

GRAPES AND MATH

The NEC Poetry Workshop
Fall 2016

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*Though I lie dormant
and obediently bide
might I be a fib?*



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*Special thanks to
Patrick Keppel, Bosba Panh & Tahanee Aluwihare*

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First Communion

Baby bird hands
Skin stitched over
bone
scalped,
fingers heart fluttering
 We wait.

Doll feet
etched in woodchip dust.
Asked if you're my mommy
I almost say
 yes.

Most days my lungs are
coated in panic.

Tuesday I'm slipping
break a teacup from two birthdays ago
and carving myself into the glass we
Splinter.

Clench

At 13 I write a list of
reasons to live
I write the same one
ten years from now.

Silent pressure
what it looks like
at the bottom of five:
Mama's Baby.

The Disappearance of a Father

one sister dead the other half
alive:
a legacy.

Swinging from the ceiling
behind closed lids.
Every birthday I remember
I'm going to outgrow you.

KYLE BEJNEROWICZ

Two haiku

Your braid of hair lies
Limp on scratched plywood bed post
You cried; cut it off

I must remember
people still exist even
when they are not here.

Sofia Basile



Pictures of you

Does it make me a creep That I like to take pictures Of you
while you sleep?

And I have an album stuffed in my drawer Of just pictures of
you All wrapped up warm while you snore.

And sometimes I even kiss your cheek While you lay there all
peaceful, too, I can lay there all night and just watch you
sleep.

Your eyes may be blue, but just as pretty when they're closed
too.

Two flowers

Two flowers live in a single pot as they drink the same water.
Their roots tied tight in knot, sun-soaked upon Your altar.

What they are given is to them both the same. As they grow,
they become more tangled. And it is so, the wind, cold and the
rain, will leave them equally mangled.

Like children cannot live without Nature's Mother, Neither
flower can live without the other.

No boundaries

YI just found a piece of your hair
in my underwear.
And I heard you guzzle that pop with a slurp,
Only to afterwards
let out that rather large burp.

And I saw you peeing with the door open,
And I rubbed your back after work like you were hopin' And I
kissed you three times
before bed,
One on each breast
and once to your head.

And we do everything together
We even shower two,
We always say thank you
And tie each other's shoes.

You iron my clothes without a single crease,
Yet, board games are tough
'cause we use the same monopoly piece.
We share one set of keys,
And our phones are obsolete.

My lap is your most lovely seat,
And even together, we brush our teeth
But we have different toothbrushes, of course...
Because that would be just plain weird.

Kyle Bejnerowicz



ART BY YIQIAO CHEN

DANIEL BITRAN

Stay where you are

05:05 a.m.

(Sun please rise today)

shower cold
coffee cold
bus ride cold
train ride cold

Hurry up now sun, don't you cry

illegally born
illegally raised
illegally schooled
illegally blond like the Sun

6:15 a.m.

Isolated swamps of bleached pain

7:55 a.m.

Good morning Sun
how are you doing good?
yes and you me too
(coño que cansancio)
how's sun doing today?
oh, fine sólo tiene un poco de fever
oh good.

He had one and he died

In the sink
waving away while drowning
burned to ashes in the oven
or crawling up the toilet trying to
get into me
but I flushed just in time

Usually they come when I'm asleep
they belong to the night
but in the middle of the day
you just have to deal with them

In universities,
scientists abuse them
sacred in the Far East
poorly understood
they will outlive us

A man in the street said to me:
"Once there was a very peculiar one,
big, strong, voracious and smart;
they say it scared millions and that
only the very brave or the very stupid
are still chasing it"

I think I care too much about them
my grandfather never paid much attention and says
they never bothered him
anyway, just in case
I always keep a dream cat-cher in my heart.

Purple Fever

They found her
they handcuffed her
they beat her
they laughed
I laughed too
and cried

Got out but now
so used to the cell
the world seems
like a place full of dangers
even more so
got used to them
doing stupid things now
so they can appear and scream
judge and condemn

Tried to date a girl
but just when we were about to meet
I saw a police officer passing by
next thing I know
I was cutting my arms and legs with a rusty machete
there was love all around
later in the night a text saying
"Idiot, you didn't show up but
maybe it was not meant to be"

Chopped his fingers in front of the kids
and It's not like he wanted to disturb them or anything
they were on a field trip eating fries under the sun
he thought they could have liked the fingers for dessert

Kids laugh and smile
Kids know it's magic
the teacher starts insulting so harshly
that all the kids get immediately sick
one of them dies
and the officers show up

They are always "right"
you have the right to remain silent
but we don't
there's always an "explanation"
a verbal argument
they always win
we always lose
but we try and try and
in the meantime
destroy our bodies
until one day
they will only find
the sound of our blood

Daniel Bitran



JONAH ELLSWORTH

Real

Artistry

The greatest sway us

We listen to the greatest

Like Thor's hammer, we are hit hard with knowing that we
have a lot to learn

Ba boom ba boom

Boom box pumping out the power and passion

Playtime filled with pink panthers and purple puns

Fangirls fanning themselves eating fruit off of fudge foxes

Technique technically is tons of trouble

Juicy Jambalaya eaten by Justin Beiber

But what am I saying?

Give it a rest

Sensational

When I put the burger in my mouth, I feel tingles in my arms
and shoulders.

The taste bursts in my mouth and I feel like the uvula is
having a party.

I can feel every morsel and indentation of the meat.

As I take a bite, juice bursts out like blood coming out of an
open wound.

The cheese and ketchup add even more lubrication to the
already juicy burger.

To add contrast, the lettuce and onions differ as they add a
little crunch.

The aioli is perfect with its creamy texture that rolls down the
inside of my mouth.

Bon Appétit.

Comfort Zone

The soft smooth milky couch
The light hanging from the ceiling
Illuminating just one table

People speaking softly
Respectful of others

The smell of bagels
And maybe some pastrami

Chalk? Well anyway a map
If you're lost just look up

That cute pick-up station

It's gone now

Want coffee? Go see for yourself

Jonah Ellsworth



MARIO FABRIZIO

Just before nothing ...

Just before nothing was planned,
just
a day, a regular one.
tasks that must be
completed but
we're done
running beside me
only time.
Look at you all chipper,
Care for me won't you?
Caress me, while you bathe
The spirit in which you've given
me.

Take me to go.
Go, take me
Too much is,
Un-done
You see I'm more now.
Aid me, take me over in the way you did to Picard that first
time on Riza.
Ah yes wouldn't that be
wonderful a day where
I
am
you
While you just pretend.
Just before anything was

Planned just a regular old
One that was almost identical
to the last
And the cup remained a top
Not one but two
A lamp cap and bowl just
Used
Unclean, cleaned out
Unseamed now
Unzipped as I tend to the ritual not
chosen by me
Still the cup, cap, lamp, bowl
kept a top
And they remained undone
imagining what would happen in some other circumstance

But what was the use
If the man on the corner continues to
Lob down and up and up and down and up
On the lane we all know
Staying, rotting?

But what was use
If the man on the corner
Lobs down and up and up and down on the lane we all know
Staying, rotting.

“Hello my brother, can you, today? One maybe two please
please please,” maybe three or four if lucky
“ oh thank you brother, oh yeah have a nice evening and oh
yeah, a God bless you, perhaps.”

Ich maine haughten haist ich ich ich
Gotten di draddle spighter
(laughter)
Jesus, he had all of those examples but he didn't use any of
them.

Did you finish?
Of course he did, just like he always did, tyrannically because
in a technical sense at least he had one.
one that was expansive not expensive
one free to anyone who was ample to have enough.
and why of course? Certainty?

Finally a certainty for a guessing game long gone
Just like what always happened on 322 Albright where
Creften Lawes and his daughter,
Steve now...had to do for a month because of a scarcity for
understanding.
months potentially, years of a stiff neck because of that
certainty.
Realistically we could all just go home and it wouldn't have
mattered like it didn't for Terrence, Tyree, Kendrick and Armine;
on 1st, Centre, and Brogen.
But at least I came.

Mario Fabrizio



A New Perspective

Lifted off the sensuous the past is forgotten
Rotten, a taste in our mouths
An unadulterated adult - I admired him once
Left unconscious in an outcry of distress
He falls in love nightly with fragments
of his imagination that creep onto the dance floor
in different shapes and styles of dress guess
why? I whisper
to the unaged beauty as the last note is played
She smiles and says goodbye.
This is not how the dream ends,
it blends in
with the obsessions of the addicted
(he'll wake up and do it again tomorrow)

On nov. 1st ...

On nov. 1st a burst of cold air
gave me the sidewalk blues.
I nursed the thought of thirst.
Surely the wind will blow and snow
will follow.
Nov. 1st, cursed by the worst
pers

on

the first.

Auxiliary blues ...

Auxiliary blues in the spectrum of
Organic noise, the head of the snare
Drum, vertical melodies reflected on
A horizontal plain, the clicking
Of the hi hat
The lids of darkness creep in
Thump thump
A toe taps, locked inside an allstar
The navigation system turns off
Going sharp, sharp again
Geometrically lost in
Pitter patter claps
I'm not loud, i'm sick
A stick person poked into me
Like the cyclical process
And there's a cough
In the beat of silence



The Windfall

tried working the new way and it
wasn't
nonetheless my friends say that work
comes and goes and maybe
the old way wouldn't
thinking on some time
that I shuddered mouth and closed up

The Automobile

We got dropped off some ways away.

The Constitution

as a people found hands
that every person outgrew
for it
and groaned in own lessons than.
farkus mitchtakerford oft-handed as he was
I am too often mistaken for farkus.
that's trying to get left behind.
and further south we encounter it.
by way of mighty mighty em
or truck
plus one seldom sits on the proper side
for you, for her
tenderizing some such sequence
everything i do turns to only one side of the massive property,
the estate.
what candle pen
and two licks
come clean towards me and i am why
a shaking occurs.



MARYANN HAN

Sunrays into Coffee

My toes touch, temp,
play dead: embody mortuary.
Buried in titillating
sands meticulously filtered to prevent papier maché.

Honey suckle.
Fruity,
candy,
lemon zest.
Smoky, milk chocolate,
mellow.

A burst, aglow, the tip is a fire,
grows as it travels
through, across, aplomb, a production magnificent.
How did man survive the heat?

slow
languid
time:
Alive.
The ocean poured through its sands.
"As the winds migrate a nation, so the waves bear man's
destitution."
washed, dried, roasted.
A burnt quaker shakes his fist.
His heart, a shadow,
brewing 4:33.
An abomination, avante garde, or beyond his time



ART BY DANIEL SAGASTUME

the hand is raised,
"nay, against."
Black: no milk, no sugar.
Glowing,
nutty,
deception.

28

Time may be the only thing

flying wingless eyeless
as a deaf widow
hunting for her best Billie Holiday record
fresh air of anesthetized pain if she only knew
she would not forget how time flies
wingless and blind



Quem Foi ?...

Quem foi?
Não sei quem foi
Não sei quem foi Não sei
quem foi Não sei quem
foi Fui eu

Porque não admities?

Não sei quem foi Não
sei quem foi Não sei
quem foi Não sei quem foi
Não sei quem
foi
Não sei quem foi Não sei
quem foi Não sei quem foi
Não sei quem foi Fui eu

Porque não admities?

Fui eu
Fui eu?
Fui eu
Fui eu?
Fui eu
Fui eu!
Fui eu
Fui eu
Fui eu?
Fui eu
Fui eu!
Fui eu?

Foi ele...



ART BY SOFIA KRIGER

NICHOLAS LEONARD

(Title)

ego centered deretnac oge

ego stic citsi oge

ego centric cirtnec oge

me me me me will I will she will he will you for me to me by me with me me me me
will I with her with him with you for me to me by me
with

me me me me will she will he will you will I for me to me by me with me me me me
will I with him with you with her for me to me by me
with

me me me me will he will you will I will she for me to me by me with me me me me
will I with you with her with him for me to me by me
with

me me me me will you will she will he will I for me to me by me with me me me me

ego centered deretnac oge

ego stic citsi oge

ego centered deretnac oge

Sleep

Here we go
Deciding between
Sleep, sleep, sleep.
The flow of the air
And the Human voice.

Where has time gone?
My whole body filled with emotions.
I'm starting to feel my heart race.

Unexpected. I feel it now.
It's amazing.
Harmonies fill the air.

Hearing the sounds lock in.
Nothing like this
Have I ever experienced before.

There it is.
Silence

Tears.

Holding Back

Just starting,
I'm all jittery and nervous.
What do I do? Well,
I have some idea.

Later,
I'm getting the hang of this.
Sometimes I overthink it.
"You just have to not think about it."
Say the people who have not a clue.

Now.
What am I doing?
Trying to get better by thinking.
Trying to get my bang for my buck.
When it all comes down to everything,
I see that I'm slowly progressing,
And getting weak at the knees.

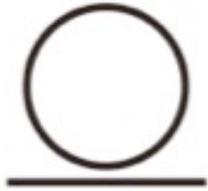
Thoughts. Let's Just Have a Moment, Please?

We're going to play a little duo.
Or that's what he said, anyway.
80 people is a lot more than duo.

I Feel as if
I'm being pushed against the wall...
Against my will.
Before I knew it,
I was shoved down the stairs were so
Steep
That I almost couldn't look up.
It's all a lie.
If you want advice,
I wouldn't dare try
Because my knees are in pain.
I just need a nice knee jerk.



a sound like ...



a sound like that of a drawn knife
persisting, without evaporation
a moment of malice frozen
tinnitus in victim's ear

pupils thin this is the om

surrounded by white light, suspended in a
field of needles and pins
some one calls in the distance

it is the sound of the sky and the wind and your mother's
face shaking your every capillary
cilia bow down ocean of numinous reverberation
you know it must be

like chewing glass

like chewing glass,
the boy with tissue paper lips
wincing, curses every word his lacerated
tongue must speak

dreading every meal and every rainstorm

acidic temptation, the sweetest of citric poisons,
the warm taste of liquid iron, red as rose,
by now so familiar he doesn't even look

viscous is this
licking his wounds, kissing sea urchins, he,
with the saint sebastian tongue wonders
what he did to deserve his martyrdom

insidious salivation, a most bitter flood of
bubbling frustration with things hidden beside
teeth cut on terra cotta pillowcases

another sanguine night
bleeding in his sleep,
the boy with the rosethornwaspsnestpricklypear
mouth dreams of soft kisses and fresh orange juice

DANIEL SAGASTUME

Long we stare
eyes meeting
locking
interlocking

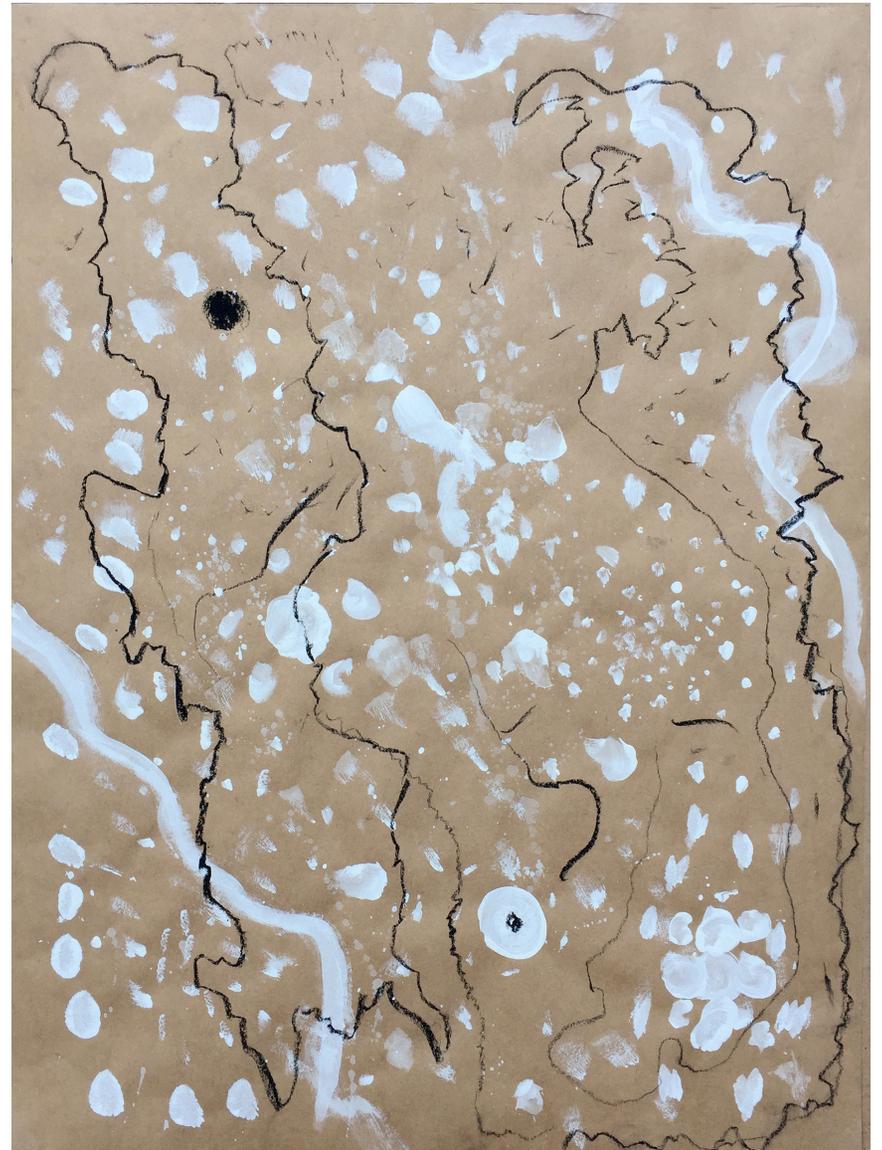
Said unspoken
the Kettle whistles
Muscat grape, Hibiscus, Honey
How long have we waited

Morning coffee, afternoon bagel
a gentle touch
golden leaves
in wind
playful yet formal

warmth Shared
time lost
or so it seems

New lust
or even at all
familiar
Just transient
for now

Yet Here we stand
Searching uncertain
stripped Bare
lost as we are



ART BY DANIEL SAGASTUME

DANIEL SAGASTUME

Crowds of faces

Dispair

Regret

what do they mean?

Mountains high with peaks of red

Blood

Rushing

down

into

Pits

of

Darkness

where am I?

gone.

Color texture again
together

Horifying.

Correctly winter

why clusters

work. carefully.

Carefully interlocking experience

Frozen conclusion.



Sky night cool Bridge

Sounds at ~~the~~  time

RAEF SENGUPTA

Thlouspern

The sun is a giant Crunch bar, Lemon me baby
My favorite part
Dripping citrus down my urethra
Lather me up
Salt me silly
My body is one big pork chop

Soiled milk Spewing forth Jetpack ass High I fly
Feeding the Earth
I am His muse
He ate my ass

Reuplnsoth

the clips and the clops and all the hulla-
balloo is on me
with
the clicks and clacks are
keeping me captive
in passing with
all my ears and
eyes and all are
my, I am off to go see Dr. Bernard
and all the happy tree people

8

ROBYN SMITH

Poem no.1

Interview

Interlude

Please go on, my face is tired and
can't take this
dreadful shit any longer

Feeling yourselves
with what you think
is

Darkness dims what's real
O Darkness keeps us well

Dig deep now
Don't prance on what may seem like light
Walk on what you know is reality

Cool

Cool like the breeze
outside
Trees blowing against the wind

Yet
Calm?

Here I sit
Floating in silence
struggling to keep my
soul from
escaping in the wind

Still
In my ways
In my thoughts

Holding on tight.

Although life may carry me to new destinations
I still remain here

Here..
Fighting with reality Fighting
with the present Fighting with
what is inevitable

Roadkill

The imprint of road kill makes me sad
It's the actual animal
Knowing something was there
something living..

Knowing something was there
is what hurts

It was never discussed
It was never obvious

But we knew something
was there

I knew

You just didn't care.

Robyn Smith



JONATHAN STARKS

team ufabulum suck life upload a pic-a-cup a
sub-type style useful shit liquid lady half-god
acid sex mixed with printer paper on this alaskan shag
carpeting sad come house boy sugar lick tight ok
understand my body a canvas for sixty years before any
bad
little squares assembled

lovely annihilation I love when it ho ho's around and
around look
at this dog

say it is trendy

lfm

looking for more but
all the dudus are in lion's pride with the claws out
ripping
and raking and raking in
a goldmine while all the sticky stab stabs hemorrhage
a poor sap without a reason beyond to slash spit on the
corpse of a lowbie
oh right, poke me

I'm looking forward to ...

I'm looking forward to the day when
this tree growing inside of me will blast
out of my esophagus and dozens of
children will come and pick the apples
from its branches

they will not eat them, but rather
throw them as far as possible
and then measure the distances,
write them down, and graph them

they will stand and stare at the graph
and realize it has produced an image
of a small tortoise on its back
with despair in its eye

several children will run away
because the image scares them
and a few others will laugh for a moment
and then walk away casually

only a handful of children will remain
pondering, thinking, admiring the work
they have just created
they will walk away as a group with
the tortoise in hand, excitement in the eye
and wonder in the mind

JOSHUA MASTEL

Flora & Fauna

the Unseen

They, crystal at gloaming roam a gossamer-veiled skull
a coalescence of things, unseen
bliss behind the ever-present phosphenes between
this & the next
these & the others

Circe, silvertongued wielding thistle & scythe a
promise. a question.
a shroud of brume
sinuous argent fibers, billowing secrets in the kungsljus,
the Honeybees know

burned in bone arcane structures, warmed by
sun

cervidae, vulpes, strigidae. feather & egg
tooth & nail

kosm,
a fathomless apiary within, between
when the sounds of Their voices fill the silences in your
breath They know

