

# BEYOND THE RIFT



POETS  
OF THE PALISADES

**EDITORS**

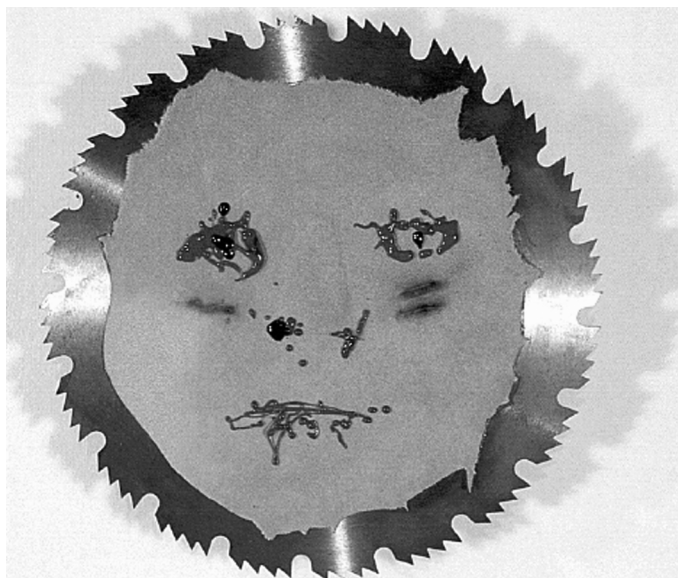
PAUL NASH

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DAVID MESSINEO

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# **BEYOND THE RIFT:**

## **POETS OF THE PALISADES**

**THE POET'S PRESS**  
*Providence, RI*

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This is the 185th publication of  
THE POET'S PRESS  
279-½ Thayer Street  
Providence, RI 02906

Also available as a PDF E-Book

To order:  
The Poet's Press  
[www.poetspress.org](http://www.poetspress.org)  
ISBN 0-922558-44-2 (paperback)  
ISBN 0-922558-45-0 (hardcover)

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## FOREWORD

**T**WO HUNDRED MILLION YEARS AGO, as dinosaurs were poised to become the dominant life forms on earth, a huge pulse of magma welled up from deep beneath the crust, rifting apart the northern expanse of the great supercontinent Pangaea, forming a series of massive rift valleys and eventually the Atlantic Ocean. As North America began to separate from Africa, successive basalt sills created the spectacular 900-foot-high Palisades, as well as Orange, Preakness and Hook Mountains — collectively New Jersey's 'Watchung Mountains.' These igneous sills were all elements of the four-million-square-mile "Central Atlantic Magmatic Province," or CAMP, comprising the largest known upwelling of continental flood basalts in the history of the planet. A mass extinction took place at this time, and some scientists believe the colossal rift event was the culprit, wiping out 40% of all life, paving the way for the rise of the saurians. Continents were on the march. New Jersey, say goodbye to Morocco ...

Nothing of much consequence happened on North America's Atlantic Coastal Plain for quite a while. Then, in the 1990s, disparate elements of the northern New Jersey poetry scene began to coalesce into what some have called the "Palisades Poetry Movement." Readings were already being sponsored by *The Paterson Literary Review*, *Sensations Magazine*, and at venues across the Hudson River in New York City. By the middle of the decade, various new poetry series were in full swing in northeastern New Jersey. Among them were popular readings at bookstores in Paramus and in Wayne, plus other new poetry series in Edgewater, Newark, Teaneck, Rutherford, Ridgewood, and Montclair. In 1996, Alda Xavier created a guild called The Rift Arts Forum, which began to host poetry readings and special events, and to put out a literary magazine called *The Rift Arts Forum Publication*, aka 'The Rift.' Some of the *Rift*-sponsored series and events initiated by Ms. Xavier included: *The Dead Poets Revival*, in Paramus, comparing the work and lives of two famous historical poets each month; *A Drop of Wisdom*, in Englewood, consisting of monthly workshops by individual contemporary poets; *A Special Evening at the Hudson Grill* in NYC in 1998, showcasing musicians, poets and other performers; two themed exhibitions by multiple artists in Jersey City, called 'Flash' and 'Kites'; the 'Sanctum' reading series at CBGB's Gallery in NYC in 2001; staged

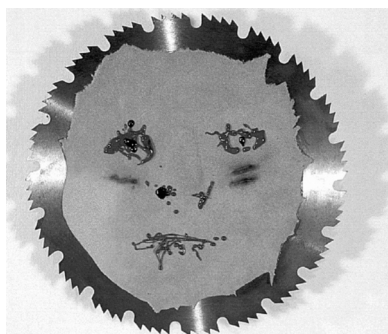


performances of original plays in North Bergen co-written by ‘The Rifters;’ and the monthly *North Jersey Literary Series (NJLS)*, which is still ongoing.

Thirty-nine distinguished poets appear in these pages — all have been featured at one time or another in the *North Jersey Literary Series*. This longstanding spoken word and music series began at Marc’s Cheesecake in Englewood in 1997, afterward residing for a time at Café Local in Englewood, followed briefly by a stint at Blend Café in Rutherford, then Il Trapezio Café in Nutley, finally settling at Classic Quiche Café in Teaneck. One of our poets is a recent Emmy nominee, another has won the Jefferson Award for Public Service, and four are Pushcart Prize nominees. Seven have produced literary magazines, nineteen have published poetry collections, five are playwrights, and twenty have hosted literary series. Among them are teachers, journalists, scientists, librarians, actors, exhibited artists and musicians, and some of them wear several of these ‘hats.’

Poems for this collection were submitted exclusively by past features at *NJLS*, and were selected and organized into six thematic sections by five editors: John J. Trause, Susanna Rich, David Messineo, Denise La Neve and Paul Nash. Mr. Nash provided further editing services. Jamie McNeely Quirk proofread the sections and the individual bios. All work on this anthology was done by members of the poetic community.

*Paul Nash*



**WITHOUT BORDERS**

## Mullican Pines

Whirring cicadas mimic  
the distant doppler whirring  
of a lone prop plane

as high summer air shimmers  
over the sloping meadow,  
down to river's edge.

The Mullica lies shadowed  
beneath a cool canopy  
of pines and cedars,

a mere trickle caressing  
hawthorn, alder, swamp laurel  
and wild blueberries.

Its current is like a snake  
slithering through flickering,  
verdant galleries—

serpentine undulations  
gliding quickly out of sight  
in bend after bend

as its course slowly widens,  
still meandering sharply  
through dappled sunlight.

Curves unfold to open marsh  
of pink and white Nymphaea  
and yellow Nuphar;

cobalt and teal damselflies  
dart over a flexed ribbon  
of sunsurface sheen.

The river's flow pendulates  
over deep pools and winds down  
as time slows to smoke.

Along a silken shoreline,  
Drosera's tendrils glisten  
with bright solar hues—

sequins of blue and lilac  
luring wingéd messengers  
to Medusa's lair.

A pitcher plant's red-veined leaves  
above beds of sphagnum moss  
are rainwater cisterns

gleaming in the late day sun,  
chalices of buzzing death  
for unwary flies.

Night falls softly to ripple  
the moon's silver reflection  
over secret springs.

Whippoorwills chorus their cries  
into atonal vespers  
of shrill dementia,

calls rising, then falling off,  
jeering nocturnal muses,  
presaging the dawn.

*Paul Nash and Denise La Neve*



## The Crows of Teaneck, New Jersey

A familiar sound, like birds but distant,  
you leave it alone, but it comes in through  
the shut window and causes your waking,  
becomes your waking. You say *it is the crows*,  
*just the crows*, but the sound resists,  
stands on its own without your memory  
and becomes only the breathing  
of a motor, an ordinary motor  
and not birds at all. You're not even  
in that house, it's gone from you, gone  
with their death. Before their death  
the casement windows bowed outward  
and breathed in the sound of crows, dark  
consonants before the eyes opened,  
and after their death there were crows dying,  
even before that summer, up on the corner  
one crow lay flattened, swept against the curb  
with that fearful loosening of feathers.

*Doris Umbers*

## Early Autumn, Montclair

*after Inness*

*The purpose of the painter is simply to reproduce in other minds the impression which a scene made upon him. A work of art does not appeal to the intellect. It does not appeal to the moral sense. Its aim is not to instruct, not to edify, but to awaken an emotion. —George Inness*

Late afternoon, and the great sky  
has bubbled into a frenzy of color  
and cloud huddled above the graying barn.  
I imagine George Inness, peering  
maybe through his backyard window,  
brushes poised as a storm about to pour  
across a canvas. Within the frame  
his eye scans landscape from deep shade  
to warm light, the rolling depth  
of farm field, forceful strokes  
laying oil down in direct caress.  
The apple tree, the wooden blur of oaks.  
A certain shift of space, wide stretch of sight.  
Not the russet hues of coolness  
and burning browns, but the last grass  
still green as ripe lime peel  
sprawled over earth, the slow buzz  
of autumn creeping quiet through Montclair,  
harvest, and the rich scent  
of new rain rushing on as quick as youth.

*John Chorazy*

## On the Cape of New Jersey

The fog lifts over tree tops  
adorning the hem of the sky  
with cornices and crenellations.

Clouds unfist their gauzy breath and  
splinters of mist settle over the lowlands.  
The buckwheat and hollyhocks stop  
to consider  
their  
fading . . .

to ephemeral dust every night.

This town, this  
slumbering wharf,  
time-worn by decades of  
unlocked doors,  
sits on the crest  
of a wisp of time  
keeping track of the sunsets  
and coaxing the ships  
to the shore.

And the sky, stippled with night signs,  
turns over and sighs  
branch over branch,  
like naked brown legs  
shifting in their meditations  
along the horizon —  
a deep crimson blood spill  
of lush flesh and faded lace  
kissing us  
with quivering lips.

*Catherine Cimillo Cavallone*

## Masquerade

Minstrels and poets are writing checks  
as Venice dies,  
drowning in a store window  
with the canal at her throat  
and unbearable pain at sea level.  
Her fantasy is bought and sold in every piazza  
as tourists seek among vendors  
their orient.

Venezia L'otel is open to the masses.  
The Doge changes residence  
and Pulcinella cries in the arms of Napoli.  
The Harlequin dance of the Gondola  
is just another expensive ride  
or a wind-up toy adorning memories.  
San Marco is without question  
the name of a pizzeria.

Brighella hangs his head  
and the port of Marghera fumes with rage  
for those of us who've lived Venice.  
Regret bleeds from the slash in our souls  
as we sniff her hot August breath;  
as Colombina takes her last,  
Scaramouche is brought down on his knees.

The Carnevale is over, ladies and gentlemen.  
La Serenissima is dead —  
her destiny leaves in plastic bags.

*Il Carnevale e' finito.  
Andate in pace.*

*Caterina Belvedere*



## Pedi-Jealousy in the Court

Madame P'ing and Lady P'ong, two lush and blushing lotus buds,  
amid the blowing poppies and chrysanthemums,  
persimmon trees and peonies, peach blossoms and  
cherry inflorescence

luscious lychees

jujubes

of the humid hothouse garden hall,  
the winding cathouse colonnade,  
the great house of the Master's seat,  
recline across the jade and ivory table top.

They speak

of old men, fathers, months and mothers, of dogs  
and youths, and brothers  
of strength and quarrels, of jaws and household gods,  
of rains and snows, of nephrites and aristocrats,

avoiding talk of little feet, lotus slippers, and plump dumplings,  
of on the palm of the hand, on the shoulder, and on the seat  
of a swing,

of within the blankets, within the stirrup, and within the snow,  
of below the curtain, below the screen, and below the fence,  
the jiggling gait, the jade horse ornaments, the jingle bells upon  
the tiny heels,

of the afternoon the servants heard the Master cry out, naked, spent  
before the slipper closet in the Third Wife's hall,  
of the muted mania for cerise silk stitch across pale pink plush,  
of the first fumbings in the bath to wash the seed and spittle out.

And then as when a tiny foot shoots soft and slowly through  
the curtains of the boudoir couch  
Lady P'ong across their dainty court to Madame P'ing  
pronounces:

“I know that you know that I know that you know that,  
although you are Primary Consort and I am only Fifth Wife,  
my feet are smaller than yours.”

“Hahhhhhh.”

*John F. Trause*

## pomegranate

there is a chinese vase  
in the outer room

things come back to me in pieces

a phrase, a word

something that she said  
so many years ago

pings inside my head  
with new meaning

the maiden shows the mandarin  
a rare delicacy  
slowly unfurled from its purple wrapping

the horses stir, but stay in place  
all expression leaves his painted face

before so many jewels  
shaped like tears,  
red like blood

and then it crashes to the floor  
no more a vase

things come back to me  
something that she said

the antique carpet near the door  
deeply stained  
chinese red

*Raphael Badagliacca*

## Eugene Turk

Like an Ingmar Bergman movie there's a momentary  
silence, cirrus in a frozen distance, and somewhere  
an old dog shudders, tethered to a pole.  
My father used to say a barking dog at night meant

someone near was going to die, and he was often right,  
but I don't remember hearing howls before his passing.  
Today December greets me childlike,  
wraps frigid hands around my legs — it's been at play

all night and comes inside to warm itself on me.  
I learned about a friend long unheard from, heard  
the story of his death and how he said  
"it's beautiful" before he went

and I am sickened by the irony of grief.  
I have a picture of him speaking verses, the photo  
black and white, like us, and he is dark and large beside me.  
We were drinking at a party in the Village, talked

about New Orleans, some verses of Bob Dylan.  
So much for poems, so much for smoke and wine, now gone.  
Once, inside a dream, I saw the shoreline of a lake  
I used to visit with my family. I don't recall

the water, not the sky, and not a single face,  
only the shoreline. I think it's meant to be this way.  
We see just the outside edges before we learn  
the courage to wade in.

*John Chorazy*

## Curves

Today at the beach I am aware  
of curves. Past the waves,  
behind the sheen of silver or ice  
where sky sags into sea, the horizon  
is a curve drawn in intense blue.  
So is the visor on the fisherman's cap  
shading the curve of his face.  
Each time he flings the line,  
it arches through the air, then sinks.  
He holds the rod tight and waits,  
dozing in the sun. Then,  
feeling a tug, he grows alert.  
Slowly he reels the fish in.  
It leaps high above the water,  
wriggling and twitching,  
falling from curve into curve,  
trying to rip the pain from its mouth.  
Even on shore, the fish  
does not stop thrashing;  
it makes a deep bed in the sand  
as if to escape through the earth.  
The fisherman removes the hook  
and tosses the fish  
into a bucket with water  
where it leaps almost to the rim.  
It is drowning on air. Curved  
around panic, its mouth is open,  
the tiny teeth useless  
as are the fins that have forgotten  
how to fly. All afternoon,  
as the fish begs for its life  
behind the man's back, I glance  
at the bucket handle —  
a curve waiting to be picked up.  
Not even a whimper  
from the fish — all I hear is

thumps against metal,  
water sloshing from side to side,  
and the wind that keeps moaning  
in my ears long afterwards,  
even as I sleep.

*Marianne Poloskey*

## Misericordia

*Michelangelo's Pietà*

*"I merely uncover what God has already placed inside the stone."  
Michelangelo Buonarroti*

This rock, this stone,  
white pure  
like her love, like her son  
in her hands, in my hands,  
empty and wanting —  
his soul reborn inside the stone,  
this mass to be form, to be shape.  
Inside my head I see his face.  
This rock, this stone,  
it is heavy  
like a mountain on my chest,  
a Madonna, it is pain,  
like a spear in my side.  
In his side  
I split the veins  
hidden in the rock,  
and I chisel the veins  
that bulge in his neck.  
Then I hammer his back  
like my heart that pounds,  
and pound on his chest,  
and form his hands  
with hands that bleed,  
and I curse this rock  
as they cursed my lord.  
Now I smooth my sins  
like wounds he healed  
and I cleanse his feet —  
He cleansed our sins.  
Inside the rock, my death,  
there's a canyon of stone

on the folds of her dress,  
and I carve his soul inside the rock  
and breathe his life inside the stone,  
and pound and chisel and carve and cut  
his hands, her hands, my blood, my bones.  
In the rock, in the stone,  
I die his death a thousand times  
and birth divinity white as hope.

*Caterina Belvedere*



## Nun Flying Through Walls

*After Miklós Melocco's sculpture, Budapest*

Ancient corner convent door opens to  
a newsstand — Fuji disposables; paprika, like  
red horns, dangling; holographic Jesus over the Danube.  
Even locals rarely know the stone woman above

who flies horizontal through the corner —  
soles, black shoes, furls of blue habit  
are a stone kite on Judge Petermann Street;  
belt to granite wimple — she bursts into Townhouse Road.

Wall angles to wall where a magician might slice  
through a woman all plumes, décolletage, net tights.  
Here, the pink stucco corner chevrons out from her belly.  
Bus stop bench across from her, I sit with the lover

to whom my father shuttled on Delta — United  
States to Hungary, future to past. My red tulips  
wilt in her lap. We look at the nun. I ask how  
one manages decades of longing for the Beloved.

She tells me the only freedom is to turn back,  
like Lot's wife, until you become the pain.  
Here she looks at me. I make myself still.  
“Only stone can pass through stone,” she says.

We look up, again. “Yes,” I say, “Let no one  
know whether the hands at your lips  
pray, hide secrets, or protect your joy.”  
“Or,” she adds, “stop hunger with silence.”

*Susanna Rich*

## John Coltrane

There is no instrument like a man,  
churches burning in his blood,  
their smoke too heavy to rise up  
and out of him, too heavy with  
blackness. There is no instrument  
like a man in the house his parents  
left him, its empty rooms and  
empty clothes and the sunlight  
bouncing off a cracked teapot  
no longer strong. There is no  
instrument like a man walking  
on the edge of the street with  
one foot on the curb and one foot  
in the gutter somewhere between  
heaven and hell without weight  
or wings. There is no instrument  
like a man with his father's hands  
building things on air too light  
to stay together, sculptures  
on a mountain top made out of  
dirt and dust, most beautiful in  
the last seconds before they  
change, before they break and  
scatter and fly.

*Josh Humphrey*

## Opera on Opera

Beatrice's Venetian fingers in stately promenade ascended  
The upper register of her dressing-room piano.  
The Mediterranean archangel  
Who presided over the stage and many rooms  
of the Paris Opera  
Sipped from a crystal flute and parted her lips to liberate  
the sonic wine of her throat.

*Croak!*

In the mirror on the wall on the other side of the instrument  
She saw eyes transporting perplexity and fright.  
Her right hand, resuming, rested on a simple major chord.

*Croak!*

In the mirror was a gondolier's daughter who despised  
the canals  
And deified Donizetti. The newspapers christened her  
*La Merlette*,  
Blackbird, in honor of her luxurious Italianate tresses.  
Were they party to this, they would rename her  
*La Grenouille*, Frog.  
She coiffed again from the flute and wiped the nervous excess  
from her chin.  
Then, a tentative arpeggio at the keyboard's lower end.

*Croak! Croak!*

Past the closet full of costumes, behind the jonquil-papered  
walls,  
Erik cackled in the gloom. He rolled the empty vial  
in his skeleton palm  
And tossed it over his shoulder. His ear pursued the echo  
of shattered glass.  
That was either F# or G, he mused.

He pulled off his mask and fingered the absence  
    where the rest of humanity  
Boasted a nose. Ugliness is the new Catholicism.  
Adjusting his cloak, spinning volte-face on his heels,  
    he returned  
In satisfaction to his well of darkness.

When one is known as the Phantom,  
One must live up to the reputation.

*Joel Allegretti*

## A Denial

*For Kurt Cobain, 15 years later<sup>1</sup>*

In the darkness of Aberdeen  
mills and litter and daughters of mills.

A bridge to live under<sup>2</sup>  
a bridge to cross over  
graffiti sings to you from the other side.

Your mouth is a wound  
through which you suck in knives  
that lodge in your entrails and fester  
there. Your life is an infection.

Rage out of a hot stomach:  
your body rejects your body  
like the offered heart  
of an accident victim.

You are not a victim.  
You are not an accident.  
You did not die of your disease.<sup>3</sup>  
We did not kill you.

*Jonathan Hall*

---

<sup>1</sup> Kurt Cobain, founder of Nirvana, was found dead on April 8, 1994

<sup>2</sup> "Homeless, Cobain slept on friends' couches. At one point, he lived under a bridge in Aberdeen [Washington], an arrangement chronicled in *Nevermind's* "Something in the Way." (*Rolling Stone*, April 16, 1992)

<sup>3</sup> "He's been suffering from a longstanding and painful stomach condition perhaps an ulcer aggravated by stress and, apparently, his screaming singing style." (*Rolling Stone*, April 16, 1992)

## A Series of Paintings by Jimmy Ernst On the Broken Glass Of His Mother's Bedroom Window

*Jesus in Capernaum, with his foot in a prostitute's hair*

Five sullen parabolic peaks  
in a cadmium rain,  
a large circle like a dead heart —  
He studies the top of her head.

*Jesus teetering on the Sea of Galilee*

Hard rivulets of olive green  
on white palette-knife scratches,  
anxious hints of canvas,  
ancient ripple.

*Jesus entering his home town without bothering to unpack*

He straightens His robe  
with a cluster of delicate strokes.

*Jesus, hands on a child*

Laughter can be heard on the inside of a house.  
Birds are hinted at with sharp edges in the sky.

*Jesus in the face of seven devils*

He is a Jew, remember.  
Yes, there is a gesture,  
the subject collides with the frame,  
more energy that way,  
the dangerous shape  
of what surrounds Him.

*Donald Zirilli*

## Waldo, Find My Mother

somewhere in my thronging *do-do-dos* days  
— tell me she's hiding, like the one *you* we, no matter, spot  
in The Nasty Nasties Castle massed with mummies,  
vampires, ghouls; in the toque-jammed Cake Factory  
of the frosted and the iced; in the Wild, Wild

West with gallons and gallons of hats, swinging  
saloon doors, Conestogas, colts and Colts.  
If only she *were* you, Mr. Cartoon Man  
with the Cat-in-the-Hat  
Stovepipe — the can without lids — slipped over her body  
same lie-down stripes prisoners wore (except black-

and not red-and-white). Might she be behind bards (oops,  
haha — bar(d)s) anyhow, meant to ask — *Think she's in jail?*  
Sing Sing? She's always on the look out for whomever  
she can thief from — men and me. I'm turning the page,  
Waldo, to forests of antlers, bucks (as in money),  
a rummage

of pants and beards, wallets, bald heads. Slipped  
on a stocking cap,  
she has, one husband's down vest, the other's belts — let her  
whiskers grow. Must've — no mother skirts in here, no  
aprons with floury hand prints (prince).

Where to look next?  
Hang at the mall (them all, the maul)? How do we spy

her in a ma(lai)ze of bar(d)codes? She might be sitting  
on Old Nick's lap. But where are her posey-pursed lips,  
lines of  
penciled brows slipped into carnival face cut-outs  
of Pat Boone,  
Pavarotti, George W . . . ? You're right: if my mother were  
my mother she'd be a cut-up, not a cut-out. My MO's to look,

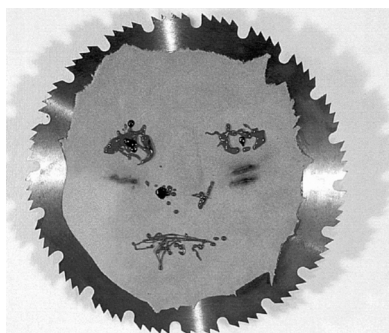
look for what can't be found in this Cosmic hide-and-seek  
this Olympiad of perpetual peek-a-boo, peek-a-boo,  
peek-a-boo for aught. For all my *boo, boo, boo* —  
all my *so-sads*,  
*she-done-me-wrongs*, ghost conversations —  
where'd you put her?  
Are *you* my mother? Emissary of Elusion in Male Drag?

I know, I know — you can't be — *you* live for me to find you.  
And I know I will. I know when I have. But nothing  
stays with me  
while I'm looking for her — not father, not children,  
not love.  
+I'm a wacky moth pummeling a screen — as if,  
with enough tapping, I could become the looking  
I do to be.

Even here — I'm creating a something-made to reflect,  
to look out  
for, to look to me. Oh, treasure of my life, World of Words,  
holding the place of emptiness too horrible to conceive —  
find my mother in here. Find my . . . Find me my find me.  
Find me my me . . .

*Susanna Rich*





**AGAINST HISTORY**

## The Cross-Dressers of Antietam

*Women occasionally disguised themselves as men in order to serve in the American Civil War. Reasons ranged from a sense of duty and honor to country, to simply raising money to send home to family. The Battle of Antietam was the bloodiest day of the Civil War—and twenty-first-century research indicates eight women dressed as men were part of it, two of whom were Mary Galloway and Sarah Emma Edmonds/Franklin Thompson.*

Everything becomes private. A bevy of boys is naked in front of you, in the creek, in a rare moment between battles. You wish you could join them — days a scorcher in these G.D.'d woolens — but you can't be seen naked. They'll know. Every moment becomes a challenge, a near-miss, a sigh of relief.

Wipe the sweat from your forehead. This dirty, bloody mess is well nigh on four years now, and you have a concern. The young'uns joined in 1861 are now starting to shave, and if this goes on two, three more years, they're gonna wonder about you. Some may already wonder about you. Do they whisper over the campfire at night? Is there an ominous hush behind the wail of the lone harmonica?

Tying your breasts down is a daily pain, your private nightmare, but you're still alive, it seems so little to give, it's really not a bother when you consider all the young boys who have died, all the flies you've seen feeding on their corpses, and the fields of body parts, the blood, the dirt, the roses, the mud, the field, the violets, the violence, the weary resolve, your fade and dissolve into grit and resolve. You look at their faces and wonder — *Am I the only one? Is that a boy? Or am I looking into a looking glass into my own future?*

Remind yourself you have a name. It may not be your  
given name, whatever they're calling you these days,  
a world away from dresses and dolls. Someone may say  
*you don't look a day older than when you came in*  
but your eyes remain the panes into your pain.

You may never know Antietam numbers: 3,654 killed;  
1,771 captured or missing; 18,292 wounded; all in one day:  
September 17, 1862, American bloodbath on a steamy  
afternoon.  
Now it's 1865: the thrown, the mangled, the war-worn,  
and you.

Women's work is never done. Don't meet their eyes.  
Reload your gun.

*David Messineo*

## Freud at Eighty, Convalescing In the Auersberger Sanatorium

*Anatomy is destiny.*  
—Sigmund Freud

*Analogies decide nothing,  
it is true, but they can make  
one feel more at home.*  
—Sigmund Freud

More insinuation than accusation,  
the cloud of smoke that lingered overhead in  
the stale air of the solarium —  
But what of the stink that has clung to  
his beard for more than forty years?  
No nurse has come to halt the primary process  
of his first postoperative perfectio.  
Its phallic tip snipped ceremoniously,  
as though a bris — that the image came  
to mind bothered him.  
One thing to deliver genial speeches at  
B'nai B'rith (the lodge never suspected  
an enemy within), quite another were Martha  
to light shabbat candles — *verboden!*

*Yaweh is but a substitute for father;*

as any object, orally fixated on, is replacement  
for the breast; as

*a good Havana — well . . .*

He would be the Moses to lead his  
people out of the wilderness of  
guilt and motivation, except his gods were  
several and had Greek names: Oedipus,  
Eros, Thanatos, the last at whom  
he shook his fist now more than ever.

No nurses had properly attended him after the first jaw surgery, either; they had gone home for lunch, and he was left bleeding all over his clothes until Anna came.

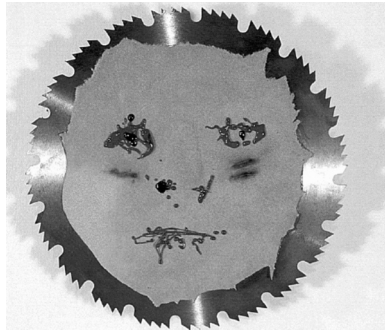
*Oh, Anna!*

How he needed his daughter even more than his wife, for those sixteen years since, an unbroken cathexis between them. She, more than Martha, knew of the irrepressible craving the ‘tissue rebellion’ in his mouth sought to defend against, mounting its malignant reaction formation, then of the dolor of ‘the monster’— ill-fitting prostheses that had eventually replaced his entire right mandible.

Sometimes a cigar teetering on the lip of an ashtray would roll onto his desk and burn a hole into the blotter before he noticed. Sometimes a cigar was clenched between his teeth as he sat in silence behind the couch, psychic pain freely associating, his own compulsion bullying his superego twenty times each day.

*Sometimes a cigar is just a cigar,*  
he would say.

*Brant Lyon*



**BETWEEN US**

## In The Bath

The water runs warm, steams up my mirror, windows.

I run it long,  
splash it to heat the bottom of the tub so as not  
to shock my delicate little feet with the cruelty of cold,  
ridged porcelain.

Lotions bustle forward on my racks, many, many bottles  
vie to be chosen.

They crowd the four-shelved, spring-loaded,  
floor-to-ceiling rack  
that beacons from the corner, they lurk beneath the last shelf  
and peek out from around the corners of the draping curtain.  
Bars and poufs dangle from the showerhead rack,  
dance in the happy, warm spray.

They do not make a thing that I will not pour  
over my head, believing the miracle of the model's hair,  
the softness of her skin and the slippery oil sensation  
that draws me most of all.

The scents of the bottles waft around me in the steam,  
carry me somewhere else where I ought to have been,  
where I do not suffer the indignity of having to scrub  
my own back,  
where brushes and blades are wielded on my behalf.  
I raise my arms, turn, bend, luxuriate  
in the scented steam, the elaborate fixtures  
of the ritual bath, its large pools and soaring plants,  
its echoing yards of tile inhabited only by myself  
and my attendants.

My scalp is massaged very, very slowly, then conditioned  
with pineapples and sage,  
the hair brushed gently, gently, so that its soaking  
wetness parts  
easily for the comb, no stretched broken split ends here.

Shining sharpness flashes toward raised arms, leaves silk  
in its wake along the calves previously massaged  
with a potion of volcanic ash scented lightly with lemon  
and suspended in a matrix of softeners. A heart-shaped stone  
diligently rubs away unpleasantness at the edges of my feet,  
and a small sea sponge, saturated with acids extracted  
from the finest over-ripe fruit, caresses my face,  
smoothing away  
the older skin of yesterday, bringing today's glow  
to the surface.

Hands — impossible to tell how many — knead  
and stroke me  
with a cleanser permeated with the essence of oatmeal  
and honey, and, yes,  
I am oiled slick as seal's skin with a heavy emulsion  
made to cling  
past the shower, to soak into the skin and leave  
softness everywhere  
following the drying dabs of towels. I am rinsed once,  
twice, more,  
first with warm water, then cool, then cold to smooth  
ruffled hair,  
sluice away the remains of the ritual,  
leave the cleansed body pink and ready  
for the drier ordeals of makeup and perfume.



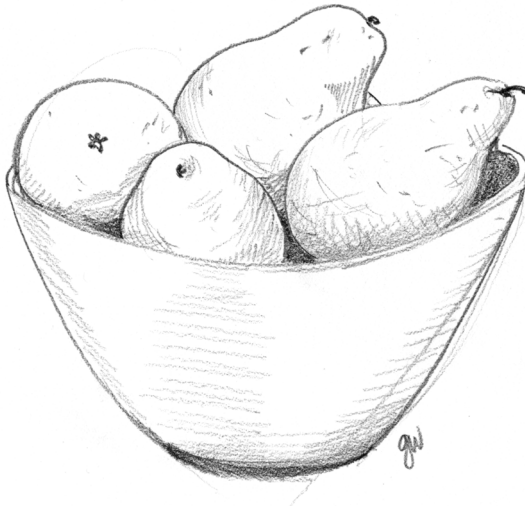
The curtain swoops grandly aside and I blink in cold,  
wet dismay  
at the tiny ugly bathroom, its faded '50s pink-and-blue  
tile, the  
bizarre hot pink blooms that dangle from curled-edge  
wallpaper, wondering  
if the bath slaves remembered to warm my towels  
before vanishing.

*Dorothy Alexander*

## Pears

When you are here the pears  
in their bowl ripen  
differently, their flesh flecked brown,  
throbbing yellow. I like  
how your footsteps force  
dust bunnies further into corners,  
your hands stack spoons in their allotted space,  
the way a family should fit,  
not just helter skelter, so now  
when I reach in to spoon sugar into my tea,  
no serrated edges or rusted blades.  
When you come back I'll poach pears in wine and sugar.  
You'll praise their grainy silk and I won't shatter  
the cut glass bowls when I rinse them in scalding suds.  
I won't.

*Denise Rue*



## Utility

Cursor, blinking in his  
Iris, a swarm of blur and  
Splendor, humming in the  
Twilight; he gives birth.

Trembling fingertips  
Sculpt his creation  
Like a Navajo at  
Her wheel;

Megabytes pressing on  
His mind, his choices  
Infinite, her colors  
Bleeding into one  
Another on  
Her tapestry —

She asks him  
To rest upon her  
Blanket, but he,  
Of a different  
Fantasy,

Hangs himself with  
A cable.

*Catherine Cimillo Cavallone*

## ABOUT THE POETS & ARTISTS

**DOROTHY ALEXANDER** has a BA in psychology from Montclair State University and is completing her masters in social work at New York University, where she is due to graduate in May of this year. She was a journalist for *The News of Paterson*. Dorothy has been an active member of the “Palisades Poetry Scene” since the 1990s, when she hosted a poetry reading series in Teaneck, New Jersey. Her poetry has appeared in *Sensations Magazine*.

**JOEL ALLEGRETTI** is the author *The Plague Psalms* (2000), now in its third edition, and *Father Silicon*, selected by the *Kansas City Star* as one of the 100 Noteworthy Books of 2006. Both books are published by The Poets Press. His newly-released third collection, *Thrum*, is a chapbook of poems, prose poems and brief poetic essays about musical instruments, published by Poets Wear Prada (2010). Allegretti’s work has appeared in *New York Quarterly*, *Margie*, *Rattapallax*, *Laurel Review*, *Art/Life Limited Editions*, *Descant*, *Confrontation*, *Xcp Cross-Cultural Poetics*, *River Oak Review*, and many other national journals. He is represented in the noted anthology *Chance of a Ghost* (Helicon Nine Editions, 2005). His poem in that collection received an Honorable Mention in the 2006 edition of *The Year’s Best Fantasy and Horror*, published by St. Martin’s Press. A Pushcart Prize nominee, he was one of three writers selected for the 2005 inaugural Visible Word, a collaboration of literary and visual artists sponsored by the DeBaun Center for the Performing Arts, Stevens Institute of Technology. In April 2009, Kean University in New Jersey presented the world premiere of a song cycle based on Allegretti’s poetry: “A Cycle by the Sea,” composed by Frank Ezra Levy, distinguished cellist with the Radio City Music Hall Orchestra, whose symphonic work is available in the American Classics series on the Naxos label. Allegretti has been inducted into the Academy of American Poets. Please visit his website at [www.joelallegretti.com](http://www.joelallegretti.com)

**RAPHAEL BADAGLIACCA** is the author of two books: *Father’s Day: Encounters with Everyday Life* ([www.fathersdaybook.com](http://www.fathersdaybook.com)) and *The Yogi Poems and Other Celebrations of Local Baseball* ([www.yogipoems.com](http://www.yogipoems.com)).

The New Jersey Arts Collective elected to transform *Father's Day* into a staged event involving three actors. He also staged portions of the book as a one-man show off-off Broadway at the SoHo Playhouse. Two of his pieces from *Father's Day* were recently broadcast on National Public Radio's *The Green Space* (2009), and the first, entitled "Bedtime Story," was rebroadcast on WNYC's *Evening Music*, hosted by Terrance McKnight. He has performed his poetry and prose in several venues in the tristate area. His most recent poems have appeared in *The Louisville Review* and *The Sanskrit Literary Magazine*. Raphael writes two blogs: [www.moviesightings.com](http://www.moviesightings.com) and [www.booksightings.com](http://www.booksightings.com). He is the founder/owner of a software company.

**CATERINA BELVEDERE** has been active in the "Palisades," or "Hudson River," poetry scene since 1996. She wears many hats, as writer and performer, mother, healer, teacher, and artist. Born to Italian parents, Caterina's love of life through the spoken word, music, dance, art, opera, architecture, and cooking are, in her words, "a natural inheritance." As an adult, her tai chi and Taoist studies have sparked a keen interest in Chinese poetry, particularly the works of Lao Tzu and Chuang Zu. Diverse poetic influences also include Walt Whitman, Giuseppe Ungheretti, Emily Dickinson, and Gabriele D'Annunzio, among others. Caterina's poetry has appeared in *The Rift Arts Forum Publication* and *Sensations Magazine*. She is a practicing shiatsu therapist and energy healer. Current projects include a cookbook of old Calabrian recipes and a collection of healing remedies handed down in her family. Ms. Belvedere lives in Bergen County, New Jersey, with her two daughters and a Maltese pup named Snowball, aka "Beni."

**JOHN CHORAZY** was the editor of *The Ever Dancing Muse* from 1993 to 2003. He has facilitated writing workshops as a teaching artist for the Artists in Education program sponsored by the New Jersey State Council on the Arts, as well as the New Jersey Music Society's Literacy Through Jazz program. His poems have appeared widely in literary journals and the Small Press. *Poems for Lunch*, an assortment of short works, was published in 1997 by Who Who Who Publishing. His collection *Walking Through My Father's Garden* won the William Paterson University English Department Chapbook Competition and was published in 2006 by WPU. He has read his work at various venues

in the tristate area and has coordinated events in New Jersey including a monthly literary series at The Montclair Public Library, as well as one at The Mug and the Bean in Rutherford. A resident of Montclair, he presently teaches English Literature at Pequannock Township High School in New Jersey.

**CATHY CIMILLO CAVALLONE** is a full-time English teacher and mom who enjoys creative writing during rare moments of free time, reading fiction and researching Victorian architecture throughout New Jersey. Her poetry has appeared in *Four Walls*, *Sensations Magazine*, and *The Rift Arts Forum Publication*. She has been featured at the North Jersey Literary Series and other tristate venues, and she participated in John Salacan's *The Muse Pool*, a multimedia theatrical production of music and poetry staged in 2002, starring eleven poets whose work appears in this anthology. Cathy has also been a Civil War reenactor for the last six years with her husband, George, and son, Michael.

**K. ELIZABETH COSTA** (formerly K. Elizabeth Sieradzki) has independently published two chapbooks, *Angels with One Wing* and *Paths of Desire*. Her work has appeared in several literary publications, including *Sensations Magazine*, *The Ever Dancing Muse*, and *The Plowman*. Her poem "No One Is Innocent" was featured on WFDU-FM's radio broadcast of *The Poet's Corner*. She has performed her original work in venues ranging from book stores and cafés to small theaters. She is grateful to her husband, Michael, and daughter, Olivia Grace, for their support and inspiration, and owes them her eternal love and devotion.

**AZA DERMAN** is a New York eclectic, avid reader, and history buff. She recently opened an eBay store called Azantia Jewelry ([www.ebay.com/azantia\\_jewelry](http://www.ebay.com/azantia_jewelry)), launching her own unique product line. She plans to pursue her twin passions of forensic anthropology and Scandinavian archaeology. Currently, Aza resides in Westchester, New York, and nurtures an incurable addiction to poetry.

**TOM FITZPATRICK** lives in Pompton Lakes, New Jersey, where he wanders the nearby woodlands in search of subject matter for his art work. A graduate of William Paterson and New York Universities, he

taught art in the Teaneck public schools for thirty years. He has illustrated several archaeological books and numerous other publications, and has exhibited locally.

**ESTRELLA GABRIE-GARCIA** came to the United States from Honduras in 1954, initially settling in Brooklyn but moving to New Jersey in 1961. She was a member of POET-X, a five-person poetry performance group founded in 1997; the other four members were Joel Allegretti, Eddie Rivera, Joseph Andrew Sapia, and John J. Trause, all of whom appear in this anthology. Estrella is an actress and poet, and has appeared in several films. She also has an interest in photography, and one of her photos was used on the cover of *Sensations Magazine*, Issue 19: “Millennium Turning” (1999). Estrella’s poetry has appeared in *Sensations Magazine* and in *The Rift Arts Forum Publication*.

**DAVIDSON GARRETT** is a native of Shreveport, Louisiana, currently living in New York City. He is the author of a collection of poetry and prose entitled *King Lear of the Taxi* (Advent Purple Press, 2006). In August 2009, he was featured in Joel Allegretti’s tribute to Leonard Cohen: *You Know Who I Am*, at the Cornelia Street Café in Greenwich Village. He trained for the theater at the American Academy of Dramatic Arts and is a member of Screen Actor’s Guild, Actor’s Equity, and AFTRA. Davidson has appeared on television in such shows as *All My Children*, *The Guiding Light*, *As the World Turns*, *Law and Order*, *Oz*, and *Spin City*. As a stage actor, he has toured extensively in the United States and Europe, and has performed in verse dramas by T. S. Eliot, W. H. Auden, and William Shakespeare. In March of 2008, Flashgun Films of Great Britain released a short film entitled *Taxi Driver*, narrated by Davidson and using poems from his collection. It was screened at two international film festivals that year (Google *King Lear of the Taxi* on YouTube). His literary works have appeared in *The New York Times*, *Xavier Review* (New Orleans), *The Episcopal New Yorker*, *Sensations Magazine*, *The Unknown Writer*, and in the *Friends For Life* and *The Wild Angels* anthologies. Online, his poetry can be found at [www.poetryvlog.com](http://www.poetryvlog.com), [www.BigCityLit.com](http://www.BigCityLit.com), and on the website of the Beat Museum in San Francisco. To subsidize his art, Davidson has been a New York City taxi driver for over thirty years.

**JONATHAN HALL** is a poet, fiction writer, and critic originally from Rochester, New York. He completed an MFA in fiction writing and a PhD in American Literature at Cornell University. His work has appeared in *White Pelican Review*, *Poetry Motel*, *Another Chicago Magazine*, *Sou'wester*, *The Hawaii Review*, and elsewhere, and he has been nominated for a Pushcart Prize. Hall currently teaches English at York College, City University of New York.

**PATRICK HAMMER, JR.** is co-facilitator for the Wild Angles Poets and Writers Group based at the Cathedral Church of Saint John the Divine in Manhattan. He is also a workshop leader for the Fort Lee-based Main Street Poets and Writers, and is moderator for the Page Turners Book Discussion Group, also in Fort Lee. His work has appeared widely in small press publications both in the United States and Europe. He has published a number of chapbooks.

**GEORGE HARVILLA** is a recipient of the Hemingway Prize for Literature, winner of the U.S. Masters Poetry Prize, and two-time recipient of the *Atlanta Review's* International Merit Award for Poetry. He was featured at the Geraldine Dodge Poetry Festival in "Poets Among Us" in 2002. A classically-trained percussionist, George has played with the Dresden Opera and the Bolshoi Ballet. In the non-classical realm, he has performed/toured with Tito Puente, Mongo Santamaria, Billy Preston, Sun Ra, Trilok Gurtu, Harry Chapin, the Original Gipsy Kings, Crowded House, the Divinyls, and Midnight Oil, among others. His body of work includes soundtracks for the films *Gettysburg*, *A Midnight Clear*, *Gangs of New York*, and *Last of the Mohicans*. Additionally, he is the primary lyricist for the English version of Janek Ledecky's international hit musical *Hamlet: The Rock Opera* and lyricist for Ondrej Soukup's modern opera *Joan of Arc*.

**JOSH HUMPHREY** spends his days as a librarian and archivist, a job in which he finds much poetry. He was runner-up in the Allen Ginsberg Poetry Competition for 2009, and has received honorable mention for this award on three previous occasions. He is a past recipient of the Merlyn Girard Poetry Prize, and he won the America at War Poetry Contest sponsored by *Sensations Magazine* in 2004. He was one of the inaugural co-features for the William Carlos Williams



Poetry Cooperative in Rutherford, New Jersey (January 2006). Some of his work will appear in an upcoming issue of *Paterson Literary Review*, and his poems have been published in *The New Plains Review*, *The Talking River Review*, *The Journal of New Jersey Poets*, *Lips*, *The Rift*, *Soundings East*, *Lullwater Review*, *Sensations*, *Mentil Soup*, and *Ibbetson Street*. Josh has lived all his life in and around Kearny, New Jersey — his involvement with local history and legend has greatly inspired his writing. He is currently enjoying his one-year-old daughter, Cate, with his lovely wife, Jen, and poodle, Pancho.

**PETER JAWAROWSKI** first thinks of himself as an explorer of possibilities. He finds excitement in many physical activities — racing motocross, practicing tai chi, cross-country running, skiing, skating, as well as traveling throughout Europe, North America, China, and India — he has literally been around the world once! Back home, in the latter 1990s, Peter was the production director for *The Rift Arts Forum Publication*. In this capacity, he co-hosted a number of poetry readings and special performance events in New Jersey and New York, and was influential in the Palisades/Hudson River poetry movement. Peter helped organize *Rift*-sponsored monthly literary series, among them “A Drop of Wisdom,” “The Creative Circle,” and the “Dead Poets Revival,” at Marc’s Cheesecake and Café Local (both in Englewood, New Jersey), and Borders Books (Paramus, New Jersey). Other *Rift* reading series were held in places like Archetypus (Edgewater, New Jersey), Café Eclectic (Montclair, New Jersey), and Spesso Lounge (North Bergen, New Jersey). Peter helped organize special arts events at the Hudson Grill and at CBGB’s Gallery (both in NYC). He took part in live and recorded radio recitals, ran open readings at the Dodge Poetry Festival, and initiated several mixed-media art exhibitions encompassing a variety of artists in Jersey City and New York City. Peter was also often seen in Philadelphia performing and reciting poetry at literary and creative art events at The Raven Café, The Black Abbey, The Loop Lounge, The Black Banana, The Middle East, and The Painted Bride Arts Center, among others. His poetry has appeared in *The Rift Arts Forum Publication*, *Hipnosis*, and *Sensations Magazine*.

**THOMAS D. JONES** is the author of two books of poetry: *Voices from the Void* (2009) and *Genealogy X* (2000), both published by The Poets Press. In 2008, his poetry appeared in the online journal *Language and Culture*, and in *Appleseeds*, an anthology about the American experience. Other online poetry publications include *Raintiger* ([www.raintiger.com](http://www.raintiger.com)), *The Surface*, *Scrivener's Pen*, and *Write-Away*. Tom's work has also been published in numerous print magazines throughout the United States. Originally from northern New Jersey, Tom has a BA in English from Seton Hall University and an MA in publishing studies from New York University. After twelve years in the publishing field, he changed careers and now teaches ESL and computer skills at adult education programs in Rhode Island. He was the founder, publisher, and poetry editor of the journal *Wings* ([www.geocities.com/wings2002](http://www.geocities.com/wings2002)) through 2002.

**DENISE LA NEVE** writes both poetry and fiction. Her work has most recently appeared in the international journal *The Istanbul Literary Review* ([www.irlmagazine.net](http://www.irlmagazine.net)) January 2010), and in the 2008 and 2009 issues of *The Rutherford Red Wheelbarrow Anthology*, along with unpublished work by William Carlos Williams, among others. Denise won *Sensations Magazine's* Best Newcomer contest for poetry (2005), as well as *Sensations's* short story contest (2007). She has co-authored several poems with her husband, Paul Nash, creating a new and distinct voice. Denise co-hosts the longstanding North Jersey Literary Series in Teaneck, New Jersey, which features poets and musicians. She has herself been featured at numerous poetry venues. Denise danced with Kleber DeFritas in several performances of *Night and Day*, based on original choreography by Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers, and she appeared in John Salacan's *The Muse Pool* (2002) as both poet and dancer. She participated in two photographic exhibitions of tristate poets entitled *Inside Out* (2006 and 2007).

**RICHARD LORANGER** is a writer, performer, visual artist, and all-around squeaky wheel, currently residing in Oakland, California. He is the author of *Poems for Teeth* (We Press, 2005), which Bob Holman calls "one of the most extraordinary and virtuosic poetic feats since Francis Ponge took on *Soap*," as well as *The Orange Book* and eight chapbooks, including *Hello Poems* and *The Day Was Warm and Blue*.

Recent work can be found in *Correspondence 1 & 2* and *CLWN WR 42 & 45*, and the upcoming *Uphook Press Anthology #2*. He wants only a calm moment.

**ROY LUCIANNA** is a published poet, musician, and exhibited painter/sculptor. He has been writing seriously for fifteen years, was an active member of the “Palisades Poetry Movement” in the 1990’s, and an editor for *The Rift Arts Forum Publication* from 1996-1999. He also contributed poetry and artwork for *The Rift*, and hosted the Rift-sponsored “Dead Poets Revival” series, comparing the lives and work of two historical poets each month. Roy and ten other poets who appear in these pages performed in *The Muse Pool*, a multimedia theatrical production of music and poetry staged by John Salacan in 2002. Roy is self-employed as a teacher and practitioner of Taiji Quan, Qigong, meditation, qi healing, Taoist arts, astrology, and shamanic counseling. He teaches courses and lectures on topics from poetry to mythology to Chinese brush painting, sculpture, and art history. At the core, he is a Taoist: “all streams, all activities, flow as one with the Tao — the source of creativity.” Please visit his website at <http://roylucianna.info>.

**BRANT LYON** writes poetry, fiction, reviews, and music. His poems have appeared in *Rattle*, *Lullwater Review*, *Medicinal Purposes*, *BigCityLit*, and other literary journals. Select works have been anthologized in *The Company We Keep* (Poet Warrior 2003), *A Cautionary Tale* (Uphook Press 2008), and *The Rutherford Red Wheelbarrow Anthology* (2008 and 2009). Brant has put together a collection entitled *Your Infidel Eyes* (Poets Wear Prada 2006), now in its second printing, based on his love affair with oasis life in Egypt. He hosts and curates the poetry and music series Hydrogen Jukebox in New York City. His “poemusic” has been recorded on several CDs, including *Beauty Keeps Laying Its Sharp Knife Against Me*. Brant is co-editor at Uphook Press. He grew up in New Jersey, but now lives in Brooklyn.

**DAVID MESSINEO** — poet, performance artist, poetry editor, and publisher — has been active in the New Jersey poetry scene across five decades from 1979, when he was poetry editor of a high school literary magazine, to 2010, with his role as one of five editors for this anthology.

During this time, his creation of and volunteer service to *Sensations Magazine* since 1987 earned him first place in the national American Literary Magazine Awards on two occasions. Then, in 2009 he received the distinguished Jefferson Award for Public Service — one of only 26 individuals from the State of New Jersey to be so honored. Most recently, all 50 *Sensations Magazine* issues and all of his poetry books were nationally archived in the research/reading collections of the Library of Congress. His poetry has been published in numerous literary journals and national magazines on four continents, and in seven books (*First Impressions*, *Suburban Gothic*, *A Taste of Italy*, *A Taste of Brazil*, *Restoration*, *Formal*, and the still-in-progress *Historiopticon*). In order to provide poets with opportunities to share their work in public, he has hosted over 700 events in 48 states across 24 years. He wrote and contributed his recent poem “Dreams” specifically for this anthology.

**GENE MYERS** is a poet and journalist living in northern New Jersey. He writes a syndicated weekly column, and his essays and interviews appear in more than 40 newspapers. Gene is the features editor at *Suburban Trends*, a newspaper, and co-editor of *Now Culture*, a literary magazine. He was recently awarded First Place in Arts and Entertainment Writing by the New Jersey Press Association. His poems have been published in *Word Salad*, *Tight*, *Graven Images*, *Candlestones*, *E-verse Radio*, the *Haiku and Twitter Poems* chapbook by World Class Poetry Blog, *The Rutherford Red Wheelbarrow Anthology*, and *Double Room*, among others.

**PAUL NASH** is a naturalist and writer whose works have included narrative fiction and poetry as well as scientific and historical articles. He tries to maintain a balance between his scientific studies and his literary endeavors. Paul conducts laboratory and field research on ancient organisms preserved in amber and sedimentary rock at the American Museum of Natural History in New York City. He co-hosts the longstanding North Jersey Literary Series founded by members of The Rift Arts Forum in 1997 and currently held monthly in Teaneck, New Jersey. He is on the board of directors of The Poet’s Press and is a fiction editor for *Sensations Magazine*. Paul was senior editor of *The Rift Arts Forum Publication* from 1996 to 1999. One of Paul’s short stories

has just appeared in the international journal *The Istanbul Literary Review* ([www.ilrmagazine.net](http://www.ilrmagazine.net)) in January 2010; two of his poems were published in *The Rutherford Red Wheelbarrow Anthology* (September 2009). Paul recently participated in two international scientific expeditions to Gujarat, India (January 2009 and 2010), where he and his colleagues excavated 52-million-year-old amber. Paul is currently authoring several scientific papers based on ongoing research. He is past-president of the New York Paleontological Society.

**REBECCA PIERSON** is a student at the Academy of Art University in San Francisco, pursuing a BFA with emphasis on storyboarding animation. She plans to obtain a masters in fine arts, concentrating on sculpture and oil painting.

**MARIANNE POLOSKEY** is a widely published poet whose work has appeared in such literary journals as *North American Review*, *Louisiana Literature*, *Paterson Literary Review*, *Connecticut Review*, *Phi Kappa Phi Forum*, *Potomac Review*, *River Oak Review*, *SLANT*, *Palo Alto Review*, *Eclipse*, *The Spoon River Poetry Review*, *Phoebe*, and *Visions International*. She has had dozens of her poems published in *The Christian Science Monitor*. Her work is also in several anthologies, including *Inside Grief*; *Rough Places Plain: Poems of the Mountains*; *American Diaspora*; *Red, White & Blues*; and *Stories from Where We Live: The South Atlantic Coast and Piedmont — A Literary Field Guide*. She has written poetry book reviews for *Valparaiso Poetry Review*, *Smartishpace.com*, *Red Rock Review*, and *Rattle*. Her first collection is titled *Climbing the Shadows*.

**S. GILI POST** has roots in the post-punk psychedelic music scene that was centered in NYC's Lower East Side in the 1980s and '90s. She has written and performed on a number of recordings produced by Music Maniac Records. Since the latter 1990s, Suzanne has lent her voice to poetry and playwriting. She performed off Broadway with other "Rifters" at the Red Room, and continues to stage performances and recitals, and to host poetry readings at venues such as *Wanted — Poets Dead and Alive* and the *Underground Railroad Museum Poetry Salon*, both in Burlington County, New Jersey. Her work has been published recently in *Sensations Magazine*, *The Haddonfield Anthology*, and online by *The Zen Society*. Suzanne is currently researching and composing

ritual ceremonies for women — paying homage to her Maltese heritage. Along with Suzanne’s professional and personal interests in literature and the arts, she now enjoys the meditative transport of simple things like petting zoos and firefly hatchings.

**DANIEL QUINN** directed the U.S. premieres of master British playwright Edward Bond’s *Derek* — staged at New York’s Lincoln Center — and *Stone*. He co-produced the OBIE award-winning production of *Diary of a Madman* at the Irish Arts Center, where his work also included Graham Reid’s *Remembrance* and Janet Noble’s *Away Alone*. While at the Park Performing Arts Center, Mr. Quinn produced *The Passion Play* with Eric Hafen, which received national and international attention for the casting of an African American actor in the role of Jesus. During his tenure as artistic director of the New Stagecraft Company, he received a proclamation from the Manhattan Borough President for the company’s award-winning and challenging works and world premieres. In 2000, Mr. Quinn was invited by New York’s Department of French Cultural Services to establish a cultural exchange between Lyons and its sister city, Paterson, New Jersey. Mr. Quinn was also a guest of Aer Lingus at the Dublin Theatre Festival in Ireland. He was invited by Claudio Abbado to be a directing assistant at the Teatro alla Scala in Milan, Italy. Mr. Quinn is a member of the Society of Stage Directors and Choreographers, and he is the author of *Exits and Entrances: Producing Off-Broadway, Opera & Beyond: 1981-2006* (2007) and *Organized Labor* (2004), a poetry collection.

**JAMIE MCNEELY QUIRK** writes, edits, and knits near Princeton, New Jersey, where she works at both a private school and a public library. Her poems have appeared in *The Macguffin*, *Journal of New Jersey Poets*, and *The Lyric*, among other places. For four years (1999-2003) she hosted a monthly open mic series in Paramus and led workshops through various adult education programs in northern New Jersey. Having earned an MFA from Sarah Lawrence College, she is currently pursuing a master’s degree in library and information science at Rutgers University.

**SUSANNA RICH** is a 2009 Emmy Award nominee for poetry she wrote and voice-overed for Craig Lindvahl's documentary *Cobb Field: A Day at the Ballpark*. She is the author of two poetry chapbooks, *Television Daddy* and *The Drive Home* (both from Finishing Line Press). Susanna was the 2008 Featured Poet of *Darkling Literary Magazine*. She is a Fulbright Fellow in Creative Writing, Collegium Budapest Fellow, and Pushcart Prize nominee. An internationally published poet and prose writer with hundreds of credits, Susanna is currently touring her "one-woman audience-interactive poetry experiences": *Television Daddy* and *The Drive Home*. Her work has appeared in such journals as *The Evansville Review*, *Feminist Studies*, *Nimrod*, *Phoebe* (both Fairfax and Oneonta), *English Journal*, *Pilvax* (Budapest), *Porcupine*, *Southern California Review*, *Sensations Magazine*, *Tiferet*, *Urthona* (UK), *Willow Review*, *LIPS*, and *Zone 3*. She is Professor of English and Distinguished Teacher at Kean University in New Jersey, where she teaches courses on Emily Dickinson, William Blake, and twentieth-century women poets. Please visit her at [www.susannarich.com](http://www.susannarich.com).

**EDDIE RIVERA** was born and raised in Paterson, New Jersey. He started writing at the age of 20, and has published a chapbook, *My Sentiments Exactly* (1996). Eddie was a member of POET-X, a five-person poetry performance group that was initiated in 1997 and active for several years. He and the other four members of the group all appear in this anthology. He has been a featured poet in many New Jersey venues, including the *North Jersey Literary Series* (Teaneck, New Jersey), the Rochelle Park Library poetry series, *Borders* (Wayne and Paramus, New Jersey), and the Specialty Cup (Ridgewood, New Jersey). His poetry has appeared in *Sensations Magazine* and *The Rift Arts Forum Publication*. In 2002, Eddie was also one of 11 poets who performed in John Salacan's *The Muse Pool*, a multimedia theatrical production of music and poetry. Eddie has been involved in graphic arts his whole life, and he was technical assistant on Daniel P. Quinn's book, *Exits and Entrances*. His reading tastes are primarily in Greek literature, Shakespeare, and fantasy/science fiction. You can find a poem about Eddie's long-lived-in Paterson apartment in Brett Rutherford's book, *Whip-poorwill Road: The Supernatural Poems*. Recently, Eddie became a father to a baby boy.

**DENISE RUE** has been published in *Poet Lore*, *Paterson Literary Review*, *Inkwell*, *Alimentum*, and *Miller's Pond*, among other literary journals. She received her MFA in poetry from Sarah Lawrence College in 2003 and has taught poetry in schools, nursing homes, and a women's prison. She is a two-time finalist in the Allen Ginsberg Poetry Contest and was the 2005 Judson Jerome Poetry Scholarship recipient, which enabled her to attend the Antioch Writer's Conference. She works as a clinical hypnotherapist and as a hospice volunteer.

**C. D. RUSSELL's** work has been published in several scientific journals as well as *The Handbook of Obesity* and *The Panhandler*. She lives in the rurals of New Jersey with a poet husband and a champagne schnoodle.

**BRETT RUTHERFORD** is a poet, novelist, and playwright, with a focus on the Gothic and neo-Romantic. He has lived and worked in Weehawken, New Jersey; New York City; and Providence, Rhode Island. During his Manhattan years, he founded The Poet's Press to promote the work of lesser-known but deserving poets. The press is active in print and online, with close to 200 publications to date ([www.poetspress.org](http://www.poetspress.org)). His play *Night Gaunts*, about horror writer H. P. Lovecraft, was broadcast as a radio drama in Boston in 2005, and then staged in Heidelberg, Germany, in 2006. His verse play, *Carlota, Empress of Mexico*, was given a staged reading by The Writers' Circle of Providence in the summer of 2007. His most recent books of poetry are *Things Seen in Graveyards* (2007), *Doctor Jones and Other Terrors* (2008) and *Twilight of the Dictators* (2009). During a "back to school" adventure, he completed his master's degree in English at the University of Rhode Island in 2007. He works for the university in distance learning and teaches literature in the Women's Studies Department.

**JOHN SALACAN** was actively involved in the "Palisades," or "Hudson River," poetry scene during the 1990s and early 2000s. His poems have appeared in such magazines as *The Ever Dancing Muse*, *The Rift*, and *Sensations*. He has two poetry collections, *Season of Saxophones and Sea Nymphs* and *Conversations with the Corn God*. He is also an artist and has had many of his illustrations and cartoons published. For the last 35 years, John has been a musical composer, writing art songs,



violin concertos, symphonies, and tone poems. In 1980 he won a grant from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts for his ballet *The Hunt of the Unicorn*. His *Watching Suite* was choreographed and performed by Barbara Sheehey's Park Dance Company in Rahway, New Jersey. In 2002 he staged a multimedia theatrical production of music and poetry entitled *The Muse Pool*, featuring 11 poets who appear in this anthology. John also wrote most of the music for this performance. In 2006, he moved to the Nevada desert with his wife, Aysa, and is currently a book conservator, binder, and publisher.

**JOSEPH ANDREW SAPIA** was a member of the poetry performance group POET-X and an active participant in the Palisades Poetry Movement of the late 1990s. His work has been published in the *Paterson Literary Review*, the Ocean County Artist Guild's annual journal *Coffeehouse Poems*, *The Rift*, and *Sensations Magazine*. He staged events through the Black Box Theater in Asbury Park, New Jersey — this organization sponsored his Beat Generation spoof reading, known as “The Beat Off,” which took place annually between 2000 and 2004. Sapia has appeared as a featured poet at numerous venues in the tristate area. He is also the author of the 2002 book *The Complete Guide to Lost Pet Prevention and Recovery*, co-authored with Patricia Sapia, published by El Jebel Press.

**S. THOMAS SUMMERS** is a teacher of literature and writing in northern New Jersey, at both Wayne Hills High School and Passaic County Community College (in Wanaque). He is the author of two chapbooks: *Death Settled Well* (Shadows Ink Publications, 2006) and *Rather, It Should Shine* (Pudding House Press, 2007). His work has appeared in *Umbrella*, *Triggerfish*, *Pedestal Magazine*, *The Oak Bend Review*, and other print and electronic journals. His poem “A Fall from Grace” was recently awarded the InterBoard Poetry Community poem of the year. award Mr. Summers' work can be read online at [www.thelintinmypocket.wordpress.com](http://www.thelintinmypocket.wordpress.com).

**JOHN J. TRAUSE** is director of the Oradell Public Library, and past director of the Wood-Ridge Memorial Library (both in New Jersey). He has two chapbooks: *Seriously Serial* (Poets Wear Prada, 2007), and *Latter-Day Litany* (Éditions élastiques, 1996). In 2009 John was nomi-

nated for a Pushcart Prize. His translations, poetry and visual work appear or are forthcoming in numerous publications, including *Sensations Magazine*, *Cover*, *The Rift*, *Xavier Review*, *The Alternative News*, *Radix*, *Now Culture*, *The Rutherford Red Wheelbarrow Anthology*, *The Journal of New Jersey Poets*, *Lips*, *Offerta Speciale*, *Plainsongs*, *Brevitas*, and *Sulphur River Review*, among others, and in online journals like *Sidereality*, *Pedestal Magazine*, and *ditch*. His work has also appeared in the artists' periodical *Crossings* (Brooklyn Waterfront Artists Coalition). *Latter-Day Litany & Other Pseudo-Hagiographica* (the stage version of his chapbook) has been produced off-off Broadway and elsewhere by Daniel P. Quinn since 1998. In both 2005 and 2006, he was chosen along with Jerome Rothenberg to participate in the Visible Word exhibition and poetry reading (Stevens Institute, Hoboken, New Jersey), which paired poets and visual artists. In 2005 he co-founded the William Carlos Williams Poetry Cooperative in Rutherford, New Jersey, where he serves as programmer and host. For the sake of art, Mr. Trause hung naked for one whole month in the summer of 2007 on the Art Wall of the Bowery Poetry Club. At various times in his life he has been mistaken for being a priest, a policeman, a pimp, and a pornographer. He is none of these.

**DORIS UMBERS** is the founder and editor of *Bluestone Quarry Press*, a broadside publication; she was managing editor of *Etruscan Press* from 2008 to 2010, the editor of *Harpur Palate* from 2003 to 2005, and a copy editor for *Global Scholarly Publications* from 2002 to 2004. Her work has appeared in various literary journals, notably in *Columbia: A Journal of Literature and Art*, *Green Mountains Review*, and the *Paterson Literary Review*. Her poetry has won numerous awards, including finalist in the John Ciardi Prize for Poetry First Book Award (2009), semifinalist in the Crab Orchard Series in Poetry First Book Award (2009), finalist for the Carolyn Kizer Prize in Poetry (2006), second place in the Allen Ginsberg Poetry Award (2005), and winner of the Academy of American Poets University Prize (2003 and 2004), among others. She has a PhD in English and teaches at Empire State College, New York.

**GALEN WARDEN** is both poet and artist. She was raised on a slim budget by a single mother who was active in the civil rights movement of the 1960s. She spent vacations with her father in the Connecticut

suburbs — complete with yacht clubs and sailing trips. This dual citizenship of privilege and humble means provided Galen with a rare opportunity to develop an informed opinion of the world and her place in it. She has been both an artist and a poet all of her life. From the bonfires of adolescence through the maze of raising six children, and now into the soaring flights of real grown-up adventures, poetry has been a constant vehicle for catharsis, communication, and celebration. Galen has been honored to be published internationally, nationally, and locally in various anthologies, literary magazines, and journals, including *Sensations Magazine*, *Lips*, *The Paterson Literary Review*, *The Ever Dancing Muse*, *The Book of Hope*, *The World Book of Healing*, and most recently *Get Satisfied: How 20 People Like You Found the Satisfaction of Enough*. She has also appeared in several small chapbooks, both hers and others'— her latest book, *Invoking Eros*, is a collection of erotic and semi-erotic poems and paintings. Galen resides in Rockaway, New Jersey, and at the time of this publication, is a marketing manager for LexisNexis.

**DONALD ZIRILLI** was born on an island. He is the editor of *Now Culture*. His poetry has been published by *Art Times*, *Iota*, *Anti-*, *Specs Journal*, and *River Styx*, among other places.

## ART CREDITS

Cover art: Roy Lucianna: *River View from Edgewater* (1989). Wood cut, 6" x 8"

Title-page and section-title pages: Roy Lucianna: *Apollonian Sun Self* (2000). Sealing wax, deerskin, sawblade, 10" diam.

Page 14: Tom Fitzpatrick: *The First Four* (1988). Ink drawing on illustration board.

Page 89: Rebecca Pierson *Portrait of Grandfather*. Charcoal.

Pages 134-135. Galen Warden. Pencil drawings.

Typography, cover design and book design by Brett Rutherford.