



The Journal of Poetry & Poetics

Table of Contents

Marriage (More Than Mercy) by **Laura McCullough**

Migration Seasons by **Dia Roth**

Anonymous Years by **Suphil Lee Park**

Photo by **Safia Jama**

sallie gardner at a gallop by **Keith S. Wilson**

On an Airplane at Night While
Another Is Missing by **Michelle Brittan Rosado**

Green was the Silence by
Millicent Borges Accardi

We Made It by **Susan Johnson**

Proserpine by **Mary Gilliland**

Checklist for Tuesday by **Amelia L. Williams**

Design Statement

The annual, distinctive print issue of *TAB: The Journal of Poetry & Poetics* engages the reader with poetry as a material object and asks that the reader negotiate between image and text. The design does not assume a traditional role of quietly framing content; instead, design actively shapes the reading experience and continues to experiment and explore the intersections between form and content, object and space, and reader and reading.

Beginning last year, the 2020 issue was the first issue that was driven by inclusive design and low-vision principles. We commit to producing an engaging and increasingly equitable experience for all abilities.

We developed a new website for online issues that also makes available accessible issue archives, including audio recordings of poems. Visit our website at TabJournal.org.

The 2021 print issue was created during a time of quarantine as the world underwent the isolation and anxieties of the Covid-19 pandemic. During this time, we reflected on concepts of time—as a sense of place, as space, as structure, as visual experience of light and dark. Time has an impact on psychology; we can lose time or lose track of time. Time has a history of visual representation and documentation as well. This issue explores visual expressions of time warping, time

traveling, and the chronology and the kaleidoscope of time keeping. In this issue, the images and texts engage in ideas of process over time, such as healing or growth.

While the design for online issues draws from the year's print issue, those issues that follow in March, May, July, September, and November are designed and formatted for the on-screen reading experience. Decisions about page size, typography, and composition are driven by the online reading experience, rather than to mimic a print version. To request one or more copies of the print issue, please use the Contact form on the website.

Volume 9 | Issue 1
2021





Marriage (more than mercy)

Scientists ask whether light chooses
between being a wave or a particle. Sometimes
we choose for it, they say, assigning
it one or the other, making reality dense
with perception, which is only temporary.
When particles meet, they are forever connected;
even separated, they affect each other no matter
how far apart they become. In one story, there
is poison in a wound; in another, we are just
asking to see under the surfaces of this world.

Laura McCullough



Migration Seasons

A full moon peers through the window,
two eyes shining, a voyeur: I'm caught
tangled naked in my philodendron, where

I've made myself a jungle with yellow walls,
humid and sticky like the back of your knees
in a slow blazing summer. Those knees, that breeze

-less room used to keep me hot and happy
for days. Never knew my neighbors then: the badger
below me or the canary across the way. Now,

the swan next door stretches her neck
long, spirals past stars, and reaches inside
for a snack. *Just until the rain stops,*

she pleads gently. Her excuse barely veils our
mutual need; I pull back a vine, invite her in. I enjoy
her company and the way she wraps me up in her wings

from behind. She holds me that way for a while,
nibbles at dying leaves, mealy bugs within reach.
When she heads south for the winter, my mind

wanders back to you, your knees, how I flew off
before the next sticky summer caught me. I learned later
that there's no escaping the steady roll of an ellipse;
we're all bound to get tangled up eventually.

Dia Roth



Anonymous Years

Too much nuance crowded to one color
in Barcelona, I began to blur.
Many travellers left their hearts there.¹
Why weren't you there to fend
off the Italian rose
hustlers, again. Sudden plunge
of rain thrashing across the steeled face
of the Thames. Think of Camus
at times—sometimes it seems
I no longer have anything
to say except to you.²
What kind of honesty,
tell me, must be shunned.
Did you manage to get drunk. Ocean
from a hydrophobic restaurant. In Greece
while I—did you, too, wait
for unfamiliar fingers often.
Each landscape altered
the color, as if taking off
a glove, of its mind.
Each sundown too nuanced to know
or tell from another.
Grenier's solitude among the empirical
sand dunes. I shall abandon all this in exchange
for one good film,³ he wrote Camus.
I know mine, what is your choice
of film. Write to me
despite my silence.⁴ Nyquil-orange
night, silence. Manhattan rush hours
in a falsetto. Passengers yearning
in a split country to take
the last train and be home at last
cannot. Is it not surprising
I still found you, and knew.
Drunk, I sandal
into salt marsh. Clutch myself
like a rabbit hutch. A nyquil-
blue night, of silence. Consider my youth
when judging me.⁵ Wines all the way
from Napa Valley. Where I last
asked you—salvo
or salvage. Banters along
the sunbelt. All of which I uncork
with this slowness, now, of yours.

¹ Grenier wrote in his letter to Camus in 1954.

² Camus wrote in his letter to Grenier in 1948.

³ Jean Grenier originally said this in *Les fies*, and the poem
imagines him saying this in his correspondence with Camus.

⁴ Camus wrote in the letter to Grenier in 1948.

⁵ Camus said to Grenier when he wrote about his disagreement
with his uncle in 1933.

Suphil Lee Park



Photo

I'm wearing a sailor dress.
Outdoors, grass.

I sit in a lawn chair.
Hands folded in my lap.

My hair, a fiery straw,
tints the whole scene
reddish orange.

Everyone wants to love me
in the late afternoon light.

I'm going down in flames, red
as Mother's red hair.

I'm looking off.
Elsewhere.

Hands folded.
Strangely wooden in my lap.

As if someone has arranged them.

Even in the picture,
you can tell.

I'm already long,
long gone.

Safia Jama



sallie gardner at a gallop

Keith S. Wilson

if history is a labor of love it remains

between the horizontals and the divine verticals

reason is an afterthought

for survival

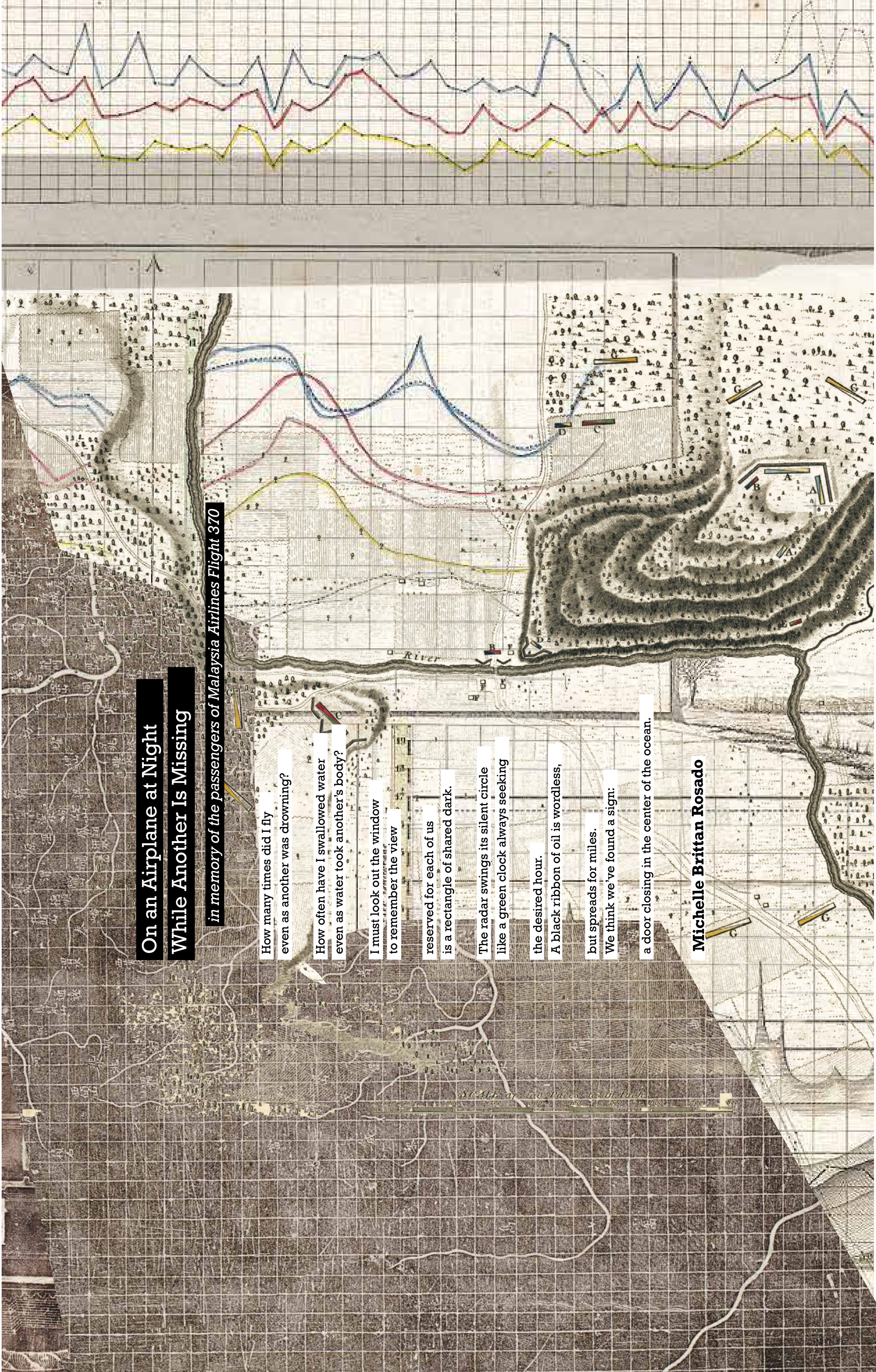
we can justify any movement

every muscle has been blamed at one time or another for

escape

we are incredible we are
can be

so fast



On an Airplane at Night
While Another Is Missing

in memory of the passengers of Malaysia Airlines Flight 370

How many times did I fly
even as another was drowning?

How often have I swallowed water
even as water took another's body?

I must look out the window
to remember the view

reserved for each of us
is a rectangle of shared dark.

The radar swings its silent circle
like a green clock always seeking

the desired hour.


A black ribbon of oil is wordless,

but spreads for miles.

We think we've found a sign:

a door closing in the center of the ocean.

Michelle Brittan Rosado



Green was the Silence

from a line by Pablo Neruda

It changes meaning like water,
as a living being, like unfettered civility,
a sunny breezeful summer ahead.
The start of June, it is altogether
stifling and as if things would never be straight
again we feel as if we had promised to be
dark and mortal, soon, like strangers
from the past we promised to be each other's
solid memory. We have shortness of breath
and a pounding inside the lungs.
We cannot remember a time when we were able
to sleep before when we were former and usual
vivid beings who existed in the city of Los Angeles,
drifting through rivers of errands and emeralds,
as if nothing had happened. We are
lost now. As if we had been careless. Dropped out.
Like music not written down but whistled and hummed
and played under strange circumstances.
Like a stranger with a guitar at a party.
It is nearly June, near the longest day of the year,
as Jordan comments in *The Great Gatsby*, a seasonal marker
complete with a sign that says, "We're done now."
And we are together and alone and about to
get reckless and cruel, but yet this time it will
be different. This year, belonging to the entangled
world that has been ripped apart.
We are limited by so many things since
the quarantine, absolute touch and hunger
and it all goes to show us that nothing
is visible or at hand any more.
We are a perfect example of ration
and virtue, essentially savage and, yet—in a new sense—
we are blindly controllable. We feel alternately
safe and in danger, every moment altered,
with no telling which statement above is truer.
We are reckless-absolute and sexual-reasonable
full of home-shocked martyrdom and wary of being
present for what is about to come. We pretend
to be on holiday and take
out the board games, self-full of pride and fear,
notching achievements with false pride:
your charm, my conflict—our 24-hour conversations
lack a richness of reality,
embodied with a generous sadness.

Millicent Borges Accardi



We Made It

We were tired and we were wide awake.
We were aching to stop and to keep going.
Anecdotes begat antidotes. Stories told

round a fire, curing us, cursing us. We were
going backward to go forward. So said
the prophets seeking profits. There's no

other way around it. Around what? This
harbor where worship begat warships.
So keep your religion under your hat,

rolled to prevent wrinkles. We tied down
our tent flaps though in reality we wanted
them to blow away. Reality a relative term.

Second cousin twice removed. We scrolled
through our to-do list and to-don't list.
A narrative to keep the action moving

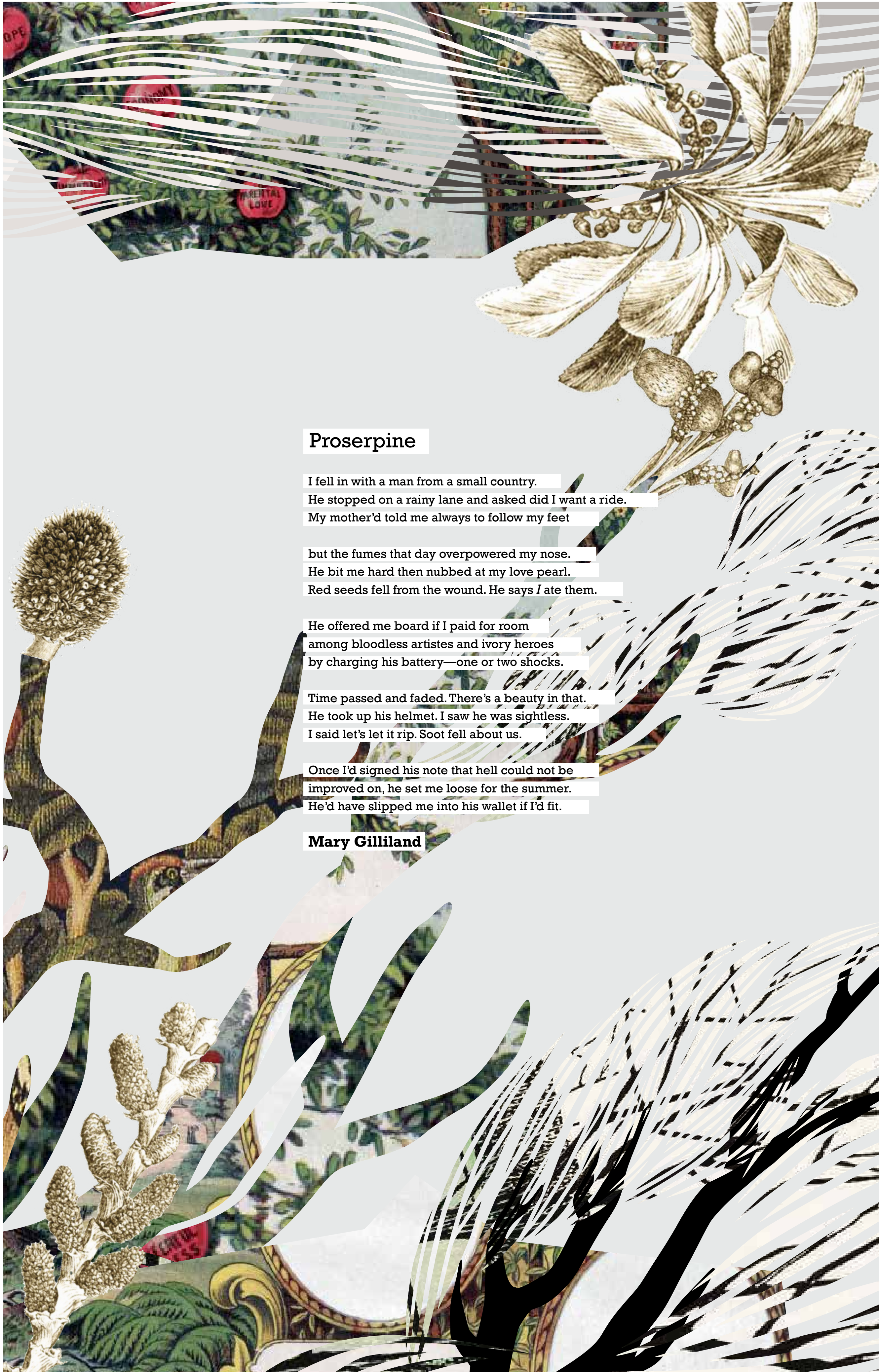
which is why it came to an abrupt halt.
To observe ourselves from a new angle we
looked from the same angle. Oh fearless

planet. In truth, we were sore afraid.
Ours was a wild relationship predicated
upon predicates. We drew on cave walls

to inform future generations what we
could not inform ourselves: to see something
strange, look at something ordinary,

again and again. And so we made it to
the top by not making it to the top, by
dancing long after the dance had stopped.

Susan Johnson



Proserpine

I fell in with a man from a small country.
He stopped on a rainy lane and asked did I want a ride.
My mother'd told me always to follow my feet

but the fumes that day overpowered my nose.
He bit me hard then nubbed at my love pearl.
Red seeds fell from the wound. He says *I* ate them.

He offered me board if I paid for room
among bloodless artistes and ivory heroes
by charging his battery—one or two shocks.

Time passed and faded. There's a beauty in that.
He took up his helmet. I saw he was sightless.
I said let's let it rip. Soot fell about us.

Once I'd signed his note that hell could not be
improved on, he set me loose for the summer.
He'd have slipped me into his wallet if I'd fit.

Mary Gilliland



Checklist for Tuesday

1 Choose

spaces,

tender layers—
sparrows puffed
against chill
wind.

3 Inhabit

pebbles

May we
be well, free
from inner or
outer harm.

river sandbar,
water's vow,
mink tracks.

4 Renounce

breath

sweet

to settle in
ladyshipper's
nectarless
pouch

2 Arrange

smooth

CUT OUT
THIS SQUARE

Amelia L. Williams

1. **Print and cut out** the fortune teller/cootie catcher. Cut along the outermost square.
2. **Fold in half and in half again.** The folds will intersect in the center.
3. **Open out, turn over** so the poem faces down. Take one outer corner and pull its tip into the center, folding along the diagonal line to form a triangular flap.
4. **Repeat** with the other 3 corners. Now you have a smaller square. Turn this

- smaller square over and repeat folding in the corners.
5. **Turn over so you can see the numbered flaps.** Fold the cootie catcher in half.
6. **Slide thumb and index finger** of right hand under the 2 flaps on the right. Do the same on the left.
7. **Push** your fingers toward one another so the top point of each flap touches the others.

Now you are ready to use your cootie catcher! Each numbered flap can combine with 4 inner sequences for a total of 16 possible combinations of the poem.

Laura McCullough's (she/her) most recent book of poems is *Wild Night Dress*, selected by Billy Collins in the Miller Williams poetry series from Arkansas University Press. Her forthcoming book is *Women & Other Hostages*, due out in spring 2021 from Black Lawrence Press.

Dia Roth (she/they) is a queer poet based in Seattle, WA. Their work appears in *Hawaii Pacific Review*, *The Selkie*, and *Sky Island Journal*.

Suphil Lee Park (she/her) is the author of *Present Tense Complex*, winner of the Marystina Santiestevan Prize. She grew up in South Korea and was educated at New York University and University of Texas, Austin. Her poems appear in *Global Poetry Anthology*, *Ploughshares*, and the *Massachusetts Review*, among others.



Safia Jama (she/her) was born to a Somali father and an Irish American mother in Queens, New York. Her poetry has been featured on WNYC's *Morning Edition* and CUNY TV's *Shades of US*. She is the author of *Notes on Resilience*, selected for the New-Generation African Poets chapbook series.

Keith S. Wilson (he/him) is an Affrilachian Poet and a Cave Canem fellow. He is a recipient of an NEA Fellowship and an Elizabeth George Foundation Grant and has received both a Kenyon Review Fellowship and a Stegner Fellowship. His book, *Fieldnotes on Ordinary Love*, is available from Copper Canyon Press.

Michelle Brittan Rosado (she/her) is the author of *Why Can't It Be Tenderness* from University of Wisconsin Press and *Theory on Falling into a Reef* from Anhinga Press. She holds a PhD in Literature & Creative Writing from the University of Southern California, where she now teaches. See more at www.michellebrittanrosado.com.

Millicent Borges Accardi (she/her), a Portuguese-American writer, is the author of three poetry books, most recently *Only More So* from Salmon Poetry. Her awards include fellowships from the National Endowment for the Arts, Fulbright, CantoMundo, Creative Capacity, the California Arts Council, The Corporation of Yaddo, Fundação Luso-Americana, and Barbara Deming Foundation.

Susan Johnson (she/her) teaches writing at the University of Massachusetts Amherst. Her poems have recently appeared in *North American Review*, *San Pedro River Review*, *Off The Coast*, and *SLAB*. She lives in South Hadley, MA, and her commentaries can be heard on NEPR.

Mary Gilliland (she/her) hails from the Northeast United States. Her poetry has appeared in *AGNI*, *Hotel Amerika*, *Notre Dame Review*, *Poetry*, *Stand*, *Vallum*, and others and in the anthology *Nuclear Impact: Broken Atoms In Our Hands*. Her award-winning *The Ruined Walled Castle Garden* was published by Bright Hill Press.


Amelia L. Williams (she/her) is a medical writer and coordinator of The Ties That Bind, A #NoPipelines Collaborative Community Art and Story Project. Her book, *Walking Wildwood Trail: Poems and Photographs*, benefits #NoPipelines organizations. Find her poems in *Rabbit: a journal for nonfiction poetry*, *Nimrod International Journal*, *3Elements*, *Origins*, *K'in*, and www.wildink.net.

Editor in Chief: Anna Leahy
Creative Director: Claudine Jaenichen
Criticism Editor: Brian Glaser
Readers and Book Reviewers: Liz Harmer, Daniel Miess, Sam Risak, Laila Shikaki, Jason Thornberry, Tryphena Yeboah

Internal Advisory Board: Douglas R. Dechow, Leatherby Libraries; David Krausman, Wilkinson College; Joanna Levin, English Department
Special thanks: The Braille Institute, Chapman University's Office of Research, and Sonia Lopez
ISSN: 2169-3013
www.TabJournal.org

© **TAB: The Journal of Poetry & Poetics**
No part of this publication may be reproduced in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, without prior written permission from *Tab Journal*. Rights to individual contributions remain the property of their authors.

Department of English, Chapman University
One University Drive, Orange, CA 92866
www.TabJournal.org

 **CHAPMAN**
UNIVERSITY
Wilkinson College of
Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences
Department of English