

otata 12

December, 2016

otata 12

December, 2016

Contents copyright © 2016 by the contributors.

<https://otatablog.wordpress.com>

Adam Rosenkranz

Sonam Chhoki

Debbi Antebi

Shloka Shankar

Clayton Beach

Guliz Mutlu

John Levy

Peter Yovu

Johnny Baranski

Tom Clausen

Hiromi Inoue

George Swede

Caroline Skanne

Christina Sng

Helen Buckingham

Nicholas Klacsanzky

Kim Dorman

Melissa Allen

Jack Galmitz

Karma Tenzing Wangchuk

C
o
n
t
r
i
b
u
t
o
r
s

tokonoma

Perception of an object costs
Precise the Object's loss —
Perception in itself a Gain
Replying to its Price —

The Object Absolute — is nought —
Perception sets it fair
And then upbraids a Perfectness
That situates so far —

Emily Dickinson

Adam Rosenkranz

Woodshed

I wanted to play,
But each toy

Was too busy
Transmitting moods,

Refusing description.
Oh no, another story

That won't fit,
That won't start.

Zeus was back in town
Trying to lay names

On people, but people just
Shook them off,

The little shadows
Falling from his wings

Coated with cat shit
And fear. Sitting in my grainy
nest,

I longed again to call him
Father, but knew

That he would make me
Spit out the moon

I kept in my mouth
In lieu of an explanation.

Sonam Chhoki

When the gods play . .

•
They are in a whorl of light. Each, riding a cloud-boat. The Khän-dro enrobed in ultramarine hues of the sky glides into the centre of the frame. Her golden büm-pa glows with the promise of eternity. Stained by grief and regret I hesitate at the edge of this gathering.

lighting butter lamps
in the blackened entrance
cave shrine

Notes:

Khän-dro: Dakini (Sanskrit) is a spiritually enlightened female being who represents wisdom.

bum-pa: ritual vase used in tantric rituals. The Khän-dro is frequently featured carrying this vessel in tantric iconography.

Incendiary memory

I can no longer borrow from our shared past to ease my present grief. What greater sorrow is there than to remember the joyful days? I live your absence as a wound.

waning moon
the cricket's song too fading
each night

tranquil ripeness of paddy terraces

broken chimney
crow sits watching
the sunset

gentians in meadow heavy with dew

moth in the jar
the glow
of a blank screen

Debbi Antebi

snow moon
blank spaces
in family album

urban dawn
I smell the peonies
on my mug

Shloka Shankar

backspacing my way into perfection

in the hook of an ampersand 99% of all thought

greeting my redacted self supermoon

rippling a summer dream koi pond

dislodging itself the frog in my throat

Clayton Beach

fallout once more
cremating the dead
wild boars

white whispers
in the deep desert sky
oracle bones

a mote
upon a mote upon
a mote

Guliz Mutlu

long road silence
the distance
between our lifelines

<http://micropoetry.com/author/guliz>

<https://www.amazon.com/Guliz-Mutlu/e/B005DJ8RX0>

John Levy

half-asleep over its
geometry homework
winter daydreams

winter stations a triangle
at the intersection of
chaos and first

placement test: avoiding the netherworld

John Levy's Wonderful *Oblivion*, *Tyrants*, *Crumbs* can be had in print and as an e-book.

Peter Yovu

old now but still here
in the labyrinth
of her fingerprint

older now I feel
my tongue against
my teeth when
ever I say “no”

winter's coming but
still in this bitten apple
some summer rain

the flag folded just so
he puts his hat back on
rain soaked hair

a new shovel's first
plunge: down to where
the earth stays cool

step into
the emptiness

the emptiness
builds

the floor stripped back
a sixteenth inch

a century

without black holes

owl
one or two sounds
will do

lightning
a red-eared turtle slides
off its black log

a breeze shines through
the tree the horse
leans against

first light
a cock is

uttered uttering

its cries

how far down do willows reach
the search called off

November

closer

to juice, sauce, pulp . . . how

rapidly apples tumble

Construction

a few ** stars in
the * emptiness

of the * ** sky

scraper's steel frame

Editor's note: Peter Yovu's *Sunrise* from Red Moon Press can be found [here](#). See also his essay *Do Something Different*.

Johnny Baranski

cold jail cell a jacket full of priors

trip and fall on the coastal trail the ocean roars

Tom Clausen

after lunch...
my plate where the sandwich
and chips were

late autumn-
my brake pedal
going soft

walk by the water...
the distance
from last night's dreams

cold rain-
our used tea bags
in the compost

high altitude wind...
prayer flags flap
for everyone

late autumn-
a great mansion comes out
of the woods

<https://tomclausen.com>

Hiromi Inoue

井上／真矢／ひろみ

蒼天を縁取るものに枯はちす

souten wo fuchidoru mono ni kare hachisu

on the pond
broken lotus stalks framing
the vast blue sky

George Swede

from frog to tadpole
the translation
of my poem

double helix undulating marriage vows

there looks different from here
wall lizard one eye on each

Caroline Skanne

picking
the bruised apple
just because

grid paper bending the mind box

is it true
what they say
aspen leaves

some days...
even the green tea burns my tongue

past regrets
coughing up
burnt leaves

Christina Sng

endless
the brief lives
of stardust

just when
the world is quiet
crickets

rag doll
part of me
still small

the things
I never told you
broken stone

Helen Buckingham

grief
night
snowbright

day moon an elephant grey wash

dusk
to dust

crow garlic a dripping blue stake

sand
sculpture
millennia in the shaping

treading water
now plankton
now kraken

dream diving
roof
to pool

pearl diver
no podium

hunger moon
another wave
another rock

Closed Season
windows laced
with frost

taintivy
nativity

Nicholas Klacsanzky

flopping ears of the pug fallen maple leaves

Kim Dorman

Flying

Flying. On paper (or in dreams). To remind ourselves we are spirits.

•

The way of silence. Window open to the wind.

•

Rain. Across a sheet of light.

Shadows.

•

[Tu Fu climbs Yo-yang Tower]

“Heaven-and-earth day-night float.”

in this, the Universe

“Day & night the world floats in its changing waters.”

Old & ill. A lone boat far from shore.

Malaria. Rheumatism. Partial paralysis.
Deaf. “... and lost all his teeth.”

•

Fading plane.

•

Overhead, valley.

•

(After dark.) The echo of light.

•

Hand on an ancient tree.

Old.

Not a man's or a woman's.

•

the red bark, rain from the leaves.

•

Cloven.

•

The path in the forest rises. Now it overlooks the sea.

•

Bird sentinels.

•

We are dreaming;
the tiny instruments wake & sing.

Melissa Allen

open the window to let in a botany test

a vee of geese
unforgiven

ignore everything but apples

unexpected
cold snap
snap

the afternoon rounded off to the nearest rose

nightfall
not much left
to name

at home with the night polish

the moon reads her diary by moonlight

that shadow
I admit—
the Milky Way

that's where they find me under the microscope

mayfly on the typewriter ribbon

a telescope aimed at my next life

static from a cold war radio

change the murder to another channel

after the menopause the stratopause

another hominid species in my bones

dusk back again for my liver

radio is playing I'm not

this is the church
this is the steeple
this is my body

in other words the doxology

the cross covering his name

Jack Galmitz

stalemate

turning
a corner

it jumps off the page

laid out flat

you're moving

inacrowd

Karma Tenzing Wangchuk

[From a Letter Nov. 7, 2016] *right now staying in a homeless shelter [nov. 1 - as late as april fools day]. writing from it/about it, and reading poems at city council meeting [every other week] during the 3 minutes people are allowed for public comment, starting tonight. poems all types. here's today's*

Talk, Talk, Talk

It's as if
every possible
quiet space
in the shelter
has to be filled
with noise,
the way people
talk, talk, talk
from the moment
doors open
at 4 P.M.
to Lights Out
at 10 and beyond,
and then again
starting
before dawn
with the first
mutterings of men
whose bodies
get up craving
that first smoke,
first drink,
first spike
of diversion
from the boredom
or misery
of another day.

Attention, Safeway Shoppers!

I'm writing
these words down
on a yellow pad
while nursing
a 12-oz.
Americano
at the Safeway
Starbuck's,
waiting
for my friend's
10 a.m.
lunch-break
and hoping
that patch of bright
blue sky
sticks around
long enough
for us to be able
to sit outside
and take a brief
vacation
from the world
of commerce
and its many
distractions
from what matters
most of all,
which is love.

November 8, 2016

Note to an Old Friend in Hospice
—For J. M.

Dear Friend,

I hear
you may be on
your way out . . .

Or will it be
on your way in--
who knows?

Soon you may
see for yourself;

And soon enough,
I'll follow.

Be brave.
Be gentle.
Be wise.