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ONE TRICK PONY REVIEW

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Apology to My Mother

Charlotte Pence

Once, when my mother tried
to apologize for my rotten start—
for the necessity of locked bedroom
doors, for the necessity of hiding

spare cash and inexpensive jewelry,
her mind returned to the frustration
of a small child. Whole essays
trapped behind simple sentences:

I know you needed more. I gave all I had.
She was huffing into her wheelchair,
transitioning from the car. The talk
had been about lilies of the valley

lining the drive. The old sugar maple
quivered over us, and I stood close,
but busy: corralling the dog, moving
recycling off the walk. So, she tried again,

her words blurring into that familiar story
of adults walking by too fast; their legs—
scissor cuts of blue—snapping by
the toddler hidden under the table.

She has crawled in backwards, not
thinking of the exit. Drawn
to the maze of wood, the beckoning
of a silver fleck just out of reach—

And now, a wall is at her back, some
voiced demand is out there. She is more
alone with each maneuver. The world
dim yet decorated with light patterned

by a lace tablecloth, the stitched holes

like stars. She's looking through these stars,
sitting beside the sky, beside the earth,
trying to reach, to grasp the brightest

blue, the brightest voice that more often
soothes than not. All the while, nothing
will stop moving, moving, moving—
Closer or farther away, she cannot say.

To Become Anecdote

Charlotte Pence

At first, Craig thought the girl
at the pub was hot. Chipped pink
polish and fast cheeseburger eater.
She had stories, parents,

foreign exchange to Paris.
Her words, though, tended toward
darkness in her crotch. Always a line
between these holes, these ins

and outs, a fact she debated
and ignored with the next beer.
They went home together,
and when she told Craig to stop,

he did stop, but not before she
came and pissed his bed, the cotton,
a drip, her name, now gone.
Every time, is what she cried. Every

time. His best sheets. His bad
luck. That was the point.

Yard Sale

Meg Eden

We covered the untouchables with tarps
and let the rain batter their skin. I hope
that their forms are preserved for selling.

My uncle loaded them from his van
into the back of our truck. He told me,
get them out of my house.

I understand his infection. I, too,
find myself, sorting out my longings
into visible hierarchies.

These childhoods have passed; no longer
are we bound by honeymoons. I will not touch
what is left, I will not look at the silhouettes

they form in their blanketed silence.

if I bury myself
into the earth, and
no one finds me, can that
mean I'm free from living?
even the flowers are becoming
brown, and as I walked
around the work building, I thought about hanging myself
from the flag post—
(I know we're not
supposed to talk about
things like that) but what
about the nights that are still
cold, but the walls are warm?
I rub my eyes but nothing
comes out: no fears,
no recollections. Every night,
I lay down in one piece.

New Twitter Peak

Tim Kahl

new twitter peak
after Year of Dragon
resonating with electorate

paint not dry on vote
money repositioned
to make the playoffs

starlet investor sighs
nothing comes between
me and my Benjamins

funds from televising
partisan food fights
sought as alternative to taxes

rebels attack Pinocchio myth
develop dance system
with broken glass and rainbow skirts

graffiti criminal
needing validation
forced to spend
week on computer

Ninety Percent of Doors

Tim Kahl

tired brain of former senator
seeks comfort in Muslim prayers
spoken daily in prison unit

liars on gun applications
reunited with séance operators

attendants at bodegas clinicas
kiss image of high court judge
woven into carpet

human rights record of gunslingers
compared to
rumors of decline in Atlantis

downtime in shuttle
used to service pistol
results in
accidental shooting
of franchise owners

society's takers give back
how-to film on hiding assets
film studio estimates
ninety percent of doors still unlocked

A Scottish Love Affair in Five Poems

Jessica Cole

The Radiance of Dailiness

There are slight movements for preservation,
not hope. 9, Barclay Terrace, top flat right,
Bruntsfield Links, my only incantation
besides *I love you*, as swords of sunlight
clatter through the slit window, blue-blotched curtains.

On the Links, swirl-flushed leaves make up patterns
for more of the same unrequitedness.

(One thing that contains desire is dailiness.)

I walk for hours. I practice dalliance;
take pictures of signs: CLIMB-RESISTANT PAINT.

The new edge made mundane, a radiance
so sheared
 it could be anyone, a place.

Are you able to unimagine such
a thing even when you see it so much?

Stigmas

Jessica Cole

Do daisies have stigmas,
she asked, like orchids?

They'd driven to a place—
Farrington Gurney? Hinton Blewitt?—
really just a stretch of grass
along a busy road
the width of two single beds
where his favorites, *Pyramidals*, grew:
their petals a pointed cluster of ruby tears,
the color of her mouth most days.
Asphodel daisies sprouting up among them
jostled to get closer.

She caressed as many as she could,
called them Sweetheart, Darling.
Everything loves to be stroked
and cooed to, she explained.

He cocked his eyebrow as only an Englishman can.
That's the most American I've ever heard you sound.

She jerked her hand from the tiny fuchsia flames.
Maybe her fingertips' contour lines would transfer,
scare insects away...

At night, she searches his skin for old signs,
bites him as hard as she can, yanks
out fine hairs on his shoulders,
cuts his curls close to the skull.

She tells him she envies her friend's first love affair,
that there are no sweet ghosts to measure it against.

In fields they fall to their knees
and "make out" – a phrase he loves.
He shows her how to distinguish grasses,

whispers their Latin names into her collarbone,
one palm curved around each breast.

She loves the things he knows,
which may or may not be the same as loving him.

Besides identifying birdsong and dragonflies,
he gives her an antique key left in Abernethy Forest,
a birdfeeder he'd crafted from a silver birch log,
apologetic roses, milky tea in the mornings.
He says she never makes it hot enough.

How do bees know which species match up?
Are they aware
which of the possible powders
is sticking to them
when they next alight?

No.
But his hand grasped hers
tighter and tighter
each time they raced
across the road's blind curves.

The May Princess

Jessica Cole

We did get there
in the end
(didn't we?)

There
love's best substitute,
love's best vessel.

The ferry's 'ship' wheel had
H-Y-D-R-O-S-L-A-V-E
tattooed around its rim.
I pointed: That's us!

Across the narrow deck:
a sour husband chiding his sleeveless
wife—even though it was May
I was chilly in my jacket.
A pair of 60-ish lovebirds,
glamorous in tweeds,
cuddling the entire hour ride.
She wore a chic shawl;
her arms trapped inside
made wings.

And the large woman in sloppy black,
raving about her brown-framed
Gucci sunglasses in American twang.
In gold-spangled script her T-shirt stated:
"The Search for Excellence Ends Here."

(sleeves of spray brushed by, haloed hair *there, there*)

I was staring – clenched in thought –
at a sea so blue it must hold some sort of truth
when your knee pecked my sputtering hem.

You just missed the seals. Everyone
was on the other side of the boat except you.

(puffins—“pocket-sized”—Anna said,
whizzed by, thrilling as bullets)

I jammed my waist into the rail, scratched
my nails against its red paint,
holding nothing by an edge.
I laughed, shook my head.
I was just thinking that I can never make
anything up!

Terns, razorbills, shags (I took a photo of you taking a photo:
Closest I've been
to a shag in a long time.)

guillemots, kittiwakes, 55,000 pairs
of puffins, gannets galore, a well-placed
kestrel, tiger-striped...
bunched into messy bouquets
tossed over the lacy shoulders
of clouds into a slaving crowd.

The Gucci woman shrieked:
They look like insects, a swarm! (There!There!There!)

I shot her a stern glance, then looked back
at the puckering sky, its stuffing coming undone,
wingbeats like unraveling stitches.

Sometimes: it is the perfectly
obvious, not approximated
mystery that rules the day.

She rose, proud,
as our bow nuzzled the Isle's dock.
Her sunglasses perched on her head
like a crown.

The Burnt-Tip Orchid

Jessica Cole

Ask her if she regrets it.

I was dreaming
when the alarm went off:
a woman started a forest fire
by burning her love letters.

(We magnify details when they are wildly disparate;
we pour hot light through glass to expose scorched bones.)

A year of pining on paper to feel
the osprey-span of his shoulders uncrease
when he reached over (the ocean) for me.
It all seemed natural.

Ask her if dreaming hurts.

The South of England is home for many orchids: Military,
Common-Spotted, Pyramidal, Monkey, Lizard-Tongue...
Burnt-Tips (*Orchis ustulata*) are very rare. Once in a blue moon they flare
up
in Wiltshire. Effervescent (calcareous) soil sparks the intricate, finicky
blooms.

Ask her if dreaming hurts.

The 'Letters Fire' ravaged over one hundred thousand acres.
It's still classified as a natural disaster.

Ask how he touched her.

The first night, we held our breath: a baby red fox
spilled thrillingly from a hedgerow,
scooped up in the dazzling shovel of our headlight.

Ask how he touched her.

Deer played like puppies in the garden,
as if there were nothing, ever, to fear
from proximity.

Ask her what she remembers.

The flowers' throats are keyhole-shaped.
The clutches of petals clot purplely at their apexes.
They smell like stewed cherries.

Ask her what she remembers.

His voice leapt toward me
like a flame.

Ask her if the fire hurts.

Burnt-Tips can be underground
for a decade developing rootstock.

I thought
Love always
fueled its own reserves.

I thought
this might be the end
of using science
to illuminate silence.

You expect to search eternally
through the coal-dark earth for embraceable soil: an enveloping
that holds you as it presses you up.

Suppose you actually meet
 ...an English Nature Reserve...

Do you regret this
cold-growing terrestrial devotion,
this smoldering inflorescence?

Even a fire's indigo-petalled heart
as it trawls the swells of soil, sweeping
over cherished, faltering ground.

Thanksgiving without You

Rhinebeck, NY

flickers

Jessica Cole

You've never been here.

Except in theory:
an expected dream, plans, the storybook
we'd read—My Side of the Mountain—that took
place here. Last summer, driving through hoary,
green cathedrals to Bath, you said: "I stole
that book 'cause I loved it so."

Here, the stove,
crammed with logs, presses hot, moist palms over
oven-heat; work; joy; loaves of *Sally Lunn*...

Paths and trees are piled with crestfallen snow.
Something seeped (the pond's buried tears), wrung
out pools (you, you): ice-frozen, water-clear.
First-flush leaves—trapped at their reddest—throb, glow...
waver like tropical fish, between worlds. You're here.
Glass jewelbox, what is—still—gone but whole.

Thank You Note to the Free Public Library

Maryelizabeth Pope

Storytime saved my life those formative years
when munchkins crawled to talon my thighs the moment their rumps met the
floor
or wept the abandonment of my arms, my right hip
whelped into a bruise of South Dakota.

Those days of my zombie apocalypse, I saw dark clouds coving
my sockets, I saw the blur of reflection, unfamiliar and vacant.
Asleep on the toilet or bathmat, I catnapped until one shrill chirp
of the cardinal broke the REM cycle and the roster cocked and shattered

my darlings into the panic of waking alone in their cribs.
I slept with babies on my chest, on my damaged side
and fantasized the rubber mats puzzled into alphabet, where my roly-polies
learned
to topple onto the laps of smiling mothers.

Sleeping Arrangements

Maryelizabeth Pope

Into our wrestling wring
you come wearing the panic.

You slip amid your father and I, and he roars
as a near death
lion, groggy and disgruntled, he hungers

for the gulley
we flood,

the odyssey between.

I wrap in your mane and arms
as the
koala upon the eucalyptus tree, as the
meadow
upon the earth,
you spun within me

your skeletal

wings, and I clothe

you, and you
clothe me.

Old Days, Less Fashionable Quarters

John Grey

Month old newspaper, a puddle in the hall,
the moon's been painted a dirty yellow
to go with the peeling plaster.
And yet someone's cooking food
and we mob the table
as if it's a holy rite.
And the radio plays
like we hired a band.
And the lamp is lit like fire.

But that's years ago,
the newspaper is decades old by this,
and the puddle may well be
a full blown swamp.
Same color moon though
as if to show that it's
a different life-span to the rest of us.
Sometimes it even cries for
what we've lost
But mostly, it's thin and laughing.

Who's doing the cooking?
Death I believe.
The table's sick.
The meals are down on their luck.
Hasn't been a gathering of like bodies
since the funeral
and even then, fingers picked,
didn't grab,
and someone forgot to bring a radio.
And it was the charnel house
that burst into flame.
Not those lamps in our heads,
such silences.

The View from the Mountain Is More up Than Down

John Grey

The roof of the world is really its floorboards.
Rarified air is the marsh gas of space.
The higher I climb, the lower I get.
The top of the mountain
is a valley for planets, for stars,
to condescend to,
for comets to relish
their distance from this world.

My life tilts its head back,
merely magnifies its implicit descent.
From footprint face
to the discarded wrappers of my toes,
my body shrinks
as the universe expands.

Only the eyes fight back,
open wider to gain height, updraft
Then the mind, capricious ladder,
struggles up on its own rungs.

Bitter wind may threaten my trembling skin,
lack of oxygen ice over my lungs.
But still I warm to the wonder.
For a moment, my chilled heart
is the pilot light of the galaxy.

Sewing Machine Syndrome

Valentina Cano

It's a thread running in reverse.
Unstitching itself
with the press of a foot,
the twist of a wrist.
Sewing machine memories
that engrave themselves
in and out of my skull.
Thread can stick, though,
knotting into clots.
I rip and tear at seams
I've already repaired,
bleeding myself
right back
to the start.

Doubting Disease

Valentina Cano

It starts with a tap.
A fingernail clicking
against my skull.
Atapatapatap.
I swipe it away.
It returns with friends and lovers,
multiplying along my surfaces,
tapping and tapping,
chipping bone away,
deconstructing domes of facts.
I have to ignore it.
IgnoreitIgnoreitIgnoreitIgnoreitIgnoreit.

In Which Perspective Fails

Valentina Cano

The neat scenarios I've created,
shadowboxes hanging from a wall,
are never as I want them.
They smell of wet paint,
bitter glue,
clothes bodies have sweated through.
The paper suns I've hung
like crowns from each scene
flutter and bleach thin
in the room's flat fluorescence.

Summeryawn 1

Jessie Janeshek

You concuss me, go easy
ex-constellation.

The orange buglight illuminates
the bonneted painter
who pines upside down
for old boundaries.

The weird ram streams curtains
on the river rock palate.
I chip my teeth
lie, say his ribs
rip like paper.

Into the Bedroom, Bright Horse

Jessie Janeshek

The night will be purple
a saddle shoe, catapult sticky

a gang-banged redhead's
underwear slung over the zither.

How do we disengage from medicine, Zephyr

when the sweet yellow log
burns the modernist fireplace?

Marry me, meritocracy.
Tarnish the brown games we play.

The dog ears are sunset
except during cold pounds
when I don't make sense.

In Deep Mid-Winter

Jessie Janeshek

Bardot refused flame.
The flashbulb that killed her lacked principle.

The marine writes me Christmas
hides needles, soft-focused

you'll be Julie Andrews
if you cut your hair

It's a slick walk to the enchanted
armoire I planted.

Between pine boughs
flakes are caulk-sticky

his lone ball the size
of a ruby-encrusted torpedo.

Today

Jeffrey Zable

Today is a voice
locked in a throat
reciting from the script
of failures and embarrassments.

Today is a dance
of hunchback skeletons
stomping in the graveyard
of a thirty year headache.

Today is a hurricane
circling in the memory
of a face without eyes
running through darkness.

Unearth

Jason Ferguson

the cloak of night starless befell:
the sun was entombed in the earth
left in a horizon of forgotten clay

nightcrawlers and creatures tunneled,
entered the dark buried chamber
secretly erecting pillars and posts
carbide lamps illumine corridors
series of discoveries, long nights weary.
from frozen layer of dark ash and snow
beetles and ants burrow up from below--

sunlight

truth eventually comes out

the enemy shudders in horror

You're Still, Very.

Stephen Silke

as you are writing
knowing allusions
crop up
in mustard-yellow structure
one pile beginning
one pile middle
one pile end

the beginning:
traditional way-finding
overbearing
you burn every bridge instantly

the middle:
life as a video game
sensual vocals
cycling through history
centered by your own swirl

the end:
romp with stomp
long extended lines
a chaotic crescendo
they wheel you away
by quick kind of metal

a scholastic rite of passage

Mush Mush!

Stephen Silke

Beneath empyrean sleep I see heaven's letterbox: across the bottom a lobster saddled up pulling a sled of huskies where the interminable boom of the disembodied voice calls out fetching the sewing machine attended by troglodytes gathering them from surrounding caves and mud pits and in me and around me—and with broken snatches of glottal dissonance direct each other making short work of my body—heaving it onto the sewing table as I sleep on and each broken fissure splits pulling apart infinitely—mending breath by breath through jerking shaking and clicking—body hurdling—me from side to side under each piercing run of the water needle from the edge of my id where I can sense the lobster and huskies circling 'round and 'round under the boom yelling, "Mush-mush!" up from which propels a cosmic wheel upon which turns my post-prandial fate which and though I believe in progression and determinate outcome I—yet—must—shall—wait for apotheosis beyond any of my power to affect—after all it is me and I am open and out spills victory and loss and lobster with drawn brain butter heated, set up for the feast of the ancients, which I now see inside of me.

[from Pulling Nails]

Rick Henry

Sophie Wright, in protest,
rode the river, rode the waves,
rode the seaway to the other side,
as chattel, she said, as cattle,
unbound, she said, unfettered, free-floating.

[from Pulling Nails]

Rick Henry

Things have gone missing
Things not nailed down
The ping pong table we found in the loft
Pigeon droppings and all
The human-sized plastic chipmunk
That peered from the north pasture.
Rocks from the little river
Tire tracks

Heron at Felton Prairie

Rodney Nelson

arriving at upland
you take its weight to you
with another eye on
the contour
 the heron
 green or black
soling
around the pothole and
you are a gauge of the
water in it
 an eye
 among
wood betony
for the prairie's moment
where every live thing
of any time has come
to agree
 you would have
no other gods before
that heron
 black or green
winging around in the
roomy day but not off

Your Onion (poem)

Cecilia M. Strakna

I am your onion
Mature, ripe, round, pungent
No young scallion.

Go ahead.
Yank me from my warm bed
Shear away my withered fringe
Sever my stringy roots
A double beheading.

I dare you.
Rip off my dry brown skin
Peel away
layer after layer after layer after
layer after layer after
layer

until nothing is left of me
but your tears.

Albedo

Olivia Frederick

One, two, three
I am stopping here,
But only to catch my breath.
Peel, skin, tear.
This is my transition

From getting
To giving. I
Am reflective of what you
Bequeath to me.
You are my Sirius.

*For Dad

At Garden Homes West Trailer Park

Steve Cushman

I remember driving the red moped,
my grandfather's old blue Crofton Bug
and eating clam chowder in Buzzard's Bay
and the day that German Shepherd
bit me above the right eye
and then I'm running past
chain link fences, past my Big Wheel
and my father's green Gremlin,
into the arms of my mother,
her screams, her arms around my shoulders
her beating heart against my face, my bleeding face.

Conversation

Steve Cushman

They sit on their back porch on a fine spring Carolina day in their third year of marriage. He considers saying what a brilliant, beautiful day it is. The grass is rising, the cardinals, the jays and robins are filling up their backyard and the sky, oh the sky, is the sort of blue that catches your breath and the red and white dogwoods are full of color. But he doesn't comment on the day because they are at that point in their marriage where he has to think about the things he says before he says them. Then from somewhere between their first and second glasses of sweet tea, she says oh Charlie it is such a beautiful day and he sighs because it is and he said no such thing and then she stands up and walks inside, leaves him there alone, with nothing to do but think about this beautiful day and what he should have said but did not have the courage to.

About the Contributors

Cecilia M. Strakna is a poet who did not initially submit a bio. But isn't she great?

Charlotte Pence is an incredible poet from whom the editor also forgot to ask for a bio. She received her MFA from Emerson College and her PhD from the University of Tennessee. She is chair of the Creative Writing committee at Eastern Illinois University. Look for her latest book, *Many Small Fires*, from Black Lawrence Press in January 2015.

Ira Joel Haber was born and lives in Brooklyn. He is a sculptor, painter, writer, book dealer, photographer and teacher. His work has been seen in numerous group shows both in the USA and Europe and he has had 9 one man shows including several retrospectives of his sculpture. His work is in the collections of The Whitney Museum Of American Art, New York University, The Guggenheim Museum, The Hirshhorn Museum & The Albright-Knox Art Gallery. Since 2007 His paintings, drawings, photographs and collages have been published in over 184 on line and print magazines. He has received three National Endowment for the Arts Fellowships, two Pollock-Krasner grants, the Adolph Gottlieb Foundation grant and, in 2010, he received a grant from Artists' Fellowship Inc. He currently teaches art to retired public school teachers at The United Federation of Teachers program in Brooklyn.

Jason Ferguson is a student at UVA-Wise majoring in environmental science and recently had four poems published in the college's literary journal, *Jimson Weed*.

Jeffrey Zable has been publishing his poetry and prose in literary magazines and anthologies for many moons. He's published five chapbooks including *Zable's Fables* with an introduction by the late great Beat poet Harold Norse. Present or upcoming work in *Vayavya*, *Subliminal Interiors*, *Literary Juice*, *Epigraph*, *Mas Tequila*, *Clarion*, *Yellow Fox Quarterly*, *Owen Wister Review*, *Boston Literary Magazine*, *Muse*, *Clockwise Cat*, and several others.

Jessica Cole is nine years into two novel projects (and grateful to the person who coined "slow fiction"!), but she has been thinking about poetry a lot lately, and took *OTPR's* call as a sign to delve back in. She teaches writing to design students at the Boston Architectural College, and the combination of visuals and short, precise text feels like poetry!

Jessie Janeshek's first book of poems is *Invisible Mink* (Iris Press, 2010). An Assistant Professor of English and Director of the Writing Across the Curriculum program at Bethany College, she holds a Ph.D. from the University of Tennessee–Knoxville and an M.F.A. from Emerson College. She co-edited the literary anthology *Outscape: Writings on Fences and Frontiers* (KWG Press, 2008).

John Grey is an Australian born poet, recently published in *International Poetry Review*, *Vallum* and the science fiction anthology *The Kennedy Curse*, with work upcoming in *Bryant Literary Magazine*, *Natural Bridge*, and the *Oyez Review*.

Maryelizabeth Pope is from the Appalachian coal-town of Harlan, Kentucky. Currently, she lives in Louisville, Kentucky, with her husband Oz, a Master Electrician and former U.S. Marine, and their daughters Lydia and Kaya. Her chapbook *Skinny Dipping* was a finalist in the 2008 New Women's Voices Chapbook Competition and published by Finishing Line Press in 2009. In that same year, she was awarded an Artist Enrichment Grant from the Kentucky foundation for Women. Her work is forthcoming in *New Madrid* and appears in *Ballard Street Poetry Journal*, *Ozone Park* and *Tattoo Highway*.

Meg Eden's work has been published in various magazines, been nominated for a Pushcart Prize, and received the 2012 Henrietta Spiegel Creative Writing Award. She was a reader for the *Delmarva Review*. Her collections include *Your Son* (The Florence Kahn Memorial Award) and *Rotary Phones and Facebook* (Dancing Girl Press). Check out her work at: <http://artemisagain.wordpress.com/>

Olivia Frederick is a Jacksboro, Tennessee, native attending the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, who hopes to one day leave Tennessee. A stranger once told her that "it's good to read other peoples' works, but it's better to write your own". Turn-ons: used books and camping trips. Turn-offs: pens that are out of ink.

Rick Henry's most recent novella, *Chant*, was published by BlazeVox Books in 2008. His other books include *Lucy's Eggs: Short Stories and a Novella* (Syracuse UP, 2006) and *Sidewalk Portrait: Fifty-fourth Floor and Falling*, a novella (BlazeVox Books, 2006).

Rodney Nelson's work began appearing in mainstream journals long ago; but he turned to fiction and did not write a poem for twenty-two years, restarting in the 2000s. So he is both older and "new." See his page in the [Poets & Writers directory](#) for a notion of the publishing history. He has worked as a copy editor in the Southwest and now lives in the northern Great Plains. Recently, his poem "One Winter" won a Poetry Kit Award for 2011 (U.K.); it had appeared in *Symmetry Pebbles*. His "Upstream in Idaho" received a Best of Issue Award at the late *Neon Beam* (also England). The chapbook *Metacowboy* was published in 2011; another title, *In Wait*, in November 2012. Nelson's chapbook of prose narratives, *Hill of Better Sleep*, is coming out this year from Red Bird Chapbooks. *Mogollon Picnic*, poems (Red Dashboard), is already in print; and the poetry ebook *Nodding in Time* (Kind of a Hurricane Press) is "up."

Stephen Silke's work has been featured in *Furniture: Poems and Stories*, *Intellectual Refuge*, *Carnival*, and *Portland Review*. His latest book *Trickster Stories*, is available for Kindle and iPad. Find his blog at <http://silkethewriter.wordpress.com>.

Steve Cushman received an MFA from UNC-Greensboro and has published two novels, *Portisville* and *Heart With Joy*, as well as a short story collection, *Fracture City*. More information on his writing can be found at <http://www.stevecushman.net>.

Tim Kahl [<http://www.timkahl.com>] is the author of *Possessing Yourself* (CW Books 2009) and *The Century of Travel* (CW Books, 2012). His work has been published in *Prairie Schooner*, *Indiana Review*, *Ninth Letter*, *Notre Dame Review*, *The Journal*, *Parthenon West Review*, and many other journals in the U.S. He appears as Victor Schnickelfritz at the poetry and poetics blog [The Great American Pinup](#) and the poetry video blog [Linebreak Studios](#). He is also editor of Bald Trickster Press and [Clade Song](#). He is the vice president and events coordinator of The Sacramento Poetry Center.

Valentina Cano is a student of classical singing who spends whatever free time either writing or reading. Her works have appeared in *Exercise Bowler*, *Blinking Cursor*, *Theory Train*, *Cartier Street Press*, *Berg Gasse 19*, *Precious Metals*, *A Handful of Dust*, *The Scarlet Sound*, *White Masquerade Anthology*, *Perhaps I'm Wrong About the World*, and more. Her poetry has been nominated for Best of the Web and the Pushcart Prize. Her debut novel, *The Rose Master*, was published in 2014. You can find her at <http://carabosseslibrary.blogspot.com>.