

The Bond Street Review



**Winter
2022**

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From the editors

It's winter here in the Northeast section of the United States, which means that it is cold and wet a good portion of the time. And that the picturesque images of blankets of soft, pristine snow gently covering everything has given way to black sludge and rock salt residue coating vehicles, shoes, and pant legs with numbing regularity. However, if you can make it through the elements to someplace warm and well-lit, there is still much joy and happiness to be found. Which brings me to this issue's cover image. What might look at first glance like a car's headlights in a storm is actually the industrial lights of a concert hall cutting through a colorful blizzard of confetti at a Flaming Lips show this past November. I have seen literally hundreds of concerts (and have the ticket stubs and hearing loss to prove it...) and this was easily one of the most joyous that I have ever attended. Maybe it was because we all hadn't seen a show in a while and the sense of catharsis was pretty palpable. Maybe it was because the band worked really hard to keep a positive vibe going all night. Perhaps it was just the presence of all that confetti – which we both found in our pockets for days afterwards – and the massive bubble machines, but whatever it was, the concert was pure joy at a time when such a resource can often feel in a very short supply.

We hope that this issue brings you some joy too. And that you are willing to share that feeling with anyone else who you think might enjoy the work it contains. It's only a mouse click or two away to send them this issue. We also hope that you'll continue to spread the word about *Bond Street* and let new writers of all stripes know about us. One of the nice things about publishing as long as we have is that we have a fair number of regular contributors. No one, of course, gets accepted just because of that but we hear from some writers regularly and value immensely the relationships that have developed. But that also means that we run the risk of developing a sense of insularity which we try hard to stave off. It's a big world out there and we can't possibly be aware of everyone but we can absolutely try to keep our apertures open as wide as possible and continue to invite new writers into the Ink Publications universe. So, continue to send us your good stuff – and then encourage others to send us their good stuff too.

Thanks,
Eric

Cover image: Ink Publications

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The Back Row

By Jim Babwe

Summer nights
buttery popcorn
dangerous playgrounds
down there next to
the big outdoor screen
took you
to the highest elevation
of the back row--
too distant
for actually watching
the movies
where you parked close
to the post
and hooked a metal speaker
to the top
of the driver's side window.

The intermission
of a weekend double feature
included short newsreel black and whites--
brief stories of war
and international developments
of interest to someone
but not
the two
of you
who remember

perfect bench seats
(not buckets)
and sliding closer
for a first feel
for alone together
for the first time
at night
when you failed
to rehearse
perfect answers
to unexpected questions
about footprints
on the inside
of the windshield
of the car
you borrowed
from Mom.

Spring Floods

By Michael Brownstein

I need to stretch my breath a minute or more,
let the broken branch of rain fall away from me,
the filament of hail move forward a Fionn's step or two,
gather my dogs from their hiding places in the stone:
I will be back soon to be with you.

The anvil sparks, the great hammer falls,
the welder flings its fire, the plasma cutter breaks free.

The aquifer fills itself until it can no longer eat,
Waters sprawl over the Missouri banks,
the flood of retribution the revival of our lacking--
then the color of sky colors the clouds and some days
we do not need the myth of rainbow, just peace, just love,
you, always you, our small house, our smaller garden,
my hope for you, safe at the end of this storm.

Corner Market

By Leslie Dianne

There are apples, strawberries
oranges, grapefruit and the
silly green grapes that
we feed each other
as we fell in love
there are also the
cherries I mashed
with my fists when you left
their round sunny cheerfulness
reminding me of my
red stained hands
bruised with the
sweetness of lost
summer love

A Pessimist's Routine

By John Gray

Every morning I wonder if this is
the day of my infected wound,
my protestations that it will heal itself,
and, finally, the rush to the emergency room.

Or will it be the time
I argue with my neighbor
over the noise from last night's party,
we get into a fist fight,
and are both dragged off to jail.

Or do I forget to rub on sun-screen,
and burn like a witch.
Or fall down an open manhole
and break my leg.
Or run in front of a bus
but not nearly quick enough.

And then every morning,
I make coffee, shave,
take a shower, get dressed.

To prepare for the worst,
I must look my best.

The Winchcombe Meteorite

By Neil Leadbeater

It's not often you find the debris
of a 4.6 billion year old meteorite
in your driveway,
its flight captured by six camera networks
of the UK Fireball Alliance
and the doorbell cameras
of private dwellings.

That February
when it blazed over western England
before coming down to Earth
it was bored with circling
the solar nebula
so it decided to go AWOL
just like Ivuna, Alais and Flensburg.

Considering its age,
it took its time

a

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Miss Swatman Supervising Playground Games

By Neil Leadbeater

All smiles
in a striped top and belted slacks
she'd spring us
words of encouragement
as we lined up for
our first leap in the light.
Stooping and crouching
on all fours
we became each other's
vaulting-horse.
This was our leaping time
the moment we discovered
by working in pairs
that we could take the weight
off each other's feet
and fast forward
slick as frogs
to whatever lay ahead.

The Moral

By Sam Levy

Never crossed a bridge
I didn't burn.

Just ask the scorpion and
the frog.

Now I drag the torch
to raze the path

that no one was following
anyway.

Waiting to connect

By Tim Pilgrim

Texted children moments ago
about my phone calls,
all five, not picked up —

messages left
told of email I'd sent —
recounted ambulance ride,

my emergency MRI, the extent
of nerve damage done.
No response yet.

Another virus nightmare

By Tim Pilgrim

I'm running in some dark tunnel,
graveyard train closing in on my dream.

I cough, make wheezing sounds,

can't find mask, clean my hands.

I lie between the rails, face up,
train's clack above. Bras, lace panties

hang low from cars, whisper
past my cheeks. The end comes,
I stay under, six feet.

Mussel

By Christian Ward

Every shell is dipped in night.
Place an ear against the ceramic
to eavesdrop on fox squabbles,
crows watching rubbish bags
left split open like unfinished
operations, brambles unfurling
their fruit. Humans, extras
with no dialogue. Open every
shell to reveal day - the glazed
pottery, a perfect sky. Of course,
there's the meat: An orange muscle
on a ready-made plate. Quiet,
contemplative. I threw up the sea
the first time I tried it. Didn't know
I was chewing its prayer.

(Previously published in *FEED*)

Walking Up Scafell Pike with My Father

By Christian Ward

After walking a few yards
you breathe like someone
who has slipped across the border.

I am ahead, you are far
behind. There are no rest stops
on this rocky path to the summit,

no hedgerows to distract
our lack of common interests
or silences broken up with ums

and ers. You wear a jacket
of rain and I nudge you ahead with tuts.
At the top, there is nothing

but what a view. We are at opposite
ends of the plateau with only similar
rocks bringing us closer.

(Previously published in *Poetry and Places*)

The Taste of Red-Orange

By Guinotte Wise

I inquired of the neighbor lady
what are those orange flowers,
she said Oriental Poppies and
that firmed them up in my mind
as the color was surely Asian but

did she say ornamental? No, I'd
heard right. Later, in my walking
which takes me by her place
several times a day, she said take
these, they're in the wrong spot

and I tried but popped a root or
two in the pulling; they so firmly
rooted in that wrong space; I was
provided a small spade. They are
the color of setting sun, shantung

silk at a royal wedding, an orange
hot rod at the drag strip opening
in Kansas City in 1955, the red-
orange of a Crayola stub, the
paper covering all but gone, the

taste of lipstick of a girl I knew
in California, a Cole Porter song
of leaves of red and gold, these
flowers ignited memories and I
saw a Jaguar XK-120, a Rothko,

golf shirts, Maui sunset, a suede
miniskirt my wife once wore,
Orphan Annie's smock as seen
on Antiques Roadshow bought
by a lover of decoded messages,

double popsicle with two sticks
tart and cold puts teeth on edge.
But the same color salsa, it goes
all ai-yi-yi in the mouth furnace.
And stokes a nice warm memory.

Andy Warhol's Campbell Soup,
Basquiat's yelling red lettering,
A bright sled left out in the snow,
the door at "Safe House" bar, they
all leave a good taste in my mind.

CONTRIBUTORS

Jim Babwe grew taller in Southeast Los Angeles, graduated from Lynwood HS and California State Polytechnic University Pomona. He currently lives in Encinitas (CA), which used to be a sleepy little surf town on the Pacific Coast. These days, Encinitas is changing into a medium-sized, over-priced, much more crowded former sleepy little surf town. Despite the negatives, today is a beautiful late January day. The sun is shining. It's 72 degrees F and the surf is breaking at 3-5 feet out of the southwest. We had a tsunami advisory last week, but no damaging waves were to be seen. Of recent note? During the Holiday Parade here, a dispute arose between Santa Claus and a local citizen who was scheduled to share a convertible with The Grinch at the end of the parade route. Mr. Claus did not want to share the spotlight. In all honesty, Babwe was a bit disappointed that the conflict did not escalate. As the event photographer, Babwe would have relished getting live still photos and video had the dispute resulted in a physical confrontation. Then again, all are grateful that the incident was peacefully resolved.

Michael H. Brownstein's latest volumes of poetry, *A Slipknot to Somewhere Else* (2018) and *How Do We Create Love* (2019) were both published by Cholla Needles Press.

Leslie Dianne is a poet, novelist, screenwriter, playwright and performer whose work has been acclaimed internationally in places such as the Harrogate Fringe Festival in Great Britain, The International Arts Festival in Tuscany, Italy and at La Mama in New York City. Her stage plays have been produced in NYC at The American Theater of Actors, The Raw Space, The Puerto Rican Traveling Theater and The Lamb's Theater. She holds a BA in French Literature from CUNY and her poems have appeared in *The Lake*, *Ghost City Review*, *The Literary Yard*, *About Place Journal* and *Kairos* and are forthcoming in *Hawai'i Review*. Her poetry was recently nominated for a Pushcart Prize.

John Grey is an Australian poet, US resident, recently published in *Sheepshead Review*, *Poetry Salzburg Review* and *Hollins Critic*. Latest books, *Leaves On Pages*, *Memory Outside The Head* and *Guest Of Myself* are available through Amazon. Work upcoming in *Ellipsis*, *Blueline* and *International Poetry Review*.

Neil Leadbeater is an author, essayist, poet and critic living in Edinburgh, Scotland. His work has been published widely in anthologies and journals both at home and abroad. His publications include *Librettos for the Black Madonna*, *The Worcester Fragments*, *The Loveliest Vein of Our Lives*, *The Fragility of Moths*, *Sleeve Notes*, and an e-book, *Greasebanding The Apple Trees*. His work has been translated into French, Dutch, Nepali, Romanian, Spanish and Swedish.

Sam Levy lives in Austin, Texas. She received a Master of Liberal Arts degree from St. Edward's University. Her work has appeared in *Gemini Magazine* and *Fiction on the Web*. A forthcoming publication will appear in the *Better Than Starbucks* literary journal.

Timothy Pilgrim, a Pacific Northwest poet, has hundreds of acceptances from U.S. journals such as *Seattle Review*, *The Bond Street Review*, and *Santa Ana River Review*, and international journals such as *Windsor Review* and *Toasted Cheese* in Canada, and *Otoliths* in Australia. He is the author of *Seduced by metaphor*.

Christian Ward is a UK based poet who can be recently found in *Wild Greens*, *Cold Moon Review*, *Discretionary Love*, *Chantarelle's Notebook* and *Scribes*MICRO*Fiction*. Future poems will be appearing in *Dreich*, *Uppagus*, *Spry* and *Impspired*. He was recently shortlisted for the 2021 Canterbury Poet of the Year Competition and the 2021 Plough Prize.

Guinotte Wise writes and welds steel sculpture on a farm in Resume Speed, Kansas. His short story collection, *Night Train*, *Cold Beer*, won publication by a university press and enough money to fix the soffits. Six more books since. A 5-time Pushcart nominee, his fiction, essays and poetry have been published in numerous literary journals including *Atticus*, *The MacGuffin*, *Southern Humanities Review*, *Rattle* and *The American Journal of Poetry*. His wife has an honest job in the city and drives 100 miles a day to keep it. (Covid changed some of the circumstances) Some work is at <http://www.wisesculpture.com>

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by Eric Evans

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