

The image features a dark green background with several white, wavy, horizontal lines that create a sense of movement and depth. A solid orange rectangle is positioned in the bottom right corner. The text 'ACTA VICTORIANA' is located in the bottom left corner, rendered in a bold, white, sans-serif font.

**ACTA
VICTORIANA**

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Acta Victoriana

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Acta Victoriana, est. 1878, is the literary journal of Victoria College at the University of Toronto.

Acta Victoriana is produced and published on the traditional lands of the Huron-Wendat, the Seneca, and the Mississaugas of the Credit, as well as other Nations that have been, and continue to be, subject to historical erasure. As members of the literary community on campus, we recognize the need to be part of the collective conversation required for the ongoing processes of decolonization and reconciliation.

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Letter from the Editors

Perhaps one of the greatest unspoken rules of any literary supplement published in the spring is that it should tie into themes of rebirth and newness. It is often relevant to mimic the growth that comes with the changing of seasons and the reappearance of life—especially, it would seem, after a memorable Canadian winter. Issue 149.2 reflects this theme with the works and inspiration of our writers and artists: it is intermittent with the hopes and fears held by families and the beauty and ferocity of nature. This time around, a striking balance emerges from the words closely interwoven with the visuals.

We thank our contributors for putting their trust in us to care for their refreshing and thoughtful depictions. We appreciate their courage to be creative from afar and nearby, and for joining the international community that *Acta Victoriana* proudly harbours. Their eagerness towards the journal has fueled the momentum for our roles as Editors-in-Chief this semester. As associate editors who formerly disagreed in every editorial meeting for three years, this is an aspect we wholeheartedly agree on.

Though it is our second supplement of the year, and thus, the last publication we will be producing together, spearheading the board and the creative direction of Canada's oldest student-run journal these past eight months will forever be a nostalgic responsibility. The commencement of summer will beget the conclusion of our posts, but not our dedication to literature and readership.

Our work at *Acta* is just a small illustration of the passionate, hardworking students at Victoria College and the strides publishing has made across the globe. To all our esteemed readers, we hope you will continue to take part in what happens here in our quaint office at the Goldring Student Centre.

Jeanne & Di
Jeanne Polochansky & Diana Vink
Editors-in-Chief



No Boots, No Priest

A. T. Robinson

The mountains hold their silence like a curse,
like prayer, like the weight before words take shape—
their cold veins running black and bottomless,
carrying unseen currents, a heartbeat
under granite.

The river doesn't care what we call holy.
It moves like time moves: patient, merciless,
washing clean whatever we thought to keep.

I leave my boots on the bank;
something about their weight
keeps me from wearing them.
The cold comes like an old friend
who knows where all my ghosts sleep.

At the waist, the water becomes a grammar
of unbecoming—something vast, vagrant,
familiar as the breath before weeping,
strange as forgiveness. Here is where
the darkness opens its arms and names me.

Under now, where the current speaks
in tongues of silt and stone, where what was
solid blurs like childhood memories.
No face here. No name. Just the river's
long song of losing one's shape.

When I surface, the air comes sharp
as the moment I first understood death—
that summer morning, finding the sparrow,
still warm. My hands tremble,
as if the world still carries it.

The trembling will pass, like water
over stone, wearing smooth.
But the river remains in my blood.
It moves, and I am here.



Poem for a Stranger

Lochlan Moorlag

Armed with a walking stick that you
considered magical, inventing a world
in your imagination for every hundredth
pine tree that you passed,
you died cold and waterlogged; and

only the creeping forest beasts
could hear your final sound, which,
if you have to know, was a series of moans
followed only by laughter.

Soon slugs ate your flesh and white foxes
might have been dancing in the corners
of eyes. The great Buck of the Tundra
sanctioned a gathering: bears came
out of their holes smelling of sleep
and swaths of forest-hornets spawned
in rows like sharks' jaws of teeth.

The animals practiced a routine of chant,
berry munching, and territorial pissing
before stretching out into a ring
around your rotting corpse—

and here and now a bolt of crimson brimstone
folds out from the flesh of beasts and,
banking inwards, crashes to the center of a circle—

when you awoke, you recalled a section of poem
you had once read penned by Wallace Stevens,
but this you soon forgot as you stretched
your stiff tail-feathers, ruffling thick
black wings that had flaming red tips,
and cocked your small eyes to the sky
that was moving to mountains,
that was opening gently with wind.



Emergence
Elizabeth Li

Death Spiral

Taylor Marshall

is the name given to bald eagles'
dance in the sky. Their talons

interlocking mid-air, eyes piercing
mid-fall, mid-courtship. Valence

bonds swirl around conjoined feathers,
whipping in the wind. Their helix of love

goes pell-mell, whirling towards the snowy
plains below. Yellow iris, black pupil,

vision doubled. Shadows becoming
shadow. The ground trembles

waiting for us. Witness to the arduous arc –
The sky above looks down and asks:

Will you let go?



Broken Things Can Still Soar

Paula Hammond

Oak Bay

Emily Couves

tucked inside the crescent moon of my heart
spoonbills fish from crater pools,
minnows circling
and overhead, a memory
of blue herons,
blades of grass woven through
pink argyle, pink weighty pupils
reflecting fluorite fractals

on a walnut floor

is an air mattress, laughter
like wind chimes, wind chimes
like warm bodies
rustling against nylon,
a bear in a campsite eating
strawberry tops
from the ground,
muzzle nuzzling pebbles, fire ash,
tasting of all things beautiful and wonderful
and dirty.



Pink Lotus

Katie Hughbanks

Everything Eats and is Eaten

Genevieve Sugrue

Someday
I'll have a son.
And in the ecstasy of washing my innocent
In the light of his first morning
I'll anoint him to the dead.
My boy.
He would be dark haired like me and smart as can be.
I say yes to his night and to his morning.
I mourn him in the music of his little breathing.
I know his fate.
Hounds and guns.
The hunted in my holding.
Strong little boy
You will need to be.
But on that summer someday, he will be with me.
Both freshly born and freshly dead, my son.
All things of this earth will end, even what has not begun.
Someday
I will kiss his eyes while he screams into breath.
Kiss his blessed head upon blessed neck.
No, no
Not yet.



Black Bird
Karen Grosman

Khalil

Christine Andreopoulos

I reach out for
family—a hand there

Here, a leg

cradle a tiny head on my lap,
the still torso
lies warmly, wet,
 beside me,
my salt-drenched Mother
wailing an ocean

in the rubble of a brief life



Soft Cells n° 596

Shee Gomes

My Father's Family

David M. Harris

I met my Aunt Anne exactly once,
when I flew to L.A. to help my father
bring his car home after my mother
walked away. Anne's daughter, Barbara,
I also met once, when she was in New York
on business. Like most of my cousins
on that side, she was older than me,
by about a generation. We saw Uncle Sam, from
DC, and Aunt Esther once or twice a year.
The other Sam (Samson, not Samuel) had
vanished into Australia in the Thirties.

And their parents? My father rarely spoke
about his father. We have no pictures,
no memories besides my father's comment
that his father killed his mother.
I was too shocked to ask if that was
metaphorical. All the kids fled
as soon as they could, to marriage
or Chicago or Australia. No wonder my father
could never navigate
my mother's family, or mine.

▲ Toasttime/Showtime ▼

Lily Van Bergen

Let us raise a toast! The partygoers exclaim. I've started smelling the toast. It creeps in through the windows I leave open during the day. How does the day go so far away in such a hurry? The checks have stopped arriving in the mail ever since I canceled my subscription to the USPS. They asked me for a donation, and I donated an idea instead, telling them to try making Taylor Swift stamps. This would surely save the USPS, once and for all. Everyone loves Taytay, I told them. There is freedom in trying too hard to get the right things done and abandoning the others. Even when you are wrong. I am no longer inspired by anything but rather, I've found the courage within myself to do the things that have never been done before. Take one and pass them around. Don't take too many, we must lighten the load we carry during our short time on this dying rock.

(at the podium) (the award sits on said podium) (my hair is pulled back and I am wearing heels) I was asked to be here tonight by my mother and father (hi mom. hi dad.) who sadly couldn't join us for this awards ceremony presentation...They're not dead, they're just far away. But before we begin, let's acknowledge that we already have. I want to say a few words on purpose—and will do so on *purpose*... How do we know our purpose without beating ourselves up to force proof of it out of ourselves? If we coax it with a donut on a string, it will call us calculated—and purpose hates calculations. If we must simply stumble gracefully upon purpose, we must be willing to wait until it's curtain call. The show must go on, but not until we know why. We've practiced lines and moved in time, but now our anonymous audience asks to hear us rhyme. Don't you *dare* propose purpose any questions at showtime. But if you look closely at the program we handed out at the door—you'll want your reading glasses for this—purpose will drop a whisper from its lips, 'you've seen this one before.'



Beetling Around

Paula Hammond



I Was Told to Write What I Know

Ewen Glass

If a radiator is cold at the bottom it's sludge,
If it's cold at the top, it needs to be bled.



My Father is Dead

Steve Denehan

Autumn walking and the world is red and yellow and fire orange and I am walking because there is nothing else that I can do or want to do and people do not notice me because I am trying my very best to be invisible and it is working and there is a weeklong dead badger on the side of the road and a waltzing balloon tied to the gate of a house and I am hungry but I do not want to eat and you are really gone and I miss you and the clouds are ghosts and you are everywhere



Pain is a Nightshade

Christa Fairbrother

An acid tomato, bleeding black. An eggplant, a purple darker than dusk. Anthocyanin, a hooded blue longer lived than the length of your pain, your mood. A brown-eyed rock of sustenance that will blight your belly. A blind you pull over your eyes to block the bright, unlock the door to your dreams.

rotting potato
brown slime of veggie drawer
a penance of clean



**As far as half the way to the gateway (Analog
Photograph, BnW)**

Phi Phi AN





Blind Curve

Sarah Cummins Small

At 57 I drop
my contact lens
on the bathroom floor
and when I squint
to find it, faint blue
on brown tile,
I find you

in 1981 at a party.
We were drunk
and I was certainly not

supposed to be there
at 15. I should have been
sleeping at Janet's house,
not seeing double

with a tall skinny boy/man
who kept asking *tonight?*
But then I dropped

my left lens
on the bathroom floor
and panicked in the blur
of myopia and Miller Lite
and you knelt

one eye squinted
to scan the floor
and held the thin
lens in the palm
of your hand

like a prize
And then six years
later you would miss
the warning sign,



miss seeing
that sharp curve
and fly
over a ramp in Queens
and into that dark, dark night.



All(one

Ulis Bertin

Those girls laughing on the grey Graham grass
Shimmer wet-hard;

(I knew that one in first year)

Dusk-oaked, throning theology books, shelves
hold God's name in empty space...

Some walked me with me to Dublin,
calling moss-dark kings under rain;

Others between them to Montréal,
battered hulk that held our toil.

(Skunk-stoned we slept
crusht six-deep and moiling)

When you set your wheel for that swamp house
I might have plunged into icy water;

This Soviet sky warns it will rain;
death whispers 'tween the daffodils,

Indecipherable drops chatter in
a language I don't speak.

Bader, my bright cloak burns holes
In your darkness –

Shadow on my shoulder, rise, overwhelm me,
and I forget my name;

... y)our words screamed on a Queen's Park bench;
Not my words raped her, why can't I breathe?

Wet tiles out the theatre,
"Oh *no*," – what she wants," - he said" - they'll want", all(one,



Soft; a whim

The counterwoman's life has eked lines
in her face like rivers;

My theatre chair creaks, the row
half-empty;

(house lights strangle down)

She reaches, knowing, moment by moment;
over the counter, it is *over*;

Stage doors slam: an empty set: no audience:
begin.

(nametagged) Sidney clatters, fumbling, whispering death –
"*Debit... or... credit?*" and

I scream
to the charnel house

Time;

Love, unruly thing
I will outlive you.



Isolation

Angela

The CN Tower is Gone

Parker Bloom

The CN Tower is gone. I look up, and sure enough, it's missing from Toronto's familiar skyline. You used to be able to see it, she tells me. But the view has been blocked by the new condos emerging from the Don Valley's profusion of green.

She's been keeping track of changes. Her cityscape, drawn from atop the lookout, shows spring starting in the valley; sketched trees grow fuzzy and full as I flip through her ruled notebook. She's not much of an artist, but her vantage point is good for keeping an eye on the shifting city.

One spire remains unchanged: the blocky smokestack of the Don Valley Brickworks. A remnant of Toronto's industrial past. Below this smokestack, at the lookout's base, is an old quarry and converted brick factory. The factory's central pavilion creates a sort of open-air arcade, featuring a teeming farmers' market on weekends and, on weekdays, an emptiness illuminated by its high roof and gauzy light. Here, one might wander and muse over the changing city and seasons. With the rains will come lovers who duck in, seeking cover. Later, brought by summer and dropped by the busload, chain gangs of children will fill the place with chatter. Fall will see apple vendors zigzagging pippins and pink ladies atop fold-up tables, and in winter, the lone figure of somebody's grandma will slash cold air with slow hands while gliding between tai chi poses.

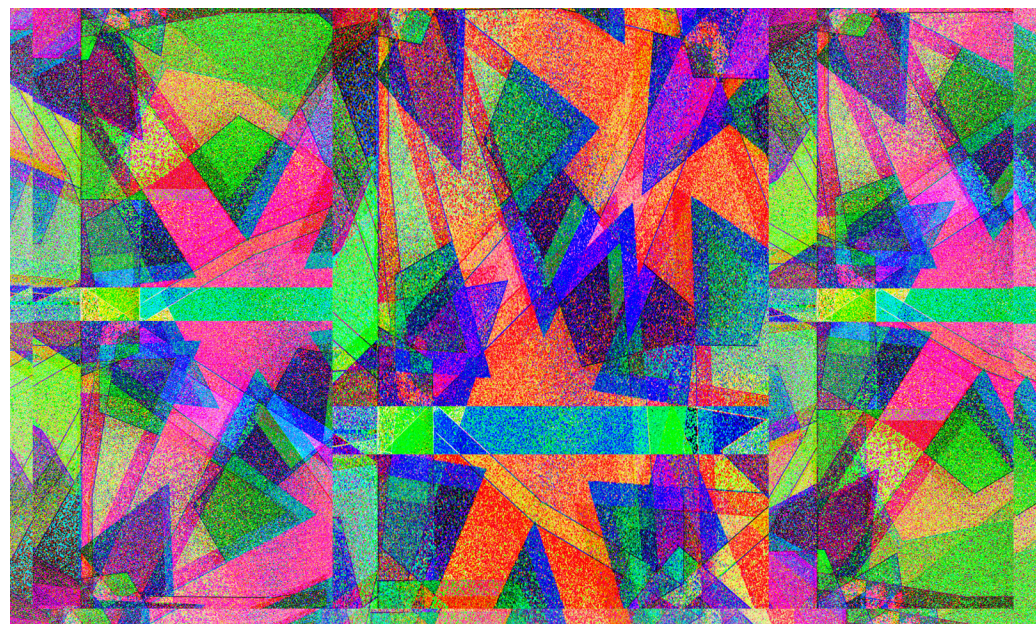
When this space still had walls, it held many men. The old Brickworks factory would have seethed with bodies and sounded like hell. For close to a century, the Brickworks' quarry yielded clay that was pressed and baked into bricks, providing the material for the city's construction. But it's quiet now, decades after being decommissioned, and the air has cleared. The factory's ovens ran first on coal and later on gas, and old photos show what must have been a permanent pall clinging to the tower that still sits, scrubbed of its soot, below my lookout.

Gone, too, are the voices of its workers. The ageless bravado of men who sweat and spit words beside other men has been replaced by the dull hum of the distant Don Valley Parkway. Instead of hearing a thousand ways of saying "shit" (should you speak English or Gaelic, Polish or Greek), one instead hears the soft talk of the walkers and birds who have taken the labourers' place. This space is peaceful now. It's become the kind of park for contemplation or chance



encounters (like my own meeting with this observer of Toronto's changing skyline), a place to escape the city's new, sanitized and more modern self.

Looking over the revitalized ruin below, old and new are both visible. The growth of spring spreads through the valley, as does the glint of glass and metal. The CN Tower is gone, but the buds are coming in.



No Sanctuary Possible

Edward Michael Supranowicz



Little Hymns on the Equinox

Charmaine Yu

The frost is thawing again

I hope you still think of me kindly

Jeremy got a new job He listens to children play piano all afternoon

You and him used to be bestest friends remember

muddy knees and dino nuggets after school

But he stole your pen and you never quite forgave him

Later you'd confess the winter makes you mean

Yesterday I walked home and saw blades

of daffodils erupting tiny explosions from the earth

Soon their halos will unfurl heads bent low

in silent prayer heavy with morning dew

I'll sit and wonder what they're wishing for

You should come back jump

across the ocean or swim if you have to

I'll plant tangerine trees and pretend they aren't out of season

You should come visit Wednesdays work best for me

We'll have coffee and look at the fish just like you wanted

It will be a balmy summer's day

The winds will rewind the videotapes



namesake

Tianyi Li

天¹ is a crop field circling. dog in the tractor seat.

the skin of my shoulder blades stretching a wish for flight.

bird lands on bone. the sheer bravado to think we can

return and have it exist exactly as we remember. i am trying

to visualize the upward hike to your apartment. the fruit market. the pool tables.

auspicious lottery numbers & suffocating heat i could never quite handle.

i falter, give way like plastic bags holding today's buns from the bakery

on the side of the road then i remember i am scared

of motorcycles.

—² last morning waking up to cicadas

and next door's morning announcements did you know

they don't name all of their schools there

instead they're numbered

meaning i cannot trace the right path back to

my mother the basketball court where the tap water came out

scalding & getting eaten alive by mosquitoes i

ended up in the hospital drinking pear juice trying to be brave

trying to put all this fear behind me.

i don't know why i changed my name. my whole life i've been running

from myself. each breath exhaling into a firecracker.

you, half a river split

but still flowing.

1 天 (tiān): day / sky / heaven

2 — (yī): one / single



Internal Reflection

Katie Hughbanks

comes lounge chair and ottoman

John Chakkour

I want to live in a box of glass and steel
with burnt orange lights and
pop art on the walls
and a wife
(brunette)
half-asleep on modernist furniture
while in the next room – the study – my mistress
(blonde)
and I shamelessly cavort like children
pretending to be
adults

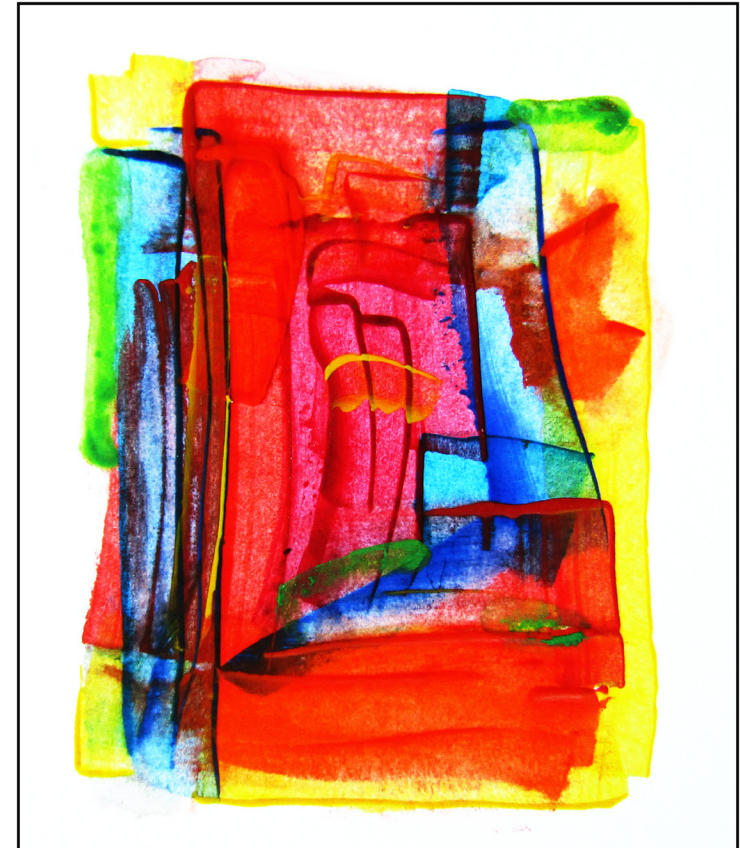
later that night
in bed in my
pinstriped monogrammed satin pyjamas
I will ask my wife
(still brunette)
whether our lovely children
named after flowers and kings
have been doing well in school
and
why don't we go to the beach next weekend?
then I will close my eyes
and dream
of cowboys

fantomime

Grace Hu

raindrops skim rusty rooftops and tendrils of moonlight curl around wet walls. glistening concrete outside hostelry, one with dark oak walls and rusted golden ledges, one with air shaped like shaky laughter, nail scratches, tenor moans, rustling fabric, fever dreams fizzling on rocks in a glass. one where the girl dances among rubble. hangs onto thin silver limelight, masterfully waxing and waning her legs to coax as much veneration as she can with flashes of ashy mascara and watery eyes. all red cheeks, sweat-stained skin shimmering under flickering dusk lumens that line corners of the ceiling.

at night, she transforms into a tornado of nauseating proclivity and impassioned motion sickness. moth to a fire. tight-lipped, loose-legged men throw a hundred little flames her way. she waits to burst into sun, bare feet sideswiping shining black floor in brief glances, black hair disappearing into technicolour blur, magenta nails chipped from metal scratches. as she waits, her spirit flies and she watches herself twist and swivel. elastic spine, rubber bones perfect for snapping around a toothpick centre. she glides from rite of spring to firebird, lighting ribs like matches, catching glimpses of the fire as she waits to burst into sun, and she waits and she waits and she



Adaptability

Michael Moreth



When God brings you a deer, shoot it with a crossbow

Paul Sheppard

there is no afterlife.
of this, I am certain

Sweet Southern Ontario and sweet southern winds
found me morning after morning wet with dew
long legs lost in fields and long legs until rest
hours and hours
looking for nothing in particular
nights staring straight into high-beams,
horns, comprehensive insurance coverage
before leaping into cover by the roadside

hours and hours of long legs
ducking down for a quick bite
I swear white spots in my eyes from
four-wheeled horsemen
matched white spots on my hip
but who's to say now? (red)
commanded, as it were, this way and that, by unseen forces
leading me blindly from field to field
dust road to dirt road

so,
sure,
I showed up on that front lawn
one morning
out of all the mornings
who knew that blue-eyed devil would be home
instead of tending to halls? (school or holy)
unseen forces brought me there
and struck, like lightning (a sign?)
a bolt in my side
unseen forces brought me there
but still I believe them to be real
but still I believe them to be real
but still I believe
still I believe

b e still

there is no heaven but the one taken from you

Contributors

As a mixed media artist, **Angela** explores the relationship between nature and emotions. Her work represents the beauty that can be seen in dark times. She uses various media, including watercolours, acrylics, and oils to create her pieces.

A.T. Robinson is a poet whose work spans four continents, finding its current home in the vibrant metropolis of Shenzhen, China. His verses are carved from the landscapes that have shaped him—from the mystic marshes and palmetto groves of South Carolina to the ancient karst formations of Guangdong, where limestone peaks pierce through veils of mist. Teaching IB History has woven additional threads of understanding into his work, enriching his exploration of human narratives across time and culture. Having faced and survived cancer, Robinson's poetry carries both vulnerability and strength, offering intimate glimpses into mortality and resilience. Through verses that are both weighted with experience and illuminated with compassion, Robinson creates a space for readers to contemplate the territories we inhabit—both in the physical world and within ourselves.

Charmaine Yu is a fourth-year student at the University of Toronto. She was previously an editor-in-chief of *The Trinity Review* and is now working on a manuscript for her novella under her supervisor, Leanne Toshiko Simpson.

Christa Fairbrother, MA, is the current poet laureate of Gulfport, Florida. Her poetry has appeared in *Arc Poetry*, *Pleiades*, and *Salamander*. She's been a finalist for The Pangea Prize, The Prose Poem Competition, The Leslie McGrath Poetry Prize, and nominated for a Pushcart Prize. She's had residencies with the Sundress Academy for the Arts, the Bethany Arts Community, and her chapbook, *Chronically Walking*, was a finalist for the Kari Ann Flickinger Memorial Prize. *Water Yoga* (Singing Dragon, 2022), her nonfiction book, won medals from the Nautilus Book Awards and the Florida Writers Association. Connect with her at www.christafairbrotherwrites.com.

Christine Andreopoulos is a multidisciplinary artist and adventurer who is currently in the Creative Writing Certificate Program at U of T. She has written and produced films. She is currently working on a book about her healing journey through travels. This is her first poetry submission.

Until 2003, **David M. Harris** had never lived more than fifty miles from New York City. Since then he has moved to Tennessee, acquired a daughter and a classic MG, and gotten serious about poetry. His work has appeared in *Pirene's Fountain* (and in the anthology *First Water, the Best of Pirene's Fountain*), *Gargoyle*, *The Labletter*, *The Pedestal*, and other places. His first collection of poetry, *The Review Mirror*, was published by Unsolicited Press in 2013. He is on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/david.m.harris1>.

Edward Michael Supranowicz is the grandson of Irish and Russian/Ukrainian immigrants. He grew up on a small farm in Appalachia. He has a grad background in painting and printmaking. Some of his artwork has recently or will soon appear in *Fish Food*, *Streetlight*, *Another Chicago Magazine*, *Door Is A Jar*, *The Phoenix*, and *The Harvard Advocate*. Edward is also a published poet.

Elizabeth Li is a 2nd year studying Sociology and Contemporary Asian Studies on the St. George campus. In addition to drawing, they like to repaint dolls and play video games.

Emily Couves is a writer and multidisciplinary artist based in Vancouver, BC. She spends her days marvelling the big and small wonders of her world and putting pen to paper. More of her work can be found in the upcoming anthology *Up: Rising* from Workman Arts.

Ewen Glass (he/him) is a screenwriter and poet from Northern Ireland who lives with two dogs, a tortoise and lots of self-doubt; his poetry has appeared in the likes of *Okay Donkey*, *Maudlin House*, *HAD*, *Poetry Scotland* and *Ex-Puritan*. His debut chapbook *The Art of Washing What You Can't Touch* is published by Alien Buddha Press. Bluesky/X/IG: @ewenglass

Genevieve Sugrue is a fourth-year English student double minoring in Cinema Studies and Writing and Rhetoric. She is primarily a video journalist, but writes poetry whenever it falls out of her.

Nationally recognized by the League of Canadian Poets, **Grace Hu** is writing fantasy novels, angsty songs, and experimental poetry that adds a touch of stardust to the mundane. She grew up in Vancouver, and is now a second-year at UTSG studying international relations and classics. You can find more of her writing content at @grace_should_write on Instagram.

John Chakkour is a fourth-year majoring in mathematics and computer science. His work has appeared in *The Woodsworth Review*.

▲

Karen Grosman (1988) is a Canadian artist based in Toronto. Her practice concentrates on painting, ceramic sculptures, ceramic art installations and drawings. Her paintings and drawings concentrate on concepts of impermanence. Ceramic sculptures and installations concentrate on superficiality, hidden meanings and the façade. She is represented by Box Heart Gallery in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania and Poetic Tiger Gallery in Boise, Idaho. Notable exhibitions include “Memento Mori - Decorated Impermanence” at Cedar Ridge Creative Centre (2023), “Fragments at the Institute of Miniature Art” (2021). Conferences include solo show “Feminism UTSC” at Gallery 1265 part of the UFT Feminist Conference (2015) and group show “Birth and its Meaning” at Milk Glass Gallery part of the Ryerson University Midwifery Conference (Toronto Metropolitan University) 2017. Her work has been published in numerous magazines. She holds a BFA from OCAD University. Majoring in drawing and painting with a minor in art history, she is self-taught in ceramics.

Katie Hughbanks (she/her) is a writer, photographer, and teacher whose photography has been published nationally and internationally in more than 50 magazines. She is the author of two chapbooks, *Blackbird Songs* (Prolific Press, 2019) and *It's Time* (Finishing Line Press, 2024). She teaches English and Creative Writing in Louisville, Kentucky.

Lily Van Bergen is a Canadian-American writer in her second-year at Victoria College, double majoring in Literature and Critical Theory and French Literature. Van Bergen's poetry aims to play with what given meaning she can find in the mundane, assigning metaphors to the most absurd roles. Van Bergen's greatest strengths as a writer are illuminated when she treats voice more self-reflexively, gazing at her own gaze, offering a theoretical elaboration on the rest of her work. She would be remiss if her work doesn't puzzle her reader, and her goal is always to move the reader towards something uncanny yet embracing. Van Bergen harnesses her quaint upbringing to scale up-to-size the experiences that brought her to Toronto, pursuing a continual wandering around the big city looking for new poetic errands. Having recently entered studying poetry in an academic setting, Van Bergen takes great inspiration from anti-colonialist poetry, absurdist poetry, and post-modernist poetic technique, creating an amalgamation of technique from which she draws inspiration.

Lochlan Moorlag is an undergraduate English student at the University of Toronto. He enjoys, among other things, reading and writing poetry.

Michael Moreth is a recovering Chicagoan living in the rural, micropolitan City of Sterling, the Paris of Northwest Illinois USA.

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Parker Bloom is a third-year student pursuing an English major and a Literature and Critical Theory minor. While his habit of always investigating a little free library rarely pays off, his optimism keeps him searching for anything by Kōbō Abe, Zadie Smith, or Seth.

Paul Sheppard, originally from Rosseau, Ontario, currently lives with his small family of human and non-human animals in London, Ontario, where he works as a neuroscience researcher. His work is forthcoming or published in *The /t&Mz/ Review*, *Soliloquies Anthology*, *The Trinity Review*, *diceroll*, and *Paper Cranes Literary Magazine*. He recently began training for a marathon so is probably on the brink of a midlife crisis.

Paula Hammond (@writer_paula) is a professional writer & artist based in Wales. She reads too much, sleeps too little, and firmly believes anything can go in a sandwich.

Phi Phi AN is a Vietnamese independent multi/interdisciplinary artist-director-curator-producer-researcher-activist. Since 2011, she has multifaceted herself with echoes—chambers, deep understanding, building, development, reformation and involvement in closely over the stages, the scenes, the spaces, arts and intercultural forms; locally and internationally. A thoughtful way to resurface after a lengthy hiatus passed through fire. linktr.ee/phiphian_official

Sarah Cummins Small lives outside Knoxville, TN. Her poetry has appeared in *Appalachia Bare*, *Cider Press Review*, *Tiny Wren Lit*, and *Willawaw Journal*, among others, as well as in the anthologies *Breathing the Same Air* and *Migrants and Stowaways*. She holds an MA in English/Creative Writing from Iowa State University.

Shee Gomes is a Brazilian artist with a BA in Digital Design, who began her career in visual arts in 2009. Her work, featured in numerous exhibitions and international publications, explores non-objective painting characterized by expressive colors and brushstrokes that seek harmony and sonority, translating her perceptions of the world. For Shee, art transcends cultures and time, connecting us to everything we are. Her purpose is to unveil the new, and expand this connection. Her recent exhibitions include “Collecting & Reassembling” at the Richmond Art Gallery in Canada and “Where Flowers Bloom” at Spazio Volta in Switzerland. In Brazil, she held a solo exhibition at Centro Cultural Taubaté, and group exhibitions at the Pinacoteca Anderson Fabiano and Galeria 18 in São Paulo, reinforcing her presence in the Brazilian art scene. Her work has appeared in publications such as *The Four Faced Liar*, *Chestnut Review*, and *Big Wing Review*, among others.



Steve Denehan lives in Kildare, Ireland with his wife Eimear and daughter Robin. He is the award winning author of two chapbooks and six poetry collections.

Taylor Marshall is a writer based out of Regina, Saskatchewan on Treaty 4 lands. Taylor is a Creative Writing major and is currently working on a historical fiction novel as part of her graduate thesis at the University of Regina. Taylor's writing often ruminates on mercurial possibilities of selfhood mirrored in the natural world to reflect interplays of internal and external metamorphoses of grief, change, death, and rebirth. Taylor has published stand alone poems in *Saskatchewan Writers' Guild Spring Magazine Volume 14*, *Pinhole Poetry Press*, *[S P A C E] Magazine*, and self-published her debut poetry chapbook, *Transits*, in May 2024.

Tianyi Li is a first-year student at Victoria College studying Anthropology and Cognitive Science. Her work can be found or is forthcoming in *Acta Victoriana*, *VOICES/VOIX*, and *Hart House Review*. Her go-to coffee order as of late has been a cortado.

Ulis Bertin writes from a strange undiscovered landmass between Albania, Australia, and France. He is an unpatriotic expatriate of no little class, unusually dissatisfied with the state of his front coat zippers. Where he wants to walk he will tread long, where he wants to see, he will go, where he goes, he will not take no for an answer. Nothing matters to him but E.E. Cummings, rainwater, and other people.



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