

postcard from alabama

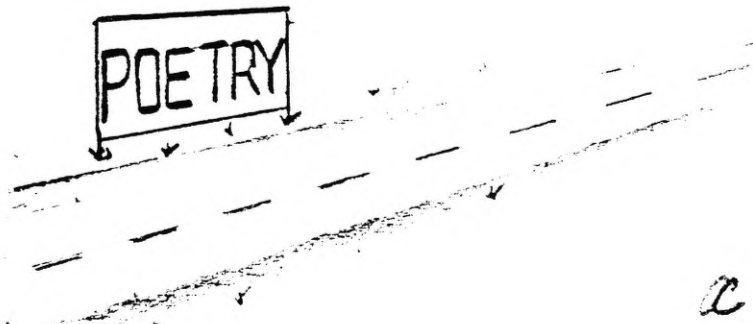
By A. J. Wright

summer has arrived at last. the june bugs
lie belly up on the sidewalk; at night
slugs are climbing the back porch stairs.
my grandfather is buried beside his daughter,
the aunt i never met--whose existence
is confirmed to me by yellow photographs.
now only an empty space divides them.
summer has arrived at last. the geese
are weeding the sugar beets and bluejays
fall to the earth like pieces of the sky.
summer has arrived at last. the pond is
shrinking,
sucked into the air, the heat surrounds us
like a windowless room. only the darkness
can relieve a thirst no water simplifies.

Early Morning

By Claire E. Zickel

Insurmountable,
Slickly impassive,
An inverted soup bowl, the
still gray horizon
Stretched in stubbornly
breaking line,
Patiently waiting the dawn
of the billboard sign.



2

tossing out the moon

with the baby's bath water:

the light on the lawn

where trolley tracks

where trolley tracks bend
back
at the ~~end~~ of the trestle:
the blackbird's whistle

asyku

asylum sycamores:

cicadas emerging from shells
from their private hells

asylum sycamores:

cicadas emerging from Hell
leave empty shells

the asylum lawn

at the foot of the sycamore:
cicada shell

cathedral ruins:

a choir of air raid sirens
inspires the sermon

asylum elms;

cicadas screaming in cells
emerge from their shells

between

between the storm sash

beating on the kitchen window
winter fly

between two windows

between the kitchen
window and the storm sash

on the muddy creek,
mallards feeding on bread crusts
knead the morning moon

under and over

the train trestle in the rain:
a flock of swallows

reading epitaphs

in the old Quaker graveyard:

kids kicking over tombstones

matching cloud-shadows

a patch of carpenter ants
mend the cracked sidewalk

preening between songs

atop the dwarf sumac--
sparrow steps and poops

on rocks by the lake

sitting in lotus position:
centering on gnats

Haiku
By Nick Virgilio

Lily:
out of the water. . .
out of itself.

(Acknowledgement: American
Haiku Magazine.)

Haiku
by Nick Virgilio

Alone on the dark road
reaching the last milestone
and beyond. . .

(Acknowledgement: American
Haiku Magazine.)

OLD FRIENDS
By Lorraine Viscidi

Hello, my friend.
It's been such a long time.
Yes, I'm doing fine.
(we both know we don't have
a damn thing to say)
We'll have to get together one
day.
It's been nice seeing you.
Me too.
(such phony formality we go
through)

FALLEN LEAF
By Gary von Tersch

Lake, dilated
by moonshine,
shivers with
fingertips of
wind. Dense
with arpeggios
of fish. Linking
the distance
between leaning
rainlight and
close-ups of
moonmoving images.

POEM
by Ron Welburn

the holes drilled in any cactus
by woodpeckers striped as hard
laborers
are the eyes of humans
sores on the bodies of the dead
prisoners' torn pieces of heart
and spiders live there.

UNFOLDING
By Gary Von Tersch

Tangerine roses
bursting. Taking
my eyes. Revealing
the pressure. Of
swallowing planets.
Leaping like
skeletons of
cigarette smoke.
Into touch
& spaces of sun.

figures in the fog
rolling in from old Cape Cod

golden red in bloom:
hands of ripe bananas
holds the harvest moon

golden-red in bloom
a bowl of ripe bananas
harvest
holds the ~~harvest~~ moon

goldenrod in bloom:
a hand of ripe bananas
holds the harvest moon

taking my father
to the violin recital:
the March night wind

the morning

a mourning dove
on the te

a mourning dove
alone on the telephone wire:
the morning moon

on the subway steps
collecting cold morning rain:
empty wine bottle

Bulldozer Blues:

the blind accordionist moves
to another corner

sunbeam through the screen door:
the shadows of mating flies
on the kitchen floor

again and again
gazing at the blooming plum:
raising her green thumb

entering alone
searching the deserted church:
evening sun

machete in hand,
the shadow of the peon
paces the parched earth

by the empty cell,
in the shadow of the bell:
cicada shell

my mirrored mother
with more than tears in her eyes:
the terror of war

a gliding condor
rising in the high Andes
lights on the hand of Christ

escaping the heat,
in the Sunday newspaper:
sleeping scorpion

Eros Denied
by John Sevcik

In the vicious circle of the
tease
We bow, we kiss the hand, we
answer 'please.'
Nothing stands between us in
the dance
And love reduces to the
smallest chance.
Letters in Venusian glow
retreat
Across unfingered lines, in
rocking beat;
Your hair, your eyes, your
radiant smiles,
Attract desire all these many
miles.
Quite the Catholic, quite the
promiscuous gent,
Love makes farce of all hearts
never spent.
Thus, I watch fierce innocence
propel
Two loves a day, a flower on
each lapel,
And near my heart a shield of
laughter
Waiting for you, the tease,
the morning after.
How seriously can you be taken,
When, by love, you cannot waken?

Blue Poles
By David Vajda

Line up the canvas,
Take out the painted bird--
And smile.

Roll over the surface
With the ease of a mime--
And smile.

Now you're poles apart
From where the race
Has started.

Stroke slowly along these
Lines when the edges meet
The thumbless stars.

messing with a poet is a dangerous thing
by Mbali Umoja

messing with a poet is a dangerous thing
when riled. . . they been known
to cut throat with words
once saw a poet take an insincere utterance
and whip it to a frenzied chant
that almost hung a man
when pushed into a corner a poet will pull language rank
and read you i mean read you
so you know you've been read to
doing wrong to a poet take a brave soul
the risk being
a poem with your name on it
actions recorded for all times
a poet got up on the wrong side
can be a poet to avoid
when you just got to bug someone and don't know who
grab a dancer or a painter
but leave the lover of oral expression be
the dialectic craftsman has a murdering tool
the mouth of a poet provoked
to send a galling jibe might seem a funny thing to do
but when you do it to a poet
BEWARE the poet will answer you
(maybe even in public too) see..
messing with a poet is a dangerous thing to do

figures in the fog

rolling in from old Cape Cod:

a bell buoy tolls

a green lizard tongues a golden gnat

over the fence talk

Independence Day

in the cabin in the woods

confined by the rain

starting the New Year

fearing another heart attack:

ransacked apartment

where red-winged blackbirds

perched in cattail and wild rice:

the Church of the Child

first winter storm

at the bottom of the sea

~~marching~~ spiny lobsters

the workshop

the crowded dance hall

only the breeze from the falling

piano lid

down the schoolyard path

tiny footprints and tire tracks

through the town graveyard

the breeze from the falling piano lid: the heat

grand father grandson

sharing binoculars:

the hawk migration

leaving father's home

blown by the cold wind, facing

the darkness alone

sharing binoculars

comparing ~~hawks~~ and falcons

grandfather grandson

alone on the street:

meeting a stream of couples

leaving the cathedral

leaving father's home

into the darkness alone

blown by the cold wind

the dry salt creek

creating a crazy quilt

of cracked clay and silt

windy afternoon:

aiming the arrow weathervane

at the feather moon

picking strawberries,

my grandmother miscarries:

the hot morning sun

From the Journal
of John Petracca

The word great
is common today.
Great battles, great
victories, great men --
not excluding great suffering.

September 3rd
by Rick Riley

Summer yawns
a few leaves drop
sluggish air sobers
the sun takes a step back

ELEMENTAL EQUATION
by Albert Russo

When I was a little boy
I used to ride horses

It was exhilarating
To gallop through the wind
Rising abreast of the leaves
Feeling the altitude sting

But one day
Sensing I had in mind
To make his wings mine
The horse flung me
Over the fence

And so, for a while
Instead of looking into the sky
I let my dreams
Sink beneath neglected realms
Finding at last the unthinkable
link

COMPOSITION
By Albert Russo

The treble clef embracing
Our leafless oak
Gives me an undeceiving wink

From my winter cell
The naked tree
With its hundred violin bows
Rehearses a mute symphony

Notes whirl, whimsical defiance
Through this treble clef
Encased in a wrought iron balcony

And amid the hundred violin bows
Glide the dotted shadows
Of a music score
Reflection of my imprisoned soul

RECYCLED MAN
By Albert Russo

When rejoicing you burst into a clang
but tell no one of the pebble
in which your heart is encased

Seeing her after a moment's absence
you shed a tear of sulphur
and your mouth stretches
like a stray pair of swallows

The forehead creases
then the furrows vanish
In sanddune fashion
Your face is more landscape
than human

How oddly he behaves people mutter
Not knowing that you have been
Emotionally recycled

cold morning rain:

from the many, selecting
the black tie again

cold morning rain:

from the tie rack selecting
the black silk again

funeral train

several black umbrellas:

cold morning rain

atop the town church,

crowning the chromium cross:

perching crow
~~an old crow~~ perches

where the cold moonlight

falls on the fire-blackened wall:

a white crucifix

Ben Franklin Birthday:

tourists pitching pennies

on Poor Richard's Tomb

Campaign headquarters:

posing with the President

cardboard candiate

above the dark wall

of the war memorial:

a mourning dove calls

the run-over child

on the tips of his fingers:

butterfly dust

pregnant teenager

surrounded by Pro-Life pickets:

abortion clinic

with his flute stolen

standing mute in the moonlight:

stone statue of Pan

telegram in hand

Marine Corps Major at the screen

summer nightfall

telegram in hand,

Marine Major at the door:

summer nightfall

a March morning

closing the church cornerstone

opening the time capsule

MARBLEMAN

by Shannon M. Minor

Discovery!

Shiny

green

marble,

half-hidden in dirt near the alley,
escorting forgotten sounds to my mind. . .

Cat Eye!

Half-pint Bumblebee!

Peery Boulder!

I felt the twitch of stubby thumb
and nimble crook of forefinger,
and longed to feel the satisfying CLICK!
of glass against glass,
the cool sensation of smooth-surfaced rounds
in my pocket,
and oh,
how I longed to be a marbleman again.

SIX-POINT

by Shannon M. Minor

Smiling head

emerging from wood above cabin door,
your glass-brown eyes are gentle,
you smile benevolence
like a priest giving blessings.

A pair of

old blue caps

adorns the smooth brown arches of
your weathered horns;

you almost look comical

in the lamplight,

and I picture you mounted

with stuffed-animal prizes
in a carnival.

I gaze at you, and wonder--

if only you could have known, as the
final

cold

bullet

fractured your peaceful heart

that you bled to become

a man's rustic rack,

and better yet--

a trophy of skill and hunter's

cunning

in the age-old art of tracking and

killing--

would you have laughed, smiling head,

would you have laughed?

Poem

by James Penzi

a simple pleasure

not to name

the sky on a bird's wing

Winter Scene

by James Penzi

a snowflake

soul of a butterfly

the smile gone from your face

the cloud

by James Penzi

outside the sky

drifts

a vague noise

trees at the window

the moon pulled from its grey face

outside the sky

the white drifts

without hope

or continent

red-winged blackbird cloud:

a clump of dead sunflowers

hides the toxic dump

red-winged blackbird roost:

a clump of dead sunflowers

hides the toxic dump

red-winged blackbird roost:

a clump of dead sunflowers

rocks the toxic dump

diminishing heat

the creak of crickets increasing

diminishing heat:

increasing the creak of

diminishing heat

diminishing heat

increasing the crickets' creak:

scent of goldenrod

red-winged blackbirds fled:

a clump of dead sunflowers

hides the toxic dump

dawn casting shadows

on the stone face of St. Joan:

the rust on her sword

dawn casting shadows

on the stone ^{STATUE} ~~face~~ of St. Joan:

~~on~~ her rusty sword

MH

MH

MH

The Sacring Bell

By Louis McKee

--for Michael P. Barrett

The sound interrupts a thought
which has slipped away: one
never knows whether to humbly bow
the head, or to lift it higher.
The ringing again; it conjures
a poem from the masks which hide
in the reds, greens and blues
of stained glass, masks lost
in the ritual of slender threads
of colored hope which spray grace
on the marble altar and raised
chalice of gold and blood.

Only you could bring me to
these doors now. Every May
you gather us together; here
is as good a place as any.
We kneel, cross ourselves

and remember more than dusty words.
We recall voices and times,
your smells, your pall malls,
and the hacking cough which stole
our attention, bringing us, even
then, together, asking a blessing.

CHILDHOOD

By Louis McKee

Walking
the woods & fields
about Upper Darby,
WCW making points
behind Ezra's back.
H.D. nowhere
to be found, he
finds a bench
on Locust Walk
& Miss Moore
stood looking
through her reflection
at stuffed animals
in a shop window
on Lancaster Avenue
in Bryn Mawr.

I walked
what woods & fields
were left, a man
treading in
the child's footprints,
a child lost
in the footprints.
It was much later.
I didn't know
then the inspiration
locked into the browns,
yellows, & greens
of Upper Darby.

Rocks

by Ann Menebroker

I have 5 bowls of agates
from the Oregon coast.
They are every color and size.
I give them to people who want
them.
The one I wanted
I also gave away.

For Owls

By Ann Menebroker

The wise old owl sits up in a tree
and he's wiser than you and wiser
than me,
but he's only as wise as we let
him be
and that is the secret of the Deity.

JOYCE THE POET

By Ann Menebroker

Joyce bought a magnificent
guitar
one winter day.
When she is not playing it
she lays it in a
red velvet case.
The dark polished wood
against this color
is so beautiful,
she does not write
a poem for days.

SERIES #1

By Ann Menebroker

When you love me,
it is so matter-a-fact
that we might as well
be in Reno, playing
the machines:
pull the handle
and out comes the change;
nickles and dimes.
The odds of getting
a jackpot
are rare, and mostly
we just spin around
with no returns at all.

closing the church cornerstone: cold wind

Carnivale Sunday: ★

a colorful cardboard clown

falls from the pulpit

removing the stamp ★

from the overseas package:

shamrocks from Ireland

In the empty crypt,

creeping on the crumpled sheets:

the sun at my feet ★

on the cardboard box ★

holding the frozen wind:

Fragile: Do Not Crush

stuffed in the poor box, MH

toasting the sea turtle with Saki: Ryuku fishermen

shaping his last verse:

the shadow of the coffin ★

slips into the hearse

stuffed in the poor box,

wrapping a wad of pesos:

the thief's confession

with each smoky breath,

alone on the steppingstones

honing my death verse

from the fallen rose

at the bottom of the grave:

crawling firefly glows

Eucharistocrat

In the folded flag

presented to mom and dad:

empty rifle shells

under the covers

in the condom commercial:

soap opera lovers ★

blown by the cold wind, ★

shouldering the small coffin:

my shadow alone

Working Girl
by June E. Madden

It is Friday.

since Wednesday
like a pelt purring
in her purse

By Thursday,
the pelt is an elk
in the evening,
she glimpses the rose,
dead, in the glass still
drinking.

All week,
at the office,
her hands have
yearned
to really work.

It is Friday.
The elk is a terrible
animal

and, that ink
which will not sop
into what she feels.
Even water colour -
merely make-up.

It is here.
She listens to important
miscellaneous radio programs,
reads
Lorca, Rilke, letter from Kimberly,
eats tuna
ingesting all except quality she is
a working girl

American society.
It is Friday.
And, finally
it is the poem
writing
that pleases.

She sleeps toward Saturday
like a maniac toward the zoo.
Ahh, but she is apart from anything
abrupt.

An Old Joke
by Louis McKee

An old joke, this house
with three stories
and none of them ending
happily: passing on
is for people and history,
not for houses. No fire
has ever flushed these
walls red, ever brightened
the dark or warmed the cold.
The wood I bring in knows
it does not belong; heavy
with the cold and snow,
it fights the burning news.
All day the windows were
open for air to wash
the musty staleness out.
Now, hours after we closed them,
we smell only the cold.
It is night again, night
forever: noises die
with the quieted sun, sounds
come alive in the night.
Tonight there are no sounds,
no sounds forever. Houses
stay while sound passes on
with people and history.

Shaking the Bed
by Louis McKee

Snaring fleeing images,
writing bits of poems
3 am
with the lights out:

no doubt
they'll make no sense
in the morning.

I worry
that the movement
of my writing arm
will wake her.

Or worse: that the words
I write will.

the far crucifix

down the railroad tracks

meet in the evening sun

from the empty crypt

to the far crucifix

ffom the empty crypt

from the empty crypt

from the empty crypt

to the crosses on the hill:

filled with sunlight and shadow: a butterfly sails

the far crucifix,

from the empty crypt

and here in the empty crypt:

up the trail

sunlight and shadow

shared needles

the far crucifix

silhouetted on the hill:

the sun in the crypt

over the steam grate,
exchanging cost for cocaine!
under the tent of blankets:

shared needles

sharing binoculars

comparing hawks and falcons:

grandfather grabdson

alcoholocaust

shampoodlecna

one hundredth autumn:

ancointing the four corners

of Sacred Heart Church

over the steam grate

a pair of street people meeting

brothell

from the empty crypt

to the far crucifix

a butterfly trip

down the railroad tracks

May 27, 1980

by Barbara Hauk

Around the honeysuckle
pieces of sunlight claim the air.
I forgive them their worminess.
They are an uproar of motion
which remains soundless,
and they swim in the air
like grace-filled visions,
as if to dare my two flat feet.

The Indigents

by Peter Krok

Sparrow, as I sip my coffee
in this mecca of morning transients,
I want to curse my indigence;

But you, perennial city vagrant,
amble your toothpick prints
over the sea of snow
damn eagerly.

AN OLD GRAVE

by Roger Langton

a scar
upon the desert's
face
haloed
with a whirlwind's
red hair and
an illusion
that passes by
like a twice-seen
movie

Taking Account

by Louis McKee

It is all here: the house
crusted with flaking history
and held in its place by
years of life and deaths;
roses, bush by bush, rolled
up against the fence like
water held back at a dam;
the old crab-apple tree,
stooped and tired of storms,
but strong and determined;
the pond run with tadpoles
and guppies, alive with frogs,
and ruled by an ancient turtle.

Ruminations on a tee-shirt

By June Madden

I lead a good life,

say my prayers.

And, at night when I die, I go
to San Francisco.

The ferry
from Sausalito cruises.
Into the wharf.

I walk up -
Polk Street's sweet
perversion gathers me
like bunches of violets.

At Van Ness,
I turn right
toward the Richmond District,
where I was poor
in my lavender house - thick
with writing desk and writing friends
and telephone wires full with invitations.

Further up then down,
I see the ocean, the cliffs
and the glistenings of shattered
bottles, strewn by the bored teens -

The meditation is interrupted
by the specks of impurity that
remind me: there is no change
except within myself. I am the
myriad fragments in the kaleidoscopic eye,
the stone in the lapidary's palm,
the chime in the wind, the raindrop
in the sea


Free and Alone

By Louis McKee

The water held our nakedness;
trees protected our secret.
Free and alone and fifteen:
water when it splashes must
make noise, surely there were
birds singing for the morning.
Free and alone: nothing
is changed in fifteen years.


Sitting here on hard mud
and looking out at the water,
I can still hear her blouse
falling from her shoulders
to the grass behind me, I can
hear her jeans slipping over
her hips. Nothing in the lake
but a smiling face of the sun.

over empty houses,
on the chimneys of Chernobyl:
nesting storks

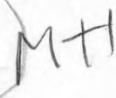



during the sermon,
in the churchyard sycamore:
mockingbird

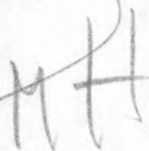
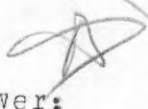
perching sparrow
aiming the arrow weathervane
at the feather moon



the end of summer:
a patch of carpenter ants
mends the cracked sidewalk



within the barbed wire
surrounding the radio tower:
sunflower silence



Poem

by Greg Geleta

Here I am
supposed to be an up & coming poet
but each time I try to write
poems that are more universal
in theme
(i.e. nature, bag ladies, Rimbaud)
I keep coming back
to that same barstool
where that girl
in the orange go-go suit
wrapped her arms around my jacket
& (as I slid her a dollar)
kissed me.

Material World

by Lillian Gottsegen

How various are the fabrics
in my family tree --
Cottons and velvets drape
near one another
and the burlap insists
on existing, rough and durable.
The silken cloth, there, too,
is delicate
and corduroy requires
special handling
because of its shading.

Whoever put together the
entire lot
was no shrewd merchandiser
playing to elegance of taste.
We please the indiscriminate.
And so the family store
ends up with silks in shreds
and grinning burlap sacks.
Do I get twisted in or out?
This loop of hanging yarn
that needs a place
inside the tapestry?

Poem

by Lillian Gottsegen

The trees
cradle
the fat moon
in their arms;
Many trees --
Only one moon.

VERSE-MAKER'S MOMENT OF TRUTH

By Lillian Gottsegen

Is the rhythm of my notions
like the rhythm of the oceans?
Sadly not.

It's more like a
blithering, blathering
shivering gathering
of words
in irregular syllables,

like the getting of wet faggots
for a hurried, harried fire
on a blustery
and clearly chilly day --

I seem to want to get warm
and quickly
and any fuelish word will do.

The Magician

by Lillian Gottsegen

I could always be fooled
by the magician.
My older sister wouldn't.

Watching his flying hands,
her mind firmly tuned out
the lilting,
hypnotic patter of his speech.
Concentrating on the trick, and
trying to catch him in his dis-
appearing canary act,
she poked her finger into the
cage,
only to have it fiercely pinched
as
the cage collapsed and flew
up his sleeve.

Like her,
I'm aware of the source of your
magic.
But I prefer to be carried away
by your radiant smile.
I don't care if there are tricks.
I'm not disturbed by sleight of
hand
or slippery words,
or whether you have scented the
air with your cologne. . .

distant factory

city ~~street~~ gutter

fluttering over litter:

tattered butterfly

leaving the fresh grave, ✓

fighting over the farmland

and grandfather's will

Hiroshima Park

relacing the faded wreath

Hiroshima Park

replacing the faded wreath: MH

a disfigured face

spatterdocks appear

in the shallows of the lake:

the droppings of deer

escaping the heat, *

wallowing in river mud:

cape buffalo

In the stinking heat,

herd of wildebeest drinking:

shrinking water-hole

sombrero in hand,

pacing the dry arroyo:

facing the long drought

city cicada ✓

snoring in the sycamore

wakens the wine *

the deserted mall

fallen in the autumn wind:

wooden Indian *

FRIENDS

for Kathy
By Anthony G. DiFiore

We search for a moment
to belong;
a speck of realness.

We hunt for someone
who is our warmth,
who can tell us.

And, hungry, we grasp
at air,
swallowing, gulping,
never satisfied, or

sometimes satisfied.

A Major Work in Progress
by Anthony G. DiFiore

He stands in a blue bathrobe
at the window.
He is waiting for the words
in a wondrous manner
to enunciate themselves.

He is listening for the pulse
of the typewriter keys.

And on the ledge of his lips
is the taste of
that first signed edition;
the talk show circuit;
the pulitzer, perhaps;
the woman with the dark eyes
who will surely love him.

All at once,
wanting to say that he lived
as deeply as he saw,
autumn changes.

A WORD PROBLEM

By Alice M. Ermlich

A person walks three miles per
hour, and
an artist thinks three hours
per mile.
If they start out from opposite
directions,
deciding to re-new their
friendship
upon meeting again, then who
will be late?

epistle

By Brian Gallagher

it's good news when
the sun shines
it's good news when
the wind blows
nicely as a breeze
or tickles your
long hair
it's good news when
the ground feels good
as without shoes you move
through your
private universe
it's good news when you hear
fine music in your mind
it's good news when everything
doesn't turn to
shit immediately.

Cracks in the Sidewalk
by Brian Gallagher

When my son falls down
his head splits apart in my head
& his life goes out
so I scream or hold it in
and
security's a gas
our lungs can't control
& real-things-really-there
don't a lot accommodate
this son of mine
whose dad can still think
that what he loves falls prey
to life and gravity
only when he's not around.

PUTTING ON THE MAKEUP

By Brian Gallagher

The secret is having someone do it.
Someone trustworthy and detached
who makes your loose ends tight,
stacks you up against even odds.
Someone unquestioning and devoted
who takes the words you say,
turns them into fish and birds
and stars.
Someone believable and demented
who shakes you up and out,
leaves the rest behind.
And you look just like you.

beneath the apple,
a rattlesnake awakens
the naked couple

through the barbed wire fence
above the empty ovens:
flickering fireflies

over barbed wire fence,
rising from rows of ovens:
flickering fireflies

Tairo

shading his eyes
watching the hawk migration:
grandson by his side

hand shading eyes
hand shading his eyes
watching the hawk migration:
grandson by his side

children's funeral
still in the chilling silence:
cathedral bell

immigrant graveyard
hidden in the morning fog:
Statue of Liberty

cathedral bell

still in the chilling silence:
children's funeral

hand shading his eyes
sighting the hawk migration:
grandson by his side

from the darkened road,
through the leaves of the linden:
the far lights of home

In the haiku mood, ~~ASPHODEL~~
I look beyond the linden
at the autumn moon

on the shady street
beating the afternoon heat:
shaggy dog
the grey squirrel sleeps

hidden in tall grass
silent in the midday sun:
the tongues of tombstones

over barbed wire fence,
rising from empty ovens:
flickering fireflies

Linda McHugh
2779 Constitution Rd.

Ann McLaughlin and I
By Rosemary Cappello

Her father came from
Scotland
And planted
Heather
In their backyard

My father came from
Italy
And planted
Parsley and basilico

She and I
Keep our ears
On the lookout
For accents

That's how we met

For My Friend,
Who Is A Dancer
By Rosemary Cappello

Your bedroom
Is tiny

You make
The most of it

You place
A cushioned stool
Near a corner of the
Mirrored wall
So I can watch you be
Juliet

You are theatrically
Correct
But it is your
Natural beauty
That makes me tremble

The music ends
Your room remains a stage
The door closed to
A world
That will not accept
A man
As Juliet

JUNE, 1981
By Rosemary Cappello

Reflected
in the oasis smell
of a cactus flower:
cool
spring

Poem from a Painting
by Ch'i Pai Shih

I fear the green hills will
laugh at my not being
my former self.

The Southern Sea
by Anthony G. DiFiore

I lie here, playing dead,
within earshot
of the receding water, fumbling
through the tutored charm
of your letter.

Its pulse speaks kindlier
than the chaos of feelings
exposed.

Still, between the seducing
cadence and the unruled measure
there is only goodbye,
a blushed apology, and
other rain words.

Alex
by Anthony G. DiFiore

Who will be wondering
where the heart will be today?
The hurt gone,
the sun undraped -
Good morning, again,
to the clear spaces & the risks.

mountain delivery

hobbling up the winding trail:

arthritic mailman

melting copper plates

inscribed with ancestral names:

the old bell-maker

echoes of summer

in the hollow silver maple:

hive of honeybees

beneath rotting leaves
tumbledown

beneath the old wooden porch:

the grave of the doll

the painted matron .
staring

fainting at the faded mirror

throws the cuge in rage

alone on the path

coming out of the forest

into the sunlight

In the morning mist,

distant factory whistle:

the frozen creek cracks

hospital sunrise

from the night nurse's radio:

Smoke Gets In Your Eyes

folding palsied hands

folding palsied hands

over rosary beads--

under widow weeds

Our Lady's Shrine:

a radio on the altar

offers rock and roll

Sahara silence

alone in the blazing heat:

raising my heart beat

turning from the church--

searching for the truth within:

regaining my youth

A GROWN UP CHILD

counting prisoners,

writing the casualty report:

short night

first day of autumn:

a team of screaming blue jays

on the way to school

on the radio,

face cream ad
replacing the ~~NO~~ announcement:

condom commercial

mountain delivery

winding trail
hobbling up the cobbled path:

arthritic mailman

through the barbed wire fence

surroundin the death camp:

flickering fireflies

i am
by Randall Brock

Maria of West Side Story
(Jossie DeGuzman, Broadway)
by Mary Cappello

i am

the lone
image
of
a forest
covered
lean.

During the curtain call
the actress
still cried for the
love she had lost --
the audience clapped --
the lead cheered --
but she remained
bent over death --
her Spanish face
hard with grey tears --
I was there with
her.

POEM
By Randall Brock

inside
my eye
i pitch
tears
at
the stomach
of
witness.

Poem
by Randall Brock

those
who speak
tremble
in
the delight
of
an edge
painted
blue.

Faith
By Mary Cappello

You showed me
your faith
through a gift --
an ivory crucifix,
pure,
reminding me of
Stephen Daedulus'
Blessed Mother.
Mine is an
ancient tool
my grandfather
used to fix shoes --
the instrument of
his art --
brown and wooden;
worn, from
making things beautiful;
the soles he fixed
have not yet worn
out.

SWALLOW AFTERNOON
by Stratton F. Caldwell

The vortex
of swallows
somersaults
the sky,
staggers toward
afternoon,
bacchic choreography
in vertigo.

IN MORNING SOFTNESS
By Stratton F. Caldwell

spilling over
pyracanthus bushes handfuls
of blackbirds shatter
crystal silence
barmy chorus line
of moving exclamation
marks punctuating stillness
with swoops
flutter falling oddly
red berries

marigold bouquet

blown away by the cold wind:

alone at the grave

the city winter:

all the steam grates occupied

with street people

alone at the grave,

blown away by the cold wind:

marigold bouquet

the slow day follows

a fleet of funeral cars

through the sleet and snow

hidden in tall grass

silent in the midday sun:

tongues of old tombstones

beneath the apple,

a rattlesnake awakens

the naked couple

In the crowds alone

searching in vain for father:

cold morning rain

MH

I N D E X

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Editor: Rosemary Petracca Cappello
21 Concord Road
Darby, PA 19023

This souvenir book commemorates the Philadelphia Poets
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Participating poets: Mary Cappello, Marion
Cohen, Anthony DiFiore, Brian Gallagher, Greg
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Sevcik, Lorraine Viscidi, Claire E. Zickel,
and Aschak, who read the poetry of John
Petracca,

and to all poets whose work appears here.

In gratitude to all whose continued support keeps Philadelphia
Poets alive.

no sun, no shadows:

circling gulls overhead search
the snowy silence

bearing a real cross,

wearing a hair shirt for Lent:

scarecrow penitent

the spring cleaning wind

sweeping the littered beach

under the carpet of surf

sweeping beach litter

under the carpet of surf:

spring wind

island volcano:

trembling jungle temple

tumbles idly

on the rain puddle

bumping into each other:

brother bubbles

distant church bell,

and air raid siren beyond:

cicada

temple reflection

touching an empty rowboat:

the
moon in the pond

empty city lot

filled with high weeds and litter:

sign reads No Dumping

under the ^{Hot Sun} ~~high~~ sky,

over the flag-covered coffin:

hovering dragonfly

at the mother house

cold morning rain--

covered with grime and graffiti:

empty subway train

sweeping the littered beach

under the carpet of surf:

spring wind

casting no shadows,

circling gulls overhead search
the snowy silence

children's funeral

still in the chilling silence:

~~the~~ cathedral bell

*Sorry for poor
messy copies*

STRIKES: WINTER 65

If I could make the world

I want

I'd make: a world where

people walk

To meet the morning sun

(no buses run)

Where snowhands rub cheeks

with fingerflakes

And watertowers are iced

like weddingcakes

: a world where

people talk

Until the news is told

(no papers sold)

Where words are caught

in windbaskets

And trafficlites are sealed

in frostcaskets

And the people's city and the City's people

Stretch to share the cold

(and hearts hold)

a crying killdeer
circling the field of wild rye
cut down by the scythe

the century turns
burning in the waste basket:
nuclear treaty

through the smoke and fire,
circling the field of wild rye:
crying killdeer

on the barbed wire fence
surrounding the radio tower:
old rubber tires

on the empty lot
filled with weeds and litter
asign reads no dumping

on the barbed wire fence
of the town radio tower:
old rubber tires

now littered with trash
and lined with abandoned cars

now littered with trash,
graveyard of abandoned cars:
the old neighborhood

my new shoes squeaking
on an early morning walk:
crickets by the creek

faraway barking

darkens the dog day

city street people
huddled around a steam grate

Examples of haiku of internal comparison acceptable for old pond -

sitting...
watching the tide -
mother in coma

april snow -
on my little sister's casket
first communion flowers

clouds dark -
trumpet echoing...
wooden crosses -E.F.

farewell dinner
for our japanese friend -
chopsticks heavy

what a spring
with
my new haiku eyes...

spring breeze -
boat tugging
mooring -H.F.

lilac scent -
child in coma
awakens

ice crystals
on my windshield -
lovers' quarrel
after the hurricane
the air of
my childhood... -V.B.Y.

rainbow still -
all my children return to
mother's funeral...

sweetpeas
fading -
our last drink -A.H.

moon
in the tide
with mother's ashes

snow
changing to rain -
crocus tips

autumn -
at the anniversary
white chrysanthemum -S.R.

Taken from a sequence on the
second world war:

clouds billowing -
massive convoy at
anchor

moon faded -
cargo bristling with
men at arms

waters foaming -
men crouching in
vomit

surf breaking...
we push the attack to
beach-head -J.D.

boulevard billboard
fallen in the autumn wind:
cardboard candidate

PHOTOGRAPH
touching his names

on the Viet Nam Monument:
his First Grade Teacher

the old Zen master
emptying the monastery:
alabaster moon

cemetery flies
flocking to fresh horse manure:
in the hearse' wake

cemetery flies
in the wake of the hearse:
fresh horse manure

cemetery flies
flocking on fresh horse manure:
the wake of the hearse

In sugar maples
shadowing the picnic table:
cicada babble

over the coffin
in the deaf mute cemetery:
silent eulogy

on the withered lawn
strewn with strands of silver tinsel:
slivered moon at dawn

our palsied mother
at the Thanksgiving table:
bachelor brothers

the powder mill bridge
beyond the reach of willows:
the House of Thoreau

In the empty house
sitting on the window sill:
a rotting pumpkin

on the city dump
filled with sunlight and shadow:
empty pumpkin

In the singles' bar
magnifying loneliness:
her thick eye-glasses

the wind-swept mesa:
a stooping prairie falcon
flushes a sage grouse

DEAD LEAF

It curves gracefully.
It is like a person,
Arms outstretched, calling.
It looks at me with no eyes.
It reaches in me
And I look at it and think.
I think of a story
I just read about a moth.
It reminds me of his family.
Scorched and burned by lights.
It makes me glad
He didn't get hurt.

by A. J. Schaffer

PEACOCK FEATHER

It is ugly because it has black strings.
It looks like a spider.
It is not smooth like an ordinary feather.
In Greek myths a man, Argus,
Was a guardian of Io for Hera.
He had a hundred eyes.
He was bored to death by Hermes to rescue Io.
His hundred eyes were put on a peacock.
Argus's eyes are staring at you from the feather.

by A.J. Schaffer

with lowered antlers

meeting with mother grizzly:

crippled caribou

with lowered antlers

greeting the charging grizzly:

crippled caribou

debating Darwin

on public television:

chattering chimpanzees

repeating the test

on the laboratory rat:

the heat

injecting virus

in the laboratory rat:

the heat

the old covered bridge

echoing from the rafters:

hay wagon laughter

through the covered bridge

echoing from the rafters:

hay wagon laughter

blooming daffodils:

bellowing at the yellow moon

the bull on the hill

the bull on the hill

bellowing at the yellow moon:

blooming daffodils

the mock funeral:

dropping another draft card

black
in the ~~small~~ coffin

shaking the branches

of the lakeside mulberry,

awakening carp

g

Gold Star Mother's Day:

dropping another draft card

in the ~~black~~ coffin

Occasionally, in a joking manner, my grandfather's friends (close ones!) would use this word in place of his nickname so that the final sound (after the vocal slur) would sound something like bujello.

On this day, however, my grandfather's mood did not correspond with such levity, or, perhaps, someone not-such-a-good friend "took the liberty." Thus, on first being called "Bujello" by someone sitting directly opposite him, my grandfather only glared intensely at the merrymaker and bit hard into his customary long, thin, cigar. When the expression was used a second time, however (coming from the same individual), the following course of action was observed: In one sweep Carmine lifted himself from his seat, brought the chickens quickly up from the floor beside him, over his head, and down violently into the face of the taunter, killing them instantly ON THE STROKE -- still biting hard on his customary, long, thin, cigar. Without a word, the story goes, he then calmly made payment for his refreshment and continued home with his two, dead chickens.

Since I've got a bit more space and time, I'll also tell you something about my grandmother, Carmine's wife.

She Knew Private Things

Maria Antonia Grascia was born around 1870 in the little, mountainous, village of Starnella, in that section of the village designated Cuzzitti. Her parents never had another child, so naturally they gave her everything they could, which, because of the economics of the time and their peasant status, could not have amounted to very much. But they did own a small parcel of good land, and this naturally passed to their only child when they died. This land formed the nucleus of the future bujente holdings, which (fifty years later) would amount to a very sizable part of the village, distinguishing them as the its major landowners. How this happened deserves telling someday also, but for now only something of Maria's personal life.

My grandmother Pomponio is remembered principally as the village's foremost midwife. She lived more than seventy years, and she helped families bring children into the world for most of her adult life. One of her great-grandsons, a successful chemical engineer and a young man of prominence, said to me proudly one day: "My great-grandmother delivered everyone in the village, nearly every adult alive today. She delivered for FIFTY YEARS!" His father, the husband of my first cousin Maria (a namesake also!), himself a man of sixty-five years, interjected gaily: "She delivered ME, and YOUR OLDEST SISTER, Susina, her son's first child --and your MOTHER twenty years before that! She would have delivered YOU if you had been born in this country. She knew EVERYONE, and everything ABOUT everyone, if you know what I mean!"

the Maine morning air:

lace window curtain touches
the empty wheelchair

with cold wind and snow
pouring through the convent door:
canned goods for the poor

asleepin

~~asleep~~ in the lake,
in the belly of a bass:
baby rattlesnake

the farmhouse cellar
tapping an old barrel:
tasting the new wine

after barn-raising,
tapping an old barrel:
tasting the new wine

after the barn-raising,
tapping the old barrel:
tasting the new wine

In the cellar hole
beneath old Monticello:
only straw remains

old dog on the porch
by the empty rocking chair:
dust on the worn seat

on the frozenm

on the frozen marsh
reflecting the partial moon:
muskrat lodge ruins

on the frozen snow,
rows and rows of white crosses
shadow the sea below

as the short night fades,
wading in the weedy lake:
a white heron feeds

at the old temple
honoring our ancestors:
the new bell tolls

another blossom
drops from the potted geranium:
her palsied hands stop

blowing
blowing his warm breath on the frozen lock
the old sexton opens the door of death

Others told me that she was a woman very small in stature, but as strong and resilient as the gnarled and sturdy olive trees she tended so lovingly. My mother never told me much about her, except that she had shown my mother, a peasant girl from a poor family, particular kindness, especially while she lived with my grandmother for a short time immediately following her marriage to my father. He was compelled to return to the United States soon after the wedding and send for his wife and child after two years.

I do remember THIS from my mother though. One day, as a young boy of ten or eleven, I went into the basement of our home where my mother was doing the family wash and found her standing beside the washing machine crying softly to herself. I approached her solicitously and asked why she was crying. In response, she held up a letter that she had been holding in her hand and said to me quietly: "Your grandmother has died."

I said, "Who is she, Mother?"

She said, "Your father's mother, Maria."

C. J. Pomponio
July 1986

entering the grove,

I center on the silence:

scent of sassafras

summing up my life
birthday
on my sixtieth summer:

longing for a wife

replacing the cornerstone

entering the grove,

I center on the silence
of a mourning dove

In farmhouse shadow

at the bottom of the barrel:

fallen leaves and snow

on rows and rows

of tombstones and row-houses:

cold wind and snow

laughing pumpkin

half-filled with sunlight and shadow:

dead flies on the sill

playing hide and seek

beneath the empty farmhouse:

spring morning breeze

small children climbing all over

bronze storyteller

down wind and down stream

closing in on the grizzly:

the camera's gleam

as the new bell tolls

echoing through the old temple:

the voice of Buddha

down wind and down stream,

the camera closing in

on the grizzly's dream

burning paper prayers

and melting copper name-plates:

casting the new bell

First impressions must have counted for something with both the perrigrine tunnelmaster from a far-off province and the diminutive local maiden with the family laundry duties (but more importantly her parents), for their marriage took place not very long afterward. He then, the story goes, returned to Popoli, his home village, packed his belongings and took up residence in the home of his new bride.

While packing, however, he did not neglect to include among his personal property an agricultural tool that was widely used in his home region, mainly for the cultivation of potatoes. The tool, fastened to the end of a long wooden handle in normal use, featured two metal prongs on its underside. In his region, it was identified with the word buyente, which means in Italian having two teeth, or in pure Italian bi-dente. The tool corresponds to what in plain English we may identify as a simple hoe or, maybe, a forked hoe.

The people of my grandmother's locality, however, had never seen such a tool and its introduction there caused quite a stir. The effect was so great, in fact, that within a short period of time the entire family came to be identified with the tool, that is, before long each and every member of the family, considered either collectively or singly, came to be identified with the descriptive phrase I Buyente or literally translated "the people of the forked hoe."

Indeed, more than half a century later, when the present writer (as a nineteen-year old American soldier) arrived in the local vicinity for the first time to visit the homeplace of his parents (both of them), the curiosity of the townspeople was satisfied with no more than a knowing nod among themselves and the plain words I Buyente. Whatever else he may or may not have done to this point in his life did not count for very much with these simple townsfolk. For them, he counted most importantly as his father's son. "I Buyente" they simply nodded.

The "other" story I started out to tell goes like this. One day my grandfather Carmine was returning home on marketday with two, bound, live chickens and stopped at the neighborhood tavern to refresh himself and make smalltalk with friends. Not surprisingly (for marketday), he found the room crowded and the conversation spirited. Thus, he decided to take a seat and order a refreshment. He set his chickens on the floor beside his chair.

As I've told you, my grandfather came to be known by the substitute name buyente. This word resembles somewhat (especially when slurred in dialect) another Italian word that carries a derogatory connotation, especially when used in association with one's family name. The word is bordello and means, of course, whorehouse or house of ill-repute.

moving from the cold corner

from the cold corner

moving with ^{the} morning sun

the far mushroom cloud

looming on the horizon

rises to the moon

the far mushroom cloud

looming on the horizon

shrouds the autumn moon

In the windy square,

In the windy square,

moving from the cold corner:

old cronies in the sun

suspended in ice

in the holy water font:

confetti and rice

sand castle ruins

a toy bucket rides

the incoming tide

at the rotting pier,

rusting in the winter rain:

Walt Whitman ferry

leaving the icy creek,

streaking across the bleak sky

a string of wild geese

autumn nightfall,

a small frightened boy crawling

from the confessional

autumn nightfall

crawling from the confessional:

a small frightened boy

on the cracked mirror

reflecting a fractured face:

a line of cocaine

7/21/31/37/40
19929
33/07/51/40/31/21
8968
513
6u 88/11/1

You may remember that on the first Sunday after the Dedication week in our New building I preached a sermon about a little girl who had come in one night and about what we had built our building for. The title was "I Came For a Drink of Water." Judy Lundin Lowe, way out there in St. Louis, having spent many years in our church, and reading the sermon, did me one better. She wrote some lines of poetry:

I came to you for a drink of water
But you gave me a glass of milk:
You touched my dress of cotton
And changed it all to silk.
The light in your eyes shone brightly and still:
Dead leaves around me moved in my sigh
As I kneeled down at your feet and started to cry.
I'd asked you for a drink of water
But you'd given me milk
And called me your daughter."

That's not really not a bad way to put it, is it? Because you see, it is true, the beloved community counts everyone in.

Grenada graveyard

unrolling the blood-stained scroll:

the tropical wind

up the beaten path

to the ancient battlefield:

a troop of Boy Scouts

In front of the cave,

in the shadow of the grizzly:

winterkilled elk

from downwind

closing in on the grizzly:

wild huckleberries

flag-covered coffin

hovering the open grave:

dragonfly

down the rusty rails

disappearing in the mist

the trail of the slug

after the divorce,

the long drive from the courthouse:

empty front seat

first D

first day of Advent

holding up candles in church:

expectant mothers

In front of the cave,

in the shadow of the grizzly:

the shadow of the elk

the village vicar

inspects the picnic baskets

for dope and liquor

In the rain barrel,

a merry go round of moths

centers the light bulb

sprinkled on the ice

in the holy water font:

confetti and rice

Easter procession

pinned to the Virgin's statue:

twenty dollar bill

now the siren fades:

the wheelchair at the window

shadows the drawn shade

between the Masses

mingling with scent of incense:

whispered confessions

on to add truly, "Surely no other word could more adequately express the spirit, and the emphasis, and the priorities of the New Testament." How true, How true.

And how I hope this can be said of us-- though I'm not always so sure. You see I probably know as well as anyone else something of the deep spiritual and emotional hungers which have come here this morning-- needs crying out to be met by the look or touch or ministrations of others in the Christian Fellowship. Sometimes, we fail each other. You know, of course, the story of Karl Marx, who once lived within the shadow of many Eastern Orthodox Russian churches, within the sound of 100 church bells --as someone once put it, but one of his daughters never got beyond the front door of one of those fine churches because of her ragged clothes. And when one of Karl Marx's children died as a baby of starvation, still within the very shadows of these imposing and impressive churches, he had to bury this child in an orange crate, carrying her to the cemetery all alone, because he found rejection in that church, and no one would help. Out of this bitterness toward the rejection of himself and his family, of course, came his book "Das Capital" and the whole system of anti-religious Marxism which has so plagued the world these many years.

How many others are finding that kind of overt or subtle rejection right here within this church family, or on the edge of it? You see, evidently, within the Peoples Temple it was a different story-- people, all kinds of people were welcomed, people cared, needs were met-- both physical and spiritual. Loneliness and desolation, fear and isolation were simply not a pattern of one's membership in that particular religious group, and that was one of the prime reasons for the magnetism of it for so many people, which drove so many people to it. Unfortunately, this kind of love and warmth is not always felt in the so-called 'mainline' churches, which I suppose includes us as well. Even though this love and warmth are exactly what many people are looking for and desperately need. John Updike in his recent novel "A Month of Sundays" points an accusing finger at religious institutions in his statement. "Most churches are like the Coca Cola billboard....they promote thirst without quenching it."

You don't know how earnestly I am hoping that we quench someone's thirst here in this place from time to time. I want very much to be faithful to Paul's admonition there in Romans 12:13. "Contribute to the needs of the saints (and there he, by no means, is thinking of the morally perfect people) and then he adds, much to the point. "Practice hospitality." I trust we will be faithful to this. In a myriad of ways; even a smile, a warm handshake, an embrace, a meal, a phone call, an overnight refuge ...making people feel wanted, loved, cared for and respected. Happily there was some of it here this week-- there were the tin-foil covered sandwiches, the offers of babysitting, the shared meals, the food order and the rent payment-- much ~~does~~ take place, but we need to do ~~more~~. much more if we would be a true New Testament fellowship. I hope in the New Year you will join me in making this one of the goals of our church family.

shadowing the snow

along the tracks to the trestle:

the song sparrow's spring

the moon enters clouds:

a merry-go-round of moths

centers the street light

two-faced neighbors

fighting over parking space:

the heat

between the pebbles

covering the puppy's grave:

the first blades of grass

My palsied mother

pieces of pineapple
eating ~~pineapple slices~~:

the heat

silent Senate:

deaf mute filibuster delays

summer recess

the silent Senate:

a deaf mute filibusters

the summer recess

silent Assembly:

a deaf mute filibusters

the summer recess

that smile on the nurse

as I enter the bedroom:

father cold and grey

the way the nurse smiled

as I entered the bedroom:

father cold and grey

hovering hummingbird:

swarming honeybees below

cover the birdbath

intruding on the silence

the Quaker meeting

intruding on the silence:

cicada

the Quaker meeting

dawn casting shadows

on the stone face of St. Joan

and a mourning dove

at the village church,

St. Joan of Arc under glass:

once a pigeon perch

out of the sunlight

THE SECRET OF PEOPLES' TEMPLE

A sermon preached by
Dr. John M. Wilbur at
The First Baptist Church in
Beverly, Massachusetts
January 7, 1979

Perhaps you read about Mamie Campbell in a Boston Globe last week. It was for the refreshments for her family after her funeral that Marjorie Harvey, the Globe columnist, was spreading cream cheese on apricot-nut bread.

Somebody by the name of Becky had called Marjorie to see if Marjorie could get some sandwiches to the little Unitarian Church by noon on Friday for the gathering of family and friends after the Mamie Campbell funeral.

In 20 years nobody had seen a Campbell near the church, but Mamie's mother had been active in the church, and Mamie herself had been baptized and married there. She was 60 when she died rather unexpectedly. Marjorie managed to get her sandwiches to the church on time. Soon, Becky, the recruiter of help, came trudging in, carrying trays sheathed in tinfoil, trailing a toddler behind her.

"Did you know Mamie Campbell?" asked Marjorie Harvey, somewhat grumpily. "No," said Becky, "I didn't."

"Then," writes Marjorie, in conclusion of the article, "it dawned on me." That was the point! We help family and friends as a matter of course. But the church simply helps. This network was reaching out because there was a need....Because of the invisible bond of old ties, of connections and commitments made before our time....Because the beloved community counts every-one in.

Because the beloved community counts everyone in! That, it seems to me, was one of the subtle secrets of the Peoples Temple Church in San Francisco which resulted in such fanatical, if misdirected, loyalty. That was surely one of the early dynamics of the first century church too. It was a beloved community which counted everyone in. We read about it there in Acts: "They devoted themselves to the apostles teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers...And all who believed were together and had all things in common: and they sold their possessions and goods and distributed them to all, as any had need....And day by day, attending the temple together, and breaking bread in their homes, they partook of food with glad and generous hearts."

The church at its best is the beloved community which counts everyone in. I can always remember what John Shroeder of the Melrose Church wrote in his Bulletin some years ago. "Of all the adjectives I might choose to describe the kind of church I'd like any church to be...I covet most for our church family that we become increasingly a CARING church. And then he goes

looking through the eyes
of the Statue of Liberty:
a Soviet spy
the evening sun

the grove by the creek:
cicadas are cranking up
the croaking of frogs

as the siren fades
and a cicada begins:
the telephone rings

after the siren,
beneath the giant linden:
firefly silence

In that withered oak
with broken branches dangling:
a crow caws and caws

Intensive Care window: departing geese

another autumn
on the bottom of the pond:
years of beer bottles

between commercials,
atop the roof antenna:
the mockingbird's act

In the swarm of gnats
rising from rank grass, fireflies
and the yellow moon

the long country road
I walk and talk to myself:
walking and talking to myself:
the heat

bearing the coffin
up the steps into the church:
the old godfather

New Year's reunion:
replacing faded faces
with baby pictures

lighting tiny candles
on tiny pentagon-shaped boats:
this Hiroshima Day

lighting candles
on tiny pentagon-shaped boats:
this Hiroshima Day

the long country road
walking barefooted alone:
the heat

From "A Gathering of Smoke," by Kerry Shawn Keys

Dyed in sal ammoniac
Palaquined from Fire Mountain

We returned from Hyderabad with silks and bedding for our living room floor. The feeling is like an ancient Muslim harem with no women because none in India are willing to be free to come and go independently of a fee. The East is a fiefdom of female poverty. Not that this doesn't suit me to satiety. A jade for a jenny. The room is covered with two enormous mattresses stuffed to a thickness of five inches. On this, covering the entire surface and cascading over the front like so many cilia, are two silk sheets embroidered with blue and gold. Then covering most of this, with only a foot on both sides and the front left to be seen, is a silk print filled with cotton to the thickness of a half inch or so. And completing the matter are four gold silk pillows with violet lacings. What is most beautiful, however, are the figures on the silk print, a mosaic mirror of the world, framed then convicted to change according to the custom of perception adopted by the observer. So, you'll need to know a little bit about me before I explain what I see.

First of all, I'm a gazetted officer. We watch our spondees, our steps are discreet. I disdain lovers except in printed matter or in the movies, and I am infatuated with a girl from Senegal. My attitude toward the West is that it is materialistic to excess. I have a particular passion for Gypsy women although I don't associate with them in the daytime out of caste pride. In the face of slow starvation they have no self-esteem and so they don't worry about losing it. I have my pride which makes me compromise and wear shirt and pants like a petty burgher, but I don't want to be taken as a villager by birth. I play croquet and I have a careful side income from milking the blackmarket. Not that I'm absolutely healthy. In fact, I sometimes think of myself as a 'mental' because of the habit I have of swatting flies wherever I go and the constitutional ennui that I suffer like Baudelaire -- I vomit and wince, complain of tiredness, and in my lethargic boredom seldom have spurts of excitement except for an interesting book, a good conversation now and then, a successful school-garden, a letter from home commending me on some tasteful pun, or in my most private moments a solid bowel movement delivered in the rasa of a thunderbolt.

Now, back to the silk print. Woven into the center is a haunted spring on a mountain plateau and a small well, surrounded by tamarind trees where there is thought to be a treasure. Madhava, the honeyed one, sits nearby, black and white, in a shepherd's heaven. There's an old bank woven in blue, a white courthouse, and a wooden flag-pole dyed grey and obviously untouched since the British Raj. Surrounding this very representational art is a circle of kadamba blossoms, round and gold like the breasts of the women in the movies from Bombay, and they are so heavy on their boughs that they weigh down the mattress with a pleasant configuration of depressions. Then around this, still maintaining a mandala form, as if the whole were a devagara, a god's house for the mysterious icon in the center, a whole series of Vanadevatas in various bandhas or coital positions like so many reincarnated totems of the sensual imagination. And strangely enough, in this amalgamated tradition of the South, the four corners have likenesses of the Buddhist goddess, Tara; a red, a blue, a white, and a green goddess.

When I wish to relax I recline over the well woven in silk in the center and dream that I am on a magic carpet flying far above India's glorious past outside the morass of all this weight of history, getting air at last.

6

one knothole in the old fence
holds the hot sun

winter menopause:

reading the same manuscript
over and over

the cellar corner:

my old upright Remington
sits out the long drought

my palsied mother

grieves at little brother's grave:
leaves falling on leaves

old Quaker graveyard

~~the lighted~~
~~alone on the beach:~~

the shadow of the ^{lighthouse} shipwreck
reaches sun-bleached bones

reachg

reaching down the well

to the boy in the bucket:
the town church bell

In the box shelter,
replacing plastic cups:
throw-away people

always returning

to the turf on the tombstone:
cemetery flies

the Fourth of July:

a buzzing horsefly explores
Independence Hall

at Ben Franklin's Tomb

celebrating his birthday:
pennyroyal in bloom

where the willow stood

shadowing the lake shallows:
the wake of the storm

fifteen summers since

the town barber's funeral:
my last cigarette

the lights of the car,
a budding maple above:
the cardinal's song

car lights up the street
budding maple above:
cardinal song

among the pennies

scattered on Ben Franklin's Tomb:
an indian head

summer nightfall

a Marine at the screen door
telegram in hand

In a coner

^{REAL}
A Portrait of a Poet by Naku Semi

In a corner of the cellar, on a small metal table, stands an old upright Remington; a little worn but able. In a corner of the cellar, on a cushioned wooden chair, sits a balding young poet; a little wiser for the wear.

This is Nicholas Anthony Virgilic who has spent many hours in this little corner ~~corner~~ of the world, studying and composing haiku night and day for the past 8 years. Surrounded by books and manuscripts, Virgilic ^{letters} ~~hunches~~ ^{his} ~~hand~~ s over ~~the~~ old Remington typewriter, and works diligently to achieve his goal; recognition as the best haiku poet in the world. ^{Concedes} ~~Virgilic agrees~~ that his goal may exceed his grasp but he has never been one to tackle anything he really wanted in a half-hearted, half-.....manner. He ~~would~~ would rather not write at all than to be considered a dilettante. Virgilic believes he has earned the title of poet and artist because he ~~composes~~ studies and composes everyday. Whatever he is, he is not a phony, Virgilic does not wear a robe and sandals, and pretend to monkish austerity. He admits to being lower middle-class, and doesn't pretend to be anything else. He does not lead his readers to believe that he lives the the life of Basho travelling the countryside seacrchng for the elusive haiku He is not in the least bit mystical in the bad sense of the word but does admit to having mystical experiences. His poems are honest, imagined or real experience that are not in the least bit zenned-up, ^{VERY TOWERED} hoillier-than-thousutterances. His poetry contains more zen by accident than by intent. Virgilic admits to being a city-slicker poet, and his poetry show it. He writes about the rivers andlakes and places in the Philadelphia area. He is not cultish, and pretend to any special knowledge ^{CANDID-} of talent given to him alone. He prefers to spell his way of Whatever else Virgilic is, he is a real poet

haiku

with a small "w" for he believe
the are many ways to the
mountaintop



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Virgilio began composing poetry and articles in 1957 but he was not encouraged in prose or lon poems. It was not until 1962 that he found himself as a poet. While browsing in the oriental literature section of the Rutgers University Library, he 2stumbled upn Kenneth Yasuda Pepper Pod collection of Japanese haiku translations. He tried a few, and sent 9 "haiku to the American Haiku Magazine; one was accepted for publication in the first issue of American Haiku Magazine, spring 1963. This poem, he considersm the "mother" of all succeeding poems:

Spring wind frees

the full moon tangled

in leafless trees.

from thevery beginning
the best demi haiku poet

To Faye P. Niles, Editor of the Green World who believed him to be
The rest is history. Virgilio is deeply indebted to Harold Gould

Henderson, Jim Bull, Clement Hoyt the editors of the AmericannHaiku for
his talent
discibering and encouraging him to whatever he has achieved so far. He is
also indebted to the fine editor of Haiku West Magazine, Leroy Kanterman who
with patience and tolerance, has helped him improve his technique since the
Frank Ankenbrand, Emma Wood
inception of Haiku West in 1967. To Eric Amann and many others

And most af all to his parents and brothers who ~~we~~ have been his
whose help
patrons through the years, without whom he would not have contributed to the
development of the American haiku



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POEM BY

John E. Rutherford Jr.
December 14, 1975

When leaves of grass turn to concrete
And waves of sea churn distraught,
Let stars of sky turn treading feet
Towards souls of song solemnly wrought:

Wise whispers winging through the heat
Help quench life's thirst sourly caught
In the desert of dilemma's demanding defeat
To mortal beings branded and bought
Midst earth's turmoil to fertilize wheat
And man's mandate to cultivate thought -
Not one whisker is demented with the mania of retreat.

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the autumn wind...master poet

the fork in the road

the loping squirrel

the old monk bends down

the incoming tide

lily

the town clock's face

the cathedral bell

into the blinding sun

a crow in the snowy pine

autumn twilight

shaking the muskrat

the sack of kittens

a distant balloon

the empty highway

the first snowfall

deep in rank grass

lone red-winged blackbird

now the swing is still

heat before the storm

a distant bell

how smooth the river

the drained everglade

rising and falling

down the dark road they go

like the weathercock

in the empty church

chromium cross

this blind poet feeling

Java tea leaves swirl

a great white swan

the icy river

the empty farmhouse

the windy swamp grass

eve

walt whitman's tomb

~~clouded sun~~

island economy

the clouded sun

suicide

the stars

chinese celebration

time and eternity

talent coming out

how many suns struck

the moonlighter

what is a haiku