

**Featured Poet: Lyn Lifsin**  
**North of Cotton Wood**

rose lichen  
    gamble oak  
        globe mallow

bent in rain

blue lupine

juniper mistletoe

it rains and keeps raining

these rocks  
    pulled from each other

two million years ago

wrenched like a woman  
whose child is grabbed

on a cattle car

smashed into stone

her eyes, streaked  
    like tonight's sky

a Monday, all *sipapu*,

a spirit entrance

into the underworld

**Arizona Ruins**

Past Mogollon River  
    the limestone ruins  
scrape it with your finger  
    and the floor breaks

    The talc  
    must have dusted  
    their dark  
bodies as they squatted on these  
    floors grinding  
mesquite and creosote

No one knows  
    where they went  
    from the cliffs  
    with their  
    earth jars and sandals

Or if they  
cursed the  
    desert moon  
    as they wrapped  
their dead  
    babies  
    in bright cloth  
    and jewels

2

Now cliff swallows  
    nest in the mud  
    where the Sinaqua  
lived  
    until water ran out

High in these white cliffs  
    weaving yucca and cotton  
    How many nights did they listen  
for cougar  
    as they pressed the wet  
    rust clay  
    into bowls  
    they walked  
200 miles to trade in Phoenix

before it was time to leave

40 years  
before Columbus

3

Noon in the  
caves

it is summer the  
children are sleeping

The women  
listen to a story  
one of them has heard  
of an ocean

Deerflesh dries in the sun  
they braid  
willow stems  
and don't look up

When she  
is done  
they are all  
stoned on what could come  
from such water

It is cool and dark  
inside here

This was the place

4

The others  
have gone to find  
salt and red  
stones for earrings

The children

climb down

To look for lizards

and nuts he  
takes the girl he  
wants  
for the first time

Her blood cakes  
on the white chalk  
floor

Her thighs

will make a bracelet  
in his head

5  
Desert bees  
fall thru the wind  
over the pueblos  
velvet ash and barberry

They still find

bodies  
buried in the wall  
a child's bones  
wrapped in yucca leaves  
and cotton

bats fly thru the  
ruins now  
scrape the charred  
walls white

The people left  
the debris of their lives here  
arrows, dung  
And were buried  
with the bright  
turquoise they loved  
sometimes carved  
into animals and birds

Lyn Lifshin's *Another Woman Who Looks Like Me* was just published by Black Sparrow at David Godine October, 2006. It has been selected for the 2007 Paterson Award for Literary Excellence for previous finalists of the Paterson Poetry Prize. ([ORDER@GODINE.COM](mailto:ORDER@GODINE.COM)). Also out in 2006 is her prize winning book about the famous, short lived beautiful race horse, Ruffian: *The Licorice Daughter: My Year With Ruffian* from Texas Review Press. Lifshin's other recent prizewinning books include *Before it's Light* published winter 1999-2000 by Black Sparrow press, following their publication of *Cold Comfort* in 1997. Her poems have appeared in most literary and poetry magazines and she is the subject of an award winning documentary film, *Lyn Lifshin: Not Made of Glass*, available from Women Make Movies. Texas Review Press will publish *Barbaro, Beyond Brokenness* in Fall 2008 and World Parade Books just published *Desire* in March 2008. Red Hen will publish *Persephone* fall 2008. Coatalism Press has just published *92 Rapple Drive* and *Drifting* is online. Goose River Press will publish *Nutley Pond*. Finishing Line Press will publish *Lost In The Fog* For interviews, photographs, more bio material, reviews, interviews, prose, samples of work and more, her web site is [www.lynlifshin.com](http://www.lynlifshin.com)

**George Bishop**  
**Visibility**  
(at *Bonnie Lee's*)

This restaurant was once a service station.  
We're in the left bay and the dialogue  
was different then. No hand clean. Before that  
it was probably a farm, the sun laying  
across the land like a huge, bright bandage.  
Rows of soil cracked like the sky  
on summer afternoons. Harvests leaned  
against the leaves waiting for the bond  
of color to weaken their grip.

Everything used to be a farm  
Even this marriage. Dissolved. The words  
we use now are so cluttered with fact  
we must've been in love. Nothing's left.  
If we dug deep enough we'd find  
an oil pit or a rusted air line.  
If we sat here long enough  
we could watch the smiles disappear  
and a chef appear wiping his hands  
on a dirty cloth. We finally agree—

everything was probably once a farm.  
At the end of a dirt road. A screen door  
banging back and forth while two  
attic windows darkened in dust.  
Eventually the children would make  
a seesaw a bridge to get to the other  
side of a small creek, the next county.  
You could hear the interstate there.  
Pick out the repairs like planets  
on a cold, dark night. Listen  
to distance travel the same speed  
we do.

GEORGE BISHOP was raised on the Jersey Shore and attended Rutgers University where he studied English/Creative Writing. He relocated to Florida in 1985 where he now lives and writes. His work has appeared in *Comstock Review*, *Boston Literary Review* and *White Pelican Review* and will be forthcoming in *SOFTBLOW* and *Poems Niederngasse*

**Mark Bowers**  
**Picking Pears with my Daughter**

We did not beat the frost.  
In my arms she is above me,  
hands out-stretching our reach  
carefully examining each piece of fruit.

In choosing, she pulls on the branch,  
slumping it down before it throttles up  
shuffling its leaves, shaded green and yellow,  
brittle in the cold.

Deer have already passed through,  
breaking a single path through the chill,  
leaving teeth-marks on fallen pears  
hardened on the frozen ground.

Examining their tracks she places  
one foot, then two in the imprints  
left behind and looks away.

Her eyes fix on the tree line,  
where their tracks disappear  
in the icy shadow,  
watching, waiting for them to return.

MARK BOWERS has been published in the Rochester, NY based literary journal *The Hazmat Review* along with numerous publications and awards from the St. John Fisher College literary journal, *The Angle*.

**Michael Estabrook**  
**baby elephant**

Little pine tree off in the gloaming  
looks like a little person, a dwarf maybe or an elf,  
while a bumpy, gnarled tree root appears  
to be a skunk, and then over on the side  
of the path is a rock that looks  
so much like a baby elephant I stop and stare.  
I suppose I should have worn my glasses,  
but sometimes for a little while at least,  
it seems better to see things as they aren't.

MICHAEL ESTABROOK makes a return appearance in this issue of the Goose.  
Look for more of his poetry in the Fall/winter 2007 issue.

**William Gillard**  
**At the Louisville Marriott With Time To Kill**

there should be art on that wall,  
above the door to the outside  
big art, a swooping steel bird thing or  
an abstract mass of yellows and reds—  
but now it's just blank  
a brown stretch of nothing  
lightly hatched into squares like someone  
played checkers on its muddy beach  
the brown that rises like floodwaters  
above the door that keeps spinning spinning  
like a paddleboat rolling upriver  
and from this red couch, submerged  
the people in the hotel lobby  
are Ohio River fish  
their sky of barge bottoms  
the quiet whoosh of passing water  
that sounds to them (I wonder if it does) like  
a riverboat wheel rolling rolling rolling upriver  
beneath the wide brown sky

BILL GILLARD teaches creative writing and literature at the University of Wisconsin. His work has appeared in over twenty-five publications, including *Writer's Chronicle*, *The Poetry Journal*, *Chiron Review*, *SNReview*, *Paradigm*, *The Literary Review*, and *Review Americana*, among others. He is also the general editor of *Fox Cry Review*, a regional print literary magazine from the University of Wisconsin - Fox Valley.

**Bradley Earle Hoge**  
**Carving Silence**

Carving silence from the scrape  
of chairs, staccato chatter, music  
from speakers behind whirling  
fans – like the silence  
of the desert, coolness popping  
from sand to soothe day  
into night, Sawet Owls,  
Cicada, memories of Trinity –  
the silence of a forest full of frogs  
and crickets and falling stars –  
the silence of a mind distracted  
from background radiation,  
the motion of stars, the noise  
of fallen trees, pine cones falling  
into water, galaxies spiraling as ripples  
into a space carved from silence.

BRADLEY EARLE HOGE lives in Spring, TX with his wife and three children. He teaches natural science at the University of Houston – Downtown. His most recent poems appear in *Tertulia*, *Chronogram*, *Elegant Thorn Review*, *LanguageandCulture*, *Concho River Review*, *Aurora Review*, and *Stickman Review*, among others.

**Kathryn Jacobs**  
**Palm Trees**

The show-offs all have ruffs like pineapples  
on green-skinned bodies, with exuberant fans  
erupting upwards -- fireworks from the neck:  
decapitated, thriving. But the dwarfs

look more like squashed accordions, with trunks  
like wicker chairs: immense green heads atop  
of puffed-air torsos, skinny broomstick hands

stretched out in celebration: gulping sun.

Belonging here: their country. Some grow slant,  
blown sideways, till up-rooted by the wind  
to crush the nearest sea-grape -- obstacles  
the tortoises will scale or clomp around,

deliberate and grumpy. They belong.  
We clutter up the beach they labor on.

KATHRYN JACOBS is a poet and medievalist at Texas A & M -  
C., with a chapbook called *Advice Column* forthcoming at Finishing Line  
Press, and poetry published in a wide variety of journals.

**Sandy Jensen**  
**When You and I Were Cedar**

Hot basalt  
Green salt  
Spindrift  
The light and hammered surface of the sea;  
the guessed-at life of gulls;  
pale chalcedony calm  
of anemones locked  
in the orange death embrace  
of a starfish arm.  
Agates: only think  
and the light catches the blood egg red  
in the black sand—  
What is still? The rock.  
What moves? The sea.  
What blows? The surf.  
What blazes? The sun.  
What rises? The moon.  
What gathers? The dark.  
What thinks a long, slow thought through time  
up through moss? Cedar ascendant and red.  
All childhood, all tragedies,  
all things both broken and complete  
rise up the resinous thoughtlines of wood.  
You and I are flat  
cedar fronds for this season only,  
extending over a remote bluff,  
itself millions of years old,  
itself crumbling into the sea.  
Fronds the shape of spindrift,

the way we catch the light—no one  
sees us and yet  
this cedar rises. We point her anonymous fronds  
at the sea and the sun and the moon and the night and the dawn and the day  
and the sea.

**Toshiaki Komura**  
**Law of Conservation in Boiled Eggs**

In the hollow of a cookpot  
in faults and places, water  
keeps boiling. The white

vapor fogs my glasses. I turn  
away, and the fog becomes saline

droplets-the way  
an illicit romance becomes penance, the way  
loss of hearing  
creates a symphony. Feelings

suppressed, in my hollow, faulty place,  
are conserved: they change their forms,  
and do not go away. I stand in the kitchen  
like a blue shadow someplace

between dusk and daybreak, snow and salt-  
in deeper mist, protein turning protean,  
feelings, suppressed, make guilty exodus.

TOSHIAKI KOMURA received an MFA degree from Cornell University in 2002, and is presently working toward a Ph.D. in English Literature at University of Michigan. Toshiaki's work has appeared in *Contemporary Rhyme*, *Evansville Review*, *River Oak Review*, *Sycamore Review*, *Willow Review*, among others.

**Marsha Mathews**  
**toadfish**

ugly as your deepest desire  
the toadfish lurks  
mud-logged at the bottom of the bay

through ripples can't you see it fanning?  
the brown-tipped grin? eyes beckoning?  
can't you hear its grunt-wobbling moan?

wait

a cream-colored fiddler floats unaware  
delicate as a newborn's hand

pectoral fins open full  
circle like wings

one lunge one gulp all

tips

white ruffles  
the last thing you see as the toadfish  
delves  
deep

**Sheila Nickerson**  
**Bellingham: March Migration**

Walking home, early evening,  
snow geese overhead,  
I remember friends to the north  
where once I lived.  
There, lengthening light  
pulls itself over them,  
as a tern, feigning brokenness,  
drags its wing over the ground,  
luring us from her nest.

SHEILA NICKERSON (Bellingham, WA), the former Poet Laureate of Alaska, has received two Pushcart Prizes for her poetry, which has appeared in numerous magazines, anthologies, and chapbooks. Her most recent title, *Along the Alaska Highway*, will be published by Sheltering Pines Press this summer.

**Scott Owens**  
**The Sensual World**  
(after Sam Tallman's photograph "Mountain Dawn")

Twin worlds of sky and lake,  
mountain and trees,  
even this low-lying peninsula  
finds reflection here,  
jagged edge repeated above

and below.

Cleft of trees and rock,  
gentle pinnacle, red sky  
burning up the black,  
evergreen leaning towards  
water, all things pulled toward  
a single point of plausibility.

A place I've been  
and long to be again,  
a time that seems  
to come every day  
but can never be quite  
the same.

One could get lost here,  
unknowing real  
from reflection  
and walk out into water  
seeking what fire burns  
below.

SCOTT OWENS is a graduate of the UNCG MFA program and the 2008 Visiting Writer at Catawba Valley Community College. His first collection of poetry, *The Fractured World*, is due out from Main Street Rag in August. He is also author of three chapbooks *The Persistence of Faith* (1993) from Sandstone Press, *The Moon His Only Companion* (CPR, 1994), and *Deceptively Like a Sound* (Dead Mule, 2008). Born in Greenwood, SC, he now lives in Hickory, NC, where he teaches and coordinates the Poetry Hickory reading series.

**Greg Schwartz**  
**five haiku**

following  
deer tracks  
secluded creek

farmer's pond  
    sleeping geese  
miss the sunset

rocker  
by the window  
-- empty

ostrich fern:  
fronds saluting  
the passing stream

winter night  
    the dog  
        hogs the sheets

GREG SCHWARTZ fixes copiers for a living and writes whenever he can. A member of the Haiku Society of America, and the staff cartoonist for *SP Quill Magazine*, his poems have in *Frogpond*, *Blue Collar Review*, *bottle rockets*, and *Hidden Oak*.

**Lucille Gang Shulklapper**  
**Welcome to Cartagena**

In light of recent threats,  
kidnappings, and murders,  
do not travel to out of the way places  
in Colombia,  
be wary of strangers who approach,  
do not wear jewelry.

We tourists follow Oscar,  
our guide; we gaze at angel places,  
ancient monasteries and cathedrals,  
buttressed and walled against pirates.

Vigilant and cautious, I  
try to look calm; but the  
movement of sloths,  
inch-long nails curled  
on mahogany arms,  
startles me.

Pay a dollar,  
snap a photo  
of the sloth,  
the parrot,  
or the thief.

Oscar's smile is an angel place,  
I build walls between  
the spaces of  
his rotting teeth.

**Rock Scramble: Mohonk, N.Y.**

On top of the mountain,  
jade green summer trees,

umbrella cousins to  
tarred roofs  
in crowded city streets,

touch one another,  
cover the mountain.

Inside the mountain,  
one small golden leaf,

curled, buried alive  
in granite boulders,  
urges me to live,

to squeeze through  
the crevice,  
to jaded greens,

tarred roofs,  
fading light.

LUCILLE GANG SHULKLAPPER is a workshop leader for the Florida Center of the Book, and the first affiliate of the Library of Congress Her poetry and fiction appear in journals and anthologies such as *Still Going Strong*, *Orchard Press Mysteries*, *Common Ground Review*, *Poetic Voices Without Borders*, *Gulfstream*, and *Jerry Jazz Musician*. She is also the author of two poetry chapbooks: *What You Cannot Have* (Flarestack, U.K.), *The Substance of Sunlight* (Ginninderra Press, Australia), and one mini-chapbook, *Godd, It's Not Hollywood*, ( SCWI Publications, U.S.A.). A picture book, *Out of Bed, Fred*, will be released in October '08.

**John L. Stanizzi**  
**Sleepwalking**

*If I could dive into a deep sleep,  
I could say – to myself, without speaking – why my words  
embarrass me.*

*Charles Wright*  
*Disjecta Membra from Black Zodiac*

late sun warps the street  
where dresses burn like fireflies

the shore surrenders its jewels  
which ignite the young

and we  
in our expensive clothes  
still turn and run

night stirs

\*

pale green lunas breathe the blue hour  
and civil twilight shivers on the beach

\*

night has fallen around you  
and you remember the sea  
as a nervous black space  
upon which you tried to dance

\*

precious darkness  
blind as wind

the clocks  
out of focus

\*

the theater  
of nightfall opens its doors  
before parting curtains  
of dark diaphanous light

\*

the quiet turn of night to darkness  
the turn of dark to memory

turning the head from side to side

the turning of pain in its own time

\*

night stillness  
rush of unfurling silence  
a transparency of volume  
into which the colors  
of grief are drawn  
with a slow low-pitched drone

\*

opaque sea behind salt spray  
and the curl of a wave

the only light  
the phosphorous of the dead  
that burns along the wet walls

\*

longer wanderings  
than the solace of scented rooms

fiercer breathing now  
than then

the blindness  
the incessant drive of endings

until a warp of fine light

is spun and drawn  
and the moon arches  
above the ghetto

JOHN L. STANIZZI has generously offered to let us feature the first section of his new, soon to appear book, *Sleepwalking*, which will be published by Antrim House. "The book comprises three sections...I have sent you section one, which I really see as a kind of single poem....some how...."

**Norma Strong**  
**being two places at once**

warmed by yellow  
sun, and tasseled  
corn silk strung  
to my place of birth  
I am invaded with light,  
as fireflies linger in field grass.

II

bell buoy clangs as  
ravenous ocean waves  
shatter against the shore  
as pelicans stand guard  
on fisherman's wharf.

in this churning wave-filled  
basin of octopus, sea urchin,  
salmon shrimp and hump-back  
whale breach among wooden  
boats that wander canyons  
deep with krill,

kelp ropes cover the sand,  
sea lions bark beyond breakwater  
as moon rises over fog banks,  
I wander between two worlds  
as my longing overtakes me.

**when twilight descends**

the sun descends in a hush,  
the air becomes thick  
with quiet murmurings  
of mallard ducks  
clucking to their young.

the musty scent, a primeval  
pond where water bugs flutter,  
and silver fish leap skyward,  
high from vibrating rings of water.

gray and white feathered sea gulls  
saunter along the sandy shoreline,  
as we linger, the glowing orange  
disk dips slowly and silently  
into the cool deep water.

NORMA STRONG lives in Michigan and has been published in *Art Times*, *Encore Magazine*, *Street Beat*, *River Run*, *Paintbrush* (Truman State Univ.) *Home & Other Places* (Western Michigan Univ.), *California Quarterly*, and *Main Channel Voices*. She continues to search for clarity in her poetry.

**Earl Yarrington**  
**How Many Years, and Counting?**

I got on 46 when I was 6,  
31 years ago;  
Never did I know,  
13 years ago,  
That I would drive 9073060;

I quit school in 89,  
19 years ago,  
Because, for nearly 13 years,  
I was told I'm very slow,  
So for 7 years I quit 20 jobs because I didn't know

Where I belonged still at 23 years old,  
But I hear quitter 7x7x7 and more,  
So I applied to business school 14 years ago;  
I was told I could not go not because I was too slow;  
I failed the test by 1 point 168 months ago,

So I didn't study and that served me well 17 years ago;  
I got my GED in 91 and now I wanted more;  
I got in to business school 166 months ago  
And dropped out 14 years since now

I went to college for nearly 13 years and got 4 degrees, my first 11 years ago;  
Never once in all those years was I called slow;

Now I teach 200 students every 52 weeks a year;  
I publish books and collections and write, well, not quite like Poe,  
But sometimes I think back to number 46  
And remember the last day before 68, 29 years ago;  
Then I got on 71 and rode, oh, I don't know,  
6 years, my birth number, 71,  
68, and 46, I miss;

May I go back 31 and start over at 6 with a 37?  
My 23 teachers may think then that I came straight from heaven,  
Or hell?

EARL YARINGTON is Assistant Professor of Communications and Modern  
Languages at Cheyney University of Pennsylvania.