

SHEARSMAN

95 & 96

SUMMER 2013

**EDITED BY
TONY FRAZER**

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Submissions

Shearsman operates a submissions-window system, whereby submissions are only
accepted during the months of March and September, when selections are
made for the October and April issues, respectively. Submissions may be sent
by mail or email, but email attachments—other than PDFs—are not accepted.

We aim to respond within 2–3 months of the window's closure.

The next issue will be guest-edited by Kelvin Corcoran.

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Letters on Cézanne

Rilke said when he went to the Salon d'Automne with Mathilde Vollmoeller to see the Cézannes or perhaps it was Mathilde who said it and Rilke wrote about it in one of those letters to his wife, letters describing days of rain and going every day to see the Cézannes, that the colour of his paintings, each colour knowing every other colour in a perpetual dialogue and exchange, that the colours blended in the air around them, mixed into a neutral grey, an atmosphere of equipose, almost velvet like—the black and white only defining the limits of his wide-open palette. It should be the same with us: the Yes balancing out the No, Joy calming Despair without cancellation: a day of sun and a day of rain.

The Theory of Touch

One theory was that the sense of handling—each apple cupped in his palm and every colour weighed so it became the thing itself—the tabletop, the pear—one theory was that this caressing light across a wall, this reaching out to feel each surface, sprung from phobia: at school a boy had pushed him down the stairs so even as an old man his son would have to say 'You'll forgive me father if I take your arm.'

Even in his final year when Émile Bernard reached to help him on uneven ground, Cézanne cried out and shook him off. I'm sated with touch. Last night I touched your face, your arms, your chest as if touching would prove some use against the the coming loss; as if I'd keep you like he kept those—how many?—apples on a box.

Wing Mirror

The ravine is a tangle of thorns, hubcaps, all the jagged edges of the night; kids scare each other shitless, drink and fuck until the blue light ghosts the trees. The ravine is a scar, a wound that opens wide, close to the burial sites of Escorts laced with rust; wing mirrors, eyes that never shut. Secrets stuck in the mud rise to the surface in rain: the fire extinguished, the party finished. Time to leave.

The ravine is a scar, a wound, a jagged secret. Kids party, drink fire, fuck in the mud; rust like shit sticks to the surface of hubcaps. Ghosts escort them to the edge of the burial site, mirror the night: blue light extinguished in rain. They rise on tangled wings laced with thorns, their eyes are shut. The ravine is open wide, never scared. The trees close their leaves.

The ravine is shit, a fucking thorn in the eye. Kids wing it, tangled up and blue. They drink until their secrets are buried, score surface wounds on hubcaps, scare the ghosts wide from the trees. They fire open night, the party never shuts. In the rain and mud they lace their scars with rust. They rise and leave before their time is finished. Extinguished. The mirror's jagged edge sticks them in its sights. The ravine closes the light.

The ravine is edged with a light surface of rain. Mirrors rust; the fire extinguished like a ghost. Shitty site to be buried: stuck in the drink, in the mud, like a hubcap. Don't tangle with the night; time is a party that finishes in a ravine; out of the blue your escort's fucked off, and you're a thorn in a wing. Don't be scared, kids. Never rise to the secret that shuts the eyes. Wounds close, but they leave scars.

The Monkey-Rope

We know Dante put his friends
in hell. It's easy, and probably right
from the balcony, floating over
the permanently unhorsed, a seeing
eye in the night of others. At first
hand, though, we feel ourselves: a bee sense
of what's been tried on the training ground,
raising you above, well, personal misery;
it comes to us already ground and
chipped and powdered and mixed and sliced,
but between the whale and the ship
there's an end that's ours, and while
on the shore of exceeding caution someone
plays the galleried scourge of vantage, living
but dust-capped even at the best of times
he only flounders in another kind of belly,
sponsored perhaps, as the labour
continues in-between. This isn't boxing
where raw talent can get a result,
but looking at you across the focus of
the camera sat ostentatiously
crow-like over the steel palings
of that white building for our own
protection—that scarf is nice on you,
I feel the faintest almost of your touch,
and you're all I can really love. And though
the best way to make a small fortune
is to start with a large one, through tocsins
the helmet lamps lighting the streets
after the wild work of the *barricas* show again
an anatomy for heavy lifting, suffering
but tenacious, constituting, rising
like living bread.

GERALDINE CLARKSON

golden opportunity wet streets

give his side a golden opportunity to move
each passing minute seemingly misses one
—if you have
anaconda, or ball python, pine—

opportunity to read what everyone
open in the mouth and good
could see. For one year flowers shone
blooming in Sweden at the end of May.

Assigned to the city of Spokane,
we are over the charred or crumbling
rain-wet street. I stood at the War
(for seconds). Lilies sued for peace

each passing minute seemingly missing one
while lilac snow milled wisdom in city ruins.

Outlandishness and Euphemism

Against empire's vain memorial to its own human loss, scrupulous in its incommensurability: scrappy outlandishness, horse-nonsense, and bunk. Braying factotum, wiener pierced by a stick. Vanity of the base human commitment to a thuggery of 'us.' Baton twirling girls high-kneeing it down Main. Fatty the pursed embouchures of the shrewd liars, the Aeolus-flatterers harping for corporate gain. A sentimental gin-sop lapses gamely into prayer. A 'common' soldier with blood-colored epaulettes rehearses a story made retail-ready by euphemism. Pure blood-urge of manufactured urgency. Prodding the vulgar to accept some particular of *a priori* 'evil,' some make-ready of the final real 'impossible either to correct or analyze.' Up in the aerial vault the chimney swifts teeter and sail, teeter and sail and thief. On the dying green lawn, two rabbits, dog-spooked, freeze.

Essays and Nettles

Some mock essays to do and the tender green nettles (lopped off with a Bowie knife in a prickly fit of florilegium'd ascertainment and culling) to parboil and a murderous sigh of prank dejectedness to interpose between summary and end: isn't that enough? Enough of too corpulent trots and jag-engineered reminiscences, enough of 'beyond the ken of the local' *sub rosa* hoots? Stumped by a word, I like to mouth it out *pianissimo*, or grind it down into use 'with inexorable jaw.' Against cloying invect and the perniciousness of Cape Mootch (a vodka): 'sing high and aloofe.' Against putrescent kissinesses and the *lie doggo* vernaculars of Regents Park (a park): 'pour the sacred boonion.' Some not-so-pricey comeuppance is in the works, some 'economy of meaning' that'll burst *all* drawers. Drawers: 'apparently a term of low origin, usually restricted to underclothing worn next the skin.' Drawers made up of 'stuffe of mockadoo.'

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Tara

abc**T**def
kj**A**i**A**hg
l**R**m**T**n**R**o
Ar**A**q**R**p**A**
s**R**t**A**u**R**v
z**A**y**A**xw
zyx**T**wvu
pq**A**r**A**st
o**R**n**T**m**R**l
gh**A**i**A**jk
fed**T**cba

TOM BAMFORD

next time

wear the skin of the six-eyed bird

you during this not
die but feel a lukewarm breath still
bed and the
dawn shard
remember. how glad your friends do not go
before you how
away your friends are
not on your side and
where the disorganisation is from
a book to be
fresh after all is
 peace without conscious
ness the bles
sing of hunger
 the bright space left
still
 the song and police erase the streets leaving payment re
lieved by a nest of starlings/
in mind's hungry amber
light walk peeping in
bushes where they
have gone but
is regardless and in her eternity/

JEN CRAWFORD

from Soft Shroud

smashed scattering bulwarks

blond splinters whirl

'someone's coming out for our furniture unhinged gate & circle
drive bursting

feet swollen seats face-up imploring
'sky sky honey the roof's gone honey the walls oh soak
your ankles

fully ponding look out perimetres

look

SAM SAMPSON

Doubled Lexicon

for Gustaf Sobin

the horizon

O

pens

the circle

Sobin

circles the expanse expands dirt

distributes

the liquescent

ellipse :

the glittering..... geometric design

of the glass headed light

two in-
complete oblong drops

the pond of the Olive Tree

O

pens

the mirror

shadows swing the windrow

:

ground

rocky outcrops: composed of chalk and green sand
composed of shelly sandstone cliffs

layers, over-
laying clays, marly macigno

the lignite field

erasure links the sentence

sentences the

pause

recesses the sun

O

pens

the corridor

(structure up-
dates a staircase disappears...

ceramic wind chimes

charred grape seeds

Ionian soft paste
pinkish circular bands)

registers
as rectangular frames
the utterance

awkward doubled lexicon
two diagonal lines

at right angles
the child centre it-

self dead-centre

O

pens

the footnote

calibrates...
passage

caresses the eye-

lid-en—————
closed circumference deeply etched

clouded) ligated to the (be-
presence of identical blocks
printed in raw clay.

NINA KARACOSTA

Féileacán *

Attach all meaning to fire

years of blown off candles
years of burning in with no instruction out

old records that don't function new
inside an iconic city with no reflection above

a Prometheus with no place to place a plague

The ongoing tempest
the outgoing oracle
the splashing oar

the edge of biologic implants.

**Butterfly* [Irish]

Dilleachtlan *

*a ponytail picks up shells
weighs them in one hand
to estimate value*

Inside the sea aspens of bizarre fish
roll around their spin to entangle you

I lay down towel
let the waves battle in
things that lived inside my two grandmothers
like stones collected meticulously
might appear again in unsuspected pressures

I have to art-create the creation
with possession of increments
measuring inside chemistry tubes
passway letters in different shapes
dilettante acts

I'm my own fish
a human foreground.

**Orphanage* [Irish]

ANAMARÍA CROWE SERRANO

μπαγιάτικος

this is it the path that leads to the source of the river
is there a technical name for that? you see it i think
not quite as you imagined it glass conch mineral gem
 with mud and memory mint

we've been walking a lifetime me with the map you folded
into a rocket the cities you blasted out of your window
the window you climbed from come nightfall before jumping
 through all the hoops

did you look? vaya si te ha costado your heart in shreds
your voice fleeing disorientated up cliffs and under bridges
scaling madness but who says there's no kindness left
 in the seventh circle of hell?

the breeze is playing tricks this afternoon oxygen to please
the pain and this path that takes the wolverine
out of every false start it's making me hungry now see?
for the berries crushed under your feet

ISOBEL ARMSTRONG

Glass Symphony: Kristallnacht

FIRST MOVEMENT

long-stemmed green wine glasses
fine-cut little glasses for port
filigreed champagne glasses

my symphony and song
 crystal symphony
 crystal song
 cry

the sounds of transparency
as hollow glasses sing in air
raisedringing against each other
delight ringsinging
hollowing out sound
 crystal cry

breaking forever in waves
that soon will be
millions of miles old
the shape of transparency breaking
there is no outside to sound
no other side no beyond
ringsinging in

sensuous riddles of glass

hard but
 translucency is its shape clear and shining
outlines made solid all out of light
and emptiness

silent harmonics of light
play inside and outside transparency
light breaks and reverberates

through quiet intransigent limpid sides
sound one single exact note
a glass will fall to pieces

and what if
someone inverted the flask
and is pouring out all the light
and emptiness?

...pulling a handle which opened up the dining room table, revealing underneath a leaf which, when put in place, served to bridge the distance between the two halves of the table, so that all the guests could be accommodated. Then I had been given permission to help set the table. In doing so, not only was I honoured by having utensils like lobster forks and oyster knives pass through my hands; but even the familiar everyday utensils called into service—the long-stemmed green wine glasses, the fine-cut little glasses for port, the filigreed champagne glasses, the silver saltcellars shaped like little tubs, the heavy metal carafe-stoppers in the form of gnomes or animals—all had a festive air about them. Finally, I was allowed to position, on one of the many glasses at each place-setting, the card which announced where that particular guest was to sit.¹

his Berlin childhood when his father's white shirt gleamed like a mirror welcoming guests
long-stemmed green wine glasses
fine-cut little glasses for port
filigreed champagne glasses
carafe stoppers

*each guest's card by the many glasses at each place setting
who sat at table but so crowded there was no room for death*

¹ From Walter Benjamin's *Berlin Childhood*. Walter Benjamin began to revise his *Berlin Childhood* in 1938, the year of Kristallnacht, the night of broken glass

Here reigned a type of furniture that, having capriciously incorporated styles of ornament from different centuries, was thoroughly imbued with itself and its own duration. Poverty could have no place in these rooms, where death itself had none. There was no place in them to die; and so their occupants died in sanatoriums, while the furniture went directly to a dealer as soon as the estate was settled. In these rooms death was not provided for. That is why they appeared so cosy by day and became the scene of bad dreams by night.

bad dreams by night

someone filled the carafe up with light
and stoppered it up
and now the light has congealed in it

impenetrable a still clear lump in the sun
dust lies on the outside

death was not provided for

after the wedding was over
we danced at the best hotel
the windows misted over
as we danced so it chanced
to palm court musicians and canapés
while portly lugubrious and slow
our mother was waltzed in the style of an earlier phase
from three decades ago
backs arched in manoeuvres once made to amaze
and our children played by the orchestra we talked and it all
went well
the bride and the groom were so happy and...

*breathe on a window pane
a sigh made visible
haze on a chill surface is
the history of breath*

*time precipitate
in vapour
for a moment
only seen by
dimming the glass and the eye*

*vapour clears resolved
momentarily to tears or
brushed by an impatient hand
blurs to a watery residue so
the eye sees through
a mark that its own body's made*

*warm breath and cold converge
a living mist forms
where a glass-blower's exhalation
hardened into transparency
he left his mark
informing blankness
with an invisible history
lived by emptying out his lungs*

*one breath seen through another
matching air with air
now the gazer's solitude is over
the past's cold breath repairs except
for the window pane's syllogism
that declares
there is still more to utter
what these words make visible and suppress
the unsaid words for die and death*

*'Mazel Tov!'
under the canopy
after the ceremony
the Rabbi's reading
a fragile glass
wrapped in an impeccable napkin*

was crushed by an impeccable leather shoe
we peered at the sharply creased trousers
the groom's solemn face
how could they decide the groom and his bride
what this fracture was for?
we were crying though as we cried 'Mazel Tov'

did they once dash the glass to the ground both of them perhaps

*sliversplintered
silvershattered
light glints
on shards
irremediably
splitsplintered forced
into the flesh*

*is that it love's forever piercing
or*

*fractured light and glass
together
broken to infinity
strange bond from breaking
the split that multiplies
love's everlasting
fracturing matter and light
forever
or*

*nothing can be sole or whole
that has not been rent well . . . there's that too
or*

*the always exodus
the arch of Titus
reared to assert the razing
of Jerusalem's Second Temple*

crushed under foot
Hadrian finished it off
Splintersplintered
shards

or

and all those wedding guests in
half a glass of wine reflecting
inverted people walking about
in golden fluid
half way up a goblet
crowding a liquid nether world
flushed blue and red
to ceiling lights beneath them

quieter upper space
of empty glass
films
refractions vaguer lights apart
cut off by golden liquid

from smokers drinkers talkers
eaters of canapés
suspended from a liquid surface
severing upper and nether space

hard to see the logic of
blurred images
crossed and recrossed by themselves

easy to see all these people
sitting upside down drinking eating
latkes
lox
gefilte
knish
condensed alive here...

must connect somehow but
what are you staring for
the children ask
what are you doing peering
so hard at your glass
mad Mum
this is only wine I say
think of a beer glass
all those facets
compounding prismatic fragments
bits and pieces
of so many worlds
mad Mum

Crack

*I found an elegant line one day
terminating in imperceptible transparency
it was two lines or four
edges cut in the clarity
accurate matching severance
held apart in the tense glass and two
internal planes facing across a fissure of air
reciprocal landscapes ruin of such precision
each glacial hollow fits
what it was hollowed from
multiple splinterage
corresponds with translucent scree*

*a gash in the skin eager membrane
thread and filament will bodge
up the tissue somehow and stop
the scarlet drops
but this is a clean cut, an integral fault
crack*

ShadowShadow

*a drained glass
has shed its slanting copy*

away on to the table
where things are made their double

*tenebrae for a form
displaced into a shadow*

concentric gleams of luster show
in sediments of light
*things that are not there
or which cannot appear*
until secreted layers of radiance
show *in the flux of a shadow*
residues hardened long ago

it does not match but it is warm
*holding things impossible to see
except by seeing double*

except in an ellipse of shade
contours made of light
spilled on to a table

tenebrae

filigree champagne glasses
green long stemmed wine glasses
little glasses for port fine cut

bad dreams *death not provided for tenebrae*

echo o o o singingininsingingin
millions of miles old

Alembic Sun

golden sun late lazy large and slow
ending day each day now hot now
warm now grasping at the later hour
willing the lees of light

golden sun to dark and on again
dawn fever rising from the night
hot skin burns and ice within sweats holds
willing the heat change fast

golden sun drawing out the heart beat
into pulse of time now stolen
breath after breath drawn from beaded thread
willing life and what's mine

gold rush midas stone philosopher's
blood touch alembic deeper red
mine blows changeling inflating to vein
I would not look for heart

gold rush surge the fluid and heat charge
all to crumbling merge ashes dearth
pulsing red crusted promising me
I would not look for calm

gold rush fiery dark red flowing
stir and pour look for more than hope
quick spurt sounds of a deeper flash charge
I would not look for life

you give it to me, give me more and
give me sun gold, heat life, relief
take away this deluding sickness
melt chilindre brand seal

you give it to me the darkness heal
count drops, hours, shade from blinding heat
error out terror out alchemise
pound the rays and forge me

you give it to me gild leaves leavings
beyond the pain of setting sun
repeat red sulphur gold cheating hope
grey weld and massicot

I tell you visions the furnace set
in leaden sky and blood congeals
shadows dispossess life cast
minted xanthin flowers

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

DAVID GREENSLADE

Prism Descent

What reason floss, extremity leads to sorrow *Martin Sinaas*

Prisms bend the light of close relations,
assessing how a zip might split apart
should spirit overstuff with heat.

Fire isn't what it used to be now staircase
pulpits burst with every cause to burn,
foundations steam their hidden roots.

Arguments (cast well adrift from facts) defend
the herring action of a fabric hook,
certain of disguise by invading even more.

Toxic visits—high minded compromise
concedes a visceral hallucination gasp.
Suspicion modifies an ordinary aftermath.

Flying Buttress

Architecture is a theatre of social empathy *Spiro Picolli*

More than my hand carries, completes
the life cycle of a trowel, it could be
cloth that simply makes a world tomorrow.

Scratch marks swell the wandering surface, hauliers
indicate which street unpacks a labyrinth—
guilds migrate from florid Gothic to Tudor caravan.

Chsiels amplifying stone repeat choral
thank loops under thumb, one foreman mutters,
not just this buttress our eager flights conceive.

SARAH CREWE

B

introducing honey the **boy**
commands words punches holes in doors
baltic **blue** stakhanovite my
nineteen year old heart speaks in
socialist economics flips
when you floor the **belorussian**
hollers out **black** sea aquatics
synchronised **beyond** all fetish

tender engines don't shunt

craving connection.
result of being
raised in earshot
of trains and railey
walls. rubber shoes keep
bouncing off the lines
into primary coloured
carriages. constant stair
crawling lift swapping
frantic platform dash.
i'd hate to miss you.

GARY HOTHAM

Four Haiku

before the day begins below freezing
easy to follow
instructions

birthday wishes
stones skipping across water
that isn't ours

before
the frost has a chance to melt
not a day to find myself

rain in the storm drain
new neighbors who haven't moved
the tulip bed

ALISON FRASER

Blood Chit

I approach when he tells me I've forgot:
still skulls of horses, uncommon measurements
raw bone that against fire broke and was left
for woods to grow around, and the fence to fall
water remains in the old well at the curve of the brook
past the waterfall, so we found

haste beginning to the end, the aged plant that contains itself
the putting forth of teeth, iced roots that cannot do so at once
brought to close up, each becoming upwards in one being
now light in the grass at the base of the lawn
tightens its repose until she-balsam bark blisters
run from six branches' budded blooming lee-side lichens

I could say it was mine because I broke this body in it
and I watched her hands clutch and reclutch the empty air
lost from my chest, no reverberation to put nails to cheek
to undress my worry, now until this wind grows
long unto my arm measuring in block
'til I no longer know the way to my own foot

go into the right woods, so sweet and full
sometimes I can almost see, owned now adrift
I sat, ringed by a circle, and they said I would not know
the bare bone edges of my fingers curl beneath skin
loved by his churlish heart; I could not count how I've aged
I am without measurement and the snow comes but does not fall

SIMON PERRIL

from Archilochus on the Moon

8.

Zeus, a fucking sign
would be welcome, other

than your swap
of newly smith'd spears

for a spine.
Until then

I decline all offerings, place
no further bets

and if I'm still
your pet, be advised

I bite
even my own limbs;

what's mine, is yours:
a mouth full of blood

irrigates my pride,
sole lunar crop

9.

I speak ill, as
we've had our fill of Zeus-born kings
and Spartan heroes.

ANNE GORRICK

Atomica across the water with a Morpheus action figure

(after poem 'Lady Catfish' —as suggested by Google)

The butcher says, "It's anime snacktime!"
Ghostman, frost, monkeywrestle Montreal
Hunt for mushrooms in a morphine galaxy that looks like New Jersey
False freezing, then fried in butter
A flock of dimes, a mansard roof vampire weekend
Her mansion is taller than mine
A widow's walk, her tears diverted on multiple slopes
When multiplying exponents on instapaper
Medicine got it wrong when memory dies
Melted chocolate makes you thinner
When melody is ripe and in season
Dolphin infused vodka, insect into select
Insert pearls into an oracle, and then turn a lemon into a battery
A mason is about to expose all his secrets
Tajikistan stupidly, a mirror for Perseus, a catalyst
Almost b, barely c
His holiness's petroleum is limited
Molarity, my mouth with myriad subtitles, bankrupted commas
A panic-ed atheism in salmon damask
The heart's curriculum
Mandarin oranges, my prophet chunders
She wears her depression mascara and
watches Madagascar penguins in a Christmas caper
Wax butterflies with the cutest personalities
Hungrynowhere, under a wrecking ball moon
The rage written in the from and to on an envelope
Igloos sewn with human summary
An example of a nonelectrolyte event
An elm and three sisters, pollen mixed with transit
The disease in this phrase, sleep strapped to his friendly attachments
Philadelphia's sunny disintegration
An alarm clock that actually cooks bacon
A nerdist breakdown in itchy bumps, in Japanese

Hexidecimal Hawaiian Hindusim

He is comprised of a repeating self, his best sarcastic gospel

Saran wrap weight loss for wufniks

Abandon the heart as if it were a florist

Salt means help or luck

A mouth full of gold, many of his attributes are not valid

A memory of light, or a chest to pin a medal on

Damn you, autocorrect

Damsel lace, ladder rungs

A dictionary burial at sea

Swallow death in a sentence, its ice green lava

Program logic rattles and gnarls

A maneating and stock picking robot

A parade of oyster and theories

I should be in French, where the days are divided by a darkroom
discretion

He was finally alone with his digital dream materials, his dudeness,
his divine shadow

Random number generator, ransom note generator

Android tourists sleeping for intensive purposes

Her headache was high in fat in her manorama

Biblebirds, a relative's DNA like an omen machine

Plum oil, a jam colored shawl when the sun turns blue

Bacon oracle bioavailability, kiss midnight from mouth to ear

Tanning luminosity in pythagoreanism

George Bataille, sonically speaking, said

Arsonists get all the girls

Say a novena to make darkness fall, to kiss girls

Hybridize that sonata, note that her realm is closed but can be visited

Use this poem to generate random events

Randomly firing freeze ray, throwing up, falling asleep, losing weight

Stop breathing, you are a fortune cookie cliché in Vaseline, Taco

Bell meat, urine

ALEXANDRA SASHE

Poem

1.

Lip-locked,
place-ridden.

Happenstance casts
a cork anchor—
incision
into the closed parentheses

(as chance may have it,
may not,
may leave it open—)

a painless surgery on the ever-
healing-over

eventlessness.
Counterfeit coins of days—
small change,
loose change:

alms to myself, begging
at the corners of long
afternoons.

Eye
caught up in reflections (mis)
-carries the *ever*
along the two-weeks' diameter,
immobilizes in
monologues

the Host to one's lips'
partedness.

Full stop splits into colon:
casts the dice
to unlace the street lights,
to step in—barely leave
ruins,

(a shortcut of the
two weeks' radius).

Else,
to step out:
a name—less,
initials, less—
a letter:

silhouette, mired
knee-deep in mirrors
(a static railway-ever-
-go-round,

from here
into here in your side
vision,
via the *Schwarzenberggasse*).

2.

Home relics
counterspell:

an essay proof-
read by a deaf hand,
sealed in, powdered with
dust.

At daybreak
waters lie seamless,
straitjacketed with eleven bridges.
One waits for winter,
face-prints on the pane.

Full stops crumble to marks of omission.

(and the mist turns yesterday
by osmosis. Yesterday's
hollow hours' holy minutes
of Lent and Carnival, blood and roses).

Months siblings, hole-
bellied—a
yellow light stutter at the crossing.
A monosyllabic stutter.
Place names,
lipped, silenced, are
locked away in the cupboards.
The stale yields no longer
to blade—

crumbles
to a forgetful sweep.

3.

Pivoted on desertion
the moons swing back—spill
over the cherry-striped coach.

Gypsies come,
predict your foresight,
carry away the moons—
leave behind
one
to play solitaire to
with your pack of *cartes blanches*.

The words-split, a greyhaired beetle,
is shaping
lips: open, closed, open
brackets.

Awake, you see the railway slit
your hemi-
sphered vision.

ANDREW McMILLAN

just because I do this doesn't mean

not knowing names doesn't make it something less
the midroad fight over red jumper and bike doesn't make it
something more it was just

a long walk through see saw streets
a stomach stretched tight as drumskin over hollow abdomen
mouths finding every part of one another

watching the mirror like a laptop screen
a moon that kept trying to light us but kept off
a flat full of shortflightstopover

the one who wanted to pretend he was wrestling
to be pinned under the anxious face of the clock watching
the kisses that wanted to stay for longer than a night

the one who said he wants to be a writer
in the way an old woman in slippers
might say she used to want to be a dancer

the heavy scent of them as they showered and I dressed
running until I was breathless in the centre of town
it wasn't the rain the rain hadn't come yet but it would

gospel

this is not the beginning
of a joke
two monks get on a train
one says to the other
and what I take from that is that I don't really have to change at all
outside a lake is frozen thick enough to walk on

In the music of wind and water

Cross currents lift and roll Annalise.
Plankton, fellow wanderer, twirls and sways.
One hand for the ship!

I sit at an angle in a secure corner
alone on watch, my feet braced
against the bulkhead.

Check forward then aft, harnessed
to the cleat, as my husband sleeps below,
I ward off any dangers:

an approaching freighter,
a roving oil drum,
a freak wave that could swamp

the cockpit or black clouds
lingering too long,
like vessels that echo loss.

On a clear and windless day
we lazy about, enjoy our breakfast,
do a spring clean below.

In the music of wind and water,
our bodies shift to a living-on-land mode
and forget, for a few hours
or days even, who and where we are.

We have free run about the cabin,
no lurching for grab-holds or
struggles with a sloping loo.

Our spirits lift and open
as we glare at our reflections
in the smooth surface azure.

It looks back at us knowingly.
Connected to the universe,
disconnected from the world.

Novice

Annalise plows through the wind's eye,
beating in a blow.
The mast vibrates, sails flutter
until settled or are tightened
to lie flat. Lines snap,
shrouds hum, the hull leans over
as insolent waves water
the deck or us.

After all this
Annalise is in the same exact spot.
Foul weather gear
is too heavy to wear.
And even worse to shed it,
if one dares go below.
(The wretched lurching up and down.)

This is a washing machine.
I am turned inside out.
My husband can crawl on deck
while seas wash over him,
take sails down,
mend them
when they tear,
repair the engine, the rigging, the head
and at the same time, cook.

PAUL O'PREY

Seeing, Believing

Erasmus was wrong: when you turn on the light
darkness reinvents itself as shadow

Your shadow is uniquely yours
but looks like everyone else

A grope in the dark sounds fun
but not if nothing's there

Those guys in Plato's cave
trust their imagination

Scared of the night and a candle in the hand
watch those dreams escape from sleep, and be believed

as when sunlight strikes the steel of mortal men in battle
soldiers seem like angels

Seawatcher

The skilled seawatcher
looks first to the sky

source of all its trauma
and desire

next the wind,
breaker of moods

must bow to the moon,
god of every move

SIRIOL TROUP

Pointed Remarks

1. TO GUARD AGAINST CONFUSION, PLEASE SAY NOTHING

Talking isn't really my thing
but let's give it a go:
Love is a spiral staircase—
enticing, staggering, impossibly steep.
It makes me giddy.
Stop laughing!
The future is only a brief stop.

2. DON'T BE SO TOUCHY

And you? Have you been waiting long?
This is the polecats' favourite place at night.
One thing's clear:
it won't be a walk in the park.

Good plan! I'll behave!
Just hypothetically—
is everything under control?

3. SILENCE IN COURT

You're looking rough
though I'm the victim in this story.
I thought about you the whole way here.

No need to be embarrassed.
Have you been reading Henry James?

The wild boar is furtive and conscientious,
he gets under your skin.

Victim—good catchword!
The pleasure was all mine.
Another round?
No further questions.

4. THE SAME AS BEFORE, ONLY WITHOUT STRAY DOGS

You kept your word: it doesn't hurt.
But something smells risky,
something smells burnt.

5. KILL-JOY

The mating call of the short-eared owl is
irresistible. Such a show-off,
so sanctimonious, so pious.
I grind my teeth,
I stiffen like dry rot.

You know what's a shame?
I had other choices:
the fortune-cookie could have been swapped.

Just for the record—
were we on familiar terms?

6. THE THING ABOUT FATE

I've been off the rails
since birth.
It's a long trek: mis-
understandings, dis-
agreements, Beauty
and the Beast...

Oh, collapsible love!
How do you imagine it?
The fact is—
I must—
And that's my final word.

SONIA OVERALL

Richter's Paris

there is something in the way that dust settles

you do not want to look down
but the tail of your eye
is drawn by the crumpled, lidless boxes

shameless roofless
exposing their slotted innards to the skies

for a second you glimpse a bathtub drawn water waiting

but that cannot be

against the drone of the engine
the words: *what happened here?*

you cough awkwardly

nobody answers

NORMAN JOPE

Friedrich in the Forest

Traces of a wolf—and of a soldier, peering
through the paint of his eyes in mid-afternoon.
There's something afoot that turns this world to winter,
a trick of the light when seen through pines
and, on the snow-covered slope, a cross
drives a stake through industriousness and noise.
I enter the canvas, dreaming as I breathe.
The unconfined takes the shape of clouds
and the world's renewed with its excellence of birds.

I enter the canvas, breathing as I dream
and as hushed as the land is. A pilgrim
into snow-depth and star-cloud, I seek strange light
from without and within, writing down my footprints
as I deepen in, lost foundling like that soldier
from a confident southern army. What ate him, wolf or bear?
No matter. By spring, his jawbone had bleached.
The birds are simply and elusively themselves
and the unconfined takes the shape of clouds.

By the spring, his jawbone had bleached
but, on a mild green slope, I replace that cross
and know that, all around, the world has changed
to a new form of light. Industriousness and noise
are useless commodities where life's this simple
and something too innocent for godhood lurks
like a starving wolf. The deeper in, the more I praise.
I have entered the canvas, dreaming as I sing
and there is nothing I need that is not from the forest.

Ice on the Stylus

Amon Düül II, Yeti

On the K2 or Dachstein. a peppermint snow-cool intro
heralds a masculine shape with fur the colour of silver
you need crampons to dig. In a Munich studio
they case each other's joints, these wary musicians

as the raga begins to move, from Ganges to Kailas,
from Schwabing to the methane sheen of Triton—
his antimony shadow's cast across night
as taxis growl off set, as Andreas and Gudrun

skulk in myths of divine retribution
expressed in broken glass and an equally-jagged
glamour fix. He walks by way of this music
into Bavarian pastures, half-iced, like Herzog

striding to oppose a death that did not happen—
for what is ahead, in this place and time
is all tomorrow. Opels and Porsches
race from the foul paternal darkness

into a place the blood friends mapped
six centuries before. What restlessness, what ambition
is encoded here. A being like an iceberg, like a mineral Golem
strides, beyond the TV towers and stage-set precincts

into steppe-space and space-steppe, into all wind hurls...
and slows to percussive applause. A bass motif repeats
and we are on the plateau. It is 1971, with infinite oil
and a glorious hubris we lack. Note by exultant note

he crosses our path once more.

DAVID MILLER

Spiritual Letters (Series 6, #7)

She told me that as a little girl she thought of spiders as her friends and would read stories to them. *Did the other children call you Spider Girl?* I wondered, hoping that they didn't. The Persian rugs displayed outside the café drew the eye as surely as the hookah pipes. Was it then or some other time that she mentioned a hankering for hookah-smoking?

foreshortening
your face here there here
foreshadowing

- - - -

in dark looking out
four hours past midnight
cathedral glass blue
above the white
wooden shutters

I shook the old piece of chocolate out of the trap—a trap already baited but which I had added bait to—into a rubbish bag; but as I did I noticed the small dark shape had a tail, and realised I had something to rescue and release. —I've made a breakthrough, he told me; I'm no longer afraid of the mouse in my flat. —There's someone here with a strong body odour, she said as we entered the gallery; I replied that I couldn't detect anything. —Yes, she continued, I have a really good sense of smell; my mother and I can both smell snakes. An apple tree in blossom, with a lone squirrel negotiating the branches. The two fox cubs jumped over each other, tussled, exposing their bellies, and ran back and forth in the garden; one found an abandoned yellow plastic toy to play with, and every time it picked it up in its jaws the toy let out a squeak. My philosophy tutor introduced me to her cat, Pascal, and then to her pet rabbit, but without telling me its name (—It's too embarrassing, she said). I had been thinking it might be called Spinoza or Kierkegaard, but she eventually told me it was Bun-bun. Hail beating, crashing,

battering against the windows and roofs as I sit in a room upstairs overlooking the garden, writing to a friend; the white stones covered the grass and the long beds of soil. A dog bitten on the face by a rattler survived; a different dog was bit on the leg and died. —Why did he leave his dead dog out in the woods to rot—and what did he really expect his friends to say when they encountered it? The storm hit, as sudden as the rain and wind were violent; he hysterically chased around the rooms of his house arranging buckets and saucepans, with little sense that I could see. I stood there astonished at his panic, as I really thought I'd seen worse in my own country. You claimed that the colour of your eyes had recently changed, and that the brown irises had become tinged with red. But I'd never allowed myself to look closely enough before; and I refrained from doing so now. The lashing rain obscured the streetlamp outside my window. Water dripped from the ceiling while, oblivious, he talked on the phone. —Is there anything I can carry for you, dear one? I know you don't have socks or a pocket watch, but the water is deep, and there must be something I could carry.... When I heard that someone had dropped ten thousand poems from a helicopter, I could easily imagine that she'd been the pilot, as well as one of the poets. No way of asking her, however, as she'd completely stopped speaking to me. —It's the sea that the heart lives on, and the sea is salt; it's salt the heart lives on. A stark ark. Often one by one, and none by none at times. Wind, hail, heavy rain, thundersnow... heart's beat. *Then*, he wrote, *it all stopped: she stopped painting, he stopped living, I couldn't continue writing, you and I stopped....* Please tell me *no*.

Germanium

I.

small quantities

widespread deficiency diseases are unknown likewise the benefits
for the organism a little too much affects thekidneys the outcome of respiratory paralysis is known. this
is product information: no

data reported

from studies on healthy subjects but undeniable deployments
in other areas. should one see through walls andin darkness on the hunt it'll hit the fifty
fifty again double twofold

hanging tight

to branches horse-hair or simply in the nature
of fellow-travellers yesterday to b who complained no businesslike you know and I didn't know where we
were in the woods.

II.

verdigris eating

at sheeting plasterwork the nonetheless nice on a course
that no-one's likely to envy you for slowing downnext stop already. delayed arrival in stendal soon
enough off elsewhere. nowhere

have I

seen dahlias like in the garden that replaced
the one I was looking for quince scent remindingme of nothing made me sneeze in the renamed
street. I'd tossed a

small coin
to decide then over the fence. nearby someone
was chopping invisible timber. I heard him splitting stacking
splitting the logs heard them drumming from the block
and nearly called out.

NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

ISOBEL ARMSTRONG is Emeritus Professor of English at Birkbeck, University of London and a Senior Research Fellow of the Institute of English Studies at the University of London, and is a Fellow of the British Academy. She is a specialist in 19th-century poetry, literature and women's writing. Her publications include *The Radical Aesthetic* (2000), *Women's Poetry, Late Romantic to Late Victorian: Gender and Genre* (1999) and *Victorian Poetry: Poetry, Politics and Poetics* (1993). Her poetry has appeared previously in *Shearsman* and in the anthology *Infinite Difference* (Shearsman, 2010).

TOM BAMFORD is a poet, writer, musician and proofreader based in London. His work has appeared in *Hi Zero* and is forthcoming in *Kaffeeklatsch*. He is the co-writer (with Jack Lowe) of the contemporary music piece *separate cat facilities*. Among other things he is opposed to Early Day Motion 912. Other activities can be followed at byproductions.tumblr.com.

GERALDINE CLARKSON also had work in the last issue. Her work has been appearing in a number of UK magazines, including *Tears in the Fence*, *Smiths Knoll* and *Eyewear*, and two pieces were featured in *This Line is not for Turning: Anthology of Contemporary British Prose Poetry*, (Cinnamon Press, 2011).

M.A. (MARY) COGHILL lives in Devon. Her collection *Designed to Fade* was published by Shearsman in 2006. A new collection, *Shades of Light*, is out this year from the new publisher, City of Poetry.

SUSAN CONNOLLY lives in Drogheda, Ireland. Her second collection, *Forest Music* was published by Shearsman in 2009. Recent publications have been in *Poetry Ireland Review*, *The Stony Thursday Book* and *Shine On: Irish Writers for Shine*.

JEN CRAWFORD is originally from New Zealand, but now lives in Singapore, where she teaches at Nanyang Technological University. In 2000 Five Islands Press published her poetry sequence, *Admissions*, which was shortlisted for the Anne Elder and Dame Mary Gilmore awards. Her other publications include *bad appendix* (Auckland: Titus Books, 2009), *Napoleon Swings* (Auckland: Soapbox Press, 2009), and *Pop Riveter* (Auckland: Pania Press, 2011).

SARAH CREWE lives in Liverpool. Her first chapbook, *Aqua Rosa*, was released by erbacce press in 2012. Work is forthcoming in *The Sheffield Anthology: Poems From The City Imagined* from Smith/Doorstop.

ANAMARÍA CROWE SERRANO has a collection from Shearsman, *Femispheres* (2008). She is a widely-published translator from Spanish and Italian, and lives in Dublin.

ALISON FRASER is a PhD student studying poetics at the University at Buffalo.

SYLVIA GEIST is a Berlin-born poet and artist now based in Lower Saxony. She has won several prizes, has edited an anthology of Polish poetry, and has published several books, most recently *Der Pfau*, a novella (Vienna: Luftschacht Verlag, 2008), and a collection of poems *Vor dem Wetter* (Luftschacht, 2009).

ANNE GORRICK has three collections from Shearsman: *Kyotologic* (2008), *I-Formation (Book 1)* (2010) and *I-Formation (Book 2)* (2012). She lives in New York's Hudson Valley.

DAVID GREENSLADE's most recent collection is the Shearsman volume *Lyrical Diagrams* (2012). The poems here come from a developing collection called *Rarely Pretty Reasonable*, in which every poem will have an artwork on the facing page. He also writes in Welsh.

HARRY GUEST has a collected poems, *A Puzzling Harvest*, from Anvil, as well as a subsequent volume, *Some Time*. Shearsman published *Comparisons & Conversions* in 2008, a volume consisting of a long poem and a number of translations. *High on the Downs. A Festschrift for Harry Guest* was published by Shearsman to celebrate his 80th birthday in 2012.

CATHERINE HALES lives in Berlin and is a professional translator. Shearsman published her first collection *hazard or fall* in 2010.

BEN HICKMAN teaches at the University of Kent. He has two volumes of critical work from Edinburgh University Press: *Poetry and Real Politics: Crisis and the US Avant-Garde* (2013) and *John Ashbery and English Poetry* (2012).

LYNNE HJELMGAARD has a collection from Shearsman, *The Ring* (2011). She lives in Sussex.

NORMAN JOPE has a collection from Shearsman, *Dreams of the Caucasus* (2010), and two recent books from Waterloo Press: *The Book of Bells and Candles* (2009) and *Aphinar* (2012). He lives in Plymouth.

NINA KARACOSTA lives in Paris.

JOHN LATTA lives in Michigan. His first collection, *Rubbing Torsos*, appeared from Ithaca House in 1979. More recent is *Breeze*, winner of the 2003 Ernest Sandeen Prize in Poetry, from the University of Notre Dame Press. He blogs regularly at *Isola di Rifuti*.

MAITREYABANDHU has a first collection, *The Crumb Road*, forthcoming from Bloodaxe, which has been selected as a Poetry Book Society Recommendation for the second quarter of 2013. He teaches at the London Buddhist Centre, and was ordained into the Western Buddhist Order 20 years ago. A chapbook *The Bond* appeared from Smith/Doorstop in 2011 and was shortlisted for the Michael Marks Award. His poems have won a number of prizes, and have been widely published in British journals. He has also published two books on Buddhism.

ANDREW McMILLAN teaches Creative Writing at Liverpool John Moores University. His work has appeared in *The Salt Book of Younger Poets* and in two chapbooks: *protest of the physical*, due from Holdfire Press in late 2013, and *the moon is a supporting player* (Red Squirrel Press).

DAVID MILLER's collected prose, *The Waters of Marah* (2006) is available from Shearsman in the UK and Singing Horse Press in the USA. A large volume of his poetry is in the planning stages. Parts of the *Spiritual Letters* project have appeared in a Reality Street volume of the same name.

PAUL O'PREY is Vice-Chancellor of Roehampton University and an authority on the work of Robert Graves, whose correspondence and essays on poetry he has edited. He has also co-translated Emilia Pardo Bazán's novel *The House of Ulloa* for Penguin, and has seen his poetry appear in a number of UK magazines.

SONIA OVERALL teaches part-time at the University of Kent, and is a novelist, with two books published by Fourth Estate: *A Likeness* (2005) and *The Realm of Shells* (2011).

SIMON PERRIL lives in Rutland and teaches at De Montfort University, Leicester. The poems in this issue come from his forthcoming Shearsman volume, *Archilochus on the Moon*. His most recent collection was *Nitrate* (Salt Publishing, Cambridge, 2010).

SAM SAMPSON lives in Auckland. Shearsman co-published his first collection *Everything Talks* (2008) with Auckland University Press. One of the poems from his last appearance in this magazine was selected as one of the best New Zealand poems of 2012.

ALEXANDRA SASHE is a poet, linguist and translator. She is a regular contributor to literary reviews in the UK, France and Austria. Born in Moscow, she spent her most formative years in Paris. Following the swerve her personal life and her poetics were taking—towards Germanic culture—she has recently moved to Vienna, where she now lives. Shearsman Books published her first collection, *Antibodies*, in April 2013.

SIRIOL TROUP's last collection was the Shearsman volume, *Beneath the Rime* (2009). She lives in Twickenham.

TAMAR YOSELOFF lives in London, is a freelance creative-writing tutor, and has published four collections, most recently *The City with Horns* (2011) and *Fetch* (2007), both from Salt Publishing. She divides her time between London and Suffolk.