

The

Bond

Street

Review

Winter 2015

From the editors ...

I've long believed that the planned and the prepared are sometimes our worst enemies, that there is so much intrinsic worth and value and importance in the random. I love the music of chance as Paul Auster (one of my favorite novelists) once wrote. And it's only fitting that I make a music reference as the method employed to assemble this issue was nicked from composer John Cage (who is also referenced in this issue). In the Summer 2014 issue of *The Bond Street Review* we carefully sequenced the pieces in an order that we felt allowed for a certain arc and told a story of sorts, fragmentary as it was. Even the cover image echoed one of the pieces in the issue.

No such luck this time. We simply assigned each piece a number, drew said numbers from a bowl and set the work end to end accordingly, letting the words tell their own stories and reverberate amongst themselves however they saw fit. Another draw of the numbers from the bowl would have invariably resulted in a completely different experience – such is the beauty of randomness. We can only hope that you enjoy the results. And if not, mix them up again and see if that does the trick.

We also hope that once you're done exploring this issue you'll employ the "forward" option on your e-mail and send it along to any and all that might enjoy the work as well. You can even just grab a handful of names from your contact list (at random, of course), send them the issue and see where it leads. What's the worst that could happen?

Until next time,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Eric Evans". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Eric Evans &
Kathy Sochia,
Editors

Cover photo: www.corbisimages.com

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Window Shopping

by Patricia Acadia

My life has been
Beach-adjacent
Back of the line where the ice cream runs out
Toasting the lovely couple
Last on the list-- misspelled.

Tangential.
Tantalized.
Tantamount to
Cookie crumbs on the bottom of the box.

Cowboy up-- some people don't even have a box.

Back row of the photo,
Almost in the frame.

What's your name, again?
We're so glad you came!

Holding the sneaker mic
In the role of hired help,

Not someone's date

Others have greater need
It's best if I wait.

Trapped in the green room
When is my hour?

If cream always rises
Then too long makes it sour.

Sad on the sidewalk
One handled jump rope.

I want something, now.
Don't give me hope.

Peeper

by Gary Beck

I have watched you late at night,
in your secret chamber of dreams,
as you bared your Park Avenue thighs,
stretched before my wondering eyes,
pressed two tiny fists
against your winking breasts,
then turned off the light
and denied me delight.

Unsaid

by Cristine A. Gruber

They sit in their usual spots,
the elder in the place of honor,
most comfortable chair, cane
by his side. The matriarch has

her place as well, blue recliner
by the portable heater. They
talk of the weather, the news,
the most recent election. But

never of the elephant in the
corner of the room. A fixture
by now, sitting by the fireplace,
an accepted part of the family

circle, suitably spectacled,
quietly reading the daily
newspaper. Medical terms
are slipped into the conversation

as acronyms. Elephant coughs.
The conversation shifts from
inoperable conditions to the
rising cost of good avocados.

Amish

by Kevin Heaton

Summer sets burnt beet sugar on sweet gum
in the lowcountry. Honey bees craze candy apples

like flypaper roulette at the Lancaster County
Fair. I break funnel cake with a Pennsylvania

Dutchman and redeem my soul to the psalm
beneath your bonnet. But you'll return to the vale

of levitating hymns where you prophecy;
where pastoral brethren tend Granny Smith crisps

on old telephone farms, and passive shepherds
divine their flocks in spot or wrinkle baptism—

separated from the carnal by a hat brim.

Eagle's Nest

by John Grey

Too high for me,
and why such brittle eggs,
Some don't see the brooding through.
The ones that do
are born to blinding hunger.

I'd never want my child to be
in play to such condemning odds.
One in three survives.
Tell that to the waning horde
behind the glass,
the nurses in their dizzy white.

And stripped of shell,
they feed and feed,
no love, no respect,
just a greedy throat full
of regurgitated rodent
I'd make time for lullaby
as well as teat,
for gently rocking tears to sleep.

But six months gone,
and now, heads baldy white,
wings spread mottled brown,
they soar, they leave.
Too much for me,
the propensity of fledglings.

Orphan

by Robert S. King

The child in a man's body
moves every day to a different
cardboard house, never sleeps
in the Shelter, that orphanage
for grown-ups.

His mouth is always open,
a hollow ring, a silent shout,
the calm before the storm.

They call him Stormy,
this child who refused
his unadopted name.
Hard rain named him.
No tears now, but years
leak in, leak out.

He was never anyone's,
never at home, lives everywhere.
His stare seems to follow
some distant sound,
some wandering echo
seeking the voice that made it.

Enigma

by Gary Beck

If glory is a futile lust
and duty is the path we must
pursue, what of our dreaming then,
the whimpering of fearful men?
Resolute and knowledged in defy
we arm and seek the senseless fray,
step-child of our arrogant display
and dispute the sense of how and why.
Then desire, doomed by its own intent,
an emanation, gut-hot, by another sent
into exile, to rot without a trace,
'til it reappears in a kinder place.

Pillow

by Mitchell Krockmalnik Grabois

Buffalo migrated down the snow packed road. Persistence was not in their nature. Persistence requires a *going-against*, making oneself into a fleshy bulldozer, shifting into lower and lower gears, to push through the Universe's resistance to the glorification of one's Ego.

There was no Persistence in the buffalo soul. There was no Serenity Prayer, no Desiderata. A buffalo would never be so stupid as to consider himself a child of the Universe. He knew that, no less than the moon and the stars, he had no right to be here. If only my lover had had the native intelligence of a buffalo.

The sensei had given her a Buddha name: *Moon Pillow*, which I thought suited her, though I can't explain why, but it had something to do with Cat Steven's song, "Moon Shadow."

Anyway, this futile quest for enlightenment was better than her other phases: high school slut; mixed martial arts fighter, bashing her fallen opponents' faces until the referee stepped in; alcoholic poet; meth head. I just rode through it all, the forbearing boyfriend, like a tourist taking in the views.

This Zen period I see as a welcome rest. She rode me hard through the changes, put me away wet. I could use a break. Maybe she'll get enlightened. Maybe I will too.

A long time ago, I had my own meditation pillow. My sister gave it to me for a high school graduation present. It was used. Someone else's ass had sat on it before me. Maybe they got enlightened. Maybe it was once the sensei's pillow, before he got one fringed with gold. I knocked the dust from it and sneezed, a pre-enlightenment sneeze.

Rebecca

by Kevin Heaton

Timelines tracked her face
like starched Sunday pleats.
She had the weathered-leather
look of a drive-weary trail boss,
and a drover's payday grin

for a smile. Her rosy cheeks
basked south of truck farm
squint tracks like rouged
mesa knolls in drought, her
sleek iron skillet hair westing

leeward into a corn dodger
biscuit, taunting our pre-
communion fasts with leftover
whiffs of breakfast bacon.
She pressed the same chocolate

print dress each sabbath,
and held firm to John Brown's
faith without the piss and vinegar.
I recall following her and Jesus
to Zacchaeus' house for tea.

The Underwear Song

for Kellen

by Patricia Acadia

I wear
my underwear
under there
most of the time.

They're under my clothes,
that's where they goes
everyone knows.

I don't wear them
on top
like Superman.
That's not the plan,
even though I can
I guess.

I don't wear them at all
if they're too small.
I go to the store
and buy some more.

Wearing them in the bath
is kind of a gaffe,
so I kick them off for an hour
when I jump in the shower,
then I put on clean undies
so I smell like a flower.

I toss them in
the laundry machine,
till they get clean,
then into the drawer
till I wear them some more.

Oh underwear
you're always there
every day.
You're there for me,
soft and cottony.
I sing for you,
to prove it's true,
that I love you.
Underwear.

Charles Ingalls

by Kevin Heaton

Little big men swaddled in soiled linens
are not defined by shamed bed clothes.

They rig main masts to prairie schooners
that set sail for ponderosas—

They plant soddies next to walnut
groves in dandelion snow—

They rise above pissants—
fisted to stars.

The Satie And The Cage

by Eric Evans

I get it now, my ex-wife's frequent
need to immerse herself in the wordless
strains of Brahms and Bach, of Mozart
and Mendelssohn, the swirl of an
orchestra, the solemnity of a string
quartet, to be free of the shouting,
accusatory voices, to be released
from the endless chore of deciphering,
from the parsing of agendas and
double-meanings, to submerge in
sound for its own sake, pauses and
rests as the balm for another overloud,
overwrought day.

So, yes, please,
always hit me with my beloved
punk and funk and metal and soul,
my cherished jazz and essential
folk, my rainy day music and Saturday
night anthems for Sunday morning's
coming down, but don't forget the
Bartok and Schubert, the Satie and
the Cage, the syllable-free swells
that momentarily cushion the day's
ever-repeated blows.

Altruism

by Michael Estabrook

My daughter is boycotting
companies that lie to her
or steal from her.

On her hit list so far:

Comcast, Apple, Hertz, Commerce
Insurance, Walmart, Sorrento's Pizza
and a local gas station.

I warn her

she's going to run out
of stores and services
by the time she's my age.

Fuck 'em, she said.

Indiscriminate

by Cristine A. Gruber

in its destruction,
undifferentiating
as it annihilates.

The Inferno

consumes,

turning

all in its path

to cinder.

Catholic church

burns to the ground;

Protestant church

engulfed as well.

In the end,

all will face

the flame.

Rock

by Patricia Acadia

Say you were my cornerstone,
My foundation,
Protection from the shifting sands beneath my feet.
What would I be to you?
Brick after brick piled atop you,
Pressing you down?
A mansion shining in the sun,
Obscuring you from view?

Say I was a pebble,
Lodged in your shoe.
Would you tilt me gently
Into your palm,
Hold me to the sky and
Examine my colors?
Or
Drop me to the road and walk on?

Suppose you
Were strolling on the beach,
Gathering memories.
Would you pocket me
For your secret box of treasures,
Or would I find myself skimming the water,
Skipping towards the deep?

Suppose I
Labeled you a precious stone
And set you in a velvet case,
To be worn only on special occasions,
Briefly seen,
And admired,
But not to be touched.
Would that please you?

Suppose we
Dug down as far as we could go.
Would we come
Eventually to bedrock
Or fall through the other side?

Contributors

Patricia Acadia lives in Greenbelt, Maryland with two intriguing sons and the world's friendliest hellhound. Hobbies include wrangling small children, and sardonic internal monologue.

Gary Beck has spent most of his adult life as a theater director. He has seven published chapbooks. Previous poetry collections include *Days of Destruction, Expectations, Dawn in Cities, Assault on Nature* and *Songs of a Clerk*. *Civilized Ways, Perceptions* and *Displays* will be published by Winter Goose Publishing. His novels and short story collections include *Extreme Change, Acts of Defiance* and *A Glimpse of Youth*. His original plays and translations of Moliere, Aristophanes and Sophocles have been produced Off Broadway. His poetry, fiction and essays have appeared in hundreds of literary magazines. He currently lives in New York City.

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

Eric Evans is a writer and musician from Buffalo, New York with stops in Portland, Oregon and Rochester, New York where he currently resides. His work has appeared in *Steel Bellow, Decades Review, Dead Snakes, decomp magazine, Red River Review, Posey, Xenith Magazine, Anobium Literary Magazine, Pemmican Press, Remark* and many other publications and anthologies. He has published eight full collections and three broadsides through his own small press, Ink Publications, in addition to a broadside through Lucid Moon Press. He is the editor of *The Bond Street Review* as well as the proud recipient of the 2009 Geva Theatre Center Summer Academy Snapple Fact Award.

Mitchell Krockmalnik Grabois has had over six hundred of his poems and fictions appear in literary magazines in the U.S. and abroad, including *The Bond Street Review*. He has been nominated for the Pushcart Prize for work published in 2012, 2013, and 2014. His novel, *Two-Headed Dog*, based on his work as a clinical psychologist in a state hospital, is available for Kindle and Nook, or as a print edition. He lives in Denver.

John Grey is an Australian born poet. Recently published in *Paterson Literary Review*, *Rockhurst Review* and *Spindrift* with work upcoming in *New Plains Review*, *Leading Edge* and *Louisiana Literature*.

Cristine Gruber a Southern California native, is a registered caregiver and a fulltime author/poet. Her poetry reflects her view of the human condition in all its complexity and beauty. Her work has been featured in numerous magazines, including: *North American Review*, *Writer's Digest*, *Ascent Aspirations*, *The Bond Street Review*, *California Quarterly*, *Dead Snakes*, *The Endicott Review*, *Foliate Oak*, *Full of Crow*, *The Homestead Review*, *Iodine Poetry Journal*, *Kind of a Hurricane Press: Something's Brewing Anthology*, *Leaves of Ink*, *Miller's Pond*, *The Penwood Review*, *The Poet's Haven*, *Pound of Flash*, *Red River Review*, *The Tule Review*, *Wilderness House Literary Review*, and *The Write Place at the Write Time*. In 2014, her short stories, "Imprisoned," and "Stash," both received Honorable Mentions in the *Writers Weekly* 24-Hour Short Story Competition. Her first full-length collection of poetry, *Lifeline*, is available from Amazon.com. More of Cristine's work can be found and enjoyed at <http://sierraviewjournal.blogspot.com/>.

Kevin Heaton is originally from Kansas and Oklahoma, and now lives and writes in South Carolina. His work has appeared in a number of publications including: *Guernica*, *Raleigh Review*, *Beloit Poetry Journal*, *Vinyl Poetry*, *The Adroit Journal*, and *The Monarch Review*. He is a Best of the Net, Best New Poets, and three-time Pushcart Prize nominee.

Robert S. King a native Georgian, now lives in Lexington, Kentucky. His poems have appeared in hundreds of magazines, including *California Quarterly*, *Chariton Review*, *Hollins Critic*, *Kenyon Review*, *Lullwater Review*, *Main Street Rag*, *Midwest Quarterly*, *Negative Capability*, *Southern Poetry Review*, and *Spoon River Poetry Review*. He has published four chapbooks (*When Stars Fall Down as Snow*, *Dream of the Electric Eel*, *The Traveller's Tale* and *Diary of the Last Person on Earth*). His full-length collections include *The Hunted River*, *The Gravedigger's Roots*, *One Man's Profit* and *Developing a Photograph of God*. Robert's work has been nominated several times for the Pushcart Prize and the Best of Net award. His personal website is www.robertsking.com.

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