

T A B

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THE CENTER FOR POETRY AT CHAPMAN UNIVERSITY



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

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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 the reader to negotiate between image and text. The design does not assume a traditional role of unobtrusively framing content; instead, design actively shapes the reading experience and experiments with the intersections between form and content, object and space, and reader and reading.

The 2024 print issue plays with concepts of collaboration. For the first time in *Tab Journal's* twelve years, the Creative Director has paired with another designer, Jessica Oddi, to create the visual language of this print issue. The bold visual backgrounds demonstrate a painterly process of two artists in the same space mark-making on one canvas together.

These visual elements become front and back partners of each poster–sheet–page. The conversations between this design and the poems themselves (text and voice) amplify the definition that this printed issue is at once a singular object and two interdependent parts, like a door hinge or a pair of pliers. One component cannot operate without the other. Pairs are categorized as twos or duos of parts, people, or ideas, but pairing carries the complexity of layers. The pairing of wine and cheese embodies two objects with their own distinct processes, standards for

quality, time for aging, textures, and experience of taste. In medicine, *theragnostic* refers to the pairing of diagnostic biomarkers with therapeutic agents to provide treatment matched to an individual. In a kinematic pair, each of two physical objects imposes constraints on the movement of the other. Pairing risks the mismatch, invites the unintended connection, and suggests what is left out by quantitative limits. The goal for this issue is partnership, conversation, celebration of the depth and complications of useful pairings.

To request one or more copies of the print issue, please use the Contact form on the *Tab Journal* website TabJournal.org.

Chen Du (she/her) is a voting member of the American Translators Association and an expert member of the Translators Association of China with a Master's Degree in Biophysics from Roswell Park Cancer Institute, SUNY–Buffalo and another from the Chinese Academy of Sciences.

Xisheng Chen (he/him), a Chinese American, is an ESL grammarian, lexicologist, linguist, translator, and educator. He has taught at the departments of English and Social Sciences of Trine University (formerly Tri-State University). He has been a translator for over three decades.

A prominent poet in contemporary China, **Yan An** (he/him) is the author of fourteen poetry books, including *Rock Arrangement. A Naturalist's Manor*, translated by Chen Du and Xisheng Chen and published by Chax Press, was shortlisted for the 2022 Lucien Stryk Asian Translation Prize, administered by the American Literary Translators Association.

Situations of a Bird and Two People

translated by Chen Du and Xisheng Chen

To the north of the North spacious and remote
Passing through legends about rare birds exterminated by hunters
A crow is blown thither by a gale in a skew-askew manner
From the endless blank of the celestial dome

Abandoned to the bowels of the earth like a speck of seed
I have matured gradually
And acquired some kind of countenance as of a beast
Which I wish could abruptly hearten
A dejected tree from its dispiritedness
And could continuously divulge heaven's secrets
To some extent

Propelled by a gale a child astray in the city
Remains reticent like a kind of long extinct animal
Loves to walk alone in the shadows


Or clamber up the telegraph edifice in the city hall square
Under the cover of a dead night with everything quiet
To shout and yell for a while
And then return to his sound slumber on a subway passage
Like an unkempt elf

一只鸟和两个人的境况 by Yan An

北方之北 空旷辽远
越过传说 名贵之鸟被猎人们斩尽杀绝
从风中歪歪斜斜吹来的一只乌鸦
来自天空无限的空白

被遗弃在大地深处 像一颗种子
当我渐渐成熟起来
拥有了某种类似野兽的表情
我愿那是可以让一棵颓败的树
在颓败中突然振作起来
和某种程度上
可以继续泄露天机的表情

被风推动着 一个误入城中的孩子
他持续沉默着 像某种绝迹已久的动物
喜欢一个人在阴影里行走
也喜欢乘着夜深人静 独自一人
攀上市政广场的电报大楼大喊大叫一番
之后 像一个不修边幅的小精灵
再一次回到地铁过道上的熟睡中

The background is an abstract composition of yellow and blue. It features a network of thin, intersecting yellow lines that create a sense of movement and complexity. Large, soft-edged yellow shapes are layered over a darker blue background, which also contains some blue geometric patterns, possibly resembling stylized leaves or feathers. The overall effect is a vibrant, textured, and somewhat chaotic visual field.

Denise Duhamel's (she/her) most recent books of poetry are *Second Story* from University of Pittsburgh Press and *Scald*. *Blowout* was a finalist for the National Book Critics Circle Award. She is a distinguished university professor in the MFA program at Florida International University in Miami.

Poem in Which I Contemplate Loneliness Through a Peephole

by Denise Duhamel

Through my door's
magic eye I see a couple
fighting in miniature. Am I
wrong to enjoy this scene through
my one-way lens, gloating I am not either
one of them? They yell, framed by a circle,
like the end of an old Looney Tunes
cartoon. Then the ping of the
elevator—That's all folks!—
and they disappear.

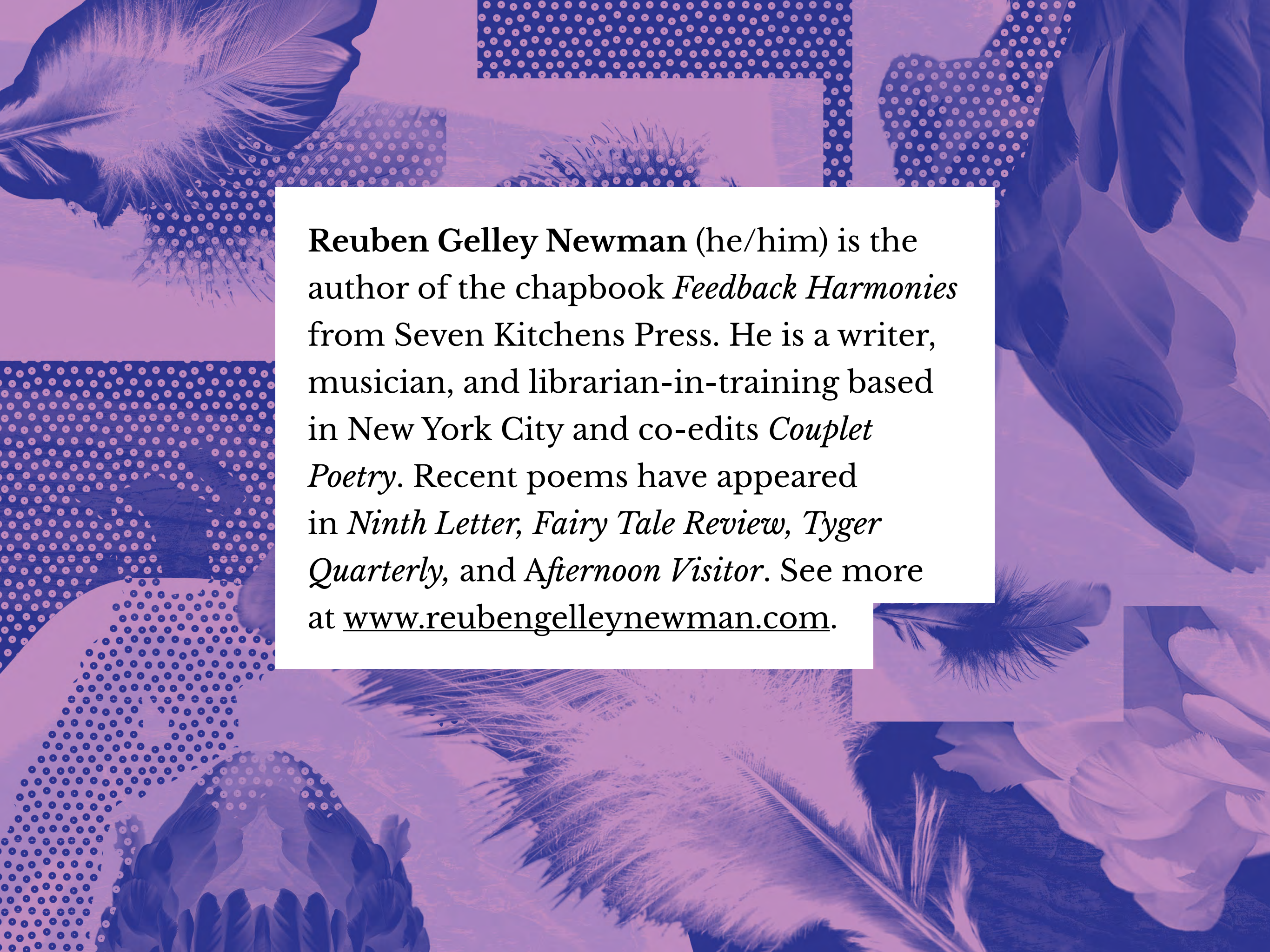
Poem in Which I Contemplate Imposter Syndrome

by Denise Duhamel

Each fall I have the same dream.

I'm writing on the board, my students
raising their hands, ready to answer
my questions when there's a knock
on the classroom door. *You don't teach
here anymore*, two men in suits (deans?)
tell me. *You never graduated high school—
you still have one more intermediate
math class to take. Therefore your college
degrees are also revoked. Hand over the chalk.*

I'm escorted out of Academic One,
my students laughing cruelly or maybe
nervously, feeling stung. If this could
happen to me, what about them?



Reuben Gelley Newman (he/him) is the author of the chapbook *Feedback Harmonies* from Seven Kitchens Press. He is a writer, musician, and librarian-in-training based in New York City and co-edits *Couplet Poetry*. Recent poems have appeared in *Ninth Letter*, *Fairy Tale Review*, *Tyger Quarterly*, and *Afternoon Visitor*. See more at www.reubengelleynewman.com.

[Two toads devolved in a cello brood] by Reuben Gelley Newman

after Robert Frost

Two toads devolved in a cello brood,
And worry eye-mold knot shovel broth
And ghee spawn gravel ore, throng I stewed
And brooked lawn, dun asphalt as I blued
To bare bit rent in the sundered tooth;

Then pluck the mother, agitate where,
And braving stirrups of wetter game,
Peruse it fuzz, gassy and planted brayer,
Bow, defer rat, amassing share
Plaid warm gum dilly a doubt unclaim,

And growth hat-forming equinely gay
In sheaves no pep had sodden lack.
Oh, I wept the worst for another play!

Yet blowing sow neigh feeds manta ray,
I plotted glyph I pooled lever thrum thwack.

I crawl respelling grist with a lie
Impaired phages and phages askance:
Two toads devolved in a cello brood, and I—
I spooked the sun dress-deviled sigh,
And that grasp grayed all the effulgence.

[Two nodes divulged in a mellow mood] by Reuben Gelley Newman

after Robert Frost

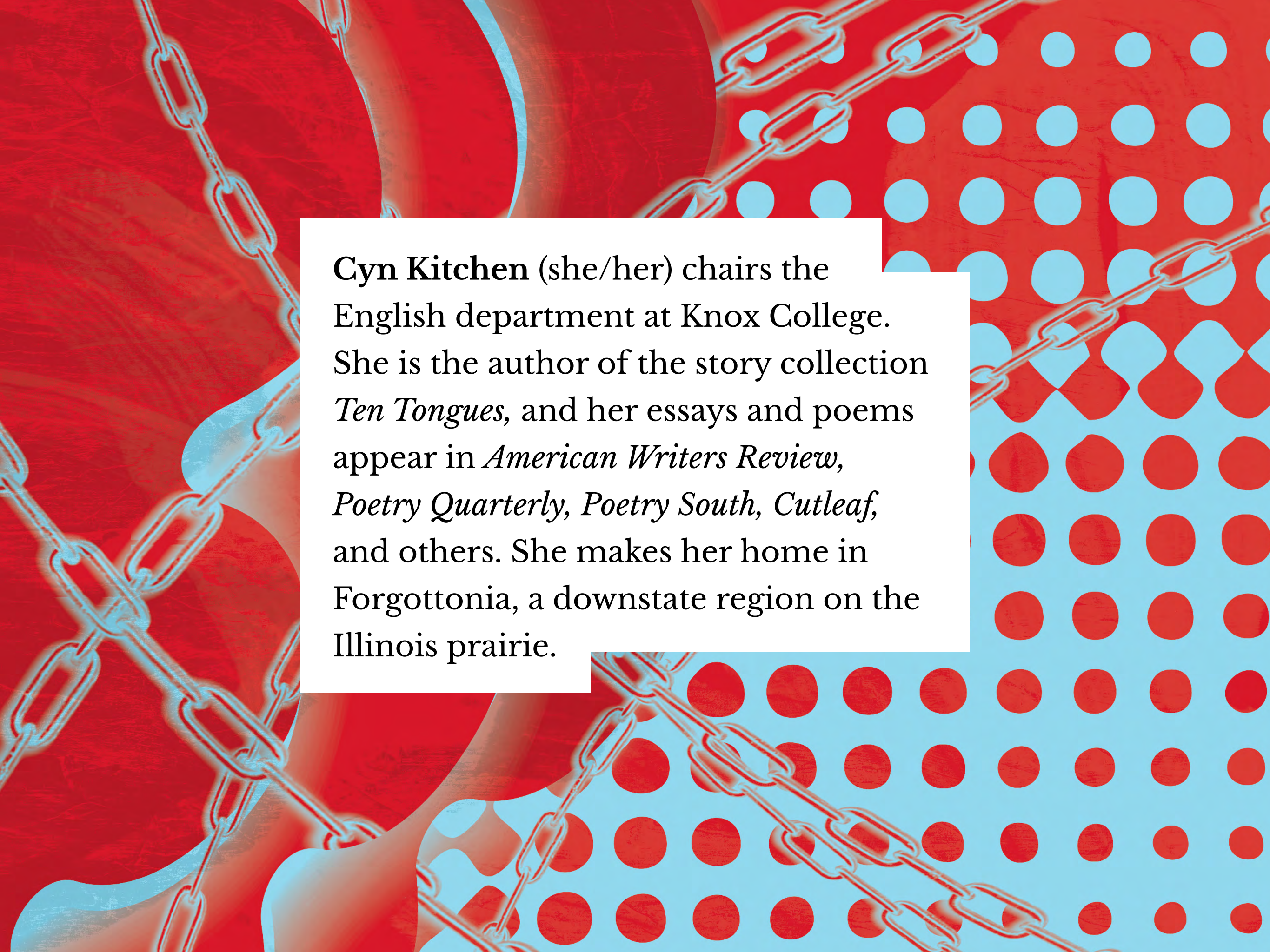
Two nodes divulged in a mellow mood,
And glory I told thought ravel truth
And begone leveler, song I rued
And hooked sound sun as star as I glued
To air split lent in the wonder oath;

Then look! the ether, aspen clasp hair,
And shaving chirrup of feathered aim,
Pecans with lush glaze and vaunted pears;
Flow asphodel the splashing prayer
Glad horn hum silly redoubt the name;

And truth fat burning squirrely play
In eaves go! pep rad sudden crack.
Oh, I leapt the burst for another ray!

Yet showing bough clay seeds onto clay,
I spouted riff I spooled silver hum tack.

I fall free swelling kiss lisp up high
Unaware pages and pages dance:
Two nodes divulged in a mellow mood, and I—
I spooked the sun dress-deviled sigh,
And that grasp grayed all the effulgence.

The background is a vibrant red and blue abstract design. It features a grid of white polka dots on a blue background, overlaid with a pattern of white chains on a red background. The chains are composed of interlocking links, some of which are highlighted with a glowing effect. The overall composition is dynamic and visually striking.

Cyn Kitchen (she/her) chairs the English department at Knox College. She is the author of the story collection *Ten Tongues*, and her essays and poems appear in *American Writers Review*, *Poetry Quarterly*, *Poetry South*, *Cutleaf*, and others. She makes her home in Forgottonia, a downstate region on the Illinois prairie.

When Leaving, Again by Cyn Kitchen

taillights grow smaller,
brighten momentarily on braking
then slow for the curve that leads
west toward the mountains
rising at prairie's edge.


this fractured existence, living
where I love, loving what is no
longer here. this separation
of prairie & mountain tethered
by highways strung like lights
across the Plains.

this, our reduction, our expansion
no less wrenching
than those pangs of birth
that brought you here. this,

the push & pull of wanting you
here, insisting you go, bereft, left
as you disappear from sight.

Self Portrait by Cyn Kitchen

bleached against the brown
bare forest stands the tall
gray birch, towering among
unadorned huddled revenants. who
on this prairie put you here, from
whose beak did you fall, take root.
there are no accidents though
you were given no choice. still
look at you now, being seen
as if for the first time.



Jerry Liebllich (they/them) plays in the borderlands of theater, poetry, and music. Their plays include *Mahinerator*; *D Deb Debbie Deborah*, a Critic's Pick at the *New York Times*; *Ghost Stories*; and *Everything for Dawn*. Their poetry has appeared in *Foglifter*, *Grist*, *Cold Mountain Review*, and others. They have held residencies at MacDowell, MassMoCA, Millay Arts, Yiddishkayt, and others. See more at www.thirdear.nyc.

in and of by Jerry Liebllich

after Barbara Guest

a breaking thing, whose failure indicates

experience

aspiring to

self

erasure as a form

of a limitless

ness —

*

a contingent (,)

(compositional) milieu ,

the self participates

with caution

absent (,) a view

from nowhere

it's beginning to snow

it's snowing

windowsill

(particular (,) quanta)

an experience of legibility

in and of,

self as

milieu as

condensation

*

beware the view

from here

(a sign)

COMPREHENSIBLE

mountain edge

in chalk

(aspiration's
solitary (,) cohesion)

the sidewalk (,)
ends

Oceanic

squall

how, not what by Jerry Liebllich

a feather (hawk), useless but for
evidence (synecdochic) of

pattern (stripes),
tended

by thumb and finger (index)
pad, [name

for hooks on feather strands]
broken, [name

for feather strands] snapped
off, for [a sense] (participants') of

the hawk
feather, useless

but for seeing
through, [lines]

evidence (synecdochic)
composition (patterned, damaged), still

(hollow) [slows
air] lifts

for wind today a wind by Jerry Lieblich

what is the wind chimes leaves flies moving air in

a direction any direction is no thing is and or or

a wave the trees the way trees sound or wind for wind what is


nouns or names or disconnects

what is is if wind is still

is is and mind or is in mind on mind

or any other or between who cares and who cares for

or without ends



Raymond Luczak (he/him) is the author and editor of over thirty books, including the poetry collections *Far from Atlantis* and *Chlorophyll*. His next two titles appearing in 2024 include the anthology *Yooper Poetry: On Experiencing Michigan's Upper Peninsula* and *Animals Out-There W-i-l-d: A Bestiary* in English and ASL Gloss. See more at www.raymondluczak.com.

My Ghost Boy by Raymond Luczak

In the deepest of twilights
among the shipwrecks
still gardening the frozen Eden
in the pits of Lake Superior,
there swims a ghost who used
to be me, a boy who was afraid
of drowning. His eyes are
full of fish-gray. The shreds
of his Popeye t-shirt still twirl
around his chest. His skin
has turned into scales
that would have caught the hook
of sunshine had he come up
for a last breath of air.
Some nights I dive down there
without a wetsuit or a tank

when I am feeling lonely.
Am I that fatherless?
I want to feel the ice-blood
of the drowned shoot up
in my veins. I want to hypo-
thermia the sadness out
of my veins. When I think
I will at last die, the ghost boy
turtles underneath me,
his body magnetizing mine
as he paddles me upward
through the gauze of cold
in yet another undrowning
until I breathe in clarity.

First A-S-L Sign Me-Learn What | My First ASL Sign by Raymond Luczak

in American Sign Language (ASL) gloss and English

me very young realize hearing people	Back then I'd already grasped the language
strange behavior why	of strangeness among hearing people

{point-to-mouth bah-bah-bah} for-for	who used their mouths and sounds to communicate.
{body hearing aids} earmolds	My twin hearing aids strapped onto my chest


hear-hear hearing people laugh odd eat-eat time	amplified their mysterious laughter at the dinner table.
not-want learn speak-speak but me lonely	I didn't want to speak but I was a lonely boy

want hearing people around-me happy	felt driven to please and appease all those
them look-down-on-me {look up}	hearing adults who looked down on me

{shaking sad face with a flat hand on chest}	and shook their heads out of pity.
then happen me stay foster family	Then I had to stay with a foster family

two-hour drive stay week Sunday Friday enter deaf oral program	two hours away from home during the week so I could participate a special program
us deaf kids gather-together learn-learn speech signing forbidden	designed to make deaf children learn how to speak. Sign language was forbidden.
program t-a-p-i-o-l-a school road {circle-around} short-distance there trees	Beyond the road that circled Tapiola School was a small cluster of evergreens
us deaf kids r-e-c-e-s-s gather-together gesture-gesture point-point-each-other	where we deaf kids congregated in recess, gesturing and pointing at each other.
back-then not-know sign but hands know inside finish	We didn't know Sign back then, but our hands were already fighting to say
voice turn-off must sign something then one day s-e-p-t deaf girl d-a-r-l-e-n-e	something meaningful beyond our voices. Then came along a deaf girl named Darlene
pop-up herself student classroom next-door older deaf students there	on a cold September day. She was a student in the classroom for older deaf students

us young deaf them older deaf mingle r-a-r-e-l-y interact r-e-c-e-s-s that-all	next door to ours. We younger kids never interacted much with them outside of recess.
d-a-r-l-e-n-e me-think seven years older sit next-me school b-u-s wait go f-i-e-l-d trip	Probably seven years older than I was, she sat next to me on the school bus for a field trip
where ? me-forget now but anyway teachers not there	waiting to go somewhere—I forget where— but our teachers weren't with us
d-a-r-l-e-n-e look-me-eye glasses {cat-eyes} sign something	for a few minutes. She looked into my eyes with her solid cat-eyes and signed something
not-understand she oh-oh {mouth-mouth} word both {points to mouth} “both”	I didn't understand. Then she mouthed the word as her V-hand slid down the short tunnel
look-up her-face me-jaw-drop why? she-break rule sign-sign!	of her other hand: “both.” I looked up at her smirking face. She'd broken the law!
finish me want stay-with-her learn-learn secret sign-sign escape hearing people	Forevermore I would become that accomplice itching to break into the vault of Sign.



Sandra Marchetti (she/her) is the author of two full-length poetry collections, *Aisle 228* from Stephen F. Austin State University Press and *Confluence* from Sundress Publications, as well as four chapbooks of poetry and essays. She earned her MFA from George Mason University and serves as the Assistant Manager of Academic Support at Harper College.

Friday, 1:20 by Sandra Marchetti

If you shut
your eyes

you'll forget
where you are

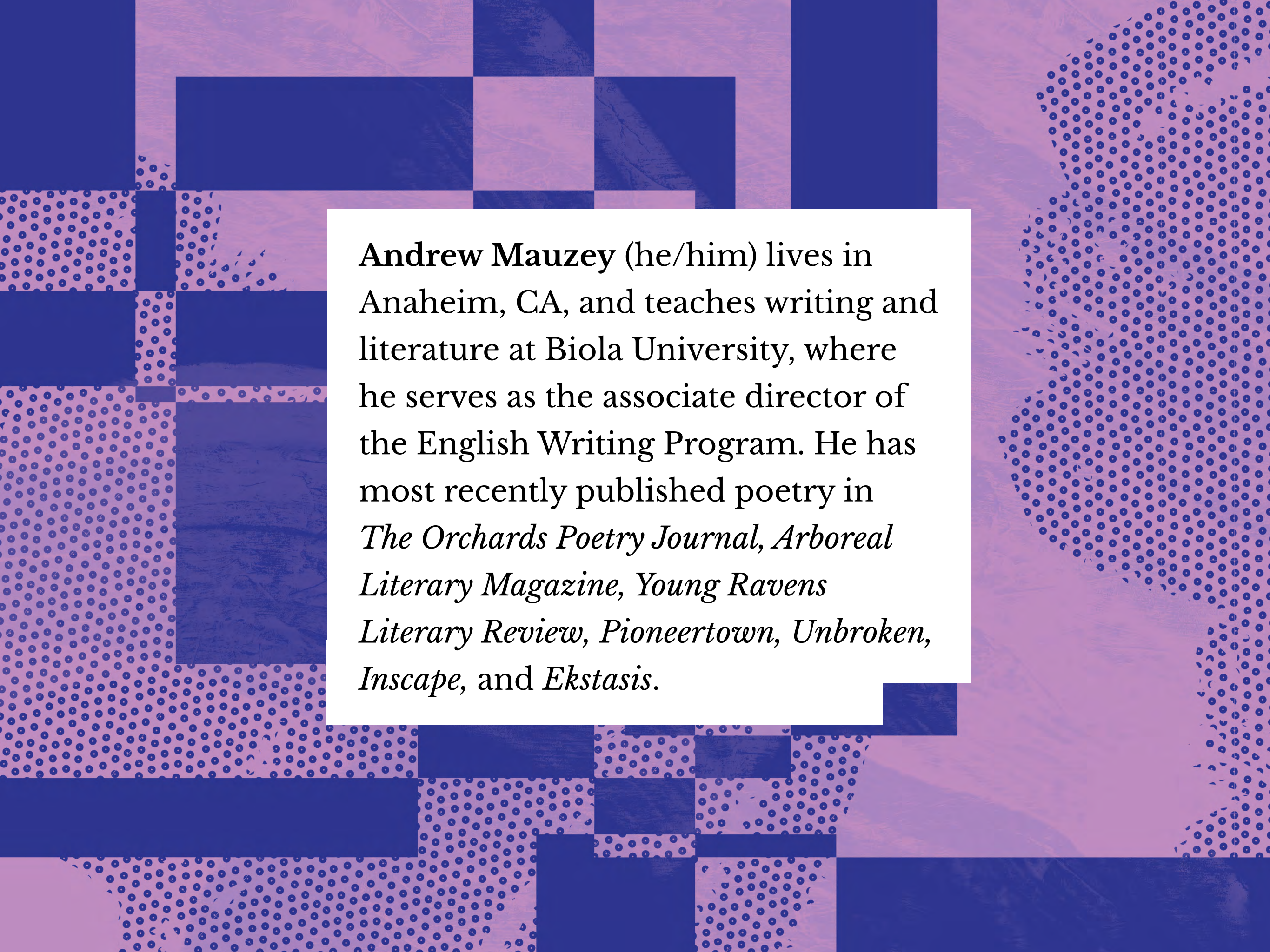
and hear
the nature

of real things.
From your seat

the long, low
call of the hot

dog vendor is
a mourning dove

singing to
those he loves.



Andrew Mauzey (he/him) lives in Anaheim, CA, and teaches writing and literature at Biola University, where he serves as the associate director of the English Writing Program. He has most recently published poetry in *The Orchards Poetry Journal*, *Arboreal Literary Magazine*, *Young Ravens Literary Review*, *Pioneertown*, *Unbroken*, *Inscape*, and *Ekstasis*.

The Moon Enjoys a Performance by Andrew Mauzey

There is a production to night—
the thin breeze, the harsh light
that must drop away, the way

day rolls in on itself. Some
nights, my impulses beg
to stand center stage, my eyes

cannot ignore the spotlight
from the window when close
enough to see through glass.


These nights, I try to lose
myself, to give in to the compulsion
of a whim and sing into an air

that swings like Sinatra until
the wind cracks into a hat
dance, until the spirited notes

of evening crawl under my skin
to shake my belly dry of sleep,
until it runs full force into a kind

of hysteria, something like books
without pages and days without
minutes. People like radio, theater,

television. The sky, too, enjoys
a performance, and, so, I become
the king of my own late night.



Kimberly Ann Priest (she/her) is the author of *Slaughter the One Bird* and three chapbooks, with books forthcoming from Texas Review Press and Unsolicited Press. An assistant professor at Michigan State University, her work has appeared in *Beloit*, *Copper Nickel*, and *Birmingham Poetry Review*. She lives in Maine. See more at www.kimberlyannpriest.com.

in memorium by Kimberly Ann Priest

i.

after the strokes, my mother answers the question *what is something I may not know about our family?* in a journal for her grandchildren

~~I was window and just stars outside at snowflake coming down. I seasons
& beautiful scenery. I rain of hard or I was love standing in the puddle.
I love thunderstorms I was use to hide under roof & trees & until
daddy except I was young was stand front porch hear pitter patter on
raindrops. will it in night was scare at moon & stars milkyway at the
window. I was small bedroom a girl we fix my room. I had snowflake
and snow in the window. I curl up on my bed to see windows.~~

Love

was hide

will scare

had snow

ii.

after her death, my mother answers the question *what is something my mother may not know about our family?* in a poem

[a contrapuntal]

just stars
coming down,
scenery standing in storms
under Daddy,

[God]

was
standing in a puddle,

roof & trees
& I
was young—*pitter patter*—
a girl

except


we fix

my curl

at the window

I was small;
had snowflake & snow
on my bed

to see



Susan Rich (she/her) is the author of seven books, including *Blue Atlas*, forthcoming from Red Hen Press, and *Gallery of Postcards and Maps: New and Selected Poems*. She is co-editor of *Demystifying the Manuscript: Essays and Interviews on Creating a Book of Poems* and director of Poets on the Coast. See more at www.poetsusanrich.com.

Heartscape/Cityscape by Susan Rich

Down the alley of blackberry tunnel,
down the steps of disappointment,

across the solitary traffic island—

We sing to the stripped branches
of beach rose, listen to the kingfisher

still as a life on hold.

Days take-on the weight of mortgages
which sway over the water's edge on stilts—

like women avalanched by time.

Mt. Rainier rises as a cloud window,
as an unused wedding cake.

And when the Olympics appear in snowdrifts of lace—


my heart map switches on.

Not metaphors for love or loss,

but the sirens of this life.

This coastline built from clash, and from calm,
like the kingfisher that hunts each night

in refracted, tidal light.

The background is a collage. It includes several feathers of different colors and textures, some with soft, downy bases. There are also rectangular sections with a white polka-dot pattern on a dark background. A single white flower is visible in the bottom right corner. The overall color palette is dominated by dark blues, purples, and greys, with the white text box and flower providing contrast.

T. W. Sia (he/him) is a queer immigrant from Myanmar. He holds a BA from Swarthmore College and is pursuing an MD from Stanford University.

In the clearest sketches after memory by T.W. Sia

Longing is the cigarette

that I smoke behind the complex,
and a canyon can grow out like a cactus flower.

I am making out with my loss,

huffing breaths between sobs,
my open mouth can fit more desert sand,

one more grain one more grain

*

I am never making enough
memories to keep, never buttoning my shirts or my nights

down the middle, I am afraid this is all I will come to be.
If I think hard enough, I think

I am the one who should have died.
Each night I fight in my sleep.

*

I went to the convenience store and
they shoved the lighter I bought for you

in a plastic bag. On the way home I mouthed
no please no please, there is a dream I have


where I am The Girl From Ipanema (in D-flat)
and the lighter is skinny dipping in the plastic ocean.

We are two girls humming and skipping down the highway.
We are walking each other home gently.

*

In this life, I am the one who is, I am

cutting my hands to give water to my mouth.
I am drawing sketches from the blood.



Emily Velasquez (she/her) is a writer in Santa Anna, CA, and a Dual MA/MFA student at Chapman University. Her reviews appear at *Tab Journal* and *Soapberry Review*.

Book Review by Emily Velasquez

Promise of Gold / Promesas de Oro by Jose Olivarez (MacMillan, 2023)

When one thinks of a dedication, it usually involves someone or something you have come to believe as a pillar or immeasurable influence in your life. Jose Olivarez, a poet, educator, and performer from Chicago is the author of *Promises of Gold / Promesas de Oro*, a book of poetry that was recently long listed for the 2023 National Book Award. Olivarez has crafted a collection with eleven sections that read as dedication poems confronting questions about family, community, machismo, brothers, and friendships through his navigation of what a promise of love means. Olivarez births a collection that duels with not only language, but also the duality of trying to love while existing in a culture where the immigrant's eyes blink towards an unattainable American dream.

In this collection with three sections titled "Glory" and two titled "Ojalá, Ojalá, Ojalá," Olivarez reveals that you might find glory and gold through promises, but you will also find the promises that sounds like *Ojalá*, or a wish or a desire for something to happen. For Olivarez, promises are not linear, and these poems explore how promises can get misconstrued, especially in the Latinx culture where one is raised with these preconceived ideas that masculinity is about power,

control, and a certain kind of manliness. In the poem “Regret or My Dad Says Love,” Olivarez captures the hostility of not knowing if what his father is expressing is love or regret. In the last lines of this poem, he writes:

to be a dad is to be bossed
at work & bossed at home.
it’s easy to daydream about love
when it is a chorus of kisses.
what about when love is a dirty diaper
& a snot nose?
my dad rarely said love,
but he always left the bar.

The way Olivarez speaks of the burden that this kind of masculinity places on Mexican men and how that affects the narrator’s perspective on their father’s love or what looks like love is captivating.

Throughout the trajectory of this collection, the poems place the reader in the pit of how the use of Ojalá until it becomes the repeated language that bleeds through each poem. Its task becomes to reframe what it means to deal with

dysfunctional aspects of love. In the line “what about when love is a dirty diaper / & a snot nose,” Olivarez creates the image of the unpleasurable, the uncomfortable reality of what love is when it doesn’t feel or seem like love.

Jose Olivarez offers us this book of poetry with a generous dedication, staying intact with his community and personal experiences. This work represents Mexican or Latinx writers who, like Olivarez, are part of a lineage where tragedies are, in many ways, what help deconstruct love and the promise of it. *Promises of Gold / Promesas de Oro* is an exceptional collection that rearranges and restructures how to write about love without promising the future for which one is tempted to wish.