

# POETRY

AT THE

# BACKYARD

June 14, 2023  
Tahoe Poetry Collective



# Table of Contents

Wasteland: on the California Wildfires Forrest Gander	1
Purple Mahala (haiku) // Three Eagles Scott Green	3
Morning Murmuring Elise Dixon	4
Blunders are Blundered Elise Dixon	5
I am The Queen, The Goddess of Change Brooke Wyrd	6
My Beautiful Crow Brooke Wyrd	7
The Sleeping Dream Can Show You Brooke Wyrd	8
Good Morning. Hello Brooke Wyrd	9
River Waltz Karli Watson	10
Aesthetic Dialectic Karli Watson	11
Moments of Rest // In The House You Call Your Friend // Aphrodite's Hands Aimee Lowenstern	12

# Wasteland: on the California Wildfires

Forrest Gander

---

Green spring grass on  
the hills had cured  
by June and by July

gone wooly and  
brown, it crackled  
underfoot, desiccated while

within the clamor of live  
oaks, an infestation of  
tiny larvae clung

to the underleaves,  
feeding between  
veins. Their frass, that

fine dandruff of excrement  
and boring dust, tinkled  
as it dropped onto dead leaves

below the limbs. You  
could hear it twenty  
feet away, tinkling.

Across the valley, on  
Sugarloaf Ridge, the full  
moon showed up

like a girl doing cartwheels.  
No one goes on living  
the life that isn't there.

Below a vast column of  
    smoke, heat, flame, and  
        wind, I rose, swaying  
  
                    and tottering on my  
            erratic vortex, extemporizing  
my own extreme weather, sucking up  
  
acres of scorched  
    topsoil and spinning it  
        outward in a burning sleet  
  
                    of filth and embers that  
        catapulted me forward  
with my mouth open  
  
in every direction at once. So  
    I came for you, churning, turning  
        the present into purgatory  
  
                    because I need to turn  
            everything to tragedy before  
I can see it, because  
it must be  
    leavened with remorse  
        for the feeling to rise.

## Purple Mahala (haiku)

Scott Green

---

Purple Mahala  
Spring rain falls bear wakes from sleep  
Silver light sunset

## Three Eagles

Scott Green

---

Driving with my 8 year old daughter  
Through Martis Valley  
We see three bald eagles in flight  
Large against a slate gray sky  
Of moving clouds - they fly  
Ahead of the storm  
Riding drafts and winds  
One after the other.

# Morning Murmuring

Elise Dixon

---

morning murmuring  
conversations swaying  
rain lightly tapping  
this that clinking  
coffee swell pouring  
emboldened youth committing  
dog nails pit patting  
bedside eggs buttered brioche placing  
goodbying; door closing  
quiet regaining

# Blunders are Blundered

Elise Dixon

---

Blunders are blundered, falterings are faltered ...

Illusion of misstep isn't durable, silky softening, elastic, bouncing forever  
in its beyond place filter the arresting resonance, tumbling headiness like a  
Machiavellian cape into favor

Patent, it's just is, as it is, at its moments progress into again the illusion of  
momentum

The folly of its delight, delights reverie of next, it's breathtaking beauty il-  
luminates the woeful wreckage in its wake.

# I am The Queen, The Goddess of Change

Brooke Wyrd

---

I am The Queen,  
The goddess of Change.  
I've gained freedom from fear  
My thoughts do arrange.  
By my side are the people  
Independent and strong.  
Together we challenge  
The things that are wrong  
In this world full of fear  
-ful people in trance  
The courage to free them  
Their lives do enhance.  
Their natural abilities  
Once lost to the bidders  
Will once again flourish  
And create that which litters  
The landscape with truth  
With dreams and with love,  
They will finally know  
It does not come from "above."  
It comes from within them  
It always did.  
And they once again see  
What they did when they were a kid.  
That the magic is theirs  
And together we create  
Co-creative endeavors,  
Leaving negative abate.  
The key to success  
Lies in imagination  
So get your habits in check  
And let go of distraction.

# My Beautiful Crow

Brooke Wyrd

---

My beautiful crow  
Be not so gone  
Focus your strength  
And go beyond  
The walls that restrict you  
That seem so solid  
Are only illusion  
Move past the squalid.  
Before you know it  
On the other side  
Is nature incarnate  
Where lethargy died.  
Where dreams are alive  
And full of light  
Where dreams are not scary  
And they just might  
Awaken the power  
Within your heart  
To brave the storm  
And make your part  
In the story amass  
To great heights still  
The hero journey  
Your heart will fill."

# The Sleeping Dream Can Show You

Brooke Wyrđ

---

The sleeping dream can show you  
The clinging mess of awake  
It shows you in a way that's kind  
A way that seems so fake.  
But fake it's not, it rings so true  
And if you listen you'll know what to do  
To fix the mess, the heavy shit  
And release the attachments that sit  
On your heart, don't you know?  
The lighter it is  
The easier to create  
Your world as a whiz."

# Good Morning. Hello

Brooke Wyrđ

---

Good morning.  
Hello.  
I'd like for you to show  
Me something you have failed  
So many times that you now know,  
You know that failing is the key  
To reach this so-called mastery.  
So-called because the learning  
Never stops, you see.  
So practice and fail  
It is nothing to fear  
Failure is your friend  
So hold it near  
And get to know it  
As you would a trusted teacher  
For teach you it shall,  
It is its best feature.  
So fail my friend!  
Over and over if you must  
Embrace failure's gifts,  
They are rewarding and just.

# River Waltz

Karli Watson

---

The leaves adorned themselves with  
dew drop diamond necklaces this morning,  
as the fog places its longing arms  
around the branches,  
cradled in natures love.  
Early morning romance,  
light, peeling through the clouds,  
And shining on this minute ocean of fresh water.

The angler takes to the river,  
Just after dawn.  
Must keep the days flowing on.  
Trout dance beneath minimal rays of sun,  
and moss catches the hook.  
The Elk Wing Caddis and Wooly Bugger explores the trees.

Then the line mistakenly smacks the water,  
like the crash of a symbol.  
The waltz begins,  
and trout dart left and right,  
after viewing their eminent death.  
So they swim on,  
And on  
In panic,  
fleeing the wader laden reaper.  
But the fisherman pays no mind,  
He is god,  
Rumpelstiltskin spinning twine,  
Into gold scales,  
That shine under bleak sunlight,  
On this misty morning...

# Aesthetic Dialectic

Karli Watson

---

The World chews me up and spits me out on canvas,  
A regurgitation of human experience,  
a reflection, a mirror, a canvas, a photograph.  
Even nature is a reflection,  
by which we extort and make into the art exhibits of bigots:  
Cities.

For whom are you beautiful?  
Let me ask you who you paint your face for,  
and change your diet for and smile for?  
And to that end, what are you beautiful for?  
To be gazed upon by sun rays  
or gaze into the mirror to get a diminished understanding of your image.  
Why are you beautiful?  
Pardon, I mean what makes you beautiful?  
What constitutes one things beauty and another's ugliness?  
With a degree of muffled longing, I really would rather know,  
For whom do you wear your facades of ugliness?

Clandestine aura,  
Shrouded in shades of blue.  
Miles Davis,  
A beautiful tragic hue.  
Are we the art or the artist?  
Have we become familiar reproductions,  
Pumped out in the societal factory.



Strive to be alike,  
achieve the golden ratio,  
Botticelli women, Michel Angelo man.  
The specific artist renditions become coded messages of love and strife,  
sparkling in the iris of passerby's on a moonglow night.

Then each sidewalk crack, building, tree.  
of the city,  
is reflected in the faces of millions of people walking by on the street.  
"Aesthetic attitude" paints experience in varied hues.  
Do you like your art to go down smooth like whisky,  
sensually like wine or bitter like coffee?  
Many, many questions make up skyscrapers,  
and I will spend my life wondering what my beauty tastes like,  
if my art is a tantalizing lover or a brutish vagabond.

Moments of Rest

In The House You Call Your Friend

Aphrodite's Hands

Aimee Lowenstern

---

*These poems are in the process of being published and cannot be printed here at this time.*

## Poetry At The Backyard



Presented by  
Tahoe Poetry Collective

Sponsored by

