

KISSING DYNAMITE: A JOURNAL OF POETRY

ISSUE 36 DECEMBER 2021: "UNAPOLOGETIC"

Welcome to Issue 36 "Unapologetic" in which our poets lay it all on the line.

This month's featured poet is **Rita Feinstein**.

Issue 36 includes work by Hayley Bowen, KB Brookins, Molly Davidson, Matthew Feinstein, Rita Feinstein, Arden Hunter, Anoushka Kumar, James Miller, Matthew Miller, Eun-Jae M. Norris, Emmanuel Ojeikhodion, and Katie B. Tian, and Siena Ho Shun Yi is featured in our Baker's Dozen spot "little secrets." Read The Gallery below!

And in this issue, we are so happy to announce our nominees for this year's Pushcart Prize! But we're not releasing the details here: you have to read The Gallery below.

Farewell

With this issue, we say farewell to Supervising Editor **Zora Satchell**. Zora has been an integral part of the KD team for the past year, working to revamp our submissions process and providing mentoring and insight across the board. Be on the lookout for Zora in her new editorial role, and follow her on Twitter @thecasualrevolt. Thank you, Zora, for everything!

Featured Artist—Kel Lakin

Kel Lakin (she/her) is a collage artist and aspiring poet living in Queens, NY with her dog, Bruce. Kel uses both paper and digital mediums to create works largely inspired by the deep complexity and multifaceted beauty of women. Her work was included in the collage showcase "**Assembly**" curated by *Beyond Photography*. You can find her work on her [website](#) and follow along on Instagram ([@kellakinart](#))

Poetry Gallery

"Tell me again of winter" by Hayley Bowen

of the fat dripping into the pan and the way the smell of dinner
stays in our hair all night. Tell me of the sleep spoiled by a cold arm

breaching warm sanctuary of blanket and body. Remind me how to love the smell of the heater's first reluctant run, burning off eight months of dust and stillness. The sun is nothing but cold light but it is light enough to read by and that's all we really need. We only go outside for new books and better coffee and I want to know we could stay that way. I ache for the quarter mile of morning between the front gate and the post office. I ache for the clean sting of frozen breath. Look how the bluebird acts like sky for us when we start resenting all this grey. Look how the trees bend to offer us the snow from their arms and tell me why we would ever refuse their gift. Tell me that we could stay this way, Januarying with the oven and the books and the birds. Tell me again of winter, I promise I'm listening.

["I'm not writing anything else where white people are the assumed audience" by KB Brookins](#)

forget the references forget the review panel full of wonderbread who've written metaphors for my skin forget the handshake forget friends who only reference other wonderbread friends forget feeling bad for never finishing an episode of *Friends* forget the discourse & allyship forget wanting the revolution's sides to be more diverse forget converting the 50sum percent of folk who still think they aren't racist forget the 50sum percent of folk who still think they're antiracist forget the nuance & sparing their feelings with every line & stanza forget "show, don't tell" for niggas in single-file lines for their lynching forget their desire their presence their hate mistaken as healthy forget the unhealthy white girl berating me on the zoom call forget rage mistaken as hate forget Defund The Police Is Not Realistic forget Nancy Pelosi & the police forget the bombings & shootings & recanting all this shit so you can feel me less forget the stares forget ignorance assumed of the reader forget mistakes forget writing more like them / to them / with them / in spite of them forget white rage forget Black pain paraded as prose & poem I am writing what Booker T needed all of this time I am writing for Phyllis for Sonia for Audre for James I am writing a poem that I don't need to explain Let minstrelsy take its rightful step inside the trash can Let the gaze of the white everything step away from my pages & my poems & my power Let them be a choir of stares Reader I am writing this poem for me—

["Ode to the Mushroom" by Molly Davidson](#)

I know what it is
to burst from the earth
against all capital
to fruit something
wicked & ancient.

Gills below a flat
scarlet cap, cantillating
secrets to filaments
of milky mycelium
which say *on we go* *on.*

Arboreal mothers
to microbial saints,
I'll pray tiny
prayers to you.
Teach me to be

an ancestor
to your forests of spores
which will inherit the world
when we are *gone gone.*

[“Spending the MFA Residency at Virginia Baptist” by Matthew Feinstein](#)

The hospital stretchers wheeled the dead
in an orderly line like ants would crumbs.
I wanted to leave—head back to residency,
so I could spill my poetry into readers
like the blooded washcloth wrung out
into the bucket beside me. Nurses told me
I'm going away for a while. I called my mother
using the officer's phone before he detained me.
He, too, was confused why he needed to transport me,
unhostile and bewildered, to the psychiatric facility.
A foreign state. Lawless, lawless place. The nurses
offended by my cursing the lord that the needle
comes out to quiet me. I ran into my room—
tried to slam the door shut on those nurses ready
to inject me. But it was lockless, so I complied
as the checkmated must. Forced into my room
every single night. Seven days in those four
white walls. But this place was no heaven.
I learned how to submit on demand—
swallowing pill after violating pill. Sedation
if too well-rested. If too loud. If slandering
Christianity. My wound was none of these things.

Instead, the young patient checked in on day four.
The way he twitched his head side to side,
exclaiming he'll fight anyone. Fuck a bitch up.
I tried making conversation, but my kindness
turned me suspect, and he grabbed my collar
to choke me out. That, too, wasn't my wound.
Rather, the way he was snatched off me. How he
squirmed under a sea of arms until injected
and dragged to bed like a tranquilized zoo animal.
I was still kind toward him. The morning
of discharge, the young patient built the courage
to ask me about my hobbies. I told him I write poetry,
told him I was flying back to California. *Why
can't you stay?* His lonely glass eyes...
they split me in the most unnatural ways

["This Isn't an Apology" by Rita Feinstein, December's Featured Poet](#)

It's just a dream of pulling a horse-print shirt
over my black bra and hoping you'd walk in on me—

a reverse burlesque to undo the winter night
I arranged myself like fruit on your sheets,

blushing skin and secret core,
a wax facsimile of sweetness.

Your body formed a suspension bridge
over mine, which must've made me the river,

something you crossed over
without ever really touching.

Or you might've been the mirror
mounted over your snake tank,

seeing only my limp loveliness
and not the scaly seething underneath.

This isn't an apology, but I took
your eyes, your hands, your mouth,

and discarded the rest. I never thanked
you for the chocolates, but I ate them all.

This isn't an apology, but once
I stole your clementine

and you blamed everyone
at the table but me.

You were the exposed skin
and I was the anesthetic

in a vampire bat's tongue.
You never even felt the cuts.

Once I said *I love you*
right as the parking meter expired.

I would've said anything
to get out of the cold.

Rita's Commentary on "This Isn't an Apology":

In my writing and in my dreams, I'm always returning to my first relationship. I was seventeen, drunk on my own drama, everything new and electric to the touch. It's a well of inspiration that never runs dry—that youthful paradox of arrogance and fragility, the furtive euphoria of making out in the backseat and wondering who's going to hurt who first. I was ultimately the one to end things, but it was a messy break. Over a decade later, I still dream about apologizing to him. This poem is an attempt to reconcile my resentments with my regrets.

"This Isn't An Apology" was a difficult poem to write. Though I've always sworn by the tidiness of a single central metaphor, I knew this poem needed to take a different shape—a litany of imagery to represent the tumult and confusion of the relationship. The speaker tries on one metaphor after another in an attempt to understand where the blame lies and to delay the final couplet where she confronts her own selfishness and insensitivity.

Of all the poems I've written about my ex, this one feels the most honest. Once I abandoned a linear narrative, the imagery let me access the poem's main tensions—feeling both desired and unseen, both victim and villain.

Though this is a poem about regret, I look back on this time of my life with tenderness. It's hard being seventeen and always feeling like you're the tortured protagonist of your own story.

These days, I primarily write young adult fiction, where I get to marinate in those big feelings for 300+ pages. I think I'll always be obsessed with how youth and first love amplify everything and give ordinary objects—like clementines and parking meters—an almost cosmic significance.

Assistant Editor Belinda Munyeza's Commentary on "This Isn't an Apology":

"This Isn't an Apology" opens right away with a precisely vivid metaphor that immediately points the reader towards the emotions the poem aims to cumulatively elicit. We are plunged right away into longing with a twinge of regret and hope. And then layer by layer, couplet by couplet, Feinstein provides rich imagery, similes, and metaphors that intensify the speaker's nostalgia, making us feel it viscerally. What's more, the musicality of the poem makes it so lulling and irresistible. But at the same time, Feinstein's commitment to the past tense and her use of sibilance signify something sinister in the poem; they mirror the deceit interwoven with the beauty that the persona reflects on in hindsight. It all culminates in the directness of the ending feeling incisive, intense, and revelatory, and the poem being quite unforgettable.

["Sometimes I shake in the mornings" by Arden Hunter](#)

sometimes i shake in the mornings / i trained myself not to stretch / if i do then my muscles
cramp in hard pulses / it used to hurt so much that i was already afraid before i even woke up /
the glow through my eyelids was the signal for my stomach to clench / the bit of me still
sleeping getting scared in preparation / hating the sun and the morning and everything
involved with the transition from auto to manual

i started stretching inwards / coiling up in a spiral / directing all that need to stretch and remind
myself i'm not dead back inside / my marrow hears it instead of the air

a by-product of losing the stretch / i lost the sound along with it / i lost the screaming and the
yawning left with it and i wouldn't mind except yawning seems to be one of those fundamental
things humans do so if my body doesn't yawn so as to protect itself from the fear of waking
then what does that say about me / maybe nothing

it's so tiring to wake up afraid / my heart pounding / waiting for pain / i don't get used to it / it
hurts just as much as it always did / and once the pain fades and the muscles stop jumping and
my brain stops screaming at me that if i could only uncurl and rip off that piece of my foot / calf
/ hip / arm that everything would be OK / but i can't uncurl because the pain is electric it erases
all the paths from my ME to my limbs and i'm trapped in a prison of agony / wanting to scream
but not wanting to because then people will hear me and they can't do anything and that
seems mean really / come on don't wake up nice people with your dramatic morning death
wails / once all that is over i'm exhausted but it's not time to sleep now it's time to wake up /
beep beep there's the alarm i didn't switch off / beep beep come on time for work

so sometimes i shake in the mornings / muscles twitching / threatening to cramp / hands
scratch without instruction at the sheets / convulsing / a split second of wondering if this time
i'll convulse forever / but then it goes away / and i get up

“On Dreams” by Anoushka Kumar

My parents say letting a cactus
into the home is a bad omen.
They say a plant like that lends you
rotten luck, false gods, motes
of dust so thick you work
in circles. An unquiet house
after all, is akin to dying
like a cotton daisy by the hands
of a spinning truck.
What's all this, but a tenderness
you have since lost.
But there's a cactus in my dreams— bulbous
and teething. It is a good cactus, like all houseplants.
I snip her thorns everyday, keep her warm, tell her the headlines:
what to do in the event of a rainstorm, how to wish
your husband away. This is the best I can do.
She listens gently knowing I expect little
in return. It is better to be sated
under a stubborn moon. No white noise.
Wide rooms, on the verge of enmity.

“Glass Eye” by James Miller

We loaded up end-tables,
your soft chair, six pairs of shoes.

Rooms newly painted, hammer-holes puttied,
a stale roll of toilet paper waiting on the spindle.

As we keyed in the service entrance, a tiny spider
froze on the handle, then slipped in with us.

No one wanted to kill her, with a flat hand or flat heel.
We turned away to unlock your door. For hours my sister

unpacked aphorisms, laid them on the floor, while I wiped

dust and mold from your TV stand. We filled your cupboard

with three each of mug, plate, bowl. Then spoon,
knife, fork. We pulled up the blinds, knowing that you

would force them down again. We hung the photo
of our dead father on the wall, so that you could fall asleep

studying his one glass eye—bauble-blown,
cooled to kindness.

“My Son Fears This World as He Hits Double Digits” by Matthew Miller

Golden Shovel of Franz Wright

Relax, I tell him, a pencil is graphite, it's
not lead. Forget the threats of last September.
Breathe, son. Be present. June 13th.
Yesterday, his birthday passed again
with just a song in the minivan and
a flat drive into the
hogback sun.
And this morning, lightning on the Front Range is
splintering, a fearful shining.

Bare cattle pant on the
foothills. Nothing leafy
to distract the mind, largely
thorny and vacant,
an abandoned rectory.
Neglect is
the devil's invitation. Just
as rattlesnakes will find a
hole to enter this empty place,
rest on broken blocks of concrete for
warmth and shade. It strikes me
how suddenly he's begun to
believe in ghosts. Recluses hang
invisible webs. *I don't want to die before my
birthday.* The forked tongue in his head.

A migration of tarantulas, it's

more nightmares on the
march. I don't want this to last,
this slithering day.
He scribbles his fears on the blue lines of
a flipbook and listens. Somebody's
turning the pages of his favorite childhood

adventure. Tomorrow, he and
I will lift every
rock and branch along the trail. All day
we'll hike up new mountains. I'll
reach into alpine lakes, try
to find macroinvertebrates to
prove the water is safe. I'll do
anything to find one
mayfly nymph, an alien thing,
hexapodal and stringy, because I
know it means healthy water, like
a well dug in
deep in his memory.
Strange creatures are just evidence of
creative being.
Don't be afraid to die happy.

["apologies for the asbestos snow" by Eun-Jae M. Norris](#)

my dearest,

i hope this poem finds you barren. it's been / a beautiful summer, hasn't it? / since our last
correspondence. / i hope you have been well. / i hope your house burns down. / i hope you
have been well.

i hope the geese fly south for the winter. / i hope you watch them go. / i hope the ashes cool /
and you are left with what comes after flame, / summer son. / i hope that / when the snows
come / the wailing wind scatters you among the bones / of everything left undone, / picked
clean by frostbite weevils on overcast mornings. / i hope that / for just one december / you feel
the way i do / when ginger turns to dust in my mouth, / like those plastic shakers where / the
powder goes teeth-yellow, congeals to rocks / my tongue recoils from names / and tea tastes
stuffy / and dinner tastes bland.

do you remember / those times in july? the ones where / the sun lingered in the sky to
eavesdrop on us, / the nights / and days / and dawns / and sunsets / the pots hissed and boiled

over / back when i felt you / like your palm was next to mine, / back when i only broke / fall-colored skin under your teeth / sweet on you like skinned-knee persimmons, called you / darling / in my head. / you grew me wellness when i was sick with guilt / cursor-blink chamomile, pencil-lead panaceas, / your bedroom an apothecary / with sparks in the walls. / oh, how your garden yielded then. / oh, how lucky my eyes to envy it.

i hope it's nothing more dramatic / than a crisp christmas morning. / the leaves try at green eventually / you'll clear the snow from the flowerbeds. / maybe you've heard / sage is a wonderful color for a kitchen. / break it in, make yourself a cup of tea / revive what's frozen. / it is bitter- / medicinal, / the ideas of it migrating here from faraway / to the space between your palms. / i hope you feel warm. / i hope the geese come back well-fed / the same time they did last year.

sincerely, yours.

"Self-portrait As a Bird" by Emmanuel Ojeikhodion

perhaps when I break into the wings of a bird,
I won't dream of returning back to this body.
I'll take over the air & sky & name my body a
paper plane undulating into grace. I slice a portion
of the air & make an experiment. I'm a specimen
& the air wears me a badge of recognition & initiates me
into the home of feathers. Wonder why I dream to
be a bird? The land is sometimes poisonous & everywhere
except the air approaches you with a sting. I fear what might
become of me every single day I spend here. It's as if
the universe is deaf; it's as if God is distracted to realize
when you suffer. I walk towards the path of light
& a shadow keeps falling in my direction. In an
unlit room I rummage my eyes in a broth of tears. Who
listens when the heart meanders through grief? Do we go
on to fill a body with sand whose bones still quake to live more?
We ignore a body dying of something as if to say we
bear mountains within us. Something must kill a man
but in what way do we come out alive?
Brother, I tell you there is nothing sweeter than the
wind pulling me into a bird.

"Why I Won't Ask You to Dinner Anymore" by Katie B. Tian

An Acrostic for Loss

Because I'm afraid

I'll ask you to run away
with me, but I can't ask

you to undirty the ink I've spilled
or ask you to meet me at the downtown diner
after graduation where we

were strangers in passing, before we watched
the sky hatch & egg yolks spill
like sunlight down a scrap-tired

dead end street where neighbors floated, drunk
on alternate nights, where we wove
a tapestry of our untidied ambitions,

two unkempt mouths humming a prayer
before colliding, bone-bruised,
in the backseat—for three

months straight, I cleared the engine
of mildew so we could escape this godless
town where every pretty picture was extinguished years

ago by the butt of a cigarette & every person was
reinvented as an elegy & no one would come
looking for us anyway—

and I want to be unabashed: fearless, certain
in my uncertainty, but my crescent
nailbeds are laced with yesterday's dirt & I don't know

why I can't stop my hands from shaking
earthquakes under arizona's swollen sky & I

didn't confess in time—I don't think—to stop
the tide from turning & the cold shakes
from setting in because now I have plastic
buttons for eyes, only seeing ugly & uglier but

I can still trace every harbored possibility

down the memory of your sequined spine; I can still

pick apart each sugared syllable, candy floss
I might swallow more easily once
I've wrung the joke dry, collected
the leftover curd: *let me make it*

up to you, let me run away
with you, let me grow old
with you or ask you to junior prom because I didn't

the first time & now
you're caught in the gaping mouths
of promises I gathered & strung along the predawn

phone lines that tether an island
my rain-slick hands may never reach.

["little secrets," Our Baker's Dozen Feature](#)

In "clandestine," **Siena Ho Shun Yi** explores the range of interpretation in our words.

["clandestine" by Siena Ho Shun Yi](#)

sounds like clementine / in my cantonese brain / is how her lip gloss looked / sticky over tables
/ eat them during spring / for *prosperous blessings* / upon a new year / *do you have a boyfriend*
/ count the soft curve of her eyes / chinese idioms stick *boy to girl* / and i wonder how many
girls / looked over complex characters to find each other / in every page / how many secrets
cremated / to ashes in my throat / that choke up when she smiled / i will bring to another grave
/ i can't tell 柑 from 橘 / in a relative's fridge / but not one citrus fruit / taste the way i wanted
her

Siena's Commentary on "clandestine":

This piece took inspiration from the many stories I have heard, and I found traditional Chinese culture adjacent to liking girls, with the same gentleness and slight melancholy. How my friends would whisper names quietly, but with no less giddiness than any other love. I think culture really comes into play when it's relevant in your life, in all the small parts: a mandarin during new year's. Your relatives' words. Those four-in-a-pair idioms of talented men and beautiful women, how good they look together. There is so much room for interpretation, so much hope in between each word unsaid, but to actually take the leap still seems terrifying.

Clandestine, clementines. To like a girl is a bittersweet little secret.

Our 2021 Pushcart Prize Nominees

“On Subjugation¹” by Keisha Cassel

The boy ██████████
██████████ black ██████████
laced with ██████████ in a complex ██████████
set of intentional scars. ██████████
██████████
██████████ stuck in a rod of light
rapidly moving through darkness. ██████████
██████████
██████████ He is wearing
██████████ the inside of the body
exposed. ██████████ the
whole skin of an animal taken and
used. ██████████ look at his ██████████ face,
██████████
know ██████████
he could take ██████████
██████████ life ██████████
██████████ power ██████████
██████████
██████████
██████████ And he is *still* black
██████████ without meaning ██████████

¹ Booker, M., Olds, S., & Shire, W. (2017). On the Subway. In *Penguin modern POETS 3: Your family, your body* (pp. 44-44). poem, Penguin.

Sometimes I'd stand too close to the edge and hover over
the shaft where the platform had been.
I imagined him pulling me back to safety.

Sometimes I'd stand too close to the edge and hover over.
I stood at precipices and dared gravity to take me.
I imagined him pulling me back to safety.
My father and I are not unlike.

I stood at precipices and dared gravity to take me.
I've met a version of myself who doesn't need anyone.
My father and I are not unlike.
In his goodbye note, my father blamed his parents for his inability to love us.

["Bombardier" by Daniel Liu](#)

The moon still smoldering. Coal-throats in the open arms
of the guillotine. Here, a funeral. How careless the
steel-cut night was. Each bone crushed, each
curved vowel rotten on my tongue. The headstones
still pregnant with my name. The embers still sputtering
ghosts, still asking for prayers. My father folded over
my open mouth. And like clockwork, I ask: isn't this charred earth
just a graveyard? Aren't we all looking for our own
names? The sound of bombs is just a lullaby
for dead men. War-stained cochlea. Crimson scattered
everywhere. This country was never ours. This wildfire
was never this bright, never this frigid. How it swallows me whole.
An ash-rimmed bullet lodged in my lungs, leaving cinders
in my words. My father tells me a son is only a son if he
can fight. Because birth is an act of violence. Because
the space between the knife and its reflection is non-existent.
Infested home. Slaughterhouse concerto. We will all be
long dead when the world ends. We will all hold our fathers

to their last words. The price of bloodthirst is two men
with their blind eyes rolled back. The spine is just another

place to hide. Another elegy. Another warm corpse. Cornered
like animals, light escaping us both. This

is salvation.

“it was Lilith who first ate grief as a spondee” by Lillian Sickler

in the beginning I ate the snake.

I wasn't hungry but she was made just like me
just like *heartbeat* *nightgown* *ribmeat*
and I coveted her like you coveted me let me explain.

I know I was a raft in my last life, my boards
rotting soft as sugar as I dissolved into juniper salt.

but in this life, I was cut clumsily from clay and slip
of tongue to suckle white milk until I could bite through
caul, feather, and thew. I balanced on wood only to cross it.
I married you and we kept every faucet
running in our house so God wouldn't hear us fucking.

in this life there is hunger, one I know exists only
because I loved you.

before love there was the snake and always after
is the way the snake eats me back. whole mouth gulps down
my *heart* */break* *sunset* *birthday*
great grief, I hate you even though you have
swathed my throat in untamable thirst and thus made me
into a drain let me explain.

if you've ever felt your chest tighten to ophidian coil
when your lover lays beneath you--
if you've ever put your famine on their
famine and fast on their fast
and allowed love to pump
you full
of hunger
until you

go blue as
slack and rancid
with
want

then you'll know why I devoured the snake.
why I have her flay me open like opaline fish

disembowel and deprive and remove everything
that dares to want what is not snake

“Alternate ending with bloodless dress” by Ọbáfẹmi Thanni

after Safia Elhillo's 'Vocabulary' and Tjawangwa Dema's 'Homonym'

The Yoruba word ọta means bullet

The Yoruba word ọtá means enemy

What should our memory hold of October

Our mothers prayed *may the bullet not stray towards my children*

or

Our mothers prayed *may the enemy not stray towards my children*

Our mothers prayed against the gun

or

Our mothers prayed against the state

To say body you say ara

To say thunder you say àrá

Teminikan recalls *that night, I ran my fingers over her body*

or

Teminikan recalls *that night, I ran my fingers over her thunder*

Teminikan recalls a memory

or

Teminikan recalls a myth

To cause a thing to fly you cast the spell fò

To cause a think to break you cast the spell fọ

The feather floating above the drowned boy sings

O you should have seen him fly

or
The feather floating above the drowned boy sings *O you should have seen him break*

The feather wanted the boy to be free
or
The feather wanted the boy to be remembered

In my mother's tongue meanings are breaths apart

Take a breath and say rí and it means saw
Take a breath and say rì and it means sank

A voice points to a wound and says *she was the only one who truly saw me*
or
A voice points to a wound and says *she was the only one who truly sank me*

The voice belongs to a boy
or
The voice belongs to a ghost

Poet Biographies

Hayley Bowen (she/her) is currently an MFA candidate at Syracuse University where she is Assistant Poetry Editor at *Salt Hill Journal*. Her first chapbook, *Dearly Departed*, is forthcoming from Finishing Line Press in 2022. Hayley is an avid craft beer enthusiast, a terrible knitter, and lives in an attic in upstate New York with her pet moss ball, Peat. She is found on Twitter and Instagram @_hbow and at her website, hayleybowenpoetry.com.

KB is a black trans poet & object in the sky. follow them on twitter and instagram at @earthtokb.

Molly Davidson (she/her) is a lesbian poet and artist with an MFA from Sarah Lawrence College. Her work has previously appeared in *Nurture*, *Superfroot*, *The Hunger*, *Rust & Moth*, *American Chordata*, and *Stain'd*. You can reach her on Twitter @molls_hale or on her website, mollyhaleidavidson.com.

Matthew Feinstein is a neurodivergent poet from Tracy, California. He is currently pursuing an MFA at Randolph College and is the author of *Breeds of Breath* (Alien Buddha Press, 2020). His poems have appeared or are forthcoming in *Poetry Online*, *Hobart (After Dark)*, *Heavy Feather Review*, and elsewhere. He is the founding editor of *Plum Recruit*.

Rita Feinstein (she/her) is the author of the poetry chapbook *Life on Dodge* (Brain Mill Press, 2018). Her stories and poems have appeared in *Permafrost*, *Grist*, and *Willow Springs*, among other publications, and have been nominated for Best of the Net and Best New Poets. She is a graduate of Oregon State University's MFA program.

Website: <https://ritafeinstein.wordpress.com/>

Twitter: @RitaFeinstein

Siena Ho Shun Yi (she/her) is a writer from Hong Kong and Malaysia. Her favourite word is pretty, and her favourite things are pretty things (words remain the prettiest). In her natural habitat, Siena can be found watching anime or bothering her friends, and she would like to bother you on Twitter @sienasyed as well.

Arden Hunter is an aroace agender writer, artist and performer. With an eclectic range of interests from the horrific to the whimsical, the theme tying all of their work together is an inexplicable and unconditional love of the ridiculous beast that is called 'human'. Arden has words and art hosted and upcoming with *Thi Wurd*, *Acid Bath Publishing*, and *Outcast Press* among other places. Find them on Twitter @hunterarden and at ardenhunter.com.

Anoushka Kumar (she/her) is a student and writer from India, with work forthcoming or published in *Vagabond City Lit*, *perhappened*, *the Ekphrastic Review*, and elsewhere. Find her on Twitter @duskelegies.

James Miller (he/him) is a native of the Texas Gulf Coast. He is published in *Best Small Fictions 2021* (Sonder Press) and in the *Marvelous Verses* anthology (Daily Drunk Press). Recent pieces have appeared or are forthcoming in *Phoebe*, *Yemassee*, *Elsewhere*, *West Trade Review*, *Sledgehammer Lit*, *Neologism*, *Press Pause*, *Coal Hill Review*, *The Shore*, and *Indianapolis Review*. Follow on Twitter @AndrewM1621.

Matthew Miller (he/him) teaches social studies, swings tennis rackets, and writes poetry - all hoping to create home. He and his wife live beside a dilapidating orchard in Indiana, where he tries to shape dead trees into playhouses for his four boys. His poetry has been featured in *Whale Road Review*, *River Mouth Review*, *EcoTheo Review* and *Ekstasis Magazine*.

Website: mattleemiller.wixsite.com/poetry

Twitter: @mattleemiller32

Eun-Jae M. Norris (they/xe) is a Korean-American nonbinary poet and aspiring author currently residing in the Greater Boston Area. This is xyr first publication. Keep an eye out for their upcoming works on their Twitter at @clicksargassum or the shifting signals coming off that weird abandoned radio tower in the woods near your house. (You know the one.)

Emmanuel Ojeikhodion (he/him) is a Nigerian Writer and Poet and Author of a *A Loss in September* (Ghost City Press, 2021). He's an Alumnus of the Transcendence Poetry Masterclass and a fellow of the Elsa Creative Writers Workshop, University of Benin. His work has appeared in *Strange Horizon*, *The Hellebore*, *Sledgehammer*, *The Augment Review*, *Capsule stories*, *The Lagos Review* & elsewhere. He's visible on Twitter as @hermynuel and Instagram @ltz_wordsworth.

Katie B. Tian (she/her) is a sixteen-year-old Chinese-American writer and journalist from New York. A Scholastic Art & Writing National Medalist and two-time Adelphi Quill Awards First Place winner, her work is published or forthcoming in *Frontier Poetry*, *Rising Phoenix Review*, *Blue Marble Review*, and *Eunoia Review*, among others. In her spare time, she serves as the Creative Writing Director of online literary magazine *The Incandescent Review*. Apart from writing, she has various talents, such as singing in the shower and eating her weight in brown sugar boba bars.

©December 2021 *Kissing Dynamite: A Journal of Poetry*
ISSN: 2639-426X
All rights reserved.