

UNSTRUNG

A magazine of,
for and about
poetry



Summer 2024

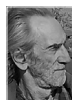
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Fournier



Reiss



Chorlton



Knapp



Gamboa



Black



Emmons



Aruguete



Christy



Fenton
Sederstrom

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Unstrung is a project of the nonprofits The Blue Guitar
and The Arizona Consortium for the Arts

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Alfred Fournier

What I Learned Standing on the Volcano

Hōlei Pali, Hawaii

How Earth is born out of violence.
That life will find a foothold—
the smallest fold in black pavement will do,
smooth and shining under sun,
soon to be dressed in rainforest.

We are only here for a blink of time.
But I can imagine
the slow unfolding parade of beings
each leaning on the others,
stretching for eons before and beyond.

How blind we've been. How stupid.

I will stand here and watch
as the sea swallows the sun
in showy silence
with nothing more to say.

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Alfred Fournier



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Alfred Fournier is a writer and community volunteer in Phoenix, Arizona. His first poetry collection, “A Summons on the Wind” (2023, Kelsay Books), was nominated for the Eric Hoffer Book Award. His poems have appeared in Amethyst Review, Orchards Poetry Journal, Gyroscope Review, The Blue Guitar and elsewhere. Twitter (X): @AlfredFournier4; alfredfournier.com.

Alfred Fournier

Beginnings

The world goes on beginning
even here at the end
of the world we've known
the one we tried to make
from the broken bones of the first

molten lava spews from an Earth
still young in its fire
laying fresh ground above sea
where the Ohi'a lehua
spreads new leaves in tropical sun

much is gone and more
will be lost
species named and unnamed
burned into memory
forgotten

the world goes on beginning
churning restless what is new
from an ancient core
that mourns not
whatever went before

After W.S. Merwin's
Morris Graves's Blind Bird

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Alfred Fournier

Mockingbird

Don't take him for a fool,
some babbling garden jester.
His string of seeming
incoherent meanderings
anything but random.
Fragments of audio-memory
strung like beads through morning air.
Truth in the shape of sound,
belted with the intense loyalty
of a knight of the crown.
Why should he care if you call him crazy?
His dreams paint the air
with a wildness of heart
the boldest among us
dare only imagine.

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Alfred Fournier

Dust

When all the dust was fairy dust
and everything seemed fine—
the gilded rim of China plates,
the tender crawl of time.

Mother's kiss to keep me safe
from darkness and from dreams
of clawed hands reaching from the mists
that bordered my beliefs:

a world safe from death and dread,
where demons had no hold.
The faith of childhood ignorance
of how the world unfolds—

with war and greed and hate's broad grin,
far worse than tales of brothers Grimm.
Oh, Mother, how much gold I'd give
to feel your kiss on my cheek again.

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Cindi Reiss

Do You Remember

do you remember

when silk felt expensive?

when rainbows touched the lining of your jacket
on my shoulders?

do you remember when ice cream tasted
like velvet? when chocolate pooled on our
lips when we kissed?

do you remember going to sleep
at sunrise? cigarettes and bacon
clinging to our hair?

I remember seeing you through
tequila-soaked eyes, the salt
on the glass stinging my lips.

I remember your pillow
soaked with sweat, your
cologne sweet but dank.

I remember waking at noon
not hearing your
breath, touching

your skin.
and draping
you in
expensive silk.

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Cindi Reiss



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Cindi Reiss' writing journey shifted from skits and programs during her career as a clown and actor to poetry that has fun with rhyme on some days then delves into memoir pieces on others. Her poems have been published in *Paradise Review*; *Inkwell 2022 Anthology*, "Roots, Shoots and Blooms"; *ASPS 2022 Sandcutters*; *Haiku Expo: Arizona Matsuri*; *Phoenix Oasis Press*, "Beyond Boundaries: Tales of Transcendence." Cindi is President of Phoenix Writers Club, which will celebrate its centennial in 2026 and welcomes writers of all genres. She has lived in Phoenix for 48 years but still considers herself a Jersey girl at heart. Her husband, three children, two sons-in-law, four grandchildren and 120-pound granddog keep her grounded in the Arizona desert.

Cindi Reiss

Carousel

the calliope caught our ears
before the truck turned down our alley.
our shrieks joined the melody and
screen doors exhaled moms and dads,
coins in their hands
for the ponies in the
dirty red truck.
Ricky's eyes looked up into mine.
we stood in our black sooted underwear,
faces grimy with the factory's offerings
that spewed over our little borough.
ash floated around the ponies
their paint faded and chipped,
proud in their prancy pose
ready to take flight any moment
and carry us with them.
a brother and a sister,
clutching the reins, rising beyond the soot
and the mom, and the dad
who didn't come out
their screen door.

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Cindi Reiss

Surrender

The blanket is smooth,
no granules of sand
from castles of dreams crushed
by toddlers with buckets,
no ice cream wrappers,
no seagulls scavenge for scraps.

On the blanket is a grey sweater,
almost silver, folded neatly next
to a jade green backpack,
that first grass of spring green
before dandelions
dot its brilliance.

11

On the edge of the blanket,
taking little space,
is a book, not a summer paperback
but a thick, hardbound red tome
precariously askew, shattered wire-
framed glasses by its side.

Continued on page 12

Waves nip at the blanket,
foam in their wake,
seaweed drops strands
in froth, shells embed
in silt, sand crabs
scurry to hide.

Crimson sunset fades
into whispers,
moon sheds light
on the blanket
in the sand.

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David Chorlton

Open Pit Dreams

Midnight in a small town
where the heat has gone to sleep
and moonlight sparkles on the edge
of each descending circle
leading down to the pool of green water
at the base of the open
pit mine.

A coyote pack is howling
its way along 2nd Avenue
giving voice to everyone's worst fears.
Drought, they cry, and *drought*
again, while they keep
water's secrets to themselves. And on
they go, united in
their purpose, moving slowly
through dry starlight.

Dig and chisel,
burn and growl, tear the heart
out from the Earth, place
it in a glass case
and open a museum where a desert
used to be. Scatter tailings
to the wind, bend your backs
men, listen to
the copper crying to be free.
Here's your money, here's

13

Continued on page 14

your life. Daybreak's coming and
you'll see the way out
where sunlight dances on the broken
yellow line along the center
of the road.

Welcome to our memories:
the tools grown tired, the instruments
that dentists used to extract
pain, the drills once wound
by expert hands, the ones that saw
in a tooth what the machinery
outside saw in the ground
when it worked its way to the nerve
and an underground scream
there never was whiskey enough
to hold back.

Weekend is a Mexican
fiesta. Skirts flare into rainbows
on the plaza. Even the former smelter
starts to sing, and there is music
behind locked doors to the exhibit
of old typewriters whose keys
play sharps and flats in honor
of dust and loneliness.

Black cloud
on the sky's north side, white light
from the south and no border
between them. Nothing stops
the past when it goes

from door to door on javelina steps
as the day dissolves at sunset.
There it goes, in wonder and in fear
of ever changing but
sure footed and determined
to reach the open pit before
it fills with stars.

Check in
at the depot for the journey
back in time, the iron heart
that drove the engine, the whistle
and the scream of wheels
at every bend. The rails just slide
away into the desert, and the sunlight
pays its way in weeds.

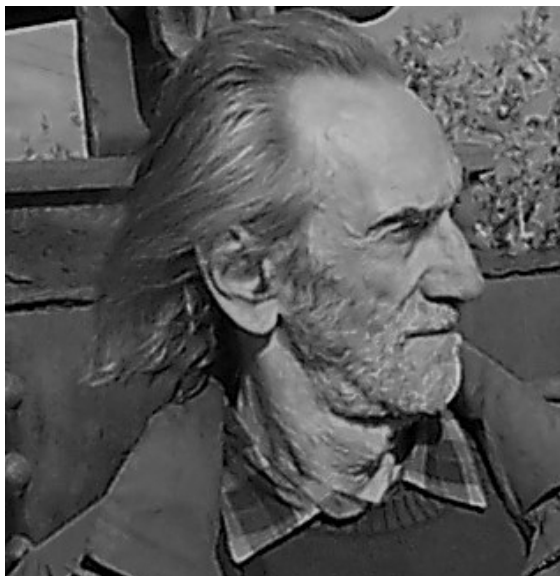
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How pretty now
the edge to every step
appears with its strip of summer light
that interrupts the blue
flow shadowing from the circling path
down to the poisonous glow
at the base of the wound. Did it hurt, did
the shovel bite
where it ought to have kissed the earth
for giving shrubs and cactus place
to grow? It was only their misfortune
to have put down roots
in land worth more destroyed
than left alone.

It's too late to put back
what was taken from the ground.
Let it shine wherever
it is now. The work is over. Easy come
the vultures from the evening sky
balancing eternities
on their outstretched wings.

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David Chorlton



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David Chorlton has long called Arizona home and looks back at visits to many fascinating locations in the state. That includes Ajo, once a mining town and now a quiet one.

Mary Knapp

Flying Freely into the Adjacent Cosmos

(and other disassociated dreams)

First of August
Whisper of the wind
Wool-o-rock
Rock and Roll
Bizmark
Prussia
When?

18

But first a Slurpee
Burger King it?
a Tiny Bit of writing
Topped with an acceptable
Level of legitimacy? – Bring it !

But if your professors don't tell you
How to do it, then
Why do it the hard way's what I say

Take my yard today
For example

Continued on page 19

You can tell what went down

There used to be rocks back there
Until Daniel sort of went there and came all unwound.
It was so gratifying, watching him.
Although for the full experience you would need to include sound.

But anyway...

There's very little time now
To say

Help. Help! Help?

Disassembled characters
Fly freely into the adjacent cosmos
Why? Because most of the people
Don't want to
Are too quiet to
Are too half to the moon to
Are joining the trajectory of perfection
And ultimate nothingness anyway
And oh
By the way
me too boo

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Mary Knapp



After a career as a biologist, Mary turned her attention to traveling and writing — literary nonfiction mostly with a dash of poetry — and has plans to see what tomorrow may bring. You can reach Mary at marymknapp@gmail.com.

Mary Knapp

The Camera

It wasn't until years had passed that he came upon his old camera, with its scenes of devastation locked inside.

Knowing – but not wanting to know – what he would find there –

He pulled out the camera anyway, took a raw breath and pressed play.

Chaotic images suddenly splashed across the screen
of ancient women and rail thin children running down a village path –
wild-eyed and sobbing, dragging old cooking pots –
and yelling to each other
that they must run now even if they could no longer breathe.

21

The violence in their eyes – hollow with fear – left no time for looking back.

He could feel a sense of shock in the hair on his arms as he watched the scenes play out. He tried to rub his eyes to rid himself of the images but it was no use. The memories, the images refused to go.

The women and children had arrived hardly a day before
With their heavy misshapen loads of daily life
Balanced precariously in bundles on their heads

Continued on page 22

It was easy to read on their faces that the wandering death of newly exploded mines had found them already, and their fate would soon be known.

Now, within moments, they had no choice but to turn and run once again, back into the unknown.

Once more it was as if he was there with them – in the burning sand – gasping in unison with them...

When suddenly somehow

He jerked his head upright...

22

sat back hard into his chair and convinced his body and mind to be separate. He was removed, disjunct, alive or a sort of living.

But for one long – guilty moment
he thought he could smell the familiar smell of death
winding its way like a cobra down the back of his neck.

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Jorge Gamboa

Mendicant

Humble saint,
prostrated on the grass,
your pleading hands thrust against the sky.
Is your face that of the suppliant
begging for the crumbs of his daily bread?
Is it that of the mendicant whose life of poverty
has set his gestures solidly into a look
of ingratiating beggary?
When I gaze upon your empty orbs
and the tall columns of teeth displayed in the rictus of your smile
I see naught but the maddened joy
Of a man who has surrendered his sense of pride
to remind all those who pass by
that the naked display of humility
does not always resemble lofty dignity
but the desperate happiness
of those who have freed themselves
from the chains of land and labor.

23

Inside the basilica,
a man with a dusty, torn backpack
comes in
and asks for a few dollars to spare
from the people at the pews.
His eyes are more forlorn
than those of the suppliant saint.

Jorge Gamboa



Jorge Gamboa hails from Sonoyta, Sonora, and his family roots in the region date back to countless centuries. He has family on both sides of the border, mainly in Southern Arizona, and this has fostered a unique worldview and appreciation for the land and the people of both countries. He is a writer, film critic, translator and Spanish tutor.

Jorge Gamboa

Crescent Moons upon My Hands

To my beloved Odilia, the first of many.

Those crescent moons
you engraved on my hands
with the points of your nails
were temporary hieroglyphs
that vanished from one day to the next,
only to be replicated again by you on the same spots.

They were painful to withstand,
but there was also comfort in your touch
and in the way you made me feel alive.
Every crescent moon that was carved
was a live wire upon the open wound of my beating flesh
and every spark from those stings
was a song of love for us to sing.

25

Now there are no more crescent moons
engraved upon my hands.
No longer is my skin the tablet
for those love poems that you carved with such precision.
My hands are clear, empty, untouched,
just like your bed by which I sat.
I yearn for your presence next to mine,
I long for those crescent moon days
gone by.

Jorge Gamboa

Picacho Spire

The dunes, the sand,
the hills and you.
The Picacho spire looms into view.

The road ahead
goes on indefinitely.

The world is wide
and larger than this desert.

26

Mind and body thrill for new adventures,
but the heart is shrunken
by the vastness of the sky
and the ashen remains of days gone by.

The dunes, the sand,
the hills and you.
The Picacho spire looms into view.

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Duann Black

Another Love Song

Anticipation is a song and respect is another.

Words with zippy tunes harmonize
snapping fingers and tapping toes.

Rhyming words engage our thoughts
pacing tugs memories in our hearts.

Places, times, people, and tears hum
to the rhythm of another tune.

Taste and sound and sight, touch us
through words, notes, volume, and pace,
swaying to familiar beats.

Melody tickles imagery
tiptoeing through our memories.

Listening, we seek another love.

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Duann Black

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Duann Black is an author and poet with stories to tell and things to say. During a multiyear break from emptying ink pens onto paper, she was the chief editor for her husband, Alan Black. They published 20 books, including “Metal Boxes” and “A Planet with No Name.” The poet is currently working on a two-book collection of short stories she and Alan wrote. She is a well-traveled military retiree, always ready with a story to share.

Duann Black

Do You Love Me?

Do you love me?

Yes, always.

How do I know?

Because I tell you so. My love is true.

Always is a long time.

Always is not long enough.

Why?

Because I love you.

29

What if I leave before you?

I love you always. It matters not.

Goodbye my love.

Goodbye my heart.

I love you always.

It is never long enough.

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Duann Black

Mated for Life

I see you, and you catch sight of me.
Mated for life, alone, you now are lost in the world.
Your morning call falling on lost ears, calls to me.
I too have no other to stand beside.

We solitary souls.
Neither can know the other's world.
Sight and sound alone we share.
Perception is in the mind of the viewer.

30 Did you love as I?

Your sad visage cloaked in mourning gray carries my thoughts away.
Once is enough, no dreaming.
Tomorrow I awake to hear your solitary song.
Mated and alone, together we sing.

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Kat Emmons

An Honorable Farewell

On a cold gray day,
fog hung low to the ground,
rain beat furiously down.
Across the road, eleven stood.
Two lines of five with one apart.
An eerie sight to see,
men against the fog.
Across the coffin, the flag was draped,
the sign of a soldier free.
Free to sleep, resting in peace.
Many gathered on that gray day.
Chilled and numbed by such a loss.
Words were spoken.
The command was given.
One shot rang through the air.
Next was heard, two rounds of ten,
shattering the heavy silence.
People rigid, unmoving stood.
One lone soldier raised his bugle.
Bringing forth upon the wind,
the haunting sound of taps.
Heartfelt tears moistened every cheek.
In silence, they folded the flag.
The flag was presented with grace and honor.
One by one, two by two, people departed.
Silence prevailed.

31

Continued on page 32

We mourned that day.
The gates of heaven opened.
We who knew him will remember.
Rain beat furiously down.
Fog hung low to the ground.
On a cold gray day.

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Kat Emmons



33

Kat wrote her first short stories in high school and her first poems in college. Over the years she took part in various writing groups. However, it was the writing groups hosted by the Dog Eared Pages Book Store and the many wonderful participants who became friends and writing peers that brought about her first published short stories in the anthology titled “Flashes of Light on a Dark and Stormy Night.”

Kat Emmons

The Autumn of My Life

The autumn of my life passed, slowly, quietly.
I was a lost and lonely girl who knew not where to turn.
I wandered far, and I wondered wide.
I never moved at all.
With every turn, a door appeared, the key to another land.
Winter arrived as I searched for the friendship of another.
I wandered lost and lonely, seeking that special door.
When opened, I hope for friendship sought.

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Kat Emmons

To a Friend on Parting

My friend, remember me.
Not as I am today,
or will be tomorrow.
As I was in bygone days,
when laughter once we shared.
Our hopes and dreams have faded away.
Now we part.
I hope someday we'll meet again,
here, or in eternity.

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Abraham Aruguete

Silence

So loud
After you say
Something.

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Abraham Aruguete



37

Abraham Aruguete is a human being. He has inhabited Northern Arizona for most of his life. He has been published in Asylum, The Blue Guitar, and Unstrung. He can be found on Instagram as abrahamaruguete.

Abraham Aruguete

Skinflint

I am an inchworm
Crawling through callouses
Hoping to feast on a heart.
I gnaw through
The toughened skin
Coming out on the other side
Having missed my mark.

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38

Carolyn Christy

Feelings

Grandma's house, where you are always welcome –
You never leave hungry in body or soul –
With her love wrapped all around you –
And your stomach filled with all it can hold.

The sweet smell of new mown hay –
Fresh turned soil as it falls from a plow –
The aroma of coffee and fresh apple pie –
Or hot baked bread cooling beneath a towel.

Babbling of a little stream –
Or raindrops as they fall for a while –
The rustle of wind through leaves on the trees –
The laughter of a little child.

Peacefulness in a Sunset –
Makes a perfect end to the day –
Blessings of a beautiful rainbow –
As you travel along your way.

Warm sunshine shining on your back –
The brisk feel when the season turns to fall –
Smoothness of silk, the touch of soft corduroy –
Tiny fingers curling round your finger – the best feelings after all.

Carolyn Christy



The poet writes:

Travel by car, ship, or plane,
Square dancing,
Visiting with friends
Writing Poems or a book
Life learner
Spending time with family
Carolyn has lived in Arizona for last 30 years.

Carolyn Christy

Grandchildren

Grandchildren – The wonder of the world –
Likened to tanning our old hides –
They make us soft and supple –
We put all bitterness aside.

Their smiles can reach thru the toughest hides –
Bring joy where there is pain –
We forget the things that ail –
It makes you whole again.

We feel we could move the world –
When they take us by the hand –
If leaders would only take this lesson –
We would have peace throughout our land.

The faith in all their little eyes –
When they look up to you –
They remind us of all the good things –
Of bright sunshine and skies of blue.

They can make us all take notice –
Open our eyes to see –
The things that really matter –
Wherever we may be.

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Carolyn Christy

We Paint a Picture

We start each life like a canvas –
All pretty and lily white –
The brush strokes are made by daily living –
Some colors are dark and gloomy, others lovely and bright.

As we touch other people's lives –
The colors blend to other hues –
Love and laughter paint lovely pictures –
But hate and anger make statements too.

42 Just remember as you pass through life –
The things you paint by what you do –
Whether your life is a beautiful picture –
Is entirely up to you.

As life goes on the colors are richer –
With fuller, bolder tones –
When we share our lives with others –
Some of theirs becomes our own.

We are only allowed one canvas –
But we can change it as we go –
If you do not like the picture –
Then you must change it – to make it so.

Richard Fenton Sederstrom

Life Outside Prague

after a pale cornerlight from Breughel

Mozart's Prague Symphony fails
as it always fails
in my distracted earshot.
Today, the symphony fails to compete
with my neighbor's chainsaw.
The distractions today discompose
a polychordant cacophony.
Chuck finishes cutting up the corpse
of a drought-starved birch tree.
I am in time to witness the final cut.

43

Then Chuck's combustion-performance intermits.
I look up to see the last fat cylinder
of palid birch log roll away from him dead
and lumber toward the dirt road we share,
and I hear between chainsaw-brevés
that I have missed a few
bars of the great symphony.
Thus: Mozart has failed to compete
with this afternoon's noisy attentions to duty.
That is, Mozart, rising,

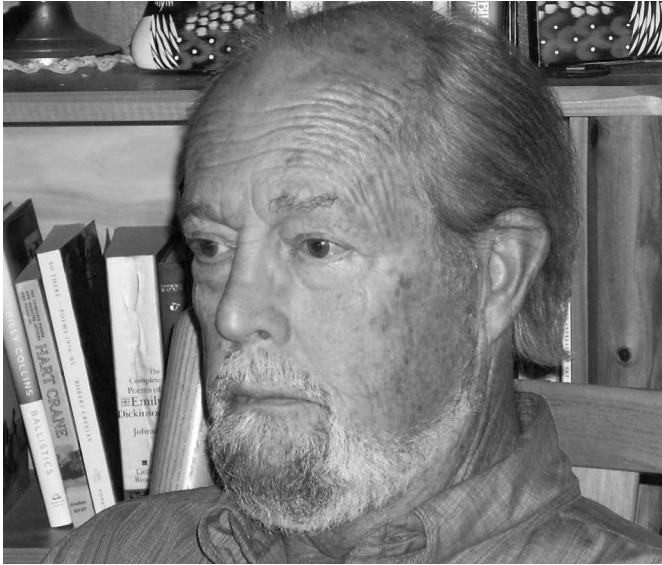
Continued on page 44

has failed again
to enter the competition with us.
The Prague had risen above us all
from the very start,
and it has remained where it started,
never so lofty that it soars above my attention.
The birch log rolls and rolls
and it is all part of the white memory
that will occupy me in the un-codified silence,
the roughly notated peace of my day.

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Richard Fenton Sederstrom



Richard Fenton Sederstrom's family moved to the Sonoran Desert of Arizona in 1954. They brought Richard along, for which he is still both appreciative and bewildered. The Sonoran Desert, for all of humanity's wounds and insults, remains a gift. Sederstrom's seventh book of poems, "Icarus Rising: Misadventures in Ascension," which occupies that desert from Tempe to Guaymas, appeared in 2020. A new book, "The Dun Box," which regards "The American Century" as a total of minus 21 days in 1945, is finally finished as much as our world will let be, and has been released.

Richard Fenton Sederstrom

Our Hands (Part II)

1

Spring 2011

Requested by Denise Rapp for her students

The exactitude of execution an ancient artist
employs in the details of a bird,
titanium sheen delineated—

and yet we still have trouble depicting hands,
and hands seem not to be complex appendages.
So why?

46

The hand of a young girl over there by the lake
stops painting, brush in midair.
She looks beyond her brush and a wing of fingers.

She seems to look somewhere over the water.
The hand with its brush moves out beyond her attention.
Ah. That's why:

The young dancer
knows her moves, watches each part of her body
work in no more than mechanical exactitude. Then

her left hand moves by itself
and she follows
the grace of it.

Continued on page 47

2

Spring 2024

for Jay Adler, at the (Friendship Village) Anniversary Party

A very old man, of more than ninety years
dances again, and with several partners.
We see that he still knows the moves,
even at a slower, surely less sturdy pace.

He watches only his partner, her eyes. At first
they work in that child's mechanical exactitude.
Then together they move on the dance floor

with skill and magnetism, as though
they are re-learning, from touch to gesture,
from stammer to talk—to song.

On a new day, still they move in my mind,
a portrait of human trust in springtime ways
and the immemorial ways of youth.

His right hand moves again
by its own singular memory,
and they move as one—

and for the age-long moments
of the music, inseparably
we follow with them
in the grace of time.

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Richard Fenton Sederstrom

Chord and Echo

Voice

Ear

Ear

Voice

*

Enigma

The eccentricity that propels
the poem is the poet's:

the poet's selenity about
dreaming the sources

the compelling haecceitas
the primal hearth or:

poetry is the impulse.
precedes the actual birth

the cave. This This This in—
The impulse
of imagined language.

Some ancient time ago
a voice at the hearth uttered
a meaningful
sound,
audible breath
divorced of utility
and she and someone else

Continued on page 49

suddenly lost breath
for a moment and were
sent,

both
Some-No-Where
new and momentarily

entirely

sublime.

But it was in the vocal

response
carrying the first sound

even further
and together that

the urge to create
something new in words
alone

49

for no
practical and identifiable
purpose—

song: poetry
really happened.

It still doesn't happen
very often. It
doesn't last

long
but it happens
and it recurs.

All poems that follow
the first poem

the first song
the second chorus
are recurrences:
like
the free adventure
of every madcap
pitch ratio:
wild shamanic
flutesong flight from the distant
hermit thrush in
the crystal flashes
of his green rapture.

The unintentional result
of the experiment
of a poem is that poems,
all arts that still exist

have evolved into a prelude
to an elegy
that could neither

be uttered nor ever recur

totendanz: Atvočⁱ
we live in the first era
of human history

Continued from page 50

and likely the last
when we are fatally
able to produce

“the fire
next time”

It would
be rather pleasant,
don't you think we might
conclude,
before we do conclude,
if we found a way
not to.

51

Not to? To?

Ding dong dong

Toward thee I roll

Toward thee—

our will: Αίνιγμα to speak in riddles Motherstory

ἄγι δὴ χέλυ δῖα μοι λέγε
φωνάεσσα δέ γινεω ⁱⁱ

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End notes

i I would far prefer to have left the Greek terms to readers to discover on their own. As suggested in the poems, I hope, so much of the power of art lies in the power of response that we make after the *silence* at the end of the music, the poem, the sculpture, the painting, etc. If you would prefer to take up the adventure of “void,” this is a good place to stop reading. Or: Here the term *Aivoζ* translates as “*ainos*,” story, especially as suggested farther down in Αἴνυγμα “enigma,” which I also translate as “Motherstory,” on admittedly questionable authority and the poet’s perfectly precise wishful thinking.

ii I recommend Anne Carson’s translation of Sappho, “If Not, Winter,” in which Carson translates the text in such a way that what is missing is clear, also making clear that the centuries of fascination with Sappho rest almost entirely in what no longer exists—save the lure of silence. These lines are the whole of fragment 118:

*yes! radiant lyre speak to me
become a voice*

52 The rest is bare silent space.

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Richard Fenton Sederstrom

The Late Pentheus in Parts Respondingⁱⁱⁱ

chats in deepest Hades
with parts of a fellow sacrifice—

“A spleen, you say?
That’s what the thing that . . .
that my mother . . . no, no!
Agave!
that foreign Agave
who seemed my mother.

53

I think that’s better.
Foreign, therefore
Distant. Exotic. Yes,
Forest or Desert, or Sea Surge
must have yanked
from my shredded torso
to display before the eyes
of my plucked head
before those eyes
were plucked also.

But a spleen? No.
Well, no, I think not.

Continued on page 54

Still, what's a body part here
and there anyway
when there's no body anymore
to part with?"

What will be Thebes,
brain-birth
of drama, of Greece,
where the worn stones,
the amphiocosmos of theater
with no body
in it?

54 No stage
No cast, no gods, no poet
Nor eyes nor ears

Ἐξοδος Σοφία^{iv}:

Enter
the pasquinade

End o' Days . . .

Which way I fly—I myself—

We fall:

Εσχατολογία^v

Fin: lights fade on Gogo's lone boots duckfooted
in the dying light on stage:

Again and again: *There's no lack of void . . .*

End notes

iii This has become a day for advocating Anne Carson, for good reason. For a view of the condition of contemporary civilization, read her translation of Euripides, *Bakkhai*. For a view of its tentative future and the process behind the condition and future, read her translations of Aiskhylos, Sophokles, and Euripides, *An Oresteia*, one play in the trilogy by each poet.

iv The best I can render in Greek for “Exit Wisdom” (Sophia).

v *Eschatologia*, the centuries-old Christian puzzlement over the nature of the “end times.” Maybe an appropriate study still; maybe not:

*Speak to me
become a void.*

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Editor's Note

Sharing the wonderful work of other poets, reading what they have submitted, always feels like a holiday.

This edition of *Unstrung* furthers our belief that poetry is a living thing, that a poem is organic and exists as much for what the poet brings to it as for what the reader brings to it.

Less is more in poetry because it is a two-way street.

With fiction, we are enveloped in a world created by the writer.

With poetry, we are enveloped in a world created by both poet and reader.

As a reader, our mind's eye is anchored to the image presented by the poet.

An example would be what happened to a line in revision for one of our poets.

In his notes, in praising a translation of Sappho because it makes clear what is missing from her original lines, Richard Fenton Sederstrom first wrote:

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Editorial Staff

Editor: *Rebecca Dyer*

Editor: *Richard H. Dyer Jr.*

Publisher: *Elena Thornton*

Artwork for front and back covers: *Marjory Boyer*

“The rest is silent bare space.”

In the revision, which we have included with the poet’s work, the poet puts the emphasis on “bare” by placing it first:

“The rest is bare silent space.”

Within the context and in our mind’s eye, we see the bareness, the barrenness, the blankness on the page where words should be, a tangible thing, which helps us to connect with the now deeper and more powerful and intangible “silent space.”

In the original line, it was harder to connect with the intangible “silent” when it came first.

The new line sharpens the image, enhances our visualization of the image, and strengthens our connection to the image, poem and poet.

The order of one word makes all of the difference. And that is why we write poetry.

Rebecca “Becca” Dyer
Co-editor

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Coming in Fall 2024!

The Annual

Blue Guitar

Festival

of the Arts!

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Join us for an amazing showcase of the arts, with music, dance, cultural presentations, art activities for children and literary readings!

Free admission!

For more information, go to The Arizona Consortium for the Arts website, www.artizona.org.

A Call to Poets

For Summer 2025

Unstrung, a magazine of, for and about poetry, will seek poetry submissions for its Summer 2025 Issue from June 1 through July 4, 2025. Poets must submit original work (no AI-generated work) and must have a tie to Arizona. Simultaneous submissions will be accepted, but the poet must notify the magazine as soon as possible if the work is accepted elsewhere. It is free to submit, and multiple poems may be submitted. Please include your name and the best way to contact you on your e-mail submission. Please include in the e-mail subject line: Attn. Unstrung — Poetry submission, and send to Rebecca Dyer at rebeccadyer@theblueguitarmagazine.org.

For more information, e-mail Rebecca at rebeccadyer@theblueguitarmagazine.org or visit www.theblueguitarmagazine.org.

Unstrung, a magazine of, for and about poetry, is a nonprofit project of The Blue Guitar magazine and the nonprofit The Arizona Consortium for the Arts. The Arizona Consortium for the Arts is a startup, nonprofit group dedicated to supporting and fostering artists and the arts in Arizona, including the literary, visual and performing arts. For more information about Unstrung magazine, The Blue Guitar magazine and The Arizona Consortium for the Arts, visit our websites:

www.theblueguitarmagazine.org

and www.artizona.org

Unstrung • Summer 2024

A Call to Writers for the Fall 2024 Blue Guitar

60 The Blue Guitar literary and arts magazine seeks literary submissions for the Fall 2024 Edition from Sept. 1 through Oct. 4. Submissions are sought in all genres — fiction, poetry, plays, creative nonfiction. Writers must submit original work (no AI-generated work) and must live part- or full-time in Arizona. Simultaneous submissions will be accepted, but the writer must notify the magazine as soon as possible if the work is accepted elsewhere. It is free to submit, and submissions may be made in multiple genres. Please include your name and the best way to contact you on your submission. To submit or for further information, e-mail Editor Rebecca Dyer at rebeccadyer@theblueguitarmagazine.org. For more information, visit www.theblueguitarmagazine.org.

The Blue Guitar, The Blue Guitar Jr. and Unstrung are nonprofit projects of the nonprofit start-up The Arizona Consortium for the Arts. The Arizona Consortium for the Arts is dedicated to supporting and fostering artists and the arts in Arizona, including the literary, visual and performing arts. For more information, visit our websites: www.theblueguitarmagazine.org and www.artizona.org.

Meet the staff of Unstrung magazine



Elena Thornton, publisher: Founder of The Arizona Consortium for the Arts, Elena is an educator, artist and poet and lives in Phoenix. Reach her at info@artizona.org.

Rebecca Dyer, editor: A Tucson native, Rebecca is a poet, journalist and teacher residing in Mesa with her husband, Richard, her co-editor for Unstrung, The Blue Guitar and The Blue Guitar Jr. Reach her at rebeccadyer@theblueguitarmagazine.org.



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Richard H. Dyer Jr., editor: Richard (married to Rebecca, above) is a managing editor of monthly newspapers with websites in the East Valley, a photographer and a welded-steel sculptor.

Marjory Boyer, cover design artist for Unstrung, The Blue Guitar and The Blue Guitar Jr.: Marjory, of Scottsdale, is an award-winning artist, muralist and an acrylic painting instructor. Her biography and contact information are available at mboyerart.com.



UNSTRUNG

A magazine of
for and about
poetry



Unstrung will
return in
Summer 2025