



# THE ROTARY DIAL

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LESLIE MONSOUR

**Summer Again**

The ink-drop bumblebee invades  
    The squashes, bloom by bloom,  
Amid the beans that weave in braids  
    And dangle from their loom.

The lizard, livening its bones,  
    Pretends that it can print  
Its belly on the blazing stones  
    Beside the cooling mint,

Where cabbage butterflies perform  
    A papery ballet  
And dodge the garden hose's warm,  
    Rainbow-illuminated spray.

The scene, familiar and brief,  
    Age after age returns –  
As green returns to summer leaf,  
    Before the forest burns.

KEVIN CASEY

**The Heron**

In the piebald stream –  
Under bough, under sun –  
The heron stands  
In the current's seam.  
When the day's finally done,  
And the dark expands,  
She will leave this dream

For a tree long dead  
Where her nest holds her near  
To the breath of the stars,  
Holds her tapered head.  
And the stream-song, clear  
And never far,  
Flows about her bed.

THOMAS ZIMMERMAN

## **Whale Watching**

Bay of Fundy

The lobster-boat-turned-tourist-tub rode out  
the rocking waves. Sun turned the water gray,  
and shade drew out the blue some people tout  
as heavenly, but you sensed danger, day  
of judgment. “Don’t be Jonah. Please stay in  
the boat”: she thinks you are the kind to dive  
or fall, be swallowed whole, your qualms a skin  
so easily peeled raw, to be alive  
a gift you might exchange or seldom use.  
“Leviathan” is what you thought, box lunch  
between your feet, your camera a ruse  
of rough-and-readiness. The captain’s hunch  
was right: you found some whales, three humpbacks and  
their calves. You prayed until your feet touched sand.

LOIS WILLIAMS

### **Seahorse**

Of all the tanks in the aquarium  
yours pulls the crowd. We gather in half-light  
to watch your fabricated ocean, wait  
to see the gravel move and you become  
the prototypal horse and brother swum  
to us upright from another field. Sleight  
performer, dangler hiding in plain sight,  
what happens in your spiny cranium?

You move with such intention that I cry,  
for you are ancient, private, and my gaze  
(too much the interloper's) steals from you  
analogies – foal, yearling, reason why  
we have to stop polluting – while you graze  
the planted sea grass, blink as horses do.

BETHANY W. POPE

### **Sailing to England**

Love's a game for grown-ups. It wasn't meant  
for children, any more than exploring  
the globe was intended for cabin-boys.  
Children often died on those voyages,  
they were more susceptible to perils;  
they drowned, caught diseases, served as larders  
in emergencies. The few survivors  
often grew into generals, but this  
is an aside. I waited until I  
was older to sail across the ocean,  
into my New World. I found your landscape  
familiar, and alien. Beautiful,  
in your own way; though you've mountain lion  
claws. Your love could kill, or bring me riches.

DAN FERRARA

## Monument

Walking Weehawken's promenade – the northbound ferries pushing their cargo up the Hudson, every passenger gawking at the starboard view: the vertical steel and glass, the traffic in the canyons like river rocks – I'm ghostlike. Portside. Dreamy until I see the fenced-in bust of Hamilton, bronzed and perched on marble and a random, red boulder placed behind it. Locals call it his death rock. After coming out on dueling's unlucky end, according to the plaque in the grass, he *may* have doubled over, wounded and bleeding from his hip, and *may* have rested his body on this very rock. The *mays* get me thinking...maybe *this* rock isn't *the* rock of consequence. It could be true, but maybe they got the wrong rock. Maybe rocks like this were a dime a dozen way back when. It's possible that the Palisades were wholly lousy with rocks, and those who witnessed Burr's undoubted achievement later fingered any rock on the bluff. What if a phony rock got branded and praised? What if the real-deal rock got taken away and ground to gravel, carted off to Cape May, combined with larger mounds of gravel then sold to some Virginian farmer, lining his country road with little bits of Hamilton's death rock, horse shit slowly crushed against their eroding edges. Awful crime. But maybe it's not important. After-all, he didn't exactly die here, only rested on a large rock in this location, maybe. Maybe they'll say a little something with respect to this spot, those ferry captains,

cruising by on their way back south to midtown.  
Something grand and historic. Maybe I should  
wait, shout out to them as they pass me, stand here  
raving wildly about fake rocks and suckers.  
Maybe nothing gets said at all. The ferries  
pass my monument, heads turned, eyes fixed portside  
while the city reflects the falling sunlight.

NED BALBO

### **Lost Prayer in Time of War**

*A variation on Rimbaud's "Le Mal"*

When machine gun fire sprays tirelessly  
under a blue sky endless, sunlit, empty,  
and the troops – oppressors, terrorists,  
heroes, or freedom fighters – fill the lists

of casualties whose names will be released  
not yet, but soon – the wounded, the deceased –  
poor soldiers, what will find you in the field?  
Artillery; the choice – kill or be killed –

and, somewhere, maybe, God, if He exists,  
waking once more, perplexed, nourished by worship,  
flattered by prayer in any tongue or faith,

yet unimpressed, indifferent to requests,  
and tired, so tired, His sole reward this sleep  
too easily breached and not enough like death.

PERRY L. POWELL

### **The Little Light**

Have the grace to be the coward you are.  
Don't buckdance round the simple naked fact.  
Truth waits in a corner of your memoir:  
take her hand; pledge her quiet pact.

We control much less than we imagine.  
We strut and stride and bluster how we do  
but there isn't much we humans ever fashion  
that chance and time and fate won't fast undo.

What can we know stuck in our little niches,  
no matter how far-flung our satellites?  
We flaunt our memes, we stitch our data stitches,  
we plant our flag on conquered high-tech heights...

But the dark remains a vast, chill place,  
and fear is in the end our final face.

JBMulligan

## **In Caves of Sky**

Bats cry out, and see food with their voices.  
In underground pools, eyelids of quick, bleached fish  
grow over eyes, and whiskers flicker and brush  
the current to unveil their appetite's choices.  
Meat finds a way to feed. How could it not?  
To reproduce takes energy, and fuel  
for life is life. The cave of now grows full  
of what will be, and bursts, and what pours out  
will find its cave in sky and rock and sea  
and gush into tomorrow, which will then  
create again the past, since repetition  
mothers the new, and all its progeny  
must blunder blindly, eat and feed and die  
for life to live, regardless of its why.

C. B. ANDERSON

### **Friendly Fire**

It's good to have a sympathetic friend  
Who's there when you decide you need a drink,  
But complications never seem to end

When brotherly relationships depend  
On who left dirty dishes in the sink.  
It's good to have a sympathetic friend,

And lest forgetfulness become a trend,  
House rules might best be written down in ink.  
The complications never seem to end

When boon companions fail to comprehend  
That loads of unwashed laundry tend to stink.  
It's good to have a sympathetic friend

With whom it isn't needful to pretend,  
But often he is ill-equipped to think  
The complications through. And in the end

He has no territory to defend,  
Except for friendship hanging on the brink.  
It's good to have a sympathetic friend,  
But complications never seem to end.

CHRIS O'CARROLL

### **Dali's Dials**

Can time stand still, or run, or creep?  
Can it maintain one constant pace?  
How does the mind flex, deep asleep,  
To reconfigure time and space?

Clock faces soften, melt and ooze.  
One drapes a semi-human face.  
Their mutable outlines refuse  
To validate the commonplace.

When rigid shapes we think we know,  
Rendered with hyper-real precision,  
Can nonchalantly shift and flow,  
Lifelike and dreamlike are one vision.

A timepiece swarms with ants, as though  
It were, like flesh, prey to decay.  
Thus art's subversive undertow  
Whisks mere reality away.

SANDY SHREVE

**Late**

Just this, the way your robe hangs from the door,  
and how the deep green leaf in its floral  
pattern (pinks on black) is answered in the towel  
dangling from a hook below the mirror –  
just the ordinariness of this, the way  
it's overlooked until one sleepless night,  
someone rises and flicks on the light.

## CONTRIBUTORS

A native of Los Angeles, California, **Leslie Monsour** was raised in Mexico City and Panama. She is the author of *The Alarming Beauty of the Sky* (2005) and *The House Sitter* (2011), as well as the recipient of three Pushcart nominations and a fellowship from the National Endowment for the Arts. Her poems, essays, and translations have appeared in numerous journals, including *The American Arts Quarterly*, *Poetry*, *Measure*, *The Dark Horse*, *String Poet*, *Mezzo Cammin*, and *Able Muse*.

**Kevin Casey** is a graduate of the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, and received his graduate degree at the University of Connecticut. His work has been accepted by *The Orange Room Review*, *The Milo Review*, *Small Print Magazine*, *Tule Review*, *Turtle Island Review*, *The Monarch Review*, and others. He currently teaches literature at a small university in Maine, where he enjoys fishing, snowshoeing and hiking.

**Thomas Zimmerman** teaches English, directs the writing center, and edits two literary magazines at Washtenaw Community College, in Ann Arbor, Michigan. His chapbook *In Stereo: Thirteen Sonnets and Some Fire Music* appeared from The Camel Saloon Books on Blog in 2012. Tom's website: [thomaszimmerman.wordpress.com](http://thomaszimmerman.wordpress.com).

**Lois Williams** is a writer and conservationist. Her poems and essays have appeared in many venues on both sides of the Atlantic, including *Verse Daily*, *New England Review*, *Antiphon*, and *Granta*. She lives in Norfolk, UK.

**Bethany W. Pope** is an award-winning author of the LBA, and a finalist for the Faulkner-Wisdom Awards, the Cinnamon Press Novel competition, and the Ink, Sweat and Tears poetry commission. She received her PhD from Aberystwyth University's Creative Writing program. Bethany has published three poetry collections: *A Radiance* (Cultured Llama, 2012), *Crown of Thorns*, (Oneiros Books, 2013), and *The Gospel of Flies* (Writing Knights Press, 2014). Her fourth collection, *Persephone in the Underworld*, has been accepted by Rufus Books.

**Dan Ferrara** is from Toms River, New Jersey. He studied creative writing at and received degrees from the University of North Carolina at Wilmington

and the Johns Hopkins University where he received outstanding graduate honors. His poems have appeared in 32 Poems, the Sewanee Theological Review, the Free State Review and Lines + Stars. He has twice been nominated for the annual anthology Best New Poets from Meridian and Samovar Press. Dan lives with his wife Laura in Baltimore City and works at the Johns Hopkins University in student affairs.

**Ned Balbo's** *The Trials of Edgar Poe and Other Poems* received the Donald Justice Prize and the 2012 Poets' Prize. His previous books are *Lives of the Sleepers* (Ernest Sandeen Prize and ForeWord Book of the Year Gold Medal) and *Galileo's Banquet* (Towson University Prize co-winner). Versions of poems by Apollinaire, Baudelaire, Rilke, Rimbaud, Trakl, or Valéry are out or forthcoming in *Birmingham Poetry Review*, *Bluestem*, *Evansville Review*, *String Poet*, *Unsplendid*, and elsewhere. He is co-winner of the 2013 Willis Barnstone Translation Prize.

**Perry L. Powell** is a systems analyst who lives near Atlanta, Georgia in the United States. His work has appeared or is forthcoming in 50 *Haikus*, *A Handful of Stones*, *A Hundred Gourds*, *Atavic Poetry*, *Black Mirror Magazine*, *Dead Snakes*, *Decades Review*, *Deep Water Literary Journal*, *Frogpond*, *Haiku Presence*, *Indigo Rising*, *Lucid Rhythms*, *Möbius: The Journal of Social Change*, *Poetry Pacific*, *Poetry Quarterly*, *Prune Juice*, *Quantum Poetry Magazine*, *Ribbons*, *small stones*, *Stone Highway Review*, *The Bactrian Room*, *The Blue Hour*, *The Camel Saloon*, *The Credo*, *The Foliate Oak*, *The Heron's Nest*, *The Innisfree Poetry Journal*, *The Lyric*, *The Mind[less] Muse*, *Turtle Island Quarterly*, *vox poetica*, and *Wolf Willow Journal*.

**JB Mulligan** has had poems and stories in several hundred magazines, including recently, *Epiphany*, *Bluestem*, *Jellyfish Whispers*, *Blue Unicorn*, and *Eighty Six Four Hundred*, has had two chapbooks published: *The Stations of the Cross* and *THIS WAY TO THE EGRESS*, and has appeared in multiple volumes of the anthology, *Reflections on a Blue Planet*.

**C.B. Anderson** was the longtime gardener for the PBS television series, *The Victory Garden*. In the past ten years hundreds of his poems have appeared in scores of print and electronic journals. His full-length book of poetry, *Mortal Soup and the Blue Yonder*, was published in 2013 by White Violet Press.

**Chris O'Carroll** is a writer and an actor. In addition to his previous appearances in *The Rotary Dial*, he has published poems in *Angle*, *Free Inquiry*, *Lighten Up Online*, *Measure*, *Umbrella*, and other print and online journals, and in the anthologies *The Best of the Barefoot Muse* and *20 Years at the Cantab Lounge*.

**Sandy Shreve's** most recent poetry collections are *Waiting for the Albatross* (forthcoming from Oolichan Books in fall 2014) and *Suddenly, So Much* (Exile Editions, 2005). Her other books include the anthology *In Fine Form – The Canadian Book of Form Poetry*, co-edited with Kate Braid. For more information, visit her website at [shreve.shawwebspaces.ca](http://shreve.shawwebspaces.ca).