

The Bond Street Review



Winter 2016

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From the Editors

So, what's with the big red "X" on the cover, right? Is it some sort of weird tribute to the 24th letter of the alphabet? A nod to "adult movies" or the legendary L.A. punk band? Is it part of some long-dead pirate's treasure map?

Nope, none of the above. It's in reference to this being our 10th issue. (We suppose we could have put a large "V" on the cover and celebrated our 5th year since we publish twice annually ... but we think the "X" looked much cooler.) What started as a modest little endeavor to share the work of some writers whose work we truly enjoy has grown into a slightly less modest endeavor that keeps moving right along and picking up a few new readers and writers each time out. Give us another hundred years or so and we'll turn into a real publishing juggernaut. Or not.

All the same, we hope you enjoy this issue and are beyond liberal in sharing it with others – just hit that "forward" button and send it on its merry way.

And before we close, a quick note about the next issue. The summer 2016 issue of *The Bond Street Review* will be our first themed issue. We're on the lookout for music-centric pieces – they can be about musicians/bands (the more obscure, the better), instruments, whatever, but music must be central to the piece in one way or another. We'll start accepting submissions on April 1st.

Until next time ...



Eric Evans &
Kathy Sochia,
Editors

Road Trip (No Wall)

By Jim Babwe

Sylvia's a tie-dyed
in the wool
gluten free Leucadia local--
silver grey ponytail--no tangles.
Occasional confusion
surfaces when someone
likes her kitchen's curtains
calls them lladro prints
instead of madras--
either way
she never corrects the minor
misnomer and redirects talk about how
the material
softens direct morning sunlight
when she feeds
five cats breakfast
at the dinner table.
Today
at 6:30 AM
alone for now
she silently curses chemtrails
and shares a tequila shot
with her favorite Siamese
(no salt, no lime)
then
stepping outside
wraps a clean beach towel
around handle bars
pedals south to Beacon's
for a swim
before she
ascends switchbacks
to Neptune
coasts to Captain Keno's

for a more than two
probably fewer than five
bloody Mary lunch
with a friend from out of town
plus
coffee to go
(no cream, no sugar).
After hugs embraced by a mutually agreed upon
vague Saturday morning
in the don't worry about it someday soon
because we live in the here and now
a predictable drifting apart
again
waits for next time.
Next stop--another euphemistic nap
with Bobby--
eight years younger
but old enough
to understand "boyfriend"
needs a more age appropriate
synonym, so the two of them
decide to invent one that works.
But not right now.
He's a dirt-under-the-fingernails
analog mechanic
who flaunts his love of beef jerky
with a modest collection of framed labels
on the walls of his hard-to-find
one-bedroom on Sylvia Street
(no relation)
where the scent of bacon
hovers between his place
and allegedly vegan neighbors
who pretend not to notice
the aroma.
His only alarm clock (broken)
pre-dates digital displays

stays stuck on 8:30
and after he awakens
on his own
he sneaks outside
to a nearby garage
and finishes up the brakes
on a tidy '62 T-bird
owned by a generous local collector.

He delivers
the ride
heads back to Sylvia
(yes--both)
and confirms quick calculations on the way.
Hey girl! Walk with me
to Vulcan. I'm buying that van
and we're heading out
if you're game.
Everyone involved says thanks a lot
while a signed pink slip
disappears into the right rear pocket.
The vintage motor starts first try
and the two of them cruise
north along the coast through Carlsbad--
slowly past that darned smoke stack power plant
motorcycle cop speed trap--
destination Oceanside.

This low key Friday afternoon
drifts into early evening
on the sunset patio
with squeaky wicker chairs
they ask to buy
with no real hope
the owner
will part with his
important dive bar decor.

In the morning
they decide it's a perfect day
so they toss longboards onto racks
pack clothes
for a week or thereabouts
pick up supplies for the road
and ignore dire warnings about
danger south of the border

If you've made the drive
you know how it is—
quiet stars all night
crashing surf in the all day sun
close to where a short dirt road
ends at the base of a bluff
near the water
not too far from K 25
or maybe K 29.

As usual it's a good trip.
No trouble.
No complaints.
No problems.
And no real sense
in all the fearful talk
about building
a taller wall.

On Treating Afghan Detainees

By Matt Borzcon

I didn't

know I
could hate
so easily
so completely

I bandaged
men I
just as
easily could
have killed

I told
myself they
were thinking
the same
thing about
me

4 years
later I
wonder
if they
hated me
as much
as I
do.

Survival Rate

By Matt Borzcon

If I
could cough
hard enough
to get
the sand
and ash
out of
my lungs
long enough
you might
hear the
thousands
of screams
that I
swallowed
into silence
as I
worked those
wound vacs
and skin
grafts and
staples
bleeding wounds
packed with
white gauze
working myself
half dead
to keep
those marines
alive
97%
survived but
I wasn't
one of
them

Camp Bastion 2

By Matt Borzcon

The dust
and smoke
were so
thick
that I
never saw
the mountain
in the
distance
until one
day when
the wind
blew it
all away
it only
happened once
in 7 months.
The rest
of the
time we
lived in
the shadow
of burning
body parts
and human
waste

Post Deployment

By Matt Borzcon

I came
to inhabit
the time
and place
I am
no one
and I
am everyone
I am
not the soldier
who lost
his leg
but I am
the corpsman
they asked
to find it
so I
came home
carrying
the weight
of an
extra limb
that eventually
became
this poem

Short Poem For My Wife

By Matt Borzcon

Dana
I hated
everyone
who said
if you
were smart
you'd leave
especially
me.

Cane

By Jakima Davis

I know I have
The blood of a reaper
Harvest the sweet fields
Tasting the grains
Working in the harvest
Sugarcanes in the harvest
Cutting the corn

I know I have
The blood of a slave
Cotton plants on my shoes
Coming home with a plate
fried chicken, collard greens, macaroni
Connected to the chain
Lashes from the whip

I know I have
The blood of a dove
Flying in the daring skies
To find peace through eyes

Won't be a caged bird

When death comes
Rise up like a phoenix

The Twilight Man

By Patrick Doerksen

There is a man, the Twilight Man they call him, who shuffles down alleys and suburbs and downtown city streets looking for every kind of suffering. He will take your weeping, he will take your pain, your terror, even your pleasure if it is malicious enough. He collects them, you see, in that empty burlap sack of his. He shoves it all in, the helpless hatred of the children listening to drunk Dad yell and smack Mom, the bitterness of the old who feels a thousand-years rusted with his arthritis, the terror of the rape victim and the agony of the stab victim and the confusion of the dementia victim. He finds it wherever he goes, the Twilight Man, and takes it away. It all goes into the bag.

Then, when he has enough, when his bag is full of the sourest and blackest of moods and they have become compressed and mingle thickly and drippingly into an unbearable brew, he finds a kid and shoves the kid in the bag. He synches the bag, ties it up, and hangs it on a rack along with the rest. Perhaps he watches the desperate wriggling and writhing for a few moments, listens to the shrieks, the moans, the even more terrible silence—taking no pleasure in it of course but rather a distinct disgust and disappointment. Because the Twilight Man cannot help what he does. There is so much sorrow and anguish in the world, there is too much, but in such moments he finds he has the energy to wish he could stop shoving himself into such an unfathomable pocket of abyss.

Baptism

By Michael Estabrook

If I were riding my bicycle in the Tour de France
with a chance of winning a stage and rounding a turn
I came upon you at the side of the road
amazing in your peach-colored dress would I be able
to continue the race. Well no, of course not.

She's striding wearing one of those swishy

bright lime green dresses below a tight white top
endless strands of blonde hair catching the sun
a reminder that sometimes
it is so damn good to be alive.

Next to me in this pew I'm distracted

by her simple gray suede pump
on the one end and on the other end the taut
sweet hem of her gray dress and in between a smooth
white calf that I simply cannot keep my eyes off of.

Incredulity

By Michael Estabrook

The stylist combing and clipping
this old lady's old gray hair
is pontificating and gesticulating about
the proper application of styling gel as if he's
about to feed the masses with 5 loaves and 2 fish.

Searching through the magazine rack
pushing aside the muscle and motorcycle magazines
karate, mountain climbing and girlie magazines
trying to find a copy of *Arthritis Today*
suddenly wondering how the hell did I get here?

He still cannot believe that some scientists
working on the atomic bomb back in 1945
did the calculations and feared
that setting off the bomb would ignite the atmosphere
obliterating life and set it off anyway.

Sisters

By John Grey

There's always the one
who wears the hurt like mascara
dripping down her cheeks,
free to roam the gutters of her face
while another crams it all inside,
pale granite face biting
down on secrets
while her guts churn and crack.

And there's this conversation
between the two, in a coffee
shop, in the bar, and one's
crying her hurt louder
than traffic noise,
the violence gushing
out of the cage of her mouth,
freed forever,
while the other's squeezing her hands
together, her demons with no
other place to go but back
where they came from,
overloading her head, her heart.

When they're done,
one says, "Thanks for listening."
The other must wait
'til she's alone to say that.

Black Box

By Steve Hood

Spark on a jet, combust,
charred seats, bodies swell
among waves, detritus floats,
a small purse.

Sixty thousand planes fly
daily, humans carry phones
through clouds to faraway,
spew out CO2.

Metal fatigue and cracks all
through our fragile aircraft,
lift high in aluminum,
wings stretched.

Apartment complex below,
oxygen masks fall, heavy
ground lurches up, we'll go
down together.

Lying Together

By James Keane

a year and a half later,
faces fixed in our narrow
spaces far from any warmth or
sweat. No thought
of bliss, no movement
to kiss, yet here we are, as if
nothing was ever amiss.

Should I kiss

your solemn face leading
with its chin. Will it push
away from my lips or
hazard a grin.

A year and a half

younger, our bodies were faces
seeking out each other; warm
smiles deepened our embraces
and kisses. Your breasts lolled,
hidden no longer.

In the end, though,

the room and bed were stronger,
frigid; no chance of sweat within
our narrow space.

Was there nothing

left to recover
or discover
a year and a half later
forty years ago.

Empress Adelaide

By Jessica Wiseman Lawrence

She is the grain-mother feeding the brown earth with small, round worlds.
She holds soft babies to her breasts, and smiles wan over the gold harvest.
She is the sovereign of growing. She is dominion over the year.
She is the germination of dreams. She is here to tend, coddle, and rear.

Call her Venus. Not for love but for true Venus with its days
longer than years and a surface melting lead. A Venusian breeze
could pick up a car and slam it through its atmosphere heavier
than oceans. Venus is a clouded, molten poison across the sun.

Adelaide, Queen Consort of Germany, lost her first husband to such poison,
and was imprisoned for four months, longing for her daughter.
Later she was taken to Canossa and married to the Holy Roman Emperor.
Her title broke tradition. More children came. In old age, she retired

to the nunnery she founded. She was named Refugium Peccatorum, a watchful
mother of thousands. She was a refuge for sinners. She was a soulmate, and a queen.
It takes more than strength to be a mother to a child, a land, a stranger, and a people.
Only a clouded survivor of poison can take on a rigid, vile world and love it.

Kitchen

By Jessica Wiseman Lawrence

The table that takes up
three-fourths of the kitchen
is covered with candy wrappers,
groceries from last week,
and overflowing ashtrays.

The aloe plant I gave her
is in the center of the table,
covered by unopened bills, and dead.

To walk in Momma's kitchen,
one must bob and weave, avoiding
low-hanging windchimes
too nice to hang outside to fade and rust.

There is a four-inch ring of bare floor.
One must sidestep-skinny, hands stretched up,
catching one's back against the chest of drawers
from 1918 that Momma painted mint green,

then shimmy between
table and another bookshelf,
to the counter next to the new stove,
where Momma serves plates
that must be set on towel-covered laps,
on the couch.

Once, my uncle forgot the rules,
tripped on a dustpan, and fell.
The bones protruding
were like sticks, and a vein hung out of it –
a looped extension cord sticking out of the wall.

He writhed and screamed my daddy's name over and over,
and my daddy said, **"this is a burden"**, because my uncle
is a child in his mind. Momma was making a potato-bake,
and it was just beginning to bubble and crust.

Stop

By Jessica Wiseman Lawrence

Take the time to be nothing but thought.
Forget the badness in you.
Feel the acres stretching beneath your feet.
Be shoulders. Be a woman. Be a man. Be a
hand or the memory of one. Be your legs
even if they aren't what you wanted them to be.

You are permanence, a forever-thing.
You are books. You are bullets.
You were a school desk and a group of friends.
Then you were years. You were something else once.
You barely got to be it before you were told –
be something else.

You forgot about being an animal.

Take off the shoes. Take off the socks.
Slip the dress up over your head.
Throw the watch onto a soft pillow.
Empty the pockets of paper fortunes and pennies.
Unbutton the things that need unbuttoning.

Stop.

Fluttery

By Maureen Moroney

Does the word “fluttery” come from “fluttery”? Or flat. Like mundane, unmoved, an indecipherable facade.

Flat like: you send so many ripples across your pond that they cancel each other out
like sine waves, like white noise

like **rubbing the same lucky penny until it's smooth and worthless, a dime a dozen**

like the boy who cried wolf-whistle

like tens across the board for all contestants, and all participants get the same ribbon

like an auto-reply message

like the Champagne waiting for us to drink it

like a seismograph before the shift and the collision

like the Earth, before we knew better

before we knew that the center moves constantly and literally all bodies attract
But the butterflies come fluttering every time, uninvited. I feel my racing heart and
flushing cheeks,

my sovereign and independent body's response to a mesmerizing foreign invasion.

The butterflies nauseate me, because sometimes they're poisonous like monarchs and
sometimes they're just frauds like viceroys, making me dizzy with second-guessing.

And still, every time, I wish:

Just let me have this nice thing, this good feeling, for a little while.

Don't let me squash it, not right away.

But you can't keep things in a jar forever.

They lose their magic, their color fades, and they wither and fall flat.

Only the toxin, the craving, the tumult, and the memory of flight
remain.

How To Confront Your Fears Of Getting A Tattoo

By Maureen Moroney

Even if you already have three. This little one is scary.

You're scared because

the artist has a policy against doing facial tattoos, and even though

it would be on your ear and you don't think that counts,

it makes you think twice. It gives you a moment to hesitate.

An excuse. An escape route.

You're scared because it uses red ink, among a spectrum of others.

And you heard that red ink is the one that most commonly causes bad reactions.

It was never your color, anyway.

You're scared because it means shedding old skin

like a snake

and you're not sure if that makes you more human or less.

You're scared because

the paperwork asked you to write a description of what you want.

And it also asked you to list any medications you're taking.

You wrote: "Seven colored dots in rainbow order along the ridge of my ear."

You wrote: "Claritin, birth control pills, daily multivitamin, acidophilus."

You're scared that these two lines contradict each other,

cancel you out.

You're scared of all the other times someone has

and all the other times someone will question you,

like being two things at once actually makes you

nothing at all.

You're scared of the misdirection that you sometimes use.

You point and flourish: Look over there! Hormones! Acne! Cramps!

You're scared of the corner you sometimes feel trapped in.

You're scared of how quickly you can reach for a lie.

You're scared the rainbow would be a lie, too:

a vision,

but only illusion.

You want the ink to say the things you can't, to let your ear speak
instead of your mouth. Like saying the words would mean
vanishing

in a puff of smoke and mirrors.

You're scared because you don't know the words
to say the rest, to bring you back, to make you real,
and seven dots on an ear can only say
so much.

You're scared how easy it is to be silent,
how comfortable vanishing is.

OMG

(After Sandra Beasley)

By Kim Peter Kovac

My god is a hardscrabble kid
from our hardscrabble town
near a dry lake marsh west
of an alkaline desert plain.

My god denies being a god,
avoids talking like one,
and dressing like anything other
than the eleven year old she is.

My god loves her dog, and hates
dogma, though that's her dog's name
because she has a preternatural
sense of the joy of irony.

My god reads by moonlight,
sunlight, and flashlight
hidden under the bedcovers
tenting over her at night.

My god loves the Chekhov stories
surprisingly found in the library
leftover from a long-ago
traveling theater troupe.

My god would be a Daoist
if she knew what that was;
she is both present --and not--
in her town at the same time.

My god will soon flee
this place; though her life
and family are good, she needs
to fill her spirit with new.

Snakes

By Kim Peter Kovac

I. The Asclepeion at Epidaurus

The sick and damaged sleep
in the temple overnight,
report dreams to the priest
who prescribes healing rituals:
herbal baths, the gymnasium,
and nights in a dormitory
filled with ordained snakes.

II. The Cardiac Cath Lab at George Washington U Hospital

Attentive disciples flutter
around the cardiologist
in the green and chilly room
where I lie on the altar:
blanket, valium drip, monitors --
chanting and charting as the catheter
snakes into the coronary arteries.

Darkness of Impossibility

T.F. Rice

You always wanted
to be a girl.

My sister always wanted to be a teacher.
As a child, the man I love wanted to be an astronaut.
I've always wanted to skydive.
My neighbor wants to be young again.
The veteran wants to be whole again.
An abused woman casually thinks her life would be better if she was a man.
The postman wishes with all his heart to be married, but she says no.

You always wanted
to be a girl
not like those people.

You always wanted to be a
Woman
like the blind man
always wanted to see, but resigned himself to the darkness
of impossibility.

The Language Of The Spirits

By Ajise Vincent

my uncle has a mouth filled with tongues of prayer.
like a seer intoxicated with cognacs imbibed by anonymous spirits
he speaks languages never heard, languages never understood,
languages that bear the emblem of realms beyond our reach.

today is independence day. he is at the village square,
feeding the ears of philosophers with rhythmic but sour words.
words that echo like the symphonies of a nightingale
yet sounds like the abracadabra that comes after the spittle of a toddler

some nights i see him knell unto a god -- a god I know not.
he adores this god with chants, beatitudes & supplications
i like this ritual. **I like him, too. But I don't** like this deity --
a god who listens to languages relished by only the oligarchs

Gospel Guys

By Mitchell Waldman

Gospel guys handing out pamphlets

(Moses Save Me!)

proclaiming the Answer

spreading the Word

the Truth

in the Rose Garden

talking about Sin

capital offenses

capital letters—

Sin—

you must Ask

Sin you must Believe

Sin you must Receive

the Time is Now

the Time was Then

the Time is Ticking

(25 or 6 to 4)

have you been Born Again?

(have you been born at all?)

seek the Truth

the Meaning

hand me the dictionary

hand me an aspirin

hand me a hand

I lost the meaning thought question answer thread

forgot my name street address birth weight social security number

trying to remember the definition of love of infinity of pi

trying to remember the capital of North Dakota

how many S's in Mississippi

I forgot I forgot I forgot

what I forgot--

what was the Question Again?

Contributors

Born in Los Angeles, **Jim Babwe** grew up in Compton and Lynwood, California, he knew he wasn't living in Beverly Hills, but he didn't know what a bad neighborhood he lived in until he went to college and listened to his professors. Shortly after taping a "for sale" sign to a van, one of his friends (and baseball teammates), was kidnapped by William and Emily Harris (Symbionese Liberation Army) during the test drive. After the abduction, his friend went to a drive-in movie with his kidnappers, who were kind enough to pick up Patty Hearst on the way to the show and release him unharmed. <http://law2.umkc.edu/faculty/projects/ftrials/hearst/matthewstestimony.htm>. I. (Note: Lynwood is misspelled in this transcript). Anyway, Jim has worked as: a public school teacher, co-founder of a non-profit company (which introduced high-risk teens to the multi-sport adventure racing), taxi driver, independent contracts broker, photographer, writer, and assessment editor with a gigantic publishing company which hired him to help write standardized tests (no kidding). He loves baseball (struck out 17 batters in a 7-inning game) and enjoys basketball (set a school record by committing 3 fouls in the first six seconds of a game). He is never bored.

Matt Borczon is a writer and sailor in the United States navy reserve. He was stationed in the busiest combat hospital in the war from 2010 through 2011. he works as a nurse for a social service agency and has a BFA in painting from Edinboro University of Pennsylvania. His work has been recently published in *Busted Dharma*, *Pressure Press* and *Dead Snakes*. He was also included in the Soul Collective anthology *100 Poems*. Matt lives in Erie, Pennsylvania with a wife and 4 kids and the ghosts of the 4000 patients he treated while working on Camp Bastion.

Jakima Davis has been writing for 15 years and often posts her poems on Facebook. **She's been published in underground publications and released a broadside published through Marymark press.**

Patrick Doerksen is a social worker armed with degrees in literature and theology. He and his wife live in Victoria, British Columbia, where flowers bloom as early as January and it is very difficult to be unhappy. His fiction and poetry has featured in *Presence*, *(Parenthetical)*, *Frogpond*, *Lyrical Passion*, *Ancient Paths Online*, *A Hundred Gourds*, and *Contemporary Haibun Online*, among others.

Michael Estabrook is a recently retired baby boomer child-of-the-sixties poet freed **finally after working 40 years for "the man" and sometimes "the woman."** No more useless meetings under florescent lights in stuffy windowless rooms. **now he's able to devote serious time to making better poems when he's not, of course, trying to satisfy his wife's legendary honey-do list.**

John Grey is an Australian poet, us resident. recently published in *New Plains Review*, *Perceptions* and *Sanskrit* with work upcoming in *South Carolina Review*, *Gargoyle*, *Coal City Review* And *The Coe Review*.

Steve Hood is an attorney and political activist. His work won an award from the Pacific Northwest **Writers' Association** and has been published in many places including *Crack The Spine*, *Maudlin House*, and the anthology *Noisy Water*. His chapbook *From Here To Astronomy* was published by Pudding House.

James Keane resides in northern New Jersey with his wife and son and a shrinking menagerie of merry pets. He earned bachelors and master's degrees in English literature 100 years ago at Georgetown University. His poems have appeared recently in *Contemporary American Voices* (he was the featured poet in the January 2015 issue), *The Wilderness House Literary Review*, *Blue Monday Review*, *Atavic Poetry*, *Verse-Virtual*, *Firewords Quarterly*, and *The Tipton Poetry Journal*. In 2013, his first poetry chapbook, *What Comes Next*, was published by Finishing Line Press. And he still **can't cook to save his life**.

Kim Peter Kovac works nationally and internationally in theater for young audiences with an emphasis on new play development and networking. He tells stories on stages as producer of new plays, and tells stories in writing with lineated poems, prose poems, creative non-fiction, flash fiction, haiku, haibun, and microfiction, with work appearing or forthcoming in print and on-line in journals from australia, india, dubai (uae), the UK, and the USA, including *The Journal Of Compressed Creative Arts*, *Red Paint Hill*, *Elsewhere*, *Frogpond*, *Mudlark*, and *Counterexample Poetics*. He is fond of avant-garde jazz, murder mysteries, contemporary poetry, and travel, and lives in Alexandria, Virginia, with his bride, two Maine coon cats, and a Tibetan terrier named Finn. www.kimpeterkovac.tumblr.com

Jessica Wiseman Lawrence grew up on a working farm in rural central Virginia, then studied creative writing at Longwood University. You can find her recent work upcoming or published in *Stoneboat*, *Origins*, *Black Fox Literary Magazine*, and *The Feminine Divine's* upcoming anthology of female voices, along with many others. One of her poems has recently earned a best of the net nomination. She continues to live in rural central Virginia with her family, and she works as an office manager by day. She believes that all people, regardless of education level or economic class, should be able to write, enjoy, and publish poetry.

Maureen Moroney is a professional drinker and skeptic, also known as an enologist, with an unfortunate poetry habit. She currently lives in Santa Rosa, California but has lost her mind and is relocating to Ames, Iowa. Her work may have been featured in

high school literary journals and the front of her parents' refrigerator, but she doesn't remember for sure. she also enjoys experimental baking, the moment she chooses to go back to sleep instead of going to yoga class or vice versa, and eating burritos while watching **America's** next top model (may it rest in peace).

T.F. Rice encourages people to be creative ... art as therapy for our stressed souls. She lives in western New York with her family and with her creative clutter. Like everyone else, she is trying to find the right mix of work and play.

Ajise Vincent is a Nigerian poet. His poem "Song of a Progeny" was a shortlisted poem at the Korea-Nigeria poetry feast, 2015. His works have been published in *London-Grip Magazine*, *Eureka*, *Kalahari Review*, *Sakonfa Literary Magazine*, *Synchronized Chaos*, *Africanwriter*, *Indian Periodical*, *Jalada Africa*, *Black Boy Review*, *Random Sample Review*, *Pin Quarterly Journal*, *1947 Journal*, *Prachya Review*, *Ana Review*, *Oddball*, *Tuck Magazine*, *Harbinger Asylum* and various literary outlets. He writes from Lagos, Nigeria.

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