

otata 38

(February, 2019)



otata 38

February, 2019

otata 38

(February, 2019)

Copyright ©2019 by the contributors.
Cover photo copyright © 2019 Amy Sweeney.

John Martone, editor and publisher.

<https://otatablog.wordpress.com>

otatahaiku@gmail.com

CONTENTS

TOKONOMA — Carlo Rovelli

Gerry Loose 5	Lucia Cardillo 55
vincent tripi 9	Anna Maria Domburg-Sancristoforo 57
Joseph Salvatore Aversano 11	Angiola Inglese 59
Vincenzo Adamo 12	Rosa Maria Di Salvatore 61
Sonam Chhoki 14	Giuliana Ravaglia 62
Kim Dorman 17	Louise Hopewell 69
Mark Young 22	Goran Gatalica 70
Sheila Murphy 26	Eufemia Griffio 71
Patrick Sweeney 30	Clayton Beach 75
John Levy 33	Mark Levy 79
Maria Concetta Conti 37	Margherita Petriccione 80
Stefani d'Andrea 39	Ashish Narain 84
Alessandra Delle Fratte 40	Kristen Lindquist 85
Lucy Whitehead 41	Hansha Teki 87
Jack Galmitz 44	Angela Giordano 89
Alegria Imperial 45	Fred Jeremy Seligson 91
elmedin kadric 47	Peter Newton 98
Tim Murphy 51	Jeannie Martin 101
Andy McLellan 53	

from otata's bookshelf

Jeannie Martin, From Stone to Air — Ethiopia

Guliz Mutlu, Valentine

TOKONOMA

... [I]t is hard for us to think of a world without time, and of time emerging in an approximate manner. We are too used to thinking of reality as existing in time. We are beings who live in time: we dwell in time, and are nourished by it. We are an effect of this temporality, produced by average values of microscopic variables. But the limitations of our intuitions should not mislead us. Understanding the world better often entails going after intuition. If this were not the case, Understanding would be easy.

Time is an effect of our overlooking the physical microstates of things. Time is information we don't have.

Time is our ignorance.

— Carlo Rovelli
(Allen Lane, Trans.)

Gerry Loose

WINTER DAYS

or:
what happens
when Morven is not here

1
today brought in
logs

spoke gently
to my daughter

listened. listen

2
kindling split
the sun never
rose

3

frugal
In the morning

drunk
by nightfall

4

murmured dusk
with delight

and the
starlings

5

this day

ladder

birch log

apples

6

some mornings
this morning

the same woods
the same

woods
smile

7

walked to the bath
house
carrying a basket
of logs
two clean towels & a bottle
of rum

8

this morning
poured tea

enough
for hope

9

went from country
side to town funeral

not one mourner
noticed my own

thinning grey hair
uncombed beard

black suit that
no longer fits

how my black
shoes hurt my feet

vincent tripi

OF COURSE

life after death?
my old eyeglasses
just within reach

lost among the mushrooms
i gathered, the mushroom
i gathered while lost

of course
the beaver knows the way!
pond at sunset

why not
the various names of God
calling the cows

Joseph Salvatore Aversano

DARK MATTER

once the eyes adjust

one of the first things
we'll ask

is why do we call it
“dark”?

after an image by Carole Kim

night's
tap-

root
streak

of light-
ning

Vincenzo Adamo

*la vicina
persa nel bosco. . .
parla con i fiori*

lost in the woods
my neighbor
talks to the flowers

*migrazione. . .
la mia vecchia casa
è senza tetto*

migration —
my old house
roofless

*stelle cadenti ...
le lucciole scendono
dal gelsomino*

falling stars —
fireflies descend
from the jasmine

*tela del ragno. . .
la rugiada riscalda
la zuppa fredda*

spiderweb —
dew reheats
the cold soup

*naufragio
la bambola ritorna
con il sorriso*

shipwreck
a doll returns
with a smile

Sonam Chhoki

Crossing the invisible Bridge

In the fuzz of anaesthetics the mind acquires a peculiar clarity that belies the helplessness of being tied to tubes on a clinic bed. It is as if freed from all care for the body I can now meet the secret demons who were never buried:

To my mother: I consecrated your death with the longings of a child. You were only 52. I should have mourned your slipping through the crevice of time and the years you could have had.

To my father: My refusal of your offer to fetch me home when the university closed sine die was not a rejection of your concern. It was a twenty-year-old's proud and foolish assertion of will.

To my daughter: How I ached to hold you the nights you slept with my coat while I was away for weeks at a time.

To the one I owe love: Words are inadequate. I thank the guardians of the cardinal points that you braved the rains and landslide that summer to meet me for the first time.

fields half-sown glow fading light

fog-bound shrine
the sound of dung-kar
comes and goes

THUS SPAKE THE GURU AND THE MOTHER

The young mother leaves home as the sun streaks the horizon. With an offering of walnuts and dried persimmons she approaches the Guru's retreat. Her breath mists in the warmth of butter lamps. He is seated on a yak wool rug. His eyes are gentle and beckoning. She prostrates before him stifling a sob.

'What is it ?' The old Guru asks.

'I dreamed again of my little one in Shin-je's grasp. He dances in obscene joy!' The mother cries.

The Guru shakes his head and says, 'Such grief will shackle your dead child to the travails of the bar-do.'

'I light butter lamps night and day and yet I fear he languishes in the darkness of Shin-je's realm.' She breaks into tears.

The Guru closes his eyes as if drawn to an inner light.

'I beseech you for a mantra, for a rite to destroy Shin-je and free my child, ' she says her voice fraying with desperation.

'This desire for revenge is your befuddled mind,' the Guru cautions.

The mother covers her face with her hands and laments. What does a celibate know of the bittersweet throes of birth? Of this urge to clasp a new born to the breast?

'The thread of bitterness and rage you cling to, will tie you to bad karma in another life,' the Guru says.

'I am more afraid of an empty womb,' the mother weeps.

chir pine shadows
the silence broken
by a hornbill's cry

blown rifts of clouds
shining bleakly
serration of peaks

JOURNEY HOME

how still the river
now that the rains have ended -
a stretch of light
along the old pilgrim route

aglow in sunset blaze
the Dorji Dro-lö stupa
thumbing prayer beads and cell phones
neighbours circumambulate

cave shrine
half hidden in falling leaves
a forest thrush spills its song
how artless prayers seem

old cypress
at the entrance to the village
with you I leave
the fatigue of all journeys

Kim Dorman

FROM SUMMER HOURS

dragonfly
 darts
hard
red

 shell

vitreous
wings
 hovering

green
 lawn

'neath
flowering crepe

industrial
soil

 bakes

cruel
heat

& shit yard grave

grow
flowering weeds

taller
than boys

passion & damned

for
nothin'

corralled

or fenced out

kush-limp

cast-off

over a dozen

in sun

or smatter of shade

scarred tree

under-spread

w/ blankets

newspapers

cardboard boxes

laid flat

backpacks plastic

shopping bags

bottles layers

to bury hide

& when the

time comes

city fathers

call out

the cops

“You start,
& it becomes your
life, man”

pale gibbous
in evening sky

red wasp
on screen

heat index
climbs

bees
pollinate

palm
flowers

old man
pushes

a grocery
cart

down the
middle

of the
street

he got no
home

three voices
fill my day —

the white-
winged dove
the grackle

& the jay

Mark Young

SYNCHRONICITY.....OF SORTS

Yesterday I watched a lizard pounce & swallow a beetle that was as large as the lizard's head. At the precise moment of engulfment, a frond came off one of the palm trees in the garden & fell ten meters, crashing into the pool—frond end—& across the pool fence—the reasonably solid trunk end. Water & reverberations everywhere. I do not know whether to buy a lottery ticket or to build a bomb shelter.

[UNTITLED] i

I find the past
too forbidding

so write about
the present,

then edit it at
some later time.

MEANWHILE, IN MONTREAL

Sometimes
he would
offer up
carcinogens

to the voodoo
gods. Burnt
toast was
their favorite.

LINES WRIT WHILST LISTENING TO THE HOLLIES

Since paddles & pacemakers
hadn't been invented yet

he carried a Leyden Jar a-
round with him just in case

he needed a charge to restart
his heart. He nicknamed the

jar Obama. It was heavy, but
at least his heart was light.

[UNTITLED] ii

The walls close in
on a self-
imposed isolation.

I raise my arms
above my head.

Ambiguous response.

More room to move &
subsequent lasting
time?

Act of
surrender, maybe?

the underground economy

The contractor
insisted on cash

so I gave him

I fell into a
blazing ring of fire.

HALF A FICCIÓN IS BETTER THAN NO FICCIÓN AT ALL

Having bent time,
gone into the future
& noted how they
fell, Albert Einstein

won lots of money
playing the cards as
he foresaw them. Ob-
servers reported he

was hoppier than a
pig in mud. "It's all
relative," he said. "At
least, that's the theory."

RYONGCHÖN — FOR THE XENOPHOBIC AMNESIACS

So large an explosion
that only from space

can it be seen entire.
So long a policy of

isolation that it takes
a day to recall there

is a world outside
& call on it for help.

Sheila Murphy

WATCHING SPORTS

I practice caring
about crossing
the plane
of the quotidian
in shelf life blue

Your penmanship
sexier than
your I.Q.

APPLE CHARLOTTE

I call after
A quarter
Century

Just
To ask
How she is

MASCULINE GRAPH

Take this
Instant
Away
Repeatedly
and never
Get it back

For the moment
Youth,
a different species

BONE BROTH

Saw it coming
Quiet rainbow
darkness

And for eternity
Your sleep
Is now
My sleep
The windshield wipers
Splash back
Rain and other
Winter

I watch you
Sleeping in a chair
The home sounds half alive
This early winter,
All mockingbirds gone still
And heat within the room
Soft on the skin.

You wake and ask a question
I can't answer. I try anyway.
You quiz me, and I know
How little I know
Despite a routine reflex
Lacking logic.

I learn to leave the room
Repeatedly, to keep myself
From being myself,
a source of sadness
in erosion.

And I dream the sky
I try to paint from memory and desire,
My hand brushing intuition
Quietly
I wish for energy
To retrieve what I have been.

Patrick Sweeney

deep in prayer
il poverello hasn't noticed
he's wearing a mitre of snow

don't try to tell
the windblown leaves
they're not butterflies

hospital elevator
'please stand clear
of the closing door'

Iga-Ueno...
am I the only one who wants
to search for Basho's tooth

Shamefully admiring
Ahab's megalomania...
I signed on again today

blue sleet novenas at dusk
a splinter of the True Cross
on eBay

playground fire god
the redheaded boy swallows
a snowflake

flowers in the vase
I'm back at O'Leary's...
not kissing my father goodbye

Kirk-Cohansey aquifer...
the mineral bone density
of bumped-off gangsters

ailing in bed
the shifting wallpaper faces
of everyone I ever knew

John Levy

IN THE OLD DAYS

*W*hen I was a child I loved the idea of having a walkie talkie like people (usually men) had in TV shows. They were big and they worked and the people who had them did things that were secret and important. When I was a child I never thought of a poem as a walkie talkie. If I could go back and tell my child self that a poem is sort of like a walkie talkie, but one in which you say something and often it seems like it goes out to no one, but you like talking into it anyhow, would it confuse a boy who talked to himself enough anyway without needing, yet, the idea of poetry?

DEAR MIND,

You are dear. Without you I'm nothing.
Often with you I'm almost nothing

but you tell me that I can't really
conceive of nothing, so you instruct me

to use "almost" up there. When I first learned
your name, Mind, I was a child.

Your name was not one of those words
that interested me. It seemed like other words

for things, like car, sidewalk, leaf.
Except unlike those things I couldn't see you

or ride inside you (it never occurred to me
I could) or walk on top of you or watch you

turn colors and fall. In many ways both of us
miss those days, days that if there was no school

were sometimes fabulously unending.
The nights were rarely as good, school or not, since

you made me so afraid of the dark. Yes, I'm
blaming you. And whatever parts of me

are not you
also deserve blame. So here we are, both

67, truly approaching the dark. You suggest I write
"truly and falsely approaching the dark"

and there, have I satisfied you?

I HAVEN'T

I've spent little time previously,
none, in fact, any time, imagining
the last 10 minutes of when
my late mother gave birth to me.

At the age of almost four I was
on my mother and father's
bed in their bedroom watching
a Walt Disney cartoon with Jiminy Cricket

when the black phone rang.
I remember, perhaps incorrectly, my father
answering it and talking. Then he handed
me the phone and my mother told me

I had a little brother. Would my father
have been home with me and my older
brother? Maybe. I held the black phone, heard
her voice and kept my eyes on Jiminy Cricket.

At that moment I loved Jiminy Cricket more
than the unknown new brother, though
that thought didn't enter my mind.
I can still see Jiminy Cricket on the screen

and the space between the bed and the
TV. It was June 1955 and so the show must've been
black-and-white, but my memory
plays it in color, with Jiminy green.

Almost all phones were black back then
so that's probably accurate. And the size
of the receiver, especially to a boy my
age, and its weight, I sense it still.

OUR COMMON HUMANITY

Yeah, sure, it's common.

Sort of decorous, when we're
all dressed up.

Full of narratives, even (or
especially) in dreams.

Our stories we censor.

Our best non-
ideas for long

moments we orgasm.

Inventions include the screen
door, the lawn

mower, the word savage
and the word boredom

plus kingdom
minus death.

Equations, though other
creatures

have been proven
to do math. Crows,

for instance, monkeys. In the future
maybe man will discover

an amoeba's algebra.
Though we're killing

the future, mostly
for money. Preach

away, butterflies.

Maria Concetta Conti

*solstizio d'inverno
così sospesa
la mia vita*

winter solstice
my life
so suspended

*luna fredda
anche la notte più lunga
è già finita*

cold moon
even the coldest night
is already over

*terremoto
il vento spazza via
le stelle*

earthquake
the wind weeps
the stars away

*la penna di papà
tra le mie dita
profumo di vaniglia*

my father's pen
in my fingers
scent of vanilla

*neve
ogni fiocco
mi ricorda di te*

snow
every flake
reminds me of you

Stefano d'Andrea

nel fracasso dell'aspirapolvere volano i petali del pruno

in the vacuum cleaner noise the blackthorn petals fly

verde che schizza alla prima carezza le raganelle

bolting green at the first caress the tree frogs

nel cielo fumoso sfrecciano gazze in white-tie

in the smoky sky magpies whizzing in white-tie

Alessandra Delle Fratte

cold winter wind —
a newspaper whirls on the sidewalk

summer party
croaking from the pond
and splashes of water

*a carp rests under
a veil of frost*

solitude
looking for the moon
I observe the sky

*we're under the cherry
and a dawn dyed amber*

Lucy Whitehead

the slow approach
of Andromeda
a sunflower opens

a thin mirror
starred with dust
winter sky

bedridden dream
the search for sky
in a snow globe

into the silence of night invisible petals

two cogs interlacing our darkness

water droplet the sun at my fingertips

threading the thunderstorm spider lace

the click
of crystal prayer beads
winter rain

THE HAUNTING

before
this universe another
ripples on a pond

after
this universe another
echoes in an empty hall

Jack Galmitz

She was at the end
of the dock
her hand in the water
feeling for the weight
of the current
and the sun
found her
in her pink trunks
a one piece getup
and the wind played
with her skin and she felt
like love and drunk
and she was alone
had traveled by herself
to discover the land
and people of her birth
the upstate she'd remember
when she returned
to the outskirts
of the city
where she had grown up.
And her mind had been made up.
She would push the world
forward another notch.

Alegria Imperial

LIFE STORY

into winter mist the hem of my sleeves first my wrinkled heart last
I unslung my weight from a marble angel's arm under slate rain
in the thaw the barn dove and me eased out of mourning
on a late winter drizzle the empty stroller I want to understand
I turn into a swarm of mayflies breaking into clouds I hear them whisper
often about endless wars my hydrangeas
with mouth open as much as my womb can hold burst of mountain rain
frost on the eaves the doll maker begs me for embers for eyes
barring sunset flare my widowhood a hillock of leaves seeping
into my soles the dankness of archived evenings
on quiet fears parched roses and I bent by virgin snow
sopped in herbed lace a whiff of Nan's passions from the shallow pond
a young moon drifting away

THE WAIF

eyes fixed
on a strange world the open sea
clouds of larvae
and the sound of sand grains
like a herd of impending cattle

in the receding tide
any burrow would be poor
sanctuary

until the harsh grate
of a sharp awakening
the reassuring twilight
in the sphere

[Author's Note: a found poem, Source & Method: words and phrases randomly picked up and woven into a poem from Book 1 Edge of the Sea, 2 Spring Flight of Under the Sea by Rachel Carson, A Signet Science Library, The New American Library © by Rachel L. Carson, 1955]

elmedin kadric

SYNONYM

nom de plume

my kind of life:

I pinch myself

(t)his (c)raft

back
ward

draw
back

rose
from

high
dust

stamp collecting
late autumn wind

TO

give
up

down
fall

withdrawn
by ourselves
on our own

Dan the lion

a clear blue sky
yesterday's rain

of it
time

of it

to one
it else

utter
ness

((((it))))

um
mu

Tim Murphy

by the statue
a woman feeds the birds
winter bustle

autumn dream
on the central plain
sea sounds

marzipan—
how many years
since I tasted it?

acrylic moon
after the four seasons
the rainy season

not carrying
anyone else's gold
hermetic moon

Andy McLellan

sleepless night
the wind in the trees
fills with gods

snow
 on tarmac
a single magpie

creation myth
I rewrite
another poem

old branches
hold up the sky
January moon

spilling sunlight
into the river
yellow flag iris

Lucia Cardillo

*passi ...
un gatto strizza gli occhi
nel buio*

steps ...
a cat winks
into the dark

*primo caffè ...
sui rami spogli fiorisce l'alba*

first coffee ...
dawn blossoms on the bare branches

*gelido inverno ...
un lavoro a maglia lasciato a metà*

frosty winter ...
a knitting left half-done

sole invernale da una finestra all'altra convalescenza

winter sun from one window to another convalescence

*mani ghiacciate ...
compro per te i primi tulipani*

icy hands ...
I buy the first tulips for you

Anna Maria Domburg-Sancristoforo

*fiore di loto
finanche la neve
ha un profumo*

lotus flower
even the snow
has a scent

*neve gelata –
tutto quel silenzio
nelle parole*

frosted snow
all that silence
in his words

*succo d'arancia –
un'improvvisa voglia
di cieli tersi*

orange juice –
a sudden desire
for clear skies

Angiola Inglese

*farfalla
sulla sabbia bagnata
colore del vento*

butterfly
on the wet sand
the color of wind

*sole sul mare –
l'odore freddo
del mattino*

sun on the sea —
the cold smell
of the morning

*rumore
dei fari —
bastone bianco*

noise
of the headlights —
white stick

Rosa Maria Di Salvatore

*bianco su bianco —
la neve sui bucaneve*

white on white —
snow on the snowdrops

*cielo d'inverno —
scompaiono i colori sotto la neve*

winter sky —
colors disappear under the snow

*splende la brina —
tra le foglie gelate
le bacche rosse*

the frost shines —
among the frozen leaves
red berries

Giuliana Ravaglia

*solstizio d'inverno:
nel sole basso l'ora del cielo*

winter solstice:
heure bleue in the low sun

*bocca di ciliegia:
il mio caldo cappotto rosso*

cherry mouth:
my warm red coat

il calicanto:
profuma già d'estate la neve fresca

wintersweet:
it smells like fresh snow in summer

freschi giacinti:
il suo scialle di lana celeste

fresh hyacinths:
her wool shawl sky-blue

e di carezze mi cingi l'orizzonte:
morbida luna

and caress me to the horizon:
sweet moon

capodanno:
in cima alle scale la luna piena

new year:
a full moon at the top of the stairs

*grigio mattino:
la luce dell'anima oltre lo specchio*

gray morning:
the light of the soul beyond the mirror

*sfuma dicembre nel mistero del tempo:
è già domani*

december fades in the mystery of time:
it's already tomorrow

*luna dei fiori:
che tu sia per me il sorriso dell'acqua*

moon of flowers:
that you are the smile of water for me

*tango di rose sulla bocca gitana:
vola la luna*

a tango of roses on the gypsy mouth:
the moon flies off

*notte di Natale:
ancora l'alba sulla terra bruna*

christmas night:
still the dawn on brown earth

*primo vento dell'anno:
affiora appena il bucanave*

the year's first wind:
snowdrops just emerging

*nevicata:
la vellutata forma del silenzio*

snowfall:
the velvety form of silence

*ultimo giorno dell'anno:
abito nuovo*

last day of the year:
a new dress

prima neve:
il gelato di nonna in un bicchiere

first snow:
grandmother's ice cream in a glass

freddo mattino:
un maglione in due

cold morning:
a sweater for two

coperta a fiori:
la mia scapigliata primavera

a flower-pattern plaid
my hair wild with spring

*solo una strada e ridere di niente:
profumo di baci*

just a road and laugh at nothing
perfume of kisses

*chiara la notte:
sussurra l'alba la luce delle cose*

clear night:
the light of things whispers at dawn

*fiore di tulipano:
il calore del grembo di mia madre*

tulip flower:
the warmth of my mother's womb

Louise Hopewell

sun sliding behind
the mountain
pink daisies

Goran Gatalica

*zimski noć —
ekstaza
zaboravljenih otisaka*

winter night —
the ecstasy
of forgotten footprints

*zimsko svjetlo —
napola smrznuti ribnjak
treperi*

winter light —
the half-frozen pond
flickering

Eufemia Griffo

*piccoli fiocchi di neve
le parole giuste
per dire addio*

tiny snowflakes
the right words
to say farewell

*cielo invernale
una stella solitaria attraversa
la via Lattea*

winter sky
a lonely star crosses
Milky Way

*mille lucciole
le fate dei boschi giocano
a nascondino*

a thousand fireflies
the woods fairies play
hide and seek

GIORNO DELLA MEMORIA
INTERNATIONAL HOLOCAUST REMEMBRANCE DAY
(January 27, 2019)

*diario di guerra
quando nessuno di noi
guardava le stelle*

war diary
when none of us
looked the stars

*cenere nera
tutte quelle stelle nascoste
nell'oscurità*

black ash
all those hidden stars
in the darkness

pagine vuote
le ultime parole di Anna
portate via dal vento

empty pages
Anne's last words
carried off by the wind

filo spinato
in primavera le rose
raggiungono ancora il cielo

barbed wire
in spring the roses
reach the sky again

petali caduti
il modo in cui lasciamo andare
la nostra vita

fallen petals
the way we left
our life

Clayton Beach

the dragon moves through chinatown someone still asleep in their tent

blue line train a trickle of water between the rails

crisp dawn over the steel bridge a single cormorant

eyes closed for an instant the green ghosts of sweet gums dance

mists through pastures here and there a liberty cap

goats on an old ford the apples brew just out of reach

twilight a silver haired couple share a cigarette

sunset over the boardwalk our son discovers his shadow

espresso steam in the crisp autumn air the whir of a tattoo gun

bamboo rattles from the wind a veteran tells his tale

snow clouds spill down the timberline stitch in my lung

moonshine in a mason jar the old barn keeps its secrets

a whiff of coffee and lace parasols held high three lolitas

queen boletes under the crescent moon pacific mists

after all this time inside you again magnolia in full bloom

Mark Levy

slow clouds
the full moon
holds still

one thousand night trains
to nowhere
frozen stars

thoughts out of season
crow
with a sore throat

Margherita Petriccione

*capelli grigi —
ultimi passaggi
di un'equazione*

last steps
of an equation—
gray hair

*festa dei diciott'anni —
il pallore sul viso della zia*

eighteen birthday —
the pallor on the aunt's face

sterco di tortora sulle piastrelle pane raffermo

turtledove's dung on the tiles stale bread

*fango e neve —
organizzando
un altro giorno*

mud and snow —
organizing
another day

*bancarelle di cianfrusaglie —
tramonto su Napoli*

stalls of junk —
sunset over Naples

*piegate insieme
nel vento d'inverno
le canne ed io*

bend together
in the winter wind
the reeds and me

*cielo di ghiaccio —
dalla macchina per cucire
un ragno*

ice sky —
from the sewing machine
a spider

casa vuota —
un ombrello di carta
sul termosifone

empty house —
a paper umbrella
on the radiator

*Lucio Battisti —
un po' di sole invernale
sul mio ago*

Lucio Battisti —
a little winter sun
on my needle

*neve nell'aria —
ancora più denso il silenzio
di questa notte*

snow in the air —
even more dense
this night's silence

Ashish Narain

perhaps he is
happier there...
neem blossoms

a shortage of what is endless sky

the darkness
of a dog's howl...
fireflies

Kristen Lindquist

blackberry patch
gorging
on thrush song

ice-fishing shacks
everyone huddled inside
except the eagle

vacant lot
mockingbird building
his repertoire

loitering teens
backs turned
on the sunset

shark's tooth fossil
worn down
to a heart

Hansha Teki

string quartet

last movement

each instrument in turn

the silence storming

sounds the ineffable

everything

leaden sky
 a spider
an illumined lunacy
 unravels the physics
yields the gold
 of fog

a moth
 moonless night
brushstroking darkness
 just the sound
 of water
by candle light
 interiorised

Angela Giordano

*un nuovo diario
il segnalibro dell'anno precedente*

a new diary
last year's bookmark

*gomitoli della nonna
l'arcobaleno racchiuso nel cestino*

grandma's balls of wool
a rainbow in the basket

*fuori la neve —
un sakè con gli amici accanto al camino*

out of the snow —
a sakè with friends by the fireplace

*sere d'inverno —
sulla stufa il profumo
dei mandarini*

winter evening —
the smell of mandarins
on the stove

Fred Jeremy Seligson

CATS

Moon
light
on
grass

You
sit
among
cats

hearing
a
poem

Blackie
 mouths,
 "Hallo ..."

 from
 atop

a
 white
 rock,

 "Hallo!"

Sparky
 jumps

to
 the
stump

 gray,
white-
 tailed

green
 eyes

A
 tree

White
 Betty
races
 up
a
 pine
scampers
 on
 down

 Kitty
wails from
the king's
wall
 A
girl calls
911

Calico
climbs
your
coat

rides
a
shoulder

through
the
trees

Cats
face

the
log

to
hear

your
violin

A
girl
stops
climbs
on
by
to
her
castle
on
the
hill

Yes,
a
cat
can
climb
a
cypress
tree
if
drooling
for
a
bird

Half

way
up

yellow
and
white
puss

now

on
top

“Where
are
my
birds?”

“Can’t
see
you!”

Now
she
peers
all
the
way

dangles
on
down,
“*Hungry!*”

Peter Newton

light snow
a poem by
snow light

snow globe
... rolling ... and
action

hefting
the snow globe
so snowball-like

oil-powered
the snow
inside its globe

vintage valentine
ruined Cupids
line the bar

fanning out
over the Atlantic
our family plot

Jeannie Martin

from OCEAN

*'Tis a gift to be simple
'Tis a gift to be free
'Tis a gift to come down where we want to be
'Til by turning, turning, we come round right.*

– Shaker hymn

I have left my home by the harbor, by the ocean to live more peacefully and without fear. A friend has graciously let me use her third floor guest room until I can find a place in the city.

FIRST DAY

waking up to
raindrops
under the eaves

bathroom mirror
my reflection
fogged up

bright day —
the attic room
a little too dark

I carry my boxes
up three flights of stairs —
how long?

Back to work —
the T from the
opposite direction

MY DECISION TO LEAVE

our small house
by the harbor —
too many secrets

6' 2"
he saw things
differently

the fridge filled
with take—out boxes
no room, no room

always
on the alert
one storm, then another

churned-up river
too murky to see
the bottom

marina
the low murmur
from pleasure boats

sailboat masts
knock together
I cannot sleep

the drawbridge
half open
half closed

long time no see
my friend says
I look sick

herb garden
I take the lavender
leave the rest

ocean
my blue
eyes

AN APARTMENT IN THE CITY

no sofa
no bed
a sofa—bed

full moon
the same moon
in Boston

lost my retainer
dreaming
through clenched teeth

after three months
my hair
falls out

spring thaw
add a sea shell
to my window ledge

snail shell
its pink
emptiness

hold a
moon shell
think of Julian



I always wanted to play my mountain dulcimer on the boardwalk near the harbor. But I was hesitant. Afraid. So I never did.

But now, a few years later, I have made the trip back to the harbor and the river; sat down on the benches at the boardwalk and played: Amazing Grace, I'll Fly Away, Will the Circle Be Unbroken..... Simple Gifts. Tunes of home and belonging; of hope and promise; of love with all its sorrow, and joy.

Sometimes I play for our homeless drop in center in Boston.

One of our guests once asked, "Where is the woman who brings the music?"

I

am

here

starfish
72 % of me
is water

