

Aperçus Quarterly

4.3





Aperçus Quarterly

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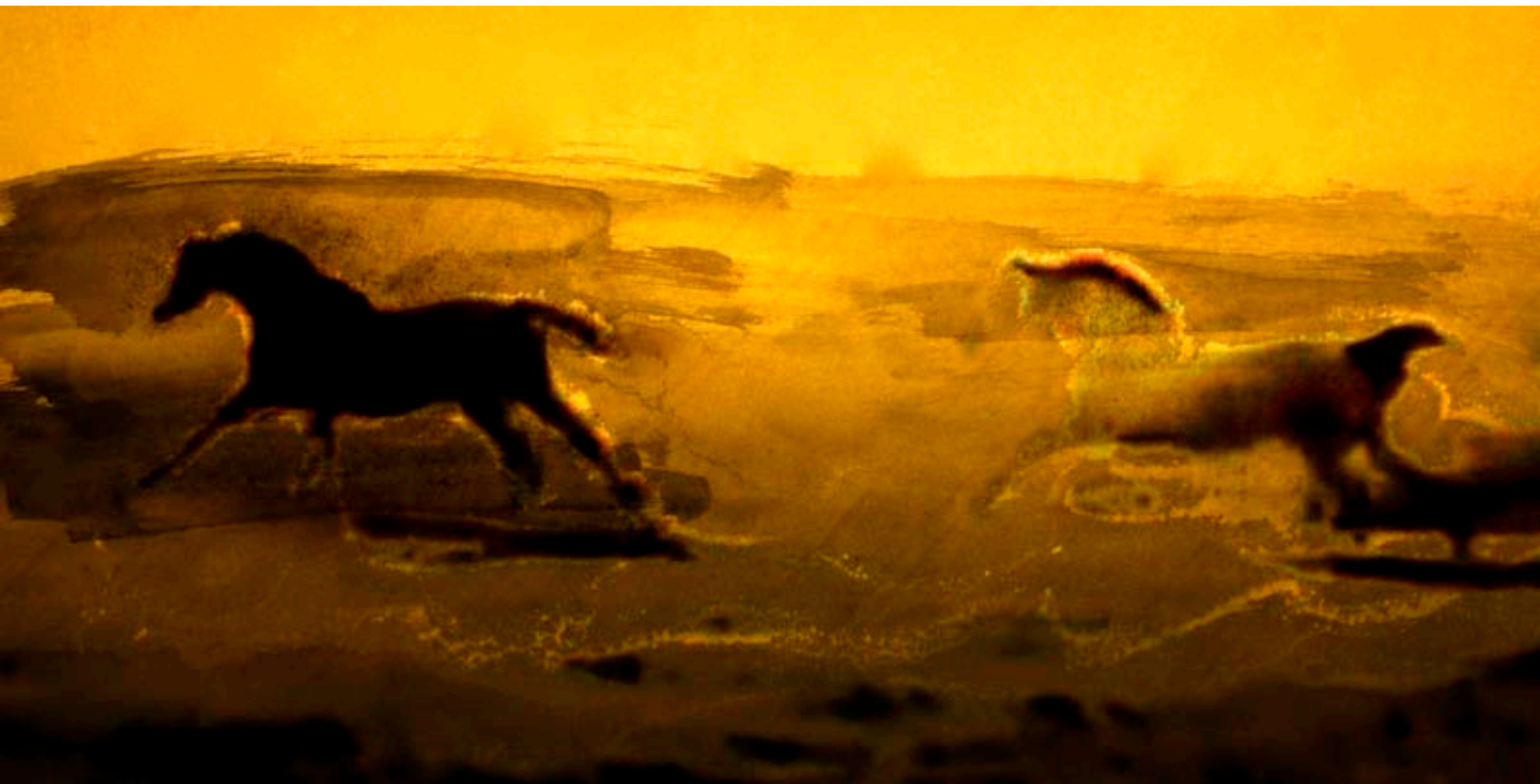
Aperçus Quarterly publishes original, previously unpublished poetry and visual art.

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Cover image: *Inside Looking In*, Acrylic on Wood, 11x14, 2013 by Kristin Forbes-Mullane

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Fire Gallop, 14 x 7 in. Mixed media. Charcoal, watercolor and acrylic ink on rice paper, Celeste Goyer

Gail Wronsky

Burlesque

Magic capes and cats' claws. Impunity. Where,
so to speak, we're all driven to ecstasy anyway.

But who cares? Bianca sawing her platinum-haired assistant
in half?
Sharni fire-fanning her fingers? No, no.

Watch out, little innocents.

You'll be scratched in your sleep as the years proceed.

Can't we preserve
the art of revealing similes to a beat?

And this forgetting in which your lives are being recorded,
vaster and vaster,

this video misprision . . .
Do they care? No. They shrug rhythmically along.

Black feathers, tats, and booze-breath, and gone.

I Didn't Like Footnotes

I used to prefer the mystery of the unexplained—

art about which

I had nothing to admit but that
the execution was excellent.

I used to eschew

the inventions of minds intoxicated by
the trivialities of the past, by notes and dry minutiae.

Refusing to elaborate, I thought,
one avoided the scholarly vanity of
self-admiring

and stuck to the point.

After all, what is history?

My youth--vanishing into a sightless twilight?

What the steeliest of eyes sees looking backward?

What the glassiest of eyes sees looking ahead?

The men were decapitated on a desolate beach
by an obscene militia.

Let that be a footnote--

slashes in all twenty-six throats
like open mouths, howling.

Kristin Bock

Goodbye

Her ears are blue and pink inside. Bunny Woman sports a blue fur bustier and big satin bow-tie. She is full of bows. What a luxury to be full of bows! I wish I were full of bows. I wish I were blue and furry and pink inside. The end of a white horse trots out of the picture, waving goodbye, goodbye with its immaculate handkerchief. By nightfall, a monkey in a suit drifts away. On the horizon, gold balloons bounce up invisible ladders. I wish I were gold and weightless and heaven-bound. Everything is moving away from Bunny Woman. Even the cow dangling from that airship is trying to run. As if there were a bomb planted in her blue fur. As if you can no longer trust the friendliest places on the planet.

Monster Poem

There is a monster. It has a hole in its belly. You can see straight through to the other side. Sometimes, I reach into its cage and put my hand through the hole. The monster doubles over and cries for a time. Then, I ride it around like a donkey. I tie feathers to its neck and bid it sing like a bird. I point. I laugh. I eat a rabbit on the floor. The monster's eyes are dark and bottomless. Like stars turned inside out. Each night, thousands of soldiers collect at the hole and stare out at me. They all have guns and the same face. They pour from the monster's belly, tumble over each other like mice from a silo. I press my palm to the hole, but they always shoulder through. By daybreak, the entire army holds me at gunpoint.

Dear Life Form

The golden contraption inserted into your ear simulates the after-death experience so vividly, you will believe you are travelling down a throat of stars. In severe cases, it will dissolve your organs in less than six minutes. Watch for warning signs: a constant ache around the eyes, fits of sleeping and waking, the urge to “clown around.” If you think you are a civil service worker, you may already be. We predict a band of searing winds will toast you in your sleep. Do not be alarmed. We’ve avoided sickness by wearing festive kitchenware: turkey basters, corncob holders shaped like little corns. We’ve painted great red arrows on our chests that point straight down. We’ve run amok among the astro-turf. We’ve even smoked our hamsters, Vaughn and Phil. However, our third and brightest hamster, Mustafa, has grown a curious eight feet in a matter of hours. He’s in the parlor with me now, dictating this memo and stroking a dawn horse, braying in the palm of his hand.

Icescape

I'm in a line of people snaking far into the distance. When I look around, I notice everyone's eyes are like enormous black pearls. *Why doesn't anyone have any color in their eyes?* I ask the woman standing next to me. *Because our pupils are all the way open,* she says. Suddenly, we are sitting in red chairs. We are like a long bloody vein stretched over ice. Why are we sitting? I ask the woman. *From time to time we are allowed to sit,* she says. Finally, I hear my name boom so loudly it echoes off the ice for some time. I jump up, but so does everyone else. I raise my hand, wave it around wildly and yell, *It's me! It's me!* But everyone does the same. After a few minutes of silence and looking around at each other in a brand new confusion and adversarial system, we all sit back down. The sun never rose or fell again. Each day was the same shade of yellow.

Snowglobe

For days, I waded through snowdrifts, holding moose antlers above my head. I caught voles, slid their bodies onto the points and stacked them neatly as hors d'oeuvres. After a time, I carved an entire Magic Kingdom of Ice to guard against the starved and directionless. Sometimes, I can hear them calling my name on the snowmobile trails, through the bent spruce and balsam firs. *Wendy, Wendy! Come home, Wendy, we forgive you!* But they are liars. Something thin and cold like a wafer has broken inside me. There is a deep trembling. Then everything goes white.

Vast Open Wide Space Area

The Vast Wide Open Space Area is the name of a park in my hometown. It was election year and I was lounging under a walnut tree. Amid the danger of falling nuts, I met a man with a star spangled shield, ten blue fingers and a pilly, red facemask. Together, on a park bench, we admired a map of the state, noted great town names like Bethlehem and Bozrah. We noticed some black dots were larger than other black dots. He was very clever. He showed me the atlas had a face, and the United States was the forehead of the world. Imagine, for me he signed an entire book of checks! For the rest of the afternoon, we watched a man paint a flagpole from the bottom up. And so we parted—his silhouette punching a hole in the paper sky. My heart growing stars and stripes.

Cynthia Anderson

Atelier

Transfixed, he works
the malleable metal

making the creature
who will stand before him

without flinching—
pouring precious liquid

in a preset mold,
then forming the skin—

distressed, beaten,
torn. His goal is always

verisimilitude—
or rather,

the satisfaction
of a loud gasp

at the unveiling.
So devastating,

so real,
nothing withheld—

the room abuzz
with cackle and gossip.

She hasn't known
such torture

since he took pliers
to her face

and beaked it.

This is No Cactus Flower

but a Very Large Array,
synchronized motion
on a spiny host,

beaming radio waves
into deep space.
Each golden stamen

is a celestial receiver,
storing messages
from the home star

for a winged posterity.
The deep central well
is a wormhole—if you

fell in, you'd emerge
light years distant,
legs dusted with pollen.

Nested crimson petals
are solar panels.
Their energy stuns you.

You retreat as best
you can—dazed,
skull buzzing.

When you wake
from this spell,
the so-called flower

will wither
and you will forget
its true nature.

Laura Donnelly

Theme and Variations

These variations in psychological time are perceptible only as they are related to the primary sensation – whether conscious or unconscious – of real time, ontological time.

~ Igor Stravinsky, “The Poetics of Music in the Form of Six Lessons”

Walking uphill under a parachute
of leaves rising/falling on wind

I feel the ground rise and fall

*

All animals have approximately
a billion and a half heartbeats

All cells except humans’
who have learned to fudge data

*

At the pond the frogs play slack-jawed
guitars and when they forget I am there

I forget I am there

*

A child’s heart is the size of her fist
but an adult’s heart the size of two fists

*

Ontological time is separate
from the hummingbird’s 1260 beats

per minute but also from our 72
The metronome calls this *Andante*

which means walking

Which means

*

*Even at rest, the muscles of the heart
work hard – twice as hard*

as the leg muscles of a person sprinting



Skull and Lilies, Acrylic on Wood, 14x11, 2014 by Kristin Forbes-Mullane



What Force Through the Green Fuse Drives the Flower:

an Interview with Kristin Bock

LH: I'm intrigued by the dark and mysterious tones in *Cloisters*. Can you talk a little about what it takes to sustain a foreboding register throughout a collection of poems?

KB: As an artist, my father was a master at this. From a very early age, I was at his side watching him paint some very foreboding images. In general, his paintings made me aware of texture, the qualities of light, and the language between objects. They facilitated my understanding of symbolism and metaphor and nurtured my love for dark imagery. In short, art taught me the vocabulary of poetry. My first poem was inspired by my father's painting of a naked china doll with its eyes extracted, a dark hole on top of its head where hair should have been. I imagined, if I could peer down inside its head, I would find a lost button, some balls of dust, or a few dried bees. The doll was cocked awkwardly to one side, and its right arm stretched out to the viewer. I was frightened and fascinated at the same time, and, as despairing as it may seem, I came to identify with the doll, and it became my first conscious metaphor. As Emily Dickinson writes in her poem, "Tis So Appalling--It Exhilarates," "the Truth is Bald and Cold."

To answer your question more directly, I paid attention to the emotional arc of the manuscript as I wrote and arranged poems. In *Cloisters*, I wanted the poems to have a cumulative effect, to build on each other so that a kind of narrative formed, one in which the reader could sense the speaker is wrestling with something formidable. I'm not a big fan of poems that explain everything away. Allowing for some mystery in each poem helped to build that sense of foreboding—something smoldering over the next hill. The architecture of the book attempts to document a year of estrangement from a long-time friend, as well as the death of my father. The speaker is conflicted by the idea of letting go and resists grief as if to complete the process would mean some form of forgetting, which is unacceptable. Nonetheless, the book is divided into sections, which loosely mirror the five stages of grief: denial, bargaining, anger, depression, and finally a kind of acceptance, or, in this case—forgiveness. Whether or not my reader picked up on this particular narrative was not important to me. The goal was to lead my reader through the struggles and triumphs of the speaker—if not on a conscious level, an unconscious one.

LH: You seem to have mastered the art of packing a wallop into a short poem, which is an extremely difficult task. Can you talk a little about balancing a poem's length with its heft?

KB: Thank you. A great short poem cuts right to the heart. I like its precision, its directness, and its audacity, if you will. The short poem must be a powerhouse or it will be lost. I remember reading, "The Death of the Ball Turret Gunner" by Jarrell, as a teenager and being floored by it. I couldn't believe how deeply I could be moved by language in just five short lines.

"A great short poem cuts right to the heart. I like its precision, its directness, and its audacity, if you will. The short poem must be a powerhouse or it will be lost."

From then on, I've always been drawn to short, highly imagistic poems that are successful at marrying idea and image. I always thought that the Imagist movement faded too soon. Pound stated, "use no superfluous word, no adjective, which does not reveal something" and that's a philosophy that may not be completely realistic, but one I've aspired to my whole writing life. I'm an obsessive editor, but the danger is that sometimes I edit my poems right out of existence.

LH: In many of your poems, the narrator seems to be unsure of what she sees—I think of "Strangelet" and "Watercolor Left in a Humid Kitchen." Here are some lines from the latter:

*In the rising river, a woman
Clutches a white bough, this I can tell.*

*But is it snowing or flowering?
Is she laughing or drowning?*

*And is that my hand
dragging her to shore by her hair?*

I love the way these images synthesize many perspectives and lead both the narrator and the reader to more questions than answers. What advice do you have for poets who feel the need to *explain* the conflict or tension in their poems? What do you do when you find your words moving towards abstraction?

"Trust the poem and where it wants to go. Trust your reader and offer them a perspective that works simultaneously upon the heart and the subconscious. Like a buoy, the meaning of a poem will right (write!) itself."

KB: In "Stranglet," the speaker mistakes her sleeping lover "for a rifle/laid down gently until dawn." There is at once the realization that the person is someone she loves but who, at the same time, has the power to annihilate her. Similarly, in "Watercolor Left in a Humid Kitchen," the speaker questions the part she plays in her relationship with the drowning woman. Is the speaker saving the drowning woman or causing her pain? Or both? Does the woman even need saving? The idea for the poem was inspired by Winslow Homer's painting, "Undertow," in which rescuers are pulling two

women ashore who are in danger of going under. The drama, for me, is that the rescuer is pulling one of the women by her hair through the strong currents. In writing the poem, I was also reminded of Stevie Smith's poem, "Not Waving but Drowning," in which the speaker admits, "I was much too far out all my life /And not waving but drowning." I've always loved that poem for its ambiguity and its invocation of perspective. Both Homer and Smith urge us to question perspective, remind us that many different perspectives exist simultaneously, and that ours is certainly not the only or best one, despite the sea of pain or peril in which we often find ourselves floundering.

My advice to poets who are tempted to *explain* the conflict or tension in a poem is to trust your inspiration and stick with it, whether that is an image or a narrative. Return to its origin. Whenever I find myself drifting in the waters of abstraction, I notice it's because I am trying to force meaning on a poem. Trust the poem and where it wants to go. Trust your reader and offer them a perspective that works simultaneously upon the heart and the subconscious. Like a buoy, the meaning of a poem will right (write!) itself.

LH: You also write short, darkly humorous prose poems. Are these prose poems a new venture for you or have you always taken turns between writing poems that use white space (such as in *Cloisters*) and other forms? What moves you between the two?

KB: I've always moved between the two forms. The voice I hear in my head dictates the form. I know from the very first line whether a poem will be a prose poem or a lyrical one. In *Cloisters*, the poems are dense, short, lyrical, and, for the most part, somber. In my new manuscript, the poems explore humor, the prose form, dialogue, and different personas, albeit through a glass darkly. They are my first book's louder and wilder cousins, but hopefully very much of the same sensibility.

I've always loved the prose poem, and this is in no small part due to my mentor and life-long teacher of poetry, James Tate, who just passed away in July. This is bittersweet for me to talk about as our community is still reeling from his death. I came to the University of Massachusetts Amherst in 1992 to study with him (and with Dara Wier and Agha Shahid Ali) in the MFA program at the young age of 22. I settled in the area after graduation and, like many of his students who did, was lucky enough to come to know Jim personally over the years. I know I'm not alone in saying it felt like losing a friend, a mentor and a father figure all at once.

As a poet, if my poems echo an inkling of his shadow, I will be happy. To put it simply, he is largely the reason I am the poet I am today. In her article, "Remembering James Tate" my fellow alum and poet, Lori Shine states, "One aspect of Jim's particular genius was to get people laughing, and then they were ready to follow him anywhere, often straight into strange or dark places." He was a master of dark humor, the prose poem and the persona poem.

Speaking of persona poems, and I know it's highly unorthodox to quote one's interviewer in an interview, but you, Lauren, made some wonderful remarks about the nature of the persona poem in your interview with the online journal, *Menacing Hedge*:

Persona poems can tap into a collective conscious and thereby speak the minds of hundreds, maybe even thousands of people... It might be true that a persona poem allows a poet to hide a little. However, we humans have many selves and the persona we choose is often just one of our selves coming out to play... Writing a persona poem is like having a lucid dream: You are in control of some of the moves you make, but at any point you could turn into a Viking, a prisoner, your neighbor, or a dolphin, and forget yourself almost completely.

Brilliant! How could I say it better? I guess this is why I feel free to inhabit the bodies of a Playboy bunny terrorist, a giant pair of scissors, a killer cookie, an eight-foot hamster, and a pole-vaulting robot in my new collection.

LH: Thank you for the nod, Kristin. Much appreciated. I am moved by your deep connection to the poet James Tate. Though I've never met him, I am an admirer of his work and he was one of my early poetic influences. You said, "To put it simply, he is largely the reason I am the poet I am today." Do you think that the rise of so many MFA programs over the past couple decades is evident proof that the need for mentorship is just as strong as it ever was? In your opinion, what role do MFA programs play in mentorship?

"MFA programs not only provide creative writers the opportunity to study closely under their literary heroes and learn what is good writing from those they admire, but also, and perhaps just as important, meet other writers who may share a certain artistic aesthetic."

KB: Yes, I believe mentorship is still vital to the craft. I'm not saying one can't become a great writer without completing an MFA, but I suspect it's a longer, harder road. As I mentioned before, my time at UMass afforded me the opportunity to work with three amazing mentors, each with different teaching styles and strengths. Jim Tate led by example and intuited his way through a student's poem, cutting away the chaff in seconds. Agha Shahid Ali, whom we also lost too soon, could instantly rearrange a student's poem, sometimes even reading

it backwards, and create, out of the most mundane verse, something fresh and magical. Finally, Dara Wier, the current director of the MFA Program for Poets and Writers, a formidable poet and fiercely dedicated teacher who helps students refine their voice and engages them in challenging conversations about poetics--she is a true and generous scholar. I am, and will always be, humbled and grateful to have studied with such masters.

Furthermore, MFA programs not only provide creative writers the opportunity to study closely under their literary heroes and learn what is good writing from those they admire, but also, and perhaps just as important, meet other writers who may share a certain artistic aesthetic. If you find the MFA program that's right for you, you can immerse yourself in a dialogue and experience in which you learn from multiple mentors—peers and professors—who appreciate and grow a similar sensibility together.

LH: I want to swerve back to the topic of your new collection, of which we are showcasing five poems from. Is the momentum of the collection propelled by an overarching narrative (with a beginning, middle, and end) as told by multiple personas—a Playboy bunny terrorist, a giant pair of scissors, a killer cookie, an eight-foot hamster, and a pole-vaulting robot—or is the collection striving for more of an emotionally cumulative effect, similar to *Cloisters*?

KB: The collection, or should I say manuscript, is still in process, so it's hard to predict definitively, but I'm not consciously ordering a narrative. Hopefully, poems will fall into a narrative that speaks to the readers' collective unconscious. I say this because many of the poems were born from dreams. I know you're never supposed to admit that, especially because you run the risk of losing your audience with the rookie move "and then I woke up," but in this case, it's true. The poems are oneiric in nature and try to create or recreate fantastical worlds that speak, on some emotional level, to and possibly for the many.

Virgil Burnett, a wonderful illustrator whose drawings graced the cover of *Poetry* magazine for many years, believed the artist beholds the world with the responsibility to recreate it "so scrupulously that he invents a reality of his own, one that counterfeits dream." He believed in a binary perception or a double vision in which the artist sees everything as both object and emblem. Dreams are where our personal desires and conflicts manifest, where our concerns about society and humanity float to the surface, and where our psychic pain plays out. Just as with a dystopian novel, we can mine our dreams for signs, for awareness about the interconnectedness with and empathy for each other that is sorely lacking in our day-to-day lives. I've come to trust that my dreams, whether night or waking, are deeply rooted in a greater, collective unconscious. What force through the green fuse drives the flower, drives me, and drives you.

"If one is paying attention, one can see the end inside the beginning, the dark seeds of our own destruction inside the apple of the Garden of Earthly Delights. Apocalyptic and post-apocalyptic poems feel more real to me than ever, and the new collection is chock full of them."

But all this to say, the earlier part of the collection features poems set in the margins of our current day reality, and then, as it progresses, poems become more dreamlike and futuristic.

LH: What is the setting for this collection? After reading "Dear Life Form," I definitely imagine a post-apocalyptic earth:

The golden contraption inserted into your ear simulates the after-death experience so vividly, you will believe you are travelling down a throat of stars. In sever cases, it will dissolve your organs in less than six minutes.

Does the collection serve as a warning for things to come—a kind of *Ghost of Christmas Future*? Or, even worse, is the collection a mirror for what is?

KB: These are great questions, Lauren. There are poems in the collection set in present day and allude to more current events and subjects, such as Abu Ghraib, terrorism, military drones, the Ebola virus, addiction, cults and other hallmarks of our troubled and violent world. If one is paying attention, one can see the end inside the beginning, the dark seeds of our own destruction inside the apple of the Garden of Earthly Delights. Apocalyptic and post-apocalyptic poems feel more real to me than ever, and the new collection is chock full of them. But on a more optimistic note, the second half of the manuscript includes futuristic creation myths and new beginnings as well. As you've noted, these poems differ greatly from my last collection. Instead of looking to the past and inward, I've turned my gaze outward to space, the future, science and science fiction.

LH: The other poem I want to talk about from your new collection is "Goodbye." Jonathan and I live in Redlands, California, about ¼ mile from where the Regional Center shooters lived. Redlands is a quaint, tree-lined, town. We often joke that Redlands is like "Pleasantville"—friendly neighbors waving from their porches, white picket fences, children playing on the sidewalks. In "Goodbye" you write:

Everything is moving away from Bunny Woman. Even the cow dangling from that airship is trying to run. As if there were a bomb planted in her blue fur. As if you can no longer trust the friendliest places on the planet.

That last sentence hits the nail on the head. How much of this collection has been influenced by the fact that we've had hundreds of mass shootings in 2015 alone and that, as you say, *we can no longer trust the friendliest places on the planet?*

KB: I'm sorry you went through that and can relate. I grew up near Sandy Hook, CT, where the Elementary School shooting took place. I spent much of my young adulthood there, still know a lot of folks and mourned for weeks. I'd say I know what it's like for a mass shooting to take place in my own backyard, but now, and very sadly, most Americans do, too.

With the way things are headed, the collection may very well contain more poems like "Goodbye," but for now it attempts to explore the more general concept of "monster." The word "monster" conjures a multitude of ideas and images. According to Carrie Shipers, in her article, "Empathy for the Monster," "we live in a world in which monsters, both real and imagined, are rapidly proliferating, from terrorists and pedophiles to hedge fund managers who abscond with millions." On the other hand, Mary Shelley's "Frankenstein: Or, the Modern Prometheus," compels us to empathize with a "monster" and his painful journey into self-awareness. *Frankenstein* is my favorite book and I shamelessly plunder it and its themes in my collection. As well, Merriam-Webster offers these meanings:

1: a: an animal or plant of abnormal form or structure, b: one who deviates from normal or acceptable behavior or character; 2: a threatening force; 3: a: an animal of strange or terrifying shape or size; 4: a person of unnatural or extreme ugliness, deformity, wickedness, or cruelty; 5: one that is highly successful.

I find the word "monster" fascinating, not only due to its many connotations, but the visceral response one experiences when saying it aloud. Try it! The new collection offers monsters in many forms, some terribly real, some playfully imagined, all hoping to illuminate the monster inside "the other" and in us.

LH: Let's pretend New Year's Day is your birthday and you are about to blow out the candles on your cake. You get to make one wish. What is it?

KB: I wish I could release the world back into Delight!



Exile of Logic, Acrylic on Wood, 11x14, 2013 by Kristin Forbes-Mullane

Cynthia Anderson lives in the high desert near Joshua Tree National Park. Her award-winning poems have appeared in numerous journals, including *Askew*, *LummoX 3*, *Writing from Inlandia*, and *The Sun Runner Magazine*. She is the author of four poetry collections—*In the Mojave*, *Desert Dweller*, and *Shared Visions I and II* (in collaboration with her photographer/husband Bill Dahl). She is co-editor of the anthology *A Bird Black As the Sun: California Poets on Crows & Ravens*.

Kristin Bock received her MFA in poetry from the University of Massachusetts Amherst Program for Poets and Writers. She currently teaches in the Business Communication Program at UMass. Her poetry has appeared in numerous online and print journals, including *VERSE*, *Columbia*, *Pleiades*, *Prairie Schooner*, *The Black Warrior Review*, *Crazyhorse* and *FENCE*. Her poems also live in the anthology *APOCALYPSE NOW: Prose and Poetry from the End of Days*, and are forthcoming in the anthology *THE MUSEUM OF ALL THINGS AWESOME AND THAT GO BOOM*, both by Upper Rubber Boot Press. Bock's first collection of poetry, *Cloisters*, won Tupelo Press's First Book Award and the da Vinci Eye Award. She lives with her husband in Western Massachusetts where they restore liturgical art for churches throughout New England.

Laura Donnelly's first collection of poetry, *Watershed*, won the 2013 Cider Press Review Editors' Prize. Originally from Michigan, she now teaches at SUNY Oswego and lives in Central New York. The italicized lines at the end of "Theme and Variations" come from Nova Online.

Born in Phoenix, AZ, currently living in St. Thomas, USVI, **Kristin Forbes-Mullane** is a self taught, fine art painter. Kristin began painting in 2000 and since then has shown her work in galleries around the US and been featured in numerous publications. More recently, she completed a tattoo apprenticeship with internationally known tattooer, Paolo Acuna of Divinity Tattoo and is working to blend the world of her paintings with tattooing.

Artist Statement:

My acrylic paintings have always been mainly portraits and still life, I gravitate to themes of the dark and macabre. Working to blend the beautiful and the ugly to create a narrative of wonder and curiosity.

Poet and visual artist **Celeste Goyer** lives in San Luis Obispo, California. Her artwork ranges from mixed media assemblage to acrylic on canvas and has been exhibited at galleries in the Owens Valley and on the Central Coast of California. With a penchant for unconventional tools and materials, she welcomes the unexpected in her studio practice, as in the ephemeral light box works on rice paper shown here.

Celeste edited a literary quarterly for fourteen years and has been featured reader at numerous events. Books in development include her first collection and a book of collaborations with the poet James Cushing.

Gail Wronsky's most recent book, *The Shortest Farewells are the Best*, is a collection of flash noir fiction co-authored with Chuck Rosenthal. She has also recently translated *Fuegos Florales (Flowering Fires)* by Argentinean poet Alicia Partnoy. She lives in Topanga Canyon, CA.

