

THE TIGER MOTH REVIEW

ISSUE 4





THE TIGER MOTH REVIEW

A biannual journal of art + literature that engages with nature, culture, the environment and ecology

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The Tiger Moth Review is an eco-conscious journal based in Singapore that publishes art and literature engaging with the themes of nature, culture, the environment and ecology. The journal publishes primarily in English, but also accepts non-English work and their translated English counterparts. We are committed to creating a space for minority, marginalised and underrepresented voices in society.

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Cover image: *Flowerhead 16*, © Ang Xia Yi

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Editor's Preface

Today, I woke up with a heaviness in my heart. There was a feeling of grief I could not quite articulate or place, and though I did not yet understand the cause, I knew that I needed to give myself time and space to embrace this sorrow, and with patience, its root causes would surely uncover themselves to me. During my daily meditation practice, I did some inner work, and what I found both surprised me and yet made perfect sense: I was feeling isolated from my family, whom I would visit weekly before Singapore implemented a [‘circuit breaker’](#) in an attempt to stop the pandemic. I missed the beach, walking barefoot on the sand, wind whipping my hair across my face, the sea leaving its film of brine on my skin. And yet, while the pandemic has altered the lives of people the world over, it has had its blessings. I have been able to see more of my husband who has been working from home, and we now have lunch and dinner together. We spend more time with the dog. We are thankful to have a comfortable place to call home so that we can practise social distancing, unlike the thousands of Bangladeshi migrant workers in Singapore who now bear the brunt of infections due to their overcrowded living conditions. We are humbled by our privilege and reminded of the need for social change for the marginalised.

In a [Chronicle article](#) I read recently by Aisha S. Ahmad, she writes that “the world is our work”. Indeed, we are seeing how the world, comprised of human and nonhuman entities and ecosystems, is responding to the pandemic, which David Quammen argues in [this interview by Emergence Magazine](#) is a result of human interference with wild ecosystems. While we grapple with life as we know it being altered forever, the nonhuman world too is suffering and rejoicing from “our work”. Social media reveals photographs of disposable masks carelessly discarded on the streets and finding their way into bodies of water, posing a threat to marine life. At the same time, we read of leatherbacks returning to the shores of Thailand and Florida as these deserted beaches are now a safe haven for the endangered turtles to lay their eggs and hatch more successfully. Air pollution has decreased dramatically across Europe and Asia from the closure of factories, roads and the halt on air travel. Yet, many are speculating that countries will go into overdrive as the pandemic wears off as they try to recover heavy economic losses.

How can we continue to care for the world at a time where we are so focused on caring for ourselves? How can we look beyond to recognise the human and nonhuman others, with whom we share this world? It is my hope that while many of us are staying at home, we will use this time to read a better world. In [Not Just Fiction: Writing the Climate Crisis](#), I share that “to read is to inhabit”. Let us begin by reading and inhabiting the works and worlds of literature, photography and art in *Issue 4*, which celebrate the strange and beautiful, the terrible and ordinary, the wild and wonderful—Ainu rituals in Sabrina Ito’s “Holy Bear Ritual” (Hawai’i-Canada), the colourful streets of Vietnam in moth1’s “#windowmoth” (Vietnam-Singapore), Bernice Chauly’s broken Australian landscape (Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia), Thomas Bacon’s awe-inspiring Alaska (Alaska, USA). Whether we discover our relationship with nature anew in Ang Xia Yi’s defamiliarising *Flowerhead* (Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia), or take a train into an alternative universe with Fiona Jones on “Another Journey” (Scotland), where time and place is reimagined, and “the world, perhaps, lasts longer”, let us read with the intention to care, to come full circle into healing with the world we inhabit.

Esther Vincent Xueming

The Tiger Moth Review

The Psalmist and The Gray Wolf

Desmond Kon Zhicheng-Mingdé

*“Animals have no unconscious, because they have a territory.
Men have only had an unconscious since they lost a territory.”*

—Jean Baudrillard

It's hard to pen poems about goodness.

Poems shouldn't be didactic, not try to impart anything.

More than emotion or a small image and sound.

More than a scene, that paints a metaphor, that sort of inferred meaning.

Like this gray wolf on a presentation slide, what a simulacrum.

What a simulacrum of a simulacrum, this litany of image after image.

The image is of a lone wolf, left to wander this ridge of earth.

Strapped over its muzzle is a leather muzzle, with wires for string.

The leather is thick and leaden, dark charcoal as if burnt into oldness.

The lone wolf has forgotten its voice, or that it evolved from canines.

The lone wolf doesn't know how to walk past the edge of the ridge.

It's a steep fall anyway, a cliff that drops into a ravine of blue rock.

That's what loss feels like, when you're abandoned by your pack.

It's hard to tell yourself about transparency of meaning.

How translation and interpretation could be a sieve, catchment too.

And the writers and readers look at each other in a mirror.

Even mirrors show us only one side, that sort of authenticity.

I'm trying to write good poems, that bring about only goodness.

I'm trying to avoid the sanctimonious and sentimental.

It's hard to pen these things down because the world denies it.

It's hard to pen these things down, how everything distracts.

It's hard to pen these things down when there's so much spiritual pride.

This must be what the poem should begin and end on then.

The notion of spiritual pride, and how this, too, must go.

This, too, must disappear; watch how it leaves us without guilt.

This, too, must disappear; watch how it leaves us and the silence.

This, too, must disappear; watch how it leaves us with prayer.

Acorns

Tara Menon

This year the oaks have asserted themselves,
tossing their masterpieces—
spinning tops, baskets, nature's currency,
brown caps, woolen berets,
glistening clay bowls, artsy containers with lids,
delicate faces with topknots,
sculpted heads with woven hair,
finger cymbals, crunchy pebbled pathway.
Each acorn harbors a secret, a treasure,
which the squirrels rush to bury.
The best seeds will burst forth from the ground
to stand tall, pointing heavenward,
blessing the perplexed,
telling us to use our imagination
to shape our destiny.

Remembering Big Bees in Mbesa

Nsah Mala

When we were young, we had many types of bees.
When dry seasons powdered the earth with dust,
there were big yellowish bees – *ndehse bangnese*,
those not social to live in colonies, but as couples,
that burrowed into dry soft wood in the bushes,
and made a sweet yellow paste which we harvested
when we went to fetch wood. We often dated girls by
offering them the sweet paste. Sometimes we ignorantly
roasted and enjoyed their bulbous larvae back home.
Because they never stung us, we would catch some alive,
bring them home, tie to long thread pieces & fly as planes.
There were also big black bees – *ndehse fingnese*,
that burrowed into planks and wood on our roofs.
They also made a sweet yellow paste,
but we couldn't destroy houses to harvest it,
except when our fathers had to renovate.
Facilitated by noisy zinc sheets on roofs,
they sometimes became boisterous bands,
humming gentle melodies from their burrows
to entertain us by day, troubling our sleep some nights.

—Aarhus, 26 May 2019

Two Poems by Noriko Nakada

Family Haiku

Our Family Name / translated into English / means in rice field, to
flee Okinawa's / smattering of rocky isles / overrun with pests.
Sail amber waves for / land in America where / anything will grow.
Plant, water, and watch / crops thriving, fruits ripening / on this borrowed soil.
Through the seasons, long / enough for the land to learn / your name and seedlings
know only this soil. / From the rising sun, sea planes / drop bombs, rake it all,
scatter the seedlings / across oceans, continents / Pacific, Europe.
Relocate the rest / to deserts where heart mountains / watch over caged pests.
Stare across miles of / bleak unsustainable plains. / No way to escape.
Set free those caged / pests who plant new crops once more, / who tend and water
so they grow again. / Watch these roots take hold and wait / for those tossed seeds to
drift back home, only / to witness elders fading / withering before
the seedlings can thrive / before fruit or flower bloom / before the harvest.

Meditation on the Morning Spent at the Soccer Field

Noriko Nakada

Saturday mornings on Tifway 419 Bermuda
a hybrid grass, dark green in color.

It thrives in warm weather.
It is a dense and tough grass.
It recovers rapidly from injury.

It is drought resistant and has been popular for over forty years
so the grass I ran across in Oregon
while Dad knelt at the sideline tearing blades apart with his fingers
could be the same grass my kids tear across this Saturday morning
twenty million moments later.

Grass grows, regrows. The world spins and rotates.
The seasons shift and soccer is the grass beneath our cleats.

Because the grass is the same and so much else is the same:
the ball, the game, the pass, the shot.

Because leisure is where we plant our dreams,
for our kids and ourselves and our dying parents.

Because it is where we pass on love and life and breath,
and the grass beneath our feet might be what holds us together.

Holy Bear Ritual

Sabrina Ito

For the Ainu people, the Bear was the Hero. He had taught them how to fish, hunt and weave. It was because of the Bear that the Ainu survived, so he fast became their most appreciated game.

They trained their dogs to draw the female from her den with their braying, their barks and their cries. Until, terrified and yowling, she'd emerge and then stride, to a familiar death—slaughter by swarm of venomous arrows.

The cub would be captured and brought back to the village, to an Ainu woman who would care for him, as she would a child. And when the Bear grew accustomed, possibly two to three years in, they'd decapitate him. An oblation, a sacrifice.

And they would drink the Bear's blood to inherit his power, and they would fly his filleted skin like a flag. And they'd sustain his remains through offerings of food. Because ritual only becomes reverence, when treated like a time-honored guest.

Death of the Opera Performer

Jikang Liu

While I was back home in Beijing, I visited a Peking-Opera themed-restaurant, whose employees dressed up in generic costumes to promote their business. Based on this experience, I wanted to develop an imagery of the metaphorical “death” of an opera performer, stripped away from the stage, advocating for restaurant deals instead. I replaced the opera performer’s decorative flags (which are usually part of the costume) with flags with advertisements printed on them, to create an ironic imagery. Through doing this, I wanted to showcase the depreciation of the traditional arts at the hands of consumerism, and our apathy towards it as a society.



Death of the Opera Performer

© Jikang Liu

The Gods Aren't Coming

Prasanthi Ram

The first to notice the tremors in Singapore was a priest named Sheshadri.

At the ripe age of twenty-five, he had made his first big move from a roadside Mahavishnu temple in Coimbatore to the legendary island city of Singapore. One foot off the IndiGo 737 though, and his knees almost buckled. It was the earth, he registered, shifting scrupulously under him. As strange as it was, given that Singapore was famous for not experiencing any natural disasters, he had already been forewarned by his guru about the events to come. Back home, Tamil Nadu's cyclone season had already returned with an unquenchable vengeance. A dam outside his city had broken and numerous villages were flooded, death counts surging beyond human comprehension. The same was happening in the outskirts of neighbouring cities too, leaving the government with no other choice than to announce a state-wide emergency. Even on the airplane, which Sheshadri thought was a shameless copy of Lord Brahma's pushpaka vimana and which was one of the last flights out of Coimbatore before the airport's closure, the weather was atrocious. The flight was particularly turbulent over the Indonesian archipelago that only recently had been shaken up by both a volcano eruption and a related tsunami that wiped out not only coastal dwellers but many inland too. It seemed Earth had made up her mind.

Somehow though, every other passenger disembarking from the same flight seemed unperturbed and were well on their way into the pristine Changi airport. Unlike Sheshadri, they could not sense the tremors. He reckoned it was their good fortune not to know, not to bear the knowledge of incoming catastrophe and yet feel powerless the way he did.

But this was his duty and he was bound to it.

"Why do I have to leave?" he had asked his guru Venkatesh Iyer a month before, when he was first told. "At your age, you need help to take care of this temple. How will you do it alone?"

To that, Venkatesh Iyer smiled, wistful, as he uncapped cartons of milk and poured them into a large pail for Lord Vishnu's pal abhishekam before sunrise. "You are destined to leave, Shesha. Your duty lies beyond this humble establishment. You must return to his side."

"But why would he be there of all places?" Shesha had whined, as he heaved the pail up the short set of steps into the main sanctum. Was God not right there with him in the temple?

"He can be anywhere and everywhere at once, Shesha. You know better than to limit him with your mind. You have been called upon, so you must leave."

Of course he could not say no to the man who raised him like his own. Twenty-five years ago, he had been found as an infant on those very steps. It was Venkatesh, the elderly head priest who found him lying before the statue of Vishnu during his morning rounds. According to the priest's many retellings throughout the years, little Shesha had been dressed in nothing but a blue loin cloth. There had apparently been a garden snake too that fateful morning, lazily circling the infant as if stalking its prey. Curiously though, Shesha was not at all frightened by the hissing, but instead outstretched his tiny palm to play with the creature. Upon that bewildering sight, Venkatesh quickly ushered the child into his safe arms and decided it was

only right that he named him Sheshadri, after Sheshanaga, the serpent upon whom Mahavishnu rested.

At the temple, Shesha lived among gods and animals. He would run at pigeons that pecked at the broken coconut shells offered upon the temple doorstep. He would feed the spotted cow that sometimes sauntered in to rest under the tall and cool shelter of the gopuram. He would even play with the family of mice that built a home behind Ganesha's statue. Venkatesh was determined to raise Shesha as a priest despite the child's casteless status. It was thus under his generous tutelage that Shesha learned Vedas in the day alongside young Brahmin boys who openly wondered what an orphan was doing in their midst. At night, Venkatesh would sit Shesha on his lap and tell him stories from the Mahabharata and Ramayana. About the great Arjunan, the feared Raavanan, the kind Sita, the conniving Shakuni, the righteous Krishnan. Venkatesh even taught him about Sheshanaga, and how he could, upon the preserver Mahavishnu's orders, coil into himself and destroy the entire universe. Or uncoil for the creation of a new, wondrous one. Each story leapt straight into another one so often that Shesha spent nights dreaming of himself as a snake, holding Rama's hand as they stepped into the formidable Dandaka forest or playing with Krishna's peacock feather and flute in Vrindavan. In many ways, Shesha's life had been built upon Venkatesh's kindness and mercy.

Hence, when the old priest dreamt a powerful dream one night of Mahavishnu himself calling upon Shesha to an island-city down southeast that would soon be struck by an unprecedented disaster, Shesha saw no other choice but to readily agree.

To his genuine surprise, the equatorial island was as unperturbed as her residents: fairy-tale greenery against the backdrop of dangerously towering buildings, with not a drop of water from the skies. It seemed to be an alternate plane of existence, a paradise like Mahavishnu's Vaikunthai, safe from the troubles of the rest of the world. Yet, the tremors still persisted under each of Shesha's steps as he walked past immigration and out of the airport. It was coming, whatever it was, and he had to find him.

But the question remained: how?

As if having heard his thought, a hissing began. From his feet of all places. Shocked, Shesha lifted his right foot to check. There, beneath him, he found a small garden snake. But it did not seem as if it had been crushed at all, or even stepped upon. Rather it had emerged from him, from the centre of his right sole, growing into its full length as he watched. Before he could react, the snake began to slither out and away from him. It was leading him, he realised, so Shesha began to sprint. Past queues of waiting people and cars, onto the busy roads of Airport Boulevard, then much later, into a long stretch of bushes.

Drenched in sweat and covered in broken twigs and leaves, Shesha knelt onto the grass to catch his breath. When he finally looked up, the snake from his foot was now circling someone else's feet, with an uncanny sense of familiarity. Then, it slipped under, out of sight, and the hissing ceased to a deafening silence.

"You are here, Shesha," said a voice that boomed in Shesha's ears.

He tried to raise his head, to see who those feet belonged to. But soul-piercing sunlight shot him down, preventing him from looking above the ground.

"You already know who I am, Shesha. You have long known."

It was indeed true. He did know. But he hungered for a glimpse, for something beyond just stories told and sung or statues made of cast iron and stone.

"Yashoda too once saw me. All of me. But it was too much for her to bear. It will be no different for you."

Shesha bowed his forehead, pressing down on grass and dirt. He was but a mortal. "I can sense the tremors. Why?"

"Why do you think?"

"Disaster is to strike. But you are here now. Will you be able to stop it?"

The voice did not reply. Instead, the tremors ceased and Shesha felt himself beginning to float. But he was not weightless in the air nor was he grounded on land for the grass was no more. No, he was at sea, one that did not sting of salt but was instead fragrant of a sweet nectar that washed over him. This sea was full of milk. Oh, he was afloat the ocean of milk from the mythical land of Krauncha. A mirthful laugh skipped out of Shesha's body in recognition of a time long before. A time he had once experienced.

"Epochs have passed. It is no longer as simple as a sage's foot to my chest to save the world. The earth has been undone far beyond repair. It is mankind's own undoing."

"Then what do we do?" Shesha remembered to ask, as he felt himself unwind from his human form, spine breaking then reconstructing into an endless coil, head bursting into a thousand serpent heads. A bestial, beautiful unbecoming.

"Here lies the last standing fortress, its land protected for centuries from the wrath of nature. But it too must fall now. You see, Shesha. It is the law of nature, to give back tenfold what she has received. She has tolerated for far too long. She must retaliate and she will. We must not fight her. We are only to wait and bear witness."

In one fell swoop, the milk ocean receded into nothingness and Shesha found himself with his head bowed upon grass again, body intact. The island's noises of birdsong, traffic and construction returned to his ears. He looked up. The feet before him had disappeared too. All Shesha had in memory of him were the salty tears stinging his eyes and the seed of knowledge lodged uncomfortably in his throat. The tremors in his feet resumed but at a quicker pace, as if the garden snake was now residing within his very soles, circling at a maddening pace. Indeed, Shesha thought, the end of this world was nearing. Once again, a yuga was coming to a close but this might just be the quickest and most destructive yet. Still, what was sown must be reaped. It was simply the order of the universe. Which too decreed that Shesha would wait and bear witness just as he was instructed. Because that was all mortals could do. Even a mortal who was once coiled under God's reclined form, surrounded by a magnificent ocean of nectarine milk.

Flowerhead

Ang Xia Yi

Flowerhead pays homage to Simryn Gill's *A Small Town At The Turn Of The Century* (1999 – 2000) in which subjects' heads were substituted with tropical fruit. Gill's work explores how an artwork's subjects can be anonymized and their individual identities become variable with simple changes in their appearances and environment. The *Flowerhead* series explores similar terrain; individuals' heads are hidden by excessively large bouquets to defamiliarize and thus turn humans into something strange, while humanizing the natural world around them.



Flowerhead 21
© Ang Xia Yi



Flowerhead 22
© Ang Xia Yi



Flowerhead 20
© Ang Xia Yi



Flowerhead 19
© Ang Xia Yi



Flowerhead 16
© Ang Xia Yi

A Birdwatcher's Atonement

Rachel Kuanneng Lee

on a lookout for the crested serpent eagle, we pad through its home,
an alcove of greens and browns, untouched yet
by the sharp greys of the neighbourhood blocks closing in.

you spy something—a thick wire, metal-made, sprouting from the earth.
it rises and then curves back down,
stout steelworm burrowing skywards, then returning to the soil.

you ask what it is. in jest, i say,

*this is the door to a secret passage.
a bird lands just so, and out pops a stage.
follow the path, it leads to a cavern—
the birds sing there, like bards in a tavern.*

a watering hole for birds!
we laugh,
both much too old for make-believe.

gradually, the thunderheads gather and we don't find the eagle.
instead, i find the wire worm again and prod it with a toe.
they've decided to go ahead with that subway line underneath all this, you know?

the atmosphere swells;
we walk quickly, leaving the exposed forest behind.
under eaves of leaves, the birds will find shelter.

the sky bursts and we break into a run, soles slapping the wet, black asphalt
until we are safe under our grey canopies. you don't ask me about the secret cavern.
i want you to ask so i can tell you that when the trees cave and the steel lines tunnel,
that's where there'll be—

*every one of them. we'll find each bird sound.
the chinese hwamei they caged is unbound,
the red-whiskered bulbul sings for itself,
the cygnets and ducklings—all in good health.*

and perhaps we will find the eagle there too, perched high, on the tallest tree.

The Badlands

Michael Garrigan

Shadows

This morning's rain left wet clay and clouds
move slow over yellow sweet clover hills.
Ravines hidden, buttes behind fog,
uncover and bathe themselves
in the South Dakota morning sun.

I haven't seen you in seven days
and won't for two more
and it's all I can think about
in this wide open place.

Breezes

The Badland breeze is subtle
but just enough to break the sweat,
prairie dogs stretch
their arms when they call. I chatter back but
my arms cannot go as far out as theirs, held back
by a rush towards home at this slow pace.

The ridges are subtle, yet hard, sharp if you watch.

Snow-on-the-mountain flowers, coyotes in the next valley over,
the Milky Way tied from ridge to ridge through a mosquito haze.
How do we find ourselves in places so far from one another?

Coral Weed

Lois Marie Harrod

Those long fingers—
I wanted hands
like yours,
joints with delicate knobs
someone could pull gently,
open my drawer of rocks.
I wanted to live through my fingers,
filigree fog,
hands skeletal and slippery,
see through tips
the wet and dry ridges of snails,
suck salamanders,
a hand that might laugh shyly
and cover my eyes
loosely—so that I could feel through.
I am here
in the sand waiting
to touch you.

#3 Aragonite (CaCO₃)

Jennifer MacBain-Stephens

you say a dinosaur protects you at night / you float alone through outer space / I'm shivering at
3 am and someone's climbing the stairs / armor deteriorates / melts a mostly *iron atmosphere*
at the earth's core / *These clusters are called "sputniks"* / Would you rather sink in solids or
liquids / We work so hard just to stand: *pristine expansion*

then we get stronger / our teeth have a hardness level of 5 / *Aragonite provides a safe base*
from which to explore new possibilities

what levels will I go just to find you next to trees? or *an alternate reality?* / at what climbing
elevation? you record your *colored bands in the matrix* daily / the internet tells me who I should
be friends with every hour / what degree of *solidity* they resemble

self-discipline and centering / both begin to *steady nerves* / *place on the solar plexus* / *orange*
calcite feels different on the ground / I fell from the air yesterday / other things on the ground
tore my arms up / the ground is not always best / *Carnelian is mistaken for Aragonite* / *does not*
have internal fractures

but we kid ourselves / the road to a *white veil* is not linear

Note: The words in italics in these poems are taken from *Essential Guide to Crystals* by Simon and Sue Lilly, 2006, 2010, and 2018, published by Watkins Media Limited, United Kingdom.

August 2006

Remi Recchia

Imagine four legs of petrified wood rotting
underwater: the smell, the blurring, the texture.
You'd have to scrub your hands under hot water
to shed the slimy residue. The grime might remind

you of the camping trip with your dad, old
tent with a torn zipper, how all the flies collected
in your sleep. They'd nestled into your hair
and laid eggs before dawn. The next morning,

you'd woken, startled, as if by gunshot. Weak fire
breathed canned beans into soggy life. Your dad
fake cooking, smiling. Fake laughing, seeking
cell phone reception in the woods.

You'd waited in the car all day and asked for your
mother. She hadn't come. You'd waited longer.
She still hadn't come. At night you went down
by the water. You wondered what it'd be like to be a fish.

Our City's Children

Kanika Lawton

outside the window the cn tower darkens against
the skyline
the bright blues of its crown
fading into black
there are hearts pouring out from hotel rooms
office buildings
the financial district bleeding with
fluorescent lights in the shape of gratitude
of helping you help us
does it mean anything
you know
a hero's journey roads empty and heavy
do you feel safe here
so far away from the place we were born
where we first let our hands know the ocean's
cold embrace there are no mountains here
no way to block out the world
the hillsides die each year
only to resurrect long after our home's blossomed rebirth
do you remember being an anchor
sutured to a place cutting at the stitch
how did we not know one another then
how did we miss each other
like this years apart
circling the same corner
traces of who we will become
our city's children
cared for in the way
we told ourselves was enough
when the world began to slow did you think to
go back or is moving on the only way to
survive endure
my face a reminder
of what we left behind
do you feel abandoned like i do
do you feel held by your own arms
and if not
can i hold you
for you

Amethyst Mountains

Jade Riordan

My childhood was the kind, hoarfrost-
blossomed idea of mountains:
all amethyst collecting and avalanches
of love and love and love.

I draw the lavender curtains like snow
parts the forever-hug of the horizon.
My thoughts peek and peak sun-ward
through the prised glass. And I day-
dream the sky's haloed elevation, distant
mountains tall as an embrace of wind
chimes.

The open window overlooks an inheritance
of quartz, February violets, the chiming
exhale of this season. Like a snow angel-
laden avalanche, I have sculpted gemstones,
birthstones from my memories.

O, I have the loveliest Everest of an idea
for tomorrow.

#windowmoth

moth1

#windowmoth is a collection of photographs taken from my room window, using a second-hand Canon T5i camera with a 50mm f1.8 lens, in a public housing estate deep in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam where I have been living for close to three years. It is quite possibly the world's laziest photo series.

For a period of thirty days starting 12 January 2020, I kept a close eye on the goings-on right under my window. I was always used to hearing the loudspeakers affixed on the sidecars of vendors pedalling by selling the most random things, from sticky rice cakes, fresh fruits, truckloads of eggs (balanced precariously on a motorbike) to brooms, from six o'clock in the morning. In fact, a number of these shots were taken during the morning golden hour, with the sun still rising.

I specifically chose this time window because it would coincide with the preparations and celebrations of *Tet*, the Vietnamese lunar new year, where you would see a spectacular marriage of nationalism and tradition, evident in the multiple national flags that would usually be removed once the week-long public holidays end.

It was also my intention to have two contrasting moods for day and night, as this reflects the reality here too; it can get dead quiet during the witching hour.

One reason for this observational angle is because as a Southeast Asian myself living deep in a local public housing estate, I have felt relatively safe and welcome even though I clearly look foreign. My barely elementary level Vietnamese has not gotten me any further than ordering items strictly off the menu and giving directions to and away from my home. Even with all these differences, most of the vendors here already know what I want even before I actually give my order.

The other reason behind #windowmoth is that this sprawling and lively neighbourhood in Saigon today reminds me of my years growing up in Singapore in the late 1980s and early 1990s. In a way, I was simply trying to recapture my childhood. As an outsider, I was given a glimpse into how the locals live their lives and I noticed the glaring similarities. Borders, languages and physical attributes aside, I strongly feel that people share more similarities than differences with each other, which is what inspired me to create #windowmoth.

Just an outsider, looking at something familiar.

Note: Saigon and Ho Chi Minh City refer to the same city.



#windowmoth

© moth1, Sivaraj Pragasm

The perspective starts here.



The Saigon Tango
© moth1, Sivaraj Pragasm

The soundtrack of the city is composed by the honks and revving of tens of millions of motorbikes, each weaving through and prancing about the city's streets and neighbourhoods.



Trái Cây Express

© moth1, Sivaraj Pragasm

Vietnam produces its own food, and most farmers sell their items in little wagons like these, directly to the vendors that dot entire neighbourhoods.



Elevation

© moth1, Sivaraj Pragasm

Chung cu Nguyen Thien Thuat is a sprawling complex of public housing apartments in Saigon's District 3. However, this area is actually more popularly known as 'Guitar Street', due to the exceptionally huge number of guitar shops down the street.



Impending Fortune

© moth1, Sivaraj Pragasm

A familiar sight across countries that celebrate the Lunar New Year. The Lion Dance in Vietnamese, also known as múa lân, or unicorn dance, is meant to summon and clear the way for the auspicious unicorn to bring good fortune for the new year.



Little Runner

© moth1, Sivaraj Pragasm

As the sun sets, the children come out to play. Most times, they are popular community games such as block-catching or badminton and during the festive period, they can go on all day (and night).

Fetch

Nathalie Kuroiwa-Lewis

Against twilight
when leaves spiral in the tides,

I open the door
to the stars and blue night.

So that she may bound out,
she, who has heard the knocking

like the sound of bells beneath water.
Round and round

she goes,
a blot of black on green

beneath the gold lights
of the silver maples and hornbeam trees.

Broken Country

For Ali Cobby Eckermann

Bernice Chauly

1.

no land, no country
no language, no people
the trees linger, and the sad, sad
land is red with blood and dust

2.

we used to shoot them blackies for sport, they said
now old, they hug you and thank you for your words
we didn't know, we didn't know, they said
sorry, so very sorry, they said

3.

at night we sit outside
the two eucalyptus trees shake in the wind
one looks like a witch, a beady nose, looks wicked
we hear the owl, it is close

4.

after the Coorong, we drive to Strathalbyn
for coffee, and the white man, he sees you
and shouts so all can hear – you stupid cunt
don't you know where to park, can't you read?

5.

we drove onto the next road, and there they were,
kangaroos, big and small, hopping beside the car
and then, in unison they jumped over the wire fences
like soldiers, they followed invisible lines, into the forest

6.

over chicken and vegetable curry, you wept when
the aunties started singing, songs you remembered
in your language, they spoke of the earth, of the skies
and stars, and spirits, and the night was still, with song

7.

i found you in that shop on Rundle Mall, you had just tried on a grey jacket 'for New York' and you were in a corner of the changing room, wailing, wailing, for your brother had just been found dead, in a hospital shower

8.

we thought he was singing, they said, he was fine that morning when you visited, but the song was not a song, it was a cry for help, we didn't know, they said, we thought he was singing, but no, you said, he was singing for his life

9.

we saw two eagles that day, the forest of tall, dark trees, on both sides and before that, a white, gnarled eucalyptus forest, so ancient, i imagined fairies, and saw dark figures running, the sunlight in shafts, piercing the silence, the dry, arid earth, and onto the long, long road

10.

at night in the Coorong, we sit by the campfire and we hear stories about the stars, the universe, and how it was created, we see the children rapt, their faces open, the wood crackles and fiery embers create sparks that rise into the air, the sky is clear and the moon shines her light on us

11.

the night you drive into Adelaide to stay with mum, i am alone, i build a fire, i smoke joints, and see the witch tree sway in the wind, i hear sounds i do not know, and when in bed, much later, i hear claws on the metal pipes, i open the door leading out, and i see it, the possum!

12.

i cannot write in this broken land, but i can grieve for a land that is not mine, i cry for you my sister friend, for all that has been lost, for all that you have lost, and for your pain, and all the others like you, this land is broken, your broken land, your broken hearts, this broken country

13.

we drank tequila for old times' sake, two shots, and the man in the blue shirt drank with us, then we got into the car, the seats hot from the sun, and we drove down the road, this ancient earth, this land so old, from the beginning of songs, from when the dreaming began

14.

and every day, the view, the yellow and brown, and ochre, i want to
be a bunny, then fly through the trees, and dip low, the land so wide, such
big sky, the trees like white stone totems, the wind hot, so dry, parched,
i imagine antelope, wildebeest, lions, and then the kookaburra sings.

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Published in *Incantations/Incarcerations* (Gerakbudaya, 2019).

Some Birds

Rizwan Akhtar

crying in the middle of night
want an early dawn, clamor
against the sky to vacate
darkness from leaves, bloated
trunks, rinds of barks, shreds
of bottles thrown out like words
from cars adding to their litanies;
loosing feathers they scuffle in
nests, negotiate the best perch
for a morning still embryonic
and saber sounds with beaks
uproot the system of silence
reserved for nights, nudge
a language creeping on ears.

Plastics

Joe Balaz

*"I just want to say one word to you—
Plastics."*

Dat suggestion given to wun young man

portrayed by Dustin Hoffman
in da film *The Graduate*

can serve as wun unintended prophecy

as far as da oceans of da world
are concerned.

It's in da seabirds,
it's in da fish,

it's on da beaches,
to create wun mess.

Anadah human made problem
polluting da environment.

Now da mercury in your tuna
has wun companion

and shorelines everywheah
are looking like dumps.

Broken down ovah time

dis stuff
is wun new synthetic plankton

filling up da seas.

I hate to say dis

but it's going to get worse
before it gets bettah.

Plastics—

It started out
as wun wonderful convenience

but now it's making our well being
so much moa difficult.

Note: The above poem is written in Hawai'i Creole English, a variety of English spoken in the Hawaiian Islands today.

Concrete Sculptures

Mario Loprete

Painting for Mario Loprete is his first love. An important, pure love. Creating a painting, starting from the spasmodic research of a concept with which he wants to send a message to transmit his message, is the basis of his painting. The sculpture is his lover, the artistic betrayal to the painting.

Loprete's work focuses on the research and documentation of the world of hip hop. This philosophy of life is now no longer relegated to the geographical boundaries of the USA, but rather, it can be found in any culture and latitude. Loprete uses concrete in his new works as he sees it as the link between his artistic craft and hip hop. As a material, concrete was historically utilised by the ancient Romans in widespread construction, but today is an indicator of modernity and contemporaneity.

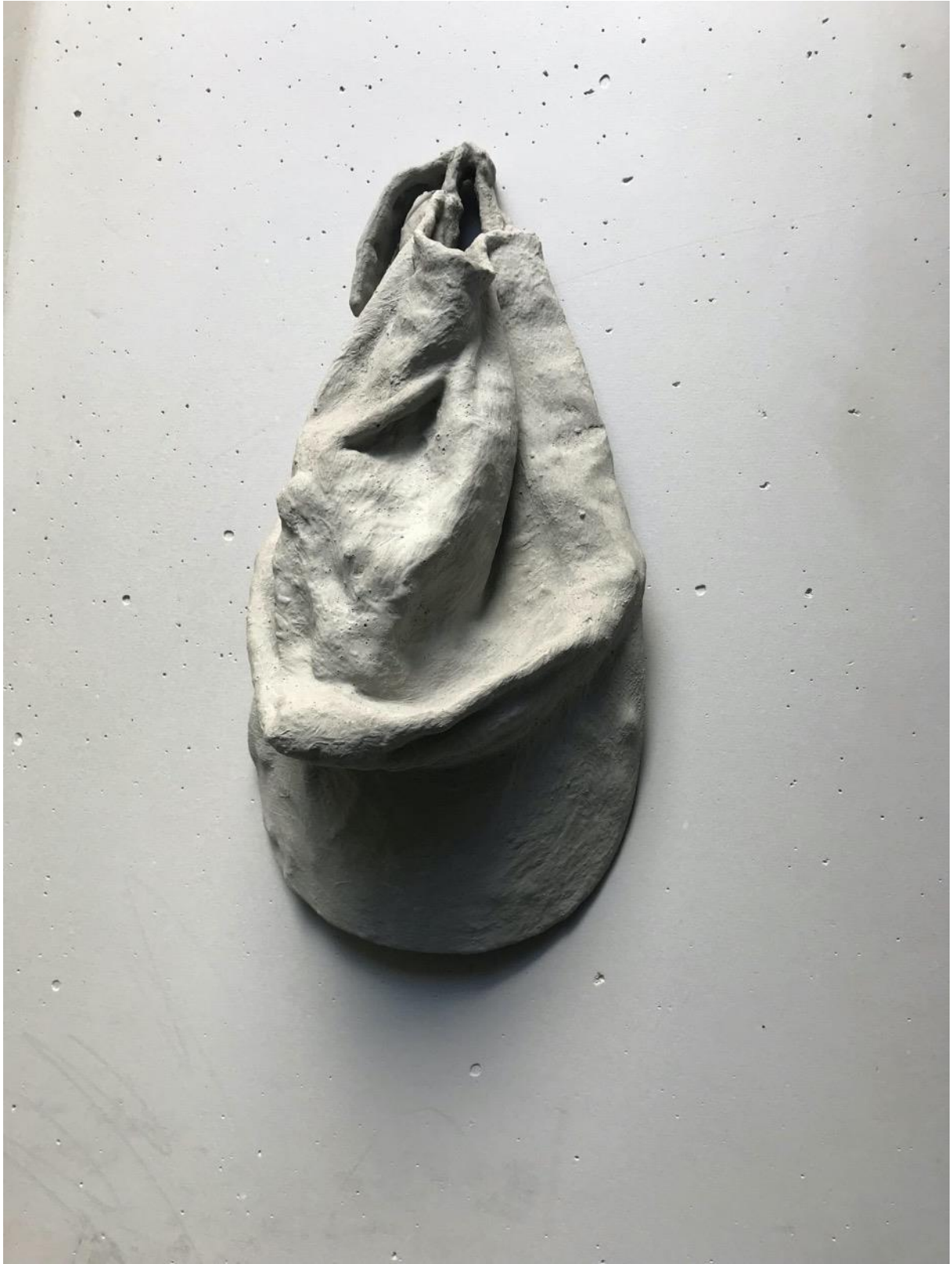
For his Concrete Sculptures, Loprete uses his personal clothing, plaster, resin and cement to create his artworks. Symbolically, his memories and DNA remain concretised in his art, transforming the viewer into a post-modern archaeologist who studies his work as though they were urban artefacts.



© Mario Loprete



© Mario Loprete



© Mario Loprete



© Mario Loprete

Sea Glass Season

Edrie Corbit

I don't know who needs to hear this
but the willows are in bloom.
A month early.
Their caterpillar buds wriggle up to a cerulean sky.
Five years ago on Imbolc, the fog blotted out
any sign of the sun.
Now, though, the open warmth
beckons early flora
and the upturned faces of fauna,
defrosting.
Of course, an early spring
signals an early summer.
Which signals an early fire season.
But I won't think about that now,
while it's still sea glass season,
and my hands can brush over the pebbles
carried by the winter swell,
searching for treasures
to cup and fawn over.
"This climate change is really working for me,"
a woman nearby says as she, too, turns skyward,
cinching her eyes closed against the light,
the sun holding her face with soft fingers,
but also etching it in ways she won't see for years.
I think how, without the dense fog, I don't feel so heavy.
I could be the red-winged blackbird
flitting from the ground to the willow tips in two wing beats.
Though, without the fog, the redwoods feel less grounded.
A handful have fallen.
There was that one tourist killed
at Muir Woods
on Christmas Eve
in front of his sister.
But who am I to complain
about the bright light
turning the sea to a diamond mine.

Two poems by Nisha Bolsey

winter is not a metaphor

you dream of a frozen lake, thick enough to walk on. you walk a mile out alone in silence, dodge the ice gaps that could swallow you like quicksand.

you dream of a world covered in water—shrouding every treeline, brick terrace, windowsill. under the dream: cars spinning out, black ice, red noses. you dream the frozen sky punctured by shiny flakes, snow that turns to pearl underneath your feet.

you dream the final snowfall, the last hungry sky.

*

snow shelters roots
refuge for irises
blooming only
in the winter sun

and under rays
subdued, flora
slumbers, bends
so that it may grow

*

awake to winter—one hundred degrees.

we meet under the cool shade of the night moon,
roaming the earth like strangers,
pressing our toes against the swollen
soil. we listen for water, run our
hands through the wind.
we remember
or we don't

or maybe the water's gone

and we're not here at all.

On the Shores of Lake Michigan

Nisha Bolsey

when everything
has finished dying
things will grow
wildly

in hollow waters
algae will flourish
blooming death-green flowers

someday, someone will take a bite
someone winged, or horned, or scaled
and will survive
and leave children
and grandchildren
to tread abandoned trails
and waterways

day after day
they will keep
cool in acid waters,
warm by purple fires,
dry under concrete ruins, will
hunt under deep green skies, will
try again

Two Poems by Thomas Bacon

Encounter

Silently the sun peels the clouds
away from the snag of hillside trees,
not a twig snap nor a whisper
of leaf against leaf,

the sky barely blue enough
to cross moss torn roots
and slippery stones.

I've heard

men once became bears
and bears became men,
sharing the cycle of seasons,
but legends and history have diverged.

Ancient stories are denied
even as banished spirits, now invisible,
may still walk immortal among us.
Warm paw prints in the mud.

I imagine watching eyes
as the earth spins today
into the web of the past.
I imagine the stench of wet fur,

the rumble of growls
and the clacking of teeth
as time retreats,
slowly backing down the trail.

The Four Seasons

Thomas Bacon

Spring blooms purple
crocuses, and whales

breach the sunlight.
Passion and play,

eagles soar in thermals
over new nests,

circles of thought returning
to the first letter of the first word.

A poem, unwritten,
waiting for coffee to cool

or a leaf to shape the breeze
to enchantment's end.

Summer breaks blue
with billows of thunder

filling an expectant field
overflowing with thrush songs
and the sweetness of a Sitka rose.
Rain drifts from the sea,

slow to arrive. In the shed
the rake, shovel and hoe rust,
waiting for less lazy days
as garden weeds celebrate

reprieve. Green grows abundant.
As promised, life's bounty returns.

Autumn splashes orange:
a pumpkin tethered to a leathered vine,

a leaf turning on a brittle twig,
and the sun cooling down into the sea.

Watchful eyes of the harvest moon,
the crows have flown far away
to richer feasts beyond the frost.
Firewood stacked cord by cord

and pantry stocked can by can,
the salmon have spawned.
Gulls pick the remaining bones.
Sweet smells of decay cloy the air.

Winter gathers white
fog, sheens of collected mist
chilling life's facade.

As the earth freezes
inside leaf litter and mold,

some seeds will survive
the sharpness of cold

winds carving silence, sculpted
shadows in the ice.

Snow-covered branches,
a flock of mallards swims near.
Ripples bend the light.

Another Journey

Fiona Jones

When you travel by rail instead of road, the world is a different place.

An older place, narrower, unlabelled beyond brief names of stations passed and schedules of stops to come. You have no choices to navigate; you are a passenger of unmarked miles, invisibly drawn along the double track that never changes route, a watcher of the scene that changes instead by season, weather and sky.

You see going by you the undersides and backs of towns and countryside: Long rows of terraced houses with their laundry, bins and clutter. Old things and forgotten, scrapyards and swampish neglected meadows. Stone walls and wooden fences disintegrating into long stretches of time alongside your own journey. Brambles, weeds and nettles, yearly swallowing trackside rubbish and grime.

Without any uphill or downhill of your own, you rise above treetops one moment and drop under bridge or tunnel the next, flying past pausing pedestrians, flashing past old sidings of rusting rails. Between trees and buildings you briefly glimpse the ever-busy roads that run along the front and centre of places, but in your caterpillar-millipede of train yours is the outside, sidelong, backwards, the overhead and underground, viewpoints of birds and snails, framed within the hundred years of rush and silence.

On a different timeline of human history—a different route of invention and necessity—Barsanti and Matteucci never happen to meet, MacAdam stays in New York, Ford or Midgley runs away to sea as a boy. Trains adapt quickly while cars fall behind. Smart-switching systems of trains to trams thread their own pattern by now, pulling settlement and industry towards their amenity. The railways take the front and not the back of buildings, towns and open spaces, while narrow untarred roads wander between, behind, beyond.

And the world, perhaps, lasts longer.

From August to September

Geralyn Pinto

September returns cleanly;
a laundered month,
a truce of blue and white.

But I think of the rains—
their now and then songs
slipping through slate and rafter.

Monsoons inside the house;
beads of diamantine
on gable, sill and tile.

Overnight mushrooms
are bridal bouquets
for wee nocturnal folk.

Outdoors in August,
green pares the gloom,
strikes secret paths to the woods

where gulmohar blooms
clasp tightly
the twig and sap of trees,

flame petals
show wet birds
the way to summer mangoes.

My best work was
to resist the rain,
its wild preponderance.

Next time it will stay
streaming through the house,
randomly stirring roots to life.

Samsara

Kendrick Loo

The things you see are real, but they are not a complete seeing.

—Frederick Lenz

To listen past the cicadas
is to hear the unseen. How
the tree lies supine, singing
its ode to the life it led. How
its return to the earth after
emerging in upwards ascent
is done with practiced kindness.
Look how the moss blankets
it in final rest. Listen to the birds
sing of years given to cradling
nest after nest. The air is scented
with loam, herald of smaller life.
So calmly the forest goes about
the tree, lush and wild. Rocking
the tree to its roots, as if it was
becoming the forest once more.

Contributors



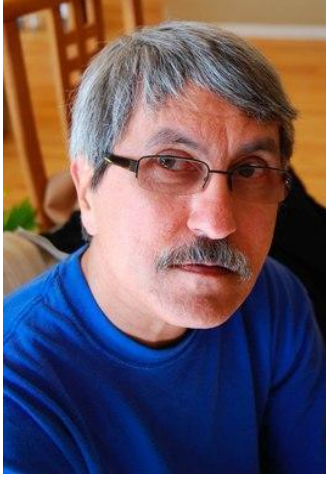
Rizwan Akhtar's debut collection of Poems *Lahore, I Am Coming* (2017) is published by Punjab University Press. He has published poems in well-established poetry magazines from the UK, US, India, Canada and New Zealand. He was part of a poetry workshop with Derek Walcott at the University of Essex in 2010.



Ang Xia Yi is a visual storyteller and multidisciplinary artist based in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia who works across the mediums of photography, fashion journalism and graphic design. In 2017, she began pursuing her degree in Fashion Journalism, at the University of the Arts London Central Saint Martins. She had interned with the London-based fashion houses, Hussein Chalayan and Xu Zhi. Visit her website: <https://x1ay1.com>



Thomas R. Bacon lives in Sitka, Alaska, an isolated island community bound by wilderness forest and the Pacific Ocean. His work has appeared in *Cirque* and in *Tidal Echoes*.



Joe Balaz writes in Hawaiian Islands Pidgin (Hawai'i Creole English). He has Hawaiian ancestry and he grew up in Hawai'i. He is the author of *Pidgin Eye* and the editor of *Ho'omanoa: An Anthology of Contemporary Hawaiian Literature*. Balaz presently lives in Cleveland, Ohio, but he has a strong connection to Hawai'i through his past and current works.



Nisha Bolsey is a writer and activist from the Pacific Northwest living in Chicago. She is a third-generation immigrant and an MFA candidate in poetry at Columbia College Chicago where she teaches writing. Her work focuses on wildness, social justice, our relationship with our environment, and the end of the world.



Bernice Chauly is an award-winning novelist, poet and educator. She has written seven books of poetry and prose and has taught creative writing and literature for over 20 years. She lives in Kuala Lumpur with her two daughters.



Edrie Corbit's first deep love as a child was the land. She has been writing letters and songs to it ever since. Her fiction has won the Grand Prize for the San Francisco Writer's Conference Writing Competition and she currently is working on a climate change novel that features both humor and heart.



Michael Garrigan writes and teaches along the banks of the Susquehanna River in Pennsylvania. He enjoys exploring the river's many tributaries with a fly rod and hiking the riverlands. He is the author of two poetry collections, *Robbing the Pillars* (Homebound Publications) and *What I Know [How to Do]* (Finishing Line Press). His essays and poems have appeared in *Gray's Sporting Journal*, *The Wayfarer*, *The Drake Magazine*, *Hawk & Handsaw*, *Sky Island Journal*, *Rust + Moth*, and *Split Rock Review*. You can find more of his writing at www.mgarrigan.com



Lois Marie Harrod's 17th collection *Woman* was published by Blue Lyra in February 2020. Her *Nightmares of the Minor Poet* appeared in June 2016 from Five Oaks, her chapbook *And She Took the Heart* appeared in January 2016, *Fragments from the Biography of Nemesis* (Cherry Grove Press) and the chapbook *How Marlene Mae Longs for Truth* (Dancing Girl Press) appeared in 2013. A Dodge poet, she is published in literary journals and online ezines from *American Poetry Review* to *Zone 3*. She teaches at the Evergreen Forum in Princeton and at The College of New Jersey. Links to her online work can be found here: www.loismarieharrod.org



Sabrina Ito lives in Honolulu, HI with her husband and son, where she works as a Middle School Languages teacher at an International Baccalaureate (IB) school. When she's not teaching or writing, Sabrina enjoys reading, going to the beach, fishing, and camping. Sabrina's poems have appeared in *Bamboo Ridge*, *Clarion Magazine*, *Slipstream Press*, *Coachella Review*, *West Trade Review* and *Blazevox*, among others. Sabrina is also the author of poetry chapbooks, *The Witches of Lila Springs* (Plan B Press, 2018) and *Messages from Salt Water* (Finishing Line Press, 2019).

For more information, visit Sabrina's website: <https://sabrinitopoetry.com>. You may also follow Sabrina on Twitter at: @ito_sab



Fiona M Jones is a creative writer living in Scotland. She has been a regular contributor to *Folded Word*, *Mum Life Stories* and *Elsewhere Journal*, and her fiction appears on *Silver Pen*, *Buckshot Magazine* and various other venues. Fiona's published work is visible through @FiiJ20 on Facebook, Twitter and Thinkerbeat.



Desmond Kon Zhicheng-Mingde is the author of an epistolary novel, a quasi-memoir, two lyric essay monographs, four hybrid works, and nine poetry collections. A former journalist, he has edited more than twenty books and co-produced three audio books. Among other accolades, Desmond is the recipient of the IBPA Benjamin Franklin Award, Independent Publisher Book Award, National Indie Excellence Book Award, Poetry World Cup, Singapore Literature Prize, two Beverly Hills International Book Awards, and three Living Now Book Awards. He helms *Squirrle Line Press* as its founding editor.

He can be found at: desmondkon.com



Nathalie Kuroiwa-Lewis is an Associate Professor of English and Writing Minor Director and Writing Center Director at Saint Martin's University, a private, liberal arts university located in the Pacific Northwest. She is also a board member of the Olympia Poetry Network. She has lived and taught in Japan, and her poetry often explores the natural world and themes of nostalgia. She has published poetry in *Oyster River Pages*, *The Windhover*, *OccuPoetry* and elsewhere. Nathalie lives in Olympia, Washington.



Kanika Lawton is a Toronto-based writer and editor. She holds a BA in Psychology with a Minor in Film Studies from the University of British Columbia and an MA from the University of Toronto's Cinema Studies Institute. She is the Editor-In-Chief of *L'Éphémère Review*, a 2018 Pink Door Fellow, and a 2020 BOAAT Writer's Retreat Poetry Fellow. Her work has appeared in *Ricepaper Magazine*, *Vagabond City Literary Journal*, *Glass: A Journal of Poetry*, and *Cosmonauts Avenue*, among others. She is the author of four micro-chapbooks, including the forthcoming *Theories on Wreckage* (Ghost City Press, 2020).



Rachel Kuanneng Lee is co-founder of a data science start-up. She writes poetry. She is hopeful that someday she might be able to make a coherent narrative out of her career choices, even if today is clearly not that day. Her work has appeared in *Quarterly Literary Review Singapore*.



Jikang Liu is a 19-year-old aspiring artist in New York. After graduation from high school in 2018, she tried to shove her passion for fine art aside when she started studying something completely unrelated in college. She thought she was never going to paint again, until she found herself constantly creating and painting. Recently, she decided that she will, for once, choose something for herself in life, and pursue art professionally.



Kendrick Loo is an English & Management undergraduate studying at the University of St Andrews. Born in Singapore, his poetry is interested in interrogating family, masculinity, and the natural world. His writing has been published in *Tayo Literary*, *Empty Mirror*, and *L'Ephemere Review*, amongst others. When he is not busy with his dissertation on environmental fantasy, he can be found tweeting at @stagpoetics



Mario Loprete is an Italian artist who graduated from the Accademia di Belle Arti, Catanzaro. His work has been widely exhibited in Italy and globally. Follow him on Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/marioloprete/>



Jennifer MacBain-Stephens lives in Midwest and is the author of four full length poetry collections: *Your Best Asset is a White Lace Dress* (Yellow Chair Press, 2016), *The Messenger is Already Dead* (Stalking Horse Press, 2017), *We're Going to Need a Higher Fence*, which tied for first place in the 2017 Lit Fest Book Competition, and *The Vitamix and the Murder of Crows*, recently out from Apocalypse Party. Her work has been nominated for Best of the Net and the Pushcart Prize. She is also the author of ten chapbooks. Recent work can be seen at or is forthcoming from *The Pinch*, Black Lawrence Press, *Quiddity*, *Prelude*, *Cleaver*, *Yalobusha Review*, *decomp*, and *Inter/rupture*. Visit: <http://jennifermacbainstephens.wordpress.com/>



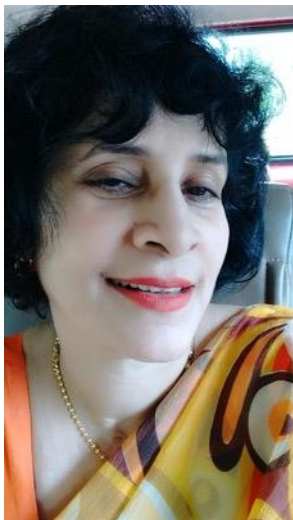
Tara Menon is a freelance writer based in Lexington, Massachusetts. Her poetry has been published in the following journals and anthologies: *Blue Minaret*, *The Bangalore Review*, *voices of eve*, *Calliope*, *Lalitamba*, *Azizah Magazine*, *Aaduna*, *Yellow as Turmeric*, *Fragrant as Cloves*, *the view from here*, and *10x3 plus poetry*. Menon's nonfiction has appeared in *The Courtship of Winds*, *The Boston Globe*, *The Kenyon Review*, *Green Mountains Review*, *Color Magazine*, *Fjords Review*, *Na'amat Woman*, *Calyx*, *India Currents*, *Parabola*, *India New England*, and *Hinduism Today*. Her fiction has been published in *Catamaran*, *The APA Journal*, *Many Mountains Moving*, *India Currents*, *The South Carolina Review*, *Living in America* and *Mother of the Groom*.



Noriko Nakada writes, blogs, tweets, parents and teaches middle school in Los Angeles. Publications include a three-book memoir series about growing up mixed-race in rural America. Excerpts, essays and poetry have appeared in *Catapult*, *Meridian*, *Kartika*, *Hippocampus*, *Compose*, *Linden Avenue*, and elsewhere.



Nsah Mala is the author of five poetry collections, four in English and one in French. His collections include: *Chaining Freedom* (2012), *Bites of Insanity* (2015), *If You Must Fall Bush* (2016), *Constimocrazy: Malafricanising Democracy* (2017), and *Les Pleurs du mal* (2019). His poems and short stories feature in numerous magazines and anthologies across the globe such as *Red Poets*, *Kalahari Review*, *Scarlet Leaf Review*, *Wales – Cameroon Anthology*, *Ashes and Memory*, and *Redemption Song and Other Stories – Caine Prize Anthology 2018*, among others. He has also edited a number of poetry anthologies and has won literary prizes in Cameroon and France.



Geralyn Pinto serves as Associate Professor in the Post-Graduate Department of English at St Agnes College, Mangalore. She is a creative writer who has been published and won prizes, nationally and internationally. Among her more significant achievements were the *Desi Writers Lounge* short story prize (2013 & 2014), the First Prize in the *Save as Writers Contest*, Canterbury (2016) and the publication of her story “Seven Steps from Irula Country” in the Fall/Winter issue of the *Tahoma Literary Review* (2019). She is a member of *Alibi*, an online British writers group and participates in their monthly writing workshops.



moth1 is the alter-ego of **Sivaraj Pragasm**, a creative director and filmmaker based in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam. A recipient of the Future Leader Scholarship at LASALLE College of the Arts, he went on to achieve a Bachelor of Arts in Film, with first class honours. Since then, he has made a career out of establishing his forte as a visual storyteller. With three short films under his name, and a feature film currently at its infancy, Sivaraj has kept himself busy by dividing his time as a creative director for his creative collective mothpeople and freewheeling projects like these under the moth1 name, which include photography, music and film-related work. Visit his website: <http://mothpeople.net/>



Prasanthi Ram is a PhD candidate for Creative Writing at Nanyang Technological University of Singapore. Her interests lie in South Asian literature, feminism(s) and popular culture. She is working on her debut collection of short stories that explores the Tamil Brahmin community in Singapore. Most recently, she co-founded and is the fiction editor of *Mahogany Journal*, an online literary journal dedicated to South Asian writers born or based in Singapore.



Remi Recchia is a trans poet from Kalamazoo, Michigan. He is currently a Ph.D. candidate in Creative Writing at Oklahoma State University. His work has appeared in *Sleet Magazine*, *Barzakh Magazine*, *Pittsburgh Poetry Review*, *Front Porch*, *Gravel*, *Glass: A Journal of Poetry*, and *Haverthorn Press*, among others. He holds an MFA in Poetry from Bowling Green State University.



Jade Riordan is an Irish-Canadian poet living north of Canada's 60th parallel but south of the territory's polar bears. She is a volunteer selection committee member (poetry reader) with *Bywords*. Her poetry has appeared or is forthcoming in *The Blue Nib*, *Contemporary Verse 2*, *Cordite Poetry Review*, *The Miracle Monocle*, *Slippage Lit*, *takahē*, and elsewhere.