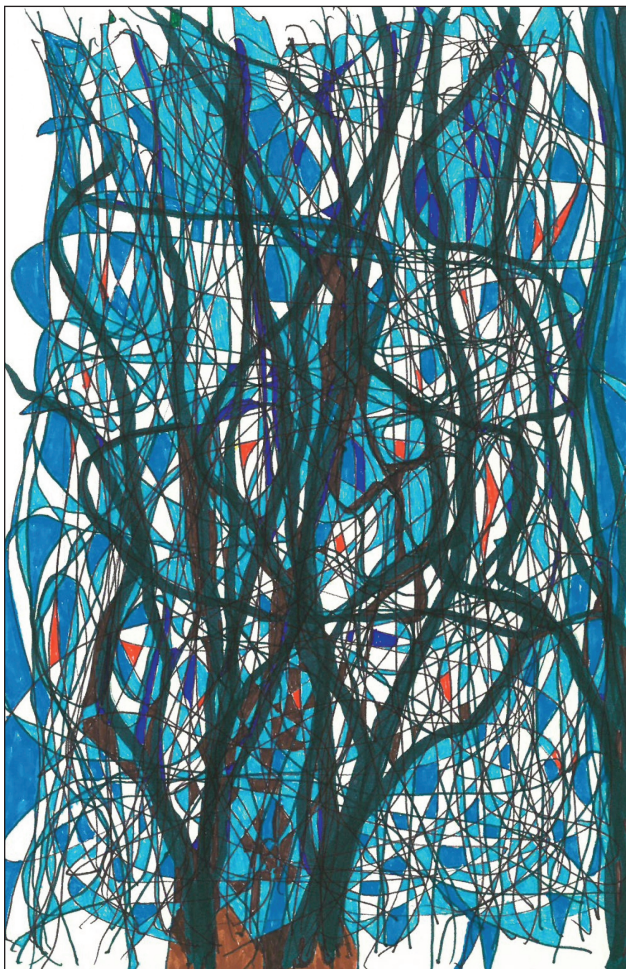


Waterways

Poetry in the Mainstream



December, 2020

Volume 41
number 6

Waterways

Poetry in the Mainstream

VOLUME 41 NUMBER 6

We make a wish
on the nearest star,
or airplane
and board the train
beneath
a svelte moon

Enid Dame
excerpt from
The Sky Is Filled

WATERWAYS

Poetry in the Mainstream

Volume 41 Number 6

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accompanied by a stamped, self addressed envelope.

WAITING FOR SISYPHUS.



Wayne Hagan

William Corner Clarke

4.05 From Penn Station

On Douglaston Station platform
Crouching down
To the eye level of a little boy
To see with him
His first real train
Passing by
On a hot summer's day

A Limited Stop commuter
From Penn Station
To Port Washington
First, the sound of its whistle
In the distance
Flushing a flight of birds
From across the estuary
And then appearing
As a thread of mercury
Pouring from the wood
Crossing the bridge
At high speed

A brilliant bolt
Of sound and steel
Becoming Everything
And then - silence
Sealing up the vacuum
Left in the air

As the last rattle
Of the end car
Shimmered away
Curving out of sight
In the heat haze

I turned to see
The impression made
On my companion
And for one brief moment
Saw the image of my self
When I too was five
Mirrored
In the wonder
Of his eyes

Marilyn Braendeholm

A Different Sky Than Yours

I love airships and blimps.
Huge. As big as a dinosaur.

They fly past one another,
and steal each other's stars
as their hinged wings spend
the air like copper pennies.

And I fly with the rising sun.
Love hearing the wind shrill
and rushing in my ears as it
pulls my dreams pleasure-long.

The starry air is my sea, and I
sail it in a small teak skiff,
its bow fixed to balloons and
oar locks winged and ribbed.

And if in my dreams I can fly,
then perhaps I am living in
a different sky than yours.

Ellaraine Lockie

In the Language of Dark

—Epigraph from my brother's gravestone:
April 1, 1934 - December 24, 2002;
Little Walt from Big Sandy, Montana

Here in the country you ran with wild
 mustang energy
from the world's brightest light bulb
until curvature of the earth switched it off
Your battery charged until the next sunrise
You fluffed up and strutted like
 a yard guard goose
But it's the prairie nights that told you
 who you were

That spoke in deep dark, foreign to a city
Where street lights and neon signs
burn bright under blankets of clouds and smog
An orange glaze suggesting dystopian fiction
Muted to the truth of an unlit night's glory
of naked stars, planets and galaxies
The power of a silver-tongued moon

Its command of the ocean's tide
and of your internal clockwork
That essential day and night rhythm
 compromised
So you would come to the country where dark
isn't silenced by reflection or refraction

Where it underwrites in unmatched volume
a brilliance of height and breadth
which became your measuring stick

And now you're the one who reflects
your sixty-seven years
The one who defies gravity
when deepest dark whispers a grave-top oratory
in your own words from under
the soundproofing of dense prairie soil

Roberta Gould

Near The Anniversary of His Death

I forget the date light the candle
two days past the anniversary of his death
wishing to right the earth's orbit
place us back a degree in the sky
to conclude with calculation
the day before yesterday
turning through the heavens
where we pass and travel on

Do I miss him now
in another sidereal spot
where we sat when he held court
from his hospital bed
praised the nurses?

(Santiago remembers
his father every day
reads his father's books, walks in
his foot steps

I'm different, never thought to follow
Dad's practical ways.

In my weaker moments, though,
I've chased a few forks through the house)
bound to tangible things
iron and magnet

But I remember without counting
or crossing days from the calendar as he did
The sun is out. The candle flickers

Monique Laforce

Les non-rencontres

Il y a des rencontres qui échappent
à nos histoires.

On se retrouve, des années plus tard.

Sur une photo. Dans une conversation.

On ne savait pas qu'on se connaissait déjà.

Qu'il y avait eu possibilité. Temps ou amis
partagés.

Des trains qui se croisent, roulant en sens
inverse.

Toi, ce jour-là, montant dans un autobus.

Et moi qui en descendais.

Jusqu'à cette fois, dans un café,
une bibliothèque, une galerie de
tableaux. Et remonter le courant
jusqu'au non-moment où tout
aurait pu commencer.

Monique Laforce

Non-meetings

There are encounters that escape
our stories.

We meet again, years later. On a photo.
In a conversation.

We didn't know we already knew each other.
That there had been a possibility. Shared
time or friends.

Trains crossing, rolling in the opposite
directions.

You, that day, getting on a bus. And I was
getting off it.

Until this time, in a café, a library,
a gallery. And go upstream
until the moment it all could have
started.

Mary K. Lindberg

Lips Light Years Away

Each kiss lolls at memory's edge,
waits to be called back.

When you left, I could tell,
it was not the last farewell.

But your kiss was different.
It slipped out reluctantly,
a thin filament wavered,
a second of finesse.

You tried again, perhaps
surprised at your own delay.

Too late, my lips already
light years away.

You never knew
I felt your clue.

In that suspended goodbye,
remnants of warmer days

began to fray, then disappear
silently, like water at night

that slices tail beams of light
into wobbling pieces.

Or does light hew water
into small waves?

Gilbert Honigfeld

The Phantom

By the time you read this it may be too late,
my new life as a Phantom already exposed.

In that case just consider this statement
of intent
as kind of a prequel to events already
revealed.

The plan has been kindling a while and
there are still quite a few kinks to work out.

In concept it is a masterwork of simplicity
requiring little more than a stack of poems
and a box.

The poems will be unsigned one to a page
and the box will say Free Poems Take One
Home.

Maybe I'll make up a coupla boxes like that
one outside the History Depart. the other
stashed near Security.

I'm hoping that when the college news
reporters
try to unmask the Phantom they'll actually
read some poems.

I will never unmask myself without a fight
but by the time you read this it may be
too late.

Once they bust me I'm not sure how they'll
book me ...

Public Nuisance? Overworked Metaphors?
Derivative?

Wayne Hogan

My Goal

I've got me this one goal in life. Just this one goal. Ain't nothing fancy, this goal. I've always found you go fancyin up a goal and first thing you know you got you a whole pot of half-baked goulash like what's been made with the wrong recipe. So I got me this one goal that ain't nothing fancy. Straight forward, this one goal I got. Nothing fancy. It don't actually have a name, though, my goal. But I want it to. One's life's goal, if it's to be a proper goal, oughta be dignified by havin a name, is the way I figure it. 'Specially if it's the only goal you got. Some of the names I'm considerin so far are "bacon fat," "future," "breast milk," and "near attainment." I'm leanin heavy toward "breast milk." I welcome suggestions.

Wayne Hogan

Adrift in the Melancholy

Sometimes I arrive
a half inch early
to sprinkle piercing light
upon the gasping flowers
adrift in the melancholy
of nature's urging

Ruth Moon Kempfer

**Primitive Song:
Night of First Freeze**

One wishes on a star.
Another
charges the moon.

One wishes (again)
but
on a different
(there are so many)

Greedy Gut
re-charges the moon.

Sylvia Manning

for Our Lady of Guadalupe

black cat crosses
backyard winter rye
 (crayon kelly green
covering after long
awaited latest autumn
 rain

the obscenely sad losses
of other grasses
 beneath pecan trees
 alive but just
 and this year
 giving us
 no fruit)

Pat Anthony

Christmas, Age Five

Santa Claus came by night
everybody knew that
although we didn't admit
to it during our school lunches
talked up what we wanted
didn't say much about
what we would get

But that night I peeked
through the sliding wood door
and saw magic bundled
right outside in the front
room and even though we
didn't have a single decoration
no hint of tree nor stocking
I knew it would be a good year

Tucked myself back into
my homemade bed painted
Sinclair green and dreamed
of anything that didn't come
from the thrift shop on Troost
and when east sun filtered
through the trees outside

I sat up and eagerly looked
at what had vanished into

two lumpy pillows bunched
into the spindle back rocker
topped by the extra blanket
from the sofa bed where
my oldest brother slept.

Our Geography of Poets

California

Ellaraine Lockie

Florida

Ruth Moon Kempher

Kansas

Pat Anthony

New Jersey

Gilbert Honigfeld

New York

Roberta Gould

Mary K. Lindberg

Quebec

Monique Laforce

Tennessee

Wayne Hogan

Texas/Vermont

Sylvia Manning

Virginia

William Corner Clarke

West Sussex

Marilyn Braendeholm

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