

# Waterways: Poetry in the Mainstream

VOLUME  
30



# Waterways: Poetry in the Mainstream

VOLUME 30, #9

"A gallery is just a store that sells paintings," she said.  
"No No," I said.

**Hal Sirowitz**

"Anger Lesson"

A poetry workshop - NY Poetry Festival at St. Clement's.

# WATERWAYS: Poetry in the Mainstream

Volume 30

Number 9\*

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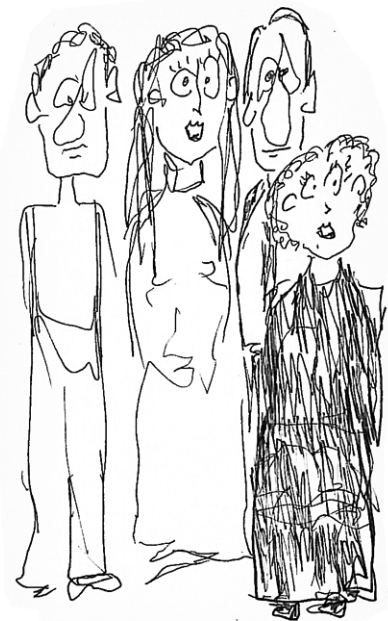
Sample issues — \$5.00 Subscriptions -- \$45.00 Waterways is published 11 times a year.

Submissions will be returned only if accompanied by a stamped, self addressed envelope.

Waterways, 393 St. Pauls Avenue, Staten Island, New York 10304-2127

©2010 Ten Penny Players Inc. \*This magazine is published 3/10.

<http://www.tenpennyplayers.org/mags.html>



## The No No Gallery — Richard Spiegel

It's all in my head  
aswirl in this skull  
with swallowed murmurs.

Can you see? No one asked so softly.  
As I gazed, counting out the seconds,  
waiting for an orgasm of delight  
to shudder my being in front of  
such a sight. O, I knew the technique  
you used to amuse us voyeurs  
in this space: so public a moment.

Here's where you can let go  
of a language from neurons  
that explode in a drizzle  
of babble, shouts, and mumbles:  
the risqué talk at an opening  
night party.

## A Rather Small Painting — J. J. Steinfeld

During a dream of being  
trapped in an art gallery  
the paintings large and vindictive  
blocking my escaping or waking  
I wonder what is the difference  
between an imaginary painting  
and an experienced one  
say, in a night restless  
as regret and falling short  
of touching someone else's  
portrait of beauty and forgiveness.

Awake, I imagine a painting  
half covered in truth  
and half covered in escape routes  
a rather small painting  
but precise in its offer of hope.



## American Pie — Rex Sexton

Better to blackout than be;  
better the bottom of the bottle  
than reality - dead end days,  
sleepless nights. Why paint,  
why write: about the old  
lady in the alley asleep in a  
doorway, the raggedy kids  
playing in the gutter, their  
families living in squalor,  
the derelicts, lunatics, pimps,  
pushers, muggers, killers,  
the lost vet begging for cigarettes?

Scenes too real to find a refuge  
in bookstores or museums,  
amidst the soup cans and  
American flags, and the golden  
words penned for the aesthetic  
ruminations of future generations.

## Numbers — Michelle M. Mead

From these faceless numbers, on which your needs rely,  
Crippled by their glances, that stop, then walk on by,  
This carelessness of artless souls, the strike we must abide,  
A frame around the edges, of your other shadowed side

If they enter into it, this place where both arts and hearts reside,  
With the curve and sneer of reckless lips, costly words decide,  
They set their eyes and mind alike, to judge both without refrain,  
Be it the whim of the common man, or the critics bitter stain

"A gallery is just a store that sells paintings," she said in mocking jest,  
A quick toss of her blonde coiffed head, had told them all the rest,

"No, no," he said, "It's more than that, when you live within the frame,"  
She smiled and said, "Ah, but then, your artistic temperament is to blame."

Balanced there, without a care, is placed the artist's future whole,  
Wobbling on a tightrope long, the multi-hued, this story of a soul,  
His sweaty brow, his clammy hands, belie his smiling face,  
For brilliant talent, and greetings gallant, good press cannot replace.

## Aliens at Roswell — Joanne Seltzer

I parse the painted sky,  
study the descent  
of small green men,  
marvel that lightning  
travels without rain.

The small green men  
came and went like the weather,  
something docents talk about  
as if mythology  
predicates God,  
as if a sighting  
proves existence.

Under indoor stars  
I sit before a camera,  
one small green man on my lap.

## Oaring through Water Lilies — Mary Belardi Erickson

After Claude Monet's series Water Lilies

### Stayed Waters

Waters can stream and gurgle past me, on-the-go  
Western tributaries.

Yet I am captivated by waters happily settled,  
translucent, painted with impressions of light.

The staying meets the muddy banks while  
blurred colors, as Monet's, stretch and laze  
in pastel majority.

Inside earthen elbows are watery-beds  
for lovely, yellow-headed pads.

## Belief — Frank Murphy

The pale bone moon  
asserts belief in the  
world below

Tonight the silver  
light breaths in the  
autumn air.

Things are alive  
Things stir



In the shadows of  
leaves, in the small  
stones

the earth anticipates  
the soft breath

of the silver light

## Georgia O'Keefe's Dream Garden — Alan Catlin

Ram's skull with  
brown leaves

The torn skin of dreams  
against a cream colored

backdrop; Black Iris III,  
Purple Petunias, Grey line

with Black, Blue  
and Yellow

Untitled by Paul Klee — Ellaraine Lockie

You have so eloquently  
labeled your art  
And I so ineptly  
escape your logic  
*The Donkey* where  
I see a pig  
*Pickle the Clown*  
who looks at me  
like a native Indian dancer  
*Juggles in April*

a map mangled in midair  
Although I do see  
California community manners  
in your *Neighborhood Doors* maze  
I can't for the life of me  
find a female form  
in the folds of *Hero Mother*  
Yet I come to an inked pond  
floating on gold-edged paper  
with graphic birds  
trees and wetland grass  
And you've tagged it *Untitled*

## Time Piece — William Corner Clarke

Beneath the polished  
Calm of glass  
The fragile hands  
Describe the perfect circles  
Of the minutes  
And the hours

Nothing disturbs  
Their equilibrium  
A moments happiness  
Misery that never  
Seems to end

It's all the same  
On that sealed  
And numbered plane

No doubts or regrets  
No jealousies or fears  
Only the certainty  
Of a little crystal heart  
Encased in stainless steel  
The precise beauty  
Of a small machine  
Dividing the mystery  
Into equal parts

## Archaeology — B. R. Strahan

Shall we leave just these fragments  
Shards and shards like shadows  
Each broken thing an artifact  
For some fool to retrieve  
And believe he understands the whole

## Gallery — Scott Owens

Heady scent of coffee beans  
and paint, curve of potter's wheel,  
smooth finish, stained glass,  
filigreed jewelry, playful stones,  
lacework of fuzzy scarves,  
blab of poems, sensual photos  
of lily, rose, and orchid,  
perfect harmony of "Guinivere,"  
murmur of lovers whispering  
soft seduction, art,  
music, people coming together  
in an ekphrastic moment of poetry.



## Galleries — Jeannine Hall Gailey

There were beloved violins curling with ferns and red tickets and out of the corner of my eye I saw the flash of white dogs. The violin had a woman's face, it was beautiful. I am certain I saw your heart there, bleeding beside the butterfly that showed up at your doorstep, dead, and you slathered it with paint right next the pair of eyes looking out of the darkness of your canvas. In another a girl sleeping on a pillow made of teeth. She had her bags packed, ready to escape into the soft lighting of interior space. There was a goddess with a dress made of fish, she was standing in a desert and the fish and water shone blue and green against the dirt red pigments. One man twisted steel around and poured glass over it, he would come to your house for \$10,000 and install one in your doorway. Most of the time you need big windows, big door-

ways for art, but I like little art too, art you can sneak out in your coat without anyone looking. A Russian dealer said she is sick of people coming for the wine and cheese, they don't know anything about art. She dragged painting after painting out of tiny closets and cupboards. I am so envious. I hide words in my cupboards, but they aren't layered on cork or sinking like oil onto paper or matted with acrylic, I can't lift them out and build anything with them. They don't swim like fish on the wall above your couch, they hide, dusty as old paper, waiting for you to breathe them to life.

## Poetry, A Sculpture — Wayne Hogan

She stood holding tight  
his tiny sweet little hand  
there on the corner where all  
the streets come together  
all at once, saying her poems  
in slow, low, yet sure voice  
that, when the air was pure enough,  
still somehow leapt  
high above the whishing clacket

the rush-hour traffic made.  
As she spoke on, they all saw  
there were tiny true flecks  
from herself that had chipped away,  
fallen at her scruff-shoed feet.  
When her last poem was finished  
and the chipping was done,  
they all saw then just how much  
she now looked so exactly  
like herself. And him, too. Yes.

## At Gina's — Ruth Moon Kempher

Gallery, the coffee was  
strong enough  
to stopper up  
holes  
in the Styrofoam cups.

**GHOST — RICHARD KOSTELANETZ**

<b>ABIDE</b>	<b>COLD</b>	<b>DEFINITE</b>	<b>FOX</b>
<b>ABODE</b>	<b>COLLIDE</b>	<b>DELIRIUM</b>	<b>FRAGILE</b>
<b>ACCEPT</b>	<b>COLOSSAL</b>	<b>DENOUEMENT</b>	<b>FRIENDS</b>
<b>ADHERENCE</b>	<b>COMMUNITY</b>	<b>HELPLESS</b>	<b>DREAD</b>
<b>BALONEY</b>	<b>ADVENTURES</b>	<b>HOME</b>	<b>DREAM</b>
<b>BARREN</b>	<b>ADVICE</b>	<b>HOMELESS</b>	<b>DRINK</b>
<b>BASEMENT</b>	<b>ADVISOR</b>	<b>HOMEWARD</b>	<b>INSTRUCTOR</b>
<b>BASTARD</b>	<b>AGAINST</b>	<b>ERRANT</b>	<b>INVENTORY</b>
<b>CLOCK</b>	<b>AGREED</b>	<b>EXIST</b>	<b>INVOCATIONS</b>
<b>CLONE</b>	<b>DECEASED</b>	<b>EXQUISITE</b>	<b>INSTRUMENTS</b>

## Anger Management — Hal Sirowitz

'A gallery is a store that sells paintings,' she said. 'No,' I said. 'It's a place where the artist meets her audience.' 'I don't have an audience,' she said. 'That's because you paint portraits with the head chopped off,' I said. 'What's wrong with that? That's how I see the world,' she said. 'But even your models don't like the paintings,' I said. 'Even I was slightly nonplussed. You told me you wanted to do my portrait.'

It was realistic except for the space that contained my head. My head was missing.' 'I don't see your head as one of our prominent features,' she said. 'Why did you make my neck so bloody?' I said. 'I'm a realistic painter,' she said. 'Then where is my head?' I said. 'Is it in another painting?'





ISSN 0197-4777

**published 11 times a year since 1979**  
**very limited printing**

by Ten Penny Players, Inc.  
(a 501c3 not for profit corporation)

Subscriptions -- \$45 for 11 issues.

Sample issues — \$5.00 (includes postage).

[www.tenpennyplayers.org/mags.html](http://www.tenpennyplayers.org/mags.html)