

That which is held back
by the levee behind the tall dry grass
shimmering in the lullaby of the afternoon
does not subside

The members of the Foundry Gallery thank all the poets who joined us in this celebration of National Poetry Month. We especially appreciate the participation of The Writer's Center.



4508 Walsh St, Bethesda, MD 20815
301-654-8664, post.master@writer.org
www.writer.org

national
poetry month

The Painted Word

Foundry Gallery Artists Collaborate
With Metropolitan Washington Poets

The Painted Word

April 1-26, 2015

Reception Friday April 10, 6-8pm

Cover:
"Held Back"
by Kenneth W. Minton
with poem
by Joel E. Minton

FOUNDRY
GALLERY

1314 18th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20036 (Dupont-South)
www.foundrygallery.org ■ 202-463-0203
Wednesday – Sunday, 12-6 pm

Artists

Fran Abrams
Amy Barker-Wilson
Jill Bateman
Jorge Luis Bernal

Katherine Blakeslee

Patsy Fleming
Gordana Gerskovic
Allen Hirsh

Heather Jacks
Donna McGee
Sarna Marcus

Kenneth W. Minton
Michele D. Morgan

Charlene Nield
Gregory O'Hanlon
Natacha Thys
Alex Tolstoy

Poets

Merrill Leffler
Mary Tercheck
Nancy Naomi Carlson
Yvette Neisser Moreno
Emily Willard
Karen Arnold
Sally Bensusen
Ann Slayton
Anne Becker
Nan Fry
JoAnne Growney
Mackenzie Jacks
Anne Dykers
Ann Bracken
Mary Beth Hatem
Joel E. Minton
Jean Nordhaus
Ann Slayton
Jennifer Pesek
Lisa Couturier
Keyteshia Guy
Sally Bensusen
Ann Slayton

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Fran
with Merrill
??? one more pair.----
"Warmth of the Fire"

Fran
with
Merrill
??? one more pair.----
"Amber Waves of Grain."

What keeps us

perched on the edge of rocks
listening to surf slush and run
over rocks — tide coming up
or pulls us nightly to watch the sun
go orange, wild pink then pale yellow
beyond the point's far side?

Why do we sit content in backyards
where nothing much happens
reading under slightly rustling trees
reaching lazily for iced tea or wine coolers
acting as if we had nowhere to be, no place to go
as if July would last another two months?

When a full moon glows in the deck furniture
do we stand at the wide kitchen door
letting expansive light fill us
listening to crickets and night birds,
leaning into the door frame
for any particular reason?

After digging the garden, smelling old moisture
planting ageratum, begonias, petunias and basil
what makes us so smug
that we water confident flowers will come
without ceremonies danced
or pollen tossed to the wind?

It is the curse of the darling cosmos
seducing us
quiet or wild
beside turned earth
fecund, strong, elusive
moving just beyond
the known

— *Karen Arnold*



Katherine Blakeslee
Rocky Shores

Kathy B
with
Ann Bracken

Three Variations on Ravel's Bolero

I

Ravel's Bolero—like a matador swishing, swirling, deftly pivoting, extending arms one with cape, willing the bull to participate, their drama, spectacularly intimate—boldly impels contained engagement spiraling towards the ecstatic. Practicing Tai Chi with Ravel led by Laurin Maazel, I concentrate bodily memory, rotate as tempo, pitch, tension intensify like the bull's breathing, swelling each pivot—until unbalanced, I'm out of control. Ravel crescendoes.

PAINTING
IN PROGRESS
Amy Barker-Wilson
(*Bolero*)

II

I recompose, go to cool Stanley Jordan's jazz Bolero, like an elegant argument teased from energy electric, logic circular, rhetoric redundant, now syncopated, synthesized sound steadily striding around. I'm grounded, the bass holding me down thum, thum, thuming along. Melody says, Fly! Centrifuge self into the universe. But I'm breathlessly aground, so coolly classic now, no crash-into.

III

Background radio blurts out Barenboim's Bolero—action's automatic, body accommodates room trappings in circling circles—like the whirling dervish stepping out to deliberate the center, liberate Self flying center holds the dervish entranced in his formulaic dance swirling skirts undulating pointed toes pivotal mind, body, soul sum of self single in motion as Ravel crescendoes.

~Mary Terchek



Jill Bateman
Heads II

Subtitles

Language is primarily so much air...
— Anthony Burgess

We read the shapes of lips
as they frame each mouthful of air--
the taut pull crisping sound

or the rounded pout,
meaning twisted into patterns
that take on a familiar slant.

Eyebrows arch and drop,
ride the curves of inflection.
When the timing is off,

words appear before they are spoken.
Some sounds run on
as if from underwater,

meaning rising to the surface
with an instinct to survive.
Feeling amplifies

the steady beat, beat of idea
that opens to a human voice
transposed to fit any key.

— Nancy Naomi Carlson

Shades of Dawn

a dialogue with García Lorca

What would you call this,
after the sky has huddled
around a half-sun on the horizon?

Aurora, maybe?

If the dawn is very close to the soul,
worshippers kneeling at the water's edge,
waiting for God to rise in the mist,

if it silvers wet sand like the inside
of a shell, and the ocean scoops out
uncolored spaces from the low tide,

is that alba?

Once the sun pinks the water,
and the day begins to open—
the space between dawn and day,

when everyone is sleepwalking,
when the houses have softened
their edges in morning's blur—

if a man floats in a bed of waves,
toes pointing up, hands folded,
has he achieved *madrugada*? Or *amanecer*?

Federico, how can I write
when dawn can never end with a vowel
and every daybreak trembles with faint prayers?

— *Yvette Neiser Moreno*



Jorge Luis Bernal
Varadero

Jorge Luis Bernal
Las Campanas

If I Keep Walking in the Woods Forever...

I am walking in the woods.

And I keep walking.

I could walk forever, one step in front of the other,
and the woods would continue before me into infinity.

But I wouldn't keep walking forever,
because as I walk, my pace would gradually slow.

Branches and vines and leaves would reach out for me
and try to hold on, slowing me down.

Gently reaching out and touching softly, beckoning.

Soon, I would be walking so slow, no one could hardly notice
I was moving at all (but there is no one there to notice anyway).

Animals would live their lives, not noticing me,
seeing me as another tree, or bush,
just a part of the forest.

The grass would start to grow around my feet,
and the vines and leaves would start to surround me.

After a while, you would not even be able to see much of me
because of the green, lush life enveloping me.

My heart would start to beat to the rhythm of the deer hoofs on their padded down trails
through the undergrowth
sinking into rich black soil.

The blood in my veins would start to flow in time with the birds' songs.

My breathing would echo the chipmunk scratching leaves and twigs to make a nest.
Soon, you wouldn't be able to find me if you came out looking for me.

Then, I will have returned from where I came.



— *Emily A. Willard*



Patricia Flemming
Letters Home

Painter's Complaint and Resolution

I was working alongside a train
trestle in the roughest part of town.
First there were the pigeons dropping down
from the scaffold, then the seagulls and rain.
But the kids, the kids were wild. Some were mean.
They would tear around and wrestle for show,
then over the paints would go!
From the platform over my head they would lean
out and drop
Pepsi cans down on me, or Coke.
It was awful, no joke.
One day a great wind gusted up
and blew my painting into the dirt. You can laugh!
Then, just like in a cartoon, a dog
trotted by and peed on it. God!
After that, I started working from photographs.

■
I thought of Michelangelo and
how at the end of the day, the light gone,
he ceased to wrestle
with angels, with God, and humans.
He would climb down the Sistine's trestled
vault and walk home. Day subsides to evening,
he takes a small supper, and sits by his fire,
sketches the kittens playing
on the hearth. And then retires..

— Ann Slayton



Gordana Gerskovic
Christ

Christ

It was the deep voice of the earth
she listened for—rumbles and groans, sobs
of exultation in long, slow phrases—
as she plunged her hands into the red
bucket of dirt—dark matter—its grains
and globules, skeletal tatters of leaves,
spongy shreds of bark and splintery twigs
flowed through her open web of fingers,
back into the bright, hard plastic
she'd lugged to the woods to rob
the forest floor of its riches.
And she listened, too, for the clicks
and cries of small, busy creatures—
their minuscule sighs of pleasure—
under the leaf litter, digesting
and gnawing, tunneling, drilling,
opening black veins to ocean and
blue sky.

— Anne Becker



Gordana Gerskovic
Unseen Beauty

Unseen Beauty

It is the faithful wood
waiting under the cracked
and peeling paint
the iron breathing
its patient rust
it is the lines of the face
the scour and etching of sun
and wind and river flow
the gloss and paint and
wearing away that is
the beauty of the mortal
earth.

— *Anne Becker*

Gordana Gerskovic
Tempera Pula



Tempera Pula

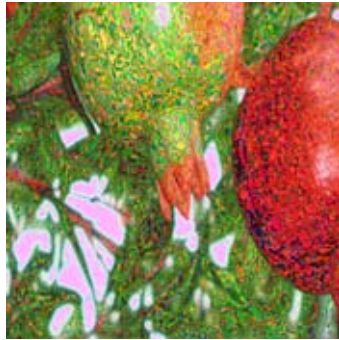
It was the weather—the clouds, the winds, the
distant sky—they had no control over,
could not touch, could not grasp in their hands,
so they piled up stone, gathered branches,
dug clay, and built houses out of the earth;
they sang, they painted their bodies, wove garments
out of grasses, told stories, released fire
from wood—awaited the return of the
sun.

— *Anne Becker*

From Persephone's Letters to Demeter

1.
You've got it all wrong, Mother,
flaunting your grief,
stripping the sycamore
down to a ghost tree.
We revel in skeletons,
find the clean lines
sensuous and economical.
The dead sing us songs
I'm learning to answer.
I'm learning new words
like *pomegranate*,
a word you can suck on:
pom—thick and round, a bittersweet
bulge, *e*—the one you slide over
to get to *gran*—a slow swelling,
cancer or the rose, it doesn't matter,
then *granate*—a stone stopping
you hard and cold.
Pomegranate—a word you spit out,
the snick of seeds
against your teeth.

2.
I remember planting, the small furrows.
And the coat of rabbit pelts
you wore. When I was small,
I'd sit beside you and blow into the fur.
I remember dusk
stitching the tulips shut
and throngs of azaleas,
their white throats
open to the moon.
I remember the peach
spattered with red,
furred yellow sun,
and all that juice
let loose on my tongue,
and the pit, its secret
bloody mouth at the center.



Allen Hirsh
D.C. Pomegranate

3.
I want to learn the language of return.
Re is a reel pulling me back,
the hook in the mouth,
the bud on the rose. Turn
is the worm biting,
smooth swell of the belly,
the detour that brings us home.

I want the ice to melt,
the slow dripping that feels like loss
and is a loosening, a letting go.
The sluggish flocs will crack and heave,
the river stretch like a snake in the sun.
Then the floods of summer, the dense
green banks, the sun pumping
juice through the peach, the earth
furred with a pelt of grain.

That dance you taught us—
I'll learn its language in my body:
lift and flail to beat the grain
from the husk, remembering to save
some to return to you, remembering
that I will return here, a seed.

—Nan Fry

Poems and art/s to come
Allen Hirsh with JoAnne Growney