Editor’s Note

Once again, it is difficult to come up with words that truly capture the amazing contributions of our student editors who made the 2007 issue possible. Editor Lauren Fisk, who has now worked on two issues of *Freshwater*, was quite simply indispensable this past year. As an exceptional poet, she consistently offered clear, insightful, and unflinching analysis of every poem we read, and was an essential participant in the selection of the poems published this year, as well writing beautiful letters to poets with astonishing ease and grace. Her extraordinary ability to organize, coupled with a delightful sense of humor, made the process of producing the magazine a joy. Editor Gay Paluch, who has also been with the magazine for two issues, continued to offer her quiet wisdom, not only about poetry but about life’s complexities, boiling them down to the importance of love and caring for each other, which calmed and focused us all during potentially frantic discussions. While staying relaxed and cheerful, she managed to take on countless tasks without the need for any guidance, and also served as a kind, supportive mentor to new editors. Jennifer Brown, an Associate Editor, has worked on the magazine for two semesters, involving herself in the process of reading and selecting poems with care and insight, and also lightening my load in many other areas, with her ability to assess what needs to be done swiftly and efficiently and her willingness to take on any task and complete it with little or no guidance. Associate Editor, Lisa Mangini, who also worked on the 2006 issue, was a passionate participant in the early reading and selection of poems for the 2007 issue, turning her poet’s eye with a stern but loving passion on submissions, keeping us focused on what matters most—craft and originality. She was sorely missed in the second semester final selection. Bob Williams, our third Associate Editor, volunteered in many areas of producing the magazine, including keeping our Web Page up to date, and once again was simply there whenever he was needed, taking on tasks that needed doing without discussion and without fretting, again keeping me focused and calm at times of stress. Assistant Editors Nicole Curylo and Kristen Pomeroy joined the magazine in the Spring semester, diving into a very complex process in midstream with a buoyant energy and cheerfulness that made them a joy to be around. Whether they were reading poems, putting up posters, or stuffing envelopes, they managed to make every task fun, reminding us all that every part of the process is not only essential but enjoyable. Assistant Editor Vivianne Grabinski worked on the magazine during the Fall semester, and her passionate delight in learning more about poetry, her thoughtful and very insightful comments while selecting poems for the issue, and her willingness to contribute extra time were very much missed this semester. Assistant Editor, Matthew LeMay, was only here for the Fall semester as well, but during that time his contributions were exceptional. His efficiency, great sense of humor, and fine sense of organization, coupled with a gentle assertiveness that made him unafraid to voice his opinions, made him an energetic and essential part of the process of reading and selecting poems. Finally, Assistant Editor Elizabeth Szewczyk was also only part of the staff for the Fall semester, but during those months her wisdom, her tender regard for others, and her joy in the written word illuminated the hours we all spent together discussing poetry, discussing life, discussing what matters most—the possibility of changing ourselves and the world for the better.

Once again, deepest gratitude to President Martha McLeod and Dean Sarah Garrett for their continued support and belief in *Freshwater*.

*Edwina Trentham*
The 2007 issue

is
dedicated
to
Jim Brennan
(1945-2006)
Poet,
friend,
generous supporter
of Freshwater
“Yes, I said, Yes!”
Bert J. Nitch

**Freshwater**

Lazing along between the muddy banks
Its hide scaled with wind, and scathed
By Puritan charity. Once, it had a name.
A voice. One could hear it in the rocking
Stones. In the hwait song of the birds.
In winter, the ice could be suckled,
The fish eaten raw, and my Father plucked
Arrowheads from the cold water.
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Fifteenth Annual
Asnuntuck Student Poetry Contest Winners

*FRESHWATER* is proud to announce the winners of the Fifteenth Annual Asnuntuck Student Poetry Contest, which was open to students from the twelve Connecticut Community Colleges, the Connecticut State Universities, and selected local high schools. This year’s judge, poet Sue Ellen Thompson, selected the following students as the winners of the contest. Following are her comments on the prize-winning poems, which are published in this issue.

**First Prize:** “Eve, We Made it” by Sean Arcarese (Central Connecticut State University): This poem struck me, upon my very first reading, as being a fully felt, fully imagined, fully executed poem. I admired the form and the diction, and especially those lines where words were heaped up, Hopkins-like: “Reaped rocks, plucked dirt’s veins... Dust, bugs, shrubs our first sickly claim... badger, bobcat, or bear to be gained... you split, screamed, spit, shit, and cracked...” Here, I thought, is a poet who truly loves language and is not afraid to push words and sounds to their limits. Here, too, is a writer who understands the difference between poetry and prose, whose rhythms are barely contained by the barriers he has erected to hold their energy in check.

**Second Prize:** “Dignity” by Gay Paluch (Asnuntuck Community College): This poem moved so quietly, like its subject, that it almost escaped my notice at first. But how could I not admire the way, through imagery, the heron is transformed first to a stone, then to a sapling, then to something mechanical (I thought of an artillery gun when I read “Eyes of glass swerve in hunt;/her gray bill positions”), and finally to an archetype of solitude and endurance? The use of sound effects—the assonance in “lifting flexible stick legs” and bill/positions/tipping/minnows, the alliteration in such phrases as “sapling seeking sun” and the repeated, although buried, “r” sounds in such words as captured/endured/search/arcs/birch—is one of this poem’s strong points as well. In the end, I found it to be a gracefully constructed, quietly self-assured—in short, a *dignified* poem.

**Third Prize:** “A Supermarket at 3 AM” by Kelly Whinnem (Manchester Community College): I had a hard time making my selection from among this poet’s work, but finally chose this one because of the way it used noise—the stockboys with their “battered dollies,” the “squawk of late-night call-in radio,” the grocery cart with its “loose back wheel,” the squeaking sneakers—as a backdrop for the silence that lies at the poem’s heart. The speaker never says a word, but her silence, in the end, is more
powerful than the surrounding racket. I also liked the way the disembodied voices on the radio keep rising to the poem’s surface—particularly at the end, where the DJ’s seemingly banal advice tells us everything we need to know about the speaker’s desperation.

Honorable Mention: “In April” by Lisa Butler (Manchester Community College): I admired the way this poet piled up images for the forsythia cave into which the young speaker crawls: “tight nest of golden wands,” “the sruti of a sitar,” “the engine room of a heart-shaped spacecraft.” I don’t know what “sruti” means, but I can hear the sitar’s sustained hum. I don’t know why a space-craft would be shaped like a heart, but I can see the poem as being, in a way, a heart-shaped container for a child’s emotional life. What I’m trying to say is that the poem is written with enough skill and authority to make my questions irrelevant. I particularly liked the ending, where the “snarl” of the car fades to a “hiss.” This is a wonderful example of how to “show” without “telling,” how to convey emotion through images of restraint.

Honorable Mention: “Silent Scream” by Yvonne Barile (Manchester Community College): I was won over by the first two lines of the second stanza: “My mother was drafted into hell/When her tour of duty was over she chose to stay.” This is a perfect metaphor for old age. The words “nothingness,” “willingness,” and “stillness” trail off into exhalation and exhaustion, and the “beast of fear” sitting next to the old woman at the end, like a faithful dog, makes it clear that even when the elderly retreat into silence, the fear of death is their constant companion.

Honorable Mention: “Captain America is in the Bathroom Getting Stoned” by Mary Ann Govine (Central Connecticut State University): This poem gets an “A” for courage, for openness and inclusiveness, for its refusal to be well-mannered. There are lines that shock, perhaps even offend, but there is also a rollicking, forward-moving rhythm with echoes of Whitman and Ginsberg, and a delight in American pop culture. I especially liked the way the poem turns a corner and begins to head down the home stretch with “so here’s to the heroes . . . here’s to the queers and sinners . . . here’s to drinking on Sundays . . . .” There’s a lot to be said for restraint in a poem, but this reminds us of all that can be achieved by its opposite.

The Freshwater Editors’ Prize for the Best Poem Submitted by a High School Student was won by Ellington High School Student Matthew Dinse, for his poem “Arboreal Reveries.”
Sean Arcarese

Eve, We Made It

I learned the apple’s name after the fall. 
Pulp between teeth, lips ash-ridden, tongue maimed after the fall.

Together we ripped roots from earth. 
Reaped rocks, plucked dirt’s veins due to the fall.

Your wanton ringlets composed, bundled back on your head. 
I hated you, burnt-browed and plain after the fall.

I: refracted in your down-turned smile. 
Resplendent Eve, you’ve no right to blame after the fall.

We’ve eaten thorns, thistles. 
We’ve toiled. Dust, bugs, shrubs our first sickly claim after the fall.

Blessed harvest! How we gorged. 
All the sweat in our tent, huddled from winter rains after the fall.

We embraced abstracted, stupidly good. Of enmity disarmed. 
Wife of my rib: we, one and the same after the fall.

Your belly ripened, bulging fruit. I’ve seen it in beasts. 
I wondered: badger, bobcat, or bear to be gained after our fall.

In nine moons you split, screamed, spit, shit, and cracked. 
I pulled from you a son, blood stained, after the fall.

I smoothed your curls from off your brow. 
I begot a son! You named him Cain after his fall.

We’ll teach him to be a great keeper of men. 
Cain, like father: provider, giver, farmer ordained after the fall.
Silent Scream

My mother’s voice shrank to the size of a pea over the years.  
Shrank to a point where her silence became deafening.  
A silence so shrill it hurt to be near her.  
An eerie woeful cry of a prisoner held hostage in isolation,  
Her tongue had been cut away,  
Soon she could only mumble her thoughts and opinions inside her head.  
After a while there was a ghostly quality to her silence  
She was haunted by her own soul.

My mother was drafted into hell  
When her tour of duty was over she chose to stay.  
It was the boom of my father’s voice  
That urged her along her way  
Her children began to believe in her nothingness  
They watched entranced by her willingness  
To leave herself behind  
Silence was her comfort, stillness her companion

Now she sits small and shriveled  
A beast of fear always positioned next to her chair
Swayed

At breakfast, on the table between us
a glass of water absorbs the sun.
Like paintings of the annunciation
light passes through but does not touch.

Together we walk the day away.
After being slightly lost in the cloudy sinews
and veins of tightly woven city blocks
we stumble upon an open view
where light is resurrected
by many streets converging.

Later on the subway we face forward,
you are close behind me,
and we are forced to sway back and forth.
I grip the railing with both hands
so I don’t ebb into your flow.
I clench and press my toes to stay fixed
so I don’t set off the trap of desire.

When I finally leave you
and walk the platform to the train,
in cinematic finesse you run back to catch me.
But there are no breathless, heaving gestures,
no stilted, long held back confessions,
just the hand off of my coat
that you had borrowed
for a day that was colder than expected.
Jim Brennan

Singing Solo

In second grade some good sister of Notre Dame told her that she couldn’t sing. And she believed it.

“Mouth the words, Kathleen.”

To this day, she won’t sing a note in public. She lip-synchs in church, at parties, anywhere two or more are gathered within earshot.

But sometimes, when she’s alone (or thinks she is) sweet sounds pour forth.

Like now, with the house quiet. Me, here, in a once-removed room, she—there in her own world of headphones, Placido Domingo, and an uncorked bottle of Valbon, half gone.

Or like then, when the babies were middle-of-the-night impossible. I’d awake to hear her whisper-singing “lover-byes” in time with the creaking rocker.
I-85 and Churton

At the intersection, a Ford van slices a VW. Restraints deploy, glass crumbles into green diamonds. Her head whips like a leaf in the wind. Sections of her brain slip past each other, blood seeping between the layers. Ice bends the maple; its crown freezes to the ground and splinters, a green stick fracture along its trunk. Gusts blow leaves from remaining branches, spit snow onto the trunk: small wet drops. The storm passes leaving the tree outlined in white. The wind rattles the limbs, sending flakes softly to the ground. Each breath, slower than the last, until the sheet lies smooth as the snow’s blanket.
Joey Brown

The Devil Poem

The devil will give you his guilt
before he’ll give you his time.
You need the job done,
you’ll have to do it on your own.
This is how it goes:
a wheel falls off the desk chair,
an answering machine never blinks its messages,
twenty-three ink pens,
all without ink.
It’s far less glamorous than the war for souls.
Lust wore the pants of a man in love,
and fool that I am,
I invited him in.
He’ll tell me he’s sorry later,
but this devil’s nothing other
than the man his mama made him.
you meet Jesus/coming down Main Street

When you’re girl
and you drive too fast,
you don’t want anyone
wanting you to be good.
For safety’s sake you go around
the same rock
a hundred times,
show them
you know all the gears.
But that was the you
who stayed in after dark.
Inside you’re a song-and-dance girl,
packed tight
and riot-ready.
On your way out
of what’s left of a town,
you meet Jesus
coming down Main Street,
sitting astride an old John Deere.
He’s tall in the saddle,
like we’d all guess he’d be,
and reminds you
of your need for signs.
Simple act of faith
on a rust green four-stroke.
You can imagine his sheet
smells of the sun,
as he chokes along the route
of a local, made-up holiday.
No time like the present,
Jesus waves as he passes,
and you crank that engine
like no other girl can.
E.G. Burrows

Naming the Ghost

The fog presents itself,
beating its wings like a hummingbird,
staring in at the window.
If there is no gasp of recognition,
no name called,
it stalls in midair for awhile,
then returns its borrowed clothes to the wardrobe.
I have a Field Guide
and will paw through it feverishly
in search of a misty resemblance,
an identity for the fog,
a red gorget from my family tree
with its thieves and itinerant preachers.
But the fog has come
in the wrong ghostwear, in the elegance
of ermine and plumes. As for us,
we had no royalty to boast of.
Mostly we were put to the sword
and the smoke rose over our knees
like fog, like a swollen river.
E.G. Burrows

Night Is Coming

The man who couldn’t sleep
heard mice mocking him in whispers.

The man indebted to rain
heard monuments toppling through the ceiling.

The man holding armloads of children
cried for the lost lamb caught in thorns.

The man who hated his single state
lay bruised by the conflict of nations,

and heard the staggers of his own heart,
and saw the wall close and the floor open.
Lisa Butler

_In April_

When the forsythia bloomed,
I could crawl into that tight
nest of golden wands, and my
whole world glowed
a warm hum, along note
of contentment, like the sruti of
a sitar. And this yellow, purring
like the engine room of
a heart-shaped space craft,
would send me far away,
so far that I couldn’t hear
my mother screaming
on the porch, my father’s
car door thunking shut, the wheels
snarling over the rocks
to the pavement,
where they hissed out of sight.
Tracy Capello

The Courtship of Fireflies

all over the sky
we ran,
eyes stinging from
sweaty laughter,
hands glowing with
phosphorescent dust

wanting only
to perfect
a Chinese lantern,
to worship
the Mayan stars,
we caught fireflies,
while playing
kick-the-can

whispers,
teasing,
temptation,
left us
soiled and sapped on
pine roots,
body warmth so unlike
the summer heat

we kept the beetles in
empty Skippy jars with
rusty holes,
wilted lilac leaves,
some twigs

watching
the midnight afterglow,
the ceasing
synchronization
Apology to the frogs

the biggest die-off
in 80 million years
comes not from space
has not been smote by god
or from overhunting
or because we covet your hide
or tusks

The French think you’re good to eat
but then they also find
Jerry Lewis funny

Like the canary in a coal mine
you are the harbinger of doom

but more studies are needed
it’s a natural cycle
survival of the fittest
a dog-screw-dog kind of planet

as the geniuses of commerce and industry
scowl at their screens
monitoring their purported wealth
you ribbitt
and needeep
and croak
in tainted meadows
dried-up wetlands
new housing projects and future malls
i apologize
with the same bottomed-out guilt
the drunken driver feels
convicted of vehicular homicide

sorry for my victim
sorry i got caught
sorry mister toad’s ride is over
Carolyn Cushing

Before Creation

In the moment
before the moment
when world unfurled
in spiky stars, orbs of rock,
blue-black, swirling seas,
we were unto ourselves.

No one stood outside
to ask for mercy—
or receive it.

So we picked up pencils
traced thin lines of love
onto our hidden center
and waited for time
to open its topaz box.

Matthew Dinse

Arboreal Reveries

Along a mere lies an ancient oak tree weeping
In dreary tree-shadowed eaves, forlorn and discreet;
A gnarled king crowned in rays of lustrous light;
Streaming blossoms strewn about his twining feet
Are lit by twinkling jewels in the tapestry of night.

Beneath his outstretched arms hangs a faded swing;
Unhinged by thoughtless ravages of time;
Relentlessly a weary tendril clings
To the fraying ends of the swaying twine.

Memories fly across the starlit skies
Like ripples over somber pools of dye:
A brazen Dawn of shining gold ablaze,
Rose-fingered with flowing locks of gold;
A tender child not yet come of age,
Laughing as he swung in carefree days of old.

Silently, the old tree mused anew
Remembering blissful years long-since spent;
His branches swayed, now bedewed,
And with a sigh he stilled and was content.
Consider the American alligator, its squared black scales sloughed off one by one, its stubby forelegs tangled with vines, roots, decaying leaves, webbed feet churning muck as it gazes, underwater, through transparent eyelids. Consider its witness of itself dismembering storks, flamingoes. Fish, smaller mammals, the American alligator swallows whole. Then it mates in brackish inlets, thrashing fiercely as if to drown something stronger than itself.

Sunset, a man strolls the beach, hunting unique shells, something to dazzle. Pausing before a clump of pink feathers, he imagines braiding one into his lover’s hair. His fingers would always smell of the sea, his eye marvel at the wondrous faded hue.
Mary Ann Govine

*Captain America is in the Bathroom Getting Stoned*

We are looking for the heroes
cause we’re not sure where they’ve gone
at least in real life anyways
cause we compare the flesh and bone
to the heroes on pages
between panels and one liners
we look for heroes like the one conjured up
by the guys who in high school never got a date
We are looking
for the real live supermen
to save us from our sins
fight our wars
we are invincible
we are made of steel
we are
not real
because these heroes don’t exist
even though we look for comparisons
but look between the page
cause Peter Parker isn’t even eligible for the draft
He’s still dealing with his acne and wondering if
the girls think his costume is tacky
and Batman is just a rich playboy that got bored
trust me you won’t see Paris Hilton putting on spandex
at least not to save the world
And Superman is really an alien
and if he were really real we’d be trying to deport him
He’d be in the streets with the protesters
screaming land of the free
where’s our melting pot that the statue of liberty promised to me
And Captain America is dying in the middle east
his patriotism is waning
He’s wondering why he’s still fighting
some Texan’s personal vendetta
who rides on the coat tails saying
this is God’s will
but God’s looking at the nuclear bombs and wondering
where did this all go wrong
We are
immortalizing heroes with morality
but the truth is they’re morally unclean
In the quiet hours,  
my limbs laid out for sleep,  
I lie and listen to my husband’s breath.  
The child coughs once in her sleep.  
A car passes on the road.  
Where is it going?  

My mother used to come and wake us.  
Get up! Get up!  
Her excited whispers roused us.  
We blundered from our beds and dressed  
with thick, unreal hands.  
Hot milk in heavy cups.  
The glare of light on the oil-clothed table.  
Silently, our tongues blurred with milk,  
we stumbled into the car,  
huddling into balls of warmth.  

Periodically we would wake and stare out the window.  
Black trees against a black sky.  
Decapitated telephone poles.  
The slow, soft curving of a hill.  
In the darkness,  
the glow of a cigarette outlining my mother’s cheek.  
The engine, pulsing over the hills,  
pressed us back, back,  
into shudders of sleep and waking.  

Surely there was some moment of arrival.  
I remember only the road—  
the soft curving of the hills in the darkness,  
circling,  
back, back—  
to this moment,  
and my husband’s breath  
and a car passing on the road.
William Greenway

_Hotel Bed_

How many times has love
been made on this high bed
above the streets, till like a dove

arising in its sheets of wing,
and passing through the window
like a hankie through a ring,

it floats on air above
the roofs and on and over the
horizon. Love

can come free like that, get
flighty as a cloud, so when
the women come to gather wet
towels, change the sheets, they stare
at bodies curled together, bare,
on the floor, the bed not there.
Jean Hollander

Capsicum

The tomatoes are good, she said
and how could I not trust
her innocence? A housewife at that.
But she had lost her taste
to a ripeness of appearance,
a lie of red and plastic.

No insects gnaw this crop. Worms recall
the tart/sweet bite of their first fruit
in the fragrance where the garden was.
That apple had a heart to nestle in.

But we, are we not happy in the fields
of ageless wheat, orchards of apples with the cheeks
of Aphrodite, where corn and grapes perfect themselves
into cloned radiance? In new-waxed glory
every cucumber grows to the year.

If salt has lost its savor our palates seek
comfort in nightshade:
zucchini, eggplant, mandrake-root,
tobacco, capsicum -- the curled, biting
red or green, hot-tempered pepper
with its shooting firecracker chili flame,
we bite it, suck it, gulp it down
and it bites back, familiar now,
without the bite of tears.
Little Lament for J.B.

From your book of dreams
a yellowed newsprint scrap
falls into my lap and again
I see you wave goodbye and leap
smack onto the ice beneath the bridge,
three-some winters past.
You always said you wanted to resign.

Stubborn and deluded, we hang on,
one habit that you learned to kick.
We're held between the hours' chime
and null, wondering how it would taste--
the cup that cheers before it chills.
Now My Father Is

with a line by Enid Shomer

My father used to lie for hours
   In the shade of a great Laurel oak.
With each breath he felt his life
   Escaping him.
Now my father lives only in the poems
   I write or in dreams.
In a poem about peaches I kept him alive
   By describing a walk
Through peach groves, how he said the fruit
   Was “stained with twilight, filled
With the taste of the sun.” In a dream
   I wrote a poem onto a wall of air
With paint so thick the words
   Cast shadows on the ground.
I beckoned my father to that place, to lie
   In the shadows of my words, be filled
With their meaning. When he appeared he said
   He preferred the shadows of trees,
To lie in them completely emptied of meaning
   & wait for the wind
To sway the branches, feel the brief sunlight
   Upon his body.
Now my father is rowing a canoe through
   The ink of my poems,
Down a canyon river where soon he’ll stop
   At the water’s edge, lie
In the tall grass beneath a large oak.
   He’ll open his eyes
For the last time & see ferns splayed
   Under the high yellow sycamores,
The sun casting a gold light on the water,
   & in the distance eagles
Gliding to the curve of the canyon, slowly
   Turning the pages of the sky.
Dory Hudspeth

Grief

At the third stage
you cut your hair
and absence becomes
background music,
something with cellos
but no words. Caterpillars
and snakes seem
to have a good idea.
Keep trying for transformations,
just small ones. The moon
is half empty, not half full.
Memory and gravity merge
and days become a thick soup
you eat with a small spoon.
John Kay

*The Winter News*

Winter trees crowded with barren ovaries,
February’s breath turning to ash,

a grape-cluster skeleton on the porch,
a daughter we would name *Flos Campi*,

“flower of the field,” who was never born.
This moment cold like menthol on my lips.

I imagine a warm stone in my hand,
my fingers wrapped around her softness

in a gentle fist I press to my heart,
poppies brushed in the loom of her hair,

this child, falling apart in the beginning,
ever coming together--the winter news.
Charles Lipka

_Magnificat_

You found a form for your aesthetics
in shadows cast by twigs in bloom,
in stars of white magnolia sketched
in broken strokes of India ink.
You filled the dogwood in with pink.
You founded your doxology
upon the framework of a birch
and traced the signature of God
in branches that you limned in white.

And on the outskirts of a binge
that blotted out a bloody floor,
you found serenity in clouds,
their massive, moving architecture,
later painting their effusions
in a dozen shades of white

I witnessed as they were applied
and now observe long after dried—
the shades I hope that someone finds
within the white between these lines.
Charles Lipka

Two Places at Once

It could be that our dreams haunt the afterlife
of the people we know who have gone before us,
that we eat in the orchards where they’re eating fruit—

that we dream of the bright red plums we’ll taste
on the one day past our last day here.
It could be that we’ll live in this afterlife,

among the beach chairs and palms and sea air
we’ve dreamt about—that we’ll lie in the arms
of the ochre shore we dream of still.

These things could be, or I dream that they may,
or I lead myself to believe that they will....
It could be that they’ll dream in our afterlife

once we’re gone, the people we’ve left behind--
that they’ll rock in the cradles or row in the boats
where they find themselves buoyed among orchids afloat

that I’ve dreamt about, surfing a night full of dreams,
a night full of fading and brightening scenes.
It could be that our dreams haunt the afterlife
of an orchard of souls that on figments feast.
Lisa Mangini

_Double-Blind Study_

I like to test myself
in the dark. I try shuffling
up driveways barred of light, grind
loose gravel beneath heels, discovering
the proper height to bend my leg
and land, sturdy, on cement footholds.

I drag palms down eternal tunnels
of hallway, willing enough discipline
to not grope giddily
for that first flip of a switch,
decline the gift of electricity
to tease a shred of grace
from clumsy mannerisms.

I’m teaching myself to measure distance
in texture: the creak and cold
of shrill linoleum, subtle adjustment
from Berber to plush. Juxtaposed
against each other, all things porous
have distinct personalities.

With fixed walls and doorframes, I practice
until I am skilled enough
to effortlessly send my hand to journey
the crease between your shoulders,
to reach you undisruptively,
without breaking the safe,
still unity of darkness,
befroe I fall asleep
with your breath soaking my hair.
Aphasia

I’m looking for a word to stretch my ribs when I lie on my back connecting stars for vision. I seek a descriptive word that doesn’t yet know the taste of water, has yet to feel wind push invisible arms through trees or see a nighttime sea mohawked in moonlight. I want a birdlike word to spread-eagle and christ across the sky, dissolve into steam, evaporate like a name nobody can remember. I need a word to resurrect the lost art of forgetting, to revive the image of your mouth fading to a hoar of silver roots, lightly braising my lips and, each night, closing my face to sleep. I need a word to touch your hands, gather a bouquet of fingers, hear your tongue loop syllables, hiss shadows that drag their porcelain teeth over ash. I need a word that doesn’t necessarily end with a period, ellipsis, or question mark. I wonder who will marry you, bury you, clasp you in memory, count each lonely freckle, chant each sullen remorse. “Stillness” isn’t quite the word I’m looking for, but it will do for now.
Rennie McQuilkin

**Indian Summer**

I

I’ve been anxious all morning,  
have come outside to sit by the fall flowers,  
shaggy red and pink and yellow zinnias  
grown tall for the occasion  
beside the rough-hewn slats of a barnred barn.  
The morning is warming after a touch of frost.  
The zinnias have made it through

and have a caller  
come on orange-red, black-veined wings  
rimed with white dots and yellow oblongs.  
The wings go from flower head to flower head,  
testing, opening and shutting slowly,  
then folding together like hands palm to palm  
for the long deep drawing in,  
and opening for delighted swags of dizzy flight  
up and down the length of the barn  
before lighting on another zinnia.

Perhaps this Monarch has no bad dreams,  
perhaps every shag of a zinnia,  
every beam of light and slice of sky is a close  
relation, every zig sensational. I’d have it so.

I am more than I was.

II

More of them today, drunk on zinnias, oblivious  
of me, old man warming in Indian Summer sun,  
trying to imagine how long their probosci  
to go so deep to let them last so long  
on each flowerhead, and how great their need.
Under These Periodic Cables

You move your fists and feet
like a stretching infant; your toddler’s body
is my first memory: we wore yellow,
then, our names sewn to the bibs,
in small stitches of brown thread, buttoned alike.

I am going to bury you and I can,
hardly. Breathe: no-no to my heartbeat,
my fingertips on your temples.

I am only at ease alone
with you; lately there is no alone –

Brother, do you remember, before
we were born, when we curled
together in womb? I am listening for you
behind the words – in pulse
and membrane
and amniotic fluid

And every time they try to touch you
to consciousness, I feel them
ripping at my bones –
The Invention of Sound

A light breeze sweeps across the room:
in the corners, dust motes dance and whirl
to the rhythm of an unwritten music.

Somewhere, the idea of a bird
folding its wings—
a conch shell, with a ringing in its ear.

In a broom closet, a paper bag rattles itself
to sleep, as the carpenter ants drag their sleds
across the ice-cold kitchen floor.
Hamtramck

Rose grabbed the doorknob in 1940
as if the brass had thorns
because her brother rang memories --
arrestural dreams, soft eyes, the fingers of a pianist,
lost in a frosted glass of beer --
a concert life which could end in an overture
of snow falling
like dead men from the sky.

To her finely tuned ear,
the police officer knelled,
Joey drank. He smoked. His wife was a whore.
And the boy driving the car was blinded by the snow
and the completely white street.

May he carry his cross
in his soul for the rest of his life, Rose spat.
She slammed the entrance,
blotting out the police officer, blinding him
in icicle slick dark.
Lawrence O’Brien

Hancock Shaker Village

"... The peculiar grace of a Shaker chair is due to the fact that an angel might come and sit on it." Thomas Merton

Here, prayer becomes three-dimensional in the symmetry of building, the grace of furniture. A chair welcomes an angel. When not in use, it hangs in the air.

Interior windows flood sunlight into darkest corners.

Weaving the basket, turning while dancing, bending like willow,
celibacy sings, shakes out the carnal.

A round stone barn floats like the Ark on an ocean of meadow,

God’s architecture, without the veneer.
John O’Dell

*Nightingale Floor: Nijo*

The Shogun’s mind, a shallow moat from which fear clammers too easily, orders a high walled palace to be built. For his Grand Chambers, the Shogun commands red tasseled doors; behind them warriors crouch, swords ready. Visitors understand red tasseled doors, and more than ritual keeps the court prostrate each in assigned tatami orbit, silk robes flaming out behind them with near celestial precision.

He orders miles of palace floor to be lifted a fraction of space above cypress joists. These boards sing loudly, too often, into palace darkness, *Be quick! New danger approaches.* When, on short winter days, the Shogun stands, back against high palace wall, eyes burning and heavy in glaring snow, and hears in his high elms that bird’s quick trilling, how he yearns for a woodcutter’s distant hut and its mute earthen floor.
Mary Orovan

Supple

Enduring the color orange,
extremity of seasons,
boys carving
deep initials,
families of birds,
staying green in
spring snow

The shirt of God
baby blue
Her skirts
six shades of soil

Look Study supple responses
to fate:
lightning and ice
tentacles of cities
Time for the truth of trees,
history of patience
persistence,
One branch brought
to the ground suddenly
twists up again
Still finding the high breast
of the sun
the milky opening of light
Anne Pabst

And I said, with rapture . . .

And I said, with rapture, “Here is something I can study all my life, and never understand.” Samuel Beckett

Nearly dawn
rain on the house precise each drop a voice in windy chorus
you started me, your dark form in the storm
your even breaths precise like rain, calling in dawn

The sky is silvering
I hear your bare step on the floor below
your whistle, the brewing coffee
you will spread open the paper, go to the scores
we will part, go out to our highways

While these limbs will remember everything
will ferry us back
to darken together
to sculpt a night
Gay R. Paluch

_Dignity_

She enters the scene
lifting flexible sticked legs
and taloned toes
through mini falls and fallen leaves,
until, beside a glaciated granite boulder,
the heron pauses
camouflaging her slate feathers,
all but her neck, becoming
another piebald stone.

Rising above rigidity,
her neck stretches taut
like a young sapling seeking
sun, then twists, holding
twin curves in unsculptored elegance.

Eyes of glass swerve in hunt;
her gray bill positions,
tipping toward the brook
for water spiders, left-over larvae,
minnows making way downstream.

Captured in patience, she endures
the emptiness of her search
until the noonday sun arcs west;
then, into the shadowed stillness
of hemlock and birch
retreats firm-footed in lone grace.
In Her Garden

Narcissus hug the foundation; their pale gaze is dirtward, resigned. Forsythia offer restraint in sallow blossoms, and the pinks have blanched. Pacing plots where tulip greens struggle through soil and curl back, anemic, he is grateful for the solace found in muted tones.

But there, in the lower beds, a slap of color — crocus overspill the banks like sugar cereal, their vividness an affront. He wants to tear those shallow roots, grind petals to a smear, stamp out that audacious cheer. Then a breeze shimmers the apple’s underbranches, revealing celadon leaves, buds swollen with mauve, luring him to brilliance.

But how will he face the crimson riot, the glorious, jade-gloss onslaught, that thrilling explosion of magenta and ginger when his mother’s roses bloom?
Simon Perchik

*

To urge the dead you lift
a small gift, placed so the height
waits motionless alongside

though you can't sleep anymore
afraid once your eyes close
there's no turning back, you'll drift

as darkness into darkness
–you bring these dead a sharp stone
the kind insomniacs find

under the kitchen table
–they loosen each tile
the way flowers are pulled out

still drinking from your hands
on the way to the cemetery –you pick up
everything! roads, shadows, dust

and carefully face to face
as if there was something daylight
left out as shovels and weightlessness.
An Adolescent Deermouse

One icy night was all it took for this thirst in the cold to find him. Last night I hauled the chickens water and today this furball in the five-gallon bucket couldn’t make himself smaller against this season whose slick walls he couldn’t climb. His tail was tucked under him as if sitting on a rail, heading elsewhere, his front feet pulled to his chin eating a final crumb of space, that zero zero makes at the ends of pipes. A life so small and light it almost couldn’t fall when I turned the bucket over, landing as noiselessly as a flake of snow.
House-Sitting

for Paul & Tracy Wilkes

Ravenous for this absence,
I lie breathing Goat Hill’s
shit-tang aroma, my own funk,
the acrid, high-summer green.

Dawn two hours gone,
the lambs we’ll stew this winter
bleat in the paddock &
the idiot rooster squawks,
two months shy of a fricassee
with dumplings & Greek wine.

Blood on my hands, a psalm
on my lips, I lie cool while bees
bounce against the screen,
a mourning dove coos & fat flies
stroll the baseboard,
the far-off city & all my dread
sweet as the tomato I’ll slice
into eggs fresh from the brood.

Soon, tilling the corn.
Soon, brushing the burrs
from the sheepdog’s ruff.
Soon, thick books, the scratching
of a pen, rumination cacophonous
as those who’ll share my happiness
when they see the care I took
of what isn’t mine.
Yvonne Sapia

*Among the Wild Mushrooms*

For a brief time,  
they have some self control.  
They imitate the single file  
of trees and high grasses.  
But being fungus,  
they have a streak  
of mischief in them.

Each night is a celebration.  
They go drinking  
in dark wet places  
and silently hallucinate  
about growing taller  
as a means of rising above  
their place on earth.  
Childishly they swim  
the black water  
of their secular kingdom  
and raise themselves,  
giving birth  
to their own likenesses.

They flourish alone  
like velvet gloves  
pointing out the plight  
of simple life forms.  
Masters of reproduction,  
they breed  
in spite of themselves,  
a family resemblance  
easily observed:

The shape of their heads.  
The intimacy of their postures.  
The small shadowy feet.  
The similar voices  
and crazy karaoke medleys  
about having to survive  
so their stories  
continue to be told.
Matthew Sisson

*A Short Poem in Which I Imagine Suicide*

Half empty cans of paint in primary colors,
left over from the remodeling of my son’s room,
huddle in the corner. The garage door closed
behind me, I float in luxury, leather seat
reclined, just like the ad said.
300 Horses of German technology
should be enough for one Jewish man.
Someone else will have to remove
the training wheels from my daughter’s bicycle
next Spring. I think she’s ready.

Meghan Sterling

*Lilies*

*inspired by the paintings of Georgia O’Keefe*

I encountered a riddle of my making;
the glass bowl, filled with water dimmed milk
With the soft sap of cut lilies--
stems plunged and quieted,
Slowly bleeding white, rings of sun
Echoing the wood around the bowl,
Shivering light. It struck me suddenly,
Brush poised midair, this slow bright death,
These lilies,
A fragrance like carrion,
Decay resting languidly along the bowl’s rim,
One dusty yellow eye
staring blankly as I paint the vulval folds like canyons,
their stamen lolling, their petals stiffening fruit peel.

I am making them immortal, these soon dead things,
Making them more than they are--
This giver of life;
these hands, these destroyers.
Planting an Orchard in Winter

The field was as blank as the milk-paint sky, a color of smoke, unchanging all day in its fog, like last night’s dream, unshaken.

The ground, tufted with straw, stubbled with grass, matted into knots as tough as rope, parts like hewn hemp with each wedge of the shovel, clots of earth crumbling, breaking into field-color, oxidized brush of bronze, stiffened and dried with wind and frost, cutting this verdigris with scabby earth like rust.

And then, after pocking the small pasture, gently placing the thin twigs that will be, carefully mixing black dung with ragged peat, we scatter it around the hairy roots. Then, once the puny trees are standing straight, gently layering ruptured, russet soil, to act as their own hands, holding trees firm.
Steve Straight

God
--after Wallace Stevens

If there is a god in the house,
let her show us in magical ways,
the phone ringing with each friend
we were about to call, the lost key appearing
in the bottom of the ice cream container,
the banana for cereal that ripens in your hand.

It will take some time, of course, for us
to connect these events to god: the little bell
on the stove that dings at each act of kindness,
the Jehovah’s Witness who brings back the dog--
to move ourselves beyond coincidence to belief--
the smell of gardenias whenever the computer
Crashes, the birthday card from your long dead aunt.

We seem so resistant to magic, let us hope
it won’t take a downpour from the tiny cloud
over the houseplant we forgot to water, or
a sudden flock of passenger pigeons lighting
in the maple trees, or below the hill at the back
of the property the fresh sound of surf. Let us
see it before one morning standing on the lawn
is a very pale horse, nibbling the grass
covered with dew.
Lou Suarez

Twilight

No, mi corazón no duerme. / Está despierto, despierto.
My heart is not sleeping It is awake, it is awake.
Antonio Machado

And it hears everything,
every subtle creak
in the floorboards,
sure it’s some intruder
bumping against tables,
munching on
ripe apples, turning out
pants pockets
to let loose change.

Sure that on the feet
whispering up the stairs
comes someone
meant to do pure harm,
a pillow clutched by
two strong fists. A rope.
Lying awake with
a voice insubstantial
as a day is in dream,

it listens to its own
murmuring, listens
then wonders whether
the weight of one word--
of saying lonely--is enough
to verify a mistake
has been made. Who
would come to kill
the perfectly stone-dead?
Charlotte Sullivan

Outside / With Tigers

You are locked out, eight, and cold.
You climb the snow bank in front of your house,
srap grooves in the snow, wink at the tigers,
white and lean-shanked, prowling the yard.
They whisper stories of geniis, of long hours
crouched behind bluffs, hungry.

When you punch your mitt through the snow
it is to feel the crunch, to make oval mouths
that say things like “warm” and “Christmas”
and “Mother forgot does not mean I am forgotten.”

The tigers surround you in circles of prints that say
Wild Magic Wait

When Father smashes his foot through the door,
it is to feel the orange burst of pain (he doesn’t know
doors do not make outside or in) and the splintered
gap cries “she forgot” and “froze” and “I love”
mixed up with “I rule.”

You remember no fear: There is an inside to out.
Like kissing Grandpa who’s forgotten your face,
holding your lover as you argue, knowing
when Mother vanishes under the sheet, she is still
in the snow, her tigress claws clicking
on the stones of your dreams.

Her breath will be warm on the back of your neck.
This, for the rest of your life.
Mark Taksa

Butterfly Reversal

Green flows from the valley
where a power hammer bangs sunlight—
or someone blasts a gun and stuffs
a political tract into the ripped guts
of someone whose blood is gushing
while a woman under a straw hat
fidgets with her lipstick as her child tugs
her sleeve at the passing of the song
of an ice cream truck. And yet,
a hammer can be a hammer.
I step from a stone house
built before electricity. Whispering
of butterflies replaces the swish
of my feet in the dreamy grass.
A butterfly hops to my shoe
and the universe is this fluttering.
This is the end of politics.
On the Beach at Marahau

Like a sheet snapped repeatedly by the wind,  
the sound of hooves on the surf-laundered sand:  
a single horseman gathered shape  
against a dusky headland.

What did it mean, coming just one day  
after Death’s wings brushed ours?  
Deafened, blinded by the cold spray  
from the waterfall, we neither saw

nor heard the tour bus swing wide  
before threading its way through the narrow bridge,  
leaving its road-dirt in a broad smudge  
across my back and clipping your scalp

with its side-view mirror. That night we lay  
in the sealskin dark, in a New Zealand house  
above a broad bay that looked south to Antarctica.

More life, it seemed, was coming our way,  
and at a full gallop.
“My God is that real?”
Mosquito behind glass
the size of a sea gull.
Wings as big as canoe paddles.
The whine alone would
shatter windows, TV screens.
Painted numbers give the scale,
one to fifty, but the sense of dislocation
is common enough.
Wars in the service of peace,
deceit to further justice,
starvation beyond the knife blade horizon
while we scoop salted milk fats
with chips of oily corn –
trusting the senses alone
is no longer sensible.
And who knows?
Some day soon, swatting a mosquito,
licking a stamp,
proclaiming your name,
you will pull back a bloody stump,
clench speechless jaws on black gap,
hear the cell door slam.
The distortions of fantasies
become facts we’re too late
to expose as exaggerations,
irritating insects inflated
to the size of death givers.
“Can something that unnatural exist?”
Oh yes it can,
oh yes it does.
Hear the buzz building.
David Thornbrugh

In Praise of Doubt

Maybe is my parachute, escape route out a burning building. 
All my sandwiches served on slices of doubting bread, ambivalent lettuce maybe 
mazes made for worms. I don’t know what I don’t know greases squeaky hinges. 
Certainty runs down up escalators, slaps water away from thirsty lips. All my life in the dark sloshing chemicals tray to tray to see what develops. What I don’t know for sure rolls over in bed beside me, snuggles warm and human.

Doubt has been my life’s companion, theme song humming along as the tumbrels trundle through dense crowds screaming for my head. Jesus on the high dive curls his toes over bobbing board and thinks again. Only uncertainty is guaranteed, three a.m. ceiling and the moon throwing spit wads at the windows of your brain, did she or didn’t she, knowing damn well she did, does, will.
Sunburn

A glow in your cheekbones you almost sense
spreading around, later, at dinner,
sitting by the evening surf.
You love being branded, initiated by sunlight
into the rawness of the salt,
all chinks filled with its luminous grit,
grabbed by the heart of the sky.
Its openness a blade
that makes it clear
all flesh is bared
and burnt in the end,
and is nothing but air.

But each burning is also a new start.
A new soil and shore.
After the whole day of silent rowing
when we had met for the first time
and measured our stares
with each oar’s stroke,
the nape of my neck carried a burn
that had bared my marrowbone.
And I felt scorched and vast in the evening light.
A Supermarket at 3 AM

We navigate the night stockboys' maze
of cardboard and packing tape, dodging
the squawk of late-night call-in radio.
Somewhere between the bread and the cheese
he stutters over simple words,
asks if I’ve found someone else.

With white hands tense
on the shopping cart handle,
shaking along with the loose back wheel,
I hunch my shoulders against
the voices clamoring for advice.

"I have these dreams I'm falling,"
says caller number three.
"I have these dreams
I go right through the ground."

We loop through the rows of produce
on autopilot, the old arguments unspoken
over the squeaks of our autumn-damp sneakers
and the stockboys' battered dollies.
He jerks the empty cart out of my frantic hands
and I dig my fingernails into the skin
of under-ripe oranges while the DJ laughs
on Mockery FM.

He tells caller number three
that she’s not afraid of falling, she’s afraid
of having to retrace her steps.
He tells caller number three
to call him back when she hits bottom.
Sylvia Anne

I can feel it coming imperceptibly slow,
like a glacier creeping on its belly,
scraping and scratching across frigid ground.
A prophetic cloud
hanging,
a cold shadow cast from Sylvia’s jar,
swinging lower and lower until I’m trapped
like a housefly
buzzing and beating itself against the unyielding pane.
Hands and face pressed frantically to the glass,
drowning,
suffocating
in the thick viscid air.
Within the flawed lens
all sense and senses are muddled and distorted.
I can’t see, I can’t hear, I can’t touch.
like bending light through a prism
the world fragments and twists upside down.
I reached out from Hansel’s dead bolted cage
with my naked bones.
The jar lifted and I was set free,
But Gretel watched obsessively, over and over,
how the alluring witch with her poisonous vapors,
pushed poor Sylvia into the vacuous oven
and closed the door, and closed the door, and closed the door
forever.

Yet, it is Anne’s voice that calls me closest,
overdosing,
devouring her poems, swallowing her words
one after the other like
brightly colored pills.
Her searching ghost drifts amidst the fog in my brain.
Her words and sounds of words
waft and wind their way through the maze of gray.
The Fifth Wind

1.

The second week of June. Green leaves in a blue wind, the grass warm, bees and blossoming plum trees, dogwood. I open the door. Last fall’s apples on the table, the bed made, candles the color of new bone alongside, all the poor furniture, dry flowers in an old pot, a tattered dishcloth draped on a chair, the unwavering mirror, shadow everywhere and shade, memories strewn across the rooms like old clothes. All these lives, the world brought back to innocence, the form and grain of the morning light. Now I understand: the wind blows, the door shuts twice.

2.

Whose face comes and goes at the window? -- The ghosts in the attic pooled like black leaves against the walls by the wind, here to watch me, and lights and lights: unburdened and borne away something out there on the other side of the glass caught in the shadow of its own sorrow, the husk of its own death and all that followed wrapped around the darkening blues of the air, the great distances it must cross, one absence at a time, rise gradually on the long long waters, the lost road home.

3.

The news arrives from nowhere full of the east wind and anxious for nothing on its way out to the far edge of the sky a wind with many doors a wind that digs deep across the red earth a wind that makes me nothing, green music, the moon down, the grass whistling with the dogs, all the beauty there is, dust and the last sound.

Now there is no one here, only you.
Sean Arcarese is a senior at Central Connecticut State University and the editor of the Helix, the university’s art and literature journal. He was named CCSU’s finalist for the 2006 Connecticut Poetry Circuit. His work has appeared in the Clemson Poetry Review and is forthcoming in the Connecticut Review.

Yvonne Barile is currently a part time student at Manchester Community College, seeking an Associates Degree in General Studies. She was born in Kentucky in the 1950’s. Her love of words, along with her emotional and spiritual experiences growing up, is what fuels her. At the encouragement of her very good and supportive friends she has in the last several years seriously taken pen to paper. Until now, none of her life songs (poetry) have ever been published.

Dianne Bilyak has been published in Palimpsest, Reflections, Meat for Tea, The Massachusetts Review, and Re-Imagining the Divine. A co-founder of ALL Gallery (ALL) in New Haven, Connecticut, she also served as Literary Programming Director there in 2003. Through the Institute of Sacred Music at Yale Divinity School, she earned an M.A.R. degree in religion and literature. She is currently an editorial associate for Sciencewriters Books in Amherst, Massachusetts.

Jim Brennan, to whom this issue is dedicated, was a longtime friend of poetry and Freshwater. He was an editor of Freshwater 2001—where his terrific eye for what makes a good poem, his gentle humor and wisdom, not to mention his unfailing ability to remember to turn off the coffee maker, made him indispensable. His work appeared in Freshwater 2001 and also in the 2002 issue when he won second prize in the Tenth Annual Asnuntuck Student Poetry Contest. Each year, for the past five years, he contributed money, anonymously of course, for scholarships to the Freshwater Poetry Festival. This generosity was typical of Jim, who believed in the possibility of changing the world for the better—a belief that illuminated his life, his work, and his friendships. He will be sorely missed.

Barbara Brooks, a poet for fifteen years, has had her poems published in Green Hills Literary Lantern, Charlotte Poetry Review, The River's Edge and Kerf, among others. She has studied with Judy Goldman, Rebecca McClanahan, and most currently with Cathy Smith Bowers. She has been a member of several writing groups, The Poets' Workshop (Duke Continuing Education), and is working with a group in Chapel Hill, North Carolina. Many of her poems are based on the observations of nature. She begins her poems on the backs of envelopes before editing on the computer. She is a physical therapist at UNC Hospitals and lives in Hillsborough, North Carolina.

Joey Brown’s poetry and prose have appeared in numerous journals, including Clare, Rhino, Front Range Review, The Dos Passos Review, Westview, Paper Street, and The Florida Review. She teaches writing at Missouri Southern State University.
E. G. Burrows was born in Texas, lived and worked in New England, Michigan, and Wisconsin before moving to Washington state. His poetry collections include *The Arctic Tern*, *Man Fishing*, *Kiva*, and *The House of August*, as well as numerous chapbooks, including *Handsigns for Rain* and *Sailing as Before*. Magazines in which his poems have appeared include *The American Poetry Review*, *Poetry*, *Margie*, and *The Gettysburg Review*.

Lisa Butler attends Manchester Community college, where she studies poetry, sculpture, and printmaking. On her circuitous route back to school, she has worked as a jeweler, puppeteer, copy editor, and contract manager in the recording industry. She and her husband can be found hiking and playing strategy games with their friends in Glastonbury, Connecticut.

Tracy Capello is a past honorable mention recipient of the Wallace W. Winchell Poetry Contest, sponsored by the Connecticut Poetry Society. She is formally educated in psychology, anthropology, and the media arts. After working in areas including graphic arts, copywriting, photography, and community relations, Tracy now owns and operates a successful small business. She is finalizing her first poetry manuscript to be accompanied by her own photographic illustrations. Tracy currently resides in West Stafford, Connecticut, with her husband Bryan and retired racing greyhound Samson.

Larry Crist leads his quiet life of desperation in Seattle. He has also lived in Chicago, Houston, Philadelphia, London, and numerous locales in California, where life was just as desperate and not all that quiet either.

Carolyn Cushing has been writing poetry as well as participating in community-based writing workshops and readings for over ten years. Carolyn is excited to make her second appearance in *Freshwater* and once again be part of this warm community of poetry makers and lovers. She lives in Easthampton, Massachusetts.

Matthew Dinse, a senior at Ellington High School, is winner of the *Freshwater* Editors’ Prize, for the best poem submitted by a high school student to the Fifteenth Annual Asnuntuck Student Poetry Contest. The inspiration for his poem, “Arboreal Reveries,” was a tree in his high school parking lot. His English teacher, Mary Gelezunas, describes him as an “exceptionally gifted writer.” Matthew plans to attend college majoring in linguistics and anthropology.

Mary Ann Govine attended Asnuntuck Community College for two years and is currently attending Central Connecticut State University. She is an English major without the slightest clue as to what she will do with a degree in English. She has been writing poetry for over six years and won third prize in the 2005 Asnuntuck Student Poetry Contest.

Stephanie Gray was an English teacher before becoming an attorney. As an undergraduate at University of California, Berkeley, she studied poetry writing under Seamus Heaney. She is the author of two books on teaching poetry and poetry writing in secondary schools, Teaching Poetry Today and Steps to Poetry. She grew up in Berkeley and aside from some brief residences in Europe has spent her life in the Bay Area.

William Greenway’s eighth full-length collection, Fishing at the End of the World, is from Word Press (2005), and a new chapbook, Twice Removed, is from Main Street Rag. His seventh collection Ascending Order, which won the 2004 Ohioana Best Book of Poetry Prize, is from the University of Akron Press Poetry Series, which also published I Have My Own Song For It: Modern Poems of Ohio, which he co-edited with Elton Glaser. His newest chapbook, Twice Removed, is forthcoming from Main Street Rag. His poems have appeared in Poetry, American Poetry Review, Georgia Review, Southern Review, Poetry Northwest, Shenandoah, and Prairie Schooner. He has won the Helen and Laura Krout Memorial Poetry Award, the Larry Levis Editors' Prize from Missouri Review, the Open Voice Poetry Award from The Writer's Voice, the State Street Press Chapbook Competition, an Ohio Arts Council Grant, and was 1994 Georgia Author of the Year. He’s Professor of English at Youngstown State University, where he has twice been awarded Distinguished Professorships in both teaching and scholarship.

Jean Hollander's first book of poems, Crushed into Honey, won the Eileen W. Barnes Award. Her second collection was a winner in the QRL Poetry Book Series. Her verse translation of Dante's Inferno and Purgatory were published by Doubleday. Paradise will be appearing this fall. She has taught writing and literature at Princeton University, and is teaching literature and poetry writing at various institutions.

Ruth Holzer is the author of two chapbooks, The First Hundred Years and The Solitude of Cities (Finishing Line Press), and a haiku collection, Silk Flower. New work will appear in Journal of New Jersey Poets, Evansville Review, Four Corners, and Blue Unicorn.

Steffen Horstmann was recipient of the Brooklyn Poetry Circle’s National Student Award while a student at the University of Arizona. He has new poems recently published or forthcoming in Baltimore Review, Blue Unicorn, Common Ground Review The Lyric, Texas Poetry Journal, and Tiferet. His reviews of books by formalist poets will be appearing in various journals. He lives in Holyoke, Massachusetts.

Dory L. Hudspeth is a poet, herbalist, historical researcher and freelance writer living in Alvaton, Kentucky. Her poems have appeared in Rattle, Wavelength, Shenandoah, Sow's Ear Review, Atlanta Review, and other literary journals. Enduring Wonders, her debut collection, is available at www.wordtechweb.com
**John Kay** lives and works in Heidelberg, Germany, as an education counselor. He has an MFA from the University of Arizona, taught writing for the University of Maryland in its European Division for many years, and worked as a mental health therapist at Providence Medical Center in Portland, Oregon. His poems have appeared in many magazines, including *Kayak, The New York Quarterly, The Wormwood Review, Clackamas Literary Review, Bellevue Literary Review, Texas Poetry Journal, Chiron Review, Pearl*, and *Jewish Currents*. He has three chapbooks, the most recent, *Further Evidence of Someone*, from Eyelite Press; and he is finalizing a full-length effort, *Coasting Toward God*.

**Charles Lipka**, a poet whose residence is in Wethersfield, Connecticut, taught writing at the University of Hartford from 1979 to 2000 and has been writing poetry for over forty years. He has published numerous poems in many journals during this span of four decades. During the 80’s and 90’s, many of his poems appeared in *The Connecticut Writer*, of which he was poetry editor in 1982. More recently, they have been published in *Destinations* and *Educational Main Street*, while earlier they were published by The Hartford Festival of the Arts and in many other journals—as well as in the book *Other Voices in American Poetry* (Harbinger Press). He has received several prizes for his poetry, including the Poetry Prize of The Connecticut Writer, and has been a featured poet at readings sponsored by The University of Hartford and the Hartford Public Library, as well as at many other venues. His collections include three cycles of variations on the villanelle form, entitled *Circling Home, Waking on the Nile*, and *Persephone*, and he is currently working on two other collections of variations on the villanelle form, entitled *The Ghost in the Shade* and *Menagerie*.

**Lisa Mangini**, of Enfield, Connecticut, is an undergraduate student at Westfield State College, majoring in English with a concentration in Writing. She has been published in *Freshwater* previously, and has pending publications in Westfield State’s *Persona* and *Women Studies Newsletter*. She plans to obtain an M.F.A. in poetry in order to teach and share with others the intense power and artistry language holds.

**Michael Constantine McConnell**’s most recent work has been published or is forthcoming in *The Bitter Oleander, Style*, and the *Jabberwock Review*. Born and raised in Detroit, Michigan, Michael is a devout student of poetry, prose, palindromes, Scotland, and the 20-button Anglo concertina. He is currently a resident of Denton, Texas.

**Rennie McQuilkin** co-founded and until 2000 directed the Sunken Garden Poetry Festival. His publishing company, Antrim House, issues books by Connecticut poets, and his own poetry has appeared in *The Atlantic Monthly, Poetry, The Southern Review, The Yale Review, The Hudson Review, The American Scholar*, and other publications. He is the author of nine poetry collections and has received fellowships from the NEA and the Connecticut Commission on the Arts. In 2004 he received a Lifetime Achievement Award from the Connecticut Center for the Book, and in 2006 he was named Poet Laureate of Simsbury, Connecticut.
Sherre Myers teaches at Camino Nuevo High School in central Los Angeles. She earned her Master’s degree at California State University, San Marcos and was named a 2006 Nevada Stars Fellow at UNLV’s Black Mountain Institute. Her writing credits include poems published in *A Driftwood Highway, The Oyez Review, Tapestries, New Writings, Perigee, Eclipse, Red Hawk Review, Susan B. and Me* and now *Freshwater*. *Green Ink Wings*, her first work in fiction, won the 2005 chapbook award from Elixir Press. She has received recognition for her writing from Bright Hill Press (Honorable Mention) and the CPU Creative Writing Conference (Second Place).

Gregory Natt teaches history at Mascenic Regional High School in New Ipswich, New Hampshire. He has studied creative writing with poets Charles Simic and Mekeel McBride at the University of New Hampshire (1977-81), and has published his poetry in a number of national/international literary magazines. He lives in Hooksett, New Hampshire, with his wife, Gail.

Michael Nowicki has published three books of poetry, the latest entitled *The Weight Of All Those Dead Angels*. He has been published in *Poetry Depth Quarterly* and *Red River Review*, among other places. He lives and breathes around Detroit, Michigan.

Lawrence O’Brien teaches English at Western New England College in Springfield, Massachusetts and has had poetry published in *Angel Face, Icarus, Peregrine, The MacGuffin, Milkweed Editions*, and *The Comstock Review*, among others. He is also Editor of *Common Ground*, a poetry journal affiliated with Western New England College.


Mary Orovan was Features Editor of *US Camera Magazine*, and taught in the Humanities Department at Polytechnic University in Brooklyn, New York. Now she makes "word pictures" in Central Park, New York City, and other green oases. She has had poems published in *13th Moon, Main Channel Voices, The Fourth River*, and two anthologies, *Poetry for Peace* and *Echoes from the Heart.*

Anne Pabst, a native Minnesotan, served in the Peace Corps in South Korea after graduating from Lawrence University of Wisconsin. Since that time, she has been a wife, mother of three now grown children, and English teacher, among other things. Presently, she is a college counselor and teacher at Convent of the Visitation School, an independent girls’ high school, and she is working on an MFA in Writing from Hamline University in St. Paul, Minnesota.
Gay Paluch is grateful to have a second poem published in *Freshwater*. A retired teacher, she has found joy in observing nature and trying to capture its beauty and serenity in poetry. She is especially thankful to the little gray heron who entered her space and inspired the poem “Dignity” and to Edwina and all her writing friends at Asnuntuck.

Simon Perchik is an attorney whose poems have appeared in *Partisan Review*, *The New Yorker* and elsewhere. *Family of Man* (Pavement Saw Press) and *Rafts* (Parsifal Editions) are scheduled for publication 2007. Readers interested in more are invited to read his essay “Magic, Illusion and Other Realities” at www.geocities.com/simonthepoet, which site lists a complete bibliography.

Joseph Powell’s most recent poetry books include *Getting Here* (QRL) and *A Ring in Air* (dPress). He also published a book on meter, *Accent On Meter: A Handbooks for Readers of Poetry*, (NCTE, 2004); it was co-written with Mark Halperin. He teaches in the English Department at Central Washington University.

John Repp is the author of three books and six chapbooks of poetry, most recently *Gratitude* (Cherry Grove, 2005) and *No Away* (limited-edition, Pudding House Publications, 2006). This is his second appearance in *Freshwater*.

Yvonne V. Sapia is an NEA Fellow and author of two books of poetry and a novel. Her work has appeared in numerous magazines. She is Resident Poet at Lake City Community College in Florida.

Matthew Sisson’s work has appeared in *Larcom Review, Poetry East, The English Journal, Moment Magazine, Byline, Sahara*, and other literary journals. He has work upcoming in *Rhino, Nimrod*, and *Jewish Currents* and was formerly the poetry editor of *Modern Steel Construction* magazine.

Meghan Sterling was born and raised in South Florida and has made her way northwards; a fascination with extreme climates and landscapes—scorched desert, New England woodland and swamp, and scraggly Florida forest—has been the result. She is a writer and student teacher of English in the Upper Connecticut River Valley in Vermont.

Steve Straight is the author of *The Water Carrier*, published by Curbstone Press (2002), one of the foremost small presses in the United States, and the book is now in a second printing. Poetry from the book has been featured on Garrison Keillor’s *Writer’s Almanac*. He has also published a chapbook, *The Deepest Breath*. He has given readings in a wide variety of venues, including the Sunken Garden Poetry Festival in Farmington, Connecticut, the Aran Islands Poetry Festival in Galway, Ireland, and colleges around New England. A teacher for twenty-five years, Straight is professor of English and director of the poetry program at Manchester Community College. For many years he also directed the Connecticut Poetry Circuit, and for many summers he directed the Seminar Series for the Sunken Garden Poetry Festival. He has given workshops on poetry and on teaching throughout the eastern United States and in Ireland. In 1998 he was named a Distinguished Advocate for the Arts by the Connecticut Commission on the Arts. He lives in South Windsor with his wife, soprano Marian Maccarone.

Charlotte Elizabeth Sullivan writes, teaches, and haunts the mysterious lakes of Minneapolis, Minnesota.


David Thornbrugh currently writes from South Korea, where he teaches English in a National University. He writes to push back the darkness a little bit at a time, in the same flighty manner as lightning bugs. He has been published in numerous small press journals, and once wrote the questions for a geography textbook. He prefers multiple choice questions to True/False.

Davide Trame is an Italian teacher of English, born and living in Venice, Italy, writing poems exclusively in English since 1993. His poems have been published in around two hundred literary magazines since 1999, in U.K, U.S. and elsewhere, recently in *Poetry New Zealand*, *New Contrast* (South Africa), Nimrod (U.S.), and *Prague Literary Review*.

Kelly Whinnem spent one of her twenty-one years in Olympia, Washington, and twenty in Vernon, Connecticut. She aims to reverse this ratio once she graduates from Manchester Community College.
Sheryl Woods works as a childcare worker at the New England Preschool Academy in Enfield, Connecticut. She has been writing poetry for many years and finds writing and reading to be a healing experience. She was published in the 2003 edition of *Freshwater* magazine, winning third place in the Eleventh Annual Asnuntuck Student Poetry Contest, judged by Marilyn Nelson, for her poem, "The Fetal Pig." She especially admires the work of Sylvia Plath and Anne Sexton. They were her inspiration for the poem, "Sylvia Anne."

Jonas Zdanys is the author of thirty-five books, thirty-one of them collections of his own poetry, written in English and in Lithuanian, and of his translations of Lithuanian poetry and prose into English. He has received a number of prizes and book awards for his own poetry and for his translations of Lithuanian poetry, including Lithuania’s Jotvingiai Prize, the country’s major prize for poetry awarded by the Ministry of Culture. He has taught at Yale University and the State University of New York and serves presently as Chief Academic Officer in the Connecticut Department of Higher Education. He lives in North Haven, Connecticut, with his wife and daughters.