

POETRY

AT THE

BACKYARD

August 9, 2023
Tahoe Poetry Collective



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Sit, Relax, Ponder, Dream

John Merryfield

Like a bird, her hands are in the air gesticulating
about the dark waters of the New York City Sound
It's summer in Heaven
Our light bodies are golden-lit by
Van Gogh's yellow straw hat
Seedpods from trees gather around us like children
Their message is always the same
Be happy
Manor Park's welcome sign reads....
Picnicking, blankets, chairs of any type, padded mats, hanging hammocks
from trees,
food and beverages are not permitted
Appropriate attire is required
No sunbathing allowed
No ball playing or Frisbees, or biking, or skating or kite flying
and in italicized lettering,
Park is closed during inclement weather
With rules like that,
it's a perfect place to
read
A Coney island
of the Mind
half-naked on a blanket,
eating an apple,
while
flying a kite

Little Feet

John Merryfield

At first light in the cool sand before the sun says Arrivederci to the horizon's linear timeline and before the osprey tucks in his wings and dives into the little Sea and before the grey heron turns into the blue grey heron and before the sandpipers march left left left right left following the commands of the little Sea the little one she is beside me she is always there beside me she wishes for the shimmering serenity made from Ignacio gold she orders me to search for the smoothed tiles on the shores of Ventimiglia she is the one who wants to get off on the right foot so her left foot with the tiny toe nail painted Yves Klein sea of cortez blue touching my left foot at the right time and in the right place she knows the score of the game – she knows the little Sea will come soon enough to take us home so she says, in Mexico getting the right size shoe is a feat. It's along the tangled blue shoreline we follow the footprints of the sweeping sandpipers in the direction of the October Sunrise.

Nathan's Hot Dog Eating Contest

John Merryfield

When the white polished bones of writer's block appear like bleached demons on ESPN, sponsored by the International Federation of Competitive Eating, I go to the zocolo. I go to the zocolo, long-ago zocolo wearing my Frida Kahlo Swatch-watch to spell trance my notebook with an offering to pico de Popocatepetl. There, in the zocolo I see the two gringo conquistadores with round upper-middle class Scandinavian bellies and t-shirts that proclaim No Bad Days, eating hotdogs one after the other as if they are large innocent animals being herded down the shoot of a slaughterhouse. A mouth-full slaughtered 23.3 million times in a day. When divided by the number of zocolos in Mexico City that's roughly 37,000 animals an hour, a soul every 6 seconds they say. But, who's counting? Who is the designated scorekeeper? Where are the poets? I open my pure white notebook to the bells of Saint Francis of Assisi for all sentient beings with a few things to jot down on paper.

What You Like Best About Me

Elise Dixon

Inviter
Interloper
Lover
Forgiver
Creator
Imaginer
Archangel

What you like best about me is that I like you. You reveal you. You want me to know you, yes ?

I see you ... the good the bad the past the sorrow the future.

The More I Read

Elise Dixon

... the more, I read, the more, I write, the more, nourished I become

you know, I know... I no longer wonder if you do. I will cry a lifetime because of you. Who will you cry a lifetime for ? They spill tears for you, they dream of you in color, even tonight. From heaven. They pray for you. You, are, so, very, loved.

For the rest of my being I will plunder for a mere twinkle of you. A sparkling memento of me.

Forever unloads wrangling heartache;
Ephemeral awakening of recast remembrance
melody igniting;
Listening; listening
for the nod toward home

Rolling hills and Granite faces

Karlie Watson

Shot me down while I was walking along those aching hills.
The ache was not here nor there, it was everywhere,
I am loved,
I love,
All alone.

Wanderer above the sea of fog
Dare to stare into the gaping mouth of freedom,
Feel its unyielding gaze back at you.
looking almost just past you.
Absurd.

Those aching hills,
Stretching high into the unknown
Home for none,
But room for all,
A far cry from freedom,
When the granite faces with their cold objective countenance ,
Peer down at you,
Chained up and so small.

Shot me down on the streets of the city, 49 square miles in all.

How high the sun rose that day,
In the untamable west,
The law filled city, wrapped up in a vagrants nest.
The gears are always grinding,
Blood pumping,
Baby smiling,
Always grinding the future away,
Those aching hills rising up into the infinite nothingness.
Shot me down.
Wounded in this empty world.

Capriciously, I make myself a metaphor

Karlie Watson

Subdued Grassland,
silenced from being walked upon,
but not meek enough to avoid sprouting again.
Feverishly the wind rustles me,
there is always change blowing past me,
never hanging in the air.

Subdued grassland grown dry
in the droughts of summer.
A mere season of existing in deficit.
This too shall pass and grandiose
color will return in spring to
replace fragility.
I make love to the dew drops of misty mornings,
I am subdued grassland.
I will accept the ever changing wind rushing through me,
and blow softly into the horrors of night.

Google Searches

Aimee Lowenstern

Originally published in Lunch Ticket

How to stop telling people I love them,
how to slow down the love, the bleeding,
the honey.
How to stop being so sickly sweet.
How to remove a beehive. How to lock my tongue
between my teeth. How to melt down beeswax
and burn my heart like a candle. How to fit real blood and sinew
where the metaphors were. Help, what if the metaphors
shatter in my newfound bloodstream.
How to be a guardian angel. How to stop the love from spreading
from my sternum to my shoulders and growing
wings. How to stop the wings from growing mouths
that say "I love you". Do my wings have pink eye,
or are they supposed to look like that?
Guardian angel applications. How to make sure people are safe
when I'm not there. How to let people know I love them
without reminding them I'm real. Am I real? Would it be better
if I was real? How many times can a real person say "I love you"
before someone gets annoyed and straight-up
murders them? Do carnivore bees eat corpses?
Do carnivore bees turn corpses
into honey? Do ghosts say
"I love you"?

I will write a poem to live in

Aimee Lowenstern

Originally published in Spellbinder Magazine

I will write a poem to live in
I will take a wide blank page
and plow the poem in deep, straight lines
where my word-plants may grow—
Tidy bushes, like "go" and "dot",
jagged trees, like "zyzzyva" and "kafkaesque"—
I will eat the meaning that each word forms,
falling like fruit from their dark branches,
pollinated and cross-pollinated by punctuation:
buzzing periods, fluttering quotation marks,
commas and parentheses that squirm
between the clauses' roots.
I will drink the spittle that rains
when the poem is read aloud,
and I will drink the tears as well,
removing the brine
to salt my most meaningful sautés.
You can come over whenever you like,
and I will have a plate for you;
we'll sit at the top of the capital Ys,
where we can see everything, where we can feel
the wind of a turning page ruffle our hair.

Prisoner Cowboy

Edward Manzi

Simulation Theory

Edward Manzi

Influence

Edward Manzi

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Saturday Makers Market

June 24 | July 8 & 22 | August 12 & 26 | September 9
3:00-7:00pm

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