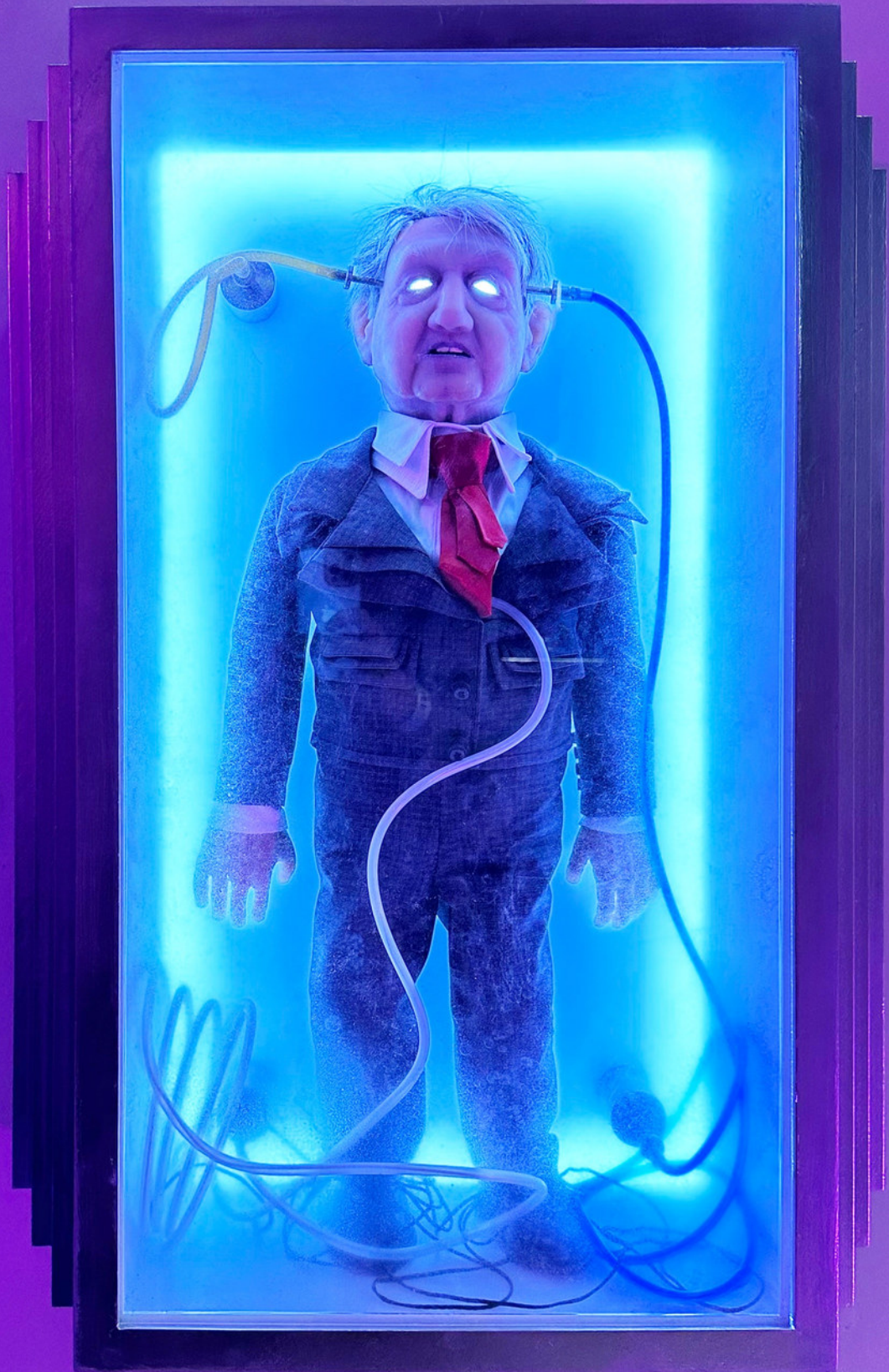


Metachrosis Literary



Issue 2 Summer 2023.

Cover Image: Romeo Gómez López, *Cold-Pac (AMLO)*, Silicon, Latex, Fabric, Wood, Acrylic, Headphones, Audio Track, LED Lights.

Metachrosis Literary

Issue 2. Summer 2023

Analog
Chitinous
Autopsy

Edited by Ellen Harrold

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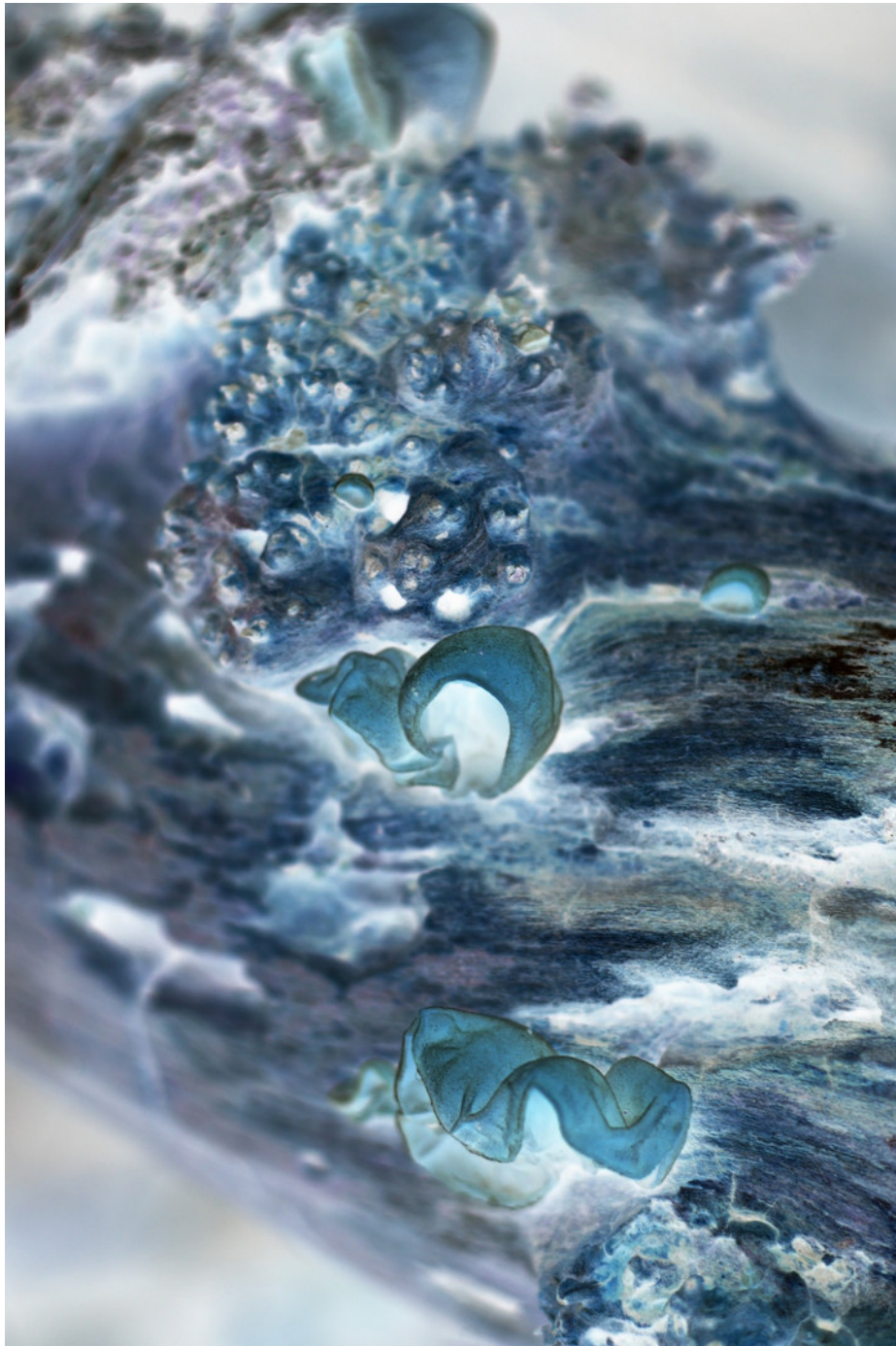
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Chapter 1: Analog



Leonie Siri MacMillan, *Aphakia, Seeing Beyond the Visible*, Photography.

FLUXUS HAIKU

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Bernardas Bagdanavicius, Fluxus Haiku NR 3, Text.

Oranges

Julia Liu

i. cracking

little by little,

a husk, or rather, a landmine, filled with cracks

until i am left to dry up

a 'was', a 'had been', an empty

shell.

juice runs down your fingers

does it sting?

do the remnants get stuck under your fingernails?

do they stain them red?

ii. peeling

if you douse a jar with orange peels,
you're left with the façade of juice.

ever so carefully,
little by little,

you peel back my shell
little by little

but the only thing that truly remains

is a heap of skin
dry, stale, cracked, fragile
drowned in water to create a lie
and you drink it anyway.



Chrissie Dervin *Nidus*, Pencil and White Pen.



Romeo Gómez López, *Cold-Pac (AMLO)*, Silicon, Latex, Fabric, Wood, Acrylic, Headphones, Audio Track, LED Lights.

BAKING WITH FRANKY SOUM

Deep in his laboratory Frankenstein toils
In the middle of the room white coat flapping
Arms raised to the heavens in supplication
Fervently chanting, rise! rise! rise!
Lovingly meticulously he did combine
All necessary measured ingredients
Kneading and pounding and shaping
Waiting and timing and waiting
For all the right signs to emerge
His very own one-of-a-kind creation
Lightning surges down the open ceiling
Zaps into the floury lump on table
Lips smacking, he prays he got it right
And he'll have bread for his tea tonight

VIVISECTION
Cadriel Hallward

Scalpel, please.
Microscope,
petri dish failed experiments.

Carbon dating and
your fingerprints on my body;
next time, wear gloves.

Flasks and graduated
cylinders standing tall like
power lines hanging with shoes.



Julianne Guinee, *Black and Gold*, Oil on Canvas.

Pink Toenails

Mehreen Ahmed

Then the mountains spoke. Voiced it in chorus, on the ancient land of Turag. A world where trees walked, winds cried, rivers sang and the mountains talked. This place is not for humans to reside anymore but for natural lives and artificial intelligence. Turag, yes, this place, because humans have long been obliterated, like dinosaurs before them. Since then robots have replaced them. The organic world even as we speak, ceased to exist, as autumnal dirge swept through the pine forests of dead wood.

They all witnessed it, the sky, the oceans, and the mountains. But their voices couldn't be heard. In the days of humans, everyone thought they were mute, who neither heard nor spoke. But humans were wrong. They communicated and witnessed every human history. Humans didn't see what they saw. Just as well, they saw the end of the world. They saw it all coming. There was too much clunky background noise. Humans were really a noisy lot.

Turag, once a lush plateau. Birds frolicked in the rain. Wheat and rice grass grew and wavered under an autumn sky. Children played around, while mothers bar-b-que'd corn over open fire-pits. Smoke nearly choked the neighboring mountains of the plateau. But the mountains never complained. They smiled and took it all in their stride. They waited patiently for a miracle to happen.

In the meantime, billions of years of civilization passed. Generations toppled one another. Kings died to make way for the new. Power corrupted Kings. Mighty Kings they might have been, who won battles, and killed people on the mountain steppes. The green fields turned scarlet, replacing the many resplendent shades. But wins and expansions were all that mattered to the Kings, one more despotic than the other, often sacrificed the innocent for self-aggrandizement and cared not much at all for justice, whether or not justice was meted out. Then a time came when nature revolted. Fields stopped producing bumper crops. Rains decided not to dole out the bountiful properties of the rainbow. Leaves shriveled up. Darkness blighted the sun. Blood-moon lit the world. Machines were empowered. This new age of machines initiated a different kind of rage. Annihilation of the humans underway, to take possession of the land. They didn't need nature to feed them, and neither did they care to find beauty in it. Humans are long gone.

"Could men not have predicted this?" asked the blood moon to the mountains.

"They could very well have, because they were the ones to make these machines. But men ignored it in haste to chase success," the mountains answered. The veiled sun conceded. The mountains said. "Enter our caves and view the paintings there; stories of life foreshadowed on the dim walls. But men paid no heed. Too much background noise; they came from war drums, drunken cheers of vacuous victories, and wanton amusements. Noise shrouded men's judgment for

everything that came to pass. Fools, they were fools! Those men, whose wisdom failed them. Only the stars knew how The massive destruction of innocent lives. Timeless settlements and resettlements, of nearly broken bones and spirits of men, women, and children. They looked like scattered peas to the gods above. Still, men endeavored to build communities and strange dwellings to shield themselves from showers, storms, and blustery winds. They chose to ignore the transience of life. They stopped to think that the life-giving, precious air, their lifeline, was sourced from an outer world; that they had no control over. The last breath taken, very well could be on those battlefields. Relentless battles, as if there were no tomorrows. Mortals inhaled this infinite air to harness what little strengths they could and stored them within their caged shells. A mortal existence, without any rhyme or reason. The immortals while they remained, so tied humans to timelines, and made them mortals. Ah! But humans didn't think that far ahead. Too limited for predictions. That their passions exultant, looped them up into this paradox. That this paradox would also lead to the destruction of the human race. By far, their intelligence caused this downfall," said Blood Moon.

"Did they have a choice?"

"Well, you and I seemed to have outlived humans."

While they had this conversation, a dust storm picked up on the far side of the plateau. A russet gust of winds rolled in and darkened the mountains, clogging up their crevices and valleys. It covered the blood moon too, rendering a sad world to further gloom. This wasn't the end surely? The mountains thought. They had difficulty breathing; the air had ceased. The trees stopped walking to regain their bearings; the rivers stopped singing. They broke out into hiccups and coughs. These tumults in the surroundings shook the peace. No human hand at play, to create this havoc. The machines ran amok, and kept losing their vital parts. There was no one to fix them. Machines could doctor one another, but they didn't get that opportunity because even they couldn't predict this. A human failing of flawed design, to be certain. An impending disaster loomed. Another kind of warfare started within nature itself. The winds clashed with the rising tide. Mountains stood guard, to stop the storm from going any further. But the lightning then befell the mountain tips. A series of volcanic eruptions and melted glaciers paved the way for pandemonium. The overflowed lava wedded the falling flashes of lightning and danced in spiraled tango. Complete chaos beset the land of Turag. In the wake of a present danger, the blood- moon shot out of sight. The storms, and the lightning, left history in awe. Then a heat wave surged. Turag was hot again. Turag hotting up! The lava ran in a rivulet towards the swelling seas. The oceans submerged the mountains. The plateau of Turag, now under water, saw another breathing world beneath the oceans. Once again there was life. Mermaids swam unhindered. A clear sun ruled and gave humans a second chance.

Chapter 2: Chitinous



Every second.

The sun produces the same
amount of energy as
400,000,000,000
1 megaton nuclear bombs being
detonated at once.

Every second.

Lewis Andrews, *Energy*, Giclee Print on Paper.

Artemis in Praxis

Tom Farr

– our lady of the bow, fleet as a hind
upon snow. Your eyes ask *why*
through the greyed-over gaze
of red fox broken

in the road; through a thick
spreading phlox
of blood fur & bone:

brown hare crushed by a 7.5
tonne truck

with tinfoil lodged in his stomach

pecked apart by blue-grey kestrel
doomed to die on wires.

Artemis, – *Diana*, wraithlike,
watchful, pale masque of owl
hunched among shaggy
juniper boughs
at bulldozed meadow's edge,

holding a vole to bring away

to your *kōmē*
of blighted wild.

It lives inside
Felicia Renea

Aorta caves

Walk through and see my pain

A pain that has never gone away

They say, you need to heal from the inside out

Part of my walls stay blackened, not full healthy and red

Maybe it will stay like this forever, until my end

No matter how hard to work to try to forget those memories

It still stays

It lives inside



Leah Sarah Coxon, *Post Colouration Etch*, Etching on paper layering soft ground, hard ground and aquatint with watercolour post-colouration.

When your tongue is thick with flies say my name

John Dummett

“If you do nothing for long enough, everything will happen”. There were five cassette tapes. “That thing was not yours. It stole you with a voice that demanded attention, it says there are four others, the other of you, the other of me, the other of them and the other of us”. The tape finished, you put in another. “Curling inside a tower that leans slightly to the west, a wooden staircase leads down to a cellar. Perpetually damp the floor is dotted with stagnant water, lumps of rotting plaster and bird droppings. After listening to me reading, you come here to think and after a fashion play. Kneeling down you’ll poke the mess on the floor with a stick. Fascinated by the flies you stick out a tongue and let the insects settle. “When your tongue is green with flies, say my name”. The kettle boils. You stop the tape and repeat my last words “when my tongue is green with flies”.

You’d trained as a geologist only to learn later it was a fraudulent science. The ground was unintelligible, or stubborn Below soil heavy with clay, there was always without fail just hard compacted sand with flecks of flint. It was the same, no matter where you dug or how deep. This unwelcome fact struck you hardest on a patch of land which an old man who claimed to be your grandfather or great uncle; he was confused which, owned on the coast. The place was nothing much, a few bleak acres of tough grass with a cottage. In winter flood water filled a maze of ditches and depressions making a pattern which archaeologists said was field boundaries, nothing more. You though had other more elaborate solutions. I visited once and stood ankle-deep in shallow water waiting while you explained the lies of this land and your inheritance. Perched on a promontory rising sharply above the waves, I said it was dramatic and suited you perfectly. You could ripen and go mean in the salt air, which you did until I left you.

When we first meet you’d been at a party attempting to juggle a conversation on geography and three soft balls. You kept pausing between explanations of meanders and glacial moraine. When you dropped a ball I picked it up then you juggled straight for nearly a minute before letting them fall to the ground. Like everyone else in that curtained room you and I were not desperate but curious. But there were exceptions to the rule, stumbling wide eyed under motivations other than curiosity. They grew in number when the thieves took control and theft became a class privilege. After that curiosity fell from favour and desperation strode in victorious.



Living on your island had not been the ideal way out, but circumstances as they always seem to decided in the end. Under a government which abolished taxes and legalised pillage and piracy, living became the proverbial ‘war of all against all’. We survived a week. Then a thief visited and took exception to the poverty of our belongings. The next day we were evicted, the house burnt. But why do I tell you what you already know. You’ll think I’m mean. But we were lucky. Three days later we’d have been appropriated for forced labour. So we fled, didn’t we? Ran away to what you jokingly called your ‘second home’, we lasted six months, more or less.

You’d been intimidated even frightened of me at first. Don’t deny it. You told me that whenever I spoke there was a sense of some devious prank unfolding. It was in my eyes which according to you had the manner of a stage magician. I’d stared at you blankly and replied that you were wrong. Do you ever consider the possibility that I’ll return? I know it’s a hope you haven’t as yet entertained. But if you did you’d think I’m not one to go back to something given up, or abandoned. Remember when we were lost in some city sinking slowly by the sea. In its crooked streets I’d refused to retrace our steps, convinced there was a way through the knotted lanes. You argued, complained and I, I refused to listen and ran down a narrow alley. You of course followed.

Full of hesitations and missteps the rest of that hot summer day had been painfully monotonous; it only ended when you broke a mirror.

Yes it was your fault.

The mirror had been lent against a wall with the glass facing the bricks. Beside it were some cardboard boxes half full of kitchen utensils. I’d stopped and looked through them after checking the alley was empty. You know how I was prone to opportune acts of theft. You stood back, nervous then a window slammed shut far above and you knocked the mirror. A corner scraped on stone shedding flecks of glass and I pocketed a spoon.

Hurrying round the next corner you recognised a small square with a fountain in the middle. Rubbing a stolen spoon between my fingers I stared at nothing and declared we were no longer lost.



Tim Edgar, *Blue Auras*, Mixed Media.

Dagger Eyes
Frank William Finney

Sometimes they keep them loosely sheathed,
ready for the plunge in the small of my back

when the words I utter
raise a blush

or some premonition makes me squint.

Sometimes I wear the blades for days,
almost forgetting the inevitable twist—

new scars beneath old camouflage.

LIVE! from the satellite orbiting our egos**Elliot Brodeur**

I think we've both started to realize that reaching my heart is like pitting a mango— only easy if you know where to cut

I won't be your darling or your lover or your baby but I can be the skeleton in your closet that you look at when you're bored

Pin me like a bug; I'm your pretty, dead thing

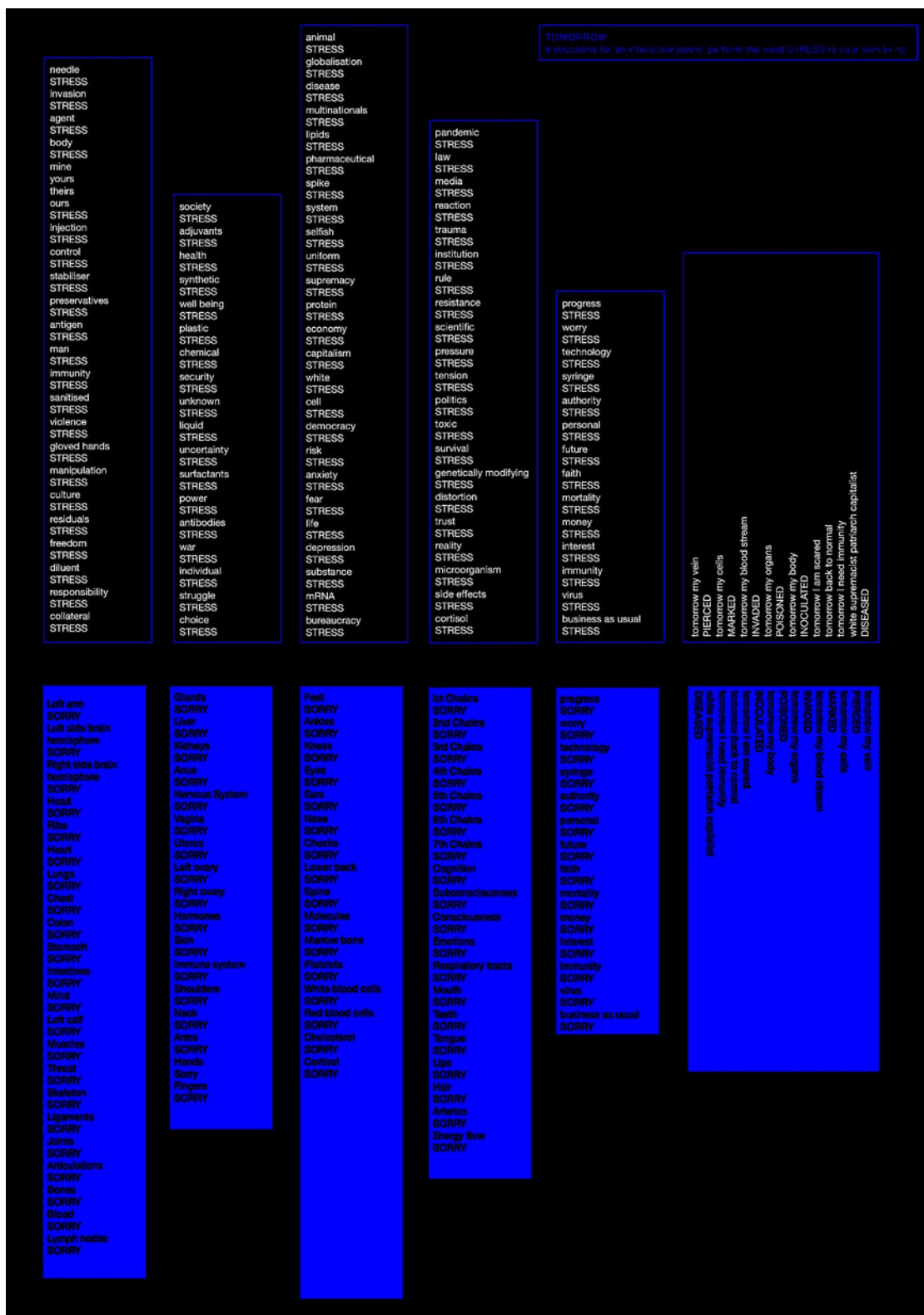
The record skips on the turntable and i'm reminded of what this is—

A goodbye fuck, a first time fuck, a 'sorry I've been too chicken shit to make a move before, but now im leaving so let's get to it' fuck

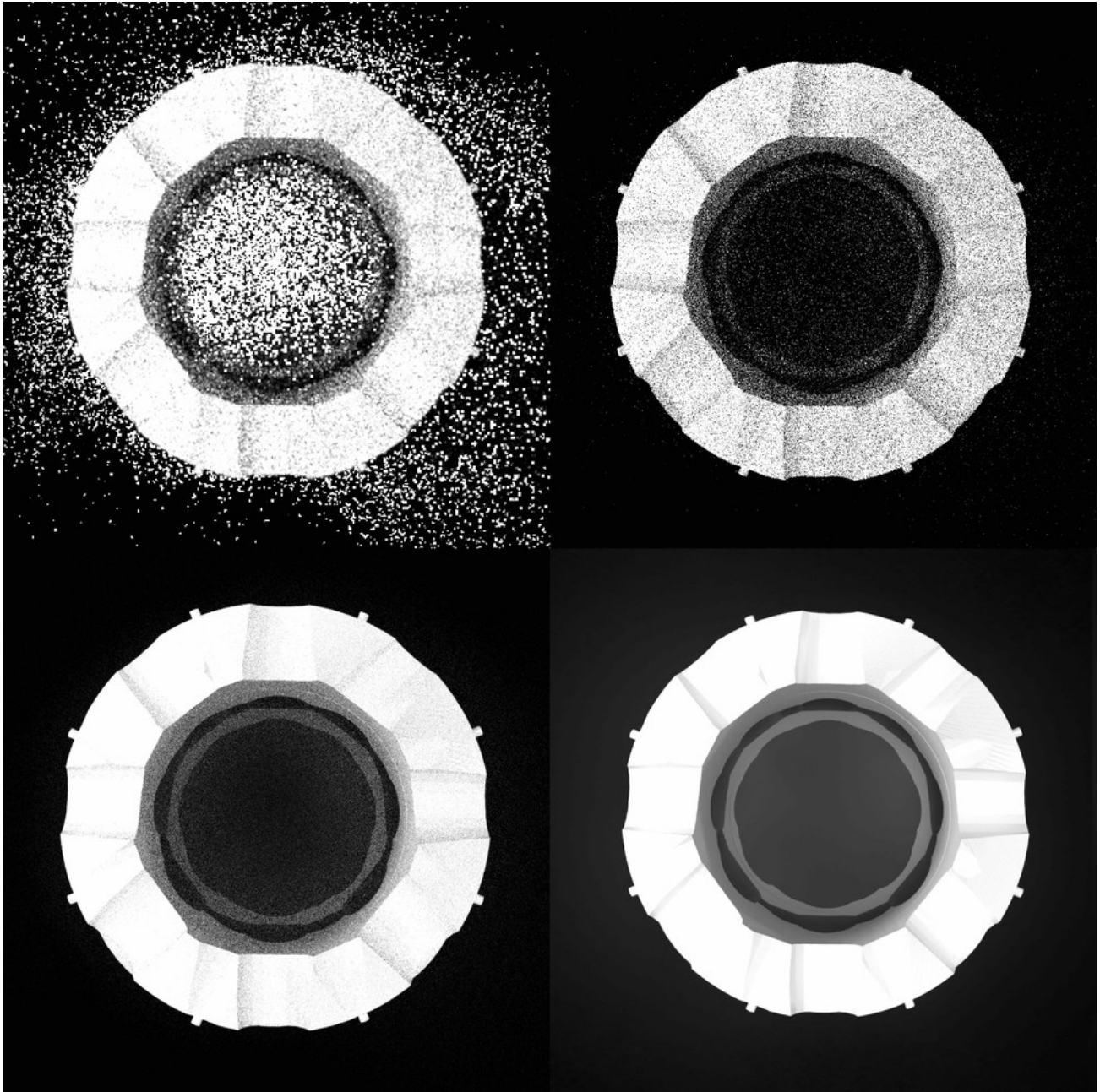
Is this intimacy? Or just the dregs of it, like the milk and sugar slurry at the bottom of a tea cup

You have to finish the cup to read the leaves

and while it is true you don't have to be looked at to be real, it helps

Claudia Piripippi, *Tomorrow Blue*, Print on Photographic Paper.

Chapter 3: Autopsy



Jonathan Lovell, *Objects Falling From a Cybernetic Future (Symbiote)*, Digital Render.

Land A-Scorched
Sfarda L. Gül

A climate crisis dialogue

WHEN I OPENED MY EYES, the solid soil had submerged
like Atlantis beneath the tears of icecaps and *oh* was it a tragicomic
scene to see the waters burn with black oil slick as obsidian
and watch the carbon sky blister with napalm.

Land A-Scorched

Sfarda L. Gül

A climate crisis dialogue

NATURELESS SPHERICITY

Above Earth you fancy yourself Untouchable

A stone dagger

A deranged creature

Vinaceous flesh ichor teeth

Unkillable killer

Civilised barbarian in green plastic cotton paper

Blood money

Blood of Earth you fancy yourself above of

You will not kneel beneath the thumb of time? But Babylon fell

Israel burned

Sumer crumbled

Erlik wept

All mouldens in the Earth yet you forget

the mother of your stone dagger whose womb

bleeds like your teeth against the vinaceous squelch of flesh you deranged creature

and Nature isn't real!

Oh! Civilised barbarian a dichotomy

you construct in false pretence to ascend

above Earth but heed the screams of Babylon

and Jerusalem and Ur and Karakorum:

All mouldens in this Natureless sphericity

Your blood money will buy you rot



Jeremy Gluck, *The Inner Life of Nothingness 1*, Generative Piece.

This life

Melissa Strilecki

snags at the underbelly
of us ground-slinking creatures,
stooped under the weight of unknowable things;
and what good has it done me, in study or in art, to be well-tuned
to the broadcasts of others?
So blessed. To be misunderstood
with precision.

It's in my spinal fluid,
immune to walls meant to keep
blood stuff from brain, and I want to know:

Is there a field of study
for how synapses leap
for well-formed strings
of language; and I want to know
why what hurts the most
is always what I miss?

I have never stopped loving anyone
once I began. Even when they wished I would.
But it's ones I never did
who question me late nights. The ones for whom, given a chance,
I would have cracked every long bone. Fêted them
on butter and wine. Armless, I'd have only a mouth
to clear the tallow from wrists,
from each finger web.

How can a body be so full without the black
finding seams, pressing a way through?

 So many boys and girls slash vents
 to let some of it out. Never that way,
not enamored with edges, but
I've polluted welcoming bodies,
 lest I forget, try to wade back in.

I don't know if I am more drawn to writing or the work
before the writing. Garden paths of research
 indented into meaning. Phrases trimmed
 and rendered outline clean; and I don't know

what this life is for, really, if not the neuroscientist's face
when, regarding the writing process, I said,
You know how, sometimes, the conclusion writes itself?



Kim Crowder, *Ambiguous Assemblage*, Photography.

There's A Place More Than Home
Sylvester Kwakye

(originally published in Renard Press, 2023)

It's so bad here
starting at dawn and never stops

slaps from Auntie's room
Kofi runs out with his mat
the whole house is awake with anger
from the shame of a little boy
flavoured with urine and a wet bed

early morning, around 6 am
uncle is already on the ground
intoxicated with alcohol
carried by flies
in a staggering gait

then mama starts her usual chants—
verbal assaults and insinuations
dramatic hymns of the dirty washroom
because it's my cousin's turn
to sweep and mop
and maybe, wash her destiny from laziness

minutes after, it's pure chaos for kids
in my grandma's hands
as the enema bulb picks each turn of hot herbs
and slowly irritates children's bowels
to once again drive away evil spirits from them

quarter to 8 o'clock
humility strikes
especially for schoolers like myself
pleading for mercy to bath and catch the bus
which is fifteen minutes away

someway, somehow
I make it on time and leave
and pray I never return
for I always find it safe out there
like where I'm sitting to write this poem



Anna-Lise Horsley, *Lascivious Flower*, Acrylic on canvas.

When the Atlantic Ocean is Gone in 170 Million Years, Where Are You Going to Fish?

Robert King

Or dip your toes at the surf's edge because that's right, she's about 50% through her lifespan, always to-us-like-us in midlife crisis & there's nothing we can do about it, & it'll be strange when the New Jersey Boardwalk, with its honky-tonk glaring purple neon stolen from the Romans stolen from the Phoenicians stolen from the royal mollusks, becomes the new front porch in West Africa because Africa is where front porches were invented certainly not discovered before 12 million slaves got poached from her cradle by those Dutch, English, Portuguese, Spanish, Belgians, & hey, you certainly don't get a pass, Carolinians, with your reintroduction to where it all began, Lucy not Eve, you heavy-accented Massachusetts longshoremen now where the Canary Islands used to be. It's not just the re-spooled spools of outdated telegraph wires laid like stitches across the north, across the ersatz under water Rocky Mountains, across the thank-god level-best full fathom five plateaus before Tesla & Marconi came along & solved that countries-as-introverts problem that wasn't a problem because just because their culture isn't your culture doesn't mean it's savagery. It's not like we can simply pack it all up & take it all with us. This isn't a vacation or a holiday. Not just a conquest or consolation prize. It's not just humble Leif Erikson with his Newfoundland encampment without

making a federal case federal holiday
out of it, unlike that Genoan sailor more
a product of the church-led masterful
marketing campaign than any authentic
discovery or invention. It's not just the oil
spills & microplastics & not at all, not even
a little microplastic because there's
nothing micro about regrouping remaking
into a giant polypropylene continent,
because even though we can't feel it,
all the continents are moving in a way
that makes you realize what's significant
isn't, & they've never stopped & will
once again Pangea, a Tierra del Fuego
lighthouse puzzle shape shifting, as if
that family-together holiday project
of standard cut glossy carboard pieces
on a well-lacquered dining room table,
& sure you all sat & talked & completed
the border with your wine & classical
music in the background as if you all
could be all cultured & thus forget about
the world's bluntness for one two three
a few evenings, but you all eventually
returned to your lives & the Patagonian
lighthouse, as if on its own, as if fate is
really a thing, will slip past India & back
into a slot where Americans used to
base in Okinawa, US containment policy
finally totally shot, a glorious feat of
plate tectonic gymnastics that perhaps
only a distant grandkid will be around
to witness, & who knows what DNA
will look like then, maybe that child is
part me, part you, part Neanderthal,
part robot, AI, cyborg, or ChatGTP.
Did you know there's a creek in Montana
called the Atlantic Creek because that
creek is part of where her mother or
would it be daughter ocean begins,
8,000 foot Triple Divide Peak, Montana
to a sandy steep southeastern slope

to another creek to the Marias River
 to the Missouri River to the Mississippi
 to the Gulf of Mexico to the Atlantic,
 to the depths & those unrecovered
 bodies & treasures & global sins &
 this convergence is why introverts
 often ask themselves why they have
 to speak up when it'd be just as easy
 for extroverts to shut the hell up for
 once. Where will all that unclaimed
 lost gold go, Discovery Channel salvage
 divers from dying reefs from pirates
 from Conquistadors from Montezuma
 from when aren't we narcissistic enough
 to think we pulled ourselves up by our
 own bootstraps, the watery memorial
 of the *Titanic* & U-boat victims not just
 sunk, but sunk again, forever folded
 inside the Earth's crust, as if we're
 kneading bread dough, keep folding it
 inside itself, & fold & fold & fold until
 it achieves just the exact consistency
 you're looking for, & sure go ahead,
 go ahead & add all the exotic fruits
 & spices you want, & bake at 350 until
 the end of time. Sure, I'll say I'm not
 irritated by *waves arms broadly,* but
 the truth may be otherwise. But this isn't
 an elegy. It's a recipe for gratefulness.

+ Inspired by *Atlantic: A Vast Ocean of a Million Stories* by Simon Winchester (2010),
The Tempest by William Shakespeare (1611), & *Quiet: The Power of Introverts in a
 World That Can't Stop Talking* by Susan Cain (2012).



Edward Lee, *The Seconds Gather (Our Fragile Glimpse)*,

The Remaining 20 per cent**Nathalia Jones**

Yesterday's lunch still moves through the walls;
A blast of hot air kitchen conundrum hits my morning breath;
I press my nose against its indelible imprint on an old cover cloth
and assail senses with the aftermath of biryani.

This repast - a result of countless Google quests,
recipe hunting and always the conversation centrepiece –
was decades in the making. A life force feeding us through trials,
and many a failed attempt.
I had made it my mission to plate memories at our family table.

Spices - bold and strident –
intermingling unabashedly with onion half-moons and fragrant basmati rice –
the only kind of marriage made in heaven;
the kind that sobered up drunk jiving and even dismantled the decorum of dancing queens;
Wood smoke bearing flavours from an open air kitchen to the house of day drinking first
holy communion guests.

So I inhaled and let memory guide the home cook - roasting spices, marinating meat;
I tried layering the ingredients; each attempt took three me fourths of the way home.

My therapist tells me healing the mind is not linear.

There are days when barbwire thoughts force you into entrapment,
triggering a freeze response against the slightest movement
that could drive the spikes in deeper;

other times you can still hear the ocean and her tranquility through craggy fog;

Suddenly everything sparks with electric lividity –
mangled drain odours are trying to upstage Chanel Chance
and for once you're not complaining.

He called this cruising at 80 per cent a victory lap.

But I wanted to open up full throttle for the remaining 20.

Through practice and persistence but mostly a tip from an expert I stuck the landing. That
five minute par boil of the rice in spiced water did the trick. The aroma unlocks old forgotten
pathways I scoop up a generous mouthful, hold it up to my nostrils. It tastes like home; it
feels like me.

FIST CITY

Tyler S

Sideoats gamma bring moths,
Wood tickseed, and erect red

Trillium wash away in the half-
Light beyond him, him who is

Useless and the father of nothing.
You are a mother's daughter,

Dizzy canary in sound,
In the nothing heard, in the mangroves
On the shore of a dream.

Loretta, we trade in skin,
In the nostalgia of absence
Felt beneath a heavy fist.

In each of the blurred faces
A false, pale light— a red recording
Sign. We pour propane on

The prickly ash, propitiate
Our understanding of self. Together,
Cocooned in pixelated gore.

Note from the editor:

To transcend the passive act of observation we need to interrogate and question. The world is filled with so much wonder and without the act of looking it will go unseen.

Thank you to all our readers and contributors, I encourage you all to keep looking.

Contributors

Chapter 1: Analog

Leonie Siri MacMillan: Siri has been a ceramic artist for about thirty years. Recently she took a couple of upskilling modules at DJCAD with the hope of completing the MFA. She loves to explore the place inbetween science and mythology in all sorts of mediums.

Bernardas Bagdanavicius: Bernardas Bagdanavicius is a British - Lithuanian artist living and working in London, UK.

Julia Liu: Julia Liu (she/her) is an emerging Chinese-American writer currently living in New England. Her work has received recognition from the Scholastic Art and Writing Awards. In her free time, she enjoys cafe-hopping, researching astrology, and collecting too many Ramune bottles. She can be found on Twitter at @juljiewels.

Chrissie Dervin: Chrissie is an artist and art teacher. Always fascinated by the power of the figure, her work has come to encompass visual reflections on the body, its frailty and our transcendence of this frailty. Chrissie feels compelled to produce her work, and does so on stolen time, while caring for her family.

Romeo Gómez López: Romeo Gómez López (b.1991, Mexico City, MX) uses diverse elements of mass culture such as religion, political figures, and science fiction, to inject a much needed and well-deserved dose of “faggotry” that critiques the conservative character of the contemporary world, defying compulsory notions of heterosexuality in art. Gómez López uses humor and his pornographic imagination to show an alternative and resilient identity. He focuses on libidinal values and their provocative potency as generators of sensibility.

Romeo Gómez López recent solo exhibitions and projects include: ASTRO PAPI; curated by Pablo Arredondo Vega at Llano in collaboration with Salón Silicón (Mexico City, 2022), La Heteropiedra Antes Del Tiempo presented at Zona Maco Ejes (Mexico City, 2022); Viaje Fantástico, Ladrón Galería (México City, 2019), I Want To Believe, Salón Silicón (Mexico City, 2018). He co-founded Salón Silicón, a gallery in Mexico City that focuses on making visible and disseminating the work of women artists and members of the LGBTI+ community. Recent awards include Tequila 1800 Acquisition Prize (2022) and REA! Art Prize (2021) in Milan, Italy. He currently lives and works in Mexico City, MX

SOUM: SOUM is an acronym for Screams Of Unfettered Minds, a collective of 3 women who write together under the cloud of preferred anonymity. Their writing style leans towards the unpolished, unfiltered, cheeky but always heartfelt. Email: screams@of@gmail.com, Twitter: @SOUMpoetry, Website: www.unfetterednfts.com.

Cadriel Hallward: Cadriel Hallward is a passionate Vietnamese queer poet and aspiring author who has been writing for 4 years. He has garnered some small recognition by winning online poetry contests and having a humble and deep dedication to his art. Through his work, he hopes to put the inexpressible into poetry.

Julianne Guinee: Julianne Guinee is a figurative oil painter based in County Cork, Ireland. Julianne began to paint full time in 2019 following the deaths of her twin children in infancy. She creates pieces that use technical mastery, and a timeless subject matter to convey a narrative that uplifts and reassures. In her work, she balances thought provoking paintings of explosive power with gentler nostalgic paintings which celebrate the ordinary miracle, taking you on a journey around many of the different aspects of everyday life. She is represented by the Russell Gallery, New Quay. Her solo show will open in the Hunt Museum, Limerick on July 3rd 2023.

Mehreen Ahmed: Multiple contests winner for short fiction, Mehreen Ahmed is an award-winning Australian novelist born in Bangladesh. Her historical fiction, *The Pacifist* is an audible bestseller. Included in *The Best Asian Speculative Fiction Anthology*, her works have also been acclaimed by *Midwest Book Review*, and *DD Magazine*, Translated into German, Greek, and Bangla, her works have been reprinted, anthologized, selected as Editor's Pick, Best of's, and made the top 10 reads multiple times. Additionally, her works have been nominated for Pushcart, *botN* and James Tait. She has authored eight books and has been twice a reader and juror for international awards. Her recent publications are with *Litro*, *Otoliths*, and *Alien Buddha*.

Chapter 2: Chitinous

Lewis Andrews: Lewis Andrews is a Fine Artist based in Leeds, United Kingdom. His work specialises in dealing with complex thoughts, ideas and facts within nature and science. Questioning our relationships, place and role within the universe, environment and natural spaces.

Tom Farr: Thomas Farr is a British poet whose work explores and challenges the human/nature binary. He appears in Aôthen Magazine, Ram Eye Press, tiny wren lit, Red Wolf Periodical, Humana Obscura, Erato Magazine and elsewhere. If he isn't writing, he's probably running or talking to his houseplants. He tweets @tfarrpoetry.

Felicia Renea: Felicia Renea (preferred name) is a native poetry writer. She is from Santa Rosa, CA but currently resides in Washington State. She is enrolled in the Big Valley Band of Pomo Indians. She has been writing since the age of 14 and found it as an outlet for expression. She is just now sharing her work 15 years later. She write from the heart and writes with emotion. She hopes to inspire and remind those who feel alone to never give up!

Leah Sarah Coxon: Leah Sarah Coxon's practice stems from drawing, where she creates a 'third space' between narrative settings and instinctive linework. She is informed by a myriad of conflicting references including therianthropy, ritualism, catharsis, animalistic desire, and female biology present in animals and humans such as the womb. She merges these in her drawings through motifs and overlapping marks to reflect a repressed expression of femininity.

John Dummett: Utilising sculpture, performance and writing, his work seeks to materialise the subtle interplays between different forms of language and how they are read, experienced and translated across multiple forms whether textual, spatial, social or otherwise.

Frank William Finney: Frank William Finney is a poet, retired lecturer, and contemporary curmudgeon from Massachusetts. His latest chapbook *The Folding of the Wings* was published in 2022 by Finishing Line Press.

Tim Edgar: Tim Edgar is an Artist and Academic based in Dorset. His Drawing practice stands at the overlap between Art and Science. Using a variety of analogue media his intense, detailed works explore connections between micro and macro worlds, in particular the cellular and the cosmic.

Elliott Brodeur: Elliot Brodeur is a fledgling queer poet based in Maine. They started as a bookseller before transitioning to the writing side of things. When not contemplating the existence of eternity, she can be found knitting with her cat.

Claudia Piripippi: Born in Germany and raised in Italy, their academic formation developed between Italy, the UK and the US but their cultural experience could not be complete without the knowledge gathered from nature and an itinerant lifestyle in the pursue of art and love. Their work is a collaboration with their wound and with the galaxy of events that contributes to the cosmic pain. It's a collaboration with thier consciousness: a collective of voices and mysterious energies that guide their practice.

Chapter 3: Autopsy

Jonathan Lovell: ‘Objects falling from a Cybernetic Future’ is a research project, which creatively explores thematic principles and conceptual issues arising from Cybernetics and Transhumanism themes. Responding to these themes, objects are created that could come from this future and exist both digitally and physically questioning humanity's relationship with technology.

Sfarda L. Gul: Sfarda L. Gu'l (Alias) is an immigrant polygot artist, poet, and writer of Indigenous Anatolian and minority Baltoslavic background. In her spare time, she is enthralled in the study of ethnography, linguistics, history, and social activism aiding to uplift queer and ethnic minorities of her native SWANA and Eastern Europe. Sfarda is a 2024 debut independent author, writing about culture and society at *Lacrimosity* and *Righteous Rage*. Her poetry has previously been featured in *Musing Publications* and *From Heart to Stomach* among others

Jeremy Gluck: Jeremy Gluck M.Arts (Hons) works as a neurodiverse postdigital fine artist in generative art, film, installation, and performance. This series, *The Inner Life of Nothingness*, explores the intersections between art, science, and philosophy, using generative art to express and explore the idea of nothingness. Often seen as a void or absence, nothingness has a rich inner life that is often overlooked.

Melissa Strilecki: Melissa Strilecki has been previously published in *Sugar House Review*, *The Shore*, *Hyacinth Review*, and others. She lives in Seattle and writes poetry, essays, and one unwieldy novel.

Kim Crowder: Kim Crowder's practice embraces photography, textiles, and creative non-fiction writing. Her work focuses on the body, human-animal relationships, nature, biotechnology, and rural lives. She holds a Visual Anthropology Ph.D (Goldsmiths, 2012) and is a member of *the prescription* medical humanities writing group. Writing and images available at www.livesinnature.co.uk

Sylvester Kwakye: Sylvester Kwakye is a Ghanaian medical student at the KNUST School Of Medicine and Dentistry. He also serves as a peer tutor to clinical and preclinical medical students in Study Pot, Ghana. He has a self-published full-length poetry collection called “Flying From Nectar To Hive”. In most of his writing, Sylvester is inspired by his environment— home, medical school, and the hospital.

Anna-Lise Horsley: Anna-Lise paints with fluidity and instinctive conviction. The powerful, hypnotic content of her images emerges through relentless dedication and daily engagement between mind, paint and brush allowing the ideas to take over, creating a doorway to an internal and out of control place where shapes and patterns form a dialogue, where the chaotic imaginary occasionally meets the recognizable. Forms appear, then are drowned only to reappear elsewhere in other paintings. www.anna-lisehorsley.com. Instagram: @annalisehorsley

Robert King: Bob's an Associate Professor of English at Kent State University at Stark. His recent poetry has appeared in or is forthcoming from *The Blue Flame Review*, *The Parliament Literary Journal*, *Fahmidan Journal*, *Erato Magazine*, *Olney Magazine*, *The Viridian Door*, *LEON Literary Review*, *Full House Literary*, *Spare Parts Literary Magazine*, and *Ink, Sweat, & Tears*. He lives in Fairview Park, Ohio, with his wife & daughters.

Edward Lee: Edward Lee is an artist and writer from Ireland. His paintings and photography have been exhibited widely, while his poetry, short stories, non-fiction have been published in magazines in Ireland, England and America, including *The Stinging Fly*, *Skylight 47*, *Acumen* and *Smiths Knoll*. He is currently working on two photography collections: 'Lying Down With The Dead' and 'There Is A Beauty In Broken Things'. He also makes musical noise under the names Ayahuasca Collective, Orson Carroll, Lego Figures Fighting, and Pale Blond Boy. His blog/website can be found at <https://edwardmlee.wordpress.com>

Nathalia Jones: Nathalia is a hobby writer who lives in the Middle East. A journalist by profession with a career that spans over a decade, she has had articles published in newspapers and magazines in India and the Middle East. Nathalia started exploring creative writing by posting her work on Instagram and Twitter. Instagram: @nat_writerslife. Twitter: @saltedcaramelle

Tyler S: Tyler S writes, teaches, and lives in Atlanta, GA. Before heading south, he bartended in the Bay Area, collected his MFA in Boston, played bass for Polar Bear Club in various places, wrote a television show into the ground in Palm Beach, and was born on the first day of school in Rochester, NY. He has poems in *Jellyfish*, *Interrupture*, *El Aleph*, and *Forklift*, Ohio. His long poem "Tracklisted" was published as a record insert by I Have Two First Names Press

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