

**Bay Farm Island**

(Alameda, California)

Wind blows windsurfer sails seaward  
beneath the full curve of a gull's wing.

Sand responds not to the steadiness of wind,  
but just lies there, daring it to blow everything away,  
as the wind tugs, ripples, vies with tides, surf,  
and headwinds that turn tables  
turned by past seasons.

Joggers oil their hearts with sweat,  
prepare for races to be won nose by toe.

Voices of fishermen are caught and  
fanned into the wind. Sleek hulls sail  
into currents too loud for metal detectors,  
too short for memory, too violent  
for peaceful bicyclers on a Sunday afternoon.

**Richard Alan Bunch's** collections include *Greatest Hits*, *Rivers of the Sea*, and *Sacred Space*. His poems have appeared in *Many Mountains Moving*, *Kennesaw Review*, *California Quarterly*, *Poetry New Zealand* and *Black Mountain Review*. His latest poetry collection is *Running for Daybreak* (Mellen Poetry Press) He resides with his family in Davis, California.

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A Grand March

Again with the absence of feeling, gaining of fat  
Not for winter but for hiding and burning, rolling in

holding up to the light. Remarkable. When  
could there be more waiting around?

When could fingernails grow any longer?  
There are empty train cars to attend,

too much paperwork for deciding,

there must be something to do with the loss. An upset,  
perhaps a glimpse of bare elbow

whose sallow draws in all light and breath;  
then a subsequent restart—

**Mary Flanagan's** writing has appeared in several books and journals, including the first volume of *The Electronic Literature Collection* (2006). "Reskinning the Everyday," a blend of critical and experimental text, is forthcoming in the anthology *re:SKIN* (MIT Press).

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The Old Man and The Sea

I'm telling you truthfully.  
I had a dream Manolin.  
The fish was wretchedly big.

But the sky, Santiago,  
The sky was the same as always,  
Wasn't it?

It was heaving the way the sea  
Heaves in a storm and the light purple  
Of twilight had darkened, and the fish  
Was wretchedly big.

Do you tell me this to frighten me?

I tell you this because I tell  
You everything and I  
Am frightened.

But I am just a boy  
And you are a very old man—  
Why should you be fearful?

I'm telling you this fish  
Was wretchedly big.  
We should stay in today.

**Matthew Kearney**

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In the Woods

I am Hanzel in the forest among fear.  
I put my finger outside the cage.  
It wears thin.  
The danger of dust is coughing.  
The danger of getting caught is being eaten  
By the witch.  
I can always throw her Gretel.  
But I'm not as much of a coward as I seem.  
I think I could be heroic.  
I'd follow my breadcrumbs home.  
But the birds ate them.  
Still I am a bird watcher and know how to follow  
Their flight.

**David Lawrence's** new book, *Lane Changes* by Four Way Books, will become available in 2007. He used to be a professor; now he's a boxing coach.

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The Cardinal

If, in a clean, clear-windowed classroom  
on an early summer's day,  
as you stare at your somnolent students,  
you let your eyes drift away -

You might catch a glimpse of a shimmering wing,  
crimson, a raining rose red,  
and, failing to dismiss that bird as a thing,  
utter a soft "You" instead-

Then find that your students are no longer students,  
the room, no longer a room,  
as you stare at that full-feathered cardinal  
with nothing to claim or assume -

The air now nameless, wordless,  
your voice, no longer your own,  
as if, by some grace, you were knowing  
all that could ask to be known.

**Jeannine Pitas** is a native of Buffalo, New York and a 2005 graduate of Sarah Lawrence College. Her work has appeared in *The Buffalo News* and *The Looking Glass*, Sarah Lawrence's undergraduate literary journal. "The Cardinal" was inspired by Martin Buber's *I and Thou* (which she highly recommends that you read) and by her philosophy professor, Nancy Baker.

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### Fall Planting

A week ago we ripped  
two roses out, giddy  
to see them go: no blooms,

plenty of thorns--regrets  
come from not what we've done  
but from what we haven't

as winter fires her rifle  
closer to the house. Soon  
ground will harden, frost's

white flame igniting. Today  
November suns our jackets.  
A Margaret DuRoss dahlia,

always fashionably late  
to any garden party,  
wears her best orange babushka--

in this time of endings,  
we plant. A sudden gust.  
We plant some more.

### Winter-ruption

Daffodil and aconite bulbs crave  
cold's touch. They wait. While  
we hang pictures we meant to hang  
for months, cover ourselves in

blue afghans, wind makes awnings  
sound like off-kilter washing machines--

the first snow flake drops,  
a white rock on a leaf's torn back.

Secret

Naughty Marietta marigolds  
open early this year, in mid-May--  
they bloom and bloom, know what autumn holds,

when trees shoo off brown leaves. Summer folds  
her tent, looks nervous, and runs away.

Naughty Marietta marigolds

crank out more buds. A peeved bluejay scolds  
a robin too near her nest. Each day  
they bloom and bloom, know what autumn holds--

a secret, death, that slowly unfolds.  
August trembles down, death on the way.  
Naughty Marietta marigolds

don't flinch or worry, keep their households  
tidy, pleased by raindrop or sunray—  
they bloom and bloom, know what autumn holds

when cold nights will put them in blindfolds,  
lead them to a hard frost, sky gone gray.  
Naughty Marietta marigolds,  
they bloom and bloom, know what autumn holds.

**Kenneth Pobo**

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Caterpillars

I search – something  
is eating the butterfly  
weed in its salt-glazed  
pot, stripping orange

sprays. Two smartly  
dressed caterpillars -  
green and black stripes -  
lurk in blossoms, pepper  
the counter with droppings.

Not stopping to think  
they might chrysalis  
into wings, I grasp each  
between thumb and first  
finger, pinch shut their double

softness. One worm squirts  
my white shirt. To squeeze

the trigger against any them,  
a crime - if condoned, still  
brought home to haunt. Q-tip

sopped in bleach. I dab cloth.

**Margaret A. Robinson's** most recent publications are in *Bellevue Literary Review*, *Rhino*, and *Prairie Schooner*. She teaches at Widener University and is a gardener. "Dark blue morning glories - much adored weeds - festoon my compost pile fence."

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Zero Season

this is the transplant season  
pillars falling, pedestals rising  
without an anthem

this blood pilgrim / that blood pilgrim  
the courier to these differences  
too hurt to exit - locks

its tiny circadian vault  
of wonders.

**Peter Schwartz** is the associate art editor of *Mad Hatters' Review* and the editor and publisher of *'eye'*."

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Beneath the rhythm  
of my footsteps, march  
ants in cadence  
towards your grim feast.

If only  
they were strong enough  
to carry you  
far away. If only  
they could lift you—  
your weight  
a still parade.

**Judson Simmons** resides in Bronxville, NY, where he works in the main library at Sarah Lawrence College. His work has appeared or is forthcoming in *Big Muddy*, *Westview*, and *Pebble Lake Review*.

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Flashback with Cousins

The windows are open  
again. Spring pours through,  
not just spring but the  
spring of thirteen:  
the smell of jasmine,  
the yellow of forsythia  
against the dark.

Then, warm wind, like  
whiskey. This feeling, less  
and less now: the clench  
of soft muscles, deep inside,  
a nervous hand reaching  
for something  
it doesn't know.

A motel in Alabama, night  
after a cousin's wedding,  
cold blue lights in the pool,  
hanging lanterns, grownups  
smoking, ice clinking,  
cousins.



No way to prepare.  
And now, thirty years  
later, again-the night  
wind entering this hot  
room. Sprinklers hiss.  
And you out there,  
making all this  
happen.

**Anna Smith** grew up in Greensboro, North Carolina and now lives in Junction City, California where she works at a center for Tibetan Buddhism.

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If I Could

Spade in hand, scents of earth  
and mulch thick as incense  
burning, I teeter between  
two worlds, the tangible and  
the implausible. My prayers punctuate  
our silences, quiet as breaths.  
You don't hear. In the dusk,  
seated only feet away  
you are almost a ghost.  
The lobelia's blue intensifies,  
peonies deepen

as the seconds tick. An ant,  
erratic, crosses my paused glove  
so intent he doesn't dream  
this mountain can move. The air  
lives another life in my lungs,  
molecules spinning, splitting  
without thought. If I could,  
I would step over  
into the butterfly's body  
with its knowledge of miracles  
and heal you in your chair.

Nearby in the orchard dark,  
daisies float, disembodied  
gray stars with nebulous power.  
Something I can't quite hear

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parts the bluestem field.  
Swifts dive and dart overhead,  
catching what I can't see.

I lift a finger so easily.  
Impulses speed along the neural  
paths. To conjure light should be as simple.

Terri Wolfe