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Editors:

Marc Moore (C.M.M), Lead Editor, Founder

Helen Sims, Associate Editor

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SUBMISSIONS (always open):

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submission rules:**

@parquet.poetry

Editors note:

I started this magazine as a personal attempt and challenge to myself to shift the entire current culture of verse towards what I believe can be both a higher quality and more inclusive space (in regards to gender identity, previous work being published, race, sexual orientation, standing in the academic community, etc) for writers.

I am consistently let down by both small pockets of the writing community and the larger academic web of gatekeeping magazines, combined with an electronic system with inherent bias and flaws. While I do not submit my work that way, and never have, as I know my own writing is beyond the quality any magazine could ask for, I constantly see friends and colleagues let down by this system.

Many early poetry magazines were started by small groups of people who simply wanted to show what they believed to be excellent and unique work during that time. Many cultural shifts in poetry led to larger magazines that still exist to this day.

The authors you will read within this magazine should be very proud of their work, it all says something very unique. The voices ring out as if pressed into the wax ether of the blank page. I cried a lot reading "Myles Ahead". I laughed a lot when I noticed there were two Bruce Springsteen references in the magazine by different authors. All of Francesca's work made me stop and think about the world. Colby Kline and Beth Boyle have such impactful and musical voices on the page. Mike Ladd has taken an amazing direction with his direct confrontation with mortality and permanence through family here and past.

Start the conversation: let's change the world of verse for the better and get more magazines and work like this out there instead of the stale stuff. Thank you for supporting us in our early days. Many more great issues and pieces to come this year.

- Marc Moore, *Lead Editor of Parquet Poetry and CEO of Night City Publishing LLC*

Author Bios:

Michael Ladd:

Mike Ladd is a world renowned poet, musician and artist who has worked from artists ranging from Open Mike Eagle to Vijay Iver and everyone in between. Constantly redefining his sound and setting trends that show up years later in the zeitgeist of the hip hop, verse and general art community in Paris, New York and his hometown of Cambridge in New England. His work can be found on all streaming services, the theater stage, the studio, in his family and kids, and the tradition of poets we hope to have readers here embrace. His Instagram is: @likemaddladd

Francesca Miller:

Francesca Miller is a poet living on the southwest side of Chicago, Illinois with her partner and their two cats. When she isn't writing, you can find her trolling the city for vintage fashion and books. Her struggles with trauma, queer identity, and mental illness have influenced her work towards the gothic and confessional. This is her first publication. Reach out to her at francescalynne1874@gmail.com.

Colby Lila Kline:

Colby, a Los Angeles native, was raised in the hills atop Mulholland drive. At a very young age she was acting, singing, and modeling in numerous tv, commercial, and film roles. She credits her father comedian Richard Kline (tvs' Larry of Three's Company) for inspiring her humor. Featured many times as a young comedy writer and vocalist in school she went on to join the prestigious musical theatre program at Northwestern University outside Chicago. It wasn't until after graduation and having her heart incinerated by a lover that she began writing poetry, compulsively, which at first arrived from thin air on a divine channel. Only then did she begin to consider herself a true artist. Today she dives deep into her arsenal of poetic pros for lyrics in the studio while recording and performing her original music. She lives in West Hollywood California and manages her own cat sitting business to be the faithful guardian of many cats (and one pig) while having no pets of her own. IG: @colbykline

Jodi Bosin:

Jodi is a West Philly based writer, artist, and social worker with poetry published in *Always Crashing*, *Metatron Press*, and *Peach Mag*. Find her on the front porch and on Instagram @jodi_bosin.

Tillie Lams:

Born in Belgium and raised in Los Angeles, 32 year old Tillie Lams primarily writes poems for herself. She hopes that by sharing her experiences with abuse and addiction, someone else might find the courage and strength to do the same. IG: @reconnezcherie

Dana Mahoney:

Dana Mahoney was born and raised in southern Virginia and is a graduate of the University of Virginia, where she studied English literature and poetry writing. She is a user experience designer for the world's leading scientific publisher and founder of mental health start-up, Rollo. As a survivor of PTSD, Dana believes deeply in the power of poetry to heal ourselves, to bring light to the harder bits of life, and to show each other that we are not alone. She encourages everyone reading this to check-in with themselves and their loved ones, and to seek professional help when ready. Dana lives in Philadelphia with her partner, their 11-year-old chow mix, and two cats.

Dana can be found on Instagram @dmahoo @dmahoo.word and on Twitter @dmahoneyux

Sonia Linares:

I am a professional singer-song-writer and lyricist, writing as a solo performer as well as for explorative electronic and world music fusion projects.

I also lived and worked in the UK for 10 years, where I studied Performing Arts Pop Music (The Liverpool City College) and Therapeutic Counselling (Lambeth College, London).

sonialinaresmusic.com

Rah Nelson:

33 year old woman digging to the core to find what is within.
New Hampshire native sitting between a mountain and a lake.
Photography pays bills but other artforms pay my soul.
My family members include: Darla the Weimaraner, Bindi the Pitbull and Rawk-r the Cat.

Sarah Van de Kamp:

S M Van de Kamp is a multi-genre writer who has published poetry, fiction, and creative non-fiction. She is the founder of the Instagram project @wait.thisispoetry, an account focused on breaking down preconceptions of what poetry should be. Her work often centers around the duality that exists in daily life and how we can come into understanding with one another.
Instagram/Tiktok: @sarahmarievandekamp

Alison Lubar:

Alison Lubar teaches high school English by day and yoga by night. They are a queer, nonbinary femme of color whose life work (aside from wordsmithing) has evolved into bringing mindfulness practices, and sometimes even poetry, to young people. Find most of their published work at: alisonlubar.com

William Moffet Jr.:

William pursues photography, art and activism in Hartford, Connecticut, he will be releasing a collection of work through Night City Publishing in the fall of next year. Look for previews on our socials. His email contact is: moffet.will@gmail.com

Beth Boyle:

Beth lives In Philadelphia, PA, and is the CTO and chief A&R executive of Night City Publishing LLC. Her work has been published in various magazines in the area and has also won awards at Temple and the surrounding area. Queen Mob, her musical project gaining wide press in Philadelphia, will release their LP next summer. She can be reached at: bethanneboyle@gmail.com

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THE CURRENCY OF SELF

by Alison Lubar

I drank the last inch of water
you left in the paper cup (melted
ice still kissed by whiskey) hoping
to find you at the bottom (its hollow
drum back on the desk sends me
asunder). Distant thunder, unlike
a last knock, comes like an ominous
wave. When you left, a rainless storm
barred its usual baptismal catharsis.

You've (removed every trace, and even) wiped the sink.

Ask if I remember (what I said) last night:

"I feel like you're trying to consume me"

("I'm trying to find myself")

I will keep you in my cells for seven years.

Three kisses (as a spell, three birds). They are testing
pyrotechnics. Fireworks for two days away. There will be
no other sign: no auspicious crow, words in coffee
grounds, pattern of leaves, or window condensation.

Then, eleven months: alchemical
transmutation, metamorphic
reassemble: a coin into a ring,
(re)fill the cup from bottom-up.

FAIR WELL, NORMA JEANE

by Alison Lubar

Diamonds are a special friend
to uroboric bulimia, an appetite

to be a ten, twelve (really, a two).
A recipe to fit a linen suit wiggle

(it has no stretch): carrot and Chablis,
liver almost raw. Two eggs in milk

slims silhouette, crystals glitter
like dying fireflies for a final

birthday wish, sing it in netted
nude, spill breast for precedent:

sex is currency. There is no blame
for fucking hit-streaks, Pulitzers:

these men deposit your spent joints
in staged discipline on death-bed.

Every hand forces satin sheet-puppetry
while you dream of kid gloves, sewing

circles, lavender dawn. I wish you citrine,
carnelian for diamonds instead of barbiturates—

I dream you queer in magenta satin, folded
in nonbinary tuxedo bodies, a prism pantheon
of pall-bearers, and supplicate silver years

itch to surface. They stay silt-level river, golden
Hollywood, eternally thirty-six. No hourglass

ticks; that's why gentlemen prefer bombs.

THE (UN)RINGING OF HANDS

by Alison Lubar

Sometimes I wake up
still married. This unringed finger
indented like ancient carriage tracks,
grooves like deep wrinkles,
but this is no laugh line,
nor nostalgia for coliseum,
pyramid, or any kind of wonder.

This is an unnamed grave:
no funeral bells, no holy burial,
no church internment: instead
merely lingering at cemetery gate.

Can you feel the divide
of cellular worlds,
muscle from bone:
where a ring split
digit from palm
divide self from self,
the ontological switch
to single?

Now the tan line fades,
now deep crease recedes to hand,
all muscle rescinds your ringing,
remembers nothing of how you felt
in my hands. Now every night these
cells regenerate, knuckle fills in,
and I sleep like the dead.

ON THE 29th MASS SHOOTING, ANY YEAR

by Alison Lubar

stick roses in rifles
guerilla murals
 for permanent armistice

instead the soft clinks of shell cases
still litter like empty seed pods
 husks of a killshot

these will not grow into decorative bushes
 bloom forsythia in the dark red
 mulch of the playground

gardens for grave memorial elms,
bench plaques their names shining brass

every time I pass my prayer rubs away spring pollen
unexpected snow edges of sharp letters
smooth to cradle the names of babes

Never again.

 but thoughts and prayers aren't bulletproof
they're bullshit

and about as useful against open fire
as the paper of a poem

It Skips a Generation

by Mike Ladd

For 14 years I have tinkered with a poem
On my son at a chapel on a cliff before a northern Ocean
His tumultuous cadence
Abruptly calmed by a wind
One million times stronger than he or I

The Breton cliffs, the stubborn grass
Shrubs as hard as the mothers that built this place
That raised the Menhirs with their sons
That placed the stones for the Roman
Oven dwarfing the chapel with time

It went by
On the internet
On my belly in bed
Next to my boy's Mother
I'd pledge in silence
Tomorrow night I'll read a book

Even after the house was sold
We googled that it would take 6 days by bike to return
I can see the wind in my fare Black son's gold hair

The child who strutted from the womb, bounced into the world
Whose weight on my shoulders
Put me on my back for nearly a week
Who talks back to his mother but apologizes after
Who revels in the story
Of when she pulled him by the ear over the phone in front of his friends
For not being where he said he would be

The young man understands why shrubs are rugged
Who at 16 bounds into the kitchen
After spending all day on an essay and says
Dad, the key to happiness
Is hard work

Ever Since I Invented Heaven

by Mike Ladd

When it truly registered
My father was dead
My mother an atheist

I imagined an eternal meet & greet
Endless faces happy to see me
Ancestors and celebrities alike

I'd meet my dad, he'd show me around
Son, meet Malcom X
Malcolm-Son-Son-Malcolm
That sort of thing—
People would shake my hand
Give me hugs

Now nearer the destination
That's still the plan

A fantastically massive cocktail party
No one upset about a Facebook post
Or an unreturned e-mail

It's understood those folks never made it up
They are missed
But the hors d'oeuvres are to die for
Everyone is happy to see everyone
—

...I can drink Champagne and the devil stays home
Like Gatsby on a veranda

Dad again,
Martin-Son-Son Martin

I duck out to find Trayvon
Stumble on Sebastien
Goddess of afterparties
among other things

I am 3 years old again
They lead me from the palace
to the prairie of the displeased

to the livid sea
to the infinite ocean
full of us furious
mourning rejoicing

everyone in tune
effortless sonar of unforgetting
everyone with gills

FUZZY-TRACE

by Francesca Miller

clever devices, a sign in Chinatown screaming
the wrong city hiding in facets of muscle
a truck holding the name "SuperEgo" with outstretched palms
I break my nose even in the dark
a torn sock, picking a lock with expiration dates
I bleed for days, unravelling safety to coax the miracle of insertion
relentless body repair, a sign for my vanity
a touch to the face and I'm flinching
hallucinating my ego crucifixion and weaving your teeth into a smile
you're moving to my amygdala, butcher's blood
basting episodic faces, bound heads catching your voice
the risk of forgetting negated by cigarettes
I curl the arrow through my lips
and cure the holes leaking cerebrospinal fluid

[the same uphill drive in every dream]

you're explaining my notes to me, a milk glass glance
degrees of surprise, a fallible steel, the brute underscore of denim
my curious feint humming
stolen lattice like fruits of the spirit
take direction into my throat
fuzzy now
the gist traces, the bottom line
my method of decoding your shoulders

AFTER "TWO STUDIES OF GEORGE DYER" 1968

by Francesca Miller

Toothless people
along the curb probe and walk away
A cigarette on the floor and another cigarette
on the floor
This is called pointing

My pelvis shifts lower, my femur a divining rod reaching for a look ahead
exposure begging
behind myself salacity in glass boxes, thoracic muscles
contracting around the pin, a leg tucked under saves space.

Transference of vision, manganese scrim, alternating current to the right of the
midline
The face is endless
mutilation caring for the terminarch, I dissolve under glass eyes, the reflection
catching twice

Prominent brow bone
spread out on the block
twisted arm
unrelaxed for final positioning
a mangled specimen
for unnecessary recalling
moments after the fact
years after
the final destruction
undercutting gaze
fixing nudity
back to the wall

MUMMER

by Francesca Miller

land before memory like cartoon dinosaurs
I bury myself under cancerous pillows, place omission, and reenact birth
miming suffocation, peeling back the cocoon unzipped from wet cushions
a naked couch

a car window rolled up to my neck
visions of a young man in the 14th century
pencil lead and the straw of your hair braided into sinew
my fingers chewed to bits:
all that pestilence I take up with the divided god
signing love, too heavy for my tongue to press open
unravelling migraines in brambleberry
in August, a cool thumb on my eyelid
the doctor using flashlights on YouTube
skin transparent and red; I press it closer

smiling back barren
I am less than a ghost
faceless in feeble quackery
I will not leave the title in the window
and wait for combat in the winter
restoration of the infidel, the promised land
the great valley of a life rewritten
here I am again, unspeaking

FERMAT'S PRINCIPLE

by Francesca Miller

To rest in sentiment in the nest of invisible hair at the base of
the neck Imagine: I gather like dust/everywhere I see the
bucket and run: a killer cocktail, the 12th guitar string, the
destination -- it's easier all the time, almost to the antipode
reflection binding me over and over a castle of
water filtration floats

wavering between instances, transposed in concrete,
 tested finger prints, the outline of gravel in my palm I'll
see it again my love in books, unreturned

Pink psychopomps racing for limestone
walls :: fixed in movement, my eyes
a picture-show, my eyelashes mite-less
alone a stranger again, moted

I see the distance and
~~can't cross it~~ stick to clumps of empty
firing: desensitized, reprocessing every
thing comes back the same

Undulations cut across. A word that is what it looks like- - a path.

Larimer

by Rah Nelson

Like the ocean wide,
I'm ruled by moonlit sky,
without a tribe.
I know that I'll be alright.

Don't lose your grip,
you'll start to slip—
sink under the surface
and into a darker place.
It's cold and empty

in space,
trying to make a case
talking through air
and light years.

Don't you worry,
swim up to the atmosphere,
hold onto the beam of light
of a dryer site.
Take all your time,
but when it's time to move:
feel fire inside:
it formed to keep you warm.

As long as its forward motion,
we don't need to go back in the ocean.
Keep space and warmth
and let it shine down on your face:

lay in the garden
and it will grow.

Don't you worry:
swim up to the atmosphere
hold onto the beam of light
to a dryer site.

Lay in the clouds
and it will all be clear.

Myles Ahead

by William Moffet Jr.

Was over a year before I found out he died
Drunk and afraid and without a consoling friend
Gallows humor not enough to laugh away
The tightening fright of that noose's slipped not
Heaven help the one who leaves, behind a tattered fantasy
Of a shadow of another Desperado under the Eaves

Like his father he worked on houses, a life of eaves
Suffering for his art, the daze the music died
Out of this gloom, sing a song, Dear Mister Fantasy
Played guitar, full of frets, strings snapped in my lost friend
Who was castawayed in a sea of troubles, to be or not
To see perchance a dream, where fortunes drifted further away

Here I stand head in hand, hiding your love away
Conversations overheard, by ears dropping eaves
Forgiving words withheld, and actions taken not
Wonder what your last words were, on the night you died?
Why in dark depths of the storm, I became a fair weather friend?
Maybe one last call could have saved your life, maybe that's fantasy

For the facts more dark and twisted, than the fantasy
Abandoned hope and kinship, it all went away
Strumming one more melody for a fallen friend
Crucified thieves, steeling resolve before the eaves
Of destruction, leaving in its wake eulogies to those who died
Unmarked graves with the floral arrangement of forget-me-not

His negated existence tied up tightly in not
Much like Bach composing A Minor Fantasy
And Fugue, oblivious as the fading notes died
Wish I had your guitar, they likely threw it away
With the rest of the refuse, crammed into overhanging eaves
We built a fence one time, should have mended them and became old, friend

In the end, though buried deep, you are still my friend
This I write for you, to better understand, for others not
Everyone's lost someone, desperate under the eaves
We hold onto these bonds, through vagaries of fantasy
I absolve you, and I absolve me, for not finding a way
To be better, to be free, as the ghost of futures passed died

Deconstruct these rotted eaves, upon which hung a friend
He tried in vain yet died, escaping what was not
Beyond his fantasy, pushing the sky away.

What We Can Never

by Sarah Van De Kamp

i remember small fissures
in your face, like cracked porcelain—
your face, with tears
in your eyes. i did not know what you had lost.
we looked in many rooms,
some that i had forgotten. there were doors
i had never opened. this scared me.
you were separating. this scared me:
the ceramic tile of your mouth peeling off,
falling down.
i did not know what you had lost.

saint sylvester

by Jodi Bosin

the ashtray on the porch is frozen
cats dart out from cars, everywhere i go, i see omens

rock salt got in my mouth somehow, a drained sea
prophecy, new years eve, 2020

a \$300 parking ticket, *merry Christmas from
the PPA*, isn't there an easy way to learn things?

it gets cold, it snows, it gets warm again,
it rains, winter always turns back into spring

nothing ends but everything is always ending
Bruce says we are "empathetic without boundaries"

diamonds are really just squares turned sideways
is this letter getting too depressing

Sleep

by Tillie Lams

It used to scare me,
but only next to you.

Asleep:

Dreaming of you
while you dreamt
of other women.

Awake:

Wondering if I spoke aloud,
interrupting your dreams
of other women
you were sleeping next to
while I was asleep.

Alarms:

Your elbow strikes my rib cage
reminding me that I still exist
and that my night sweats
get the sheets wet again.

My dreams knew
what you were doing
while I slept.

Awoken.

With nobody but my own,
I scoot to the other side
where sheets are cool
and I remember
how it feels to dream.

Sleep used to scare me,
but I don't see your face
when I close my eyes anymore.

DĒMØN

by Colby Kline

Turn your back on me twice,
chilly as fuck, slimy black ice
tattooed illicit drug user,
pussy, mouth, ass, generosity abuser:
pinky dips, coffee table licks, turnt up sniffs
with dirty dollars in skid row adjacent squalor.
Wide awake three days straight.
Night out,
blackout,
passes out,
lashes out. Who me?
I'm just letting my demon out.
Distractions, attractions, knee-jerk reactions.
Breaking glass, grabbing ass...
all can't take the place
of a warm embrace and a father.

I Felt You

by Colby Kline

use me like heroin,
as you envelope me,
freebasing my energy,
the beat of your heart through your neck setting an elegant rhythm in my chest.
I attempt to give myself fully
In your grasp I find my escape.
Loosening the reigns of which
I bind my mind.
This is no poison:
We devour only the delicious
and all it takes is a taste.

Dethrone

by Colby Kline

Leave me here to burn
Shine the light in my eyes
Come out from the inside
A whine, a shake, a scream
Nothing can wake me from this dream
Passions too intense
Shots numb the pain
Collapsing pyramids
The queen has lost her reign

Cura

by Sonia Linares

Cura
El amor
En el que pasan las cosas
A la luz del sol
Una sombra rota
Reflejo de la ciudad natal
Naturaleza agarrando
Con sus tentáculos
La superficie endeble

Mi propia piel habla
Para encontrar el cierre
Y la libertad
Que es la verdad
Y a veces el obstáculo
De los conscientes
Que buscan su dolor
Agitado
Muestra sus defensas
Atrayente el aroma
De la puerta sin mirar

Desesperación en la forma
En la textura
Por fuera
El silencio
Es la tierra
Para el que habla
Interiormente

Mariposa y flor
Son de temblor joven
El aire
Fuera de la ventana
Espera
A que el susurro
Sea visible

You'll Know When You Get There

by Dana Mahoney

when the moon no longer calls your name
and all your stars of shame
have washed into a dawn
and the desert breaks into golden prairie
and the cloak of conformity falls
and the alpine lakes bend back
all the fragments of your self, scattered
throughout an ocean of doubt
that once filled your lungs
when the rivers of forgiveness float you
over familiar sticks and stones
and like a redwood, you rise from the burns
of time, blackened but greening
as your roots weave songs
of a shared salvation

21 April 21

by Beth Boyle

Where did you go, then
With your ever-breaking glass, your graceful hands and your stupid ideas,
I always stay till I'm last at the party
I always pick up the cups and the knives,
spoons and bags and balloons,
the debris of sex and danger left all over the floor.
I am always the one who can remember last night--
It embarrasses me. To stand like this, when you can't look at me
without falling over.
While you sway against the wall, while your light shakes in your palm,
I endure the questions around you:

*Does he shall i will we can he would she should they ever what if it is never
someday always*
Dancing palm-to-palm in the silver dark
As long as we both can stand.

like a house on fire

by Beth Boyle

You should have kissed me in the graveyard
under the tree, all around us
white stones, in a circle next to the highway
We should still be driving down that road, straight down the line
for both of us
Remember?

Past the burning cars and
past the river running and
past all the times that came before

Out in the backyard, at the party,
in sequin gowns and sweet beer
Everyone else was twisted in sheets of blue
but I didn't notice any of that.
You and I had a fight
I should have kicked your teeth in
I'm sorry I wasn't a better friend
You threw me and I held it in my hand.

Maybe we're still asleep on that burlap couch.
When you wake in the afternoon, we'll watch an old movie we'll walk down the
dirt path
through the overgrown bushes past the playground the store the church and the
halfway house
Someday we'll stop and we'll stay here and we'll eat ice cream for breakfast on
the hissing lawn.

Until the Last One

by Beth Boyle

And anyway---it's been 10 years and 10 years
where is her Southern husband now
with his wide-set white teeth and blood in his hair.

She's still somewhere here, crying in her dead languages
when we were up-all-night wildflowers, we were jaws clenched in acid green,
we screamed on the highway we got lost in the diner
we were found on the radio
and we bloomed every May until the last one.

I never left for Pittsburgh
(though i think often of the silver clouds, our long cold walk home)
Rather than the tower, I shattered anything I laid my hands on. I starved.
I never spoke my name, I cut off all my hair,
I woke up on the dirty floor
All those years ago, I couldn't even sit up straight. I couldn't find the door.

I still see her out the windows, looking foolish, looking fine
I'm glad you're still alive.

The Gleaners at Rest

by Beth Boyle

When I first sat down here, with you
We'd circle our next disaster in the want ads, take our drugs, wander off into the
thick dark night.

There was a record player and a leaking window full of sun. There was
oh, sweet nothing.

There was you you you and there was for a few years
me.

The same tri-state trash have been sitting at these broken
tables, sipping black-tar coffee from leaking faucets
and waiting,
adrift and unafraid, for the world to fall to pieces

Each and every one of us was going nowhere in style. But I walked alone at
night, stray as a
cat, drunk as a fool, perfectly fine
I should have stayed where I belonged—
But I left
My mistake.
What'd I miss?

Thank you: Alison Morgan, Dale Morgan, Fireball Printing, William Moffet Sr.
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Wesley Morgan

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Parquet will announce our second issue shortly.

Keep writing and reading verse!!!

-Marc Moore (CMM), Lead Editor, and founder of Parquet Poetry

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