

broadsheet

new new zealand poetry

Issue No. 14,
November 2014

Editor: Mark Pirie

**THE NIGHT PRESS
WELLINGTON**

Contents copyright 2014, in the names of
the individual contributors

Published by The Night Press

Cover image: Michael Harlow by Otago Daily Times

broadsheet is published
twice a year
in May and November

Subscriptions to:

The Editor
Flat 4C/19 Cottleville Terrace
Thorndon
Wellington 6011
Aotearoa / New Zealand
<http://broadsheetnz.wordpress.com>

Cost per year
\$12.00 for 2 issues.
Cheques payable to: HeadworX

ISSN 1178-7805 (Print)
ISSN 1178-7813 (Online)

Please Note: At this stage no
submissions will be read. The poems
included are solicited by the editor.
All submissions will be returned. Thank you.

Contents

PREFACE / 5

MICHAEL DUFFETT / 6

RIEMKE ENSING / 8

BRENTLEY FRAZER / 10

NOELINE GANNAWAY / 12

MICHAEL HARLOW / 13

CAMERON LA FOLLETTE / 19

P V REEVES / 23

NICHOLAS REID / 24

EDWARD SAKOWSKI / 27

LAURA SOLOMON / 28

MARYJANE THOMSON / 29

BRIAN TURNER / 32

MICHAEL WALKER / 34

PAT WHITE / 36

MARK YOUNG / 39

NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS / 40

Acknowledgements

Michael Harlow's poems are from a work in progress, entitled (provisionally), 'The Weather in Mallorca and Tennessee'.

Grateful acknowledgement is made to the editors and publishers of the following collections, where the following poems in this issue first appeared:

Cameron La Follette: 'Panther Mind' is from *Lanterns in the Twilight* and 'The House Where Time Begins' and 'Wildflower Cowboy' are from *Winds of the Green World*, both published by Original Books, Wellington, New Zealand, 2014.

P V (Pearlie) Reeves: 'Moon Struck' and 'Seen Through the Window' are from the Horowhenua writers' collection *Seen Through a Window* (Levin: Levin Writers' Group, 1996).

MaryJane Thomson: 'One strike' is from *Fallen Grace* (Wellington: The Night Press, 2014).

Preface

Michael Harlow is one of New Zealand's distinguished poets with international stature. This year he represented New Zealand at two world poetry festivals in Nicaragua and Romania. I first came across his work as a student and was arrested by his titles like *Vlaminck's Tie*, *Giotto's Elephant* and recently the Book Award short-listed *The Tram Conductor's Blue Cap*. They sing of magical and out of the ordinary things. I've met him a number of times and at the Second Wellington International Poetry Festival, 2004.

Harlow brings wit with a cosmopolitan feel and an almost Mediterranean vibe to his poetry. He has an American and Greek background/experience. While his poems may appear to be nothing flashy at first, many things are bristling beneath the surface of his lines, and the cleanness of his imagery. The selection of his prose poems included in this issue illustrates this.

The prose poems are from a work-in-progress. Of these poems, Harlow writes: 'they are best described as very short prose texts (rather like the French *récit*—I resist the "flash fiction" definition/category). Closest thing we have to it here is the prose-poem, and I'm happy with that. I like to think of the *poème en prose*, these texts, as an example of the "prose that's in poetry"—following on from the great Greek poet Seferis, who once remarked words to the effect that "I wish our poets would write poems with more of what our best prose writers have..." Thus far, I've only published a few of them in bilingual, translation form, English and Spanish, in overseas journals.'

The prose poem (depending on your definition) is a mode of poetry perhaps under-developed/utilised in New Zealand. The Christchurch poet John O'Connor has done good work in this area of late, see his new collection *Whistling in the Dark* (HeadworX, 2014). Modern prose poems date back to the 19th century with Baudelaire in France and in New Zealand Katherine Mansfield's prose vignettes have been included in anthologies as prose poems. More writers developed the prose poem or vignette in the *New Zealand Mercury* in the 1930s edited by Helen Longford. Kendrick Smithyman, Louis Johnson and a host of others since the late 1940s have tried them. The mode became more common in journals from the 1960s/1970s. Harlow brings his own style to the innovative genre.

A key feature in *broadsheet* is the inclusion of new faces each issue. In issue 14, excellent work from Noeline Gannaway, Brentley Frazer, Edward Sakowski, Nicholas Reid, Mark Young, Michael Walker, MaryJane Thomson and Pat White appears here for the first time. Thanks to all the contributors. Enjoy.

Mark Pirie
Wellington, November 2014

TO CORSO AND WHALE ISLAND

Dear Gregory, I'm at the age when you died,
The age to which Dante thought he was bound
And I met you when you, like him once, were midway
On the journey. The dark wood then was still
Awaiting me but now it's behind me
With only the love that moves the sun
And other stars before me. You have reached it.
But I suspect that, for all your spitting
Insult, you had found it before you left,
With Ginzy, with your black-eyed son and with
Audiences, public and private,
You entertained while you were here on stage.
Shelley knew as you and the Vedas know
That atoms have no capacity for recognition.

* * * *

Whale Island was the name of the place
Where my brother learned to enter and survive
Submarine depths. I loved him but he did not
Join me in entering depths of different
Waters. He was a blunt and bluff naval
Officer who gave his men confidence
To navigate waters unafraid while he
Was inwardly uncertain of the depths
I plumbed. "Too deep for me, Michael," he would
Grumble as I hesitantly handed him
My poems and he took another drink.
He was popular in the wardroom
And when he took me there, he did not
Have to tell me to keep my whale mouth shut.

A TIE THAT BINDS

My dog chewed a Jerry Garcia tie
But I still wear it, shortened by a stump,
Its colorful and intricate design
Unspoiled by Billy's teeth and jaws. Jerry
Gave it to a college friend of mine
Who was for years his manager and I,
Gratefully alive now Jerry's among
The dead, wear it not only in his memory
(Although I never met him) but to record
The intersection of life and death
Symbolized by (no pun!) a tie that joins
Dead Jerry to a living Billy
Who continues to cavort with all
The energy of Jerry among the dead.

AVIAN FAME

There's a sparrow on the hummingbird house
Perched as if he belonged there. No exotic,
He fluffs his feathers as if they were
Tropical. He may be uninvited,
His common beak ill-equipped to deal
With the intricacies that hummingbirds
Can handle but he settles down as if
He were at home, as he is, unlike
His hummingbird distant cousin who is
Confined to tropical climes, on every
Continent of the globe. Jesus knew him,
The poet Issa in Japan too,
But the exotic hummingbird, famed
For his looks and habits, is more obscure.

BEING THERE

‘without stirring abroad one can know the whole world... [Lao Tzu]

My bookshelves are full of Venice,
waterways and carnival delights. I go there
through words and pictures.
I wear a mask and get in amongst.
Right now I'm with Gore Vidal
looking down the basin of St. Marks
filled with boats for the Long Row.

If only life could be a gondola
bold as a bird gliding through moonlight,
watching the sights preen themselves in reflection.

People say, ‘Travel. Go places,
see the world.’ And I do,
but like that Chinese Ancient,
not stirring –
taking it all in from the inner room.

‘UND OB DIE WOLKE’

It's four years since your death
and still winter. The garden tangled
in neglect. But look,
among the weeds, an iris –
the generous Lothario, wrapped in regal hue,
its purple velvet gently arched
in charming grace.

In the almost imperceptible echoes of memory,
one of your lovers sings Weber.
A message between realms, perhaps, a sign,

but nothing happens.
No clouds furrow the sky.
The room is no more empty than before.
We are wrapped in quietude.

The German ‘Und ob die Wolke’ translates as ‘Even though the clouds’. It's from an aria in Act III of Carl Maria von Weber's Opera *Der Freischütz*.

PURPLE VERTIGO

I've noticed two or three satellites
rotating slowly in orbit, reflecting
light only at intervals, as though
junked.

I've noticed men lurking
under lamps at subway entrances
hawking various pamphlets, warning
of atrocities, hats out, pleading for
a few dollars, imploring the lion.

I've seen women in the gardens with
animals, war embroidered on their
cardigans, dancing with Hopelessness,
sleeping nights in abandoned lingerie
factories.

However, I've got this slow
glow coming over me, a delayed
suffocation, like that praying mantis
in a jar found in the drawer of a
writing desk bought on eBay...a
happy drowning feeling that I have
no hesitation surrendering to...
a purple vertigo, I guess.

In the city tonight, the shadows
broken, all leaking light.

CIGARETTES AND TENDING ORCHIDS

Hornrims and quiff
a natural cowlick, untamed as
his wanderlust.

This of him I will always remember.

In my best suit
at his funeral. The apocalyptic
tramp preacher says that before we
know it the worms will have their
way with all of us.

The Australian flag and slouch hat on
his coffin, a past
I never felt a part of. A child
hood of summers by his side on riverbanks
shorelines and sitting in dinghies.
He always clowned around, never
mentioned atrocities or talked of
war at all.

I have a terrible ear for jokes. He told
me a thousand, but I don't remember
one, or the fishing stories.

Crazy dances
and spoon percussion of Cock Eyed Sue
the intangible web of memory like his voice
will dim
when I think of him.

AUTUMN DAY

(after Rilke's 'Herbsttag')

Lord, it is time: Summer has long held sway.
On the sundials let your shadow rest,
And in the fields release the winds to play.

Command the last fruits to put on completeness.
Give them just two more sunny days.
Urge them to full maturity, and chase
Into the heavy wine the final sweetness.

Whoever has no house will not build now,
The one alone will long remain alone,
Will read, keep writing letters, watchful grow,
And up and down the avenues will go
Wandering restless when the leaves are blown.

SEPTEMBER MORNING

(after Mörike's 'Septembermorgen')

Still sleeps the world in mist, and still
Forest and field lie dreaming.
Soon when the veil has dropped you will
See the blue sky impeccable,
See Autumn strength and softness fill
The world in warm gold streaming.

**SHORT TALK CANTABILE ON
SPRING WITH FANTAILS**

That far but always near place of feeling we called childhood when we grew up and discovered that it was still here nesting down somewhere inside us. The natural way it has of returning us to that someone we once were, and still are on the way to becoming that someone we are. With a little good fortune to help us on the way to survive even ourselves.

And now that its's spring being sprung all over, all these friendly fantails air dancing about, even daring to take bread at your hand. To say there is something going on that makes your feet fly across the hillside, that wakes in you those fine freed times that keep turning into music you get to play all over again.

And here in this little book cantabile of words, you get to say some other words that sound just sun-struck and wind-talking enough to keep you safe turning even the sharpest corners. To meet yourself and some others you haven't forgotten, now that spring has arrived that makes you want at least to risk delight for delight's sake and no other.

LEARNING TO BE AN ASTRONOMER

I have always said the movies was where I got my first education, and one or two other things best learned in the close dark of the local. Sometimes even a double matinee on Saturdays. It was at the same time I also learned to be an astronomer of a kind. Our science teacher knew the alluring value of small-time economics, he said ‘the stars the stars the best free show on earth’, he learned that during the war. Long nights and there were many I thought of ending up as a constellation, all those stars, with a name to shine down to earth. Some years later during what turned out to be a final birthday celebration for my father, I remembered a story about the Bushmen of the Kalahari Desert who were astronomers of a kind too. The night sky a different kind of movie-going. The elders would tell their children to look there—another one of those falling stars their tails on fire on the way down. ‘They are leaving the heaven-house you know to make room for someone like yourself to take their place one day’. And it wasn’t so long ago our adopted son said, ‘Last night I saw the star you said I fell from. Very bright too. Even if I was born in China I arrived here, didn’t I?’

ON NEVER MEETING SAMUEL BECKETT

On my last visit to Paris I met a man who was an aspiring writer on the way up and such a long way to go he kept falling down. Who swore on the alphabet itself that he had never met Samuel Beckett. Not even by accident. Furthermore, he had never glimpsed him even from a distance, or anyone who might conceivably be Samuel Beckett who might be wearing a genuine Borsalino in disguise. Not only that, he had no earthly or otherwise desire even if by happenstance to receive a postcard signed by Samuel Beckett and posted to the wrong address. And what did I think of that? As for myself he said, addressing himself in the smokey café mirror, 'It has left me sincerely speechless. You could say the ideal situation for getting on with the world whether you have something to say or not.'

PHOTOJOURNALISM AND TELLING A STORY

Ara Güler / Istanbul

On his way to becoming the distinguished photojournalist that he is, he has not forgotten that he grew up in a neighbourhood of onion sellers and card sharks, the grieving widows of sponge divers and the bawling sellers of lottery tickets. And you didn't know from one slippery moment to the next whose hand was in whose pocket, you had to keep your eye everywhere watchful. To survive that kind of filching intimacy, he learned intimacy of another kind. He learned to shake hands first with himself. One hand greeting the other. Then to consider: how the world inside the eye might want to show how out there a certain kind of *looking* can be an inescapable pleasure. 'Congratulations he would say and you too', composing images in his head for the next picture about to happen. That one-legged girl with her raggedy doll in the cemetery in Zeyrek. 'I learned never to lounge about too long with my hands in my pockets. You know, I am only trying to grab a piece of life. Telling a story I write photographs.'

SHORT TALK ON AESTHETICS

After attending a symposium on aesthetics, my American friend who comes from a long line of cosmopolitan *fashionistas* and small-game hunters has finally decided to study pre-Socratic philosophy. She thinks that if you can learn to ask questions before giving the answers you are at least half way to the door. On the other side of the door and after thinking about it for some time, she left a note in my letter box: 'And who is the fairest of them all? What manner of beautiful living is this when one half of the nation sells a cosmetician's promises, such earthly delights, and the other half buys them, and every one is a prince and princess on parade, inside the mirror's eye, forever?'

WRITER'S BLOCK

A friend who was baptized with the name Atlas was being stalked by that old daimon *writer's block*, and being caught too. In desperation he decided that some heavy-lifting was in order. And he finally managed to pen a note to himself signed sealed and delivered by himself. 'Take hold sport. Some days it's like this: all we know and all we want to know is if the arrow to the bow is fit to fly. At other times it's enough to imagine that every word is a cross-roads, isn't it?'

POST MORTEM ON PROMISES

Not long after they met at one of the bookstalls along the *Seine*, this one draped with streamers of sheet music; and a display of old keys and locks—‘Strays’, he said, she said a glancing smile, ‘They look like they’re looking for a way to fit each other.’ And she promised him that no matter what she would always dream about them together naturally in French. For the first time he understood what the word ‘charming’ could mean, and what a charming promise could be. Maybe even a little dangerous too.

When it came to breaking promises, they promised each other the world—*She loves me she loves me not, she loves me not she loves me, she loves me...*Such promises he told himself are promises of the heart.

And then that time when you send them out to someone dear, and they return a wreath of broken flowers. Such times when you don’t know who to trust including yourself. Sometimes the heart lies to itself because it must.

That time she left after the morning she told him it was her defloration true. That time—he splashed a circle of water behind her, calling out ‘May it not dry before you return...’

PANTHER MIND

I sit in a hidden cabin at the edge of the wild,
Closed in by darkness and silence and trees;
All the farther realms were long ago defiled,
But here I have wind and fire and faint sound of seas.
I am alone under a white Shell-Mind of my own,
And wandering Minds pass through like sparks,
Flimsy and brief, blind and ghost-blown
Faint Minds, unwilling to leave shine or mark.
One flits dusky as a Bird through my windows,
Another is a frightened, speechless Deer,
Others roar desperately, unseen when it snows;
All of them twilight-colored with fear.

A Panther leaps into the house one solemn blue night,
Glorious and proud, tawny and strong,
Agile and fearless in my small hoard of light;
She stares and paces and watches. It will not be long.
She leaps the high crag, surveys river and meadow,
Fire on her back, flame in her eyes,
Around her fierce winds and powers blow;
The Panther will return. The hardened Shell dies.
Shell-Mind, pale and firm-fastened and still,
I have carried you, staggering under the heavy white;
But the Panther leaps the gray encircling hills,
She is tireless in the long star-powdered night.

THE HOUSE WHERE TIME BEGINS

1.

There is a house that sits by glimmering shore
Touched by stars and moonlight and twilight winds,
And on every side an open silver-carved door;
The house where time begins.

A timekeeper watches every life of every soul,
All that is and all that will be lying side by side;
Soft bells are chiming, the hours unfold
And the sea is running on foam-white tide.

2.

Let no man seek this lonely starlit place,
Let no bird find of it any trace;
Let there be a flowing of hours over gray sea,
And coverings of mist and sorcery;
Let there be the silvery beat of the beginning of time,
And the endless peal of the chime.

3.

In the house is gathered every thread
And the lives of every soul breathing ceaselessly,
Never touching, but never parted in the halls of the dead,
Pouring over the soft gray sea.

Small timekeepers count the mortal heart's rise and fall,
And large ones the heartbeat of river and hill;
And endlessly flowing, the faint silver call
Of the timekeepers of the sea that never lies still.

4.

Again and again in twilight may the soft chimes toll,
Again may time unfold upon pure white flower;
May time flow over the thirsting, waiting soul,
And spread wings of soft gray power.

Let the house watch over us in silver moonlight,
Let time flow softly over whispering gray sea;
Let the shining stars turn in a shadow-blue night,
Gathering that which is and was and shall be.

5.

Peace be upon us in the house where time begins,
And gray and silver winds.

WILDFLOWER COWBOY

I wasn't never much of a cowpoke for flowers,
Bright colors dyin' so fast, such weak nodding things
Beaten down in an afternoon's tail-flickin' shower,
Bustin' when the sun's brandin' iron hots up and sings;
But there's one thing: they talk to the clouds.
All tied up in dark seeds, no pretty skirts or pretty face,
They weep and cry without no shame, right out loud,
Over by Four Peaks, near the clouds' home-place.

Onct there was a drought, everyone pantin' for water pitifully
But there weren't a tick of water to find;
The quartz-rock was glarin' so you couldn't hardly see,
Ole sun was the boss-man, makin' everybody blind.
Then the seeds begun wailin' and in comes the rain,
Sweepin' on the beat-up hills, hard-drivin' down,
Lookin' on the earth like a ugly dark bloodstain;
And a few hours after — flowers is first out of the ground.
Flowers springin' up purple and orange and red,
Thick as a horse's tail under every inch of cloud;
Now that talkin' to clouds, I'd like that in my head,
I'm takin' seeds out Four Peaks way and shoutin' out loud!

MOON STRUCK

I saw a moth-eaten moon
 one day
Shadows blue as the faded
 winter sky
Like grandmother's old white doyley
 it hung
On heaven's clothesline to dry.

SEEN THROUGH THE WINDOW

Today the sun shines
On this lovely land
Drowsily sunbathing
On a rug of harvest browns
Beside a gentle sea:
Silent trees make love
Their shadows stretched
Across sun-soaked soil;
And gentle fingers of a breeze
Rouse swift consummation.

Today the sun shines –
Mother, your season past.
Lie still while fantasies
Take wing and carry
A cheek to brush the tree-tops
And lips to kiss the sky.

ARRIVAL¹

Enlightened story of the swaying raft
that gripped an ocean current for a drift
left-side of sunset, south-west by the stars
until the clouds and sea-birds spoke of cliffs.

No accidental voyage but the work
of priestly forethought, founded on the spheres,
roots under rushes, hooks to trail for fish
and chanted prayers to make grey waves a bridge.

This is the story that the placard tells,
denying mad starvation and the sweat
of storm-forced sailors, lost, *Medusa*-like,
in oceans of ungovernable salt.

True tale, perhaps, and mild: mystery shot out
to calm us with the certainty of plans.
There is no awe in oceans, just a route
as routine as timetabled train or bus,

no bound hulls creaking, no coarse woven sails,
no angry white-caps and no hunger groans,
no sharks as scavengers, no ache for home,
no sailors spitting fear of the unknown.

¹Being a reaction to current wisdom concerning Goldie's painting
The Arrival of the Maoris in New Zealand

PHOCIDAE

(Kaikoura coast)

Perfection in the television wildlife show
their smooth rubber bodies write underwater
swashes of bubbles, ensnaring herded herring
with expert curlicue and arabesque
or (arrow-straight and concentrated in the dive)
plunge with knowing instinct to a deeper game,
mammal-warm in a cold sea, where fat's an asset,
residual digits fused in streamlined flippers.
Such speed! Such finesse! Such energy and whiskers!
Companionate seals are sensible fish-slayers.
Bright sunlight always filters where they hunt and play.
It is unending summer in the wildlife show.

My nostrils prick seaweed, belched fish
on a loose-gravelled shore, with sky overcast.
The colony's yokels loaf on outshore boulders,
bark, slurp in air, writhe and rub at common sea lice.
Young males fight coded games of dominance, and butt
their blubber-bloated breasts, oblivious to the waves
that froth indifference at their upturned snouts.
The agile black sea-master bobs ashore, shape-shifts
to blundering jelly, yawns at tourist cameras,
his red gorge an offending colour in the grey,
eyes dilated, rear limbs nailed to uselessness
in evolutionary crucifixion.

On this insufficient ribbon, I deform you
with my mind, selkie, and anthropomorphize
your leisure after daunting distances of salt.
Ungainly in my eyes the seal's sought paradise –
a dip in air. We are caught between, selkie.
My digits are not oars, my arabesques are ink.
This is our being's twilight, a liminal ledge
at the sea's and the air's edge. I swim sightless,
tailless forked creature who shoulders sea ineptly.
You flounder footless in the desired element,
alien and kin in amphibious limits.

From WAR.COM

Translated from the Polish by Robert Zuch

From: Unknown man

Sent: Anno Domini

To: unknown recipient

Subject: Conflict

noun

1. a struggle or clash between opposing forces; battle
2. a state of opposition between ideas, interests, etc; disagreement or controversy
3. a clash, as between two appointments made for the same time
4. (psychology) opposition between two simultaneous but incompatible wishes or drives, sometimes leading to a state of emotional tension and thought to be responsible for neuroses

The boy was missing an arm
He ran blindly
I killed him to spare him suffering

Shooting people
Is considered
Pretty much
OK

Why is this still shocking
We live in a world where people wage war constantly
And kill each other
A soldier, a professional
He's just doing his job
He kills
And then, like a hunter at a shoot
Takes a selfie
With the killed.

SKY BURIAL

I think I would like a sky burial –
No photographs allowed as the vultures take me skywards.

I'd have to live in Tibet, get friendly with the locals –
Earn somebody's respect.

Those gigantic birds would circle overhead,
Waiting patiently, then *swoop*,
My body parts would be swept up in talon and beak –
The easiest way to take to the sky.

More practical than cremation
When the ground's too hard and rocky to dig a grave –
This would be my exit strategy.

Instructions can be found in the Tibetan book of the dead
For this ceremony intended to help my spirit move on from
The uncertain plane between life and death into the next life.

Who'd want to be hanging around on planet Earth
When you could be digested by greats of the sky,
Something with a decent wingspan
And spend your after death, pre-digestion hours,
Hovering high in midair,
Waiting to be born again.

NARCISSUS LIES DOWN

Likes to lie down like a wolf waiting to creep.
This is your testimony, not written by you,
just revealing inner thoughts of your head,
like catching Narcissus in the looking glass,
taking off his beauty mask,
watching his eyes as he buttons his shirt, neck as wide as his girth,
which let's everything slide, stream on in,
like the visions he brings out,
but only when he's lying, always when he's lying,
for nothing is ever truth.

Rosey red cheek like the red of his beloved's behind,
putting everything in reverse,
the beloved's behind he sees is his,
therefore he loves it, almost as much as he loves himself,
he keeps it like the wolf keeps his master.

Beloved must provide at all times
and be grateful for what is given,
lest it be held up and shown to all like a badge of his natural honour.
Where did it come from?
Some self-help Chopra,
teaching you how to live.

So he likes to lie down and meditate on breath,
as he nibbles his chicken breast,
protein day today as his belt breaks.

His beloved comes in and says on cue,
"If it's not that, it's the cancer that'll get you."
He picks up Chopra and searches for what to say....

ONE STRIKE

And they loiter down the stairs as you do your dance,
like you are liberated from a private closet full of things only you
know about,

no one looks in the door.

It's white like night, only seen in the dark,
bright like satellites moving, but they don't see here, they see now.

The world mapped out and gridlocked because they so high,
you move out to the concrete, flick your feet here and there,
you feel you have the flair, till you fall over on your knee.

The satellite has stopped, it zeros in on you,
it has caught you praying, it's the allotted time, the bell has rung.
They take you away and stick you in Abu Ghraib,
Saddham has not been found, there is no freedom,
the CIA and US military police reign on,
like they're having a party without you,
thrown for you like a bomb, one more has arrived.

You panic you remember how your father was hung here,
burnt in an oven,

ashes never scatter here.

You act dumb but they strip you naked – and not for the shower.
Military police film your terror, all of it.
Millions watch on YouTube, post a like.

Modern reality, this is you uncensored America,
as they would say, "*lookin' good*,"
as they take a cell phone pic and push you back in to your closet,
like that's where you belong.

CIA? Oh, there never was,
soldiers get three months rap over the knuckles,
perhaps temporary loss of badge,
because of course there is liberty, in that land.
Out of their country everywhere is no man's land, everywhere
is their frontline.

One strike for all.

BLACK

In Romania bison are symbols of national pride
whereas in my country two-legged equivalents
rampage in our stadiums, in black.

On Saturdays,
for an hour or two in winter, they help us mask
our dilemmas, hide the *real issues*, assuage
discontent. It's then, when nationalism's most
strident and boorish, that skilled might prevails,
pride seethes, distraction's overwhelmingly
triumphant and the crowd goes wild.

CLOUDS BETWEEN RANFURLY AND WEDDERBURN

Ignore them, you can't. Avoid them,
you've never wanted to. High
tubular shapes curving, swerving,
trailing fleece-like wisps, all
seemingly stationary, lifted
and slowly rearranging themselves
in the never-ending millions
of acres of softened blue.

Replication and repetition rendering
tranquillity is what they do,
replacing extravagance with nuances
that console by making you accept
you have to live with the this
that is all there is, for now.

EPITAPH

Don't say he *passed away*,
say he *died*, and that,
with luck, some of what
he did, said, wrote,
will be remembered,
valued, live on.
And one final thing:
cast his ashes
by a chuckling, clear
mountain stream,
in tussock country,
among high hills
on a fine day. That
would be enough,
that would do, surely.

PRAYER

Give me true friends, literature and music
and art that moves us, and dancing streams
and sunshine on the vine. Let us be more tender
and tranquil and truthful, let us welcome
that hoped-for trinity we've been known,
like desperados, to love and die for.

FIRE

The Greek philosophers thought of fire
as one of the four elements in the world.
The others were air, earth and water, all visual.
Fire tends upward the most, from any pyre.

Earth and water push downward the most,
affected very much by gravity and mass.
I think of air as more in-between these,
still involved in gravity, but lacking density.

Unlike the other three, fire has to be ignited to exist;
then it can be destructive, out of control, like floods.
Nearly every summer, bushfires burn in Australia.
The Great Fire of London in 1666 burnt down St. Paul's.

I equate physical fire with strong emotions.
I have heard fiery speakers on street corners.
I have heard singers bristling with passion and fire.
I know I am driven by the same inner fire and desire.

DUSKY DAY IN DALLAS

On 21-22 November, 1963, President John F. Kennedy, and Jackie stayed at the Hotel Texas, Fort Worth. There was morning drizzle when JFK went outside to greet people and give a short speech; there was sunlight.

Inside the hotel there was a welcoming breakfast given by the Fort Worth Chamber of Commerce. The confident MC offered JFK a stetson there, which he graciously accepted, but did not wear.

John F. Kennedy gave a last speech, mixing humour with seriousness: "No one expects that our life will be easy; certainly not in this decade, perhaps not in this century." The Minister prayed: "May the Lord bless you and keep you."

The President boarded Air Force One at Carswell, touching down at Love Field at 11.40am, where there were crowds pressing along the fence-line, holding up pro-and anti-JFK signs, ambivalence in the air.

At 12 noon I saw President Kennedy get into the rear seat of a Lincoln convertible without the bulletproof bubbletop. Mrs Kennedy was holding a bouquet of red roses. I felt sadness as the motorcade receded to downtown Dallas.

M A T A R I K I

how still the star in the water
he stands reflecting, the constellation
approaches mid-winter, cloud
brings news of rain, drowning light

at midnight there is nothing to see
only that lone star caught on the surface

denying velocity of the universe, slowing
speed of his thought, within the dark
breath in, or out, at the request of
a deeper well, the way he breathes

he is standing, waiting for frost, breath
visible, season of the new moon, how still

SILENT

a line in this poem should not
need to clamour for attention

the genetics of each word
has a right to be heard
or remain unspoken

not as the poet thinks
but as the poem requires
beneath the pen's ink

each word owns a history
older than any poet's claim
at least as old as

the bird's flight
flick of fin through water
story this stone would tell

if someone were to listen

SPINNING

The spinning planet concentrated wind across our plains
this week at the other end of the earth, waves do their best
their very damndest to wash away islands in their path
we're living when extremes lay waste, trees break apart, and
those that resist are lifted bodily from the darkness enfolding
the secret soil of their rooted being, water wears at our words
the small container of one voice is likely to crawl mute into
the mouth of a conch shell following washes of sea sound
or her beating heart, winding inward, spiralling backward
seeking one true thing – scent of wild thyme, song thrush
persisting after dusk to claim an uppermost branch, fire
burning so that ash might replenish the earth, there are
so many reasons to remain hopeful in spite of our fears

if spinning yarn was good enough for Gandhi then it's
good enough for me, the idea of so many strands wrapping
tracks around a spindle forms its own coherence without
need of narrative, patriotism or proof, it is no more nor less
for being what it is, the turning of this place into yet another
story, traced like mist rising off the dam on frosty mornings

Mark Young

**THE PLAYGIRL OF
THE WESTERN WORLD**

Feisty self-
assurance was her
trademark, & kept

the cosmos in a
ceaseless state
of flux. Ordered be-

headed for crimes
against divinity;
but intercession

on a day that was
sponsored by the
letter C brought

clemency. Reciprocity
applied. Conditions
agreed to. She spent

the rest of her life
in a herbarium,
pressed & dried &

sandwiched in be-
tween a sycamore
seed & a synchrotron.

Notes on Contributors

MICHAEL DUFFETT is an internationally-published English poet, born in London, educated at Cambridge, worked in Arabia, Tokyo, NZ and Hawaii and who now lives in California.

RIEMKE ENSING's set of poems *Storm Warning - after McCabon* was recently put to music by composer Alex van den Broek and premiered at the WORD Writers & Readers Festival in Christchurch 2014.

BRENTLEY FRAZER lives in Queensland, Australia, and is editor of barekucklepoet.com

NOELINE GANNAWAY lives in Wellington, widowed, interests include peace, environment, human rights, organic gardening and health.

MICHAEL HARLOW, featured in this issue, recently published his selected poems *Sweeping the Courtyard* (cold hub press) and a selection of his love poems, *Heart absolutely I can* (Makaro Press).

CAMERON LA FOLLETTE works as an environmental activist protecting the Oregon coast. She co-founded and runs the Classic Poetry Group in Salem, and is the Australia and New Zealand editor for Representative Poetry Online, a website run by the University of Toronto.

P V REEVES writes fiction and poetry and lives in Wellington.

NICHOLAS REID is a poet and Aucklander by choice and a teacher and historian by trade. His first collection *The Little Enemy* was published in 2011 and he is currently preparing his second collection for publication.

EDWARD SAKOWSKI, born in Poland, left after solidarity movement and moved to New Zealand, living first in Dunedin and now in Kaiapoi.

LAURA SOLOMON is a well-known fiction writer and author of the poetry collection *In Vitro*, HeadworX, recently republished in Hong Kong. Forthcoming works include the two sequels to the novella *Instant Messages* and a poetry collection *Freda Kablo's Cry*.

MARYJANE THOMSON is a Wellington writer, artist and photographer. Her first collection of poems *Fallen Grace* was published this year.

BRIAN TURNER has won numerous awards for his poetry. At present he lives in the Ida Valley, Central Otago.

MICHAEL WALKER is an Auckland poet.

PAT WHITE, moved recently to live at Fairlie, in the Mackenzie country. A new volume titled 'Naturally' is to be published by Frontiers Press.

MARK YOUNG's most recent books are the e-book *Asemic Colon* from The Red Ceilings Press; *The Codicils*, a 600-page selection of poems written between 2009 & 2012, out from Otoliths; & *the eclectic world* from gradient books of Finland. He lives in North Queensland in Australia.