



# *Lingerpost*

**Issue # 5**

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## Letter from the Editor:

Thanks for visiting us.

Come back again.

Come back soon.

Here we go. Louise Gluck states in her essay, “The Education of the Poet” (found in *Proofs and Theories*), that the “fundamental experience of the writer is helplessness.” Writers spend so much time in the “torment” of wanting to write but being unable to write, that our lives are so often marked by yearning, rather than success.

We try to illuminate what is hidden, to make art. We live somewhere between “the dream and the evidence.” To live here we require a desperate, obstinate need. To live here we require a desperate, obstinate hope.

With the desire to make art “always there seems something ahead, the next poem or story, visible, at least, apprehensible, but unreachable. To perceive it at all is to be haunted by it; some sound, some tone, becomes a torment—the poem embodying that sound seems to exist somewhere already finished. It’s like a lighthouse, except that, as one swims towards it, it backs away. That’s my sense of a poem’s beginning. What follows is a period of more concentrated work, so called because as long as one is working the thing itself, it is wrong or unfinished: a failure.”

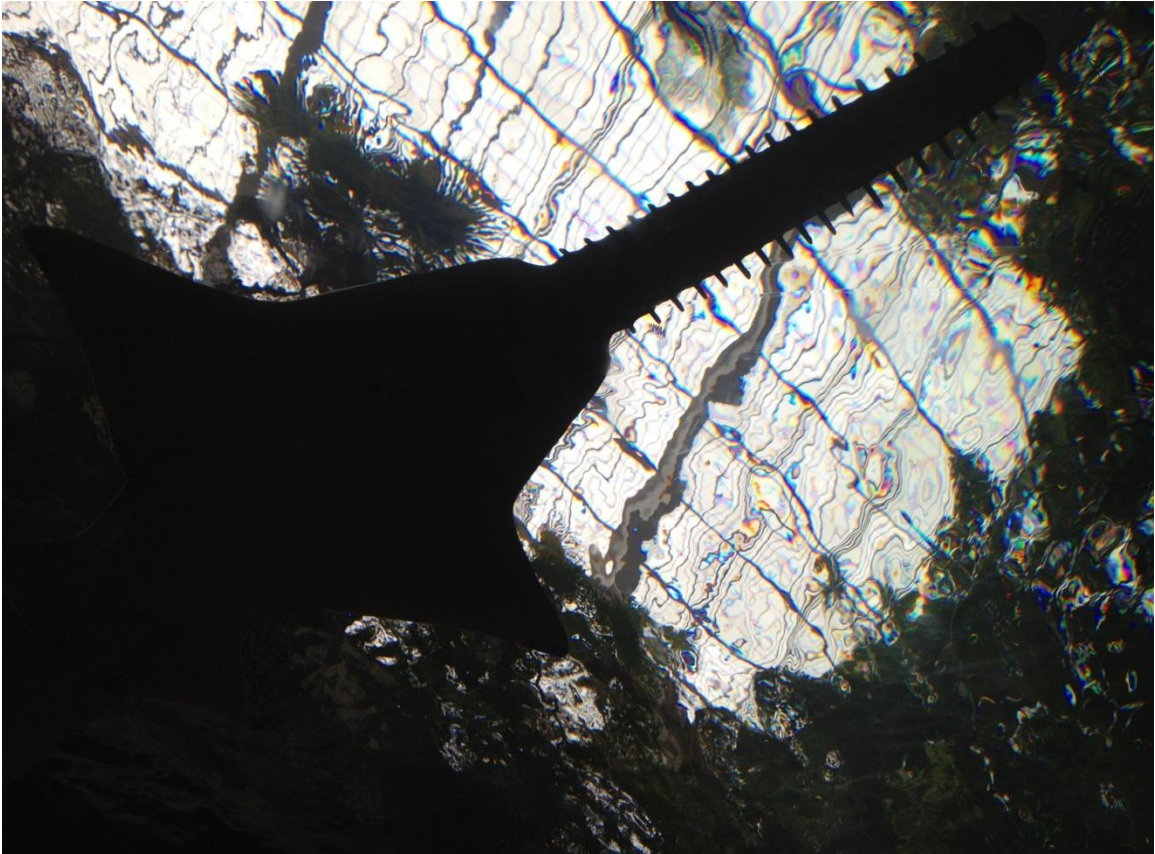
But for now, here with these poems, we celebrate the successes and the hope. As always, much love and thanks to our wonderful (and successful) contributors.

Best wishes always,

Kara Dorris

*Lingerpost*, Editor-in-Chief

*Iridescent Warning*



**WENDY WISNER**

*Looking for Our Father*

My mother strapped us in the backseat.  
The car swept through Menlo Park,  
Mountain View, San Jose.  
Our father lived somewhere  
in the rows of meaty Redwoods.  
I watched my sister  
because my mother couldn't see her.  
With my fleshy palm,  
I dried the sweat off her brow,  
used the tips of my fingers  
to brush away her hair. So much  
of her body could be broken.  
When she was safe  
in dream, her bottle fell  
onto the sticky leather seat  
and the car tunneled with the glow  
of apple juice inside glass.

*Shells*

When my father left, I took to shells:  
squatting in the corner, dark  
summer night lapping—  
oysters, conches, mother  
of pearl heaped at my feet.  
*We lived by the ocean once,*  
my mother murmured, rocking  
the baby. I loved  
how shells sucked  
against me, song of the dead  
animal in my ear. I fell  
for that suction, slurped up  
that soulful humming, knocked  
and nestled in those  
chilly hollows. The baby  
was also a shell, stuck  
to my mother, clammy  
with sleep and hunger.  
But she had sailed here  
by a different storm, clinging  
to the waves of a different sea.

**MARK DECARTERET**

*Clues to the World's Existence*

Some silences are never slept off or forgiven.  
Yes, that could have been either one of us, being

overheard, sighing, what was said said again  
or so clouded with near-speech and doubt

the picture we long had of the two of us  
appeared doubly exposed and cheapened by time.

But now the rain pelting the street is as tepid as blood,  
the air so thick with our memories, anything might take.



**KEVIN McLELLAN**

*Conductors*

The smoke of 50 fires in Northern Quebec  
the wind brought

I can't translate this for you  
since you left the window ajar

People seem so close to one another

The world kept promising  
but there are no apparent deliverables

Even under the spell of the night sky  
animals know the way

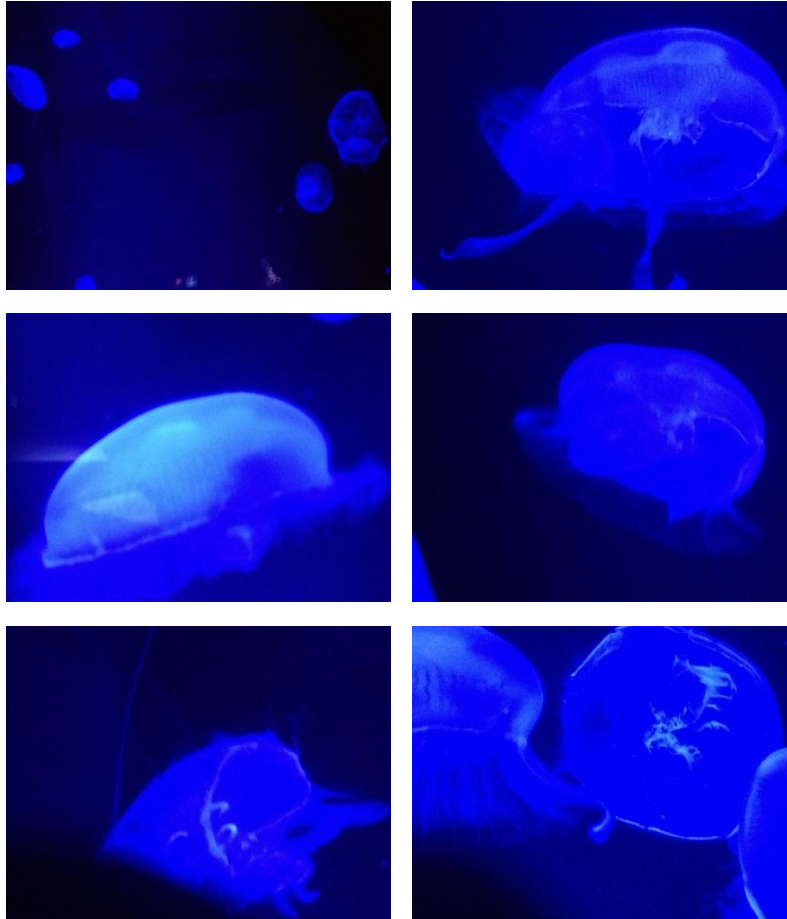
After the rains a maple branch and its susurrus  
became an understudy for crab grass

I once thought I could hold a shadow

Once (it only takes once) I was mistaken  
for a clay pigeon

This morning an outside bird  
jumped from dirt onto my wild hand

*Neon Warnings*



*Neon Warnings 2*



## **MERCEDES LAWRY**

### *Domestic Arts*

She has willingly given up latitude and moved to trim her margins with careful, neat cuts, pleating her own concerns into the corners. There is no never mind in the kitchen with the gravy and the spoons. Songs long out of use came crawling up out of the pipes and ducts and some of those notes intermixed with the dust, softening the harmonies to the buttery sounds that kept people from rage on a slow, hot Sunday. She never forgave the wily cats. Some distant memory involving wings returned at odd times to confuse her, when she was stirring batter or folding the sun-wicked sheets or watering the blue roses.

## HOWIE GOOD

*At the Museum of Famous Authors*

Here's the empty room that lived inside him. Here's the key he used to lock it. Here's the black moon that burned in her window. Here's the leaf she heard vibrating all night. Here's the shadow he kept for company. Here's the bottom-shelf booze he fed it. Here's the fly that chased through her dreams. Here's the twisted sheets in which she woke up flailing. Here's the trigger he pulled with his big toe. Here's the one-syllable word the cops dug out of the wall.

**ROBERT ANNIS**

*I've Never Spied Into this Room Before*

Tonight I am out  
to throw away the remnants

of a sliced tomato, a pineapple  
husk and gallon of expired milk.

Tonight I walk past her  
twice. She is kneeling

beside her bed, praying,  
each eye closed and still

as a moth hiding  
from a swatting hand. She chews

and gnaws little words  
like a teething infant given a carrot,

tiny miniscule words  
that only God can lip-read.

And even he is struggling.

*I watched a star die tonight*

it was

orange and blinking, like a grapefruit  
soaked in gasoline, lit  
and fired from a cannon,

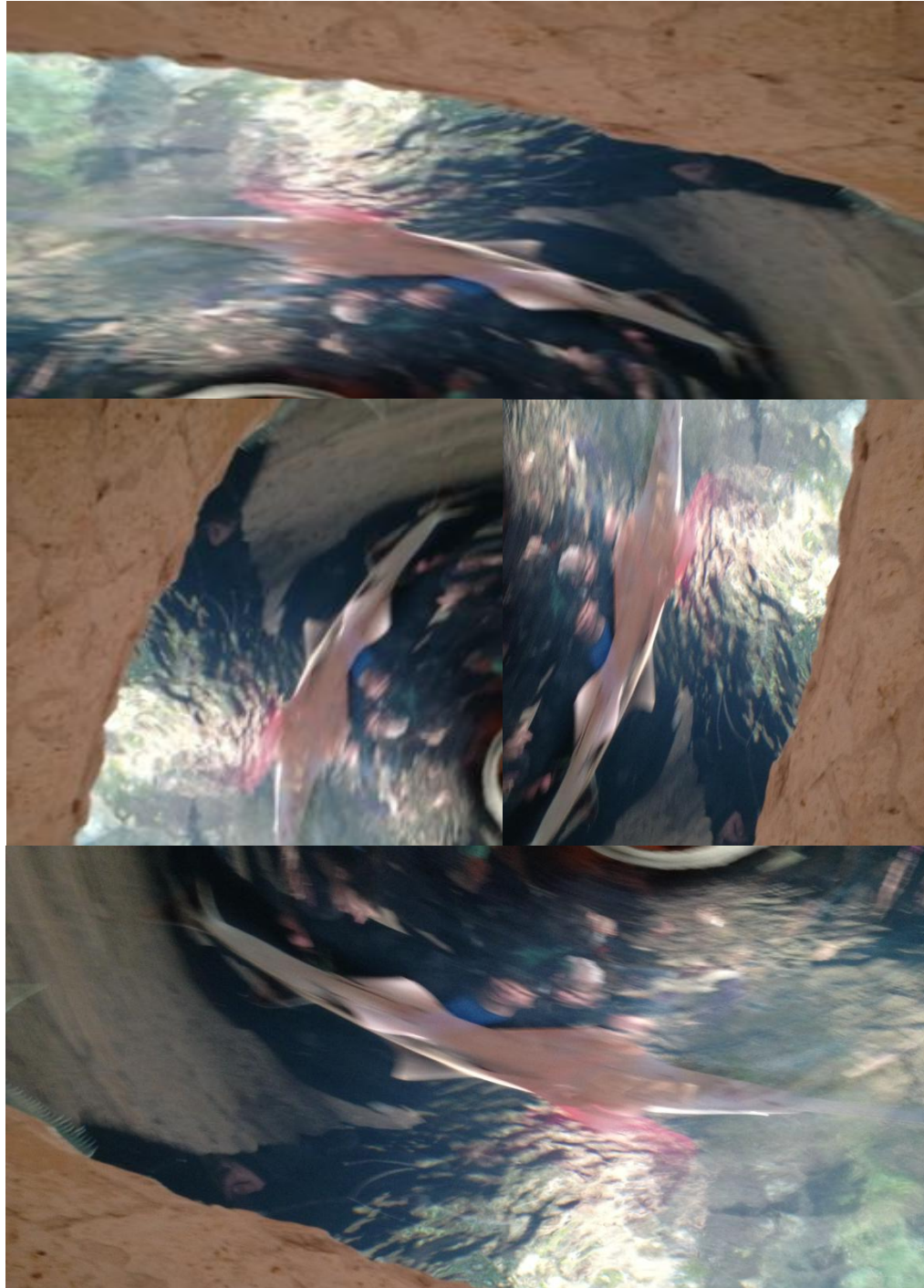
fired up

and over the houses and trees  
and all the little yappy dogs in the neighborhood.

But my dog is old

and his dusky-eyes  
didn't notice the fireball  
waning against the night sky.

*Whirlwind Warning*





**DANIELLE HANSON**

*The Affect of Rip Van Winkle On His Neighbors*

A man rumbled out of town one day, my sleep tucked away in his pack along with a loaf of bread from the counter and a newspaper. The first night, I thought I must have misplaced the sleep. I checked the bed, recliner, hammock, floor. After a week, I began hearing the rumors of Rip and his sleep and knew what had happened.

Over the years I visited Rip several times—glaring at him for hours, putting bugs into his snoring mouth, kicking and prodding him, anything to wake him so that I could grab my sleep and run. When the wind carried the dark smell of roots, I laid in the cellar, arms and toes curled around dreams.

*The bat discovered in England 10 years after her species was declared extinct talks to the press*

Today I am a sparrow. Tomorrow I may be a squirrel. The day after possibly a dog. I have studied all creatures for years and am quite qualified to be any of them. Today, I am a sparrow. I have accomplished all the sparrow tasks to show my sparrow-ness. I have a nest, which I have brought with me today for your examination. I have eaten bugs (you might object and point out that other species, such as bats, also eat bugs but I assure you that the bugs I ate and the manner in which I ate them was extremely sparrow-like.) I have sung on-key and ceaselessly for hours. I have flitted from branch to phone wire and am willing to demonstrate to you after this session. Today, as you can well see, I am a sparrow. I am not alone.

*Tracks left in the mud*

On the banks of the river, there was a rose  
and I rose, and the sun, and the whole earth  
rose in the moment. I went  
to join what was only present in its absence.

**CHRIS CRITTENDEN**

*Desert Cliff Prayer*

i want you to  
blanket me with fossils,  
unfurl the museum  
of the unheard.

i need you

to be one with me in dust  
effaced by the gone,  
cloaked in the unremembered,

to hug my worries  
down under a sabertooth's fang,  
or the chalky wisps  
of a primordial shell.

make it rough for me to cry  
under parched waterfalls of gone skin;  
embarrass me as i bathe in spent death  
and squander heartbeats.

*Pastel Warnings*



**AIMEE HERMAN**

*dandelions on skin can forget the living*

On mother's day, give her a corsage of dandelions. Focus on its yellow. The sun is yellow. Jaundice is yellow. Happiness may be described as yellow. Urine is yellow. Bananas from the tropics and all its curves are yellow. Infection is yellow. Saturn is yellow and giant with rings. Cigarette-stained teeth and fingers are yellow. Sunflowers are yellow and so is this weed.

Build a bridge with question marks and flaps of skin. Memorialize manhood through video screens and plaster. Pray in Italian and see if it means more. Engage in a conversation about the representation of darkness on bodies. Speak about cancer, motherhood, birth control options and favorite donut flavors. Visit museum, forego art and spend hours speaking about the muteness of movement with elevator operator. Eat a slice of cake made out of despair and nude bodies. French kiss Rodin statue too tall to reach and challenge its boundaries. Walk inside the worry of a wound. Search for the missing head of Cybele. Unfold kneebone. Climb on top of painted reflection, push out push out push out subliminal skeleton. Present table top with split ends and empty bowls. Say a prayer before bingeing on nothingness. Place various historical women's vaginas on hand-embroidered place settings and decide which ones look most appetizing. Reimagine religion through tar and plastic bags. Stand too close to a Keith Haring and wait for the swallow. Call out muse against the magnified hole built into front door reimaged in a painting. Find out where meat comes from, then lick up the trail of blood left from the source. Coat body in chalk/ Stand on head/ Wait for the ache of brain swallow. Place art and sin in alphabetized columns. Organize filth. Request a receipt when purchasing animals, artifacts and love. Remove baby from cartoon-drawn woman's pixelated womb. Dare the body to promote silence.

*what exists besides the night where sunsets swell*

Formulate a hypothesis on the elegance of dreadlocks, dandelions & Anne Sexton.

remember the birds

the pea pod

the feathers

the wood shavings

remember the music

stuffed deep into the pocket

of business-sized envelope

because

I wanted to

send you something

more romantic

than a sunset



there is a swell of sky in my belly

(breath)

all that talk on suicide/ emptiness in walls/ slumped trees pressed into  
poorly postured beams

Oh, Anne. I have loved you for decades. I gathered up enough dandelions to turn this planet blonde, neon lemon scented oceans with daffodil-hued horizons. I grew my hair long to cover you when we ran out of sweaters and sheets. I grew so distracted by your sorrow that my red grew confused, tangled and dreadlocked.

Anne

your lean

Anne

your clutch of cigarette

Anne

your need to gargle pills and red lipstick and  
poems

I've no mail today    nor yesterday    but I believe in tomorrow

I'll keep you in my throat, Anne/   I'll keep you against my sternum/   I'll poem my  
way toward an evening/   where the sun disappears into star formations

*Winter Burial*



## ***Lingerpost* Issue # 5 Contributor Bios**

Robert Annis is a Tampa resident who teaches at the University of South Florida. He studies poetry at the University of South Florida and is preparing to teach English in Japan after he completes his MFA. His work has appeared in the *Rose Red Review*, *Ubernothing*, *Brevity*, and *Thread*. He runs the Gaijin Tanka poetry blog.  
<http://gaijintanka.tumblr.com/>

Chris Crittenden writes next to a forest 50 miles from the nearest traffic light. The roaming coyotes are almost as big as wolves, and sing with gusto. His vulnerable, full-length collection *Jugularity* was recently released by *Stonethrow*.

Mark DeCarteret's work has appeared in the anthologies *American Poetry: The Next Generation* (Carnegie Mellon Press), *Thus Spake the Corpse: An Exquisite Corpse Reader* (Black Sparrow Press) and *Under the Legislature of Stars—62 New Hampshire Poets* (Oyster River Press) which he also co-edited. From 2009-2011 he was the Poet Laureate of Portsmouth, New Hampshire. You can check out his Postcard Project at [pplp.org](http://pplp.org).

Howie Good, a journalism professor at SUNY New Paltz, is the author of five poetry collections, most recently *Cryptic Endearments* from Knives Forks & Spoons Press. He has had numerous chapbooks, including *Elephant Gun* from Dog on a Chain Press, *Strange Roads* from Puddles of Sky Press, and *Death of Me* from Pig Ear Press. His poetry has been nominated multiple times for the Pushcart Prize and Best of the Net anthology. He blogs at <http://apocalypsemambo.blogspot.com>.

Danielle Hanson received her MFA from Arizona State University. Her work has appeared in over 40 journals and anthologies, including *Rosebud*, *Asheville Poetry Review*, and *Blackbird*. She has edited *Hayden's Ferry Review*, been on staff at The Meacham Writers' Conference, and attended a residency at the Hambidge Center. Her work has been nominated for a Pushcart Prize and Best of the Net.

Aimee Herman is a performance artist and poet disassembling gender, language and form. Her full length book of poems, *to go without blinking*, was published in 2012 by

BlazeVOX[books]. Find her wrapped in caution tape in Brooklyn or at [aimeeherman.wordpress.com](http://aimeeherman.wordpress.com).

Mercedes Lawry has published widely, including two chapbooks: *There Are Crows In My Blood* and *Happy Darkness*. She's also published fiction, essays, humor and stories and poems for children. She lives in Seattle.

Kevin McLellan is the author of the chapbook *Round Trip*, a collaborative series with numerous women poets. His poems appear in many journals including: *Barrow Street*, *Colorado Review*, *Diagram*, *Interim*, *Kenyon Review Online*, *Sixth Finch*, *Western Humanities Review*, and *Witness*. Kevin lives in Cambridge, and sometimes teaches at the URI.

Wendy Wisner is the author of a book of poems, [Epicenter](#) (2004), and a chapbook, *Another Place of Rocking* (2010). Her book reviews appear regularly in [Lilith Magazine](#), and her poems have appeared or are forthcoming in numerous journals and anthologies, including *Prairie Schooner*, *The Spoon River Review*, *The Bellevue Literary Review*, *Rhino*, *Natural Bridge*, *5AM*, and *Verse Daily*. Her second full-length book, *Morph and Bloom*, will be published by CW Books in 2013. Wendy lives in Bayside, New York with her husband and two young sons. Visit her website at [www.wendywisner.com](http://www.wendywisner.com).