as a genre of literature but as a peculiar spirit, experience, or way of knowing, one senses that the word has become untethered from anything in particular. One can almost see the broken twine left swaying beneath the hot air balloon of poetry as it rises, rises, pushes upward on the heat of our many fine sentiments. Even Eliot understood things had gotten out of hand; he just did not know how to correct the matter.<sup>26</sup>

When poetry and verse are distinguished in this line of thinking, it becomes clear that one refers to an actual object—poems—and the other to some activity of a subject—the poet. We are no longer talking about the same things. Those who try—and fail—to follow Sidney portray poetry as a great thing; whatever it may be, it is surely good. Verse seems a term of deprecation. But, if "verse" is such a bad thing, why did those writers who broke with established English metrical practice feel the need to claim that their poetry was experimenting with "free verse"? Why not call their stripping away of actual verse something more romantic like "transcendental poetry" or "pure spiritual expression" or who knows what else? Is not verse, after all, for mere journeymen?

There must be something about verse that we recognize as not only good or valuable but as absolutely essential to poetry such that one cannot exist without the other. Those who tear

themselves away from meter, who abandon verse, would seem to bandage over the wound with the gauze of “free verse” and hope that no one will notice. We live in an age of course where people paper over unrealities with pleasing newspeak as a matter of course, and so I guess it testifies to the prophetic powers of true poets that they were already papering over the abandonment of meter with meaningless nominals a hundred years ago.

But a wound is a wound and is bound to ache. Hence the sharpness of Dick Davis’s poem “Preferences.” If poetry is prophetic transcendental emotional excrescence, Davis wants no part in it. He’ll take verse. His full statement reads,

To my surprise  
I’ve come to realize  
I don’t like poetry

(Dear, drunkly woozy,  
Accommodating floozy  
That she’s obliged to be,

Poor girl, these days).  
No, what I love and praise  
Is not damp poetry

But her pert, terse,  
Accomplished sibling: verse,  
She’s the right girl for me.<sup>27</sup>

If this is not a poem, but just verse, then why does it sound like a poem? And, why does so much that claims to be poetry though it walks about stripped bare of verse—not?

Well, if poetry and verse are categorically different things, those who like their poetry to be verse and those who do not might just as well go their separate ways. They might, as Davis proposes, simply oblige their own preferences. Yet somehow this pleasingly pluralistic proposal does not work. If one persists in following one’s yen for verse, one is still liable to be called backward, reactionary, “narrow-minded,” or perhaps even a fascist.<sup>28</sup> Eliot, recall, told us he intended no “value judgment” in distinguishing poetry and verse, but his essay on Kipling shows otherwise. He cannot resist. And if he cannot, it is no surprise that those who have followed him have been even more zealous in

their praise of poetic powers and in their denigrations of measured practices.

Let me take stock of this accidental critical tradition. It distinguishes poetry and verse finally for the sake of opposing them. It begins in an effort to define poetry but it ends only by judging its moral value. It begins by trying to describe different ways of writing and speaking and ends with everyone talking past one another.

Cunningham, whom I mentioned above, sought to curtail such jabbering by reducing poetry to meter. In his most important critical volume, he concluded that “Poetry is what looks like poetry, what sounds like poetry. It is metrical composition.”<sup>29</sup> Poetry is verse, verse is poetry, and that is that. By his own admission, there is much that poetry may do besides constitute a metrical composition, but this and this alone is poetry’s definition.

Well, with the mis-readers of Aristotle, I believe there is a distinction between poetry and verse. And yet, with Cunningham, I believe that verse is so essential to poetry as to be nearly identical with it. Do I contradict myself? We shall see. My intention is to solve this problem by engaging in just that mode of inquiry that Aristotle himself practiced, and which is now called that of “tradition dependent rationality.” With Aristotle, we turn to the cumulative historical experience of a tradition in order to arrive at a rational account of something that finally transcends the tradition.<sup>30</sup>

Consider a very different starting point for the definition of poetry. Not in the words of Aristotle, but of Plato. Here are some words of the priestess Diotima found in *Plato’s Symposium*:

Well, you know for example, that “poetry” (*poiesis*) has a very wide range. After all, everything that is responsible for creating something out of nothing is a kind of poetry, and so all the creations of every craft and profession are themselves a kind of poetry, and everyone who practices a craft is a poet . . . Nevertheless . . . As you also know, these craftsmen are not called poets. We have other words for them, and out of the whole of poetry we have marked off one part, the part the Muses give us with melody and rhythm, and we refer to this by the word that means the whole. For this alone is called “poetry,” and those who practice this part of poetry are called poets.<sup>31</sup>

Diotima tells Socrates that every act of making is poetry, because the word poetry simply means making.<sup>32</sup> But the kind of making for which we normally reserve that word is that part “the Muses give us with melody and rhythm.” This passage, coupled with much of what we know about the long history of poetic practice in the ancient and modern worlds, allows us to make two observations.

First, what Diotima indicates here is that the art of poetry is the *paradigmatic* art form. By this I mean, it is the *prototype* of all making: it comes first, because it comes from the Muses, from beyond this world, as it were, and so before we begin making other things on our own. It is also the *archetype* of all making. Every other kind of making is understood or defined by way of analogy to the art of poetry. There will, consequently, be many things that resemble poetry in some respects and not in others. They will be more poetic the more closely they approximate to it, the more fully they *participate* in its essence; but each of these things may be called poetry by *way of analogy*. I’ll return to this.

The second conclusion will more immediately speak to our subject. What is this special part of making in itself? It is *making*, first of all, yes, but it is a kind of making given by the muses. What do the muses give? Well, whether we look with care specifically at Plato, Aristotle, and other ancient sources, or take a wider view of the whole historical practice of poetry, we shall see that all poems partake of three other elements given to them—which, please note, conveniently start with the letter “m” as well. Those three elements the muses, in one way or another and in various proportions, give to our paradigmatic act of making are *memory*, *metaphor*, and *meter*. Let me define them.

Under *memory* we comprehend several aspects of poetry. In calling poetry a gift of the muses, Plato reminds us that the muses themselves are all daughters of Mnemosyne.<sup>33</sup> Memory is the mother of the muses. Memory is, first of all, that power which gathers up the minute fragments of the past and forges them into a whole that constitutes a true form, a unity, a story that can be told. It re-collects. Memory is also that power which can hear such a story piecemeal and perceive it as a true whole. It is, furthermore, the faculty that allows a story to be retained, to be passed from person to person and generation to generation. We see that Aristotle’s talk of poetry as *mimesis*, as imitation of an action, is really just a particularly important sub-category of memory. We require poetry if we are to live out our own lives—



of action—as social and historical creatures with a shared past and culture.

Under *metaphor* we comprehend all those uses of language rooted in analogy that allow one thing to stand in for and to reveal another, including both the trope, where a vehicle signifies a tenor, or the scheme, where an ordering of language causes that language to reveal by connotations of idea and feeling more than it literally denotes. This element also is given by the muses. Whereas memory seems to gather ingredients from one place before constituting them as a whole in another, it is through metaphor, in this broad sense, where poetic language seems to bring something new and beyond the limits of this world into it, where we may know it. As Plato makes clear in another of his dialogues, the *Phaedrus*, it is through metaphor that poetry can become a revelation of being and truth, the eternal can appear under the sign of the temporal, the ideal incarnate in the particular.

The third element founds, holds together, and fulfills the first two. *Meter* is the very foundation of poetry; because it measures language, it makes it memorable.<sup>35</sup> Verse gives poetry the power to become especially memorable, to be a fit bearer of the gifts of Mnemosyne. The shaping of meter was taken by the Greeks as a sign that it was inspired—a gift.<sup>36</sup> Mundane language is infused and tailored by a divine power to take on a perfected shape that we recognize as heightened and therefore above us; its language has been gathered into a whole that we can see and that holds together under scrutiny. This shaping attribute of meter leads it additionally to take on the offices of metaphor, insofar as the orderliness of the metrical line serves as a microcosm for the general orderliness and intelligibility of the macrocosm, the whole of reality. As an analogical order, meter stands apart from the intelligible, literal sense of the line, and so also hints at the depths of the poem and the depths of reality. Meter deepens the sense of a poem such that we perceive every poem is always more than the sum of its parts; all being is intrinsically self-transcending, and poems reveal this by their form. However much we may think that our knowledge of reality qualifies as a comprehension of it, we will always discover that there is something more, something that exceeds our grasp.

In brief, meter provides a foundation of poetry as the kind of making that holds and perpetuates memory; it shapes the form of memory into a true whole; it orders it in analogical conformity to the total order of things; and it reminds us in its refined perfection that everything we perceive is a vicar of a reality beyond itself,

a revelation of inexhaustible depths. Here is why Cunningham's deflating talk is true but inadequate. Here is also why poetry is distinct from verse and yet inconceivable without it. For everything poetry does in the precincts of memory and metaphor it does with meter as source and fulfillment of them.<sup>37</sup>

Ah, but what of those poems that are unmetred, but still rooted in memory or metaphor? For such things exist. Are they not poems? They are. By analogy. Poetry as memory, metaphor, and meter is the paradigmatic art form. A work of making composed only of memory and metaphor will strike us as "poetic" if not a poem, and it may even be called a true poem insofar as it *participates* to a great degree in that paradigm. Consider the work of Marianne Moore, which is sometimes written in rhymed syllabics and sometimes in free verse. In a late interview with Donald Hall, she called it all poetry *not* because it contained in their fullness all three elements I have defined. Rather her work bore analogical traces of those three elements sufficient that, lacking a better word, it could only be "called poetry because there is no other category to put it."<sup>38</sup> This does not place meter outside the essence of poetry. Rather, we see that every non-metrical poem seeks to remind us of meter by way of analogy, by allusion to poetry's origin in meter. At its most coarse, we see that this is why non-metrical poetry has to be called free verse: not because it is verse, but because it looks over its shoulder to verse in anxious search for its origin in the muses. Poetry is the paradigmatic art form, and verse, meter, is the paradigm of poetry. Centuries of efforts to divide the two have not succeeded, because they cannot. Poetry was, after all, the part of making that the muses gave to us "*with melody and rhythm.*" Sidney was more correct than he knew to hold up poetry as the consummate philosophy and the transcendent history. Every poetic tradition the world has known shows us meter as founding and perfecting the elements of memory and metaphor such that the three seem always to want to be *with* one another. When a poem lacks the element of verse it seems nonetheless to call out for it, as Mnemosyne might call after one of her lost children, the muses.

<sup>1</sup> T.S. Eliot, *On Poetry and Poets*, 228.

<sup>2</sup> Eliot, *On Poetry and Poets*, 230, 251.

<sup>3</sup> Steele dedicates considerable space to Eliot's essay on Kipling, in *Missing Measures*. See, 10, 109-114.

<sup>4</sup> Aristotle, *Poetics*, 1451b.

- <sup>5</sup> Timothy Steele, *Missing Measures*, 111.
- <sup>6</sup> Aristotle, *Poetics*, 1448a.
- <sup>7</sup> This is just how Aristotle's *Poetics* begins. He discusses the formal "means" that divide the poetic art, but notes that these divisions cannot fully describe what each species of the art does in itself (*Poetics* 1447a-b).
- <sup>8</sup> Aristotle, *Rhetoric*, 1408b. Cf. Steele, *Missing Measures*, 119.
- <sup>9</sup> Aristotle, *Poetics*, 1448a.
- <sup>10</sup> Gavin Alexander, ed., *Sidney's 'Defense of Poesy' and Selected Renaissance Literary Criticism*, 9-10.
- <sup>11</sup> Alexander, 12.
- <sup>12</sup> Alexander, 32.
- <sup>13</sup> Cf., John Thompson, *The Founding of English Metre*, 139, 156.
- <sup>14</sup> Alexander, 32.
- <sup>15</sup> Alexander, 16, 18, 35.
- <sup>16</sup> Alexander, 16.
- <sup>17</sup> Yvor Winters, *Forms of Discovery*, 28.
- <sup>18</sup> Winters, 32.
- <sup>19</sup> Alexander, 18, 34.
- <sup>20</sup> Alexander, 5.
- <sup>21</sup> Alexander, xxxii-xxxiv
- <sup>22</sup> Alexander, 15.
- <sup>23</sup> Steele, 110.
- <sup>24</sup> J.V. Cunningham, *Collected Essays*, 134.
- <sup>25</sup> Aristotle, *Poetics*, 1453a. For a critique of Aristotle's account of the matter of Athenian tragedy, see Alasdair MacIntyre, *After Virtue*, 131-133.
- <sup>26</sup> T.S. Eliot, *The Sacred Wood*, viii-ix.
- <sup>27</sup> Dick Davis, *A Trick of Sunlight*, 36.
- <sup>28</sup> See, for instance, Ariel Dawson, "The Yuppie Poet," in *AWP Newsletter* (May 1985), 5-6.
- <sup>29</sup> Cunningham, 136.
- <sup>30</sup> My account of the definition of poetry is given at greater length in *The Fortunes of Poetry in an Age of Unmaking*. See Chapter 7 for a discussion of the character of "tradition dependent rationality," and Chapter 12 for a fuller description of the essential properties of poetry. For the classic account of Aristotle's practice of rational inquiry, see Alasdair MacIntyre, *Whose Justice? Which Rationality?*, 124-145.
- <sup>31</sup> Plato, *Symposium*, 205c-d.
- <sup>32</sup> Alexander, 8.

- <sup>33</sup> See Hesiod, *Theogony*, in *The Works and Days/Theogony/The Shield of Herakles* (Trans. Richmond Lattimore). It will be pertinent to what I say about memory to note that Hesiod tells us the muses dwell with Zeus, “singing the race of human kind, / and the powerful Giants” (126). So also, later in the poem, Mnemosyne is called the mother “from whom were born to [Zeus] the Muses / with veils of gold, the Nine / whose pleasure is all delightfulness, / and the sweetness of singing” (178). In brief, memory is the mother of song—measured speech (meter)—that tells us the recollected stories of the past, and tells those stories to Zeus, too, which suggests their significance is more than merely human (see the discussion of metaphor below).
- <sup>34</sup> In the *Phaedrus*, Socrates deprecates most poets before proceeding to show what genuinely muse-inspired poetry, given in a “divine madness,” can reveal (245a). It can imitate the otherwise inimitable, because “invisible” but intelligible, ideas of the plain of truth (246a-247b).
- <sup>35</sup> Verse “far exceedeth prose in the knitting up of the memory,” writes Sidney (Alexander, 32).
- <sup>36</sup> Aristotle, *Rhetoric*, 1408b. Plato, *Phaedrus*, 245a.
- <sup>37</sup> What constitutes meter is at least as important a question as whether meter is essential to poetry; it is, in fact, the more obvious and necessary question from which that of “are verse and poetry distinct” can sometimes seem a mere distraction. For a discussion of what “counts” as a metrical form suitable for poetry, see the “Symposium on Form” that comprises the whole of *Think* 3.4 (Spring 2011). For a specific solution to the question, see David J. Rothman’s “Lispings in Numbers” (3-5), and my response, “The Splendor of Form” (21-28). A revised form of my response appears as an essay in *Dappled Things* 8.1 (Candlemas 2013): 43-55 and in *Classis* 23.1 (March 2016): 4-10.
- <sup>38</sup> Donald Hall interview with Marianne Moore, *The Paris Review* 26 (Summer-Fall 1961).

## **CONTRIBUTORS**

**Claire Bateman** has been awarded Individual Artist Fellowships from the National Endowment for the Arts, the Tennessee Arts Commission, and the Surdna Foundation, as well as two Pushcart Prizes, and has taught at Clemson University and various workshops and conferences. She lives in Greenville, SC, teaches at the Fine Arts Center, and serves as an Advisory Editor for Orison Books. Her newest poetry collection, *Scape*, was published by New Issues Poetry & Prose.

**G.F. Boyer** is a freelance editor, creative writing instructor, and the editor of *Clementine Poetry Journal* and *Clementine Unbound*. Her poems have appeared in a number of publications, including *The Southern Review*, *Prairie Schooner*, *Poetry Northwest*, *RHINO*, and *Heron Tree*.

**Rick Campbell's** most recent book is *The History of Steel: A Selected Works* (2014), from All Nations Press. His other books include *Dixmont*, Autumn House (2008); *The Traveler's Companion*, Black Bay Books (2004); *Setting the World In Order*, Texas Tech (2001); and *A Day's Work*, State Street Press (2000). He's won a Pushcart Prize, an NEA Fellowship in Poetry, and two poetry fellowships from the Florida Arts Council. Poems and essays have appeared in *The Georgia Review*, *The Florida Review*, *Prairie Schooner*, *Fourth River*, *Kestrel*, *Puerto Del Sol*, *New Madrid* and other journals. Campbell was the director of Anhinga Press for twenty years and is a founder and the Director of the Florida Literary Arts Coalition and its Other Words Conference. He teaches in the Sierra Nevada College Low Residency MFA Program and also teaches English at Florida A&M University in Tallahassee, Florida.

**Catherine Chandler**, an American poet and translator, is the author of *The Frangible Hour*, winner of the 2016 Richard Wilbur Award (University of Evansville Press); *Lines of Flight* (Able Muse Press), shortlisted for the Poets' Prize, *Glad and Sorry Seasons* (Biblioasis), and *This Sweet Order* (White Violet Press). Winner of the Howard Nemerov Sonnet Award, *The Lyric Quarterly* Award and the Leslie Mellichamp Prize, and finalist in the X.J. Kennedy Parody Award, the Able Muse Write Prize, Best of the Net, and the Muriel Craft Bailey Memorial Award, Catherine's complete

bio, a sample of audio podcasts, a list of awards, reviews and other information are available on her poetry blog, *The Wonderful Boat* at [www.cathyhandler.blogspot.ca](http://www.cathyhandler.blogspot.ca). She lives in Saint-Lazare, Quebec.

**Christopher Childers** lives in Baltimore, MD, and has poems, essays, and translations published or forthcoming from *The Kenyon Review*, *The Yale Review*, *Agni*, *Parnassus*, and elsewhere. He is currently at work on a book of translations, for Penguin Classics, of Greek and Latin Lyric Poetry from Archilochus to Martial.

**Maryann Corbett** earned a doctorate in English from the University of Minnesota in 1981 and expected to be teaching Beowulf and Chaucer and the history of the English language. Instead, she's spent almost thirty-five years helping to teach legal drafting to legislative and administrative drafters at the Minnesota Legislature (and just this month has happily retired from that work). In the ten years since she came back to writing poetry, she's published three books and two chapbooks. Her newest book, *Mid Evil*, won the Richard Wilbur Award and was published by the University of Evansville press last year. Her poems her poems have appeared in many journals and an assortment of anthologies and have been featured on *Poetry Daily*, *Verse Daily*, *American Life in Poetry*, *The Poetry Foundation*, and *The Writer's Almanac*.

**Stephen Cushman's** next book, *Hothead: A Poem*, will be published by LSU in 2018. He teaches at the University of Virginia.

**Jeffery Donaldson's** fifth volume of poems, *Slack Action*, was published by Porcupine's Quill (2013). Recent prose works include a collection of essays, *Echo Soundings* (Palimpsest Press, 2014) and *Missing Link: the Evolution of Metaphor and the Metaphor of Evolution* (McGill-Queen's University Press, 2015). He teaches in the English department at McMaster University in Hamilton Ontario.

**Richard Foerster's** seventh collection of poetry, *River Road*, was published by Texas Review Press in 2015. Other recent work of his appears in the *Eighth Annual Nâzım Hikmet Poetry Festival* anthology, published by the American Turkish Association of North Carolina, 2017.

## Contributors

**John Foy's** new book, *Night Vision*, won The New Criterion Poetry Prize and will be published this year by St. Augustine's Press. His first book is *Techne's Clearinghouse*. His poems are included in the *Swallow Anthology of New American Poets*, *The Raintown Review Anthology* and *Rabbit Ears*, an anthology of poems about TV. They have appeared widely in journals and online, including most recently *The Hudson Review*, *The Yale Review* and *The Hopkins Review*. Visit him at [www.johnffoy.net](http://www.johnffoy.net).

**Majô L. Foy** began drawing and painting in the 1980s when she lived in Paris. Since 1991, she has been affiliated with The Art Students League of New York, where she has studied sculpture, drawing and painting. She currently works as a monitor for Henry Finkelstein's class in painting the human figure. She has numerous paintings in private collections and has displayed her work in New York City at Café Mocias, The Carter Burden Center of New York, Bettolona and, most recently, at the Arco Cafe. Visit her at [www.mjlanarifoy.com](http://www.mjlanarifoy.com). *The Pond Eddy Bridge* is a pastel painting. "I'm very fond of old bridges," she reports. "What caught my attention at this spot on the Delaware River were the lights on that rock in front of the main bridge beam, on the beam itself, and the play of light and shadow on the landscape. It was also exciting to see the interaction of different greens."

**H. L. Hix's** forthcoming poetry collection, *Rain Inscription* (Etruscan Press, 2017), includes poems first published in *Alabama Literary Review*. He lives in the mountain west with his partner, the poet Kate Northrop, and writes in a studio that was once a barn. His website is [www.hlhix.com](http://www.hlhix.com).

**Tim Murphy** has twelve individual collections, published and forthcoming. His latest is *Devotions* (North Dakota State University Press, 2017).

**Angela Alaimo O'Donnell** teaches English & Creative Writing at Fordham University in New York City and serves as Associate Director of Fordham's Curran Center for American Catholic Studies. Her publications include two chapbooks and four collections of poems, *Saint Sinatra* (2011), *Moving House* (2009), *Waking My Mother* (2013), and *Lovers' Almanac*. A fifth collection, *Still Pilgrim*, is forthcoming. Her work has appeared in many journals, including *Alabama Literary Review*, *America*, *Comstock*

*Review, First Things, Hawaii Pacific Review, Mezzo Cammin, Potomac Review, Runes, String Poetry, The Same, Verse Wisconsin, and Valparaiso Poetry Review*, among others, and has been nominated for the Pushcart Prize, the Best of the Web Award, and the Arlin G. Meyer Prize in Imaginative Writing. O'Donnell also writes essays on contemporary poetry and is a regular Books & Culture columnist at AMERICA magazine. A memoir, *Mortal Blessings*, appeared in 2014, and a biography *Flannery O'Connor: Fiction Fired by Faith* (2015) recently won first prize for excellence in publishing from the Association of Catholic Publishers. Readers may visit her website at <http://angelaalaimoodonnell.com/>.

**Hilary Sideris** is the author of *Most Likely to Die*, poems in the voice of Keith Richards (Poets Wear Prada Press 2014), and *The Inclination to Make Waves*, a book of four-letter word poems (Big Wonderful Press 2016). She works for The City University of New York and lives in Brooklyn.

**J.D. Smith's** fourth poetry collection, *The Killing Tree*, was published in October 2016. He is currently seeking publishers for a fifth poetry collection and a collection of short fiction. He works in Washington, DC, where he lives with his wife Paula Van Lare and their rescue animals.

**Ronald Stottlemeyer** lives in Helena, Montana. After a long teaching career in English Literature and Classical Studies at several colleges and universities across the country, he devotes himself full-time now to writing poetry and fiction and amateur astronomy.

**James Matthew Wilson** is the author of six books, including *Some Permanent Things* and *The Fortunes of Poetry in an Age of Unmaking*. He is associate professor of religion and literature in the Department of Humanities at Villanova University.





The background of the page is a painting of a bridge over a river. The bridge has a wooden truss structure and a stone pier. The water is dark and reflects the bridge. The trees in the background are green and brown. The overall style is impressionistic.

# **CONTRIBUTORS**

**Claire Bateman**

**G.F. Boyer**

**Rick Campbell**

**Catherine Chandler**

**Christopher Childers**

**Maryann Corbett**

**Stephen Cushman**

**Jeffery Donaldson**

**Richard Foerster**

**John Foy**

**Majô L. Foy**

**H. L. Hix**

**Tim Murphy**

**Angela Alaimo O'Donnell**

**Hilary Sideris**

**J.D. Smith**

**Ronald Stottlemyer**

**James Matthew Wilson**