

Yes, Poetry

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GREGORY GUNN

Leavened Aphrodite

Leavened Aphrodite, risen from foam,
could garner not her yearnings, she had
but one desire, tender as an olive leaf
to the estuary, a concubine
of a single light and lust, compelled
to become subterranean.

Dismay is merely mortality
in pursuit of celestial adjudication ,
in an ill-suited location below
cyclamens in non-elevated ethereality.

Impart what pensive kisses wander
over the skin-Elysium of the psyche
to wherever *The Fates Of Love* await
with spears cocked to pierce
the unsuspecting humankind.

But since vine aren't oviparous,
and even proselytes appear prone

to recover their rational. You will eventually discover the three motifs of this natural magic are flora, excreta, and temptresses. May they proffer you serenity's aplomb; equanimity.

JOHN GROCHALSKI

Christmas Lights

she was naked
hanging christmas lights
above and across her bed
i watched her ass
as she crawled around
i thought about taking her
from behind
as carols played on her radio
as she hung the bands
of red, blue, yellow, green,
and purple lights
i thought about taking her
singing joy to the world
as she strung christmas lights
as her family watched
it's a wonderful life downstairs
but i was novice back then
a dunce with women
yes, she'd let me have her
but i'd had yet to take her
in the way that i wanted to
i wanted her full force
i wanted her doggystyle
right there on her childhood bed
those christmas lights
illuminating her ass
and the top of her back
the two of us like one sweating machine
moaning and panting
spreading yuletide cheer
as the snow fell outside
all over the quiet landscape
but i just laid there watching her
wanting to lick the center of her back
lick the rosy center of her perfect ass
her ass
now resting on the backs of her feet
untangling spools of lights
as she hummed silent night

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before she turned to me
smiled
and asked
would it be too much trouble
for me to help.

ANN CUMMINGS

Getting Older

The thing about getting older is
That your friends begin dropping,
Dropping like the wooden birds at an amusement park's
Sharp shooters' arcade.
The question is –
When is it my turn?

LES BERNSTEIN

Ordinary Light

one small risk
at a time
bright and hot
everywhere
invisible

a bulwark instinct
to hold and keep
cleaves in half
a before
an after

living in different light
the pull of shadows
mess and noise
home
is you

this world we share
willfully ordinary
takes the time out of time

KORY BEACH

Tempest

this hour is not
the hour for subtleties—
the crashing skies
and crashing seas
the crashing cries
of leda in the black
the whack of those
jovian thunder thighs
have reminded
sounder minds than yours
of this noisome truth

for that hour is passed
when the skies were wise
and the taste of peace grew
bitter and dry
on a wanting tongue—
o that hour is passed
and a shadow cast
by cumulonimbus (king of
kings!) howling as a brute
howls when he need not—
oh this hour is not
the hour for subtleties

yet when the stranger sees
through the black
of the windowpane
the stranger
standing in the rain
unblinking at his eye
like a stain in his sight—
for all the raunch of the rain
and loudness of the clouds
he is lost (is lost!) to discern
the something subtle
sleeping in the stranger's heart

the sky lights up and

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the paneman dies as
the swan slams its mighty thighs

but alas reborn he is not the same—
the shame in his eye as brutish
as the brute in the sky

CASEY FRANCIS

Waiting Out Winter

I drank my coffee from behind
the newspaper, ignored the school
beyond the window. Dormant
halls waited out the weekend
before dread crept in just past eight.
Not a morning to remember,
spring teased the week prior
with soft warm hands, though again
winter asserted its icy authority
until I was left with an anonymous
landscape– a white sheet draped over
the football field encircled by a track, and me
left like a girl with an empty dance card,
waiting for this waltz, the foxtrot next, and
all the other dances to stop.

Not a day compelling one to grab
for even what must be next, so
I turned from the gray
and folded the paper back to order then
set out for the day and accomplished
nothing short of nothing.

JOHN GREY

After the Bulldozers

The queen abandons
the busted hive.

The workers trail behind,
a long, buzzing spoor.

Only one thing in their heads:
follow, follow.

Through the pines,
around the oak,

she needs to find
the ideal place to begin again

and her needs are
their requirements.

At last, a meadow
flush with wildflowers.

She stakes out a tree.
The honey can begin.

Bees drop to petals,
suck pollen from the bud.

The flower wears them
like a hearth log, its fire.

ANDREW P. DILLON

Apologia for My Shadow

Carl Jung called it the shadow. After each night with either of you I loosened its drawstring, considered your complaints, added to its bulk, denying myself those attitudes, denying you the satisfaction of knowing I tried to change. Now that I'm alone again I find myself reaching in, this time removing those bright spheres of embryonic behavior for reconsideration, my shadow now with new textures: a hole from you, the first, you lioness — in and out, apathetic to the damage; and new thread sewn along the seam from you, lover, most recent — careful, but still irreverent. You've both been rummaging — no wonder I forget my purpose between the bedroom and the kitchen; no wonder I fall asleep so quickly; no wonder I was sixteen yesterday and twenty-six today; no doubt I'll soon be demential, morphine-blunted, peaceful. Lioness, continue the hunt. All the things you prey on, now, are only liabilities. The shadow is a carnivore. Lover, even married we'd still be less than one whole person.

Aiuas

How do you term the phenomenon that means
I am feeling it and you are doing it?

For example, when I think of a song, you sing it. I am willing to believe it's more

than coincidence, but cannot explain its mechanism. I would like it to be physical —

the harmonic vibration of our bodies on a subatomic level, perhaps. Something

that explains why I must describe love in terms of shoulder blades, vertebral hollows,

collarbones, and the jaw line.

Compromise

You stole the covers, held the hem
the whole night, took them with you
as you turned away. I moved in

close to stay warm.

At first, your head was too high
under two pillows. I added
another beneath my shoulder
to ease the pain in my back.
But I couldn't sleep long
on my arm. You didn't like it
under your neck, so you adjusted,
leaning your weight in to me.
It was hard to be so close

all night. *I feel like*
I'm being consumed by a sun. We lost

one blanket, stayed close in January.
Minutes, hours, years — changes came
slow for us. But they were
small things, we really did know;

and they would make us happier.

ALYSSA SORRESSO

Memory

Then my mind
was running for
grapes

Gwrapes! I say
I want gwrapes!
as the tractor
pulls me along
in a little wooden wagon

Everything is untouched
around us, my Nonno and I
There are trees clumped in the distance
spread out before them
a carpet of field
I never know what kind
it's all sunlit waves to me

I look up and see Nonno
laughing at my face
smeared with those gwrapes

He's across the dinner table
She, she had them...all over...
those blackberries...but, Gwrapes!
Gwrapes!
He hiccups the words out
in a voice that paints the room
with dotted laughter

He loves telling this story
my memory

A hundred times
would not convey
how sticky or dirty
or purple my face was
that field day
on a clear afternoon

VINCENT RENSTROM

My Neighbor Screams: "How's the Writing Going?"

Stan took a spill in the
wet grass this morning,
tangled in his dog leashes.
Nothing serious though,
he scrambled to his feet.

He often used to ask
how my career was going.
He'd always, he said, wanted
to be a writer himself.

But then he and his wife
got the dogs, two excitable
little yappers about the size
of suckling pigs. And after
a couple of attempts Stan
and I realized it is not
possible to converse in the
dogs' presence because they
insist on voicing their opinions.

So now we just wave to each other.

M. G. STEPHENS*Poultice*

Fear seeps out of me
like pus from a wound

Mother

What's it matter?
She was only your mother.
There are plenty more where she came from.

They all know how to dance
backwards in high heels
like Ginger Rogers, reciting
Shakespeare's sonnets.

Some even recite backwards, and in high heels,
Spinning plates balanced on long wooden
sticks on the tip of their nose.

She's only your mother, and this isn't even her day.

Half-Sonnet

In late November, when there is fog on
the empty-leaf trees and the hospital
across the road is shrouded in a fine
mist, the moon hangs over everything,

As if London were a stage set, a play
that is about to begin shortly, please
order your drinks now for the interval,
take your seats, the show about to begin.

JEFFREY PARK

Testimony

The policeman held his face expressionless
 no reaction
 while she told the story
 only took notes in ballpoint blue.

What does he think of me she wonders
 same old story once again
 angry neglected wife, lover, girlfriend, sister
 girl next door
 simply retrace the notes from case 179 or 254
 or just a shopping list
 cucumbers, cream cheese, loaf of wheat bread
 or some random word repeated
 a thousand times – arpeggio
 arpeggio, arpeggio.

Ask a single question
 why let me babble on this way?
 She could have summed it up in a phrase –
 he told me to stick it, and not for the first time,
 so I did.

Metamorphosis

molten copper into the mold
 a hiss
 as liquid metal oozes, cools,
 hardens, taking on a new shape
 serpentine
 dulling all around a pair of ruby eyes
 and what is it now? what it
 shall be – into cold water steaming
 cracks porous ice and
 sinks to the bottom of the trough
 heavy with the remembered intensity of heat
 a new shape, neatly
 fit
 to a thousand crevices
 waiting, watching, testing
 the waters

DORIS SHORES

Anniversary

Here
in this region

of catastrophe
I sip my tea

uneasily, eyes drawn
out the café window,

skyward. Tiny still,
still far away but gaining,

now glittering in the sunlight
like some kid's unlikely toy,

that plane up there—
just a flickering thought:

on course of course
for scheduled landing

at La Guardia,
right?

Eighth Grader's Quarrel with Poet

“... Nature never did betray
The heart that loved her”?

Sorry, but who's this guy kidding?
He could use more time
on that couch of his
or a shrink's couch, even.

He needs to focus
on those daffodils,
but lose the vacant mind,
okay? Get, like, *really* pensive

about the ones cut short
mid-dance who sink down,
done for, as he might too,
at any time betrayed

like them by Nature—
like my own dad, at thirty-five,
on his old, sick patient's chest,
collapsed.

So no more fairy tales, okay?
Guy better open wide that inward eye
of his, think twice before he bullshits
all us kids.

JOANNE MONTE

Carolyn in the Kitchen, Baking

from the heart, from an old Italian recipe
handed down
through generations: flour, salt, yeast.

She's teaching me technique, measuring
precisely the oregano, garlic,
basil and thyme—olive oil and water

for baptism—a blessing shining in full
purity. She works
the dough, kneading and kneading

until she feels its energy, its warmth.
Every minute thickens
the texture. We are keeping a promise,

an old tenacity anointing the surface
with oil; each gold bead
strung like rosaries into a prayer, as though

the oldest branches of our heritage
reach out of the urns
of Tuscan bronze and cypress.

What endures, grieves, is an observance,
and yet, a loyalty
that is beyond measuring, beyond any shape

or form. We fold, press, turn—follow it
through to preservation,
then mold the mixture into a ball.

Cover will gingham. And let it rise.

A Synopsis in Blue

From this blue inlet off the Pacific
and out where the rocks are

with just a fringe of surf trimming

the headland, a blue moon rises,
gradually closing out what is most
primitive, most enduring.

One can try in resignation to bear
through the absence, an oblivion
somewhat noble. Thereafter,

it's drinks at the *Bird of Paradise*.
Blue curaçao, and on the bar
aquamarine fish plates offer tidbits

as though not enough had been given.
Perhaps everything had already
been drawn from blueprints. A blast

of frost in early spring. Blue ice.
Blue fire. Out of the blue, a blue streak.
A blue baby. And another blue moon rising.

AMOS JASPER WRIGHT

Synopsis of De Anima

The Greek concedes that to define the soul, if it is, is the most prohibitive of questions, often provoking laughter. Before he begins at the beginning, the conclusion is already known. He can magnify the soul under a microscope, which does not yet exist. Words can be used to define other words. The soul exists apart from its corpus. The anima has a science; pleasure and pain are parcels of its complex. The soul's rationality, algid and calm, belongs to it alone. The mind does not belong to bugs. The soul is like likeness itself. Charming and shallow as a shark, there is no catching it, in net or necrosis. Words are used to define other words. The mind, but not the soul, is immortal. Which no one will believe.

Whereof One Cannot Speak

1. The world *noun* is everything that *pronoun* is the case.

I circumscribed the conflagrant world from a single hill in Oslo.

2. What is *present* the case is the *past* existence *Ecclesiastes* of a *current* state of affairs.

I whose rigorous mortis is worlded in the fraught of.

3. A logical picture of *distraught* facts is a *disordered* thought.

I picked the picture off the wall and built it in the hall.

4. A *vertical* thought is *perhaps* a proposition with *non* sense.

I crossed the bridge screaming colorful balderdash at the sunset.

5. A proposition is a *gospel* truth-function of elementary *particles* propositions.

I analyzed the evidence of my existence and did not agree with his conclusions.

6. The general *adjective* form of a *particular* proposition is the general form of a [truth function](#).

I climbed out of the backfire up the ladder leaning against a tree in the simple present tense.

7. Whereof one *you* cannot speak, thereof one *I* must *imperative* be *caught* shouting.

WILL GREENWAY

Hypo

I had one again last night, riding the motorcycle I never had through the neighborhood, the parks and back yards, then out into the countryside and the woods, wringing speed with merely my right wrist, thinking I'll buy one of these when I wake, when suddenly I knew where I was exactly—in the fields, lovely and light-headed, just before coma, and I woke to the familiar almost-ultimate sinking feeling, sweating, heart fluttering from the too-much needle I had before bed.

Just another flirtation with death, me once again standing on one bank of the river and yoo-hooing, waving my red bandanna at the boatman, who lays down his newspaper, groans to his feet, squints, snorts, then sits back down, resumes reading the obits and smoking his pipe, and the vaguely familiar ghosts, used now to these false alarms, these wolf cries, fade back into the trees, where I think I hear, far-off, muffled, just before waking, the cough of another kick-start, somewhere up ahead.

CHARLES BASSEY

Solidarity

(To NLC @ 25)

The prologue adorned the stage
Accompanied by the energizing sound
...we shall overcome...

The theatre had the rarity of a full cast;
The rattling of the casual miner's tools
Struggling to keep their contract;
The growl of the retirees
Scrambling for a sweet dose of repose;
The custodians of Ivory heritage
Dying heavenward for their harvest;
And the bureaucrats in search of their cards
To vote for a meal.

They, all archetypes of capital casualties
Chorused on *...when the Unions inspiration
Through the worker's blood shall run...*
But the potpourri was discordant.

And then, in same mores, they danced;
But to the drumming of the audience
Who giggled away with their glasses
Slicing the cast by capitalist casino-like.

Beyond them a rhythm resonated
*...There can be no power
Greater anywhere beneath the sun...*
As the cast in encircling chanted
*...yet what force on earth
Is weaker than the feeble strength of one...*
As the fading tune of *...we shall overcome...*
Recedes off-stage, the narrator chimed
"It's not yet epilogue."

JOE MASSINGHAM

Off the Peg

Death came in and tried my suit on
yesterday. "Not bad," he said,
looking at nothing in an empty mirror.
He peered at himself sideways.
"A bit baggy in the seat
and the waist's a trifle tight.
A good press wouldn't do you any harm."
He decided against wearing me
and walked out. As the door opened,
light flooded in.

PATRICE M. WILSON

Having Your Cake?

Firmly placed in my apartment in Honolulu
I sit at my small outcropping of shelf
between the kitchen and the hallway
to the front door,

eating a piece of 59th birthday cake,
wondering why I can't have it
and eat it too, this old British maxim
that challenges the illogic of not possessing
and yet consuming at the same time,

that also sounds as if it could be part
of a blues song: You can't have your cake
and eat it too, baby, no, can't keep
your cake and eat it too,
but you sure as hell got to have it
before you can eat it, so come on back home
to me, mama, come on back home to me,

and then a profound sadness insinuates itself
into my heart, whose softer parts worry
about a picture I have in my head
of some nicely sliced piece of cake alone
someplace—in the middle of nowhere maybe—
not being had and not being eaten
by anyone.

Contributor's Notes

Charles Bassey lives in Abuja, Nigeria, where he works full-time with a financial services regulatory agency and writes part-time. As a creative writer with the sociological imagination, he stares at life actively and reflects on human existence and emotions through poetry, essay and creative fiction. His poetry has appeared in an anthology and on the internet. As a life traveller as well as a path follower who believes in parenting as a child, he envisions a world of radiant people living their best. He is a member of Abuja Literary Society.

Kory Beach is an undergraduate student at Colgate University; he is 18 years old and previously unpublished. He writes and reads frequently and hopes to one day be a well-known poet.

Les Bernstein has been published in the *California Poetry Society Quarterlies*, *The Marin Poetry Center Anthologies*, and other small presses. His chapbook, *Borderland*, was published by Finishing Line Press. He lives in Mill Valley, California with his very large and boisterous family

Ann Cummings, who lives in Florida, has had work published previously in a few select religious magazines. This is her first attempt at submitting to a secular magazine. For about a year, writing has come to her as poetry. Brevity appeals to her now, packing the most into a few words. Briefly, her life experience has included motorcycle riding, mountain climbing, and other sports. Married twice, now widowed, she has one daughter.

Andrew P. Dillon received his bachelor's of arts in English from the University of Tennessee. He has been published in *Phoenix Literary Arts Magazine* of the University of Tennessee, and *Siren* and *Tourist*, both of Knoxville, Tennessee. He writes poetry and short fiction, but not as often as he discusses music with his father, attempts to become fluent in Korean, and plays soccer. He strongly supports the use of semi-colons, dashes, and the serial comma. He can be reached at andrewpdillon@gmail.com

Casey Francis is currently pursuing a graduate degree in English at New Mexico Highlands University, but he's desperate to get back to the humid summers and frigid winters of the Midwest. He has published or has work forthcoming in *Boston Literary Magazine*, *Red River Review*, *Verse Wisconsin*, and the *Blog for Rural America* (www.cfra.org/blog).

Will Greenway's tenth collection, *Everywhere at Once*, won the Poetry Book of the Year Award from the Ohio Library Association, as did his eighth collection *Ascending Order*. Both are from the University of Akron Press Poetry Series. His publications include *Poetry*, *American Poetry Review*, *Southern Review*, *Georgia Review*, *Missouri Review*, *Southern Poetry Review*, *Prairie Schooner*, *Poetry Northwest*, and *Shenandoah*. He is currently Distinguished Professor of English at Youngstown State University.

John Grey is an Australian born poet, US resident since late seventies. Works as

financial systems analyst. Recently published in Poem. Kestrel and Writer's Bloc with work upcoming in *Caveat Lector*, *Prism International*, and the *Cider Press Review*.

John Grochalski's poems and stories have appeared in several journals including *The Lilliput Review*, *Underground Voices*, *Zygote In My Coffee*, *The Big Stupid Review*, and *Bartleby Snopes*. Grochalski is the author of two books of poems *The Noose Doesn't Get Any Looser After You Punch Out* (Six Gallery Press 2008) and *Glass City* (Low Ghost Press, 2010). Grochalski currently lives in Brooklyn, New York, where he constantly worries about the high cost of everything.

Born in Windsor, Ontario in 1960, **Gregory Gunn** grew up in small towns before settling in London in 1970. A graduate of Fanshawe College in 1982 as an electronics technician, he has worked in that field ever since. Mr. Gunn began writing during his tenure at Fanshawe and has done so for over thirty years. He is most passionate about poetry.

Some of his credits include: *Cyclamens & Swords*, *The Toronto Quarterly*, *Glimpse Magazine*, *Ascent Aspirations*, *Butterflies Are Free To Fly*, *Carcinogenic*, *Psychopoetica*, *Afterthoughts*, *Ditch Magazine*, *One Earth*, and myriad others. His other interests comprise music, astronomy, foreign languages, psychology, gardening, photography, and philosophy.

Joe Massingham was born in the UK but has lived the second half of his life in Australia. Major employment has been as a Navy officer, university student from first degree to PhD, tutor, lecturer and Master of Wright College, University of New England, NSW. Has run his own writing and editing business but retired early because of cancer and heart problems and now spends time waiting to see medical practitioners, writing poetry and prose and smelling the roses. He has had work published in Australia, UK, Eire, USA, NZ and India.

Jeffrey Park is a native of Baltimore, Maryland. He has been a movie theater manager, an IT specialist and a middle school English teacher. He currently lives in Munich, Germany where he works as an educator in a private secondary school and teaches business English to adults.

Vincent Renstrom lives with his wife and daughter in Middletown, Ohio. He received his Ph.D. in Hispanic Literature from Indiana University in 1996 and spent a decade chasing that elusive tenure-track position before packing it in in 2006 to become a full-time househusband and stay-at-home Dad. He is one lucky son-of-a-gun. Since 2008 his poems have appeared in *MARGIE/The American Journal of Poetry*, Vol. 7, as well as in the online journals *Alba*, *The Centrifugal Eye*, *Silenced Press*, *Slow Trains*, and *Tertulia*.

Doris Shores, a New Yorker, has been a college-level English teacher, a pharmaceutical-advertising copywriter, and a freelance editor. Her earlier publications were feature articles, mostly in newspapers. More recently, a poem and an essay of hers appeared in *14th Street Gold*.

Alyssa Grace Sorresso is a post grad student in London, studying for an MA in Applied Theatre. She ran away from her home in Chicago only to discover that she likes writing and making videos much more, and laughs about it sometimes. You can find more of her writing and videos at www.tactlessgrace.com, and follow her on twitter at [tactless_grace](https://twitter.com/tactless_grace).

M. G. Stephens has published eighteen books, including the novel *The Brooklyn Book of the Dead* ("a great, great book," says Roddy Doyle) and the essay collection *Green Dreams*, which Joyce Carol Oates picked as one of the notable nonfiction books of the 20th century in *Best American Essays of the Century*.

Patrice M. Wilson's poetry has been published by the *Journal of New Jersey Poets*, *Nimrod*, *Barbaric Yawp*, *Hawai'i Review*, *Hawai'i Pacific Review*, *Byline*, and *Common Ground* among others, and is forthcoming in *Eclipse*. She has three chapbooks by Finishing Line Press, *On Neither Side* (2009), *When All Else Falts* (2003) and *A Different Current* (2011). Her ancestors are African-American, Tsalagi (Cherokee), and Irish. She is an assistant professor of English at Hawai'i Pacific University.

Amos Jasper Wright is a native of Birmingham, Alabama. After two years drifting hand-to-mouth in Boston, he returned to Birmingham and recently completed a master's in English at the University of Alabama, Birmingham. Upon realization that he must work for a living, and after acquiring experience in architecture and planning, he applied and was accepted to Tufts University, where he will enroll in the fall of 2011 to begin a master's degree in urban planning. He has high hopes that two master's degrees will equal a PhD.

Editor Biographies

Joanna C. Valente is a MFA candidate in Poetry Writing at Sarah Lawrence College. She is also a part-time mermaid. More can be found at her website: <http://joannavalente.com>

Stephanie Valente lives and writes in New York. Her work has appeared in *Italics Mine* and other journals. She is currently working on a collection of short stories and as always, poetry. She enjoys candlelit smiles and diamond cut laughter. One day, she would like to become a silent film star. Her favorite desserts are crème brûlée and strawberry-rhubarb pie. She can be found at: kitschy.tumblr.com.

G. Taylor Davis, Jr is from the Milky Way.

Submission Guidelines

- Please send all submissions to editor@yespoetry.com.
- We consider previously unpublished work, although simultaneous submissions are acceptable. Copyrights revert back to writer upon publication.
- Submissions are on a rolling basis, so we ask you not to submit more than once per month.
- Don't forget to include a third-person author biography with your work. We also encourage you to link us to your website or blog.

Poetry: Submit up to seven poems. In the subject line of the email, please write "Your Name_Poetry Submission." Either copy and paste your work into the body of the email, or attach as a .doc file. We welcome all types of poetry.

Photography: Only submit original work; it can be a stand-alone piece or part of an entire collection. Submit up to five photos with an artist's statement. Email us with the subject line "Your Name_Photography Submission."

Music: Please send mp3 or mp4 files only. In the subject line of the email, write "Your Name_Music Submission."

Film: Submit only short films up to 30 minutes long. You may send us a link to your film if it is hosted on a website, such as Vimeo. Email us with the subject line "Your Name_Film Submission."

Other: If you are submitting a review or interview, please send in a .doc file. It must not exceed 2,000 words. Email us with the subject line "Your Name_Other Submission."

If you would like to be involved or have any other questions, please direct all emails to joanna@joannavalente.com.