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-
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We here at *Prospectus* exist to find and celebrate the work of new and emerging authors and artists. To that end, if you would like to submit your as-yet-to-be-published poems, prose, or photography for consideration, please see the guidelines for submissions on our website, www.ProspectusLiterary.com. For those pieces and images selected, we offer a modest fee per published item along with plenty of complimentary copies to share with your friends and fans. For now though, please enjoy some of the wonderful voices we have discovered and published in this, our 2nd edition.

Sincerely,
Kate Shawcross
Editor

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“Why Don’t You Finish Anything You Start?”

Jeremy Cantor

The untrained dog flushes a bird
but she does not know there is
something she is supposed to wait for,
a way these things are done,
so she chases it, barking at the sky
until she flushes another
which she chase until
she flushes another,
and so across the field,
right, left, back, away,
band and away again
chasing another and another
until she lies down exhausted
not far from where she started,
having brought back
nothing.

She will be here again tomorrow.
Together we will run
and run

What This Dog Thinks

Jeremy Cantor

"I do not know whether dogs can think, or what thinking is, or whether human beings can think. But whether human beings can think or not, I know that those who love dogs think that dogs can think. This, I am afraid, is the sum total of my contribution to human knowledge on this important subject."

- Bertrand Russell, from "Do Dogs Think?" (15 June, 1932) p. 181-182

I don't know what dogs think.
Today I watched a woman throw a ball
for a pair of Boston terriers to retrieve.
There was a moment
when I thought I saw
a shadow of a thought
cross a canine face
"If I drop the ball in front of my dogfriend
instead of in front of my human packleader
will my dogfriend pick it up and throw it for
me?"
But it passed.
I don't know what dogs think.
Books have been written
on the subject of what dogs think

but I have not read them.

There are guesses I could make
about what a dog has never thought,
such as “Why is the velocity of light in a vacuum
constant regardless of the relative velocities of
the source and the observer?”

But that’s an easy game.

No,

what I wonder is
how often dogs think
about how life might be different
as one dog may have thought
just before she slipped her collar and ran off
never to be seen by me again.

Age of the Dead Pangea

Amanda Tumminaro

Growing pains came to stretch Pangea.
Kahlo couldn't have created a world
as detached as our own.

Pop culture that distracts us
from the fall of people, and texting
that fashions wrecked cars into jewelry for
Hercules.

We are rooting for the persona
and the human being is stranded on I-39 as the
horizon strikes
like an ethereal blade.

the Shetland pony

Christopher Mulrooney

the macaws have a saying
do not recall the message if the remuneration is
not a bonny cracker
how many times have I heard it said?
billions I suppose
and every time right as rain
comme un sou neuf
to spend upon the pony rides in the park
hot dusty things as a rule
a backwater in a bog
here the sweet creatures are no spunk or get up
and go
incredibly trodden down like the rest of us
serving our turn
even the poets with their dull compositions on
events of the day
the military-industrial-entertainment golf
complex is a hard master

From the new novel ***Saving Kandinsky***
by Mary Basson

Recovering after years of emotional collapse following her relationship with Kandinsky, Ella forms her life anew, just in time to feel the threat of the Nazis in their quest to destroy the art of “Degenerate” painters. She and her partner Johannes have hidden over 100 works of Kandinsky in Ella’s basement, hoping to preserve them – and themselves.

They dined on questions, slept on scenarios.

The knock came on a cold, rainy afternoon. A large, black car stood running under the dripping trees. It took Ella a second to realize the moment had come.

Two male voices, one lilting, refined, the superior, the Berliner; the other heavy and coarse, a Bavarian. The knock came again, insistent. Should she run to the cellar and out the lower level? It was no good. She went to the door.

“Frau Münter.”

The term of address took Ella aback. They knew her name. Her breath lay high in her chest.

The Berliner spoke. ``We have some questions regarding your paintings. I am afraid that my partner will be obliged to search your house. You will excuse him. He may leave your things in some disorder.''

The Bavarian crossed his arms in front of his barrel chest.

The Berliner nodded to the junior officer. ``Buckholtz,''' he said, jerking his head toward the Bavarian. He motioned to Ella. She must sit.

Ella pulled the cardigan tight around her shoulders. She watched the Bavarian leave the room, his thick haunches moving under the thin fabric of his suit. She heard the ruckus as he pulled aside the bed from the wall, opened the drawers of her bedside table, rummaged through her soft clothes. She listened while the Bavarian called back reports to his senior officer. It would not take long to scavenge the entire house, the upstairs part. She and Johannes were neither wealthy nor acquisitive. In this part of the house, he would turn up only the paintings

of Fraulein Gabriele Münter, paintings clear to the naked eye on the walls of every room, harmless and inoffensive.

Downstairs, though, was a different story.

Women's Work

Nancy Taylor Day

Collecting and spinning,
turning wild and oily fibers into yarn
to tie off the cord,
to hold back the hair,
to knit,
lengths of fabric substantial and strong,
far beyond any man's dreams.

Fibers spun across muscled thighs
shared by laughing, nursing children,
twined together community, bore witness
to talk of star's return and the depth of the well.

Carding, dyeing, spinning, knitting, weaving,
sewing

Community

They twisted wool, flax, horsehair,
and somewhere linen, firm and tight,
fine of texture (who would dream
of worms that would spin us silk?)

Women's work,
and other ministrations from our hands
fell to machines
and time cards,
found their ways into sweat shops
where production rose
far beyond any man's dreams

Ken Kessel

Charles

For breakfast
White clouds
Lunch
Blue sky
Dinner
Stars and moon
Why am I
Hungry?

Edward

Sentient beings
Are annoying
Why breathe in
Breathe out?
In front of the door
Is the doorknob
You know
What to do

James

Nothing isn't you
You aren't nothing
Aren't you nothing?
Isn't nothing you?
When you consider this
Drink tea

It's Not About Soup

Connie Beresin
(1935 – 2014)

Pearl barley simmer,
swell. I slice mushrooms,
chop and dice leek,
small bits yam, onion.
Sauté my tomato heart
into a liquid tub
of thick winter.

Bombs Bursting

Edna Small

How did I carry you,
my wondrous child,
ten fingers, ten toes?

How do I soothe you,
my fretful babe?
Nuzzle with me, sleep.

How will I bury you
my silent child?
Bathe your body and
cover you with earth.

Minding One's p's and q's

Edna Small

My pulse quickens. Put to the quest
I'm pursuing the quickest
path to queerness.
Not a party, not a quinceanera
not a political rally of questionable value.
Please. Please. Question, question, question.
You were taught to mind your p's and q's
say please and thankq
to not confuse the p's and q's when setting type.
(Why not mind your b's and d's?
my mirror asks).
Oh, yes, that mirror
says no, not pretty, a bit quirky –looking,
but what the hell ...you've already had too
many pints and quarts,
are quarrelsome and pouty ---
oops, I've mixed up the p's and q's
how quaintly perfect.
I'm sure you never mistook a pence for a quid,
a penny for a quarter,
a pineapple for a quince. – so, what's the point?
This is precisely the question.

Valentine Gift

Changming Yuan

A
Single
Rose
Exchanged
For
A
Whole
Spring

The 30th Olympiad

Ben Nardolilli

I wanted to do something that a billion
Other people were doing at the same time,
So I stood in front of the television set
And watched the opening of the Olympics,
Without trying to listen to the hosts,
Because I knew that not everyone else
In the world would get to hear their banter.

There was a spectacle instead and I was glad
To be able to appreciate it through TV,
The cameras were set up to capture every slight
Action of men and women in costume,
Choreography missed by those in the audience,
Who were too busy taking pictures anyway,
And neglecting what a billion people saw.

OFF SEASON

Diane Hickey Carter

In the North Country there's a lull
It's off season
October threw its foliage party
and we are the last guests to leave

Tourists have vanished to the southlands
as we mildly intrude on time
belonging to the locals

Meandering along back roads unobserved
our red SUV a stark contrast
to purple mountains
against November skies
Pine trees line the winding blacktop
next to birch trees, barren

We climb ragged cliffs
twisting and turning our heads at each vista
The stillness hangs
like laundry on a line without a wisp of wind

The mountains lie in wait
and for a while, they belong to us
We know we stumbled upon
a wonderful secret
and sink into the deafening calm

Before long,
the heavens drop winter dust on its peaks
city folks return
and once again,
the forest surrenders its silence
to the world

What's for Breakfast?

Thomas Feeny

Again this morning she breaks the news
The world is coming to an end.
Not a prediction, no conjecture:
"It's a well known fact," says she
as, tugging on Bobby's ear, Sweet Face
dishes up eggs to five sleepy people.

Silent, I study my coffee cup,
wince at what I detect slipping
off its perch. With her loopy smile,
my wife surveys the fat kitchen table.
She offers no lollipops.

"Listen up, folks. We're in the end times,
get it? Mark this, the hour of repentance."

I sneeze. My elbow rattles the butter dish.
She opens her mouth, pauses, sputters:

"But first, you all finish your eggs."

Fallen Angel

Deborah Hefferon

She had traveled a long way,
the fretted fingerboard of a lute
in the crook of her arm.

Fired in Oaxaca, porous red clay,
she stood with dignity, uncomplaining.
Not once did I catch her leaning against the
rails.

A winged immigrant on our balcony, silent and
still,
perhaps gesturing when I wasn't looking.
She generously shared space with impatiens,
potted Norfolk pine and baskets of mums.
In winter she was cloaked in snow,
handling the humiliation
of a halo of holiday lights with grace.

Waiting for warmer air – she longed
to return south: dip her toes
in the Gulf, breathe chilies in the air,
hear the language of a more pious people.
There remained the option of pinning up
her long locks and draped gown for the trip.

The brutal gales last evening
slashed through Soapstone Valley.

Travelers too, they gained force coming
down from Canada, stinging
the Atlantic coast, settling in Rock Creek.
She had defied wind before.

I found her face down. Arms dislocated,
nose broken, lute smashed. Her hands
were a fair distance away as though
they had reached out to protect her fall,
failed. While I slept, she gave up –
only human in the end.

Vows

Carol Hamilton

"...if I were to vow at all, it should be to build a lighthouse."

-Benjamin Franklin

Safe from near shipwreck,
Ben Franklin eschewed
the promise of a chapel
as payment for Divine Rescue.
We could litter the landscape
with thanks for narrow escapes:
a windmill in my backyard
for the tornado's fickle path,
an ark for the flood that wiped out
another part of town, a huge
traffic light for the delayed start
that let the pickup truck
racing against red miss me.
We avoid disaster more
than we can ever tell or know.
So I simply do not look for trouble,
count the daisies along the path
and even step on cracks
with no thought of what horror
might await my mother's back

To Understand a Fickle Star

Carol Hamilton

“Farewell, Morning Star, herald of dawn, and quickly come as the Evening Star, bringing again in secret her whom thou takest away.”

- Meleager (1st Century B. C.)

The wanderers took longer to figure out, their planet paths retrograding, backward turn of reels, laughing down at surprised faces. Watch long enough, be attentive, and all skipping out of course takes shape. My wishful, flaming will can never spark fire in nebulous clouds, but I can watch, chart, model, pronounce Venus less fickle than she seems on first acquaintance. It is better to wait and see than to turn maidens into trees or swans. She spreads her smiling light in season where she will. You can swish this magic wand about, twitch at east, tell me when her bright reflections will stroke her sister, Earth, in those corridors each side of our many dreams of day.

PATTERNS

Cary Kamarat

Symmetry of form and soul—
patterns of contentment—
heron trails across a quilted sky—

Mist-born jasmine
fills this clapboard frame
with gods and lovers—

And a sorcery of horizons
turns a simple cottage
to a golden-turreted palace

standing firm,
against invasion.

Service Day

Fred Obermann

On my return to Eugene, I was Dragooned, Shanghaied, Press-Ganged! The Federal District Court in Eugene demanded my service as a juror on a very inconvenient Thursday and apparently the note from my mother hadn't worked. What I really needed now was a note from my parole officer!

In the last court case, a personal injury one, where I served as the jury foreman, I found the Chiropractor witness guilty of absurd claims of medical competency and fraudulent behavior, and I recommended a hanging. The judge said we couldn't hang the witness, and so I whined in reply, "But he's a Chiropractor!"

"Nope, sorry." the judge replied.

"Could we at least get a court order enforcing mandatory electro-shock treatment?"

The judge, no stranger to Chiropractors himself, turned a malevolent, knowing grin on the witless spine-cracker, and then whispered to me, "I'll take it under advisement."

Fog

Lance Nizami

Fine cool white moisture hangs, fills up
dimensions
All things are vague in the street-level cloud

My breathing's not labored; I breathe deep and
rhythmic
I stride, hands in pockets, all cloistered and
warm

I smile in the calm air of old San Francisco
The atmosphere's simplified, shrunk to a sphere

The atmosphere's shrunk to a sphere all around
me –

My world seems more private, images fade-out
Others creep up on me, suddenly near

No blue yet intrudes between earth and the
clouds
How vigorous I feel! I yearn for fresh coffee

The door to the store opens, clarity hits me
Space surges forward, for one instant, blinding.

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In Memory of

James Stephen O'Brien

Author of

The Papal Enclave

A novelist we lost too

soon

(1953-2014)

Featured Writers

Mary Basson
Connie Beresin
Jeremy Cantor
Diane Hickey Carter
Nancy Taylor Day
Thomas Feeny
Carol Hamilton
Deborah Hefferon
Cary Kamarat
Ken Kessel
Christopher Mulrooney
Ben Nardolilli
Lance Nizami
Fred Obermann
Edna Small
Amanda Tumminaro
Changming Yuan

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Mark Skuta