Otata 31
July, 2018
CONTENTS

Tokonoma — G.M. Hopkins  4

Alessandra Delle Fratte  5

Alegria Imperial  7

Marta Chocilowska  8

Tom Montag  9

Lucia Cardillo  12

Joseph Salvatore Aversano  14

Guliz Mutlu  18

Elmedin Kadric  21

Corrado Aiello  23

vincent tripì  24

Jeannie Martin  25

Peter Newton  27

John Levy  30

Gary Hotham  35

Robert Christian  40

Patrick Sweeney  41

Lisa Espenmiller  43

Christina Sng  44

Aparna Pathak  45

Angelica Costantini  46

Eufemia Griffo  48

Jack Galmitz  50

Timothy Murphy  51

Mark Young  52

Sonam Chhoki  56

Adrian Bouter  58

Gabriel Bates  60

Lucy Whitehead  62

Pere Risteski  63

Beverly Acuff Momoi  64

Angela Giordano  66

Corrado Aiello  69
Dearest Bridges, — My heart warmed towards that little Bertie Molesworth (I do not mean by this that he is so very small), so that if you were to bring him again I shd. be glad to see him. (But I am afraid he felt dull. He is shy I dare say.) However I expect he is no longer with you. It cannot be denied nevertheless that the presence of a third person is a restraint upon confidential talk.

Davis the gardener was discontented that I would not let you buy his peaches: he wd. have let you have them on reasonable terms, he said.

I have been studying the cuckoo’s song. I find it to vary much. In the first place cuckoos do not always sing (or the same cuckoo does not always sing) at the same pitch in the same key; there are, so to say, alto cuckoos and tenor cuckoos. In particular they sing lower in flying and the interval is then also least, it being an effort to them to strike the higher note, which is therefore more variable than the other. When they perch they sing wrong at first. I mean they correct their first try, raising the upper note. The interval varies as much as from less than a minor third to nearly as much as a common fourth and this last is the tune when the bird is in loud and good song.

About the book I will not write.

Your affectionate friend

Gerald M. Hopkins S.J.
Alessandra Delle Fratte

bidoni in strada —
la grandine estiv a improvvisa una ouverture

street bins —
sudden summer hail an overture

Roma al tramonto —
un vecchio tram sferraglia sui binari

Rome at sunset —
an old tram rattles on the tracks

finisce il giorno —
pesa un chicco di grano per la formica

end of the day —
for the ant is heavy the grain of wheat
fiore di cactus —
un solo bacio rubato alla notte

cactus flower —
only one kiss stolen at night

farfalla azzurra —
anche l’oceano non ha colore fra le mani

blue butterfly —
even the ocean has no color in the hands

fra i canneti sospiri di vento —
inizio d’estate

among the reeds wind sighs —
beginning of summer
if the sphere is a shell
why then am I…

pierced by the noiseless flapping of leaves playing life-like on grass
bruised from the swagger of kings and queens’ consorts unleashed by the bald oak
fractured in my skull as the clang of hungry stones joins volcanic tiles
basso-grinding on loose molars
the flutist rants against wet sticky winds and I’m ripped “my notes cough out brownish stuff”
mimicked-screams rent my breast ‘DECAYED’, crawled on foreheads of swine
said escapees from south of the border
a retinue of rainbow worms belly-creeping to an arc over the haze of fury leaves me
swooning as if color is also a blare of trumpets
over crystal orbs crushed by five-toed hooves my knees melt on promises
spilled into sand misshapen one-eyed masks
death-stilled as the theater fills—in legions muted mutated humans
un-climb off trembling vines
sparrows/doves/butterflies plucked off sleep tune in to a sextet
a soundless whimper that jags me heaving
first lines: a chorus of hands disentangles my joints
“un-clamp our ankles, un-cage our fledglings, give back our souls”
who is for whom? I agonize with ageing cedars burdened by a mummy-wrapped empire
entangled in echoes (its own)
what now? I fold and unfold elegies in my breast tucking in threadbare seams under my ribs
…squat in the stillness ballooning with darkness long deaf
to kings and queens’ consorts trading un-proofed lies
speared wakened and asked: what do you see?
the sun growing big with the stench of unwashed mouths
enfeebled and yet through mist…I tear up
as the little boy tips his baseball cap at a Black-eyed Susan
shadowed by shaggy clouds I skim round a dandelion’s
soundless pulsating heart
…balancing young night on a wobbly head
the weightlessness of my shell

Alegria Imperial
hospital café —
the oatmeal cookie
like at mom’s

Friday evening . . .
the pub door swings
in front of a boy

window-shopping
the red high heels
straighten me up
A long silence it is, between the going and the coming home.

~

~ 9 ~
Not even morning knows what morning knows.

Sometimes wisdom is in the not-knowing.

He is who he wants to be who travels this road alone.
Oh, the lies
one must tell
to tell the truth.

~

Great blue heron
dragging wet sky.
The world weighs
heavy with waiting.

~

The old man
lifts his eyes.
The loveliness
does not blink.
It stays with
him all day.
sorridi
ed io ti parlo ancora …
fotografie

you smile
and I still speak to you...
photos

vecchia dimora …
il bouganville nasconde
antiche ferite

old house …
the bougainvillea hides
ancient wounds
lo stesso soffio
una sboccia una muore …
rose

in the same puff
one blooms and the other dies …
roses

l'ultima estate …
nella mano stretta a pugno
una conchiglia

the last summer...
in her fist
a small seashell
so how would you know
if you are
entertaining an angel if
she herself
doesn't know
her own wings being
much too transparent
& delicate enough
to beat in
the furthest
thing from a gale if
what she is rather
impressed by
is the frame
of some insect on the
tip of her finger
at the edge of the sky;
but that’s how
you know
& that’s
how you can
tell as she
walks off w/o
it occurring
to her
to fly

written in response to a photograph by Tamara Tracz
the shadows of the neighborhood
kids play on the local market wall

and not unlike the shadow puppets
Karagoz & Hajivat (Karagoz "The
Black Eyed" & Ivaz "The Pilgrim");
as we need them, both of them

the shadow & its skin

as the shadow of each kid can
double her size, & double

his friends & their
play area
BOTTLED IN

ask the starfish 
what it says and

five arms point
in all directions

what is meant
regardless of

if read the
open

sea
PHOKAEA

where still some
old plaster

the paint peeled
to all of the colors

this house has
ever been
in memoriam Hamide Gultepe (1914-1999)

I was working on the proof of one of my poems
all the morning, and took out a comma.
In the afternoon I put it back again.

—Oscar Wilde

i’m asleep, the stars behind the sun

once alone, i like mondays and cherry red

saying nothing, all left behind louder than words

back to where i started, until i become a memory

a simple life, entering my mind nothing to miss

friends, easy to remember or forget

friends, i easy listen each laugh

my silence, the forgotten and the unsaid

long road silence, the distance between our lifelines

undecided journey, the emptiness of where and how

i’m homesick, a child lost, found and stolen

everything happens to me, my feelings in the closet i ask myself why
star-crossed night, i complain under the wish tree

earth scent, a dream i tell in silence

i ask grandma: what is the speed of life? — a toll booth on highway
grandma’s smile, a weight of heaven and earth
grandma’s scent, the wind blows barely, barely
grandma’s birthday, i hide one more candle for the next year
a tulip vase gift, children visit grandma, tall and thin
spring cleaning, grandma preparing herself to return home
the chestnut tree, grandma back home in the rain
grandma’s window, all the storms and rainbows
grandma’s promise, a bowl of cherries when tomorrow comes
long distance call, i only remember grandma’s goodbye
not a crowded family, a rose from one name to another
the sick rose, early in the morning how old is your heart
dear ancestors, everywhere now eden

behind the rose another rose, i watch the dawning
my small window, one begonia to another
hands in my pockets, under a blue sky, the lady with sweet peas
tea picking, the taste of the sunset ripens in my mouth
peplos dusk, let’s sail with dolphins the wine dark sea
amid the dolphin messages, being the universe solved, unsolved
starry night, listening wind with a bedouin
a handful of stars, clouds rolling but not for me
summer rain, i weep for me right on time
a bee, my overjoyed summertime
singing low, not me, a cicada
acorns and stars, i cannot leave the river stones
hazy moon, on my way home the smell of rice tea
the morning haze, a smell of rice tea from a memory
green or red, which way do i fall on this autumn day
my ink black umbrella at the bookstore, i’m dancing with the sun
day of the dead, my shadow dancing back from a grave
silk snow, my wet nurse getting older
storm window, each drop on my reflection
mellifluent moon, my clock is slow under snow
melting snow, the things i cannot
crocus or not, my young boyhood stands in the melting snow
japanese garden, i wonder who left behind the tree house
Elmedin Kadric

plain
moan
dawn
stone

a little sage
my big nose

thinking
about
never
using
a dot
waking
the dot

allot
if not
a dot

knew
snow
maestro silenzioso —
il modo in cui il pesce
muore

silent master —
the way the fish
dies
unknown flower
unknown butterfly
the nectar

of course
I pop one for
the Maker of the jewel weeds
near-sighted
the things of this world
in close up

dep inside
the peony -
peony smell

from broken bottle
to blue orb
ocean
2 windows
a thousand petals
summer

rising
from the forest floor
roots
Peter Newton

pine

needle

rain

first layer of summer
our words under
a pine needle rain

locking arms
a slow walk through
forest pines
pine needles
drop sideways
parallel universe

the needlework
of pines
frame a red house

after a swim
shedding pines
needle the skin

longleaf loblolly pinyon
remembering the names
of my cousins

~ 28 ~
resting in my open palm
eventually
a pine needle

her little fistful
means peace
pine needle bouquet

speaking my language
pine needles
one to the next
GIORGIO MORANDI

The man with secrets
in bottles
and vases
on tables
in his room where
he’s
alone
with them
and
shifts
them

after he
examines
where they are.
How they are.
Not who

he is
and is
his eyes
on and with
their form

as they form
out of him
somewhere
we see.
in the dream another sort of inning
Floaters

The eye doctor tells the patient they're floaters, not ghosts. The eye doctor tells the patient that he's not the first to think his floaters are ghosts. The eye doctor can tell the patient wants to believe in his ghosts and the eye doctor doesn't blame him. He'd like to believe in life after death himself, even if we only come back as grey specks and spots and blurs and motions across someone else's life, someone else's time, but not erased, not erased. I've never told anyone, the patient confides, but I know who some of them are. Who am I, the eye doctor says, to say you're wrong. You're not laughing at me? No, I'm not. And believe me, if I told you some of my thoughts... The eye doctor pauses, not ready to confess any more than that. Same here, the patient says, the floaters are only the beginning.
"Death frequents the poems ..."

John Wilson writes, in an Introduction to a book of essays on Robert Creeley, of Creeley's later poems. The entire sentence reads

"Death frequents the poems, but the intense loneliness of the earlier poetry has subsided." Of course those are my line breaks. The use of *frequents* as a verb isn't unusual, but somehow gets to me. Wilson continues and quotes part of a poem by Creeley about his late mother, "Mother's Voice." The entire poem has that Creeley listening to thought that's felt and moves. He begins by saying it has only been a few years since she died and he can hear her say "I won't want any more of that." I won't paraphrase the poem. Creeley
has been dead
more than a few years now (I'm writing
in June 2018 so more than 13). I saw him
twice, once in Canada giving a reading and then
30 years later in Tucson giving another. Now
he frequents death, if it makes any sense
to use that verb in the present
tense for someone who died
even minutes ago. I bought
every book of his and
double copies of several, thinking
I’d use one to mess up with notes
and leave its double pristine. I always wanted
more of what he offers, still do. Where
he frequents, in his poems, doesn’t
subside. At 66 now I recall being
about 21 in a small house in Seattle that
someone turned into a bookstore with
no one else besides the person at the
front. Alone in a room I found
a copy of *For Love*, a book I already
owned, and opened it again, facing the
corner, and while I can’t remember
the specific poems I chose to enter I see its
cover, still
hold it open.
wild morning glory vines
the neighbor’s fence
as high

gary to grave
no boundaries for
the dandelions

white papers
the child draws
melting snowflakes
childhood snow globe
each shake
a fresh layer

weakening the fog's depth
mourning doves call
back & forth

comfortable shoes
stone steps breaking
their silence

one street corner to the next

the rain heavier
joining the colors of sunrise
disconnected
clouds

wide sky
fences keeping the land
close to home

above the meadow
the hawk using air
to hunt

city limits
the wind losing
touch
night
silence worth
hearing

a series
of caws
sunrise

spreading thru the night
--
time between stars others named
sunrise
light imagines
the fog

Tintern Abbey
shadows of ruined walls
to walk thru
Robert Christian

Yes Spring
  to us then
The next one
gone

Poems a line
  (lived)
as written
it seems soon

Just then
  and now
to have been
friends known
stirring again

in the month
  of re-call
wanting
and forgetting
it all
Patrick Sweeney

Our May Queen
doesn't know the name
of the flower in her hair

My Viking daughter
reminds me drink
to the honored dead

those dark years
in my old dictionary
blind girl reading Braille
rainy Candlenut leaves
speak in the name
of the Lord

running with his rifle
the soft haired son
of the goatherd

eels in a tank
each one with two
green ears

Three sheets to the wind
down the narrow alley
of Cans and Brahms
miles from the burning
white ash
on her black t-shirt

moving day
an upended tree
roots in the air
chalkboard sky
my little girl charts
the constellations
counting stars ...
the depth of my son's
open mouth

exam results —
he swears
god doesn't exist

zebra crossing —
a girl wrapped
in her long hair
guardando il fiume —
anche i corvi smettono
di bisticciare

Watching at the river —
even the crows stop to bicker

vento d’aprile —
scopro per caso com’è
la tua voce

april wind —
I discover by chance
the sound of your voice
mondo intatto-
il pallore lunare
nella rugiada

intact world-
the moonlight
in the dewdrops

candida neve
anche tu invecchi quando
tocchi la terra

pure white snow
also you get older
once you touch the ground
Eufemia Griffo

*bambini rifugiati*  
*lo stesso mare*  
*di ieri*

refugee children  
the same sea  
as yesterday

*bassa marea*  
*uno sciame di Perseidi*  
*sopra le onde*

ebb tide  
a swarms of Perseids  
above the waves
antico tempio
la nebbia eterna protegge
le ceneri degli antenati

ancient temple
eternal mist protects
the ancestors’ ashes

nebbia primaverile
il grido ovattato
di un gabbiano

spring fog
the muffled cry
of a seagull
one morning
men in reflective vests
stood armed with chainsaws

one morning
men with chainsaws
cut down the landscape

The trees cut down
a mouse runs frantically
around the parking lot

The trees didn't scream
when the chainsaws
separated them from their leaves

reflective vests
lit up in the sunset
smoke cigarettes

At sunset
stumps and cigarette butts
and sawdust

---

Jack Galmitz
Timothy Murphy

family values
wildhorsefire
fears

night spider
it all makes sense
astrologically

spoken bone charcoal words unheard moon

watching recorded dreams until the end of the series broken star
Countdown

6. Messages were left. On the surface simple cyphers. A different meaning underneath.

5. Every body dances, but nobody dances with the man.

4. Distance is what you make of it. Closeness someone else decides.
SNAPSHOT OF ANOTHER TOWN

Talking about Zukofsky / Wilson Pickett singing Mustang Sally in the back-ground / eating Japanese food for lunch & dinner / still toast in the morning.

ABOLISH FOOLS.

Jukka pauses in a solid state to tell it like it is. No phasing, deliberate phrasing. Ethical. Optical.
COMPLICATED TRANSACTIONS INVOLVING MIDDLEMEN

How many schools have their own Crash Test facility with a deep voice, & big eyes & mouth? The potential is horrendous, but wearing a sexy Red Riding Hood costume on the school fun run has nothing to do with the education of the students.

A MIXTURE OF STATES

Schrödinger’s dog perceived objects in their right forms but could not comprehend any extortion attempt if multi-disciplinary construction projects were used in the commission of the crime & may or may not have come from stolen customer data.
A QUALIFIED VALIDITY

The model theory is sound. Manufacturer warranties remain in place so long as the ever-growing elderly population keeps up with the increased provision & advances in medical technology.

Truth is not a datum.

DAGONFLY

tranquility — a small space that hovers momentarily just above the alligator pool

[ed. note: Dagonfly is not a misprint. Dagon = Philistine god of war and story by H.P. Lovecraft.]
Sonam Chhoki

What does the sacred past hold?

Crossing the rickety bamboo bridge we climb to the quake-destroyed valley.

*toppled dzong*
*eyes flecked with curiosity*
*a raven watches*

Hayagriva, the horse-headed guardian still stands in the ruins.

*ragged clouds*
*patterns of light and shadow*
*on the threshold*

The wooden prayer wheels are embowered in bracken and wild rose.

*as if in echo*
*of buried drums . . .*
*the sound of woodpeckers*

Broken prayer flag poles litter the courtyard.

*in stony solitude*
*wild poppies*
*amongst the flagstones*
night border patrol
the summer moon hurrying
through mist

pouring its song
over the hub of traffic
the yellow-eyed babbler

still in its wooden box
the Panama hat
you never wore

white frills of orchids glow late summer wood
words & music
deep in the woods
an owl decomposes

family meadow the ignorant black lamb

smooth lake
swans cross the oak’s
old shadow
bugs in the streetlight free summer jazz

untitled skulls the war inside

morning
wet horsebacks
carry the opal sky

fear not to weep
ferns at daybreak

offspring
the pink marker
left in the yard
inhaling
exhaling
hazy moon

dead poem
will you take me
with you?
quarter moon tonight I buy another bag

something isn't right
inside me
lengthening shadows
thistledown
on the wind...
when we were young

decath waits under my feet infinite space
a crow of a crow flew over a cloud
Beverly Acuff Momoi

spring rain glittering mudsnails

first rule in storytelling old fashioned bleeding heart

bespoke before readymade pincushion flower

focusing on the now perfect fig ripening
self portrait in blue not who I expected

autumn near buddleias and butterflies

no one left the grave overgrown with whispering bells

sometimes the stars make the case for moonlight

afterglow how long it remains operative
a piedi nudi
inseguendo farfalle —
spenti i cellulari

barefoot
chasing butterflies —
our phones off

grigi palazzi —
l’arcobaleno chiuso
dentro una pozzanghera

gray buildings —
the puddle encloses
a rainbow
nebbia sottile —
Sotto un lampione un cane
Abbaia alle ombre

thin fog —
under the lamp a dog
barks at shadows

nello specchietto
Una stella cadente —
Auto allo stop

in the mirror
a shooting star
a stopped car
si spegne il giorno —
dentro gli occhi di un vecchio
c’è una fiammella

the day goes out —
a little flame
in the old man’s eyes

tra fiore e fiore
il colore del vento —
un’alba chiara

between flower and flower
the color of the wind —
clear dawn

sopra la pelle
della luce i ricami —
un cappello di paglia

embroideries
on the skin of light —
a straw hat
a A. C. (Fenice)

notte di Litha...
sboccia da una manina
un giglio arancio

to A. C. (Phoenix)

midsummer night…
an orange lily blossomed
in a tiny hand