



***ALEMBIC***



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Editors  
Francis P. McAleer  
Audrey Fontes  
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Poetry, my dear friends, is a sacred incarnation of a smile. Poetry is a sign that dries the tears. Poetry is a spirit who dwells in the soul, whose nourishment is the heart, whose wine is affection. Poetry that comes not in this form is a false messiah.

*Kahlil Gilbran*

*(from A Second Treasury of Kahlil Gilbran)*

## Contributions

Kathleen McCann	<i>Reversing Falls, Great Esker Park, North Weymouth</i>
Francis P. McAleer	<i>Confessions of a Civil Servant Two Men (for my father's father)</i>
Susan Hroncich	<i>From The Audience</i>
Dj Gamage	<i>Winterharbor</i>
L.J.R.	<i>Night Cries</i>
Susan Elise	<i>Untitled</i>
Audrey Fontes	<i>Untitled</i>
Patricia Slonina Vieira	<i>Gathering Flocks</i>
Audrey Fontes	<i>Untitled</i>
Dj Gamage	<i>Day's End</i>
Mark Piva	<i>Untitled</i>
Anne McDonald	<i>Dead Pigeon</i>
Michele	<i>Dessert</i>
Mark Travers	<i>The Fall</i>
Jane Lunin Perel	<i>Charlie, the Rooster (for the Robertis)</i>

Cover  
Karen Maloney

Art  
(by order of appearance)  
Karen Maloney  
Karen Maloney  
C. Pink  
Karen Maloney



*Reversing Falls, Great Esker Park,  
North Weymouth*

Dog, black setter, huge walrus,  
Buddha of low tide.  
Patience to you is absolute.  
Either you stand to love it, or your tail  
salutes you off out of sight  
to love it there.  
Mysteries for you are not shells, or meditation  
in afternoon.  
Purist,  
in love with the air, the feel for mire.

In three months it will be November.  
How we advance into time, like a living sepia  
deep and brown in body.  
One day I will push dust away to remember this,  
particular dog.  
Like looking at a Currier and Ives. Peace will abide,  
the old mill pond.

Kathleen McCann

## *Confessions of a Civil Servant*

The apartment is right above the barroom.  
Steps leading to the apartment are caked with  
dog crap, and lead paint chips.

The woman staggers up the steps,  
brushes an oily clam of hair out of her eyes  
as she enters the shadows of the apartment.  
She crumbles into the springless floor mattress.  
A melon moon cracks through the crusted window pane.

Gutter-dogs sleep at her door every night  
While shores rap themselves around drunks  
who sleep in aged cars in the dirt parking lot.

I walk down the steps, through the broken-backed screendoor  
by the procured whores and step along the crumbling  
streets.

Francis P. McAleer

## *Two Men*

(for my father's father)

You were dead before I was born.  
But my father, when seeing me read Ginsberg or Ferlinghetti,  
would tell the story of how you loved to read  
Goldsmith or Longfellow  
When coming back from the trolley cars at two in the morning.

But my father is dead.

And all I have now are volumes of Goldsmith and Longfellow,  
an the memories of my father's memories of you.

Francis P. McAleer





KAROL FAJONKY  
1937

## *From The Audience*

The music sounds, the curtains open slowly  
And there they stand so poised and perfect, learned  
Toes glide over glassy floors, coyly  
Performing graceful combinations, turned  
    then twirled, a stolen spirit, free at last.  
A smoothly curved back; rounded arms hold  
False bundles, dancing pillars moving fast  
To tunes and lyrics dainty and fine, a mold  
Of wonderous art; richly fragile, soothes  
The watches, admiration concentrated on  
Majestic dancers dancing in pairs of twos.  
    Like stars of flashing lights, off then on.  
Then action slows, all music stops and  
The curtains sweep the stage, preserved they stand.

Susan Hroncich



## *Winterharbor*

I

Along  
ice blazen silent trails  
lies  
Winterharbor. I  
traveled there once.  
I thought I remembered  
snow,  
lots of snow. And a  
silence stretched taut;  
a deerskin hide drum  
that thundered and echoed to  
the touch  
and pierced by my boots  
on brittle granular ice, ice

ice  
everywhere.  
Sole on earth, I  
stepped forth  
into this wilderness.  
I touched remote, I drank  
it in  
and it chilled me up and filled  
my veins blue.



II

Winterharbor  
was ice  
Hugh ships frozen,  
their gaping mouths frosted  
and whitely laced,  
stone cold silent.  
The air was empty, past cold  
and I felt to spoon  
out big chunks of  
vastness.  
And Nothing Moved.

Winterharbor. Winterharbor.  
I thought to mouth your name  
and to await the warm, green  
rain of spring, full and lush.  
My head ached with your controlled  
distilled white flame.  
Soul upon earth.  
I built you, Fragile, Beautiful World  
with your piercing pines, castles ice,  
glassy beds blue.  
My Winterharbor.

And Nothing Moved. Nothing Moved.

Dj Gamage

## *Night Cries*

Sirens, like an eerie knife  
shatter through the thickness  
of a soft, sleep ridden night.  
As shrill as the cry  
of a seagull on a naked beach,  
sharp and unerringly forceful.  
Silent is the dark ink of night,  
until broken  
by the uproar;  
a stark bleak schism  
upon the silent air.

L.J.R.

## *Untitled*

The inventor of the balloon  
was a genius.  
whoever tied the string  
was a perfectionist.

Susan Elise



## *Untitled*

snow and black of bark  
blizzard of eyes  
waving to me  
in a horizontal fashion.

black of bark  
humbled its severity  
against the winds of  
February.

snow, silently  
nestles on  
shelves  
asleep.

snow and black of bark  
carcasses with no eyeball,  
remembering is the carcass  
wave to me.

Audrey Fontes

## *Gathering Flocks*

The pines of our tall back woods are a way  
station for gathering flocks  
of south bound birds who dare  
not miss their flight.

Since Sunday, begging a pause  
among needled limbs, swooping from tree  
to tree 'til finding the flock of their fleeing.

Imagine one hundred thousand birds crying —  
stinging the frosted crown of morning!

Filling the house with shadows darting  
bedroom walls and mirror  
following my morning rite.

As suddenly as beginning  
there is silence.

Left is a breathless country  
morning:                    steamy sun-filtered haze rising  
                                  from fields and weed-grown gardens.

Is this the day they will be off for good?  
Leaving us to another  
wintering with a few who stay behind.

Cardinals and jays who singe new snow,  
tiny tit-mice too small to fly so far  
and another scattered few not called to flight.

A rag-tag flock of the hungry  
teaching us faithfulness in small things.

Patricia Slonina Vieira



## *Untitled*

They put you with  
the old.  
They were within their walkers  
and their distorted, bumpy faces.  
Lines of dried Wombs.  
You, eyes red with  
tears  
tell me you love me, barely audible;  
then fall asleep  
with your mouth open,  
intravenous feeding  
the always suffering you.

Audrey Fontes





## *Day's End*

I

Morning

The day is swallowed, choked in one  
heavy, cloudy sob.

The pain in your stomach is still  
unmuted by the stale air

and you cry outloud, the window open,  
yearn to fly over life of rooftops

pressed flat below against the wind.  
The coffee doesn't help the pounding.

The emptiness is quiet and you  
peer out from an eye of red

swollen.

## II

### Afternoon

Bare feet padding and pink chenille.  
Grit, grit, grit.

And the cereal is spilled all over the table.  
Carpet worn, nails dirty.

The music didn't help, Beethoven drones unceasingly  
on in the parlor

and you stare at the poetry  
wishing you were

a letter on that page,  
faded representative of sharp red pain.

Cut it out and look at it.  
Hold it in your hand. Examine

Life carefully. The doorbell rings.  
And rings.

## III

### Night

Quiet.  
The streetlights blink lazily through  
yellow curtains. The house is empty,  
still. A tomb.

Pretty red and green spilled along the table  
mixed with cereal and grit.

Your head lays down among the colors and the cereal,  
hair tumbles.

Tumbles down. Down.

Dj Gamage





## *Untitled*

The branches of the empty, leafless trees  
Sway somberly in the November twilight;  
As my mind wanders amidst  
The darkening sky.

It will get cold - they say.  
They - always say everything.  
Someday I'm going to find out who  
They are.

The night is crisp and cool.  
The wind softly blows through the open window,  
Pushing the curtain over the picture  
Of the smiling face, that rests on the piano.

The bare branches move unknowingly  
As if suspended in air, wondering,  
Searching, for what they cannot have.  
The bare branches; the picture; my heart.

Mark Piva



## *Dead Pigeon*

dirty frowny squaw  
you loiter and soil  
like seedy old men.

your gummy black and white  
feathers stick like clumps of  
seaweed mixed with muck.

your maw is slit like a tiger  
cowrie and you stink  
like the all-nite diner

down the street. who will  
come by and feast on such a  
sumptuous bird?

you soiler! I wish they'd gnaw  
you away. you mock the statues  
of eagle-winged things in the square

and make me see plant food everywhere  
fish emulsion indeed?

Anne McDonald

*Dessert*

Like a jar of apricot preserve  
with the lid off---  
whatever shall become  
of you after you have  
topped  
the last angel cake?

michele



## *The Fall*

A shadow —  
    something's in the air,  
        falling through sunlight.  
The dead leaves of autumn  
    are breaking loose.

Here is one view of the fall:

leaf and shadow  
(the shadow growing)

leaf and shadow  
(the shadow growing)

leaf and shadow  
(the shadow growing)

leaf —

When leaf meets earth,  
shadow is only something  
hidden underneath.

Today, no leaf  
fallen to earth  
has missed its shadow.

Mark Travers

*Charlie, the Rooster*  
(for the Robertis)

This leghorn is wistful  
a hurdy-gurdy man with a limp  
arm. When he calls  
up the morning his whole rooster  
heart isn't in it. One  
or two cockadoodledoos plucked out from  
his skinny harp.  
Is it thin blood or his chicken childhood?  
Even his staccatos are would-bes  
though the boys feed him well  
lavish butcher fat and orange rinds  
and his staggering harem bocks  
and starts around him  
their combs furred red  
to his peck and call. Sure he

struts as roosters must  
but there's a shudder in the open—  
sore-red of his comb. When Charlie struts  
his tiny eyes are flat with disbelief.

Though somehow he gets his job done  
what he prefers in roostering  
is the utter dark  
winds to bobble up his comb and jowling jowls  
all the scraps of the world  
thrown over his fence and  
quiet in the chicken house.

Jane Lunin Perel







