

NORTHERN LIGHTS

2017-2018

2018 Northern Lights Staff

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Untitled

Tucker Kirchberger

In all the times I've stared into guitars
Or pored through books the past has kept alive
I think I thought the urgent artist's heart
Was guided by an opaque source of light
And looking out to see the swirling streets
Of tired towns where sunlight seems to fade
The ivy squalls all come in burning heat
So lost in rage about my towns unmade.
But towns are made of people shaking hands
And buildings built to stand the test of time
We burn and shake and hope for something grand
And leave behind desires in design.
I know my name will fade into the night
But I am man, and man must do what's right

Rain

Morgen Fisher

Gloomy skies
and muddy shoes
Giant puddles
and splashing boots
Gently falling
or striking the ground
Soothing noises
or blaring loud
Simple droplets
and cold skin
A nice warm bed
and a house to live in
So rain, rain come and play
When I'm done with you it
shall be I who walks away.



Venice Canals

Feelings That Haven't Quite Left Me

J. McPherson

I. Contingent Gardens

small and frail,
 like that of the Allium.
but much like the soft flower,
 is ripped from its foundation.
not for its beauty,
 but for its pungent roots.

II. Sweet Tooth

you were supposed to be sweet,
 like candy,
an unquenchable thirst arose,
 but as tensions grew,
you proved to be sour
 and undesirable to my tastes.

III. The Search Engine Lies

desperate for answers
 that you never had
i immediately search for
 new words
every time.

IV. False Teeth

looking for untainted integrity,
 yet when the truth breaks,
we cover it with deception
 but fool no one.

my love does not change with the seasons

Francesca Tangreti

his laugh is the pitter-patter of raindrops on a tin roof and
a summertime breeze whispering through the verdant foliage
as the leaves have fallen, so have i

he walks as if heaven lies beneath his scuffed sneakers and
he is afraid to disturb eternity
treading quietly will not disturb my dreams

his eyes are a cosmic amalgam, dripping copper and rubies and
sheets of stars shining silver
so i beg of him to step louder, step louder, step louder

he loves with a love that beats louder than a big bass drum and
never, ever, ever stops thrumming- the everplaying music of the universe
the moon holds my eyes shut; shake me out of this stupor before spring begins to bloom



Judson Graham

prayer

Grace Clifford

the dining room echoes.
these yellow walls, like sunshine,
encapsulate the potential for a host
of voices raised together
tonight, they enclose only two

i fold my hands, i bow my head
yet without my brother's baritone
my silence is more vocal
than when, with tears rolling down my cheeks,
i denounced my god
and swore
never to utter words not formed
between my own two lips.

tonight, i am tempted to speak.
i am not moved by words
but by their absence.
the hollow harmony of my parents
begs for me to chime in.

today, i will be the silent observer
an interloper at my dining room table
between the people who
taught me to believe
but by my own heretic command
i am severed from--

so tonight,
i listen.



Lock by Chloe Wandless

My Perfect Place

Rachel Parilis

If only if I could live in a place of peace and harmony
A place where no one could hurt or push me
There'd be no war, nor quarrels
There'd be no hatred, nor sorrows
We'd accept each other as we arrived into the world
No matter what you are or who you love, whether it be a boy or girl
When sickness falls upon you, someone will nurse you to health
All people would be generous and respectful, not caring about power or wealth
Everyone would be clean, everyone could eat
Everyone would be happy, everyone would be sweet

Unfortunately, no utopia exists around us
There are cruel people who break hearts and trust
Those who abuse, break and destroy
Those who treat a person like an insect or a toy
Of course that's the main thing that I have to accept
That no one, nothing will ever be perfect.
Just because there are cold hearted out there
Doesn't mean that there aren't warm hearted left to spare
Where there is dark there is light
Even if it doesn't shine that bright
In a place with villains, there are heroes to protect
Once more I tell you this: No place is completely perfect

Words and Wings

Amelia Milza

Come back to me
Wake me up from this unwanted dream
Fill my nights with ink and pen
And poetry

Drown my paper in your seas
Draw me in if you so desire
Write like darkness has evaporated
And Heaven is in reach

Sing like the strings on your hollow guitar
Play like the twists of your piano fingers
Plunge me back to the words I knew
Lead me down the path to where
Everything is held
Fill my voice with drizzling honey
Re-engulf my mind
With the boiling of my thoughts

Let me live forever in my books
Soak me up in fantasy
Rip me from reality
As you set my heart free
From its cage
As it flies
Faster, faster
And then is gone



Caitlin Meyer

The New Look

Haley Marra

A grey cobblestone path leads to a small boutique
Fallen leaves cover the surroundings, making the scene unique
My brown, heeled boots compliment my patterned sweater
The camera is angled to make me look better

It clicks every second, the flash shines so bright
But my forehead is sweating because of the light.
My fall look is simple, but the magazine is pleased
My body looks thin, despite how much I'm squeezed

I probably look perfect to the young girls watching on my right
For I'm covered with Maybelline, it makes for quite a sight
I'm caught up in the fashion- the glam and the glitz
But this beauty just comes from a few make-up kits

I stop what I'm doing, and I cancel my shoots
I walk 15 steps to those girls and hand them my boots
They squeal and they thank me for this product is great
But I remind them that shoes are not all it will take

Their confidence is coming, but hell, it takes time
I've stumbled my way through the dirt and the grime
This body I live in has taken a toll
Of my negative thoughts beating it into a hole

I am not living for a perfectly contoured face
My clothing style can indeed stem from my taste
I'm done with this standard; I'm sick of it all
I'm loving myself and enjoying the fall.

And Fall

Erin Carbone

slithering trees shed their red, yellow, orange skin
embers flicker and flake to the ground
the summer sun has shined too harshly this year
it has burnt the green out of these majestic oaks
leaving flaming leaves to burn
until they smother themselves
and fall
summer seems to do that often
it shines too brightly
it is too hot to touch
it is over too quickly
autumn is where hearts - and leaves,
should go to recover from the severe burns that flower
their skin
but more often than not
summer was too hard on them
they burn out
and fall.

Autumn

Kayla Solino

Can you hear the whispers of the wind that whistles between the trees yet?
Can you see the vivid yellows, and bright amber leaves that swirl amongst the
sparrows?

Can you feel the crisp air on your fingertips yet, nudging them blue?

In between the last bits of summer and the beginning of a new, fall stirs,

Quietly simmering under the fallen flowers of August,

Waiting to show its true colors

It's only colors

In the silence of summer, Autumn screams.



Tree by Indra Glasergreen

a fight, a god, a martyr

Gwen Bernick

i lay face-down in the sharp winter grass,
chest pressed into the heavy, frozen dirt. i will myself
to feel it. to get up. i dig my fingernails into the ground.
your skin pink, blushing-- i will myself to forget.

i come back inside fourteen days later
with my fingers black and my heart undone.
i sit on the lip of the counter in my mother's kitchen,
the cast-iron pans and the tiled floors, your memory
on the back wall. i turn all of the burners on
and the oven up to 400.

i black out watching my hands bend in the thick heat of pity.
my ghost leaves, sits awake on the brown leather couch
in the dead of night. i wake next to her, crying.

i left behind the person i was. my
mistake. i let time in, sit in the shallow end
of the ocean, split myself in two. somewhere else,
i prop up your corpse in my bedroom
and sleep alone on the heavy leather couch.

i lay on the red carpet in my mother's bedroom.
her shoes lined up by the door. i close my eyes,
i breathe it in. i feel it.

a fight, a god, a martyr (continued)

i write down my confession in pen
on the wrong side of a bar napkin. streetlights and
taxis, my fists in my coat pockets. itching
for something. a fight, a god, a martyr,
you. i smash the taillight on the back of my heart.

i keep swallowing the blame of every bad thing
that's ever happened to me. i keep thinking about
that car alarm, the rusted lamp post and your cold hands.
i keep finding myself shivering, sitting
on the front step of your frosted porch in the dark,
willing you to come out.



Shattered

Untitled

Jozef Janosko

The rich dark earth is hidden by an amber sheath
Soil and stone concealed by hummus and podzol
Songbirds are quieted by the stark call of the crow
Fauns stare half spotted in their fading adolescence
Doe and buck graze preparedly for the coming cold
The winter crops deepen in their bronzing colors
The air thinned as if it had starved for all summer
The pink marigolds have wilted into a deep brown
Their dry carcinsus yet to be cannibalized by new ones



Capiscum Family Portrait by Grace Petrossian

Star-Crossed

Catriona Ferguson

Perhaps the sun and moon are the two most star-crossed lovers of our universe. For as the moon rises, he can only see the pink remnants of the sun's shine reflected in our skies. As the sun rises, she only sees the deep purple left by the moon's absence. Just as Romeo sacrificed his life to be with Juliet, the moon sacrifices his reign over the sky just to try and get a glimpse of the sun shining in all of her glory. But perhaps it is not love that drives them, but curiosity and mystery. The moon wants to understand what beauty causes the birds to sing such glorious song, just as the sun wants to know what handsome glow would cause thousands of stars to come out of hiding. Their loneliness is reflected in the dark ebony sky as the wolf greets the moon with a long haunting howl. He rises once again, too late. This chase will continue for eons as they continue to miss each other, creating tragically beautiful skies. They can only imagine what beauty awaits on the other side as they continue the cycle, she is moving the mornings as he is shifting the tides.



Judson Graham

Untitled

Lauren Sy

the omniscient pressure
make up my mind
it is known i can explore the unknown
yet my will is to settle in these doldrums,
this malefic place
it comes in waves
the cold ones
where your existence serves no pain
the ones filled with heat
that remind me of the fiery deeds
the mellow ones
where all is felt is sorrow and the heat waves evaporate
alas, the ones filled with love
of which i cannot control
for they prevail above all
cognizance of my subconscious feelings
here, i'm drowning, i'm feeling, it's reeling me in,
these waves,
to the deepest, darkest parts of the sea
drifting farther and farther out
until i am isolated, split from reality.

Untitled

Francesca Tangreti

an ice cube melted atop the vent that pumps out salty sea-breezes
and now the air is crisp and fragrant with the scent of fallen things
the carcass of a tree
long forgotten when our minds were summer day-dreaming
there is a whisper of winter and it is the fog on our breath
it is the goosebumps that trail up and down our sun-stained arms
it is blues and greens withering into reds and browns
your apple-round, apple-red, apple-sweet cheeks turned upwards towards the
harvest moon
and fields of wheat flowing in your hair
a greeting, a meeting, a cinnamon kiss



Sunflower by Indra
Glasergreen

like the leaves

Nicole Zamek

someone once told me to listen to the trees
help them hum their autumn tunes
“please” they beg me
i’m trying to hear their heartbeats
falling into the sweet sounds of nature
like crackling of an upcoming storm
the wind tosses my hair
leaves rumble beneath my trembling feet
i am weak like a leaf thrown about
“fear not” they whisper
i’ll watch my fears like leaves of umber
disappear in autumn’s breeze



Fox by Indra Glasergreen

Maple Leaf Lullaby

Amelia Milza

She sits on the crescent
peel
of the weathered branch
turning the pages,
the chapters,
the books,
letting the words take flight
in the breeze.

She hangs on to her old scarf
as it whistles in the trees
with the welcome smell
of pumpkin spice.

The grass is painted
cinnamon brown beneath her,
patches of emerald green
still wandering along the hill.

Summer's turquoise oceans
are long gone,
its traces of sandy beaches
and sundresses
melting in the sun's gentle
butter.

Summer fades
as quickly as it had come.

Maple Leaf Lullaby (continued)

She breathes the cool air like
a last
breath,
embraces it as if it were a
prayer.

Her hair swims,
radiates in the wind.
Maple leaves tag along
her caramel locks.

The rain will come,
tears draining
scarlet
orange
gold
maroon.

But for now, it is just her:
in the trees
on the branches
of the leaves,
engulfed
in Autumn's song.



Winter's Gale by Elizabeth McPherson

The Musician's Song

Shady Barsoom

It's silent
Nothing stirs
Each holds his breath
Listening to the shivering
stillness

The signal is waiting
Waiting to be dropped
That white baton
Moving like a phantom

He drops his hand
The white stick races after it
An explosion of noise erupts
The Vesuvius of the show

No time for delay
No mercy for tarrying
The music is moving
Lightning through the sky

The phantom slows
The players breathe freely
As they slow their fingers
That were once blurs across
the ebony

The Musician's Song (continued)

In a second's worth of time

It is over

The turtle has won the race

Unexpectedly, but undeniably

Gracious melodies, where did you go?

Why did you leave our practiced fingers?

Does the audience not feel, not understand

How months of knowing you could suddenly be over?

And yet, we are happy

We bid you a good farewell

One rich with blessings

May you bring joy to another generation

False Love

Morgen Fischer

Blinded by storms of emotion
I fell for lies and deceit
Every touch scorched my skin
Seeking numbness I allowed
Myself to be drugged with kisses

Ignoring words of wisdom
Always falling for you
Never saying no
Not knowing how to
Only to be abandoned

Wondering what I did wrong
Tears pour in streams
You said you loved me
Promises never kept
Counting every breath that hurts

Filled with toxic love
Boiling away my heart
Looking for closure
Rejected and unprotected
I've never been so alone

False Love (continued)

Dangerous thoughts swim in
my head
Unwelcome memories take
up rent
This war inside is ripping me
apart
You refuse to listen or even
talk
Watching you walk away
increases the pain

I can't take it anymore
Fits of rage cause sparks
You held power for too long
Cutting off the strings you
pull
I am no longer your little
doll

All Houses

Anonymous

You may feel weightless now, but by morning it's not like you'll be reborn

drop all your baggage to the wayside
you can spend the whole day hitchhike your mind and body
but you'll find yourself where you started

stop drowning in your own self pity
you know how to swim
you learned how to at five, when you were still fearless

don't expect anyone to look at you like Madonna or Jesus H Christ

people die
or they leave their T-shirts at your house and don't come back

but you're tethered to yourself
take off that coat you've had on for seventeen years

stop living like an alcoholic from West Virginia
because self loathing,
it tastes like rubbing alcohol

All Houses (continued)

what you need is the kind of bravery that only exists in former drug addicts, and teen moms

you can learn to but alone again
lay in the grass
let your butt get itchy

in twenty years you'll forget about you preschool best friend,
your third birthday party,
the pen pal you had in grade school

go ahead,
build your rickety little cardboard house
but be prepared for the roof to leak
the walls to shake
for the windows to smash in

those neighborhood hooligans?
they're just you in hoodies and ripped jeans

let the door cave in
roll in the grass
let everything burn
every last faked love letter, prescription, dollar store receipt

you can keep living choking on that Godforsaken smoke



Into the Universe by Indra Glasergreen

Memory Boxes

Francesca Tangreti

a collection of moments that haven't quite left me.

I. recess

there is something scrambled glinting in your eyes
cerulean glass marbles scattered across the hardwood floor

II. hands

your hands tell stories-
with knuckles like mountains and
long, crooked fingers
polished with chipped shades,
and river-like veins that curve
and twist and jut out
creating paths to follow to
your bounding heart.

III. tag at midnight

all while it sits between your palms
there is a glint within your eye and
mischievous sounds its bellowing call.
out from the darkness i am beckoned, looming
rays of pearly moonbeam cloak you
all while it sits between your palms.
it catches the glimmering light and sends
shards, eclectic, through the shadows while
mischievous sounds its bellowing call.
and through the hallways we shall run
pulled by cryptic, creeping creatures
all while it sits between your palms.

Memory Boxes (continued)

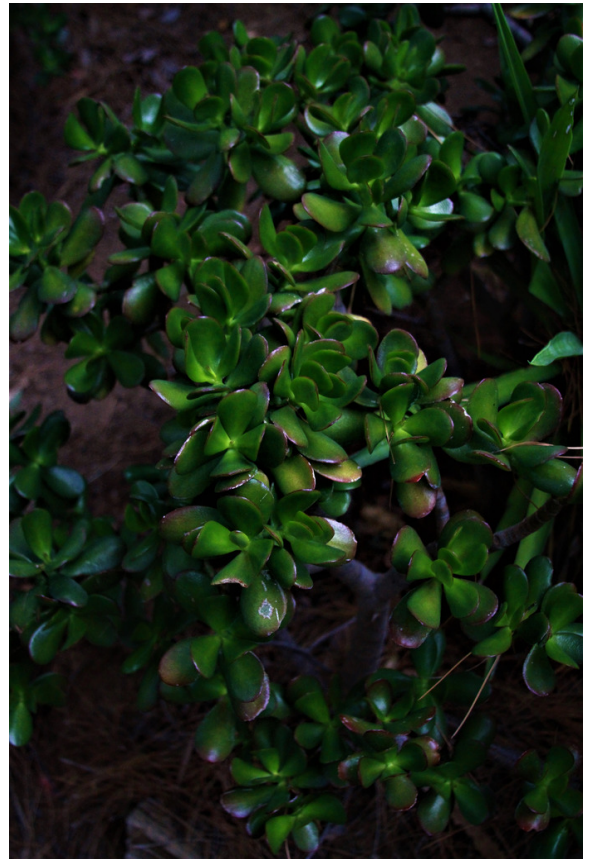
i see a quiver in your upturned lip
closed tight to hold back paradox, and hear
mischief sound its bellowing call.
your footfalls tremble to a stop
and i watch your fingers loosen slowly
all while it slips from between your palms and
mischief cowers at the echo of its call.

IV. juice box

like the empty cardboard casing of a fruit-punch-packet in the
crinkled palm of a toddler who
squeezes tight, tight, tight
the air escapes my lips in a puff of saccharinity and
you take a sip

V. celestial

now the window glows with dying light and
the expanse of your back is the broad night sky
speckled with heroes like
pinprick orion



Jade

There Goes the Lady

Anonymous

The slighted lady of the forest
black mired forest so near
she goes through her day
crushing the bones of children so small, so dear
leaving their pieces like half empty tomes
reliving their fair hearted fear



Caitlin Meyer

Sister

Amelia Milza

Blue sibling slumber
Dancing across the stars
Liquid blond
Beneath the heavens
Wild brunette
Between the clouds

They lived
And breathed
In the music of midnight
Bathed in the oceans of constellations
Blue eyes matching the face of the moon
Chocolate brown that played in the dust

Eyes brought together by endless love
Devoted to the fate
That hugged them
And penetrated them
Swaddling them in a whispered warmth

They swam with the swans
And flew with the crystals
That were sewed to the sky
Chestnut cloaked the cloudy darkness
While the sparkling sand held the sunshine

Sister (continued)

They walked across a bounding sea
Of turquoise green and blue
She was self-conscious to let it all go
Yet the other let her spirit sprout wings and be free

They left the fleeting moments behind them
While walking hand in hand
Their hearts
Two flowers intertwined
By real unblinded love

And they danced forever
In the midnight sky
Leapt above the Earth
Twirled beneath the heavens
Flew to the moon
Where they chased down the stars
Swimming in their untouched thoughts
United as one
But soaring as two



Galaxy by Cade Braddock

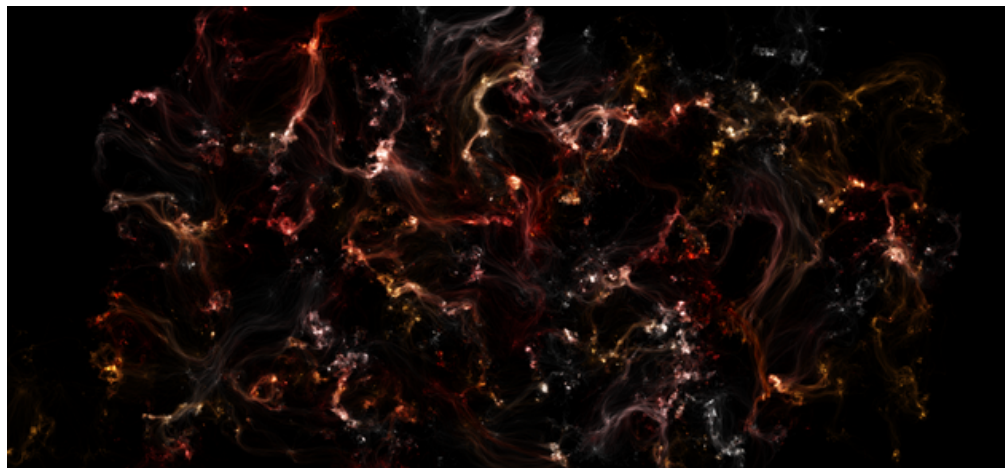
Crush

Kayla Solino

Our love was fierce,
and raw,
and real

It was so strong that it could crush walls,
and skyscrapers,
and mountains

But it crushed us too



Galaxy 2 by Cade Braddock

Ambrosia Goes Well With Memories

Ruth Ahan

i miss our nectar coloured summer nights
when the stars would glimmer and fall like rain.
as we bathed ourselves in the moons soft light
that spilled upon our gold-flecked skin,
we warmed ourselves in the others safe embrace.



Judson Graham

sink

Gwen Bernick

i don't want to be alone anymore.
my heart escapes from my body in breaths
like a dripping sink or
a slow-moving car crash.
i kick dead leaves up into the air and
i stopped going outside except to carve your name
into the tree in my backyard.
you were never there.

i write tiny poems to you on my math homework.
i imagine that you do the same;
a cosmic exchange of empty prayers
across miles of my shaking body and your guilty hands.
i wake up at five am with cold deep in my bones.
tip-toe down the stairs, cry in the basement;
i go outside and kick up the leaves,
drown myself in a half-empty
kitchen sink, or heart.

i still wish you had been better.
swallow back bile and fever memories
when i see you. it doesn't matter
anymore. i open the windows in a thunderstorm,
open my rotten body like a car door.
i let the rain spill over like blood or vomit or
an overflowing sink. i have been here
before. i convince my heart to start beating
agan. i come home shivering, sprawl in the grass
and breathe.



Caitlin Meyer

Pulse

Cade Braddock

There are two black rocks in my room,
Seemingly trivial objects.
There are names on each of the stones,
Names of people I have never met.
Luis S. Vielma,
Leroy Valentin Fernandez.
We are connected, bound together,
In a way that can't be explained in words.
We are connected by a thread
Of shared experience, of love.
I have mourned them, shed tears for their blood.
Although they have left us all behind,
Their bodies buried and forgotten,
Their pulse still beats within me.

The Crow and the Gull

CSM

A crow sits atop a tree
Shouting its call out to the free
A call for doomsday
A gull sits atop a post
Giving off a joyful toast
Here is life, it would say
The crow would say bye
The gull would not fly
The crow would live
The gull would die



Haunted Tree by Cole Bertola

I Was Born Yesterday

Anonymous

I was born yesterday,
I'll die tomorrow.
The river of emotion ceases to flow.
Washed away like the sandcastles on the shore
Bridges falling, while
the wellspring of grace was flowing.
Deeply immersed
The pool is waterless.
Standing still turns stone cold
The author dies,
The author's work is born



Judson Graham



Yosemite Valley by Bobby Fodera