



# The Sandstar Review

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# The Sandstar Review

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## **A Replica of Venice**

In a garage off West Fortieth  
Burke has built a full-scale replica  
of Venice, complete with canals,  
glories of St. Mark's, the campaniles,  
mysteries of the Doge's Palace,  
Bridge of Sighs, Arsenal, churches  
of gilt and mosaic. On this set  
Burke films himself as detective  
solving crimes in Venetian byways  
whose narrow streets end at canals  
where carcasses bob on greasy slick.

With a federal small-business loan  
Burke has hired a troupe of actors  
to live in the ancient palazzi  
and faux-murder each other with grace  
and aplomb. He tries to peddle  
his series to networks, but no one  
believes he's rebuilt Venice  
not quite a mile west of Midtown.

As they watch the tapes the eyes  
of executives glaze with daydreams  
of the actual Venice. They're sure  
Burke has filmed his series there.  
They won't buy his product until  
he confesses that he's tricked them  
and hired real Italian actors  
at far less than union scale.

Meanwhile Burke can't pay the rent,  
so the owner of the garage  
evicts Venice and the actors.  
He hauls St. Mark's and the Palace

to the dump in the Meadowlands  
where the great Penn Station repines.  
The canals pour into the Hudson,  
leaving scum on the concrete floor.  
Burke retires to a single room  
in Chelsea and sighs greater sighs  
than the Doges ever inspired.

His detective's unable to solve  
the mystery of his great ambition,  
unable to follow the draining  
of his Grand Canal, the crumbling  
of thousands of mosaics, toppling  
of two great campaniles, and most  
poignantly the renaming  
of famous antique palazzos  
after the many crooked mayors  
true New Yorkers always love.

**dissolving**

this is the place  
where roads  
bleed into rivers

fragments of our journeys  
drift like leaves

briefly dance  
with thread-legged  
water spiders

relics  
flaunting brightness

soon devoured

bone and flower  
tangle  
meld their burdens

all that the river craves  
seeps from our skins



## Antoinette Forstall

### At a Tender Age

They had covered the path in palm leaves before me.  
And I rode with my legs swung over the side of an ass.

We were sitting with our backs to the wall, searching through the city skyline for the occasional medical helicopter. Skaters swarmed in circles around ramps and dips, and kids sat with their legs hanging off the wall, their feet kicking the air.

This isn't my story to tell.

She signified that I was the one with a kiss on my cheek.

We smoked cigarettes as the night fell upon us, pinning itself on the skyscrapers.

We had driven in circles for hours, and we had been lost, and we'd been found by a field. We wanted it to find us again, but it was too distant and its beauty was so immaculate. I was almost afraid to see it again; next time, the sky wouldn't be painted in gray and lavender, or there would be a corpse of a cat.

They bound my hands and led me away to my final earthly judgment.

We walked around the park, and we thought that You Are Beautiful.

We crossed under a bridge and we thought, You Are Not Beautiful Because You Chose Not To Be. We thought it

would be nice if you were to open your eyes, and see that this is not true. But your mother made you go to sleep so early. And you did not have anywhere to go anyways.

I will rise from the dead in three days.

I have filled the shoes of those girls before me, those who wrote on the bathroom walls and stayed with their wings shut all of the time. I have a list of songs that you must sing before my funeral, and I want to be burnt on a pyre so my ashes can mingle with the air and the dove wings and I can make my way to heaven. Never bury me. I will just sink straight into hell.

Although, I dreamt about floating into the ocean on fog, in a carved boat filled with smoldering logs and luscious lilies and roses.

I will crack the temple into halves.  
My father really isn't that powerful. He's like me.

The world is making a strange, horrifying noise. I am worried that it could collapse any day now.

I am constantly tired. I fall asleep everywhere I shouldn't, under tables and in class and propped on uncomfortable restaurant chairs. I don't mind that much. It's everyone else who is worried and offended.

I wish we lived in Europe, because there no one minds if you smoke or drink or pretty much do anything else, and you never have to show anyone your I.D. I know it seems like a ridiculous reason to be in love with a continent, but hell, people have been in love with a lot stranger things.

I guess it's impossible for me to get things done in a p8ntraul.

I don't remember saying that last sentence that was ascribed to my dozing brain. Every day, at this time, my eyelids are as heavy as my heart.

I don't want to defile myself with ink and writing and fake colors splashed in the most narcissistic way.

I would never ask myself to be around you so often; there is too much transfer of my blood onto your hands.

Changed from bread and wine into flesh and blood, she died a virgin, drowning in her own anointment at birth.

There will be stars and flickers of warm light and dripping wax, and I will serve you thick and creamy elixir that will slide into your essence and make you a more understanding person, and we will be enchained by smoke together and together we shall venture forth into flowers and thorns, and I will tell you their Latin names.

I will sing to you and you will sing to me, we have promised each other, and I will find time in the back of my closet and under the loose floorboard in my bedroom. I will wrap it all up and present to you little by little, and I will try not to be the storminess which you try to avoid. And after months and years of counting the hours and the times of writing and spilling paint, we will be.

My mother and my father taught me how to say please and thank you, and I would fall over a branch and scrape my palm, and you would wash it, and kiss it, and we would both cry when we saw my blood. I don't know why, but I knew that I would understand and so would the world someday. I remember all of my childhood, but I do not feel like it belonged to me. I feel like it belonged to a different person who chose a different path at the age of eight. And I felt at peace for that person, and I kept my load firmly on my back, splinters digging through my robe and into my shoulders, sweat and blood streaming down my body, leaving a trail on the path behind me.

My mother wore a beautiful crown of roses, pink as the morning sky, as fresh and round as her smiling eyes. But under the modest glory, thorns dug into her head, her scalp bleeding, and she would watch her children run by her feet, and she would smile at her husband, and she would live a life that would be prayed to forever.

She would have never been confined to curl under the mass of her life, desperate for a way to escape into the darkness. And here I am, her daughter-son, forever afraid of death and fear and people's eyes turning mean, with stones in their hands.

And here I am, able to run free, past the decisions in my life. I watch every decision in my life, and I watch all of the faces morph, and I keep circling back to the eighth year of my feet treading on the dusty roads of Jerusalem, and the final year of my head floating with my ambitions in the blackened desert sky.

We were moving from one city to another with the rest of the Jews. If you'd like to hear the more detailed, adult perspective of the story, there are wiser men who have written

a more elegant tale. That is not my purpose. I was a child, with the knowledge that my blood was to be spilled sleeping in my bed and treading on my shadow. And my parents went in two separate herds of people, and I watched the men, then the women leave. My feet would not take me with them, though my heart panged for my father's hands and my mother's lap. I walked to the temple. I walked through the quiet rows of clay houses, making a procession in the center of the street. And in front of the temple, I found a group of children, sitting quite abandoned on the bottom step. We saw each other, each for what the other truly was. They had a leader, a girl who stood, and bowed, and asked to lead me to the sanctuary. I smiled at her, sad for her pain. I followed her up the marble stairs, and I looked back at the children. I stopped, I could not forget about my own. I went down and touched each where their hearts were.

"You were blind and now you see," I whispered.

Then I ran back to the girl, almost afraid of their glowing faces. She took my hand and guided me through gardens, empty rooms, and then to the sanctuary. She stopped by the door, and I took her shoulders. She had golden brown eyes and mahogany hair, and she saw into my crown of thorns and the fluttering heart.

She couldn't say anything without me already knowing it, so she kissed my lips gently.

I went into the sanctuary and was blinded by the golden light, so alien to the human world.

I woke up at some early hour and I did not know where I was. I rolled over in my bed and turned my light on. My dog started and looked up at me. I sat up, looking into the mirror that was my armoire across from my bed, and I saw my own

exhausted face. I fell back into my pillow, and slept, not to dream any more that night.

But you know that is a lie. That was not a dream. And that cannot be the proper ending of this story. This tale feels too mythical.

**Monster**

Hear that? A low wailing? Like a tornado of meat flies? I must have signed my name in the wrong place or acquired the wrong kind of expertise. As I drive into town, the glass eye soaks overnight in a glass of wine. No one among my so-called friends volunteers to save me. There used to be a rule, Monstrous face, monstrous soul. The crow furiously pecking at something red in the road ignores it.

Kenneth Gurney

**Twelve to Fourteen Years**

I do not understand why so many people  
are more concerned about eternity  
than driving within the speed limit.  
It probably has something to do with October  
and the celebration of Halloween  
which seems to have lost its hallow-ness.  
Since I enjoy a good conspiracy theory,  
I prefer the idea that it is the fault  
of the parakeet union striking for a longer life.  
Anything that can drop a feather to waft  
so elegantly, almost silent, upon currents of air  
should be around a few years longer.



## **Tabulation**

Unable to love you  
the way you want to be loved  
I do all the household chores  
and stagnate in indecision  
for a few days that add up to three,  
then I slide my time worn hands  
around the door knob  
and turn it counterclockwise  
to remove myself  
from this troubled silence you prefer  
and trust there is a sun  
above this November grey wash  
that cannot decide  
if it is snow or if it is rain.

**killing habits**

*breathe in*

killing yourself slowly but darling, you smell like a poem.  
there is tobacco under your skin, smelling like a home away  
from home.  
cold feet, rain here yesterday, cooled everything off, made it  
easier to breathe.  
you smoke menthol because you miss basil and that is the  
saddest part of all.  
tonight you inhale and lose yourself in one burn or another,  
warm glass under your fingers  
thumb on a lighter and you are getting better at this, might be  
good one day,  
recognizing the stutter slow stop of your thoughts, becoming  
one in the present moment  
faster than yoga can bring you there, but your bones still ache.  
people are here, other smokers, they are better. this is their  
habit, you are just  
visiting. you are looking for a new habit, because poetry is not  
good enough,  
because it takes up the time but you also breathe it sleep it  
drink it eat it it is not a habit  
poetry is homeostasis. it is equilibrium. your feet are cold  
because it rained and you  
are laughing at a conversation you are a part of and it has been  
a while, a long while  
since you laughed and meant it. this is their habit and you  
probably won't pick it up,  
but it was nice to try.  
*breathe out*

**Midnight on the Youkali Express**

This train stands still as the world goes by—a blur of lights & speeding darkness, the earth beneath us rumbling and rolling. The shrill whistle gets a cold finger from chimneys jutting out of half-shuttered houses in the distance.

From the opposite side of the aisle (somewhere in the collective stop-start stupor) I nod by mistake and you smile.  
Small talk reveals your preference for riding backward, recklessly toward the future, and my irrational fear of the slowly disappearing past—a need to face ahead.

A passenger staggers by, hesitating between us like a breath-held pause, defining a moment.

This train drones on under sinew and sleeplessness. Sitting together now, coffee thermos and whiskey flask keep us company, raising questions about the scar on your throat and my crooked jaw—until a burst

of lightning, a beat of thunder, an x-ray flash on black glass: glittering runnels spread to enfold us in the sensation of being far from departure and destination.

This train cries out between breathless

mountains, chanting fountains and frozen  
churches, lunging back and lurching along  
the final widening grin of track.

Thermos and flask emptied  
of every drop, the shimmering  
sky and the conductor calls the stop  
as we stretch out the last  
leg of a journey just beginning.

## **Crossing**

Sailboats and swans and pure  
white clouds big as lawns

as we cross the Youkali.  
There is an ocean between us.

Slow ferry ride, water  
mirroring the sky, a glassy calm

that must belie the absence  
beating in our hearts.

What is lost cannot be regained:  
ripples sever the lake

leaving brilliant scars of light.  
Seagulls soaring in mid-air,

their freedom merely mockery  
as we cross the Youkali.

Corey Mesler

**Evenfall**

At dusk I took my pad  
onto the porch and  
tried to wrestle the crimson  
sky into six lines. I  
give up now. I have lost faith  
in the opaque, charcoal line.

**When she's born**

In the womb of this treacherous terrain  
dreams take seed  
unfed, are born disfigured  
uncared, grow stunted  
before the sun bloodies the distant horizon,  
the eve of their first shedding;  
they lie violated.  
Humiliation flows hot down the thighs  
that have not yet returned from  
sprightly chase after butterflies.





Nathanael O'Reilly

**Bayou**

Gliding through the bayou  
Between the bald cypress trees  
Draped with Spanish moss  
In an aluminum canoe,  
I press your tiny shoulders  
Between my knees, take  
Comfort in your firm grip  
On my calves, convince  
Myself you are old enough  
To sit still and stay safe.  
I point out dragonflies,  
Duck blinds, lily pads,  
Egrets, herons and catfish.  
You sit silently, head swiveling  
And eyes roving, ingesting  
The new environment.  
We scan the banks for alligators,  
Listen for slithers and splashes,  
Hoping for a little fright  
Before returning to the familiar.

## Sunday Drive

On the day we moved  
Out of the house where  
You were conceived,  
We checked in to a hotel  
And washed away the stench  
Of moving. Then I strapped  
You into your car seat  
And took you for a Sunday drive.

You fell asleep one minute out  
Of the parking lot, as planned,  
But I drove for over an hour,  
Covered thirty-three miles  
Of northern Calhoun County  
And briefly traversed southern  
Eaton County. Free from  
The demands of teaching,  
Packing and moving, I relaxed  
And explored. We drove down

Roads named Fourteen Mile,  
W Drive North, Nineteen-  
And-a-half Mile and Old 27,  
Through Bellevue Village,  
Walton and Lee Townships,  
Across both I-94 and I-69,  
Past two-storey brick farmhouses  
Beside red wooden barns,  
Past open fields sown with corn  
And soy beans, through dense

Forest, hundreds of acres  
Of swampland, by secluded  
Luxury homes nestled on wooded

Acreage and four-room shacks  
Surrounded by rusty trucks  
And tractors. On Eighteen Mile  
A fawn meandered across  
Six feet in front of us  
From her forest haven  
To a narrow roadside creek.

On Nineteen Mile we passed  
An unexpected field of lambs.  
Capital letters spelt TROLLS  
On a roadside mailbox.  
We drove through Olivet  
College, where Ford Maddox  
Ford improbably taught amidst  
Ivy-covered Anglophile architecture  
And a lone brother sat with a beer  
On his frat house porch.

As summer rain played  
A tattoo on the windshield,  
We drove down narrow roads  
With trees embracing overhead,  
Forming glistening tunnels  
Of foliage. As we parked  
In front of our hotel room  
And you awoke, I wondered  
Why it took four years to discover  
The beauty of my own backyard.

**Ice Skating Dindi**

In my fantasy I'm skating  
on a frozen Michigan lake,  
stars peppery as a Perez Prado

mambo. A gorgeous woman  
or man, why quibble,  
sidles up. We're beautiful.

We're handsome. You ask  
will I marry you.  
You'll have to be a man,

at least for now, or  
we can skate to Vermont.  
I awaken each night just

when you slip  
the ring on my finger. Warm  
bologna on the counter

I forgot to put away. Summer.  
A rink forms  
on a firefly's wing

from love and diapers. Decades,  
an icy sidewalk under  
a high heel.

## **Opulent Dindi**

In my dream I'm stinking  
rich and stinking drunk.  
I wake up poor and sober.

Do trees dream? Holding sky  
in thickening branches, they  
may not need to. I doubt

I'd work out as wealthy—  
spend, spend, spend, and  
end up possessions

reduced at resale shops and  
garage sales. I treasure tips,  
my paycheck, when I have one,

flimsy. Like most lovers,  
gone before I have it  
around very long.

**“Weights”—Family Therapy Session**

*Baba*, me, and our white psychotherapist:  
the crazy Freudian mambo jumbo American crap.  
Therapy was for the weak, the crazies—  
like me, *Baba*, right?

But you were the crazy one that day.  
You sat stoic as a stone,  
never acknowledging my existence,  
never validating my pain.

“Cultural miscommunication” is all you’d say.  
American crazies like psychotherapists twisting the truth to  
twist your pockets....  
right *Baba*?  
No, wrong again.

“You need to validate your daughter’s feelings,”  
my therapist said.  
But you didn’t validate me or my pain.  
Didn’t validate the weights your father dumped on me at age  
eight  
when he’d twirl my hair, kiss my lips, and call me his *asal*—  
“ENOUGH,” you screamed.

“Now is the time to take your daughter’s weights,”  
my therapist said,  
holding two five-pound weights.

You didn’t take my weights, *Baba*.  
You never have—  
you stormed out of the room,  
leaving me there to shoulder the weights...  
hoping I would do so in reverence to our family.

In reverence and in silence,  
I carry these weights for you, Baba.

**(Notes on) A Small Flat Town**

Outskirts  
Trimmed in dead corn

Snow shaken from  
The pelt of a passing storm

Brick husks of the hardware store  
The beauty school  
The collectible shoppe that sold  
Pearl-oysters in cans  
And antique postcards

Sorrows raging  
Out of the heart's cellar  
When the neighbor girl came out  
To hoe black rows  
Newly recovered

Old men in denim coats  
Drinking in the park  
Like crows—filthy! loud!—  
Squandering  
Their arguments as the starry resources of  
Winter tricked into splendor

Houses  
Knotted  
Under cottonwoods  
Out of danger



**A game of hide and seek**

Her last chip, this London hospital,  
the underground burrowing back through time  
to emerge in elegant Bloomsbury, where quaint  
signposts, polite as old fashioned policemen,  
told her way to the square with its railed garden.  
The building was grand as a Victorian railway  
hotel but stepping through doors that parted  
with a swish, she time travelled onto the bridge  
of the Starship Enterprise. Having given the  
slip somewhere in Kent to hospital records  
that bulged like a stalker's scrapbook, she bore  
only a hastily scribbled note from her GP,  
so sat before this consultant, with the medical  
history of a new born. Seeing him nod after  
her responses was like ticking off the numbers  
in the lottery draw. A flourish of his fountain  
pen and she found herself entombed in an  
MRI machine. When his lines of enquiry were  
foiled by her tight-lipped body, *I think we'll  
keep an eye on you*, knowing that some diseases  
like to play a game of hide and seek. So writing  
essays in the waiting room gave way to marking  
year 7 homework as check ups routinely reassured  
her, *I don't think there's anything to worry about*.  
So for years she didn't.

## Bedside Manners

A morning's treasure hunt around London to distract her;  
peering in the overdressed windows of the drag queen shop

at slippers fit for Brobdingnag Cinderellas. In the hospital  
waiting room he found a copy of 'The Lady' magazine

whilst she shielded her eyes against the young woman with  
double sticks tottering towards the consulting room like a  
toddler

taking her first steps. *Well it's not what you want to hear but it's  
good news from our point of view.* 10 years of baffled shrugs

and suddenly during a check-up that was more of a courtesy, a  
medic thought he saw something out of the corner of his eye.

In her head the soundtrack to a disaster movie as she pulled  
out  
the list of questions from her bag. But each *we don't know*

revealed the specialist to be as ignorant of her condition as an  
18<sup>th</sup>  
century sawbones. Her final ask like turning and facing the  
monster

chasing her, *Will I end up in a wheelchair?* The doctors smirked,  
*Oh I rather think you are overegging the pudding there,* as  
unintelligible to

her as Latin. In the pub nearest the hospital he gabbled  
between gulps  
of red wine about stem cell technology, whilst she downed a  
large

gin and tonic then pulled out her notebook to examine  
forensically  
the doctor's words but finding only a few tight-lipped phrases:

*unknown disease, no treatment*, she grimly began to tell her  
own fortune.

**The Yard**

A pig's knucklebone stripped to the marrow  
is thrown to the dog. A snarl of matted fur,  
wet from the constant metal rain.  
Its muzzle-caged head resists the weather of men.  
Lamely it turns the soil red bone and sniffs the air.  
In the chained up doorway  
a carcass hangs like a veiled threat,  
curing in the flies buzzing heat,  
dripping sequins of fat,  
as it pirouettes and swings.  
On this ground, this field, this yard,  
a butcher's leather apron  
lies in oil and mud.  
The scars of steel and hoof  
etched in the steam of slaughter.  
In the bins, shining balloons of intestines overflow,  
finding split and folded skin,  
livid green and pink their drum,  
and all the while the grey rain spits and arcs  
flowing down the gutter's rusted line.

Persephoneae Velasquez

**truth**

*truth exists only in the south*  
you said, embers firing as you inhaled.  
Raw sienna clouds against a navy sky, your smoke  
gray pinwheels. Each leaf in your  
cigarette moaned and crisped. I laughed.  
*what kind of truth is this?*  
You exhaled through your nostrils, kneeled  
and left a streak of tobacco, charred and dried,  
on the pavement.  
*only she knows. and she ain't sayin'.*

**Musing on Cézanne's Mont Sainte-Victoire Series: 1885,  
1886, 1900**

*“A work of art which did not begin in emotion is not art.”  
—Paul Cézanne*

The outlines of my mother's eyes  
curve smoothly, blended mountain gray,  
pine and shadowed snow.  
Her skin is the color of sunrise  
on Mont Sainte-Victoire, both darkened  
and sun-facing, her arms tanned  
from pruning her garden. Faint lines sprawl  
from her forehead to her fingertips, smudged  
by state lines and sleeveless pastels.

Her heart sighed for the dog on death row  
and she brought him home that day, moved  
books from the shelves to protect them  
even as the rockers on the chair her mother bought  
when I was born were gnawed into spear-points.  
She rocked me in her lap every night and I  
breathed in that day's perfume mixed with nicotine,  
tickled by the hair she'd slather with cream  
to straighten.

My mother's skin is the forest-edge,  
river and aqueduct—her body traced  
with black lines, tree-frog green,  
stargazer lily and hyacinth, dotted  
with studs and loops she keeps in an old tea tin.

She is the hum of cicadas and rooster calls,  
drifting leaves in fall and she is  
the girl who caught rattlers  
in coffee cans, who sees truth

in both hanged men and cat's eyes, and  
people don't stop to listen.

**The Poet Must Write About His Plane Ride to Iowa City**

the view from a mile  
above the—  
AMERICAN  
MIDWEST:  
the earth's surface  
was not engineered to cushion  
the egos of the fifty-something  
writerly types  
quarantined to the front of the aircraft  
“one's soul is concrete,  
cradled in the belly.  
a fanny pack for my  
metaphysical existence”  
someone says over the asscrack of  
a leather-bound, appropriately frayed  
journal. twelve dollars and  
fifty cents, tax not  
included. twelve-fifty can buy you  
a lot. twelve-fifty can buy  
two weeks' worth of soy beans at the least  
soy beans contain estrogen. estrogen causes the same feelings  
of being female that being female causes.

See:

I am not profound.  
My only observation is  
that the ground is planted with soybeans  
and not nose-down airplanes  
broken at the wings and bleeding  
out burning poets from the rips in its steel,  
while they scream:  
THE HUMAN CONDITION IS FLAMMABLE.

This is what I am afraid of:



all of the part-time poets in  
the world  
get on a plane to Iowa.  
It doesn't crash and I am  
bored to death.

William Winfield Wright

**a natural history of your back**

it starts with fish  
the long prehistory of fins

followed by the slow climb up the beach  
the time of tails and then trees

a million years of hair  
100,000 years of sunburn

10,000 years of clothes  
and now the everyday marks

of freckles and injuries  
the stiff shoulders and familiar mole

small curve and arch  
you are not as supple

as when there was water  
but you can carry more things

lovers children groceries books  
all this

what doesn't get revisited  
in the 15 minutes it takes to scrub you?

## **clocks mean go to bed**

your hair means it's windy  
jewelry that you have ears and wrists

taking so long in the shower means  
come in here before the water runs out

walls are for hands  
spoons are for contemplation

our clothes are designed  
to lie on the floor and absorb sound

we move from awareness to application  
wood/paper eggs/cake arm/fingers

we get our sea legs back  
walking on the couch cushions

our bearings by pointing  
your nose at the sun

I spill the salt on purpose  
scratch my nose when I hear your car

box my ears so they ring  
and then stare at the phone

clocks mean go to bed  
where we'll tell the time by counting your breaths

## Contributors

**William Doreski's** work has appeared in various online and print journals and several collections, most recently *Waiting for the Angel* (Pygmy Forest Press, 2009).

**Eva Eliav** grew up in Toronto, Canada and now lives in Israel. Her poetry and short fiction have been published in a number of literary magazines, including *Room of One's Own*, *Natural Bridge*, *Stand*, *Flashquake*, *Quality Women's Fiction*, *The Apple Valley Review*, *Horizon Review*, *The Linnet's Wings* and *ARC Israel*. She received an honorable mention in the Glimmertrain Winter 2011 Very Short Story Competition. She is married and has a daughter.

**Antoinette Forstall** stole a wasp from its nest and cradled him for years. Now they're both grown up, writing at the stroke of midnight, crawling under the Alabama sun. The wasp has grown so huge, he promises to carry Antoinette away one day.

**Howie Good**, a journalism professor at SUNY New Paltz, is the author of the full-length poetry collections *Lovesick* (Press Americana, 2009), *Heart With a Dirty Windshield* (BeWrite Books, 2010), and *Everything Reminds Me of Me* (Desperanto, 2011).

**Kenneth Gurney** lives in Albuquerque, NM, where he edits *Adobe Walls*, an anthology of New Mexico's poetry.

**Danielle Hurd**. Alabama School of Fine Arts graduate. Current student at the University of Alabama. Fantasy writer. Woefully fond of confessional poetry, even it's a bit self-centered.

**Steven Mayoff** is a full-time writer living on Prince Edward Island, Canada. His fiction and poetry have appeared in magazines across Canada and the US, as well as in Ireland,

Algeria and France. His collection of prose, *Fatted Calf Blues*, won a 2010 PEI Book Award.

**Corey Mesler** has published in numerous journals and anthologies. He has published four novels, *Talk: A Novel in Dialogue* (2002), *We Are Billion-Year-Old Carbon* (2006), *The Ballad of the Two Tom Mores* (2010) and *Following Richard Brautigan* (2010); 2 full length poetry collections, *Some Identity Problems* (2008) and *Before the Great Troubling* (2010); and 2 books of short stories, *Listen: 29 Short Conversations* (2009) and *Notes toward the Story and Other Stories* (2010). He has also published a dozen chapbooks of both poetry and prose.

**Ananya Mishra** is a student of English at the English and Foreign Languages University, India.

**Rodney Nelson's** work began appearing in mainstream journals long ago; he then turned to fiction and did not write a poem for twenty-two years, restarting in the 2000s.

**Nathanael O'Reilly** was born in Warrnambool and raised in Ballarat, Brisbane and Shepparton. He now resides in Texas. His poetry has been published in journals and anthologies around the world, including *Antipodes*, *LiNQ*, *Blackmail Press*, *Harvest*, *Transnational Literature*, and elsewhere. He is the author of the chapbook *Symptoms of Homesickness* (Picaro Press, 2010) and a recipient of an Emerging Writers Grant from the Literature Board of the Australia Council.

**Kenneth Pobo** has a new chapbook out from Thunderclap Press called *Closer Walks*. His work appears in: *Hawaii Review*, *Nimrod*, *Stickman Review*, *2River View*, and elsewhere.

**Roxanne Rashedi** received her Master of Arts in English with High Honors from Georgetown University in 2011 and her Bachelor of Arts in English with High Honors from the University of California Berkeley in 2009. She has presented excerpts of her thesis, *Deconstructing the Erotic: A Feminist*

*Exploration of Bodies & Voice* Lucille Clifton, Audre Lorde, Nella Larson, & Toni Morrison, at numerous conferences, most recently the *Negation & Negativity* conference, and an excerpt from the same thesis was published in the Spring 2011 issue of *Predicate: An English Studies Annual*. Roxanne lives in San Jose, California where she teaches yoga and English composition. She is currently working on a collection of short stories with the working title *Saffron Lips*.

**Eric Rawson's** work has previously appeared in *Agni*, *Ploughshares*, *American Poetry Review*, *Crazyhorse*, *Iowa Review*, and other periodicals. His book *The Hummingbird Hour* was published in November.

**Fiona Sinclair's** work has been published in numerous reputable magazines. Her second collection will be published by Indigo Dreams Press late this year. She is the editor of the online poetry magazine *Message in a Bottle*.

**Mark Stopforth** is currently Head of Art in a school in Gloucestershire and as an artist has exhibited at The Royal West of England Academy, Bristol. As a poet he has been published by Leeds University Press, *Sentinel Magazine* and *Writer's Forum*, and has won *Fleeting Magazine's* "short writing of the year 2010."

**Persephonea Velasquez** is a second-year English student at Cornell College who enjoys cooking, container gardening and cat naps.

**Nicola Walls** comes from Alabama with a banjo on her knee. A recent graduate of the Alabama School of Fine Arts' creative writing department, she served as co-editor-in-chief of *Cadence*. Her work has been recognized by such national writing competitions as Columbia College of Chicago's Young Authors Fiction Contest and YoungArts. In the fall, she will be a student in the Blount honors program at the University of Alabama.

**William Winfield Wright** is a Fulbright Scholar and a Fishtrap Fellow. He was born in California, and currently lives in Grand Junction, Colorado, where he teaches at Mesa State College. He has been published in *The Beloit Poetry Journal*, *Borderlands: Texas Poetry Review*, *Field*, *The Ninth Letter*, *The Seattle Review*, *The South Carolina Review*, *Third Coast*, and elsewhere.

## Artist

**Blake Taylor** is a recent graduate from the Alabama School of Fine Arts, where she majored in visual arts. She plans to continue her education at Syracuse University in New York. A caffeine addict, she spends sleepless nights playing the flute and sketching in her notebook.

## Editors

**Tyler Pratt** has been recognized both for his poetry and his nonfiction by national writing competitions such as YoungArts and the Columbia College Chicago Young Authors nonfiction contest. He was the recipient of the Sena Jeter Naslund Scholarship for excellence in three genres, awarded by the Alabama Writers' Forum, and his work has appeared in *Right Hand Pointing*. After graduating in May from the Alabama School of Fine Arts, he will be attending New College of Florida in the fall.

**Lin Wang's** work has been nationally recognized by YoungArts and Scholastic; she recently took 1<sup>st</sup> in Gannon University's poetry contest. Her work has appeared in literary magazines such as *inscape* and *Cadence*. She dreams best in June and writes best in October. She will be attending the University of Alabama in the fall.