



THE OAKLAND REVIEW • ALUMNI VIII

The
**OAKLAND
REVIEW**

ALUMNI VIII

THE
OAKLAND
REVIEW

ALUMNI VIII

CARNEGIE MELLON UNIVERSITY
PITTSBURGH, PA
2016

The Oakland Review
Alumni VIII

The Oakland Review was established in 1969 as Carnegie Mellon's literary-arts journal. Edited by students, and published in the spring, it serves to represent the best literary and artistic work of the undergraduate body of Carnegie Mellon. The first alumni edition was printed in the fall of 2009 as a way to showcase the talent of Carnegie Mellon graduates. Submissions are evaluated anonymously.

For back-issue listings, subscriptions and submissions, please contact:

Editor

The Oakland Review
University Center, Box #7
Carnegie Mellon University
5000 Forbes Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15213

Inquiries may also be sent to oakland.review@gmail.com

Copyright © 2016 by *The Oakland Review*

The Oakland Review reserves the right to reproduce the works published in these pages in special issues and anthologies. All other rights revert back to authors upon publication.

The Oakland Review is funded in part by the Carnegie Mellon student activities fee. The opinions expressed in or by *The Oakland Review* are not necessarily the views of Carnegie Mellon University.

Cover art by Joni Scully — "Soho Penthouses"

In permanent collection of the La Salle University Art Museum.

Book design by Rissa Ji-Yeon Lee.

Oakland Review Staff

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Hyunho Yoon

POETRY EDITOR

Izzy McCarthy

PROSE EDITOR

Ian Sears

PRODUCTION MANAGER

Rissa Ji-Yeon Lee

EDITORIAL BOARD

Brian Bizier

Jenny Bornemann

Gabriela Brik

Joshua Brown

Kate Busatto

Julia Hou

Julie Kim

Abbey Salmon

Paloma Sierra Hernández

Marika Yang

FACULTY ADVISOR

Sharon Dilworth

From the Editor

Dear Reader,

I am happy to present to you the eighth Alumni Edition of *The Oakland Review*, Carnegie Mellon's premier literary and art journal. This issue marks many new beginnings for *The Oakland Review*. This will be the first issue that will be made available digitally, concurrently with the launching of our brand new website. We also have a new editorial board, drawn from across the many disciplines that Carnegie Mellon University has to offer. After four consecutive issues of *The Oakland Review* since I was an eager freshman – as first a reader, then Prose Editor – this is my first as Editor-in-Chief.

But with the new, we have also striven to uphold the great tradition of literary excellence that *The Oakland Review* has been known for since its first issue in 1969; the staff have spent many weeks picking the best of the many outstanding submissions we have received. Following much deliberation, we have chosen the ones we believe exemplify the brilliance and diversity of those who have passed through this university. It is our hope that this issue lives up to the high standards set by its many predecessors over the years.

I would like to thank the Carnegie Mellon English Department and the Creative Writing program for their generous support over the years, and particularly Professor Sharon Dilworth, our faculty advisor, for her valuable guidance and encouragement. To everyone who submitted their work for our consideration, thank you for sharing your art with us. And to the members of *The Oakland Review* board, thank you for all your hard work.

And lastly, thank you for reading.

Sincerely,
Hyunho Yoon
Editor-in-Chief

Contents

Empty House Song.....	<i>Kelsey Dolbon</i> . . .	11
With a Smile	<i>Kelsey Dolbon</i> . . .	13
Flood the Void.	<i>Madeleine Barnes</i> . . .	14
Tapping Against the Dark.	<i>Mark Evan Chimsky</i> . . .	16
Blue Hands I.	<i>Tanya Fletcher</i> . . .	19
The Road.	<i>Janet Culbertson</i> . . .	20
Memorial.	<i>Janet Culbertson</i> . . .	21
Cinque Terra	<i>Lynda Kusuma</i> . . .	22
Pecking Order	<i>Lynda Kusuma</i> . . .	23
You can see me now?	<i>Laura Karetzky</i> . . .	24
Housecat Vigil	<i>Laura Berry</i> . . .	25
Ode to the Art of Tattoo	<i>Mickey Coburn</i> . . .	35
I Solved the Problems of		
Time and Purpose	<i>Jonathan DeVries</i> . . .	36
Sleep Phase	<i>Madeleine Barnes</i> . . .	40

ART INSERT

THE
OAKLAND
REVIEW

ALUMNI VIII

Kelsey Dolhon

Empty House Song

I was sleeping in an empty house
hours before I knew it you never came back
so I woke up got some old string
decided to make you anew you never liked
my knitting but that didn't stop me
steady click-click needles fiddled knit purl knit
pattern cast on from memory softer
than you ever were stuffed with all the best
intentions I could find still misshapen I tried
not to cry the cat pulled strands you flew
apart all over again unravelling on the floor
at least you let me hold you in pieces

I was waiting by the phone you never called
so I twirled the cord made a snack
full stomach I fixed a whole pan of biscuits
and I ate them raw before the ring that never came
forgive me I've consumed my sadness again
dough soft as cobwebs it clutched in my throat
sticking awful I kept swallowing in love
with salt cutting sweet butter the bitterness
that lingered foggy on the tongue
I ate the whole pan the way you never liked
when my hunger shook loose

I was hoping for a sign I knew better
so I drained your coffee yesterday's dregs
threw out the mug I'd have taken a walk
but you hate a cliché and some part of me
had to keep watch I lay down in the yarn-ends
thinking up the perfect way to turn you away
waiting by the door through day longer
than I should have when you never came back
I slept at the threshold knowing this should be
a metaphor but you've stolen my conceit

Kelsey Dolhon

With a Smile

Always keep your back straight when in costume—
they like to see your figure. Remember to freshen up

midway: dab your eyelids, blot your forehead, stuff
your bra. Make sure your nylons never run. And you.

Wear black. Invest in good shoes. You have nice
long legs, so don't be afraid to show a bit. Flirting

is all part of the experience. Everyone appreciates
a fresh face working and nobody will judge you,

probably. Be attentive to their needs. They are paying
for a service, the illusion of caring, and no matter

how they disgust you, make your eyes twinkle.
Try. Buy glasses, better makeup if you cannot.

Work the tip. Think of college or next month's rent.
Focus. For God's sake keep your hair out of your face

and don't shrink, no matter what they tell you, just nod
but keep a sharp eye they don't walk out on the check.

Madeleine Barnes

Flood the Void

Tell me I am good despite everything.
Sing me one of your songs
as you carry me upstairs.
Tell me all the friends I don't see anymore
made, and make, me happy.
Find me a field of broken irises.

A boy runs down the street
with silver balloons tied to his wrist.
I can hear the flood of color.
I'd like to think you're the kind of person
who comes from a dysfunctional home
but never uses the words broken.

And you might be able to detect
the details of the forest's shimmering edge
in my brain, faint green-gold
that intensifies at night,
heavenly trees on the periphery,
bark on fire for someone.

Do you have an ice tray?
Tell me that I will feel terrible if I steal
a string of lights from a stranger's lawn.
Throw me over your shoulder
when I don't believe you, piercing
glow on the back of my hands.

Will you cook something for me?
Do you freeze blueberries,
line up your shoes for the afterlife?
Do you have a shirt I can borrow?
Have we gone beyond the periphery,
with a mind to get through it?

Carry me through the cemetery
over unsteady ground.
Kiss me among the graves.
Tell me I have several lives
and this is the truest one.

Mark Evan Chimsky

Tapping Against the Dark

For the Trapped Miners of Somerset County, Pennsylvania

I.

The rapping was insistent,
feverish as the beat of a quickened heart,
the hollow echoing that in its own Morse code
let us know there was still breath enough
and hope.
Into the night, we stood above ground listening
for the only sound that mattered—
as if our very silence could draw out
what we waited to hear.

When we dreamed of them,
our world seemed too big, and all
we could think of was the narrow shaft below,
the flood breaking through the wall,
the earth that sealed them off,
the missed morning kiss.

II.

With the water rising and the rock closing in,
there wasn't much space in between to breathe.
We looped heavy rope from waist to waist
to bind us so that no man would be lost,
an umbilical that made us feel larger
than just ourselves.
The world seemed to float away
like a kid's balloon swallowed by the sky.

Even time held no sway.
We counted minutes, but the long days were nothing
more than a perpetual night.
When we found the dry space, we huddled
against the cold that had taken hold inside us,
a chill that seemed like the end
numbing our bones.

Bent to half our height,
we saw each other in the light from our hats that glanced off
the glinting coal,
our faces black with soot,
grim reapers with our picks.
What did we have beyond our own bodies?

Our tools were useless here.
All we could do was to lean in close to one another
for the warmth and something more—
for in that place where nothing was certain
we wanted to feel our lives
given back to us in the arms of others who understood
what we were leaving behind.

There, in the hours after the voices above went lost
like a phone line gone dead,
and before the engineers' precision brought us up,
we had our own miracle:
in that silent void,
gasping for air as if the earth had turned against us,
as if we had dug our way into our own grave
and were afraid of sleep that would not let us wake,
we never stopped tapping.

Though no one answered back,
we tapped against the dark for what seemed like a year
our hammers striking the iron pipe
again and again and again,
hope becoming too hard a sound for Heaven not to hear.

Tanya Fletcher

Blue Hands I



oil, silver leaf on birch panel framed in textured, colored glass

Janet Culbertson

The Road



oil, iridescent pigments, collage on rag paper

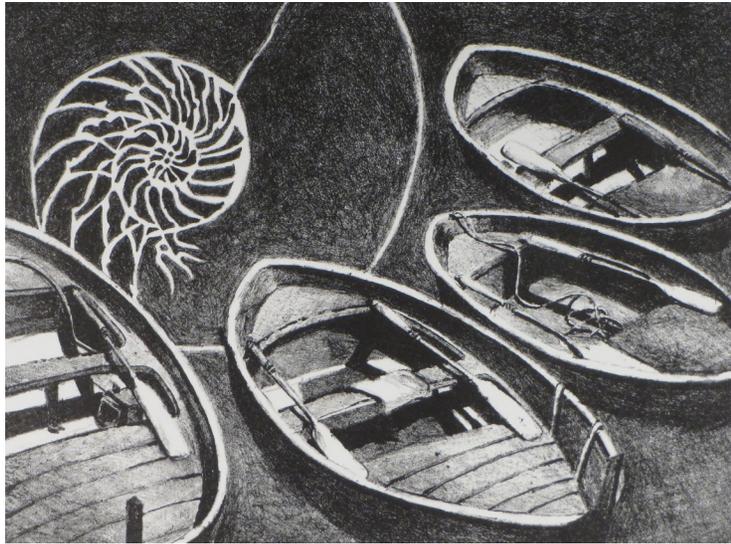
Memorial



oil, collage, iridescent pigments on rag paper

Lynda Kusuma

Cinque Terra



lithograph

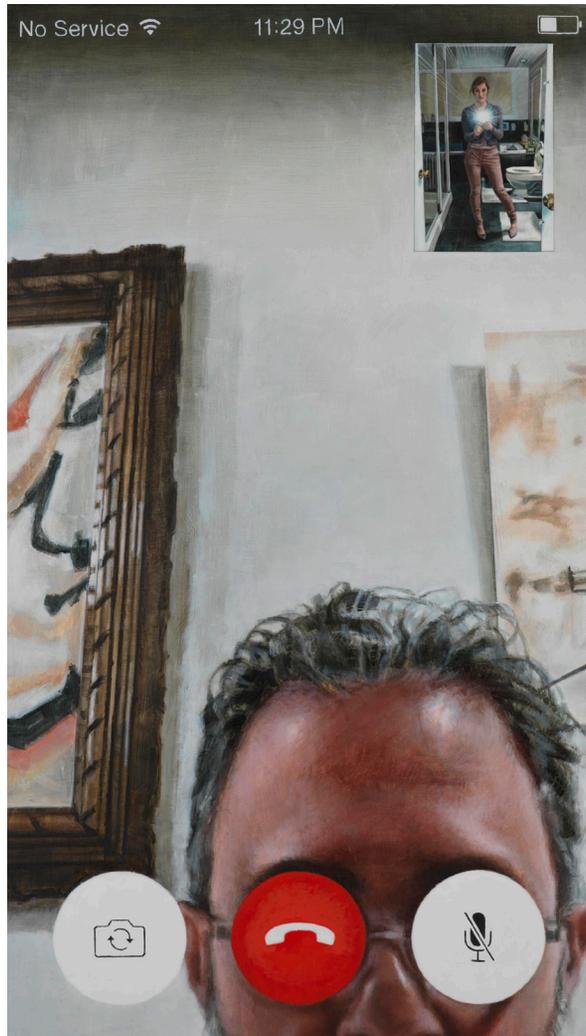
Pecking Order



intaglio

Laura Karetzky

You can see me now?



Laura Berry

Housecat Vigil

When I was a kid I would get in a lot of trouble for playing too rough. We would be pretending at lunchtime, me and the other kids, pirates or spies or sometimes just boys chase girls, and I guess I would get a little worked up over it. Once I knocked Jae Kim so hard he chipped his front tooth on the pavement. He started screaming and wailed on me until my nose bled, but I just kept laughing the whole time because I was having so much fun. This made him angrier and he hit me harder so I laughed harder and I didn't even notice when we had been pulled apart because it was the best game of pretend I'd ever played. We both got in trouble but the teachers weren't sure what to do with us so we just sat and played board games in the principal's office until our parents came to pick us up. The nurse gave me Powerpuff Girl Band-Aids and an ice pop. Maybe that's why I never learned my lesson.

•

In addition to being a historian, I am also a barista. I'm stuck behind the café counter at 3 PM on a Wednesday afternoon when the only people still getting lunch are the stragglers with too many kids. One family sits fanning themselves with matching triceratops hats from the gift shop. The prehistoric exhibit is a big hit this summer, which is a relief. It was my job to order the bones off the internet.

The tuna salad sweats in the case. Nobody orders anything.

While I wait for my TV dinner to defrost I read the local news. The residential population here is only ten-thousand but maybe there's something about tourist towns that all the weird stuff happens. RARE FLESH-EATING DISEASE, STRING OF HOME DEPOT ROBBERIES, SERIAL PETNAPPINGS. I know out in the world stuff much worse is happening, but these small things give me enough of a headache as it is.

I'm reading about a missing songbird when a vicious electric sizzle comes from the microwave. A lightning storm crackles behind the mesh grate. I tear the plug from the wall too late. The lasagna inside is zapped and I'm down a lunch for the week.

I remember we have another microwave in the stuck closet and wish I could get to it. The stuck closet has been stuck for months since we lost the key and Mr. Wojciechowicz is too stingy to bring in a locksmith. We had to replace most of its contents, anyway, so I don't know why he thinks waiting for the key to show up is saving our endangered historical institution any money.

The reflection of a stranger's watch quivers on the wall. I follow it with my eyes. Four o'clock comes and goes. Nobody orders anything.

•

I've been in a really weird mood the past couple of weeks, like I'm invincible. It's probably because I stopped sleeping. I don't even get tired anymore. At night I lie down on my bed and say, okay, I'm going to sleep now, and then I wait eight hours and climb out again. It's not insomnia. I don't feel sick. My back hurts pretty awful, but otherwise everything is the same.

It starts the evening a huge storm breaks—the kind where you can feel the electricity humming in the air before it even hits. When night falls it's still so unbearably hot I bunch up the comforter at the end of the bed and knock the pillows to the floor. After a few minutes I can't stand being in my pajamas either. I try reading a book for a while, but even without a shirt, sweat still pools on the underside of my chest and I have to lay down. Then my arms get too tired to hold the book above my head so I just drop that to the carpet, too, and turn off the light.

I'm lying there for three or four hours dead asleep when these small scratching sounds from the window wake me up.

After a few minutes lying paralyzed, I decide to open the window and a cat jumps in from the fire escape that zig-zags up the back of the building. I wonder if it belongs to a neighbor or if it really climbed six metal flights in a storm. It's small and soaked and its paws stick to the carpet.

Can I help you, I ask.

The cat looks at me with its marble eyes and settles onto the foot of my bed.

I'm allergic, I protest.

It mews in indifference.

I give the cat milk and sit up with it the rest of the night. On my nightstand 3:12 floats disembodied in the darkness, then 5:34, then 7:00. I don't get tired. I shower and go to work and the cat is still there when I get back. I haven't slept since then.

•

Later that afternoon I'm in the archives and Hank, the other full-timer, is cleaning one of the foxes from the natural history wing. Hank is handsome in a way that bores me to death. His eyes are flat and steely and he never laughs except when I make a mistake. I don't really understand him at all, except that he's insufferable.

When Hank's not taking care of the models all he seems to do is play solitaire and look at dog adoption websites on the old desktop in the archives, which are mostly fake. My first job here was to stain a bunch of forged documents with tea to make them look old-timey. Right now I'm doing research for a new exhibit, which means I am making new things up, but also fact-checking with the history that previous exhibits have already established. It is a tangled web of lies Mr. Wojciechowicz demands we weave.

Mr. Wojciechowicz and Hank and I are the only full-time workers, meaning we're the only ones who get to know that the museum is mostly embellishment. The rest are unpaid interns from the community college, who give enthusiastic tours to day camp groups and tourists. I really really do not like Mr. Wojciechowicz or Hank, but the interns are harder to talk to. I'm always afraid I'll mention the receipts for the rocks in the mineral room or something and blow the lid off the whole operation.

Hank's fox is staring at me.

Can't you point that thing another way, I ask.

No, he says. I exhale sharply and try to count to ten in my head, but the

numbers get jumbled. Not sleeping has made me scatterbrained. I used to loathe committing to so many wasted hours every night, but now I miss the emotional reset. Every annoying thing Hank's done since I stopped sleeping still feels as bright red as the moment it happened and I'm worried I might clock him in the head if I don't remember how to sleep soon.

Mr. Wojciechowicz is into Productive Conflict Management, meaning he is too busy trying to keep the museum from going under to intervene every time Hank and I get into a fight. He tells us that when you combine high levels of COOPERATION with high levels of ASSERTION you can achieve COLLABORATION, which is the ideal. If you're missing any of those ingredients you'll end up with ACCOMMODATION or AVOIDANCE. If it were up to me, I like to remind Mr. Wojciechowicz, I would avoid Hank entirely. I know he can't stand me, but I know too much to be fired.

I say to Hank, if you don't turn that goddamn fox the other way right this second I'm going to wreck your whole precious exhibit Godzilla-style.

Yeah right, says Hank. He shakes the fox at me. Yeah right.

COOPERATION, Mr. Wojciechowicz yells from his office.

•

On my way home from work I'm still fuming. I grab my mail and stomp up six flights to the apartment. Inside the cat is curled up on the mat by the kitchen sink. When it hears my keys drop on the counter every afternoon, it jumps up and nuzzles against my legs and I loosen up a little. All the hair floating around makes my head ache, but I appreciate having someone stay up with me every night. Then I tell myself I'll look for its owner starting tomorrow.

I sift through the mail. It's all junk and bills, of course. But this one blue and gold postcard catches my eye:

Psychic Readings By Tanya

Call For An Appointment 213-342-3637

If You Have Some Of Life's Most Important Questions, Then You Have Found The Right Psychic To Direct You Toward All Of The Right Answers. Whether It's Concerning Love, Marriage, Divorce, Soul Mates, Reuniting Lover's, Past Lives, Keeping Your Lover Faithful, Career, Money, Future. There Has Not Yet Been A Problem Too Big Or Small That She Can Not Yet Solve. She Has Been Able To Reunite The Separated And Bring Back Past Loved Ones. Her God Gifted Ability Will Not Only Tell You But Lead, Guide & Direct You Toward The Right Path. Shes Waiting To Help You And Hoping You Are Ready To Help Yourself. Available For Private Parties.

And on the other side:

*This Card Entitles You To One Free Reading**

It has an asterisk like there is supposed to be some sort of catch, but I don't notice any fine print.

Please, I tell the cat. I'm not *that* desperate. It meows in the affirmative.

That night I try to bore myself to sleep watching public access.

•

Hank is even weirder than usual the next day and I have had it up to here with him.

The summer is as brutal as ever. Through the window the sky is an aggressive blue; not even the smudge of a jet trail between the sun and the earth. I don't trust cloudless skies, they make me nervous. So I'm agitated enough as it is sweating in my standard green polo and khakis and two days behind on work because half the interns have been out on vacation this week. It's no wonder I can't help but start a fight.

I'm ignoring Hank after he won't share the magnifying glass in the archives with me. His text isn't even that small, and also it's not even *true*. I'm trying to decipher this long contract that came with the dinosaur bones about not putting them on display in a for-profit space or trying to pass them as

real. Mr. Wojciechowicz wants me to find a loophole just in case the whole operation comes crashing down on us.

Like I said, I've had it up to here with Hank and I haven't slept in a month so I start whacking him on the arm. Not to hurt him, really, just to be annoying. He keeps ignoring me and pretending to read with it even though I *know* he doesn't need it. Give it to me, I say. Then I try to grab it and he does this really weird thing. He grabs my wrist hard and closes his eyes like he can hear something in my heartbeat that I cannot. Then he lets go and laughs at me. I pull away, shaken. What? I ask him. What is it?

You're ordinary, he tells me.

I manage to rush out into the hallway before bursting into tears. *Please, please, please*, I think. *Just let me go to sleep.*

•

I'm on my way to work the next morning and my back is killing me and my head is throbbing and the thought of seeing Hank again anytime soon is making me queasy. I find myself driving white-knuckled straight past the museum into downtown, the blue-and-gold card folded in half in my bag.

When I enter the parlor, it's a lot like I would have expected. The whole place is stuffy velvet chairs and heavy tablecloths and strange candles. There's a crystal ball on the front desk. I look at my reflection inside. Round head, flat nose, wide-set eyes. I'm like the face in the moon.

Welcome, Tanya says, stroking the cat on her lap. It stares at me with cool eyes. I practically leap out of my skin. She was almost certainly not there a moment before.

I have this card, I tell her, and hold out the advertisement I got in the mail. She doesn't take it.

You haven't been sleeping, she says, which I'm not sure is a psychic thing. It is probably just because I look like shit.

No, I say.

Something's keeping you up. Guilt?

I'm not guilty, I say a little defensively.

Is it anxiety?

Well, I think, my livelihood hinges on a fraudulent institution and this cat decided we're roommates and I don't even know if it has all its shots or not, but, like, otherwise.

I tell her I'm fine.

She considers this for a minute, making a show out of holding her long bedazzled nails to her temples and fluttering her eyelashes. The cat leaps from her lap and brushes against my legs.

You must be up for a reason. Is there something you need to do? Maybe something you've forgotten or haven't realized yet?

I think about it for a minute. I suppose it's possible, I tell her. Can you help me figure out what that is?

No, she says. It must be very important, though.

Somehow she still charges me ten bucks.

•

Mr. Wojciechowicz doesn't even want to *know* where I was that day when I was supposed to be manning the café counter from eight until four. But, he tells me, he knows where I'm going to be that night.

He sticks me with the watch shift.

Apparently our security guard bailed out months ago, Mr. Wojciechowicz tells me. He was still cashing his checks of course. Now it's my turn.

Oh boy, I think. Maybe this is the reason Tanya was talking about. A career in security.

You're coming with me, I tell the cat.

There's a new moon and a heavy fog that night. I stand at the car as the sound of a passing train roars like a monster through the other side of the trees. The black street stretches out ahead; a distant street lamp illuminates where it keeps going beyond the curve of the road. I duck into the driver's side and close the door before a ghost can slip in beside me.

The wind picks up as I near the museum. It whistles through the cracks in the busted passenger window which spider from the top like lightning. The air outside sounds like water rushing to form a wave but never toppling. The foamy white noise mixed with the cat's soft purring puts me in a trance.

Maybe the watch shift *should* be my new permanent position. At least I'd never have to see Hank or Mr. Wojciechowicz that way.

The monitor is in Mr. Wojciechowicz's office, so after I steal a few juice boxes from the cafeteria I prop my feet up on his desk and start reading the manual. The cat scratches at the legs of the chair.

I switch between cameras, checking every channel for signs of an intruder two, three times. This wastes about a minute. Then I try to list every song on the cafeteria playlist and a half-hour slips by even though there are only fifteen or so. It feels like the workings of my internal clock have fallen to pieces.

Sometime later—I'm not sure how long—the sound of the cat nudging its way past the office door snaps me out of my stupor. I follow it through the archives, the foyer, the mineral room. It isn't waiting up for me. I'm not sure why, but I get nervous. It rounds a corner and I'm having trouble keeping up. It breaks into a run and—

I'm face-to-face with Hank. He holds the squirming cat in his arms. It's meowing like crazy and clawing every which way but Hank doesn't seem to notice.

Oh, I say. It's just you.

Why are you here? he asks.

Night shift, I tell him, and fold my arms over my chest. Something isn't right. His expression is different—not really happy or sad, but also not the blank-sheet boredom he wears during the day. Plus his tone is unrecognizable—flat, impatient. He's not trying to mess with me right now. It's hard to tell in the dark of the museum, but I think he might be angry.

Go home, he tells me. I've got the night shift. Mr. Wojciechowicz told me to relieve you.

He did? I say. Seems awfully considerate of him.

Just go, he tells me.

Fine, whatever, I say. Can I have my cat back?

Hank's face falls. Then he kicks me in the stomach as hard as he can and runs.

•

The wind rushes out of me and I fall back-flat on the tiles. I remember the news story about the missing pets and the dog adoption sites and the stuffed fox. I remember Tanya the psychic telling me there's a reason I can't sleep. Then I get the feeling that Hank is not just a horrible co-worker. He's a horrible person.

When I get up I can still hear meowing echoing through the halls. I stumble after the sound. The museum is a completely different world in the dark. The dinosaur bones and statues cast deranged shadows against the walls and my sense of direction flip-flops. I try to pry a spear from a looming suit of armor on the wall, but it doesn't budge, so I settle on a fire extinguisher instead.

I find myself in front of the stuck closet. Only it's not stuck—it's unlocked and Hank has disappeared inside. It has three long shelves with barely enough space between to fit. On the shelves are the missing pets. Or they were the missing pets. Now they're just like the fox Hank was cleaning.

Holy shit, I say. You're evil. He snorts. The cat is still in his arms, but he's backed into the closet corner now. The cat looks at me and I know that something really, really bad is about to happen. I raise the fire extinguisher above my head.

Yeah right, says Hank.

I remember Jae Kim punching me in the teeth. I remember kicking him to the ground hard and the plastic snap of his Gameboy flying from his pocket and clattering across the asphalt. I remember how good it felt to fight before I had learned to be afraid of pain and I whack the fire extinguisher as hard as I can across Hank's face.

He falls to the ground like a stuffed toy.

•

I leave Hank tied up to the bullshit Neanderthal diorama in the natural history wing. I figure he's out cold enough that I can leave him until morning. The thought of spending another second looking at him is unbearable.

The cat follows me back to Mr. Wojciechowicz's office. I wonder how the whole scene looks on the security tapes and whether I can get fired for

hitting a murderer. I wonder whether there will be an investigation. I wonder if the museum is gonna get shut down, and where I could possibly go from here.

It's all too much to think about now. I stand up and push the windows open and stick my face in the new morning air. Molecules of mist settle on my skin. The light from the low-hanging sun burns softly. I wish I were nocturnal, that I could wake up to moonfall and watch as my day got brighter and I would be alone and everything would be quiet. The city would be still. The museum would be still. It would only be me and the sound of my heart. Those last-one-standing apocalypse movies never seemed so bad to me.

I think I should start taking more night shifts.

A yawn wells up from the cavity in my chest. If I go to sleep now, I think, who is going to explain this to Mr. Wojciechowicz in the morning?

Next to me, the cat snores quietly.

I settle back into the chair and let myself sink into darkness.

Mickey Coburn

Ode to the Art of Tattoo

Grandma's friend had a tattoo; when I was little I'd trace it with my finger. We'd laugh. It seemed a silly thing to have. Later on my high school fella got several. It was prerequisite for Maritime adventurers—anchors and little ships and such. I asked him If it'd hurt and he laughed. The kids on Saint Mark's Place have lots: tattoos that seem like shirts to be peeled off to ease undressing. Complicated patterns in many colors. My sister-in-law got one to celebrate her 50 year birthday. A butterfly on her left butt. Everyone had to see it much to my brother's chagrin. Now my son has two: beautiful artwork on the back of his shoulders. One—a royal lion—is very Shakespeare. The other reads Satori drawn in Japanese. It means Awakening. But the first tattoo I ever saw was the one my grandma's friend had. Six numbers burned into her left forearm. Her name was Leah.

Jonathan DeVries

I Solved the Problems of Time and Purpose

Seven years ago
I sat in a cathedral in Madrid
and questioned the purpose
of my remaining months
in that continent:
I had walked to Santiago
and discovered satiety;
I had bought three
stove top espresso makers
and determined
the meaning of steam;
I had bought a knife
and listened to it cut
the crust of fresh bread.
Sunlight shown on a stone wall
in the shape of a window
and I considered
time and purpose.

The shapes of the stones changed
as sunlight stretched.
I decided the purpose
of my remaining time
would be to experience it.
I rested my hands,
watched the pits in the rocks,

breathed this thought in,
breathed this thought out.

A weight passed from
my reservoir of years,
through my bare feet,
into the stone floor.
The smooth coolness
absorbed the ache
of a month's walk
and myriad endings.

I walked outside
into the sunlight
and felt like
a corner of the cathedral
touched only by
echoes and incense.

A woman walked towards me
in an orange skirt,
brown shirt
and red glasses
on cream skin.
Her walnut hair
kept tempo with
her fluvial stride.
We looked at each other
as we passed.
I looked back
and so did she;
I slowed my pace
then looked back
and so did she.

I stopped walking.
She changed course
and sat on a park bench.
My heart pounded
with the first fear
as I watched
the back of her head.

I slowly approached
until hedges separated us.
My heart hammered
hormones that
alerted my muscles
and stopped logic
as her hazelnut hair flowed
over her orange shirt,
through her blue glasses,
around her tapered calves.

My heart continued
to pound fluids
through conduits
even when I walked away
into the cove of a building
that sold many things.
I looked through a window
and wondered what I needed.

Seven years later
I still consider her possibilities
like all that chestnut hair
whirling around the cleavage
of her toes:
if I had sat down

and complimented all her colors
I would not be
squeezed with stress,
isolated by loneliness,
saddled with the hope
of a better job,
awoken by fighting
in the night;
we would kiss our differences,
lick our flaws
and stoke our pheromones;
I would live in Spain
but feel at home,
a job would be for
money not meaning,
I would no longer beg
my younger self
to dry his palms,
ignore his heart
and sit on that bench.

Madeleine Barnes

Sleep Phase

The forest again, this time in winter, and with us,
disembodied voices of paradise: the bend in the tree,
the stretch of highway glimmering. Suffering evolves.

At the park entrance, a bucket of antlers waits
to be gathered up. It's normal to start out here,
standing before the aisle of firs, where the dark eyes
hang. Several realities interface, because.

The needles can be made beautiful if the song so chooses.

What about you, do you see any imminent signs?

The forest can only be motionless now, and there is no
because. Brown needles all over the yard. I thought
that if we drank enough we wouldn't wind up here,
where the path begins, light gone from the black mirror,
the river locked shut. I've done something wrong.

There's a wound in my sleep and I cannot see it,
a diamond, a tradition lost, in a cabin a long way ahead.

Permanent voices outside the border of your silence.

I'm tired of cold animals regarding me as something
intergalactic. Hard to please. I see my own soul's
femaleness. I'm afraid it isn't safe. I look at you,
silvery and scratched, marked by a different suffering,
the kind that stays away from new fires. Have I done
something wrong? And now, since both of us are
alone, the world cleared away, a flame expanding,
tell me, will I remember the taste of snow?

Has anyone seen my song? Who's coming?

Will I be able to speak in the end? Tell me. Stay calm.

Contributor Notes

Madeleine Barnes

(2012) is a poet and visual artist from Pittsburgh, PA. Her poetry and artwork have appeared or are forthcoming in places like *Pleiades*, *Jai-Alai Magazine*, *Rogue Agent*, *BOXCAR Poetry Review*, *The Rattling Wall*, *Yew Journal*, *Three Rivers Review*, *Washington Square Review*, *Cordella Magazine*, and *Pittsburgh Poetry Review*. Her chapbook, *The Mark My Body Draws in Light*, was published in 2014. She earned a BHA from Carnegie Mellon University, an M.Phil in Creative Writing from Trinity College Dublin, and an MFA in Creative Writing from New York University. She lives in Brooklyn.

Laura Berry

(2016) graduated with a degree in creative writing and Japanese, researches literature at Hokkaido University in Sapporo, Japan, and has many fond memories of the Oakland Review.

Mark Evan Chimsky

(1977) Mark Evan Chimsky is an editorial consultant whose poetry and essays have appeared in *Wild Violet*, *The Journal of the American Medical Association*, *Xanadu*, *Mississippi Review*, *The Cincinnati Judaica Review*, and *The Three Rivers Poetry Journal*. In 1997, he received the Anna Davidson Rosenberg Award as New/Emerging Poet. As a publishing executive at major houses, Mark was the editor of Johnny Cash's memoir, *Cash*, as well as a number of other best-selling books. He recently compiled and edited *25 Women Who Survived Cancer: Notable Women Share Inspiring Stories of Hope*.

Mickey Coburn

(1960) graduated from Carnegie Tech as a playwright major. Among her credits: her poetry has been published in various journals and her work has received recognition from the Massachusetts State Poetry Society among others. Her screenplay, *THE WOMAN'S VOICE*, was a finalist at the L.A. Femme Film Festival 2009; her children's plays are published and handled by Bluemoon.com The children's plays are performed internationally on a regular basis. Her play collection, *Charming Princes and Wicked Queens*, (*Cinderella*, *Snow White*, *Sleeping Beauty*) is published in book form and is available on Amazon.com along with a stand-alone publication of her *CINDERELLA*.

Jonathan deVries

(2005) is a transportation planner in New York City but continues to nurture his passion for writing. He draws inspiration from science, memories, the natural and built environments and uses poetry to extract mental and emotional splinters.

Kelsey Dolhon

(2015) is a recent Professional and Creative Writing graduate with no more of a life than reported in the last volume but has since developed the focus to knit and watch *Wheel of Fortune* at the same time.

Tanya Fletcher

(1989) and the origins of her figurative style were nurtured during her formative years at Carnegie Mellon. After graduating, Fletcher built upon the foundation of her art education which is evident in her mature current work today. She continues to exhibit throughout the Northeast and is represented by several galleries in So. Maine. To see more of her work, please visit her website: fletcherfigures.com

Laura Karetzky

(1987) lives in Brooklyn, NY. Her work probes the space between relationships as they strive to stay connected over all kinds of distances. Social media and the computer interface have caused her to reconsider perspective (where we simultaneously become a third party to our own discourse). It is this exchange between the multiple points of engagement as we struggle for cohesion, which she seeks to explore. She is the recipient of two Yaddo residencies. Her work has been exhibited widely including the Smithsonian National Portrait Gallery (Washington, DC). Reviews have included: *American Arts Quarterly*, *The New York Times* and *Hyperallergic*.

Lynda Kusuma

(1986) pursued a degree in Graphic Design at Carnegie-Mellon. While there, she took a few classes in printmaking. Although she enjoyed the classes she needed to finish her degree and work so her passion for making prints was put aside. Life has led her down many paths and she finds that she is now pursuing a Masters of Arts in printmaking. Her work is part documentary and part imagined about the unseen or over-looked life and thoughts in the natural and man-made worlds. Through printmaking, drawing, and book art she creates pieces that are a window into the life below the surface.

Joni Scully

(1971) lives and works in her studio of 40 years on Canal Street, New York City. The artist was born in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. After a BFA from Carnegie-Mellon University, a scholarship to Yale University Summer School of Music and Art, three years post graduate study at the Art Student's League, she had a seven year apprenticeship to master painter Knox Martin. She is represented by Holland & Company Fine Art. Her painting "Canal Street Crows" is in the permanent collection of Cahoon Museum of American Art. "Soho Penthouses" is in the permanent collection of La Salle University Art Museum.