

# PoetryMidwest

an electronic journal of the literary arts

NUMBER 6  
WINTER 2003

FEATURING:

ANAWALT • CALLAN • CARLISLE • COOK • FAHEY •  
FARGNOLI • HARRYMAN • HARVEY • HODSON • JETT  
• LAWDER • MASAT • MATEJKA • MINTZ • MUSTIN •  
NEUMIRE • PFINGSTON • REAGLER • SELLMAN •  
SMERDJIAN • SZUMOWSKI • THOMAS • UMSCHIED •  
WEBSTER • WINANS • ZHENG



# PoetryMidwest

NUMBER 6  
Winter 2003

EDITOR  
MATTHEW W. SCHMEER

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## Masthead

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Beware of woodchuck.

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**PoetryMidwest**

**Francis Masat**

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**The Clay of Florence**

Red-tiled roofs roll and jumble like cubist foothills  
    below blue-hazed layers of surrealist-like mountains.  
As morning sunlight turns ancient stone spires to gold,  
    clay from the hills laps at the old pontoon bridges.

## **Botany of Orchids**

A fertilized orchid grows  
red & shrivels, its  
stem swelled to form  
the seed that will ripen &  
yellow, its veined ridges split.

It turns a shade that might  
shadow the brain's  
right side—the glow  
of a woman's satin train  
sloshing velvet carpet, the blush  
of her sly smile dodging  
reporters, questions, of flames  
falling from trees, of waning  
regret as I watch them  
at the bedroom window.

The first time  
I uncurled like a leaf for a boy  
I was stunned with a science  
that outweighed lust: how  
we arranged ourselves to fit  
one another, the determined  
stems of our spines, clumsy  
pain & angle, shocked  
little laborers, a tuft of petals  
rustling in the dark.

## **Apple Trees**

Looking out the back window  
that day, I saw a giant bush  
where no bush had been,  
the apple tree ripped  
and tossed on its side  
by a quick corridor of wind.

At first I thought to ax  
the roots, chainsaw the limbs  
and drag it piecemeal  
into the woods it never quite  
joined, as if by standing apart  
it knew its blooms would sing  
against that dark scrim.

It survives root-  
naked, umbilical tangle  
nurturing still the baby-fisted fruit,  
the bushy spread a haven now  
for nesting rabbits, foraging deer.

## Bradford Pear Trees

Gloriously bridal, Bradford pears  
are neatly queued along the streets,  
a hazard, I should think, for drivers

and pedestrians alike, their eyes  
dangerously distracted. To make  
things delightfully worse, the wind,

like a jealous sister come to town,  
is brewing trouble, as much as she  
can muster, dresses whipping and

rising like a kind of laughter,  
undoing hair and hats. In fact,  
forget the hats, they're off on a hoot

of their own, a few in the trees  
like *Look at me!* even though  
the brightest can't compete

with Bradford pears in April bloom.

**This Morning**

Yellow finches spark  
in and out of the garden,  
seed seekers tearing away

petals of zinnias, black-  
eyed susans, while nearby  
the night-blooming cereus

droops, her one night spent  
in a rainstorm, wet still  
under the dripping gutter.

**Sunday Afternoon: A Report**

Who knows why—I stood  
over my desk reading  
Sermon on the Mount  
for the first time.

My cat Moriah  
scampered into the house  
from outside, squealing.  
She circled

the room noisily. I  
turned to see her  
playing rodeo  
with a small green

gecko. I crossed  
the room to check  
which of them  
needed more help.

The gecko body  
now lived  
as two, both still  
squirring shrilly.

Poor Moriah,  
confused now—  
which to kill?  
I left the room,

thinking I needed  
to move around  
but returned with a broom  
not quite knowing why.

Then I was sweeping  
the lizard halves  
out the door, off  
the porch, into dust.

It was not a big deal  
to me. I'm not  
even sure why I  
wrote this down.

So now Moriah perches  
on the left banister,  
guarding the front  
porch of my house.

I love her being  
there so motionless,  
silent creature,  
gargoyle of conscience.

But that is the whole  
of this story, no  
lesson learned, no  
possible saving grace.

**Hope**

The weeds of the field, tall  
As I am, bend  
Just a little, and stars, stars, stars call out  
Their names in the dark  
Arkansas night. I am seven.  
And then the fireflies start up. I wade  
Slowly, afraid I might fall.

Fireflies stir the air.

## **Cricket Song**

In the night when it is still  
we feel the coolness of the air;  
around us crickets churn songs  
in the dark where we cannot see.

The crickets, the night, and the air  
enfold us, and we are not separated—  
as our eyes grow used to the dark  
we look upwards and see the stars.

The stars lie far, far from us;  
the crickets near at hand—  
their comforting sounds draw us  
closer to the distant stars.

The cool touch of the night air  
and its faint jasmine scent recall  
the warm day behind us  
and the day which lies ahead.

We remain quiet for a while  
as darkness reveals the light,  
and the crickets' singing etches  
the silence around us.

It seems it would last forever—  
we are joined with them,  
with all that surrounds us  
in the garden in the still of night.

**Gwendolyn Mintz**

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**season**

heat stretched across  
our backs fingers moist  
and probing  
fertile bulbs  
penetrating hollows deep  
and rich  
in possibility

## **How Fiction Works**

In the first act, a man of no particular, unique quality walks into a museum on a late Saturday afternoon in the middle of winter. He has never been to a museum before. *There was one time*, he thinks he remembers. He thinks he remembers that the hallways were long, the frames longer, what he imagines to be brushes like prophets on the sidewalk, their voices a tail around the street.

As the man of no particular, unique quality makes his way into this museum, everything begins to become more familiar. Everything isn't necessarily the place. It isn't the people, the grapes in the corners. It isn't the slant of faces, either. Everything is a place inside him that everything is familiar.

He remarks to himself about the length of time that has transpired since he felt *being* in that place. It is unlike any other place. He thinks it, about length and time, *a unique place to be*, like on the cover of a snowflake diving past other snowflakes toward the ground.

Some time goes by as time does in a museum. At approximately twenty-eight minutes into his museum visit, the man finds himself in the middle of a dream: circles spinning like dishes with no lines to support them. Sharp red, the texture of giant bears, silence.

Everything is in motion like the center of a universe is in motion. At approximately twenty-nine minutes, the man with no particular, unique quality is standing in front of what he thinks is the most peculiar thing he has ever seen.

There is no specific explanation for this occurrence, at least not in the same way as there would be for the lights going out right now, or loading a gun. Without much further thought, he falls in.

**Jnana Hodson**  
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### **Arapaho Cosmologies**

flexed still falcon on overhanging branch  
within each eye, lightning flickers

### **Endless Direction**

blonde wheat stubble

### **Facts of Microclimatology**

why our neighbors' peach blossoms froze  
the year our crop overwhelmed us

## **The Loon Song**

1.  
a loon wails—  
I stop pitching the tent  
to listen
  
2.  
paddling on the lake  
a loon's yodel lapping  
upon my eyes
  
3.  
on calm water  
a loon carries two chicks  
on the back
  
4.  
ricochet a stone—  
a loon skitters away  
across the pond
  
5.  
natural circus—  
loons penguin-dancing  
on the lake
  
6.  
“I'm here”  
a loon hooting  
in dense fog
  
7.  
on tip of a rod  
I concentrate on the wail  
of a loon somewhere

## **Hannah Cook**

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### **Middle of the Road**

If I were a crazy woman,  
I would straddle you right now,  
sandwich myself between  
you and the steering wheel,  
lift up my skirt and let you in,  
for just a moment,  
just to tease,  
not caring what  
the passengers in the other  
parked cars think.

But instead I will sit silently  
and watch you fight desire  
while I straddle the double  
yellow line of uncertainty  
in the middle of my road.

**God-fearing**

That's why he runs. The man  
Who has shorn your old life  
From you like a husk. Even  
Though you will never tell,  
Even though no one will ask  
Him. Even though he is not  
Troubled by the rasp of wind  
Against his back. He knows.

## Mass

*The Mass of an object doesn't change when an object's location changes.  
Weight, on the other hand does change with location.*

—The MathMol Hypermedia Textbook

The woman finds her ordinary  
vows as insubstantial as the volatile  
breeze that pours over her skin  
like galvanic electricity.  
*I do's* have a common density with fog  
no matter where she stands.  
In some other landscape, the aggregate  
power of the old litany is caught.  
The fingerprints, the almost-forgotten  
love names, are heavier in that location,  
where once she lay down as part  
of a couple, inside her the man's weight  
measuring matter, the body of his concentration,  
the pull of this gravity on her heart.

### **Eve's List of What Keeps Her from Despair**

The way hummingbirds hang in the air beating their wings and sipping the  
nectar  
Fireweed rushing in after a forest fire to hold the earth in place for new  
seedlings  
Adam working in the garden, then admiring his lilies, his blue globes, his  
butterfly bush.  
Turtles congregating on a rock. More turtles congregating on another rock.  
A snapping turtle swimming in the reservoir, sees me and dives deep, as if shy  
Walking every day to North Truro to run on the sandbars and feel the wind  
Babies in my arms, at my breasts, on my lap, cooing, crawling, wobbling,  
gobbling  
Walking 'round the reservoir, sweet lake smell, turtles, grumpy geese, purple  
loosestrife  
Forsythia, lilacs in every backyard, peonies fragrant, poppies, delphinium,  
daffodil  
Shiny skyscrapers, fat ballerinas, sailboats on the Charles, cormorants directing  
traffic  
High heels, black nylons, slim if it could happen again, BB King, Brubeck,  
Baby,  
Just Look at Me Now, Writing the Blues, Listening to Blues or Jazz or  
Flamenco Guitar.  
Tall men, smart men, funny men, kissable men, ticklish men, pushover men,  
theatrical men, poetic men, musical men, more men, grocery store men,  
hospital men, circus men, animal-loving men, baby-loving men, outdoors  
loving men, movie-loving men, etc. men.  
Rhapsodies, Goldberg variations, Rachmaninov, does she know how to spell it?  
This is the beginning of what keeps her from despair. Her child. Despair.

**Ptim Callan**  
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### **An Affinity for the Status Quo**

You know how I am, I hate change. That's how come I have this mutilated ear. The one on this side. When I was four, my father took me to the barber to get my hair cut. I bit off the barber's finger. It wasn't that I objected to having short hair. I just didn't want my hair to change from the way it had been. So anyway, when I sunk my teeth into the man's hand, he reflexively jerked it away, and the scissors accidentally snicked off half my ear. I don't hold any resentment toward him; my parents should have warned him about my affinity for the status quo.

**Tamara Kaye Sellman**

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**Two A.M.**

gnawing sounds drop  
through open voilé

the wind's favor reveals  
my half-slept memory

of snapping stick, grass-  
hushed hoof

peeking into Eden, I witness  
blue light bathing

the fawn defoliating  
my dahlias

## Dozens of Reader's Digest Condensed Books

my father never read were sacrificed.  
Garage sale. I was eleven. I remember

the box of them, next to a cargo  
hold of still-new and unnamed

dolls given late to me, the book-eyed  
daughter. Summers before, the sun

boiled. Blacktop blistered too hot  
for bright-pink bikes. Instead,

I descended to the dim tank  
of my father's den, to rediscover

every afternoon the rows of linen  
spines. Underwater relics to a tomboy.

Each treasure had been shelved  
without its jacket. Gold lettering

flaked under veneers of dust.  
But for a diver given to ruins,

the holding of breath comes easily.  
Opening *The Day of the Jackal*,

my fingertips swept pages cool-smooth  
as block ice. Chapter openers, end

sheets, tables of contents I pressed  
to my temples and upper lip

to absorb damp concentration,  
to smell the calendared brine of paper.

One quarter-century later, August  
air still stifles me. I seek familiar

relief in strangers' junk. Garage sale  
marked by motionless neon flags.

Buoys. Humidity holds my breath  
for me. Each walk up each asphalt

driveway is a new exploration.  
Beyond the caches of Happy

Meal toys, the unwanted yogurt  
maker, a rusted ice-fishing augur,

I frisk soggy cardboard boxes,  
fingers and eyes scouring for ten-

cent castoffs. To trace those glittering  
backbones again, to salvage the buried

comfort of someone else's dust  
on this, Chicago's hottest, meanest day.

**Paul Alan Fahey**  
<pafahey@sbceo.org>

## WHODUNIT?

October 27, 1933

Mrs. Lucille Eureka Foundy  
Little Sister Drive  
Pacific Palisades, California

Dear Madam,

Thank you for your letter and the enclosed manuscript that I'm now returning. Though I'm not an expert in the mystery genre and found the book an entertaining read, I can assure you, it is not the genuine article it purports to be.

This tome could not be the memoir of a Mr. Charlie Chan, the Honolulu detective, for the simple reason that this gentleman does not exist. Though Charlie was based in part on a real person, the author, Earl Derr Biggers, who recently succumbed to the big sleep, fictionalized his sleuth to a great degree.

In order to authenticate your manuscript and validate my own notions, I called in several markers. People who owed me favors. Big ones. Put simply, there is no record of a Charlie Chan assisting the police in Shanghai, New York, Panama, Rio, London or Monte Carlo.

There is also no mention of such a shamus unmasking phony psychics, rounding up counterfeiters, tracking spies and saboteurs, pursuing opium smugglers or locating missing heirs.

In conclusion, I'm afraid you have been the victim of a most elaborate hoax. But all is not lost. I suggest you call upon the studio moguls at Twentieth Century Fox, as they have already transferred a few of these stories to celluloid. I'm sure you'll find these folks eager to continue Chan's escapades in cheap black and white productions with second class actors and Charlie, himself, speaking in corny aphorisms, such as the title of this questionable memoir, "Words Won't Cook Rice."

I wish you success in Tinseltown. And in the future, please remember that fictional characters are just that. Fictional.

I bid you goodbye and farewell,

Phillip Marlowe  
Los Angeles, California

## Memories

no more jazz at the  
Black Hawk  
no more jazz at the  
Cellar  
no more jazz in the  
Fillmore  
just ghostly boarded down doors  
gone, the clinking of glasses  
the waitress who always knew  
when your glass was empty

Solo

Combo

Trio

working their magic on  
your inflamed nerve ends  
the black female crooner  
hitting her notes  
like a midnight train  
breaking the stillness of night  
with its long, wailing whistle  
her sultry smile imbedded  
in your skin  
long after the closing hour  
leaving you sweating  
limp, like waking from  
a wet dream

## **The Medium**

Holding hands looking up at the surface  
strange how light cuts in and out of ribbons of water  
then suddenly a flash streams down a few meters  
almost as if we could grasp a flame of sun  
how magical the space in which we hang  
feet and arms flailing to keep upright balanced  
in currents that buffet and wobble  
we battle the deep bruise widening beneath our feet like evening  
diffuse blue slipping slowly from the left and right of our bodies like fog  
as if we are trapped in a bowl of powdered light  
we are a pair of hands  
an occurrence  
an event from which our warm blood radiates  
grappling each other for steadiness for calm  
in the dazzling medium where  
momentarily  
we will lose our  
breath



**At Macdowell**

I walked softly when I found  
the foxes' den in the April forest,  
down the hill, above three birches,  
a few footsteps from the tallest cedar.  
It was in the ground, a burrowed hole,  
nothing but dirt, small as a child.  
A few dried leaves had fallen down it,  
and a sprig of cedar. The dirt was sandy  
but the lip of the hole was rubbed smooth  
like an old man's hard gum.  
There was no one home.  
Nowhere else I had to be  
and I looked and looked, then sat nearby  
on a fieldstone wall, gray-green with lichen.  
I wrote down the moment in my black sketchbook—  
I wanted to keep it as well as I could—  
then I went away.

## **At Dusk**

*It takes time to separate what belongs to sleeping from what belongs to waking.*  
—Leonard Nathan

When you go out  
let the light follow your path  
from the home that lumps up  
behind you, edging closer to the treeline  
inching through the meadow.

Home will try to move closer  
to your disappearing form,  
clapboard and foundation sliding  
nearer the forest, trying to lose  
delineation, civilization, as all wood  
and rock give in to urges to tumble back  
into places both primitive and sacred.

But this isn't your home, the voices warn—  
and they sound oddly like your father and mother  
waving cheerily—you have to make your own.

Only out there, in the sweep of night,  
grasses swinging at your thighs,  
where you have pulled all sense  
of human shelter and safety,  
are you welcomed into the boggy  
home of turtles and wood frogs.

Just as you are buoyed by the blue  
that darkens above, the stars prickle the air,  
and pin you down to this soft space  
where no one, not even you,  
can sift through swamp of rushes,  
sedges, sheets and floors, the mush  
of each step sinking into pile carpeting.  
Your ears ring with the mesh of chirp  
from computers, blip of insects,  
shuffle of fallen leaves layering  
smiling family photos.

The green glow of swamp gas fails  
to illuminate any hard edge  
that separates structure from nature—  
if there is a way home, this is it.

**Northwest Passage**

wild ice  
blooming on distant  
blueslope:  
and a broken spruce  
slants toward skyhold

where they were  
traveling:  
no roads crossed

### **Late Fees**

Before she reaches the shelf to right the book that has fallen into a slant, she sees the small call number written on it. She puzzles, then recalls it as a book she'd checked out from her high school's library twenty years ago and never bothered to return. A copy of Fitzgerald's *Gatsby*, she thinks. Its spine is cracked and loose, and the book shifts in her hand. Clear tape that had been used to bandage the wound now curls, exposing the sinewy threads that run its length. The midnight, canvas cover is worn, and layers of pressed-board bloat at the edges. In the back of the book she sees the index card, which lists the borrowers' names and due dates. She takes it out and looks at the names written there, then runs her finger over each of them, feeling the imprint of the signatures. She says them one-by-one out loud, remembering their owners as they were when they'd written their names—Rosemary Whitmore, Tim Stricklen, Clara Minix. Instead of returning the book to the shelf, she opens it to page one and begins to read. The amber leaves feel dry and brittle against her damp fingers, and molded smells of neglect assault her as if to accuse. Some of the pages even pull loose as she reads. But this doesn't bother her. She knows the book's value is greater than the late fees it has amassed over the years.

**James Lawder**  
<[z\\_zaphos@hotmail.com](mailto:z_zaphos@hotmail.com)>

### **Mundane Household Object #1**

The mundane quality of the object in the house is not unlike the mundane house in which the object is but is not at all alike the mundane object in which one finds a house as an object which is mundane and is not a house or is a house cannot be unlike a house for the sake of it having presence in the house and yet what worth a mundane object could give any house but a mundane house seems too small to be of any in any or for any scale of house as a house is a rather grand object and so we see that a mundane house is not so likely to be quite alike an object which is mundane, and in a house.

## **Bob Mustin**

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### **Broccoli**

How well we know its quandary:  
Thick neck stretching upward,  
Groping toward the sun's  
Desiccating nourishment,

Its hydra-head unfolding,  
A thousand eyes searching,  
Formulating only questions,

While its roots web and burrow,  
Thirsty for the hidden river  
Of yesterday's showers,

A pair of fates grasping  
For possession of its soul:  
*You are here to be eaten*

Or to endure until, along  
The rim of its floret,  
Each blind eye detaches  
And falls among the leaves.

## Crow Augury

In my room I measure the cry  
of crows black against waking hours.  
Their beaks open to make sounds  
that mimic children  
ricocheting laughter.  
Wings tilt to accent their caw.  
They mark the sentinel's watch  
and ride old sky in daylight.

First watch  
there is silence.  
Not from black birds  
but from my ears pressed against sleep.  
In dreams I hear their warning.

City streets smash sounds together  
to erase familiar crows cawing.  
Artificial noises ring and quicken my pace.  
I lean forward to avoid unblinking eyes  
and hurry against blowing west,  
rain and wind at my back.

Crows tuck their heads  
and murmur under wings.

Tibetan bells echo homage to their ancient caw,  
while here, shots crack against them.

Farmboys rifle feathers to watch bird bodies explode.  
In swirling blackness, those alive  
lift and cloud to darken grey skies  
loosening their tongues to speak secrets.

Crying crows still speak with each watch of day  
Inside, my bed opens in softness  
blotting out inspection.  
I have forgotten separation.  
I have made a nest  
while crows speak of tomorrow's  
death by a virus.

### White Pages

Three years later and there are more Bennett, M.'s in the Indianapolis metropolitan phone book than there used to be. What was that street you lived on? I can't remember. It's 11:24 a.m., Wednesday; most respectable people are at work. So I could call every listing, listen to the answering machine for the scrape of your voice. Like I did last time I lost your number. You were angry for a week: *You mean you don't have it memorized?* I didn't, but knew your curves like my favorite Lee Morgan sprint. I can still draw the trumpets in your lips upside down.

## **Klimt in Chicago**

### *1. On the Elevated Train*

bucking past Chicago's topography:  
concrete & soot, wigs stores. Starter  
jackets in windows, mouthless  
mannequins starting nothing but trouble.  
Despite cold, horizontal stars look  
closer above the metallic clang  
that makes a city a city. This time,  
Secession comes to the town  
not from the South, but from Vienna  
served on a paint palate: wild-eyed  
watercolor women, oil-embalmed men  
dulled by entwined shades. Half-sealed  
office windows lit with oil lamps.

2. *Klimt's Women*

Pre-dawn bruised  
by trains grumbling  
like a bass with a broken string.

The women are washed  
in a mezzanine of geometry.

Chattering in paint  
like a topiary outrunning itself.

Collage of stained glass  
covering the body's archeology.

Klimt knows the speed of beauty.

How it will leave you  
bed-ridden with  
the memory of once.

No shadows in memory,  
only paint's mute  
understanding of skin.

The difference between painter  
& canvas is the contrived  
in & out of breathing.

3. *Waterworks*

Mermaid & mermaids again, flopping  
on dog day concrete.

4. *Chicago's Unhealthy Atmosphere*

is blind from sleep  
    & Gustav steps into  
    the bathroom.

He reaches the sink,  
begins because he can't find

the toilet. Because cold-blooded  
    porcelain softens his face.

In his dreams, the lamp  
is a child begging change.

Worn clothes, teeth corrupt  
    from nights on the street.

*I don't have any change,*  
Gustav mumbles, returning

to bed. A cocoon of blankets  
    & he sleeps quickly,  
    dreams parading children,

mouths full of decaying teeth.

5. *“Procession of the Dead”*

—*charcoal*

Klimt’s parting is a hiss.  
Exhaust of his body—

a dry breath from  
the waning shape pulled  
into the caravan.

His skin is left airing  
beneath the city’s sun.

His hair is left, still damp  
from hunching, bottom  
of a stained tub.

Shivering  
from patchwork anecdotes

babbling from a rusted spigot.

## Contributors

**Howard Anawalt** lives in northern California with his wife, Susan.

**Ptim Callan's** writing has appeared in *ZYZZYVA*, *Poetry Midwest*, *Eyeshot* and others. His films that have been screened at The Palm Springs International Festival of Short Films, San Francisco Independent Film Festival, and other festivals. Read more of his writing at [www.ptim.org](http://www.ptim.org). His first name is pronounced "Tim."

**Wendy Carlisle** has recently had poems in *2River View*, *Carnelian*, *Conspire*, *Lightning Bell Journal*, *Ludlow Press Journal*, and *Three Candles*. Her book, *Reading Berryman to the Dog*, was published in 2000 by Jacaranda Press. She has just finished a chapbook, *Nine Parts Water*. She and her husband David and the dog live in Texas.

**Hannah Cook** is a graduate assistant in the English program at Eastern Kentucky University. A graduate of Transylvania University, she received the 2001 Judy Gaines Young Award for Poetry. Her work has appeared in *The Peralta Press* and *The Transylvanian*.

**Paul Alan Fahey** is a learning disabilities specialist at Allan Hancock College and editor of *Mindprints: A Literary Journal*. His fiction has recently appeared in *Thema*, *Agrippina*, *Seven Hills Review*, *Retrozine*, *Scriptum* and *Words Literary Journal*.

**Patricia Fargnoli** is a retired psychotherapist who currently teaches poetry in Keene, New Hampshire. Her book, *Necessary Light*, (Utah State Univ. Press, 1999) won the May Swenson Book Award, and a chapbook, *Lives of Others* (Oyster River Press) was published in 2001. A Macdowell fellow, and associate editor of *The Worcester Review*, she has work recently or forthcoming in *Atlanta Review*, *Rattle*, *The Adirondacks Review*, and *Prairie Schooner*. Past work in *Poetry*, *Ploughshares*, *The Southern Review*, et al.

**Veronica Harryman** received a B.A. in English from the University of Kentucky and is currently pursuing her M.A. in Creative Writing at Eastern Kentucky University. She lives in Lexington, Kentucky, with her husband and two children. Her work has also been featured in *Hackwriters*.

**Yona Harvey** lives in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, where she teaches at Carnegie Mellon University.

**Jnana Hodson** writes newspaper headlines for a living, and has had poems in several online journals, including *Ascent Experience*, *Comrades*, *Deep Cleveland Junkmail Oracle*, *Kota*, *Pierian Springs*, and *3rd Muse*.

**W. Luther Jett** lives in Washington Grove, Maryland, and is the author of the chapbook *A Leather Dress Fur Mother*. His poems have also appeared in a

number of journals, including *The GW Review*, *WordWrights*, *Syncopated City*, *Synæsthesia*, *ABRAXAS*, *The Burning Cloud Review*, *Middle Class Review*, and *Main Street Rag*, as well as in several online journals.

**James Lawder** is an untested yet undenied criminal mastermind, currently possessing nothing but that which he possesses. And some other stuff. He has been published in *Whiskey Island Magazine*, and currently resides in Ohio, which is kind of like a small suburb of California, except not at all so.

Raised in the Midwest, **Francis Masat** moved to Key West after twenty-some years as a professor in New Jersey. In addition to writing, he enjoys volunteer work, tropical living, and the Key West Poetry Guild. His recent work appears in *Amaze*, *Heron's Nest*, *Modern Haiku*, *Paper Wasp*, and *Solares Hill*.

**Adrian Matejka** currently teaches at SUNY-Geneseo. His poems have recently appeared in *Lake Effect*, *Good Foot*, and *Beacon Street Review*.

**Gwendolyn Mintz** is a fiction writer and poet living in New Mexico. Her poetry has appeared in various journals, including *Puerto del Sol* and *Black Creek Review*. She is currently completing a poetry chapbook, *What I Share With You*.

**Bob Mustin** has had poetry published recently in *Comstock Review*, *Niederngasse*, *Switched-on Gutenberg*, *Horsethief Journal* and *Green Tricycle*. His first novel, *A Reason to Tremble*, was published in 1997. His work has also appeared in the *Rockhurst Review* and *Mefisto*.

**Willam Neumire's** poetry has previously appeared in *Poetry Midwest*, *Blue Mesa Review*, and *Melange*. He is currently on staff at the *Cortland Review*.

**Roger Pfingston** is a retired teacher of English and photography with new poems scheduled to appear this fall in the *Louisville Review*, *Southern Indiana Review*, *Red River Review*, and *Hummingbird*. A chapbook, *Singing to the Garden*, will be published in 2003 by Parallel Press at the University of Wisconsin in Madison.

**Robin Reagler** lives in Houston, Texas, where she serves as the Executive Director of Writers in the Schools (WITS). Her poems have been published in *Ploughshares*, *American Letters & Commentary*, *Colorado Review*, and many other journals.

**Tamara Kaye Sellman** is editor and publisher of *Margin: Exploring Modern Magical Realism* <<http://www.magical-realism.com>> and is an active member of PEN USA West (Washington Chapter) and Jane's Stories Press Foundation, a women's writing collective. Her work has recently appeared in *Edge City Review*, *Peralta Press*, *The Griffin*, *ByLine*, *Alligator Juniper*, *Segue*, and *Tower Poetry*.

**Alan Semerdjian** currently teaches at Herricks High School in New York, performs regularly in the tri-state area in a myriad of musical outfits—including Surreal, Milquetoast, and Watercats—and is working on his first collection of poetry through the MFA in Creative Writing at Goddard College. His work has appeared in several literary journals, including most recently *Ararat* and *Whalelane*.

**Margaret Szumowski** grew up in Winterset, Iowa, the oldest of seven children. She served in the Peace Corps from 1973-75. As a hostage in Uganda, she had the distinction of having her photo taken by Idi Amin—a sort of keepsake for him. Szumowski received her MFA from UMass, and at the end of her orals with Jim Tate, she commented on how much she enjoyed the program. Tate's response: "Even more than being a hostage of Idi Amin?" accompanied by that great laugh of his. Her poetry collection, *I Want This World*, was published by Tupelo Press in 2001.

**F. Richard Thomas's** publications include eight collections of poetry, including *Frog Praises Night* (Southern Illinois University Press) and *Death at Camp Pahoka* (Michigan State University Press). Other books include a short novel, *Prism: The Journal of John Fish*, and *Literary Admirers of Alfred Stieglitz*, which explores the relationship between poetry and photography.

**Colleen Webster** lives at the juncture of the Susquehanna River and the Chesapeake Bay in a little old town where she is most often outside, running, sailing, kayaking, biking, walking her dog and rescuing cats. Her indoor activities include teaching college English, writing, reading and looking longingly out windows. Her work has recently appeared in *The Maryland Poetry Review*, *Poetry Midwest*, *ARIEL: A Review of International English Literature*, and *Re)verb*.

**A.D. Winans** was born and raised in San Francisco. A graduate of San Francisco State College and the author of thirty books of poetry and prose, his work has appeared internationally in over 500 literary magazines and anthologies. His current books are *The Holy Grail: Charles Bukowski and the Second Coming Revolution* (Dust Books) and *A Bastard Child With No Place To Go* (12 Gauge Press). He is the former editor/publisher of *Second Coming Magazine/Press*.

**Christina-Marie Umscheid** has published in an extensive list of journals, including *The Chicago Review*, *Hiram Poetry Review*, *Caliban*, *The Poetry Review*, *Negative Capability*, *The Old Red Kimono*, and *Great Lakes Review*.

**Jianqing Zheng** is an Associate Professor of English at Mississippi Valley State University. His poems have appeared in *Poetry Midwest*, *Mississippi Review*, *Flyway*, and *Cape Rock*, among others. He was the winner of Slapering Hol Press Poetry Competition in 2001 and is the author of *The Landscape of Mind*.

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