

# **FRESHWATER**

**2010**



# FRESHWATER

## 2010

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*FRESHWATER'S* Twelfth issue, to be published in May 2011, is open to submissions from August 15, 2010, through December 15, 2010. Send up to five previously unpublished poems and a brief biographical note, with name, address, phone number, and e-mail address on each poem. Only one submission per submission period. An e-mail address is essential for electronic notification and re-submission of accepted work. Include a stamped, self-addressed envelope for notification only. Poems will not be returned.

Submit to

*FRESHWATER*

Asnuntuck Community College  
170 Elm Street, Enfield, CT 06082

or

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## Editor's Note

Once again I am faced with the delightful task of thanking a group of amazing editors who made this year's issue possible. As usual, longtime Editors Gay Paluch and Elizabeth Szewczyk were indispensable to the wellbeing of the journal as well as to my emotional health—Gay, with her calm efficiency, quiet taking on of tasks, and deep love of poetry; Elizabeth, with her intense passion for the written word coupled with brisk but warm assurances that everything that needs to get done can be achieved with minimal fuss. Editor Christopher Tarr once again kept us honest by applying his abiding belief in the essential role of poetry in our lives to help us see what we might have missed when reading submissions and also managed to keep us all electronically organized—no small feat. Right from the start, Associate Editor Nicole Costner showed an extraordinary ability to figure out the complexities of bringing out the journal and was an extremely insightful reader, as well as being a cheerful worker on even the most tedious projects. Assistant Editors Cayla Iacolino and Frank Marafioti were only able to be with us for the first semester, but Cayla's quirky eye for the unusual and Frank's growing love of both reading and writing poetry were great assets in the early selection of poems. Assistant Editors Christopher Brown and Sarah Charbonneau joined us for the second semester, which can be very challenging, but they were clearly up to the task and swiftly became active participants in the final selection of poems, skillful proofreaders, and most importantly were able to plug into the often peculiar *FRESHWATER* sense of humor, as well as intense discussions of poetry, life, death, and the sometimes obscure arguments for the merits of a particular poem.

Again, I must thank Elaine Folkers for her patient instruction and help when I called her in desperation on hitting a snag while formatting the issue; Falcon Press for their ongoing and valued partnership; and Duncan Morris, who has worked so efficiently over the years to ease the process of getting the journal printed. Finally, my deepest thanks to Asnuntuck President Martha McLeod and Dean Barbara McCarthy for their ongoing support of and pride in *FRESHWATER*.

*Edwina Trentham*



**Bert J. Nitch**

*FRESHWATER*

Lazing along between the muddy banks  
Its hide scaled with wind, and scathed  
By Puritan charity. Once, it had a name.  
A voice. One could hear it in the rocking  
Stones. In the hwait song of the birds.  
In winter, the ice could be suckled,  
The fish eaten raw, and my Father plucked  
Arrowheads from the cold water.

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**Eighteenth Annual  
Asnuntuck Student Poetry Contest Winners  
and  
Winner of the Second Annual Cover Contest**

**FRESHWATER** is proud to announce the winners of the Eighteenth Annual Asnuntuck Student Poetry Contest, which was open to students from the twelve Connecticut Community Colleges, the Connecticut State Universities, and selected local high schools. This year's judge, poet Robert Cording, selected six winners. Following are his comments on the prize-winning poems, published in this issue.

**First Place: "Maine" by Christopher Tarr (Asnuntuck Community College)**

I liked a number of things about this poem: the insistence of its voice which the reader feels in its repetitions ("hard, hard") and its imperative ("Repeat twice a week") and the hard facts of existence in Maine that the poem both acknowledges and doesn't try to prettify; the way the poem is plotted so that the poem moves from the dilemma that is winter in Maine to what is done to confront that dilemma to the surprising ending that conflates a painting of a river and a river in the actual backyard; and, finally, the subtle psychology that runs through the poem and helps us recognize our own lives in it.

**Second Place: "21 Oakwood Street" by Becky Bergeron (Asnuntuck Community College)**

This poem works its central irony (the blindness of the newspaper delivery man and, by implication, each and every one of us) very nicely and with great restraint. I liked, too, the way another irony, even more subtle, is played out during the course of the poem—that despite all the watching that goes on, there is very little "seeing" and very little that can actually be done to change the course of some events.

**Third Place: (tie): “Eight” by Sherylle Roberson-Hutchings (Asnuntuck Community College) and “Rhythm” by Brett Pinedo (Manchester Community College)**

I liked both these poems for opposite reasons. “Eight” has a rawness of emotion that is very powerful and very moving. I especially admired the way the poem plays with the number eight and how its constant repetition acts as a kind of refrain that knits the poem together. I liked “Rhythm” because it found a very appropriate form for its subject matter. The parable nature of the poem is just right for the way we all must learn to absorb the pains of life.

**Honorable Mentions: “uncertain waters” by Nicole Costner and “P.S.” by Alison Downs (Asnuntuck Community College)**

In some ways these two poems are linked in my mind. Both explore genetic history and the inevitable thoughts and fears we harbor about how we are linked to our family’s gene pool, for better or worse. I like, especially, how “uncertain waters” makes use of a nicely balanced plot—two stanzas on the male gene pool, two on the female—to contrast the darkness of gender inequality. I like, too, the ambiguity of the ending that can be read both as a disease carried in the women’s gene pool and as the result of being the less desired gender. “P.S.” is more direct in its emotion. The poem makes good use of the search of the father (a victim of a mental disorder) for God, for his daughter, and the daughter’s/speaker’s search for the part of her that is her father, a search that takes place out of both need and fear.

**FRESHWATER** is proud to announce that Asnuntuck Community College student, June Vaine, won the **Second Annual Cover Contest** with her beautiful photograph of a waterfall, featured on the cover of this issue. (This award was made possible through a grant from the Asnuntuck Community College Foundation.)

## Simon Perchik

\*

By the handful, in tenderness  
yet your shadow erupts  
and by nightfall holds on

one shoulder then the other  
spun as if this dirt would find  
the wind it came here for

circle up and cover this place  
with your finger touching  
the grave skies grow into

and never let go—a parting gesture  
collecting darkness with another  
helps you leave the way the dead

fill their arms with the Earth  
carried around as morning and higher  
in stones they know by heart.

## **Brett Pinedo**

### ***Rhythm***

she said  
*it's hard to keep my chin up*  
*when the rain is in my face*  
so I pulled her  
underneath my umbrella  
to shield away the storm  
and let her steer

forces of nature  
rain drops thrashing  
her grip on the handle  
was all she needed  
and she paced towards  
her destiny  
down the gleaming, wet road

and once she felt the rhythm  
that the rain dances to  
she dropped the umbrella  
halted in her tracks  
extended her arms  
wings  
raised her eyes to the sky  
and let the rain  
crash onto her face

and absorbed it

**Nora Pasco**

***His Honeymoon***

Under the erect and god-fearing trees,  
we make our day in dancing  
to the thin and blessed songs  
that tremble in the houses  
of the sparrows' throats;  
our green and glowing selves  
melting into the earth,  
praising every worm and flower.  
Each blade of grass an insect altar,  
from the soul's daylight to its evening.

At night's command we tread our path together,  
led by the god eyed torches of the stars  
to a home, hungry in our absence.  
Our memories hover, gull-like and laughing,  
over our sleep, picking and savoring the meat  
from the shells of our separate dreams.

I want to marry you again and again  
in every time martyred season,  
in every rippling silver moment,  
let me hold you like a wild bouquet  
resting gently in my honored arms.  
The day dawn autumn colors of your skirt  
fluttering in the world worn winds,  
and all my old songs hopelessly deafened by joy.

## LilyGrace

### *Perhaps*

*(after Wen-I-To and perhaps, Arthur Sze)*

Perhaps you have thought and can think no more.  
Perhaps. Perhaps you ought to rest a bit;  
put your thoughts away, come walk with me  
through the purple of iris, the red of poppy.

Don't let the sunlight stop you from touching.  
Don't let the cool breeze brush the kiss off your eyelids.  
No one will see us hiding in the flowers;  
I will press open each bud.

Perhaps you will hear the sound of a poem,  
the breath in a breeze, a heart beating.  
Perhaps the music you desire is lovelier,  
the song of a petal unfolding, a foot touching sand.

Then hush, unbend, lie still.  
I will let you rest, rest your head upon my breast.  
I will cover you lightly, lightly with my hands.  
I will tenderly watch, watch you sleep.

## Carolyn A. Cushing

### *The Little Hours*

#### *Midnight*

Dark over  
threshold of days.  
We are equipoise  
between the end & the beginning.  
Then the tick, tock of clock  
starts it all up again  
while we wear  
the silks of sleep  
descending.

#### *1:00 am*

Night, the ocean  
where you do not drown,  
but float in folds, chase  
a liquid shape of forever,  
watch it overtop  
your bantam boundaries.

#### *2:00 am*

Moon slips over ledge—

leaking backwards light  
lost by sun,  
pressing the thin milky  
of day over night,  
contending lux and lumen  
make a silent hum—

into variegated darkness  
where once I thought  
of sleep.

*3:00 am*

I place my hand on your hip.  
Beneath a thousand cells ignite,  
blood born in the bone,  
sent heart-ward to muscle  
that must not rest.  
I curve myself around your back,  
ribs rise with a half-hiccup of breath.  
There are stars somewhere  
but I know only blood, breath, and bone  
knitting you together  
under my hand.

*4:00 am*

Arcing branches,  
their tips above the house.  
Moon-frosted light  
making way for morning  
with blueing of sky  
and three sharp trills  
of the unseen bird  
crying out to the sun:  
*I need you.*

**Lisa Mangini**

***Einstein's Prophecy Loosely Penetrates My Nightmare***

In my dream, you showed me a handful  
of teeth, smiled—proof they weren't yours.  
You've never seen my bedroom, but here  
you stood, indisputable, in that way sleep  
allows everything to transform, in that way  
a photo still tells the truth, even when left  
in the sun for too long. The walls  
were breeding wasps: they filled windows,  
flickering between glass and screen, desperate.  
We tore our lashes from the lids, wished  
silently, focused (the way the pious  
pray). You opened my window, easy  
as a fortune cookie, knowing to discard  
whatever hidden wisdom buzzed  
inside. At my distress, you offered:  
*They're not bees. Useless. They'll never  
yield a drop of honey.*

## Christopher Tarr

### *Before God and These Witnesses*

I hung the hair on  
my head the way  
I hung the glasses  
on my eyes and  
the shirt on my  
back or the rings  
in my ears,  
thin ink on my  
skin, a grin on  
my mouth or you  
gripped in the  
mingled digits of  
our hands—bands  
touched together  
in a prostrate eight.

But then you said:  
“But I love him”  
and I was as one flung  
naked into an antarctic  
sea on a starless  
midwinter night—  
having nothing, I  
begged you to  
let me mean  
anything  
at all.

## Gayle Eleanor

### *Truth*

Sometimes  
it nibbles your nape,  
stands hairs on end,  
lights tiny bonfires  
across your scalp,  
slaloms your spine,  
slams into the pit.

More often,  
you must search,  
discern it  
in the subtle twist  
of a lip,  
the quality of light  
in a person's eyes,

tease it from  
*Why do you make  
me beat you?*  
or a cascade of tears  
that waters strangler figs  
planted beneath  
your heart.

When enough  
shards, sinkers,  
and noxious tailings  
have settled, ballast  
beneath your ribs,  
you can balance  
on any pitching ship.

Your hand  
will be steady  
when you pass the salt.  
With a quiet jolt,  
you will realize  
you have become  
dangerous.

## Timothy Martin

### *Eighth Rest*

The assassin hesitates, looking at the gun  
in his hand. He expected to find a pencil there,  
to write more of the sugary sonnets he'd given  
his landlady after she'd mended his overcoat  
for no good reason. Or an eggbeater,  
to make his nephews tapioca to eat  
on the terrace while they watched the peacocks.  
Which reminds him he's intended  
to send his sister his second wheelbarrow,  
hers being rusted through like a cancerous jaw.  
His boot is temporarily caught between  
the floorboards of time; if he's to step ahead,  
it'll have to be awkwardly, with one  
stockinged foot. The breeze has stilled.  
Two more notes, and the parade  
will have passed. The widow is already  
behind schedule for her weeping.

## **Dawn Avallone**

### *morning*

sunlight squeals through blinds  
even the blades of grass  
are too much today  
too crisp and green

last night I had a dream  
my teeth fell out  
chunks of black crumbling  
through my fingers

exhausted, I peer through  
the tiny port holes  
of a chain link fence  
fingers snaking  
through twists of wire  
rays beaming off the surface of each

and mourn the possibilities  
for disaster

## Rebecca Bergeron

### *21 Oakwood St.*

I cried then,  
loudly and in hysterics,  
watching the crippled  
newspaper deliveryman  
step out of his bumbling Buick  
and walk  
to the frosted front steps,  
placing yesterday's news  
firmly on the concrete.  
He staggered back to his car,  
chin to his chest  
and drove slowly down the street,  
as if there weren't  
a body bag  
with a dead man inside  
four feet east of  
where the newspaper lay.  
I watched from my bedroom window  
along with the paramedics and policemen,  
all with glazed-over gazes  
watching the car dribble on,  
wondering,  
how could he be so blind?

## **Lisa Mangini**

### ***Matthew***

think breath, contagious as breath itself,  
cascading through tissue since birth,  
since passage through fissure of flesh,  
like you. think sweat streaking  
palms seeking solace in pockets, a hallway  
too narrow to pass. blink fast,  
clamp teeth to deny speech  
or kisses except in darkness. think denial,  
think exile, violator of common policy,  
parody of humanity. think stray dog,  
snout in garbage, starved, condemned  
to sustain from scraps, forgotten  
matter. think leper,  
think pus and blood entangled  
in sharp barbs of a metal fence, closely,  
like lovers' legs. think  
corn and grass, companions  
while i'm strung up in confessions  
of the last sunset while i wonder  
what will they think when they write my eulogy?

## **Diane Glancy**

### *Arrival*

The animals woke me  
from the stockyards where my father worked.  
I went there  
not often  
but enough to know what happened.  
Why their cries of puzzlement in my sleep?  
Their fears of the ramp?  
But then it would be done  
except for the cries  
borne on water  
which have become water  
echoing like surf  
disturbed from an energy behind it  
always pushing forward  
back and forth as a lead goat  
the cattle followed without ever figuring it out.  
The weight of their noise is a surf above the horizon.  
Their voices of distress over one another  
until smooth as pebbles on a shore  
homogenized into sand.  
At one time, milk was left in glass bottles  
at the front door.  
The surf like a bottle spilled  
by accident  
yet the wailing  
as if the waves along the shore  
were a milky foam.  
And why the kill on the second floor?  
The ramp up from the pens?  
The pellet into the brain.  
The throat slit  
blood hosed into a trough.  
There it's over now.  
Was that so bad?

Cows did not go to the ocean  
yet it is in their death—  
a dismembering of water into words  
a separation of parts joined with other of the same parts  
on carts with metal wheels that tore  
the wood floor of the plant.  
The wood construction of the stockyards  
like an old galley ship  
until it began to list and sink  
and nearly toppled with the grooves of the iron-wheeled carts  
of tongues or intestines or tails wagging on the passing carts  
as if waves trying to cut loose the ocean  
from the land and it would fly off like a 727.  
Can you imagine the wings of the sea?

## Stephen Mead

### *Waves*

This one, ten foot slate, a girder unearthed  
& returning. These others are meniscuses  
too grey for reflecting  
the sky sliding  
on each curve . . .

Here the post cards are all black 'n white.  
If any difference occurs shades blur it in a slap  
of repeated graceful savagery.

Why be a non conformist when insanity is all the rage?

Instead, weather tongues, the multitude's mouth,  
a basin with teeth gnashing to spit out . . .

Oh Deus, do you exist, & from such  
a tough rugged heartland must not  
wounds be genuinely felt, entered,  
before healing can spark mercy?

Mama, I'm going in, goat-shaped froth  
gnawing off despair's crabgrass.  
Where are my bones?  
Now the pleated sheets form leaves, an excess

of light & the coast whitens.  
In Excelsis, purity burns liquid brimstone,  
the amethyst face, hands, a spirit looks on  
in tenderness, dis-  
possessing memories, a passage to float from  
& open upon

Baltic cliffs, Gibraltar balustrades—

The other world, the other world,  
this must be a birthing place.

## Corrine De Winter

### *Aphrodite*

Oh, this heavy hair could strangle you.  
Last night I was spitting out  
Pieces of my tongue, and they were like  
Overripe fruit on the ground,  
And I thought the birds would come  
And carry them away.  
They would be full of poetry,  
They would be swollen with beauty  
And a harsh naivety.

They call me Aphrodite  
Although I cannot swim, I cannot  
Hold my breath under water  
And the mermaids want to kill me.

Do I remember my first dawn?  
Barely, but that there was a deafening music,  
Little cherubim pulled at my curls  
And a gull placed a string of pearls  
Around my throat.

I was to symbolize the world's love,  
But even love, being half-myth,  
Was a thing of fiction to me.

I had learned of humanity  
And longed to live on its shore,  
To drink with the sailors  
And be bruised by passion.

But no one, nothing,  
Would let me come down.

**David Bushelle**

***Comedy Routine***

You stay down  
as if tiny snowflakes  
caught you  
and turned into sunlight's crystals,  
fresh on your face and huge  
in your lying-down eye.

You felt the black boot  
of an impersonal, godlike kick,  
and now you stay still,  
enamoured by this view through ice  
of sky's porcelain,  
with no essence of yourself  
anywhere in sight.

Such quiet crystals  
don't know what a human being is.

You hesitate  
to rise and assume again  
your irrelevant life.

**Rhonda C. Poynter**

***This Heat Reminds Me of When My Father Drove His T-Bird  
Through the Living Room Wall Because My Mother Had  
Locked Him Out***

he didn't kick in the door  
and he didn't break a window

he climbed into the thunderbird  
some hood out of Chicago had given him as a bonus

we heard the engine turn over and  
then the devil began redecorating

my little brother would later pronounce  
lemme tell you Sheriff it was better than anything

on Starsky and Hutch

unseen angels pulled us clear although  
the shelf of dimestore crap was never seen

again and it took two weeks for our  
old labrador retriever to come out from under

the porch

and from behind what was left of the dining room set  
i watched my mother

pick her way across rubble and beams  
and my father came up and out of the car

a lit cigarette still dangling from his lips  
and my mother cried out but not for her children

she yelled oh Jr. Baby are you all right?  
and Dad howled Jesus Jeannie look at what you drive me to!

years would go by and my mother would still laugh about his  
words  
because that boy of hers well, he just could not not be clever

and my brother went out to wave the cops down  
and i herded the neighbors this way

and that

my parents made up and held hands while  
the police took the report

as a matter of fact they went to a movie that night

Dad bounced a check to get the cash

and this kind of heat reminds me of  
the strangest things

yeah i've seen heat like this  
before

and it won't stop until everything  
around it has gone to ash

## Timothy Martin

### *Pet Store Expecting Fish Gets Man's Body*

An honest mistake, a back turned at the warehouse  
(and a thousand apologies from the shipper).  
Not, we assure you, the work  
of tragicomic gangsters, who did not fully grasp  
the principle of sending one to sleep with . . .  
well, in no wise was it. We are mortified  
at the thought of the college student,  
crowbar still in her fist, passed out next to  
the crate in your back room. We deeply regret  
the youngsters leaving empty-handed,  
pulled puddle-eyed past cages of dogs  
with snouts like black armbands against the wire.  
We cannot, however, at present rectify it.  
In Keokuk, they expected Uncle Chester, and were  
surprised to unpack instead coral, koi  
waving *konichiwa*, seahorses like darning needles  
quickenning the water. They've set  
the aquarium in the funeral parlor,  
where the bier was to be. The family  
dances in slow undulations, the gulls  
of grief kept circling high above.

## **Elizabeth Kudlacz**

### *Lycanthropy*

The bottle was daddy's full moon:  
it rose every Saturday morning  
between Looney Tunes and Scooby-Doo.

In the cluttered darkness of his dank garage  
coarse hair and yellow fangs grew  
unseen, even his howls unheard

for in the basement we were buried  
in bowls of Lucky Charms and another  
amazing escape by Wiley E. Coyote  
while Mother vacuumed the green pile carpet  
upstairs until the floor's wooden bones revealed.

Dread curdled the milk in our bellies  
bristled hair on the old beagle's back  
drove us shivering in thin cotton nighties  
into fortresses of red velvet pillows.

During countless electric hours  
we waited for the back door to explode  
listened for the clumsy, cumbrous footsteps  
and voice prickly as his unshaven chin

for with one huff and one puff  
he could blow our house in.

**Logan Nee**

***Their Parents Never Hit Their Daughters***

They were once all together, under one roof,  
Ate at one table, washed out of one bath.  
Now there's two, two roofs, two tables,  
Two baths, two sets of siblings,  
Clinging to one another with greased palms.

Oh the days they are all together,  
So precious, so few, so sad.  
Sadness the sisters keep inside,  
Staying strong for their lovely brothers.

Giving them smiles and love, not tears  
When they look into their soft blue eyes,  
Blackened and red.

## Mary Elizabeth Parker

### *Small Murder*

The Joshua trees pose  
like teens in spiky, cheap dresses  
in the desert at Twenty-Nine Palms.  
A pear-blossom moon pouring on them  
does not light  
a thousand hidden  
spiked and fork-tongued small things.  
Wild and kind enough to dance with anyone,  
dress-alike mothers and daughters  
slow-grind in the bars  
with cigarettes in their hands.  
As sartorial balance  
to his bad moods,  
a Marine stationed here who  
rolls his own and off-duty casually kills  
lizards and girls,  
wears Cole Haan shoes.  
Outside, two scrap cigarette papers  
tumble like pets in the moonlight.

**John Stanizzi**

***AMBER***

*The AMBER Plan—America's Missing: Broadcast Emergency  
Response Alert Plan*

We are compelled  
to watch one another always,  
that intimate stare from a distance,  
the inevitable judgment,

and at times some of us are caught  
in the riptide of a temptation so strong and menacing  
that it drags us under and out,  
an influence impossible to acknowledge,

and the innocent, childhood chant  
of *Copy cat! Copy cat!*  
becomes a bleak and terrifying cry  
into a night that will not listen.

Someone keeps taking the children,  
whose wings are so delicate  
they cannot be seen,  
and the ancient, sticky resin of hatred

encloses those frail lives  
whose warm, golden images  
remain as windows slightly fogged over  
and forever in our minds.

## Sherylle Roberson-Hutchings

### *Eight*

you dropped eight  
you dropped eight  
eight of us  
out of your immature  
un-nesting womb

one by one  
we dropped  
like a dozen  
of fresh raw eggs  
on the kitchen floor  
heart heaved  
with generational cracks

did you drop eight  
trying to use us  
as human vagina  
packing tape  
to stop the bleeding  
the wounds, your scars  
your bastard father left

or was it  
to secure your  
drug money  
rent money  
or section 8

did you drop eight  
to keep hold  
of the many johns  
that came late

## **Lois Marie Harrod**

### ***Wire Man***

He bent a wire hanger into a woman's face,  
its shadow poked the light, making certain things certain:  
there would be no more miscarriages.

So put away the nightgown of that wiry child  
who died of leukemia, pass the leather jacket  
of the motorcycle lover to the Salvation Army,

didn't he save you by leaving? Stop saying  
loss is what you gained, cease drinking that man  
who emptied you, no returns on grief.

And later you try. You sit in your living room  
and sip, but here he is again, the gall,  
buzzing the bubble between the double windows.

Wrong season, but it doesn't take Terminix  
to explain what happened to your own dear bulge.  
He has entered the chink between brick and mortar,

the one you sealed, and nested the autumn in your walls.  
Now without thinking, you turn on the heat—  
and he stings, tail enameled, black and glistening.

## Mackenzie Cole

### *Butte*

Occasionally the old miners will sift up to the topsoil and patch themselves with leaves. In town I'll see them gutting elk in their driveway or digging gardens, trowels crusted to their hands. One night, late, I woke up to one hucking bottles at my door. He was shouting. His rage choked me like the taste of mercury through skin—certain as the urine smell of Fall. He demanded that I account for his skin, for why he had been treading water in the loose soil, for why he struggled even as the earth took him.

## Simmons B. Buntin

### *Arc*

If there is an art  
to scaling desert  
boulders in bare feet  
it is this: my daughter,  
eleven, tosses her sandals  
to prickly pear  
and mesquite, pries  
knee into crevice,  
and presses onto the sun-  
drunk surface  
like a lizard revealed,  
hair blazing  
in late afternoon  
light, pants hitched  
mid-calf, a hard  
look of fear  
and determination  
before fingers and feet  
release to the flat  
wind, time slowed  
by her sudden  
leap to sharp granite  
and the improbable  
landing, only a thin  
necklace of blood  
on her ankle, red  
like the thorn-guarded  
flower, the arc  
of a girl's first desire.

## Paige Steinert

### *for parachutes*

*for Peggy Steinert*

such an awkward occasion  
to first paint your legs  
an orange tint,  
stroking evenly,  
completely,  
and careful not to form blotches—  
then to bend  
with your back to a standing mirror,  
arm twisted around your calf,  
neck stretching and studying the steadiness  
of your hand. It's a craft  
to draw a straight line  
from your heel, through the dip  
of your knee, past where  
the hem of your skirt will fall  
in one smooth motion.

Then to scrub—watching water  
fall through your hands  
draining rust colored.  
But our boys need  
silk  
and we assume it fools  
most men.  
Just don't let them  
touch your knee.

## Taylor Graham

### *Girl in Landscape, Oil on Canvas*

What has the sky done to her dress,  
its red all patched and torn with sun?  
The fields too, parched behind her. Guess  
what's in her face. The morning's done,  
the noon casts sinking shadow. Look,  
her gaze, as well, is downcast; air  
of not expecting stranger, book,  
or road to take her anywhere.  
Barefoot as the day she came to breath,  
a redbird on the topmost rail  
she is, not singing. What could shake  
her from this pose? She's young. Old Death  
not yet a past-due in the mail.  
She's waiting for the sky to break.

**Rhonda C. Poynter**

*Sister*

I will forget the  
Fat redheaded nurse who stole your  
Ghiradelli chocolates,

And the doctor who paid for his  
Porsche on your heartache and  
Howls will be old mail:

Simply gone.

I will take the blackness that  
Coiled in and out of your  
Bones and cast it, pockets weighed down  
With stones, into the sea:

When I am old,  
I will remember only  
Your hand clasping mine, long ago.  
I will remember that your slender fingers were

Steeple.

## **Alison Downs**

### ***P.S.***

I was kept sheltered, mostly  
from the intricacies of gray matter  
degenerative illness buried deep  
in the skull of the man I called father

soreness in his palms  
where he still felt the ache of nine inch nails  
tearing weak human flesh from martyred bone  
fasting, praying, waiting for his Lord

found in a ditch years later  
white knuckles clutching the wheel of a stolen car  
unaware of the stillness of the tires  
police told my mother  
*He was coming to kidnap your little girl*

After a decade I'm still searching  
peering into dusty mirrors in dimly-lit rooms  
comparing yellowed photographs to reality  
frightened fingers lingering on features they call "his"

Never knowing how much of me is normal  
and how much of me is *him*

## **Sarah Nichols**

### ***California***

From the look of the photo  
You are in California on business.  
Your tie is undone  
and behind you  
waves rise  
California breaking off  
from the rest of us,  
that old rumor.

You are still young  
in California.  
Your face is creased by dimples and  
the tide has frozen  
along a shore  
that someone else photographs.

You called from the road,  
stealing hangers and towels.  
You phoned from some desert place  
and the mountain outside your window  
hunkered and breathed like a pregnancy.  
Your needle voice  
expected some accumulation of my facts.  
“I’m fine.”  
You hated that.

Time is a needle.  
You passed through the eye.

You were a rich man, riding a camel.  
The ventilator, indifferent,  
was a false breath,  
the rasp crackle  
of an ocean  
at the end of a line  
in California.

## Trent Busch

### *The Cold Ones*

Here where sycophants are  
not ashamed of their art,  
as if others envy  
or praise their gain, what room

is there for a working  
desk, walls for hanging up  
*The Scream*, or an open  
door for the comic hand?

What is it all but fear  
that keeps both owl and deer  
to night as if peace too  
is jungled in shadows?

Keeping to the wall as  
in Shakespeare's day, even  
if unafraid, the cold  
ones go, collars up, dark

coats in the snow, taking  
solace in neither drink,  
work, or complaint nor in  
a man or woman's love.

## John Davis

### *Requiem*

He was finally floating  
    in night wind  
folding a deep heaven of music  
    around him.  
With his voice he forged  
    chords of glass violas  
and deftly slid through the bell  
    of a trumpet.  
He sang in mist rain  
    He sang in broad leaves.  
He sang through hanging moss and fronds  
    and he loved the thread-thin ivy  
loved hemlock needles  
    salmonberries, dewberries  
vine ripe blueberries.  
    He loved mold  
on oak tree bark. He loved cedar rot  
    below the huckleberry tree.  
He loved them with his voice  
    loved the blood and breath  
of rocks and lichen and the moon  
    and moments of awe  
in brownbat claws  
    and full-grown ravines.  
At last he could love anything.

## Robert Cording

### *For My Birthday*

Sixty years old and I wake  
to a mourning dove  
and think of how often it has returned  
me to myself, the first voice  
of the not-yet-here morning.

*Who who, who who who . . . .*  
For too many years, half-asleep,  
posturing, ridiculous, I answered,  
*one who knows so little*  
*and wants so much.*

I spent years yearning  
after this or that, denouncing  
whatever could be attained.  
Now I get up and open a window  
to listen more carefully.

Five or six juncos dash  
in and out of the spruce tree  
and the *Globe* lies by the mailbox  
waiting to be read. Once again,  
the sun is redistributing itself,

spreading its wealth,  
and where it spends its light  
on the top of the spruce,  
the tree turns to gold.  
The day gains buoyancy.

Today, I rule out regret  
and shame and sit at my perch  
on an upstairs window,  
warming myself, waiting to see  
what is going to happen next.

## Sandy McCord

### *Pandora's Sister*

She carries her own curious jar  
looped on her wrist, not exploding  
with woes nor hope, but tucked  
with necessities, oddities, remainders  
that leak from the broken lid  
when she least plans it: a fan  
in January, a mackinaw in the Mojave,  
but once in a while a button  
that bridges a gap. She treks  
like a turtle at home in herself,  
spilling along the way a *centime*,  
a clementine, the name of a cat,  
six words of a poem, the scent  
of roses, a broken shell,  
two seconds of silence: bits  
like dust bunnies that soon  
roll under the bed. By the time  
they are swept out again—  
these real shards of the sister  
we all loved, we all ignored—  
she is already lost in myth.

**Kate LaDew**

*she will disappoint you*

I squeeze out tears tight,  
like gripping a hand that wants to leave,  
histrionic, on stage,  
for someone else's benefit, for God.  
I am in my apartment,  
wondering if it's time to go home,  
if it's normal,  
safe to see my parents so often,  
to waste money on two rooms that clutch with fingers.  
reading the bible in short bursts,  
completing some prerequisite of childhood,  
I listen as Jacob is close to blaspheming.  
touching his brother's hand,  
*I see your face as one sees the face of God*, and  
what does God look like?  
my father, my mother,  
me as a little girl, blonde and chubby,  
do I warn them? she will disappoint you,  
she will gulp down clear bottles until she stumbles,  
you will be lost in your loving and wander  
and she will not be beautiful.  
I'm alone,  
tracing black letters  
right to left—they mean as much—  
talking to my rooms,  
to my jade plant,  
afraid I'll leave them wilting.  
I cannot speak to God,  
he will know I am lying.

## Diane Glancy

### *Acute*

The night good as it was  
but there was an overall *removal*  
I objected to.  
A document of broken words  
crushed  
pulverized  
carried in the bones.  
The bone fertilizer  
gray and powdery  
rising steadily upward  
with the feet of passing cattle.  
It is given—  
the fear we all have of ascension  
yet it changes as it passes through  
the filament  
between unconscious  
and conscious  
the surf  
out of place  
I have always felt on this earth.

## Christopher Tarr

### *Maine*

The winter comes  
hard, hard the  
winter comes screaming  
off the polar  
ice twice, sometimes  
three times a week  
to drive away clouds  
and heat.

Repeat twice a week  
from September to June,  
soon we say, summer  
will come. Sometimes  
it never does. Sometimes  
it just rains until the winter  
begins again and the  
ground heaves and our  
houses buckle and  
crumble and our cars  
chew through struts  
on 20 miles trips to  
get gallons of milk or  
smokes and beer to ease  
our perennial fear.

There is no money here.  
Maybe you cut trees for  
paper. Maybe you work  
at LL Bean during the x  
mass rush and collect  
unemployment for 10 months  
and work on your car or your  
house or the fish in the

painting that is the river  
in your back yard where you  
go to remember why,  
despite everything,  
you live  
here.

## David Bushelle

### *Piping on the Harmonium*

For each sound is lonely  
and wants to be touched,  
the bottlebrush grass,  
Indian hemp and pink chicory,  
black-eyed susan, bergamot—  
from their moist underworld  
they rise to dithering air,  
the turkey's foot  
like wine-colored braids  
gently stroked, and all grasses  
swaying and bending,  
till Earth becomes  
a bowed instrument  
touched by pure blueness  
and sailing cloud,  
the furry poplar leaves  
make a warm bright sound,  
the wheatgrass blows  
tawny and bearded like gods.

## **Dawn Avallone**

### *Late September*

*for Sam*

leaves sparkle like jewelry  
glint in the air across the road  
lit ocher  
but it's not the color that concerns me  
each glint a split second  
of illumination

I think of what the fall will mean to me now  
the final surge of brilliance  
your death  
confronted with a sudden barrenness  
a forest of brown stiff things  
as though a sudden fire erupted  
rendering everything ash

now each branch one false move  
from snapping  
so when spring comes  
it won't bear leaves like the rest  
but will stay recumbent  
trampled underfoot

I can almost see the flames  
lapping each other  
insatiable devil tongues  
yellow devouring orange  
a touch of blue licking up now and then

I try to comfort myself with the heat  
step back when my hands start to burn

**Rennie McQuilkin**

*Landscape with Log Carrier*

Still here, I watch—from far off—my diminished stick  
figure, the world around it immense  
as a landscape by Li Ch'eng: wild water, jagged peaks

in which you can barely discern a tiny man  
stooped under his load of sticks, his colors merging  
with the muted browns & blues of woods & river,

threading his way as I thread mine, bent low by  
the logs of maple & ash I carry up an icy path  
to the cooling woodstove in the chill of my house,

my pale blue parka & white face not fading entirely  
into shades of blue-white snow—slight calligraph for  
*Here, still here!*

**Patricia O'Brien**

*How She Escapes*

*for Lisa*

She's crossed into a vague geography  
where her diagnosis spans the sky  
and neither sun nor rain falls where

she places one foot before the next.  
Where she must rest. Where the roof  
holds nothing back because nothing

rides the air. She has tired of plucking  
a bright word or two from the blah, blah,  
blah of pain. She knows her mother

can no longer bear to hear the ache she  
cannot silence. To recalculate her cross-  
hatched box of pills. To heed the heedless

progress of what it is that makes her daughter sick.  
And she, so vague, can no longer name  
the day or, named, find meaning in it.

Her son stays away and she dreams he falls  
from the sky like sun or rain. Or she dreams  
her mother is giving birth to her again.

## Nicole Costner

### *uncertain waters*

To be their son, ah to be  
their son, and drift  
along the sunshine  
that glitters over  
clear waters  
that are their gene pool.

To look upon the faces  
that have given you your own,  
and see how the time  
creeps in with wrinkles  
that will caress your skin  
reflecting a life well lived.

But to be their daughter, oh  
to be their daughter  
and hopelessly sink  
into the muck  
hiding below,  
infested with disease.

To see how a life will end,  
dressed in a paper gown  
suffocating from the plastic  
that brings sterilized air  
violently crashing into these lungs.  
The dirty secret of heredity.

## **Sarah Nichols**

### *New York*

Mourning  
is an approach tunnel  
to Grand Central:  
A downward tilt  
in a battered train.

You are a part of that now.  
Exhaust and earth and gasoline.

It's the disembark  
from all of those bedroom communities  
NewCannanDarienNorwalk  
No more stops until 125<sup>th</sup>  
Last stop, Grand Central  
Grand Central, last stop

The terminus  
with short circuited constellations  
the lights visible, but dim,  
a sign to ache after,  
even after  
the realization it is  
a Beaux Arts cave drawing.

I forget what I ache for in those gold misplacements.  
A fish,  
A lion,  
The Oyster Bar.

The hemispheres are blurred.  
That we made this trip together  
Is a trick of memory.

I have a schedule to keep to,  
A train to catch.

## Scott Gallaway

### *Submersible Conversation*

We traced the waves in crystal while rain padded slow for the feast. Our silence could be blamed on even numbers at table, or thick food, buttered and beefed, or simple lethargy bestowed by stars, an energy that catches in rain and builds, each drop a warming, each drop a penny sunk, unable to rise.

Our lungs were filled by humidity. This, I imagined, was death in submarines, pressure building around the body, entering the ears, worse than oppressive others, inescapable until the breach and welcome water, filling all with shudder and calm. After the pie

I thought coffee and sugar would bring a new angry interest in each other, new energy caught by bodies, but the cat crossed the room and caused uncertain smiles. This would have been the time for smoking had smoking been in style, or the excusable burp of a submarine destroyed in the deeps, quiet destruction confirmed, where no one sees what's left.

## **Kasandra Larsen**

### ***Sunday, After the Party***

Not quite right to say, biting your tongue, but something like an insect's buzz and hum, rolling a meaty wave against a palate at a loss, juicy secrets sucking on themselves. Manic, moist with summer's inevitable expectation, replaying

conversation, rearranging sound, endings stretch from limping into liking. Above your cloudy head thought bubbles float. And then the strings of your misgivings touch the ground. Teeth

still amicable, gregarious, the brittle corners of your smile caged but social animals. Morning's first smoke lingers, mingles in your mouth during chicory coffee's bitter visit. Twinned consolations. Chastened kisses.

## Helen Wickes

### *First Knowing*

Maybe in God's world, it was dark, then light,  
but know that in my world, light was the sole  
progenitor—always in motion, arriving, or slipping  
away, fathoming this meadow, that pond,

carving the hill's bright crest. You couldn't tell  
them apart, light from place, they inhabited the mind  
so deeply, light that sculpted September evenings,  
those two people mowing here, raking there,

the glow that warmed their faces as they pattered  
around their world. And how this world imprinted  
itself on us—canny, uncanny—space calling on light  
to enliven its whole body, and sunlight after sundown

waiting for any chance come back to us, especially  
for us, bringing another world into being.

## John McKernan

### *The Amazon 60° 03°*

Powder of butterfly  
On the green lips of a frog

A coil of green lizard  
Slowly dissolves  
In the gut of a poison frog

The forest is raining again  
Nests of black smoke  
Temples of red flame  
Into a sky the texture of frog skin

Even the river is spitting  
Teeth of piranha  
Needles of heron beak  
Folding slowly into a bright yellow river  
Black water in frog spawn

Question-mark purple parrots  
The knife-song of ibis  
Glow in a red sunset  
Above a blanket of ants  
The exact shape and contour  
Vast Still Peeled Hoof-free Carcass of Frog



## CONTRIBUTORS

**Dawn Avallone** is a former Assistant Editor of *Freshwater*. She lives and works in Connecticut.

**Rebecca Bergeron**'s first poem has been published in the 2010 issue of *Freshwater*. Coming from a family of eight kids, she was able to find her passion for writing as a source of escape from the chaotic lifestyle. She is an avid writer, having gone to Manchester Community College to study journalism, and then to Asnuntuck Community College to study English. With current changes in the economy she has stopped studying writing to pursue nursing, but the dream of writing lives on every day. She plans on establishing a steadiness in life to then reconnect with her love of writing, with dreams of being a newspaper journalist.

**Simmons B. Buntin** is the founding editor of *Terrain.org: A Journal of the Built & Natural Environments*. His first book of poetry, *Riverfall*, was published in 2005 by Ireland's Salmon Poetry, and his second book, *Bloom*, is due from Salmon in early 2011. His poetry has recently appeared in *Whiskey Island Magazine*, *The LBJ: Avian Life*, *Literary Arts*, *South Dakota Review*, *Verse Daily*, *Isotope*, *Orion*, *Corridors*, and *Southwestern American Literature*. Catch up with him (and sometimes his daughters) at [www.SimmonsBuntin.com](http://www.SimmonsBuntin.com).

**Trent Busch** is a native of rural West Virginia who now lives in Georgia where he makes furniture. His poems have appeared in many journals including *Best American Poetry 2001*, *Poetry*, *Hudson Review*, *Southern Review*, *Georgia Review*, *Threepenny Review*, *Shenandoah*, *The Nation*, *American Scholar*, and more recently in *Los Angeles Review*, *Rattle*, *Notre Dame Review*, and *Boston Review*.

**David Bushelle** has had a diverse career as writer and editor of trade journals and as public relations writer and media liaison for a national organization; currently he teaches writing, literature and mythology at local colleges, is a musician and a lover of the wilderness. His poems have appeared in *Freshwater*, *Two Review*, *Mid-America Poetry Review*, *Karamu*, *Hawai'i Pacific Quarterly*, *Off the Coast*, *Heartlodge*, *The Sow's Ear Poetry Review*, *The Tar Wolf Review*, *Comstock Review*, *The Alembic*, and many others.

**Mackenzie Cole** graduated from the creative writing department at Reed College with a BA in English. His work has appeared in *The Big Sky Journal* and *RCCR*, as well as in several online journals. Currently, he's sleeping out under the roving galaxies.

**Robert Cording** teaches English and creative writing at College of the Holy Cross where he is the Barrett Professor of Creative Writing. He has published five collections of poems: *Life-list*, which won the Ohio State University Press/Journal award, in 1987; *What Binds Us To This World* (Copper Beech Press, 1991); *Heavy Grace*, (Alice James, 1996); *Against Consolation* (CavanKerry Press, 2002); and most recently, *Common Life*, from CavanKerry Press, 2006. He has received two National Endowment for the Arts fellowships in poetry and two poetry grants from the Connecticut Commission of the Arts. His poems have appeared in numerous publications such as *The Nation*, *The Georgia Review*, *The Southern Review*, *Poetry*, *Kenyon*, *New England Review*, *Orion* and *The New Yorker*.

**Nicole Costner** is a student at Asnuntuck Community College, who will be graduating this May and continuing her education. This is her first published poem in what has been a short poetry career, but she plans to continue writing poetry for many years. Nicole has been an editor at *Freshwater* for two semesters now and gives her experience at *Freshwater* and the individuals involved the credit for uncovering her hidden talent for writing poetry.

**Carolyn A. Cushing** is a poet currently obsessed with cells and the first flaring forth of the universe. A couple of years ago, Carolyn completed a series of poems inspired by the life and work of Rachel Carson, and the biology and mystery of life has fascinated her ever since. She has been writing and reading around the Pioneer Valley of Western Massachusetts for over fifteen years. *Freshwater* is her favorite place to be published.

**John Davis** is the author of *The Reservist*, a chapbook of poems from Pudding House Press. A full collection, *Gigs*, is forthcoming from Sol Books. His work appears in journals such as *The Beloit Poetry Journal*, *Cream City Review*, *Cutbank*, *Georgetown Review*, *The Laurel Review*, *The New York Quarterly*, *The North American Review*, *Oxford Magazine*, *Poetry Northwest* and *Sycamore Review*. He has been nominated for a Pushcart Prize. Currently, John lives on an island west of Seattle, teaches high school, and plays guitar and blues harmonica in the band Never Been To Utah. He adores peaches.

**Corrine De Winter** is the author of several poetry collections, including the Stoker Award winning *The Women at the Funeral* and the latest *Virgin of the Apocalypse*, nominated for a 2008 Stoker Award. *Tango in the 9th Circle* (Dark Regions Press), *Valentine* (Black Arrow Press), and *A Dark Ride* (Black Arrow Press) were also on the Stoker Awards Final Ballot. Nominated four times for a Pushcart Prize, De Winter has been widely published in over nine hundred journals, including *Doorways*, *New York Quarterly*, *Sacred Journey*, *FATE*. Her readings and a movie are featured on **YouTube**. Self publishing *Touching The Wound (Poems in Memory of Kurt Cobain)* in 1994, she successfully sold over five thousand copies without a major publishing house or professional distributor. She has performed readings across the country, including The New School (NYC), The Stoker Awards, and many colleges and coffee houses. She has recently recorded a spoken exposé of her work, which will appear on her website soon: [corrinedewinter.com](http://corrinedewinter.com)

**Alison Downs** often appears under the pen name Alison Leeds. Her work can also be found in *Boink Magazine* and Holyoke Community College's *Pulp City*. She wrote her first (super short) short story at the age of four and has been writing ever since. She is currently finishing her degree in Broadcasting and Communications at Asnuntuck, and in the fall she hopes to pursue her education in either New York City or Boston. Some of her other interests include photography and fashion design.

**Gayle Eleanor** is a retired Marriage and Family Therapist living in California. Her work has appeared in *Atlanta Review*, *California Quarterly*, *Calyx*, *Earth's Daughters*, *Hawai'i Pacific Review*, *Manzanita Quarterly*, *Sow's Ear Poetry Review*, *Snowy Egret*, and several other publications. She has published three collections of poems: *Grace Happens* (2001), *Nahanni* (2002), and *Letters to Bluebeard's Daughter* (2009). A graduate of the University of Denver and John F. Kennedy University, she has also studied with the award-winning poet David St. John. She works with the Ina Coolbrith Circle (a poetry organization started in 1919 by the first poet laureate of California) to promote poetry in the state.

**Scott Gallaway** has published poetry in *Arts and Letters*, *Cumberland Poetry Review*, *Birmingham Poetry Review*, *Permafrost*, *Midwest Quarterly*, and others. In 2005 and 2006 he won awards for poetry from the Rosenberg Foundation. He has recently completed a manuscript of ekphrastic poems with the photographer Douglas Prince.

**Diane Glancy** is professor emeritus at Macalester College in St. Paul, Minnesota, where she taught Native American Literature and Creative Writing. She was the 2008-09 Visiting Richard Thomas Professor of Creative Writing at Kenyon College. Her 2009 books are *The Reason for Crows*, a novel of Kateri Tekakwitha, SUNY Press, and *Pushing the Bear, After the Trail of Tears*, University of Oklahoma Press. In 2007, the University of Arizona Press published a collection of poems,

*Asylum in the Grasslands*. A new collection of essays, *The Dream of a Broken Field* is forthcoming from the University of Nebraska Press.

**Taylor Graham** is a volunteer search-and-rescue dog handler whose poems have been published in *American Literary Review*, *Freshwater*, *International Poetry Review*, *The New York Quarterly*, *Notre Dame Review*, *Poetry International*, *Southern Humanities Review*, and elsewhere. Her work is included in *California Poetry: From the Gold Rush to the Present*. She is a member of Red Fox Underground poetry group and helps coordinate poetry readings in El Dorado County, California. In many of her poems she tries “to create landscapes of the mind, as well as to find the spirit of the physical landscape.”

**Lois Marie Harrod** teaches Creative Writing and supervises student teachers at The College of New Jersey. Over 350 of her poems have been published in journals, among them *American Poetry Review*, *Blueline*, *The MacGuffin*, *Salt*, *The Literary Review*, *Zone3*. Her ninth book, *Furniture*, won the 2008 Grayson Press Poetry Prize. Lois is a Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation Poet and has won three New Jersey Council of the Arts fellowships. Modest by nature, she prefers the nakedness of poetry to dancing naked in the street.

**Elizabeth Kudlacz** is a full-time scientist and part-time poet. Born and raised in the suburbs of Cleveland, Ohio, she currently lives, works, and writes in Groton, Connecticut. Some of her haiku/poems have appeared in journals, including *Cicada*, *Aureorean*, *Connecticut River Review*, *Caduceus* and *Bellowing Ark*.

**Kate LaDew** is a recent graduate from the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, with a BA in studio art.

**Kasandra Larsen's** chapbook, *Stellar Telegram*, won the 2009 *Sheltering Pines Press* Chapbook Competition and is forthcoming in 2010. Her poetry has appeared or is forthcoming in *The Watermark*, *Short Fuse: The Global Anthology of New Fusion Poetry*, *Poems-for-All*, *100 Poets Against the War*, *Babylon Burning: 9/11 Five Years On*, *Look! Up in the Sky!*, *Ballard Street Poetry Journal* (nominated for a Pushcart Prize), *The Moose & Pussy*, and *SLAB*, as well as online at *The November 3rd Club* (nominated for a Best of the Net award), *Poetic Diversity*, *nthposition*, *Osprey Journal*, *The Lipstick Pages*, *Full of Crow*, *tinfoildresses*, *The Nervous Breakdown*, and *Breakwater Review*. Originally from Boston, she now resides in the Bywater neighborhood of New Orleans.

**LilyGrace** is a poet, short story writer, and teacher. She has been in love with language for as long as she can remember.

**Lisa Mangini** lives a double-life by working a 9-5 desk job for a major corporation during the week and pretending to be nineteen again on the weekends. Her work can be found in *Persona*, as well as previous issues of *Freshwater*. She currently attends Southern Connecticut State University for her MFA, officially for Fiction, but she might change her mind, as she really struggles with genre monogamy.

**Timothy Martin** resides and works in Ann Arbor, Michigan. His poems have appeared in *The Comstock Review*, *The Coe Review*, *Slant*, *The Bryant Literary Review*, and numerous other journals. He has a passion for reading nonfiction, especially history, and has found that some of the “smaller, quirkiest moments” from the pages of history have provided the basis for several of his poems.

**Sandy McCord** lives in Richmond, Kentucky. With her husband she is co-author of *The Litigation Paralegal, a Systems Approach*, now in its fourth edition. Her poems have

been published in many different journals, including most recently *The Cape Rock*, *The Chaffin Journal*, *Epicenter Magazine*, *Exit 13*, and *Plainsongs*. Her first chapbook, *Dragon Well*, will be published in spring 2010.

**John McKernan** is now a retired comma herder. He lives—mostly—in West Virginia where he edits ABZ Press. His most recent book is a selected poems, *Resurrection of the Dust*.

**Rennie McQuilkin** has had work in *The Atlantic Monthly*, *Poetry*, *The American Scholar*, *The Southern Review*, *The Yale Review*, *The Hudson Review*, *Crazyhorse*, and other journals. He is the author of ten poetry collections, the most recent being *The Weathering: New & Selected Poems* (2009). He has received fellowships from the NEA as well as the State of Connecticut. For many years he directed the Sunken Garden Poetry Festival at Hill-Stead Museum in Farmington, Connecticut, and subsequently founded Antrim House Books, which publishes contemporary American poetry. In 2003 he received the Connecticut Center for the Book's Lifetime Achievement Award. He and his wife, the artist Sarah McQuilkin, live in Simsbury, Connecticut.

**Stephen Mead** is a published artist, writer, and maker of short collage-films living in northeastern New York. Please feel free to put his name in any search engine for links to his wide variety of work.

**Logan Nee** is a student at Asnuntuck Community College, who has a passion for writing poetry. He hopes to further his writing career and take this love to new heights in the coming years. He uses his other great love, the love of the outdoors, as a primary source of inspiration, as well as exploring his inner self. Logan also explores the connections and relationship between people and their environment in his writing, saying that, “written expression is a profound way to explore and find your place in the world.”

**Sarah Nichols** is a former Connecticut Student Poet whose poems have appeared in *The Connecticut Review*, *Freshwater*, and *Interdisciplinary Humanities*. A passionate cinephile, her film criticism has been published on the *Senses of Cinema* website.

**Patricia O'Brien** is a member of the Guilford Poetry Guild. She has facilitated poetry workshops, including at York Correctional Institution hospice program. Pat has been published in various periodicals, including *Connecticut River Review*, *Embers*, *Pulp Smith*, *Fairfield County Magazine*, *Poet Lore*, *Caduceus* and *Red Fox Review*. She has won several prizes, among them, from the Trumbull Arts Council, *Embers*, and, more recently, from the Public Library in the town of Old Saybrook where she resides with her husband, John, and not too far from her three sons and their lively families.

**Mary Elizabeth Parker's** poetry collections include *The Sex Girl*, (Urthona Press), and two chapbooks, *Breathing in a Foreign Country*, and *That Stumbling Ritual*. Her poems have appeared in journals including *Notre Dame Review*, *Gettysburg Review*, *New Letters*, *Arts & Letters*, and *Greensboro Review* (nominated for a Pushcart Prize), and in *Earth and Soul*, an anthology published in English and Russian in the Kostroma region of Russia.

**Nora Pasco** is twenty-seven years old and currently resides in New Britain, Connecticut. Born to a family of writers and artists, she has been writing since the age of eight. In 2006, she received an honorable mention in the Asnuntuck Student Poetry Contest and was subsequently published in the 2006 edition of *Freshwater*. She has been a featured reader at the 2009 Wintonbury poetry series in Bloomfield, Connecticut, and at the 2008 Wood Memorial Library poetry series in South Windsor, Connecticut.

**Simon Perchik** is an attorney whose poems have appeared in *Partisan Review*, *The New Yorker*, and elsewhere. For more information, including his essay, “Magic, Illusion and Other Realities,” and a complete bibliography, please visit his website at [www.simonperchik.com](http://www.simonperchik.com).

**Brett Pinedo** is a student to the education system, a philosophical pizza chef, and the average day's surplus of life lessons. He is young and has a thirsty mind.

**Rhonda Poynter** has recently had poetry, essays, and other writings accepted in *Tipton Poetry Journal*, *Black Tree*, *Diner*, *Slant*, *Frontiers*, *Bird's Eye Review*, *Plainsongs*, *Pebble Lake Review*, and other periodicals. She has also had a number of chapbooks published through various presses, and one collection of her poetry, *Start the Car*, was published by Warthog Press in 1998.

**Sherylle Roberson- Hutchings** won first place in Asnuntuck Community College's Seventeenth Annual Student Poetry contest in 2009 for her poem, “God Why My Flower Child.” She has had many humbling and pleasurable experiences, reading alongside other amazing poets at *Freshwater* poetry readings. In addition, she has read her poems at minority cultural clubs, women's private parties and events, and meetings of the Student Union of Minorities at Asnuntuck (SUMA). Sherylle's goal is to continue writing poetry with hopes to publish a collection of raw, real life experience for women. Her poetry comes from life's upheavals, the hurt places, as well as the thankful, growing, and feel good places.

**John L. Stanizzi**, a Former Wesleyan University Etherington Scholar, is an adjunct professor of English, Manchester Community College, and he teaches English at Bacon Academy in Colchester, Connecticut, where he also directs the theater program. In 1998 The New England Association of Teachers of English named John the New England Poet of the

Year. His poems have been published in *The New York Quarterly*, *Tar River Poetry*, *Rattle*, *Hawk & Handsaw*, *The Spoon River Quarterly*, *Poet Lore*, *Passages North*, and many others. John has received two nominations for the Pushcart Prize. His first book, *Ecstasy Among Ghosts* (now in its third printing) and *Sleepwalking*, his second book, were published by Antrim House ([www.antrimhousebooks.com](http://www.antrimhousebooks.com)). John is working on a new book comprising poems about teaching high school. The book's working title is *After The Bell*.

**Paige Steinert** won Hill-Stead Museum's Youth Poets Competition in 2003. Her poetry has been presented in conjunction with ballet performances through Ballet Theater Company in Hartford, Connecticut, and Ballet Pensacola in Pensacola, Florida. In 2008, she won the Dehn Poetry Contest through the Connecticut Poetry Society. She is currently completing her BFA in Creative Writing at Goddard College. Her work has appeared in *Freshwater* and *Long River Run*.

**Christopher Tarr** writes poems and sells books with his wife and son in Broad Brook, Connecticut.

**Helen Wickes** lives in Oakland, California, and worked for many years as a psychotherapist. In 2002 she received an MFA from Bennington College. Her first book of poems, *In Search of Landscape*, was published in 2007 by Sixteen Rivers Press. Her poems can be read and heard online at From The Fishhouse. Her work has appeared or is forthcoming in *AGNI Online*, *Confrontation*, *Eclipse*, *South Dakota Review*, *Stand*, *Runes*, *ZYZZYVA*, *Zone 3*, *Chicago Quarterly Review*, *Natural Bridge*, *Santa Clara Review*, *Limestone*, *The Spoon River Poetry Review*, *Bryant Literary Review*, *Southwestern American Literature*, *The Coe Review*, *Crucible*, *The Jabberwock Review*, *Kaleidoscope*, *Pleiades*, *PMS poemmemoirstory*, *SLAB*, *The Griffin*, *Salamander*, *Epicenter*, *Poetry Flash*, *In the Grove*, *CQ*, *CSPS*, *Schuylkill Valley Journal of the Arts*, *5 AM*, *Bennington Review*, and the anthology *Best of the Web 2009*.



