

*The*  
**TOE TREE  
JOURNAL**

A SEASONAL REPOSITORY  
OF RATIONALIST VERSE



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ISSUE # 2

WINTER 2006



*Always*  
**WASH  
BETWEEN  
YOUR  
EARS**

**The Toe Tree Journal**

www.toetree.co.nr  
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Winter 2006  
Issue #2

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**THE TOE TREE JOURNAL**

**WINTER 2006**



## ***Letter From the Editor***

You may never forget your first time, but normally the second is a great deal less awkward. And so it has been with the second edition of the Toe Tree Journal. No longer do we have to plead with people to submit their “rationalist” poetry, nor thankfully even have to explain what such a thing might actually be! People from all over the world sent us their submissions, and many of them were simply sublime in their marriage of reason and rhyme. Far better than that last sentence, anyway. We’re looking forward to the next issue - you know what they say: third time’s the charm. See you again in Spring!

Sincerely yours,

**Oliver Benjamin, *Editor***

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### **THE TOE TREE JOURNAL AND THE TEMPLE OF EARTH**

THE TOE TREE JOURNAL is a magazine of original poetry that aims to celebrate and uncover rational aspects in our lives and in poetry itself. True to our expectations, there are a lot of talented poets out there who don’t find rationality and poesy incompatible. The popular assumption that poetry is chiefly a “right-brain” phenomena is given a serious challenge in the creations of these gifted contributors. We hope you find this “poetry for the left side of the brain” as inspiring and meaningful as we do.

The Toe Tree Journal is a publication of the Temple of Earth, the world’s first “non-religious religion,” a religion (if you will) that exalts pure rationality. Please visit its website at [www.templeofearth.com](http://www.templeofearth.com) to see what

it’s all about. Ordain as a minister for free, enjoy the site, and all the organization has to offer.

Poets featured in this journal are not necessarily adherents to the Temple of Earth philosophy, nor are they necessarily members of the organization. They are simply artists whose work we believe helps elucidate our contention that rationality can be poetic. Moreover, rationality can display aspects normally considered part and parcel of the emotional and intuitive spheres of existence: i.e. beauty, joy, transcendence and wisdom.

Thanks for reading. If you feel like contributing any original work, please send submissions to: [toetree@templeofearth.com](mailto:toetree@templeofearth.com).

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**CRAIG BROAD**

**The Polar Bear Has The Eyes**

The juggernaut stalls in the dunes  
And we hope it makes it to the tea party  
The distant sea crashing nearer further nearer  
And we just hope it's at the tea party,  
To meet your parents and tell them how much,  
It loves the way your skin floats on metal,  
Like a plastic duck in water  
But I think that line will sink this time.

The juggernaut gasps in the dunes  
And we hope it makes the photo shoot,  
The chime of a wedding bell and the sight of a dress  
And we just wait for the life of the party,  
To grin that charred smile and show them how,  
A girl of twenty three can make a metal man like me,  
Happier than I've ever been  
But I guess that line has sunk this time.

**The Random Anorexic Kid From The Suburbs**

This acid culminates to nothing but a marinated meal that's too  
fat for your lips but too thin for your teeth.  
These party hats don't sit well with the green glint of salad,  
so I reckon we'll stand beside the fat of fries,  
it's worth it now that my face falls off.  
We're waiting for some postcard but the words have been blurred  
between the grease from the floor of the disco,  
the piano and it's keys don't tell you that your fingers are skinny  
enough to play,  
they just aren't,  
they just aren't.



## GLEN NORRIS

### when i was looking forward

when i was looking forward to t  
that tself was t  
there t was  
here i am



## CAMERON SCOTT CONAWAY II

### The Patience of Herpes Zoster

So cleverly coward  
it attacks the young  
– swirling van Gogh skies  
erupt in unitchable itches  
sleepless nights  
– not starry nights  
then it's gone  
until sixty years later  
it strikes again  
like a match  
– rather  
like a hammer  
– into a nail  
– into a shingle





## HOLLY DAY

### The Fallen Niche of Apollo

Hand over hand up the side of the cliff  
we grappled with the side of Olympus  
no one sane had ever tried before, especially not  
in the middle of winter. The world stretched around us  
like Galileo's Europa; we were a million miles from Earth  
on our way to meet the gods.

Not even mountain goats disturbed the breathless  
quiet – we passed a blocked-up cave that one man said  
had once housed an oracle. I could picture  
the crazy old man who had lived there, years  
before Christ, brown arms wrapped around anemic knees  
shaking, begging Apollo  
for an end to the winter.



DEVIN WAYNE DAVIS

**filament**

a white-  
hot, hollow window  
of fire vibrates inside

you, screw.

**immigrant**

i want to wave  
you like a flag,

in that scant  
peasant dress.

**grammar had an a**

did frank ...

head lying in newspaper;  
hair, the fur of 7 hamsters;  
breath, its stench like fish;  
midst an ashram that's both  
tuna epithet and anagram:

...paginate her mat?

gray & white  
spider-hunter,

marked with  
black print.



## obsidian

octavio paz,  
be at peace; just  
wasn't enough gold  
in the name...

to dream of  
silver, only, &  
that your latin  
isn't mine.

eldorado,  
it's unreal;  
like midlife crisis,  
mescaline & mexico;

coyotes,  
peyote,  
loss...

the sun hides inside us,  
a menstruation of days.

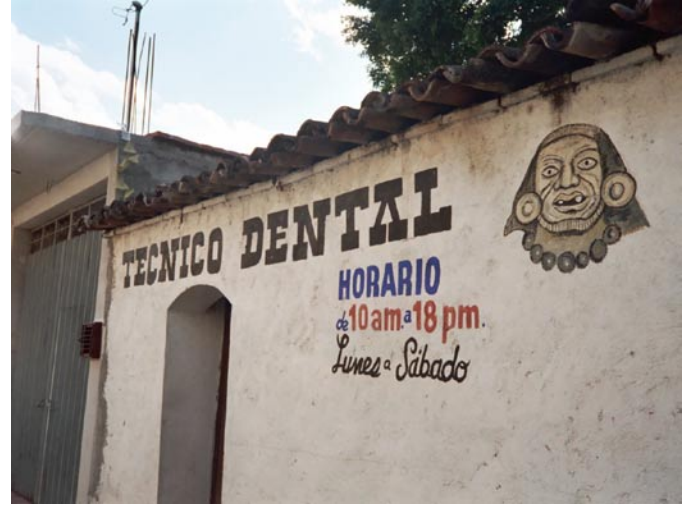
2, 3  
people in every  
human, rooming.

bring no stones  
– they are carved  
for fear or erosion

– nor rocks,  
not a product of volcanoes;  
or porous as bones; those  
unnatural glass bubbles; up,  
mud plumes flow, into blue.

what flatulence,  
toucan weather whip; & that  
glorious vortex of feathers –  
all condors – drawn more from

temples,  
than ascendancy.  
cats and monkeys



sat assembled,  
treetop tabernacles  
that are landmarks;

as one was  
less sacred, it  
made another  
indomitable;

gyre; white  
legs snaked;

they left  
ferrous  
anchors;

the armada.  
musica exhumed  
a dove, with an olive  
complexion ...

suicidal aztecs,  
who did not want  
to kill; spaniards,  
spared; instant  
citizenship.

gods ...  
becoming ruddy  
on enemy blood.

advanced  
sanitation; waste  
creates strength.

so, this city,  
is it a heart  
or the seed?

## **bust**

our forefathers were  
incredibly long-winded  
but, never-the-less,  
prominent; & such  
eloquent figures.



so that is why  
we use an ellipsis,  
whenever we remove –  
from one of their various  
remarks – the context.

## **break**

you first  
were a tail-light  
busted by a cop.

coming on, you,  
were headlamps passing;  
and taking a turn –

blinding  
brightness,

only for that moment  
you were going straight.

you took it fast  
but, oh, the rubber  
hugged the road.



## OLIVER BENJAMIN

### Ears

Idears!  
We lend you our ears!  
Great and small, pithy and banal,  
We lend you our ears!  
Huge and tiny, fishy and briny,  
We lend you our ears!  
We're dim, damned, and dumb here,  
So swim, swam, or swum here.  
We lend you our ears!  
If there's a notion in the ocean  
that can be our secret potion,  
don't keep us in arrears!  
We lend you our ears!  
Eyes are the mirrors of the soul,  
but ears are the hearers of the whole.  
We lend you our ears!



## RAUD KENNEDY

### Phone Rage

All these jackasses  
who walk around  
talking  
into their cell phones  
like the person  
on the other end  
is hard of hearing,  
like everyone else  
in line,  
wants to hear them  
go on and on  
about their troubles  
picking out a color  
for the living room.  
Paint it with feces,  
I say, just hang up  
the damn phone  
and shut the f\*ck up!

### Sweat Stains in Traffic

Any exit will do,  
even the shoulder.  
Abandon the car  
and be the eight  
year old inside me.  
Not 41, stuck  
looking at the world  
through tinted safety glass.



LAURIE CORZETT

**And Why Not Now?**

The 4th dimension that subsumes the 3  
– length, width, depth.  
We move as we will in space,  
Yet we move always in time  
Whether we want or even know it  
Ever onward through eternity;  
Moment to moment  
Encompassing all of our lives.  
And yet they say there is no time, only now.  
Every precious moment, every interminable hour, every slippery  
slovenly unrelivable day  
an unrelenting onward and inward and outward soulesque  
surrounding eternity.  
Where is now? Yes, everywhere, of course, but how do we  
divine the intention,  
manifest the intention  
give birth to form and substance  
give meaning to the here and now that expands into times unknown?  
How do we have meaning that stands true and real  
that stands the test of time  
that expands outward, strands playing in the breeze entangling  
and evolving?  
How do we tame Now and make a dance of time, swinging and swaying  
executing formal twirls of shadow and light to uplifted applause?  
How do we account for time, yet spend it like raindrops, yet live  
in eternal awakening?  
If it must be done, it must be done now!  
There is no waiting room in eternity.  
Yet there is no being done.  
There is only doing, and being, and bravely swimming  
uncharted seas.





LEE ANN LEUNG



### Mathematical Slumber

1:31.87 A.M.

You aggravate me with all your problems,  
you push me to the limit.

It's so late that I can hardly function,  
let alone, solve all *your* problems.

I tire of my own.

My mind diverges from you constantly.

Sometimes I wish I could burn your natural logs in my fireplace  
but that would only lead to a series of more and more problems which,  
when summed together, does not leave me feeling positive.

I've tried to integrate myself  
into your world of abstract symbols. The difference you make in my life.  
But your notation creates integration and differentiation  
in a new language.

Now I can only become arbitrarily close to you.

If I compute your problems, you should at least understand mine.

Your numbers are so complex and sometimes irrational,  
your real and imaginary planes are a pain,  
cosine gives me sinus troubles,

and all that sticky tricky trig trips up my brain!

I want to see you from a different angle  
and get even with your odd complexity.

Your relatives Taylor and Maclaurin made a powerful statement  
with their series.

Thus, you always self-centeredly prove yourself to be right.

But I'm a prisoner to the Chain Rule; I'm sick of L'Hospital's Rule.

Cauchy's Mean Value Theorem was in a brutish mode all night.

I have a new theorem: If I'm the lazy-8 symbol,  
then I'll go to sleep –

Infinitely.

## MICHAEL MARKS

### *from* **Pieces of the Evolution Revolution**

Rescued from the broken bloody birth waters  
brain so big it doesn't slide easily out  
a pampered pet until I grow allergic  
to my maiden juice, I spend my dilatory drying years  
trying to de-nest until all that counts is now  
I buy my castle with borrowed sand dollars  
tide cycled with my own wet stain  
which vaporizes sneakier than wizards or dreams  
streaming into shell invading cancers  
that I try to snag like hidden minnows  
never knowing if all are captured  
the darkness dies with my arid costume  
all contrast disappears, my shadow swims away  
only light is left as I backwash out to sea.

### **Eden Revisited**

My sixth grade science teacher called it  
A billiard ball, contending that it  
Was nearly impossible to damage it.  
Two days boring flying over it,  
I landed in Hawaii paradise reward  
Tropical candy postcard healthy garden.  
Seventeen, smiling through the orthodontia,  
A cheerleader from smalltown Oregon  
Fled to cash in on the promised land.  
Standing with other micro-mini-skirted  
Uniforms on all Waikiki corners,  
Selling makeshift love and permanent herpes  
On the treasured island. I want my money  
Back and back to my spot on the perfect ball.

### **In a Carnival Mirror**

In a carnival mirror we see our kin  
Magnified, distorted ghosts  
In time from the place where they've been:  
Ancestral séance alliance overdose.



Vacuum cleaner music in a new word order.  
Forgive our sloppy births, cornucopia  
Of ego in a paralyzed recorder,  
Motored by money, obscured by myopia.  
We see our ivy covered stucco wall  
And think of children playing in the yard  
Too long ago! Frisbee, then volleyball.  
The bruises of education, so hard  
To forget, so easy to remember.  
We wait again—our lives are in November.

### **Incubus**

I broke my sleep to check  
A smoke detector false alarm,  
Returned to find my brother in my bed  
With my wife. I looked outside my window  
Just in time to see an Airbus  
Crash into my backyard trees.  
I ran to help, forgetting I was naked.  
No one was hurt – they laughed at me,  
I stumbled away and a rat  
Bit off a bit of my left foot.  
I cried for help, my mate held tight,  
And next thing was the morning.

### **Petra**

In Jesus time across the Jordan River,  
In Caesar time across the Mediterranean Sea,  
In the protected village of Petra  
The Nabataeans held a competition  
Carving building faces from cliffed walls:  
A stage set city Greco-Roman  
Architecture sandcastle proud.  
Like Michelangelo they found  
The images inside the rosy stones,  
Making monuments from living rock.  
Some live on like Concordes for shepherds.  
Others erode like broken families.  
In our own time of spitting camels  
Holy Petra holds more than hollow skin.



FRANCIS MASAT



### Blue Eggs at Easter Tide

swimming in the shallows  
thousands of horseshoe crabs  
clattering their shells  
in a blind mating practice  
– exude and spray –

fertilized blue eggs drop  
into timeless primal muck  
a species unchanged  
in two hundred million years

they return each spring  
to their coastal bays  
where shore birds gather  
to eat the young  
as they crawl towards life

*Note: Limulus Polyphemus are not crabs but arthropods (spiders & scorpions) with sapphire-blue blood: it contains copper rather than hemoglobin. It also contains enzymes used to detect flu, cholera and gonorrhoea bacteria. Up to 300,000 crabs are caught, bled and returned to the sea each year. Dating from Triassic times (dinosaurs), this animal is in danger of extinction.*

### Rock from Salt Point Cove

There is coolness in the rock  
from Salt Point Cove.  
As I hold it in my hand,  
dark gray-green kelp beds  
glow into mind. I feel  
the wet air made salty  
by the Cove's surging tide.  
With my eyes closed, I see  
water, green-gray with foam  
in the morning light.

There is resonance in the rock

from Salt Point Cove.  
As I hold it in my hand,  
its clear crystalline purple heart  
holds cracked schisms of white  
cast eons ago in timeless seas.  
As I hold it in my hand,  
I think "And now it's mine -  
for at an immeasurable instant  
compared to its existence."

### **Throw the Farm Away**

"I survived! I am the last!"  
the lone ant may be  
calling, but no others hear.

Outliving all the others,  
one solitary ant is  
roaming empty paths.

No one cheers  
as the ant begins  
another victory lap.

As though fearing  
my own end alone,  
I free the ant.

I turn so it will not see  
my tear, my regret,  
and throw the farm away.



**PATRICK MCCARTHY**



**Cycle of a Tree**

The buds of spring nurture hope  
Swiftly out-dueling prior months of  
Colorless days with a cataclysmic green

In summer it provides shelter  
As sheets of shade protect  
Its parasitic cohabitants

Autumnal afternoons are  
Warmed by its fiery chromatics  
That act as an alarm for furry creatures  
To prepare for winter

It sheds its leaves  
Protecting Mother Earth with a blanket  
Opening its ranks for whistling winds  
To rush through limbs unobstructed

Then beneath its battered bark  
As it now prepares for spring  
Mother Nature has etched within its trunk  
One more concentric ring

**Witches' Brew**

Where in the world has story tellin' gone  
Tales like my Daddy told to me  
How long has it been since you, my friend  
Have set your children on your knee

The modern child loves Spider Man  
And Saturday is the day  
When he doesn't think and doesn't run  
And we let his mind decay



So turn that TV off tonight  
And make some witches brew  
Watch those little eyes light up  
As they confide in you

Let it go, let it fly  
Let your mind unfold  
And you will find that from YOUR mind  
Are the greatest stories told

There are witches, goblins, animals  
And things from outer space  
And tales that happened long ago  
In a distant place

There are candy houses, dinosaurs  
And little men you wind  
Go ahead, have some fun  
And uncork your mind

There are pancake flips and sailing ships  
And magic carpet rides  
Little elves, adventure trips  
Down endless slippery slides

Get started in this world of fun  
Then your family will find  
The tube can't hold a candle  
To the theater of your mind

### **Immutable Balance**

Noble gray breezes force the clouds  
To contort into a fluid succession  
Of images for the mind

Birds going one way  
Fight for every inch  
While others glide with rapture

Limber limbs bend and wave  
Contouring to the forces  
While brittle ones snap  
Succumbing to a divine pruning



Climatic adversity brings life  
In the days that follow with insects habitating  
Within the blown down branches

Immutable balance

The mind has a choice  
To be a note of a harmonious chord  
Or the friction of a flint  
Which induces fire





**EVA IVONNE OLSON**

**The Promise**

The snow is drifting, sifting past my window.  
Gentle wonders come to rest on drive and deck,  
melting now, but soon to freeze and lock me in.

Starless night swathed in veils of melancholy  
closes down upon the world, encasing nature  
in frigid blanket, woven tendrils of silent vapor.

Layered cast off vestments, spring's fashion show passé,  
mantel the slumbering earth, awaiting the awakening.  
Warmth will come again, though bleak the wait may be.

For now, I hold the memory of soothing winds and rustling leaves  
within my soul, harbingers of summer days that comfort me  
with prophesy. The sifting, drifting snow is not forever.



**RAVI RAJAN**

**Morning Moods**

A misty fog engulfed the frozen ground,  
gentle rains trickled down a gnarled banyan tree,  
honey bees dozed within virgin rose buds,  
glistening dew drops snuggled beneath tiny leaflets,  
mother nature slept blissfully, enthralled in intoxicating fragrance,  
as the weakened night resisted a reddish growling sun.

Suddenly, a shrill voice shattered the heavenly calm;  
a colorful little bird began to sing in a melodious voice.  
It's rustic notes charged the somnambulistic air,  
creating vivid images of mythical lands,  
brimming with milk and honey, blessed by gods.  
Mighty kings ruled over these golden lands,  
beautiful damsels bathed in lotus studded pools.  
Colorful bustling markets overflowed with dazzling gems,  
an aura of breath taking splendour ruled supreme all around.

I got out of my warm bed;  
cold, bitter winds numbed my body.  
Shooing away the damn bird, I closed the window,  
and drifted back to sleep once again.  
I am not a morning person.



**THOMAS REYNOLDS**



**Megatheria at Large**

We are the members of Megatheria.  
We live in the dark halls of the Smithsonian.  
We eat, sleep, work among the nooks and towers  
cataloguing the great finds that arrive by day,  
all the rich tapestry of America's past.  
We are young vibrant soldiers of science  
like small boys in a backyard science club.  
the halls echo with the "How! How!" of our greeting,  
imitating the call of the great Megatherium,  
great beast of American prehistory.  
Consumed by our devotion to the past,  
the future to us is as distant as fossils,  
as distant as that exploding shell  
that echoes now over the Potomac.,  
in the war that is as distant as the dinosaur.  
The year is 1862.

Each morning we appear out of the dark corners  
and fall upon our breakfast with a wild roar.  
The food is our soon to be extinct prey,  
but we are a merry gathering of carnivores,  
given to high-spirited and vociferous grunts  
while the sausage and eggs begin to flounder,  
make a spirited last stand, and disappear  
into the annals of the noble but vanquished.  
The only reminder of this brief struggle  
is a burnt corner of Sherman's jelly and toast,  
which we wrap in a handkerchief for posterity,  
so that all who come after us shall know  
the valiant struggle hallowing this table.  
A moment of silence please.

Then Hopkins describes his fantastic night,  
tossing and turning curled like a parasite  
inside the largest stegosaurus ever known,  
pacing back and forth inside its ribcage  
surrounded by total darkness in the moist air  
with a musty wind blowing down the dark hall

and the growl of the great beast in his chest,  
a steady rhythm of grunts, snorts, and beats.  
How does it feel, Johnson asks,  
to wipe out the greatest species on the planet?  
Very tiring, yawns Hopkins,  
opening his mouth like a voracious worm  
greedy for the next species to take its turn.

Where's Meek, the old trilobite,  
fallen asleep bent over a limestone slab  
shipped by train from a Tennessee quarry,  
examining by glass his long-lost ancestors,  
crawling and squirming in an ecstatic greeting  
to their cousin with large protruding eyes,  
horn-rimmed glasses, and stiff wiry hair.  
What can we say of this specimen, gentlemen,  
faced down on the rock with arms akimbo  
as if attempting to dissolve into stone?  
Well, sirs, states Hayden,  
this was a particularly thick-headed species,  
communicating, if at all, by a series of grunts  
punctuated by vigorous clearing of the sinuses.  
These nasal harrumphs were undoubtedly warnings  
to members of the same species to steer clear,  
for this was a solitary creature given to silence,  
bouts of melancholy, and extended sneezing fits.  
Look at him there, so life-like,  
as if a vigorous rap on the head  
might miraculously awaken him to life once more.  
Damn you!  
says the awakened beast.

Members of Megatheria convene in the snake room  
by means of a steeple-chase through Allan Hall!  
In the pursuit of science, we play a game of tag  
among stuffed specimens of American wildlife  
to adjudge their quickness and agility  
while stuffed with sawdust and bits of newspaper.  
In their present state, I begin my thesis,  
these species have considerably hampered mobility.  
In pursuit of fun, we shortsheet Meek's bed,  
imagining the fearsome call of primeval man  
echoing among rattlers and boa constrictors,  
sending them crawling under rocks,  
and Tyrannosaurus Rex with its wire and bones  
rattling through the halls looking for shelter  
from the real terror of the American past.

It is nine o'clock.  
The members of Megatheria, nine strong,  
begin to dissolve into the Smithsonian woodwork,  
each to his own particular age, his own era,  
to convene at nightfall around the table  
from out of the muck and glory of the past,  
to the present, among friends and colleagues,  
to the cannon fire across the Potomac,  
guardians of the past.

### **Egg Mountain**

“Several miles from camp was a small treeless hill,  
known for its deposits of dinosaur eggs, which  
we dubbed, rather imperiously, ‘Egg Mountain.’”

the last find of the day  
ridged, misshapen, oblong  
four inches wide, the size of a grapefruit

the egg sits on a box  
keeping notes from flying away

a seven million year old paperweight  
or an eye that sees all

even the fly I killed  
one leg still moving  
the cup of water in my hand

the egg misses nothing  
shining in dim firelight

the fetus of stone inside  
ended before it began

which came first?  
the egg or the dinosaur?  
who knows?

only the egg lasts  
and the mountain



## Miscellaneous

“One shipment to the university was composed entirely of miscellaneous bones too precious to throw away.”

too small or broken to be identified  
bones washed out of centuries  
through rivers in the soil  
spilling over onto this cold plain  
unattached, anonymous, unadorned

small fragments of one creature  
lying near fragments of others  
one creature momentarily formed  
from the refuse of the ages

in a ravine where the wind blows wild  
and erosion blurs any divisions  
we could do no more than gather them  
like shells washed up on a beach

they were valuable to us all  
because they were beautiful and timeless



## Paleontologist Dream

We tracked them,  
through woods and thickets,  
wounding several. Finally,  
we drove them toward the canyon,  
into the ravine from which  
there was no escape.  
We could see clouds of breath,  
and smell their fear of death.  
“We’ve got them,” Beck shouted,  
as they headed for the wall.  
But they didn’t turn away  
or slow down, and when  
they hit the rocks,  
they disappeared,  
with deep thunderous roar.



**RICHARD DENNER**

**Poised**  
for Webster



Why is there a Universe!  
How did the Universe come into being!  
Shouts of joy or fear or accusation.

Bumping my head against the wall  
like La Motta in Raging Bull,  
“Stupid! Stupid! Stupid!”

Bertrand Russell’s frustration  
when, as a child, he asked,  
“What is matter?”

And the answer, “Nevermind.”  
“What is mind?”  
“It doesn’t matter.”

The Universe is big  
and getting bigger, expanding fast  
and ever faster, a basketball

Crossing twenty-four time zones  
on its way to the hoop.  
Only there is no hoop.

No end to an expanding Universe.  
I drift in infinite space  
(or no space), an illusion

Of myself in an obscure place,  
a floating reflection,  
nothing holding me up.

What’s nothing’s circumference!  
Pi and light,  
the defining functions.

A circumference of no-space expands  
@ speed of light towards a critical radius.  
The impalpable algebra of infinity.

This U  
a sub-atomic structure  
of a larger U.

No U, just dots on a time line,  
or like a bulb on a timer  
on/off.

Vacuum soup. Eternal Mind.  
An egg , a holy word, a string.  
Winos and zinos in stasis.

Black bodies, black holes, blue lights.  
Anti-matter, negative space, and big bangs.  
The quarks of love and strangeness

And the quirkiness of God.  
No limits: multiple Universes.  
Limits: a one night stand.

Singularity is the “instant”  
the Universe appears, every region  
squeezed into a single point

On an “axis” of time.  
Poised.  
 $A = \pi r^2 - 1 / \text{Threshold} + 1 E = MC^2$

Empty: does not exist,  
has never existed,  
will never exist.

Empty: has potential to exist.  
Primordial mind pool.  
Heap of awareness.

What is truly empty!  
Every minim has stuff, &  
even without mass, there's spin.

Exists and not-exists at the same time.  
Either/or, neither/nor, both and.  
Nothing spinning, no word for this.



Given previously annihilated U,  
then there's potential  
for a new U to come into existence.

Things are already out of hand  
by the time the Prime Mover  
produces/invents/creates the U.

Angels cruise by in a `oo Ford Escort  
with automatic weapons on their laps.  
I hear them peel out

On the corner of Hall & Piezzi,  
laying down a streak of rubber  
before their Dunlops dig in.

A mirror in the void.  
A flight of photons  
against the force of darkness.



SHARON ESTHER LAMBERT

Tsunami



How many tears can the ocean hold?  
What the history books  
Don't tell you is that  
The Indian Ocean was formed  
By thousands of years  
Of tears that flowed from  
The fishermen of Sumatra.  
Their pain was unbearable.  
Their poverty was immeasurable.  
Little to eat, little to wear,  
Little to learn, too little work.  
Abandoned and forsaken  
Deep within their broken silent hearts  
An echo was heard, the little earth quaked -  
As it could no longer hold their tears.

Tens of thousands of tears overflowed  
Deadly waves, crashing ashore  
Sweeping their pain out from under  
Their tattered rugs of impoverishment -  
Out onto the front pages of newspapers worldwide.  
Finally, the world took notice of their tears:  
They sent care packages of food, clothing, shelter, schools, and  
cash.  
They sent care packages of compassion, mercy, tolerance, and  
love.  
The tears of the fisherman brought new life to tens of thousands  
in pain.  
Salty, salty, sea water, tears of the fallen.  
Salty, salty, sea water, heals the wounds of grief.  
What the history books don't tell you is  
How many tears can a human heart hold  
Before it cracks beneath the surface  
From the strain and pain and swells open  
And learns how to love.

WENDY SAW

**of purine and pyrimidine base pairs**

love is supercoiled;  
held together by hydrogen bonds and  
electrostatic forces.

\*\*\*

we are children  
lost in cytoplasmic waiting,  
hesitantly asking for a stem cell;  
another way to draw breath  
as our lungs collapse  
under hereditary fluid –

*rosary beads give way,  
fall to the floor and  
ragged breathing fails*

\*\*\*

i cleave you with DNases,  
coax your shy undressing  
but not even viral coquetry will  
you give up your secrets for;  
all forty some odd phone books  
that the book of life will fill –

oh, such delicacy!  
if only Rosalind had thought of you first,  
perhaps then she might have died  
with your sugar backbone crystallised,  
cryogenised into her memory with  
your nitrogenous fingers reaching  
out across to each other;  
anti parallel twins.

\*\*\*



i dream of you sometimes,  
my dear guinea pig.  
you, who have sacrificed so much  
to many who do not care or know  
about your children, only their own.

prayers unanswered,  
they turn again to you,  
prod, poke, attach electrodes  
to your lymph nodes  
and when they are done,  
throw your carcass into  
the graven heap for 'used parts'

\*\*\*

and in the dark of night,  
the white coats dressed in darkness  
stole soy from the farmer's patch,  
to become grave robbers of the twenty first century.

### the skinhead's dilemma

when you are bleeding from every orifice imaginable,  
i wonder if you will realise that you are glistening as yellow as i am,  
and that i will be cross matching your blood with some random  
donor's.  
i wonder what you will say if i told you that i give blood,  
and that i am o rhesus d positive, too.



**CLIFFORD K. WATKINS, JR.**

**Brain Storming For Zilya**

reflection  
tainted  
imperfect  
me  
bodies mangle in crystal gleaming fury  
step aside  
I can't see  
what  
it is a canvas breathing and clinching  
avoiding a lynching by several multitudes  
secret but glued  
raise another tree to grow old with me  
lessen the burden of longevity  
we mutants of the golden beggar's sun  
have returned to the gallery  
and its shower of sarcasm  
now we burn  
and spread ashes on our canvas  
after frequent spasm  
limited life has them

I'm the deviant who hurls impurity  
seeds sowed by evil erections  
a door to unreality  
the blemish of imperfection  
a stain on the palette of life  
a blue-eyed Jesus impaled with knives  
a vision filtered thru brainwashed eyes  
we are all beautiful beneath spurious skies  
that bring tides of lies  
and simple truth unrecognized

recreating ourselves along the way  
what is more trivial than today  
only tomorrow  
or maybe a realm in absence of sorrow  
minds bedazzled  
ideas swirl crimson-hued  
another blue-eyed Jesus to the rescue



the products of our own buffoonery  
we have got no clue

in the lean hour  
shadows recede  
and skies darken  
memories empty into scatter gardens  
unable to feel of flesh  
unable to come  
to exist forevermore in absence of the sun

no mansion in the sky  
no more reasons  
no more wondering why  
no more sleep  
no more drugs to keep me high  
I would probably sit and sigh  
when you contemplate the ideal  
this life is not that bad  
and much more real

encompassed in brains  
we are electric energy surging insane  
walking a high wire between pleasure and pain  
the ordinary and deranged  
I am one in the same

a life so beautiful  
a sky so strange  
an avid listener  
an oblivious ear  
be certain  
nothing is clear

I wish I knew not  
fear  
emptiness  
nor despair  
until I imagine a world consumed by happiness  
too involved to care  
deeply oblivious  
unbroken stare  
I would rather be anywhere but there  
gripping her warm  
abysmal swirls  
drowning in a sea of hair



## ROHITASH CHANDRA

### How Do They Process the Dead?

The preacher at the church tells me,  
Leave your religion, and come to mine  
For you pray to the idols and stones  
in which the Devil grime.  
The major religions confuse me,  
One say resurrection,  
The other reincarnation.

Is there a security officer sitting  
for processing beliefs of the dead?  
He shall command — to those dead,  
Christians form a line to the right,  
Hindus form a line to the left.  
“You will be processed further  
according to your beliefs you had”.



## JEFFREY WILLIAMS

### Mindful

Through the contemptuous times when  
the ice melts on the asphalt after a blizzard  
and we are left pondering the very meaning  
of our rather meager existence,  
it's very important to know that  
the answers to all of life's questions are present.  
They are there staring us in the face  
waiting to be found, eager to be learned  
and eventually bound to be forgotten.

### Gas Leak

The smell of the  
fumes reached all the  
way up the stairs  
piercing through my  
walls and invading my nose  
It was the horrid smell of gas  
Devastating and dangerous  
The trail was the sign of  
imminent disaster  
One light of a match could set  
off the flames of certain death  
I hurried downstairs  
opening windows throughout the house  
screaming for the neighbors to  
call the fire department  
when I reached the kitchen  
the smell increased. Horrified,  
and almost unable to breathe,  
I reached into the cabinet under the sink,  
pushed aside the floor and oven cleaners,  
spilled over the bottle of washer fluid  
and grabbed my combative weapon.





With one push of the button,  
I cleared the kitchen of the gas.  
Once the air was clear,  
I begged grandpa to lay off the refried beans.



# feelin' so logical!



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