

CircleShow

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Seven CirclePress

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From the Editor

Volume 5 marks a crucial turning-point in the history of this little magazine. As we move forward with the project we will be reassessing its basic nature, possibly leading to innovations in content, changed format, new delivery and more.

To celebrate this change we are thrilled to offer our readers this small but quality issue, which includes work by a handful of our past contributors, authors who really exemplify the vision behind this project.

As always we want to thank the many wonderful authors we sent work our way. Seven CirclePress could not survive without the continued interest of so many talented artists and minds.

Enjoy.

Seth Jani
Founder and Editor-In-Chief

May 9, 2011

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Jeffrey Alfier

Jeffrey Alfier is a two-time Pushcart prize nominee, and a nominee for the UK's Forward Prize for Poetry. His poems have appeared recently in *Vallum* (Canada) and *Post Road*, with work forthcoming in *New York Quarterly*. His latest chapbook is Before the Troubadour Exits (2011). His first full-length book of poems, The Wolf Yearling, will be published in 2012, by Pecan Grove Press. He serves as co-editor of *San Pedro River Review*.

The Last Snowfall We Remember

Storms always swept in from the east. They tumbled in dark tidal clouds over the horizon locals named for owls, making all the more stark the bare scaffolds of fir and poplars that flourished in opaque green canopies most of the year.

We played in the sugar-glue and gumdrops that held the cookie walls of the gingerbread house your grandmother insisted we build. She demanded Christmas in full dress uniform – loud as brass, all red and green ribbons, a grand yield in toys. Like the plastic soldier in his parachute I'd toss down from the balcony as you waited below in the gaining snowdrifts.

We kept a room for you then, named it yours through the months of absence, unsure when you and your mother would visit again. When you slept, we locked it out of fear of the staircase just outside your door. One day you napped in our bed, next to grandma's stamps on the nightstand. She found your pajamas covered with them –

she who would live only four more winters, all without the cold and snowmelt she feared would soak your boots as we pulled your sled through packed snow against throatfuls of wind. In her red and green solicitude, she'd forget how at day's end I'd hold your chilled feet tight to my chest, as if they'd never know again what the earth beneath the snow was like.

Mario Ariza

Mario Alejandro Ariza is a master's student in Hispanic Cultural Studies at Columbia University. His economy grew by 10.3% last year.

Commute

This old song of Indolence?
It stops the shifting arc
of light beyond - beyond
the point of pleasure.
Gesundheit.

The crush of people on the 6 train
all sing the strangest song;
It slowly chokes off every inch of space.
I forget my handkerchief
And use my sleeve to wipe my face.

I am a necessary
Un necio, nunca, nada, nothing.
I am a necessary but not a necessity.
I pick my nose with uncommon violence,

No one says anything.
Senescence. Somnolent morning
Spent trying not to fall asleep
In this, the subway car.
 People with children
 With homes.
 Husbands

Who watch the hours pass
Without metaphor.

Huechalafquen

My Dear Ken, Remember the freezing night
We spent inside your dirty orange tent?
Wood wet, we failed to get a fire lit
Shivering shore-less on that alpine lake.
Or our mad dash to Neoquen? Money out,

Mario Ariza

twenty-seven hungry hours on a bus
That swayed as we both read *The Fountainhead*.
Slowly, we climbed towards far Bariloche
and beyond, just to see how some southern stars
were by the toothsome jagged Andes bent.
Our trail back to Buenos Aires was too long -
We begged with the dogs in Bahia,
Caught night trains with winter white Trotskyites
And returned to the city so cynical.

She-Bop-Shema

A city sucks up rivers as it grows and I oppose to nothing the
experience of poetry.
Each temple gets destroyed without a trace. It's like the special solitude
of Sophoclean heroes the advent of infinitesimal calculus or the
accurate prediction of eclipses. Let's talk informal principals.

Don't tell anyone but,
There's a run in the pantyhose.
It points straight to your pussy.
Can you name all the Niobids?

That's right, I oppose to nothing
Nacreous Nothing
And boast of my progeny and chase the hair with the ox
and swim against the torrent.

I will perish quickly from the good land that the lord gave me.

Buff Whitman-Bradley

Buff Whitman-Bradley is the author of two books of poetry, b. eagle, poet, and The Honey Philosophies. He is also co-producer/director of the documentary films Outside In, and Porque Venimos, and co-editor of the forthcoming book About Face: Military Resisters Turn Against War (PM Press, 2011).

Desert Night

How solitary and forlorn they seem in the moonlight
The cactuses standing next to their shadows
Like figures in an Edward Hopper painting
Waiting at the midnight depot
For the last bus out of town
Or the unscheduled arrival of love

The Light in the Attic

Late one night it suddenly occurs to you
That the woman you once loved so fervently
You believed you could never live without her
Has shrunk to the size of a tiny sparrow
You glimpse occasionally out of the corner of an eye

While a boy you treated badly in third grade
Whom you haven't thought of in decades
Has grown enormous and comes thumping down the stairs
To harrow and torment you with such ferocity
That you whimper and cower under the covers

If only you had a white handkerchief to wave
You could surrender and negotiate a truce but
All you can do is try to outlast him and he does leave eventually
Making his way back up to the shadows of the attic
Where small birds roost in dark corners and flit about
In the faint erratic light of a bulb flickering off and on

David Chorlton

David Chorlton was born in Austria, grew up in England, and spent several years in Vienna before moving to Phoenix in 1978. His newest published books reflect this concern for the natural world. They are Waiting for the Quetzal, from March Street Press, and The Porous Desert, from Future Cycle Press. He recently had a poem included in the anthology, BIRDS, from the British Museum, won the Ronald Wardall Poetry Prize for his chapbook The Lost River, from Rain Mountain Press, and the Slipstream Chapbook Contest with From the Age of Miracles.

Castings

for John and Ruth Waddell

Left leg extended, right arm raised, the heel
on the standing foot is sprung
two inches from the ground
and a current flows straight up
through the body's axis
while sunlight runs its blue-bronze course
from fingertip to shoulder,
down along the hip and out
on the thigh, on the shin, to the toe
where it glints a moment before
the shadow from a tree
begins its climb toward evening
when the figure retains its stance
the way a dancer filled with moonlight
does. She is one of many in the garden,

caught mid-step or balancing
as only the practiced can
with arms held in a vertical line and the face
looking back through the pose
to a leg held firmly while the muscles flow
through it; or with hands raised
while the head is turned toward the sky
in a gesture of release
from a world spinning too fast
through a universe too large to care

but here are stillness and motion
cast in a single mold.

Night in the Wet Season

The roads leading into a storm
dip and wind
between a theater of cloud and the grass
where sparrows wait for rain.
There's a brilliant light

in the sky
and a shadow moving in
as the mountains
rise to meet it. Heat has built all day

to the first lightning flash
that turns a deer's eye white
when she stops
to look back from her run
through the oak trees
whose leaves are silver

for a second. Rain gallops
uphill and down. Then the sun

returns as quickly
as it disappeared, and peak after peak
returns to its place
in time for the glow
that precedes the descent

into the time the owl
calls softly from its branch
and the Black Witch moth
arrives with a hiss

like a nail
driven through layers of dark.

Tobi Cogswell

Tobi Cogswell is a two-time Pushcart nominee. Publication credits include *Illya's Honey*, *Rhino*, *RE:AL*, *Decanto* (UK), *Red River Review*, *CircleShow*, *Turbulence* (UK), *Spilt Milk* (UK), *Inkspill* (UK), *Iodine Poetry Journal* and *Frostwriting* (Sweden) among others, and are forthcoming in *Hawai'i Pacific Review*, *Pinyon Journal*, *Slipstream* and *Chiron Review*. She has three chapbooks and her full-length poetry collection Poste Restante is available from Bellowing Ark Press. She is the co-editor of *San Pedro River Review* (www.sprreview.com).

What Love Spares

Write down everything.
It just is. Don't put the years
in order, making them march,
put them as you come upon
the sweetness of the day
or sting of an unexpected slap.
Remember how you remember,
the poignancy is that you
do remember, the detail doesn't
matter. This is what made you.
Were her lips bitter-blue with cold,
just bring it forward. Understand
why you have an engraved
fondness for gray days,
the altered tenor
of salt on sugary things.
Forgive yourself and spoon her.
No lectures required. The back
of your breath has touched creation
the way the inside of a glacier
is from time before time.
Let it carry you through pulsing
moments, let it grow wilder.

Howie Good

Howie Good is the author of the full-length poetry collections Lovesick (Press Americana, 2009), Heart With a Dirty Windshield (BeWrite Books, 2010), and Everything Reminds Me of Me (Desperanto, 2011), as well as 24 print and digital poetry chapbooks.

Dented

You tired? Lean
against something

big,

such as the birth
of the modern navy.

A canary doesn't
usually chirp

this much.
That other noise

is rain

being squeezed
from fresh hearts.

Hostage

I'll leave when you say.
I'll stay if you think I should.

After farmers seeded the clouds,
the clouds became barking crocodiles.

White petals mixed with red.

The TV hazily recalls
homicidal machines approaching
across a stubble field.

Coffee keeps you up.

Howie Good

We pass between the black crow
and the even blacker shadow it throws.

Mat Gould

Mat Gould is subject to reality and at other times adept at it. He is currently making a stone oven for as to strengthen his spear and to simply keep a lantern lit. The Fire is Breathing On Me is his recent chapbook.

a mid-day tea on a far away beach

the ship is such a little boat
once
it
is
out at sea
the cold rain takes it even further away
a spec upon a spec in this conundrum
it
feels
like my heart
distant in my chest
on
its
way
to you-

for there are rats in the pigeonhole

I wasn't going to confess
a
love
for anything
it is early Sunday afternoon
and
dammit
I've been listening to Jazz records on the turn-style
flipping into books
off
and
on the bookshelf
Pound
Ostaijen
Gayton
Buk (I can call him that because I know his ass ya know)
this is that kind of poem

not a poem at all
but
somebody can rave about it
someone else can bitch about its irrelevance
I will be responsible for my own outrage
they were not here to witness these factors
had no idea the blathering cauldron of need
would not of known a pen exploded within itself
nor
that my feet are mildly sweating in my winter slippers
how paunch bellied this winters gut
or
that I look up from this paper
at
the blinds raised
watching birds scatter and gather at the feeder
so
here
it
goes
seems we all love a teet in our mouth
be it by spoon, sippy cup, or a hanging suet sack
a great lavish tit
sure
you have dreamed about them
looked at or for them
from
across the room
across the world
right here across this page
maybe you have stacks of pages full of them
probably if not jes for sport
whole sets dedicated to their very celebration
thought of them with every drink
perhaps you are in need of such with the thought of each
I
think
I
will do jes that

for there are rats in the pigeon hole
I am full of silent cheer
now that I have done what I had set out not to do
I am marching from the house
into
bare sunlight
record still spinning after a precious last song
stove on for teas and soups
I will be responsible for my own power outage
I will return from the day
when
said sunlight is at half-mast
and
I have found what there was to look for
as
I
can
be
not so different from them rats-

Seth Jani

Seth Jani began Seven CirclePress in 2008 as a way to showcase his work. Believing that poetry is a truly communal experience, one absent in modern society, he decided to open the press up to the voices of others later that year. He is the author of the full-length collection Let Us Rejoice: Poems 2003-2009 and has had work appear in *The Holly Rose Review*, *Shoots & Vines*, *The Foundling Review*, *Writers' Bloc (Rutgers)*, *Chantarelle's Notebook* and others. He is also the founder and editor of the new eco-journal EarthSpeak Magazine (www.earthspeakmagazine.com). He currently lives in Seattle, WA.

Paean

Inside me dreams drip and slide like sweat.
A life flourishes and ends on cue.
Such happy animals we are laying out alone
Mid-morning in the fog,
The craven appetite paused for a brief moment
With the sun.
Let's worship the early crickets praying in the dawn.
Let's worship the cat's long stretch against the earth.
I write a poem on the turned cheek of darkness.
I stroke the untroubled bodies of the grass.
The sea is far but its music finds me
For tiny intervals upon the wind.
The universe is large but I reel in my modest
House of bones, in love with the whole damn tapestry
Of gases, and lights, and stars.

Polarities

Dense, I desire lightness.
Weightless, the weight of the world.
Bent by my longing for wings
I forget my ability to walk.

Seeing the sadness of a river
I want the sadness of the sea.
Feeling the earth move beneath me
I want the stillness of the stars.

In the light of morning I dream of darkness.
In the dearth of winter I speak of spring.
Immutable as a shadow on the ocean
I choose silence when I should sing.

Martin Willitts Jr.

Martin Willitts Jr. was recently nominated for two Best of The Net awards and his 5th Pushcart award. He has four new chapbooks: The Girl Who Sang Forth Horses (Pudding House Publications, 2010), Van Gogh's Sunflowers for Cezanne (Finishing Line Press, 2010), True Simplicity (Poets Wear Prada Press, 2011), and My Heart Is Seven Wild Swans Lifting (Slow Trains, 2011).

Almond Branches in Bloom, San Ramey

Based on the painting "Almond Branches in Bloom, San Remy," by Van Gogh, 1890

"There is no blue without yellow and without orange." --- Van Gogh

The white flowers indicate a sweet nut
I devour as oceans of blue sunsets

dormant during winter,
a yellow poem waiting to bloom.

The orange sun opens sunflower petals,
yellow mist pulsates on leaves.

I find a blue that is impossible,
sighing names of things to come.

The mailman could hide letters in his blue whiskers.
Each letter opens as sparrow eggs.

The orange cobblestone streets are alphabets.
Nuns gather them into schoolchildren reciting by rote.

Your words migrate into my heart.
I am not so lonely when you write to me like this.

Retribution

Over fields of planted suburban houses,
cracking whips of frizzed blinding light
leave patterns of shadows of our former selves
plastered temporarily on stucco walls.
Fixated on the lawn,
twisted, broken telephone wires sizzled like bacon.
Father wandered in our dazed house,

how sins were packed away in suitcases,

Martin Willitts Jr.

how no one ever sees retribution coming
until it comes.

Steve Klepetar

Steve Klepetar's work has appeared widely and has received several Pushcart and Best of the Net nominations. His chapbook, Thirty-six Crows, was recently published by erbacce-press.

In the City of Sand

Below this web of stars, child-bearer
and clown, we open our hands to the moon.

Silent threads dangle in the atmosphere.
Everywhere glowing eyes and vanishing
scent of hemlock and oak. Paintings burned

in these tunnels of light, dancing figures with

triple horns, vibrant filaments wave and swing
from stylized hands. Turn and your mind
goes blank, wake and you have lost another day.
Here in the city of sand we look for signs
telling of rivers and loam and dripping clothes.

My Father's Hands

My father's hands holding
nothing, disembodied fingers
calloused and gray.

I saw them move in the mist
like skittish birds. Here is a choice:
North, with strong
wind at your back or South, where ocean
melts into foam.

You decide, hungry hands, unable
to connect unreachable
hours, penetrating fingertips
of stone. It's you who must batter
nearly forgotten flesh, ignite
the lamp of your forgotten mind.

About the Press

Seven CirclePress was founded in 2008 by New England poet Seth Jani. It publishes both online and off and aims to create a collective of the best voices from the independent literary scene.

It commits to no prescribed esthetic but has a strong inclination to view art as a means of promoting unity and meaningful interaction.

It has a strong online presence with the amount of visitors growing daily.

SCP publishes a select number of books/chapbooks a year as well as CircleShow: The Official Journal of Seven CirclePress, released biannually.