



Anapest

A Journal of Poetry Excellence

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Want to see your poem appear in our next issue of Anapest? Submit your work via [Submittable](#).

Anapest

Editor - in - Chief

Sara Stevneson

About Anapest:

An anapest is a “metrical foot” comprising of two short/unstressed syllables followed by one long/stressed syllable. Daily Writing Tips released an article about the 36 poetry terms everyone should know, and many of them are ones that we hear on a daily basis when we are talking about poetry. We decided that we should name our poetry journal after a term that is not often heard.

We do not expect the poets that submit their work to have a certain amount of anapest in the works they submit nor do we expect them to follow strict guidelines. We want to showcase elegance and excellence in poetry. Thus, Anapest was born. We want to be able to bring the wonderful world of poetry to people daily.

We accept poetry for Anapest all year round, and we would love to read what you have for us.



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Unconscious in the Woods

Jean Verthein

Its logs all hairy, the cabin begins
to fall. Growing furry, it riles and
harries.

Creepy, however muddy, the blocks
melt not.

Nor burn they like blocks of hairy ha-
shish.

Nor drown this home into its puddle.

And under the cover, ridged
and stitched into riddles, where once
mud glued the hairy logs together.

That they grow hairy, hairier,
as the comforter billows and
no longer cuddles the logs.

Undercover, they burst alive.

They fly to evade the boom on the river
and re-root themselves
upright, once more alive
in the woods.

Harvest Rings

Jean Verthein

Unearthed so long,
cloven too, we are told from urbanity
on a desert isle so monumental
it has razed our very sky.

So we decreed our very own rescue.
To an arbor near the sea,
healing us, time-stricken, yearning.

Under the vine
grape-laden, ripening,
sways over our being,
pouring enchantment.

Fall, flyaway,
swing we, here with muffled castanets.
Leaves, staccato in the fall.

Dogwood, green in summer, flickering
ruby
in this chalk dome day.

Crescendo, zephyrs in this dun

November.

As to a tambourine, black-white puss
prowls,
angling, skipping on the lawn
after a mite.

And we do realize that the sun

the yellow glow
and vermilion,
pours onto leaves, our fruit, and into
ourselves,
the sun a cornucopia.

While the bells of Ecclesiastes hymn
enter with praise.

We know we have seen:
how time has elasticized the
truth—

It fades, summer too,
into our long Diaspora

Fred

Gary Galsworth

Fred Henson passed over Christmas.

We went on spring break together, in his tidy green Volkswagen Beetle.

Four of us, and our gear, a cozy fit.

Toby and her boyfriend John Bowden, Fred, and me.

Down to New Orleans from Chicago, for some fun and adventure.

Spring break over fifty years ago.

Seemed a fresh, bright thing to do. Light, as in not heavy.

On reflection, it still feels that way.

Bright, light, and the leaden skies on the horizon went unrecognized.

I ate oysters for the first time. Toby too. We held out, in disgust, for a couple of days, surrounded by crowds of oyster-eaters. Tons of oysters and tides of beer.

It was the beer that broke our will. I came away loving oysters, raw with lemon and cocktail sauce—lovely. Still do.

And we had a nice time, even some serious excitement swimming in the Gulf, when the sharks swam up. Scared us near to death. Amid a frenzy of splashing to escape, fear, and heroics—John shielding Toby—the sharks magically turned to dolphins.

Fred has died, Toby will have heard. She'll be sad.

That woman was a true robust beauty in her time. It's what I still see. She's got a couple of pictures on a dressing table. *Ab, yes, there she is*—seeing them.

Now she's cheerful with a tart wit, thin and a bit unsteady. Though not as unsteady as Glen, her thinner little gentleman of a husband.

Visiting, my thought was, *These two drink a lot to live in a house with so many stairs.*

John Bowden and Toby did get married. The “love of her life,” she remarked.

Seems it didn't last. They were more successful courting. Classic, in poor art-student mode.

John may have created a drinker's life. I won't go into it. You want to know what that looks like, look around you.

So it's been a long time since I've heard of Fred, and now I have again. His neat little VW Beetle is out of this picture and he's gone west.

In between, an industrial design student, orderly, bright, and reservedly congenial, created and lived out a life.

Probably a manageable tidy one. I'm filling in the blanks with almost no info.

Fine - make it up for him.

Leave out the slander and the larceny, if there were any. Keep hia clean well-kept little VW in focus. Expand on that.

At the time I had a beat-up VW Bus, which certainly set the pace for my journey.

No matter where it broke down, which was often, I stopped, took out tools and ground cloth, and went to work till it was running again.

In bad weather (Chicago!), no joke. In winter—really? Put out the tarp, get down, get under, work it—my life.

Fred's? I'm sure he had Triple A.

He laughed, we can be sure of that. He was one of those low-key planners that persevered and had his share of socialization. A low-key but regular part of the group. He'd swim in the shallows. Me, I was more comfortable isolating, but tended to head for the deep end when I showed up.

We were all too young then to screw it up too badly. Misdemeanor-level on the evolutionary scale.

Yes, we had lots of laughs and smiles and private worries. More to enjoy than not. And the promise made it almost breathtaking.

Some laughs were light, buoyant, floating by. Others, in their joy, were also attached to our souls, pulling on it as they drifted on.

Fred had a career, a steady job, found a wife (or she him), had a child—hence some tears and fears among the laughter, the cocktails, and cigarettes.

Everyone I knew smoked, except me. I wanted to, wanted to be like them, but I'd turn green and get seasick. Spread my wings and crash-land.

I broke up asbestos-laden boilers in old factories; he worked over a drawing board, ate lunch at the appointed time, his regular tuna salad or grilled cheese sandwich.

Followed his path, much of it I would guess, he was destined to tread on, as was I on mine.

Even had an occasional oyster, perhaps in New Orleans again?

I never returned till a few years ago. Quaint, worn, tons of oysters, tides of beer.

I passed on it this time around.

It was good, Fred.

Still is.

Cycles

Isabelle Duffy

Bite your tongue my darling
as hot tears roll down your cheeks.
Remember that you are glazed by them
that the golden hue of that setting sun
will dry your tears with its soft heat
And all that has left will slowly be restored to you.

Day by day
she rises and sets,
sometimes tucked away.
The sun, always a reminder to love gently
to hold and kiss in the light while you can
as it lingers on your skin
warm with the love of the earth.

But do not mistake the moon to be scornful
for she too will cast her glow.
And although it is not the soft heat
which wraps your body in its embrace,
she will be your navigator
to pull you through the night
and light the path at your feet
when the sun's rays have become
too harsh
for your eyes.

Darling, the stars have been longing to meet you for so long now
You have let them spill out of your tear-filled eyes
gleaming with the light escaping from inside your very soul
twinkling with the insuppressible pain that you feel right now.

Look up.
You do not have to feel, it or know it,
but you are so loved
even the breeze comes to kiss you when it can.
The cold comes to tickle your cheeks rosy
and in the glimmer of the heat, you are positively radiant.
I know that it hurts.
I know you, feeling as if the essence of you
is leaking out of your soul
staring at empty faces in the mirror hoping
one won't feel so much like a mask.

But no matter who you are,
no matter who loves you,
the earth is made of cycles
And you will find your way back to yourself.

Unwanted Wishes

Isabelle Duffy

Worn hands
longing for the sweet caress
of a soul in kin with their own.
Rip from the crumbling ground
Weeds,

The nasty pests infest the rolling fields
of conformed green swaying
in harmony.
They are uprooted from their homes
outcast, to perfect, the whole
unwanted.

And yet we take these milky weeds
and bless them with our breath full of wishes
and intertwine our fingers in their laced crown.
We place dreams within their seeds and their collective
beauty upon our brows.

Beautiful things are not always wanted.
But the dandelion does not bloom because of those that tread above,
Rather from the blind soil that chose to nurture its seed.

The Illustrated Life of the Body

Christopher Kuhl

Our bodies are poems.

Some are illustrated
with tattoos: barbed wire

on the bicep; a girlfriend's name
on the wrist; Chinese

characters on the chest.
Some people ink a whole limb,

telling a secret everyone can see,
but nobody comprehends.

And then,

some are artists, recreating themselves
from scalp to sole of the foot, like a
richly colored, live pointillist painting:
no clichés here; rather a song, a story —

*My true love waits in the west, by the
headwaters of the mighty Columbia:
when the sun sets, I shall never see her again.
I weep . . .*

I weep: I am no artist.
I have three small rose tattoos and no lover:
I am not the rose, the lover —

I am the chain of thorns embedded thickly
in a rash of briars.

Machines

Andy Jones

The boy at the window refuses
to draw the river irises.
Let them draw themselves,
he says to his father.
The boy resents being attached
to a machine that is so much larger
than the other boys' machines.
In plays, on green lawns,
they are appearing.
He is disappearing.

Comets

Andy Jones

Naughty astronomers sometimes sneak their dates into the planetarium after hours,
and point out which of the Greek gods and goddesses watch us in the nude.
Look at me, one says, promising celestial explosions, for I am made of stars.
The farther one travels from the poles, the closer the poles come to one another.

Wearing noise-isolating headphones, radio astronomers are lonely,
even though all of us travel together at a thousand miles an hour.
Vast data sets whisper seductively. We are all interpenetrated by light.

The body of an astronomer
is itself an instrument.
Comets are coming.

The Keyboard

Barbara Ryder-Levinson

This is the keyboard

That opens my folder.

This is my elm

A canopy for life.

This is a coffee mug

covered with art history.

This is my monthly planner

small and flesh-colored

mostly laid out for my year to come.

This is a painted pencil

black-and-white stripes

with feathers and a kiwi in the grass of New Zealand.

This is a sound

the soft puff of my heater

cycling on and off.

This is a fat Buddha

brown and laughing

breasts resting on his belly

knapsack over his shoulder.

This is the folder

With adventure on its face

inside are the places I've been.

This is the keyboard

that opens the folder

where the adventure begins.

The First Memory of Skin

Parker Jamieson

It took awhile for my organism - asexual -
To burrow into itself and create a soul
And I listened to the syllable dissemble into air.
Reassembled in my nostril.

I was quenched by the malcontent
A singular strand -
Asexual -
She fabled me through crucible.

For the Word was Flesh.

In my first memory of skin, the breath

Of a Lilith's black hair splayed across my chest,
We laid in bed,
I read her Kunitz. I read her Abigail Williams.
We burrowed - into our first dream.

Mortician

Parker Jamieson

It's a she. Don't ruin the narrative
With predestination.

She smiles.

She has made male veterans, mangled soldiers,

look like boys. It is not Friday the 13th
When she passes by. She fights

With ferocity of a soldier:
The ferocity of human - not man, nor woman.

She fights because it's human.
She smiles because it's humane

Self-Portrait with a Box of Brownies

Yvonne Leach

I would have liked to bake
with my mother.

But there were six of us
and she had laundry to fold
groceries to buy, bills to pay
beds to change, floors to scrub
meals to make and animals to feed.

Baking was a luxury.

By the time I was old enough
to stir cookie dough, the world
capitalized further and everything
became precut, precooked
prepackaged and preprocessed.

Still, I would have loved to bake
brownies even from a box with her.

She went to work
when I was eleven
and never looked back.

Check-boxes

Max Thomas

The most horrid prison
I have ever been in
was a check-box
on a government form.

Either/or
this/that
yes/no

These extremes
strangle me
because I've embraced
my own enormity.

My body is a
garden always growing
photosynthesizing
drinking
in the sunlight
daintily
gently
like a newborn
nursing
for the very first time.

My mind
is a cave full
of glow worms
a wild grape vine
ripe for the picking
pouring out of my
mouth
like communion wine
a galaxy
full of stars you
can harvest
in your palms

a world without end
that fits in your pocket.

My heart
beats like
church bells on a
long-awaited
wedding day.

My hands are calloused,
my eyes are open.
I'm on my feet,
and I'm ready
to eat
the world.

Check-boxes
aren't built to withstand
that kind of wildness.

Check-boxes
are padded rooms
where they keep girls
for thinking for themselves.

Check-boxes
are islands for
misfit boys,
marooned by society.

Check-boxes
are gas chambers
for old souls,
 free spirits,
 and the insufferably fearless.

Check-boxes
are canvas cloths
never big enough
to cover the drum.

But we beat anyway.

Changing Clothes

Valeri Paxton-Steele

We slip into and out of each other
Like something covering
A department store mannequin.
The pieces fit the parts.
We try each other on
Caring not one whit
About fit nor color;
And we wear each other
For a few sad moments,
Knowing all the while
Each one of us has to be
Put back on the rack-
Unbought, unsold...
How frivolous of us,
Playing dress up,
Knowing we haven't any right
Trying on these garments
We will refuse to buy.

Stickline

Gannon Daniels

When we were sticklike
across the page
our five-fingered hands
like licorice crisscrossed
in solidarity
so thin we were
smiling crescent moons
flat and happy
It seemed our arms
were always opened wide
ready for anything
Our legs sketched
dark as trunks
to keep us steady

Your father's hair grew
like the grass
at the bottom of the page
and mine like melted
ice cream flowing
demurely across
one pencil-
point eye
that could never
really see
anything
The other eye
in the open;
the leaded mark
solid and stern
looked beyond
what was just
right there

Changing Clothes

Valeri Paxton-Steele

We slip into and out of each other
Like something covering
A department store mannequin.
The pieces fit the parts.
We try each other on
Caring not one whit
About fit nor color;
And we wear each other
For a few sad moments,
Knowing all the while
Each one of us has to be
Put back on the rack-
Unbought, unsold...
How frivolous of us,
Playing dress up,
Knowing we haven't any right
Trying on these garments
We will refuse to buy.

Hot Date

Paul Watsky

Wet snow avalanche, col-
lapsing the chest, or, set-

tled, cementing me into suf-
focated immobility two

feet below daylight,
a Memorial Day week-

end neocorpse formerly
confident his blistered

face was the worst
nature might do to this

sweltering XC no-
vice and his sexy

coach half clambered
up the ungroomed, rotten

postseason Shasta Ski
Bowl, rivulets atrickle in-

side the suncupped
snowpack. I knew too

little for cowardice. She
thought me brave.

Fire-side

Valerie Griggs

The fluid moon lies on the night
and fills my mouth with silver

that spills down my chin
and drowns my vain jangling.

The fire paints a tale of light
with ancient dyes and bristles

and illuminates
the incongruities of my heart.

On Being Asked When to Kiss on A First Date

Richard Brostoff

I say you can't plan it.

I say walk her home, pause on the walkway before you get to the door.

I say each hesitation is like a little death.

I say think of Wayne Gretzky who said you miss a hundred percent of the shots you don't take.

I say your body knows before you do.

I say it's as hopeless as lawn care in midsummer heat, with no sprinklers.

I say tell her you love the night's rain, how it caresses the lampposts, sends steam rising from the walkways.

I say you kiss with your eyes first.

I say it happens before it happens anyway.

I say tell her about your love life, but tell it slant.

I say its terrifying; I think of the tinniest movement of hair on the spine.

I say no one knows anything anyway.

I say the universe is random and undecidable. Somewhere a planet is slowly spinning from its orbit into trajectories no one can calculate.

I say think of Kate and Leo, the great shards of ice sliding unseen.

I say don't bother asking Siri. She is useless. Tinder?

I say she'll probably lead anyway, it's 2019.

I say no one dates anymore anyway.

I say wait till the moment compresses.

I say think of the moon like a breath mint, remember to turn your cell phone off,
watch out for the noses.

Why I Am Not A News Anchor

Richard Brostoff

It's three a.m. on June 29th I wake up and can't pee what else is new I've got to get my prostate fixed twenty minutes go by I still can't sleep so I read Frank O'Hara though I think of reading Kenneth Koch or Barbara Guest but I don't and I don't turn on the lights which wake me up still I can't see the book's punctuation so I turn on the lights it is not a comma but a period after all what a good student I am in my underwear and blue T shirt I turn on my large screen LED TV Anderson Cooper's face looks too big he is repeating his show a third time though the news happens only once which is more than enough in this age of Trump Anderson Cooper keeps appearing in my poems I must have a thing about him I like how he puts on his baby blue eyes and stutters sometimes in the right frame even the absurd seems profound in his hands or is it at this hour the profound seems absurd do you really think this is a poem he says to me skeptically ask Pinsky I say I must go to sleep now but I'm still more awake Oh Anderson Cooper please go to bed!

Dreaming Bodies I

Steven Tutino

it was the way he presented
himself interruptingly,
obtrusively, in my thoughts

the darkness and the snow continually
remind me of the inevitable gruesome
unearthly repetition
of oceanic sensitivity, sensibility,
abstruse slandering
a romanticist glamorization of the snow

and the ghostliness of that man
in some far away land
who never came back home,
who spoke a language
I had been cursed with
to never fully understand
whose body is not conceptualized

not by language or words,
but by the hungriness of the soul,
the intimacy,
the yellows, purples
golds and pinks, the colours
of sex;

the formless shapeless everywhere
indistinct from the stars
has always been about
the body and what it aches for
in the dream

movement of the body his body
my body their bodies
the love between two bodies

with the kiss on the mouth I surrender
to the eyes, the blackness of hair
all reminiscent of a body I have known,
with him the way the body

wants, his mouth his arms as though

to penetrate me
and become reality,

the oneness with you here
the nowhere where I am.

We level upon your layers my layers
clouds float in between
with us apart from who we are
penis poised against penist
he genesis concrete
centered, specified

Penis

Against

Penis

Against

Ocean

Against

Your Body Our Body Their Bodies

Yet These Bodies
Are Just Bodies.

Ponderings of a Man Lying Naked Underneath the Sun

Steven Tutino

When there are no longer any words to follow, when the words cease, how else will we continue to address the unspeakable? When nothing more will come, nothing else surely will follow. You think of the night just as I think of the day but in the end, maybe, just maybe, nothing more will come and nothing more will follow. Walk in the garden, plough your share of gold remnants and silk and cotton remnants and so many more fabrics that you pack yourself a bag and leave for a distant country into a far-off distant land, somewhere where everything could be new again. You are suddenly reborn, a freer person, freer than free, freer than anything else imagined to be free. Speak of the day and speak of the night just as how so many before you spoke of so many wonderful things: the stars and the planets and that big star which is the sun required to sustain us all. Even Art is sustained by the sun, but it still remains to be seen whether Art can return to her former glory and take her seat on the throne of culture and all that is noble and good. The creative process is order and chaos, yet the meticulousness of the artist in their selecting, understanding and judgment can only be achieved by the discernment of a St. Ignatius of Loyola, the self-repentance of the sinner, the discipline and asceticism of a Bernard Lonergan, the martyrdom of a saint and a person of deep faith grasped by other-worldly love.

Imagine yourself and someone you admire and care about as free and in love and knowing everything and nothing and knowing firmly that it cannot go on much longer, that this love is unbearable and that everything must certainly come to an end. Even love must end, the love that cannot be reciprocated to you from another, from anything but the love that no longer sustains these growing pains, the love that knows no bounds, the love that loves wherever love will take it. *"My love for you floats across architecture,"* Sina Queyras once said. My love floats for you like a river of melancholy, unbroken yet still sad. And you have love in so many ways, but enough about love. You wrote fifty poems today, scraps of a Radiohead love song (or was it Donna Summer?) and scraps of a dozen more poems you could make alternative gift cards out of or that early morning suicide note to that love who holds a special place in your heart: *"I want to take the time to wish you a beautiful day today, wake up, wake up, wake up! Or sleep in, or stay in bed all damn day today, its Sunday, right? Anyways, love you, peace."*² And the next day, if you survived that onslaught (*"I walk in my clothing, unmarked by that voyage"*)³ you paint twenty paintings as part of a series you title Tracings of the Human Spirit, because that's what art is about: the spiritual quest, the liberation of the spirit from mechanical living and instrumentalized consciousness; and you know everything is wonderful and beautiful and that Art is the reason you are alive, and that Art is why we are living and dying each day, because Art is like the sun and renews our hearts and minds and all of us combined each day.

He awakens to the early light of a June day sun and there he sees his destiny inscribed like a revelation. A harrowing moment of bliss is what he longs for. What will he accomplish today? He is always thinking

2. Former WWE wrestler Joanie "Chyna" Laurer's final message to her fans before being discovered dead three days later on April 20, 2016.

3. From Anne Sexton's poem, "Wanting to Die."

thinking a thought that has no relation to his existence, to the reality inside him, but nevertheless he still thinks it because he thinks reality is cruel and so the mind ought to be used as a weapon against the cruelty and destruction of reality since reality is unbearable. Reality is a murderer and we are silenced by the silencers. If it weren't for reality, he thought, all of my problems would vanish ceaselessly and I would be cured of all my ailments and disturbances. I want to uncover my strengths and weaknesses, undertake the painful and arduous task of self-understanding in order to get a clearer idea of what it is I'm really searching for, my strengths and weaknesses, my needs and wants. Sometimes it's best not to speak and not allow for anything more to come, for you will emerge wonderfully into the person you are meant to be on your own accord, from acorn to oak tree. You will actualize the constructive forces inherent within you that are necessary for self-realization. You will develop into the authenticity that is the byproduct of a glorious self-transcendence through the patience and virtue of a saint, the faith, hope and love of a person in love with God. Be honest with yourself. Let go of maladaptive behavior. Relinquish false pride and take pride in the work itself, in the person you are, in the reality of your being and everything you are here and now, real and actual. Rely on your own strength not on his, take responsibility for this life you are seemingly so unequipped for. Take control, choose order over chaos while still maintaining a balance between both forces. Surrender yourself to a higher cause, to an ideal that is dignifying and ennobling and worth pursuing.

Adopt, assimilate and develop the wholeheartedness of a Zen Queen while still maintaining the power and strength of a Gladiator and the soul of a Warrior Princess.

So, what more can I say other than you are a rose swaying in the breeze? Your love is greener than the greening grass in Spring blossoming into Summer autumn's becoming, a butterfly flapping her wings as she graces you with her presence in your garden on that hot summer's day.

About the Authors

Jean Vethein is originally from a Mississippi tributary town, but she has traveled through Italy, Iran, Japan, and Mexico before settling in New York. She bused across Afghanistan and Iran in a study tour while learning about the literature of the two countries. Her counseling of disabled students - some from war zones - has taught her the wonder of survival, and her experience as an adjunct assistant professor at Columbia University's School of Social Work has been invaluable. She earned a masters of fine art degree from Sarah Lawrence College and received two writing grants from the Ragdale Foundation. Her work has been published by Adelaide Literary Magazine, Artifact Nouveau, El Portal Green Hills Literary Lantern, The Furious Gazelle, The Saint Ann's Review, Scarlet Leaf Review, Downtown Brooklyn, Gival Press, Hypertext Magazine, Litbreak, Poydras Review, decomP, Oracle Fine Arts Review and other small presses

Gary Galsworth grew up in the New York City area. He spent three years in the Marine Corps before studying painting and filmmaking at the Art Institute of Chicago and the University of Chicago. His work has been featured in Abstract, Contemporary Expressions, Nebo: A literary Journal, Pennsylvania English, Temenos, Broad River Review, Obsidian, and others. In addition to writing poetry, he is a professional plumber and a student of Zen and Vipassana practice. He's published two books of poems: "Yes Yes" and "Beyond the Wire." Gary lives in Hoboken, NJ.

Isabelle Duffy is a Mathematical Business Major and an English Minor at Wake Forest University in Winston Salem. Her passion for poetry started when she was in high school, and from there she started experimenting with poetry, writing about nature, extended metaphors, and a lot about her own angsty emotions as a teenage. Her poetry focuses on the marriage of the emotional sphere and nature in an attempt to make sense of the world and her own emotions.

Christopher Kuhl earned one bachelor's degree in philosophy and one in music composition, as well as two masters of music degrees and a PhD in Interdisciplinary Arts. He taught English at the Illinois Mathematics and Science Academy. His work has been published in various magazines and literary journals. His other interests include studying higher mathematics and classical Greek and Hebrew, as well as drawing and painting with acrylics.

Dr. Andy Jones is the author of four books. He has been teaching poetry and various forms of writing at UC Davis since 1990. He lives in Dallas, California where he runs a poetry series and hosts a weekly poetry radio show.

Barbara Ryder-Levinson has had poetry published in several literary magazines and journals, and she has studied with John Brandi, Rachel de Baere, and Natalie Goldberg on

several occasions. She has a bachelor's degree in philosophy from the University of Southern California. She is an avid traveler and owned a travel agency for two years, and all of her personal travel experience has fed into her poetry.

Parker Jamieson is an existentialist from Buffalo, NY. They read the almanac of their nightly dreams, and they use it to punctuate their writing. They love humanity - its intimacy, the world of family /and/ the family of this world. Thank you for reading.

Yvonne Higgins Leach is the author of *Another Autumn* (WordTech Editions, 2014). Her poems have appeared in many journals and anthologies including *The South Carolina Review*, *South Dakota Review*, *Spoon River Review* and *POEM*. A native of Washington state, she earned a Master of Fine Arts from Eastern Washington University. She spent decades balancing a career in communications and public relations, raising a family, and pursuing her love of writing poetry. Now a full-time poet, she splits her time living on Vashon Island and in Spokane, Washington. For more information, visit www.yvonnehigginsleach.com.

Max Thomas is a young writer from Bellevue, Nebraska, and he is currently working on his third book. He is currently living at home with his mother and father while taking a gap year before attending college to pursue writing full time.

Valeri Paxton-Steele is a native of Broome County, New York, who writes both short stories and poetry. She authored 'Shadowstyx By Valkyri, Poetry and Prose of Depression,' and 'Underneath, Poetry by Valeri Paxton-Steele.' She has contributed works to 'Silver Lining: Poets Against Violence,' '100 Voices, Vol. 2.,' 'Insert Yourself Here,' and 'The Rock Springs Review Anthology 2017.' Two of her poems were nominated for The Best of The Net Award 2017. She has contributed extensively to *The Paragon Journal*, as well as to *Echo: Journal of Creative Nonfiction* and *The Martian Chronicle* magazine. A disabled mother and grandmother, she lives a quiet life with her fiancée Robert, along with their clowder of cats and kindle of kittens.

Gannon Daniels just bought Bushnell binoculars at a second-hand store for ten dollars so she can get a closer look at the birds in her backyard. Her poetry has been seen in *California Quarterly*, *Cimarron Review*, *RATTLE* and several other publications. *The Occupying Water* was published in 2001 by *GaltArtHouse*. She teaches writing in the LA area.

Paul Watsky attended New York University as an undergraduate, where he won the school-wide literary prize for a group of sonnets, did graduate work at the University of California, Berkeley, and the State University of New York, Buffalo, then taught as an assistant professor in the English department at San Francisco State University, specializing in modern poetry. Subsequently, he earned a doctorate in clinical psychology and now make his living as a Jungian analyst. For the past six years he have been poetry editor of *Jung Journal: Culture and Psyche*, published by Routledge. His own work has appeared or is forthcoming in *Atlanta Review*, *Asheville Poetry Review*, *Alabama Literary Review*, *The Cape Rock*, *The Carolina Quarterly*, *Crack the Spine*, *Euphony Journal*, *Fugue*, *Interim*, *The Moth*, *Natural Bridge*, *Permafrost*, *The Pinch*, *The Puritan*, *Rattle*, *Rip Rap*, *Smartish Pace*, and elsewhere. In 2006 he cotranslated *Santoka* (Tokyo, PIE Books), and in 2010 published a full-length poetry collection, *Telling the Difference* (Fisher King Press), as well as an online chapbook of his baseball poems, *Extra Innings* (Interpoezia). His most recent book, *Walk-Up Music* (April, 2015, Fisher King Press), was characterized in a Kirkus recommended review as an "excellent" collection in which "Watsky does the work of 10 poets."

Valerie Griggs has been published in *Typishly*, the 20th Performance Poets Association anthology, the Nassau County Poet Laureate Society anthology, *Avatar Review*, *Door Is A Jar*, *The Ledge*, *Apricity Magazine*

Pisgah Review, Schuylkill Valley Journal, Steam Ticket, and Bitterroot. She has an MFA in Creative Writing from Brooklyn College and an MA in Religious Studies, Spirituality/Spiritual Direction from Fordham University. She works as a full-time writing consultant and as an adjunct English instructor at Molloy College.

Steven Tutino is currently a graduate student at Concordia University in the process of completing an M.A. in Theological Studies. He obtained a double major from Concordia as well in Honours English Literature and Theological Studies. His poetry has appeared in *The Paragon Journal*, *Halcyon Days* and *Concordia University's Journal of Interdisciplinary Studies in Sexuality*. His artwork has appeared in *Word in the World*, *The Paragon Journal*, *The Minetta Review*, *Beautiful Minds Magazine*, *GFT Press: Ground Fresh Thursday*, *Michael Jacobson's The New-Post Literate*, *The Omnicult*, *November Bees: Journal of art and literature*, *Inside the Bell Jar*, and *Hour After Happy Hour Review*. Steven currently resides in Montreal, Quebec.

