

Longsword

Spring 2016

Painting Ourselves into Corners

Scott Thomas Outlar ([Chaos Songs](#))

Nietzsche said
that the poets lie too much.

I'd elaborate on the subject
if I weren't already in too deep.

Cured

Cleveland Wall
(originally appeared at [Roguescholars.com](#))

Shoes are strung
on the telephone wire
outside the skate shop
like crutches at Lourdes,
as if their owners had been cured
of perambulation forever
and ever more would roll along
friction-free and bootless.

Fragments

Heidi Renee Mason ([Journey in a Fragmented Life](#))

Today I stumbled upon
Scattered fragments of myself;
Pieces I discarded long ago,
Picking up instead
The things that others expected;
I found my innocent smile
That in time was replaced
With a guarded gaze;
I discovered my trusting nature,
Diminished by life-weary cynicism;
I found my belief in fairy tales,
Crushed by the reality of betrayal;
I gathered the pieces
And put them in my pocket,
Determined to reconcile them
With the woman I've become.

Dromomania

Cleveland Wall

(originally appeared in *Möbius Poetry Magazine*.)

The sufferer was prone to wander
far from home, having forgotten
who he was.

He might find himself months later
in Prague or Moscow living another life
with no recollection of traveling there.

Did he dream his real identity
while sleeping? And while awake
was he even aware of his forgetting?

The syndrome was specific to France
in the Belle Epoque,
before true modernity.

How can anyone now get lost
with cameras everywhere, or walk
unimpeded across boundaries?

Wide awake dreaming is no foreign state.
Those afflicted roamed like somnambulists
and the landscape would not say them
nay.

He Kissed Maggie In Paris Texas

Saira Viola

Zebra skin and jelly heels
It's a curve and swerve fit silhouette dress
her eyes like buttered raisins hold the
promise of something new
someone warm with a chess intellect
His move king to rook one
Her move knight to knight six
Above the fried dirt and Jesus statue
Cross salvation in cowboy boots
he placed his open mouth hot and sweet
on cherry red naked heat
Tongue slide taking him high,
high into Janis Joplin skies.

haiku moon sequence

P.J. Reed

night time once more and
lonely moon asks for a friend
my bed lies empty

moon hangs low tonight
she glows with silent beauty
the stars are hiding

the night is growling
roars wildly through my window
even the moon hides

Holden turns 25

Rebel Waste

The carousel whirls,
 The carousel twirls
Like a barber shop's candy cane sign.
It plays the same song year after year

Not that I would remember the song;
I still remember reaching for the rings
And the world spinning-

As a child I remember
Climbing, on this giant Red Flyer wagon,
 As big as the world-
Sliding down the slide, in the sun and the
rain-

Now each thought I write;
Each word I leave behind,
Is a note explaining to the spinning world
Why I am leaving-

 Yet this tiny world,
 She tells me to shut up,
 And remains mad at me;

Til I lead her to the carousel:
 Riding the horses and dragons
 And an elephant pulling a sleigh-
 All with skin like

Life-like

 Carnival paint.

Chipping after years of spinning;
Showing that character is hidden under the
bright colors slapped on to attract
attention.

Now its dilapidation is beautiful
Even with all the vulgarity carved into the
poles
With pens and knives-

Sometimes I sit on a bench, in the rain
Watching the world spin on
 Hoping I don't disappear, after all
my skin peels off-

Sometimes I stand
And allow the world, to take me by the
hand-

Sometimes, I run counter to the spin,
Dodging the blur of oncoming days
Like they are memories I want to forget-

And sometimes, I sprint ahead of the
revolving mirrors and stationary lights
 With the burning friction of a record
needle!

 After the monotonous carousel
song is turned up to 33 1/3

 When it's suggested to be played
on 45-

Each has their time
Til I see that what is before me-
Is that which has passed before.
And life becomes a simple ride
 Of childlike wonder-
Of wisdom sought, through experiences.

Slattern

Cleveland Wall

(originally appeared in *Schuylkill Valley Journal*)

My friend's husband recently figured out
that she cleans when she is angry—
a unnerving discovery, given that
their house is unfailingly spotless.
If she were a violent person, he'd be dead
now
several times over. Bludgeoned.

I, too, clean when I'm angry,
but my house is a mess. Not that I lack
for suppressed rage, only it takes
such an awful lot of it
to offset my native sloth.

I am a bad housekeeper. I feel it
keenly when I visit my friend's gleaming
home
and still more keenly when she visits mine
and I try but mercifully fail
to see my wretched dwelling through her
eyes.

There are levels of cleanliness to which
I am frankly oblivious.
The proof of this is
that I have bought and worn second-hand
shoes.

By this sign is the slattern known
and denied the Seal of Approval
so freely given to her squeamish sisters.
For there is something irredeemably
slattern
in the wearing of second-hand shoes.

Funny word, *slattern*, only for women—
a word that weds untidiness
to immorality, and yes, poor housekeeping
to unhygienic footwear. It is all of a piece,
cleanliness being next to godliness and
vice
versa. I suspect I am not angry enough,

which may mean I have not sacrificed
enough.

If, like my friend, I had earned
a doctoral degree first, fallen farther,
I might have the requisite fury
to obliterate all this dust and clutter.

As it is, I never finished my undergrad
studies,
sensing a trap at the end of the chute
even beyond the death that all
completions are.
I have a horror of completion, which
should
suit me well to the task. If ever I began
cleaning,
I'm sure I'd never leave off.

You are not Goliath

Rebel Waste

David came to slay me
but then exclaimed perplexed,
"You are neither tyrant
nor a giant-
You are not Goliath."

My child grown,
looked upon me,
in bewilderment, and wonder,
"You are not the beheaded fable of my
youth-
You are not Goliath."

The gods rode upon the storm
As the thunder rolled on past,
"You reject Dagon correctly
To become the gods,
Greater even than wood and stone
And you are more alive,
Than the murky myths in stream beds,
For you fashion yourselves
Out of knowledge and fire;
That which can be both
good and evil.
And you are not so self-deceived and
useless
As to be decapitated by your own sword-
You are not Goliath."

As I walked along a grassy knoll
I heard a voice ring out,
"You are not the head followed by a
hoarded sea of footprints
Your feet stand alone; alongside no one.
For to be the leading strides upon the
sands
You must first prove, your depth of worth
Without the use of deception or violence-
You are not Goliath."

A medusa came upon me
in an alleyway
and cried,
"You are not the frozen memories that
bring terror to my dreams!
You are not Goliath!"

Love turned to me and said,
a-flush with beauty and pride,
"Against my sirens' iron bars
you would press your face against,
imprisoned.
I am just too captivating
to be your conquest-
your slave-
You are not Goliath."

("You are not Goliath", cont.)

Justice removed her blindfold
and dropped the scales from her right
hand,
to then raise her sword,
too heavy for her left.
She then looked past me
into a mirror and said,
"You are too insurmountable
to be brought to your knees by smooth
and simple skipping stones-
You are not Goliath."

At the birth of my child
I heard a voice in my head,
amidst the chaos in the room,
"You are the reason that I am not you.
You are not a philistine,
You are not a warrior or a king-
You are not Goliath."

I heard my mind speaking to me
Beyond my beliefs and dreams,
"You are not a deadly conclusion
You are not the fear of free peoples!
You breathe beyond the past and future
Even after your lungs and bones have
returned to dust.
You do not believe in the slavery of free
will;

Debilitating free peoples through the
excising of unwanted tongues.
You believe in nothing
but the will to speak and to be free-
You are not Goliath."

In the empty space between every word,
In every color combination,
In the silence between every note;
Between the longest tension and the
shortest relaxation,
There exists the truth of creation,
"You are not the mighty swing of your
sword.
You are severed limbs,
lacerations and broken bones.
And you are not your bellowing battle cry
You are the fear and passions of war-
You are not Goliath."

You are not the villain
the world claims to know.

Girl Unmade

P. J. Reed

Strangers face smiled;
Eyeshadow, metallic blue
Blinked and gazed;
Scented candles cowered,
Lavender run
Through the air.
As under icy breaths:
Tiny flames flickered.
Face in mirror faded.
Hidden under frosted mists,
It leered at her.
She stood reviled,
In waterfalls of pain.
Metallic tears fell
From dissolving face,
False eyelashes,
Flew away,
As rouged cheeks
Gurgled down the drain,
But still she kept,
On washing.
Then slowly,
Taps turned westwards,
Water ebbed away,
And the empty
Mirror Stared.

The Passage

Scott Thomas Outlar (Chaos Songs)

There is no finer moment in a day
than that when the wine,
halfway through the first bottle,
begins to bring the ease, the calm,
the lucidity into the blood.
A cool fire
flows through the synapses,
sparking neuron pathways
to open wide, to flare, to burst
into creative fury, into wild
abandon, into glorious affirmation.

The great Yes to life -
in all its horror,
in all its sorrow,
in all its suffering,
in all its pain,
in all its crisis,
in all its murder,
in all its rape,
in all its violence,
in all its filth,
in all its shit.
Undenied, taken full on,
a shot to the heart,
to the head, to heaven, to hell,
wherever, whenever, however,
for whatever reason.
Buy the ticket,
take the ride,
meet you on
the other side.

touched once

Shane Rexford Starling

flow never ends
each other us
 astral dipped not sand blown in dead
bleu
seas

cute wrung roses cut wrong
 flung
 fugitives pricked in the nite
anything plucked
other than love even
 when unlove is not loving hot
 living moments
touched once
 dessicated by time's fade
tendencies & moontide lit up tripping
the hot-wired chaos of totally everything...

who knows what holds or
why?
 who can say
in the tide of sense&sensuality
passion's levée never breaks dipping all
 we are in the miraculous river toe
 or head
puncturing our coin flip

encasing our learning
giving these yelp-hurled souls the crisp
quantum earth
stealing moments in flame
in the everyday step-yip
 twitch-lounge-beat-shake-trip
slake

this sweet solar chanson...
who knows what holds?
 what gives
when hands unite
or bodies bleed
mouths taste
 another, time
 that godless dance
 blows crimson free
forever

A Membrane of Glass

Todd Krewal

A glass membrane vibrates our
BODY & LIFE with amplification...
A Squeeze by the Doppler Technician
issues random frequencies...
My grey clay shaped brain formed into a
snowball>>is Tossed>>Leptons & Alfa
waves reverberate my negative weight****
Merciless portions of time control my
equilibrium~~~~
Clay Brain Ballbot??
Will it be tossed at you?

Longsword

is a quarterly poetry review, published by Longsword Press of Davenport, Iowa. Poets in this issue include:

Scott Thomas Outlar lives and writes in the suburbs outside of Atlanta, Georgia. [Chaos Songs](#) (Longsword Press, 2016) is his third collection of poetry. He is a Best of the Net nominee whose words have appeared in hundreds of print and/or online publications, both in the United States and internationally.

Heidi Renee Mason is a passionate novelist who enjoys writing character-driven stories. A lover of words, she also writes poetry. [Journey In A Fragmented Life](#) (Longsword Press, 2016) is her first poetry work. Heidi is a member of Romance Writers of America, International Thriller Writers, and Willamette Writers. A native of the Midwest, Heidi now resides in the Pacific Northwest with her husband and three daughters.

Cleveland Wall is a poet, editor, and mail artist from Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, land of crows and freight trains. She has performed her poetry at venues all over the Lehigh Valley and on both coasts. Her work has appeared recently in *Poetry24*, *Transcendent Visions*, *Full of Crow*, and the *Lehigh Valley Vanguard*, where she was resident poet for fall 2014 and 2015. She makes tiny chapbooks and occasionally hosts poetry readings.

Saira Viola is a critically acclaimed poet, author, song lyricist, satirist and creator of innovative lit technique self-labeled "sonic scatterscript". She enjoys a hit of Basquait with her tea and can often be found on the sunny side of a cherry whipped waffle. On occasion she has had astral convos with Man Ray and Baudelaire.

P.J. Reed is a writer and poet from England. She has published one collection of dark romantic and Gothic horror poetry entitled *The Wicked Come*. Her first haiku collection, *Haiku Nation*, is a collection of powerful modern haiku which challenges the reader to seek out and see the world afresh. Her latest haiku work entitled, *Frozen Haiku* is a thought-provoking collection of imaginative, visually stunning haiku.

Rebel Waste is a poet and bar stool philosopher from Bellingham, Washington, somewhat active within the poetry community of the Pacific Northwest. To explain his work imagine a broken hourglass that, each and every hour, spills out some of its sand onto the floor. The mind is a floor; the page is a floor. The origin of the verb "spill" comes from the Old English word "spillan", defined: kill, destroy, waste, shed (blood). This word, despite its archaic form represents Rebel's desire for his work; what he tries to do when writing.

Shane Starling left Australia in 1999 and lives in Montpellier, France, where he writes journalism & other things when he's not pouring jeroboams of fine Languedocienne red wine down his neck. Or cycling the Cevennes.

Todd Krewal was born into this world with his perspective slightly askew. His life was influenced by his father, John, who was a musician, comedian and draftsman. He could rarely focus on one topic, a natural multitasker. Todd has dedicated himself to the power of writing since he was 13. He continues to express himself in a marginal fashion at 59 years old, writing in Racine, WI.

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