

epigraph



EPIGRAPH

Magazine

Issue Twelve / May 2016

epigraphmagazine.com

In This Issue

Mary Alinney Villacastin

Subtext Captions for a Smartphone Snapshot:

'A Pool of the Promised Land' / 4

Eyewitness Endless Edge Off Barrier Islands / 5

Bob Carlton

Double Talk / 6

"Found Poem" Bumper Sticker / 6

Argive Beachhead / 7

Wood, Wind / 7

Louise Thomas

Once to Kadıköy by Ferry / 8

The Union of Union of Open Sets and Apricots / 9

TS Hidalgo

I want to have a million friends / 10

Olivia Inwood

Robotic Arm / 11

24hr News Cycle / 12

Daniel Riddle Rodriguez

Cynical Ode / 13 - 14

James Mc Elroy

Elias / 15 - 16

Won Gyeong Seong

Last Dinner in Czechoslovakia / 17

A Fast Flytrap Dissolves Pure Painkillers / 18

Jeff Burt

The Alphabet in Courier / 19 - 28

Contributors / 29 - 30

Subtext Captions for a Smartphone Snapshot: 'A Pool of the Promised Land'

Mary Alinney Villacastin

1. *on the other side of the road,*
lies liquid condensed concrete code,
real estate rooftops parallel power lines
palm trees parallel-perpendicular steel signs
street floor flood collects fluid storm sky
built condo box home cloud high;
a puddle in a parking lot
plots rain piss, drew dots
bliss in dew drops,
blips, slips, stops
(hurricane eye)
---pause,
'cause
a car crash is a-coming; don't cross.

2. *floating off paper edge void,*
vast past, everglade grass
pastures
planets, points . plains of existence
gravitates back distance
white-eye-lined wetness permeates
pavement permits black instance,
carves bubbles
captures
labor's
curves
clouds , holes:
(rupture raptures)
landscape maps to vroom-doom trigger optical loss.

3. *reverse versions mirror visions,*
primitivism's paradise pioneers
of modernist human mind
painted air humid mist, saturated near
sighted spectral kind of
sidewise shimmering glimmer wish
crystal gaze, fantastical
blur speculum sea
crystallizes color collisions;
skin wet, we be we,
we [can] be [kin] we
(& eye be I.)
future's nebular fusions scatter origins of stardust lust.

[subvert/inert/stimulation/of/surreal/idealism]

Eyewitness Endless Edge Off Barrier Islands

Mary Alinney Villacastin

A drive down dunes, due east,
on Broward Boulevard,
-between-
causeways, canals and (is)land's end,
bridge streets bleed into
sand,
bounded by
deep-sea see currents
bathtub spilt-silt
hits asphalt
blacktops sliver up
shorelines spring break
brick pink boardwalks
billboard promise tourists
business as usual/casual
paradise prices
broadway public plays,
'Bikini B*tches Biking Beaches,'
billowing signs selling
flyers hitchhiking hydroplane rides
below blue-on-blue horizons
spiking
disk light sight's
striking slash . / . / . / .
. . . /// before,
Sand blown, dust west, rock specks
accrue archaic curves
(curse of treasure-sunken ships)
belie liquid below
(kneels, knolls, atolls)
commodify mangrove mass/mounds
(coastal condo views)
deify torrential tempests & towers
(swimming suit goddesses)
estrangle street barrier blocks, ages ago
(combine cloud nine and *cauchemar*)
finger fine dusk particles like glass fallen sun lust
(hollywood hills lettering will)
glittered skin spelling YOLO, spilling
(human's sky high imaginings)

Double Talk
Bob Carlton

ssaayy

"Found Poem" Bumper Sticker
Bob Carlton

09-1
WE WILL NEVER F GET!

Argive Beachhead
Bob Carlton

crests wave
waves crest
horse tails
a flame--

plumage in
four elements

Wood, Wind
Bob Carlton

a
vibra
ting
column
of
air
s

Once to Kadıköy by Ferry

Louise Thomas

Even Istanbul birds
decompose like divining
hours,

out of sight,
into mysterious
dust.

Just like here. The lake
turns strait—

Black cormorants,
as one,
disappear under
the Bosphorus
where it seems

and seems

world lost to us.

The Union of Union of Open Sets and Apricots

Louise Thomas

All the religious people
had gathered together an evolving

eternity

a dark water field.

Attending
to endless fruit.

Was the human voice
a flower among them too?

Picked for days

for indefinite decades before words.

I want to have a million friends

TS Hidalgo

Fundamental rights,
or rather -ists,
Syrian heart pills:
<<It is urgent to act,
today we must do our best>>,
one of their leaders said,
so you can imagine the campaign:
<<The-last-time-all-of-them-breathe!>>
(schizophrenia numbers);
how many?,
sale,
they were on sale:
that's when there are few garments left;
since some years ago:
they have already done an exam,
or two.

Robotic Arm

Olivia Inwood

Robotic arm, extension of the human mind

depart our insecure future

Go back towards

a life full of nature

learning,

sacrifice,

ideas that

tempt and torment us

Theories of the make-believe

Ideas, ideas, always ideas

which redefine us

mould us,

situate us

New spectrum where we are flexible

flowing relentlessly

Devouring all our ideas

Patterns overflowing

We resemble this Earth

repeat, always, on repeat

Powerful extract.

24hr News Cycle

Olivia Inwood

We ate you like we
Ate the Prime Minister
And the Prime Minister
Before that Prime Minister
Prime Minister
Prime Minister

Cultural
d-i-s-c-o-n-n-e-c-t-i-o-n
Google translator
translated the entire
conversation

With too many words
Back-to-front beginnings
No pronouns just
Objects
I couldn't describe

Let alone try to draw
on a 3D rendering program
To print-out

Like I print-out

Tax receipts.

Cynical Ode

Daniel Riddle Rodriguez

I'll take fire and water over virtue any day, no matter what you say, Confucius!

Prometheus was a man rubbing two dollars together.

Real knowledge is knowing the extent of everyone else's ignorance.

Even the cloud sees silver as a trick of light.

And the glass, whether half-full optimist or less-full realist

is nevertheless stolen and gulped by full-full opportunist.

And this, our love, so like a cake I can't help but haunt your kitchen

itching for a lick of spoon.

A love so like the moon: an oscillating dance of wane and wax

brilliant but hardly here, yet we dance anyway

because to dance is all that matters anyway and anyway

all that matters is we think: *why you think you matter, anyway?*

Like to think and therefore be is exactly the kind of thing

that got my coming-of-age punched in the teeth.

O this life! There is so little and so much of it.

Ditto time. Ditto time.

The spine, now a question, turns in on itself.

Hello coccyx, my old friend!

Hello asshole! Hello id!

Hello god we forged in a crucible of violence

taught him then to walk and walk over
to talk in quids and pro quos

QEDs

Ipsa factos

Maybe that is why when you scratch my back
sometimes I stab yours (ergo, the opposable thumbs)

or why I never learned to fold a swan
but the full Windsor's down pat?

And what is origami anyway
but the art of folding dead trees?

Sure, Borneo lost some forest
but now they have the internet

and the internet has Google
and Google has everything.

I am telling you, world, father god to mother maker
when man stares into the abyss

it trembles.

Elias

James Mc Elroy

Once in a while
(Or is it 'Once and a while?')
It's important to skip the

Whole PC thing and stop yourself
Going Prius plus
Like the rest of the gang.

Think John the Baptist
Lost in the wilderness.
Think going it alone –

Being
Scantily clad
And becoming nothing

More than a footnote
To this, that, and these.
Tell it like it is.

Take no prisoners.
Shout if you have to shout.
Curse if you have to curse.

Do a round of violence
If you must.
But whatever you do,

Make sure you get to it
When people begin to think
Your head's cut.

Well, that's it,
Go ahead and declaim
What's what.

Wade into the alluvial
Downstream of a Jordan
And await those

Who'd like to do you in
Because they think
Looks can kill;

Think you might cut
Them to the quick
Without so much as

A word passing
Between you.
So, yeah, it is what it is.

All of it printed in
Bold elliptical font
Running down one side

Of an orange colored
Onion bag stretched
Flat out on a parch

Of barren ground with
The word Elias –
Not Elijah –

Emblazoned clear as
Day with no
Explanation given,

And no expiration date
Stamped thereon.

Last Dinner in Czechoslovakia

Won Gyeong Seong

There is a hunger
That resides in the
Reptilian parts of my brain.
It requests,
And I obey.
Cutting off the flesh
From my left hand,
I cook it in singing oil
With sweet onions
By a bony palm
And eat it off
A blue china plate.

A Fast Flytrap Dissolves Pure Painkillers

Won Gyeong Seong

the world around
was drowned
in dark as i
disturbed
the silver dust of stars
with greasy wings

The Alphabet in Courier

Jeff Burt

- A pyramidal,
 divine point of dispersion
 mortal aiming eternal ascension,
 the Eiffel Tower of desire
- a the slow humping silhouette
 of snail, shuffling,
 shawl-covered crone,
 beginning of the end
- B the juvenile sex joke,
 boobs, breasts,
 the baby's first impression,
 the fullness of delight
- b the sprung stem
 and half-note,
 the pure song
 from the babbling infant
- C in shape,
 has no upper or lower case,
 in sound the changeling,
 the upper clack of king, kite, kitsch.
- c the lower case,
 the sound of slither,
 serpent, snake
 scissoring in grass.

- D for drum,
the incessant tip on the tongue
denting the flesh
of the upper cleft
- d for da-da,
the small intimate pounding
an infant makes
before the figure father
- E top test
on the eye chart,
the fork you pitch
in the direction of food
- e the fishhook
with the barb missing,
origin of a fish story
which will lengthen throughout your life
- F top-heavy, ponderous,
military,
the glowering top stem
to emphasize its weight
- f in image
a meek shepherd's crook,
in sound a foxy fricative
among the mouth's white sheep

- G the circumference of a circle
aborted, line bent to center
like a mind honed on truth;
the gut punched, body bowed
- g the pin-straight hair
of a young girl
finally reaching at long length
a forward curl
- H goalpost of hate or love,
a bridge to join
the parallel emotions
into one imprint
- h a worn chair
from which you launch out,
an inchworm
reaching for a new height
- I the image of a forthright self,
columnar,
but on inspection,
flatfooted, flatheaded
- i introverted, shy,
a candle flickering in darkness,
the bubble of a new idea
taking shape

J the sombrero-topped worker
asleep in the sun,
the umbrella,
the capital for all weathers

j slow curve,
then a straight vertical shot
punctuated in glee,
the beginning of joy

K a nose pressed
to a window in curiosity
before moist breath
obscures the search

k the poised silhouette
of a kangaroo
the moment
before it leaps

L right angle, conservative,
portent of a square,
able to hold the liquidity
of its sound, shapeless, watery

l line, a stem without fruit,
a slash on the page
as equilibrium to the long-lasting
languorous phoneme

- M the Rocky Mountains of letters,
snow-capped, ethereal,
unfriendly,
aboriginal god-home
- m the rounded Appalachians,
approachable, home to families,
tamed, farmed, combed by trails,
mom
- N the jabbed look
of an unstable profit line
with a steep vertical
pullout line of hope
- n parabolic image
of the bouncing ball,
the pull of gravity
which pulls all down but hope
- O the poetic expression
of the stammering soul
surprised into simple articulation
by beauty or sorrow
- o the rolling vowel,
the small moan
that escapes the mouth
from frustration or ennui

P bubble forming
on the stem of a wand
held by a child
in the sunshine on a walk

p the missing hasp to a necklace,
a string of pearls without clasp,
the bead of water
at fishing rod's end

Q the Q was an O
until its shoelaces untied,
stumbles without
the support of you

q a note on the scale
two beats long, half
the full measure,
in need of u for acceptance

R a dancer extending a leg
with arm bowed at the waist
waiting for a drum roll,
the rush of the curtain

r the end of the gaff
before it enters the gill,
pike staff to position the log,
break the dead branch

S the capital of fear and delight,
of snake and sex,
Salome's serpentine dance
for the head of the Baptist,

s the shadow of the larger,
the introverted self,
the switchback trail
through the heart's steep country

T the washpole,
the backyard goalpost for a kicker,
pullup, free hang,
a sparrow's rest

t humble cross,
the beginning sticks of human form
drawn by a child's hand,
legs bent to form a lap

U the horseshoe arcing in air,
the remnant of Brahma bull
left on the prairie after coyotes
and vultures have fed

u ugly of and short on sound,
it is pail and urn,
keeper of all
guttural sounds

- V commonly used for peace and victory,
note how the fingers
are kept apart
indicating both triumph and defeat
- v new sprout of reed,
of corn crackling through soil,
vegetation, the small letter
the victory of the people
- W the widest of letters,
imitating the long enunciation
at the start of Wonderful,
Wow, and Wahoo
- w the inglorious buttocks of letters,
recluse and timid,
found with h as in why,
who, where, and whisper
- X the brand,
singed on hide to mark cattle as beef,
blood smeared on the lintel
for death to pass over
- x the kiss of the parent to child
marked on the napkin
in the lunch box
the first day of school

- Y chalice raised in rejoicing,
the branch branching,
children grown
from the thighs of the mother
- y letter of yes,
accepting all directions,
north, south, east, west,
up, down, left and right
- Z forbidding, sometimes with a slash
as if to nix finality,
as if to forestall the conclusion:
death
- z squiggly zygote,
zip one way, zap the next,
zeta ends in alpha,
the end is the beginning

Coda

!@)* like gathered shocks of corn, cuss, swear,
words not in print, body parts, functions, abuses,
punctuations of crude like oil unrefined

+ crosshairs or redemption

\ a needle, a scar, a slash of separation

~ the liquid influence of a second language,
the ripple of a tongue against the hard pallet

sign of weight, the end to a story, hashtag,
the crisscross on palms from forty years of labor

Contributors

A Filipina-American graduate of anthropology from Barnard College, last based in the mountains of Oaxaca, Mexico, **MARY ALINNEY VILLACASTIN** records experimental auto-ethnography while on the traveler's road (RealityEnRoute.blogspot.com). *Local Nomad* and *Alien Mouth* recently published her hybrid nonfiction. (Post)paradise is part of her photo-prose-poetry project, instagram [@swamp_sea_suburbia](https://www.instagram.com/swamp_sea_suburbia), exploring and exposing civilization's carved landscape of South Florida.

BOB CARLTON lives and works in Leander, TX.
bobcarlton3.weebly.com

LOUISE THOMAS has appeared in issues No. 18 and 19 of the *Columbia Poetry Review*. She grew up on the Southside of Chicago and works in administration for a small university. She is a graduate of the Columbia College poetry program and St. John's College in Annapolis.

TS HIDALGO (43) holds a BBA (Universidad Autónoma de Madrid), an MBA (IE Business School), a Master in Creative Writing (Hotel Kafka) and a Certificate in Management and the Arts (New York University). His works have been published in magazines like *Otoliths*, *The Unroean*, *Alien Mouth*, *Haggard&Halloo*, *Trascendent Zero*, *Crack the Spine*, and others. He has developed a career in finance and the stock-market.

OLIVIA INWOOD is an Australian-Lithuanian, originally from a farm near Forbes, NSW, Australia. She is currently studying a dual degree in English and Visual Arts at the University of New South Wales, Sydney. Her work has previously been published in *Poetry Quarterly* (USA), *Foliate Oak Literary Magazine* (USA), *UNSWeetened 2015 Literary Journal* (Australia) and *Written Portraits: An Anthology of Short Stories* (Australia). www.oliviainwood.com

DANIEL RIDDLE RODRIGUEZ's real name is Daniel Riddle Rodriguez. He is a full-time student and father from San Lorenzo, California, where he lives with his son. Previous publications include *Juked*, *Prairie Schooner*, *Gulf Stream Magazine*, *Fourteen Hills*, and others. Winner of the 2015 *CutBank Chapbook Contest*, his book *Low Village* is forthcoming. He is thrilled to be here.

JAMES MC ELROY grew up in Belfast, Northern Ireland, and currently teaches at The University of California. Recent publications include poems in *The Coe Review*, *The Boston Poetry Magazine*, *Literature Today*, and *DMQ Review*.

WON GYEONG SEONG is a senior at Carroll Senior High in Southlake, Texas. He hopes to major in neuroscience and will be attending Stanford University in the Fall of 2016. When not acting as the Marquis of Management for *combustion.lit*, his school's literary journal, he can be found either in the research lab or with his friends, exploring and eating whole ice cream cakes.

JEFF BURT lives in Santa Cruz County, California, with his wife and a July abundance of plums. He won the 2011 *SuRaa* short fiction award.

Epigraph Magazine publishes three times per year. We love experimental poetry. We love poems that make us question what poems are. We love the internet. We love immediacy. We love distance. Guidelines for submissions can be found at epigraphmagazine.com.

Send us your poems.

Epigraph Magazine
Issue Twelve / May 2016
edited by Nicholas Bon

© 2016
All poems in this issue
belong to their creators