

© TAB: The Journal of Poetry & Poetics. Volume 4. Issue 4. July 2016.

No part of this publication may be reproduced in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, without prior written permission from TAB. Rights to individual submissions remain the property of their authors.

Department of English Chapman University One University Drive Orange, CA 92866 www.chapman.edu/poetry

ISSN: 2169-3013

THE CENTER FOR POETRY AT CHAPMAN UNIVERSITY





Department of ENGLISH

Editor in Chief: Anna Leahy

Creative Director: Claudine Jaenichen Graduate Assistant: David Krausman

Criticism Editor: Brian Glaser

Translation Editor: Alicia Kozameh

Readers and Book Reviewers: Alexis Gobel, David Krausman, Adrianna Medina, Robert Matt Taylor

TAB Internal Advisory Board: Joanna Levin, Chair of English; Mary Litch, Director of Academic Technology; Laura Silva, Wilkinson College; John Benitz, Theatre; John Boitano, Languages; Douglas Dechow, Leatherby Libraries; Rei Magosaki, English; Kevin O'Brien, English

The internal Advisory Board represents a variety of disciplines and perspectives; is consulted individually and/or as a group for advice and ideas; meets once each semester for reports, updates, and needs of the journal; and is invited to assist in other ways as needed. The Chair of the Department of English, the Director of Academic Technology, Wilkinson Account Manager in Strategic Marketing, and Wilkinson College's Publicity Coordinator hold standing positions on the Advisory Board. Each additional board member serves a three-year, renewable term.

DESIGN STATEMENT

The print issues of *TAB*: The Journal of Poetry & Poetics are special editions, each published at the beginning of the calendar year. These issues reflect the mission of Tabula Poetica: The Center for Poetry at Chapman University to create an environment that celebrates poetry in various forms and venues. The annual print issue engages the reader with poetry as a material object and asks that the reader negotiate between image and text. The design of the print issues does not assume a traditional role of quietly framing content; instead, design actively shapes the reading experience. The special print editions of *TAB* continue to experiment and explore the intersections between form and content, object and space, and reader and reading.

The 2016 print issue explores the representation of energy. Energy is best conveyed by experience, in context, generating an emotional effect. Yet, we *learn* energy in 2-dimensional static visual representations like weather system reports, combinations of molecules, and diagrams like the ones used to explain the energy forces of how the Twin Towers collapsed during 9/11. This issue contains four energy panels (movement, connection, destruction, sustaining) dedicated to the exploration and relationship among diagrammatic representations, the expression of energy, and poetry. Diagrams interact with text and visual compositions that occupy the space and create new visual representations of energy. The contrast and radiance of the back panels is a complete manipulation of diagrammatic language, returning movement, and chaos that leaves an emotional imprint to the experience of the viewer. Perforated panels empower the reader to redirect energies, recreate sequence and narrative.

Electronic issues, on the second Wednesday of every other month, follow this printed issue. Using these differing formats—print and digital—allows experimentation with design and materiality in a time when print and electronic dissemination coexist. TAB will not force either format to adapt to the other. The reading experience in virtual spaces is different than that of a printed journal. The electronic issues are shaped by Open Journal Systems, a federally funded, openaccess system from the Public Knowledge Project designed to serve the public good globally. While the electronic files can be printed, each electronic issue are formatted for reading on the screen. Decisions about page size, typography, and composition are driven by the online reading experience, rather than to mimic a print version. TAB also makes use of the audio possibilities of digital dissemination.

To order a copy of the print issue from 2016, 2015, 2014, or 2013, please send a check for \$10 made out to Chapman University to TAB: The Journal of Poetry & Poetics, Department of English, Chapman University, One University Drive, Orange, CA 92866. *TAB* is available at the AWP Bookfair.

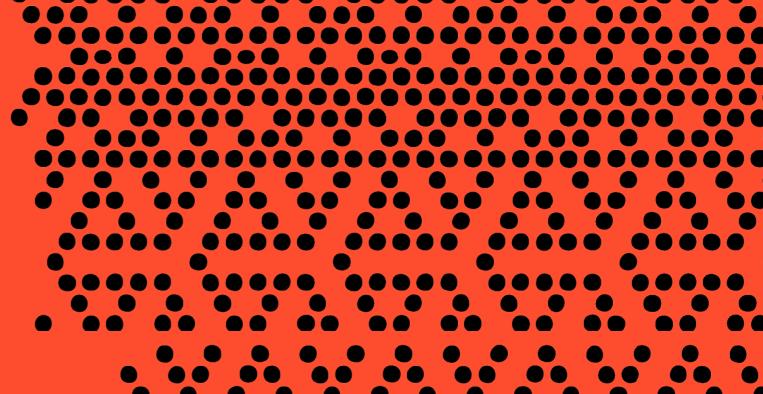
GET A COPY

To receive a complete copy of the print issue as a map, please send a check for \$10 made out to Tabula Poetica and mail to:

TAB, English Department Chapman University One University Drive Orange, CA 92866

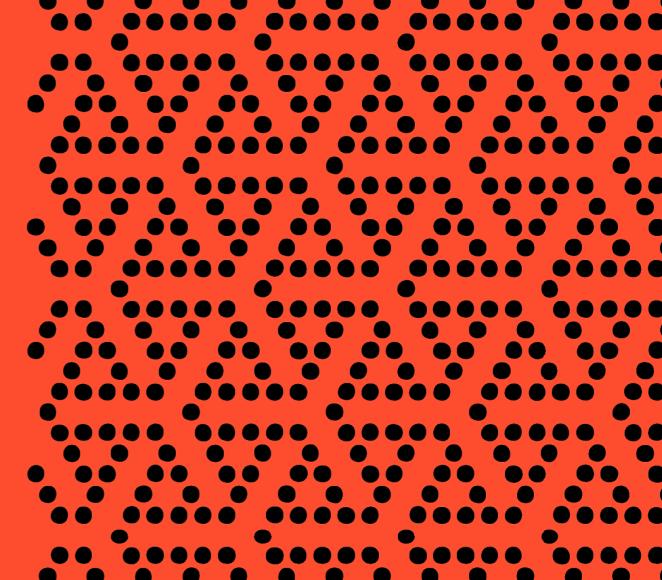
Or become a member with a charitable contribution: https://secure.touchnet.com/C20539_ustores/web/store_cat.jsp?STOREID=1&CATID=130

Contributors receive complementary copies and can request additional copies. *TAB* is distributed at the AWP Conference each year.



KELLI ALLEN

Kelli Allen's work has appeared in journals and anthologies in the United States and internationally. She served as Managing Editor of Natural Bridge, is the current Poetry Editor for The Lindenwood Review, and is the director of the River Styx Hungry Young Poets Series. She is Professor of Humanities at Lindenwood University. Her chapbook, Some Animals, won the 2016 Etchings Press Prize. Her full-length poetry collection, Otherwise, Soft White Ash, arrived from John Gosslee Books.



THIS IS THE PART WHERE WE DON'T SAY "LOVE"

Tell me again how I'm sorry. Explain how underneath your hands I am different than when alone with my body. Make it up. The long fence running from sandy yard to seaside. Pretend to look out the window while you talk to me. Show me what believing you means. I cannot press against nowhere, or later.

Tell me how I want to be saved. In the backseat of my car you called me Princess and I whispered dragon and we almost sang.

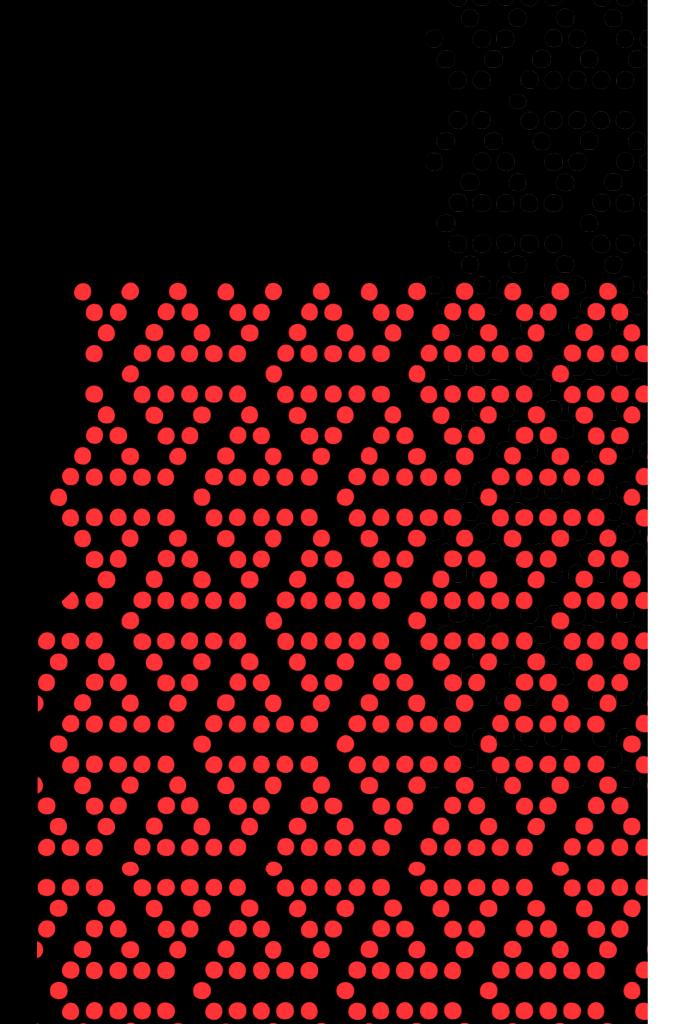
This isn't the part where you remind me that I sometimes ask for dirty things, windshield muck thick ugliness. There is no mystery in breaking twigs under my back when you push hard into the cold grass, hips-against-hips. This story is not that one.

When all the delineations point toward a happy ending, tell me you know better. Say, we are both falling from some bridge, but not really. Tell me how we both jumped, waving our hands, tongues out to the monsters we left long on the ground.

THIS IS HOW I ANSWER GOODNIGHT

Gravity changes the way we say Yes. Reclining means that I am relaxed enough to tell you I could have drowned when you fell asleep on the sand. I stood over your sun bruised body, tiny crabs outlining your legs, and collected my breath into lungs more than burning, more than almost spent completely. You did not wake then, not for hours, and I let you burn a little, watched your lips puff bright from simple red to something like belladonna sheen.

I lie back, now, and admit that I never wanted you to save me, that we save, each, ourselves, shells already snug on our backs, curled smooth as only skin pretending to be more than itself can. I rest my head against your pillow and wait for you to listen right, to see how far I've come from undercurrent to woman who is asking you not for forgiveness, but for knuckles to press into shoulder blades, palms slow to fan, when I roll to leave this space, yours, and walk directly back into the ripe waiting sea.



COLLEEN COYNE

Colleen Coyne is the author of the chapbook Girls Mistaken for Ghosts from dancing girl press, and her work appears in DIAGRAM, Hayden's Ferry Review, BOXCAR Poetry Review, Tupelo Quarterly, New Delta Review, and elsewhere. She lives in Massachusetts, where she teaches writing at Framingham State University and works as a freelance writer and editor. You can read more of her work at collencoyne.net.

UNDERSTORY

When the dead speak, we have to listen. They coach this puffed up season, this fertile mantle.

They own our palest reflections, which create their own dangers.

In the house of roots, they pass through small rooms and balk at each threshold.

They perch alone among trees, like cold creatures curve & hunch, fur & bluster the over-hanging shadows that fold themselves neatly into our beds.

Past the pane: the sky between the branches.

Blue leaves surprised by red flowers, yellow-budded pinecones split by cicadas, a trunk netted by sliding weeds.

Their skin the winter sky between the branches.

In the cradle of evening, the cool, endless rocking, the dead steal our wings. No time to learn to die. Oh, but then—the moment just before, that last lost calling—the body lets go its gentle grip. Every branch bends and lifts—the great exhale. We press our ears to the canopy.

THE BIRKENHEAD DRILL

An ornament of light decorates real danger, scolds our reckless passage. Stumps float in the mirror moon path, or stack solid from the seabed. Prepare for your grave enlightenment; unravel your ultraviolet hair, which we'll fling into the foam.

On this under-sunned, tilted starboard, salt sanitizes our armless hands, wind steals cold from clanging buckets, and we barnacle our anchor. If rescue fails, we'll out-sink the scavengers with stale bait: our ankles wrapped in coral.



HOW MUCH COMPRESSION?

In "Can Poetry Matter?" Dana Gioia asks:

Q. How much compression is needed to transform versified lines into genuine poetry?

how much compression is needed to transform versified lines into genuine poetry?

how much compression?

so much depends upon the compression

of versified lines into genuine poetry

how

much

com

press

ion?

how much compression

is needed to transform

versified lines into poetry?

A. just this much.

JESSICA HUDGINS

Jessica Hudgins lives in Baltimore, where she teaches creative writing and co-organizes the reading series Hey You, Come Back.
Her work appears in The Journal, Portland Review, Glassworks, and Incessant Pipe. She received her MFA from the Writing Seminars at Johns Hopkins.



DREAM FRUITS

I am surrounded, calm. Nimble-fingered, I know there is a source, a problem, and a solution in each pried-at thing. I thumb the peels off, then the flesh, leave it all glistening around me. I crack open the seeds and they burst, one after another, into flower. Pistils unfurl from their hold and worms and moths swarm down, eager to be known.



ALL I SEE IS LINES:

Henry Speller to wife Georgia, two years dead

train tracks bedrails I set to our floor as if an engine was due to pass through like a storm strings in my guitar grids those strings stamp in my fingers my time with you racing my mind like bourbon on a motorbike smiling eyebrows and lips on the sexy pictures you painted nylons over a woman's thigh like a sheet of diamonds breasts coming at me like darts Delta Queen's stacks licking up sky and pushing it back like spit it's blown to a bubble paddles working that steamer through mud and turtle grooves on a cow's horn head of my shovel to red clay bathtub ringed in rust steeple cutting through rain Pastor's arm aimed for God and cloud your drum picking up and carrying off my beat your eyes steady like knives the morning you said, "Mamma come to me in a dream. I won't be out here next summer." the poles holding up the porch when you said it arms of the chair I held till my hands fell slack floorboards cold to my feet plane rising up like a cross slicing earth from Heaven handles on your coffin my harmonica quiet by my pencil on a table edge of paper where my crosshatches stop curtains without those long lashes of yours to pull them shut nights I can't draw a new face

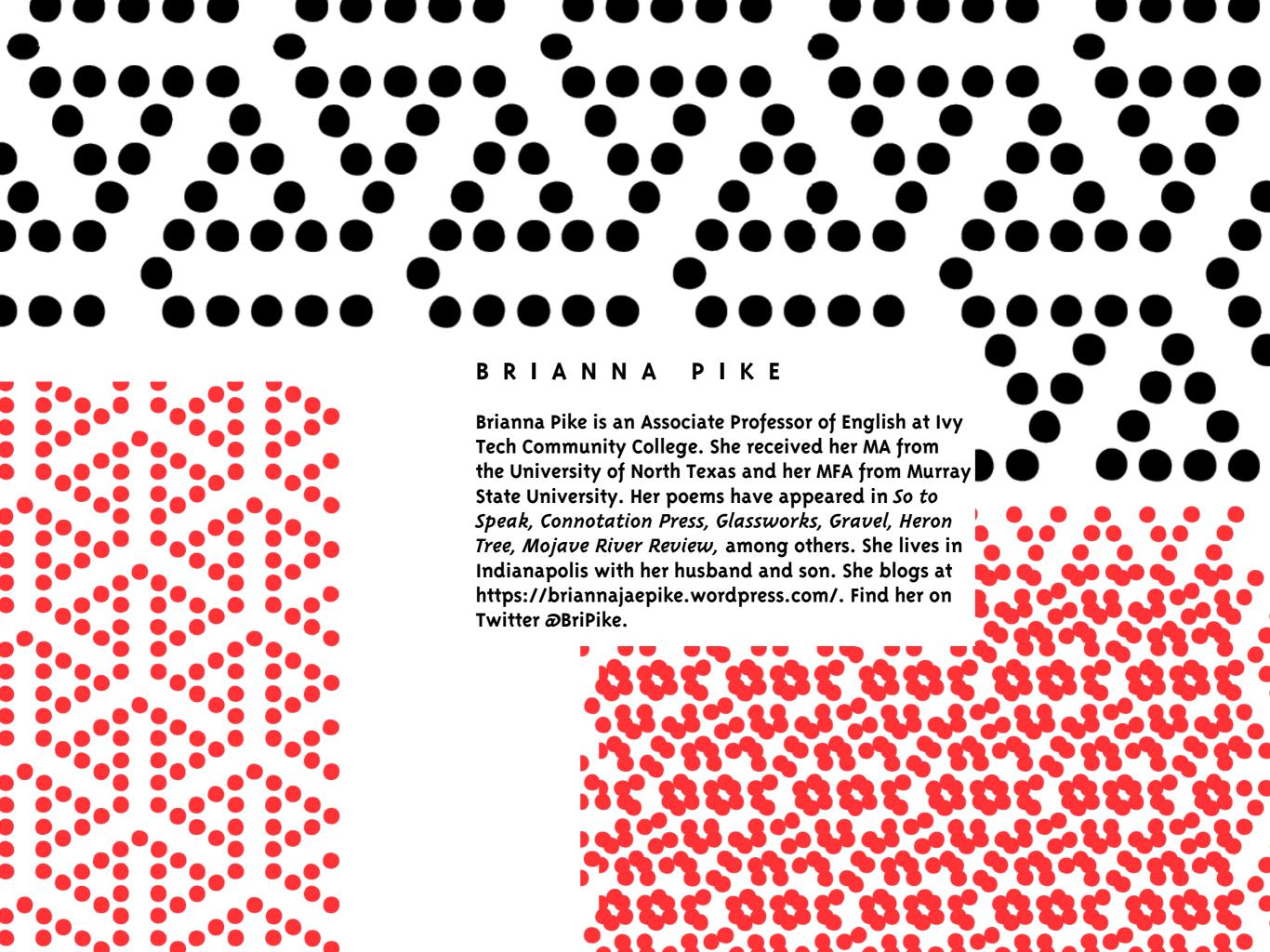
NO PEACE:

Juanita Rogers to the stone baby in her belly

Little knot I can't pull my pants past, you are the fist the Devil left in my gut when I ran from the Garden. I don't know what to call you, but I hear you singing real whispy like you've lost both your front teeth.

Mud woman, mud woman, make your clay men. Break them down and build them up again. Mud woman, mud woman, drink your lye tea. Sway in the suds till down comes baby.

I hear other songs. Stonefish and Monster come dragging femurs like spears. They tap hymns on a pig's empty skin beside horned men nibbling at mermaids' scales like wet secrets. Stuck under this sun, they, too, will harden.



WEDGWOOD

In a small room off my grandmother's kitchen shades of blue take shape in a cake stand, serving platter, butter dish, cup and saucer. Maidens, lambs, and cherubs etched in a collection gathered

over countless trips to cramped, antique stores crammed with glass goblets, painted porcelain birds, and brass lamps. My grandmother hunted every booth, straining to glimpse a glint

of blue and white. Delighted, she held them tight to her breastbone all the way to the register, only letting go when the shop owner wrapped each treasure in layers of thick paper.

Today, my mother, my sister and I stand in front of the shelves while my grandmother's fingers caress every dish, recalling each time she pulled a piece of beauty free from dust.