

OVERTHROWING CAPITALISM



Revolutionary Poets Brigade

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Special thanks to Fran Furey and all the others who
made generous contributions to this publication.

OVERTHROWING CAPITALISM
A Symposium of Poets

Revolutionary Poets Brigade

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Introduction

This is an age in search of visions, summoning us all to become visionaries.

In these troubled times, rife with disillusionment, sickened by false promises, with all life on this beautiful planet under siege, many wonder if humanity will even survive to greet another new century.

The old solutions have failed. Innumerable people have sunk into deep despair. No new common vision has yet risen to fire the people's profound creative energies.

To what should we attribute this disastrous situation? The obvious place to look is all around us. Globalized corporate capitalism rules our planet today, disempowering even nations and governments. Is that system the cause of the problems, or do the problems persist in spite of the system?

Our schools almost universally teach that the American capitalism system is the best and fairest in the world, offering opportunity to all, the basis of freedom and democracy, the source of prosperity, and the people of the world both look to us and our system for enlightened leadership and clamber to enter our borders. That's the mainstream spin.

But a very different view of the situation is obvious to most of the world, yet largely censored out of American dialog. Capitalism transforms everything of value into private profits belonging to a tiny transnational elite. Capitalism uses financial control to grasp political state power and undermine democracy. Capitalism is based on a small elite permanently in control, while an ever larger number of people are excluded, marginalized, and impoverished. Capitalism rewards the elite with vast wealth that is not the reward of a fair system, but the spoils of the predator atop the power chain, at the cost of the impoverishment and oppression of most of the world, utter destruction to the environment, and endless wars

On Saturday, November 15, 2014, poets, speakers, and musicians are gathering in a day of collaboration and celebration on the theme Overthrowing Capitalism, organized by the Revolutionary Poets Brigade in conjunction with the World Poetry Movement, at the

Emerald Tablet Gallery in San Francisco. This anthology contains the word visions and ideas brought forth on that day.

We hope you will agree with us that this anthology is filled with sophisticated and inspiring insights, ideas, exposés, and analyses from poets and writers who are serious about the work ahead. Words that unmask capitalism and raise our consciousness to hopefully lead the world into a more cooperative society. What is capitalism? Might it be reformed into a constructive force, or can we move beyond it only by overthrowing it? What does overthrowing capitalism look like? How do we know when it's overthrown? What might a post-capitalist world look like? This century is issuing in an era of unprecedented planetary crises, and we have only a short time to transform these many looming disasters into a powerful movement for a constructive revolutionary future.

We call on all poets and all people to join us in making a new beginning, to reach deep into your center and bring forth the energies that can lead humanity and the natural world into a bright future, and we call on you all to become visionaries.

John Curl

For the Social Justice Committee 2014 of the Revolutionary Poets Brigade, comprising Jack Hirschman, Dorothy (Dottie) Payne, Sarah Menefee, Jessica Loos, Karen Melander-Magoon, and John Curl.

MELBA ABELA

**MONUMENT TO GRAMSCI, SOUTH BRONX,
SUMMER 2013**

(after Thomas Hirschhorn)

All young people should be equal before culture.

Antonio Gramsci

Turn left here

Into the project

This Gramscian project monument of heart and mind

Built of scraps, cardboards, packing tapes

Community cooperation

Boxed inside the box: decontrol contra ruling-class control

Tactics tactics tactics

Classes, lectures, books, computers, music, radio station,
newspaper, snack bar, field trips

Open windows, open doors

Hope

The problem is entrenched capital, bourgeois mystification

But we get you

You came we are here the project residents

One grand summer fling

But can we have a long-term engagement instead?

A future marriage of equality, a civil union, at least?

Yes, we can?

IN RE PEOPLE POWER, THEN AND NOW

(After Alan Jazmines)

How do you speak to your time, those of you whose birthright has been robbed of your flesh and blood mother, the mother-tongue of your DNA, those of you enamored of distractions, the alien ways of Barbie, Mickey Mouse and American Idol, those of you let-in and left-out of minatory sheeted complexes, the all-encompassing power of interventionist transnational personhood?

Daily I breathe your unknowing and complicity from my caged window, daily I see and hear the dissonant patterns in your funneling voices: some gleeful, some complacent, some cruel, some angry, many despairing, and my chained hands reach out to you from before layers of armaments, bars, screens, barbed-wire fences, the concrete and mortar sky with roving eyes, my words forming the images shaping the truth of your imprisonment. My current embodied incarceration no less this, only a teardrop in our people's long march to freedom, justice and equality.

Freedom, justice, equality---to be sure these are rhetorical abstractions, but I've been there before, among the best of you stewarding forward our cause in the academy, in the pulpit, in the round table, in the streets, in the backlands, as I'm still now, even at the pits of our continuing struggle.

Surely, I've earned the right to invoke the names of Malakas and Maganda, Lapu-lapu, the Katipuneros, Kabataang Makabayan ... I'm one with them and one with all of you, the ones with the driving determination and pride of we the people to reclaim again our collective legacy of resistance and love of freedom. In the meanwhile, prayerful for the unbroken thread shepherding a new generation of leaders and the multitude, I'm ever hopeful of the development of an evolving peaceful, egalitarian and just society.

WRITTEN NOTICE

Dear Capitalism:

Have you seen all those black-clad figures
Standing around
Downtown?

Sure you have.

Don't mind us.

We're just gathering together to attend a funeral.

Yours.

Sincerely,
Your Frustrated Subjects.

BLACK SEED

Something different

Drops from an open hand
Into an open hole.
New deposit received
By the burrowed brown soil.
Buried, nourishment from falling rain
Germinating over time,
Firmly rooted underground.
Sapling arises, breaks past
Soil and concrete
Which cannot contain it for long.
Sapling sprouts, grows
Taller, bigger,
Grows branches, grows leaves,
Crosses, weaves, outstretches
In many directions.
Gives oxygen, gives life
To all that surround it
And the will to
Fight the death-culture that
Threaten life's totality---
Animals, humans, nature---
In pursuit of more currency.
Resistance
In the shape of a tree
Born from a black seed, small promise of
Something different

From what currently exists
To destroy.

TREES MAY FALL, BUT SO DO SYSTEMS.

ROBERT ANBIAN

GO TO GAZA

before you call Israel a Jewish state
go to gaza
before you say the USA loves democracy
go to gaza
before you believe Europeans and Americans love Arab springs
go to gaza
before you think Arab elites care about poor Palestinians
go to gaza
before you embrace hope or despair
go to gaza
before you impose a no-fly zone on Libya, Bosnia or anywhere else
go to gaza
before you decide who is killing and who is dying
go to gaza
before you forget who supplied the bullets, bombs, gas canisters,
chemical agents, and missiles
go to gaza
before you think the empire is not an empire
go to gaza
before you salute the flag or join the army
go to gaza
before you confuse ideology with life
go to gaza
before you go to Jerusalem
go to gaza
before you go to Disneyland
go to gaza
before you wish upon a star
go to gaza
before you think writing a poem like this lets you off the hook
go to gaza
before you make your peace with power
go to gaza
before you feel contentment, satisfaction, pride
go to gaza
before you believe violence is the way forward

go to gaza
before you think the heart of humanity is anything more or less
than a knot of blood under the sun

go to gaza
before you decide you're not bleeding

go to gaza
before you praise god

go to gaza
before you blame the poor, the landless, the refugees, the jailed, the
tortured, the pent-up and beaten-down, the terrorized-into-
madness, the brutalized-into-brutality

go to gaza
before you invoke the hallowed name of the "six million"

go to gaza
before you ever again say, "never again"

go to gaza
then turn around
and tell it to the powerful.

ADRIAN ARIAS (Peru)

(ANTI) ODA AL CAPITALISMO

El capitalismo es una bomba
una bomba que adoramos
que queremos tener cada mañana al despertar
una bomba que nos estremece
con su aroma de miedo y seducción.

El capitalismo es un animal de extraño olor
un animal que abrazamos
que damos de comer cada día
que sacamos a pasear y él
termina paseándonos a nosotros.

Oh Capitalismo con letras mayúsculas
eres el super héroe el jefe el drogadicto el mesías
la prostituta el soldado el homeless el asesino
eres el doctor que cura con una palmada en la espalda
eres el sacerdote que nos salva de todos los pecados.

El capitalismo es una nube
la que llueve sobre nuestras cabezas
la que nos persigue en cada paso
inventando el clima de nuestra vida
lloviendo sobre nuestra tumba viviente.

Eres la arquitectura del nuevo mundo
y nosotros que solemos perdemos en tus calles
terminamos viviendo bajo los puentes
sobre los árboles, escondidos en nuestra ceguera
amordazados por tus suaves brazos de pulpo infinito.

Oh dulce capitalismo
derritiéndote en tu azúcar de mil colores
eres el postre que no podemos parar de comer
el que nos hace reír incontrolablemente el que nos hace gritar, llorar
nos hace maldecir nos hace perder la paciencia, nos hace matar.

(ANTI) ODE TO CAPITALISM

Capitalism is a bomb
a bomb that we adore
want to have to wake up to every morning
a bomb that shakes us
with its aroma of fear and seduction.

Capitalism is an animal with a strange smell
an animal that we embrace
that we feed daily
that we take out for a walk and he
ends up walking us.

Oh Capitalism with capital letters
you are the superhero the boss the junkie the messiah
the prostitute the soldier the homeless the murderer
you are the doctor who heals with a pat on the back
you are the priest who saves us from all sins.

Capitalism is a cloud
that rains on our heads
that haunts our every step
inventing the climate of our lives
raining on our living tomb.

You are the architecture of the New World
and we who usually are lost in your streets
ended up living under bridges
over trees, hidden in our blindness
gagged by your soft arms of infinite octopus.

Oh, sweet capitalism
melting in your thousand-colors sugar
you are the dessert we can not stop eating
that makes us laugh uncontrollably makes us scream and cry
makes us curse, makes us lose patience, makes us kill.

Translated from Spanish by Nina Serrano.

VICTOR AVILA
MOLOTOV KISSES

At first she believed their lies about true beauty
And how because of something lacking
she wasn't worthy of being loved.

She would comb her hair this way and that,
sure that if she looked like the golden ones
on the cover of those glamour magazines
the sons of America would adore her.

Not for who she was
but for who they perceived her to be.

One day in a supermarket
while in the check-out she noticed a glossy cover.
It told her that she was not beautiful, thin or light-skinned enough.

And on that day she realized
that it wasn't her who was flawed...it was them.

That a false system based on greed and lies
reveled in its ability to rob her of her pride and dignity.

So she lifted the magazine from the rack.
She placed it against her lips and gave it a Molotov Kiss.

In her mind she saw it catching fire. Then she heard a great wind.
The wind carried this magazine onto the concrete steps
of Madison Avenue and Wall Street.

There a great conflagration ensued.
Locusts swirled relentlessly above the flames.
Grey suits ran in all directions hoping they'd be spared.

But that was not to be---
Judgement Day had come.
And not one grey suit or briefcase survived.

In her mind the young woman envisioned all of this
as she placed the magazine back into the rack.
She exited the store and entered the dawn of a new awakening.

MAHNAZ BADIHIAN

I DETEST YOU, CAPITALISM

I detest your harsh voice
Your bloody hands
And your eyes with rays of fire, bombs and guns.

I detest your bottomless stomach
Which is hungry all the time for more and more.
The more you eat, the more you're hungry and
Thinking of the meager food left on poor peoples' tables.

I detest you, Capitalist
The way of your life
The darkness you create between people
The damage you cause to friendship, to families, to lovers
By creating money as if it were a god---
Money, money, more money!

I detest you, Capitalist
You're the enemy of kindness and equality.
Are your wide pockets filled enough with the money
You get from wars and the killings you enact?
Has your dirty world lost its appetite for
All these crimes you commit?
Have you ever thought of the horrible days and nights
Innocent people endure because of your actions?
Has it hit you yet, the scenes of torn-bodied
Children, wreckage of your plans?

Your sky be dark and gloomy
Your life be short,
As the lives of people you terminate everywhere
Your legs be broken, that walk on
Exploitation, racism and blood shed

Capitalism is the domination of human over human and nature
Capitalism is the endlessly growing appetite
Without which it will die

Capitalism is a sword on humanity's jugular vein!

Capitalism means constant economic crises
Constant ecological degradation
Capitalism means drugs in the food chain
And creators of diseases with resistant organisms
Capitalism means no prosperity for all

As Rosa Luxemburg said:
There is 2 choices facing humanity,
Socialism or barbarism.
Capitalism means more slavery by
Creating more goods, making us slave harder.

If we want to end poverty, exploitation, inequality,
If we want freedom, human respect over greed and profit
We need to destroy Capitalism

Under the current system invasions, killings, stealing resources
Are called humanitarian acts.
Under the current system
The future looks dark and bloody and doomed to
Vanishing humanity
And we are running out of time!

VIRGINIA BARRETT

CHASE BANK BLUES

A Metaphorical Message to All Mega-Banks

In color therapy, blue light can be projected over the whole body to relieve physical pain.

Maybe Chase has a scheme to trick us into thinking they will cure our material aches by outlining all their buildings with a brilliant, sapphire beam.

At night, however, studies show that blue light disturbs our sleep by suppressing melatonin and our natural circadian cycle.

Perhaps this is what the bank really has up its chroma-pathic sleeve. Anxious with insomnia, our thoughts (they hope) will spin mindlessly on loans, mortgages, and money.

Someone twittered: seriously considering getting chase bank because I love the blue lights they have outside their building & it just seems pretty cool :)

Save us from our silly selves . . . I would take
a red-light district over this numbing blue.

Blue appears in the neck at the throat chakra
and artistic expression is an aspect it embodies:

SO HERE IS THIS POEM

but more blue blood
surreal bank lights
and I'm simply going to scream.

Blue should be saved for visionary dreams.

The color of the ocean, lakes, and sky,
blue is with us all our lives
producing calming chemicals in the body . . .
but not the electric shades.

Agitating with overuse, the effects
can be felt as cold, as aloof, as uncaring.

“The blues ain’t nothin’ but a low-down shakin’ chill

If you never had 'em, children, I sure hope you never will.”

By assets, Chase is the largest bank in the US and growing,
while *glowing, glowing* more and more these days I see
on San Francisco streets.

Remember, the first to sing the blues were poor.
Night time aerial views of any U.S. city reveal
how much energy we waste.

In Texas, Chase has now added its blue to the green
of Dallas Main Center, an art deco skyscraper
outlined in tubes filled with argon gas.
Currently the Bank of America Tower, it radiates
over the skyline like lit-up dollar bills

(sorry, no more star-thrills).

Another healing hue, green is for the heart chakra . . .
but not in this case.

At least the moon they can't subjugate.

Here in my neighborhood, across
from cozy Mission Pie,
yet another branch disquiets
like a video-monster's stare.

Turn off big-bank glare!
Say good-night, Chase.

ALESSANDRA BAVA

MADE IN ITALY CHINA

When you walk into a shop to buy
yourself the trendiest shoes
or the t-shirt that is the latest fad,
do you ever stop to consider that
even the most fashionable
corporate Companies of our *Bel
Paese* are sending fabric and materials
to China where everything is assembled
and returned in exchange for starving
wages, considering the ridiculous price
you are ready to pay for such items?

Every time you are wearing those
shoes and that t-shirt, try to be
aware of the invisible small hands
and of the swollen and tired eyes
seaming the objects of your desire.
Nothing you may buy can be worth
the terrifying shifts, the subhuman
conditions of kids, men and women
working at the other side of our world.

Every time you walk into a shop,
consider the real price other human
beings pay for gifting you with your
fleeting happiness. Tell your heart
to forget the beauty and to embrace
the sorrow!

LINCOLN BERGMAN

CAPITALISM STINKS!

Back in the day in Berkeley
A newspaper was named—
Its masthead trumpeted:
“Capitalism Stinks!”

I think it was published weekly
As the student, anti-war, and
Black liberation movements surged.
The rising tide: Indigenous Alcatraz
The Chicano Moratorium
Women’s and Gay/Lesbian Liberation
Community and Working Class
Organizing, protesting, resisting, attacking—
Worldwide revolutionizing!

Capitalism Stinks!—
I think the newspaper was
Started by the same man who, at demonstrations
Dressed up as General Waste-More-Land
An iron play on Westmoreland’s name—
One of the most genocidal U.S. generals in Vietnam.

Capitalism stinks—that’s for sure
Breeding exploitation and inequality
By its very nature, and although
Marx famously said capitalism contains
The seeds of its own destruction, that
Capitalism would dig its own grave—
That its boom and bust would eventually
Crash and new systems of equality would be born,
And while there are some notable bright spots
It looks like its downfall isn’t going to occur anytime soon
Unless the peoples of the world are able to make it happen.

If capitalism stinks, then imperialism reeks,
Feeds on blood like a vampire—sinks its teeth everywhere

Guilty of some of the most barbarous crimes in
Humanity's short time on Mother Earth.
From Nazi death camps to Hiroshima and Nagasaki
From the Congo to Gaza to Ferguson
From fracking to trade treaties to GMOs
Imperialism—if left unchecked—will
Not only dig its own grave—but everyone's!
Rosa had it right when she said that the choice
Is finally between socialism or barbarism.

To transform our future we need
Mississippi of masses in motion
We need to turn the tables on
The giant globalized corporations, to, in the words of
Muralist Miranda Bergman—"inwit to outwit!"
To use all our wits, creativity, and striving unity
Along with the modern tools of communication
To outwit their mass surveillance and imprisonment
To cross and uncross all borders to organize
In tried and true and brilliant new ways
We devise to bring to birth a new world—
To combat oppression in all its forms
To pay deep attention to the Earth and its climate
To make connections with "all our relations"
In the animal and plant communities
Plant, tend, and harvest free indigenous seeds
Use solar and wind to meet all energy needs
As light spreads rainbows from a prism
We need to build a world of solar communism!

THANKSGIVING DAY 1991/2014

Thanksgiving Day dawns crisp and clear
For homeless under freeways in the doorways at
Soup kitchens featured on TV--boats leave San Fran
For Alcatraz, beacon of Native American resurgence,
Thousands gather, appropriate remembrance of the holiday's
origins,

And celebration of the corn rebellion rising in 1992
On through the year 2000 and succeeding generations
May those to come indeed succeed in harmonizing
Their activities with the natural cycles
And may even we, beleaguered by the bestiality
Of private property, the grasp of greed,
Entrapped within the cruelty of desperate days
Bring forth upon these shores beginnings of wise ways.

Thanksgiving Day, at the Unitarian Church,
Poems from many cultures sing the praises
Of justice, peace, affirm the human spirit,
Gathered with friends, appreciating this
Sustenance, turkey and stuffing, when we know of so much need,
The children running happy at the playground,
The seasons turning once again, so soon, so soon
As time rushes by, overtaking everything,
We take the sacred moments when we can, we sing
Amidst the utter degradation, immiseration,
Desperate depression and Bush-league regression
Spouting all the worst clichés of capital in decline.

“Gentleman with a family will work for food”
So says the sign of one homeless man
Amidst the arms sales spiraling, the irony of
Someone like Shamir importing settlers in to colonize
Against the backdrop of Hitler’s “lebensraum”
In that bloody 20th century, may Thanksgiving in the 21st find us
Active witness to real progress in the Middle East.

Meanwhile the city streets are filled with miseries
Miseducation, misleadership, misappropriation of shrinking public
funds

Stab deep in violent, twisted, sick scenarios of pain
My five-year-old asks *why* of poverty—who can explain?
As Shakespeare had it—getting and spending we lay waste
Or Thoreau's mass lead lives of quiet desperation
Yet we know, and his and herstory confirm that
Great strengths reside within the people, whose force can be
Sudden, swift, and often irrevocable, sweeping
In new ways in just days and hours with unimagined powers.

As Little Turtle, Leader of the Miami Peoples said in 1791: “If our
people fight one tribe at a time all will be killed
They can cut off our fingers one by one
But, if we join together, we can make a powerful fist.”
On this Thanksgiving Day may the wisdom
Of the original inhabitants hold special place
Within the heart; may the hands of those who
Tenderly nurtured the grass seed into corn
Creating thousands of varieties, encourage
An underlying unity, envisioned as a weave
From a diversity of souls and strategies, emerge
Blanket to warm and protect the best in each of us

Beautiful blanket, woven in practice and patience,
Bold in design, bright, textured, wondrous to the eye and touch,
Blanket to embrace the homeless, unemployed, dispossessed,
Spreads its artistry as signal of esteem to bright-eyed Native child
Whose stories go back perhaps to human genesis
Blanket to affirm the intricate weavings of all peoples
Patchwork quilts and calicos, silkscreens, paintings, murals,

tapestries,
The very fabric of our distinctive cultures and common humanity
The connecting thread that interleaves between us all
As Chief Sealth said, “the Earth does not belong to people,
People belong to the Earth. All things are connected
Like the blood that unites one family--all things are connected.”

May each of us, we the single threads, in our own lives,
With our own friends and families, give thanks, endure, somehow
survive,

Mend and blend unique attributes of all hues and shades
Renew, revitalize ourselves to face the next tumultuous decades.

JUDITH AYN BERNHARD

CALIFORNIA AND THE DEATH OF PLENTY

Friends, we are witnessing the death of plenty.

The light of the golden dream is on the wane
and our hopes have fallen into the murky dusk.
Where can the Joad family go now?

Water was always scarce here but these days
it seems barely enough has become not enough.
This year it didn't rain on the just or the unjust.

So the price of lettuce from our own Central
Valley puts it out of reach for the not so rich.
And we thought crisp salad was our birthright.

Now we don't expect a chicken in every pot but
we'd like vegetables that reproduce themselves.
Can't Mother even have a kitchen garden?

Neighbors, we'll have to lower our expectations.

We are suffocating under the pile of cheap trinkets
and useless plastic crap available everywhere.
Has the global economy enslaved us all?

The workers who make the junk we can afford to
buy are paid just enough to keep them working.
While we are paid just enough to keep us buying.

We were only trying to realize our so called middle
class destiny by acquiring stuff we didn't need.
And we wanted to make the children happy.

Now we no longer put our faith in prosperity and
those better times that were just over the horizon.
Is it too much to ask to keep a roof over our heads?

Californians, I'll tell you what happened to our bounty.

For one thing, we fell deeply and madly in love with that quintessential shiny object known to us as the automobile. Did we have to marry it and raise a family together?

It was cheaper for the boys with capital to offer goods and services further and further away from the centers of culture. We thought fuel and the daily joyride would last forever.

We were already choking on the exhaust permeating the air when we began to realize the true cost of our style of living. Like drug addicts we couldn't imagine changing our habits.

Now the changes in the atmosphere we wrought are a simple matter of fact and we're either drowning or dying of thirst. Doesn't anybody here know how to ride a bicycle?

Brothers and sisters, the greed of a few has nearly destroyed us.

It hasn't been enough for them to get rich on the backs of the working class or to rig the game to eliminate competition. Can't they let anyone else make a nickel or two?

Insurance executives are playing golf in some tropical paradise while poor people sit waiting in hospital emergency rooms. The "greatest healthcare system in the world" isn't so great.

The distribution of books and news has fallen into the hands of people who couldn't care less about knowledge or truth. The only thing they want is to corner the market.

Now most of us are just trying to keep our heads above water so it's difficult to find the energy to fight the powers that be. What can we do to transcend the meanness of our poverty?

Fellow citizens, take some time to explore the possibilities.

Stop using up resources. You know how to do this. Think

before you get in your car. Conserve energy; conserve water. Reuse; recycle. Suggest to others they do the same.

Quit buying crap you don't need. This is easier than you might imagine. Say no to the junk your children see on TV. Don't go to the mall. Don't believe buying things will make you happy.

Fight the corporations by supporting the little guy. This is not always convenient. Protect the food supply by getting your food from nearby farms. Shop locally. Make every dollar count.

Stop warring on each other. You can do this. Peace begins with you. Don't fight. Don't tolerate hate. Don't let others name your enemy. Speak up. Speak out but always look for common ground.

Guard and keep your humanity, Friends, it is all we have left from our days of plenty.

KRISTINA BROWN

BOX/SAINTS AND POWER

for Sean Bell, Oscar Grant, Andy Lopez, and especially Michael Brown

Again
another young man of color
killed by the police
under suspicious circumstances.

Why
if you are poor
must you be a saint for your life to have any value?

Why
does a police officer's irrational fear justify your death?
1 mistake justify your murder?

Why if you are poor
do you bear the burden of everyone's else mistakes?

I dreamed of a young man of promise
about to escape
beat the odds,
but he crossed the street,
it turned into a nightmare:
him being buried in a giant cigar box.
It is an open casket funeral
his coffin filled with other young men of color in new suits
wrapped neatly in cellophane
stacked like cigars.
His funeral procession
hemmed in
by giant squares of troopers in body armor and Nazi uniforms ,
blue grey and black,
is sprayed with drops of bright red.
High above
a shiny billboard says RIP,
rotates into trips to Vegas
other distractions.
But how can he rest?
How can we?

Everywhere people carry signs that say, We want justice.

No one
in power
says it is a crime
a death penalty offense to be poor.
But once you're murdered by the police without a trial
once you're dead
the attempts to justify
your murder
excuse your killer
make it clear
to those in power
your life
is less important
than police authority.

Sometimes
it's time to protest in the streets.
nothing else seems to reach those in authority
even temporarily.

Nothing else breaks the shoot to kill
call in the artillery
mentality.

Nothing else cuts the apathy
clears the hypocrisy
makes simple the supposed complexity
of police murder.

To speak out
to go into the streets
changes the equation
the balance of power
of concern.

YOLANDA CATZALCO

IN LOVING MEMORY OF MY MOM

Proletarian women
Screaming at each other
Across the assembly line
In order to be heard

Thunderous noise
Of machines
Pouring out food
On the Campbell's Soup
TV-dinners plates
As women separate
The meat to put it
Into TV dinners plates
Drowning out the
Hoarse voices of women
Toiling five days a week
Beginning at 5 o'clock
In the dark hours
Of the morning

Years later
Poor moms
Forced to retire
Because plants closed down
Across America
Yelling at sons and daughters
When talking
Out of assembly line habit
Technology now
Replacing the
Proletarian women and men

Powerful capitalist machinery
Being manufactured
With the main purpose
Of producing machinery

For speed-up rates
With less workers
Driving up profits
For the companies
For the capitalist class

My poor Mom
May she rest
In Peace
When with us
Young teenage offspring
Sons and daughters
At her side in the fields
She was the fastest
Boysenberry picker
Picking more berries
Than the men
With scarves on our heads
To keep the scorching sun
From overheating us
Putting berry leaves and thorns
Into the boxes
To raise the height of the
Soaked, downed berries
For the miserly
---What---? 80 cents a box pay
That was our
School-clothes money

You're in our loving
Memory Mama
Scraping up the dollars
To buy us
Secondhand clothes
To make sure we had
Two or three meals a day
In a, ---at first
Only table and chairs
Furniture-filled---living room

Yes, capitalism has defined
Our family
My Mom's wrinkled
Face and hands
Folded firmly and calmly
In the casket
That June 2nd, 2014
A little more
Than a month ago

2.

Before writing this poem
In the early morning
Of the 4th of July
In the laundromat
I read the book with
Dr. Martin Luther King's
"I have a dream" quotes
This is what he said
On Social Justice, page 133:
"I have the audacity to believe that
Peoples everywhere can have three meals
A day for their bodies,
Education and culture for their minds,
And dignity, equality and freedom
For their spirits.
I believe that what self-centered men
Have torn down men other-centered
Can build up."

Understanding that
Capitalism is a paradigm
For unemployment,
For homelessness,
Let's demand,
No more drones
Over the Middle East

No more drones
Over the Mexico/USA border

Let's turn that
Self-centered mentality into
Other-centered ideas
And break the chains
Of capitalism
By fighting for others
In your neighborhood,
In your country
In the world
And thus fight
For ourselves,
The people!

J.VERN CROMARTIE

ON THE CASE

(For Jack Hirschman)

you have stood
in the ancient rain
singing a praise song
for Bob Kaufman
as a forgotten Beat poet

we heard the rain
and we came running
as fast as we can
into your words
into your life
into your sphere
of influence

we saw you
dripping wet
with the water of life
praising Bob Kaufman
again and again

you have stood
in the bright sunshine
singing a praise song
for Amiri Baraka
as an ultimate progressive poet

we saw the sun
and we came running
as fast as we can
into your words
into your life
into your sphere
of influence

we saw you
flowing in the rays
and shadows of a golden sun
praising Amiri Baraka
again and again

from Bob Kaufman and Amiri Baraka
you gained a deeper sensibility
about the world
you gained a feeling
of a jazz people

from Bob Kaufman and Amiri Baraka
you gained a deeper sensibility
about the world
you gained a feeling
of a blues people

from Bob Kaufman and Amiri Baraka
you gained a deeper sensibility
about the world
you gained a feeling
of a spiritual people

from Bob Kaufman and Amiri Baraka
you gained a deeper sensibility
about the world
you gained a feeling
of a jazz people
of a blues people
of a spiritual people
up from slavery
up from reconstruction
up from post-reconstruction
and battles against the KKK
up from the nadir
and hated segregation
up from peonage
and chain gangs

up from the lynchings
and killing grounds
of capitalism

there are those of us
who have lived in the shadows
of chocolate cities
who have heard
your voice
who have seen the ancient rain
and the golden sunshine
in California

because of your being
on the case
we know what you know
we feel what you feel
we know that capitalists
are looking for running dogs
and we will not join that class

because of your being
on the case
we can see more clearly
that capitalism has a long history
as a decadent system
full of death and destruction

because of your being
on the case
we can more clearly
that Bob Kaufman and Amiri Baraka
did not die as running dogs
for capitalism.

METIN CENGİZ (Turkey)

GAZZE

Dün ölümü gördüm, ölüm kanatsızdı
Yağmur gibi yağıyordu havada

İşte ölümün divan kurduğu Gazze'desin
Hava bir bıçakla yırtılıyor sanki
Kör bir çığlık güneş
Camları cam gibi suskun
Ağaçların cesetleri ceset gibi
Minareler gökyüzüne değil hiçliğe yaslanıyor

Çocuklar çocuklar çocuklar Gazze'nin çocukları
Çocuklar sokak sokak çocuklar çarşı çarşı çocuklar ev ev
Gazze düşmanla çarpışan çocuk gölgeleriyle bir dev
Ölümün kucağında şarkı söylüyor çocuklar
Çocuklar azizler kadar sessiz müminler kadar dindar
Kurşun sesleri dinsin diye bekliyorlar
Bir anda dolduracaklar alanları
Açlıklarını unutup ölülerine sarılacaklar

Ehramlarına sarınmış yaşlı kadınlar
Evler sokaklar omuz omuza hayatı koruyorlar
Sabırla çizilmiş yüzleri
Çaresiz asabi acılı kindar
Göge ağan bir çığlık halinde
Göge ağan yeminler gibi
Göğün bir parçası gibi duruyorlar

İşte Gazze'desiniz
Gazze'de ölüm çocukların oyunu gibi
Sabahları kahvaltıda zeytin ekmek gibi
Sevişmek gibi gençler arasında
Gazze'de ölüm tunçtan bir heykel gibi
Bütün pencerelerin baktığı

Ölüm akı gibi çalışıyor Gazze'nin

İşte Gazze'desiniz
Ateşler arasında
Ölümün dilini yuttuğu ateşler arasında
Gazze sanki patlamış bir balon

Neylesin Arap ozanlar
Yanık kokar artık Celile'de türküler:
Gazze çöl ortasında bir sarı limon
Bir yandan görünmez eller sıkar
Çelikten bir cendereyle
Bir yandan düşman
Ölümden bir bulut halinde
Ağlamaktan kurumuş gözyaşları Gazze'nin
Gayrı Gazze'den tanrının cesedi çıkar

GAZA

Yesterday I saw death, it was wingless
It was in the air, raining

Here, you are in Gaza where death encamped
Air seems to be torn by a knife
The sun's a blind scream
Its glasses silent
Trees are like corpses
Minarets are leaning not on the sky but on nothingness

The children, children, children, Gaza's children
Streets, markets, houses full of children
Gaza with its images of children is a giant which fights the enemy
Children singing on the lap of death
Children silent as saints, religious as Muslims
They're waiting for the ceasefire
They're going to fill all the arenas
and embrace their deaths without keeping in mind the hunger

Old women covered in togas
Houses, streets, shoulder by shoulder are guarding life
Their faces are drawn with patience
Helpless, angry, sad, revengeful
Like a scream going up to the sky
Like promises
They're standing as a piece of sky

Here, you're in Gaza
Death in Gaza is like games of children
It's like eating olives and bread at breakfast
It's like the love-making of the young
Death in Gaza's like a statue made of bronze
That all windows look at

Death is working like Gaza's mind

Here, you're in Gaza

On fire
Where death's swallowed its tongue
Gaza's like a balloon blown

What can the Arabian poets do?
Songs smell burnt in Galilee
Gaza's like a yellow lemon in the middle of the desert
On the one hand, it's shaken by invisible hands
By a steel press
On the other hand, enemies stand
Like a death-cloud
The eyes of Gaza dried because of crying
So from Gaza now the corpse of God goes out.

Translated from Turkish by Müesser Yeniy.

NEELI CHERKOVSKI

THE SOUND OF CAPITALISM

every one of our water
sources are owned by corporations,
every blade of grass
belongs to the corporations,
all of the trees and mountains
belong to them,
take a look at a map
of ownership of any island anywhere
or of any mass chunk of land,
it belongs to an elite around the world,
it belongs to emirs and board presidents
and CEO's and CFO's and bankers
and lawyers and old moneyed clans

try to sleep on your own bed
or sit in your own kitchen
when they come to take it away
don't be surprised

is capitalism
the best we can do?
can't we find
a way to regain the planet
and find in it a home?

take a look at the barrios
and slums in our major cities,
look at the dust
of the streets and the dirty trenches
of gray water, come see
what governments do
under the control of people
who have private cooks, nannies
and security guards
roaming in their dreams, looking out
for wayward demons

the sound of capitalism
is the triumph of the criminal mind
at work, one percent or less
trimming the grass, eating
the trees moving people
into poverty from which there is
no escape, oh how it rings
over the denuded hills, look at
the map of ownership, this strip to
that mogul, the other strip to the other mogul,
see how it sounds, hear
the heartless melody of power
hear the grass going down, the trees
being ripped from the earth, the people
turned into anonymous forms.

MARCO CINQUE (Italy)

MISSILI & LIBERTA'

Ho visto un missile
intelligente
venir giu'
cometa artificial fendere la note

Ho sentito
il sibilo assordante della democrazia
scendere a scalzare via il tiranno
il despota, l'oppressore

Ho visto un missile
intelligente
venirmi incontro
annunciando liberta, per me
per il mio popula
per il mondo
Ho sentito vibrare la terra
sotto I colpi
incessant
di una risoluzione umanitaria
...domain sara un giorno di pace
domain

Ho visto il tetto della mia casa
aprirsi
e il missile intelkligente entrare
senza far domande

Ho visto I miei pezzi sparpagliarsi
fondersi nel calore
nel bagliore eterno
regalatomy dal liberatore

Non ho parole
per dirgli grazie.

MISSILES & LIBERTY

I've seen a smart
missile
come down,
an artificial comet rending the night

I've heard
the deafening scree of democracy
descending to undermine tyrant,
despot, oppressor

I've seen a smart
missile
come to my meeting
declaring liberty for me
for my people
for the world

I've heard the earth shaking
under the incessant
blows
of a humanitarian resolution
...tomorrow will be a day of peace
tomorrow...

I've seen the roof of my house
opening up
and the smart missile entering
without asking

I've see my belongings scattering
melting in the heat
in the eternal glow
delivered to me by the liberator

I don't have words
to tell them Thanks.

Translated from Italian by Jack Hirschman.

FRANCIS COMBES (France)

POUR UNE ENFANT PALESTINIENNE

Elle est née dans un pays prisonnier entre le ciel et la mer.

Elle a appris à jouer sur l'étroite bande de terre
enfermée derrière des barbelés.

Elle aime sans doute les poupées, les robes et les livres
et elle rêve de devenir docteur.

Elle a dix ans,

Elle est née et a grandi sur une langue de terre surpeuplée
qui se soulève vers le ciel

Mais jamais elle n'a connu la liberté des nuages.

On l'a conduite en urgence à l'hôpital
un éclat d'obus dans l'oreille.

(Comparée à d'autres, elle a eu de la chance)

Elle a été blessée lors de l'attaque terrestre.

D'autres ont été tués

resteront paralysés toute leur vie

ou ont perdu leurs parents sous les bombardements.

Comme eux, elle a grandi à Gaza, dans le pays transformé en camp,
dans le ghetto, la réserve des Palestiniens

où régulièrement l'occupant tue des otages au hasard.

Ne lui racontez pas d'histoire,

elle ne vous entendra pas.

Ne lui racontez pas le mythe de David et Goliath.

El Jalout, le héros des Philistins, est un géant désarmé

Et ce n'est pas une fronde que David a dans la main

mais des chasseurs bombardiers, des drones, des fusées téléguidées,
des tanks

et elle sait que ce n'est pas Dieu qui a armé son bras
mais l'Amérique.

Hier elle rêvait de devenir docteur

Aujourd'hui elle veut fabriquer des roquettes

pour tirer sur Israël.

(Qui sème la mort récolte la haine.)

FOR A PALESTINIAN CHILD

She was born in a country prisoner between sea and sky.
She learnt to play on that narrow band of earth
hemmed in behind barbed wire fences.
She loves without doubt dolls, dresses and books
and she dreams of becoming a doctor [someday].
She is ten,
born and raised on a crowded tongue of dirt
that rises to heaven
but she has never known the liberty of clouds.
Rushed in haste to hospital
fragments of shrapnel in her ear.
(When compared to others, she is lucky)
Injured during the ground offensive
While, others like her were killed,
paralyzed for life
or lost their parents in the bombings.
Like them, she lives in Gaza, in a country turned KZ,
in a ghetto reserved for Palestinians
where the occupier regularly kills his hostages at will.
Don't speak of history
She will not listen.
Don't speak of the David and Goliath myth.
EL JALOUT, the Philistinian hero, is an unarmed giant
And it's not a slingshot that's in David's hand
but bombers, drones, unmanned rockets, tanks
and she knows it's not God who primed his arm,
it's America.
Yesterday she dreamt of becoming a doctor
Today she wants to build the rockets
to fire on Israel.
(Who sows death reaps hate.)

Translated from French by Macdonald Dixon.

IGOR COSTANZO (Italy)

**CHI AVRA IL CORAGGIO DI GUARDARE
NEGLI OCCHI LE FUTURE GENERAZIONI?**

L'isola di plastica del Pacifico
s'ingrandisce a macchia d'olio,
pescherecci pescano a strascico
diffondendo anche la nostra
morte nei mari che potrebbero
smettere di produrre
ossigeno, chi pagherà
per questo? no, non noi,
ma quelli verranno ai quail
lascieremo inquinamento
e ignoranza e una lotta
per la sopravvivenza
senza precedenti.

Oppure
da oggi dobbiamo dare vita
al Rinascimento ecologico
fotovoltaico elettrico:
mai più petrolio in Brasile!
Quando ero un ragazzo
questa era fantascienza,
ora è a portata di mano
purché i popoli lo vogliano,
dobbiamo dissuadere la Cina
dall'utilizzare il carbone
e quando lo stile di vita
diventerà occidentale
e consumistico in India
deve essere eco sostenibile
per non ripetere lo scempio
occidentale.

Autonomia energetica
ecologica in Russia
e Sud Africa

così da diffondere benessere
ovunque, che farà deporre
le armi e creerà occupazione,
educazione, una nuova era
di democrazia planetaria
dove governi l'Onu e ogni
semestre cambi il Paese guida
in modo da dar voce anche
al resto del mondo.

Questo è un sogno
ma non è utopia
e sono sicuro la specie
umana sia pronta ad evolversi
per tornare a rispettare
la nostra grande, ma fragile
madre terra.

WHO'LL HAVE THE COURAGE TO LOOK THE FUTURE GENERATION IN THE EYES?

The island of plastic in the Pacific
increasing in oil spills;
fishing boats drag-fish
spreading our
death in seas that could
stop producing
oxygen. Who will pay
for this? No, not us
but those will come to whom
we'll leave pollution
and ignorance and a struggle
to survive that'll be
without precedence.

Or else
from today on we have to give birth
to the electric photovoltaic
ecological Renaissance:
never again oil in Brazil!
When I was a boy
this was science fiction;
now it's within reach:
we have to dissuade China
from utilizing carbon,
and when lifestyle
in India becomes western
and consumistic
it's got to be eco-sustainable
so as not to repeat the western
havoc.

Energetic ecological
autonomy in Russia
and South Africa
so that by spreading well-being
everywhere, it will disarm

weaponry and create jobs,
education, a new era
of planetary democracy
where the U.N. governs and
every six months the leading country changes
by way of giving voice as well
to the rest of the world.

This is a dream
but it's not utopia
and I'm sure mankind's
ready to evolve
through returning to respect
our grand but fragile
mother earth.

Translated from Italian by Jack Hirschman and Lapo Guzzini.

JOHN CURL

DO UNTO OTHERS

When you wound a hummingbird,
when you slash a maple tree
when you crush a daffodil,
when you trample a honey bee,
when you poison children's minds
to prevent them from seeing
the world as it was meant to be,
when all your crimes against humanity
rain blood on the least of these,
the blood rains down on you and me.

Here in this grownup world
of corporate nations and endless wars
when you try to hide the truth
with cunning words and lies
when you accuse your victims
of your own war crimes
when you say it all just means
I will murder you
or you will murder me
you think I do not see,
but when you maim the innocents
you also mutilate you and me.

Do unto others
mama taught me
Do unto others
crying on her knee
Do unto others
the playground creed
lesson learned easily or
cruelly received
spit into the wind
find out what it means
Do unto others
while Gaza pleads
Do unto others
while Ferguson bleeds.

THE PEACE OF INJUSTICE

Back in 1960,
I traveled around
fascist Spain
during the
Franco dictatorship.

I expected to see
military everywhere;
gun turrets on corners and
tanks in the streets.

I had just come from
democratic Paris,
where the military
was everywhere,
utter chaos in the streets
in the throes
of their Algerian war.

But in fascist Spain,
the only military I saw
in four weeks traveling
were several small groups of
Guardia Civil with rifles
and funny hats.
Instead of tanks,
I found friendly people,
lots of children
campesinos
orange groves
goats, donkeys, grapes
and chickens.
Spain seemed idyllic
almost Disneylike,
the most peaceful country you
could imagine.

Yet it was all held in place
by the most vicious
violence.

This was
the appearance of peace,
which arises
from victorious oppression,
absolute injustice, from
all opposition surrendered
or murdered.

Fascist peace.

The peace of the old Roman Empire,
Pax Romana
where a traveler
along the Appian Way
approaching the gates
to the eternal city
needed to pass by
the place of crucifixion,
the punishment for rebels and
enemies of the state,
before entering Rome
fully pacified.

The peace of the Old South,
the peace of slavery.

The peace of terror.
The peace of injustice.

The USA may seem
like a peaceful country today.

Americans don't march
much in the streets.
don't storm city hall
don't stage general strikes
don't occupy factories
don't break bank windows.
Most of them
inside are angry as hell but
nothing they do changes much so
for the moment at least

they appear pacified,
punchdrunk,
not at peace but
at surrender.

The uneasy standoff between
the ghetto
and the gated community,
the homeless camp
and the police patrol,
the hungry child
and the supermarket shelves,
the oppressed workers
and the bank conference room.

There is no real peace in America,
only the peace of injustice.

A wall without doors
a maze with no exit
a puzzle with no solution
a lock with no key.

A land without justice
is not at peace.
A world without justice
is not a peaceful world.

A world at peace rests
in the peace of justice.
Peace is the absence of injustice.

The door in the doorless wall
the exit from the exitless maze
the solution to the solutionless puzzle
the key in the keyless lock

is the struggle for justice.

ROQUE DALTON (El Salvador)

ACTA

En nombre de quienes lava ropa ajena
(y expulsan de la blancura la mugre ajena)

En nombre de quienes cuidan hijos ajenos
(y venden su fuerza de trabajo
en forma de amor maternal y humillaciones)

En nombre de quienes habitan in vivienda ajena
(y aun los mastican con sentimiento de ladron)

En nombre de quienes viven en un país ajeno
(las casas y las fabricas y los comercios
y las calles y las ciudades y los pueblos
y los rios y los lagos y los volcanes y los montes
son siempre de otros
y por eso esta alli la policia y la guardia
cuidandolos contra nosotros)

En nombre de quienes lo unico que tienen
es hambre explotacion enfermedades
sed de justicia y de agua
persecuciones condenas
soledad abandono opresion muerte

Yo acuso a la propiedad privada
de privarnos de todo.

ACT

In the name of those washing others' clothes
(and cleaning others' filth from the whiteness)

In the name of those caring for others' children
(and selling their labor power
in the form of maternal love and humiliations)

In the name of those living in another's house
(which isn't even a kind belly but a tomb or a jail)

In the name of those eating others' crumbs
(and chewing them still with the feeling of a thief)

In the name of those living on others' land
(the houses and factories and shops
streets cities and towns
rivers lakes volcanoes and mountains
always belong to others
and that's why the cops and the guards are there
guarding them against us)

In the name of those who have nothing but
hunger exploitation disease
a thirst for justice and water
persecutions and condemnations
loneliness abandonment oppression and death
I accuse private property
of depriving us of everything.

Translated from Spanish by Jack Hirschman.

CAROL DENNEY

WHERE'D THE MONEY GO?---The Bailout Song

The banker had your money stacked in a neat and tidy row
and now he says the money's gone and where he doesn't know

**Chorus: oh, where'd the money, where'd the money, where'd
the money go? where'd the money, where'd the money,
where'd the money go?**

There was money here just yesterday I swear it was a lot
it was stacks of dough and piles of pay and now my friends it's not
(chorus)

I saved my money all my days in bonds and banks and stocks
and now they're trying to tell me that it's worth its weight in rocks
they tell me up on Wall Street that investing is an art
but the guy who never saved a dime is looking kind of smart
(chorus)

I lost my job I lost my home they say it had to be
that some folks are too big to fail and then they say - not me
oh, you can bet this bailout made big money for someone
I'd bet my bottom dollar but my bottom dollar's gone
(chorus)

Oh, who decides what money's worth I'd like to know their name
and then I'd like to tan their hide cause I think they're to blame
a dollar may not buy you much in this old day and age
but a banker's hide I'll tell you now's about to be the rage
(chorus)

They took old Alan Greenspan and they hauled him up the hill
they asked him to explain it all with economic skill
he said I'm shocked I'm shocked he said at what has come to be
greed and profit worked before – at least they worked for me
(chorus)

I see they're scaring up some dough for those who lost in stocks

and people who might lose their home they're helping out of hock
but if you've never owned a house and couldn't save a dime
there ain't no bailout dough for you but better luck next time
(chorus x2)

Where'd the Money Go? by Carol Danney 10-19-2008

Oh the banker had your money streaked in a neat and tidy row, and now he says the money's gone, where he doesn't know.

Where'd the money, where'd the money, where'd the money go? where'd the money, where'd the money, where'd the money go?

AGNETA FALK

EVICITION

She was under the cover
when the letter arrived
her mother three days dead
the letter of eviction
the landlord: her godfather
she 30 something and her
entire childhood in that apartment

a year later the inevitable
two days to go to final eviction
& 40 years of her parents'
life still untouched
a kitchen full cookware, books
photos, toys, clothes and paintings

& she paralyzed with fear
no longer caring of what
will happen to it all
just wanting to get on
that plane, that one-way
ticket out & no return
leaving this city
a little less quirky
a little less diverse

and so many with her
torn out of their warm beds
like Gum Gee Lee
& her husband
Poon Houng Lee
and their 48 year-old
handicapped daughter
who were forced to
put their entire life
in storage while
callous, greedy Charlie

stood panting at the door
with insatiable eyes
almost pissing himself
with delight at constructing
yet another condominium
for Google Glass Tom
and Techno Mic

Oh golden nugget of a city
basking in the glory
of your rich palette of people
and multifarious cultures,
your quaintness, your tolerance
of others, your aspiration
to freedom and choice

Don't cyber yourself out
Breathe in, breathe deep
before you tear yourself apart.

RAFAEL JESUS GONZALEZ (México)

SPAM

Please, the e-mail says,
do not forward political material;
it clogs up my mailbox.

*In the towns of Aleksinac, Medosevac, Cacak,
in the cities of Nis, Novi Sad, Belgrade in Kosovo,
Serbia, Yugoslavia the bombs drop
(to stop the killing, they say.)
The fleeing & the wounded clog up
the bridges & streets.*

Please send only personal
or professional mail.

*In San Cristóbal de las Casas,
in Acteal in Chiapas, Mexico, the dead
clog up the villages & fields, the refugees
clog up the rectories & naves.*

Poems & good jokes are ok.

*In Centla, in the city of Villahermosa,
in Tabasco, Mexico, the disappeared,
the taken, the imprisoned do not
clog up the streets or the polluted farms;
the armed soldiers do.*

Hold political & religious messages;
I've pretty much made up my mind on all that.

*In Becora, the city of Dili, Maliana in East Timor,
while their wives sew Nike sport shoes in Jakarta,
the Indonesian soldiers murder & murder
those men & women with gall enough to vote,
the children simply because. Their bodies
clog up the neighborhoods, the exiles the roads.*

I hope you understand

*In Afghanistan, the country of Rumi,
in the city of Kabul & throughout the land
the wounded, the hungry, the cold,
the desolated clog the roads & byways.*

*In Ramallah and Bethlehem, in Jenin
in the towns of Hebron, in Jerusalem,
in Israel/Palestine the bodies clog
the streets, the roads, the ditches.
Overtured ambulances & wrecked houses
clog up the entrances & exits. The blood
of the children of Isaac & Ishmael
clog the holy land.*

*In Baghdad & throughout Iraq the bombs fall
& the dying clog the cities & suburbs;
in Abu Ghraib (in Bagram and Guantánamo, too)
our young are turned into torturers
& the bloodied clog the cells.*

Be well.

*Except for the bay bridge & the financial
district at certain times, our streets & bridges
are not clogged. We take care our homeless do
not clog our streets, nor our ill the hospitals.*

I do want to hear from you.

*April 15 comes with taxes due
(for those bombs, those guns
in Yugoslavia, in Mexico, in Timor,
in Afghanistan, in Columbia,
in Israel/Palestine, in Iraq)
& the rich get richer
while the hungry go hungry;
the homeless, homeless; the ill untreated;
the children and youth untaught.
& when I was a boy Spam
was a meat marmalade in square cans
to feed the soldiers.*

STEVEN GRAY

PHONY HUMANISM OF THE DAMNED

I was brought up with a phony humanism where you hear that human life is precious and let's hear it for the Renaissance, but there's a nuance of the darker side in all of this and you are blindsided by the corporations if you are distracted by illusions of self-worth and think the government is looking out for you and it is too disturbing to think otherwise, and so the power structure has you right where it wants you, it is hiding behind a veil of your own weaknesses and those include the sentimental notion that "it can't happen here." A corporation balances the profit motive with a body count you can't believe. "THE BUSINESS OF AMERICA IS BUSINESS" and there may be people dying by the thousands but the government is moving in slow motion to protect them, the tobacco companies a case in point, the headstones reach to the horizon but they're still in business and I've heard that alcohol has caused some damage in this country, but the power structure won't allow a dying man to smoke a joint. You think the government is looking out for you, then where's your health insurance? The democracy's rigged, the politicians going through the motions, it's a kind of theater, they're pretending to be representatives who make decisions which reflect the will of the people, but the real decisions are secured behind the scenes, like Cheney meeting with the oil executives before they engineered the ruinous invasion of another country. We are in a realm of "manufactured consent," the advertising pumping up the glorified consumer units, but the standard of living is declining. In the old days you could raise a family on one income, now it's common for both parents to be working

just to make ends meet, the system separating mothers from their children. There are many people who are suffering from depression and the system makes a lot of money selling anti-depressants, we're said to be a freedom-loving population but we don't have much vacation time and millions are in prison. How did that occur? The humanism's so adulterated in this country we can't even tell when there has been a coup d'etat, because there are no coup d'etats in Disneyland. What good is going to college if you can't even read the license of the Army truck that ran you off the road? What good is any humanist philosophy if those who are imbued with it don't know what happened to them on 9/11?

They lack the ways and means to figure out it was an inside job; believing the official story of 9/11 is like believing Rock Hudson was straight. Reality's too disturbing for some people and the power structure is exploiting that phenomenon, we're subject to the "mass psychology of fascism," not to mention "1984."

When you inhale the nicotine they say "it's springtime," Nixon wanted "peace in our time," and Bush was looking for weapons of mass destruction under his desk, a useless bureaucrat was doing "a heck-of-a job" when they ignored the bodies floating in a flooded out New Orleans. But the government is looking out for you, like when it's using public monies for the sake of private profit, giving it to Wall Street and pretending it was necessary and so urgent there could be no oversight, and how deluded does a population have to be to swallow these conditions? Are they medicated, tired, overworked, afraid, or what?

Ill-fated in their humanism, faded by a TV screen, and having fallen for a middle class lobotomy they can't imagine the assassins in their midst.

MARTIN HICKEL

PROFIT

the only human right
everyone who does -- survives
whenever & however it comes
whoever gives it to you
whatever it takes to make it
get in its way -- get run over
fall behind -- starve

fail to work -- freeze
find a need & fill it
or lose your way & fall
choice clear & simple
make money or make nothing
profit -- the only human right
anyone who does not -- dies

FREEDOM IS SLAVERY

that all food
cooked or not
tastes only
of more hunger
that each must
starve before
all will act

that thesis
& antithesis
night & day
wind & sea
together carve
a distant cliff
called tomorrow

that the weak
gruel served
again & again
without relent
never feeds us
leaves us only
wanting more

that we fear
for ourselves
what might be
lost rather than
risk what little
we have for
something better

that we dare not
dream -- close
our eyes & imagine
the untasted while
stomach whispers
be afraid
be very afraid
that to dream

is an accusation
a failure
guilt a sentence
a solitary confinement
a single cell
our own mind builds
that the time before
is somehow different
than the time after
that now is not
like then or closer
still to a beginning
than the end
that time is not
the same here or
there & what we know
& waste -- ignore
or covet like gold
why we say we are
out of time -- for now
that it comes wrapped
in a box & goes by
slow for the young
fast for the old while
those in the middle
wonder how long
it will last
that sometimes
there is more
other times less
but in the end
always runs out on us
infinity no matter
for mere mortals
that we are told
to study & learn
history & find
like a highway map

in the past
the road to us
our forward path
that road more
advertising than
route -- a picture
& a pretty one at that
selling deeds & ideas
goods & services
on profitable account
that advertising sells
sales more important
than facts -- just
trust what we hear
believe what they say
history is not made up
trust it is real
trust that our time
taught many ways
somehow learns
from mistakes -- that
winning without losing
lifts an arc
we all can climb
that we can escape
time like a prison
go on vacation
play on the internet
swim to the bottom
of a bottle of whisky
hide in a puff of pot
that like so much
else we pretend
time a thing we own
it's not & we don't
ownership a leaky boat
going down at the bow
whatever else they say

GARY HICKS

INVOKED

the boys four of them
playing on the beach
offshore a naval warship
where from the bridge
it is clear
telescopically
clear
that there's nothing
in the vicinity of
the young pre-athletes
no buildings
no suspicious objects

this scene has
taken place in one form
or other since the
phoenicians fortified
the beach at gaza
at accra
at all kinds of points
up to tyre in those
times phoenicia
greece rome
boys played peacefully
on the beach
to become fishermen

but today is different
the naval vessel
no longer wood but steel
has a bridge on which
there's a clear view
and no excuse for
the few seconds
the explosive rockets
the four dead bodies

of playful boys

the funerals take place
the next day the grieving
will take eternities alongside
those of the victims of
mass carnage the likes
not seen since the
time of the crusades

israel. you blame hamas?
extremists? terrorists?
these are not needed by
a literate people who can
read verses seventy five
and seventy six
of surah four. the authorization
is clear, the call to fight
unambiguous. herod nethanyahu
will find out like his ancestors
that what goes around
will ultimately hit from behind
and on that day those
final hours of reckoning
there'll be no hiding
place between the river
and the sea.

JACK HIRSCHMAN

THE OXANA JOKSAROVA ARCANÉ

1.

How many before---
and not meaning
how many have died
of capitalism
in its wars, in its streets,
at the borders of
its myopic xenophobia—,

how many haven't simply
died but have been
murdered by its greed,
its bullet-happy cops,
by injections of its
drugs into the screaming
veins of its children,

ever since evil was declared
good, and the body soul,
and the price of a piece
reasonable in the Tenderloin
of your sinnercity,
your serenading of
serendipity

---ho-ho-ho, what fun!
what fanny fun!
what immense quartz
of desolate expenditure,
wherein a bra is a sister of bro
and a bro is the cover
of Pussy Riot, which

Oxana Joaksarova adores
when she intones,
“How many before...?”

We've had it up to
Higher, and higher,
and now we're gonna
get rid of it at last."

2.

Do you remember
the simplest thing in
your life, or doesn't it
mean anything to you
anymore? I want you to
think about the first time
you fell in love, the first

kiss, which made you feel
you were no longer a child.
You felt like you wanted
the whole world to be as
you felt that moment.
You felt the whole world
as a poem at liberty all over

and everywhere was feeling,
just as you and your friend were.
There was no difference. Every
thing was one thing and that
thing was the world and the
kiss and the poem and they all
were no different than the sun.

3.

O World, you're all I've known
since I opened my eyes 80 years
ago and found myself in you,

at your breast, and have never
not had you with me and all my
senses, as I near the final branch
of this multi-foliate tree you've

let me climb, write and perform
my lives on and in. Through many
loves and imaginings I've stood
with Basho "watching roses of/
Sharon disappear into/ the mouth
of a horse", seen the seam of a
baseball unstitched by the teeth

of an iguana hungry for sisal, and
under everything there's been
just one thing I've lived all this for:
to have the tooth of war fall out,
dying the death it's deserved
for all the centuries I can remember--
only this time, as we realize

the peace now with us is the feeling
of that first kiss as the poem of a
humanity that's meant to be, I put
war under my pillow like that tooth,
and from the dime I find tomorrow
morning I'm going to overthrow
capitalism with all my might.

HENRY HOWARD

WHEN WE, THE SOCIALIST PEOPLE, PREVAIL!

When I see the endless parade of blood-stained faces
Haunting my T.V. screen and my nightmares alike,
The butchered and betrayed and martyred children
Of Baghdad and Kabul and Gaza,
Even of Detroit, Chicago and Ferguson, Missouri,
I see not just one face gone forever
From a parent's gaze,
But the single, consuming face of Capitalism,
That plunders the innocent for the profits of the guilty.

When I march to expose the lies
Of military recruiters and corporate seducers,
I see the Commander-in-Chief of a Capitalist army,
Staffed by paper soldiers of five and ten and twenty-dollar bills,
Sent to conquer the world
On behalf of men who wage their wars
From the air-conditioned splendor
Of banks that pierce the sky.

When I see a single mother of six.
Her hungry brood close on her heels
As she scours the bins of refuse
Behind the finest restaurants,
I see the lash of Capitalism on the backs of the starving.

But when I see the rows of tents firmly occupying
The grassy lawns of Wall Street power,
And I see the hungry fed by volunteers
Serving liberation theology along with bowls of stew,
Then I see the hunger of empty stomachs replaced
By a hunger for truth,
And I know that We, the Socialist People, will prevail.

When I see Mothers breastfeeding in public without shame,
And sending their their sons and daughters to free schools that
buzz
With the thrill of higher learning,
And kissing them goodnight in apartments fit for human living,
Then I know that the new generation will feed

On the milk of Socialism,
And We, the Socialist people, will prevail!

There will come at last a long, bright day without end,
When students will gather in universities without walls,
And the textbook myths of history,
Written in the scarlet letters of Capitalist revision,
Will be replaced by the revolutionary science
Of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism.

And on that day,
A table will be set for a feast of liberation,
And the corporate drones of plenty
Will serve the first portion
To the prisoners of starvation.

In every town and every city,
From the glass towers of the First World
To the tin-roofed hovels of the Third World,
The dogs of war will be leashed and tended to
By the lambs they so recently devoured,
And both will gnaw on the bones of Capitalism.

The soldiers of fortune will throw down
Their spears and guns and uniforms,
And the good earth will open to receive them.

The paper army of dollar-bill soldiers,
Fearsome for so long in global conquest,
Will fall upon its own sword,
And the once-vanquished and oppressed
Will go forth in glory, with a world to win.

The Capitalist dragon will lash in dying,
To no avail.
And We, the free people of a Socialist earth,
Will at last prevail!

GABRIEL IMPAGLIONE (Argentina)

RESISTENZA

Izo esta disonancia esta blasfemia
y resisto la lluvia de espadas el ojo filoso
la crueldad regurgitada en nombre de los paradigmas
del buitro

Los defensores del extrañamiento pacen en sus ombligos
Saquean la lengua Succionan luz y sangre Aplastan
la hierba mientras todo huele a incendio y húmedo billete

aquí escribiré revolución tantas veces como sea necesario.

RESISTANCE

I brought about this dissonance this blasphemy
and I resist the rain of swords the sharp eye
the cruelty regurgitated in the name of the paradigms
of the vulture

The defenders of banishment graze in their navels
They plunder the language Suck in light and blood Crush
the grass while everything smells of fire and wet money

here I will write revolution as many times as necessary.

Translated from Spanish by Barbara Paschke

FINAL

Antes del primer revoltijo de polvo y piedra
del silbido in crescendo del metal quemado
del corazón saltando hacia la urgencia
y la pupila absorta previo al corte de luz
y la alarma las colas el pan de ayer y las calles
rotas de basta desoido antes de los himnos
televisados las arengas desde los megáfonos
las solemnes marchas patrióticas y los viejos
abrazados al miedo que les mordió la infancia
antes de los niños con porqué al vacío
y la clandestinidad de los compañeros
de los discursos de hemoshechotodoslosesfuerzos
antes del gran silencio de los diarios y del grito
de los pobres sobre el surco envenenado antes
del desesperado intento de comenzar de nuevo
de la implantación del toque de queda
de las manifestaciones y los asesinatos
antes del trabajo roto y el hambre creciente
desbordado como un río de huecos negros
mucho antes de los pactos secretos la fiesta
de la casta todopoderosa la indiferencia
como peste en el aire el gran sueño americano
y los créditos fáciles el gran circo romano
mucho antes de cuotas vidrieras vacaciones
cuando se movían ejércitos lejanos hablaban
prepotentes los dueños de todo y un viejo
anunciaba lluvia tardía como en los años treinta
mucho antes que todo esto sucediese
te había dicho, mi amor, no hay dos sin tres,
la tercera guerra será su último gran negocio.

THE END

Before the first pile of powder and stone
of the whistling crescendo of burned metal
of the heart leaping in urgency
of the astonished pupil before the lights went out
and the alarm the lines yesterday's bread and the shattered
streets rudely ignored before the televised
hymns the sermons from megaphones
the solemn patriotic marches and the old ones
embracing the fear that shattered their childhoods,
before the children with the reason for the emptiness
and the clandestinity of the comrades
of the speeches of wehavemadeallsacrifices,
before the great silence of the newspapers and the cry
of the poor on the poisoned furrows before
the desperate intention of beginning again
of the introduction of the curfew
of the demonstrations and the assassinations,
before the shattered work and growing hunger
overflowing like a river with black swamps
long before the secret pacts the celebration
of the allpowerful class the indifference
like a stench in the air the great American dream
and easy credit the great roman circus
long before the costs of shop windows vacations
when distant armies were moved and the all powerful
owners of everything spoke and an old man
predicted late rain like in the 1930s
long before all of this was to occur
I had told you, my love, there is no two without three
the third war will be their final great transaction

Translated from Spanish by Barbara Paschke

MARK LIPMAN

IMPOSING DEMOCRACY

When you have to
Terrify your own
People into giving
Their freedoms away,
We say it's
Guaranteeing security.

When you invade
Another country
To steal their wealth
And establish your own regime,
We call it
Setting people free.

When you bomb
A tiny village
While all its people
Are fast asleep,
That is known as
Collateral damage.

And when you rob
From the poor
To subsidize
Your rich friends' wallets,
Well, I'd say that's graft,
But maybe you'd call it
Paying homage.

When there are
Police at every corner
No, that's not repression,
It's maintaining order.

When all the news
Tells you to follow
The government line,
They say that
Freedom of the press
Is doing just fine.

When you're not
Capable of an
Independent thought,
Then you've received
A good education.

And when your
Healthcare runs out,
That's just the benefits
Of privatization.

When we hide our
Sweat shops in China
We say that
Slavery is abolished.

When your vote
Isn't even being counted,
There are people who
Would call that
Universal suffrage.

When a baby is shot
By a stray bullet
Maybe it's officially
An accident,
But just try telling that
To the mother.

And when the ice caps are melted
And the air is polluted,
No, that has not a thing
To do with your profits.

When you say
We're at war,
I ask you
When haven't we been?
That's their version
Of peace without end.

Why is it that
The rules suddenly change
When you're on
The wrong side
Of a color?

And while you're at it,
Can you explain to me
How life in prison
Without a trial
Could ever be
"For their own protection?"

When you get to choose,
Who has the right to live,
Is that what is meant by
"Having God on your side?"

When judges are allowed
To hand out the jobs
Is that thanks to having
Free and open elections?

I don't know
What you think
About all this going on,
But if that's democracy
Then something's
Very, very wrong.

KIRK LUMPKIN

OCCUPY POEM

Where have you been my brothers and sisters
just caught up in the day to day of making a living,
lost in TV shows
where the advertisers bought
time in your mind,
or somewhere out in cyberspace
trying to live some life
that marketing departments
made up for you,
or too drunk, too stoned, too medicated
to care
or at least
to do anything about it?

I understand,
I've been there myself.

And we've all been occupied
by corporate America
and the military-industrial complex
just like our government has.

But it's time to come back to ourselves:
Occupy your own life
fully and deeply,
Occupy your own body,
your own mind, your heart,
Occupy the present moment,
Occupy the place that you live,
your neighborhood
your community,
your watershed,
your bioregion,
your continent,
your planet,
and damn it

your government
Occupying not
like invaders, colonizers, developers, or corporate profiteers,
but like native citizens,
like native plants
reclaiming,
re-inhabiting
their own,
reaching down roots
that connect us
to our billions of brothers and sisters
around the world,
to Mother Earth,
to the life energy flowing through all living things.
We can become
a home grown grassroots rainbow volunteer army of love
occupying the soul of America.

VISUAL POLLUTION

All around they taunt me with sexuality
Like it had somethin' to do with product quality
They want me to think it'll feel like sex
To buy me more cars, clothes, and cigarettes
Advertising in my face it tries to shape my dreams
Bombarding my brain with their marketing schemes
They buy imaginations, they want inside my pants
'Cause that's the place where my wallet's at

There's lots of writin' on the wall
Some of it big, some of it small
Some costs a lot of money, some was done for free
Some is advertising, some's graffitti
What's the solution
To visual pollution
It's a thing of great complexity
That won't be cleared up by making us less free
What we need is more community
What we need is more community

When people talk about it they put graffitti down
Like it was the nastiest thing in this town
Though the tags of idiots are what we mostly get
Sometimes there's art and the words of new prophets
Graffitti at best a kind of free speech
At worst it's a mess we don't need on our streets
But if ya wanta stop graffitti and ya want my support
First your gonna have to stop those damn billboards

There's lots of writin' on the wall
Some of it big, some of it small
Some costs a lot of money, some was done for free
Some is advertising, some's graffitti
What's the solution
To visual pollution
It's a thing of great complexity
That won't be cleared up by making us less free
What we need is more community
What we need is more community.

KAREN MELANDER-MAGOON
POLLUTION BLOWS NORTH

The Inuit
Close to nature
Close to the heart of Mother Earth
Enduring millennia upon millennia
Of nature's harsh lessons
Of tough love
Born of conditions
The earth has created
Simply existing
Evolving
Revolving
And spinning through seasons
Balanced upon a
Revolving globe
As part of its pattern
Essential to its character
Non-essential to its existence
Drinking once fresh
Unadulterated waters
Consuming fresh game and fish
And vegetation
Breathing untainted air
From healthy lungs of earth
Enjoying unsullied paradise
On a singing planet
Taught and raised in a challenging
Garden of Beginnings
Finding nourishment from rich clean soils
From pristine streams and oceans
Finding refuge in caves
Or sheltering under detritus of reeds and trees
Building families communities societies
To live with the earth
In harmony
In the arctic hemisphere
In harmony

With the earth
In harmony
Pollution blows north
Pollution from non-Inuit peoples
Who exploit the earth
Who will not learn
To sing and dance
With earth as partner
Who will not learn
To breathe the lungs of earth
Sweet vibrant membranes
With pure untainted breath
Pollution blows north
Pollution blows north to the Inuit
Blows north from China
Blows north from the Americas
Blows north with toxins
Blows north to poison
Once-thriving fishing villages
Blows north to suffocate
The living tundra
Blows north with asthma and cancer
Blows north to rock the Inuit
With winds of death
Against its cradle.

NON-VIOLENCE

Non-violence brings fewer casualties than violence
They
The amorphous They
Want to prove this with statistics
Bombs dropped by remote-controlled drones
Bring fewer casualties
To American soldiers
Than bombs dropped by live non remote-soldiers
Civilians
Children who are not Americans
Die daily
Are in terror
Daily
They are non-violent
They watch the sky
Daily
For drones
Non-violence brings fewer casualties than violence
Those are not my words
They are a quotation from somewhere else
Children without weapons die in schools
Shot by children with weapons
Who've been abused
By violence
The violence of neglect
The violence of silence
The violence of betrayal
The violence of watching
Children
Somewhere else
Watch drones
Threatening
Violence
From azure blue
Skies.

SARAH MENEFEE

MANIFESTOS

my young friend
slept under wadded news-
papers and their lies
underground
in the BART station

or near a dark dune
by the heaving
ocean's eye

in the rains
or dry I wept
over his dreaming
limbs

*

someone reaches into his pocket

someone holds the cup

gratitude balances
the black well
of compassion

*

this overwhelming
dialectic
what is new & arising

shooting flames
thru the broken places

*

the Senate voted
to cut food stamps why
written on a cardboard sign

the rich pay no tax
I DID pay
now I beg
anything helps

*

love enough for
my spanging cup
overflowing or empty

spange-ing = spare-changing
the kids call it

'help make this skinny kid a fat one'

*

I know the politic
of its young cheek
that rises
over the horizon

with roses of cracking dawn
in February

when hiding from the cold
and holding on
to fugitive bedding
and chatting organizing
late online
is the order of
this raw evening

when will we be warm again?

*

Iraq vet
need food
for my wife
my dog
and me

*

light of day
stretched on the sidewalk
was roused up early

and got on his business
of revolution early

wakened by the crack-apart of its dawning

*

for some reason
the cops didn't bother us
in the park last night

we need to fall off
a tower of zzz's
into some real
sleep

we need ID to get a room
at the Henry Hotel

they picked up their gear
she with her guitar
he with his African drum
shouldered it and went off to seek

some stolen sleep again
my young friends

fifty bucks a night
for all the bedbugs
that can bite you
is the deal
here in St Francis City

sleep in the shadow of
an endless rent-a-cop

passed out down in the station
dreaming of sleep

*

pages folded
and scattered
to the wind

unflagging manifestos
of the homeless
young

gonna need
another revolution
just to get some peace and justice
and a little sleep.

PAUL LOBA PORTUGUES

KAI-HUI TO HER BELOVED MAO

(Changsha, 1929)

To My Beloved:

Morning north wind
grey day alone
in a corner of our bed
cold to the bone
yearning for you
my faraway man.

Has your foot healed?
Has your winter coat arrived?
Who watches over you
while you sleep?
If you die my tears
will shroud your corpse.
If I die?

No letters come through.
I wait, look, nothing.
Would I had wings
to hover near you my dear.
Unable I am sorrow without end.

I lean on others--
dream I welcome the God of Death
curling around my heart
like a poisonous snake.
I am misery--have you forgotten me?

I pity our children.
Do you miss them?
They won't grow like others,
play in the warm spring.
They are ravaged by the violent
storm of revolution.

Oh my beloved
I want to kiss your eyes.

You my man belong to me.
I want to go to you,
but our boys...
Come, come to me,
warm, warm my loneliness
with an open heart. Dare I hope?

Without you how could I
bear the wild grasses
on the unkempt graves?

Your wife,
Kai-hui

(Kai-hui was assassinated by the Nationalists when she refused to renounce her marriage to Mao).

A FATHER'S PRAYER
--for the children of Gaza

" Forget the philosophy of bullets, we are tired of funerals"
Mahmoud Darwish

I close the door to darkness and bend like an old tree over my son
Wrap myself around him with the calm of a summer shade
While the terror bombs scatter butterflies in the happy flowers
And shatter the faint smile on his quivering lips.

We wait with pain for all the dying children to stop crying.
If only my thousand prayers would lift them to heaven
Where the stars are the happy faces of kids skipping in the clouds.
We never found them under our father's father's house of stone
now dust.

And when we wept for my true love she had already become a
galaxy
As I lifted her from the rubble her heart became the song of birds
I hear every morning when we visit her grave of roses and tears
Under the tree we climbed as children imagining happy stories in
clouds.

NANCY MOREJÓN (Cuba)

MUJER NEGRA

Todavía huelo la espuma del mar que me hicieron atravesar.
La noche, no puedo recordarla.
Ni el mismo océano podría recordarla.
Pero no olvido al primer alcatraz que divisé.
Altas, las nubes, como inocentes testigos presenciales.
Acaso no he olvidado ni mi costa perdida, ni mi lengua
ancestral.
Me dejaron aquí y aquí he vivido.
Y porque trabajé como una bestia,
aquí volví a nacer.
A cuánta epopeya mandinga intenté recurrir.

Me rebelé.

Su Merced me compró en una plaza.
Bordé la casaca de Su Merced y un hijo macho le parí.
Mi hijo no tuvo nombre.
Y Su Merced murió a manos de un impecable *lord* inglés.

Anduve.

Esta es la tierra donde padecí bocabajos y azotes.
Bogué a lo largo de todos sus ríos.
Bajo su sol sembré, recolecté y las cosechas no comí.
Por casa tuve un barracón.
Yo misma traje piedras para edificarlo,
pero canté al natural compás de los pájaros nacionales.

Me sublevé.

En esta misma tierra toqué la sangre húmeda
y los huesos podridos de muchos otros,
traídos a ella, o no, igual que yo.
Ya nunca mas imaginé el camino a Guinea.
¿Era a Guinea? ¿A Benín? ¿Era a Madagascar? ¿O a Cabo
Verde?

Trabajé mucho más.

Fundé mejor mi canto milenario y mi esperanza.
Aquí construí mi mundo.

Me fui al monte.

Mi real independencia fue el palenque
y cabalgué entre las tropas de Maceo.

Sólo un siglo más tarde,
junto a mis descendientes,
desde una azul montaña,

bajé de la Sierra

para acabar con capitales y usureros,
con generales y burgueses.
Ahora soy: Sólo hoy tenemos y creamos.
Nada nos es ajeno.
Nuestra la tierra.
Nuestros el mar y el cielo.
Nuestras la magia y la quimera.
Iguales míos, aquí los veo bailar
alrededor del árbol que plantamos para el comunismo.
Su pródiga madera ya resuena.

BLACK WOMAN

I still smell the foam of the sea they made me cross.
The night, I can't remember it.
The ocean itself could not remember it.
But I can't forget the first pelican I made out in the distance.
High, the clouds, like innocent eyewitnesses.
Perhaps I haven't forgotten my lost coast,
nor my ancestral language.
They left me here and here I've lived.
And, because I worked like an animal,
here I came to be born.
How many Mandinga epics did I look to for strength.

I rebelled.

His Worship bought me in a public square.
I embroidered His Worship's coat and bore him a male child.
My son had no name.
And His Worship died at the hands of an impeccable English lord.

I walked.

This is the land where I suffered mouth-in-the-dust and the lash.
I rode the length of all its rivers.
Under its sun I planted seeds, brought in the crops,
but never ate those harvests.
A slave barracks was my house,
built with stones that I hauled myself.
While I sang to the pure beat of native birds.

I rose up.

In this same land I touched the fresh blood
and decayed bones of many others,
brought to this land or not, the same as I.
I no longer dreamt of the road to Guinea.
Was it to Guinea? Benin?
To Madagascar? Or Cape Verde?

I worked and worked.

I strengthened the foundations of my millenary song
and of my hope.

Here I built my world.

I left for the hills.

My real independence was the free slave fort
and I rode with the troops of Maceo.

Only a century later,
together with my descendents,
from a blue mountain

I came down from the Sierra

to put an end to capital and usurer,
to generals and to bourgeois.

Now I exist: only today do we own, do we create.
Nothing is foreign to us. The land is ours.

Ours the sea and sky,
the magic and vision.

My equals, here I see you dance
around the tree we are planting for communism.

Its prodigal wood resounds.

Translated from Spanish by Kathleen Weaver

DOROTHY (DOTTIE) PAYNE

BECAUSE

1.

Because the sun
rises and sets
in a rhythm predictable
and melodically new every day,
because the heart beats like a drum
inside every woman and man,
and the babies' cries resonate the world over
in the same miraculous way;
because I too can bleed
in the streets
and every child's death that goes unchecked
diminishes me,
because I weep vengeful and hot,
heart over-brimming,
grieving for what we
have permitted
 to befall us all.

Because I recall the mahogany
sweet of the first strong, young
black boy I held in my arms,
danced with in
the high school gymnasium
in that Sundown Town I was born in
where black boys like him
could not go to the pool
to swim,
could not go to the theater
to watch a film,
could not get their hair
dyed, fried, or even trimmed
at the barber shops.
Because I knew he too understood
this dance meant
we would be comrades for life

in hating all of this.

Me and Charlie,
swaying hip to hip
to the Platters singing
"My Prayer" which
was really "ours",
 mine, Jimmy's. Gary's,
 Carol's and Sherry's
and so we danced everyday this way,
made lunch time our public proclamation,
made our bodies a testament to
our commitment
 to make a better way,
danced hot and
in defiance of all
the hate,
danced like warriors preparing
for the rupture sure to come---
danced renewal into that shellacked,
old history drenched floor,
danced joyful and proud
even before James Brown---
 made the whole town
 wish they were black.

2.

Then we became Dr. King,
became Medgar,
followed Malcolm X,
wore T-shirts with images
of Huey in that rattan chair
taking back his manhood;
hooked up with brothers
wanting to be George Jackson
nuzzling into our fros as big and bold
as Angela's brilliant mind,
wore black berets,
married, made beautiful babies,

ebony, mahogany, golden,
high-yellow and tan

sacred evidence
things were not
going be that way
ever again,

made the very fact of
our young lives a protest,
our children, a chant;
our organs an offering,
our understanding,
a tambourine.

3.

But the horror has returned:
the stealth and terror we thought
never again possible;
a history almost forgotten;
believed there could never again
be 3/5ths of a man,
never again be "White makes right"
threatening our streets,
never saw the holocaust of robots
battering down our doors---

thought they would always need us,
would want to educate
and "improve" us
even if it was just
for their own use--

But rust never sleeps
and greed's malignancy
spreads like unchecked flames---
city to city---
rampant and ravaging our world
as we danced.
Our cities raging once again
as they slaughter us,

---one by one---

like dogs in the streets,
and cage us, our children,
like the arsenic-soaked
chickens they feed us.

4.

When I was very small--
and often naughty--
my harmonica-playing auntie
would reprimand me:

"You must never again do that!"

" But why?" I would ask,
not so innocently.

"Because you have two legs not four"
she would retort sharply.

5.

Two legs:
Today,
I re-count them,
remember them
as they carry me
down to the docks
to stop the apartheid ships;
today I count and re-count them
as they stand with the
young defiant ones
desperate for the respect
they know they deserve
in the streets of Ferguson

And today I count them on the elderly
struggling to stand their ground
in the mean monied streets of San Francisco,

count the scars and bruises on them,
the callouses from so much "gettin' up",
the bulging veins pumping indignations
purpled by many batons.

And today I count those of
the yet plump muscled young ones
leading us without retreat,
recall the hip-touching
tomorrowness,
the making our body a testament---
a weapon in the streets---
link arms with them
as we surge toward beasts of steel
(those whose legs can
no longer be seen),
storm audaciously head-on
charging as more and more join in,
feel my own two anew,
taunt and tightened at the ready,
take strides I no longer
thought possible,
feel power I thought
long lost--
feel the wind beneath our heels
as we rise together
knowing exactly what to do
chanting furiously---

NO MORE!!

NO MORE!!

The pavement
thrumming like a thousand drums,
rushing with this new blood
transfusing between us,
holding on to where
our fear refuses to reside:

"Hands up; Don't Shoot!"

each knee now drawn

in a high defiant prance,
like Tommy Smith and Juan Carlos'
strong black fists---

Yes, "Hands up!"

and we be war ponies now,
stampeding against
this terror over-taking our streets--
our DNA rapid-firing,
directing our every move---
the old guard rising with
the new---
collective memory
guiding us,
Gaza-ing us,
Ferguson-ing us,
Detroit-ing us,
Oscar Grant-ing us,
Alex Nieto-ing us,
Mike Brown-ing us,
Border-death-ing us,
GMO-ing us,
uneducating us,
unemploying us,
unhousing us,
murdering us...

Reminding us:
we have a world
to Win!

Because
the cause is always
the consequence,

and we do not forget.

DOREN ROBBINS

STRAW HILL

You could end up worse off down the highway
at Straw Hill. That's the worst straw ever—

Nickel Refinery-Recycling Dump
Rest Area Toilette Maintenance Jobs

Unlimited, waiting for who's next
at Straw Hill.

You think you can make it
in a remote place,
you're wrong, don't give it a chance, even if
you're not alone. Stay away from Straw Hill,
whether you've got a lover or not, whether
you've got a dog or not, whether
you're gifted with efficiency making it with
your case of kidney beans and dayold bread,
or not. Even if you get it down to the roots
don't let insight make you too cocky.

Don't come near Straw Hill..
But face the fact, it wasn't just Straw Hill.

Since I was eighteen and stood eight hours a day
in Jake L's Shoe Repair

gluing soles, grinding heels, getting paid under
the minimum, under the table,

I always attacked, I always hated any form
of business. Western and all the Restern

Hemispheres' corporate property management
armedservices, Nosferatu investors, the gross
money, the net money, whatever the country, whatever
the economic system,

wherever the capitalist state capitalist
fake communist saccharine socialist Vichy
gangster mob gangbanker brain operates.
Luckless future laidoff business majors
don't go around like you're some
hereditary peer, owner's, admiral's, banker's,
top of the landed
military spawn or descendant: you're going to
end up with the rest of us
working at The House of Suction.

Any job you have: electro dialysis technicians,
computer programmers, laid-off dot.-comers,
waitresses, freelancers for loose change,
scabs in the sewers, bankrupt corn sweetener
and denim investors, genetic pirates,
moonlighters for Cesspool Drainage,
gas meter readers and digital meter
computators, postal slaves,
penitentiary fry cooks, Radio Shack heads,
maids, meter maids,
assemblyline workers any of the lines,
handicapped Xerox salespersons,
Rock Star whores,
sausage stuffers, defunct adjunct professors,
all kinds of maintenance people, meat cutters,
parttime and lifetime grocery baggers,
carcinogenicized insulation installers,
painters who end up sniffers and that cancer,
plutonium pounders
and uranium handlers and those cancers,
military flip-outs, depleted

uranium gunners and that cancer,
Agent Orange fuelers and pilots,
 meltdown cleanup crews and this and that cancer,
halftime when you need fulltime,
 split shifts, partial benefits, six days,
overtime, no overtime, layoffs,
 20-minute strikes,
pennies of raises, no smoking, no dating
 employees, no jerking off in the bathrooms,
this location when you need the other one,
 decreases of increases,
bonuses schmonuses—since I was eighteen
 I hated it. I was never right with
the economy of anything.
 Even as a kid the few times
I played Monopoly I never handled much
 of the multicolored money, I was nervous
about having more than one house,
 I didn't do well accumulating apartments.
All I wanted when we played Monopoly
was to be the shoe.

NINA SERRANO

ANTEPASADOS/ANCESTORS

We are one
because America is one continent
tied by the slender curves of Panama.
We are one people
tied by the buried bones of antepasados
the buried bones of ancestors.

from Asia to America
from Africa to America
from Europe to America.

Back to the first mothers and the first fathers
back to the first gardens of flowers and fruits,
where vegetables grew wild.

The soft thick grasses cushioned their bodies
when they lay down to love.

Warm water gurgled up from the earth
and spilled down into clear pools.

Feathers waved above their heads
and floated across their bodies
as they strutted in the afternoon.

But then there was the snake of greed
grew like a weed
planted the seed
that made one person think that to fill their need
or to succeed
they had to use someone else's labor
for their own profit.

Wars came. Dead animals.
Women and cattle became property
Slaves chained. Put to work,
endless work
that finally built factories and smog
rich parts of town and poor
built on the buried bones of antepasados
the buried bones of ancestors.
Shake the bones hear their ghostly moans
We learn from our past to build our future.

GABRIEL ROSENSTOCK (Ireland)

DEIREADH LE TEORAINNEACHA

Deireadh le teorainneacha

Deireadh le bratacha

Deireadh le sreang dheilgneach

Deireadh le fallaí arda

Deireadh le náisiúin

Cuir deireadh le cling shuarach na n-airgeadraí

Deireadh le cogáí

Lig don phláinéad anáil gan bhac

Gan teorainneacha

Gan bhratacha

Gan sreang dheilgneach

Gan fallaí arda

Gan náisiúin

Gan cling shuarach na n-airgeadraí

Gan chogáí

Deireadh go deo le teorainneacha

AN END TO BORDERS

An end to borders
An end to flags
An end to barbed wire
An end to towering walls
An end to nations
End the base tinkle of currencies
End wars
Let the planet breathe freely
Without borders
Without flags
Without barbed wire
Without towering walls
Without nations
Without the base tinkle of currencies
Without wars
An end forever to borders

Translated from Gaelic by the Author.

E. SAN JUAN, Jr. (The Philippines)

ITAGA SA BATO

Naghiwalay tayo noong Disyembre 1991 sa kanto ng Blumentritt at Avenida

Rizal.

Ka Felix Razon, natatandaan mo ba?

Bungkalin mo ang kalansay sa apog at lumot ng gunita
upang masapol ang katotohanang taliwas sa kabuktutang
naghahari. Inilantad mo ang kabulukan at pagtataksil ng gobyerno't
militar

sampu ng pagpuputa ng mga premyadong artista't intelektuwal
kaya hindi nakapagtataka, hinuli ka't ikinulong, binugbog, ginutum
sa bartolina, kinoryente ang bayag, parusang maka-abo't-dili--
Diyos ng awa, sinong makapagbubulag-bulagan sa krimeng
nangyayari
araw-araw sa bilanggong pulitikal? Sinong testigo ang
magpapatunay?—

dahil (bintang nila) ikaw raw ay komunista.

Uma

ambong takip-silim

nang tayo'y maghiwalay, patungo ka na sa asilo ng Utrecht,
Holland....

Samantala sa Isabela at Davao, timog at hilaga ng kapuluan,
patuloy

ang paghihimagsik ng masa, ang "di-kagila-gilalas na
pakikipagsapalaran"

ng karaniwang mamayan, katuwang ang mga kapatid sa Bagong
Hukbong Bayan....

Ilang taon na ang nakapamagitan sa atin....

Makulit ka pa rin, sinusurot ang lahat ng kasuklam-suklam na
kamyerdahan

Ngunit kaagapay ng iyong paglipat, napansin ko sa mga sulat mo
may bahid ng pagkainis, pagkasuya, pagtatampo, hinakdal--totoo ba
ito?

sapagkat (wika mo) nakalimutan na ang sakripisyong naihandog mo

sa bayan....

Yumao ka na, Ka Felix, naglalagag sa gubat ng mga lungsod,
kaulayaw ang
mga ulilang lansangan at malungkot na katedral at palasyo sa
Europa, habang
sa Nepal, Colombia, Mexico, Peru at iba pang bansa unti-unting
sinasakop
ng mga komunista--mabalasik at matalisik--ang mga kuta ng
imperyalismo
kaya kahit na walang makaalala sa iyong paglilingkod sa kilusan, di
kailangan,
ipagbubunyi ang iyong katapangan at katapatan, kahit bawal ito at
mapanganib....

Ka Felix Razon, saan ka man naroroon, dinggin mo ang pahimakas
kong ito:

Alimuom at trapik ng nagsalikop na kalsada sa Blumentritt at
Dimasalang
ang sumaksi sa ating huling pagniniig, at itong katagang hinugot sa
alabok
ang magsisilbing memoryal sa iyong puntod o saan mang larangan
ng pakikibaka,
nawa'y maging mabalasik at matalisik ang talinghagang naikintal ko
rito—

pintig at pitlag ng panambitan,

nagpupumiglas
nagpupuyos sa angil ng tagulaylay.

REMEMBER FOREVER

We parted last December on the corner of Blumentritt and Avenida Rizal—

Comrade Felix Razon, do you still remember?

Dig up the skeletons in the lime and lichen of memory
to strike the truth opposing the wicked rule.
You exposed the decadence and duplicity of the government
and military
including the prostitution of laurelled artists and intellectuals

not surprisingly, you were arrested and jailed, beaten,
starved in the dungeon, testicles electrocuted, unbearable
punishment.

Merciful God, who could play blind to the crime
that happens every day to political prisoners? Who are the
witnesses that will testify?—

because (they say) you're a communist.

Twilight had fallen
when we parted, you were leaving for the asylum of Utrecht,
Holland...

Meanwhile in Isabela and Davao, north and south of the
archipelago, the revolution of the masses continues, “un-spectacular
adventure” of ordinary citizens, side by side with kinsfolk from the
New People's Army...

Years have already come between us...

You're still a tease, infuriating all that is dreadful with distractions.

But with your transfer, I have sensed in your writing
a trace of irritation, loathing, rancor, dejection, resentment—is
this true?

because (you say) forgotten is the sacrifice that you've
made for the nation...

You've left already, Comrade Felix Razon, flâneur in urban forests,
among the deserted roads and sad cathedrals and palaces of
Europe,

while in Nepal, Venezuela, India, Mexico, Peru and other
countries the communists, little by little, lay siege—
grim and determined—

to the barricades of imperialism, this much is
known,

so, even if no one remembers your service to the movement, no
need, your courage and loyalty will be celebrated, even if it is
delicate and treacherous...

Comrade Felix Razon, wherever you may be, hear my testimony:
Haze and traffic of convoluted streets in Blumentritt and
Dimasalang were the witnesses to our last engagement,
and these words drawn from dusts shall be the monument to
your grave or

whatever field of struggle, may the metaphors that I etch
here

be grim and determined—

beat and vigor of mourning,

gathering in the roar of bereavement...

Translated from Tagalog by Charlie Veric.

KUNG SAKALING HINDI NA TAYO MAGKITA MULI

Tila matandang tugtugin na ito, Kasama, maski na wala akong
lamparang

pagsisidlan upang makalusot sa guwardiya,
di bale, pakibigay sana ito....

Sabi nila'y kung saan marapa, doon bumangon, sige pagbigyan--
ngunit kung ikaw'y pinatid, dinukot, binugbog,
pinaluwa ang bituka, ginahasa, tinadtad ang
laman?

Walang kailangan—

Kaluluwa ko'y katawang bahagi't sangkap ng buong kalikasan,
lamang

ito'y may kasaysaysang hinugot

mula sa

tunggalian ng mga uri at lakas...

Ngunit bukas? Kasama, walang maliw ang kalikasan....

Dinggin mo'ng amihang humahaplos sa bawat pisngi ng dahon at
bunga

ng mga halamang alaga ng

gerilya doon sa libis—

Masdan ang agos ng ulan sa bubong at sa daang bumibigay tuwing
takip-silim—

Pakiramdaman ang mga ibo't hayup sa tabi ng ilog

nakatingala sa buwan at sa bituing kumikislap

(Oo, di maitatago,

umaalingasaw ang bangkay na nakabayubay sa gilid ng

hukay...)

Gayunpaman, magkita tayo doon sa tabi ng talong lumalagas sa
pusod ng gubat

at dumadaloy sa lilim ng lumulutang na ulap
sa balikat ng bundok....
Walang maliw ang kalikasan, bumibigay....

Sa bawat paalam, may handog na pagbating hitik ng
kontradiksiyong
kalangkap ng bawat karanasan sa buhay:

iy

o'y tadhana, kapalaran—

Sige lang, di ko na uulitin, sa iba't ibang anyo't mukha, magkikita
mulì tayo,

sa bawat pagkakataong may bumabaklas

at bumabalikwas
Naroon din ang humahalik at yumayapos—

Salamat, Kasama, hanggang sa muli, pakisuyo, ingat—

sa bato

mibigay....

IN CASE WE DON'T MEET AGAIN

This sounds like an old song, Comrade, though I have no lamp
 into which I could retreat to fool the sentinel,
 never mind, on my second retort or attempt,
 kindly give this...

They say where you fall, there you will rise, all right let's permit it—
 but what if you've been tripped, seized, beaten,
 entrails gutted, raped, flesh chopped—how to
rise?

No need—
My soul is an embodied piece and substance of entire nature,
 only
 it has a history drawn from the clash
 of classes and
forces...

But tomorrow? Comrade, nature has no end...

Hear the northern winds kissing each cheek of foliage
 and fruit of the garden that the guerrillas tend there on
the valley—

See the streaming rain on the roof and road that vanish at
nightfall—

Feel the birds and beasts on the riverbank
 staring at the moon and
shining stars

(Yes, reeking are the corpses splayed on the edge of the grave...)

Let's meet there by the waterfall that murmurs deep
 in the forest and flows in the shadow of clouds
passing over
 the shoulder and bosom
of the mountain...

Nature has no end, bountiful—

In every parting, there is the gift of a
welcome filled
with contradictions that come with every experience of
life:

it's fate,
fortune—

Go ahead, I won't repeat it, in many shapes and guises,
we'll meet again every time someone breaks free and
stands firm

The kissers and embracers will also be there—
Thank you, Comrade, until then, please, take care—

Nature is infinite, eternal,
forever
giving....

Translated from Tagalog by Charlie Veric.

ALESSANDRO SPINAZZI (Italy)

ODIO DI CLASSE

(ai miei ricchi amici d'infanzia)

Figlio
di schiavi
del dolore
della sfortuna
allenato
a non avere
non voglio niente
vivo d'aria
e di parole
spettatore
annoiato
di questa eterna
ridacchiante
corsa all'oro
aspetto
eutanasia della Storia
di farvi fuori
tutti
in altri modi
sotto altri
cieli.

CLASS HATRED

(to my rich childhood friends)

A son
of slaves
of sorrow
of misfortune
trained
to have not
I want nothing
I live on air
and on words
a bored
spectator
of this eternal
tittering
race for money
I wait for
the euthanasia of History
to take you
all out
in other ways
under other
skies.

Translated from Italian by Jack Hirschman.

JON MICHAEL TURNER

TRIGGERS

They rise in the nights and the days with
emptiness to shroud your heart

pretending to nurture you as the sandstorm
nurtured you, creeping beneath cuff and collar
as you sleep, just to be near your skin

They lead you to the noose and beg to take your last breath
offering a solution to the sober reality of being numb

and remind you of the mind that believes in war
but has never touched a face of the dead.

STEALING RAIN

When her fingers touched the sand, Allah wept
and begged to be forgiven. We bound her son,
walked him blindly through the desert past villages
that sold sunflowers to birds and laid earth rammed

brick in the morning sun, waiting for sturdy homes to form.

From the fields I turned to watch her bones contort,
preaching redemption through our ears with chimes
of mother's love. We forgot about missions
We forgot about the identity of being

soldiers, searching homes in a country side littered
with families held behind walls of conflict,
taking back to the land as their bloodline before
them did. We learned what it was like to live

simply, utilizing canals to flood a field at dawn and
to drain by dusk. Each crop then would be provided
for throughout the harsh season's sun. Listening to her weep
I remembered home-

how her wails sounded like my mother's when I told her,
I do not feel that I will return

For the first time, I felt war touch family, and wished
to be near my home, watching fading light of an indigo sky
from the concrete stoop of our apartment, distracted by
vanilla ice cream and my mother's prayers grateful for
the stars, when I was a child, learning how to walk.

* * * * *

I imagine a moment that we meet in the courtyard,
his wife tending to children as we walk

and pick figs from his trees speaking of poets

and stars and god. We are old friends understanding,
that between him and I, the man I am now, aware
that back then we were foolish and drunk with war,
there is equanimity, and we have, after time has passed,
become something greater than what we were. Time has
passed and his flesh within the concrete tombs among a
thousand others, maintains resonance of immortality,
with stories that exist, still, even after his spirit has left,
yet to be heard---Wa Laykum Salaam

* * * * *

There are nights I walk near the edge of a road,
with eyes intent on the clapboard siding and
the edge of a window-

The fascia of a home will often draw you to vistas
where snipers are said to wait. Waiting
for crosshairs to touch your neck,

beneath Kevlar and beaded sweat, they watch
your carotid pulse. It is then they sync their breath
with yours and pray, pray as you fall from the curb

when others scatter for cover and wish for
a bed to breathe their lovers' hair.

At night when it's cold, I follow
shadows beneath street lamps that see
beyond me, across the road, following lines

to vistas, where snipers abide by their breath, and
breathe in sync with death. They wait for vigilance
to fade, fade...

They are only ghosts who remind me how to walk,
or maybe they are angels, ones who promised
to bring me home for mother,

whose tears no longer stream in fear

* * * * *

Forgive me, lord, for speaking with a false tongue;
proclaiming hate though I only love.

Believing righteousness roots from untaught triggers
though righteousness is forgiving the finger,

resting flowers upon his soul;
begonias and marigolds where blood stained the sand grit

floors trampled in praise from his death,
by black silkened feet, dry and clean,

beneath phallic mosaics crying for Allah
as children reminisce from doorways and elegant curtains

dripping with nicotine and residue.

I ask you to remove what essence exists throughout
this fabric of mind, which keeps me from finding in its place

a blossom, or a fruit, to sweeten each grain of sand
that stained our souls with crimson, where love intended
to reside.

LELLO VOCE (Italy)

IL VUOTO AL CENTRO DEL SENTIRE (la ballata del lavoro cieco)

“Grande è la confusione sotto il cielo”

(...)

Il cuore è questo vuoto al centro del sentire
il fiore che nasce già appassito muto zittito
questo vecchio bambino e i suoi occhi grandi
questo passato già tanto passato da essere ormai
l'unico avvenire il futuro di un muro un viaggio
che non s'allontana ma sprofonda quest'onda
che passa e non tramonta la pena che sormonta
i tappi senza bottiglia il tuo corpo a miglia e miglia

il vuoto è questo dolore che riempie l'orizzonte
questi volti immobili questo contrarsi del tempo

questo precipizio e lo sguardo nell'interstizio
a spiare l'aborto di ogni inizio le doglie con lo
sconto di ciascuna delle nostre voglie la fame
che attende paziente che pianta le tende mentre
la carica squilla gli scudi e noi nudi noi picchiati
noi svenduti suicidati torturati e poi condannati

*lavorare meno lavorare tutti respirare
carezzare urlare prendere lasciare
scegliere pensare sospettare vedere dire
distruggere costruire imparare insegnare
godere soffrire sognare vivere tutti*

morire meno

solo pochi minuti fa in anticipo sul ritardo
dell'adesso ed è successo l'avete visto tutti
questo sangue e le donne in vetrina i passanti
l'abbiamo visto tutti il ghigno aspro della neve
abbiamo sentito lo stridere chioccio dei denti
negare quella risposta che da sempre ci si
mente i tonfi poi gli stivali e lo scalpiccio ogni

mio ogni tuo ogni suo ogni vostro ogni nostro

calpestate mentre il loro gas e la nostra massa
mentre accadeva il mentre e s'apriva il buco
s'apriva la pelle il muscolo l'osso lo zigomo
e il sangue si liberava del corpo lo sguardo
del morto questo nostro respiro così corto
noi zoppi noi storpi noi che per distrazione
abbiamo perso futuro amore rivoluzione
noi ciechi noi muti sordi i nostri colli torti

*lavorare meno lavorare tutti pensare
bloccare incendiare colpire avanzare
retrocedere ritornare colpire prendere
restituire calcolare punire perdonare
compatire disprezzare agire vivere tutti*

morire meno

hanno accecato il lavoro tagliato la lingua
ad ogni ribellione frantumato i timpani
della memoria strappato il cuore a ogni
sentimento bruciato i polpastrelli d'ogni
sensazione hanno disegnato la strada
e poi hanno sbarrato i cancelli hanno
riempito la nostra testa con il vuoto
dove volano i loro pipistrelli hanno

bevuto il nostro sangue il conto langue
siamo in credito di vita siamo in attesa
che sia finita questa pena infinita che nasca
la radice che traligna che esige che ora sia
esatta l'ora che fa tornare i conti siamo giunti
sin qua solo per mostrarvi i numeri la lista
e tutta l'evidente moderazione che c'è nel
comprendere come ormai l'unica soluzione

non sia un pranzo di gala ma piuttosto

tutt'un'altra rivoluzione.

THE VOID AT THE CENTER OF FEELING

(BALLAD OF BLIND WORK)

The heart's this void at the center of feeling
the flower that's born already withered mute hissed at
this old child with his big eyes
this past already so very past by being by now
the only happening the future of a wall a journey
that doesn't estrange but sends the passing wave
to the bottom and doesn't end the pain that fits
the bottleless corks your body for miles on miles

The void's this sorrow that fills the horizon
these motionless faces this bridging of time
this precipice and gaze into the interstice
to spy on the abortion of every beginning the labor
pain with the
discounting of each of our wishes the hunger
that stays patient that pitches the tents while
the charge sounds out the shields and we naked we
battered
we undersold suicided tortured and then condemned

*working less working everybody breathing
caressing shouting taking leaving
choosing thinking suspecting seeing talking
destroying constructing learning teaching
enjoying suffering dreaming living everybody
dying less*

only a few minutes ago in advance of being late
and it's been a success now you've seen everything
this blood and the women in the show-windows the
passersby
you've seen the rough sneer of the snow
have heard the hoarse gritting of teeth
negating the response that from time immemorial we
lie to one another about the thuds then the boots and I
shuffle around every
one of mine of yours of hers or yours plural of our

trampling while their gas and our mass body
while it happened and while it opened the hole
opened the skin the muscle the bone the cheekbone
and the blood was freed from the body the look
of this dead man our breath so short
we lame ones we crippled we who through distraction
have lost future love revolution
we deaf dumb and blind our necks twisted

*working less working everybody thinking
blocking setting on fire hitting overcoming
retreating returning striking taking
restoring computing punishing forgiving
pitying despising acting living everybody
dying less*

they've blinded work cut its tongue out
crushed every rebellion the drums
of memory torn the heart out of
every sentiment burned the fingertips of
every sensation they've designed streets
and then blocked their entrances they've
filled our heads with the voids
where their bats fly and have

drunk our blood the account languishes
we're into credit in life waiting for when
this infinite suffering be finished that's birthed
the root that degenerates that demands that now is
the precise time to restore the joint account we are
right now only by showing you the numbers the list
and all the evident moderation that there is in
understanding how by now the only solution

isn't a gala affair but rather
another revolution entirely.

Translated from Italian by Jack Hirschman.

DAVID VOLPENDESTA

PSALM TO A COMMUNIST

They can't turn the salt
on their brows
into sugar
Pain in their eyes
and misery
is the lash of scorn
given to the lives of workers
who live on their backs
as the whips of the rich
whirl through the air
snapped with a flick of the wrist
to jar the atoms of consciousness
hammered by iridescent pain
that reduces screaming men
into puddles of flesh
Capitalism is a sadist
sharpening its fangs
only to bite into flesh
so that blood coagulates
in muscles and sinews
and pours
from a hole
in the head
until it slows to a drop
In this age
when capitalists
revel in their wealth
everyone else
gets an ear of moldy corn
That was rejected
by well-fed farm animals
Human beings want to know
Where will it end?
Mothers clutch infants
whose lips are too dry to wrap around a breast
and whose eyes are swimming in bitter tears

Men of god repeating the gospel
Of it's not a sin to bow before the rich
while corpulent leeches living off the wealth
others create
Drugs to keep people anesthetized
Religion to keep them babbling
There's a new astrology
one in which human beings
are liberated from exploitation
so the planets can revolve
around the stars
and men and women can dance
the dance of revolving
chimes in the rapture of the wind
Freed from the scourge of violence
empires will crumple
when their walls evaporate
from the transparency of their lies
a dusty book
with a broken spine
The letters are a retired alphabet
of profit and greed
in a chapter of humanity
that soon will be ending
banks won't be able to afford
the interest they will be charged
as their worthless currency
keeps burning a hole in their soul
and clinks on the cement
like a copper coin
Wealth gave them the appearance
of immortality
but the mortality
of living
showed that they were ephemeral
like buzzards
swept from their nest
by a hurricane.

MÜESSER YENIAY (Turkey)

GEZİ PARKINDA BİR KUS YUVASI

Nâzum Hikmet'e saygıyla

Bir kuş yuvasından yazıyorum bunları
iki dal arasında, Gezi parkında
göğsüme bıçak gibi saplanıyor nefesim
göğü yıkmaya geliyorlar bütün yeryüzü halkıyla

bir kuş yuvasıyım Gezi parkında
iki dal arasında

burada insanlar zehirli
ağaçlar sökülmiş

kovuluyoruz annemizin
bizi davet ettiği dünyadan

kuş seslerini bombalıyorlar
-çıkaramaz kuşlar çil çil para sesini-

bir Ethem duyuluyor ateşler içinde Anka!
kaynak işçisi Ankara'da...
yığılıyor bedeni kuş tüyü gibi

ölmeden toprak ediyorlar bizi
duman altında sokak çocukları ve kediler
kambur sırtlarında kaybolan rüya
kör gözlerle dünyaya bakılmaz artık
ya uyumak hiç ummadığın bir anda!
hiç ummadığın anda uyumak...

ben bir kuş yuvasıyım Gezi parkında
bir çift dal arasında.

A BIRD'S NEST IN GEZI PARK

In Memory of Nâzım Hikmet with respect

I'm writing these words from a bird nest
between two branches, in Gezi Park;
like a knife my breath is stuck in my chest
they're coming to destroy the sky
together with all the people of the earth

I'm a bird's nest in Gezi Park
between two branches

here the people are poisoned
the trees are uprooted

we're being expelled from
where our mothers invited us

they're bombing the twittering of birds
---birds can't produce the sound of cash---

Ethem* is heard, a simurg in fire!
A welding worker in Ankara
his body is collapsing like a feather
They're turning us into earth before we die,
under smoke street children and cats...
On their hunched backs a lost dream
Blind eyes can't look at the world...
or fall to sleep in an unexpected moment!
In an unexpected moment to sleep...

I'm a bird's nest in Gezi Park
between a pair of branches.

Translated from Turkish by the Author.

**Ethem is a victim who was killed by the government in the protests*

YURI ZAMBRANO (Mexico)

CAPITALISMO JODIDO, LÁRGATE

De mugre en mugre
con charcos de ahogarnos sofisticadamente el capitalismo nos
quiere hundir.

Quiere taladrar nuestras conciencias hasta dejar países enteros sin
dignidad
escondidos en la máscara
deleznable asquerosa,

nauseabunda y repugnante de
una globalización enmascarada de miserias de abandono de
destrucción de guerras de oprobio y humillación continua
El capitalismo carcome la educación
la viola sin piedad pero queda la dignidad
y nos quedan las ganas de luchar en contra de ellos
de ese monstruo devora-conciencias Para ello tenemos la
palabra nuestra palabra que aunque les duela
que aunque crean que no existimos
cada vez que usamos esa palabra, la convertimos en poesía para
luchar contra ellos,
los embaucadores de destinos
que creen siempre que pueden con nosotros
podrán contra algunos pero no, contra nuestra dignidad la de la
poesía hechas acciones. Por eso estamos aquí
escribiendo contra ese fantasma para decirle...
no más capitalismo de mierda
ahora tenemos un arma letal
más fuerte que ustedes...

Nosotros somos poesía
Somos la unidad, una brigada de soñadores
llevando paz alrededor del mundo,
pero también, acciones revolucionarias.

Trabajando, trabajando,
poniéndonos en acción

sin descanso.

FUCKING CAPITALISM, GO AWAY

Filthiness on filthiness
mud poodles
sophisticatedly drown us.

Capitalism wants to sink us, wants to drill our consciousness,
leaving complete countries without dignity.
Hidden under its mask, despicable very pitiful,
nauseating and disgusting Globalization appears
disguised in misery, in carelessness, in the destruction of wars, in
humiliation and endless ignominy.

Capitalism eats away education, mercilessly raping it instead.
We have our dignity, our demands to fight against them, that
monster-devouring consciousness. For this,
we have words. Our word even though it hurts,
even they don't believe in our existence, every time we use OUR
word we turn it into poetry to fight them : the real tricksters of
destination, believing always
they can be with us.

They could contra some...but not our dignity concerning poetry
becoming actions.

That's why we're here writing against the ghost telling him:
No more fucking capitalism,
we have a lethal gun now, stronger than you.

We're poetry
We're union, a brigade of dreamers
leading peace over the world,
but leading also revolutionary actions.

Working working
going into action,
without rest.

Translated from Spanish by the Author.

BIOGRAPHIC NOTES

MELBA ABELA, a Filipino-American immigrant living in San Francisco, is an artist and published poet. She visits The Philippines regularly. **DEE ALLEN** is an African-Italian active in two San Francisco-based Spoken Word performance troupes: Poor Magazine's Po' Poets Project and the Revolutionary Poets Brigade. His first two books, *Boneyard* and *Unwritten Law*, are available from Poor Press <http://www.poormag.info/static> **ROBERT ANBIAN** has published three poetry collections, and Edgetone Records released the poetry and jazz CD, *Robert Anbian and the UFQ* in 2007 and the poetry and story two-CD set, *I Not I*, in 2008. **ADRIAN ARIAS** is an international prize-winning Peruvian Bay Area poet who has been enlivening the local poetry scene for the last 14 years. His poems often include visual and performance arts aspects of an accessible lyrical, emotional, surreal and whimsical nature. **VICTOR AVILA** is an award-winning poet. His work was recently featured in the anthologies, *Occupy SF-Poems: from the Movement*, and the *Revolutionary Poets Brigade-Los Angeles*. Victor also writes and illustrates the comic book series *Hollywood Ghost Comix*. He has taught in California schools for twenty-five years. **MAHNAZ BADIHIAN** is an Iranian poet-painter and activist-translator from Farsi. She is a member of Revolutionary Poets Brigade (RPB) in San Francisco. www.badihian.org www.mahmag.org **VIRGINIA BARRETT** has published five books; *I Just Wear My Wings—collected poems of an aspiring mystic* is her most recent. She has edited two poetry anthologies including *OCCUPY SF—poems from the movement* (with Bobby Coleman). Virginia is the co-founder of We Are All Poets—youth poetry and civics program in collaboration with the San Francisco Public Library. **ALESSANDRA BAVA** is the author of two bilingual chapbooks, *Nocturne and Guerrilla Blues*, both published in Italy. Her first U.S. published chapbook, *They Talk About Death*, is now available. She is active in the Revolutionary Poets Brigade of Rome and has translated its first Anthology into American from the Italian poets in that city. **LINCOLN BERGMAN** is a San Francisco Bay Area poet and educator. He is a member of the Revolutionary Poets Brigade, a founder of the Freedom Archives, and a Co-Poet Laureate of Richmond,

California. **JUDITH AYN BERNHARD** is a founding member and past chair of the Marin Poetry Center and a current member of the Revolutionary Poets Brigade. She lives in San Francisco with her husband, Byron Spooner, and teaches writing. Her book of poems, *Prisoners of Culture*, is available from CC.Marimbo.

KRISTINA BROWN often writes about what people will and won't do for love. She also paints. **YOLANDA CATZALCO** is Mexican-American and was born in 1950. She has twin daughters and an extended family and is a member of the San Francisco Revolutionary Poets Brigade. **METIN CENGIZ** was born in 1953 in Kars, Turkey. He has published 12 books of poetry and translated more than 20 books. His poems have been translated into more than 30 languages. His selected poems have been published in French, Spanish, Romanian, Serbian and Albanian. **NEELI CHERKOVSKI**

has recently returned from Brasil and Argentina. His books have been translated and bi-lingually published in Italy and Mexico, where he's traveled to read from them in recent years. A book of his drawings has also appeared from *Nicola Viviani Edizioni* in Verona. **MARCO CINQUE** is not only a poet and musician but an excellent photographer living in Rome, where he is the archivist for *Il Manifesto*, and a member of Rome's Revolutionary Poets Brigade. He has deep ties as well to the Native American movement in the U.S. **FRANCIS COMBES**, born in 1953, founded the publishing company *Le Temps des Cerises* and he's now the director of the International Poetry Festival of Val-de-Marne (Paris). As a poet, he's published fifteen books, the major one of which is *Cause Commune/ Common Cause*, one of the most important books of poetry since the Millennium. **IGOR COSTANZO** is a young Italian poet who was an acolyte of Francisco Conz and the Fluxus Movement and whose poems have appeared in the U.S. He teaches in Brescia, Italy, and will be publishing his 2nd book of poems in the U.S. in 2015. **J.VERN CROMARTIE**'s poetry has been published in periodicals including *The Black Panther*, *The Journal of Pan African Studies*, *Unity*, *Current*, *C*, *Haight-Ashbury Literary Journal*, *The Black Times*, *Grassroots*, as well as in anthologies like *Ascension I; Ascension II; Would You Wear My Eyes? A Tribute to Bob Kaufman*. His est book is *Intercommunal Street Poetry*. **JOHN CURL** is co-editor of this anthology. Among his more recent books are *Yoga Sutras of Fidel*

Castro and a novel, *The Co-op Conspiracy*. His selected poems, *Revolutionary Alchemy*, appeared two years ago. He is chair of PEN Oakland and is known also for his translations ancient Aztec and Mayan poetry. **ROQUE DALTON** was the foremost communist poet of the past generation in El Salvador, and his influence on contemporary poetry is immeasurable. **CAROL DENNEY** is a Berkeley poet, musician, and activist, editor of the *Pepper Spray Times*, and a contributing writer and cast member of KPFA's TwitWit Radio. She's worked for years with the Augusta Heritage Center in Appalachia, where her family has roots, to preserve indigenous music and culture. **MACDONALD DIXON** was born in 1944 in Castries, (Saint Lucy). He's one of the most well-known poets of that island. He's also a translator, a painter, a photographer, and he writes novels and theater plays. He received a national award in 1993 for his literary work. He is the translator of Francis Combes poem from French. **AGNETA FALK** is a Swedish-born poet-painter whose latest book, *Heart Muscle*, was published in Italy in a bilingual edition translated by Raffaella Marzano. Her poems have also been translated into Chinese, Albanian and Arabic. She is a central cultural organizer in San Francisco's North Beach. **RAFAEL JESUS GONZALEZ** is a bilingual poet in Spanish and English. His work is published in the U. S. and Latin America and has thrice been nominated for a Pushcart Prize. His book *La Musa Lunática/The Lunatic Muse*, 2009, has had a second printing. **STEVEN GRAY** is a venerable poet, photographer and musician who has also designed covers of the *Out Of Our* poetry magazine, edited by Sarah Page. He has mastered the art of the rhyming line in a way that is enviable in all spoken-word dimensions. **MARTIN HICKEL** lives in Marin and works as a database in consultant in San Francisco. He has self-published numerous chapbooks and often recites his work in readings around the Bay Area. **GARY HICKS** has dedicated his poetry and activist actions in the last 35 years to the communist transformation of the United States and especially the liberation of his own African-American people along with all others of the American working class. His latest book is *Itching for Combat*, poems published by Vagabond Books of Venice Beach, California. **JACK HIRSCHMAN**, the co-editor of this anthology, likewise has worked tirelessly for the communist movement, currently with the League of Revolutionaries for a New

America (LRNA), and is the U.S. representative to the World Poetry Movement founded in Medellin, Colombia in 2011. **HENRY HOWARD** is a member of the Los Angeles Revolutionary Poets Brigade. His most recent book of poems, published by Vagabond Books in 2013, is *Sing to Me of My Rights: Poems of Oppression and Resistance*. **GABRIEL IMPAGLIONE**, born in Argentina in 1958 and living in Italy, is a poet, storyteller and journalist. He directs the international poetry magazine, *Isla Negra*, co-organizes the poetry festival *Palabra en El Mundo*, and is on the coordinating committee of the World Poetry Movement. **MARK LIPMAN** is a poet and essayist and publisher of Vagabond Books. He is a member of the Los Angeles RPB, and is also a political artist who paints thematically social realist works. **KIRK LUMPKIN** is a poet and cultural worker, the author of two books of poetry, *In Deep*, and *Co-Hearing*. He has read all over the U.S., Canada and England (the latter for the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament. He is on the board of PEN Oakland. **KAREN MELANDER-MAGOON** spent 20 years singing opera in Vienna and Berlin. She returned to the states where she's written one-woman mini-operas about Lillie Langtry, Georgia O'Keefe, Clara Barton and Colette. She has a degree of Doctor of Ministry from San Francisco Theological Seminary, and writes activist poetry on the most current situations for the San Francisco RPB. **SARAH MENEFE** has just returned from a 10-reading tour of Italy and Sardinia for the bilingual publication of her poems, *Stella Umana/Human Star*, translated by Raffaella Marzano of Multimedia Edizioni, Salerno. She is a member of the RPB in San Francisco and the nationally and internationally known League of Revolutionaries for a New America. **NANCY MOREJÓN**, the great Cuban poet, was recently in California where her latest book, *Homing Instincts*, was published in Chico, CA by Cubanabooks, translated by Pamela Carmell. Nancy gave many readings throughout Northern California including a collective one with the San Francisco RPB at The Emerald Tablet in SF's North Beach. Translator and editor **BARBARA PASCHKE** has publications that include *Volcán* (co-edited with Alejandro Murguía; translated *Riverbed of Memory* (by Daisy Zamora), and *Clamor of Innocence* (City Lights Books); *Clandestine Poems* (Curbstone Press); *Tomorrow Triumphant* (Night Horn Books); *First World Ha Ha Ha* (City Lights), She was an

original member of the Roque Dalton Cultural Brigade, is currently a member of the SF-RPB and translated the Spanish of Gabriel Impaglione for this anthology. **DOROTHY (DOTTIE) PAYNE** is a longtime political poet and keeper of the flame of the San Francisco RPB at her ArtInternational Gallery and Salon. She is preparing what is sure to be a knockout book of her selected poems, tentatively entitled *Birthmarks*, and she is a member of the League of Revolutionaries for a New America. The books of **PAUL LOBO PORTUGUES** include: *The Visionary Poetics of Allen Ginsberg, Saving Grace, Paper Song, Aztec Birth, The Body Electric Journal, The Silent Spring of Rachel Carson, On Tibetan Buddhism, Mantras, Witness* (forthcoming 2015), and *1,000 Poems of Love and War* (forthcoming 2016). **DOREN ROBBINS'** most recommended books are *Parking Lot Mood Swing: Autobiographical Monologues and Prose Poetry* and *My Piece of the Puzzle*, awarded the 2009 PEN West Josephine Miles Poetry Award. For more poetry, art, and essays go to dorenrobbins.com. **GABRIEL ROSENSTOCK** (b. 1949 in postcolonial Ireland) poet, haikuist, novelist, playwright, essayist, author of over 170 books, mostly in Irish. A bilingual selection of his poems *Margadh na Míol in Valparaíso/ The Flea Market in Valparaíso* published recently by Cló Iar-Chonnacht. His translations of Bob Marley and Kate Bush feature in the forthcoming IMRAM festival in Dublin. His blog: [http:// roghaghabriel.blogspot.ie](http://roghaghabriel.blogspot.ie)

E. SAN JUAN, Jr. is emeritus professor of English, Comparative Literature and Ethnic Studies, Washington State U. and U. of Connecticut. His most recent books are *U.S. Imperialism and Revolution in The Phillipines* (Palgrave), *Balikebayang Sinta: An E. San Juan Reader* (Ateneo University Press), and *Toward Filipino Self-Determination* (SUNY Press). He was previously fellow of the W.E.B. Du Bois Institute, Harvard University, and of the Harry Ransom Center of the Humanities, University of Texas. **NINA SERRANO** is poet, media-producer, and educator. Her latest book *Heart Strong, Selected Poems 2000-2012* won a PEN Oakland Literary Award for 2014. She produces Literature and Latino Public Affairs radio programs for KPFA-FM. **ALESSANDRO SPINAZZI** lives in Marghera, Italy, the working class district of the area around Venice. He is the author of the book of poems published in 2013 by CC. Marimbo, *Beyond the Curve on the Path*, translated by Jack Hirschman, and his poems appeared in the *Heartfire 2nd Anthology* of the San

Francisco Revolutionary Poets Brigade. **JON MICHAEL TURNER** is a regional coordinator for the Vermont Farmer Veteran Coalition, and a member of the Burlington, VT Revolutionary Poets Brigade. He served as an infantryman in Iraq twice from 2005 to 2006, where he was awarded a Purple Heart for a small shrapnel wound. Jon's work has appeared in *Left Curve*, *Revolutionary Poets Brigade Anthologies*, *Warrior Writers*, *Boston Poetry Magazine* and *Penthouse*. **LELLO VOCE** is one of the European pioneers of spoken word; he introduced Slam poetry to Italy. He's published many books and CDs of poetry. His poems have been translated into many languages including Arabic, Japanese and English. He is one of the founding members of the World Poetry Movement in Medellin in 2011, and has organized international poetry festivals. **DAVID VOLPENDESTA** is the author of four books of poetry, his most recent publication, *Friends Who Are Living* (CC Marimbo). His translations have appeared in *Volcán* (City Lights) as well as in Otto Rene Castillo's *Tomorrow Triumphant*, which he co-edited with Magaly Fernandez (Night Horn Books) and *Clamor of Innocence*, which he co-edited with Barbara Paschke (City Lights). He also co-edited *Homeless Not Helpless* with Barbara Paschke. **KATHLEEN WEAVER** is an anthologist of international women's poetry, the translator of Nancy Morejon's poem. She is the author of *Peruvian Rebel*, *The World of Magda Portal, with a Selection of her Poems*, (Penn State University Press). **MÜESSER YENİAY** was born in İzmir, 1984. She has won several prizes. Her poems are translated into several languages. Müesser is the editor of the literature magazine *Şiir den* (*Of Poetry*). She is currently pursuing a Phd in Turkish literature at Bilkent University, Ankara. **YURI ZAMBRANO** is an activist poet, a member of the World Poetry Movement (WPM), director of WFP (World Poetry Festival), sowing poetry all over the world. He's published more than ten historical-political novels, as well as incendiary books of poetry. He considers himself a member of the Revolutionary Poets Brigade in Mexico, where he lives.

REVOLUTIONARY POETS BRIGADE MISSION STATEMENT

NOW

As poets we are uniquely positioned to seize the possibilities of the time, bringing language to life and participating in the movement that is gathering as we speak...

IT'S TIME

Poetry has always been and continues to be not only the way the poet listens to his or her innermost being, but a way the spirit of the times, in its most forward-looking incarnation, is expressed and heard. And the times we're in, of crisis and the cry for transformation, particularly needs the news, as poet W.C. Williams said, "without which we die."

We say what we see: and that is the system which cannot rest until it extracts every drop from a desperate earth: capitalism. We say what we see: and that is the oppression of our class, driven to the streets and alleys of our cities, driven to the muddy fields, all because there is no profit in maintaining life and health. We are the harbingers of revolution and the awareness that underlies and drives it.

FOR THE REVOLUTIONARY POETS

In our common struggle toward freedom, each individual instinctively reaches for the best tool at hand. As artists, we have the most powerful tool of all, the ability to inspire, transform, and liberate, just in the nick of time as it happens, as the sick old ways rust, choke, sputter, and fade. Poets, those at the compressed razor sharp edge of social thought, and all fellow artists of visionary courage, stay mindful of this historic opportunity, lead with strong revolutionary voice for all humankind to genuinely live and thrive in common spirit!

BRIGADE

Therefore, we want to create a Revolutionary Poets Brigade, to respond to the demands of the moment – provoking the future out of the confused minds of today, inspiring with the passion of the living word, in preparation for the development on a wider and

larger scale of the uprising, the action that will overthrow this system of greed and exploitation.

As a network, we can be present and participate in the popular resistance that is going on around us by holding poetry events, by reading and speaking at demonstrations, and by publishing broadsides and pamphlets. Join us.

"Camerados . . . will you come travel with us? Shall we stick by each other as long as we live?"

–Walt Whitman

REVOLUTIONARY POETS BRIGADE

Web Site: <http://revolutionarypoetsbrigade.com/>

Email: revpoets@gmail.com

TOWARDS A WORLDWIDE POETRY REVOLUTION

The world's poetry movement declares itself to be in a state of rebellion regarding the sad history of humanity.

We are against the war-torn history of countless barbaric civilizations that have left hundreds of millions of dead throughout the so called "human evolution" here on earth.

We oppose the petty and dangerous practices against nature and the peoples of the world, which have deteriorated and damaged our oceans, lakes, rivers, atmosphere, the earth's climate, devastated forests, inviting expanding deserts to take over our glorious green planet, and imprisoning the human species in a miserable existence.

We oppose slavery material and rigid religious dogmas which have taken away the freedom and dignity of millions of people, chained in dejection and hopelessness.

Against the failure of the economic, political, social and cultural systems that imprison humanity, we call on the world to join this Worldwide Poetry Revolution.

We are calling all of humanity to rise from the ashes of defeat and build with great energy, before it is hopelessly too late- a superior world, filled with poetry, social justice, dignity and truth, beauty and kindness. A splendid world united by brotherhood and mutual recognition.

Let's gradually prepare a nomadic world festival, from country to country, from continent to continent. Let's build a global school of poetry. Poetry should be massively expressed in every street, in every country, in every language, in the mouths of everyone, children, women, men and elders. Let us anticipate the victory of life over death.

We invite poets and artists from all over the world, their organizations, and all organizations in the world to take a part in these international spiritual and cultural activities, for a planet free of the horrors of war and hunger, for an independent and fair world, united as one by the indestructible hand of a Worldwide Poetry Revolution.

Coordinating Committee of World Poetry Movement

Medellin, July 27th, 2014

<http://www.wpm2011.org/>

