

ME



Multicultural Echoes

Department of International Languages, Literatures and Cultures
California State University, Chico

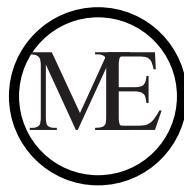
Literary Magazine

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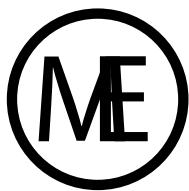
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ME

*Multicultural Echoes
Literary Magazine*

VOLUME 12
2020

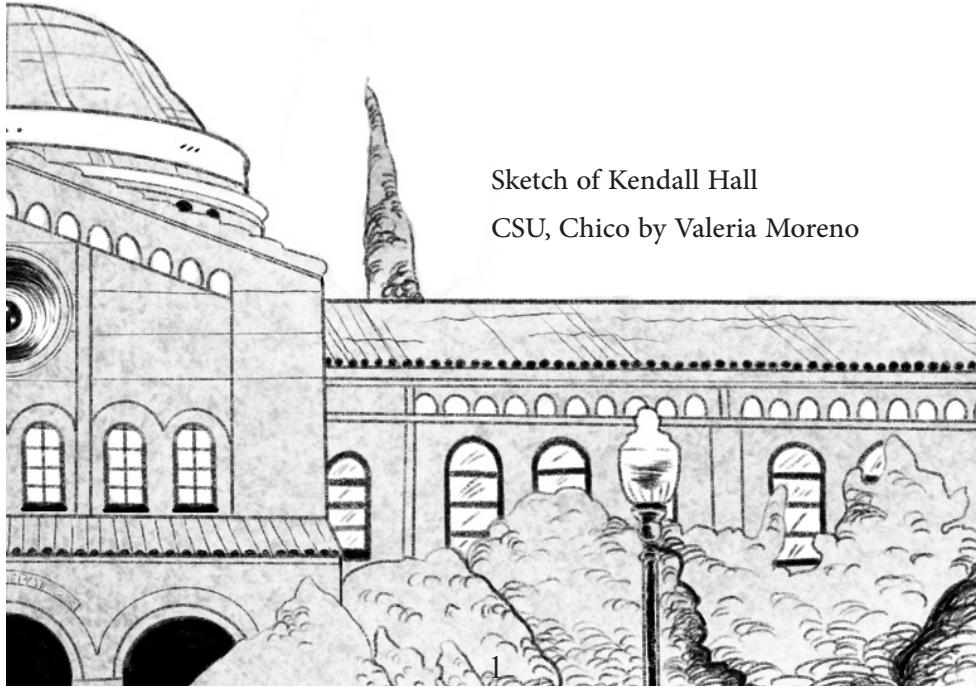


Multicultural Echoes
Volume 12
2020

Multicultural Literary Magazine



Echoes



Sketch of Kendall Hall
CSU, Chico by Valeria Moreno



ME

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Literary Magazine*

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The cover art this year, entitled “A Tale of Two Pandemics: Coronavirus and Racism,” is designed by Daniel Lopez, Anahi Martinez and Char Prieto. The designers believe that each individual is unique and they recognize that our differences comprise aspects such as nationality, race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, age, physical abilities, religious beliefs, political beliefs, or other ideologies. They consider that, in spite of our differences, we all belong to the same race: the human race.



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ME: Multicultural Echoes was founded in 2008 by Dr. Char Prieto alongside a group of faculty and students from the Department of International Languages, Literatures and Cultures at California State University, Chico. The journal's purpose is to promote multilingualism, multiculturalism, intellectual growth, creativity, tolerance, and to help authors share and publish their works in a supportive artistic community.

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DEDICATION

Toni Morrison

February 18, 1931-August 5, 2019

In Memoriam



Toni Morrison was a novelist, essayist, book editor, and university professor born in Ohio. Her literary works brought her national attention and accolades such as the National Book Critics Circle Award, the Pulitzer Prize, and the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1993. Morrison developed her own reputation as an author and one of her most celebrated works, *Beloved*, was made into a film. In 1996, the National Endowment for the Humanities selected her for the Jefferson Lecture, the U.S. federal government's highest honor for achievement

in the humanities. That year, she was honored with the National Book Foundation's Medal of Distinguished Contribution to American Letters. In 2012 President Obama presented Morrison with the Presidential Medal of Freedom. In 2016, she received the PEN/Saul Bellow Award for Achievement in American Fiction. Her works convey stories of a racially segregated America. She was awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1993. In her Nobel acceptance speech, Morrison talked about the power of storytelling and to make her point, she told a story about an old blind woman who is approached by a group of young people. They demanded of her: "Is there no context for our lives? No song, no literature, no poem full of vitamins, no history connected to experience that you can pass along to help us start strong? ... Think of our lives and tell us your particularized world. Make up a story." Morrison was not afraid to comment on American politics and race relations and her writings typically concentrated on African American women. In her book *The Song of Solomon* she said: "And she was loved." Toni Morrison certainly was loved in the USA and all over the world and she will always be remembered. RIP.

DEDICATION

Patxi Andión

October 6, 1947-December 18, 2019

In Memoriam



Patxi Andión was born in Madrid, Spain in 1947 and died in a traffic accident in December 2019. Andión was a singer, songwriter, actor, composer, movie director, scriptwriter, author, political activist, university professor and, above all, a man of magnetic treatment and inexhaustible knowledge. He was born during the dictatorship of Francisco Franco and his opposition to the fascist regime and political beliefs led him to seek exile in Paris, where he took part in the May '68 protests, and subsequently began his musical career. In the 70s, he became fundamentally the new face of the protest song and one of the last singer-songwriters of anti-Françosim. In the 80s, he was a successful actor in notable roles in television series and popular drama films. Above all, Andión played characters who transcended niches and was, beyond his achievements in music and acting, famous in every rule. Andión received a PhD in sociology and became a professor at the Complutense University in Madrid. With his degrees in sociology and journalism, he taught Audiovisual Communication. Patxi Andión's last years were discreet, dedicated to teaching, and never left his music aside. Just before his tragic death, he published a disc-book entitled *The Lobicán Hour*, a poetic testament of a multi-faceted creator who knew how to harmonize his fame with his intellectual and social work. ¡Hasta la victoria siempre! RIP.

DEDICATION

Miguel Prieto

January 3, 1953-March 1, 2020

In Memoriam



It is not a coincidence that Miguel Prieto passed away only a few months after we lost Toni Morrison and Patxi Andión. Miguel admired both. He devoured Morrison's books and he knew the lyrics to all of Andión's songs. Miguel was born in Spain and lived most of his life in Burgos, a northern city of the country. In the 70s, during the dictatorship, he was a strong activist against the repressive regime of General Franco. He was affiliated to Comisiones Obreras, The Workers' Commissions and the largest trade labor union in Spain.

Miguel earned a degree in English philology and became a professor of English. As an educator, he took trips with students, family members, friends and colleagues around the world. He was an avid reader, and he especially loved English literature. In his home, he had a library with a large collection of books in many languages. Besides Spanish, he was fluent in French, English and Italian and he studied Greek and Latin as well. Miguel was an enthusiastic gardener and loved hiking and the outdoors. When he was young, he enjoyed playing soccer and later, he became a paddle ball enthusiast. He was an ardent learner and in the last few years of his life he dedicated his time to learning Italian, a language he mastered quickly. When he retired from his teaching position in 2015, Miguel devoted his time to tending his garden, cooking, sports, traveling, and his family, especially his granddaughter, Emma and his "grand dog," Jacko. Miguel was friendly, charismatic, energetic, and a lovely person to meet. In December 2019 he was diagnosed with liver cancer and he lost his battle in March of 2020. We are deeply saddened by his departure and cannot find the words to express our sorrow. He left with all of us a legacy of love and tenderness and he will be greatly missed. RIP dear Miguel. ¡Hasta siempre comandante!

Editor's Introduction to the *ME: Multicultural Echoes* Literary Magazine 2020

Dear Readers:

The year 2020 will surely go down in history as a time of frayed nerves, a difficult one all over the world with the wild fires in California, the rapid spread of the Coronavirus, sheltering in place, enduring isolation, and social distancing. We are facing a defining moment in history as the world combats the COVID-19 pandemic; we have witnessed communities erupting in angry protests across the country, calling for justice and an end to institutionalized racism after the killing of so many Americans by police brutality. This civil unrest reflects social inequities and remains with us as a commitment to build and foster inclusiveness, equity, and diversity. We must not tolerate acts of racism, sexism, xenophobia, homophobia, bias, prejudice nor violence, but strive to understand and end social inequality and economic disparity. Courageous conversations with *ME* readers and authors enable all of us to develop cultural competencies and combat our own unconscious bias. It is my hope that each of us will emerge embodied with greater respect and appreciation for all people. *Multicultural Echoes* is a beacon of hope and enlightenment for this progressive social change.

As students, faculty, community members, and authors adjust to these trying times and economic downturn, we have received a myriad of works for this year's *ME* magazine. Now more than ever is time to reinforce our commitment to learning and equity, and it is precisely in moments like these that we need a platform to express ourselves. I would like to thank and welcome the contributors who have helped make this magazine by editing or submitting literary and art works this year. My heartfelt thanks to you for your efforts in making *ME* 2020 possible during the long haul of the COVID-19 pandemic and social

unrest. As a nation, we have been tested in the past, but we recovered from the chaos and tragedy, and we can and will certainly rise above adversity now. Our lives have been altered by fears, concerns, tremendous challenges, and death. This has been a transformative ride. The challenges we face now are part of the journey that will ultimately shape us into a stronger people.

Martin Luther King Jr.'s words "our lives begin to end the day we become silent about things that matter" reminds us of the importance of the work we undertake in *ME* and that we can create literature and art in the face of death and destruction. We have the power to effect positive change. Creativity is indeed a deeply empowering tool and a space of liberating dimensions. It is boundless and therefore full of redemptive value such as inspiration and imagination. I invite you to keep creating, writing, and making art to influence change. I am very pleased to announce the twelfth issue of *ME: Multicultural Echoes*. Echoes of ourselves and others, to us and the world, these contributions all seek to communicate the creativity and voices of the human experience, even in these challenging times. It is my hope that each of us will emerge embodied with greater respect and appreciation for all people. My heartfelt thanks go out to you for your efforts in making *ME 2020* possible during the long haul of the COVID-19 pandemic and social unrest!



Fondly,
Char Prieto

Dr. Char Prieto, Professor
Founder, Editor and Adviser of
ME: Multicultural Echoes

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ME: Multicultural Echoes Literary Magazine Reading 2019
California State University, Chico

English

anism, —
English ing'glisn,
from the Engle
German tribe who
Belonging to
inhabitants.—n.
German group
people

MELISSA CISNEROS
The Mexican in Me

It is all in me
The guitarrón of the mariachi
Strums in my heart
The Aztecan admiration
To fight pulses through me
The águila soars among
My desires of freedom
Padre Hidalgo rings
To awaken my soul
My eyes are embroidered
Con colores de café
Hands tremble with empathy
For those working en el campo
El Río Bravo flows
To quench my thirst
My tongue dances with
The accents del español
My skin is painted brown
From the brushes of antepasados
My smile alludes to pride
Y de alegría de mi cultura

That is the Mexican in me.

CIARA CHRISTIAN-BERG
Two Fridas

mujer fuerte hermosa
strong beautiful woman

your fingers touched his blood
but now
you touch your own

you found yourself in losing
him but
you will be found again

the thrum and twang of the strings
llena mi corazón
as yours is exposed

she is whoever she chooses to be
a white lace bodice or a skirt of green like the earth
a lady nonetheless

see, her hand is held by
her own
there is no eucatastrophe
it is only her

ALENA FLETCHER
Symmetry

Alena's song, "Symmetry" can be found by clicking

<https://soundcloud.com/user-906581623>

The degradation came slowly like
the winds of color blowing in our minds
we needed music
to prove god exists
but where is silence in this discipline?
The saber toothed sage was not wrong
about everything, there is black and white
and organic tragedy
but this constant shift is seamless
the change we want to be
echoes in our hearts
we straddle the rift with patient ownership
encircling this world in our double helix curls
In the dust of my child courage
there's a girl who's screaming:
embrace the shadow!
Say you love him on a busy corner
embrace the shadow, love your shadow.
All this information, I want a conversation.
So taboo and wild out flows our inner child,
laughing in the dust of all our parent's lies
discovering the hope in our caterpillar eyes.

KENNETH FRIES
Raking Leaves

Sometimes I do poet's work
with notebook in the park
in the cafe

with writing friends
or anywhere
in nooks and crannies of the day

Poems come alive when I rake leaves

With an old wood rake
tines splayed apart
I take my time

work the pond
pull leaves from the bottom
marvel at the slow dance of the koi

This pond
a single teardrop
all the waters of the world

How I'd love to sail again

Cooper hawk on branch above
watches me, hopes
I'll stir a tasty rodent

I may gather mushrooms, acorns
bend to look more closely
at bark, moss, ground

beneath, grateful for feeling
in my fingers
mix of life forms all around

Words rise from brain and heart

in ripple wind and water
I sense rhythm
of the line

When in a dream I rake
even our small scattering of oak leaves
I scratch the skin, comb the hair, and

taking off my gloves,
brush the fur, warm and vibrant
of earth beloved

EUGENIO FRONGIA
Fulfillment

The Sun we always see distant and round,
Dispensing, with full hands, its life and light,
Keeping its wandering flock steady and tight,
Faithful and caring like a shepherd's hound.

The Moon, resplendent in the starry night,
Waxes and wanes between birth and death,
Never tiring to tread its ancient path,
Making valleys and mountains clear and bright.

And you, new man, Alexander, join this Age!
Vast is your journey, the Century is young.
Be stout in courage, resolute and strong!
You shall inherit both promise and rage.

We are you, you are us. We all will be
Bound by the shores of an eternal Sea.



CHAR PRIETO
La escritura de papá

EUGENIO FRONGIA
Harvest of Empire – On the Move

The Harvest of Empire is migration.

The Harvest of Empire is homelessness.

The Harvest of Empire is poverty.

The Harvest of Empire is hunger and thirst.

The Harvest of Empire is death.

The Harvest of Empire
Is the curved scythe
On every stalk
Of Latin America wheat fields.

The Harvest of Empire
Has filled the granaries of the North
And left a scorched wasteland in the South.

The Harvest of Empire
Has launched the caravan of horrors
And the way of the cross
To the walled borders of the Northern Empire.
The desert trek consumes the bodies
And the minds
Of fathers, mothers, children, infants.
No water springs from the desert rock,
No blade of grass sprouts in the desert sand,
No flower, no tree, no shade, no shelter.
The price of Empire is death.

The Harvest of Empires –
Albionic, Gallic, Italic, Teutonic, Iberic, Netherlandic –
Has yielded a vintage of watery graves
In the Mediterranean.
Hopes and dreams have sunk
And joined the ancient slaves
Powering the corditae, gauli, ponti
Of the Roman masters of Empire,
Hauling grain, oil, wine and plunder
To the ancient villas of Pompeii, Capri and Positano.

The hot, sandy winds of the Scirocco
Blow from the Libyan Desert
Howling at the Northern Shores:
“Cursed be you,
You and your progeny,
For having harvested our hopes,
For having raped our lands,
For walling us off to drown
In the Mare Nostrum,
The blue Mediterranean,
Now strewn with the flotsam
Of the corpses of our children –
Rubina, Noor, Un-named, Ershad, Naser, Yasir.”

In a horrid twist of fate
The angels are thrown out
Of the Garden of Eden
By the Serpent
Who robbed them of their innocence.

The new Barbarians
Are erecting walls, barriers and fences,
Shutting down harbors and shores:
Trump – Salvini – Orban – Kurz –
Boris – Nigel – Vladimir,
The stonehearted regurgitation
Of Nazi/Fascism.

No power, no hatred can wall off
The inevitable day of reckoning.

The Day of Historic Judgment
Is upon you,
White America,
“Christian” Europe.
The tsunami of humanity
You have uprooted
Is on the move, East and West.

Oh, Wind, sweep away
The Master Builders,
The Harvesters of Empire!

EUGENIO FRONGIA
Prayer to a Hypothetical God...

If I were told
That I had only a week to live,
I would, uncharacteristically,
Beseech any power that be,
To give me, perhaps,
A month,
Maybe a year,
Not to go out to see
The far reaches of the Earth,
To discover new lands,
To sail new and distant seas,
To land on unexplored shores.
No, I would resurrect dead gods,
Magic miracle workers,
Who, it is alleged,
Walked on water
And restored life to the dead.
I would beg for but a short reprieve
To be able to read
In the unbroken silence of the mind,
Books,
Teaming with life,
Roads many times traveled,
Lives conflicted,
Of women and men
Who meet, love,
Abide and part

And find refuge,
Fleeting time and eternity
In the immortal turning of a page.
Both the new and old,
Pontoppidan’s “Per Lucky”,
Olga Tokarczuk’s “Flights”,
“Daniel Deronda,” George Eliot’s gift,
“The Life of Jesus,” Renan’s to some unwelcome present,
And realms imagined and yet real,
Without fake paradises
And unwelcome promises,
Paths trodden
In quests of self and other,
Worlds yet untilled,
Left to my plough,
Bountiful wheat fields
That my scythe can harvest
In rich granaries
For the seeds
Of eternal returns.

San Francisco, on Clayton Street, 10/24/2019, while Alexander slept

EUGENIO FRONGIA
The Creative Nature of Want

All, or most, of the notable ideas or milestone achievements of humankind, have their origin, not in having, but in wanting, not in fulfillment and security, but in need and deprivation.

The wheel has been the answer to the need for locomotion and transportation, electricity to the need to overcome darkness, fire the answer to cold and raw foods, medicine to heal from sickness, tools as instruments to build, refine, shape, clothes to ward off cold and adorn nakedness.

In the same category of supplying some human need, belong religion and the idea of god and gods, the human response to the mysteries and the threats of Nature, the fear of death and the darkness of the afterlife, the lack of rain or the destructive abundance of it, hope of a solution for a host of irremediable evolutionary shortcomings. The limitations of the human body and the human mind have propelled humans to strive to overcome the limits of Homo Sapiens, with art, technology, engineering, philosophy and rituals of various kinds.

Where the hard facts of reality about human limitations and the brief trajectory of biological life have stood their ground, humans have tried to overcome them and to compensate, by erecting temples and altars, investing time, labor and material resources and juxtaposing faith and belief to reason, assuaging despair with hope, conjuring realms of life and utopias beyond bodily and historical death, boundless immortality beyond the cruel limitations of time and eternal returns and resurrections beyond completed journeys and the inevitable return to dust.

And while a wheel, a tool, a weapon, a musical score, a painting, a cell phone, a train, a car, a ship, a spaceship are real and tangible, no one has ever seen or touched a god or gods, a single returned dead person from among the tens of the billions of departed, even from among the most beloved ones, mothers, fathers, lovers, children, friends, teachers. No one has ever walked

again the paths of the Earth after their death. Empirically not ever. Statistically not one exception.

Human inventiveness in overcoming need, lack and want, comes with an inbuilt dichotomy, that has produced, side by side with the good, an ominous record of evil. Gunpowder has empowered warmongers, imperialists, adventurers and conquerors, criminals and murderers; the wheel has given leverage to tanks and cannons, the engine that has lofted airplanes for travel and pleasure, has also enabled aircraft to rain death, fire and obliteration on cities and tens of millions of city dwellers, and turn to rubble the most notable structures of human creativity; fission has enabled modern nations to light their cities, heat their dwellings, power their crafts, but it has also vaporized in a flash tens of thousands of human beings and city structures and now holds eight billions of humans in fear and terror of potential annihilation and the total destruction of life on the Planet.

Religion, while in many cases it has served as a catalyst and a motivator for some good and noble souls and praiseworthy enterprises across the centuries, has also been, be it under the aegis of a cross, a half moon, a swastika or a star, the licenser and the enabler of scoundrels, power-hungry monsters, violent preachers, racists and looters to subdue continents in connivance with the sword, to destroy civilizations and eradicate cultures, to wipe out entire populations with genocidal barbarism, through germs, disease, plague, slavery, or to create untouchable, well-endowed citadels of perpetual power, lawlessness, abuse of women and the innocent, and exert forms of ongoing mental slavery and control over billions, who still give and believe, and receive nothing in return.

The written word, perhaps the greatest breakthrough, liberating and empowering tool of human evolution, has been, over the millennia, appropriated and exploited for the ultimate power of mind control, by unscrupulous, uniformly male, self-appointed prophets, preachers and charlatans, who endowed the myths and legends of the so-called “Holy Books”, with their own stamp of infallibility, the alleged will and authority of their gods to intimidate the

gullible, the “faithful”, the mostly poor, uneducated and powerless, translating their earthly hopelessness, into the promise of forever-coming and yet never-come, second comings, or never-tasted nirvanas and paradises.

As long as humankind, and the minds and wills that individualize our race, live under the millennial cloud and control of false promises and perseveres in the vain hope of forever imminent “returns” that would magically “renovate all things,” install fabled “kingdoms of god on earth,” and “make whole all that is broken,” our world will look just like it looks today in “the year of the Lord 2020,” riven by racism, exploited by hoarders and unscrupulous profit seekers, threatened by narcissistic tyrants and dictators, who bend the plain truth to suit their unethical needs, who trample the basic human and hard-earned civil rights for the purpose of perpetuating their hold on power, destroying democracy, disempowering and disenfranchising the people in the process.

We, the individuals who uphold and exercise the power of REASON and the unshackled freedom of the human WILL, buttressed by the powers of love, respect, justice and altruism, we constitute the People, who can renew our land and all lands on the Planet, turn back violence, hold in check greed and put an end to the many facets of slavery, uncover and expose the Big Lies, silence the guns and obliterate tyranny and totalitarianism by the responsible exercise of the democratic vote.

The creative nature of all the wants that afflict the world in the 21st Century, will empower and motivate us to dream a new world, to craft tools and wheels to move society forward, where everyone is afforded an equal chance to live the ideal of citizenship, to give, to approximate a dream of happiness and fulfillment on this earth, our only common home.

EUGENIO FRONGIA
Immoral Tales:
Nepotism, Power-Mongering and the New Borgias

Rodrigo Borgia, Alexander VI, a Spanish Pope of the Renaissance, was easily the most corrupt pope of any time. He had three sons, Cesare, Goffredo and Giovanni Borgia, and one daughter, Lucrezia Borgia. The father broke all rules, sacred and profane, and used his power, often illegally and criminally, to put his children and friends in positions of wealth and power, so that he might, ultimately, exert his own power over friend and foe, at home and abroad.

The concept and the practice of shameless and criminal “nepotism” is historically rooted in the behavior of this family. Interfering with due process of law, circumventing and bypassing established order, was one of the characteristics of the Borgia clan. Even skilled administrators among the Borgias, never passed up an opportunity to promote their families and friends. Rodrigo, even as a churchman, established a reputation as a ladies man. Lechery was both attitude and practice. Rampant nepotism among the Borgias was a strategy for extending and exerting family control over business, politics, real estate holdings, social influence and marriages. The Borgias controlled the Church, the State, and a vast portion of the financial world surrounding them. Rodrigo secured, not always by legitimate means, castles, bishoprics, money. He appointed his children, especially Cesare and Lucrezia, to key positions, regardless of merit.

Rodrigo, as a Cardinal and a candidate for the top spot in the Church, the Papacy, exerted his power to influence the outcome of the election. In 1492, Rodrigo Borgia at last became Pope Alexander VI, enlisting the support of the Spanish Crown, Ferdinand and Isabel, whom he had supported in previous dealings, and bribing the conclave electors. Papal Rome in the Renaissance was venal and it can be said that Rodrigo Borgia bought the Papacy. As Pope, he indulged in hedonism and flaunted wealth; he fabricated his own truths

and superimposed his own modus operandi on the traditional mores of Christianity. His children became the main holders and beneficiaries of his ill-gotten power and wealth. Cesare became a Cardinal, then a Duke with his own dukedom. So did another son. Lucrezia Borgia was used as a pawn in multiple power and influence games.

Consumed by secular pursuits of power, wealth, lust and nepotism, Alexander VI is the only High Renaissance Pope not to have left a significant mark in the Arts, the Humanities and Science, unlike Pius II (Piccolòmini), Leo X (Mèdici), Julis II (Ròvere) and others.

The Borgias came to a bad end, caught in the very web of corruption, cruelty, nepotism and arrogance they had spun. An undefinable sense of poetic justice brought them down.

This immoral, yet intriguing, tale, sounds awkwardly contemporary and familiar. It is so because there is some constancy in human nature and human affairs and history tends to repeat itself. From the Vatican to the White House, from the Renaissance to the Twenty-First Century, it may seem a stretch, but this immoral tale of nepotism is now unfolding on the stage of the American democracy with remarkable and frightening similarity. Donald Trump, the new Rodrigo Borgia, likewise, has no interest in, or understanding of, the Arts, The Humanities and the practical aspects of Science and intends to defund the NEA, the NEH and the NIH and is bent on setting back, or destroying, the environment, by gutting the EPA and abolishing regulations that protect and benefit the environment.

With Pope Borgia, Trump shares another disturbing trait: erratic behavior. The most authoritative historian of the High Renaissance in Italy, Francisco Guicciardini, in his *A History of Italy*, describes Rodrigo Borgia as a man driven by the demon of mutability: “But after this work of reform had been under way for a few days, ...the Pope set aside his good intentions ...and returned more uncontrolledly than ever to those ideas and actions with which he had consumed his years up to that time.”

Trump’s family members, son-in-law Jared Kushner, Ivanka Trump, Don

Trump Jr. and Eric Trump are telling parallels, especially of Cesare, Lucrezia and Giovanni Borgia, all power grabbers, wealth and influence seekers, puppets in the hands of Donald Trump, the new Rodrigo Borgia. The political lesson from this immoral tale is: Americans, be very worried about your civil rights, the future of your children, your wallets, your Medicare and your Social Security, your health care and the air you breathe. Four years of this pseudo-fascism is unconscionable, eight years irreparable. We may wake up to find out that the nightmare has become reality. Most of all, be actively vigilant about your democracy. For those who want to see and understand, the writing is on the wall.

Borgia-like criminal nepotism, anti-democratic and un-American megalomania, Bannon-instigated and unconstitutional ultra-right ideology, are undermining the America that has inspired and led the free world in the Twentieth and Twenty-First Centuries. The American citizens must rise against the Trumpian malaise sweeping the land and use the state of right and the state of law to stop it. As free citizens, when the appropriate time comes, they must go to the ballot box and obliterate the tyrant.

EUGENIO FRONGIA
The Yellow Brick Road

Is life like a yellow brick road that leads to Oz,
That a throng of undoubting people journey upon,
Their fervent hopes entrusted to Someone
Whose likeness bears no resemblance to any of us?

Following the damsel's steps, many a Tin Man,
Put their faith in the Wizard and his art,
Hoping, beyond hope, for a loving, gentle heart
And every other gift that makes us human.

And many, in Dorothy's lead, a Cowardly Lion
Dream themselves, as if by magic, brave,
Trusting that, once in Oz, the Wizard will save
And lead believers to an eternal Zion.

Scarecrow, Tin Man, and Cowardly Lion, alas,
Find brain, courage, heart, in themselves, not Oz!

GUSTAVO GAC-ARTIGAS
The Virus of Death

Translated by Andrea G. Labinger

She advanced mercilessly throughout the world. Born in a small, abject village, she took revenge by decimating all those in her path who had ignored her, scorned her, and forgotten her.

There I was, holed up in my study like Prince Prospero, thinking I had defeated her. I had taken every measure to transform my house into a fortress.

I installed the first barrier at the front door: I even disinfected the chains that raised the drawbridge between the garage entrance and the door to my house, a door that I painted red to throw her off guard, to make her think she'd already passed this way.

I blocked the rear entrance to prevent her from slipping in like an uninvited guest.

Inside, I placed an assortment of barriers in deliberate disorder to confuse her, in case she managed to steal inside despite the barriers, which allowed me to watch over the entire house and its various rooms from my desk.

I left two cans of aerosol disinfectant in strategic places for my personal defense.

I replaced the light bulbs with multi-colored ones as a kind of relief from my imposed quarantine: a blue space to remind me of the sky I couldn't see, a green one to remind me of the plains of my native land, a black one to conceal my thoughts, and finally, a red one, my favorite color, to face up to her if it became necessary.

Like Prince Prospero, I felt protected. I had defeated her; I had managed to prolong my existence in my compound.

My computer screen lit up, and amid streaks of light, an image broke the surface. Tall, slender, in a red cape that floated to the rhythm of the sighs of the condemned, smiling with her pink, sensual, irresistible lips, the Plague bestowed upon me her fatal kiss.

MARIANA GONZALEZ
MARIANA

Mature

Ambitious and adventurous

Reliable and a runner

Impatient

Athletic

Nice

Affectionate

MARIANA GONZALEZ
FALL

Fresh

Amazing

Live

Lovely

MARIANA GONZALEZ
HOME

The feeling of **H**appiness

Being **tO**gether

The quality of **faMily** bonding

Eating homemade family dish**E**s

KURTUS LOCKE
The American Manipulation

How can anyone truly know what is real when so much around them is a manipulation of some greater force of power and a greater ideal? The simple answer is to say that one can try but despite their own best efforts they truly can't. The biggest evidence of this manipulation occurs with photo manipulation. Any normal person can already spot video manipulation pretty well, as good as CGI gets, it still looks somewhat fake. But what about photographs? This is some of the oldest depiction technology known to man and it is one of the most manipulated.

The area where we see photo manipulation do the most damage is in the depictions of women. These depictions are what we see the most common. The most interesting thing to consider is that they are mostly on media geared at feminine markets. Although this is not the only area where photo manipulation takes place, it is possibly the most interesting. So why would doctored photos of women be so prevalent in feminine media? In other words, why would we want to sell this fake, unrealistic depiction of women to other women?

The answer is not actually all that complex; in these areas companies can find a profit in creating a poor body image. They are forms of imposed self-hatred within a greater system of patriarchy. Within this system across the board products are more expensive; there are more required for purchase and the market itself relies and preys on self-judgment, self-hatred and the judgment of others within the lines of the gender margin. This is important to understand that the area of photo manipulation that possibly causes the most harm is far more geared and does far more harm to females than it does to males. This is further proof that we live in a patriarchy, one that preys and relies on mutualized forms of exploitation or self-sold exploitation.

The idea is to sell an impossibility to women; this flawless, perfect goal supposed to be achieved is a paradox for what it creates within itself. What

is left after the self-judgment is a desire then to look back at that moment of critique and what was thought to be horrific and horrible back then is a force of renewal for what has become. The creation of flawlessness takes away from the veneer of the self, those slight imperfections that give each of us our own unique and true beauty. This is why photo manipulation is wrong in this degree, when it leads to self-hatred and self-judgment, when it leads to downward spirals of self-loathing.

The idea that America should change its laws regarding these kinds of images that are sold as a model for women of all ages is an accurate notion. It is wrong to exploit this kind of self-hatred in order to sell a product or more products to a group that makes far less of a wage across the board and it is also wrong to charge more for these products. This is why America ought to be pioneering the world in terms of equality and realistic goals with realistic models that depict the world or reality, not the world of mass media manipulation. Women can't take the blame for buying into what is sold when they are victims of a harmful market geared at pushing heteronormativity and imposing traditionalized gender roles.



CHAR PRIETO
Our Woods in Indiana

KURTUS LOCKE

There Was Once: A Magical House

There was once:
A Magical House
That cleaned itself,
So that it would be
Spotless for every guest
Who came and went.

No matter what the mess
That was left behind,
The Magical House

Would
Clean
Itself.

The whole family
Would go to bed
After spending
Time in the living room,
Cozy, with tea

Everyone would forget
The pillows thrown messily
Around, the blankets strewn
Across the couch, a
Red white and blue plaid.

When we awake each morning
And leave our rooms all messy,
We see the living room on
Our way out.

It has been cleaned
By our Magical House.

When we gather
In the Kitchen
To eat our breakfast,
The piles of dishes
Stacked nearly to the ceiling
And we leave for our day
To caught up in our own feelings,

We return home to find
An empty kitchen and the
Mess we all left behind.

These things help us unwind
Because of our Magical House,

We don't have to worry
About a thing.

In our Magical House
Where everything
Is always clean.

But one day I realized
When I saw, and I
Returned home
Too early to say:
That our house
Is not magic at all.

I saw a little orphan girl,
A dirty coal, with dusty face grin,
She was the one
That was cleaning up
All of our sins.

She looked me in the
Eyes and she said
Softly spoken,
Well for her young age:

“I am the one who cleans
Up after you,
When you leave. This
House is not magic,
There is no trick
Up any sleeve.
My job is so difficult,
So please: can’t
You just pick up and
Keep this place clean?”

I never knew that
We were the ones
Not being considerate,
Carelessly throwing it
All away, making
Such a mess.

Doesn’t that
Just sound
Mean?

KURTUS LOCKE
What If I Told?

What if I told
You this country
Was built on a lie?

The American Dream:

What if I told
You it was a lie?

It is something
They told you,
When you were little,
To make you believe
You weren't a slave.

What if I told
You this lie
Was a masked
Nightmare crusader,
Holding all of us down,
Who tried to get up?

What if I told
You that all
Your hard work
Was only exploitation
Hiding behind
A smiling, split mask?

What if I told
You how they use us,
Lie to us, force us
Into this thing?

What if I told
You all of this,
Would you even
Bother to dream?

What if I told
A different tale
One more peaceful
With few excuses:
How could we ever fail?

I would be too
A liar, telling
A false fabrication
To you.

What if I told
You, both sides
Are fucked,
Would you
Ever dream again
Or go blind
From taking the look?

What if I told
You about
A double dealt game
Of liars and crooks?

What if I told
You of a time:
Right now,
Where there is a man
Who never backs down?

What if I told
You, never judge a book
By its cover, that there is
A hero out there
Fighting for a better dream?

What if I told
You nightmares
Make better dreams,
Would you be shaken?

What if I told
You they used me too,
And they're going to
Use everyone,
Just like you?

What if I told
You of a past
Where values didn't align

Where the lie
And treachery
Have killed all the
Dreams like mine?

Would you
Still bother
To dream?

Never stop
Dreaming,
Tear it all apart,
Rip it in half,
Right at the seams.

Until the nightmare
Dissipates; with
A greater truth,
And we are
All once again
Free to dream.

HANNAH MAY
Mothers and Daughters

So what am I meant to do?
If sparing me,
Means killing you?
How am I supposed to move on?
When deep in my heart,
You're still my mom
It's beating me black and blue
I rip out my lungs
To give breath to you.
Tell me, what else can be done?
Fighting myself
To overcome--
I even tried talking to God
He never answered,
Would you call that fraud?

I guess he reminds me of you.
And of the times
You were silenced too.
You tell me, "when I'm dead and gone,
I'll fill your heart,
Like your favorite song."
But that statement is novel and new
I'm sorry to say,
There's no comfort in you.
This is no war to be won
This guilt is a burden

HANNAH MAY
Rot

I chipped a tooth a few months ago
A molar in the back
It's been decaying slowly I know
And the hole fills up with plaque

I have no money to fix it
And money melts in my hands
It's rotting every day
And my body falls away like sand

I spit fire when it comes to me
And pain hits me in the jaw
I imagine I am liquid glue
And I pretend the crack is small

I avoid the problem as it comes
Like it's a puddle in my way
But if I raise my umbrella soon
I'll catch a breeze and fly away

And the rivers come with me too
With the foliage and their branches
I hope they'll bring the fish too
All, what wonderful catches

We'll swirl around together
And I'll try to gasp for air
We'll level out way higher
When we leave the atmosphere

If we gather speed
And find ourselves a star
Which one should I call my home?
How far away is too far?

Will we find a friend in Orion
As he stands ready with his bow
Or will we hate his battles too
And tip-toe off his arrow?

Can we settle on dear Sirius
With all his searing heat?
With blinding steadfast loyalty
Will at early dawn we meet?

Or should we hurl towards Virgo
With her faithful steady stare?
Or will we find we hate her too
When we see my reflection there?

But then I find my Scorpio
With temptations will we meet?
So we balance off the loopy end
And find a new place to be

If we come back home
To our old familiar sun
Will the fishes come with me too?
Now that the journey is done?

No, they'll take the river with them
And come back down to earth
But I keep the twigs and branches
In hopes to feed the hearth

Then I'll hurl my body towards
The burning helium
And bring my body to ash
And let my rot return to dust

HANNAH MAY
Lost

The bird's chirping comes in fours
Pouring rain comes down in sheets
Sleet and snow cut through my skin
Thin blades of nature's icy knife

Life is teeming even in the fall
All the birds sit still perched
Besmirched by careless scented breeze
For reasons still unknown to me

I see a couple walking slow
Low to the ground the lovers dip
I slip into a spiraled thought
Brought on by these gentle winds

Thinned layers of muddy earth
Birth a slippery open slope
I hope the favored walking path
Lasts long after the cold sets in

When the birds do fly from home
Though they may still like it here
Near some warm and distant shore
The more they will be glad to go

I know they will return someday
In May when the world is thawed
The caws of well-remembered friends
Will end this cold and icy frost

Lost and sitting on this lonely bench
I quench my thirst for beauty still
I will the world to stay like this
And miss the birds flying over my head

LILITH MEREDITH
Count Your Bruises

You will die and I am sorry.

I will die and I hope you will be sorry, too.

I and you and so will her,

And so he will and so and so sorry.

We will breathe and our breath will
catch.

Fill your lungs with your hand on your belly,
it may be the last time.

They and we will breathe until we don't.

It is many days the only thing she can do
to keep from sinking.

One day you will sink and I will be
sorry for not holding your hand tightly enough.

For not saying “Say that again but let me look into your eyes this time.”
Sorry so many hands held your head down instead
of pulling you through.

I cut a cucumber wrong and I bled.
So sorry he is so fragile, the skin is so soft.
We are so soft, so gentle, so wet on
the other side of the skin.
He is so sorry he is so soft he should have
been sorry should have been harder than
the asphalt harder than his anger

he should have been sorry so
soft so vulnerable so much
softer than his heart.

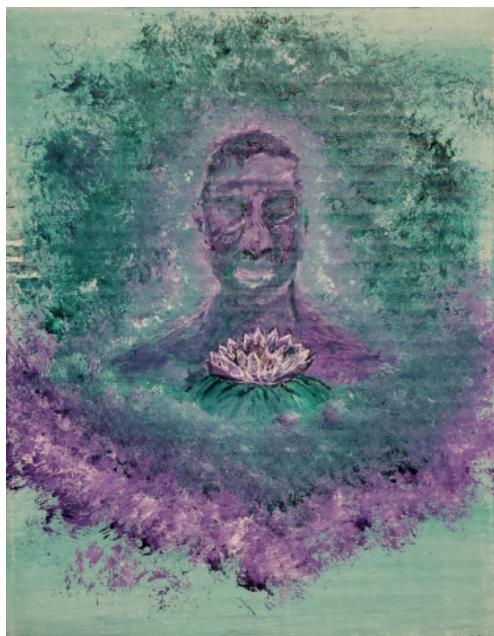
You will bleed and I am sorry.
We will bleed and ache from the sun and from
invisible beings we are just starting to
understand.

Understand she is just as soft as you.
Understand she also breaks so much so
easily under pressure under the weight of
your femur.
Understand that not a single one of us has
been loved enough and will still rip
when you drag us along the highway.

I caught the table with my thigh and
my skin bloomed with a sick purple puddle but
it could have been his boot or his baton.
Or his fist or his gun or his so so sorry heart.
Life is so hard and I am sorry.
I am sorry that we are the problem,
that you cannot fill your lungs and
feel her drowning. I am so sorry that
you are too angry to feel your own weak
fleshy body over the under, that you are
too hard so detached from your softness,
that you have been loved so little that
you have become so little in the face of fear.

He and she and we are dead and I am sorry.
That the people that prey think they
are too hard to bleed and that they will
never read this and never learn about
their own softness. I am sorry that we are
killing ourselves instead of lions or
old age or some disease that you can only
get from breathing too deeply.

I never looked you in the eye and held
your hand and listened to you breathe
and I am sorry.



LILITH MEREDITH
George Floyd

MAX MYERS
Deaths Bleak Harbor

along the Pacific Coast Mountain Range
where the sea below so often relentlessly pounds the jagged cliffs
upon which, towering over the deep blue, nearly black depths
stand ancient Redwood trees both solemn and receptive
that have stood watch for hundreds of years
silent witness to sun and moon, wind and rain
and the blanketing wet low fog that drearily, ghostly rises
from the warm air upon the cold sea
many an unfortunate ship having become lost
in the thick impenetrable grey murkiness
with the crew and captain frightened into silence
peering into the grey with straining ears blinded
 lulled onward as grey turns into darkness listening, listening
for waves at that sleepy low tide now unheard in the distance
barely lapping the feet of the tall and menacing cliffs
deceived by the damp mist's suppressed sound
were many such noble vessels and men
unaware of the impending next moments
unwittingly meeting their instant of truth
with groans and screams and cracking timbers
only to perish upon the grinding rocks
that hide just below the surface
as the tide changes and ships lodged upon the rocks founder
hungry, unforgiving, waves offering no escape
from the cold awaiting death
descend upon broken backed ships now splintering
rolling upon their sides helpless

cargos and men consumed in the darkness
soon it is mercifully all over
only the steady sound of the pounding surf remains
in the clearing fog at dawn no life remains
and it begins again
such is the way of the sea,
yet it seems that there is more
something stirs beneath the smooth surface
where shipwrecked treasures lay scattered
between rocks, sea weeds and sandy places
at the bottom in the darkness
beyond the reach of the sun's warm light
and the souls of the lost sailors drift
trapped in their last terrifying moments
wandering the depths searching the darkness

for the way out of their watery grave
home to their grieving families and loved ones
most whom have now grown old
or passed over and are long forgotten
in the sea only the fishes know the sailors' eternal fate
they the sea creatures with their own perilous existence
for the sea is tolerant though not friendly
and though sustains life will just as easily
call forth its due in an unsuspecting moment
on and on it goes as it has always gone
the story above and below having been written
of death's bleak harbor

MAX MYERS
Life

the fragrance of life lingers in my thoughts
from this silent place I watch
as memories of this day and other days
much like flowers in a garden
parading their attributes and adorning their moments
as an artist would pour forth impressions
shading and brightening as was the interpretation
such subtle whimsy unfolding
as I quietly watch from this silent place



SUZANNE GARRETT
Earth Angel

MAX MYERS
Sky Ranch

In the hills of the Pacific Coast Range, about thirty miles inland from Big Sur and about twenty miles south of that, in the Los Padres National Forest is a piece of property, privately owned, which is called Sky Ranch. The stories that were the history of times spent there are numerous. The people who visited there were of the most interesting I have ever known, writers, musicians, craftsmen, dreamers, lovers, peacemakers all! Many a-night with a jug of wine and a guitar sitting around a campfire singing, telling stories and star gazing. In love with being alive, and connected with each other, my heart grew gratitude every moment. Though I do not have any idea where these friends are today, we are still connected in the spirit world within. My blood tells me this is truth. Winters blew cold and uninviting, but springtime was quite nice up until about the end of May when it began to heat up. Summers were unbearable after the water disappeared, unless you went down creek. The view from there, which was a little higher than the surrounding hills was incredible, one could see for miles looking west towards the Ventana Wilderness. I witnessed some of the most wonderful sunsets you could imagine from there, sitting atop a boulder silently observing the beauty of the impressions. Sky ranch, with its twelve by twelve foot cabin, pot belly stove, completely off the grid, was everything from a place of refuge when home life became too much for me to handle, to a period when it was a commune, such an amazing time, and other times a meeting place, or a destination for travelers from across the country whom I had met in my travels, and invited to visit our Golden State, but it was always a spiritual sanctuary any time I could go there. I was just beginning to write poetry back then and the peaceful location lent itself to introspection as well as observations of the world around me, aiding my endeavors. All of the people who arrived at Sky Ranch were spiritual seekers on their paths, this we had in common. Some pines, scrub

oaks and lots of large valley oaks and sage brush. I have spent many days there from time to time, some richly enjoyable and some so lonely, bearing my angst filled teen years, having run away from home to escape myself. For the most part the memories are wonderful and treasured deeply. There used to be native peoples living in those hills, and on Eagle Creek, which ran thru the property. That stream would flow for a few months, winter and spring, but went underground about the end of May. There was a waterfall close to where we camped with two pools, one about ten feet above the other. Just above and to the left of the pools we had discovered a small opening in the cliff, just big enough to lie down and crawl into. It went back into the hillside about twenty feet or so and opened up into a cavern about twelve feet long and six feet wide with stalagmites and stalactites growing out of the rocks. In all there were three caverns back in there, and it was apparent that in the winter they would be flooded to some extent, linked to the stream in some way. In the heat of summer, they were cool and refreshing to go into. The creek was shaded by madrone trees and oaks, which made the watery pools quite refreshing. The waters toppled about five feet into the top one and from that one ran over and dropped about six feet into the one below it. I called the top pool Li Po and the lower one, which was much larger and swimmable, Tu Fu after the two great Chinese poets from centuries ago, 7th Century AD, both who were living in the mountains as hermits, or traveling thru the mountains writing poems. I felt a kinship with the writings of those two. The stream, although it went underground, came back up about a quarter mile downstream, and ran all year. It was shielded by trees on both sides as it crept through the narrow hollow flanked by steep hillsides both brushy and too slippery to hike. The stream widened as it went, allowing native peoples who had lived there more space alongside the cool waters. These foragers had left grinding holes in some of the boulders alongside the water, where they prepared their food. After about another quarter mile the creek reached a cliff that dropped its water about three hundred feet, or so, into the valley below, where it joined the Arroyo Seco River. Just before it toppled over the edge there was a massive boulder

which overhung the stream, and under the shade of that boulder was a hole about eight feet across and fifteen feet deep constantly fed with the clear cool waters. The spirituality of the place was vibrant; one could feel the spirits of the people who had taken pleasure in bathing, and foraging, simply living in that place. It was serene, wild, natural, and I could go deep inside myself to that state of oneness. I was in harmony with creation there. Now I am too old and not in physical shape to go back there again. The hike down the stream was hard which required entering the waters and diving under boulders to pass farther downstream, or going up the steep and slippery hillside to bypass the exposed rocks that nature used to protect the other side and its serene, almost secret beauty from the world at large. I am of the belief that other than the native peoples, who used that place as a summer camp, there haven't been more than ten to fifteen people who have set foot down at that end of Eagle Creek. I am content with my memories from my teens and twenties spent in those hills, those mystical hills. That memorable Sky Ranch, is a large part of who I am.

GEORGE MCCLENDON
Earthy Spirituality

Plows wide and heavy upon her womb
Tear Earth's body, open her
To receive Water's flow.
Seeds from Air take root in Her dark places.
Offspring warmed by sun's Fire
Grow now green within Her body.

LIFE

You plow the soil of my soul
Your grace opens me
To spirit seeds.
In my dark places
Passions, love
Burn inside me
And I shout

YES



CAROL MCCLENDON
Winter's Rest

GEORGE MCCLENDON
Sierra Discovery

“You’re not lost, the trees know where you are.”

Native American saying

High Sierra many trees

So much knowing

I stand among them humble

“Look up” they say

“Listen to us” they say

Nature’s pipe organs

Music divine.

Back to earth

Sounds resound within me

“Listen—Listen

Not lost:

Here you are.”

Found!



JENNIFER MCCLENDON
All Creatures Cry Vote

EDUVIJE “MEL” MORALES
La curandera

I wanted to tell her,
but I couldn't
My mother said
A ella no le importa
And I believed her.

I'm not a curandera
She says,
You have what you need.
I pick up my bag
and continue my day.

From a young age
my mother taught me
to be self-sufficient
to only trust myself
A world out to get me.

Mi ansiedad
Mi depresión
I inherited
Like a family heirloom
Told it was sacred.

La nueva terapeuta
Asks invasive questions
I answer,
Sometimes truthfully.
Can you heal me?

EDUVIJE “MEL” MORALES
La exorcista

I reopen scabs
I can never get closure
Estoy viva, I’m alive
A gentle reminder,
That somehow I survived.

You’re no exorcista
They whisper in the dark
Want to try it our way?
Desperate to be free
I nod “Okay.”

Obsessed
I remain in the dark
Reliving my trauma.
This is all I’ve known
So I called it home.

My anxiety
My depression
Demons in my head
Say *We will never leave*
Unless you wind up dead.

I begin a ritual
My mind begins to fade
My body feels relaxed.
For once, I am happy
but it doesn’t last for long.



ARTHUR LEMNER
The Elusive Woman of Willendorf

EDUVIJE “MEL” MORALES
Gorda no la quiero

Gorda no la quiero
This is what Fat-phobia sounds like
She says she's looking out for me
How she tells me she cares
She wants me to live a long, healthy life
Like the chinitos I like so much.

Gorda no la quiero
Literally translates as
I don't want her fat.
This is how I lose my identity,
Before I was a daughter, a scholar, a poet
But now I'm just a fat person.

I'm the fat girl,
The extra weight determines this,
The doctor confirms it.
I can't eat like I used to
My serving size must be cut in half.
My happiness shouldn't come from eating.

Food is a blessing,
but I've abused it,
Gluttony is my sin.
I must repent by fasting
Even when I'm hungry
This is my punishment.
Fearful of God's wrath I starve myself,

After not eating all day,
I decide I deserve a meal
I mean a feast
This is how it starts
A cycle of self-destruction.

I'm 20 lbs lighter now
My mom's so proud of me
Mi hija sigue echándole ganas.
My mom encourages me
To keep up this bad habit,
But she doesn't know any better.

I have no energy to go to class,
I get lightheaded if I stand up too
fast,
I can't concentrate on anything
Even if it doesn't feel right
At least it feels good
Is this how good feels?

Losing weight should make me feel
better
Stop, you're hurting me!
My body cries
I turn to the mirror
My reflection screams

¡Gorda no la quiero!

This is how I silence myself,
Disguise it as self-love,
So anyone who cares
Can't tell me it's wrong
Or call my mom
Wrong for being so proud.

I crave the sweet things,
But my diet forbids me.
It all feels like a metaphor;
I always feel so empty!
Am I insatiable?
Or is it something more?

Life without love is lonely,
I want to be distracted
But media reminds
Good guys don't love fat girls.
This I must accept because
Gorda no me quieren.

CUMBIA PADILLA
A Long Conversation with the Train Tracks in Napoli

I'm on a train from Naples and it is hot. So very hot. I think you can find many mirrors along train tracks.

What your morals are

How selfish you are

How far you'll let people suffer

And who you would really suffer without a doubt for.

I sat for so long and watched two done-up older ladies stand in their Italian leather heels

Something inside of me said they stood near me because they knew I would give in, that surely I'd give them a seat

I wasn't feeling my best, and selfishness overcame me

I refused.

A younger woman in front of me flushed with beauty and her hair in a braid offered hers immediately

And so the older of the two took it graciously

The woman with the braid suddenly appeared so very beautiful to me.

So kind, and simple

Of course she would, I thought, she is a good person

And I am not

I sat and wallowed in my guilt.

Closing my eyes, trying not to think

Why me why me? Why not the young man sitting beside me?

A little girl had come to sit across the aisle from me, her mom and baby sister down on the floor

I looked at the little girl, nearly passing out from the heat

And knew I would risk anything for her.

I wanted to give her my water, but didn't want to scare her, wanted to help

her all I could

Why the young girl and not the old girl? And me, the middle girl, with middle thoughts

And so what do I find on these train tracks?

I will get on my knees for the young

Question my elders

And debate along with myself and choose what is half right

Meaning what is good and right, but maybe too late, and maybe not for the right person

I want to be better

The train tracks tell me that I want to be better.



ARTHUR LEMNER
Jeannie Bullet

CUMBIA PADILLA
I Have Been Loved by Other Layers of the Earth

I walked into the room that had been my first own room

The sheets were changed for colder weather

It looked smaller

It smelled

The same

I remember that smell

“I’ll be here for a year. So much will change.”

Today I thought maybe I will feel like this year has never happened

I’ll go home and go to my bagel shop

And it’s the same

But how could I

How could I ever forget the things I have endured and marveled at?

The way to the night market from KK’s house back and forth

The running in the underground bus tunnel

So I don’t miss my ride home to Toto’s house on that rickety little bus 772

How could I forget?

How could my heart ever forget?

I told the girl taking my place:

When it rains, put the fan toward the glass door, not toward your bed, to dry
your room

On the first floor you can’t forget the little light for the bathroom is on the
outside.

I always forgot and KK Mama and Papa laughed so much

There is a little key on the inside of the fence, if you lose your house key

When it rains, the huge window in the living room is magical. When there’s
a typhoon, it’s mystifying

Maybe you will learn another language, but I have learned little of the way a

Taiwanese lives

The fan, the light, the key, the window

Has any time passed?

Of course, just look at your hands, look at the skin on your face, you have
been loved by other layers of the earth



ARTHUR LEMNER
Ruben Crow

CUMBIA PADILLA
They Named Me Yu Xin, 郁昕

Sometimes, I fear,
That I am really universe hopping. Or plunking.
That when I wake up so abruptly and breathless from dreams and nightmares,
I have to pull myself like a spoon out of molasses
And only barely make it back.
Maybe that's why this body I live in is always screaming for travel
Maybe my natural self is a bundle of starlight
Speeding faster than anything in between universes
And that is my only substitution



GISELA RAMIREZ
Orígenes

ANAHÍ PIÑA
I Represent

I represent the ones who never made it to the border.

Those who were told that they weren't good enough.

I represent the dreams of many whose desires were to be born in the U.S.

I can tell you from experience that it's all not too great.

My parents left behind their home, familia, trabajos y su cultura to give my brothers and me a better future.

Han pasado 19 años desde la última vez que han ido a sus tierras y visitado a sus familias.

I carry the weight of my family on my shoulders.

There are people who have doubt in me, who wish me the worst, who stop being by my side,

and who left me when I needed them the most.

It's hard, I will tell you that, but I don't easily give up.

I am a 1st gen here in Chico State, I am an older sister, I am a role model, I am a Mexican-American,

I'm a Catholic, and I'm a fighter for others and myself.

I am grateful to be here because I'm learning to find myself.

Quiero dar las gracias a mis papás porque por ellos algún día voy a cambiar el mundo por sus sacrificios.

I will find a way even if it seems impossible and I will help others to be treated right.

I'm proud of myself and I will continue to push through and let nobody tell me "no."

And if you really knew me, you'd know that I will rise up.

CHAR PRIETO
Just in Case Again

It was a dreadful night in November, but we had so much hope. We were expecting her to win, actually, she was wining, but we were skeptical. Bob had organized a party for the future first woman president and Nicolai Larsen, the artist, arrived with a colorful box filled with packets of powdered lemonade. On the box there was a puppet with orange face and bright yellow hair and it read: "Just in case." Packets of Kool-Aid and lemonade rested inside of the box and it was signed by Jim Jones. We all laughed naively at the joke and admired Nicolai's creativity by yelling: "Yes! Lemonade! Just in case!"

Watching the results of the election on the big TV screen made us nervous and once in a while we would stare at the "Just in Case" box afraid that our fears might become a reality. Moments into the party, the night turned into a nightmare: she was losing. How could that be? Mad and disappointed, we all left the party and went home. Frustrated and angry I jumped in bed thinking that there had been, in fact, a mistake and she would become the first woman president.

That night I was dreaming about the "Just in Case" box and how we were all drinking the Kool-Aid and dying with Jim. I woke up sweating from the dream, and in fear, I said to myself: "No. It was a dream. She won!" I could not sleep so I turned on the TV and to my dismay, I witnessed the worst nightmare. I saw an orange blurb with a bright yellow hair and people with red hats cheering on the screen. From those blurred images I overheard the chanting: "Lock her up!" "Lock her up!" I wished right then and there, that I had the "Just in Case" box near me so I could grab a packet of the Kool-Aid and drink the lemonade.

It is now 2020 and another election looms near. It could happen again. If it does, I will sure be ready to drink the Kool-Aid.



NICOLAI LARSEN
Just in Case

CHAR PRIETO
An Immigrant...

...is

To feel lonely

Very distant

Out

Of

Place...

Solastalgia...

Emotional

Existential distress

Environmental

Change...



ALLISON MAHAFFEY
A Good Day for a God Day

MARC RUMPH
My True Family

Once there were two brothers
walking down the beach
one wanted to learn
the other wanted to teach
the older brother spoke
and the younger brother heard
the eagle showed the hummingbird
the wisdom in his words
now the eagle is a dragon
and the hummingbird a hawk
and we fly together everyday
just the two in our own flock
because the swallow fell from her perch
while her mentors still remain
to teach others in her name
and while it's a shame
we blame ourselves
it's not our fault
but we don't feel the same
with the tears in our eyes
we sit and we cry
wondering why
why couldn't we lift her to the sky
no....no....no our words are not hollow
we will keep flying together for the swallow
and soon enough others will follow
we carry her with us and will share her with you
we will give you the love she gave as only we knew
until then we remain yours always and eternally true



CHAR PRIETO “WARHOLA”
Homage to Notorious RBG

French



KEN FRIES
En ratissant les feuilles

In collaboration with Jacqueline Paillet

Parfois je taquine la muse
dans un parc carnet à la main
dans un café

avec des amis d'écriture
n'importe où
dans les coins et les recoins de la journée

Les poèmes naissent en ratissant les feuilles

avec un vieux râteau en bois
aux dents émoussées
je prends mon temps

scrute l'étang
retire les feuilles du fond
m'émerveille de la lente danse du koï

Cet étang
une seule larme
et toutes les eaux du monde

Comme j'aimerais à nouveau naviguer

Au-dessus un épervier de Cooper sur une branche

me surveille, plein d'espoir
vais-je déranger un délicieux rongeur

je peux ramasser quelques champignons, des glands
me pencher pour observer
une écorce tombée, de la mousse, la terre

heureux de sentir, dessous
sous mes doigts
et autour, des fourmillements de vie

Des mots s'élèvent de mon esprit et de mon cœur

dans le murmure du vent et de l'eau
je trouve la musique
du vers

quand en rêve je ratisse
même le petit tas de feuilles de notre chêne
j'écorche la peau, peigne les cheveux, et

retirant mes gants
caresse la fourrure, chaude et vibrante
de la Terre bien-aimée

Italian



EUGENIO N. FRONGIA
Aspettando Godot...

Mi naban sos amigos: “Prega a Deus chi passet custa pestilentzia!”

Invano cerco il volto, o Grande Assente!
E il morbo infuria e il panico imperversa.
Nel dolore e nella paura immersa,
Te prega e invoca l’angosciata gente.

E t’invoco’ col cuore e con la mente,
In tempi di malaria e di Spagnola,
Di Coronavirus, Sars, AIDS ed Ebola,
Sperando nel tuo aiuto, vanamente.

Come Godot, per millenni t’hanno atteso;
Ma desio ed attesa furon vani.
Vuote le spemi, vuote son le mani,
Ma del dolore sempre grava il peso.

Nessuno ha mai veduto la tua faccia,
Perche’ l’Assente di se’ non lascia traccia

EUGENIO N. FRONGIA
Sos tempos de su disamore

Solu e sezzidu in custu bellu logu,
Inghiriadu ‘e montes e marinas,
Passo sas lantas oras matutinas
Abbolotadu e chena desaogu.

Custos non sunu tempos de laore,
De cojuonzos, de ballos e festas.
Tribulados sos coros, is caras mestas,
Custu est su tempus de su disamore.

Su Entu no nos battit prus cantones,
Ma fogu e fumu e ‘nde suffrit sa terra,
Frade e sorre si faghene sa gherra,
Peleana sas cittades cun sos biddatones.

Malaittu e senz’anima, o Tirannu,
Chi has postu custa terra a ferru e fogu,
E che tiaulu has treulau su logu,
A tottus has apportadu solu dannu.

O Bentu, Bentu, chi sulas in s’jerru
E jughes vida o morte sutt’is alas,
Abbranca custa Bestia per is palas
E iscarrigalu in sas jannas de s’Inferru!

Japanese



IVANA COLIC
シースルー

ひとり雨の交差点

透明の私

噛み締めている

「希望」なんかごめんだ

もう飽きたのさ

だから

憂いの嵐に踊って

涙に酔って

孤独を求めて

不幸の避雷針になり

踏み出そう

苦しみながら

濡れて帰ろう

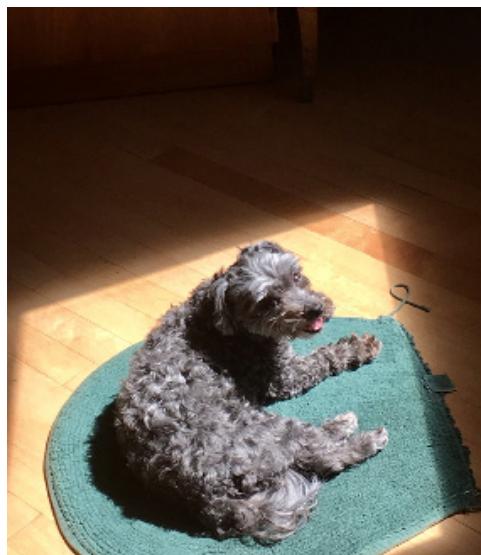
ANNIKA EDSTROM
トトロ、どこ？

昔々、めいとさつきはまたトトロといっしょにあそびたかったです。さいごに会ってからもう何年もたっていました。トトロは女の子達をいい気分させます。

女の子達がトトロを見つけるのを、私は手伝いたいから、一生けんめいそうしているときに、私の犬のキキの鼻をたたいたら、私はめいとさつきの前に現れることができました。私の赤ちゃんのようなそんざいのキキは、スタジオジブリの世界と私達の世界をつなげる魔法です。

私とキキ、それからめいは、今いっしょにトトロの歌を歌って、さつきはオカリナを吹いています。すると、遠くから何か点のような物が見えてきました。それがニヤニヤとしながら近づいてきます。

トトロに会えて私はうれしくて、それが本当かどうか信じられません。めいとさつきは走ってトトロのおなかにとんでいきます。女の子達は安心しました。



ALEXANDER H. LOPEZ 一ロペズ・アレックスアンダ
月

お月さんが眠ると同時に太陽が昇る。
誰もが一日中それを褒める。

そして、太陽が寝るとき、
誰もまっていないお月さんが昇る。

それを時々、誰かが賞賛する。
その時、暗いお月さんが夜空で最も明るく輝く。



ALLISON MAHAFFEY
Pollen Wars

ROLAND RIDER
魔女のぼうし

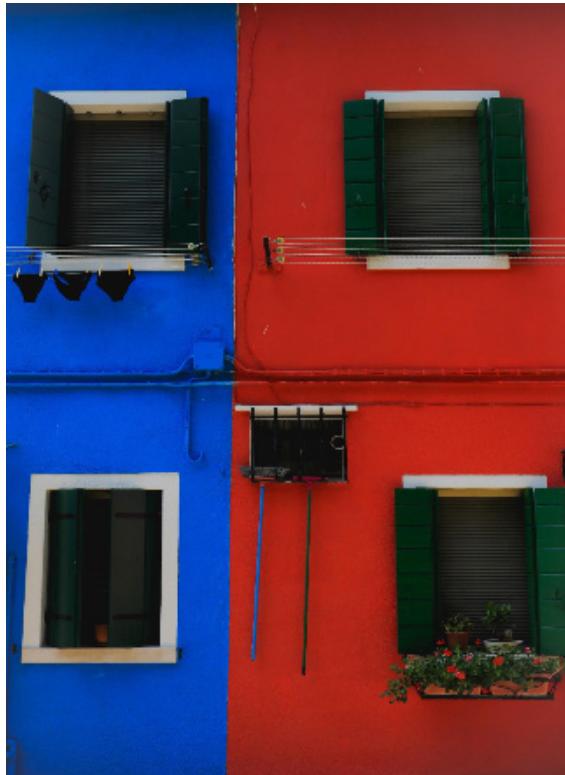
昔々あるところに、やさしい男が湖に住んでいました。ある日、男と彼の犬はぼうしを見つけました。犬は、
「これは何ですか。」と言いました。男は、
「ぼうしだと思う。」と言いました。犬は、
「わああ、魔女のぼうしがある。」と言いました。男は、
「多分そうだね。」と言いました。それから、男と犬は一緒に魔女の家がある森の中に行きました。男は
「すみません、私たちはあなたのぼうしを見つけました。はい、どうぞ。」と言いました。魔女は
「すごいね、ありがとうございます。」と言いました。犬は
「彼女は可愛い。」と言いました。男は
「うん。」と言いました。—おわり—

SAMUEL SCHMIDTBAUER—サミュエルシュミットバウ
グリザイユの魂

世界樹は灰色だ。
果実は落ち、花は咲かない。
生と死を繰り返しの中
僕は捕らわれ続いている。
これが僕の呪いか。罰か。
僕の手は血で染まる。
僕の過去の行動は取り戻せない。
汚れた魂が無くも贅い、
尚其の魂は叫ぶ。
最後の夢を捨てた償い、
だが笑顔で居続けている。
…なぜ…?
だって、
僕はまだ他人を助けなければならない。
この世界の愛は果てしない。
全ての存在は滅びるようデザイン
されているにもかかわらず…。
祈りが赦しを得られずとも…。
この一色の世界で、
それでも僕を覚えていてくれますか。

SAGEJANE SNYDERBEHR
回転

ゆっくりとちやくちやくと回る。
灰色の日と冬の間を。
カジュアルなシャツから厚手のジャケットまで
この地球のもう一つの回転
星の間をゆっくりとちやくじつにころがる



ALLISON MAHAFFEY
Bright Bikinis

JOSHUA XIONG
ある日

今日の海は寒かったです。
かわいい夏の帽子を被った女の子を見ました。
彼女は彼女の友達と楽しそうにしていました。
海岸を歩いていると、海の中に大きなイルカを見つけました。
バス停に行く前にイルカの写真を撮りました。
そこで若い男の子と話しました。
彼はここにお姉さんへ電話をあげるために来ました。
家に着いたのは夜でした。
今日はいい日でした



ERIC MATTSON-PRIETO
Beauty during the Pandemic

Portuguese



EDUCAR
PARA CRESCER

ROCHELE BAGATINI
Moça de saia

Quando ouviu o primeiro estrondo, assustou-se. Estava em casa sozinha, como de costume. Ela e a gata, na verdade. Mas o barulho que veio em seguida era revelador, não podia ser outra coisa. Quando você escuta um corpo caindo no chão de um andar alto, ainda que nunca tenha ouvido antes, você reconhece. Ela tinha certeza. O apartamento era pequeno, de um dormitório, ficava no primeiro andar e tinha um pátio que acompanhava a sala. Estava deitada no quarto, devia ser umas duas da madrugada. Tentava dormir mas, como sempre, a gata a impedia, derrubando o que tinha em cima dos armários e prateleiras. Depois do segundo tiplófti na rua, a bicha agitada sumiu para debaixo da cama.

A sala ainda não tinha cortinas e precisava ser atravessada para se chegar na porta de entrada. A primeira coisa que ela imaginou é que, se o corpo estivesse no pátio, quando ela passasse pela sala a caminho à porta de saída, esse corpo desfigurado se arrastaria em direção a porta de vidro para pedir ajuda. Pensar nisso era absolutamente apavorante. Ficou concentrada, tentando ouvir algum barulho, um vizinho abrindo a janela, perguntando se estava tudo bem. Silêncio. Os vizinhos também disfarçavam. O quarto tinha uma janela para outro prédio, um andar mais baixo. Sem acender a luz, espiou entre duas pás da persiana. Estava lá. No pátio da loja. Apesar da penumbra, a lua cheia mostrava que se tratava de uma mulher. Caiu de bruços, a saia levantada, deixando a calcinha à mostra. Respirou fundo de alívio, o pátio não era o dela. Ficou ainda uns minutos prestando atenção se o corpo mexia, nada. Se uma mulher vai cometer suicídio dessa forma, ela não escolhe usar uma saia.

Era uma noite fria, fazia uns sete graus. Colocou um casaco grosso por cima do pijama e desceu para avisar o porteiro. Subiram os dois.

“Tá vendo ali?”

“Putz, a moça foi cair justo na loja que está para alugar.”

“Você chama ajuda, por favor?”

“Essa moça caiu do quarto andar. O vizinho que chegou com ela saiu não faz nem quinze minutos, disse que se ela tentasse sair não era pra eu deixar. Eu disse que não podia impedir ninguém de sair, daí ele disse que ela não ia sair porque ele tinha trancado ela, e deu uma risada. Acredita que ele falou bem assim?”

“Chama a ambulância, o síndico, a polícia, faz alguma coisa rápido!”

“Sim, vou chamar tudo já, tenho esses telefones prontos pra essas coisas”, saiu correndo e parou na porta, “fica cuidando ela aí, qualquer coisa dá uns gritos, acorda os vizinhos, não deixa ela sair daí.”

“Combinado, vai logo!”

Como ela sairia dali? Parecia mesmo que a moça estava morta. Aproveitou para abrir com cuidado a porta da varanda e buscar o cigarro que estava lá fora, saiu pé por pé.

“Socooooooooorro, me ajuda!”

Voltou para o quarto escuro, ficou um tempo encostada na parede ao lado da janela segurando o barbante da persiana, mas não tinha jeito, puxou e abriu o vidro.

“Socorro, me ajuda!”

Ela viu os olhinhos brancos da mulher se movendo na sua direção, mexia só um pouco a cabeça e um braço. As pernas, à mostra, não se moviam.

“Já chamamos ajuda, deve estar chegando. Fica calma, vai ficar tudo bem, não tenta se mexer. Tá com frio?”

“Tô.”

Pegou um coberta peluda e amarela, atirou o mais próximo que pôde, um cálculo meio nervoso, mas deu certo. A moça conseguiu alcançar a coberta e puxar pra cima do corpo, acabou escondendo a calcinha.

“Chamou mesmo ajuda?”

A voz dela saía meio rouca, meio falha.

“Chamei, sim, daqui a pouco você vai ouvir as sirenes.”

“Tem cigarro?”

“Peraí.”

Tirou metade do maço da carteira e colocou o isqueiro dentro.

“Se eu jogar a carteira acha que consegue acender?”

“Consigo, joga, pode ser o último... da minha vida!”

“Sente dor?”

“Já senti piores, não sinto muito o corpo.”

Mirou perto da garota, dava para perceber que era jovem, a carteira quicou, e caiu afastada. Com um tanto de esforço, a garota alcançou os cigarros, abriu com a boca e puxou um com os dentes, deixou cair o isqueiro no chão, acendeu, fumou com o queixo escorado no chão.

Observando todo o quadro lá embaixo, notou que a planta de Aloe Vera que estava em cima da mureta do pátio se encontrava despedaçada junto com a mulher no pátio da loja. Deduziu que ela caiu em direção à mureta, bateu derrubando o vaso, foi o primeiro estouro, depois caiu no outro pátio, o segundo estrondo, um andar mais baixo. Ela terminou de fumar, girou o pescoço e deitou a bochecha na lajota, tinha o rosto bem machucado.

“Se eu ficar paraplégica eu tô ferrada!”

“Mas você tá mexendo o pescoço.”

“Eu disse paraplégica... não tetraplégica. Chamou socorro?”

“Sim, já vai chegar”.

Não queria sair dali porque tinha dado a palavra ao porteiro, e não queria parar de falar porque tinha escutado que era importante manter a pessoa acordada. Mas já passavam vinte minutos. Ela estava em dúvida se o porteiro tinha chamado o socorro. Será que o vizinho que estava com a menina tinha feito algo com o porteiro? E se descesse, e ele estivesse lá e fizesse alguma coisa com ela? Foi até a porta, fechou todas as trancas e voltou para a janela.

“Eles já estão vindo.”

“Tô me sentindo tonta, acho que vou desmaiar.”

“Tenta ficar acordada, se dormir pode acabar morrendo. Viu a lua hoje?”

“Eu sinto que vou morrer, não quero morrer.”

“Ah, todos vamos, do pó ao pó, mas você não vai morrer hoje, caiu de

boa altura e ainda tá viva, é porque não é pra morrer hoje. Você tem alguma religião?”

“Não.”

“Eu tenho, eu sei umas orações que ajudam nessas horas.”

“Eu tô grávida, chamou mesmo?”

“Essas coisas demoram, já tão vindo, acredita em mim. Grávida? Como você cai de uma janela nesse estado? Gêmeos?”

“Não.”

“Tá de quanto?”

“Mês, mês e meio.”

“...7...8...9... Então vai ser de gêmeos, sim. Eu tive um namorado de gêmeos. Ele era egocêntrico, metido, mentiroso, mas gostava da mãe, é verdade, visitava, ajudava financeiramente, sabe? É bom ter um filho de gêmeos.”

Ela fechou os olhos.

“Ei, fala comigo.”

Trinta minutos se passaram, um silêncio constrangedor, só o motor da geladeira e a sensação de que uma plateia ouvia tudo, uma plateia fria. Ela tremia escorada na janela, nariz vermelho, miúda, quando ouviu o uó uó uó fraquinho aumentando. Fechou o vidro e as persianas, ficou espiando. Eles conseguiram pular pelo pátio do vizinho, arrombaram as portas, uma coisa de cinema. Polícia, resgate, bombeiros. Viu o porteiro apontando para sua janela quando falava com o policial. Colocaram a menina numa maca. Quem sabe ela gostou daquele cara por duas horas e uns trocados.

A gata não saiu mais debaixo da cama naquela noite, a casa toda silenciou, ela enfim, dormiu exausta.

CLARICE BORGES MATOS
Borboleta depois do trovão

Um cálido dia
Aspirei distraída
Pequeno furacão
Espalhou-se dos dedos
Até a ponta dos cabelos
Remeximento molesto
R o m p e n d o
Es tru tu ras
antigas
Destapou padrões daninhos
Soprou-me aos olhos o invisível
Eu: mar, cachoeira
Água que transborda
Em lágrimas
Libertárias...
Porque dói
E como é bom

ALINE VANUCCI
Conflitos

Caminhando pelas ruas, contemplamos uma nova direção.
Buscamos por mudanças
Tantos questionamentos
Será uma nova revolução?
Na multidão nasce uma ideologia
No meio da calamidade
A filosofia
Calado, sinto aflição pelos conflitos
É a procura por respostas de algo desconhecido.
Se no futuro viveremos a incerteza
E o presente vigora o caos
O passado....silenciosamente procuremos
Uma reflexão sobre a beleza e o superficial.
“Observo quantas coisas existe de que não preciso para ser feliz”
Palavras sábias de Sócrates
O mesmo
Caminhando pelas ruas, contemplando as mudanças
Filosofando
O presente então, do que necessito?
O futuro, uma nova conscientização
onde exista igualdade para todos, e muito amor no coração.

SOPHIA VANNUCCI
Transformação

Que dentro do coração
Sublime
a Força
do amor
da paciência
da tolerância
Para que..
a prosperidade
e a abundância
torne-se
FELICIDADE
e
LUZ.



GISELA RAMIREZ
Un comienzo nuevo

Яussian



ELLIE MAKAR-LIMANOV
Баклажан

Я с детства помню, как мама “жжет” баклажаны. Она заворачивает их в фольгу, кладёт на решётку нашей газовой плиты и готовит их прямо на открытом синем пламени, от чего на кухне начинает пахнуть летним костром.

Это — не русский рецепт. Я долго пыталась добиться от мамы, откуда он — черновицкий, турецкий или арабский… В любом случае, я знаю точно: мама научилась жечь баклажаны в Израиле, кажется, от чьей-то тёщи. Она вообще всё научилась готовить в Израиле: суп из батата, запеченную цветную капусту, израильский салат два раза в день, иерусалимские артишоки. Во всём было много чеснока, много специй, много лимона и много зелени. Все русские же блюда мама как-то странно преображала: даже в винегрет она клала острые мелко нарезанные арабские солёные огурцы.

Несмотря на нерусскую кухню, в нашем доме всегда была русская речь — она переливалась из домашних бесед в телефонные разговоры, в лекции по радио, в книжки, которые мне читали перед сном. Я выросла на русских сказках, песнях и мультильмах, и где бы я ни была, русская речь означала уют и привычную компанию. В каждом городе, в каждой стране непременно находились русскоговорящие знакомые — в Гренобле, в Лондоне, в Стокгольме, даже в Сан-Пауло. Эта неизменность меня как-то даже не удивляла: казалось естественным, что этот русскоговорящий мир расползся по всему белому свету. Мы тоже, переезжая в разные новые места, всегда брали его собой, и таким образом мы всегда были дома — в Америке, в Израиле, в Германии, в Бразилии, в доме, в квартире, и в машине…

В машине, например, я провела много часов, когда родители устроили поездку по Норвегии. Мы долго ездили по разным красивым местам, а во

время путешествия слушали музыку, особенно песни. Я любила громко орать со своего заднего сиденья, что “на далёкой Амазонке не бывала никогда”, потом плавно переходила к моей “тоске по Бричмуле” и под конец напевала какой-то Александре о ясене, который ещё «надышится Москвой».

Особенно мне нравилась какая-то странная песня о баклажане. В ней был какой-то непонятный диалог, кто-то разговаривал с «Леонидом», что-то пелось о бровях и о усах. А припев пелся так: «джан джан джан, джан джан джан — дунем, плюнем, в рот засунем целый баклажан». Мне эта песня очень нравилась: я все её слова знала наизусть. Только я в ней ничего понять не могла: откуда там взялся Сталин? Что такое «Магадан»? И причём тут баклажан?

Я вообще многоного не понимала в русских песнях и разговорах взрослых и, когда с чем-то непонятным сталкивалась, лезла к папе с вопросами: «Папа, что такое кацо? А кто такой Бродский? Где это он сидел? И что такое Чойболсан? А Биробиджан? А кадриль?»

Чаще всего меня, конечно, интересовала не это, а совсем другое: «Папа, каким ты был, когда ты был маленьkim? Ты ходил в школу? Ты с кем-нибудь дрался?» Папа на такие вопросы любил отвечать так: «Это для меня слишком сложно», или «Я не помню: папа твой стал старенький», — то есть “отстань, не мешай!”.

Но иногда он всё же что-то рассказывал — о том, как занимался математикой в кружке, о том, как в школе однажды подрался с учительницей физкультуры. Рассказывали часто и разные знакомые, и хоть они не всё, что говорили, объясняли, что-то я всё-таки усвоила: так я узнала о том, как пятнадцатилетний Юра Гандельсман уехал из домашнего Ташкента в Москву со скрипкой завёрнутой в газету, об ужасных московских роддомах, где рожала Лена Трахтенберг, и о том, как Иван Павлович ребёнком ходил на охоту в сибирский лес, где однажды повстречался с медведем.

Много лет я собирала разные осколки этой не понятной мне советской

жизни. В голове воцарились страна Россия и город Москва, уже не сказочные, но и не вполне настоящие. У меня медленно составилось какое-то псевдо-географическое понимание этого города: папа родился на улице Семашко, где-то рядом царил мечмат, консерватория и ЦМШ, между всем этим растекалась улица Арбат («стрданное название»), а на Патриарших прудах Сатана беседовал с Берлиозом перед тем, как трамвай отрубил ему голову. И так всё на своих местах.

Эта «Москва» незримо присутствовала в моей жизни. Она появлялась почти каждый вечер, когда собирались знакомые. Они разговаривали, вспоминали, и их ушедший мир воскресал и вновь начинал жить.

Разговоры велись, например, такие: «Русский народ — уникальный народ»; «Русский народ — народ рабов»; «Без чувства юмора — не прожить»; «Ну, дайте человеку историю закончить, а?!» (Обычно это была история о том, как Юра Гандельсман в юности был на гастролях в Японии и там питался исключительно сублимированной картошкой, которую он готовил на электрической плитке, привезённой с собой); «А если в номере розетки нет, можно лампочку открутить»; «И запах какой!»; «Да жрать, ребята, было нечего, что поделаешь! На что деньги уходили! Чемоданами везли книги — еду домой, а у меня в кармане «Доктор Живаго», «Воспоминания секретаря Сталина» и Оруэлл. Чемоданами везли!»

В какой-то момент я поняла, что мои родители, увы, уже не молоды, и это папино «не помню» меня стало пугать. Что будет с этим миром, неизменно оживавшим по вечерам? Он же забудется, пропадёт из истории — и всё исчезнет! Ведь папа уже забыл, а я ещё не поняла. И мне вдруг очень захотелось понять — понять мир, который всю жизнь крутился вокруг меня, понять жизнь моих родителей, понять то место и время, в котором они выросли.

Я стала всё больше и больше возвращаться к детским воспоминаниям, к тем же русским песням и книгам, стала интересоваться советской культурой и Россией. Вспомнила также и «джан-баклажан» — нашла и

переслушала. Песню о баклажане, как я потом выяснила, из спектакля «Московские кухни» написал Юлий Ким, известный российский бард, поэт и композитор. В пьесе описывается история из жизни советских диссидентов 70-ых и 80-ых годов. Песню с «баклажанным» припевом исполняют «два закадычных друга, Илья и Вадим», главные герои пьесы, изображая на кухне беседу-во-сне между «Лёней» и «Осей». Лёня — то есть Брежнев; Ося — то есть Сталин:

И снился Лёне дивный сон
И явственный, как былъ:
Что будто бы танцует он
Со Сталиным кадриль.
Спокойно так, солидно,
Хотя и не того...
Немного вроде стыдно...
А в общем, ничего.

Я переслушала всю пьесу — переслушала песни о сталинских лагерях, об опасной игре между простыми людьми и начальством, о демонстрациях, о ссылках, о вечерах на кухне, где наконец-то можно было высказаться и где всегда кипел бурный разговор.

Я осознала, что эта же самая культура московских кухонь много лет назад перешла сначала в небольшую израильскую кухню, потом — уже в моё время — в нашу просторную американскую. Пока советская жизнь возникала в вечерних разговорах и туманилась где-то под потолком, я, сидевшая в просторной квартире, где на стенах развешаны картины и тихо играет джаз, даже представить себе не могла, о чём на самом деле шла речь.

Я выросла на осколках культуры, которой уже нет. Россия мне странна и непонятна, в Москве я ни разу не была, Советский Союз рухнул за десять лет до моего рождения. Я выросла среди слов, которые я не понимала, но которые всегда звучали в моей голове. Я в собственной культуре — иностранка. Я, наверное, никогда до конца не постигну этого времени

— никогда не пойму, какова была жизнь в советской коммуналке, жизнь в стране, в которой посылали людей ни за что в лагеря, в которой нельзя было свободно говорить и читать, в которой надо было часами мерзнуть в очередях на улице, чтобы купить продукты. Я смотрю родному папе в глаза, спрятавшемуся за «не помню», и понимаю: он совершенно из другого мира, из мира, в который я не способна проникнуть и который я не способна понять. Ведь что для меня — русский язык? Почему он мне так интересен? Зачем мне гоняться за этими советскими привидениями? Отчего у меня этот зуд, эта страсть понять то, что я понять никогда не смогу?

А может быть, всё проще, чем кажется. Для меня русская речь — это дом и детство. Поздние вечера — мягкий голос Валюши, моей «родной няни», мама, разговаривающая по телефону, папа, читающий сказку и вечно на полуслове засыпающий.

Русская культура мне и близка, и далека, и естественна, и непонятна. Вот так я до сих пор и не знаю, почему Юлий Ким вписал в свою песню баклажан. Но вот он, этот баклажан, сожжённый на плите, размятый вилкой, стоит у нас сейчас на столе, а вокруг него — московская кухня, перемещённая в просторную кухню в штате Мичиган. Знакомый непонятный разговор, знакомые непонятные люди. И хотя я не все могу в них понять, я этих людей люблю — они мои. И это моя культура и мой баклажан: русский-нерусский, израильский-неизраильский, еврейский-нееврейский, понятный-непонятный, но точно мой — и очень вкусный.



ELLIE MAKAR-LIMANOV
Monochrome



ELLIE MAKAR-LIMANOV
Sleeping

Spanish



JULIÁN ALONSO
Haikus de Covalagua

El cuco canta,
la luz está llegando,
yo me despierto.

Vuelan los pájaros.
El cielo se sostiene
entre sus alas.

Bajo la escarcha
la hierba está esperando
un nuevo día.

El frío hiere,
dibuja sus estigmas
sobre mi piel.

Huye la noche
con los primeros rayos
de la mañana.

Escucho el agua.
Él conoce el secreto
que el tiempo oculta.

Abro mi mente.
El paisaje me empapa,
moja por dentro.

¿Qué es ese canto?
No sé de dónde viene
pero emociona.

El sol se asoma.
Arden los verdes copos
de la arboleda.

Cantan las aves.
La vida se despierta
y me saluda.

Las nubes pasan.
El cielo permanece.
Yo también viajo.

Cielo vacío.
Me rodea el azul,
su luz me envuelve.

Tocar las piedras.
Sentir en nuestras manos
su escalofrío.

En el arroyo
mi imagen en el agua
se marcha lejos.

Sobre una roca
el lagarto descansa,
se bebe el sol.

Hojas que caen.
Regresan a la tierra
que les dio vida.

La tarde suena.
Vibran alrededor
las mariposas.

Para el viajero
el camino es un río.
Fluyen los pasos.

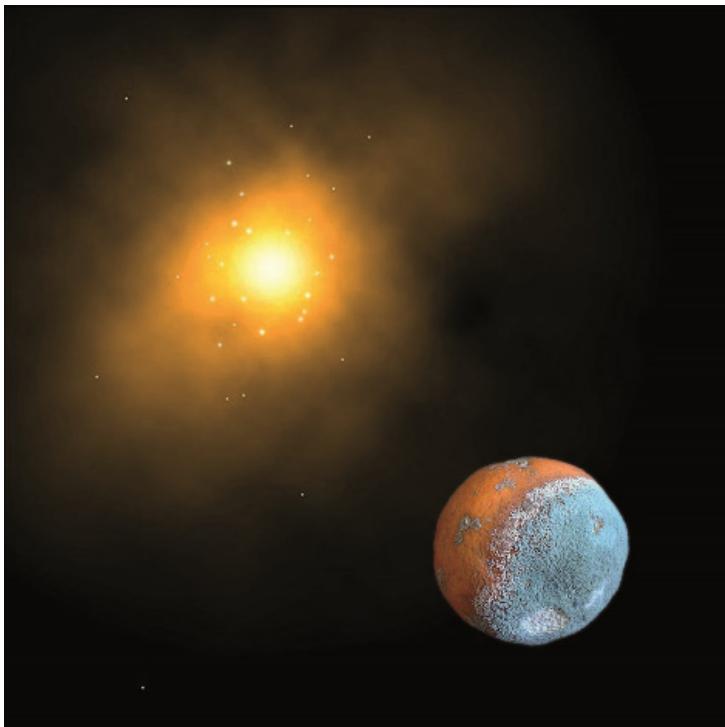
Llega la lluvia.
Sus puñales de agua
hieren mi cuerpo.

Llega la nieve.
Con su sábana blanca
cubre mi cuerpo.

Grito mi nombre.
El valle está vacío.
Contesta el eco.

Cardos azules.
Los toco y se defienden
con sus espinas.

Peregrinando
al dios de la semilla
van las hormigas.



JULIÁN ALONSO
Planeta naranja



JULIÁN ALONSO
Timidez

UVES MIGRATORIAS



JULIÁN ALONSO
Uves migratorias

JENNIFER BARAJAS
Aislada

Aislada, desesperada, llorona
No siempre era así.
Yo ni sé cómo entender esta realidad ahora.
La vida puede cambiar al instante.
Un minuto manejamos la rutina diaria,
Día tras día es lo mismo.
Al siguiente momento, ¡sorpresa!
Pánico, ansiedad, preocupación, frustración
¿Qué va a pasar?
¿Quién tiene las respuestas?
Distanciamiento social –
¿Es la solución?
¿En quién podemos confiar?
Consideramos más preguntas que respuestas,
Pero sobre todo percibimos el valor de la comunidad.
Estoy aislada para ayudar a las más necesitadas.
No pienso en mí misma, sino en la colectividad.
Así me levanto el ánimo con solo ver
Los actos de bondad,
El amor hacia la gente.
Este aislamiento no dura para siempre,
Pero los efectos sí.
Entonces me quedo aislada,
Excepto no tanto
Porque me rodea el amor de la familia

CLARK COLAHAN

La independencia a base de los estudios y la firme voluntad

Cristina Fuérez y su hermana menor, Margarita, nacieron y fueron criadas en una casa tradicional de adobe situada en una pequeña granja cerca de la aldea de Panecillo, Ecuador. Chica y oscura la casa, de una sola habitación sin ventanas, tuberías ni electricidad, está situada arriba en la colina sobre una parcela con mucho declive que su abuelo había logrado conservar mediante un litigio legal de dos años. En los sesenta del siglo pasado, se vio obligado varias veces a caminar cien kilómetros hasta Quito para obtener los documentos legales imprescindibles, en la época cuando Ecuador por fin puso fin a la servidumbre del huasipungo. Muchos de sus vecinos no lograron lo mismo y perdieron los terrenos donde habían habitado durante generaciones. Esa defensa valiente por sus derechos, a pesar de los desafíos, sigue viva en sus nietas.

La nueva familia edificó otra casa un poco más lejos de la de los abuelos, pero una noche se la llevó una inundación relámpago. Todos se escaparon sólo por buena suerte. En el torrente la familia perdió todo lo que tenía y tuvo que empezar de nuevo desde la nada. Agotada por las exigencias interminables de manejar una familia, con todos sus movimientos dictados por una suegra típicamente dominante, sin apoyo ni el afecto ni atención que todos necesitamos, la mamá se murió de cáncer muy joven, al tener Cristina y Margarita respectivamente ocho y cuatro años. Las niñas vivieron por un tiempo con la abuela y por eso aprendieron a cuidarse la una a la otra y a ser personas fuertes. Cuando le era posible, su papá dejaba aparte el papel masculino usual, haciendo la comida para los tres en los años cuando las jóvenes habían crecido y salían del hogar para trabajar. Margarita, al cobrar un sueldo por primera vez, se compró una estufa de gas para liberarse al fin de cocinar con la leña. Por un acto de benevolencia, una mujer mestiza-blanca que era dueña de un terreno adyacente ayudó a Cristina, a menudo brindándoles a ambas chicas la oportu-

tunidad de realizar más cosas que suelen llevar a cabo las pobres muchachas campesinas que han perdido a su madre. Este apoyo les animó a creer en sus propias capacidades y les hizo descubrir que un cambio positivo puede surgir inesperadamente. Cuando abrieron una escuela primaria en su pueblo, ambas niñas pudieron asistir y entonces estaban esperando a que llegara Anna Taft y sembrara progreso dentro de la comunidad, primero como maestra y luego como fundadora de Tandana.

Dicha fundación ha sido un evento transformador para el área y para las dos jóvenes. Para Cristina significó que de repente su mundo se había expandido. En 2008 solicitó participar en el programa de intercambio cultural con la zona del suroeste de los Estados Unidos. Tandana le concedió la beca para ir a EEUU y en compañía de jóvenes de otros países, caminó por las montañas, bajó el Río Verde en balsa y vivió y trabajó con la Nación Hopi de Arizona. Al volver a su pueblo natal, se puso a trabajar utilizando su destreza manual extraordinaria y su talento artístico, haciendo y vendiendo joyas y bordados.

Al pasar por los años, después de haber vivido en los Estados Unidos, terminado el colegio y mantenerse económicamente por sí misma, Cristina se ha dado cuenta de que tiene las cualidades necesarias como para dirigir su propio negocio. Por tanto, ha recibido otra beca de Tandana y está estudiando administración de empresas en la universidad. Para llevar eso a cabo, trabaja como joyera de lunes a viernes y luego viaja a Ibarra para tomar clases los sábados y domingos.

El apoyo de Tandana ha producido un impacto igualmente fuerte en la vida de su hermana Margarita. Con ayuda de la fundación, ha podido terminar el colegio y conseguir trabajo en la guardería de un centro comunitario en el que muchas veces organizaba eventos para recaudar dinero. Pero ella, como Cristina, quería seguir adelante y estudiar más y así recibió la primera beca de Tandana para sacar un título universitario, en su caso de contabilidad. Margarita se dio cuenta de que ese campo de trabajo era idóneo para las indígenas que tienen las aptitudes apropiadas. De hecho, de veinte individuos que se titularon el mismo año, sólo cuatro eran hombres.

Para Margarita el próximo paso fue conseguir su trabajo actual como contadora y gerente de la oficina de Tandana. Ella es una risueña amiga de los alumnos, quienes pasan por la oficina para pedir ayuda con los deberes y además ella es consejera y guía de los voluntarios de la fundación. Margarita es en su casa anfitriona, ayuda a los voluntarios y trabaja como intérprete en las brigadas médicas que dos veces al año llegan del extranjero. Todo esto lo hace ella, además de manejar la granja, lo que implica cocinar, limpiar, criar gallinas y cuidar de un ternero. Su padre trabaja asiduamente en el campo todos los días y comen los frutos, o bien los venden si sobran. Como resultado de su trabajo duro y su cuidadosa economía, ha podido recientemente ahorrar suficiente dinero como para comprar terreno y mudarse de su diminuta casa a otra nueva de cuatro alcobas construida de bloques de cemento. A su nuevo hogar Margarita lo llama su casa digna y fija, o sea, un hogar bien merecido y permanente con el que hace muchos años había soñado.

Las dos hermanas no quieren abandonar la seguridad de sus terrenos y casas. Por otra parte, como dice Margarita, casarse podría estar bien, pero lo más probable es que los esposos fueran muy dominantes y machistas. Las dos, como buenas feministas, han estudiado sus opciones, reconociendo sus vínculos de afecto entre sí y para con la comunidad indígena y piensan bien sobre su futuro. Poseen una excepcional alegría y esperanza después de tantos años de sufrimiento y tienen un fuerte sentimiento de gratitud por lo que ellas mismas y otros también, han aportado a la calidad de vida de Ecuador a base de los estudios y la firme voluntad.



BARBARA CODDINGTON
Ecuador

PABLO DEL BARCO
Domingo de Ramos podado

(Frente al Monasterio de las Huelgas, Burgos)

Pasan los vehículos lentos por la calle
como si no quisieran despertar al virus
y recibir su castigo de aureola contaminada,
circulan en silencio, temerosos del ruido
que parezca no respetar las normas del gobierno,
el vuelo de las aves lo sustituye sin prudencia,
los graznidos aplauden el silencio conquistado,
el monasterio está mudo, no danzan las palmas
no hay campanillas monacales recreando los oídos
ni el incienso atraganta las fauces con dulzura,
todo está fijo, inalienable, agazapado en la espera,
sostenido por sombras con unos aires cansados
que repiten posturas petrificadas por los siglos,
no se escuchan niños ni zapatos que arrastren
bajo los mantones la elegancia festiva de la fecha,
no hay corrillos tabernarios ni colillas sin cabeza,
no sabe el viento dónde ni cómo ejercer su maestría,
no hay nadie para desecharle un cálido saludo,
van los pájaros a su aire, el polvo duerme a su pesar,
todo a punto para comenzarlas costumbres del día,
todo fijo y latente como en un cuadro de El Bosco,
todo entero, frío, quieto, sin apenas circunstancias;
abro la ventana y no se cuela el paisaje como suele,
es solo una fotografía que arrastro y recolocho
en un álbum cotidiano de este siglo, el pasado

o el que viene, que asoma distraído y sin forma
para decírnos que la prisa se acabó y se atenderá tan solo
a lo que en el hombre existe de fantasía y corazón,
el cuidado de niños, ancianos, poetas y los magos
que habitan más allá de lo real, más acá de las sirenas
y todas las razones desvestidas de amaños y fortunas

¡ FELIZ 2020 !

pa qué nos vamos a engañar...



PABLO DEL BARCO
Feliz 2020

PABLO DEL BARCO
El hotel impropio

Era ella, seguro, tenía su pelo, su andar medio bailón, su mirada lejana de miope antigua, se puso enseguida a mi lado buscando protección, íbamos por una especie de puente extraño, en el aire, con la vista al frente, ella no me miraba por miedo a perderse tal vez en mi mirada, yo no la miraba para que sintiera la seguridad de que yo sabía dónde íbamos, hubiera descubierto el engaño si me hubiera mirado, yo sabía dónde iba sin saber el camino, solo conocía el final que llevaba embutido en la cabeza. Sons estaba hermosa aquella tarde, se había puesto sus mejores pelos, yo con gabán y sombrero, como para ir al mejor hotel de la ciudad. Hacia él nos dirigíamos, embriagados por lo que imaginábamos como una noche eterna de pasión. Ninguno expresaba nada pero los dos lo sabíamos; lo habíamos soñado.

Yo financiaba la operación, sin reservas; ella había dicho, al fin, que sí y no era cuestión de ceremonias inútiles. Eligió el hotel a su gusto y contra el mío: bautizado con el nombre de un monarca, vicioso como casi todos ellos, me ponía un nudo en el estómago, me conducía sin remedio a la época de la historia que más me desagradaba, pero... El puente atravesaba un parque florido; era la época de lluvias y resplandecía, aunque no me emocionaba porque mis ojos se perdían por el rabillo contemplándola. Iba como distraída, entramos en el vestíbulo pomposo del hotel lleno de azulejos de color y lámparas de bronce que parecían de oro, nos saludó el estirado portero como si fuéramos príncipes, aunque no se percató de quien era yo, visitante ocasional del establecimiento en las reuniones de los premios literarios de los que era jurado; pero la literatura me desvestía y yo no era entonces comparable; o la elegancia del traje me configuraba en otra dimensión más social de incalculable valor. Recogimos la llave de la habitación reservada, de número múltiplo de cuatro, manía de la que no era capaz de librarme. Era enorme y lujosa, para bailar dentro, para perseguir liebres, o a una dama con un látigo, una pistola, de juguete, e iniciar una conquista a la brava.

Miré a Sons, seguía distraída, le atraían más los espejos y las alfombras que yo. Imaginé que lo haríamos en una de ellas, tejida con la figura de un fauno arrogante y bien armado, mientras sostenía su figura en los espejos reconstruyéndose por encima del ser habituado a la mediocridad. No me miraba, enseguida me hizo un gesto; lo entendí: ¡vámonos!, y salió de la habitación. Iniciamos una larga y agobiante peregrinación por los pasillos del hotel, pensé que me quería cansar para dejarme más delicado y sutil. Dos largas horas de bajadas y subidas entre genuflexiones serviles del personal del hotel, como si alguien apretara a nuestro paso un mecanismo que les doblegaba la cintura en nuestro honor.

Todo esto lo había soñado unas noches antes y no terminaba de llegar el final deseado, como si una maldita fuerza de rechazo lo impidiera. Podía ser venganza, pensaba, pero no sabía por qué, qué razones la impulsaban a hacerlo, y el tiempo se alargaba sin fin, la realidad me llevaba a unos caminos que más tenían de irrealidad que de transcurso real; pensaba que todo era un mal sueño del que necesitaba escapar. Y el pensamiento me parecía también disparatado, vaporoso, incluso algo impertinente. Ella caminaba con la mirada al frente, sin ver por los lados, erguida, sin saludar a los que pasaban a su lado y le dispensaban un grato saludo de bienvenida y deseo de felicidad. Yo esperaba que en la intimidad de la habitación se despojara de esa actitud al tiempo que se liberaba de sus malas razones. Y no fue así, no fue, no se dio la circunstancia, mientras mi desazón se disparaba alocadamente: no la favoreció, no se “desnudó”; Sons emperifollada y sin mirarme, ¡qué miseria!

Llamé por teléfono a la recepción del hotel solicitando una refección. Cuando llegó la camarera con su delantal y cofia almidonados Sons se levantó automáticamente y salió, tal vez presa de un ataque de celos. No hizo caso de mis llamadas, de mis indicaciones, de mis razonamientos; tuve que salir detrás, avergonzado, para no perderla, aunque perdía el fenomenal banquete que nos habían traído; hambre tenía yo más que suficiente, aunque no tanto como para maldecir a Sons, que ahora marchaba veloz sin mirar atrás, dueña el mundo. Otra larga y cansina caminata sin mirarnos, como desconocidos, por

una parte de la ciudad que me era familiar, a la que yo le era familiar; el traje elegante y el sombrero dificultaban ser reconocido, y también la presencia de ella, sobre todo, que atraía la mayor parte de las miradas. Yo solo causaba una leve curiosidad, de refilón y precaria; no era el protagonista, de lo que me alegraba sobremanera dada mi natural timidez que, inconscientemente o no, se apoyaba en ella. Ella era la reina y como tal se comportaba. Yo era el esclavo a punto de desmoronarme con la rotura del sueño que tanto tiempo había perseguido y acariciado.

Sons se negaba a hacerlo; se lo pedí por favor, de rodillas sobre la hermosa alfombra, que era parte importante de mi sueño, por última vez, pero nada conseguí, después de haber obtenido la grabación original del samba de Mocidade “Sonhar não custa nada!” Ou quase nada, mi samba preferida, alma y vida de mi adolescencia, consumido hasta hacerlo pura nostalgia, injertado en mi sangre, allí, en el apartamento del Jardim Botánico carioca. Se negó rotunda, inflexiblemente, a mi sueño: verla bailarlo sobre sus dos patas traseras, como tantas veces habíamos ensayado en la alfombra de casa. Ni ladrar quiso al compás, solo un leve guiño dejó escapar, de desaprobación, la firma de su negativa. Tanto empeño, tanto dinero invertido, tanta ilusión que Sons, mastina de raza, destruía en un solo instante de realidad. Me entraron ganas de ladrar, y, justo en ese instante, desperté. Sons dormía apaciblemente a mis pies.

PABLO DEL BARCO
Es tan fácil ser poeta...

deja las alforjas al borde del camino,
camina descalzo sobre la hierba fresca,
mira al sol, que te abanique con el viento
y el susurro de las amapolas que danzan,
bebe el agua cristalina del arroyo,
sigue su cauce hasta un nuevo horizonte cada día,
conversa con los peregrinos sin nombre,
acompaña de la mano a un niño sin preguntarle
por su lugar de origen o la raza de los padres,
aprende de la sabiduría de animales y plantas,
con la rama de un árbol dibuja sobre la arena
un corazón profundo que no lo borre el mar,
escucha las nanas de tu infancia y las canciones
de los poetas que escriben con palabras sencillas
en la soledad de sus cuevas a la luz de un candil,
mírale al mundo a los ojos y escúchalo sin ecos,
desnúdate sin miedo al ridículo y a las habladurías,
desde lo más alto del monte más alto grita tu nombre
para asegurarte que vives y proclamar tu fe
en el hombre agobiado por el engaño y la burla,
aprende a ser de nuevo un niño, sal a la calle,
vístete de arañazos, del barro de la vida y de la sonrisa
ingenua que es pura poesía para este mundo infeliz.

PABLO DEL BARCO
Libro, libertad

cientos de libros se alinean en los estantes,
pacientes, flacos a pesar de su sabiduría,
guiñando sus lomos como damas en la barra
de un bar abierto a todas las edades;
hoy es día de fiesta en la biblioteca,
bailes, canto, poesía, hasta la madrugada,
yo quiero danzar con el más feo y el más bello
de los asiduos participantes en el granado silencio
de la aventura, el saber, la cultura y la filosofía,
a gritos, con infinitas trompetas y tambores,
las letras cogidas de la mano girando sin cesar,
abrazadas estrechamente como dulces amantes
visualizando todo el mundo bajo las estrellas,
desgranando sus ordenadas páginas sobre mi cabeza
hasta convertirla en el elevado cielo de mi vida
y, mientras respiro, ofrecer mis bocanadas
de ritmo y rima, mis alforjas de frases y palabras,
mis disfraces de mago y las burlas del payaso,
mi dulzura de panal y mi acidez de limón,
para que en tus entrañas pergaminos el libro
que te hará ser para un futuro nombre y luz,
masticando la palabra libertad libertad libertad.

GUSTAVO GAC-ARTIGAS
El virus de la muerte

Avanzaba sin piedad por el mundo. Nacida en un pequeño y miserable pueblo se vengaba diezmando a su paso a aquellos que la habían ignorado, aquellos que la habían despreciado, aquellos que la habían olvidado.

Como el Príncipe Próspero me encontraba encerrado en mi escritorio, pensando que la había derrotado.

Había tomado todas las medidas para transformar mi casa en una fortaleza.

Una primera barrera la instalé en la puerta de entrada, desinfecté hasta las cadenas que levantaban el puente levadizo que llevaba de la entrada para el auto a la puerta de mi casa y esta la pinté de rojo para despistarla a ella, para que pensara que ya había pasado.

Bloqueé la entrada trasera para impedir que por ella se deslizara cualquier huésped no invitado.

Al interior coloqué múltiples barreras dispuestas en estudiado desorden para confundirla en caso de que a pesar de los obstáculos lograra deslizarse al interior, barreras que, desde mi escritorio me permitían vigilar toda la casa y sus diferentes salones.

Dispuse dos frascos de desinfectante en aerosol en lugares estratégicos para mi defensa personal.

Cambié las ampolletas por unas de diferentes colores para dar una variación al tiempo de encierro: un espacio azul para recordar el cielo que no veía, uno verde que me recordara las planicies de mi país de origen, uno negro, para ocultar mis pensamientos, y finalmente uno rojo, mi color favorito, para enfrentarla si fuera necesario.

Al igual que el Príncipe Próspero me sentí protegido. La había derrotado, había logrado prolongar mi existencia en mi encierro.

La pantalla de mi computador se iluminó y de entre los reflejos de luz surgió una imagen. Alta, esbelta, una capa roja flotando al ritmo de los suspiros de los condenados y unos labios rosados, sensuales, irresistibles, la peste, sonriendo me prodigaba el beso fatal.



SUZON LUCORE
19 Faces of Covid-19

GUSTAVO GAC-ARTIGAS
Yo, la peor de todas

los hombres me quieren pura,
indefensa en un altar,
costilla flotante en el esqueleto del idioma,
me quieren pura
y olvidan que nací puta
que adoro revolcarme en la boca de los desposeídos
que el barro es mi elemento

me quieren sombra
y olvidan que soy faro

me quieren sombra
para ellos ser luz

me quieren prisionera
para forzarme a cantarles loas

me violentan para que desaparezca
me adulan para que los adule
me conceden libertad vigilada
para encausar mi actuar

Yo me deslicé de la entepierna del crucificado
donde ladinamente me escondían
y antes de desaparecer caí en los senos de la puta arrepentida
acaricié sus pezones gastados por el abuso
subí a su pensamiento y le susurré

soy puta hermana
levántate y salgamos a cambiar el mundo

Y aquel que nos desea en un altar
que nos quiere puras
nos quiere sin deseo
nos quiere desaparecer bajo su férula
nos quiere pisotear bajo su mando
esconder bajo su manto
y olvida que somos madres
que gozamos
que damos vida,
que, de puras,
¡su puta madre!
que la belleza de la palabra
se deslizó
oliente
embadurnada
ardiente
desde nuestro sexo
y que sin “nosotras”
el “nosotros” no existiría.

GUSTAVO GAC-ARTIGAS
Sueños

El español se enfrenta a un alerta lingüístico: un cambio amenaza al mundo. Pese a la evidencia de la calle, a las palabras que se filtran por la red, algunos intentarán negarlo, otros, acompañados de algunas otras, exclamarán “¡no es científico!,” y se refugiarán en el pasado, el de ellos, no el mío.

Otros dirán: “dejemos que sea el tiempo quien hable”, y, en silencio, se alejarán bailando en punta de pie por los pasillos de la academia, ligeros, ligeros como una pluma seca, pesados, pesados como el plomo que se transforma en letras para besar las páginas de un libro, cerrando, cerrando las tapas para que el beso no alcance los versos de la poeta, del poeta, las aventuras de un hidalgo caballero, la “o” que quiere transformarse en “a”, la “a” que quiere transformarse en “x” o en “e”, el amor eterno que quiere transformarse en amor en movimiento, en amor efímero que por ser efímero es eterno.

En sueños me transporté al pasado, las aguas se habían agitado y fui testigo de cómo las guarisapas, entrelazadas sus colas, salían del océano a caminar por este mundo para darle brillo y esplendor a la lengua.

Celosos, los guarisapos cortaron la hermosa colita que caía de la a, y le pusieron un varonil y dominador sombrerito transformándola en o pretendiendo que por siempre, en el reino del lenguaje, ellas quedaran bajo su dominio.

Desperté cuando las aguas nuevamente se agitaron.

Al pasar de un sueño a otro, al sexto día, me dormí en el Génesis, aquella olvidada historia de la creación. No estaba seguro si dormitaba por ser un ser, un asno, un buey, un siervo, un amigo en casa de un siervo, o un forastero que pasaba por la historia, y en el descanso, escuché una voz celestial que decía: – tomé el barro de la tierra, lo humedecí con mis lágrimas puesto que ella estaba destinada al sufrimiento y creé a la mujer.

Al verla tan hermosa, pero solitaria, decidió crearle un compañero a su

imagen, (no olvidemos que en esa historia el creador era hombre), sacó, una costilla de la mujer y creó al hombre. El creador, con disimulo le quitó la colita a la “a” de la última letra de Eva, se la colgó al hombre y los mandó a caminar, hacer el amor y fructificar por este mundo. Del hombre se supo que murió a los 930 años, de Eva no se conoce la fecha exacta, al parecer el hombre ya había comenzado a sumergirla en las tinieblas.

En el tercer sueño, caminando en el desierto me encontré con la segunda persona y en ese encuentro usé mi lengua para comunicarnos; la abracé y, llomando de emoción, le dije: “nosotros”. Éramos dos y fuimos uno; fue así que sin darme cuenta la dominé y comencé a dejar fuera la otra mitad de los seres humanos, las humanas.

“Es que no tenemos tiempo”, me dije, “la vida es tan corta y tan justificable el olvido, en ese nosotros las incluimos”, me justificaba, “al fin y al cabo ellas provienen de nosotros”, insistí olvidando la leyenda, olvidando que somos nosotros quienes provenimos de ellas y desperté sudando frío en un frío sillón de cuero pensando, “y si fuera lo contrario y si por economía nos hicieran desaparecer y en el nosotras fuéramos nosotros los que, por economía del lenguaje, desapareciéramos. Nosotros los subordinados”.

Me pregunté, cobarde yo, si tendríamos la fuerza de luchar por la igualdad, por nuestro reconocimiento, si exigiríamos cambiar la regla, y por economía, dado que la economía rige el mundo, buscaríamos encontrar un terreno común en el que la colita de la a, o el chulo sombrerito de la o, se cambiaron por una vigorosa e en la cual ni ellas ni nosotros domináramos.

En ese mundo al revés, – ¡atacaron la regla! –, clamarián las guarisapas más recalcitrantes; –la regla es maleable –retocaría el varón subyugado–, y por ello puede cambiar.

Desperté sudando frío, “debo tener más cuidado al escribir”, me dije, “no sea que me reprochen: tú también, Brutus, y me expulsen del reino del lenguaje enviándome a las tinieblas de la desigualdad eterna, y por lo eterna, efímera”.

MARISOL HUERTA NIEMBRO
Amor de perro

Para mis hijos

- Me gustan tus ojos querido Ringo.
- ¿Solo cuando te miro o al ladear?
- Así como los tienes me bastan y te quiero.

Y el perro, siempre fiel,
se sacó por un rato
los ojos de sus órbitas
para hacerla feliz.



GISELA RAMIREZ
Preservando

MARISOL HUERTA NIEMBRO
El borracho del parque

Hoy me encontré un borracho
tirado sobre el suelo,
estaba boca abajo
con el torso desnudo.

Al lado una botella ya vacía.

Se acercó un barrendero
y él se enfadó muchísimo.

Rompió contra el asfalto su botella
gritando que allí estaba
su corazón,
corazón de poeta
capaz de propinarle a su mujer
una paliza,
capaz de arrepentirse,
que nunca más lo haría.

Y allí cortó una rosa del jardín.

También miraban otros.

Me fui de allí
y no hice nada.

Pétalos y cristal
cortaron nuestros pies.

MARISOL HUERTA NIEMBRO
La forma del otoño

después de recoger
los trofeos efímeros
las siete toneladas
de huellas de tus pasos

después de recogerlo
y contar sin tapujos
las esquinas de casa
y darles un abrazo

después de haber vivido
mil noches en tus sábanas
con la piel incorrecta
donde las pecas fluyen
buscando direcciones
tal vez equivocadas

a partir de aquí
la forma del otoño
el fondo de la noche
los pájaros marinos
vivirán a nuestro lado

después de examinar
los diarios de viajes
los libros de los hijos
que ahora viven en casas
con puertas giratorias

hijos que se defienden
en la luz de otro arroyo

después de haber cruzado
los lapsus de memoria
que ondean la palabra
sobre el color intenso
de un libro de poemas

CARMEN ÁNGELA LÓPEZ ÁLVAREZ
Lazos de sangre

Dedicado a mis hermanos del alma José y Rodolfo

A mis tiernos años,
mis “mayores” decretaron
esta máxima como
irrefutable verdad:
“La sangre pesa más que el agua.”
No sin antes recalcarme que
no había vínculos tan inquebrantables
como los de la sangre....

Quise confiar en sus palabras,
pero la vida me enseñó
todo lo contrario....

Ellos me engañaron,
me mintieron,
me embaucaron.

La genética es una gran mentira....
Una fantasía fugaz
Una arbitrariedad de Dios
que nos hace creer--estúpidamente--
que unos cuantos genes
nos obligan a la solidaridad
a la fraternidad
y al amor....
Es una mentira,
pura hipocresía,
algo que no es cierto....

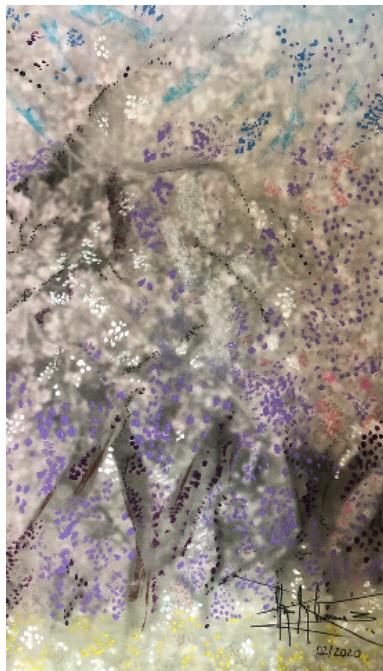
Me he topado con muchos Caínes
que movidos por la codicia
e impulsados por la envidia
le asestaron
--sin miramientos--
un puñal a su hermano...
o lo venden cual Judas Iscariote
un jueves cualquiera
por menos de treinta monedas.

He visto al Poderoso Caballero
sacarle garras al cordero
y que puede más...mucho más
que cierto fluido grana
mal coagulado
en las venas frías
de unos entes despiadados....

Mi larga vida
me ha brindado
una importante lección
diametralmente opuesta
a la de máxima de mis “mayores”...

Los lazos de sangre son una ficción,
una farsa,
una ilusión
ideada por unos cuantos ingenuos
que viven la alucinogénica falsedad
de la bondad de los humanos.

Porque no hay fuerza
sobre la tierra
que pueda imponer
el amor....



ALINE VANUCCI
Chico Beauty

CLAUDIA ORTIZ
Un corto reencuentro

Cuando te vi, te sentí
Cuando te sentí, reviví
Cuando reviví, sonreí
Cuando sonreí, te conquisté
Cuando te conquisté, te amé
Cuando te amé, me diste vida
Cuando me diste vida, te reviví
Cuando nos unimos, nos sentimos
Cuando nos sentimos, nos vemos
Cuando nos vemos, nos reconocemos
Cuando nos reconocemos, nos perdemos
Cuando nos perdemos, nos sepáramos
Cuando nos sepáramos, nos buscamos
Cuando nos buscamos, nos reencontramos
Como almas gemelas, separadas por la distancia
Generada por el ego, el temor y el miedo a perdernos de nuevo.

CLAUDIA ORTIZ
Poema para mi padre

Hoy duerme la vida de mi padre,
Descansa su perdida memoria,
Sumido en un eterno sueño
Donde no existen, verdades ni mentiras.

Hoy quiero padre, decirte que te amo,
Hoy quiero padre, agradecerte lo enseñado,
El amor entregado, tu sabiduría proyectada.

Hoy quiero padre agradecerte por los paseos a los ríos,
Las caminatas dominicales, el arequipe del valle,
El amor a la vida y la vida dada a tus manualidades.

Hoy te veo padre, en cada estudiante de escuela,
En cada pájaro que vuela, en cada canto del turpial, del sinsonte.

Hoy te veo padre en cada uno de tus hijos,
Unos hacen trabajos manuales, otros educadores, otros empresarios,
Pero todos llevan algo en común, y el lema que nos enseñaste:
“No dejes para mañana lo que puedes hacer ya, el mañana no existe.”

Hoy duerme la vida de mi padre,
Pero vive en nuestros corazones
Llenos de gratitud y admiración por la dedicación
Y amor que profesó a sus hijos.

CLAUDIA ORTIZ
Lecciones de la pandemia

Vivir en soledad no es estar solo,
La mayor soledad se vive cuando
No sabes compartir contigo mismo.
Cuando vives en el pasado y en el futuro
Y te olvidas de que lo único que existe,
Es el aquí y ahora.
Cuando buscas lo que no se te ha perdido
Fuera de ti y te olvidas de que la felicidad es
Una decisión y no un estado anímico.
Cuando te concentras en lo que no tienes
Y olvidas que no estás
En un hospital aislado de todo y de todos.
Cuando añoras lo que tuviste y viviste,
Más no lo que vives y sientes en el momento.
Cuando nos concentramos en lo que pudo haber sido
Y no fue, en lo que quisiéramos y no en lo que es.
Cuando ignoramos lo que está ocurriendo
Y buscamos culpables para justificar lo ignorado.
Cuando la palabra es lo único que ofrecemos
Y no obras ni acciones.
Cuando pretendemos que el mundo cambie
Y no lo hacemos individualmente.
Cuando criticamos las acciones externas
Y no las nuestras.

CLAUDIA ORTIZ
Parte de mi vida y la colcha de retazos

Ami regreso a Medellín, Colombia, lo primero que vi cuando entré a mi cuarto, fue la hermosa colcha anaranjada hecha por mi madre que cubría mi cama. Ella la había cosido con sus laboriosas manos, ya hacía tiempo y la había guardado con la ilusión de que cuando yo regresara a casa pudiera ser para siempre mi colcha de retazos.

Cada trozo en ella representaba una parte de mi vida. ¡Qué bien me conocía mi madre! Todo estaba bordado con vivos colores, cada detalle preciso y perfecto. En esta colcha ella había plasmado para mí personas, animales y detalles que forman y en algún momento formaron parte de mi vida. Aunque tengo tres hijos, fueron los dos menores a quienes mi madre bordó en ella, ya que con ellos he vivido diez y ocho años momentos alegres, pero también dolorosos, amargos y tristes. Mi madre también incluyó mi símbolo del zodiaco, el toro, pero representado por una vaca muy femenina, colorida y alegre. De igual manera, bordó un delfín, mi animal preferido, libre y del color azul del mar y del cielo. Mi madre, también cosió en la colcha a mi perrito, Lucky, o Suerte, que había sido rescatado, aunque realmente, fue él quien rescató a mi familia. Además, están bordadas nuestras otras mascotas, quienes nos han dado a través de los tiempos alegría, amor y ternura, como Zeus, un dóberman con cuerpo grande y fuerte, pero con corazón y ternura de un cachorrito, Karla, mi lora, quien estuvo con nosotros desde pequeñita y a quien le enseñamos a hablar, alegar, cantar, bailar y nunca a pronunciar una palabra soez pues era una lora con un vocabulario avanzado. Mi madre, también bordó, otros animales que me gustan y que para ella representan recuerdos, como pájaros, gallinas, mariposas, patos, tigres, osos, guacamayas, cabras, gatos, ovejas, ardillas, iguanas y el caballo, mi símbolo zodiacal en China. Como una alegoría femenina y porque alegran el ambiente en donde quiera que estén, además, de hermosas, mi madre incluyó diferentes tipos de flores y hasta mi tira cómica

favorita, Mafalda, personaje con quien Quino, su autor, nos da reflexiones sobre la vida. Por último, sus tiernas manos bordaron los mándalas que representan la unidad y la energía del universo.

Hoy me encuentro de nuevo lejos de la colcha de retazos y de mi madre, pero aún recuerdo con alegría y melancolía esa hermosa obra de arte llena de amor, ilusión, alegría, tristeza y esperanza que me trae recuerdos de mi familia y país natal y la esperanza de que algún día volvamos a vernos mi madre y yo, abrazarnos y besarnos y poder tener para siempre, mi colcha de retazos tan llena de recuerdos memorables e inolvidables.



CLAUDIA ORTIZ
La colcha de retazos

CHAR PRIETO, ROCÍO GUIDO Y DANIEL LÓPEZ
La tonada de María González

Dedicado a la profesora María González con motivo de su jubilación

Esta es la tonada de María González,
nacida en Coahuila ciudad de Torreón
María la bandida siempre la llamaban
por ser mujer brava y de mucho valor

Allá por los cuarenta al mundo llegó
y por los sesenta en Jauja vivió
su madre quería una vida digna
y con su familia al norte emigró

Pasaron los años y en su juventud
trabajó en los campos e injusticias pasó
ella tenía sueños de ser muy letrada
y después de un tiempo estudios siguió

Ya una doctorada era la María
María la mexicana, María la erudita
sus palabras eran revolucionarias
así que con ellas por ideales peleó

Ahora ya María se va a jubilar
Y ya es momento de la vida gozar
Sembrando justicia, cosechando paz
Su legado siempre en Chico estará

Yo ya me despido, yo les digo adiós
María la doctora de Chico se va
Nos deja muy tristes pero recordando
Su sabia presencia siempre vivirá

A video dedicated to Prof. González can be found at:

<https://youtu.be/00igNjnEqxE>

CHAR PRIETO
Hasta siempre, comandante

Ya casi había llegado el COVID-19. Se había aprendido de memoria el Diccionario de la Real Academia Española y acabado de leer la última letra de la Enciclopedia Británica. Un oscuro amanecer del primero de marzo de 2020, al principio de la pandemia del Coronavirus, lúcido, pero con el cuerpo cansado y el alma un tanto ausente, se recogió su esqueleto, sus fatigados huesos y echando una mirada de complicidad al retrato sepia de su padre que yacía en una de las estanterías de sus cientos de libros, dijo adiós a su mundo para reunirse con Morrison y Andión. Bien sabía que al otro lado le estaban esperando sus héroes juveniles, amigos y antepasados: Abuelos, Papá, Carrillo, Pasionaria, Guevara...

Y así, en la madrugada de ese primer oscuro día primaveral, nos dejó con su último suspiro susurrando: En todo lo florido y hermoso de la naturaleza, en el viento y en las caricias de la brisa del mar, en la espuma de las olas, en el volar de las mariposas, mis huellas quedarán en vuestros corazones para siempre.

Sé que sin tu latido, hoy muere una parte de mi alma. Espero que allá donde estés, encuentres la paz que mereces. Gracias por haberme levantado en los momentos más difíciles, hermano.

Hasta siempre, comandante

**WASHO QUEZADA
Después de Paradise**

Caminas caminos de frío
Con tus pies levantando ansiedades
Caminas caminos de soledades ...inquietas, macilentas, derrotadas
Tus pies uno por uno haciendo idas y venidas
Te columpias péndulo en ascuas
Repitiéndote en fragmentos que se desconocen
Neblina de fuego...tu mirar....los caprichos del viento lo ciegan
Congelada en el tiempo..... te veo
Sorteando los abismos del olvido
Sin manzana, ni serpiente te expulsaron del paraíso
Rodeada de la venganza de un dios que no sabe lo que es vivir
Hoy en tus caminos de soledades meditas la olvidada oración que te reconcilie
con este presente.
Eva, tu hijo, hijo del pecado
No merece este castigo
Eva, tus entrañas expuestas a la noche, no tienen luz, el calor las secó todas
dejándote con un silencio eterno

WASHO QUEZADA
A los conquistados

Somos semilla que se sueña fruto
Camino esperando su caminante
Pajarillo que se quedó sin cielo en pleno vuelo
Somos la frontera que se desconoce
Y se plantea como horizonte..... tímido, desmesurado
Ayer destino
Hoy nostalgia
Altivos nos pasamos negando
Desprendiendo para continuar re-aprendiendo
El tiempo, nuestro mejor amigo, fusionando excusas al futuro
En un presente deleitado de pasados
Como me miró te miro en el espejo del origen
¿Cuántas partes componen la osamenta de una cultura en bodegas
Fuimos y después de la violación somos? ¿Qué somos?
Nos conquistaron la piel y nos imaginamos nietos
Para que no nos abandonen a su suerte
Nos quedan solo las ganas
¿Para qué más?
Las ganas que nos hacen confundir el horizonte con el camino.

WASHO QUEZADA
Voyager

Empecé este viaje cuando tu estación te llevó al norte
He alcanzado espacios de bordes infinitos
Casi sin darme cuenta hundido en la blanca rutina del movimiento constante
He desaparecido de los ojos que me miraban
Un silencio profundo ocupa mis oídos que alientan un vacío eco
Nada y todo a mi alrededor
El límite del sistema solar ha quedadoatrás
Las últimas huellas de lo conocido se hacen nebulosas
Me doy vuelta y esta soledad de planeta me congela
Mirarnos allá tan pequeños insignificantes
Un pedazo de luz que se va apagando
.....Suspiro un hasta que me encuentre.....
Estás tan lejos pero te siento tan cerca
lejos como estaba Dios antes de este encuentro
Acá arriba, acá afuera tu fantasma, mi satélite, mi conexión
Me habla de pasados que se hacen presente
Esta oscuridad infinita se encarga de desvanecerlos

DIANA SÁNCHEZ
FAMILIA

Fundación del hogar donde encuentras
Amor incondicional y cada miembro comparte la
Misma sangre que corre por sus venas
Intensa fuerza de unidad y
Lazos que se vuelven
Inquebrantables junto a los valores
Antes puestos de generación en generación



DANIEL SILVA
Granada

DANIEL SILVA
Granada de mi vida

Granada de mi vida, tu tan hermosa de pies a cabeza

Me hipnotizas con tu belleza

Granada de mi vida, tú que me sacas más de un suspiro,

al mismo tiempo aspiro más a conocerte

Granada de mi vida, envidio el sol y la luna por contemplarte
de noche y de día

Granada de mi vida, ahora entiendo la razón de aquellos, los cuales
derramaron sangre por conquistarte

Granada de mi vida, tus calles son cicatrices que pasaste
en esta vida

Granada de mi vida, como tu calle Duquesa que quedó prendida
En mi corazón, donde tuve el privilegio de andar

Granada de mi vida, incluso en tus rincones más escondidos,
escondes algo mágico

Graná de mi vida, desde tu mirador de San Nicolás tus vientos rozan mi
piel erizándose dejando una sensación de melancolía

Y como Boabdil, di mi último suspiro

¡Ay Granada de mi vida! Mi Graná....



CHAR PRIETO
Yes Posh, Spain Smells Like Garlic!

Contributors' Biographies



ME

*Multicultural Echoes
Literary Magazine*

VOLUME 12
2020

Contributors' Biographies

Julián Alonso is a writer from Spain. He is a poet, narrator, artist and a member of the Spanish Association of Art Critics and the Association of Visual Artists.

Rochele Bagatini is from Brazil. She graduated in Advertising and has a Master's in Literature, in Creative Writing. She is a teacher and a writer.

Jennifer Barajas is an Assistant Professor of Spanish and Linguistics at Bradley University. Her research interests include Spanish in the U.S., Heritage Spanish, Sociolinguistics, and community engagement. Dr. Barajas enjoys working closely with student clubs and organizations on campus as well as with groups in the community.

Ciara Christian-Berg is a Santa Monica native who loves to perform in theatre and to write. Ciara attends Chico State and hopes you enjoy her ekphrastic poem.

Melissa Cisneros was born in Chico, California. She is a part time student at Chico State hoping to one day graduate with a Master's in English Education and pursue her dream of elucidating her love for books and writing to others.

Ivana Colic is a first-year student at CSU, Chico majoring in International Relations. She started learning Japanese after mistakenly signing up for it instead of French in high school, and has continued her studies ever since.

Alena Fletcher is studying literature at UCSC and feels compelled to explore every facet of her creativity, although this might put her at risk of being

a jack of all trades and a master of none. She is going to spend her life traveling, meeting people, singing, writing and utilizing her privilege to give back to the fight for social justice.

Kenneth Fries has lived many years in Chico with his wife Janet before moving to Idaho to be closer to family. His poetry draws on wooden boats, still and whitewater camaraderie. Ken appreciates the generous collaboration of his dear friend Jacqueline Paillet with the French translation of his poetry.

Gustavo Gac-Artigas is a writer and theater director from Chile but lives in the USA. He is a member of the North American Academy of the Spanish language.

Suzanne Garrett has always spent much of her time with nature, appreciating how light and shadow seem to dance. She finds photography as a way to share the beauty with others, offering an opportunity to slow down and appreciate the often overlooked.

Marisol Huerta Niembro is a teacher, poet and a writer from Spain who has authored numerous books. Her literary creation mirrors social issues, feminism, politics and education, and has been published in several anthologies and won literary prizes. In 2019 she was a visiting scholar and presented her works at CSU, Chico.

Alexander H. Lopez is an undergraduate student at CSU, Chico majoring in Business Administration and Video Game Development with a minor in Japanese. He has always had a passion for learning languages. He wishes to share some of that joy with others in the form of poetry.

Daniel Lopez is the designer of the magazine this year. He is a Communication Design major at Chico State. He was born in Mexico, but most of his

life he has lived in Los Angeles, the crossroads of languages and cultures. He comes from a family of artists who have influenced his artistic appetite.

Arthur Lemner creates his view of Earth's inhabitants. He uses his art to help people and groups with projects as time allows. He makes art for himself and attends art shows year-round, and participates in classes, workshops and art clubs at CSUC, Butte Community College, and the Chico Art Center.

Kurtus Locke is a writer and a Chico State Graduate with a double major in English Education and English Studies. He has a Graduate Studies application pending departmental review for Creative Writing. He hopes to obtain his master's degree and to teach. Writing is his passion.

Suzon Lucore attended CCAC in the Bay Area. Influenced by impressionists, her loose style and freedom often captured portraits in an acrylic medium. Suzon received her BFA in painting and marketing is now her occupation which daily draws on her artistic talents.

Carmen Ángela López Álvarez is a professor of Spanish at the University of Puerto Rico-Río Piedras. A Penn State graduate, she has worked as a tutor, translator, editor and consultant. She is a fierce advocate for individuals with disabilities. In 2014, she published *Cuentos para reflexionar y reír*.

Ellie Makar-Limanov is from Ann Arbor, Michigan. She is a student at Princeton University where she studies history and literature. Otherwise, she enjoys learning about languages, philosophy, and art. She is interested in writing as a medium of reinvention and as a means to explore relationships.

Anahi Martinez is from Escondido, California. She is a fourth year student at CSU, Chico majoring in history and minoring in Asian Studies. She is assisting with the editing and design of the ME magazine.

Eric Mattson-Prieto graduated from CSU Chico with a degree in Construction Management and Business.

Hannah May comes from the Central Valley, Stockton. She is the youngest of six children and the first person in her family to go to college. She writes poems mostly about the internal struggle of coming from a working-class family and to have dreams, but to feel weighed down by the guilt of leaving family behind.

Carol McClendon is a retired middle school teacher of English, a former Peace Corps Volunteer who served in the Philippines, and a lifelong learner. As a student in the Chico State Elder College, she has pursued her interest in the arts.

George McClendon was a Benedictine monk in Oklahoma for 25 years. He has practiced psychotherapy and spiritual guidance, trained mental health professionals, and conducted workshops. Currently he teaches Meditation & Contemplation through OLLI at CSUC. He has published two books: *Heaven's Call to Earthy Spirituality* and *She Asked Who I Was Really*.

Jennifer McClendon is a flower grower, wedding designer and photographer in Sebastopol, California. Each morning, she tends to her 1000 rose bushes and recently found a snail with an important message for 2020 voters. She shared it on her instagram page JenniFloraSonoma.

Max Myers aspiring writer who lives in Oregon House, CA. His interests include writing poetry, and short essays, often reflecting the impressions of the countryside, memories, and the joy of being alive in these exciting and challenging times.

Claudia Ortiz was born in Colombia and have lived in USA for 21 years.

She holds a Spanish major and a Mathematics minor from Chico State and a masters from the University of Nevada, Reno. She likes to write stories about different experiences in her life as a single mother.

Cumbia Padilla is a Mexican-American journalism and Asian Studies student with her heart in many places. With experience traveling and living in eight other countries, her passions reside largely with helping those from other cultures to feel heard and understood. When escaping her academic life, she flees to nature.

Anahi Piña is a Mexican-American and a first-generation second-year student at Chico State majoring in Sociology and Multicultural Gender Studies with an option in Women's Studies and a Spanish minor. She is an advocate for marginalized communities and uses her privilege to empower those who lack those privileges.

Char Prieto has lived in Spain, Paris, London and the USA. She has always stood at a unique intersection of different identities from which she draws multicultural perspectives, a foreshadowing of what would eventually obsess her writing and psyche: the negotiation of identity. Traveling is the inspiration for her creative works.

Washo Quezada was born in Quito, Ecuador. He enjoys every possibility of the human experience and writing is one of them.

Gisela Ramirez is working towards her printmaking and Art Education degree. As a Mexican-American she is interested in how Mexican culture changes through migration, childhood memory, and the passing of generations to create a sense of belonging and opening up a narrative for others who may feel disconnected from their culture.

Roland Rider is a first-year student at Chico State, majoring in History.

Living in Chico, he was able to take Japanese all four years of High School and is continuing his education in Japanese through his college years.

Samuel Schmidtbauer is a senior at Chico State majoring in Liberal Studies and focusing on a Minor in Japanese. He is deeply interested in the language and culture of Japan and hopes to form relations and work in the country in the near future.

Daniel Silva was born in Mexico but moved to the US in 2011. He is a Chico State student completing a Spanish Pre-Credential. He is interested in languages, cultures and art. Daniel studied abroad in Granada, Spain. He fell in love with Granada, a city full of history and culture.

Sagejane SnyderBehr is studying to be an anthropologist, specializing in forensics. She is minoring in Japanese. She is twenty-two, and a homebody. She prefers reading, writing, and watching the rain. She loves to practice writing Kanji. It is soothing and almost a form of meditation.

Aline Vannucci was born in Belém, Brazil. She received a Medical Degree at the University of Rio de Janeiro. All along, she has been looking and searching for the beauty within ourselves. Our Voice is a force. “Conflitos” was born this way. It brings us an opportunity for reflections.

Sophia Vannucci is a 14-year-old girl who has always been fascinated by culture. She first gained her passion for languages and arts from her Brazilian mother. “Transformação” is about attitude and believing in yourself. Be confident. Follow your dreams. Each one of us can build a better world.

Joshua Xiong is a junior studying Japanese at CSU, Chico. His hobbies are gaming, running, and basketball. He likes to eat ramen. He has been interested in the Japanese language and culture ever since his childhood.

Multicultural Echoes | Contributors' Biographies

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ME: Multicultural Echoes is a print and online journal of creative writing in world languages, sponsored by Phi Sigma Iota, the International Foreign Language Honor Society and the Department of International Languages, Literatures and Cultures, at CSU, Chico. The journal accepts submissions of original poems, short stories, photos and artwork for students, faculty, staff and community members. We are looking for unpublished and original creative works in any language. You may submit no more than three entries per person; poems and short stories (1,400 words maximum, Word attachment, Times New Roman, 12 pt. single space) art pieces and photos with titles for each one. Please submit works and a short 50-word biography as a Word attachment, Times New Roman, third person, 12 pt. to cprieto@csuchico.edu

ME: MULTICULTURAL ECHOES LITERARY MAGAZINE

<https://www.csuchico.edu/illc/publications/me.shtml>

Dr. Char Prieto, PhD, Professor of Spanish

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