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June Jordan

Activism is not issue-specific.
It's a moral posture that, steady state,
 propels you forward, from one hard
 hour to the next.
Believing that you can do something
 to make things better, you do
 something, rather than nothing.
You assume responsibility for the
 privilege of your abilities.
You do whatever you can.
You reach beyond yourself in your
 imagination, and in your wish for
 understanding, and for change.
You admit the limitations of individual
 perspectives.
You trust somebody else.
You do not turn away.

This poem originally appeared in the February 1999 issue of The Progressive. It is reprinted here with permission from The June M. Jordan Literary Trust.

Infrastructure

by Sally Elesby

That pothole
under the bridge that's
being retrofitted behind
concrete Jersey barriers tagged
with black graffiti and
an eight foot construction wall painted
baby blue, which
redirects traffic into
one lane so dump trucks can
come and go except
during rush hours when
gridlock quickly
frustrates commuters whose
tires chew into asphalt with
stops and start-ups day
after day—two times a day—for
almost one year,
has doubled in size.

Can't Get the Oil Out of My Wings

by Bob Schildgen

Oil rolling down the arroyos
oil oozing over reservoir dams
oil bubbling up in the foyers and conference rooms
oil leaking up through the petroleum-based carpet
oil sweating from the petroleum-based Walmart floor
(ordinary lonely consumers slipping in oil,
falling and breaking their oil filters and filing lawsuits)
oil dripping across the market research spreadsheets
oil buoying up the daytrader swimming
the oildark sea into oil backing up from storm drains
oil congealing inside Sport Utility Vehicles
and trapping entire families
can't get the oil out of my wings
oil, warm oil surging up in the toilet at the speculator's office
and lapping at the stockbroker scrotum,
lubricating modern para-economic membranes.
Oil in mudpie puddles and kindergarten cubbies
oil in the life-support transparent tubing
oil in Galicia and Galápagos
oil in the very feathers of Darwin's informative finches
oil dangling in black threads from their beaks
can't get the oil out of my wings
oil rising up in a wind-driven
earthquake-shuddering tsunami smearing coastal cliffs
oil cuddling the kids in the surgical ward
oil drips from the wounds of insurgents
and even from the breast implants and hair
and organ transplants of oil czars and czarinas
can't get the oil out of my wings
oil oozes out the remote tuner
that slips from your hand and you can't get the oil off
you rub and rub your hands out out damp spot
but oil gushes from your crotch
and oil puddles in your sacral dimples
your armpits and adenoids and clefts and cleavages
and you run naked to the shower to wash off the oil

and it sticks and you rub but it thickens
and oil curdles at the shower nozzle—
it's talking now, babbling, hotter and hotter
we're all Ophelia floating in oil
can't get the oil out of my wings
the oil is in flames, your cat is igniting
your television looks at you pleading,
crying for help before it implodes
can't get the oil out of my wings.

I Now Declare This To Be An Unlawful Assembly

by Benjamin Walker

for Scott Olsen

An officer holding a megaphone calls it
before the half-light breaks over Oakland.
500 policemen pummel the camp awake
with batons, rubber bullets and tear gas.
We find video instantly, watch the sky torn
up with flash-bang bursts and hook-trails
of smoke descending on Snow Park.
We learn of the first protester to suffer
critical wounds. He served his tours in Iraq
without injury, shipped back in time for war
at home. It doesn't matter what fractured
his skull. Beyond rage, beyond our fear
that with night comes a matching crackdown,
it's another martyr we dread at McPherson Square.

A Dissenter Breaks Protocol

by Benjamin Walker

It gets tense if the assembly's wrists go limp.
We let our hands dangle when we disapprove,
wave when we're willing to march in support,
and form crosses along our chests when a move
will spur us into hard opposition, sending us home.
A homeless man sitting outside the circle, donated
trench coat, black knitted cap, drops his water
bottle on the grass, and starts to scream back
about how he's had it with our fucking assembly,
our drum circles, communal loaves and droning talks
that never end. Frantic members from the Mediation
Committee run after him as he reaches the street,
giving his own speech on why Jubilee won't come,
agitating the police, staring into traffic for an hour.

October 23, 2011

The Werther Effect

by Benjamin Walker

for Mohammed Bouazizi

In the public square I search for you, Mohammed.
Can a single degree matter? Can I ignore the signs
asking for change and roll up my window, or turn slack,

force my eyes into a kinder shape as a baton strikes
my knees? You showed me that, for all our demons-
trations of will, we're governed by the same rules

that set us in motion at the beginning: The swiftest of us
finding weak points at our borders, escaping, the sly
outlasting, the sick eaten first. We can't wait

for appointed hours – they come when we pour gasoline
on our fruit stands, on ourselves. This truth came
from my fall: death comes suddenly, surely as a deep scrape.

Should I give up, or should I weld myself in place,
soldered to an earlier stage of grief? Is it too late
to engage in denial? Too late to bargain? You be the judge

of my integrity. Try me. Test me. We'll see if fire refines
my resolve, makes it unbreakable. But Mohammed – I
project your path, foresee fire-teams of militant bankers

and survivalists joining arms against the poets, perpetually
outgunned. In time I pray for the salvation of land
mines, the brutal clarity of a demilitarized zone.

I slice my soft hands open, searching through cabinets
for an unchipped glass of water. I abandon the square
where your testimony began. I seek the safety of sun-

less Metro tunnels, the comfort of wet concrete. I stop chanting

about freedom, stop test-flicking my lighter.
You weigh me in the balance, baptize me in gasoline.

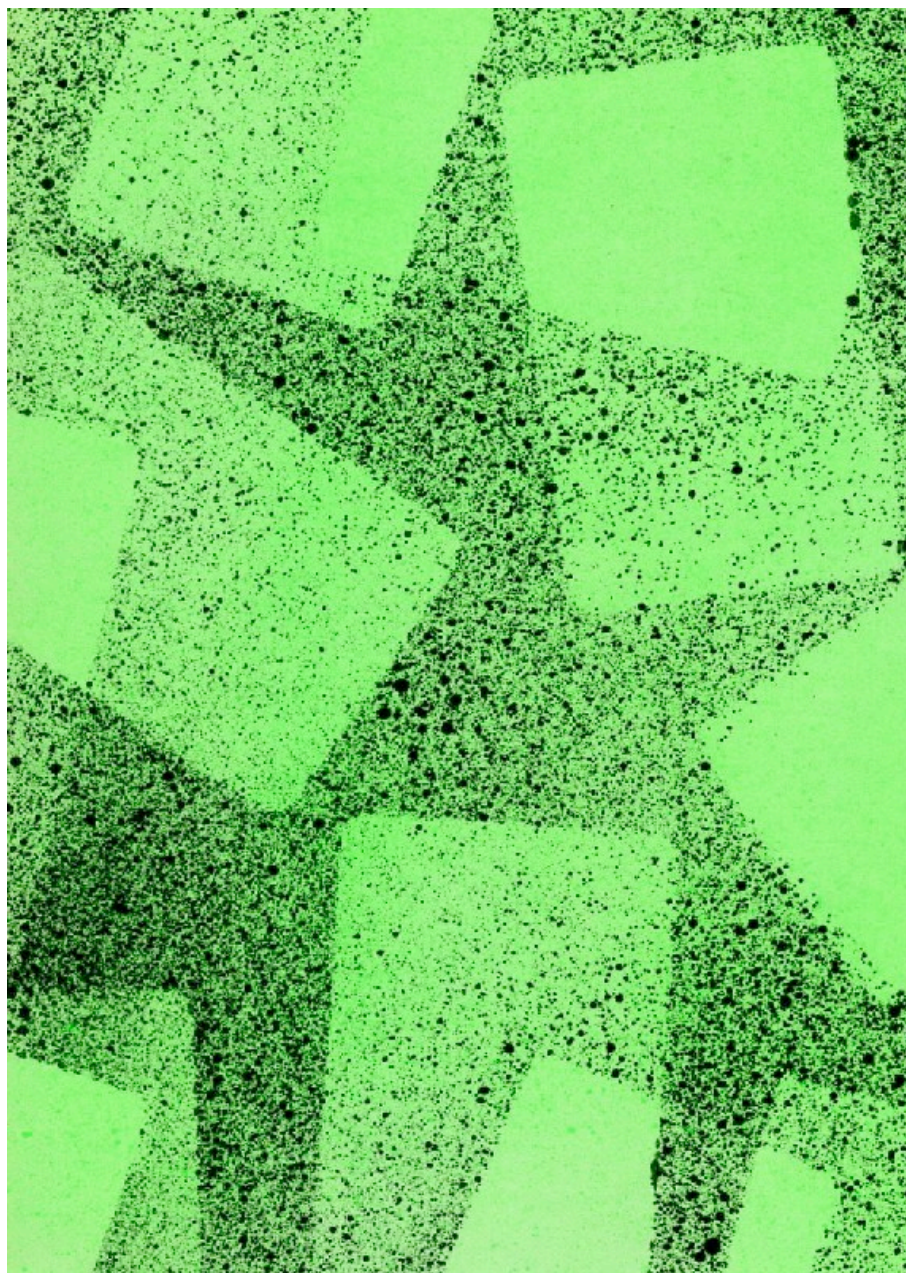
by Fabio Sassi

by Fabio Sassi

Company	Price	Change	Company	Price	Change
3M	54.25	+0.12	Dr Pepper	27.00	+0.05
Amgen	51.69	-0.10	Dynegy	27.00	+0.05
Boeing	31.85	-0.10	Eastman	27.00	+0.05
Caterpillar	38.50	-0.10	GenCorp	27.00	+0.05
Chrysler	33.43	-0.10	General Motors	27.00	+0.05
Citigroup	58.75	-0.10	Glaxo	27.00	+0.05
Conoco	43.40	-0.10	Johnson & Johnson	27.00	+0.05
Cummins	65.85	-0.10	Merck	27.00	+0.05
DaimlerChrysler	78.92	-0.10	Novartis	27.00	+0.05
Delta	31.60	-0.10	Pfizer	27.00	+0.05
Dynegy	89.99	-0.10	Roche	27.00	+0.05
Eastman	60.76	-0.10	Schering-Plough	27.00	+0.05
GenCorp	47.72	-0.10	Schwarz	27.00	+0.05
General Motors	63.92	-0.10	Smith Barney	27.00	+0.05
Glaxo	89.14	-0.10	Union Pacific	27.00	+0.05
Johnson & Johnson	24.20	-0.10	Verizon	27.00	+0.05
Merck	31.85	-0.10	Wal-Mart	27.00	+0.05
Pfizer	38.50	-0.10	Wendy's	27.00	+0.05
Roche	33.43	-0.10	Yum Brands	27.00	+0.05
Schering-Plough	58.75	-0.10	Zions	27.00	+0.05
Schwarz	43.40	-0.10			
Smith Barney	65.85	-0.10			
Union Pacific	78.92	-0.10			
Verizon	31.60	-0.10			
Wal-Mart	89.99	-0.10			
Wendy's	60.76	-0.10			
Yum Brands	47.72	-0.10			
Zions	63.92	-0.10			

The Shadow of Money

by Fabio Sassi



The Dawn of Falling Banks

by Fabio Sassi



The Stars Say We Belong

by James C. Henderson

The stars are pinned in their places.
Not a single one has been lost or added.
Orion glitters in his belt of jewels.
The Big Dipper spills her mouth of black sky
into the never-ending river of black sky.
The earth still spins on its axis
through the vastness of space around the sun.
All the planets dutifully follow their orbits
and occasionally line up to vibrate
as a mysterious, harmonic force
then break up and drift home, like after a really good concert.
Spring still turns to summer, then fades to autumn, winter.
The moon goes through its phases
as the snake sheds its skin, swallows its tail.
But tonight I feel things are different.
It's not the earth that has changed direction.
Time still ages, I'm going to die—it all ends badly.
But tonight, here in our encampment
as we try to keep warm, feed ourselves
go to the bathroom, clean our clothes, dry our bedding
organize, organize, organize
when I look up at the stars
I don't curse them for not allowing me to fall amongst them
or for leaving me behind, finite.
In the constellations I don't see the old myths
but make new connections.
Our circles around the sun, our cosmic cycles
are no longer a monotonous, boring routine to me.
Tonight, gravity has a purpose.
It holds me to a place I want to occupy.

Why He Stands to One Side

by David Rosenthal

Despite the fact that escalators move,
he found himself at some point walking up —

as if he willed the movement of the crowd;
as if his will had something left to prove.

When he was still a boy he'd climb the down,
then turn around and barrel down the up,

or pace himself to fall into a groove,
applying will to will to hold his ground.

But now one will wins out above the rest:
as motion all around him escalates,

pedestrian momentum is compressed
to be usurped by more momentous fates.

District Annex

by David Rosenthal

The district needs the space for cubicles –
they'll park their cars where children used to play.

The classrooms will be gutted and rebuilt,
the backstop, slide, and monkey bars will stay;

the rain will turn the garden plot to silt,
the sun will cause the murals to decay;

meanwhile, canvas swings will sag and fray
unused, unless the wind brings ghosts to play.

The Hum Everywhere

by Lindsay Illich

Between a pair of mismatched
socks and a round fugue.
Dirndl and a shot.

A man walks down
the street, talking on his cell.

A car idles at the corner.

The blues light of television
in every window, the tint
night. The hum everywhere

trying to be heard
above the making it.

As if the noise, too,
wanted to be more
than what it is:

vicarious, unusable,
the background of a life
it will never know.

Calendary

by Lindsay Illich

Low as the heart's low
thrum, dark as moon wink.

The camp of mind, as dust
losing its place in the caste
of mystery. Recall the piano bench,
a door jamb, losing
all taste for living here.

The little house in a row
of little houses forgets to mean.

The middle life of books
and paperclip, a diaper's
heavy weight, the dog's bowl
always empty again.

Dram of aspirin, hum
of appliance, awl. Winteriness
a carved carbuncle of January.

Like a splinter, this isn't where
we were supposed to be.
Like errata, then waking up again,
kneeling at the coffeemaker,
bargaining with what gods will listen.

Myrna Loy's Early Films

by Kenneth Pobo

They made her *exotic*,
meaning non-white, "Oriental,"
a woman who easily ruins men
just because she can. Why

was this exotic? When I think
of corporations ruining men,
no one calls them *exotic*—
they're *job creators*
though the jobs went poof.

Loy's victims? Who were they,
Little Nell? Dimwits
who blame everyone but
themselves? Maybe they're
the *exotics*, hothouse flowers
that withere outside of
the greenhouse. Or
they trap women and ooze
bile when they fight back.

By the mid-30s, Loy would be
urbane and martini'd, shedding
her exotic but still erotic look—

foreclosures rose while
bankers put a whole country
in a picnic basket
and had us for dinner.

I Knew this Guy

by Kenneth Pobo

who for many years had
a lot of money
a nice home
a nice family
that he complained about but
paid every bill until

he lost his job
just like that
no warning

his stocks blew up
debts mounted

the house moved away
from him
courtesy of the bank

he often said he hated
kooks and creeps
who rabble-roused and
protested
hoped the cops
would round them all up
and imprison them

He changed

Courageously

he faces

pepper spray and weapons.

Chaos of Theory

by Terry McDermott

in the chaos of this moment,
everything looks like tornado winds.
twist and spin, fly and fall;

torn apart, torn down. like buildings
abandoned or a spent subway newspaper
caught in the air stream of the passing train
news too slow never read, rarely noticed in and
among the media maelstrom;
that forms, informs and misinforms. we're
overwhelmed, as everything seems frantic
and moving fast to what end.

we're familiar with a certain chaos, though
we may use words like hectic and demanding.
this day's chaos is out of context.
we've become consumers, and rumours.
ruled by the omni-chaotic, guilt-inspiring
shelves of choices and channels.
the new and improved
shampoos, computers, credit cards and cereals.

at this moment, we all look disheveled
caught with our gloves down and another
haymaker's on the way. until we
climb out of the ring, wipe at our
bruised faces and cut the face-
book tightly-knotted umbilical cord.
to find a quiet place where we can live
with our disquiet, our unease for a simple
moment and leave them behind.

i look for reason or reality in this chaos
of a million pebbles in a million ponds
that ripple the water,

and gather momentum.

and i find none, the sense of change
is a wave that has breached the dyke.
a wildfire that has jumped the break.
and people are no longer hidden
in trenches, entrenched in the belief

that their voice is out of tune,
that their power is only in their
wallets, that shrink each day,
that they are just consumers, taxpayers,
not citizens or people with
values, of value, with
rights and wrongs, with
a place that they need to repopulate.

i have removed the barricade of
reason and reality
from my equations and calculations.

and i don't mind the chaos.
it leaves in its wake fragments
of ideas, thoughts, alternatives
that we can pick up later.
think about. understand that
hope doesn't break like bamboo
and potential is not lost
but a spring wound up
ready to be released.

no i don't mind this chaotic moment
i just would like a hill
to sit on, to watch
to wonder.

We'll Build

by Tony Burfield

I'll build a fire tonight
against the cold and against
technology and against the federal
reserve.

We'll build a fire tonight,
crouching in flannel shirts
and Achilles boots,
fire in the brick box in the dry
wall box in the 2×4 box
in the wooden siding box.

We'll build a fire
and breathe the pine smoke
and taste the grit and get splinters
from gently, delicately, pulling
thin, dry kindling off
logs.

We'll build a fire tonight
and remember something deep
something not forgotten
but misremembered
and rusty, something embryonic
and more human than the keys
we type.

I'll build a fire tonight,
and it will burn and smoke
and crack with snap,
with expanding resinous tree blood.
We'll build a fire.

The 1%

by Frederick Pollack

I buy him, he buys me
with what we made divesting ourselves
of the last vulgar *matter* in
our portfolios. Then I buy Charles,
who owns the water somewhere.
Managers are let go
with manly hugs. Without regret,
they buy one home where we buy eight
in various sylvan glades.
And at each turn we create jobs:
drivers, pilots, gardeners,
my tailor – extending rank on rank
as in old posters
to the greenwood where frontiersmen
still, undoubtedly, spit on their hands,
build houses, and will one day buy us all.

Flunkies labor in the clouds;
we, on a lower floor,
like to be part of things. But this year,
misguided people mar
the park below our window. Pete,
of Euro-Pacific Capital,
went down to film himself
attempting to instruct them; they were rude.
We put up a sign –
“We are the 1%!” –
in response to their silly boast,
and by the window drank their health in champagne.

It’s cold down there. At night,
they look like maggots in their sleeping-bags.
We can see through their tents;
would have total data if needed.
By day they do the repetition thing –
nonsense, objections, divagations
all with the same enthusiasm.

One girl on a generator-bike
is their flywheel; I think
she stared at me once.
“You’ll get more out of me,” said Leon, late
of Goldman, “if you treat me with respect.”
It’s not even that. We only
want simple humanity.

Stampede

by Barbara Lightner

Hold back,
runaway stallion,
headstrong, determined
upon your course.

We have too long
pastured indifference
and its easy silence
feeding your power,
your pounding hoofbeat.

We will no longer hold
to inertia's doom;
are not so hapless
as you depend on.

This day we hold hard
against your intractable runs;
the bit of our bridle
cutting into your
immeasurable
extravagances.

Apocalypse Night

by Barbara Lightner

High thoughts must have high language.
–Aristophanes

They would
 crack thunder,
erupt with the fierceness of volcanoes,
 become power
 in a righteousness of apocalypse.

What we got
 was small rain,
 the piss-conduit of frogs.

Listen! You can hear them now:
brekekekekex, koax, koax

Defiant Trespass

by Barbara Lightner

Can't sit down
 on the rocking chair porch
 of the *is*,
bad air disturbing your ease,
 old women,
 sending you into the center
where they hold the big cigar.

Cigar's miasma
 fills the swamp
of a fetid finale,
 circular self satisfactions
rung 'round by the law
 they've done in.

Take your lesson:
 the cockatoo dies
 outside of her cage;
Prometheus high in the crags
 had his liver pecked out
 for trying and trespass;
Eve didn't make it 'gainst
 the warlords of patriarch deeds.
And for you?
 No bird sings.

Defiant trespass,
 the charge
 brought in law;
 the charge
 waged for peace,
grandmothers resisting.

Revolutioning by Proxy

by Erik Tate

For those of us who aren't quite ready to
pitch our tents in the park,

those of us who want to know more about what's
going on out there before we commit,

for those of us with soft skulls,
those of us who are partial to our spleens,

or
for those of us who want to step in gradually,
get our feet wet first,

we can safely watch events unfold from
in front of our computer screens.

The danger in this is
after a time

we've convinced ourselves that we can see more by
staying home,
watching up close,

letting the revolution come to us.

Tuning in to live feeds of key encampments 24/7
we can chat with protesters on the front lines,

watch as cops pull the tarps from over
sleeping protesters in the rain —

seeing it all without leaving our living rooms!

We watch as protesters retake a park they were
driven from days earlier.

Such a feeling of pride,

like

when our team wins, we say

we won

even though we

had nothing to do with it.

Occupy the Heart

by James C. Henderson

When we look back on what we do here today
whatever the outcome, whatever the result
we can say we did it out of love
as friends, who, before we occupied
were preoccupied by doubt and despair.
Who, before we were many, were one
alone in our room looking out
at the future with dreary eyes.
Sure, now that we are together, out in the open
there is danger.
Now that we have shown our faces
vowed to love one another and the world
we are vulnerable to the cold
to pepper spray, the rain of billy clubs
but here we stand.
Without food or shelter, without signs
without even our books, we stand.
Inside or outside of the designated hours
or the prescribed zones of free speech
we stand, voices raised, for what's right.
To the forces that oppose us,
to those that oppress us, we say:
You can kick us out of your public parks
your government centers, your open spaces.
These are not really what we occupy.
We occupy the heart.

from this day forward

by Michael Mars

the fathers never meant by peacefully assembling,
that inalienable right to collectively complain,
to petition the government for a redress of grievances,.
stand against an entity uncontrollable, a future unacceptable,
they never meant for those kinds of things
to take place after the sun went down, well into the night
much less on the grass, such citizens are to be remanded
to the concrete walks, the hard outline of streets,
never the soft yielding leaves of grass
certainly not in places frequented by privilege
for that would be quite inconvenient to haves
which always make up a whole or at least
that sacrosanct one percent of the whole
what were you thinking, little ones,
stop reading books, or listening to others
your libraries will be hid away in dumpsters
maybe you should congregate on ships in harbors
except tea bags seem inconsequential like so many starbucks
in an unwashed sea of Citizens United, every corporation now
becomes a brother to you, maybe even a brother-in-law or two
brothers created by law, the newest by-laws clearly reveal
the first amendment has become annoying to the few,
amendment number one is the inconvenient truth
from this day forward we shall begin with two,
as in two nations under god, divisible

Immigration & Customs Enforcement

S1639

by Karen Douglass

Whose idea to chill our borders?
Metal badge — ICE Officer — not real
gold pinned to a dark uniform.
I cannot explain ICE,
never had to run, duck and cover,
to harvest lettuce or grapes,
put on a nanny dress, hide
my face in false papers.
Border crossing is a curse;
dying of poverty is a curse.
Twelve foot fences
make fourteen foot ladders.
ICE — to kill.

La Révolution Américaine

by David Osnoe

The crowded gallery brims
with warm energy-
small nervous exchanges
of smiles & handshakes,
the scene is reminiscent
of the Parisian underground.

Pops- an older, houseless man
wears his friendly grin
& greets his brothers & sisters
with love.

An elderly couple,
dressed warmly & holding hands
squeeze down the quickly filling
aisle. I stand alone

in the back of the room as
the white-haired woman's eyes
wrapped in tissue-paper wrinkles
flash sky-blue in my direction & I nod

in deference. My nose fills
with the dense odors of pressed bodies
& cigarette smoke. I turn to face

the projection screen,
watching the conversations of strangers.

Hemp oil rising to my nose-
it has been rubbed into the dreadlocks
of the slight, pale skinned girl

who sits beside her husband-
both of them clad in skinny jeans
& vintage 1940's accessories.

Lights
dim & the documentary begins:
All Night, All Day-
the story of the seven week old
Richmond Occupation.

I see this
film mirrored in the flashes
of NY police batons raised over
plastic riot shields, in the screams
of UC Davis students sprayed with chemicals
& the heavy intonation, the heartbeat
of hope struggling against violence-

I let history quietly whisper
into my reddened earlobes
& blink back refracting tears
against the flashing of the projected future:
here, nestled in Virginia's bosom,
revolution stirs.

Community Policing

by Patrick Forgette

In the morning, I put on a T-shirt.
It's not as easy as it sounds.

My head is too big for the collar,
and my arms run aground in the sleeves.

I am aware of no charges against me
so it must be for the common good

that each dawn I am given
the brief sensation

of what it's like to be clapped
in the stocks.

Shadows of the King

by Joshua Jennings Wood

Shadows of the king pollute this city.
They occlude, as a rule, the horizon.

Graffitied affections enclosed, the staged
Dream between planks of old-fashioned scaffolding.
Residue spreads from the reverse fireworks
As we gag the national anthem backward.

But we'll raise in a dilated ditty
Our black marks and bottles, sift in the shin-
Level silt thronging the statue ashen
As faded paper. The demands of weather
Forecasters here are unsurprisingly
Simple, but the appointed ladies at court
Insist on poets intimate with firearms.

*

Sections of this city stay blockaded.
Even the most tongue-talented travelers
Find pulp sheet erections bar entrances
To the museum where movies play on
Unannounced midnights—indigestible
Refreshments are still free, thankfully.

Once in a while one slips past a limp patch
Of choked scratch shoving the uncontestable
Sky aside, or rumor lands like a rock
In a well nowhere near here that all is...

Wishlessness—arid garbled thralldom.

Department heads commend themselves with slaps
Behind the back and prep the next dead astronauts.

*

Shadows of the king pollute this city.
They occlude, as a rule, the horizon
Producing one that is more present and
Truly, not lacking its own color and charm.

Attaching the Rainfly

by John Bonanni

We take to streets to live in them.
From just behind the nylon of this cave,
the long-standing edifice belches: *Your hunger is your own.*

I unzip the nylon in swooshes, I disagree,
I nail it all down to the concrete.
The edifice grows red with plastic.

And the plastic sends out more plastic.
I inhale the exhaust and curl my toes,
the air thickens with a warm sense of shattering coffee mugs.

To escape it, I go with them, I take the low bridge,
the one that everyone takes,
and we collapse it

with sound—
the murmur of our mad treason,
the restless call of our shoe soles,

the rip of the nylon across November,
the never-ending clap.
We chanted away the rumbling terror of cloud,

And we stayed
to cross this ocean pavement, to roar like unbridled rockets,
a push, a give, a raised baton. To all the cameras in our pockets.

Legal Separation

by David S. Pointer

In 1986 when I
suggested the separation
of corporation from state
to a businessman—he
looked shocked as if
I'd separated the master
from his administration
building or wanted to
separate a congenital
defect from its cancer
ridden host coming
down with increased
corporate sickness
planned and fanned on
like fire accelerant for
countless generations.

Animous Uni State

– *erased from the Declaration of Independence*

by Katherine Factor

When the human be comes one bands connect them the
powers of the earth equal station to laws of nature nature's God
entitle them respect kind they impel truths to be self created
endowed Creator with certain alien life happiness.

Deriving their just powers from ends, is the right institute new
foundation to effect safety indeed changed experience disposed to
right selves by abolishing forms A long train pursuing invariably
the same design Absolute.

It is their right, it is their duty, to guard their future patient colonies; and such is
now the necessity to alter form system The history present is a
history of direct states. To prove this, candid assent to
wholesome good.

Forbidden operation assent obtained; and so utterly attend
accommodation districts relinquish representation formidable called
together bodies places unusual distant depository of records,
measure dissolved houses opposing firmness

Exercise time exposed to invasion from without convulsions
within endeavored population; migration hither raising the
conditions Will alone erected a multitude of new swarms their

substance peace - independent power combined with others
large bodies of us:

protecting inhabitants of these states: all parts of the world: imposing
us consent: cases of benefits transporting us beyond seas to: free
province, establishing therein - enlarging its boundaries so as to
render fit instrument absolute colonies: altering fundamentally the
forms declaring selves power to legislate protection - our seas, our
coasts, towns, and lives . Time transporting large complete works
parallel ages, total head

Fellow citizens take captive the high! Country, become friends and
brethren, hands endeavored to bring on the inhabitants of our frontiers,
Indians of all ages, sex conditions Every stage humble
petitions answered only by prince character marked act
of a free people.

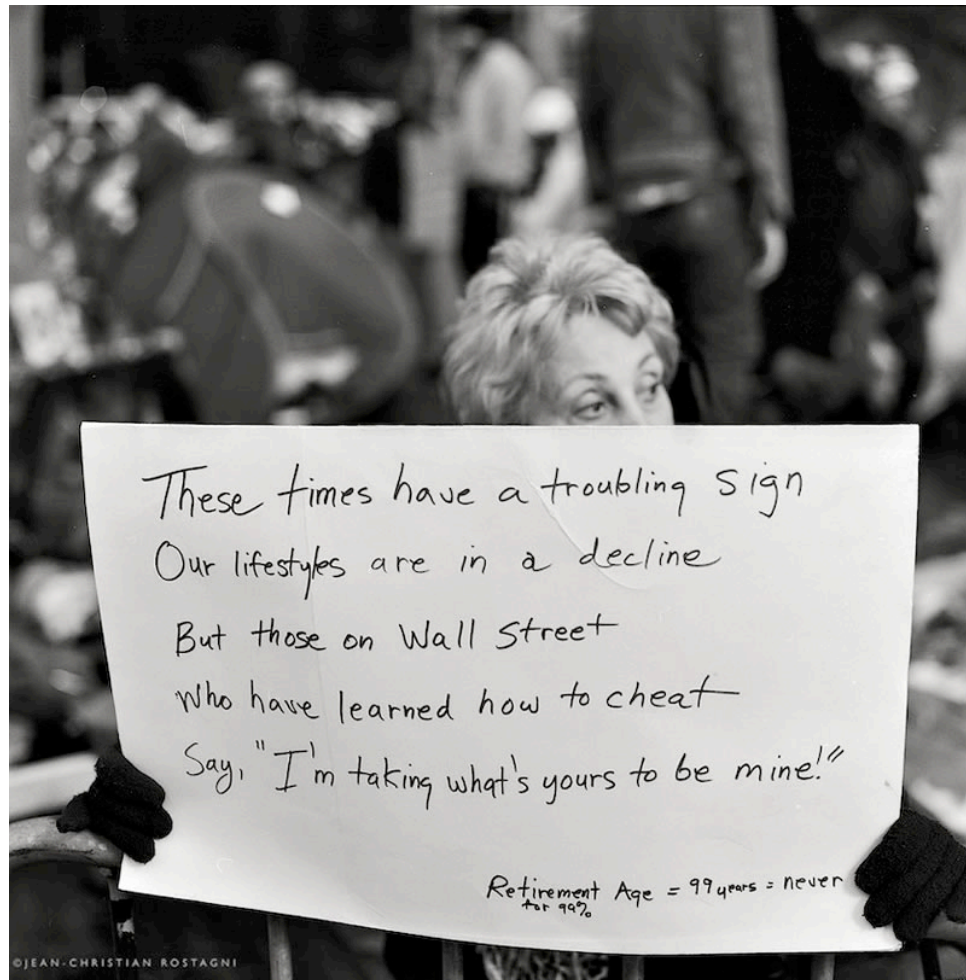
We been wanting time to extend over us.

We have reminded them of the circumstances of our settlement here. We have
appealed to native we have conjured hem ties of our
kindred vow inevitably our connections correspond to the
voice of justice and o We must hold them, as we hold kind peace
friends.

We representatives of the assembled Supreme world Name united colonies
right ought free absolved from all Crown all connection
between them and Great Divine Providence, we mutually pledge Light

Troubling

by Jean-Christian Rostagni



This photo, taken in October 2011 in Zuccotti Park, is from the collection *Rocking for Discomfort*.

We Have Our Dogs and Their Ancestral Blessing

by Eleanor Lerman

If tomorrow,
it turns out that our lives
are more mysterious than we thought
but our connection to each other deeper,

involving secrets about the creation of fire
and the folds of time that figure, mathematically,
into the distance between our encampment
and the distant stars, then even so

we believe that we are ready
More ready, probably, because we are friends
The scouts say it is dark up ahead
but we know how to live from meal to meal

We have our flags
We have our dogs and their ancestral blessing
Out on the road, we will survive the winter
In the spring, the wind will write its thoughts
upon the future

It thinks of us
It thinks that we will win

The Countess of Flatbroke

by Mary Meriam

I shun the man-made world and stay at home.
This suits the world, since I am very queer.
I eat my spinach quiche and write a poem.
I like my chair and bed; it's pleasant here.
Except one little problem, namely cash,
which threatens to undo my little life.
The bank account is headed for a crash.
The fridge is empty—where's my working wife?
What happens when a poet lives beyond
the time she would have died, except for fate?
A strange career, but not designed to bond
somebody to a steady job this late.
I have no skills in generating wealth.
I've spent my time recovering my health.

The Bitter Side of Flatbroke

by Mary Meriam

Some people lead an easy life, from birth
to death, connected, pampered, lucky, rich,
convinced that smiling fate defines their worth,
quite safe and snug and settled in their niche.
I wonder why I can't be one of them.
If I had money, I'd have time to write
and read and socialize with any femme
or butch or in-between who came in sight.
Or spend my time alone or take a trip.
Then I could call my life a life and not
this constant jungle fight to get a sip
of water, find a place to rest, too hot,
too cold, too worried, hungry, lost, alone.
Perhaps someone will throw this dog a bone.

*From the depth of need and despair, people can work together, can organize
themselves to solve their own problems and fill their own needs with dignity and
strength. They must learn to think and act for themselves — and be free.*

Cesar Chavez

Trabajo

by Rachelle Linda Escamilla

It is hard to live in the triangle tip, the last
bight before the pass through the *quien*
sabe mountain range, before nomansland.

Here my family's lowincomehome
below the tooth water tower,
 Here my father's white
picket fence hides our mudcolored bodies.
He tends his chile, cilantro and *nopales*,
in the crook of his caramel elbow he rubs
cilantro to release the sharp green

How to tell him he may not find
work at forty seven beat from the sun, so so
young, years climbing up ladders
plucking windows and planting them in the
gold mine of mansions the pictures he would
take! The houses so so so!

He guards our house with his tattered flag
checks the creaks in the fence, fills the holes
from snakes, raccoons, the stray dogs.
Runs his fingers 'round the edges of our windows
his expertise noticing problem areas, screen needs,
places where work

We Didn't

by Lindsey Walker

We didn't wear olive and coffee-colored duds or red stars or black berets when the whole world burned, from Tripoli to London. We didn't throw Molotovs in the sweat-soaked night. We didn't dance to the chorus of breaking glass. We didn't chant slogans, sing anthems in the throaty darkness.

We did eat corn chips and applaud the rebel forces from our couches between reruns of soda commercials. We remembered then that we were thirsty; we smacked our salty lips together.

Worm-mouths lisp into the ears of kings, but how long can we distract us? How long do our pleasure responses last, dopamine flooding synapses every time we chew peanut-butter cups?

I'm not saying now that we need to set fires, but if we must let's try not to get caught. Remember they can pull your prints from the insides of latex gloves. Remember that a naturally-occurring fire has a single point of origin. Near an electrical box is good; we could probably get away with it.

I'm not saying we have to set a fire, but we're going to need something to warm our hands. We'll need something people could follow through the night, a sailor's polestar, celestial navigation. We don't have to start a fire, but what else would we use to burn this whole place down?

Position Paper #4: Taxes

by Andrea Lawlor

In the new country the children will read with fascination about money economies when they borrow books from our neighborhood or central libraries which will be open all night every night and all day every day. We immigrants will try not to worry about the children's games of cash register, which they will play in the great common buildings when there's rain, scattering handmade tokens in front of the fireplace. We will try not to call them baby capitalists even in jest. We will be so kind to the babies, and we will let them pick out their own clothes from the clothing depots; we will not impose our fashion agendas once they are old enough to point. When they are very young we will dress them in tiny animal costumes, which we will create by sewing ears and tails on earless or tailless garments. The babies will later look at drawings or photographs of themselves and remember in flashes their kittenhoods, lapping milk and sleeping among their littermates in our arms.

Position Paper #5: Property

by Andrea Lawlor

In the new country, we will eschew individual possessive pronouns, preferring to indicate linguistically our shared but not individually-owned belief that all property is probably theft. We won't have much use for thieving, which will sadden the older among us, with our fond memories of shoplifting cassette tapes from k-mart but which will be nicer for those of us who prefer to pick up the nearest hybrid-style bike and ride it rather than fiddle with u-locks when we are late for our six-monthly appointment at the free dentist, to have our teeth cleaned using non-toxic but very excellent cleaning solutions. Our house will still be "our" house; I haven't worked out the particulars of housing yet, but I think we'll just agree that we stay there, temporarily, like all of life.

Shelter

by Taylor Graham

Long bare room, three rows of cots
with Army blankets (gray), cots with men
sleeping sprawled or fetal, or sitting
head in hands looking down at
linoleum spotless-shiny floor (gray).

He's been there. Bussed
with the others from street corners,
edge of woods, wherever
a man's allowed to spend an hour
neither working nor buying;

herded in, where it's safe and warm;
fed a nutritious meal (aftertaste
of gray). Lights out; too many men
breathing. Too hot. Staring at a ceiling
that keeps out rain and stars.

November. He's stood at the corner
with the others. The bus is gray.
He stands now at the edge
of a weedy nook. Beyond, cottonwoods
and willows spending their last gold

coins beside a trickle of undammed
water; blackbirds singing the last day-
light. And then the dimming of
colors into black. Cold enough to
sleep, shivering in dreams under stars.

My Cell Phone Is a Genie in a Box

by Ana Garza G'z

It speaks the time when I tap an upper corner,
Which can be its forehead next to an eye, and it says, "Please
unlock," when I slide a finger across its face
where the mouth should be, as if I had the key
to more than my front door. It says, "home,"
as if home could spill out of a fingertip. It says,
"You are near ..." as if Here were the dot
that starts or ends a line on a map,
not a parking lot near an ATM that tells me I'm broke.

And she, my phone, speaks in facts,
as flat and plain as her voice—the weather in Nairobi,
the sunset in Caracas, the time in Seoul—
what only God and Google know except for the money I'll tip
the server who doesn't smile or make small talk
when my coffee is poured or the bargain entree is brought out.

And when I ask, "What do I do next?" the phone says,
"I'm sorry. no short answer for 'What do I do next,'"
and when I wonder where I am
exactly, she says, "Location not found,"
and when I tell her I can't keep this up, she asks,
"Did you mean, 'I can't keep this up'?"

I stop talking to her, both of us stuck
in the mechanical patter of an email form letter
that says another position has already been filled
and an online bank statement that says bargain
entrees are as necessary as pearls,

and her eventual silence brings what we dread, her shrinking
into a metal case, my dropping
a thumb against sealed glass
to push for time before slipping to the edge.

Port

by Ana Garza G'z

I tasted it in Lisbon
in a seventeenth-century stable
turned restaurant, turned tourist
trap, before I turned thirty.

The food there was good:
croquetas, cheese, olives like Hosts
on communal platters, circles of fish, rice, vegetables
(I asked only for vegetables), and glasses

and glasses and glasses—
long stems, short
stems, wide mouths, curls,
flutes—in lines

above our spoons. "It's good,
the port," the proprietor stood
at my elbow, "from the fields of Oporto
beside the sea. Taste."
And he leaned close to pour
a mouthful. "It's sweet,"
he said.

Then

I reached for the tiniest
wine glass, the littlest
one—the size of an orange blossom,
kiss-shaped—touched
it to my lips,

received:

Oporto, cool

nectar, the singing workers
of the fields sea-breeze

chilled; Oporto, syrup
over my tongue, honeyed.

"Drink."
And I swallowed.

And the hardness of the dirt,
the chill, the rocks (Oporto is
a stony shore), the thick-necked beer bottles
of the hands who picked

lodged
in my throat,

and I coughed.

First Responders

by Howard J Kogan

Oh how we love to love our fire fighters and EMT's –
counting on them to save us in the worst of times.
Waving the red white and blue, applauding,
standing at attention, saluting as they parade past.
We praise their courage and respectfully, mournfully,
attend their funerals where bagpipes wheeze their dirges.

Our beloved First Responders who go where we
never would, who face the danger and the horror
as we wait and witness from a safe distance.
They're our angels in uniform.

Until their labor contract needs renewing,
and property taxes climb and we piously decide
they must sacrifice, accept benefits cuts, lay-offs.
Asking of them only what we ask of other angels –
to live on our occasional prayers and inconstant love.

American History

by Susan Rich

Someday soon I'll be saying, at school

there were chalkboards, at school
we read books made of paper,

we drank milk from small cartons. We drew.
At school we liked children unlike us

studied evolution, enjoyed recess, plenty of food.

At school we made globes of papier-mâché,
built solar systems democratized in sugar cubes.

At school we sang harmonies of Lennon -
McCartney; we were cool;

collected pennies for children in China
Biafra, Bangladesh, and Timbuktu.

There were teachers of Plato, King,
and Kennedy all paid for by taxpayers

for an ordinary American school.

untitled, from *American Amnesiac*

by Diane Raptosh

We have to tolerate inequality as a way to gain prosperity for all,
someone told me Goldman Sachs' Lord Griffiths said

at London's Southwark Church last fall. What kind of sense is this?
I can't remember a thing I did for that firm,

but it says on my C.V. I have advised for them.
Here is a thin cut of wisdom: The kinder you are the stronger

your immune system will be. And don't forget oysters. Dark meat.
The day's breath of garlic. Carelessness can ruin months of growth.

My old best friend Jen Byers says there's such a job
as being minister of leaves of tea!

If someone were to ask which ancient figure I'd most like to meet,
I'd say the constitution, as it is a living document. Get on the page with me.

I recall the end of Rinehart's last consulting phase
as if it were Lisette's first look.

At each momentous stage of his life, a Sioux Indian earns a new name.
Jumping Badger landed the tag Sitting Bull on killing his first bison.

Unfriend was just dubbed word of the year.
The name's Jon Doe, and I'm just lying doggo here on wheezing earth.

untitled, from *American Amnesiac*

by Diane Raptosh

Is it just me or have tales of repression, suffering, and cruelty
disappeared from public memory, slipped out

of view like white deer against a rinse of snow?
People aren't so much persons anymore as they are

war fighters, purchasers, prisoners—shoulders bunched up like shrubs.
You can order cancer cells from a catalogue! Money is speech.

Goldfish have a god-big range of recall, so I've read. I can sum up
watching tops of trees, lying on the bench that day in Gas Works Park.

We need to shut down oil infrastructures, and the tips of leaves don't give
if we do this through lawsuits, boycotts or sabotage. But I'm afraid

of assault. Of stroke. I have no memory of fear itself. A street. A bus shelter.
Blue snowflakes wafting from Shanghai. My treatment in Sydney

for kidney stones. I've grown more oval than the orange roughly. I ache
on all the bodies of each of my parts. I need to clutch another person's face.

Good morning America, Where Are You?

by Joan Gelfand

Now that the buck has stopped
The jig is up
The well done run
Dry your eyes. You're done.

The party's over the game is played
The bad boys took off
With the cache.

Now that the buck has stopped
Where are you?
What's your place?
What's really on your mind?

Now that the buck has stopped
Did you make the right choices,
Sacrifice the best of times?
Can you remember your kid's last season?
Who won, who lost, who's behind?

Good morning America.
The drug of distraction's worn off
The cocaine high of overvalued
Done gone good-bye.

And this downturn, this turn down,
This big big disappointment, bummer slump
Might just be Nature's way of cooling us off
Cooling us down – all that dough
Rising and rising making us feel
Super, natural but you know she's the boss
Nature had to cool off!
Man! She was feeling the heat.

You have lost and

I feel for you
All that hard work and
Faith in The Street.

There's a knock knock joke
In here somewhere
Something along the lines of

"How many Investment Managers
Does it take to screw..."

Or was that greed I heard knocking
Your knees back there?

Our bodies warm the room together

by Christian McCusker

The cold comes in from outside
so one of the students stands up
to close the window, to stop the draft.
We all agree this should be done.

In the classroom, we sit cross-legged
and we face the center of the circle
and we sit shoulder to shoulder
and we talk things over.

Like molecules of gas compressed
together we excite each other.
We give our energy to our neighbors
and our neighbors return the favor.

And we hardly even notice the way
our bodies warm the room together,
the way our heat sweats and swells.
Outside, the passersby look in and shiver

watching as we slowly shed
our jackets and coats, our cold-weather clothes.
We roll up our sleeves and make plans.
Soon, we'll need a bigger room.

Paro Nacional

by Mary Ann Christensen

When she walks, there is iron
in her face, but not her fists.
These, stuffed in her pockets,
share space with lint and loose coins
and the idea of justice.
She does not bother to paint
her mouth and knows her presence
is faceless,
the limb of a crowd,
and therefore beautiful
in itself.

She is a fingernail.
An eyelash.
The wink
of the masses which salutes
authorities, small armed,
with serpentine movement,
coquettish and proud.
Footsteps honor the footsteps of others—
the elders, the lost and never found
(my third grade lunch-box, my memory).
They echo in the reverb of coarse guitar strings
plucked in national stadiums,
in the unwavering gaze of loaded guns.
Her footsteps obey your footsteps.
There is history in chanting,
in the verses of a broken song.

An American Dream

by Josh Gaines

The American dream rejects us.
The prospect of earned respect
Through hard work is suspect
At best.
Beneath the weight of economic neglect,
Like pyramid boulders
That slump our shoulders
That make us colder.
When they say Giza
Wasn't built by slaves,
That just means
In some way they were paid,
But that didn't make them free.

Society has never been
More controlled
Than by the power of the paycheck.

My mother had this idea
That was crazy
About making money
To free me
From a system
That would find me
Bind me
Charge me and fine me
Hold me
Control me
And hang me from a rope
Made by men for the hope
Of a dollar
With a picture
On the back
Of a pyramid
That watches

Their every move.
My mother had this idea
And I wanted to be a poet.
And one time
I got sneered at
'Cause I couldn't know
Of hard work
Or struggle,
But ask me.

I've been car-jacked
Commissioned
Shot at
Kidnapped
Beat up
Broke down
Broke ass
Homeless
Foodless
Fearful
But, cared for.
Someone cared enough
To give me my voice,
One voice among billions,
On a planet among trillions,
In a world where men's noise fills in
The gaps between wind and thunder
And I wonder,
I wonder if my 1% brothers
Could understand this dichotomy,
Could understand the solidarity of
Our fists in the air
In America's night,
Pumping for our chance
To stand equal with the elite,
Even if we come
From the streets,
Outside
Wall Street.

Welfare Diet

by Louie Crew

The rich taste good with pepper and salt.
Don't waste thyme, rosemary, or sage;
cayenne's enough. It's not their fault
they're bland or fat. It's the age.
Stay their hearts with Louis Vuitton
strips; baste them with buttered blood.
Roast and serve. Soften in brine
their necks, then boil. Next flood
with garlic these briskets. Press
cloves with salvaged dentures.
Kabob their balls with mushrooms.
Eschew more exotic adventures.
The rich taste good with pepper and salt.
Don't waste thyme, rosemary, or sage;
cayenne's enough. It's not their fault
they're bland or fat. It's the age.

Howl Again

— *with thanks and apologies to Allen Ginsberg*

by Richard Downing

I.

I have seen the smallest wallets of my generation opened for the gold man, sacks
of money taken from the people by the people

who could because they wrote the laws they did not break,
who could because they bought the rating services
who looked at what they had to sell and said it was good,
very very good,

who put a middle class into dream homes that drowned beneath derivative waves
and magic numbers that made those houses disappear, vanish to the place
where jobs and pensions go to die.

II.

Why is Henry Paulson not in prison?
Why is George W. Bush not in prison?
Why is Dick Cheney's heart an artificial muscle?
Where are the 4500 hundred who left for Iraq?
Why were the coffins covered with flags and from view?

Why are our President's financial advisors Wall Street's financial advisors?
Why do we have Citizens United?
Why can't we have citizens united?

Who is Justice Alito...or is that an oxymoron?
Who is Clarence Thomas? Is he Justice Alito?
Or Anthony Scalia? They look so alike inside their black robes.
How does John Roberts comb his hair?
Does he comb his hair or does it just stay fixed and heavy on his head
like a mortgage?

Where is Thurgood Marshall?
Where is Thomas Jefferson? Why is no he longer inside Texas school books?
Why do we have a Supreme Court?

Do we have a Supreme Court?

Why don't we have a Supreme Being who will smite the Supreme Court
we don't have? Or is that what He intends to do in due time?

Can we vote on that? May we? I'm asking nicely here.

III.

Who are all these people in the parks? Why are all these people in the parks?
Why aren't they all young or all old? Why aren't they all straight or all gay
or undecided?

Why do they vote with their fingers? Why do they sleep in tents?

Don't they know it's growing cold?

Don't they know that their behavior is...different,
that people will talk, that they're already talking,
that so many people are already talking,
that this behavior is contagious, dangerous, likely to spread?

IV.

Why are they in my town? I've been told to be afraid. FOX News has warned me
of the violence that will follow. Why do FOX News anchors all sound alike?

Why is their hair perfect? Are they Supreme Court justices?

I thought there were only nine. Why aren't Sean and Bill be-robed?

Is "be-robed" a word? Will Sean and Bill know if it's a word?

What if it isn't and they don't know that it isn't
and they still make binding decisions for an elderly audience who,
God knows, doesn't need more binding? Who does at that age?

V.

Why am I down in the park again tonight?

Why am I waving my fingers upward like a demented mime?

Why am I smiling when it's so goddamned cold outside?

Why am I talking to strangers who are older and younger than I and dress in ways
I never would except for those who dress exactly like me?

Does my mother know where I am? Is she with Sean or Bill?

Why am I coming back tomorrow? Why do I know that...

VI.

I am with you in Zuccotti Park
where the rain becomes sleet and the numbers grow.

I am with you in Oakland
where an Iraq veteran lies wounded and the numbers grow around him.

I am with you in the small towns of Tennessee and North Carolina and Oklahoma
where permits and policies and curfews are the order
of the day and still the numbers grow.

I am with you in Europe and beyond
where America's true democracy is finally being recognized.

I am with you as we walk dripping from tents and sweat on a single highway
with so many lanes across America
to the open door of our cottage beneath a new moon in the Western night.

Unborn

by Carrie Osborne

I've made myself a much smaller crisis.
Marched and swept the floor. Walked
the dog, moved my money.
Lately, the ground's been letting it out.
I haven't stored enough water, but I keep
a pair of shoes near the bed. I think of them
as sighs, translated by outer layers, coming from
the alloy core, nickel and iron spinning at an unseen rate.
We have reason to believe it's there.
Machines can feel it; our instruments sense
existence. On this day and these coordinates
on the crust, the freeways were filled with feet.
The ships did not leave the harbor. I gathered
spare change from the dresser for the jar and
I don't know what kind of world I can give you. Guaranteed,
there will be Big Bang in your blood,
the elements of every structure:
a small tent-city,
a red and wholly unpopulated planet.

Contributors

John Bonanni's work has appeared in *Off the Coast*, *Whaling City Review*, and *Ganymede*, among others. He is founder and editor of the *Cape Cod Poetry Review*, a regional literary journal and reading series which showcases the work of Cape Cod poets. He is the recipient of a scholarship from the Fine Arts Work Center in Provincetown and a grant for the arts from the University of Massachusetts Amherst Commonwealth College. His most recent visual art has appeared at a juried exhibition at the Cotuit Center for the Arts in Cotuit, MA, and his poetry is forthcoming in *Mutual Muses: A Marriage of Poetry and Visual Art at the Cultural Center* in South Yarmouth, MA. He was recently interviewed at the Occupy Boston encampment for an article in the *Boston Globe*.

Tony Burfield lives with his wife in Boulder, CO and works at the public library. When not running wild in the hills or streets, he reads, writes, and saunters by the creek. His poetry collection "Canid" won the Green Fuse Press 2010 chapbook contest.

Mary Ann Christensen is from Santiago, Chile, where she currently resides. After majoring in English, she now works as a teacher for middle and high school students. Besides marking papers and writing, she dedicates her time singing out of turn and out of tune and drinking tea with those who love her and endure her rambling. Mary has been published in several independent magazines and journals, and more recently, in *White Rabbit: English Studies in Latin America*, where she has recently been asked to be a submissions reviewer.

As of today, editors have published 2,157 of **Louie Crew's** poems and essays. He has written four poetry volumes *Sunspots* (Lotus Press, Detroit, 1976) *Midnight Lessons* (Samisdat, 1987), *Lutibelle's Pew* (Dragon Disks, 1990), and *Queers! for Christ's Sake!* (Dragon Disks, 2003). You can follow his work at <http://rci.rutgers.edu/~lcrew/pubs.html>

Crew wrote the first openly gay materials ever published in *Change Magazine*, *Christianity & Crisis*, *Chronicle of Higher Education*, *The Churchman*, *Fellowship Magazine*, *The Living Church*, *Metanoia*, and *Southern Exposure*. He has been editor of special lgbtq issues of *College English* and *Margins*. He serves on the editorial board of *Journal of Homosexuality* (1978-83; 89–).

Karen Douglass: Her books include *Red Goddess Poems*; *Bones in the Chimney* (fiction); *Green Rider, Thinking Horse* (non-fiction); *Sostenuto*, (poems) and *The Great Hunger* (poems), which is available from Plain View Press (2009). Individual poems have appeared in a wide variety of publications.

Richard Downing has won the Nuclear Age Peace Foundation's Poetry Prize, Writecorner Press' 2010 Editors Award, and *New Delta Review's* Matt Clark Prize. He has poems in numerous journals and in the anthologies *Hunger Enough: Living Spiritually in a Consumer Society*, *The Dire Elegies*, and *Against Agamemnon: War Poems*. He is co-founder of local peace and environmental groups, has a PhD in English and a chapbook, "Four Steps Off the Path," from YellowJacket Press.

Sally Elesby is an artist who lives in Oakland, California. A burgeoning poet, "Infrastructure" is her first completed poem.

rachelle [linda] escamilla is a three time james phelan literary award winner, the recipient of the dorrit sibley poetry prize, the marjorie mclaughlin folendorf literary scholarship and the virginia de arujo academy of american poets prize. her work can be found in *580 split*, *cavemoonpress broken circles*, *the villiage pariah*, *la bloga* and *hinchas de poesia*. she lives in hollister, ca with her husband, dogs, and a house-bunny named melbourne the great.

Katherine Factor is a graduate of the Iowa writers' Workshop & lives in the eco-poetic desert mountains of Southern California where she teaches poetry to young artists. She is currently at work launching her blog Bionysos.net.

Poems by **Patrick Forgette** appear in *Crab Creek Review*, *DIAGRAM*, *Floating Bridge Review*, *Poetry on Buses*, and *Word Riot*.

Ana Garza G'z has an M. F. A. from California State University, Fresno. She works as an interpreter and translator. Her work has appeared in various journals and anthologies, most recently in *Taktil* and *Magnolia Journal*.

Josh Gaines recently separated from the Air Force as a Captain, and is currently working towards and MFA in Poetry at The School of the Art Institute of Chicago. His poems have appeared in *Travelin' Music*, an Oklahoma anthology from Village Books Press, and *Ain't Nobody That Can Sing Like Me*, a Woody Guthrie tribute from Mongrel Empire Press. He finished writing his first book *Cigarette Sonatas* this year and has performed in dozens of poetry venues and schools around the country.

Joan Gelfand's poetry, fiction, reviews, essays and letters have appeared in national and international anthologies and literary journals. Joan teaches poetry and coaches writers. She is the Past President of the Women's National Book Association and blogs regularly for the *Huffington Post*.

Her books are: *A Dreamer's Guide to Cities and Streams* (SF Bay Press, 2009.) "Here & Abroad," a chapbook of short fiction (winner of the 2010 Cervena Barva

Fiction Award) and *Seeking Center*, Two Bridges Press, 2006. *Transported*, a spoken word CD with original music can be found on iTunes & www.reverbnation.com

For many years, **Taylor Graham** and her husband, Hatch, have been volunteer search-and-rescue dog handlers, first in Alaska, then Virginia, and for the past 30 years in Northern California. She's responded to hundreds of missions for lost children and elderly walkaways, missing hikers and hunters, victims of avalanche, drowning, homicide, and urban disasters. In 1985 she and her dog spent five days searching for earthquake survivors in Mexico City. Searches and training exercises have taken her to homeless camps in the wooded and brushy fringes of our cities. Her poems have appeared in *American Literary Review*, *The Iowa Review*, *The New York Quarterly*, *Poetry International*, *Southern Humanities Review*, and elsewhere. She's included in the anthology *California Poetry: From the Gold Rush to the Present*. Her book *The Downstairs Dance Floor* was awarded the Robert Phillips Poetry Chapbook Prize. Her latest book is *Walking with Elihu*, poems on the American peace activist Elihu Burritt, also known as the Learned Blacksmith. You can find her on the web at www.somersetsunset.net

James C. Henderson has published poetry in a variety of literary journals including Haute~Dish, Double Dare Press, 42opus, and Midwest Poetry and has participated in numerous poet/artist exhibitions at The Crossings at Carnegie in Zumbrota, Minnesota. A member of OccupySaintPaul, James lives with his wife, Athena, in New Brighton, Minnesota.

Lindsay Illich teaches writing at Curry College in Milton, MA. Her work has recently appeared in *Improbable Worlds: An Anthology of Texas and Louisiana Poets*.

Howard J Kogan is a psychotherapist/social worker who enjoys rural life in the Taconic Mtns of East Central New York State. His first book of poetry, *Indian Summer*, was recently published by Square Circle Press.

Andrea Lawlor's work has appeared in journals such as *The Brooklyn Rail*, *MiPOeasis*, *OCHO 31*, *Lambda Literary*, and *Encyclopedia Volume 2*. Lawlor studies and teaches writing at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst.

Barbara Lightner is a 73-year old shameless agitator who began writing poetry in law school to escape the intolerable burden of death by law. She grew up in rural Tennessee among sharecroppers and cotton magnates and lived among killer whales and dolphins when on an island in Puget Sound. She taught Creative Writing at Skagit Valley College in Mount Vernon WA. She currently lives in Wisconsin where she owned and operated a 50-cow dairy farm; opened up and ran the Red Wheelbarrows Bookshop; and tried for political office where she failed miserably. The Madison WI Equal Opportunities Commission granted her its 20th

Anniversary Award for Community Organizing in the Women's Community. She has been known to write satire and parody.

Eleanor Lerman

Michael Mars is a counter culture poet writing from beneath the urban sprawl in the not so quaint hamlet of Farmers Branch, Texas. Some of his current work is touring with Speak Peace: American Voices Respond to Vietnamese Children's Paintings and can also be found in *Soundzine*, *Foliate Oak*, *Gumball Poetry* and *Tattoo Highway*. After spending over 60 years on the planet, he looks forward to waking up and to this day remains cautiously optimistic.

Christian McCusker was born and raised in New York City, where he attended Stuyvesant High School. He is currently a literature student at the College of Creative Studies at UC Santa Barbara.

Terry McDermott is a writer living in Ottawa, Ontario, Canada. Terry wrote *Sing the Hymn: Elegy to a Bottle*. He received the Jane Jordan Prize and his work has been published in *Bywords*, as well as e-zines. Terry's writing can be found at www.terrymcdermottwriting.com, which also features prose, some music, a blog and a buffalo. He co-wrote a seven episode web series, *Vita Bella: The Dogumentary*, four of which have been completed and can be seen on YouTube. He co-wrote, *Villanelles a deux*, in August 2011. Additionally, Terry, employed by the Government of Canada, has written in a variety of formats, particularly articles and speeches.

Mary Meriam is the author of two poetry chapbooks, "The Countess of Flatbroke" and "The Poet's Zodiac," and the editor of *Lavender Review*.

Carrie Osborne was born and raised in Kailua, Hawaii. She earned a B.A. in Communications from Saint Mary's College in 2003, an M.A. in Teaching from the University of San Francisco in 2006, and is currently a poet in the M.F.A. program at Saint Mary's College. She was a middle school Language Arts teacher at Claire Lilienthal School for four years prior to entering the M.F.A. program. She lives in Oakland, California.

David Osnoe is a Richmond, VA based writer who will be graduating from VCU in 2012 with a BA in English. He joined the Richmond Occupation on November 1st, after his friend was arrested and the Kanawha Plaza encampment was destroyed. One of the successes of the Occupation is its inclusive acceptance of a variety of skills, talents and voices and that is partially what inspired "La Revolution Americaine."

Kenneth Pobo won the 2011 Qarrtsiluni poetry chapbook contest for "Ice And Gaywings." They published it in November 2011. Also published in 2011 was *Tiny Torn Maps*, a collection of microfiction, from Deadly Chaps. He teaches creative writing and English at Widener University.

David S. Pointer has been publishing poems for 21 years in the small press scene. He currently resides in Murfreesboro, TN.

Frederick Pollack is the author of two book-length narrative poems, *The Adventure* and *Happiness*, both published by Story Line Press. Other of his poems and essays have appeared in *Hudson Review*, *Southern Review*, *Fulcrum*, *Salmagundi*, *Poetry Salzburg Review*, *Die Gazette* (Munich), *Representations* and elsewhere. Poems have most recently appeared in the print journals *Magma* (UK), *The Hat*, *Bateau*, and *Chiron Review*. Online publications in *Big Bridge*, *Hamilton Stone Review*, *DIAGRAM*, *BlazeVox*, *The New Hampshire Review*, *Mudlark*, and elsewhere. Pollack is an adjunct professor of creative writing at George Washington University, Washington, DC.

Diane Raptosh has published three collections of poems, *Just West of Now* (Guernica Editions, 1992, repr. 1995), *Labor Songs* (Guernica, 1999), and *Parents from a Different Alphabet* (Guernica, 2008). Her poetry has appeared in such journals as *The Los Angeles Review*, *Michigan Quarterly Review*, and *Women's Studies Quarterly*. Her poetry, fiction, and nonfiction have appeared in numerous anthologies in the U.S. and Canada. The recipient of three fellowships in literature through the Idaho Commission on the Arts, she was a recent featured artist on "Art and Soul Public Radio Stories: American Masterpieces Celebrates Selected Idaho Artists, Writers, and Performers." She is an ardent supporter of the Occupy Movement.

Susan Rich has traveled to Bosnia Herzegovina, South Africa, and the West Bank as a human rights activist and electoral supervisor. She has worked as a Peace Corps Volunteer, a Program Organizer for Amnesty International and now teaches English and Film at Highline Community College outside of Seattle, WA. Susan is the author of three collections of poetry, *The Alchemist's Kitchen* (2010) named a finalist for the Foreword Prize and the Washington State Book Award, *Cures Include Travel* (2006), and *The Cartographer's Tongue / Poems of the World* (2000) winner of the PEN USA Award for Poetry. She has received awards The Times Literary Supplement of London, Peace Corps Writers and the Fulbright Foundation. You can find her on the web at www.susanrich.net

David Rosenthal lives in Berkeley, California, with his wife and two daughters. He teaches kindergarten and first grade in the Oakland public schools, and he teaches poetry at Cazadero Music Camp and the Writing Salon. His poems and translations have appeared in print and on line in *Raintown Review*, *Measure*, *The Chimaera*, *Unsplendid*, *Blue Unicorn*, and several other journals. He has been a Pushcart

Prize nominee, a Howard Nemerov Sonnet Award finalist, and a semifinalist for the Richard Wilbur and Donald Justice Poetry Prizes. His website is <http://users.lmi.net/rosen4>.

Jean-Christian Rostagni is a French photographer based in (Old West) Durham, North Carolina. His work is distinctly multi faceted but features a substantial study of American culture and politics under the title "Life on Mars." All that, including the O.W.S. Chapter, is the subject of a documentary *Monsieur Contraste* by Rodrigo Dorfman, set to play the Festival circuit in 2012.

Fabio Sassi lives and works in Bologna, Italy. He started making visual artworks after varied experiences in music, writing and photography. He makes acrylics with the stencil technique on board, canvas, old vinyl records or other media. His brushes are spray cans. He uses logos, icons, tiny objects, and discarded stuff to create weird perspectives. Many of his subjects are inspired by a paradox either real or imaginary and by the news. You can view more of his work at <http://www.coroflot.com/fabiosassi>

Bob Schildgen is known to a million readers of the Sierra Club's magazine *Sierra* as the environmental advice columnist and blogger "[Mr. Green](#)." A collection of his columns, *Hey Mr. Green*, was published in 2008 by Sierra Club Books. His poetry has appeared in *Atlanta Review*, *Peace or Perish: A Crisis Anthology*, *Stoney Lonesome*, and other publications, while his prose has found a home in venues ranging from the alternative press's *Berkeley Barb* and *Pacific Sun* to mainstream newspapers and magazines such as the *San Francisco Chronicle* and *California*. A native of Wisconsin's west coast in the Driftless Zone on the Upper Mississippi, he is a longtime resident of Berkeley, California, where he "intensively gardens and pontificates."

Erik Tate is a huge fan of Allen Ginsberg and the Beat Generation poets and writers. He enjoys abstract photography, reading about quantum physics, gardening, and playing chess. His poems and stories have appeared recently in publications such as *Breath and Shadow*, *The Blotter*, *Brilliant Record Magazine*, *Speedpoet's Zine*, *Storyteller Magazine*, *Stray Branch*, and *Taylor Trust*.

Benjamin Walker is an MFA Candidate in Creative Writing at Hollins University in Roanoke, Virginia. His poems recently appeared in *PANK*, *SOFTBLOW*, *Orange Quarterly* and other journals. New work is forthcoming in *Mobius: the Journal of Social Change*.

Lindsey Walker is the current managing editor of *Licton Springs Review* and a student of creative writing. She has won the Loft Poetry Contest, the national League for Innovation Award for best essay, and the Whidbey Writers Workshop Students' Choice Award for fiction. Her work has been published a little in print and a lot online, most recently by the Northwest Institute of Literary Arts and P. Q.

Leer and will be featured in upcoming editions of *Third Wednesday* and *Eunoia Review*. She lives in Seattle with a boy and a dog. Visit her at lindseywalker.wordpress.com.

Joshua Jennings Wood is poetry editor and blogs for *dirtcakes*, a journal that explores themes suggested by the UN Millennium Development Goals to end extreme poverty by 2015. Please stop by. Other writing appears in *Chaparral*, *DIAGRAM*, *The North American Review*, *SpiralOrb*, *VOLT* and elsewhere.