

Comrades^{Press}



Comrades Press E-Sampler

October 2003

Introduction

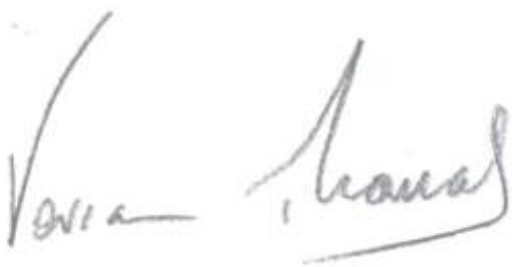
Included in this e-sampler are selections from all the books and chapbooks that Comrades Press has published since it first began paper publishing in 2001.

Some of the titles are no longer available but are included here as an example of the work that we have published and because the writing deserves a second airing. I hope you enjoy the samples I've chosen from the books which, I have to admit, are some of my own favourites. This electronic format is not something that we intend to pursue but as many of our books are limited editions and sell out quickly I thought that it was well worth trying.

Comrades Press still runs on a non-profit basis and we welcome donations, which have in the past helped us to publish things that we otherwise couldn't due to lack of funds. We are very grateful to those that have helped us so far as without them our publishing fund would look even sadder than it does now. Donations can be made securely using any credit card and further details can be found at our web site.

Please do feel free to forward this file on to anybody that you think might be interested and if any of the available books are of interest then please do visit our web site where purchasing links for each book can be found.

Thanks for your support

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Verian Thomas', written in a cursive style.

Verian Thomas
Comrades Press

UNO

A Poetry Anthology



Edited By
Verian Thomas

Uno – A Poetry Anthology – Edited By Verian Thomas

Warning! This product contains poetry*

Ingredients: Luis Garcia, Larry Jaffe, Michael Rothenberg, Keith Johnson, Clayton Vaughan, t. kilgore splake, Devon C. Fitzgerald, Rochelle Hope Mehr, Robert Wynne, Derek Adams, Chris Mansell, Jeffrey C. Alfier, Moshe Benaroch, Brad Evans, Thomas Fortenberry, Jayseth Guberman, Marie Kazalia, The Mag Man, Stazja McFadyen, J. Berk, Marc Olmsted, Sam Vaknin, Richard Denner, Pablo Paredes Romero, Adam Perry, Radames Ortiz, John Bennett, Tess Christi, C.E. Chaffin, Jon Moll, Salvatore Amico M. Buttaci, Shane Jones, RhondaK, Nicole Hubbard, Andrew Hull, C.M. Frederick, Michelle McGrane, Emily Van Duyne, Regina Coeli deWinter, Dmitri Arbacauskas, Diane Payne, Averil Bones, Mike Hession, Donna Michele Hill, Suzanne Frischkorn, Cate Compton, Julie Cookson, Jennifer Ann Vickers, Deborah Swain, Allyson Kalea Boggess, Lyn Lifshin, Claudine Moreau, Adrienne Lee, Lisa Gaidanowicz, Ed Jamieson, Jr, Peter Ball, Andrew Baron, Janet I. Buck, Michelle Cameron, John Cartlidge, Arthur Chappell, Ron Gibson, Jr., Larry D. Griffin, Mick Moss, Judith Pordon, Nanette Rayman, Joy Reid, Michelle Worrall, T.L. Stokes, Mike Subritzky, Rob Walker, Michelle Watson, Edward Wier, Amy Elisabeth Wirtz, Sofie Jansson.

Nutritional Information: Brain fertiliser for the mind starved of insight, wit, and humanity.

* *may contain traces of nuts.*

ORDERING:

Available in Paperback (ISBN: 1-4010-4120-5)
& eBook (ISBN: 1-4010-4121-3)

Pages: 277

www.comrade.org.uk/Press/

Averil Bones

Sydney, Australia

WATCHING THE SKY

Watching the sky,
and listening to the passing and passing of cars,
the passing of feet, and of time in the sand on the beach,
I wonder how small I am.

The weight of my body cycles with the moon,
the colour of my hair with the sun's season.
That these things should change me is no surprise.
But do my nights of drinking worry the sun's hair grey
and slow the night moon in her orbit?

Mike Hession
Manchester, England

Ice House

This is an ice house:
kitchen, lounge, bedroom.

I lie in bed
and watch each breath rising.

Exhale:
a shortlived cloud of hope.

Exhale:
a steamtrain, leaving.

Exhale:
the ghost of something.

And the ceiling creaks
under the weight of accumulated ice.

Claudine Moreau

Arlington, Virginia USA

BLEEDING SEPTEMBERS

Here the seasons stumble
upon themselves in the trees
like eleven year old girls
with thinning chlorophyll limbs,
linear and clumsy,
moving forward,
teetering back.
Knees—scuffed and bruised—
dance among September leaves,
lift them to the verge of bleeding.

Collected Poems

1961-2000



✧ RICHARD DENNER ✧

Collected Poems 1961-2000, by Richard Denner.

Richard Denner's poems are storms of desert rain. Short, intense, profuse and creating fertile ground.

The first poem of his collected work begins with this slender proclamation: "we find / ourselves / in a new / world / speaking / an old / language." Yet, Denner finds a nascent tenderness in that old tongue that radiates equally from drama and humor.

Hugging the spine of this 500 plus page, black monolith, Denner's incantations rant, roll off the tongue and stare down the gullet of the eternal with a vengeance, and with an elegance that is no pomp and all circumstance.

Certainly the circumstances of this forty-year span of the poet's life are fertile ground enough for poetic insights. The poems are arranged chronologically and geographically, moving from Berkeley in the 1960's to Alaska to Washington to Colorado, finally landing in Santa Rosa, California in 1998. The volume also includes the author's linoleum block prints, nude figures, rendered with a confident honesty.

The poet's voice remains remarkably secure and even throughout this stretch of time and personal evolution, as if the voice itself were already found and whole when that journey began and only the angle of perception and the depth of vision have clarified.

Denner is fond of angles, of the way light, thrown on matter, changes reality, alters meaning, if even for a moment. His poems spawn words that then turn 180 degrees to new meanings by association, or by the magician's slight of hand.

His poems of love are arrestingly unhampered by sentiment. His politics are sedimentary rock elevated by Platonic technics, ideas hoisted and tossed like a salad and dressed with apple cider vinegar. Sharp and uncensored. Denner is unconcerned about appearing wise or astute, his writing is clean and playful, devoid of conceit, adroit by virtue of candor.

Denner's work brings us to "a place smaller than the heart / but bigger than the world." And if he is one of the first of his generation of poets to publish a collected work, it is perhaps because he has

lived each day not once, but once again to savor its very tonic and to gain all there is of truth and beauty from the bough's sweet fruit.

—Review by Eve West, University of California, Davis.

"Richard Denner is one of the most original people I know. Copying furiously, creating fearlessly, he begs, borrows & steals, and then invents something utterly unexpected and astounding—& he himself is the first to be surprised. He has too much talent for one person, and his outpourings reflect this abundance. ("Mithra cutting/the throat of the Bull w/a ZIP code") He never stops to chip away, to enhance, or to reduce—it's all there in a Henry Millerian stream-of-absurdity with blasts of wisdom. Quite amazing is Richard."

—Gail Chiarello

"Richard Denner composes poetry with a light touch from a relaxed hand, getting progressively clearer, deeper and more profound through decades of practice. From Berkeley to Alaska, through Ellensburg to Buddhism, his classic insight is rendered in a fine idiomatic vernacular."

—Charles Potts

"Richard Denner has always belonged to the alternative party, its Masonic-anarchist branch. His poems can be playful or run an idea a bit further than you're comfortable with; they almost always vibrate, as he does. Denner is one of the edgiest people I've ever know, and in his best poetry that comes through."

—Mark Halperin

"Out there stuff...it is you coming from that place...in a low-rider with tinted windows, no mufflers on the dual pipes, a hot chicano mama snuggled up against your pale Nordic shoulder."

—John Bennett

"These poems are extraordinary, fantastic, freaky turnings not to be secured with ease, the clarity developed by pursuit, the dark and light of understanding, of misunderstanding, all are here, the eloquence of it as it appears and disappears, whatever it might be, all of it is here."

—Luis Garcia

Richard Denner



Richard Denner was uneducated in Berkeley, California, during the 60s, self-exiled into the Alaskan woods, printing on a 1927 Kesey hand press small, smudgy chapbooks, graduating from University of Alaska, Fairbanks, 1972, continued printing while working at Queen Anne News in Seattle, moved with family to 800 acre cattle ranch east of Ellensburg, Washington, to punch cows and write hayseed verses, finally finding a career as the proprietor of Fourwinds Bookstore & Cafe, settling down to civic responsibilities, Masonic Order, alcoholism and a total freak-out after separating from the most beautiful woman in the world, finding happiness in the teachings of Buddha, 1989, moving to Tara Mandala Retreat Center in Colorado to manage another bookstore and do a long retreat until called back to California in 1997 to care for his elderly parents, staying on after his father's death to write, publish and teach at Summerfield, a Waldorf school near Santa Rosa. You are invited to visit his website: <http://www.dpress.net>

ORDERING:

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www.comrade.org.uk/Press/

VISTA

For Laura

Does love hurt?

—Yes, it hurts.

.

Half cloud
half wave
Half sand
half moon
If I don't suffocate,
I'll drown.

.

Sometimes a little
sometime much
sometimes nothing.

.

What is to love, what
does it mean?
If I say "I love you,"
need this be true?
What kind of mistake
is there room for here?

.

Baffled,
I try to walk
backwards,
see backwards.
The leaves lighten
and grow
visible.
Light
filters down.

.

Feeling is a path,
and when the path splits,
you must sit
and be quiet
until the ground
trembles.

.

To say "I love"
is not the same
as what I feel.
The sense is not
the sentence,
but the words
are enough.

AUTOMORPH

Being in the body
being in the world
curves in space
I love it all
A tree and a rock
a sacred spot
because it is
it just is
I look
I think it through
I do, or I don't—
two fish meet midstream

TURNING AND MIRRORING

Bliss.
Not conditioned.
Enjoying being
undefined
by the circumstance
of sitting in this café.
Ha! Ha!
This is magical ground.
I see what this is.
But whose?
Instant presence.
A woman sits
at the keyboard playing
Smoke Gets in My Eyes.
I smile and receive
a smile.
I catch myself
looking at myself
looking at
myself.

Ex-Lovers and More Important Losses



LISA HAYNES

Ex-Lovers and More Important Losses **by Lisa Haynes**

There is a maddening, mystical paradox about the words of Lisa Haynes. They are as gutsy and as human as a cup of day old coffee in a roadside diner, they can also soar, on passionate faerie wings to the outskirts of a land far beyond Oz. They evoke pain, longing, disappointment, then pull you, abruptly, into the remembrance of a lover's touch; an almost forgotten prayer; the sensual tang of warm, damp skin on a summer's night. Lisa Haynes' words are her heart, her alchemy, her magnificent addiction and her singular view of the human condition.

- Carolee Ross Ross, award winning writer and journalist, honored by the Connecticut Press Club and the National Federation of Press Women.

Lisa Haynes reminds the reader that life is both cruel and exquisite. She turns her words into lions and lambs and has them lie down together. There is a stark candour in her writing that catches one off-guard in the way a guileless, naive child might; but don't be fooled; she tackles the hardest human subjects and her writing is altogether sensual and devastatingly mature.

- Douglas Anderson Anderson, Editor, Black Moon Review

Lisa Haynes builds stain glass windows out of words. Her images reflect and absorb the light of our experience from all sorts of interesting angles, weaving into the center of every vision a secret of the human heart. She is truly one of the most clear-spoken and talented voices in modern poetry today.

Cate Compton Compton, Editor, Atomic Petals

The poems of Lisa Haynes are all layered stories. You get caught up and lost in the flow of the tale, not realizing until your breath goes, just how the familiar truth has pierced your heart in its most tender and vulnerable place. She has a unique way of putting down her words, but the universality of feeling rings in a clear tone that we all have heard.

Sandy Starr Starr, writer/ journalist/ winner of Artisan's 6th Anniversary Poetry Contest.

From the sacrosanct to the irreverent the poetry of Lisa Haynes is a lodestone; her use of language finds its mark with ease. Her images and moods take hold, and I am reminded that nothing is ordinary

least of all her understanding of our human passions.

judi goldberg goldberg, PenHouseInk Press, Guerneville, CA

Lisa Haynes' work addresses familiar topics of loss and grief but with a freshness and specificity that push the reader on. Haynes knows she must have patience to fill the gaps that absence and death create; so she waits and fills the thickened spaces with anger and impatience, as well as memory and her grandmother's rugalach. These she EX-LOVERS AND MORE IMPORTANT LOSSES intertwines with lost children, her father's army blanket, a SWAT team, lullabies and insolent stars. Haynes' language is dreamy and practical. It keeps us alive.

Esther Altshul Helfgott Helfgott, Seattle writer, teacher, author and speaker.

Lisa Haynes



Lisa Haynes was conceived on a houseboat during a thunderstorm as tempestuous as une liaison amoureuse between her sophisticated French-Irish mother and her father, the artist. The first seven years of her life were safe; the next seven were perilous; and the rest have been an exploration into the human condition, which she believes is the certainty of loss and the necessity of love—even in the face of loss.

She lives in the Pacific Northwest with her lover and fellow writer, Ken; her 19-year-old daughter who studies music and theatre; her mother who loves the Seattle Mariners and Perry Mason re-runs, and the cat, 3-Sam-2, who runs the house with great efficiency. She works as a police dispatcher for the Seattle Police Department and writes in the middle of the night, “when life stills to breathing and one can hear the faintest echoes of thoughts too vulnerable to speak aloud.”

ORDERING:

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Day Lilies

dreaming Patti naked
day-lilies tattooed across her
breasts and stomach
nipples ripe like
feral flower fruit
stigma
stamen
ovary

she's dancing wildly nude
like the woman on public access TV
who says we need
to get over our fear of

she colors each flower by name
Druid's Chant
Cobalt Dawn
Crimson Pirate
Blackberry Candy

when I tell her my dream
she is delighted
eyes bright moonstones
a restless moth dancing the dream
into wakefulness
laughter rumbling from her
in an avalanche
tumbling to our feet
in a glorious heap
of newborn stars

To Hang Your our Insolent Star

"Lightly stepped a yellow star, To it's lofty place—"
—Emily Dickinson

I think you'd be sorry to see me
sagging beneath the weight of your absence:
standing in my bedroom, forehead pressed
against cold white plaster, my two
tight fists acting as bookends
to my grief.

I'm not crying.
I'm angry.
I want to kick a hole in the wall
the size of your dying.
A raging memorial
into the mouth of death
to leave a gaping hole
and rattle its teeth.
I want angels to fall from pedestals.
I want it noticed.

If I could reach high enough
to separate myself from
the gravity of sorrow
I'd kick a wound into the black
unforgiving sky big enough for you
to hang your insolent star.

Visiting the Family Plot

*Walking with canes
one grey-haired family
is visiting graves*
—Matsuo Basho, 1677

Upright stones stand
like marble bookmarks tucked into
the final chapters of this fruitful field:
The Book of Those Departed.

My aunts are two old sisters in black dresses
bending arthritic hands to the task of grooming death
their sandstone eyes, softer than granite
sit like tired monuments in their wrinkled faces;

a white handkerchief against a sweaty brow
a cough, the sweet song of pneumonia.
It is the busy work of the living
befriending the dead.

My father, a novella
is dead longer than he was alive.
With so much time, a man could forget his family.
I remember him best as buried.

Long familiar with the rituals of mourning
these old women place flowers and gather weeds.
My own hands, empty and remorseful
gather air like butterflies.

deborah swain

filling the silence with a sigh



Deborah Swain – filling the silence with a sigh

These poems plowed into me. They are direct and make contact. Whether she is counting pebbles or kissing her lover, Deborah Swain writes her experiences with humor, tenderness and an attunement to her craft. There is heat here."

- Richard Denner, Dpress

"Deborah Swain writes with a stunningly strong voice; her poetry captivates, illuminating the imagination with everyday simplicity."

- Lisa N. Cisero, Claypalm Review

"Swain's poems are sweet puffs of air in a big red balloon. We float through these poems with a woman who is still in touch with childplay, dreams, and curiosity. The poet stares at us innocently on the page with large child-eyes in her adult perspectives. We see through these poems that the child within her tackles and relates to the slightly sinister and mournful aspects to life, and indulges in the bittersweet morsels of the sensuous."

- Claudine Moreau, Comrades

Deborah Swain



Deborah Swain moved from England to Italy eight years ago and now divides her time between Rome and rural Marche. She is an editor of both Comrades Poetry Journal and the short story pages of *The Physik Garden*.

ORDERING:

Sold Out

buddha

a machine-made
buddha sits
(cross-legged) beside
your bed; his eyes
are closed to our love
making, but there's a (little)
smile on his face.

it's hand carved, you say later
and i'm glad;
it doesn't change
the way it looks –
only the way this sounds.

counting pebbles

there's safety in numbers.

very special pebbles
(eighty-eight pebbles!)
carried in a bucket
from the beach.
ever so special pebbles,
shiny on the shingle,
choosing only the best ones.

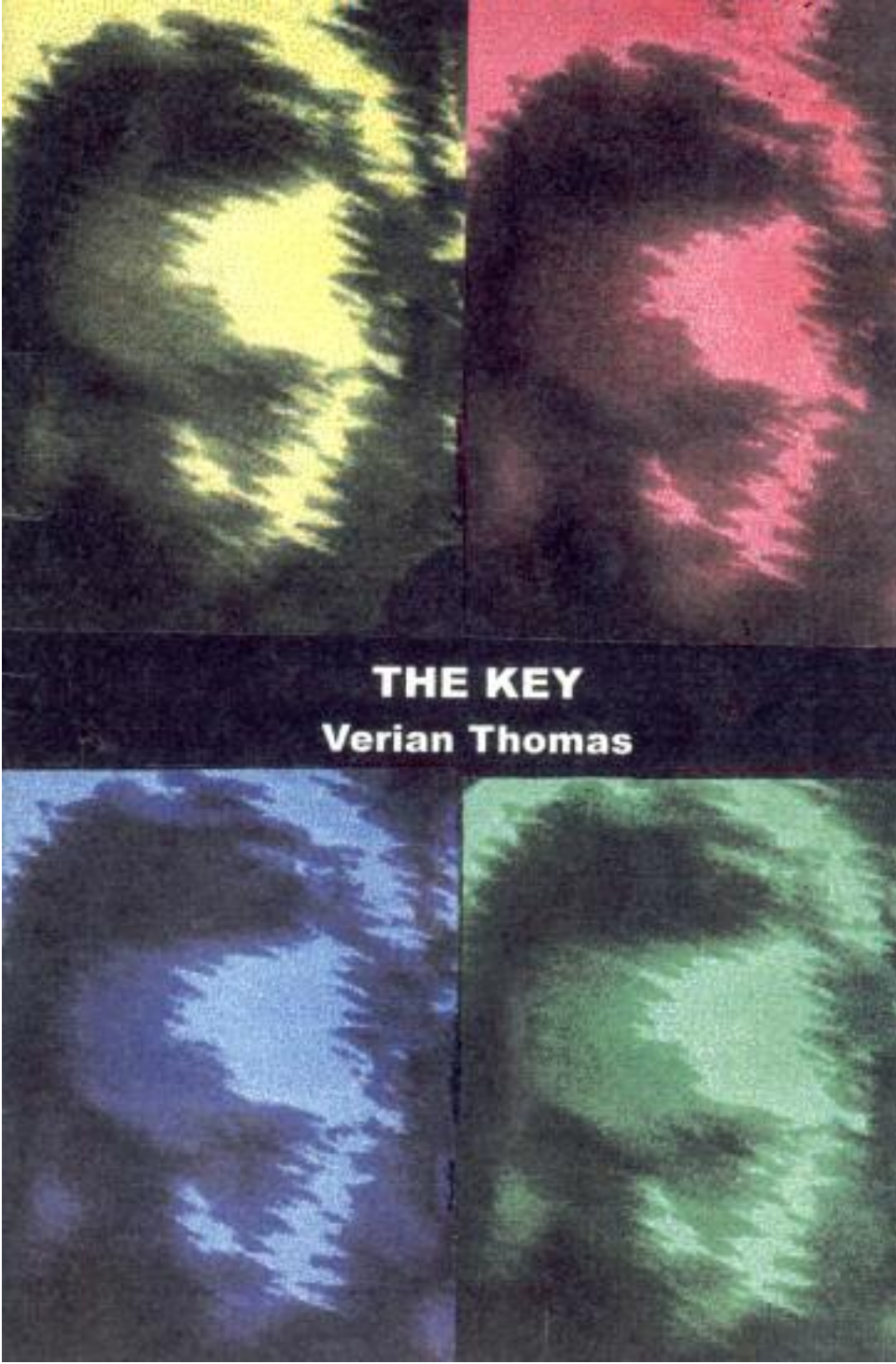
but the grown-ups don't like
the pebbles
and sand
and *what is this mess?*
(so pretty!) on the persian carpet.

the child, dull now,
like the eighty-eight pebbles,
takes them outside,
looks up, and

counts the stars.

stone

If you run your fingers
along the edge,
you'll feel the heat,
a pulse,
a buzzing through
hairline forking fissures:
the nervous system
of stone. Torn
from the earth,
made from life itself
- and a billion deaths,
its endless future forms are compressed
in an impossible
and indelible DNA.
Feel the beat
and strike
the first blows carefully!
With steady hands
hold the daring chisel
as it slides and
sparks and dances
out the dates of
my birth, and then,
my death.



THE KEY
Verian Thomas

Verian Thomas



Verian is the editor of Comrades and owner of Comrades Press. He is a writer of poetry, fiction and non-fiction, a bad painter, photographer and maker of handmade books, amongst other things.

His first book, 'The Key' was published by DPress and is distributed by Comrades Press. He also edited the Comrades Poetry Anthology - UNO

ORDERING:

Published by Dpress – Distributed by Comrades Press

Sold Out

Grand Orphan

At my Grandfather's funeral
the grandsons were to carry his coffin,
from the hearse,
to the grave.

There were seven of us,
I was left on the corner,
at the back
barely touching the wood.

An outsider.

Several years later
my Grandmother died,
Five grandsons were there as
the hearse driver asked
How many are carrying the coffin?
One of my cousins replied *four*.

This time my fingers
never touched wood.

The outsider.

At some point
I will be the insider
and they can carry me.

MEASUREMENTS

It is only the thickness of a butterfly's wing,
the distance between being and not,
an imperial measurement of existence
in a world turning metric,
where a calliper takes readings
of the clocks demise,
plotting the precise co-ordinates
of all our exit points,
on average we will die young
or grow old or end mid-point,
depending on an infinite set of circumstances,
there is no time to waste
waiting for the loss adjusters knock,
I have things to do.

The Key

Death is not
the key
to heaven's
gates.

It's the key
to a door
closing
behind you.



About Gravity

Deborah Swain

ORDERING:

About Gravity was published by Dpress and Distributed by Comrades Press

Sold Out

About Gravity and Other Things

On the day she found out
(for herself)
about gravity and other things,
she climbed right to the top
of the bouncy hill,
over bright green tufts
of springy grass,
to where the church
still clung to the tor
and looked out at the flatlands
as far as her eyes could see.
But *what was it!*
That kept the cows
(chewing thoughtfully unaware)
from dropping off the world?
She giggled
at the idea of them –
black and white comets
with udders!
spinning through space –
but was frightened all the same
and filled her pockets
with the heaviest stones she could find.

The Dead Missionary

The dead missionary, killed
faraway in some revolution
after dedicating twenty
of his forty-five
years to Christ was born here –
a sandstone town, where
medieval monuments crumble
and saints seem leprous
with their vague bumps in masked faces.

It isn't in the guidebook.
there's a fuzzy photograph,
(like all snapshots of the dead)
pinned to the door of the church.
That's how I know.

Wishbone

Slimy to touch
- yuck! –
do I really have to?
But my mother insists
that it's *what one does*,
and I don't want
to spoil her fun,
so I grit my milk teeth
and grip one greasy end.
The bone is bendy,
won't snap, but I hold tight.
Crack! She's got the knack
and wins
her hearts desire.
Phew!
I'm happy to be
saved from the incredible
possibilities of wish making.

My skin around me



Adrienne Lee

Adrienne Lee



Adrienne Lee currently lives in Mobile Alabama and has recently completed her undergraduate studies in English and Gender Studies. She shares a small house with her husband and two miniature dachshunds and will soon begin graduate work in Library and Information Science.

ORDERING:

Very limited stock of this chapbook available

<http://www.comrade.org.uk/Press>

When Breasts Become Bread

I leaned down over the table,
still careless with youth,
letting the neck of my shirt
fall open as I reached for the butter.

I looked up at my Uncle,
saw him staring over the rolls
at my new, round breasts,
as if they had been rising

and baking under training bras
for him. He told me he saw
stars on my panties when light
hit my Sunday school dresses

the right way. His hunger
ate away at me, making me want
to knead my dough back into the shape
of the boy I used to be,

the child who could run
shirtless to the dinner table,
free from the appetites of men.

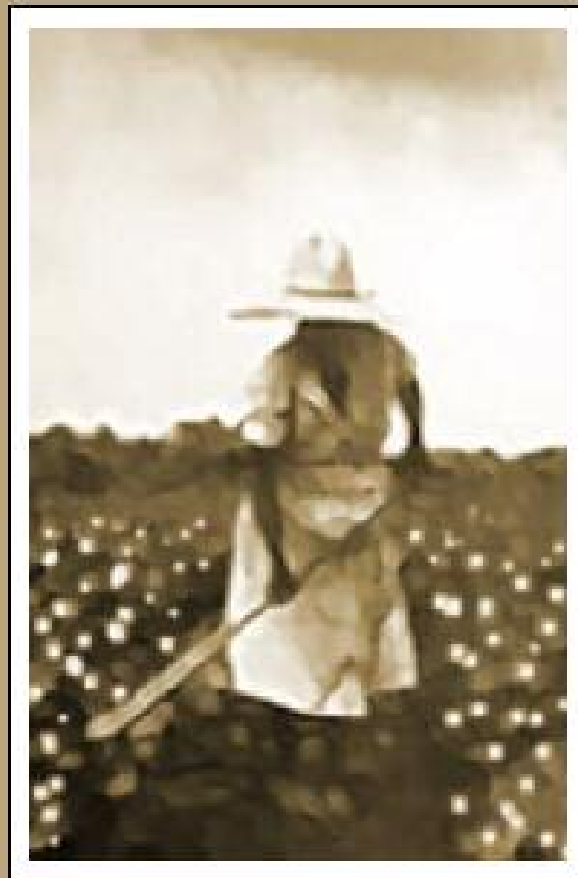
Craving

Spirits
Must crave language
The way I
Crave cheesecake,
Fighting over which one
Will come to the Ouija board
And slip one foot in
The alphabet,
And then the other,
Wearing words
Like sweet skin.

Distance

I never realized
How far I'd crawled from your womb
Until, on the phone with you today,
I looked behind me
And realized I could barely make out
Your shape
And all this time,
I thought I was right between your legs,
Your knees locked around
My infant head,
Keeping me from running.

Snows of a Southem Summer



Cate Compton

Cate Compton



Cate Compton is a native Texan who spent several years in Hollywood before finally having the good sense to return home. She spends her days working as a felony prosecutor, and spends her nights working on the next great American short story. A chronic dabbler, she happily divides what little spare time she has between her art and her writing. Her most recent work has been published in *Comrades*, *3rd Muse*, *Artemis Journal*, *Naked Poetry*, *The Physik Garden*, *The Dakota House Journal* and *Pierian Springs*. Cate is also editor of the online literary arts journal *Atomicpetals*.

ORDERING:

Sold Out

Leaves

It was August.
The trees looked like
fading bruises.

We took one last swim in
the stream by the house,
ignoring dead leaves and
floating bug corpses.

I watched you rest in my
oldest peeling lawn chair,
scratching mosquito bites
only when absolutely necessary.

The smell of hibiscus tea
warmed my vision of you,
until I lost my head and
asked you to stay the winter.

A Dryad Outside the Garden Window

I know little but cleaving to the arms of trees,
catching their dappled leaves in my hair,
reading messages in their ironbound bark.

Careful, there are no oaks in the desert.

Their uneasy voices translate as silence,
whispered hushed tones that recount the
transformations of my sisters before me.

*Echo's flesh shrank away from her;
she lived in the caves alone, desolate,
until her bones became ashen stone.*

I ease their apprehension with gentle assurances
of a place in the rocks where persimmons and pears
ripen under the watchful tendrils of a Flower Moon.

*I am wary only of being lost in the place
between where she ends and I begin.*

I think of green acorns as I make my way
to the windowsill; infused with his sweet voice,
I fearlessly tread the garden path, feet keeping time
with what I imagine his heart's step to be.

Notice of Death: St. Martinville, Louisiana

Miss Evalene Cormier died in her seventy-sixth year,
on a warm evening in June watching fireflies
on the front porch of her daddy's old house.

She never married so there are no children here
to mourn her passing, to recall apron strings,
buttermilk pies, or the way she smiled with her eyes.

No one to testify to her kind spirit in the
Mount Calvary Baptist Church as the parishioners
nod their heads and fan themselves in unison saying "Amen."

No one to know that as a young woman she'd disrobe
without shame to bathe in Ugly Pierre's pond,
even when she knew he was always there watching.

No one to remember that she lay with him
under the Flower Moon, that she whispered
how beautiful he was while he wept silent tears onto her lips.

There is no husband to lay a trembling hand to rest
on the lace of her funeral gown, loathe to return alone
to the warm bed they shared for so many honey sweet years.

No one to understand why she never seemed right again
after they found Ugly Pierre dead in the woods,
or why she hated her daddy so much.

There's nothing to say about Miss Evalene Cormier
except she loved watching fireflies.

C
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Issue One
May 2003

Teri Zipf

Tattoo

After sitting with my sister
After feeding her
After holding her hand
After rubbing her back
After bathing her
After wiping her eyes
After telling her what I know
And what I don't
After turning her
After cradling her in my arms
Like I did when she was a baby
After counting every breath
I come home
Where it is still spring
And sitting on the edge of the tub
I unbutton my blouse and see
The tiny black dots that could be dirt
Or moles, but they are placemarks
For radiation and she has four
Just like them.
After my shower,
I stand on the porch
In the dark and listen
To the frogs sing.

Edward J. McGowan

Still Life

your hair in the brush your clothes on the floor your smell in the sheets your blood in the sheets your soap in the dish your book by the tub your jars and tubes and potions and creams your pictures and drawings and paintings and lists and letters and cards your knickknacks and jewellery and makeup and keys your baby plate with the girl and the goose and the way that the places for all of these things are defined in a language spoken in my life like the words on this page or the thoughts in my head and even that which despite my best efforts has no decipherable language like my breathless love for you at the end of it all I am still here with these simple hands and all that I've kept hidden.

Verian Thomas

Block Tower

Depression absorbed over years
sweated out into the dark rooms of
sleeping scorpion people
waiting for a reason to
sting themselves.

They are useful
gathered together in
black boxes, walk on by and
thank the Lord we aren't them,
then forget that they exist.

The only way is up,
out and into
the pavement.

A blackbird flying
into the night.

Upcoming Chapbook Publications

Kissing Gate – Deborah Swain

Bleeding Jesus – Verian Thomas & Bruce Barone

First, Restlessness - Autumn Collins

&

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