

THE HITCHHIT REVIEW



SECULAR SPECIAL: WOMEN'S VOICES

THE
HITCHLIT REVIEW



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Contents

Poetry

Jenny Yang Cropp

- 6 Beatitudes for the Girl
- 9 The Drugs We Take

Kimberly Sousa

- 15 Flood warning
- 16 I am learning not to bite out of astonishment
- 17 You are still in prison, and I am still outside

Jess Turner

- 18 Sappho's Grave Part I
- 19 (De)composition in Seawater or Sappho's Grave Part II
- 20 Sappho as Necklace

Christina Seymour

- 22 Inferiority: An Underwater Dance of Lights
- 23 Watercolor Fox, Patience
- 25 all the salt swelling of the sea laughed aloud

Sarah Brown Weitzman

- 26 Laundries For Magdalenes

Non-Fiction

Holly Jean Richard

- 32 Fever

Visual Artwork

Lindsey Cherek

- 35 Ally Lee Steinfeld, 17
- 36 A Womyn With Power Is Feared
- 37 Power
- 38 Magik womyn
- 39 Assigned Male

- 40 Contributors

“The cure for poverty has a name, in fact: it’s called the **EMPOWERMENT of WOMEN**. If you give them some control over the rate at which they reproduce, take them off the animal cycle of reproduction to which some religious doctrine condemns them, and then if you throw in a handful of seeds or access to credit, the floor of everything in that village—not just poverty, but health and education—will rise.”

-- Christopher Hitchens

Poetry

Beatitudes for the Gurl

Jenny Yang Crop

Blessed are the sick days, the fevers that spike, chills and aches, skin on fire and feet like blocks of cement at the ocean's bottom. These are easy. These make sense. For so long, we feel sick inside with nothing to show for it but the years and jobs that make us want to vomit in the face of each morning, but we don't. We hold it down. Or we do. And then we swish and spit and go on our way. But what is that beyond a mild discomfort when weighed against the commandments? *Be not lazy or stupid. Be not dirty or ugly or low. Be not lost. Be not ungrateful. Be not sad for reasons no one is willing to name. Be not tired*, unless there is a virus giving us permission to succumb, to lay ourselves down and dream.



Blessed are the jobs we quit. The ones where we call people and talk them out of their money, or walk up to people and talk them out of their money, or do the paperwork and answer the phones for someone who talks people out of their money, or stuff hundreds of bags per day with loaves of bread and twist the ties by hand until our fingers blister and bleed to save the corporation a little bit of money.



Blessed are the dreams. Blessed are the ones filled with ghosts, those that died and those that left. The one where we lose control of the car, and as it speeds from the top of a steep hill, our bodies lift from the seat and then follow it down. We are queasy. Gravity somehow the same in a dream as in real life, until it's not. Until we're swimming through the sky, floating on the outside of the scene. There we are, looking through the glass at our dead sister sleeping in the backseat. That's how we know that it is a dream. That's how we are justified in staying.



Blessed are the nightmares, too. Even if it's the one about the lost lover who kills us, a stab or a bullet but never through the heart, always in the gut, a slow bleed. Even when it's the one where our dead friend has stolen our money and our car and we are shouting and people are shrugging and it all feels too real. Or when it's the one where we have taken too many pills and we are hooked to tubes that pump us full of charcoal which is more a memory than a dream except for the part where we feel lonely in that hospital bed and keep picking up the phone to call someone but can't get any of the numbers right. Because they belong to us.



Blessed are the ones who leave us. First the mother not made for mothering. And then the father who sees in us his worst self. We came out crying, he says. We came out crying, and we never stopped. Next, the brother trapped beneath the weight of a name. Then the sisters, with their own girls and their own ghosts, because they too have found themselves in this kingdom. Blessed are we who know this, who grow to love the leaving, friends and lovers, houses and cities, dreams and demons. Until we are hungry for the pain of it, each day's goodbye to the minutes and strangers, until we are tolerant. Until we are immune.



Blessed are the ones who stay. They are the reason we do not run screaming when people say we make our own families. We know this a lie. We know we do not make them. Unless by that we mean that we spend our lives trying to fill in the holes or bridge the lonely gaps with other odd-shaped pegs or boards-too-short because we see in them a kindred pain. We do not make them. And they do not make us. Though by our mutual staying, we are all forgiven.



Blessed, too, is the pain. Not because it will make us whole or pure. Not because it's beautiful or human. Not because we might say, *Look at our pain. See how we are worthy of love.* That is the lie that begins with our father's hands around our necks and ends with our hands around our own necks. No good end. But the pain itself, when it speaks, will teach us to listen, and our listening will teach us that love is the star-shaped hole into which we cram our heart-shaped heads.



Blessed are the ways in which we get it all wrong. Maybe that is human. Maybe that is beautiful. And though there may be no such thing as pure, we might gather our mistakes to us and make of them something whole.

The Drugs We Take¹

Jenny Yang Cropp

1. Two Hits Lysergic Acid Diethylamide on SweetTarts

This book needs to be studied all the way thru to get its best value. I fall asleep reading and wake in a changing room. These shoes are of a pair. A pair of pairs. *Put them in mind.* Two women to wear them, two skirts long enough to hide them, one skirt pink and one skirt teal, out of the back room marching. They keep their legs warm in hidden pants. *Speak no evil of men.* They are unsatisfied. We are looking for new shoes. *From this I receive my thought. Remember, O man!!!* After I fail the math test, I say, “I am the teacher. This is what I do.” The saleswoman glares. Nothing fits in this thrift store except the pieces I stretch. She glares, and I touch the edges of a goddess top shaped from a dull 70s rainbow knit. If I put it on, a man might put his hands on me. *It was man’s despicable way that moved God’s kindness.* If a man places his hand just so on my back, fingers splayed between the shoulder blades and pressing firmly, it is a warning. *Deeds of darkness must have darkness. Deeds of light must have light.* Time’s up. Pencils down.

¹ Italicized portions of this poem are lines taken from the sermon notes of my grandfather, Rev. W. C. Cropp, an Assemblies of God minister.

2. The Psilocybin We Forgot in the Back of the Freezer

Vow is a promise. We know exactly where the walls should be. That is not the same as knowing exactly where the walls are. They fall away. No, they move, they tick by and return. *Idle words.* There are three women between us. You, in the mirror. You look a little like me. Mute with unmoving parts. This is who replaced me? *Have you not said, Deliver me and I'll serve you. Deliver me and I'll use my talent for you. Fill me and I'll witness.* The other two, their faces turn and turn and turn away. Hard to pin down. Hard to catch. This door is a flat black rectangle. A bag lies open and empty at my feet. Far away, the school bells are ringing. *A broken vow is a sin,* says the mirror. *If you will keep my word I will do thus and so for you.*

3. Oxytocin of Our Own Making

Endure: to continue unchanged. A girl I could fall in love with comes to see me. I tell her about the dream I had where I learned a new way to wind a watch. It takes leverage, like opening a bottle of wine. Channel all that kinetic energy, and it will go and go and go. There are two rosy bottles in the fridge. One is open and one is not—*there must be a testing and a proving before acceptance.* We drink both bottles. And then we stand in the shower with our clothes on and sing a song we know by heart. *There must be a refining process to purify,* and we are so good at naming our impurities. When the notes come creaking and broken from our throats, we talk of running away. How easy it would be to step out now, to dry off and leave this place. How easy to fail the test. But she is so, and I am so, and then she puts a hand on my chest and presses until all of time is wound between us and released in a kiss. *When you are tempted and endure you are proving your love.* Yes. We agree. And we would burn in hell for this. We would gladly for this.

4. One Pill of What We Hope Will Be 3,4-methylenedioxy-methamphetamine But Turns Out to Be Mostly Caffeine

When I am not in front of the mirror, I can't recall the shape of my own body. My skin is a restless dream only half remembered at waking and then gone. *When one turns away from the mirror and its teachings, where shall he go or to whom shall we go? Shall we go to the arms plant? Shall we go to the scientist? Shall we go to the medical field? Shall we go to the economist? Shall we go to the pleasure spots?* When sleep comes, I dream I am in school again. The assignment is to write six pages on the bread of life. My six are written on thin brittle slices of white bread I baked myself. The mirror says it was a failure to achieve, a poorly risen loaf. She holds hers up, rough-hewn and whole, crusted and thick. Effortless.

5. Risperdal, Divalproex Sodium, and Trazadone

If they ask you to say on a scale of 1 to 10 how much you hurt today, what they mean is, *What are your chances of survival?* Because there is only so much pain we can hold before we beg to be strapped down for our own good. And how do I sleep? I move away from my body in methodical spirals as the soft blue walls exhale. I look for all the doors. *Consider the present scientific features, plans, and modes of escape.* I collect matches and gas cans and rag dolls. *The thinking of man is self-preservation, but the pattern is and seemingly must be fight fire with fire.* Count all the ways we break. Count all the ways we burn and bleed. *Poison to kill poison. An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.* Then I return to the dark of my room, watch the walls recede, afraid to sleep and be seen. *What are the destroying forces?* A pill. Another and another. A white-cold tub. A mother asleep on the couch, a father whispering to his shadow. *Man's ingenious mind coupled with hate and jealousy, and the latter are devils; real, genuine devils out of hell.* And when finally it all falls away, the dreams. Say you believe in heaven and hell, and they will let you walk out of here. Say you believe you deserve better, and they will scribble their notes and feed you their pills.

6. What We Hope Is MDMA, and Then It Is, So We Take Too Much of It

Because I cannot stand the sound of my own voice, I write letters to the girl in the mirror. In them, I tell her I love her. I tell her that tonight we will touch. Just this once. Because my brain is flooded with dopamine which is my brain erasing itself so all that is left is a body. *Peculiar to all the letters written is this one thing. They show us the good we may possess and yet be on the whole evil in the sight of.* Which is why I can only love myself from a distance. I can only write in the language of lies. But tonight, I move as if lost in the city that made me. I forget everything. The streets are washed clean, and the signs are painted over. I am barefoot, and the sun has set. The moon. She, too, is mute. *The moon shines as it reflects the rays of the sun or you could not see the moon at all.* Which means I am the mirror. Which means I am just a trick of light.

Flood warning

Kimberly Sousa

It's always raining: sometimes, there's a comfort in this.
Some personal myth
I draw from—that I was born in a thunderstorm.
That I was born at all.
This, some prayer card or candle.
Some small miracle I've already tapped.
I am hardening with hunger. I hold it in my hand
like something saintly.
Part of rib. Piece of foreskin. Some shrouded
proof of life. Relic-self—never reliquary.
I don't walk barefoot, but I did, for a time.
My father and I, more alike than he knows. I would light
a candle at the altar of his barefoot childhood:
what is the prayer for immigrant fathers?
Why does my own poverty cut him so deeply?
I bleed from my ribs, too.
My life is staring at the blood-less stone.
Earlier, I let the shower run over me on the floor of the tub.
How to suture self to body?
What is the stitch? How big is the needle?
I navel-gaze: too-hot water and skin red as hurt.
Once, the umbilical cord was everything I needed.
I was submerged and felt fine.
Felt nothing at all.
Water-barrier. Water-womb. Link to the spirit world.
What whispers did I swallow there?

I am learning not to bite out of
astonishment
Kimberly Sousa

*Written in part from the Jan. 29, 2016 Jezebel article,
"Female Shark in Seoul Aquarium Eats Male Shark
Because He Kept Bumping into Her."*

I listen to your open-mouthed sleep, the trumpet
in your smoker's chest. You are mine, and you aren't.
You call me *my girl, my shorty, my honey, babe.*
Your kids' mom calls me, *that bitch.*
Earlier, you read me a text:
*I hope you're happy at that bitch's house
since we out here getting played lmfao.*
I chew on my lips
until they're sidewalk-cracked and bloody,
smoke cigarette after cigarette.
I swallow my words like I swallow sleep—
with peeling cuticles and an arrhythmic heart.
There is something soft inside me spilling out;
I do the job of tightening the lid.

I use gravity to fall, without fins for balance. I simply cannot stop.

If the shark that ate her mate in South Korea could tell it,
she wasn't astonished or territorial. She only swam
tighter circles around her mate. He: an electric current,
a drop of blood in one million drops of water.

A shark can only swim forward;
though, she would say, *it's more like flying.*

You are still in prison, and I am still
outside

Kimberly Sousa

*Written in part after listening to This American Life episode
597: One Last Thing Before I Go.*

Tonight, I'm thinking about how the wind feels like it's trying to tell me something, and if I could only sit still long enough, it might. And how this is too sentimental to fit into a poem, so I don't know what to do with it, except think about that phone booth in Japan where you can talk to the dead or the lost and tell them not to worry. And listen to the wind and only the wind—or maybe not only the wind—on the other side. And which one of us is lost, anyway? Behind a cell curtain, you ink a prison tattoo proof of life. Each pen nib dipped into your skin is a step toward higher ground. Everything is the sucking sound of water rushing from the shore. There is no wind for you there, I know. And I'm tired of speaking in metaphor. Or maybe I need this indirectness, the opposite of hard time.

I don't mean to appropriate pain; so many are lost in tsunamis. But all I feel is loss
and not indirectly—in a way that feels so much like drowning.
And it's not the same loss,
but it is the same wind. The same siren. Even the same water.

And I say again and again, to you, to myself, to the wave:
be found soon

Sappho's Grave Part I

Jess Turner

If I could visit, find your bones
somewhere in Greece or Sicily,
I'd offer a real funeral:
 peel chickpeas,
 sing birdsongs,
 spill a handful of the sea.

Gripping fingers into soil,
I'd try to reach you.
As if to say, *I've been listening.*
Someone is still here.

Should I read your words aloud
or would the fragments
sound like a severed dirge
rather than a eulogy?

I want to do right.
Pour tenderness into your mouth
like a peach.
Give something sincere:
 a pit at the center,
stone clasped with what is sweet.

(De)composition in Seawater or Sappho's
Grave Part II

Jess Turner

I imagine you in the ocean.
Petals of song float up from your throat,
each melody lending
 to the movement of water.

I see you tumbling with the currents.
Sunlight finds you
 & makes amber of your arms.

Eventually, you come apart.
Piece by piece, the sea licks you
 into its belly
& you're never cold, Sappho.
Not once.

Sappho as Necklace

Jess Turner

Historians pluck her words
like grapes. Chew thoroughly.
Brunch conversations about the symbolism
of violets. *How curious.*
The men twiddle their thumbs.

Consider Pope Gregory—
burns her work like he's branding
an animal,
 roped,
 wrestled to the ground,
 legs tied together.
Hot iron melts skin, melts breath,
melts ink from the page.
Another man threatened
by what a woman's hands can do.

Her name is Sappho

or, according to Athenian Comedy,
“oversexed,”
or according to the Hellenistic period,
“homoerotic.”

Centuries take bites.

She began as honeycrisp, rotted
into sodden, skinless fruit. Each year,
someone new claiming her as a species
not yet discovered, calling out from the field,
Would you look at how this one fucks?

///

Tell me was Sappho exiled
to Sicily because of her love for women?

Forget the ferryman. Forget the flowers.
I want to know if she suffered.
When she called a woman's throat "soft"
was it only a daydream?
Was Sappho ever allowed
to be the necklace, the woven garland
wrapped around the pulse of her lover?

Inferiority: An Underwater Dance of Lights

Christina Seymour

Evening spring, white petals turning under—
I want to believe that I feel perfectly safe
on a dark street by the man shouting at his son.
Gracie scrapes at the ground, ignorant, as I yank her forward.

Similar is the sound of a car hovering close behind,
the way a star-filled dusk turns into a moment to escape,
to grip the pepper spray or keys and push ahead.

Later, I force an empty soda bottle under bath water,
feel bubbles float up, over my legs, like a piece of wheat
dragged across the back of the neck. Suds shift
on the surface: the sound of a skirt pulled over nylons.

I feel like a film negative, black and white reverse of the original,
a lady bug turned to shell, a lake turned to smoke.
I wish I had a god to tell me *sit still* or *know your worth*,

but I settle for the maternal hare in my imagination, eyelashes
blinking approval—or the real heron with silver feathers
who makes peace with the risk of fishing in the city dam,
startles and billows out at the first clatter of a train.

Watercolor Fox, Patience

Christina Seymour

after Fire Spirit by Luqman Reza Mulyono

The one orange room
is because of the sunrise,
just as I am *because*.

Answers fall short of the gray
swirls of the painted fox,
just as this speech is as silent

as sitting near an evening fir,
watching wood flake to wind.
We want always for the warmth

to make sense of distance:
quiet night against croaking animals,
your way of changing subjects.

Family prefers me cushioned by snow,
drawing wings rather than
no, not yet, no. When I cup

a golden puddle of broken ice
by a muddy river with gloved hands,
it is a steadiness like being held.

Muses can grow from gravel
in the coldest air of the season.
There is no *dust to dust*.

There is no sleight of hand.

all the salt swelling of the sea laughed
aloud

Christina Seymour

after "Hymn To Demeter," trans. Jules Cashford

My light, foam paddleboard knocks against the wooden dock, and I
fall the first time, baywater flooding my nostrils;

soft mud with fish parts and clam shells grabs my foot, and I do what
you do on water:

repeat the same motion until maybe you're out of trouble.

In the distance, brown trees of Assateague, a razor of bug-eaten
cedars, prove words for time powerless.

I hope that this version of quiet—

toes spreading sand in the wind of a wild horse's flicking tail,

the *ahm* of the park ranger when I reported the abandoned fawn by
water's edge—

cures me of that youth where I felt like I could change you by trying

or could make a creature think better of us, hordes of pastels
crowded to catch a glimpse

of eyes like mirrored worlds, of hooved feet born, unequivocally,
from earth.

Laundries For Magdalenes

Sarah Brown Weitzman

For more than two centuries in Ireland unwed
mothers,
rebellious or orphan girls were virtually enslaved their
entire lives in laundries run by convents.

Sometimes they arrive from an asylum
if they are docile and strong enough

for the work but when it is a girl from
the orphanage next door, the older girls

rush past the nuns to ask: "How old
be you?" "What be your date of birth?"

If she knows, though they rarely do,
one of us may be lifted out of this

life of longing and wondering
about the child she's never seen.

But they never know. Yet if the age
seems close to the one we hold dear

we study her hoping for some sign
of our own mother's eyes perhaps

or even his nose or mouth.
We all look the same to them

in our grey wilted smocks
as no amount of starch

can withstand the constant steam.

We frighten them with our gaunt bodies
red faces, haggard and sweaty, our hands
raw and festering from the bluing and
the caustic soaps and the scalding water
not to mention the scars from the irons.

They can see at once what the years
of drudgery have done. Expiation,
the Father calls it, for a moment of joy
a lifetime of washing away the stain.

But most of us did not have even that
moment of joy, forced by an uncle
or a grocer for credit for the family or
a piece of gristly meat from the butcher.

Here behind walls we must work
off our shame for our keep and
the child's we are never allowed
to see. The walls are too high
to look over or climb. We listen
when we hang out the laundry
for the voices of the children.
But it is always quiet over there.

Slaps and shoves from the nuns
force us back to the scrubbing
and the litanies, their responses
the only speech we are allowed

while we work O LAMB OF GOD
PRAY FOR US SINNERS

O LAMB OF GOD, O GOD
PRAY FOR US DRUDGES

We sort the huge loads of sheets
from the hospitals rank with vomit

and grimy with human wastes,
aprons encrusted with blood

from the slaughterhouse.
Over the litanies the groans

as we lift heavy piles of wet clothes
to the wringer where blind Kate

turns the heavy crank and where
Patty lost four fingers last year.

Once Maggie found a dandelion
in the dirt near the wall. Each of us

took one petal to remind her of yellow
until it finally shriveled to brown.

Last month Bridie managed to slip out
the kitchen door and run away.

They brought her back, confused
and crazed, the city had so many streets

that twist and turn and the men
called out to her and gestured obscenely.

Bridie was beaten on the soles of her feet
so she couldn't walk at all. No one is allowed

to hug or kiss here but when we carried her
nearly unconscious back to her pallet bed

Maureen held her and rocked her
though Bridie probably never knew.

Yet stand she had to the next day, whimpering
over the steaming tubs while we lugged pails

of hot water, her eyes red from the bleach
as much as from weeping. Bridie must

have believed she was damned anyway
for her brother had raped her

most nights and the baby was born
with a club foot. So yesterday we found her.

Somehow she must have saved small scraps
of cloths and her own hair to braid into a rope

tying the end to a cloak hook
where she hung by her own weight,

thin though she was, her knees bent
only inches off the floor. She could

have stood and saved herself
at any time, instead she endured

that slow, dreadful death - a death
none of us could ever imagine copying.

The weeping that night was brief
because we are always so tired

but our dreams were more vivid.

We never dream of the sea or the blue sky

of heaven as the wash water and the
bluing has spoiled them for us.

We all dream the same dream
of deserts, dry, clean sand, a green oasis

with bright flowers and children, children
playing loudly under a dandelion sun.

Non-Fiction

Fever

Holly Jean Richard

Blood thickens, flushing my skin red-hot. I feel a wave surging to my breasts, throat, and cheeks. Sweat beads on my forehead. I breathe in slowly, trying to cool down. Filling my belly, expanding my ribcage, lifting my chest . . . “baby fever” strikes. I’m about to hold my friend’s baby for the first time. Arms outstretched, I receive the warm package swaddled tightly in the seemingly softest cotton. It coos. I coo. I vow to be the highest bidder on e-bay when this smell is bottled: spring-breeze laundry softener, baby lotion and diaper rash cream, a hint of breast milk, regurgitated. I peel back the receiving blanket and breathe in baby. My nostril-hairs grow arms and hands and fingers to fondle the smells as they pass. These smells turn to tastes and accumulate in the back of my throat. As I swallow the pooling saliva in my mouth, I feel faint, and my peripheral vision goes dark. I drink in that fleshy baby. I fall in love. I want to hold it forever.

Reluctantly, I return the baby to its mother, but the fever stays with me. What follows lasts a season. Then repeats.

The usual and acceptable cooing at strangers’ newborns, toddlers, and even preschoolers is the just the beginning. Awkward and gangly preteens become precious and desirable, so much so that the urge to hug them, hold them, rock them on my lap, overwhelms me. The sight of a child of any age raises my core temperature and sends my thoughts racing. Constant circles of perspiration linger in my shirts’ armpits. My nipples tingle. I channel some of this visceral reaction into measureable and arguably rational actions: I stock my library with books on pregnancy, the first years, tough love, love and logic, and children’s stories; I keep up on safe and popular baby products for strolling, traveling, bathing, and breastfeeding. I research names in my family’s history and claim a few by announcing them in an email to my siblings. Just to be safe, I “cc” my cousins.

The less usual and less acceptable actions shortly follow. When the fever strikes, these actions also have a tendency to repeat.

“I’m going to have his baby,” I announce over waffles at my parent’s kitchen counter. They hadn’t met him yet. Nor did they know we were dating. And we weren’t, *really*—just online. A week later, over another waffle breakfast, I state proudly, “He’s moving in with me.” Months pass. Without conception, the fever breaks. “This isn’t working anymore,” I tell him. He suggests we remain friends. My married friends confess they never liked him and didn’t understand what I saw in him. My parents profess they’re content with their grand*dog* and think his cracked paws and cocked ears are precious. I tell myself, “You’re better off single.” I remind myself, “You’ve never wanted to have children.” I redirect all of my energy into work and receive a promotion.

Then, without warning, my temperature rises again. I’m a hot, sweaty mess. My pulse quickens, and everything else seems meaningless. Baby-making thoughts invade my brain. I attempt to redirect my thoughts with new hobbies: I take up snowboarding, join a cook-book club, and adopt a cat. I avoid my friends with children to prevent triggering my body into heat. Efforts futile, I wake up in the middle of the night panicky, sticky, and google “hormones” and “motherhood” and “water birth.” I update my profile and return to serial dating, speed dating, blind dating, online dating.

Twisted. Primal. Wet. I hunt for a mate with suitable genes for propagation.

Visual Artwork

Ally Lee Steinfeld

Lindsey Cherek

Ally Lee Steinfeld, 17, Missouri. Cause of death: attempted poison, stabbed, eyes gouged, genitals mutilated & body dismembered and burned in cover up. Date of death: Unknown. Estimated September 3rd, body parts found in burn pile and discarded plastic bag on September 14th



Tempera, wax, acrylic, oil pastel, charcoal, and ink on Stonehenge paper. 42" x 67"

A Womyn With Power Is Feared
Lindsey Cherek



Tempera, wax, acrylic, graphite, charcoal, and printed media on Stonehenge paper. 42” x 60”

Power
Lindsey Cherek



Acrylic and oil on Stonehenge paper. 30" x 22"

Magik womyn
Lindsey Cherek



Oil and charcoal on board. 48" x 30"
Assigned Male

Lindsey Cherek



Oil on board. 60" x 48"

Contributors

Lindsey Cherek is an artist, currently pursuing her Bachelor of Fine Arts in Studio Art at the University of Wisconsin—Stout. Her work has most recently been featured on the *1340Art Magazine* blog.

Jenny Yang Cropp is the author of the poetry collection *String Theory* (Mongrel Empire Press), a 2016 Oklahoma Book Award finalist. Her chapbook, *Not a Bird or a Flower*, is forthcoming from *Ryga: A Journal of Provocations*. She is an Assistant Professor of English at Southeast Missouri State University.

Jenny Ferguson (this issue's guest editor) is Métis, an activist, a feminist, an auntie, and an accomplice with a PhD. She believes writing and teaching are political acts. *BORDER MARKERS*, her collection of linked flash fiction narratives, is available from NeWest Press. She lives in Haudenosaunee Territory, where she teaches at Hobart and William Smith Colleges.

Holly Jean Richard is a Ph.D. candidate in 20th Century American Literature at the University of South Dakota. After years in communications, she spent a decade instructing university writing and women's studies. Activist and artist, Richard spends her time mothering two little feminists, small-scale farming, and star-gazing with her scientist-husband.

Christina Seymour's poetry appears in the chapbook *Flowers Around Your Soft Throat* (Structo 2016), *North American Review*, *Cimarron Review*, *The Briar Cliff Review*, Wick Poetry Center's exhibit, *Speak Peace—American Voices Respond to Vietnamese Children's Paintings*, housed at the War Remnants Museum in Vietnam, and elsewhere. Seymour teaches poetry, publishing, and technical writing.

Kim Sousa was born in Goiânia, Goiás (Brazil) and raised in Austin, Texas. She currently lives in Pittsburgh with two illiterate pugs, where she reads for the Pittsburgh Poetry Review. Her work can be found or is forthcoming in *Poet Lore*, *Rogue Agent*, *Apogee*, *Blunderbuss* and elsewhere. You can find her at kdowsousa.wordpress.com.

Jess Turner has a B.F.A. in Creative Writing from Chatham University. Her poems have been published in *The Sigma Tau Delta Rectangle*, *Rogue Agent*, and *Pittsburgh Poetry Review*. Besides poetry, she has interests in food studies, hiking, music, and the French language.

Sarah Brown Weitzman, a past National Endowment for the Arts Fellow in Poetry and Pushcart prize nominee, has been published in hundreds of journals and anthologies including *ROSEBUD*, *THE NEW OHIO REVIEW*, *POET & CRITIC*, *THE NORTH AMERICAN REVIEW*, *THE BELLINGHAM REVIEW*, *RATTLE*, *MID-AMERICAN REVIEW*, *THE MacGUFFIN*, *POET LORE*, *SPILLWAY*, *MIRAMAR*, etc. A departure from poetry, her fourth book, *HERMAN AND THE ICE WITCH*, is a children's novel published by Main Street Rag.

