

NOON 12





NOON | journal of the short poem

ISSUE 12  
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## ARS POETICA

There is a penguin lost in the forest  
Keep your backs square to the waves  
and swear silence to the water  
Be patient and wait on this beach  
for the penguin lost in the forest

## A THEORY OF NERITICS

The sea always forgives  
the fog for sleeping  
with the hills  
The fog comes sobbing  
The sea always forgives

*Maurice Turcotte*

Below toes' blurred  
trajectory earthworm  
entrails overturn  
stubbornness  
steady as the surf.

Directions are adequate & complete,  
trapped in a world of possibilities,  
impossible choices  
learning the slow witchery of wind.

*Joseph Cooper*



never enough horizon

*Christopher Patchel*

once in a while a handful of harbour

high tide  
thoughts without brains  
shimmer in moonlight

rain mixed with snow  
snow mixed with rain  
my higher education

*George Swede*

the snow  
only on  
one side  
of things

This street was a lot more interesting on the map.

at Seven Dials: 'psychic readings –  
appointments not always necessary'

## THE LOUIS JORDAN/WCW MASH UP

there ain't  
nobody here

but us  
white chickens



## HOW TO BUILD A BIRDHOUSE

Start with  
a song

the one  
you want

to hear.

Carry it  
outside

and place it  
out of reach.

bug in a bottle  
the lightning inside  
out

*Peter Newton*

blackout  
some of the darkness  
is us

wax on, wax off  
the moon  
in his fender

*Rick Tarquinio*

not made in the last ice age  
chips in the granite  
counter top

anxious morning  
daylight staying out of  
the rocks

*Gary Hotham*

bats at dusk my words come back to haunt me

*Ian Willey*

deep in  
my bones

sing no  
more lies

*Marcus Liljedahl*



death when the original windows open

## EARTH

A place  
where I've slept.

A thimble-

ful  
of hearts,

beating &  
gone. Mother

was here as well  
as You.                   We-

lcome.





home birth the moon out

*Agnes Eva Savich*

MIST

I will have woven her Bruge lace  
to brush lifelines pluperfectly

*Sheila E. Murphy*

moonlight the stitch in a metaphor

## DUOTONE

The field is hacked and honey-fed by necessity. It bridles us both. With the goldenrod lined up like taxicabs we know it's time to leave. Now comes the awkward good-bye – the part where we make promises that we can't possibly keep. Look at the goldfinches as they assemble into flocks and raid the pantry. They know what they're after – not gladness. Yet their last-minute flurry doesn't feel like a salvage run. We succumb to the vertigo of clearing out nonetheless. Despite the hum and bramble bathed in brome light, the furnace in all of us is burning down.



## ALPENGLOW

Fortune's      a white world  
of psychopomp    bone dust  
in humus      a    void yawns

alpenglow                  under-  
tints            the green blades  
springing            in blue mist

lighter particles                  poor  
creaturely fits                  ripped  
silence    blurred                  glints

## CLEAR STORIES

I

lull,

luck

ebb's pause

stay

*where it listeth*

II

tied

and lucent

sky-glad

shrugs undone

III

islands reaching higher

than trees

*s'en fuient*

and the slow return

aisle

*asile*

admittance

twilit tide pool –  
a hermit crab wriggles  
into a new shell

## THE CRUCIBLE, SHEFFIELD

Watching the snooker world championship on TV, the defending  
champion   career as a verb   body and mind in concert  
and the challenger two frames ahead   watch in and out of thought  
the song mere murmur amid   bright attention bright otherness  
at that angle   using the spider   terrific pot  
selves shed to one or unify in the act of concentration  
behind the red   at what consequence

## JAPANESE GARDEN, GLADSTONE

Lizards, &  
blue dragonflies.

Pink  
& white  
lotus. Dirty  
water. No koi.

f  
r p  
p o o l  
g o  
p

equinox  
fucking foxes  
turf us from our holes

*Helen Buckingham*



## PASTORAL CITY

Waves collapse – coral batten down.  
Clouds appear on the cliffs by noon.

Driving to a diner – hearsay lowers  
clearings in the stands of gods

facing off – unfaltering  
news a never-ending ladder –

a chameleon turns to stone – a cat hisses –  
ants deliver – roaches devour.

Rivers return storms flown inland –  
waters rise – towns swept away.

Banyan trees dangle receding roots  
thickening as they touch down

in stirring mud – roadside, the sun circling.  
A little boy stalking the grass says

‘I won’t hurt you pretty kitty.’

## A YOUNG FOX

A young fox running across the field,  
a gliding fluidity.  
Grass half hides her legs. She does not seem  
to touch the ground, but to toy

(as a kit does with the mouse its mother  
drops at its feet)

with gravity,

nipping at it as she goes.

## THE ONE

The thought comes in, the one  
that could be more than a thought,  
but it comes in sideways,  
it comes in like light off a distant wave  
looking at first like a ship  
coming to save me but quickly  
folds back into the sea.

latitude far north confounding sun slants

## PREPOSITIONS TO END APRIL ON

turn the light off  
look up  
something to live by  
something to live with

where did it come from

it crawled in  
it flew down  
it scurried over  
it got through

not what you asked for  
not what you could ever think of

and that's how it's been ever since  
you lost what you thought you were after

lithe yellow light skinning the breeze in day-old maple leaves

*Eve Luckring*

## MONTEROSSO

*after Montale*

The lemon trees, a place-name  
and everywhere those fond quotations,  
memories, our dead come  
back like the clatter of a disappearing train  
between its local station's  
two tunnel mouths, the sense of shame  
and a shame returning too  
where, paused in foam, the sun-fringed bathers pose.

Then it's as if we had come home  
to ourselves once more, our fresh discoveries  
of thirty years before –  
swimmers in the glittering of their own waves;  
and yet how changed now, crowds  
like faces crumpled in that warped cheval glass  
or, one more example, Chinese  
sightseers passing underneath his lemon trees!

## THREE POEMS FROM AL-ANDALUS

In the tidy marina,  
the tide is going out.  
My last image of her  
tugs at its mooring.

I pause on a slope  
of the Alpujarras.  
The wide sky can't  
encompass my loss.

A hooded crow calls  
two hours before fajr.  
The engraver has come,  
desperate for epitaphs.







You took away my seas, the run and the running jump,  
but brought my heels to rest on the earth now violated.  
So what have you achieved? How well you settled up:  
lips that won't stop twitching can't be amputated.

May 1935

*from 'Hellenic Post'*

The Greek fleet has set out  
and passed the last island fort,  
on course for Benghazi and Basra  
with its crude oil carriers.

Now Sport.

\*

The myths are wrong. No way  
was that road to the bus stop 5K.

*from 'The Quad'*

Professor Putin,  
I believe, is teaching  
his module on speeches  
in front of Pushkin.

\*

Out in the cold,  
the poem pulled  
by the past uses  
its mass to swing out to the future.

Old guy  
in a Dark Side of the Moon  
t-shirt leans on the rack  
of Halloween chew toys  
at Pet Smart –  
August 20.

## ESTATE

I inherited 468 uncaptioned photos  
instructions to a card  
game, a pet's memory  
third place medal (dance contest)  
plans for a suspension bridge, unbuilt,  
flat feet, tolerable guilt, grape vine  
across a fence gate, 10 maybe 12  
good Xmas my laugh  
the expression when I'm  
about to fall asleep.

A dacha by the offramp.  
forged weather reports,  
a smell of goldfinches.  
banker with a box  
of distortion pedals.

*Bill Freind*



CRACKLE

power line's oily

< hum >

the voting dead

*from 'characters and spaces: the tweets of microbius'*

*hammerhead*

ughhuh ha  
drum tick  
slivery gl  
iss-squeez

ed (s)crea  
m voc-vol  
trat-ahhhh  
-yaya thum

punked hic  
suck upsh  
ivery glik

shot out o  
f throaty  
tub-thramp

(track 12, john zorn's *naked city*, 1989)

*lucretius*

atoms make  
space & t  
hen discom  
pose in mo

tion/littl  
e letters  
make words  
& then re

contextual  
ise atoms/  
lettery cl

inamens li  
ke 'world'  
to 'word'

(*de rerum natura*, c. 50 b.c.e.)

*micrographia*

flee from  
the flea u  
nder the g  
lass: furr

y legs and  
tufted tu  
sks; preci  
se menace/

look at ho  
oke's full  
stop: scuf

fed flares  
, a furred  
black sun

my students  
pay rapt attention  
to the wasp

the Buddha  
walks into a bar  
and nothing happens

*Michael Meyerhofer*

fast dance tune  
a girl grinding  
saffron

her decision all the skin  
peeled away from  
the flesh of a peach



between my child and i  
corporate language  
disguised as a gull

corp  
orate  
contami  
nation

a whale  
spouts

far off  
shore

a Montana river in the autumn dawn dot com

i look you back from looking through me lone wolf

*Jim Kacian*





## PARALLEL LINES

Eventually,  
our gaze fixed  
at a point in the distance  
where two rails promise  
to meet.

## TRIANGLE

The old cinema in Ginza has now gone. It was half underground, but it was where I took you to see the first film. *Damage*, a love triangle set in England, the storyline clear and unexpected, the fiancée infatuated by her intended young man's father. Passion, tragedy and ruin. I was startled by it, but you were so cool, so indifferent, so young.

The next film was *Gekashitsu*, 'The Surgery Room', very short, from a mere sliver of a tale. Meiji period setting, lush scenery, almost plotless, but the married woman and the young doctor, who'd never spoken, died for each other. I wanted to see it for the aesthetic style, drawn from the Kabuki theatre nearby and directed by a famous actor.

Then, one evening at the crossroads, you changed your mind and came back home with me and spent the night.

\*

There is always a break of some kind. When I returned in late summer, we went somewhere else to see *The Lover*, a steamy, exotic, half-true tale of Indochina. It was still warm, and I ran my finger down your bare arm, but the season was already changing.

From cinema  
to subway  
harvest moon



Your long brown fingers  
and your thirty years  
with someone else

*David Burleigh*

# SPIRAL

*for Ted Enslin*

*the sense of  
loss  
your going  
makes*

the sense  
your going  
makes  
of loss

## RECOGNITION

Towards five  
in the morning:  
My hand creates  
the words  
I write,  
the words I write  
create me.

Day breaks in my body.

*John Phillips*

a thought,  
barefoot

slips

along  
a painter's  
tendon,

pools at the risk. Wrist.

## IF I WERE THE OTHER ONE

I would appear first on Google,  
nest my head in my arms looking nonchalant,  
having written metaphors on diagonals –  
*textual juxtapositions* – crazy aerial views  
carved and collaged onto Smithsonian walls  
to leave crags and crevices – *poetic evocations*  
*of communion with Nature's essentials* – that  
humanise the veins and surfaces of rocks.  
I would stare out through the holes – *apertures* –  
that Wikipedia says produce sensations  
of helplessness, to remind you that the name  
is MINE alright? No matter if I am dead.

*Jane Frank*

authoreauthoreauthoreauthoreauthor  
eauthoreauthoreauthoreauthoreautho  
reauthoreauthoreauthoreauthoreauth  
oreauthoreauthoreauthoreauthoreaut  
horeauthoreauthoreauthoreauthoreau  
thoreauthoreauthoreauthoreauthorea  
uthoreauthoreauthoreauthoreauthore  
authoreauthoreauthoreauthoreauthor

## AFTER EMERSON

That the body bodies forth tells  
Us that the body bodies  
In harmony at times, at times  
In disharmony, still more says  
Such oscillation is itself  
Body as when mind bodies at  
Problem's hint, as when a foot slips  
On fractious stair or eye spies an  
Other's eye; it's then that body  
Minds itself, minds body, says look,  
Here is body, and look, here, too,  
Is body, for in the morning  
We walk with our whole body, at  
Night with just our legs.

*Robert Farrell*

pigeon necks –  
answers that keep me  
awake



## FINISHING

I've read all the beautiful books  
I've read all the gray books. A book  
lies face-down on the floor. Two birds  
are inventing noise. It means the  
back window is open. It is  
Saturday or Sunday. Monday.

## SIGHT-READING

Foreseeing where the tune would go  
means you recall how it has been,  
your moments filled with past and future  
sounds: the black dots perched on wires,  
birds scoring an arpeggio!

the last sister  
escorted to a front pew –  
dandelion lawn

counsellor's office –  
the paintings on the wall  
reveal nothing

*Sandra Simpson*

## GOD NAMING

Who needs this knowledge,  
winged in between  
Talmud and Kabbalah?

Instead, should I use  
the cloudy soup  
or the changing tonalities,  
  
the grammar of birds?

the wind  
quotes  
the tree

*John Levy*

a bonfire untethers  
what the bone sea  
tells

your dialect's  
lingering edges

*Markeith Chavous*





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