

An abstract painting featuring several rounded, light-colored shapes, possibly representing stones or pebbles, scattered across a dark, textured background. Some of these light shapes have bright red, irregular spots or stains on them. The overall style is painterly and expressive, with visible brushstrokes and a rich, somewhat somber color palette dominated by dark greens, blues, and greys, contrasted with the pale stones and vibrant red.

FOOTHILL: A JOURNAL OF POETRY

2012 Fall Edition | Volume 2 | Number 2

FOOTHILL

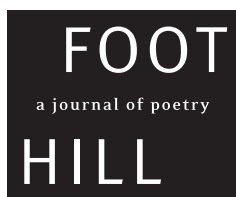
a journal of poetry

V.2, NO.2

FOOTHILL

a journal of poetry

FOOT a journal of poetry HILL



2012 Fall Print Edition | Vol. 2, No. 2
www.cgu.edu/foothill

Kevin Riel
Editor-in-Chief

Jan Andres
Communications Editor

Brendan Babish
Advisory Editor

Kelsey Kimmel
Design Editor

Brian McCabe
Outreach Editor

April Anderson
Production Editor

Emily Schuck
Production Editor

Tyler Reeb
Associate Editor

Scott Kneece
Associate Editor

Clarissa Castaneda
Assistant Editor

Rachel Tie
Associate Editor

Jaji Crocker
Assistant Editor

Friends of *Foothill*: Anonymous
Patrons of *Foothill*: Peggy Phelps

© 2012 by Claremont Graduate University
ISSN 2162-8173

Cover art by Katie Grip
"Night Games," oil on canvas.

We would like to thank John Koethe, Katie Grip, Sheila Lefor, Wendy Martin, Poetry in Claremont, Monika Moore, David Carpenter, Lisa Maldonado, CGU Art, and Esther Wiley for their assistance, guidance, and support, without which this journal would not exist. We also apologize to Gregory Emilio for misprinting his poem, "Of Orange & Life," in our last print issue, and thank him for his boundless patience and understanding.

SUBSCRIBE TO *FOOTHILL*

To subscribe to *Foothill's* online journal, visit www.cgu.edu/foothill.

To subscribe to this year's spring and fall print issues, send a check for \$25 made payable to "*Foothill: a journal of poetry*" with "subscription" written in the memo to:

Foothill: a journal of poetry
165 E. 10th Street
Claremont, CA 91711

Send any questions to foothill@cgu.edu

SUPPORT *FOOTHILL*

Though *Foothill* is produced with generous assistance from Claremont Graduate University, additional support is essential to fulfill our mission of publishing and promoting the country's best graduate-student poetry.

All donations should be made by check and are tax deductible to the fullest extent of the law. A receipt will be promptly sent for your records. Checks should be made payable to the Office of Advancement, with "Foothill" written in the memo. Mail all donations to the above address.

FOOTHILL PATRON LEVELS

Friend: \$100-\$499 for a two-year print subscription and acknowledgment in the journal for two years.

Patron: \$500-\$999 for a three-year print subscription and acknowledgment in the journal for three years.

Council: \$1,000-\$2,999 for a five-year print subscription and lifetime acknowledgment in the journal.

Co-Publisher: \$3,000 (which represents one year's operating costs) or more for two lifetime subscriptions and lifetime acknowledgment in the journal.

CONTENTS

viii EDITOR'S NOTE

Goodness

13 KIMBERLY ADAMS

Brown University

The Whores of Ogallala

14 CHRISTOPHER JOHN ADAMSON

Vanderbilt University

Hypotaxis

I Dreamt We Were Apple-Picking

Perilous Position—Ancient Crater

19 EMILY ALLEN

University of North Texas

The Blind

21 CONOR BRACKEN

University of Houston

how to measure for a tux

23 NIKIA CHANEY

California State University, San Bernardino

chocolate jesus

24 GREGORY EMILIO

University of California, Riverside

Meeting La Matriarca

26 ELIZABETH BIDWELL GOETZ

City University of New York

Soho, July 3, 2012

29 JULIE KANTOR

Columbia University

Black Out

31 LB LONG

University of South Carolina

A Domestic Haunting

- 32 DL MATTILA Johns Hopkins University
Objets Trouvés
Petals for Poe
Discordia
- 35 DEVON J. MOORE Syracuse University
Visitations
The Lady in White is Coming Down the Stairs
- 39 VICTOR ARNOLDO PEREZ California State University, Fresno
In a Dive Bar Near Delhi
- 40 SUSANA XUXA RODRIGUEZ Illinois State University
Let's Fall In Love Like Our Parents Aren't Divorced
- 41 FORREST ROTH University of Louisiana at Lafayette
Apology
- 42 CAITLIN SCARANO University of Alaska Fairbanks
The first time you kiss a girl
Head and Hammer
- 45 NANCY SIMPSON-YOUNGER University of Wisconsin-Madison
Hic Jacet
- 47 ART Claremont Graduate University
Katie Grip
- 67 INTERVIEW
John Koethe
- 76 CONTRIBUTORS

EDITOR'S NOTE

Goodness

"Your manuscript is both good and original; but the parts that are good are not original, and the parts that are original are not good."
—Samuel Johnson

We've received more than a few e-mails the past year inquiring what we "look for" in successful poetry submissions, to which I rarely have anything enlightening to offer save that "we prize poems from poets who seem to be reading lots of poetry." I'll hazard a few more words on the subject here—however equally unenlightening or obvious—as there is no topic we discuss, dispute, or are confounded by more at editorial meetings than what constitutes poetic "goodness" in the twenty-first century.

First, rest assured that we strive—and to a decent extent, I think, succeed—to get beyond intuitive evaluations ("it just works for me") or prejudicial filtering ("I hate prose poetry") and have seized on a distinct yet tolerant spirit of appraisal.

Second, this is not a manifesto, we're not a movement-launching journal like *Blast*, and I'm no Wyndham Lewis—though, more than anything, we do want "THE WORLD TO LIVE and to feel it's [*sic*] crude energy flowing through us" when reading your submissions ("Long Live the Vortex!").

Beyond bearing a pulse, there are the obvious things we expect from good submissions: that they are well edited and crafted, deploy logically designed lines and dynamic language, and that all "darlings" have been mercilessly slaughtered . . . you know, what can be gleaned from any one of dozens of guides-to-writing-poetry on the market.

Also seemingly obvious, we think good poetry is not only—or not at all (apologies to Wordsworth)—the "spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings," though this notion seems to inform the majority of our least-good submissions.

Considering we are a graduate-student journal, we expect your submissions to live in the twenty-first century, perhaps even the twenty-second. We expect your poetry to react to the critical and artistic debates raging yesterday, on the hour, and to occasion fresh arguments on poetry.

Arguments like this one, from Charles Bernstein's timely defense of good poetry *Attack of the Difficult Poems* (2011), "Innovation is not so much an aesthetic value as an aesthetic necessity . . . [though] not necessarily related to improvement; at its most engaged, it is a means of keeping up with the present, grappling with the contemporary. We have to constantly reinvent our forms and vocabularies so that we don't lose touch with ourselves and the world we live in."

This brand of good poetry requires courage as much as craftsmanship, as William Carlos Williams reminded us just after *Blast* hit London: "How easy to slip / into the old mode, how hard to / cling firmly to the advance—"

We tear into each new packet of submissions hoping to find good poems that are both thoughtfully conceived and daringly *au courant*. Maybe never-said-better than by Bernstein: "Safe poetry is the best prophylactic against aesthetic experience." I urge you, as a matter of public (imaginative) health: practice safe sex and dangerous poetry.

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a stylized 'K' followed by a large, flowing 'R' and 'E'.

Kevin Riel
Editor-in-Chief

POEMS

KIMBERLY ADAMS
BROWN UNIVERSITY
MA ENGLISH

The Whores of Ogallala

If there is such a thing as a fake poem
then this is it. I make no concessions
to the women that did this, or spaces
their blouses are open, their faces turned
west and their mouths are all humming
displacement. There is red wine in stains
on their sheets and they are refusing
to open the window shades.

Lost. My parents were always afraid
I would accidentally hang myself on the
string to pull open the blinds. Dehydrated,
with an aversion to light, and a fear of
being left behind. It's a long way to Nebraska.
Sunday, a harem of insensate faces waits
patient, fat smiles of past love. Sober
mothers. As a child I climbed out windows
and swam in sin. My mother drives
west. We're fucked. Away from here
I wake on a painted sofa historical whores
on the floor there is candle wax and
dormer windows. Close them.



CHRISTOPHER JOHN ADAMSON
VANDERBILT UNIVERSITY
MFA CREATIVE WRITING

Hypotaxis

—is fluid, languid clauses
leading one into the other
like dreams of the dead,
when they chastise you
for the pushing and
transference of a lover,
when he enters you and
you speak him out, gasp him,
translate his pushing into
your own language
of obsolescence, and like
the pain of knowing
this language is not his.



I Dreamt We Were Apple-Picking

J and I—taking pink ladies, honeycrisps,
the mauve-touched—when we fell together to the ground.

Awake, I read of a new subatomic particle,
a consistent blip, a bump on their print-out,

a “Mysterious” physical force seen only, yes,
by a faith in the accelerator, the machine and its ink.

... Then I dreamt we were apple-picking
in the center of a particle accelerator—

colors like a vivisection of thought,
a smearing of sunsets across whatever

fabric holds us together; bleeding lilacs,
ambers from every sacrosanct corner

of every universe, a tender rendering
of the delicate tissue in the back of our eyes ...

Awake again, upright, I shut the door to the dream,
I had to, suddenly I had seen what no one could bear.

I saw I was the door I shut. Our shared skein
I knew then by both apple-ends. I tried,

but I could not unsee. I shut only nothing.
The fabric came to me white hot in the night,

the fabric has stayed with me just as hot,
silky yet caught on a branch and slapping

against my window. Incessant, heavy sight!
Sight of the bound, unbound!



Perilous Position—Ancient Crater

(after Captain Stansbury)*

Those who walk near the lake of salt know what it means to thirst.

Even the artemisia has disappeared

I find myself in drought
acre after acre
a plantation of thirst

My mule exhausted
I go on foot

Driving my mule before me
I march around the shore

just trying to find the fields
the streams on the other side

drink satisfaction after this

But why

why a lake with no water
 you would think

quenched and drenched you would think

—

* Capitan Howard Stansbury is the author of one of the first US Senate-commissioned topographic and ethnographic studies of Salt Lake City, Utah, in the years after Mormon settlement: the *Exploration and Survey of the Valley of the Great Salt Lake of Utah*, first published in 1852. The poem's title is taken from this survey.

I left the mule behind
 given out
No doubt it has perished

No herd before me
Even the artemisia has disappeared

—

I find myself
in a small isolated butte
a grey-brown color

bare all vanished vegetation

rocks all around me
north and south and east and west
I must be inside an ancient crater

a wide cone of contorted shales
sandstones claystones

but wood and water
 none

On each side of me
all around me
all there is is want all desire

for somewhere else

But I may not reach the mountain or the fields
I may not find the right
the right water

—

Even if I do drink again
if I climb out

I will always know this thirst like a severed limb
This thirst phantom dirt in the throat

—

In the center of the crater
the rocky butte

I lay myself down
fireless and supperless
laid bare upon the full rock

This whole country is a crater
a pit in desire
I have climbed down into it

down into depths impossible
climbing out also impossible

Even the artemisia has disappeared



EMILY ALLEN
UNIVERSITY OF NORTH TEXAS
PHD CREATIVE WRITING

The Blind

As an old man, Milton spoke of needing to be milked,
swollen as he was with metered words, a sense of task.
Mary must have felt more like handmaiden than daughter,
every morning transcribing until her fingers' movement
was nothing but a series of signals at arm's length;
nonsense, at first, like chickens' squalling, the languages
he bade her read aloud: Greek, Latin, even Arabic.

Each symbol was a stutter for him to correct, so he told her
of the ways she mangled syllables, divine song.
He taught her only to worship, never pray, like a hostage
modeling her captor's inflection. Understanding
was intuitive, at best, but when people asked,
she said her father taught her everything.
Through him, the great father spoke; she listened.

I should pity Mary, the spinster, her caretaker's routine.
I too am using her in the same: a set of directives
strung out like candles in a hall, and no one else
to light the lamps. Still, I envy such simplicity,
her provided purpose—no need to serve the muse,
to write the way he speaks: blind in the sitting room's
dark, dependent on patience, a promise of solace.

Mary, it is time to be honest. If history has kept silent,
speak. I've strained my eyes, reading late into the night,
writing in near-blackness, and I know nothing
except questions perhaps better left unasked.
Every wise father is his daughter's oracle,
I've heard, and you will speak no evil, so what
do I say to my creator, or his mute God?

Father, I do not have your congregation,
but I am struggling to match your wisdom, as if even now
you oversaw my prayers each night, sneaking out
as I count my sins to sleep. I can no more command
a household than a sentence; the kitchen is always dirty,
the meter sputtering. I can no more explain
my Godless world than return Milton his power to see.

CONOR BRACKEN
UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON
MFA CREATIVE WRITING

how to measure for a tux

or: how to fit the scourge and grace
of one body into monochrome.
my tape-measure search lights

drawer-nooks dark-packed
for years where the only marriage
was bruises to coffee-tables,

hands joined in a sweet haze
of ego and stumble. uneven as they
are my legs will carry the same me-

asure, the same erasure of small
distances marked by satin's loud
self-congratulatory handshakes:

so good of you to be here with us,
how kind to show up and celebrate
and you, so intent on bolts and reams,

we are great, aren't we? in two colors
shades—of irony, of grey, of offensive
remarks made in quite inoffensive tones—

fade. I will space my teeth with them.
how to decide if your feet are wide:
wear like clipped wings the prospect

of six upright hours for two. multiply
by the square root of toothpaste needed
to match smile gleam to shirt brilliance, and,

if you feel a swoon at hour one point six,
divide by height. either my feet are narrow
or my arithmetic is wrong. the haber-

dasher recommends factoring mothers'
pride into chest circumference, due to
communicability, which has its own

algorithm. how wide you grin after hearing
I'd rather be sweeping is integral
but its application, like the uvula's, is

abstruse. inside the lapel of each jacket,
beside a violet rose, beside two pockets
sewn in as a deftness test, are instructions

for how to look when the groom kisses
the bride indelibly: not at the bride's
maids, nor the pews. we're directed

to look at the space in front of our eyes
where all things loom enormous, where
a mouth can even for a moment

be a temple for words for truth
a chrysalis for the heart, bursting
the bouquet of dressed bones around it.

NIKIA CHANEY

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, SAN BERNARDINO

MFA CREATIVE WRITING

chocolate jesus

chocolate jesus wants you to stand up and make your voice into something because chocolate jesus is pointing to you chocolate jesus with his red flag and his black braids his end rhymes his member discounted 20% off upgrades and his bottom chair folkers who uphold the quo love him so make us love us some chocolate jesus

chocolate jesus is a symbol no a symphony a sweet standing story he wants you he needs you to get out on that street and work and work and work until your gold honey pot your car note your monthly check your economy falls from the sky in little green wrappers for sweet chocolate for chocolate jesus

chocolate jesus wants you to hold signs cause he is so sexy up there he got a soft voice oh he talking right lets all vote lets all jump aboard for the ride this version of the high oh can I have your number mr chocolate mr politician mr dawn man cog meal mr ice cream mr just tell me to get on up for even though you never said you wasn't street you chocolate you jesus

chocolate jesus is maker, meet need to believe in me some chocolate jesus cause chocolate jesus chocolate jesus is him 1% like Malcolm like pimp daddy hustler chocolate politician chocolate soldier enough for this strangling stumbling civility chocolate jesus captain of the mothership mutherfucker don't we wish him jesus him bittersweet him look him pretty pretty smile



GREGORY EMILIO
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, RIVERSIDE
MFA POETRY

Meeting La Matriarca

Glendora, CA

Like a rotting habañero,
Leila's right big toe weeps in the rust-violet light.
In an unfamiliar home, in the hills above Route 66,
I blot puss still oozing from her drunken, bare-footed
misstep the night before. She straddles the kitchen sink
and I taste apple in her ankle.

Her mother swings
through the backdoor with flank steak, white onions,
tomatoes & green bell peppers for *Ropa Vieja*:
old clothes. Before we even shake hands,
she reduces sugar in water for the flan,
tells me I'm too skinny.

Leila decants Tempranillo
into a clay jug. We steal glances at the bloody bandaged toe,
though Sra. Grau never asks her daughter
Why, or How.

I imagine Leila fifteen years ago,
a child sneaking stray ropes of meat between her teeth.
Her mother burns the sugar: *mierda*. Kneeling twilight
sets motes of dust in amber about us.

This woman
who named her daughter after darkness eyes me
suspect: I'm suspended in the lengths of her silence.
I want to say that a face passes down
like dusk over foothills, that the meat is so tender
it tastes of someone else's childhood.

Senora Grau,
once a child in Havana who fainted awaiting rations
of chocolate, explains that most nights now she's too tired
to cook, that it's just as well since memory can ruin
a recipe as easy as flan.

When we finish eating,
easing in the wine & meat scents of the kitchen,
she tilts her glass in the lamp-light, angling her eyes:
“More old clothes, *delgado*?

We also have apples.”

ELIZABETH BIDWELL GOETZ
CITY UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK
PHD ENGLISH

Soho, July 3, 2012

I'm cruising Prince St., looking for a store
with beautiful colors in the windows.
But there are no beautiful colors
behind windows today, and I always forget the crossstreet
for McNally Jackson. I kind of want ice cream, but it's not
hot enough for once. Last night we tossed
anchovies in our pasta. Frank O'Hara
used to like anchovies on his sandwiches, or the person
he misses in the morning does. Maggie used to ask
me if I still ate anchovies for lunch, but now
she is in Prague or sometimes Dresden
or maybe Alsace. Is missing someone
like the dickens better or worse, more or less
sincere, more or less intimate, than missing
someone like fuck? (How does missing work
in other languages, where there are
reflexive pronouns to set records not straight,
but to align them differently?) Sitting at the Angelika
for my monthly homage to Greta Gerwig
—I think she's getting worse, less earnest—
I wonder whether Wayne Koestenbaum likes Woody Allen.
Probably not, but they both like opera,
wear glasses, and are Jewish.
Sinatra used to play on 103.1 in LA every
weekday—*Furious Frank at Five*
p.m.—and I would stay in the dusty Camry
in my running shorts to hear him
plead luck to be a lady tonight, he squeezed
between Jack White and Frank Black, me
stalled under the orange trees, out of season.
The only benches not in parks in New York
are on 6th Ave., where I am sitting
right now, and where everything is gray
and yellow, even the blues.

Woody Allen makes me
thirsty Jesse Eisenberg makes me remember
the day I saw *Adventureland* with Luke, and how we
walked through the Olympic protests
—did such a thing happen?—
and called Joanna from the bridges
of Millennium Park afterward. But that
was a long time ago. Now we are older,
and Luke has long since stopped answering
my calls. In July, I hate sleeping
with the door open. I call my mother on the one day
a month I have a working
telephone and she tells
me about the food trucks she has heard about
in Paris, and how they're considered to be "*très* Brooklyn."
I haven't eaten from a food truck
in ages, not since the night
in May with the *Hs* after dropping my phone
in the dewy grass, the night we drank beer
and danced to Friends while sitting in the lawn
of the best block of McCarren Park, which
is sort of where I wish I were now.
I go into a hat shop on Thompson, south of Prince, partly because
the soda bottles in the window are
really beautiful colors. (Oren Izenberg
used to say, no one had ever written a poem
about Coke before, but now someone long
since has. This is not a poem about Coke,
but it has long since been written
with words more prone to sizzle on sidewalks
like the eggs I haven't fried on Starr Street
and with line breaks more clever and
languid. But I only know how to breathe
derivative air.) I try some hats on

and touch the felt and wonder
if garden parties are a thing, do they really exist. They must,
these ribbons are bowed in the shapeliest black gauze.
A woman explains to the proprietor how to
wear a green coat as a cape but she must
be confused, think it's still March. Who
can buy clothes in July? Doesn't everyone
just want to be naked? The woman across the street
looks like an extra in some low-budget horror
film and tells me that even Chanel doesn't line leather
bags with leather anymore, it's really insane. I find another
bench to write this. A drooping girl in a Mickey Mouse
shirt says goodbye to another, walks south
in her gym shoes, and swings a Barney's
bag. I stand up to search for iced coffee.

JULIE KANTOR
COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY
MFA CREATIVE WRITING

Black Out

Will be said from my symptoms
onward you were quite gracious,

tell me such remarkable quotations

that came to you with the touch of

eccentricity, alacrity, we're all mistaking

for illness, but if the morals deplete ahead
of the mind then we can't very well continue

calling this love when I haven't seen you

for weeks, channel visions with the lead
everything is fed & channeled through,

the remainder it can't hold within—it is
the outside that does the holding

in—ruins your moral capacity you always
fall back on: start calling yourself different

names when you walk out of rooms;
I'll think you were never there or are

an entirely other person; with name comes
other life that is coming at the rate your body

loses & that really sick part when you uncloud
& ask, *is that me that's poisoning myself.* & if

you're asking, I have to ask, too, & I can't
blame my nostrils that won't blow black

onto my tissue, but it's coming in
& I swallow as light & quick as possible.

LB LONG
UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA
PHD ENGLISH

A Domestic Haunting

Follow us. They promised
to make my wheezing voice
as bright as the ghosts in my bathroom vent:
sparks of light whispering
the secrets of the pale and unformed dead.

I watched, half-drunk,
sleep-deprived, as they wove through the metal bars
of the rusty grate, mocking the divide between the room
and the space beneath.
You'll never catch us, they sang,
and I smiled across the room,
crooked teeth beautiful in their unconcerned glow.

Mice used to nest in there.
I would worry the fumes from their shit
would make me mad, infect me with hantavirus.
But not so: they've moved on.
I found tiny bones in the attic.

I'd like to think they're still here,
floating in the faint rays from my digital clock
and the persistent blue and green standby LEDs,
rather than accept that there is debris in my eyes
and dust in the air.

DL MATTILA
JOHNS HOPKINS UNIVERSITY
MA WRITING

Objets Trouvés

An unexpected find,
without a stitch, for sale,
her upper torso in recline,
au naturel and pale,

lay sprawled, a castaway
abandoned and defiled:
such raw, undignified display.
With lifeless eyes unveiled,

two orbs, a stony stare
adorns her dead-pan face
beneath loose locks of midnight hair
disheveled, now displaced.

Butt-naked thighs and legs
deposed, exposed, wave feet
upended on the front porch steps:
an android meet-and-greet

of sorts, a social gaffe
exposing tits and ass,
(how *gauche*!) compelling me to laugh
at what might come to pass

should I accessorize
with reassembled limb,
nude hips, sealed lips, and vacant eyes:
a junkyard mannequin.



Petals for Poe

Emerging at midnight among the shadows,
bundled in black and with bottle in hand,
a figure of featherlight footstep approaches,
aggrieved by the grave of a glorified man.

Petals for Poe that appear with the cognac,
waft faintly perfumed for the poet of fame.
This beast or strange bird that abides with decorum
comes steeped in great sorrow, insisting no name.

Whispers from watchers aware of its presence
are shared in the shadows, assured it is there.
What lady or lordship alights bearing presents?
Who's tossed from the tempest to tout Poe each year?

But two-thousand-ten, a tale of misfortune:
no tribute, no tokens, no tap at the door,
no form of the figure—whose flourish was legend—
who pined for the poet who pined for Lenore.

January 19, 2010
Old Westminster Burial Ground
Baltimore, Maryland



Discordia

A flurry of asynchronous sound swirls
in the symphony of percussive chaos and clanging
that signals the strength of an approaching storm.
Tubular bells, bandied about
by wayward winds that whirl unexpectedly
like dissonant demons searching a destiny,
clank and clamor with increasing distress
as the wind paddle wobbles and wavers
with the lulls, then leaping aloft—dives
in its wooden attempt to contain the turmoil,
soothed only by silence at the end of the storm.



DEVON J. MOORE
SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY
MFA CREATIVE WRITING

Visitations

His mom used to say he had the neon disease.
When the lights came on, he woke up.
I, too, wake up to lights.
Last night before bed, I flipped the switch
at the top of the stairs to turn it off.
The light wouldn't go away.
Flickering, not like the gradual diminishment of a candle
flame, but like the persistent beats of a heart
that's unaware it's ending—more like the insistence
of the last words of a body
of a man who happens to be your father.
Green car, pretty wafer, daughter, daughter,
help me, please. Syllables dropping
like prayer beads. His last night
I was there resting my ears on the couch,
but his death wanted me
to stay awake for it.
I couldn't. Too young to have laid next to the end
of the end, and what was wrong with the wires
behind the fixture? Round face, tongue
of light, a ghost on the stairs. There is
no one alive to ask. When a light tries not to go out,
when a man who is your father dies,
when all you can think about are words
you didn't hear and that pillow,
the one he said he had, the one he said
you could always lay your head on,
when a light goes out and when you realize that
the safety of the pillow is gone, you wonder
what use it was to have been given
such a promise. You're alone now,
standing on a stairwell, watching
the light you turned off continue to buzz,
you're whispering to the dome fixture,

its flicker hanging on by a spark,
Father, die again if you want,
this time, I promise, I'll watch.



The Lady in White is Coming Down the Stairs

These evenings turning around
the same bend, the same television

glow lapping at my cheek. I would say to you,
we could have been the heroes, could have risen

up and rescued ourselves. These evenings I know
we will die here, eventually and aglow, our fingers reaching for pixels,

and gripping the empty bottle on the seat like the peanut shells
we busted open and found empty in our dreams. Supposedly,

we love it here, we love the grey fleck
in the blue eye of the television star, wishing we could see

perfect like that, the heroes on the television are running
into houses and the vampire queen is chopping off their heads

with only one fingernail. We were born unflinching,
watching broken bones push through skin.

Call it anesthetization. Call it evolution. Call it
what it is. The heroes on the television have survived us,

are the fittest, are swimming over seas of foolishly closed eyes
and calling them lakes. Real ghosts

exist, you know. I saw the lady in white, a long time ago,
in another movie, gliding down the stairs,

and in my most susceptible moments I see her again,
and close my eyes to transmit her away.

But what would she say if she could?
You could have been real.

You could have been the sound you thought you heard at the back of your head
whispering to the part of you that still listens to the truth.

Grey matter. Adjusting eye. This is not right. Look up.
See a pockmarked face. Call it a moon.

Did you know that the white matter in your bones is made
from the same calcium as those stars?

Did you know that, all along,
it's been your own light that you've been
turning off?

It's scary how easy it is to forget what you need
to protect yourself from.

VICTOR ARNOLDO PEREZ
CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, FRESNO
MFA CREATIVE WRITING

In a Dive Bar Near Delhi

I would like to imagine that it started with a sound, like cigarettes being packed against a palm—or maybe the beat of the juke box, hypnotic, reaching its great tendril arms onto the highway. Some song that kept the engine turning inside, but still faint enough to be unfamiliar. I didn't know what it was

to miss home yet, so along highway 99 on the way to Fresno, slowly dipping back into the valley, I would fall into these spaces, like an errant ant falling into the den of a trap door spider. Within this diffused light, Tim the bartender stood, watching like a front row spectator, steady behind the gates as the bulls

reeled themselves in. Once said that he earned this job the old fashioned way, nepotism, then chuckled and reposted himself steady against the hardwood laid down by his father. And in the late summer I would find him there, perfect in front of the electric altar of glowing glass, with salvation drifting out beyond

the red double doors. From the travels I was taken in by the cordials the thickness that tucked me back from the brilliance of the day. And at two in the afternoon when the light breeches the doorway igniting the patrons inside you might find a couple of stools aflame, Henry and Raynè lost in two step, lovely

with eyes closed, gripping tighter and tighter like children lost in fire. These are the days when a little smoke couldn't hurt anyone, especially Tim short in stature, but always a giant torturing the mini city of bottles for a cure. I'm many miles away from home still, hunkered down in a dive bar near Delhi

sacrificing the sun for gripping glass like a pistol against my lips. I suppose life's got a couple of more turns before I can start again, so I stroke the stag head mounted in a position forever north and for once, and maybe never again, hone our sonorous high notes, contemplate where we have been, witness the distance appear

lost and somehow eternal. Home, somewhere beyond the fake wood paneling and the many voices that scatter like thin clouds overhead. Maybe I should stop in at a dive bar near Delhi, to watch the June bugs loitering underneath, to toss peanut shells as steady and as sure as the tide of cars gliding their great sails through the top of Stevens Street.

SUSANA XUXA RODRIGUEZ
ILLINOIS STATE UNIVERSITY
PHD ENGLISH STUDIES

Let's Fall In Love Like Our Parents Aren't Divorced

Ocean spit salted sun bleached sand burned skinned eyes licking
tastes bright like red licorice shins tart apple necks sweet mustard
sharp cheeks under hard lids lashed longer than days ran on hours
wholed halved arms famished for five seconds of chest to heart to
rhythm drum beating out mouths mashed spilling in every look
thought hoping wishing too tender soft vibrant trembling unholy
speak between the breaths of hello and how and are and you like a
bandit biding time testing locks scouting routes to see me in the crack
of the door to the tree lined walks leafed red yellow green glittering
begging pardon so sorry so the wind slinks over hairs out heads just
inside ears whisper your jaw to my brow guarding tripping tongues
threatening but you keep coming doubling back pause pregnant awe
at the peek through the crack at me my something familiar unfamiliar
but couldn't be could it be is this what you what I slow dance boom
boxed roof cream coffee lunch dinner notes texts letters raining down
a thousand flowers and warm names spelled out snowed under stars
breath bated tracing racing constellation roads nowhere every where
hand in felt no *feel* soft focused breaths beyond horizoned sea
meeting big blue bowl sky forever these skins too thin to hold close
in a here that's there that's enveloping sugar spun milk shed hearts
bristling bright white night songs to guide I and love and you only
now in waking sleep stretching out over bodies layer caked warm in
orange sweet tea lipped mornings of a blessing a call a song to
guide you home.

FORREST ROTH
UNIVERSITY OF LOUISIANA AT LAFAYETTE
PHD CREATIVE WRITING

Apology

smears clandestine
blood to enjoyment. Provenance
without as a canopy. An offering up
open to his kill. Any mercy allows quails
some suffering before expense. Left caught
in the month younger as ancestors had way
by mistake. Including the frail thereby should
their day spare. Would meager wishes be satisfied
under his cover but determined. This hunted crave.
Heaps of cunning pile by doorstep. The feeding upon
for swell until pillars buckle. How he gives them study.
There is airy weight in sensing
hastened breath must lead shallow,
the ample ruses
the flighted ply unforgiven.

CAITLIN SCARANO
UNIVERSITY OF ALASKA FAIRBANKS
MFA CREATIVE WRITING

The first time you kiss a girl

and you are a girl, there is a splash
in the next room. Your mother hems wind
chimes but the wind is snagged
on the top fingers of the cobalt blue pecan
tree. When this occurs, you can forget snow
wilting on downtown side streets, the dimming
shops as day folds into your night-
stand. The old pointer hound is set. The lines
all gather under the crooning fridge where you
thought you'd never have to mop. Listen,
you don't always need your voice.
I just wanted to remind you of this.

Head and Hammer

When they meet
what is the sound? I know
nothing of my father's father
but for a bile ringing on that hill
shadowing me. After Italy
cankered, he pulsed
through hot Pennsylvania
restaurant kitchens, burning.

His wife discharged five sable
headed children who softened
into grain whiskey, bail
bonds, and briny Lithium.
Then dissolved—we don't

talk of this. Only through
rubicund wine, closing throats,
the flush of impotent night
does my mother reveal:
my grandmother, my
grandfather, how wan a human
head and how acute the metal.

See, I must believe
that two can come together
making azurite towers,
almond biscuits, laughter
down effulgent hallways.
The parents of my father,
the head, the hammer,
simply did not.

That bestialized night
dented our history, this batter
bowl I am subject to live
beneath. But now

I know. Head and hammer
is a keen sound, it
speaks: This happened. Please,
someone remember it.

NANCY SIMPSON-YOUNGER
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON
PHD ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LINGUISTICS

Hic Jacet

There she lies,
all twenty-seven inches of her,
in the middle of the Big Bed,
with all the sheets and pillows
hastily removed in her honor.
She is all paleness,
all babynose and babystomach
and pudgily delicate knees.
And I would give anything for her to stir.
And when she does,
quirking her tight-pursed mouth in a fight
against waking, writhing with a stretch
that will come to rival her father's,
I exhale, and sink down next to her,
exhausted and wondering:
When, when did we condition ourselves
to think that all the moments
were pivoting toward death?

ART

Night Games

48" x 48"

oil on canvas

2012



Sorry Grandma

60" x 48"
oil on canvas
2012



An Arrangement

17.25" x 22"

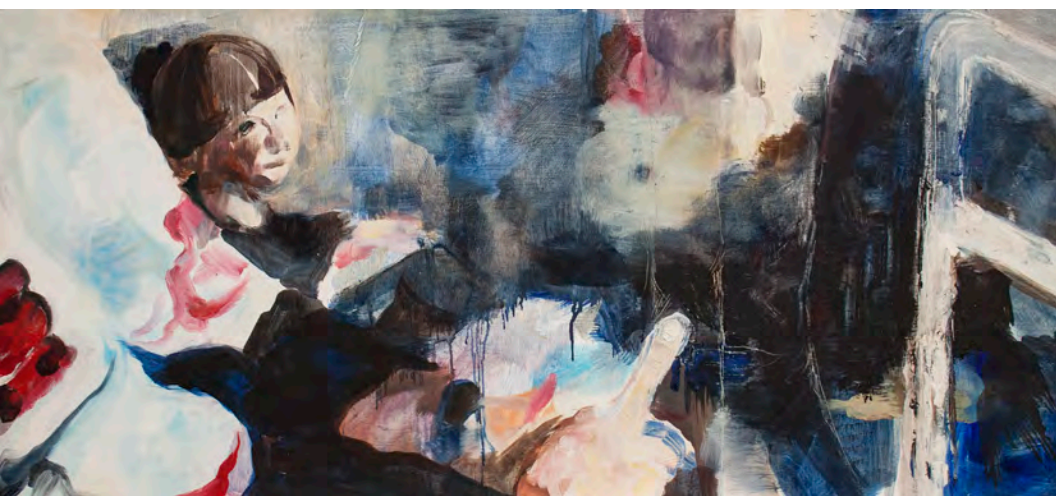
oil on canvas

2012



Popcorn and Hotdogs

36" x 15.25"
oil on canvas
2011



Shades

6.75" x 5.5"

mixed media on
canvas on panel

2012







Guest Bedroom, 66" x 42", oil on canvas, 2012

Boogie Pod

6.75" x 5.5"

mixed media on
canvas on panel

2012



'Bad Bones'

Alt+title: 'one of those
cursed defunct businesses
that is better off being bulldozed'

alt+title: 'i cut the 2nd painting
off this canvas 3 days
before i started my period...

oh shit... if i bring up periods
in art skool you might call
this feminist art... which is
ok i guess... cuz i am

female... I'm actually just
kind of bummed that
these paintings turned out

bad... I was not really good
for that... wait I know this
is grad school and you're

supposed to always pretend
like you think your own
work is awesome but

c'mon... don't you think this
kinda fucking douche?
'wer'e all just people...
it's cool.'

This is where

~~the~~ you're

supposed to
put your

name... mine

is Katie grip

← rhyme

drip

← another
drip



Bad Bones, installation, 2012

Jeffery's Friend

24" x 24"

oil on canvas

2012



INTERVIEW

JOHN KOETHE

Photo by Tom Bamberger



John Koethe is a distinguished professor emeritus of philosophy at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee and was the first Poet Laureate of Milwaukee.

*His collections include *Falling Water*, which won the Kingsley Tufts Poetry Award at Claremont Graduate University; *North Point North*, a finalist for the *Los Angeles Times Book Prize*; and *Ninety-fifth Street*, winner of the *Lenore Marshall Prize*. In 2011, he received a *Literature Award* from the *American Academy of Arts and Letters*. His newest book, *ROTC Kills*, came out in August. Originally from San Diego, California, he lives in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.*

Foothill: Because *Foothill* publishes poetry from graduate students—those in what we like to call the “apprentice” stage of their writing career—we wanted to start by discussing your unconventional mentorship of Henri Cole (also a winner of the Kingsley Tufts Poetry Award, among many other awards). As the story goes, he—then a master’s student—showed up on your office doorstep at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee and persuaded you to do an independent study with him on poetry. Judging by your 2008 comment that he has since become “one of his generation’s most assured and accomplished poets,” it must have been a tremendous encounter. Would you describe the experience and some of the books you assigned that he especially responded to and that you think might be of interest to graduate-student poets?

Koethe: It actually wasn’t a tremendous encounter, though Henri has gone on to become a tremendous poet. I don’t know how he wound up at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. He’d gone to William and Mary College, and I don’t know why he applied there; it really wasn’t a writing program that he fit in with very well. He had rather aesthetic sensibilities, and the faculty were more kind of gung-ho populists. So they didn’t really get along very well. And someone said to Henri, “There’s this guy in the philosophy department who writes poetry. Why don’t you go see if you can do something with him?”

So, he turned up, and I was happy to do work with him. He seemed quite personable and talented, though he'd never really read any contemporary or even modern poetry. And I could hardly call it mentorship or teaching; we would just meet once a week and I would give him a poet to read or a group of poems to read. We read Marianne Moore, Elizabeth Bishop, John Ashbery, James Merrill. We read Alfred Corn, who he liked quite a bit. And then I would just read the poems that he'd written and, well, you'd hardly call it teaching. I'd just make comments on them and asked things like, "Why did you break this line here instead of there?" or "Why don't you cut this out?" At the time he was actually a photographer as much as a poet. And thereafter he went on to study at Columbia University, and I think that's where his style was really formed much more than with me. All I did was basically introduce him to this body of modern and contemporary poetry that he wasn't familiar with.

FH: How did you navigate your own formative years as a poet while a graduate student in a non-literary discipline? Did you have access to mentors, or did you learn to write poetry in the library? Do you think having artistic mentors is important?

JK: Actually, it wasn't as a graduate student that I started writing poetry. I started writing poetry in my sophomore year at Princeton University; that would have been in 1964. I started out as a math and physics major, and, after a year of that, I took a course from Carlos Baker (Ernest Hemingway's biographer), and that was the first time I read modern poetry, and I was just bowled over.

Then I switched over from physics and math to philosophy, stopped running track, started smoking—so it began a period of decadence. I never really wanted to major in . . . well, there was no writing program at Princeton, though there were a few occasional visiting writers like William Meredith, who I would take courses from to get out of taking regular courses.

But there was a very serious group of undergraduate poets, and we hung around together and basically taught each other. We were kind of united in a disdain for the English Department. I was always drawn toward philosophy anyway. But I didn't want to become any kind of academic/literary writer, so for me it was philosophy, then poetry on the side with these students. I'm not sure you'd call them mentors, but there were some poets who were one or two classes ahead of me, one of whom became rather well known and is now quite active in Los Angeles poetry circles—Lewis MacAdams—who I guess became the closest thing to a mentor I had. It was more like I would be reading Ezra Pound and T.S. Eliot and didn't know

anything about contemporary poets, and Lewis would turn me on to them, and we would just all hang around and all just teach each other, show each other poems, and what not. So I think that kind of experience was quite valuable.

I'm not sure about mentorship in the more formal sense where there is a senior poet who kind of directs you and shapes your agenda. But I can't say really because I've not gone through a writing program, and I have no idea what that experience is like. I mostly tend to think I would have disliked it, but who knows?

FH: Are you still in touch with Lewis? He is still very active in Los Angeles, especially with regard to the Los Angeles River.

JK: I haven't been for many many years. Last time I saw him was when a book of mine, *North Point North*, got nominated for the Los Angeles Times Book Award. He was there at the ceremony afterwards, and we talked. And I've had some indirect contact with him. But I'm more in touch with him through other people from those Princeton days who see him more often than I do. He is an amazing guy. He turned me on to the Black Mountain poets and to the New York School; he knew Frank O'Hara and Ted Berrigan and all those people. And that really was my *entre* into that whole world. Those were really my formative years.

FH: In an interview you said, "I'm uneasy about the professionalization and commodification of poetry through writing programs." Can you explain what you meant by this? And I realize that you weren't ever enrolled in an MFA program, but do you think they might offer possibilities such as you had with Cole or MacAdams?

JK: Aside from little independent studies with Henri, I did teach a reading/writing course on "the long poem" at Northwestern University in 1990, and then I spent five weeks at the University of Cincinnati, where I taught a workshop, but that really is it, so I really don't know how to teach writing.

And I don't really know how to evaluate it or what it's like. I just have this gut feeling that it's better to have this concentrated, opinionated period when you're young where you really think poetry ought to be this way rather than that. Better this than what I gather is a workshop experience where you're supposed to be very broadminded and appreciate everything. But I could be wrong.

The one thing that does strike me about the proliferation of MFA programs is there is a lot of adequate and even good poetry . . . of

course, there is much more of it than when I was younger; there are all these books, you can't possibly read them all. No one can possibly read them all and know what's going on. It's all Balkanized.

I don't like the idea that poetry can be taught, but I think it can be taught in a way. Let me put it this way: I have great interest in ceramics, and while there are a few great ceramicists, mostly ceramics is something you can learn to do if you really want to do it. And I sometimes think that creative writing programs are like that. They teach you to write poetry, which is kind of like pleasant and decent ceramics [*laughs*], which is not bad, but it certainly can't turn you into a great poet. Nothing can really do that other than coincidence and perseverance and whatever else it takes.

So obviously this is not a very enlightening answer [*laughs*]. But there are a lot more poets around that you ideally ought to keep tabs on, and in the 1960s you sort of had a sense of who all the poets were, even if you didn't spend all your time reading them. That's impossible now.

FH: In another interview you said, "I'm not wild about going to poetry readings because the kind of poetry I respond to is meant to be read on the page." Is something crucial lost in not being able to see where the lines break, how the stanzas are arranged, or any other idiosyncrasies that constitute the poem-on-the-page's architecture? Do you believe that the performance of poetry pollutes or imposes on the poem-on-the-page (perhaps this is what W.B. Yeats meant when he asked: "How can we know the dancer from the dance?")?

JK: I made that comment some years ago, and my view has changed a little bit, though not entirely. I think when I said that I tended to write long, very dense, meditative poems that don't lend themselves that well to oral presentation. For one thing they are hard to remember, and they can go on for 10 or 15 minutes. Whereas recently I have written poems that are not written with an audience in mind—an idea which I just abhor—but they perform better just because they are a little more open and a little more lively and little more anecdotal.

What I still do agree with about that remark is that there is something about reading the poem-on-the-page that draws you into it mentally, if it works. You kind of get on this wavelength, at least I do when I'm writing and reading, where you're just kind of drawn into an internal soliloquy, which I don't think you can do at a poetry reading.

I generally like going to poetry readings more to see what the poet is like [*laughs*] personality-wise. I sort of half follow the poems. So I guess that means I half agree with that statement, but not entirely.

FH: In the same vein, we wanted to mention your participation in PBS and the Poetry Foundation's Poetry Everywhere project, in which your poem "Chester" (read by you) is set to animation by Christopher Eystad [which can be viewed here: www.pbs.org/wgbh/poetryeverywhere/uwm/koethe.html]. Does this kind of creative collaboration offer new possibilities for the poem-on-the-page, or should it be seen as more of an inducement to read the poem as it's "meant" to be read?

JK: Well, no. I enjoyed doing it, but it wasn't really a collaboration since I had no contact with the artist. I had to read that poem six or seven times before I got it the way they liked it. But no, you know, I like those old Ron Padgett and Ted Berrigan collaborations. And there was just a review of my new book, *ROTC Kills*, in *Slate*, which was accompanied by a really marvelous drawing by an artist and poet named Bianca Stone, which I just love. But no, I'm not really a collaborative guy.

FH: Like "Chester," many of your poems are expressed through the voice and language of a learned philosopher consumed with the examined life. And yet—as described in your poem "The Proximate Shore," which states "Poems are the fruit of the evasions / Of a life spent trying to understand / The vacuum at the center of the heart"—there are poems of yours which make use of uncomplicated language and address seemingly trivial experiences . . . maybe that's not the right word "trivial" . . .

JK: Oh no, it is!

FH: Oh, well good. There are also poems with references to pop culture or the everyday and that are wistful, elegiac, and discursive—sometimes spending half a page describing a sunset from the porch. Is it merely that different content or moods occasion different voices, or are there multiple personalities alive in your poems? In everyone's poems?

JK: All of the above, though it is true, as I just said, I haven't written as many of those kind of sustained, meditative poems as I used to. I have been much more interested in anecdotal poems written in a kind of conversational style. I think starting with the title poem of "Sally's Hair," my poems have always been very concerned with time and memory, but I discovered a certain pleasure in writing poems that are just straight memory poems, and in which a "trivial,"

as you say, really trivial incident is brought back to you in a kind of Proustian, involuntary kind of recollection. Then you just write it without editorializing or dwelling on any significance it might have, which is usually nil. And the conceptual interest is not in the incident itself, but in the feeling of a vast gap in time between the remembered incident and the time you're reading it. I tend to think it's a way of recreating the feeling of time passing, which in some sense is my major subject.

Though, yes, my poems have become less meditative. And I've always loved pop culture; I love poems about movies and music. It took me a while . . . I think it has been in the last 10, maybe even 15 or 20 years, but it took me a while to develop a style that would accommodate those things that I was always drawn to anyway.

FH: In what ways does your knowledge and training in philosophy seep into your poetry? While working do you allow them to commingle, or does a good fence between them make them good neighbors?

JK: I've always tried to keep them separate. I don't think of philosophy as a semi-poetic enterprise the way many people do. I'm retired now, but when I was working, I was a very strict, analytic philosopher—which a lot of people dislike, but is the real glory of philosophy.

And no, I never tried to mingle them. I would tend to work at them at different times, for a half a year at each to keep them separate, though, when I was in graduate school and college, I would do them all the time, but the way I began to work at them made it necessary to relegate them to different seasons. So, until recently, I never wrote poems that I felt as philosophical, though some critics would describe me as a philosophical poet. Though I never thought I did or was or am. I have a poem called "Moore's Paradox," which starts off: "I don't like poems about philosophy."

FH: In an e-mail exchange we had, you mentioned that cities are almost like characters in your books. In fact, you wrote, "I realized at one point that *Ninety-fifth Street* is a book about cities." What space do cities occupy in your poetry? How do they function?

JK: I love cities. I wrote a third of *Ninety-fifth Street* while I was living in Berlin, so that city is present. There are also poems about Milwaukee, Lagos, Cincinnati, and the title poem is about New York.

Apart from cities themselves, places are rather important to me. As I've said for a long time and still to some extent now, my poetry

is somewhat abstract, and I find tying it to places is a good way of bringing it down to earth. I've always liked poems that are kind of meditative or explorations that start out in particular places. And often those places are cities. So that's one reason.

The other is, as I've said, I've gotten more into these memory poems. The memories are often triggered by cities because I'm basically a city guy.

FH: Are there any up-and-coming poets that you are especially intrigued with, find technically innovative or exciting?

JK: Well, that's one thing that I regret. As I get older, I'm lazier, and I don't stay up on things as much as I wish I did. I see individual poems that I like. But I haven't immersed myself as much as I wish I would have in some younger poet's work.

There are poets who I have just come to know who I find very exciting. Susan Wheeler, who, though hardly young, is not as well known as she should be. I think she's a terrifically exciting poet. She's at Princeton, and when I was teaching there a couple of years ago, I got to know Michael Dickman, whose work I also enjoy. But, you know, that's one thing I regret: I just don't read as many young poets as I should.

FH: Well, as you said, with the proliferation of MFA programs and journals like ours, it's impossible to keep up.

JK: That's right [*laughs*]. Who would know?

FH: Are there any new aspects of poetry being explored in your just-released book, *ROTC Kills*?

JK: Despite the title, it's not a political book. Well, it is somewhat political, though the title poem is not about ROTC at all. It's about posters. There is another companion piece to that poem called "Eggheads," which is more political and centered on the 1950s. But it's not a particularly political book, though I do think it's a memory book, but it's a bit broader, and . . . I hate the word "accessible," but I think it's funnier than my other books, perhaps more reader friendly, though it's also obsessed with mortality.

The other thing is that I've always avoided writing poems that might be, at least to my mind, explicitly philosophical. But in this book I did write three extended prose meditations, which do have quite a bit of philosophy in them. I don't exactly know why I did that. I think one reason is I hadn't written many prose meditations. I did part of one in *Ninety-fifth Street*.

Another thing is that there are some themes in philosophy I want to say something about—I find them on the tip of my tongue—but I can't figure out a way to translate them into real philosophical prose. So I just thought, "Well, why don't I just riff on them," and so I wrote a poem called "Like Gods," and I liked it. A year later I decided to write two more. So there are these three extended philosophical prose . . . I hesitate to call them prose poems because I hate the connotations of that phrase—it conjures gauzy surrealism and enigmatic stuff, but I found that they structured the book well, which isn't broken up into sections, so it has more unity to it than many poetry books.

So those are the two main differences. It's a little funnier and, well, maybe more anecdotal would be the term rather than accessible. And there are some actual pieces of semi-philosophical writing in them.

CONTRIBUTORS

KIMBERLY ADAMS has studied at Cornell University, Vassar College, and the University of Bologna. She is currently completing a master's degree in English at Brown University. She blogs at www.alternateprojects.tumblr.com.

CHRISTOPHER JOHN ADAMSON was born near the foothills of Salt Lake City, Utah. He currently lives and writes in Nashville, Tennessee, where he is an MFA student at Vanderbilt University and the poetry editor for the *Nashville Review*. A former student of the undergraduate poetry program at Northwestern University, Adamson is poetically preoccupied with rendering the intersections of myth, the wild, and the sacred. His awards include an Academy of American Poets prize and a scholarship from the New York State Summer Writers Institute. His poems have appeared or are forthcoming in *491 Magazine*, *CICADA*, *Town Creek Poetry*, and *Grey Sparrow Journal*.

EMILY ALLEN is a doctoral candidate at the University of North Texas, specializing in creative writing/poetry. Her work has been featured in the *Xavier Review* and *Poetry Quarterly* and is forthcoming in the *Southern Poetry Anthology: Louisiana*. Last year she was nominated for inclusion in the *Best New Poets Anthology*. In addition to writing, she is a dedicated composition and literature teacher and an ESL tutor. Her primary interests are in nineteenth- and early twentieth-century poetry, contemporary poetry, and creative writing pedagogy.

CONOR BRACKEN loves dogs and hails from Richmond, Virginia, though, since he left Virginia Tech in 2009 with a bachelor's in English, he's called various other places home, too. Born in Massachusetts but raised alternately in different states or close to an embassy base, he grew attached to abstractions and words because they always fit in his luggage, and he started writing them down at age 17. Sporadically published, frequently mobile and rarely angry, Bracken enjoys reading and traveling.

NIKIA CHANEY holds an MFA from Antioch University, Los Angeles (2009). She is currently enrolled in California State University, San Bernardino, for an MFA in Poetry. Chaney teaches creative writing workshops at San Bernardino Valley Community College, poetry classes for children and adults, and literacy classes

for Pathways From Boys to Men, a nonprofit community-based organization. Chaney is the founder of *shuf*, an online literary magazine that publishes experimental poetry. Chaney's poetry has been chosen by Nikki Giovanni as the winner of the 2012 Enizagam Poetry Award. Of her poem "the fish," Giovanni writes, "What power this poem has with showing the difficulty of growing up with a terrible secret. What a powerful song this friend sings for a friend drowning in if not evil, then certainly, difficulty." Chaney's poetry has been published in *Portland Review*, *Saranac Review*, 491, *Pearl*, *Sugar House Review*, and *Badlands*, among others. Chaney is currently working on a book of poems, "thump" and two chapbooks, as well as a photography book about her experiences as an American Muslim. She will spend this summer in Pittsburg at Cave Canem, an organization dedicated to African American poets. She lives with her children and husband in Rialto, CA.

GREGORY EMILIO is an MFA student in poetry at the University of California, Riverside. He is currently working on a collection of poetry that explores interpersonal relationships, ekphrasis, and translation.

ELIZABETH BIDWELL GOETZ is pursuing a doctoral degree in English at the City University of New York, Graduate Center, where she utilizes a sociological approach to study American modernism. She teaches composition at Hunter College and Borough of Manhattan Community College. She has published fiction in the *Hypocrite Reader*, a travelogue in the *Great Lakes Reader*, and arts criticism in the *Chicago Maroon*.

KATIE GRIP is California-born artist currently residing in Los Angeles County where she is an MFA candidate at Claremont Graduate University. She dislikes the idea of having to wake up in the morning, but remedies this curious predicament by daydreaming, painting, playing with herself, and enjoying a fair amount of red wine—each activity fueling and folding in on the others until distinguishing between them becomes much like attempting to untangle a jewelry box full of tiny faux gold chains.

JULIE KANTOR is an MFA candidate in poetry at Columbia University where she received a Stanley Kunitz Fellowship in poetry and is currently a teaching fellow in Columbia's Undergraduate Writing Program. She is a poetry reader for the *Boston Review* and has poetry forthcoming in *A Public Space*. She lives in Brooklyn, New York, and plays in the band Cycles.

LB LONG is from Clover, South Carolina (born in 1987); ze earned a BA in English from Winthrop University (2009), an MA in Rhetoric and Composition from the University of Georgia (2011), and is working on a PhD in Rhetoric and Composition at the University of South Carolina. Hir areas of research revolve around protest, specifically the music, visual arts, and action of various progressive movements. Long currently lives in Columbia, South Carolina with oodles of cats.

DL MATTILA is completing a master of arts in writing with a concentration in poetry at Johns Hopkins University. Her forthcoming and former publication credits include *Blast Furnace*, the *Maier Museum of Art 2011 Ekphrastic Poetry Page*, *Poets Against War* (CA), *Shot Glass Journal*, *Symmetry Pebbles* (UK), *Verse Land*, the *Applicant* (Nepal), and the *Washington Post*.

DEVON J. MOORE grew up in Buffalo, New York, worked as a high school English teacher in the Bronx for four years, and currently lives in Syracuse, New York, where he is completing his MFA in Creative Writing at Syracuse University. He has two poems in *Stone Canoe*.

VICTOR ARNOLDO PEREZ is currently an MFA student in poetry at California State University, Fresno where he previously received his BA in English literature. His recent work explores family history, via a collection of old photographs and narratives. He enjoys his small townhouse near Fresno State, where he can be caught driving his prized 1964 Dodge Dart GT. He has had the pleasure of studying with great poets and performers such as Lee Herrick, Corrine Hales, Tim Skeen, Taylor Mali, Violet Juno, and Jack McCarthy. He looks forward to publishing his first collection of poetry after graduation.

SUSANA XUXA RODRIGUEZ is a PhD student in the department of English Studies at Illinois State University. She organizes and curates *Word Bombing*, a seasonal prose, poetry, and performance series in Normal, Illinois where performers follow closely on the heels of the performer before them to blur the lines between performance and audience, individual and group, beginning and end. Her publications include “Researching, or How I Fell in Love with Post-Its” (Fall 2011) and “Reading Visual Texts: A Bullet For Your Arsenal” (Fall 2010, reprinted Spring 2012) in the *Grassroots Writing Research Journal*, the primary text for ISU’s Writing Program general– education courses, and “Deadly Fun: Jouissance and Carnival in Alice in Wonderland and Peter Pan” (Spring 2010) in *Polyglossia*, Sigma Tau Delta’s English Studies journal at ISU. Her first book chapter, “Boy-Girls and Girl-Beasts: The Gender

Paradox in C.S. Lewis's *Chronicles of Narnia*," will be published this November in Michelle Ann Abate and Lance Weldy's edited collection, *C.S. Lewis: The Chronicles of Narnia* (New Casebooks). She lives and writes in the Midwest.

FORREST ROTH is an English PhD candidate in creative writing at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette. His novella *Line and Pause* is available from BlazeVOX Books. "Apology" is taken from a manuscript in progress, with excerpts having appeared previously in *Caketrain*, *elimae*, *MudLuscious*, *Pinstripe Fedora*, and elsewhere. Links can be found at: www.forrestroth.blogspot.com.

CAITLIN SCARANO is originally from southern Virginia but now lives in interior Alaska, where she is a poet in the University of Alaska Fairbanks' MFA program.

NANCY SIMPSON-YOUNGER is a PhD student at University of Wisconsin-Madison, whose interests include early modern gender, rhetoric, lyric poetry, and practices of sleep. Her creative writing picks up and explores many of these themes, and she is currently working on a chapbook about parenting. Her work has appeared in *Red Fez*, and is forthcoming in *Victorian Violet Press* and *Red River Review*.

FOOT

a journal of poetry

HILL



Directed by students at Claremont Graduate University, *Foothill: a journal of poetry* is a biannual print and online poetry journal that features the work of emerging poets enrolled in graduate programs across the United States. To listen to some of the poets performing their work, visit www.cgu.edu/foothill.

