

KISSING DYNAMITE: A JOURNAL OF POETRY

ISSUE 13 JANUARY 2020: "ANCHOR"

Welcome to Issue 13, "Anchor," our first anniversary issue!

In "Anchor," we experience poems that take root: mothers and grandmothers who nurtured our fledgling selves, communities that supported each other through the darkness, nature that cradled us. Even when we're cut down, we can stand strong.

This month's featured poet is Sarah Marquez

Issue 13 includes work by E. Kristin Anderson, Mark Bolsover, Kim Harvey, Ceinwen E. Cariad Haydon, Tim Heerdink, Sarah Marquez, Elliot Ping, Heather Quinn, Tiffany Shaw-Diaz, Miguel Soto, Joanna Streetly, and Oma Umehea. And JK Anowe is featured in "On Memory" to make it a baker's dozen.

Finally, in honor of our first anniversary, we've included a few extra sparks! Join us down below for "The Anniversary Special," which includes work by Cleo, Shannon Frost Greenstein, and J. B. Stone.

Featured Artist

Lou Swan's first memories of photography are at age nine with her father and a Kodak instamatic camera.

From early teenage to the present day Lou has always had her camera(s) within easy reach, if not constantly in her grasp, wherever she has been in the world. She has always preferred the inanimate, sited within an environment of light and freedom.

Her work has spanned many decades from an early enthusiasm assisting a local news and wedding photographer to the heady heights of her commercial studio shooting catalogues, cars, kitchens and everything in between. All the while collecting and collating ideas and images, and constantly adding to her diverse portfolio. To date she has not exhibited her work.

“Every Twirl” by E. Kristin Anderson

(after Bree Sharp)

I fall asleep holding my breath on Halloween night with sirens howling, a song buzzing down my street to catch in my throat. And I’m waiting for November’s

headlines but dreams persist and I’ve become a nightmare woman—asleep I feel your sharp objects slicing my muscles like butter and in these dreams by the time

I find water the blood is running down my thighs and I remember that waking won’t solve a thing until I can hold shattered glass in my own hands. And soon

I’d like to wear you like a wreath of white lilies. I’ll fold you up and put you in my pocket. Tonight even the ants won’t collect their dead and if you’re making

every breath from my lungs a crime I’ll learn to be your undertaker. I can’t seem to hypnotize a man, but I have shaken so many men like trees in a hurricane just to

see what might fall out. And maybe I smell like cheap perfume but you should see how my hands are dirty from fishing for spoons stuck in the garbage disposal. How

my hair is dirty from a week of dry shampoo and anger. How after the rain steam rises from the pavement and I find clarity and you find fog. You close your doors

to the bellwethers of freedom even as you point your rifles toward the sky and celebrate. Every day we call our country *She* and like any other woman she chokes

in the hands of men who would genuflect at profanity. Who would find obscenity between my thighs, find it falling from my mouth like a black widow spider and her

throng of children—throw your bricks at my moral decay, your fantasy, but as evil as I am I know conspiracy from conundrum. So in any city I also know the time

it takes to untie your knots. I know what rot will come loose when your hands grow too stiff to keep tying these knots anew. Wait for the crack of gunpowder to mitigate

your January crisis but I promise you’ve already met disaster. It’s just never grabbed you by the legs and pulled. And while you genuflect before a virgin I’m learning

to dance again, to take every joy I am offered, to break the glass, to feel every song like a buzz in my throat, even as my body mutinies. There is no girl who has ever

been clean and I invite the unclean to join me. Our poison is ours, is what we make

of it. So when I make my final exit, just tell the world I got on my broom and left.

“the fish” by Mark Bolsover

the fish. ...

in the ... shallows. ((swamp(s). pools).

(strange (dim-twi-) (washed) light-lit. ... —miles. ‘v low ground (flat(s)).).

river(s). (narrow(-thin) (*channels* – canal(s)), in-*through* the shallows-swamps-flats (ground)). ...

(—so (very) **deep** (down.—f’ miles. (int’ dark-*pitch*-ink dark (*depths*) (blue-black), (freezing) cold). ...).

(and into(-in-through) the *caves* (cavern(ed). (—over. ...). (—the *entry(ance)* ‘v-to. (th’ *mouths* (‘v)). ...).

(rock, dark (rough),—arches over). ...

...

fish.

(... —*huge*. ...

—*long*. (whale. (grey)).—snake(ing) long ((*pale*) pink, ‘n’ grey) (the) *body*. (long). ... (ribbed, ... ‘n’ muscled-*veined* (sinews-veins (*see*). ...).

—*slick* (*suh-lick*). (shine – *glistens*). (*shark*).

—*blunt* (*buh-lunt*). (flat) head. (smooth). *small* black eyes (bead). (—set back). ...).).

moves. (fr’ m (out) the *caves’* (entrance-mouth)).

(... *rise*(s), ‘n’ fall (*waves*-snakes). (huge). ...).

(—in the boat. (row). (small). ...).

...

she’s down there. (in the *dark*. (black). ice. cold. (flashes (lightning – sparks). ‘v *deep* blue – white ‘lectric light). ...).

(—she reaches up. (arms).—a look of terror (pleading). (*see*). ...).

—*She's not coming back. (now)*. (she says).
(down.—in the cold shadow).

You know that.

...

—*You have to do it.* ...

...

... —pour th'explosive (—white powder (dust-grit)).

—down.—int' the *whirlpool* (small-narrow-*thin*) — (gravity's) *well*.
(—*spirals*. down (th' well). (—'lumines-(out)lines). ... —int' (down) the dark(ness). ...).

'n' *light* it. (now).
(—lighter. (silver. Zippo). ... —rub the wheel (**strike**) — push the button.

—*sparks*. (flint). ...).

'n' *burns*. ... —(runs-)running. down (the spiral-well).
(burns out th' white powder. ...).

and **explodes**. (down. in(t') the darkness. ('lectric dark-blue (*pulse-burst*) 'v light, and bubbles
(gas-'xpan) (silver-white). ...).

(—t' destroy the fish(monsters). ...).

(... —killed. ... 'n' we *pass*(past). the shallows (...)—int' the caves.
(we're the first). ...).

...

—*round* the back(s) (th' depths) 'v the caves. ...

—'long (tall — smooth-sided. (*dark*, narrow channel(s)) the canal — *rapids*.
(the first t' see — ride. ...).

...

and **out**.

...

(in-) ont' the *river*. ...
(—*broad*. gentle-still. ... shallow.

—trees (huge) (– wood-forest), and grass,—line the banks. ...

(daylight).

...).

...

“Salute of the Vale” by Kim Harvey

Into our cups, gold and raised up
for drinking, pour. The mist enters

the church of our childhood,
silk-veiled with long trail of gown.

Amidst whispers of vespers
her grey eyes flutter the coarsely-

toothed aspen asking, *Is it time?*
Other branches answer,

their bare bones crackling.
Do the thing that scares you.

Rustle of maple, gentle steeple
with her hair ablaze. She will

quiet us with her love,
rejoice over us with singing.

We are one body. Burgundy heart
calling us home like a dwarf star.

Sweetgum, salvia, goldenrod,
hickory: constellation of trees.

The leaves come down close
to the ground and listen hard.

“i risk all you less so” by Ceinwen E. Cariad Haydon

you stand secure hide in shaded arches
your outline muted by shadows
i stand alight exposed
in sunshine
between us
on listing ground
squared darkness
maybe shallow sand pit
maybe abyss
you dare me
jump over

*[ekphrastic poem prompted by Giorgio de Chirico’s “Scene 1: The Enigma of the Hour”]

“Sixty-Seven Days in Utqiagvik” by Tim Heerdink

Twenty-four hours have passed since the great star
collapsed from its heavenly pedestal
for a sabbatical in the southern hemisphere.
Alaska deals with this phenomenon of darkness
in months when ultraviolet waves prove to be
a blessing to the freezing, destitute and alone.

Alarming numbers of suicide are reported annually
all over Seattle, where the rain falls more times than not.
Two-thousand miles north at the highest point,
I can imagine depression winning more battles.

Surviving such a prolonged period in the pitch black
calls for celebration when the flames show their face
like distant relatives back from holiday,
wondering where everyone disappeared to
during their leave of absence.

“Here’s a Lie: We Were Rich Once” by Sarah Marquez, January’s Featured Poet

inspired by Emily Dickinson

A lemon tree knew our backyard better
than us. It produced more fruit than we
could swallow whole.

The sun rose, ribbon by ribbon, though we
were dying. You tucked me into your side,
more bone than skin.

Hands folded like a bridge between our bodies,
we said a prayer.

We settled our grumbling bellies
with bitterness— the juices of a bruised lemon.
My flat voice praising God
was a sign
of my readiness to die.

But you said not yet...

You wanted tomorrow,
you wanted a smile to fall from the sky.

*

We sold everything we owned, sewed coins
into the folds of our clothes, so we wouldn’t go hungry,
but we kept the lemon tree.
It would not be moved.
It stood, sentry, waiting for a miracle to come.

We got up, left home and the tree, and walked—

for miles
down the desert road, till our feet blistered,
and sweat mixed with the dust
in our eyes.

We found a mason and asked him to build us a wall.
We found a field and asked the farmer tending it
for two bags of rice and beans.

In our white dresses, hanging

like a final curtain across our waning shoulders,
we commanded attention. They could not look away.
“Okay,” they said, “but you better pay us back.”

*

Home again, we sold the goods at market,
to hunch-backed women, wives wearing cuffs
 around their wrists. They spent
their best years in the kitchen,
burning the worst of their feelings in the fire,
the earth-bound flame of an adobe oven.

When it was all gone, except for the little we saved
for ourselves,
we returned to the mason and the farmer and paid
our debts,

then asked for more.

Back and forth we went, until our desperation, our hunger,
grew.
Soon, we had a business.
A new roof over our heads.
Four thick walls,
to keep the world out
 and our good fortune in.

*

One day, a man appeared—
a statue in the shade of the lemon tree,
looking for work.
He knew how to bake bread.
His fresh hands, two round loaves, were calloused
but warm.

We gave him a cup of lemonade, which he drank
as well as his brown skin
 drank in the day-shine.
We gave him space to open a bakery, to make
 as much bread as he liked.
He smiled, and I swear I saw the clouds part,
 and blue sky open

and close like a mouth.

Sarah's Commentary on "Here's a Lie: We Were Rich Once":

This poem is inspired by a true story that takes place in Mexico City in the late 1800's before the Mexican Revolution. My great-great grandmother came from a wealthy family. She, along with her brother and several sisters, lived in a big corner house. But their parents had died, and the family had run through their inheritance. So, they were poor, and to get by they were forced to sell everything they owned. This left them with little but a few animals and a lemon tree. To keep up their strength, they would regularly make and drink lemonade. A time came, however, when they were down to the last of the animals and time was running out, but not the hope the family was clinging to. They were very prayerful and still had each other to rely on. So, although things were bad, my great-great grandmother did not let them get worse. She was the youngest, but the most determined and ambitious. One morning, she came up with the idea to turn her family home into a storefront. Because traveling far was not easy, she was able to make a business out of selling merchandise to the people of the city. One day, she encountered a man who was a baker. He looked strong and reliable, though he was young. She invested in him and established the first bakery in Mexico City. Eventually, she married the man and expanded the business. This is how she became one of the wealthiest women at the time.

When I first heard this story, it made me think a lot about how struggles shape us, help us tap into our hidden potential. And how while we are living, and before we die, we go about leaving our mark on the world. My great-great grandmother left a significant mark. Her triumph over dying determines that miracles are made to happen.

To help me tell this interpretation of the story, I turned to the words of Emily Dickinson in, "A Day." I love how this poem meditates on life and death by portraying vivid images of the rising and setting sun. I wanted to mimic its style of storytelling in "Here's a Lie: We Were Rich Once," which explores the same themes. This is why there are images of the sun and sky.

I wrote the poem in three days. The original draft took a horizontal form to resemble a prose poem, but during editing I realized that the poem wanted a vertical form. So, I attempted several rewrites, wherein I played with line breaks and the blank space on the page until I was satisfied.

Assistant Editor Jeni De La O's Commentary on "Here's a Lie: We Were Rich Once":

"Here's a Lie: We Were Rich Once" is a poem for 2020. Here, Sarah Marquez presents us with a narrator who has a clear insight to the past, a razor sharp understanding of the present, and the discernment to see how these elements will shape the future.

Marquez positions us as the reader in familiar terrain: tourists, adventurers by proxy—consumers—and in that comfort zone of suspended incredulity she pulls the shades and let's in the sun. "Here's the Lie. . ." does away with rose-colored storytelling and gives us—even in this

fable, a dose of reality—something missing from too many an allegory, too often—the dirt on the potato, the grit. Marquez shows us the willingness to both part with and define oneself by boundaries as a measure of worth and it feels anything but played out.

In this piece we see the borders of a country we collectively imagine every December 31st as the lights dim on what we have accomplished and our minds turn towards the work to be done. And the way Marquez tells it, even when life gives you lemons. . . .

“devotional” by Elliot Ping

i run my thumb over the rosary surrounding
my mary mother of god keychain, try
to remember the words to a prayer i never
learned. i should at least try. i praise
the latching of the car door, shove the
key into ignition. fog pushes across
the windshield. it does this every day
when i crank the a/c. i consider my belief
in the resilience of the air compressor
to be holy and my devotion to the hum
of the radio static to be righteousness.

faith flows like gasoline, smells like
exhaust: i believe the air-fuel ratio in
the carburetor means something. i accept
forgiveness in the form of brake lights.

“inception” by Heather Quinn

egg & dart acanthus flowers
bloom into chandelier
its green cord, not ivy but umbilical
shoots up a custard colored wall
through ceiling to rooftop, the sun-stop

where a body of angels sit straight backed
on a sofa blue as the caribbean sky
their wings flutter frantic as starlings
stirring up wind to wake the humans below
to the memory of womb

the predawn of blood & placenta
star, bark, magma , taproot

their wings flap feverishly
frothing a salty storm
the humans look down at their iphones

searching for that new sleep app
exhausted, the angels release a sigh so strong
it whips every country's flag into a frenzy
as mother earth spins in her stillness
waiting to crack buildings in two

to birth fossils of feather & extinct thumb bones
for the next billion years

["Elegy in 4/4" by Tiffany Shaw-Diaz](#)

Neil Young once sang
it's better to burn out
than to fade away which was
also coincidentally
quoted at the end of Kurt Cobain's
suicide note

we're always fixated on youth
aren't we?

better to be famous when
old men can sexualize // monetize you
when you
look taut in bikinis and heels
as saliva drips on
the magazine spread

your legs

Christina Aguilera once sang
you gotta rub me the right way
as a teen and even as a teen I

knew that was super creepy

but that's still played
on the radio and we all
listen to it bob our heads
sing along like

whatever

have you ever thought that when Britney
the Spears one went batshit
and shaved her head
maybe that was the first thing
she could do

for herself

“Sun in Aquarius: A Poem at Eighteen” by Miguel Soto

A man who doesn't introduce himself
tells me to slow down, to drink

water to avoid a hangover in the morning.
He must be a stupid man. Doesn't he know

this is a boy acting beautifully for a bar
of so many possibilities? Doesn't he know

what it took to get in? The fake I.D.
The years of cementing this drinking-well

of a body, begging for more than the sum
of its fill. My body has taken so many shapes—

each leaving trundling hoops across my krater
torso. I sculpt myself for the desire

of others. I sway my hips, grab the hands
of a stranger, who cups my waist. I dip

under a constellation of electropop beats,
how I could bow to a greater force,

and be a prize worth filling.

“even so” by Joanna Streetly

five heads of hair that comb went through
scrape and tug of curl-battered tines

as we sat on the old canoe, not fidgeting
worn metal hull hot beneath our legs
and the searing burn of thigh flesh if we shifted

five kids—I was youngest, rushing
to close a four-year gap, no sprint fast enough
time chaining me to my lineal
place, last groove on the stick, my mum
so ill because I—

there I am sitting in the yard in midday sun
staring at dents in metal and peeling paint
the glinting debris of tweezered lice, that
pale blue surface littered with corpses
lessons in multiplication, while

fingers like hounds trot through
the parted rows, my scalp a scouting field
underbreath comments: *oh lord, terrible*
how d'you let it get so bad?
and still that shameful scuttling in the unmown

grass of my hair, and even so I'd give anything
to be there, frying in the heat, the hot-land sun that would
finish off the lice, finish off mum, her tired hands
safeguarding my head, tho' she didn't have
the time for this, didn't have the strength

["I Am a Woman in My Family" by Oma Umehea](#)

Every night, I forge a note to self,
Pleading for slumber,
Devoid the fear of dreams
and what it encompasses .

These days I scurry at 6am,
To my neighbors garden without permission,
For her wild white roses.

"Soak in warm water,
Bathe its sweetness
And sleep [only at noon]".

Grandmother clearly says
a moment of confession with nightmares
will not bring pardon.

"This is why,
You bathe in stolen beauty,
Before [insomnia] strikes"

All the things women in my family,
Have to do to avoid ~~the demons~~

[themselves] at night.

"On Memory"

From EIC Christine Taylor: **JK Anowe** explores the intersection of memory on public and private history. Walk with him on this rhythmically complex journey.

"A Musical Malady" by JK Anowe

my head sings of a departure of all reasoning an echo
a word inside every word ready to break out i fill a book
with the word *remember* to emphasize how badly i long
to remain within the confines of memory once i was
the boy who perceived humans to be the only beings
capable of memory now i return to the awe of being

grown-up to watch a nanny goat after a morning
of grazing return to breastfeed her young my mother
who lets her back in the pen forgets her own
spouse daydreams of shutting the door on his big toe
as much as I wait my father's dust-feet at the threshold
every dream is a plot to return from the body this place
of unresting we packed for but do not remember

arriving at imagine a wall & on it a painting imagine
in the painting a field any field & at its centre a grand
piano with a finger nailed to its single key blood
-dripping the only possibility of sound go back

to that wall imagined are you there now do you see it isn't
that memory a sickening we return to for its music

JK's Commentary on "A Musical Malady":

I am interested in poetry as a form of complex autobiography. A biography that curates my multiple selves through metaphors and myths. I invent the myths in my poems to survive, to breathe. In my poems, I'm always trying to interrogate how memory interferes with and alters history, private history and vice versa. I have said complex autobiography because it is my life. A history of colonialism and post-colonial violence. It is the history of my mind. A mall of multiple and chaotic voices. It is the history of my desire; of the restlessness I feel inside language.

As for my process, there's really nothing fixed, i.e. other than living, as far as I can tell. There's a lot of thinking (sometimes out loud), note-taking (which basically is just writing down interesting ideas/phrases that pop into my head every now & then), & idling (or being the devil's favorite workshop, as I like to call it) weeks or months before the faithful business of sitting to finally "write" the poem, but never anything meticulously routine.

I believe to be a poet is to be in a constant state of searching. I am always searching for otherness in language and self, i.e. the sound within sound, a word within a word, a feeling within a feeling, which I am yet to embody. I am, for example, quite fascinated that you can find the word *mother* in *smother*, (to borrow a little from Ocean Vuong), especially as it relates to the complex relationship I have with my own mother.

I want to explore intersections—between illusion and wakefulness, between birth and reincarnation, and as a chronic depressive, between side effect and withdrawal symptom, outlining the difficulties, such as mental, emotional and economical blocks, in my creative process as a poet.

The Anniversary Special

"My Grandmothers Tell Me to Stop Crying" by Cleo

I. Barbara: Stop Crying Over Boys

I did not cry all that time for you to do the
same thing and not stand up for yourself.
You're fine and if you aren't, you will be.
You come from a line of planted women
Planted as in buried alive,
As in you tried to drown us but we drank it
up,
Clawed our way out of the ground and
cooked dinner with the dirt still under our

fingernails kind of women
Venus flytrap women willing to swallow a
man whole and choke on his bones before
having our throats slit into a bouquet again
Dandelion women who have bent easily and
wilt slowly
Who wilted into wedding bands and men's
arms
So how dare you let some *anything*
except God's own hands root you to
anything you don't want
Use the voice we taught you that you
deserved.
Make your own money so no man can claim
you as his own.
Drink wine, watch Fraiser, and read more
books.
The sky is not falling and even if it is, you
know what the femmes in this family do
You come from a line of smoking women
Like we shouldn't have been burned in the
first place but we will gift you these ashes
like roses
Because you don't have to burn anymore.
This line ends with you
You have generations worth of tears to
extinguish yourself
You are allowed to cry, but you are not
allowed to cry for long.

II. Cleo: Stop Crying Over Failure

Stop looking for my legacy in your face.

III. Soni: Stop Crying About Dying

That psych nurse did not think we were a
good pair—
She said two broken people could not fix
each other
Did not think about how one knife sharpens
the other
She can't tell that we're family, either
Can't see past my light eyes, your brown

skin

We do not share blood but who couldn't see
that

I gifted you my snarl, and my wild hair
I gifted you a halo and wings made of
fucking steel.

You grew your claws on your own,
remember to sharpen them every morning.

I have you seen with a dead heart before
Cobwebs in your aorta and all

I saw you, you curled onto the floor
claiming your heart was split in two but I
knew they were just growing pains
Slapped the word "burden" off your face
"Heartache" is a word that does not deserve
a line in your poems

Take your fucking meds.

You aren't broken, your body just hurts
because it is growing

See the wings are breaking through your
spine and cracking through your skin
And that you're free now to fly.

You tried to die.

Not even you can kill you.

["Relapse" by Shannon Frost Greenstein](#)

Thin/I've missed you/sacrifice due
Empowered/unshowered/depression/dark hue.

Control/a drug/an addiction to less
The number drops lower and my life's a mess.

Numb, cold, bloody, awake and wired/
Isolate/avoid/I'm so fucking tired.

Old habits/destruction/descent into Hell
Starvation/damnation/I never feel well.

I watch with no interest as things fall apart,
desire for bone that might stop my heart/
Diet Coke, coffee, grit and willpower,
slow suicide/angst/there goes the Dark Tower

My family is watching/unable to help me/
a secret I hide/so my young children don't see
until a time comes when they're watching and learning/and I will have screwed them despite
my yearning
to break the cycle of low self-esteem/to be a mother/come straight from a dream.

Each day/a trudge/a race like Pheidippides'/
no drive/to survive/in such matters as these;
Darwin so quiet as I waste away/
where is my urge to live today?

For them, though, I fight/
a reverse siege/
food I don't want
and helpless pleas
to end the torment of never enough
and learn how to cope when things get rough

Take Pills and be mindful and do self-affirmation/
Parent and live and avoid desperation
when flesh seems to grow and thin disappears/
It's ok to mourn when you can't stop the tears

Because maybe/in time/I will learn not to hate
All that is in me which I always rate/
Sub-par and weak and a source of disgust/
maybe/in time/I will learn to trust
My husband, the children, the mirror and thus/
return to the haven of love which is us.

A family. A unit. A tribe. My heart.
And I soon hope to have the courage to start
to begin the fight which brings me back to me/ as I try to find recovery.

Again.

["Maybe One Day We Will Be Lions" by J. B. Stone](#)

i

when I say I have depression

I mean my sky is a pale horse,

winter white
when the rest of
the world around me
can see a bright, crystal summer blue

ii

when I say I have anxiety

I mean my mind—
—I mean my heart
—wait—I mean my tongue
tastes of locust swarms
rather than butterfly colonies

iii

when I say I have ADHD
I mean my mind works like a racer
without a pit-crew
just a manic pilot navigating a lapping speedway,
trying to be ahead,

but

ends
up
breaking
down

iv

when I say I have autism

I mean that my being
is not meant to be a puzzle piece
paraded as someone else's moment of zen

v

when they say I am a puddle

know that one day I shall become an ocean
formed by the waters that tried to drown me,
but I rise still floating, far from sinking

vi

when they say I am a flowerbed

wait until I bloom into a forest
that seeks to be a space for the broken,
from places that would rather see them dead

vii

when they say that I am a pebble

just watch me become a mountain
composed of all of moments
that made me stand

Poet Biographies

E. Kristin Anderson is a poet and glitter enthusiast living mostly at a Starbucks somewhere in Austin, Texas. A Connecticut College alumna with a B.A. in classical studies, Kristin's work has appeared in many magazines including *The Texas Review*, *The Pinch*, *Barrelhouse Online*, *TriQuarterly*, and *FreezeRay Poetry*. She is the editor of *Come as You Are*, an anthology of writing on 90s pop culture (Anomalous Press) and is the author of nine chapbooks of poetry including *Pray Pray Pray: Poems I wrote to Prince in the middle of the night* (Porkbelly Press), *Fire in the Sky* (Grey Book Press), *17 seventeen XVII* (Grey Book Press), and *Behind, All You've Got* (Semiperfect Press). Kristin is a poetry reader at *Cotton Xenomorph* and an editorial assistant at *Sugared Water*. Once upon a time she worked the night shift at *The New Yorker*. Find her online at EKristinAnderson.com and on Twitter at [@ek_anderson](https://twitter.com/ek_anderson).

JK Anowe, Igbo-born poet and teacher, is author of the poetry chapbooks *The Ikemefuna Tributaries: a parable for paranoia* (Praxis Magazine Online, 2016) and *Sky Raining Fists* (Madhouse Press, 2019). He's a recipient of the inaugural *Brittle Paper* Award for Poetry in 2017, and a finalist for the 2019 *Gerard Kraak* Award. Recent works appear in *Glass Poetry*, *The Gerard Kraak Anthology 2019*, *The Shore*, *The Muse* (University of Nigeria's literary journal), *Agbowo*, *20.35 Africa: An Anthology of Contemporary Poetry*, *Fresh Air Poetry*, and elsewhere. He's Poetry Chapbooks Editor for Praxis Magazine Online. He lives, teaches, and writes from somewhere in Nigeria.

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Cleo (they/them) is a Black femme genderqueer poet. They have been blessed with opportunities to perform through school and the ACUI in their home of New Jersey, Boston New York, Chicago, Houston, and Philadelphia, both individually and on poetry teams, either for showcase or competition. They were a member of Penn State's 2019 1st place earning CUPSI team and a member of the 2018 2nd place earning "Ashe Not Ashy" FEMs tournament team. They aspire for their work, whether it be in elementary education or poetry, to be honest, healing, radically joyful, and unapologetic.

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Kim Harvey (she/her) is a San Francisco Bay Area poet and Associate Editor at *Palette Poetry*. Her poems have been nominated for the Pushcart Prize and Best of the Net. You can find her work in *Poets Reading the News*, *Rattle*, *Radar*, *Barren Magazine*, *3Elements Review*, *Wraparound South*, *Black Bough Poetry*, and *Juke Joint Magazine*. She is the 1st Prize winner of the *Comstock Review's* 2019 Muriel Craft Bailey Memorial Award and the 3rd Prize winner of the 2019 Barren Press Poetry Contest. Twitter: @kimharveypoet. Instagram: @luna_jack. Web: www.kimharvey.net

Ceinwen E. Cariad Haydon writes short stories and poetry. She is widely published in web magazines and in print anthologies. Her first chapbook was published in July 2019: 'Cerddi Bach' [Little Poems], a Stickleback by Hedgehog Press. She was a winner in the Nicely Folded Paper Pamphlet Competition July 2019 and her first pamphlet is due to be published 2019/20. She is a

Pushcart Prize nominee and has an MA in Creative Writing from Newcastle University, UK (2017). She believes everyone's voice counts.

Tim Heerdink is the author of three poetry collections, *The Human Remains*, *Red Flag and Other Poems*, *Razed Monuments*, and the novel, *Last Lights of a Dying Sun*. Heerdink is president of the Midwest Writers Guild. His short stories, *The Tithing of Man* and *HEAVEN2*, won first and second place in the guild's annual anthology contests. He also has poems published in *Poetry Quarterly*, *Fish Hook*, *Flying Island*, *Kissing Dynamite*, and various anthologies. He graduated from USI with a BA in English and resides in Newburgh, Indiana with his wife, daughter, and two cats.

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Heather Quinn is a poet living in San Francisco who loves the act of layering memory, image, the political & spiritual into her work. She often thinks of writing as collage-making. Recent publishing credits include *42 Miles Press*, *Burning House Press*, *Ghost City Review*, *Headline Poetry & Press*, *Prometheus Dreaming & Raw Art Review*. You can find her on Twitter at @hquinnpoet.

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Joanna Streetly's (she/her) most recent book, *Wild Fierce Life: Dangerous Moments on the Outer Coast*, is a 2018 BC Bestseller published by Caitlin Press. Other titles include *Paddling*

Through Time (Raincoast Books) and *Silent Inlet* (Oolichan Books) as well as *This Dark* (poetry, Postelsia Press). Her work is also published in *Best Canadian Essays 2017* and in anthologies, magazines and literary journals. Look for her essay “Water Signs” in the January 2020 edition of *The London Reader*.

Joanna grew up in Trinidad and moved to Canada to study Outdoor Recreation and Wilderness Leadership. She has lived in Tofino since 1990, most of that time off-grid on islands, or in the float house she still lives in today. She is the inaugural Tofino Poet Laureate 2018-2020.

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©January 2020 *Kissing Dynamite: A Journal of Poetry*

ISSN: 2639-426X

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