

# poetry speaks



Wisconsin poets animate, celebrate, and deliberate on the value of the arts

# poetry speaks

2016 marks MMoCA's 115th anniversary and 10th year in its Cesar Pelli-designed building. To celebrate the occasion, poets from across Wisconsin were invited to submit poems that animate, celebrate, and deliberate on the value of the arts.

Sarah Sadie Busse and Wendy Vardaman, proprietors of Cowfeather Press and Madison's fourth Poets Laureate, selected the poems for Poetry Speaks.

## PARTICIPATING POETS

Kimberly Blaeser, *Of Fractals and Pink Flowering*

WISCONSIN POET LAUREATE

Lewis Bosworth, *Art for Art's Sake*

Jen Brady, *Artery Art*

Sylvia Cavanaugh, *To Make It Matter*

Robin Chapman, *Surely the quilters*

DeWitt Clinton, *Remembering High Beams on Night*

*Commutes*

T.A. Cullen, *Monuments Considered*

Jody Curley, *Northern Lights #1, Still Life*

Ron Czerwien, *Vessel*

Bruce Dethlefsen, *Artists*

WISCONSIN POET LAUREATE (2011–2012)

CX Dillhunt, *Some Partial Entries*

Marnie Bullock Dresser, *On Hopper's Evening Wind*

Rebecca Dunham, *Elegy Sung in Dirt*

Araceli Esparza, *Shadow*

Fabu, *Romare Bearden Takes the Long Way Home*

MADISON POET LAUREATE (2008–2012)

Tyler Farrell, *The History of Finger Painting*

Amy Gaeta, *the art of junk mail*

Russell Gardner, *Do Not Call Me Ishmael*

Ronnie Hess, *Conversations on Seeing Kandinsky's Mural*

Barbara J. Holt, *Artist's Eye*

Dominic W. Holt, *South Transfer Point*

Keesia Hyzer, *Fine Arts Week*

Jo Jensen, *Art*

Patrick Johnson, *Deer Scroll with lines by Kunaikyō*

Martha Kaplan, *15 Poem*

Norman Leer, *Carl Nielsen in the Rain*

Sandra J. Lindow, *Rayna in Utero Dancing Toward Daylight*

Bobbie Lovell, *The Art We Can't Afford to Lose*

Gregory Markee, *The Sum of Art*

Richard Merelman, *Come to Light*

Oscar Mireles, *Poetry Can Be Hard on Your Hands*

MADISON POET LAUREATE

Eva M. Olsgard, *Wild Plums*

Norma Gay Prewett, *Ars Prolifica*

Fran Rall, *Ms. Forward Speaks*

Liz Rhodebeck, *Of Pens and Paints*

James P. Roberts, *Midnight Curator of the Little Free*

*Libraries*

Evalyn Robillard, *evening at token creek chamber music*

*festival*

Jonathan Rosenblum, *Bookless*

Mary C. Rowin, *Learning from Children*

Paula Schulz, *All Art Is My Zulu Basket*

Lynn Shoemaker, *Sing Mercy, Maya*

Jo Simons, *Chocolate Croissant*

Sandy Stark, *Praise the Quietly Unadorned*

William Stobb, *Interval*

Richard Swanson, *Museum Pieces*

Marilyn L. Taylor, *Glass Under Glass*

WISCONSIN POET LAUREATE (2009–2010)

Guy Thorvaldson, *Overture of Dreams*

Moises Villavicencio Barras, *Tarkovsky's Sounds*

Timothy Walsh, *Plastering*

Dylan Weir, *One Day at a Time (in III Acts)*

Tori Grant Welhouse, *Muse*

Amanda Werhane, "Anonymous"

Linda Newman Woito, *Dreaming #14, White days, black cat*

Marilyn Zelke-Windau, *Sharing*

Mark Zimmermann, *Leni Riefenstahl*

**KIMBERLY BLAESER**

**Of Fractals and Pink Flowering**

Imagine the geometry of flower  
is hunger for balance,  
is my child's hand on the gears of beauty  
layering and interlocking color.  
Picture me prone, a small center point—  
one copper dot in the white Minnesota winter.  
Picture my mother drying her hands  
placing the compass and spinning  
arcs and intersecting curves,  
woodland flowers growing  
into many-petaled mandalas  
into limitlessness: a universe  
of circles, of symmetry—sun,  
stars, blooms and orange-hued fruits,  
the berry, squash, ripe tomato wonder  
of belonging.

My own spirograph bursts  
rush forth ornate like paisley, like fireworks  
against dark summer sky. Spokes and wheels  
and gears meshing—each pencil thrust  
a tentative mark, a hopeful threading  
of the cogs of longing. Imagine my fingers  
holding tight to the friction,  
watch the intricate flourishes appear  
on white paper—the tabula rasa  
transformed by oval,  
just another language  
another voice saying hello  
to the spiraling bodies of self.

Imagine my psychedelic crayola  
yearning, my January pining  
after the purple florals  
the cosmos, the daisy mix  
*(he loves me, he loves me not)*  
on Gurney's seed packs.  
Now watch as we carve splendor:  
my world is medicine wheel and hand drum,  
is pow-wow bustle and beadwork in woodland design.  
The sweep of nature tallied by curve,  
by eye, assembled now as scarlet fractals,  
as collage of vines, tassels, seed pods,  
and a child's simple pink infinity.

LEWIS BOSWORTH

**Art for Art's Sake**

He wore a bowtie and smiled as he  
Looked up at the blue-green stripes  
Of paint in etched lines high above.

“What is that, mom?” he asked,  
Vaguely touching her skirt—“It’s a  
Picture of a living room,” she said.

The boy fidgeted slightly but kept  
His cool—“Why did we come here  
Right after church?”

“We wanted to see Aunt Alta’s new  
Paintings. Don’t you love the one of  
The kitty and the roses?”

“Is that her cat, Blackie? He bit me  
Once. Can I go to the bathroom?”  
—“Wait a minute, dear.”

“I knew I’d be in trouble as soon  
As art got dropped from the  
Curriculum,” she thought.

“Is that Mrs. Wilcox over there  
With Brenda?—Why are they  
Here anyway, Mom?”

“Dunno. I think Brenda wants  
To be an artist when she grows  
Up, like Aunt Alta.”

“Why didn’t Dad come with us,”  
The boy complained. — “The  
Packers are playing today, Henry.”

“I bet Aaron Rodgers’ mom didn’t  
Make him go see some ol’ paintings.  
I’m thirsty. Did Blackie die?”

“Thelma! Thelma! It’s me. Doris!  
What does Brenda think of the  
Exhibit? Henry is very impressed!”

“Brenda likes everything except that  
One with the blue-green blotch in  
The middle. She says it ‘stinks...’”

“I have to pee, Mom! Who’s that  
Woman in the brown uniform?”—  
She’s a docent, Henry.

# poetry speaks

**JEN BRADY**

## **Artery Art**

peel back our skin  
to see the art in our bones,  
the creative forces of our hearts,  
& recognize how they work together

let the rhythms placed in our blood  
beat out the story  
that there are spaces inside us,  
we have yet to find

let this artist's world  
pull you from sleep  
hear the invitation spoken in your spirit  
racing along your nerves & rising in your mind

we were created to imagine—  
to give vision a home.  
a canvas.  
a voice.  
a body.

because art is discovery  
let us make maps

because truth sings  
let us make music

because grace bleeds color  
let us paint

because hope holds a pen  
let us write

because beauty moves us  
let us dance

for we know—  
art is our gravity  
    & our wings to defy it

SYLVIA CAVANAUGH

## To Make it Matter

Ever since the big  
bang let loose  
this endless oscillation  
between energy and matter  
and the Asian philosophers  
taught that empty space  
is the wellspring  
of all creative thought  
it was inevitable  
the Chelsea hotel  
would become uterus  
of the new art scene  
minds of the marginalized  
drifted its rooms  
and corridors  
attached themselves to parties  
to arteries  
but sometimes it simply  
comes down  
to opposable thumbs  
and gender constraint

and lately, Gabriele Münter,  
I stand before you  
expressionless in reverence  
as if blue flame could breathe  
through spires  
as if there were two moons  
because there were  
because maybe two moons  
need witness  
in Germany  
and other such places  
when dark days descend

and just think  
those two turntables  
and two needles  
turning tables  
on a singular vinyl groove  
where landlords torched tenements

smack and reprisal attack  
emcees and deejays  
Afrika Bambaataa style  
peace for a while  
in block parties  
and head spins  
aerosol spray  
colors displayed  
on brick walls  
and subway cars

this is what art does  
here in the crisis of things  
some of those distant suns  
we see glitter at night  
have long since expired  
art reflects us  
or makes us  
while nagging oblivion  
scintillates our thoughts  
even our own sun star  
is doomed  
energy or matter  
artists can make it matter  
its about how many ways  
the universe can be expanded  
stroked or splattered or knifed  
or spoken in invisible word  
or in notes or dream

O, dream with me  
Fred Stonehouse  
a galaxy in a gallery  
up against a starlit street

**ROBIN CHAPMAN**

**Surely the quilters**

*—for my grandmother*

will dance at the gates of heaven in their gossip  
and stories, bringing weekly their hoops and frames,  
thimbles flashing nimbly, drawing the bright threads  
through stitch after stitch or rattling their fabrics  
through the stabbing needles of the quilting machines,  
color joined to color, over stitching the pattern—  
log cabin or crazy quilt or Art for art's sake, order  
shuffling from tiling to painting and back again—  
I have seen them working at three in the morning,  
heads bent over their piecing and backing of worn-out  
work jeans and aprons, skirts and shirts, draperies  
and dresses, whatever remnant patches of old life  
still exist, laughing and praising, creating baptismal  
blankets, wedding bed covers, wall art that can be folded  
and carried from one generation to the next.

DEWITT CLINTON

## Remembering High Beams on Night Commutes, I Read Tu Fu's "Night Thoughts While Travelling"

At night, travelling at high speeds  
I sometimes crane my neck so the  
Moon can shine all yellowy into my  
Old blue eyes. Moon risings are breath-  
Taking, a relief after moving papers  
And students around all day. In the fall,  
I dread the high beams reflecting in  
deer's eyes, tiny moons I don't want  
To crash into. *My poems have not made  
Me famous<sup>1</sup> but without them I might as  
well have died when N.V.A.<sup>2</sup> sappers  
overran our outpost, the night lit with  
tracer rounds, a Russian flamethrower.*

---

1 Line from Tu Fu's "Night Thoughts While Travelling"  
2 North Vietnamese Army soldiers carrying C4 explosives

**T.A. CULLEN**

## **Monuments Considered**

We planted lettuce in early spring.  
For some reason, we planted it in a ring  
Not a normal row of lettuce  
but a circle, a Stonehenge of lettuce.

Visions of sturdy heads  
Topped by heads of endive that spread  
So long and flat over the Romaine towers.

Imagine wrapping them in plastic  
preserving them forever  
like the sofa in your mothers living room.

Do you think tourists will come to visit -  
and wonder about their celestial significance  
or just wander about taking photos  
with their Instamatics with those  
lovely flashing bulbs.

**JODY CURLEY**

**Northern Lights # 1  
Still Life**

This first blizzard of December turns  
me back toward my mother  
and all the years I gave no thought to  
how she must have worried  
while I traveled cold, dark highways far  
from her.

Now as branches bend beneath  
the weight of this long night  
falling early,  
drifting deep,  
I remember how little she asked  
when she knew  
she would not go home again.

“I want my turquoise pillows,” she whispered.  
“And my Christmas lights.”

So we wrapped the string of colored bulbs around  
the headboard of her hospice bed.

Once she had been an artist.  
She traded her oils and brushes  
for typewriters and kids  
but she never stopped trying  
to make beauty.

And I still don't know why it had to be  
so hard  
but finally when she died,  
her head lay soft on her illuminated pillow,  
her face washed with every color  
of light.

# poetry speaks

**RON CZERWIEN**

**Vessel**

*Its glass prow will be one of the most recognizable forms in Madison.*

Architect Cesar Pelli on his design for  
the Madison Museum of Contemporary Art

Not everyone  
is on board  
for the voyage

Some works of art  
demand

You abandon  
ship

# poetry speaks

**BRUCE DETHLEFSEN**

**Artists**

(for Denise)

we chase the moon  
too hard sometimes  
and stumble in the stars

that sparkle always blinds us  
we trip up tumble down  
we suffocate in stardust  
drown in floodlight

and still we recreate  
we sing we write  
we dance we paint  
we one more time in space  
ourselves remake

return retune

gracefully we rise again  
we're artists  
grateful for another dreadful chance  
to chase the moon

**CX DILLHUNT**

from The Incomplete Glass Man's Glossary

**Some Partial Entries**

**ART** a fluid place or state of being.

See: LIQUID

**CONTEMPORARY** 1. happen stance; last chance; the real dance. 2. the here and now. 3. everything else. Sometimes fanciful, as in: *She was such an innovator, she had no contemporary as she was ahead of her time and behind the artistic glass eye, so to speak.*

See: KIT & CABOODLE, THE WHOLE; TERPSICHORE (def. 1)

See Also: CANNED SOUP; CLIO, CALLIOPE; CANTICLE

**LIQUID** 1. fortunate; 2. to be before, before after 3. to be in an unsettled state; to relish being so, as in: *He had an unusually, atypical bad day, but felt lucky all the same—he knew when he woke up the next morning that he was still liquid.* 4. preferring to step into, rather than out of; often, a sense of feeling common in uncommon circumstances. 5. lackluster, until stepped on or into. Compare: *The glass looking puddle seemed rather unassuming and unwilling to be stepped into, so he walked around it wondering why it was so lack luster in spite of the colorful mood it appeared to be in at the time.*

See: PUDDLE, PUDDLER, PUDDLIER; PUDDLISHIS (et var.)

See Also: PUDDLE-WONDERFUL, PUDDLEWONDERLUSTER

Related: LIQUIDISH (espec. def. 2); FLASHED GLASS (def. 4); MUDLUSCIOUS (uncommon); MNEMOSYNE (in all senses)

**MMoCA** Madison Museum of Contemporary Art, 227 State Street.

See: GLASS HOUSE; CESAR'S CASTLE; REFLECTION; CELEBRATION

**MUSEUM** 1. place of or pertaining to that which is of or once was pertaining to place 2. placed yet unplaced 3. gathering of gotten, forgone, and forgotten 4. home 5. place for placing necessarily and unnecessarily a certain priority to that which was both known and unknown.

See: ERATO, EUTERPE, MELPOMENE, POLYHYMNIA, THALIA, URANIA

See Also: TEMPLE; GARDEN (more at PARADISE)

**MARNIE BULLOCK DRESSER**

**On Hopper's *Evening Wind***

I used to call it prayer, the wet  
kick of air a window wants  
and wants. The way a curtain says,

“not yet.” Back then, physical meant  
sexual and everything  
was flesh—skin-colored muslin

went after the moon,  
a scab on the night. I'd dream  
the hands of an evangelist

upon me and sleep past noon.  
His manicured pulpit gestures.  
My drowsy pubescent amen.

REBECCA DUNHAM

**Elegy, Sung in Dirt**

after the *New York Times* image of  
the Deepwater Horizon's collapse into the sea

Feather-vented, the smoke  
flows up, black-

blooded as the oil plumes  
that soon will unwind

below. Boats spray  
forth arcs of salted water,

the image suspended,  
caught by the camera's

shutter. By evening  
this image—viral elegy—

will echo across screen and page.  
I cannot look. No,

I am the poet of the eye  
filled with dirt. Mouth

shut. But reader, tell me,  
who among you could conjure

the gift, at such depths,  
of seeing in the dark?

# poetry speaks

**ARACELI ESPARZA**

## **Shadow**

Light casted tree shadow  
This is where we were born  
In an afternoon snow fall  
Covered in feathers  
We searched for each other's hands.  
I pulled her, she pushed  
We came out.  
There are a hundred things that happen outside of a  
window,  
If you watch long enough you will see us.

FABU

### Romare Bearden Takes The Long Way Home

Romare Howard Bearden  
Pale onion skin and round  
African American artist  
Painting  
Words, jazz  
Watercolors and works  
In graphite, serigraphs and ink  
Takes the long way home.

All his troubles  
As a cream colored man  
On a personal odyssey  
Painting  
From North Carolina to New York  
Facing  
Fierce battles and tribulations  
Found expression in an ancient Greek story  
About family and home.

*Romare, why did you make  
the people Black in your paintings?  
Others question.  
While his answer lies in the circles  
He traveled for America  
To even pretend to be home.  
If a child in Benin  
or in Louisiana  
sees my paintings of Odysseus*

*He can understand the myth  
better  
Is Romare's answer.  
Who has ever asked  
His contemporaries  
Why the people they paint  
Are always white?  
Their worlds are devoid of color  
Yet why insist that ours  
Must be too.*

The real myth is that Black people  
Are ever welcomed home in America  
Except inside the warm hearts  
Of their family and friends.

The long way home  
Follows historical twists and turns  
Freedom, slavery, segregation, integration  
(except in economics)  
up to President Barack Obama, down to  
murdered Trayvon Martin.

Romare Bearden  
Picked up his two heavy hands  
Full of heroic experiences  
Took what was known  
Accepted and believed of another race  
Fashioned a modern story on canvas  
His own and others like him  
Full of revelation  
And resurrection power.

As he took the long way home  
Warring  
Identifying as a Black man  
Victorious  
Against his enemies everywhere  
Using intelligence, talent, strength  
Romare Howard Bearden  
Referred to as Negro artist painting in 1930  
When his art career ascended  
Became an "American" modern genius by 1988.

**TYLER FARRELL**

**The History of Finger Painting**

Art house dance club rock  
world patient ears.  
Everything speaks to us, everything sings to us.  
Blame it on youth.

Remember time, sketch  
sidewalks and street lights, dialogue of dramatic  
overtones. TV and telephone pole art  
leaning table art, symbiotic dance number art  
boy leotards strutting to the plucks of Paganini art.

Trips to museum see paint  
calms our mind  
for once instead of fast pace animals  
virtuous groan businessmen.

Picasso pushed art so did Wilde for the sake  
of art freedom embraced. Hang paint cans from boat sides  
whitewash fences mural color  
saxophones visualize sound  
drawn round scribbles on dark paper stick people  
with large heads, round feet.

Art always looks for the trouble with us  
distortion expression pushed reason. There is no reason  
what reason do you need?  
Mysterious tapers burn silently above our heads  
leak ideas bend moments into sight  
and we cry in the corner  
of the room  
kids bow heads, reverent, waiting for  
next muse formulate history of knowledge – we don't know  
the faults of ourselves.

Art for escape four walls like  
kind elephants plotting our jailbreak  
with few casualties  
questions in halls  
of our horrible burden  
our glorious flaws.

**AMY GAETA**

## **the art of junk mail**

five weeks have past since i came out via email. in a fan letter of sorts to a poet i call my favorite. she read at my school and i felt she was someone i could almost feel myself next to. not in bed or in "life" but at ATMs lines, check-outs, gas pumps. where normal people are too afraid to speak aloud to one another. bodies don't invade the space we're told we all have, just move in the same direction.

i buy that pocket sized guide to japanese inspired decluttering or whatever. apparently everything i own is western privilege. my furniture blocks positive energy, the root cause of my stomach aches. new news to me, i wrote her that those poems about the kennedys gave me these knots.

besides white tees and birkenstocks, my possessions are shipped to various new york avenues in hopes one will land on her stoop. i can tell myself she's unpacking my old Lost boxset before replying. before my sexuality exists elsewhere than a sent folder.

at a hundred odd pages I read it and minimize my life twice in one day, but there's still a small turning in my gut that makes it impossible delete that email from every thought. it does more good slipped into a manilla envelope, addressed to the busiest ATM's, check-outs, gas pumps, creating the space we all really don't have,

**RUSSELL GARDNER**

**Do Not Call Me Ishmael**

Do not call me Ishmael. Call me Obsessed,  
For I am Ahab, not Ahab's scribe,  
And I must harpoon certain white grotesques—  
Forget the beleaguered beast named Moby Dick,

Hardly malevolent—sad hunted quarry  
Whose oil in 19<sup>th</sup> century whale oil lamps  
Whetted the appetite for Aladdin's new light so now  
After millennia in their grave, carbon ghosts return.

Once buried deeply dead, now—after just one  
Century and a half, their ghostly vapors poison  
Our skies, threaten our human existence:  
Frankenstein will kill us. Death merchants these

Carbon billionaires, seducers, bullies—  
Drunk on their own good lives alone; and drunk we too  
For what they give us, that we cannot resist.

Hamlet knew his ghostly father should stay dead.  
Now he the harpoonist-actor insists that this be read.

**RONNIE HESS**

**Conversations On Seeing Kandinsky's Mural**

A circle pierced  
by a dart, a triangle,  
a beak, a blue piece of pie.  
Playthings, paintbrushes,  
colored pencils, white checkerboards,  
someone's big foot,  
five toenails painted red.  
Three women come and go,  
follow the museum guard's orders  
to stay within the visible frame.

*Who could live in this space,  
among these intersecting lines?*

Every object becomes  
something else,  
starburst or flower pot,  
the underside of a bird,  
a green fence.

*I could if I had a huge house  
like Marietta's. The black  
is the more effective ground.*

You can see whatever you want,  
barbed wire, the boat, the oar,  
a horse, a ballerina,  
the otter, the dove of peace,  
nothing really, nothing,  
this fractured, terrified world.

**BARBARA J. HOLT**

**Artist's Eye**

Was Amsterdam picturesque  
before painters of past centuries  
put it on canvas?  
Or,  
was an artist's eye  
the only way to discover  
the slight bending of trees  
away from sweeping winds,  
the patient tossing  
of an old fisherman's boat,  
the soft lapping of sea water  
on canal's mossy side,  
the stern, determined gaze  
of military and politicians,  
the patient, sturdy look  
in hands, clothes, face  
of those commonly-special people,  
the flat, filtering feel  
of land too low to stay land,  
the white-edged clouds  
rolling opposite others  
as both momentarily pass  
and briefly open way for bright sun ~~  
mirroring light-lit figures in paints  
done by masters from this place?

**DOMINIC W. HOLT**

**South Transfer Point**

When I change buses  
by Centro Hispanico  
on my way to meetings  
at the Capitol, I glance up  
at the Centro's murals  
of protests, books,  
gardens and the silver sun  
brighter than the Golden  
Arches next door, richer  
than the bank's scarlet  
Time-and-Temp sign.  
Drawn by the fields  
and picnics on those walls,  
if I strayed inside, slack jawed  
under the glares of more suns  
as tall as this white man,  
and the Latina at the desk  
smiled "Hola,"  
I hope I'd say  
"How can I help  
another D.R.E.A.M.er to college?"

# poetry speaks

**KEESIA HYZER**

## **Fine Arts Week**

A week of wonder every May. Just as students once again succumb to the sirens of springtime the curtain floats up on the stage of that worn auditorium and they bedazzle. There's Roxy, hasn't turned in a paper all quarter, poetry slamming her heart out about transgender bathrooms. The next day Neng, silenced by English, swirls around in hand-stitched finery singing a haunting Hmong folktale. The jazz ensemble takes the stage and Ray riffs away at *Round Midnight* as Lisa scats smooth as syrup. Karl, a class jokester, stars in the one-act play, weeping in his role of scorned suitor. Finally the week ends, and I, their English teacher, exit humming with hope.

# poetry speaks

JO JENSEN

## Art

art  
happens  
like shit  
like miracles  
like rain pouring down  
out of control  
like divine inspiration or intervention  
like spirit possession  
a compulsive compulsion to create  
stuff

the  
inarticulate expression  
of art is like  
talking in tongues  
a knife wound to the ribs  
a waterfall  
spontaneous combustion  
wowing the devotee  
invisible to the uninitiated

what is art?  
what isn't?

art  
is made like  
a conscious decision  
a meditation  
a surgical incision  
premeditated, mediated, medicated  
and mutilated  
a sacred mystery or scientific trial  
ideas  
creation  
at the tip of our tongues, fingers and toes  
sometimes we can't believe our eyes and ears

art  
double edged sword  
a precious gift  
when it satisfies the need  
the desire  
the belief of the believer  
or  
a cloud of nerve gas

a bloated carcass  
a reminder of a misbegotten conception  
those poor ugly bastards  
kept in closets, drawers and attics  
taken out  
sacrificed  
at the bonfire of the vanities  
yes  
artists kill their offspring  
the infirm  
the weak  
the contrived  
are sacrificed  
in smoke and flame  
those offerings  
always  
sting the eyes  
burn the nose  
blister the soul  
over time  
the ash settles  
union of mind and matter  
beget another love child  
will it be still born?  
will this one change the world?  
will this be the sacrificial lamb?  
the whipping child  
the one who dies so others may live?

art  
the cycle of abuse  
the orgy of mind and matter  
the continuous decline and resurrection  
of personal civilizations  
the exorcism of demons  
the calling of angels  
devil worship  
silent benediction  
godless musings of interior spaces

what a scene!

the art museum  
a crypt for the beloved dead children  
a runway for the overachievers

# poetry speaks

the book  
sacristy of thoughts  
a portable repository for memory

theater  
magnification of life  
a macro view of the birthing process  
up close  
and personal

the movie  
theater, book and art museum in quick time  
now in video

music  
color, form and thought carried on the wind

dance  
dear dance  
graceful and hyperactive child of mind  
body and soul

art  
inarticulate and hyperbolic  
senseless acts of duty  
concise and explicit  
mirror reflection of the living and dying  
accidents waiting to happen

art  
trophy case  
personal hell  
giver of life  
measure of worth  
testimonial to a critical mass  
art is life is art

PATRICK JOHNSON

**Deer Scroll with lines by Kunaikyō**

Moving from the right to the left  
in my hands, the time or the story  
passes at one's own pace. First, a single deer.  
Last, two deer limp from behind a hill  
back to the beginning. Somewhere in the middle,  
a poet writes, *Although there is / nothing in particular /  
that troubles me / in my heart I seek answers.*  
The past accelerates toward its narrow pursuit  
of the future. In one section of the scroll,  
one can hardly see the deer  
behind a gray mist cast across the scene.

MARTHA KAPLAN

15 Poem

it's 4:32 pm in mid-January  
the window is turning blue  
stark and linear & white  
feathers falling from  
the sky  
everything inside turns yellow-orange  
endlessly electric  
and lights  
soon the window will blacken  
and mirrors will begin  
but I am thinking about blue  
and guitars and Picasso  
and suddenly I am thinking about New  
York  
and oranges and Frank O'Hara  
and then I remember  
it's Erin's birthday! And I then think, I'll write  
a poem!

**NORMAN LEER**

**Carl Nielsen in the Rain**

The rain is paper thin, the grayness  
of the drum. Eighty students

dead in Norway; compassion  
dead in Washington. Today,

the whole world seems to die.  
Nielsen's Fifth is on the Danish

radio; it lets me cry. The clarinet  
is falling rain, falters as it sings

in broken understated notes  
against the drum and military lie

With his clairvoyant ear, Nielsen  
heard the drum before the occupying

boots, the deadly patter of the marching  
rats, gnashing their teeth, daring

the clarinet. He also heard the stoic  
horizontal farms, huddled in the winter

light, and the mustard yellow fields,  
climbing in the summer sky. Landscape

was the seed of thought and art. Both  
were more than drums. Inextinguishable.

After the clarinet, the music gathers  
itself, swelling with resistance.

For a loud and unreal interlude,  
the drum is overcome. But jarring

chords reiterate a world of endless  
war. Sensing what would happen,

Nielsen tried heroically to finish  
what he could not stop. The battered

farms and fields would never be  
the same. But in the music, they survive

by weaving in and out and underneath  
the antic drum. If thought and art

are inextinguishable, they are so  
only by acknowledging their opposites,

their possible extinction. This knowing  
is their triumph. They tell us

how we can last despite the drum,  
gladly balancing laughter and dying.

**SANDRA J. LINDOW**

**Rayna In Utero Dancing Toward Daylight**

For Rayna, born January 10, 2006

Despite the thin midwinter sun,  
Sarah is fat with promise,  
her ninth month pregnancy  
deliciously obvious, a solar center  
for the mostly menopausal women  
of the Friday Noon Soul Dance Group.

Radiant of heat and light,  
Sarah's roundness burgeons life,  
palpable to the hands of the dancers  
circling around her, blessing her  
and the amazing light within,  
the light that becomes Rayna.

The confluence of radiance and rain,  
this dazzling daylight daughter, spun  
from life's first two-step dance,  
swings in its primitive rhythm,  
knows the love that surrounds her,  
sent through mothering hands

and begins an improvisation,  
out from the soul-sweet central,  
the irrevocable first step,  
wriggling, rainbowing  
dancing toward daylight jazz,  
welcomes herself to the future.

**BOBBIE LOVELL**

**The Art We Can't Afford to Lose**

The Mona Lisa. The Taj Mahal.  
The sacred anthem that stirs us.  
It's those, of course, but also

the hummed lullaby, the ad-lib dance,  
the words that honor  
our partnerings and partings,  
each whistled tune, each doodle.

Cathedral. Sandcastle.  
Lithograph. Tattoo.  
Fiber, fable, finger paint, film,  
ballet, bronze and blues:

threads of light that string  
the mismatched beads of our hearts  
to circle the city—the planet—

dredge treasure from depths  
we'd forgotten, or hadn't yet found  
in ourselves, remind us

we are makers, that sharing  
never leaves us empty-handed,  
that others have passed this way,  
that we are people, not just profiles,

that we always were  
more alike than different,  
that we were never—  
and will never be—alone.

GREGORY MARKEE

**The Sum of Art**

The sum of art  
is a mirror a lens of creation the artist biography  
the situated paint is a story [pause]  
color plus art plus context and  
were the poet the artist [what is color to the poet]  
the fallen leaves beneath the snow I assume  
[I assume]  
and it were music for the wind the texture of the environment is a studio  
sterile and readied for installation  
conditions nor conditions [the unconditional]

Enter the gallery the owned gallery  
the sum of art is a spot among spots the rubric of change is  
within a walls a containment  
[the invitation] they go forward with a heaved being  
there is one thing I remember about time it is  
now  
nor confuse time with space [my unblinking eyes] [I see time marked in color]  
the surface the etched lines the light but  
it is not I who calls art art  
the poet the title assumes language

[Put a germ in healthy society] [solve this] the grudging  
the common space of a wall is an invitation  
is a resolve to the barren the void  
rests quietly [they walk past] [arrange for the art to be changed every ninety days]  
says coffee  
the permanent will not change will not degrade  
context the walls fall down first  
the sum of art is model to reproduction all of  
poetry is ekphrastic all of material is ekphrastic [how I am conditioned]  
what it is I declare original

**RICHARD MERELMAN**

**Come To Light**

*I saw the angel in the marble  
and carved until I set him free.  
Michelangelo.*

Placed upon the sidewalk apron, severed from sewers  
and feces, this polished, spotless toilet defies such words  
as *dazzle, pure, gleam, alabaster*. When the sun assumes  
precisely the proper angle, the porcelain surface  
evokes the pearl on the ear of the girl in Vermeer's  
portrait of whiteness no one has defined,

a whiteness that hijacks the eye to the border of blindness.  
Museum-goers devour the glance of Vermeer's model,  
then return to the pearl. Here walkers and cyclists barely glimpse  
the cluster of daisies, the new turf. They gaze at the toilet,  
as they never would a piece of chalk, a bowl of milk,  
fresh snow on roofs. People linger until the light fades.

OSCAR MIRELES

## Poetry Can Be Hard on Your Hands

I arrived late  
to the mind's eye  
poetry group meeting  
and I interrupted a critique of a prose poem  
about a father tragically  
losing his finger  
in a lumber yard accident

and before I could shake  
the impression of a crushed finger  
bleeding and screaming  
out of my mind

another writer mentioned  
that her father had accidentally  
cut off his finger one day  
and saved it in a clear mason jar  
alongside other body parts he had lost  
and I did not have the nerve  
to ask which ones.

Another poet said  
his uncle lost a finger too!  
losing sounds so nice  
until you walk in another room  
and accidentally find it  
again

I thought about the time  
my oldest son Diego  
almost snipped the tip of his index finger off  
with the neighbor's hedge trimmer

his mother Clara put his hand  
inside the coffee grounds  
of a Folgers can  
to stop the bleeding  
because that is what her grandfather did  
on his coffee plantation  
when workers cut themselves with a machete

finally rushing to the hospital  
to get seven stitches  
the mangled tip was still hanging on  
to the end of his finger  
at the end of the day

I didn't realize  
that poetry  
could be so hard  
on your hands

EVA M. OLSGARD

**Wild Plums**

All summer, we listened to *The Secret Garden* narrated by actors of a British company. Your mother gave us matching diaries with flimsy golden locks and tin keys from the novelty store she ran in town.

She was a magician: hiding behind the mirrored bathroom door, painting and repainting her face, or coaxing silk panties from her bureau like a string of kerchiefs from a top hat.

You dressed your dolls in satin and strutted them around for all the dayroom to see. "Do you have a confession?" looking up at me as I straddled the scaffolding of the tower that would one day be your room. I could think of nothing I had done without you.

There was a tree in your field where stones were gathered. We scrambled up the pile and stood in green shade. Rain pooled in a fissured rock reflected swaying leaves above. You dipped your fingertips in water and sprinkled my lips and eyelids. You told me I was saved. "What does that mean?" I asked. You told me I was loved.

We discovered an old foundation hidden in the shade of a wild plum grove. Two rusted milk cans and a heifer's charred jawbone were all that remained of a fire that drove the last tenant farmer from this reaped and burning land. When we returned home red and black as though escaped from a refugee camp, your mother stung us with peroxide: "We'll chop that thicket down!"

Beyond the lawn white pine, once lumbered and hauled to Chicago for hotels and dry goods stores, were beginning to grow thick again.

You were reading, already, books I could not understand where feelings were betrayed and things happened to people in secret behind closed doors.

We listened to the train, at night, pass through a far off unincorporated town. I fell asleep to a thunderclap. When I woke rain was still breaking over the black limbs of wild plums.

for S.S.G.

**NORMA GAY PREWETT**

**Ars Prolifica**

Since before those white legs plunged into that blue water—  
and the plowman turned away while his horse scratched its rump  
People have been thinking real life is without art.  
I can't think how I would survive if I didn't see a single  
mastectomy in my bed when one pillow is missing  
and the comforter all flat on that one side—  
if clouds were vapor instead of cats batting birds.  
I have heard melodies in the elevator chimes at  
And watched guitarists mentally find "C"  
You cannot know what this means to me—  
the tangle of tree limbs in high wind forming and breaking,  
beating hearts, the percolator in my mother's kitchen  
popping like a gopher in its capsule. Grapes  
are taffeta and the chest of drawers is winking where  
one eye-knob is missing. Hamlet knew—he saw whales  
in clouds—and was too prone to imagination it's true.  
that's the gift with fangs you risk to hang around with art.

**FRAN RALL**

## **Ms. Forward Speaks**

First consider the dates:

Sculpted by a Wisconsin woman in 1893,

Saved from the burning of the Capitol in 1904,

Now in 1998, standing here firmly,

I am the oldest thing around!

What an epic!

Who would have guessed I would be such a survivor?

Proper for the age, with classic dress, flag and upheld hand.

How French!

First hammered out of copper like my sister, Liberty,

I stood through two moves, repairs, and a bronze makeover;

All paid for by the women of Wisconsin.

Good on you, Sisters. Why the long wait for the vote?

(What terrible fear kept postponing it?)

All we were asking for was a Square Deal.

**LIZ RHODEBECK**

## **Of Pens and Paints**

I would rather buy  
new pens or paints  
than the iron I know I need,  
which dribbles all over the clothes  
when I press them, though  
some would say, "Forget the wrinkles,  
ditch the crappy iron – just write or draw,"  
breathe in this halcyon day,  
balmy late summer with  
a hint, less than a whisper,  
of frost, like the salt water  
churned from the chilly bottom  
that slaps you with a laugh in the face,  
as the hot sand shimmers like desire,  
the fingers itching to scoop up wet handfuls,  
build a moat, a castle before the rising tide  
takes it, like the muse takes you  
to that subterranean stillness,  
the sunlight murky, sounds of earth muffled,  
your creased and crinkled thoughts  
smooth and crisp, weightless as air.

**JAMES P. ROBERTS**

**Midnight Curator of the Little Free Libraries**

I call them my children,  
these repositories of the last read.

Little boxes of books  
like strewn fields of poppies

all around the city of lakes.  
In them, I search for the old,

the out-of-place, the curiously strange  
in hopes of a future revelation.

At midnight I make my rounds  
for that is when the books come alive.

I hear them speak in that language  
which lies beyond the printed page.

One or two, I take home,  
new orphans of the technological age.

The remainders are straightened properly,  
arranged like obedient soldiers.

I close the wobbly door and leave  
the Little Free Library standing

by itself in the space between shadows,  
a sentinel in the moonlight.

**EVALYN ROBILLARD**

**evening at token creek  
chamber music festival**

perhaps it's the late-summer sky  
here & there a star or the open

field we park in or the lanterns along  
the walk among flowers that have no name

perhaps it's the ash tree rising through  
the second-story deck outside the barn

the quiet chatter the wine or is it  
the way the composer informs us the waltz

in his latest sonata doesn't become a waltz  
until it wants to

# poetry speaks

**JONATHAN ROSENBLUM**

**Bookless**

And after the Uprising  
We destroyed the library.  
Five thousand of us.  
We exhorted the art director, Trent,  
To step aside.

One of ours, howling “Autonomous Solidarity!”  
Helped stack the kindling wood.  
A woman in a smock,  
Hoarding steel bookends  
Dipped in acrylic,  
Spread psychedelic lane markers along the floor.  
Those rules were obeyed.

We grabbed paint tins,  
Sloshed bright fiery slogans against the wall,  
A riot in the name of Rimbaud.  
Waves of yellow spume poured forth  
Like the wake on a stormy Kickapoo.

Interlude: in the liquor line a floor walker  
Sprays lemon zest perfume on her hands,  
Holds out her wrists for the  
Marauding sans-literati to taste and see.  
Poets take their pause  
Under a placard’s dark decree:  
Artists  
“Eat Pets In Library.”

Determined to distract the crowd,  
Librarians shuffled card catalogue cards catalogued  
With possible new fortunes  
To deliver by gasping pneumatic vacuum,  
To the basement oracle.

After wrecking a Rimbaud wall,  
I stopped and took a card  
Which said, “Etrangers Impudents.”  
I wrote the oracle why, and what this could say  
About Anarchism, Love, and Democracy.  
But I never reached the oracle.

# poetry speaks

A kindred bookless soul  
In opal pendant with a lightning strike  
Through the middle picked her card,  
Called out "Impudent Strangers!"  
She had my match.  
We embraced. She smelled of lemon zest.

We summoned our friends  
Who squared off menacingly, flexed for a poetry slam.  
Then relaxed at our commands.  
We descended to the book slide  
That was now a waterfall,  
To the discotheque bibliotheque.  
To dance amid vacant steel stacks.

Later, said the stranger to stranger, in love for perhaps an hour,  
As structure collapsed in smoke,  
"Tonight the library,  
Tomorrow the dome."

**MARY C. ROWIN**

## **Learning from Children**

What do you say about The Skull, I ask.  
The other docent tells me she ignores it.  
But it's a 2 by 3 foot charred wooden skull  
sitting on a metal plow in the middle of the gallery.

I walk my high school art students up to The Skull.  
When I don't have a clue, I leave it up to them.  
Why a skull? Why a plow? Why burned?  
Farm kids from Monticello, they look dismayed.

Answers come if I wait. Skulls are about death.  
Maybe the artist found the wood on his property.  
People die in accidents with plows like that.  
Black is intense. Family farms are dying out.

I don't expect them to get as excited as me,  
but sometimes they do. They ask if they can  
come back and when is it open. They ask about  
the art, like the boy from Up North, a first-timer.

He wondered whether the paintings were real.  
I've only ever seen art on posters, he told me.

**PAULA SCHULZ**

## **All Art Is My Zulu Basket**

My Zulu basket was woven by Gugu Gino,  
someone I have never met.

But I know she worked it in her home  
for support of her family. The tag tells me so.

What she saw: a chance for food, palm  
bark, leaves; mud and berries for color,

a chance for hands to sing a solid song.  
a reaching of the mind, a branching.

What I see: color, pattern, shape,  
a purpose of my own.

So that what she gives  
is not what I receive:

is this basket  
and something more.

This basket: never enough bumping brio  
to tell the rhythm of her heart and days.

This basket: can hold water,  
which is to say life,

which is to say your life  
with its endless possibilities.

And always a story  
of life among another people.

I gift it to you.  
Fill it with your life.  
Gift it to another.

LYNN SHOEMAKER

**Sing Mercy, Maya**

*I wanted to make a cut  
in the earth.*

*Maya Lin*

Sing mercy, Maya. May your visions  
give us this day a smooth black  
surface that will reflect our names,  
our faces, as we descend  
into our carrying  
of stones. Bone to seed,  
what's left, less, less, to seed,  
walk with us. Then before you die,  
in rubble time, cut upwards,  
create for us an exit,  
mercy water exit, for our  
children's sake, that they may rise  
out of this dust garden,  
new river,  
try life again.

**Jo SIMONS**

## **Chocolate Croissant**

I notice you every time  
in the cafe display case.

I hear you whisper,  
“You know you want me.”

But some deep resolve responds,  
“Gave the likes of you up eons ago.”

And then one day out of the blue  
I hear my voice say, “that one please.”

There you sit on that little glass plate;  
a smirk on your face, shedding all over.

The next thing I know, you’ve entered my being  
leaving me wondering who on earth I am.

**SANDY STARK**

**Praise the Quietly Unadorned**

—after Ellsworth Kelly, *Calla Lily II*

the penciled-in, the quickly sketched,  
the simplest representation—  
there, broad contour of leaf,  
a single, uncolored pear—  
and here, two calla lilies,  
flower and stalk, drawn layered  
and flowing, with the fewest lines:  
tropical birds caught  
in a slow turn and lean,  
not yet unfurled.

All the better to see  
with no distraction,  
without the urge to ask  
for more.

**WILLIAM STOBB**

## **Interval**

It shouldn't be rare, this ability  
to sit quietly in history, a statue  
of St. Francis tucked among woody  
trunks of old Lilac—a kind of  
dopey looking saint my sister gave me  
after her husband quit the ministry  
left her with the girls  
and became an architect over in Ames.  
On today's date, a comedian  
and a salesperson of air time  
are divorcing down my block.  
Their teenage daughter fronts a punk band  
so collapse immediately becomes chorus.  
A looming cloud formation  
threatens my biking plans, as distant nail guns  
fasten down roofs. Prayer,  
an idea, circles like birds  
as a breeze sets the chime.  
Two translucent insects hover  
above irregular stalks of grass  
and two families down the alley  
have lost sons in the war.  
Dogen Marty tells me  
“if you're not afraid of death  
you're afraid of fear.”  
And I hate the anger  
that spilled out of me yesterday  
when I yelled at my children for simple carelessness.  
Marty's trying to help me  
regain my composure but I think I  
pretend, mainly, to understand my motives.  
In the popular stories Betsy writes  
which I've been reading this morning  
in a plastic chair that will outlive me,  
the emotional life, inflected  
by the brightness of wit,  
puts its arm around the intellect  
and leads it back inside.

**RICHARD SWANSON**

**Museum Pieces**

She's turning heads, this thing  
in the gallery's center, an assemblage of bricks,  
twisted bike frame, hubcap, and contorted wiring.  
"Lady Wreckage," one of three friends pronounces.  
"A piece of work," says the second, smirking.  
"Bad hair day, that wire, but I like her." (the third).

She's turning heads, the docent,  
inviting her field-trip kids to look again, to find in a  
landscape plays of light she knows they missed.  
At her side a small boy points out something  
she, too, missed. "Yes!" she laughs, beaming at him.

She's turning heads, that almost familiar face,  
(southeast wall) where a senior male, arthritic  
early this morning, in a turnabout grasps  
the artist's sly joke: a yawning "Mona Lisa."  
Grinning, arthritis forgotten, he's whirled back years,  
to Europe and his first affair with culture.

She's turning heads—at least one—that gallery-goer  
who's caught the eye of a fellow downtown worker.  
So pensive, absorbing what she peers at, he notes,  
someone to get to know, thoughtfully pretty.  
Minutes from now the two will start a conversation,  
perhaps one of dozens between them in coming weeks.

Three friends together, their conversation sparked  
by something new; a docent and child getting an  
education in seeing; a droll reappearance of a famous  
someone known world over; maybe a little romance  
between two like-minded people:  
things go on here, day by day, in this fine place,

a museum, turning heads.

MARILYN L. TAYLOR

**Glass Under Glass**

*A guided tour of Dale Chihuly's glassworks exhibit at  
the Phipps Botanical Gardens, Pittsburgh*

Ladies and gentlemen, what you suspect is true:  
alien botanists from the Planet Vitreous  
have landed, they have parked their Prisms  
somewhere behind this crystalline hangar  
and seized horticultural control. As you can see,  
the Tropical Forest has been booby-trapped  
with conglomerations of twistiferies,  
curling and looming like cobras—  
while the Desert Room is skewered now  
with purple spikes and periwinkle spindles,  
humbling the resident platoons of pale saguaros.

Watch your step, please, as you pass  
the Sunken Gardens, where gaping clamshells,  
scarlet and cerise (possibly carnivorous)  
are either yawning or trolling for trespassers  
to pluck and swallow whole. Still further on,  
note that a galaxy of miniature suns and planets  
has been set afloat—cosmic flotsam on black,  
motionless water, lit from above  
by a yellow thistle's exaggerated rays.

Go now. Thank you for coming. Spills of ribbed  
and ruffled zinnias will direct you to the door.  
But be forewarned: although in here the ferns  
and stalks have made way for these immigrants  
with their infinite variations on the literal—  
the city waits outside, bathed in ordinary sun.

**GUY THORVALDSON**

**Overture of Dreams**

Sometimes our kids grant us entrance to the divine—  
or at least the classy.

My own girl chose ballet,  
each winter securing a date with the Nutcracker  
as she evolved from wobbly and exuberant Pulcinella,  
to regimented Soldier, to Clara, to Siamese, to Spanish,  
her father or mother always in tow,  
tracking the well-worn path to crosstown classes,  
relishing the side-by-side conversations in the dark car,  
the rare and tender moments within a teen's journey.

And then came the prize: Tech and Dress rehearsals  
in the concert hall,  
a time that aligned with the end of my own semester,  
my students' essays graded in the orchestra seats  
to the abiding strains of Sugar Plum, Flowers, Russian!  
as my onstage daughter refined her arabesque,  
adjusted her tights, or stood, legs turned out,  
hands placed on tutued hips, her lungs pulling for breath  
between the third and fourth run-through of Snow—  
her body immersed in the sublime intellect of sinew and muscle,  
her dreams aloft in grande jete in the palace of the magical.

**MOISÉS VILLAVICENCIO BARRAS**

## **Los Sonidos de Tarkovsky**

Aprendí a escuchar el mundo  
con los ojos de Tarkovsky  
cuando tenía 17.

Desde niño  
me gustaron los ruidos  
de la noche en la taza del café  
que tomó mi madre.

Los sonidos de Tarkovsky  
están en todas partes.  
Abre tus ojos y escucha  
como tu casa se queja  
con el frío del invierno  
como trabaja eficaz  
en sostenerse y sostenerte.

Piensas talvez  
que la nieve no hace ruido  
cuando cae en los techos,  
pero tu casa tiembla por dentro  
como una bicicleta antigua  
por los caminos secos  
de tu niñez.

Escucha  
el vaso de vino en la mesa  
los libros, las plumas, los anteojos  
las flores en el agua  
tiemblan por dentro  
como una rana  
que canta desde el miedo.

Escucha.

¿Qué sería del universo  
sin los sonidos de Tarkovsky?

## **Tarkovsky's Sounds**

I learned to listen  
to the world  
with Tarkovsky's eyes  
when I was 17.

Since my childhood  
I liked the night's noises  
in the cup of coffee  
that my mother drunk.

Tarkovsky's sounds  
are everywhere.  
Open your eyes and listen  
how your house complains  
with the winter cold  
and how hard she works  
to hold you and hold herself.

You may think that snow  
makes no noise  
when it falls on the roof  
but your house shakes  
like a bicycle on the dry roads  
of your childhood.

Listen to the glass  
of wine on the table  
the books, pens, eyeglasses  
and the flowers in water,  
they tremble  
like a frog that sings from fear.

Listen.

What would the universe would be  
without the sounds of Tarkovsky?

TIMOTHY WALSH

### Plastering

Cracks are inevitable as wrinkles  
in an old house that's been slowly settling  
these seventy years—  
hairline cracks spiderwebbing walls,  
pressure cracks spanning ceilings  
wide as frozen lakes,  
a few jagged lightning bolt cracks  
descending on arches and windows.

To repair a crack well, you must first widen it.  
Gouge out the loose plaster with probing tools,  
scraping away old layers of paint that record  
the changing styles of lost decades.

Cover the cracks with fiberglass mesh,  
then work the plaster rhythmically,  
feathering the angle of the plaster knife,  
laying the swath in smooth motions....

As you work, Chopin mazurkas on the stereo  
insinuate themselves into the wet plaster.  
Your arm motions fall into three-quarter time,  
and the work becomes something  
more like dance.

Arm strokes blend into arm strokes,  
working the plaster, the mind blank as a wall.  
Hours pass. The piano seems an echo  
of eternity beckoning  
as you work on the house, and the house  
works on you.

Forever after, you see plastered surfaces  
as frozen artifacts of muscular motion,  
and, sitting in the quiet of the room,  
you can hear faint mazurkas  
echoing in the walls.

**DYLAN WEIR**

**One Day at a Time (in III Acts)**

**I**

Newly constructed condos towered over a homeless shelter; a safehouse crowded by threadbare faces, black coffee in dixie cups. We swap war stories, drunkalogues, homicidal

thoughts, the We version of the Serenity Prayer & I hold Michelle's hard hands. Michelle, who knows fences better than dogs & postmen. Michelle, who made Dean's list &

doesn't know what email is. Michelle, who brews us coffee at dawn. Let go, let God, light cigarettes on the stoop. Outside, she showers in the building's shadows.

**II**

3 years clean & relapse before I had my organs appraised. A rash down my pants & surrounding my waistline; an exception to my rule of never seeing doctors.

The nurse skipped STD tests for the pills & a needles. She rolled rubbers down her wrists then swabbed a circle of ethanol. I unfolded my arms like prison discharge papers.

I squeezed scarred fists like stress balls before she unsheathed the syringe. Showing my new vascularity – my elbows with their atlases – my protruding blueprint of veins.

**III**

Behind the curtain a drunk man screams. Walking to the waiting room I recognized the lumpy sheets. Drunks & junkies we're all dying or carrying each other's corpses.

So I told the nurse everything:

*He has no home,  
no relatives to gather him,  
we were friends &  
I'll be taking him  
with me.*

## TORI GRANT WELHOUSE

### Muse

*She was not only beautiful. She was intelligent, she was sympathetic. She gave Whistler the constant companionship he could not do without.*

—Elizabeth Robins & Joseph Pennell

She was Symphony in White  
No. 1: The White Girl,  
skin like milk, lushness about  
her eyes, lips, strong line of her  
nose, creamy brocade, lillyed  
cambric setting off her fiery,  
exuberant hair, chin set  
for contemplation.

She organized his house,  
imagination. She adopted his son,  
cared for during long, artistic  
absences. She was an accomplice  
to his creativity, was she not?  
White was an interesting choice,  
in between the exigencies  
of color, revealing shading, texture,  
brilliance of an unseen source  
of light, pull of attraction.

As a model, she conferred her  
presence in tacit agreement,  
her life a testimony, Beautiful  
Irishwoman, henna hair slatted  
like a ladder, her influence subtle,  
gaelic and unmistakable. She was the  
intersection of two great men, the  
pendulum of all women—The White  
Girl and The Origin of the World.  
She had body, a reality, an  
interior understanding of what  
it meant to be muse, inspiration  
of the bold statement: Yes.

—About Jo Hiffernan

# poetry speaks

AMANDA WERHANE

**“Anonymous”**

It seems  
that each time I return  
to the gallery,  
the paintings have been changed  
just a little bit—  
I come to savor  
the faintest hint of expression  
released by  
otherwise-anonymous artists...

Sometimes I catch myself  
living off those minute  
glimpses into someone else's world,  
& need to remind myself  
to take the time  
to nourish my spirit  
with creations of my own...

And every once in a blue moon,  
while or while not  
getting carried away at my easel,  
a fellow painter  
sets up camp next to me,  
and we do more than  
glimpse each others' worlds—we share them.

LINDA NEWMAN WOITO

**Dreaming No. 14**  
**White days, black cat**

He's at my feet, sleeping  
purring, as my brain  
attempts unfreezing  
from its absences of  
color—

white-on-white outside  
is all I see  
—too stark to stare upon.

Where, oh where  
are my Blue horses?  
Their dancing legs, their clowns,  
their elephants of joy?

Where *are* the fairy tales  
from frozen-white  
of Russia, and Chagall?

*Bring me colors*, I plead  
on knees  
to satisfy the weather-gods.

*Please bring me green on green, or even dirty brown  
to calm my reddened eyes . . .*

as shapes of words and cats and poetry  
keep on drifting by.

**MARILYN ZELKE-WINDAU**

## **Sharing**

Her mother gave her chinks,  
fat, chunks of chinks  
for her 4<sup>th</sup> birthday.  
Some were the light colors—  
pink and lemon and lavender.  
Most of her friends had those.  
The surprise was that she also got  
the deep, dark colors—  
navy and forest green and brick red.

On the front sidewalk, she made art.  
Her art continued to the neighbor's squares,  
and, if her mother hadn't caught her,  
she would have continued down the entire block.

"But, Mom!" she protested, "I'm making  
the world pretty. I'm sharing.  
My art is for everybody."

Sometimes public art surprises us  
on sidewalks, on beach sands,  
in swaying banners on small town light poles,  
in poems on the sides of buses,  
in saxophone serenades on the corner,  
in mime at the farmers' market.

It can be simple, yet magnificent, or  
it can be publicly acclaimed  
as can be noted in concerts, acts of theater,  
exhibits of glass and paint and clay,  
photos—glimpses of life now, then,  
or imagined.  
It can be puzzling, or literally understood—  
a buffet for the senses—a pick your own wonder.

"Don't you know, Mom?  
My teacher says, 'Stop, look, and listen!'  
And, please, Mom, don't smear my chinks!"

# poetry speaks

**MARK ZIMMERMANN**

## **Leni Riefenstahl**

At the rallies he shines.  
His rites instill  
in all the fatherless  
an inner star, a fire, the faith.

An aesthete, I relate it  
in Arian art: *Heil Hitler!*

If there is fire  
all I see  
as an artist  
is fire.

## BIOGRAPHIES

### KIMBERLY BLAESER

Kimberly Blaeser, Anishinaabe poet, photographer, and scholar, is the author of three poetry collections, *Apprenticed to Justice*, *Absentee Indians and Other Poems*, and *Trailing You*. A Professor at UW-Milwaukee and the Wisconsin Poet Laureate, she teaches Creative Writing and Native American Literature. Blaeser is editor of *Stories Migrating Home: A Collection of Anishinaabe Prose* and *Traces in Blood, Bone, and Stone: Contemporary Ojibwe Poetry*. Her poetry, short fiction, and essays have been widely anthologized, and selections of her poetry have also been translated into several languages including Spanish, Norwegian, Indonesian, Hungarian, and French. Blaeser has performed her poetry at over 200 different venues around the world and has been the recipient of awards for both writing and speaking, among these a Wisconsin Arts Board Fellowship in Poetry and four Pushcart Nominations. Her current creative project, *Ancient Light*, will feature “picto-poems,” photographs, and ekphrastic poetry.

### LEWIS BOSWORTH

Lewis Bosworth is a Madison poet who also teaches poetry writing for the Participatory Learning and Teaching Organization. He has published four books of poetry, and some of his work has been published in Church bulletins and for a play produced by Forward Theater Company. He is the archivist of the Wisconsin Fellowship of Poets. Lewis is currently working on an anthology of faith-based poetry/prose written by LGBT members of ELCA congregations in North America.

### JEN BRADY

Jen Brady is a poet and photographer who is inspired by stories of the earth and stories in our bones. She loves living in Madison, and recently released her first volume of poetry *To Write of Hope*. If you are searching for her, look on forest trails or along the edge of water, and if all else fails you can find her at [jenbradypoet.com](http://jenbradypoet.com)

### SYLVIA CAVANAUGH

Originally from Pennsylvania, Sylvia Cavanaugh has an MS in Urban Planning from the University of Wisconsin. She teaches high school cultural studies, and advises poets and breakdancers. She and her students are active in the Sheboygan chapter of 100,000 Poets for Change. A Pushcart Prize nominee, her chapbook, *Staring Through My Eyes*, is forthcoming from Finishing Line Press in 2016.

### ROBIN CHAPMAN

Robin Chapman, Madison, is the author of nine books of poetry, most recently *One Hundred White Pelicans* (Tebot Bach), poems of climate change, and the portfolio *Dappled Things*, (Paris: Revue K) pairing her poems with 23 of Peter Miller’s photogravures. Her poems have appeared recently in *Alaska Quarterly Review*, *North Dakota Review*, and *Diode* and have been featured in *Verse Daily*, *Poetry Daily*, *American Life in Poetry*, and *Writers’ Almanac*. She is recipient of the 2010 *Appalachia Poetry Prize* and a fellow of the Wisconsin Academy of Sciences, Arts, and Letters.

### DEWITT CLINTON

DeWitt Clinton is Emeritus Professor at the University of Wisconsin—Whitewater, and lives in Shorewood, Wisconsin. A few poems from a book-length adaptation of Kenneth Rexroth’s 100 Poems from the Chinese have appeared in *Cha: An Asian Literary Quarterly*, *qarrtsiluni*, *Verse Wisconsin*, *Verse-Virtual*, *The Missing Slate*, and *medicinthe greentime.com*. He received an Honorable Mention in the 2014 Lorine Niedecker Poetry Award by the Council of Wisconsin Writers.

### T. A. CULLEN

T. A. Cullen lives and works in Madison, Wisconsin and is a member of the Wisconsin Fellowship of Poets. His work has appeared in the *Wisconsin Poets’ Calendar* as well as other publications.

### JODY CURLEY

Jody Curley is a Madison native who is startled to realize she has been writing poetry for nearly 50 years. She worked as a geriatric social worker and dementia care specialist for four decades and now teaches a variety of tai chi and chi kung classes in Dane County. She also serves as an ordained interfaith minister within the Universalist Sufi tradition.

# poetry speaks

## RON CZERWIEN

Ron Czerwien is the owner of Avol's Books LLC, which sells used and out-of-print books on the Internet. His poems have appeared online and in print journals. His chapbook, "In the Office of Uncomfortable Admissions," was an honorable mention in the Concrete Wolf Chapbook Contest. Ron hosts the Madtown Poetry Open Mic readings on the first Friday of each month at Mother Fool's Coffeehouse in Madison, Wisconsin.

## BRUCE DETHLEFSEN

Bruce Dethlefsen, Wisconsin Poet Laureate (2011-2012), has three full-length books of poetry published, *Breather* (Fireweed Press, 2009), *Unexpected Shiny Things* (Cowfeather Press, 2011), and *Small Talk* (Little Eagle Press, 2014). He sings and plays harmonica and bass guitar in a blues band, The Big Talkers. Bruce lives in Westfield, Wisconsin, runs Poet Camp twice a year, and has taught over a thousand people how to juggle.

## CX DILLHUNT

CX Dillhunt was born in Green Bay, grew up in DePere, and is fluent in the Wisconsin dialect. He was the keynote speaker at the 2014 Lorine Niedecker Wisconsin Poetry Festival. CX is the author of *Girl Saints* (Fireweed, 2003) and *Things I've Never Told Anyone* (Parallel, 2007), and editor of *Wisconsin Poets' Calendar 2006* with Ron Czerwien. CX's work on teaching English and American poetry in China have been published in *University Magazine* (Xi'an Jiaotong University) and the international online literary journal, *Studio* (York University, Toronto). He is the editor of *Hummingbird: Magazine of the Short Poem*, [hummingbirdpoetry.org](http://hummingbirdpoetry.org).

## MARNIE BULLOCK DRESSER

Marnie Bullock Dresser lives in Spring Green with her husband and son and four cats. "Sustainable chaos" is her life motto. She grew up in Southern Illinois, went to graduate school in Montana, and has been teaching in the UW System for twenty-five years.

## REBECCA DUNHAM

Rebecca Dunham is the author of three collections of poetry. The poem *Elegy, Sung in Dirt*, will appear in her fourth collection, *Cold Pastoral*, forthcoming in 2017 with Milkweed Editions. She is Professor of English at UW-Milwaukee and lives in Madison.

## ARACELI ESPARZA

In between parenting, teaching and saving words for later, Araceli Esparza, writes bilingual-bicultural picture books and poetry. She is a graduate of Hamline's MFA in Children's Literature. Visit her on twitter @WI\_MUJER.

## FABU

Fabu, as she is professionally known, is a poet, storyteller, columnist, and a life-long educator. She holds the distinction of being the first African American Madison Poet Laureate (2008–2012). As a literary artist she shares poetry with both young and old through poetry-in-residences and the Alzheimer's Poetry Project. Her four books are *Poems, Dreams and Roses*, *In Our Own Tongues*, *Journey to Wisconsin: African American Life in Haiku* (which won an award,) and *Love Poems*. She is finalizing a new manuscript, *Remember Me: Mary Lou Williams in Poetry*. You can hear Fabu reading selected poems on her website at [www.artistfabu.com](http://www.artistfabu.com).

## TYLER FARRELL

Tyler Farrell was born in Illinois and grew up in Milwaukee and Omaha, educated primarily by the Jesuits and the layfolk at UW-Milwaukee. He wrote a biographical essay for James Liddy's *Selected Poems* (Arlen House, 2011) and has published two poetry collections with Salmon: *Tethered to the Earth* (2008) and *The Land of Give and Take* (2012). He currently teaches writing and literature at Marquette University and lives in Madison, Wisconsin with Joan, Holden, and Linus.

## AMY GAETA

Amy Gaeta grew up and studied in Boston and surrounding areas until moving to Madison in the Fall of 2015 to join the doctoral program in literary studies at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. She's taken part in various writing workshops in addition to being published in university journals and small press publications. While studying in Madison she hopes to further immerse herself within the creative community of writers, visual artists, and scholars, which will surely refine her skill as a poet.

# poetry speaks

## RUSSELL GARDNER

Russell Gardner, Jr. grew up on a central Wisconsin farm followed by a career as an academic psychiatrist. He returned to Madison a decade and a half ago, does mixed media art, often collaboratively, and writes novels and poems.

## RONNIE HESS

Ronnie Hess is a journalist and poet whose work has appeared in national and regional newspapers, magazines and literary journals. She is the author of a culinary travel guide, *Eat Smart in France*; and three poetry chapbooks, *Whole Cloth*, *Ribbon of Sand*, and *A Woman in Vegetable*. She lives in Madison.

## BARBARA J. HOLT

Poems started writing their way into Barbara J.'s life in front of a fireplace in Green Bay, Wisconsin back in the 1970's and they have continued to come ever since, whether on a beach, 30,000 feet over land, in a Lascaux cave, a Salzburg garden or at home by a pond in Milwaukee. Her poems have been published in *There Is a Season*, *House Blessings* and *Soundings: Door County in Poetry*.

## DOMINIC W. HOLT

Still new to Madison, Dominic W. Holt is a poet, writer, and a communications and public policy professional. He holds a BS in astrophysics (Indiana U.), an MSW in social policy and an MFA in creative writing (both U. of Michigan), and interned at the *Michigan Quarterly Review*. His work was featured at the Library of Congress and has appeared in *The Driftwood Review*, *Lifeboat: A Journal of Memoir*, *Poems & Plays*, *Miami Herald*, TomPaine.com, and other literary and news venues.

## KEESIA HYZER

A former high school English teacher, Keesia Hyzer began writing poetry when she had to teach it to her creative writing students. She was later forced into a poetry writing group by a dear friend to whom she is forever grateful. Keesia has poems published in *Verse Wisconsin* and *The Wisconsin Poet's Calendar*. She has also co-authored several books for English Language Learners.

## JO JENSEN

Jo Jensen teaches middle school Health and Home Economics in Madison, Wisconsin for a living and makes art and writes poetry to live.

## PATRICK JOHNSON

Patrick Johnson received his MFA in poetry from Washington University in St. Louis and earned his Bachelor's degree from the University of Wisconsin-Madison's English Department and Creative Writing Program in 2012. He lives in Madison and is working on publishing his manuscript while pursuing a career in healthcare.

## MARTHA KAPLAN

Martha Kaplan is a Pushcart nominated poet living in Madison close to the Arboretum where cranes occasionally fly over her house. Language, art, place, and how we live in this world are her enduring concerns.

## NORMAN LEER

Norman Leer has published three volumes of poetry, *Slightly Crumpled Survival Flower*, *I Dream My Father in a Song* and *Second Lining*, a critical study, *The Limited Hero in the Novels of Ford Madox Ford* and articles and poems in several magazines. In 1990, he received the Illinois Significant Poet's Award from state Poet Laureate Gwendolyn Brooks. He is Professor Emeritus of English at Roosevelt University, and he and his artist wife Grethe Brix-J. Leer live in Madison, where both teach in the PLATO program.

## SANDRA J. LINDOW

Sandra J. Lindow is semi-retired and lives on a hilltop in Menomonie, Wisconsin. She teaches, writes, edits and competes with wildlife for the sustenance of her gardens. She has seven books of poetry and has been WCVP of the Wisconsin Fellowship of Poets since 1987

## BOBBIE LOVELL

Bobbie Lovell studied visual art, and her career is based in graphic design and print production. She first visited MMoCA in 2010 and was wowed by the Clayton Brothers exhibition. Bobbie's honors include a

# poetry speaks

Pushcart Prize nomination, and her poems have most recently appeared in *Mobius: The Journal of Social Change*, *Verse-Virtual* and the *Wisconsin Poets' Calendar*. Her website is [bobbie-lovell.com](http://bobbie-lovell.com).

## GREGORY MARKEE

Gregory Markee makes a practice of conceptual improvisation. He writes poems in Madison, Wisconsin and materializes at [gregmarkee.com](http://gregmarkee.com)

## RICHARD MERELMAN

Richard Merelman, a native of Washington, D. C., taught political science at UW-Madison for thirty years. He has published two poetry volumes: *THE IMAGINARY BARITONE* (Fireweed, 2012), and *THE UNNAMED CONTINENT* (a chapbook published by Finishing Line Press in 2016). He has published individual poems in a number of journals. Forthcoming are poems in *Common Ground Review*, *Danse Macabre*, and *Blue Unicorn*. He and his wife live in Madison.

## EVA M. OLSGARD

Eva M. Olsgard is a mid/west based writer, artist, and designer. In addition to performing and exhibiting her work internationally, she has created award-winning programming and lectured on the arts and cultural studies. Her poetry has appeared in *Pinyon Review*, *Cobalt*, and *Magma Poetry*. *Between Two Worlds*, her instillation set in the Chicago bioregion, was commissioned for the Gross Park Sculpture Invitational. Her calligram, *EYE DISCRIMINATE AGAINST GAZE*, launched on [Myspace.com/focallength](http://Myspace.com/focallength) as a "bust" and on T-shirts donned by acclaimed poets and authors worldwide in a discussion about profiling, surveillance, and social media.

## NORMA GAY PREWETT

Norma Gay Prewett (aka Gay Davidson-Zielske) was a poet before she was anything, then a painter before she was a poet again, short-story writer, monologist, and radio writer. For thirty years, she taught English at UW-Whitewater. Now in Chicago half time, she paints, sings Cabaret, tells stories, writes songs, and does Improv. Poetry endures. She lives on I-90.

## Fran Rall

Fran Rall, born in the lumber town of Klamath Falls, Oregon, has lived in Wisconsin since the early 1960s and traveled the world. She is well known in poetic circles for organizing the annual state-wide Invitational Poetry Marathon at Olbrich Gardens in Madison for twenty years.

## JAMES P. ROBERTS

James P. Roberts is the author of four poetry collections and has been published widely in a variety of fields. He is the South-Central Region Vice-President for the Wisconsin Fellowship of Poets and organizes the annual Winter Festival of Poetry. He lives in Madison where he writes, hikes, sings and has a passion for women's flat-track roller derby.

## EVALYN ROBILLARD

Evalyn Robillard is a retired children's librarian. She writes for both adults and children. She is the author of three poetry chapbooks, and Garrison Keillor has read several of her poems on NPR's "The Writer's Almanac."

## LIZ RHODEBECK

Liz Rhodebeck is the author of three chapbooks, *Here the Water is Deep*, *What I Learned in Kansas* and *Benthos*, and was the 2014 winner of Wisconsin Fellowship of Poets' Muse Prize. Her poetry has appeared in *Your Daily Poem*, *VerseWisconsin*, *Red Cedar*, *Echoes*, *The Penwood Review*, *Creative Wisconsin*, *Stone Boat Journal*, *Poetry Jumps Off the Shelf*, *Verse and Vision* and others. She is a founding member of Grace River Poets, performing inspirational programs in the community.

## JONATHAN ROSENBLUM

Jonathan Rosenblum is a Madison labor rights attorney and writer. Barbara Kingsolver wrote of Jonathan's book, *Copper Crucible* (Cornell University /ILR press 1995, 1998), that it "answers the question, "Where does [the union strike] leave us now?" Alfredo Montoya, former director of the nation's largest Latino/a union organization, wrote that *Copper Crucible* "captured the essence of the Chicano struggles for social, economic, and political equality."

# poetry speaks

## MARY C. ROWIN

Mary C. Rowin's poems have been published by the Wisconsin Fellowship of Poets, *Stoneboat*, *Solitary Plover*, *Mariposa*, *Zo Magazine*, *Blue Heron*, *Postcard Poems and Prose* and by the Science Fiction Poetry Association. Mary's work has appeared in several anthologies, including *The Ariel Project*, *Anthology of Poetry and Art*. Mary lives in Middleton, Wisconsin and blogs at [wordpress.com/post/poeticpossibilities.wordpress.com](http://wordpress.com/post/poeticpossibilities.wordpress.com).

## PAULA SCHULZ

Paula Schulz has been involved in several ekphrastic projects and has been nominated for a Pushcart Prize. She lives with her husband, Greg, in Slinger, Wisconsin.

## LYNN SHOEMAKER

Lynn Shoemaker grew up near the Missouri River in South Dakota. In 76 years of life, he has lived in the middle and on both sides of the country. He has also published three books of poetry and one chapbook, *A CATCH IN THE THROAT OF ALLAH*, published by Parallel Press. For the last 25 years he has lived, taught, and written in Whitewater, Wisconsin.

## JO SIMONS

I started writing poetry 5 years ago when my father told me he was dying. It helped tremendously to deal with the angst of that. He's still here at 99! I am a piano and Music Together teacher in Madison having stayed after obtaining my degree in my mid 40's.

## SANDY STARK

Sandy Stark, Madison, Wisconsin, is the author of *The Toolbox Poems* (Finishing Line Press, 2015) and *Counting on Birds* (Fireweed Press, 2010). Retired, she enjoys bird-watching, prairie restoration, book festivals, and gallery nights. She has participated in four poetry events at the Madison Museum of Contemporary Art.

## WILLIAM STOBB

William Stobb is the author of five poetry collections, including the National Poetry Series selection, *Nervous Systems*, and *Absentia*, both from Penguin Books. His poems appear in recent issues of *American Poetry Review*, *Colorado Review*, *Kenyon Review*, *North American Review*, and *Passages North*. He serves as Associate Editor of *Conduit* and Chair of the Wisconsin Poet Laureate Commission. He lives in La Crosse, Wisconsin, where he works on the faculty of the UW-La Crosse.

## RICHARD SWANSON

Richard Swanson enjoyed a 33 year career of teaching English at Madison Area Technical College. In retirement he has published the award-winning "Men in the Nude in Socks," as well as a second full-length collection: "Not Quite Eden." His poetry often focuses on cultural events and scenes.

## Marilyn L. Taylor

Marilyn L. Taylor, former Poet Laureate of the state of Wisconsin (2009 and 2010) and the city of Milwaukee (2004 and 2005), is the author of six poetry collections. Her award-winning poems and essays have appeared in many anthologies and journals, including *Poetry*, *American Scholar*, *Able Muse*, and *Measure*.

## GUY THORVALDSEN

Guy Thorvaldsen's poetry has appeared in *Alembic*, *The Aureorean*, *Forge*, *Gulfstream*, *Zone 3*, *Poet Lore* and *Verse Wisconsin*. Guy received his MFA from Vermont College and teaches English at Madison College in Madison, Wisconsin. He is also a journeyman carpenter, father, and plays a wee bit of golf.

## MOISES VILLAVICENCIO BARRAS

Moises Villavicencio Barras is a Mexican poet, translator, fiction writer, and co-founder of *Cantera Verde*, a magazine that has been one of the most significant literary publications in Mexico for the last twenty years. His poetry has been selected for several Mexican and American anthologies. His newest poetry book, *Light of All Times* was published in a bilingual edition by [cowfeatherpress.org](http://cowfeatherpress.org).

# poetry speaks

## TIMOTHY WALSH

Timothy Walsh's most recent poetry collections are *When the World Was Rear-Wheel Drive: New Jersey Poems* and *The Book of Arabella*. His poems and short stories have appeared in *The North American Review*, *Arts & Letters*, *Cutthroat*, *New Millennium Writings*, and others. His awards include the Grand Prize in the Atlanta Review International Poetry Competition, the Kurt Vonnegut Fiction Prize from North American Review, and the Wisconsin Academy Fiction Prize. He is the author of, *The Dark Matter of Words: Absence, Unknowing, and Emptiness in Literature* (Southern Illinois University Press) and two poetry collections, *Wild Apples* (Parallel Press) and *Blue Lace Colander* (Marsh River Editions). His website is [timothywalsh.com](http://timothywalsh.com).

## DYLAN WEIR

Dylan Weir is a Chicagoan and MFA candidate at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, where he teaches creative writing. Dylan holds an MA with distinction in English Literature from DePaul University and his work appears in *The Boiler*, *Blue Earth Review*, *Rhino*, *Rust+Moth*, *Word Riot*, and others. He's a co-editor at *Devil's Lake*.

## TORI GRANT WELHOUSE

Tori Grant Welhouse writes poetry and lists. Raised within cheering distance of Lambeau Field in Green Bay, she now lives in farm fields next to a meandering river with a husband who thinks he's a lumberjack. Her website is [torigrantwelhouse.com](http://torigrantwelhouse.com)

## AMANDA WERHANE

Amanda Werhane is a blisstery, sistery, sciencey, appliancey, intuitive, sirenish muse. She's been writing poetry for over 25 years, and her works have been published in the *Wisconsin Poets' Calendar* (1995) and the *Power Exchange* anthology (2013). On the first Friday of each month, you can find her at the Madtown Poetry Open Mic at Mother Fool's Coffeehouse.

## MARILYN ZELKE-WINDAU

The arts played a key role in Marilyn Zelke-Windau's upbringing. Her mother was a classical pianist, her father a writer and editor. Now living in Sheboygan Falls, Wisconsin, she grew up in the Chicago area, went weekly to Ravinia Park to hear music and see plays and dance performances. Marilyn is a retired elementary school art teacher, who has written poetry since high school days. She is published in many printed and online journals and had two books of poetry released in 2014. She believes that observation is key to the arts.

## LINDA NEWMAN WOITO

Linda Newman Woito, Madison, Wisconsin, retired lawyer, likes to spend time with her grandsons Ian and Leo and to write poetry, which can be found in *Poetry NZ*, *Spin*, *Wisconsin People & Ideas*, *Main Street Rag*, *James Dickey Review*, *Rockford Review*, *Free Verse*, *Wisconsin Fellowship of Poets Calendars*, and *The Pen Woman*, among others. Linda's won several state, regional and national poetry prizes, recently been a judge in a local Poetry Slam, and has a few remaining copies of *Restless Bird* (2008 RWG).

## MARK ZIMMERMANN

Mark Zimmermann lives with his wife and two cats in Milwaukee where since 2004 he has taught humanities and writing courses at the Milwaukee School of Engineering. From 1993-2001 he did the same work at Ibaraki University in Mito, Japan. He is a member of the Hartford Avenue Poets and is the Wisconsin Fellowship of Poets' representative on the Wisconsin Poet Laureate Commission. His poetry collection *Impersonations* was published by Pebblebrook Press in 2015.