



The Journal of Poetry & Poetics

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THE CENTER FOR POETRY AT CHAPMAN UNIVERSITY

T A B U L A
p o e t i c a



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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 Journal* continue to experiment and explore the intersections between form and content, object and space, and reader and reading.

This year's print issue is driven by inclusive design and low-vision principles. We aim to produce an equitable and engaging experience with diverse sight abilities. In 1840, William Moon developed an embossed reading system for the blind that was less complex than learning Braille. It was centered in Britain and later shared by missionaries in India, China, Egypt, Australia, and West Africa. The Moon system was particularly useful for people who had lost their sight later in life because the Roman alphabet had already been deeply rooted in their cognitive recognition and recall and, therefore, proved easier to learn than the abstract system of Braille. Moon's system could be taught and learned in only a few days. It now appears in *Tab Journal's* 2020 print issue.

Both the color blocking of the print issue and of the the title pages of the online issues echo the approach that Oliver Byrne applied to *The Elements of Euclid* in

1847. Byrne translated all seven books of the *Elements* into a visually dominating presentation of diagrams and color to help categorize and highlight information. Byrne published mathematical and engineering works in the more text-based tradition, but with *The Elements of Euclid*, he made it clear by his subtitle, "...in which coloured diagrams and symbols are used instead of letters for the greater ease of learners," that he intended the publication to be more accessible.

Electronic issues are published on www.tabjournal.org and follow the theme of the annual print issue. Using these differing formats—print and online—allows experimentation with design and materiality in a time when print and electronic dissemination coexist. *Tab Journal* does not force either format to adapt to the other. The reading experience in virtual spaces is different than that of a printed journal. While the electronic files can be printed, electronic issues are formatted for reading on the screen and for assistive technology. Decisions about page size, typography, and composition are driven by the online reading experience, accessibility, and low-vision standards. *Tab Journal* also makes use of the audio possibilities of digital distribution.

To order copies of the current or previous print issues, 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, California 92866. *Tab Journal* is available at the AWP Conference and Bookfair each year.

Special Issue: California Coastal Commission Poetry Contest

Every year, Tabula Poetica selects finalists for the Coastal Poetry Contest for K-12 students hosted by the California Coastal Commission. This year, Chapman University students in Dr. Genevieve Kaplan's poetry writing class served as the mid-level judges.

Tab Journal is thrilled to share the poems of young Californians as part of this collaboration with the community and Annie Frankel, the Public Education Program of the California Coastal Commission. You can also view the winning art and poetry selections at the California Coastal Commission's website: <https://www.coastal.ca.gov/publiced/poster/mm20/winners2020.html>.

Kindergarten–1st Grade

Winner

Alexandra Lepe, Sonoma, Kindergarten

Honorable Mentions

Leonardo Cavaliere, Tarzana, Grade 1

Alexander Martinez, Redondo Beach, Kindergarten

Sea Lions

Big cute eyes

Black smooth fur

Pointy whiskers

Ow Ow Ow

My tummy hurts

I ate plastic bags and straws

Help

—Alexandra Lepe

Malibu

My mom took me to Malibu.
There I saw crabs, dolphins and even a lobster.
Yes, that is true.
There were surfers and divers too.
It was so cool!
I felt happy,
The sky was blue,
And to mommy I want to say,
Thank you.

—Leonardo Cavaliere

Pelicans

Pelicans

Fly in the air

They look like Pteranodons

I see them dive

Into the water

Like a torpedo

Zippering in

They gulp a fish

Then they fly home

—Alexander Martinez

2nd–3rd Grade

Winner

Tessa Magnuson, San Diego, Grade 3

Honorable Mentions

Chloe Y. Park, Los Angeles, Grade 3

Cammie Arnold, San Clemente, Grade 2

Gabriella Cavaliere, Tarzana, Grade 3

The Colors of the Sea

As I enter the beach, the fresh invisible salty breeze hits me.
I see the teal waves crash and the bright green palms surrounding,
The chocolate brown sea lions sitting on the rocky shore,
The bright yellow sun shining with pale peach sand,
Spiral orange singing shells rest on the seaweed,
Grassy green rocky cliffs above us.

—Tessa Magnuson

The Amazing Marine Life

They live in wild life.
Otters eat crabs and sea urchins.
Pups are with mothers.

Ocean looks shiny.
Ocean waves crash together.
The water is cool.

Take care of water.
Don't throw garbage in the water.
Use less plastic stuff.

Bring joy to the beach.
Make rainbows over waters.
Bring ocean life back.

—Chloe Y. Park

Beach Day

When I surf I have fun. When I surf and I am done, I can swim along the shore and snorkel in the sun all day. I like to swim in the San Clemente bay avoiding all the manta rays.

The leopard sharks are dark and brown and the sand sharks live deep deep down.

When I feel something at my feet and I think that it's bad, I swim to the shore and I tell my stepdad.

When I get to shore my mom feeds me some wasabi, and now I'll tell you my favorite hobby.

Skim boarding is fun, it's my favorite thing to do. Next time you go to the beach, you should try it too.

—Cammie Arnold

Winters in Malibu

On the coast of California, winter is always so magical.
Forget the snow and the freezing weather,
We have miles and miles of vivid scenery,
Point Dume, Zuma Beach, El Matador, never dull.
Here is all about sunlight waves, white sand and spending time together.

Families come out ready to play,
Teenagers taking pictures, whatever!
Surfers ride the day away
Yogis seeking surrender...

Everybody is looking forward to watching the sunset,
Oh the sunsets in Malibu,
I swear
There is nothing better!

—Gabriella Cavaliere

4th–6th Grade

Winner

Talia Boneh, Palo Alto, Grade 6

Honorable Mentions

Finley Baskin, Los Angeles, Grade 5

Eden Yuen, Dublin, Grade 5

Ryan McManus, Cardiff, Grade 5

If Only I Saw the Flowers

If only I saw the flowers,
the world would have been brighter
I could've given it all my attention,
all my awareness,
all my recognition,
and all my protection

I could have looked at an orchid,
one that only grows on California's delicate coast,
but no,
I chose to stay inside, not bothering to open the window

now I look onto the porch,
my mind like a blank canvas,
"why?" I think "why couldn't you have enjoyed the presence of the fragile flowers
before litter had stomped on the world as if it were mud?"

I could have enjoyed the deep lavender of the beach pea,
the soft lilac of the calypso orchid,
the baby pink of the beach morning glory,
the bright yellow of the Menzies wallflower,

but now the petals are replaced with soda can tabs,
the stems replaced with tin foil...

I can only feel regret.

—Talia Boneh

Turtle Gaze

the soft

sacred

sea turtle

 silently swimming

 in the Soundless

 sea

gazing

 at the Bright

 plum

orangish yellow

 sun

the birds

 swing and sail

through

 the

 salty air

 in the

 soothing

 southern

 sky

—Finley Baskin

Sutro Baths

A shadow of its glorious former self
Broken and ruined
It used to have totem poles, coin collections, and shells
Now merely a legend

It had grandeur, museums filled to the brim
The Panorama of the World
Photos, mummies, pinned insects, and stuffed animals
A poised snake curled

It was a majestic saltwater pool complex
Boasting warm and cool
With children pushing and shoving to go next
An Elysium after school

It was only finite, however eminent and opulent
This paradise bound to end
Water slides, diving platforms, trampolines, and trapezes
A scorched remnant from a mysterious blaze

A treacherous assembly of
Salty pools, crumbly walls, weathered tunnels and rusty pipes
Now one with the rugged Sea Cliff
A destination for daring hearts and romantic souls

—Eden Yuen

The Salty Wonderland

The ocean,
The magnificent ocean.
The crashing waves,
breaking out a streak of white.
The salty air stings my eyes.

It has been there for wars big and small.
It is a host to creatures of the deep
and the shallow.
I see shells,
the diamonds in a sea of sand.

Timeless, the salty wonderland.

—Ryan McManus

7th–9th Grade

Winner

Gavin Hayes, Burlingame, Grade 8

Honorable Mentions

Sierra Glassman, Watsonville, Grade 9

Matthew Oda, Belmont, Grade 7

Kaylia Roark-Hernandez, Fairfax, Grade 9

But a Peep

A queer little bird
Stood silently on the beach
Still as a statue
A bug wandered into its reach
Fast as lightning
without but a peep
A bug forfeited its life
To this mighty beak
The bird walked away
content in its power
To feed its young
No matter the hour

—Gavin Hayes

Albatross

Above the turning waves
Over the crest
Through the trough
A bird glides
Wings long, white
Tipped with black
Not a wingbeat for several days

The albatross rides the current
Of the wind of the waves
Sleeping on the wing

Three years at sea
Following schools of fish
Never touching land

When the albatross returns
To the land where he was raised
What does he feel?
A homecoming after a long trip?
Or a sudden pull

That only Albatross feel

But then

Back to sea

Above the turning waves

Over the crest, though the trough

He flies on

—Sierra Glassman

untitled

A plastic island
Reminding us of our sins
This guilt outlives us

—Matthew Oda

Umbrella on the Coast

Cold, wet, and salty
teeth chattering up and down
my vision blurred by flailing hair
circling my head like seagulls.
I look at the waves of water
how they reflect the clouds in the sky
as dark winter breezes tornado around me.
The umbrella, what is it for, if it cannot keep me dry?
Its metal veins so thin and fragile
black silk that buffers only mist
is no match for the pelting rain and wind
of the mighty coast
at Rodeo Beach.

—Kaylia Roark-Hernandez

10th–12 Grade

Winner

Olivia Lee, Arcadia, Grade 11

Honorable Mentions

Dohyun Kim, Valley Village, Grade 11

Alyssa Ho, Pasadena, Grade 10

Claire Zhu, San Jose, Grade 10

o-to be-an isopod

o-to be-an isopod—
beneath the gasping blacklit blue
to shuffle sulfur silt and sand
recall back when the sea was new
to stumble forth on jointed legs
spit ash, from dark volcanic vents
to lift, from currents, from the shell
with plankton feeds for small lament
what geography—traverse desire
must it be lonely, might they mind
this marianas solitude—
with only self for all your time
one thousand bars of pressure pounds
the sea dissolves where sound might bother
but o-to be-an isopod—
where all the pressure's only water

—Olivia Lee

Venus, planet of love, was destroyed by global warming

—From "*Nobody*" by Mitski

Somewhere far away from a city full
of elevators drowning with people,
a grandmother

has marked a coastline with a wet finger.

And on this line of surrender, I,

a city boy, search escape. City boy whose hair matted
smog and productivity. City boy
witnessing sky—

and the sky rolls
with boulders, sunlight barely
large enough to crawl through.

The body before me: solitary
but glinting teeth. A body of breaking.

A wave shatters into sea spray on the rocks,

and I imagine the yawning maw of the ocean
swallowing

the house behind me.

Where the sun will meet the water like
an upturned scoop of disappointment
submerging

into asphalt, I do as my father does, cleaving
the horizon for meaning until my vision
speckles into flies.

Another wave, heavy with fish frothing scales.

And I imagine a child searching for
trinkets in a home
that used to swell with voices.

The ocean no louder than a street corner.

My father before me too toed the sand
when he found his pockets sunken by too much

skipping stone

and not enough coin.

What a reckoning, to stand on the cusp of
a churning iris that only
observes.

Every corner of the city now stained by rust,
a school of bluefin tuna streak silver down a freeway,

and I am reminded,
as my father was, that what I was searching for

was not escape.

I wanted permanence.

—Dohyun Kim

This is Where the Woods End

A bobcat kit
wanders too
far from home.

She runs nowhere
in particular.
Just away
from the thickness of the redwoods
that loom like monsters in the dark.

Her heart beating fast,
she races toward the light,
only to find
a sheering cliff.

This is where the woods end.

Majestic redwoods
make up the cliff,
their steady roots growing away from the sea
like a timid child who runs

when the water gets too close.

The bobcat whimpers in fear
but it's as if the ocean knows,
and plays a song just for her.

The rhythmic sweep
of foam and waves
soothes her mind
and comforts her heart.

So high up,
the sea seems so thin,
like a white sheet that
can be folded seven times.

The silver waves continue to fall,
as if the moon were combing
Mother Nature's hair.

This is where the woods end.
And where the sea begins.

—Alyssa Ho

a bit of foam, roaring waves

It starts with the slightest touch
Just a bit of foam creeping up on the beach
Veined like a gemstone, bordered with lacy froth
Weaving between grains of sand to
meet skin with the slightest prick of cold

More waves rush in like wild horses
beckoning for the shore to melt into sea
an undeniable, irresistible call
like a murmur emanating from the curve of a small shell

The whisper becomes a growing roar
The cry of icy tides striking jagged rocks
The wail of unruly surf echoing in the sky
The indignant screams of seagulls
and indomitable waves thundering in symphony

—Claire Zhu