



# Trestle | CREEK | Review



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**CONTENTS**

**FICTION**

*Ron McFarland* Distances ..... 13  
*Michelle Brumley* Old Lady in Space ..... 29

**POETRY**

*Georgia Tiffany* Last Night ..... 5  
In Duncan Gardens ..... 6  
That Old Story ..... 9

*Paula Yup* A Man Brings Dahlias ..... 10  
At Hatcher Pass ..... 11

*Farley Egan Green* The Needlepoint Pillow Speaks ..... 17

*Liam Cameron* Lies I Believed ..... 19

*Jessica Struble* The Deepest Part of the Creek ..... 25

*David E. Thomas* Christmas Eve at the Transfer Center ..... 26  
Bus Stop Vigil ..... 27

*Ron McFarland* Late Summer Afternoon on the Patio ..... 31

*Roger Dunsmore* One More for Lahey ..... 32  
What the Archeologist Said ..... 33

**VISUAL ART**

*Eric Demattos* Bridge ..... 8  
Harrison Boat Ribs ..... 12  
Birch Forest ..... 18  
Canoe's Last Destination ..... 24  
Sea Chair ..... 28

**CONTRIBUTORS** ..... 34





Georgia Tiffany

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## Last Night

How do you bless a blessing?  
Do you hold it in your hands,  
dip it in holy water and holy words,  
pledge to watch over it, cradle it,  
sing to it, for it,  
keep it, give it away?

Do you run with it, in it,  
to the mailbox, the crossroads,  
the top of the highest mountain?  
Do you inhale its fragrance  
until your body emanates it?  
Take it to bed?

We rocked in our old porch swing,  
listened to rain, the first (or so it seemed)  
in decades of hot, irretractable  
damage to bee balm, milkweed,  
even the intrepid oak,  
watched the grand strokes of lightning

(that could mean more fear,  
more fire, more smoke),  
felt the house, and surely the sky, shake.  
I confess there was a time  
from such a night, from every lash  
of light, each Delphic roar,

I cowered in the closet  
behind my mother's skirts.  
But last night you said, *Beautiful*.  
You said, *Sublime*.  
And so I wondered at the difference,  
and wonder still.





*Georgia Tiffany*

---

**In Duncan Gardens**

*to Mary Ann Waters*

i.

Of these thin-soled shoes, the gravel  
grinding into them, into my insteps,  
of this path we walked,  
the lush-covered wall along it  
that still leans askew

all moss and centipedes  
where we perched sleepy-eyed  
to breathe in the waking  
of all those early mornings  
teeming with sound,

and of the Townsend's Solitaire  
perched too, the one we thought to be  
a dove, how it waited with us for the sun,  
nothing passive, nothing  
too small to be heard—

a leaf turning, beetle overturned,  
the single high-pitched *pik* and *pik* again  
of downy, and of the petunias parading  
their vibrant perennial rush,  
that joy and sorrow in the blood.

ii.

How we thought we'd love  
the cottage by the sea,  
me in the little room in back  
fragrant with lavender, beach peas,  
and windflowers hanging from the beams,

you, in the room with the wider view  
of wind and wheels of weather,  
boats unmoored, sails raised, bearing away,  
and peacock feathers  
splayed above your door.



We could have stayed longer,  
but you refused, though I offered  
to change rooms, take down  
the iridescent feathers with their evil eyes.  
You said the spell lasts forever.

I write this now, under the shadow  
of oncoming fall,  
feel your hand steadying mine,  
that unconscionable word,  
cancer, crawling onto the page.

iii.

Everywhere petunias overflow their beds,  
gowned in bloodfire, indigo, maroon.  
Even in the dusk, scent thickens the plush  
and multiplying blooms,  
the exploring fullness of them.

The white ones silk their edges  
to lure the moonlight, a tryst of sorts  
furred with cold,  
as light reveals and light diffuses,  
or is it grief itself

that patterns out the shadows  
where you were meant to be  
a shining in the world?  
and me, still here with my breath,  
garden echoes accumulating.

So here I'll grieve. Who will understand?  
I am violating the petunias.  
One by one I break the hairy stems.  
All night I'll scrub  
their sticky perfume from my hands.



*Eric Demattos*

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## Bridge





## That Old Story

We discovered it that night in Montana—  
the cold not so cold  
as the dark, and the dark  
trailing behind a forecast that stretched  
all the way from the pass to the valley  
where we'd stopped for sleep.

The oldtimer said stars would tell us  
how to go on, and they tried, but stuttered  
among clouds too fast to negotiate.  
Without a guide, we'd had our troubles—  
the wrong turn at Bozeman,  
road construction over Thompson Falls.

Now we huddle between mountains,  
knowing the snow will come early,  
bury us here, alone together—  
that old story—or else turn us to snow  
with all its sterile certainty  
aimed for the heart.

We'll freeze inward from the extremities,  
feel the beat of nothing so loud  
as trumpeter swans escaping the valley  
heading anywhere else,  
a homily in the wind,  
ghosts in the wings.



*Paula Yup*

---

## **A Man Brings Dahlias**

from Five Mile  
which he puts in vases  
at this coffee shop  
says soon it'll be too cold  
in his yard  
for the dahlias to survive  
so I enjoy them now  
the end of the season





*Paula Yup*

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## **At Hatcher Pass**

in Alaska  
sometimes skiers  
die in an avalanche  
and skier Daryl  
is very careful  
sometimes  
he leaves it alone  
doesn't ski for that day



*Eric Demattos*

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## Harrison Boat Ribs



## Distances

Did it seem more ominous than it was, or was it more ominous than it seemed? This question had plagued Tanya for at least a dozen days now since she first became aware of the huge nest—the size of a rugby ball one of her neighbors claimed, as if she would know anything about that. According to the internet, hornets, like all wasps, were “not as aggressive as one might think;” they were, in fact, “gentle giants.” She would have loved to believe that, being painfully allergic to insect bites of all varieties—mosquitoes, yellowjackets, a broad range of wasps. Spiders too, for that matter, including the most ordinary household types.

She hadn't always been. Only in recent years had spider bites and yellow-jacket stings morphed into itchy and then painful blisters that would often become infected. Then a specialist in Spokane introduced her to Clobetasol. “Apply immediately,” Doctor Osbold advised. She preferred to be called an immunologist, unlike Tanya's ex, Bill, who preferred “allergist.”

Her neighbor Mark, recently widowed and painfully needy, identified the “critters,” as he liked to call them, as bald-faced hornets, members of the *Vespidae* family. Mark had retired a year ago from his job as a wildfire consultant for Idaho Fish & Game, and he liked to boast he knew his bugs. Tanya might have found it reassuring to think of the hornets as members of a “family” had Mark not also reflected on a painful encounter with one of them a couple years back when he was mowing the lawn shirtless and apparently came too close to a nest of the “shy, peaceful creatures,” the internet's phrasing, not Mark's. Perhaps the key phrase was “have been known to be quite passive.” As a high school English and history teacher of twenty-plus years—twenty-eight to be precise, but at her age she indulged in approximations—she was accustomed to parsing the texts.

Blissfully divorced for seventeen years, she had no desire to replicate that mistake. “Too bad, Mark,” she told herself in the three years since her kind and truly helpful neighbor lost his Paula (a bit frumpy and too conservative politically for her tastes, but a good soul). He liked to refer to her still as “my Paula.” Pathetic. Poor, possessive guy. Bill would not have dared.

Mark advised her to let the hornets be. “Just keep your distance,” he said. “Leave them alone, and they'll leave you alone. Come the first hard freeze, I can knock the nest down for you. I've got a friend that collects them. He'll love this one. In the meantime, just keep your distance.”

Trouble was, this huge, gray, papery nest was perched in the scarlet hawthorn about ten feet up and eight feet away from her beloved patio. For years, she had indulged in serene breakfasts and suppers on the patio from late spring through early fall. And it was now early August, so the first freeze of any sort was a long way off. She had become aware of the hornets when they began clustering around the copper birdbath her son, Billy, got for her fiftieth birthday a couple of years ago. Again with the easy approximations. *Four* years ago.



## Distances

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Billy. It was just like Bill to insist their firstborn be a Junior. She had resisted in vain and suspected it was an omen, and sure enough it was. Shortly after Billy finished second grade, Bill left them for a nurse at the hospital and then left Idaho for Portland and then left the nurse and Portland for Houston. Allergist, and a very good one, Bill could not get far enough away from Tanya and their son. He had the nerve to describe it as “aesthetic distance.” She could not complain about his maintenance though—a generous initial settlement, ample child support through Billy’s graduation at UW. Moreover, Bill had the good sense to stay out of their lives altogether except for the obligatory birthday cards (with appropriate checks) for Billy and Christmas cards for them both. After the first few Christmas cards, which Bill stuffed with obligatory yuletide brag letters, she chucked them unread.

“I discard them,” she told her best friend Susan, who taught life sciences at the same high school where Tanya taught. “I dis-*card* them!”

Susan laughed, raised her wineglass.

“Did you ever read Ovid’s *Metamorphoses*?”

Susan shook her head.

“One of the best-known myths has to do with a musician named Orpheus whose wife dies, but he gets permission from Hades, god of the underworld, to bring her back if Orpheus promises not to look at her during their return. Of course, being a man, he does look, and she gets sucked back into Hell.”

“Weird.”

“Yeah. The way Ovid tells it, most of the story has to do with how poor Orpheus suffers. He doesn’t waste much ink on Eurydice, the wife. Tough break for her. But that’s about how I felt when Bill left, and I got stuck here in G-ville. I felt like Eurydice.”

Susan shook her head, sipped at her pinot noir. “But don’t you, though? After all these years, don’t you miss having a man in your life, someone special?” Susan had been lucky with her second marriage.

“Nope. Like Othello said: ‘To be once in doubt is once to be resolved.’”

“Hmm. And how did that turn out for *him*?” Susan was among a small handful of people in town Tanya could talk literature with, or history.

Tanya watched hornets enter and leave through a hole about the size of a golf ball at the bottom of the nest, and despite her neighbor’s observation that hornets only crave aphids and other irksome insects (confirmed by a website both Mark and Susan assured her was reliable), they frightened her. It occurred to her that the chickadees and tiny siskins that used to sip from the birdbath now steered clear of it, and she dreaded seeing the black hornets buzzing over the copper bowl. She’d found as many as nine of their waterlogged corpses in the birdbath, which she refused to refill until after the sun went down and the interlopers returned to their gray hangars.

For whatever reason, they reminded her of Stukas, Hitler’s siren-equipped dive bombers that terrified Europe during the Second World War. “It’s irrational,” she told herself, but for her history classes she had shown documentary footage of



Stukas, swarms of them, dive-bombing and strafing the Poles so often that the connection had become, for her, greater than metaphorical.

“Hornets love bees,” the website affirmed. Just as the dark marauders enjoyed sugar and sap, they enjoyed honey and the bees that produce it. A giant hornet, per the website, could liquidate “roughly forty bees a minute.”

“Think of Warsaw,” she told herself.

Although number seven on the list of “Facts about Hornets” informed her that they were a “delicacy in Japan,” the authors of the site saved their most frightening fact for the penultimate slot: “Hornet venom can be deadly.” At least they spared her the exclamation mark. But they did accompany that dire warning with information about recent incursions of the Giant Asian Hornet into the neighboring state of Washington. They did not indulge their spirit of *Schrecklichkeit* with the moniker that had achieved some popularity in regional newspapers—“murder hornet.” The proto-Nazis had resorted to that term—*Schrecklichkeit*—for “frightfulness” or “horribleness” to describe the impact of their zeppelin raids on the civilian population of London during the First World War. “*Ja, sie waren schrecklich!*” They were terrible.

But that was long ago and far away. Back to the more domestic, household dilemma at hand. If Billy weren’t spending the summer on the Italian Riviera with his girlfriend Nikki (lovely girl, really—young woman, that is), he would know what to do. When he went off to Seattle six years ago, Tanya began to feel distance as she had not felt it since moving with Bill from Ohio to this small Idaho town, population around three thousand, in 1990. There had been incentives for him to relocate to the dinky regional hospital, but not surprisingly, he’d found only slight demand for his specialty and soon began to commute to a larger hospital seventy miles north. And so *that* got started.

Tanya prided herself on adapting to smalltown life in remote Grangeville. People had seemed so kind right off, and the large beauty of the unfamiliar mountain landscape had excited them both, and then along came Billy, and everyone said this was a great place to raise a family. She had grown up in Barnesville, Ohio, and found small towns amicable, natural, easy.

How quickly that had changed. The welcome amicability seemed to fade after Bill left. Just like that. The century was about to turn, Billy was about to enter third grade, and Tanya felt like a 1950s divorcee. Like her Aunt Martha had been. Her mother still talked about that on occasion, always with sighs for her poor sister. Her parents pleaded with Tanya to come back to eastern Ohio after the divorce—plenty of good teaching jobs there for her—but she hadn’t done that. Why, she could not say, especially now.

And where was Susan when she needed her? In Arizona golfing with Dewey and her in-laws and attending some conference for secondary school science teachers. Far away.

But the hornet’s nest was right here, right now. And perched on the rim of her wine glass—one of a set from Bill’s parents for their first anniversary, filled with



## *Distances*

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the last of a nice Oregon pinot noir Mark left two afternoons ago when he came over to offer advice on the *Vespidae*—buzzed the black insect in question. Menacing. Unusually large too, or so it seemed. A murder hornet perhaps?

What was he thinking? Or she? Probably not a female, surely a male. Did insects think or did they act merely on instinct, driven by their senses—smell, in this case, the compulsion to taste? Hornets as insect connoisseurs of fine wines.

Without thinking, impulsively (and she was not by nature an impulsive person), Tanya swatted at the marauder, who reacted instinctively with a potent sting that drove her back into the wrought iron chair. Hard. Her wine glass flew from the table and shattered on the patio pavers she laid down a few years after Bill left. Billy had helped her level the ground. He must've been twelve or thirteen then. Her boy. Was he in Genoa? No, not in Genoa but somewhere south or west of Genoa or . . .

Hardly a swat, she thought as the pain surged from where the hornet had struck into the soft tissue on the back of her hand between the thumb and index finger. More like a flick really, just a flick of her hand to chase him off. No offense intended. She tried to call out, but her throat thickened. "Mark!" She tried to call. "Mark," she rasped. Where were men when you needed them? Distant. Far away.

"Bill?" she mumbled. What would Bill say, have said?

"*Chee-zus* Tanya, where the hell's your epi-pen?"

"Kitchen counter," she whispered, her throat tightening.

She stumbled back from the chair as a black swarm zoomed down on her from the gray clouds overhead. Those poor Polish refugees cowering in the ditches! But surely, that was only a metaphor.

Idaho was not Poland, and Grangeville wasn't Warsaw, or Hades for that matter, and Tanya was no refugee. Slowly, she rose from the gray pavers and shook out her glossy black hair. Breathless, she felt herself ascend into the warm air transformed, changed utterly into some other being altogether.







*Farley Egan Green*

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## The Needlepoint Pillow Speaks

He stitched me,  
cigarette dangling from mouth,  
staring down at me, not at the others  
in a gathering of the newly sober.

He chose the colors:  
orange, red, green for the pattern  
black, black, black for the rest.

He finished,  
pulled out a new canvas,  
kept stitching, stitching, stitching,

yet tenderly wrapped me in tissue,  
placed me in a box,  
and mailed me to you.





*Eric Demattos*

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## **Birch Forests**





*Liam Cameron*

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## Lies I Believed

### *History*

we are born now, marked inside,  
skyscrapers with gapes blast out.

curls of smoke fill the whole air,  
stars scream above the blanket.

most parts fall here, on the page,  
skyscrapers with blast out gapes.

we the pieces are united  
through the road tar long later.

but back before the blasts:

our story began during February:  
Schumann and I coinciding,  
slipping through dissonances and beneath icy sheets,  
one hundred forty-seven years copper to a coin's side.

two pleading child, grasping into  
that placid whiteness.  
and if a child does resemble  
that placid whiteness,  
then they two plead, like  
two old heat-pipe cuckoo clocks.  
what "festivals of atonement"  
should we, two too, invent?





*Lies I Believed*

---

*Love*

someone glances at you:  
some old glitter on your sleeve  
where underneath is UPC.

an augenblick is memory.  
barbarically gray roads  
are clearly exciting  
even those pleasures dim. - - - - -

snaring sun we both do  
over and then over too,  
sapping the still yellow-white.  
drums do crack, but still *you*  
are the ant that summers my apple.





*Liam Cameron*

---

*Absolution*

collective subconsciousness exists.  
knowing? suffering? loving?  
across time they are one axis,  
everything about everything.

*You and I are one another within.  
as before for admission admission is key.*

in my heart there is tension  
and that sturdy infant Earth will inherit  
but intrinsically bind a ransom in questions too vain.  
in this way there is traction  
but “traction” is multivalent so let me be specific  
and diagram some confessions to explain:

I've located the world within myself  
and I will friction weld it to the world.  
I am flawed; I see in others  
parts of me I seek to annihilate  
that reveal perfections with skillful audacity.  
one layer of me is Kautilyan, I don't know where—  
soft-hard-soft or hard-soft-hard?  
and if it is the latter: Sisyphean urges are  
the natural alignment of my inner and other.  
and if it is the former: there is traction.





*Lies I Believed*

---

*Naturality*

sometimes here, but not now.  
sometimes now, but not here.  
and every now and then  
and every here and there  
I am now and here.

transparencies  
grainy ricochets  
tangless minerals  
hanging in the air.  
Cage sans cresc.  
new patterns elope,  
arrange, and fulfill,  
then return to still.  
trees that cover feet to head  
whisper in many voices.  
beams pour through the foliage  
dust dancing on your eyelids.

*silence*, purifying mist evokes,  
and heavenly pines trace the meadow.





*Liam Cameron*

*Originality*

turned corners point to what I love in gardens of thought:

and so there is a word “lukebrightness”  
and a hobbyhorse knight still in me  
“hidden excitedly, containing laughter.”  
and there is that placid whiteness—  
it’s here beneath blue-black sky  
when two blankets are alike:

when can we save Mahler’s pyre  
where ash is ash and tradition is fire?  
when art is decision and craft is effort:

I must speak soft and  
listen close, hands deep in ink.  
something within me—

tear the soul from its  
fibers, emerge with a pearl,  
give it completely:

from spit-sucking smoke  
from beige boredom  
from pallid husks  
from unsalted bread, I am.

mark this back cover creed:  
Wright’s “I have wasted my life”  
died with Schumann and will with me.  
love intensely everything  
like these lies that I believed.





*Eric Demattos*

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## Canoe's Last Destination







*Jessica Struble*

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## The Deepest Part of the Creek

The lime-green birch leaves swam around freely,  
Like little angelfishes in a calm summer sea, and the water was  
The warmth of Christmastime port wine, and when I swam deeper,  
I saw that the bottom of the pond was the most ridiculous shade of royal  
Blue I bet you've ever seen, like the deepest part of a mystical creek where,  
If I drowned there, I would be convinced that Heaven was flooded with blueberry  
Nectar, but the deep part of the creek is where people have been known to eat too many blue  
Berries and drink too much and become undone, and lose sight of the sun, and if that were the  
Case then I'd be afraid to go there.  
I'd be afraid to go anywhere but up,  
Where the sun beckons me to come.





*David E. Thomas*

---

## **Bus Stop Vigil**

Traffic on Broadway  
    rumbles and spews  
        fumes  
on a gloomy November  
    afternoon  
weather that drove  
    Ishmael out to sea  
with Ahab to chase  
    the white whale  
no such drama here  
    though the Children's  
        Theater sits  
behind me it's not  
    providing  
    any performance  
and all I want to see  
    is the Number 5  
    bus come along  
and take me to one more  
    chore  
before Thanksgiving Day.

*27 November 2024*





*David E. Thomas*

## Christmas Eve at the Transfer Center

Catching my breath  
    on this bus stop  
                    bench a  
young lady approaches  
    hands me a small  
envelope and with a smile  
    says "Merry Christmas"  
I can't resist  
I open the envelope  
    inside find a greeting card  
                    and five bucks  
I don't need the dough  
    but I'll find someone  
                    who does  
afternoon sun obscured  
    by cloud  
the Life Flight helicopter  
    roars overhead  
a bite in the breeze  
    my bus still  
minutes away.

*24 December 2024*





*Eric Demattos*

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## Sea Chair





Michelle Brumley

## Old Lady in Space

Dani's eighty-three-year-old mother did *not* belong in space. Neither did he, for that matter. Rose was along for the maiden voyage of the starship *Sapphire*. A maiden voyage that was hit by space debris only moments ago. Four hours from their destination and only four *minutes* from the ship hemorrhaging oxygen and the vast emptiness of space killing them all in grotesque ways.

It was a repair job that required the precision of a seasoned welder. That wasn't Dani, or Charlie, or any of the other dozen crew members. The job came down to Rose with her compact welder the size of a sewing kit.

Mother and son moved along the bulkhead in their matching tropical-colored spacesuits. The ship was deathly quiet: all crew members huddled in their escape pods in case Rose couldn't finish the job.

"My goal is to live to ninety-two. I've got to make it nine more years," Rose said.

"I wish you wouldn't say that." Dani paused. "At least, not over the comm. Other people can hear you."

"Then *other* people can know that an eighty-three-year-old woman is saving their butts."

She shut her comm off. Dani watched her bump along the edge of the wall. Each step closer to the breach was agonizingly slow. Rose carefully opened the welding kit as Dani's visor flashed red: *three minutes to hull breach*.

They had all been on their way to a luxury assisted living planet. The holo-advertisement boasted miles of beaches, fresh air and the finest life-enhancing scientific breakthroughs and treatments. The average life expectancy was well over one-hundred years old. She could make it to ninety-two and beyond. If they survived this.

Dani realized Rose was trying to distract him. She had no intention of dying. She just didn't want him to worry about what they were doing, and that made him worry more. He moved closer to her.

Planet-side, Rose had been a jeweler for most of her life. Dani recalled traveling with her from city to city to help set up her table and displays, falling asleep to her quiet swearing when metals were particularly difficult to bend, or when gemstones fell from trembling tweezers. One time, he'd been late for a second date because Rose couldn't decide between sapphires or emeralds and insisted on his opinion. In the end, Dani chose sapphires. His second date had been with Charlie. Charlie, who later proposed with a sapphire ring and claimed it was the story of how he knew he loved Dani: a gentle, kind man with a soft spot for his mother. Rose *adored* Charlie.

"Three minutes, love. How's your mother doing?" Charlie's voice buzzed with static.





## *Old Lady in Space*

---

Dani smiled, despite his fear. “She’s been through worse. After everything else, this is a piece of cake.” He winked and realized Charlie couldn’t see him.

Dani never pressed for the details of his father’s sudden departure. Rose spent many nights staring up at the night sky but would say nothing. At some point after Dani had moved out, Rose had taken up small welding jobs in the garage. She’d taught herself how to read blueprints and sold enough jewelry to buy a MIG welder. She was just innocent-looking enough that no one questioned a little old lady buying flux-core wire in bulk. It had escalated from there. Welding and jewelry ended up having a lot in common. Dani was always impressed with her wirework and dedication to her craft. How Rose had rebuilt her life out of nothing, just as she was repairing the spaceship with art and welding and hope.

The space debris left a star-shaped scar in the metal and was close to bursting open. The inner wall had been hastily patched with some kind of spray-metal and fluid. It had held long enough for Rose and Dani to arrive, and that was all that mattered.

*One minute to hull breach.* Dani’s heart skipped a beat.

“How can I help?” he asked.

“Watch and learn, kiddo. Watch and learn.” He could tell she was smiling from the tone of her voice. The laser welder produced shimmering lines of metal that Rose twisted and shaped. She created metal where there was none before. She’d worked her entire life to see her husband leave her. She’d raised Dani all by herself in her own kind of lonely space. In less than a minute she could be hurtled off into nothingness. But Dani was there, and Charlie in his own way. She wasn’t alone.

It was a job for the lonely, for trembling hands made steady by experience, a job for a mother and a divorcee. Rose was *uniquely* qualified to fix this breach of the heart. The bright light of the laser hid her steadiness and skill in which she wielded it, but Dani saw. He knew they were in safe hands. Somehow, this maiden voyage was not their last. It was, perhaps, just the beginning of a different journey.





*Ron McFarland*

## Late Summer Afternoon on the Patio

Six, no, make it seven young quail  
tearing away at rhubarb leaves  
midafternoon, September warm,  
scratch a minute or two and then  
plop down as if what? Exhausted?  
We'd thought them more industrious,  
and after all, it's not really that hot.

It's like they've gotten tired of summer  
two or three weeks ahead of time,  
or bored, resigned to a feathery gray  
drowse. May our neighbor's tabby  
not happen into our yard about now,  
known bird-slayer, and catch them  
unaware. I'd intervene, of course,

hiss that always famished tomcat away,  
but oh, he's fast and here I am distracted,  
jotting all this down and nosing at a book.  
Next thing I know, they've tottered off,  
crossed the street, eight after all, it seems,  
leaving me mystified and a little tired,  
confused and ready now for summer to end.





Roger Dunsmore

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## One More for Lahey

What do you want for your birthday?

*Your prayers, you answer,  
after a pointed silence.  
Prayers from one who forgot how to pray  
many years ago. Painful relearning  
so as not to let go  
of that way of raising his voice.*

I know you are afraid of death.  
Me too.  
Suzuki Roshi  
dying of cancer  
and asked by another old teacher  
what were his thoughts  
now that it drew close to him  
said, simply,  
“I don’t want to die.”

And so now you have converted to Catholicism?  
The mass, the rosary  
all the paraphernalia & ritual  
through which we hope  
to keep our fear at bay.

*A Buddhist Catholic, however!*  
you insist.

I will not say  
“do not go gentle,”  
will not recommend you  
“rage, rage against the night.”

I love your unabashed fear,  
old Buddhist Catholic Friend.

For now, this note,  
(as close to prayer as I can come),  
will have to do.

*for Ed Lahey,  
decades-long, de facto Poet Laureate  
of Butte, Montana*







*Roger Dunsmore*

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## What the Archeologist Said

after excavating  
the stone entrance  
to a five thousand year old building

its rounded inner edge  
worn smooth by thousands  
of people rubbing against it,

*This is what we leave  
of ourselves:  
a smooth edge on an old stone.*

*Orkney Islands, Scotland*





## CONTRIBUTORS

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**Michelle Brumley** is an NIC and EWU alum and a fan of puns. Two boyfriends, one cat, no teeth. And, someday, a fantasy and science fiction novelist. Failed or otherwise. She wins whether you print this or not.

**Liam Cameron** is a clarinetist and poet from Spokane, Washington. As a symphonic musician, his emphasis is on tone poems like Richard Strauss's *Don Quixote*. As a poet, his emphasis is setting non-programmatic music to original poetry.

**Eric Demattos** is an Assistant Professor of Photography in the Communication and Fine Arts department at North Idaho College, where he expertly wrangles cameras, confused students, and the occasional tripod that just won't cooperate. He teaches a variety of photography courses because, well, someone's got to explain what all those buttons on your camera actually do. Currently, he's working on his magnum opus—a photography textbook titled *Learning Digital Photography*, designed to make even the most camera-shy folks feel like pros.

When he's not molding the next generation of shutterbugs, Eric is out in the wild, capturing stunning landscapes or whatever else catches his eye (including the occasional photo-bombing squirrel). With a passion for creating visual learning experiences, Eric sneaks peer-reviewed content and beautiful images into his teaching materials like a ninja of knowledge, ensuring his students never see it coming—but totally learn from it.

**Roger Dunsmore** taught Humanities, Wilderness Studies, and American Indian Literature at the University of Montana for fifty years. For one year he trained teachers at the largest Indian High School in the US, at Tuba City, Arizona, on the Navajo Nation. He was twice the exchange fellow between UM and Shanghai International Studies University, People's Republic of China, and was thrice short-listed to the governor for the position as Montana Poet Laureate. He was a founding member and mentor of the Bent Grass Poetry Troupe, and in 2012 was named a "Humanities Hero" by Humanities Montana. Roger has published five volumes of poetry, including *On the Chinese Wall: New and Selected Poems*, 2018, and one volume of nonfiction, *Earth's Mind: Essays in Native Literature*. His current project is affixing by staple-gun various "world poems" to utility poles and in local businesses here in Coeur d'Alene, for which he received the CDA Mayor's Award for Excellence in Art Education, 2024.

A former co-editor of Trestle Creek Review, **Farley Egan Green** rediscovered poetry a few years back after retiring from a communications career. She has also published in *Halfway Down the Stairs*, *Emerge Literary Journal*, *Boomerlit Magazine*, *Assisi Journal of Literature and the Arts*, and elsewhere. Farley says she writes for the pleasure of playing with words, images, and sounds, to tell stories and make sense of experiences she hopes readers will recognize. She lives in Spokane.





## CONTRIBUTORS

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**Ron McFarland** is emeritus professor of English at the University of Idaho. His most recent books are his critical study, *Gary Soto: A Career in Poetry and Prose* (2022), and his fifth full-length collection of poems, *A Variable Sense of Things* (2023).

**Erin Schulz** (cover artist) started studying art at an early age in Yakima, Washington, and continued studying with a focus on classical realism in oil (portrait, figure, and still life). Ironically, she was first exposed to classical realism and atelier style teaching at the Sichuan Fine Arts Institute in Chongqing China ('88-'89) where she had private instruction in portraiture and joined group model sessions with other students.

She then had the good fortune of connecting with Juliette Aristides, an instructor at the Gage Academy in Seattle. In addition to Juliette's teaching, she has since enjoyed workshops and courses at the Grand Central Academy in New York and Florence Academy of Art in Italy. She currently lives and paints on Vashon Island in Washington State.

**Jessica Struble**, who goes by Jessie, is twenty-three years old and lives in Spokane Valley with her grandmother. She works at an assisted living facility in the valley, and she is attending NIC as a full-time student this semester.

**David E. Thomas** grew up on Montana's Hi-Line, earned a degree in political science from the University of Montana, then dived into the cultural melee of the 60's and 70's with both feet. Worked as a gandy dancer on railroad maintenance gangs and a laborer on big construction projects like Libby Dam while pursuing an interest in literature and poetry fueled by Jack Kerouac and the Beats. He has published eight books of poetry, and the latest, *Railroad Gravel*, is now available from FootHills Publishing. He has appeared in several anthologies and many small magazines. He lives and works in Missoula, Montana.

**Georgia Tiffany's** new book, *Body Be Sound*, was released by Encircle Publications in November 2023. Her poems have appeared or are forthcoming in various publications including *Limberlost*, *Montreal Review*, *Calyx*, *Antigonish Review*, *South Carolina Review*, and the anthology, *Poets of the American West*. She has served as a visiting scholar for the Idaho libraries Let's Talk About It program for almost two decades. Her limited-edition chapbook, *Cut from the Score*, was published by *Night Owl Press*. A native of Spokane, Washington, she now lives in Moscow, Idaho.

**Paula Yup** resides in Spokane, Washington. She has poems published in *J Journal*, *Exit 13*, *Trajectory*, and *Shemom*. She has poems forthcoming in *Chiron Review*, *J Journal*, *Samsara*, and *Shemom*. Her book of poetry is entitled *Making a Clean Space in the Sky*.





# Trestle | CREEK | Review

welcomes submissions of any genre of literary or creative work for its 2026 issue. Submissions of poetry (3–5 poems per submission), prose (5,000 words maximum), or black-and-white artwork (any style or medium) may be sent via email. We consider work by any member of the North Idaho College community—including students, faculty, staff, and alumni—and by residents of the Pacific Northwest.

No previously published work can be considered, but simultaneous submissions are welcome. Please include a brief bio with your submission. More information and complete submission guidelines are available at our website, [www.nic.edu/tcr](http://www.nic.edu/tcr). Submission deadline is **January 31, 2026**, for May publication.

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