



Photo of scene in Brugge, Belgium by Colin Goldie

Right Hand Pointing

Issue 7

Living Room

Contributors

Meredith Whipple
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Cleo Fellers Kocol
Jeffrey Randsdell
Colin Goldie
Rosanna Armendariz
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The Note

Dale, Editor, Right Hand Pointing

You'd be surprised how many people who submit to Right Hand Pointing say that it's because of the orange background. Those that don't mention the orange as the main reason they submitted are, I think, lying. We all know orange is the new black.

The chapbook contest has been postponed due to the United State's government enforcement of certain provisions of the Patriot Act. We will, God willing, be publishing two web-based chapbooks per year. The first, Susan Case's lovely Hiking the Desert in High Heels is up and running on the website. These will be by-invitation only.

Keep submitting, kids. We love reading your work.



Dale

Your Editor



Office Space

Meredith Whipple

cavern of cubicles,
roomful of monkeys

and the smallest, loneliest one
is me.

eyes all donuts,
ears full of clickety-clack,
simian brilliance shred by partitions

Lan Nail Salon

Meredith Whipple

i've decided it's the topcoat which makes all things clear.
for when she paints my toes
so red!
with the blood of babies yet unborn,
it's as if each drop
dropped out of me
marking me this:
my breasts. my blood. myself.

you have asked and not asked,
we have told and not told,
but we are witches all,
squatting around the fire of womanhood,
conjuring nightmares,
our witchy ways of wiling,
our bitchy ways of beguiling,
our bottles of enamel-potions standing guard.

even though you didn't ask,
i will tell you how
this tent marks us this:
our breasts. our blood. ourselves.

Plumbing

Rich Murphy

The pump of clear days
showers gifts upon itself
and the neighbor
in your bed.

Menu

Rich Murphy

Fish hook with line cut.

Jackknife

Rich Murphy

A pointed stick to skewer a hot-dog
or pick teeth.

A rusty screw, now loose, miles from home.

The taste of wine by an open fire

Well-pared nails before turning in

To be open anywhere in the world
with all your tools showing.

Crucifixion Currency

Rich Murphy

We used the small crucifixes that filled our pockets to purchase good without ever asking for change. The mundane transactions have taxed us of millennia. Every piece of merchandise and service has cost each of our ancestors limb or life. A butcher shop cleaved every street. Our parents retired to torture chambers, and their organs were sautéed for someone else's fat.

Thank God that money of self-determination overflowed its banks during our epoch. I pray some spiritual agency will soon recall the frivolous crosses that we used to bury ourselves. Consumers could then rise to the memorable business of saving Caesar his rainy day.

Working Day

Cleo Fellers Kocol

Eight-thirty AM I rush in, the telephone ringing. "Third Street Dry Cleaners and Laundry," I answer, registering the waiting room's tired paper geraniums and lone wicker chair. Behind my counter a fog-bank of steam, industrial detergent and cleaning fluid clogs air thick with heat. I tackle piles of soiled clothing. Like morning sickness their odor brings a sour taste. No time for it. I swallow, sort, staple, stamp until one when my half-hour lunch break breaks the day. Sun glares on macadam. Steam irons hiss like heat waves breaking on a dry shore. A wino shuffles into the shade, leans against the building and upends a bottle. I finish my banana, comb my hair, put on fresh lipstick, and tilt the fans my way. The phone rings, and I mutter, "Third Street Cleaners." The spotter, swearing a black fog of words, broadcasts the scent of jalapeno peppers and raw onion. "Dry Cleaners," I gag into the phone. Scraps of paper are gathering in the entrance way. Time drags the afternoon away. "Cleaners," I slur into the telephone and spray myself with cologne. Briefly a tropical bouquet flowers the interior of the Third Street Laundry and Dry Cleaners.

Before Man Fought Nature

Cleo Fellers Kocol

*After Bierstadt's painting:
"Giant Redwood Trees of California"*

No palette-knife black and white,
clear-cut world of saw-dust
giants glaring disaster, but nature
glistening with
reverence. Shying from
sound-bite society and
visionary abstractions,
Bierstadt's romanticized reality creates
wonder, tongue-cool waters
married to sun-streaked forest.
Redwood bark peels naturally;
boulders rise from ground known
by unshod feet. A gentle breeze
rustles foliage, and the earth, in tune
with human life, smiles. Now it weeps.

Holding On

Cleo Fellers Kocol

A propped up
memory,
barb-edged,
slips through
my guard.
Immediate
relief

Party Partners

Cleo Fellers Kocol

Night seducing
moonlight broadcasts
Circe's whisper. Strangers
regenerated, clothing
drops like discarded
dreams.

At dawn sun splays
disarray and cuts
through recent
hours like a cleaving
knife. Promises are
scattered. Glances
skitter away.

Waxing

Jeffrey Ransdell

I've a warm spot in my heart for something that is not a car, even if the more pedantic call it a 1967 Chevy Impala, maroon with white convertible top. I can forgive the error. It looks remarkably like those things we call cars. Only the most discerning recognize it as the cosmic collision of a rainy Saturday, two boys, double dating, Prom Night and the ultimate experimental proof of the chemical properties of wax. In short - no matter how long you frantically rub, paste wax does not dry on a rainy day in the garage on your buddy's mom's new car. You may achieve an interesting murky iridescence reminiscent of a thin coat of Vaseline, but no shine, even if it seems important. As it turned out, it rained even heavier that evening. No guys stood surreptitiously touching the finish, rubbing fingertips together to see if whatever covered the sheet metal could actually be felt as a separate entity. No girls risked their hairdos in the rain. We shouldn't have worried about the wax.



photo of James O'Grady by Colin Goldie

Appendage

Rosanna Armendariz

I bump into Harvey, my gynecologist, at El Paso Gourmet Foods, during lunch. He's wearing a baby carrier with his infant daughter strapped to his back. "How's the job search going?" he asks.

During my last exam, I told him that I was looking to change careers, from acting to something else. Since then, my job search hasn't been going well and I'm about to tell him this when his cell phone rings. He raises his pointer finger, signaling me to wait. "No, darling," he says, I imagine to his wife. "Liddy Dole is most certainly a conservative." He looks at me and makes a face to suggest his wife is stupid. "I don't care if she wears pink stilettos," he says. "She's still a conservative, just like her old man, an extension of him really—the appendage he lost in the war." He clicks his phone closed. "She's rather naïve about politics," he explains.

I look at Harvey's baby girl, watching us quietly from his back. "She's not at all fussy," I say.

"I have a calming effect on women." He winks, implying that he can calm me down, too. Then he reaches for me, tries to touch my arm, but I back away.

I look at his daughter taking everything in with her big blue eyes. Twenty years from now, she'll still be riding Harvey's back, jabbing him in the flanks with stilettos sharp as spurs.

Goo Goo G'Jube

F. John Sharp

I'm sitting on a cornflake, waiting for the van to come. Literally.
The cat splashed around in my cereal when I got up to check if the
movers had arrived. I heard a crunch as I sat.

I'm crying.

Corporation t-shirt doesn't fit anymore. Relocation blues. Veronica
found the stress too much and has settled into a routine moving groceries
across a plate of glass until she hears a beep. I'm expected to leave her
behind.

I'm letting my face grow long.

I called ahead to see if I could start a week late. They said it doesn't
matter much cause every day is the same. Chickens, chickens, chickens.
I'm only glad we don't kill them. See how they run like pigs from a gun. I
couldn't stand that.

The van is still not here. I may have to see if I can delay one more
day. We get t-shirts that say, "I Am the Egg Man." There is no end to
packing eggs, they tell me. I hope to pack enough eggs to stop wondering
if any of the cartons I touch will also be touched by Veronica.

Darkness & Light

Doug Draime

it all begins
after it's all over

*and the darkness lifts,
brother*

in a place our eyes cannot see
in a *time* outside of time
where there are no gravestones
to clutter the landscape

*and the darkness is a wicked maze,
brother*

The Hollow Dead Ring Of Time

Doug Draime

If time itself -
the passing of time -
has a sound
it is a dull dead ring
a clang muffled
suppressed, suffocated
a gunny sack of bones;
the sound of shovels
tossing earth on coffins
of dead political lies

The Weight of the Head

Doug Draime

Rimbaud had consumed more
alcohol than any 16 year old
could possibly hold, and was
in the gutter puking
on the Boulevard Montparnasse,
in a new, blue silk blouse ...
that he had stolen from a
40 year old trick ...
who had finally gone home
to his grieving wife.

Living Room

Amanda Laughtland

Reading and cross-stitching
on the couch, we check the clock,

refocus our eyes. A blue cuckoo
perches at noon or midnight—

or what time is it when time
has stopped? A pattern

of red-brown plaid begins
to fray beneath our legs

Postcard: June 20, 1957

Amanda Laughtland

We're having cocktails out
at the end of this dock
with Florence and Jack.

Their trailer's parked across
the lot between a palm tree
and a convertible. So hot

but we sleep by the ocean.
Mickey fishes from every pier.
I swim. Bathing suit doesn't

quite fit, but who cares?

Short Fusion

Mark Martin

This one time I tried to say something in very few words but in order to get my point across I had to add more words which in turn muddied up my meaning and consequently I had to add even more words to clarify which only led to a very large pile of words that collapsed under its own weight leaving any intended meaning buried in the rubble of disconnected thoughts at which time I discovered that I had unknowingly been using my jazz pen.

Doing the Dishes

Jennifer Hill-Kaucher

He said there was nothing like doing all the dishes after dinner
the water drip licking edges of plates that wait for a gush spurt
of warmth, the thrust of the towel in and out of wineglasses
and tumblers,
the sponge swelled with suds, the blind grope for the rhythm
of silverware
under fingers-fork, fork, fork, spoon-the kiss caress or cloth
softer than tongues,
the slap spank of an overfilled sink, pans drip mewling,
overturned,
and the final suckmoan
of the drain.

Central

Jennifer Hill-Kaucher

The air is blanched, an erased page with a slight fust
of mushroom. It is summer, so we've locked out heat,
followed the Romans with their blocks of ice and fans
to chill skin, stanch sweat. Our cubes hum from windows.
This world licked like frosting on an ice cream cake
stale beauty we've conditioned ourselves to breathe.

Vand

Jennifer Hill-Kaucher

She held want in a box
scattershot with pinpricks.
Soon want gnawed a hole
and found itself in a cage
with shavings and water
that dripped from a metal teat.
Her mother moaned -
 You cannot keep wild things.
She built a maze for it,
astonished her brother with want's
long memory for underplot.
At night she kneaded its paws,
stroked its whiskers and let it scavenge
and dance through her covenant
of bedsheets.

It Makes Sense

J. Andrew Morris

In a Googlefight
Reason beats faith
 Yet
God whips Satan -- no contest.
Homer takes OJ.
Batman 3 to 1 over Superman.

 Odd,
I always figured superpowers would
Overcome a simple utility belt
At forty-five, it starts to make sense.

(Editor's Note: See <http://www.googlefight.com> if you don't know what a Googlefight is.)

The Most Powerful Force in the Universe

J. Andrew Morris

The physicist proposes gravity;
the biologist entropy;
the philosopher truth;
the poet, of course, proclaims love.
The wounded inner child knows better.

All things can be endured.
No punishment,
No suffering
too great -- Except one.

And this we should never give up:
The Will to Power
Even if it means
Guilty rather than helpless.

Amor Fati

J. Andrew Morris

In the brief moment
before he presses his hands
yet again upon the stone
Sisyphus smiles.

Marietta is a Memory

Matt Betts

Pitch-covered rooftops drip dark in the rain as we drive by.

Children at smudged windows stare, long-faced to be sitting inside
on a Saturday.

Across a Neighboring Field

Matt Betts

a trio of horses
in the distance
exhale clouds
into new morning air
a heavy sigh
sets the trees in motion

Early Morning San Francisco Happenings

A. D. Winans

I

Out walking the streets again
in my home town
San Francisco
bag lady talking to the
cracks in the sidewalk
the Pope taking his last breath

II

Market street once a palace
now a gaudy whore
failed cowboys and fallen angels
gathered at sixth and market streets
down at glide memoiral the
grand slam poets practicing
to raise the dead the
heavens show no mercy

III

Kaufman poems rattling around inside
my troubled head
Hunter Thompson's remains waiting
to be shot out of a cannon
down at Pac Bell Park the
umpire in black sweeps off
home plate

Church Dance

Anna Lucas

Genuflect, cross yourself,
kneel, sit, stand;
bow to the gospel,
shake your neighbor's hand.
Yawn through the sermon,
try not to offend,
one eye on the clock
amen, amen, amen!

Contributor Bios

✖✖✖ **Meredith Whipple** is an upstart twenty-three year-old yuppie living in Boston's South End. Business consultant by day and superhero by night, Meredith takes the time when changing from business casual into spandex to pen poems such as those featured in *Right Hand Pointing*. Meredith has unhealthy obsessions with grocery stores, Michigan, and Waffle House, all of which she is now taking medication to treat. We fully expect her to up and move to Singapore any day now.

✖✖✖ **Rich Murphy's** poems have appeared in such journals as *olling Stone*, *Poetry Magazine* (where I was featured poet), *Grand Street*, *New Letters*, *Negative Capability*, *Confrontation Magazine*, *Slant Journal*, *Barrelhouse Review*, *West 47* (Ireland), *Aesthetica Review* (England), *Alligator Juniper*, *New Delta Review*, *Full Circle Journal*, *Fulcrum*, *Salamander*, *Borderlands: Texas Poetry Review*, *Entelechy: Mind and Culture*, *Red China*, and *MiPoesias*. His essay "Vanishing Artist: American Poet and Differend" was published in *Fulcrum: An Annual of Poetry and Aesthetics* and again in *The International Journal of the Humanities*

✖✖✖ **Cleo Kocol** has been writing poetry for four years, with work in *California Quarterly*, *Poetry Depth Quarterly*, *Rattlesnake Review*, *Blue Collar Review* and other journals and publications. She had award-winning poems in the California Federation of Chaparral Poets, the Ina Coolbrith Annual Contest, and was Grand Prize winner in 2003 for the Dancing Poetry Contest held by Arts Embassy International.

✖✖✖ **Jeffrey Ransdell** appeared in Issue 6 of *Right Hand Pointing*, and there's no bio there, either.

✖✖✖ **C olin Goldie** grew up in Watford, just North of London. In addition to making fine photographs, makes fine musical instruments and is a musician. He lives in Germany.

✖✖✖ **Rosanna Armendariz** is a recent graduate of the bilingual MFA Program at the University of Texas at El Paso. She has publications and upcoming publications in *Callaloo: A Journal of African Diaspora*, *Poetic Voices Without Borders* (Gival Press 2005), *Pindeldyboz*, *Illyas's Honey*, *Convergence Journal*, *Barbaric Yawp*, and *Zygote In My Coffee*. Her chapbook, *Brooklyn Smoker*, is forthcoming with BoneWorld Publications. She is at work on her first novel.

✖✖✖ **F. John Sharp** lives and works in the Cleveland, Ohio area. His fiction has appeared in print in *Peninsular*, *Snow Monkey* and online in *The Paumanok Review*, *Flashquake*, *Salt River Review*, *Prose Ax*, and *Pindeldyboz*. His poetry has appeared in *In Posse Review* and in an anthology by Regent Press. He had a story in Issue #1 of *Right Hand Pointing*.

✖✖✖ **Doug Draime's** most recent books: *Slaves of the Harvest* (Indian Heritage Publishing, 2002), *Unoccupied Zone* (Pitchfork Press, 2004), *Spleen*. an ebook, (Poetic Inhalation, 2004). He started publishing in the small press and underground newspapers in 1969, and his work continues to appear in publications worldwide. He lives in Oregon. This is his third appearance in *Right Hand Pointing*, the others being here and here, respectively.

✖✖✖ **Amanda Laughtland** lives in the suburbs of Seattle, teaches English part-time at a community college and works part-time in a public library. She has a poem in the current issue of *QP: Queerpoetry*.

*** **Mark Martin** rides a bike, paddles a kayak, repairs brain slicers, plays drums, and tries like hell to play guitar. Mark's work can be seen in current and upcoming issues of *Prose Toad*.

*** **Jennifer Hill-Kaucher's** second book of poetry, *Book of Days*, was published by Foothills Press in 2005. Her poetry has appeared in *Lilies* and *Cannonballs Review*, *Curious Rooms* and *Agnieszka's Dowry*, and was recently included in the University of Iowa Press anthology, *A Fine Frenzy: Poets Respond to Shakespeare*. A Pennsylvania Council on the Arts roster poet, Jennifer conducts poetry residencies throughout the state and recently in Ireland.

*** **J. Andrew Morris** is a prophet of manna teaching at Catawba College in Salisbury, North Carolina. When He is not teaching young capitalists the tricks of the trade, he wonders how he might make a living writing poetry. He has published poems in *Foliate Oak*, *Thrift Poetic Arts Journal*, *Iodine Poetry Journal* and *the Academy of Management Program Guide*. He recently published an academic article entitled, "Poetry and the Visual Arts as a Means to Teach Emotional Intelligence".

*** **Matt Betts** is a former reporter and news anchor from Lima, Ohio. Although he has lived in most of the larger cities in Ohio, he still draws on his small town upbringing as inspiration for his fiction and poetry. He runs workshops around central Ohio and facilitates a highly productive writing group called the Naked Wordshop. His poetry appeared, or will appear, in *Red River Review*, *elima*, *Inkburns* and *minima*.

*** **A. D. Winans** is a native San Francisco poet and graduate of San Francisco State University. A member of PEN, his work has appeared in hundreds of literary magazines and anthologies, and been translated into eight languages. He is the author of 43 books and chapbooks of poetry and prose. His latest book *DREAMS THAT WON'T LET ME ALONE* is available from Bottle of Smoke Press: www.bospress.net.

*** **Anne Lucas** lives in Madison, Indiana and is fairly new at poetry and maybe that's why we liked her little poem anyway. She writes to say she has no major published works. Until now.