

OVERTHROWING CAPITALISM Vol. 2

Revolutionary Poets Brigade

Kallio Press

OVERTHROWING CAPITALISM

Volume two:

Beyond Endless War,

Racist Police,

Sexist Elites



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EDITED BY JACK HIRSCHMAN & JOHN CURL

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Special thanks to all who
made generous contributions to this publication.

OVERTHROWING CAPITALISM
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OVERTHROWING CAPITALISM

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Beyond Endless War, Racist Police, Sexist Elites

INTRODUCTION

How can a small volume of poetry overthrow a world order?

This troubled time is in desperate need of vision. Global catastrophe looms before us, we all know it, yet the banquet continues, the orchestra plays, the handsome couples dance, the captain smiles, the crew obeys, the ship hurtles forward into the night.

Poetry can bring us together and heal many deep wounds. The 61 poets in this volume are doctors and visionaries.

In the regime we live under today, wealth is power. Transnational financial institutions run our world to extract wealth and privatize it into the hands of a tiny elite. The elite then uses that wealth to make the world their personal playground and to perpetuate the system. It's called capitalism.

Read some of these poems out loud. They contain the answers to many of the deepest questions of our time. Sometimes you can find the meanings in the spaces between the words, in the music of the syllables, in the friction of homonyms, in your thoughts or emotions after you have read the poem, or in the poem that is hovering in the air of your room, that you just need to catch and pull down into your heart.

We want a world structured around people caring for each other and for the environment, looking out for the best interests of all, an equitable civilization, a sustainable, thriving planet to pass down to our great-grandchildren. What prevents us from having that?

Capitalism pretends to be a natural order based on the justice of market forces. Yet that is simply a ruse. Behind the curtain, people are pulling the strings.

Transitions can be painful, and revolutionary changes disrupt everyone's life. Yet the enormous disruptions of climate change, population growth, the technological marginalization

of work, the impossibility of capitalism to transform itself into a system based on sharing, make revolution the only option for the people of the world.

Yes, violence breeds violence. But poets and artists are not by nature violent people, and this is not a violent social movement. Gandhi's and King's nonviolent movements each succeeded in overthrowing regimes based on the most vicious violence, the British Raj and Jim Crow. Regimes are always held in place by violence, and thus always need to be overthrown to achieve progressive change. And elites always fight desperately to preserve their privileges. But when a regime is thoroughly rotted and hollow inside, the violence needed to bring it down is like pushing over a dead tree.

Capitalism requires people to maintain a low level of consciousness based on individualism, competition, consumption. A world based on sharing is only possible through raised consciousness, and poets and artists are among the gatekeepers of our consciousness. Poetry and literature are not toys of the elite. We process and communicate our understanding of the world through language. A better world is possible only through taking language back from those who have hijacked it in the interests of perpetuating the regime of violent elites.

The spirit embodied in the poetry in this little volume is at the cutting edge of all that is most relevant to the future of this beautiful threatened world.

John Curl

For the Social Justice Committee 2015 of the Revolutionary Poets Brigade, comprising Jack Hirschman, Dorothy (Dottie) Payne, Sarah Menefee, Jessica Loos, Karen Melander-Magoon, Agneta Falk, Mahnaz Bahidian, Cathleen Williams, and John Curl.

MELBA ABELA

MAHARNILAD BEFORE MANILA

Birds have returned to Manila—
mostly common sparrows, tea bag
brown and tiny. They twitter, nest
in the green revolution trees and
bushes planted by bureaucratic
fiat, and in scraggly acacia trees
remaindered from moldy post-
war estates. They survive in the
hot, muggy climate amid the smoke
and fumes of daily gridlock traffic;
they feed on fast food crumbs
smog and insects' encrusted fruits
themselves toughened by harsh
city living. It must be a hard
grubby life for the birds, yet day
after day, like the endless stream of
displaced hungry people from the
provinces, more and more of them
show up: swooping and swirling past
cars, buses and train windows, past
blackened homes and high rises
clogging this once magnificent city—
Maharnilad by the mighty Pasig River
of the wild fish and birds and
laughing children, now coughing
up rank phlegm: the vomit and
excreta of alienated appetites.

NEON WORDS OF GOD

inside the deepest night
neon words stream
in continuous loop
NEED TO TALK? TALK TO ME.
GOD.

sinful sorrowing fun city Manila
mall warehouse of Southeast Asia
awake all night awash in bowls
upon bowls of fool's gold rush longings
here lies disturbed viral desiring
alongside need- less hungering

here lies saleable tiny bodies
their pinched faces averted
their gazes remote before
appraising first world gimlet eyes
faraway in a designated barrio
a babaylan's arcing chant
calls forth ancestral anitos
they do not hear they do not come
buried deep in centuries of
colonialism capitalism meanwhile
NEED TO TALK? TALK TO ME.
GOD.

streams neon in continuous loop
who is this old-new god who does
not know the language
of the people look god
their bodies are talking to you
they do not have to ask to see the
stars nor to hear your neon words
only to eat to eat to eat
the devouring moment and not die

MAHNAZ BADIHIAN
SILENCE OF NIGHT

We turn our bloody pages
In a cold winter
In the empty rooms
Filled with harsh memories

We lay down our dead
In a deep silence of night
In any bare land
Void of guns and guards
Let the rain soak their brave
Innocent bodies in the dark
Where the world is not
Aware of our pain

We feel the dark
We feel the bitter cold
We cry for the countries ruined
For the young lives lost
Now with the last remaining drops
Of human hope
We'll write our own history
Humanity's struggle
Against a Capitalism that's drunk on
Human blood. It will be written
In Glory.

آهوی ختن

برای برادرم که در جنگ کشته شد

به جستجوی تو برخاستیم
در خاکی که تو جان باختی
خاکی که بوی تو را گرفت
و ما هرگز تکه ای از تو را نیافتیم
خاکی که از سلولهای جوان تو
بوی همیشه بهار و نرگس گرفته بود

مشتمان را پر کردیم از خاک تو
و آغشتیم با آب زنده رود
از گل تو هنری آفریدیم
به یادمانندی تر از پرسپولیس

تو رودخانه ای شدی
جاری در قلب خانه ی پدری
رودخانه ای که پر بود از اشگ ما

تو آهوی ختن شدی
در شهر اصفهان
عطر پوست تو
هرگز رهایمان نکرد

MUSK DEER

For my brother died in war

We ran in search of you
On the soil you lost your life
And never found an inch of your body
But the ground smelled of evergreen
And daffodils from your youth

We filled our fists with
That aromatic soil, mixed it
With Zayandeh Rud water
To create a piece of art
As memorable as Persepolis

You became the river running
Through our house
Filled with our tears

You became a young Musk Deer
From Isfahan

The perfume of your skin
Never left us.

[Translated from Farsi by the author]

BENJAMIN ALCALÁ

ANTES QUE

Comíamos la carne asada,
Antes que McDonald's estaba.

Comprábamos en el mercado,
Antes que usábamos el teclado.

Caminábamos a nuestro destino,
Antes que el carro robó el camino.

Cultivábamos nuestra comida,
Antes que la tierra fue podrida.

Construíamos las casas y oficinas,
Antes que todo fue hecho en China.

Corrompíamos a nuestras economías,
Con estos tratados de puras mentiras.

¡Para rescatar a nuestra nación,
Hay que sobrevivir esta invasión!

BEFORE

We ate carne asada

Before McDonald's was.

We bought in the market

Before we used the keyboard.

We progressed to our destiny

Before the car stole the road.

We cultivated our food

Before the earth turned rotten.

We built houses and offices

Before everything was made in China.

We corrupted our economics

With those treaties of outright lies.

To redeem our nation

You must survive this invasion!

[Translated from Spanish by Jack Hirschman]

DEE ALLEN

UNDERSTATEMENT

Though there's been great
Technological
Advances
And changes in policy,

We are living in days
When the lives of certain
People are still considered less.

Exactly how much is
A human life worth these days?

Two dollars?
A small bag of chewy, colored candy?
A slim box of cigarillo?

Kenneth Harding was shot
By police in Hunter's Point
For two dollars
Bus fare he didn't have.

Trayvon Martin was shot
By one "creepy cracker" whilst
Being pursued in Twin Lakes packing
Skittles & his cellphone.

Then the cycle of violence turns
To another
Young brother

Over Swisher Sweets
A liquor store clerk
Claimed he'd stolen.

"HANDS UP!", the policeman shouted.
"DON'T SHOOT!", the boy shouted.
Responded with gunfire.
A body laying still
Four hours, slowly

bleeding out.

Rather big boy. Age 18.
Loved him some Hip-Hop.
Just graduated from
High school, bound for college.
They called him Mike-Mike.

But his name may as well
Have been Emmett Till
The way that cop Wilson came at him.
Instead of a cap & gown, Mike-Mike
Received a few caps in his thick frame.

Ferguson, Missouri:

Calling it
"A town without pity"
Would be putting it
Mildly.

Another youth killed by police
Repressive peace will shatter
Many who mourn have realised
Black lives do matter.

The slaughter's but another chapter
In a long history of spite
The system sees certain people as less
No alternative left but to fight.

Ferguson, Missouri:

Calling it
"A town without compassion"
Would be calling it
Correct.

Here they come,
The cause of one boy's death.
Out in force. Geared and prepared.
Restoring the peace

Epitomised daily in
Words such as
"DON'T ROCK THE BOAT",
"STEP BACK IN LINE OR
GET SMACKED INTO LINE",
"SHUT UP AND OBEY",
"GO SIT SOMEWHERE
AND DO NOTHING".

Basically speaking,
The peace of submission.

No-fly zone,
Nighttime curfew,
APVs roll through the streets,
Armed troops march through St. Louis County
Under martial law.

Ferguson, Missouri:

Calling it
"A town without restraint"
Would be closer
To the truth.

Superior firepower,
Tear gas,
Mass confinement,
Smear campaigns:
All the system's favored tools.

Outmanned,
Outgunned,
But the youth with their
Black hands in the air
Stand to outlast

Attempts at removal
From the human register.
Lasting silence. Capitalism's final solution.

Ferguson, Missouri:

Calling it
"A town that hates"
Would be the ultimate
Understatement.

Lest we forget:
That understatement
Worked well
In reverse also:

Ferguson, Missouri:

Call it
"A town that fought back"
Lifetimes of disrespect, centuries of racism
To a fucking crawl.

[For Michael Brown--1996-2014.]

ALESSANDRA BAVA

CRAVE WHAT MATTERS

"L'ansia del consumo è un'ansia di obbedienza a un ordine non pronunciato. Ognuno in Italia sente l'ansia, degradante, di essere uguale agli altri nel consumare, nell'essere felice, nell'essere libero: perché questo è l'ordine che egli ha inconsciamente ricevuto, a cui «deve» obbedire, a patto di sentirsi diverso. Mai la diversità è stata una colpa così spaventosa come in questo periodo di tolleranza."

Pier Paolo Pasolini, Scritti Corsari

I walk along the Tiburtina and cannot help noticing, in such desolate urban landscape, crowds of people with an unforgettable greed painted on their faces. Even here in the suburbs so dear to Pasolini, I see trendy cell phones, brand-new cars, girls wearing fashion clothes. My ears are full of the cries of Mamma Roma. Aren't we all whores for what allures us best? Eyes and souls are hawks and kites that bite us ravenously. I shake my head at the many forms of slavery I see -- the latest fad, the newest knick-knack, the necessary unnecessary. As I drive back home, along the Appian Way, at sunset, I see the soil breathe as a herd is treading on. One sheep following the other. Too often men are sheep too. They follow the vacuous leaders of void, they trust false promises, they fall prey to covetousness, they forget to be only because they can have and own. We all should crave what matters only -- some food, some words, some art, some love and what little else we may really need -- and stop being puppets in the hands of Surplus Masters.

LULLABY

(for Philip Levine)

I am humming you
a working-class lullaby—

fingers stained with ink of grease.
Your heart

as a transmission factory
shall beat eternally.

Your lines shall smell forever
of cogs and poetry love,

your words shall clang beautifully -
you blazing anarchic dove.

KRISTINA BROWN

**SHIRTS OF ICE/HEROES/
NEW YORK MAGAZINE/2015/JULY 27**

On the cover
Bill Cosby's accusers
all the brave victims
sit arranged in rows and ranks.
Even though they stand up united against their rapist,
the rich, powerful, famous as a father, man who drugged
them,
in their composite group photo
they do not stand tall,
do not stand
shoulder to shoulder.

Photographed separately
they sit on tiny
too small
folding
stools,
sitting ducks,
their insecurity,
lack of power
emphasized.

Inside the magazine
their single portraits immobilize them too,
trap each of them behind
a white tabletop
like the placard for a mug shot
or a cheap Japanese dating service.
Bright light illuminates every detail.
Frozen
in front of a cold silvery white wall
dressed in shirts of ice
they have not been made comfortable.
Almost all exhibit

folded hands, or crossed arms.
strained almost smiles signal their discomfort.
The conditions of the sessions
conspire to make them into objects
without warmth or glamour.

In truth
and in the words of the story
they are the heroes,
but you wouldn't know it by the formats of the photos.

Still

even so
in their eyes
from their faces
their message of hope and resistance
their strength

shows.

But wait,
there is an epilogue:
I wrote all that
printed the piece
then realized
I hadn't capitalized anything
except the rapist's name.

I'd done it too.

I'd diminished the heroes,
weakened
undercut
my own intent.

Under deadline I might not have noticed
until it was too late.

I went back and capitalized,
gave each sentence
the power and dignity it,
and they, the women, deserved.

JANET CANNON

REALLY?

really? you want less
government but you want to
stuff government into my
uterus like turkey dressing
disguised as compassion

really? you pay for
viagra and cialis but you
won't pay for birth control
like saying if you work for
me i am your slave master

really? you say you
want to save babies but
you kill doctors like saying
you are not an addict as
you shoot-up hypocrisy

really? you want to buy
guns without any restrictions
but you don't want your kid
killed by one like a deer in
endless street hunting season

really?

NEELI CHERKOVSKI
BLUE BIRD AND CAPITALISM

No! No! No!
Says the bluebird
Who shits on our garden bench

I clean up the mess
And dream of William Blake
Shouting at the dragon
Who holds us hostage
Till we die

And that must suffice
Instead of bombs
And other cruel devices

I clean up the mess
Almost everyday now
While the bird hides
In the avocado tree

Men shit in board rooms
And on private ranches
Where they destroy
The dreams of weaker men

The bluebird turns
A somersault
In my reverie
A crude squawking aviator
Filled with worms and bugs
He just ignores
My beautiful heart
And leaves a mess

There are men who throw shit
On the real American Dream
Men who cheapen
Every decent thought every
Sensate desire

They exterminate lovely eyes
And run prisons as a business
And rule the world
With corn syrup and lies
Let them eat shit

June 11 2015

DOMINIQUE CHRISTINA

SUMMER OF VIOLENCE

You will ride through these neighborhoods..
You the respectable taxpayer whizzing by the ruins
In your convenient cars,
Avoiding the faces of children who cannot keep their skin.
The ones whose fingernails are not clean,
Who pick the chicken bones bare and spit on sidewalks,
The unearned saunter of summer.
They are everywhere and nowhere and you will say:
There is no crisis here
And scuttle off to work
Grateful for 401k's, department store slacks and
Wine-laced one night stands that
Do not cost you anything to be so fucking free.

And I will say:
Did you notice the ones who are gone?
Did you see the unpopulated stoops and alleyways?
The caterwauling yawp of
Long ago black boy bodies who shut up their flesh
Brick by bullet by blade?
Do you know there was a dirge
That hitched the city's steps to a limp?
How the corner boys knew they would die that summer.

It was 1993
I buried four friends and the bodies kept coming
Into Pipkin Mortuary
I saw fourteen-year old boys pay for their funerals in advance
So their mamas would not hafta leave em at the city morgue
Or borrow money from an auntie they never spoke to.
How they traded in their gold chains, the paraphernalia of the
oppressed,
For discount caskets and pre-printed obituaries.

How Tyree paid for his funeral because he knew he would die

in June.

How Marcus paid in advance for his interment
Because he knew he would die in July.
How James and Richard brought in mason jars
Filled with scrunched dollar bills because
They KNEW they would die in August.

Do you know ALL of them were right?
I sat at the wakes of boys who were not old enough
To drive a car or fall in love.

Do you know all their mamas look the same on Sunday
morning?
The polyester skirts, the pleated blouses, their hair just curled,
The same sizzle at the ears.
How I sang with the choirs that were heavy
With big black women born to slip grief around their necks
And cry Hosanna.

A practiced familiar hurt.

The media called it The Summer of Violence.
A blistering three months where we were sooooo stingy with
our suffering.
The fuckin fecundity of negro boys who were nevertheless
good at dying.

Do you know that Paul was shot in his chest on the way to
school?
He was my favorite student.
I gave him chocolate bars and composition notebooks.
The only lie I ever told him was that he would survive.

Do you know the machine that whirred and beeped on his
behalf
Did not announce the moment when his lungs,
Peppered with 22 caliber bullets,
Decided they were no longer interested in the dance of

survival.

I did not attend that funeral.

Sent flowers to his grandmother instead,

Tucked my sons into me,

Became a wolf, where a woman should be.

Woke up the next day and asked

The bloody knuckle citizenry of black boys

To sit up straight in class, turn in their homework anyway.

The boys I know have no allegiance to their bodies.

With their necks jutting into midnight,

The boys whose subjects and verbs don't agree with each other,

These boys with their hypothetical futures,

Do not BELIEVE in your kind of tomorrow.

Your tomorrow has a bullet in it.

Ask Trayvon Martin.

Your tomorrow has a bullet in it.

Ask Jordan Davis.

Your tomorrow has a bullet in it.

Ask Michael Brown.

See what you don't know is

We are still trying to be here.

To give up an antebellum inheritance and

Reach for the sound of

Our own unBROKEN flesh.

Though we bleed best.

We are sti trying to be here.

To throw roses into the abyss and say,

Finally say,

*"Here is my thanks to the monster
who did not succeed in swallowing me alive."*

MARCO CINQUE

SCIogliETE LE RIGHE

Siete qui per difendere
ma difendere chi da chi?
chi difende noi da wall street?

chi ci protegge dalle speculazioni
dalle assicurazioni che si
assicurano gli anni migliori
delle nostre tartassate vite?

un lavoro come un altro, dite
manganelli su mani arrese
i vostri gas urticanti

i vostri brutali pestaggi
la vostra disgustosa legge & ordine
madre della banalità dell'orrore.

Voi, ridotti a cani da guardia
vorremmo vedervi spogliati
nudi davanti alla ragione.

Qualcuno finalmente vi
liberi da collari & guinzagli
dagli scudi, dai cazzi mutanti
in canne d'impotenti pistole

che difendono la gerarchia che difende
la vostra stessa penosa frustrazione
dove lo stomaco è stato promosso
ad organo atto al ragionare.

Non dimenticate che siamo noi
noi manganellati noi vessati
noi arrestati noi abusati

a finanziare la vostra carriera
appuntata su patetici distintivi.

Noi a pagare i vostri petti tronfi
a mantenere le vostre trippe gonfie
a imboccare i vostri cinici intrallazzi
a saziare il razzismo di cui vi nutrite.

La giustizia non ha bisogno di voi
per essere giusta, così come
alla pace non serve la guerra
per affermare il suo principio.

Pagheremo i vostri debiti, non temete
e vi daremo un lavoro utile, ma
trasformate le caserme in scuole
le armi in attrezzi per costruire
le prigioni in musei dell'errore
solo così ci sentiremo al sicuro
senza minacce legali da temere.

Il potere si difenda da solo
se non è troppo vigliacco o
troppo inetto per farlo, non avrà
altra strada che rinunciare
alla propria insensata autorità.

Che il re torni nudo e ci resti finalmente
e voi sarete liberi di lasciarci liberi:
sciogliete le righe!

DISSOLVE THE RANKS!

You're here to defend
but defend who from whom?
who defends us from Wall Street?

who protects us from speculations
from insurance companies that
insure the best years
of our harassed lives?

A job like any other, you say,
nightsticks on surrendered hands,
your poisoned gas,

your brutal clubbing,
your disgusting law&order
mother of the banality of horror.

You, reduced to dogs on guard,
we'd like to see stripped
naked before justice.

Finally someone's freeing
you from collar and leash,
from the shield, from your fucking
gun-barrel changes of impotent pistols

that defend the hierarchy which defends
your very distressing frustration
whereby the stomach's been promoted
as an organ suitable for discussion.

Don't forget that we exist,
we the bludgeoned we the oppressed
we the arrested we the abused
by financing your career
pinned on pathetic badges.

We're paying for your puffed-up chests
held up by your swollen bellies,
fed by your cynical kickbacks
to satisfy the racism that nourishes you.

We'll pay your debts, have no fear,
and give you useful work, only
turn those barracks into schools,
weapons into gym gear for constructing
prisons as wandering museums
just so we feel ourselves secure
without any fearful legal threat.

Power defending itself by itself
if it's not too cowardly or
too inept at doing it, won't have
any other street renouncing
its own foolish authority.

May the king return naked and finally remain with us
and you'll be free of leaving us free:
Dissolve the ranks!

FRANCIS COMBES

LA PRIÈRE DU MÉCRÉANT

1.

Il y en a qui prient Dieu,
Vichnou, Allah ou Jéhovah.
Et c'est bien leur droit.
(Même si depuis tout ce temps,
le monde n'a pas vraiment
l'air de s'en porter mieux).
Mais moi, ce soir, c'est toi,
mon semblable, mon frère,
que j'aimerais prier...

2.

Oui, je sais, croire en toi
n'est pas tous les jours facile.
Souvent tu te montres étroit,
idiot, égoïste, imbécile,
incapable de veiller à tes
propres intérêts. (Pour croire
en toi, mon semblable, mon frère
il faut avoir la foi !)

3.

Souvent tu fais comme Dieu,
Vichnou, Allah ou Jéhovah :
Tu te tais, tu ne réponds pas,
tu es dur de la feuille, obtus,
indifférent aux malheurs que
toi-même et les tiens endurez...
Mais c'est toi ce soir, mon semblable,
mon frère que j'aimerais prier...

4.

Car tu es mieux que Dieu,
Vichnou, Allah ou Jéhovah.
Oui tu es mieux, mon frère,
tu es plus fort et plus puissant.
Souvent, on te croit absent,
mais tu es partout, mon frère.
Tu es omniprésent... On te croit
ignorant, mais tu sais tout mon frère.
Tu es omniscient... On te
croit impuissant,
mais si tu te lèves, rien ne peut
te résister car tu es le nombre,
mon frère, le nombre, la force,
la sagesse et l'intelligence.
Oui, tu es tout puissant, mon frère...

5.

C'est pourquoi, mon semblable, mon frère,
c'est à toi ce soir que j'adresse ma prière:
Prends pitié de toi mon frère... Oui, prends
pitié de toi. Ne te laisse pas faire.
N'en laisse pas quelques-uns (qui sans toi
ne seraient rien) décider à ta place et
continuer sur ton dos à faire leurs petites
et leurs grandes affaires. Occupe-toi toi-même,
mon frère, de tes propres affaires. Occupe-toi
un peu moins de Dieu Occupe toi un peu plus
de toi. Et assure avec tes frères ton Salut sur la Terre.

THE INFIDEL'S PRAYER

1.

There's those who pray to God,
Vishnu, Allah or Jehovah.
And it's indeed their right.
(even if after all this time,
the world doesn't really seem
to be getting better).
But as for me this evening it's you,
my fellow man, my brother,
that I'd like to pray for...

2.

Yes, I know, believing in you
all the time isn't easy.
Often you show yourself as narrow,
an idiot, egoist, an imbecile
incapable of looking after your
own interests. In order to believe
in you, my fellow man, my brother
one has to have faith!

3.

Often you act like God,
Vishnu, Allah or Jehovah.
You're silent, you don't respond,
you're tough as a leaf, dull,
indifferent to misfortunes that
you and yours endure...
But it's to you, my fellow man,
my brother, I'm praying tonight...

4.

For you're better than God,
Vishnu, Allah or Jehovah.
Yes, you're better, my brother,
you're stronger, more powerful.

Often one believes you're absent
but you're everywhere, brother.
You're omnipresent... One thinks
you're ignorant, but you know
everything, my brother.
You're omniscient ... One thinks
you're powerless but
if you rise up nothing can resist
you for you're the number, my
brother, number, might, wisdom
and intelligence. Yes. You're all-
powerful, my brother...

5.

That's why, my fellow man, my brother,
I address my prayer to you this evening:
Take pity on you, my brother... Yes, take
pity on you. Don't let them get to you.
Don't let some (who without you
would be nothing) decide for you and
continue using you for their big
and little business. Take care of your own
business yourself, my brother. Take care
a little less of God, a little more of
yourself. And ensure with your brothers
your Salvation on Earth.

[Translated from French by Jack Hirschman]

ROMEO ALCALÁ CRUZ

UNDOCUMENTED IN AMERICA

Let me hear my great cockroach feet
scurry in the darkness of your cities.
I can feel my dreams coming from

my heart whispers secret melody: I will survive!
My machinations! My victories! My initiatives!
I sing a sustaining rhyme at corners shops,
restaurants, I whisper, I chant, I rap.

Danger, Speech, Feints and Raids.
I am an expert in decoys, ruses.

I chew on endless attorneys' pleadings
breaking a prophetic utterance-
your amnesty is coming.

I spit, I chant, I rap. What a lie!
Byzantine betrayals!

I see leviathan's fouts and spuddles again.
I ask for respite, threshold from foothold's patio.

What a lie! Here, where there is wilderness
stands still. But I see destruction in your towns
and cities. Rigor mortis in your living.

For nobody can live longer while others
die in their sweat shops, in the farms,
in the restaurants and care homes, in the corners
uncared,
unloved,
ignored.

I will chew on your houses, on your flesh
on your spirit.

Creative indifference as if you can
ignore me with one eye and disinhabit

the customary floor, slidden from
insurrective light, fructified, frozen in

Time.

Just wait for the stinking dark, rigor
mortis will set on your hometowns,
farmlands.

JOHN CURL

FIRE

The American economic system
produces the greatest good
for the greatest number,
they say. But
what if the system
is on fire?

Rivers are churning
poisonous rain
rodents are scurrying
forests enslaved
war crimes are flourishing
victims are blamed
Congress is burning
The White House in flames.

American democracy,
though flawed,
is still the greatest in the world,
they say. But
what if democracy
is on fire?

Hyenas are stirring
innocents framed
politicians usurping
bankers take aim
the undead concurring
the judges deranged
assassins conferring
the children are slain.

America
right or wrong,
they say. But
what if America
is on fire?

Fire! The demons returning!
Fire! Our oceans ablaze!
Fire! The blood moon is turning!
Fire! Our leaders insane!

Never shout fire
in a crowded theater,
they say. But
what if the theater is
on fire?

HOW LONG

If Africa is the mother of us all,
as they say,
the homeland of humanity,
if all our ancestors wandered forth
from that garden,
as they say,
and beneath the veils of ethnos, race,
tribe, gender, age, and nation,
if we are all one people at the core,
then why do so many of Africa's great grandchildren
have such unspeakable fear of our grandmother,
cause her such unspeakable grief
decade after decade,
year after year after painful year?

How long until the full moon eclipses this curse?
How long until this pestilence runs its course?
How long until this keystone
no longer supports this collapsing wall?
How long until these dry petals fall?

Great historical wrongs
never fade away,
can never be corrected
or ignored,
or so it seems,
their poison infects our blood
generation after generation,
leaving us forever afraid
to fall asleep,
forever wary
of the same sinister dreams;
no matter what we do
no matter what we don't do,
no matter what we say
or don't say,

we keep repeating
the same nightmares,
the things we can't accept,
the great historical wrongs
that cannot be wished or washed away.

How long must a people suffer
just for being what they be?
How long before all the glaciers
melt into the sea?
How long must we close our minds
while hungry children shriek?
How long can we look away
while the powerful oppress the weak?

How long must this doomed ship
over and over again set sail?
How long must this trapped coyote mourn
and wail?
How fiercely do the lions tear the antelope apart?
How deeply must I love you
before you return my aching heart?

steve dalachinsky
& thus kapital

*“i was homeless. it was horrible. i was on the borderline of
killing myself or being killed.”*

a. empire / homecoming

the rain has stopped for us today
the sun comes out at sunset
the wind brays sweetly thru the now pale
onion flowers
open to a new diversity
the sounds of equivalence & rhyme

but it is still
& always will be true
Columbus never stopped here.

b. vampire / for rent

psych(ot)ic: *slowing down progress*
in the name of progress
strangled eggs / brain tappers

“i judge my friends by what they can do for me”

“the business of America is business”

i sit here in a pre-capitalist state >

my friends love me as i love them
my enemies hate ME...the rest are in different
states *as in: REAL ESTATE*

c. conviction

you're old
you don't have a mother

just useless brain clutter
just a body tilting sidewise
due to bulging pockets
filled with
epochs of religious beliefs
paper & coin
your bladder bursting
every few seconds
your cuffed pants
barely reaching your ankles
tomorrow is always your 33rd birthday
& capital
more & more @ the center of it all

groceries are barely able to buy themselves
yet the teeth whitening experts claim
they can painlessly shine
your affordable magic SMILE.

d. eviction

you look up @ the maître d.
can you tell me where i am NOT?
he laughs & says that's a good one. you are a small man.
in more ways than one. time is no longer on your side.
it probably never was. she looks prettier than she is. her face
powdered
like a donut. a fake face. her hair slicked back with oil. the
room is dark &
full of clichés. in just over 200 years of captivity america has
become
less than a third world country. yet the donut shops expand &
thrive.
you are a small man in decline like your country. you know
very little if anything. you are filled with clichés. you have
begun to realize that no one has ever been on your side. the
bridges are near collapse. the entire infra-structure is at war

with itself due to mismanaged funds. funds funneled into wars & more wars.

& donut shops. trusted funds stuffed into the already bugling pockets of the so-called 1%. you stand in the back facing the music in a desperate pre-capitalist state. *we must all face the music at some point* you declare to an audience that barely sees you knowing that at the end of the month your lease will expire. *we must all eventually pay the price for being on the guest list* you mutter knowing all too well that all things good & bad must eventually come to a halt.

recollections

explanations

traffic

penmanship

forests

portraits

living rooms

anti-bodies

snow / sugar

donuts.

A.J. DICKINSON

why is it (1)

why is it
that the greed-head dead
want to suck the life
out of our planet ourselves

killing threatening
all & all of this
for their demented feast
so brief so temporary so small

we are not
their torches
their barbecue

we are
the people
of this planet

the life blood red
of our fragile blue green
hearty ecosphere world

the consciousness
the power
the flower

the indigo rose
the vermilion lotus
the triple rainbow

the arrow the spear
of what we all are
of all that's here

JEAN-LUC DESPAX

JAPAN EXPO

Petits soldats bariolés de l'inutile insipide
Puérils employés, avec ou sans allocations,
De l'industrie du divertissement
Accordez-moi quelques minutes
Abandonnez la marche de zombie
Imitant je ne sais quel manga
À laquelle vous travaillez depuis un an
Enlevez les écouteurs que vous aviez
Dans les oreilles
Dès le moment de naître
Cessez de danser en groupe
En contemplant cette animation sur écran
Interrompez les selfies !
Je ne remets pas en question votre mode de vie
Je ne vous fais pas la morale
Je vous demande une minute ou deux
Je ne vous parlerai pas
De l'harrypottérisation du monde
J'ai besoin de vous pour que vous débarquiez
En fanfare
Dans les salons littéraires
Où l'on parle de redonner accès à la poésie à la jeunesse
Mais jamais à la jeunesse tout court
J'ai besoin
Que vous envahissiez les réunions politiques
Où l'on jure de vous faire revoter
Et que dire de celles pour l'emploi
Ou le regain de conscience civique ?
Venez avec vos masques en silicone
Vos perruques de couleur
Votre acné morale
Vos jarretelles douteuses
Votre cellulite rédimée
Arrivez sur fond sonore terrifiant

TA TA POUM !

Absence de fond politique garanti

Je pense que vous serez utiles

Grâce à vous

Nous ne parlerons plus de soulever le monde avec les nouvelles générations

D'inventer des lendemains meilleurs

Parce que le monde d'équerre

Vous dégoûte depuis toujours

Petits oiseaux extra-utérins

Vous le faites exploser

À toute heure du jour et de la nuit

Dans vos dimensions parallèles

Nous ne chercherons plus à peindre le Grand Soir

Ni même à le pixelliser

Nous vous photographierons sur les I phone que vous nous passerez

Sans connaître qui vous imitez à merveille

La guerre est perdue

La paix nous conduisait vers la Japan Expo

Il n'y a peut-être pas que des inconvénients

À accepter d'être un vieux con.

Mais vive la Révolution.

JAPAN EXPO

Multicolored little soldiers of useless insipid
Puerile jobs, with or without shares
In the entertainment industry,
Allow me some minutes,
Leave off your zombie walk
Mimicking I dunno what *manga*
In which you've been worked for a year,
Remove the earphones you had
In your ears
Since the moment you were born,
Cease dancing as a group
By gazing at this animation on the screen,
Break away from your selfies!
I'm not questioning your way of life
I'm not into morality
I ask only for a minute or two
I'm not going to talk to you about
The harrypotterization of the world
I need you to arrive
With fanfare
In the literary salons
Where one talks about re-accessing poetry for the youth
But never just youth,
I need
You to overrun political meetings
Where people swear they'll make you vote again,
And what's to say about those for employment
Or the renewal of civic consciousness?
Come on, with your silicone masks
Your colored wigs
Your moral acne
Your dubious garters
Your redeemed cellulite,
Arrive at the terrifying background sound
BA BA BOOM
The absence of political depth guaranteed

I think you can be useful,
Thanks to you
We'll no longer speak of rousing the world with new
generations
Inventing better tomorrows
Because the triangular world
Disgusts you since the beginning,
Little extra-uterine birds,
You make it explode
At any hour of the day and of the night
In your parallel dimensions
We'll no longer seek to paint the Great Evening
Nor even pixelate it
We'll photograph you on the I-phone you hand us
Without knowing who you're marvelously imitating
The war's lost
Peace led us toward the Japan Expo
There are perhaps not only inconveniences
In accepting being an old asshole.
But long live the Revolution.

(Translated from French by Jack Hirschman)

SILVANA DI GIROLAMO (DINKA)

È TUTTO ZUCCHERO FICCATO IN GOLA

Trasporteremo sale

Dove c'è il mare

Sabbia dove è deserto

Porteremo calore sotto il sole

Ghiaccio in Siberia

Malattie negli ospedali

Siamo le multinazionali

Globalizziamo il globo

Vi rendiamo tutti uguali

Nel consumare i nostri desideri

Che a voi fanno sognare

Siete figli realizzati con scarti

Assemblati coi resti riciclati

Di questa societàevolvente

Perché noi non buttiamo niente

Per te che ti ostini

A non voler collaborare

Teniamo in serbo

Un prodotto

Davvero speciale

Abbiamo coniato

Una parola per te

Complottista

E ti annientiamo

Col tuo stesso fiato

Ti lapidiamo con le risate

Dei tuoi cari fratelli

Ignari e contenti

Di essere allineati

Conformati

Adattati

Senzienti

IT'S ALL SUGAR STUCK IN THE THROAT

We'll transport salt
Where there's the sea
Sand where there's desert

We'll carry heat under the sun
Ice to Siberia
Diseases into hospitals

We're the multinationals
We globalize the globe
Make you all equal
In consuming our desires
That make you dream

Seven kids realized without discards
Assembled from recycled remains
In this developing society
Because we don't waste anything

For you who persist
In not wanting to contribute
We have a really
Special
Product

We've coined
A word for you
"Conspirator"

And we annihilate you
With our own breath
We stone you with the laughs
Of your dear brothers
Ignorant and content
To be set up
Conforming
Adapted
Beings without.

[Translated from Italian by Jack Hirschman]

AGNETA FALK

ELLIS ACT BLUES

She was under the cover
when the letter arrived
her mother 3 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 of 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 Houg Lee
and their 48 year old handicapped daughter
who were forced to put their entire life
in storage while callous greed, 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 you rich palette of people
and multifarious cultures, your quaintness
your tolerance of other, your aspiration
to freedom and choice

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

BILLIE GAUCHE

PAYCHECK

This is a wishlist, kisses.

An early morning and late night doing business.

I tried to stab it, get it out of my head, but I'm a slave to this
page yeah I work till I'm dead.

And at this point, it's a habit, I need it, gotta have it, got to
eat it, gotta match it, and sometimes I just don't have it.

See I've been branded from before I began.

Yeah I rage for my age and I fight for my clan.

If they knew of this future they'd be grievously mad.

They would kill all the children and burn the knowledge they
had.

So that when the slave man came he would have ashes to
drag, ashes to outsource, ashes to Billboard, ashes to sell for
more, imprison and get addicted to stores.

So at this point, there's only one solution.

As long as I'm breathing I'm breathing revolution.

D.O.A

I tried to scream when the white hot bullet touched my flesh,
Nothing came out save for blood,
It fell from me red tears,
I could not help but think of the millions of years of genetics
that fell from me so easily,
The grass smells sweet,
And now I know that the initiation into capitalism is the
blood of a black child,
I know because it pumps through him right now,
Back into sweet home Pangaea,
So that I may live again,
As freedom and justice for my people.

RAFAEL JESÚS GONZÁLEZ

SEMBRADORES DE VISIONES

a Benjamin Ernest Linder

Ours is a time to scatter seeds of vision,
bring these images, the hues, and cries of
people together into that one light.

John J. Coveney

Me duele por lo que el mundo pudiera ser
dijo mi amigo, hombre capaz de ver.
Habla por nosotros sembradores de visiones
nosotros labradores de sueños.

El mundo sufre hambre,
por maíz y trigo, sí,
pero también por arcos iris
y tales señas.

Tengo un sueño
otro hombre dijo otra vez
y su sueño nos alimenta aun.

Pero la mayoría andan dormidos
a la orilla del precipicio
y pisan el borde oscuro de la muerte
pero no la honran.

Los sueños de nuestro dormir
están apretados, pesadillas de temor
y en nuestros pechos los corazones
se encogen duros como ciruelas viejas,
la miel en la sangre, oscuro vinagre.

Es tiempo que despertemos gritando
clamando el nombre de nuestra Madre,
buscando los brazos del uno al otro,
arrojando nuestra traición.

¡Oye, hermano! —

¡Oye hermana! —

¡Despierta!

Hay trabajo que hacer

que hacer con alegría

y el tiempo ha llegado para sueños nuevos
verdes como el maíz nuevo,
y el metal frío de nuestros rifles y bayonetas
anhela limpiarse
en la tierra de campos nuevos!

SOWERS OF VISIONS

for Benjamin Ernest Linder

Ours is a time to scatter seeds of vision,
bring these images, the hues, and cries of
people together into that one light.

John J. Coveney

I ache for what the world could be
my friend said, a man who can see.
He speaks for us vision sowers
us farmers of dreams.

The world is hungry,
for corn & wheat, yes,
but also for rainbows
& such signs.

I have a dream
another man once said
& his dream feeds us still.

But most walk asleep
to the edge of the cliff
& step on the dark hem of death
but do not honor her.

The dreams of our sleep
are cramped, nightmares of fear
& in our breasts our hearts
shrivel hard like old prunes,
the honey in our blood, dusky vinegar.

It is time we woke screaming
crying the name of our Mother,
seeking one another's arms,
throwing off our betrayal.

Hey there, brother —

hey, sister —

awake!

There is work to be done

to be done in joy

& the time be come for visions

for new dreams

green as new corn,

& the cold metal of our guns & bayonets

yearns for cleansing

in the earth of new fields.

ADAM GOTTLIEB

AFTER CAPITALISM (WE WILL BE FREE)

After capitalism, I won't have to market my music
or work any day job to do it
or worry about paying bills.

After capitalism, your food won't come from California
unless you live in California
and by the way, it will be free!

In fact, me personally, I'll probably grow my own food
Cuz after we get rid of capitalism, we'll be free to do what we
choose!

We will be free, la la la la!
We will be free, ya ya ya ya!
We will be free!

After capitalism, we'll start being part of our planet,
and start to remember our magic,
and eat only really good food.

After capitalism, the city won't be so depressing;
on buses we'll all be more pleasant –
cuz we won't be so tired all the time.

No one will work in a factory, or serve popcorn or scan
things in shops
Cuz after we get rid of capitalism, computers can do all those
jobs!

We will be free, la la la la!
We will be free, ya ya ya ya!
We will be free, Oh,

What would you do if you didn't have to worry about
basic needs?
What would you do with your life if you knew you
were part of one huge family?

After capitalism the people will go to the movies,
and there won't be any commercials
and previews won't all be the same.

After capitalism, we won't be afraid of our neighbors,
our streets won't be filled with policemen –
we'll work out our problems somehow.

After capitalism, we'll finally be human beings,
cuz in a communal society, we'll find out what that truly
means!

We will be free, la la la la!
We will be free, ya ya ya ya!
We will be free,
Oh!

JACK HIRSCHMAN

THE 2015 ARCANE

1.

This time's not like entering
a new year exclaiming:
хуй его знает?
How the hell should I know
what's up ahead, going down?

This time, along with your
que viva la revolucion cubana,
you have to admit you'd have
to be half a robot or an idiot
to look the other way,

have to be stuffing rags down
your ears to stay deaf to the
bellgongs tolling over the world.
The cops shot Mike Brown,
the cops choked Eric Garner;

the cops are the army of the
corporate State and the Congress
its bought, for which you slave
and get as a booby-prize
a computer, kindle or tab

to keep it all stored in, keep
your mouth wide shut
allover this land.

2.

Capitalism rolls race down

in front of your face down.
Been doin' it
since Crispus Attucks.

As long as you see it
Black, Brown/ or Native,
as long as it keeps that
race card playing,

you'll never tell yourself
the truth: Michael's your
comrade; Eric, Alex, Trayvon,
Oscar, your comrades too.

This here's a class war
opened up at last for
all to be done with the
privilege of free hypocrisy

and believing in equality
as if it grew on trees.
Slip into these class-conscious
togs for the sake of the future

and those suffering everywhere,
--yes, brother & sister comrades,
and the hungry and mercilessly
beaten by the winds of all

miseries this winter, for the
homeless and locked-out,
the striking and water-boarded
and those without water at all.

A generation's been weaned
on technologies: laughed, loved,
married happily bi-racially,
will *not* abide the old bigotries!

If that's capitalism, it's gotta go.
It's sick in its marrow. Has no
tomorrow for anyone with a trace
of dignity in his or her face.

Its individualism is a hole
in the head. Ayee, it's dead.
You need to organize
so that we don't die.

I gotta organize so we don't
die of the stench of profits
that Wall Street pack of
swine are wallowing in,

totally mobilizing bodies
into viscious war machines
at the desperate end
of its robotic rope.

3.

We need a manned demand
of Amandla, a police force
revolutionarily ready to defend
all of the people, bar none,
guarding our swelling ranks

with all of us in motion
gathering, gathering in a
great wave of visionary drive,
filling the halls of that sellout
Congress with the meaning

of our cause, declaring with

the Declaration of Independence:
We abolish you, congressional
betrayers of the people; we're
cleaning the House of your

filthiness of wars and corrupt.
We're gonna hang 30 of your
prize billionaires upsidedown,
empty their vast pockets, feed
the hungry to infinity,

announce a Bank Holiday and
make it permanent, and when
all the homeless are housed
and lakes sit at Detroit's tables,
we'll say: Happy New Year!

to each and everyone, and mean:
Let's all keep going on
forever!

DOUG HOWERTON

A PAYCHECK AWAY

Shopping carts line the back alleyway
The homeless shelter is 100 feet away
A small band of tired folk
Sit on a bench drinking wine, sharing a smoke
The night air is cool and brisk, the sky clear and star filled
Together chatting nimbly about times past and present dangers
Passers glance, peering with disdain
Not uttering a word, creeping away ignorant...
The shelter door swings open, the clients rush inside
The staff orders their business
Calls them by name, gentrifying the situation
Offering hope a clean bunk, a shower, a solid meal
They're homeless, not hopeless
Some down on their luck... others just need your hand
Remember billions are a paycheck away from poverty
They're homeless, not hopeless!
Some have an odor... some act a little batty
Many drink and do drugs in lieu of hugs
Others live outside humanity permanently
They've given up wanting things as they are!
They are the human conscience worldwide
The very soul of mankind wandering perpetually
The unkept manner... the constant chatter
Reminding all that we aren't yet civilized nor content
This a picture of humanity living in shanty-like skid rows
The myth-laden hobos
They sleep the streets from Calcutta to New York
Everywhere we are, they are also!
There's a spark in that eye
A smile in that frown
Offer them a hand up, not just a hand-out the meek shall inherit the earth
The meek shall inherit the earth

The mirror reflects the image
The panhandler is a banker minus a branch
The shopping cart lady is a housewife minus a house
The drunk in the corner, a youth with his first beer
The drug addict with needle in arm, a picture of dependency
A true to life creature of habit
The mentally unbalanced crack under pressure
Swallowing medication for stabilization
Homelessness isn't a mystery nor superstition
Evictions shove many to the door of despair
Swelling the roles of the sheltered and unhoused
Remember billions are paycheck away from poverty

JASON HYATT

CAPITALISM RULES

the splendor of life
caught in a swirling whirlpool
clouds of matter in the inescapable pull
of a black hole
a cornucopia in reverse
green, trees, wild life
mystery of birth
mothers' loving eyes
second fiddle
to a relentless, mindless power
a machine corrupting brains
a giant behemoth
on a juggernaut no one can stop
dispensing bribes
controller of survival
wage slavery no exaggeration
governments beholden to it for their taxes
politicians owned by its contributions
fans the flames of greed
consumes everything it can
legally obliges corporations to its service
enforced by police
protected by military
a planet of people
world domination
hypnotized by its memes
that infect
with comfort
with promise
it gives with one hand
takes everything with the other
takes humanity
squanders a global environment
mortgages our future
to funnel fictitious money
entries in a bank ledger

into fewer and fewer pockets
as nature begins to foreclose our debt
because Capitalism
already spent
our birthright.

SUSU JEFFREY
GOD BLESS AMERICA
ATM INSIDE

I know how the Germans felt
when they saw worms erupting
out of the national face.
Uncle Sam got his fangs on.
Eats boys.
Bleeds toxins
unto the generations.

The surprise is
happening again
how sad replaces anger
when the bully gets bullied
and bullies back.
Do we stoop to their level
or they to ours?
After all the killing
we will break
bread together.

Turn on the TV
and you will see
the Dream War
"The American people want..."
"The American people want..."
the wars to end
the recession.
This is a holy war.
We have 246 words
in American English
for money.

Owe money and out of work?
We're looking for a few young

men of color
to serve
in the School of the Americas
Islamic Extension
God versus God
backs to the people
seeing who can piss the farthest.

Author's note: found title, storefront sign

ANNE LEONARD

O.B.P.

**(& THE BLACK PANTHER PARTY 10 PT.
PROGRAM)**

We want freedom.

no O.G.—
he was O.B.P. —

We want power to determine the destiny of our black
community.

an original black panther
from the chicago chapter—
charles emory—
one of the youngest who ran with fred hampton—

We want full employment for our people.

pushing 50, balding, bespectacled
on parole after 30 years in the tennessee penitentiary
he sat at the picnic table on the half way house lawn—

We want all black men to be exempt from military service

he said, “i was taught to never accept disrespect,
and i never did, not one time”—
scalp gouged and dented—
stomped/kicked in the head time and again
by billy goat guards

We want education for our people that exposes the true
nature of this decadent american society.

he'd been just a few blocks away from the slaughter at 2337
w. monroe—

when the word hit the street, “our chairman is dead!”
police had stormed the apartment—
firing a hundred rounds—
—the panthers not one—
then ran to the room where
hampton— drugged by his bodyguard—
lay sleeping in bed and
shot him point blank—
2 bullets straight to the head

We want education that teaches us our true history and our
role in the present-day society.

an f.b.i. snitch had been in their midst—
a map had been drawn—
an “x” marked the spot

We want an immediate end to police brutality and murder of
black people.

charles said, “we knew we were next,”
and he and his crew gunned their
buick special onto the expressway—
heading south and east
as fast as they could—
final destination—
havana cuba—

We want an end to the robbery by the capitalists of our black
community.

until stopping for gas
in the hills of Tennessee—
suddenly surrounded by troopers and f.b.i.—
then driven to Nashville in a fleet of
patrol cars and

big black sedans—
and charged with armed robbery

We want all black people, when brought to trial, to be tried in court by a jury of their peer group or people from their black communities, as defined by the constitution of the united states

he had a tic under one eye—
repeated involuntary twists of the neck
turning his head to check behind him
again and again—
eyes darting as we spoke.

“we never robbed that filling station.
i did 30 years for nuthin’,” he said.
“most of it, at the old pen, was hole time.
it was a dungeon,”
deep chocolate skin now dulled and grey—

We want freedom for all black men held in federal, state,
county and city prisons and jails

“rats, feral cats—when the toilets flushed,

everything emptied
into open gutters running
along the walk between the cells—”

We want decent housing fit for the shelter of human beings.

“we didn’t have computers inside,
and that’s what i’m studying now—
but how am i gonna keep my parole if I can’t support
myself?
all i can get is banquet work, once every week or so—”

We want land, bread, housing, education, clothing, justice and peace.

the next time i visited dismas house, charles was gone. he couldn't find a job and jumped parole. i hoped he'd made it to cuba this time—and the beautiful women of havana—drinking rum punch and dancing night and day—the timba and the rhumba and the chachacha—

—a revolutionary holiday—

after 30 years spent inside
repeating his mantra—
the black panther party 10-point program—
educating his brothers
setting an example—
even in the hole—
bringing the revolution
 home each day
 in some way—

MARK LIPMAN

HAIL, THE PICKET LINE

for Joe Hill

*Hail, the picket line,
the picket line,
the picket line.*

*Hail, the picket line,
the picket line,
the picket line.*

Hail, the picket line.

Hail, the picket line.

Don't you dare cross that.

Don't you dare cross that.

It started back in the days
of industrial revolution,
when the working man
had to fight for wage and right.

(Not too much has changed these days,
and much less for the better.)

To stand together,
shoulder to shoulder,
against the bosses henchman,
simply to organize,
to work together,
to protect the interest of the laborer,
against exploitation from the 1%.

The unions are what made this country strong.

They had to fight for every inch
and fight they did,
... for their sons and daughters
... for the future.

*Hail, the picket line,
the picket line,
the picket line.*

*Hail, the picket line,
the picket line,
the picket line.*

Hail, the picket line.

Hail, the picket line.

Don't you dare cross that.

Don't you dare cross that.

Now comes the attack,
cuts in pensions,
the outsourcing of production,
the advancement of technology
that makes the common worker obsolete,
striking divisions between
those who can and cannot afford to eat.

The rights we take for granted,
fought for by our grandparents,
are being whittled away,
one by one,
until the land of the free
seems like some daydream,
fantasy-land imagination
this once great nation
SOLD ... to the highest bidder.

If we're ever going to save her,
we need to remember
what it took for us
to earn our rights to begin with

... and hold the line.

*Hail, the picket line,
the picket line,
the picket line.*

Hail, the picket line.

Don't you dare cross that.

*Hail, the picket line,
the picket line,
the picket line.*

Hail, the picket line.

Don't you dare cross that.

ANGELINA LLONGUERAS

HA COMENÇAT...

Són els presos els que ho han començat
globalment,
amb no-violència,
dues paraules unides en una sola,
un concepte kingià pro-actiu i unificat,
un camí cap a la justícia,
un camí cap a la llibertat creativa...

Ha començat al cor de la tenebra,
al lloc de l'aïllament i la tortura,
al lloc de la impunitat,
a l'essencial lloc ocult,
al punt cec,
al lloc clandestí, tancat, secret
on té lloc la negació,
amagada als ulls...
i al cor.

Guantánamo,
el lloc primordial de la negació,
amb la mort diària i invisible
dels qui han tingut la mala sort
de quedar atrapats dintre els queixals
d'un sistema invisible,
sense judici.

Califòrnia,
on els negres i els bruns
s'hi troben
en nombre més gran
que mai no es van tobar esclaus
durant el temps oficial de l'esclavatge.

Palestina,
on un exèrcit invasor que els nega el futur
tanca els infants a masmorres
mentre els roba la terra.

Ha començat...

Ha començat amb la més Gandhiana de les tècniques:
La Vaga de Fam,
un mitjà de desobediència civil
que té el seu centre
al nostre lloc de poder,
a la nostra llar enmig de qualsevol horror:
el nostre cos.

Aquest cos col·lectiu que és ara,
altra volta, domesticat “legalment”
per la Inquisició global
per via de la tortura i l’aïllament.

Aquest cos col·lectiu presoner,
que ara refusa cooperar.

Aquest cos que les dones coneixem tan bé:
el cos amb el que s’ha traficant,
al que s’ha segrestat,
que s’ha comercialitzat,
al que s’ha seduït,
amb violacions i humiliacions
perquè els proxenetes puguin fer anar endavant
el primer negoci del món:
la prostitució,
perquè els clients puguin fantassejar
que són els homes que no són.

El cos que ha esdevingut
receptacle forçat
per la reproducció
dels futurs esclaus obedients
de l’estat de Texas,
com a metàfora
de la maternitat obligada,
on les dones només podem cuinar,
i engrescar i cantar
les lloances als amos globals.

Ha començat...

Ha començat amb un acte de voluntat radical:

refusar-se a empassar
una sola engruna més de l'horror,
refusar-se a consumir
cap més verí,
rebutjar que caigui ni un sol més
edifici que s'ensorra
per enterrar treballadors explotats
en l'oblit,
refusar que un sol ésser més ,
un cor més,
un cos més
sigui aïllat,
humiliat
i torturat
en secret.

La consciència global
dels presos que som
ha començat
als quatre punts cardinals de la terra.

Ha començat...

Aquest és un poema amb presses,
urgent, mal construït,
que no té ni ritme ni rima,
que és només repetició
i un cor que té gana,
un ventre que es dol,
un estómac que es regira,
amb els membres tensos
i l'esquena encorvada,
que ja no aguanta més.

El meu cos s'ha fet un
amb el cos col·lectiu malalt
de la humanitat,
amb el cos
del llop exhaust
que prova de fugir d'helicopters assassins
i els mira
amb els ulls agonitzants

i amb el cos farcit de bales,
amb el cos del planeta terra
que es regira en terratrèmols,
onades de calor,
i tsunamis...

Aquest poema cal refer-lo,
re-formar-lo,
traduir-lo,
circular-lo,
canviar-lo,
I afegir-hi...
Però ha començat.

Ara, cal bellugar-lo
amb una llarga vaga general,
amb un acte de voluntat col·lectiva,
amb una llavor central,
amb una parada global,
amb un rebuig ferm a continuar
“com si no passes res”.

Ara, és hora que germini
en un procés constituent global de projectes,
en un qüestionament profund
de què volem tots junts,
des d'els diferents caps
des de pensaments separats,
àtoms pulsants d'un sol cos viu
amb millions d'idees
conjuntades
per un funcionament sà.

Ha començat...

Ha començat
i ha estat revel·lat
per una avantguarda de ments,
ments globals,
que s'han mirat
i s'han posat
en aquest pou sense fons

de tortura i secretisme,
que s'ha posat en marxa
per reproduir un cos d'esclaus.
Ha estat revel.lat
pels delators globals.

Els han donat a llum
milers de llums
perquè podem veure aquest secretisme,
perquè podem netejar aquest cor de la tenebra,
perquè podem donar veu i nom
als nostres punts cecs,
perquè podem posar fi
a la màquina-espía
que crea la nostra misèria artificial
en un planeta de plenitud.

Ha començat.

Nosaltres, els presos, hem començat
el nostre camí cap a la llibertat,
i el nostre cos famolenc
s'alimenta del nostre rebuig.

Ha començat.

Chicago, 13 de juny de 2013.

IT HAS BEGUN....

It is the prisoners who have started it,
globally,
with nonviolence,
two words put together into a united single one,
a Kingian pro-active, unified concept,
a path to justice,
a path to creative freedom...

It has begun in the heart of darkness,
in the place of isolation and torture,
in the place of impunity,
in the essential hidden place,
in the blind spot,
in the locked.up, secret, clandestine place
where denial takes place,
hidden from our eyes...
and our heart.

Guantanamo,
that paramount no place of denial,
with a daily invisible death
of those unfortunate enough
to be trapped inside the fangs
of an invisible system
with no trial.

California,
where the black and brown
are to be found
in bigger numbers
than slaves were ever found
during the official time of slavery.

Palestine,
where children are put in dungeons
by an invasive army that denies their future
while it steals their land.

It has begun....

It has begun with the most Gandhian of techniques:
Hunger strike,
a means of civil disobedience
that has its center
in our place of power,
in our home amid any horror:
our body.

This collective body that is now,
once again, “legally” tamed
by the global Inquisition
via torture and isolation.

This collective prisoner body
That now refuses to cooperate.

This body that women know so well:
A body that has been trafficked,
kidnapped,
commercialized,
and tantalized
via rape and humiliation
so that pimps can keep up
the first business of the world:
prostitution,
so that johns can fantasize
they are the men they are not.

A body that must become
a forced receptacle
for the reproduction
of future compliant slaves
for the state of Texas,
as a metaphor
of forced motherhood,
where women can only cook,

and cheerlead and sing
the praises of the global masters.

It has begun...

It has begun with a radical act of will:
to refuse to be fed
one more morsel of the horror,
to refuse to consume
one more single poison
to refuse one more crumbling building
to fall down
and bury exploited workers
into oblivion,
to refuse one more being,
one more heart,
one more body
to be isolated,
humiliated
and tortured
in secret.

The global awareness
of the prisoners we all are
has begun
on all four corners of the earth.

It has begun....

This is a hurried, urgent,
ill-constructed poem
with no rhyme or rhythm,
but simple repetition
and a heart that hungers,
a belly that aches,
a revolted stomach,
with tensed limbs
and an arched back
that cannot take it any longer.

My body has become one
with the collective sick body

of humankind,
with the body
of the exhausted wolf
that tries to flee from killing helicopters,
and looks at them
with its dying gaze,
with its body riddled with bullets...
with the body of planet earth
that revolts in earthquakes,
heat-waves,
and tsunamis...

This poem needs to be re-done,
re-shaped,
translated,
circulated,
changed,
and added-on...
but it has begun.

Now, it must be set in motion
with a global lengthy strike,
a collective act of will,
a core-seed,
a global stoppage,
a stern refusal to go on
“business as usual”.

Now, it’s time it germinates
into a global constituency of projects,
into a thorough questioning
of what it is we all want together,
from our different heads,
from our separate thoughts,
pulsing atoms of one living body
with millions of ideas
put together
for a healthy functioning.

It has begun....

It has begun
and it has been revealed
by an avant-garde of minds,
global minds,
who have looked
and have been put
into this bottomless pit
of torture and secrecy
set in motion
for the reproduction
of a body of slavery.
It has been revealed
by the whistle-blowers.

They have given birth
to a thousand lights
so we may look into this secrecy,
so we may clean this heart of darkness,
so we may give voice and name
to our blind spots,
so we may put an end
to the spy-machine
that creates our artificial misery
in a planet of plenty.

It has begun.

We, the prisoners, have begun
our way to freedom
with our hungry body,
that feeds on our refusal.

It has begun.

Chicago, June 13th, 2013.
[Translated from Catalan by the author]

JESSICA LOOS

WORTH

some girls vogue, promise catering down
river sold she's coming \$90 5 to 17
labor don't apply to debts oh bondage,
men pay the man that owns them
to fuck them fuck them use me
no say no way oh no way
is the there they're here human
traffic down river

RICHARD LORANGER

O CORPORATION, YOU ARE NOT IMMORTAL

O plug the merry plug, you tedious
face of death, you impossible freak,
plug the silky siren in and shunt
the silence of its saccharine song
into the linty bureau of your splintering,
rapt, rapacious heart—O eat
the plucky mare, the tedious mace,
the mass of death, O eat and eat
the sabine heat, the chattering flock,
the ambitious dull, O eat and plug and stuff
the flinty sorrow of the captive mind
into the rancid love boat of your hacking
want, your flatulent eye—O stuff,
and eat, and plug, and hack, hack away
hewing freak, hawing cancer, hiving horse,
howling mentor, cannibal drunk, hypnotist
of the mewling spree, chimera, canker,
soft dis-ease, hackneyed genius of a
volute sense, tyrannic enzyme, flawed macaw,
sanctum, slaughterhouse, verdant scree,
mother of nihil, father of a twisted tongue,
myopic utopia, dementia unbound—
eat it all up, yes, like a good bunny
—chow down, fucker, stuff it down,
stuff it all the way, plug it in, clamp down,
and gloat—chew your cheeks, pucker up,
like a champing Jesus gloat, har the hardy har
and plug all the stops, plug every pore—
Leak not, O Corporation—and bloat,
bloat huge, bloat baleful, bloat bilious,
bloat immobile and freeze, blackheart,
from the bunions up—freeze a roiling
babble stew, freeze a sphincterous clench,
freeze basaltic, freeze stench to dust,
freeze breath, freeze nerves, freeze face,
freeze in mid-gaw, freeze the minions of your

tantric tongue to autonomic blades, freeze
that tantalizing rictus of your cawing maw,
and hack—hack above all, hack
blood to boil, joints to rust, hack
egregious rhetoric to pandering excuse,
hack the corpses from your safe,
hack the vital organs loose,
hack vision to a dwindling speck,
hack all your being to a desiccating sty,
and die, and die, and die.

KAREN MELANDER-MAGOON

EARTHQUAKES

There are more earthquakes
Everywhere corporations fracture the earth
Force-feeding the earth with chemicals
Forcing water into her mouth
Water that drills into her very bones
And dispels itself in polluted waste
Millennia of terrestrial infrastructure
Crushed with the boots of corporations
Companies oligarchies banks tyrants
Birds fly over the earth
Their brilliant songs
And feathered grace
Flies over rigs and drills
Flies over once pristine waters
Seeking resting places
In disappearing trees and native growth
Seeking the breasts of mother earth
Fecund breasts of hills and mountains
Offering generous nurturing
From fruited plains
Offering clean rains
And unpolluted waters
Birds fly into flying machines
Into turbines airplanes windows
Seeking
The disappearing
Home
Of their ancestors

devorah major
tote

1.
what well dressed woman
or man
manhattan bound
or los angeles held
atlanta housed
or san fran fed
caught in the loop of the latest
fashion rendition of costumed history
doesn't want
to own the 100% white cotton tote bag
black block letters proclaiming
I AM A MAN

2.
decades ago
my father showed me the pictures
a single file line of sanitation workers
first, the newspaper approved shot
of the line of men
determined proud men
signs hanging from their necks
and then he showed me the real photo
tanks on one side
drawn rifled soldiers on the other
the men walking the gauntlet
facing forward
not just stating
but defining the depth
of meaning in the signs they wore
I AM A MAN

3.
now the newest bag in town
is slung over the shoulder
I AM A MAN facing outwards
and used to carry books or lacy underwear

organic carrots or the latest running shoe
rocked by the hippest fashionistas
in these post-racial
multi-racial
non-racial
raced
coded signed
times.

start anywhere

thou shalt not steal

just take that one
all the way through

don't take
what aint yours
by all rights

not a dollar
not a house
not a bank
not a body

don't steal nothing
not someone's family
not someone's land
not someone's heart
not someone's life

let's start there
see where it gets us

ELIZABETH MARINO

PORNOGRAPHIC PICTURES

*After the assassinations of Mr. Stephen T. Johns
and Dr. George Tiller, June 2009*

We've all seen the pornographic pictures.
We've all seen what's lead to a
clothesline full of dirty laundry:

A forearm stamped up and down
with cigarette burns.

A head, bright with Cholas colors
slammed through their nursery wall.

Her mouth,
so, so much better than his,
finally shut up – by a fist full of keys
and a left hook from behind,
aimed repeatedly at her face.
Because, (sobbing) he was so sorry.
He could not protect her
(she – so trusting!) from that animal
who just came and took her.

We've all seen the pornographic pictures,
then locked our own deadbolts,
and turned our own pages.

We've also seen other pictures:

Of lockups with cots in the halls.
Of children sleeping under desks
of social service offices, lacking
in emergency placements,
and homes barred from taking them back.

"Which child are you asking about?" her
hand reaching for the top of a pile

of files at the tipping point. She admitted sheepishly, she might not know if I was looking for a fugitive or a corpse.

PIPPO MARZULLI

LA PIÙ GRANDE POESIA MAI SCRITTA

La più grande poesia mai scritta,
la poesia più significativa,
la poesia che cambia il mondo,
non la trovi su delle pagine
impregnate di tempo & passione,
non la trovi incisa nel marmo
che degli uomini custodisce il verbo,
non la trovi spruzzata sui muri
che privano della libertà,
non la trovi nelle parole
tanto care a chi schematizza la vita
con regole, leggi, decreti.

La scrivono ogni giorno i compagni
col proprio sangue.

Ho visto compagni

avere una casa

e poi abbandonarla

per abitare nei presidi

di chi una casa non l'ha mai avuta.

Ho visto compagni,

che ci vedono benissimo,

dichiararsi daltonici

perché non è col colore della pelle o etnia

che si giustifica la follia.

Ho visto compagni

vivere nell'agiatezza,

ascoltare la voce del mondo,

mollare tutto

e partire verso il nulla

per costruire un mondo migliore.

Ho visto compagni

fare scudo col proprio corpo

dalle manganellate e l'ingiustizie legalizzate

per far prendere aria

a chi era represso.

Ho visto compagni

di natura schizzinosa

sporcarsi le mani di merda
 mettendole addosso ai camerati
 pur di difendere la libertà
 del popolo anestetizzato.
 Ho visto compagni
 rifiutare 30 danari e comode poltrone
 pur di conservare
 quel pugno levato al cielo
 della memoria e del futuro.
 Ho visto compagni
 cucirsi la bocca e far voto del silenzio
 pur di non esser sessisti
 e in virtù di questa scelta
 esser derisi.
 Ho visto compagni
 con le braccia corte
 abbracciare alberi giganteschi
 pur di salvarli,
 compagni minuscoli
 riuscire a fermare trivelle gigantesche
 pur di difendere mari & monti,
 compagni gonfiare il petto ossuto
 e fare barricata
 per fermare camion di monnezza,
 compagni con gambe robuste
 come radici che permeavano il territorio.
 Ho visto compagni
 in buona salute, forti e curati nell'aspetto
 non ingoiare pillole, non mangiar carne, non usare trucchi
 per non uccideretorturareingabbiareeschiavizzaredissanguare
 vite inermi.
 La più grande poesia mai scritta,
 la poesia più significativa,
 la poesia che cambia il mondo,
 la scriviamo ogni giorno col nostro sangue
 senza ambire ad alcun premio.

THE GREATEST POETRY EVER WRITTEN

The greatest poetry ever written,
the most significant poetry,
the poetry that changes the world
you won't find on pages
impregnated in time with passion,
you won't find it cut into marble
that the word of human beings cherishes,
you won't find it sprayed on walls
deprived of liberty,
you won't find it in words
so dear to those who organize life
with rules, laws, decrees.
Comrades write it every day
with their own blood.
I've seen comrades
having houses
who abandoned them
to live in garrison camps
that a house never had had.
I've seen comrades
who see very well
declaring themselves colorblind
because it's not with skin-color or ethnicity
that madness is justified.
Seen comrades
living in comfort
hearing the voice of the world,
letting go of everything
and setting off toward nothingness
to construct a better world.
Seen comrades
make shields of their own bodies
from the bludgeoning and legalized injustices
in order to have breath
for whomever was repressed.
Seen comrades
of finicky nature

dirty their hands with shit
 and put them on friends
 only in order to defend the liberty
 of the anaesthetized people.
 Seen comrades
 reject 30 plush and comfortable armchairs
 simply to preserve
 that fist of memory and the future
 raised up to the sky.
 Seen comrades
 keeping their mouths shut and voting for silence
 in order not to be sexists
 and, by virtue of that choice,
 be ridiculed.
 I've seen comrades
 with short arms
 embracing gigantic trees
 simply to save them,
 small comrades
 succeeding in stopping gigantic drills
 just to defend seas and mountains,
 comrades' scrawny chests swelling
 in making a barricade
 to stop a truck full of garbage,
 comrades with robust legs
 like roots permeating the territory.
 I've seen comrades
 in good health, strong and cared-for in aspect,
 who don't swallow pills or eat meat, don't use make-up
 in order not to killtorturejailenslavebleed
 defenseless lives.
 The greatest poetry ever written,
 the most significant poetry,
 the poetry that changes the world
 we write every day with our blood
 without ambition for some prize.

(Translated from Italian by Jack Hirschman)

SARAH MENEFEE

from **SQUAT**

for 'the dirty kids'

1.

I have spent
the night in
an old barracks squat
on a radioactive
decommissioned
navy base

on an artificial island
in the beautiful Bay
where people from
the streets are given
housing and slow death
so cynically
out of sight

and came home
with little sores
on my chest

my young friend
had deep ones
from being there
full of typhus for
seeking a roof

I bought him
red and black spray paint he
painted Fuck the Nazis on
its military walls

all part of
the same gang

'the biggest one of all
is the police' he wrote

*

now here's

Mike Lee
from our SF
Homeless Union days
almost 30 years ago
he's been in
Las Vegas stirring
it up
came back to
take care of
some medical stuff
discovered his old
Tenderloin fleabags
now rent for \$300 a week
so he's staying at
an encampment
at 15th and Potrero
facing off the cops
who come to
wake and harass
that petty form of torture
called move along
no wonder the kids
talk about
the zombie apocalypse
what can we see
beyond such dystopias?

2.

here be dragons and
homeless Michael comes
with his silver-stranded
long Korean hair
still determined and clear
and Pirate Mike
and Rover Mike
and Lullaby and Jesse
and Trigger and Styx

and Willow and Muzik
Cody and Chotas
Ninja Kitty and Gypsy
and Mike Z and Charlie
and Lilith and Julie
Skud and shaman Ayat
Julianna and her Arielle

who can count
the dreams they
create between
them? enuf to roll
the planet over
into another
epoch

of their
utterly practical
hearts' desires
a new
naked myth
of the global tribe

of the sharing of all
this nature-grown
and human-created abundance
and every story and all
this love

3.

as Nelson Peery says
it's a spiritual question
this economic and social one

and the companion animals
Rover's dog Jack
and Dottie's beloved Zach
her art space evicted for
the sake of another
million bux

the English guy

who slept alongside
the Old First Church
on Van Ness Ave said
I am not homeless
the earth is my home
a scavenged rose
and carnation
by his head

the homeless artists say
unfolding their visions from
backpacks and bags
no evictions in heart space
because we share here
or die

private property kills
capitalism loots
and will itself die
when overthrown

by the hands of
our powerful
sane obsession
for justice and peace

by our need to
take care how
we save our souls
from despair

4.

we were born
to do something
so epochal
born into time
into this one
I got an occupation
get a bum
you dirty jobs
the street kids wrote

in chalk on the gentrifying
streets

they call themselves
the dirty kids

know how
to make kitchens
out of none
the cops got their
pots and pans
in a campsite sweep
they wander on
with a flame in the lead

out of every imperium
that's collapsing
around them
a whole prison state
built of the cracks
in the groans
of hunger's
crimes

who sleep in the moon
and the rain.

GARRETT MURPHY

2015 OPPRESSOR OF THE YEAR

Whereas,
You have lived by the credo
Of claiming to speak for the oppressed
Better than the oppressed ever could,

Whereas,
You have claimed to act for their own good
But really more for your own,

Whereas,
You crave to be part of a movement
Especially as its LEADER,

Whereas,
You have woven an imaginary tale
With the most succinct blend of hubris
And delusions of grandeur,

You have provided a grande example
Of the classic and quintessential qualities
Of being an oppressor
(and all while having your prey believe
you a friend and ally).

Hence, it is our honor to award the
2015 OPPRESSOR OF THE YEAR AWARD
to you...

...Rachel Dolezal.

*[Editor's note: Rachel Dolezal is a white woman who passed as black
and served as president of the Spokane N.A.A.C.P. chapter.]*

EDWARD MYCUE

RAGNAROK

The enemy of my enemy is my friend. The friend of my enemy is my enemy. The friend of my friend is my friend (unless that friend is a friend of the friend of my enemy). The feud of my family is a breach in the friendship of my blood. My blood is my enemy. This the edge of my world and how rotten is the tooth of my despair. Does peace have a pulse for peace? Does our world have a hope? I read seas are rising, glaciers disappearing, crops failing. When 30 years ago I asked great aunt Antonia Bellone how then she felt, she said "disgusted" (memento mori, rewind.) In San Francisco every wave in the Pacific Ocean here at Land's End, where great ships foundered, brings back unfinished symphonies: the future is ugly, sharp paradigm shifts, earth jimjams a jungle, diamond skies, sea change, playground happenings, tree rats scurrying into the canopies, everyone here is there under the surface of consciousness along with all the bungled aspirations, mischances, mistakes, errors, crimes completing apprenticeships, and over the mind a brown shale—roomtone, mouthfeel, reordering parts, rationing emotions. Ripening memories pressing upward, stardust a diminishing gusher, thickening light a sea scar.

BILL NEVINS

**HOW THEY DO SO PLAN FOR US--MYTHS OF WAR,
OR,
JSOC AND THE FAT BOSSES' 21ST CENTURY FEVER
DREAMS**

He my son
"lived in honor"
they say
died in war
correctly
they tell me--
that high commandant of NATO and National Guard Generals and
the Spec Ops brotherhood
all with one stern voice say:
he was a hero (meaning he is alright in hero-land Valhalla-heaven or
simply in the hearts of living comrades all trained to love him well
—I needn't fret behind my Gold Star pin,
i am advised to take comfort and warmth as loyal parents do

Now, to them,
He is nearly a Myth
Who fell to fire
Loyally
for them and for our beloved families
and for their well considered battle plans
and border walls
Far over there
somewhere
wherever they say it was
where no one here
really
knows where
and they tell me
he died for freedom for peace in defense of our dear land
and people
for honor
against terror and cowardice,
fear
and savage flames.

As the nuke nations rattle their unimaginable firestorm spears,
threatening to bring liquids of human bodies bubbling on a
concrete floor,
let us draw a veil.
Let us ignore the fascist dog-babble for a while.

Here,
I am walking and reading mysterious irish poems of thomas kinsella
feeling heartbeats in cool cloudy river air.
I am happy to be here;
I think my son is with me, happy as well
to be here.
We feel no fear.

In this fog of peace, as they say,
I walk along a shallow river ocean
while women work far ashore
each pressing her earnest soul
against that grinding wheel of death,
each railing in her quiet voice at the inevitability of war,
of daughters sons mothers and fathers
dying
of children dead
of tidal dread.

Come round at last here in even this dry land of sun
contemplating how it will be to be . . . to be old,
very old,
contemplating that holy cold,
imagining the calculations over Ukraine or Iraq
over Russia
over Pakistan Aghanistan India Vietnam
over China over China over China
over Palestine
over Africa
over all borders
over all revolutions begun and crushed
and the arithmetic of bones involved.

Then,
shuddering awake and seeing myself some fine old poet,
strolling here in Albuquerque late winter

on the border of mad and wise
on the border of USA and world
and realizing with a startle that I am now returned to myself,
in joy, smiling as my son, very much here in this borderland,
laughs.

"Old man old man,"
he sings to his crazy old man,
we each in our myths mad,
and sane joyous brave and wild.

oh
I weep happily for my
sweet dead child.
and, oh, I laugh
in joy at long long last
for the borders crossed
for the lands freed
for the liberating fire this time
for the flames

EDOARDO OLMI

VIOLENCE IS...

VIOLENCE IS...

atto I

act I

violenza è un fast food
un'agenda un satellite;
la Chiesa Cattolica e tutte le
chiese: indistintamente.

violence is a fast food
an agenda a satellite;
the Catholic Church and all
churches: without distinction.

lo Stato, Sanremo
isciversi al partito
violenza è un passatempo
è già di per sé
essere vivo.

the State, Sanremo
signing up to the party
violence is a pastime
in and of itself
being alive.

violenza è un cane da guardia.
la guardia inglese; svegliarsi dalla
cosa migliore che ti potesse capitare
per scoprire che stavi solo
sognando

violence is a watchdog.
the English watchdog; waking
from the best thing that
could happen to you
to discover you've only been
dreaming

atto II

act II

violenza è Studio Aperto
voler essere da qualche altra parte;
gli specchi dei bar e tutti i bar
borghesi: indistintamente.

violence is Open Studio
wanting to be from elsewhere;
mirrors in bars and all bourgeois
bars: without exception.

la Realpolitik, un orologio
la macchina burocratica
violenza è il sottopasso
la persona giuridica.

the Realpolitik, a clock
the bureaucratic machine
violence is the underpass
the juridical person.

cercare l'infinito,
una frontiera,
lo Zecchino d'Oro; violenza

looking for the infinite
a frontier,
the Gold Coin; violence

è una crema per la pelle
la prima
fila dei viali

is a skin cream
the first
row of boulevards

atto III

act III

talvolta la terza talvolta
la seconda –

sometimes the third sometimes
the second---

violenza è civiltà
è una sveglia che suona
alle 06:00 del mattino,
la tua faccia riflessa
allo specchio sopra
il tuo lavandino. fissati

violence is civilization
it's an alarm that sounds
at 6 in the morning,
your face reflected
in the mirror over
your sink. gazed at

un istante e sei finito,
un altro giorno regalato
a un Occidente
di David fermi immobili
ma nei loro
diritti: inalienabili

an instant and you're finished,
another day granted
to a West
of Davids motionless
but in their
rights: inalienables

c'è sempre qualcuno
che si ha paura di incontrare
camminando per strada;
beh coraggio
rialzati e picchia
la legge è sorda,
non parlarci
non ti sente

there's always someone
one's afraid of meeting
walking on the street;
take heart
get up and fight
the law's deaf,
don't speak to it
it doesn't hear you

parla con me.
io sono l'anarchia

speak with me.
I am anarchy

[Translated from Italian by Jack Hirschman with Lapo Guzzini]

DOROTHY (DOTTIE) PAYNE

THERE IS NO FORGETTING

*You ask me why I care,
why I risk all that I am--
have been--
and I'll tell you: "Things keep happening."
Pablo Neruda*

Things keep happening:

I have seen the walls that darken
the Negev, that blinded the world
to Mohammed al Duri.

There is no escaping
borders that get higher
and wider--
darkening the Deserts of Death.

I've heard the screams in the night,
tasted the sulphured morning air
after their kill--

I've been there.

Watched as they wrestled children to the
ground like sacrificial sheep;
made us see it over and over on T.V.,
made us complicit there--now here--
made us witness their lynchings

In the streets--
reveal the horrors to come--
and they have--
one, by one, by one...

Boys, young sons,
murdered one way or another,
our heads hooded along with theirs

virtual lynchings;

kept us busy scrambling
to stay safe ourselves;
desperate to figure out how

to survive yet another horror,
desperate to breathe.

What to do with all this death?
This is the question that presses now:
We hold our breath,
but the looping truth returns,
again and again,
in 10th dimension clarity:

There is no past.
No "over there".
It lives here--
everywhere--

Where the Slaughterers for Greed
beat the calf who just wants
to suckle its mother;
Murder the man
who just wants to breathe;
Strangles the woman
who dares to speak;
Diminishes the man
whose land he stands upon;
Slaughters the boy
with hands in the air.

There can be no forgetting this:

No forgetting this blood in our streets;
No forgiving the green in the pockets
of those who choose not to see;
No forgiving the cunning, the deceit,
the fondling under our sheets;
No ignoring the stain on our own hands
if we do not put our bodies on the ground
to stop this;
No wallowing in the sorrow
of our perfect knowledge of all this,
No forgetting the dollars for drones
with our morning toast.

Here in the sterile wombs of

the young, the ripped organs
of those too soon sexed--
there will be no dialing for dollars
on our daughters' backs.

No,
There will be no forgetting this.

Things keep happening in this
deepening darkness:
the dead keep dying,
the flags keep flying
as the bankers burn the midnight oil
stockpiling stolen goods
as the children keep starving
--and they keep silencing the poets--
But, there will be no forgetting this.

MARCY REIN

UNION DRIVE AT OXBOW CARBON AND MINERAL

Alex and Chuy and the rest of the guys
lounge against the patio walls or sprawl in the booths.
Night drops, and light from inside the Mexican restaurant
strokes their smooth skulls.
That's the style: shaved heads, bushy mustaches, one stud earring.
The bigger the stone, the smoother the scalp, the better.

They spend their days on the big machines of small boys' tractor
dreams,
shoveling the piles of black coke left behind from oil refining,
misted in dark toxic dust.
They have only paper masks to guard their lungs.
Each guy does the work of two,
look at the boss wrong, they're gone—
they know any union worth its dues could take him on.

But it goes deeper. Asked why they're there,
Eddie turns his empty pockets inside out, mouth quirked down.
John whips out his wallet and flips to the picture of his wife and
kids.
Miguel thumps his beer on the table. "Respect, man!"
Nods and grunts of assent. "You got that right."

Holding their Coronas with thick first fingers stuck in the
bottlenecks,
they light up learning the law, where they can talk union and when.
They piece their way through the handbill, then dare each other
to plant it on the bulletin board in the boss' face.
They count noses, looking to the vote.
"We got all but three, and we know
where those guys live," Chuy says.

They don't yet know how they'll be tested.

The old yellow light from inside drops deep shadows between them.

The dark plays off their faces
but in their need they seem not to see it,
and they leave,
handclasps and
slaps on the back all 'round.

ANTHONY ROBINSON JR.

STRANGE FRUIT

The cherry blossoms with a bullet in its pit
because its roots have been watered by the
muffled screams of slaves hanging from its branches...
A child plants a prayer in the garden of his mother's mind
next to his father's broken dreams;
she raises him on bitter milk and cold cereal:
a meal she deems
fitting to prepare him for the world.

I sometimes wonder if Trayvon Martin
and Oscar Grant are in heaven
writing an epistle to the people
on the same bullet?
I imagine it would read:

“To the Black and minority people
of revolutionary merit,
our communities have become the death blossoms
that the power structure in America
uses as rationalizations to parade its paramilitary
and institutionalized mass incarcerating agendas
to wipe out a colorless class...
Colorless in regards to any political hue
that would give us the power to paint our visions
with the vibrant expressions
of self-determination
to act in our communities and in the
world as productive contributors
to the will of humanity.
Remember, our lives were taken with
the consent of state sanctioned jurisprudence
under the watch of a Black president.
We wanted our lives to be more than a few sad songs
and photographs pasted onto the
collective subconscious of the American people.
We see the true people of merit

organizing, protesting, marching ...
We've tuned in so much to the rhythms
of the people's heart for change
that we threw a concert in heaven
so that we could watch the angels dance.
Some of them hadn't cut up in a while.
We are tired of dancing,
but we're noticing that the music is getting louder.
Please, don't let them stop the music;
now it seems we can't rest without it.
Sincerely, Trayvon and Oscar"

The cherry blossoms fall from their stems
willingly in order to be free of the noose.
Falling with the determined strength to live free,
they plunge into the soil
similar to slaves overboard cargo ships
plunging into the ocean
with the purest memory of freedom in their hearts...

Black and minority people have been pitted against so
many antagonisms and contradictions that it is hard
for us to recognize the value of our seed.
Maybe it is more important for us to remember the source
from which our water is gathered:
inner strengths like love, faith and determination...
Yes! We are proudly recognizing that we are strange fruit in
America; strange because once we blossom into the people we
are meant to be, only God will recognize our names ...

RACE IS POLICY

Sirens disturb embryonic dreams
because police are so thirsty for the souls of black folks
that they dispatch search and seizure warrants
before the third trimester...
Batons beat back expectations
for forty acres and a mule. While police
huddle in ideological training lectures
reiterating the epitome of Willy Lynch letters,
patrolling the ghetto looking for niggas to tar and feather,
we are enduring new millennial humiliations in regards
to the lynchings, sentencing, and incarcerations under
the guise of progressive changes:
While our limbs and appendages are still being auctioned
because a nigga's value does not exceed the depths
of working the field of some prison, being chased on an episode of
Cops, or hangin' on CNN...
We remember the Oscar Grants, Mike Browns, and Trayvon
Martins
but rarely do we recall the homicidal police
who are protected by the forgetting.
Freeze! america: in the grips of this truth
you put yo mutha fuckin' hands up and pray
for me not to shoot...
The bullet or the ballot.
Patrol or parole.
Penitentiary or college.
Freedom or turmoil.
Race is Policy!

LUIS J. RODRIGUEZ
PEOPLE'S SONNETS

1.

A shadow hangs where my country should glow.
Despite glories shaped as skyscrapers or sound.
More wars, more prisons, less safe, still low.
Massive cities teeter on shifting ground.
Glittering lights, music tracks hide the craven.
TV, movies, books so we can forget.
Countless worn out, debt-laden & slaving;
Their soul-derived destinies unmet.

Give me NASCAR, lowriders, Hip Hop, the Blues.
Give me Crooklyn, cowboys, cool jazz, cholos.
Give me libraries, gardens of the muse.
Give me songs over sidewalks, mad solos.
 Big America improperly sized.
 Give me your true value, realized.

2.

Praise to shoes on a homeless winter night
Praise to mothers who nurture without men
Praise to the bottom in a drug-mad flight
Praise to the poet who shatters with a pen
Praise to vibrant children in a static world
Praise to dreamers in cash-only exchanges
Praise to the tattered flag of justice, unfurled
Praise to our nation's depth, breadth and ranges
Praise to a renewing earth with global warming
Praise to large spirits even in cages
Praise to the new alignments now forming
Praise to anger with eyes, not blind rages
 There is much to praise, if we are to last
 The big within the small, the small in the vast

3.

Let us dare haunting verse of the oppressed,
poems with hoodies, finger-tapping, ambling.
I mean pissed off and ardently expressed,
poems delirious as midnight rambling.
Bebop, Hip Hop, a *decima* or slam,
metered lyrics, free shaped texts... no matter,
bring out the fire, the punch, a resounding jam.
Let it ring far, a magnificent chatter.
Naming the nameless, voicing the unheard,
questioning the questions, swimming, splashing.
No expert strokes but damn if not expert word;
every line bleeding, grieving, pleading, slashing.
 The power of poetry is its stance,
 page or stage, electrifying or trance.

JULIE ROGERS

WAR CRIME

The women in those countries
have their sex cut off, a victory
for the men and their tradition.
They hold the little girls down as they
scream. They say this makes them calm.
Their virtue is strong
and their vaginas are sewn shut like war wounds
and if that's not enough
they later force them open
for you know what: this is how
they save it for their husbands.
The photograph of an eight-year old
with her mouth stretched wide
and her eyes shut tight
and her brow wrinkled up
was in an American paper.
It was taken of her at the ritual
when her clitoris was cut like a vegetable
as the mother gave her blessing.
The article said nothing could be done.
When the girls grow up
they do it to their own.

from House of the Unexpected

LEW ROSENBAUM

ODE TO CAPITALISM

I hate you.

I mean, *I hate you!*

The way your circus of commodity production

Screams molten lead across my frozen

Fevered brain,

I am classed-and-filed in the cell of my wage labor,

Confined in the solitary hiding place of

Stygian nightmares, lost in Lethian forgetfulness,

I hate you.

I love your surplus

The electronic French-kissing tongue

That spits out endless quantities of consumables

I want to leap from the Walmartian tower of

Appliances begging to transform my kitchen,

But I see that gleam of qualitative antagonism

Darting from the calculating, dilating pupils of your eyes.

You tell me money is the root of all accumulation

As you sweep away my fantasies and

I am just another Tantalus stuck in your wet dream

Of profiteering

My hands reaching for what I need

Always at the edge of my grasp,

Beyond my fingers, pain-wracked with stretching.

I hate you capitalism

Because you *can* feed me but you *won't*

And nothing I can do will convince you

To guarantee me an annual income even in

Worthless money.

I don't love *you* capitalism! I love your cell phone

I hate your insulation and isolation, you are the

Padded prison of my individualism,

The asbestos that covers the hot pipes through which my blood

flows

Cooling me from hating you capitalism, and still I hate you.

Oh Circe-like capitalism!

Flush my mind with
Your distillery's nepenthus brew
And in my stupor I will love you forever!

I will hate you capitalism,
Until my fingers sculpt a new social organism
That will tear your murderous calumny to bits
And build a world to kill hunger, satisfy love!

DON'T SHOOT

1999

Amadou Diallo

23 years old

Guinean immigrant in The Bronx,
New York.

His name rolls off the tongue

Like waves rising from the port of Conakry
To crash at the foot of the Statue of Liberty.

Shot 41 times

By four white police officers.

2011

Kelly Thomas

Thirty-seven years old

Homeless, Anglo, schizophrenic man.

Citrus-scented hallucinations

Taunt his fevered

Fullerton, California, street dreams.

Beaten to death by the police.

2014

Michael Brown

19 years old

African American bound for college,

Hope gripped tight,

A future denied.

Shot 6 times

In Ferguson, Missouri.

Come: See the blood

Running in the streets of my country.

Does it matter

If it's 41 shots

Or only 6 –

Or (merely) beaten to death?

Amadou Diallo's killers

Were judged not guilty.

Kelly Thomas: verdict not guilty.

How will Michael Brown's killers be judged?

Come see the blood,
Blood that torrents down the streets
Of my poor country.

Michael Brown, his student life opening before him;
Kelly Thomas, living in the trap of his delusions;
They achieved the equality of the bullet and night-stick,
Both shed blood to wash the streets of their cities.

Amadou's mother cried out, sobbing:
She had "the talk" with her son.
Surely Michael's mother had
"the talk."
Even before Trayvon Martin
I had "the talk" with my grandson.
Today I shiver as his
Brown-skinned hands brandish his toy rifle.

Come see, how the blood
Floods the streets of my rich country.

These, our words, are
Our weapons.
Our weapons draw all the poor together
In what is a tapestry of common purpose,
That join us in a vision of a country
Where no one wants for a place to stay
For food to eat
For songs to sing

Where the conjoined blood
That today separately runs rivulets in the streets
Will bind us together
To return laughter to our throats
Peace to our hearts
Justice to our hands.

RICHARD SANDERELL

FORKED TONGUES SPOKEN IN BROKEN ENGLISH

Speak with forked tongues and in broken english, language of the
Empire!
Viral! Bacterial! A language of hope that gives none, where audacity
stands
frozen and frightened.
Speak to us with forked tongues and in broken english so everyone
understands with whom they are speaking .
The Empire is where leaders lead but the people find themselves
leaderless
and confused by their broken language!
In our Empire all the presidents' names are george.
Remember to speak to us with forked tongues and in broken
english so
truths can remain hidden and we fight and argue from viewpoints
that are
viewless and pointless.
Speak to us with forked tongues and in broken english so that what
was
done to the aboriginal people will continue being done to us the
children of
Empire.
Speak to us with your forked tongues and in broken english so
Orwell's
double speak reigns and shines.
Speak to us straight and we will just assume
you are lying.

E. SAN JUAN, JR.

PUNTA SPARTIVENTO

“In the naked and outcast, seek love there.”—William Blake

Kamusmusa’y pinaglahuan, Mahal ko
Hinubdang kariktan ng lawa, bundok at ulap na maaliwalas--Bakit
malulungkot?
Sa kabilang ibayo nagliliyab ang mga bulaklak, pula, dilaw, asul o
kulay luntian

Ngunit ang nakaraan ay sumisingit sa ganda’t aliwalas ng kalikasan
Bumibiyak sa pinagbuklod na puso’t humahati sa pinagtipan
Nagugunita ang pinakasasabikan
“Ininis sa hukay ng dusa’t pighati”
Alaala ng kinabukasan—
anong balighong simbuyo ang naibulalas ng dumaragsang hangin?

Sa dalampasigan ng lawa dito sa Punta Spartivento
kung saan naghiiwalay ang hangin—sa kaliwa o sa kanan--
Tila walang pagpapasiya, itinutulak sa kaliwa o kinakabig sa kanan
Pinaghahati ng tadhana o kapalaran?
O itinitulak ng pagkamuhi, kinakabig ng pagmimithi?

Anong uring ibon doon sa kabilang pampang—pumapaimbulog,
pumapailanlang?
Tila kuko ng mandaragit ang humahagupit ngayon
Nagsisikip ang dibdib, balisa sa pagkabigo, pinagtiim ang bagang

Buhay ma’y abuting magkalagot-lagut—walang kailangan....

Doon ang pag-ibig sa mga hinagupit ng walang-katarungang orden,
doon sa mga dukha’t ibinukod ng kabuktutan.

Agaw-dilim sa Punta Spartivento, humhati’t bumibiyak sa agos ng
panahon at karanasan
Sa pangungulila, kumikintal sa gunita ang mga mandirigmang
sumakabilang buhay
Di matatarok ang lalim ng pag-ibig sa tinubuang lupa

Patuloy ang paglalakbay sa kabila ng hanggahang humahati't
naghihiwalay sa atin

Mahal ko, namimilaylay sa iyong labi ang damdaming biyaya ng
nahubdang kamalayan
Nakintal sa dalumat, sa pagitan ng panganib at dahas, ang kailangan
at di-kailangan
Ang walang halaga at may halaga, pinaghahati't pinaghihiwalay...

Pinagpala ang mga kaibigang namundok at nag-alay ng kanilang
buhay
Pinagpala ang mga walang pag-aaring nagdusa't nagdurusa para sa
kinabukasan
Pinagpala ang mga bayaning naghiwalay at humati, nagbukod at
nagbiyak
Magtatagpo ang lahat sa Punta Spartivento ng pakikipagtuos.

PUNTA SPARTIVENTO

Innocence has flickered out, my Beloved,
The disrobed glory of the lake mountains clouds is the gift offered by
nature
From the distant shore burn the flowers symbolizing the promised
blessings....
But what wings of the past sneak in
 shrouding the beauty and sanctity of our meeting?
 splitting the unity of desire, dividing our trust?
Remembering the violated victims "plunged in the grave of suffering and
despair...."
Souvenirs of the future--
 what tidings are trumpeted by the turbulent winds?
They killed Juvy Magsino, Benjaline Hernandez, Eden Marcellana, Rafael
Bangit, Alyce Claver...
On the shores of Punta Spartivento, the waves encounter each other and
separate--
 right or left, here and there--as if without any decision,
 pushed to the right
 or pulled to the left
 divided by fate or fortune?
 driven by hatred, attracted by hope?
What sails have traveled to the other shore--moving to and fro, up
and down, hither and thither?
Famished claws of vultures are striking down--
 Scarcely does the wanderer sense the crimes that have occurred
 and are now occurring--
 755 murdered, 181 abducted and abused--
Was it all a waste, Salud Algabre?
 "Even if a life is extinguished?" how many more leaps?
Those tortured by this unjust order link us together,
 they connect and are joined by what has disappeared, drowned by
barbarism....
Dusk falls on Punta Spartivento....
 dividing and splitting the flow of experience....
In my solitude, all the combatants who have perished are inscribed
in the psyche, transcending the claws and fangs
 of this port that divide and fragment---
My beloved, in your lips treads the dawn of the promised beatitude,
grafted into the cut of grief and rapture,
 of what is needed and not needed,

of what is valueless and what is valued,
while we embrace, our jaws clenched,
attacking the shore's whirlwind.....

Blessed are the thousands of victims of the oligarchy and compradors
in the fissure of the past now sunk and tomorrow
heaving up, surging.

Blessed are the comrades who, separated and divided,
selected and cut up
The world will know who deserted and who volunteered,
those who fought and those who fled--
Everyone will meet here at the Punta Spartivento of the revolution.

[translated from the original filipino by the author, e. san juan, jr.]

G.G. WASSERMAN SERENE

THE SUFFERING PROLETARIAT

The ocular windows
 of uneasy apprehension,
Glances of low lying fear,
Movements of social fragility,
The scrolling thoughts
 of a vulnerable people
 designate a slogan of reality
 made visible by attentive hearts.

The charred skin of birth
 walks the lonely aisles
 of neighborhood burial grounds
 beyond the railroad tracks.

They're dueling with box cutter cries of hunger
 surviving under the legal radar
 meant to terrorize
 while both unassuming zombies
 and petulant sopranos
 achieve the daily laps of comfort
 from the spoils of American Empire
 without a word to their victims
 of colonial usurpation;

They jet between their snooty worlds
 to subordinate
 the human wage horses
 of factory farms and offices.

Taskmasters host the orgies
 of dehumanization;

The toilers' circumspect worry
 inhibits their humor
 and the adlibbing jazz streams
 of conscious thought;

A deafening knock on the cotton doors
 of the ethnic proletariat
 is a sledge hammer
 bashing a family to fragments,
 guaranteeing an executioner

at the end of deportation.
Black granite faces
in a modern politics of acid rain
await the heavy metal
of false charges,
dungeons and murder.
Poor whites
eat at the same canteens
of depredations
in hope-drained networks
of suppression.
An idea begins to grow the cells of eye sight.
The people scratch forth
from fountains of suffering
creating drums
of contentious non-compliance
and close ranks
in a parsing of methods,
with a refinement of intent,
waking up the moon's long winded repose;
They can move
against the rulers of production;
a menacing world finance--
powering genocidal machines
for conquest and rape
of the sacred seeds
of Earth's journey.
Only those crystallized minds
with the wise waters
of inner learning
and the etched scars of battle
have an interest in change,
spraying an enduring polish
of subversion
on the wheels of evolution
by any means necessary.

NINA SERRANO

GOOD MORNING REVOLUTION

*(Written on my 81st birthday- Sept 1, 2015 in memory of
Langston Hughes, author of "Good Morning Revolution.")*

Revolution you are always happening
Already today we revolved around our axis
and it is a new day
Already today new beings are born
and we are all closer to dying
Already this morning employees are on the job
positioning the lever and pressing the computer button
to drop drones on wedding guests, fruit vendors, and school
children
from a list the president approved perhaps last night before bed
Already the events of this day are in the process of unfolding
this mystery of a new day
of events set in motion millenniums ago
of underground shifting plates
and the undone ciphers left on your To Do list
that will turn around and bite
There is the accident waiting to happen
And the deep love that is about to jell, solidify
and wrap you in an unseen amour of joy
The connection between you and even your jailer
you and your mother
you and the stars
It is already in motion and yet
you are the essential element
to make the next thing happen
Our hard wiring demands we feel connected
Solitary confinement is our cruel torture
Yet in my quiet alone-ness
or when wrapped in rhapsodic music or in love's arms
I feel the ecstasy of being part of the whole
knowing completeness in my smallest particles
that one day will rejoin the ether and atmosphere
making new things happen
in the permanent revolution of life.

WARSAN SHIRE

NO ONE LEAVES HOME

no one leaves home unless
home is the mouth of a shark
you only run for the border
when you see the whole city running as well
your neighbors running faster than you
breath bloody in their throats
the boy you went to school with
who kissed you dizzy behind the old tin factory
is holding a gun bigger than his body
you only leave home
when home won't let you stay.
no one leaves home unless home chases you
fire under feet
hot blood in your belly
it's not something you ever thought of doing
until the blade burnt threats into
your neck
and even then you carried the anthem under
your breath
only tearing up your passport in an airport toilet
sobbing as each mouthful of paper
made it clear that you wouldn't be going back.
you have to understand,
that no one puts their children in a boat
unless the water is safer than the land
no one burns their palms
under trains
beneath carriages
no one spends days and nights in the stomach of a truck
feeding on newspaper unless the miles travelled
means something more than journey.
no one crawls under fences
no one wants to be beaten
pitied
no one chooses refugee camps
or strip searches where your

body is left aching
or prison,
because prison is safer
than a city of fire
and one prison guard
in the night
is better than a truckload
of men who look like your father
no one could take it
no one could stomach it
no one skin would be tough enough
the
go home blacks
refugees
dirty immigrants
asylum seekers
sucking our country dry
niggers with their hands out
they smell strange
savage
messed up their country and now they want
to mess ours up
how do the words
the dirty looks
roll off your backs
maybe because the blow is softer
than a limb torn off
or the words are more tender
than fourteen men between
your legs
or the insults are easier
to swallow
than rubble
than bone
than your child body
in pieces.
i want to go home,
but home is the mouth of a shark
home is the barrel of the gun

and no one would leave home
unless home chased you to the shore
unless home told you
to quicken your legs
leave your clothes behind
crawl through the desert
wade through the oceans
drown
save
be hunger
beg
forget pride
your survival is more important
no one leaves home until home is a sweaty voice in your ear
saying-
leave,
run away from me now
i dont know what i've become
but i know that anywhere
is safer than here

LESLIE SIMON

THE SORROW AND THE RAGE

there's driving along Lake Shore Drive jazz
walking the streets of Manhattan jazz
taking the subway in Brooklyn jazz
up in The Bronx jazz

Harlem jazz

South Central

Venice on the L.A. beach jazz

North Beach in Frisco jazz

before he ever said "don't call it Frisco"

and after now, when they do

there's white girls singing jazz

like me in this poem

when mostly we should just be listening to Billie jazz

there's back behind the woods jazz

the blowing down the house, the street, the river jazz

the last night, the last stand, the last straw

the sorrow and the rage jazz

I pressed the CD button in my car

"Strange Fruit" played

the poem about lynching written by a Jew

that Billie sang until she couldn't anymore

I said "not tonight, I have my own sorrow, too much for me
tonight"

foolish me, privileged me

I pressed the radio button in my car to switch from the poem

and got the real thing

Michael Brown dead on the street

killed by what we used to call the Man

who never ever has to account for, never has to be sorry for, never

has to go to jail for

slowly it unwound, the music in my head, that long ago memory

we had just crossed the border
with our white skins in our old VW bus
when we reached Texarkana, Texas, five cop cars pulled up
surrounded us, as they do
they said the man beside me riding gunshot
“matched the description of a bank robber in the previous town”
they ripped apart our car, looking for dope
and then let us go
so when they said: “Michael Brown matched the description of a
suspect in a store robbery that had just happened”

we knew, this man beside me, and me
that if we had been black, we’d be on the street dead, in jail dead, at
the bottom of the river dead
hanging from a tree dead
dope planted on us
accused of fleeing or resisting or just being black

driving in Chicago along the lake
or waiting in line outside the Keystone
to hear Rahsaan Roland Kirk
or slipping into the smallest spot on the beach
where music, that music, makes its way through the cracks
how do we put a white body next to a black body
and not turn to another station when the sorrow and the rage
becomes too much
or just enough, to shut us down

when so many poems before this poem
have begged us to listen
how could this poem be, how could any song be
how could getting a witness ever be
enough
when what we used to call the Man
owns the lies and all the stations and all the courts

this music—the sorrow and the rage—that does not stop
hear it, his mother, all their mothers, all their people
the nameless and the named ones

“pop pop, it’s a cop, pop pop”
who never ever has to account for, never has to be sorry for, never
has to go to jail for

hear *all* the people mourn
the fear and the shaking that never lets, and should never let
any *one* of us go

DOREEN STOCK

TAPING THE DOLLAR

They've never heard of this system on Wall Street or in China. When the dollar breaks in half (not quite half, actually, more like three quarters of it parts company from one quarter so that George Washington's Mona Lisa smile remains intact, you take the scotch tape from the 2nd desk drawer, pull off a dollar-width piece and tack the worn gun-powder green certificate together trying to get the edges exactly matched up. This will take you some time. The dollar you save will have been obliterated as your car was towed meanwhile so the local street fair where farm grown organic fruits and

vegetables are sold by local purveyors can take place. So tear up more dollars, lots of them, go get your impounded car and when

they question the torn pile of mangled money you are giving them

ask incredulously, "But haven't you ever heard of taping the

dollar?"

MICHELE TERESI
RISPETTO OPERAIO

Non voglio il potere
Voglio il rispetto
Per il mio lavoro
Perché sudo
Produco
Creo cibo per la vita

Nei campi
Nelle fabbriche
Nella distribuzione

Non sono un ramo secco
Che produce carta scritta
Dentro un ufficio climatizzato

Per ogni operaio che schiatta
Dieci impiegati scrivono il nulla
(col triplo della mia paga)

WORKER RESPECT

I don't want power
I want respect
For my work
Because I sweat
I produce
I make food for life

In fields
In factories
In distribution

I'm no dry branch
That produces writing paper
In a climaticized office

For every worker who croaks
Ten employees write nothing
(for three times my pay).

[translated from Italian by Jack Hirschman]

PETER URBAN

SOCIALISM OR BARBARISM

There's nothing left at all
'Cept the writing on the wall
And it's the same words
That were there in '68
When the tanks rolled into town
And crushed the workers down
And every student wore the blood-stained bandage like a crown
Now the years have stumbled by
And everything has changed
Yet everything, it still remains the same
'Cept the students are back in university
And the workers are back in the factories
Where their sweat and blood creates the mud
From which the pottery of profits are thrown
And the trade union leaders
Continue to sell us out
And the left-wing parties have nothing to say
So they merely shout
But the reality is plain to see
It's a hell of a long way down
That we've come now
To barbarism

Where were the words of Zimmerwald
In nineteen-thirty-nine
When the international working class
Was sent to fight and die
In defense of the bourgeois republics
In defense of the USSR
If we fought to defeat fascism
Explain Franco and Salazar
In the trenches of Spain
There lingers a stain
As red as the flag we fly
And it marks the fall
To barbarism

But I remember the words of Luxemburg
Not long before she died
She said, victory, it isn't preordained
There's no god on our side
There are two roads lying before us
And history will decide
One leads to freedom for the working masses
The other, to genocide
And they smashed her skull
With a rifle butt
And the revolution died
And we've come now
To barbarism

Give me back my innocence
You had no right to take
Give me back the little things
That helped each day to make
Give me back everything
The love, the life, the hate
Take me away
From barbarism

ANTONIETA VILLAMIL

SONG FOR THE WORKER WOMAN

“La poesía es un arma cargada de futuro”
—Gabriel Celaya.

It is happening right now in my heart, in my mind, on a city street of any country; but I need to take that the revolution is not here because conformity is sitting its big potato ass on a couch of misled-me tales and we, the outraged 99%, have to push all at once with all power from the ground up but first, need to dig that we are the base. Here I break the screen before the system implodes a replay in my face. Here I exercise the muscle of rights before they become flaccid, but first I need to digest this: I protest, YES, because the nipple finds its way to the needy mouth but I watch what kind of lollipop I get to shut me up. Administered like Prozac, the revolution is bipolar, sold to people as genetically altered mad cow with scorpion genes and, beware, smells like mass destruction.

The revolution is at home, teaching children another way; teaching that public woman means leader and not prostitute, as it is written in the dictionary of men, and while you grasp that, take this: Organized women of the world will close the legs not to give war more kids, still attached to placentas as body bags. These are “weapons charged with future” and take these words to heart; the revolution is a planet of hungry widows with no work; homeless women and children with a future against all common sense. And what is for breakfast and dinner is next war until the next war of poor against poor, while the 1% predator kind breaks a richer laugh.

R.B. WARREN

DETROIT CITY

James Johnson Junior, in the Great Magnolia State
Of Mississippi, had seen
With his nine year-old eyes, his cousin's lynched
And dead, and mutilated body.
Twenty-six years later,
At the Chrysler Eldon Avenue Plant,
In Detroit, on July 15, 1970,
James Johnson Junior killed
Two white-shirted foremen,
One white, and one black,
And one job setter,
With an M1-30 caliber carbine,
Loaded with years of harassment,
And put downs, and downed hopes,
And threats, and being laughed at.
The bosses fired him at the start of shift.
James went home and got the carbine
And a second badge
To get him back into the plant,
Back to the hotter than hell furnaces,
Where they'd tried to make him
Work that morning.
At his trial for murdering three men,
James Johnson Junior
Was found not guilty (innocent)
By reason of insanity,
By a jury of his peers,
Who visited the Eldon Plant,
And decided that
The Chrysler Motor Car Company,
The incarnation of faceless,
Therefore blameless evil,
Had driven James Johnson Junior
Murderously insane.
He spent 5 years in the Ionia State Hospital,
Where he sued Chrysler for workmen's comp

And won.
They had to pay him seventy five dollars a week,
Not because he killed three people,
But because the conditions,
The horror, the inhumanity,
The heat, the meanness,
The speedups, the white supremacy,
Those things Chrysler truly employed,
And were its most loyal and true employees,
Had turned James Johnson Junior
Into a killer of men.

Chrysler closed the Eldon plant.
The weed-choked parking lots added
To the NoTown MoTown emptying of Detroit.
But after that day in July of 1970,
The foremen and the supervisors
Never again wore white shirts
And shiny shoes.

CATHLEEN WILLIAMS

THE HALF HAS NEVER BEEN TOLD

Last year I traveled to Senegal
to the Isle, Goree
I stooped at
the Door of No Return
touched the grit of stone
the green Atlantic, rapacious, speechless
shattering at the rocks below.
The ground remains.
Gravelly blasted James Island
a prison of heat
in the Gambia:
renamed Kunta Kinte
peopled only by naked and spectral
Baobabs
Above an eroded, hated fort.

In North Carolina,
At the slave graveyard
Marked by cups and rocks
I saw the roughened grass,
The bristling hedge, just there,
The road going by on the right hand.
The hiss of passing cars
no more than a metaphor
for my kind of mental silence.
My own people in Newburyport, Massachusetts,
one Nathaniel Merrill, willed to his wife
by name a man he had enslaved.
When I read this in a book
I threw the book away.

Ninety years of age, born a slave,
Lorenzo Ivy was interviewed and spoke.
Quote: "When one takes Lorenzo Ivy's words as a start, the whole
history of the United States comes walking over the hill behind a
line of people in chains."

I had not glimpsed even their downcast shadows
Rippling over the ditches and icy paths
As the Creeks, the Chickasaw
The Choctaw, the Cherokee were warred out,
One million, most trudging chained, barefoot
One million driven west and south in chains.

One route from Virginia's James River
Across the Blue Ridge
To the Shenandoah
Until the Alleghenies loomed
Down the Monangahela
To the flatboats of the Ohio
To Louisville to Lexington
In Kentuck
To Alabama, Mississippi
To the city, corrupt and bejeweled,
New Orleans...

Now we all learned about the cotton gin
1793 why not this other stuff
The forced march of a chained million
In this very America?
Hand forged, the chafing iron collar
Brass bolted to the raw neck
Locked to the man in front and back
And sideways each wrist cuffed in iron
Twenty pounds of chains
A thousand miles.
Women harnessed and roped
A coffle
From the Arabic word cafire
in the language web of Africa
and America

Chained for fear of this stolen staggering wealth?
It wasn't a sad few
Pleading not to be sold down river
As we've been told

It was a million.
Not plantations.
But slave labor camps
In ruthless axed forest
All the way to the Republic
Of Texas.

***.

Quote: “And because the man in the iron collar
and all who followed
into the depths of the continent
would make not a luxury
but the most basic commodity
a new kind of endlessly expanding economy
no limit on the market
for the product of his body.”

Acceleration. Expansion. Enslaved, mortgaged, securitized for land
and seed. Banks and bonds and credit. More work, more wages in
Lowell, Massachusetts, and in Birmingham’s “satanic mills.”

The first irreversible manic age of capitalist industry.

1820: 28 pounds per day per enslaved hand.

1860: 500 or more pounds per day per cramped, clawlike hand.

The dread of unspeakable force

Cut, open, bleeding

Elemental wound.

No technology until the 1940s could harvest

The white weed.

Now we all learned about the cotton gin

1793 why not this other stuff

The forced march of a chained million

In this very America?

***.

Here’s what Lorenzo Ivy said,

Sweeping away the questions

Drafted by the WPA in 1937

He who spent his life teaching

The newly freed:

“They sold slaves here and everywhere. I’ve seen droves of Negroes
brought in here on foot going South to be sold. Each one of them
had an old tow sack on his back with everything he’s got in it. Over

the hills they came in lines reaching as far as the eye can see. They walked in double lines reaching as far as the eye can see. They walked in double lines chained together in two. They walk em here to the railroad and shipped em south like cattle.”

Truly, son, the half has never been told.”

Yet once in the slave labor camps

They married – hand drawn bracket in ledger –

Broken and woven again

Quote: “What mattered was to matter, to count,

To be essential in the life of another person.”

Joe Kilpatrick sold away from his daughters Lettice and Nelly

Adopted a son who, when grown, married, then named his

daughters

Too

Lettice and Nelly

They wove as we may weave

For a future still imagined.

Adapted and quoted from a recent book of evocative history by Edward E. Baptist, entitled the “The Half Has Never Been Told”

ERIC ALLEN YANKEE

POISON SLEEPS

One year ago "I can't breathe"
Rose up to become a battle cry

One year ago "Hands up, don't shoot"
Soared up to rally the comrades

In 2015 the Confederate battle flag
Was torn down
Reattached to a chain
Passionately defended
Taken gently down
Hung honorably in a museum
What kind of funeral for hate is this?

Sandra Bland was stopped
for a traffic violation
On July 9, 2015.
On July 13 she was dead in her cell.
Just another unfortunate accident
Just another unfortunate accidental murder
They've buried Liberty in Texas
Seceded from human rights

Donald Trump speaks of losers
Spreading their loss over his America
He is a Bully joyriding down the hall
On a skateboard made from the bones
Of the losers who lost so he could win

On July 17 we remember
Eric Garner
We saw this video of a man
with his head
crushed
to the ground
A video of a man

who became
Another rubbed out
cigarette
In the Corporate ashtray
America has now become

We are told America is post-racial
Hoods off
Black President
Blood rubbed from white hands
Except, out damn spot!
Out!
Hatred shorn away
Now covers
The bottom of our bowl
It lives
Just inches from the top
Of our red, white, and
BLUE SKULLS

Every time one of us
Crosses to the other sidewalk
Finds another seat on the bus
Or turns our eyes away
From those we were told
Are prone to criminal activity
Because black is the color of crime
And darkness is our metaphor for evil
We wear the hoods
Given to us
By our masters

Poison sleeps at the bottom
Of our cups tonight.
In the morning it will wake
To the sound of another
unarmed brown body
Cracked against the sidewalk
By the hands of the real losers

As long as we allow Capitalism
To bury us
We willingly stay dead

The Future is up to us
We can pull hate down
Like Bree Newsome climbing
The slick flagpole
Of our tainted heritage.

TIM YOUNG

BEHIND THE VEIL

Behind the veil
Lies a familiar face
A race
A particular stench
Stinking rich
Wreaking of privilege
Their capitalism, a euphemism
For slavery, sweatshops, and low wages...

Behind the veil
Lies the top 1 percent
The upper echelon of
Capitalistic tricks
International poverty pimps
Bleeding the needy...
The need to be greedy
Insidiously killing mankind...

Behind the veil
Lies are told
Propaganda sold
Wars waged
Natural resources stolen like slaves...
Environmental decay
Capital rules the day
Humanity falls to the wayside...

A NEW DIMENSION

The great equalizer
Freedom, justice, and liberty provider
Highly coveted
Desired like a precious jewel
Green enigma
Squandered in the hands of fools...

I'm talking dollars and sense
Money well spent
Weakens the grip of capitalism
Investing in your tribe
A cultural hi-five
A paradigm for the 21st century.

Henceforth, "Buy Black"
The battle cry is exact,
Neither fad nor trend
The fight for power never ends,
Divided we repeat the past
United we ascend.

To rise, self-hatred has to subside
Antiquated practices must die
Banking, borrowing, buying from "massa"
Are signs of being colonized.
"De-colonize!"
Be totally self-sufficient.

Break away from economic enslavement
The underground railroad departs daily
Hop aboard
Travel to a new dimension
Where slave mentalities don't exist.
And unity trumps division.

ANDRENA ZAWINSKI

WOMEN OF THE FIELDS

--for Dolores Huerta

The women of the fields clip red bunches of grapes
in patches of neatly tilled farmland in the San Joaquin,
clip sweet globes they can no longer stand to taste -
just twenty miles shy of Santa Cruz beach babies
in thongs, Pleasure Beach surfers on longboards,
all the cool convertibles speeding the Cabrillo Highway
women line as pickers, back bent over summer's harvest.

The campesinas labor without shade tents or water buffalos,
shrouded in oversized shirts and baggie work pants, disguised
as what they are not, faces masked in bandanas under cowboy
hats
in fils de calzón-

the young one named Ester taken in the onion patch
with the field boss' gardening shears at her throat,
the older one called Felicia isolated in the almond
orchard
and pushed down into a doghouse. The pretty one,
Linda,
without work papers, asked to bear a son in trade
for a room and a job in the pumpkin patch,
Isabel, ravaged napping under a tree at the end of a
dream
after a long morning picking pomegranates, violación
de un sueño.
Salome on the apple ranch forced up against the fence
as the boss bellowed his ecstatic Ave, Ave Maria.

The promotoras flex muscle in words, steal off into night

to meet face-to-face to talk health care, pesticides, heatstroke,
rape,
meet to tally accounts - forced to exchange panties for
paychecks
in orchards, on ranches, in fields, in truck beds - to speak out
to face
joblessness and deportation to an old country, a new foreign
soil.

Women of the fields, like those before them, like those
who will trail after - las Chinas, Japonesas, Filipinas -
to slave for frozen food empires in pesticide drift,
residue crawling along the skin, creeping into the nostrils
and pregnancies it ends as they hide from La Migra
in vines soaked in toxins or crawl through sewer tunnels,
across railroad tracks, through fences to pick strawberries,
for this, this: la fruta del diablo.

YURI ZEMBRANO

EL FLUIR DE LA REVOLUCIÓN

De repente
un trío de sobrevivientes post-universales se levanta a saludarnos.
Vienen ataviados vistiendo colores vivos
enseñando los rastros de poetas
de la talla de Nazim,
 de Yiannis,
 de Roque.

Un acta revolucionaria
en pro de la justicia
insiste con honor en cada línea.
Lo rojo de la sangre
se confunde con el verde de la tranquilidad
porque Dalton es un oftalmólogo de la esperanza.
Esa esperanza del poeta que no se deja vencer.

En Bursa, la cárcel de los vientos
ha escrito en silencio cada flor hecha palabra.
Nazim pasa saliva, porque sus huelgas de hambre
le indican que para retar instituciones
No basta con escribir,
para ello también hay que entender la revolución
como paisajes humanos de un país.

Eri camina despacio.
Lleva flores a las tumbas
entre pájaros, entre álamos.
Muy a lo lejos,
los argonautas del monte Pélion ven la sombra
de un poeta triste que cree salvar al mundo
con los ojos clavados en su Penélope
soñando con barcos fantasmales cruzar el golfo Pagasítico,
y manejar trenes voladores más allá del Peloponeso.

Allí, tras aquel fluido lírico
el hombre del clavel

recuerda los obreros muertos en Salónica.
Los pies de Zeus tienen el fuego suficiente
capaz de incendiar todo el alambrado
de los campos de concentración.
No hay generales ni coroneles que apaguen su voz
No hay tuberculosis que lo haga toser,
sólo las letras aromáticas de Beloyanisgrado.

Los vientos de Doftana y Makronisos
ya duermen tranquilos.
Dentro de una sonata lunática al estilo Beethoven

canta el epitafio que verá nacer este poema
y nos llevará de forma imprevista
a la cuarta dimensión,
allí donde exactamente
la poesía se casa con la esperanza.

STREAM OF REVOLUTION

Suddenly

a threesome of post-universal survivors is rising to meet us.
They come wearing significant colors
teaching the tracks of poets
such as Nazim,
 as Yannis,
 as Roque.

Like a revolutionary *Acta*
in favor of justice
some of them insist on honoring each line.
The redness of bleeding
is deeply mingled with the green of peacefulness.
Dalton is an ophthalmologist of hope,
that hopefulness of a poet who doesn't give up.

In Bursa, a winding prison
each word written in silence
becomes flowers.
Nazim passes saliva
because their hunger strikes say
that, to challenge institutions
the duty of writing is not enough.
We must also understand the revolution
as human landscapes of a country.

Eri walks slowly.
She carries out flowers to these trans-sidereal graves.
Among birds, among many plane trees
very far away,
Argonauts from Mount Pelion
see the shadow of a sad poet who believes in saving the world
contemplating his Penelope whilst she is in blank stare,
dreaming of eerie ships through the Pagasetic Gulf
steering flying trains beyond the Peloponnesus.

Just, right there, behind a lyric flow

the man with the carnation
retrieves the dead workers in Salonica.
Zeus' feet
boast enough fire to burn
all the barbed wires of concentration camps.
No generals or colonels to turn off poetic voices,
No tuberculosis producing cough,
only perfumed letters from Beloyannisgrad.
The Makronisos and Doftana's airstreams
are now quietly sleeping.

Inside a Beethoven's lunatic sonata
an epitaph will sing
envisaging the birth of this poem
taking us unexpectedly to the fourth dimension,
the right place where exactly
poetry marries with hopefulness.

[Translated from Spanish by the author.]

BIOGRAPHIC NOTES

MELBA ABELA is a Filipino-American artist and poet. She has shown her art work in galleries and museums and is published in several art and literary anthologies.

BENJAMIN ALCALÁ is the pen name of a member of the Albuquerque, New Mexico Revolutionary Poets Brigade. He writes in both Spanish and American.

DEE ALLEN. African-Italian poetry writer and Spoken Word performer currently based in Oakland. Allen is active in two San Francisco Bay Area-based Spoken Word performance troupes: Poor Magazine's Po' Poets Project and the Revolutionary Poets Brigade. His first 2 books *Boneyard* and *Unwritten Law* are available from Poor Press.

MAHNAZ BADIHIAN is a poet and translator of Persian poetry, as well as a painter. She is a member of the San Francisco RPB. Her recitation of the poems of Rumi in Farsi will appear in 2016 in disc form with Jack Hirschman reading Coleman Barks' adaptations.

ALESSANDRA BAVA is co-founder of Rome's Revolutionary Poets Brigades and editor of Rome's RPB Anthology Vol. 1 (2012) and Articolo 1 (2014); author of bilingual *Guerrilla Blues* (2012) and *Nocturne* (2013), published in Italy; two chapbooks in the US: *They Talk About Death* (2014) and *Diagnosis* (2015). She is editor of *Nuova Antologia di Poeti Americani* (New Anthology of American Poets), and is writing a biography of Jack Hirschman.

KRISTINA BROWN is a member of San Francisco's RPB, and an activist lawyer in the struggle to keep the soul of that city in the communities that poetry---and not any techno-fracking---best serves.

JANET CANNON's poems have been published in many literary journals such as *Berkeley Poetry Review*, *The Midwest Quarterly*, *Texas Review*, and *New York Quarterly*—among others. She has read her poems and performed via singing the spoken word all over the United States.

NEELI CHERKOVSKI is an internationally recognized poet and literary chronicler. His latest collection of poems is *THE CROW AND I* (R.L.Crow). A new collection, *BLUE ODE*, will be

published in Kolkata (Calcutta) India in early 2016. He is currently completing a memoir of his life as a poet.

DOMINIQUE CHRISTINA is a Denver mother of four, an educator and the winner of the 2012 and 2014 Women's Slam Poetry. Her submission is from her just published book *They Are All Me*. (Sleeping With Elephants Press).

MARCO CINQUE is a distinguished Italian. poet, musician, photographer and member of the Rome Revolutionary Poets Brigade. He is also the archivist for the strongest newspaper of the Italian Left, *Il Manifesto*.

FRANCIS COMBES is the author of *Common Cause* and many other books of recent French Poetry. He is a member of the Revolutionary Poets Brigade of Paris and has read this year at the Qinghai Lake International Poetry Festival in China.

ROMEO ALCALÁ CRUZ. One of student journalists in early seventies who wrote and suffered for standing against declaration of martial law in Philippines by President Marcos, 63 year old Romeo Cruz, has published two books of poems, titled *Washing Rice* and other poems (2010) and *Crossing the River from Remembering to Forgetting* (2014). Also wrote poems for *Poets 11* last 2014.

JOHN CURL is co-editor of this anthology. Among his more recent books are *For All The People* (history), *Yoga Sutras of Fidel Castro* (unclassifiable), *The Co-op Conspiracy* (novel), and *Revolutionary Alchemy* (collected poems). He is chair of PEN Oakland and is known also for his translations of ancient Aztec, Mayan and Inca poetry. He is currently finishing a new novel, *Maroon*.

Poet/collagist **STEVE DALACHINSKY's** *The Final Nite* (Ugly Duckling Presse) won the PEN Oakland National Book Award. His recent books are *Fools Gold* (feral press), *a superintendent's eyes* (unbearable/autonomea) and *flying home*, a collaboration with visual artist Sig Bang Schmidt (Paris Lit Up Press). His latest cd is *The Fallout of Dreams* with Dave Liebman and Richie Beirach (Roguart). He is recipient of a Chevalier D' le Ordre des Artes et Lettres.

JEAN-LUC DESPAX is president of P.E.N. France, a winner of the Arthur Rimbaud Prize for poetry, and a member of the Revolutionary Poets Brigade of Ivry, France. His most recent works have taken on the whole range of technological gimmickry that is imprisoning human revolutionary sensibility.

A.J. DICKINSON. Centered in Kyoto & Kathmandu/For over 3 el Vagabundo decades Roaming Living Breathing Free/All us eaarth unbound refugees/Hearts hands minds arm in arm/This heart-fire this time.

SILVANA Di GIROLAMO is an activist poet living in the Palermo area of Sicily. She is a member of the Palermo Revolutionary Poets Brigade and her poetry is ever engaging of the situation in both Sicily and Italy and of course the world at large.

AGNETA FALK is the Swedish-born poet/painter who is a member of the San Francisco RPB. She has just returned from a month-long series of readings throughout Italy, where her poems are published by Multimedia Edizioni.

BILLIE GAUCHE, Caribbean American poet, singer, song-writer, welder and community organizer, lives in Chicago. Billie has worked with groups like Food Not Bombs Fort Lauderdale, Earth First, Chicago Coalition for the Homeless and Chicago Legal Advocacy for Incarcerated Mothers before starting Break the Chains Chicago, a networking group for community, social, physical and psychological healing. Follow Billie on instagram @billiegauchness.

RAFAEL JESÚS GONZÁLEZ, bilingual poet in Spanish and English published in the U.S. and Latin America, was thrice nominated for a Pushcart Prize, and honored with a Lifetime Achievement Award by the City of Berkeley in 2015. His book *La musa lunática/The Lunatic Muse*, 2009 is in a second printing. (rjgonzalez.blogspot.com)

ADAM GOTTLIEB, poet/emcee, teaching-artist, musician, community organizer, and revolutionary from Chicago, co-founded the Chicago chapter of the Revolutionary Poets Brigade. He was selected as one of five emerging writers in *Voices of Protest*, through which he participated in the Kapittel festival for Literature and Freedom of Speech in Stavanger, Norway. He leads a

band, Adam Gottlieb & OneLove, and he is a regular contributor to the People's Tribune.

LAPO GUZZINI is an Italian living in San Francisco. He was co-director of the Emerald Tablet and organizer of its many events. He is also co-translator of the poems of Enrico Ghedi's, *The Vermin in the Box*, out in 2016.

JACK HIRSCHMAN is the emeritus 4th Poet Laureate of San Francisco (2006-2009), one of the founders of the Revolutionary Poets Brigade (RPB) of San Francisco in 2009; a founder of the World Poetry Movement (WPM) in Medellin, Colombia in 2011, and a member of the League of Revolutionaries for a New America (LRNA). He has co-edited this Anthology.

DOUG HOWERTON has published short stories and performances with the Veterans of War Veterans of Peace Writers Group, edited by Maxine Hong-Kingston. A member of Pen Oakland, he has published in three of their anthologies. While working as an Information & Assistance Specialist at the Oakland Senior Centers, he has brought out a chapbook on homelessness, and a recent publication called "Cosmic Warrior" (Book Baby publisher).

JASON HYATT, physicist, home remodeler, software engineer, now is a practitioner of Western and indigenous therapeutic modalities. A refugee from a religious Midwestern childhood, he lives his adulthood in the Bay Area. Jason credits the San Francisco region and its open mics for cracking him open to put what he sees in the world into poetry.

SUSU JEFFREY grew up on politics and mashed potatoes in Midwest America. She has 3 degrees, 5 books and 30-some nonviolent civil (dis)obedience arrests.

ANNE LEONARD has recently left San Francisco, where she was an RPB member, and returned to Nashville, where she will continue her work with incarcerated men and women. She also saw to it that the poetry of two inmates became available to the editors of this anthology.

MARK LIPMAN, recipient of the 2015 Joe Hill Labor Poetry Award; founder of Vagabond Books; writer, poet, multi-media artist

and activist, is author of six books, including, Poetry for the Masses and Global Economic Amnesty. Co-founder of the Berkeley Stop the War Coalition, Agir Contre la Guerre (France) and Occupy Los Angeles, he is a member of POWER (People Organized for Westside Renewal), Occupy Venice, the Revolutionary Poets Brigade and 100 Thousand Poets for Change. www.vagabondbooks.net

ANGELINA LLONGUERAS, born in Barcelona and today a member of the Chicago Revolutionary Poets Brigade, is author of To My Friend Nathan Thornton: in Memoriam. Her poems have appeared in Amor Eterno, Occupy SF: Voices from the Movement, Heartfire, Poems for the Hazara. She translated Jack Hirschman's The Soviet Cenotaph Arcane into Catalan, and coordinated the Chicago events for the World Poetry Movement in 2013 and for Woman's Shout in 2014.

JESSICA LOOS is a poet, improvisational performer, collage artist, and tambourine player (?). She is a member of The Living Theatre, has written for High Times magazine and is also published in various other things.

RICHARD LORANGER is a writer, performer, visual artist, and all around squeaky wheel, currently residing in Oakland, CA. He is the author of Poems for Teeth, as well as The Orange Book and nine chapbooks, including Hello Poems and the recent 6 Questions (Exot Books), and has work frequently in journals and zines. More about his work and scandals at www.richardloranger.com.

KAREN MELANDER MAGOON, a member of RPB, has written songs and poetry since she was two (!), beginning with a song about a bird that her music teacher transcribed; she sang major roles in opera theaters throughout Europe. She is currently singing in Lady Sings the Blues, and works in Engagement at Agesong, doing group therapy, playing piano, and working with elders through exercise, modified yoga and song.

devorah major served as San Francisco's Third Poet Laureate (2002-2006). She has two novels published, Brown Glass Windows and An Open Weave; four poetry books, with more than tongue, where river meets ocean, street smarts, and travelling women (with Opal Palmer Adisa); four poetry chapbooks,; two biographies for

young adults; and short stories, essays, and poems in anthologies and periodicals. she performs nationally and internationally, Venezuela, Jamaica, Italy, Belgium, Bosnia, Germany and France. devorahmajor.com

ELIZABETH MARINO (Chicago RPB) was born into a Chicago barrio to a Puerto Rican couple, and was raised in a working class Italian-German-American family. Recent poetry publications include: the "Best of 2014" issue of "La Bloga," The Significant Anthology (Morph Books, India), and The Muse of Peace (CWC Press, Gambia). "Daughters of 1898" originally appeared in her chapbook, Ceremonies (dancing girl press, Chicago).

PIPPO MARZULLI is a poet born in Bari, Italy in 1978. A journalist and literary editor as well, he has performed his poetry in theatrical spectacles and, in 2014, founded the Revolutionary Poets Brigade of Bari, many of whose members are from towns in southern Italy. He is a major poet-organizer of the Italian underground culture of today.

San Francisco poet **SARAH MENEFEE** is a homeless and poor people's rights activist. She is a founding member of the League of Revolutionaries for a New America [LRNA], the Revolutionary Poets Brigade, OccupySF and 'First they came for the homeless'. Her most recent collections are Human Star, In Your Fish Helmet, and Stella Humana [Italian & English].

GARRETT MURPHY is well known in the Bay Area as a political and human nature satirist. His chapbooks include Call 9-1-1 (and Mister Punch), Mother Nature Has Become a Terrorist!, I, Eye!, Now Showing, and the novel Yang But Yin: The Legend of Miss Dragonheel. He has published in the Sacred Grounds Anthology, the New Now Now New Millennium Turn-On Anthology, Street Spirit, At Home in the Land of the Dead.

EDWARD MYCUE. Damage Within The Community (1973, Panjandrum Press); Root Route & Range Song Returns (1979); Long Poem (Melbourne, Paper Castle Press); The Singing Man My Father Gave Me (1980, London, Menard Press); Torn Star (1985, Oberc Press); Edward (1986, Cambridge, Primal Press); Mindwalking (2008 Philos Press); I Am A Fact Not A Fiction (2009 Echabpk Online

Wordrunner Press); Song Of San Francisco (2012, Peterborough, England, Spectacular Diseases Press)

BILL NEVINS lives in Albuquerque New Mexico. He teaches at the University of New Mexico and he hosts monthly RPB poetry gatherings. His book, Heartbreak Ridge and Other Poems is published by Swimming With Elephants Publications. Contact: bill_nevins@yahoo.com and Bill Nevins on Facebook. A film about him is at www.committingpoetry.com

EDOARDO OLMI was born in Florence in 1984. Pacifist and libertarian activist since high school, in 2009 he started the CUSA experience (<http://cusa.noblogs.org/>). In 2010 he released his first poetry book, Il porcospino in pegaso, and a second one is looking for publisher. He is a Bibbia d'Asfalto – poesia urbana e autostradale editor (<http://poesiaurbana.altervista.org/>), and a member of Rome's Revolutionary Poets Brigade (<http://romerevolutionarypoetsbrigade.blogspot.it/>).

DOROTHY (DOTTIE) PAYNE is an activist, painter, poet and international educator. A world literature and writing teacher, she spent her most recent five years as curator of ArtInternationale Gallery in San Francisco, where some of the world's most accomplished artists/ poets/ musicians were featured. Her book Birthmarks was recently published by New Native Press. In 2015 she and Jack Hirschman were the first poets from the U.S. to participate in the International Poetry Festival in Havana, Cuba.

MARCY REIN is a writer, editor and organizer who has engaged with a range of social movements and organizational forms. Her articles have appeared in women's, queer, labor, and left publications; she worked as the communications specialist for the ILWU's organizing department, and co-edited (with Clifton Ross) Until the Rulers Obey: Voices from Latin American Social Movements (PM Press, 2014).

ANTHONY ROBINSON JR. Through many ups and downs I've managed to publish my first book in 2010 titled Incarcerated Tears: Book of Poems Vol. 1. My focus was to enlighten inmates and the community about rehabilitation, forgiveness, and redemption, and invite readers to look into my humanity in order to see their own.

Through the grace of God I have written my second book, *Incarcerated Tears Vol. 2*.

LUIS J. RODRIGUEZ is Poet Laureate of Los Angeles with 15 books in poetry, children's literature, fiction, and nonfiction, including "Always Running, La Vida Loca, Gang Days in L.A." He is founding editor of Tia Chucha Press, cofounder of Tia Chucha's Centro Cultural & Bookstore in L.A.'s San Fernando Valley. Luis is also co-convenor of the Network for Revolutionary Change.

JULIE ROGERS has authored six chapbooks and a collection of poetry, *House Of The Unexpected*. She has published a Buddhist hospice manual, *Instructions for the Transitional State*—which helped to launch a non-profit hospice training program—and most recently, *Street Warp*. Michael McClure says of her work, "Few poems are written as close to the heart -- no extra words, just soul meanings..." www.julrogers.com.

LEW ROSENBAUM is a longtime activist poet and cultural worker, as well as being a member of the Revolutionary Poets Brigade of Chicago. His writings also appear in the newspaper, the *People's Tribune*.

RICHARD SANDERELL In 1965, my cousin was killed in Vietnam and I got my draft notice. After Vietnam I worked in coalition politics raising issues concerning Native people, Veterans and those killed by the Empire. Retired from the city after working 23 years at San Francisco General. I have been writing all my life but filled with rage, until 2007 when all changed in style. I began reading in public last December.

E. SAN JUAN, JR., brilliant Filipino poet and cultural critic, is one of the most honored Marxists in all of North American academic life. He lives in Connecticut. where he writes and teaches.

G.G. WASSERMAN SERENE I am a California sculptor and poet. I was born in Newark, New Jersey and grew up in New York City. I've been a sculptor for 35 years and I've been writing poems since I was 14. I was politicized in the late '60s, when I realized that Capitalism must be transcended for all people to be truly liberated. *La lucha continua. Venceremos.*

NINA SERRANO was awarded the 2104 Oakland PEN Award for Excellence in Literature for “HEARTSTRONG, Selected Poems 2000-2012.” In 2012, she received “best book award” from Artists Embassy International for “Heart's Journey, Selected Poems, 1980-1999.” In July 2010, she was voted best local poet by Oakland magazine. Serrano produces Open Book: poet to poet on KPFA-fm, radio and La Raza Chronicles.

WARSAN SHIRE, Kenyan-born Somali poet, writer and educator based in London, has read her work internationally—including South Africa, Italy, Germany, Canada, North America and Kenya. Her début book is, *Teaching My Mother How To Give Birth* (flipped eye, 2011). Her poems have appeared in *Wasafiri*, *Magma*, *Poetry Review* and *The Salt Book of Younger Poets* (Salt, 2011). She is poetry editor at *SPOOK* magazine. She is winner of the 2013 Inaugural Brunel University African Poetry Prize.

LESLIE SIMON is the author of *Collisions and Transformations* (Coffee House Press), *High Desire* (Wingbow Press), *i rise/you riz/we born* (Artaud's Elbow) and *Jazz/ is for white girls, too* (Poetry for the People Publishing Collective) and co-author (with Jan Johnson Drantell) of *A Music I No Longer Heard: The Early Death of a Parent* (Simon and Schuster). Simon founded Poetry for the People, a class and publishing collective at City College of San Francisco in 1975.

DOREEN STOCK is a poet/prose-ist living and writing in Fairfax, CA. and currently reading from her newly published *Poems Selected* and with an Introduction by Jack Hirschman titled, *In Place Of Me*.

MICHELE TERESI is an active member of the Palermo-Sicily Revolutionary Poets Brigade, and a staunch proletarian, as the poem included in this anthology strongly testifies to the attitude thereto.

PETER URBAN spent over 25 years in the Irish Republican Socialist Movement, after becoming its first member in the US. In 2005 he became a founder of the International Republican Socialist Network, extending his work to Scotland and Euzkadi, Catalonia and Puerto Rico. His first poetic efforts were lyrics for two songs of the pioneering punk band the Dils, in 1977, but only in 2012 did he begin doing public reading of his poetry.

ANTONIETA VILLAMIL is an international award winning bilingual poet, writer, singer and editor with over 11 published books. Blog: www.antonietavillamil.blogspot.com, The Cervantes Institute of New York and Literacy Now awarded her the “14 International Latino Book Award, Best Book of Poetry”, and she won the “International Poetry Award Gastón Baquero” in Spain. She directs the review and salon “Poesía Féstival” that brings poetry to the underserved community of native Spanish speakers in Los Angeles.

R.B. WARREN. I was born and raised in Detroit, and am without credentials of any kind. I never graduated from anything, never received a diploma or certificate of completion from any sort of institution of either higher or lower learning. At fifteen, I quit school. At seventeen, I took part in my first civil rights march. At twenty-one, I was elected Unit Steward for the Operating Engineers. The rest of my life has been spent doing instrumentation and control work and feeding people.

CATHLEEN WILLIAMS is a poet, civil rights lawyer, co-founder of the Revolutionary Poets Brigade and an activist in the homeless movement. She is a member of the Sacramento Homeless Organizing Committee and the League Of Revolutionaries For A New America.

ERIC ALLEN YANKEE's poetry has appeared in or is forthcoming in The People's Tribune, Crabfat, CC&D, and Sweet Wolverine. He is a member of the Revolutionary Poets Brigade of Chicago. He hopes his poetry can inspire the people to build a society based on cooperation instead of corporate greed.

TIM YOUNG is an inmate poet at San Quentin Prison. His work has appeared in the Bay View newspaper in San Francisco because of his highly regarded poetic insights.

ANDRENA ZAWINSKI teaches creative writing at Laney College in Oakland. Her poetry collection, *Something About* (Blue Light Press), received a PEN Oakland Literary Award. Her *Traveling in Reflected Light* (Pig Iron Press) won a Kenneth Patchen prize. Author of four chapbooks and editor of *Turning a Train of Thought Upside Down: An Anthology of Womens Poetry* (Scarlet Tanager Books), she is Features Editor at

PoetryMagazine.com <http://andrenazawinski.wordpress.com/category/poetry>

YURI ZEMBRANO lives in Mexico and is strongly tied to the World Poetry Movement, which was founded in Medellin, Colombia in 2011. His poem marks the engagement of three great international poets, Nazim Hikmet of Turkey, Yannis Ritsos of Greece, and Roque Dalton of El Salvador.

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
<http://revolutionarypoetsbrigade.org/>