

poetry by **Gerald So**

Summer Snapshot

On the side of the road
somewhere in the Catskills
we see a replica of
The Dukes of Hazzard
General Lee.

Two guys and two girls
hop the low fence
and pose for a picture:

the guys prop elbows
on the roof like Bo Duke,
the girls in short-shorts
stretch seductively on the hood

while I hang
back in our Olds,
looking out for the law.

poetry by **Carl Palmer**

66489

Wheel-chaired into the lobby
from his assisted care room,

the elderly Jewish gentleman
squints into bright camera lights,

accepts the lottery check,
smiles at the television crew.

A newspaper reporter asks:
Was this a computer pick

*or did you already have
some numbers in mind?*

He focuses on her microphone,
as his hand rubs the sleeve

of the frayed gray sweater
covering his faded blue tattoo.

poetry by ***Victoria Clayton Munn***

North Mountain

Violets taste purple
when I pluck them, one by one
from the yellowing grass
and place them, feathery
on my tongue.

The water is crisp,
beaten by rocks and wind -
it froths into drinkable air,
clear and serene.

I can smell the sun
my skin hot to the touch
as I tip my head back
and breathe in.

poetry by ***Victoria Clayton Munn***

Black Bridge

We walked across Black Bridge
the rust falling like dandruff
onto our jackets and you talked
about how you wished to be me.

Your daddy, beer filled,
the smell of tobacco staining his fingers,
as he touched you like a lover
and you didn't fight.

The water, only a few feet below,
you stopped and threw a pebble -
contemplating... something as
I grabbed your hand, and we
stepped off the bridge together.

poetry by **Alana Folsom**

Turn on, tune it, drop out

Timothy Leary dropping from the tip of an un-ashed cigarette
Onto wet concrete dreams
mussed sheets and
crayola memories coloring the roofs of mouths and
the walls of my first home,

you.

Beauty is absorbed by the baking girls of the Los Angeles winter.

I remember these spreading fires like butter on toast
The entire forest,
smoldering.

The largest disaster was kicking out the chair from under herself
Was him walking out of the pharmacy clutching a white paper bag
Was them saying "I love you"

Was my reading poetry to you with pre-dawn light

and *meaning* it.

If I could shuffle my life like a deck of cards
I would put this memory first:
Getting high under a blanket at Barnsdall Park,
blissing.

poetry by ***Davide Trame***

Garlic

Its flowers in the lush new grass,
in the spacing grasp of the year's first warmth.
A rich, pungent, pregnant smell.
The sun digging into
the earth's brewing veins
that in light-drenched mud
spread assessment, like a staring lion,
its yawn full of horizon.

Smell of memory:
the days when you could pass on this grass
on horseback, the horse's heat, its vast
pupils beside you at one with the air
and the soil's buzz.
Smelling the grasp of memory
and its roar, where space instantly
craves for its own image.

poetry by ***Davide Trame***

Quiet

The storm is gathering over the bridge,
dark clouds as busy as bubbling flowers,
the water of the canal green and quiet
and the bustle among the bar tables on the bank
like the shuffling breath of an orchestra
in between rehearsals, claps, coughs, laughs,
and the sense of a whispered accomplishment like a current,
like tiny ripples on water or a cat purring.

A petal of light has just pierced the clouds
and towards the lagoon horizon
the sky expands in breezy largeness
and winds are free to sleep, in the soothing
lingering of the storm's feet.

On this side of the canal two mallards are pacing
and a third one has just
laid eggs in her small floating box
where the sandbars she comes from
flash in a handful of hay,
where the tides swarm over the grass
and air roams in its perpetual gaze.

Scattered gusts, screeching shutters,
on the balcony the shifting fingers, the silky
conversation of branches.

In the silver silence of the wind
the cat casts its long miaowing
quiet and persistent like a moon.
You open the door and he comes in
with a gypsy belly of notes
asking to be gazed at and stroked
tasting carpet and wall, home's skin and soul,
now it seems the storm has entered with him
with not much fuss, just winding and whispering,
the cat's fur is discoursing with it
in veins of quietened electricity.

And the storm's skin itself –you love thinking
it could linger endlessly- the cat's whiskers

recording in sleep its trail of glances
like piano keys, its tale
of clashing arms
glittering in rest.

poetry by ***Davide Trame***

On the Permanence of Stones

Heated by the summer sun
they are a welcoming hand
receiving your winter pale limbs
in their huge palms.

The new causeway is larger
and longer, it extends farther
into the sea horizon, reds and ochre
on the tip are having their wide
dialogue with water.

Feet pass from time to time, taste
the small asperities

of each surface, before letting
the body lie down on a towel
or slide like a slow lizard

among seaweeds and plunge in.

I am standing on this mute heart now

before my swim, I am crouching

for balance before my little jump,

I am waiting as if taken in

by eyes beyond eyes under the sun

as if I knew it would be the best way

to be unmade.

As if I knew their mute stay

would finally give me a place,

it's maybe my naked feet,

soles full and flat, adhering

while I scan the horizon

with no waves anywhere, in the still summer,

just a gaze for your gaze, the quiet

bare grip.

An arched stone has helped me

take the plunge, the arches of my feet

balancing on it.

On the safe firmness.

Swimming I think of the graves
I haven't visited for a long time,
months, a year maybe, it always
seems a long time.
Or a time beyond.
We think they are waiting there
for our visit, for us to change the flowers,
"waiting" we say, giving time
a kind of breath, an earth face
covering the unknown,
the inertness in the stone.

Helping you come down
from the granite block
on the path crossing the river bed
I was afraid you had scraped your back
on the scaly, rough texture,
the moss catching scales of light
piercing the undergrowth.
You said it had been all right, no scratch,
and we looked back at the gap
from stone to gravel
that would stay behind us
before finding us again- who knows?-
in skin or bark, or in that rustling often
confused with chatter
over rooted rock bodies
welcoming all fluttering
like rhinos or hippos do, on their backs,
sky sailing on their stoniness.

poetry by **Pamela Uschuk**

Career Move

*previously unpublished
from: Crazy Love (Wings Press, 2009)*

Dulled by office duties, the deadpan clutter
of my desk, committee emails with
no feet for rhythm, I doze like the weed-caked croc
offshore, watching for any slight stir
a furred foot dipped in shallows
might create. In dreams, I lick
the golden stomach of the girl I was
and the thigh of the woman I want
to be, each stretched like sand dunes
heaped by wind's sunburned hands.
I leak from each bureaucratic arrow shot
into hide that thickens over my heart until
no one hears the ruined thud inside
my chest, the need raw as ore
beneath earth's crust.
Whoever glimpses me in this buzzing swamp
might fear these yellow eyes,
the electric tint of lemon sweat. Look
closer and note how I take
lessons from a showy great egret, whose wings
benevolent as the courtesan's unfolding robes
reach up, then from
its warped reflection, lift.

poetry by **Pamela Uschuk**

Blossoming in Lilith's Garden

previously unpublished
from: Crazy Love (Wings Press, 2009)

I pick wild cherries plump as the fire moon
as I brush through
my garden's full blooms—
 fuchsia petunias that tongue
velvet Pasque flowers pulling themselves
erect as silk temples next to the blousy lips
of giant snapdragons, pink
cosmos in gauzy frocks, and
red geraniums lewd on green stalks.
Sky flaunts blue skin spread
wide as Lilith, Salome, and Bovary in their prime,
opening luscious arms to lift
golden eagles, ravens, mountain
blue birds and vultures alike.
This heat-ticked season shouldn't be wasted.
I listen for love's slow snores
storming our house and know
I want to be entered the way wind
bites into wildfire crackling through sage
or the way the sunset-bellied brook trout
strokes her entire body into the muscular current
to find upstream. Earth longs for torrents, for
rain's unbound knuckles
to pound jazz into it after months of sun.
And me? Today I am Lilith
open as a garden where insolent fruits
and heavy-breasted flowers shake their booty
above the snaking roots of trees.
Wrapped in a silk robe the color of wind
I pad inside from the barefoot yard, fertile
soil splaying my toes, wild cherries
staining my teeth.

poetry by **James Hoggard**

**Rooms by the Sea
(EH on his 1951 oil)**

originally appeared in the #9 issue of *Faultline* and was subsequently published in: *Triangles of Light* (Wings Press, 2009)

I, too, like Magritte
but our points of weirdness
aren't the same

Light on the wall
and the sea out the door
are sufficient for me

I don't need people
floating goofball through my skies
or breasting through my walls

Inanimate things,
like planes of light, door and sea,
speak well enough for me

Nothing's inviting me out
into oblivion of sky or sea,
and nothing says stay put

Nothing, in fact, addresses me

poetry by **James Hoggard**

**Summer Evening
(EH on his 1947 oil)**

originally appeared in *Southwestern American Literature*, Vol. 33, No. 2, in 2008
and was subsequently published in: *Triangles of Light* (Wings Press, 2009)

The porch tonight belongs to them
and the light they're in fortifies them,
and young, they've learned to speak
with a comfort I don't have,
and only a few I know have had

No anger bleeds on them tonight,
and though there's tension in them
no demons made them wooden-limbed
the way my figures have sometimes been
Somehow I quickly got them right

Leaning back against the balustrade,
her body brave with sensual speech,
she seems to be comfortable with
the kiss of light down all her length

The young man, though, is trigger-tight,
as I would be if she were mine,
though no junebugs or other pests
slap wall or door or face this time

poetry by **James Hoggard**

El Palacio
(EH on his 1946 watercolor)

previously unpublished
from: *Triangles of Light* (Wings Press, 2009)

Five o'clock, cocktail time in Saltillo,
and the light has surrendered its glare
Tonight will likely be cool
but the clouds are wrong
for a long humming rain

This afternoon a shower passed
and stole my light, but the clouds
it left kept the glare away,
fow awhile they kept the glare away,
and I'd rather not leave the window

The right light, I've found, is rare here,
so I'll do without the cocktail now,
and though there's a bustle of people about
down there where stores and movie are
the view from this angle is peopleless,

but the image, I'm sorry, wont last
except in the way I'm rendering it:
harmonies of light-washed rust
on mute cement and plaster walls,
and a stillness that's absolute

poetry by **Carlo Matos**

LHC

--For Alexander

Competing with the Large Hadron Collider was taking its toll.
He was beginning to feel the pressure—
his weak force stretched particularly thin.
He had been digging discretely for years now—
engaging the help of the neighborhood kids from time to time:
the family dog.
Spoons vanished in the night, appeared Gellared and rusted,
ruined in mysterious heaps.
Without charge, remotes went cold, freezing TV sets in midstream.
Not a flashlight was discovered the year the hurricane hit hard;
the tree house glided gracefully to the ground as he worried over the integrity of
his
 tunnels.
But his pace remained steady even as he moated his own yard,
horizoned his neighbor's fence
and vortexed his grandmother's pool.
No one would help him when the swimming hole went zero.
Thankfully the distance between two summers is long and memories short.
He continued to piece together his home-made, particle accelerator—
the largest of its kind—
as the piggy bank fell prey to repeated hammer blows and could not be put
together
 again.
He must beat the LHC.
He must find the elusive graviton first even if his math was unsure.
How much gravity would be enough to maintain their discrete orbits?
TO . . . STOP . . . TIME . . . TIM . . . TI . . . T
and Bingo was his name-o.
To make us all significantly serious.

poetry by **Carlo Matos**

Bed Bugs

When he cleaned like this, he could not be held responsible for his actions.
He vacuumed the pool bottom—the deep end—
using a garden hose and a snorkel
unaware of the impossibility of drawing air under such pressure.
He drowned for a few moments.
He came back.

He banged about with such fury as he cleaned that he lost all the keys,
ate the children's homework, bit the mailman.
He gathered his children up, filled in the gaps, cleaned the grout
and caulked them against mold and rain—
fixing it all—
bolting it down;
the rugs free of dust,
the linoleum,
the plastic runners replaced before yellowing
and the bed turned down before his wife returned late from work—again—
the bed bugs harrowed.

poetry by *Carlo Matos*

The Lovebugs Return

Every year they come to this part of Florida
to make more,
to die.
It was not love
but a superior force pulling at them,
pulling them in full reverse,
not by the nose as is the custom.
It was the result of an indirect genetics—
a test of character built into the code of conduct.
The lovebugs' return
is accompanied by the clacks of a ghost crab
easing his way among the disinterested, polished hulks.
He was not built for this kind of work,
marking the hours on the stone tiles,
but he did not shirk his duties.
He served the moment.

poetry by **Ajay Vishwanathan**

Shards

The apple slipped from my hand
But it didn't get crushed by the fall.
Cushioned by the shadows of its own sphere
And the shine from the coruscating stars,
It rolled down the blue sky
And floated among the geese in flight.
The poison from the ivy filled my veins and stung my heart,
As Sarah shook her head full of bees
That leaped out of her hair and buzzed angrily around me.
Her twirling skirt caught the rose bushes,
The thorns scraped her thigh as she stepped back into them.
Her dancing feet, her lilting voice drew the deer from the bushes,
Stopped the chipmunks in their tracks,
As she segued effortlessly from one composition to another.
My mother was right; this sight was no more a farrago
Of exaggeration, canards and mystery.
The clouds spilled their largess, sprinkling on the dry concrete
Shards of glass intended to foment
The rise of rebellion in my mind.
Sarah smiled and stood there disrobed,
Her faultless skin stippled by flashes from the fallen glass.