

# The Bond Street Review



Staff Only

Winter 2018

### **From the editors**

Welcome to our second themed issue. This time out, we were looking for pieces about the working world, the workplace, that colleague you adore (or can't stand – admit it we all have a handful of each), that job you loved, the one you didn't get, or that first paycheck when you finally understood why your parents were always complaining about taxes. As people who have been working since our teenage years (so, in other words, we've been employed for a long time ...) we identify with every single one of the above examples. A few of them we're still dealing with – kind of the nature of employment, right?

So, we invite you to enjoy the following pieces where you'll hear about, among other things, the first day as a new teacher, the hazards of too much jargon and the potentially soul-draining effects of the weekly department meeting. And then we invite you to share the issue far and wide. All it will take is a simply push of the "forward" button – it'll hardly feel like work at all.

Until next time,  
Eric Evans & Kathy Sochia,  
Editors

Cover image: Ink Publications

## **Table of Contents**

**My First Day** / Michael Brownstein / 1

**New Job, Day One** / Jim Babwe / 2

***“The new test stand is set up and waiting for the appropriate downstream valves before becoming operational.”*** /  
Michael Estabrook / 4

**Not at Rest** / Keith Moul / 5

**Homework** / Robert Ronnow / 6

**Me and My Lunch** / William Doreski / 9

**Tuesday Afternoons From Three To Four** / Eric Evans / 11

## **My First Day**

By Michael Brownstein

My first day in the school out south,  
the principal told me she did not give  
anyone school supplies for their class  
until they proved they were worthy  
of receiving anything at all. This decree  
included textbooks and teacher guides.  
But there is one exception, she tells me.  
I will give you rulers, thick wooden rulers,  
rulers that are hard to break and duct tape.  
All the duct tape you feel you might need.

How do I prove myself? I ask.

She grabs a handful of thick rulers  
that are so thick they cannot break  
and she duct tapes them together.  
Then she smacks the finished product  
down on her desk really hard and says,  
"Here are the rules. Never use this to hit a child  
in their face or neck. This leaves a mark.  
On the thigh or the behind, that's fine.  
When I hear that you have used this  
then you will get everything you deserve--  
chalk and paper, pens and pencils and—

## **New Job, Day One**

By Jim Babwe

Hired by  
The State of California,  
Department of Mirage Repair,  
I joined the crew  
and accompanied  
these new co-workers  
into vast desolation,  
where eight of us  
staggered through gusty wind  
and flying sand  
to place several dozen  
orange cones at the edge  
of a two-lane highway.

We chanted instructions to ourselves,  
carried electronic measuring devices,  
noted digital readouts,  
and sprinkled holy water  
onto a large collection  
of dramatic boulders  
where several damaged mirages  
needed repair.

We shook magic beans in rhythm  
to the rumble of passing trucks  
and the rush of passing cars.

We traded fresh water for information  
from a pair of lizards,  
who provided us with descriptions  
of the responsible vandals.

After lunch,  
we knocked off early,  
drove off road into the desert  
until we could look back through  
distance to double check  
the effectiveness of our work,  
and on the way back to San Bernardino,  
I wrote a narrative account  
of our accomplishments.

***“The new test stand is set up and waiting for the appropriate downstream valves before becoming operational.”***

By Michael Estabrook

Jerry's explaining  
about the recent engineering problem in  
manufacturing the 6-Stacks. He's a  
sharp young engineer from a good  
school, working for *The Company*,  
a *Fortune 500* company, and he's eager  
to forge a successful career  
in business. I notice  
his stiff starched white shirt  
and stylish businessman's tie,  
his demeanor calm but firm, assured.  
I notice the trim cut of  
his hair, his clean neat nails  
and shiny polished shoes.

*“The plan is to purge the first  
batch for 24 hours and then test on  
the new test stand. Process optimization  
will follow from there.”*

He's making a note with a magic marker  
on a broad white sheet of easel paper  
when suddenly I see my Father  
in the dirt driveway of our old house  
on Northfield Avenue. He has  
one foot up on the dented

bumper of the green '53 Buick he's  
fixing-up. The hood is up,  
his hands and shirt and coveralls  
are covered with grease and oil.  
He's holding a beer can in one hand,  
a Pall Mall's dangling from the corner  
of his mouth  
and he's smiling at me.



## **Not at Rest**

By Keith Moul

At threshing time, before steam machines,  
my ancestors here on our land work hard;  
then, when crops have been seen to, fell  
more trees for the barn; or husband calves  
for the growing herd; or contend with wind  
through guarded nights. Rest comes later.

In my time I navigate the plentiful stumps,  
wet as sponges; husband calves to the herd;  
battle recalcitrant winds; worry through dark;  
truck grains and vegetables to market, little  
valued by others who do not trod the land.

I evict vagrants and rest when work permits.

## **Homework**

By Robert Ronnow

Moby Dick, geometry, physics.

Study every subject every day.

Homework is an indicator of future success.

Success is not necessarily happiness but it helps.

Freedom is to formulate your own definition of success.

Happiness is an imaginary tree, its own reward, and a fact.

Facts and fiction may be memorialized in memos or found in dreams.

The story starts thus: Each summer the honeysuckles and the huckleberries . . .

The web is that extra brain we've all been dreaming of having.

Like jumping 4 meters or flying without a plane.

To fly like that must one first have homework?

Some say yes, some say don't. It depends on how you vote.

Happiness is what happens when everything that happens

Fits the time perfectly and it's all out of your hands.

Not exactly. You don't let go of the steering wheel while driving fast in the passing lane.

You look left and right and check your blind spots.

Homework is an introduction to everything you're not

And all you do not know. It's supposed to help you learn to know where you want to go before  
going where you have to go.

Otherwise you end up on Ulzana's raid

Bleeding, without a bandaid.

All the achievement in the world won't relieve your loneliness

Or satisfy your sexual longing. What girls are like behind their eyes.

Survival, procreation. That's all there is to love.

But the loved one is the one who can be trusted with your life.  
Whether Christ or your wife. The Muslim moms.  
On my walk in the woods I come to a sitting spot  
Above a small gorge cut by a stream through hemlocks.  
Here someone has left a statuette of the Buddha and the flags you see  
Flapping in the wind at sky funerals.  
This is a pretty good place to sit quietly and think about homework.

## **Me and My Lunch**

By William Doreski

In an abandoned factory, sunlight curdles on concrete floors  
and the brick walls nourish spiders big enough to kill a bird.

I'm here to think about volume and dimension. This huge  
vacant rectangle reminds me how little space I occupy.

When I'm gone, the universe will close over my absence  
like water healing a splash. I've brought a lunch: a sandwich,

a flask of seltzer, an apple. In my inner ear a hum of lathes,  
a snore of metal-cutting saws, the banter and cursing of men

who preferred their own company to that of the women in their lives.  
They don't exactly haunt this place, but they left tatters of noise

caught in the veils of web-work the spiders have woven to trap  
whatever proteins come along. I keep well away from the walls

and find a pool of sunlight large enough to illuminate  
me and my lunch. I worked here fifty years ago, apprentice

machinist, but couldn't take the noise and teasing and stink  
of hot metal. Now abandoned for decades, brickwork crumbling,

glassless windows gaping, this blank old structure bares its dimensions  
and fills me with its volume. Enlarged by a micron or two,

I eat my lunch and watch the light crawl up and down the work-stained walls,  
exciting the spiders. I wish someone could chalk my outline

on the floor, commemorating this casual lunch and assuring me  
of whatever immortality I'm entitled to attain.

## **Tuesday Afternoons From Three To Four**

By Eric Evans

I would love to voice an opinion  
but I can't speak right now, not  
with this letter opener stuck in  
my neck, stabbed there just to keep  
things interesting.

Yes, I would be  
happy to add to the groupthink,  
to the brainstorm  
but I'm busy trying to remove my  
skin in one perfect layer, the way  
you would with an orange and a  
knife.

Nothing would please me  
more than to speak in quotes and  
verbatim but I'm about to run my  
tongue through the shredder lest  
I say something off-page or not  
from the manual.

And I would be  
overjoyed to take these marching  
orders and carry them out but it's  
simply not possible as my heart has  
just exploded and my spine is in the  
shop for repairs.

## **Contributors**

**Jim Babwe** is still glad to live in Encinitas, California. It snowed there in 1965, but he lived closer to Los Angeles in those days, so he didn't get to see the snow. Sometimes people from the East say we don't have seasons in Southern California. That's when Jim usually says something along these lines: "Yes. We do. We have baseball season and not-baseball season". He may have stolen this line, but he doesn't remember when and he's not sure who deserves credit.

**Michael Brownstein** has been widely published throughout the small and literary presses. His work has appeared in *The Café Review*, *American Letters and Commentary*, *Skidrow Penthouse*, *Xavier Review*, *Hotel Amerika*, *Free Lunch*, *Meridian Anthology of Contemporary Poetry*, *The Pacific Review*, and others. In addition, he has nine poetry chapbooks including *The Shooting Gallery*, *Poems from the Body Bag*, and *The Katy Trail, Mid-Missouri, 100 Degrees Outside and Other Poems*. He is the editor of *First Poems from Viet Nam*.

**William Doreski** lives in Peterborough, New Hampshire. He has published three critical studies. His poetry has appeared in many journals. He has taught writing and literature at Emerson, Goddard, Boston University, and Keene State College. His new poetry collection is *A Black River, A Dark Fall* (Splash of Red, 2018).

**Michael Estabrook** has been publishing his poetry in the small press since the 1980s. Hopefully with each passing decade the poems have become more succinct and precise, clear and relatable, more appealing and "universal." He has published over 20 collections, the latest being *Bouncy House*, edited by Larry Fagin (Green Zone Editions, 2014).

**Eric Evans** is a writer 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 also the co-editor of *The Bond Street Review* as well as the resident dramaturg for Blackfriars Theatre.

**Keith Moul's** poems and photos are published widely. Finishing Line Press released a chap called *The Future as a Picnic Lunch* in 2015. Aldrich Press published *Naked Among Possibilities* in 2016; Finishing Line Press has just released *Investment in Idolatry*. In August, 2017, Aldrich Press released *Not on Any Map*, a collection of earlier poems.

**Robert Ronnow's** most recent poetry collections are *New & Selected Poems: 1975-2005* (Barnwood Press, 2007) and *Communicating the Bird* (Broken Publications, 2012). Visit his web site at [www.ronnowpoetry.com](http://www.ronnowpoetry.com).

### **Books from Ink Publications**

*Juggling Fire, Blindfolded*

by Eric Evans

*The Anatomy of a Cratedigger*

by Eric Evans

*The Halo Effect*

by Eric Evans

*Punk Rock for Hip Statisticians*

by Eric Evans

*A Beat Too Long*

by Eric Evans

*Tristero Rapid Post*

by Eric Evans

*Hell or Cleveland*

by Eric Evans

*Godflesh*

by Eric Evans

### **Broadsides from**

### **Broadsides from Ink Publications**

(All broadsides are free to download from  
the Ink Publications website)

*Helicopter Full of Ghosts*

by Matthew Borczon

*How Not To Dress*

by Florine Melnyk

*The King of Water*

by Eric Evans

*Losing Duende*

by Alicia Hoffman

*Every Day of My Life*

by Michael Estabrook

*Geometry for Two*

by Lisa Feinstein

*Lisbon via Boston*

by Eric Evans

*Reap Eat*

by Carly Christiansen

*Good Fortune*

by Alicia Hoffman

*Crows*

by Eric Evans

**All titles are available through the Ink Publications website –**

**[www.inkpublications.com](http://www.inkpublications.com)**



The Summer 2018 issue of *The Bond Street Review* will be published in early August. Submissions will be considered beginning on April 1st. For submission guidelines, please go to [www.inkpublications.com](http://www.inkpublications.com)